



## ACWSA Michigan-Ohio Group Newsletter

*Volume 1, Issue 5 – June 2010*

### *Historic Fort Wayne*

One of the main themes we have been attempting to include in everything we do is keeping the American Civil War as a central focus of the affairs and events of the American Civil War Shooting Association. It is with that in mind that we take a look at Historic Fort Wayne in Detroit. Some of you may remember being at the fort at various times in the past whether as an inductee into the United States military during the Vietnam War, as an attendee at some of the historic events held there in the 1980s, or as a visitor to the museum that used to be on site.

The fort had its origins in the period following the War of 1812 when the United States began building a large series of coastal defense fortifications, including some brick star forts, to protect herself from invasion from foreign powers, especially the British. This building spree resulted in such famous installations as Fort Pulaski in Georgia, Fort Jefferson in the Florida Keys, and Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. Fort Wayne in Detroit is one of those forts, and is one of the few sites in the State of Michigan with a direct connection as a Civil War mustering point. Virtually all of the units from the state left for the war from Fort Wayne.



Google Earth aerial view of the 1845 Star Fort and 1848 Barracks at Fort Wayne

The site was chosen in the 1840s by Montgomery Meigs, future Quartermaster General of the Union army, because of its proximity to British Canada. Construction of the star fort, also designed by Meigs, was complete in 1845. The army continued to expand the installation in 1848 by building a stone barracks within the walls of the star fort. During the Civil War the fort was expanded even further and its fortifications improved by adding the thick brick walls that are now existent on the site. Various infantry regiments were garrisoned at the fort during the war, and most volunteers from the state learned the rudiments of army life and military drill within those same walls.

The Army occupied Fort Wayne as major mustering point through the Spanish American War and the Great War, and buildings from that era were added to handle the growing sophistication of army operations. One of the most completely restored buildings on the current



Officers and enlisted men of the 1st Michigan Volunteer Infantry stand parade outside of the main sally port entrance of Fort Wayne in 1861.

site is the guard house from the Spanish-American War. During the Second World War the fort was used as a supply depot for equipment leaving Detroit's "Arsenal of Democracy" and photographs of the period show a wide range of military hardware within the confines of the old fort. Perhaps the most lasting memory for some of our membership is the fact that parts of the fort served as an induction station as late as Vietnam, and protestors of that war were known to burn draft cards along the Jefferson Avenue entrance to the base.

Following Vietnam the fort was turned over in several parcels

and at different times to the City of Detroit, and is now part of the city's Parks and Recreations infrastructure. For a decade in the 1990s the fort was closed to the public and fell badly into disrepair. In 2004 concerned Civil War hobbyists and historians formed the [Historic Fort Wayne Coalition](#). They are currently active in presenting high quality events (reenactments) that provide ways for the public to enjoy Historic Fort Wayne and see glimpses of how it would have looked when it was garrisoned. They are also very busy in the effort of preserving and restoring as much of the salvageable structures and facilities as possible on the fort grounds. Some of the Coalition's projects can be seen at the Detroit News website at

<http://apps.detnews.com/apps/multimedia/player/index.php?id=2886>

After talking with Lloyd Hevelhorst who is on the Board of Directors for the Historic Fort Wayne Coalition, and now also with the 7<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin, at the Field Trip Shoot in May I started to think of how I could get my students involved with the fort, or at minimum get a tour. I began to look into this and discovered that another school from Macomb County was scheduled to have an overnight event at the fort, sponsored by the Coalition, and that a few weeks later the same school was to be at the fort to perform some community service as payment for their overnight trip. Considering they were also from Macomb County I contacted the school and attempted to get my Civil War students involved with the service event the New Haven Middle School was doing. This was



Lake Shore students Tom, Alyssa and Nathan paint the safety fence near the powder magazine.

easier than expected! Since the Seniors who were in my class had already graduated, it was arranged that I would take my nine remaining underclassmen to the fort on May 27<sup>th</sup> to get involved with the community service project.



This is a picture of the gun emplacements on the ramparts above the magazine before we went to work on them.

