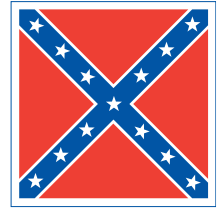


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXX, Number 10

Chicago, Illinois

June 2010



## 692nd REGULAR MEETING

John V. Quarstein

on

“Battle of the Ironclads”

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Friday, June 11

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HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

*Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.*

*Dinner at 6:30 p.m.*

**\$40 - Members/Non-members**

*Entrée: Sweet and Sour Pork,  
Baked Salmon, Vegetarian  
Plate or Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, June 7 by calling 630 460-1865, or emailing [chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net](mailto:chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net), with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the number before 9 a.m. Thursday.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:30 p.m., for a charge of \$5 per person.

*Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$10 with a validated parking sticker.*

## John V. Quarstein on “Battle of the Ironclads”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

The first battle between armored vessels raged at Hampton Roads, Virginia, on March 8 and 9, 1862. Often called the Monitor-Merrimack engagement, it is perhaps the most significant naval event of the entire Civil War.

While the British and French navies had recently built their own, ocean going, ironclad warships, Hampton Roads marked the first time these modern-style warships had engaged each other in combat. The Battle of the Ironclads is indeed a story of technology; however, it is also a saga of uncommon valor and leadership epitomized by Franklin Buchanan, George U. Morris, Samuel Dana Greene, and John Taylor Wood.

Rotating armored gun turrets; forced air ventilation systems; underwater rams—these were just a few of the features of these vessels that were soon copied by navies the world over. The brilliant innovations of John Mercer Brooke (lead designer of the CSS Virginia aka “Merrimack”) and the farsighted inventions of John Ericsson (designer of the Monitor), made this showdown in Hampton Roads a death knell for wooden sailing ships. The Battle of the Ironclads is indeed an epic tale that tells how steam-powered iron



John V. Quarstein

vessels not only influenced the Civil War; but more importantly, how the two ironclads echoed the dawn of modern navies.

John V. Quarstein is an award-winning preservationist, author, and historian. He presently serves as Historian for the City of Hampton. Quarstein previously served 30 years (1978-2008) as the Director of the Virginia War Museum, during which time he helped to preserve important Civil War sites

such as Lee Hall Mansion and Lee’s Mill Battlefield, as well as serving as Historian for the U.S.S. Monitor Center Project.

Quarstein is the author of 10 books, including Fort Monroe: The Key to the South, C.S.S. Virginia: Mistress of Hampton Roads, and A History of Ironclads. He has written and narrated five PBS documentaries such as “Battle of Ironclads” and “1862 Peninsula Campaign”.

An avid decoy collector and duck hunter, John lives at his family’s Eastern Shore farm and on historic Fort Monroe, Virginia.



## Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

### Judge: NPS Didn't Follow Law On Cyclorama Center Decision.

Gettysburg, Pa. — The March 31 ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Thomas F. Hogan that the National Park Service (NPS) didn't follow federal environmental regulations when it decided to demolish the Cyclorama Center isn't necessarily the end of the matter. Gettysburg National Military Park spokesman Katie Lawhon said the NPS is consulting with the Department of Justice about its options. The park's interpretation, according to its April 15 Operational Update, is that the "NPS prevailed on the National Historic Preservation Act issues, but did not prevail entirely on issues related to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)." The statement continued, "At issue was whether the National Park Service had followed policies in its decision to demolish the Cyclorama Center at Gettysburg National Military Park (NMP), in favor of rehabilitating the historic landscapes of the battle line of the Union Army on Cemetery Ridge."

