



Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

THIS IS A DOUBLE ISSUE (MARCH AND APRIL) OF *CALL TO ARMS*.

THE STAFF (THERE'S JUST ONE OF US!) WILL BE OUT OF THE COUNTRY FOR ALMOST THE ENTIRE MONTH OF MARCH. THERE WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT TIME TO PUBLISH A SEPARATE APRIL ISSUE.

YOU'LL STILL RECEIVE THE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT FOR APRIL'S GATHERING, THEREBY GETTING ALL THE DETAILS FOR ATTENDING IN PERSON OR VIA ZOOM.

APPRECIATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING. RESPECTFULLY, *THE EDITOR*

We're Back at Hatch

The March 7 meeting takes place at our regular venue - Hatch Auditorium on Fort Caswell.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER - JOHN BUTLER

Just a reminder, we are going back to Hatch Auditorium for the March 7 meeting. They have replaced the wooden pews with chairs, the theater has been carpeted, there's new lighting and windows, and most importantly, the sound system got an update!



Prior to our March meeting, the BCWRT staff is meeting with the Hatch Auditorium staff to make sure they are ready for us!

Now that spring is just about on us, it's time to get out and visit some of the many Civil War sites in the area. If you have not gone to the Sutler's table and picked up a copy of the North Carolina Civil War Trails Map, you need to do so. It gives you all the locations of Civil War battlefields in the state. The other great thing...it's FREE.

Here are some other activities happening in our area:

Fort Fisher State Historic Site: Saturday, May 13, 2023, 1-2 p.m. Join them in the Spencer Auditorium for their 2023 Beat the Heat Summer Lecture Series debut. This presentation will introduce you to Asian Pacific Islanders in the US Navy at Fort Fisher. Free and open to the public. Bring a friend and beat the heat together. Program components subject to change. Cost: Free, donations appreciated, Contact Info: [Becky Sawyer](mailto:becky.sawyer@ncdcr.gov), 910-251-7343, becky.sawyer@ncdcr.gov

Fort Fisher State Historic Site 1610 Fort Fisher Blvd. SouthKure Beach NC 28449

Friends of Fort Fisher: Go to the Friends of Fort Fisher website to see events they are sponsoring. <https://www.friendsoffortfisher.org/>, foffinformation@gmail.com, (910) 251-7351.

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REMODELED HATCH AND GREAT SPEAKER AWAIT US

One of the pre-eminent Civil War historians, a refreshed and refurbished Hatch Auditorium, and a topic that probably appeals to all. Yes, our March 7 meeting looks like a five star event!

Peter Carmichael is a BCWRT favorite, having captivated us on previous occasions with his mastery of Civil War knowledge told in an easy-to-understand captivating manner. This time he'll address the question of how soldiers endured the brutal and unpredictable existence during the conflict. He believes the war forced soldiers to bridge the gulf between two competing impulses. "Sentimentalism" helped



fighters understand war is a series of hardships and sacrifices that could be endured through faith, courage, and patriotism. Yet their "pragmatism" guided soldiers desperately seeking to survive with honor despite the filth, blood, and despair they actually experienced.

Using records and letters from Northern and Southern soldiers, he identifies the totality of the Civil War experience - the marching, the fighting, the boredom, the exhaustion, the punishments, and the frustrations of being away from families back home who often faced their own dire circumstances. The phrase "war is hell" will clearly be emphasized in his dramatic presentation which is based on his insightful and soul-searching book entitled, *"The War for the Common Soldier,"* which was the culmination of nearly ten years' research.

Currently Carmichael is the Robert C. Fuller Professor of Civil War Studies at Gettysburg College. After completing his doctorate at Penn State University, he went on to teach at Western Carolina University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and West Virginia University. He is a prolific author, holds seasonal interpretive positions at several National Park Service sites, speaks frequently to general and scholarly audiences, and has appeared on the PBS Robert E. Lee documentary for the American Experience series and the popular TV show "Who Do You Think You Are."



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/89098861286?pwd=bmtTNjdMTGVGQ24rYWVjdEdjdUFxUT09> **Meeting ID -** 890 9886 1286 **Passcode -** 925523

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 March's meeting! Starting Friday, February 24, and lasting until noon on Tuesday, March 7, current members may log into the system — <https://olr.bcwrtn-c.org/> — to print a ticket (one each for yourself and your spouse) showing you've registered. Bring the ticket(s) to Hatch Auditorium and enter through the far right door. (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, March 7 meeting takes place at Hatch Auditorium on 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.

