



ABOUT the ALCWRT

- *The Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table is the oldest Civil War Round Table in Michigan, founded in 1952. Our JUBILEE (65th) anniversary was September, 2017.*
- *Meetings are each 3rd Thursday, September through May (except December), 7:30 pm, at the Charter Township of Plymouth City Offices, 9955 N. Haggerty, in the Chamber Council Room.*
- *For more information, contact ALCWRT President Liz Stringer at stringerL@aol.com*
- *Our web site is ALCWRT.org*
- *Like us on FACEBOOK...!
"Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table"*

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JOHN SIMMONS will be the featured speaker for the MAY 17th meeting of the Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table. His topic:

THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN of 1862: 21 DAYS in SEPTEMBER

John Simmons is clearly an avid student of the US Civil War, judging from the twenty-five page handout he made available at our April meeting. Your homework is to review it prior to his presentation in May, so that we all come prepared to participate in the discussion. *(If you weren't at the April meeting, there will be additional copies at the May meeting).*

UPCOMING EVENTS:

MAY 26--28 :: CIVIL WAR REMEMBRANCE at GREENFIELD VILLAGE

Everything from military tactics to the fashions of the time...
Three days of living history for a great family outing.

JUNE 9—10 :: CIVIL WAR DAYS at FORT WAYNE

Saturday 9:00 - 5:00 -- Sunday 9:00 - 4:00
Your opportunity to see the real deal as living historians take over the fort.

AUGUST 17-19 :: 2018 CWRT CONGRESS

See p.6 below for the details.

SEPT 20th is our NEXT MEETING, after the summer break

After our May meeting, we adjourn until Sept 20th.
Have a happy and safe summer!

65th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION...!

Better late than never, a dinner-and-speaker celebration of the ALCWRT's 65th year will be held in the spring of 2019. Will Green will be the guest speaker at the event to be held at the GAR building in Detroit.

FALL TRIP - 2018!

Liz is targeting "early fall" – probably September – for a trip to Kentucky. *To help finalize plans, you may see an email survey soon asking if you're likely to sign up. Prompt replies will be appreciated.*

NASHVILLE'S BELLE MEADE STUD FARM... and TWO CONNECTIONS to MICHIGAN

As you get ready to place your bets -- or just watch -- this year's Kentucky Derby, you might enjoy reading about Nashville's Belle Meade Stud Farm, its Civil War history... and two connections to Michigan.

Establishment of Belle Meade

The property which eventually became Belle Meade was purchased in 1806 by John Harding, who had earned the money to buy the original 250 acres from working for his father on their family farm. He and his bride soon moved into a log cabin on their new farm, located on the Natchez Trace near Nashville. With more and more settlers moving into the area, the farm from its beginnings was a diverse operation. It provided needed services to the area's new settlers through its blacksmith and cotton gin operations, and its grist mill. By 1820, John Harding had a new brick house built on a small hill on the property, and began to call his farm Belle Meade.

While John Harding was not formally educated, he was a skilled farmer and businessman. Thoroughbred racing, popular in the young country, was moving west from Virginia and the Carolinas. By 1816, John began boarding stallions (including those of his neighbor Andrew Jackson) and advertised in Nashville newspapers stud services at his farm. By 1823, he had registered his own racing silks with the Nashville Jockey Club and was training horses at the track on his McSpadden's Bend Farm.

By 1839, John's son William Giles Harding, who had worked with his father training horses, had taken over management of Belle Meade. Under his management of the property, the original brick house was enlarged, and Belle Meade eventually grew to encompass 5,400 acres. But William's greatest contribution was in the breeding of thoroughbreds. He saw horse racing as the way to identify the sires and dams to produce quality thoroughbreds. By 1860, William Giles Harding was thought to have the largest collection of silver trophies and cups of anyone in America. Belle Meade's annual crop of yearlings was highly sought after and quite lucrative for the farm.

Belle Meade during the Civil War

With the onset of the Civil War in 1861, racing and breeding operations came to a halt in the South. Throughout, Harding was able to keep his thoroughbred horses, even though horses from other farms were being requisitioned by both armies.

