



Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER - MIKE POWELL



This is certainly not the topic I wanted to write about. The Coronavirus has shut down events all over town, the state, and the country. BCWRT is also cancelling our meetings until it is safe for us to gather again.

Nothing is worth risking the health of our members. Along with our leadership team, I am trying to find ways to fill the void. So, please look to our Facebook and website for updates. This may be a good time to read those Civil War books you have been wanting to get through.

BCWRT has always had an unstated mission that we are a part of the

community, not just a history club.

Whether it's a hurricane, or a government shutdown, we owe it to the community to try and help. This situation is no different. If you live alone, let us know and we will periodically check on you. If you know someone who lives alone, please take a moment to check on them. History tells us that every time there is a crisis, the US has to play catch up, but we do that better than any nation. We will also overcome this crisis.

Stay well and we'll see you all when it is safe for the best Civil War Round Table - on the planet! - to meet.

Hopefully, our leaders in Washington will get their act together and mitigate the damage being done by this crisis. But, pay attention to the doctors and the medical community, not Washington, not the talking heads on cable news. Listen to the doctors, err on the side of caution. Stay well and we'll see you all when it is safe for the best Civil War Round Table - on the planet! - to meet.

Thanks to **Derek Maxfield**, **Tracy Ford**, and **Jesse Sherman** for their excellent portrayal of U. S. and Julia Grant and William Sherman. It gave us a fly on the wall view of three of the key moments of the war, that interestingly did not take place on the battlefield.

I generally stand in the lobby as our meetings end, trying to gauge from the crowd how the program was received. The play was extremely well liked by you, the 597 members and guests! I am pretty sure I saw three folks come through one of the skylights in the roof, repelling down to the floor, without being counted at the registration tables. So let's just call it 600. It was particularly nice to see Tish Gordon back visiting with us. She may have been one of those that repelled to the floor.

Mike

Our meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, that was to have featured Chris Fonvielle's talk, "Closing Down the Kingdom: The Battles for Fort Fisher 1864-65," is cancelled. We hope to reschedule Chris at a future date.

“Now We Stand by Each Other Always”

A Review of March Meeting’s Play - By Jim Medeiros (*Photos by Chuck Roedema*)

Why plays and why not just speakers at our roundtable? With two plays in recent months, why do we watch plays (which generally portray fiction) while history (we hope) studies what actually happened, a chronological look at facts. What can a play do that plain speaking cannot? Plays and fiction both offer a measure of emotional comprehension, an appreciation of the feelings experienced by the participants in history. As with so much in history, the experience of one human being may contradict the feelings of an entire culture, yet that does not invalidate individual reactions. Even with so called “facts” seen from different angles, facts can seem as fluid as water which strengthens the appropriateness of emotions in history. Put another way, when the generals stepped out of character they explained the genesis of their play emanated from the stubborn recalcitrance of college students to learn history. Fortunately, what works for 18-year-olds works for their elders, too.

Basing their dialogue on the historical events and summaries of the three meetings between Grant and Sherman in Vicksburg (1863), in Cincinnati (1864), and in Goldsboro (1865), **Derek Maxfield** (also known as General Grant) and **Tracy Ford**

(also known as General Sherman) filled in the missing richness of experiences between these two men, a richness often lost in the pedestrian list of dates for battles, meetings and decisions. Each act was introduced by **Jesse Sherman**, dressed in period costume and expertly helping set the scenes.

The play develops the genuine friendship between these two men. In spite of the fact Sherman steals the show between the two generals, a true sense of the art of



winnowing men for the right job comes through Grant’s sedate, restrained performance. In some ways, his verbal rumination on who would get what command and running commentary on the strengths of his generals echoed the thoughtful course of his written memoirs. But general officers do not just move men around like chessmen and the play succeeds yet again in

conveying the melancholy of war. Sherman reports the death of one of his officers, General McPherson, and in the somber silent moment Grant and Sherman agree, “He was a good man,” a tribute we should all hope to earn.

