



Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER - MIKE POWELL



The stars aligned May 7. The bridge was open. **Masonboro Parlor Band** produced another great performance of Civil War-era music for our ninth anniversary meeting, complete with a celebratory cake (shown

with BCWRT's Officers and Directors). **Chris Fonvielle** filled in for a cancellation with an outstanding review of the Wilmington campaign of 1865. And we set an attendance record: 495 members and guests. I personally think there were five more, hiding in the balcony, who dodged registration.

Conventional wisdom says Civil War round tables that draw one hundred for their meetings are considered large round tables. What does that make us? A mega RT? Our volunteers and members continue to set the standard for Civil War round tables. Congratulations and thanks for nine great years.

BCWRT gratefully thanks Chris Fonvielle. Chris combines the two characteristics needed for a great program: he speaks with authority on his topic and he makes it feel like a conversation with each of the almost five hundred attendees rather than a lecture.

Our bonus from Chris is he is always ready to take BCWRT members on whatever tour we come up with and does so with the

same expertise. He is also very active behind the scenes. We are currently working on a brochure to bring attention to the nearly forgotten Fort Holmes on Bald Head Island. Thanks, Chris. You are a big part of our success.



We are sending you into the summer break with a lot to think about. **Bud Robertson** is going to give us his take on the downward trend in preserving our history. Whether it is a lack of time spent on the topic in the classroom, or monuments being torn down, our history, is under attack. This is a topic that Bud has studied with great interest and many concerns. His ideas will, I'm sure, stimulate a lot of conversation and thought. And that's the way it should be. This is one of those topics where I will be looking for another excellent historian to present the other side for us.

Have a great summer, be safe, and see you in September.

Mike

Civil War Monuments and Statues Addressed in Final Meeting of Program Year

What is surely to be one of the most thought-provoking talks in BCWRT's nine year history will highlight our Tuesday, May 28 meeting, the last of the 2018-19 program year before our summer break. And the guest speaker, **Bud Robertson**, is one of the most respected, authoritative and distinguished Civil War historians. The title of his presentation is, "Are We Killing Civil War History?"

(Remember, this Tuesday, May 28 meeting is the one we would normally hold the first Tuesday in June. That date is not available due to a long-standing obligation by Fort Caswell, thus our special gathering this last Tuesday of May. We'll resume our regular meeting schedule on Tuesday, September 3.)

The legitimacy of Civil War statues and monuments dedicated to the Confederacy and existing throughout the country continues to be under scrutiny, over 154 years since the last shots of the war were fired. Especially during the past several years, this issue has intensified. Opinions regarding their legitimacy or detriment as a symbol of America's history continues unabashed.

Bud's thesis focuses on how we think about the importance of the Civil War in present day America. He will articulate how the lack of education and common sense of small groups of agitators (e.g., white nationalists, neo-Nazis, and the Ku Klux Klan), have the ability to destroy our past, and thereby doom our future. In essence, he feels we can no longer ignore their presence. Exacerbating the situation are recent events, including the Charleston church shooting in June 2015, and the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Va, in 2017.

"Bud" Robertson is the recipient of every major award given in the Civil War field, and a lecturer of national acclaim. He is



the author of 20 books, including biographies of Gen. Robert E. Lee and A.P. Hill, as well as several works on the common soldier. His massive biography of Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson won eight national awards and was used as the base for the Ted

Turner/Warner Bros. mega-movie, "Gods and Generals". Bud has served as Executive Director of the U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission in the 1960s, and worked with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson in commemorating the Civil War's 100th anniversary. He taught for 44 years at Virginia Tech, where upon his retirement, the university named him Alumni Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History.

As usual, the Tuesday, May 28 meeting takes place at Hatch Auditorium on the grounds of Fort Caswell. Registration and refreshments begin 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. For more information, contact president Mike Powell at (910) 278-3545, or email to mikepowell260@gmail.com. Our website is brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com. You may also visit our Facebook page for interesting facts, comments, announcements and updates.

