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**Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. $40 - Members/Non-members**

**HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA**

350 North Orleans Street

**NOTE**

Make your reservations by Monday, April 5th by calling 630-600-6527, or emailing ChicagoGeneva@earthlink.net, with the names of your party and choice of entrée. If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the member below 9 a.m. Thursday.

All cancellations necessitate a 72-hour notice. Reservations are $5 per person and are limited to 40.

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Friday, April 9

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Battlefield Preservation

By Brian Seiter

Knoxville Foundation Buys 70-Acre 1863 Battle Site

KNOXVILLE, TN. — Knoxville’s Legacy Park Foundation recently purchased 70 acres of land known for the Nov. 25, 1863, Battle of Armstrong Hill. The non-profit that is dedicated to the interpretation and protection of key Knoxville historical and wilderness areas.

LFP has raised $14.1 million for the Armstrong Hill 70 acres so far, according to executive director Carol Evans. The foundation plans to eventually turn the property over to the city park system. “We have also been given a year to raise $800,000 to buy 22 acres that once was part of nearby Fort Stanley as well,” Evans says.

In late 1863, Confederate troops under General James Longstreet laid siege to the town and faced a series of works that included Forts Higley, Dickerson and Stanley, earthen structures thrown up to stop the city from Longstreet’s effort to free Knoxville from Federal control.

The siege followed a series of failed attacks by Confederate General Joe Wheeler to take the high ground from where the Union army could control the Tennessee River. Wheeler and his forces even used their artillery to challenge Confederate positions in the area.

In between these defended hills was an area controlled by neither army, some say was a no-man’s-land where the Battle of Armstrong Hill was fought. These sites are directly across the river from downtown Knoxville in the hilly ridges as well as use their artillery to challenge Confederate positions in the area.

The siege followed a series of failed attacks by Confederate General Joe Wheeler to take the high ground from where the Union army could control the Tennessee River. Wheeler and his forces even used their artillery to challenge Confederate positions in the area.

The Union had three years to do the same. Their fighting for an abstract reason doesn’t—same thing. He decided he fights, he is damned and if he fought the way he would be kept informed of all needed information and that his orders were carried out. He also did not have the use of his cavalry and did not know where the Northern Army was located. Schofield has no idea where the Rebel Army is and being causious sends about 5,000 men to Spring Hill. General Forest does not report that the Federals are at Spring Hill. Why not? Hood gives orders to attempt to block the road, not realizing that the Federals were already marching in. In over five hours during the night, 22,000 Yankees marched past the Confederates. If Schofield reaches Nashville, Thomas will have about 30,000 men and fortifications that have been three years in the making. The Union retreat halts at the unbridged Harpeth River. General Schofield sets up a defensive perimeter south of Franklin and anchored on the river, while the engineers go to work building bridges.

Thus, the Battles of Spring Hill and Franklin are some of the most important in the war. This ended the war in the west making this action more important than either Gettysburg and Vicksburg. The biggest casualty of the Battle of Franklin was the heart of the Confederate Army—it died that day.

On an interesting side note, there was music that day. The Union band was playing the Bonnie Blue Flag. Confederate General Francis Cockrell remarked to his son, that if we were going to lose, we were going out in style. A second interesting point, Jacobson could find no evidence from that time period that Hood took any narcotic for pain. He merely suffered from the after effects of his wounds and exhaustion.

March Meeting

By Jackie Wilson

On March 12, 2010, at the 689th meeting of The Chicago Civil War Round Table, Eric Jacobson asked the question: “Was the Battles of Spring Hill and Franklin fought, or was it something that no one could follow orders or else they got lost. Yes, as the man in charge Hood is responsible, but what was the problem with Forrest, Stewart, and Cheatham?”

General Sherman finally sends General Schofield to Nashville to support Thomas and his army is marching up the road to Nashville right past the enemy. No one knew they were there. Hood believed that Forest could block the road, not realizing that the Federals were already marching in. In over five hours during the night, 22,000 Yankees marched past the Confederates. If Schofield reaches Nashville, Thomas will have about 30,000 men and fortifications that have been three years in the making. The Union retreat halts at the unbridged Harpeth River. General Schofield sets up a defensive perimeter south of Franklin and anchored on the river, while the engineers go to work building bridges.