The New Haven kids were doing some clean up and removal of garbage along with planting a flower bed. My students were slated to repaint the rail that is around the main powder magazine, and assist with things the younger students could not do. Chaperons for the event included retired Lake Shore teacher Norm Gibson, who designed the Civil War course, and Lake Shore graduate Phil Vermeulen (Class of 2002). As you know, both of these Lake Shore alums are heavily involved with the American Civil War Shooting Association.

My students were very motivated in doing this work for the fort, and one of the seniors who graduated the day before returned to help out. The painting went very well, and not one student fell the 14 feet from the fence to the bottom of the powder magazine, which was a relief. When it became apparent that we were going to finish the painting project in much less time than anticipated, the students suggested clearing the brush and overgrowth from the gun emplacements and ramparts nearby. As you can see in the "before" image above there was no shortage of brush that could be removed. The students, Norm, Phil and myself went into the mess full bore and made our goal for the day to clear one of the walls of the overgrowth. With the use of the Coalition's power tools and the efforts of the students we were



(L to R) Matt, Cody, Cody, Tom, Richard, and Charles working on removing the last big pieces of growth.



Nathan adds some brush to the pile removed from the breast high walls seen in the background.

able to do that. In the "after" pictures above you can see what a difference one morning worth of work makes! It makes me proud of my students to see how much we were able to accomplish!

Not only did this experience teach my students how important it is to be involved with preserving history, but in the afternoon they also got to tour one of the hidden gems of the proud military history of our state. I have already been given the go-ahead to make this an ongoing

effort from my school and I look forward to taking future Civil War classes to the fort for the same service learning experience. I hope this is the beginning of a long mutually beneficial relationship between Lake Shore and Historic Fort Wayne.

With that relationship between Lake Shore and Fort Wayne in mind at the June Richmond shoot the team commanders present supported a motion for the ACWSA to join the Historic Fort Wayne Coalition to aid in furthering the Coalition's goals of preserving the site. This week we have paid from our treasury the membership dues and are as an organization now members of the Coalition. We will receive communications about the activities of the Coalition, will be invited to their events, will have a vote (one vote as ACWSA) in the affairs of the Coalition and will get an access card that will allow our representatives into the site. This puts the ACWSA actively involved with keeping the historic site alive, and that makes this exciting!

Several of us have been throwing around ideas for ways the ACWSA can contribute to the actual maintenance of the site. One idea we have entertained is "adopting" one of the points of the star and taking on the responsibility or removing brush and over growth, much like my students did, and maintaining that point as it would have looked when the fort was garrisoned. We welcome any additional project ideas you may have, but would like to make it recognized that funding is one thing that is in short supply but labor is something that we can provide!

Just this past week, after voting to join the Coalition, I received the following e-mail, and am now extending the invitation to you:

Dear Chris,

The Coalition will be hosting our annual Fireworks viewing get-together at Historic Fort Wayne on this coming Monday, June 21. Coalition members & their families can arrive @ 1700 hours, park in the main Visitors' Parking Lot, and proceed into the Star Fort. We plan on having our usual BBQ, so bring chairs! I was going to post this on the ACWSA FaceBook page, but since it's a "open to all" site, thought better of that, and hope you can email or contact as many members as possible in the region who may be interested.

When your members arrive, have them sign in as "HFWC" members, and tell the guards you're there for the Coalition Fireworks Party.

Hope to see you there!  
Lloyd Hevelhorst  
Member-at-Large, Executive Board  
HFWC, Detroit

I plan on going, and hope to see some of you there! Wear normal street clothes not uniforms. This would be a great opportunity to wear the ACWSA shirts that were distributed at Richmond, if you'd like. In either event, sorry for the short notice, but I hope you can make it!

You can keep up on Historic Fort Wayne Coalition events and read some more about the history of the fort at the Coalition's website at <http://www.historicfortwaynecoalition.com>

## Recent Events

### *Richmond Shoot – June 12-13 – 8<sup>th</sup> Arkansas/1st South Carolina.*

The Richmond shoot was a great time, even if few people camped! The event was run efficiently, and the registration process seems to be working great. Thanks go in both regards to Wally Gibson for his effort and dedication in making it happen. Many thanks also go to Wally's wife Jen for running the statistics for the shoot. With the Gibson's efforts, all of the events started on time, and finished in good order. The only possible complaint I can imagine was the weather was too nice Saturday and more appropriate for lounging by the beach!

