

GENERAL ORDERS



The Newsletter of the

**Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
and The Iron Brigade Association**



January 9, 2025

Bjorn Skaptason

Milwaukee and Shiloh

The Battle of Shiloh was a shock to the entire nation. The South's defeat at Shiloh ended the Confederacy's hopes of blocking the Union advance into Mississippi and doomed the Confederate military initiative in the West. For the Union, though it was a victory, the unprecedented loss of life was an indication that the war was to be long and costly in lives and property.

Communities both large and small were also dramatically affected. Some smaller towns lost a large proportion of their manpower. Others saw the battle as a call to enlist. The whole nation held its breath and said its prayers as men in blue and gray went off to war.

At the January meeting we will look at the effect of the battle on the city of Milwaukee, and how the people of Milwaukee and Wisconsin responded to the battle and remembered it Civil War memory.



Bjorn Skaptason holds a M.A. in history from Loyola University Chicago. He worked as a seasonal ranger at the National Park Service's Shiloh National Military Park and Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center for two summers while studying at Loyola. He still returns to Shiloh yearly on the anniversary of the battle to help lead special interpretive hikes of the battlefield. He has previously published essays on Ambrose Bierce at Shiloh, on the United States Colored Troops in the campaign and Battle of Brice's Crossroads for the West Tennessee Historical Society Papers, and in the Journal of the Illinois State

Historical Society on The Chicago Light Artillery. A dealer in antiquarian books, Bjorn produces and guest hosts A House Divided on the Author's Voice network, a Civil War book discussion program live-streamed from the Abraham Lincoln Bookshop in Chicago.

Next April Bjorn will lead the Chicago Civil War Round Table tour of Shiloh National Military Park and Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center. Contact the Chicago Round Table if you are interested in going on this tour." Go to the following link to access the trip information page.

<https://www.chicagocwrt.org/battletour.html>

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January 2025

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**January Meeting at a Glance
The Wisconsin Club
9th and Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Jackets required for dining room.

5:30 p.m. - Registration/Social Hour

6:30 p.m. - Dinner

7:30 p.m. - Program

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

2024-2025 Speaker Schedule p. 9

Civil War Round Table News

When Reservations are Cancelled

Please be aware that cancellations of dinner reservations within 48 hours of the meeting are subject to payment in full. The MCWRT is charged for these dinners whether they are used or not!

Your Cooperation is Appreciated

“Walk-in dinner” requests are sometimes difficult to honor. Remember, dinner reservations are to be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date. We are always happy to accommodate where possible, but we cannot always guarantee a dinner that evening if you have not called in or emailed your reservation. Thank you for your understanding.

Special Dietary Needs

We have quite a number of regular members who have opted for special entrees as options to the regular dinner being served. The Wisconsin Club and the Round Table will make every effort to meet any special dietary needs you may have. As a courtesy, **please give a reminder when making your reservations**, so we don't forget to serve you what you're expecting!

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, creed, ancestry, pregnancy, marital or parental status, gender identity or expression, veteran status, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other legally protected status in its educational programs, activities, or membership.

The movie *Glory*, with its star-studded cast including actors **Matthew Broderick, Morgan Freeman, Denzel Washington, and Cary Elwes** will have a special showing on the big screen.

The Oriental Theater – 2230 N. Farwell Avenue – will host this event on Friday, February 28 at 7:00 p.m. **Treat yourself!**

Wishing you all a blessed, healthy, and prosperous 2025 from the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table.

The Muster Roll: NEW MEMBERS

NAME	RANK	REGIMENT	PLACE OF BIRTH	OTHER MILITARY SERVICE	REMARKS
...

MCWRT Annual Fund

The following members have made a generous commitment to the MCWRT by investing in that fund. This list reflects those donations made July 1, 2024 through September 14, 2024.

Major Contributor (\$500 and above)

Roman Blenski, Paul Eilbes, Gerald Frangesch, Dawn and Van Harl, Charles and Rebecca Jarvis, Grant Johnson

Patron (\$200 - \$499)

Mike Deeken, Doug Haag, Gene and Jane Jamrozy, Dan Nettesheim, Laura Rinaldi

Associate (\$100 - \$199)

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Contributor (up to \$99)

George Affeldt, Mike Benton, Dale Bespalec, Jim Blake, Robert Christie, Jim Cornelius, Gordon Dammann, Ellen DeMers, John Durr, George Geanon, Julian Gonzales, Brian Gunn, Leon and Margaret Harris, Paul Heaton, Christopher Johnson, Jerome Kowalski, John Lenchek, Steve Leopold, Paul and Susan Miller, Ed Newman, John Rodahl, Diane Smurawa, Sam Solberg

