



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XX, Issue 14, JUNE/JULY 2014

**HISTORIAN DR. B. FRANKLIN COOLING
SPEAKS ON "THE BATTLE OF FT. STEVENS:
JULY 1864 " AT THE JUNE 12TH MEETING**

By Mark Trbovich

Summer is here, my friends, and the Civil War is heating up down south of us, as the 1864 Overland Campaign has begun and the bloodshed is horrific on both sides. The BRCWRT will continue to bring Sesquicentennial anniversary battles and events throughout 1864/2014 and 1865/2015.

The geographical exception - The Battle of Fort Stevens – is a rare instance of Overland fighting that took place north of our locale. It was fought July 11–12, 1864, in Northwest Washington, D.C., as part of the Valley Campaigns of 1864, as forces under Confederate Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early attempted to attack Washington, D.C. The battle is notable for the personal presence of President Abraham Lincoln, whose direct observation of the fighting created a stir, and that lore of courage and foolhardiness follow him to this day.

Dr. B. Franklin Cooling, a prolific author of numerous military history books and articles and highly regarded historian, has spoken to our round table in the past on a number of topics. His presentations are always extremely interesting and well-received. Some of his Civil War-related works include: *"Forts Henry and Donelson: Key to the Confederate Heartland," "Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam," "Monocacy: The Battle that Saved Washington,"* and one of my favorites: *"Mr. Lincoln's Forts: A Guide to the Civil War Defenses of Washington,"* co-authored with Wally Owen.

Dr. Cooling is a Washington, D.C. native. He earned a B.A. in History from Rutgers University, and later an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He has worked on history programs for the Departments of Interior, the Army and the Air Force. He served as the Chief Historian for the Department of Energy, and Associate Dean and Professor of National Security

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2014

7 P.M. Centreville Library

GUEST SPEAKER:

HISTORIAN

DR. B. FRANKLIN COOLING

TOPIC:

**"THE BATTLE OF
FT. STEVENS: JULY 1864 "**

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THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2014

GUEST SPEAKER:

HISTORIAN NPS RANGER

ROBERT M. "BERT" DUNKERLY

TOPIC:

**"THE BATTLE OF COLD
HARBOR, VA - JUNE 1864"**

Studies, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University in Washington. His latest work is a study of the 1864 Middle Tennessee Campaign and its impact on post-war Tennessee and Kentucky.

As always, members are encouraged to come early, meet Dr. Cooling at the Coyote Grill for dinner at 5:00 p.m. and enjoy some fellowship. If, unfortunately, you can't make the dinner, please come early to the Centreville Library prior to the lecture at 7:00 p.m. Hope to see you there.

**NPS RANGER ROBERT M. "BERT" DUNKERLY
SPEAKS ON "BATTLE OF COLD HARBOR, VA - JUNE
1864" AT THE JULY 10TH MEETING**

The Battle of Cold Harbor was fought from May 31 to June 12, 1864 (with the most significant fighting occurring on June 3). It was one of the final battles of Union Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign, and is remembered as one of

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

General Membership meetings are held at 7 P.M. on the second Thursday of each month at the

Centreville Regional Library
14200 St. Germain Drive
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For specific meeting dates and information, please visit the Web site: <http://bullruncwrt.org>.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE

For the **August/September 2014 issue**, e-mail articles by 9 a.m., Monday, July 28, to Nadine Mironchuk at: nadine1861@hotmail.com.

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For the **August/September 2014 issue**, advertisers should please click on "Instructions for Advertisers" at <http://bullruncwrt.org> and e-mail ads by noon, July 18, to Charlie Balch at BRCWRTads@gmail.com.

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to educate and commemorate the battles
and events of the Civil War**

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

July 10, 2014 - NPS Ranger Robert Dunkerly - "Battle of Cold Harbor: June 1864"

August 14, 2014 - NPS Ranger Emmanuel Dabney - "Battle of the Crater/Petersburg: July 1864"

September 11, 2014 - Scott Patchen - "Sheridan at Opequon Creek: September 1864"

October 9, 2014 - James Price - "Battle of New Market Heights/Chaffin's Farm: September 1864"

November 13, 2014 - Gene Schmiel and Ron Mayer - "Citizen-General: Jacob Dolson Cox and the Civil War Era, Battle of Franklin, TN: November 1864"

December 18, 2014 - David Goetz - "Hell is Being a Republican in Virginia: The Postwar Relationship Between John Singleton Mosby and Ulysses S. Grant"

January 8, 2015 - John Coski - "Confederate Navy, James River Campaign: 1862/1865"

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The President's Column By Mark Trbovich

Bull Run Civil War Round Table Members,

This Summer of 2014 will prove to be an excellent season for touring, lectures and fellowship with your BRCWRT family. I totally enjoyed the May 17th Wilderness Battlefield tour, hosted by John De Pue and Rob Orrison; I really began to feel the impact the 1864 Overland Campaign had on both sides, as we walked the battlefield. It gave me great insight into that bloody struggle and, of course, brought to mind the “what ifs” that makes researching the battle so interesting. After walking a few miles in the sun around Widow Tapp’s Farm, I was hoping to hear the relief order: “Trbovich to the rear!” But that didn’t hap-



pen, so I completed the full expedition, and indeed, I am glad I saw everything that day. Thank you, John and Rob, for an *excellent* tour!

The May meeting with National Park Service Historian Emeritus Ed Bearss was truly memorable, especially when U.S. Congressman from the 11th District of Virginia, the Honorable Mr. Gerry Connolly, joined us, to again see his old friend speak. Rep. Connolly mentioned that he toured with Ed for many years, and was so happy to see him in great shape as he turns 91 years old. There were many pictures taken, and the huge crowd enjoyed the evening as Ed laid out the advent of the Overland Campaign, starting with the Wilderness.

The lecture led perfectly into the following week’s tour of the battlefield, led by members of the BRCWRT. Ed clearly laid out the heartrending struggles of men who fought and died for yards, and these graphic descriptions were fresh in the mind while covering the same ground later. Thank you, Ed, for coming again and see you next year!