The pistol match was the most memorable for me because for the first time I was able to shoot my LeMat revolver in a competitive match. Well, ok, just in a "match." Despite the fact that I was able to load and shoot ten rounds, nine from the revolving cylinder and one large round ball from the "grapeshot barrel", which most people would see as an advantage, I think the gun may actually be a disadvantage in competition. The revolver match in many respects is determined by who can shoot the fastest and accrue the least penalties. The extra time it takes to fire the additional shots in the LeMat makes it slower than the tiny 6- shooters, and therefore they have the advantage. This match was also the first time my teammates had ever fired a revolver match, and the first time Lloyd had fired a revolver. Leilani was shooting an 1851 Colt Navy and Ted and Lloyd were both shooting 1858 Remington New Army. We finished last, but that is ok.



The 146th New York revolver team. (L to R) Leilani Martin, Lloyd Hevelhorst, Chris Hubbard, Ted Neda.

Carbine team and smoothbore finished out Saturday because due of the heat all mortar teams decided not to shoot. It was really hot. One thing that was pointed out during the carbine match by several competitors that were using the new orange rubber Smith tubes that were announced last month is that they were having ignition problems, and in some cases their guns were not staying locked closed. Not having firsthand experience myself, I guess the tubes need some more experimentation, and if anyone would like to write a firsthand review of their use I would be happy to include it in a future newsletter.

The Sunday morning musket team match was the largest we have had to date, and ran smoothly despite all teams being able to shoot. A video of the musket match is available on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8J9t450p3OI>

We tried something new for this shoot in that we were looking for other colors to shoot at. We painted the pigeons red so that they were not either orange or black. We also painted the metal targets a very bright colors. Most people seemed to enjoy this, so it was a good idea. The only downside was the pigeons which were painted with latex paint. Unfortunately the latex made the pigeons hold together so it was hard to tell which ones were hit at times. We won't be using latex paint again! Live, laugh, and learn, I guess.

In my opinion the thing we need to work on in the area of targeting is getting in the habit of having only the first relay pick up metal targeting if it is to be used. Since the second relay uses the same targets as the first we only need to pick up one set per position. We also need to get in the habit of collecting pigeon ties and unbroken targeting. If we return those things to the target depot we can save money in the long run and be able to continue to keep costs down. Another thing of note that it appears most people are getting in the habit of is that the range was taken down and cleaned up in less than 15 minutes. Many thanks to those members who brought cordless screw guns to take apart target frames and to the many more members who were there not only cleaning up their own mess, but assisting with the dismantling of the range. It really went smoothly and quickly so that all could go home in a timely manner. As time passes this will become second nature, I hope.

I also want to point out that the 8th Arkansas elected to put their share of profits from this shoot toward the fund raising efforts for the Breast Cancer shoot to be held in October. Thank you 8th Arkansas! More info about additional fund raising efforts will be published in the coming months!

Full stats for the Richmond shoot have been posted by Wally on the ACWSA website at <http://www.acwsa.org/MIOHInvites/Results%20-%20Richmond%20June%2012th%20-%2013th.pdf>

### ***Memorial Day Parade, Dearborn - May 31<sup>st</sup>***

The ACWSA marched in the parade at Dearborn in conjunction with the Sergeant John S. Cosby Camp 427 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) organization in Dearborn. The weather was great, a bit warm, but a nice start to summer. We had 15 members



plus the guys from the SUVCW. We were able to carry the new banner we had made with the web address and the ACWSA logo. This was great, and since the logo and contact information is large, we were contacted following the parade by a father and son who are interested in learning about Civil War firearms and in joining the association. The two men live in Dearborn, and are planning on coming to check out a

variety of guns at my home in the near future. Hopefully this kind of thing will pay off for us, but in reality the main reason for marching in the parade is paying honor to those who have given their lives in our defense, and for me personally, especially those 600,000 Boys of '61.

