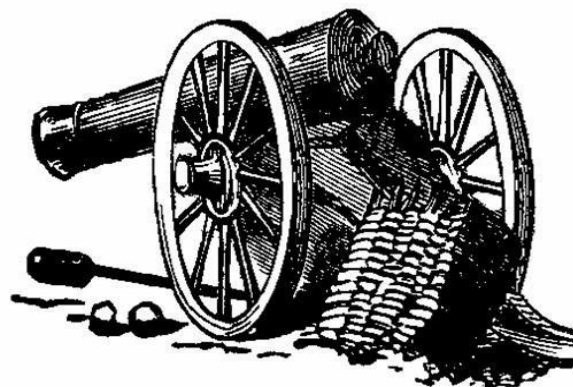


Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Inc. 501 (C) (3) non profit corporation
Founded 1978

The Grapeshot

March 2020



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This month's guest speaker:

Don't miss our exciting presentation by Eric Wittenberg "Holding the line On the River of Death: Union Calvary at Chickamauga.

Scottsdale Civic Library

Auditorium 6:00 p.m.

March 17 2020. Please join us for social hour and book sales at 4:30

About Our Speaker

This month Eric J. Wittenberg speaks on Holding The Line On the River of Death. While John Buford's cavalry action on the first day of Gettysburg is well known, a remarkable and comparable but little recognized Union cavalry stand on the first day of the Battle of Chickamauga will be Mr Whittenberg's topic.

Mr Wittenberg is an award-winning Civil War historian and a recognized expert on cavalry operations. Eric is the author of 22 critically acclaimed books on the American Civil War, and serves on the boards of trustees of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust and the Little Big Horn Associates, and often works with the American Battlefields Trust on battlefield preservation initiatives. He also recently became program coordinator for the well-known Chambersburg Civil War Seminars.

Eric is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and partner and litigation practice manager for Cook, Sladoje & Wittenberg in Columbus, Ohio where he resides.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library Auditorium on the third Tuesday of every month Sept. thru May. Each meeting includes these activities: 4:30 Social Hour and Book Sales, 5:00 Movie, 6:00 lecture



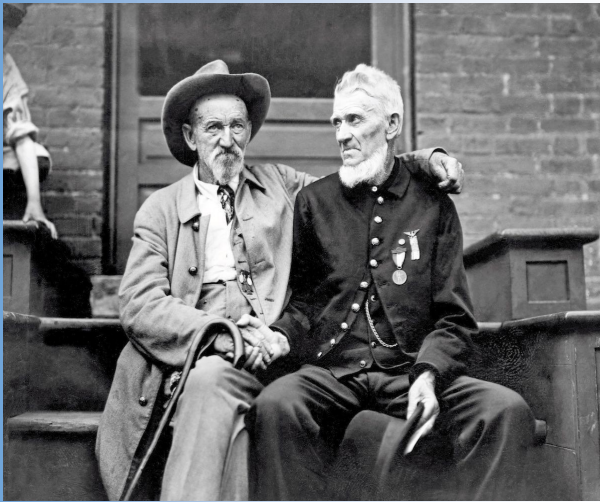
March 17 - Eric Wittenberg, “Holding The Line On the River of Death: Union Calvary at Chickamauga”

April 21 - Chris Mackowski, “The Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania”

May 19 - Lorien Foote, “Retaliation: Bushwackers, Guerrillas, & Prisoners”

History Discussion Groups

Didn't get enough Civil War at our speaker meetings? Here is the schedule for our History Discussion Group for this season. We encourage you to join us. Our meetings are casual and engaging with a lot of information. Not to mention it's a blast. The discussion group meets at the Loft Conservation Space at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library from 6 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.



2/27 Annual Trivia Contest

3/26 Open Discussion on the Battle of Chickamauga.
Facilitator: TBA

4/30 Open Discussion on the Battle of Spotsylvania.
Facilitator: TBA

5/28 Confederate Partisan Rangers. Facilitator: Dick Cox

***From Around the Campfire...A Message from Our
President John Bamberl***



Living Historian's Creed

We are people to whom the past is forever speaking. We listen to it because we cannot help ourselves, for the past speaks to us with many voices.

Far out of the dark nowhere which is the time before we were born, men who were flesh and bone of our bone went through fire and storm to break a path to the future.

We are part of that future they died for.

They are part of the past that brought the future.

