



GENERAL ORDERS

The Newsletter of the
Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.

Our 61st Year

and The Iron Brigade Association



JANUARY 8, 2009

FRANK O'REILLY Fredericksburg

In January the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee will be visited by Frank O'Reilly. Mr. O'Reilly's presentation will focus on "Hidden Fredericksburg – the Battle We Thought We Knew."

In researching the Fredericksburg Campaign Mr. O'Reilly looked at a battle that seemed easy to understand but one where few have really delved into the details. We all know about Union commander, Ambrose E. Burnside, bludgeoning his forces against an impregnable Marye's Heights and its terrible Stone Wall. Yet, when Mr. O'Reilly looked at the details he found that Fredericksburg was a very different battle than was first assumed. The Union Army came perilously close to winning in spite of itself and in the course of three days, helped re-write how armies would fight in the modern military world, right up to today.

In his presentation Mr. O'Reilly will talk about a number of episodic events that surprised him as he researched the Fredericksburg Campaign as well as the things that made him pause, get excited and lose sleep for months on end.

Francis Augustin O'Reilly graduated from Washington & Lee University in 1987 and joined the National Park Service at the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. He worked briefly at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and then returned to Fredericksburg in 1990 as the permanent historian for the "Stonewall" Jackson Shrine. He has also served as a historical consultant for the City of Fredericksburg and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Planning Commission.

Mr. O'Reilly has written numerous articles on the Civil War and the Mexican War as well as introductions to several books, including William McCarter's *My Life in the Irish Brigade*, and *The History of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry*. In 1993 his book on the Fredericksburg Campaign—*Stonewall Jackson at Fredericksburg*—was released. His latest publication, released by LSU Press in December, 2002, is *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter on the Rappahannock*. The book received a 2003 nomination for the Pulitzer Prize in Letters and was the winner of the 2002 Capital District (Albany, NY) Book Award, the 2003 James I. Robertson Jr. Book Award, the 2004 Daniel Laney Book Award and the 2004 Richard Barksdale Harwell Book Award. Mr. O'Reilly is currently researching a book on the Battle of Malvern Hill and the Seven Days' Campaign.



Fredericksburg from Tyler's Battery, photographed by James Gibson. Library of Congress: LC-B815- 676

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JANUARY MEETING AT A GLANCE

January 8, 2009

"Hidden Fredericksburg — the Battle We Thought We Knew"

by Frank O'Reilly

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, January 5, 2009

See page 5.

Speaker and topic are subject to change.

In case of inclement weather, listen to

WTMJ or WISN radio.

2009 Membership Cards

New Membership cards for 2009 will be mailed out to the membership between Christmas and the New Year.

2008 Christmas Gala

Eighty-six Civil War Round Table members and guests spent a delightful evening of dining, dancing and entertainment at the Third Annual Christmas Gala held at the Wisconsin Club on December 7th. After cocktails and a silent auction, all enjoyed a delicious Victorian dinner while listening to period music skillfully played by pianist Eileen Beamish. Following the meal, the West Side Soldiers Aid Society presented an excellent program of Civil War holiday traditions, songs and dances. Members and guests were invited to join in the waltzes and reels under the capable leadership of dance mistress Patricia Lynch. It can be safely said that, unlike the young Abraham Lincoln with Mary Todd, most of the men did not dance with their partners "in the worst way." The fun was also enhanced by instructions in ballroom etiquette of the era, such as "If you accompany your wife to a dancing party, be careful not to dance with her except perhaps for the first set."

Another highlight of the evening was a surprise visit from a very patriotically-garbed Santa Claus and his beautiful helpers who distributed small sacks of Christmas candies to all in attendance. Those who received a sack tied with a gold ribbon were awarded special gifts which included a certificate for dinner at the Wisconsin Club, a certificate for a massage at Namaste, and tickets to the Pabst Mansion, Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee County Zoo, and the Cemetery Tour at Reclaiming Our Heritage in 2009.

Event chair Tom Arliskas and his wife Terry are to be congratulated for arranging the dinner with the Wisconsin Club, for soliciting auction and raffle items, and for coordinating the program.

At the end of the evening, there was unanimous agreement that the Christmas Gala was a great success and all were looking forward to next year's event.

Submitted by: Bill Finke

Ulysses S. Grant Association News

The Ulysses S. Grant Association and Southern Illinois University-Carbondale have reached an out-of-court settlement on a lawsuit over "priceless" works of Civil War-era historical materials.

The December agreement comes after a nearly year-long dispute over works detained by the university and nearly four months after association lawyers filed a restraining order against the university for the property.

The Grant Association board voted unanimously, in August, to name retired Mississippi State University professor John Marszalek as the group's new executive director. Association president Frank Williams indicated that Mississippi State would be the new home of the association.

In Memoriam



On December 3, 2008, after a short battle with cancer, Dr. Richard Zeitlin, director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, passed away.

In his remembrance of Dr. Zeitlin, Wisconsin Secretary of Veterans Affairs John Scocos said:

When I think of Rich Zeitlin, I remember him first as a young curator over in the original Civil War Museum in the Grand Army of the Republic room over in the State Capitol, with a bold future vision for promoting the historical legacy of Wisconsin's veterans in a first-class, easily accessible, interactive museum to share the history of Wisconsin's veterans...For those of us who had the honor and privilege of knowing Rich Zeitlin, we will always remember his warmth, his kindness, his incredible knowledge of military history, and his ability to work with anyone, whether it was a veteran or a staff member, because his heart was always in the right place to reach out and take care of people.

