



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XXVII, Issue 7, OCTOBER 2020

Bull Run Civil War Round Table Preservation Chair Blake Myers on “The BRCWRT West Ox Battlefield Program”

The Battle of Ox Hill (Battle of Chantilly), which took place on September 1, 1862, is the only Civil War battle to have taken place in Fairfax County, VA. It was a brutal affair, and while of smaller dimension than the second Battle of Bull Run that had just taken place a few weeks prior, the toll of casualties – 1,300 for the Union and 800 for the Confederacy – included the notable loss of two promising generals, Isaac Stevens and Philip Kearny. A raging thunderstorm accompanied the booming, blasting sounds of battle. The Union stand in Chantilly that day preserved the capitol of Washington City, and led to Gen. Robert E. Lee’s attempts at circumventing the high level of protection around the capitol by instead moving into Maryland, and on to the Battle of Antietam.

In the late 1980’s, development of this area ate up large portions of the battlefield, appalling the Civil War community and sparking the formation of the Civil War Battlefield Trust (now the American Battlefield Trust). All ensuing efforts at preserving the historic battlefields of America that have followed began with the determination that this sacred ground would not perish. It is the genesis of the modern battlefield preservation movement. Prominent in this movement is BRCWRT member Ed Wenzel, who has doggedly fought to maintain the integrity of the bequest that was made for the visual elements of the memorial site, including statuary.

We are fortunate to welcome as speaker tonight the Bull Run Civil War Round Table’s talented chair of the Preservation Committee, Blake Myers, who will take us through the Ox Hill Battlefield’s unique place in the preservation movement, and the new and exciting app that has been produced to describe the battle and

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

7 p.m. LIVE via

~ Zoom and Facebook ~

THURSDAY, October 8, 2020

GUEST SPEAKER:

**BRCWRT Preservation Chair
Blake Myers**

TOPIC:

**“BRCWRT West Ox Battlefield
Program”**

BRCWRT Meetings Going Forward -- Virtually!

The Round Table’s regular meetings will take place... in your house! The meetings will telecast live via **Zoom** and **Facebook**. Viewers will be able to submit questions via a “chat-box.”



The meeting will still take place at 7 p.m. - find the instructions for connecting to the meeting posted on the BRCWRT Facebook and Web site pages.

“See” you at the next meeting!

that interacts with users. Blake has a full plate of preservation initiatives on his table, including following governmental actions to keep members apprised of those that could be detrimental to historic preservation; connecting with schools to provide educational “boosts” to the telling of local history, and to identify and explain various historic efforts by other groups that could benefit from the support of our Round Table.

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

General Membership meetings will be held as soon as responsible under COVID guidelines.

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

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE

For the **November 2020 issue**, e-mail articles by 9 a.m., Monday, October 26, to Nadine Mironchuk at: nadine1861@hotmail.com

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

For the **November 2020 issue**, advertisers - please click "Instructions for Advertisers" at: <http://bullruncwrt.org> and e-mail ads by noon on October 16, 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

(Virtual - until further notice)

October 8: Preservationist Blake Myers on "The BRCWRT West Ox Battlefield Program"

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

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

STOP!

**Have You Paid Your
BRCWRT Dues Yet?**

**Don't be known around camp
as a straggler!**



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The President's Column by Mark Whitenton

Fellow BRCWRT members -

First, I hope you all are well and staying safe. We are seeing that taking COVID casually is doing so with real health risks. Accordingly, we will be continuing with Zoom for our monthly meetings and -- unfortunately -- continuing to postpone our tours.

However, that does not mean that things are remaining static. I hope you will peruse Blake Myers' update of the top activities under the Preservation umbrella, starting on page 14, below. Blake has been working tirelessly on a broad range of activities, both recurrent issues such as the potential impacts of the expansion of Rt. 28 on the Blackburn's Ford (July 18, 1861) Skirmish site, as well as an exciting new opportunity with respect to the skirmish at Dranesville (Dec. 20, 1861).

By now, I'm sure you are all aware of the passing of a great historian and our friend, Ed Bearss; Nadine Mironchuk, editor of this terrific newsletter, has pulled together a members' tribute to Mr. Bearss, starting on page 4. Thank all of you who contributed your thoughts and photographs and to Nadine for organizing them with such skill.

At our next general (Zoom) meeting on Thursday (October 8), our Nominating Committee Chairman, John DePue, will be announcing the beginning of the election process for next year's officers. I am pleased to let you know that our current Treasurer, Joe Young, and our current Secretary, John Pearson, have agreed to serve again in 2021. Likewise, I am hopeful that you will consider re-electing me as President for 2021. However, it is with genuine sadness that I learn that our current Vice President, Greg Wilson, will not be seeking re-election. As Vice President, Greg has been tireless in pursuing initiatives on behalf of the BRCWRT, particularly his work with our members and the American Battlefield Trust to create an ABT Ox Hill Battlefield app, a project that is now completed. He will be missed next year.

Also - at our meeting on Thursday, Treasurer Joe Young will begin our 2021 membership drive. Joe has secured Executive Committee approval to provide for a three-year membership option. This option would allow members to

re-up for three years-- thus avoiding the inconvenience of annual renewals, but also an opportunity to shave \$5.00 off the three-year total, as well as avoiding any potential dues increases. Please consider it.

As you may have read in the Sep 30, 2020 Preservation Corner article and in the October edition of the Stone Wall, the BRCWRT, represented by Blake Myers, gave testimony at the September 15 hearing of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors of our organization's opposition to the removal of the John Quincy Marr Obelisk and an accompanying informational historical marker informing the public that he was the first American soldier killed in combat during the American Civil War, presently located on the grounds near the historic Fairfax Courthouse. Despite the 17 persons testifying against removal of the items (including 7 RT members), the Fairfax Board immediately after the hearing ordered their removal, without consideration for several alternative options that were offered. The Fairfax County Staff has until October 20 to determine the disposition of these items.

At this past Tuesday's meeting of the Executive Committee, we agreed to support legal action -- at no cost to the BRCWRT -- to prevent Fairfax County from removing the Marr marker/obelisk and DHR Historical Marker B-262. The grounds for this legal action include: 1) that the Virginia Statue upon which the Board of Supervisors based its actions, 15.2-1812, Memorials for War Veterans, is not applicable in this case since neither of the respective items is a monument or memorial to a war veteran, and 2) multiple procedural omissions and errors in the "process" used by the Board of Supervisors to reach the decisions to remove the items.