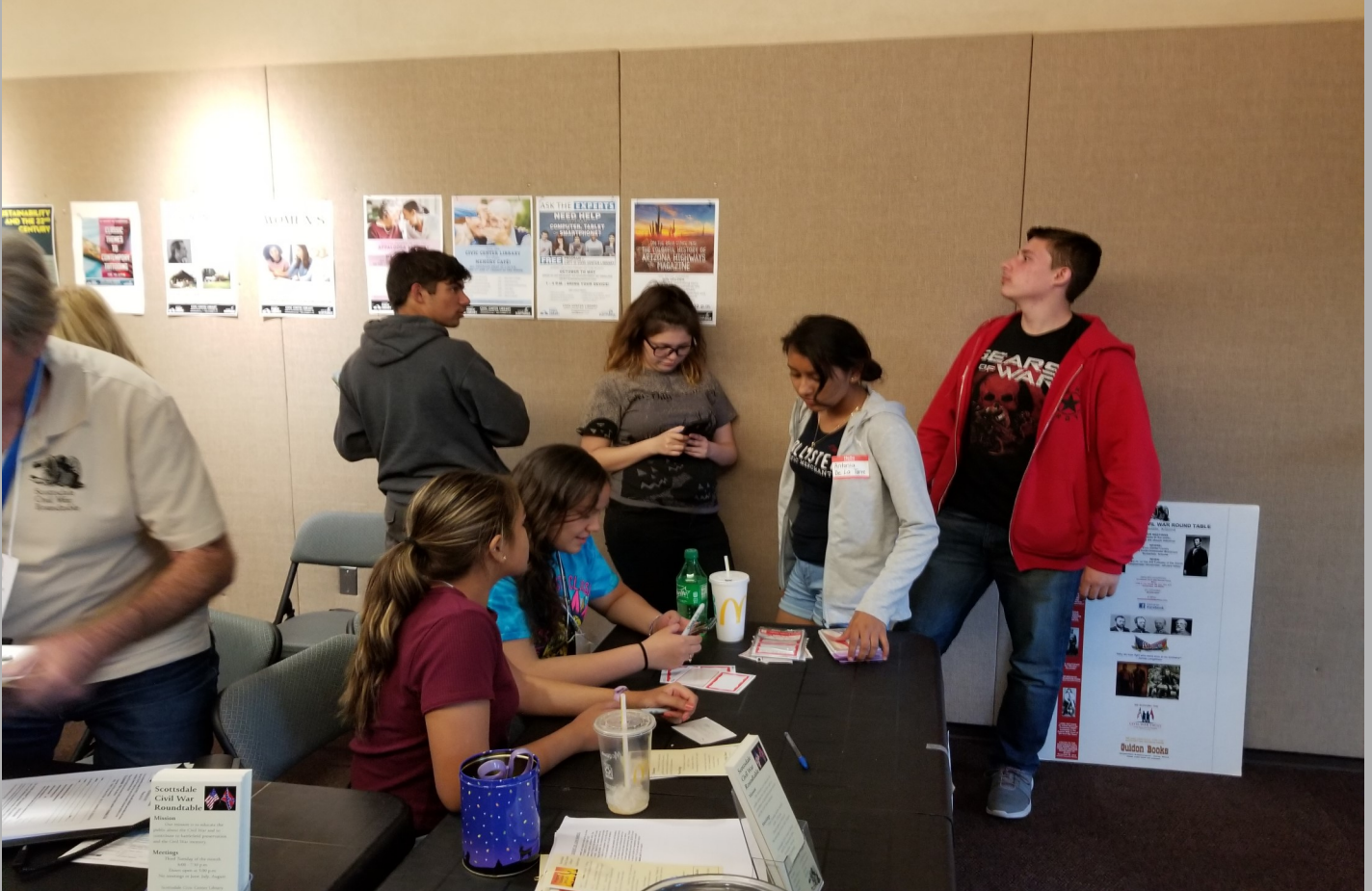
What they did, the lives they lived, the sacrifices they made, the stories they told and the songs they sang and finally, the deaths they died-make up a part of our own experience.

It is as real as something that happened last week. It is a basic part of our heritage as Americans. By: Bruce Catton.

Photos from our February meeting













Nightmare at Chickamauga

It was the early morning hours of September 19th 1863. Major General Thomas Crittenden and his XX1 Corps were just finishing their morning breakfast of bacon and coffee on the outskirts of Lee and Gordon's Mill. To the north came the sounds of cannon and musket fire. The roar increased and grew louder as the mid-morning turned to noon. Soon Crittenden received orders to move his Corps of three divisions on the double quick north up the Lafayette Road. First was MG John Palmer's division followed by BG Horatio Van Cleve's division and then BG Thomas Wood's division. Palmer's division took up position on the northeast corner of the Lafayette Road and the Brotherton Road. Van Cleve's division was on the southeast corner with Wood's division just south of Van Cleve.

