



Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Welcome back to live meetings at Hatch Auditorium! The Tuesday, September 7 gathering will start earlier than usual, 6 p.m., to allow you time to enjoy the Masonboro Parlor Band. The meeting starts promptly at 7 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

When you arrive at the Hatch Auditorium you will find almost everything just like our last meeting in March 2020 - coffee and cookies, 50/50 raffle, framed print raffle, and the Sutler's table. The one change involves our registration process. We have added an entry point for those who use our new online registration process. The online registration is open to all members who are current in their membership dues. It is a very simple process. Log into the system - <https://olr.bcwr-nc.org/> - which will allow you to print a ticket to show you've registered. Bring the ticket to Hatch and enter through the special door. If you're not certain if you are a current member (dues paid), the system will tell you...and explain what to do if you're not up to date. Online registration closes at noon the day of the meeting. We'll still have our on-site registration working, which will also allow you to pay your dues if necessary.

The BCWRT board and volunteers have a

number of interesting activities planned for you this year. Most importantly, there is a first-rate line up of speakers for the 2021-22 program year. Guest presenters include Chris Mackowski leading us off, and we'll finish with Peter Carmichael and two talented women speakers in the spring. Topics this year run the gamut, including Fredericksburg, Lincoln, Fort Caswell, battlefield trauma and prisons. Another activity we're offering is an interesting tour, led by Chris Fonvielle on **October 23** of the Sugar Loaf Line of Defense. Part of the tour involves visiting the park in Carolina Beach showing the trench works from the battle for Wilmington. Finally, Advisor Charen Fink and her team will host the Ladies' Forum, always a popularly attended event, on October 25. Details on these activities can be found elsewhere in this issue of *Call to Arms*.

Come join us September 7, grab a cup of coffee and a cookie, and get ready to have a good time.

Please note: Due to the increase in COVID 19 Delta cases in NC, we are asking all members and visitors to please wear a mask while inside Hatch Auditorium. This is being done to help keep you, our volunteers, and guests stay safe. We will have masks available for those who forgot theirs, along with hand sanitizer. Thanks.

John

First Meeting of 2021-22 Features Lively Music, Outstanding Speaker/Topic, In-Person Camaraderie, Online Registration...and those Delicious Cookies

Our round table returns to Hatch Auditorium at Ft Caswell for live performances beginning Tuesday, September 7. This will be the first meeting of our new season. Leading off will be a fascinating piece of history from that era entitled, “Simply Murder: The Battle of Fredericksburg,” as presented by popular returning historian, Chris Mackowski, Ph.D.



The program will also welcome back the Masonboro Parlor Band to start the festivities.

The Battle of Fredericksburg was fought from December 11 - 15, 1862. With nearly 200,000 combatants, the greatest number of any Civil War engagement, Fredericksburg was one of the largest and deadliest battles of the Civil War. It featured the first opposed river crossing in American military history as well as the Civil War's first instance of urban combat. The battle was between the Union Army of the Potomac, lead by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside, and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, headed by Gen. Robert E. Lee. Afterwards, a visitor to the battlefield described the battle to President Lincoln as “butchery”. Was the disaster pre-ordained, or could Burnside have made other choices? Was Burnside really to blame for the loss? Was it a brilliant victory for the Confederates, or simply murder?

No one is better able to answer these questions than Chris Mackowski, editor-in-chief and co-founder of Emerging Civil War. He is the series

editor of the award-winning Emerging Civil War series, and the “Engaging the Civil War” series. Chris is a writing professor in the Jandoli School of Communications at St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, NY. He has authored or co-authored a dozen books on the Civil War, and his articles have appeared in all the major Civil War magazines and journals.



Thanks to the creativity of president John Butler and our leadership team, we will begin using a new online registration at the September meeting. (Regular on-site registration will still exist!) Starting Friday, August 27, and lasting until noon Sept 7, current members may log into the system - <https://olr.bcwr-nc.org/> - which will allow you to print a ticket to show you've registered. Bring the ticket to Hatch and enter through the special door. It's that easy. The system will clearly show if you're current (dues paid)...and what to do if you're not up to date.

