



The Dispatch
Newspaper of the

**CAPITAL DISTRICT
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

PO Box 11493 Loudonville, NY 12211
www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org



Volume 35, Number 10

December 2018

FIRE ZOUAVES SAVE THE WILLARD!



DECEMBER MEETING

Friday, December 14, 2018

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

1541 BROADWAY

WATERVLIET, NY

**Zouaves: America's
Forgotten Soldiers**

Patrick Schroeder

Social Hour	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Business Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Presentation	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Questions & Answers	8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

The regular meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, December 14, 2018. Our very special guest speaker will be author and historian, Patrick Schroeder. Patrick is an old friend of the CDCWRT, and we welcome him back. He will talk about one of his favorite topics --- Zouaves. The title of his presentation is "Zouaves: America's Forgotten Soldiers."

This is a slide show of 100 photographs of Zouaves both North and South, with a discussion of the origins of Zouaves in North Africa, French Zouaves and their distinguished exploits in the Crimean War and in Italy, and Elmer Ellsworth

and the "Zouaves craze" in America. Patrick will demonstrate various styles of American Zouave uniforms, and present brief capsule histories on several famous Zouave units. He will bring reproduction uniforms, and will explain details of this unique uniform.

Schroeder was born January 1, 1968, at Fort Belvoir, VA, and was raised in Utica, New York, until he was 13. In 1990, he graduated Cum Laude with a B.S. in Historical Park Administration from Shepherd College in WV. He has a M.A. in Civil War History from Virginia Tech. From the summer of 1986-1993, Patrick worked as a seasonal living history interpreter at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park. In 1993, he wrote "Thirty Myths About Lee's Surrender," which is currently in its 14th printing. From 1994-99, he was employed at Red Hill, the Patrick Henry National Memorial. Patrick has written, edited and/or contributed to more than twenty-five Civil War titles including: "More Myths About Lee's Surrender," "The Confederate Cemetery at Appomattox," "Tar Heels," "Recollections and Reminiscences of Old Appomattox," "Civil War Soldier Life: In Camp and Battle," "A Duryee Zouave," "We Came To Fight: A History of the 5th New York Veteran Volunteer Infantry," "Duryee's Zouaves," "Campaigns of the 146th Regiment New York State Volunteers," "The Pennsylvania Bucktails," "The Bloody 85th," and "The Life of General Ely S. Parker: Least Grand Sachem of the Iroquois and Grant's Military Secretary," and "With the 11th New York Fire Zouaves: In Camp, Battle and Prison."

In 1994 he and his wife, Maria, founded Schroeder Publications, which has edited and/or published over thirty titles. Titles and prices can be found on Schroeder.Publications@Verizon.net.

Patrick resides in Lynchburg, VA. He has worked as an independent researcher, historian, and author, and tour guide. He has been the Historian at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park since 2002.

UP-COMING MEETINGS

The January 11, 2019 meeting of the CDCWRT will be the annual Potpourri Meeting where members of the Round Table may do a short presentation or discuss a Civil War artifact or item in their possession. Anyone interested in presenting should contact Program Chair, Matt George, at the email or phone listed on the back page of the newsletter. This is also the meeting where our post-holiday social gathering occurs.

BOARD MEETING REPORT

The board met on October 29, 2018. The Treasurer reported \$522.56 in the regular account and \$3003.58 in the preservation account. Dues will be \$35 annually starting in 2019. A Brandy Station field trip with Bud Hall is being planned for May 17-19, 2019.

DUES ARE DUE

The Round Table membership year starts January 1. Dues payments will be accepted beginning at the December meeting. The new basic dues level is \$35, and members also have the option

to make donations to the Operating and Preservation Accounts. Payments at the meeting will be accepted by check, cash (correct change, please) or credit card. The membership form is included in this newsletter, and copies will be available at the meeting. And of course payments can always be mailed to the Round Table's new P.O. Box.

Capital District Civil War Podcast – December

In the latest episode, Harold Holzer talked about his new book Monument Man: The Life & Art of Daniel Chester French. French was "one of America's most prolific sculptors of public monuments," creating The Minute Man in Concord, Harvard University's John Harvard, and most famously, the statue of Abraham Lincoln for the Lincoln Memorial. Holzer discussed French's work, the controversy surrounding public monuments, the Phillip Sheridan statue in Albany, and the Lincoln Forum.

