



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XVI, Issue 4—MAY 2009

## JOHN HENNESSY SPEAKS ON SECOND MANASSAS

By Nancy Anwyll

Our speaker for the May General Membership meeting will be John J. Hennessy, chief historian of Fredricksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park and author of the classic *Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas*, published in 1992.

Although John spoke to us in July of 2002, many of our long-time members will recall that he spoke much earlier to the round table in November of 1992 soon after his book was published by Simon & Schuster. Since we will do our own return to Bull Run on May 16<sup>th</sup>, John's talk will no doubt help us to understand the battle more clearly.

John was born near Worcester, MA, but his family moved to New York when he was young. He attended the State University of New York at Albany where he received his undergraduate degree in history and economics. Although he planned to pursue a career in banking after graduation, he took a temporary seasonal job at the Manassas National Battlefield Park and consequently stayed nearly four years.

He returned to New York in 1985 where he spent three years in state government. The NPS lured him back south, and John took a position at Harpers Ferry to work as an exhibit planner and writer at the Interpretive Design Center. It was during his times in New York state government and at Harpers Ferry that he wrote his book *Return to Bull Run*. In May of 1995, he was appointed assistant superintendent of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP, and in 2002 he was named chief historian.

*Return to Bull Run* is considered by many as the best comprehensive account of the Second Manassas battle. James M. McPherson, Pulitzer Prize-winning Civil War historian, said, "This thorough study eclipses all other accounts." James I. Robertson Jr., author of the award-winning *Stonewall Jackson* and a distinguished Virginia Tech professor, said that *Return to Bull Run* is "the deepest, most comprehensive, and most definitive work on this Civil War campaign by the unchallenged authority." George C. Rable from the University of Alabama said, "*Return to Bull Run* is a superb study of an important eastern theater campaign."

Besides being the author of *Return to Bull Run*, Hennessy has authored *The First Battle of Manassas: An End to Innocence* as well as *The Second Manassas Bat-*

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**14 MAY 2009**

**7:00 P.M. Centreville Library**

### GUEST SPEAKER:

**John Hennessy**

### TOPIC:

**Second Manassas**



**6:30 P.M. Join us for refreshments to celebrate the BRCWRT's 18th Anniversary**

tlefield Map Study. He contributed chapters to two of Gary W. Gallagher's books: *Chancellorsville: The Battle and its Aftermath*, published in 1996, and *The Wilderness Campaign*, published in 1997. In 2000 Hennessy edited the diary of Thomas Mann in *Fighting With the Eighteenth Massachusetts: The Civil War Memoir of Thomas H. Mann*. Additionally, Hennessy has written forewords for two books: *The 115<sup>th</sup> New York in the Civil War* written by Mark Silo, and the *Gentle Infantryman* written by Bill Boyd. Several Civil War periodicals, such as *Civil War Times Illustrated* and *Blue and Gray*, have published John's articles.

John is truly a gifted writer of military history, and his knowledge of the Second Manassas Battlefield is unsurpassed. Don't miss the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting!

**BRCWRT TO REMAIN AT CENTREVILLE LIBRARY DESPITE FAIRFAX COUNTY BUDGET PROBLEMS**

**See Page 8**

## BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

### Executive Committee

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Janet Greentree and Jill Hilliard

The Bull Run Civil War Round Table publishes the *Stone Wall*.

**General Membership meetings** are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at the **Centreville Regional Library**

**14200 St. Germain Drive  
Centreville, VA 20121-2299  
703.830.2223**

For specific meeting dates and information, please visit the web site:

<http://www.bullruncwrt.org>

### SUBMISSION DEADLINE For JUNE/JULY 2009 Issue

E-mail Articles By 9:00 a.m. Thurs., May 28 to  
Sandra Cox at [scox@capitalav.com](mailto:scox@capitalav.com)

**If you do not receive an acknowledgment of your e-mail article by deadline**, please call Sandra at 703.675.0702 (cell) or 540.374.2011 (Capital AV) as it may have been blocked by company software.

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## ROUND TABLE BOOK SALES

Please remember to bring your used Civil War books to our meetings to aid in our ongoing book sales. Besides helping to raise money for the BRCWRT, these books help raise our members' understanding of the Civil War. Thank You.



## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**JUNE 11**

**Speaker:**  
Marc Leepson

**TOPIC:**  
Desperate Engagement:  
Battle of Monocacy

**JULY 9**

**SPEAKER:**  
Doug Wicklund

**TOPIC:**  
Sharpshooters During the Civil War:  
Their Weapons and Accoutrements

**AUGUST 13**

**SPEAKER:**  
Larry Gordon

**TOPIC:**  
Last Confederate General:  
John C. Vaughn and  
His East Tennessee Cavalry

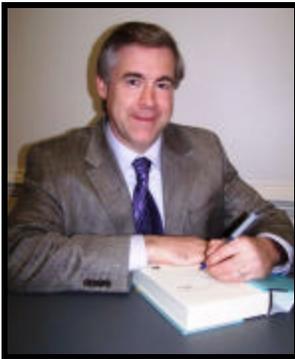


If you sign up for a BRCWRT tour or event and your plans change, please notify the tour guide or event coordinator as soon as possible. Many of our tours and events are limited in space, and someone may be waiting to take your place.



## The President's Column By Nancy Anwyll

It was good to see a large audience for our April meeting. Ninety-one people heard Peter Cozzens discuss his new book *Shenandoah 1862*. Besides asserting that General Banks was a good general and managed the retreat from Strasburg fairly well, Cozzens also said that General Jackson used scapegoats to deflect blame, was too secretive, at times was a poor tactical commander, and failed to stop Gen. Nathaniel Banks's escape from Winchester. The question-and-answer period following Cozzens' talk proved that members of our round table had excellent questions and ideas about the Shenandoah Valley campaign.



