



CINCINNATI
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
SERVING OHIO, KENTUCKY AND INDIANA SINCE 1956



THE CANISTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

Cincinnati CWRT P. O. Box 621082 Cincinnati, Ohio 45262 <http://www.cincinnati-cwrt.org>
November, 2013 Issue

Meeting Date: November 21, 2013

Place: The Drake Center

(6:00) Sign-in and Social

(6:30) Dinner

(7:15) Business Meeting

(7:30) Speaker

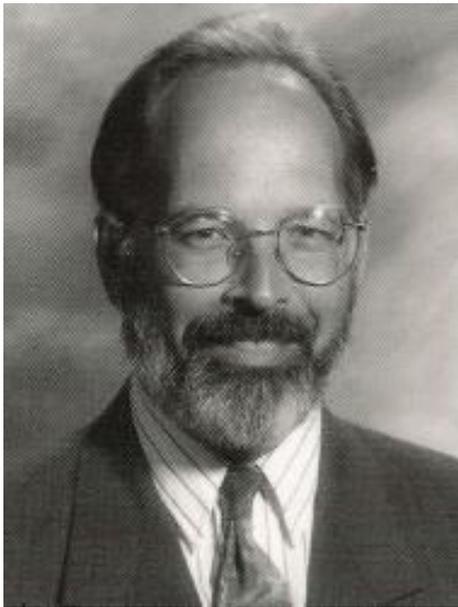
Dinner Menu: Country ribs & sauerkraut, red potatoes, rye dinner rolls, traditional tossed salad, and german chocolate cake
Vegetarian Option: Available upon request

Speaker: Gary Knepp, University of Cincinnati, Clermont College

Topic: *Camp Dennison*

Reservations: If you do not have an Automatic Reservation, please remember to email your meeting reservation to reservations@cincinnati-cwrt.org; call it in to Tom Williams at 513-563-2665 or email ccwrt.dinners@gmail.com. If you are making a reservation for more than yourself, please provide the names of the others. Please note that **all reservations must be in no later than 8:00 pm Wed., Nov 13, 2013.**

For our November 2013 meeting, we welcome author, professor and attorney, Gary Knepp. Some of you may remember Gary when he and Mike Stretch spoke to our Round Table in 2000 on Camp Dennison, primarily focusing at that time on the Museum now run by the Daughters of the American Revolution organization. Gary will center his talk on the early years of Camp Dennison when, in April, 1861, shortly after the fall of Fort Sumter, it became a training ground for Ohio troops. It was the beginning of a lengthy role the area would play as a training facility for well over 50,000 Union troops during the course of the War. Gary will also discuss the interesting additional duties the Camp assumed in 1862 as the site of a huge U.S. Army General Hospital that ended up treating almost 30,000 patients throughout the War. Through Gary's talk, we will see how this relatively small section of northeastern Hamilton County played such a major role in the War's internal operations.



Gary Knepp

A lifelong resident of Clermont County, Gary is currently an attorney, as well as an adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati's Clermont College. He has also been the Director of the Clermont County Underground Railroad Research Project, and has presented several papers at academic conferences on the Underground Railroad. Gary has published several books on a wide variety of historical topics, including *Forgotten Warriors: Stories from the Korean War* (Little Miami Publishing Company), *Freedom's Struggle: A Response to Slavery from the Ohio Borderlands* (Little Miami Publishing Company, 2008), and *Beyond the Names: A Tribute to Clermont County Vietnam War Dead* (Little Miami Publishing Company, 2009). Author of many journal and newspaper articles, Gary has also appeared as a guest historian on the PBS television show, *History Detectives*. For more on Gary, you can visit his website: <http://www.garyknepp.com/>.

