



GENERAL ORDERS

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



MARCH 13, 2008

BRIAN S. WILLS

The Civil War in Cinema

An avid movie fan since childhood, historian Brian S. Wills combines his love of movies with his passion for history in his presentation on the Civil War in Cinema.

In his look at the portrayal of war in film, Wills will explore what Hollywood got right and wrong, how films influenced each other and how the movies reflect our changing perception of the Civil War and our country. Since *Birth of a Nation*, each generation of moviemakers has resolved the tug-of-war between entertainment and historical accuracy differently. As Wills has stated: "In the case of the American Civil War, the tableau is rich in color, conflict and character. Yet some producers, directors, and performers have less interest in, or knowledge of, the demands of history than others. Many will use the war as a mere backdrop or context rather than seeking to inform audiences of the issues and complexities of the conflict itself. Others cast the struggle in the simplest forms. Even in the best of situations there is always a tug-of-war between two powerful poles: entertainment value and historical accuracy."

Wills was raised in Suffolk County, Virginia, the son of a peanut farmer and a fourth-grade teacher. After graduating from the University of Richmond, Wills earned an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Georgia. He came to the University of Virginia-Wise in 1992 and has been the chair of the Department of History and Philosophy since 1997.

In addition to his book, *Gone With the Glory: The Civil War in Cinema*, Wills is also the author of *The War Hits Home: The Civil War in Southeastern Virginia* and *The Confederacy's Greatest Cavalryman: Nathan Bedford Forrest*.



In 1947 Lloyd D. Miller spoke to us on "The Battle of Franklin."
1950 brought Frank Welcher to our Round Table to talk about Antietam.
In 1960 James Robertson visited and spoke on the Stonewall Brigade.
In 1985 Gary Gallagher's topic was
"Stephen D. Ramseur: Lee's Gallant General."
In 2000 James S. Pula spoke to us about "The Sigel Regiment:
The 26th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry."

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FEBRUARY MEETING AT A GLANCE

March 13, 2008
"The Civil War in Cinema"
by Brian S. Wills
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, March 10
See page 5.

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 Round Table of Milwaukee Speaker's Bureau

Our Round Table has established a Speaker's Bureau to recommend speakers and presenters to various groups. The goal is to create a list of Round Table members who would be available to speak on Civil War related topics to groups or organizations that make such requests. In addition, we would like to identify members who would be able to make a presentation to our Round Table should a scheduled speaker have a last-minute cancellation. If you are interested in becoming a speaker for the Bureau, please contact Peter Jacobsohn for an enrollment form at the following address or via e-mail:

Dr. Peter Jacobsohn
3819 W. Le Grande Blvd.
Mequon, WI 53092
peter@jacobsohn.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS • EVENTS • MEETINGS

Company of Military Historians



The Company of Military Historians will be holding their annual meeting on May 1-4, 2008, at the downtown Doubletree Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. Included on the agenda for this year's meeting are: bus tours to the Stones River National Battlefield Park and Sam Davis Home, Franklin Civil War battle sites, and the Hermitage; a "behind the scenes tour of the Tennessee State Museum"; and a variety of seminars on military subjects including

David Jarnigan on "Civil War Leather," Tom Kanon on "Jackson and his Dirty Shirts in the War of 1812," Tom Nolan on "The Forensics of Alvin York's Medal of Honor Actions," Greg Biggs on "Tennessee Civil War Flags and Flag Makers," Thomas Cartwright on "The Battle of Franklin," Dan Pomeroy on "Artifacts of the Battle of King's Mountain," Jim Ogden on "The Provisional Army of the State of Tennessee in 1861," David Wright on "Military Art," and Pete Eisert on "Pennsylvania Shooting Medals."

For further information visit www.military-historians.org, or contact Tom Arliskas at csuniforms@hotmail.com or 414-810-3182.

ANNOUNCEMENTS • EVENTS • MEETINGS

March 11, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Waukesha Round Table Meeting
Citizen's Bank of Mukwonago – Waukesha

March 18, 2008 • 7 p.m.

Prairieville Irregulars Civil War Meeting
Student Center Building, Carroll College
Speaker: Patricia Lynch, Patriotic Turmoil: Young Women of Milwaukee and the U.S. Sanitary Commission

March 25, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.