The motion to approve our decision be a plaintiff in this lawsuit was carefully considered and debated by the Executive Committee. The ExCom voted that the Bull Run Civil War Round Table will become a plaintiff seeking a temporary restraining order to prevent Fairfax County from removing the Marr Obelisk and DHR Historical Marker from their present locations at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex. The ExCom believes that the importance to keeping History alive via an informed public, despite the current political environment, requires a reasonable push-back against those who wish to erase Fairfax Coun-

(con't on page 17)

National Park Service Historian Emeritus Ed Bearss - Our National Treasure and Dear Friend of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table - Taken From the American Landscape at Age 97

by Mark Trbovich

Our beloved friend and historian par excellence - Edwin (Ed) Cole Bearss - passed away of an ongoing heart condition on September 15, 2020, in Richland, Mississippi, where he had recently moved, after living over 50 years in Arlington, Virginia. Ed enriched every experience people had when they joined him on battlefields, in lecture rooms and through the wealth of video that exists, showcasing his encyclopedic knowledge of the American Civil War.

For over 25 years, Ed Bearss supported and spoke at our round table meetings, which is an unmatched feat that will likely never be matched by any other speaker we host. Ed was so beloved, that we made it a point to invite him to our lectern every May (which is our anniversary month) to help us celebrate, always joining us with an outstanding presentation. Annually, it was the largest meeting attendance we would enjoy, which was another blessing for the Round Table.

Edwin (Ed) Cole Bearss passed away on September 15, 2020, in Mississippi, where he had recently moved after living over 50 years in Arlington, Virginia. Ed's wife Margie Riddle Bearss and his daughter Sara Beth Bearss predeceased him. He is survived by his brother Robert (Pat) Bearss, his son Edwin Cole Bearss, Jr. (Annika), and his daughter Mary Virginia (Ginny) Bearss; three grandsons, four great-grandsons, and two nieces.

Ed was born in Billings, Montana, on June 26, 1923, and grew up on his family's ranch on Sarpy Creek. At age 18, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps. Serving in the Pacific Theater, he was badly wounded in Cape Gloucester, New Britain on January 2, 1944. He spent two years convalescing in Navy hospitals.

Using the GI Bill, Ed graduated from the foreign service program at Georgetown University in 1949 and obtained a Master's in History from the University of Indiana in 1955. Ed soon found his calling in the National Park Service. He was park historian at Vicksburg from 1955 to 1958 and then historian for the Southeast Region of the United States until 1966.

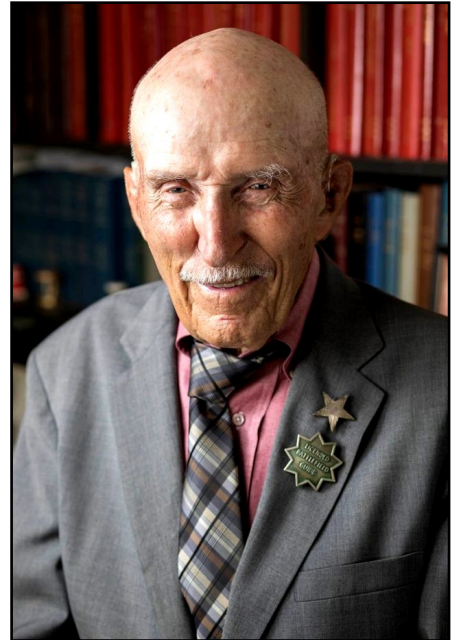
In 1958, he married Margie Riddle, a schoolteacher whom Ed courted, in an odd manner: on his second visit to Ms. Riddle, Ed brought her a cannonball! While at Vicksburg, Ed was central to the discovery and raising of the USS Cairo, a Civil War ironclad sunk in the Yazoo River in December 1862. To help finance the recovery effort, Ed was a victorious contestant on "The \$64,000 Challenge." The vessel now resides in the Vicksburg National Military Park.

In 1966, Ed joined other research historians at the headquarters of the National Park Service, responsible for historical sites of the 19th and 20th centuries, including the homes of Presidents Jimmy Carter and Lyndon Johnson. By 1981, Ed was named Chief Historian of the NPS, a position he held until 1994.

While with NPS, he testified many times before Congress. He was a charismatic orchestrator of Congressional support for the NPS, much in the same way that 'Mr. Rogers' was an eloquent spokesman for public television on Capitol Hill.

He also served on the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, established by Congress to guide it on priorities for battlefield preservation. In 1990, Ed achieved national and lasting fame as one of the commentators in Ken Burns' movie *The Civil War*. Animated in his topic, with eyes twinkling and voice booming, his amazing personality, that we have known and loved, came through to a giant national

(con't on page 5)



National Park Historian Emeritus Edwin Cole Bearss

Photo by Buddy Secor

Ed Bearss – (con't from page 4)

audience. That year, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian James M. McPherson described Mr. Bearss as “a national historic treasure who probably knows more about the Civil War than any man alive.”

By this time, too, Ed had established a new career as teacher, lecturer and tour guide, educating and leading literally thousands of people across battlefields of almost every American war, including those overseas locations of the World Wars. He continued leading tours until late 2019. “My classroom is thousands of acres,” he told the Washington Times in 1992. “I have thousands of students of all ages and expertise. I can’t see being confined to a single room.”

During Mr. Bearss’s frequent visits to the battlefield in Gettysburg, Pa., it wasn’t unusual for casual tourists to become enthralled until he was surrounded by a crowd of 500 or more. The flavor of his narrative style was captured by the Times-Dispatch in 2010, when Mr. Bearss was visiting Virginia’s Spotsylvania County and describing the scene after the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864:

“So, as darkness closes in on the evening of the 7th down at the intersection of the Brock and Plank roads, where the ground fires are still burning from the previous day and you have the blackened corpses of soldiers . . . and the Union army comes to the crossroads and the men who have heretofore done the dying and the suffering know they are not turning back. They are going on. The Confederates will be correspondingly discouraged.”

Ed leaves two extraordinary legacies - as a public historian, he is the author, editor of, or contributed to, more than 25 books, 100 scholarly papers, countless NPS monographs and oral histories. As a preservationist, he is responsible for the creation, expansion, and restoration of historic battlefields, houses, and other sites integral to American history. For his contributions to the field, Ed was recognized numerous times, including receiving honorary degrees from Lincoln College and Gettysburg College, the Distinguished Service Award from the Department of the Interior, the Wailes Award (the highest historical award from the State of Mississippi), and awards from various Civil War Round Tables. In 2005, the Smithsonian Institution named Ed as one of 35 people “who made a difference to our world.”

The National Park Service Edwin C. Bearss Fellowship Award and the American Battlefield Trust Edwin C. Bearss Lifetime Achievement Award were established in his honor. He is a Fellow of the Company of Military Historians and a lifetime Trustee of the American Battlefield Trust. At the time of his death, a bipartisan coalition of members of the U.S. Congress had been sponsoring a resolution to award Ed the Congressional Gold Medal.

