



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XIII, Issue 7—October 2006

## DISTINGUISHED HISTORIAN RESCUES CONFEDERATE GENERAL FROM OBSCURITY

By John McAnaw

We are honored to have historian Gregg Clemmer as our guest speaker at our 12 October meeting. He is a native of Staunton, Virginia and a graduate of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. Gregg is the descendant of 14 Confederate ancestors who served with the Army of Northern Virginia in the Stonewall Brigade and that of BG Lewis Armistead.

Gregg has authored four books, including two that have received much critical acclaim from fellow historians. One is *Valor in Gray: The Recipients of the Confederate Medal of Honor*. The other is a superb biography (and the subject of Gregg's talk) titled: *Old Alleghany: The Life and Wars of General Ed Johnson*. Cited biography received the 2005 Douglas Southall Freeman History Award as the book of greatest merit regarding southern history for that year.

Of note: Gregg is past Historian-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. He is also an active member in other hereditary and patriotic organizations, including the Aztec Club of 1847 and the Society of the Cincinnati. Gregg resides in Darnestown, MD with his wife Heidi, daughter Jill and son Daniel. Gregg Clemmer has done a great service to serious students of the American Civil War by writing a superb (and meticulously researched) biography of an all but forgotten Confederate warrior—MG Edward "Old Alleghany" Johnson. His opus is over 700 pages in length. I strongly recommend Gregg's book to all members of the BRCWRT.

MG Edward Johnson, aka *Old Clubby*, *Hickory Club*, *Brute* and *Fence Rail* was a formidable combat leader. Dr. Douglas S. Freeman called Johnson a "curious, uncouth and fascinating man." Historian Harry Pfanz commented that Johnson was a "character in an army that had more than its full share of eccentric generals."

Gen Robert E. Lee and LTG Thomas J. Jackson both praised the soldierly qualities of Johnson. Gregg Clemmer noted that a private soldier from the valley remembered Johnson as a irascible character who "always carried a big hickory club or cane, and when he got mad could work his ears like a mule."

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12

7:00 P.M. Centreville Library

GUEST SPEAKER:

**Gregg S. Clemmer**

TOPIC:

**Old Alleghany: The Life and  
Wars of General Ed Johnson,  
C.S.A.**

**Book sales and autographing at meeting**

Join us on Thursday, 12 October, at 7:00 pm for an outstanding presentation on a talented and memorable Confederate combat leader who has finally received the recognition that he deserved—MG Edward Johnson. Do not miss the 12 October meeting.



A good time was had by all aboard the *Potomac Belle* for our cruise Saturday, Sept. 30 to view sites of Fort Washington and Fort Foote. Thanks RT member and Skipper Lyle Loveall and boat owner George Stevens! Great tour commentary Kevin Anastas! Thanks Janet Greentree for the photo!

## BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE Executive Committee

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

**General Membership meetings** are held at  
7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the  
month at:

**The Centreville Regional Library**  
**14200 St. Germain Drive**  
**Centreville, VA 20121-2299**  
**703.803.2223**

For specific meeting dates and information,  
please visit the WEBSITE:

<http://bullruncwrt.org>

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**9 NOVEMBER 2006**

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

**DR. JOSEPH WHITEHORNE**

**TOPIC:**

**INTERSTATE WARFARE  
GENERAL AVERELL'S 1863 RAID  
ON SALEM, VIRGINIA**



## ROUND TABLE BOOK SALES

Please remember to bring your used Civil War books to our meetings to aid in our ongoing book sales. Besides helping to raise money for the BRCWRT, these books help raise our members' understanding of the Civil War.  
Thank You.



## JOIN US AT THE BORDER CAFE

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 for dinner? Join the BRCWRT board and our monthly guest speaker for good food and camaraderie.

We are currently meeting at The Border Cafe at 5:15 p.m. just across Lee Highway from the library. **Space is limited so RSVP** to Dale Maschino at smasch1verizon.net or 703.734.3244 no later than Tuesday before each meeting.

Of course, it's always Dutch treat for the 'cheap and the proud'! Bring cash to get us in and out quickly.



## SUBMISSION DEADLINE For November 2006 Issue

E-mail Articles By 9:00 A.M. Monday, Oct. 30

To [scox@capitalav.com](mailto:scox@capitalav.com)

If you do not receive an acknowledgment of your e-mail article by Oct. 31, please call Sandra at 703.675.0702 (cell) or 540.752.9500 in Fredericksburg (Capital AV) as it may have been blocked by company software.

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## The President's Column

### By John P. McAnaw

August and September were very eventful months for our Round Table. First, I want to thank those members who actively tried to recruit individuals to join our organization. As a consequence, BRCWRT membership for 2006 has exceeded our goal of 200!! I extend my personal thanks to Vice President Charlie Balch who spearheaded our recruiting/retention efforts.

