

THE FOUNDING OF THE PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

The primary organizer of the Round Table was Dio Richardson, and the year of the first meeting was 1985.

When Dio visited Civil War battlefields in the 1980s, he heard about Civil War Round Tables and decided that one should be established in Seattle. He persuaded his former classmate (at the University of Washington, class of 1941), Loren Mann, with whom Dio had served in the Second World War, to join in the attempt to set up a local Round Table. In addition to Mann, Dio recruited two more individuals into the organized group, Thomas Pressly and Stewart Pope. Pressly's name was suggested when Dio called the History Department at the University of Washington and asked if any faculty member of the Department was interested in the Civil War. After Dio recruited Professor Pressly, Pressly suggested the name of Stewart Pope, and Dio recruited him.

Virtually all of the detailed work of starting the Round Table was done by Dio, with the assistance of Loren Mann. The two of them required the list of subscribers to Civil War Times in the Puget Sound area and sent the subscribers invitations to participate in the proposed Round Table. And, it was Dio and Loren who arranged that the Round Table meet at the Officers Club at the Sand Point Naval Air Station. The first meeting of the Round Table was held there in October 1985, with Loren Mann as speaker; the second meeting was held in November 1985, with Professor Pressly as speaker. Thirty to forty individuals were present at each of these two meetings. From then, on, the Round Table met each month, and the membership steadily increased.

The above account was written by Thomas Pressly, after conversations with Dio Richardson in December 1999 – Written by Pressly because Dio is too modest to give himself the credit he deserved as “Founding Father” of the Round Table.

