



October 2003

The Border Star

Monthly publication of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri, Inc.

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Meetings

Second Wednesday
of the month at 7 pm
at Blue Ridge Mall,
40 Hwy & I-70, in
the Community Room,

Visitors

Always

Welcome

for more information

Sonny Wells 628-9910

Tim Cox 478-8833

Beverly Shaw 478-7648

from the Pres...

Because the first of the month falls on a Wednesday, our meeting date will be quite early in October, on the 8th. Thus I must proceed with haste in order to get ***The Border Star*** out to the membership.

First, I feel I should recognize Beverly Shaw for the job she did in getting last month's issue mailed out. Not only that, she added a couple of pages that I was not going to include, those being the list of books that were delivered to the Clay County Archives and Historical Library. There are still about 40 more books to be delivered to the archives and another book has been added to the inventory, ***The Civil War in St. Louis***, received from the St. Louis Round Table after seeing the list in last month's newsletter. This is quite a book and I recommend everyone take the time to check it out.

In return, the Board voted to send the St. Louis Round Table a copy of ***Civil War Monuments in the Greater Kansas City Area*** and the new booklet we have been distributing on ***The Battle of the Little Blue***.

With assistance from several Round Table members and a couple of friends, Karen and I set up at the Austin Bean Eating Festival, which is held the last Saturday of September in southern Cass County.

Special thanks to Kent Kooi, for helping set up the tent and tables on Friday and to Richard & Ruby Abbot and Art & Sharon Kelley helping load up on Saturday evening.

We took 6 B & W monument books and 8 color copies and included them in the display. All 14 sold. Two are going to schools in Harrisonville and others are going to members of the Round Table of Greater Kansas City.

The first printing copy which was loaned to the Kansas City School District has failed to be returned. The loanee has asked for replacement. There will now be only 2 of the original printing books left. I feel these two books should be set back and marked "Not For Sale".

Also, all of the second printing color editions are now gone. There are 48 of the third printing left in stock and 80 of the B & W editions remaining.

Tim has attended several meetings on battlefield preservation and has uncovered a wealth of data which may help us save the Little Blue Battlefield. I have asked him to break all the information down into terms the average person can relate to and share it with the group at the October meeting.

If you, or any of your friends, have any interest in saving the Little Blue Battlefield site, or any other historical site which is now or soon may be endangered, I strongly recommend you attend the Wednesday, October 8th meeting, at 7 pm, in the Community Meeting Room at the Blue Ridge Mall, near the North Mall entrance.

On the Calendar

October-November 2003

Wednesday, October 8th, 7 pm

Regular Monthly meeting

Blue Ridge Mall Community Room

"Preserving Historic Treasures"

by Tim Cox

Thursday, October 9th, 7 pm

Mid-Continent Library, Parkville

Understanding Tombstones

by Sonny Wells

Wednesday, October 15th, 7 pm

CWRTWMo Board Meeting

Thursday, October 16th, 7 pm

Boardwalk Mid-Continent Library,

I-29 and Barry Road

**"The 1890 Special Census of
Sailors, Soldiers and Widows"**

by Sonny Wells

October 17, 18, 19

Civil War Reenactment

Palmyra, Missouri

Porter's Raid on Northeast Missouri

Tuesday, November 4th, 1 pm

Lee's Summit Mid-Continent Library,

150 N.W. Oldham, just off 7 Hwy

"Researching Rebs"

Thursday, November 6th, 7 pm

Civil War Program

Jackson County Genealogical Society

at the Truman Depot

Wednesday, November 12, 7 pm

CWRTWMo Meeting

Tuesday, November 18th, 1 pm

Lee's Summit Mid-Continent Library

"Researching Yanks"

McCorkendale Marker Dedicated

It took some doing but Charles McCorkendale finally got a marker placed on the grave of one of his Civil War kin.

With the assistance of local Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War members and some kinfolk the marker was placed and dedicated at Providence Cemetery, north of Camden Point on September 20th.

There was a good crowd on hand to witness the ceremony, some of which were direct descendants of the honoree.

Charles took some great pictures and there was a nice article in the *Richmond News*.

He had the pictures and a copy of the newspaper with him at the Annual Austin Bean Eating on Saturday, September 27th.

There was a 35 Star "Appomattox Flag" fluttering in the breeze as the Lady in Black removed the black drape from the stone. The flag was then folded and presented to Charles' older brother, a special moment for the family and all those present.

Charles has worked for several years to get this grave marked. I am very happy for him to see this project completed.

Jim Beckner was the minister and Master of Ceremonies and Sandy Martin was the Lady in Black.