We revisited a local preservation issue discussed at our May meeting - the membership was updated on the section of the Bristoe Station Battlefield which is in preservation danger at the present time. The BRCWRT was honored to have this battlefield nominated for the 2014 Virginia Most Endangered Historic Sites list. In May, Preservation Virginia presented its tenth annual list of Virginia's Most Endangered Historic Sites to raise awareness of places that face imminent or sustained threats to their integrity or survival.

The statewide preservation organization creates the annual listing to bring attention to properties that at risk, and encourages individuals and organizations to advocate for the protection and preservation of Virginia's historic places. What an honor for us - but our work is far from done. We must see the “Kirkland’s Charge” core battlefield acreage preserved for future generations. Please continue to read in this newsletter

(Con’t on page 15)

May Speaker, NPS Historian Emeritus Ed Bearss, with his favorite BRCWRT “Stone Wall” writers — “Ms. Rebelle,” a.k.a. Janet Greentree (left, above), and Spot Reporter Gwen Wytenbach (left, below).

Photos by Janet Greentree



Bristoe Station Battlefield Designated Endangered Historic Site

by John De Pue

Last month, Preservation Virginia, the oldest statewide historic preservation organization in the United States, designated the Bristoe Station Battlefield as one of the Ten Most Endangered Historic Sites in the Commonwealth. The designated area has already been identified as the “Bristoe Station Historical Area” in Prince William County’s comprehensive plan.

The nomination for the ‘endangered site’ designation was drafted and submitted by the BRCWRT. The application stressed that, although Prince William County has preserved some 130 acres of the sites of two Civil War battles fought on the same terrain, the protected property comprises only 15 per cent of the battlefield. As the remainder is privately owned, it is highly vulnerable to encroaching development generated by the urbanization of the county and, in particular, development near the Manassas Airport and new residential communities.

Recently, key battlefield terrain has been threatened by preliminary efforts to transform an 80-acre tract into a for-profit cemetery, a measure

that, if brought to fruition, would result in forever losing the land as an eternal monument to the hundreds of men who fought and perished there during the October 14, 1863 battle.

The endangered historic site designation will not automatically inoculate the unprotected portion of the Bristoe Station Battlefield and other sites awarded the designations from such encroachments. Instead, Preservation Virginia’s objective is to highlight to the citizenry, property owners, government decision-makers, and preservationists the designated sites’ importance and vulnerability. This, we all believe, will both promote sound planning and development decisions by county officials and dialogue between members of the preservation community and private land owners.

As the BRCWRT, we will monitor the threats at Bristoe Station battlefield and will do what we can to promote preservation efforts. Working with the Civil War Trust, we hope that our round table will play a pivotal role in preserving this important hallowed ground.

Each of 2014’s 10 sites (and additional battlefields) is listed below (a brief synopsis of Preservation Virginia’s assessment of Bristoe Station is also attached):

Virginia’s Civil War Battlefields

Bristoe Station Battlefield (Williamsburg Battlefield is designated, also)

Significance: The Bristoe Station and Williamsburg Battlefields are just two of the most recent examples of Virginia’s oft-threatened Civil War landscapes, the threats to which are especially worthy of attention during the ongoing Civil War sesquicentennial. The Bristoe Station Battlefield is the site of two significant battles: the August 27, 1862, Battle of Kettle Run, and the October 14, 1863, Battle of Bristoe Station. Various winter encampments took place in this same area, and various cemeteries exist, most still unidentified. Both battlefields have been recognized as among the Civil War’s most significant sites by the Congressionally-appointed Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) and its *Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields*. Bristoe Station Battlefield is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources holds a historic easement on the 133 acres that incorporate the Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park. Locally, Prince William County identifies the current Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park as a County Registered Historical Site.

Southside Roller Mill, Chase City

Virginia’s “Sidestepped” Towns: Columbia and Pamplin City

James River Viewshed

Hook-Powell-Moorman Farm

Historic Schools In Virginia

The Old Concrete Road

Pocahontas Island Historic District

Phlegar Building (Old Clerk’s Office)

Shockoe Bottom

Waterloo Bridge



**PRESERVATION
VIRGINIA**

<http://preservationvirginia.org>

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in Manassas

Civil War Weekend August 22 - 24

Immerse yourself in the sights, sounds & lore of the time. Free living history, music, tours, encampments, period baseball, parade and much more at two sites in Historic Downtown Manassas.



Shop online or visit *Echoes*, the Manassas Museum Store, for distinctive Civil War treasures.



www.manassasmuseum.org

www.visitmanassas.org





CIVIL WAR TRAVELS WITH MS. REBELLE

Connections from Fredericksburg to Savannah

By Janet Greentree

Ms. Rebelle was recently in Fredericksburg for her "17th Four Days in May tour with the Greater Boston Civil War Roundtable. Great tours are given by this group, and they would love to have anyone from the Bull Run Civil War Round Table join them. Next year's tour will be Petersburg and Appomattox. The following year a tour to North & South Carolina is in the planning stages. Our tour guide was Scott Walker, owner of Hallowed Ground Tours in Fredericksburg. He was a very good guide and was constantly talking about connections and obscure information which is what I find extremely interesting.

Driving around Fredericksburg, Scott was constantly pointing out interesting things to us. We drove by the Hugh Mercer Apothecary Shop, where he talked about the Savannah connections, so I knew I had my subject for this month's article.

Hugh Mercer was a physician in Fredericksburg. Physicians dispensed herbs and potions back in the 1700s, and he opened his Apothecary Shop in downtown Fredericksburg.

One of his clients was Mary Washington, mother of our first president, George Washington.

George and Hugh became close friends.



Hugh Mercer's apothecary in downtown Fredericksburg, VA.