Civil War Dance
Hales Corners Public Library, Lower Meeting Room

March 29, 2008 • Noon - 8 p.m.

Kenosha Civil War Museum
Dedication Day and Exhibit Preview

April 4-5, 2008

Book sale to benefit libraries
of the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center
Times, locations and donation guidelines available at www.wssas.org

Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin Annual Meeting

The Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, April 19, 2008, at Maggiano's Little Italy at Mayfair Mall in Wauwatosa. The speaker will be Dr. Craig Symonds, Director of the Mariner's Museum of Newport News, Virginia. For further information please contact: Pete Skelly at 608-756-2590. Dr. Symonds has a new book being published by the Oxford Press in September of this year titled, *Lincoln and His Admirals*.

America in the Civil War Era A History Institute for Teachers

Saturday and Sunday, May 17-18, 2008, Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin. Sponsored by The Foreign Policy Research Institute's Wachman Center and Clausen Center for World Business, Carthage College Adult Education, Carthage College. Topics include: "Throes of Democracy: America in the Civil War Era," "Teaching About Slavery," "Women in the Civil War," and "Post-war Reconstruction." The conference begins at 11 a.m., May 17 and concludes at 1 p.m., May 18, 2008. For further information visit: www.fpri.org/events/

Reclaiming Our Heritage 2008 Tribute to Women, New Features

Reclaiming Our Heritage, the annual living history event on the grounds of the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center, will be held on May 31 and June 1 this year and will include a Civil War School Day on May 30. Women Veterans will be honored throughout the weekend. **Betty Mosely Brown**, associate director of the Center for Women Veterans, will be one of the featured speakers. The event will also include a "Timeline of American Fire Power," an impression of the Battle of Belmont, authors' area, popular Cemetery-by-Lantern Tours, tours of historic buildings and grounds, free entertainment. For information: www.rohmilwaukee.org. The event is hosted by the staff of the VA Medical Center and sponsored by the Soldiers Home Foundation, Inc.



MIDWEST CIVIL WAR CIVILIAN CONFERENCE

For the second year, Tom and I attended the annual Midwest Civil War Civilian Conference, held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Joliet, Illinois, on January 25-27, 2008. This was the 7th annual conference of the same name, and after having such a great time at last year's conference, we vowed to attend all in the future.

Due to work and winter weather, we were not able to attend Friday afternoon's workshops and the welcome reception. The workshops sounded interesting, including one with a panel of experts chaired by Connie Payne, editor of *Citizens Companion*, investigating period CDVs.

Saturday opened with a breakfast buffet in the conference room, and featured a full day of varied and interesting speakers. We started off with one of our favorites, Fr. Robert Miller, who spoke on religion and faith in the Civil War. As always, it was a lively and enlightening presentation. Sandy Melcher followed with a presentation on "the outward appearance of sorrow and grief," mourning during the Civil War.

The afternoon featured Victoria Ramble speaking on her book, *Outdoor Recreation and Leisure in the 19th Century*, and the types of outdoor activities that people participated in during the Civil War era. Her presentation of original photographs was fascinating, especially of women fishing and canoeing in their crinolines! She was followed by Florida antique dealer, Joseph Reed, who gave a fascinating introduction to mid-19th century period lighting, educating most of us to the fact that the oil lamps and lanterns we've been using at reenactments and living history events all these years have been wrong. The panel of experts finished the day with a discussion on their favorite resources and tips on how to put one's research together. Saturday evening featured a tour of the P. Seth Magowsky Museum of Victorian Life, the former home of Union Officer Hiram B. Scott.

The conference continued on Sunday morning with a presentation from Marta Vincent on 19th century children's clothing and concluded with Kay Gnagny's talk on Civil War headwear for women. After taking copious notes, Tom is quite proud that he can now be noted as a "B.E.," or bonnet expert! We were able to enjoy "show and tell" by some of the attendees as well, which included a fabu-



lous collection of original women and children's wear from the collection of Ainsley Wonderling.

We really can't recommend this conference highly enough — it's a great way to break up the post-holiday doldrums, and the caliber of speakers is top-notch. People attend from as far away as Florida, Pennsylvania and Georgia, and in just two conferences, we've taken away friendships and contacts that will benefit our lives for years to come.

