



# Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

## The President's Corner by John Butler



We have two things to celebrate this month of May. First, it's our 14th anniversary. Our first meeting was in May 2010 with 85 attendees. We now average 400 attendees both in person and on Zoom. With almost 1100 members we continue to be the largest Civil War Round Table in the country.

The next thing we must celebrate is our volunteers who make this all possible.

Our first two volunteers were co-founders Wally Rueckel and Tom O'Donnell. Currently it takes over 30 volunteers to plan and execute each meeting. This includes the 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 to our group 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. Without their efforts we would not be the great organization we are.

In this issue of the Call to Arms newsletter you will see lots of pictures of our volunteers. As you all know, volunteers are key in making a great organization. Take a moment and consider volunteering. You might realize that you get as much or more from volunteering as the organization you help. According to the experts, here are some of the benefits of volunteering:

1. It connects you to others.
  2. It is good for your mind and body - it keeps you mentally stimulated.
  3. It brings fun into your life and reduces stress. Volunteering is not all about work.
  4. It offers vital help to the organization, but the benefits can be even greater for you, the volunteer.
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# BCWRT Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, May 7, 2024 Program**

## “Contributions of the United States Colored Troops During the Civil War”

Despite the Union rejecting Black enlistments early in the war, the United States Colored Troops eventually played a critical role in their victories. Over 180,000 African Americans enlisted, which included 175 USCT regiments, accounting for roughly 10% of the Union Army. Their regiments fought with courage and distinction, challenging racist notions about their

fighting ability. Their forces fought bravely in battles like Port Hudson and Fort Wagner, and played a key role in capturing Charleston, South Carolina, the “Cradle of Secession,” and Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital, swaying public opinion in the North toward abolition and equality.



U. S. Navy Captain Edward W. Gantt (Ret.) has had an extensive career. During his first tour of duty, he graduated from the U.S. Army Airborne and Ranger schools at Fort Benning, GA and later saw combat as a helicopter door gunner and crew chief in South Vietnam. After graduating from Howard University, he returned to the military, entering the Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School where he received his Naval Flight Officer “Wings of Gold.” Career duty has taken him around the world. In July 2000, he took command of Navy boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois, responsible for the development of nearly 50,000 sailors annually. He retired from the Navy in 2003 after 30 years of active service. A few years later he began a new career as a public school teacher.



In 2014 he began an association with the 23rd Infantry Regiment USCT Civil War re-enactors and living historians. Currently he is a member of Company B, 54th Massachusetts Civil War re-enactors, and president of the re-formed 23rd Regiment USCT in Spotsylvania, Virginia.

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/89288633876?pwd=RHV6MmlmNkVTTGdydk9YVkJVzTHJYQT09>

**Meeting ID:** 892 8863 3876

**Passcode:** 958093

# United States Colored Troops



The memorial at the Cameron Art Museum is a sculpture by Stephen Hayes. The Cameron website describes the memorial as follows: “The sculpture is situated on the last remaining vestige of Federal Point Road, the actual road these men marched upon from Fort Fisher to Wilmington. They stand on the road, active and proud. On the back of the sculpture are inscribed the names of 1,820 men of the 1st, 5th, and 37th USCT who fought in the Battle of Forks Road. These names were researched by a group of community volunteers, led by a local public historian. Thanks to their research, we now know that these men were as young as 12 and as old as 45, that they came to military service as carpenters, cooks, barbers, and farmers. Some were escaped slaves; some were freedmen. All were fighting for the abolishment of slavery. We know that they were from as far away as Ohio and that some of them stayed and settled in southeastern NC after the Civil War.”

The American Civil War Museum has an exhibit in collaboration with the Cameron Art Museum entitled “*Beyond Valor: United States Colored Troops & the Fight for Freedom*”: [acwm.org/beyond-valor/](https://acwm.org/beyond-valor/)

A video by the American Battlefield Trust in their 4-minute series is also worth viewing - “[Black Soldiers \(United States Colored Troops\): The Civil War in Four Minutes](#)”

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## President’s Corner

Continued from Page 1

Why don’t you take the opportunity 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.

**“At the end of the day it’s not about what you have or even what you’ve accomplished... it’s about who you’ve lifted up, who you’ve made better. It’s about what you’ve given back.”**

**– Denzel Washington**

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.