Photo by Janet Greentree

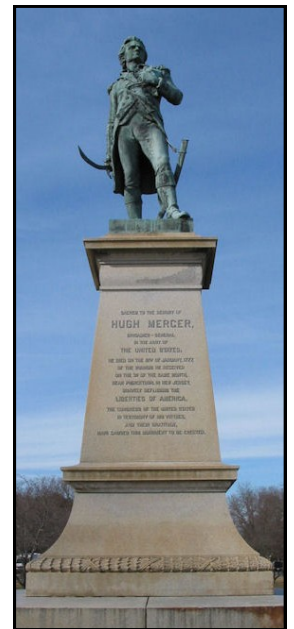
Washington sold Mercer his childhood home, Ferry Farm. Both of them fought in our American Revolution. Hugh Mercer received a letter signed by John Hancock of the Continental Congress in 1776, appointing him a brigadier general. On January 3, 1777, as General Mercer, along with 350 men, were on their way to Princeton, NJ, they encountered two British regiments and cavalry. A fierce fight broke out. The British, thinking Mercer to be George Washington, surrounded him and ordered him to surrender. Mercer chose to fight it out with his saber. He was beaten to the ground, bayoneted seven times, and left to die with a saber in his chest.

His body was taken to a white oak tree nearby; the tree then became known as the Mercer Oak. The Mercer Oak is part of the seal of Mercer County, NJ. Mercer died nine days later, on January 12, 1777, at the age of 35, at the Thomas Clarke house on the eastern end of the battlefield. Artist Charles Wilson Peale did a painting "Washington at the Battle of Princeton, January 3, 1777." The painting shows General Washington in the foreground with General Mercer mortally wounded, lying in the background. Dr. Benjamin Rush is supporting Mercer, with Major George Lewis holding the American flag.

Fortunately for my story, Mercer married Isabella Gordon and fathered five children before the Revolution. His son, Hugh Ten-



Colonial Gen. Hugh Mercer.



Gen. Hugh Mercer monument in Fredericksburg, VA.

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Ms. Rebelle - (con't from page 6)

nant Mercer, is the father of Civil War General Hugh Weedon Mercer.

General Huge Weedon Mercer, CSA

Hugh Weedon Mercer was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia at "Sentry Box" on November 27, 1808. He was named for his grandfather, Hugh Mercer, a Revolutionary War general, referenced above. Mercer graduated from West Point third in a class of 33 cadets in 1828. After graduating, he served in Georgia as an aide to General Winfield Scott. He was also stationed at Fortress Monroe, with the artillery school. He served in the Army from 1828-1835. He was an artillery officer in the Georgia militia as well.



Gen. Hugh Weedon Mercer.

After resigning from the Army, Hugh married Mary Stiles Anderson from Savannah, and settled there, working as a bank cashier at the Planter's Bank. Mercer was first married to Bessie Steenberger of Virginia and had one child with her, Alice. Most likely, Bessie died, as Mercer remarried. Hugh and second wife Mary had six children together.

Construction of Mercer House in Savannah was started by him in 1860, but the beginning of the Civil War interrupted the further building of the house. For those of you who have read the book or seen the movie, *Midnight in the Garden of Good & Evil* by John Berendt, Mercer House was featured in both venues. No Mercers ever lived in the house, but it has retained the name all these years. The house was completed in 1868. The house is located at 429 Bull Street. The house is now the Mercer-Williams Museum.

Mercer enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861, became the colonel of the 1st Georgia Infantry and was promoted to brigadier general in October, 1861. He was instrumental in getting slaves and free blacks into the Confederate Army. [*Editor's Note: these black men were "impressed" or coerced/kidnapped into servitude to Confederates, they were not enlistee soldiers; See: Wikipedia Biography.*] Mercer left Savannah for service in the Atlanta Campaign with the Army of the Tennessee. He fought at Dalton, Marietta, Kennesaw Mountain, and Atlanta. His son, George, was wounded at Kennesaw Mountain. Being 56 years of age (in 1864) as the war wore on was hard on his body; he became ill, and was sent back to Savannah under General William J. Hardee. He then was in charge of the defenses of Savannah. Mercer and Hardee left the city before General Sherman arrived, but Mercer returned later. He was imprisoned briefly at Fort Pulaski, a fort which he had commanded. He was relieved of duty for physical inability on August 31, 1864.

After the war ended, he returned to the banking profession. In 1869, he moved to Baltimore, MD and worked as a commission merchant. Still having health problems, he moved to Baden Baden, Germany, staying for five years, trying to find a cure for his illness. Try as I may, I cannot find out what that illness was, or what he died from. He died in Baden Baden on June 9, 1877. Most likely (but there is some speculation that it wasn't), his body was returned to Savannah for burial in Bonaventure Cemetery. Mercer is buried in Section F, Lot 19, and grave #7. The records in the Baden Baden cemetery where he was first interred do not show that he was ever disinterred. His marker in Savannah may be a cenotaph.

It is interesting how everyone named their homes in earlier times. The Sentry Box house where Hugh Weedon Mercer was born is just below the middle pontoon bridge site on the Rappahannock River. The

(con't on page 16)

Scholarship Winner Announced

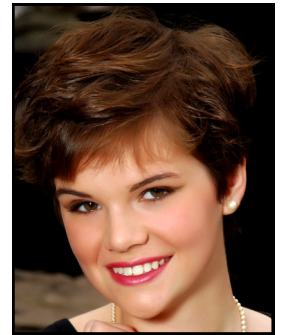
by Nancy Anwyll

The BRCWRT Executive Committee is proud to announce that Caroline Marie Howard is the 2014 winner of the \$1000 Bull Run Civil War Round Table scholarship. She will use it at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia where she plans to major in Chemistry and minor in American history.

Caroline will graduate from Osbourn Park High School this month with Advanced Studies and Biotechnology Honors Diplomas. She enrolled in several Advanced Placement courses including European history, United States history, science and math. As a result of her work, she'll graduate with a grade point average well above a 4.0. Her immediate goal is to finish college, but her lifetime goal is to serve her country in a military role by becoming a United

States Coast Guard helicopter rescue pilot.

