

# Clarksville Civil War Roundtable

Founded March, 2004 – Clarksville , Tennessee

[www.clarksvillecivilwar.wordpress.com](http://www.clarksvillecivilwar.wordpress.com)

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**January 15th, 2014** – Our 118th meeting.

The next meeting of the Clarksville (TN) Civil War Roundtable will be on Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at the Bone & Joint Center, 980 Professional Park Drive, right across the street from Gateway Hospital. This is just off Dunlop Lane and Holiday Drive and only a few minutes east of Governor's Square mall. The meeting begins at 7:00 pm and is always open to the public. Members please bring a friend or two – new recruits are always welcomed.

## OUR SPEAKER AND TOPIC:

*"Jefferson Davis: The Man"*

For four years, Jefferson Davis was the central and most conspicuous figure in the greatest revolution of American history. Prior to that time, he was one of the most outstanding statesmen of the first sixty years of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. He was nominated by the Massachusetts men in 1860, for President of the United States. He was a war hero, and the Secretary of War, in which his achievements alone entitled him to rank as a benefactor of his country. Davis was also a U.S. Senator from Mississippi. But notwithstanding all this...of the living and of the dead, irrespective of whether they wore the blue or the gray, history has, with one exception, delivered...the verdict by which posterity will abide. The one exception is Jefferson Davis. As a "man", why is Jefferson Davis not given his due?

Jefferson Davis could be contentious, loyal (especially to his friends), and was known as a very gifted lawyer. He was dedicated to his service to the United States and the Confederate States and it is his time for the latter that he gets judged. Please come and hear Ron Sydnor, Park Manager for the Jefferson Davis State Historic Site, where Davis was born, inform us about Davis as a "man." This will undoubtedly be a very interesting program!

Ron Sydnor was born in Russellville, KY, and was raised in nearby Pembroke where he lived, from the age of two until he joined the Marine Corps in June 1972 at age 17. He served 20 years in the Marines, retiring in August 1992 in California. He graduated from De Anza Community College in June 1995 and from UC Berkeley in 1997. Ron then moved back home to Pembroke in September 2000.

In September 2005, Ron was hired by Kentucky State Parks to serve as the Assistant Manager at Kenlake State Resort Park. In May 2006, he transferred to Lake Barkley State Resort Park as Assistant Manager. On May 16, 2010, Ron was assigned to Jefferson Davis State Historic Site, in Fairview, KY., as the Park Manager where he currently serves.

Ron is married to Louanna Sydnor and has three daughters, Mallory (30), Caitlin (23), and Michelle (15). He also has one grandson, Isaiah (9).

## LAST MONTH'S MEETING

We had a wonderful program at our annual Christmas dinner by Linda Barnickel of the Nashville Public Library on her new – and award winning – book on the Battle of Milliken's Bend. Her program included the importance of Milliken's Bend not only for the Union side but what it meant to newly raised black units that defended the post. Attacked by veteran Texas troops of John Walker's Division, these Federals bent but did not break and managed to hang on and repulse the Confederate assault. The far reaching consequences greatly affected the Union's decision to recruit black units to augment the Union Army; they learned that these men could fight with the best of them. Thanks Linda for coming to see us and congratulations on your book award!

## FUTURE PROGRAMS:

**February 2014** – Dr. Michael Bradley, historian/author – *"The Raiding Winter: Confederate Cavalry Operations in the Winter of 1862-1863"* (This will be from his new book of similar title.)

**March 2014** – Kent Wright, historian/author – Tennessee Valley CWRT – *"Conflicted Friendships: John Bull, Uncle Sam and King Cotton; The British Influence Upon Union and Confederate Naval Strategies"*

**April 2014** – Rob Cross, historian, Belle Meade Plantation – *"The Affair At Spring Hill, TN"* (tentative)

**May 2014** - Doug Richardson, park ranger, Fort Donelson National Battlefield – *"Lincoln and McClellan"*

**June 2014** – Robert Girardi, historian/author, Chicago Police Detective – *"The Murder of Union General William "Bull" Nelson"*

