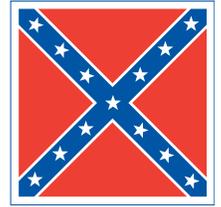


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXXI, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April 2011



## 700th REGULAR MEETING

Richard McMurray

on

“A Georgian Looks at Sherman”

★★★★★

Friday, April 8

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

*Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.*

*Dinner at 6:30 p.m.*

**\$45 - Members/Non-members**

*Entrée: Chicken Heartland,  
Baked Halibut, Vegetarian  
Plate or Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, Apr. 4 by calling 630 460-1865, or emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the number before 9 a.m. Thursday.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:30 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

*Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$12 with a validated parking sticker.*

Richard McMurray

on

“A Georgian Looks at Sherman”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

“War is Hell.” “War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it.” “I can make this march, and I will make Georgia howl!” These and other colorful quotes made the outspoken William T. Sherman one of the most sought-after speakers of the 19th Century. They also contributed to Sherman’s image among southerners as a remorseless, ruthless war leader, who wrecked the state of Georgia. Words such as “arson” and “pillaging” are often thrown around when talking about Sherman, especially by Georgians. As one Georgia historian later wrote of the March to the Sea, “The limits of this chapter do not permit of an adequate description of the ruin wrought throughout Georgia. The imagination, acting upon the basis of the outline here given, cannot exceed the reality.”

On April 8th Richard McMurray will present his perspective of General Sherman. As a long-time Georgia resident, McMurray grew up hearing the local stories and opinions of General Sherman and his alleged murderous, destructive rampage through Georgia in 1864. McMurray will ask whether the image of Sherman’s announced “total war” policy, matches the reality, and indeed



Richard McMurray

whether this image of Sherman is actually shared by most Georgians. He’ll explore why many Georgians have this view even today, when modern scholarship has—at a minimum—dispelled many of the myths regarding Sherman. As McMurray has observed, “Sherman’s bark was worse than his bite.”

**Dr. Richard McMurray** is a respected historian, humorist, author and lecturer in Civil War circles.

Richard is a native of Atlanta, Georgia, a graduate of Virginia Military Academy, and received a Ph.D. in history from Emory University under Bell

Wiley. He is the author of numerous books and articles on the Civil War, including Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History; John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence; The Fourth Battle of Winchester: Toward a New Civil War Paradigm; and Atlanta 1864: Last Chance for the Confederacy. Dr. McMurray has spoken several times to our Round Table.



## Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

### Gettysburg Land Purchase Updates: Preservation Groups Score Successes

#### Gettysburg Country Club

Gettysburg, PA—The Conservation Fund with help from the Civil War Trust recently purchased 95 acres of former Gettysburg Country Club land for future transfer to the National Park Service.

The developer released information to the Gettysburg Times before the preservation groups and Gettysburg National Military Park were prepared to make a public announcement.

Cumberland Club Services LLC developer Martin K. P. Hill told the newspaper that he will keep 15 acres with the clubhouse, pool, tennis courts and banquet facilities and market those services. There was no mention of the remaining 10 acres of the 120-acre club property.

The country club property, where Confederate and Iron Brigade forces fought on the battle's first day, is within the park boundary on the south side of Chambersburg Road, Route 30, west of Willoughby Run. Zoning would allow hundreds of houses to be built there.

The Civil War Trust donated \$25,000 from revolving funds towards the \$1.6 million purchase price and is now fundraising to replenish the fund.

Last year Park spokeswoman Katie Lawhon told Civil War News the site was a "major battle action" area. The park's 1993 Land Protection Plan said: "as part of the historic Harmon and Abraham Spangler farms, Confederate Brigades advanced and retreated over it during an attack on Union positions on McPherson and Seminary Ridges on July 1st".

According to John W. Busey and David G. Martin's *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg*, more than 900 men died there. The tract is also where the Iron Brigade captured Confederate General James Archer.

Lawhon said the east side of the parcel adjoins park land that is already accessible to the public. Last year she said, "If we acquire the land, the National Park Service could potentially do some battlefield rehabilitation work on property and we could provide guided walking tours and programs to the public there."

#### Josiah Benner Tract

The Civil War Trust is raising an additional \$45,000 for the nine-acre Josiah Benner Farm property near Barlow's Knoll, another first day action site, making a total of \$70,000 needed for Gettysburg land purchases.

The Benner property cost is \$450,000. Gettysburg National Military Park has \$405,000 in acquisition funds and the Trust will make up the difference.

This parcel includes the Josiah Benner house. On July 1, 1863, as the battlefield widened from west to east, Union troops under General Francis C. Barlow occupied the knoll just across Rock Creek from the Benner Farm. In the vicinity of the house, four companies of the 17th Connecticut were fired on by the advance forces of Jubal Early's Confederate Division. Elements of Confederate brigades under John B. Gordon and Harry Hays advanced over the Benner Farm to attack the Barlow's Knoll position.

