The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Spring, 2013

President's Gavel.

Last month we lost a great friend and longtime member Conrad Brennfleck. He was always there whenever we needed him - from being a docent at the museum to assisting at Junior Camp Olden showing all of his artifacts He was a regular at our meeting and he will be greatly missed! My condolences to the Brennfleck and Daly families. May he Rest in Peace!

Last February 12th, I went to Philadelphia for the Lincoln Birthday Celebration. It was a great day. First we had ceremonies outside the Union League. Then we were fed lunch and at 2:00 we formed up for a parade from the Union League to Independence Hall. Ceremonies were held, and then we returned to the Union League for where we all gathered for food and good cheer. I have been participating in this event since its inception and have always had a great time.

I have some fine speakers lined up for you in the upcoming months:

- March 7 Nick Ciotola discussing Civil War Veteran as Outsider Artist; The Case of Private Joseph Steiner.
- **April 4** Kerry Bryan discussing *Elizabeth Hutter, Home front Heroine*.
- May 2 William B. Styple discussing his book *McClellan's Other Story*.

Hope to see you at these meetings.

Your Obedient Servant.

Bruce ♦

Reminder --- Bring A Dish!

Remember hospitality for the March 7th meeting is a covered dish. Bring your favorite last taste of winter or first taste of spring food to share. Special start time is 6:00 PM. •

Installation of Officers.

At January's meeting Hamilton's Mayor Kelly A. Yaede swore in Camp Olden's board for 2013. Pictured below is the Mayor with President Bruce Sirak.



Camp Olden Civil War Round Table and Museum 2013 Board of Directors

President Bruce Sirak

Vice President William Moore

Secretary / Treasurer Connie Davis

Museum Representative Bruce Smith

Event Coordinator Bob Dunphy

Event Coordinator Dan Fox

Civil War Related Places to Visit:

Our Co-Event Coordinator Dan Fox has come up with the following suggestions:

Company H Seventh Reserves

http://7thpares.org/schedule.html

US Army Heritage & Education Center http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ahec/ahm/heritage.cfm

Washington County (Md.) Museum of Fine Arts http://wcmfa.org/events.cfm?event=10

Civil War Medicine Conference

http://www.civilwarmed.org/civil-war-medicineconference/. ◆

Who Am I?



I was born on 13th October, 1826. My family moved to Michigan but I left home in 1848 and did a variety of different jobs in the West. In 1856 I joined the Vigilance Command that cleaned up San Francisco following the California Gold Rush. During this period I was involved in several lynchings.

On the outbreak of the American Civil War I managed to gain an interview with General Winfield Scott. I told Scott I had lived in Richmond and proposed that I be sent to that city, now the capital of the Confederacy, to gather military information for the Union Army. Scott agreed to the proposal and I was sent to Virginia to spy on General Pierre G. T. Beauregard and his forces in Virginia.

The plan was for me to pose as a photographer who wanted to take pictures of the leaders of the Confederate Army. However, on 11th July, 1861, I was arrested by the Union Army at Alexandria, Virginia, as a Confederate spy. I was in danger of being executed as a spy until General Winfield Scott intervened to gain my freedom.

I eventually reached the Confederacy but was quickly arrested by an army patrol. I was interviewed by President Jefferson Davis and Pierre G. T. Beauregard and after providing information about Union troop movements, positions of heavy gun emplacements and locations where ammunition and goods were stored, I was released. I took with me a photograph of Beauregard that I used to help enter Confederate Army military camps.

In Fredericksburg I was once again arrested as a Union Army spy. Convinced that I was about to be executed, I managed to use a small knife that I had hidden in my shoe, to free two loose bars in my cell.

When I returned to Washington, General

Winfield Scott was so impressed with my information he made me a captain and put me in charge of his intelligence service. Scott told the story of my adventures to several members of Abraham Lincoln's government. When Edwin M. Stanton Secretary of War, heard the story he recruited me as the replacement for Allan Pinkerton, head of the Union Intelligence Service. I was given the job as head of the National Detective Police (NDP), an undercover, anti-subversive, spy organization.

One of my successes was the capture of the Confederate spy, Belle Boyd. Later I was accused of conducting a brutal interrogation and despite the inhuman treatment Boyd refused to confess and she was released in 1863.

