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Abner Delos Austin's Civil War Memorial Re-dedication Ceremony

... a Wonderful Day to Remember!!

"On Sunday, September 13, 2009, a memorial service took place at Clarenceville Cemetery in Livonia, Michigan at the gravesite of my Great Great Grandfather, Abner Delos Austin. The ceremony was coordinated by local Civil War reenactors and was attended by approximately 40 guests along with my father, Edward V. Austin of Wauseon, Ohio, and my husband Jason Scarcelli. It was a glorious afternoon that was warm in more ways than one; warm with the Indian summer sun and with the full hearts of everyone who attended.

The ceremony featured a musket volley and a bugler providing a flawless and moving performance of "Taps". Also as part of the event, I sang "God Bless America" in honor of my ancestor and recited Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain's famous "In great deeds something abides" address from 1889. The Livonia Police Department graciously provided us with security and members of the local press were on hand to cover the event.

One local gentleman, a World War II veteran and descendant of Civil War soldier Casey Krueger, read about the ceremony in the *Canton Observer* newspaper and decided to come out and show his respect. And a wonderful surprise was getting the chance to meet Sue Daniel, chairman of the Livonia Historical Commission, who attended so that she could share with me that Abner's foster mother, Eliza Shaw Milroy, was part of a prominent 19th century Livonia family and that the Shaw family home is at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia! She also mentioned that the historical commission is in the process of reading and documenting a Shaw family diary and that she would like to share with me the findings ... particularly if there are any mentions of Abner! How exciting!!

But the highlights of the ceremony were the addresses given by two gentlemen who have become dear friends of mine and whom I am very blessed to know. Chaplain Mike Gillett and Dave Tennes, portraying Michigan Senator Jacob How-

ard, both keynote speakers. Both Mike and Dave spoke about Abner as if they knew him personally. Their words were deeply touching.

In many ways, I couldn't help but sense Abner's presence while Mike and Dave spoke. It was a wonderful feeling! Surely, if he was watching and listening, he was pleased.

Words cannot express how honored I am that so many wonderful people would take time out of their busy schedules to memorialize my Great Great Grandfather. To everyone who attended: Mike and Karen Gillett, Dave Tennes, Jim Cary, Ken Collier, Mike Parr, Pam Setla, Rick Danes, Andy Assenmacher, Rebecca Assenmacher, Drew Assenmacher Jr., Sue Daniel, Celestine and Robert Hollings, Bennie Lattimer, Bill Bresler, my friends from the 17th, 21st, and 24th Michigan Infantry reenactors, the Michigan Soldiers Aid Society, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Junior ROTC/Marines, Greenmead Historical Museum -- and especially my Dad and Jason -- thank you for sharing this wonderful day with me. I will never forget it!! I am so blessed!

Thank you Mike Gillett and Dave Tennes for coordinating this tremendous event in honor of my ancestor. To everyone who made this day possible ... THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart!!!

"Why we're here today isn't because Abner Austin was unique," Mike said during the memorial ceremony. "Rather, he was pretty typical. His uniqueness comes from the fact that his story is being told. But for those soldiers whose stories have not been told, our goal should be, in the words of Hamlet, that each grave shall have a living monument."

His name may not appear in most history books but Abner Delos Austin is an American hero who will never be forgotten. In all that I do, I strive to be that living monument!"

Kristina Austin

My apologies for missing to put this article
In the newsletter... Randy

