

MEMBER RENEWAL

The MRRT is celebrating its 56th year in 2016—and this month would be a great time to show your support by renewing your membership. Membership remains \$20 a year—or \$5 for students. Checks should be made out to Don

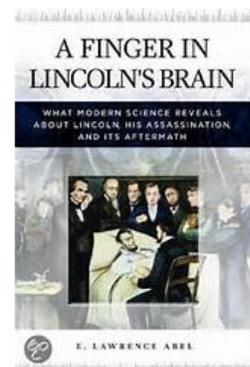
Kadar and can be mailed to his home at **61895 Fairland Drive, South Lyon, MI 48178**; or simply brought to the meeting and given to Don or Jeanie Graham. Cash is also welcomed.

Our Monday, March 28, 2016 meeting begins at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library. Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

Sadly, long-time member Mark Farrell, 93, passed away on February 26th. Mark was Vice-President of the Roundtable for many years and very much enjoyed our yearly field trips.

The Roundtable voted to visit the Antietam battlefield for our fall 2016 field trip. Scott Patchen will be our tour guide for the weekend of October 8-9, 2016. The preliminary itinerary for Saturday, Oct. 8th, Discovery of General Lee’s Lost Orders at the Best Farm in Frederick, Maryland Middletown, MD South Mountain, Turner, Fox and Crampton’s Gaps Harper’s Ferry Sunday, Oct. 9th, Boonsboro, Antietam Battlefield, Sharpsburg, Shepherdstown (if time permits) We will probably be staying in Frederick, MD. Further trip details will be forthcoming.

The Roundtable welcomes MRRT member Dr. Ernest Lawrence Abel, PhD, who will present “A Finger in Lincoln’s Brain”. Dr. Abel will shed new light on the assassination of President Lincoln; including medical details on the assassin John Wilkes Booth and the forensics of the crime, the medical care the President did or did not receive that night, and the significance of his funeral for the American public. Dr. Abel is a professor of psychology, obstetrics and gynecology at Wayne State. He has several publications to his credit including A Finger in Lincoln’s Brain, Singing the New Nation: Confederate Sheet Music, and more than 200 articles in scientific journals. Dr. Abel received his PhD in psychology from the University of Toronto.



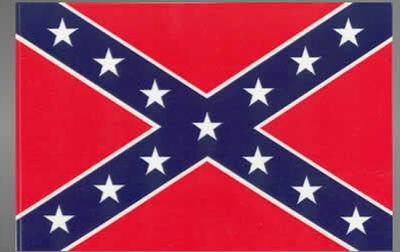
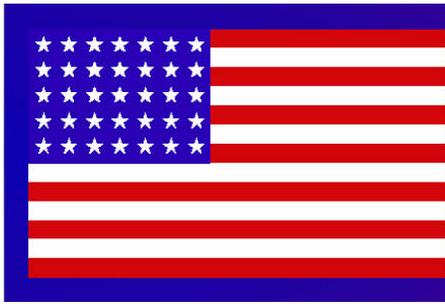
The MRRT would like to thank member Bill Cottrell for his informative and thought-provoking presentation on “President Grant Honors Lincoln’s Legacy”. President Lincoln’s legacy embraced two ideas. One was



reconciliation rather than revenge. Lincoln wanted 10% of a seceded state’s population to agree to abolishing slavery in exchange for readmission to the Union. This is consistent with his “*malice toward none, with charity for all*” speech. **The second legacy was a vision of political and social equality for blacks.** Lincoln’s speech of April 11, 1865 (which John Wilkes Booth attended) proposed that blacks that had served in the Union Army be given citizenship and the right to vote.

Lincoln’s successor, Andrew Johnson, believed that the South did not really leave the Union. Social and political equality was rejected. Blacks

became sharecroppers as the white man’s government remained in place. President Johnson unsuccessfully campaigned for the defeat of the 14th Amendment providing equal protection under the law to all. Hate groups, including the KKK, were formed to prevent former slaves from participating in the political process.



General Grant was elected President in 1868. He represented political moderation and supported the 15th Amendment, legalizing black voting. President Grant was the “hero” of the 19th Century. During the late 1800’s he was more popular than President Lincoln was. Over 100,000 people attended his New York funeral in 1885. President Grant viewed the Presidency as a system of values learned on the battlefield. The United States was a nation of people united to forget the war and move on. His mantra was “Let There Be Peace” between the North and South, and between blacks and whites. He called for a level playing field for everyone.

