



Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER - MIKE POWELL



The world is a sadder place with the loss of Dan Fink.

Dan always had a kind word for everyone behind a perpetual smile. I did not know him as well as I would have liked, but I do know that after Charen and his family,

the Boy Scouts of America remained an important part of his life, and he embraced all the good qualities they represent.

Dan and Charen were part of the group that founded the BCWRT back in 2010 - May is our eighth anniversary. Dan immediately pitched in to write a synopsis of the speaker's talk for the newsletter. His writing was thoughtful, succinct, and entertaining. In 2014, he fulfilled a life-long dream and published a book, "SOUTHPORT, OAK ISLAND AND BALD HEAD ISLAND," part of the Postcard History Series featuring vintage photographs of the Lower Cape Fear, with annotations. Since their retirement the Fink's began lighthouse sitting. They spent several months each year at an NC lighthouse maintaining, running and operating the visitor center. Dan will be greatly missed. Please see page 4 for the link to Dan's obituary.

We are nearing completion of this year's work on historic preservation at Fort Caswell. We have three plaques that should be fully installed, hopefully by the time of our May meeting featuring a tour with Jim McKee.

I need to thank some folks for their hard work on this project. Thanks to the NC Department of

Archives and History in Raleigh for proofreading the text for each sign. Leslie Rivers, a BCWRT Advisor was instrumental in coordinating that effort and providing insights on how to actually get it done. She has a lot of experience working with historical markers and kept us on the right track. Thanks to Nathan Sloan, a BCWRT Advisor and staff member at the Fort Caswell Baptist Retreat. His expertise in turning my rough drafts into art was invaluable. Besides running the A/V room at Hatch for our meetings, we continue to find that Nathan has many talents. We must also thank Pannier Graphics for actually creating the plaques. They were a pleasure to work with. We must also thank the Baptist Retreat at Fort Caswell for allowing us to interpret this historic site. Obviously, history is not their business, but when presented the opportunity, they were open and supportive of our ideas. Finally, we must thank you, our members, for without your support none of this or the other historic preservation work could have gotten done. We will let you know when the signage is installed so you can enjoy them.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to all of those who inquired about my recent surgery. On Monday, April 9, I had a 10-cm goiter and half of my thyroid removed at NHRMC. I have a lot of swelling in my neck, but this too shall pass. Talking is a problem, but some, like my wife, would say that is a good thing. See you at our May 1 meeting.

Mike

General Hood Vs. The Impossible Odds

We are in for an enlightening evening at our May 1 meeting when **Steve Davis**, the foremost authority on the Atlanta Campaign, describes the almost unobtainable challenge given to General John Bell Hood to defend the city. Davis' presentation is titled, "General Hood's Efforts to Save Atlanta, July 18 - Sept. 2."

As background, Confederate General Hood was appointed by President Jefferson Davis to command the Army of Tennessee in mid-July 1864, when Sherman's Union forces were just five miles outside of Atlanta. The Confederate government had concluded that Atlanta was virtually lost, but asked Hood to do what he could to save the city. Davis plans to share his assessment and recounting of Hood's efforts to do so.

Hood served with distinction at Sharpsburg and at Fredericksburg, and was a significant player at the Battle of Gettysburg where he was severely wounded. He eventually recovered and led major offensives in an attempt to break Sherman's siege of Atlanta. However, all of his reckless offensives were abysmal failures personally and militarily, suffering staggering casualties. Finally, on September 2, 1864, Hood evacuated Atlanta, allowing Sherman to execute the famous March to the Sea and the capture of Savannah, Georgia. Hood finally resigned in disgrace in early January 1865.

Steve Davis is noted for his dynamic speaking engagements at countless Civil

War round tables, historical societies and organizations. He is a longtime Georgia



native and a Civil War enthusiast since the fourth grade. He served as Book Review Editor for "Blue & Gray" magazine for more than twenty years, and is the author of more than a hundred articles and books on the Civil War. Now retired, Steve serves as Book Review

Editor for "Civil War

News," and is a regular contributor to the "Critic's Corner" column.

