

Our May meeting comes one week early this month so mark your calendars for Monday, May 21. Although the membership renewal push is over, it's never too late to renew or join. For 2012, the MRRT is pleased to announce we have 84 paid members. We also have 26 members currently subscribed for the October trip to the battlefields of First and Second Bull Run. It's certain to be memorable so come-out and sign-up at the May meeting or reserve your spot by emailing one of the trip committee members (see the attached flier).

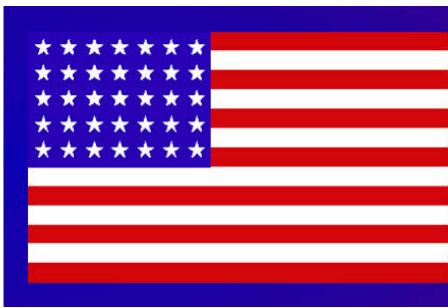
**On MONDAY, MAY 21, The Roundtable welcomes JACK DEMPSEY from Plymouth, MI. Jack will present "Michigan: 1861, the First Year of the Civil War".** During antebellum Michigan the state militia was underfunded and consisted of a mere 1,240 men. Following the surrender of Fort Sumter, Michiganders rallied enthusiastically in response to President Lincoln's call for volunteers. By the battles of Alexandria and First Bull Run, Michiganders played key roles. Michigan contributed 90,000 men of which 14,000 died for the Union cause in four years of war. This high cost excludes wounded and those that served under the flags of other states. Jack Dempsey will discuss how Michigan entered the Civil War in what is sure to be an informative presentation.

Jack Dempsey is a lawyer in Ann Arbor. He has an undergraduate degree from Michigan State and a law degree from George Washington University. He is very active in the Michigan Civil War community, serving as Chairman of the Michigan Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission and the Michigan History Foundation. He is also Vice-President of the Michigan Historical Commission and a member of the Ann Arbor Civil War Roundtable. Mr. Dempsey maintains an internet presence at his "[Michigan Civil War Blog](#)" and is also the author of "[Michigan and the Civil War: a Great and Bloody Sacrifice](#)". Copies of Jack's book will be available for purchase and signing at the Roundtable's May meeting.

**MRRT would like to thanks JOHN MICHAEL PRIEST for his very fine presentation, "Stand to It and Give Them Hell".** Mike's superb talk was given primarily from the soldier perspective, rather from that of senior command through the 'sometimes' politicized officer reports. He used previously unpublished Gettysburg maps to tell his story. Mike attributes much of the Confederate failure on day two to their poorly scouted flank movement by Lee's engineer—Johnston; the late start of the attack, partly due to an argument between Hoods & McClaws as to who would lead it; and the three Corps echelon attack along Emmitsburg Road that quickly went astray—no small part due to Union fire. A small sampling of his entertaining observations included:

- Battle plans don't outlive the first fire—a truism to this day.
- Big Round Top was not user friendly—tree cover.
- Defends Dan Sickles' salient position, placing blame with Mead's inattention to that point of the line. He argues if Sickles had kept his assigned ground his troops would have been exposed to murderous enfilade fire.
- 20<sup>th</sup> Main didn't put up the wall along the ridge of Little Round Top until day three—not during day two as normally depicted.
- The monument to Hunt's union artillery is misplaced—a not uncommon phenomenon with monument placements to include many others at Gettysburg.
- Chamberlain told the best Gettysburg stories. Many of his contemporaries claimed he "*wouldn't know the truth if it hit him in the head*".
- The soldier—probably wisely—would choose not to hang around for hand-to-hand combat if given the choice.
- The Confederates got to within 10' of the 20<sup>th</sup> Main during their charge on Little Round Top—close enough for the volley discharge to set clothes on fire.
- Dan Sickles was asked by soldiers at the 1913 Gettysburg reunion why he didn't have a monument on the battlefield; he replied the "*the entire battlefield is a memorial to Dan Sickles*".





- Sickles leg which he lost in that day two battle by a 6 lb Confederate cannon ball was embalmed in whisky and placed in his living room for 30 years. It now resides at National Museum of Health and Medicine.

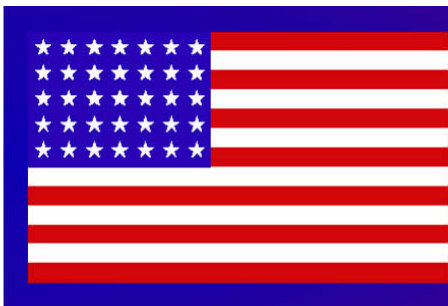
### QUIZ: All Questions Pertain to Michigan during 1861

1. What was Michigan's contribution to the Union Army during the Civil War?
2. What was the importance of the First Michigan Infantry's (3-month regiment) arrival in Washington May 1861?
3. Which Michigan regiments participated in the First Battle of Bull Run on July 21, 1861?
4. Who was governor of Michigan in 1861?
5. Who was the only Michigan resident who participated in the battle at Fort Sumter?

