

Early this month long-time member **Ray Madigan** passed away after a prolonged illness. A veteran of World War II, Ray served in North Africa and France before returning home and earning his degree under the G.I. Bill. He worked as a math teacher and principal in the Detroit Public Schools and later served as a Curriculum Director in South Lyon. Ray loved our Fall Field Trips and went on many of them when his health wasn't the best. But he never complained, and his sense of humor and pithy comments were always welcome.

Ray's body will be donated to the University of Michigan medical school. A Memorial Service will be held on March 23 from 2:00-8:00 P.M. at the Harry J. Wills Funeral Home at 37000 Six Mile Road with a Rosary at 7:00. A Funeral Mass is scheduled for March 24 at 11:30 A.M. at St. Paul of the Cross (on Schoolcraft Road between Telegraph and Outer Drive) with a luncheon following.

Confederate agent, spy, and terrorist Alexander "Sandy" Keith, Jr., a devious criminal of the 19th Century, orchestrated some of the most heinous plots of the Civil War. Following the war, dogged by creditors and victims of his frauds, Sandy kept on the move, leaving an increasing number of illicit scams, nefarious schemes, and cheated women in his wake. As his situation became more desperate, his obsession with explosives and violence intensified. Finally, in 1875, while posing as a prosperous American businessman living in Germany, Sandy's machinations proved deadly and earned him the nickname, the "*Dynamite Fiend*." This horrifying plot ultimately unfolded on a dock when a bomb—designed by Sandy Keith—exploded, killing 80 people and injuring 50 more.

This month—**MONDAY, MARCH 27**—**Ann Larabee**, author of *The Dynamite Fiend: the Chilling Tale of a Confederate Spy, Con Artist, and Mass Murderer*, will present this most unusual and fascinating story of **Alexander "Sandy" Keith**. Ann is Associate Chair of American Studies at Michigan State University. While researching the bomb-making techniques and terrorist activities of 19th Century radicals, Ann became interested in covert action during the Civil War, including the development of "horological torpedoes" and other explosive devices. This led to the discovery of Sandy Keith, a Confederate agent operating out of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Not only does her book examine Confederate operations in Canada with information drawn from previously unknown sources, but it explores the effects of an involvement in Civil War terrorism on a notorious criminal mind.

This program, unlike any other ever presented before the MRRT, is one that will hold your attention throughout. Mark your calendars and make certain you're in attendance for this one.

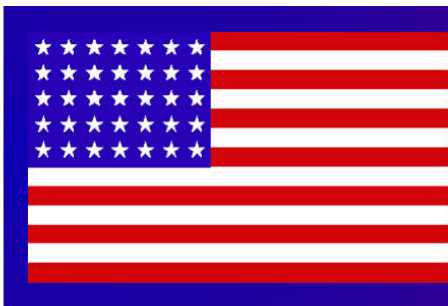
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Last month our own legend, **Dr. Weldon Petz**, presented "*They Are Still Remembered*"—a tribute to Michigan's more than 400 Civil War monuments. Add another spellbound audience to Weldon's unending list.

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FALL FIELD TRIP: Last month 39 folks signed up for our October 14-15 trek to Spring Hill/Franklin/Nashville. Details were given for our bus and motel accommodations. If you weren't in attendance or forgot to sign up, you'll have to wait until the April meeting to do so OR you can call Jerry Maxwell at 248-363-1710.

QUIZ: All questions pertain to Civil War spies and espionage.....



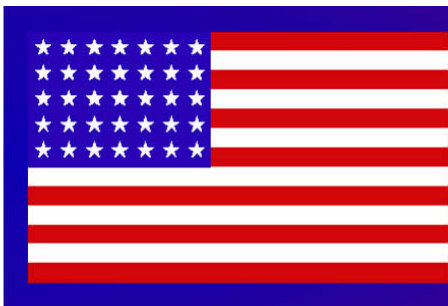
1. Which woman disguised herself as a male nurse in the 2nd Michigan Infantry and is the only female ever granted membership in the GAR? And, name one of the two books she wrote describing her wartime exploits.
2. Which noted spy commonly used the nom de guerre “E.J. Allen”? And, how did he save Abraham Lincoln’s life in Baltimore on February 22, 1861?
3. Which Union spy once stood on a stage in Louisville and proposed a toast to Jefferson Davis and the Confederate cause? And, in which Michigan town did she live a good portion of her early life?
4. In which northern city did Confederate operatives attempt to burn down 19 hotels on November 25, 1864? And, what foiled their plot?
5. Which spy was called the “Siren of the Shenandoah”? And, where did she provide Stonewall Jackson with information leading to his surprise attack victory on May 23, 1862?
6. Which Federal general, awakened from a possible drunken stupor, was taken prisoner by John Mosby on March 8, 1863? And, where did this embarrassing moment take place?
7. What was the 1864 Confederate plan called where thousands of prisoners would be liberated from a Federal prison and overthrow the governments of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois? And, what prison was their target?
8. Which Vermont town did Confederate agents raid on October 19, 1864? And, who led the excursion and what happened to him and his raiders?
9. Which notorious man headed the Federal Secret Service? And, in his secret, coded messages, which cabinet member did he accuse of being involved in the Lincoln conspiracy?
10. Which 21-year-old Tennessee martyr, dubbed the “boy hero,” was hanged as a spy on November 27, 1863? And, what did Federal authorities offer as a means of sparing his life? Also, which Federal general reluctantly ordered his execution?

