

The Grapeshot

Newsletter

March 2023

This month's presenter:

ERIC WITTENBERG



**The Scottsdale Civil War
Roundtable welcomes**

ERIC WITTENBERG

as he presents:

***Union Cavalry Operations
at the
Battle of Chickamauga***

Scottsdale Civic
Center
Copper Auditorium
March 21, 2023,
5 pm
Also on Zoom

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Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Inc.

501 (c) (3) non profit Corporation , Founded 1978

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About Our Speaker

Eric Wittenberg



On March 21 the Scottsdale Civil War Round Table will host noted Civil War historian Eric Wittenberg. A prolific author, having written more than twenty books, Wittenberg will speak about Union cavalry operations at the Battle of Chickamauga. Wittenberg is the leading authority on Civil War cavalry operations. His lecture is based on his 2018 monograph *Holding the Line on the River of Death: Union Mounted Forces at Chickamauga, September 18, 1863*.

A native of Pennsylvania, Wittenberg earned his bachelor's degree at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He subsequently received a juris doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. In addition to practicing law in Columbus, Ohio and writing books and articles, Wittenberg leads battlefield tours and is the program chairman of the Chambersburg Civil War Seminars program.

Mr. Wittenberg's lecture will begin at 5PM in the Copper Auditorium located on the lower level of the Civic Center branch of the Scottsdale Public Library, 3839 N Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale. Doors open at 4PM. The public is welcome to attend the monthly meetings of the Scottsdale Civil War Round Table.

Topic: Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable,
February 21, 2023 Time: 05:00 PM Arizona

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85776666048?pwd=aG1VMqeAbFwnZDO7R84KQbUU8ZaC3Q.1>

Meeting ID: 857 7666 6048
Passcode: 374195

Scottsdale Civil War Round Table
Speakers & Programs
January 2023 - May 2023

- | | |
|----------|--|
| March 21 | Eric Wittenberg “Holding the Line on the River of Death: Union Cavalry at Chickamauga” |
| April 18 | Lesley Gordon “‘A Badge of Conspicuous Gallantry’: Allegations of Cowardice in a Civil War Regiment” |
| May 16 | Garry Adelman “Battlefield Preservation Extravaganza: People, Politics, Parcels, and Progress” |

All events at 5 PM in the Scottsdale Civic Center Library Auditorium and available simultaneously on Zoom.

If attending in person, you can come as early as 4 PM to meet our speaker, fellow members, and browse the book sale.

Letter from our President

Mark Stoler



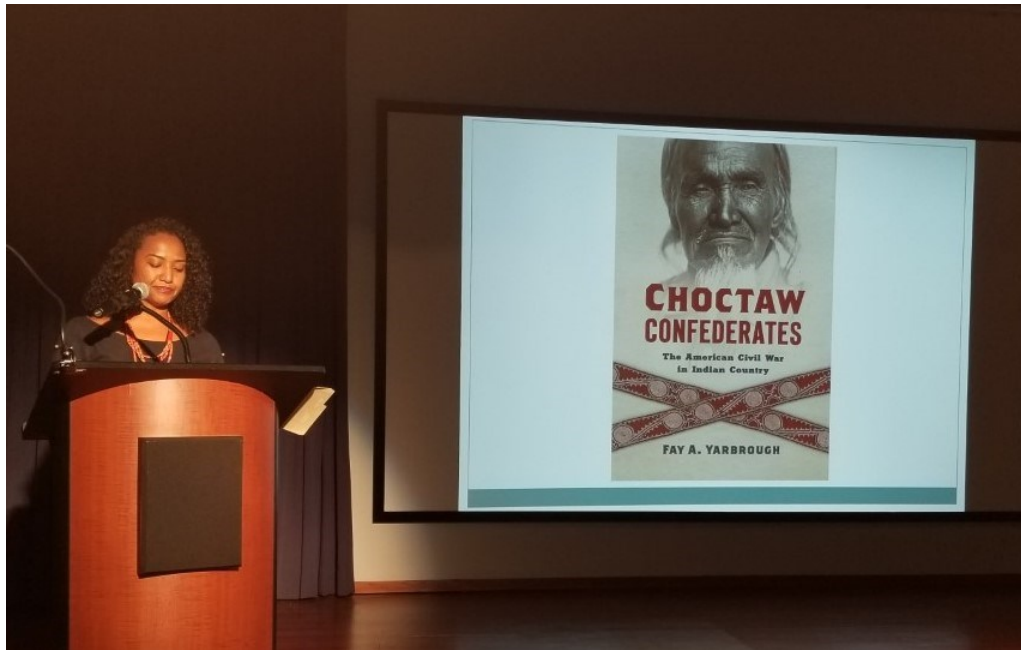
For those who may have missed the recent announcement, we have BIG NEWS! Starting in September 2023 the Roundtable speaker programs will begin an hour later - doors opening at 5 PM and speaker beginning at 6 PM. Since Covid changed the operating hours of the Scottsdale Library we've had to start earlier and gotten a lot of comments from members and prospective members about the inconvenience of the earlier starting time. We hope this makes it easier for everyone. Our thanks to the City of Scottsdale and the Library for accommodating us in making this change.

