



# Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

## The President's Corner by John Butler



I want to welcome everyone back to the start of our 15th season. We already have a jam-packed schedule.

Chris Mackowski will kick off our first meeting on Sept 3 with a presentation on "Battle of Spotsylvania Court House." Chris always does a great and energized talk, and we are happy that he will start us off for the year.

The remainder of the program year will have a number of great presentations. Ann Birdsall has put together a strong mix of speakers such as Eric Wittenberg, Will Green, and Kevin Pawlak, along with Curt Fields appearing as U.S. Grant.

BCWRT recently lost one of our great supporters with the sudden death of Peter Carmichael, Director of the Civil War Institute. Peter joined us a number of times with his fantastic presentations and we are both shocked and greatly saddened by his loss.

The new museum at Fort Fisher is almost completed and the new displays are being set up. It will open mid-September. Look for exact date. To celebrate the new facility, John Walsh and Jim Dunn are working with Chris Fonvielle to do a tour of the new museum and a night tour of the battlefield and earthworks. More details to follow. In addition, John and Jim are working on a couple of other tours to cap off the year.

The next Ladies' Forum will be held on October 14 at the Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport. Robbin Smith has put together an interesting program we think everyone will like. Sorry guys, this is for women only.

Finally, we thank everyone who participated in our recent survey. We had a great response rate: 288 responses out of a possible 600. The survey indicated that members like our speakers, the updates to Hatch Auditorium, and the newsletter. Most members do not access the website, our Facebook page, or online registration. We did get several ideas for speaker topics and will use them for our 2025-2026 Speaker Season. You can see the survey results here: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-YBVn5TctJTY8cvmh\\_2B3VuYg\\_3D\\_3D/](https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-YBVn5TctJTY8cvmh_2B3VuYg_3D_3D/).

When you get a chance, try our online registration system and take a look at our website and Facebook page. See you at the September meeting!

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# BCWRT Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, September 3, 2024 Program**

## **“The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House”**

Popular historian Chris Mackowski returns with another dramatic performance with his presentation “The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House.” Chris will describe in detail one of the bloodiest battles of the war between Generals Lee and Grant. It was a battle that cost over 30,000 lives over a 12 day period in May, 1864, ending with no winner. The intense fighting included nearly 20 hours of brutal hand-to-hand

combat at the infamous “Bloody Angle,” a section of the Confederate salient. Although the Union suffered severe losses during the campaign, it was a strategic victory for Grant. The battle inflicted proportionately higher casualties on Lee’s army, eventually driving his troops into a siege at Petersburg, and ultimately leading him to surrender the following year at Appomattox Court House in April, 1865.



Our popular guest speaker, Chris Mackowski, Ph.D., is the editor-in-chief and co-founder of Emerging Civil War and the series editor of the award-winning Emerging Civil War Series as well as an author of books, essay collections, and articles. Chris is a writing professor at St. Bonaventure University as well as historian-in-residence at Stevenson Ridge, a historic property on the Spotsylvania battlefield in central Virginia, historian for the National Park Service at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park, serves on the advisory board of the Civil War Roundtable Congress, and is a longtime Advisor to BCWRT.



You are encouraged to attend the meeting either in person or via Zoom.

**If participating via Zoom,** simply use the following link:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/87804495774?pwd=p9m3nmg9KdIWJy25HTvDiMQHa4Iz9u.1>

**Meeting ID:** 878 0449 5774

**Passcode:** 604328

# BCWRT Donation & Tours

Since 2010 when BCWRT began, it has donated more than \$50,000 to a variety of Civil War causes and organizations. Included in these donations are Fort Anderson, the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, Fort Fisher, Bentonville Battlefield, the CSS Neuss Museum, and Fort Fisher among others. The money has been donated for things such as site plaques and interpretive signs and to help with special projects at a site. Below is information about our most recent donation and another from our 2014 archives follows on the next page.

## Bentonville Battlefield Site Plaque Donated by BCWRT

In August 2023, BCWRT approved a donation of \$1,700 for the purpose of having a trail sign created for Bentonville Battlefield.

