

# CIVIL WAR LADIES' FORUM

## Sex in the Civil War is topic at the October 30th Forum



Renowned local historian, author, and popular guest speaker Chris Fonvielle will join the Civil War Ladies' Forum at its annual meeting on Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss a most interesting subject rarely discussed at Civil War presentations... "Sex in the Civil War." His presentation five years ago was so popular that Chris returns by popular demand with his most recent version.

The meeting will be held in Murrow Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport, across from the Southport Post Office. The program begins at 6:00PM.

Sex in the Civil War was a complex and varied topic. The experiences of soldiers and civilians, men and women, white and black, varied greatly depending on their circumstances. For soldiers, sex was often a way to relieve stress and boredom. It could happen between comrades, with prostitutes, or with women they met while on leave. However, it was a risky activity, possibly leading to transmitted diseases or even death.

For civilians, sex was often seen as a way to maintain normalcy in the midst of chaos. However, it could also be difficult to find privacy or time for intimacy, especially for women who were left to care for children and elderly relatives. The issue of sex was further complicated by the fact that the Civil War was fought over the issue of slavery. Some white soldiers saw black women as sexual objects, while others believed that they should be treated with respect. Black women, for their part, often had to negotiate the difficult balance of asserting their own sexuality while also avoiding exploitation.

Ultimately, sex in the Civil War was a reflection of the complex and extraordinary nature of the war itself. It was a time of great upheaval and change, and it is no

surprise that sexuality was also affected. For these reasons, Chris's presentation will leave his audience enlightened and bewildered.

Marion Martin, a frequent guest speaker to the Ladies' Forum, will also join the meeting. Her presentation will highlight the many roles the women of North Carolina played throughout the Civil War, especially taking charge of the home front when their husbands went off to war.

Chris received his B.A. at UNCW, his M.A. at East Carolina University, and his Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina, making him a Seahawk, a Pirate, and a Gamecock! Upon his retirement from UNCW in 2018, Chris was presented with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine for distinguished service to the State of North Carolina. He is a regular history tour guide for Wilmington Water Tours.

The Forum cordially invites all the ladies to attend. Refreshments will be served and door prizes awarded. The guest fee is \$5, and can be applied toward the \$25 annual membership dues to the Brunswick Civil War Round Table. There is no fee for current members. For more information about the meeting, please contact Charen Fink at (330) 507-2773, or email her at [dcftandm@hotmail.com](mailto:dcftandm@hotmail.com). You can also learn more about the Ladies' Forum by going to the Brunswick Civil War Round Table website at [Brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com](http://Brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com).