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

Review of Chris Fonvielle's May Presentation *By Jim Medeiros*

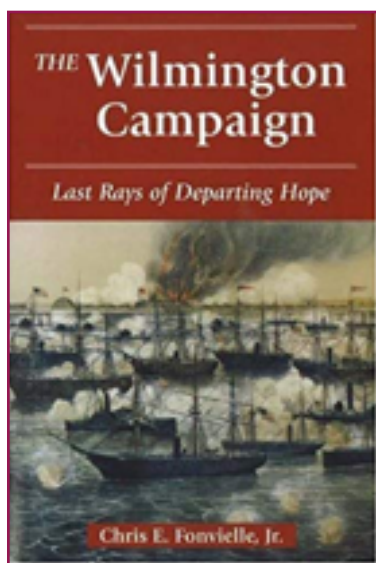
Anyone can sound like a historian. The first battle of Fort Fisher (beginning the end for Wilmington) ran December 24-25, 1864, and ended a failure for the 64 ships under Admiral Porter and Major General Benjamin Butler. The

second battle for Fort Fisher, January 13-15, 1865, under Porter and General Alfred Terry took the fort with a bombardment of 100 shells exploding per minute in the second greatest bombardment of the war. There. I

gave you the précis of dates, commanders, and arms of the centerpiece battle for Wilmington. Dates and names do *not* make me a historian. Chris Fonvielle delivers on the lesser details. After all, he *is* a historian.

Politics cost the Union the early fall of Wilmington. The decision to invest Charleston, SC, over Wilmington politically supported Lincoln at the cost of Union blood and treasure. The port of Wilmington remained in business. Lee remained supplied in Virginia. The conquest of Charleston satisfied northern vengeance on the first state to secede and the city embarrassing the Union at Ft. Sumter.

Fort Fisher, too, paid for politics in blood. The first Ft. Fisher threw Porter and Butler (a controversial choice as he invented



“contraband” slaves and as military ruler of New Orleans declared any female in town a lady of the night if she insulted a Federal soldier) together for joint operations. Porter and Butler, permanent members of a mutual hate-fest, meshed roughly. Jefferson Davis chose the infamous Braxton Bragg for Wilmington’s defense. Announcing Bragg’s appointment, Richmond papers allowed, “There goes Wilmington.” Porter bombarded Ft. Fisher fiercely in the most terrible shelling of the war, yet Butler withdrew his troops and Ulysses Grant removed him. General Terry *did* land his troops in the Second Ft. Fisher.

Only politics could delay Wilmington’s day. Wilmington boasted a rail center with three railroads. One hundred and six steamships served the port over the war. Colonel William Lamb’s fort bristled with cannon. (150 years later his Armstrong 150-pounder sits on Trophy Point at the USMA.)

Wilmington boasted the largest population (10,000) in North Carolina and by the end of the war had become a kind of Las Vegas (“My kind of town,” Fonvielle declared). Forty Union ships eventually blockaded the port. The Union strategy to seize other ports ahead of Wilmington still left Lee his lifeline through North Carolina.

(Continued on page 6)



Ladies' Department — *By Charen Fink*

The Changing Role of Women

The Civil War, the war of sectionalism motivated by slavery, affected all Americans, but no group of people were impacted quite as drastically as women during this era. Before the war began, a woman's typical role in society was to cook, take care of children, and was limited to only household duties. Women were limited to the "Cult of Domesticity." They held no power in the workforce and were expected to follow their husband's lead.



Taking into account that women were not given the right to vote during the Civil War era, they virtually had no power in society or politics. In the grand scheme of things, white women were more respected than African Americans, but were considered inferior compared to white men.

The Civil War challenged the roles of all women, whether they were elite whites, poor whites, or African Americans. Out of all of the women during this era, the Southern elite white women underwent the most change. On top of all of that, they were doing the most to support the war effort through fundraising events such as raffles, dances, concerts, etc. They also made a big impact by collecting necessity items for the troops.

This was a time of liberation for these women, because for the first time ever they had contributed to society in the workforce. However, their time as slave owners, business managers, and nurses proved to society

that women were just as capable as men to be in the workforce.

Gender roles were strictly divided, but the women stepped up to assume new roles. As husbands, fathers, sons and brothers joined the military, no longer were women considered the weaker sex, fragile or dependent. They took on new duties at home. They assisted the war effort as nurses, spies and soldiers. This proved how strong women really were. There were similarities regarding gender roles between the Northern woman and the Southern woman, as well as, differences. One major difference is that Confederate women cared deeply about having their side win because it was their land that was being invaded.

Well Behaved Women Seldom Make History

Throughout the South there were heroic women for the good of the cause, then there were those truly rebellious women.

One woman, who was the opposite of the preconceived Southern Belle, was Nancy Hart, pictured at right, not to be confused with the Revolutionary War heroine Nancy Hart. Nancy was born in 1846 in



Roane County Virginia, later West Virginia after 1863. She was number seven of 13 siblings. She never wore dresses which was going against the norm for the time.

(Continued on page 6)

LAST CHANCE TO WIN

Entitled "Time to Fight," this numbered and signed print (205 of 950) depicts Union Major General John Reynolds preparing to commit the First Corps at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863. The original painting was done by noted Civil War artist Dale Gallon and commissioned for the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, PA.

