



# Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER - JOHN BUTLER



Hatch Auditorium is undergoing some major renovations in **January and February 2023**, so the BCWRT will meet at an alternate location. The updating at Hatch involves new seating, new lighting for

the lobby, alterations to the stage and auditorium, and windows for the lobby.

The sound system will be upgraded and new sound proofing will be added. The project is expected to take about two months.

**Remember our December meeting is still at Hatch Auditorium.**



The BCWRT Board considered a number of options for a temporary meeting place. The only one that met our size



requirements, the ability to do realtime online presentations, videotaping of the presentations, and Zoom capability was

Generations Church. Members are encouraged to attend the live meeting at our temporary venue, or watch it on Zoom or view it on YouTube one week after the presentation. For those that may not know, Generations Church is on route 211 between St James and Arbor Creek. The church address is 4019 Executive Park Blvd SE, Southport.

Our preregistration process, the doors opening at 6:15 p.m. for on-site registration, and meeting start time remain the same.

Generations church has seating for over 750 people, an excellent sound system, ample parking, and plenty of room in the lobby to accommodate registration.

There's good news for Christmas shoppers at the December meeting: the Sutler's table will hold their annual Christmas sale, and Skip Maxwell will take almost any offer for the remaining 2022 prints and statues.

On behalf of the BCWRT officers, directors and advisers we wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*John*

# APPOMATTOX STARTS DIFFICULT UNIFICATION

We often think of the surrender at Appomattox at the end of the Civil War as a critical chapter in the country's history. It was. But it also marked the beginning of a period that would continue tensions and uncertainty for both the North and the South on the return to unification. This intriguing dilemma, entitled "The Legacy of Appomattox," will be discussed at our meeting on Tuesday, December 6, by Beth Parnicza, Chief of Education and Visitor Services at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park.



Many thought the gentlemanly handshake between Grant and Lee at Appomattox would yield the pattern for Reconstruction's implementation. Alas, it was not to be. Some Southerners wanted to promote The Lost Cause theory, believing theirs was a noble fight, and they were not defeated but rather simply outnumbered. Other issues proved just as challenging, e.g., how to handle freed slaves and getting the South reincorporated politically and socially back into the Union. Many Southerners viewed Reconstruction as "Punishment," while still others outrightly promoted White Supremacy.

Lee's surrender at Appomattox portrays one of the most honorable and sincere actions of the war. What followed during Reconstruction proved more challenging and less estimable or honest.

The trials and tribulations of Reconstruction can be characterized as being a complex series of successes and failures, about many areas, over many years, and will best be summarized by noted historian



and guest speaker, Beth Parnicza. Beth's credentials and knowledge about this period of our history are exemplary. She has served as a park ranger and historian at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Park for nine years before joining the Appomattox Court House National Historic Park. In March of this year, Beth became a prestigious member of the Advisory Board at the University of Virginia's John L. Nau Center for Civil War History.

You are encouraged to attend the meeting either in person or via Zoom. If participating via Zoom, simply use

the following:

**Link** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85751473822?pwd=MkU2a0RWTFBZUmRmQnljSnJld0hDQT09>

**Meeting ID** - 857 5147 3822 **Passcode** - 108086

If attending in person, we suggest you pre-register. *Remember you must pre-register for each meeting, so any previous pre-registration won't work for December's meeting!* Starting Friday, November 25, and lasting until noon on Tuesday, December 6, 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. Bring the ticket(s) to Hatch and enter through the special door on the far right. (Please do not go to the registration tables.) 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!

The Tuesday, December 6 meeting takes place at Hatch Auditorium on the grounds of Fort Caswell. Registration begins at 6:15 p.m., and the program starts promptly at 7 p.m. The guest admission fee is \$10, and can be applied toward the \$25 annual membership dues.