Our March 21 meeting, featuring Eric Wittenberg, is BRING A GUEST NIGHT. Any member can bring a guest, and guests can each select a free book from our book sale. We'll have a large selection to choose from.

March 31 is the deadline for purchasing the special discount tickets for the Ben Butler play at the Don Bluth Theater. The event, a matinee at 2PM on May 20, should be a lot of fun, and will provide attendees with an extra added attraction - a Q&A with the actors and director at the end of the play. You'll find details elsewhere in this Grapeshot.

Because of your support and contributions the Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable is one of the largest donors to Civil War preservation among all the Roundtables. You can find a listing of donations since 2015, which total \$30,500, and the battlefields and projects which have been recipients, along with the matching grants available in many instances, by going to the Roundtable website <https://www.scottsdalecwr.org/>, clicking on the Resources tab at top and then on the link to Preservation Donations. This is something we can all take pride in!

Prof. Fay Yarbrough discussing her book,
Choctaw Confederates: The American Civil War in Indian Country
at the February membership meeting.



Officers & Organization

Officers / Board Members

President: Mark Stoler (203-645-1387) (stolerscwrt@gmail.com)

President Emeritus: Dr John Bamberl (480-699-5844)

Vice President: Richard Cox

Secretary: Hal Bliss

Treasurer: Bruce Washburn

Board Members (thru 5/2023): John Bamberl, Shelly Dudley, Don Swanson, Cal Thompson

Board Members (thru 5/2024): Tom Merrill, Pat Toftoy, David Ward

Committees

Program: David Ward

Book Table: Cal Thompson

Grapeshot: Richard Cox

Greeters: John Bamberl

History: Richard Cox

News Media: Shelly Dudley

Membership: Mark Stoler

Social Media: John Bamberl

Student Outreach: Tom Merrill

Libraries Liaison: Pat Toftoy

Dues:

\$35 Individual; \$45 Family; \$500 Lifetime; Students & Active Military Service - Free

Website: www.scottsdalecwrt.org

Mailing Address:

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable
7359 N Via Paseo Del Sur, Ste 515-274
Scottsdale AZ 85258

THE HERO OF LITTLE ROUND TOP WHO BECAME PHIL SHERIDAN'S GOAT

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One of the pleasures of being both a Civil War and a movie buff is being able to cast a critical eye over films about the war. Watching and re-watching these movies from a cinematic standpoint sometimes uncovers interesting lapses in continuity, special effects and historical accuracy. One of my favorite examples comes from the film *Gettysburg*.

One of the reasons *Gettysburg* is so impactful is that many scenes were filmed at actual locations on the battlefield. But that led to many cinematic challenges since the battlefield is now filled with statues and monuments added many years later.