Although she plans to pursue a career in the Coast Guard, she plans to continue her interest in history as well. Her AP United States History teacher, Robert Watters, who wrote her recommendation for the scholarship, said, "She is a history person. She is the only student I have had in twenty years of teaching whose interest in the topics I discuss is on par with mine." That characteristic was apparent when she met with the BRCWRT Scholarship Committee in April for an interview. She has long been interested in the Civil War and has had access to many Civil War books.



Ms. Caroline Howard.

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150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF NEW MARKET

by Tim Duskin

On May 14, I left for the 150th anniversary activities at New Market. On that day, I visited the Stonewall Brigade Museum in Verona, Virginia. It is run by the 116th Infantry Regiment Foundation and covers the history and lineage of that regiment from its formation as militia in 1741 to the present. During the Civil War it was the Stonewall Brigade, and there are many exhibits about that command on view. One is an interactive map of the Stonewall Brigade's campaigns and battles during the entire four years of the Civil War. I also visited the nearby Augusta Military Academy Museum in Fort Defiance, Virginia. AMA was founded in 1865. It was one of many military academies founded by Confederate veterans in Virginia after the war as preparatory schools for the Virginia Military Institute. AMA closed in 1984, but the museum tells the school's story.

The Battle of New Market was fought from May 13 to 15, 1864. The 150th anniversary commemoration of it was held from May 15 to 18. On the morning of May 15, the Women's Memorial Society held a ceremony at St. Matthew's Cemetery in honor of the Confederate and VMI dead from the battle. The organization was founded in 1867 as the Women's Memorial Society of the Lost Cause for the purpose of marking and caring for the graves of Confederate soldiers. St. Matthew's Cemetery, with 93 Confederate dead from New Market interred, is one of four cemeteries at which they are active. The six VMI cadets killed at New Market who are now buried at VMI were originally buried at St. Matthew's, and there is also a monument in place to the Confederate soldiers and VMI cadets who died at the Battle of New Market. Some 258 VMI cadets fought in the battle. Ten were killed, and 47 were wounded. There was also a ceremony at VMI the same day in honor of the VMI cadets who were killed at New Market.

At 1:00 a.m., an officer from VMI gave a tour of the battlefield showing the participation of the VMI cadets in the battle. He started at the Virginia Museum of the Civil War (formerly the Hall of Valor) and got as far as the fence at the northern boundary of the Bushong orchard when it started raining heavily, just as it did the same day 150 years before. That ended the tour. Some current VMI cadets and some VMI alumni who were dressed in 1864 VMI uniforms marched from Lexington to New Market to re-enact the march of their predecessors 150 years before. I saw them as they arrived at New Market, some of them quite tired. They showed the position of the VMI cadets in the battle during the tour. I spent the rest of the day visiting the museum, which I had last seen twenty years before.

The re-enactment of the battle was held on the next three days. The first, second, and third days of the battle were depicted successively. On May 16, the first day's battle, which was fought at Smith's Creek, was depicted. I also saw the film at the museum and heard historical fiction writer Jeff Shaara speak on his

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THE BOOK CORNER



by Ralph G. Swanson

Eighteen sixty-four is justifiably the “Year of the Black Soldier.” Not that 1864 was the year blacks first served in the Union army (black men were in uniform in Kansas in fall 1861). Nor was 1864 the year Negro troops first saw extensive combat (blacks fought valiantly at Port Hudson, Milliken’s Bend and Ft. Wagner in 1863). But 1864 was the year that white America (the north, of course) finally came to accept the black man’s legitimate right to fight for his own freedom and the restoration of our Union. *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (University Press of Kansas, 1987) by Dudley Taylor Cornish has long been considered the classic text on the subject, and is now indispensable reading for our full understanding of such a noble aspect of this most destructive of our national undertakings.

First, a few sobering facts: 180,000 blacks served the Union as soldiers, sailors and laborers; 36,000 Negro troops died in service; by war’s end, 25 black soldiers had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for valor. And all of this in a few scant years, starting from an official policy that determined that blacks had no role in this war.

The history of the black soldier in the Civil War has been neglected for reasons that elude this writer. Cornish reports that only three book-length treatments of the subject preceded him, all published before 1890. This was a tense and complicated period in our history, with slavery, emancipation, and fugitive slaves all intertwined with rebellion and disunion. The evolution of the black soldier was nothing less than a social and political upheaval in this nation all playing out in the chaotic midst of war. We must get right with these issues in our minds and *The Sable Arm* will take us a long way in that direction.

A number of the key players in this drama are unexpected so - certainly not those we generally regard as heroes of renown. Some were effective and some were not, but each materially advanced the cause of the black soldier. Timing alone (and probably politics) seemed to make all the difference. General David M. Hunter, with bold support

from the much-maligned Secretary of War Simon Cameron, formed black regiments out of fugitive slaves in the Sea Islands (off South Carolina and Georgia). General Ben Butler absorbed black (Confederate) militias then existing in New Orleans into Union ranks after he took command of that city. Preceding them all was Senator James H. Lane of Kansas. He formed the 1st Kansas (black) Volunteer Regiment and personally led it on Jayhawking raids into Missouri in fall 1861. He drilled and armed all fugitive slaves who would join him. All of this was absolutely contrary to federal policy. Lincoln reversed Hunter and sacked Cameron, but curiously sustained both Butler and Lane. Perhaps one just did not say “no” to the murderous-looking James H. Lane.

President Lincoln, as we know, was very much a follower in this whole matter of arming blacks. Hoping for an early end to hostilities, Lincoln’s initial policies were limited to: 1) conciliate the south; 2) hold the border states; and 3) control radical Republicans in Congress who were pressing for immediate emancipation and a harsh war. The specter of a black Union army invading the south, and particularly the border states, was not what Lincoln wanted. To Lincoln, emancipation and preservation of the Union were different things; likewise, emancipation and the arming of blacks were different things. Underlying all of this, Lincoln believed that slavery was protected by the Constitution and that he was duty-bound to preserve it - at least in those states still loyal to the Union. Lincoln would not act in an extra-Constitutional manner, even to save the Constitution.