Prominent architect Richard Neutra designed the 1962 Cyclorama Center. His son, Dion, who worked on the project, was one of the plaintiffs with the Recent Past Preservation Network (RPPN) in the suit. RPPN is a volunteer non-profit that aims to preserve architecture that is less than 50 years old. RPPN President Devin A. Colman said his group was pleased with the ruling. "We are hoping that the park service won't try to appeal the ruling, not because we fear that we might lose an appeal, but because we are ready to move on and resolve the situation." Colman noted that two federal judges have now ruled that the park service did not consider alternatives when it decided to demolish the Cyclorama Center, something it intended to do in 2008. "We don't see the situation as an us against them," Colman said. "We want to work with the park service and find a solution to the problem that suits everyone's goals and needs." Relocation of the building is an option. He said, "We've had a building mover look at it and say yes it can be done." Last year two Gettysburg businessmen offered sites for the building. "We are hoping it will come to a resolution before the upcoming

150th anniversary of the Civil War and the Gettysburg Address," said Colman.

If the park service follows environmental review requirements it could demolish the building which is on the Ziegler's Grove part of the battlefield the park intends to replant as fields. The former visitor center adjacent to the Cyclorama Center, which housed the Gettysburg Cyclorama painting, was demolished last year. Writing in the December 2001 Civil War News Preservation News column, Dion Neutra pointed out the NPS chose the Cyclorama Center site because it would "facilitate interpretation and appreciation of the importance of this spot on the battlefield to the war." The building was sited in such a way that after seeing the painting visitors could go to the observation terrace and see the same landscape as in the painting. Neutra wrote: "To say that (building) removal would restore this scene to Civil War Days is rank cynicism. No one seriously plans to remove the myriad of other monuments that have sprung up, nor the adjacent highway with its motels in plain view, or the many park roads that allow movement around the area." Neutra recently told The Philadelphia Inquirer his father had a broader vision than commemorating the battle. He wanted the building to commemorate the Gettysburg Address and reconciliation, as Lincoln tried to do in his 1863 speech. That view was rebutted in a June 27, 2004, Los Angeles Times article quoting then superintendent John A. Latschar saying the park administration never embraced Richard Neutra's vision. "Mr. Neutra had the idea that this would be his monument to Lincoln and freedom and all that stuff," he said. "The problem is, he never listened to his clients, because we did not want a monument, we wanted a functional building. And, as a result, we got neither."

The Cyclorama Center was one of 100 modern visitor centers built as part of Mission 66, a 10 year program to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service in 1966. It cost \$1 million and opened in 1962 for the Civil War Centennial. The building, a large, drum-shaped mass of concrete that housed the 19th century Cyclorama painting of the battle

## THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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1039 Hinswood  
Darien, Illinois 60561  
Phone: 630-460-1865  
www.chicagocwrt.org

The only requirement for membership in The Civil War Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinswood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or contact bsa1861@att.net.

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of Gettysburg, "was their show piece," Devin Colman told CWN in a 1995 interview. It was Neutra's only federal commission, according to Colman, and his only public building east of the Mississippi. "Neutra considered this building one of the highlights of his career".

from the "Civil War News"

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We're happy to publish the names of the people who contributed to The CWRT's **Ed Bearss Preservation Award Fund**. Thanks to your generosity, The CWRT was enabled to make a \$2,000 contribution to battlefield preservation in Ed's name.

Larry Gibbs, Chuck Adams, Paula Walker, Cindy Heckler, Bruce Allardice, Jim Patterson, Ken Fringer, Roger Rudich, Tom Jaros, Anonymous, Seamus "Jim" Cunningham, Jackie Wilson, Janet Linhart, Mark Matranga, Arthur & Beila Kunis, Chuck & Marilyn Bednar, Terry & Marilyn Carr, Mary & Mike Abroe, Brian Seiter, Cindy Intravartolo, Marybeth Foley, Millie O. Jarvis, Jerry & JoEllen Kowalski, Gale & Lyn Pewitt, Jerry & Ellen Allen, Rob Girardi, Hank Schure, Jerome Schur, Rae Radovich, Tom & Rosemarie King

## May Meeting

BY JACKIE WILSON

At the 691st meeting of The Chicago Civil War Round Table, held May 14, William W Freehling PhD, stated that in order to understand the Civil War, you must know the reason for it. He stated Lincoln was not the reason. What was more dangerous to the South? Lincoln or Secession? That is the question he answered this evening. Dr. Freehling stated that racism was much more important than slavery ever could be as a reason for the war. Most southerners were not slaveholders, but were afraid that the blacks would take over the south if they were freed. After all, the white population was in the minority in some southern states.