We are now in the home stretch of our tour season for 2006. Only one more featured tour is scheduled for this year. As noted on page 4 in this newsletter, that **tour is slated for 28 October**. On that date the inimitable **Bud Hall** will lead us on a tour of various 1863-1864 winter encampment sites of the Union Army of the Potomac, plus other interesting locations in Culpeper County.

I extend my thanks and congratulations to the following for their commendable efforts regarding the following recent field trips/excursions:

**David Born** for the eye-opening tour of Sailors Creek plus other sites of the 5-9 April 1865 phase of the Appomattox Campaign.

**Kevin Anastas and his "wounded" brother Chuck**, for the outstanding tour on 23 September of the Antietam Battlefield.

**Lyle Loveall and Kevin Anastas** for the enjoyable Potomac River excursion on 30 September aboard the Potomac Belle (with Skipper Lyle at the helm).

Our guest speakers for our monthly meetings on 10 August (**Greg Mertz**) and 14 September (**Jim Burgess**) had excellent turnouts. Both of these talented National Park Service historians made informative and thought provoking presentations. Attendance was as follows: 10 August – 63, 14 September – 77. I extend my thanks to both.



Mertz Photo by Janet Greentree



Burgess Photo provided by Mark Trbovich

I believe most members are well aware of the BRCWRT's efforts to preserve our priceless yet vanishing Civil War heritage. I need not recount the sites that we

have fought to preserve over the years. At present our top priority is the preservation of the remaining Civil War sites in and peripheral to the present day Centreville Historic Overlay District. At least as far back as 1935 the National Park Service expressed its intent to include these sites within what is now the Manassas National Battlefield Park. Legislation introduced by members of the U.S. Congress to preserve Civil War sites even predates efforts by the National Park Service described above.

#### Since 1986 there has been continuing destruction of Civil War sites in the Centreville area.

This area has been steadily bleeding from a thousand developer cuts for the past 20 years. While the damage to our national heritage has been immense, enough sites remain in the area around the old Civil War village of Centreville and near St. John Episcopal Church to put together a first class "Gateway Heritage Park" -- owned and operated by Fairfax County.

This is why we are so adamantly opposed to the request by NVP Inc. to rezone a 3.68 acre tract near St. John Episcopal Church, a.k.a. the "Rice Tract". A large part of the last remaining Confederate regimental winter camp in Fairfax County is on this property. If, as proposed, nine homes are constructed on this tract, the creation of a viable "Gateway Heritage Park" would be much more difficult.

The scheduled date for this rezoning action to come before the Board of Supervisors has been changed numerous times. **At present, NVP Inc's rezoning request is scheduled to come before the Board of Supervisors on 20 November (Thanksgiving Week)**. I ask for the continued support of round Table members in opposing this outrageous request. We must win this battle!



### WELCOME NEW BRCWRT MEMBERS!

Lance Carroll

Jill Hilliard

Jeff Hunt

Bill Johnson

Tom Lennon

Kenneth Smith

Tim O'Hearn

**Now over 200 members!**



## CONNECTING TO OUR PAST.....

By Janet Greentree

### Meet CHARLIE BALCH



Charlie Balch gets the distinction of being the second person profiled in this series as he was the second person to turn in his questionnaire. He was born in the Midwest in Oak Park, Illinois. He can tell you the year if he wants. I'm not telling!

Charlie is married to Ann, and has three sons, and two grandchildren. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1962 and received his MBA in 1963. He was on active duty in the Army in 1963 and in the Reserves from 1963-69.

He worked as a consultant for Accenture for nearly thirty years. He was in charge of their Banking and Financial Services Industry consulting worldwide from 1975-1991 which entailed lots and lots of travel. Now he is retired as a new Virginian but formerly lived near Chicago, Cleveland, and Atlanta.

His interest in the Civil War began while living in the Atlanta area. He was the chairman of the Historic Preservation Committee for the Sandy Springs Foundation. His achievements with the Committee included researching CW activities on the north side of Atlanta; writing and placing historic signs in the area for all 100 + year old homes; and, producing a 45 minute driving tour tape giving the history of the homes and sites in Sandy Springs many of which had CW connections.

December, 2001, Charlie moved to Northern Virginia, joined our group in 2002, and became our Vice President in 2004 through the present.

Pictured above while leading a hike to Great Falls National Park, Charlie is an active volunteer with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, serving as a hike leader and manning the sales desk on Thursday.

He has no known ancestors who fought in the Civil War, but his wife's paternal great-grandfather, Harvey M. Trimble, was the Adjutant of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of the Illinois Volunteer Infantry out of Bureau Co., IL.