In 1863 I raised a battalion of cavalry called the 1st District of Columbia Cavalry. This unit was used against John S. Mosby and his Partisan Rangers. However, they were unable to hunt him down and his raiders continued to create problems for the Union Army until the end of the war.

I was also suspected of being guilty of corruption. I went after people making profits from illegal business activities. It was claimed I arrested and jailed those who refused to share their illegal gains with me. I was eventually caught tapping telegraph lines between Nashville and the office of Edwin M. Stanton. Baker and was demoted and sent to New York and placed under the control of Charles Dana, the Assistant Secretary of War.

After the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, I was summoned by Edwin M. Stanton to Washington with the telegraphic appeal: "Come here immediately and see if you can find the murderer of the President." I arrived on 16th April and my first act was to send my agents into Maryland to pick up what information they could about the people involved in the assassination.

Within two days I had arrested Mary Surratt, Lewis Paine, George Atzerodt and Edman Spangler. I also had the names of the fellow conspirators, John Wilkes Booth and David Herold. When my agents discovered they had crossed the Potomac near Mathias Point on 22nd April, I sent Lieutenant Edward P. Doherty and twenty-five men from the Sixteenth New York Cavalry to capture them.

On 26th April, Doherty and his men caught up with John Wilkes Booth and David Herold on a farm owned by Richard Garrett. Doherty ordered the men to surrender. Herold came out of the barn but Booth refused and so the barn was set on fire. While this was happening one of the soldiers, Sergeant Boston Corbett, found a large crack in the barn and was able to shoot Booth in the back. His body was dragged from the barn and, after being searched, the soldiers recovered his leather bound diary. The bullet had punctured his spinal cord and he died in great agony two hours later.

Booth's diary was handed to me and I later passed it on to Edwin M. Stanton. I was rewarded for my success by being promoted to brigadier general and I received a substantial portion of the \$100,000 reward.

I was dismissed as head of the secret service on 8th February, 1866. I claimed that President Andrew Johnson had demanded my removal after I discovered that my agents were spying on him. I admitted the charge but argued I was acting under instructions from the Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton.

In January, 1867, I published my book, *History of the Secret Service*. In the book I describe my role in the capture of the conspirators. I also reveal that a diary had been taken from John Wilkes Booth when he had been shot.

This information about Booth's diary resulted in me being called before a Congressional Committee looking into the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Edwin M. Stanton and the War Department were forced to hand over Booth's diary. When shown the diary by the committee, I claimed that someone had "cut out eighteen leaves" When called before the committee, Stanton denied being the person responsible for removing the pages.

Speculation grew that the missing pages included the names of people who had financed the conspiracy against Abraham Lincoln. It later transpired that John Wilkes Booth had received a large amount of money from a New York based

firm to which Edwin M. Stanton had connections.

After his appearance before the Congressional Committee, I became convinced that a secret cabal was intent of murdering me. I was found dead at my home in Philadelphia on 3rd July, 1868. Officially I died of meningitis but the authors of the book, *The Lincoln Conspiracy* (1977), claim that I was murdered by my brother-in-law, Walter Pollack, a detective at the War Department. ◆

Courtesy of The Spartacus Educational website.

Answer to "Who Am I" is on page 7.

Meet Your Fellow Members:



Hi, I'm Dan Fox. I was introduced to the Camp Olden by Bruce Sirak. I met Bruce through our church. When I joined the men's organization at church, the other members told me that "we have a guy here with us who would love to meet you!!!!!"

As Bruce has come to know, my experience as a student of the Civil War is extensive and varied. I totally enjoy the reenactment part. By reliving the basic life style of the solider you can place yourself into a pseudo roll playing. Just one weekend camping in the rain, a cold night on the ground, starting a fire in the damp morning and drill, drill and drill provides great insight. Also considering the sheer amount of men in the ranks you can see why it took hours to get troops to line up for a march or battle formation.

I enjoy reading non-fiction books of the war, especially regimental historys. I enjoy shooting as a sport. By using the muskets in live fire you can see how the smoke from black powder can cause problems with sight and the loud noise of the muskets problems with commands.

