



# Call to Arms

## Brunswick Civil War Round Table

### The President's Corner **by John Butler**



At our May 5th meeting we will be celebrating our 16th Anniversary. It is hard to imagine that our co-founders Wally Rueckel and Tom O'Donnell thought the BCWRT would become the largest Civil War round table in the country with over 1,200 members.

Our first meeting in May 2010 had 85 attendees and we now average over 350 in person attendees and another 100 online. It is a testament to Wally and Tom's genius and

organizational skills that we have been so successful.

To celebrate the 16th Anniversary, we will have music provided by *Dear MariBella and the Pigkickers*. Registration begins at 5:45 pm and music starts at 6:00 pm.

The May meeting is not only a time to celebrate our founding, but also our volunteers. Our first two volunteers were co-founders Wally Rueckel and Tom O'Donnell. Now we have more than 70 volunteers to plan and execute all the programs and activities for the BCWRT.

At each meeting there are over 20 people involved in the organization and execution of each meeting. This includes the board of directors, registration team, guest registration, 50/50 raffle, Sutler's Table, tours, newsletter, publicity, technology and meeting preparation. Everyone has an important role to play in making each monthly meeting successful.

Without the dedication of the volunteers, we would not be the most successful CWRT in the country. Every speaker who comes to make a presentation is amazed at our size and the efficiency of our organization.

I would like to thank all of the volunteers past and present who have worked to make this round table such a success.

*Continued on Page 3*

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# BCWRT Upcoming Event

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

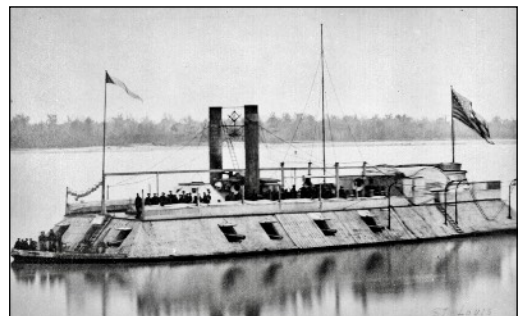
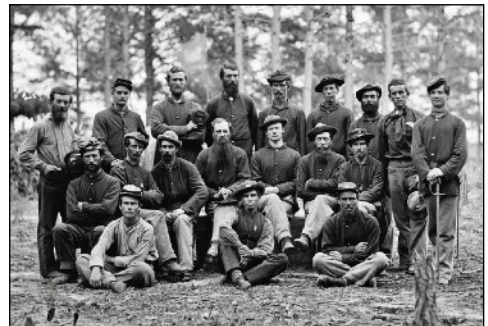
## “The Fight for the Old North State: The Civil War in North Carolina January - May, 1864”



Newsome will focus on the Confederate effort to retake the key coastal positions in North Carolina during the first half of 1864. In launching these operations, Confederate leaders sought to secure vital supplies for Gen. Robert E. Lee’s army, and dampen a growing peace movement then threatening to pull the state out of the Confederacy and out of the war.

The ensuing series of engagements, including the New Bern Expedition and the Battle of Plymouth, involved complex joint army and navy operations, daring raids, and deadly ironclads.

Our guest speaker **Hampton Newsome**, award-winning Civil War historian, joins us to discuss a topic of interest for all North Carolina residents entitled, “*The Fight for the Old North State.*”



Hampton Newsome led the Federal Trade Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Protection team that created the ubiquitous yellow Energy Guide labels on our appliances. Now retired, he has had a long career as attorney with the Federal Trade Commission and the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

He is also the author of several Civil War books, including “*The Fight for the Old North State: The Civil War in North Carolina January-May, 1864.*”

**See page 13 for Pre-Registering for the Meeting and the link to watch on YouTube.**

# BCWRT Upcoming Event

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

16  
Years



It will be a festive evening on May 5 as we celebrate our 16th anniversary.