But sea changes were rapidly occurring in this country. Recruitment of Union troops was not keeping pace with attrition, the hated draft complicated matters, and rising battle casualties were eroding popular support for the war. By 1863, and the issuance of Emancipation Proclamation, the Lincoln administration was, at last, fully committed to the use of black troops. Now comes the least prominent character in this history. Obscure Adjutant General of the Army, Lorenzo Thomas, clothed with the full authority of the President, was dispatched across the north to enlist black troops. He was successful beyond all expectation. Throughout 1864, Thomas organized over 60 black regiments; eventually, he had mustered over 70 black regi-

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The Best Kept Secret in Fairfax County

Brian McEnany

Wolf Run Shoals, an idyllic part of Northern Virginia's Fountainhead Regional Park, lies at the end of Wolf Run Shoals Road in Fairfax County. There are no traffic jams and planes can hardly be heard. On a clear spring day, the sound of birds is all that can be heard in the quiet forest that surrounds a sunken depression in the ground that stretches down a slope to the Occoquan River. In the late fall, the hillsides near Wolf Run Shoals lose the greenery that blocks one's vision, and shapes emerge that have been there since the Civil War - earthworks - and if you know where to look, numerous weathered stones that formed the fireplaces for tents, an old stone oven, and a company street. History is all about you, but most visitors fail to understand its significance. That will soon be rectified.

A new Civil War Trails historical marker at the end of the paved road describes a large Union encampment and an artillery battery that occupied the area where the farmhouse stands today. Imagine all the activity, sights and smells that took place here. Begin your venture down the forest trail to the Occoquan River, and you'll note a small sign identifying the sunken depression to the left as being part of the Washington-Rochambeau Wagon Route. This was the route that the American and French wagons, cattle and horses traveled to reach Yorktown in 1781, where the conclusive battle of the American Revolutionary War took place.

When you reach the river, you are compelled to wonder just where the road emerged in today's Prince William County. In actuality, it traveled over three (now submerged) shoals (islands). The Occoquan was the *de facto* Mason-Dixon line early in the American Civil War...Confederates on the south side and the Union, later on, on the north. The shoals were used by both armies, including tens of thousands of Union soldiers with their wagons, horses, and mules headed northwards on the way to what would eventually result in the battle of Gettysburg. A few days later, J.E.B. Stuart and three brigades of cavalry crossed on their controversial ride north into Pennsylvania. It was also used frequently by local partisan rangers, and Mosby's men.

The history of Wolf Run Shoals will not be lost, as it will be formally memorialized via a Civil War Trails marker dedication ceremony on June 21, thanks to the efforts of Brian McEnany and James Lewis. See *INVITATION to ceremony on next page*. Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax Board of Supervisors and Pat Herrity, the Springfield Supervisor, along with Chris Pauley of the NV Regional Park and Patrick Lennon of "Visit Fairfax," will help dedicate the historic site.

Wolf Run Shoals will finally receive its due recognition.

The Book Corner — (con't from page 12)

ments of infantry, artillery and cavalry.

By the end of 1864, prejudice against black troops had largely abated. Blacks had long since demonstrated their courage and fighting ability beyond all question, but new and stubborn challenges arose: officering black regiments, equal pay and benefits, and the special dangers faced by black prisoners of war are also important parts of this history.

Cornish writes an essentially uplifting history, but he begs some questions: Would the north have won the war without the assistance of black troops? Probably. Moreover, it is hard to see that black military service mitigated what would be a

harsh Reconstruction or the later rise of Jim Crow. But military service was one of the first and has long been one of the most effective pathways for black acceptance into mainstream white America. And we in the BRCWRT will never fail to appreciate and honor the service of any American in the armed conflicts of this nation.

Until next time, keep reading.

Note: **The Book Corner** invites comment on these critiques and, especially, your personal recommendations for other outstanding books on the Civil War. Comments are always welcome at re-nataralph@gmail.com.



You are Cordially Invited!

Saturday, June 21, 10:00 AM

8598 Wolf Run Shoals Rd., Clifton, Virginia

Wolf Run Shoals Historical Marker Dedication

Welcome & Opening Remarks

James Lewis, Moderator & Co-author of the marker

Speakers

The Honorable Sharon Bulova, Chairman FCBOS

The Honorable Pat Herrity, Springfield Supv.

Chris Pauley, Dir. Of Ops., NVRPA

Patrick Lennon, Mktg Mgr., Visit Fairfax

Brian McEnany, Keynote Address & Co-author

Ms. Jenee Lindner, (a.k.a. Mary Willcoxon)

Accompanied By

Live Period Music by Jon Vrana

Presentation of the Colors - 17th VA, Co. D

**Directional signage to the event will begin
at the intersection of
Chapel and Wolf Run Shoals Rd.**



Northern Virginia
Regional Park Authority

Co-sponsors: NVRPA & CWT



Civil War Trails Marker Dedication at "MERRYBROOK"

by Gwen Wyttenbach

A Civil War Trails marker was dedicated on Sunday, May 4, at "Merrybrook," the Herndon, Virginia home of Laura Ratcliffe from 1869 to 1923. Several BRCWRT members were in attendance, including: Jim Lewis, Ed Wenzel, Alan Day, Chuck Mauro, Don Hakenson, Nancy Anwyll, Janet Greentree, Sandra Cox, Lynne Garvey-Hodge and Rob Airaghi, Pete Andrews, and Nancy Olds, and myself.

Laura was a war-time friend and confidante of both Major General J.E.B. Stuart and Colonel John S. Mosby ("the Gray Ghost"), and critically impacted their lives and safety, as well as improved the success of their missions, on many occasions during the conflict, providing valuable intelligence to General Stuart and saving Colonel Mosby's life with a warning keeping him from capture by Union cavalry waiting in ambush for him and his Rangers.

