Announcements

On April 20–21, the Civil War Numismatic Society will host a Civil War Forum at the Schaumburg Renaissance Convention Center. The event is part of the Civil War Numismatic Society’s Teacher’s Institute.


On April 12th, the Wheaton History Center is presenting a program on “Andersonville & the Civil War.”

Bob Kuzma will speak on “Will County Goes to War” Apr. 26th, at noon, at the Joliet Area Historical Museum. On April 14th Rob Girardi will speak on “The Midwest in the Civil War” at the Kenosha Civil War Museum. The event is part of the Civil War Trust’s Teacher’s Institute.

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

Grapeshot

Upcoming Civil War Events

Apr. 4th, Lake County CWRT: Charlie Banks on “U.S. Military Railroads”

Apr. 6th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Rick Andersen on “Reconstruction”

Apr. 10th, McHenry County CWRT: Marla Vincent, “Clothing Worn by Women from Breakfast to Ballroom”

Apr. 12th, Milwaukee CWRT: Marshall Krolick on “The 8th Illinois Cavalry”


Apr. 17th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Georgiann Baldino on “A Soldier’s Friend—Cornelia Hancock, Civil War Nurse”

Apr. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Richard Crowe on “The Lincoln Assassination”

Apr. 26th, South Suburban CWRT: Larry McClellan on “The Underground Railroad in Illinois”

Apr. 28th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Ed Bears on “The Shiloh Campaign”

25th, Union League Round Table: at 11:30, Michael Burlingame and Robert Shaw on “Abraham Lincoln Traveled This Way”

Reminders 2012 Tour (Chickamauga/Chattanooga) May 3–6, 2012

2013 Tour — Antietam

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.


May 18: Bruce Holden Reid, “Strategy of the Civil War”

June 8: Dennis Frye, “Antietam”

September 14: Tom Schwartz, Nevins-Freeman Address

October 12: Ed Bonekemper, TBA

November 11: Dale Phillips, TBA

Bjorn Skaptasen of the Abraham Lincoln book store reminds us that the next “Virtual Book Signing” will be Saturday, April 28th, at noon, with Michael Burlingame and Robert Shaw talking about their new book, Abraham Lincoln Traveled This Way. Visit www.virtualbooksigning.net for more details.

REMINDER—The 2012 Battlefielld Tour is coming up. Visit the website to download the registration form!

Call by Wednesday Apr. 11

Marshall Krolick on Riding for the Union: Memoirs of the 8th Illinois Cavalry

Call by Wednesday Apr. 11

Marshall Krolick on Riding for the Union: Memoirs of the 8th Illinois Cavalry

They were farm boys, store clerks and factory workers from the towns and prairies of Illinois. Their experiences with horses had mostly been from behind, either walking with a plow or riding in a wagon. Certainly it had not been sitting atop a horse while at a full gallop. Yet they came together to form one of the finest cavalry regiments of the Civil War, respected and admired by friend and foe alike.

In their diaries and letters home, and in their postwar writings, they recounted their experiences as troopers. These memories tell us of the good times and the bad, the many achievements and the few failures. However, in each remembrance, there is a common thread. It is pride, a pride that glowed within each of them for the rest of their lives whenever they said, “I rode for the Union with the 8th Illinois Cavalry.”


Mr. Krolick has been a member of the CWRT of Chicago since 1961, serving the CWRT in several capacities including president (1971-72), and editor of its newsletter (1974-79). In 1990 he received the CWRT’s Nevins-Freeman Award for distinguished scholarship and dedication to Civil War study. He is a member of numerous charitable associations, several Jewish historical societies, and other round tables. His published works on the Civil War include articles in most of the major Civil War magazines, and he was for several years a columnist for Civil War Times Illustrated. Marshall regularly guides tours of Gettysburg and other Civil War battlefields.
The Preservation of the H.L. Hunley
On the night of February 17, 1864, the H.L. Hunley became the world's first successful combat submarine sinking the USS Housatonic off the coast of Charleston, S.C., marking the first successful submarine Hunley Commission and a private, nonprofit group called the Friends of the Hunley. Work is now under way in solving the mystery of this submarine. For more information on the H.L. Hunley please check www.hunley.org. Below is latest update from the March Civil War News on the Hunley.