Not much for props — a couple of chairs, a fake camp fire, a camp tent — the sparse chairs and several flasks and bottles provide a skeletal framework for the audience to leave Ft. Caswell for war time. (*Continued on page 7*)

Ladies' Department — *By Charen Fink*

TRIVIA

1. Which female outlaw supposedly rode with William Quantrill, and allegedly had a daughter fathered by Cole Younger?
2. Which state was the first to ratify the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, the amendment that ended slavery?
3. What prominent thespian and outspoken Southern supporter was actually a Union spy?
4. What was the cost of sending a letter from Ohio to Alabama in 1864?
5. Who was the only woman to have received the Congressional Medal of Honor?
6. Of the best ten Civil War movies, what is the name of the first one and when was it made?
7. What popular soldier's song took its title from a telegraph dispatch?
8. What did Southern troops call "gallinippers"?
9. At what age did the President Lincoln's son Tad learn to read?
10. What color were Abe Lincoln's eyes?
11. Who was known as the "Dragon Lady"?
12. What was the name of the man (hint: he was a poet) who was a volunteer nurse?
13. At least two groups of women in Georgia formed their own home guard groups, drilling and learning to fire weapons; both groups were named after which Georgia heroine of the American Revolution?
14. A bat is another name for a
15. Another name for a dead cart.....?
16. A belly band was thought to be a cure for what condition?

Answers

1. Belle Starr
2. Illinois
3. Pauline Cushman
4. Twenty-five cents
5. Dr. Mary Walker
6. "Birth of a Nation" in 1915
7. "All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight"
8. Mosquitoes
9. Nine
10. Gray
11. Union Nurse Dorothea Dix
12. Walt Whitman
13. Nancy Hart (the groups were named the "Nancy Harts")
14. Prostitute
15. Ambulance
16. Diarrhea

Reference

Fink, Charen. *The Civil War Ladies' Department*. Next Century Publishing: Austin, TX, 2017, pgs. 295-299

BCWRT Donates to Weather Tower Restoration

Southport's historic weather tower, an iconic structure that graced the grounds of Fort Johnston for more than a century, was toppled over during a storm on February 7. Why have a weather tower that is not? There were many storms far worse than the one on this February night that the tower withstood, but this time...

Visitors to the NC Maritime Museum know the story of Jessie-Stevens Taylor. For over 60 years, before we had the Weather Channel and satellites, she gathered her weather data from that tower. It is an iconic

part of Southport's history and we applaud the city's determination to repair or rebuild it. The BCWRT Board of Directors recently approved a \$500 donation to the "**Weather Tower Restoration Fund**" to help in that effort.

Anyone interested in personally donating to the project may send a check to the City of Southport, Finance Department, 1020 N. Howe St., Southport, NC 28461 (Attn: WEATHER TOWER RESTORATION FUND) or contact the Finance Department, City Hall at 910-457-7900.



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Appomattox and Bennett Place Worth Visiting

John Walsh, BCWRT's Trip Coordinator, says that while Coronavirus currently occupies our attention, members should put two Civil War historical parks on their "Must See" list to visit once we are able to travel again. He noted, "Appomattox Court House is just a five hour drive away, and visiting Bennett Place, site of largest surrender of the war, is only three hours from Brunswick County. Both sites had 155th anniversary events that were necessarily cancelled, but even without special activities, both sites are very worthy of a visit." John reminds members who go to either or both locales to take pictures for submission to this newsletter's "Civil War Views" section.

It's All Relative

Being a member of the BCWRT is special for many of you — your relative participated in the Civil War! Members **Brenda and Bob Hagerman** are in charge of sharing your unique stories. From time-to-time, *Call to Arms* will feature a capsulized view of a family's Civil War history. You may also visit our website (http://brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com/member_relatives%20) for expanded stories. If you've not done so already, please contact the Hagermans to tell of your family's CW involvement: **910-854-0326**, or b_hagerman@msn.com.



BCWRT member **Carol Campbell Jutte** had four relatives who served in the Civil War: John C. Campbell, Obadiah Alexander

Campbell, Johann Adam Auck, and Ward Cummings Courter, Jr.

Carol's 2X great grandfather, John C. Campbell, who was born in 1817 in Pennsylvania, served as a private in the 65th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Co D, from 1861-1862. He was a shoemaker and farmer, lived to be 81, and is buried at Mt. Zion cemetery in Angola, Indiana.

