



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XXVII, Issue 1, FEBRUARY 2020

**HISTORIAN/SVBF DIRECTOR TERRY
HEDER SPEAKS ON "IS THE WORLD BEING
SET ON FIRE?: THE BURNING OF THE
SHENANDOAH VALLEY" AT THE
FEBRUARY 13th MEETING**

by Mark Trbovich

The Shenandoah Valley in western Virginia stretches about 140 miles north to south between the Allegheny Mountains on the west and the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east. During the Civil War the strategically important valley was the site of two major campaigns and numerous battles.

Confederate control of the Shenandoah helped prolong the Confederate war effort until 1864, while the region provided sustenance to Confederate stomachs and succored Confederate nationalism. When those connections were destroyed by Union General Philip H. Sheridan and his Valley Campaign in the autumn of 1864 - a campaign that culminated in what residents called "The Burning," and that also helped U.S. president Abraham Lincoln win re-election - victory for the Union and defeat for the Confederacy were all but assured. We are so happy to have an expert from the valley with us to speak at this week's meeting.

Terry Heder is the Director of Interpretation, Education, and History for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, which manages the eight-county Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. Terry oversees the Battlefields

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

7 p.m. Centreville Library

THURSDAY, February 13, 2020

GUEST SPEAKER:

**Author/SVB Director
Terry Heder**

TOPIC:

**"Is the World Being Set on
Fire?: The Burning of the
Shenandoah Valley"**

Foundation's interpretive, education, historical, visitor services, partnership, museum, library, archives, and print and digital communications programs throughout the district, including work at 20 major battlefields and related historic sites, and is managing editor of the *Shenandoah At War* magazine.

He serves as chair of the Shenandoah Valley region for the Civil War Trails program and serves on the boards of Civil War Trails and Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute.

Come on out at 5 p.m. and meet and dine with Terry at Carrabba's Italian Restaurant, 5805 Trinity Parkway, Centreville, Virginia, 20120: 703-266-9755.

Don't Miss These Special BRCWRT Upcoming Tours!

The Northern Virginia region is a gold mine of famous (and less famous) sites, where you can walk in the footsteps of Civil War soldiers, civilians and generals. Join members of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table as they explore notable and lesser-known local history.

- **Wolf Run Shoals:** March 14 - half-day field trip to a local landscape that still reflects features of military occupation - led by Jim Lewis and Brian McEnany
- **1863 Cavalry Battles in Loudoun County:** April 11 - full-day field trip to learn about the fighting in Loudoun County that led up to the epic clash at Gettysburg - led by historian Richard Gillespie
- **CSA Military RR at Manassas Junction/Centreville:** May 9 - half-day field trip to study the - led by Blake Myers
- **Kernstown:** June 13 - full-day field trip to the Shenandoah Valley battle site - led by Larry Turner
- **Antietam:** September 12 - full-day field trip - led by David Welker
- **Along the River Road:** October 10 - led by Greg Wilson

Contact Doug Horhota at oog1775@hotmail.com or 757-592-1193 to reserve a space; 10 sign-ups required. Walking anticipated; wear comfortable shoes. Lunch not provided; lunch break is planned for full day tours and for members to chat after half-day tours.

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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:

**Centreville Regional Library
14200 St. Germain Drive
Centreville, VA 20121-2255
703.830.2223**

For specific meeting dates and information, please visit the Web site: <http://bullruncwrt.org>

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE

For the **March 2020 issue**, e-mail articles by 9 a.m., Monday, February 24, to Nadine Mironchuk at: nadine1861@hotmail.com

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

For the **March 2020 issue**, advertisers - please click on "Instructions for Advertisers" at: <http://bullruncwrt.org> and e-mail ads by noon on February 14, to Charlie Balch at: BRCWRTads@gmail.com

Support the BRCWRT in its mission to educate and to commemorate the battles and events of the Civil War

JOIN US AT CARRABBA'S

Do you come directly to the monthly meeting from work and look for a place to eat, or would you just like to come early to dinner? Join BRCWRT members and their monthly guest speakers for good food and camaraderie. Currently, we gather prior to each meeting around 5 p.m. at Carraba's Italian Grill, located just across Lee Highway from the Centreville Regional Library.

UPCOMING 2020 MEETINGS

February 13: Author and Historian Terry Heder - "The Burning of the Shenandoah Valley"

March 12: NPS Historian Jim Burgess - "JEB Stuart's Raid on Catlett Station - August 1862"

April 9: Historian Deborah Mueller - "Clara Barton"

May 14: Author and Historian Steve Ditmeyer - "Railroads, Herman Haupt, and the Battle of Gettysburg"

June 11: Author and Historian Richard Quest - "I Held Lincoln; A Union Sailor's Journey Home"

July 9: Author and NPS Emeritus Ed Bearss - "Civil War Question and Answer Session with BRCWRT Membership"

August 13: Author Historian Chris Mackowski - "Grant's Last Battle - Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant"

September 10: Historian Kristen Pawlak - "Battle of Wilson Creek, MO - Aug 1861"

October 8: Professor of History Noah Cincinnati - "Capitalism: 1830-1860"

November 12: Historian David Dixon - "The Lost Gettysburg Address"

December 10: Historian Ron Beavers - "Arlington House, The Last Battle of the Civil War"

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The President's Column By Mark Whitenton

Bull Run Civil War Round Table Members -

It's the start of a new year for the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. Thanks to the strong Executive Committee that has been appointed over the past 10 years by our past president, Mark Trbovich, this year promises to continue his legacy and be a great year for the Round Table. As Mark Trbovich stated in his last column in the December/January newsletter, "We have accomplished many things at our Round Table, but as always, our work is never done - as we will never be a stagnant organization."