The Tuesday, September 7 meeting takes place at Hatch Auditorium on the grounds of Fort Caswell. Registration and refreshments begin at 6 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 John Butler, at (404) 229-9425 or email to brunswickcwr@gmail.com. Our website is brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com. You may also visit our Facebook page for interesting facts, comments, announcements and updates.

CIVIL WAR...OR MORE LIKELY A PANDEMIC?

A review of Thomas Flagle's May Presentation By Jim Medeiros

The American Civil War produced casualties beyond any prior American war, yet the deadliest warriors of the War danced on the head of a pin: microbes. Thomas Flagle's thesis--that we may not have learned their pandemic lessons--should, if true, frighten us, specters of dead soldiers from the Civil War terrifying us, both North and South, with the message from their cold dead hands.

In 1863, John Leek, stationed in Tennessee with the 92nd Illinois, received a letter from home: "John, this war is an awful thing, and I fear many more valuable lives will be lost. You are exposed to many dangers." As far as we can tell, John never read the letter. He was already in the hospital ward with "lung fever"--another danger--when the letter arrived, dying shortly thereafter due to invisible deadly bullets. Replete with medical advances, the end of the 19th century offered longer lives, but not so the decade of the Civil War.



The three most efficient killing machines of the war: "camp fever", "the speckled monster", and the "flux"; all three flourished in the crowded military encampments and the more crowded towns that rapidly blossomed into cities of war. The speckled monster--small pox--at a 40 percent death rate remains one of the deadliest diseases in human history. Even after surviving the infection, many survivors remained debilitated for life. George Washington mandated smallpox vaccination in his war but in the Civil War even identifying good reservoirs (read donors) for serum proved problematic. For the South, not wasting the expense of vaccination on the poor consigned many counties and towns to death. Estimated combatant deaths: 15,000.

Camp fever (typhoid) followed the armies wherever they went. Cities, too, bred their own illness with

drinking water contaminated both locally and upstream. Even famous civilians fell to typhoid, the death of Lincoln's son in Washington being one of the most prominent. Water, one of the basic weapons against most disease, once contaminated caused most typhoid. Estimated combatant deaths: 64,800.

The flux (dysentery or diarrhea) cut fewer men from the battlefield killing only one in twenty-five, however, the flux revisited the ranks repeatedly. In fact, military surgeons routinely questioned soldiers on their bowels because they expected the men to get diarrhea. The fact remains, however, that then, as now, diarrhea remains eminently treatable so few should die. The typical 19th century treatment, however, involved such toxic substances as mercury, killing even more. By the end of the war 95,000 combatants died of the runs.

The thousands of uniformed dead formed the tip of the pandemic. Engorged cities bloated with refugees, soldiers, hospitals and war materiel imitated camp conditions. Clean water and sanitation were hard to find anywhere. The numbers of civilian dead due to disease are impossible to estimate because, unlike the army, no concentration of records with cause of death exists.

For Flagle, the final analysis is what we can learn through history. The lesson on preventing disease holds as true today as it did 150 years ago. "When I look at the Civil War I look at all of it. I see it as us just in different clothing. What can we learn from each other? We learn civic responsibility."

(See page 8 for statistics on the Civil War medical casualties, and other fascinating factoids.)

Ladies' Department — *By Charen Fink*

We hear so much about the Southern women and their trials and tribulations but this is not to minimize them. This article will profile the women of the North of whom we know less about their role in the war effort. Nina Silber authored the book, *Daughters of the Union*, from which I included excerpts.

Most women of the North remained far from the conflict and although they suffered hardships, the battles were not fought on their home front, but with few exceptions. Nevertheless, they supported the Union cause and participated where and when they were able. This transformed them as it did their Southern sisters. The women developed a new sense of self and citizenship. These women wrote of their experiences in letters and diaries of the changes in activity and attitude as a result of the war. Women now became wage-earners, participants in politics and contributed to the war effort.

However, they were still expected to subordinate themselves to a male-dominated government and military bureaucracies. They discovered their patriotism and ability to confront new economic and political challenges. Obstacles of wartime rule were encountered. There was the chance to act with greater independency in running their households and their political views. These were crucial starting points for the late nineteenth-century feminist struggle for social and political equality.

Susan B. Anthony and fellow reformer Elizabeth

Cady Stanton (seated) put their women's rights work on hold to organize the Woman's Loyal League. The league gathered thousands of petitions to outlaw slavery.

