



The Border Star

Official Monthly Publication of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri

• **Founded 1992**

• **Incorporated 1994**

"Studying The Border War and Beyond"



July 2004

In Memory of Sonny Wells

The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri

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Meetings

2nd Wednesday of the month - 7:00 pm
Old Blake Museum - 106 E. Walnut
Independence, Missouri

Visitors Always Welcome!

Annual Dues

Individual ----- 15.00
Family ----- 22.50
Student (under 21) ----- 5.00
Newsletter Only (no meetings)-- 9.00

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I've seen the elephant recently and was left with a few thoughts I'd like to convey on...

The Reveille – The Reveille was a good time and I believe it accomplished what we had hoped: telling the history of The Battle of The Little Blue, and publicizing its preservation plight. We are also networking and making acquaintances and connections today that may pay dividends in the future. Many individuals related stories and situations that may help in our preservation efforts later.

We weren't able to do a great amount of advance work and preparation on this event. Taking that in account, I think our attendance was pretty good. If this becomes an annual Reveille, we'll learn from our mistakes and look forward to an even stronger doins in the future.

We did achieve good coverage in the press, both with The Examiner and The Star. I do want to paraphrase one comment of note that I gleaned from the Star's article. I believe Mel Henderson, from MARC, was quoted as saying something to the effect that the EIS report process of the MRC road project is continuing, and the knowledge of the existence of The Battle of The Little Blue could help to alter the route of the road in the future.

In other words, publicizing the Battle may be doing some good after all. Time will tell.

Timber Creek Housing Edition – Recently Vicki Nave and I attended an Independence Planning Commission meeting and spoke about our concerns regarding this new housing edition being planned near Bundschu Road. It is important to communicate to the city that there was a significant battle here and that there are potential artifacts and land formations that should be preserved. Since there is no City Historic Preservation Officer at the present time there is little communication between developers, Planning Commission and City Council regarding historic preservation issues, especially enforcement of Section 106 of the preservation law.

Bridge and Trail Grant – Recently, Dennis Myers and I met with Tom Garland, Parks Contracts Manager for The City of Independence, regarding his writing of a grant for a biking/walking trail that will mirror the old Lexington to Independence Road at the Little Blue River crossing.

Tom's idea is to branch off of the existing bike trail down at The Ripley Junction Park. This was great news to us! Here is the best part: I found historical verification from a soldier that the bridge was a "covered bridge" at the time of the battle (Oct 21, 1864). This is exactly the type of bridge that Tom wants to build across the river, just south of the present day highway bridges to accompany the new trail. Not only will it be historically accurate for the Civil War era it could be an attraction to people in the region. I believe today there are only 2 covered bridges in the state of Missouri. Folks, this is exactly the type of community involvement that we need to preserve the battlefield. Thanks to Tom and the city.

We'll have more elephant tales next month. See you bye and bye. Tim Cox, President

ELEPHANT TALES

The expression "see the elephant" is an old one, perhaps dating to Hannibal and his use of elephants in battle. Of course, in 19th century America, everyone loved to see the elephants at the circus when they came to town, always the featured attraction. Gold Rush travelers used the term to refer to the remarkable sights they had seen in their adventures out west. Finally, Civil War soldiers used the expression in referring to their first glimpse of combat, "I seen the elephant!"

Reveling in the Reveille

We had fun at the Reveille! Our first event devoted to publicly promoting and preserving The Little Blue Battlefield began on a wet, blustery and warm day but gave way to undaunted enthusiasm, high spirits and an improving forecast. We did it! We told the story of The Battle, its Valley, the impending road project and development, but did so with smiles and handshakes - from Round Table members, Guardian folks, friends, reenactors, and visitors.