We are pleased to announce that the sign is now in place at the battlefield and it explains Hoke's Assault on March 19, 3:45 pm until dark.

Thanks to all of our members, BCWRT is proud to have been able to have this information board made and installed.

“Donated by Brunswick (N.C.) Civil War Round Table” is included at the bottom left of the sign.

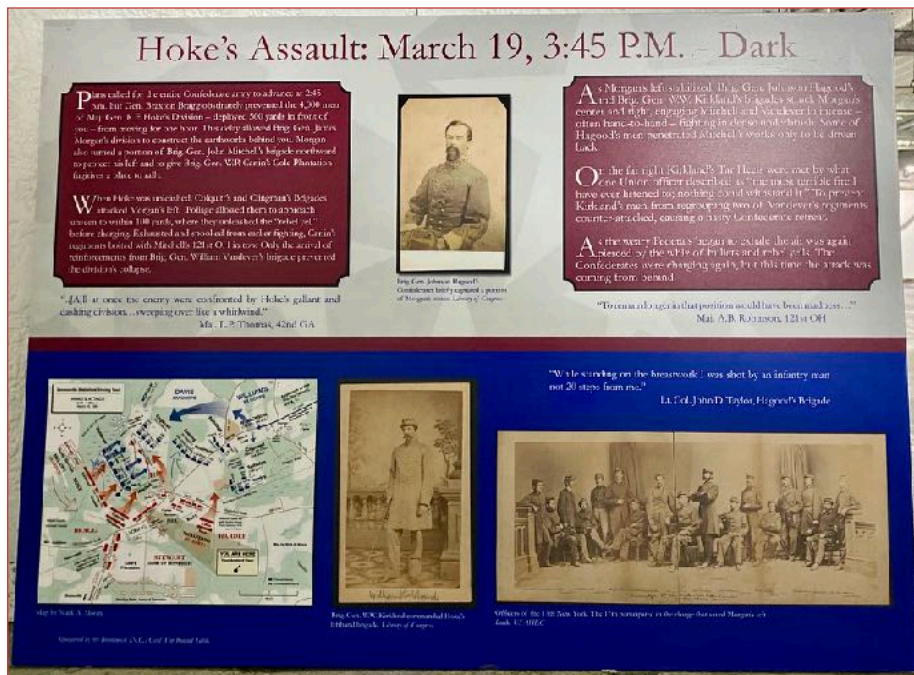


Photo by Naomi and John Macey, members and volunteers, who visited Bentonville Battlefield in April 2024

## Fort Fisher Tour



The new museum, visitor center and reconstructed earthworks at Fort Fisher will soon be open.

John Walsh advises that the next tour will be an evening one of Fort Fisher led by Chris Fonvielle on Friday November 15.

The tour will begin with a tour of the new Fort Fisher museum and there will be a full moon that night to highlight the experience.

Mark your calendars. Details will be provided soon.

# BCWRT Donation 2014

## USS Monticello Flag Restored

In 2014, BCWRT donated \$2,000 to the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Hatteras, NC, for the purpose of completing the restoration of the battle flag of the USS Monticello. Below is the page about this that appeared in the September 2014 issue of Call to Arms.

Wally Rueckel, co-founder of the BCWRT and president at the time, shares his story about the hanging of the flag:

*"We got a call from the Museum inviting BCWRT to come down to the Hatteras Museum and participate in the ceremony. Mike, Charen Fink, Connie Hendrix and myself traveled to the ceremony. The flag raising was more than we expected. There were only about ten participants including the four of us. We had to manually hoist by pulley and rope a wood-framed flag about 10' x 6' about 20 feet to the top of the Museum. We then were asked to hold on while the flag was stabilized and secured. Raising that flag for six people, including two women, was probably one of the more challenging action of the BCWRT. But what we accomplished was to preserve the Civil War history of the USS Monticello that captured the Confederate blockade runner British schooner Revere off Frying Pan Shoals at the entrance of the Cape Fear River.*

*I encourage you to visit the Museum of the Atlantic in Hatteras. It is magnificent and the area is a great place to visit and perhaps vacation. DON'T VOLUNTEER TO HANG ANY FLAGS"*

SEPTEMBER 2014

Ladies' Forum

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### BCWRT Helps *Monticello* Flag

HATTERAS - Through the generosity of Mr. Jim Keith and the Karl M. Keith Family Trust, the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum has acquired the silk ensign from the USS Monticello. It is one of only three silk naval flags from this period known to exist and is the only one with the name of the ship, "Monticello", and that of her commander, "Lieut. Daniel L. Braine" embroidered along the hoist.



