

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LXIII No. 1, September 2025



582nd Regular Meeting

DATE: Saturday, September 27, 2025
Note date change due to conflict with Civil War Show
PLACE: Glen Ellyn History Center at Stacy's Corners
800 N. Main Street, Glen Ellyn, IL (NW corner of Main & Elm Streets)
TIME: 11am
PROGRAM: **"And Then He Was a Lion, General James B. Steedman"**
SPEAKER: Jerry Allen

Major General James Blair Steedman (pronounced Stead-men), a former newspaperman, was always concerned that reporters would misspell his name. During the Battle of Chickamauga, Steedman was a division commander in the Reserve Corps, which came to the timely aid of the Army of the Cumberland on the last day of the battle. At a crucial moment, his horse was shot from under him. Steedman mounted a borrowed horse to resume his desperate work. His aide, convinced that the general was going to get himself killed, asked if he had any last words. Steedman replied, "Yes. See that these damn newspaper reporters spell my name right."

Historian William Shanks, in his *Personal Recollections of Distinguished Generals*, wrote, "Steedman dares to assume responsibilities which are at times appalling and does so with so much cool impudence as silences you in astonishment, and such sublime nerve and boldness as hushes you in admiration. He defies argument by the preposterousness of his plans, and silences opposition by the daring with which he executes them. He hesitates at nothing. The magnitude of an undertaking has a charm for him, and he accomplishes great things in the most unexpected of ways."

Jerry Allen is a retired pension actuary currently living in Cary, IL. He has been a lifelong amateur historian with a primary interest in the American Civil War. He is a past president of the Civil War Round Table of Chicago and the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table. He is a member of seven Civil War Round Tables. For more than 25 years, he has been making presentations, including living history performances, to history groups. Jerry is a fine speaker and storyteller with a depth of knowledge and a twinkle in his eye.

ALL FOR THE UNION

The Midwest Civil War Show is September 20th, which conflicts with SCCWRT's meeting date. The SCCWRT meeting has been moved to September 27th. Volunteers are needed to help at the tables for the Civil War Show. If you want to volunteer out contact Jan at jrbarns@sbcglobal.net.

The SCCWRT made a \$1000 donation to the ABT for the Save the 417 acres at the Breakthrough Project with a \$17 to 1 match. The donation was made in memory of Rick Benson. His family made a recent donation of memorabilia, artifacts and books.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Check with the organization sponsoring the program for meeting status.

September 5, 2025

Northern Illinois CWRT will feature Chuck Rebesco presenting "*Ward's Brigade at Gettysburg*".
Arlington Hts. Library www.northernilcwr.org

September 8, 2025 at noon.

Rock River Valley CWRT will feature Steve Leonard presenting "*Wilson's Creek*".
Veteran's Memorial Hall, 211 N. Main Street, Rockford.

September 9, 2025

McHenry County CWRT will feature Robert I. Girardi presenting "*LaSalle County at War: Lincoln and His Generals*". Woodstock Library www.mchenrycivilwar.com

September 12, 2025 *Note location change*

Chicago CWRT will feature James Pula presenting "Overlooked and Unappreciated, General Dan Butterfield". Blossum Café, 8349 W. Lawrence Avenue, Norridge, IL 60706 www.chicagocwr.org

September 16, 2025

Lincoln/Davis CWRT will feature Jonathan Sebastian presenting "*The 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign*". Country House Restaurant, Alsip, IL lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

September 20, 2025 **Midwest Civil War Show** www.zurkopromotions.com

DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Road, Wheaton, IL

September 25, 2025

South Suburban CWRT will feature Brian Conroy presenting "*Civil War Engineering & 1st Michigan Engineers*". Aurielio's Pizza, 19836 Wolf Road, Mokena South Suburban CWRT on Facebook

Great Lakes Civil War Forum at the Civil War Museum of Kenosha, Wisconsin Saturday, Sept. 13th.

The theme of this year's Forum is the Antietam Campaign.

John Banks will present "*Faces of Antietam and the 40 Acre Cornfield*".

James A. Rosebrock will present "*Perspectives on the Artillery Battle of Antietam*".

Alann Schmidt will present "*Antietam Landmark: The Dunker Church*".

Gordon Dammann will present "*Medicine and the Battle of Antietam*".

For registration costs and additional details contact link below.

<https://museums.kenosha.org/civil-war-museum-programs-events/annual-events>

The Kenosha Civil War Museum is offering a Petersburg and Appomattox Campaign Tour. Sunday October 19th thru Wednesday October 22nd. For itinerary and more information see website.