Where do we begin, though, to tell the story of June 12th? We'll attempt to tell it through "thank yous." Here goes, a giant, Moonlight Beamer kudos to:

- Pat and Bob Dye (and family) – for their work on food donations, serving as the Grillmasters! and for their efforts in getting help from The New Salem Baptist Church. We could not have had this event without the church and their extra tables.
- Earl Brown – for being an integral part of the Guardians group, providing generous paper and photocopying donations (he made possible many of the copies of the historical picture and article items that were on display).
- Fran and Lucky Mason – for the Lawson Moore home display and the GREAT COBBLER!
- Beverly Shaw – for providing the easels, the stenciled display boards, maintaining the cash box, helping with advertising and countless hours of running down details.
- Mark Wealand – for his display on The Lewis-Gregg cemetery and his devotion to preservation.
- John and Diane Lehman – for their singing and playing contribution. Their costuming and guitar and hammer dulcimer added much to the event. They never sounded better. (Thanks also for your participation in The Moonlight Beam Choir and John's help in obtaining the old sheet music broadsides).
- Sons of American Revolution – for their costuming and their booth. They are taking an interest in Nathaniel Lewis (Revolutionary War soldier) and the Lewis Gregg Cemetery.
- John Ruddy and The Blue Hills Elementary Custodial Staff – for providing the venue, tables, restrooms and courteous, friendly public service.
- Philip Nicolaus – for his trumpet rendition of "Reveille!"
- Kevin, Wells, Karen Wells, and the Civil War Shoppe – for their display and tent that added to the ambiance of the day.
- The Cox family (Kay, Tyler, Andrew, Sara, Virginia and Bud) – for your work on this event, especially Kay for her dynamic personality and button making expertise (she made the buttons). Yes, Bud sang too!
- Dr. Lindsey and The 10th Mo Confederates – for their participation, devotion to preservation and spirit.
- Michael Grossi – for his wonderful "postmaster" presentation. We're booking him for a Round Table presentation. If you didn't see him at the Reveille, you'll have a second chance.
- James Bair (Missouri Irish Brigade) – for his camp surgeon portrayal (beware of the leeches); maybe a program for us? Thanks for your work on this.
- Jim Beckner – for his pistol display, and participation as the Preservation Officer of the Kansas City Round Table; we appreciate their support.
- John Martin – for his participation as a representative of the Sons of Union Veterans. GAR is his thing and what a display of GAR medals.
- Jim Bagby – for his help and support (Jim could not make the Reveille but his Sons of Confederate Veterans - John T. Hughes chapter did attend). What a flag display by the SCV! Their flagpole is awesome; will have to purchase one.
- Harriet Lionberger – for her work at the food table, taking in those donations!
- Ted Stillwell, Betty Key, and The Blue and Grey Book Shoppe – for their great selection of books, and their booth participation
- Dennis Myers and son Levi – for work on designing the new website, helping to design the Little Blue Battle Flag prototypes (please vote for one on-line or at the next meeting) that were on display, helping to design the buttons that were sold (buy yours for \$1), setting up tables (winning the prize for first arrival at the event) and giving hours of behind the scenes help and support.
- Sonny Wells – for all of his past contributions and hard work on this project.

I've surely left a significant contributor devoid of recognition in this article. Please forgive me! We had fun together and hopefully we'll do it again next year.

Moonlight Beams

"Scotty beam me up," or in this case, voices lifted us up at The Reveille. The first appearance ever of The Moonlight Beam Choir was one of the highlights of the day.

As you will recall, when ammunition ran short during The Battle of The Little Blue, Union field commander, Colonel Thomas Moonlight, had his men shout in defiance at their Confederate foe, and led them in singing, "Rally Round The Flag." Later, after being replenished from Independence, they continued with a successful retreat, against overwhelming Reb numbers.

We attempted to replicate this bravado on June 12th, by periodically forming ranks and belting out in our best manner, renditions of "Rally Round The Flag (Battle Cry of Freedom)," "The Bonnie Blue Flag," "Johnnie Comes Marching Home" and "Camping Tonight On The Old Campground," in memory of Moonlight.

John Lehman must be recognized in his capacity as choir director for leading the group in pitch, tempo and tone, as well as helping with the music and lyric research. (John's knowledge of music is impressive – did we want a battlefield version of Battle Cry or the popular version?)

