



Banner of the Blue and Gray

Newsletter of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable Frederick, Maryland
Founded January 30, 1989

273rd Meeting

December 2018

Volume 45, Issue 4

December 13, 2018, 7:00 PM National Museum of Civil War Medicine 48 E. Patrick St, Frederick, Maryland



Speaker: Brandon Bies

**Topic: Unprecedented Discovery at
Manassas National Battlefield Park**

In 2014, archeologists monitoring a utility trench excavation at Manassas National Battlefield Park observed bone fragments scattered across the soil. This led to further archeological excavations in 2015 which resulted in the discovery of the remains of a Union field hospital surgeon's pit dating to the

Second Battle of Manassas. Archeologists recovered the nearly-complete remains of two Union soldiers, along with eleven amputated arms and legs. This unprecedented discovery is the first of its kind on a Civil War battlefield and has greatly expanded our understanding of the decisions made by surgeons on who could, and could not, be saved.

Brandon Bies is the superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park, where he manages the historic meadows and woodlands of the 5,000-acre park which draw more than 500,000 visitors annually. Before taking the helm at Manassas in March 2017, Bies served as the legislative coordinator for the National Capital Region of the National Park Service (NPS). During that time (2014 - 2017), he also served as the regional project manager for the rehabilitation of Arlington House, Robert E. Lee's historic home, made possible by a \$12.35 million donation from

philanthropist David M. Rubenstein. Bies began his NPS work in 2001 as an archeologist at Monocacy National Battlefield. He has served as the cultural resources specialist for George Washington Memorial Parkway and on assignments as the site manager of Great Falls Park and in the NPS headquarters Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs, and held the position of Site Manager of Arlington House from 2010-2014. Bies holds a master's degree in applied anthropology and bachelor's degrees in American history and anthropology.

In Case You Missed It.....

At our November 27th meeting about 70 attendees were on hand for the presentation by Paul Bolcik and Erik Davis from the Center for Civil War Photography. The event was so successful that we may be teaming with the C. Burr Artz Library in the future for more presentations.



Treasurer's Report for October

Treasurer Robert Kozak reports that our balance as of November 21 is \$1213.94. Our annual membership drive continues, and we need renewals and new members to continue providing our current level of activities. With more members we could consider inviting more well-known historians and authors.





DECEMBER BOOK RAFFLE

John McKay has assembled a collection of topics not always covered in books on the war. His book, *Brave Men: In Desperate Times, The Lives of Civil War Soldiers*, covers infantrymen's stories, but also includes chapters on a variety of topics: prisoner camps, medical treatment, the navy, the cavalry, and the artillery.

McKay is a military historian and high school history & government teacher in Georgia. He served in the U.S. Army and Georgia Army National Guard; was an EMT/Paramedic and later a firefighter and firefighting instructor.



And, a great coffee table book, is *The Irish Brigade: A Pictorial History of the Famed Civil War Fighters* by Russ A. Pritchard, Jr. This beautiful book covers officers in the brigade, Medal of Honor winners, uniforms, weapons, equipment, and flags. This book is in wonderful condition and would make a lovely holiday gift for someone who is interested in the saga of the Irish in America. (a new version of this book lists on Amazon for over \$90!) Russ Pritchard is a graduate of Washington and Lee University and the former Executive Director of the Civil War Library and Museum.

Many thanks for your generous donations of books and magazines. Keep 'em coming! Proceeds from the raffle help us to fulfill our mission.

If you have Civil War books you can spare, please consider donating them to our book raffle. It is a significant fund-raiser for our Roundtable.

Prez Sez

The holiday season is truly upon us and we at the Frederick County Civil War Round Table hope that whatever holiday you celebrate it will find you with friends and family. As often happens this time of year, the holidays have a way of jumbling our schedules. This is true for the round table as well! For the last several seasons we have tried different options for our meeting in December and working around everyone's busy schedule. This year we are going to try an earlier meeting, specifically December 13th, the second Thursday in the month of December.

As usual our meeting will be held in the National Museum of Civil War Medicine at 7pm. The speaker this December will be the superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park, speaking on the recent archaeological discoveries that have occurred at the battlefields. This should be a great talk, so come out and get some history over the holidays!



Beyond fluctuations in the meeting schedule, I also wanted to update you about the ongoing preservation talks for the Camp Letterman site up in Gettysburg. As you may recall, in late 2017, the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association reached out to the Frederick County Civil War Round Table and the National Museum of Civil War Medicine to participate in their letter writing campaign to help convince a developer not to build over seventeen acres of Camp Letterman, one of major hospital sites at Gettysburg National Military Park. The hospital site is currently beyond the Federal boundary of the battlefield and thus can potentially be developed.