As usual, the Tuesday, May 1 meeting takes place at Hatch Auditorium on the grounds of Fort Caswell. Our registration and refreshments begin at 6:15 p.m. The guest admission fee for the meeting is \$10, and can be applied toward the \$25 annual membership dues. For more information, contact president Mike Powell at (910) 278-3545, or email to mikepowell260@gmail.com. Our website is brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com. You may also visit our Facebook page for interesting facts, comments, announcements and updates.

Below: the famous Cyclorama painting, "The Battle of Atlanta," produced in 1885-86.



Type to enter text



DAN FINK

MAY 4, 1941 - APRIL 6, 2018

The Second Day at Gettysburg

Review of Dave Shultz's April 3 Presentation — *By Dan Fink*

A huge thank you goes to “one of our own.” Dave Shultz generously did a great pinch hit for us. Abner Doubleday introduced baseball to his Civil War “team,” and Dave Shultz grabbed the bat with the intention of hitting one out of the park for us. He opened his Civil War haversack (suitcase) and big question marks spilled out all over the place. It seems neither side was “goof proof.”

Look at that famous statement: “It is well that War is so terrible otherwise we should grow too fond of It.” Did Robert E. Lee really say this to Longstreet? Was it said exactly this way? Perhaps it was said to enhance the “persona” of a really great man? If Ed Bearss were standing here he would ask, “Were you there to hear him say it?” Can you believe Longstreet’s re-statement 40 years later in his memoirs? Are you beginning to pick up what Dave is laying down?

The second day is really about the defense of Cemetery Ridge. “Stuff” keeps getting in the way. Lee stands on and for principle. It makes him say things like “take that hill—if practicable.” He stands strong on policy and puts his beloved Virginia high at the pivot point. Oh, by the way, (Dave reminds us) what will the Civil War do about that many headed snake called politics?

There are bullet holes everywhere. They brighten the way for myths, legends, folklore, just plain luck, and finally — actuality. Nepotism in the Confederacy was probably a good thing. Everyone seems, in some way, to be connected and close to one another.

Wouldn't you love to be a “mouse in the corner” to hear what Lee REALLY said to J.E.B. Stuart about all those supply wagons

he delivered instead of providing enemy scouting reports that second day? Lee cherished J.E.B. as he would his own son. Are you beginning to see the complications and complexities that Dave points out? To this day no one knows for sure who told Gen. Dan Sickles to pull those troops from Little Round Top. Today we know there were discrepancies in elevations and maps.

Dave gave us a tactical overview of one very messy afternoon of fighting. The Union center is in big trouble. A gap appears in the Confederate line. Longstreet is delayed and there is an unexpected clash at Plum Run Ravine. Finally, at 8:15 p.m., the Union counterattacks with the NY 111th right in the thick of it but receives no credit! (They had NO battle flag.) Pender, unfortunately, is mortally wounded and that gives rise to a very big missed opportunity.

Ya just had to be there to hear what Billy Mahone was doing during this crucial time.

Night fighting doesn't happen in the Civil War. The Confederate attack is over by 9 p.m.

“It is well that war is so terrible otherwise we should grow too fond of it.” Think about it.

Dan Fink submitted this column one day before unexpectedly passing away on April 6. He will be sorely missed by the BCWRT members, and this editor particularly. Dan was a master wordsmith, always capable of capturing the essence of our speakers, no matter their subject or delivery quality. RIP, Dan. You will forever be in our hearts and minds. And to Charen, Dan's wife, our deepest condolences and sympathies. EGS
See <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/southport-nc/daniel-fink-7814435> for Dan's obituary.

LADIES' FORUM IS BACK!!!!

After a year-long hiatus, the very popular Ladies Forum is returning on October 30. The guest speaker is Rhonda Florian (pictured) who will discuss Lucy Pickens: Queen of the Confederacy. The ladies-only event will again be held at the Trinity United Methodist Church (across from the post office) in Southport.

Charen Fink, BCWRT Vice President, is the originator and producer of the Ladies' Forum which always draws a packed crowd. According to Charen, the forum is back because so many women told her they miss the event.

