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Civil War Round Table of Kansas City
P.O. Box 6202
Shawnee Mission, KS 66206

An IRC 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization

Website- http://cwrtkc.org/
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493rd Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 27, 2017
Sunset Ballroom, 8th Floor, Holiday Inn
8787 Reeder Rd., Overland Park, KS 66214
Social Hour - Cash Bar – 5:30p.m.
Dinner - 6:30p.m.

June Program

Dr. Timothy B. Smith will be speaking about his book titled: Shiloh, Conquer or Perish, that was published in November 2014.

The title of his talk is: "Difficult and Broken Ground: The Terrain Factor at Shiloh." The terrain at Shiloh had a huge impact on the outcome of the battle.

Dr. Smith is a former National Park Service Ranger at Shiloh and currently teaches history at the University of Tennessee at Martin. He has written numerous books on the Civil War.

Attendance requires a paid dinner reservation.

Please be sure Susan Keipp receives all reservations by 12:00 noon on Thursday, June 22, 2017 along with payment of $27.00 per person. Mail to:

Susan Keipp, 436 W. 88th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64114-2912

Report any necessary adjustments to Susan at 816-333-0025 by 12:00 noon on the Thursday before the Tuesday meeting.

Use your debit/credit card at our website, http://www.cwrtkc.org. Go to Dinner Reservation under the Meetings tab, fill out the reservation form, and then make your payment in the box to the left on that page through PayPal. If you are using this service please send Susan an email, so that she will not miss your reservation. skeipp@kc.rr.com.

Reservation Deadline: 12:00 noon, June 22nd
Reservation Deadline

Our Catering Contract with the Holiday Inn requires that we turn in our final head count 3 business days before the monthly dinner meetings, so that they know how much food to order. That means that we have to turn in our final head count by the start of business on Friday morning. Therefore, our dinner reservation deadline is 12:00 noon on the Thursday before the Tuesday dinner meeting. Thank you for your cooperation!

June Dinner Menu

Salmon Filet – Salmon baked with a honey, lemon and dill glaze, served on a bed of almond rice pilaf, with herb roasted russet potatoes and chef’s choice of vegetable. Served with a house salad, freshly baked bread with herbed butter, chef’s choice of dessert, coffee, iced tea, and water.

The Holiday Inn has advised they can provide the following 3 options for dinner:

- The main entree meal as selected by the Civil War Round Table.
- A vegetarian meal as determined by the chef.
- A gluten-free meal as determined by the chef.

The Holiday Inn indicated they cannot provide a low-carb meal and cannot provide any substitutions.

Meet Our Speaker

Dr. Timothy B. Smith

Timothy B. Smith (Ph.D. Mississippi State University, 2001) is a veteran of the National Park Service and currently teaches history at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

In addition to numerous articles and essays, he is the author, editor, or co-editor of eighteen books, including Champion Hill: Decisive Battle for Vicksburg (2004), Corinth 1862: Siege, Battle, Occupation (2012), which won the Fletcher Pratt Award and the McLemore Prize, Shiloh: Conquer or Perish (2014), which won the Richard B. Harwell Award, the Tennessee History Book Award, and the Douglas Southall Freeman Award, and Grant Invades Tennessee: The 1862 Battles for Forts Henry and Donelson (2016), which won the Tennessee History Book Award and the Douglas Southall Freeman Award.

Dr. Smith's newest book, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Civil War Battlefield Preservation in History, Memory, and Policy, 1861-2015, came out in April 2017. He is currently writing a book on Grierson's Raid and is under contract to write a book on the May 19 and 22 Vicksburg assaults.

Dr. Smith lives with his wife Kelly and children Mary Kate and Leah Grace in Adamsville, Tennessee.

Overview of Book: Shiloh: Conquer or Perish

The following is an overview of Dr. Smith's book, Shiloh: Conquer or Perish, as provided on the inside flaps of the dust cover:

"A critical moment in the Civil War, the Battle of Shiloh has been the subject of many books. However, none has told the story of Shiloh as Timothy Smith does in this volume, the first comprehensive history of the two-day battle in April 1862 - a battle so fluid and confusing that its true nature has eluded a clear narrative telling until now.

