



## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

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### **Snowfall muffles Civil War museum's 160th anniversary**

#### **President Street Station closed for damage inspection**

By Edward Gunts, Baltimore Sun, February 22, 2010

Last Thursday was the 160th anniversary of the opening of the historic President Street train station, home of Baltimore's Civil War Museum, but nobody did much celebrating.

The small brick structure at 601 President St. was condemned by the city Feb. 12. It is just one of several historic buildings, including the Baltimore Streetcar Museum, damaged by the back-to-back storms that dumped about 40 inches of snow in Central Maryland.

The museum typically opens on weekends in February because it's Black History Month, and the train station was a stop on the Underground Railroad route that some slaves took to escape to freedom. "It's a shame we weren't able to open. It really put in a crimp in our plans, because February is a big month for the museum," said Ralph Vincent, treasurer of The Friends of President Street Station, a nonprofit group that runs the museum. President Street Station is a landmark and one of the oldest structures in the Harbor East renewal area. It was a key terminal in the city's early railroad network, and is associated with some of the first casualties of the Civil War. On April 19, 1861, troops from the 6th Massachusetts Regiment marching from President Street to Camden Station were attacked by Southern sympathizers, resulting in the deaths of four soldiers and 12 civilians. Margaret B. Martin, chief of the design and construction division of

Baltimore's Department of General Services, said city representatives inspected the station's interior after the second February snowstorm and determined it shouldn't be entered until the exterior can be inspected from a lift.

The building apparently is not in imminent danger of collapsing. "There are no structural concerns with the roof or building," Deputy Mayor Andrew Frank said in an e-mail. "We closed the building out of concern that a water leak would damage the electrical system. We have a contractor scheduled for early next week to further assess the situation and develop a timeline for the repairs."

The Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, a nonprofit group that also had its headquarters in the restored train station, has moved to the 1000 block of Lancaster St. in a space donated by H&S Properties Development Corp. "We're very grateful for their help," said Laurie Schwartz, executive director. Vincent hopes the problems will be fixed in time for the museum to reopen "by the end of this month or early March."

### **Cumberland Township tables Gettysburg casino zoning decision**

BY SCOT ANDREW PITZER,  
Gettysburg Times,  
*February 23, 2010*

After two and a half hours of discussion Monday night, the Cumberland Township Planning Commission tabled its talks over whether to support casino land-zoning in the municipality. Instead, the planning board scheduled a March 11 meeting to vote on a proposed zoning

amendment submitted by Mason Dixon Resort & Casino co-partners David LeVan and Joseph Lashinger. LeVan and Lashinger are hoping to transform the Eisenhower Inn along Business 15 into an exclusive slots resort, but need a zoning amendment to facilitate their project. The property is already home to commercial, recreational and residential development.

"We have to provide for every potential land-use that law allows," explained Cumberland Township Planning Commission Chairman James Henderson.

Under the current zoning revision, "gaming facilities" would be permitted anywhere in the municipality's mixed-use district, which includes major roadways out of historic Gettysburg. A casino is currently not an allowable land-use within Cumberland Township, but state law must include language for every type of development.

Township planning commission member Jim Paddock felt that the five-person panel was moving "too fast" in considering Mason Dixon's zoning amendment in time for the Board of Supervisors' originally-scheduled March 2 session. Paddock, the husband of No Casino Gettysburg chairwoman Susan Star Paddock, noted that the casino site is located within a half-mile of the boundaries of the Gettysburg Battlefield. The location has drawn a clear — sometimes heated — line between casino supporters and adversaries.

"It's unique in that we have a 6,000 acre military park," he said. "Our township wraps around it. It seriously offends heritage tourists." Henderson replied: "I've seen information in both directions." The township's board of supervisors



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originally proposed allowing gaming facilities in "mixed-use" commercial zones within the township. However, the planning commission indicated Monday night that it would rather place gaming facilities under "conditional use" land development regulations. That means developers would have to apply to the township with each unique project to earn an exemption.

No Casino Gettysburg Chairwoman Susan Star Paddock attended the meeting with about 20 other locals, and said she supports the change, calling the previous zoning amendment "inadequate."

"Cumberland Township is kind of in the public eye tonight," she said, citing the Eisenhower Inn's proximity to the Civil War battlefield. "There are more people watching Cumberland Township tonight...because it is a national treasure," Susan Paddock continued. "We don't want any blank check zoning."