Private inurnment services will be held in the Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery, Brandon, Mississippi. Memorial services will be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, his family requests that gifts be made to the American Battlefield Trust for preservation projects in Mississippi, at: www.battlefields.org/remembering-ed-bearss.

He will be forever missed by all of us and these tributes are dedicated to him:



Left to right: Ed Bearss and Mark Trbovich.

Photo courtesy of Mark Trbovich

BRCWRT Past President Mark Trbovich:

My tribute to Ed Bearss is an honor to write, because of what this man meant to the BRCWRT and the entire Civil War community. In 1999, I became a member of the BRCWRT. That started 10 years of attending Ed Bearss’ presentations, but I never really knew him personally. I met him a few times and was kind of in awe of him because of his legacy. In 2010, it was my honor to be elected as President of the BRCWRT, which started a special period of friendship with Ed that I never had previously. You see, I had the pleasure to invite Ed to the pre-meeting dinner, which was where I got to know the real Ed.

During dinner, the opening conversation was always Ed saying to me, “I see you are still here as President,” which made me feel good that he remembered. He honestly said that ten times during my presidency. We talked about health issues, family issues, Civil War community issues, politics, and so many more topics that brought us closer every year. Whatever I ordered to eat, Ed would usually order the same, and I believe he enjoyed

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Ed Bearss – (con't from page 5)

every bite. My memory of Ed is personal, because of being able to talk with him at those special dinners, and what we shared together in our conversations. As always, when we came back to the library for the meeting, Ed was surrounded by so many people that I couldn't get a word in edgewise, but that was fine, because I'd had that hour and a half with him. It was a treat to enjoy this special time every year with my friend, Ed Bearss. I miss him and mourn his death. I got a little emotional writing this because I looked up to him and will miss him dearly. He was a special friend to me and the entire BRCWRT. RIP, Ed, until we meet again.

~

Nadine Mironchuk:

The first time I saw Ed Bearss was, as with many others, when viewing Ken Burn's "The Civil War." He wasn't given as much on-camera time as, say, Shelby Foote. His 'snippet' of commentary was brusque. So he was seemingly included in the documentary as an homage to his prominence in Civil War study – an expert historian, as compared to the noted author of Civil War history – Foote. Civil War history was not yet an interest of mine, but it caught my eye that he was obviously a 'Personage.' A few years later, while on a visit to Virginia with my Round Table outside Boston, I was struck by the hub-bub that was raised when it was announced that he was to join our bus tour for a few hours. I saw then that he was *THE* Personage. Since then, it's been fun to, many times, be part of the "event" that he was, as well as being the recipient of his knowledge and insights on the events of the Civil War.

~

Gwen Wytenbach:

The first time I ever "heard Ed's voice," I didn't know "WHO" it was, with this LOUD voice drifting out over the Gettysburg battlefield from the Virginia Monument in the far distance, as I was riding by on horseback. I thought "who is 'that' with that LOUD, RUDE, DISRESPECTFUL VOICE disturbing the 'peace and sanctity' of this 'hallowed Pickett's Charge ground'?" I was riding across. It wasn't until I was watching a T.V. series several months later called "Civil War Combat" that I heard that VOICE AGAIN and learned "who it was!!!" From then on, Ed Bearss' voice at our BRCWRT meetings was as the voice of Angels! ; -)

At right, Gwen Wytenbach (left) stands as a true-blue member of the "Bearss Brigade," loyal fans who doted on Bearss' insight,

Photo by Janet Greentree



~

Ed Wenzel:



At left, Ed Wenzel with Ed, at 2008 dedication of the Ox Battlefield.

Photo by Janet Greentree

Ed Bearss was truly a one-man encyclopedia of history and his passing is mourned by his many friends, fans, and followers. Though personally well known to many in our Round Table, I had the added good fortune to get better acquainted with Ed about 20 years ago when John McAnaw asked if I would drive Ed to the Vienna Metro Station after one of our meetings (John used to pick him up there and return him). Some years later, when John's health was declining, I began regular duty as Ed's chauffeur, picking him up at Metro and driving him to Centreville for dinner and the lecture, and afterwards to his home in

(con't on page 7)

Ed Bearss – (con't from page 6)

South Arlington.

It was during those car trips that we had many pleasant conversations. Ed loved maps and was very knowledgeable about topographic mapping. He had used National Forest maps and was quite familiar with the USFS (my old employer) in the Rocky Mountain west. Of course, he spoke of his life in Montana, the Bozeman Trail, and Red Cloud's war. Port Hudson and Vicksburg were topics, as were Forrest and Stuart, Hooker and Meade, Lee and Grant—and WWII. His astonishing memory and recall made the trips most enjoyable. Ed was always very grateful for the rides home and thanked me often.

In 2015, when we were finishing the Fairfax Civil War Chronology, I asked Ed if he could look it over and give an opinion as to its value and usability. He said sure and I gave him a draft. He called two months later to say that it was far better than anything he had ever seen in a local chronology. He had corrected some mistakes and errors, but said he would be happy to write a blurb for the book. He even penned a preface in which he complimented the BRCWRT, the book, the book team, and all involved in its publication.

It was far more than I had hoped for. That Ed would take the time to do that was a gesture of great kindness from a brilliant and renowned historian who, at his very heart, was a down-to-earth, humble man who loved his country and its history. Most of all, Ed Bearss loved people, and especially those who tramped the battlefields and followed the Blue and the Gray.

Thank you, Ed, for all the great lectures and tours, and for your kindness and friendship.

May God bless you always. Semper Fi.

~

Janet Greentree:



Generous to all, and appreciative of the adoration he received from his status as a 'rock star,' he is shown here with Ms. Rebelle (Janet Greentree), whose book he made sure to endorse with a glowing foreword. It shows that he, too, could be a fan of Civil War enthusiasts, too.

Photo courtesy of Janet Greentree

I joined the Bull Run Civil War Round Table in 1997 and enjoyed many years of Ed Bearss speaking to us. In 2006, I began writing my column for the Stone Wall – "Civil War Travels with Ms. Rebelle." One of my jobs is mailing the printed copies of the Stone Wall to members/friends who did not have a computer. Ed Bearss was one of those people. I always wondered whether he read our newsletter. Probably in 2009, Ed was at dinner with us before the meeting and was sitting next to me. He had never spoken to me before. He asked someone else at the table who this Ms. Rebelle was. He told me he loved my articles because there is so much information in them that is not readily available. He said he had saved every one of them and re-reads them a lot.

