



STONE WALL

Bull Run Civil War Round Table

April 2001

Guest Speaker: Frank A. O'Reilly
The Fredericksburg Campaign
"I Cannot Die Better"

Frank A. O'Reilly graduated from Washington and Lee University in 1987 with a B.A. in American History. While an undergraduate he worked at the "Stonewall" Jackson House in Lexington. He also lectured on Civil War military history in the ROTC Department of Washington and Lee. Following graduation, Frank joined the National Park Service as a temporary historian at the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County National Military Park (F&SCNMP). He subsequently accepted a full-time position with the National Park Service at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, PA. In 1990 Frank returned to the F&SCNMP to fill the permanent historian's position at the "Stonewall" Jackson Shrine at Guiney Station. He is now assigned to the Headquarters, F&SCNMP, at the historic Chatham House just across the Rappahannock River from the City of Fredericksburg.

Of note, while assigned to the F&SCNMP, Frank spent a year cataloging all of the historic resources along the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers for the City of Fredericksburg. Last year he served as a historical consultant for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Planning Commission.

Frank is in great demand as a speaker and has lectured at various locations around our Nation, ranging from New York City to San Francisco, and even, down into Mexico. He has appeared in a dozen documentaries on the Civil War including the A & E *Civil War Journal*.

Over the years Frank has established himself as an historian of exceptional merit. His critically acclaimed book on the Battle of Fredericksburg, 13 December 1862, entitled "*Stonewall*" *Jackson at Fredericksburg* was published in 1993. Other published works include:

- More than a dozen articles on the war in Virginia
- Introductions to the following reprints:
 - Philip H. Sheridan's *Personal Memoirs*
 - Augustus C. Hamlin's *Battle of Chancellorsville*
 - *History of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry*
 - *Under the Maltese Cross* (A history of the 155th Pennsylvania)

His latest book, published by L.S.U. Press, will be released later this year. Yes, you guessed it - the title is *The Fredericksburg Campaign* and will be the subject of his presentation on 12 April 2001.

Do not miss this presentation! It promises to be an extremely informative talk from a very perceptive and talented historian.

General Membership Meeting
12 April 2001
7:15 PM

- **Frank A. O'Reilly**

The Fredericksburg Campaign

**Bull Run Civil War
Round Table**

P.O. Box 2147
Centreville, VA
20122

President

John McAnaw
(703) 978 – 3371

Vice President

John DePue

Treasurer

Mark Knowles

Secretary

Nancy Anwyll
nanwyll@patriot.net

At Large

Michael E. Duggan

Robert W. Ford
rford@cox.rr.com

Keith Young

Field Trip

Kevin Anastas
kanastas@iitri.org

Preservation

John McAnaw

Editor

Mary Ahrens
ahrn@starpower.net

Immediate Past President

Scott Patchan

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The STONE WALL is published monthly by the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. Meetings are held at 7:15 PM on the second Thursday of the month at:

The Centreville Regional Library
14200 St. Germain Drive
Centreville, VA 20121-2299
Tel. No. (703) 830-2223

A word of special thanks to the staff of the Centreville Library is in order for allowing us to use the facility – especially to Jerilyn Polson for her efforts in assisting the BRCWRT on Thursday nights and for creating interesting Civil War book displays for our group.

NEWSLETTER UPDATE

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER:

If you would like to receive the newsletter via e-mail (sent blind copy to protect privacy), or if you would like to offer comments please contact:

Mary R. Ahrens
P.O. Box 2147
Centreville, VA 20122
ahrn@starpower.net

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The deadline for May 2001 articles is 27 April 2001. Please send input to Mary Ahrens at the above address or e-mail.

<p align="center"><u>BRCWRT – 10th Anniversary Celebration</u></p> <p align="center">General Membership Meeting 10 May 2001 7:15 PM</p> <p align="center">Guest Speaker: Ed Bearss Gettysburg: Day Two</p> <p align="center">Special Guest: William Miller Founder of the BRCWRT</p>

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By: John McAnaw

If you did not attend our February General Membership Meeting, you missed a superb presentation on Arlington National Cemetery by BRCWRT member, Mike Duggan. Well done, Mike! And, don't forget to sign up for his tour of Arlington National Cemetery on Saturday, 14 April 2001.

