



# Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table

## The President's Corner by John Butler



I hope everyone had a good summer and you are looking forward to cooler weather.

Ann Birdsall has planned an excellent program for the new season. It starts with Thomas Jessee doing his portrayal of General Robert E. Lee. Other speakers during the year include Chris Fonvielle, Jim McKee, Neil Chatelain, Dave Powell, Dean Calbreath, Angela Zombek and concludes with Hampton Newsome.

The Ladies' Forum is in for a real treat with Emily Lapisardi portraying Rose Greenhow, a Civil War spy. See page 4.

The tours duo of Walsh and Dunn are planning tours of Ft. Anderson, a night tour of Ft. Fisher by Chris Fonvielle, and tours by Jim McKee of Fort Caswell.

Wade Sokolsky has been chosen as the Executive Director of *The Blue and Gray Education Society*. The BGES "is dedicated to the preservation of the heritage of the American Civil War by the study and understanding of its battlefields and other historic sites through the conduct of field study tours and seminars, open discussion of issues relating to the case for preserving sites and artifacts, interpretative projects, and collaborative evaluation and publication of scholarly research and writings." Wade plans to continue his writing, tours and speaking engagements. He will remain an advisor to our BCWRT.

Eric Wittenberg, our scheduled speaker in October, had a relapse of his cancer and sadly has passed away. (See brief memorial on page 3). Eric last spoke at the BCWRT on April 2015, on "The Last Two Days of Gettysburg, Stuart's Controversial Ride". He had been looking forward to his presentation since his initial bout with cancer had interrupted his scheduled presentation last October. He was a tremendous speaker and prolific author with over 20 books to his credit. Ann Birdsall is diligently scheduling a replacement.

Reminder: If you cannot attend a meeting in person, we will be live-streaming it. See page 3 for the link to watch live.

*John*

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# BCWRT Upcoming Events

## Tuesday, September 2, 2025 Program

### Thomas Jessee as Robert E. Lee

Confederate General Robert E. Lee is alive and well as we welcome his appearance at our first meeting of the season. Actually, General Lee will be portrayed by Civil War re-enactor Thomas Jessee, a respected and celebrated “Living” Historian, dressed in his Confederate uniform.



General Lee, the commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, remains one of the most compelling and controversial figures in American history. What we remember most about him is a complex combination of his renowned military genius, his symbolic role in the “Lost Cause” of the Confederacy, and the ongoing, often heated, re-evaluation of his legacy focusing on his role as a slaveholder, and his fight to preserve human suppression, better known as slavery.

It is simply impossible to briefly summarize his incredible three year military career, from assuming command of the Army of Northern Virginia in June, 1862 to his surrender to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox

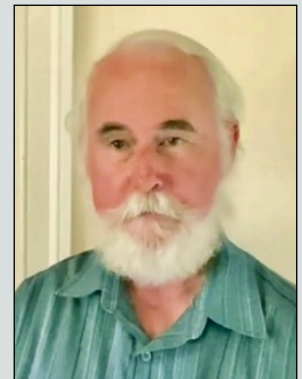
Court House in April, 1865.

But equally important, what about his early life which has been largely ignored by many historians? Or, if time permits at the meeting, what about his life after the war? As best expressed by Thomas Jessee, “I’ll be there so you can meet me, talk to me, and ask me questions. I look like General Lee. So when you go away, you’ll remember the experience, which also means you’ll remember this part of history.”



**Thomas Jessee** is a longtime student of General Lee. He has portrayed him in various venues throughout the US over the years. As a Living Historian, he is well known for his in-depth research to capture Lee’s character and demeanor.

In 2015, he was approved by the National Park Service to portray General Lee at the 150th Anniversary of the Appomattox Surrender in Virginia, and appears in the new Appomattox Visitors Center film shown to the public daily. He recently appeared in the role of General Lee on April 9 - 10, 2022 at the park. Jessee also has been a Civil War re-enactor since 1969 at the age of 18, starting out as a Private, and through the years worked his way up the ranks to General.



