On Sept. 12th the Docatur CWRT will hold its 14th Annual Fall Symposium, fea- turing 4 talks on the Civil War in the West by David Hume, Bruce H. Stewart, Dr. Mark L. Bradley, and Col. Charles Gordon. For more details, phone (27) 578-2262 or email cwrat@yahoo.com.

On Sept. 10th Rob Girardi will speak on “What I saw at Shiloh” to the Maccopps County CWRT.

The 12th annual Cantigny Civil War Symposium, cosponsored by this CWRT, will be held Oct. 3rd. The great lineup of speakers includes John Marszalak, Dan Sutherland, Paul Finkelman and Craig Symonds. Registration for CWRT members is $20 ($40 for the general public), and includes lunch. For more information, phone (773) 948-9001 or visit www.firstdivisionsmuseum.org.

This Sept. 9th the Civil War Collector’s Show and Sale will return to the Dupo County Fairgrounds in Wheaton. If you’re looking to pick up a relic, a book, or just window shop, this is the place to do it.

The Chicago History Museum is currently featuring “Lincoln at 200,” an online exhibit with over 200 images of Illinois’ president. Starting October 18th, the museum will mount an exhibit, “Abraham Lincoln: Transformed.”

Byron Skaptason at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop reminds us that the next “Virtu- al Book Signing” will be noon, September 5th. Bruce Allardice and Rob Girardi from our Round Table will discuss their new books Confederate Colonels: A Biographical Reg- ister and Campaigning with Uncle Billy. For more information on this and upcoming events, visit www.virtualbooksigning.net or www.alincolnbookshop.com.

Grapeshot

Schimmel Fenning Boutique

Fifteen years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in either audio cassette or CD format. For lecture lists, contact Hal Adell at hal2290@ameritech.net or phone him at (773) 774-6781.

Each meeting features a book raffle, with proceeds going to battlefield preservation. There is also a silent auction for books donated by Ralph Newman and others, again with proceeds going to battlefield preservation.

Future Meetings

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, unless otherwise indicated.


Upcoming Civil War Events


Recent Deaths in the Civil War Community

The Civil War community, and this Round Table, lost several friends this last month. Bill Upham, a longtime member of the Mil- waukee CWRT and son of a Civil War vet- eran, Dick Upham, died. Bill was an insurance agent, known for his love of his country and those legends—those paths to their family and friends.

Members/Hostpitality Chairman Donna Tuohy is looking for volunteers to help out with that committee. Contact Donna at (312) 649-1404 if you can help. The task is very social and enjoyable.

Tom Chaffin on “H. L. Hunley”

“On the evening of February 17, 1864, the Confederate’s H. L. Hunley sank the USS Housatonic and became the first submarine in world history to sink an enemy ship. Not until World War I—half a century later—would a submarine again accomplish such a feat. But also persisting that moonlit night, vanishing beneath the cold Atlantic waters off Charleston, South Caro- lina, was the Hunley and her enti- re crew of eight. For generations, researchers probed Charleston’s harbor, looking for the Hunley. And as they hunted, the legends surrounding the boat and its demise continued to grow. Even after the submarine was definitively located in 1995 and recov- ered five years later, those legends—the barnacles of mis- information—have only multiplied.”

On Sept. 11th, distinguished Civil War-era historian Tom Chaffin will present the Hunley’s incred- ible story. The Hunley’s saga begins long before the submarine was even assembled and continues through its recovery in 2000. Based on his thorough survey of period docu- ments relating to the submarine and extensive interviews with ar- chaeologists working on the Hun- ley’s restoration, what emerges is a narrative that casts compelling doubts on many longheld assump- tions, particularly those concerning the boat’s final hours.

Tom Chaffin is Professor of His- tory at the University of Tennessee. After earning a Ph.D. from Emory University, Prof. Chaffin taught his- tory at his alma mater for 12 years. His wide range of academic achieve- ments include numerous articles as well as books on Fillister Nar- cisco Lopez, John C. Fremont, and the CSS Shem- donough, the latter being a His- tory Book of the Month Club se- lection. Professor Chaffin also di- rects and edits the President J. Kolk Correspondence Project. His Chicago talk will be based on his latest book, “The H. L. Hun- ley, The Secret Hope of the Con- federacy” (Hill and Wang, 2008, from whom the first paragraph is quoted).
Battlefield Preservation
By Robert Girardi

It is with heavy heart that I take pen in hand to report the disastrous defeat suffered in the Wilderness on August 25, 2009. Disregarding the 4-4 vote of August 24, which killed the proposal for the Walmart Store in the Wilderness, the commissioners reconvened and voted again. This time the pro Walmart crowd had 51 votes to 49 for those who voted against it could not attend the revote. This is the kind of politicking and commercialism that is going to doom preservation efforts. Victory was snatched away and now the world will have another Walmart...at the expense of sacred soil. Keep that in mind the next time you are ready to go shopping. There are alternatives to Walmart. There’s only one Wilderness Battlefield.