The Hunley Sub Is Free of Rust, Visible For First Time
By Scott C. Boyd
Charleston, S.C.—The Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley is now fully visible for the first time since it sank in 1864.

The 17,000-pound metal framework, or truss, which had covered the submarine since it was recovered from the sea on August 8th, 2000 was removed on January 12th as a small crowd of reporters and Hunley project workers anxiously watched.

“I was very nervous. I don’t want anything heavy above the sub,” head conservator Paul Mardikian said later. After about 15 minutes, two cranes finished safely moving the truss up and away from the Hunley. Mardikian yelled, “Champagne now!” It’s like looking at her for the first time. It’s beautiful,” he said.

Archaeologist Ben Benison observed, “The Hunley looks a lot smaller, but it looks like a sub in drydock ready to go.”

“I think it’s amazing,” said Kelken Correa, executive director of the Friends of the Hunley.

The rectangular truss stood over the 40-foot-long submarine that had held it in a series of slings. It was used to raise the submarine from the ocean and then support it in its water tank home at the Warren Lasch Conserva- tion Center, now operated by Clemson University, at the former navy base in North Charleston. Since 2000, the 55,000-gallon tank in which the Hunley sat held fresh water with an “impressed electrical current to keep corrosion very low,” Mardikian said. When the tank was drained periodically to allow archaeolo- gists to excavate the vessel’s interior, a sprinkler system protected the Hunley from corrosion.

Discovered under water at a 45-de- gree list to starboard in 1995, just out- side the mouth of Charleston Harbor, the Hunley was kept in the truss at the same angle during and after the recover- y until the submarine was rotated into an upright position in late June 2011.

Mardikian said rotating the subma- rine’s upright was the key preparation for removing the truss and was the more technically challenging and dan- gerous task.

Within six months the Hunley will go into an “active conservation phase,” Mardikian explained. The focus will be on removing the salt the iron sub- marine acquired while being under water for 136 years. “Had the sub been in a fresh water lake, we wouldn’t have this problem,” he said.

The impressed electric current has already removed a lot of salt from the metal, but to get the submarine into a stable state, he said it must be soaked now in a chemical solution of sodium hydroxide. “It’s very caustic, with a pH of 13,” he said, adding that the fumes aren’t hazardous, but direct contact with the liquid would be.

Mardikian estimated the Hunley would need to soak in the chemical solu- tion for about three months before the remaining corrosion on the hull is ready to be shipped. He could not commit to a timetable, but he said the results of the chemical action would dictate the pace. “The submarine will tell us how long it needs.” “When we clean it off the corrosion, we’re going to see things we’ve never seen before. It will help us understand the final mo-
ments of the submarine,” he said.

The mystery of why the Hunley did not return after sinking the USS Housatonic on February 17th, 1864, became the Hunley's most important mission to sink an enemy warship, has yet to be solved. Beyond chipping off the visible hull concretion, the Hunley will need to re- main in the conservation tank for several years before becoming stable, accord- ing to Mardikian. At that point, when the conserva- tion is completed, the truss will be placed over the Hunley and it will be moved to its final destination for dis- play, a museum-like setting yet to be determined.

“There is no textbook, no road- map, for how to conserve a Civil War submarine,” Mardikian told re- ports. “No one in the world can tell you but us now how to do it.”

Some 300,000 visitors have seen the Hunley over the past 11 years, ac- cording to Correa. After removal of the truss, however, the visitor experi- ence will be very different.

“With the concept not only of seeing things we’ve never seen before, but understanding how things worked and why they’ve never seen it like this."

The annual Nevins-Freeman ad- dress on the Bermuda Hundred Campaign was delivered by A. Wil- lis Greene at the 70th meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Chi- cago on March 9, 2012. This cam- paign is overshadowed by the Over- land and Petersburg Campaigns. However, during sixteen days in May 1864 there were eight engage- ments in this complicated campaign which resulted in over ten thousand casualties.