Gary will have several of his books available for sale at the meeting. He can accept cash or a personal check and, of course, will be happy to sign your copy. For your preview, here is the booklist with prices:

- 1) *Forgotten Warriors: Stories from the Korean War* - \$22.50
- 2) *Musings from the Land of the Clear Mountain* - \$16.95
- 3) *Freedom's Struggle: A Response to Slavery from the Ohio Borderlands* - \$22.50
- 4) *To Crown Myself with Honor - The Civil War Letters of Captain Asbury Gatch* - \$16.95
- 5) *Beyond the Names: A Tribute to Clermont County Vietnam War Dead* - \$22.50



President's Report

... Pat Homan

It is November, and nearing Thanksgiving, when I eagerly look forward to Turkey, dressing, potatoes etc. etc. and...the Pecan Pie, which Ellen makes following an old recipe passed down though our family. It actually came from a newspaper but its sounds better if it is "old family tradition".

We had an excellent meeting and presentation in October and I am anticipating another in November as Gary Knepp discusses Camp Dennison. I know a bit about the camp but I suspect I will discover there is a lot I did not know. I remember being a Camp Edgar Frieland in the early 1950s where the Boy Scout leaders warned us to stay off the steep hillside on the south of the Camp as there were unexploded artillery rounds still there from the Civil War as that hillside was supposed to be the target area for the newly enlisted artillerymen of the time. I hope to find out if this is fact or myth.

I have just heard that the Taft Museum is planning a series of events early next year to commemorate the War. I have no details at this time but hope I can get some by our meeting. If any of you hear of events or presentations, please forward the information to me or one of the officers. We can pass this on to the rest of the members and possibly take part in the event. I am shameless in seeking opportunities to recruit new members. As usual, I encourage you to do the same.

So enjoy Halloween, with three grandchildren in the house, we are full of anticipation and the great college football games, which the sports networks are bringing to us. If you are not a football fan, which I think is un-American, enjoy the wonderful weather we have had. I hope to see all of you on the 21st.



Book Review

... By Alan Berenson

So you think you know Lincoln! Well, it's unlikely that you know him as well as you will when you finish reading William Lee Miller's *Lincoln's Virtues, an Ethical Biography*. Published in 2002, this 456 page labor of love examines in depth Abe's genius in combining principal with flexibility, idealism with reality and rhetoric with leadership.

Written in a conversational style featuring frequent dashes, interjections, double negatives, parenthesis and extra long sentences this reader found himself rereading sections of the copy several times over before the author's point could be discerned if it was discerned at all. Alternatively he also could describe events in exciting, fast moving fashion as he does in recalling the details of Lincoln's iconoclastic vote regarding the Illinois House's debate (1837) on an issue to discourage abolitionism and the dramatic Republican party nomination process in Chicago's Wigwam in May 1860.

Miller fails completely to hide his enthusiastic support for Abe's character, logic, rhetoric and political morality (largely deserved) and occasionally forgets to avoid using 21st century racial standards to mid 19th century racial practices. Is it really "remarkable" that Alexander Stephens was completely comfortable with the morality of slavery as practiced in the South and that Thomas Jefferson was in error when he wrote that "all men are created equal?" He is also objective and intellectually honest enough to note some of the (rare) low points in Abe's ethical history (his use of signed pseudonyms to denigrate a political opponent; his playing up to the racial prejudices of his audience at the Charleston Lincoln - Douglas debate) and recognizes and responsibly explains countervailing views of Lincoln's political actions and positions.

Rather than being a recital of all things Lincoln 1809-1865 as most bios are, Miller puts spotlights on the turning points both minor and major in Lincoln's life, looks into Lincoln's self educated mind and explains how Abe arrived at the decisions/conclusions he did. In particular he dissects Lincoln's speeches explaining the research behind them, their logic and rhetorical significance. The book ends when Abe turns in at 1:00a.m., 5 Mar. 1861 after having given a critically important first inaugural speech in which he offers conciliation to his dissatisfied countrymen; it was too little, too late. Even today we are still trying to bind up the wounds of our country's greatest tragedy.