Returning to help celebrate the evening's program will be the foot stompin' music of our local favorite bluegrass band, **Dear MariBella and the Pigkickers!**

To best describe this up-and-coming band's music is a quote from the Wilmington Star News: *"with a mix of tight harmonics, considerable music chops, and the youthful ability to conjure instant goodwill, the band stands out on a quality, crowded Wilmington music scene."*

But best of all, this is a family affair, with sisters Isabella on fiddle and AnnMari on guitar, add brother Pete on banjo, the youngest sibling Chris on mandolin, and sometimes Dad on bass. So get ready for some good ole foot-stompin' music and a little rabble-rousing fun!

The entertainment will begin at 6:00 pm and *doors will open at 5:45 pm to allow for early registration.*



## The President's Corner... *continued from page 1*

Take a moment and consider volunteering. You might realize that you get as much or more from volunteering as does the organization that you help. Volunteering is important because it enables individuals to help others in a selfless way. When individuals volunteer, they may choose to help people, support philanthropic causes and provide assistance to their local community. Additionally, volunteering benefits everyone and is a terrific way to have a positive impact in the community.

Please consider joining us as a volunteer and give back to the BCWRT where you have enjoyed some great historical presentations. We have volunteer roles that take as little as an hour or two a month.

*"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."* — Winston Churchill

Again, I would like to personally thank each and every volunteer for all of their heartfelt efforts to make the BCWRT such a wonderful success.

*John*

## ***“Competing Visions of the Post-War World: Military Reconstruction and Southern Resistance in North Carolina” with Angela Zombek***



Returning guest speaker Angela Zombek took center stage and captivated her audience with a subject which could properly be covered over the course of a semester at one of her Civil War classes at UNCW.

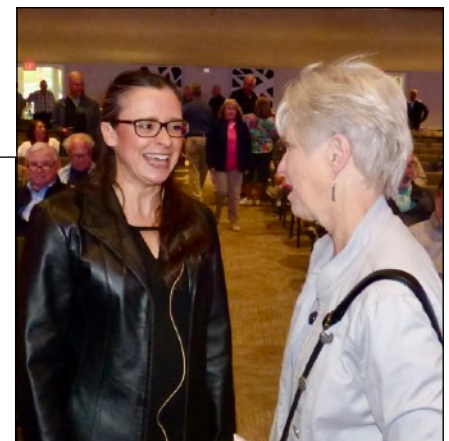


Her one hour or so presentation was riveting, covering the period from May, 1865 when President Andrew Johnson called William Holden to Washington and appointed him provisional governor of North Carolina. He was a central figure in the state’s dramatic, and even chaotic, Civil War.

Angela ended her presentation with the incredible events during the Wilmington massacre of 1898. And yes, Angela’s fascinating presentation was completed in about an hour!



massacre of 1898. And yes, Angela’s fascinating



*This speaker had terrific facts & details of history - that the KKK actually was an instrument that went after not only Blacks BUT also white Republicans, that ALL of the Confederate states except TN voted against the 14th Amendment, and it was interesting hearing where the names Holden and Galloway came from historically. She did a splendid job...So grateful you offer it for those of us who cannot make the meeting. - Kendra Maxwell*

## Fort Caswell Tours, April 2026

By Jim Dunn

The Brunswick Civil War Round Table hosted two well-attended guided tours of Fort Caswell on April 7, offering participants a rare opportunity to explore one of North Carolina's most significant coastal fortifications. Both tours—held at 4:00 PM and 5:30 PM—were led by historian **Jim McKee**, longtime site manager of Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson, and one of the region's foremost interpreters of Cape Fear military history.

McKee guided attendees through the sprawling 19th-century fort, highlighting its evolution from an antebellum Third System masonry work to a key defensive position during the Civil War and later a strategic installation through World War II. Participants explored the fort's massive brick casemates, artillery positions, and commanding views over the Cape Fear River and Atlantic approaches.