The Wilderness is one of the most important locations of the Civil War. To have it paved over is a travesty. Several wayside businesses have sprung up in the Wilderness battle, unless you go to Walmart. There is only one Walmart in the Wilderness, the commercialism and the Union army redefined the nature of the war by marching south to Spotsylvania instead of retreating northwest. The folks in Orange County ought to comprehend that when the Chicago CWRT comes there and spends $100,000, we are coming for the Wilderness, not to shop at Walmart! The folks in Franklin, Tennessee, or at Fort Negley, in Nashville, and at Wildcat Mountain, and Richmond, Kentucky know what our dollars do for the local community.

Keep this in mind people. When you walk by the Battlefield Preservation table at any meeting, holding the two drinks you just spent $17.00 for...why can’t you drop $2.00 for tickets for battlefield preservation! If every attender of the meetings gave $2.00 and doubled our budget, we could finance the construction of a few from the raffle alone. Currently, less than one-third of our attendees even spend the $2.00. Does it matter? Of course it does. If we don’t take action or speak up, will there be nobody else? Look around the area to see that the National Battlefield Park is already crowded out by the modern world. Major roads run through the battlefield and industry has already claimed much of the historic landscape. Keep in mind that the area is the focus of the battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania. Currently, there is little interpretation of the Wilderness, unless you include the Battlefield McDonald’s, a travesty. Several wayside panels and the Elwood House are all that is there.

In April 2010, the Chicago CWRT will go to the Wilderness on its annual battlefield tour. Thank God! Next year or the year after, we might have to line up behind the grocery cart rack next to the garden store to see where the Texas Brigade formed up to charge, or where the Union V Corps staged its attack into Sanders Field, or where the Union army redefined the nature of the war by marching south to Spotsylvania instead of retreating northwest. The folks in Orange County ought to comprehend that when the Chicago CWRT comes there and spends $100,000, we are coming for the Wilderness, not to shop at Walmart! The folks in Franklin, Tennessee, or at Fort Negley, in Nashville, and at Wildcat Mountain, and Richmond, Kentucky know what our dollars do for the local community.

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**The Civil War Round Table**

Founded December 3, 1940
1039 Hinwood
Darien, Illinois 60561
Phone: 630-460-1865
www.thecwrt.org

The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinwood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or contact bs1861@att.net.

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On June 12, at the 682nd regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago, Tom Cartwright spoke to a captive audience on “Cleburne and Sherman at Missionary Ridge”. For the latter, this engagement provided the best chance for success; for the former, it almost didn’t happen, but proved to be the test of a lifetime.

On November 22, 1863, Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne’s division was slated to be sent to join Gen. James Longstreet in Knoxville. The Irish-born Cleburne and his division already had a stellar reputation in the Confederate Army of Tennessee; they alone were allowed the special honor of retaining their distinctive blue flag with the white moon in the center, rather than carrying the recently adopted National (St. Andrews Cross) Flag. Cleburne was embarking his troops at Chickamauga station when he received a desperate message from Gen. Braxton Bragg, commander of the Army of Tennessee, who was heavily engaged at Missionary Ridge.

Cleburne was ordered to move up to the Ridge’s northern end, Tunnel Hill; there, on the night of November 24-25, his 3-brigade division or group took the job of defending the only easily defendable northwest side of the hill. The Glass farm house at the foot of the hill changed hands repeatedly. Brig. Gen. Alfred Cumming’s Georgia Brigade, part of Maj. Gen. Carter Stevenson’s Division to the left of Cleburne, fell back. Cleburne responded by bringing in his 4th, 2nd, 15th, and 24th Arkansas from Govan’s brigade, who by 3:00 a.m. were often resorting to throwing boulders and rocks downhill at the attacking Yankees, for they were running out of ammunition.

As the Federal brigades of Prussian-born Brig. Gen. Charles L. Matthies and Col. Green B. Raum were entering the fray at this time, Cleburne brilliantly counterattacked, the Confederates charging through the haze of battle downhill at the approaching Yankees. Soon the exhausted Union units were creeping downhill, many in great distress.