October Presentation:

... submitted by Pat Homan

Our October speaker, Mr. Stuart Sanders of Danville KY, presented an interesting talk on the aftermath of Perryville. He covered an area of the War not usually given much attention, which is what happened after the armies departed the scene, leaving their dead and wounded for the most part to the care of local civilians. He presented some eye-opening information.

Mr. Sanders opened with a brief description of the battle, explaining that less than half of the Union forces available actually got into the fight, due to a strange atmospheric condition, which prevented the unengaged troops from hearing the sounds of a pitched battle less than a few miles away. He pointed out that, even though the battle lasted a short five hours, the troops actually engaged considered it one of the hardest fights or the hardest that they had participated in. When the smoke cleared and the soldiers departed, the real problems began.

He described the condition of the field in the hours after the fight that evening as parties from both sides began to scour the field, seeking to find wounded or dead friends and bring them to the aid stations for treatment, or to prepare them for burial. As Bragg felt he could not stay in the area, due to the growing Union strength, he departed, leaving this gruesome task to the Union soldiers or the local civilians. Some of the wounded lay on the field for five days before receiving aid. The dead were collected and usually buried in common graves, although there were attempts to mark the gravesites, especially of the Union dead, so that families could later retrieve the bodies of their family members and take them home for their final internment.

While this is bad enough, Mr. Sanders pointed out that there were few local facilities, and Perryville's 300 residents were overwhelmed by the 7500 killed and wounded. Most of the townspeople of Perryville and all the local communities for almost a 50-mile radius had wounded soldiers to care for. This problem was exacerbated by the severe drought, which had affected the area and would continue for weeks after the battle. Most of the existing streams were polluted by the dead or wounded which led to a severe outbreak of typhus and typhoid among the soldiers, which then spread to the civilian caretakers, then to the communities. The wounded soldiers continued to die daily for almost six months after the battle.

Mr. Sanders recounted how the severe loss of property, especially livestock, impacted the communities, and how all lost fences and structures which had been torn down for firewood. There were problems with the hastily buried dead, usually in shallow graves, that surfaced once the rains returned, which brought its own horror and unmistakable stench.

While the subject was not pleasant, it was covered in a manner that did not dwell on the horrors but laid them out in a factual presentation. Mr. Sanders deserves high marks for covering this subject in an excellent manner, which is expanded in his book *Perryville Under Fire: The Aftermath of Kentucky's Largest Civil War Battle* (History Press, Charleston SC, 2012).



Stuart Sanders

Humor in the Civil War

- In reading the 1985 book titled "Tangled Machinery and Charred Relics" I found a humorous anecdote about a blockade runner, the Nashville. After being bottled up in the Ogeechee River in Georgia, the Nashville was sunk in the Ogeechee River in Georgia. The Nashville, later renamed Rattlesnake, was side-paddle steamer built in New York in 1853. When the war started with fall of Ft. Sumter she was the largest Union ship in Charleston harbor. She was later purchased by the Confederate government and reportedly became the first ship commissioned into the Confederate navy.

In January of 1863 a Union fleet consisting of three gunboats, one mortar boat and an ironclad (Montauk) ascended the Ogeechee River near Ft. McAllister about 15 miles below Savannah. On February 28 the fleet caught the Rattlesnake aground on the mudflats and an unequal contest ensued. After an hour of pounding by the Union boats, the Rattlesnake's three hundred and seventy cotton bales of cargo were ablaze and soon thereafter the magazine of the Rattlesnake exploded reducing her to smoking ruins.

A measure of revenge was enacted the next day when a torpedo was discharged under the hull of the Montauk. As the crew of the Montauk worked to repair the damage, bits of the Rattlesnake floated past. A Union sailor noted:

"As these silent witnesses of the havoc drifted past us, they seemed to show a determination that, if we would not allow the Nashville to run the blockade as a whole, she was going to run the blockade in pieces."