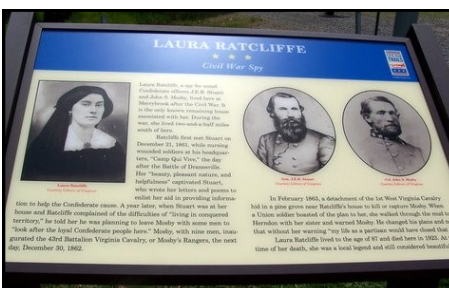
Distinguished speakers during the program were: Virginia Congressman Gerry Connolly; local historians Chuck Mauro and Don Hakenson, who



Laura Ratcliffe

were instrumental in lobbying for this marker and essential to its placement; Virginia Delegate Tom Rust; Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust; and Patrick Lennon, Co-Chairman Fairfax County American Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee. Following the officials' remarks, reflections were offered by Win Meiselman, accompanied by her husband Dave, long-time owners of "Merrybrook."

Among the living history participants were: Amy Beechler, portraying Laura Ratcliffe, and Jimmy Fleming, portraying Colonel John S. Mosby. A tour of the home followed the dedication ceremony, and a display was provided by Clay Pickett (descendant of Major General George E. Pickett, CSA) of original daguerreotypes of Laura and members of her family. Also unique to the day was display of a lovely wood table that had belonged to Laura and was used by her in Merrybrook when she lived there. Light refreshments were served by the Herndon Historical Society.



Left, top, unveiling of the Civil War Trail Marker (shown left, bottom). Above, General Pickett's descendant Clay Pickett. Right, top: (l. to r.) Jimmy Fleming (Colonel Mosby), Amy Beechler (Laura Ratcliffe), Congressman Gerry Connolly, Chris Godart (Major General Richard S. Ewell). Right, bottom: (l. to r.) Jim Lewis, Alan Day and Ed Wentzel.

Photos by Gwen Wyttenbach



Wilderness Battlefield Tour – After Action Report

by John De Pue

Fifteen members of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table participated in a tour of the Wilderness Battlefield on Saturday, May 17, led by Rob Orrison and myself. After meeting at the Sheetz/McDonalds shopping center and fortifying ourselves with a strong cup of coffee, we arrived at the Wilderness Battlefield Visitors' Center at 8:45 am. There, I provided an overview of the opening stages of the 1864 Overland Campaign and summarized the five clashes between Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell's Second Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia and the Union Fifth and Sixth Corps along the Orange Turnpike, between noon on May 5th and the evening of May 6th.

Following the briefing, the attendees participated in a two mile loop-trail walking tour, embracing the defensive positions of both the Confederate Second Corps and the Union Fifth and Sixth Corps. The tour afforded the participants an appreciation of the wooded terrain that frustrated the repeated Union assaults and the opportunity to view well-preserved earthworks. Most significantly, the walk included the opportunity to visit the site of Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon's flank attack on elements of the Union Sixth Corps on the evening of May 6th. The morning walking tour was followed by stops along Hill-Ewell Drive at the site of Brig. Gen. James Wadsworth's May 5th attack, and Brig. General Samuel Crawford's activities at Chewning's farm.

Shortly before noon, our party arrived at Elwood, aka "the Lacy House"—the site of Maj. Gen. G.K. Warren's headquarters during the battle. There, members of the Friends of the Wilderness Battlefield gave us a guided tour of the house and grounds – including a visit to the burial site of

Stonewall Jackson's arm. The graciousness and knowledge of the docents at Elwood made this a highpoint of our day.

Following lunch, Rob Orrison assumed the duties of lead guide. Stopping first at the Brock Road/Orange Plank Road intersection, Rob explained the opening phase of the conflict between Lt. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill's Confederate Third Corps and the elements of the Union Second and Sixth Corps. After a brief walk, we visited the Ver-

mont monument commemorating the actions of members of Brig. Gen. Lewis Grant's command during the early phases of the action along the Plank Road.

During a walk to the site of the Widow Tapp farm, Rob described the actions along the Plank Road during the morning of May 6th, the timely arrival

of Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's first Corps, and the counterattack by the famed Texas Brigade. The walk also included stops at the Texas monument, where the now-empty graves of several hundred members of that unit could still be seen, and the site of the legendary "Lee to the rear" incident. The final stop of the tour was the site of the wounding of General Longstreet and the death of Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins during Maxey Sorrell's flank attack, along an unfinished railroad bed, against the Union Second Corps line. The tour concluded at 3:40 p.m., with the taking of a group picture of the participants.

Participants included: Mark Allen, Kim Brace, Bill Cratty, Alan Day, Tom Jones, Dale Langston, Melanie Langston, Joe Rhodes, Richard Sherwood, Rob Skelton, Mark Trbovich, Joe Young, George Zamka, Tony Reichhardt, Kim Brace, Rob Orrison and John De Pue.



Members of the BRCWRT enjoyed a detailed tour of the Wilderness Battlefield recently, led by John De Pue and Rob Orrison.

First Annual Emerging Civil War Symposium at Stevenson Ridge

"The Civil War in 1864"

Dates:

August 15-17, 2014

Cost:

One all inclusive ticket is just \$55.00 per person. All tickets will be sent within 10 days of the purchase date. If you forget to bring your tickets along to the event, please do not worry, we have a full list of all participants.

Location:

Stevenson Ridge. Stevenson Ridge is located on the Spotsylvania Court House Battlefield, 12 miles south of Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Symposium Highlights:

Friday night roundtable discussion emceed by Chris Mackowski.

Author book signing events.

Saturday lecture series, with keynote presentation by Eric J. Wittenberg.

Sunday tours of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Battlefields. (Participants choose which tour they would like to take when they arrive at the event registration, in August.)

Door prizes.

