

MEMBER RENEWAL

The MRRT celebrates its 60th year in 2020 – and now is a great time to show your support by renewing your membership! (Or become a new member!).

Membership is \$25 a year – or \$5 for students. Checks should be made out to Treasurer **Jeanie Graham** (the bank does not like checks made out to the RoundTable) and can be mailed to her home at **29835 Northbrook, Farmington Hills, MI 48334-2326**; or simply bought to the meeting and given to Jeanie. Cash is always welcomed.

Our March 30, 2020 meeting has been cancelled as stated in an earlier e-mail. The Farmington Library has cancelled all meeting room reservations through most of April 2020.

We thank our scheduled March speaker, Tom Nanzig, who was going to speak on “Ten True Tales . . . With a Twist-Part 2. We enjoyed Part 1 during 2019. We plan to reschedule for 2021.

Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

The Roundtable has voted to tour the Brandy Station battlefield (and other battlefields in the area)! Our great Trip Committee (Jeanie, Linda, and Mollie) will be putting together a great trip for us!

The Roundtable thanks Ken Baumann for another entertaining and educational presentation “63 Years with the Military History Hobby and Dumb Luck has been my best collecting tool.” Ken’s interest in the Civil War era began on the family farm in Mount Pulaski, IL area. The town of Mt. Pulaski has a two story courthouse that was part of the 8th Judicial Circuit that Abraham Lincoln traveled as a lawyer. Some of the old timers had actually seen Mr. Lincoln working there. The courthouse has been restored to its appearance during the Lincoln years.

Ken’s interest in the Civil War grew in 1961 as he read his first regimental history, that of the 36th Illinois. The 300 page book included a detailed discussion of weapons issued to the soldiers during the war.

He moved to Ottawa, IL in 1964 after graduating from the University of Illinois where Ken became a member of the LaSalle City Roundtable. Union General W.H.L. Wallace, who died at the Battle of Shiloh, was from Ottawa. Ken then moved to Milan, MI where he worked for 26 years as a horticulturist at Milan Federal Prison. He then met the largest Civil War relic’s dealer living in the Midwest. As a member of the Monroe, MI roundtable he met several members who knew Civil War veterans.



Ken wrote a book in 1969 entitled Arming the Suckers 1861-1865: A Compilation of Illinois Civil War Weapons. He explained that the term “Suckers” came from the fact that in the 19th Century Illinois was called the “Sucker State” because fish had to travel a long distance upriver to spawn. **Ken’s “dumb luck” resulted in his purchase of a 1861 Navy revolver that belonged to Col. Voss of the 12th Illinois Cavalry,** who was involved in the “Harper’s Ferry Skedaddle”. He bought the revolver and a Spencer rifle because the president of a company had to sell them to keep his company going. His accountant had embezzled funds from the company. **Ken has an Ellsworth breech-loading rifle.** The Confederates captured all twenty of the rifles that were stored at Harper’s Ferry. Unfortunately, the rifles became unusable after a few shots. **Ken fires his gun every summer at the Salute to America celebration at the Henry Ford in Dearborn** (picture of Ken and his gun was in the February newsletter). Ken has the only real cannon/gun that was captured by the Confederates during the War.



Ken's mother knew a Mrs. Gray when they were at the University of Illinois. Mrs. Gray had items used by Dr. William Gray, a member of the 60th Illinois, during General Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864. Ken received the collection when Mrs. Gray died. The collection included a haversack, 1840 sword, a 19th Century ledger book, an 1861 Remington rifle, and a journal of the March to the Sea.

Ken's "dumb luck" continued to increase his Civil War collection. He bought an 1858 cartridge box that was used at the Chickamauga battle. Ken acquired a letter dated November 19, 1864 letter that General Rosecrans wrote to President Lincoln regarding the execution of Confederate Major Wolfe. The President responded with a note back to the General that told him not execute out of malice. Then, General Rosecrans set up a prisoner exchange for Major Wolfe.

Ken shared with us a portion of his collection. Dr. Gray's haversack and traveling desk, an original Ellsworth gun projectile, an Eagle sword, and a Remington rifle were on display for us. We thank Ken for sharing these items with us.

