



Traffic Reports



36 more...



Jobs

Autos

Re

News | Sports | Lifestyle | Business | Opinion | Multimedia | Shopping | About Us

Banking with a difference.
 Uncommon values.
 Undivided attention.

NAUGATUCK SAVINGS BANK
 Experience the Difference
 Member FDIC

- Ours
- Our Readers'
- Syndicated Columnists
- Write to an Editor
- Archives

Lifestyle

Friday, February 1, 2008 12:03 AM EST

Honoring the Ninth: Cheshire resident instrumental in raising a monument that honors some of the state's Civil War heroes

BY TRACY SIMMONS REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

Over the past eight years, Bob Larkin of Cheshire has become a Civil War history buff. He knows the dimensions of the Grant Canal, the North's strategic plan of 1862, and the names and stories of the Ninth Regiment Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, the Irish order.

For almost a decade, honoring the troop has been his project.

"I knew my ancestor had died in the Civil War," Larkin said.

That's what he credits his interest in the regiment to. However, when his daughter took a trip to Vicksburg National Military Park in Mississippi several years ago, his fascination proliferated.

"She found that there was no mention, not only of my ancestor, but of the 9th Regiment, nor of Connecticut," Larkin said.

Vicksburg is the largest Civil War cemetery in the country with more than 1,300 memorials with an estimated 1 million visitors annually. The park only had memorials for the states that fought in the final battle in 1863, which meant the exclusion of several states, including Connecticut.

In 2000, a Senate bill passed and land was added at the park to commemorate where troops died the year before the siege.

When Larkin heard that news, he got to work.

The Cheshire resident, and a committee of about 40 people from across the country, studied "the ninth," had a monument designed and raised money for its creation.

Larkin said several organizations made donations, including the Knights of Columbus.

Patrick Korten, vice president of communication for the Knights, explained that a man named James Mullen was a sergeant with the Connecticut volunteers during the Civil War and later helped establish the Knights.

"It's nice to know his picture will be on the monument," Korten said. "It's really an honor for us to donate \$10,000 toward the establishment of this monument. It's nice to see these fellows are finally getting their due."

The \$30,000 monument, designed by Mathieu Memorial and Granite Works in Southington, will stand 9 feet, 8 inches in height, be 10-feet wide at the base and weigh 16,000 pounds. Two granite benches will also sit near the reliquary. Photographs of 12 soldiers from the regiment, including Mullen, will be sketched onto the black granite memorial as well as the order's emblem, which reads "Erin go Bragh," which translates to "Ireland Forever."

The memorial will be located at the Grant Canal, where many of the soldiers died. The canal is a detached area of the park, located on the Louisiana side.

"This project is to honor not only my family, but the Irish community, Connecticut and veterans as well," said Larkin.

A plaza may also be installed at the monument, but that has not yet been confirmed.

The dedication is slated for October and Larkin said the committee is planning an exhibition in Connecticut to mark the occasion.

INFO BOX

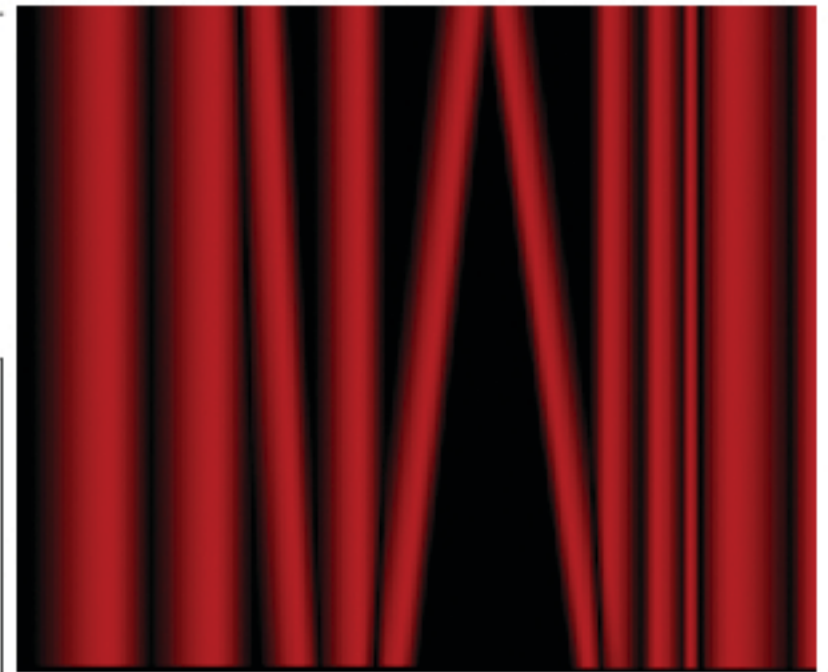
The Battle of Vicksburg was one of the final conflicts of the American Civil War. Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and his army drove Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton's Confederate Army into the defensive lines of Vicksburg, Miss. From May to July, 1863, Grant besieged the city until it surrendered, giving command of the Mississippi River to the Union.

There were an estimated 35,825 casualties during this battle.

Grant's Canal, where many of the Connecticut's 9th Regiment fell, was an attempt to create a channel that would bypass Confederate forces. Work on the canal began in 1862 but after disease and flooding, was eventually abandoned.



Bob Larkin of Cheshire holds a replica of a monument honoring the 9th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers, an Irish infantry regiment in the Civil War, that will be erected in Vicksburg, Miss., in October. Behind Larkin is a replica of the regimantal flag. (T.J. Kirkpatrick/Republican-American)



More Lifestyle

- Keeping the GIs stocked up on Joe
- MACMILLAN: Tribute to a fallen runner
- Honoring the Ninth: Cheshire resident instrumental in raising a monument that honors some of the state's Civil War heroes
- TRIO SINGS FOR YOUNGER SET
- Saint Mary's to glitter for 17th Gala
- Children's weekend at Warner, Palace
- Keep it clean at home show
- Make your Super Bowl party work a pre-game show
- BEER SNOB: Unnecessary roughness — Cheap Shots from the Super Bowl King
- Ware's the beef: Litchfield farm's cows are anything but mad

Story Tools

- printer friendly version
- e-mail this story
- search archives