



# ★ *The Border Star* ★

Official Publication of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri  
"Studying the Border War and Beyond"

January – February 2021

## The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri

### 2021 Officers

President ----- Mike Calvert  
1<sup>st</sup> V.P. ----- Pat Gradwohl  
2<sup>nd</sup> V.P. ----- Terry Chronister  
Secretary ----- Karen Wells  
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Historian ----- Joyce Gillespie

### Board Members

Michael Clay      Joyce Gillespie  
Denise Irminger      Bill Irminger  
John Moloski      Barb Wormington  
Denis Wormington

### Border Star Editor

Dennis Myers

### Meetings

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 7:00 pm  
Via Zoom until further notice  
See instructions in this newsletter

### Visitors Always Welcome!

### Annual Dues

Individual ----- 25.00  
Family ----- 35.00  
Student (under 21) ----- 5.00  
Newsletter Only (no meetings) 10.00

### For Information

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### Mailing Address

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### Website

www.CWRTWM.org

### Facebook

www.facebook.com/CWRTWM

## *President's Letter*

Message to the Army of the Potomac  
Executive Mansion, Washington, December 22, 1862

*To the Army of the Potomac: I have just read your Commanding General's preliminary report of the battle of Fredericksburg. Although you were not successful, the attempt was not an error, nor the failure other than an accident. The courage with which you, in an open field, maintained the contest against an entrenched foe, and the consummate skill and success with which you crossed and re-crossed the river, in face of the enemy, show that you possess all the qualities of a great army, which will yet give victory to the cause of the country and of popular government. Condoling with the mourners for the dead, and sympathizing with the severely wounded, I congratulate you that the number of both is comparatively so small.*

*I tender to you, officers and soldiers, the thanks of the nation.*

The letter above was written by Abraham Lincoln to the Army of the Potomac "congratulating" them on their effort at the battle of Fredericksburg. Five days of fighting in December of 1862 left 12,653 Federal and 5,377 Confederate casualties on the field. This was not the Federal Army's most shining hour. Lincoln was trying to his best to encourage a very discouraged army and nation.

I have been trying to write this president's letter for some days now. I have wanted to be very upbeat and to encourage everyone to look forward to a new year. I was going through the usual things, you know, planning for the future, looking forward to meeting in person again and just looking ahead to better days. I found this to be very difficult. The times we live in make it very hard for me to remain upbeat. Not that I'm depressed. It just takes more effort to maintain a favorable outlook. That's enough of that. I do look forward to the New Year. We have so much good news on the horizon, it is not difficult to begin to hope for a better year ahead. I look forward to seeing you all in full size and in three dimensions. Until that time, please take care of yourself and those around you. Here's to the future. Let's use Lincoln's letter as the example to give and take encouragement from each other no matter how dark the past has been.

P.S. When Lincoln first read the telegraph reports of the Battle of Fredericksburg, his first words were: "If there is a worse place than hell, I am in it."

**Mike Calvert, President**  
**Civil War Roundtable of Western Missouri**

## CWRTWM Calendar

### January 2021 Virtual Membership Meeting

Wednesday, January 13, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Zoom meeting. Grady Atwater: “John Brown’s Image in the Media vs. Historical Reality.” Our Zoom Meeting is now by pre-registration which we will be sending next week. If you do not normally receive your *Border Star* by Email, please give Beverly Shaw a call at (816) 225-7944 so that she can send you a link. Zoom programs can be accessed by computer or smartphones, but we need to send a pre-registration invitation so that you can click the link. It will then bring up a page where you can identify yourself by name and device. Then you will receive a new Email with a code for yourself to enter the meeting. You will need to save this Email until after the meeting. You will not be able to share this link with anyone else. Each person will need his own link. This extra layer of security is used to prevent unwanted hacking. To prepare for this program, you may want to watch the Showtime program called “The Good Lord Bird” which is a dramatization of John Brown’s Raid on Harper’s Ferry starring Ethan Hawke. If you do not take the Showtime channel which first screened this show in October, you can take advantage of a limited time complimentary subscription through January 11, 2021. This will make you eligible to view prior programs on your computer. Then you can cancel the channel before your 30 days are up.