When I planned my "Finding My Roots" trip to Ohio and Indiana, I looked for my grandfather Albert Schrader's grave in Peru, Indiana, on findagrave.com. To my surprise, I saw that there were a lot of Bearss family members buried in the same cemetery. The next time I saw Ed, I asked him if they were his

family members. Indeed, they were. So, Ed and I have a quirky connection, as his parents Omar and Virginia Bearss, plus many other Bearss relatives, and my grandfather Albert Schrader, are all buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in Peru, Indiana, right across from each other.

Ed later asked me if I could send him the copies of my articles from 2006-2009, which I did. Ed was my biggest fan, and often urged me to turn my stories into a book. The book is in the process now of being published by the BRCWRT, and will most likely be out before the end of the year. It was my hope to give the first copy to Ed but that is not possible now. Rest in peace Ed. So many people loved you and all the knowledge you so willingly gave us. One tribute I saw said Ed is now the 'Historian of Heaven.' I like that. I will miss you so much Ed.

~

(con't on page 8)

Ed Bearss – (con't from page 7)

Jim Lewis:

Years ago on a tour up in Gettysburg, Ed took us up the Longstreet Tower and I was amazed at his physical prowess, particularly at his age. I queried him about it, and he told me a little story on the side. He said he had conducted a tour for some Marines, and they, too, were impressed with his energy level. Hence, as the testosterone flowed, things evolved into a bet as to who could skirt up and down those stairs the quickest. When I asked him who won, he said "well, the Marines weren't first here!"

~

John De Pue:

Ed very graciously conducted a number of staff rides for members of my Army unit. While doing so, he learned that I was raised in Sussex County, New Jersey, only a few miles from the home of the infamous Gen. Hugh Judson ("Kill Cavalry") Kilpatrick. From that time on, Ed only referred to me as "Kilpatrick." On one occasion, my Army boss, a Major General, and I were touring East Cavalry Battlefield at Gettysburg when we came upon Ed leading a tour. When Ed spotted us, he pointed to me and bellowed to his thoroughly mystified audience, "And there's Kilpatrick now. He's finally arrived!"

On another occasion, my boss and I arranged to take Ed on a tour of the Confederate field works at Union Mills Ford near Bull Run Bridge. Upon entering my home, Ed shouted "does your wife know that you share the same habits as Judson Kilpatrick?" Unfortunately, she knew exactly what Ed meant, but was at a loss for an appropriate response!

As we proceeded with our expedition on that cold January morning, the three of us came to an icy stream that appeared too deep to ford. As the General and I combed the bank for a spot where we could safely get Ed across, we heard his booming voice exclaim "Come on you Army slackers - get over here." Ed had simply waded the icy stream without bothering to wait for us to find a more accommodating location. Ed never let us forget the incident, and often reminded us of it.

~

Pete Kirby:

I can recall the time when I first learned about Edwin Bearss. I was watching Ken Burns' masterpiece film, *The Civil War*, and saw his appearances at several points in the film. I was struck then by his command of the subject matter.

Ed was in his 80s when I first met him in person at a Bull Run Civil War Roundtable meeting. He was even more compelling in person than he had been on film, and I was struck again by his ability to recall details and dates without using a single notecard or reference, which only served to prove his command of the topics of which he spoke. He was smart, funny, and he had a presence and speaking delivery that was interesting, and unique to Ed, and no other. I have learned so much from him through the years and will miss his annual presentations to the Round Table.

~

Sam Laudenslager:

One of the best (true) Bearss stories is in Ted Savas' comments today, recounting when Ed passed out (dehydration) at Gettysburg at the base of Gen. O. O. Howard's statue, and insisted on being carried over to the Hancock monument (because he didn't want to pass away under Howard's command)!



Two patriots - "forever" comrades - the late BRCWRT President John McAnaw (left) and Ed Bearss, at one of the many visits he made to the BRCWRT over the years. Lt. Col. McAnaw served in Vietnam, and, of course, Ed served in the Pacific in WWII. Both later were intrepid battlefield guides, conducting their "troops" with swift military precision.

Photo by Janet Greentree

Ed Bearss – (con't from page 8)

TWICE - German Army staff rides I was guiding just happened to intersect with tour groups he was conducting. Once at Wilderness/Spotsylvania, once at Petersburg. Both times, our bus pulled into the parking area at same time. Both of my groups were in BDU's and berets, and I instructed my groups to hang back so that they could listen in to Ed's talk, if he permitted. With both groups, he spotted their BDU service attire and shouted at us -- "Identify yourselves! What Unit ??!!" I shouted back -- "German Army Bundeswehr! SIR !!" and he shouted back -- "Follow me!! At the Wilderness, we followed Ed from Widow Tapp, through to the Spotsylvania Mule Shoe. At Petersburg, we went from Fort Stedman through to the Crater.

More of Ed Bearss and His Special Relationship With the BRCWRT:



Some of Ed Bearss' devotees shown here, left to right, are: Lynn Garvey-Hodge, Sandra Cox, Janet Greentree, Ed, Nadine Mironchuk, Nancy Anwyll, and Gwen Wytenbach.

Photo courtesy of Janet Greentree



The oldest and youngest BRCWRT members admire each other at a recent RT meeting. At right, Bryan Holtzer chats with Ed Bearss.

Photo by Gwen Wytenbach.



Above, left to right: BRCWRT member Drew Pallo, President Mark Whitenton, Ed, and Debbie Whitenton.

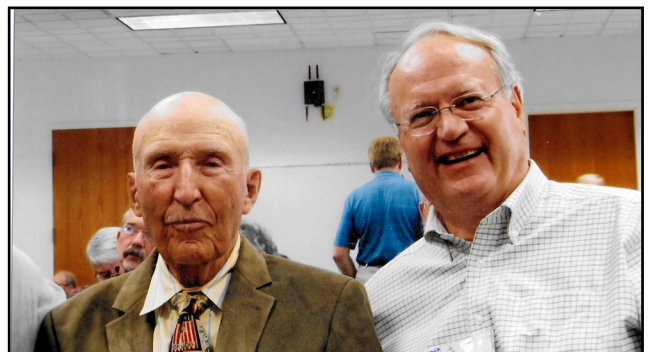
Photo courtesy of Mark Trbovich.

Above, right: Ed Bearss with BRCWRT member Charlie Balch (right).

Photo courtesy of Charlie Balch.

At left, Ed Bearss (left) is the victim of an amusing story told by Cong. Gerry Connolly (VA).

Photo by Janet Geentree.



A Salute to Nancy Anwyll

by Charlie Balch

Nancy Anwyll, a 26-year member of the Round Table, is retiring from the leadership of the hugely successful Scholarship Committee, which she founded in 2012. The Scholarship has grown into one of our most distinctive Bull Run Civil War Round Table accomplishments.