Dr. Zeitlin began working at the Museum as curator on January 9, 1980. Construction of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum began in July 1990. Dr. Zeitlin supervised the major redevelopment from 1990-1993 and presided over the museum's continued success from that time on.

Richard Zeitlin earned a Masters and a Ph.D. in U.S. History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He published three books and a number of articles, mostly about state and local history as well as military affairs. He was a member of the National D-Day Master Planning Board.



On the Web

Craig A. Warren, Professor of English at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, is the editor of a website dedicated to Ambrose Bierce. The Ambrose Bierce Project is an online forum and resource for the study of Ambrose Gwinnett Bierce. If you would like to take a closer look at Bierce visit the site at: www.ambrose-bierce.org/

In a recent deal with Google, the Life archives are going online. Life.com will provide public access to its archives including about 10 million images, 97% of which have never been seen before. Visit www.life.com. On the home page click on Search for Life Images and then click on 1860 – you'll find 8 "pages" of Civil War photographs. Images through the 1970s are available for your viewing pleasure at the site.

In this Bicentennial year of Lincoln's birth there is an overwhelming amount of material and information available on Lincoln. One very nice site is: www.abrahamlincolnonline.org. You'll find some very nice interviews here with Lincoln scholars, a daily "Lincoln log" listing daily events in his life as well as a section to keep you up-to-date on the new or soon-to-be published books about Lincoln.

☆☆☆☆☆☆ IN THIS MONTH • JANUARY ☆☆☆☆☆☆

On January 5, 1861 the Mayor of New York City declared that if the southern states could secede, then New York City should also become a free city with the right to trade with both North and South. No action was taken.

On January 6, 1863, retreating from Murfreesboro after the Battle of Stone's River, Pvt. Jackman of the Orphan Brigade wrote:

In the morning the regiment came up. The trains being again ordered towards Tullahoma. I kept with it on "my horse." When we got as far as we did before, the wagons of our regiment were ordered back to Manchester...That night my mess did not put up the tent - we slept on it. Late at night I waked up with something heavy on my face. I found it to be an old gander, quietly roosting on my head... I presume he saw that I had no feathers under my head and concluded to put some on top instead of underneath. I thanked him by flinging him against a stump hardby.



Hubert W. Hawkins spoke to our group in January 1959 about John Hunt Morgan's Ohio Raid.

In January 1960 our speaker was the late Alan Nolan speaking about Brawner Farm.

In January 1964 the late John Y. Simon spoke to our group about Elihu B. Washburn and Ulysses S. Grant.

On January 20, 1977 our Round Table speaker was John W. Schildst speaking about the Maryland Campaign of 1862.

In January 1982 William C. Davis visited and spoke on the Orphan Brigade: The Kentucky Confederates Who Couldn't Go Home.

Terry Winschel was our speaker in January 2001. The topic that night was: Vicksburg: Shut Up as in a Trap.

Veterans Day Ceremony: Ripon College

Round Table member and videographer, Jeremy Johnson, son of our Webmaster, Jim Johnson, organized a Veterans Day Ceremony and Program at Ripon College this past November. Jeremy is currently a student at Ripon College majoring in History with a minor in National Security. He is the president of the Ripon Student Republican Group.

In his opening remarks Jeremy welcomed attendees to the second annual Veterans Day event, saying: *Last year, the College and the community came together to celebrate and pay respect to our fighting men and women. Currently in Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea and other areas of the world, our military is deployed to safeguard the United States and its citizens from danger. The sacrifice we as students have made in presenting this ceremony pales in comparison to the sacrifice in lives (both figuratively and literally), fortunes and futures that have already been made and indeed are still being made today even as we speak. I hope that you will come away from this ceremony with a greater appreciation of our combat veterans and military personnel both from yesteryear and today.*

After a presentation of the colors the National Anthem was sung and an opening blessing was given. A moment of silence was observed to honor veterans who were not present or who had made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Speakers at the event represented several military arenas: Jonathon Suchy (Iraq), Cmdr. Jack Frank (Korean War), Jack Johnson (Desert Storm) and Judy O'Hara (Vietnam, Bosnia).

Veterans as well as friends and family members of veterans were invited to share their stories with the audience. The program concluded with a closing prayer, the playing of Taps and the retirement of the colors.

ANNOUNCEMENTS • EVENTS • MEETINGS

January 12, 2009

Manitowoc Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Manitowoc Historical Society Heritage Center

January 20, 2009

Prairieville Irregulars, 7 p.m.
Student Center Building, Carroll University
Speaker: Donna Agnelly
"What About Bob? Robert Todd Lincoln"

February 21, 2009

Second Inauguration Ball for Our Sixteenth President, 7 p.m.
Historic Turner Hall Ballroom
Information: 414-427-3776 or friends@FOROH.org

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for January 8, 2009

Mail your reservations by Monday, January 5 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 January 8 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.

CWRT of Milwaukee, Inc. • 2009 Meetings

January 8, 2009

Frank O'Reilly:
Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania

February 12, 2009

Bruce Allardice:
Lincoln as War Leader

March 12, 2009

John Latschar:
Gettysburg

April 16, 2009

Steven Wise:
TBA

May 7, 2009

James Ogden: Chickamauga
Period attire welcome

Speaker and topic are subject to change. In case of inclement weather, listen to WTMJ or WISN radio.



Rob Crouthamel
Milwaukee, WI