One failed attempt to cinematically return the battlefield to its original condition happens as the film depicts the start of the third day of battle. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain of the 20th Maine is talking to his younger brother Tom on the summit of Little Round Top. As the camera focuses in on the actors sitting on the bare rocks, one can clearly see the foot of a bronze statue. As the camera moves out, the profile of the entire statue can be seen, clumsily disguised with some out-of-place bushes.

What the film crew was trying to hide is the magnificent statue of Gouverneur Kemble Warren that dominates the summit of Little Round Top. Created by Karl Gerhardt and dedicated in 1888, it is a tribute to the man who arranged the last-minute defense of the hill on July 2, 1863, and consequently became known as the "Hero of Little Round Top." But his subsequent service as a corps commander as well as the remainder of his military career were ruined when Gen. Phillip Sheridan relieved him from command after the Battle of Five Forks on April 1, 1865.



Warren Statue on Little Round Top

Gouverneur Kemble Warren was born January 8, 1830, in Cold Spring, New York, a village almost directly across the Hudson River from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He was named after Gouverneur Kemble, a prominent local congressman, diplomat, industrialist and owner of the West Point Foundry, which produced artillery pieces for the U.S. government.

Warren entered West Point at age 16 and graduated second in his class of 44 cadets in 1850. Like most high-ranking West Point graduates, he was assigned to the Corps of Engineers. Before the war Warren worked on surveys and maps of the Trans-Mississippi West. He took part in studies of potential routes for a trans-continental railroad, taking him as far as latter-day Wyoming.

At the start of the war Warren was a first lieutenant and mathematics instructor at West Point. He helped raise a local regiment and was appointed lieutenant colonel of the 5th New York Infantry. Warren distinguished himself as an infantry commander at the Battle of Big Bethel, Virginia in 1861 and led a brigade during the Peninsula Campaign of 1862.

He was promoted to brigadier general in September 1862. When Hooker reorganized the Army of the Potomac in February 1863, he named Warren chief engineer of the Army of the Potomac. At the start of the Gettysburg Campaign, Warren advised Hooker on the routes the army should take in pursuit of Lee. When Hooker was replaced, Meade's inclination was to remove Hooker's chief of staff, Dan Butterfield, as well. Warren, who was close to Meade and a confidant, advised him not to make too many staff changes at the start of a new campaign. He said he would remain as chief engineer but would act as *de facto* chief of staff.

On July 2, Warren was with Meade during the commanding general's heated discussion with Dan Sickles about his moving his 3rd Corps forward without orders. In light of Sickles's ill-considered move, Warren was concerned about the state of the Union left flank. "I felt so worried at the outlook," Warren later wrote, "that I requested General Meade to let me go to Little Round Top. He directed me to do so." As historian Allen C. Guelzo writes, what made Warren's blood pool when he gained the peak of Little Round Top was the spectacle unfolding beyond the Emmitsburg Road. In Warren's words, "from the point [summit] I could see the enemy's lines of battle, fixed bayonets glinting in the sun. Four big Confederate brigades were coming out of the woods like a pack of ravenous wolves, then four more on their left flank, and then still more, on and on up the line, with enough weight to crash through Sickles's corps as though it was a dead hedge."

The signals attachment on Little Round Top had seen all this and had been trying in vain to awaken Sickles and Meade to the danger since first catching sight of Longstreet's column earlier in the day. They were packing up their equipment to get away from the threat when Warren ordered them to stay put and keep their flags wagging to demonstrate to the approaching Confederates that the hill was occupied.

Warren sent one of his aides to tell Sickles and Meade that it was essential that infantry be sent to defend the strategic position on Little Round Top. Sickles said he didn't have a regiment to spare, but he had been assured that Sykes's 5th Corps would be available to support the left flank. The aide then went looking for Sykes and found him riding ahead of his corps, which was just coming onto the

battlefield. Sykes ordered a brigade to occupy Little Round Top -- Strong Vincent's brigade – the 16th Michigan, 44th New York, 83rd Pennsylvania and 20th Maine.