Women no longer had to stand hidden within their male kin's political identity. Unfortunately, the state and federal governments still felt paternalistic towards women. The assassination of Lincoln left many bereft because Caroline White (famous abolitionist) felt safe when he was

at the helm. Many women felt insecure after their husbands returned from war after living in relative independence with little feminine guidance or attention. Often marital bliss did not resume after husbands returned.

Immorality on the husband's part added to the wife's insecurity as did widowhood. Then she had to depend on the Pension Office for funds. Women in the North were expected to swear a loyalty oath to show their loyalty to the U.S. government. This was

important for those who wanted to travel, marry, sell property or teach school.

Northern women for years thought more should have been done to Southern women's displays of treason. Ultimately the Northern woman agreed that the main tributes and laurels should go to the men as their own contributions paled in comparison to the work of the men.

Notwithstanding, the Northern women made many sacrifices and contributions as their societal roles changed.



LADIES' FORUM RETURNS

The pandemic is almost behind us and we are moving forward with the 2021 Civil War Ladies' Forum, an opportunity to learn about women and how the Civil War impacted their lives, both North and South. The date is Monday, October 25, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport on Nash Street across from the post office. The time is 6-8 p.m., with doors opening at 5 p.m.

Coffee will be ready and Civil War music playing. Organizer Charen Fink reminds everyone this event is for women only. Brunswick Civil War Round Table female members are free of charge and it's only \$5 for lady guests. Civil War-era refreshments and door prizes are included.

The first speaker is Rhonda Florian, from Leland, returning by popular demand and speaking on Mary Sophia Hill, "The Florence Nightingale of the South." This is the story of



an Irish woman who became famous for the outstanding nursing care she gave to Confederate soldiers and officers.

Rhonda is a former English teacher and theater professional. One of her many history affiliations includes the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The second speaker is Marion Martin of Southport who is reprising her topic on Civil War era quilts. This will be "Part Two" as she goes into detail about their history and construction. On display will be lap top quilts available for sale.

Currently Marion is the kitchen manager at Trinity United Methodist Church. Organizing the Farmers Market in Southport is another one of Marion's specialties.

Reservations are necessary to insure that there is sufficient food. For more information/reservations call Charen Fink at 330-507-2773 or email dcftandm@hotmail.com. There will also be a sign up sheet during the September meeting at the front of the Hatch stage.



WINNER'S CHOICE RAFFLE RESUMES

Skip Maxwell, BCWRT's Artifacts Manager, says "The Winner's Choice" print raffle is back in business. Interrupted by Covid (what hasn't been?), the raffle winner will be able to select the print of his or her choice from the three last displayed in March 2020, and again at the upcoming September meeting. The beautifully framed prints are all from recognized Civil War artists: Dale Gallon, Mort Kuntsler, and Lafayette Ragsdale. Kunstler's "I'll Be Moving Within the Hour," capturing a scene from the Second Manassas Campaign in August of 1862, is shown, without the frame.



Tickets are one for \$2; three for \$5; or seven for \$10. They will be available for sale in front of Hatch Auditorium, alongside the prints. The winning ticket will be drawn at our October 5 meeting and the winner gets to select which print they'll take home!

All monies raised will go for our mission of education and battlefield preservation.

JOIN BCWRT ON A TRIP TO "THE BEACH" !

That's Carolina Beach, of course! Our own Professor Chris Fonvielle, leads us on a tour of the Confederate Sugar Loaf line of defense. Chris is shown at the park's dedication in February 2021.

On Saturday, October 23, Chris (who is THE expert on all things Civil War in the Wilmington area)



will take us through the new Joseph Ryder Lewis, Jr., Civil War Park and other nearby locales that were pivotal in the Confederate defense and eventual 1865 Union capture of Wilmington.

Note: the October 23 date is a week later than previously advertised.

We will meet at 10:45 a.m. at the Carolina Beach Town Hall, 1121 N. Lake Park Blvd, Carolina Beach, (take the ferry or the bridge), a short walk from the park, which has

signage partially funded by our round table. After an hour of touring we'll have lunch delivered, then set off to explore additional sections of the fortifications and battlefields. Expect to walk a total of about three miles, with the tour ending around 4 p.m. Attendance will be limited to 35 people, and the price per person is \$35. The rain date is the following Saturday, October 30.

