



The Bushwhacker

Civil War Round Table of
Saint Louis Newsletter

February 26th Guest Speaker

BRUCE NICHOLS

Bruce Nichols of St. Louis draws on a combination of education and life experience from his background to be a Missouri Civil War historian. He completed formal academic education toward a teaching degree in social studies and a Master of Arts degree in American History, both from the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg. He completed his master's thesis, "The Civil War in Johnson County, Missouri," with noted Missouri historian Dr. Leslie Anders as his thesis advisor. This thesis is currently in print and available for sale from Two Trails Publishing of Shawnee Mission, Kansas, a company directed by another noted Missouri Civil War author, Carolyn Bartels of Independence.

This Missouri resident of 41 years approaches the subject of the Civil War flavored by his twenty years of experience in the United States Army Reserves, both as an active soldier and on reserve duty mostly in the field of military intelligence, where he achieved the rank of Major. His extensive duty assignments as staff officer and commander of various military units provide him with a solid background in military topics. Bruce has completed several levels of military education culminating with his graduation from Command and General Staff College. His military intelligence specialties working in the fields of psychological warfare, counterintelligence, and counter-terrorism provide him with perspectives on the guerrilla war in Civil War Missouri.

Bruce is currently employed full-time by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in St. Louis as an intelligence analyst, where he has worked these last 29 years. His experience in that specialty and previously as a cartographer there also equip him in deciphering the half-hidden, half-folklore aspects of the Civil War in Missouri.

This historian has extensive writing experience in addition to his master's thesis, as mentioned above. In addition to many written assignments required by the military and the intelligence community, Bruce has also published two volumes of his *Guerrilla Warfare in Civil War Missouri* series for 1862 and 1863 with McFarland and Company Publishers, Jefferson, North Carolina. He is currently working to complete this series with the final book covering 1864 and 1865, which should reach the market in 2011. In addition, Bruce actively provides volunteer online assistance to *The Missouri in the Civil War Message Board* on the Internet at <http://history-sites.com> to people trying to discover and interpret their ancestors' experiences during the Civil War in Missouri.

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 24TH, 2010
MEAL SERVED AT 6:30p.m. at
TWO HEARTS ON LINDBERGH BLVD
NEAR GRAVOIS. Doors are open around 5:30 p.m.

Please make RESERVATIONS BY FEBRUARY 10

Let us know if you are eating.

Please reserve via our Web Site at

<http://civilwarstlouis.org/main/>

Or reply to the e-mail sent to you

or Call Gary at 314-623-2062

A Note from our President

Attention all members of the Saint Louis Civil War Round Table! Written requests for charitable donations for this campaign need to be sent to our mailing address below. Please mail early to allow plenty of time in order to be received before our March 24th meeting:

CWRT of St. Louis
P. O. Box 220982
Saint Louis, MO 63122

Or, presented in writing to me at our March meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 2010. This is our deadline, and we will not consider any requests after the meeting.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. William Jackson

Christine Petton

On February 2, 2010, long time member of the round table passed to her eternal reward. We wish to express our sympathy to her family and friends.

CWRT Raffle

The St. Louis Civil War Round Table is selling raffle chances for the print "The Battle of Wilson's Creek" by Andy Thomas. The tickets are \$5 each, and we are limiting the amount of tickets to 130. The print will be raffled off when either all the tickets are sold or the May meeting of the 2009-2010 Campaign, whichever comes first. The limited edition print, #22 of 450, was donated by Paul Hauser.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

March 24, John Voehl, "Abe Lincoln"

April 28, Doug Mishler, Reno Nevada, "Jefferson Davis"

May 26, Greg Clemmer, author of "Old Allegheny and Valor in Gray", speaking on
Edward "Allegheny" Johnson

JANUARY MEETING

Our January 27 speaker was Steve Dasovich, PhD, Senior Archaeologist for the Environmental Services Division at SCI Engineering in St Charles, MO who described how archaeology has served the Heritage and Preservation Foundation. He noted that such work, by sharpening knowledge and understanding about the course of battle and related events, can also help communities enhance the tourist appeal of history-based parks and other such locations. In its work, SCI applied its considerable field techniques and skills to three nearby areas: Centralia, Boonville, and the 1864 Pilot Knob battlefield near Arcadia. The last was the main focus of the presentation.