In the January 2001 issue of *The Stone Wall*, I addressed the postponement of the allocation of funds by the Fairfax County Park Authority to begin the interpretation of "passive recreation sites", including historic Civil War locations. The prime example is the Ox Hill Battlefield Park where work to begin the interpretation of the 4.5-acre site has been postponed three times. Please review Ed Wenzel's article on the Ox Hill Battlefield Park in the March 2001 issue of our newsletter and the brief summary prepared in this issue by Mary Ahrens.

Now is the time to get the ball rolling to obtain the necessary funds for the interpretation of the Ox Hill Battlefield. I ask all members, particularly residents of Fairfax County, to write and request help from the Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors, other concerned Supervisors (including your own) and the Director of the Fairfax County Park Authority. A listing of these individuals is in this issue. Our patience is at an end.

Lastly, we have reached a critical point in our membership drive for CY2001. Your assistance in recruiting new members and bringing former members back into the fold will be appreciated. I believe that we have an obligation to publicize and protect our magnificent Civil War heritage.

After Action Report: Tour of the Blackburn's Ford and Grigsby Hill Battlefield (18 and 21 July 1861)

Despite cool, blustery weather, more than 30 members/guests showed up for a tour of the Blackburn's Ford and Grigsby Hill battlefields, plus several other sites of historical interest. Courtesy of Mark Morgan, who treated us to an interesting rundown on the history of the property, we were able

to set up our base of operation on his 35-acre tract that includes much of the southern part of the Grigsby Hill Battlefield. Mark and his wife, Nancy, were gracious hosts. They plan to begin development of the property in May 2001, into six 5-acre equestrian estates. The property, located just west of Little Rocky Run and just south of Compton Road was once part of a larger estate owned by Aubrey Graves, a columnist with *The Washington Post*, known as "The Squire of Grigsby Hill."

We hiked to Blackburn's Ford Battlefield, enjoying the magnificent scenery along Bull Run, while traversing the entire east-west width of the 18 July 1861 battleground. High bluffs on the Fairfax County side gave the Union troops a distinct advantage over the Confederates, who were at a marked tactical disadvantage on the Prince William County side of Bull Run. BG James Longstreet's brigade, however, was able to defeat the Federals. Our next destination was an impressive Confederate artillery earthwork on the Fairfax County side of the confluence of Little Rocky Run and Bull Run.

The group moved downstream to McLean's Ford, the crossing site, on 21 July 1861, of Confederate BG D.R. Jones' brigade. After a short lunch break we toured the Grigsby Hill Battlefield of 21 July 1861, both north and south of Compton Road. Clearly this engagement was a one-sided victory – won almost entirely by Union Artillery.

I believe everyone enjoyed the tour and gained a better understanding of the effect these engagements had on the course of events during the First Manassas Campaign. We covered a lot of ground on our 3.48 + mile hike. Lastly, I want to thank all participants for making this tour a very enjoyable one for me.

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

If, on the date of a scheduled tour adverse weather conditions exist or are impending, first call the Chief Tour Guide. In the event contact cannot be made, contact John McAnaw at (703) 978-3371. Either he or a recorded message will advise the caller.

Tour: Civil War Arlington National Cemetery (14 April 2001)

Tour Highlights:

- Overview: The Custis and Lee families at Arlington.
- Tour Arlington House.
- Overview: The Estate becomes a cemetery.
- The Field of the Dead – the Civil War enlisted burial section.
- Tomb of the Unknown Civil War Dead.
- The Officer's Section.
- Visit the graves of many prominent personalities.
- Changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns.
- The site of Freedman's Village.
- Contraband Section – the burial site for the residents of Freedman's Village and the United States Colored Troops.
- The Confederate Memorial.
- The graves of the first person, first soldier, and first officer buried in ANC.

Assembly Location: Ravensworth Shopping Center parking lot, between the Mobil Station and the Bank of America. The shopping center is located on the eastbound side of Braddock Road, just outside the Beltway, at Port Royal Rd. (Look for the Mobil station and the Safeway sign.)

Assembly Time: 8 AM Vehicle convoy to Fort Myer will depart at 8:10. (We will enter ANC through Ft. Myer.)

Tour Duration: 9 AM to 4:30 PM

Lunch: Bring your own, or purchase a meal at the Fort Myer Bowling Alley. No food or drinks are allowed on the cemetery grounds.

Terrain: Mostly flat. Some slight inclines and stairs. Total walking distance: about 2½- 3 miles.

Sign-up deadline: Sign-up sheets will be available at the 12 April General Membership Meeting, or telephone Mike Duggan, at (703) 503-8825. (The Fort Myer Provost Marshall requires a complete list of visitor names prior to entering the post on the day of the tour.)