He opined that Lincoln was not dangerous to the South as he could not abolish slavery on his own and abolitionists, although loud, were not in the majority. The southern states had planned a Southern States Convention in order to determine if secession was something that all the states truly wanted. Virginia, for one, did not want to secede, as the politicians knew that if war came their state would turn into the battleground it did eventually become. Georgia had a wait and see attitude. Dr. Freehling stated that about 85% of Southerners were not secessionists, so how did they get the upper hand? South Carolina high jinks, that's how!

The secessionists believed that because each state had ratified the constitution, each state must make its own decision about whether to secede or not, and tried to make sure there was no Southern States Convention where all the states could vote

yeah or nay. They feared that the non-immediate secessionist majority would rule. South Carolina had been trying to secede since 1832 during the Nullification problem. Then, President Jackson had isolated the state and prevented it from happening. Now, South Carolina wanted nothing to stand in their way of seceding this time.

South Carolina proved reluctant to secede without the guarantee that Georgia, the leading Deep South state, would back its action. For Professor Freehling, the turning point came on November 9-10, 1860, during the joint celebration of the completion of the Charleston to Savannah Rail Road. Francis Bartow, a Georgia state senator and noted orator, was asked to speak during the celebration and he stated that South Carolina should not secede, but if it did, Georgia would stand by its side. Of course, Bartow had no official position to make this promise, but that did not matter to the South Carolina legislature, eager to seize on any excuse to go ahead on its own. Individual state conventions were then scheduled instead of the all inclusive conference originally planned.

After the President Buchanan reinforced Fort Sumter, the government of South Carolina sent telegrams to all the southern states to suggest that the states should seize all the Federal forts and armaments and once the seizures took place the conventioners (especially in Virginia) felt that they had to support the boys already in the trenches.

Thanks to President Buchanan's actions, Lincoln's actions when he took office would not have made much difference. The seizures of the federal forts in southern territory had already taken place even before the secession conventions took place. Professor Freehling noted that Lincoln had planned to reinforce Fort Pickens in Florida and give up Fort Sumter. Unfortunately, someone did not listen to orders.

Lincoln was disliked by the south because he was not an aristocratic gentleman, rather he was considered a country bumpkin. But that was no reason to go to war, just wait four years and another election would remove the problem. However, because of the precipitous actions of President Buchanan and a few hot headed South Carolinians, war became inevitable.

Freehling provided a light-hearted but educational few moments when he portrayed Henry Wise, Governor of Virginia and CWRT President Tom Trescott portrayed John B. Baldwin as they read the words of an actual secession debate between the two. Wise represented the secessionist point of view, while Baldwin was a Unionist. Dr. Freehling presented a talk that was full of his enthusiasm for his subject and left some of us wondering what really did cause the Civil War.

A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from **Hal Ardell**, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net.



## GRAPESHOT



Dave Corbett and his "Battlefield Balladeers" will perform at the "Reclaiming our Heritage" festival in Milwaukee, June 6th, and in Orland Park July 2nd. Visit [www.youtube.com/battlefieldballadeers](http://www.youtube.com/battlefieldballadeers) for details.

Leslie Goddard will present "Clara Barton" June 19th to the John Butler Chapter, National Society Daughters of the Union in Lisle, and to the Shreveport (LA) Bar Association June 23rd.