### February 2021 Virtual Membership Meeting

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Zoom Meeting. Diane Rogers: “Lou from Missouri City.” A pre-registration Email will be sent around the first of February and you will need to follow the same steps as listed above to receive your own link to the meeting.

## Other History Events

### Missouri Compromise and the Struggle for Statehood

Tuesday, January 5, 2021 – 11:00 a.m. Zoom Meeting. The State Historical Society of Missouri presents a series based on the bicentennial of the State of Missouri: “The Missouri Compromise and the Struggle for Statehood.” Presented in conjunction with the Missouri Humanities Council and the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy: Jeffrey L. Pasley, professor and director of the Kinder Institute and Steve Belko and Claire Bruntrager of the Missouri Humanities Council. This program draws on the controversy of accepting Missouri as the 24th State and how it ultimately leads to the Civil War.

The program is free but you must pre-register by going to [www.Shsmo.org/events/2020/mo2021-presents-jan](http://www.Shsmo.org/events/2020/mo2021-presents-jan) and click on the Link that says “Register.”

“The Liberty Arsenal: An Ordnance Depot on the Missouri Frontier.” The Clay County Historical Society presents a Webinar on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Chris Harris will be giving an extensive Timeline of the Liberty Arsenal from his new book. You will need to RSVP by going to the following link and then follow the instructions;  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_-D0U05bjQVeT022FUxoJWg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-D0U05bjQVeT022FUxoJWg).

### Mid-Missouri Civil War Round Table, Columbia, MO

Virtual meeting on Monday, January 18, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Andy Papan: “The Western Flotilla in the Henry-Donelson Campaign.” Zoom invitation will be sent later. If you do not normally receive the *Border Star* by Email, please call Beverly Shaw at (816) 225-7944 to give her your Email address for sending the invitation.

Independence Civil War Study Group, Wednesday, January 20, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Perkins Restaurant, 3939 S. Bolger Drive, Independence, MO (across from Walmart on 39th Street). Jim Beckner: “Place Names of Missouri’s Cities.” Masks required.

Kansas City Round Table Program. The January 26, 2021 meeting has been cancelled because of COVID.

### Mid-Missouri Civil War Round Table, Columbia, MO

Virtual meeting on Monday, February 15, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. James Cummings: “Urology and the Civil War.” Invitation will be sent by Email around the first of February. If you don’t normally receive your *Border Star* by Email, call Beverly Shaw at (816) 225-7944 to request an Email invitation.

The 23rd Annual Lincoln Event – St. Mary, Leavenworth, KS. Virtual event. Monday, February 15, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Dr. David Trowbridge will discuss how America’s monumental landscape became contested territory in the early 20th century and provide examples where the battle over public spaces and historical memory have continued into the 21st century. Free but you must RSVP at; [www.stmary.edu/SIDHelp/form/82](http://www.stmary.edu/SIDHelp/form/82).

### Independence Civil War Study Group

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Perkins Restaurant, 3939 S. Bolger Drive, Independence, MO (across from Walmart on 39th Street). Toby Giese: “Apache Kid.”

### Randall Jessee, Newsman and Diplomat

Webinar presented by the Clay County Historical Society on Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Randall Boone Jessee and Jana Jessee Becker: “Randall Jessee, Newsman and Diplomat”. Free but you must

RSVP by going to; [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/-register/WN\\_9ehVV6jxTHiDwC1UPPkIA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/-register/WN_9ehVV6jxTHiDwC1UPPkIA)

#### Kansas City Round Table Membership Meeting

Tuesday, February 23, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Milburn Country Club, 7501 W. 69 Street, Overland Park, KS. No meal; lecture style seating socially distanced with a limit of 50 people; masks required. Subject to cancellation. James S. Marin: “Black Military Heroes of the Civil War.” RSVP to Susan Keipp at (816) 333-0025 by February 17, 2021.