**July 2014** – Conrad Laplante, Ottawa, Canada CWRT – *"Canada and the American Civil War"*

**August 2014** – Eric Wittenberg, historian, author – topic TBA

**September 2014** – William C. Davis, noted author and historian – Topic TBA

**October 2014** – David Mowery, historian/author – Cincinnati CWRT – *"John Hunt Morgan's Great Indiana and Ohio Raid"* (tentative)

**November 2014** – Shirley Farris, author/historian – *"Fort Donelson: One Soldier's Story"* (CS Surgeon, 41<sup>st</sup> Tennessee)

**MEMBERS AND DUES:** - DUES ARE DUE AT THE JULY 2013 MEETING. WHEN YOU ARE CURRENT YOU WILL GET A NEW CWRT MEMBERSHIP CARD FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR. Thanks to all of you, the Clarksville CWRT continues to grow. We would love to have you join us! If you have friends interested in the Civil War, please bring them along. *July is our fiscal*

*year when dues for the current campaign were due.* If you haven't paid your dues for this season yet please do so. Our dues help us get great speakers and for historical preservation. Annual dues are as follows:

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### **CIVIL WAR AND ASSOCIATED NEWS AND EVENTS**

#### **Friends of Fort Defiance Annual Ball – January 11, 2014 – Clarksville, TN**

The Friends of Fort Defiance is holding our Annual Civil War Ball on January 11, 2014, at 6:00 PM at the First United Methodist Church in Clarksville. The event is a production of the Friends and the Clarksville Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee. The event starts at 6:00 PM. The Madison Street United Methodist Church is located at 319 Madison Street, Clarksville, Tennessee 37040. Tickets are \$ 35 per person and period dress or evening clothes required. To purchase tickets by Paypal please visit -

<http://ftdefianceclarksville.com/>. For more information please contact Roger Tenney at - 615-406-2697.

#### **Save the Date – Atlanta Campaign Tour – March 27-30, 2014. Sponsored by the Battle of Franklin Trust**

Tour guides Greg Biggs and Thomas Cartwright, in a fund raiser for the Battle of Franklin Trust, are conducting a tour of the Atlanta Campaign. The tour will cover Ringgold Gap through Kennesaw Mountain including such sites as Dalton, Snake Creek Gap, Resaca, Calhoun, Cassville, Dallas/New Hope Church and Pickett's Mill and the first and second Kennesaw Lines. Some sites have several stops. The tour will be by bus and leave from Franklin, TN on Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> and return on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cost details are forthcoming with proceeds going to the Battle of Franklin Trust and will cover any museum fees, three hotel rooms, guides and map sets for the tour. Keep your eyes here for more details as they develop. For more information please email Greg Biggs at –

[BiggsG@charter.net](mailto:BiggsG@charter.net)

#### **"RAISING THE HUNLEY" movie - Johnsonville State Historic Park, February 17th 2014**

150th Anniversary of one of the greatest unsolved mysteries of the American Civil War as National Geographic goes in search of the truth about the ill-fated Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley. Discover the desperate ingenuity behind the creation of the first submarine ever to sink an enemy ship in battle. Witness researchers' attempts to learn why the Hunley sank and what became of its crew. Join the mission to raise the primitive "hand-powered" sub and be there as the Hunley is opened for the first time in more than a century.

The film is showing at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. in the Johnsonville State Park, Civil War Museum-Visitor Center. For more information call 931-535-2789. The park visitors center is located on US Hwy 70 just before the Tennessee River. You can also get there by I-40 west, then get off at Exit 143 and turn right. Follow the signs to New Johnsonville.

#### **Annual Battle of Chickamauga Seminar in the Woods – March 7-8, 2014**

Noted Chickamauga historian Dave Powell and Chick-Chat National Military park historian Jim Ogden hold another of their annual Seminars in the Woods, a tactical tour and study of different aspects of the three day Battle of Chickamauga. The purpose of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Study Group is to create a forum to bring students of the American Civil War together to study and explore those events in the fall of 1863 that led ultimately to the creation of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park ... *"for the purpose of preserving and suitably marking for historical and professional military study the fields of some of the most remarkable maneuvers and most brilliant fighting in the war of the rebellion."*

The tours begin on Friday, March 7 continuing on Saturday, March 8, 2014. Friday's tours will involve a tour bus. We will be charging a small fee for use of the bus. For more details go to - <http://chickamaugablog.wordpress.com/>