Throughout the tour, McKee emphasized several historical touchpoints:

**Antebellum Construction:** Built beginning in 1826, Fort Caswell was part of a national effort to strengthen America's coastal defenses.

**Civil War Role:** Seized by North Carolina troops in 1861, the fort helped guard the vital

Confederate supply line into Wilmington, working in tandem with Fort Fisher and other river defenses.

**Postwar and 20th-Century Service:** Fort Caswell remained active through multiple eras, including the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II, adapting to new technologies and strategic needs.



**Enduring Legacy:**

Today, the fort stands as one of the best-preserved coastal defense sites on the East Coast, offering a tangible link to nearly 150 years of military history.

Attendees praised McKee's depth of knowledge and engaging storytelling, which brought to life the soldiers, engineers, and communities connected to the fort across generations.

The BCWRT continues its mission to promote education, preservation, and public understanding of Civil War and regional military history through lectures, tours, and community programs.

# Civil War Women and More

## Ann Hill Carter Lee (1773-1829)

Ann Hill Carter Lee came from one of the wealthiest and oldest families in Virginia spending her childhood at Shirley Plantation (in the family since the 1600's) on the James River. She did not enjoy good health and feared becoming an invalid. This eventually came to pass. She suffered from narcolepsy, a sleep disorder that was little understood at the time. Victims sometimes fell into a "sleep paralysis" with a deep trance-like state which could cause the cessation of normal reflexes and sensations.

At age 20, she married Henry Lee III (Lighthorse Harry) in 1793. He was 17 years her senior with three children from a previous marriage. She bore him four children. Some sources state that in 1804 she became ill and was declared dead, placed in a coffin and 3 days later laid to rest in the family vault. Some time later a sexton bringing flowers heard her voice calling for help so he removed the lid from the coffin. Lack of medical knowledge at the time and the lack of embalming made this scenario possible.

By January 19, 1807, she had fully recovered and gave birth to a son, Robert Edward Lee, named after her two brothers. Most of the traits that we admire in R.E. Lee, deep religious beliefs and sense of duty, were imparted to him by his well-bred, fervently devoted mother. Until her death he was her primary caretaker.



*The Civil War Ladies' Department by Charen Bishop Fink. Shared by Robbin Smith*

## Cooking Eggplant

(During the Civil War and shortly after, 1867)

Select long purple if possible, the next kind is the round kind with prickles on the stem. Peel and slice them, spread salt on each separate piece and lay them in a colander to drain; let them lie one hour, parboil, and fry them, until thoroughly cooked, in pork fat or butter; eggplant unless well cooked are insipid and even disgusting; they must be cooked through and browned.

From *Civil War Recipes, Receipts from the Pages of Godey's Lady's Book*, Lily May Spaulding and John Spaulding, Editors  
Shared by Robbin Smith

## *The Ladies' Forum*

Monday, October 19, 2026

*Save the date for an evening with **Kate Stuart***



Sue Crippen, an experienced performer and a member of the Southport Historical Society Living Voices group, will portray Kate Stuart who was a formidable presence and civic leader in Southport during the Civil War and in the decades that followed. She was also the innkeeper of the most famous hostelry in Southport, the Stuart House.

For information or reservations, contact Robbin Smith at [robbinsmithnc@yahoo.com](mailto:robbinsmithnc@yahoo.com)

# Civil War News & Event

## 1726 Historic Sloop Point House Program & Tour

Monday, May 9 11:00 AM - 3:30 PM Hampstead, NC

Sloop Point Plantation House, built in 1726, is among the rarest colonial buildings not only in the Cape Fear region, but in the entire state of North Carolina. Built 50 years before the Battle of Moores Creek and the Declaration of Independence, this year is the 300th anniversary of this ancient and beautifully graceful home. It is the 2nd oldest standing structure in the state. The private home has not been opened to the public since 2007.