Over the past couple of years, the membership of the Round Table has skyrocketed to over 370! A major goal of the Executive Committee is to provide real value for our growing membership (and adding a few more members would be terrific, as well). Fortunately, Mark Trbovich continues to serve as Speaker Chair, providing quality speakers for all of this coming year's Thursday evening general meetings.

We understand that many of our members do not always have the time or the ability to attend our Thursday evening meetings in Centreville. Accordingly, we are adding additional Round Table events on the weekends. Our new Field Trip Committee Chair, Doug Horhota, has already scheduled six field trips from March through October. In addition, our new Vice President, Greg Wilson, is planning three special weekend events this year, including the annual picnic on September 27. For your information, Greg has prepared a listing of all of our 2020 events, which is provided below in this newsletter.

Preservation will continue to be a fundamental purpose of our Round Table. Blake Myers has again provided an update for this newsletter. As you may be aware, through the efforts of the Round Table and Ed Wenzel in particular, a precious few acres of the original Ox Hill battlefield were saved from development. Blake is planning a special commemoration of the Battlefield event on Saturday, September 5. We hope you will be able to attend.



Above, left, the loquacious historian John Quarstein talks at December's meeting about the Battle of Big Bethel; above, right, author Jan Croon, January's speaker, talked about her new book "The War Outside My Window," about a disabled Southern boy who observed the war from his home.

Photos by Janet Greentree

Past President Nancy Anwyll has agreed to help with the annual Round Table scholarship program for one last year. Over the past several years, Nancy has worked very hard to spread the word to an increasing number of secondary schools in order to attract an expanding group of impressive applicants. When you see Nancy at the next meeting, please take a moment to thank her. Thanks are due as well to the generosity of a number of our members who have given donations to the Scholarship Program, which is now separately and fully funded!

I thank you all for your vote for me as the new BRCWRT President. It is tough to follow Mark Trbovich's 10-year legacy of vision and expansion. I look forward to listening to you about what changes you would like to see as we go forward to meet our Round Table's goals of preservation and education.



Above, left: The "Refreshment Committee" (l to r - Gwen Wyttenbach and Sandra Cox) add holiday cheer to the December BRCWRT meeting; above, right, youngest member Bryan Holtzer received recognition and a gift for having written a book review for the *Civil War Times* magazine.

Photos by Janet Greentree

Benson-Rice Tale of Battlefield Compassion Enjoyed by BRCWRT Members

Sudley Church was the site recently of an enjoyable dinner and re-telling of the story of Union Col. John Rice and local farmer Amos Benson who, with his wife Margaret, was said by Rice to have saved his life, in 1861, after being wounded and left unattended near Sudley Church following the battle of 1st Manassas.

Many members of the Round Table were in attendance, including the two members portraying the title characters – John Myers, as Col. John Rice and Fred Eckstein, as Confederate Corp. Amos Benson.

The story, as told by Rice to the newspaper *The Springfield Republican*, November 24, 1886, provides a moving account of the generous treatment he received from Benson:

"[After being wounded], my comrades bore me off in the wake of our retreating forces toward Sudley Church, where our surgeons had established a hospital. In a short time, being closely pursued by the enemy and finding that I was apparently dead, they laid me under a fence and made their escape. Some two days after the battle I recovered consciousness but was unable to move...In this condition I was found by Amos Benson and his wife, who lived on the opposite side of Bull Run. They were returning to their home at evening, after spending the day at Sudley church....Benson, discovering life in me, brought an overworked surgeon from the church, who, however, turned away with the remark that he had no time to spend on so hopeless a case. Mrs. Benson meanwhile brought me food from her house, while her husband removed my clothing and scraped away the vermin that were praying upon me. They continued to feed and care for me till at the end of 10 days I was so far revived that the surgeons were persuaded to remove me from under the fence to more comfortable quarters in a freight car at Manassas Junction, whence in a few days I was carried to Richmond and consigned to Libby Prison."

Looking up Benson 25 years after the battle, Rice said that he wished to return the great gesture of having his life saved by the farmer and asked what he could provide the Bensons in return. Told that the church was in desperate need of repair, Rice is said to have returned to Springfield, Massachusetts, and raised enough funds to restore the war-torn chapel.

While Rice's narrative immediately following the war did not recount the tale of the saving grace of the Bensons, only recounting the more normal course of triage, treatment and removal from the battlefield that most casualties experienced, it is still a story worth retelling for its inspirational values.

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BRCWRT members (left to right): John Myers, as Col. John Rice and Fred Eckstein, as Confederate Corp. Amos Benson present the story of compassion on the battlefield that has lived through a century-and-a-half.

Photo by Janet Greentree



BRCWRT members attending the Benson-Rice presentation were (left to right): Row 1 – Stephanie Vale; Row 2 – Bryan & Ben Holtzer, Julie Holtzer; Row 3 – Fred Eckstein (Corp. Amos Benson), Janet Greentree, Gwen Wytenbach Dave Button; Row 4 – Drew Pallo, Kevin Garrahan (Gen. Rawlins), Jon Vrana, Debbie & Mark Whitenton, John Myers (Col. John Rice), Blake Myers, and Eric Fowler. Scott Adkins was in attendance but left before photo was taken.