I cannot recall at what age I started to "study"

the war. I am 62 so it's been a while. I do remember Halloween of 1961 when I dressed up as a Union Solider with musket and uniform. I even slept in it that evening. Also I remember that year that bubble gum trading cards came out with battle stories and short histories of people and places. Hey this was better than Mickey Mantle cards.

There is a great deal to enjoy in this hobby of muskets and books and there is a greater enjoyment in teaching our young students of the war as our school system is steadily short changing and/or altering our history (not just this period but all U.S. history). (*Editor's Note:* Dan Fox is now Co-Event Coordinator for Camp Olden CWRT.) •

In Memory of Conrad Brennfleck



Conrad & Jeanne Brennfleck

Conrad will be missed by his wife Jeanne, family and many friends at Camp Olden CWRT. His daughter, Kim Daly, has special memories of her Dad.

My Dad was a collector. I can remember as a kid he would go through stages of collecting things. Lighting, clocks, Bennington Pottery, ice cream molds etc. Each new collection was a learning experience for him. He was a wealth of knowledge.

Back about 20 years ago my now 30-year old son and I attended a Civil War reenactment in Veterans' Park. I knew nothing about the Civil War. I'm a Jersey girl and we know Rev. War. My son however decided he wanted to "do Civil War". A deal was struck. You attend some Civil War meetings and learn more about it and if you are still interested we will see about reenacting. After our first Camp Olden meeting we told my

Dad about Jared's new interest and Dad decided he would learn more about it too.

My Dad was a collector. As we started to assemble uniforms, fifes, drums, etc., that Jared would need, Dad was busy searching the flea markets for artifacts and items we could use or learn from. Each new item Dad purchased was a way for us to learn. Ebay became a very good friend.

Camp Olden and reenacting was a wonderful growing experience for Jared and a sharing experience for Dad and me. As Camp Olden grew and expanded to more Community Programs we recognized that Dad's collection could be used to share and teach others. Our first Jr. Camp Olden had Dad and his artifacts as one of the stations and he has been at every one since - even the "on the road" JCO's. Whenever we needed items for a Library display either for Camp Olden at Hamilton or last year's Fort Dix display, Dad's items were brought out and shared. When we needed an items purchased for the Museum Dad was searching Ebay.

My Dad was a collector but he was also a talented creator. Jared was into blacksmithing. Dad researched Civil War blacksmiths and he and Jared built a "to scale" traveling forge that Jared and Kurt used a few times at the reenactments. Dad built two repro Sibley tent stoves....because he thought the Museum needed one.

Dad really supported the Museum and until recently was a regular docent. He attended Camp Olden meetings on a regular basis for the last 20 years. He enjoyed the speakers but also the club members. He knew almost everyone by name and enjoyed working with everyone over the past years. He shared his interest with his daughter, two grandsons - Jared and Kurt and even with his two great-grandsons - Aidan & Owen

I have many fond memories of our "Camp Olden" times but one of my fondest is our search for the actual location of Camp Olden. Dad and I spent many father/daughter hours searching through the deeds at the Trenton Courthouse looking for the right links and chains to comprise the area Camp Olden was reported to be. Thanks Joe Seliga for that wonderful time. Dad was very

proud to be a part of the team who "found" Camp Olden.

My Dad was a collector and he collected friends. Thank you all for all your thoughts, prayers and cards. I gave Daddy two 50 cent pieces. I figured if Lincoln got two so should Dad.

Club members have some memories of Conrad.

As Museum Director, *Bruce Smith* has a special appreciation of Conrad. His memory of Conrad is that he never saw Conrad get angry at any time when it was his turn to docent at the museum. If the key holder didn't show up or the weather was bad or job had to be done for Jr. Camp Olden, he didn't complain. Also, when we needed his artifacts for display he was always happy to loan them to us.

Cindy and Stan Saperstein would like to share these thoughts. In the early years of Camp Olden we had a picnic every year in August. Connie and Jeanne opened up their home to Camp Olden members and their families to enjoy a day of fun and food. They were most gracious hosts .Stan was fascinated by Conrad's restoration work on his classic cars. He did an expert's job in restoring the cars to mint condition. Conrad will surely be missed.