The rest of the story is well known. But for Warren's timely presence on Little Round Top, ability to recognize the danger and his order to find some defenders, the Union left would have been in serious peril. His actions on that day won him the title "Hero of Little Round Top."

Warren was promoted to major general in August 1863 and led the 2nd Corps after Winfield Hancock was seriously wounded at Gettysburg. Upon Hancock's return from medical leave in 1864, Warren assumed command of the 5th Corps and led it through the Overland Campaign, the Siege of Petersburg and the Appomattox Campaign.



Major General Gouverneur K. Warren

During these campaigns Warren and his corps performed admirably, but within the high command he had developed a reputation for bringing his engineering traits of deliberation and caution to the role of infantry corps commander. In other words, like George McClellan before him, he was accused of having the “slows.”

One commander in particular had it in for Warren -- Grant's aggressive general Phil Sheridan. He was angry at Warren's corps for supposedly obstructing roads after the Battle of the Wilderness and its cautious actions during the siege of Petersburg. At the beginning of the Appomattox Campaign, Sheridan requested that the 6th Corps be assigned to his pursuit of Lee's army, but Grant insisted that Warren's 5th Corps was better positioned. Grant did, however, give Sheridan written permission to relieve Warren if he felt it was justified.

At the Battle of Five Forks Sheridan judged that the 5th Corps had moved too slowly into the attack and criticized Warren severely for not being in front of his columns. But Warren had been held up searching for one of divisions, which had gone astray in some woods. Overall, Warren had handled his corps efficiently and their attack at carried the day. Nevertheless, Sheridan relieved Warren of command on the spot. He was assigned to the defenses of Petersburg and then briefly to command of the Department of Mississippi.

Warren was humiliated and resigned his commission as major general of volunteers, reverting to his permanent rank as major in the Corps of Engineers. He served in the army as an engineer for 17 more years. He vehemently asked for a court of inquiry to exonerate him from the stigma of Sheridan's action. Numerous requests were ignored or refused while Grant was president. President Rutherford B. Hayes ordered a court of inquiry that convened in 1879 that found that Sheridan's relief of Warren had been unjustified. On November 21, 1881, President Chester A. Arthur directed that the court of inquiry's findings be published.

Unfortunately for Warren, the findings weren't published until after his death on August 8, 1882.

Dick Cox is SCWRT vice president and chairman of the History Committee.

THIS MONTH IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY

March 7-8, 1862. In the Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas (aka Elkhorn Tavern), the Federal Army of the Southwest, under the command of Brigadier General Samuel R. Curtis, defeats the combined Confederate Army of the West commanded by Major General Earl Van Dorn. This victory is a key factor in deciding whether Missouri will remain in the Union or join the Confederacy.



Artist's Rendering of the Battle of Pea Ridge

March 2023 Trivia Questions

1. Name the veteran Union general who, just before he was shot and killed by a Confederate sharpshooter, said, "They couldn't hit an elephant at this distance."
2. What was the "Dictator"?
3. President Lincoln's second vice president is better known than his first. Who was Lincoln's vice president during his first term?
4. Not as famous as the Petersburg mine and crater were at least three other Federal attempts to breach Confederate lines with tunnels and explosives. Name one.

Answers on final page

SHARP. WITTY. CAPTIVATING.



SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2023 AT 2 PM

by Richard Strand

Directed by Lee Cooley

When an escaped slave shows up at Fort Monroe demanding sanctuary, Union General Benjamin Butler faces an impossible moral and legal dilemma that could alter the course of the Civil War and U.S. history. Sharply comic, a battle of wit and word play. Completely captivating!

DON BLUTH
Front Row
THEATRE.

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8989 E VIA LINDA | SCOTTSDALE AZ 85258

JOIN FELLOW ROUNDTABLE MEMBERS FOR A UNIQUE THEATER EXPERIENCE!

Someone wrote a play about General Benjamin Butler? A play described as sharp and witty? A play performed by theater groups across America to glowing reviews? Surely, you must be joking! But it's true, and Scottsdale Roundtable members have a unique chance to experience it themselves.

