



GENERAL ORDERS

The Newsletter of the
Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
Our 62nd Year
and The Iron Brigade Association



JANUARY 7, 2010

ROBERT I. GIRARDI

Our January speaker, Robert I. Girardi, has had a life-long fascination with the Civil War. He has studied the war from all sides, and has tramped over many of the battlefields and related sites. He has collected artifacts and memorabilia and has read through thousands of documents and letters written by participants. Robert is both an author and historian and is a well traveled speaker and consultant on the American Civil War.

Robert earned his M.A. in Public History at Loyola University of Chicago in 1991. He is the past president of the Civil War Round Table of Chicago and is currently vice president of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. He is also a member of two other Round Tables in the Chicago area. He is a fellow of the Company of Military Historians and is an associate member of the Sons of Union Veterans.

Among the books our speaker has authored or edited are: *Campaigning with Uncle Billy: The Civil War Memoirs of Sgt. Lyman S. Widney, 34th Illinois Volunteer Infantry* (2008); *The New Annals of the Civil War* (2004); *The Memoirs of Brigadier General William Passmore Carlin, U.S.A.* (1999); and *The Military Memoirs of General John Pope* (1998). Mr. Girardi's most recent publication is *The Civil War Art of Keith Rocco* (2009).

Robert Girardi lives in Chicago and currently works as a homicide detective for the Chicago Police Department.

Round Table Sponsored Event at the Kenosha Civil War Museum

The Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and Iron Brigade Association is sponsoring the following lecture at the Kenosha Civil War Museum:

Saturday, January 30, 2010, 1 p.m.

Speaker: Michael Kutzer

A Study of the Cyclorama Paintings of the Battles of Chattanooga and Atlanta by Milwaukee's American Panorama Company, 1885-1887

Nearly one hundred years after Fredrick Wilhelm Heine's death, his diaries detail how he and other artists created panorama paintings depicting the battles of Chattanooga and Atlanta. His writings show how the paintings were made and how the artists researched their topic by visiting the original battlefields and meeting eye witnesses to create an authentic painting. As the lead transcriber for a project sponsored by the Milwaukee County Historical Society, the Museum of Wisconsin Art and the Max Kade Institute, Michael Kutzer has deciphered these unique documents, written in German and in a style no longer in use. His lecture will present a largely unknown aspect of Civil War History and remembrance as well as detail a little known aspect of the cultural history of Wisconsin.

As a sponsored event, the lecture fee is waived for Round Table members. *Members are requested to show their Round Table membership ID when attending the event.*

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January 2010

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NOVEMBER MEETING AT A GLANCE

January 7, 2010

Robert I Girardi

Wisconsin Club

9th & Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee

(Jackets required for dining room)

5:30 p.m. – Staff Meeting

(Open to all members)

6:15 p.m. – Registration & Social Hour

6:45 p.m. – Dinner

7:30 p.m. – Program

Dinner – \$23 by reservation.

Deadline: Monday, January 4, 2010

See page 3.

Speaker and topic are subject to change.

In case of inclement weather, listen to

WTMJ or WISN radio.

Posthumous Color Guard Announced

The Color Guard of the Iron Brigade Association shows recognition for those who have remained “with the colors” of the organization for forty years or longer. One posthumous member is added to the Color Guard annually. This year’s inductee, voted on by the Round Table membership, is John H. (Jack) Thompson.

Donations for Camp Randall Guns

The Awards and Donations Committee is asking members to consider making their Civil War related donations to the Camp Randall Guns Fund. “The project is local, the effects are real, and we’re grabbing a piece of history,” John Beatty has said. “One of these guns was captured at Shiloh. Can’t get much more authentic than that.” Sadly neglected over the years, the old artillery pieces are literally disintegrating in place. Think of the Camp Randall guns next time you want to give of your hard-earned money. John Beatty, Awards and Donations Committee chair, at jdbeatty@amcivwar.com

Civil War News

Casino talk at Gettysburg – again. Three years ago the possibility of a casino in the Gettysburg area was blocked. Now, as reported in the *Gettysburg Times*, Gettysburg businessman and philanthropist David LeVan is seeking a license to establish a 500-machine casino based on the current Eisenhower Inn, a hotel and convention center on Emmitsburg Road, south of Gettysburg Borough.

Susan Paddock, organizer for the No Casino Gettysburg group indicated that LeVan had not actually applied for a license, or specified a place to locate the gaming facility.

