

MARK YOUR NEW 2019 CALENDARS!
MONDAY OCTOBER 14, 2019
 at the GAR Building for the
 ALCWRT 65th Anniversary Celebration!



ABOUT the ALCWRT

- The Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table is the oldest Civil War Round Table in Michigan, founded in 1952. Our JUBILEE (65th) anniversary was September, 2017.
- Meetings are each 3rd Thursday, September through May (except December), **7:30 pm**, at the Charter Township of Plymouth City Offices, 9955 N. Haggerty, in the Chamber Council Room.
- For more information, contact ALCWRT President Liz Stringer at stringerL@aol.com
- Our web site is ALCWRT.org
- Like us on **FACEBOOK**...!
 "Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table"

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GARY REMBISZ

will be the featured speaker for the **JANUARY 17th** meeting of the Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table. His topic:

THE 24th MICHIGAN MEN WERE NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM US

Gary will talk to us about the similarities between soldiers of our Civil War era and soldiers of today. He'll also share with us insights into their innovations and resourcefulness. Some of the details in his presentation will be illustrated using examples from the 24th Michigan, and he'll bring along and explain some of the accoutrements the soldiers would have worn or used.

You'll recognize Gary easily:

he'll be the one in the re-enactor's Union uniform.

Gary Rembisz received his Masters of History from Eastern Michigan in 2012 at the age of sixty-four. We know him from his presentation to us in October-2016 of his book "Black Feathers in Black Hats" about Wayne County's 24th Michigan of the Iron Brigade.

Gary is a former member of the Board of the Plymouth Historical Museum and docent, is a presenter of the 24th Michigan on Livonia Public Television's Facebook page, and is a member of the Farmington and Plymouth Civil War Roundtables.

Gary, a Plymouth resident of 20 years, has been married 48 years. He has two daughters and is the proud grandfather of two – a boy and a girl.

For more info, see his website: www.historyspeaker.com

THANKS to Dr. DAVID STODDARD for his fascinating presentation to us in November on [The Red River Campaign](#), a series of battles fought along the Red River in Louisiana from March 10 to May 22, 1864.

For a quick quiz, see "What Did We Learn?" on page 3.

ARLINGTON's MILLENNIUM EXPANSION -and- TWO NEW CIVIL WAR-era BURIALS

The expanded section of Arlington National Cemetery opened in the summer of 2018 with a ceremony to bury two Civil War Unknowns.

ARLINGTON's MILLENNIUM PROJECT

Arlington National Cemetery is arguably the most famous cemetery in our country, and honors more than 400,000 people buried there since 1864. The Millennium Project, completed last summer, expanded the number of remaining available burial spaces to 100,000.

The Millennium Project, begun in 2014, was the first expansion in almost forty years. At a cost of \$81.7 million, the expansion added 27 acres carved from the National Park Service and Joint Base Myer Henderson Hall. The final result is an addition of 6,000 pre-dug graves and 16,000 niche wall burial spaces. It is designed to accommodate traditional in-ground burial as well as in-ground burial of cremated remains.

The Millennium expansion included a new design for saving space and improving efficiency. Concrete boxes for burials will be double stacked, with space for two caskets. These concrete containers will be about 18 inches above ground and spaced closely together.

Although the Millennium Project addition with its new space-saving design will extend availability, projections show that additional space will be needed. A second expansion project, The Southern Expansion, is on the drawing board. This 37-acre expansion, on the site of the old Navy Annex building, should extend the life of the cemetery into the 2050's once it is completed around 2025.

How long burial spaces will be available will depend, though, on eligibility rules for burial there. Eligibility rules have changed some fourteen times in the past 150 years, and a public comment period is planned in the near future to gauge sentiment for tightening the rules further. Currently, to be eligible for in-ground burial service, members must be either retired military, a recipient of a high status medal, or killed in action. Above ground burial of cremated remains requires at least one day of active duty (outside of training). Even with today's strict requirements, there are up to thirty funerals at Arlington every day.

BURYING TWO CIVIL WAR UNKNOWN

There is no question of eligibility of Union Civil War veterans to be buried at Arlington. The ceremony to open the new Millennium expansion last summer included the burial of two Civil War Unknown soldiers. Attendees saw a soldier marching before the Army's Ceremonial Band as horse-drawn caissons carried the flag-draped caskets. They heard the beat of a muffled drum as soldiers serving as pall-bearers carried the caskets to the new graves. A rifle salute was fired over the graves, and taps was played.

Traditional Coffins

Volunteers were enlisted to construct traditional wooden coffins for the burial. Working in the wood shop of the Manassas National Battlefield Park, three volunteers made traditional toe-pincher coffins. Anyone who's watched old Western movies is familiar with this style of coffin: narrow at the feet, wide at the shoulders, and narrow at the head. The oak boards for the coffins came from a 90-year old, 60-foot tall tree that fell in a windstorm on the Manassas battlefield in 2018.