I am happy to say that while negotiations are ongoing, the developer did meet with the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association in hopes of finding a mutually agreeable solution. The letter writing campaign was called out specifically as one of the factors that brought the developer to the negotiating table, as they had not been aware of the historic significance of the property or the passion the preservation community had in seeing it saved. As the discussions for this historic landscape continues we will keep you informed.

From all of us here at the Frederick County Civil War Round Table Board, we wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday season, and a happy New Year.

~Matt Borders

Nearby December Events

(For any event listed please remember to confirm it's happening before hitting the road.)

Shepherdstown, WV Civil War Christmas Program

November 30 from 4-6:30 PM, The Civil War Military Encampment Opens– Costumed interpreters will explain the camp and conduct a firing demonstration – Garden of the George Tyler Moore Center

6:30-8:00 PM, Music Performance by the Village Brass and Lecture from Dr. Ashley Whitehead Luskey “The Last Christmas in the Confederate White House”– Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church

8:00-9:00 PM, Self-Guided Walking Tour of Private homes in Shepherdstown and the George Tyler Moore Center

December 1, 10:00am-3:00 PM, Civil War Military Encampment, George Tyler Moore Center for Study of the Civil War

December 1 at 6 PM- Memorial Illumination Antietam National Battlefield

December 1 at 2:30 PM, Book Talk – September Mourn: The Dunker Church of Antietam Battlefield- Join author Terry Barkley on December 1 at 2:30 PM at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine as he uncovers the full story of one of the Civil War's most iconic structures – the Dunker Church on the Antietam Battlefield.

December 2, 16, and 23, Christmas and the Civil War- from 2:30 -3:30 PM, join volunteer Brad Stone, as he details the history behind the celebration of Christmas during the Civil War. The Civil War shaped the way we celebrate the holiday season in the United States in surprising ways.

December 8, Civil War Church Service and Living History Program at the Historic Rocky Springs Chapel- from 1:00-3:30 PM, 7817 Rocky Springs Road, Frederick, Maryland.

December 8, “Museums by Candlelight,” special tours at the Monocacy National Battlefield. Tours every half hour 12:30-4:30 pm. Space limited. Registration begins Nov. 1. Call 301-662-3515. Details at nps.gov/mon.

Seminars and Conferences

March 22-24, Civil War Weekend, “Civil War Leadership,” The Inn at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. www.cpe.vt/cww

April 10-13, 2019- “Give the Enemy No Rest” – Sheridan’s 1864 Shenandoah Campaign Front Royal, Virginia. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation’s 4th Annual National Civil War Conference will focus on Sheridan’s 1864 Shenandoah Campaign. The conference will include talks, programs, special events, and tours of Third Winchester, Fisher’s Hill, and Cedar Creek. Guides and speakers will include Gary Ecelbarger, Caroline E. Janney, Robert K. Krick, William Miller, Jonathan A. Noyalas, Scott C. Patchan, Ralph Peters, Nick Picerno, and Jeffry Wert.

June 14-19, 2019, Civil War Institute Summer Conference, Gettysburg College- The 2019 CWI Conference will feature a wide range of topics, including the 1864 Atlanta campaign, the political crisis of the 1850s, Civil War artifacts, Nat Turner’s Rebellion, the combat experience of Civil War soldiers, and more. Join us for a blockbuster year of CWI speakers! We are thrilled to feature eminent Civil War scholars, **Gary W. Gallagher, Ed Ayers, Carol Reardon** and **Peter S. Carmichael** within a line-up of over 35 distinguished speakers and tour guides. www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference

BOOK REVIEW by MATT BORDERS

REVIEW:

Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War*. 218 pp. photos, notes, bibliography, index. \$22.95 (softcover), ISBN: 0-674-16056-8, Reviewed by Matthew A. D. Borders

One of the best-known historians of the American Civil War, Gary Gallagher, produced a two-volume series in the late 90's that has recently been re-released as paperback. *The Union War* and *The Confederate War*, both look at issues of national will, military strategy and popular will. In the case of *The Confederate War*, Gallagher looks into how these aspects of the Confederacy could not stave off eventual defeat. He does this by challenging a number of popular opinions that have developed over the last several decades, specifically the idea that the Confederacy collapsed from within and a lack of will to continue the war by those on the Confederate home front spurred on this collapse.

On the face of it *The Confederate War* looks like a fast read. It has just over two hundred pages, but the subject matter is very dense. The reader is often left considering other works they may have read, as well as other interpretations they may have heard about the Confederacy and its ability to wage and continue the war. Finally, Gallagher wraps up this work with a chapter on defeat. How did the Confederates deal with the collapse of their armies and government?