"Unfolding over April 6th and 7th, the Battle of Shiloh produced the most sprawling and bloody field of combat since the Napoleonic wars, with an outcome that set the Confederacy on the road to defeat. Contrary to previous histories, Smith tells us, the battle was not won or lost on the first day, but rather in the decision-making of the night that followed and in the next day's fighting. Devoting unprecedented attention to the details of that second day, his book shows how the Union's triumph was far less assured, and much harder to achieve, than has been acknowledged. Smith also employs a new organization strategy to clarify the action. By breaking his analysis of both days' fighting into separate phases and sectors, he makes it much easier to grasp what was happening in each combat zone, why it unfolded as it did, and how it related to the broader tactical and operational context of the entire battle."
"The battlefield's diverse and challenging terrain also comes in for new scrutiny. Through detailed attention to the terrain's major features - most still visible at the Shiloh National Military Park - Smith is able to track their specific and considerable influence on the actions, and their consequences, over those forty-eight hours. The experience of the soldiers finally finds its place here too, as Smith lets us hear, as never before, the voices of the common man, whether combatant or local civilian, caught up in a historic battle for their lives, their land, their honor, and their homes.

"We must this day conquer or perish," Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston declared on the morning of April 6, 1862. His words proved prophetic, and might serve as an epitaph for the larger war, as we see fully for the first time in this unparalleled and surely definitive history of the battle of Shiloh."

Please note that Dr. Smith will not be bringing any copies of his book: *Shiloh, Conquer of Perish* to the dinner meeting. We recommend purchasing a copy of his book before the meeting, if you would like to have him sign the book at the meeting.

**The Sergeant Major’s Book Auction**

Arnold Schofield will auction the following books and map at the June meeting:


**Member News**

Our historian, Betty Ergovich lives at Villa St. Francis Senior Care Facility in Olathe KS. Betty's daughter, Phyllis Ergovich-Marshall, has been kind enough to bring Betty to our dinner meetings for the past several months. Phyllis said: "You have no idea what a treat it is for Mother to come to the meetings. She talks about it for weeks." Thank you, Phyllis for bringing your mom. It is great to see both of you at our dinner meetings.

Our president, Chip Buckner, will be performing in a play titled: "Crazy for You" at Theatre in the Park from June 16-24, 2017. The play features music and lyrics by George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin and is based on the book by Ken Ludwig. Chip will be performing the role of Everett.

At last month's dinner meeting, Don Bates brought a copy of the CWRT of KC 2001 Membership Roster. In 2001 we had a total of 125 members. Did you know that there are only 25 current members that were members of the Round Table back in 2001?

**Executive Committee Meeting - June 17, 2017**

The Executive Committee of the Civil War Round Table will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 17, 2017. The meeting will be held at Don Bates' office, located at 7600 State Line Road, Prairie Village KS.

**The Round Table’s Website**

Embedded throughout our emailed newsletter are links to the website. Just click on those links and find out what great information is available on the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City website.

Check out the Round Table’s Facebook page, and make sure you “like” the page.

**Civil War Round Table of Kansas City Facebook Page**

**Last Month’s Program**

Our May dinner meeting featured Dr. Justin S. Solonick, who gave a very interesting presentation based on his book titled: *Engineering Victory: The Union Siege of Vicksburg.*
**Upcoming Programs in 2017**

**July 25, 2017:** Rev. George C. Wunderlich will be speaking about the U. S. Army Medical Corps. Rev. Wunderlich is currently serving as the Director of the U.S. Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Museum in San Antonio TX. He previously served as Executive Director of the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick MD.

**August 22, 2017:** Rich Gillespie will be speaking about Confederate cavalry officer John S. Mosby and the Mosby Heritage Foundation. Colonel Mosby was known as the “Grey Ghost” and commanded the 43d Battalion, 1st Virginia Cavalry. This unit became known as “Mosby’s Rangers” or “Mosby’s Raiders.”