Photo by Janet Greentree

ROUND TABLE MEMBERS SUPPORTING HOLIDAY EVENTS

Brentsville
Courthouse
Christmas



Christmas
at the
Stone
House



Blenheim Christmas in Camp





CIVIL WAR TRAVELS WITH MS. REBELLE

Maj. Gen. William "Extra Billy" Smith, CSA

By Janet Greentree



Above: Extra Billy's house in Warrenton, VA; At right: Woodland United Methodist Church in Culpeper, VA where the pillars from Smith's house have been repurposed.

Photo at right by Janet Greentree



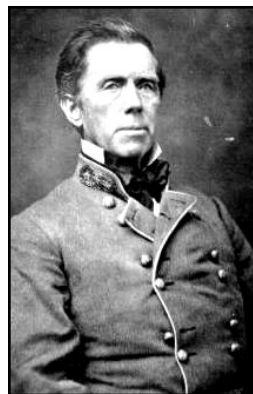
This article is dedicated to the late Dave Meisky who so greatly reenacted and effortlessly portrayed Gen. "Extra Billy" Smith. Dave died on October 24, 2019, in Buena Vista, Virginia. Dave had the Southern accent already going for him and always carried his blue umbrella, as did Extra Billy. Dave was a member of Lee's Lieutenants and participated in many events, including a tete-a-tete with Gen. Richard Ewell (Chris Godart) at one of our Round Table meetings. (See page 10 for obituary and photo tribute.)

Extra Billy was born on September 6, 1797, making him the oldest Confederate Civil War general. The Union's oldest Civil War general was George Sears Greene, but he was born in 1801, so Extra Billy had three years on Greene. They both also faced off at Culp's Hill at Gettysburg. Smith was born at Office Hill Plantation, Maren-



Above, left: (left to right): Chris Godart (Gen. Richard Ewell) and Dave Meisky (Gen. William "Extra Billy" Smith) take a moment to plan strategy at a past meeting of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. At right: the man himself—Gen. William "Extra Billy" Smith.

Photo at left by Janet Greentree



go, King George County, Virginia, to Caleb Smith and Mary Ann Waugh Smith (his cousin). His maternal grandfather was also named William Smith. This William was wounded in Lord Dunmore's War (1774) fighting for Virginia against the Shawnee and Mingo Indians. His paternal grandfather Thomas Smith fought in the Revolutionary War and spent the winter at Valley Forge (with George somebody – oh, OK – George Washington). Caleb and Mary's joint ancestor was Sir Sydney Smith, a British admiral, who fought in the American and French Revolutions. Napoleon Bonaparte was quoted as saying of Admiral Smith: "That man made me miss my destiny."

Smith was educated at private schools in Virginia and later at the Plainfield Academy in

Connecticut. He returned to Virginia to read for the law and was admitted to the bar in 1818 in Culpeper. In 1820, he married Elizabeth Hansbrough Bell and had 11 children. Four of their children died in infancy or as young adults. Smith's house in Culpeper was located at 302 North Main Street, which is now a post office. A historical marker is on display on the corner on the corner of North Main and West Spencer Streets. The house was so large it encompassed an entire city block.

The house was also three blocks from General A.P. Hill's house on Main Street. Smith's house was torn down in 1931 to build the post office, but the pillars were sold to A.W. "Jim" Hawkins, who installed them at the entrance of the Woodland United Methodist Church at 14280 Woodland Church Road in Culpeper. The church is still standing and in use, with Extra Billy's pillars welcoming parishioners. As you read the paragraph below, it is a little more than interesting that a post office was erected at the former site of his home in Culpeper.

In 1827, Smith earned his soubriquet "Extra Billy" for the mail lines he established, going from Washington City to Warrenton.

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Ms. Rebelle – (con't from page 6)

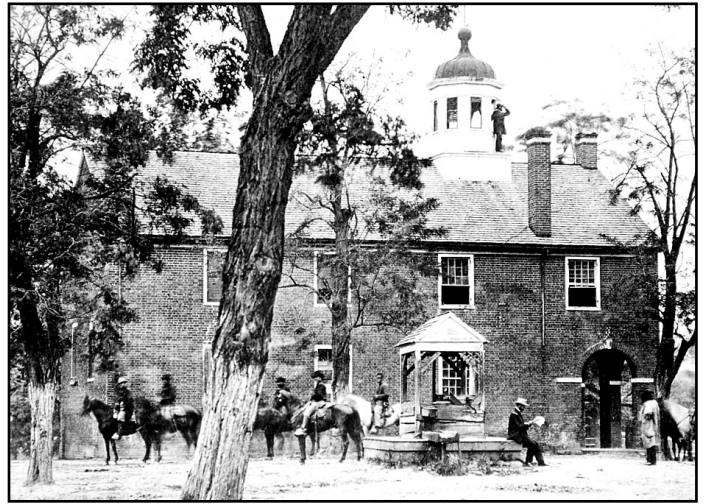
Soon, he expanded the route to Culpeper. Eventually, his route went all the way to Milledgeville, Georgia. He was awarded the contract by Pres. Andrew Jackson. Smith fortified his routes with numerous spur routes, but always charged "extra" for doing so. Hence his nickname - Extra Billy - which stuck with him for the rest of his life.