Thanks to our  
April speaker  
Peter Cozzens

Photo by  
Janet Greentree

Thanks again to John McAnaw, John DePue, John Pearson, and Mike Block who led us on a top-notch tour of the Mine Run Campaign on April 4<sup>th</sup>. You can read more about the tour elsewhere in the newsletter. Thanks also to Jim Lewis for leading a second bus tour of the Hunter Mill Road area on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Both tours prove that as we visit Civil War sites, we learn more about the history of the Civil War as it occurred in our own state and locality.

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, we will mark our 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Our organization was formed under the leadership of Mr. William J. Miller, who at the time lived in Manassas and now lives near Churchville, Virginia, in the same home where Stonewall's mapmaker, Jedediah Hotchkiss, once lived. That first round table meeting was held at the Manassas Library in May of 1991, and in October of the same year, the group held its meetings in the Visitor's Center of Manassas Battlefield Park. After being pressured to relocate from the Battlefield, the round table moved its meeting location in November of 1999 to the Fairfax Government Center; and then later settled in at the Centreville Public Library in 2000. Time will tell if another move is in our near future.

After scanning the original 1991 membership list, I was pleasantly surprised to see that there are within our membership a few who were in at the beginning in 1991. They are Brad Bradshaw, Tim Duskin, Martha Hendley, Garon Isaac, Wilfred Masumura, Robert Stone, and Ralph Swanson. Although 18 years is not a

very long time compared to the age of the universe, being a member of our round table for 18 years is a remarkable length of time. Thanks to these members for sticking with us and helping us to move forward!

Thanks to all of our current members for attending meetings, serving on executive committees, helping with refreshments, suggesting speakers, paying dues, and performing a myriad of other miscellaneous tasks, but also thanks for being friendly to all of our members and guests at our meetings and tours. With your help, we'll be around in 18 more years, at least.

## BRCWRT PAST PRESIDENTS TO BE HONORED

The round table looks forward to greeting its past presidents in attendance at the May anniversary celebration. Keeping to our "Cheap But Proud" tradition, we will reserve a front row seat for each one, give them a big piece of cake, and recognize each one by name. All of this belies the true depth of appreciation that the round table owes to each president.

The following are the names of each president and the years they served:

**William J. Miller, 1991 - 1992**  
**Armando Mancini, 1992 - 1993**  
**Kevin Leahy, 1993 - 1994**  
**Scott Patchan, 1994 - 1995**  
**Gary Ecelbarger, 1995 - 1996**  
**Martha Hendley, 1996-1997**  
**John McAnaw, 1997 - 1998**  
**Dan Paterson, 1998 - 1999**  
**Scott Patchan, 1999 - 2000**  
**John McAnaw 2000 - 2001**  
**Keith Young, 2001 - 2002**  
**John McAnaw, 2002 - 2008**

## AN EVENING OF MERRIMENT FOR MERRYBROOK

Laura Ratcliffe's house "Merrybrook" is the last remaining antebellum home on Old Centreville Road and is threatened by development. Laura was a Confederate spy supporting J.E.B. Stuart and John Singleton Mosby's operations around Herndon.

Our Round Table's sister organization, Friends of Laura Ratcliffe House, invites you to join them in celebrating another year of progress toward the goal of preserving Merrybrook.

**DATE & TIME:** June 7<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Frying Pan Park Conference Center, Floris, VA

**Scheduled Events:** sing along with Rick Garland (aka J.E.B. Stuart); enjoy a down-home country dinner; hear keynote speaker VA State Senator Mark Herring discuss preservation struggles in Virginia; listen to Chuck Mauro's tales of 'tracking Laura' for his book *A Civil War Album: The Life of Laura Ratcliffe*; bid on Silent Auction items; dance the night away

**Tickets:** Single \$75, Couple \$135, Table of 6 \$400 RSVP: Win Meiselman [lratcliffehouse@aol.com](mailto:lratcliffehouse@aol.com) or 703-713-0124

## THIRTY BAGS OF TRASH

By Nancy Anwyll

The newsletters in the archives on the BRCWRT's web site reveal how and when the group was established in 1991. The purpose of the group, its meeting locations, type of speakers, field trips, and other activities were all defined in that first year. Bill Miller rounded up enough people in the Prince William and Fairfax areas and held the first meeting at the Manassas Library in May of 1991. In the first printed handout for the meeting, Bill set forth what he thought the group could do in the future; and when the first year ended, he wrote another report for the newsletter about what had been done.

At the first meeting, Bill wrote that the main "purpose of the group was to promote the study of the Civil War so that its members may better understand its importance." He went on to say that he hoped that the group could support community projects, education programs and preservation causes. He wanted the monthly meetings to have speakers that would come from within the group's ranks as well as without. He also hoped that the round table would be run democratically with a constitution and elected officers, would take one or two field trips a year, and would create a newsletter. He hoped total membership would reach 100 members or more. Overall, he said, "The round table could be whatever the group wanted it to be."

By the time the first year ended in late summer of 1992, the group was holding its meetings at the Manassas Battlefield Visitor's Center, and it had a newsletter. Bill summarized the year's accomplishments in the *Stone Wall*, making note that the total membership was 90 members and that he looked forward to even more in 1993. The treasury was strong due to a successful book raffle as well as income from dues, which was \$15 per member. Program speakers that first year were a mix of prominent historians, authors, and members, and included Bud Hall, John M. Priest, and Arthur Candenquist.

The round table became a charter member of the Battlefield Preservation Advisory Coalition, which was organized to keep track of preservation issues. Revenues from a field trip were donated to the Brandy Station Foundation, and many members wrote letters to defeat a law that would have given developers power over the fate of historic battlefields and land. Some members were beginning to work on a constitution, while other members worked to save Cannon Branch Fort in Manassas. The round table toured the battlefields at Cedar Creek and Brandy Station, but it realized that chartering buses had its limits. Lastly, Bill made note that the members picked up thirty bags of trash from the area around the Stuart Hill tract at the Manassas Battlefield on one day of volunteer work.

