

MEMBER RENEWAL

The MRRT celebrates its 65th year in 2025 – and now is a wonderful time to show your support by renewing your membership! (Or become a new member!). Membership is \$25 a year – or \$5 for students. Checks should be made out to Treasurer Jeanie Graham (the bank does not like checks made out to the RoundTable) and can be mailed to her home at 29835 Northbrook, Farmington Hills, MI 48334-2326. Cash is always welcome at our meetings.

Our November meeting will be on Monday, November 25, 2024, at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library – corner of Grand River and Farmington Road. Our guest speaker, President Abraham Lincoln, will begin around 7:00 pm after our 6:30 pm business meeting. We must leave the library by 8:45 pm.

The Roundtable has a great website, created by our friend, Gerald Furi. We are no longer connected to the Farmington Library. The website is: <https://www.mrrt.us> Please note that the s after http is necessary to get on the website. The website is well worth visiting.

The Roundtable is proud to welcome as our November 2024 speaker, President Abraham Lincoln (Ron Carley), who will share with us story(s) of one of our greatest Presidents! Ron has portrayed our 16th President for several years in different years. He will once again educate and entertain us!

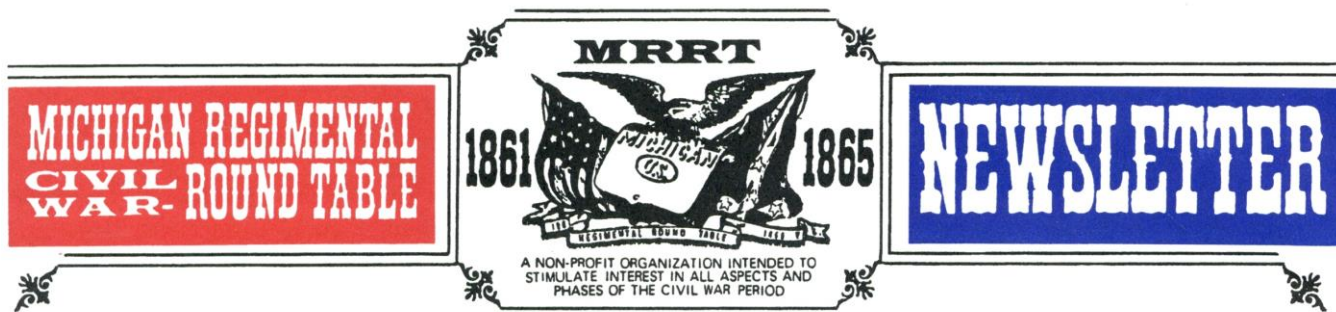
September 2024 – The 4th Michigan Infantry in the Civil War by Kim Crawford

The Michigan Regimental Round Table appreciated Kim Crawford's presentation of the 4th Michigan Infantry in the Civil War. His presentation was taken from the book that he co-authored with Martin Bertera. **Kim utilized the sketches produced by Lt. Carl Gruner**, an Austrian-born officer in the fourth, to illustrate many of the notable episodes experienced by the regiment. Kim emphasized that, unlike the illustrations appearing in newspapers during the war, Gruner's sketches were authentic and not embellished for dramatic effect.

From the beginning, the formation and leadership of Civil War units, including the Fourth, was influenced by politics. **Dwight Woodbury**, a militia officer and Democrat, had been eager to form a regiment to help restore the broken union, but was initially rebuffed by newly elected Governor Austin Blair who was an abolitionist Republican. The pressing need for troops changed Blair's mind and **the regiment was mustered in in May 1861 with Woodbury as commander.** The regiment was given a form of Zouave uniform early in the war. (picture left – men of the Fourth).



Although the Fourth did not see front-line action at 1st Bull Run, one officer, **Capt. Samuel DeGolyer**, advanced to the battleline and was captured during the Union route. He became famous for his daring **escape from Libby Prison** in Richmond and later in the war, as an artillery officer at Vicksburg. During his time in Richmond, Degolyer became a convinced abolitionist. The fourth time was spent in the summer of 1861 at Fort Woodbury on Arlington Heights near Washington. Another of Gruner's drawings showed men of the regiment **digging entrenchments outside Yorktown** at the beginning of the Peninsular Campaign, an unenviable but necessary task. The fourth performed well in the summer of 1862 when they pushed rebel pickets back after crossing the Chickahominy River. Generals MacClellan and FitzJohn Porter both complimented the men of the fourth for their actions this day. They participated in the fighting at Gaines Mills and then at Malvern Hill.



Woodbury was killed at the latter battle while trying to rally his men. The Fourth suffered heavily in both battles.