In May and June of 2023, the Don Bluth *Front Row* Theatre in Scottsdale will present *Ben Butler*. We have arranged with the Theatre for the matinee show on Saturday, May 20 to be available exclusively to the Roundtable and tickets, normally \$30, will be discounted to \$25. In addition, at the end of the performance, cast members and the directors will come back out to answer questions and engage with us, something only being done for our group.

The play is about the incident early in the war, when escaped slaves entered the Union lines at Fort Monroe, presenting General Butler and the Federal government with the question of what to do?

To buy tickets, follow the directions below and click on this link: https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?perf_special=618466, which will take you directly to the theatre's website and this specific performance. You should also have recently received an email from us with the same information.

SCOTTSDALE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

**Private Group Performance
& Post-Show Talkback with Company**

**SATURDAY, MAY 20 at 2 PM
Group Discount Tickets \$25**

1. **Go to special private ticketing page**
2. **Select Adult Ticket Type & Choose
Seats - Continue to Cart Check Out**
3. **At Cart Sign Up for an Account**
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BUY NOW

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After you select seats you will need to set up an account and password.
The discount code is only entered in the last step, so you will see the \$30 charge until then.

It's called the Front Row Theatre because it only has 74 seats, so get your tickets soon.

Look forward to seeing you there.

HISTORY DISCUSSION GROUP MEETINGS

Please join us for a relaxed and informal conversation at the Roundtable's History Discussion Group meetings. All are welcome, including non-members. Our discussions tend to center around a topic the previous week's speaker has presented. These are participant-led discussions, not lectures, facilitated by a Roundtable member. You can add your comments, thoughts, questions or just listen. It's always fun and interesting and sometimes goes off in unexpected directions.

Location:

Scottsdale Civic Center Library

SHC Program Room (on the right side of the Scottsdale Heritage Connection (SHC) Room on the main floor of the library. Just ask at the front desk if you have trouble finding the Program Room.

Discussion group meetings begin at 5:00 pm.

Here is the schedule for the remainder of the year with this season's topics:

March 28: General Discussion on the Battle of Chickamauga

April 25: How did the Union and the Confederate Armies Deal with Desertion, Bounty-Jumping and other disciplinary infractions?

No meeting in May

Hope to see you there!

Scottsdale Civil War Round Table Membership Form

Please Join Us!

Your membership enables the SCWRT to donate towards civil war preservation projects and attract the best Civil War experts from around the country to speak at our meetings, from September to May! Please fill out this form and return it with your check payable to Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Mailing address:

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

7349 N. Via Paseo Del Sur, Ste 515-274

Scottsdale, AZ 85258

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Student Membership (no charge)

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Lifetime (\$500) \$ _____

Individual Annual (\$35) \$ _____

Family Annual (\$45) \$ _____

Additional donation \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable is an Arizona non-profit corporation and a U.S. 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Website: www.scottsdalecwrt.org

All members receive our monthly publication, The Grapeshot, from Sept-May

Follow us on Facebook at Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

Other Opportunities via Zoom

A series of free lectures on **Wednesdays hosted by the Civil War Round Table Congress (CWRTC)**. Check out their website for topics and to register.

<https://www.cwrtcongress.org/speaker.html>

CWRT Congress Fridays With U.S. Grant for a special series with Dr. Curt Fields. To register (free)

<https://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant.html>

YouTube Channel for CWRT Congress includes 40+ recorded past talks: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=cwrt+congress

From Chambersburg Civil War Seminars and Tours

Zoom presentations 15th and 30th of every month. Nationally known speakers. \$5 per registration

For schedule and registration

<https://www.civilwarseminars.org/lectures>

March 2023 Trivia Questions

1. Major General John Sedgwick
2. A 17,000-pound, 13-inch seacoast mortar used by Federal forces during the siege of Petersburg. It was also called the “Petersburg Express.”
3. Hannibal Hamlin of Maine
4. Two were at Vicksburg; one exploded June 25, 1863, the other July 1. Another was at Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia, near Cheatham Hill