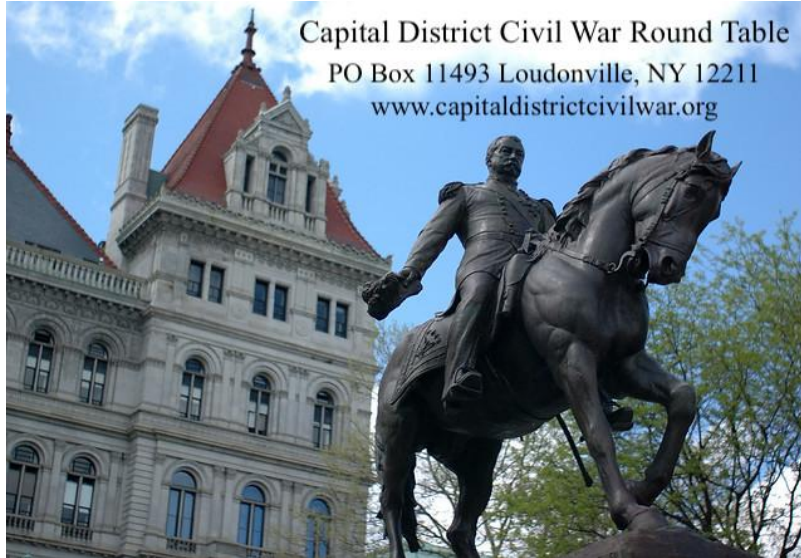


The Dispatch

Volume 39, Number 10

December 2022



A Conversation with Miss Clara Barton



Carolyn Ivanoff portrays Clara Barton. Photograph from the Confederation of Union Generals.

<https://uniongenerals.org/meet-the-members/clara-barton/>

DECEMBER MEETING

Friday, December 9, 2022

AT THE WATERVLIET
SENIOR CENTER

Carolyn Ivanoff presents
Clara Barton

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

Carolyn Ivanoff is a retired high school administrator and educator. She writes and speaks frequently on American history at local, state, and national venues. In 2003 Carolyn was named Civil War Trust's Teacher of the Year. In 2010, 2011 and 2013 her education programs received Awards of Merit from the Connecticut League of History Organizations. In 2016 Carolyn was honored by the Connecticut Council of Social Studies with the Bruce Fraser Friend of the Social Studies Award.

In 2018-19 Carolyn served as project coordinator for the 17th Connecticut Flagpole preservation and rededication project on Barlow's Knoll at Gettysburg National Military Park. This project was honored with a 2019 Award of Merit from CHLO for preservation. She is currently working on a manuscript of unpublished first hand experiences by members of the 17th Connecticut Regiment at Gettysburg.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 13: our annual potpourri program

February 10: author Deirdre Sinnott presents on the 1835 Utica meeting of the New York Anti-Slavery Society

March 10: Bob Connor presents on James Montgomery - Abolitionist Warrior

DUES, DUES, DUES

The Round Table membership year starts January 1. The basic dues level is \$35, and members also have the option to make donations to the Operating and Preservation Accounts. The membership form is included in this newsletter. Payments can be made through the PayPal link on the Round Table's website or mailed to the Round Table's P.O. Box. Payments will be held for deposit until January.

CDCWRT'S 2023 ELECTIONS

The election will be held at the January meeting, and any member in good standing (dues paid) may be nominated from the floor for any board position. Erin Baillargeon, Mark Koziol, and Steve Muller are running for their current positions. Rik Scarce is running for an At-Large position.

This leaves THREE open positions (secretary and two At-Large), which is nearly half of the Board. The time commitment to serving on the Executive Board is minimal. Please consider joining the Board to help our organization continue.

THANK YOU, MEMBERS

The Round Table wishes to thank Matt George for his continued donations to the Round Table and for his tireless work arranging speakers for our monthly meetings.

BOARD UPDATES

The Executive Board met via Zoom on November 21, 2022. The Operating Account balance was \$4,004.99 after expenses and income from the successful Kate Hewitt program in October. The Preservation Account balance was \$4,366.72. The Board voted to purchase 500 stamps so we can continue mailing newsletters.