Bill Miller must be satisfied and proud with what the round table has done in the past 18 years. The organization has grown each year, and last year it attained 220 members. The newsletter improved each year so

that now it may be the best round table newsletter in the country. The group has been involved with many preservation issues over the years, most notably working to save the battlefields of Bristoe Station and Ox Hill. The speakers have been a mix of professional historians and authors. These ranged from outsiders such as Ed Bearss, Peter Cozzens, and Greg Mertz to our own members such as Keith Young, Gary Ecelbarger, and Scott Patchan.

The treasury continues to receive revenue from dues and book sales, but as one sign of economic reality, the dues were finally raised from \$15 to \$20 for the year 2009, the first change in dues the round table made since 1991. The book raffle became a book sale a few years ago. With the small amounts of excess money at year's end, the round table contributed each year to several worthy Civil War preservation organizations and museums, such as the White Oak Museum near Fredericksburg and the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust.

The group took more than two field trips each year, forming car pools most of the time. Most of the tours were organized and led by the round table's own talented members, such as John McAnaw, Gary Ecelbarger, Scott Patchan, and Kevin Anastas.

Although the round table hasn't picked up thirty bags of trash since that one day in 1991, it has done many different things over the course of the years to contribute to the main purpose of the group: to promote the study of the Civil War so that the round table members may better understand its importance. And as Bill Miller had envisioned, the round table became whatever the group wanted it to be. There were some changes, but in many ways, it is as it was in 1991.

### NATIONAL ARCHIVES CW EVENTS

Submitted by Tim Duskin

Archivist Bruce Bustard will be speaking about the exhibit "Discovering the Civil War" which will be opening at the National Archives Building in Downtown Washington in April 2010. This talk will be delivered on Tuesday, May 12, at 11 a.m. in Room G-24 at the National Archives Building in Washington. Enter on the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the building.

On Tuesday, May 19, the From the Records Book Group will be meeting in Room G-24 at the National Archives Building in Washington. The book to be discussed is "Railroads of the Civil War: The Impact of Management on Victory and Defeat" by John Elwood Clark. The discussion will take place at 12 noon and it will be preceded by a related presentation at 11 a.m.. The book can be purchased in advance for a discount at the bookstore on the Constitution Avenue side of the building.

Currently in the O'Brien Gallery at the National Archives Building in Washington through January 3, 2010, the exhibit "Big!" has General Warren's huge map of the Gettysburg battlefield on display. Enter on the Constitution Avenue side of the building.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Note: If you plan to attend an event, please verify the information given. Advance reservation and fee may apply. If you would like an event posted, please e-mail Dale Maschino at [smasch1@verizon.net](mailto:smasch1@verizon.net)

**9 May**—Dedication of monument to McGowan's Brigade at the Bloody Angle, Spotsylvania Battlefield, 10:30 a.m. For details, photos and directions see [mcgowansbrigade.monument.awardspace.com/id18.htm](http://mcgowansbrigade.monument.awardspace.com/id18.htm).

**9 May** – Living history walk in Atoka (4 miles west of Middleburg on Rt. 50). Civil War characters present vignettes. Sponsored by the Mosby Heritage Area. 7:30 p.m. \$5/adult. Call 540-687-6681 or link to [www.mosbyheritagearea.org](http://www.mosbyheritagearea.org).

**16 May**—Tour of Brandy Station Battlefield (Buford Knoll & Yew Ridge presents the fighting that took place in the afternoon of June 9 between Gen. Buford and Gen. WHF "Rooney" Lee's brigade. RE Lee's 2nd son was shot in the thigh and carried from the field. \$10 Call 540-727-7718.

**16-17 May** – Battle of Spotsylvania anniversary commemoration at the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. Special programs and tours all weekend. Free. Call 540-373-6122 or link to [www.nps.gov/frsp](http://www.nps.gov/frsp).

**17 May** – Walking tour, "Freedman's Farm and Confederate Winter Camp" at Montpelier, home of James Madison, near Orange. Call 540-672-2728 ext. 441, or [www.montpelier.org](http://www.montpelier.org).

**23 May**—Fredericksburg National Cemetery Annual Luminaria from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Program includes a historical walking tour to view the illumination of 15,300 candles, one for each soldier buried in the cemetery on Marye's Heights. Taps will be played every 30 minutes.

**23 May** – Walking tour of Fredericksburg takes visitors to sites visited by President Lincoln in 1862. Meet at City Dock in Fredericksburg. Free. Call 540-373-6122, or [www.nps.gov/frsp](http://www.nps.gov/frsp).

**25 May** – Memorial Day observance at the Manassas National Battlefield. Free with park admission. Call 703-361-1339 or, [www.nps.gov/mana](http://www.nps.gov/mana).

**27 May** – Lecture, "Mary Surratt: An American Tragedy," at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. 7:30 p.m. Free. Call 703-838-4994.

**30 May** – Tour of Brandy Station Battlefield (Beverly Ford and St. James Church). Two hour tour begins at 10 a.m. at the Graffiti House Visitor Center and covers the early morning fighting between troops under the command of Union Gen. John Buford and those commanded by his West Point classmate, Confederate Gen. William

E. "Grumble" Jones. \$10. Call 540-727-7718 or [www.brandystationfoundation.com](http://www.brandystationfoundation.com).

**30 May** – "Remembering John Brown," anniversary of the Frederick Douglass address, at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. 1 p.m. Free with park admission. Call 304-535-6029 or [www.nps.gov/hafe](http://www.nps.gov/hafe).

**5 Jun** – Walking tour of Jefferson Davis's Richmond, a presidential view of the Confederate capital. Noon. Museum of the Confederacy. \$10. Call 804-649-1861 or [www.moc.org](http://www.moc.org).

**5-7 Jun** – Civil War "personalities" including Lincoln, Grant, Lee and many others gather at the Old Courthouse Civil War Museum in downtown Winchester. Call 540-542-1145 or [www.civilwarmuseum.org](http://www.civilwarmuseum.org).

**6 Jun** – Manassas Heritage Railway Festival in downtown Manassas. Annual event includes Civil War history. \$1 admission to Manassas Museum. Call 703-368-1873 or [www.manassasmuseum.org](http://www.manassasmuseum.org).