The Environment Conquers All Armies

A review of Judkin Browning and Timothy Silver's February Presentation By Jim Medeiros

Lest we forget, the environment is bigger than any man. Lest we forget, the environment is more than a forest, one ocean, a river, a bear, a drought or a downpour. Many historians and observers give snap obeisance to the environment, but no one really has the 50,000-foot-high perspective. Except Judkin Browning and Timothy Silver. Note that they claimed the Failed Union Peninsula Campaign of 1862 as their subject matter, yet the opening minutes' focus was on the flooding in California (no, not this year's floods). But the best definition of their talk on Environmental History of the Peninsula Campaign came in the first minute of the talk in Silver's words:

"Environmental History is history with plants, animals, rocks and trees left in; Whatever people do they do it in the context of the natural world."

Probably we have all heard mentioned before that the rain, the mules, the horses, sickness, foul water, dead flocks and stolen provender all influenced the Civil War, but the Silver and Browning presentation brought these things home with a review both microscopic and detailed as well as stratospheric to encompass the whole tapestry of the United States. At the same time as the Peninsula Campaign, central California endured historic flooding in the central and farming sections of the state. This sample of an atmospheric river fall played harbinger for its visitation to the East affecting the outcomes of both the Grant's fight for Fort Donelson and the Peninsula Campaign. The prickly Fort Donelson found itself underwater in the deluge and McClellan's army of 100,000 men squished through 16 days of rain in April and 10 straight days in May.



The quagmire went beyond just pulling at boots in significance, although we could hear the sucking of the mud pulling down legs and wagon wheel in the Silver/Browning telling.

Part of the environment is the animal kingdom, and in the case of armies their transportation machine bore four legs and the mules and horses both consumed fodder (horses at 23 pounds a day) that often had to be carried on their backs. What's more, that fodder recycled to become 35-40 pounds of manure and 4-6 gallons of urine a day, per animal. Feces and urine alike fell where the animals walked

usually the same roads the army slogged through. Though burning 5,000 calories per day per man, many of the needed supplies only got up to the columns once every two or three days, so here is our army tired, cold, wet, dragged down by the mud, fumigated with the mud, and often dipping the first water they could find for a drink: water from the ruts of the roads. You could

just smell the bouquet of the day fraught with animal recycling.

From the recycled rainwater which dogged their tracks, the troops received further gifts: micro-organisms looking for a free lunch. Tiny invisible parts of the ecosystem carrying typhoid fever, malaria, and dysentery left the careless rut drinker—already worn down by marching in the rain, mud, absent food—sick enough to sicken 40% of the Union army of 100,000 by mid-July. (Today, a third of our audience carry typhus or dysentery, however, we are healthy with clean water and easily fight off any outbreaks.) *(Continued on page 5)*

NOTES FROM FEBRUARY'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 membership meeting, and begin at 10 a.m. If you wish to attend or have suggestions for the Board, please contact John at jlbutler2007@gmail.com. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 14.

Here are the main items of interest from the February 14 meeting.

1. Our records indicate 143 new members since September 2022.
2. 36 members and guests are signed up for the March 18 Fort Anderson tour.
3. We have scheduled six of the nine speakers for our 2023-24 program year.
4. It was agreed to conduct another survey of members similar to the one we did in October of 2021. We will also do a separate survey to inactive members asking their reasons for leaving.
5. Our current balance is \$6,659.
6. Discussion was held on possibly allowing Civil War enthusiasts from other round tables, including those from inactive organizations, to view our Zoom presentations. More research is needed regarding eligibility, cost, monitoring, etc.

(Continued from page 1)

Fort Anderson: Saturday, March 4, 2023, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. North Carolina Rice Festival.

Saturday, April 22, Living History: Tar, Pitch and Turpentine; Oh My! [Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site](#) 8884 St. Phillip's Rd SE Winnabow NC 28479

Bentonville Battlefield: Saturday, March 18, 2023, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Living History: 158th Anniversary. They will commemorate the 158th anniversary of the Battle of Bentonville with a day of FREE living history demonstrations, informative talks, and family activities! Demonstrations and talks will happen throughout the day. Food and concessions will be available!