From 1836-1841, he served in the Senate of Virginia, from the Piedmont District. He served one term in the 27th Congress, from March 1841 to March 1843. He then moved to Fauquier County. He was elected as governor of Virginia in 1845, without his knowledge. The *Richmond Times Dispatch* stated that "while walking down Main Street in Warrenton..., Smith was told by a friend he had just been elected governor by the legislature. I replied I hoped it was not so for I at once saw that I would have to give up my profession and as the governor's salary would barely support a family in a very moderate way, I would at the close of my term be utterly destitute."

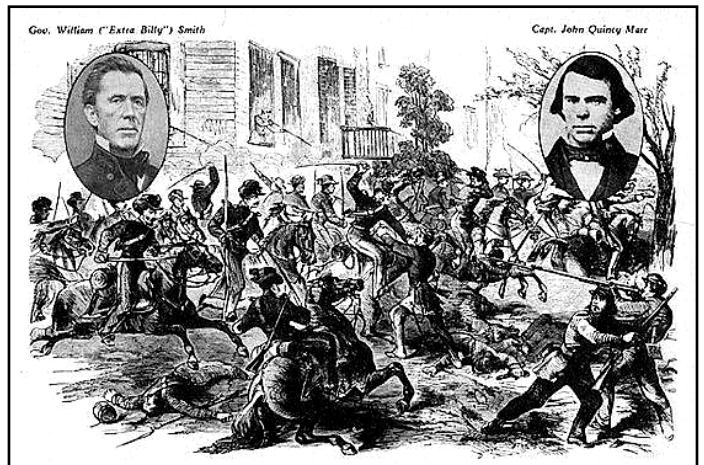
Extra Billy was correct about being destitute at the end of his term. The year 1849 had him moving to California to find his fortune in the Gold Rush. He was also president of the first Democratic Congress in California in 1850. In 1853, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. He was reelected from 1855-1859. He returned to Virginia a wealthier man than he was when he left, from his many dealings in the Gold Rush business.

He was elected to the 33rd Congress and reelected three times. He then resigned to join the Confederate Army. Even while fighting for the Confederacy, he was elected governor of Virginia in 1863. Biographer John W. Bell stated: "Smith never left his command for a single day to do any political campaigning."

Extra Billy participated in the Battle of Fairfax Courthouse in June 1861. Participated is a broad word, as he sat on the porch of the Joshua Gunnell House in Fairfax City firing his single-barrel gun. A newspaper article in the *Richmond Times Dispatch* stated "Extra Billy was there at the time and did his fighting from the hotel porch, with a long single-barrel gun, picking the tube and putting on caps as coolly as if he were hunting robins, with



Above, Fairfax Courthouse during the Civil War; below, an illustration of the battle of Fairfax Courthouse, including portraits of sitting governor and Confederate colonel William "Extra Billy" Smith, who took over command of the troops under Capt. John Quincy Marr, the first Confederate officer to be killed in the Civil War, just prior to 1st Manassas.



bullets striking the walls around him."

When Capt. John Quincy Marr, the first Confederate officer to be killed in the Civil War died, Extra Billy took over command of the troops. At the advanced age of 64, he requested a commission in the Confederate Army. He was appointed colonel of the 49th Virginia Infantry three days before 1st Bull Run/Manassas. He was offered a commission as a brigadier general first, but declined stating he was: "wholly ignorant of drill and tactics." He fought under Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard at 1st Manassas/Bull Run. He fought at the Seven Days Battle, where he was described as having a characteristic coolness and fearlessness. He was known for expressing contempt for West Point graduates (West

(con't on page 8)

Ms. Rebelle – (con't from page 7)



Extra Billy Smith, portrayed at left by the late Dave Meisky, usually wielded a blue umbrella in the field, fair weather or foul.

Photo by Janet Greentree

P'inters) for their formal tactics. He was also known to go into battle with a tall beaver hat and his blue cotton umbrella.

He also fought at Seven Pines (wounded); 2nd Bull Run/Manassas; Sharpsburg/Antietam (wounded); Fredericksburg; and Gettysburg. Smith marched with the Army of Northern Virginia through York, PA, the week before Gettysburg. He fought with the 49th VA, 31st VA, and the 52nd VA on Culp's Hill and has a shield marker there noting his position. The marker is very close to Spangler's Spring. The marker states:

"July 3. The Brigade having been detached two days guarding York Pike and other roads against the reported approach of Union Cavalry was ordered to Culp's Hill to reinforce Johnson's Division. Arriving early formed in line along this stone wall receiving and returning fire of Infantry and sharpshooters in the woods opposite and being subjected to heavy fire of Artillery. It repulsed the charge of the 2nd Massachusetts and 27th Indiana Regiments against this line and held its ground until the Union forces regained their works on the hill. It then moved to a position further up the creek and during the night marched to Seminary Ridge where it rejoined Early's Division. July 4. Occupied Seminary Ridge. After



Smith's marker at Gettysburg.

