

# BRUNSWICK CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

## Renowned U.S. Colored Troops to be featured at May 7<sup>th</sup> Civil War Round Table



The Brunswick Civil War Round Table is pleased to announce U.S. Navy Captain Edward W. Gantt (Ret.) will be the guest speaker at its Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. His presentation is entitled, “Contributions of the United States Colored Troops during the Civil War.” This meeting will also mark this organization’s 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and continues to be nationally recognized as the largest Civil War round table in the country with 1,095 members, adding 157 new members since last September. The meeting will be held at Hatch Auditorium on Caswell Beach. Registration begins at 6:15PM. The program starts at 7:00PM. Everyone is welcome to hear Capt. Gantt’s enlightening presentation, and help celebrate this festive occasion until monthly meetings resume on Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.



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. To this point, President Abraham Lincoln acknowledged, “without the military help of the black freedmen, the war against the South could not have been won.” Importantly, their service paved the way for greater social equality in the post-war era. It demonstrated that

Black men were willing and capable of fighting for the nation, a crucial step toward their eventual civil rights advancement. The USCT's service paved the way for greater equality for Black Americans, though the fight for civil rights continued for many years.



Capt. Gantt has had a coveted career. During his first tour of duty, he graduated from the U.S. Army Airborne and Ranger schools at Fort Benning, GA. Later he 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, including the Mediterranean Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the West Pacific, flying over 2,000 hours, including from several aircraft carriers. 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 year later, he began a new career as a public school teacher. In 2014 he began an association with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment USCT Civil War re-enactors and living historians. And currently he is a member of Company B, 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Civil War re-enactors, and president of the re-formed 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment USCT in Spotsylvania, Virginia.

**For this last meeting of the current season, and one not to be missed,** the guest fee is \$10, and can be applied toward the \$25 annual membership dues, which can include a spouse. For more information about the Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, contact president John Butler at [Brunswickcwr@gmail.com](mailto:Brunswickcwr@gmail.com), or call him at (404) 229-9425. Or, visit their website at [Brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com](http://Brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com) to learn more, become a member, or learn about member benefits. Their Facebook page also has additional information, news, and updates.