Contact: Mike Duggan at (703) 503-8825.

Tour: Gettysburg: The Second Day (12 May 2001)

You've heard of Bearss' Brigade right? Well now you can join Kevin's Kommando's as the BRCWRT heads back to Gettysburg for action on the second day!

Tour Highlights :

- Lee's plan for July 2nd (Herr's Ridge)
- Longstreet's flank march – and countermarch
- The Peach Orchard -- Sickles' plan
- Hood's attack – Law's brigade
- Slaughter Pen
- Little Round Top
- Devil's Den
- McLaw's attack -- Kershaw's brigade
- **Lunch Buffet at Gettysbrew Pub**
- The Wheatfield – Caldwell's Division
- Barksdale's attack
- Wofford's attack -- Bigelow's battery
- Willard's brigade counterattack
- 1st Minnesota counterattack
- Wright's brigade attack

And More!

As always on Kevin's tours, if you have special knowledge of a particular unit, personality or event, sign up at the April meeting or e-mail Kevin to be a tour guide at the stop of your choice.

Assembly Location/Time: Centreville Library parking lot at 7 AM (consolidate riders). If you choose to drive directly to Gettysburg, meet outside the Gettysburg National Battlefield Park Visitors Center at 9:00 AM.

Tour Duration: 9 AM to 4:30 PM

Lunch: Buffet lunch at Gettysbrew Pub (approximately \$12).

Terrain: Hills (Little Round Top), rocks (Devil's Den), fields, trails, rock fences. Extensive walking. You will understand the terrain!

Sign-up deadline: 10 May. Sign up sheets will be available at the 12 April General Membership Meeting or telephone/e-mail Kevin Anastas.

Contact: Kevin Anastas at (703) 266-1265. E-mail KPA1@erols.com

PRESERVATION CORNER

FINALLY, SOME “GOOD” PRESERVATION NEWS FROM ALEXANDRIA: CIVIL WAR SITE SAVED (MOSTLY)

By: John McAnaw

The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit land trust dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural resources of Northern Virginia. The NVCT mailing address is:

4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Tel. No: (703) 354-5093
FAX: (703) 354-5169

The NVCT has been working for months with a development firm called Carrhomes, Inc., and the Seminary Hills Civic Association to preserve an important Civil War site in the West End section of the City of Alexandria. The 7-acre site includes Union breastworks, an artillery emplacement and a wooded stream valley located at the headwaters of Strawberry Run. This stream is a tributary of Cameron Run.

A nationally recognized architect, the late Charles E. Goodman was the previous owner of the property that also included a 19th century farmhouse, gardens, expansive lawns and many mature trees. When the property was placed on the market, it was valued at \$6 million.

According to Stephen Ness of Carrhomes, plans to develop the Goodman estate consisted of “clustering” seven homes, with lots smaller than that allowed by-right zoning, on the open high ground of the development site. Thus, the special property features, described above, would be left undisturbed. These plans were acceptable to both the Seminary Hill Civic Association and the NVCT. Carrhomes’ plans won quick approval from the City Council of Alexandria.

Information for this article was obtained from Winter 2001 publication of The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (Volume 4, Issue 1).

MOST ENDANGERED CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS

By: John McAnaw

In February 2001 the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) published its list of the 25 most endangered battlefields. In evaluating each site, the CWPT used a study prepared by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) that prioritized battlefields based on their historic importance and state of preservation. Battlefields are rated from Priority I (sites considered most threatened) to Priority IV (sites considered lost). Further the CWSAC system ranks battlefields from A (most significant to the course of the war) to D (sites of local importance).

The TOP TEN most endangered battlefields are as shown (Asterisk denote Virginia sites):

1. Allatouna, GA (I, B)
2. Brice’s Cross Roads, MS (I, B)
3. Fort Fisher, NC (IV, A)
4. Gettysburg, PA (I, A)
5. Harpers Ferry, WV (I, B)
- *6. Loudon Valley, VA (III.C)
7. Mansfield, LA (II, A)
8. Raymond, MS (I, B)
9. Murfreesboro, TN (IV, A)
(Stones River)
- *10. The Wilderness, VA (I, A)

The other 15 battlefields listed by the CWPT are:

1. Bentonville, NC
- *2. Bristoe Station, VA
3. Buffington Island, OH
- *4. Cedar Creek, VA
- *5. Chancellorsville, VA
6. Corinth, MS
7. Fort Heiman, KY
8. Franklin, TN
9. Lovejoy’s Station, GA
- *10. New Market Heights, VA
11. Newtonia, MD
12. Parker’s Cross Roads, TN
13. Port Hudson, LA
14. Spring Hill, TN
- *15. Stephenson’s Depot, VA

I believe consideration should also be given to the inclusion of the following endangered battlefields:

1. Blackburn’s Ford/Grigsby Hill, VA

2. Ream's Station, VA (Clear cut logging has obliterated most of the Union entrenchments in the northern part of the battlefield.)

