

Official Newsletter of the Historic Fort Wayne Coalition

From the Editor

Little did Montgomery Meigs know just how long Fort Wayne would exist. Built in the 1840's as a defense against a possible invasion from Canada, it has certainly seen its share of history. It has seen the growth and modernization of the United States military. It has been the last place called home for

soldiers before leaving their home town for combat. It has been an induction center and a vehicle depot. The Fort now, is our history. Many of our local veterans left for war from this Fort. It is our duty, our privilege and our honor to remember those who came here before us.



Photo: Fort Wayne Archives

Chairman – Tom Berlucchi

I will take this month's Chairmen's Report and start off again by saying what a group we have. At the February work-day we came to the rescue of the Visitor Center and 1905 Guard House. Water pipes in both buildings had frozen and burst spraying water all over, that would have caused considerable damage and may have even prevented the use of the visitor center for the upcoming season. No one enters these buildings very often. In the visitor's center that

means the broken water line in the custodial closet might have sprayed water all the way into the main gallery, and might have sprayed for days, if not weeks before it would have been found. The damage would have destroyed the flooring, tiles, etc. The water had been leaking for about ½ hr before it was found by Jim Conway and within minutes of his call for help, the entire work day group came running. We had to crawl under the building thru

the crawl space to turn off the water (that meant finding the right valves as well). The water was shut off, mops buckets, wet/dry vacuums came from all over. Everyone pitched in and then went back to work on the projects they were doing. We avoided a HUGE disaster.

Not more then 2 to 3 hours later another water line broke in the 1905 Guard House and again went out the

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Donated
Man-Hours
as of Feb.
24, 2007

400.5

Vice Chair- Will Eichler

Greetings, Friends! It's been a very busy month for us despite winter finally showing its ugly face here in Michigan! I'm thrilled that we had an even larger turnout for the February workday than we did on a mild day in January. As a reminder, please try to join us for our next workday on Saturday, March 24. As the hours we work together at the Fort continues to increase, the visibility and safety of the site grows by leaps and bounds. This can only happen currently because of all of our dedication and GREAT WORK!

As you find elsewhere in the newsletter, we have given over 400 hours this year to the Fort. In 2006, our last goal for time given was to give enough time to be the equivalent of one full-time staff employee at the Fort. This time averages 160 hours per month (40 hours a week for 4 weeks). We've given over 160 hours at each workday so far, plus extra hours put in by members on separate work at the Fort! However, we won't have a work day in April because of the Federal Battalion Drill and Medich Confederate Battalion Drill tying up so many of our members. This training for our Civil War re-

enactors will better prepare us to interpret the men who came through the Fort in the 1860s. Your help at other workdays to make up the 160 hours we might have given in April is greatly appreciated!

I'm the person working closest with our application for 501c3 non-profit status. I only want to make a short report now and say that it is moving along well and that I hope to have a complete report for all of



Will Eichler and Mathew Asher

Photo: Sandra Asher

you at the March business meeting.

I was thrilled to receive an email in the middle of February from Matt Musik, a Coalition member. As Matt had looked around the Fort during the February workday, he had several ideas for fundraising and interpretation to the public. He wrote them down and presented them. Great show, Matt! If you are like Matt and have ideas, please write them down and make sure they get to at least one member of the Executive Board. I don't promise the idea will be implemented, but I do promise it will be consi-

dered. Only by all of us brainstorming, together and separately, can we come up with the ideas that will help this Fort survive. Let me close this month by making the comment that many of you have heard me say during the workdays, "All things are possible. They only take two ingredients – time and money." Your hours of work provide the time. Your membership dues are the money we can regularly plan on. Please check and see if you've paid your dues for 2007. If not, that little bit of money from each of us will go a long way to providing for the events and projects we do to help promote and restore Historic Fort Wayne. Your passing the story on to others encourages more people to join and the time and money compounds – as does the enjoyment. Once the 501c3 status is in place, there will be a new effort to create fundraising that is as robust as the work we do, so our work is financially supported. Rest assured that during this time of preparation, the Executive Board members are already talking about fundraising ideas.

See you at the Fort on March 24th!

HISTORIC FORT WAYNE COALITION

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Spotlight On – Dave Jamroz

Dave Jamroz isn't looking to be the most 'gung-ho' member of the Coalition. He's looking to share his knowledge of the Fort, and to help rebuild it's former glory. He took a tour in the early 1980's and was quite impressed with the brickwork and sallyports. A rowing friend of his talked him into joining.

His knowledge of the many West Point officers who once were stationed here at the Fort is quite keen. After all, he's a retired Lt. Colonel, who graduated West

Point in 1973!

For about a year, Dave has been "just a worker" here at the Fort. What he doesn't mention is his collaboration with Jim Conway in the writing of a book about Historic Fort Wayne. Due out in stores April 9th of this year, it promises to share much history of the Fort that isn't generally well known.

