

7TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY
MORNING REPORT
Headquarters: Bay City, Michigan

Speakers Set for Monthly Meetings

We hope you will like the speakers we have lined up for the upcoming monthly meetings. About half are local and half are out-of-towners. They are listed on page 3 along with their topics.

Boat Cruise Successful

A crowd of 135 persons sailed on the "Princess Wenonah" on August 21. The Saginaw River cruise was sponsored for the Roundtable and the Bay County Historical Society. Proceeds are marked for the care of the Pine Ridge Cemetery and the Historical Society's "River of Time" get together on September 27th & 28th.

***River of Time Set for
September 27th and 28th***

It's time again for Bay County's River of Time at Veteran's Memorial Park in Bay City. I asked Len McInerney, a regular reenactor at the event, to tell us about it and his experiences. Here is what he wrote:

The River Of Time, or "R.O.T.", as we reenactors call it, is a time line event that spans 250 years of Michigan's history. It includes participants reenacting Native Americans through American soldiers from World War II.

Held since 1990, this event is always held on the fourth weekend in September and has grown from just a few dozen reenactors to several large groups that make it a must see event.

When you are there, it is hard not to get caught up in the atmosphere that makes you feel you have gone back in time.

Walking along the encampments for the various time periods, you might first listen to a fur trapper spin his yarn about the close call he had with the bear that is in the pot that he's stirring over an open fire in front of you.

Then, you might walk a few paces but a couple of decades in time to see a soldier of the Highlanders 42nd of Foot wearing his black watch kilt and "talk'en of the grand donny brook they had with thos' colonists".

Further on, there's an education program tent where spectators can hear music, see a puppet show, or listen to a special speaker.

.And what would your trip to River of Time be with out standing in line for delicious Kettle Korn and a bottle of cold Root beer.

On Saturday evening at 8 PM, there is always self guided candlelight tours were you can see the camp and listen to impersonators.



Len McInerney, a/k/a, The Irishman

My role at the River of Time is a bit different than some other events such as movie reenactments. At the River of Time, I spend a lot of time talking to visitors and explaining our roles and equipment.

We do try to keep things as authentic as we can. We cook our own food as it was cooked during the Civil War, have marching drill, and even have reveille in the morning.

Uniforms, equipment, and weapons must meet our guidelines, although we are not as strict as some organizations. A full outfit can easily cost \$1500 with the most expensive item being a reproduction (and workable) rifled musket costing \$700 to \$800.

We usually have a dozen or so Union reenactors at the River of Time and an equal number of Confederates, which allows us to have a mock battle at some point in the week-end.

Parking is free and the so is the shuttle bus to bring visitors from the parking lot to the activities.

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So, if you or your children want to step back in time to see what life was like before everyone was carrying a cell phone, the River of Time is the place to be.

You and they might conclude that life wasn't so bad in days gone by after all.

Local Boy Makes Good: Michigan's Alpheus S. Williams

On Belle Isle in the Detroit River is a hardly noticed statute of a soldier on a horse. It's Michigan Civil War General Alpheus Williams on his war horse "Plug Ugly".

A picture of Williams with his beard and mustache that seems all too long makes him hard to take seriously. But, he wasn't just a whiskered man in a much whiskered army. He was also probably Michigan's most successful general.



Alpheus Starkey Williams

He was born in Connecticut, orphaned as a boy, and came to Detroit to live in 1836. There, he practiced law, was a Probate Judge for a time, and became active in the local Detroit Light Guards, a militia group in which in 20 years, he rose from a private to be its commanding officer.

When the Civil War broke out, he and the Guards immediately went to Washington to help provide security to a city that had none.

Although handicapped by not having graduated from West Point and not being part of the "old-boy network" that controlled advances in rank, by May of 1861, he was a brigadier general.

He missed the first battle of Bull Run when he was assigned a command in the defenses of Washington. But, when the spring of 1862 arrived, he was a division commander in the Shenandoah Valley and facing Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.

Doing well enough against Jackson, he fought him again in June of 1862 at Cedar Mountain and at Antietam in September.

At Antietam, when in command of the 12th Corps, his troops found General Lee's famous lost order 191 that allowed the Union army to know Lee's battle plans. But, a few days before the battle, Williams was replaced by General Joseph Mansfield due to the inexperienced Mansfield's lobbying in Washington for a field command.

Reassigned to a division in the same corps, he watched Mansfield misalign his troops in column formation 20 men deep, which allowed Confederate artillery to decimate them. Fortunately for the 12th Corps, Mansfield was mortally wounded early in the battle and Williams reassumed command.

He quickly realigned the troops in a loose line 2 ranks deep, which made the enemy artillery less effective & allowed his troops to hold their position.

He was again a division commander at the 1863 battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. At Gettysburg, when 12th Corps commander Henry Slocum took command of the entire right wing of the Union army, Williams again took command of the 12th Corps and held off repeated Confederate attacks on Culp's Hill.

The 12th Corps was then sent west to the Chattanooga campaign after the Union loss of the battle of Chickamauga. In the spring of 1864, Williams was a division commander in Sherman's army advancing on Atlanta. In Sherman's March

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to the Sea, he commanded the Union's 20th Corps – the high point of his military career.

He was brevetted a major general in January of 1865.

After the war, he was appointed to various political posts and, in 1875, he became a

Michigan member of the U.S. Congress. On December 21, 1878, he suffered a stroke while in the U.S. Capital Building and died there. He is buried in Elmwood Cemetery in Detroit.

In 1921, he was still well enough remembered to have his statue erected on Belle Isle.

7th Michigan Cavalry

2008 – 2009 Monthly Meeting Speaker Schedule

All meetings are at 7 PM in the Edelweiss Room at the Stein Haus Restaurant,
1108 N. Water St, Bay City, Michigan

- Wednesday, October 8, 2008
"John Wilkes Booth Imposters"
Presented by John Kokkonen, our resident expert on the Lincoln Assassination and John Wilkes Booth

- Wednesday, November 12, 2008
"Civil War Prisons – North and South"
Presented by local history & newspaper writer Tim Younkman

- Wednesday, December 10, 2008
"James Birney and his Family of Abolitionists"
Presented by D. Laurence Rogers, a/k/a Dave Rogers, local historian, writer, and author of the hoped to be published book "Apostles of Equality"

- Wednesday, January 14, 2009
"Religion and Faith in the American Civil War"
Presented by Father Robert J. Miller of Chicago, Ill. and author of the book "Both Prayed to the Same God"

- Wednesday, February 11, 2009
"They were killed by more than just Bullets"
Presented by Raymond Herek, Saginaw Valley University history instructor and author of Civil War volume "These Men Have Seen Hard Service"

- Wednesday, March 11, 2009
"Union Volunteer Engineers In the Civil War"
Presented by Mark Hoffman, Deputy Department Director of the Michigan

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Dept. of History, Arts, and Libraries, of Lansing, MI and author of
"My Brave Mechanics - The First Michigan Engineers and their Civil War"

- Wednesday, April 8, 2009 (or other date as may be determined)
Annual Dinner