Stand Up For Ox Hill

By: Mary Ahrens

The struggle to prevent the knowledge of our history from fading into oblivion, as you are well aware, is an ongoing battle for preservationists. This is especially true of the efforts concerning the Ox Hill Battlefield Park. Currently, the Park is lacking appropriate interpretation. Granted, there is an interpretive sign at the Monument Drive entrance, but much more is needed if this site is to truly be viewed as a historical park – as it rightfully should be considered. Visitors to the park should have the opportunity to learn the details – and be given the opportunity to appreciate – the events that transpired there on 2 September 1862.

In light of cost overruns elsewhere in the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) the BRCWRT is concerned about the Park Authority's level of commitment to the Ox Hill Battlefield Park. Among the concerns are:

1. The reduction of funding for improvements in interpretation at Ox Hill from the original \$110K to only \$50K, meaning that \$60K has been allowed to slip away from historic interpretation to other park projects.
2. Repeated delays that have pushed back the park's completion date to July 2004, ten years after the land was acquired by the board of supervisors.
3. Apparent FCPA resistance to the level of historical interpretation at the park that the BRCWRT thinks is necessary and appropriate. (Perhaps because the funding was cut???)

I would like to urge all members of the BRCWRT to stand up for Ox Hill – and not allow the historical significance of the battle to fade from our collective memories. Please, take the time to write to the Park Authority Director, the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the Supervisor in your district about the above mentioned concerns. We have already lost

most of the battlefield, let's not lose the knowledge of the battle as well. Thank you for your support!

Park Authority Director

Paul L. Baldino (703) 324-8700
12055 Government Center Parkway Suite 927
Fairfax, VA 22035
e-mail: pdaldi@co.fairfax.va.us

Chair At Large

Katherine K. Hanley (703) 324-2321
(703) 324-3955 (FAX)
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 530
Fairfax, VA 22035-0079
e-mail: www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov.chair.htm

Vice Chair

Mount Vernon District

Gerald W. "Gerry" Hyland (703) 780-7518
(703) 780-1491 (FAX)
Mount Vernon Governmental Center
2511 Parkers Lane
Alexandria, VA 22306
e-mail: mtvernon@co.fairfax.va.us

Braddock District

Sharon Bulova (703) 425-9300
(703) 503-9583 (FAX)
4414 Holborn Avenue
Annandale, VA 22003
e-mail: braddock@co.fairfax.va.us

Mason District

Penelope A. "Penny" Gross (703) 256-7717
Mason Governmental Center
6507 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22033
(703) 354-8419 (FAX)
e-mail: mason@co.fairfax.va.us

Dranesville District

Stuart Mendelsohn (703) 356-0551
(703) 821-4275 (FAX)
McLean Governmental Center
1437 Balls Hill Road
Mc Lean, VA 22101
e-mail: stuart.mendelsohn@co.fairfax.va.us

Hunter Mill District

Cathy M. Hudgins (703) 478-0283
(703) 471-6847 (FAX)
North County Governmental Center
12000 Bowman Town Drive
Reston, VA 20190-3307
e-mail: hntmill@co.fairfax.va.us

Lee District

Dana Kaufman (703) 971-6262
(703) 971-3032 (FAX)
Franconia Governmental Center
6121 Franconia Road
Alexandria, VA 22310
e-mail: leedist@co.fairfax.va.us

Providence District

Gerald Connolly (703) 560-6946
(703) 207-3541 (FAX)
8739 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031
e-mail: provdist@co.fairfax.va.us

Springfield District

Elaine McConnell (703) 451-8873
(703) 451-3047 (FAX)
West Springfield Governmental Center
6140 Rolling Road
Springfield, VA 22152
e-mail: springfield@co.fairfax.va.us

Sully District

Michael R. Frey (703) 378-9393
(703) 803-9216 (FAX)
Fort Building
5900 Centreville Road, Suite #205
Centreville, VA 20121-2425
e-mail: bcorg@co.fairfax.va.us

BLENHEIM RESEARCH UPDATE

By: Mary Ahrens

The organization tasked with unearthing the identities of the men whose signatures appear on the walls of the Blenheim House in Fairfax City, "The Blenheim Group", has been successful thus far in verifying eighty-two Union Army soldier signatures through service and pension files. BRCWRT member, Patricia A. Gallagher is one of the dedicated researchers.