<https://capitaldistrictcivilwar.org/podcast>

IN MEMORIAM

The following message was recently received:

"It is with sadness that I inform CDCWRT of the passing of my father Stan (Stanley) Bergman on Friday, November 23, 2018. Although he moved to New Mexico in 2014 he continued to receive and read the monthly Dispatch. He will be greatly missed."

Older member of the Round Table will recall that Stan and his wife provided snacks for our meeting for a number of years. Stan's wife predeceased him by a

number of years. Anyone wishing to respond personally to the family may send emails to Nancy Bergman at bergmannancy@hotmail.com

WHO'S BEHIND THAT BEARD?

By Erica X. Eisen

When Kurt Luther walked into Pittsburgh's Heinz History Center in 2013 to attend an exhibition about Pennsylvania during the Civil War, he didn't expect to be greeted by his great-great-great-uncle. A computer scientist and Civil War enthusiast, Luther had been drawn to researching his own family's connection to the conflict, gradually piecing together information over years and years. But his searches had always failed to turn up a photograph, and Luther was ready to give up on the possibility of ever seeing his ancestors' faces. It was only through sheer happenstance that, walking through the History Center that day, Luther had spotted an album of portraits of the men of Company E, 134th Pennsylvania—his great-great-great-uncle's unit. Laying eyes on his relative's face for the first time, he later wrote, felt like "closing a gap of 150 years."

Five years later, Luther launched Civil War Photo Sleuth, a web platform dedicated to closing the gap a little further. Together with Ron Coddington (editor of the magazine *Military Images*), Paul Quigley (director of the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies), and a group of student researchers at Virginia Tech, Luther crafted a free and easy-to-use website that applies facial recognition to the multitude of

anonymous portraits that survive from the conflict, in the hopes of identifying the sitter. When a user uploads a photograph, the software maps up to 27 distinct "facial landmarks." Users are further able to refine their searches by adding filters for uniform details that could offer clues about rank. (Three chevrons and a star, for instance, indicates a rank of ordnance sergeant for both the Union and Confederate armies, while shoulder straps with an eagle were worn by Union colonels.) From there, the program cross-references the photo with the other images in CWPS's growing database. The final search results present an array of possible matches (and possible names) for consideration.

Over the four-year course of the Civil War, photography was a crucial medium for capturing both the shifting tides of the conflict and the individuals caught up within them. Mathew Brady's searching portraits and Alexander Gardner's unflinching views of the dead at Antietam helped make the war real for both civilians at the time and those of us at a century and a half's remove.

In an interview with *Military Images*, Coddington said, "I once calculated that there were 40 million photographs of Union soldiers taken during the Civil War. Even if only 10 percent survive, there are 4 million images out there today." Yet we have names for few of them: "David Wynn Vaughan, a premier collector of Confederate soldier images, estimates that no more than 10 or 20 percent of the images he's seen during his more than 25 years of collecting are identified," Bob Zeller, president of the Center for Civil War Photography, writes on the organization's website.

The ambitious goal of Civil War Photo Sleuth, Luther says, is to get that number to 100 percent. If it's a task that seems daunting at the outset, it's one Luther says will get easier with time. "The beauty of CWPS," he says, "is that the more people use it, the more information gets added, leading to more identifications—it's a virtuous cycle." In the site's first month alone, CWPS logged 88 reported identifications, of which 75 were "probably or definitely correct" (and since not all users choose to publicize their identifications, Luther thinks that the real number of matches may have been higher). Given that IDs like this are otherwise rare enough that they make national news when they occur, this is a massive leap forward.

One particularly memorable ID occurred the night before CWPS's launch in August, as Luther was searching for a sample image for the next day's demo. After selecting an unidentified portrait from the Library of Congress to demonstrate how to upload and tag photos, Luther ran it through the program. The very first result was a perfect match. More digging turned up yet another portrait of the same sitter, this time with an autograph: Francis Marion Eveleth, assistant surgeon in the 7th Maine Infantry. When Luther presented the match at the launch event the next day, Tom Liljenquist, the man who had donated the photograph to the Library of Congress, was in attendance.