**6-7 Jun** – Monocacy Battlefield living history and tour. Artillery demonstrations all weekend, auto tour of the battlefield on Sunday at 1 p.m. Free. Call 301-662-3515 or, [www.nps.gov/mono](http://www.nps.gov/mono).

### BRANDY STATION FOUNDATION HOSTING FREE CIVIL WAR LECTURES

Submitted by Mike Block

The Brandy Station Foundation will host a series of free Sunday lectures on the Civil War. The lectures will be on the last Sunday of each month and end October 25 at the Graffiti House (19484 Brandy Road, Brandy Station, VA) from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information on these events, please call (540) 727-7718.

**May 31** - "The Courts-Martial of Lt. Col. Henry Clay Pate presented by Joseph McKinney

**June 28** - "Three Years a Soldier" presented by Richard Griffin

**July 26** - "Reconciliation: "The Postwar Relationship Between John Singleton Mosby and Ulysses S. Grant" presented by Dave Goetz

**August 30** - "Walt Whitman's Civil War" presented by Melissa Delcour

**September 27** - "The Civil War in Culpeper Through the Eyes of Artists and Photographers" presented by Michael Block

**October 25** - "Music of the Civil War" presented by Evergreen Shade

## CONFEDERATE STINK BALL

By Barbara Bensinger Welch

While indexing the *Fairfax Herald* newspaper for the Virginia Room, I came upon the brief report of a Confederate stink ball, information attributed to the *New York World*. Further digging produced the following article printed in the *New York World* on May 16, 1864:

"Before leaving the defenses of Richmond I [the *World's* correspondent] must mention a new and novel invention by Captain Holden of the rebel army. It is nothing more or less than a stink ball designed to be fired into the works of besiegers to stink them out. About the middle of April, I was one of several civilians, who upon invitation, accompanied a party of officers to Atlee's, a station on the Central railroad ten miles from Richmond, to witness some experiments with this ball. The ball is an iron shell containing combustible and destructive material, as well as odiferous matter, and in appearance is similar to the stink ball in use many years ago. It is designed to be thrown by mortars, but in the tests on the occasion referred to, the fuse was lighted and the shells allowed to fulminate where they were placed. The stench which followed the explosion was the most fetid and villainous that ever outraged the olfactories of man. Coleridge said that he counted in Cologne seventy-seven "Well defined and several stinks." But if he had been at Atlee's on the day of the experiments alluded to he would have recognized them all, and seventy-seven thousand more. The concentrated stink of all the skunks, pole-cats, niggers, pitch, sulphur, rasped horses and horses' hoofs, burnt in fire, asafetida, ferula, and bug-weeds in the world could not equal the smell emitted by these balls. But not only is the smell in itself intolerable, but it provokes sneezing and coughing, and produces nausea, rendering it impossible for men to do duty within reach of it. A single ball will impregnate the atmosphere for fifty yards round, and the fetid compound, entering everything it touches, emits the stench for a long time. The opinion of all who witnessed the experiments was that these balls were a fair offset to Greek fire, and General Winder, and several other officers of rank who were present, expressed the belief that it would prove more effective for driving off besiegers than anything ever invented. Be this as it may, if Richmond is ever threatened by a siege, the "sneezers," as the inventor facetiously calls his balls, will form a prominent feature in the defensive operations."<sup>1</sup>

The stink ball prototype could be called an early gas warfare experiment. Research turns up mention of stink balls, also called stinkpots, during the early years of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In memoirs of the years he spent at sea on American vessels before the Civil War, author Thomas Robinson Warren described a stinkpot as "a small hand grenade, filled with sulphur, which, bursting on an enemy's deck, momentarily suffocates all in its vicinity."<sup>3</sup> So the idea was not exactly new, only that the Confederate manufacturer, probably the referenced Captain Holden, just made it larger, used an iron container, and its delivery system would be a mortar.

Unfortunately the correspondent does not name all the eyewitnesses to these experiments. However he does provide the names of two important ones, General Winder and the so-called inventor, Captain Holden. In May 1864, John H. Winder commanded the Richmond district, and perhaps the last sentence of the article gives us the reason Winder was interested in this experiment: he could foresee the possibility that Richmond would be subjected to a siege. Biographies of Winder do not mention his visit to Atlee's Station in April 1864; he apparently kept no diary, plus his sudden death on February 7, 1865, did not give him the opportunity to write memoirs or an autobiography.<sup>4</sup>

Captain Holden is more difficult to identify because we do not have his first name. There are several Holdens with the rank of captain in Confederate army records: two served in infantry regiments and one was an assistant quartermaster, not exactly in positions to invent and test the stink bomb. It is also possible this Captain Holden held a naval rank.

The stink ball apparently was never used by the Confederate army, although the stalemated trench warfare in front of Petersburg from the fall of 1864 to early spring of 1865 would have given them ample opportunity to use one. So why did the Confederate army not use it? We can only speculate that other experiments were made and difficulties arose when it was actually test-fired from a mortar; or was the aristocratic gentleman heading the Army of Northern Virginia, Robert E. Lee, opposed to this non-conventional form of warfare?

And finally, we should also consider why the Confederate Army would invite a northern newspaperman to a testing of an unconventional and new weapon. Rarely did northern reporters complain of being censored by Confederate authorities although it took at least a month after the test occurred for the article to appear in the newspaper. Was allowing this event to be publicized, knowing it would be reprinted in other Yankee newspapers around the country, just an attempt by Confederates to weaken northern resolve or army morale? The editor of the *New York World* was Manton Marble, and it was no secret that Marble and his influential friends such as financier August Belmont and Samuel Tilden, were "peace Democrats" who opposed Lincoln's reelection.<sup>5</sup> This raises the possibility that Confederate government or army staff members selected the *World's* correspondent to be a witness because they knew that they would receive favorable coverage from this newspaper. So were Holden's "sneezers" just teasers? Perhaps researchers will some day uncover more information on this unusual Civil War experiment in gas warfare.