Jim Paddock voiced extreme opposition to the proposed mixed-use zoning amendment. He cited lighting, noise and traffic studies among his concerns.

"If someone looks at the facts, the gamble for Gettysburg isn't worth it," he said. "It's a major, major issue, nationally and internationally." Stephanie Mendenhall was the only other member of the public to speak about the zoning amendment. She opposed the legislation, too. "I don't want to see family entertainment destroyed," Mendenhall said about converting the hotel and adjoining All-Star Sports Complex into a gambling site. Cumberland Township supervisors David P. Waybright and Debra Golden both attended the meeting. Waybright answered questions from

the planning commission, but Golden did not offer comment. Waybright said last month that we "have to allow gaming somewhere in the township" because the "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has determined that gaming is an allowable activity." Late in 2006, the state's Gaming Control Board rejected another LeVan casino project: "Crossroads Gaming Resort & Spa" in Straban Township. The board cited "overwhelming opposition" and the impact of Maryland slots in its denial. Now, LeVan plans to apply for the state's lone remaining "resorts license" by the Wednesday, April 7 deadline.

Meanwhile, the Cumberland Board of Supervisors has rescheduled its special meeting date to ponder gaming facilities in the township's mixed-use district. The meeting is now scheduled Thursday, March 18 at 9 a.m., compared to Tuesday, March 2 at 7 p.m.

### **Guns from famed Confederate raider CSS Alabama restored**

By Bruce Smith, The Associated Press, February 7, 2010  
CHARLESTON, S.C. -- A crate arrived in Mobile on Friday carrying a piece of painstakingly restored Confederate history.

The cargo was a gun from the famed Confederate naval raider CSS Alabama which was conserved at the same South Carolina lab where the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley is being restored.

The three-ton gun, one of two restored at the lab, will be displayed at the Museum of Mobile.

The second remains in Charleston where there are plans to display it at a museum that will one day display

the Hunley, said Paul Mardikian, the head conservator on the Hunley project.

"It's a relief for me to see them done," Mardikian said Friday. "Cannon are inherently difficult to conserve and stabilize."

The Hunley, the first submarine to sink an enemy warship, was raised off the South Carolina coast in August 2000, and brought to the lab. The next day one of the Alabama guns arrived as well.

The second gun from the Alabama arrived later, said former Alabama state Sen. Robert Edington, who for years served as head of the CSS Alabama Association.

There were human remains -- including a jaw bone -- on the encrustation on that gun. Those remains were buried in a ceremony in Mobile several years ago and the gun arrived back in Alabama on Friday, he said.

It took about six years to conserve the guns.

Scientists initially had their hands full with the Hunley, the hand-cranked sub that contained the remains of its eight-man crew, so conservation work on the guns didn't begin immediately.

"I would think these are the last cannon I treat with conventional techniques," Mardikian said. "It takes less time to build a bridge than to treat a cannon."

The conventional method leaves the cannon in a bath of solution such as sodium hydroxide or sodium bicarbonate to remove salts left by sea water.

Clemson University researchers at the lab have been experimenting with a new subcritical fluid method. With that technology, fluids take on the characteristics of both a gas and a liquid under intense heat and



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pressure and have unique dissolving characteristics.



Chris Watters, an assistant conservator for the H.L. Hunley project, restores a gun from the CSS Alabama. Scientists announced Friday that they have completed a six-year restoration of two guns from the famed Confederate raider Alabama. (AP/Friends of the Hunley)

Mardikian said that once the technique is perfected, conserving a similar cannon in subcritical fluids could be done in six months rather than six years.

The Alabama, built in Liverpool, England, and launched in 1862, was one of the most successful raiders in naval history.

The CSS Alabama Association said that during the 22 months it sailed, her crew boarded 447 ships taking 2,000 prisoners. The cannon have inscriptions showing they were made in Liverpool, Mardikian said.

"It's very significant" to have the gun back, Edington said. "There were eight guns altogether on the ship and we have recovered four, one of each type. This was a standard Royal Navy 32-pounder -- 32 pounds refers to the weight of the cannon ball."

The Alabama sank in about 200 feet of water off Cherbourg, France, after an engagement with the Union's USS Kearsage on June 11, 1864, just a few months after the Hunley sank.

The wreck of the Alabama was discovered in 1984 by a French navy mine sweeper. The cannon were

raised in 2000, a few months before the Hunley.

