



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"

November/December 2005

The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri

2005 Officers

President ----- Tim Cox
1st V.P. ----- John Martin
2nd V.P. ----- Art Kelley
Secretary ----- Karen Wells
Treasurer ----- Beverly Shaw
Historian ----- Paul Tate

Board Members

Dr. Gerald Anderson, Emeritus
Mike Calvert Harriett Lionberger
Terry McConnell Charlotte Tindall
Pat Gradwohl Lee Jackson
Don Moorehead Pat Dye

The Border Star Editor

Dennis Myers
410 N. Cogan Lane
Independence, MO 64050-2006
(816) 769-6490

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

For information:

Tim Cox ----- 478-8833
Beverly Shaw ----- 478-7648
Art Kelley ----- 373-4101

Mailing Address:

C.W.R.T. of Western Missouri
4947 S. Peck Avenue
Independence, MO 64055



The bombardment of Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861 was the opening engagement of the American Civil War. The countdown to the 150th Anniversary on April 12, 2011 is just 1980 days as of the date of our Round Table meeting, Wednesday, November 9, 2005.

I'VE SEEN THE ELEPHANT, AND. . . (Thoughts from Tim Cox, President)

I've seen the elephant, . . . and will live to tell about the experience - ha!

Seriously, thank you for the many words of encouragement and acts of kindness that I've received as I continue to recuperate from a bout of illness. A special thank you to Beverly Shaw and Dennis Myers who continue to shoulder a good part of the behind the scenes work specific to our Round Table. Thank you friends.

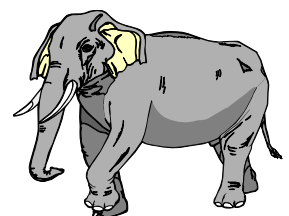
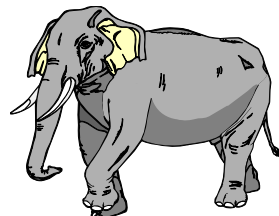
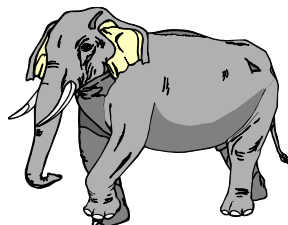
Also, congratulations to Pat Gradwohl for serving as the Chairperson for the Election Nominating Committee. We will witness the fruits of her work at the November Regular Monthly at which time we will hold the annual election of Officers and Board Members.

Tom and Janice Pearson thank you too for our group's tour of Farview on October 12. Sorry I had to miss that event.

Hopefully, I'll be back to full strength soon. See you in November.

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!"



Calendar

November Regular Meeting

Wednesday, November 9th, 7:00 p.m.

Program: Colonel Henry M. Routt by Chris Harris

Location: Old Blake Museum – 106 E. Walnut Street
Independence, MO

November Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 16th, 7:00 p.m.

17313 E. 51 Terr. Court

Independence, MO

December Regular Meeting

Saturday, December 10th, 11:30 a.m.

Christmas Party!

Old Blake Museum – 106 E. Walnut Street
Independence, MO

January Regular Meeting

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

Program: Open Round Table

Old Blake Museum – 106 E. Walnut Street
Independence, MO

January Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 18th, 7:00 p.m.

17313 E. 51 Terr. Court

Independence, MO

Guardians of the Little Blue Battlefield

Monday, November 21st, 7:00 p.m.

Blue Hills Elementary School

1911 N. Blue Mills Road

(Just north of Blue Mills Road and 24 Highway)

November 9, 2005 - Program

Chris Harris of Liberty, Missouri will speak about Col. Henry M. Routt, "*The Most Misunderstood Man in Liberty*." You may want to review pages 26 and 27 of our book, "*Civil War Monuments and Memorials*," as Chris believes he has additional information about the Routt House to share with us.

Chris is 33 years old, married and has two children. He graduated from Liberty High School and William Jewell College with a degree in History. He participated in the 175th anniversary celebration of Liberty and the Century House Project. His research resulted in a book called "*Liberty's Living Legacy, 19th Century Houses and Buildings, 1830-1899*." The book is available at the Liberty City Hall and the Liberty Chamber of Commerce for \$10. Chris will try to bring copies with him to the meeting. Chris will be speaking about 7:30 p.m. as we will have a brief business meeting at 7:00 p.m.