The officer most associated with the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, Benjamin F. Butler, rose to promi- nence in pre-war Massachusetts pol- itics. Although a Democrat, Butler remained an ardent unionist: his unit was one of the first to arrive in Washington. When assigned to Fortress Monroe, he anticipated fu- ture war policy by refusing to return escaped slaves. His status as a War Democrat and some success dur- ing operations in North Carolina brought him command of the cam- paign for New Orleans. But the aro- ma of corruption surrounding his administration following capture of that city resulted in his removal in late 1862.

For the next year, Butler was on the stump supporting the war ef- fort. His popularity was such that Lincoln considered him a rival, and he was given a new command, the 40,000-man Army of the James. This officer with previous pre- war military experience and was pri- marily made up of conscripts from New England and New York. But- ler’s corps commanders were Quin- cy Gilmore, an engineer with few command skills, and W. F. “Baldy” Smith, who possessed a penchant for being critical of his superiors. George Pickett opposed them with a force of 13,000 assigned to protect the railroad from Wilmington, NC to Richmond.

The annual Ed Bears Award

Please support our goal to raise $2,000 dollars for the 11th Annu- al Ed Bears Preservation Award. Every year our battlefield tour Ed selects two battlefields, and the roundtable sends a $1,000 check in his name for battlefield preserva- tion. Please help us reach this goal by April 27th.

The annual CWRT election for offi- cers will be at the May meeting. As always the nominations com- mittee will present its selections, and members present at the meeting can make other nominations from the floor.
The Preservation of the H.L. Hunley

On the night of February 17, 1864, the H.L. Hunley became the world's first successful combat submarine sinking the USS Housatonic off the coast of Charleston, South Carolina. The Hunley Conservation Commission and a private, non-profit group called the Friends of the Hunley are working together on solving the mystery of this submarine. For more information on the H.L. Hunley please check www.hunley.org. Below is latest update from the March Civil War News on the Hunley.

The Hunley Sub Is Free of Rust, Visible For First Time

By Scott C. Boyd
Charleston, S.C.—The Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley is now fully visible for the first time since it sank in 1864.

The 17,000-pound metal frame- or, truss, which had covered the submarine's entire length, was recovered from the sea on August 8th, 2000 was removed on January 12th as a small crowd of reporters and Hunley project workers anxiously watched.

“I was very nervous. I don’t want anything heavy above the sub,” head conservator Paul Mardikian said later. After about 15 minutes, two cranes finished safely moving the truss up and away from the Hunley. Mardikian yelled, “Champagne now!” “It’s like removing the truss and was the more technically challenging and dangerous task.

Within six months the Hunley will go into an “active conservation phase,” Mardikian explained. The focus will be on removing the salt the iron sub- marine acquired while being under water for 136 years. “Had the sub been in a fresh water lake, we wouldn’t have this problem,” he said.

The impressed electric current has already removed a lot of salt from the metal, but to get the submarine into a stable state, he said it must be soaked now in a chemical solution of sodium hydroxide. “It’s very caustic, with a pH of 13” he said, adding that the fumes aren’t hazardous, but direct contact with the liquid would be.

Mardikian estimated the Hunley will need to soak in the chemical solution for about three months before the remaining corrosion on the hull is ready to be chipped off. He could not commit to a timetable, saying the results of the chemical action would dictate the pace. “The submarine will tell us how long it needs.” “When we chipped off the corrosion, we’re going to see things we’ve never seen before. It will help us understand the final moments of the submarine,” he said.

The mystery of why the Hunley did not return after sinking the USS Housatonic on February 17th, 1864, became more tantalizing now that the sub could be photographed and shown to the public.

The Hunley was kept in the truss at the Charleston Harbor, the Hunley was kept in the truss at the same angle during and after the recovery until the submarine was rotated into an upright position in late June 2011.

Mardikian said rotating the submarine upright was the key preparation for removing the truss and was the more technically challenging and dangerous task.