### **Yacht that launched the America's Cup saw service in the Civil War**

By Frederick N. Rasmussen, Baltimore Sun, February 21, 2010  
Where did she come from? New York town.

Who was her skipper? Old Dick Brown.

Because of the snow and the chaos it exacted over the past week, you might have missed a short item in Monday's Baltimore Sun sports section reporting that, after a long drought, the America's Cup, the oldest trophy in international sports, will return to the U.S. after it had been in European hands for the past 15 years.

The trophy made its trans-Atlantic return after USA 17, owned by software tycoon Larry Ellison, swept by Switzerland's two-time defender Alinghi in waters off Valencia, Spain, last Sunday in the 33rd America's Cup competition.

Since 1851, wealthy yachtsmen, grandees and other assorted magnificoes have spent fortunes attempting to win or hold onto a Victorian-style, bottomless ewer that cost \$510 when it was new. The cup, often called the "Old Mug," is named for the first vessel to win the seagoing challenge in a race around England's Isle of Wight on Aug. 22, 1851, that saw the American schooner yacht America triumph over 14 of Britain's Royal Yacht Squadron's schooners and cutters. Oddly enough, the story of the America has a Maryland connection - and not a particularly happy one - and a few old-timers might remember when it lay in the Severn River during

the 1920s and 1930s at the Naval Academy.

Commissioned by the New York Yacht Club, the America was built by George Steers, a noted shipwright and designer, and William H. Brown, owner of a New York shipyard. The America that was commissioned by the New York Yacht Club and budgeted at \$20,000 was built in the Williamsburgh yard of Hawthorne & Steers, across the East River from New York City.

The vessel, which was 95 feet long, 23 feet wide amidships, was built of white oak, locust, cedar, chestnut and mahogany; its frame was supported by diagonal iron braces.

The America's keel was 80 feet long and its bottom was sheathed in copper that rose six inches above the water line. It displaced 170 tons and drew 11 feet of water.

"From stem to amidships the curve is scarcely perceptible, her gunwales being nearly straight lines and forming with each other an angle of about 25 degrees," reported The Spirit of the Times in an 1851 article. The America was delivered to its owners on June 17, 1851, and three days later set sail for Le Havre, France, with a crew of 13. The America was under the command of Commodore J. B. Stevens, who upon its arrival at Cowes, England, wired the following challenge to the Earl of Wilton:

"The New York Yacht Club, in order to test the different models of schooners of the old and new world, proposes through Commodore Stevens to the Royal Yacht Squadron, to run the yacht America against any number of schooners belonging to any of the yacht racing squadrons of the Kingdom." Stevens heard nothing for a week and then sweetened his challenge.



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He would sail the America against "any cutter, schooner or vessel of any other rig of the Royal Yacht Squadron."

Britain finally agreed to the race. At the helm of the America during the race was a veteran sea dog, Capt. Richard "Old Dick" Brown. The 81-mile race commenced at 9:55 a.m. on Aug. 22, 1851.

Gypsy Queen took the lead at the start, with America far back. Within 15 minutes, only three boats led the New York challenger, and it finally pulled ahead of the Aurora, its only serious competition.

Among the spectators that morning were Queen Victoria and Prince Albert aboard the royal yacht Victoria and Albert.

At 5:40 p.m., the America was rolling across the English Channel at a brisk 13 knots and 7½ miles ahead of its nearest competitor. When it was beating its way home to the final buoy, it is said that Queen Victoria asked: "Who is first?"

She was quietly told that it was the America.

"Who is second?" she asked.

"There is no second," came the reply.

At 6 p.m., the America was declared the winner, with the Aurora coming in some 24 minutes later.

The race generated such good feeling that Victoria and Albert paid a visit to the America three days after the contest.

Prince Albert became flustered when Brown requested that he wipe his feet before entering the America's cockpit. "I know who you are," stammered Brown, "but you'll have to wipe your feet."

After the historic race, the America was launched on a nomadic career that would come to an end in the Severn River.

It was purchased by Capt. John Blaquiere, an Indian army officer, who sailed the vessel in the Mediterranean, and after 1853, it went into a period of "obscurity and neglect," John Scott Hughes, yachting editor of The London Times, wrote in a 1958 article. The America lay in the mud at Cowes until being sold to Lord Henry Montagu Upton, who in turn sold it in 1858 to Henry S. Pitcher, an English shipbuilder.