They were held in reserve at the Antietam battle. Two days later, at **Shepardstown Ford**, they had to cross the Potomac River after the Confederates who then counterattacked. The fourth was able to avoid disaster, but an unlucky Pennsylvania regiment was decimated. Just before Fredericksburg, Colonel Childs who had replaced Woodbury, resigned. The regiment avoided the heavy losses incurred by others during the failed attack on Marye’s Heights but did experience the nightmare “Mud March” that followed it. **In March 1863, Harrison Jeffords took command.**

The 4th Michigan was again spared heavy casualties at Chancellorsville being used for recon only. **The regiment’s greatest trial was on the second day of Gettysburg at the Wheatfield.** It crossed the Trostle property and entered the Rose Woods where it was ambushed and flanked by the rebels. **Jeffords was killed bayoneted while trying to recover the fallen flag** and many 4th Michigan men were captured. **The monument to the fourth at Gettysburg shows an officer with a flag** but Kim said that it does not specifically portray Colonel Jeffords.

The now diminished regiment saw little action in the months after Gettysburg. However, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania battles of the Overland campaign in May 1864 also proved to be very costly. Colonel Lumbard was mortally wounded in the Wilderness battle. **On June 30, 1864, after most of the original 3-year enlistees who had survived chose not to reenlist, the 4th Michigan Infantry Regiment was mustered out of service. The unit was one of very few in the war that suffered more fatalities from combat than from disease.**

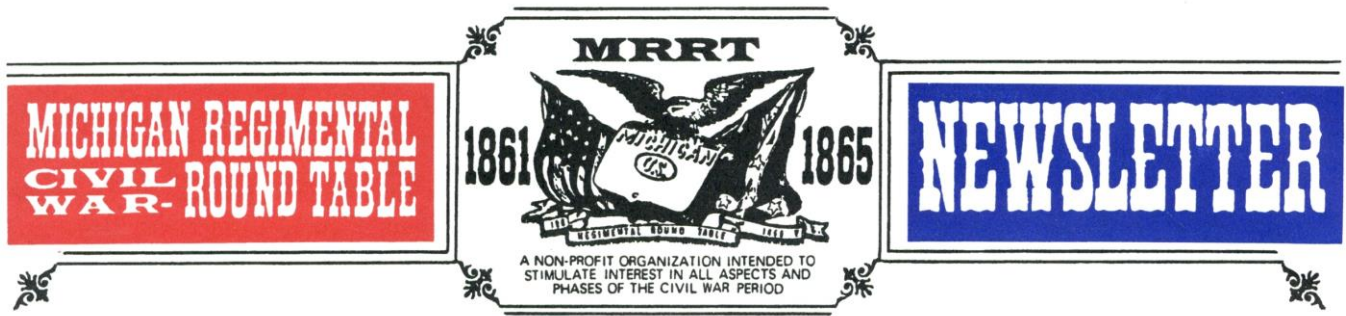
We thank Kim Crawford very much for his presentation.



Our trip to Franklin and Nashville, Tennessee – October 26 and 27, 2024

Our group of twenty-five participants really enjoyed two days exploring the Civil War battlefields of Franklin and Nashville. Joseph Ricci, our Saturday guide, explained the build-up to and battle of Franklin. Joseph will be going to Louisiana State University in 2025 to pursue his PhD. We wish him success! An outstanding guide.

During the Battle of Franklin campaign, General John Bell Hood commanded the Confederates and General James Schofield was the leader of the Union Army. The two commanders knew each other from their days at West Point. They were roommates and Schofield assisted Hood



significantly in passing mathematics. After the war, General Schofield set up Schofield Barracks at Pearl Harbor. General Hood’s Army crossed into Tennessee on November 21st while Union Divisions were scattered all over Tennessee. **Stop 1 -St. John’s Episcopal Church**, built 1841. The beautiful church is well-preserved. Confederate General Cleburne and four other men were buried behind the church after the Battle of Franklin. Cleburne was reburied in Hebron, TN in 1868.

Stop 2-Duck River at the Battle of Columbia the Battle of Columbia lasted for three days, including two days of artillery probes by the armies. The Union Army evacuated Columbia on November 29th. The column was twelve miles long with the front of the column arriving in Spring Hill as the end was leaving Columbia. There were 28,000 men, 6,000 animals, eight hundred wagons, and sixty artillery pieces in the procession.

Stop 3-Spring Hill and the Rippa Villa home – built in 1852.

Spring Hill was one the most controversial episodes \of the Civil War. The Federal army stumbled by the Confederates who should have had them trapped. Confederate General Frank Cheatam was responsible for blocking the road to Franklin. This did not happen as the Federal Army had a great escape, which set up the Battle of Franklin on November 30, 1864.

Stop 4 - Franklin

General Hood believed that battle success at Franklin was the key to Southern independence. Franklin was where the old South came to die. At 4:00 pm, a two-mile-wide attack was launched. The fight ended around 7:00 pm. The bloody battle was not necessary because the Union Army left Franklin for the Nashville area during the night. By 6:00 am on December 1st, there were no Federals in Franklin.