Florian, who returns to the forum by popular demand, has an impressive background as a theater actress and teacher. She is also recognized for her contributions in furthering the study and preservation of Confederate history. Her subject matter - Lucy Pickens - was the only woman pictured on Confederate States currency. Lucy was considered the beau ideal of the Southern Belle and some claim she was the model for Scarlet O'Hara.

Via Florian, the audience will experience firsthand Lucy's exploits as a young belle, her travels to Europe, the return to the heart of the Confederacy, and the experiences of war's havoc. You will share Lucy's triumphs and heartbreaks.

More details on the Ladies' Forum will follow, but for now, BCWRT women (and female guests) should block out Tuesday, October 30, for what surely will be an entertaining evening.



FONVIELLE RETIRES FROM UNCW



Chris Fonvielle, BCWRT Advisor and a regular presenter to our organization, will hang up his teaching duties this month as associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. We wish Chris the very best in his next phase of life, and hope he'll NOT retire from giving well-received talks to our round table. All the best, Chris.

Bridge Closing: BCWRT Meetings Worth the Drive

President Mike Powell has a message for everyone who currently takes the older Oak Island bridge to get to our meetings: “Come October, it’ll be worth the few extra miles to attend our gatherings. We promise that the quality of speakers, camaraderie, raffles, Sutler’s Table, news and information, and refreshments will justify your time,” he stated.

The NC Department of Transportation recently announced the G.V. Barbee Bridge will close in October for major “preservation” repairs. The

bridge will reopen in April 2019. That means six of our 2018-19 meetings will be impacted by the closure.

BCWRT records indicate that 45% of members reside in Southport, Leland, or Wilmington. “Members from these locales will need to take East Middleton Boulevard (Route 906) to cross over the new Oak Island bridge (Swain’s Cut Bridge), and turn left onto Oak Island Drive till it intersects with Country Club Road. Turn right and it’s familiar traveling to Fort Caswell,” Mike noted.



The Barbee Bridge detour may add extra minutes...but will be worth the time and effort.

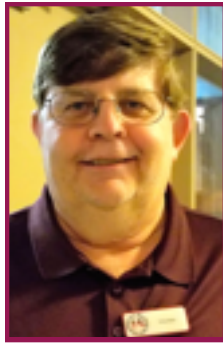
MEET MORE REGISTRATION TEAM VOLUNTEERS

Last month we highlighted a portion of the volunteer team that makes registration run so smoothly. Here are the other team members. *(Photos by Tish Gordon)*

Jonathan Richmond, who hails from Connecticut and now lives in Southport, admits his take on the Civil War was mostly from the “Blue” perspective. “Now living in the South, I wanted to learn more facts about both the Blue and Gray.” Jonathan is a five-year member and is impressed with our amazing growth.



John Butler, is retired from the US Army and owing to his interest in military history, has visited battlefields in Korea, Europe, and the US. He’s toured every major Civil War battle site except Shiloh and Vicksburg. He notes that volunteering for the BCWRT, “Allows you to spend as much or little time you have available to help.”



Pam and Ron Collins, one of several wife and husband volunteers, moved to St. James from the Washington, DC, area and joined the round table almost from its inception. “I enjoy American history, especially the Civil War, and particularly Gettysburg,” Ron said. “Volunteering is a lot of fun and we meet so many people,” Pam added. “We have been hanging out together since we



were 15 and 16 years-old,” according to Ron, to which Pam added, “Believe it or not, it’s a great date night!”

Fran and Ralph Ventola are Civil War buffs having visited many sites in Pennsylvania and Virginia, as well as watching documentaries on the conflict. They’ve been round table members for five years and responded to an



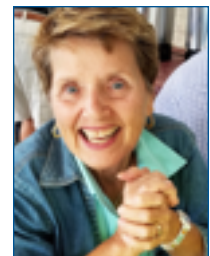
advertisement asking for volunteers. The Ventolas enjoy doing things together and the BCWRT meetings offer the perfect “together” opportunity.

Wayne Biggs probably takes the BCWRT’s most unique member award: he is a Canadian who snowbirds south every winter from Browns Flat, New Brunswick, to stay with his daughter in Seaspray Cove, eh? Living next door is Ken Keast, the registration team coordinator, who recruited Wayne to help out. The affable Canadian is an avid reader on the Civil War and has been



fortunate to visit numerous battlefield sites from Gettysburg to Petersburg. “This is a great round table,” he adds.