Quiz Questions: This month's questions pertain to the barely remembered ship USS *Indianola*

1. USS *Indianola* was an ironclad river gunboat built in 1862. What TWO types of propulsion did she use?
2. USS *Indianola* was launched weeks before she was completed to defend which Ohio River city from the Confederates?
3. USS *Indianola* spotted the Confederate steamer *CSS Webb* on the Mississippi River but gave up the chase due to heavy what? A. Fog B. Cannon fire C. Log chains blocking the river
4. USS *Indianola* was attacked and disabled by *CSS Webb* and *CSS Queen of the West*. What caused the USS *Indianola* to surrender?
5. Confederate salvagers on the USS *Indianola* removed only a locker filled with which "medicinal" cargo?
6. What dirty "Yankee trick" that cost \$8.63 caused the Confederates to panic and scuttle the USS *Indianola*?

We thank Tom Nanzig for these questions.



Civil War Essentials – Fallen Star: Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard (1818-1893) General Beauregard was the first prominent Confederate general of the Civil War. By the end of the war he was relegated to subordinate commands. Beauregard served with distinction in the Mexican War after graduating from West Point. He earned the position of Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy in 1861. When the Civil War started, he resigned and became the first brigadier general in the Confederate Army. **Shortly thereafter, General Beauregard served as the successful commander of the Confederate forces at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Three months later, in July 1861, he led the winning Confederate army at the First Battle of Manassas after receiving a hero's welcome in Richmond, Virginia for his "great victory" at Fort Sumter.** The general devised a strategy to bring General Joseph Johnston's army from the Shenandoah on trains to reinforce his army at Manassas. After the battle, Beauregard was promoted to full general, dating from July 23, 1861. **His men had fired the first shots of the war and won its first major battle.**



During the winter of 1861-1862 Beauregard created major issues with the Confederate high command. His plan to invade Maryland was dismissed as impractical. The General's request to assume command in New Orleans was rejected. He issued published statements that challenged the Confederate Secretary of War's ability to give commands to a full general, such as Beauregard was. Finally, President Davis was enraged when the general's report on Manassas was published in the newspapers.

As a result, General Beauregard was transferred to Tennessee where he became second in command to General Albert S. Johnston, effective March 14, 1862. **The General planned the assault at the Battle of Shiloh on April 6-7, 1862. The assault was marred by Beauregard's improper organization of forces resulted in command confusion and failure to mass soldiers at the appropriate places. After General Johnston was mortally wounded, Beauregard assumed command of the army. As night fell, he called off any further attacks on General Grant's army which had set up a tight semicircle on the Tennessee River. His directive soon entered Confederate lore as the "Lost Opportunity".** General Beauregard sent a message to Richmond that night, informing President Davis of the "*Complete Victory*" and "*the remnant of his (Grant's) army driven in utter disorder to the immediate vicinity of Pittsburgh (sic).*" The next day General Grant turned the table on the Confederates.

The Confederate Army retreated back to Corinth, MS after the Second Day's battle. General Halleck's army slowly approached Corinth where General Beauregard's army then retreated to Tupelo, MS. Then the General went on medical leave without permission and President Davis replaced him with General Bragg.

General Beauregard was then transferred back to Charleston, South Carolina where he successfully prevented the capture of the city by Union army and naval forces in April and September 1863. He promoted the use of submarines, naval mines (torpedoes) and a small naval vessel called a torpedo-ram.

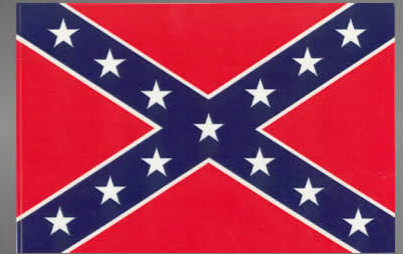
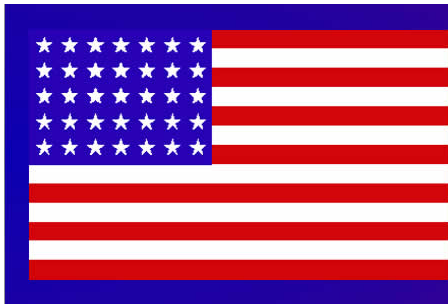
The General received a telegram on March 2, 1864 that his wife had died in New Orleans, where she had been ill for two years. More than 6,000 people attended her funeral and Union General Nathaniel Banks provided a steamer to carry her body upriver for burial.