The conference is hosted by Midwest Civilian Civil War Education Inc., and next year's conference will be held on January 23-25, 2009, probably in Springfield, Illinois. We're hoping that we can bring the conference to the Kenosha Civil War Museum in 2010. For information on future conferences please visit <http://www.midwestcivilian.com/>. It's a must for anyone even remotely interested in the material culture of the Civil War era. And don't forget, every soldier started out as a civilian!

Submitted by: Terry Arliskas

RECOMMENDED CIVIL WAR CIVILIAN WEBSITES

Midwest Civil War Civilian Education

www.midwestcwcivilian.com/

Ladies and Gentlemen of the 1860s Conference

www.genteelarts.com

Society for Women and the Civil War

www.swcw.org

Victorian Dance Ensemble

www.civilwardance.org

MEET THE OFFICERS

Secretary Bill Finke

Bill is Senior Counsel at Wisconsin Electric Power Company where he has been employed for over 42 years. He has a Civil Engineering degree from the University of Cincinnati and a Juris Doctorate from Marquette University Law School.

From his boyhood in Cincinnati, Bill says "I was always interested in American history, and I was particularly inspired by stories about the Revolutionary War and our Founding Fathers." He indicates that his interest in the Civil War began when, as an engineering coop student, he did surveying work in and around Chattanooga, Tennessee, for the Southern Railway Company and learned about the battles fought in that area. After graduation, he served as an officer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stationed at Ft. Benning, Georgia, in the early 1960s and had time to do more reading about the Civil War. Bill says, "When I taught military classes to the troops, I was able to get their attention and spark their interest at the beginning of the class by telling them about Civil War battles that were fought 100 years before, sometimes to the day of the class."

Years later as an attorney for Wisconsin Electric, he says, "I had the opportunity and privilege of meeting Bill Upham, who was a stockholder in our company and president of an association of utility shareholders that I helped to organize and incorporate. Bill invited me to a meeting of the Civil War Round Table in 1987 and I have been a member ever since." He adds, "I was pleasantly surprised to find that several friends of mine were also members, although they had never mentioned it to me, which is an indication that we might be successful in attracting more members if we make an effort to talk up our organization." Bill believes his experience as a corporate lawyer has been useful in connection with his responsibilities since 2005 as Secretary, particularly in drafting revised Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and in providing advice on copyright and other legal issues.

In his spare time, as a long-time member of the History Book Club, Bill enjoys reading works about Abraham Lincoln, biographies of Civil War commanders and books about battles and campaigns.



Bill Finke (far right) with CWRT friends at the 60th Anniversary Symposium, October 20, 2008.

With his wife Claudette and daughter Alice, he has visited many Revolutionary War and Civil War battlefields and other historic sites over the years. He says, "My background as a civil and military engineer gives me an appreciation for the role that topography and terrain played in troop movements and defensive positions, and in operational strategies and tactics."

Bill is a strong believer in the need to protect and preserve our American heritage, and he is a member of the Civil War Preservation Trust and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, as well as a supporter of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, the oldest historic preservation organization in the United States. "I am proud to say that my interest in this cause is being passed to the next generation, as our daughter is currently a candidate for a master's degree in historic preservation at the University of Pennsylvania."

The Civil War Museum of the Upper Middle West

The Civil War Museum of the Upper Middle West in Kenosha will be dedicated Saturday, March 29, 2008.

The formal ribbon cutting will take place at noon and will be followed by an exhibit preview from 1-8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

The new museum is located on the Lake Michigan lakeshore at Kenosha between Chicago and Milwaukee. It highlights the roles of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa during the Civil War.

"The story on how the war affected the Upper Middle West is often overlooked. The states provided almost three-quarters of a million soldiers. We are telling the personal stories of soldiers, nurses, chaplains, and the families left behind. The human cost was staggering," said Museum Director Paula Touhey.

The full exhibit area will be open June 14, 2008.

The block-square, two-story museum features a 15,000 square



foot permanent gallery entitled "The Fiery Trial," a research center, veterans' memorial, gift shop, second floor temporary gallery, and a class and seminar rooms. The \$16.7 million facility was funded partially through tax incremental financing.