Conrad helped me identify and date one of my Dad's artifacts. He was part of an interesting Round Table outing hunting ghosts at Fort Mifflin. He certainly enjoyed Kim's choices for brunch and dinner. *Corinne Mazzocchi*

Fellow members, we all lost a good man last month and he will be much missed by us and his family. Conrad was my aide both as a docent and during Jr. Camp Olden. Conrad was a guy who never liked to hear the high praise for all he did to help Kim and me with setting up a station and teaching the campers about his artifacts. He always had a quiet confidence, knowing he was good with what he did and loving to help out the kids. Conrad always held their attention and teachers would always tell me what neat stuff he had and how the kids enjoyed his station. He will always be remembered as long as there is a Camp Olden in Hamilton and his spirit of volunteerism will be missed most. God Bless. John Maleski & Bob Dunphy.

Civil War Visits.

One of our members did some traveling over the past few months. Following is a "field report".

Seminary Ridge Museum in Gettysburg.

Contributed by Jane Peters Estes

My husband and I had an opportunity to visit the new Seminary Ridge Museum (a/k/a Schmucker Hall) in early January. Although the exhibits are not yet in place, this looks to be an excellent new addition to Gettysburg's many attractions.

This four-story building has great historical significance. It was built in 1832 as part of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, but its important contributions to the Civil War era was its use as both a viewing area (the cupola) of the battlefield and a hospital (after the 3-day battle).

The building is handicap-accessible and has an elevator that reaches all four stories and has modern lavatory facilities as well as a small gift shop. Each level of the museum will feature a different theme with its own brief introductory movie.

The first floor contains the admission desk, lavatories, gift shop, introductory film and information about the building's history. Level two is entitled "Voices of Duty and Devotion" and delves into moral, civil and religious issues surrounding the war. Level three tells the story of the wounded, dying and the medical personnel who treated them. It is called "Steeped in Sorrow and Death" and provides information on medical treatment as well as the surgeons and nurses who worked with the wounded. Level four is called "We Have Come to Stay!" and provides an hourby-hour account of the events during the battle's first day (July 1, 1863).

Although the building has received a \$15 million face-lift, visitors are still able to see original floors, plaster and wood details. Every effort has been taken to maintain the historic details of the structure. For me, the "cherry on the sundae" was the opportunity to climb to the cupola of the building. This viewing area provided a "bird's eye view" of the battlefield for Union General John Buford on July 1st (which is very well-documented). There is also strong evidence that

Robert E. Lee used the same place to watch Union troop movements after Confederates took the town. While looking out from the cupola, I was awe-struck by the history that took place, literally, where I was standing.

Just a "heads up"--the climb into the cupola is not for everyone. While the view and historical significance are enough to create goosebumps, it takes a bit of physical dexterity to reach the cupola. There will be an extra charge (\$20) for admission to the cupola which is in addition to the fee to enter the museum. If you are physically able, I highly recommend the experience.

The museum will have a "soft" opening in April and its "grand" opening in July 2013. Feel free to tell them I recommended the museum to you!

If you'd like to get more information, check out: www.seminaryridgemuseum.org. ♦



Jane has also forwarded the following about an upcoming civil war tour:

In 2013, Starr (www.starrtours.com) is offering a new itinerary in its series of Civil War tours. This year's trip running in June and October is entitled "The Civil War on Land & Sea" and will highlight the Peninsula Campaign and the Navy. Attractions include Pamplin Park and the National Museum of the Civil War Soldier, Berkeley Plantation, the Mariners' Museum & the USS Monitor Center, a riding tour of the Battle of Williamsburg, a candlelight walking tour ("Shadows of the Blue & Gray") and dinner at Boxwood Inn with live entertainment.

The cost of the tour includes round-trip transportation via Starr motor coach, three nights' accommodation, three breakfasts, one lunch and one dinner. We'll stop in

Fredericksburg for lunch on the way to Williamsburg. You'll have free time in Colonial Williamsburg and we'll also visit the Marine Corps Museum in Quantico on the way home. •

National Society of Civil War Grandsons

By N. Ray Maxie

As you may remember from my *Meet Your Fellow Members* story published sometime back, I am a Civil War Grandson. My grandfather served two stints in the Union forces out of Delaware County, Darby, PA. I have now started the NSCWG (National Society of Civil War Grandsons) and we are looking for all living first line (real) CW grandsons. From what I have researched, there are very few of us left standing today. We would like to find all we can and record the history of their grandfather, as well as their own. If anyone has a CW Grandfather, please contact me at wordsbyray@gmail.com and also see our websites at:

http://nscwg.wordpress.com;
http://www.texasescapes.com/N-RayMaxie/Modern-Day-Civil-War-Grandson.htm. •

Coming Events

Saturday, April 6 - Sunday, April 7

United States Colored Troops Weekend at Fort Mifflin, Philadelphia, PA, 10-4. Artifacts, tours, exhibits, demonstrations, speakers. Admission \$6. Information, (215) 685-4167; www.fortmifflin.us.