**September 26, 2017:** John Michael Priest will be speaking about the Battle of South Mountain, which was the prelude to Antietam. Mr. Priest is a Civil War historian/author and a tour guide at Antietam National Battlefield.

**October 24, 2017:** Dr. Kyle S. Sinisi, Professor of History at The Citadel, will be speaking about his book titled: *The Last Hurrah, Sterling Price’s Missouri Expedition of 1864*, that was published in July of 2015.

**November 28, 2017:** Dr. John T. Kuehn, the William A. Stofft Chair of Historical Research at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, will be speaking about Gideon Welles, Gus Fox, and the U. S. Naval Blockade.

**December 19, 2017:** Round Table members Herschel and Jacque Stroud will give a presentation titled: "Abe and Mary, a Family Portrait." This talk is based on the book written by Harold Holzer and Robert Neely, regarding the Lincoln’s family photograph album, which they kept in the White House. The album was lost until 1985, rediscovered, and Holzer and Neely produced their book on the album titled: *The Lincoln Family Album*. Herschel and Jacque will appear in period dress, but not as Abe and Mary, but as Herschel and Jacque, commenting on the book and its ramifications.

**Sergeant Major’s Roar**

**Battlefield Dispatches #476**

**Chasing Quantrill “Night Attack”**

During the Civil War, night attacks were not very common, but they did occur. Normally a coordinated night attack was very successful and one of the keys to its success was maintaining the element of surprise by the attacker. This was often accomplished by the darkness of the night, which would conceal the attackers advance until the last possible second, before engaging the enemy. However, if by sound or sight, the element of surprise was lost, the advantage would evolve to the defending force. This was the case when, at night, Quantrill’s raiders attacked Company A of the 9th Kansas Vol. Cavalry in late August of 1863. The following description of this night attack was written by Albert Greene of Company A and was published in *Vol. 13 of the 1913-1914 Kansas Collections on Pages 442-444.*

“It was now dusk and we fell back half a mile and bivouacked [camped] for the night. We had neither food nor water and the orders were peremptory to lie down with our arms and hold the horses by the bridle [possibly reins]. Of course fires were out of the question, although it was chilly before morning. Our location was a good one for defense. We were in a shallow swale, or depression, sloping away from the enemy and semicircular in form. To the rear and below us were scattering blackjacks [oak trees], but in the front was open prairie and any object passing along the road we had come from would be silhouetted against the sky to the east and toward the rebels, who were undoubtedly bivouacked within a mile of us. To go a little more minutely into a description of this position, let me say that the rod we had been traveling, ran in a direction from the southwest to the northeast; the stream and belt of woods with the lane along its edge, where we heard the bugle call, ran at right angles to the road and therefore from the northwest to the southeast. Our position was some two hundred yards west of the road we had come and the right of our line was somewhat nearer to this road than to the left, our front being almost due east. But one picket post was established and this was about one hundred yards to the front and center.

"Corporal Corwin and Privates McCune, Rorhoff and myself were the detail. We were sent out on foot and Major Thacher, who seemed to be running things generally, gave us our orders. The first [guard] tour fell to me, the second relief to McCune, and the third to Rorhoff. Our post was a trifle higher than the line of bivouac and from its position the ground sloped somewhat more to the road referred to. The surface was covered with a growth of grass about knee high and scattered here and there were hummocks of sumac and persimmon brush. When Corwin had repeated the orders, he said with a chuckle, “I’m not likely to fall asleep so there’ll be two of us on watch all the time.” I had no means of knowing the time of day, but daylight was gone and at that time of the year (August 22, 1863) it was probably between 8 and 9 o’clock.

"In spite of the excitement and the probability of a fight before morning, I found it very hard to keep awake. For ninety-six hours I had less than six hours of sleep and that broken and fitful; had been without food for twenty four hours, except a little half cooked corn on the
cob and had not been refreshed, by so much as a drink of water, for more than half a day. Two hours is a long time when counted a minute at a time and, when a man is “dead tired” and his legs are ready to buckle under him at every step, it seems longer than ever. As I paced back and forth in the tall grass, the silence was oppressive. True, there were hundreds of men, but a few steps away. “But the stillness gave no token”, and the feeling of loneliness was almost overpowering. An owl hooted away back in the rear and the uncanny sound startled me. Then I wondered whether it was an owl or whether it might not be a signal of the enemy for an attack. Remembering that there were a few trees in the rear, I concluded it was an owl in one of them and dismissed my fears.