It is documented that he was on every march and battle of that unit throughout the war.

Joshua Chamberlain is Charlie's favorite person in the war. The last CW book he read was *Team of Rivals – The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*.

His latest project is writing a script and assisting in production of a video of the CW history along Hunter Mill Road in Oakton, VA. He has also presented preservation positions for Ox Hill and Centreville, edited the interpretative signs for the Ox Hill Battlefield, and gone on CW hikes and tours with our group, the Smithsonian, and Don Hakenson's Mosby Tours.



## MARCHING ORDERS

### UNION WINTER ENCAMPMENTS AND OTHER CIVIL WAR SITES IN CULPEPER COUNTY

**DATE/TOUR DURATION:** 28 October  
2006 / 9:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

**ASSEMBLY LOCATION/TIME:** Centreville  
Regional Library 7:45 a.m., Carpooling encouraged

**CHIEF TOUR GUIDE:** Bud Hall

**STARTING POINT OF TOUR:** McDonald's  
Restaurant in Opal, VA. Located on west side of  
U.S. Hwy 29 at the intersection of U.S. Hwy 17.

**ARRIVAL TIME AT START POINT  
(McDonald's) FOR TOUR:** 8:46 A.M.

**IN EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER:**  
Call Tour Coordinator, John McAnaw, at (703)  
978-3371. Either he or the answering machine  
message will advise the caller.

**ATTIRE:** Sturdy footwear and warm layered  
clothing recommended. Expect considerable  
cross-country walking. Be prepared for precipita-  
tion.

**LUNCH:** Bring brown bag meal (no fast food  
available), water and energy snack.

**DEGREE OF EXERTION:** Considerable.  
Members with cardio-vascular or respiratory ail-  
ments should not participate in this tour.

**MORE INFORMATION:** Contact John  
McAnaw at (703) 978-3371. Sign up at the meet-  
ing or on line at <http://bullruncwrt.org>.

## THE HISTORY OF THE REBEL YELL

By Bill Etue

What tips the scales in a battle lost, or a battle won, is often some obscure factor. The South was always anxious to involve any device that might tip their battles toward victory. Along with oddball inventions, long-shot tactics and maverick leadership, must be included the power of the Rebel Yell.

Thousands of rebel voices in a deafening cacophony of sound rushing toward unseasoned young Yankee troops was sometimes enough to have them stampede away before the first bullet was shot. The Rebel Yell has earned its place in the history of successful, if goofy, tactics of war. But where did it all start, and what did it sound like?

Fortunately a recording of the yell, said to be the only one in existence from the voice of a rebel soldier, was made in 1935 of Civil War veteran Thomas N. Alexander, Private Co. I, 37<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regiment. The occasion was a meeting of the Sons of Confederate Veterans held in 1935. Alexander was reportedly a very active member of the SCV. The general manager of radio station WBT in Charlotte, NC attended the meeting and recorded the yell.

At the time, Alexander was 90 years old. His first recollection of hearing the yell was at the 1862 Seven Days Battle of Gaines Mill. Alexander said that whenever the Yankees heard the Rebel Yell, "they would fly", meaning run away. This recording can still be heard today as a "wave file" on the internet at [http://www.26nc.org/History/RebelYell/RebelYell\\_1.wav](http://www.26nc.org/History/RebelYell/RebelYell_1.wav)

As to the origin of the Rebel Yell, until recently it was attributed to Jousting competition that used to be held before the war in Loudoun County, Virginia at the estate named Greengarden, which was the family home of Major Adolphus "Dolly" Richards, one of Mosby's most able officers. Greengarden, at 32469 Greengarden Road in Upperville, still stands as a magnificent antebellum estate house. It is privately owned and public access is not allowed. The current owners, though "history friendly", only make the home open to the public at times and events of their choosing, and like their privacy.

It was at Greengarden, before the war, that joustiers, many of whom later became confederate officers, used the yell to encourage themselves as they rode their horses in jousting competition. The famous "trap door" in the closet is still here at Greengarden where Dolly and other rangers would access the cellar until enemy troops were gone.

Colonel Turner Ashby Jr., was a part of this jousting scene. (Turner Ashby Jr. was in the Civil War, Turner Ashby Sr. was a Colonel during the War of 1812). Recently, historian Audrey Bergner of Middleburg, in researching the life of Turner Ashby Jr., has connected his

use of the yell to an even earlier period of time when he was training his vigilante cavalry company of his friends known as "the Mountain Rangers". The rangers were absorbed into the Virginia Militia in 1859 following John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry.