<sup>1</sup>*New York World*, Vol. IV, No. 1221, p. 2

<sup>2</sup>Robert Anderson, M.D., *Memoirs*, Edinburgh, 1820, p. 5

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Robinson Warren, *Dust and Foam*, Charles Scribner, New York, 1858, p. 295.

<sup>4</sup>Arch F. Blakey, *General John H. Winder*, Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 1990, p. 121

<sup>5</sup>Jean H. Baker, *Affairs of Party: the Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, Fordham University Press, New York, 1998, p. 281

## RAPPAHANNOCK STATION & MINE RUN TOUR After Action Report



BRCWRT members pause at Mayo Farm. Photo by Janet Greentree

By John De Pue

On April 4, 2009, 26 members of the BRCWRT participated in a battlefield tour that some believe to have been the first of its kind – a survey of the Army of the Potomac's operations during the fall of 1863. A beautiful spring day, coupled with the fact that two of our members reside or have resided in the vicinity of the military actions that were the focus of our tour, are largely responsible for its great success. John Pearson, who grew up near Locust Grove, is not only intimately familiar with the terrain comprising the Mine Run Battlefield but also has retained personal friendships with landowners that resulted in our ability to gain access to key sites on that field. Mike Block, who resides in Fauquier County and is a mainstay of the Brandy Station Foundation, secured permission to visit County property that was the locus of the Union assault at Rappahannock Station. We owe both John and Mike our thanks for literally opening doors for us.

After assembling at Centreville, linking up with a second contingent at the Opal McDonalds (and signing numerous waivers of liability), we made our way to the center of the Village of Rappahannock Station now known as Remington, Virginia. We took a short walk to the site of one of two Confederate redoubts that anchored a bridgehead on the north side of the Rappahannock River. On 7 November 1863, the bridgehead was manned by members of Harry Hays' famed Louisiana Brigade. There the writer provided a brief overview of events leading up to the Battle of Rappahannock Station and along with Mike Block, described the Confederate positions and the successful night attack upon them by Ellemaker's and Upton's brigades of the Sixth Corps. We then briefly stopped in the village to view one of four surviving anchors from the pontoon bridges which Army engineers threw across the river.

Our second stop was probably the most scenic of the entire tour. After a short hike to an overlook at Kelly's Ford., we discussed the deployment of MG William French's Third Corps at that location on November 7, 1863, and the cross-river assault of the First and Second U.S. Sharpshooters against Robert Rodes' entrenched North Carolina Infantry. Even during

an unseasonably warm April day, none of our members volunteered to replicate the crossing, which originally occurred in near freezing, mid-November weather.

John McAnaw assumed "guide" responsibilities as we next alighted from our vehicles at Germanna Community College. He explained the 18<sup>th</sup> century origins of the Germanna community and provided an overview of the Mine Run Campaign during which the Ford was one of the principal means for traversing the Rapidan River. He further recounted the travails of French's star-crossed Third Corps as it vainly attempted to cross the Rapidan at Jacob's "non-ford" and link up with Gouverneur K. Warren's Fifth Corps. Before we left the area, we were treated to the site of extensive and well-preserved Confederate earthworks adjacent to the Community College, which extended from the highway clear down to the River.

Following lunch at Lake of the Woods Shopping Center, we resumed the Mine Run Campaign with John Pearson conducting the narration. First, we visited the Payne Farm site. After challenging several metal detector armed interlopers and inquiring whether their "hold harmless" agreements with CWPT were up to date, we took a short hike over a muddy dirt road to Civil War Preservation Trust property marking the site of a meeting engagement between the Third Corps Division of Brigadier Gen. Henry Prince and that of Major General Edward Johnson. Aided by a series of large, detailed maps that he brought along, John Pearson explained how the action evolved.

Stopping at Locust Grove, John McAnaw directed our attention to the original site of Robertson's Tavern. Fortunately, the structure was preserved and relocated when a shopping center was constructed at its original location. The stop also gave us an excellent vantage point from which to survey the terrain where on the afternoon of November 27, 1863, the two armies confronted one another.

Proceeding to the Confederate battle lines, we were, once again, privileged to view what are likely some of the best preserved earthworks in Central Virginia. Unfortunately they were on private property, and, as a consequence, we had to peruse them from the road with John Pearson explaining their significance and regaling us with his recollections of the extensive trench line at that location which he explored as a youth.

Our final stop took us to the farm of the Mayo family with whom John Pearson has been acquainted since his youth. After traversing several dirt farm roads and engaging in a game of "bumper cars" in an effort to jockey our vehicles into a confined parking spot, we took a short walk to a farm pond. After pointing out the roadbed of the "unfinished railroad" of Wilderness fame, John explained that we were standing midway between the Union and Confederate lines on their far southern flank. It was in that location that on the morning of November 30, 1863, acting Second Corps Commander G.K. Warren determined that an assault on the Confederate lines would be suicidal and convinced his superior to abandon the venture. Thus ended the Mine Run Campaign and, after picture-taking by Janet Greentree, so ended a highly successful and enjoyable tour.

Participants included the following: Nancy Anwyll, Kevin Anastas, Mike Block, John Briar, Mike Buckley, Sandra Cox, Paul Cunningham, John De Pue, Howard Ewing, Janet Greentree, Cecil Jones, Mike Jones, Mark Knowles, Jim Lewis, Lyle Loveall, Jack Machey, Gayle Machey, John McAnaw, John Pearson, John Peyton, Bud Porter, Pat Quinn, Ed Wenzel, Gwen Wyttenbach and Keith Young.

## BRCWRT WORKED TO REMAIN AT CENTREVILLE LIBRARY

By Nancy Anwyll

The economic downturn in Fairfax County became very evident when the round table confronted news in mid-April that it would have to relocate in July due to budget cuts to the county library system.

The Fairfax County preliminary budget approval on April 20 required that effective July 1, 2009, the Centreville Library would close at 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays as well as 8:00 p.m. on Mondays through Wednesdays. This budget item also stated that Centreville Library was one of several libraries that could *not* have after-hour activities. Thus the BRCWRT would not be able to meet at the Centreville Library.