Dave's dream is to one day see the Parrott guns mounted on carriages in front of the Guard House.



Dave Jamroz

Photo: Sandra Asher

Berlucchi – Cont'd from page 1

call for help and guess what – Full response from all the volunteers. The outcome was the same- 2 buildings saved from harm. How is this done? This group has stepped up, taken more projects no matter how small or how large and completed them with no problems. It is called a labor of love and pride.

Pride is really what keeps us all involved in Fort Wayne. That Pride is showing in the quality of workman-



Tom Steele

Photo: Sandra Asher

ship, events and workday turn outs. Now that the winter is breaking we are going to be shifting our efforts into a higher level and start working evenings also to get the place looking good for the Memorial Day public opening. Can we make a difference on the appearance? You all know that answer.

The season also is bringing in events and those events need volunteers to help make them first class events. We need everyone to assist in this. We will be forwarding to the membership a worksheet to sign up to help at events. This year the Coalition is involved in 8 events on eight different weekends. With the addition of the Detroit Ghost Tours, we could increase that even more. When we started this group there were only 3 events all summer for the public to see. Again we need your help. Please volunteer to work at them.

I am looking at either April or early May to hold training for tours guides. These guides will be needed to assist on weekends of events, possibly a week day if you can make it. This class will go over some of the following points- public speaking skills, presentation, tour routes, safety, and some Fort history. Remember that tours are to be given to educate the public in the Fort's construction, history and current usage. It's a great way for us to tell the story of this place we care so much about. If you are interested please contact any Executive Board member or myself.

I cannot tell you all just how proud I am to be the Chairmen of such a proud and wonderful group of volunteers. I look forward to working with you all this upcoming summer to make Fort Wayne one of the finest places in the State Of Michigan for the public to enjoy.

Upcoming Events

March 24 Work Day and General Membership Meeting

April 20-22 Federal Battalion Drill at the Fort

April 28-29 Confederate Battalion Drill at the Fort

May 11 Scranton Middle School Presentation – Brighton MI

May 12 Work Day and General Membership Meeting

May 25-27 Fort Wayne Through the Ages – Living History Event

June 9 Work Day at the Fort

June 23-24 British Victorian-Prussian Event at the Fort

July 8-9 Civil War Days at the Fort

August 10-23 14th Michigan Progressive Event



John Shook

Photo: Dave Jamroz

Member at Large – Ric Julian

Thanks once again to all those who helped with the Quartermaster Shop. **WE** made another major dent in the clean-up and organizing of the shop. I am in the process of get-

ting new tires for the band saw pulleys. Shawn is a great help with this. I hope I will be able to start on the casemate March 24th. Anyone that is interested please e-mail me. I do need an experienced per-

son with band saw knowledge. Weather permitting, I plan on staying the weekend.

Email me at

RNJulian@aol.co

Welcome New Members!

Greg Samson, Ian Kushair, Keith Kushair, Cindy Blake, Bobby Williams, Lon Kuehn, Christopher Allensworth and Shelley Greene

Victorian Event – Lloyd Hevelhorst

On the weekend of June 23-24, 2007, Historic Fort Wayne will host The 1st Annual British-Prussian Military Event. This event will include reenactors from the 1860-1880 era. After much discussion on the British Victorian Military Society (BVMS) Yahoo Group site this past fall regarding a wide interest in staging such an event, but lacking a proper site, I decided to inquire if there would be an interest in holding such a reenactment at the Fort, and received a host of positive responses from around the country. After checking with Tom Berlucchi and the Coalition Executive Board, we decided to go ahead with it. Units which have signed on so far, and their locations, are as follows:

The Kaiser Alexander Garde (Michigan Tech University)

The 1st Prussian Guard (Philadelphia, PA.)

The 35th Royal Sussex Regiment (New Jersey)

The 24th Regiment of Foot (California)

The Highland Brigade, consisting of members of the following Scottish Highland Regiments:

42nd Black Watch (Kansas City)

93rd Sutherlands (Michigan)

79th Regiment, The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders (New Jersey)

24th Regiment of Foot (Nebraska and Ontario)

Also accompanying the 35th will be several Victorian Ladies, in all their finery. Invitations have been sent out to various other units as well, and we hope to hear from them shortly.

Lynne Bidigare has graciously volunteered to cook a hearty meal for the reenactors on Saturday evening, a modest fee being requested to cover her costs. There will be drills and a skirmish scenario pitting the British troops against the Prussian units each afternoon on the Parade Ground. The troops will be billeted inside the Enlisted Men's Barracks, with a company street of tents posted in front of the Barracks. Stan Dolan, from Fresno, CA., has agreed to act as British commander, and Bob Kolka, professor at Michigan Tech, will serve as Prussian CO.

Our fond hope is that this 1st annual event will lead to Historic Fort Wayne being the site of the finest Victorian Military event in the country in future years.