



# GENERAL ORDERS

The Newsletter of the  
**Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.**  
**Our 60th Year**  
and The Iron Brigade Association



JANUARY 10, 2008

## Edward T. Cotham The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine

Henry O. Gusley, a young Pennsylvania printer turned U.S. Marine, went south in February 1862 on board a ship that was part of Commander David Dixon Porter's flotilla. Until his capture at the Battle of Sabine Pass, Gusley participated in a series of battles and engagements along the Gulf Coast and up the Mississippi River as far as Vicksburg.

During this period, Gusley kept a record in his "note-book," recording, among other events, the capture of New Orleans and the bombardment of Vicksburg. Serving on a ship in the same flotilla—a ship to which Gusley was eventually transferred—was Dr. Daniel Nestell. Dr. Nestell was a physician with a talent for drawing on-the-spot sketches. Gusley's note-book entries and Nestell's sketches provide a unique record of the Civil War in this arena.

In September 1863, after Gusley's capture, the *Galveston Tri-Weekly News* published a section from the confiscated note-book. When readers clamored for more, the entire note-book was excerpted twice until the entire note-book was published. Ironically, the imprisoned Gusley subscribed to the *Tri-Weekly News* so he could follow the diary's publication.

Edward T. Cotham, Jr., our January speaker, has expertly annotated the complete text of Henry Gusley's Civil War Diary. It is one of the few journals that survived from the U.S. Marines who served along the Gulf Coast.

Cotham was born in Dallas, Texas, and is President of the Terry Foundation in Houston. The Foundation is the largest private source of scholarships at Texas Universities. Cotham holds an undergraduate degree in Economics from the University of Houston and a Masters Degree in Economics from the University of Chicago. He returned to Texas to obtain a Law Degree from the University of Texas in 1979.

Cotham is a former President of the Houston Civil War Roundtable and is active in the Civil War preservation movement. He is a Life Member of the Civil War Preservation Trust. In September 2005, Cotham was awarded the Jefferson Davis Historical Gold Medal by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. He is an honorary member of the Edward Lea Camp of Sons of Union Veterans.

*The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine: The Illustrated Note-Book of Henry O. Gusley* is Cotham's third book. The nature of the book led to an interview on National Public Radio, bringing both and his book to the attention of the Civil War community.



Edward T. Cotham, Jr.

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#### JANUARY MEETING AT A GLANCE

January 10, 2008  
"The Southern Journey  
of a Civil War Marine,"  
by Ed Cotham  
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: January 4  
See page 3.

**www.civilwarwi.org**

## 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. To make a donation, contact John Beatty, Awards and Donations Committee chair, at [jdbeatty@amcivwar.com](mailto:jdbeatty@amcivwar.com).



In 1947 M.F. Cockrell spoke on the Battle of Corinth. He would re-visit our group in 1950, and his topic at that meeting was the Siege of Vicksburg.

In 1960 Alan Nolan presented a talk on the Brawner Farm.

In 1974 Jack Filipiak spoke on "Rufus King: Civil War Minister."

In 1982 William Davis visited our Round Table, speaking on the Orphan Brigade.

In 1983 Frank Klement talked about "The Deep Roots of the Civil War."

In 1995 James Robertson's presentation was: "Billy Yank and Johnny Reb Were Uncommon Soldiers."

## A Request from Our New Archives Committee Chairman

As the new Archives Committee Chairman, I am asking all members who have copies of the old newsletters, handouts, photographs or copies of the presentations given to the Round Table in the past years to either make copies, or lend them to me to make copies, or donate them to the Archives Committee and the Round Table. My goal is some day to make all this information available to our members for research or just a trip down Civil War Memory Lane. I was looking over a spread sheet Andy Oren sent me going back to 1947, giving the list of speakers and their topics for the last 60 years! Some of the best and finest authors, researchers and enthusiasts have spoken to our Round Table. What a treasure in terms of knowledge and Civil War History has been experienced by our membership through the years. To collect and collate all this is my duty. Your help is needed and appreciated. Will accept any valuable Civil War antiques or heirlooms as well. (Only joking folks!)