"Then a horse gave a snort and moved about restlessly and I could hear its master swearing at the animal, as if he had been awakened by it. I instantly forgot my fatigue and the alertness of the horse made a good sentinel of me in a second. Cavalry horses seldom make a mistake about the approach of an enemy at night. Just then I heard the swish of the wet grass, as Corwin came as the second relief. I whispered instructions to McCune and as he relieved me, I started back to where Rothrock was lying. I had gone but a few paces when I heard Mac shout "Halt!" At the same instant he fired his carbine.

"Turning to look toward the crest of the ridge, I could see the whole prairie alive with moving horsemen. They were in column and were marching to the southwest, along the road we had come by earlier in the evening. Instantly came a command from someone out at the head of the column, “fours right into line wheel!” Some of our boys who had been taught by Quantrill, when he was a Kansas schoolmaster, and it was he who gave this command, for they instantly recognized his voice and they were undoubtedly right. As the guerrillas came into line, they began to fire at will without orders that we had given. I could even hear the swish of the wet grass, as Corwin came as the second relief. I whispered instructions to McCune and as he relieved me, I started back to where Rothrock was lying. I had gone but a few paces when I heard Mac shout "Halt!" At the same instant he fired his carbine.

"Then the clear voice of Major Thacher rang out: “Picket Guard lie down.” This was quite unnecessary, as we were as flat on the ground as could be. The rebels had fired about one hundred shots before our boys got fairly started. A few straggling shots here and there had been made, but it was not until Thacher had told us to lie down that the firing became general. About the same time the SWERING became general also. Each side ATTACKED THE ANCESTRY of the other with every volley. The rebels fired much too high to do any considerable execution, largely owing, no doubt, to their being so much above us. By the same token, our side should have done good execution, for we were enough below them to overcome the propensity of soldiers to overshoot and to catch them about right. To some extent this was realized.

"In the midst of the fracas and in spite of the uproar, we could hear the shrill voice of Thacher calling: “FIRE LOWER, MEN, FIRE LOWER!” And again, “DARN IT, MEN, FIRE LOWER, YOU’RE WASTIN’ AMMUNITION!” After that it was noticeable that there were more shrieks of pain on the Rebel side and not so much bragging about what they had done at Lawrence.

"About this time, the tones of the Rebel commander carried an appealing sound and he seemed to be begging his men to stand up to the work and not mind a few wounds. More than once I heard him say: "never mind, never mind, we’ll get ‘em yet – let him alone – he’s all right,” etc. It was all in a begging voice, utterly devoid of the snap and go that appeals to the soldier in the commands of his officer. McCune cried out that he was hit and when I crawled over to him and inquired where it had caught him, he snarled to “Get away or I’ll kick You!” He had received a painful wound in the foot, but I don’t believe he missed a shot because of it; in fact, he may have fired a little faster for all I know. Then there were many shrieks of pain on the Rebel side and a few words of sympathy on the part of the officers and then the command: “FALL BACK, MEN, FALL BACK, LET’S GET OUT OF HERE!” and they moved away in confusion to the left and rear, the way they had come. Perhaps this was the way he wanted it in retreat, but the informal way in which he ordered his men to “Fall Back” showed that he knew that he had gotten the worst of the affair. This was Quantrill’s last stand. He had expected to find us napping and slaughter us in our sleep, as he had the unarmed recruits at Lawrence, and then go on his way unmolested.

"The first thing, as soon as it was light, was to examine the field. The grass was splashed with blood and there were a few pools, as though men had died there, but the most significant appearance was the grass beaten flat to the ground in large spaces, as though men had struggled there in death agony. It was in these places where the pools of blood were. Whether dead or wounded, the victims had been taken away by the guerrillas. We had a few wounded, one quite severely, but none killed. One of the horses was wounded, but not enough to disable it.