The event offers two public entrance times, with the advance purchase of tickets, at noon and 1:00 p.m. Features of the event include:

- A tour of the inside and cellar of the historic home.
- A 40-minute informative program about the times and the house at 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the barn by co-presenters author/historian UNCW Professor Emeritus Dr. Chris E. Fonvielle, and Michael Y. Taylor, Vice-President of Pender County Historical Society.

On the grounds will be the following historical demonstration/information stations sponsored by supporting community historical entities:

**Historical Society of Topsail Island** – about the necessity of manufacturing salt during the Civil War during the Union blockade of imports to the southern coast and the salt works at Sloop Point.

**NC Maritime Museum at Southport & Brunswick Town State Historic Site** – about colonial indigo dye production in the lower Cape Fear. The desired blue dye was exported to England. Learn how it was produced and see a vat of the dye made from the indigo plant, indigenous to our region.

**The Pender County 1865 Society** – about “The Other Residents of Sloop Point and Enslavement.” The story and contributions of the enslaved will be remembered and honored.

**Moores Creek National Battlefield** – about 18th century musketry with firing demonstrations.

**TBA special guests** – about the daring and successful 1863 Union raid on Sloop Point to destroy a blockade running schooner and the salt works guarded by Confederate troops.

**Because the number of tickets available for sale are restricted, purchase in advance to ensure admittance. This is a charitable benefit event for Pender County Museum, a non-profit institution operated solely by Pender County Historical Society.**

**Tickets: \$75 incl. sales tax. Rain or shine event; no refunds.**

PURCHASE TICKETS, LOCATION ADDRESS, AND OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE THROUGH THESE LINKS:

[Pender County Museum Facebook](#)

[Sloop Point House Tour](#)



Sloop Point House  
229 Family Lane  
Hampstead, NC 28443

# BCWRT Volunteers

## BCWRT Volunteers, Current and Former (As of May 1, 2026)

Below is a list of the volunteers who have worked to make the BCWRT the great organization that it is. An organization is only as good as its volunteers and these people have been tremendous. Thank you for all of your good work.

### Current Volunteers

Amy Adams	Ann Birdsall	Bob Benedict	Diane Bergan
Abigail Bergan	Monica Bender	William Bender	Susan Burgess
John Butler	Ann Butler	Jack Carpenter	Judy Casey
Jennifer Chapman	June Chisolm	Jim Conklin	Audry Connelly
Sue Crippen	Tom Currier	Pat de Barros	Lynn Dean
Hema De Silva	Bob DiMattia	Rina DiMaio	Meg Dingwall
Gar Dowell	Jim Dunn	Kate Dunn	Chris Fonvielle
Tiffany Gunter	Trish Greene	Bob Hagerman	Gerald Haviland
Donna Italiano	Matt Italiano	Bruce Jordan	Joe Kaczvinsky
Barbara Kanto	Tom Kehoe	Joan Kelly	Betsy Kumnick
Naomi Macey	Joe Livoti	Chris Mackowski	Skip Maxwell
Jim McKee	Mike Miller	Helen Morschauser	Rick Morschauser
Karen Penner	Gary Pyle	Larry Rittinger	Jodi Robinson
Chuck Roedema	Maggie S. Roedema	Beverly Rounds	Donna Serabian
Mike Shissler	Robbin Smith	Steve Smith	Wade Sokolosky
E. Gifford Stack	Elizabeth Szala	Connie Tatman	Fred Taylor
Len Trizinsky	Gene Trombley	Carolyn Vey	John Wall
John Walsh	Tim Walsh	Mary Kay West	Jim Wheeler
Angie Zarcaro	Angela Zombek		