During the 1864 Overland Campaign he successfully bottled up Union General Benjamin Butler in the Bermuda Hundred Campaign. Shortly thereafter, his weak force of 5,400 men successfully prevented a 16,000 men strong Union force attack at Petersburg on June 15, 1864. This was his most successful action during the war.

Finally, General Beauregard became the commander of the new Department of the West on October 2, 1864.

General Hood's catastrophic failure in the Franklin-Nashville Campaign of late 1864 was under the direction of General Beauregard and President Davis. Later, he tried to concentrate Confederate forces at Columbia, South Carolina to stop General Sherman's march. General Lee replaced him with General Joseph Johnston. The war was over for the General. Any analysis of General Beauregard as a commander revealed several positive and negative qualities. On the positive side, he was very popular with his subordinates and soldiers. He understood the importance of entrenching well before most of his comrades did. Even though he was the South's most successful field commander outside of General Lee he only commanded a field army for five months.

This was due to the General's personal and physical shortcomings. He became ill during times of stress. His ambition and arrogance made it hard for him to accept being a subordinate. He was unsuited to the game of politics and conciliation. The General did not fit in with the Confederate high command because of his Louisiana Creole upbringing, Catholic faith, and slight French accent in a command of Anglo-American Protestants. Most of all, General Beauregard lost the Battle of Shiloh where President Davis' favorite general, Albert Sidney Johnston, died during the battle. Davis then became very hostile towards Beauregard. Few men fell as hard from the General's position as a hero in 1861 as he did.



Answers to USS *Indianola* Quiz:

1. Two side wheels and a set of screw propellers.
2. Cincinnati (during the September-October 1862 Kentucky campaign)
3. A. Fog that did not lift until the next afternoon
4. C. Being rammed seven times
5. Liquor
6. The Federal Navy “attacked” with “Black Terror”, an unnamed coal barge disguised as an ironclad with log “cannons” and barrel “smokestacks”.

Civil War Essentials – Clara Barton’s (Dec. 25, 1821-1912) Missing Soldiers Office Clara Barton, a well-known battlefield nurse, wrote the following letter in early 1865 to President Lincoln, “*Sir, I most respectfully solicit your authority and endorsement to allow me to act temporarily as general correspondent at Annapolis, Maryland, having in view the reception and answering of letters from the friends of our prisoners now being exchanged. It will be my object also to obtain and furnish all possible information in regard to those that have died during their confinement.*”



Shortly thereafter, on March 24, 1865 Clara received permission to serve as a contact person for families looking for missing loved ones and to compile a list of Union soldiers who had died in captivity. Her official title was **General Correspondent for Friends of Paroled Prisoners**. She became the first woman to lead a government bureau.

After the newspapers carried the story of her appointment, Clara began to receive thousands of letters from civilians whose friends and relatives had been captured and sent to Southern prison camps, and then had not been heard from. When the war finally ended, Clara Barton met the transport ships carrying returning prisoners. She interviewed released prisoners to find out about their regimental comrades.

Clara’s team of assistants answered letters, usually with the form reply that research on their soldier and others was in progress and would provide answers for their families. By June 1865, the first roll of missing men included 1,533 names. During the next three years, five Rolls of Missing Men were published.

Dorence Atwater (discussed in the July 2018 newsletter) kept a secret roll of prisoners while he was a captive at Andersonville Prison. He gave Clara his information and helped identify the graves of 13,000 prisoners and provided definitive word to their families. Their work helped establish Andersonville National Cemetery.

The Missing Soldiers Office operated for four years. During that time, 63,182 written inquiries arrived, 41,855 replies were sent. A total of 58,693 printed circular had been distributed, 99,057 copies of the missing rolls had been delivered across the country. This very hard work resulted in the identification of 22,000 men and changed their fates from missing and unknown.

Clara Barton and her associates did not accept donations for their work. Eventually, the federal government granted her \$15,000 for her work.

Today, the Clara Barton Missing Soldiers Office is operated by the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. The building was saved from demolition in 1996. The museum, open to the public, is located on 7th Street in Washington, D.C. The museum’s website is <http://www.clarabartonmuseum.org/>