Also helping out at the front table is **Bobbi Sullivan**.



SEPTEMBER TOUR OF WYSE'S FORKS AND KINSTON

Here's a quick question: Where were the largest Civil War battles in NC fought?

If you answered Bentonville, Fort Fisher, and Kinston you get a star. For bonus points, can you name the two sites the BCWRT has already toured? Yes, we've traveled to the first two Civil War locales. On September 15 we are going to walk the Wyse's Fork battlefield, then journey to nearby Kinston, where we'll have lunch and visit the impressive CSS Neuse Civil War Interpretive Center.



from the sites, with Wade narrating and taking us on a walking tour of the still-existing trenches of a battlefield where over 25,000 troops fought, resulting in an estimated 2,600 casualties." The battle took place March 7-10, 1865, pitting Confederate forces commanded by

General Braxton Bragg against Union forces under Major General John Schofield. Despite the last mass capture of Union soldiers during the Civil War, the fighting nevertheless resulted in a Union victory.

Wade Sokolosky, the BCWRT's newest advisor and THE EXPERT on the Civil War in that locale, will be our tour guide for a fascinating Saturday excursion.

Save the date - Saturday, September 15 - and look for a sign-up sheet coming soon. John - whose previous tours have all sold out - warns, "This is a tour you shouldn't miss!"

According to BCWRT Tour Coordinator John Walsh, "We'll take a comfortable bus to and

Volunteer Opportunities

There is certainly much truth to the saying, "Volunteering is a work of heart." The BCWRT is looking for more members with some heart to volunteer for various aspects of our organization.

Wally Rueckel, co-founder of our round table, recently identified seven volunteer opportunities.

1. Assist President Mike Powell with arrangements for speakers he books. Specifically, he needs someone to communicate with the speaker regarding overnight accommodations, making pre-meeting dinner reservations, and providing directions to the hotel, restaurant, and Hatch Auditorium.
2. Work with the BCWRT secretary from time to time with member correspondence.
3. Assist President Mike Powell in preparing pre-meeting slides.
4. Work with the registration team guiding members to open registration computers.
5. Help John Walsh with the planning and logistics of our BCWRT trips.
6. Assist in selling raffle tickets for our 50/50 drawing and donated items.
7. Provide storage for Sutler's Table books between meetings.

If interested in any of the above, please contact Wally Rueckel at 248-252-6844 or wrueckel@outlook.com.

PROGRAM SPEAKERS FOR 2017-18

Tuesday, May 1: Steve Davis, renowned Civil War historian, prolific author, Book Review Editor for Blue & Gray magazine, speaker and consultant for TV documentaries, and popular speaker at numerous Civil War round tables and historical societies. His topic: *“General Hood’s Efforts to Save Atlanta, July 18 - Sept. 2”*

Tuesday, May 29: Susannah Ural, Ph.D., Distinguished Alumni Professor of the Humanities, and co-director of the Dale Center for the Study of War & Society in the history department at the University of Southern Mississippi. Her topic: *“Letters of Hood’s Texas Brigade.”*

Lt Gen John
Bell Hood

Born 1831
in Kentucky

Died 1879
in New
Orleans



POST-SPEAKER PROCEDURE

Immediately following our speaker’s presentation, members and guests who wish to leave may do so. Once they have exited, the speaker will gladly conduct a 10-15 minute Q&A for members who appreciate the opportunity to learn more.

No Meetings this Summer

BCWRT members are reminded that we’ll take a summer recess from our meetings. We will NOT MEET during June, July, or August. (Our June meeting will be held May 29 due to the unavailability of Hatch Auditorium in June.)

However, you are encouraged to take advantage of Civil War symposiums, conferences, re-enactments, or visits to battlefields, monuments, cemeteries, parks, and other Civil War historical sites. Don’t forget to send a picture of your activity to *Call to Arms* for inclusion in a future issue.



