

# The Outpost

**The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table  
Vol. LV No. 6 February 2017**



## **500th Regular Meeting**

**DATE:** Friday, February 17, 2017  
**PLACE:** Oak Trace, 200 Village Drive, Downers Grove, IL  
**TIME:** 8:00 p.m.  
**TOPIC:** “Salt Creek Civil War Round Table’s 500<sup>th</sup> Meeting:  
Reflections on the Past and a Look to the Future”  
**SPEAKER:** Jan Rasmussen

The Salt Creek Civil War Round Table was founded during the Civil War Centennial by Marilyn Steele after she was refused membership in the Civil War Round Table of Chicago who did not allow women. The first meeting was held on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1962 at the Elmhurst YMCA. The Round Table chose the name Salt Creek, which runs through many of the communities where its members reside. Harvey L. Long, a member of the Civil War Round Table of Chicago became the first chairman or president. Besides an annual banquet, the monthly meetings included speakers, panel discussions, debates, memorabilia/relic nights and an annual auction and book sale to raise money for battlefield preservation. Over the years the group has gone on field trips, sponsored the 97<sup>th</sup> Regimental Band Concerts and participated at the Midwest Civil War Collectors’ Show. This meeting will be a reflection of the past and a look to the future.

Jan Rasmussen is a graduate of the University of Minnesota Technical College-Waseca with a degree in Veterinary Technology. While there she developed an interest in Minnesota history. She has given presentations “Minnesota in the Civil War” and “The Minnesota Sioux Uprising of 1862”. Jan joined the Salt Creek CWRT in 1990. After serving several years on the board of directors, she served as Secretary until she became President from 2008 to 2012. She is currently Secretary/Treasurer.

Joyce Clark will be 100 years old on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Help us celebrate her Centennial Milestone!

## **JANUARY MONTHLY SUMMARY BY ARTHUR FOLEY**

In the aftermath of the Civil War, returning veterans realized that problems involved with reintegrating into society often fell beyond the scope of government run soldier homes and surviving vestiges of the Sanitary Commission. Our speaker for January, Rob Girardi, expounded on the activities of the largest and most influential Northern veterans group, the Grand Army of the Republic in the city of Chicago.

An organization dedicated to the fraternal, political and memorial needs of Union veterans, the GAR began in downstate Illinois in the 1860's. Membership soared through the latter part of the 1800's and then slowly dwindled as the veterans answered to the call of the last bivouac, ending in 1956.

During its course, the GAR fashioned its own oaths and fraternal signs, elected officers and established local posts, the George H. Thomas post being the first in the city. The group, led by General and Senator John A. Logan established Decoration, or now known as Memorial, Day and participated in the establishment of numerous memorial ceremonies and the installation of headstones, statuary, plaques, and other objects lauding those who sustained the Union.

The organization also participated in reconciliation activities, notably giving assistance in the memorialization of the Confederate Mound at Oakwood Cemetery. Benevolent activities on the behalf of the disabled, the mentally damaged veterans, their surviving wives and offspring were also carried out. Black veterans sometimes were part of local posts or had separate posts and encampments activities.

Chicago was a favored convention site and boasted museums, reconstructed buildings of historical note, (Libby Prison, Lincoln and Davis's birthplace cabins, cycloramas, etc.). These attractions were quite popular with the boys in both blue and gray. The organization also boasted a spectacular meeting hall and collection of war artifacts located in the main Public Library, on South Michigan.

The 1900 National Encampment in Chicago hosted a multitude of veterans and celebrity personages. Two parades on successive days featured remembrance activities and enjoyment of the attractions found in the metropolis.

By 1914, Chicago had 23 active posts and these groups exercised considerable political power in the pre- World War One America. However, as time winnowed the ranks and the war years slowly faded from the American consciousness the GAR's presence. The veterans' presence at Memorial Day activities thinned and vanished. The sumptuous meeting hall was engulfed by the Library, it's noted collection placed in special collection or lost. The treatment of these hallowed remains found shabby handling in the then modern world of the 1950 's-60's.

We are left with their written memories, sites of battle, and a memory of their valor and patriotism.

Thanks to Rob for sharing his knowledge and offering a scintillating evening. Huzzah!

## **NO PRESERVATION REPORT THIS MONTH**

### **ALL FOR THE UNION**

Brian Conroy has taken over the Salt Creek CWRT Facebook page. Check it out.

Speakers are needed. If you have a program to share please contact Jan:  
[jrbarns@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrbarns@sbcglobal.net)

The next board meeting will be May 9<sup>th</sup> at Oak Trace in the Small Dining Room.

### **BACK IN HISTORY**

50 Years Ago: Elmer Gertz presented: "The Assassinations of Lincoln & Kennedy: Jack Ruby's Lawyer Looks at the Slaying of the Two Presidents"

25 Years Ago: Roger Carlson presented: "General Meriwether J. Thompson"

10 Years Ago: Norman Stevens presented: "The Flower of the Southern Army: The Army of the Valley and the 1862 Shenandoah Campaign"

### **REMINDER TO RENEW:**

If you haven't renewed your membership yet, please send your dues in. If you have already renewed thank you.

## **UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS**

Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Pheasant Run Resort  
Military History & Reenactors' Fest  
[www.reenactorfest.com](http://www.reenactorfest.com)

FEBRUARY 21, 2017  
**LINCOLN DAVIS CWRT**  
"Camp Douglas-the Story in Artifacts"  
Speaker: David Keller  
Country House Restaurant, Alsip  
[Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com](mailto:Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com)

FEBRUARY 23, 2017  
**SOUTH SUBURBAN CWRT**  
"DuPage County During the Civil War"  
Speaker: Steve Buck  
Smokey Barque, 20 Kansas St.  
Frankfort, IL  
[www.SurburbanCWRT.com](http://www.SurburbanCWRT.com)

MARCH 1, 2017  
**KANKAKEE VALLEY CWRT**  
"The Confederate Territory of Arizona"  
Speaker: Ray Wilson  
Kankakee Public Library

MARCH 3, 2017  
**NORTHERN ILLINOIS CWRT**  
"Disunion Sentiments & Secession  
Threats 1788-1860"  
Speaker: Harold Knudsen  
Arlington Hts. Memorial Library  
500 Dunton, Arlington Hts.  
[Northernilcwr.org](http://Northernilcwr.org)

MARCH 10, 2017  
**CHICAGO CWRT**  
"Simon Cameron: Lincoln's First  
Secretary of State"  
Speaker: Paul Kahan  
Holiday Inn O'Hare  
5615 N. Cumberland, Chicago  
[dinnerreservation@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:dinnerreservation@chicagocwrt.org)

MARCH 14, 2017  
**MCHENRY COUNTY CWRT**  
"McHenry County & the Civil War"  
Speaker: Ed Urban  
Woodstock Library  
[www.mchenrycivilwar.com](http://www.mchenrycivilwar.com)

## **FUTURE SCCWRT MEETINGS**

March 17, 2017  
"Military Academies During the Civil War"  
Speaker: Brian Conroy

April 21, 2017  
"Lincoln's Political Generals and the Roles  
They Played"  
Speaker: Steve Alban

## **THE SALT CREEK CWRT**

[www.saltcreekcwr.org](http://www.saltcreekcwr.org)  
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