

**The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LX No. 1 September 2022**



552nd Regular Meeting

DATE: SATURDAY, September 17, 2022
PLACE: Glen Ellyn History Center (N.W. Corner of Main & Elm Streets)
800 N. Main Street, Glen Ellyn, IL
TIME: 11:00 am
PROGRAM: "Murphy's Law and the Peter Principle: The Holly Springs Raid"
SPEAKER: Jerry Allen

Some time ago, Jerry Allen gave a presentation to the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table on the 8th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. At that time, he said that there was too much information to be crammed into one presentation. So, he decided to take a more in depth look at the unfortunate Union Col. Robert Murphy. He was the epitome of Murphy's Law which states "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong." Murphy's Law could have been named in honor of Col. Murphy, but it wasn't.

Col. Murphy started as a very poor regimental commander. So, what should be done in a situation like that. Of course, he was promoted to command a Brigade in Major General Rosecrans' Army of the Mississippi. *How in the world did that happen?*

Col. Murphy's Brigade was protecting a supply depot at Iuka, Mississippi. On September 14, 1862, under threat of a Confederate attack, he tried to set fire to the depot and withdrew his brigade to Corinth, Mississippi. The Confederates quickly doused the flames and recovered a large collection of valuable supplies. *How in the world did that happen?*

Murphy was relieved of his command and ordered to be court-martialed. However, Murphy was found not guilty. *How in the world did that happen?*

Although Col. Murphy was found not guilty, he probably wouldn't get another important command – Would He? Well, yes, he would. On December 13, 1862, Col. Murphy was named commander of the District of the Tallahatchie. This district included the major Union supply depot at Holly Springs, Mississippi. *How in the world did that happen?*

On December 20, 1862, Confederates raided Holly Springs and the Union supplies were destroyed or ended up in Confederate hands along with 1,500 Union prisoners including Col. Murphy. *How in the world did that happen?* So, on two different occasions, Col. Murphy oversaw significant supply depots, and on both occasions, the much-needed supplies ended up destroyed or in Confederate hands. At that point, Murphy's military career was over, but there was more to his story.

Jerry Allen grew up on a farm in LaCrosse County, Wisconsin, with a predominantly Norwegian heritage. He attended the University of Wisconsin – LaCrosse (BS – Mathematics and Physics) and the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (MS - Mathematics). In 2013, Jerry

retired after working 40 years as a pension consultant in Atlanta and Chicago. Jerry and his wife, Ellen, live in Cary, Illinois.

Although not a professional historian, Jerry has had a life-long interest in history with a special interest in the Civil War and American Indian Conflicts. He is a member of various Civil War Round Tables and a past president of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round and the Civil War Round Table of Chicago.

Being from Wisconsin, Jerry has an interest in the Norwegian Regiment (15th Wisconsin Infantry) and the Eagle Regiment (8th Wisconsin Infantry).

ALL FOR THE UNION

Thanks to those who attended our 60th anniversary banquet.

In commemoration of our 60th anniversary a \$1000 donation was sent to the American Battlefield Trust for the Williamsburg battlefield project with a match of \$163 to \$1.

September 24, 2022

Civil War Show at the Wheaton Fairgrounds.

Volunteers needed. Sign up at next meeting or Contact Jan at jrbarns@sbcglobal.net

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Daniel Modes

Frank Peterson

The 2022 Great Lakes Civil War Forum will be held at the Civil War Museum of Kenosha, WI, on Saturday, October 15. Four speakers--Scott Hartwig, Brian Jordan, Phil Spaugy, and Lance Herdegen--will present programs on the campaigns of the Iron Brigade of the West. Information on the event and each of the programs is listed below along with a link and phone number to register.

Prior registrations can be made by calling 262-653-4140 between 10am and 5pm daily or by following the link below.

<https://84428.blackbaudhosting.com/84428/Great-Lakes-Civil-War-Forum-15Oct2022>

The Civil War Congress meeting scheduled for September 16-18 at the Kenosha Civil War Museum has been cancelled.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Check with the organization sponsoring the program for meeting status

September 9, 2022

Chicago CWRT will feature Steve Cowie presenting "When Hell Came to Sharpsburg: The Battle of Antietam and Its Impact on the Civilians Who Called It Home".

Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615 N. Cumberland, Chicago (In Person & Zoom Presentation)

chicagocwrt.org

September 13, 2022

McHenry County CWRT will feature Robert Girardi presenting "John E. Smith: Galena's Forgotten General".