Welcome Gift Bag

Included with Registration:

Friday night welcome reception and roundtable discussion, with hors d'oeuvres and cash bar. (Registration table opens at 6 P.M.)

Saturday lecture series, morning coffee service, lunch, afternoon snack and author signing event. (Registration table opens at 8:30 A.M.)

Sunday car caravan tours of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House Battlefields.

Lecturers and Tour Guides:

Daniel T. Davis—"More Desperate Fighting Has Not Been Witnessed on this Continent": Ulysses S. Grant and the Overland Campaign

Phillip Greenwalt—From "Old Bald Head" to "Lee's Bad Old Man": A Study of the Second Corps, Army of Northern Virginia in 1864

Chris Kolakowski—1864: The Last Stand of the Confederate Navy

Chris Mackowski—An in-depth tour of the Spotsylvania Court House Battlefield

Meg Thompson—A Bad Month for the President: Campaigning the Election of '64

Kristopher White—A tour of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House Battlefields

Lee White—"To die like men": Patrick Cleburne and the Tennessee Campaign of 1864

Eric Wittenberg—The Trevilian Station Raid

(Also joining us for the Friday roundtable discussion is author David A. Powell and publisher/author Theodore P. Savas.)

Schedule of Events:

Friday, August 15: 6 PM: -Registration -Welcome reception with hors d'oeuvres and cash bar -Author Book Signings 7-8:30 PM: -Author Roundtable Discussion Emceed by Chris Mackowski

Saturday, August 16: 8:30-9 AM: -Welcome and Registration

9-11:45 AM: -Morning Speaker Series

11:45AM-1 PM: -Lunch

1 PM-4 PM: -Afternoon Speaker Series

4-4:30 PM: -Q & A and presentation wrap up -Door Prizes

4:30-5 PM: -Author Book Signings

Sunday, August 17: 8:30 AM: -Car Caravan Tour of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Battlefields with Kristopher White. Tour departs from Stevenson Ridge and will include Saunders Field, Ellwood, Tapp Field, Bloody Angle, and more.

8:45 AM: -In-Depth Car Caravan Tour of Spotsylvania Battlefield with Chris Mackowski. Tour departs from Stevenson Ridge at Spotsylvania Exhibit Shelter and will include Laurel Hill, the Bloody Angle, Lee's Last Line, and more.

Proceeds from the event support battlefield preservation.

Thank you to our sponsors: Stevenson Ridge, Savas Beatie, LLC., Blue and Gray Magazine, The Fredericksburg Area Museum, Darby Downs Equestrian Center, and Civil War Brigade Legends.

For more information, contact us at:
emergingcivilwar@yahoo.com

President's Column—(con't from page 3)

further information.

I am so happy to announce that you will meet our 2014 BRCWRT College Scholarship Award winner at our June 12th meeting. Our Scholarship committee, headed by Nancy Anwyll, has determined a winner, and it will be our honor to take the awardee and her parents out to dinner, and later have you meet them at the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

Please remember that in order to receive your free BRCWRT newsletter, you must renew your membership with us. The year 1864 was a tremendous one, full of fighting/battles that will be commemorated at Sesquicentennial-themed meetings, and you will not want to miss *The Stone Wall's* articles, photos and stories about that turbulent time. Please make every effort to sign up at the next meeting, mail in your check, or sign up online at our website.

We now have 210 folks who have chosen to "Like" our new Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/bullruncwrt>. At the site, you can receive future real-time pictures of Civil War events, event updates, local and regional Civil War information, and BRCWRT information that should enhance your Civil War experience and knowledge. You can also "Share" your BRCWRT FB page with your friends, so that many of them can sign up, too! Please continue to spread the word to your family and friends, younger folks and potential members that the BRCWRT is the Northern Virginia hub for Civil War information and preservation – it's a tremendous organization!

Again, join us to hear Dr. B. Franklin Cooling in June and NPS Ranger Bert Dunkerly in July – you



"Rock Star" NPS Historian Emeritus Ed Bearss and his most fervent fans, the Board members of the BRCWRT. 1st Row - L-R - Nancy Awyll, Charlie Balch. 2nd Row - L-R - E.B. Vandiver, Ed Bearss, Congressman Gerry Connolly, John McAnaw, John De Pue. 3rd Row - L-R - Mark Troblich, John Pearson, Mark Knowles, Jim Lewis, Ed Wenzel, Brian McAnany.



Above, Ed Bearss (left) and great friend Cong. Gerry Connolly. In photo at right, Sandy Iasiello (left) and Deanna Bailey, the members who went out of their way to provide a great collation for the evening, including cake, cookies, soda, water.



Past Presidents of the BRCWRT greet history fan fav Ed Bearss at the May meeting, including: L-R - John McAnaw, Nancy Anwyll, Ed Bearss, Dan Paterson, Mark Troblich.

don't want miss them! As always, if you can't make the 5:00 p.m. dinner at the Coyote Grille (in the Giant shopping center) before the 7:00 p.m. meeting starts. Enjoy the fellowship, buys some books and get ready for another excellent lecture.

Let us never forget them and what they did for us. God Bless all of you.

Ms. Rebelle — (con't from page 7)

home was heavily damaged during the battle of Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862. There is a historic marker at the corner of Dixon & Caroline Streets noting that the home Sentry Box was located near there. The home was owned by General George Weedon (Revolutionary War) and his wife Catherine. After General Hugh Mercer was killed at the Battle of Princeton, Catherine Weedon invited the Mercers to live with them at Sentry Box.

If you have never been to Bonaventure Cemetery in Savannah, it is a beautiful place to visit. It sits along the Bull River with Spanish moss hanging from the trees. The address is 330 Bonaventure Road, Thunderbolt, GA. In addition to General Mercer (maybe) resting there, five other Confederate Civil War generals are buried there: Robert Houston Anderson, Francis Stebbins Bartow, Henry Rootes Jackson, Alexander Robert Lawton, and Claudius Charles Wilson.