Supporters said the casino would attract gamblers from the Baltimore-Washington D.C. metro areas, as well as areas closer to Gettysburg. Opponents point out the adult nature of the facility and noted efforts in Maryland to establish slot machine gambling in that state, separated only by a state line from Adams County.

R. Michael (Mike) Madell, effective January 17, 2010, will be the new superintendent at Vicksburg National Military Park.

A native of Michigan, Mike graduated from Western Michigan University with a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies and geography and from the University of Minnesota with a master’s degree in recreation, parks and leisure studies. He has been a superintendent since 2002, serving most recently at the Missouri National Recreational River.

Stones River National Battlefield has received \$1.5 million in funding with the help of Congressman Bart Gordon. The funds will be used to improve the site allowing visitors to see new portions of the battlefield. Congressman Gordon’s efforts, through the years, have helped secure funds that have led to nearly doubling the battlefield area now protected.

U.S. Rep. Todd Platts introduced legislation to expand the boundaries of Gettysburg National Military Park to include the Lincoln Train Station and 45 acres of donated land in Cumberland Township, Adams County, in order to preserve it. *continued on page 3*

January 11, 2010

Manitowoc Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Manitowoc Historical Society Heritage Center

January 19, 2010

Prairieville Irregulars, 7 p.m.
Student Center Building Carroll College
Speaker: Donna Agnelly



In January 1948 Max Herriott spoke to the Round Table members about “The Cavalry of Gettysburg.”

M.F. Cockrell spoke on “The Siege of Vicksburg” in January 1950.

In 1961, U.S. Grant III spoke about “The Development of Military Law in the Civil War.”

Miner Coburn visited the group in January 1972. The topic that night was “Grant and Vicksburg.”

The topic in January 1989 for speaker Bruce Bazelon was “Gettysburg: After the Fighting.”

Terry Winschel spoke on “Vicksburg: Shut Up as in a Trap” in January 2001.

40th Annual Patriotic Luncheon

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1, and its Auxiliary issue an invitation to our membership to attend the 40th annual Patriotic Luncheon honoring Presidents Washington, Lincoln and McKinley. This year’s event will be held at 12:30 p.m., Saturday, February 6, 2010, at Bluemound Gardens Restaurant in Wauwatosa.

The guest speaker at the luncheon will be Professor James Marten of the Marquette University History Department. Professor Marten’s topic will be “Lincoln Provides for the Veteran.”

The luncheon has been held annually in the Milwaukee area for the last 40 years and prior to that as a dinner, starting in 1890. In the past, almost 30 hereditary, patriotic and military organizations have attended the event.

Luncheon cost: \$18.00 per person

Luncheon choice: Roast Beef with natural gravy or Roast Tom Turkey and dressing

Reservation and payment are due before January 30. Make check payable to C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1 and mail along with meal choice to: C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1, 6623 S. North Cape Rd., Franklin, WI 53132-1227. Unfortunately, no walk-ins will be admitted on the day of the luncheon.

For further information call 414-425-4648 or email at banner@suvvw.org.

Our Past Unnoticed, Fading Away

Every street has its story. Some guard theirs jealously, preferring anonymity and silence, while others proclaim their noble status with a royal gesture, such as Wisconsin Ave. (nee Spring St., nee Grand Ave.), whistling like a great arrow fired into the heart of Milwaukee.

A special few are touchstones of the past, windows into our hometown history linking us to the greater story of a nation. Such a street is National Ave.

You won't find its story proclaimed on signs or equestrian monuments, but if you travel its length from the Lake Michigan shore to the city limits and beyond, some of its secrets will be revealed. It's a tale of perhaps our greatest national tragedy, arguably our greatest president and the vestiges (and fickleness) of history.

Travel west from Walker's Point to the Zablocki Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and a glance to the north reveals an arresting sight. Perched on and amid the rolling hills and bluffs sits a collection of buildings, including the splendid Victorian Gothic "Old Main," of a seemingly different time and place.

That time is the end of the Civil War, when destitute former soldiers literally begged for food on street corners, bereft of clothing, medical care and often a place to live. Acknowledging such widespread misery, Congress passed legislation establishing the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (the name was changed to the National Home later because of pejorative connotations.) President Abraham Lincoln signed it into law in March 1865, an action some say was his last before his assassination.

That place is here, changing but unchanged, a city of neighborhoods, a gathering place of immigrants, a shelter from the storm. Milwaukee was chosen as one of the three original Soldiers Home



National Avenue entrance to the Northwestern Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Photo courtesy of Zablocki VA Medical Center Archives

sites largely through the lobbying of its women, for whom sacrifice and service was to be exalted.

