

# Cannon Valley Civil War Roundtable

Volume 15 – Issue 2

October 2019

**Debra Gnemi.**

**Will be our Speaker on October 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Her presentation will be:**

**“Ford Theater Actors and Theater Stage Crew at Ford's Theater the Night of Lincoln's Assassination and Their Lives Afterward”**



Abraham Lincoln and his wife, Mary, had a love of the theater and attended productions when time permitted during his Presidency in the White House during the Civil War.

It is eerily ironic that the theater should mark the place of his assassination. Ford's Theater was the scene of the most infamous crime in American history, and was crammed, as usual, with actors, stagehands, doorkeepers, prompters, musicians, costumers, callboys—the whole multilayered crew necessary to put on a play on this 19<sup>th</sup> century stage, the evening of April 14, 1865.

Debra Gnemi, a member of the Cannon Valley Civil War Roundtable, has been a student of the Civil War from the early age of 10 when she read for the first time Margaret Mitchell's GONE WITH THE WIND. Primarily interested in the effect of the war on the home front, she will speak regarding how the lives of the onstage and offstage crew (many of whom were Confederate sympathizers) were forever altered, and in some cases, destroyed as they became eyewitnesses when the President was shot by John Wilkes Booth ( a well-known stage actor with Secessionist leanings) and then leaped to the stage.

This true-life thriller presentation will occur on Thursday, October 17, 2019 at 7 p.m. at the Northfield Senior Center, 1651 Jefferson Parkway, Northfield, MN

## *Cannon Valley Civil War Roundtable Schedule September 2019-August 2020*

**October 17, 2019 7-8:30 pm**

*Deb Gnemi*

*"Ford's Theater Employees & Actors After the Assassination"*

**November 21, 2019 7-8:30 pm**

*Rick Gnemi*

*"Civil War Weapons"*

**December 19, 2019 - No Meeting**

*Members Christmas PotLuck  
(more details to come)*

**January 16, 2020 7-8:30pm**

*Carol Vanorum*

*"Sherman, the Chattahoochee River, and the King Family"*

**February 20, 2020 7-8:30pm**

*John Cain*

*"Twenty + Confederate Flags"*

**March 19, 2020 7-8:30pm**

*No Speaker as of this printing*

**April 16, 2020 7-8:30pm**

*No Speaker as of this printing*

**May 21, 2020 - No Meeting**

*Members Picnic*

**June - August 2020 - No Meetings**

*Summer Break*

*Just a reminder,  
Membership dues for renewal or new members  
will be accepted at the meeting*

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

On October 10, 1877, the U.S. Army held a West Point funeral with full military honors for Lieutenant-Colonel George Armstrong Custer. Killed the previous year in Montana by Sioux and Cheyenne Indians at the Battle of the Little Big Horn, Custer's body had been returned to the East for burial on the grounds of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, where Custer had graduated in 1861 -at the bottom of his class.

Even before the Battle of the Little Big Horn, Custer had won national fame as a bold-and some said foolhardy -Civil War commander who eventually became the youngest major general in the U.S. Army. A handsome man, famous for his long blond hair (though he cut it short while in the field), Custer, even after the Civil War, continued to attract the appreciative attention of newspapers and the nation as a lieutenant colonel in the 7th Cavalry, a unit recently created to fight in the western Indian wars. Reports that Custer treated deserters of the 7th with unnecessary cruelty and overworked his soldiers led to a court-martial and conviction in 1867. But Custer redeemed himself, at least in the eyes of some, with his subsequent attack on a winter camp of Cheyenne on the Washita River. Others, though, faulted Custer for attacking a peaceful band of Cheyenne and leaving behind some of his men when he withdrew from the battle under cover of night.

Custer's status as a national hero and martyr only began to be seriously questioned in the 1960s, and since then he has often been portrayed as a vain and glory-seeking man whose own ineptitude was all the explanation needed for the massacre at Little Big Horn. The truth about George Custer is probably somewhere in between these two extremes.

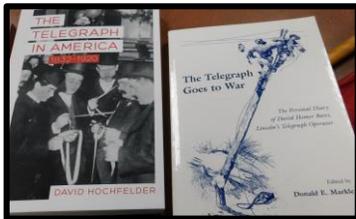
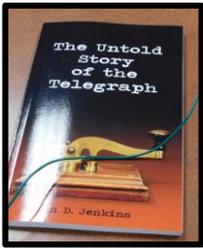
Author  
[History.com Editors](http://www.history.com)



Dan Peterson,  
our Pres  
had a birthday  
October 9th (1945)



Dan Roberts, our presenter last month, receiving the CVCWRT Cup. He gave a lot of interesting facts about telegraphs during the Civil War. Very good. Enjoyed it!  
Thank You, Dan Roberts



### Civil War Trivia

1. Who was William Jones (Freed in 1859)?
2. What WAS Point Lookout? (50,000 held there)
3. Who shot John Wilkes Booth?

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Answers for September's questions;

1. General Albert S. Johnston
2. Bernard Bee
3. Robert E. Lee
4. Stonewall Jackson

Questions from CIVIL WAR TRIVIA & FACT BOOK  
By Webb Garrison, 1992

#### The Cannon Valley Civil War Round Table

is a small group who likes to share interesting information about all things Civil War.

We have a monthly meeting on the Third Thursday of each month, May-August, December – No Meetings  
We have a speaker at monthly meetings.

#### Membership Dues

**Individual - \$25    Family - \$30    Students - \$10**  
Membership year is September – August

We meet 7 pm at North Forty Senior Center – Northfield, MN

#### Officers

**President** – Dan Peterson  
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