On Monday, June 30, the Friends of the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum hosted a special event to mark the return of the ensign to Hatteras. The event was by invitation only and was meant to recognize those who participated in the restoration and preservation of this important, historic, North Carolina artifact.

Those in attendance saw the flag prepared for permanent exhibit prior to its exhibition to the



public. BCWRT president, Wally Rueckel; Director, Charen Fink and advisors, Connie Hendrix & Mike Powell traveled to the Museum to represent the RT because of our donation.

In addition, the USS Monticello, engaged batteries at New Inlet, captured the blockade running British schooner Revere off Frying Pan Shoals, was part of the expedition to Smithville (Southport), participated in the attacks on Fort Fisher, and accepted the surrender of Fort Caswell.



"The association of the flag with the USS Monticello makes this of primary importance to the history of Hatteras and North Carolina," stated Joseph K. Schwarzer, Director of the North Carolina Maritime Museum System. "We are thrilled to have been able to preserve this remarkably unique and important piece of history," he stated.

Mike Carraway and Lynn Anderson of the North Carolina Maritime System worked with Ms. Stevens preparing the artifact for public display.





## *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*



We invite you to 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 (Southport's original name until 1887) 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 the author of the recently published book, Southport's Secret Suffragist: The Story of Anna Alene Clemons.*

We are also pleased that our October Ladies' Forum will feature **Carolee Morris** whose long interest in history has included graduate studies as well as oratorical and speaking contests. Carolee will be reading a selection from Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer. The selected story, its time frame, subject matter, and Twain's inimitable humor jibe with Liz Fuller's well-chosen topic.

*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. Light refreshments are served.*

*Reservations are strongly recommended.*

*Please contact BCWRT at [brunswickcwr@gmail.com](mailto:brunswickcwr@gmail.com) to sign up.*

*There will also be a sign-up table near the stage with Robbin Smith before our next meeting.*



# Civil War Notes

## Civil War Cornbread Recipe

The cornbread we eat today bears only a passing resemblance to that eaten during the Civil War years. In those days, it was bland and rather tasteless, so add a little sugar to this traditional recipe if you feel the need.

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup yellow  
cornmeal 1 cup flour.  
Pinch of salt  
4 Eggs  
2 Tbs milk  
2 Tbs butter, softened

### Instructions:

Combine the cornmeal, flour and salt in a bowl.  
Add the eggs, milk, and butter and mix well.  
Pour into a 9x9-inch buttered baking pan.  
Bake in a moderate oven (375 degrees F) for 15-20  
minutes.



Recipe from The Civil War Cookbook by William C. Davis  
shared by Robbin Smith

## Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, Only Woman Awarded the Medal of Honor



Mary Edwards Walker was ridiculed for her dress, which was often a pair of pants underneath a short dress. Photo by Mathew Brady Studio sometime during the period of c. 1860-1870.

Before, during, and long after the war, a patriarchal American culture condemned the idea of women in the medical profession. Only a few medical schools accepted female students, and few communities allowed women doctors to practice.

The military was no different. In 1861 medical practitioner and graduate of a Syracuse medical school Mary Edwards Walker applied for a surgeon's commission in the Union army. Officials rejected her outright.

Between hounding Washington officials for reconsideration, she volunteered as a nurse. She also provided assistance to families visiting loved ones in camp hospitals. Early in 1864 she finally received an appointment as an assistant surgeon in

the Army of the Cumberland, the first woman surgeon ever commissioned by the U.S. military.