### **Ongoing History Events**

#### Clay County Museum

14 N. Main Street, Liberty, MO. Closed during the month of January 2021. Starting in February 2021, the hours are 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. Free admission for the present but donations are welcome. For information, please call (816) 792-1849. Masks are required.

#### Lone Jack Battlefield Museum

301 S. Bynum Road, Lone Jack, MO (12 miles east of Lee’s Summit, MO on US 50 Highway). Hours through February 2021 are Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.. Adults: \$5.00. Children ages 12-6: \$2.00. Children under 6: Free.

#### Missouri Town 1855

Located at 8010 E. Park Road, Lee’s Summit, MO. (Near Lake Jacomo). Drive thru Tuesdays. Self-guided tours. Drive your personal vehicle down the main road into Missouri Town to explore the village and visit with living history interpreters. All tours begin at the Visitor Center where admission is purchased. Adults: \$7. Seniors 62 and over and children 5-13: \$4. Children below 5: Free.

Dates in January are 5, 12, 19 & 26, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm.  
Dates in February are 2, 9, 16 & 23, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm.

### **Report from the Board**

Your Board of Directors continues to plan for meetings (virtual for right now) in 2021. Pat Gradwohl has scheduled speakers through June and has the following interesting topics: January: Grady Atwater-“John Brown’s Image in the Media vs. Historical Reality.” February: Diane Rogers-“Lou from Missouri City.” March: Mike Calvert-“Witness Houses.” April: Peggy Buhr – “The Burnt District.” May: Ted Stillwell – “American Indians during the Civil War.” June: Sarah Poff – “The Santa Fe Trail.”

The Board will delay a Planning Meeting until about March 2021 to see about in person meetings; otherwise we will continue with our Zoom presentations.

We want to thank a couple of members who are rotating off the Board. Charles Bianco has done a wonderful job of maintaining our History through scrapbooks and will be passing this job to Joyce Gillespie, but he will continue his membership. Steve Hatcher will no longer be a Board member but will continue to host our Zoom meetings and update our website. It is through his efforts that we have been able to continue presenting programs.

Our finances are stable and we invite you to renew your membership for 2021. You can send a check to “CWRTWM, P. O. Box 3019, Independence, MO 64055.” Single membership is \$25 and family is \$35. If you want just the *Border Star* newsletter, a subscription is \$10.

### **News About Members and Friends**

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of **Jay Jackson** of Missouri City who passed away on October 25, 2020. Jay was an outstanding Civil War historian of Clay County and shared his knowledge with our Round Table many times.

**Lynn Wolf Gentzler** passed away on July 9, 2020. She spent her entire professional career at the University of Missouri’s Ellis Library, first with the Western Historical Manuscript Collection and then the State Historical Society of Missouri. You may have seen her name as the Editor of the *Missouri Historical Review*.

Not a person but a building will be missed in western Independence, Missouri. **The Thomson House** and former restaurant on U.S. 40 Highway had a fire on November 6, 2020. This was an historical brick House built before the Civil War by slave labor. One of the amazing things about the house was that it was turned around to face U.S. 40 Highway in the 1930’s. It has been one of the finest Greek Revival mansions in Jackson County.

“Ripley’s Believe it or not” says that the only army survivor of the Battle of Little Bighorn (Custer’s Last Stand) in 1876 was a horse named **Comanche** ridden by cavalry captain Miles Keosh. Comanche’s taxidermed body is now on display at the University of Kansas (unless someone knows differently). Jeff Fox of the *Examiner* thinks that secretly we like being a nation in pajamas. If this is so, you might want to use some of your time to search online archives.

One of the biggest is based on the collections of the **Library of Congress** to learn about American history and culture. Go to [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org).

