

## MEMBER RENEWAL

The MRRT is celebrating its 57<sup>th</sup> year in 2017 – and this month is a great time to show your support by renewing your membership (or becoming a new member!). Membership remains \$20 a year – or \$5 for students. Checks should be made out to Treasurer Jeanie Graham (the bank does not like checks made out to the RoundTable) and can be mailed to her home at [29835 Northbrook, Farmington Hills, MI 48334-2326](mailto:29835@northbrook.com); or simply bought to the meeting and given to Jeanie. Cash is always welcomed. **It's time for everyone to pay their dues as our expenses continue to rise!**

We will be meeting one week earlier this month, Monday, May 22, 2017 because of the Memorial Day holiday.

Our Monday, May 22, 2017 meeting begins at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library with returning speaker John Simmons discussing “Gettysburg: The Civilian Viewpoint – Part 2”. Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

Our field trip to Shiloh and Corinth will be the weekend of October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have found a highly recommended tour guide, Keith Willingham. The preliminary itinerary is Saturday – Shiloh Battlefield tour, and Sunday – walking tour of Corinth, MS. Our great committee is working on the details. To sign up, contact Mollie (313.530.8516), Linda (586.588.2712) or Jeanie (248.225.7596). They will also answer try to any questions that you may have.

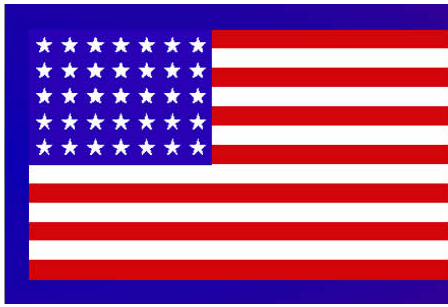
**The Roundtable welcomes back John Simmons who will speak on “Gettysburg: The Civilian Viewpoint – Part 2”.** John will be sharing with us many new stories of ordinary citizens living through the greatest battle ever fought on the North American continent, Gettysburg. We will hear the story of the lawyer father and son team of Moses and William McClean. The task of dealing with the men in Blue and Gray will be told by Catherine Foster, Alice Powers, and Jane Smith. The difficulty of holding families together during the carnage of battle will be shared with us by Hattie Schriver, Sarah King, Sarah Brodhead, and Fannie Buehler. Young boys, Charles McCurdy and Gates Fahenstock, will tell their stories of adventure. **This promises to be another evening of great storytelling.** John is an active member of the Grand Rapids Roundtable. He is retired from the food business.



The Michigan Regimental Roundtable wishes to express its appreciation to Dr. Ernest Abel for his entertaining and educational discussion of **Lincoln's Assassin and the Women Who Loved Him**. Dr. Abel began his presentation by noting that after John Wilkes Booth was fatally shot at a farm in Virginia, an examination of his pockets revealed photos of 5 young women – a surprising find considering that Booth was engaged at the time!



**That Booth was a great womanizer is not surprising considering his family background. His father, Junius Booth, born in England, established a notorious reputation for this failing. His was twice a defendant in paternity suits in his early teens!** To escape this notoriety, Junius' father took him to Belgium. Continuing to indulge his appetites, at 18 years of age he seduced a woman at the Brussels boardinghouse where he lived. He returned to England with her and the child she bore him. He deserted mother and child after seducing Mary Ann Holmes who would become John's mother. Again changing locations to escape the unfavorable publicity his philandering had caused in England, he and



Mary Ann moved to Bel Air, Maryland near Baltimore. Junius, although a successful actor, gradually became more abusive and alcoholic. He beat his wife and John Wilkes. **This caused his mother to dote on her son which may have contributed to John Wilkes Booth's narcissistic tendencies.**

John Wilkes Booth's brothers Edwin and Junius Jr. would also become famous actors in the U. S. As an adult, John Wilkes Booth started to act and to womanize. **His acting career did not initially prosper in the north so he began acting in Richmond theaters.** He was careful not to try to conquer "respectable" upper-class southern women as this could invite violence from husbands or brothers bent on protecting their lady's "honor". He concentrated on actresses and prostitutes instead. **By 1861, his good looks and acting skills had made him a star.** Women of all classes vied for his attention.

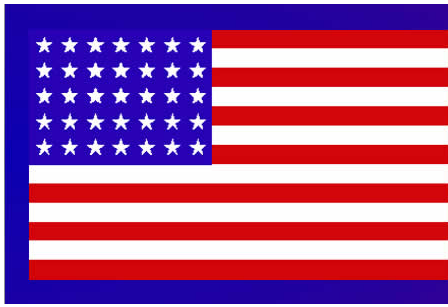
**He had torrid affairs with a number of actresses. Two of the most interesting were Henrietta Irving and Effie Germon.** Henrietta, 5 years older than Booth, is remembered chiefly because she attacked Booth with a knife in a fit of jealousy. She then attempted suicide. Effie was a cheerful girl who began playing comedic roles in 1862. She met Booth in 1863 and ultimately became his leading lady at the Grover's Theater in Washington. **After the assassination, she was the only one of Booth's women to send a letter of condolence to his mother and sister, Asia.** She became very popular after the war until her inexorable weight gain made her unsuitable for leading female roles.