Archivally yours,  
Tom Arliskas

## ANNOUNCEMENTS • EVENTS • MEETINGS

### January 8, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Waukesha Civil War Round Table  
Citizens Bank, Waukesha  
Speaker: Lance Herdegen

### January 14, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Manitowoc Civil War Round Table  
Manitowoc County Historical Society Heritage Center  
Speaker: Dale Brasser, The Battle of Franklin, Part II

### January 15, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Prairieville Irregulars Civil War Meeting  
Student Center Building, Carroll College  
Speaker: Tom Arliskas, The Cairo Campaign

### January 28, 2008 • 7 p.m.

West Side Soldiers Aid Society Meeting  
Wadsworth Library, VA Grounds  
Speaker: Becky Anderson, "Homespun Remedies: Traditional Remedies"

### February 2, 2008 • 12:30 p.m.

38th Annual Patriotic Luncheon  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
Information: 414-425-4648

### February 11, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Manitowoc Civil War Round Table  
Manitowoc County Historical Society Heritage Center

### February 12, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Waukesha Civil War Round Table

### February 12, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.

Civil War Dance  
Hales Corners Public Library, Lower Meeting Room

### February 16, 2008 • 1 p.m.

Victorian Valentine Luncheon at Heaven City, Mukwonago  
West Side Soldiers Aid Society  
Information: Patricia Lynch (414) 427-3776

### February 19, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Prairieville Irregulars Civil War Meeting  
Student Center Building, Carroll College  
Speaker: Tom Finley, The Battle of Fredericksburg: Burnside's Demise

## ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ON THIS DATE • JANUARY 10 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### 1862

The War Department was facing increasing charges for corruption. Murmurs were on the rise for the resignation of Simon Cameron, Secretary of War.

### 1863

Four hundred fifty Southern refugee women and children had been given permission by the Federal government to leave for Petersburg, Virginia. On January 7 they arrived at their destination.

### 1865

Men in Union transports, waiting for word to move on the assault of Fort Fisher were less than comfortable as a raging storm brewed off the coast of South Carolina.

## MEET THE OFFICERS

### Treasurer Paul Eilbes

Paul's interest in the Civil War dates back to age 10 when he took a look at the *American Heritage Civil War* volume edited by Bruce Catton. Catton's prose and story-telling captured his attention. Add the hundreds of illustrations included in the book and Paul was sold on wanting to know more and more about the Civil War era.



*Paul Eilbes*

Paul went on to become an avid reader and book collector, subscribing to most (if not all) of the major publications. He is interested in all areas of history with his main focus on military history between the years of 1700 and 1945. Although none of Paul's ancestors served in the Civil War — his grandparents on both sides were immigrants — Paul's father served throughout World War II with the 32nd Division in the Southwest Pacific.

Until he was well out of high school, reading was the main focus of Paul's Civil War interest. He isn't sure when he first saw it, but an ad or mailing from the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (now the Civil War Preservation Trust) caught his attention, and he joined up. Prior to this, Paul was really unaware of the lack of protection around many of the major battlefields and sites associated with the Civil War. As he became more aware, he began traveling a little more to Eastern theatre sites, becoming more "in tune" with the era instead of just reading about it.

Paul joined the Milwaukee Round Table in April, 1997. A couple of years earlier he had seen an article in the *Milwaukee Journal* about re-enacting; the article had the late Jack Thompson's name and address in it. Paul's wife, Nancy, suggested that he needed "a night out" once in a while, and he called Jack. Jack invited Paul to the next meeting and, while Jack couldn't attend, Paul was taken under the wing of Lance Herdegen, and the rest is history.

Paul became Membership Chair in early 2002, taking over the reigns from Jack Thompson. It has been a real treat for Paul to preside over the incredible membership growth in the Round Table, most of which, Paul claims, is due to increased publicity and the fine efforts of the members of the organization.

Paul assumed the Treasurer's duties in August, 2002. Paul is grateful to our current President, Ellen Kelling Vukovic, for many of the procedures and policies that were in place when he took over, making his job relatively easy. Paul really enjoys the interaction that he gets at each meeting at the Registration Table and says that it has helped him get to know quite a lot of the membership.