In Van Cleve's division were three brigades. The first brigade was BG Samuel Beatty. The second was Colonel George Dick and the third was Colonel Sydney Barnes. Beatty's brigade was made up of the 79th Indiana, 9th Kentucky, 17th Kentucky and the 19th Ohio infantries. This brigade was positioned about 100 yards south of the Brotherton Road and about 200 yards east of the Lafayette Road. Out front was the 19th Ohio and 79th Indiana with the two Kentucky regiments behind them.

At 2PM, Beatty received orders to move out. This brigade started a push forward with their objective to neutralize an Alabama battery that was creating havoc along the lines. This movement was hindered by very dense trees and thick undergrowth. Opposing them was the Alabama brigade of BG Henry Clayton and three regiments, the 18th, 36th and 38th of MG Alexander Stewart's division.

After some fierce fighting and taking many casualties the brigade was able to overpower the battery and captured six cannons and driving off Clayton's brigade. This was a scene of horror. Most of the confederates that manned the guns were either killed or severely wounded.

Also lay dead were 30 horses. It would only get worse.

Upon the capture of the cannons, they proceeded to drag them back to the safety of their lines. Meanwhile, back on the hill west of the Lafayette Road and south of the Brotherton farm was the 10th Indiana Light Battery. This battery was unaware of the advanced position of Beatty's brigade and unleashed a barrage of shell shot. This salvo landed directly in the midst of the 19th Ohio. As they were scrambling to pull the cannons, many were killed or wounded. With the confusion of the exploding shells, blinded by both musket and cannon smoke and wounded men screaming, many became disoriented and separated, running in what they thought was the right direction. To make matters worse was the fact that even in September the foliage was tinder dry. With the exploding shells and musket fire, the trees and undergrowth became one huge bonfire. Those that could escape did, those wounded who could not burned to death, adding to the dismay and confusion while men screamed as they were consumed by the blaze.

Of those confused and disoriented were five men from the 19th Ohio, company I. Henry W Kitchens, Hiram Doll, Peter Fisher John Balmont and Elwood Robinson. These men thought they were heading west back to safety when they actually were going east. They ran into the arms of Confederate BG John C. Brown's brigade of Tennesseans.

They were rounded up and marched to Ringgold. There they were loaded into cattle cars along with hundreds of others and sent to Richmond ,Virginia arriving on September 25th. These men would spend a terrible winter at Belle Island POW camp ,digging a hole in the ground for shelter. On December 20th 1863 they were transferred to Danville, Virginia. They were incarcerated in Warehouse # 6. This was a miserable place. Each man had about 4 square feet per man to exist. No heat, no ventilation, rotten food that they shared with a rat infestation. (Some rats became a delicacy). On April 16th 1864 they were transferred to Andersonville via Savannah ,Georgia. At this time Andersonville had swelled to a population of 30,000 men within a 26 acre compound. On July 10th 1864 ,a day before the hanging of the Andersonville Raiders,(A gang of thieves and cutthroats preying on other inmates), Elwood Robinson was admitted into the prison hospital tent with severe scurvy and diarrhea. On August 24th 1864, John Balmont died of exposure along with 100 men that perished that single day.

After Elwood's release from the prison hospital, he and his comrades (Less John Balmont) were shipped to the POW prison Camp Lawton near Millen, Georgia. Six weeks later the camp was abandoned due to Sherman's advance during his March to the Sea. The men of the 19th, Ohio, were sent to Savannah, Georgia where on November 19th, 1864 were paroled. Elwood Robinson was boarded on the hospital ship "The Atlantic" and sailed to Division One Hospital in Annapolis, Maryland. He was 6 feet tall and weighed 98 pounds, A true emaciated skeleton.

Henry Kitchens, Hiram Doll, Peter Fisher and Elwood Robinson would return to Ohio and lead prominent roles in their communities. In all these men spent 14 months in captivity. All because they ran the wrong way.

Henry Kitchens wrote a memoir relating these experiences in 1887. He also wrote an affidavit in Elwood's pension records. His description in his memoir of those helpless men caught in the fire was most prominent, impacting and beyond his recollection of his captivity. He knew most of them and for years felt a sense of guilt that he could not save them.

Elwood Robinson was my 2nd great uncle, brother of my 2nd great grandfather, Isaac S. Robinson.

Brad Cox

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Meetings @

Scottsdale Civic Center Library (Auditorium)

3839 N Drinkwater Blvd

Scottsdale AZ

3rd Tuesday of the month

September thru May (except Nov. Dec. for holidays)

5:40 PM - 7:30 PM \$35 Annual Dues (individual)

\$45 Annual Dues (family)

EVERYONE WELCOME

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Please Join Us!

Your membership enables SCWRT to help with battlefield preservation and attract the best Civil War experts from around the country as keynote speakers at our meetings, September-thru-May!

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