To move the Hunley from the truss, the sub will be placed over the Hunley and it will be moved to its final destination for display, a museum-like setting to be yet to be determined.

“There is no textbook, no road map, for how to conserve a Civil War submarine,” said Mardikian. “No other conservators, do the DNA analysis of degraded remains, do the facial reconstructions, conserve fabrics that have under wear for over a century.” Mardikian told reporters. “No one in the world can tell you but us how now to do it.”

Some 300,000 visitors have seen the Hunley over the past 11 years, according to Correia. After removal of the truss, however, the visitor experience is very different. “You can get a full sense of the Hunley for the first time,” she said. “Everyone who has been here before had to imagine what it was like because they’ve never seen it like this.”

The annual Nevins-Freeman ad- dress on the Bermuda Hundred Campaign was delivered by A. Wil- liam Greene at the 200th meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Chi- cago on March 9, 2012. This cam- paign is overshadowed by the Over- land and Petersburg Campaigns. However, during sixteen days in May 1864 there were eight engage- ments in this complicated campaign which resulted in over ten thousand casualties.

The officer most associated with the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, Benjamin F. Butler, rose to promi- nence in pre-war Massachusetts pol- itics. Although a Democrat, Butler remained an ardent unionist: his unit was one of the first to arrive in Washington. When assigned to Fortress Monroe, he anticipated fu- ture war policy by refusing to return escaped slaves. His status as a War Democrat and some success dur- ing operations in North Carolina brought him command of the cam- paign for New Orleans. But the atmo- spheric of corruption surrounding his administration following capture of that city resulted in his removal in late 1862.

For the next year, Butler was on the stump supporting the war ef- fort. His popularity was such that Lincoln considered him a rival, and he was given a new command, the 40,000-man Army of the James. This was a poor fit with pre- war military experience and was pri- marily made up of conscripts from New England and New York. But- ler’s corps commanders were Quin- cey Gilmore, an engineer with few command skills, and W. F. “Baldy” Smith, who possessed a penchant for being critical of his superiors. George Pickett opposed them with a force of 13,000 assigned to protect the railroads from Wilmington, N.C to Richmond.

Grant instructed Butler to estab- lish a base between the James and Appomattox, seize the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad, and to as- sist Meade when the latter reached Richmond. Butler erroneously con- sidered his mission simply that of securing the peninsula and aiming Meade. This probably doomed the campaign.

Sensing Union army movement, Pickett sounded the alarm, his government responded by placing P.G.T. Beauregard in command over him. Beauregard collected troops from other states and from General Ransom’s command at Richmond. Butler landed on May 5th. Pickett commanded just 1,400 men, but Butler first secured his base, giving the Confederates time to reinforce. He attacked at Port Weldon Junc- tion on the 6th and 7th when Fed- eral forces tore up a small section of railroad. On May 9th, Smith met Bushrod Johnson’s division at Swift Creek where a Confederate recon- naissance in force was repulsed. On May 10th, Ransom attacked at Chester Station, stopping Federal destruction of the railroad and caus- ing Butler to retire to his encamp- ments.

Beauregard arrived on May 10th, taking command from the emotion- ally drained Pickett. Butler did not strike until May 13th at Woolridge Hill on Drewy’s Bluff. Beauregard determined to concentrate and at- tack Butler’s poorly-led troops, in conjunction with an attack on their rear by Whiting’s force from south of the Appomattox. The May 16th assault, a sanguine affair in- volving approximately 17,000 men, was compromised when Whiting failed to attack. After Beauregard’s May 20th attack at Ware Bottom Church, the Confederates con- structed the Petersburg railroad, effective- ly ending the campaign. With this both sides began to pull units for action northward.

Greene disagrees with the notion that Butler was “corked” in the Ber- muda Hundred — he maneuvered forces across the Appomattox and transferred them without incident; Butler claimed he kept thousands of Confederate soldiers occupied. Greene doubts any officer could have succeeded with the command- ers Butler was assigned. On the southern side, Pickett performed well but suffered a nervous break- down for his efforts. Beauregard’s initial absence was suspicious. His plans were well designed but thwarted in turn by his subordinates Ran- som and Whiting. While Greene does not consider Bermuda Hun- dred the force some do, it remains a study in how not to manage a mili- tary campaign.