The Military History Education Group is holding its 12th annual "Summer Conference" Saturday, June 19th, at Yoder's Kitchen Banquet Facility in Arthur, IL. Speakers include David Powell on "The Chickamauga Campaign", Chris Kolakowski, Clay Mountcastle, and James A. Goecker. Form more information call (217) 578-2262. Tickets are \$50 in advance.

Bruce Allardice will speak on "Conscription and the Civil War" to the Knoxville (TN) CWRT on June 8th.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at [bsa1861@att.net](mailto:bsa1861@att.net) or (630) 297-8046.

## SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in either audio cassette or CD format. For lecture lists, contact Hal Ardell at [hal229@ameritech.net](mailto:hal229@ameritech.net) or phone him at (773) 774-6781.

Each meeting features a book raffle, with proceeds going to battlefield preservation. There is also a silent auction for books donated by Ralph Newman and others, again with proceeds benefiting battlefield preservation.

### Upcoming Civil War Events

- Lake County CWRT: No meetings for June-August
- June 2nd, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Annual dinner
- June 4th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Annual banquet, featuring Jim Ogden speaking on "The Engineering of Grant's Victory at Chattanooga"
- June 8th, McHenry Co. CWRT: Ed Urban on "McHenry County's Part in the Civil War"
- June 12-13, Kenosha Civil War Museum: "A Salute to Freedom, 2nd Anniversary of the Civil War Museum: Features Bjorn Skaptasan discussing "Wisconsin & Shiloh" and Professor Ted Karamanski on "Chicago in the Civil War"
- June 13th, Borders Books in Crystal Lake: Suzy Barile will speak on her book "Undaunted Heart: the True Story of a Southern Belle and a Yankee General"
- June 15th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT in Alsip: David Eicher on "Dixie Betrayed"
- June 17th, Milwaukee CWRT: Rob Girardi, on "Railroad Defense in the Atlanta Campaign"
- June 18th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Brett Lobella will lead a discussion on "Why South Carolina was the First State to Secede". Visit [www.thecivilwarmuseum.org](http://www.thecivilwarmuseum.org) for more details.
- June 18th, Salt Creek CWRT: Annual dinner, featuring Dan Weinberg speaking on "Adventures through Historical Artifacts"
- South Suburban CWRT: No meetings June-July
- July 10th, Lakewood Forest Preserve near Wauconda: annual "Civil War Days", featuring reenactments and first-person portrayals
- July 13th, McHenry County CWRT: Tom DeFranco on "Controversies of Gettysburg"

## Bulletin Board



**Upcoming Civil War Events cont.**  
 August 2nd, Lakeside Men's Breakfast Club in Highland Park: Jerry Schur on "Civil War submarines"  
 August 3rd, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Ed Bearss will be featured in the Museum's "Spirit of Freedom" series. See the attached brochure.

### 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.

June 11: John V. Quarstein, "Battle of the Ironclads"

### Reminders

Bjorn Skaptason at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop reminds us that the next "Virtual Book Signing" will be 3 p.m., June 12th, with Harold Holzer talking about his new book, The Lincoln Assassination, and Ronald White talking on A. Lincoln: A Biography. On June 16th the inimitable Ed Bearss will discuss his new book, Receding Tide, and on July 10th Mark Lause will talk about Race and Radicalism in the Union Army. For more information on these and upcoming events, visit [www.virtualbooksigning.net](http://www.virtualbooksigning.net) or [www.alincolnbookshop.com](http://www.alincolnbookshop.com).

### Douglas Association Luncheon

Noted Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer will address the annual luncheon of the Stephen A. Douglas Association on Saturday, June 12, on "The Lincoln-Douglas Presidential Campaign of 1860." The event will be at the Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson, at noon. The cost is \$40 per person and will be preceded by a ceremony at the Douglas Tomb. For more information visit [www.stephenadouglas.org](http://www.stephenadouglas.org).

### Website Address Change

We've changed the address of our website from [www.thecwrt.org](http://www.thecwrt.org) to [www.chicagocwrt.org](http://www.chicagocwrt.org).