Speaker Enhancement Fund

John Abbott, George Affeldt, Mike Benton, Jim Blake, Jim Bolek, Dale Brasser, Gordon Dammann, Ellen DeMers, Lori Duginski, Gary and Judy Ertl, John Durr, Paul Eilbes, Gerald Frangesch, Julian Gonzalez, Doug Haag, Jim Heinz, John Helmenstine, Tom Hesse, Peter and Jean Jacobsohn, Gene and Jane Jamrozy., Jerome Kowalski, John Kuhnmuench, John Lenchek, Steve Magnusen, Rod Malinowski, Tom and Robin Martin, Kathy McNally, Jim and Monica Millane, Dennis Mueller (in honor of Frank L. Klement), John and Susan Petty, Laura Rinaldi, Dennis Slater, Diane Smurawa, Dan Tanty, Paul Zehren



Previous January meetings of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table featured these speakers and topics.

- 2005 Terry Winschel: "Stephen D. Lee and the Making of the Post-War South"
- 2008 Edward T. Cotham: "The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine"
- 2011 Lawrence Lee Hewitt, Ph.D.: "Slandered Heroes: Deserters Who Didn't"
- 2012 General Parker Hills: "Chickamauga"
- 2013 David Powell: "The Confederate Cavalry in the Chickamauga Campaign"
- 2014 Robert Girardi: "The Murder of Major General William 'Bull' Nelson"
- 2015 Father Robert J. Miller: "The Most Christian Nation in the World"
- 2016 Dave Moore: "William S. Rosecrans"
- 2018 Bruce Allardice "These Charges Don't Pay: The Battle of Ezra Church"
- 2019 Bjorn Skaptason: "Shiloh in the Footsteps of Henry Stanley"
- 2020 Pamela D. Toler, Ph.D.: "From Unwanted to Indispensable: The Story of Civil War Nurses"
- 2021 Chris Kolakowski: "The Battle of Stones River"
- 2022 Garry Adelman: "Civil War Myths and Mistakes"
- 2023 Robert Girardi: "The Union Prisoners of War at Camp Douglas"
- 2024 Patrick and Dylan Brennan: "Gettysburg in Color"



The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee was established in 1947 and is the second oldest of the more than 200 Civil War Round Tables still in existence in the United States and abroad. Current membership of the MCWRT is approximately 200.

Kenosha Civil War Museum Second Friday Lecture Series

Sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and the Iron Brigade Association. Free and open to the public.

William B. Britton and His Adventurous Life with the 8th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry
Friday, January 10 | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
Presenter: Mr. Dick Zimmermann

Enrolling as a captain in a Janesville, WI volunteer infantry company, William Britton saw many of the Civil War's most dramatic Western Theater campaigns and battles from 1861-1865. The presentation will highlight his exploits at Island #10, Corinth, Vicksburg, the Red River Campaign, and the Battle of Nashville. Research for this program came from an entire series of articles Britton wrote for the Janesville Daily Gazette. These articles present his uncensored views on the conflict in the West as he discusses guerilla warfare, slavery, combat itself, and war protestors.

What Did Lincoln Know about Science, and Did It Matter?

Friday, February 14 | 11:00am – 12:00pm
Presenter: Dr. James M. Cornelius

James M. Cornelius, PhD., the curator of the Lincoln Presidential Library from 2007-2018, has been working on this topic for more than a decade and has given two preliminary talks on the subject. It begins with the surprise that Lincoln was our only president who held a scientific patent, then takes up the mental world of his era concerning such topics as "race science," phrenology, genetic inheritance, astronomy, geography, weaponry, folk vs "real" medicine, natural history, discovery, and linguistics. Some of these fields may have influenced his presidential or other political actions. Parts of the talk may be unpalatable to polite conversation about him, and that is why the topic needs addressing.



More exciting offerings from the Civil War Museum may be found on page 12.



Weekly Gazette
March 08, 1861

The Inaugural

We can bestow no higher compliment upon the admirable message of President Lincoln that the universal commendation awarded to it. Every republican expresses himself unqualifiedly satisfied with it, and a large portion of the democrats any it is "just right". Mr. Lincoln is not the man to fail in the execution of his duty after he has declared his policy, and the county may now confidently expect that its honor will be vindicated and the supremacy of the laws asserted. A happy day it was when Abraham Lincoln succeeded James Buchanan as the chief executive of the nation. Everywhere and by almost everybody, it is approved, and by republicans most cordially endorsed.

James Buchanan

At twelve o'clock at noon to-day, the term for which the people of this country entrusted the administration of their government to James Buchanan, ended.

We would gladly, if we could, speak well of a man who has been a half century in public life, and has terminated his political career by holding an office which Washington once filled, and which has been adorned by the names of Jefferson, Madison and other honest men and true patriots, and who now retires in his old age to the shades of private life to prepare for that termination of his mortal career, which is doubtless, in his imagination, thronged with dark and terrible phantoms which strike the deadliest terrors to this old man's heart.