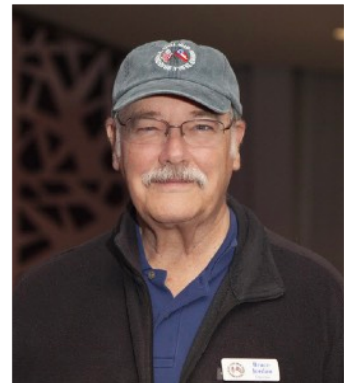
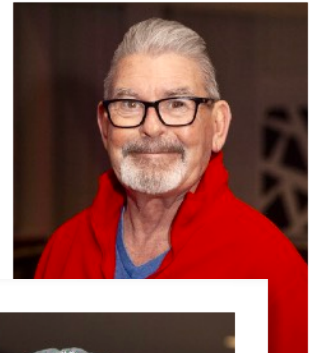
### Former Volunteers

Roger Albizu	Alan Armstrong	Mo Beers	Sam Benson
Teresa Benson	Deb Bevenour	Frank Bevenour	Mary Boose
Wayne Briggs	Cindy Brochure	Tom Brown	Peter Carmichael
June Chisolm	Pam Collins	Ron Collins	Dianna Conaty
Tom Conaty	Kirk Davis	Joe Day	Paul Douglas
Mike Duffy	Matt Farina	Charen Fink	Dan Fink
Doug Friedman	Tish Gordon	Anne Hager	Marv Hamer
Wesley Heckendorn	Connie Hendrix	Harvey Hosid	John Hoskin
Carolyn Hubbard	Jim Johnson	Jim Kane	Ken Keast
Frank Kelly	Debbie King	Gary Krupp	Paul Laird
Richard Largent	Ginny Largent	Carol Lehr	Linda Lewis
Wayne Lewis	John Lewis	Beth Linton	Martha Loughlin
Nick Mastorides	Diane McCorkle	Lee McCorkle	Sharon McCoy
Marty McLaughin	Katy Menne	Jim Medeiros	Carol Lee Morris
Dale Mullarkey	John Nowell	Kathy O'Donnell	Tom O'Donnell
Rich Palazzi	Roy Pender	Woody Petchel	Ruth Ann Petzinger
Frank Pinto	Mike Powell	Warren Pratt	Jon Richmond
Leslie Rivers	Wally Rueckel	Nan Rueckel	Lori Sanderlin
Gail Savell	Dan Sellers	Dave Shultz	Chris Simonetti
Nathan Sloan	Lee Smyre	Bobby Springle	Gene Sullivan
Bobbi Sullivan	R. Summerville	Barry Thomas	Fred Truelove
Richard Turek	Frances Ventola	Ralph Ventola	Christine Volpe
Barbara Voorhees	Bill Voorhees	Robin Ware	

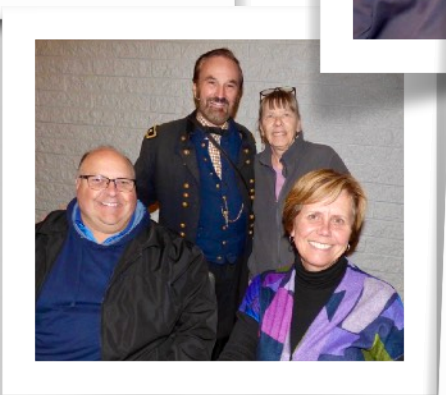
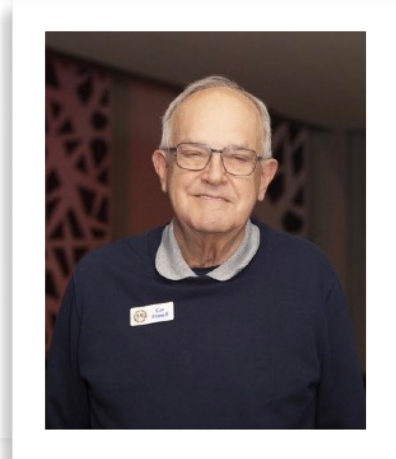
# BCWRT Volunteers



Our Founders and first Volunteers,  
Tom O'Donnell and Wally Rueckel



# BCWRT Volunteers



## Preview of Upcoming September 2026 to May 2027 Program

Ann Birdsall has done a great job of selecting speakers for the upcoming BCWRT Speakers Program. These are the speakers who are scheduled for each month and as usual, we will publish information about them and their selected topics each month in advance. It promises to be another interesting season.