The Arcadia Valley in Iron County, significantly influenced the course of the Civil War in Missouri. Due to its iron ore deposits, the Union fortified the valley at several points starting in 1861 and completed a railroad spur into the mining town of Pilot Knob to facilitate transport of this significant raw material. These fortifications and their associated garrison, along with their arms and ammunition, proved to be an irresistible target to General Sterling Price when he invaded Missouri in 1864. The result was that this little-known valley became the route of disaster for Price's army and helped end the Confederacy's hope for a more prolonged war. The archaeological work there served to deepen understanding of the courses of battle while uncovering a range of other clues. For example, the role of Immanuel Lutheran Church (still standing) as a field hospital was confirmed partly as the result of unearthing, and analyzing the markings on, a mini-ball buried deep beneath a floor trap door. After careful examination and analysis, it was concluded that it had first struck the ground before embedding itself in flesh. It was further adjudged to have been removed from flesh following three attempts using surgical forceps! A most interesting and well-illustrated presentation!

By Phil Baker.

FROM THE SHELF

"Fields of Blood, The Prairie Grove Campaign "

by William L. Shea, The University of North Carolina Press, 2009

Prairie Grove is one of my favorite battles, partly because I had relatives there, but also because my wife and I had Don Montgomery, the park historian, all to ourselves when we visited several years ago. While there, Don convinced me to buy "Embattled Arkansas, The Prairie Grove Campaign of 1862" by Michael E. Banasik (Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1998). You may remember Michael Banasik's presentation last February on the battle of Newtonia. The maps from that presentation are from his book. "Embattled Arkansas" a great book, covering the conditions from just after the battle of Pea Ridge through the Battle of Prairie Grove.

Now, William L. Shea has provided another look at the battle and campaign in an extremely readable text that provides great insights into the thinking and the movements from both sides. Shea has also included the aftermath of the battle, covering the retreat and the raid on Van Buren, ending on January 1, 1863. I just wish he would have gone about a month farther since my great-great grandfather's brother was captured and paroled at Van Buren, Arkansas on January 25, 1863.

Two great books on Prairie Grove, and I highly recommend them both.

By John L. Harris

Calendar of Events of Interest

TRIVIA NIGHT/FUND RAISER FOR THE CHATILLON-DEMENIL HOUSE

Please join us on Saturday, February 13, 2010 at St. Wenceslaus Parish Hall at 3014 Oregon Ave., St. Louis MO 63118 for an evening of trivia! Cost is \$20 per person, 8 people to a table. Come alone, come with 1 or 2 friends, come with a bunch of friends, just come! Don't think you have to fill a table to attend! Doors open at 6:30 pm, trivia starts at 7 pm. All proceeds from this event go to the historic Chatillon-DeMenil House. For more information or to make your reservation, please call CWRT member Edna Dieterle at 314-892-6175.

JEFFERSON BARRACKS SWAP MEET Saturday, February 27

The annual Swap Meet will be held at the Grant Pavilion Building from 9 am till 3 pm. There will be many organizations that represent eras from the Civil War through WW 2. Come talk, buy, sell, or trade items from your favorite history time frame. \$3.00 entry fee at the door.

GENERAL SHERMAN CELEBRATION Sunday, February 28

The annual observance of the death of General William T. Sherman will take place at Calvary Cemetery located at 5239 W. Florissant Ave, St. Louis. This annual observance is sponsored by the William T. Sherman Camp # 65, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Ceremony will start at 2 p.m.

Diary of Reverend F. J. Biltz

In 2009 the diaries of Reverend Biltz were found by Concordia Historical Institute, Interim Director Rev. Marvin Huggins while looking for another document. For decades the books were mistakenly assumed to have belonged to the late Rev. Theodore Walther, whose widow donated papers to CHI in 1960. Walther was the grandson of both Biltz and Dr. C.F. W. Walther, the first Missouri Synod president. The diaries include a volume for each of the Civil War years, 1861 through 1865 and also 1869.

“On October 5, 1862, after trudging through the rain to baptize twins at the home of the town blacksmith, Rev. Franz Julius Biltz was enjoying supper with the blacksmith's family and some guests. Suddenly, shouting, cursing men on horseback surrounded the house. Bushwhackers - Confederate guerrillas - took Biltz and 10 others hostage.

The bushwhackers killed or wounded six of their hostages. Biltz lost only his overcoat, his watch, and some money before he was set free. When he returned home later that night, he found his home had been ransacked. His wife and children stood outside, crying and praying.” (Page 16 & 17 June/ July 2009, *Lutheran Witness*, article by Kim Plummer Krull)

His diaries are just brief notes that he entered. Greater details are filled in by Huggins and Nierman, plus two written sources - a history compiled for St. Paul's 150th anniversary and *Independent Immigrants: A Settlement of Hanoverian Germans in Western Missouri* (University of Missouri Press, 2007) by Robert W. Frizzell, a book in which Biltz and his flock play prominent roles.

Space

Submitted by William Jackson