A year later, the vessel ended up in the hands of Henry Edward Decie, who renamed it Camilla. Taken to the West Indies, it was outfitted as a blockade runner and sold to the Confederate navy at Savannah, Ga., in 1861.



The America in 1891

The vessel took on a third name as the Memphis, a dispatch boat. Found by the Union gunboat Ottawa in 1862, the Memphis was scuttled in the St. Johns River near Jacksonville, Fla., where it lay until being raised by Union forces and refitted. Restored to its original name, the America was part of the Union fleet off Charleston, S.C., and later was sent to Newport, R.I., then the temporary home of the Naval Academy, as a training vessel. In 1870, when England attempted to regain the cup, the America was one of 23 vessels seeking the prestigious prize; however, it came in fourth

behind newer and larger boats. The America was purchased in 1873 for \$5,000 by former Union Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, who had been in charge briefly of the occupation of Baltimore in 1861.

Butler raced the America for two decades, and after his death, his grandson continued its racing career. During the Spanish-American War, he lent it back to the Navy. In 1917, the Butler family sold the America to Charles H. W. Foster, who in turn sold it to Charles Francis Adams III, one of the country's most notable yachtsman; he became secretary of the Navy in 1929. He turned the America over to the Naval Academy for \$1 on Oct. 1, 1921, where it served as a training ship until World War II.

In 1929, Adams sent the vessel to the Navy yard in Norfolk, Va., where the vessel was surveyed. An estimated \$80,000 would be needed to repair the aged vessel.

The America was towed back to Annapolis and tied to the sea wall, where it seemed it would spend its final days.

It was later moved to an Annapolis shipyard, where it was hauled out of the water and placed in a shed. A heavy 22-inch snowstorm that has become known as the Palm Sunday snowstorm of March 29, 1942, spelled doom for the America, as the shed came crashing down and destroyed the vessel.

Beyond hope, the America was broken up, with souvenir pieces of its mainmast and other slivers of its timbers making their way into collections of yacht clubs, maritime museums and yachtsmen.

A 36-inch model of the America, made from the wood of the original, can be seen in the Naval Academy Museum, along with its wheel and



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binnacle.

### Famed 'Lincoln flag' takes a commemorative trip

By JESSICA COHEN, Pocono Record, February 19, 2010

MILFORD, PA — The Lincoln flag — that is, the American flag that cushioned Lincoln's bleeding head when he was the first American president assassinated — years ago hung from a shower rod on the second floor of the Milford library.

Those were the days when the Pike County Historical Society housed its local relics there, according to Lori Strelecki, local history expert and guide at The Columns, a 1904 neo-classical mansion on Broad Street, where the Society now has the flag more appropriately encased and protected from sunlight.

Last week, Jersey City, N.J. police came to Milford and escorted the flag to their city's Lincoln Park in observance of his birthday on Feb. 12 where, for the 145 years since Lincoln's death, the Lincoln Association annually holds a dinner honoring his birth.

He was born 201 years ago in 1809, and a wreath was laid on the Lincoln statue within the park; the flag was hung in the Casino in the Park nestled within the park, where the dinner was held; and Thomas Fleming, author of "The Intimate Lives of the Founding Fathers," spoke to attendees.

After he died in 1912, the house stayed in his family until 1930. But by the time the Pike County Historical Society bought it, in 1985, the house had been a restaurant, night club, boarding house, dance studio, and finally, a center for war veterans, according to Barbara Buchanan, Pike

County Historical Society president emeritus.

The flag was donated to the Historical Society in 1954 by V. Paul Struthers, whose mother, Jeannie Gourlay Struthers, had acted in the play "Our American Cousin" that Lincoln was watching the night he was shot by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865, six days after the large-scale surrender of Confederate forces under General Robert E. Lee that effectively ended the Civil War. Her father, Thomas, had also been in the play, and had accompanied Lincoln's body when it was moved from the theater box to a house. According to accounts of the event, to avoid putting Lincoln's head on the floor, someone had taken a flag from a railing near Lincoln's seat and rested his head on it.

Various experts have verified the authenticity of the flag — by its wool fabric, its 36 stars, and its similarity to flags of that time, as well as by the nature of the blood stain.

Joseph E. Garrera, president of the Lincoln Group of New York, studied the Lincoln Flag independently for one year. In his research document titled "The Lincoln Flag of the Pike County Historical Society," Garrera confirms his findings, declaring the Lincoln flag genuine.