But we can indulge in no laudation of him. There has been nothing, absolutely nothing, in his motives or conduct during his presidential term, that can possibly be made the subject of praise, or that can fail to draw the severest censure from every man who desires that our government shall endure, or our county continue to expand and prosper. There is a feeling of deep and universal gratitude among the people, that his term of power is ended. They feel that an incubus of imbecility, corruption and treason has been thrown off; that there is now a chance for our government to live, which all were convinced, if Buchanan's power had continued but a few months longer, must have surely perished. He came into office when our public debt was light, our national treasure full to overflowing and our public credit higher and stronger than that of any government in the world. He has squandered the public money in political bribery and for corrupt partisan purposes; he has increased by an enormous sum our public debt, and has dishonored and nearly ruined our public credit.

But these are evils which could have been lightly felt by a strong and rich nation like ours, and which wise and honest men could have easily repaired, but for worse than this, he has seen men who held high offices of trust and profit by his favor. Deliberately plotting the overthrow of the government, and has conceived at their schemes and continued them in others. He has had a host of traitors serving in all the offices of the government and has aided them in their treasonable designs; he has seen men rebel and resist by force the lawful authority of the government and has by his messages and conduct encouraged them to persevere in their rebellion has allowed the public property to be stolen and held in open defiance of the government, and has taken no steps to regain it; he has allowed our national flag to be insulted with impunity, and a national vessel to be fired upon, and he has allowed a hostile government to be organized and put in operation in our own territory.

This infamous old dotard has stood by and seen all this without missing has had to strike a blow for the safety and honor of the constitution and government which had had solemnly sworn in support and it is said the old drive submitted to all this from the basest of all motives that can move a man--cowardice-- the fear that has worthless life, already so near its close. might be shortened by a brief space. His very name is and always will be, while this county has a history, uniquely infamous. There is probably in the whole county no man so wretched or base as to be willing to exchange places and reputations with James Buchanan.

His fate will be an example and a warning for all time to come, to all men and who aspire to position and power in our government and that view has administration possibly may not be without value to the country; but in every other light it is an abomination and a disgrace to the American values.

Chas. F. Fairchild, a brother of Capt. Fairchild of the Governor's Guard, has enlisted in that company. Charley is a graduate of Harvard and a young man of fine ability. He has the position of Deputy Commissary to the First Regiment.

CAMP RANDALL

The carpenters are busily engaged in enlarging the structure used for the exhibition of operative machinery at the last State fair, for the mess room. the building used for the exhibition of fine arts and fancy articles, is reserved for a drill room in bad weather. the sheds have been thoroughly cleaned and furnished with fresh straw, for the men to sleep on.

**Thank you, Jim Johnson,
for these *From the Field* features!**



Through the Looking Glass features are intended to tell the stories of common folks of the Civil War, whether they are civilians or military personnel. If you have access to the story of an ordinary citizen of this war-torn era and are willing to share it with our members, please consider submitting it to the **General Orders**. Thank you!

Andrew McConnell: A Sad Death by Misadventure

Recently the Ashland Historical Society Museum received a request for information on the shooting and killing of a soldier during the Civil War. The unfortunate soldier is buried in the LaPointe Catholic Cemetery on Madeline Island. I thought you might be interested in what we found. There is no doubt that these guys could have used a gun safety class!

The soldier was Andrew McConnell from Mineral Point, a private in Company E, 30th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. Paperwork indicates he was wounded at Camp Smith, Wisconsin. Camp Smith, which operated from 1820-1822, was near Green Bay. It was opened during a malaria outbreak at Fort Howard, which was also near Green Bay, and closed when the outbreak dissipated.

The 30th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment was organized at Camp Randall in Madison, Wisconsin, and mustered into the service of the United States on October 21, 1862. While headquarters remained at Camp Randall, portions of the 30th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment were detailed on guard duty in various parts of the state. In May 1863, a number of companies were transferred to the Indian frontier and for some months were engaged in guard duty on the line of the Missouri River from Sioux City north to Fort Pierre, North Dakota. In the summer of the same year, the one company (Co. E) remaining in Madison was transferred to Superior and later to Bayfield, Wisconsin. Other sources state that Company G was with Company E in Superior and Bayfield.

From the Mineral Point Weekly Tribune, Wed. Aug. 19, 1863 edition.

Dateline Bayfield, Wisconsin, July 31st, 1863:

A statement of the facts connected with the wounding of our fellow soldier Andrew McConnell who died on the 29th inst. On Saturday, June 30th, while the men were cleaning their arms for inspection Orderly John T. Jones and Andrew McConnell happened to be near each other and were talking and joking together. The Orderly while cleaning out his gun bore got the rag fastened in it and inserting a little powder through the nipple asked McConnell if he might shoot at him. He replied "yes, shoot away". The orderly then stepping back a short distance fired at McConnell who was sitting on a bench cleaning his gun. After which he asked if it hurt him. McConnell laughingly replied "no".