Great grandfather Obadiah Campbell was born in 1843 in Ringgold, Jefferson Co., Pennsylvania, and served as a private in the



26th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Co E, from 1864-1865. A farmer, Obadiah was 75 when he passed and is interned at Oakwood cemetery in Bucyrus, Ohio.

Carol's 2X great grandfather, Johann Adam Auck was born in 1837 in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, and married Mary Smith from Ohio. Johann was a private in the 34th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, primarily serving as a cook in 1861. Also a farmer, he died at the age of 43 and is buried in the municipal cemetery in Broken Sword, Ohio.



Carol's 3X great grandfather Ward Cummings Courter Jr., was born in 1840 in New York City. He served as a private in the 43rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry Co F, from 1864-1865. Ward was wounded below the knee and his leg was amputated at Pocotaligo, SC. He returned to Ohio after discharge and became a shoemaker and veterinarian in Delaware County, Ohio. He died at age 76 and is buried in Roseland, New Jersey.

Now We Stand by Each Other Always (Continued from page 3)

Decanters become a sight gag in every scene as Sherman swigs the booze and leaves the dregs for Grant. In fact, at one point after gulping a whole glass of liquid fortification while discussing an army rival, Sherman picks up Grant's glass and empties it into his own. The alcohol in every scene comes calibrated so that General Sherman grows incrementally verbose and grandiose as each lubricated scene proceeds. Not to be outdone, Grant, too, has his moments when they meet in Cincinnati after his promotion to Lieutenant General.

Returning from Washington, DC, he avers, "Too much 'show business' in that town."

Politics 150 years ago looked remarkably the same as it does today.

The great appeal of this play remains its insights into the heart. Though often ignored, Sherman earned part of his reputation for insanity by early on predicting it would take years (and not 90 days) and thousands of lives to win the war. A long diatribe in our three-act play gives life to Sherman's antipathy for the horrors of the war. Nonetheless, the final meeting in Goldsboro throws Sherman on the opposite track as he gleefully describes his army's morale on their long march to the sea, "They ate the heart out



of Georgia." After so many Union defeats, victory remains sweet.

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CW Round Tables to Hold Fourth Meeting

Wally Rueckel, co-founder of the Brunswick Civil War Round Table, recently announced that in September round tables from across the county will meet outside of Philadelphia. "This is our fourth such congress designed to share helpful information, network, visit historical sites, and have a little fun, as well," he noted. "The meeting, hosted by the CW round table of Philadelphia - 'Old Baldy' - is open to any Civil War round table member in the country."

While details are still in progress, most participants are expected to arrive Friday, September 18, with the meeting ending Sunday afternoon, September 20. This year, BCWRT's Mike Powell and Charen Fink are featured speakers. Registration information will follow soon according to Wally who added, "This is a unique opportunity for BCWRT members to visit with other Civil War enthusiasts, see a little history, and share ideas on how to enhance round table experiences." For more information, contact Wally at wrueckel@outlook.com, or 248-252-6844.

Civil War Views

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

Recently Jim Medeiros visited the National Civil War Museum. He was so taken by his experience he wrote a “virtual tour” of the museum, as well as snapping photos among the exhibits. His word picture is extremely descriptive. If you have not been to the NCWM, Jim’s account should help prioritize your future travel plans. (All photos by Jim Medeiros)

Most Civil War museums have a focus — a battle, a general, a lost cause, ironclads, etc. The National Civil War Museum eschews a



viewpoint and strives to span the war in broad strokes from causes to reconstruction. Located in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and associated with the Smithsonian Institution, the museum admirably considers both sides in the conflict using a plethora of media. First, a cast of actors appear throughout the museum in video monologues to show how the stages of the war affected common people including a southern belle on the home front, a married black woman and her husband in the United States Colored Troops, two brothers on opposite sides and a third fleeing both in California, and a southern landowner. Next come the standard artifacts — the guns, cannon and uniforms, lock of Lincoln’s hair — all preserved under glass. Then come every other enhancement for the story in paintings, posed mannequins, war music, posters, slave sale handbills, and live uniformed reenactors. Come, follow me through a quick look.