CLARA BARTON AND THE MISSING SOLDIERS OFFICE by Rosemary Nichols

One of the aspects of Clara Barton's amazing work immediately after the Civil War was her founding and staffing the Missing Soldiers Office on behalf of families seeking to learn what happened to their loved ones who had not come home from the war.

As the end of the Civil War was further in the view from the back of the wagon, there needed to be some entity to aid these grieving families. Clara was the default potential source of information for the many grieving Union families who were saddened when 'their soldier' did not come home when the war was over. Clara received over 63,000 requests to help locate their missing men. Ultimately Clara located over 22,000 missing men, dead and alive.

The 'Angel of the Battlefield' was creative in her search for the missing. She contacted friends who would have known the soldiers or their battalion. Clara knew some of the men personally. She had confirmation of some deaths in prison camps from burial records seized from the camps when the Union soldiers were freed.

When she couldn't find a missing soldier by those means, Clara published their names. The 'Roll of Missing Men' was organized by state. These rolls were distributed throughout the Union. People wrote back with information about the missing. Clara found many soldiers this way, including some who would rather not be found.

During her three years of searching, Barton published the Rolls of Missing Men five times. The contents of the rolls (6,664 names) have been transcribed into a searchable database. It can be found on the website of the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. Surprisingly, the rolls are not for only enlisted men. Officers at all ranks below Major are generously sprinkled through the database.

How did the Missing Soldiers Office come to be? As was true throughout her life, if Clara saw a need, she could imagine a way to fill it. Then she went to work to recruit the citizens, government, and civil society organizations (think Christian Sanitary Commission) to implement her vision.

Clara reached out to President Lincoln for support, which he provided in March of 1865, only days before an assassin's bullet ended his life. Clara opened the office in the third floor of

her boarding house on 7th Street in Washington, DC, hired some clerks to help and went to work.

To financially support her work, Clara delivered lectures across the North, telling her story and the stories of those incarcerated at Andersonville during the war. She sought \$15,000 from Congress to offset her significant operational costs, a request approved in 1866.

Clara Barton's passionate quest to find missing soldiers and provide closure to their families established her as one of the earliest advocates for the POW/MIA community. In contrast to today, where soldiers, sailors and marines not only have 'dog tags' but also samples of their DNA to aid in identifying them in the event of loss, there was no organized effort to provide identity markings for soldiers. A dead soldier was simply that. Before Clara there was no organized effort to provide word to the family of the loss of the loved one. Commanders tasked with many other duties had little time to write informative letters to family members.

The Missing Soldiers Office closed in 1868. It had been located in a private building and no one was looking for it. This changed in 1996, when Richard Lyons, an employee of the General Services Administration (GSA) and his partner were making a routine inspection of 437 7th Street, a rundown building slated for demolition.

In an exploration of the third floor of the building, Richard felt something (or someone) tap his shoulder. He turned and saw an envelope hanging out of the slates of the ceiling. The envelope

was addressed to Edward Shaw. It was clearly old. Lyons used a convenient ladder to access the building's attic.

He found a 'treasure trove' of artifacts, over 1,000 in all. Among them was a sign that identified the location of the Missing Soldiers Office. Lyons had discovered the rooms where Clara lived and worked during the Civil War. The rooms had gone unchanged for 100 years, since 1911 and the tragic Triangle Shirt Factory fire, when public outrage forced municipalities to start enacting fireproofing requirements for the multistory buildings in their jurisdictions.

After two decades of hard work and collaboration to save the building, it was turned into the Clara Barton Missing Soldiers Office Museum. The building is owned by GSA. The National Museum of Civil War Medicine manages the museum, which officially opened to the public in July of 2015.

The Missing Soldiers Office Museum is located at 437 7th Street NW, Washington, DC. Check its operating hours before you come. Its sister museum, the National Museum of Civil War Medicine is located at 48 East Patrick Street in Frederick, MD. Both are well worth a visit the next time you are in the area.