## 2024-2025 Season Calendar

Monthly Speakers,  
Women's Forum

**September 3, 2024**

**Chris Makowski**

*"Battle of Spotsylvania Court House"*

**October 1, 2024**

**Eric Wittenburg**

*"Sherman's Carolina Campaign"*

**October 14, 2024**

**Liz Fuller**

**Women's Forum**

*"Mrs. Mary Duffy"*

**November 5, 2024**

**Will Green**

*"The Beefsteak Raid at Petersburg"*

**December 3, 2024**

**Curt Fields**

*Ulysses S. Grant Impersonator*

**January 7, 2025**

**Wade Sokolosky**

*"Civil War Hospitals"*

**February 4, 2025**

**Kevin Pawlak**

*"Never Such a Campaign:  
The Battle of Second Manassas"*

**March 4, 2025**

**Judson Brown / Tim Silver**

*"Weaponizing Food:  
From Antietam to Vicksburg"*

**April 1, 2025**

**Sarah K. Bierle**

*"John Pelham: Trained at West  
Point but Aiming Artillery for the  
Confederacy"*

**May 6, 2025**

**Brad Gottfried**

*"The Battle of Antietam Paintings of  
John Pope"*

**Tours TBA**

Bentonville, Fort Fisher, and/or  
Fort Caswell Tours are being  
considered

**Meeting Location:**

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

## Tours of Fort Caswell



Thanks to Jim McKee, the Baptist Assembly and our BCWRT members for making these tours such a great success! Thanks also go to Jim Dunn and John Walsh for arranging the tours. The April tour before the meeting sold out quickly. It was so popular that two tours will be done before the May meeting, and both sold out quickly.

# Civil War Sites - Fort Zachary Taylor

*BCWRT member John Walsh recently visited Fort Zachary Taylor in Key West, FL and has shared his photos of the fort and a great deal of history found on its information boards.*

*He also met Dawn and Ted Henry who are re-enactors from Illinois. They are founders of the [10th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment](#) re-enactors. The original regiment mustered from counties near Springfield, IL and were informally known as "Lincoln's Own."*

*Thank you, John, for sharing all of this with us.*



Photo: Fort Zachary Taylor Florida State Park



## History of Fort Taylor

Fort Taylor served faithfully through the American Civil War and was called the "Gibraltar of the Florida Straits," even though it never fired a single shot in defense. It protected the harbor from attack, and served as the anchor of the Union's East Gulf Blockading Fleet.

## Modernization

After the Civil War, the U.S. Army decided to upgrade the Civil War weapons to more modern, long-range rifles. The Fort was reduced from two and a half stories to only one and a half. This reduction allowed the full employment of the two 12-inch Barbette Rifles and for 3-inch, 15-pounder Anti-Motor Torpedo Boat guns. These were installed between 1898 and 1903. A number of obsolete cannons were buried inside the Southern-facing casemates.



## Twentieth-Century Defense

The Fort also played a key role in World Wars I and II protecting the harbor and its facilities. It even served during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 as a radar installation



Text from the Park information boards and photos by John Walsh on these two pages.

# Civil War Sites - Fort Zachary Taylor

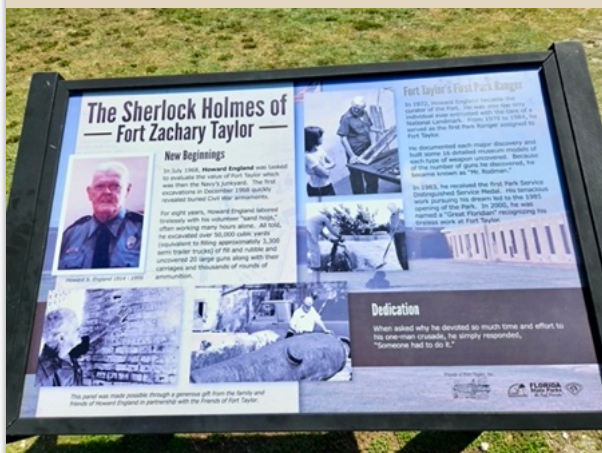
## 10th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment.

We are a 501c3 NFP founded in 2004 by Ted and Dawn Henry. We have built a living history reenacting regiment that emphasizes education. We are a family friendly unit; wives and children join with the husband/father and create persona for everyone in the family to participate. All new recruits start as privates and earn rank. We have members who in real life have come from all walks of life which you will see if you look at our Personnel - Reenacts page on our [website](#). Over the past 20 years there have been over 150 different people who have been members of the regiment. We usually have 40-50 members at any one time and each year we participate in 10 to 15 events.

Just as in the original regiment, we have a brass band of 8-12 members who dress in wool uniforms and play the music heard during the Civil War. These members are professional musicians who happen to love history and provide historical context and education about the tunes played and the lyrics sung by the soldiers who sang along with the band.



## The Sherlock Holmes of Fort Zachary Taylor



### New Beginnings

In 1968, (Navy engineer) Howard England was tasked to evaluate the value of fort Taylor which was then the Navy's junkyard. The first excavations in December 1968 quickly revealed buried Civil War armaments.