Another extensive archive about Black history and stories is [www.enslaved.org](http://www.enslaved.org). Beverly clicked on “stories” to find extensive names but none she recognized until she got to “**Phillis Wheatley**.” She was born in Senegal/Gambia around 1753 and was brought on a slave ship to Boston where she was purchased by John Wheatley. She learned to read and write and was the first Black woman to publish a book. There is an elementary school at 2415 Agnes Ave. in Kansas City which is named for her. Her first name is from the slave ship that brought her on the Middle Passage.

There are a couple of new books you may be interested in. One is called *Shades of Gray* by **Neil Block**. It is composed of short biographies of many of the confederate Veterans of Randolph County, Missouri. It is \$25 including shipping. You can reach him at [rcrebel@cvalley.net](mailto:rcrebel@cvalley.net) or call him at (660) 651-6828.

Another new book is *Women Making War: Female Confederate Prisoners and Union Military Justice* by **Thomas F. Curran**. It deals with the critical area of St. Louis, MO. It was published by Southern Illinois University for \$26.50, telephone 1-800-621-2736.

Speaking of books, **Jo Anna Dale** was kind enough to donate books to the Round Table. Jim Beckner picked them up, Mike Calvert made a list with suggested prices, Beverly Shaw made them available for pickup or by mail, and Paul Bond bought the remainder. We thank our members for the brisk sales.

**Paul Bond** returned the favor by offering some of his library to members free of charge but donations to the Round Table encouraged.

The Emmy awards for 2020 had a nod to the legacy of **Andrew Drumm** who established the Drumm Farm for Children in Independence over 100 years ago. A documentary called “The Andrew Drumm Legacy: A Cattleman’s Promise to Children” was nominated for a regional Emmy. It was written, produced, and edited by Chad Godfrey of Lee’s Summit, MO. Some of you may remember that our late member, Art Kelley, grew up on the Drumm Farm and later returned as a staff member.

In the State of Missouri, we have had several decisions about monuments recently. In Jackson County, Missouri where Kansas City and Independence are located, the

voters opted to keep the statues of **Andrew Jackson** located in front of the court houses, but explanatory plaques will be added.

In Jefferson City, MO a controversial Civil War marker dedicated to **Confederate Gen. Sterling Price** was removed and returned to the Missouri division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. It was originally donated by the Winnie Davis Chapter which had ties to the Ku Klux Klan. It is to be placed at the Missouri Civil War Museum at Jefferson Barracks Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri.

**Richard Stewart** is continuing his research and writing about men who served with William Clarke Quantrill, but he will no longer be using Facebook. He has donated his archival materials to the Bates County Historical Society at Butler, Missouri which will have the materials available about April 1, 2021.

Our member from Platte County, **Dr. Judy Tharp**, has a new adventure in Farley, Missouri where she presently resides. She has bought the Farley School building built in 1939 which she is converting into living quarters for herself and not sure what will happen to the remainder. It has a small auditorium with a raised stage and curtains that still work.

**Dick Titterington, Dan Smith, and John Twite** of the Kansas City Round Table recently installed three new markers at Byram’s Ford which marks the Battle of the Big Blue or Day Two of the Battle of Westport. Visit [www.transmississippimusings.com/pages/historical-markers/byrams-ford-markers.php](http://www.transmississippimusings.com/pages/historical-markers/byrams-ford-markers.php). They would like to add more markers across the battlefield and update the Battle of Westport Driving Tour. If you are interested in helping with this project, you can Email Dick at [myrtlewarbler@gmail.com](mailto:myrtlewarbler@gmail.com).

While researching the Thomson House on 40 Highway to give to the *Examiner* at the time of the fire, Beverly Shaw found that the best resource was the late **Kathleen Tuohey**’s book *The Devil’s Backbone* which is out of print. Luckily David Jackson, former archivist with the Jackson County Historical Society and a good friend of Kathleen’s, has permission to sell reprints for \$10 plus \$3 for shipping and handling. You can send a check to “David Jackson, 192 NW Shamrock Place, Lee’s Summit, MO 64081. In case you are wondering, “The Devil’s Backbone” is Blue Ridge Boulevard.