"Days of running fights ensued between small detachments of troops and a handful of guerrillas, but the band was broken up and never had the least bit of cohesion after that NIGHT ATTACK.”

*****

Now then, this unsuccessful night attack by Quantrill’s raiders was a victory for the 9th Kansas, because the element of surprise was lost when the guerrillas were heard and seen to be advancing towards their enemy’s defensive position. The 9th Kansas then concentrated their field of fire toward the attacking
guerrillas and successfully defended their position and of course, "The War Went On!"

Civil War Round Table of Kansas City History

In 1991, the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City presented Dr. James M. McPherson with the Harry S. Truman Award. Dr. McPherson is an American Civil War historian, who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1989 for his book: Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era.

The following article appeared in the Kansas City Star on May 30, 1991:

Interest in Civil War Still Rising

TV Series, Gulf Victory, Prompt Greater Curiosity in Conflict, Historian Says.

By: Brian Burnes, Staff Writer

James M. McPherson’s lot could have been that of Shelby Foote. Filmmaker Ken Burns filmed interviews with perhaps 12 historians for “The Civil War” series he produced for public television. Among them was McPherson, author of Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era, which won a Pulitzer Prize for history in 1989.

McPherson might have enjoyed a windfall of publicity after a career of distinguished but comparatively uncelebrated scholarship.

Burns, however, in the finished series, eliminated almost all the footage featuring McPherson and his colleagues in favor of film highlighting historians Shelby Foote and Barbara Fields.

To that editorial decision, McPherson admits both envy and relief.

“Shelby Foote was instantly catapulted into national fame by his performance,” said McPherson, who visited Kansas City on Tuesday [May 28] to address the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City and to receive its Harry S. Truman Award.

“I’ve talked to him since, and he really had to fight off the media and everybody else. He got so he dreaded answering the phone. So my feeling is one of relief, with maybe some underlyng envy.”

McPherson, a professor of history at Princeton University in New Jersey since the 1960s and the author of six books on the Civil War and related subjects, said he had never seen interest in the Civil War more passionate than it is today.

There are more than 200 groups across the country similar to the Kansas City Round Table, he said. Sales of his books and invitations for him to speak have surged since the “Civil War” series. The quick and successful resolution to Operation Desert Storm may prompt even more curiosity in the 19th-century conflict, he added.

That’s in contrast with the 1970s, McPherson said, when an unpopular Vietnam War flattened interest in all things military as well as to the 1960s, when a Civil War centennial commission tried to honor Civil War figures during initial skirmishes between the federal government and officials in some Southern states in what’s now known as the civil rights movement.

Today, however, interest in the Civil War may be at its most excitable. Of that, McPherson has a personal knowledge, because of fallout sparked by a quote attributed to him in an October 1990 Newsweek cover story on the “Civil War” series.

“I got into a little bit of trouble with some of my Southern friends,” he said.

“A lot of Southerners of what you might call the neo-Confederate persuasion were very unhappy with the Ken Burns series because they regarded it as being biased in the direction of a Yankee interpretation of the war.

“And its emphasis on slavery as the root of the conflict was something they didn’t particularly like because it’s rather embarrassing for many Southerners today to admit their ancestors were, in fact, fighting to defend a society based on slavery.

“So I made some reference to a ‘lunatic fringe’ - which, of course, was quoted in the Newsweek article, and I’ve been hearing about ever since.” McPherson was listed as a consultant to the public television series, and an essay of his appeared in The Civil War, a companion volume.

“I thought the series was very good, powerful and moving,” he said. “The only reservation I have to it - one that’s shared by a lot of other Civil War historians - is that there were an awful lot of mostly minor factual errors that crept into the script that could have been fixed up if they had just had one of us go over it.” McPherson’s “lunatic fringe” quote was made in context of how some Southern historians prefer to see slavery not as the only reason the war was fought but just one issue in the larger battle over states’ rights. The flare-up, whatever a person’s perspective, illustrated how emotional Americans can still get about events almost 130 years distant.