## In Memoriam: Eric Wittenberg



It was a bittersweet day for us at BCWRT on Saturday, August 2, 2025. We learned of the death of Civil War Historian and longtime friend of CW Round Tables, Eric Wittenberg. For the past two years, Eric, 64, had battled non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

Eric J. Wittenberg (born March 26, 1961) was an American Civil War historian, author, lecturer, tour guide and battlefield preservationist. He was a practicing attorney in downtown Columbus, Ohio. He and his wife, Susan, resided on the east side of Columbus, Ohio.

His published works have focused especially on the Civil War cavalryman and the cavalry battles of the Civil War, with emphasis on the Army of the Potomac's Cavalry Corps.

His first book, *Gettysburg's Forgotten Cavalry Actions*, was chosen as the best new work addressing the Battle of Gettysburg in 1998, winning the Robert E. Lee Civil War Roundtable of Central New Jersey's Bachelder-Coddington Award. The second edition of this book, published in 2011, won the U. S. Army Historical Foundation's Distinguished Writing Award for that year's best reprint. In 2015, his book *The Devil's to Pay: John Buford at Gettysburg* won the Gettysburg Civil War Roundtable's 2015 Book Award.

Eric Wittenberg was a member of the Governor of Ohio's Advisory Commission on the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War and has been active with several Civil War battlefield preservation organizations. He was a longtime friend of Bentonville Battlefield Historic Site.

### Pre-Register for the September Meeting

*If attending in person, we encourage you to pre-register.*

Starting Friday, August 8, and lasting until noon on Tuesday, September 2, current members may log into the system -<https://olr.bcwrt-nc.org/> - to print a ticket (one each for yourself and your spouse) showing you've registered.

When you use the online system it will clearly show if you are current (dues paid)...and what to do if you are not up to date. It's that simple!



If you are unable to attend the September meeting in person, you will be able to watch it via YouTube Live Streaming by using the following link:

<https://youtube.com/live/uSzBTUTBk1A?>

This is the link to the **BCWRT YouTube Video Library** where you will find all of the videos that have been created:

<https://www.youtube.com/@brunswickcivilwarroundtab4954/videos>

# The Ladies' Forum

## *The Ladies' Forum*

Monday, October 20, 2025, 6:00 - 8:00 pm  
Morrow Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church  
Nash St., Southport



*Emily Lapisardi*

*portrays Rose Greenhow*

*Civil War Diplomat and Spy*



First-person interpreter Emily Lapisardi portrays Rose Greenhow in a presentation drawn from primary sources including Greenhow's memoirs and correspondence, bringing her vividly and realistically to life through her own words. A native of Maryland, Rose Greenhow was a prominent antebellum society hostess in Washington, D.C. In 1861, Greenhow developed a network of Confederate agents which were credited by Jefferson Davis with ensuring the southern victory at the First Battle of Bull Run/Manassas.

Emily Lapisardi has portrayed Rose Greenhow at a range of venues including, among others, the International Spy Museum, Manassas Museum System, Manassas National Battlefield Park, the Lomas Center (Gettysburg, PA), and Petersburg National Battlefield Park. Emily is also the editor of Rose Greenhow's *My Imprisonment: An Annotated Edition*, which debuted as the highest-ranking new release in Amazon.com's U. S. Civil War Women's History category in the spring of 2021.

We are also pleased that our meeting will feature **Musette Steck** who is a Southport historian and Past President of the Southport Historical Society. Musette will be speaking about Elizabeth Keckley, the personal dressmaker and confidant of Mary Todd Lincoln as well as the author of *Behind the Scenes*, her story of slavery and insight into the lives of the Lincolns.

*The Ladies' Forum is for women only and is a free event each year for members of BCWRT. Guests are always welcome and pay only \$5. Light refreshments are served.*

*Reservations are strongly recommended.*

*Please contact BCWRT at [brunswickcwrt@gmail.com](mailto:brunswickcwrt@gmail.com) to sign up.*

*There will also be a sign-up table near the stage with Robbin Smith before the October meeting.*





## Wade Sokolosky

We recently received this news from Wade Sokolosky who included his interview with Chris Mackowski of Emerging Civil War.