Booth also consorted with common prostitutes. **The most interesting was Nellie Star.** She had started her profession in a brothel run by her mother. She was devoted to Booth who cynically used her to try to set up Vice President Johnson for assassination at the same time he shot Lincoln. Horrified when she realized what had happened, she also attempted suicide but was saved by her "coworkers".

**His most serious attempt at a respectable approach to women involved the daughter of a New Hampshire congressman named Hale. Lucy Hale (picture left)** was bright and charming but plain rather than beautiful. Like other women, Lucy was struck by Booth's looks when she saw him on stage in 1863. By 1865, they were engaged. In many ways they were opposites and held conflicting views – she was an abolitionist, for example. **It appears that her main attraction for Booth was the aura of respectability she would bring as his wife.** After the assassination, she accompanied her father to Spain and unsuccessfully attempted to cover up the engagement. **Dr. Abel suggested that perhaps a contributing factor in John Wilkes Booth's decision to assassinate Abraham Lincoln was that he may have been in an advanced stage of Syphilis.** Certain symptoms he displayed, including a sudden negative personality change he underwent in August 1864, suggest this possibility.



**MRRT Minutes for April 24, 2017: Call to Order** 6:45 pm, Gary Pritchard acting President **Pledge** Dedicated to long-time member Guy Duffield, who died recently. **Introduction of Guests and New Members** None **Secretary's Report** Accepted **Treasurer's Report** We have 50 paid members, dues need to be paid now **Preservation** No report **Newsletters** Bob read from Toledo Mini Bulletin, Indianapolis Hardtack, and the NYC Dispatch **Website** None **Trip Report** Our guide for the Fall Trip to Shiloh is Keith Willingham. Keith and Ken Baumann helped pull a 20 pounder Parrott gun up the hill at Shiloh Military Park. Keith is retired and is now a full-time guide **Program** Dave Ingall is our new speaker for August **Items of Interest** Gary mentioned the Mansfield, OH Civil War Show on May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. It is one of the best shows. George mentioned a Gettysburg book by Storrick that he came by, signed by U.S. Grant III. Cable network CSPAN3 shows American history all weekend. A recent show suggested that monuments be reinterpreted instead of torn down. Ken shared with us a book on the 5<sup>th</sup> Ohio and Bea enjoyed Lincoln and the Court very much. **New Business** None **Old Business** None



**Quiz Questions: This month's questions and answers pertain to The Sanitary Commission and Clara Barton.**

1. Who did General Sherman recognize as one of his best generals?
2. When did Clara Barton begin caring for the casualties of war? What was her nickname?
3. What were the requirements for Union Army nurses?
4. Who took care of the wounded left behind by the Confederate Army when it retreated from Gettysburg?
5. What was a major obstacle to caring for the wounded after the Battle of Gettysburg?

**President Lincoln and Son Go to Richmond – April 1865** Richmond, Virginia, the capitol of the Confederate States of America fell to Union forces on April 3, 1865. **The following day, April 4, Abraham Lincoln was determined to see the city for himself. He had been visiting the Federal Military Headquarters at City Point for more than a week.**

The actual trip there proved to be complicated. On Tuesday morning, April 4, President Lincoln with his twelve year old son Tad and Admiral David Dixon Porter headed toward Richmond on board the naval flagship, *Malvern*. Confederate forces blocked the harbor, forcing the party to transfer to a barge hauled by a tugboat. The towing had hardly begun when the *Malvern* began drifting toward a nearby bridge, so the tugboat was ordered to her rescue. To Lincoln's amusement, the twelve sailors in the group had to use oars. **After rowing to Rocketts' Landing on the edge of the city, at about 9 a.m. President Lincoln disembarked to symbolically reunite the battle-torn country.**

Holding onto Tad with his left hand and with Admiral Porter on his right, Lincoln headed uptown, pausing to look at Libby Prison a few hundred yards away. **The brightly uniformed sailors surrounded the small party, six in front and six in the rear, alert for dangers that never materialized.**



Though no advance party went before him, **Lincoln's visit did not remain a secret very long. An elderly African-American laborer was the first to recognize the President. In his astonishment the laborer raced toward the President shouting, "Bless the Lord, there is the Great Messiah".** When he arrived at the President's side, he tried to kneel, crying **"May the Lord bless and keep you safe".** The President lifted his own hat, bowed, and replied, **"Don't kneel to me. That is not right. You must kneel only to God and thank him for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy."**