The Orderly finding his gun a little rusty still concluded to clean it by shooting another rag. He accordingly poured a small quantity of powder into the bore - about one fourth the amount contained in a blank cartridge - and pressing down a cotton rag upon it said to McConnell "Andy, may I shoot at you again?" He answered "yes" upon which the Orderly moved off the distance of four or five paces and fired at his back as he had done the previous time.

Immediately after the discharge both were unaware of injury done. McConnell thinking the concussion had taken his breath a little. As soon as something of the extent of the wound was ascertained he was removed to the hospital where the rag was extracted by Dr. Smith, a kind and skilled surgeon employed here by the Government. The captain detailed a good nurse from the company who faithfully attended him during his illness. He never suffered much pain as the spinal nerve was injured causing a paralysis and an almost entire loss of feeling below the wound. During his illness he was visited several times by a Priest. The last time the Priest visited him he said he was very sorry for him and had no doubt the young man who wounded him was very sorry, too. McConnell knew he was very sorry and said "he was not to blame and would not have been even if he had shot him dead on the spot". This was the voluntary statement of Andrew McConnell which together with the facts place the whole matter in the true light.

submitted by Sam Solberg

Winter Quarters



Civil War winters were particularly trying and monotonous for the armies. Impassable, muddy roads and harsh weather precluded active operations. Disease ran rampant, killing more men than battles. But with all of its hardships, winter also allowed soldiers an opportunity to bond, have a bit of fun, and enjoy their more permanent camps. Through these bleak months all soldiers, Union and Confederate, had to keep warm and busy in order to survive.

Winter huts, many of them fairly substantial, were built by the armies out of the surrounding materials including: trees, mud, leaves, and soldiers' canvases. These huts usually included a chimney, which kept the small space warm, but some were more effectively built than others.

Always innovative, Civil War soldiers in winter camp put common sense ideas to good use as they battled the elements. Notched logs, leaves used for insulation, rubberized ground sheet as a door – the men used what they had, and they used it effectively.

The camps were set-up much like small villages complete with crisscrossing lanes called "company streets", churches, and sutlers' shops. While this may seem cozy, these temporary villages lacked the appropriate systems to provide clean water and clear away waste; additionally, food was scarce. Disease and death abounded and spread easily. However, the American soldier persevered.

This particular building was built as a set for the remake of "Red Badge of Courage," a project produced by the very historically accurate Lionheart FilmWorks.



"The view is wild, bleak, and desolate. The elements, which have been warring for the last fortnight, have called a truce and left a sea of mud."

– George P. McClellan 15th Pennsylvania Infantry

"We then rake up dry leaves and fill the dog house about ten inches deep with the leaves, which makes us a good warm bed."

-Private John W. Stevens, 5th Texas Infantry

"Thursday Dec. 17th – Last night was very stormy – this morning no better. Our house leaks all over, and our chimney works badly, which make things rather uncomfortable."

– Lieutenant Charles Stewart 124th New York Volunteers

"We bivouac on the cold and hard-frozen ground, and when we walk about, the echo of our footsteps sound like the echo of a tombstone. The earth is crusted with snow, and the wind from the northwest is piercing our bones. We can see our ragged soldiers, with the sunken cheeks and famine-glistened eyes."

- Sam Watkins, Co. H., First Tennessee Regiment, December, 1864



You're invited to our 55th Annual
Patriotic Luncheon
Honoring Presidents Washington, Lincoln and McKinley
Saturday, February 1, 2025 at 12:30 p.m.



"The Devil is in the Details: Lincoln & Temperance"
Guest Speaker: Steve Rogstad

Bid on premium silent auction items. Choose from a multitude of prizes in our \$1 raffle. Make new friends among more than 30 patriotic, hereditary, fraternal, historical and service organizations in attendance.

Luncheon buffet price \$27 per person
Location: Alioto's Restaurant
3041 N. Mayfair Rd., Wauwatosa, Wis.
(exit Hwy. 45 at Burleigh; east to Hwy. 100; turn right to restaurant)

Luncheon buffet includes:
Tenderloin Tips with Noodles or Baked Chicken.
Served with honey glazed carrots, buttered new potatoes, assorted relish tray, tossed garden salad, Italian bread, coffee, sherbet for dessert.
Hosted by C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1 and Auxiliary #4
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

For more information, call (414) 614-3690
(Deadline for reservations is Friday, January 24, 2025.)

Cedarburg History Museum
N58W6194 Columbia Road
Cedarburg, WI 53012
www.cedarburghm.org



A New Exhibit Premiered on November 13
"Christmas Through the Decades"

Decorations, music, toys, and more transformed the Magic of Christmas throughout the 20th Century.