Evidence suggests her appointment may have been more for her capacities as a spy than as a doctor. In 1864, while crossing enemy lines to care for civilians, she was taken prisoner and convicted of espionage. The recipient of considerable ridicule, she served four months in a Richmond prison. Her jailers, however, acknowledged her commission and exchanged her, along with other Union surgeons, for seventeen Confederate medical personnel.



Mary Edwards Walker photographed wearing her Medal of Honor

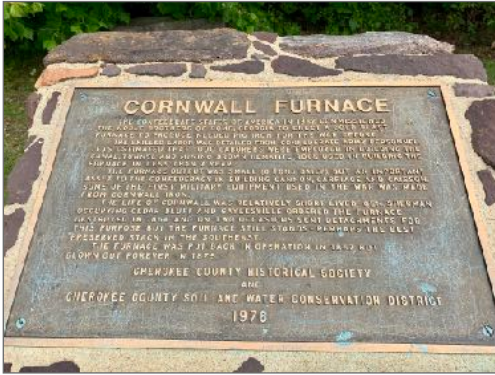
In 1865 Mary Edwards Walker received the Medal of Honor. A review board repealed the decoration in 1917 because she was technically a civilian. In 1977 the award was reinstated, and Walker remains to date the only female recipient of the award.

*This article is an excerpt from "The History Buff's Guide to the Civil War" by Thomas R. Flagell.*

# Civil War Views

## Cornwall Furnace, Alabama

*E. Gifford Stack, a member and former BCWRT Director and Editor of this newsletter, shared photos and notes from a trip he made this summer on his motorcycle.*



In July, while riding my Harley in Alabama, I stumbled across a Civil War site accredited as a National Register of Historic place. The Cornwall Furnace on Lake Weiss near Cedar Bluff, AL, was erected in 1862 to supply iron ore for furnaces in Rome, GA, for manufacturing Confederate cannons, cannon balls, and other munitions. The 50-foot tall furnace was ordered destroyed by Gen. Sherman in 1864, but it survived and went back into operation in 1867. It was eventually destroyed by an industrial explosion around 1875. The five-acre site has picnic facilities and wonderful lake views.



Front of the furnace



The top of the furnace can be seen in the background on the left (if you can take your eyes off of the Harley).

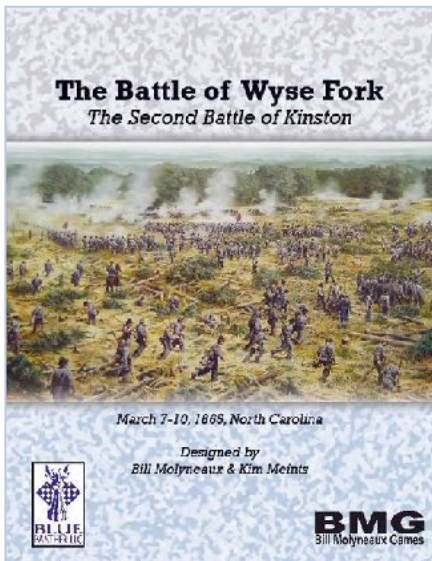
## Help Planning Your Civil War Battlefield Visits

If you find yourself needing help in planning your trip to various Civil War Battlefields in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, or Pennsylvania, here is a resource for you. The group that produces the **Civil War Trail Maps** for those states can also provide you some help in figuring out what to see, where to stay and eat at these various sites. Email Drew Gruber, Executive Director, Civil War Trails, [executivedirector@civilwartrails.org](mailto:executivedirector@civilwartrails.org).



# Battlefield Preservation

## The Battle of Wyse Fork Game



Mike Parker, a columnist for the Neuse News, recently met and interviewed Bill Molyneaux about the game he created, *The Battle of Wyse Fork, The Second Battle of Kinston*. The full column can be found on the *Save Wyse Fork Battlefield Facebook* page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/4914158828666582/>

I am not sure how Bill Molyneaux came to know about our part of Eastern North Carolina, but once he discovered us, he became a frequent visitor and friend in our efforts to preserve our local history. "I have been a play tester for over 30 years and have done work for many game companies and designers. ... I like to design games for historic sites that will be sold to non-war gamers in order to expand the hobby."