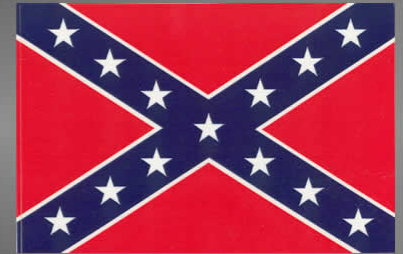
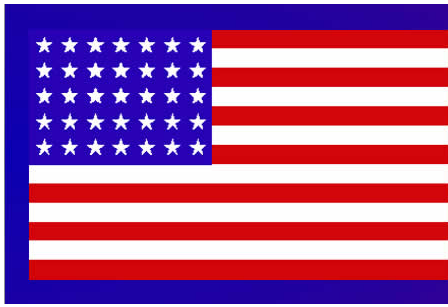
One white woman, watching scornfully from a nearby building turned away as if from a disgusting exhibition. No real dissent was voiced that day, no threat manifested itself. President Lincoln and his son marched on safely.

The President and Tad walked nearly two miles that day through crowded streets, past painful scenes of devastation. **Finally the party reached the Confederate**

**White House, where Union command had set up its headquarters. Here at last, the President wearily sank into a chair, remarking "This must have been President Davis' chair". One eyewitness watched Lincoln gave "far off with a serious, dreamy expression. There was nothing of triumph in his gesture or attitude." After resting briefly President Lincoln declared, "Come, let's look at the house" and proceeded to inspect the mansion where his Confederate counterpart had lived and worked.**

That afternoon, the group resumed its visit, setting out in a horse-drawn ambulance to tour the city, stopping to visit the magnificent capitol building and its statues of the Virginia Presidents. Lincoln also paused solemnly at the site where so





many Union soldiers had endured a dreadful existence. **Wherever he rode that day, joyous ex-slaves, cheering Union soldiers, even some white women waving handkerchiefs, saluted the President. Yet the President showed no signs of exultation.**

**A journalist wrote, “His countenance was one of indescribable sadness. Tears almost came to his eyes as Lincoln heard the thanksgiving.”**

**It proved to be a visit without precedent, an occupation without force or rancor.** No one could have predicted that Lincoln would even survive such a bold visit, much less receive a greeting described as “*enthusiastic in the extreme.*” However, the President himself would not live long enough to lead the new birth of freedom. Just a few days later, he was assassinated. **Tad bravely told a friend, “Pa is dead, and I am only Tad Lincoln now, Little Tad, like other little boys. I am not a President’s son now.”**

#### **Quiz Answers:**

1. Mary Ann or Mother Bickerdyke was one of General Sherman’s favorites. She established 300 hospitals for Union soldiers during the war and helped them after the war. She set up Confederate hospitals during the Atlanta campaign.
2. Clara Barton began caring for victims of the war on April 19, 1861 when the wounded from the Baltimore Riot were brought to Washington. During August 1862 she received permission to work on the front lines. She was called the “Angel of the Battlefield”.
3. Dorothea Dix, Superintendent of Army Nurses, set the rule that Union army nurses had to be 35 to 50 years old and plain-looking. Attractive, young nurses would be vulnerable to all the men in the hospitals.
4. Most of the 5,000 wounded left behind by the Confederate army were cared by Dorothea Dix’s nurses.
5. General Meade took most of the Union medical officers with him when the Army of the Potomac moved south following the Confederates. Only 106 out of 650 doctors were still in Gettysburg. The Union Second Corps had only 13 medical officers to care for 3,400 wounded.

**“Johnny Shiloh” – John Lincoln Clem (1851-1937) served as a Union drummer during the Civil War. The legend was that John ran away from home in 1861 to become a drummer boy after his Mother died when he was 10 years old. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Ohio rejected him because of his age and size. Eventually, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan adopted him as drummer boy and mascot. Research indicated that he probably really joined the Army in either 1862 or 1863 (11 or 12 years old). The legend was that John Clem served as drummer boy with the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan at the Battle of Shiloh – April 1862. The story continued that he almost died during the battle. His comrades rescued him after being knocked unconscious by shrapnel and they gave him the nickname “Johnny Shiloh”. Unfortunately, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan did not muster into service until August 1862, four months after the battle.**

**The Johnny Shiloh legend probably comes from a popular Civil War song “The Drummer Boy of Shiloh”.**

John Clem did serve as a drummer boy at the Battle of Chickamauga in September 1863, where he supposedly shot a Confederate colonel.

**John Clem retired from the Army in 1915, reaching the rank of Brigadier General. He was the last Civil War veteran still on duty with the U.S. Army.**

**Walt Disney created a movie “Johnny Shiloh” in 1963 and showed it on the Disney TV show.**