In 1987, teaching a range of subjects in the Social Studies Department, Nancy joined Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Tech, which has been consistently ranked as one of the finest high schools in the country. Prior to TJHSST, Nancy taught at Chantilly High School from 1973 to 1987. In both schools, she served briefly on scholarship committees.

We were fortunate to have her join the Round Table in 1994 and join the Executive Committee in 2000 where she served as Secretary for five years. After serving as President in 2009, she remained on the Executive Committee. Then in 2012, she was appointed Chair of the newly created BRCWRT Scholarship Committee. She said, "I'd like to do that, and I love to volunteer."

In the first year, with the help of Rob Orrison, Nancy took on the task of connecting with the history/social studies teachers and guidance/career departments in just three high schools: Centreville, West Springfield, and Stonewall Jackson, using these to refine the high school senior's responsibilities in order to win the initial \$1,000 scholarship. Mark Knowles helped gather applications and Charlie Balch was an essay reader. Brian McEnany joined the team the next year. In that second year, the scholarship was made open to public schools in both Fairfax and Prince William Counties, and then eventually all private schools and home schooled students in these jurisdictions were made eligible as well.

Scholarship prizes remained at \$1,000 in 2013 and 2014, increased to \$1,500 in 2015 to 2017, and became \$2,000 in 2018. Alan Day made certain that the scholarship instructions were posted

on the BRCWRT web site and Drew Pallo designed a colorful flyer. The number of applicants and quality of essays rose during those years. Nancy's concept and her connections with area schools grew year-by-year.



The talented chair of the BRCWRT, Nancy Anwyll, was recognized recently for instituting and growing the scholarship given to high school students interested in studying history in college. She is shown here receiving a specially-engraved clock from the membership.

Photo courtesy of Charlie Balch

While the initial emphasis in 2012 was more of an essay contest rather than proof of interest in history, per Nancy, the goal was "to help students understand and engender interest in local Civil War history and reward those who excelled."

In the fourth year a change was made. Applicants were asked to find a Civil War historical sign and write about the event that was described on the sign. To make sure students did not just copy a sign from their computer, they were required to take a selfie/photo of themselves at the sign. Many applicants found themselves standing on historical local Civil War sites for the first time.

In addition to this requirement, the love of history and the capacity to do well in college is considered. Thus applicants were asked to list courses taken, grades received, extra activities pursued, and an adult recommendation. As a result, of the winners with whom we have maintained contact, all have done well in college.

The BRCWRT Scholarship idea has brought positive visibility to the Round Table. The public seems to accept and embrace the idea of helping broaden the knowledge of history by helping young people with their education. It has also helped expand the Round Table membership.

Nancy's scholarship concept and execution have been major contributions to the reputation and pride of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. While she will continue as a counselor to the Scholarship Team, her direct leadership will be missed. Remaining to carry on the good work will be Charlie Balch, Brian McEnany and Mark Knowles. Thank you, Nancy Anwyll.



CIVIL WAR TRAVELS WITH MS. REBELLE

Gen. James Griffin Dearing, Jr., CSA

By Janet Greentree

This article is dedicated to my friend Edwin Cole Bearss, who died on September 15, 2020. Ed, who was the U.S. Park Service's Historian Emeritus, was my biggest fan.

James Griffin Dearing, Jr. was born at Otterbourne in Campbell Co., VA. on April 25, 1840. He was the son of James Griffin Dearing, Sr. and Mary Ann Lynch. His great-great-grandfather on his mother's side was Revolutionary War Col. Charles Lynch. Charles Lynch's father immigrated to America from Ireland. Otterbourne was about a mile from Lynch's home of Avoca. Charles Lynch was a Quaker and took the oath of office to be a justice of the peace in Bedford Co., VA. He was disowned by the Quakers for doing so, as Quakers are not allowed to take oaths of office. Charles went on to organize two rifle companies for the Revolutionary War and became a colonel. He fought at the battle of



Gen. James Griffin Dearing, Jr.



Avoca, in Campbell Co., VA, home of Gen. Dearing's great-great grandfather, Col. Charles Lynch. It is about a mile from where Gen. Dearing grew up.

Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781. His 18-year-old son Anselm snuck away from his home to join his father at the battle, boasting

that he killed his first "Red Coat." Col. Lynch is also associated with "Lynch Law." He held trials under a tree in his yard. Disloyal men were given 39 lashes, and some were hung by their thumbs to the tree until they shouted, "Liberty Forever."

Dearing first attended Hanover Academy as a youngster. He was interested in the military and was accepted as a cadet into West Point in 1858. He was described as a reckless, handsome boy, and introduced the song "Dixie" to the academy. He found West Point life extremely strict and regimented. He debated about resigning but ended up staying four years. Dearing was first in his class through all four years. He would have graduated with the class of 1861 but resigned three days before his 21st birthday (and before his graduation) on April 22, 1861, when Virginia seceded from the Union. Some of his classmates were future Union generals Adelbert Ames, Guy Henry, Hugh Judson Kilpatrick, and Emory Upton.

Dearing traveled to Richmond and received a lieutenant of artillery commission in the Virginia Militia. Shortly after arriving in Richmond, he joined the Washington Artillery from New Orleans, commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant and a drill instructor. His friend Thomas Rosser also joined the Washington Artillery. Dearing and his friend Isaac W. Brewer, both in the Washington Artillery, had a photo taken together. Brewer would die at the battle of Rappahannock. Brewer carried the picture of he and his friend James all through the war.

Dearing saw action at First Bull Run/Manassas under Jubal Early. He earned his ranks coming up from 1st lieutenant, captain, major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel. He then earned his brigadier general rank, but it was not approved by the Confederate Senate before his death on April 22, 1865. He was commander of the Lynchburg Battery and Dearing's



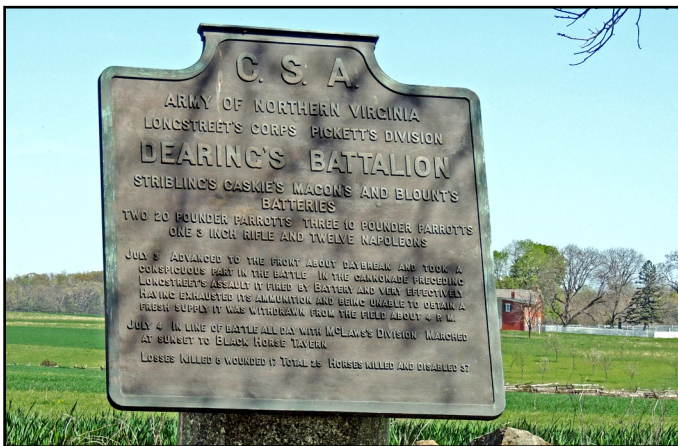
Dearing and Brewer (l to r), arm-in-arm in photo.