A Blenheim Civil War Weekend will be held on May 5, from 9 AM – 9 PM, and on May 6, from 9 AM – 5 PM, at the Blenheim House located at 3610 Old Lee Highway in the city of Fairfax. Admission is \$3 per person, \$5 per family and an additional \$5 for an Attic Tour. Proceeds will benefit the Blenheim Civil War Museum Capital Campaign. For more information call 1-800-545-7950.

FLASHBACK 1861

April 1861

By: Mike Duggan

The seven-state Confederacy is acting much like a nation, complete with government, President, Constitution, people, and territory. In Washington, President Lincoln is trying to mold and shape his new administration.

4 Apr. – President Lincoln drafts a letter to the commander of Fort Sumter, Maj. Robert Anderson, stating that an expedition to provision the fort will go forward.

7 Apr. – At Charleston, Confederate Gen. Beauregard tells Maj. Anderson that no further communication between Ft. Sumter and that city will be permitted.

8 Apr. – Lincoln's message to South Carolina governor Pickens states that Fort Sumter will be re-supplied but not reinforced unless there is resistance. Message is passed to Beauregard.

10 Apr. – From Montgomery, Sec. of War Walker telegraphs Beauregard that if he is certain Ft. Sumter is to be re-supplied, "you will at once demand its evacuation, and if this is refused, proceed, in such manner as you may determine, to reduce it."

11 Apr. – The Confederates demand surrender of Fort Sumter. Anderson refuses.

12 Apr. – At 4:30 AM, The Confederates open fire on Sumter, signaling the start of the Civil War. Out at sea, the Federal relief fleet is in sight, but not involved in the action.

13 Apr. – After 34 hours of bombardment Sumter surrenders.

14 Apr. – After the formal surrender ceremony, the Federal prisoners board ships and sail northward.

15 Apr. – Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring that an insurrection exists, and calls for 75,000 militia from the northern states.

16 Apr. – Virginia officially refuses Lincoln's call for militia.

Local Events – April 1861

By: Mary Ahrens

17 Apr. – The Virginia State Convention adopts an ordinance of secession by a vote of 88 to 55, providing for a popular referendum on 23 May, virtually putting Virginia in the Confederacy.

18 Apr. – The US Armory at Harper's Ferry, VA, is abandoned and burned by its garrison, but much of the machinery is left intact.

-- Francis P. Blair, acting for the President, offers Col. Robert E. Lee command of the field army the US is forming to put down the rebellion.

19 Apr. – Lincoln initiates a blockade of southern ports.

-- As the 6th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment moves through Baltimore on its way to the Washington Depot, they are attacked by pro-secessionists. At least 4 soldiers and 9 civilians are killed.

20 Apr. – Robert E. Lee formally resigns his commission in the US Army.

-- Near Norfolk, several ships are burned or scuttled by the Federal garrison to prevent capture, one is the USS Merrimack which the Confederates will re-float and rename the CSS Virginia.

23 Apr. – Lee, now a Maj. Gen. of Virginia troops, is formally assigned to command the military forces of the state.

27 Apr. – For reasons of public safety, Lincoln suspends the writ of habeas corpus, along a line from Philadelphia to Washington.

29 Apr. – In an address to the second session of the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy President Davis states “. . . we protest solemnly in the fate of mankind that we desire peace at any sacrifice save that of honor and independence . . . all we ask is to be let alone.”

Source: The Civil War Day By Day: An Almanac 1861-1865; E.B. Long with Barbara Long.

13 Apr. – The telegraph dispatch announcing the hostilities at Fort Sumter is posted on the bulletin board of the *Alexandria Gazette*.

-- A seven-gun salute is fired in honor of the attack.

17 Apr. – The Confederate flag is hoisted in Alexandria.

18 Apr. – Virginia and Maryland residents, especially those upon rivers and within easy access of the enemy are urged to plan defenses. Earthworks are recommended.