Harding was a staunch proponent of the Confederacy, and had donated \$500,000 to the Confederate States Army. (That sum gives you an idea of how lucrative the thoroughbred business was for Belle Meade). In 1862 he was arrested and imprisoned at Fort Mackinac for six months. Upon parole, he returned to Belle Meade.

Belle Meade was used as headquarters by Confederate General James Chalmers during the Battle of Nashville in late 1864. On December 15, the first day of the two-day battle, the blue and gray skirmished on the front lawn of Belle Meade outside the mansion. Visitors to the house today can see bullet damage on some of the house's stone columns.

Belle Meade's Heyday

By 1867, Belle Meade's stud operation was back in business. (Tennessee had voted to rejoin the Union in 1866). In 1868, Harding's daughter Selene married former CSA General William Hicks Jackson. They settled at Belle Meade to help her father manage the house and stud operations. By 1875, Belle Meade had become an internationally renowned thoroughbred farm and showplace. The farm sold breeding stock of ponies, but also Alderney cattle, Cotswold sheep, and Cashmere goats.

While William Giles Harding had had many successful studs prior to the Civil War, the annual yearling sales took off in 1867, with ponies sired by Jack Malone (1867-1872), Vandal (1870-1872), **Bonnie Scotland** (1873-1879), Great Tom (1879-1899), Enquirer (1880-1895), Bramble (1882-1891) and Luke Blackburn (1883-1904). In 1892, Belle Meade took in \$110,050 in its most successful yearling sale.

The Jacksons were avid entertainers and promoters of Belle Meade. They had developed six hundred acres of its grounds into an English-style deer park, and hosted many prominent visitors, among them President Grover and Frances Cleveland, Robert Todd Lincoln, President U.S. Grant, General William T. Sherman, General Winfield Scott Hancock, and Vice-President Adlai E. Stevenson.

Changing times

By the 1890's, Jackson had taken on debt to finance an expansion of the business. The Panic of 1893 and a decade-long financial crisis and depression, coupled with evangelical reform movements in Tennessee that led to the closure of racetracks and eventually an end to gambling, had a big impact on his ability to cover the debt. Competition from horse breeders in other parts of the country also was cutting into their business. In 1898 Jackson and his son began reduction sales to try to streamline operations. In 1902, they made \$172,665 from the annual yearling sale and the auction, but it was not enough to cover the debt. Both Jackson and his son died in 1903, so his son's widow Anne held several more dispersal sales until the storied operation was finally closed in 1904.

What about those two MICHIGAN CONNECTIONS?

It was mentioned above that William Giles Harding was imprisoned at Ft. Mackinac in 1862 for six months. The second connection to Michigan is through Belle Meade's thoroughbred operations, and a horse named Iroquois.

Iroquois was the first American-bred thoroughbred race horse to win prestigious races in England. He was bred in Pennsylvania in 1878 and purchased by Pierre Lorillard IV (of tobacco fame) in 1879. It was Lorillard that sent Iroquois and several other horses to race in England. Iroquois won four times in England as a two-year old, and won seven of his five races the next year there, including two of the three races in England's Triple Crown. (He placed 2nd in the third Triple Crown race). Iroquois' success in England made him famous across the world of racing.

After his racing career ended, Iroquois was sold several times to stud operations, and ended up at Belle Meade in 1886. Iroquois was the leading sire in 1892. He died at Belle Meade at the age of twenty-two in September, 1899.

And what of that Michigan connection?

There was a racetrack at one time in Detroit, and two of the streets nearby were named for famous racehorses of the time: Iroquois and Seminole. Later, as Detroit grew, the racetrack was closed and a developer began to build houses on the site. The developer named the new streets after Indian tribes and called the neighborhood Indian Village – even though the original two streets, Iroquois and Seminole, were named after racehorses, not Indians.

BELLE MEADE'S LEGACY CONTINUES ...

If you're in a betting mood on Derby Day, consider picking a horse in the bloodline of Belle Meade's famous Bonnie Scotland. A few of the winners descended from Bonnie Scotland:

Man-o-War (1917), Sea Biscuit (1933), War Admiral (1934), Secretariat (1970), Seattle Slew (1974), Affirmed (1975), California Chrome (2014).