(con't on page 12)

Ms. Rebelle – (con't from page 11)

Battery, attached to Gen. George E. Pickett during the Peninsular Campaign. He was highly praised by Gen. James Longstreet for his conspicuous courage and energy. He fought under Longstreet at the 2nd Battle of Bull Run/Manassas. Dearing went on to division command of Longstreet's First Corps and fought at Fredericksburg. He also led his division at the Siege of Suffolk with Longstreet. After Suffolk, he fought at Gettysburg, Bermuda Hundred, Plymouth, Petersburg, Boydton Plank Road, Appomattox, and High Bridge.

In the Gettysburg campaign, Dearing's Battalion was camped on the outskirts of Chambersburg on the Carlisle Road and marched through Cashtown to Gettysburg on July 2nd, arriving on the field around noon. Dearing rode ahead and offered his artillery services to Lt. Col. E.P. Alexander. Dearing was given command of two batteries. His guns were in the cannonade on July 3rd at Pickett's Charge, right in the center, with Gen. William Barksdale and Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw between the Codori and Rogers houses, north of the apple orchard and opposite the Spangler house.



This Gettysburg battlefield marker notes the position of Dearing's artillery, which participated in the enormous Confederate cannonade that took place prior to Pickett's Charge on July 3rd, 1863. That barrage did not damage the Union lines to any significant degree, and that failure to shred the Federals' forces helped to seal the fate of the day called the "high water mark" of the Confederacy.

Photo by Janet Greentree

Dearing stayed on his horse, commanding his batteries. Even Gen. Robert E. Lee said he did not approve of young officers needlessly exposing themselves and said Dearing's place was with his batteries.

After the cannonade, Dearing's guns

supported Gen. Richard H. Anderson's advance against Gen. George J. Stannard's 2nd Vermont Brigade. There is a marker on West Confederate Avenue not too far before Gen. Longstreet's equestrian statue for Dearing's Battalion. On July 4th they were with Gen. Lafayette McLaws' Division and marched back to Black Horse Tavern at sunset on the retreat. Gen. George Pickett said of Dearing in a letter to the secretary of war: "I shall assign them (cavalry) to the command of Major Dearing, and ask that he may be ordered to the command of these troops, with the temporary rank of colonel. He is a young officer of daring and coolness combined, the very man for the service upon which he is going, a good disciplinarian, and at the same time generally loved by his men. I am not saying too much in his absence in assuring you that General Longstreet would strongly endorse his claims to promotion had he the opportunity."

After Gettysburg, Dearing accompanied Gen. Pickett to Southern Virginia and North Carolina. He was assigned a cavalry regiment on January 12, 1864 and was made commanding officer. His unit was known as the 8th Confederate or Dearing's Confederate Cavalry.

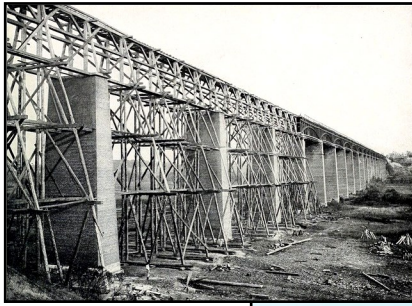
During the Petersburg Campaign, Dearing married a local Petersburg debutante, Roxana Birchett, on January 27, 1864. They had one child, Mary Lucretia, who lived until 1926. Being stationed in the Petersburg area, he had a lot of chances to see his new wife.

In April 1864 he was ordered back to the Army of Northern Virginia and took command of the horse artillery. His promotion to brigadier general came through on April 29, 1864, but was not approved until after his death. In July 1864 he served with the cavalry division of Gen. W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee. After the battle of Boynton Plank Road, a rumor was circulating that he died at the battle, but that was false. At the Appomattox Campaign, he was given a brigade with his old friend and classmate at West Point, Maj. Gen. Thomas Rosser.

At the battle of High Bridge on April 6, 1865, Dearing and his cavalry clashed with Union forces on High Bridge. He fought at close range with his pistol against two Union commanders, Cols. Theodore Read (Chief of

(con't on page 13)

Ms. Rebelle – (con't from page 12)



The High Bridge, near Farmville, VA, is where Gen. Dearing was fatally wounded on April 6, 1865, leading up to the surrender at Appomattox Court-house on April 9th.



Staff to Gen. Edward O. Ord) and Francis Washburn. Read was killed instantly - supposedly by Dearing - and Washburn was mortally wounded with a bullet to the mouth. Dearing was also mortally wounded when he was shot through the lungs. He was taken prisoner and brought to Lynchburg's old city hotel called the Ladies Relief Hospital on April 13th. His friend and classmate at West Point, Ranald Mackenzie, as commander of Lynchburg, visited him and paroled his old friend. Gen. Dearing lived until April 22, 1865, when he died from his wounds. He was originally buried in the family's Avoca Cemetery, but his body was later moved to Spring Hill Cemetery in Lynchburg. His funeral was held on April 25, 1865, which would have been his 25th birthday.



Gen. Dearing's grave at Springhill Cemetery, Lynchburg, VA.

High Bridge was 2,500 feet long and 126 feet high and was the crossing for the South Side Railroad over the Appomattox River and its flood plain. It is located 4 miles from

Lynchburg. My friend Gwen Wyttenbach has been on two tours of High Bridge - one in 2015 with Robert Krick, Jr. and Peter Carmichael (in 2001), and another one with Nancy Anwyll, sponsored by the Franconia Museum



Various approaches to the High Bridge over the Appomattox River, enjoyed by Bull Run Civil War members (lower right, left to right Gwen Wyttenbach and Nancy Anwyll).

Photos by Gwen Wyttenbach

and their 'Both Sides Tour' with tour guide Don Hakenson. The pictures of the High Bridge Tours are courtesy of Gwen.

The *Daily Intelligencer* dated November 3, 1864 reported as follows: "The South Side" - At eight o'clock yesterday morning, the enemy made an attack on our extreme right on the Boynton road, between the Weldon and Southside railroad, about seven miles southwest of Petersburg. Passengers who came over on the evening train reported the fighting as having been very severe, the enemy having assaulted our position seven times, and were seven times repulsed, suffering heavily on each occasion. The fighting had not ceased when the cars left. We regret to hear that General James Dearing was among the killed. He was from Campbell county, VA., only twenty-two years old, and one of the most promising young officers in the cavalry service." What do you think??? Fake news?

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 may contact her at jlqtree@erols.com.