This beautifully framed print measures 33.25" x 27.5" and was donated by BCWRT member **Charles Gormley**. Paperwork associated with the print's authenticity is also included. Online prices for other numbered prints of this painting (without the frame!) run



in the \$250 range!

Tickets for this BCWRT raffle are one for \$2, three for \$5, or seven for \$10. Tickets will be available at our season's final meeting, May 28. **Skip Maxwell**, the BCWRT Artifacts Manager (shown above), will display the beautifully framed print in front of the Hatch stage. He'll also have a plethora of raffle tickets

for sale! The drawing is at our May 28 meeting! As always, all money raised will go towards the BCWRT mission of education and battlefield preservation.

A friendly reminder: BCWRT members (and family/friends) who shop using the AmazonSmile program, contribute 0.5% of their purchases on eligible products to BCWRT.

To participate, members should log on to the AmazonSmiles website (<https://>

smile.amazon.com) and follow the easy steps to begin shopping (our name for the program is **Brunswick Civil War Roundtable**), giving a percentage of their sales to our organization. All monies go towards program services.



(Fonvielle - Continued from page 3)

Finally, politics turned on Wilmington.

The fall of Ft. Fisher lead to the attrition of the forts up the Cape Fear punctuated by flashes of human insight. During First Ft. Fisher, the Confederates moved banners so 1/3 of the incoming 20,000 shells overshot. Also, during the bombardment Private Christopher Bland scrambled aloft on the Mound Battery to twice reattach the Confederate banner to the cheers of not only his comrades but the observing Federal sailors. At Ft. Anderson, dueling regimental

bands from North and South encouraged the men. As the Union troops closed on Wilmington, the redoubtable General Bragg busily reorganized his staff in Richmond. This task executed, he returned to Wilmington in time to evacuate it for the Union army, another triumph in Bragg’s twisted annals. Lifeline cut.

Dr. Fonvielle’s well-deserved applause, from a record crowd of 495 members and guests, helped place him nicely bookending BCWRT’s first nine years.



(Ladies’ Department - Continued from page 4)

At age 14 she ran away from home, joined a band of rebel raiders, known as the Moccasin Rangers and always carried a pistol and musket. She knew how to cook but not how to read or write.

She was eventually captured by the Yankees. Using her physical charm to attract a guard, she escaped by killing him. Nancy died in 1902 but her tombstone reads b. 1843 and d. 1913. Legend has it she was hanged in 1862.

Some Interesting Legends in History - may or may not be true, but then this is the basis for legends!

“Baths consisted of a big tub (like this metal version) filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women, and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, ‘Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water!’”



“Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June. However, since



they were starting to smell, brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.”

Memorial Day Has CW Roots

* **M**emorial Day was a response to the unprecedented carnage of the Civil War, in which some 620,000 soldiers on both sides died.

* Major General John A Logan, a CW veteran, founded Memorial Day in 1868, “for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion.”

* The holiday was long known as Decoration Day for the purpose of decorating graves with flowers, wreaths, and flags. The name was eventually changed to “Memorial Day” by federal law in 1967.

* On May 30, 1868, President Grant presided over the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.

* Several Southern states continue to set aside a day for honoring the Confederate dead.

* The Memorial Day custom of wearing red artificial poppies is attributed to the WWI poem “In Flanders Fields,” by the Canadian military doctor John McCrea. The sale of poppies supports the work of VFWs across the country.



Tom Kehoe Honored

Tom Kehoe, BCWRT’s Treasurer for six years from 2013-2019, was honored at our May meeting for his dedication and outstanding service. President Mike Powell (with hat) presented Tom a plaque reading, “In appreciation and recognition for his contribution and service. The Brunswick Civil War Round Table has greatly benefited from his time and expertise in support of achieving our goals towards the advancement of American Civil War history.”

Mike noted that while Tom is stepping down as Treasurer, he remains on the leadership team as an Advisor. You will also see him every meeting helping at the registration desk.

Tom, we thank you for all you’ve done for the BCWRT!





CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

2019 CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE SUMMER CONFERENCE

Join us, **June 14-19, 2019**, for a blockbuster year of CWI speakers! We are thrilled to feature eminent Civil War scholars, Gary W. Gallagher, Ed Ayers, Carol Reardon, and Peter Carmichael within our line-up of over 35 distinguished speakers and tour guides.

Full-time and part-time packages available!
Register now at www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- *Gettysburg: A Staff Ride*
- *Stonewall Jackson at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville*
- *Mosby's Confederacy: Part II*
- *Treasures of the National Civil War Museum*
- *Voices of Antietam*

with guides Carol Reardon, Dennis Frye, Greg Mertz, Wayne Motts, and more.