Wade also gave a nice plug for the BCWRT in the interview. **Click on the image below to listen.**

Congratulations, Wade, and thank you for your kind words.

Emerging Civil War

### ECW News: Sokolosky to Helm Blue & Gray Education Society

By **Chris Mackowski** on June 29, 2025

The **Blue & Gray Education Society** has selected Wade Sokolosky to serve as its new executive director. Sokolosky offers a preview of the work ahead.

Sokolosky takes over following the retirement of Len Riedel after 31 years.



## Samuel Flowers



In 2021, Our BCWRT scholarship was awarded to Samuel Flowers in 1921 who received his M.A. from UNCW with a concentration on American History. The May issue of *Call to Arms* included a thank-you letter from Samuel. He is an Assistant Professor of History at Louisburg College in North Carolina.

In addition, in May 2025 Samuel became a member of *Emerging Civil War* where he contributes book reviews and is a guest author of several posts on a variety of Civil War subjects including his five-time great grandfather, William Lovelace "Love" Flowers, and his 11 sons who served in the Confederate Army.

Look for and enjoy the writings by Samuel Flowers in *Emerging Civil War*.

We hope one day to have him join us at a meeting in Southport.

# Women in the Civil War

## Mary Randolph Custis Lee

Mary Randolph Custis Lee was an artist, author, and early antislavery activist. The great-granddaughter of Martha Washington, she enjoyed virtually unequalled social status throughout her life. Tutors in history and philosophy, she became acquainted with the early republic's leaders, who visited her father's estate, Arlington. Following her mother's lead, she fought slavery, and helped to ease the lives of her own family's slaves. Her uncle's death in 1830 prompted a religious awakening, and marriage the next year to Robert E. Lee put her in the position of being an army wife, a somewhat uncomfortable role for someone of her background.



"Slave Girl" by Mary Custis Lee

She followed her husband to his various outposts, sketching her travels and becoming an artist of some note. While her connection to Lee did not immediately augment her social standing, when he led the Army of Northern Virginia during the American Civil War (1861–1865), she was accorded further deference.

Mary Custis Lee had not supported secession, but she was a devoted Confederate, her grace under pressure making her a symbol of quiet strength in wartime Richmond.

At the end of her life, she was embittered by the Union occupation of her beloved Arlington and felt betrayed by her family's former slaves. She died in 1873.



Sketch by Mary Custis Lee

<https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/lee-mary-randolph-custis-1807-1873/> Shared by Robbin Smith

# Civil War Recipe

## Robert E. Lee Citrus Cake

*It is rumored that Robert E. Lee proposed to Mary Custis over a slice of cake she made; that cake is now known as Robert E. Lee cake. The cake was unique because it called for baking powder, which was not a common ingredient in the 1850s. Before then women usually used stiffly beaten egg whites to give their cakes an airy texture and help them rise.*

### Lemon Filling:

- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 Tbsp. Lemon zest + 1/2 cup Lemon juice
- 6 egg yolks
- 1-1/2 cup sugar

**For the Filling:** In medium bowl combine melted butter (slightly cooled), sugar, egg yolks, and lemon zest. Whisk until smooth. Pour into a double-boiler and set over pan of simmering water. Stirring every few minutes, cook 30-45 minutes, until mixture thickens and is smooth. Remove from heat, let cool slightly, and pour into heat-resistant bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit in fridge 2 hours minimum.

### Cake:

- 2 Cups Flour
- 1-1/2 tsp Baking Powder
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 8 eggs, separated
- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1 tsp Lemon Zest + 1/4 cup Lemon juice

**For the Cake:** While the curd is cooking, butter and flour 2 9" cake pans and set aside. Preheat the oven to 325 F. In medium bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. In large bowl beat egg yolk using an electric hand-mixer until frothy, about 2 minutes. Add in sugar in three stages, beating until eggs become pale and smooth. Stir in lemon juice and zest.