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## PRESERVATION CORNER

BY BLAKE MYERS

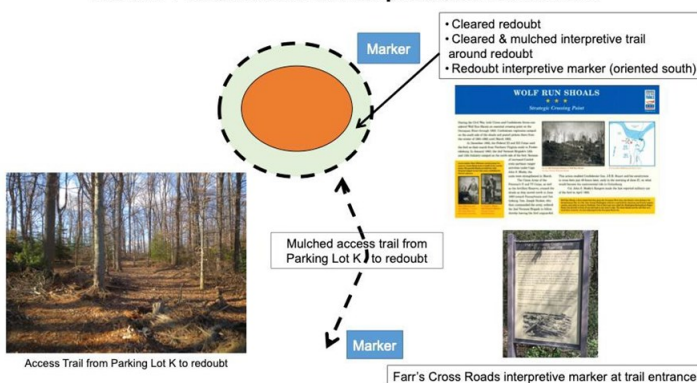
Greetings BRCWRT Members - I hope and trust that you and your family and friends are doing well and are safe and healthy.

This edition of Preservation Corner includes: 1) an update on the Farr's Fort preservation and interpretation project at George Mason University; 2) an update on the Route 28 Bypass project; 3) results of the September 15th Public Hearing before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on the Civil War-related markers located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex; 4) the BRCWRT's involvement in a Dranesville Battlefield preservation initiative; and 5) a final update on the BRCWRT's fundraising project in support of GMU's 8th Regiment Band.

### Farr's Fort Preservation and Interpretation Update

As previously reported, the Farr's Fort Interim Preservation and Interpretation Project Plan, implementing the approved interim site concept and a timeline for completion by November 2020, was approved by George Mason University's Vice President for Facilities Frank Strike on August 17th.

#### Interim Preservation & Interpretation Schematic



On September 25th, Blake Myers and Dr. Brian Platt met on site at Farr's Fort with Eric Miller, GMU's Grounds Program Manager, to walk the site and review the project plan, the grounds and maintenance-related actions, and the envisioned timeline for completion.

On September 30th, Blake Myers, Jim Lewis, Brian McEnany and Dr. Brian Platt met with John Forgy, GMU's Environmental Graphic

Designer, on site at Farr's Fort to walk the site and review, discuss and update the two planned historical markers and the process for designing, producing and installing the markers.

BRCWRT coordination and work continues with GMU as we implement the Project Plan, achieving our long-sought objective of preserving and interpreting this historic site on GMU's Fairfax Campus. Project completion is anticipated to be scheduled by mid-November 2020.

#### Route 28 Bypass Update

As previously reported, at their August 4th meeting, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS), following lengthy discussion, voted (7-0) not to endorse the staff-recommended Route 28 Bypass project location (Alternative 2B – Godwin Drive Extension), but to pursue the widening of Route 28 instead.

The basis for the BOCS vote & decision regarding the recommended Alternative 2B is summarized as follows:

1) Alternative 2B would not significantly alleviate traffic congestion on Route 28

2) Alternative 2B would have negligible traffic impact, but would have significant environmental impacts on the wetlands and residential properties in the existing floodplain within the proposed Alternative 2B route

3) Alternative 2B would result in significant fiscal and human impacts on county residents living along the proposed route, including those residents who would face the loss of their home. During a very contentious, and at times confusing, September 8th BOCS meeting the Prince William Board of County Supervisors reconsidered its August 4th decision and took the following actions with respect to Route 28:

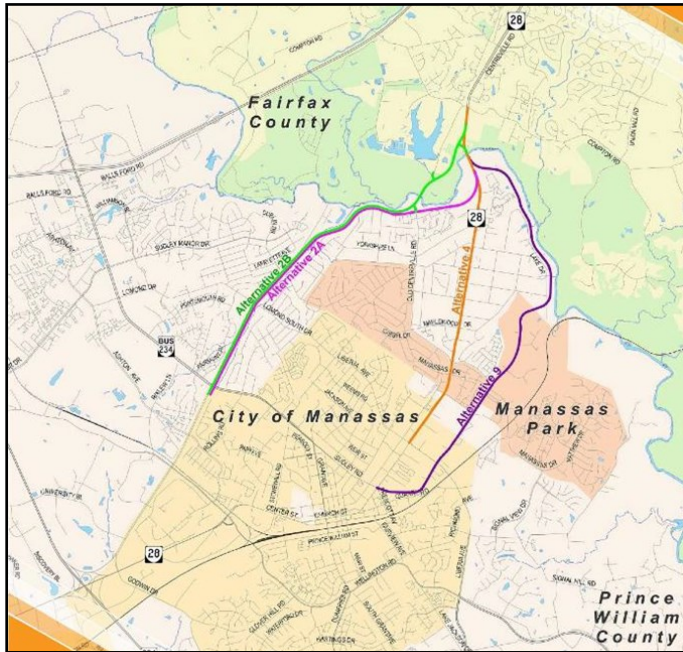
- Upon reconsideration of the respective PW Staff proposal, the Board voted to endorse (on a 5-3 vote) the PW Staff recommendation to adopt Alternative 2B as the location for the Route 28 Bypass
- The Board voted against (on a 4-3 vote w/1 abstention) endorsing Alternative 4 (Rt 28 Widening)
- The Board approved (8-0) initiation of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment for widening Route 28.

The central factor in reconsidering Alternative 2B appeared to be the potential loss of

(con't on page 15)



## Preservation Corner – (con't from page 14)



\$89M in Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) funds for the Route 28 project. The Comprehensive Plan Amendment is viewed by the BOCS as a back-up plan, should Alternative 2B encounter an Army Corps of Engineer decision to deny the permit (s) for road construction through the respective protected wetlands.

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment, to include widening Route 28 from the City of Manassas to Fairfax County, timeline (as of September 2020):

- September 2020 - Comprehensive Plan Amendment Initiation; dispatch review of CPA (90-day review by Code) to regional transportation partners
- September/October 2020 – Public Engagement
- November 18, 2020 – Planning Commission (PC) Public Hearing
- December 15, 2020 – Board of County Supervisors Public Hearing

### Civil War Related Markers/Items Located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, a public hearing was held during the scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County. The stated purpose of the public hearing was *“to consider the potential removal, relocation, contextualization, or covering of any or all of the publicly*

*owned Civil War related monuments or memorials located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex....”* The Civil War related “monuments or memorials” under consideration were the granite obelisk/marker commemorating the death of John Quincy Marr, the first soldier killed in action in the Civil War, two boat howitzers adjacent to the Marr marker and Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) Historical Marker B- 262, entitled “First Confederate Officer Killed”.