Camp Douglas and Chicago during the Civil War

Chicago has numerous connections to the Civil War, but too often, they go unnoticed. The **Elk Grove Historical Museum** is providing visitors with the opportunity to look more closely at some of those connections. Perhaps the most tangible link to the war was the presence of Camp Douglas. The camp served as both a training camp for Union soldiers recruited from northeastern Illinois and as a prisoner of war camp during its existence. With items generously on loan from the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation and the personal collection of Civil War historian Robert I. Girardi, this exhibition will provide visitors with a window to the City of Chicago during the Civil War, the experiences of prisoners at Camp Douglas, and the postwar use of Libby Prison as a museum. This exhibition will be on display until December 19. The Elk Grove Historical Museum is open Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays 12-4pm. The museum is located at 399 Biesterfield Road, Elk Grove Village.

VACANT CHAIR

Civil War historian and prolific author Eric Wittenburg lost his battle with cancer on August 2nd. His passion was Cavalry. Over the years many have attended his lectures and tours. We mourn his loss.

FUTURE SALT CREEK CWRT MEETINGS

Check us out on Facebook and at saltcreekcwrt.org

Oct.18, 2025 ANNUAL BOOK SALE 11am to 1pm. Program at 1pm.

Fr. Bob Miller will present "*From Rome to Appomattox: The History of Military Chaplains*"

Nov.15, 2025 Thomas Arliskas will present "*Smoothbores & Shotguns vs Rifles at Fort Donelson*".

Dec. 20, 2025 Memorabilia Show & Tell moderated by Robert I. Girardi. (Volunteers needed)

BACK IN HISTORY

50 Years Ago: Edward H. Stulken presented "*Lincoln's Shadow: An Analysis of Lincoln's Influence*".

25 Years Ago: Dick Hausman presented "*The G.A.R.*"

10 Years Ago: Frank Crawford presented "*Jennie/Albert: Another Look at a Civil War Hero*".

THE SALT CREEK CWRT

President: Robert I. Girardi

Vice-President: Jan Rasmussen (interim)

Secretary-Treasurer: Jan Rasmussen

Board Members: Brian Conroy, Rick Zarr, Dan McCarthy, Nancy & Jon Fritz

Historian: Cindy Intravartolo

Newsletter Staff: Jan Rasmussen, Rob Girardi, Brian Conroy

Facebook and Website Editor: Brian Conroy

September 2025 Preservation Report by Brian Conroy

Save 74 Acres of Hallowed Ground in Virginia & Arkansas

Today, you have a unique opportunity to protect 74 irreplaceable acres at three different battlefields where Americans fought and fell in the name of freedom. These landscapes are not just land — they are living history. And if we don't act now, they could be lost forever to development. Every acre of battlefield land we save is a powerful victory for our shared American story and thanks to a remarkable \$6.56-to-\$1 match, your gift today will go nearly seven times as far to safeguard this sacred ground. All four tracts across these three battlefields can be saved with the final \$245,500 needed to close the deal.

Pea Ridge, Arkansas

This is a historic first: the American Battlefield Trust has not previously preserved land at Pea Ridge. These 3 acres adjoin the Pea Ridge National Military Park, where the pivotal Civil War battle unfolded on March 7–8, 1862. It was a fight that helped Union forces maintain control of Missouri — and now, encroaching development in the area threatens to erase its story from the land. These acres are unprotected, and without our help, they cannot be acquired and eventually restored to their 1862 appearance.

Deep Bottom, Virginia

Just 600 feet from surviving Civil War fortifications lie two tracts totaling nearly 6 acres — potential targets for development. At this site in August 1864, Union brigades stormed the defenses and were met with a brutal Confederate counterattack. The land saw waves of charging troops, retreat, and relentless fire. These important tracts in the epicenter of the battlefield are two of the few remaining to be preserved at this hallowed site — and they are in immediate jeopardy. The land saw waves of charging troops, retreat, and relentless fire. These tracts remain one of the few untouched corners of this hallowed site — and they are in immediate jeopardy.

Saltville, Virginia

This 65-acre tract in southwestern Virginia preserves the site of not one, but two crucial Civil War battles, including the October 2, 1864 assault by the 5th U.S. Colored Cavalry. Fighting up a steep mountainside under a hail of Confederate fire, these brave men overcame incredible odds. Col. James S. Brisbin called their charge a “desperate struggle” that broke through enemy lines. Their valor deserves to be remembered — and preserved.