-- The *Alexandria Gazette* announces the passage of the Virginia Ordinance of Secession. Private residences are illuminated that night in honor of the Ordinance.

22 Apr. – Ft. Washington artillery, on the Maryland side of the Potomac, is heard for the first time. The signal guns are firing warnings at commercial vessels in an effort to compel the ships to stop at the fort for cargo inspection.

25 Apr. – Northern natives are leaving Fairfax County for fear of being accosted.

THE VIEW FROM WAY BACK

Grant's Fort Donelson Council of War

By: Keith Young

A Scotch traveler on a visit to the United States, furnished the following anecdote of General Grant:

"The day before Grant attacked Fort Donelson, the troops had marched twenty miles, part of it during a bitter cold night. Grant called a council of war, to consider whether they should attack the fort at once, or should give the troops a day or two's rest. The officers were in favor of resting. Grant said nothing till they had all given their opinion; then he said: 'There is a deserter come in this morning-- let us see him, and hear what he has to say.' When he came in, Grant looked into his knapsack. 'Where are you from?' 'Fort Donelson.' 'Six days' rations in your

knapsack, have you not my man?' 'Yes, sir.' 'When were they served out?' 'Yesterday morning.' 'Were the same rations served out to all the troops?'

'Yes, sir.' 'Gentlemen,' said Grant, 'troops do not have six days' rations served out to them in a fort if they mean to stay there. These men mean to retreat-not to fight. We will attack at once.'

-- *The Civil War in Song and Story, 1860-1865*, by Frank Moore, 1882--

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Luminaria at the Fredericksburg National Cemetery – BRCWRT Presence Requested A note from BRCWRT President John McAnaw

On Saturday, 26 May 2001, the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County National Military Park (F&SCNMP) staff will sponsor a luminaria at the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. At sunset, candles will be placed on each of the 15,300 graves in the cemetery and a military bugler will play "Taps" every half hour during the program which will last from 8 PM – 11PM.

This is the first time area Civil War Round Tables have been invited to participate in the event. Staff historian, Donald C. Pfanz asks that a team of four to six members attend in order to man one of the six stops on the tour. Each team member will be given a one- page fact sheet on a particular aspect of the cemetery's history that they should memorize for their two-minute presentation. They should not read the printed material except in cases where there is a quote. In a nutshell, participants must be at least 16 years old, have a strong voice, be accustomed to speaking in public, and have a reasonably good memory.

The schedule for team participants on 26 May 2001 is as shown:

- 6 PM – Mandatory meeting to familiarize participants with their roles.
- 7 PM – Issuance of equipment.
- 7:45 PM – Team mans designated post, "locked and loaded."

- 8PM – Cemetery opens to the public.

- 11 PM – Cemetery closes to public. Turn in equipment and dismissal will follow.

Note: Team participant "should dress casually, but in nice clothes (i.e. no jeans, cut offs, T-shirts, etc.)"

I strongly encourage members to participate in this memorable event. If you want to be part of the BRCWRT Team, please notify me no later than 12 April 2001. My deadline to the F&SCNMP project officer, Donald Pfanz, is 15 April 2001.

Note: If you plan to attend an event please verify the information given in this column by calling the telephone number provided.

Through Sep 2002 – Arlington National Cemetery Exhibit: "TAPS – The Military Bugle in History and Ceremony." Info: (410) 744-7708.

7-8 Apr – Sat: 9 AM - 5 PM/Sun: 10 AM to 4 PM
29th Annual Civil War Memorabilia, Relics, Books, Art, and Antique Weapons Show. Capitol Expo Center, Chantilly. Info: (703) 823-1958.

7 Apr – 11 AM – 1 PM Aquia Episcopal Church. (Stafford) Free tour of the beautiful historic church whose history spans both the Colonial and Civil War eras. Info: (540) 659-4007

22 Apr – 5 PM - 7 PM Aquia Episcopal Church (Stafford) Special Candlelight tour.

22 Apr – 1 PM Manassas National Battlefield Park 5-mile guided hike through the First Manassas battlefield. Rain or shine. Bring water, appropriate footwear. \$2 admission fee Info: (703) 361-0993.

The following events will be held at the Museum of the Confederacy, 1201 E. Clay St., Richmond, VA 23219. For info call (804) 649-1861.

Through 2001 – "R.E. Lee: The Exhibition." Display includes family letters, Confederate service and post war items, his Appomattox sword and death mask. Info: (804) 649-1861

7 Apr – 2:00 PM The Richmond Bread Riot, 1863.