The sign-up sheet and additional information will be available at our October 5 meeting. For questions or to register before then, please contact John Walsh, BCWRT's trip coordinator, at jdwalsh1@gmail.com, or (609) 651-7719.

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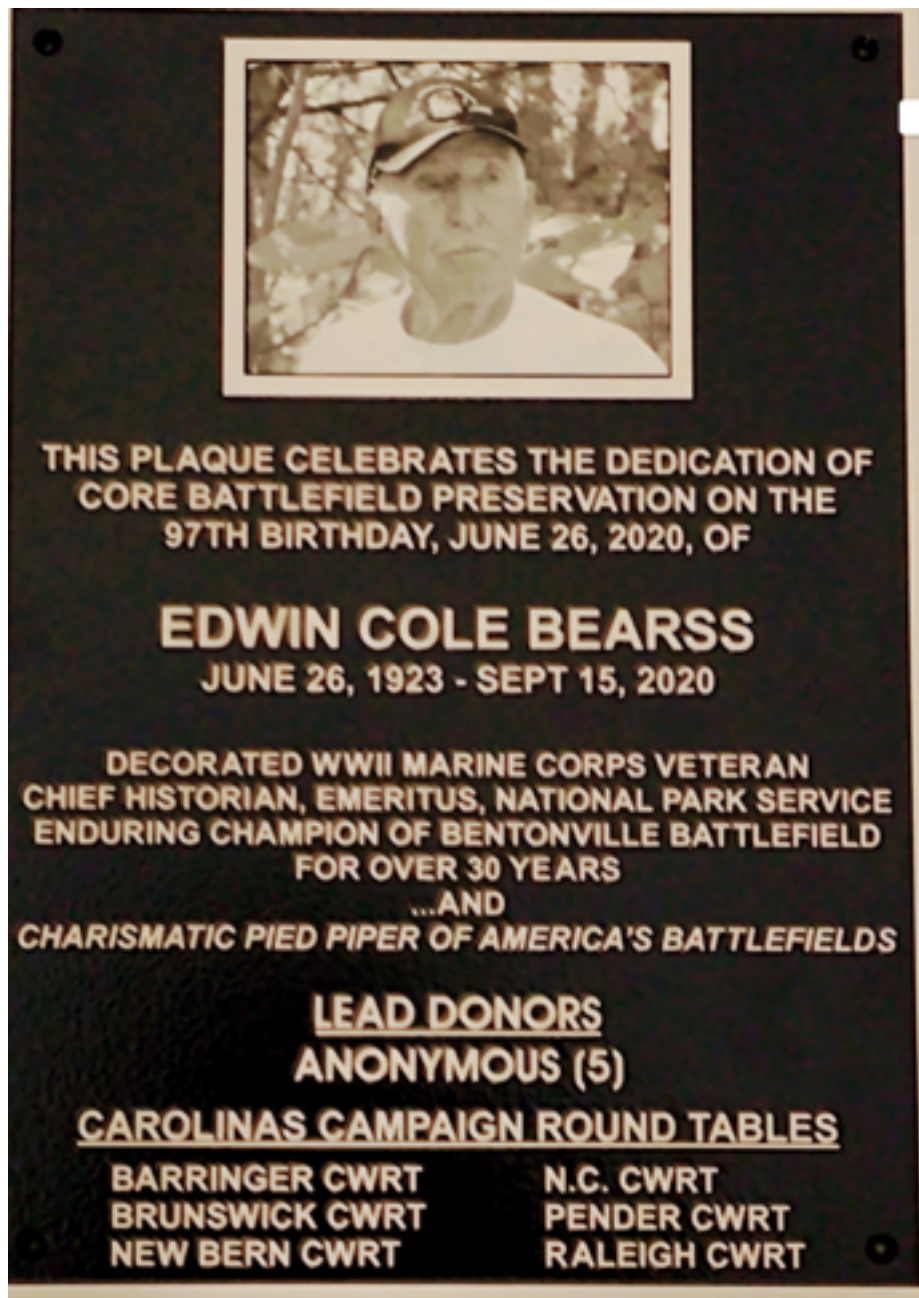
TAR HEELS AT GETTYSBURG

If you've ever wondered about the participation of North Carolina units at Gettysburg, you're queries will certainly be answered at the Civil War Institute's October 8-10 program, "North Carolinians at Gettysburg." The weekend event features outstanding speakers and guides, including BCWRT Advisor Peter Carmichael. According to organizers, space is limited. For information, see <https://www.gettysburg.edu/civil-war-institute/fall-field-program/schedule>. To register or for any questions, contact Heather Miller at civilwar@gettysburg.edu or 717-337-6590.