When U.S. Grant became President the Northern economy was doing well. The newspapers discussed the Captains of Industry instead of the war’s casualty lists. The Southern cities were smoking ruins.

During the early 1870’s racial violence almost created a Second Civil War.

By March 1870 all 14 former Confederate states were readmitted to the Union. The KKK took over the North Carolina judgeships in 1870, resulting in racial “violence of every kind” that spread to 9 counties in South Carolina. **President Grant took a measured response to the violence by sending the U.S. Army into South Carolina and suspended the writ of habeas corpus for a short period of time.** The Army also went into Alabama and Mississippi. Using the Army was very effective as it put the fear of federal power into the KKK for decades.

Black leader Frederic Douglass believed that blacks owed their right to vote to President Grant’s moral courage. A key factor in this was that General Grant had commanded black troops.

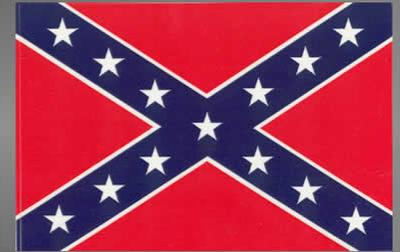
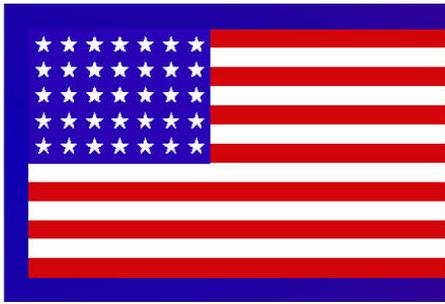
President Grant wrote in his memoirs 3 days before he died that he looked forward to Union and Confederate harmony. He favored reaching out to the Southerners who had fought in the war.



MRRT Minutes for February 29, 2016: The **Call to Order** 6:40 pm, with 25 people present for the business meeting **Pledge** Dedicated to Amos Pritchard of the 14th West Virginia and to Mark Farrell, long-time member and Vice-President, who died Feb. 26th **Introduction of Guests and New Members** None **Secretary’s Report** Approved **Newsletters** Bob Newill read from the Toledo Mini-Bulletin, Indianapolis Hardtack, Cincinnati Canister, Cleveland Charger, and NYC Dispatch **Trip** The Roundtable voted to visit Antietam this year. Scott Patchen, our tour guide from previous years, will lead the group on a fascinating tour. **Preservation** Central Virginia Battlefield Trust increased the size of Pelham’s corner at Fredericksburg from 1 acre to 4.5 acres. The Civil War Trust wants to save another 25 acres at Fredericksburg, located on the Union left near General Meade’s attack, from encroaching development. Joe Epstein proposed a \$100 donation to this effort which was approved unanimously. The Civil War Trust wants to save 70 acres at Perryville, essentially completing the battlefield. **Website** Gerry Furi updates the website for us every month **Program** Jim has scheduled a speaker for all 10 meetings in 2016 **Items of Interest** Charles Warren has a booth at the Waterford Antiques Emporium and has offered to sell books with historical content that the Roundtable members bring in. **Bring your books to a meeting and all of the money, except for sales tax, will come back to the Roundtable. Old Business** None **New Business** None

Quiz Questions: This month’s questions and answers pertain to “A Finger in Lincoln’s Brain”.

1. Which part of President Lincoln’s brain did the fateful bullet first enter?
2. What was the velocity of the bullet Booth fired from his derringer?
3. Name three of the five doctors who either stuck a finger or a probe into President Lincoln’s brain?
4. Who performed the autopsy on President Lincoln?
5. Who embalmed President Lincoln?



Civil War Essentials – Fort Pulaski, Georgia After the experiences of the 1812 War, in which Washington and other U.S territories near the coast were subject to British invasions and raids, the Madison administration decided to construct substantial fortifications to protect key points on the East coast including the important city of Savannah, Georgia. Not all of the proposed forts were built, but in 1829 work commenced on Fort Pulaski, named after a Polish nobleman who came to America to help the fight for independence and died trying to recover Savannah from the British. The walls were 11 ft. thick and 32 ft. high and used 25 million bricks. Although designed for up to 146 guns, only 20 were mounted in early 1861 when Georgia militia forced the garrison – one ordinance sergeant – to turn over the fort. A few days later, Georgia seceded.