... Contributed by Larry Southwick

- In reading the book entitled "General Lee's Army," by Glatthaar, I found a humorous anecdote quipped during Lee's Pennsylvania invasion of 1863. As the Army of Northern Virginia advanced, British observer Lt. Col. Arthur Freemantle observed a local woman adorned with a miniature Union flag affixed to her blouse. As Confederate troops as they marched by her, they cast contemptuous glances. Finally, a Texan had enough. Pointing his finger at the woman, he announced:

"Take care, madam, for Hood's boys are great at storming breastworks when Yankee colors is on them."

She retreated into her home.

... Contributed by Alan Berenson

We Who Study Must Also Strive To Save!

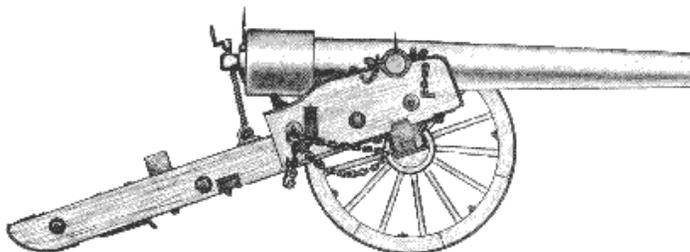
Items of Interest:

Regimental Pets of the Civil War: The Wyoming Historical Society will present a program on the Civil War and the animals that played a part in that war. The presentation by Ned Lodwick, Historian and longtime Brown County Veterinarian. Time: Thursday, November 14 7:00 p.m. Location: Wyoming Presbyterian Church Great Room Cost: Free. Refreshments will be served (usually cookies and brownies)

Welcome New Members! We had one new member join the CCWRT in October. A hearty welcome to JoAnn McLain . Welcome Aboard JoAnn.

New Book on Johnson's Island Prison:

Professor David Bush's new book is now available: *I Fear I Shall Never Leave This Island: Life in a Civil War Prison*. The book anthropological/archaeological/historical look at letters between Wes Makely and his wife Kate. There are 49 plates illustrating the hard rubber industry, the photographic exploits of Robert Smith, and many other items. The book takes you through Wes' coping with being a prisoner of war at Johnson's Island and how both governments failed to treat their prisoners appropriately. The book is being sold through the Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island and thus will be a fund raiser for their continued preservation efforts.



Future Presentations:

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|---------------|---|
| Jan. 16, 2014 | Gary Q. Johnson, CCWRT
<i>Webbed Feet on the Western Waters: Cincinnati and the River Navy</i> |
| Feb. 20, 2014 | Dan Bauer, CCWRT
<i>Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Politics of Slavery</i> |
| Mar. 20, 2014 | Mike Rhein, CCWRT
<i>General Lytle: Home Again</i> |
| Apr. 17, 2014 | John Fazio, Cleveland Civil War Round Table
<i>The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln</i> |
| May. 15, 2014 | Greg Biggs, Clarksville, TN Civil War Round Table
<i>The Fall of Nashville and the Rise of the Sirens</i> |

October Quiz:

- 1.: In 1861 a Confederate deserter and riverboat pilot fled to Nevada. On the way he spent one meal with Jack Slade, a violent and notorious western outlaw. The brief encounter gave the traveler material enough to sustain 3 chapters in a book he was to write about his western adventures. The book was a memoir said to be second only to the bible in the eyes of western old timers. Who was the traveling author to be? And for bonus points what was the name of the book?
- 2.: Buchanan, Careysburg, Clay-Ashland, Edina, Greenville , Harper and Virginia are cities in the country of _____.
- 3.: The last port remaining in Confederate hands by the end of the Civil War was_____.
- 4.: The Bushong farm is a central landmark of the battle of New Market, Va., 15 May 1864. When Union General Sheridan put the torch to almost every structure in the Shenandoah Valley in October, 1864, that could possibly have economic value to the struggling Confederacy, the Bushong farm went untouched. Why?
- 5.: What is unique about a slave trader named Nathaniel Gordon?
- 6.: Why was Mary Surratt not allowed to speak in her own defense at her trial regarding Abraham Lincoln's assassination in 1865?