To attend a free lecture, please RSVP to 262-377-5856 or joel@cedarburghm.org

440 Wells Street, Basement Suite
Delafield, WI 53018 262-347-9111

Please check the website for titles and times of presentations.

Please register at our website: www.civilwarmuseumdelafield.com

The museum is open Thursdays and Saturdays from 11:00-3:00 or by appointment, or call 262-347-9111.

Or to register via email or contact us with questions, write to us at: cwmdel@gmail.com



Think you know all there is to understand about President Abraham Lincoln?



At the January 9, 2025 meeting of the Round Table, our esteemed Quartermaster Roman Blenski will be bringing books for a special sale. At just \$3.00 per book, one can brush up on knowledge of the Rail-splitter, learn more of the complicated man who took on the powerful Stephen A. Douglas in debate, or simply come to a new appreciation of the man who guided the ship of state through the awful storm of the Civil War. All book sale proceeds go directly to support the educational mission and programming of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee.

So, help Roman clear a few books out of the stockpile he holds for the Round Table. At the same time, help our group by adding some funds for our work. Imagine - \$3.00 for a book about Abraham Lincoln, and just in time for your Christmas shopping!

"The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise – with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

Abraham Lincoln to Congress
December 1, 1862

General Orders, the official publication of the **Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.** is produced September through June and upon request of the Board of Directors.

Send submissions to **David Wege** at wegs1862@gmail.com. All submissions must be received by no later than the 10th of the month prior to the next issue. We reserve the right to select articles to be printed and to edit for content, style, and length.

All address changes or problem receiving your *General Orders* should be directed to **Treasurer Paul Eilbes**.

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Yearly Round Table membership available: Individual (\$50), family (\$65), non-resident (\$30), attending education institution (\$25). **Contact Paul Eilbes for information at (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.

**MILWAUKEE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
2024-2025 SPEAKER SCHEDULE**

September 12, 2024	John Horn <i>Wilson-Kautz Raid</i>
October 10, 2024	Jen Murray <i>General George Gordon Meade</i>
November 7, 2024	Allen Ottens <i>The Grant-Rawlins Relationship During the Civil War</i>
December 12, 2024	Jon Sebastian (At the Bavarian Bierhaus) <i>We Are All in This War – The Northern Homefront</i>
January 9, 2025	Bjorn Skaptason <i>Milwaukee and Shiloh</i>
February 13, 2025	Hampton Newsome <i>Gettysburg's Southern Front</i>
March 13, 2025	Gerry Prokopowicz TBA
April 10, 2025	Phil Spaugy <i>The 19th Indiana of the Iron Brigade</i>
May 8, 2025	Steven Phan <i>Asian and Pacific Islanders During the Civil War</i>
June 12, 2025	Dave Powell <i>Nevins-Freeman Award Winner</i> <i>Lost Opportunities in the Atlanta Campaign</i>

**Speakers/topics remain subject to change.
We appreciate your understanding!**



**Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
2024 – 2025 Board of Directors**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office/Position</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Terry Arliskas	Secretary/Program Chair	2025
Thomas Arliskas	Past President	2025
Michael K. Benton	Past President	2026
Dale Bspalec	Member	2026
Roman Blenski	Quartermaster	2025
Paul A. Eilbes	Treasurer	2025
Van Harl	First Vice President	2026
Tom Hesse	President	2026
Grant Johnson	Membership/Webmaster Past President	2027
Bruce Klem	Past President	2027
Daniel Nettesheim	Member	2027
John Petty	Second Vice president	2025
Frank Risler	Program Chair	2027
Justin Tolomeo	Member	2026
David Wege	Editor, General Orders	2027

www.milwaukeecwrt.org

**~ CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE NEWS EMAIL
NOTIFICATIONS ~**

Would you like to receive an email reminder before each meeting? How about an email telling you about a special or upcoming Civil War event in our area? If you are interested in receiving an email reminder/notification please send your email address to Grant Johnson at: grant.johnson@responsory.com

Grant will be creating a database with email reminders set to go out a week before the scheduled event. This is a purely optional choice on each member's part. If you have any questions please talk to Grant at a Round Table meeting or email him at the listed email address.

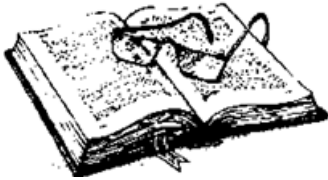
Milwaukee Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for January 9, 2025

Mail your reservations by Monday, January 6 to:
Paul Eilbes
1809 Washington Avenue
Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730

Call or email reservations to:
(262) 376-0568
peilbes@gmail.com

Enclosed is \$_____ (meal is \$35.00 per person) for _____ people for the
January 9, 2025 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee.
(Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)