Jeannie Gourlay lived her later life in Milford, and in addition to the flag, her son gave the Pike County Historical Society three of her costumes, two of which she likely wore the night of the assassination. They were displayed together for the first time this week. One is thought to be the dress Gourlay wore as a poor milk maid in the performance for Lincoln.

The plot of the play, said Strelecki, was that she's poor in the beginning, then receives an inheritance and gets

rich. "I couldn't get past the first page. I thought it was awful.—

Another dress Gourlay would have worn to sing a song. "The gown never worn for the song never sung," said Strelecki.

She says the dresses are made for theater. "They have loose hems. They're made to be altered. People say it's a shame the dresses have deteriorated. But the Textile Restoration Institute says restoring them would cost \$10,000. We rely on the kindness of strangers."

Dixie Rich, a local costume designer has "stabilized" the dresses.

### Donations Sought for U.S. Colored Troops Memorial Monument

Baynet.com, February 22, 2010

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MD - The United States Colored Troops (USCT) Memorial Monument Committee of the Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions (UCAC) is sponsoring a winter/ spring fundraising campaign and asking for your generous donations to erect a memorial monument to honor USCT. It will be located in John G. Lancaster Park in Lexington Park, MD. The monument will honor USCT and all Union soldiers and sailors from St. Mary's County who fought during the Civil War.

It will pay particular tribute to James H. Harris and William H. Barnes, Medal of Honor recipients (1864) from St. Mary's County. This project is being sponsored in partnership with the newly formed chapter of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, James H. Harris Camp #38.

Levels of giving in our donor/sponsorship program start at the bronze level of \$125 and move up to the platinum/Congressional level of \$25,000. Depending on the levels of



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giving donors/sponsors receive collectible challenge coins that show replicas of the monument, listings and ads in the monument dedication book, wall plaques of recognition and/or plaques of recognition to be placed on the monument pedestals.

Any and all donations will be appreciated. Your tax deductible donation can be made by contacting us or visiting our website at [www.ucaconline.org](http://www.ucaconline.org). (UCAC 501(c)(3) Tax deductible organizations

### SCHOLARSHIPS

### AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS FOR THE CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE AT GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

CWI press release, February 26, 2010

The Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College (CWI) is providing a limited number of scholarships to high school students and teachers who are interested in exploring topics related to the Civil War era. This year's Institute, to be held from June 27th-July 3rd, is entitled "The Election and Characters of 1860."

Since 1983, the Civil War Institute has sponsored quality lectures, seminars, battlefield and museum tours, as well as other programs. In 2010, a full slate of leading historians will explore the "Election of 1860," introduce the issues and "characters" dominating the campaign, and the factors that contributed to secession. Speakers will include Michael Burlingame, Allen Guelzo, Matthew Pinsker, Michael Holt, Craig Symonds, Elizabeth Varon, William Cooper, and Carol Reardon, among

others. The CWI is also pleased to announce that former United States Senator and presidential candidate George McGovern will discuss his new book, Abraham Lincoln (part of the American Presidents Series).

In addition, the Institute will offer full day tours to places such as Harpers Ferry and Ford's Theatre. Other tours will focus on the Underground Railroad as well as the activities of abolitionist John Brown. Half day tours will be presented and will concentrate on Gettysburg. Unique opportunities, such as small group workshops, lectures, and additional tours will be open to scholarship attendees. Teachers will have the opportunity to develop curriculum material in the Civil War field.

Any high school juniors (rising seniors) and history teachers are welcome to apply. The scholarships, available only to first-time participants, will cover room, board, and tuition for the entire week. Students should provide their academic transcript, two letters of recommendation, a personal reflection explaining their interest in the Civil War, and one original work completed during their high school career. Applicants must have completed at least one year of US History in school, and must demonstrate a genuine interest in the Civil War.

Teacher applicants must teach students within grades 9-12, and be responsible for a subject that includes the Civil War as part of the curriculum. Applicants should submit two letters of recommendation, one from a superior and one from a student, along with a personal description of how they hope the Institute will benefit their teaching.

The deadline for the scholarship application is April 15, 2010.

Additional information on scholarships or registration can be obtained by contacting the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College, Campus Box 435, 300 N. Washington Street Gettysburg, PA 17325; by telephone at (717) 337-6590; by email at [civilwar@gettysburg.edu](mailto:civilwar@gettysburg.edu) or by visiting our webpage at <http://www.gettysburg.edu/academics/cwi>.

