

The Shako

The Official Newsletter of 'The Cleveland Grays'

The Cleveland Grays Armory Museum
1234 Bolivar Road ~ Cleveland, Ohio 44115
(216) 621-5938 www.GraysArmoryMuseum.org



William Roediger, President | Katrina Hutcherson, Executive Director | Editor, Scott Hutcherson

MARCH, 2009



Membership Meeting

Monday MAR. 30, 2009
Social Hour starts at 6:00
Business Meeting at 6:45

ALL MEMBERS & GUESTS ~Please R.S.V.P!

William Perry: WWII Vet & Movie Consultant

Local "Buffalo Soldier" returned to Italy after sixty years to assist movie makers as a technical advisor and consultant.



During the Second World War, native Clevelander, William Perry was one of thousands of young G.I.s fighting on the continent of Europe; six decades later he was back on the same soil helping a contemporary film production company to portray African American Infantrymen fighting with the 92nd Division ("Buffalo Soldiers"). Mr. Perry was with the 92nd Division in 1944 as they came up against fierce resistance from the German army trying to push them back to the so-called Gothic line, which stretched from the Ligurian Sea across to the Adriatic.

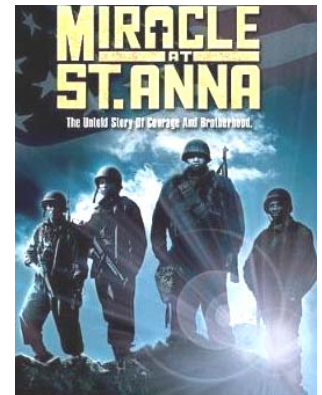
Mr. Perry's collaboration helped to bring realism and authenticity to the 2008 movie "*Miracle at Saint Anna*"—a war film directed by Spike Lee and written by James McBride (based on McBride's novel of the same title). The action takes place in the Tuscany region as a group of black soldiers become stranded behind enemy lines and come upon a village that was the scene of a Nazi atrocity.

This key plot event was inspired by an actual incident which took place on August 12, 1944, when 560 people were massacred by the Nazis

at St Anna di Stazzema, near Lucca, (most of the victims were women, children and the elderly).

The screenplay also inhabits more recent times during the winter of 1984 as the story tells how one of the character's wartime experiences comes back to effect his life in a dramatic way.

By the time the movie was released on September 26, 2008, our guest speaker had become a key contributor to the filming—being involved with the project from its inception. A *Variety Magazine* article prominently mentioned that "the 82-year-old WWII vet William Perry" was one of only three people present at the official press announcement to 'kick-off' the project (also on hand were Director Spike Lee and Mr. Moreno Costa, an Italian anti-fascist partisan who fought alongside the American liberators).



ROME-ARNO 1944

Mr. Perry's military service was something of a story in itself. William Perry was born on August 12, 1924 living on East 46th Street and graduating from Central High School in 1942. After turning age 18 he enlisted in the army on November 27 of that same year and was sent to Camp Perry in Port Clinton, Ohio. A subsequent assignment to Company 'K,' 370th Infantry Regiment, 92nd ("Buffalo") Division took him to Fort Huachuca, Arizona and then to the Italian Front. Throughout 1944-45 he saw combat action in successive campaigns pushing the Italian and German armies northward: starting in the Rome-

Arno River region and then in the North Apennines Mountains, and finally achieving a break-out into the Po Valley. Sergeant Perry remained in Italy until December of 1945. For his service in the field he was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge with bronze stars. He later received a commission as a Second Lieutenant and served as a Weapons Platoon Officer in Company “A” of the 372nd Infantry, Ohio National Guard (1948-1952). Perry’s military experience came full circle last summer, when he was once again part of a select group recognizing the 60th anniversary of President Truman’s Executive Order 9981—the directive that desegregated America’s military forces (July 26, 1948). Mr. Perry joined Defense Secretary Robert Gates and General Colin Powell commemorating that day with a ceremony in the Capital Rotunda.

Please join us for the March Membership Meeting as we welcome Mr. Bill Perry-!

☛ **Please Make your Reservations Today ~! ☆**



Membership News & Notes

The ongoing effort to modernize Cleveland Grays organizational records resulted in last month’s mass mailing to all Active Members in the annual dues category. Dues notices should have been received by all Cleveland Grays other than those who are in the Honorary, Life Membership or the “Perpetuity” categories. Our ultimate goal is to capture all historical membership records electronically, but our first priority is to make sure that current Grays stay current on their active membership.

If you have received a dues notice, or if you haven’t and believe that you should have ~ **Now is the time to Act-!** Please mail or drop off your dues payment at the next meeting. Cleveland Grays activities, membership meetings, voting, and subscriptions to “Shako” Newsletters are the sole purview of our active members.

Please exercise this opportunity to support a great tradition and “take care of business” while upholding the venerable Cleveland Gray’s motto: **“Semper Paratus~!”** (Always Ready).

Outstanding Work Party Volunteerism

Once again our members and the “Friends of Grays Armory” have demonstrated that they are not adverse to roll up their sleeves and get dirty. Remarkable progress in the clean-up of the basement area was evident and so were the many much-needed repairs to light fixtures and emergency exit signage. Some of our more talented (“artsy”) helpers exhibited extreme creativity in decorating the building exterior and the main archway gate in a bright Green, White, and Orange Tri-Color to promote our Saint Patrick’s Day Open House.

Once again, Barb and Bernie Borowski did a terrific job of support and coordination, providing lunch along with a morning cup of Joe and donuts to all the volunteers. Special gratitude goes to Cleveland City Councilman Joe Cimperman who once again provided a city dumpster and arranged for refuse pick-up.