For eight years Howard England labored tirelessly with his volunteer "sand hogs," often working many hours alone. All told he excavated over 50,000 cubic yards (equivalent to filling approximately 3,300 semi-trailer trucks) of fill and rubble and uncovered 20 large guns along with their carriages and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

### Fort Taylor's First Park Ranger

In 1972 Howard England became the curator of the Fort. He was also the only individual ever entrusted with the care of a National Landmark. From 1979 to 1984 he served as the first Park Ranger assigned to Fort Taylor.

He documented each major discovery and built some 16 detailed museum models of each type of weapon uncovered. Because of the number of guns he discovered, he became known as "Mr. Rodman."

In 1963 he received the first Park Service Distinguished Service Medal. His tenacious work pursuing his dream led to the 1985 opening of the Park. In 2000 he was named a "Great Floridian" recognizing his tireless work at Fort Taylor.

When asked why he devoted so much time and effort to his one-man crusade, he simply responded, "Someone had to do it."



*Save the Date*

## *The Ladies' Forum*

Monday, October 14, 2024.

6:00 - 8:00 pm.

Murrow Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church  
Nash St., Southport

*Liz Fuller Presents*

*Mrs. Mary Duffy*

Come meet Mrs. Mary Duffy, a tavern owner in Smithville during the 1800s. Mary is a widow whose only grandson fought for the Confederacy. She has a wealth of stories about life in Smithville during the War of Southern Independence. During those difficult years, she and her friends experienced numerous hardships. Mary is looking forward to telling you tales of the spirit, resolve, and determination of Smithville's women.

Liz Fuller is the President of the Southport Historical Society where she speaks on a wide range of topics relating to Southport's history. She is a popular speaker at local history and civic organizations. She regularly writes guest columns and articles on Southport history of the *State Port Pilot*. Liz is known for her ability to foster a more intimate connection to the past by highlighting the lives of everyday people within the context of larger, historical events. She is the author of the recently published book, *Southport's Secret Suffragist: The Story of Anna Alene Clemons*.



*The Ladies' Forum is for women only and is a free event each year for members of BCWRT.*

*Guests are always welcome and pay only \$5.00. Light refreshments are served.*

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

## Notes from the April 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

1. Our current balance is \$5,550.
2. Our meeting turnout for April was our third highest since beginning again after Covid.
3. Speakers for the 2024-2025 season have been lined up and include U. S. Grant impersonator, Curt Fields.
4. May will be our 14th anniversary. Wally Rueckel will give a short talk on how the round table began. Pictures will be shown on the slide show.
5. The three tours of Fort Caswell all sold out quickly. There will be two before the May meeting. The tour of Fort Bragg fell through and will not be possible. Next season will include a tour of Fort Fisher and possibly Bentonville.

*Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, May 14, 2024. Meetings are held monthly to discuss items that will make our round table more interesting, run better, and keep our membership engaged. President John Butler leads the two-hour meeting that includes interested Advisors and members. The meetings are held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport one week following our gathering at Hatch and begin at 10:00 am. If you wish to attend or have suggestions for the Board, please contact John at [jilbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jilbutler2007@gmail.com).*

## Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

### Key West in the Civil War: Union Stronghold, No Tropical Paradise

UNCW professor Dr. Angela Zombek, an expert on the prisoner of war experience in the Civil War, will talk about the strategic Union outpost of Key West, including the use of Fort Zachary Taylor as a prison for blockade runners, Confederate sympathizers and Union miscreants.

May 9, 2024, 7:00 pm

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

## Southport Historical Society Program

### History of the Southport Fire Department

Presented by Fire Chief Charles Drew  
Tuesday, May 14, 10:00 am, Harper Library

Join Chief Drew as he tells the story of the history of the Southport Fire Department. The official beginning of the Department was in 1893, with firefighting roots in Southport that go back to the community's founding in 1792.

Free. Reservations Required. Reserve your spot at <https://brunSCO.libcal.com/event/11975737> or call 910-457-6237

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### "An Evening of Celebration and Excitement"

Thursday, May 23, 5:30 pm  
Garrison Lawn at Fort Johnston  
203 E. Bay St. Southport

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy the salubrious breezes at 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 will be provided by "Up The Creek."

The program is free and open to the public.

