

# The Outpost

**The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table  
Vol. LII No. 5 January 2015**



## **476th Regular Meeting**

**DATE:** Friday, January 16, 2015  
**PLACE:** Oak Trace, 200 Village Drive, Downers Grove, IL  
**TIME:** 8:00 p.m.  
**TOPIC:** "The Irish in the American Civil War"  
**SPEAKER:** Brian Conroy

More than 150,000 Irishmen, most of whom were recent immigrants fought for the Union in the Civil War. Many fought out of loyalty to their new home, hoping their new found patriotism would put a stop to anti-Irish discrimination. The concentration of Irish immigrants was the highest in major cities like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati and Chicago. Irish companies increased to regiments, leading to the formation of the Irish Brigade led by Francis Meagher. The Irish Brigade had a reputation of courage and toughness in battle suffering high casualties. Seven Union generals were Irish born. The Irish population was smaller in the South, but over 20,000 Irishmen fought for the Confederacy. There were many Irish units at the company level and one all-Irish Regiment. Six Confederate generals were Irish born.

Brian will discuss Irish immigration and the Draft Riots, the Irish regiments in the Army, Navy and Marines, notable Irishmen who fought on both sides and monuments to the Irish who fought.

Brian has a B.A. in History from the University of South Florida and teaching certification from the Trinity Christian College. He is a Certified Interpretive Guide with the National Association for Interpretation, Museum Assistant at the Joliet Area Historical Museum, and board director with the Will County Historical Society, where they are planning a new exhibit, "Weapons and Warfare of Will County", opening February 1<sup>st</sup>. He has been a Civil War reenactor with Camp Douglas and the 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Engineers since October 2000. He is also a Vintage Base Ball player and a Voyageur at Rendezvous events. This will be Brian's first presentation to the round table.

## **DECEMBER MEETING SUMMARY BY ARTHUR FOLEY**

There are a million stories from the Civil War some of which beg incredibility. December's presentation from our esteemed friend, Rob Girardi, outlined such a tale. Using the procedures he follows in his occupation of homicide detective, Rob delineated the facts involved with the murder of Major General William "Bull" Nelson, by Brigadier General Jefferson C. Davis. Davis's cold blooded murder of Nelson in the lobby of the Galt House Hotel , on September 29, 1862 at 7:30 a.m. Facts and only facts were the consideration and the vast amount of opinion amassed from various personalities not involved or witnessing the event were discarded.

Rob described the interactions between the offender and the victim previous to the crime, the incensed Davis's appeal for a firearm, Captain Thomas Gibson's supply of a pistol, and the cold blooded murder of Nelson. At this point events defied belief. Neither Davis nor Gibson had formal military charges leveled against them. A stunning series of administrative failures to act and political arm bending ensued. Davis was indicted later by civilian court on manslaughter, that charge was also dropped. The General and his accomplice, Gibson, walked away from a very public murder never to face a court of justice in this world.

Davis would give exemplary service throughout the war, and in his post war service, but the cloud of the murder never dissipated over his head.

Nelson's spirit walks still demanding justice. Perhaps historical opinion will sooth his soul. Mr. Girardi provided the membership with a captivating evening of true crime adventure and a model of historical reportage that should be emulated.

Farewell Cindy! You are marvelous and will be missed.

Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!

## **PRESERVATION REPORT BY DAN JOSEPHS**

My name is Dan Josephs. I am the new Battlefield Preservation Column writer for the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. I would like to first acknowledge the incredible work, time and efforts that Mr. Len Overcash, Sr. devoted to writing this column for the last several years. He has contributed much to Civil War battlefield preservation. Due to the disabling effects of his Parkinson's disease, Mr. Overcash can no longer write this column. I hope to be able to do a proper job in writing this column, as Mr. Overcash always did. Mr. Overcash advised us in his last column about the preservation efforts by the Civil War Trust at the battlefield located in Franklin, Tennessee.

The Gettysburg Battlefield lately has also been involved in battlefield preservation efforts lately by several not-for-profit organizations and individuals. The Gettysburg Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to help the preservation and the education of the Gettysburg National Military Park, President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Historic Site and Home in Gettysburg. The Gettysburg Foundation was created from the merger of two preservation groups: the Gettysburg National Battlefield Museum Foundation and the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg. The Gettysburg

Foundation has an excellent working relationship with the National Park Service at Gettysburg. This relationship of these two groups provides to the Military Park and the Public battlefield preservation, public outreach, private financial support and historical interpretation. There are two parcels of real estate that the Gettysburg Foundation is donating to the National Park Service. One parcel is a 45 acre vacant parcel of land located at the base of Big Round Top and is adjacent to the southeastern boundary of the Gettysburg Military Park. According to a recent e-mail last month from the Gettysburg Foundation, cavalry skirmishes took place on this land. The parcel of land was originally donated to the Foundation by Wayne and Susan Hill in 2009.