Thanks to all who supported the preservation and renovation efforts of Grays Armory:

Dan Avondet	Barb Borowski
Bernie Borowski	Paul Castellano
Anthony Crowe	John Crowe
Scott Hutcherson	Katrina Hutcherson
Joe Indriolo	Egan Kilbane
Paul Konys	Greg Manson
Stephanie Miller	Timothy Miller
Clara Petkac	Elizabeth Petkac
Gabriel Petkac	Greg Petkac
Lucille Petkac	Monica Petkac
Dan Rabkewych	Herk Rauzi
Max Rieker	Bill Roediger
Kristin Roediger	Michael Sheehan
Brendan Sweeney	Roland Waschpusch

Many members of the Civil Air Patrol’s Lakefront Thunderbirds Squadron also caught “Spring Cleaning Fever,” and a squad of hardworking cadets along with their adult leaders spent the day cleaning and inventorying their own Wing storage office and the hallway areas in the in the armory’s “back building.” Kudos to these conscientious young people—and also to the dedicated volunteers who provide their adult supervision:

Kenneth Busler	Trevor Busler
Edward Hollo	Daniel Hollo
Ilona Kereki	Scott McCombs
Mark Vealey	William Vealey
Randy Williams	Tyler Williams

(List current as of Noon March, 14, 2009) ☆

The Grays honor Willoughby Supply

On February 23, 2009 The Cleveland Grays observed their “*Founders Day*” with a traditional dinner and commemorative speeches. Our organization also had the very great privilege to host representatives of Willoughby Supply Company and present them with a token of our appreciation, recognizing their charitable donation of roofing supplies. President Roediger noted in his remarks that their generous contribution made possible such a gathering under a dry and snug Drill Hall ceiling, and he also joked that everyone could enjoy their meals free from umbrellas, leaks, and exposure to Cleveland’s legendary winter temperatures.

From its inception, Willoughby Supply Company has always been very much a family enterprise. Ever since Ron Romanini, Sr. founded the firm nearly three decades ago, it has also been known for a remarkable commitment to customers, employees, and to the community at large. Willoughby’s kindness and eagerness to help in the preservation of Grays Armory is certainly reflected in their company motto:

“People Committed to Service since 1985.”



William Roediger, of the *Cleveland Grays* (left) with members of The Romanini Family: Ron Romanini Jr. (center left, holding plaque); Brian Romanini (center right); and Pat Romanini (right).



Trustee Nomination Slate Announced

Mr. Paul Konys, this year’s Cleveland Grays Nominating Committee Chairman, has compiled a slate of candidates for Trustee chairs that are up for election in 2009. In accordance with current bylaws, four trustees are now nominated annually to a three-year term—implementation of this current format shall also slowly realign the Board from 15 to 12 members as is the current

mandate. Mr. Konys struck a balance with this year’s recommendations, having put forth two incumbents along with two freshmen candidates. The slate will be announced at upcoming general membership meetings along with opportunities for discussion and additional nominations from the floor.

The 2009 Cleveland Grays Trustee Slate:

Mr. Daniel Avondet	Mr. Daniel Rabkewych
Mr. Jerry Lewandowski *	Mr. Harold Rauzi, Esq. *

*** Incumbent Trustees**

Organ Concert coming to the Armory

On Saturday, April 18, 2009 The Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society will once again treat audiences to the majestic sounds of the Mighty Wurlitzer, under the accomplished hands of guest performer, Donnie Rankin. The Cleveland Grays will be providing tours to the general public prior to the performance, which begins at 7:30 p.m. For more specifics and ticket information, please refer to Page-4.



The Passing of a Fellow Gray

It is with great sadness that we must report the passing of Mr. Thomas E. Czech, who endured a long battle with heart disease. Mr. Czech graduated from *John Carroll University* in 1972. As a student, he was active in the Pershing Rifles Company of the campus Reserve Officer Training Corps. Tom was extremely dedicated to his family and to his country. Tom’s brother, Father Edward Czech, contacted the Grays and wanted our members to know how much his departed brother cherished his ties with the organization and the fellowship he shared among its members. Tom will be sorely missed by everyone whose lives were touched by him. Funeral Services were held for Tom Czech on March 21, 2009 at Saint Therese Church of Garfield Heights, Ohio. Your prayers and thoughts of remembrance will be greatly appreciated. ☆

The Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society

Presents

THE 2007 ATOS YOUNG THEATRE ORGANIST COMPETITION OVERALL WINNER



SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2009

GRAYS ARMORY

**1234 BOLIVAR ROAD
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44115**

**ARMORY MUSEUM TOURS AT 6 PM
CONCERT HALL DOORS OPEN AT 6:45 PM
CONCERT STARTS AT 7:30 PM**

FEATURING

**DONNIE RANKIN
AT THE MIGHTY WURLITZER**

LIGHTED PARKING ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ARMORY - AT PREVAILING RATES
FOR ADVANCE SALE GROUP RATES OR FURTHER INFORMATION, CALL 440-526-6347
ADVANCE TICKET PRICES ARE AS BELOW
CONCERT TICKETS PURCHASED AT THE DOOR ARE \$12.00 EACH

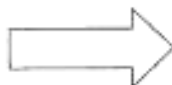
Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please send _____ Adult Tickets @ \$10.00 ea. Total \$ _____

Please send _____ Student Tickets @ \$5.00 ea. Total \$ _____

Grand Total \$ _____



**Send check payable to WRTOS Inc. with this coupon to:
WRTOS TICKETS, P.O. Box 770166, Cleveland, OH 44107**



- Check a box:
- Please keep my tickets at the box office
 - Enclosed is a self-addressed stamped envelope
 - Sorry, I can't make it, but keep me on your mailing list

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