One aspect of the Confederate war effort, and indeed the continuation of the Confederacy that Gallagher makes very clear is that both National and Popular Will are tied to Confederate forces in the field. Many historians have elaborated on the extensive damage to the Confederate home front, the loss of support from the home and the inevitable collapse of the southern armies due in part to desertion, nearly 100,000 men by the end of the war. Gallagher challenges these interpretations by pointing out that though the Confederacy did suffer extensive privations at home and on the field, overall the Confederate will remained strong. Furthermore, he asserts that there was a feeling of a national unity that had begun to develop prior to the war, and that the vast majority of both the military and civilian population remained committed to the cause for which they fought and suffered.

Though the internal tensions in the Confederacy, debates over slavery, resource hoarding, the divine nature of the cause and potentially arming slaves for service in the Confederate forces, were real and ongoing, Gallagher believes these tensions have been overblown by more recent historians. He contends that this is due to many historians working backwards from Appomattox, viewing the Confederate struggle as essentially doomed from the beginning. As opposed to a very real threat to the continued existence of the country as we know it. There were several points when the outcome of the war in the Union's favor was not a forgone conclusion and the Confederates themselves continued the struggle in hopes of potentially exhausting the Union's will to continue the conflict.

This exhaustion, and indeed the continuance of the Confederacy, Gallagher argues, hinged on Confederate successes in the field. As the war continued, stressing the Confederacy's ability to supply its forces, as the Union blockade began to strangle the southern economy and as Union forces made gains in the western theater, the southern cause, its people and its national identity became more and more tied to Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia. This faith in the Confederacy's primary field army was felt by the men in the ranks, and for the most part it was a point of pride. This pride in themselves and having the eyes of their nation on them helped keep up Confederate spirits, for both soldiers and civilians, to the bitter end.

The despair caused by the surrender of Lee's army is seen in part by the quick collapse of the rest of Confederate resistance, but also in the manner in which the southern population accepts the defeat. Gallagher goes to great length throughout *The Confederate War* to show how even in the darkest days of the Confederacy the vast majority of Confederate civilians believed in the cause. He does this again in his chapter on the defeat to show how the continued organized resistance died with the defeat of the field armies. Until that occurred, most in the ranks and at home kept the faith.

For those interested in the history of the Confederacy, its people, and its eventual collapse I recommend *The Confederate War*. To better understand this most turbulent period in our nation's history it is important to look at both sides and how they carried themselves through this war. As Gallagher states in his closing sentence, until historians can more fully explain why the people and armies pressed on as they did, histories of the Civil War will remain woefully incomplete.

We are on Facebook! Please check out our page for timely updates, local events, or comments. Please read and share our posts!



<https://m.facebook.com/fccwrt>

Gary Dyson is our “face” for Facebook.

Help us spread the word about OUR FCCWRT!! We now have 300 “likes” to date with even more “followers!”

Join Facebook. Share posts with friends! You’ll get more timely notice of events when you check us out on Facebook. Post things you’d like to share!

Our MISSION

TO cultivate and preserve Frederick County’s Civil War heritage and broaden the understanding of the Civil War Era and its impact on our nation.

TO explore the many facets of the Civil War from the battlefield to first-person narratives, including guest lectures by writers and historians.

TO support historical projects and activities aimed at increasing public interest and appreciation of our Civil War history, both locally and nationally.

Looking Ahead

Please join us for our next meeting on Thursday, January 17th at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine on East Patrick Street. Dr. Audrey Scalan-Teder and Tracy McIntire will be presenting “Women Soldiers in the Civil War.”

2018-2019 Board of Directors

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FCCWRT

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Our membership drive for the 2018-19 season continues. Please consider renewing your membership as well inviting friends to join. Your membership provides the space for our meetings, attracting well known speakers, and website and P.O. Box maintenance.

For those who remembered to renew your FCCWRT membership, thank you! Your dues make it possible for us to continue to fulfill our mission. We can't continue without your support! If we had more members we could do more to promote our Civil War history!

As a member of our group, you'll enjoy these benefits:

- receive the current newsletter
- receive email updates of local events related to Civil War history
- always have a place to be on the third Thursday of the month

Our yearly dues are:

- \$30.00 for an individual
- \$50.00 for a family up to four
- \$5.00 for out of state members and members under 16 years of age

You can renew your membership at our meeting or by mail. The membership form is attached and may also be downloaded from our website at

<http://www.frederickcountycivilwarrt.org/>.

NEW *or* RENEW ANNUAL FCCWRT MEMBERSHIP



NAME (If family membership, please list all names and email addresses)

STREET ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS/ADDRESSES _____

BEST PHONE NUMBER TO REACH ME _____

NOTE: *We will protect your privacy. None of the above information will be shared.*

ANNUAL DUES: Individual - \$30; Family - \$50 (Please make check payable to FCCWRT)

AMOUNT PAID \$ _____ DATE _____

- I would like to volunteer to assist with registration and other tasks at our monthly meetings
- I am interested in helping with outreach activities

MAIL TO:
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For additional information about the FCCWRT and to see meeting dates and times
and our roster of speakers for the season, check our website:

www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org