After the successful October 1861 Union attack on Hilton Head Island, Confederate concern over Savannah's vulnerability caused now Confederate General R. E. Lee, department commander, to order a concentration of his meager forces into fewer but stronger coastal positions. Troops were removed from Tybee Island across the South channel of the

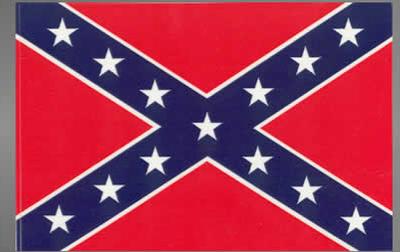
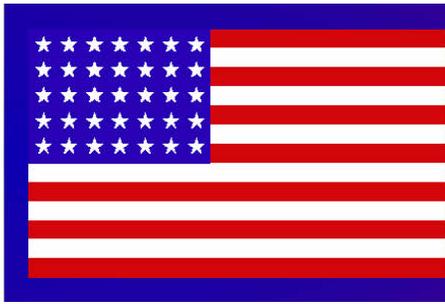


Savannah River from Cockspur Island. **Lee inspected Fort Pulaski in late 1861 and early 1862 and ordered parallel trenches dug across the parade ground (to trap rolling cannon balls that might land inside the fort) as well as added protection for interior walls especially at the magazine.** He told the fort's commander, Colonel Charles Olmstead, that although the Union troops already occupying Tybee Island could "make it very warm" for the fort they could not breach the walls at that distance. He was wrong.

Union Captain Quincy Gillmore, first in his 1849 West Point class, planned to use newly developed rifled cannon, plus mortars, against the fort. These siege guns were sited, with backbreaking effort, on the north coast of Tybee Island after being landed through the heavy surf on the Atlantic side over 2 miles away. Hundreds of soldiers pulled each of the "sling carts" from which the guns were hung to the battery sites. All the work of hauling and emplacing these weapons was done at night to shield the activity from the enemy.

In order to cut off the fort from resupply and reinforcement from the city, several batteries were positioned upriver from Cockspur Island to prevent resupply by Confederate ships. Although this was eventually achieved, by the time of the actual bombardment the garrison had supplies for 4 -6 months safely in hand.

Finally, on the morning of April 10, 1862, after a formal demand for surrender had been rejected, the Union guns began firing on the fort at distances of around 1800 yards. The heavy mortars proved to be ineffective. However the 4.2" Parrott rifles, plus 5.8" James and 7" James rifles pounded the fort's walls, crushing bricks, dismounting some of the defenders' 48 cannon and wounding members of their crews. All during the attack, the Confederate gunners stubbornly maintained return fire and inflicted the only fatality of the bombardment – a private from the 3rd Rhode Island Heavy Artillery. But by nightfall, it was clear to Olmstead that the fort's wall could be breached clearing a path for an infantry assault. More ominous, the magazine's 20 tons of powder would soon be exposed to incoming shells. Around 1 PM on April 11, a Union shell exploded at the magazine entrance but miraculously failed to set off the stored powder. This



convinced the fort's commander. He ordered the Confederate flag lowered and the 300+ men of the garrison were surrendered.

The Union forces repaired the damages to the fort and it now served to help cut off Savannah from the ocean.

While it saw no further fighting, two notable events did occur there. A month after the battle, overall area Union commander, Major General David Hunter, saw fit to declare that all slaves reaching Cockspur Island were free. This was quickly rescinded by President Lincoln who was not yet ready to take the momentous step he would take later. **In 1864 about 600 Confederate officer prisoners, who had been held on Morris Island in Charleston harbor, were moved to the fort and placed on a near-starvation diet in reprisal for the horrific conditions experienced by Union prisoners at Andersonville.** Despite clandestine efforts by sympathetic members of the garrison to alleviate their sufferings, **13 prisoners died before this punitive policy was cancelled.**

Antietam Campaign books to read for our Fall Trip (This is not a complete list).

Landscape Turned Red, Stephen Sears

The Gleam of Bayonets, James V. Murfin

The Antietam Campaign, Gary Gallagher, editor

Antietam: The Soldiers' Battle, John Michael Priest

The Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam, Time-Life Civil War Series

“A Finger in Lincoln’s Brain” Quiz Answers

1. Occipital lobe
2. 425 feet per second
3. Charles Leale, Charles Sabin Taft, Robert King, Assistant Surgeon General Charles Crane, and Surgeon General Joseph Barnes
4. Army surgeons Dr. Joseph Janvier Woodward and Edward Curtis
5. Henry P. Cattell