Some of the Beamers were: Art Kelley, Beverly Shaw, Tim Cox, John and Diane Lehman, Bud Cox, Mark Wealand, Terry McConnell and Dennis Myers. Again, I've surely left someone devoid of recognition. Please forgive me and know it was not intentional!

While no CD is being planned at this time, there is a promise of future appearances by the Beamers.

Financial Report from the Reveille

Thanks to Pat and Bob Dye and their wonderful food service crew including their daughter and granddaughter, we had a profit of about \$100 from selling hamburgers, hotdogs, doughnuts and drinks at the Reveille. We also gave a free lunch to our reenactors. Pat was able to get many of the food items donated for this event. We also thank Fran Mason for bringing delicious blackberry cobbler which sold at a premium. Jim Beckner got out the bucks to buy the remainder to take home.

We also made \$76 from sale of the Little Blue buttons, made by Kay Cox, Little Blue Battlefield books reproduced by Tim Cox, miscellaneous donations and \$25 from the Civil War Shoppe donated by Karen Wells.

We did not have as large a turnout as we had hoped but the people who did come were interested in the displays by the vendors and reenactors. The Little Blue battlefield preservation was highlighted by a large color photo in the *Kansas City Star* and a subsequent article in the same newspaper plus a large, front page article in the *Independence Examiner*.

Congratulations to Tim Cox, our President, for his many hours of labor to set up this event and follow it through to completion. We also thank the many members of the Round Table who came and worked at the event.

Annual Summer Picnic

Please plan to attend our summer picnic on Wednesday, July 14, 2004 at the Ripley Junction Park Shelter House. This is part of the site of the Little Blue Battlefield and located at the end of Old Lexington Road, south from 24 Highway, just east of the entrance to the McCune Home and south of the current 24 Highway bridges on the Little Blue River (see enclosed map).

We plan to eat at 6:00 p.m. so come early to enjoy visiting with your Round Table friends. We'll eat, discuss The Reveille, Round Table events, the Civil War bridge and hopefully do a little role playing from soldier comments concerning the crossing of the river and the beginning of The Battle of The Little Blue.

There are no electric lights at this park so we will need to be out before dark.

The Round Table will provide the meat, drinks and condiments. We ask everyone else to bring a side dish or dessert and their own table service, lawn chairs and a card table if you have one. There are some picnic benches under the shelter. We do NOT need any potato chips as we have plenty left from the Reveille.

See YOU there!

Calendar

CWRTWMO – Annual Picnic

Wednesday, July 14th, 6:00 p.m.

Ripley Junction Park / Little Blue Battlefield
Old Lexington Road and 24 Highway

CWRTWMO Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 21st, 7:00 p.m. at Beverly's.

CWRTWMO – Regular August Meeting

Wednesday, August 11th, 7:00 p.m.

Old Blake Museum – 106 E. Walnut Street
Program: “H. L. Hunley – Confederate Submarine”
By Jim Beckner

CWRTWMO Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 25th, 7:00 p.m. at Beverly's.

Little Blue Battlefield Preservation Meeting

Tuesday, August 31st, 2004, 7:00 p.m.

Blue Hills Elementary School
1911 N. Blue Mills Road
(Just north of Blue Mills Road and 24 Highway)
All are encouraged to attend as we work to protect
and preserve this important Civil War battle site.

CWRTWMO – September Meeting

Wednesday, September 8th, 7:00 p.m.

Old Blake Museum – 106 E. Walnut Street
Program: “Cole Camp” - Bob Owens & Lou Harms

CWRTWMO Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 15th, 7:00 p.m. at Beverly's.

CWRTWMO – October Meeting

Wednesday, October 13th, 7:00 p.m.

Old Blake Museum – 106 E. Walnut Street
Program: “American Battlefield Protection
Program” by Connie Langum, Midwest
Coordinator, National Park Service (Wilson's
Creek)

Little Blue and Westport Tour – 140th Anniversary

Saturday, October 16th and 17th
Bus tour - Little Blue, Big Blue, and Westport, in
conjunction with the Kansas City Civil War Round
Table and the Westport Historical Society.