Saturday, April 20 - Sunday, April 21

24th annual Neshaminy Civil War Reenactment at Neshaminy State Park, Bensalem, PA (one week earlier than previous). "Mine Run Campaign." 9-4. Battles 2:30 both days. Dress parades, military demonstrations, living history, music. Free admission & parking. Sponsored by 28th Pennsylvania Regiment, Army of Northern Virginia, Historical Society of Bensalem Township, Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum & Library, Delaware Valley Civil War Round Table, Neshaminy State Park & Waste Management Inc. For information, Chuck Gilson, (267) 968-4809, cdg://www.neshaminyreenactment.org.

Civil War Sesquicentennial:

Below are some of the major events which occurred 150 years ago from March to May of 1863:

March, 1863 -- The First Conscription Act. Because of recruiting difficulties, an act was passed making all men between the ages of 20 and 45 liable to be called for military service. Service could be avoided by paying a fee or finding a substitute. The act was seen as unfair to the poor, and riots in working-class sections of New York City broke out in protest. A similar conscription act in the South provoked a similar reaction.

March 3, Fort McAllister I

March 5, Thompson's Station

March 13-15, Fort Anderson / Deep Gully

March 17, Kelly's Ford / Kellysville

March 20, Vaught's Hill / Milton

March 25, Brentwood

March 30-April 20, Washington

April 7, Charleston Harbor / Fort Sumter

April 11-May 4, Suffolk / Fort Huger

April 10, Franklin

April 12-13, Fort Bisland / Bethel Place

April 13-15, Suffolk / Norfleet House Battery

April 14, Irish Bend / Nerson's Woods / Franklin

April 17, Vermillion Bayou

April 26, Cape Girardeau

April 29, Grand Gulf

April 29-May 1, Snyder's Bluff / Snyder's Mill

April 30-May 6, Chancellorsville

May 1, Port Gibson / Thompson's Hill

May 1-2, Chalk Bluff

May 3, Fredericksburg II / Marye's Heights

May 3-4, Salem Church / Banks' Ford

May 10 Stonewall Jackson dies

May 12, Raymond

May 16 Champion Hill / Bakers Creek

May 17 Big Black River Bridge

May 21, Plains Store / Springfield Road

May 21-July 9, Port Hudson ♦



Future Meetings:

Remember our next meeting will be **March 7th** at the Hamilton Public Library located at 1 Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. Drive; Hamilton, NJ. It will feature Nick Ciotola discussing *Civil War Veteran as Outsider Artist; The Case of Private Joseph Steiner*.

April 4 - Kerry Bryan discussing *Elizabeth Hutter, Home front Heroine*.

May 2 - William B. Styple discussing his book *McClellan's Other Story*. ◆

Reminder --- Bring A Dish!

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Be a Gazette Contributor!

Explore a battlefield? See an interesting museum exhibit? Read a new Civil War book or reread a favorite one? Share your experiences with round table members.

Jot down a couple of lines and send your photos and your thoughts to the Gazette email address: *oldennewsletter@optonline.net*. The mailing address is C&M Mazzocchi, 1430 18th Ave. Wall, NJ 07719.

For meeting and other information visit us on the Web: *www.campolden.org*. ◆

Answer to "Who Am I?": Lafayette Baker Editor's Note: Members at the January meeting may recall that in March, 1865, Lafayette Baker conducted a "sting" operation in Hoboken, NJ, in which he rounded up "some 200 bounty jumpers and 27 bounty brokers" in one day. ◆ http://www.nytimes.com/1865/03/12/news/col-baker-s-operations-immense-trap-sprung-nearly-regiment-bounty-jumpers-caught.html?pagewanted=all

