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Titone has discussed her book on NPR and C-SPAN, and been a guest speaker at Ford’s Theater, the National Archives, the Harvard Club of Boston, and the New York Public Library, among other venues. She is delighted to be making her first visit to a Civil War Round Table.

“My Thoughts be Bloody:” The Bitter Rivalry of Edwin and John Wilkes Booth

by Bruce Allardice

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The battle of Antietam is called in James M. Cothren's book, The Crossroads of Freedom the battle that changed the course of the Civil War. The preservation of the Antietam battlefield would use a different model than the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Parks.

The Antietam Memorial Association was created in 1890, though the efforts of Rev. C. L. Keedy and Maryland Congressman Louis E. McComas. McComas proposed a park establishment bill in the House of Representatives on June 7, 1890. McComas was given no support for his bill, so in true Congress fashion he had an earmark added to a civil bill which included a provision of $15,000 to begin the surveying, location and preserving of Antietam and all lands would be under the care and supervision of the Secretary of War. The spending bill became law on August 30, 1890 and with this bill came the start of preservation of the Antietam battlefield.

McComas tried again to have Congress pass his park establishment bill but the House of Representatives did not follow the Committee on Military Affairs' recommendation on Antietam importance. This issue was never brought up again and with the defeat of McComas in his reelection bid in 1890, Antietam lost their political sponsor. This would result in Antietam development in a different fashion compared to Chickamauga with its large amount of acreage and large monumentation. Congress would save money by acquiring small amounts of the original fields of battle and save money by passing only sustaining appropriations in the years to come. This decision by Congress meant not all battlefields would be preserved along the Chickamauga Plan.

The War Department created an Antietam board in July 1891 to organize the work at the battlefield. As board members it chose Colonel John C. Stearns of 9th Vermont Infantry and ex-Confederate Major General Henry Heth. The problem was neither officer was a veteran of the battlefield nor did they report to the secretary of war himself. Congress and the War Department were taking a different view of how the work was going to be done on the Antietam battlefield.

Over the next three years the park was showing little signs of development under Stearns and Heth. Those men were old and sick, the battlefield had changed over the years and landowners wanted to sell all, not part, of their land. By January 1894 the Antietam battlefield had two hundred wooden signs around the battlefield to mark troop positions. They also started the process of working with landowners on the possibility of acquiring land. A major change came in the summer of 1894 with the new Secretary of War Daniel S. Lamont. Work on the Antietam battlefield would change with his active supervision of Antietam and creating a new team to implement these plans.

Stearns would resign as member of the board and Heth would stay on as the Confederate representative. Lamont appointed as president of the Antietam board Major George B. Davis. Davis had served in the 1st Massachusetts cavalry during the war, was a competent administrator, authority on military law, advisor on battlefield preservation and president of board publishing the Official Records. The Union representative and historical expert was Antietam veteran Ezra Carman, who was the colonel of the 13th New Jersey and brevetted brigadier general after the war. He worked in the War Department and had actively petitioned for a position on the Antietam board. The last member of Lamont team was Jed Hotchkiss, former "Stonewall" Jackson cartographer, because an expert topographer was needed to aid in the board’s mapmaking efforts.
September Meeting

By Mark Matranga

Bruce Allardice spoke to the 703rd meeting of The Civil War Round Table on our ‘national pastime,’ baseball, and the Civil War. Baseball had its origins in the bat-and-ball games played in 18th century England and its colonies such as “rounders” and cricket. Although Abner Doubleday has been called the “father” of baseball, Doubleday never claimed credit. The diamond-shaped field is attributed to Alexander Cartwright, albeit modern scholarship disputes even this. It is agreed that Cartwright formed the Knickerbocker Club in New York in September 1845 and, with another club member, James “Doc” Adams, changed the rules of an existing game, town ball, to set many of the rules we now associate with the game, including fair/foul territory, three-strikes and “out,” nine innings, nine players, and 90-foot baselines.

A convention of clubs standardized the rules in 1858. By that time, the game had spread across the country, with franchises in southern cities as well. Chicago saw its first game in 1857; the Excelsiors, ancestor of the Washington Nationals and Brooklyn Exciters. And Lincoln had a baseball field, the “White Lot,” constructed behind the White House.

