

# The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable  
Vol. XLV No. 7 March 2008



## 409th Regular Meeting

DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008

PLACE: Fairview Village, 200 Village Dr., Downers Grove, Il.

TIME: 8:00 PM

SPEAKER: Eric R. Girardi

TOPIC: "The 69<sup>th</sup> New York State Volunteers"

The 69<sup>th</sup> N.Y.S.V is one of the best known, and most justly renowned, regiments, on either side, in the late unpleasantness. It was the very cornerstone of one of the longest-serving, and far-famed, units in the war: The Irish Brigade. Its record of honor is unexcelled by any and equaled by few. It is indeed long past time for the SCCWRT to receive a comprehensive overview of its entire career. This is precisely what Mr. Girardi proposes to give us. This presentation will be an account of these Sons of Heroic Hibernia from 1<sup>st</sup> Bull Run, through the Peninsular Campaign, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and other engagements too numerous to count. Fasten your seatbelts! This is going to be a truly spectacular ride!

Eric Girardi has been a member of our esteemed organization since birth (Ah, well I remember that summer day in Glenview when his admired father was presented with the new-born size First Michigan uniform, but I digress...). As noted, he has been surrounded by the Civil War ever since. In the course of his brief life he has visited over forty battlefields (Got me beat by a long shot and, I suspect, a few more of us.), and is also interested in European Military History, period unspecified (I suspect he is the re-incarnation of one of Napoleon's marshals but, of course, so large a field offers many other possibilities!). It is with great pride and pleasure that we extend our welcome to this, the youngest presenter in our now 46-year history.



FEBRUARY MEETING

BY

CINDY INTRAVARTOLO

On February 1, Bjorn Skaptason presented, "The History of the History of the Battle of Shiloh", before 41 members and guests at the 408<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable. Mr. Skaptason is a former park ranger from the Shiloh National Military Park currently working at the Abraham Lincoln Bookshop while attending Loyola University in Chicago.

After a brief synopsis of the battle in which Grant was surprised on April 6, 1862 at Pittsburg Landing TN. and then managed a Union victory on April 7, Skaptason discussed how we came to know what we know about the Battle of Shiloh.

The key source of information for the battle is the battlefield itself, Skaptason noted. He said that the information that is read from the tablets and markers are considered a primary source of information because the veterans have placed them there. The key the source of that information, therefore, he said, lies with the battlefield historian.

Prior to the establishment of the park, veterans began writing their memories of what took place following the battle. Skaptason referred to these accounts as the

"bloody shirt interpretation" of the battle. No one was writing a history of the battle, they were merely writing what they remembered from their point of view. Skaptason said this material is a great primary source that historians would use later for their interpretation of the events at Shiloh. There were many controversies about the battle at the time and one was: Who killed Albert Sidney Johnston? Everyone wanted to claim the act.

Once Shiloh was established as a national military park in 1894, a commission was formed to hire a historian to interpret the battle and determine the location of the plaques and markers. That commission was made up of one veteran from each of the three armies involved. They appointed Major David W. Reed, a veteran of the 12<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry, as the first battlefield historian. Reed took charge of this responsibility and reported with great accuracy the course of the battle through primary records from veterans and the OR's. The government had begun to publish these Official Records in 1888. These became crucial to studying and understanding the Civil War, and remain a valuable

source of information today for authors and researchers.

The first person to write a book about the Battle of Shiloh based on the OR's was Gen. Manning Force who wrote From Fort Henry to Corinth. Skaptason mentioned several modern authors for their notable works on Shiloh including Wiley Sword's, Shiloh: Bloody April; James McDonough's, Shiloh: In Hell Before Night; and Larry Daniel's, Shiloh: Battle of the West. Our speaker noted that new generations of rangers and historians would continue to interpret the battle differently, add their own validity, and raise new controversies as well.

The SCCWRT thanks Mr. Bjorn Skaptason for a very informative presentation enlightening us on how the history of Shiloh was gathered and how it continues to evolve to this day.



PRESERVATION REPORT BY  
LEN OVERCASH, SR.

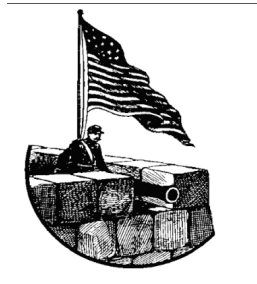
VA.- The Civil War Preservation Trust is on a winning streak, having permanently protected 1,616 acres at 12 different Civil War battlefields in five states during 2007. These successes enabled the CWPT to reach a historic milestone of 25,000 acres saved during its two decades of preservation work. Its overall success, according to a press release from CWPT, includes the protection

of 25,289 acres of battlefield at 99 sites in 18 states.

TN.- For the past three years, Spring Hill battlefield has been listed among the 10 most threatened Civil war sites in the country. Soon, it could be getting some protection. The Tennessee Historical Commission is seeking a \$2 million grant to buy and preserve the Battle of Spring Hill land. The organization submitted its 101-page application last month to the Tennessee Department of Transportation, the state agency that administers the federally funded enhancement grant program. TDOT has \$18.5 million to distribute this year and expects to award the grants in August or September, said spokeswoman B.J. Doughty. "Only a very small portion of the core battlefield land at Spring Hill is preserved or accessible to the public, and almost none of the core battlefield land has interpretive facilities for the public," she said.

The historical commission's application describes its plans as costing \$3 million for land acquisition. Of that amount, it will commit \$1 million at its local match. VA.- A developer recently withdrew his rezoning request for the 513-acre Willow Run property, which would have placed a massive commercial and residential complex along U.S. 29 just east of Culpepper Regional Airport in Elkwood. Had the application not been withdrawn, county planners likely would have denied or tabled it once again... Source for the above articles: Civil War News Roundup-02/01/2008

Courtesy of the Civil War  
Preservation Trust-  
[www.civilwar.org](http://www.civilwar.org)



### ALL FOR THE UNION

The Kankakee Valley CWRT is holding its 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Civil War Symposium on March 29, 2008. Cost is \$50 for adults, \$25 for students. Money should be submitted by March 21<sup>st</sup> before the cost goes up by \$5. Consult the flyer enclosed last month with this newsletter or sent to you by E-mail (Thanks, Bill), for all the juicy details.

While you may have missed out on the great and glorious raffle for a free membership, (Congratulations, Rick Z.!!-Ed.), a number of you still need to pay your dues for 2008. Do not lose your access to the best newsletter ever printed!

Never too early to notify-The spring Du Page County Civil War Memorabilia Show is just around the corner. Date is April 19 and we will be sharing a table with the Chicago and Northern Illinois RT's as per usual. Hope to see you there!

As you can see, we are in need of speakers for 2009 starting in February. Plenty of open spots, so do not hesitate to give us all the benefits of your hard-earned (and expensively gained, I'm sure!-Ed.) knowledge



### EDITOR'S NOTES

The next board meeting will be held at Fairview Village. Ask at desk. 7:30 PM, 3/4/08. Questions? Phone Jan Rasmussen at 630-830-7614

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 4 -Phil Angelo-Allan Pinkerton

May 2- General Book Discussion

June 20-Cricket Bauer Pohanka-TBA

September 5-Stephen Munier-The Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858.

October 3-Tony Cichantk-Civilians of Gettysburg

November 7-Annual Battlefield Preservation Auction.

December 5-'Show and Tell'-Memorabilia Night

January 2-Maryann Oblack-Lt. Col.

Arthur J. Fremantle: Coldstream Guards.

### THE SALT CREEK CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

[www.saltcreekcwrt.org](http://www.saltcreekcwrt.org)

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