“That’s why it’s the war that won’t go away,” McPherson said.

“The Civil War was by far the largest war this country ever fought, both in terms of the number of casualties and its impact on society. There were 620,000
soldiers who died in the Civil War.” That makes it by far the country’s largest war.

McPherson, 54, was born in North Dakota and graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn. His professional interest in the Civil War emerged while he was a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore in the early 1960s.

The civil rights movement, then flourishing, helped doom the plans of a Civil War centennial commission during the same period, he said.

“The centennial celebration of the war was kind of a flop and for interesting reasons,” McPherson said.

“It happened to coincide with what turned out to be another showdown between the federal government and Southern states trying to resist federal law. What with bombings in Birmingham and the firebombing of buses, it didn’t seem quite the right time for a celebratory occasion.

“Then the late ‘60s and early ‘70s was really tough, a low point of interest in any kind of military history, because of Vietnam.

“Finally, there was a greater interest in the ‘80s. I think the greater distance we are from a real war, the more interest there is in past wars.” A short, successful war in the Persian Gulf, he said - although very much a real war - may in fact reinforce the interest in the Civil War.

“Because the Persian Gulf was so short and turned out so victorious, I think it would reinforce the notion of an honorable and progressive role played by war in dealing with social and political problems,” McPherson said.

“My guess is, though, that if the Persian Gulf had turned into another Vietnam and gone on for years, it would have had the same sort of impact on the Civil War that Vietnam did - that people would not have wanted to hear about it.

“But it didn’t. And, if anything, it might have reinforced interest in the Civil War - as if to say: "Here’s a war that actually seems to have accomplished something and in which people could take pride. Just as the Civil War was."

**Events Around Town**

**Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri**

The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri will hold its June 14th meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Village Heights Community of Christ Church, 1009 Farview Drive, Independence MO. The meeting will include an indoors potluck picnic. The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. Jim Beckner and John Moloski will talk about their recent trip to Vicksburg. Jim will also be giving a tribute to Art Kelley, their former 2nd Vice President.

Call Beverly Shaw at 816 225-7944 for details. Check their Calendar (http://www.cwrtwm.org) to verify the date, location and find out about the next program topic. Visitors are always welcome!

**Kansas City Posse of the Westerners**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 13th. The Westerners meet at the Golden Corral restaurant (near the Home Depot), 8800 NW Skyview Avenue, Kansas City, Mo. 64154. Dinner is at 6:00 p.m. from the buffet menu. Cost is $12 or less and visitors are always welcome. Deb Buckner will be giving a program titled: "Shakespeare in the West." For more information, see Deborah Buckner or Dennis Garstang or call (816) 569-1180.

**Flag Retirement Ceremony**

Dan Turner, a new member of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City, is the treasurer of the Missouri Korean War Veterans Memorial. The memorial is located in Washington Square Park, at Pershing and Main Streets, Kansas City MO (just east of Union Station and immediately north of Crown Center).

The Missouri Korean War Veteran's Memorial annual Flag Retirement Ceremony will be on Flag Day, Wednesday, June 14th, 10:30 a.m., at the memorial. This will be a one-hour long, moving, patriotic ceremony. The keynote speaker will be Dan's USMA cadet roommate, Colonel Walton H. "Buck" Walker, U.S. Army (Ret.), who happens to be the grandson of General "Bulldog" Walker of Korean War fame.

The event is also an opportunity to meet and talk to a large number of Korean War veterans who attend the ceremony at their memorial.

**National World War I Museum and Memorial**

*Taps* will be played at the WWI Memorial tower at sunset every night from June 18-24, 2017. This is a free public event linking the beauty of *Taps* with the symbolism of our nation's WWI memorial.
Examples of Terrain Features at Shiloh National Military Park

Pictured above is a creek known as Shiloh Branch, which slowed the Confederate attack on the Union right flank on the morning of April 6, 1862.

Pictured above right is an extremely steep ravine at Dill Branch, which effectively ended the Confederate assault on Grant's last line of defense on the evening of April 6, 1862.

Civil War Round Table of Kansas City
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Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66206-0202