Photo by Janet Greentree

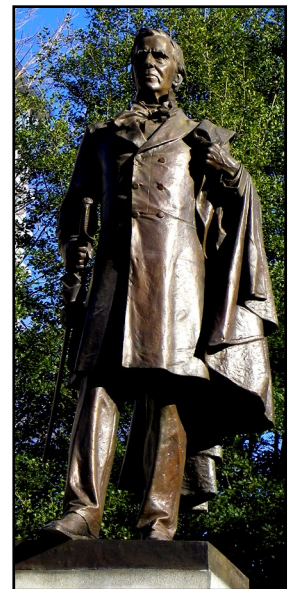
midnight began the march to Hagerstown. Present about 800 Killed 12 Wounded 113 Missing 17 Total 142"

Maj. Robert Stiles stated that Extra Billy was in great form as they moved near the Potomac on the way to Gettysburg. Stiles said: "I heard a great cackling and shouts of laughter at the head of the column....and riding forward to see what it meant, found Gen. Smith dismounted in the road, surrounded by a bevy of pretty girls, every one of whom he was kissing, despite very vigorous sham resistance, and, as he performed the ceremony in each case, he would comfort his blushing, laughing victims by the reflection – never mind, my dear, it's all right, you just tell your father Extra Billy did it, and he'll say it's all right."

Gen. Smith took over the governorship of Virginia on January 1, 1864. Richmond falling in April 1865 caused Smith and the state government to retreat to Lynchburg and then to Danville. After the surrender in Appomattox, Gen. Henry Halleck put a \$25,000 reward on Extra Billy's head, calling him the Rebel Governor of Virginia. No one was able to collect the award. Extra Billy negotiated his own surrender, gave up the governorship on May 20, 1865, and was paroled on June 13th. At age 80, he served one term as a delegate from Fauquier County.

Extra Billy returned to his home Monte Rosa, a big yellow house at 343 Culpeper Street in Warrenton, VA. The house is still standing and was later named Neptune Lodge. There is a narrow cart path called Monte Rosa to the right of the house, which goes down to his massive barn/stable located behind the house. The house and barn are privately owned, however.

Extra Billy had the unique distinction to be the first two-term gover-



The statue of Gov. Extra Billy at the state capitol in Richmond, VA.

Photo by Janet Greentree

(con't on page 9)

Ms. Rebelle – (con't from page 8)

nor of Virginia and is one two governors (Gov. Harry Byrd) to have a statue on the Capitol grounds in Richmond. It wasn't until Gov. Mills Godwin was inaugurated a second time that Godwin joined Extra Billy's club. Gov. Godwin even mentioned Extra Billy in his inauguration address in 1974. Smith's statue was unveiled in 1906. The inscription says, in part: "A Virginian of Virginians...A man of strong convictions... When the storm of war burst, his voice was in his sword."

Gen. Beauregard said of Smith at the battle of 1st Bull Run/Manassas: "Col. William Smith was efficient, self-possessed and brave, and the influence of his example and his words of encouragement were not confined to his immediate command."

Gen. Jubal Early said of Smith at the battle of Antietam: "I found Colonel Smith standing by himself on a limestone ledge. I rode up to him and said: Colonel, get your men together and reform your regiment as soon as possible; the enemy may come back again. He answered: "General is he gone? Yes, I said, but he may come back again, and we must be in a condition to receive him. Then he replied: "Yes will observe, General, that I am very badly wounded, and can't do anything more." Smith had blood streaming from his left shoulder, and he was also shot in the leg. Early said: "He was very seriously wounded, and I saw he was unable to move, though he was standing up. He was subsequently carried from the field in a hapless condition and was confined with his wounds for a considerable time. He was as brave a man as I ever saw, and seemed almost insensible to fear."

Extra Billy was sitting on his piazza of Monte Bella on the evening of May 16, 1887, when he took a chill. He died at the age of 89 on May 18, 1887, in Warrenton. A service was held at his home and then he was transported by rail to Richmond where he lay in state at the Capitol Rotunda.

Then Governor (General) Fitz Hugh Lee met the funeral cortege. Edward Valentine, the great sculptor, did a death mask of him after the viewing. Col. Alexander Payne of the Black Horse 4th Virginia and Col. Robert Stribling of Stribling's Battery, both Delegates, gave speeches for Extra Billy. He is buried along Midvale Avenue in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, VA.



Gov./Gen. William "Extra Billy" Smith's grave marker in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, VA.
Photo by Melanie Greentree

A big huzzah goes out to my daughter, Melanie Greentree, who now lives in Richmond, for the beautiful, blue-sky day picture of Extra Billy's grave and mausoleum in Hollywood Cemetery.

NOTE: Ms. Rebelle's hobby is traveling the country finding and honoring the graves of our 1,008 Civil War generals. So far, she has located and photographed 426 - 169 Confederate and 257 Union. You

The Bull Run Civil War Round Table's Newest (and Returning) Recruits!

Here's a grateful "Huzzah!" for these new members of the BRCWRT:

- ◆ Bret Rodgers
- ◆ Denise Rodgers
- ◆ Marc Martinez
- ◆ Jon Gentile

- ◆ Don Richardson
- ◆ Frank Beachem
- ◆ Gail Beachem
- ◆ Flash (Maeve) Costello

In Memoriam - David P. Meisky - Gen. "Extra Billy" Smith

Civil War living historian David Paul Meisky, 74, of Buena Vista, VA, died Thursday, Oct. 24, 2019, at his home, following a brief illness. Dave, a past member of the BRCWRT, was well-known in historical circles for portraying Confederate Gen. William "Extra Billy" Smith with flair and personality.