Ed Bears Award

Please support our goal to raise $2,000 dollars for the 11th Annu- al Ed Bears Preservation Award. Every year our battlefield tour Ed selects two battlefields, and the rundtable sends a $1,000 check in his name for battlefield preserva- tion. Please help us reach this goal by April 27th.
On Saturday, Apr. 21st, the DuPage County Fairgrounds will host the annual “Civil War and Military Collector’s Show” from 9-4. Admission is $9. For more information, phone (715) 526-9769 or visit www.zurkopromotions.com.

On Apr. 20-21, the Civil War Numismatic Society will host a Civil War Forum at the Schaumburg Renaissance Convention Center.

On April 12th, the Wheaton History Center is presenting a program on “Andersonville & the Civil War.”

Bob Kuzma will speak on “Will County Goes to War” Apr. 28th, at the Joliet Area Historical Museum.

On April 14th Rob Girardi will speak on “The Midwest in the Civil War” at the Kenosha Civil War Museum. The event is part of the Civil War Trust’s Teacher’s Institute.

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

Upcoming Civil War Events

Apr. 4th, Lake County CWRT: Charlie Banks on “U.S. Military Railroads”
Apr. 4th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Sam Blackwell, topic TBA
Apr. 6th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Rick Andresen on “Reconstruction”
Apr. 10th, McHenry County CWRT: Marta Vincent, “Clothing Worn by Women from Breakfast to Ballroom”
Apr. 12th, Milwaukee CWRT: Marshall Krolick on “The 8th Illinois Cavalry”
Apr. 17th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Georgiann Baldino on “A Soldier’s Friend—Cornelia Hancock, Civil War Nurse”
Apr. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Richard Crowe on “The Lincoln Assassination”
Apr. 26th, South Suburban CWRT: Larry McClellan on “The Underground Railroad in Illinois”
Apr. 28th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Ed Beans on “The Shiloh Campaign”
Apr. 27th, Union League Round Table: at 11:30, Michael Burlingame and Robert Shaw on “Abraham Lincoln Traveled This Way”

REMINDER—The 2012 Battlefield Tour is coming up. Visit the website to download the registration form.

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.

May 18: Bruce Holden Reid, “Strategy of the Civil War”
June 8: Dennis Frye, “Antietam”
Sept. 14: Tom Schwartz, Nevins-Freeman Address
Oct. 12: Ed Bonekemper, TBA
Nov. 11: Dale Phillips, TBA

The Civil War Round Table

Marshall D. Krolick on Riding for the Union: Memoirs of the 8th Illinois Cavalry

By Bruce Allardice

They were farm boys, store clerks and factory workers from the towns and prairies of Illinois. Their experiences with horses had mostly been from behind, either walking with a plow or riding in a wagon. Certainly it had not been sitting atop a horse while at a full gallop. Yet they came together to form one of the finest cavalry regiments of the Civil War, respected and admired by friend and foe alike.

In their diaries and letters home, and in their postwar writings, they recounted their experiences as troopers. These memories tell us of the good times and the bad, the many achievements and the few failures. However, in each reminiscence, there is a common thread. It is pride, a pride that glowed within each of them for the rest of their lives whenever they said, “I rode for the Union with the 8th Illinois Cavalry.”


Marshall D. Krolick has been a member of the CWRT of Chicago since 1961, serving the CWRT in several capacities including president (1971-72), and editor of its newsletter (1974-79). In 1990 he received the CWRT’s Nevins-Freeman Award for distinguished scholarship and dedication to Civil War study. He is a member of numerous charitable associations, several Jewish historical societies, and other round tables. His published works on the Civil War include articles in most of the major Civil War magazines, and he was for several years a columnist for Civil War Times Illustrated. Marshall regularly guides tours of Gettysburg and other Civil War battlefields.