Here is a picture of the only known lifetime oil portrait of **Bonnie Scotland**, premier stallion of Belle Meade Plantation, with chief groom Robert "Uncle Bob" Green, painted and dated 1879 by Herbert S. Kittredge (American, 1853- 1881). This painting sold at auction for \$48,000 in January 2018.

Thanks! to **LARISSA FLEISHMAN** and **KEN GIORLANDO**

for their enlightening presentation at our April 19th meeting showing (not just telling) us about

Life Experiences in the Civil War Era

in the local farming community of Erin Township, Michigan.

Here's a quick quiz to see what we learned....

WHAT DID WE LEARN...?

(Answers in "This and That" below).

- (1) Where was the farming community of Erin Township located?
(Hint: It's not far from here...)
- (2) Apples were an important crop on a typical farm of the era.
What were apples primarily used for?
- (3) About how many candles would the average farming family go through in a year?

THIS and THAT ...

* VISITOR's WELCOME ...

- ~ The ALCWRT welcomes friends, relatives, acquaintances...
- ~ We're always looking for new members, and visitors are **always welcome..!**
- ~ Here's the current **list of future meeting topics:**

* Sept 20:	Peter Gaudet:	"Gettysburg Photography Then and Now"
* Oct 18:	Michael Gillette:	"Chaplains of the Civil War"
* Nov 15:	Dr. David Stoddard:	"The Red River Campaign"

* WEBSITES for other nearby roundtables –

- Kalamazoo www.kcwrt.com
- Ann Arbor www.aacwrt.org

* STATION 885 –

- ~ Yes, the group still meets for dinner prior to the monthly meetings...
- ~ Please join us for spirited and enlightening conversation (and yes, dinner) !

* REFRESHMENTS for FUTURE MEETINGS –

- ~ Let Liz know if you're interested in bringing refreshments to a future meeting.

* ANNUAL DUES –

- ~ Worley is always happy to collect your dues
- ~ \$20 for a single ~\$35 for a couple
- ~ Dues are payable by the calendar year (January through December)

* QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS –

- (1) The farming community of **ERIN TOWNSHIP** was located around the intersection of today's Nine Mile and Gratiot Roads. Back in the day, Gratiot was known as School Road, because of the several schools located on it.
- (2) Almost every farm had an **APPLE ORCHARD**. Apples weren't for eating, but were for making cider. Years later, during Prohibition, the government (in its infinite wisdom) destroyed many farm orchards to prevent the making of cider.
- (3) Oil for oil lamps was expensive, so farm families made candles. An average family would use from 600 to 800 candles in a year.

The following info was forwarded along by Fred Priebe:

2018 CWRT CONGRESS

AUGUST 17-19

Sustaining and growing CWRTs is the focus of the CWRT Congress. Last year, we held a very successful symposium hosted by the Bull Run CWRT in Centreville, VA. (To read what attendees had to say, click this link:

<http://www.pscwrt.org/activities/CWRT-congress/2017-congress.html>

This year, the congress will be held in Harrisburg, PA hosted by the National Civil War Museum with assistance from the Harrisburg CWRT. The agenda this year is much expanded to include a reception on Friday, August 17 including a behind the scenes tour of the museum and a presentation by Chris Mackowski on *That Furious Struggle: Chancellorsville and the High Tide of the Confederacy*.

On Saturday, the congress begins with "takeaways" including enhanced fundraising and speaker recruitment, no cost marketing, preservation and CWRT assistance and social media as the lynchpin to 21st century marketing. Following the congress, there will be a book signing with eleven Civil War historians and authors, a networking opportunity and dinner at the museum.

On Sunday, Wayne Motts, CEO of the museum and licensed battlefield guide, will be conducting a tour of the Gettysburg battlefield.

To learn more about the 2018 CWRT Congress, to register for the event and to get a discounted rate at a local hotel, click the button below or use the following link:

<http://www.pscwrt.org/activities/CWRT-congress.html>

We hope to see you in August!

[CWRT Congress](http://www.pscwrt.org/activities/CWRT-congress.html)