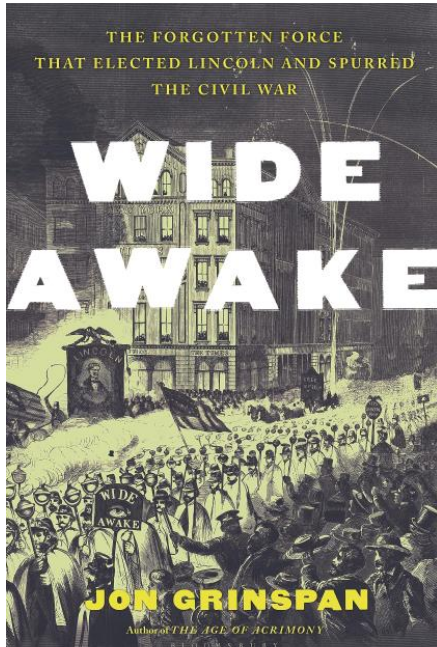
Name of Member _____



BETWEEN THE COVERS

Wide Awake: The Forgotten Force that Elected Lincoln and Spurred the Civil War

Jon Grinspan



This review is on a book that was read by the Kenosha Civil War Museum Media Club for its October meeting. The book is Wide Awake: The Forgotten Force that Elected Lincoln and Spurred the Civil War. It was written by Mr. Jon Grinspan who is a curator of political history at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. The group felt that it was a very timely book based on election events that were occurring now. Some of the events highlighted in the book seemed eerily similar to some of the events occurring in today's elections.

The story of the Wide Awake movement is brought to life by historian Jon Grinspan who enlivens the little-known story of the Wide Awakes by bringing to the reader how the group began on a whim and a stolen kerosene lamp, a handful of textile workers accidentally start a movement that helps energize the nascent Republican Party and elect Lincoln. The story is, of course, more complicated than that, and the author brings this out, I thought in a comprehensive and entertaining way.

Wide Awake is a real must for those of us into the Civil War period but who have read enough about battles, generals and Lincoln biographies. The "Wide Awakes" is about one of the most important mass-movements in history according to Mr. Grinspan. Millions upon millions of pages have been written about the South and how an agrarian society fought to preserve slavery. Comparatively little has been written about how ordinary Americans in the North came together to right the eternal wrong of slavery. The Wide Awake movement differentiates between the

highbrow abolitionists of the time and the millions of common young men who won the war. The author once again demonstrates his deep knowledge of how young people (and women) shaped the political debate. It's a fun book too, written well, and a largely untold story.

Mr. Grinspan asks, "Where exactly was that dynamic moment when an argument became a fight?" The political fight was always with us, he notes, from the first landing of slave ships on North American shores; and it was the enslavers—not the Northern Wide Awakes—who escalated politics to violence centuries on. Deep South legislators were not a "minority of extremists" who planned to break away no matter what, they were the controlling majority of political leaders all across America's slave states. They didn't need the Wide Awakes to "arm them with a potent symbol to scare more moderate Southerners out of the Union;" Southern Democratic Minutemen had "evolved from a political club into a paramilitary militia" long before the Wide Awakes sneaked rifles into St. Louis according to the author.

The author shows how during the turbulent 1860 presidential campaign that a handful of fired-up young Northerners organized a unit to defend antislavery stump speakers from frequent attacks. They called themselves the Wide Awakes. They were wide awakened to the slavery question and how it was pulling the nation apart. They formed martial companies, threw their support behind Lincoln and marched through the streets providing support to the Republican Party and Lincoln. I thought that Mr. Grinspan gives readers plenty to consider about the relationship between militarism and American politics and sheds light on how Lincoln's election pushed Southern states to secede.

Grinspan points out that it was Deep South plantation class slavery that was silencing opposition by violence, not the Wide Awakes. The same violence that for centuries had, with the whip and lynch rope, "silenced" America's enslaved people of color.

I thought this is a book that any student of the Civil War should read and put on their bookshelf. The writing style made this an easy read for me and other members of the Media Club and provided an insightful look into a key group that according to the author was "the forgotten force that elected Lincoln and spurred the Civil War."

submitted by Bruce Klem



BETWEEN THE COVERS

A Tempest of Iron and Lead: Spotsylvania

Court House, May 18-21, 1864

Chris Mackowski, PhD

The Army of the Potomac had a new leader named U.S. Grant, and nothing would be the same. It was 1864 and the slumbering army aroused itself in the spring and headed south. What was to be a quick and simple march through the woods would become a bloody portrait of hell as the two armies collided in the dense woods of the Wilderness. R.E. Lee wanted to slow the northern military and catch it in a situation that would make open-field fighting difficult. The first fight between Grant and Lee would prove to be a bloody and horrific fight as troops on both sides fought in the dense and tangled wood. After the three days of fighting both armies rushed south, each seeking to possess the high ground around Spotsylvania.