This sets the scene for some of the nastiest, bloodiest fighting in the war. Hood believes that if he fights, he is damned and if he doesn’t—same thing. He decided that he would rather face an army that had only 24 hours to fortify rather than an army that had three years to do the same. Six Generals died that day along with about 10,000 casualties. The fighting did not just include artillery and rifle fire, there was some of the fiercest and bloodiest hand-to-hand fighting ever seen during the war. There was bitterness, burning animosity between the two sides. Jacobson stated that one of the reasons for this emotional fighting was that, although the Union soldiers were fighting for an abstract reason such as preserving the Union, the Rebels were fighting for “home.”
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The siege followed a series of failed attacks by Confederate General Joe Wheeler to take the high ground. From these forts the Union army could control the Tennessee River in front as well as use their artillery to challenge Confederate positions in the area.

In between these defended hills was an area controlled by neither army, some say a no man’s land where the Battle of Armstrong Hill was fought. These sites are directly across the river from downtown Knoxville and touch each corner of a north to south series of ridges. Standing on the Fort Dickson crest one can get a great view of the location of a different type of modern-day contest, the University of Tennessee football stadium. These lands have remained mostly untouched under constant development threat with some homes already on parts of the hilly ridges.

The Battle of Armstrong Hill was not well recorded but it was an important event in Knoxville’s Civil War history. Armstrong Hill was a two-hour fight involving hundreds of Confederates hoping to take the high ground and taking more than 100 casualties in the small fortified ridges and hills where the battle was fought; a major reason the Union was successful in ending the Confederacy’s siege of Knoxville,” says Steve Dean, president of the Civil War Alliance (CWA). The CWA is a coalition of historical and heritage groups, including the Knoxville Civil War Round Table, that is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of key Knoxville historical and wilderness areas.

The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hillwood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or contact bsa186101@att.net.

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A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from Hal Ardell, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 744-6781 or hal2292@ameritech.net. This is a record well worth having as Eric Jacobson is a dynamic speaker.
Grapeshot

Schimmel-Fennig Boutique

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Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

$40 - Members/Non-members

Call by Monday, April 5

Menu

Cost: Chicken Heartland, Baked Hobbs, Vegetable Plate or Fruit Plate

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LXX, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April, 2010

David O. Stewart

on “The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson”

By BRUCE ALLARDICE

By 1868 President Andrew Johnson’s inept, often brawling political style and his inept, pro-Southern handling of Reconstruction, disgusted the nation in general and Congress in particular. Congressional Republicans, led by the fiery but mortally ill Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, seized on a legal technicality— whether Johnson had the legal right to fire his own Secretary of War—as the basis for impeachment. The Radical Republican majority in the House impeached (indicted) the President, but the Senate, by only one vote, failed to convict.

The Senate trial featured the most brilliant lawyers of the day, along with some of the least scrupulous, while leading political fixers maneuvered in the dark corners to save Johnson’s presidency with political deals, promises of patronage jobs, and even cash bribes.

On April 9th David O. Stewart, the author of the acclaimed bestseller The Summer of 1787, will challenge the traditional version of the pivotal 1868 clash between Congress and President. Rather than seeing Johnson as Abraham Lincoln’s political heir, Stewart views Johnson (a southerner and a Democrat) as squandering Lincoln’s political legacy of equality and fair dealing. The talk is based on his new book, Impeached.

In the words of historian David Herbert Donald, the book is “Vigorously written, it is by all means the best account of this troubled episode in our history. It demolishes the myth that Johnson’s impeachment was unjustified and that those who defended him were heroes. Stewart proves that impeachment may be an unwieldy tool for recapturing control of the national government but at critical times it can be an essential one.”

David O. Stewart is the author of three history books, including Impeached: The Trial of President Andrew Johnson and the Fight for Lincoln’s Legacy (2009). A graduate of Yale Law School, Mr. Stewart is a Washington DC based attorney who has appeared on CNN and authored numerous articles on the law and history, His The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution (2007) won the Washington Writing Prize for Best Book of 2007.