Woodstock Library

www.mchenrycivilwar.com

September 20, 2022

Lincoln Davis CWRT will feature Bruce Allardice presenting "Baseball in the Civil War".

Country House Restaurant, Alsip

Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

September 22, 2022

South Suburban CWRT will feature Steve Magnussen presenting "Rufus Dawes".

Trail's Edge Brewery (formerly Smokey Barbbque), 20 Kansas Street, Frankfort, IL

South Suburban CWRT on Facebook

October 7, 2022

Northern Illinois CWRT will feature Jerry Allen presenting "The 8th Wisconsin".

Arlington Hts. Memorial Library

www.northernilcwrt.org

October 11, 2022

McHenry County CWRT will feature Charlie Banks presenting "program TBD".

Woodstock Library

www.mchenrycivilwar.com

October 14, 2022

Chicago CWRT will feature Charles Knight presenting "Robert E. Lee".

Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615 N. Cumberland, Chicago (In Person & Zoom Presentation)

chicagocwrt.org

October 18, 2022

Lincoln Davis CWRT will feature Gene Salecker presenting "Nathan Bedford Forrest's 1864 Railroad Raid".

Country House Restaurant, Alsip

Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

September 2022 Preservation Report

By Brian Conroy

The American Battlefield Trust had assumed the duty to not only to save the vulnerable hallowed ground targeted by development, but also to restore those lands to their authentic wartime appearance, so they can fulfill their destiny as true outdoor classrooms and preserve our hallowed battlefields. Often, it is required to restore the land before it can be transferred to another entity, such as the National Park Service or a state park. This is what the ABT is facing this year during the 160th anniversary of three major engagements at their battlefields: Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Harpers Ferry. These restoration projects will amount to a total bill of approximately \$240,000, which will be funded by a newly created special Battlefield Restoration Fund to raise the money required through at \$2-to-\$1 match to complete all three restoration projects on time, as well as others that are planned at many sites across the nation. These projects would remove all non-historic structures and restore the property to its original appearance within 3 to 5 years, which will begin work by the end of September.

This month will highlight the first project, which is at Fredericksburg, Virginia. At this location, the restoration project will demolish and remove five houses in order to turn the land over to the National Park Service to be included in the adjacent Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. Demolishing these houses will return the battlefield to its original view, in addition to allowing more people to reach the famous Meade Marker. The Meade Marker is the stone pyramid standing 23 feet high and 30 feet square that marks the location where Meade's men made their courageous assault.

The town was the site of some of the first urban combat in American history, and contains the nearby Sunken Road, Slaughter Pen Farm, and Prospect Hill areas, which are filled with historical markers and trails for those who want to understand the 1862 battle. The Battle of Fredericksburg was one of the Confederacy's most lopsided victories. From December 11-15, 1862, Union troops tried to dislodge Southerners from fortified lines near Fredericksburg. Despite some temporary Federal success, the Confederate position held strong for the remainder of the battle. More than 18,000 soldiers fell during the battle—fewer than one-third from the South.

Fredericksburg is also the recognized birthplace of the modern Civil War battlefield preservation movement. On July 18, 1987, 27 Civil War historians and enthusiasts organized a grassroots preservation organization devoted to saving Civil War battlefields by buying the land. They named it the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, which later merged with the American Battlefield Trust. The APCWS made its first save in 1988, and every year since then, the movement has saved new land. The American Battlefield Trust has continued this commitment to preservation and has saved 247 acres at the Fredericksburg battlefield.

This work is not cheap and is getting more expensive by the hour. It is estimated to take fully \$125,000 to demolish the structures, haul away the debris, and restore the land.

BACK IN HISTORY

50 Years Ago: Jay Perkins presented “Ft. Sumter to Appomattox”.

25 Years Ago: Bruce Allardice presented “Civil War Generals”.

10 Years Ago: Rob Girardi presented “The Civil War as Viewed from the Ranks”.

FUTURE SALT CREEK CWRT MEETINGS

Check us out on Facebook and at saltcreekcwr.org

September 17, 2022

Jerry Allen will present “Murphy’s Law and the Peter Principle: The Holly Springs Raid”.

October 15, 2022

Annual Book Sale for Battlefield Preservation 11am to 1pm. Program at 1pm.

Rob Girardi will present “John Eugen Smith: Galena’s Forgotten General”.

November 18, 2022

Bruce Allardice will present “The Election of 1864”

THE SALT CREEK CWRT

President: Cindy Heckler

Vice-President: Rick Zarr

Secretary-Treasurer: Jan Rasmussen

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

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Facebook and Website Editor: Brian Conroy