Thousands of baseball club members volunteered for service in the Union Army, and a few enlisted in the Confederate Army. Some brought bats and balls when reporting for duty. All bats and balls were homemade. Soldiers wrote home of the pleasures of playing ball as a diversion from the hardships of battle and boredom of camp life. George Putnam, a Union soldier, wrote of a game called early due to a surprise attack. Another wrote home of hearing the report of musketry while his company played “batball.” Ballplayers of one regiment or brigade challenged others. On Christmas 1862, the 165th New York volunteer regiment played a group from other regiments before a crowd of 40,000.

There is no convincing evidence Union and Confederate soldiers played against each other during lulls in action. However, informal games were played after the surrender at Appomattox while Lee’s army was awaiting parole. And Private John Adams of the 19th Massachussets wrote of having observed Confederates playing baseball across the Rappahannock River while his unit was encamped at Falmouth, Virginia: “We would sit on the bank and watch their games, and the distance was so short we could understand every movement and would applaud good plays.” Rank did not prevent officers from participating in games. Charles Davidson of the 13th Massachusetts related that in early 1862, General Hartstut “got off his horse and requested permission to catch behind the bat” and playing for several minutes.

Baseball was played in prisoner-of-war camps with guards and town residents as spectators. Dr. Charles Gray wrote in his diary of the game being played regularly in the camp at Salisbury, North Carolina. Louisiana Brigade members who had played for prewar New Orleans teams were imprisoned on Johnson’s Island, Ohio, where they played the first recorded organized baseball game in that state.

Veterans became prominent in professional baseball following the war. One, Morgan Gardner Bulkeley of the 13th New York, later established his own team. The Round Table thanks Bruce for his very informative talk on the intersection of the war and the game that has become an integral part of our culture.

To hear the entire talk, there is a recording of the meeting (and every meeting) available from Hal Arndell, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@americantech.net. To view his slide presentations see http://classic.kodakgallery.com/civilwar/main.
Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, unless otherwise indicated.


Nov. 11: Gail Stephens on “Early’s 1864 Invasion of Maryland”

Dec. 9: James Robertson, “The Untold Civil War”


Feb. 10: Harry Bulkeley, “I Propose to Fight it Out”

Upcoming Civil War Events

Oct. 5th, Lake County CWRT: Char- lie Jarvis on “Bell City Rifles”

Oct. 5th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Jon Sebastian on “Illinois Politics”


Oct. 11th, McHenry County CWRT: Kathy Grey on “Women of the South”


Oct. 18th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Dave Hirsch & Dan VanHaften on “Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason”

Oct. 21st, Salt Creek CWRT: Panel Discussion: Ron Carbon “Greatest What-Ifs of the Civil War”

Oct. 27th, South Suburban CWRT: Bob Miller on “Father James Sheenan”


2013 Tour – Antietam

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 hal2290@ameritech.net or phone him at (773) 774-6783.

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.

On Oct. 29th the Chicago History Museum will host its annual Lincoln Colloquium, which focuses on the theme of Lincoln and Leadership. Speakers include Daniel Stowell of the Lincoln Papers, Prof. Stewart Winger, Prof. Matthew Holden, Prof. Bruce S. Allardice (speaking on “Lincoln as a War Leader”), and Dr. Lawrence Hewitt. The event starts with a light breakfast at 8:30 a.m., and ends at 4 p.m. The registration fee includes lunch. For more information, contact the CHM.

On Oct. 16th Rob Girardi will speak on “What I Saw of Shiloh” at the Wilmette Public Library, and Oct. 18th on “Civil War Artifacts” at the Chicago History Museum.

Dave Corbett’s Battlefield Balladeers will perform at the Rolling Meadows Library Oct. 7th, and the Addison Library Oct. 9th.

Leslie Goddard will present “Clara Barton” at the DuPage County Historical Museum Oct. 15th, and at the Elgin Historical Society Oct. 16th.

Check the Announcements section of the CWRT’s website for additional coming events.

Bjorn Skaptasan of the Abraham Lincoln book store reminds us that the next “Virtual Book Signing” will be November 2, with Amanda Foreman talking about her book, A World On Fire. In addition, the store and the Union League CWRT are sponsoring a discussion and book signing by historian Craig Symonds on Oct. 7th at the Union League Club. Visit www.virtualbooksigning.net for more details.