In a separate large bowl beat the egg whites and cream of tartar on high until egg whites are stiff. (You can tell egg whites are stiff if, when you pull the beater out of the bowl, the egg whites stand up in stiff peaks without sagging.)

Pour half of the flour mixture into the egg yolk mixture and fold, then pour in half the egg white mixture and fold again very gently. You don't want to deflate the egg whites. Repeat with remaining flour-egg white mixtures until all ingredients are combined. Pour batter evenly into prepared cake pans and bake 22-30 minutes, until toothpick inserted in cake comes out clean. Remove cakes from oven and let sit five minutes to cool, then release cakes from pans and set on wire rack to cool completely.

### Icing:

- 4 Tbsp Butter, room temp
- 4 c. Powdered Sugar
- 2 Tbsp Lemon Juice + 1 tsp Lemon zest
- 4 Tbsp Orange juice + 1 Tbsp Orange zest

**For the Icing:** In large bowl beat the butter 2-3 minutes using an electric mixer. Pour in juice, zest, and 2 c. Sugar and beat on medium-high until combined. Continue adding sugar until the icing is thick and spreadable. For decoration slice the cakes in half horizontally, creating 4 layers. Spread the filling thickly over the middle two layers and cover cake with thin coat of frosting (this is called the crumb coat). Place the cake in freezer for an hour until crumb coat is set, then remove and finish icing cake. You can cut some thin slices of lemons and oranges for decorating the top.

<https://vocal.media/feast/authentic-civil-war-recipes>. Shared by Robbin Smith



## Madden Branch Massacre, McCaysville, GA

Member **E. Gifford Stack** lives in Georgia where Civil War sites are ubiquitous. During a July motorcycle ride, he came across this Georgia Historical Society marker in McCaysville identifying a little-known event that occurred on November 29, 1864. Seems that six Georgians who were anti-Confederates tried to enlist in the Union army in the next county over - Polk County, Tenn. The marker's language describes what happened: "*...they were executed by the notorious Confederate guerrilla John P. Gatewood, 'the long-haired, red-bearded beast from Georgia.'*" The sign also describes how the Georgia mountain counties divided into pro- and anti-Confederate factions.



## Civil War Baseball

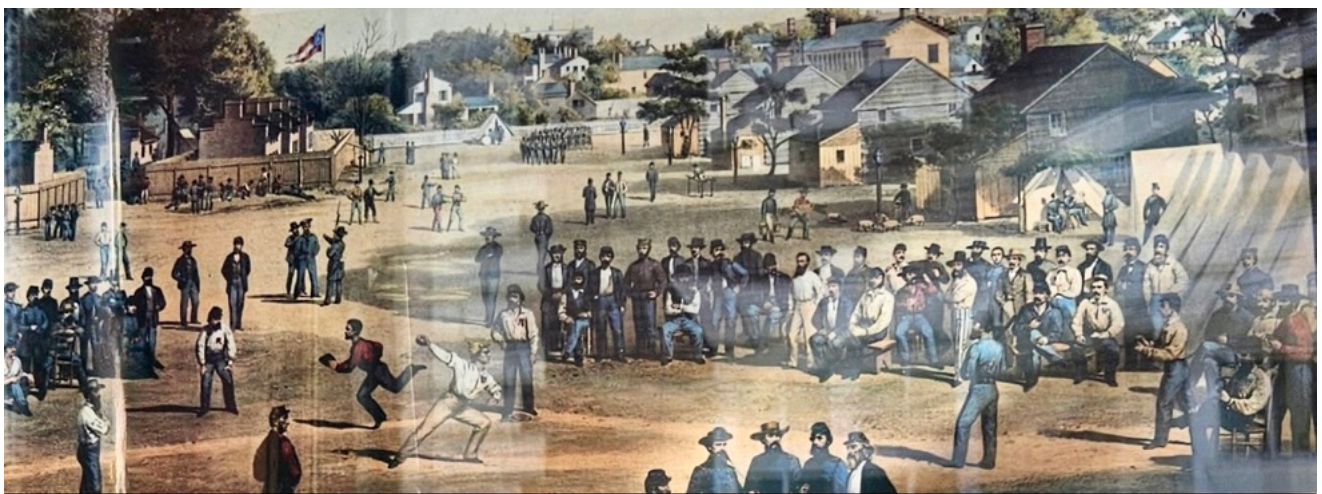


During his travels in June this year, member **John Walsh** came across a window display in Ellicott City, MD about early games of baseball, including during the Civil War.