**MRRT Minutes for April 30, 2012:** The call to order came at 6:40 pm w/approximately 40+ present for the business meeting. **The Pledge** was dedicated to the 45th Illinois. **Introduction of Guests:** Douglas Moore, Diane Anderson, Gary Lesinski and Anne Liimatta. Anne additionally invited MRRT members to the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society's annual Ice Cream Social on Sat. July 28 from noon to 5 P.M. **Newsletter Report:** Bob read from newsletters from Cleveland, Toledo, Ann Arbor, Cincinnati, and NYC. **Program Report:** Harold Holzer, a nationally known Lincoln scholar & author, will be speaking to the Abraham Lincoln CWRT Thursday May 10 at 8 pm, Embassy Suites Hotel, Livonia. All are invited. **Old Business:** A motion was made to donate \$250 to the CWT to preserve the Tom's Brook (aka Woodstock Races) battlefield. That amount was increased to \$500 and the motion was passed. The Maxwell Scholarship is going well and Jerry's family is putting an additional \$400 into it for this year. **New Business Report:** Don Kadar says we need to work on membership outreach. Our newsletter is a good recruiting tool and he suggested we print it and pass it on to anyone who might be interested. He's looking for someone who could make up flyers to place in strategic spots like libraries. **Secretary's Report:** The April 2012 report was accepted.

**2012 Trip Report:** The trip committee has put together what is sure to be a not to miss trip. See the attached flier for details but in summary, the trip dates are October 27 and 28, 2012. Our tour guide will be Scott Patchan, a widely published author and well known and respected tour guide. The trip cost is projected at \$80. Rooms have been reserved at the Hampton Inn Manassas (703 369-1100) at a rate of \$84 per night that includes a hot breakfast. Dinner on Saturday night will be at the City Tavern in Old Town Manassas. The trip's primary focus will be Second Bull Run (Second Manassas), with a secondary focus on First Bull Run (First Manassas). Scott Patchan provides a preliminary itinerary:

*"Second Battle of Manassas - Robert E. Lee's Greatest Victory. We will follow the course of the conflict that spanned three days in late August of 1862. You will see the historic quarry trench that separated the combatants by only a few feet at Thoroughfare Gap. History literally comes to life as we explore the ruins at the Gap, a seldom seen but most evocative historic locale. Then we will be off to visit Brawner Farm, where the "Black Hat" Brigade fought Jackson to a standstill in the most prolific stand up fight of the entire war. Our next stop will take us to the legendary Unfinished Railroad used by Stonewall Jackson as a defensive barrier against more than 6 Union attacks. Our visit will include a stop at Groveton Confederate Cemetery where Hood's Division engaged McDowell's Federals in a thrilling night fight on August 29. On the last day we will follow in the footsteps of Porter's massive attack against Jackson at Deep Cut. This action rivals Pickett's Charge as one of the most breathtaking assaults of the war. You will experience this like never before as the NPS has cleared out hundreds of acres of trees that will allow you to relive Porters attack as never before. Then we move on to the climax of the battle when Longstreet seized the initiative and counterattacked in the wake of Porter's failure. We will follow the sad decimation of the Zouaves and follow the attack through to the "Vortex of Hell" on Chinn Ridge where fierce Union resistance saved Pope's army from destruction. Then we will move on to examine the rear guard actions on Henry Hill. Then we will be off to Portici where the Union's finest horseman, Gen. John Buford showed Jeb Stuart that the U.S. Cavalry could and would fight."*



**Civil War Sesquicentennial (May 1862):** **May 1**, Gen Joseph Johnston abandons Yorktown, VA, without a battle under pressure by the advancing Army of the Potomac. **May 7**, Abraham Lincoln visits the Monitor while on a trip to Fort Monroe to witness Federal forces during the Peninsular Campaign. Gen Stonewall Jackson repulses union forces under Gen Schenck at the Battle of McDowell. **May 9**, Lincoln meets with McClellan. Southern troops evacuate Norfolk, abandoning or destroying supplies and equipment. US Gen David Hunter frees slaves in South Carolina without presidential or congressional approval and the move is countermanded by Lincoln on May 19 on grounds that Hunter exceeded his authority. **May 10**, Lincoln supervises the occupation of Norfolk and Portsmouth. **May 11**, the Confederates destroy the ironclad Merrimack to prevent it following into Union hands. **May 15**, Union and Confederate forces clash at Drewry's Bluff as McClellan moves towards Richmond—he ultimately retreats. **May 16**, Gen Butler issues the infamous Gen Order 28—otherwise known as the 'Woman Order'. **May 17**, Gen McDowell is ordered to advance from Fredericksburg towards Richmond in support of McClellan. **May 18**, David Farragut advances the Federal fleet towards Vicksburg. **May 20**, Lincoln signs the Homestead Act, spurring settlement of the West. May 22, Gen Halleck continues to skirmish with Confederate forces under Beauregard in and around Corinth. **May 25**, Lincoln presses McClellan to either attack Richmond or give up the job and come to the defense of Washington. Compelled by the relentless offense of Stonewall Jackson, Nathaniel Banks withdraws his troops around Winchester towards Harper's Ferry. **May 26**, Lincoln queries McClellan, "*Can you get near enough to throw shells into the city (Richmond).*" **May 29**, Gen Halleck's movement towards Corinth pays off as Gen Beauregard destroys supplies and withdraws his troops towards Tupelo. **May 31**, McClellan and Johnston's forces clash at the Battle of Fair Oaks (Seven Pines). The Confederate losses are estimated at 6134 and the Union at 5031. Johnston is wounded and Jefferson Davis appoints Robert E. Lee as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.