The remains were wrapped in reproductions of Civil War Union blankets before being placed in the toe-pincher coffins. The oak coffins were then placed inside modern military caskets.

... continued ...

Who Were These Unknown Soldiers?

Though we don't know the names of these two soldiers – they're called now Burial 1 and Burial 2 – we do know something about them.

In 2014, during excavation for a utility line, a limb pit was discovered near the suspected location of a field hospital at the second battle of Manassas. Typical finds in a limb pit are as the name implies: limbs discarded after amputation. But in this case, two fairly complete skeletons were found. They had been placed side by side, with their amputated limbs arranged next to them.

Burial 1 had been hit in the right thigh by a Confederate bullet that shattered his leg and buried itself in the bone. It was still embedded there when the remains were excavated.

Burial 2 had been buried in his Union coat. Its four eagle buttons were found in the pit nearby. He had been wounded by one large bullet that had smashed his upper right arm, a smaller bullet to the groin, and another small bullet near his right shin. Several rounds were found in the dirt near him.

Speculation is that these two men were hit during the doomed Union attack on August 30, 1862, against Confederates hunkered down in an unfinished railroad cut at the top of a ridge. The fighting was so desperate there that at one point the enemies threw rocks at each other. Union soldiers were forced back with heavy losses.

The Army believes that identifying the two men after all this time would be extremely difficult. And perhaps that is as it should be: Arlington is the burial site of thousands of Civil War unknowns.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Here's a quick quiz based on Dr. Stoddard's presentation on the Red River Campaign at our November meeting.

- (1) What were some of the reasons given for the Union initiating the Red River Campaign?
- (2) Was this an army or a navy initiative?
- (3) Which side won?

WHAT DID WE LEARN -- answers

- (1) There were several reasons cited as the rationale for the Red River Campaign:

- Northern textile mills needed cotton from the south to lower unemployment in northern mill towns;
- Lincoln wanted to readmit TX and LA to the Union, with provisional governments
- It was thought that having the Union in TX would dissuade the French, who had invaded Mexico in 1861, from siding with the Confederacy

- (2) The Red River Campaign was both an army and a navy initiative.

- (3) While technically a Confederate victory, it was not a complete one.

Confederate Lt-General Taylor successfully defended the valley with a force roughly half that of the Union and stopped the Federal advance. But Confederate General Kirby Smith sent half of Lt-General Taylor's troops north rather than pursue the retreating Union forces under Major General Nathaniel Banks after the battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill.

UPCOMING EVENTS in 2019

Watch for announcements from ALCWRT.NEWS@gmail.com when dates & details are firmed up.

65th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: OCTOBER 14, 2019

Now confirmed for Monday, October 14, 2019 is the celebration of the ALCWRT's 65th year with a dinner-and-speaker event at the beautifully renovated and restored **GAR Building** in Detroit. Our speaker will be **A. Wilson Greene**, whose recently published book on the Petersburg campaign -- "**A Campaign of Giants**" -- got a very favorable review in the Wall Street Journal in August, 2018.

SPRING TRIP - 2019

Liz is now targeting [spring 2019](#) for the next round table trip. She's thinking Kentucky.

Are you interested? Let Liz or Worley know.

FUTURE SPEAKERS

Here's a look ahead at some of the upcoming programs that Brian Mayer has arranged for us:

FEB. 21:	William Cottrell	"Lincoln and the Declaration of Independence"
MAR. 21:	Steven Ramold	"The Controversy Over the Sherman/Johnston Surrender"
APR. 18:	Dr. E. Lawrence Abel	"John Wilkes Booth and the Women Who Loved Him"
MAY 16:	Curt Fields	"General Ulysses S. Grant: The Man Behind the Uniform"

THIS and THAT ...

* VISITOR's WELCOME ...

~ The ALCWRT welcomes friends, relatives, acquaintances...

~ We're always looking for new members, and visitors are **always welcome..!**

* ANNUAL DUES –

~ Worley is always happy to collect your dues

~ **\$20** for a single ~~ **\$30** for a couple [Yes, it's \$30 for a couple... Ignore the Nov. newsletter typo 😊]

~ Dues are payable by the calendar year (January through December)

* **WEBSITES for other nearby roundtables** are posted on ALCWRT.org.

* **STATION 885** – Yes, the group still meets for dinner prior to the monthly meetings... All are welcome!

* REFRESHMENTS for FUTURE MEETINGS –

~ Let Liz know if you're interested in bringing refreshments to a future meeting.

~ **Thanks to Lee Solaggi for November refreshments..!**