A Good Read Over Summer Break

Comprising over 1,000 pages, *Grant*, by Ron Chernow, challenges the commonly held belief that Grant was “an inspired commander, an adequate president, a dull companion and a roaring drunk.” The accounts of Grant’s military accomplishments are extremely well done. Five star recommendation for this biography which is still on many seller lists.

Fort Caswell Symposium Set for August

If you are like most BCWRT members, when you drive through the grounds of Fort Caswell you wonder about all the brick, stone and concrete fortifications spread around the 220-acres. Now is your opportunity to find out the answers!

On August 24 and 25, Fort Caswell will host “Focus on the Forts,” a symposium featuring some of the nation’s leading experts who will give the definitive insight and answers about coastal defense structures. You will learn about Fort Caswell’s varied defense systems, as well as how they fit into the nationwide network.

“We’ve designed the symposium so participants can learn about the fort system via first-class lectures, breakout sessions, and walking tours,” noted Nathan Sloan, BCWRT advisor and the event’s organizer. “Plus, we’ll enjoy some excellent meals, and offer comfortable overnight accommodations for those traveling from outside the area.”

For more information including the schedule, speakers, and registration details, visit <http://fortcaswell.com/project/cfhs/> or call (910) 278-9501, Mon-Fri, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.



2018 CWRT Congress Open to All

Wally Rueckel, co-founder of the BCWRT, is a featured speaker at the Second Congress for Civil War Round Tables, August 17-19, 2018, at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Penn.

“The purpose of the Congress is to share best practices in membership recruitment and retention, learn how to govern the organization, study techniques to fund and preserve Civil War sites...and have some fun,” Wally stated.

The event is open to all round table members, not just the leadership. Included are presentations by noted experts, and guided tours of the museum and Gettysburg Battlefield.

For the complete agenda, event flyer, and registration details, visit <http://www.pscwrt.org/activities/CWRT-congress.html>. You may also contact Wally Rueckel at 248-252-6844 or wrueckel@outlook.com.

Fort Fisher to Get New Battlefield Interpretive Center

Plans are progressing for a new visitor center and museum at Fort Fisher State Historic Site, the “Gibraltar of the South,” to replace the existing structure built in 1965.

“The new center will double our existing gallery space,” noted Paul Laird, Executive Director of the Friends of Fort Fisher. “We will be able to tell a more comprehensive story of the importance of Fort Fisher during and after the Civil War.” He noted that none of the existing center structure will be incorporated into the new building.

When the Fort Fisher visitor center opened, it was thought the annual number of visitors would range between 25,000 – 35,000. This last fiscal year the center hosted 835,000 visitors making it the number one visited historic attraction in the state.

The new facility is currently estimated to cost \$13 million and \$5.4 million has already been appropriated by the General Assembly. Construction could begin as soon as the remaining funds are appropriated by the legislature, perhaps as early as the middle of 2019. There is a separate budget for new exhibit fabrication and installation. According to Laird, the Friends will lead a capital campaign to raise funding for these new exhibit galleries.

Jim Johnson, BCWRT’s vice president and liaison to Fort Fisher, believes the new interpretive center will make the fort an even more important “must see” stop for Civil War enthusiasts and students. “The new building will put an extra-special spotlight on the fort that played such an important role in the Civil War.”



Artist Rendition of New Fort Fisher Visitor Center and Museum

CIVIL WAR VIEWS

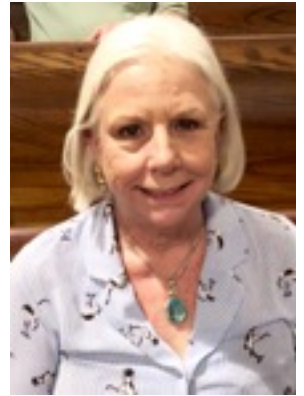
The editors of *Call to Arms* ask you to share your visits to a Civil War battlefield, monument, park, reenactment, or historical site. Simply email your high resolution photo to egstack@cnsr.com along with the name of the photographer, location, date taken, and a short caption