Born Sept. 15, 1945, in Oak Ridge, TN, he was the son of Caroline Buzby Meisky and the late Robert E. Meisky. Dave was retired from his profession as a Fairfax County librarian. It is perhaps this vocation that led him to be an expert in various topics of the Civil War, including his specialty of Confederate currency. He often presented this subject in the lectures he was requested to provide to historical groups. He was a member of 'Lee's Lieutenants,' a living history group that provides Confederate officers for various commemorations and events that depict the story of the Civil War. Below are photos of Dave at various events, courtesy of Janet Greentree.

In addition to his mother, also surviving are four sisters, Marilyn Meisky, Carolyn Meisky, Barbara Meisky and Margaret Meisky Nelson; one nephew, Daniel Nelson; one niece, Deborah Nelson Estep; and one great-niece, Hannah Estep.

A memorial gathering was held with Lee's Lieutenants on Nov. 23rd in Gettysburg, PA, where friends and colleagues in the Civil War reenactment community saluted his many years of dedication to history.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions be made to the American Cancer Society in his name.



Photos by Janet Greentree



THE BOOK CORNER



By Dave Button

Hymns of the Republic by S. C. Gwynne

481 pages; available in either print or electronic versions

The author's previous work, "*Rebel Yell*," is a traditional biography of Stonewall Jackson. (Reviewer's Note: It is having read "*Rebel Yell*" that I downloaded "*Hymns of the Republic*.")

"*Hymns of the Republic*," by S. C. Gwynne, is the story of the last year of the American Civil War, but instead of being only a chronological approach, tells the story through the eyes of some of the major participants in or an account of a major event during the last year. The book is designed to give an overview of the last year of the war rather than a detailed, day-by-day, campaign-by-campaign analysis. It is a good "introductory book" for the beginner as well as a good "quick summary" for those more experienced.

Interestingly, each chapter is introduced by a photograph of the major character or event that follows and serves as the axis around which the chapter revolves.

- Chapter 1 is introduced by a photo of President Lincoln
- 2: Nathan Bedford Forest
- 3: Robert E. Lee
- 4: Ulysses S. Grant
- 5: George G. Meade
- 6: the Wounded at Spotsylvania Court House
- 7: Clara Barton
- 8: Benjamin F. Butler
- 9: a Union Army Tent in the field
- 10: the aftermath of the Crater's being blown
- 11: Lee again
- 12: Grant and staff at Petersburg
- 13: Salmon P. Chase
- 14: Clement Vallandigham
- 15: John Singleton Mosby
- 16: William T. Sherman
- 17: Sherman and his staff

- 18: the ruins of Columbia, S. C.
- 19: back to Petersburg trenches
- 20: Philip Sheridan
- 21: Appomattox Court House
- 22: Jefferson Davis
- 23: Andersonville

The book begins with the social swirl of the Winter of 1863-64 culminating in the marriage of Salmon P. Chase's daughter, Kate, to Senator William Sprague. The wedding is set in contrast to the world outside the Washington, D. C., social scene, which consisted of bitter cold, forts surrounding the city in anticipation of perhaps a Confederate invasion and the primitive condition of the city from its open sewers to its muddy "streets" to its unfinished Capitol dome. The Surrender at Appomattox is the conclusion of the whole matter some 16 months after the Chase-Sprague wedding. The intervening months tell the story of the fall of the Confederacy, the re-election of Lincoln, and the beginning of the re-forming of the Union.

Continuing through the book, as is indicated by the photographs that introduce each chapter, the reader is invited to take a quick tour through the last year of the Civil War. If one wishes to read "who did what to whom; when and where was it done" narrative of the Civil War, he or she will be disappointed, since this is not a collection of characters, locations and times. Rather the book is more of a "story" in that it flows through each chapter. The chapters on Chase and Vallandigham are devoted to the more political aspects of the last year as opposed to the military operations of either army. Since, in the Eastern Theater, Lee and Grant, the major protagonists, each has two chapters devoted to him; the three chapters devoted to Sherman essentially cover the Western Theater during the last year.

Pages 375 - 381 are photographs of some of the minor as well as some of the major personages/sites that played a role in the last year of the Civil War. Even a casual student of the Civil War era will recognize many of the photographs, but some are photographs that this reviewer has not seen elsewhere.



PRESERVATION REPORT

BY BLAKE MYERS

Ox Hill Battlefield Park

The BRCWRT remains involved in several ongoing activities and actions at Ox Hill Battlefield Park, including the development of a Battle of Ox Hill (Chantilly) Battle App, the commemoration of the 158th anniversary of the battle and our continuing efforts to ensure the installation of the *Ox Hill* and *Chantilly* monuments at the park. This article provides an update on each of these activities.