### An Interesting Civil War Fact

Of the nearly 200,000 African Americans who fought for the North, more than 100,000 were runaway slaves. The number who enlisted in the Union Army was larger than the number of soldiers in the entire Confederate Army in the final months of the war. Twenty-five were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Approximately 35,000 of the nearly 200,000 died during the war. ([factretriever.com](http://factretriever.com))



# BCWRT Volunteers

*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.*

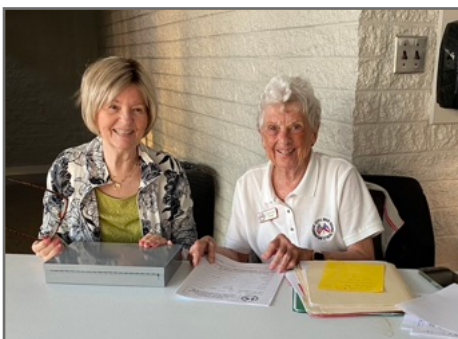
*John*

## These Are Our Current Volunteers

Amy Adams  
Ann Birdsall  
Bob Benedict  
Diane Bergen  
John Butler  
Peter Carmichael  
Jack Carpenter  
Jennifer Chapman  
Jim Conklin  
Audrey Connolly  
Tom Currier  
Pat de Barros  
Hema DeSilva  
Bob DiMattia  
Rina DiMaio  
Gar Dowell  
Jim Dunn  
Charen Fink  
Chris Fonvielle

Bob Hagerman  
Donna Italiano  
Matt Italiano  
Bruce Jordan  
Joe Kaczvinsky  
Barbara Kanto  
Tom Kehoe  
Joan Kelly  
Debbie King  
Betsy Kumnick  
Naomi Macey  
Joe Livoti  
Chris Mackowski  
Skip Maxwell  
Jim McKee  
Jim Medeiros  
Helen Morschauser  
Rick Morschauser

Roy Pender  
Gary Pyle  
Chuck Roedema  
Wally Rueckel  
Chris Simonetti  
Wade Sokolosky  
Bobbie Sullivan  
Elizabeth Szala  
Fred Taylor  
Len Trizinsky  
Fred Truelove  
John Wall  
John Walsh  
Tim Walsh  
Jim Wheeler  
Robbin Smith  
Angie Arcaro  
Angela Zombek



Audrey Connolly and Barbara Kanto



Chuck Roedema



Rick and Helen Morschauser

## These Volunteers Have Helped Us In the Past

Roger Albizua  
Alan Armstrong  
Mo Beers  
Sam Benson  
Teresa Benson  
Deb Bevenour  
Frank Bevenour  
June Chisholm  
Pam Collins  
Ron Collins  
Tish Gordon  
Anne Hager  
Marve Hamer  
Connie Hendrix  
Harvey Hosid  
John Hoskins  
Carolyn Hubbard  
Jim Johnson  
Jim Kane  
Ken Keast  
Frank Kelly  
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 McLaughlin  
Katy Menne  
Carol Lee Morris  
Dale Malarkey  
John Noweli  
Kathy O'Donnell  
Tom O'Donnell  
Rich Palazzi  
Woody Petchel  
Ruth Ann  
Petzinger  
Frank Pinto  
Mike Powell  
Warren Pratt  
Jon Richmond  
Leslie Rivers

Maggie S. Roedema  
Nan Rueckel  
Lori Sanderlin  
Gail Savell  
Dan Sellers  
Dave Shultz  
Nathan Sloan  
Lee Sayer  
Bobby Springle  
E. Gifford Stack  
Gene Sullivan  
Rosann Summerville  
Barry Thomas  
Richard Turek  
Frances Ventola  
Ralph Ventola  
Christine Volpe  
Barbara Voorhees  
Bill Voorhees  
Robin Ware  
Peter Whalen  
Susanna Whalen  
Max Williams  
Tony Zezza



Beth Linton



Jim Johnson & Paul Laird



E. Gifford Stack

# BCWRT Current Volunteers



Tom Kehoe and John Wall



Matt Italiano (50/50)



Jim Dunn



Skip Maxwell



Bob DiMattia and Debbie King



Bruce Jordan (right)



Naomi Macey



Jim McKee & John Butler

# BCWRT Volunteers - Past & Present



Tom Kehoe & Mike Powell



(L-R) Mike Powell, Gary Krupp, Jim Johnson, Jennifer Chapman, Chuck Roedema, Charen Fink, Tish Gordon



Wally Rueckel

**To All of our Volunteers  
Current and Past  
Thank You for All of Your  
Help and Efforts!**



Gar Dowell & Wally Rueckel



Rina DiMaio, Rick & Helen Morschauer, Chris Simonetta



Charen Fink



# Muster Notes and Notables

**The May BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, May 7, 2024.**

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

**See page 2 for details to attend via Zoom.**

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

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

## 2024 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

John Butler: President & Director  
Ann Birdsall: VP & Director  
(Vacant): VP & Director  
(Vacant): Secretary & Director  
Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director  
Bruce Jordan: Director  
Chuck Roedema: Director  
Gar Dowell: Advisor  
Jim Dunn: Advisor  
Charen Fink: Advisor

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

## Connect with us



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

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

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