

# Croghan Day events bring history alive

BY VINCE GUERRIERI • Staff writer • August 3, 2010

FREMONT -- As a history teacher, Mike Gilbert spends a lot of time talking to his students about names, dates and places.

But on Saturday, he'll have a larger audience.

Gilbert, who's been a teacher in the Fremont City Schools for 35 years, will be the featured speaker at the 171st annual Croghan Day, Saturday evening on the lawn at Birchard Public Library.

The day is a commemoration of Maj. George Croghan, who with about 160 Americans defended a fort -- against the orders of his commander, Gen. William Henry Harrison -- against a larger group of British soldiers and American Indians on Aug. 2, 1813.

The site of the battle, Fort Stephenson, was on the hill now occupied by the library -- and Croghan's remains. Croghan, later promoted to colonel, was disinterred from his original gravesite in Kentucky and buried at the site of the battle in 1906.

Gilbert knows that most of his audience is already familiar with Croghan's exploits, and he'll talk about them, but it won't be his focus.

"I'm going to talk about why history matters," he said.

Gilbert is also going to bring with him one of his students, junior A.J. Mehlow, who was in Gilbert's honors global studies class last year.

"He's a very good student and a very good person," Gilbert said of Mehlow. "I knew he'd be comfortable with giving a talk."

Once again, the event is sponsored by the Fremont chapter -- named after Croghan -- of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a women's organization open to anyone whose ancestors fought in the Revolutionary War.

Mary Kay Farrell is in her first year the chairwoman of the event for the DAR. She knew Gilbert, and asked him to speak at the event.

"He tries to instill in his students the idea of primary sources," she said.

The event begins at 6:30 p.m. with a performance by the Genoa American Legion Band, the oldest continuously active Legion band in Ohio. The band started as the Genoa Eagle band in 1874, but became a Legion band in 1932.



People stand as the color guard advances during last year's Croghan Day celebration. (NM file photo)

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