On the personal side, Paul has been married to Nancy since 1991 and is the proud parent of Molly, age 10, and Maggie, age 4. "They certainly keep me busy!" said Paul.

#### MEMBER NEWS

### Society for Women and the Civil War

The Society for Women and the Civil War recently announced the theme and speakers for its 10th annual conference, July 25-27, 2008. "Women at Gettysburg" will include DeAnne Blanton on "Women Soldiers at Gettysburg"; Robin Young on "The Very Earth Beneath Our Feet Trembled: The Vicissitudes of War and the Businesswomen of Greater Gettysburg"; Timothy Daley on the Cleveland and Northern Ohio Sanitary Fairs; Mercedes Graf on "The Struggles of Civil War Nurses as They Encountered the Pension System."

The 2008 conference will take place at Wilson College in Chambersburg. It is open to the public for a nominal fee.

The Society for Women and the Civil War is an organization dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding of women's lives and roles in the American Civil War through original and innovative research. Its members include authors, independent and affiliated researchers, scholars of all disciplines, genealogists, archivists, museum professionals, librarians, students, historians, teachers and re-enactors.

For more information, contact the Society for Women and the Civil War Inc., Box 9066, 8345 NW 66th St., Miami, FL 33166; (804) 244-1864; [www.swcw.org](http://www.swcw.org) or speak with Wisconsin members Terry Arliskas and Patricia Lynch.

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## Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for January 10, 2008

**Mail your reservations by 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 the January 10 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 \_\_\_\_\_**





Thanks to Gettysburg resident Al Ferranto, members of the West Side Soldiers Aid Society were treated to a private tour of the Civil War collection of the Adams County Historical Society on November 17, 2007, and to an enthusiastic overview of the society's plans by Executive Director Wayne Motts.

Housed in historic Schmucker Hall on the campus of the Lutheran Seminary, the society's massive collections include materials that will open early in 2008 as the **Battle of Gettysburg Research Center**. Interns and volunteers have been creating a digital archives of the subject files of the Licensed Battlefield Guides, National Park Service documents and Gettysburg Campaign publications from the society's own collection. A significant amount of the society's holdings were printed in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. Scanned as portable document files (.pdf), all scanned materials will be searchable by keyword.

The society is currently open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. – noon and 1 – 4 p.m., and on Thursday evenings, 6 – 9 p.m. For information and membership, visit [www.achs-pa.org](http://www.achs-pa.org) or call 717-334-4723.

Al Ferranto, a member of Company C, 2nd Wisconsin, has dedicated his retirement years to a number of volunteer activities, including steady work at the historical society and Belle City Rifles landscape projects. Al has been doing a great job on his one-man mission to keep a clear path to Willoughby Run. He is a member of the Gettysburg Civil War Round Table and Gettysburg Foundation.

*Contributed by: Patricia Lynch*

*Highlights of the 2007 Remembrance Day Weekend in Gettysburg included ceremonies at the National Cemetery and Herbst Woods (top photo); National Civil War Ball hosted by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (center photo); and a pancake breakfast sponsored by the Sons at the Gettysburg G.A.R. Hall (bottom photo). West Side Soldiers Aid Society members also participated in a demonstration to protest aggressive development on the site of Camp Letterman and attended a program on Christ Lutheran Church, one of the field hospitals.*



Where have your Civil War wanderings taken you? Have you visited a battlefield or other historic site? Share your reflections in the *General Orders*. Send submissions to **Donna Agnelly, Editor**, 420 Racine St., Unit 110, Waterford, WI 53185 or email to [dagnelly@tds.net](mailto:dagnelly@tds.net).

# CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION

## Camp Letterman, Gettysburg

In October *Civil War News* ran a story by Glen Hayes: "Final Battle to Save Camp Letterman Is Being Waged." In brief, development in Straban Township on the York Pike continues to encroach on the site of field hospital and unmarked graves. Hayes believes that the site contains unmarked graves of two Wisconsin soldiers: Milton Monroe of the 7th Wisconsin and Nicholas Young (Jung) of the 26th Wisconsin.