### New Firearms Law Takes Effect

CWi, February 22, 2010

A change in federal law that goes into effect today allows firearms in many national parks. People who can legally possess firearms under federal and state law can now possess those firearms in the national parks in that state.

The new law (Sec. 512 of P.L. 111-24) was passed by Congress and signed last May by the President. Prior to today, firearms had generally been prohibited in national parks – except in some Alaska parks and those parks that allow hunting.

State and local firearms laws vary. Visitors who would like to bring a firearm with them to a national park need to understand and comply with the applicable laws. More than 30 national parks are located in more than one state, so visitors need to know where they are in those parks and which state's law applies.

"For nearly 100 years, the mission of the National Park Service has been to protect and preserve the parks and to help all visitors enjoy them," Director Jon Jarvis said. "We will administer this law as we do all others – fairly and consistently."

Federal law continues to prohibit the possession of firearms in designated "federal facilities" in national parks, for example, visitor centers, offices, or maintenance buildings. These



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places are posted with "firearms prohibited" signs at public entrances.

### Ford's Theater

#### Announces Walking Tours for Spring 2010

Broadway World.com, February 24, 2010

Ford's Theatre Society announced the spring and summer 2010 schedule for its popular History on Foot walking tours, which are guided by actors playing characters from Civil War Washington. The tours begin outside of the historic Ford's Theatre (511 10th Street NW) and continue through downtown Washington, D.C. Beginning March 24, 2010, Ford's will offer the assassination conspiracy walking tour "Investigation: Detective McDevitt," including two tours on April 15, the anniversary of Lincoln's assassination.

"Investigation: Detective McDevitt" written by Richard Hellesen; directed by Mark Ramont

Join Detective James McDevitt as he revisits and reexamines the sites and clues from the investigation into the Lincoln Assassination Conspiracy. This tour lasts approximately 2 hours and makes at least eight stops. The distance walked is approximately 1.4 miles from Ford's Theatre to the White House. Tours are offered at 6:30 p.m. on March 24, 31, April 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, May 1, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, 29, June 2, 9, 11, 12, 16, 18, 19, 23, 25, 26, 30, July 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 21, 23, 24, 28, 30, 31, August 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 25, 27 and 28; and at 10:15 a.m. on March 27, April 3, 10, 15, 17, 24, May 22 and July 3. March and April tour dates are currently on sale at [fords.org](http://fords.org). Tour dates for May-August 2010 will become available in March.

### Tickets

Tickets for History on Foot are \$12 for individuals and \$10 for groups of 20 or more. Once tickets go on sale, individual tickets can be reserved through Ticketmaster at (202) 397-SEAT or by visiting [www.fords.org](http://www.fords.org). Groups of 20 or more may reserve tickets by calling (202) 638-2367.

### Western New York store owner helps solve theft of historical items

Patti Singer, Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, February 10, 2010

A Greece shop owner has helped authorities in several western New York counties recover Civil War items and other iconic pieces of local history that were stolen from historical society museums.

Police in West Seneca, Erie County, and Warsaw, Wyoming County, have charged Michael Ortiz, 38, of Medina, Orleans County, with grand larceny. Roy Ortiz, 35, the brother of Michael Ortiz, is accused of theft from a museum in Caledonia, Livingston County.

Officials said that the brothers were accused of thefts from small museums in Erie, Wyoming, Yates, Livingston and Ontario counties.

The items were brought to Jewelry & Coin Exchange on Ridge Road and owner James Frey purchased them and worked with officials to restore the pieces to their rightful homes. One item was a Colt gun believed to have belonged to a rumored member of the Jesse James Gang who lived as a hermit in West Seneca at the turn of the last century.

"It hurts the community," Frey said of the thefts. "The West Seneca police were hot to get that gun back. It was part of their history. It's like something

stolen out of your house. It's sentimental."

Frey said he was reimbursed \$800 by West Seneca police for the gun. But he estimated that buying the other items, which included Civil War swords and scabbards, Union uniforms, documents, a surgical kit and powder horn, cost him between \$2,500 and \$3,000.

"He's done more than his civic duty," Warsaw Police Chief Bill Blythe said of the recovered Civil War memorabilia stolen from the Warsaw Historical Society. "We don't have any money to pay for stolen stuff."

The thefts took place over several months and often went undiscovered for days.

"Everyone had their guard down," said Capt. Larry Fallon of the West Seneca Police Department. In many cases, he said, the museums are staffed by volunteers and the facilities lack sophisticated security systems.