November 9, 2005 - Business Meeting Election of Officers and Directors

At the November 9, 2005 meeting we will elect several Officers and Directors (see enclosure). Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. The newly elected Officers and Directors will begin terms in January 2006. Board meetings are generally held the Wednesday night following the general membership meeting. The usual meeting place is at the home of Beverly Shaw, 17313 E. 51st Terr. Court in Independence, Missouri.

November/December 2005 Newsletter

Please note that this newsletter is a combined November/December 2005 issue. Please don't look for a newsletter in December but we will have one in January 2006. Merry Christmas to all!

October Monthly Meeting at "Farview"

The October 2005 CWRTWMO monthly meeting on Wednesday, October 12, 2005, was a tour of the Chiles Home on Blue Mills Road, home of Tom and Janice Pearson.

We began with an outside walk-around. Starting promptly at 6:00 p.m., Tom and Janice began the tour at the front of the house. As we proceeded toward the east side and ultimately to the north, Tom stopped and told many stories about the home and people who lived there from the past. Two interesting items are the fact that Tom has searched just about every brick on the outside of the home and has yet to find a single bullet mark. Also, apparently one former owner had a horse racing track on the property but Tom has yet to find evidence of that.

As the evening light began to fade, we entered the house from the north side and began the interior tour. Once again, Tom continued with story after story about the history of the home and its previous owners. The décor was fascinating and as we walked from room to room, Tom and Janice continued with their living history tour, handouts and answering a multitude of questions.

Janice's name for the property is "Farview" and that was evident as we left the home from the front entrance (the south side) and saw the orange sky to the west.

After the tour, everyone was invited to the west end of Blue Mills Road and the home of Lucky and Fran Mason for a bonfire and snacks.

A sincere "Thank you" to both Tom and Janice Pearson and Lucky and Fran Mason for making this an evening to remember. Please see photos of the two homes on the next page.



“Farview” – The Pearson (Chiles) Home



The Mason (Lawson Moore) Home

Heritage League History Map

Our Round Table is a member of the Heritage League, an umbrella organization of historical groups in the greater Kansas City area. As a holiday gift to our members, we are enclosing a second edition History Map which is quite interesting and helpful in planning day trips.

Refreshments Committee

It has not escaped our notice that it's always the female members of the Round Table who sign up for a month to help Karen Wells with delicious delicacies for the refreshment break at our meetings. Men - now is the time for YOU to step up and help participate in this important opportunity for us to visit with one another and welcome guests.

We would like to have two members sign up for each month, so members of BOTH gender should think about which month you would like to help.

Christmas Party

Betty Key and Ted Stillwell have generously invited us to have our Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Blue and Grey Book Shoppe (the Old Blake Museum), located at 106 E. Walnut, Independence, Missouri on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 11:30 a.m. Anyone who would enjoy helping to decorate tables for Christmas should be there about 10:30 a.m.

As is our custom, the Round Table will supply deli meats, cheeses, bread and drinks. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish to share along with your own plate and table service. We are hoping that Karen Wells will again bring her delicious “slush” for our Christmas cheer!

After lunch we will enjoy a gift exchange. We ask members to bring an inexpensive gift, wrapped or unwrapped, Civil War related or not and everyone will receive a free ticket for a chance to win a gift.

We will, doubtless, have a short “surprise” program before adjourning about 2:00 p.m.

Betty Key tells us that the Blue and Grey will have a themed Christmas tree on display called “Selling and Art.” Many of the businesses on the Square will have trees decorated and available to the winners of tickets for a donation of \$1.00 each. This Winter Solstice project will benefit a beautification project for downtown Independence.