**September** - Thomas Jessee as General Lee.

**October** - Ed Gantt talks about the US Colored Troops and their combat actions in Florida during the Civil War.

**November** - Chris Hartley, a new speaker for us, will discuss the life of General D. H. Hill.

**December** - Chris Mackowski returns.

**January** - Jared Portman is our guest speaker.

**February** - Judkin Browning returns.

**March** - Wade Sokolosky will give one of his interesting presentations.

**April** - Kevin Pawlak returns.

**May** - Jack Davis will close our season.

## The Sutler's Table



Thank you to everyone who helped us out with our Free Book Giveaway.

We still have a good assortment of **Civil War books** for you, but the number is now down to a

level that can be stored at Hatch Auditorium.

The Sutler's Table has an assortment of polo and tee **shirts for both men and women** in different colors and sizes with our round table logo, as well as an assortment of **BCWRT logo hats, magazines, decals, and free Civil War Trails maps.** Come on up and find something you like. We thank you for your support.



## Civil War Art for Sale

Our dated and autographed print by **Mort Kunstler** work titled "**The Fairfax Raid**" is available for sale. This is #0926 of 2,750 limited editions and comes with the Certificate of Authenticity. The print depicts Mosby's raid on Fairfax Court House and subsequent capture of Brigadier General BG Edwin Stoughton.

This piece will be displayed and offered for sale at our May 5 meeting.

BCWRT's asking price for the print is \$125 (OBO). Available on the Mort Kunstler website for \$400.



Print size is 18" x 27 1/2"  
(overall size is 23" x 32 1/2").

# Local Events

## Southport Historical Society Programs

### Second Tuesday Talk

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 10:00 am  
Margaret and James L. Harper, Jr. Library  
101 W. Moore Street, Southport.

**Shannon Walker**, Curator of Programming and Education at the North Carolina Maritime Museum at Southport will discuss the Venus flytrap in a presentation called "A Curiosity Grows in Carolina". First identified in 1759, the little plant sparked a craze that would involve a North Carolina royal governor, the who's who of 18th century scientists, and a high seas adventure.

*Free. Reservations Required: 910-457-6237*

### **An Evening of Celebration and Excitement**

Thursday, May 28, 2026, 5:30 pm  
Southport Community Building  
223 E. Bay Street, Southport.

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy the salubrious breezes on the Garrison Lawn where SHS will celebrate the Commemorative Bricks that are placed in the walkway in front of Fort Johnston Museum and Visitors' Center. Word has it that a few special guests will include past members of our Community as portrayed by our "Living Voices" Actors. Live musical entertainment.

The meeting is free and open to everyone.  
Reservations are **not** required.

### **Ancestry Research Assistance** *from Southport Historical Society*

Tuesday, May 19, 2026  
10 am - 12 pm, Walk-ins Only  
Harper Library Computer Room  
Free. Open to All



### ***The Calling Card***

**The Monthly E-Newsletter  
of the  
Society for Women and the  
Civil War**

## Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

### "Brown Water Ironclad: CSS Neuse"

Presented by Matthew Young  
Site Manager of the CSS Neuse  
Museum in Kinston, NC

On October 17, 1862 the Confederate Navy Department signed a contract with the shipbuilding firm of Thomas Howard and Elijah Ellis of New Bern to construct an ironclad gunboat to be called the CSS Neuse, named for the river that runs through the northern part of the state. The site, however, was vulnerable to Union attack and the unfinished ship was moved to Kinston for completion.