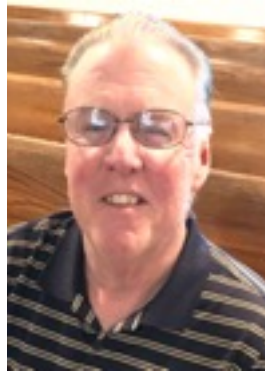
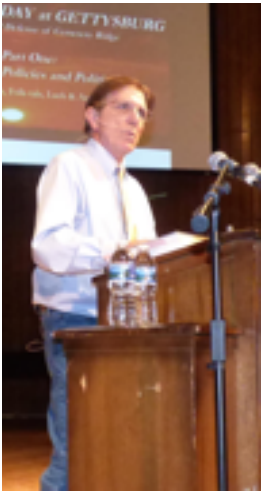
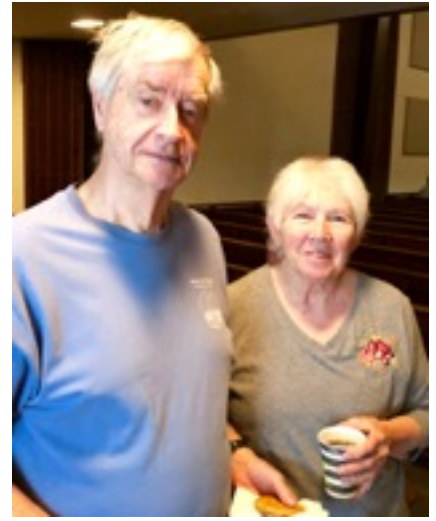
This past year Jim Johnson visited the Fredericksburg National Battlefield. He walked the site along the stone wall road that became known as the Sunken Road following the December 13, 1862 battle. Pictured clockwise from top left: Kirkland Monument honors the Confederate Civil War hero Richard Rowland Kirkland, known as "The Angel of Marye's Heights," who braved the battlefield to give water to wounded and dying Union soldiers; the bullet-ridden Stephens House was built along the road prior to the war and during the battle it was used as a headquarters by Confederate Generals Thomas Cobb and Joseph Kershaw; the stone wall protected Confederate soldiers from 15 Union brigades participating in charges against Marye's Heights...not a single Union soldier breached the wall; and the Fredericksburg National Cemetery, placed on Marye's Heights, was a Confederate stronghold during the battle. (*Photos by Carol Jutte*)

Pictured at Our April Meeting

Dave Shultz and 379 members and guests attended our April meeting, including the happy attendees shown here...particularly the winners of the record-setting 50/50 drawing of \$211 and the Robert E. Lee print. (Photos by Tish Gordon, Chuck Rodema, and E. Gifford Stack)



Pictured at Our April Meeting - Continued



MUSTER NOTES and NOTEABLES

The next meeting of the BCWRT is Tuesday, May 1, 2018. The meeting will be held at Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.

Registration and refreshments begin at 6:15 p.m. and the program starts at 7 p.m.

BCWRT is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, co-founded by Tom O'Donnell and Wally Rueckel, and organized in May 2010.

The BCWRT website, brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com, contains helpful information and is available to everyone, no user name or password required. Our Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/brunswickcivilwarroundtable/>. Visit both sites to learn of future speakers, trips, and interesting Civil War information.

2018 Officers, Directors, Advisors, and Liaisons

- | | |
|--|---|
| Mike Powell: President & Director | Jim McKee: Advisor |
| Charen Fink: Vice President & Director | Roy Pender: Advisor |
| Jim Johnson: VP, Director, & Ft. Fisher Liaison | Jonathan Richmond: Advisor |
| Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director | Leslie Rivers: Advisor |
| Mo Beers: Secretary & Director | Wally Rueckel: Advisor |
| Tish Gordon: Director | Lori Sanderlin: Advisor |
| Kathy O'Donnell: Director | Nathan Sloan: Advisor |
| Chuck Roedema: Director | Wade Sokolosky: Advisor |
| E Gifford Stack: Director | Len Trizinsky: Advisor |
| Jack Carpenter: Advisor & Ft. Anderson Liaison | Peter Whalen: Advisor |
| Chris Fonvielle: Advisor | Max Williams: Advisor Emeritus |
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***Call to Arms* co-editors: Charen Fink and E. Gifford Stack**