CWRTWMO Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 20th, 7:00 p.m. at Beverly's

CWRTWMO Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 17th, 7:00 p.m. at Beverly's.

CWRTWMO Christmas Party

Christmas Party with Union Cemetery Association
Loose Park, Kansas City, Missouri

Marion, Iowa

A recent trip to Marion, Iowa led us to visit The Marion Historical Society and their exhibit, “Marion Civil War Life: Before, During and After.” This was very interesting and revealing at the same time.

First of all, you may not know that Marion is named for Swamp Fox Francis Marion of South Carolina Revolutionary War fame (he has always been a favorite) and they are very proud of this. Later this summer there will be “Swamp Fox Days” and a map has been displayed that lists all U.S. cities named for Marion (Marionville, Missouri is one of them). Also, many of you know that Dave Poole's given name was Francis Marion Poole.

Anyway, back to the Civil War. There are 210 Civil War veterans buried in Oak Shade Cemetery in Marion, only one of which is a Confederate, David Lewis Baker.

There is also a “freed” slave buried there, William Henry Harrison. William Henry Harrison was freed by an Iowa Colonel while in service in Georgia and stayed with him for the remainder of the war as his manservant. During camp they began to play chess, and after the war both resided in Marion.

Upon William's death, his stone, in the shape of a “chess piece,” was placed in Oak Shade. We did visit this site and it was quite striking and neat to see. I'd like to return and participate in a cemetery walk that will occur later this year.

Next month, I'll conclude reporting about the trip to Marion (with a few comments about the Confederate Battle Flag controversy thrown in) and our trip to Lisbon, Iowa and The Gettysburg Rock!

Charles McCorkendale

Many thanks to Charles McCorkendale and his June meeting presentation on the 2nd Colorado. The portrait of his ancestor was quite striking and the personal accounts from the soldier's diary were very interesting. It's rewarding when you can learn about a topic like this and then link it to another subject such as the group's involvement at The Grinter Farm or The Battle of The Little Blue.

Meeting Site

The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri meets at the Old Blake Museum, 106 E. Walnut Street, Independence, Missouri (northeast corner of Walnut and Main). Parking for the meeting is at any street parking near by and a few spaces across the street at the Plasterers' Union building, 301 S. Main. Please do not use any other private parking until we receive permission from business owners.

The Missouri Irish Brigade

October 1-3, 2004 – Last Campaign in the West, Battle of Franklin, Spring Hill and Nashville.

October 23-24, 2004 – Battle of Mine Creek, Pleasanton, Kansas.

For additional information, contact the MIB: jpbairkc@yahoo.com or visit their website: <http://www.geocities.com/missouriirishbrigade/index.html>

4th Annual Midwest Women's Civil War Conference

Dates for this conference are July 30th, 31st and August 1, 2004. Location will be in Liberty, Missouri with lectures, demonstrations, beauty preparations of the 1860s, 19th century parlor games and magic, personas, daily life, church, bonnets of the period, hair styles, collections of original garments, accessories and jewelry and sutlers will be available. Contact Kelly Yarnes-Schott at Distinctively History, 1118 C Avenue, Gladbrook, Iowa 50635 or E-mail Kelly at Kschott@cfu.net.

Save the Little Blue Buttons

"Save the Little Blue" buttons - Just \$1.00 each.



Which Flag do you like best?

Vote on-line at <http://www.orgsites.com/mo/littleblue>, by E-mail to Tim Cox or at the next meeting.



Flag #1



Flag #2

Photographs from the Little Blue Event June 12, 2004



The Civil War Shoppe – Karen and Kevin Wells



Some of the many tables and displays



Michael Grossi, Postmaster



Music performed by John and Dianne Lehman



Visitors speak with James Bair, Missouri Irish Brigade
and Postmaster Grossi hard at work



Reenactors from the 10th Missouri Confederates