HONORING ED BEARSS

When Ed Bearss passed away in September of last year BCWRT lost a true friend. Ed spoke to our round table eight times over our eleven year existence, always amazing us with his knowledge, wit, and Marine Corps bravado. We enthusiastically made a donation for a memorial plaque to be placed at the Bentonville Battlefield Park, recognizing Ed's support for the Civil War site, as well as his assistance to so many North Carolina round tables.

Officials recently announced the plaque's design is finalized (see below). The date of the official unveiling at Bentonville is pending. There is one line in the memorial that certainly captures Ed's contribution in getting more people to better understanding the Civil War: ***Charismatic Pied Pipe of America's Battlefields.***



2021-22 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER CHOSEN

President John Butler recently announced the University of North Carolina Wilmington selected Samuel Flowers as the recipient of BCWRT's 2021-22 scholarship. The \$1,000 grant is given annually to a UNCW graduate student majoring in history with an emphasis on Civil War studies. This year's scholarship is given in the name of Max Williams who helped get the round table off the ground in part by acquiring outstanding speakers for our initial years, and who passed away in January.

Mr. Flowers is an entering M.A. student and Wilmington native who received his B.A. in history from UNC Charlotte in 2020. He will continue his studies focusing on the Civil War era and nineteenth century U.S. history.

BCWRT's first scholarship in 2019 was given in the name of Tom O'Donnell, co-founder and Past President, and was awarded to Matthew Poirier of Chesapeake, VA. Last year's award, donated in the name of Ed Bearss, the Civil War historian cited on the preceding page, was awarded to Aeris Carter.



Civil War Factoids

As mentioned in Jim Medeiros' article on page 3, the statistics were grim for Civil War soldiers with a disease. Jim provided these numbers to make his point (with a few other non-medical factoids added).

- 450,000 combatants of both sides lost their lives to disease. If we were to lose a proportional number of combatants in a war today, the equivalent of every man, woman and child in Tennessee would lie dead.
- 20,000 soldiers was the most General of the Continental Army George Washington ever had.
- Over 2,000,000 men fought in the Civil War and both North and South together produced 2,000,000,000 bullets.
- One tubercular soldier could cough out 4,000,000,000 bacilli in one day.
- Only one in ten Native Americans survived smallpox, far exceeding average death rates.
- A soldier had a 1 in 30 chance of dying on the battlefield.
- A soldier in a prison camp stood a 1 in 7 chance of dying.
- Each draft animal in camp produced 24 pounds of feces/urine per day.
- 64,800 combatant deaths due to typhoid exceeded the dead of the Vietnam war.
- 95,000 soldiers died of the flux (diarrhea).

THANKS TO BCWRT VOLUNTEERS

“An organization is only as good as its people and the BCWRT has been especially blessed.” This sentiment was expressed by President John Butler at the August Board of Directors meeting.

John continued, “It takes a lot of volunteers to make everything run smoothly at each meeting. From the registration team, 50/50 raffle, coffee/cookie team, Sutler’s table and many more behind the scenes volunteers organizing meetings and setting up the tours.



We currently have over 50 volunteers helping make the Brunswick Civil War Round Table an enjoyable experience. I want to take a moment to thank each and every one of our volunteers for their efforts. Without their sacrifice and dedication we would never be able to have such great programs and events for our members.”

He ended by noting that we are currently in need of a couple of people to take over the coffee/cookie team for the meetings. “Based on frequent comments, the refreshments are a big hit, and the volunteers would be truly appreciated. And, our 50/50 raffle team could also use one-two more volunteers.” For more information - or to step up and volunteer - contact Jim Kane, BCWRT’s Secretary, at 480-710-4491, or jtkane07@gmail.com.