Above an illustration of a baseball game at a Civil War base or training camp is a note written by Frederick Fairfax, 5th Regiment Ohio Infantry, on April 3, 1862:

*"It is astonishing how indifferent a person can become to danger. The report of musketry is heard but a little distance from us...yet over there on the other side of the road is most of the company, playing [baseball] and perhaps in less than half an hour they may be called to play a ball game of a more serious nature."*

Frederick Fairfax was killed at Chancellorsville, VA, on May 3, 1863



A detail from the window display above, showing a baseball game going on at an army camp.



## The Battle of New Market

BCWRT member, **John Walsh**, visited Civil War sites this summer and shares some of his pictures from The Virginia Museum of the Civil War and The Battle of New Market Battlefield.

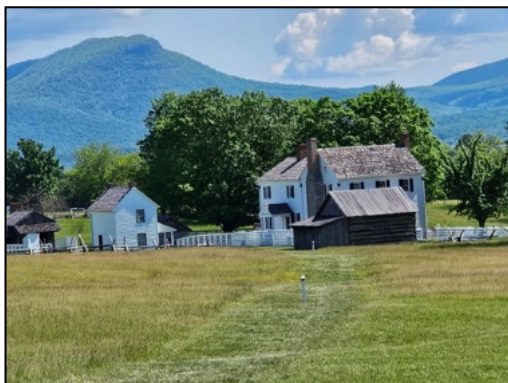


The Confederate General John C. Breckinridge, in desperate need of troops against a 10,000-man Union army, summoned the Corps of Cadets from Virginia Military Institute to join him in what became the Battle of New Market, 1864.



Gravestone at the battlefield of VMI cadet J. C. Wheelwright who died there, May 15, 1864, 15 years old.

Noted on the historical sign above:  
“Of the 257 Virginia Military Institute cadets who fought in the Battle of New Market, ten were either killed outright or later died of their wounds. Six of the ten are buried at VMI in Lexington, Virginia. In 2005 VMI replaced the original 1866 marble gravestones of the six cadet casualties with new stones and added memorial stones for the four cadets buried elsewhere. VMI brought the original gravestones to the battlefield and installed them here in 2006.”



Battlefield views. The cadets were originally held in reserve, but ultimately were needed in combat when they overran an exposed artillery battery, capturing one cannon and many prisoners.



This statue of Stonewall Jackson which was originally at the Virginia Military Institute is now located at the VA Museum of the Civil War.

# Summer Conference

## Highlights of the Gettysburg College Civil War Institute 2025 Summer Conference:

For over 40 years, the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College has hosted a premiere annual summer conference bringing leading historians and public audiences together for lectures, battlefield tours, small group conversations, and roundtable conversations about the Civil War era. Sessions, lodging, and meals are held on the 260-acre college campus, with many customizable packages available.



This year's Conference, June 13-18, 2025, was a very special CWI one honoring the life and scholarship of the Civil War Institute's late Director, Dr. Peter S. Carmichael, who was a frequent speaker at the Brunswick Civil War Round Table as well as one of our Advisors.

The presentations included over 45 distinguished speakers and tour guides who discussed some of the major topics that influenced Pete Carmichael's scholarly work such as: the culture of the common soldier, gender, politics, and honor in the Old South, doing Civil War history in public, Robert E. Lee in history and memory, and Indianans at Gettysburg.

Other topics included: Gettysburg documents from the National Archives, the generalship and postwar life of James Longstreet, the Battle of Perryville, archaeological discoveries from Little Round Top, emancipation and early Reconstruction in the South, and more. Little Round Top has re-opened after

two years to upgrade the trail and allow user friendly access without changing it historically.

