



NEWSLETTER



*The Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument
Support Group*

Vol. V, No. 1 (Dec 3, 2005)

Fundraising Continues for Monument Restoration!!

As of December 3, 2005, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument Support Group has received donations and/or commitments in the amount of \$494,496. The new donors since August 9 are: The Gries Family Foundation, Hahn Loeser & Parks, Louise H. and David S. Ingalls Foundation, the Western Reserve Civil War Roundtable, the Northeast Ohio Civil War Roundtable and Mr. Jeff Legan.

The funds needed to meet the goal of \$1,048,500 are \$554,004.

So please, everyone, in addition to renewing your membership and paying your 2006 membership dues of \$25.00, help the Support Group meet its 2006 commitment of \$5,000 to the Monument Revocation Fund by making a special contribution.

The Fundraising Committee has already asked the Ohio General Assembly for a capital improvement appropriation to help fill the gap. Additional support from foundations is anticipated in December. Civil War and Veterans' groups will also be solicited so that there will be a broad base of support for this very vital project.

County Commissioners Authorize Hiring of Restoration Architect:

On December 1, 2005, the Cuyahoga County Commissioners authorized the Cuyahoga County Architect, Berj Shakarian, and Cuyahoga County Central Services to hire a renovation architect and to request qualification sheets from architects and engineering firms. After these statements are obtained and reviewed, formal proposals will be requested and juried following an interview process. All we can say is:

OFF WE GO!!

Membership Campaign, 2005 and 2006:

As year end draws nigh, it is apparent that the 2005 membership will regrettably be less than 2004. Attached is a list of the 2005 members; the new members have an asterisk by their name. Thank you and I ask for your continued support.

It is now almost 2006; enclosed is a membership renewal form. Please give careful consideration to donating more than just your dues. Costs of administration, routine mailings

including ongoing events, at the Monument have increased and the need to fulfill the Support Group's \$5,000 commitment to Monument restoration in 2006 is very compelling. There are two new lines on the renewal form for your consideration. This will enable you to designate where your additional donation is to be applied.

We still need volunteers; please indicate your interest on the reverse side of the application; we will follow up with you and get you involved.

Monument Visitation:

Sign-in Monument visitation, as of October 31, 2005 was down almost 20%. Thousands of Clevelanders see the Monument each day; a fair number have their lunch there during the summer months – sitting on the limestone walls. Relatively few come inside to the Museum Room. Perhaps we should give consideration to opening from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., an additional two hours, so that we could attract more visitors. This, however, would require additional overtime payments to our staff.

Although it is but poor consolation, visitation at Hale Farm and the Ohio Historical Society sites were also down by similar percentages in 2005. WE DO NEED TO INCREASE VISITATION!!

Landscaping:

173 yew bushes were planted in early September. ParkWorks did the job with volunteers from the Ford Motor Company. The yew bushes appear to be doing well and are now protected by a plastic tarp-like screen stapled on wooden posts (which are too short) in order to protect the bushes against sidewalk salt. The Monument still needs one additional crabapple tree, 65 or so yew bushes and an underground irrigation system.

Many compliments were received this year with respect to the very, very green lawns, the gorgeous flower beds; the Monument has never looked as good in the last 15 years.

Monument Maintenance:

Steve Hill, Project Manager of the Cuyahoga County Central Services (our liaison), moved to Arizona; we will indeed miss his help and cheerful smile.

Venus Bronzeworks (George Gikas) cleaned, waxed and made minor repairs to all of the lower exterior bronze statues. The outside statuary is now a deep brown-black without any splotches of green oxidation. Also completed well ahead of schedule were the cleaning and waxing of all the interior bronzes – the medallions, memorial busts and the reliefs. These works of art are truly magnificent: come see them, they cleaned up well! Many “kudos” to Venus Bronzeworks for doing an exceptionally fine job and to Dave Swetland, whose donation initiated this program.

Electricians at Cuyahoga County Central Services installed new electrical conduit, a new panel box and other improvements to the Monument's electrical system in late October. Their work is deeply appreciated.