FEATURING

- Gary Gallagher, *Edward Porter Alexander*
- Ed Ayers, *The Thin Line of Freedom: The Civil War and Emancipation in the Heart of America*
- Peter Carmichael, *The Combat Experience of Civil War Soldiers*
- Earl Hess, *Tactics, Terrain, and Trenches in the Atlanta Campaign*
- Amy Murrell Taylor, *Embattled Freedom: Journeys Through the Civil War's Refugee Camps*
- Patrick Breen, *Nat Turner's Rebellion*

2019 CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE SUMMER CONFERENCE JUNE 14–19, 2019

For 35 years, the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College has hosted an annual summer conference bringing leading historians and public audiences together for lectures, battlefield tours, small group discussions, and roundtable conversations about the Civil War era. Sessions, lodging, and meals are held on the 200-acre college campus.

The 2019 CWI Conference will feature a wide range of topics, including Civil War artifacts, the political crisis of the 1850s, the Civil War on the international stage, and more.

Participants will be able to tour the Gettysburg battlefield with expert scholars and guides, as well as explore other nearby battlefields and historic sites in Maryland, Virginia, and Harrisburg, PA. This conference will continue the recently added and highly popular Saturday evening tours of the Gettysburg battlefield and town, as well as both “lunch-in” and “dine-in” discussions with CWI faculty. The 2019 conference will offer something for everyone, from longtime students of the Civil War to those who are new to Civil War history.

For rates, visit www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference. BCWRT members receive a 15% discount. Please contact the CWI office to receive the appropriate discount code: 717-337-6590, or civilwar@gettysburg.edu,

CIVIL WAR VIEWS

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



Top Clockwise: BCWRT VP Jim Johnson (fourth from right) stands next to his wife Carol Jutte in January at Fort Fisher's 154th Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Fisher. *(Photo by Attendee)* Jack Carpenter and his son visited the Gettysburg Battlefield in May 2018 and admired the North Carolina Memorial. *(Photo by Chris Carpenter)* E. Gifford Stack enjoyed a 1,500 mile motorcycle trip in April, stopping at several Civil War sites, including Florida's Olustee Battlefield, where on February 20, 1864, Confederate forces defeated Union troops in the states's largest CW battle. *(Photos by EG Stack and passerby)*

Remembering Tom O'Donnell

Many of you are relatively new members and may not know BCWRT's background. From time-to-time, *Call to Arms* will publish articles explaining our history and early leaders. This month's article features one of our co-founders, Tom O'Donnell. It is written by Wally Rueckel and Kathy O'Donnell.

Tom was born in Greenwich, CT, and eventually moved to Allentown, PA, close to where else? -

Gettysburg! Over the years he would visit Gettysburg numerous times with his sons and friends. He obviously had a keen interest in Civil War history. He was an executive with Hershey Foods, managing their packaging and helping fix struggling operations. He joined the Harrisburg CWRT and also attended the Gettysburg CWRT. These experiences, good and bad, were the cornerstone of decisions he would make when organizing the BCWRT.

Tom also liked to take Civil War tours especially those organized by Ed Bearss.

Tom and wife Kathy moved to Southport, NC, in 2003. There he met Wally Rueckel at a 2006 New Year's Eve party. Wally was also a Civil War buff and had been a member of several CWRTs in the Midwest. That evening they weren't very social with the guests, both spending the entire evening sharing Civil

War stories. Who says good things don't result from a cocktail party? It is safe to say

their wives were unhappy with them that night.

Tom and Wally started attending regional CWRTs in Raleigh and Wilmington, but the round trip drive was 2-3 hours. After one such trip late in 2008, Tom said, "Wally, I have a great idea. Let's form a Civil War round table in Brunswick County." Both being prior business executives with planning experience, they decided to form a study group of local historians, business executives and friends from the Civil War

crowd. Before launching a Civil War round table, the two reached out to local history organizations to make sure they were not stepping on anyone's toes or covering the same information. They named the new organization Brunswick Civil War Round Table, not St. James or Southport since Tom wanted to attract a broad base of members from throughout the county, including



Tom, on left, and Wally at Vicksburg in 2009

spouses and youth. Wally agreed. That decision was certainly the right one. Tom also insisted that the organization not have pre-meeting meals, a tradition with most all other round tables. This was done to put the focus on the speaker, program and meeting other members, and thereby also avoid an extra fee for meals and creating the chaos of serving and cleanup.