After the battle, the Benner farm became a hospital, with General Barlow being one of the patients. Scores of Union and Confederate dead were buried on the farm.

Lawhon said this property also is within park boundaries. "We are working with our extremely supportive partners at the Civil War Trust... to acquire it for preservation and protection for future generation," she said.

To donate and see maps, articles, images and videos about these Gettysburg properties visit the Trust's Web site at [www.civilwar.org/gettysburg2011](http://www.civilwar.org/gettysburg2011).

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1039 Hinswood  
Darien, Illinois 60561  
Phone: 630-460-1865  
[www.chicagocwrt.org](http://www.chicagocwrt.org)

The only requirement for membership in The Civil War Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinswood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or [editor@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:editor@chicagocwrt.org).

#### Power's Hill

The Civil War Trust announced successful completion of its October campaign to raise \$75,000 to purchase five acres of Nathaniel Lightner Farm land on Power's Hill.

Union artillery batteries guarding the Union right flank from the hill on the morning of July 3rd trained their fire on exposed Confederates at Culp's Hill and Spangler's Spring creating an "artillery hell."

The total purchase price was \$310,000. The park had \$235,000 to put toward the acquisition. The tract along the Baltimore Pike is within the park boundary. It adjoins the park-owned Shealer property on Power's Hill.

Lawhon said the park will work to remove the non-historic buildings and trees this year.

From the April 2011 *Civil War News*

#### Ed Bearss Award

Please support our goal to raise \$2,000 dollars for the 10th Annual Ed Bearss Preservation Award. Every year on our battlefield tour Ed selects two battlefields that the roundtable sends a \$1,000 check in his name for battlefield preservation. Please help us reach this goal by April 27th.

## March Meeting

BY MARK MATRANGA

The Civil War Roundtable was feted at its 699th meeting by **Susan Boardman's** excellent presentation on the Gettysburg Cyclorama. The cyclorama, a large panoramic painting shown in the round, was initially patented in the late 18th Century, but this 'art for the masses' was not introduced to the United States until the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. Rotunda style buildings were built to house these huge canvases after they became standardized (400' x 50'). Hundreds were painted and exhibited but most were lost or destroyed. The Civil War was the subject of the majority of the cycloramas produced in the United States.

Teams of artists worked together to produce a cyclorama: there were specialists in perspective, landscapes, architecture, vegetation, and uniforms and weapons. Twenty artists worked on the Gettysburg painting. The cyclorama utilized a unique method of display which helped create the illusion of reality in the painting. The circular canvas, hyperbolic shape, overhead canopy, diorama, and elevated viewing platform all contributed to a 3-dimensional effect which immersed the viewer in the scene.

Paul Philippoteaux (1846-1923), principal artist and creator of the Gettysburg Cyclorama, first visited the battlefield in 1882. To prepare the project, he built a 30 foot platform on site to view the landscape. He studied War Department maps and conducted interviews with participants—Generals Hancock, Webb, Gibbon, and Doubleday, among others. He also relied on photographs of the battlefield taken by William Tipton. Philippoteaux first created a 1/10 scale oil study. He then sketched the entire composition in

pen and ink upon which he drew grid lines and projected the drawing, with grid lines, onto the full canvas. The process of planning and executing the project took about two years.

The Philippoteaux team executed four versions of the Gettysburg cyclorama. The first, in Chicago, opened on October 22, 1883 in its Rotunda at Wabash and Hubbard. The other three followed: Boston, December, 1884; Philadelphia, July, 1886; and Brooklyn, October, 1886. The effect of these creations was variously described as "simply astounding" and creating "a suspension of reality that took one's breath away." It was called "so realistic it could be confused with reality." General John Gibbon, who commanded a division at Gettysburg, extolled the virtues of the painting:

"...you may rest assured you have got a sight to see before you die. It is simply wonderful and I never before had an idea that the eye could be so deceived by paint and canvas.... The perspective and representation of the landscape is simply perfect....it was difficult to disabuse my mind of the impression that I was actually on the ground."

The success of the Chicago Cyclorama generated imitators – at one time there were two dozen such paintings. These "buckeyes," defined as "work of low quality, based on the 'buckeye' being an inferior tree, useless for building, fencing and even fuel," were often fine copies. One exhibited in Dayton, Ohio earned \$2,000 a week; the original grossed one million dollars in its first year, however. But by the end of the 1880s, the cyclorama was no longer the attraction it once was.