### **Coming Events**

#### ***Richmond Log Cabin Day - June 27<sup>th</sup>***

Norm Gibson reports that Log Cabin Day in Richmond is the last Sunday in June. He says this is a time of show and tell and that the visitors they get at the historic village in Richmond are

really interested in seeing whatever it is that you are interested in telling about. At past Log Cabin Days Norm and others have put on Civil War cooking demonstrations, built field fortification elements, and had weapons on display. If you are interested and available for this event get in touch with Norm.

### ***Northville Victorian Festival - July 3rd***

Jim Bone is heading up an effort to have the ACWSA represented in Northville, and reports that we have been asked to set up a Civil War encampment in Northville's historic village (Millrace Village) on July 3rd, in the morning after Northville's Independence Day parade. The parade is at 10:00am and the Village will be open from 11:00am - 4:00pm. We would like people and uniforms, guns, cannons, tents and flags. Anything you think that would be of interest about the Civil War, or our hobby, would be ok. This hopefully should be a great opportunity for recruitment. Please let Jim know as soon as possible who might be available, interested and willing. Jim is coordinating this effort, so please contact him or post on the Facebook page.

### ***Historic Fort Wayne Civil War Days - July 10-11th***

The Historic Fort Wayne Coalition will be hosting Civil War Days at the fort on July 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. This is a reenactment with an encampment, several battle scenarios and active tours of the fort. Civil War Days is one of the major events hosted annually by the HFWC. On most weekends, anyone can enter Fort Wayne, walk around and see all the buildings. However, this event is held to bring the era of the Civil War to life. Over two days, participants from across Michigan and other Great Lakes states take on the roles of Union soldiers, their Confederate counterparts and the civilians from both sides of this great conflict. Read more about the event at <http://www.historicfortwaynecoalition.com/cwdays.html>

### ***Blue Water ACWSA Shoot - July 23rd-24th***

Included in this e-mailing you will find the invite for the match we are sponsoring at Blue Water near the end of July. You will notice several different team events, including Musket Carbine, Revolver, Smoothbore, Mortar and Artillery. Please pay attention to the registration and start times for these team events as we have moved them forward a little to try and finish the day earlier on Saturday. We also have added a long range rifle match on Friday night. If you have never fired your musket at 200 yards, don't be afraid to give it a try.

One thing I want to point out to you because it is a bit out of the norm is the musket match on Sunday. The concept behind this match is the fact that infantry did not fire at 100 yards and 50 yards only, but rather fired volleys as they marched into battle attempting to dislodge the enemy, at various ranges, and then fired repeated rounds or volleys at the position they intended to hold. With that in mind following the second relay of each of the first three events the skirmish line will advance, gaining ground on the "enemy", and then will occupy a position 50 yards from their lines, and hold there until relieved. (Please take note of distances!) The match is six events, and may be a little challenging, but should be worth a try. I hope you won't be discouraged by this concept and that you will be willing to come out and try some new ranges!

Team Commanders, please submit all estimated team entries to Chris Hubbard at [minieball577@yahoo.com](mailto:minieball577@yahoo.com) by July 18th.

## Featured Uniform Sources

It is with pleasure that I present you this month with an ACWSA member as a supplier of high quality uniform parts. Joe Toth is a name and a friend we all know, and because of that I asked Joe to write a few words about his leatherworking past and his business philosophy.

In 1973, I purchased a used 44cal. Remington Rev. from Bob Hubbard Sr. At the time I didn't have the money to spend on a holster, although, I wanted one. The word cheep may have also entered into it. My employer at the time was an architect from Arizona, who told me, "out west, if you need a holster, you just make it". So we bought a piece of leather, drew a pattern, and made a holster sewn with cat-gut fishing line. That was my first experience with leather working.

By 1976 I had made more leather products for myself and a few items for team mates. It was at this point that I decided that if I was to continue working in leather, I should seek professional training. I also wanted to learn how to make shoes. I signed up for a class, slipper making, at Greenfield Village, taught by Mr. Philip Hawk . Mr. Hawk was a master craftsman, having set up and operated the shoe and saddle shops in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.