We had two deaths in our Civil War community recently. Longtime CWRT member Ted Zimmerman passed away September 17th at Evanston Hospital. Rick Benson, Vice President of the Salt Creek CWRT and frequent presenter on Captain Henry Wirz, passed away Tuesday September 20th. They’ll be missed.
Battlefield Preservation Committee News

Many thanks to all of our members who make donations at our monthly meetings by supporting the book drawing and the Battlefield Bookshelf. We appreciate your support and participation in our efforts, and your recommendations are always sought and given due consideration. This year, we are starting some new initiatives to raise funds, including the elevation of the minimum donation for book drawing tickets to $5.00. We have been trying this on the battlefield tours with great success, and have begun implementing it at the monthly meetings.

This is the latest report of what your generosity is accomplishing.

At our meeting held on August 27, the Battlefield Preservation Committee sent off contributions to Civil War Trust in the amount of $500.00 for their New Campaign to buy acreage at 2nd Manassas. This matching funds program is in the amount of 11.25 to 1.

We also spent some money closer to home, meeting a request from the Illinois State Historical Society to help sponsor new signage for the state's Civil War markers. We sent $350.00 to help replace the marker at Camp Butler, in Springfield. We also sent $500.00 to begin our support of the Camp Douglas Restoration Project. This worthy organization is seeking to create a museum to memorialize the training camp and prison on the south side of Chicago.

Lastly, but no less importantly, we responded to an appeal from the Macoupin County CWRT to participate in their drive to conserve the flag of the 122nd Illinois Infantry. Our contribution of $250.00 is helping them raise the necessary funds to complete the project. Thus far, they have raised more than two-thirds of the $35,000 necessary to conserve the flag.

It is our support of these projects that keep our collective memory and appreciation of the sacrifice made by those of the Civil War Era alive. During the Sesquicentennial years of the Civil War, it is more important than ever for all of us to contribute to the preservation of our history and heritage. Towards that end, the Battlefield Preservation Committee is announcing the beginning of the Chicago CWRT Sesquicentennial Challenge.

To Arms!

As part of the sesquicentennial commemoration of the Civil War, we are challenging 100 members of the CWRT to contribute $150.00 to Battle Preservation. The goal is to raise $15,000 by May of 2013 when we are hosting the Sesquicentennial Symposium. It is hoped that the CWRT can use these funds to make a substantial contribution to a worthy battlefield Preservation Project.

Each person who donates will have their name inscribed on the Roll of Honor which will be put on display at the symposium. Each contributor will get a copy of the Roll of
Honor. In order to ease the burden of the donation, we will be willing to take partial donations until the $150.00 is paid.

Please seriously consider joining us in this worthy cause. Give a little in memory of those who gave all.

Robert I. Girardi
Chairman, Battlefield Preservation Committee.

**CWRT Current Officers**

**Officers 2011-2012**

- President: Bob Stoller
- Senior Vice President: Brian Seiter
- First Vice President: Mark Matranga
- Second Vice President: Paula Walker
- Treasurer: Cindy Heckler
- Assistant Treasurer: Jon Sebastian
- Secretary: John Kociolko
- Assistant Secretary: Mike Weeks

**Trustees, terms to expire 2012**

Bob Gibson, Leslie Goddard Allardice, Mark Kunis, Bjorn Skaptason

**Trustees, terms to expire 2013**

Tom Murray, Rick Branham, Fred Johanson, David Zucker

**Blast from the Past**—The Sept. 29, 1948 Chicago Tribune featured a profile of the CWRT by Trib reporter (and CWRT member) Lloyd Wendt. The article noted that the Round Table had 150 members, “enthusiasts” with “an intense loyalty to their hobby, their heroes, and to one another. … Sometimes at the meetings there are heated battles over such issues as whether a certain general did wrong or right at a time of crisis. But the fights are never personal.” Although mentioning the several prominent historians who were members, Wendt observed that “most members have no direct professional interest in history, but started their studies for recreation and personal development.” Sounds like today! But wait…..

The following might surprise current members: Aspiring members were cross-examined by veteran members to see if they were “able and serious followers” of the Civil War! “Aspirants for membership must know their subjects thoroughly, for the inquisition is severe. It’s all done in the spirit of serious scholarship, however.”