Annual Austin Bean Eating Festival

There was a unusual amount of noise at the Bean Eating Festival this year. Not from the bean eaters but from the 3 cannons which sounded off during the battle reenactment (Although I must admit there was plenty of the other also).

The festival is a benefit for the Austin Cemetery Association and funds have also been used to assist with the restoration of the Austin G.A.R. Hall.

Lots of good country music, some antique cars, some crafters and a couple of book vendors and a quilt maker were on hand, as was the Sons of Confederate Veterans display.

My favorite part is when they start auctioning off the home made pies. Karen and I brought home two pies this year. Don't drop by the house expecting to get a sample. They were gone in 3 days!

The event is not a big one, as Civil War events go, but it is always a fun time. Next year's event will be on the last Saturday of September, as it has been since the 1920's. Mark your 2004 calendar now, so you won't miss it next year.

At the Board Meeting

The Board met on Wednesday, September 24th, at 7 pm, at Beverly Shaw's residence. Eight were present, two had already informed me they would not be able to attend. Several important items were discussed.

Special thanks to Beverly and Jerry for the use of their home for the meeting.

Minutes of previous meeting were passed out.

REPORTS...

Newsletter Report--80 printed and mailed

Bill for 61.14 submitted and paid.

Historian's Report--Almost all of the old **Border**

Star newsletters have now been located.

Treasurer--Report submitted.

Coffee Fund--Previous Bal. \$-6.18, Spent \$6.00

In Donation Jar \$13.00-- New balance \$+82

2nd V. P.--Reported 28 present at last meeting plus 4 guests.

1st V. P.--Reported on several meeting he has attended and contacts he has made relative to the effort to save the Little Blue Battlefield.

President--A check for \$42 has been forwarded to the treasurer. This represents the \$18 owed to the group from sales of the monuments book plus another \$24 from the most recent sales. The total of funds earned from the sale of the books to now over \$100.

NEW BUSINESS

A bill for the latest batch of monument books has been received from the printer. He rushed the books through his print shop so we would have them for Santi-Cali-Gon. Sonny Wells offered to pay half the cost if the Round Table would pick up the other half.

Motion was made and passed to have the Round Table pay \$375 of the \$750 bill. Funds from the sale of the newly printed books will go directly into the Round Table account. When that expense is paid the funds will then go to Sonny's Civil War Shoppe account, except for the \$2 fee which goes to the Round Table.

We received a copy of *The Civil War in St. Louis* from the Round Table in St. Louis. The Board voted to send them a monuments book and a Battle of the Little Blue booklet in return.

Note--The Christmas Party will be held at the Historic old Harris-Kearney House in Westport on Saturday, December 14th, starting at 11:30 am.

New site, need new chairperson, house will already be decorated, chairs and tables already in place, tour of the house is included, small kitchen is available.

The restored 1894 G.A.R. Hall and Museum in Nebraska City, Nebraska, has requested a copy of the monuments book to be included in their display. The request was approved by the Board.

Tim requested a copy of the monuments book and the Battle of Little Blue booklet be sent to Gregg Wolk in St. Louis, Chairman of one of the several Civil War grant committees. Board approved.

The Lee's Summit School District has requested 4 more monument books, thus all 15 of their elementary school libraries will have copies. Books will be delivered after October 1st.

Nominating Committee--It is that time of year again, time to seek out new officers and board members for the Round Table. If any one would like to serve on such a committee with me, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

The current board has been such a joy to work with I am hoping they will all stay over another term, but I guess that is too much to expect.

As to the officers, there will need to be some changes. A new President must be found and there will be at least one other change take place.

If you are able to serve as either an officer or a board member, please get in contact with me.

I consider it an honor to have my last official function for the Round Table to be helping select those who will carry the group into the future.

OLD BUSINESS

The monument books which were turned down will be donated to schools in the Holden-Centerview area as per agreement with Margaret Bardgett, the original donor of the books.

The Big Blue and Loose Park tour, scheduled for Saturday, October 4th, has been canceled, as has the Saturday, October 25th, tour of Graves of the Famous Outlaws. The Jolly 60's group which had requested there tours has decided not to go.

Of Special Note...Over a dozen of the bird houses, made by Richard Abbott, have been donated to the handicapped Sisters at the Immaculata Manor in Liberty. The Sisters are going to paint them up and give them as gifts to older people and widows.

Also, over a dozen of the bird houses were given to youngster at the Austin Bean Eating. This is the second year in a row we have done this at Austin. There will be no Little Blue Tour on October 18th as had earlier been planned. This is the second year in a row we have not had a tour.

Let's Save a Civil War Battlefield

ROADS
LESS
TRAVELED
Kent Kooi

There is something of a tragedy in the works, buried deep in MODOT's plans to create a by-pass around the east and north sides of Independence. The project is called the "Missouri River Corridor."