The Centreville Library staff notified BRCWRT President Nancy Anwyll of the budget impact on the round table on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Knowing that the budget would be in mark-up sessions the following week with the final approval by the Board of Supervisors on April 27<sup>th</sup>, Ken Jones and I immediately notified members to contact the Board of Supervisors.

The response by the general membership was small but effective, and a true lobbying campaign took place. John McAnaw worked especially hard on a person to person level and talked to several government officials and their staff. Other members such as Ed Wenzel, Larry Gordon, Mike Cosner, and I wrote letters.

Whether it was due to the group's lobbying efforts or not, the staff of Chairman Bulova's and Sully District Supervisor Frey's office were receptive, and each acknowledged the round table's concerns. However, while waiting for government officials to make decisions and knowing that it would be difficult to find another site if forced to relocate, I began to research other facilities as possible meeting sites.

As of the newsletter deadline date (April 30), the staff of Chairman Bulova's and Supervisor Frey's office communicated to our group that despite Centreville Library's closing at 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays, the library would be allowed to have after-hour activities on the second Thursday of each month beginning July 1. Edwin S. Clay, Fairfax County Library Director, declared that both the Centreville Library and the Chantilly Library, along with two other county libraries that weren't originally on the list, would be able to hold after-hour activities.

As a result of these decisions, and if nothing else comes up, only a few changes will be in order for our meetings, such as using a different door to enter and leave. More up-to-date information will be given to the general membership at the meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup> and in the next newsletter.

## BRCWRT 2009 SPRING TOUR SECOND MANASSAS



**MG John Pope**

*“. . . more insolence, superciliousness, ignorance, and pretentiousness were never combined in one man.”*  
**BG Alpheus Williams**

**DATE:** Saturday, 16 May 2009

**ASSEMBLY LOCATION/TIME:**

Meet at the Manassas Battlefield Visitor Center at 8:30 A.M. You are responsible for purchasing a park pass (\$3 for the day). Rest rooms are available in the visitor center. We will depart the parking lot at 9:00 AM.

**TOUR DURATION:**

**8:30 A.M.** until approximately **3:00 P.M.**

**LUNCH:** There are a number of fast food restaurants near the battlefield just off Route 234.

**EXERTION:** We will hike for approximately 2.5 miles. (From Matthew's hill, we will follow Grover's attack route, then walk the unfinished RR to Deep Cut and Brawner Farm). About ½ mile of this will be through thick woods. The remainder will be on trails. Wear comfortable shoes, a cap, and long pants/jeans. Bring water, sun screen and insect repellent (lots of ticks). If you do not want to walk the entire route you can drive and linkup with the tour at Deep Cut for a presentation.

**SIGN UP:** Please sign up for the tour using the link on the BRCWRT home page. I will also pass around a signup sheet at the May meeting. We will post maps showing the tour stops on the web site.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER:** We will send out a weather cancellation notice via e-mail the morning of the tour. If you do not have e-mail call Kevin Anastas for an update.

**CHIEF TOUR GUIDE:** Kevin Anastas Cell: (703) 431-2569. E-mail [kka2@cox.net](mailto:kka2@cox.net)



## THE BOOK CORNER

By Ralph G. Swanson

This year we celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. No better reason is needed to recommend an absolutely fascinating and important book about our greatest President. *Lincoln at Cooper Union, The Speech that Made Abraham Lincoln President* by Harold Holzer is a detailed history of the calculated political strategy, the magnificent craftsmanship, and the subsequent national impact of this remarkable speech. Holzer has authored more than 30 books on Lincoln and the Civil War era and is currently co-chair of the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. *Lincoln at Cooper Union* was awarded the Lincoln Prize by the Civil War Roundtable of New York.

In his tantalizing introduction, Holzer explores why this most important of Lincoln pre-presidential speeches has been so thoroughly overlooked. We have all heard of the speech, but few of us understand the significance of it in Lincoln's campaign for the presidency. And how many of us have actually read the speech? Here is your most enjoyable opportunity. Holzer relates this story with his depth of knowledge, intensive research and a writing style that will hold you. You will be startled and enthralled by the history and anecdotes surrounding the preparation and delivery of the Cooper Union address.

Well known regionally, Lincoln was regarded in the East with doubt and suspicion. Was he an abolitionist? A racial amalgamationist? Or just a backwoods hick? His debates with Senator Stephen A. Douglas two years earlier (1858) had been printed and widely circulated, but Lincoln had lost that election and been out of public office, and out of the national public eye, for many years. Moreover, New York Senator William Seward was the assumed frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination in 1860. Republican friends realized Lincoln needed to come east to deliver a major address if he was to secure the support of influential eastern political power-brokers and generate public enthusiasm for any serious candidacy.

Lincoln worked assiduously on the speech. The topic was slavery, a growing national controversy. Not slavery *per se*, which Lincoln would not touch, but the authority of the national government to legislate on the extension of slavery into the unsettled western territories of the United States. He researched the topic exhaustively, reviewing the laws, proclamations and Congressional debates on slavery dating from before the founding of the nation.

On February 27, 1860, Lincoln addressed an overflow crowd for 90 minutes at Cooper Union in New

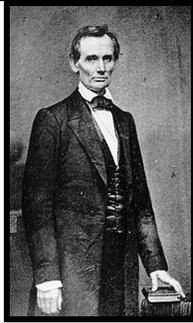


Photo of Abraham Lincoln taken by Mathew Brady in New York City 27 February, 1860, the day of Lincoln's famous Cooper Union speech.

York City. The effect of the speech in the North and East was electric. Eastern newspapers heaped praise on Lincoln and extolled the power and persuasion of his words. He was invited to give the speech, or versions thereof, in eleven other eastern cities on that same trip, eventually addressing several thousand people.