Quiz Answers:

- 1.: Mark Twain "Roughing It" Ref. Wall St. Journal 11 Nov 2008, pA15
- 2.: Liberia Ref. Wikipedia, cities in Liberia
- 3.: Galveston Ref.: Opinionator, New York Times, 11 Jan. 2013, A Strange Sail, Morrison
- 4.: The Bushong family converted their property to a hospital for wounded soldiers, convalescing them for several weeks after the debacle Ref. Hallowed Ground, Summer 2010, Bushong Refuge, p 26
- 5.: Gordon was the only person ever executed by the United States government (2/62) for slave trading. His death warrant was signed by Abe Lincoln. Ref. Lincoln's Virtues, Miller, p 266
- 6.: In 1865 no criminal defendant was allowed to testify in any court, military or civilian except in the state of Maine Ref. The Assassin's Accomplice, Larson, p 149

ABOUT THE CINCINNATI CWRT:

Membership in the Cincinnati CWRT is open to anyone with an active interest in the American Civil War. Annual dues (prorated throughout the year to new members) are \$25 for a Regular Membership. This fee helps cover operating costs which include this newsletter, as well as speaker expenses. A Sustaining Member level of membership is also available for \$50 (single) and \$85 (couple). The purpose of this membership category is to encourage and recognize members who make additional contributions of \$25 or more, in addition to their annual dues in any fiscal year, to the objectives and programs of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table. If you are joining for the first time, there is a one-time, lifetime, initiation fee of \$20.

Dinner reservations are required, and can be made prior to the reservations deadline either by an email to reservations@cincinnatiwrt.org or by a phone call to the officer taking reservations for the meeting (whose name and number is listed on the header of the current *Canister*). **Meals** currently cost \$28. Menu selection will change with each meeting. A vegetarian meal option is available, if requested prior to the reservations cut-off date.

A Meeting Only Fee of \$5.00 is assessed to members, visitors and guests who arrive after dinner to hear the speaker. The monies collected are used to help offset the expenses of the evening's activities.

Late Reservations and **Walk-ins without a reservation**: Our ability to be flexible for late reservations or walk-ins is now restricted by the fact that the Drake Center only prepares meals according to the reservation count called in. Therefore, **Late Reservations** (after the Wednesday by 8:00 pm which is eight days before the meeting) will be accepted conditionally, subject to the caterer's ability to honor a change in dinner count if received close to the meeting date. **Late Reservations** and **Walk-ins without a reservation** will only be able to have dinner if offset by cancellations or no-shows, or if the caterer determines that sufficient food is available.

Late cancellations may be made by email or phone. Since a cancellation after the Wednesday 8:00 pm deadline which is eight days before the meeting means that CCWRT has guaranteed payment to The Drake Center for the reserved number of meals, the Treasurer will review the number of late cancellations and late reservations for every meeting. If a late cancellation results in the CCWRT being required to pay for an extra meal, the person making the late cancellation will be expected to pay for the dinner. **No-shows** who have a dinner reservation but do not attend will be billed for the meal. **Meetings** are held the third Thursday of the month, September – November and January – May at The Drake Center, 151 West Galbraith Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45216 (**Phone: 513-418-2500**). If traveling Interstate 75, exit at Galbraith Road (Exit 10) and go west one mile. If coming across the Ronald Reagan Cross County Highway, take the Galbraith Road exit and go west two miles. Or, take the Galbraith/Winton exit and go east one mile. **Free parking** is available in the WEST PAVILION parking lot. The West Pavilion entrance will take you to the meeting rooms. To get to our meeting room enter the West Pavilion and take the elevators to your right to level A, go to your right and Motivation Meeting Room G is located at the end of the hallway.

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Don't Forget to Bring a Friend!