# USS Monitor and the First Ironclad Battle

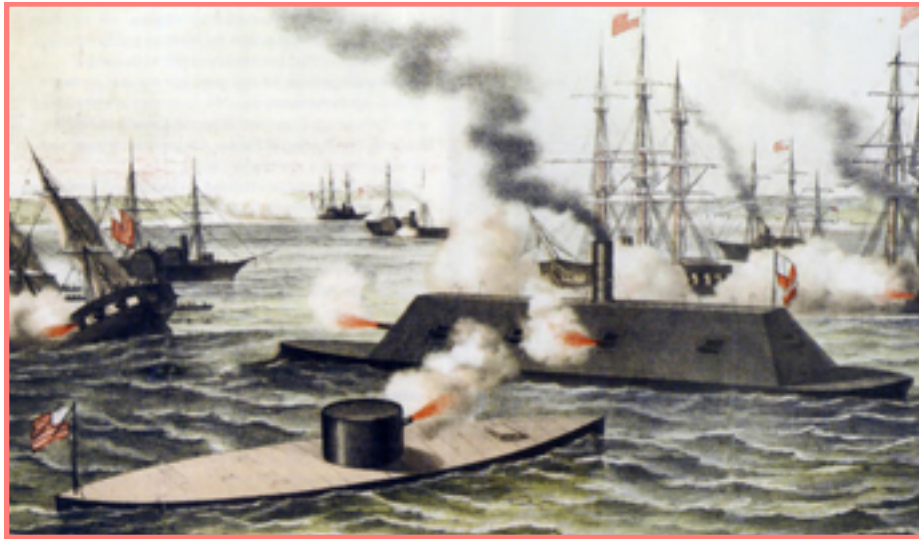
A review of Dwight Hughes' November Presentation [By Jim Medeiros](#)

The surprise in Dwight Hughes's recounting of the Battle of Hampton Roads turned out NOT to be the fierceness of the fighting, the vulnerability of the US Navy, nor the jeers of the nation at the Monitor. Instead, it appears business acumen triumphed over military prowess.

The U.S. never had a large standing army or navy so it had not advanced with the Europeans in pursuing steam-powered ironclads. With the Civil War and the need for numerous warships to enforce the Union blockade, the naval buildup focused on wooden ships, most boasting steam supplemented with sails. The conversion of the captured USS Merrimack to the ironclad CSS Virginia prompted consternation from the Chesapeake to New England. Rumors ran that all Union ships in Hampton Roads would suffer destruction, then the ironclad would steam up the Chesapeake to bombard Washington, DC, then it would attack commercial shipping in New York, then sail on the port of Boston. All the threats called forth the talents of Swede John Ericson.

Ericson designed the Monitor and shepherded its construction in only 100 days. Using nine contractors in seven northeastern cities, he assembled the parts together in Brooklyn. With contractors' ironclad experience limited to boilers and railroad engines, somehow Ericson proved an effective leader for the disparate teams. His design and its construction produced a combat-ready vessel rapidly constructed and deployed, suitable for restricted waters and of small size and shallow draft, making it a formidable target.

Yet despite its dispatch in construction, speed left several handicaps. Monitor got no extensive sea trials. The crew consisted of volunteers from across the navy, many barely wet by the sea. The scattered origins of the crew raised questions about their effectiveness to work together in a wholly untested



cramped dark environment. At the time Monitor sailed into range of the Virginia, the crew and their officers had never even fired her only armament—two Parrot guns. Criticisms of all this were easy to find.

Descriptions from the press and existing navy underwhelmed and included such monikers as Washtub on a raft, Hat on a shingle, Cheese box on a plank, and Ugly.

In spite of skepticism, Monitor performed well. Her two guns protected by her small visibility above the waterline gave the Virginia a difficult target that even when struck (a total of 22 times) suffered at most a two and one-half-inch dent. The Monitor apparently being an invulnerable target, its low profile and maneuverability allowed her to approach point-blank range of the Virginia. Thus, northern manufacturing prowess neutralized the threats to the Union in Hampton Roads, Washington, the Chesapeake, New York City and Washington, and the noose of the blockade around the Confederacy grew tighter.

A full-scale replica of the USS Monitor exists at the Maritime Museum in Newport News. With hundreds of artifacts from the Monitor at the Museum, the ship's rotating turret occupies pride of place.

## **WE'LL VOTE FOR OFFICERS IN DECEMBER**

As mentioned in the past two newsletters and at previous meetings, our by-laws require us to elect our leadership at the December 6 meeting.