The building is located at 54th Street and First Avenue north of the Kenosha Public Museum. For additional information please call 262-653-4140 or visit: www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

A Reflection on Women During the Civil War

Katherine Wormeley wrote in 1889 in *The Other Side of War with the Army of the Potomac*: "As the men mustered for the battlefield, so the women mustered in churches, schoolhouses, and parlors, working before they well knew at what to work, and clinging everywhere for instructions... Little circles and associations of women were multiplying, like rings in the water, over the face of the whole country."



Clara Barton wrote of Antietam: "We were in a slight hollow and all shell which did not break among our guns, in front, came directly among or over us — bursting above our heads or burying themselves in the hills beyond. A man lying upon the ground asked for a drink — I stopped to give it, and having raised him with my right hand, was holding the cup to his lips with my left, when I felt a sudden twitch of the

loose sleeve of my dress. The poor fellow sprang from my hands and fell back quivering, in the agonies of death — a ball had passed between my body — and the right arm which supported him — cutting through the sleeve and passing through his chest from shoulder to shoulder. There was no more to be done for him and I left him to his rest — I have never mended that hole in my sleeve. I wonder if a soldier ever does mend a bullet hole in his coat?"

Mary Walker — the only Female Medal of Honor recipient — received the medal on November 11, 1865, awarded for special valor for going into enemy grounds where no male surgeon had been willing to go. 52 years later, she was among the 911 medal recipients who were disqualified — the board stipulated that the citation should go only to a member of the armed services who had distinguished themselves in combat. Mary's efforts to have the medal and its replacement restored were fruitless but she never gave up wearing the medal and wore it until her death at age 86 in 1919. In 1976, her descendant, Helen Hay Wilson, petitioned for the restoration of the medal. On June 10, 1977 — 58 years after her death — Mary's medal was reinstated.

After the creation of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, women were prominent in every branch and worked tirelessly canvassing neighborhoods for donations, working as nurses, organizing diet kitchens in the camps, running hospital ships, knitting socks and gloves, sewing blankets and uniforms, and baking food. Much of the money raised by the Sanitary Commission was by means of fairs, some of which became national events and lasted for weeks. During its existence, the Sanitary Commission received \$4,924,480.99 (\$766,103,273.00 today) in money and the value of \$15,000,000.00 in supplies. Katherine Wormeley, commission activist, wrote of her work with the men on the Commission, in particular Frederick Law Olmstead, General Secretary of the Commission (and architect-in-chief of Central Park) saying: "We of the staff are specially subordinate to Mr. Olmstead. And though we are not his right hand, we are the fingers of it and help carry out his ideas."

While her husband served in the Union Army, Elizabeth Thorn assumed the position of caretaker of Evergreen Cemetery from 1862-1865. Elizabeth was about 30 at the time she was left alone to care for three sons and her elderly parents. With the help of her elderly father, Elizabeth, 6 months pregnant, buried 91 soldiers in the weeks following the Battle of Gettysburg. She dug graves in the rockiest regions of the cemetery. Her possessions were stolen during the 3-day battle and she did not have food left at the house. Men were ordered to help Elizabeth with the burials but they could not handle the working conditions and left soon after they started digging. The baby she was expecting was named Rose Meade but she was never healthy and died at the age of 14. Elizabeth believed the psychological and physical stress of the battle and her burial work affected her unborn child.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Jeanie Attie, *Patriotic Toil*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1998.
- Judith Ann Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition*. Boston: Northeastern University, 2000.
- Patricia Richard, *Busy Hands: Images of the Family in the Northern Civil War Effort*. New York: Fordham University, 2003.
- Jane E. Schultz, *Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2004.
- Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2005.

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for March 13, 2008

Mail your reservations by Monday, March 10 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 March 13 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.



Did You Know?

Unexpected events, sudden illness, unpredictable Wisconsin weather... we all have reasons for being unable to honor monthly dinner reservations from time to time. But did you know that dinner reservations placed and not kept are charged to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee? Members are requested to pay for these reservations unless Paul Eilbes has received advance notice by the Monday before the meeting.

CWRT of Milwaukee, Inc. • 2008 Meetings

March 13, 2008

Brian Wills — Civil War in Cinema

April 10, 2008

Jennifer Weber — TBA

May 8, 2008

Vernon Burton — TBA

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