Battle of Ox hill (Chantilly) Battle App

BRCWRT's work with the American Battlefield Trust (ABT) to develop a Battle of Ox Hill (Chantilly) Battle App has begun. Our Battle App team, led by Vice President Greg Wilson, consists of Greg, Ed Wenzel, Eric Sebastian and yours truly, and is working with ABT's Larry Swiader (Director of Digital Strategy) and Mike Rosst on this project that began in July 2019. After several months of coordination and meetings with Larry and Mike; development and refinement of draft app content by our BRCWRT team; a successful app development fund-raising effort within BRCWRT; and discussions within the BRCWRT Executive Committee, we recently finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with ABT. So now, the direct work on app development begins. Our plan is for app development to be completed and the app ready for a 'beta test' no later than April 2020. Our objective is to launch the app in advance of ABT's 2020 Annual Conference, June 4 – 7, 2020,

in Chantilly, VA. As a part of this conference, ABT plans to offer a tour of Ox Hill Battlefield Park for its members attending the conference – a great opportunity for publicity for Ox Hill Battlefield Park, the new Battle App and for BRCWRT.



2020 Commemoration of the Battle of Ox Hill (Chantilly)

The date has been set for the commemoration of the 158th anniversary of the battle – Saturday, September 5, 2020, and planning has begun for the commemoration's activities. BRCWRT's Commemoration Committee members are - yours truly, Dave Welker, Scott Adkins, Jim Hawkins, Sam Laudenslager, Jon Vrana, Bill Backus, Drew Pallo, Ed Wenzel, Pete Kirby and Mark Roddy. As done in 2019, BRCWRT is partnering with the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) on the commemoration; Mark Roddy is AOH's representative on the Commemoration Committee.

The committee held its initial organizational meeting on Saturday, January 11, discussing individual committee member's area(s) of interest and commemoration role(s) and broad parameters of the 2020 commemoration, building on the success of the 2019 commemoration. Our 'working vision' for this year's commemoration includes reenactor participation; living history portrayers; a 'short' formal program presentation; events throughout the day for attendees, including walking tours of the park; park-and battle-related presentations and children's activities, and live music (elements from GMU's 8th Regimental Band, and strolling musicians). The BRCWRT will also support and

(con't on page 13)

SPREAD THE WORD!

Do you know a high school senior who is fascinated with American history or the American Civil War? If so, help the BRCWRT find that student, so that it can give away a \$2000 scholarship. In general, the requirements include:

- Graduate in 2020 from a local public or private high school
- Reside in Prince William or Fairfax County
- Prove a strong interest in American history or Civil War history
- Visit a local Civil War historic site and write a short essay about it
- Apply by April 6, 2020



All of the information about how to apply is found on the BRCWRT website at <http://bullruncwrt.org>. In addition, students can find information on high school scholarship sites, which are accessed in the schools' career centers, guidance departments, or by home computers.

Let your family, friends, and neighbors know about our offer! Spread the word!

Preservation Report – (con't from page 12)

participate in the annual Labor Day Picnic at Saint Mary of Sorrows Historic Church in Fairfax Station on Monday, September 7, 2020. Stay tuned for additional information as planning continues and the 2020 commemoration plan matures.

Ox Hill Battlefield Park Soldiers Monuments

Many of you have been following, during the past two-and-a-half years, the BRCWRT's efforts to ensure installation of the two soldiers monuments, *Ox Hill* and *Chantilly*, at Ox Hill Battlefield Park.

These monuments, included in the *Ox Hill Battlefield Park General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan*, approved in January 2005, were designed in 2015 and produced in 2016 at Fairfax County expense. As of January 2020, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and the Park Authority Board have taken no action to fully establish or convene the monuments subcommittee created by the Park Authority Board in January 2019; have continually ignored the BRCWRT's inquiries and offers of assistance, and have consistently misled BRCWRT

as to their intentions and actions.

Our continuing frustration with the FCPA and Park Authority Board on this matter has led the BRCWRT to request intervention by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. In identical, individual letters mailed on January 21, 2020, to each District Supervisor and to the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, the BRCRT requested the following; "We request that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors direct the Park Authority Board to: 1) clearly identify the specific wording and/or inscriptions on the monuments that it deems inappropriate; 2) fully establish and convene the subcommittee to resolve the specific wording and/or inscriptions deemed inappropriate; 3) complete the disposition (installation) of the monuments in accordance with the Ox Hill Battlefield Park General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan that was approved in January 2005."

The letter, sent to Jeffrey McKay, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, is reprinted on the following page:



Bull Run Civil War Round Table

P.O. Box 2147
Centreville, Virginia 20120

Jeffery C. McKay, Chairman
Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 530
Fairfax, VA 22035

January 18, 2020

SUBJECT: Ox Hill Battlefield Park Soldiers Monuments

I am writing you on behalf of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT), a non-profit organization with more than 370 members, half of whom are Fairfax County residents. Our focus is enhancing learning and understanding of all aspects of the Civil War, including the soldier, civilian and family experiences that are part of that history.

The BRCWRT requests your support to correct the improper actions of the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and the Park Authority Board (hereafter Board) regarding their failure to complete the approved *Ox Hill Battlefield Park General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan*. That Plan, approved by the Board in January 2005, includes two monuments, *Chantilly* and *Ox Hill*. These monuments were designed as integral components of the Park and to commemorate the soldiers who fought at Ox Hill. Produced in 2016 at Fairfax County expense, the monuments have yet to be installed as called for in the approved Plan and remain in storage at an undisclosed location. The *Chantilly* and *Ox Hill* monuments are typical of monuments located in battlefield parks throughout the United States, are balanced and historically accurate, and complement the existing Park monuments commemorating Union Generals Kearny and Stevens, both of whom were killed during the battle.