After Bill visited the CSS Neuse Museum and the CSS Neuse II replica, he became fascinated with the history of our area. After hearing about efforts to preserve the Wyse Fork Battlefield a few miles east of Kinston, he arranged to meet with Dennis Harper and Wade Sokolosky for detailed talks about the battle. The more he heard, the more committed he became to designing a game based on the Battle of Wyse Fork.

*The Battle of Wyse Fork* is a one-to-two-player game set during the American Civil War. At this battle, often called the Second Battle of Kinston, the Confederate army tried to blunt the Union advance of Gen. Jacob D. Cox, who moved his men from New Bern to join forces with Union Gen. William T. Sherman.

*The Battle of Wyse Fork* game offers a historically authentic experience for new and experienced gamers. One player takes on the role of Union Gen. Cox, whose task is to seize the railroad supply point. The other player serves as Confederate Gen. Bragg, whose mission is to stop Cox. With only 15 turns to play, the players can enjoy the average game in under two hours. The game also has optional rules for players looking for extra depth.

However, Bill's purpose for *The Battle of Wyse Fork* is not merely to offer another war game. **Bill has dedicated a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the game to support the "Save the Wyse Fork Battlefield" efforts.** If you are interested in the game or only interested in preserving the Wyse Fork Battlefield, visit this link for more information or to make a purchase: <https://www.bluepantherllc.com/products/bmgwysefork>

## Protect the Site of the Second Largest Battle Fought in North Carolina

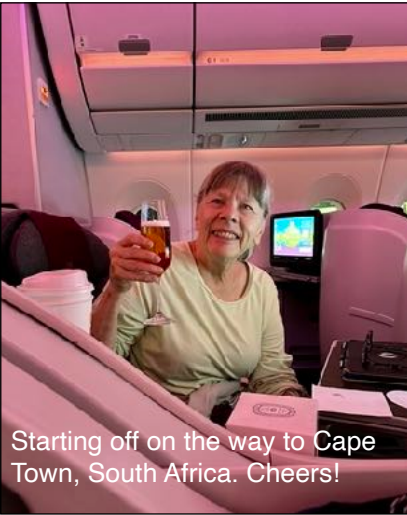
The American Battlefield Trust, the Save Wyse Fork Facebook page, along with many individuals are continuing in their efforts to protect Wyse Fork Battlefield from a proposed interchange that would destroy an essential part of one of the most significant Civil War battles fought in the Tar Heel State.

Construction of this grade-separated interchange, with flyover ramps and overpasses, would destroy invaluable archaeological resources while ruining parts of the hallowed ground and endangering preserved land. Alternative sites that do not destroy hallowed ground can and should be selected to continue this project.

**Please take action and make your voice heard against this threat at Wyse Fork. [Click here](#)** for a link to the American Battlefield Trust page for more information and to sign their letter of opposition.



# A Volunteer Summer Vacation



Starting off on the way to Cape Town, South Africa. Cheers!

Naomi Macey, our Registration Team Captain, and her husband, John, traveled to Africa in June for a safari vacation. It took 37 hrs to finally arrive in Cape Town, South Africa.

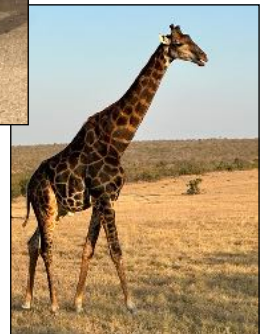
One of the first sites to see was penguins on Boulder Beach. Then on to a preserve for safari - and glamping in a private hut. While in Zimbabwe they were on a river cruise on the Zimbia River, then a bush plane to another safari.



A open Land Cruiser ride at dawn and then another at dusk with lions, elephants and leopards so close at times that we could (but didn't dare!) touch them.



Off in a doorless helicopter over the Delta Preserve in Botswana.