Identifying figures in historic photographs poses a number of challenges. Given that the photography of the time was in black and white or sepia, potentially helpful information about skin tone and eye color is lost. Technological tools developed with modern photos in mind

can also run into problems when faced with antiquarian material. Profile views, which were fashionable in the 19th century, are tricky for many facial recognition systems. Similarly, the iconic facial hair sported by many at the time helps human photo sleuths but hinders software because beards and mustaches can block the features the program is trying to map. While digital tools are extremely useful for drastically narrowing the field, human users still do better when it comes to weighing up several potential matches.

Identifying photos through programs like CWPS can have a sizable economic impact for collectors. Portraits with names attached almost always command a higher value, benefiting museums and private individuals alike. Beyond monetary factors, of course, knowing who is in a photograph can have a powerful effect on how we perceive the past. For Luther, part of what motivates him in his work is the human desire to remember and memorialize. "It's important to give names to these faces," he says. "Images are powerful, and they humanize these people who might otherwise just seem like names on a list or numbers in a casualty report."

Addendum:

Anyone may upload their own photographs or select from the many photographs that are already available online, such as photos from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration's web site. The software in the Civil War Photo Sleuth web site then maps as many as 27 "facial landmarks" on each photograph. Once it finishes cross-referencing, the site will serve up a slate of closely similar

photographs that already have names attached.

For any one photo, the web site often identifies a number of potential candidates, rather than just one. In that case, humans have to compare the photographs of potential candidates to identify the correct person, if possible.

A lot more information about the Civil War Photo Sleuth may be found in an article by Annie Palmer in the Daily Mail web site at <https://dailym.ai/2S6gUwy> while the Civil War Photo Sleuth web site may be found at: <https://www.civilwarphotosleuth.com>.

ONE OF OUR OWN

Several newsletters ago, I presented some follow-up of one of our former young members who went onto West Point and now has her first command --- namely, Roxanne Wegman. Here is more follow-up.

After a year of many triathlon and two marathon victories, Roxanne entered her first Ironman race in Tempe, AZ. Ironman consists of a 2.4 miles swim, bicycle ride of 112 miles, followed by completion of a marathon 26.2 miles. It is an extreme race demanding patience to survive. She has trained for a year for this race, but has engaged in other extreme or ultra-races, for years. Her performance was good enough for top 20% finish overall, top 20% for age group, and top 10% of females. Huzzah!

REMAINING POSTAL CIVIL WAR COMMEMORATIVE ENVELOPES & SUCH

Matt Farina has an assortment of postal envelopes that the CDCWRT produced for past events. Most are related to the Civil War, but there are some sports exceptions. They may be purchased as envelopes OR mounted already on card-stock ready for framing. The list is a partial list, so if interested, email Matt if you are looking for a particular officer, and he will let you know what he has.

150th Vicksburg & Gettysburg envelopes, First Day of Issue, among the last Art-Craft envelopes produced. Pair \$5.00, mounted \$8.00.

Pair of Grant envelopes, Grant & Shiloh stamps, First Day of Issue in Albany 1995. Pair \$5.00; mounted \$8.00

Red Socks fans: Fenway Park envelope & Fenway stamp from Legendary Stadiums series in 2001; different postmarks. Each \$3; different pair \$5; mounted \$8.

Yankees fans: Silk-screened Mickey Mantle stamp, First Day of Issue; Joe DiMaggio envelope with Yankee Stadium stamp; \$3 each; mounted with other baseball envelope \$8.

End of war pairs: Appomattox & Bennett Farm; #6 envelopes \$5 or \$8 mounted; #10 silk-screened envelopes \$10 or \$15 mounted. (Very limited Bennett Farm)

Very limited fund-raising pair of the Fayetteville Arsenal and NC CW History Center logo; #10 envelopes \$10.00.



2019 MEMBERSHIP FORM
 (Membership Year Runs January – December)

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Newsletter Preference: View on website _____ Copy Mailed to Home _____

Membership Dues* \$35

Donation to Preservation Account** _____

Donation to Operating Account*** _____

Total _____

* All dues money goes into Operating Account

** Pays for battlefield preservation donations, rental of storage shed, insurance

*** Pays for newsletters, program expenses, donation for use of Watervliet Senior Center

Please send your payment to:

CDCWRT
 P.O. Box 11493
 Loudonville, NY 12211-0493

Note 1: Payments received in December will be deposited in January 2019

Note 2: Payments by credit/debit card can be made at the December and January meetings

**CDCWRT
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LOUDONVILLE, NY 12211**

Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly in various locations in the Capital District. This newsletter is published eleven times per year. Annual dues are \$35. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.

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