Following more than two years of BRCWRT efforts to work collaboratively with FCPA, the Board voted (with one abstention) during their January 23, 2019 meeting to approve the Executive Director's recommendation, to wit: "The Park Authority Executive Director recommends to not install the monuments in their current form; and recommends that the Park Authority Board establish a subcommittee to work on the disposition of the monuments, as discussed by the Committee of the Whole on January 9, 2019." [Emphasis added].

During the two-plus year period preceding the Board's January 23, 2019 vote, the FCPA and the Board publicly stated their intent to work with BRCWRT to identify and resolve issues regarding the monuments, but did not follow through on their commitment to do so and have misled the BRCWRT with respect to their intentions and actions. Additionally, to date the FCPA and the Board have neither fully established nor convened the subcommittee called for in the Board's January 23, 2019 vote and have not responded to multiple BRCWRT inquiries and offers of assistance.

We request that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors direct the Park Authority Board to: 1) clearly identify the specific wording and/or inscriptions on the monuments that it deems inappropriate; 2) fully establish and convene the subcommittee to resolve the specific wording and/or inscriptions deemed inappropriate; 3) complete the disposition (installation) of the monuments in accordance with the Ox Hill Battlefield Park General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan that was approved in January 2005.

Enclosed is a summary of the history of the monuments and our engagement with FCPA. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss our request and answer any questions you may have. My point of contact is Blake Myers, who can be contacted at 703-868-1728, or via e-mail at jb11thva@cox.net.

Sincerely,

Marshall Whitenton

Marshall Whitenton
President, Bull Run Civil War Round Table

Enclosure



Bull Run Civil War Round Table

P.O. Box 2147

Centreville, Virginia 20120

Enclosure - Summary of Monument History and BRCWRT Engagement with FCPA

The history and story of Ox Hill Battlefield Park begins in the 1980s with the struggle to save from extensive commercial and residential development the last remaining historic landscape of the only major Civil War battle fought in Fairfax County, the Battle of Ox Hill (Chantilly) fought on September 1, 1862. Although encompassing only 1/100th of the 500+-acre battlefield, 4.9 acres of core battlefield land was ultimately saved and preserved as Ox Hill Battlefield Park.

The Park was planned, designed and interpreted by FCPA staff, supported by a Citizen's Task Force composed of local Civil War historians, preservationists and veterans (including several BRCWRT members), and representatives from adjacent homeowner associations. The *Ox Hill Battlefield Park General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan* was approved by the Park Authority Board in January, 2005. A key element in the *Conceptual Development Plan* is the incorporation of "two monuments (one Union and one Confederate) to recognize the contribution of the soldiers who fought in the battle" within the Park and sited to complement the existing Kearny and Stevens monuments.

During 2005 to 2008 the interpretive plan for the Park was completed, and the Park's infrastructure, landscaping and interpretive elements (less the two soldiers monuments) were installed. Ox Hill Battlefield Park opened with a formal ribbon cutting ceremony conducted on the anniversary of the battle on September 1, 2008, and at that time the monuments' designated sites were marked with metal signs indicating "Future site of Union (Confederate) soldiers monument "Chantilly" ("Ox Hill").

The Ox Hill Memorial Committee, which included FCPA staff members, developed the monuments' designs in 2015. The monuments were produced in 2016 and scheduled for installation, with a formal dedication ceremony planned for September 9, 2017. Following the May, July and August 2017 demonstrations and incidents in Charlottesville involving that city's Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson statues, the FCPA on August 18, 2017 indefinitely suspended plans to install the two monuments.

During BRCWRT's initial meeting on August 29, 2017 with FCPA's Executive Director Kincannon and FCPA staff members, we indicated BRCWRT support for FCPA's decision to postpone installing the monuments based on public safety concerns, and agreed to meet again in the spring of 2018 to develop a plan and timeline for installing the monuments. During this August 2017 meeting, Mr. Kincannon stated that it was FCPA's intent to fully implement the approved plan for the Park and that there was no advocacy within FCPA to not install the monuments. A follow up meeting was planned for April 2018; then rescheduled by FCPA to June 26, 2018 at 3:00 pm; then postponed by FCPA to July, but was never rescheduled or conducted.

On September 19, 2018 we received a letter from the FCPA Executive Director informing us that installation of the soldiers' monuments was an agenda item scheduled for discussion at the October 10, 2018 meeting of the Committee of the Whole of the Board and that following this meeting the FCPA staff would work with BRCWRT to establish a date and time to meet again regarding the monuments. From that time onward, BRCWRT's only engagement opportunities have been speaking at Board and Committee of the Whole meetings during the respective public comment segments.

Since the August 2017 meeting, the BRCWRT has attempted to meet and effectively engage with the FCPA and the Board in order to collaboratively develop a plan and schedule to install the monuments, thereby completing the approved plan for the Park. As noted in their October 8, 2018 letter to the Park Authority Board Chairman and the FCPA Executive Director, the Fairfax County History Commission strongly supports this effort and the installation of the monuments. Nevertheless, as of January 2020 the monuments remain in storage - they have not been installed and we are aware of no plan to do so.

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

The *Stone Wall*

P.O. Box 2147

Centreville, VA 20122

2020 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)—FREE.

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:

Bull Run Civil War Round Table, P.O. Box 2147, Centreville, VA 20122

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ **STATE**_____ **ZIP**_____

PHONE_____ **E-MAIL**_____