Over the next 20 years, I learned shoe making, boot making, belt and strap, knife sheath, sword sheath, saddle and harness repair, and 12 different hand stitching techniques, and many tips on the preparation and finishing of leather. Along the way, I assembled a reference library and expanding catalog and pattern file , with every new product request.

In 1991 I formed Period Leather Co., and went on line with a web site. Some of the most unique request I have produced are, a shot gun holster worn on the back for a Confederate reenactor, Revolutionary War leather helmets, an exact copy of an 1830 hutting pouch in the Gettysburg Collection, and a Mule Foot cap box, fist made for the South in England. I have been fortunate to find original items to copy, like a man's pocket book, a cartridge box and cap box both carried by a member of Co. K, 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Vol. Infantry, and a ships fire bucket. I take great pride in the production of , a pair of 1812 Officers Boots, a French 1860 Backpack, researched in Paris, and a copy of an Artillery horse watering bucket.

To date, the most difficult project I produced has been a sword scabbard. The scabbard required a special class with Mr. Hawk, and a lot of patience and a mandrel to form over. The scabbard was a ¾" dia. leather tube that had to allow a square bladed sword though and fit into a brass throat and drag and have no apparent visible seem. The sword was carried by a child in the 1870's Russian Corte.

The latest item I have produced was a handmade pair of 1860 Brogans using research preformed by Ernest W. Petterkin at the Smithsonian. The shoes were made, paying attention to such details as, material thickness, type of leather, rand and welt construction, as well as hand sewing the sole and heals on.

the only use of wood pegs, as in the research, was the building up of the stacked heals. Dispelling a modern notion that wood peg soles were most common. The Government at the time actually paid less money for the less desirable peg soles as opposed to the sewn on sole shoes and boots.

It is my ongoing goal to produce the best reproductions I can, with attention to material, appearance, while always attending to serviceability and quality. I always welcome custom orders.

Joe Toth  
2nd Texas  
periodleather@comcast.net

In my opinion the best thing about Joe's leatherworking philosophy is that he will try anything! He specializes in bespoke, or custom made, items. If you need something out of the ordinary, like a Marine Corps Boarding helmet, Henry rifle ammo box, or Zouave jambieres Joe is your man. I have been shooting with a carbine pouch made by Joe for the last 16 years, and it is still in great shape. I have included some images of Joe's recent project below.



Above are the are the Union Shoes mentioned by Joe in his article.

Below are the Confederate Mule Foot Cap Pouch and a French Knapsack.



If there is an article you would like to see in the news, or something you have written that you would like to share with other members, please pass it along! I would be happy to print it!

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<b>ACWSA Michigan Calendar Dates</b>			
<b>2010</b>			
Date	Location	Hosts	Notes
May 8-9	Blue Water Port Huron, MI	146 <sup>th</sup> New York	<a href="#">LSHS Field Trip/ 1-Day ACWSA</a>
May 31	Dearborn	Chris Hubbard	Memorial Day Parade
June 12-13	Richmond	8 <sup>th</sup> Arkansas	
July 24-25	Blue Water Port Huron, MI		Includes Artillery
July 31-August 1	Grayling	Loomis' Battery	Long Range Artillery
August 14-15	Richmond	1 <sup>st</sup> South Carolina	
September 24-26	Grayling	7 <sup>th</sup> Wisconsin / Loomis' Battery	Includes Artillery
October 9-10	Richmond		
October 23-24	Blue Water Port Huron, MI	146 <sup>th</sup> New York	<a href="#">LSHS Field Trip/ 1-Day ACWSA</a>

<b>ACWSA Wisconsin/Illinois Calendar Dates</b>			
<b>2010</b>			
Date	Location	Hosts	Notes
June 5-6	Appleton, WI	66 NC & 2 WI	
July 17-18	Bristol WI	56VA	
August 7-8	Boscobel WI	15 WI & 8 WI	Civil War Days
September 4-5	Rhineland WI		
September 11-12	Bristol WI		ACWSA/N-SSA