Accession:

Dean A. Taylor generously donated to the Monument a gold and silver engraved M-1851 Naval Revolver. This beautiful gun was a “presentation piece” given to high ranking officers and governmental officials. The cylinder is engraved with tall naval sailing ships and the barrel features elegant scrolling. With its 7.5” octagonal barrel and a strong frame, the pistol was a handsome and reliable weapon. Many thanks to Dean for this wonderful gift.

Monument Events:

Descendants’ Day: On September 10, 2005 the Monument Support Group conducted its third annual meeting and its first Descendants’ Day. Four Civil War-era flags were presented by the Sons of Union Veterans, James A. Garfield Camp No. 142. These four flags are now posted and, in guard, at the corners of the central shaft of the Monument, with the 33-star flag at the southwest corner and proceeding clockwise, with the 36-star flag at the southeast corner. These flags represent the states that were within or admitted to the Union during the Civil War.

Descendants spoke about their ancestors. Jane B.N. Brook talked about her great uncle, Col. William Creighton of the 7th OVI; Jerry Young read from letters of Gershom Morse Barber, Lt. Col. of the 197th OVI (formerly of the 5th Ohio Sharpshooters); Richard T. Prasse described the role of his ancestors, Frank and Frederick Prasse, in the 107th OVI and how that unit had performed at Gettysburg. Jon Silvis, Executive Director of the Support Group, related stories about his ancestors, the S. Gesner brothers.

Attendees included Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Scofield, III from Pennsylvania, Nancy Yahraus, President of the Ohio 103rd OVI (who lives in Michigan), and 50 or 60 others. Wonderful Civil War music was provided by Judy Thomas and the Anonymous String Band. A great photograph of them and Monument appeared in the Sunday *Plain Dealer* on September 11th.

Ghost Tales and Tunnel Tours at the Monument: On October 29, 2005 from noon until 4:00 p.m. tours of the basement exterior vaults were conducted by the Monument staff for qualified children and adults. Qualifications consisted of being told three Civil War ghost stories. There were over 100 participants, including several dens of Cub Scouts. Mary Louise and Tim Daley, our two “Nancies”, Skedis and Yahraus, and several others helped with the tales.

The Ohio 41st Re-enactors were present, including Mr. and Mrs. Frank Zombek. They drilled and entertained the youngsters, who admired their uniforms.

Totally unanticipated was the gentle presence of the Antrim Mennonite Choir from Holmesville, Ohio. This wonderful group of 25-30 singers in their traditional attire sang Mennonite hymns and handed out leaflets from the northwest Monument Steps. They accepted an invitation to come into the Monument and were served with cider, donuts and coffee.

The weather was beautiful and it was great to be at the Monument while it was serving its intended function so admirably.

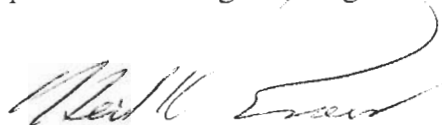


Victorian Christmas: The outdoor Monument trees are now covered with gold-orange holiday lights, the interior is decorated with red bows and greenery and a Victorian Christmas tree. Please come to the Monument over the holidays and see for yourself!

The Monument Restoration is “on its way.” A very good start has been made with the fundraising but a serious, continuing effort must be mounted to raise the balance. Memberships and visitation regrettably are both down. The Monument appearance and maintenance has improved considerably.

In slightly less than five years, the Support Group has made a tremendous difference. Please recall the following: the Ohio Timeline articles, the sales counter, locks on the doors, repairs to the basement gate, Monument leaflets, payment for programs and activities, the website, research on the S.S. Sultanna and the “Names on the Walls.”. The County has responded and more than matched the Support Group’s effort with the restoration of the exterior statuary, the cleaning and tuckpointing of the exterior of the Monument, redoing the paving stones on the Monument’s walkway and just recently, updating the electrical system.

The progress is all very exciting!! Please keep up your support: renew your membership, volunteer, visit and bring others with you to visit the Monument and consider making a contribution in addition to your annual membership fee. Thanks for all you have done; let’s keep up the effort and great things will happen.



Neil K. Evans, President

