

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LVX No. 3 November 2021



544th Regular Meeting

DATE: **SATURDAY**, November 20, 2021
PLACE: Glen Ellyn History Center (N.W. Corner of Main & Elm Streets)
800 N. Main Street, Glen Ellyn, IL
TIME: **11:00 am**
PROGRAM: "Command at Antietam"
SPEAKER: David Keller

The Battle of Antietam, widely known as the bloodiest day in American history, was also a pivotal point in the Civil War. The battle itself was a draw, but it ended Robert E. Lee's first attempt at invading the North. The outcome of the battle caused President Lincoln to reevaluate the performance of General George McClellan, a decision that altered the outcome of the war. Author David Keller provides a fresh look at the command decisions of Lee and McClellan before, during and after the Battle of Antietam, with insight into President Lincoln's evaluation of McClellan and his use of the Battle of Antietam for political purposes.

David Keller is a long time resident of Chicago and an amateur historian. Retired from the business community since 2002, he devotes much of his time to volunteer activities including the Chicago History Museum. He is founder and managing director of the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation and editor of its newsletter, Camp Douglas News. Mr. Keller's books include: *The Story of Camp Douglas: Chicago's Forgotten Civil War Prison*, *Military Prisons of the American Civil War*, *Robert Anderson Bagby: Civil War Diary 1863-1865* and *Command at Antietam-Lincoln, McClellan and Lee*.

DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS WE ARE NO LONGER MEETING AT OAK TRACE.

The November and December meetings will be held on the 3rd SATURDAY at 11am at the Glen Ellyn History Center. The future location and time of our 2022 meetings will depend on the outcome of these meetings. Input from the membership would be appreciated.

The October meeting was our first attempt to offer a Live/Zoom presentation. We experienced technical difficulties and were unable to provide the zoom presentation. We will try again! Hopefully you will be able to attend in person!

Time: Nov 20, 2021 11:00 AM Central Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89358906272?pwd=bHNuVkRoT0tCN2ZibTJaL090d1IRZz09>

Meeting ID: 893 5890 6272

Passcode: 429395

ALL FOR THE UNION

Thanks to Rob Girardi, Jan Rasmussen, Karen Gustafson, Cindy Heckler, Sharon Maher, and Nancy Fritz for their participation and efforts at the Book Sale. Over 60 people attended the Book Sale and Program. \$1350 was raised, primarily from the donations from the Chuck Kurtz family. Thanks to those donated items and Thanks to those who made purchases. Huzzah!

VETERAN'S DAY MEMORIAL

On Saturday, November 13, 2021, at 11am, The 1st Michigan Engineers will host their annual Veteran's Day Memorial to the American Soldier at Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago.

The memorial will feature re-enactors representing all periods in American military history for a tribute. Starting with the American Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, WWI, WWII, Korean War, Viet Nam and Afghanistan/Iraq War impressions.

VACANT CHAIR

Longtime member Dan Josephs passed away February 25, 2020. Due to his work schedule he was unable to attend many meetings. Dan gave a presentation: "The Chicago German Contribution to the Battle of Gettysburg: The 82nd IL Infantry" and also made contributions to the Outpost Newsletter. Sincere condolences to his wife Abbe and family.

BACK IN HISTORY

50 Years Ago: Earl Kubicek presented "Lincoln and the Fair Sex".

25 Years Ago: Roger Bohn presented "The U.S. Army's Navy, 1861-65".

10 Years Ago: Jerry Feinstein, Dan McCarthy & Rob Girardi hosted the Auction for Battlefield Preservation.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Check with the organization sponsoring the program for meeting status

November 16, 2021

Lincoln/Davis CWRT will feature Rick Shaus presenting "Lee is Trapped"
Country House Restaurant, Alsip, IL
lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

November 18, 2021

South Suburban CWRT will feature Dennis Doyle presenting "The Irish Birgade at Gettysburg"
South Suburban CWRT on Facebook

December 3, 2021

Northern Illinois CWRT TBD
northernilcwr.org

December 4, 2021

Two Old Goats in Cedar Lake, IN will feature Gene Salecker presenting "The 2nd Pearl Harbor"
rzarr@sbcglobal.net

December 10, 2021

Chicago CWRT will feature Dennis Doyle presenting "Illinois Regiments at Gettysburg"
Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615 N. Cumberland, Chicago (In Person & Zoom Presentation)
chicagocwrt.org

FUTURE SALT CREEK CWRT MEETINGS

Check us out on Facebook and at saltcreekcwr.org

December 17, 2021

Gordon Ramsey will present: "Balloons in the Civil War: How the Air Force Really Began"
Saturday at 11am at the Glen Ellyn History Center.

THE SALT CREEK CWRT

President: Cindy Heckler

Vice-President: Rick Zarr

Secretary-Treasurer: Jan Rasmussen

Board Members: Mike Miller, Sharon Maher, Brian Conroy, Nancy & Jon Fritz, Rob Girardi

Historian: Cindy Intravartolo

Newsletter Staff: Jennie Warner, Brian Conroy & Jan Rasmussen

Facebook and Website Editor: Brian Conroy

November 2021 Preservation Report

By Brian Conroy

As we continue through fall and another season of great Civil War discussions and presentations, we are also continuing with our four-part series on preservation efforts that will cover the course of a little more than two years and five battles across three states in the Western Theater that changed the course, and ultimately, the outcome of the American Civil War. These tracts of land, which there is an opportunity to save, was fought fiercely over by both Union and Confederate forces, and controlled the means of transportation in the south on the river and by railroad. The donation match is \$9.27-\$1, and the ultimate goal is \$307,450.

The third part of our series covers the incredibly vital port of Port Hudson on the Mississippi River. This historic, 2.6-acre tract was well within the Confederate defenses, and were impacted heavily by an almost nonstop bombardment of Union artillery. Located 20 miles south of Baton Rouge, Port Hudson State Historic Site preserves the site of the 1863 Union siege of the Confederate stronghold along the river bluffs. Adding to its historic nature are a portion of the post-siege earthworks constructed by the Corps d'Afrique, a unit that later became part of the United States Colored Troops.

Beginning on May 11th, 1863, as Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's launched his final offensive against Vicksburg, Maj. General Nathaniel P. Banks moved his forces against Port Hudson after learning that some Confederates had been moved from Port Hudson to support the forces defending Vicksburg. Banks divided his forces into two columns: one group of three divisions approaching Port Hudson from Alexandria to the north, and a second column of two divisions advancing north from Baton Rouge. By May 21st, the columns had combined and Banks' force of about 30,000 men surrounded the Port Hudson defenders and outnumbered them four to one. Banks delayed nearly a week organizing his forces, giving Maj. Gen. Franklin Gardner, in command of the Confederate defenders, time to reinforce his lines and move additional artillery into place.

Banks, supported by U.S. Navy gunships, finally attacked on May 27th in a series of uncoordinated and unsuccessful attacks. Another Union attack on June 13th was beaten back, so Banks settled in for a siege. Soon the defenders exhausted their food and ammunition, and fighting and disease greatly reduced the number of men able to defend the trenches. A Confederate soldier wrote of their food supplies during their 48 days under siege, one of the longest in American military history: *"We eat all the meat and bread in the fort...eat all the beef--all the mules--all the Dogs--and all the Rats around us."*

When Gardner learned that Vicksburg had surrendered on July 4th, he realized that his situation was hopeless and surrendered on July 9th, thus opening the Mississippi River to allow unobstructed Union navigation from its source to New Orleans.