After meeting at the Camp Letterman marker, members of the West Side Soldiers Aid Society and Company K, Second Wisconsin, drove to the area the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association is hoping to protect from development. **Shannon Leonard Skaluba**, a young woman we met at this demonstration, shared her letter to S & A Homes, one of the potential developers:

*I have recently become aware of the plans for your Company to build a housing development in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where the Camp Letterman General Hospital existed from July – November 1863. To hear this news broke my heart....*

*I have been actively researching my family for the past two years, being a native of Pennsylvania. For years I lived near the State College area and am familiar with your Company.*

*I grew up hearing stories passed down from my great grandmother and seeing the names of my ancestors on the magnificent Pennsylvania Memorial at Gettysburg. My great great great grandfather was an Assistant Surgeon for a Pennsylvania regiment and served on the Second Corps operating staff at Gettysburg. He would contract malaria early on during his service, which would ultimately shorten his life. His brother, my great great great uncle, a Sergeant for the same regiment, was severely wounded on July 2, 1863, during the fighting in the Wheatfield. His is a truly moving story. After recently receiving his military documents, they indicate that he died at the Gettysburg General Hospital/Camp Letterman, on August 2, 1863, after a month of indescribable suffering. Up until this point, I had assumed that he died in a private home in town. When I learned this, I immediately began to research Camp Letterman and its significance. I had the opportunity to attend a seminar this past weekend in Gettysburg and visit the area of Camp Letterman. I can honestly say that I have never been moved so much in my life.*

*It is sad enough to know that a trailer court occupied the very heart of the Camp Letterman tent wards where my uncle lay, suffered, and ultimately died and that a Target store may be built there. The area you propose to develop is where the Dead House, Embalming House, and Cemetery were located. To think that a housing development could sit in this very location brings me to tears. My uncle was most likely embalmed and kept here until his body could be sent home for burial.*



*Amputation being performed at Camp Letterman. From a stereoscope image.*

*I am a sentimental person and have a deep love and appreciation for my heritage. My life's goal is to research, record, and share my family's history and to make sure that future generations of my family know where they came from. I am but one person, but I have a voice. I beg you to reconsider developing this area. It is a piece of ground, but one with great historical significance, not only to me, but to those who suffered, died, and gave the ultimate sacrifice. For it to disappear would be a tragedy in the deepest sense....*

Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation  
Association (GBPA)  
P.O. Box 4087  
Gettysburg PA 17325  
Gettysburg@pahouse.net

Shannon Skaluba's on-line petition:  
<http://www.PetitionOnline.com/camp1863/>

Target Corp.  
Bob Ulrich, CEO  
Mail Stop TFS #2 A-X  
P.O. Box 9350  
Minneapolis MN 55440  
Guest.relations@target.com

S&A Homes  
Bob Poole, CEO  
2121 Old Gatesburg Rd.  
Suite 200  
State College, PA 16803  
(814) 231-4780  
Cbankert@sandahomes.com

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**Nurse Sophronia Bucklin told the story of a wife with an 18-month-old child who was at her husband's side when he died at Camp Letterman:**

**"Broken hearted she returned to the desolate home which should never know the sunlight of pleasure again, while her soldier's body rested under the distant sod on which was spilt an ocean of heroic blood."**

**Will this site, which saw so much suffering and sorrow be preserved?**

*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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*General Orders* design and layout by Patricia A. Lynch.

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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.

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## **CWRT of Milwaukee, Inc. • 2008 Meetings**

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January 10, 2008

Ed Cotham — The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine

February 7, 2008

David Long — TBA

March 13, 2008

Brian Wills — Civil War in Cinema

April 10, 2008

Jennifer Weber — TBA

May 8, 2008

Vernon Burton — TBA

Period dress welcome

May 26, 2008

Special Event for Civil War organizations at "Trial by Fire," the Civil War Museum in Kenosha

**Speaker Schedule Subject to change. In case of inclement weather, listen to WTMJ or WISN radio.**