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North Carolina in the Shenandoah Valley

October must be the month for learning about North Carolinians battles outside of the Tar Heel State. As mentioned on page 6, the Civil War Institute has a weekend conference October 8-10 in Gettysburg. Now comes word of a one-day conference Saturday, October 23, in Raleigh, “Tar Heels in the Valley: North Carolinians in the Shenandoah Valley During the Civil War.” Pre-registration is required. For details, [click here](#).



BOOK REVIEWS

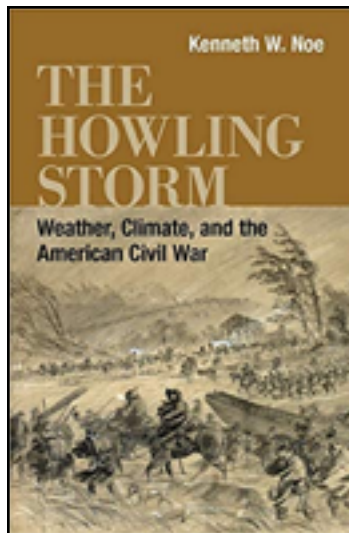
John Butler occupied many of his pandemic “stay at home” days reading numerous Civil War books. Here are three he is recommending, along with his comments:



“The Confederacy’s Most Modern General, James Longstreet and the American Civil War,” by Harold M. Knudsen, LTC (Ret.), published April 2021.

Longstreet was one of Gen. Lee’s critical

subordinates. But since the Civil War he has become a controversial general in the post war period. The proponents of the Lost Cause theory have heavily criticized Gen. Longstreet for his legacy and his support for reconstruction. You may not agree with the author’s conclusions but you will get a more balanced analysis of Gen. Longstreet’s Civil War and post Civil War activities.

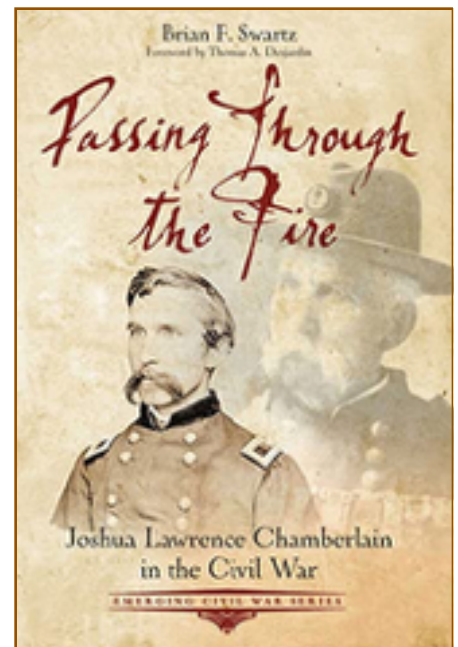


“The Howling Storm: Weather, Climate and the American Civil War,” by Kenneth

W. Noe, published October 2020. This is the first book to take a detailed look into the effects of weather and climate during the Civil War. It will give you some new, interesting perspectives of how each side was affected by the weather and how they were able to cope with it.

“Passing Through the Fire: Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain in the Civil War,”

by Brian Swartz, published July 2021. Many books have been written about Gen. Chamberlain, so most people think there is little left to be said. Brian was able to find some



unknown facts and tidbits that make this an interesting read even for someone who has done extensive study of Chamberlain’s life and career. It will be great book for those who know very little about Chamberlain except for his Little Round Top exploits. This is another great paperback book by the Emerging Civil War organization, giving you an opportunity to read about an interesting topic in a quick, easy to read format.

MUSTER NOTES and NOTABLES

The September meeting of the BCWRT is Tuesday, September 7, 2021. The meeting will be held at Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.

Registration and refreshments begin at 6 p.m., and 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/>. The YouTube BCWRT site is located at: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=brunswick+civil+war+round+table.

Contact us at brunswickcwr@gmail.com.

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

2021 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

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Cindy Brochure: VP & Director
Gar Dowell: VP & Director
Jim Kane: Secretary & Director
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Charen Fink: Advisor
Chris Fonvielle: Advisor
Tom Kehoe: Advisor
Jim McKee: Advisor
Roy Pender: Advisor
Leslie Rivers: Advisor
Wally Rueckel: Advisor
Wade Sokolosky: Advisor
Peter Whelan: Advisor

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