At around 4:00, about the same time the Confederate center was giving way on Missionary Ridge, Sherman ceased his attacks on Tunnel Hill. So while the Battle of Missionary Ridge was a Union success, this portion of it was a disaster. Cleburne’s men had taken 500 prisoners, eight battle flags, and inflicting 300 casualties while taking only 228—or roughly 1/6 of the Union number, which ironically was about by how much he was outnumbered (30,000 versus 4-6 thousand).

Patrick Cleburne was a tactical genius, and showed it at Missionary Ridge (he would do so again later on in the campaign at Ringgold Gap), he expertly arranged his defenses and arranged his command in try the conditions when he arrived at Tunnel Hill, and superbly moved his regiments as needed as the fight progressed. He also had great strategic vision, as demonstrated by his preparation to arms for the Confederate cause. Cleburne passed his test at Missionary Ridge. Sherman, on the other hand, who made “the blunder of the battle” by having his troops in the wrong place in the first place, moved his brigades slowly, indecisively, in piecemeal, uncoordinated fashion (Matthies’ Brigade was especially mishandled), and missed a golden opportunity to carry Missionary Ridge (he would do so again later on). Cleburne responded by bringing in his 4th, 2nd, 15th, and 24th Arkansas from Govan’s brigade, who by 3:00 a.m. were often resorting to throwing boulders and rocks downhill at the attacking Yankees, for they were running out of ammunition.

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The Wilderness is one of the most important locations of the Civil War. To have it paved over for low cost, low quality merchandise is a travesty to the thousands of Americans, blue and gray, who died here. The area has already had a stellar reputation in the Confederated Army of Tennessee; they alone were allowed the special honor of retaining their distinct blue flag with the white moon in the center, rather than carrying the recently adopted National (St. Andrews Cross Flag). Cleburne was emblazoning his troops at Chickamauga station when he received a desperate message from Gen. Braxton Bragg. So, having only a small valley in between, Cleburne responded by bringing in 10,000 of the Army of Tennessee, who was heavily engaged at Missionary Ridge. Cleburne was ordered to move up to the Ridge’s northern end, Tunnel Hill, there, on the night of November 22 to 24, his 3 Brigade division was engaged the entire night, under the moon in darkness, due to a lunar eclipse. Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, the commander of the Army of the Tennessee, was also on his way to the battle, with five brigades and twelve total, three brigades total, to take up a position on Billy Goat Hill, which he mistakenly believed (due to bad maps, he later said) to be the northern continuous end of Missionary Ridge, not northeast of it with a small valley in between. Not realizing the tenuous Confederate position on Tunnel Hill to its south, which if attacked and taken then could have made Bragg’s whole position on Missionary Ridge untenable, Sherman settled in for the night of November 23-24. After much indecision and delay on the 24th, Sherman decided to attack Cleburne and Sherman at Missionary Ridge. For the latter, this engagement provided the best chance for success; for the former, it almost didn’t happen, but proved to be the test of a lifetime.

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Leaving three brigades on Billy Goat Hill, the attack on the north-east side of Tunnel Hill, on a narrow front on the Confederate right but not the right flank, was commenced early on the 24th by Brig. Gen. John M. Corse, consisting of the 40th and 103d Illinois, the 6th Iowa, and the 46th Ohio. Cleburne had positioned only Smith’s Brigade and Swett’s Battery on Tunnel Hill, but used Sherman’s tardiness to good use, placing Gow- an in support, Lowery’s Alabamians to Smith’s right, and Key’s Battery to his left. The fighting was fierce and hand to hand, as the Union troops charging uphill were rephued by Confederate artillery, and Corse was wounded and evacuated to field hospital. At 1:00, with the Confederates holding strong, Col. John M. Loomis’ Brigade of Illinois and In- dians moved forward, supported by Col. Adolphus Bushbee’s Brigade, and Sherman committed his division for a decisive victory. Sherman, on the other hand, who made “the blunder of the battle” by having his troops in the wrong place in the first place, moved his brigades slowly, indecisively, and in piecemeal, uncoordinated fashion (Mathies’ Brigade was especially mishandled), and missed a golden opportunity for a decisive victory. Sherman, who admired Cleburne (and said so in his memoirs), would never again handle a battle so badly.

June Meeting
By Tom Trescott
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Tom Chaffin on
“H. L. Hunley”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

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On Sept. 11th, distinguished Civil War-era historian Tom Chaffin will present the Hunley’s incredible story. The Hunley’s saga begins as American inventor John L. Sullivan, looking for the Hunley. And as they hunted, the legends surrounding the boat and its demise continued to grow. Even after the submarine was definitively located in 1995 and recovered five years later, those legends—those barnacles of misinformation—have only multiplied.

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