Attendees selected from 11 different battlefield tour options, including evening and full-day tours, as well as new, "hybrid tours" which combined a half-day of focused classwork with a half-day out on the battlefield. This year's topics included (among others):

- An Exploration of Gary Gallagher's Favorite Sites at Gettysburg
- Unraveling the Mysteries of the Wheatfield
- Florida and Floridians at Gettysburg
- An Army War College Approach to Understanding Gettysburg

Additionally, attendees had an opportunity to participate in the ever-popular "lunch-in" and "dine-in" small group discussions with CWI faculty. These provide excellent opportunities to ask questions in a small group led by an expert.

The CWI conferences offer something for everyone, from longtime students of the Civil War to those who are new to Civil War history. The CWI annual conference begins on the Friday of the second weekend of June, and runs through Wednesday morning of the following week. Dates for upcoming years are: June 12-17, 2026, June 11-16, 2027, and June 9-14, 2028.

More information is available by email at [civilwar@gettysburg.edu](mailto:civilwar@gettysburg.edu) or at their web site: [gettysburg.edu/civil-war-institute/summer-conference/2025-cwi-conference#schedule](https://gettysburg.edu/civil-war-institute/summer-conference/2025-cwi-conference#schedule)

*Shared by Ann Birdsall, BCWRT VP Programs, who attended this year's conference.*



# BCWRT Profile

## Charen Fink

Coming from Youngstown, Ohio, in 1981, I was one of the first members of the Mahoning Valley Civil War Round Table, serving eventually as President. While there I began writing monthly articles in their newsletter.

The day after the inception of BCWRT in May 2010, I was approached by Wally Rueckels and Chuck Roedema asking if I would join the new Civil War Round Table as a Director.

For the next fifteen years I enjoyed being a volunteer in many capacities. While a Director, I initiated the newsletter, "Call to Arms," acting as its first editor. During this time I wrote monthly articles highlighting the many roles of women and their daily lives.

Other positions included Vice President, and Director of Women's Studies, and Advisor. I initiated the Ladies' Forum in 2013 and in March 2025, I turned the leadership over to the very capable Robbin Smith. Currently I am an Advisor which entails being an available resource person to help the organization wherever necessary.



Being a volunteer has enabled me to meet so many Civil War enthusiasts from all over this country. We have had, and continue to have, outstanding leadership and volunteers. The speakers continue to offer programs to enrich our knowledge of the

War and its social history. We are fortunate to have this valuable resource in our community.

Though I am not a native North Carolinian, I've always felt I must have been a Southerner in a previous life and I found every opportunity to travel south for vacations. I am a retired registered nurse and specialized in school health. Way back when I was fifteen years old, I dated my future



husband, Dan, who introduced me to his parents. His mother's grandfather was a Civil War Union soldier and his father was a Civil War buff with an impressive library of vintage Civil War books. Needless to say, he and I spent the entire evening pouring over his library, after which, my husband told him I was his date not his father's. From then on I was smitten with the Civil War and continue to study it. In 1991, I began touring various states speaking in period dress specifically about women, their roles, social history, and the North and South. Later I added about twelve additional topics, all involving women. I've toured numerous sites from all over the country but my all-time favorite has always been Gettysburg. It offered many opportunities for studying women and learning how to dress and dance properly for the period.

My interest will always be the Civil War but much of my focus is now on church activities and its Health and Wellness Team serving as a nurse. Other interests include reading about American war stories and historical fiction.



## A Thousand Words a Battle: Bentonville

Part of an Emerging Civil War Series. Posted by Bert Dunkerly, July 4, 2025

### Bentonville, March 19, 1965



Photo by Chris Heisey

General Joseph E. Johnston faced the challenge of stopping General William T. Sherman's armies as they marched across eastern North Carolina in the spring of 1865. Johnston gathered forces from various quarters, including weary garrison troops, anxious Junior Reserves, and the battered remnants of the Army of Tennessee.