The proposal would build a limited access expressway from I-70 just east of the Highway 291 interchange northward, loop slightly to the east, crossing Highway 24 just west of the Ft. Osage schools, then westward along the south side of the Missouri River, ending at Front Street and the Chouteau Trafficway.

The theory behind this proposal is that the new highway would ease traffic congestion on I-70 for commuters coming in from Blue Springs and Independence. In theory, I'm sure it will ease traffic flow, and I would certainly end up using parts of the new highway to get around town.

But the tragedy is that MODOT has proposed grading and paving over one of the metro area's Civil War battlefields, and looking at the maps of the project, it seems to be completely unnecessary.

If you drive east from Independence on Highway 24, once you clear town you will drop down into a small valley just west of the Ft. Osage schools. There are Missouri historical markers there, one along the side of the highway, and another just a little way south.

Both document the October 1864 Civil War engagement known as the "Battle of the Little Blue" for the Little Blue River that runs through the valley.

If you know what you are looking at, you can still see key sites of the battle as you drive across the

valley floor such as a rocky ledge upon which Col. Thomas Moonlight placed his artillery to fire on advancing Confederates under Maj. General Sterling Price. Just off the highway is a spring at which soldiers from both sides drew water, and the clump of trees under which five Confederate generals gathered to discuss battle strategy.

The troops fought their way back across Independence and down to Westport over the next two days.

Although there are a number of homes that will be affected, one is of particular historical significance. It was used as a hospital during the battle, and some of Shelby's officers and men are buried on the grounds.

The Civil War Preservation Trust notes that one acre of Civil War battlefields is lost to construction every ten minutes across America.

Now the Battle of the Little Blue is not as well-known as, say, Gettysburg. But President Lincoln referred to all Civil War battlefields as "hallowed ground," ground on which some 600,000 Americans fought and died.

The Missouri River Corridor project is divided into four sections, and there are nine separate alternative corridors listed.

Each of the four sections is further divided into segment options, each

with a slightly different routing. The Little Blue site crosses both sections three and four where they meet at Highway 24.

Each of the four sections is funded in variable amounts depending on construction costs, and right-of-way expense. The overall projected cost of the project ranges from \$210.8 million to \$345.7 million depending on which if the alternative corridors is used.

USED RV PERMISSION

The MODOT report on the project is available on the internet at: "<http://mrcstudy.com/Preliminary%20Report.htm>." It is a pdf file of 272 pages.

One of the most interesting parts of the document for me is this section:

"3.16.4 Historic Resources The study area during the Civil War was the scene of rebel guerilla raids, as well as federal army reprisals that involved the forced

removal of hundreds of residents. At Blue Mills Landing in 1862, Confederate guerillas fired on a passing federal gunboat and

warehouses there were burned in retaliation.

The largest engagement within the study area between organized forces occurred in October of 1864, when invading Confederate troops clashed with Union forces under Samuel R. Curtis. Known as the Battle of the Little Blue, or the Battle of Independence, it began on the banks of the Little Blue and thereafter shifted onto the bluff line to the west, before ending in a Union withdrawal. Archaeological evidence of the battle could still exist within the study area and [Area of Potential Effect] APE (Alternative Corridors 2-9)."

So, combine MODOT's own language with this part of their report: "The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 requires that all federally funded projects that have the potential to impact properties that are included or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) be evaluated. This applies to archaeological sites, historic sites, historic bridges and all cultural resources in the project's APE [Area of Potential Effect]."

"In Missouri the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) of the MDNR administers the Section 106 process. A determination of eligibility for the NRHP would be made prior to any construction activities that would potentially affect a listed or eligible property. Such sites could be classified as 4(f) properties under the Department of Transportation Act, further requiring that there is no practical alternative to avoiding the site and appropriate actions taken if the site cannot be avoided.

"Section 4(f) coordination is required for the use of land from a significant publicly owned park, recreation, or wildlife and waterfowl area, or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that there is no feasible or prudent alternative to the use of the land or property. Section 6(f) coordination is required for any public lands purchased with Land and Water Conservation Fund monies."

For my part, I think we should all be concerned that this area resource may be destroyed if we don't act soon.

We may not know how many tourists would visit such a site if it can be preserved, but we certainly know how many will visit the area to see it if it's destroyed.

Our State Representative, Doug Ervin, just happens to be the Vice Chair of both the Appropriations Committee, and the Transportation and Economic Development Committee. You can e-mail him your concerns (or support) for this part of the project at "dervin@services.state.mo.us".

You can also write him at the State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101-6806, or phone (573) 751-2238.

Ask him to send you his views on the Missouri River Corridor, and specifically on how the project may effect the Little Blue battlefield.