Unlike its sister ship, the CSS Albemarle, the Neuse saw no action until the end of the war when U.S. land forces reached Kinston. The ship helped cover the retreat of the Confederate army from Kinston after the Battle of Wise Fork, and was then scuttled. The wreck of the ship settled to the bottom of its namesake river only becoming visible during times of low water. The machinery, armor plating, and guns of the Neuse were salvaged immediately following the war, but no serious attempts were made to restore the ship until the mid-1900s. The gunboat's remains were salvaged in the early 1960s, and the hull was moved to the Richard Caswell Memorial Park in 1964. Since then, it has been the centerpiece of Matt's CSS Neuse State Historic Site and Governor Richard Caswell Memorial in Kinston.

Thursday, May 14, 7:00 pm

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

### **Wilmington Historical Sites**

#### **Burgwin-Wright House**

224 Market St, Wilmington, NC  
Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm  
Call (910) 762-0570

#### **Bellamy Mansion**

503 Market St, Wilmington, NC  
Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm  
Call (910) 762-0570

#### **Latimer House**

126 South Third St, Wilmington, NC  
Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 3 pm  
Call: (910) 762-0492

## Notes from the April 14 Board of Directors Meeting

1. Our April meeting with Angela Zombek had a good turnout with 305 in person and another 97 via YouTube and was well received by the members.
2. The free book giveaway is complete and the goal of reducing the space required for storage at Hatch was met.
3. We will begin registration 15 minutes earlier for our May meeting as we will have *Maribella and the Pigkickers* for our 16th anniversary entertainment starting at 6 pm.
4. The Board has decided that in future years we may award a second scholarship of \$1,000 for a graduate student of history. This will be an optional decision each year.
5. Robbin Smith's email will be added to The Ladies' Forum notices for information and reservations. Robbin will also take reservations at the September and October meetings.
6. The \$1,000 annual scholarship has been issued to UNCW and will be awarded in May.
7. A total of 71 people participated in tours of Fort Caswell before the April meeting. Jim McKee did an excellent job leading the tours. A tour of Oakdale Cemetery with Chris Fonvielle is being planned for October.
8. An article about BCWRT along with photos is in SPT / OKI Magazine this month.
9. Chuck Roedema nominated Naomi Macey and Trish Greene as Advisors for their contributions to the BCWRT and it was unanimously approved.

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*Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, August 11, 2026. Meetings are held monthly. 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 [jbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jbutler2007@gmail.com).*

## Pre-Register for the May Meeting

Starting Friday, March 20, and lasting until noon on Tuesday, April 7, 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 meeting in person, you will be able to watch it via YouTube Live Streaming by using the following link:

[https://youtube.com/live/FTT1GKhvTUg?  
feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/FTT1GKhvTUg?feature=share)

*To view at home on your TV: watch on YouTube TV if you have that, or you can "cast" or "mirror" from your phone to your TV. If you are unfamiliar with this, click [here](#) for a link to instructions..*

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

[https://www.youtube.com/  
@brunswickcivilwarroundtab14954/videos](https://www.youtube.com/@brunswickcivilwarroundtab14954/videos)





# Muster Notes and Notables

**The May BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, May 5, 2026.**

Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.

See page 13 for details to attend via YouTube.

**Registration begins at 5:45 pm and the music starts at 6:00 pm, followed by the meeting 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	Trish Greene: Advisor
Ann Birdsall: VP & Director	Naomi Macey: Advisor
Jim Dunn: VP & Director	Jim McKee: Advisor
Jennifer Chapman: Secretary & Director	Chris Mackowski: Advisor
Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director	Skip Maxwell: Advisor
Bruce Jordan: Director	Wade Sokolosky: Advisor
Chuck Roedema: Director	Robbin Smith: Advisor
Gar Dowell: Advisor	Len Trizinski: Advisor
Charen Fink: Advisor	John Wall: Advisor
Chris Fonvielle: Advisor	Angela Zombek: Advisor

## Connect with us



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

The Brunswick Civil War Round Table does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, creed, ancestry, disability or any other legally protected status in its educational programs, activities, or membership.

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))



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