At the small community of Bentonville, Johnston struck one of Sherman's columns, hoping to destroy it before the rest of the Union army could arrive in support. The Army of Tennessee had been shattered at Nashville the previous December, and recuperated in northern

Mississippi. Part of the army then moved to North Carolina to join Johnston's command. The main Confederate army in the West, it had launched many fabled attacks like at Shiloh, Stones River, Chickamauga, Atlanta, and Franklin. On the afternoon of March 19, the Army of Tennessee launched its last great attack.

Its ranks were thin and many units were severely understrength. The men were exhausted from short rations and long marches. Joined by troops from the North Carolina Junior Reserves and the Department of the Carolinas, the veterans from the Army of Tennessee

# Civil War Views

stepped off for a massive attack that was sure to break the Union forces before them.

Colonel Charles Broadfoot of the 1st North Carolina Junior Reserves looked up and down the line as they were about to step off. He wrote,

*It looked like a picture and at our distance was truly beautiful. Several officers led the charge on horseback across an open field in full view, with colors flying and line of battle in such perfect order as to be able to distinguish the several field officers in proper place and followed by a battery which dashed at full gallop, wheeled, unlimbered, and opened fire. It was gallantly done, but it was painful to see how close their battle flags were together, regiments being scarcely larger than companies and [the] division not much larger than a regiment should be.*

General Edward Walthall, commanding a division on the end of the line, said,

*I have been in all, or nearly all the battles fought by the Army of Tennessee, and have seen many brave sights, but nothing comparable to this.*

General Alexander P. Stewart, watching from the Confederate left flank, recalled,

*It was an inspiring sight . . . to see the firm, steady lines, their intrepid commander towering above them on his horse, advancing under a shower of bullets into the storm of battle . . .*

A North Carolina artilleryman, whose vantage point allowed him to see the entire attack unfold, wrote that it was *“the most splendid thing I ever witnessed.”*

On the receiving end of this assault was Lieutenant Marcus Bates of the 21st Michigan. They were sheltered in the woods, and as they looked out across the open fields before them, they saw the Army of Tennessee emerge and advance directly upon them. Bates wrote,

*As far as we could see on both our right and left they were coming in unbroken lines with that old yell we had learned to know so well. We held our position, keeping up a continuous and rapid fire, until we could plainly see their trap closing around us as they enveloped our flanks and subjected them to their fire. It was impossible to maintain our position.*

The Confederate attack overwhelmed the Union defenders, driving them back about a mile and nearly driving the Federals entirely off the field. They held on in desperate fighting, ending the last assault of the Army of Tennessee.[1]

— Bert Dunkerly

Part of a series. Used by permission by the author.

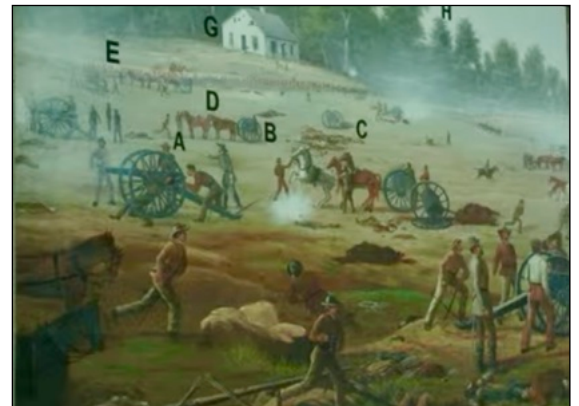
[1] Bradly, Mark L. *The Battle of Bentonville*. Campbell, CA: Savas Woodbury Publishers, 1996, p. 204, 211.

# Meeting Photo Gallery

## Photos From Our 15th Anniversary Meeting in May



Brad Gottfried presented  
*"The Battle of Antietam: The  
Paintings of James Hope."*



Local bluegrass family band, "Dear Maribella & the  
Pigkickers" led off with their foot-stomping rousing music.