In October 2009, the study group decided to launch the round table. BCWRT became official, incorporating in North Carolina in May 2010 and receiving the tax exempt status shortly thereafter. Tom became the first president. Tom and Wally selected professor Max Williams, a local well-known Civil War historian and member of the study group, as program chair. The first speaker in May 2010 was Black Jack Travis, a local speaker, re-enactor and writer whose topic was, "The Guns of Gettysburg, Legends of Artillery." Prior to the meeting Tom said he thought 50 people would attend. Wally said 30-35. Both were wrong as 90 people showed up. The organization never looked back, growing month by month until reaching our present level of 1,200 members, making BCWRT the largest round table in the country.

There are many reasons for organization's

success but one stands out in Wally's mind. It is a suggestion Tom made in mid-2010. He came to Wally and said, "Kathy and I are going to take a tour of Gettysburg led by Ed Bearss, the pre-eminent Civil War historian. I am going to invite him to come and speak to our round table." Wally replied, "You have to be crazy. We are a small start-up round table in North Carolina. Why would he speak to us?" As we know, Tom was successful and Ed Bearss addressed the BCWRT in January 2011. This was a major success as the round table not only got a preeminent speaker but each year that Ed has spoken, up to 80 new members sign on.

Tom was the first president of BCWRT. But after a year he realized he was unable to continue in that capacity due to his Parkinson's disease. His voice was just not strong enough to speak in front of the group. As Wally took over the presidency, Tom continued to help out until his death in 2014.

According to Kathy, "Tom would be proud of the success of our round table which he would attribute to great speakers, superior publicity, a great board and volunteers." And, it is obvious, BCWRT's success owes much to Tom's vision, determination, and love for all things involving Civil War history.

BENTONVILLE TRIP PLANNED

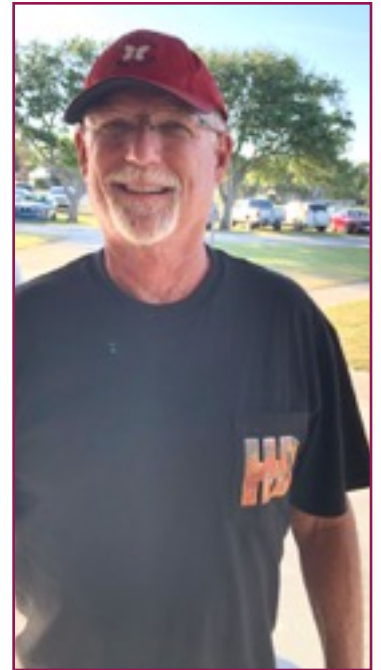
Get out your calendars and circle Saturday, October 26! BCWRT is sponsoring a bus tour of the Bentonville Battlefield, site of the largest CW battle fought in NC. Wade Sokolosky will be our guide, and he'll surely give us numerous historical insights. More details in our September newsletter.

Pictured at our May 7 Meeting

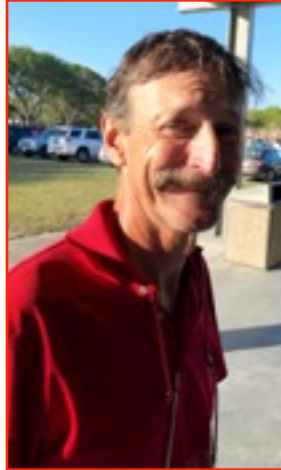
Chris Fonvielle and a record 495 members (including 23 new memberships!) and guests (30) attended our May 7 meeting. Some of the happy attendees, including the \$169 winner of our 50/50 raffle, paused for our cameras. *(Photos by Chuck Roedema and E. Gifford Stack)*



Pictured at our May 7 Meeting - *Continued*



Pictured at our May 7 Meeting - *Continued*



MUSTER NOTES and NOTEABLES

The next meeting of the BCWRT is Tuesday, May 28, 2019. The meeting will be held at Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.

Registration and refreshments begin at 6:15 p.m., and the meeting 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.

The BCWRT website, brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com, contains helpful information and is available to everyone, no user name or password required. Our Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/brunswickcivilwarroundtable/>. Visit both sites to learn of future speakers, trips, and interesting Civil War information.

2019 Officers, Directors, Advisors, and Liaisons

Mike Powell: President & Director

Charen Fink: VP, Director & Ladies' Forum Coord.

Jim Johnson: VP, Director & Ft. Fisher Liaison

Jennifer Chapman: Secretary & Director

Gary Krupp: Treasurer & Director

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Peter Carmichael: Advisor

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Tom Kehoe: Advisor

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Wally Rueckel: Advisor

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Wade Sokolosky: Advisor

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Max Williams: Advisor Emeritus

***Call to Arms* co-editors: Charen Fink and
E. Gifford Stack**