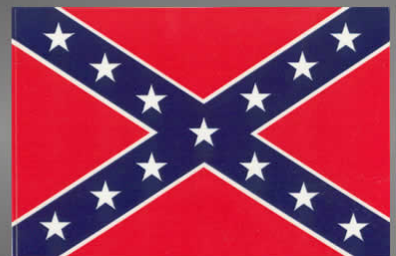
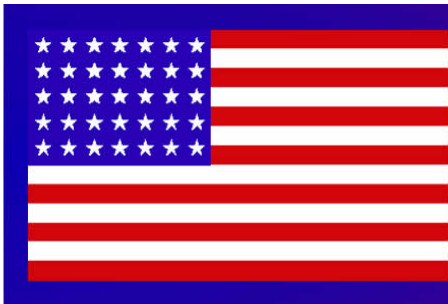


**Civil War Essentials:** Smoothbore artillery was used by both armies as field guns and howitzers. As field guns they fired solid shot at high velocity in low trajectories at targets in the open. Shot and canister were also used. Howitzers were shorter barreled guns for firing explosive shells in high trajectory. They also used spherical case shot and canister but over shorter range than field guns. Howitzers were the weapon of choice for use against opponents concealed behind terrain features or fortifications. Howitzers used a lower powder charge than a corresponding caliber field gun. The guns were made of bronze or iron (cast or wrought) and occasionally steel. Artillery was often identified by the year of design by the Ordnance department. Smoothbore artillery was also categorized by bore dimension based on rough weight of the solid shot; i.e., a 12 pounder field gun fired a 12 pound shot from a 4.62 diameter bore. The most popular smoothbore cannon were the 12-pounder Model of 1857, or "Napoleon". With the advance in metallurgy and other supporting technologies, smoothbore guns were increasingly replaced on the battlefield by rifled artillery. Next month we'll review rifled cannons.



**Civil War Item of Interest:** **Harold Holzer** (preeminent Lincoln scholar and author) May 10 presentation at the Embassy Suites was a pure delight for MRRT members' fortunate enough to attend. His subject was "[Lincoln on War](#)" and in his hour long presentation he clearly rebutted the myth that Abraham Lincoln was somehow a dove that morphed into a hawk after his election to President. Harold's presentation was chocked full of interesting and insightful anecdotes. I'd like to thank Liz Stringer of the ALCWRT for extending this open invitation.





On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the **Fifth Michigan Regiment Band** performed a rousing one hour set on a warm spring day at the Westland Armed Forces Day celebration. Our own Gene Kramer (photo upper right next page) is a member of the band. Their set



covered many of the most popular Civil War tunes, to include a personal favorite, “*When Johnny Comes Marching Home*”. The band was formed in 1974 and is an authentic historical recreation of the Fifth Michigan Volunteer Infantry Band that mustered into service August 28, 1861 at Fort Wayne in Detroit. Their repertoire includes 150 Civil War tunes from both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line. Their instruments are antique and replica saxhorns and rope tension wood

drums. Their uniforms are authentic reproductions of those used by the Fifth Michigan Volunteer Infantry Band and the accompanying female civilians were dressed in period-correct attire. The band has recorded 5 CDs. For more information, speak with Gene or see their website at <http://www.mi5th.org/>.

If you have an item of Civil War interest, be that a book report, website, battlefield visit, picture, etc., you’d like to share with the group, email that item along with a brief write-up to [ncarver55@comcast.net](mailto:ncarver55@comcast.net).

**QUIZ Answers:**

1. Michigan contributed 31 regiments of infantry, 11 regiments of cavalry, 14 batteries of artillery, 1 regiment of engineers, and 1 regiment of sharpshooters. The 90,000 Michigan volunteers exceeded the state’s quota so numerous Michigan residents had to enlist in other states.
2. The First Michigan Infantry (3-month regiment) was the first western regiment to arrive in Washington. Two days later they met President Lincoln at the White House. The President may have said “Thank God for Michigan!” (Not all historians agree that he said that.)
3. The First and Fourth Michigan was part of General Orlando Willcox’s brigade. The Second and Third Michigan were included in General Israel Richardson’s (from Pontiac, MI) brigade.
4. Governor Austin Blair played a key role in mobilizing the volunteers and pushed Michigan’s involvement.
5. Second Lieutenant Norman J. Hall of Monroe, MI.

Last reminder—the meeting comes early this month so make plans to hear **Jack Dempsey, Monday, May 21**. The meeting begins at 6:30 P.M., Farmington Public Library. See you there! Check our website at [www.farmlib.org/mrrt/](http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt/).