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Federal spy Philip Henson, described as “*probably the ablest man in our secret service*,” possessed many attributes that made him ideal spy material. As a native Southerner his accent was authentic, and as a lifelong traveler, he knew the territory as few others did. A naturally amiable sort, Henson was always generous with offerings from the supply of “*good old rye*” that he carried wherever he went. And above all else, he hated secession and loved the Union.

Born in northeast Alabama, Henson left home at an early age and traveled from Kansas to New Mexico. Returning to his native state, Henson still found time to roam through Georgia and Mississippi. When the Civil War erupted, Henson was married and working comfortably in a country store. He avoided serving in the Confederate army and later took a loyalty oath to the Union, not out of coercion but because, as he said, “*I believed in it.*” He would soon agree to spy for William S. Rosecrans. Upon returning from one of his first forays, Henson was arrested as a “Confederate” and brought before General Grenville Dodge who was so impressed that he quickly enlisted Henson as a spy for himself. Dodge soon had him investigating the defenses of Vicksburg.

Henson finagled his way into the city, and his friendly manner caught the attention of Rebel General John Pemberton, who gave Henson free rein to look over the Vicksburg defenses. Making mental notes, Henson filed all the critical information into his remarkable memory. When he finally made his way back to Union lines and divulged what he had learned, Henson was presented with a fine horse, “*Black Hawk*,” by General Dodge. Later Henson embarked on another mission which led him to the headquarters of Confederate General Leonidas Polk. Again Henson’s charm allowed him to be placed on Polk’s espionage payroll with a starting stipend of \$500. Similarly, at other times during his service Henson was employed as a double agent by at least three Confederate generals—Daniel Ruggles, Samuel Gholson, and Samuel Ferguson. And so, armed on the one hand with passes from various Confederate commanders and, on the other, with one from the Union’s Grenville Dodge (which he kept hidden in a hollow beneath the brass plate on the butt of his pistol),



Philip Henson repeatedly made his way between hostile camps—until May 1864, when Dodge dispatched his prize agent on what he promised would be Henson’s final mission. And so it was.

Sent to spy on the activities of the Confederacy’s ferocious cavalryman, Nathan Bedford Forrest, Henson was arrested in Tupelo, Mississippi, by some of Forrest’s men. Suspicious of Henson’s intentions, Forrest, unlike other naïve Confederates, was immune to Henson’s charms. For months, Henson languished in solitary cells, being transferred from one prison to another. During one period he was confined in a tiny, windowless room known as “*the sweat box.*” Yet somehow he survived. Finally in February of 1865 Confederate authorities, desperate for men to bear arms, agreed to Henson’s request that he be permitted to serve in “*the old bloody 26th Mississippi*” with Robert E. Lee’s army in Virginia.

What happened next is unclear, although Dodge later hinted that his network had bribed Rebel guards to let Henson escape. At any rate, while in transit to Virginia, Henson jumped off a train and, in the War’s final days, somehow reached safety behind Union lines. Later, when he learned of Henson’s exploits, Nathan Bedford Forrest, regretting only that he had not hanged the agent when he had him in custody, paid Henson a left-handed tribute. Philip Henson, said Forrest, had been “*the most dangerous Federal spy operating in the Confederacy.*”

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Sarah Emma Edmonds and *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army* or *Unsexed: Or the Female Soldier*
2. Allan Pinkerton and he found bombs aboard Lincoln’s Presidential train on its way to Washington D.C.
3. Pauline Cushman and Grand Rapids
4. New York City and they used liquid phosphorus (“Greek fire”) which ignited slowly and was easily put out
5. Belle Boyd and Front Royal
6. Edwin Stoughton and Fairfax Court House, Virginia
7. “Northwest Conspiracy” and Camp Douglas in Chicago
8. St. Albans and Bennett H. Young; escaped to Canada and released by the Canadian government
9. Lafayette C. Baker and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton
10. Sam Davis and if he divulged the identity of his leader (Captain Henry Shaw); Grenville Dodge

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Don’t forget to remind yourself on the date of this month’s meeting: **MONDAY, MARCH 27.** **Ann Larabee** will tell the fascinating story of the “*Dynamite Fiend—Alexander Sandy Keith, Jr.*” The meeting will begin at 6:30 P.M. at the Farmington Public Library (Grand River and Farmington Road). Don’t be late and bring a friend.

Also our website: <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt/>.