#### **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Kennesaw State University Civil War Symposium, "1864, The Western Theater", March 21-22, 2014**

An outstanding group of presenters will lecture on a variety of topics having to do with the war in the Western Theater during 1864. These include, William C. Davis who will speak on General John C. Breckinridge, *"Trying to Remain a Gentleman in the last gentlemanly theater of the war;"* Richard McMurry, *"The General in the Jar, Joseph E. Johnston and the Atlanta Campaign."* Steve Woodworth; *"A. J. Smith's Guerrillas and the Battle of Nashville;"* Jim Ogden, *"Inflicting All the Damage You Can, 'Sherman's War Resources' Target;"* and Craig Symonds, *"Cleburne's Memorial, Confederate Emancipation and the Meaning of War."* All are noted Civil War historians and authors.

The program begins on Friday, March 21, at 6 pm with a reception and entertainment by the 97<sup>th</sup> Regimental String Band. The festivities will be held at the Kennesaw State University Center. The symposium will get under way at 9 am on Saturday, March 22. This program will also be held at the KSU Center, 3333 Busbee Dr, NW, Kennesaw, Ga. This is located at Exit 271 right off I-75 in Kennesaw, GA north of Atlanta – only about 4 ½ hours from Clarksville. They put on a fine seminar so please be sure to support it if you can.

### **Belle Meade Plantation in Nashville Announces The 2014 Civil War Book Club Series**

The fine folks at Belle Meade Plantation continue the excellent series of discussion on great books of the Civil War. The books will focus on battles, personalities, events and much more. Topics for 2014 include the CSS Hunley, The Union war effort, Black Union troops, the Wilderness Campaign, Battle of Atlanta, Civil War field fortifications in the East and Spring Hill/Franklin. These are free events but you must register for them. This is a great way to dig into some fine Civil War books and meet new people that enjoy what you enjoy doing. We hope you support these great programs by our friends at Belle Meade

To do so just email Andy Blair, Education Programs Coordinator at – [andy.blair@bellemeadeplantation.com](mailto:andy.blair@bellemeadeplantation.com). For more information and the dates of each book club please visit their web site at – <http://www.bellemeadeplantation.com/>. When you go for the program just check in at the plantation's visitors center.

### **Fort Negley In Nashville To Be A Site for 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events for the Battle of Nashville (From the Fort Negley wig Wag newsletter)**

On December 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Fort Negley will be one of a nearly a dozen sites participating in the city wide Battle of Nashville Signature Event. In an attempt to accurately depict the city's atmosphere during the battle, reenactors will portray the military units and civilians present at each site 150 years ago. Fort Negley will feature Union infantry, artillery, United States Colored Troops, and U.S. Signal Corps while Travellers Rest Plantation will serve as General John Bell Hood's headquarters as it was during the actual battle.

Other participating sites include: Belle Meade Plantation (site of a major cavalry battle literally in their front yard), Belmont Mansion, Bicentennial Mall, Glen Leven Farm, and the Tennessee State Capitol (which had been converted into a fort by the occupying Federal troops). This free event, organized by the Nashville Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee, under the direction of Metro Historical Commission will serve as the climactic finale to a year full of exciting programming and events. For more information on the City-wide Battle of Nashville Signature Event and other events planned for 2014, please contact Fort Negley at 678-862-8470 or by email at - [fortnegley@nashville.gov](mailto:fortnegley@nashville.gov).

### **Fort Negley To Hopefully Expand Its Site as Greer Stadium Is Removed**

In related good news for Fort Negley, the largest remaining Civil War fort of its type in the United States, there will be some welcome changes coming soon as the Nashville Sounds minor league baseball team will leave Greer Stadium and move to their new home which is under construction. Greer Stadium is built on Fort Negley property and there is talk of converting this into more Civil War oriented uses including a site for reenactments, drill fields, and more. There are other ideas being floated including a condo development. For the sake of Civil War preservation and the respect of this historical property, it is hoped that the powers that be in Nashville will do the right thing and return it to the use of Fort Negley as historic property. The removal of Greer Stadium will also allow for expanded parking at the Fort Negley Visitors Center.

Stay tuned for more news as these events at Fort Negley develop over 2014.

### **CLARKSVILLE CWRT OFFICERS**

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