BUFORD'S VIEW

by Matt George

I just returned from the 159th Remembrance Day ceremonies in Gettysburg. Although snow prevented me from visiting the Central Pennsylvania Civil War Round Table meeting in State College, the ceremony



The Dispatch
Newspaper of the

**CAPITAL DISTRICT
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

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



Membership Form

2023 Calendar Year

Name: _____

Newsletter Preference: Email _____ OR Mailed Copy _____

_____ Email/Mailing address is the same as last year

If not: _____

Membership Dues

\$35

(All dues go into the Operating Account to pay for newsletters, program expenses, and use of the meeting space)

Additional Donation for the Operating Account

Donation for the Preservation Account

(Preservation money pays for donations to preserve historic sites/lands, rental of the storage shed, and the Round Table's insurance)

Total: _____

Please mail your payment to: **CDCWRT**
P.O. Box 11493
Loudonville, NY 12211-0493

- * Early payments will be held and deposited in January.
- * Credit/Debit card payments can be made through www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org

at the National Cemetery and the Lincoln Fellowship luncheon at the Wyndom Hotel were exceptional.

The cemetery that morning was cold, but the program was was superb. While this was the first time they did not feature a person portraying Lincoln reading the Gettysburg Address, the other speakers included Dr. Allen Guelzo, Jon Meacham and Harold Holzer. Their presentations were excellent with Guelzo receiving a standing ovation from the crowd. Of course, the swearing in of sixteen new citizens of the United States is a very popular finale to the event. To see the smiles on the faces on our newest citizens as they are pronounced citizens is always very moving. Later at the luncheon Harold Holzer and Jon Meacham held a conversation about his newest book "And There Was Light" Later I got to briefly talk with Meacham and he signed my book.

The next day I caught up with our previous speaker Brad Gottlieb (I missed his talk for the C.P.C.W.R.T. at State College). He said he would be happy to return speak to our Round Table sometime in 2023. His topic could be the Point Lookout prison camp. Also at the Gettysburg Heritage Center was Jeff Harding signing his book ("Gettysburg's Love Story"). I showed him the pictures I took at St. Agnes Cemetery and he asked if I would send him some copies. I said I would. Another first time author I met there was M. Chris Bryan. His first book is called "Cedar Mountain To Antietam- A Civil War Campaign History on the Union XII Corps, July-September 1862". He seemed to

be interested in being a speaker for us in 2023. I took his contact information.

While at the Luncheon I met Carolyn Ivanoff who will be giving a living history presentation of Clara Barton at our December 9 meeting. I made her hotel reservation yesterday. I also met and had a brief conversation with Wayne Motts.

We have one to two more openings for our potpourri meeting in January. Marty Caravan will talk briefly about his ancestor who was in the 5th U.S. Regulars and fought at Gettysburg. However, we need some more volunteers.

TRIVIA: Email your responses to: jbuford63@aol.com

1: Which Confederate General mortally wounded during Pickett's Charge, died at the Union XI Corps Field Hospital (Spangler Farm)?

2: At age 62, who was the oldest Union general at the Battle of Gettysburg?

3: Who converted her apartment in Washington, D.C. into the Office of Correspondence with the Friends of Missing Men of the United States Army (finding about 22,000 of of the over 62,000 missing soldiers)?

Note: the purpose of the Trivia is not just educational in nature, but, primarily to encourage support for the Round Table by attending meetings and even perhaps bringing new members.

**CDCWRT
P.O. BOX 11493
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.

Contact the Capital District Civil War Round Table through
our website: www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org
or email: cdcwrt@hotmail.com

THE OFFICERS

President	Erin Baillargeon	Vice-President	Mark Koziol
Treasurer	Steve Muller	Secretary	Rosemary Nichols
At-Large	Joyce Brooks	At-Large	(open)
At-Large	(open)		

THE NONCOMS

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Refreshments	Dean Long and Luanne Whitbeck		
Webmaster			
Education	Matt George		
Newsletter	Erin Baillargeon and Rosemary Nichols		