**Marr Marker/Obelisk & Boat Howitzers**



**Virginia DHR Historical Marker B-262**

President Mark Whitenton submitted a written statement on behalf of the BRCWRT's 384 members calling for these three items to remain in their current locations as they are historical markers commemorating an historically significant event in our Nation's and Fairfax County's history, and are not monuments or memorials to, or monuments or memorials glorifying, either John Marr or the Confederacy. In

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## Preservation Corner – (con't from page 15)

addition, 17 individuals, including 7 BRCWRT members, spoke at the public hearing in opposition to removing or relocating the items.

Immediately following the public hearing, in a series of three 9-1 votes, the Board of Supervisors approved three resolutions directing the removal of the Marr marker/obelisk, the two boat howitzers and Virginia DHR Historical Marker B-262, respectively, and gave the County staff until October 20, 2020 to determine the disposition of these items.

BRCWRT is pursuing, in collaboration with other local history organizations, potential legal action to prevent Fairfax County from removing the Marr marker/obelisk, the two boat howitzers and DHR Marker B-262. The grounds for this potential legal action include: 1) that the Virginia Statue upon which the Board of Supervisors based its actions, 15.2-1812, Memorials for War Veterans, is not applicable in this case since none of the respective items is a monument or memorial to a war veteran, and 2) multiple procedural omissions and errors in the “process” used by the Board of Supervisors to reach the decisions to remove the items.

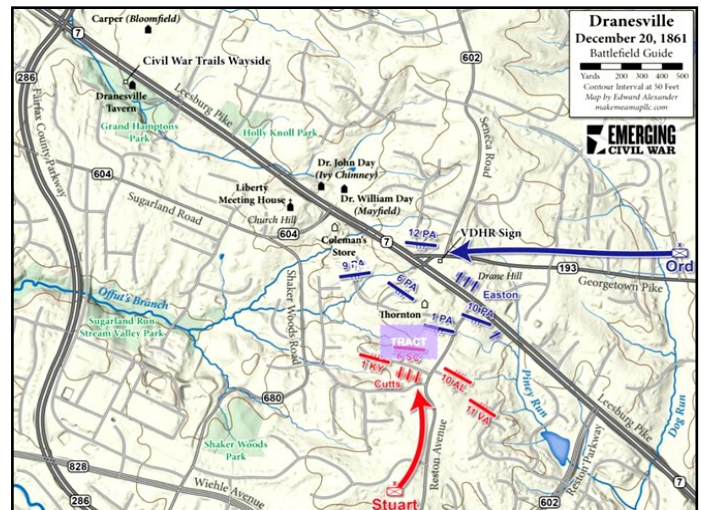
Meanwhile, several organizations, including Manassas National Battlefield Park, have contacted Fairfax County expressing their interest in taking possession of the boat howitzers. Several organizations, including the BRCWRT, have written to City of Fairfax Mayor David Meyer and the City Council members encouraging Fairfax City to accept transfer of the Marr marker/obelisk and relocate it to the Fairfax Cemetery or another historically relevant site within Fairfax City. Virginia DHR has been made aware of the Board’s action with respect to DHR Marker B-262.

### An Opportunity to Save a Core Section of the Battle of Dranesville Battlefield

The BRCWRT recently became aware of a unique opportunity to save four acres of core battlefield on the Dranesville Battlefield in Fairfax County. Though a relatively small affair between the units of the Pennsylvania Reserve Volunteer Corps under the command of Brig. Gen. E.O.C. Ord and Confederate Infantry under the command of Brig. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, the fighting

in the Battle of Dranesville on December 20, 1861, was fierce and left a strong impression on those who fought there.

The available land tract lies directly across today’s U.S. Rt. 7 from the Dranesville Church of the Brethren, which sits atop what was in 1861 Drane Hill (see map, below).



**Battle of Dranesville Map – Annotated with Available Land Tract (Emerging Civil War)**

The BRCWRT is working with local (Dranesville/Herndon) residents who are interested in saving this battlefield land, and the American Battlefield Trust to take advantage of this last, best chance to save a portion of the Dranesville Battlefield.

As a side note, in early October, the Church of the Brethren is scheduled to install on its grounds a new historical marker on the Battle of Dranesville – an Eagle Scout project supported by historians Ryan Quint and Edward Alexander.

### BRCWRT Fundraising in Support of GMU’s 8th Regiment Band

The BRCWRT successfully raised and donated \$1,075 in support of the purchase and restoration of Civil War-era brass instruments by and for the GMU 8th Regiment Band. A huge thank you to our members who generously donated to enable the BRCWRT’s support of this GMU Green Machine Civil War Brass Band ensemble.

Thank for your interest in, and support of, historic preservation. Stay strong, safe and healthy!



## The President's Corner – (con't from page 3)

ty's robust and complex history. This decision was also founded on the condition that this litigation will incur no financial cost to the Round Table General Fund and that decisions with respect to subsequent legal efforts will not involve the BRCWRT absent future agreements applicable to those subsequent actions.

Again, please re-join our great organization. This has been a tough year for everyone. Don't let "Groundhog Day" be part of your daily life experience. The BRCWRT is continuing to produce new material and to fight for preservation of Civil War history. Please let the Round Table provide value to you as we go forward.

### National Park Service Announces:

#### **VIRTUAL - Gettysburg Dedication Day Ceremony: November 19**

Dedication Day 2020 will commemorate the 157th anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

This event is sponsored by Gettysburg National Military Park, the Lincoln Fellowship of Pennsylvania, the Gettysburg Foundation, and Gettysburg College.

This event will be virtual due to the ongoing pandemic. Full details will be announced in the coming weeks. Thank you for your patience.

View updated information at: <https://www.nps.gov/gett/planyourvisit/dedication-day.htm>



### Bull Run Civil War Round Table 2020 Program of Events

**ALL EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO  
COVID-19 DEVELOPMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS**

by Greg Wilson

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u>                                                                                       | <u>Comment</u> |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| October 10  | <u>Field Trip</u> – “The Civil War from Mount Vernon to Pohick” – Greg Wilson                      | Half-day tour  |
| November 12 | Monthly Meeting Speaker: David Dixon – “The Lost Gettysburg Address”                               | Confirmed      |
| November 21 | <u>Fall Special Event</u> at Manassas Battlefield National Park – Speaker TBD – Open to the Public | TBD            |
| December 10 | Monthly Meeting Speaker: Ron Beavers – “Arlington House – The Last Battle of the Civil War”        | Confirmed      |

**NOTE: All events are sponsored by the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. More logistics, sign-up and contact information will be posted on the BRCWRT Web site and Facebook page as the individual events get closer and are confirmed.**



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## **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 21 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**

**You also may join using your credit card by going to our website at [BRCWRT.org](http://BRCWRT.org) and clicking on "Membership Application."**

**NAME**\_\_\_\_\_

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

**CITY**\_\_\_\_\_ **STATE**\_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP**\_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE**\_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL**\_\_\_\_\_