In a way, it is almost as if the subject chose its biographer. With his personal knowledge of the battle, combined with his skill as an author Chris Mackowski presents not only the horror of the fighting but the complexity of one of the bloodiest times in the bloody Overland Campaign. The casualties exacted at Spotsylvania exceeded those of the Wilderness by thousands. Viewed from the fighting man's perspective as well as the generals overview the reader feels the intensity of the conflict at Spotsylvania. The fighting launched a host of new place names and events, such as Spindle Field, Upton's assault, the Mule Shoe, the Bloody Angle, and the Harris Farm. The fighting severely tested the offensive capabilities of Gen. Robert E. Lee's Southern army, just as the defensive posture his men embraced would, in turn, test the limits of Federal endurance.

Many histories of the Overland Campaign mention Spotsylvania only in passing, highlighting the terrific fighting at the Mule Shoe. Yet there were 13 days of heavy fighting both before and after the Mule Shoe and Mackowski lays out the book chapters in days so readers can watch the battle as it unfolds just as the soldiers experienced it.

I've heard it said that until a battlefield is visited and viewed as it is, it can be difficult to sense the ebb and flow of the fighting. It is clear the author has been on the battlefield many times as his account puts the readers shoulder to shoulder as they witness carnage seldom seen in North America. A former Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park historian, Mackowski's new treatment of the battle is derived from his "meticulous knowledge of the landscape and familiarity with primary source materials, earned over nearly two decades." The text is supported by 21 maps. A lot of recent map sets, even those attached to otherwise top-notch works, have skimmed on tree lines and other terrain features critical to understanding the battle, but that is not the case with these excellent-looking renderings created by cartographer Edward Alexander.

The prolific Chris Mackowski is a writing professor in the School of Communication at St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, NY, and historian-in-residence at Stevenson Ridge, a historic property on the Spotsylvania battlefield. He is also editor-in-chief of Emerging Civil War (www.emergingcivilwar.com). The author of more than a dozen books about the Civil War, Chris' writings have appeared in all the major Civil War magazines. He serves on the board of directors of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, a preservation organization that focuses on saving endangered property associated with the four battlefields. Chris has an M.F.A. from Goddard College and a Ph.D. from Binghamton University.

Chris has worked as a historian with the National Park Service at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park and still gives tours of the area's four major Civil War battlefields (Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Wilderness, and Spotsylvania). The stories that the author meticulously collected over 15 years via archival research are interesting, and in-depth, and provide information about the battle landscape, ordinary people, and the common soldiers.

This comprehensive study of the campaign of the Spotsylvania Court House will appeal to scholars and anyone interested in the Civil War. *A Tempest of Iron and Lead* offers an important reinterpretation of the battle of Spotsylvania. The Civil War's Battle of Spotsylvania Court House saw a considerable amount of nonstop hand-to-hand fighting during the clash and was the third-bloodiest battle during the Civil War, with more than 31,000 casualties. At Spotsylvania, the hostilities ended in a tactical draw, but the Union Army scored an operational victory because it was able to continue its march southward. This superb work should be in the hands of all Civil War readers, especially those interested in the Overland Campaign. I found the book compelling and highly recommend it.

From *A Tempest of Iron and Lead* by Chris Mackowski: *"And the season would drag on. The suffering would continue. The North Anna River and Cold Harbor awaited. I have sometimes hoped that if I must die while I am a soldier, I should prefer to die on the battlefield," Private William Fisk, 2nd Vermont, would write. 'But,' he added after the sights of Spotsylvania, 'one cannot help turning away and saying, 'Any death but that.'"*

submitted by Robert Johnson



A Civil War Enthusiast's Lament

When the weather outside is frightful, And the roads are not delightful,
Since we have no place to go, Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

Sitting by the fire and reading, My heart for history is bleeding,
For all the places I want to go, Let me go, let me go, let me go!

Got my books stacked to the ceiling, My poor brain is surely reeling,
It's information overload, (I wanna) Hit the road. hit the road, hit the road.

***Public programs are free to attend and pre-registration
is not required unless otherwise noted.***

Kindness in a Cup of Coffee

Thursday, January 23 | 6:30pm – 7:30pm | Presented by Doug Dammann and Steve Acker

One of the items that brought together the Civil War soldiers and sometimes led to moments of civility and understanding was coffee. No single item of food or drink meant as much to Civil War soldiers. They talked about coffee, wrote about coffee, and dreamed about coffee. Based on first hand written accounts, this program describes the different methods Civil War soldiers obtained, brewed and shared their coffee and how these actions sometimes brought them brief moments of peace, comfort and kindness.

“To care for him who shall have borne the battle.” Civil War Medical Weekend with the 17th Corps Field Hospital Group

**Saturday, February 1 | 10am – 4pm
Sunday, February 2 | 12pm – 4pm**

Join the Civil War Museum and the 17th Corps Field Hospital for a weekend of interactive displays, presentations, and programs that explore the medical care provided to soldiers during the Civil War. Members of the 17th Corps Field Hospital, the largest Civil War Medical unit in the Midwest, will set up displays and materials highlighting Civil War-era surgery, nursing care, pharmaceuticals, and embalming in the Civil War Museum's Freedom Hall.

