

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LVII No. 6 February 2019



520th Regular Meeting

DATE: Friday, February 15, 2019
PLACE: Oak Trace, 200 Village Drive, Downers Grove, IL
TIME: 8:00 p.m.
TOPIC: "Five Factors Impacting Confederate and Union Prison Camps
During the Civil War"
SPEAKER: David Keller

David Keller will discuss a study funded by the National Park Service-Andersonville National POW Research Program discussing five factors impacting conditions in Civil War Prisons. These five factors 1) Lack of a strategic plan for prison development and management before and in the early stages of the Civil War; 2) Inadequate plans for long-term incarceration of prisoners of war; 3) Poor selection, high turnover, and lack of training of camp command; 4) Lack of training of camp guards, and 5) Failure to provide individual soldiers information on how to behave as POW's.

David Keller is Managing Director of the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation. He is a long time resident of Chicago and an amateur historian. Mr. Keller's professional life included various executive positions at Chicago area commercial banks. Currently he is a respected witness in banking matters throughout the country. Retired since 2002, he devotes much of his time to volunteer activities including the Chicago History Museum. David's interest in Camp Douglas comes from his interest in the Civil War, Civil War Prison camps and 19th century Chicago history.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION REPORT BY BRIAN CONROY

Hello, everyone! I hope you all hunkered down and stayed warm this past month through the sub-arctic conditions that visited our neck of the woods. As we hopefully begin to emerge from our deep freeze, this month's preservation report will cover the American Battlefield Trust's continuing journey to preserve the Slaughter Pen Farm at the Battle of Fredericksburg.

On December 13, 1862, Federal troops marched across muddy farm fields south of Fredericksburg. This main assault of the Battle of Fredericksburg struck a weak point in the Confederate line, touching off a seesaw battle that raged from the wooded slopes of Prospect Hill and across the shell-swept plain of what is now known as Slaughter Pen Farm. By the end of the day, more than 9,000 Americans had become casualties in one of the worst Union defeats of the Civil War.

For decades, visitors to the Fredericksburg battlefield focused on the lopsided assaults on the Sunken Road at Marye's Heights, all but forgetting the fighting on the southern end of the field, where the Confederates suffered the majority of their casualties and where six medals of honor were won. The Slaughter Pen Farm—scene of the most vicious hand-to-hand combat of the battle—remained in private hands until 2006, when the Civil War Trust partnered with TriCord, Inc., a family-owned development company that had previously cooperated with preservationists to save the 140-acre First Day at Chancellorsville Battlefield, and purchased 208 acres of the Slaughter Pen Farm. The price—a staggering \$12 million—made it the largest transaction the Trust had ever undertaken, but well worth the cost when weighed against the historical significance of this hallowed ground.

In addition to TriCord, the Trust also partnered with SunTrust Bank for a loan to purchase the acreage, they also received \$1 Million from Central Virginia Battlefield Trust; \$2 Million in matching federal funds through the American Battlefield Protection Program; and \$300,000 from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Civil War Sites Preservation Fund.

Since the Slaughter Pen Farm is located outside the currently authorized boundary of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, the Trust will not be able to immediately transfer it to the National Park Service once the full cost is paid. However, the true reason to preserve a historic property like this is to open it for public education and appreciation. Knowing this, the Trust opened a 13-stop interpretive trail at the site in 2008. Moreover, the Slaughter Pen Farm is one of the four tours included in the Trust's Fredericksburg Battle App, which debuted in 2011. This GPS-enabled mobile battlefield tour utilizes the latest technology, including historian video and maps, to help visitors interpret the land under their feet.

To date, the Trust has raised more than 60 percent of the purchase price for the Slaughter Pen Farm; however, work remains to be done before this incredible part of our nation's history is fully set aside for posterity.

Many thanks to Chuck Kurtz for his \$1000 Battlefield Preservation donation to SCCWRT in memory of Joyce Clark.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

FEBRUARY 19, 2019

LINCOLN/DAVIS CWRT

"Bushwacking on a Grand Scale:
Chickamauga"

Speaker: Lee White

Country House Restaurant, Alsip

lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

FEBRUARY 23, 2019 2pm

GLEN ELLYN HISTORY CENTER

"Mary Lincoln's Illustrated Album"

An Illustrated Lecture by Laura Keys

Adults \$8, GEHS Members \$6

800 North Main Street

www.glenellynhistory.org

FEBRUARY 28, 2019

SOUTH SUBURBAN CWRT

"The 2nd Wisconsin"

Speaker: Michael Kirchner

Smokey Barque, 20 Kansas St.

Frankfort, IL

www.southsuburbancwrt.com

MARCH 1, 2019

NORTHERN ILLINOIS CWRT

"Illinois Civil War Prison Camps"

Speaker: Rob Girardi

Arlington Hts. Memorial Library

www.northernilcwrt.org

MARCH 8, 2019

CHICAGO CWRT

"Dear Delia"

John David Smith & Michael Larson

Holiday Inn O'Hare

5615 N. Cumberland, Chicago

dinnerreservation@chicagocwrt.org

MARCH 12, 2019

McHENRY COUNTY CWRT

"Jonathan Letterman"

Speaker: Steve Acker

Woodstock Library

www.mchenrycivilwar.com

If you need assistance parking during construction, ask at the front desk or Call 630-401-6699

ALL FOR THE UNION

The SCCWRT website is back.

It is still a work in progress.

Brian Conroy has taken over the

Salt Creek CWRT Facebook page.

Check it out for updates.

BACK IN HISTORY

50 Years Ago: Frank Hinst presented:

Lincoln Memorabilia

25 Years Ago: Bill Hupp moderated:

a Panel Discussion on the Importance of
Gettysburg featuring Marshall Krolick, Kurt
Carlson, Don Sender and Jim Soens.

10 Years Ago: Brian Seiter presented:

"Henry H. Sibley, E.R.S. Canby and the
New Mexico Campaign of 1862"

FUTURE SCCWRT MEETINGS

March 15, 2019

"Saving Antietam: 100 Years of Challenges
Met and Lessons Learned"

Speaker: Dr. Mary Abroe

April 19, 2019

"Sherman's Working Battery: History of the
1st Illinois Light Artillery – Battery H"

Speaker: John Matuszek

THE SALT CREEK CWRT

www.saltcreekcwrt.org

President: Cindy Heckler

Vice-President: Rick Zarr

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Sharon Maher, Brian Conroy, Nancy Fritz

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Brian Conroy

2019 Membership renewals are due.

Memberships received before the

**February 15th meeting are eligible for the
free membership drawing.**