

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LX No. 9 May 2023



560th Regular Meeting

DATE:	SATURDAY , May 20, 2023
PLACE:	Glen Ellyn History Center (N.W. Corner of Main & Elm Streets) 800 N. Main Street, Glen Ellyn, IL
TIME:	11:00 am
PROGRAM:	"Patriot From Keokuk: Samuel Ryan Curtis"
SPEAKER:	Arthur Foley

According to the author William L. Shea "Curtis compiled a list of superlatives matched by few other Union generals." Not only a competent and gifted warrior, he was an engineer, diplomat, lawyer, entrepreneur, and the first elected Republican Congressman. The man can also be considered the father of the Transcontinental Railroad. Unfortunately, he commanded a far-flung district at the edge of hostilities. He also became a staunch abolitionist which aroused the antipathy of other officers. Fueled by envy and discontent, his enemies repeatedly denigrated his achievements.

A true patriot, the general spent considerable time apart from his family and experienced repeated personal tragedy.

Arthur Foley is a retired educator and a longtime member of the Salt Creek Roundtable. He has provided programs covering music and composers of the period and numerous events that occurred in the Trans-Mississippi Theater.

The Annual Banquet on June 16, 2023 will feature Lawrence Lee Hewitt presenting: "The Birth of Combat Photography: McPherson & Oliver, 1863". **The Banquet Registration flyer is included as an attachment.**

ALL FOR THE UNION

Thanks to Rick Zarr, Jan Rasmussen, Karen Gustafson, Cindy Heckler, Sharon Maher, Pat Murphy, John Beale and Rob Girardi for their participation at the Civil War Show in Wheaton on April 22nd. Besides promoting the Chicago area Civil War Round Tables, \$650 was raised for Battlefield Preservation. Huzzah!

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Check with the organization sponsoring the program for meeting status.

May 16, 2023

Lincoln/Davis CWRT will feature Frank Varney presenting "U.S. Grant on the Rewriting of History".

Country House Restaurant, Alsip,

Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

May 18, 2023

South Suburban CWRT will feature Gordon Ramsey presenting "The Role of Music in the Civil War".

Trail's Edge Brewery, 20 Kansas Street, Frankfort.

South Suburban CWRT on Facebook

June 2, 2023

Northern Illinois CWRT will feature David Zarefsky presenting "The Strategy of Lincoln's First Inaugural Address".

northernilcwrt.org

June 9, 2023

Chicago CWRT will feature Mark Zimmerman presenting "Mud, Blood and Cold Steel".

Holiday Inn Oakbrook, 17 W 350 22nd Street, Oakbrook Terrace

chicagocwrt.org

June 13, 2023

McHenry County CWRT will feature Larry Werline presenting "U.S. Grant and the Battle of Champion Hill".

Woodstock Library

McHenry County CWRT on Facebook

June 17, 2023

The Abraham Lincoln Association is holding a symposium at Cantigny Park, Wheaton, IL.

Information flyer is included as an attachment.

FUTURE SALT CREEK CWRT MEETINGS

Check us out on Facebook and at saltcreekcwr.org
Meetings are held at the Glen Ellyn History Center at 11am

June 16, 2023

Annual Banquet Lawrence Lee Hewitt will present: "The Birth of Combat Photography: McPherson & Oliver, 1863". **Banquet Registration flyer is included as an attachment.**

September 16, 2023

Jerry Allen will present "The 1st and 8th Wisconsin: Shadowy Secrets".

BACK IN HISTORY

50 Years Ago: Elmer Brinkman presented "Sibley's New Mexico Campaign".

25 Years Ago: Len Overcash presented "The Illustrated War: The Artists and Editors of the News Weeklies".

10 Years Ago: Don Sikorski presented: "The Civil War Comes to Florida".

THE SALT CREEK CWRT

President: Cindy Heckler

Vice-President: Rick Zarr

Secretary-Treasurer: Jan Rasmussen

Board Members: Sharon Maher, Nancy Fritz, Rob Girardi

Historian: Cindy Intravartolo

Newsletter Staff: Brian Conroy & Jan Rasmussen

Facebook and Website Editor: Brian Conroy

MAY 2023 PRESERVATION REPORT by Brian Conroy

Happy Spring, everyone! The American Battlefield Trust has had a new campaign 'spring' up that covers five battlefields across four states, in which from 1862 to 1865, some of the fiercest fighting of the Civil War happened. A few were some of the final Confederate victories of the war. And while this group of properties span multiple years and states, they all played a crucial role in the story of the Civil War. This campaign consists of an \$18-to-\$1 match to raise \$140,732 towards a staggering \$2.5 million transaction value towards preserving the hallowed acres of Chickamauga, Bentonville, Shiloh, Brice's Cross Roads, and Wyse Fork. In the following months, we will cover each battlefield individually to focus on its importance.

This month we will be covering the significant four acres of land at Chickamauga in Georgia. Not only did this parcel of land see Confederate forces capture Reed's Bridge at the second bloodiest battle of the war, with 34,000 men killed, it provided a crucial buffer against urban sprawl and residential development to protect the experience for visitors.

Following the successful Tullahoma Campaign, Union Gen. William S. Rosecrans consolidated Union forces scattered throughout Tennessee and Georgia, forcing Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg to evacuate and concentrate his forces in LaFayette, Georgia, looking to reoccupy Chattanooga. Following the Union army, they skirmished at Davis' Cross Roads until reinforced with divisions under Gen. John Bell Hood and Brig. Gen. Bushrod Johnson by September 17th, in the first attempt to transport Confederate troops from one theater to another to achieve numerical superiority. On the morning of September 18th, Bragg marched his army to the west bank of Chickamauga Creek, hoping to wedge his troops between Chattanooga and the Federal army. Bragg had been hoping that his advance would be a surprise, but was observed by Rosecrans, who used his infantry and mounted infantry armed with Spencer repeating rifles to skirmish with Rebel forces until receiving reinforcements when Bragg had crossed the creek.

The following morning of September 19th, shortly after dawn, was when the battle of Chickamauga began in earnest. Bragg's men gained ground throughout the day but could not break the extended Union line. But Confederate luck changed that evening when Gen. James Longstreet's divisions arrived and gave the Confederate force superior numbers. Bragg divided his forces into two wings, with Longstreet commanding the left, and Lt. Gen. Leonidas K. Polk took charge on the right. The battle resumed the next morning with coordinated Confederate attacks on the Union left flank, forcing Rosecrans into believing a gap existed in his line. He ordered Brig. Gen. Thomas Wood's division to fill the gap, even though Wood knew that no such gap existed in the line, and that moving his division would open a large swath in the Union position. But Wood had been berated twice in the campaign for not following orders, and moved his division to avoid further reprimand, which created a hole in the Union line that allowed Gen. Hood's eight brigades to hammer through the gap. Union resistance at the southern end of the battlefield evaporated as Federal troops, including Rosecrans himself, were pushed off the field.

George H. Thomas took command and consolidated scattered Union forces on Horseshoe Ridge and Snodgrass hill into a defensive position, refusing Confederate assaults within feet of the Union line, earning him the name "The Rock of Chickamauga." Thomas withdrew as darkness fell, and Rosecrans kept his army in Chattanooga as Bragg occupied the heights surrounding Chattanooga, blocking Federal supply lines. And while the Union army was driven from the field, Confederate forces were able to block Union supply lines but were unable to reoccupy Chattanooga. The Confederate victory at Chickamauga was the highest loss of any Western theater battle, with 16,000 Union and 18,000 Confederate casualties.