“The Battle of Wilson's Creek helped to keep a critical border state out of the Confederacy”

The December 2005 issue of *Civil War Times* magazine (Vol. XLIV, No. 5) has a feature article on Wilson's Creek. You can also view and print this article at: <http://www.historynet.com/cwti/blwilsonscreek/>

CWRTWMO Membership Dues

We collect membership dues on a calendar year basis. You can bring your 2006 dues to the November meeting or mail them to; “Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri,” 17313 E. 51st Terr. Court, Independence, Missouri 64055.

Dues are \$15 for an individual, \$22.50 for a family or \$5 for a student. If you cannot attend meetings but would still like to receive the newsletter, newsletter-only subscriptions are available for just \$9 per year.

Little Blue Battlefield is Placed on Missouri's List of Endangered Places

By Kelly Garbus

JACKSON COUNTY, Mo. – Proposed highway construction and housing development has forced Little Blue Battlefield onto Missouri's Top Ten Most Endangered Places.

The listing is sponsored by the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation, a non-profit organization that seeks to promote, support and coordinate historic preservation.

The Battle of the Little Blue, Oct. 21, 1864, was a prelude to the Battle of Westport, which occurred two days later. The running battle began along the Little Blue River, east of Independence, Mo., when Confederate troops under the command of Gen. Sterling Price clashed with Union forces commanded by Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt.

Tim Cox, president of the 80-member Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri, said the battle was the last tactical maneuver by the Confederacy to gain control of Missouri and portions of the Trans-Mississippi Territory.

Price's force, estimated between 12,000 to 15,000, overwhelmed about 3,000 Union troops who were forced to fall back, first to Independence and then to Westport, where Union reinforcements eventually triumphed. Cox said the defeat helped usher in a closure to the war in the west.

Cox, on behalf of the Round Table, nominated the battlefield to the Top Ten List to help generate awareness and preserve portions of the battle site.

His application to the Missouri Alliance described the battlefield as encompassing about seven-and-a-half square miles in an area bounded by Old Blue Mills Road on the west and north, Missouri Highway 7 on the east and just south of U.S. 24 Highway on the southern border.

Historic features of the land include the 1856 Lawson Moore Home, which was vacated by a pro-Southern family during the war as a result of Order Number 11, which ordered residents in several counties to leave unless they proved their loyalty.

The home served as a hospital during the battle and today still has several visible bullet holes and shell marks. The grounds also include a couple of springs that may have been used by troops during the battle.

Other historic highlights within the battlefield area include the former Jabez Smith property, home to what

may have been the largest slave settlement in the state. More than 200 slaves died there in the 1850s as a result of a cholera epidemic, Cox said.

There is also the Lewis-Gregg Cemetery, where Revolutionary War soldier Nathaniel Lewis is buried, and Blue Mill, a grist mill located on the Santa Fe Trail and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Cox said the land also includes rocky limestone bluffs and ledges that served as "high ground" during the battle.

Part of the challenge in preserving key portions of the battlefield is in dealing with several jurisdictions. The battlefield encompasses city and county jurisdictions, and, to some extent, the federal government, which is helping to fund a major through-fare that will pass through the area.

The best that preservationists can hope for may be to target strategic areas within the site and get small parcels of land donated or set aside as easements, so monuments and kiosks can be erected to tell the story.

Cox hopes people will come forward with donations that would help in purchasing key parcels of ground. He also hopes to save the cemetery and maybe have a visitor's center that tells about the battle, along with a driving tour and historical markers.

At the very least, he would like to gain permission to search lands prior to development and try to recover artifacts that could be displayed in a museum.

Vicki Nave, a member of the Independence Heritage Commission which promotes and educates people on the historical heritage of Independence, said many people in the community grew up with the stories of the Civil War and kind of took it for granted. She said increasing development in the area has pushed the preservation issue to the forefront.

"It wasn't until the last decade that it became more important," she said. "Once it's gone, it's gone, you can't bring it back. It's hard to point to a piece of asphalt and say, 'This is where 20,000 men tried to kill each other.'"

The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri is hosting meetings for battlefield neighbors and is part of an informal group of people interested in the site. For more information contact Tim Cox at (816) 478-8833 or littlebluebattlefield@comcast.net.

From *The Civil War News*, Vol. XXX, No. 9, October 2005, page 18.

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