That place is here, where in the last decades of the 19th century, picnics, concerts and Fourth of July celebrations drew people in such great numbers that Elizabeth St. became known as National Ave. because it was the way to the National Soldiers Home.

Despite years of misuse and deferred maintenance, the Soldiers Home remains a spot for contemplation and repose. Yet we are constantly at the business of reshuffling history's deck, deciding what to keep and what to discard.

While the Congress of 1865 authorized the original Soldiers Home, the current model has enjoined against any new development, without providing any resources to save the original. What to do?

When County Stadium opened in 1953, some bleachers were placed on the Soldiers Home bluff so vets could watch the ballgames. Perhaps the long-gone bleachers could be reset facing the buildings, and people could come and watch them crumble through benign neglect. Lincoln or no Lincoln, there seems an inevitability about the erosion of these historic assets.

If you listen closely, you can hear the bugler sound Retreat. Be sure when the wreckers come, they take National Ave. It's the way to the Soldiers Home.

This "Perspectives" column by Bob Trimmier first appeared in the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, Oct. 27, 2009, and is reprinted with the permission of the author. Mr. Trimmier lives on Milwaukee's west side. He was Soldiers Home Foundation Board president in 2004.

Civil War News continued from page 2

In a news release on December 17, 2009, Platt said, "The preservation of the Lincoln Train Station will help inspire future generations to better appreciate the significance of the Gettysburg Campaign, the Civil War and the bravery of soldiers who, in President Lincoln's words, 'gave the last full measure of devotion.'"

For the past two years, the station has been operated by the National Trust for Historic Gettysburg and is owned by Gettysburg borough. The two approached the park asking it to incorporate the

station into its borders to ensure its preservation. In June 2008 the Gettysburg Borough Council voted to sell the station to the Park Service for a minimum of \$722,000. The final selling figure will be determined by an appraisal of the market value.

The Park Service plans to use the station as an information station and orientation center in downtown Gettysburg.

Platt's legislation will be referred to the U.S. House Committee on National Resources for consideration.

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for January 7, 2010

Mail your reservations by Monday, January 4, to:
Paul Eilbes
1809 Washington Ave.
Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730

ALSO, call in reservations to:
(262) 376-0568

Enclosed is \$ _____ (meal price \$23.00 per person) for _____ reservations for January 7, 2010, meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. (Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)

Name of Member _____

General Orders, the official publication of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc., is produced September through May and upon request of the Board of Directors.

Send submissions to **Donna Agnelly, Editor**, 420 Racine St., Unit 110, Waterford, WI 53185 or email to **dagnelly@tds.net** with "Civil War Round Table" in the subject line of your message. All submissions must be received by the Editor no later than the 10th of the month prior to the next issue. The Editor reserves the right to select articles and to edit submissions for style and length.

All address changes or problems receiving your *General Orders* should be directed through Membership Chairman Paul Eilbes.

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Yearly memberships available: Individual (\$35), Family (\$45), and Non-Resident (\$20).

Contact Paul Eilbes for information: (262) 376-0568.

The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc., admits members of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges and activities of the Round Table.

☆☆☆☆ **IN THIS MONTH • JANUARY 1863** ☆☆☆☆

Through the Eyes of Pvt. Jackman of "The Orphan Brigade." On January 6, Pvt. Jackman, while retreating from Murfreesboro-, wrote: *In the morning the regiment came up. The trains being again ordered towards Tullahoma. I kept with it on "my horse." When we got as far as we did before, the wagons of our regiment were ordered back to Manchester...That night my mess did not put up the tent – we slept on it. Late at night I waked up with something heavy on my face. I found it to be an old gander, quietly roosting on my head...I presume he saw that I had no feathers under my head and concluded to put some on top instead of underneath. I thanked him by flinging him against a stump hardby.*

CWRT of Milwaukee, Inc. • 2009 - 2010 Meetings

February 11, 2010

Paul Finkelman, Albany Law School, "Lincoln and Emancipation"

March 11, 2010

Eric Jacobson, Carnton Historic Plantation, Franklin, TN
Topic TBD

April 8, 2010

David O. Stewart, Trial Lawyer, Ropes & Gray, Washington, "The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson"

May 13, 2010

William W. Freehling, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, "The Strange, Difficult Triumph of Southern Secession"