# Board Notes & Local Events

## Notes from the May & August 2025 Board of Directors Meetings

1. Our current balance is \$5,854. Expenditures since last meeting include space rental at Generations Church, speaker and band for our 15th anniversary meeting as well as replenishing items for the Sutler's Table.
2. The May presentation by Brad Gottfried about the Civil War battle art of James Pope was well done and received by members. The music of Maribella & The Pigkickers before the presentation was fun and enjoyed by all.
3. Wade Sokolosky of *Blue & Gray Education Society* has requested our help in having new signage created for Fort Anderson for which Wade will take the lead on the project. Both BCWRT and BGES will be credited on the signs. We will develop a budget for this.
4. Tours for the new season are being worked on: Fort Anderson and Town Creek, Fort Caswell, and Fort Fisher.
5. Recent mailings have gone out to our list of inactive members. This has helped us to better identify their status and have a more accurate member database and we have a few that have decided to become active again.
6. Tom Kehoe, Treasurer, is working on the budget for our 2025-2026 season which will be finalized in September.
7. Ed Gantt will replace Eric Wittenburg for our October meeting.

*Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, September 9, 2025. Meetings are held monthly to discuss items that will make our round table more interesting, run better, and keep our membership engaged. President John Butler leads the two-hour meeting that includes interested Advisors and members. The meetings are held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport one week following our gathering at Hatch and begin at 10:00 am. If you wish to attend or have suggestions for the Board, please contact John Butler at [jlbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jlbutler2007@gmail.com).*

## Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

### "I Am Fighting for the Union" Civil War Letters and Journals of a Naval Officer on Blockade Duty

Wilmington's Cape Fear Civil War Round Table welcomes back Dr. Robert W. Browning Jr., Ph.D. to talk about his latest book, *"I Am Fighting for the Union: The Civil War Letters of Naval Officer Henry Willis Wells"*. This is an insightful, detailed, and invaluable account of daily life in the Union Navy; it is also a dramatic human story.

Knowing the Navy's role in isolating the Confederate economy and preventing the movement of troops and supplies within the South is crucial to fully understanding the outcomes of the Civil War.

Dr. Browning, retired chief historian of the U.S. Coast Guard, is the acknowledged expert of the Civil War blockade and his subject presents one of the most moving and insightful accounts of life on the blockade.

Thursday, September 11, 2024, 7:00 pm

St John's Episcopal Church  
1219 Forest Hills Dr., Wilmington

## BCWRT Update

We have a change to our speaker schedule due to the sad and unfortunate death of Eric Wittenberg who was looking forward to being our guest speaker in October.

Ed Gantt will once again join us and his topic will be the years after the Civil War titled, *"With Malice Towards None, With Charity For All?"* Additional information will be provided.





# Muster Notes and Notables

**The September BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, September 2, 2025.  
Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.  
See page 3 for details to attend via YouTube.**

**Registration begins at 6:15 pm and the meeting starts promptly at 7:00 pm.**

**Mail Dues Checks to:** BCWRT, PO Box 10161, Southport, NC. 28461.  
(Please include your current phone number, street address, and email.)

## 2025-2026 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

John Butler: President & Director  
Ann Birdsall: VP & Director  
Jim Dunn: VP & Director  
Jennifer Chapman: Secretary & Director  
Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director  
Bruce Jordan: Director  
Chuck Roedema: Director  
Gar Dowell: Advisor  
Charen Fink: Advisor  
Chris Fonvielle: Advisor

Jim McKee: Advisor  
Chris Mackowski: Advisor  
Skip Maxwell: Advisor  
Roy Pender: Advisor  
Wally Rueckel: Advisor  
Wade Sokolosky: Advisor  
Robbin Smith: Advisor  
Len Trizinski: Advisor  
John Wall: Advisor  
Angela Zombek: Advisor

## Connect with us



We Welcome Your Suggestions for our Speakers, Website, Meeting Procedures, Membership Retention, etc.

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

**Call to Arms** Editor: Jennifer Chapman ([jennifer.chapman3@icloud.com](mailto:jennifer.chapman3@icloud.com))