# Meeting Photo Gallery



We finished up our last season in May with guest speaker, U. S. Navy Captain Edward W. Gantt (Ret.) who gave his presentation, "Contributions of the United States Colored Troops During the Civil War." Captain Gantt is a Civil War reenactor and added to the evening by being dressed in his uniform.



After greeting and speaking with members in the audience, he began his talk from the podium on stage, but quickly changed and came down to speak from the floor. His talk was energized and enlightening, so much so that at the end he received a standing ovation. We hope to have him back to present his sequel about the Reconstruction in the future.



In May we celebrated our 14th Anniversary and Wally Rueckel, one of our co-founders, spoke about the history of the BCWRT and how it came to be.

## Have a *Faster and Easier* Check-In



Did you know that you can speed up the time it takes to check in for a meeting by pre-registering in advance? All current members can log into <https://olr.bcwrt-nc.org/> from the time the first meeting notice is sent out until noon of the day of the meeting.

Then print a ticket for yourself and your spouse showing you have registered. Bring them to hatch Auditorium and enter through the door on the far right. Skip the registration tables.

# Board Notes & Local Events

## Notes from the May 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

1. Our balance as of the end of May is \$6,789.
2. Our speaker at the May 7th meeting, Edward W. Gantt, received a standing ovation after his presentation. We hope to have him present his sequel about the Reconstruction at a future meeting.
3. We had a successful "tour season" in 2023-2024 with three of Fort Caswell and a historical river cruise. The next season will include a tour of Fort Fisher - the new museum and an evening tour of the Fort.
4. Speakers are lined up for all of the 2024-2025 season.
5. A survey will be sent out to all members who will also be provided with the results.
6. We are considering ordering BCWRT shirts to sell and will look into the cost.

*Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, September 3, 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 [jlbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jlbutler2007@gmail.com).*

## Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

### "Civil War Uninterrupted: Jefferson Davis, George Washington Rains, and the Confederate Gunpowder Strategy"

Ted Savas, author, publisher and co-founder and majority partner of Savas Beatie, will be presenting objective evidence to prove that Jefferson Davis' vision and decision-making were well-reasoned and much more successful than even he believed possible. This was due to the partnership with George Rains and the strategy those two men employed to ward off invasion long enough to set up the Confederacy to fight.

September 12, 2024, 7:00 pm

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



## Southport Historical Society Programs

### "The History of the NAACP in Southport"

Presented by Donnie Joyner

Tuesday, September 10, 10-11 am, Harper Library

Join Donnie as he takes us back 60 years to the time of the nationwide Civil Rights movement and the establishment of Southport's branch of the NAACP. Learn about Southport's citizens who stepped up to work for equality and to drive Jim Crow out of our community.

Free. Reservations Required. To reserve your spot, call 910-457-6237

### Southport Suzie's Monday Speaker

Monday, September 23, 6:00 pm

Southport Suzie's (in Big Lots shopping plaza)

Come join us for our Speaker Series featuring Stephen Burns from the Southport Historical Society as he talks about the rise and fall of the WB&S, Southport's railroad.

Have a drink or snack and enjoy learning Southport History. No reservations required.

### "John N. Maffit the Prince of the Privateers"

Thursday, September 26, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Southport Community Center  
223 E. Bay St.

Learn about the career of John Newland Maffit, especially his time stationed at Fort Johnston and his service to the Confederacy as a Blockade runner. See artifacts from his life and meet his great-great-grandson, Robert Maffit.

The program is free and open to the public. No reservations required.



# Muster Notes and Notables

**The September BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, September 3, 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	Chris Fonvielle: Advisor
Ann Birdsall: VP & Director	Jim McKee: Advisor
Jim Dunn: VP & Director	Chris Mackowski: Advisor
Jennifer Chapman: Secretary & Director	Skip Maxwell: Advisor
Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director	Roy Pender: Advisor
Bruce Jordan: Director	Wally Rueckel: Advisor
Chuck Roedema: Director	Wade Sokolosky: Advisor
Gar Dowell: Advisor	Robbin Smith: Advisor
Jim Dunn: Advisor	John Wall: Advisor
Charen Fink: 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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