We will vote by a show of hands on the following:

- President – currently John Butler
- Two Vice Presidents – currently Ann Birdsall is the VP for Programs and the second VP position is vacant
- Treasurer – currently Tom Kehoe
- Secretary – currently Jim Kane

If there is anyone that is interested in running for any of these seats, please contact Wally Rueckel at 248-252-6844 before the December meeting. If you are considering the 2nd Vice President seat, please contact John Butler at [jlbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jlbutler2007@gmail.com).

## **NOTES FROM NOVEMBER'S BOD MEETING**

Your Board of Directors, along with interested Advisors, meets 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 with a packed agenda that he keeps moving along. These meetings, open to all members, are held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport, one week following our gathering at Hatch, and begin at 10 a.m. If you wish to attend or have suggestions for the Board, please contact John at [jlbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jlbutler2007@gmail.com). The next meeting is Tuesday, December 13.

Here are the main items of interest from the November 8 meeting.

1. Our books, prints, and statues will be sold at low prices — or even make an offer pricing — at the December meeting. We need to remove these items from our inventory.
2. Our current balance as of November 8 is \$6,588.
3. Members need to tell us when they have new contact information including phone, email address, and home address. John will make an announcement on this at December's meeting.
4. Charen reported another successful Ladies' Forum even though attendance didn't match recent meetings.
5. Hatch will be closed January and February for remodeling. After discussion, it was decided to hold our meetings during this period at Generations Church on Route 211.
6. To date, there are no new names for any of the officer positions that we will vote on at December's meeting.
7. The Board unanimously voted to once again provide a \$1,000 history scholarship to the University of North Carolina Wilmington. The scholarship for the 2023-24 academic year will be given in the name of Gary Krupp who passed away earlier this year and was our Treasurer for several years.

## BCWRT DONATIONS HELPFUL TO OTHERS

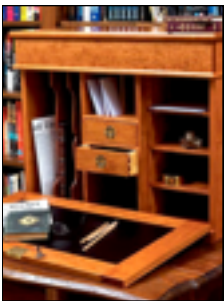
Since our inception in 2010, the Brunswick Civil War Round Table has donated more than \$66,000 to various Civil War battlefields, parks, historic sites, and organizations supportive of educating, promoting interest in, and disseminating knowledge of the Civil War.

### Summary by Organization - As of November 2022

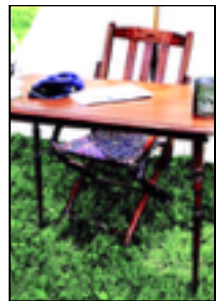
Friends of Fort Anderson	\$10,184
Cameron Art Museum (for Artwork and Signage)	10,000
Goldsborough Bridge Battlefield Association	6,000
Friends of Fort Fisher	5,850
NC Baptist Assembly (Fort Caswell)	5,281
Friends of the Graveyard of Atlantic Museum - Hatteras	5,000
UNCW Scholarship (2019-20, 20-21, 21-22, 22-23, 23-24)	5,000
Trinity UM Church	3,400
Friends of NC Maritime Museum - Southport	3,250
Western Carolina University (Max Scholarship)	2,500
Sugar Loaf Park Signage	2,000
Friends of Bentonville Battlefield	1,600
NC Literary & Historical Assoc.	1,000
City of Southport - Fort Johnson Weather Tower	1,000
Pamplin Historical Park	665
Richmond Battlefield Assoc.	578
CSS Nuese Museum	500
Oak Island Station, U.S. Coast Guard	500
Fort Holmes	464
Kennesaw State University	300
National Park Foundation	250
National Civil War Museum	250
Lenoir City Tourism	200
Boy Scout Troop #238	200
Civil War Trails	200
Save Wyse Fork Battlefield	200
Angel House - Cape Fear Hospice	100
Brunswick County Charters of Freedom	100
Oak Island Rec. Center - Veterans Park	100
	100
	<b>\$66,672</b>

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### **Calling all BCWRT Woodworking Hobbyists**



If you're into woodworking, why not create a piece of American history with a downloadable collection of Civil War furniture plans, including a folding officer's chair, drop front desk, shaving box, and more! Visit <https://www.rockler.com/civil-war-furniture-plans-collection>. (Thanks to Jim Medeiros for bringing these plans to our attention!)