The Chicago Cyclorama closed in 1890 but was refurbished for the Columbian Exposition in 1893. It closed in 1895 and was allegedly destroyed in a fire. Philadelphia's moved to Cincinnati in 1887 where it remained for two years and then disappeared. Brooklyn's "Gettysburg" moved to several cities and eventually was cut into pieces and distributed to Veterans' Posts – some are now in the Park collection. The Boston version transferred to Philadelphia for a year, after which its whereabouts were unknown until 1901. Two large pieces were bought by Newark store owner Albert Hahne in 1910 and were brought to Gettysburg for the 50th anniversary of the battle. The painting remained in the Hahne family until 1942 when it was acquired by the NPS. Restoration using infra-red technology to locate the original grid lines began in 2006.

The restored Philippoteaux painting now resides in the new Visitor Center at Gettysburg where the "pageantry of war" it so realistically portrays is again on display.

To hear the entire talk, there is a recording of the meeting (and every meeting) available from **Hal Ardell**, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or [hal229@ameritech.net](mailto:hal229@ameritech.net). To view his slide presentations see <http://classic.kodakgallery.com/civilwar/main>.



On Sunday, May 15th, the Civil War Museum in Kenosha will host a free lecture and book signing with nationally renowned Lincoln scholar **Harold Holzer**. More details to come.

## GRAPESHOT



The **Chicago History Museum** is sponsoring several events to coincide with the Sesquicentennial, including the showing of the film "Love & Valor" April 3rd. Phone 312 642-4600 or visit [www.chicagohistory.org](http://www.chicagohistory.org) for more on these events.

Beginning in April the **Union League Club** will host monthly presentations on the Civil War, hosted by Larry Hewitt and Frank Patton.

**Dave Corbett** and his "Battlefield Balladeers" will perform at the Berwyn Public Library on April 9th.

Local notes—**The Elmhurst Public Library** is hosting a series of Civil War events this Spring, in connection with the Sesquicentennial. On April 2nd will be a program on "Foods of the Civil War Era," and on April 6th Trevor Steinbach will portray a Civil War Surgeon. See [www.elmhurstpubliclibrary.org](http://www.elmhurstpubliclibrary.org) for more details. **The Lake County Discovery Museum** is hosting an exhibit on "Civil War High Tech," and the **Waukegan Historical Society Museum** has a Civil War exhibit.

**Rob Girardi** will speak to the Wilmette Historical Society April 17th on "Illinois Fights the Civil War." On April 19th he'll address the Sarasota, FL CWRT on "General Impressions of the Civil War."

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at [editor@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:editor@chicagocwrt.org) or (630) 297-8046.

### SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus 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 Ardell at [hal229@ameritech.net](mailto:hal229@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 benefiting battlefield preservation.

### Upcoming Civil War Events

- April 1st, Northern Illinois CWRT: Marta Vincent on "Children's Clothing During the Civil War"
- April 6th, Lake County CWRT: Dave Noe on "The Great Camel Experiment"
- April 6th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Ray Guttendorf on "Marines and the Civil War"
- April 7th, Milwaukee CWRT: Richard McMurry on "A Georgian Looks at Sherman"
- April 9th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Presentation on "Illinois Regiments" by Tom Arliskas. Visit [www.thecivilwarmuseum.org](http://www.thecivilwarmuseum.org) for more details.
- April 12th, McHenry County CWRT: Ed LeCrone on "Copperheads in Illinois"
- April 14th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Lance Herdegan on "The Firing on Fort Sumter"
- April 15th, Salt Creek CWRT: Bruce Allardice on "Conscription and the Civil War"
- April 16th, Du Page County Fairgrounds: National Civil War Collectors Show
- April 19th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Dr. Mark Lause on "Missing Dimensions of the Civil War"
- April 28th, South Suburban CWRT: Don White hosts a discussion on "Lincoln Calls on Grant"

**Reminder: 2011 Tour** (Petersburg/Appomattox)—April 27-May 1, 2011

**2012 Tour** (Chickamauga/Chattanooga)—May 3-6, 2012

## Bulletin Board



### 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*.

April 8: Richard McMurry, "A Georgian Looks at Sherman"

May 13: Tom Schott, "Alexander Stephens and Jefferson Davis: A Marriage Made in Hell"

June 10: Peter Carmichael, "Robert E. Lee and the Strategy of Annihilation"

Sept. 9: Marshall Krolick, Topic TBA

Oct. 14: Open

Nov. 11: Gail Stephens on "Early's 1864 Invasion of Maryland"

### Reminder

The **Illinois State History Symposium** will be held April 14-16 at Carbondale. Its focus will be on the Civil War, and at the symposium copies of the Sesquicentennial Issue of the Journal of Illinois History will be available. This special issue features articles by Rob Girardi, Bruce Allardice, Kurt Carlson, Bjorn Skaptasan, Roger Bohn and others.

### Election Notice

At the May meeting, the CWRT will elect officers for the coming (2011-2012) year. The nominating committee's slate of proposed officers will be published in next month's newsletter. Nominations from the floor can be made at the meeting by any CWRT member.