One of the most interesting things about

the Mercer family is their descendants. In addition to General Hugh Weedon Mercer, direct descendants are John Mercer Patton (Governor of Virginia), Lt. Colonel Waller T. Patton (mortally wounded at Pickett's Charge), Colonel George Smith Patton (Waller's brother, Civil War), General George S. Patton, Jr. (World War II), and the songwriter/lyricist Johnny Mercer. Johnny Mercer is buried near General Mercer at Bonaventure Cemetery.



Gen. Hugh Weedon Mercer's grave in Bonaventure Cemetery, Savannah, GA.

Photo by Janet Greentree

NOTE: Ms. Rebelle's hobby is travelling the country finding and honoring the graves of our 1,008 Civil War generals. So far she has located and photographed 385....169 Confederate and 216 Union. You may contact her at jlgrtree@erols.com.

Scholarship - (con't from page 8)

Caroline said that she especially liked reading General Longstreet's memoirs. She wrote about both General Lee and General Jackson in her history class last year, and this year she submitted an essay on Stonewall Jackson for her BRCWRT scholarship application.

Caroline is interested in many subject areas and has done well in her academic work. Some of her honors include being a member of the National Honor Society in which she served as treasurer, the German Honor Society in which she served as president, and the Tri-M Music Honor Society. She participated in her school's Track & Field events all four years, was class treasurer in 2011, and participated in the Model United Nations Club in which she served as Co-Secretary General this past year. She played the violin for the Prince William Youth Orchestra and was a Girl Scout in which she received the Bronze and Silver Trefoil Awards. Not surprisingly, in 2013 she was named the Outstanding Youth Leader of Prince William County and Insightful Leader by the National Council on Youth Leadership.

It's easy to see that Caroline Howard is a worthy recipient for the BRCWRT's scholarship for 2014.

Caroline's proud parents are Lawrence and Edith Howard of Woodbridge. They have been invited to accompany Caroline to the June 12th general membership meeting where we will present Caroline with a certificate, a one year's membership in BRCWRT and a membership pin. We'll also meet her and her parents at the Coyote Grille prior to the meeting.

This is the second year that the BRCWRT offered a scholarship, but it's the first year that the organization opened up the scholarship to all public high schools in Prince William and Fairfax County. This resulted in receiving five submissions, three from Fairfax and two from Prince William. The BRCWRT scholarship committee members are Nancy Anwyll, Rob Orrison, Charlie Balch, and Brian McEnany with assistance from Mark Knowles. The 2014 scholarship rules and forms are posted on the BRCWRT website.

Upcoming Speakers - (con't. from page 1)

American history's bloodiest, most lopsided battles. Thousands of Union soldiers were killed or wounded in a hopeless frontal assault against the fortified positions of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's army. The BRCWRT is fortunate to have a prominent speaker on this subject visit us.

Robert M. Dunkerly is a historian, award-winning author and speaker who is actively involved in historic preservation and research. He holds a degree in History from St. Vincent College and a Masters in Historic Preservation from Middle Tennessee State University. He has worked at nine

historic sites, including both Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina and Appomattox National Battlefield Park (Virginia), and written seven books and over twenty articles.

His research includes archaeology, Colonial life, military history, and historic commemoration. He has visited over 400 battlefields and over 700 historic sites worldwide. Bert is currently a NPS Ranger at Richmond National Battlefield Park. When not reading or writing, he enjoys hiking, camping and photography.

New Market 150th — (con't from page 8)

and his father's books and the movies which were made from them.

On May 17, the HistoryMobile of the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission was at the battlefield. I heard Charles R. Knight, author of the book *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864*, speak on "Missourians at New Market." Colonel Charles H. Woodson's Missouri Confederate soldiers were exchanged as prisoners at City Point, Virginia, after being captured at Port Gibson, Mississippi, because the other and closer prisoner exchange point, Vicksburg, Mississippi, had just fallen. They asked to remain in Virginia and were assigned to Brigadier General John D. Imboden's 62nd Virginia Infantry in the Shenandoah, which was engaged at New Market. Knight stated that Woodson's command suffered heavier casualties at New Market than any other unit in any other battle during the Civil War. Woodson had 62 men there and 40 of them were casualties. One of the few monuments on the battlefield is to them. I also took a battlefield tour given by Byron Faidley (VMI 2007) and some of the VMI cadets who had made the march called "The Battle of New Market: A Cadet Perspective." This time, the tour covered the battle to its conclusion because there was no rain. However, a portion of the Field of Lost Shoes was still filled with water from the rain that we travelled short of it and the conclusion of the battle was explained from the same point where the previous tour had stopped. This same depression was also filled with water during the battle, which is why some lost their shoes there.

After the re-enactment I went to the Lee-Jackson Building, which is now the headquarters of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation. The same building was formerly the Bedrooms of America Museum. Lieutenant General Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson reviewed his troops while standing in front of this building during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862 and Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early used it as his headquarters during the Valley Campaign of 1864. I attended an "Eyewitness to History" program called "Whispers from the Past." It consisted of accounts presented by living historians of soldiers on both sides, VMI cadets, and civilians during the battle. I then went home and did not stay for the final day.

In high school, I was a cadet at Fork Union Military Academy, one of the other military schools in Virginia founded after the war by Confederate veterans. I still wear my combat boots from those days for battlefield tours. They got very muddy during this trip because of the rain and its aftermath. If they had similar combat boots during the Civil War, they would not have been lost. That is one modern advantage which I had which prevented me from losing my shoes.

VMI maintains the New Market Battlefield Historical Park. It also maintains the VMI Museum and the "Stonewall" Jackson House, both of which are in Lexington. The SVBF holds activities, such as lectures, regularly at the Lee-Jackson Building in New Market.



BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

The Stone Wall

P.O. Box 2147

Centreville, VA 20122

2014 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. Family—\$25. Student (age 22 and under)—\$10.

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

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

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PHONE_____ **E-MAIL**_____