Saturday, April 15, 2023, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. "Bentonville in Bloom!" Explore the natural side of Bentonville during their annual spring program, "Bentonville in Bloom!" Learn about the plants and wildlife that call eastern North Carolina home. Learn about leaves and blooms and explore the natural world with activities for the whole family. This event is also an official part of the North Carolina Science

Festival, a month long celebration of science every April focused on fun, interactive science learning opportunities. Learn more about the festival at ncsciencefestival.org. Cost: Free. Contact Info: [Bentonville Battlefield](#), Chad Jefferds, 910-594-0789, chadwick.jefferds@ncdcr.gov, [Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site, 5466 Harper House Road, Four Oaks NC 27524](#)

[Latimer House](#), 126 South Third Street, Wilmington, NC 28401, Phone: [910-762-0492](tel:910-762-0492), <https://www.lcfhs.org/>. Built in 1852, they offer tours on Saturday.

[Joseph Ryder Lewis Jr. Civil War Park at Carolina Beach](#). The park is built around remnants of the fortifications of the "Sugar Loaf Line of Defense" from the Civil War and is located on the north side of Publix market at 1018 Lake Park Blvd, Carolina Beach, NC. It features a raised walkway and picnic areas. The BCWRT supported the construction of this park by paying for two signs for the trail. It is open year around and the self-guided tour takes about an hour to walk.

John

Review of February Speakers (Continued from page 3)

Another 20,000 soldiers were incapacitated by diarrhea and men too sick with diarrhea often disposed of their unsavory packages in the same environment compromised by horses and wild animals. Simply put, environmental influences brought out the worst in McClellan’s army.

We inherited many things from the Civil War—any number being military inventions—but probably others such as our mania for clean water (think of the dubious notoriety coupled with outrage of Flint,

Michigan), perhaps National Parks to preserve at least some lands from destruction in a future war, the National Weather Service—still a work in progress—from the Signal Corps, the Department of Agriculture to protect future food supplies, and veterinary training schools to preserve future horses and livestock. Despite their ability to call up the aroma, misery and sucking mire of the war, perhaps their final message was: Environment does not dictate human action; human reactions to the environment dictate human actions.



CANNON SHOTS



The Cape Fear Civil War Round will feature Charles R. Knight, curator of military history at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, at their Thursday, March 9 meeting. Mr. Knight will discuss his book about Confederate General Robert E. Lee and his Civil War experience. The CFCWRT meets at St. John’s Episcopal Church, 1219 Forest Hills Dr, in midtown Wilmington near Independence Mall. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. Brunswick CWRT members are invited to attend free.



Be sure to get your copy of the North Carolina Civil War Trails Map-Guide at the Sutler’s table. You may also review (and/or download) an [electronic version of the map-guide here](#). If you visit one of the sites, please remember to take a photo or two and send to the **Call to Arms** editor - egstack44@gmail.com - for inclusion in the Civil War Views section.



Three Excellent Programs for Remainder of Year

As most of us recall, our 2022-23 program year ends in May. We take June, July and August off to host our friends and relatives, travel, and engage in beach activities and other summertime pursuits. However, before Memorial Day, we’ve got three excellent programs:

March 7 - see page 2 for a discussion of Peter Carmichael’s presentation.

April 4 - “**Grant’s Next Chapter: Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and the Rise of Ulysses S. Grant.**” Grant finished one volume of his memoirs after Vicksburg, and began the second volume with Chattanooga which became the turning point of his career. Guest presenter: Chris Mackowski, Ph.D., is the editor-in-chief and co-founder of *Emerging Civil War*, a prolific award-winning author, and serves on the Board for the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust and the Civil War Roundtable Congress.

May 2 - “**Raising Corn, Embankments, and a Little Hell: Impressed Labor and the Wilmington Fortifications.**” Starting in 1862, the subject is slavery. In 1864, a key moment in our history involved the need for planters on the home front despite freed slaves. Guest presenter: Jaime Amanda Martinez, Professor and Chair in the Department of History at UNCPembroke. She is a frequent speaker about the role of enslaved, free black, and American Indian men, and in building Wilmington’s fortifications.

CIVIL WAR VIEWS



In February while visiting Barnsley Resort, a short 55 miles north of Atlanta, member E. Gifford Stack literally stumbled on a piece of Civil War history. Behind the ruins of what was once the original brick main home on the Barnsley plantation is the gravestone and marker for Colonel Richard Earle of the 2nd Alabama Calvary. On May 18, 1864, Earle, a friend of the Barnsley family, was riding to warn of the imminent attack by General Sherman's troops. The colonel was killed by a sharpshooter, buried adjacent to the old home, and is honored with signage and a tombstone. Clockwise: E. Gifford examines the marker; the description of what occurred; and Col. Earle's headstone.