Holzer includes the speech itself, loaded with informative footnotes, as an appendix, and must not be overlooked. Lincoln ridicules Douglas's "popular sovereignty" that had, by 1860, finally proven such a colossal failure in practice. He speaks to the Dred Scott (Supreme Court) decision (1857) and the John Brown raid on Harpers Ferry (1859), both of which had so inflamed northern public sentiment. He even addresses southerners directly in an effort to convince them that Republican policies would not mean an end to their society.

Lincoln is deadly serious throughout; no folksy backwoods parables here. He systematically demolishes Stevens and his arguments for slavery extension with unrelenting sledgehammer logic. Holzer provides insightful analysis so that we in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can understand Lincoln's meaning in the context of 19<sup>th</sup> century American politics.

Then there is the photograph. Taken by Mathew Brady at his New York studio, just blocks from the Cooper Union on the very day of the speech, the photo shows a dapper, even handsome, Lincoln. Utterly coincidental, the photo was so well timed and so well received that it amplified the impact of the speech. The photo was widely reproduced on pamphlets, banners, badges and all manner of campaign literature, and Holzer spends considerable time on its importance in the coming campaign. Lincoln himself was later quoted as saying that Brady (meaning that photo) and Cooper Union made him President.

Lincoln's election was not the cause of Civil War, but it sparked secession of the first southern states, states that feared Lincoln's policies on slavery. The Cooper Union address was Lincoln's effort to explain those policies and enlighten the public on the necessary future course of our nation. *Lincoln at Cooper Union* is a book--and a speech--we all need to read.

Until next time, keep reading.

**Note:** Many new books on Lincoln will be published this year. Throughout 2009, **The Book Corner** will focus on Lincoln with recommendations of books it considers the most informative and enjoyable. Now is the time to read--or re-read--a Lincoln biography. Carl Sandburg's *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years* and *The War Years* is still the gold standard. David H. Donald's *Lincoln* is a modern treatment hailed by all Lincoln scholars as outstanding. What is your favorite book on Lincoln? Send your recommendations to [renataralph@comcast.net](mailto:renataralph@comcast.net).

The Abraham Lincoln Book Shop in Chicago, Illinois, states that over 10,000 books, articles and pamphlets have been published on Abraham Lincoln. It has compiled a list of 160 books on Lincoln's life, family and presidency that it considers essential reading. Review the list at [www.alincolnbookshop.com](http://www.alincolnbookshop.com).

## CIVIL WAR TRAVELS WITH MS. REBELLE

### Clara Barton Tour

By Janet Greentree

Ms. Rebelle, and fellow BRCWRT member, Gwen Wyttenbach, signed up for the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum tour on March 28, 2009 given by round table member Bill Etue. Bill's very capable assistant was his wife, Rebecca Marti. They are quite a team. Bill would read the text on one page, and Rebecca would give him the text for the next page so he didn't have to turn pages. Gwen and I were impressed.

We started the tour at the Museum, and boarded our "short" bus for the ride downtown to see Clara Barton's office at 7<sup>th</sup> & E Streets, or 448 ½ Seventh Street, N.W. Waiting to let us in was Richard Lyons, who while working as a GSA carpenter in the building in 1996, saw an envelope hanging out of the attic ceiling above Clara's room. Out poured a plethora of Clara's papers. That must have been such a thrill for Richard. We climbed up 42 steps in a very narrow building that led to Room No. 9 that was her office. It was definitely like walking back in time. Although the building had been used over the years, you could definitely see the time frame of the past with the wallpaper and the old banisters on the stairs. Richard tells the story that as he entered the room, he looked around, and felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned around but no one was there. Then he looked up to see the envelope. In addition to the envelope, he saw a metal sign "Missing Soldiers Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Story, Room 9, Miss Clara Barton." Letters and artifacts were in that space belonging to Miss Barton. Richard also found a blouse with a bullet hole in it that he later discovered was worn by her at Antietam. Clara lived at this residence all during the war. She moved there in 1860 while working at the Patent Office two blocks away. It later served as her office. She had a privacy wall built at the back of the office for her bedroom. The wallpaper is still on the wall. On the door, with the No. 9 still intact, is the mail slot that Clara herself carved in the door for her mail. She got lots and lots of mail from families trying to find their missing loved ones after the war.

Clara was the first woman appointed to run a U.S. Government Office. She was appointed by President Lincoln in March of 1865 to be in charge of the search for 62,000 men missing from the Union Army. No Confederates? She called her office the "Office of Correspondence with the Friends of the Missing Men of the United States Army." The men of the period didn't take too kindly to a woman running an office and were very unkind to her even to the point of spitting on her. She prevailed though and spent 1865-1868 looking for the missing soldiers. She was given \$15,000 and a small staff to get the job done. She accounted for about 22,000 men although some were dead.

Clara had an interesting life. She was born on Christmas Day of 1821 in North Oxford, Massachusetts. She was the youngest of five children in a middle-class family and was educated at home. Clara stayed home from school for two years to care for her brother David, who fell from a barn roof. Perhaps it was this experience that made her become a nurse. She started teaching school at the age of 15. The science of phrenology was becoming popular at that time. Clara's mother had a "reading" for Clara, and had the bumps measured on her head. Dr. Franz-Joseph Gall read her head. He declared that she was destined to become a school teacher. Clara was extremely shy and a very slight young lady. Nevertheless, she did become a school teacher. After her mother died, and her siblings moved away, she went to Bordentown, New Jersey (Are you reading this, John De Pue?). She taught at the Pauper School, later named Barton's Pauper School. The school was so popular that even the children in private schools wanted to go to Miss Barton's school. The 1851 New Jersey School Board didn't believe a woman could run a school so the job of principal was given to a man. This man made \$350 more a year than she did for the same work. She had been told she was making the same as the men in the school. She quit teaching, came to Washington, D.C., got a job as a Clerk at the Patent Office making \$1,400/year. Later the Secretary of the Interior didn't think women should be working in the Government so her job was reduced to a copyist. She then made a penny for each ten words she copied. The Civil War began and the rest is history. Her brother David became the Quartermaster of the 18<sup>th</sup> Army Corp. This is interesting to me as this is the unit my Union ancestor, Daniel Smithers, served with (Are you reading this, Yankee Nan?). David was sent to Hilton Head Island and Clara followed along to tend to the sick. Here she met Colonel John J. Elwell, a married man from Ohio, and they began an affair. That surprised both Gwen and me as we had never heard anything about that before. The affair ended and Clara never married.