Individual galleries consider modest details: slavery as seen by people at the time; campaigns

and battles from 1861-1865; weapons and equipment; building the armies from volunteers and drafts; women in the war; battlefield medicine; construction of navies; why men fought; Civil War music; battlefield grooming; Lincoln; and military cooking. It will take us four hours to go through both floors and even that gives short shrift to some exhibits.



Although every school student learns the timeline leading up to the Civil War (Missouri Compromise, Dred Scott decision, Fugitive Slave Act, History of Slavery in the Constitution, etc.), the museum sets the stage for slaughter with subtle displays. A bale of cotton and summary of northern factories versus southern manufacturing emphasizes the economics that posed such opportunity and obstacles for the North and South. A poster advertises the coming sale of a menu of slaves to emphasize the brutality of slavery tearing apart families. We remember John Brown’s Harper’s Ferry raid for his religious fanaticism and suppression by Union officer Colonel Robert E. Lee.

Once we leave behind the tableaux of manikins reenacting the bombardment of Ft. Sumter, consider the exhibit of arms and uniforms. The long box of the room nicely juxtaposes Union accoutrements on one end with Confederate

developments on the other. For the North, examples of colorful blue and red Zouave clothes and fezzes contrasts with the many colors of gray/butternut/ and blue of rebel armies as they struggled with inconsistent supplies as mundane as cloth and dyes. The nasty fifty-caliber, cased scoped sniper rifles appeal to the armament enthusiast but, more to the point, the yawning bores expose the cause of the horrific injuries of the war.



Walk round the corner and, once past the diorama of the confusion and horror of the Battle of Shiloh, a distinguished historian explains the campaigns in the war. Both the soft voice in the video and easy mastery of the facts tickle my memory as I follow the list of battles—First and Second Manassas, Shiloh and Antietam, etc. As I turn away and listen without the visual cues, I realize we have found an old friend of our Roundtable: Bud Robertson. Who better to tell the tale of campaigns and battles than the executive director of John F. Kennedy’s U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission?

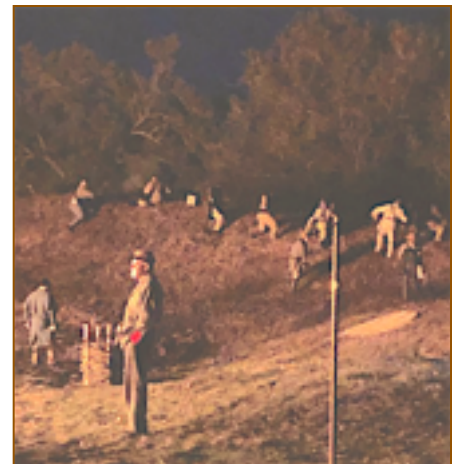
With so much to see, don’t miss the section on Lincoln, his assassination, and remembering veterans. The exhibit on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and its veterans’ reunion offers film of the final “reconciliation” between the combatants, a reconciliation lacking in Tom Flagel’s description of the fiftieth anniversary to our roundtable in January.

With all its clever use of media (Abraham Lincoln will answer questions posed to him, for example) and thorough scope across the war, this museum provides a model of what museums in the twenty-first century should look like. Come back again when you have more time.



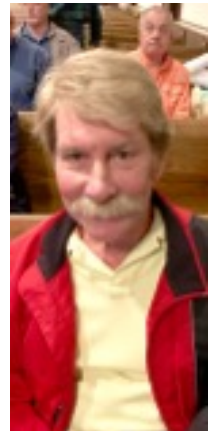
Civil War Views - Part 2

In February, Board member Jennifer Chapman attended the 155th anniversary of the fall of Fort Anderson, snapping these photos of the commemorative event.



Pictured at our March Meeting

Actors Derek Maxfield, Tracy Ford, and Jesse Sherman, along with 597 members and guests (including 36 new members and 30 guests!) were present for our March 3 meeting. Some of the happy attendees, including the \$217 winner of our 50/50 raffle, paused for our cameras. *(Photos by E. Gifford Stack)*



MUSTER NOTES and NOTABLES

The April 7 meeting of the BCWRT is cancelled.

BCWRT is a 501©(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.

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