## LADIES' FORUM ONCE AGAIN ENTERTAINS AND ENLIGHTENS

By Charen Fink and Ann Birdsall

On Monday, October 31 (Halloween!) 60 BCWRT ladies and guests met in Murrow Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church for an evening of education and entertainment. We obviously did not participate in Halloween festivities but we were regaled instead by



speaker Betty Vaughn who is a noted author and Civil War speaker. Her topic was “Christmas Traditions During the 19<sup>th</sup> century.” As the ladies entered the hall they were serenaded by Christmas music and offered hot coffee.

Betty explained — with the assistance of excellent PowerPoint slides — that many of our current traditions originated during the Civil War period. The Christmas tree was first put up in England by Prince Albert, Queen Victoria’s husband. Christmas cards were handmade and then replaced with commercial cards. During the Civil War years carols were sung, the “Twas the Night Before Christmas” poem was read throughout many homes, and Santa Claus went through numerous transformations and

appeared dressed in various outfits according to the country in which he appeared.

At the forum refreshments were offered consisting of three different kinds of tea sandwiches, cookies and cider. The buffet table was covered in a lace tablecloth and decorated in a fall motif consisting of a yellow mum and small, decorated, pumpkins done by some of the women of the church. During the intermission, the ladies were encouraged to take home as many Civil War books as they wanted from Charen Fink’s extensive library.

Carolee Morris, a BCWRT member, gave us 19<sup>th</sup> century etiquette lessons. They included the proper deportment during dinner, social graces, and proper seating during formal dinners. Also included were admonitions such as, “Don’t pick your teeth at the table,” “don’t pick your nose,” and “don’t pick your neighbor’s nose!”

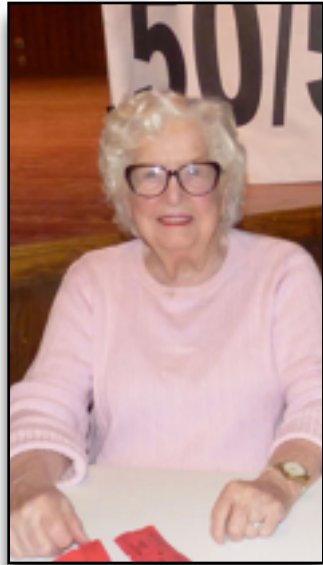
The event concluded after two hours with the announcement of next year’s speaker and topic. Dr. Chris Fonvielle, retired UNCW history professor and BCWRT Advisor, will reprise his talk of six years ago, “Sex in the Civil War.” It was a hit then and sure to be a hit next year. (The forum is scheduled for Monday, October 30, 2023.)

We had the help of many volunteers and ladies, some who were not BCWRT members: Marty Loughlin, Betsy Kumnick, and Marion Martin who donated items from the church kitchen. Thanks went out to the church and the staff along with all the attending ladies who supported this program.

In the words of a former BCWRT columnist,  
**Ya just had to be there!**

# OUR SYMPATHIES

The BCWRT is saddened at the recent passing of Connie Hendrix and Philip Gerard.



Connie was a long-standing member of our round table and volunteered in numerous positions for the organization. She was an Advisor for many years, sharing her knowledge of the Civil War, recommending speakers, and assisting with the operation of the BCWRT. Most recently, she helped with the sale of our 50/50 tickets.

Connie will be remembered for her always welcoming bright smile.

Philip Gerard, a professor at UNCW and prolific writer, was our Zoom speaker in January 2021. His topic, “The Last Battleground: Understanding the Civil War Through the Experience of North

Carolina,” was an engaging presentation based on



one of the last books he wrote by the same title. Philip’s monthly columns in “Our State” magazine on the Civil War in North Carolina were supported by original research, as well as Civil War stories

and artifacts shared by relatives of soldiers and families from the war.

Thanks to Connie and Philip for enriching our round table. May they Rest In Peace. We extend our sympathies to their families and friends.