The other parcel of land being donated by the Gettysburg Foundation is the Train Station located in downtown Gettysburg. The station was built in 1858 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Borough of Gettysburg rehabilitated the Train Station in 2006 but did not have sufficient funds to operate the station. Last year the Gettysburg Foundation purchased the Train Station from the Borough of Gettysburg. The Train Station served as a hospital during the battle. Also, many wounded and dead soldiers were transported from the Train Station. Soon after the battle family relatives of soldiers of both sides came to look for their fathers, brothers, and sons. President Abraham Lincoln utilized the Train Station when he came to Gettysburg to deliver the Gettysburg Address in November, 1863.

Since federal legislation has recently passed which adds these two parcels of land to the Gettysburg Military Park, the Gettysburg Foundation and the National Park Service can complete the transfer of these two parcels of land. It is the intention of both organizations to complete an operation plan for the Train Station as well as to provide access and information for the public about the historical significance of the Train Station during and after the Battle. In this column next month will be the Civil War Trust actions relative to the Gettysburg Military Park as well as other Civil War battlefields. For several years in the 1990's I wrote the Battlefield Preservation Column for the Chicago Civil War Round Table. At the time there were no such non-profit organizations such as the Gettysburg Foundation and the Civil War Trust involved in Civil War battlefield preservation. At that time the options to preserve Civil War battlefields were very limited. This public/private process of preserving battlefields by these non-profit organizations has been very successful over the last 15 to 20 years in preserving Civil War battlefields. Please support these and other such organizations.

Dan Josephs, sole practicing lawyer. Engaged in preparation of wills and trusts, probate estate administration and claims for Social Security disability (mainly for the homeless), member of Salt Creek CWRT, Chicago CWRT, and Northern Illinois CWRT. In the column I mentioned that I wrote the Battlefield Preservation Column for the Chicago Civil War Roundtable.

## **ALL FOR THE UNION**

2015 Membership Renewals are due. Renewals received by January 31<sup>st</sup> are eligible for the free membership drawing at the February meeting.

Jennie Warner would like to thank Len Overcash for his many years on the Newsletter Staff writing up the Preservation Report. He did a great job. He will be missed. I would also like to welcome Dan Josephs to the Newsletter Staff. I know he will do a great job.

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBER**

Jim Ward

Speakers Needed for 2015.  
Contact Jan ([jrbarns@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:jrbarns@sbcbglobal.net)) if you have a presentation to share.

## **UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS**

JANUARY 20, 2015  
LINCOLN-DAVIS CWRT  
David Corbett and the Battlefield Balladeers  
Country House Restaurant, Alsip, IL  
[Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com](mailto:Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com)

JANUARY 22, 2015  
SOUTH SUBURBAN CWRT  
"John Hunt Morgan's Raid"  
Speaker: Phil Angelo

JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1  
Military History Fest  
Pheasant Run Resort

FEBRUARY 6, 2015  
NORTHERN ILLINOIS CWRT  
"The Civil War in the Movies"  
Speaker: Bruce Allardice  
Arlington Hts. Historical Museum  
[northernilcwrt.org](http://northernilcwrt.org)

FEBRUARY 13, 2015  
CHICAGO CWRT  
"Gone With The Wind And The Construction of Civil War Memory"  
Speaker: Leslie Goddard  
Holiday Inn Mart Plaza Chicago  
350 North Orleans Street  
[chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net](mailto:chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net)

## **FUTURE SCCWRT MEETINGS**

February 20, 2015  
TBD

March 20, 2015  
"The 12<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry"  
Speaker: Samuel Blackwell

THE SALTCREEK CWRT  
[www.saltcreekcwrt.org](http://www.saltcreekcwrt.org)  
President: Kurt Carlson  
Vice-President: Rick Zarr  
Secretary-Treasurer: Jan Rasmussen  
Board Members: Chuck Kurtz, Mike Miller, Sharon Maher, Pat Murphy, Brian Conroy  
Historian: Cindy Intravartolo  
Newsletter Editor: Jennie Warner  
Newsletter Staff: Dan Josephs  
Jan Rasmussen, Art Foley  
Webmaster: Stephen Munier