After lunch at the Irish Inn, a former biker bar but now an upscale restaurant, we toured Clara's house at Glen Echo. That is another story in itself. She started the Red Cross in 1881. The Red Cross built the house at Glen Echo for her, and she finally moved into the premises in 1897. At first it was a warehouse for



**See BARTON, Page 11**

## BARTON [Continued from Page 10]

her supplies. It's a very utilitarian house. There were no ceilings so she tacked gauze on the beams. There is a large second and third floor, but at that time there were no stairs. Clara climbed a ladder up to the second floor to her bedroom at the



age of 76. The house is filled with awards and mementos of her service with the Red Cross. Her desk is there and several original pieces of her furniture. Clara died there in her bedroom in 1912. She is buried in Oxford, Massachusetts. The house sits next to the former Glen Echo Amusement Park.

The park is now a center for the arts. Ms. Rebelle's first date with her former husband was at Glen Echo many years ago. I certainly didn't know then that Clara Barton's house was next door. It was rather strange to be there again. Bill Etue told a funny story about landing a job selling cotton candy at the park trying to impress a girl. In the former bumper car pavilion before touring the house, we were treated to a little three-character play about Clara's life. It was very well done.

Bill Etue's tours are wonderful. This is my second tour with him. He gives everyone a nice booklet printed out with your name on it. He takes you to nice restaurants. It was a very good tour. Thanks a lot, Bill.

## FORD'S THEATER After Action Report

By Jill Hilliard

Many activities have been planned in Washington this year to honor the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birthday. A BRCWRT group of twenty went by car and rail on Saturday, March 7, 2009, to take in one of these events: a viewing of a matinee performance of the play *The Heavens Are Hung in Black* at Ford's Theatre.

Commissioned to write the play to honor this bicentennial, playwright James Still interweaves historical knowledge with his imagination to show the pressures Lincoln undergoes during five months in the year of 1862 as he faces the death of his son Willie, the Civil War, and the Emancipation Proclamation. As Lincoln in the play, actor David Selby gives a truly human portrait of the man.

In addition to honoring the bicentennial, the play was also commissioned to be written to celebrate the re-opening of Ford's Theatre after its closing for eighteen months for a \$25 million renovation. BRCWRT members

got to see the new lobby, hear the updated sound system, and sit in the more comfortable chairs which have replaced the ladder-back ones that made those of us with large bodies not eager to return to Ford's. Nicola Haire, who booked the tickets for us, assured us that we would not have any danger of sitting behind a pillar. In the balcony the window giving a view into the presidential box is no longer there, and restrooms have been added. At this time the museum in the basement has not yet been reopened.

Prior to the play, nine members of the group met at the Reliable Source, a restaurant in the National Press Club (NPC) for a "no-host" lunch given by Lou Priebe, a member for many years and a former commander of the American Legion Post No 20 at the site. The NPC is a professional and social media organization of over 4000 members and has hosted national and international public figures through the years. One of the predecessors of this club was the Bold Buccaneers, a group of correspondents during Lincoln's administration.

As we had lunch in a private dining room overlooking the Willard Hotel, Lou informally gave us some of the history of the club and then, after lunch, took us on a tour of the inner sanctums. Some of the memorable artifacts we saw included offset plates of famous front pages of newspapers, the piano in the famous *Life* photograph of the then Vice President Truman and actress Lauren Bacall, the original oil painting by Norman Rockwell entitled "Norman Rockwell Visits a Country Editor," autographed original cartoons, and exhibits of famous photographs, including the prize-winning one taken by George Thanes of President Kennedy looking out the window overlooking the South Lawn of the White House. (Later in the play we saw David Selby as Lincoln looking out that same window.) The NPC is about two blocks from the White House, and we could see the roof of the White House from one of the rooms. Lou gave us some details about how life has changed at the club since 9/11: no one is now allowed to go out to the balcony from this room anymore, and snipers can be seen on the roof of the White House guarding it. Also, bushes have been placed in front of the windows at the atrium of the White House so no one can view the first family.

Among the participants to Ford's Theatre were Nancy Anwyll, Matt Cosner and Brynn Turner, Sandra and Doug Cox, Robert and Marianne Graham, Janet Greentree, Dan Lundeen, Jack and Gayle Machee, Dale and Suzan Maschino, Blake Myers, Lou Priebe, Audra Rooney, Bernard Ruffin, Gwen Wyttenbach, and Deborah Wyttenbach.

Thanks to Nancy Anwyll, Sandra Cox, Ken Jones, and John McAnaw in helping me plan this event. Special thanks to Mark Knowles for all the time he put into this project, to Lou Priebe for inviting us to lunch at the NPC (a short walk to Ford's), to Nicola Haire at Ford's Theatre, and to Bernie Ruffin, author of the book *Last Words*, who was able to tell some of us during intermission the last words of Abraham Lincoln.

**BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

**The Stone Wall**

**P.O. Box 2147**

**Centreville, VA 20122**

**2009 Bull Run Civil War Round Table — MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**We are delighted that you are interested in joining our organization and look forward to seeing you at our next meeting and at our upcoming events!**

**Annual dues are:**

**Individual—\$20.00. Family—\$25.00. Student (age 22 and under)—\$10.00.**

**Make checks payable to: BRCWRT (Bull Run Civil War Round Table). This form may be given to the President or Treasurer at the General Membership meeting. Or mail it to:**

**Mark Knowles, BRCWRT Treasurer, 169 Applegate Drive, Sterling, VA 20164**

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**ADDRESS\_\_\_\_\_**

**CITY\_\_\_\_\_STATE\_\_\_\_\_ZIP\_\_\_\_\_**

**PHONE\_\_\_\_\_EMAIL\_\_\_\_\_**