## USCT Park Dedicated

Article and Photos by John Butler

On Sunday, November 13, the Cameron Art Museum held a grand opening of the United States Colored Troops Park. It is the only sculpture park in the country created to honor the USCT and their fight



for freedom. The Cameron Art Museum is also unique in that it is the only art museum that contains Civil War fortifications on its grounds. The USCT Park is located next to the museum on some of the field fortifications from the Battle of Forks Road on February 20-21, 1865. This was the last battle before the fall of Wilmington to the Union forces and involved approximately 1,800 colored soldiers. Last year the BCWRT contributed to the park seating, and this year we donated to the signage describing the events that took place.





*Your BCWR1 Leadership Team wishes every member and their family an enjoyable, safe holiday season. We thank you for your support during 2022 and look forward to bringing you more educational programs in the coming year about the Civil War.*



## **CIVIL WAR VIEWS - Part 1**



Member Dick Slease, who among other attributes is a professional photographer, took this photo while visiting Fort Anderson recently. His title is eerily appropriate: "The Last Sentinel."



## CIVIL WAR VIEWS - Part 2

**M**ember John Walsh and his friend Edie Day visited Harpers Ferry in late October. **Below:** Edie pauses on a walk up main street that looks like it did in 1862. **Bottom:** John said the “National Park Service ranger Issac gave a one-hour presentation on the September 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry, a resounding Confederate victory that immediately preceded Antietam.”



## CIVIL WAR VIEWS - Part 3

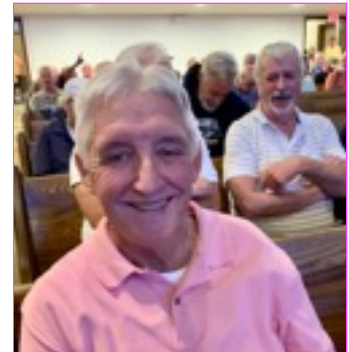


In early November, E. Gifford Stack visited Florence, SC, and Salisbury, NC, to tour a Confederate museum, the sites of Southern POW camps, and burial locales. *Clockwise from top left:* the museum in Florence houses a model of the town's POW camp; the Florence National Cemetery holds the remains of approximately 2,700 male Union soldiers from the nearby prison...and one women - Florence Budwin - who disguised herself to be with her Union spouse; a seven-inch Brooke rifled cannon, recovered from the bow of the CSS Peedee, is displayed adjacent to the cemetery; and the approach to Salisbury National Cemetery where 3,000 Union soldiers who died during 1864-65 while in the Salisbury prison are interred. **(Photos by EGS)**



## Pictured at our November Meeting

Speaker Dwight Hughes and 233 attendees (including 14 new members and seven guests!) attended our November 1 meeting. Some of the happy participants, including the winner of \$116 in our 50/50 drawing, paused for our camera. Another 33 members attend the meeting via Zoom. (Photos by E. Gifford Stack)



# **MUSTER NOTES and NOTABLES**

The December BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, December 6, 2022.  
The meeting will be held at Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC. See pages 2 for details to attend via Zoom.

Registration begins at 6:15 p.m., and the meetings starts promptly 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.

Our Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/brunswickcivilwarroundtable/>.

The YouTube BCWRT site is located at: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=brunswick+civil+war+round+table](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=brunswick+civil+war+round+table).

Our website address is: <https://brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com>

Contact us at: [brunswickcwrt@gmail.com](mailto:brunswickcwrt@gmail.com).

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

## **2022 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND ADVISORS**

**John Butler: President & Director**

**Ann Birdsall: VP & Director**

**(Vacant): VP & Director**

**Jim Kane: Secretary & Director**

**Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director**

**Bruce Jordan: Director**

**Chuck Roedema: Director**

**E. Gifford Stack: Director**

**Peter Carmichael: Advisor**

**Gar Dowell: Advisor**

**Jim Dunn: Advisor**

**Charen Fink: Advisor**

**Chris Fonvielle: Advisor**

**Jim McKee: Advisor**

**Chris Mackowski: Advisor**

**Kathy O'Donnell: Advisor**

**Roy Pender: Advisor**

**Woody Petchel: Advisor**

**Wally Rueckel: Advisor**

**Wade Sokolosky: Advisor**

**Peter Whelan: Advisor**

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**Call to Arms Editor:**

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