(All photos by John Piccirillo)



Twenty Good Reasons to Study the Civil War

Editor's note. Occasionally I am asked by acquaintances what I find so interesting about the Civil War. One neighbor even teases me about attending the BCWRT meetings, asking if I go to see who won. I recently came across an article from Virginia Tech's Virginia Center for Civil War Studies that gives many answers to what is so interesting about the Civil War. Entitled "Twenty Good Reasons to Study the Civil War" and written by John Waugh, the article succinctly lists what it is that keeps us interested. Here is a brief summary of Waugh's writing ([see here for full version](#)) which I think hits the mark perfectly.

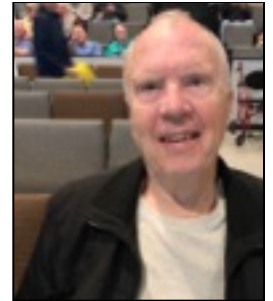
1. Because it was unique - think brother against brother
2. Because it was a watershed in American history - the change from independent states to "one nation, indivisible"
3. Because it was a war of firsts - conscription, Secret Service, income tax, flag signal codes, African American army officers, the Medal of Honor, and many more
4. Because it saved the republican government
5. Because it killed slavery
6. Because it originated new ways of waging war - from muzzle loaders to repeating rifles, rifled artillery, land minefields, telescopic sights, the first machine gun
7. Because it revolutionized war on the water - ironside ships, submarines
8. Because it teaches us brotherhood
9. Because it showcases undaunted courage
10. Because it made heroes - both in the battlefield and political arenas (Editor's note: Lincoln is my favorite)



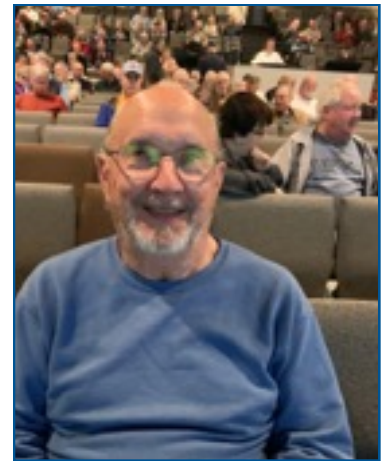
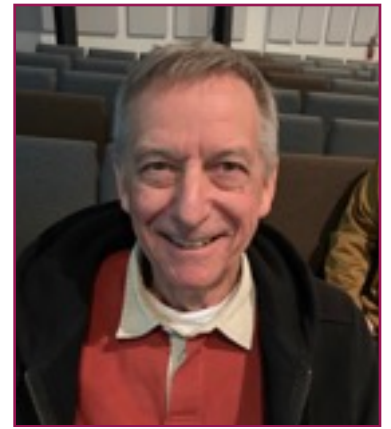
11. Because it created a new industrial America - it was on the cusp of the Industrial Revolution
12. Because it produced men of fabulous fortunes - Andrew Carnegie, John Pierpont Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller all avoided the war, earned millions, and poured much into philanthropy
13. Because it was a war of political oddities - think Democrat and Republican conventions, elections, candidates, Confederate States of America
14. Because it pioneered a new journalism - less opinion and more facts
15. Because it inspired great literature - and still today hundreds of books are written annually about the war
16. Because it tested our faith - "But if the Civil War teaches us anything it is that we can't necessarily count on God's being on our side when we begin fighting one another."
17. Because it is our own direct tie to the past - we learn about our ancestors to learn about ourselves
18. Because it makes us remember
19. Because it is great drama
20. Because it still speaks to us - think Ken Burns documentary, National Battlefields, our own BCWRT

Pictured at Our February Meeting

Speakers Judkin Browning and Timothy Silver and 308 attendees (including 32 new members and seven guests!) attended our February 7 meeting. Some of the happy participants, including the winner of \$207 in our 50/50 drawing, paused for our camera. (The new members, in person attendance and 50/50 winnings were all the largest so far this program year.) Another 24 members attended the meeting via Zoom. (Photos by Chuck Roedema, Pat de Barros and E. Gifford Stack)



Pictured at Our February Meeting - Continued



MUSTER NOTES and NOTABLES

The March BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, March 7, 2023.
The meeting will be held at Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC. See page 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.

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

Contact us at: brunswickcwr@gmail.com.

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

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