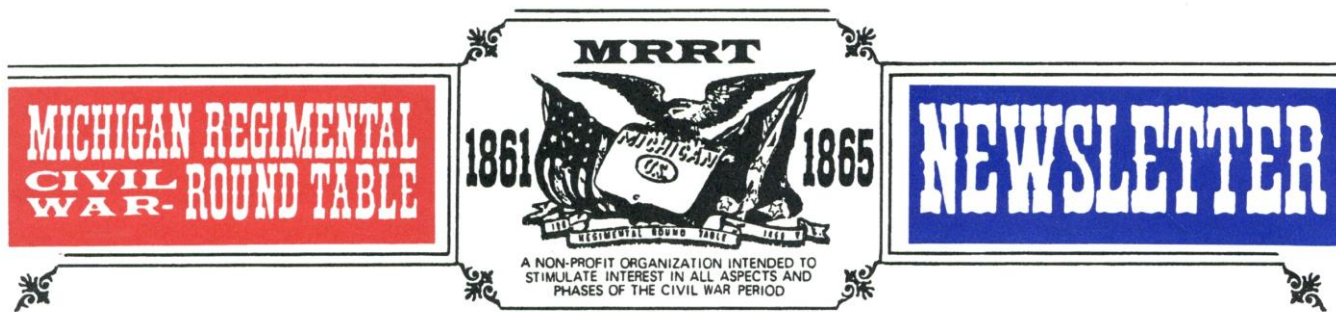


Confederate Captain Todd Carter was mortally wounded near his family’s home, the Carter House. His father and sisters searched for him on the battlefield. He lived for several more hours when he was brought back to the house. The Carter House (picture left), and three other buildings still stand, with over 1,000 bullet holes still visible. The famous cotton gin, where a lot of the fighting took place, is gone. The Carter family hid in the basement during the roar of the battle. The Carter House was completed in 1830.

Battle of Franklin Compared with Pickett’s Charge

Our friend Wiley Sword, author of *The Confederacy’s Last Hurrah: Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville* compared the attack at Franklin with the more famous Pickett’s Charge at Gettysburg in July 1863. Wiley spoke to our group during the 1990’s.

The attacking columns of “Pickett’s Charge” and “Hood’s Assault” at Franklin were both approximately 11,000 men. Both assaults were over open ground, almost two miles at Franklin compared with one mile at Gettysburg. A heavy artillery bombardment for two hours occurred at Gettysburg while there was little artillery at Franklin. There were no strong earthworks at Gettysburg, only a low stone wall and barricades of fence rails.



Pickett's Charge was repelled with an estimated Confederate loss of 6,500, about five hundred less than the Franklin losses. The Confederates at Franklin partially carried their objective and held it to the end of the fighting.

Several years after the fighting, General Frank Cheatam returned to Franklin, where he met a Union veteran also visiting the battleground. The General hugged the veteran and said, "*Any man who was in the battle of Franklin, no matter which side, is my friend.*"



We enjoyed an excellent group dinner at **Puckett's in Franklin** (picture left). Puckett's is well-known for barbeque and other dishes. Our tour guide, Joseph Ricci, is the first person on the right-hand side of the dining table.

We thank Linda Gerhardt and Jeanie Graham for arranging this visit and our great trip to Tennessee.

We look forward to another great trip in 2025!

Sunday, October 27, 2024 – Battle of Nashville, Tennessee – Tour Guide, Lee White

Our outstanding Sunday guide was Lee White, who led us on our tour of Chickamauga and Chattanooga in 2018.

The Battle of Nashville was the most complete Union victory of the war. General Hood wanted to “besiege” Nashville and the Union Army, commanded by General George Thomas, the Rock of Chickamauga.

There are a few Civil War sites left in rapidly growing Nashville. **We visited Fort Nagley**, which was rebuilt by the WPA during the 1930's. Fort Nagley was six hundred feet long, four hundred feet wide on four acres, the largest fort constructed during the war.

Another stop was at Redoubt #3, which is now mainly a church parking lot. The Union Army overwhelmed Redoubt #3 as the Confederate line collapsed. Redoubts 2 and 5 were also captured by the Union Army.

Union commander General Grant was really upset with General Thomas' delay in launching an attack. General Thomas needed time to organize his army and wait for the weather to improve. General Schofield's men from Franklin were his best soldiers.

General Grant decided to remove General Thomas on December 12th. Fortunately, the telegraph operator held on to the note because Thomas would be attacking soon. As the weather improved, the attack got underway.

The Union Army of 35,000 men drove the remaining Confederates into Alabama. The major western Confederate army was decimated.

Our last stop was at Shy's Hill, a major portion of the Confederate line. The December 16, 1864, the attack drove away the Confederates.