Interactive presentations, materials, and displays will be available throughout the weekend.

Activities include:

- Civil War surgical demonstrations both Saturday and Sunday.
- View hundreds of original surgical instruments up close.
- Hear about the different diseases that affected soldiers during the Civil War.
- Learn how women nursed the wounded and sick.

African American Surgeons and Caregivers Who Served During the Civil War

Sunday, February 2 | 1:30pm – 3pm | Presented by Dr. Trevor Steinbach

Dr. Trevor Steinbach, President of the Society of Civil War Surgeons, will present a program on the African American surgeons and caregivers who served in the Union Army during the Civil War. His program will introduce the audience to the service of Dr. Alexander Thomas Augusta, the first commissioned African-American Army Doctor of the Union Army. Also considered will be Dr. David O McCord and Dr. John Van Surly DeGrasse, two other medical officers commissioned by the United States during the war. Dr. Steinbach will also give information on nine other African-American Assistant contract surgeons who were temporarily appointed to the position of Surgeon by the United States government during the war.

This lecture is part of Civil War Medical Weekend programming.



Civil War Time
Travelers, LLC

**Trouble in the Trans-Mississippi:
Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove
April 27 - May 2, 2025**

Join CWTT for a week exploring the Trans-Mississippi as we dive into the lesser-known battles of Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and Prairie Grove. Union victories came hard early in the war, but Old Glory eventually flew over the region despite early setbacks and defeats. Come visit these pristine battlefields and discover why the Trans-Mississippi was important in the overall Union war effort.

Our formula for sharing the story of the Civil War involves using the talents of members of our own Round Table as speakers. We also enjoy the skills of NPS Rangers and well-known historians/authors to build a historical framework for the sites we visit and the events we explore.

History for the Civil War novice and for the truly serious student of the conflict, it's all here when we go find some *Trouble in the Trans-Mississippi*.

Contact wegs1862@gmail.com

Driftless Area Civil War Club 2025 Schedule

Programs are held monthly on the 3rd Saturday of the month at the Odd Fellow Lodge at 121 Front Street Mineral Point.

January 18, 2025 Kevin Orloff of Blue Mounds will speak on his two deployments to the Middle East. Other veterans are encouraged to share their experiences in the Middle East version of a civil war.

February 15, 2025 John Helmenstine, past president of the Iowa County Historical Society will tell us of the 1865 deployment of the 49th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment and of the local Grand Army of the Republic organization.

March 15, 2025 "The Literate Soldier" by Dave and Kay Wege will present a program about soldiers' Civil War letters to and from home. Dave and Kay will act out the text while discussing how prolific and well-written these citizens were.

April 19 2025 Rich Fronck President of the Madison Civil War Club will speak on "The Life of Andrew Jackson Bovee and the Battle of the Wilderness." His great grandfather fought for the Union in the Civil War.

May 15, 2025 Julie Mason of Argyle will share her experiences as a Civil War re-enactor and maybe let her father talk about his also being an enactor.

July or August 2025 Dave Wege on "When Johnny Came Marching Home." The program tells the story of a gruesome Civil War amputation and then moves into our modern military and a return home after traumatic amputation.

Paul Eilbes of the Milwaukee Civil War Roundtable will be scheduled later.

Milwaukee Civil War Round Table member John Helmenstine has been working hard to form a Civil War club, as he calls it, in the Mineral Point area. Through a lot of hard work, this group is off to a successful start and has had several very successful meetings already. To learn more about the group contact John at helmenstine@att.net.

**MILWAUKEE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
QUARTERMASTER'S REGALIA**

What better way to show off your pride in our organization! All items are made of first-rate, quality materials, modestly embroidered with the Round Table/Iron Brigade log, along with your name or initials.

ITEM	COST
Hooded Sweatshirt in Northern Blue.....	\$35.00
Baseball Hat.....	\$10.00
Blue Brief Case.....	\$25.00
Blue Light-Weight Sweatshirt.....	\$30.00
Blue Izod Polo Shirt.....	\$40.00
Blue Dress Shirt.....	\$40.00
Blue Fleece-Lined Jacket.....	\$60.00
Iron Brigade Pin.....	\$5.00
CWRT Pin.....	\$5.00
Bugle Pin.....	\$5.00
Iron Brigade Medal.....	\$25.00
Red River Medal.....	\$25.00
CWRT 60 Year Medal.....	\$10.00

Contact Roman Blenski, Quartermaster
4601 W. Holt Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53219
(410 327-2847 dbcpmilw@gmail.com)

You may also see Roman in person at the monthly meeting at the Book Raffle table.