Jousting, the official state sport in Maryland, has a very strong showing in Virginia as well. Each year a new "National Champion" is crowned, many of them in past years coming from Virginia. Loudoun County has a long history of Jousting. The National Jousting Association competition has made a permanent home at the Mount Zion Church grounds in Aldie, Loudoun County, Virginia. Their annual competition event will be held there on Saturday, October 14 this year. The Mt. Zion Church Preservation Association recently purchased 88 acres of land adjacent to the church to protect it from development. One of the fields on that land is ideal for jousting and is currently being worked on for the October 14 event.



Photo provided by Bill Etue

Records show that Jousting competitions were held at Mount Zion Church in the 1800's. So this will be a reuniting of the historic sport with the land where it was so popular long ago. If the yell is heard this October at Mount Zion (take your pick – jousting yell or rebel yell) perhaps the ghost of John Mosby, reportedly often seen around the church, will come out to see what all the noise is about.

**DON'T BE A BRCWRT TOUR NO-SHOW!  
IF YOU SIGN UP AND CAN'T MAKE IT,  
CANCEL ON LINE OR CALL THE CHIEF  
TOUR GUIDE.**

### A THOUGHT!

At the start of the war, the value of all manufactured goods produced in all the Confederate states added up to less than one-fourth of those produced in New York State alone.

## ANTIETAM AFTER ACTION REPORT

By Maureen Quinn

On the first day of autumn, Saturday, September 23, 2006, BRCWRT Tour Guide, Kevin Anastas, kicked off the 2006 Fall Tour. This year's stop was Antietam and for those who haven't been to this battlefield in a few years, it was well worth the time. Once again, Kevin was aided by two capable assistants: his brother Chuck, all the way from North Carolina, and member Bill Carritte, who had the honor of trucking all of the maps around the field – in the rain – all day! Thanks to both of these guys for their stalwart support!

During the orientation at the beginning of the tour, *Kevin pointed out that 60% of the property that makes up the current battlefield has been acquired during the last 12 years!* A remarkable feat of preservation! Some of those acquisitions make it possible to walk more parts of the field and see a lot more of the battlefield from the perspective of the soldiers who fought there.

Starting behind the Visitors' Center, Kevin gave us an overview of the battle and used the high ground on that part of the field to show how the battle unfolded during the course of the day. Most of those parts of the field were clearly visible from this excellent vantage point. During the introduction, Kevin highlighted the three phases of the battle: the morning phase, which began around dawn at the north end of the field, the mid-day portion of the battle, which took place between 9:30 and 1:00 and was basically an east-west movement that culminated in the battle at the Sunken Road. The third and closing part of the battle took place in the afternoon, the armies battling south around Burnside Bridge. *A theme that ran through the tour – mainly because it ran through the battle – was McClellan's lack of a clear plan of battle.*

For ease of movement around the field, we did not follow the battle chronologically; instead, we walked a clock-wise route starting at the **Dunker Church**. The church, built in 1852, was a well-noted landmark by soldiers of both sides. In fact, it was a major objective for troops of both armies during the course of the day. Kevin noted that the original structure was blown down during a storm; an intermediary structure (a store!) was built on the spot until THAT was finally torn down and replaced with the present church, which was reconstructed from original materials about 1961.

**The West Woods.** This part of the tour took us to a few different spots in and around the woods. Discussion centered on the 125<sup>th</sup> PA and 15<sup>th</sup> MA whose monuments immortalize troops who fought against McLaws' division on this part of the field. Both regiments suffered shocking casualties with the 125<sup>th</sup> PA at 33% and 15<sup>th</sup> MA at over 50%. The fact that these were green troops, most of whom did not yet even understand the commands being given, makes these casualty figures particularly tragic. At the last stop at the West Woods, Kevin displayed the famous photos of the dead along the Hagerstown Pike – a sobering moment as we stood in the exact spot where so many had fallen.

**The Corn Field.** A slight drizzle that had started while we were in the West Woods, became a steady drizzle but we continued to make our soggy way across the field to the scene of the worst fighting on a day that saw nothing but "the worst fighting". The undulating character of this part of the field was matched by the undulating character of the battle fought here. Both sides were repulsed again and again; both sides sent in reinforcements as their numbers were decimated, both sides contested the same ground back and forth, over and over. It was on this part of the field that Hood's Texans, who hadn't eaten in 3 days and who were about to get their first meal, were sent into the battle. One regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Texas of Wofford's brigade suffered more than 80% casualties, the highest for any regiment in the war.

**The Mumma & Roulette Farms.** The Mumma farm was burned to the ground during the battle; another remarkable piece of real estate on this field – and one that was noted by both sides in diaries and letters after the battle. The family was never reimbursed for their loss since the house was burned by Confederates, not Union soldiers. The Roulette farm, neighbor to the Mumma farm, was largely untouched during the battle – except for those beehives! Union soldiers, during their attack south toward the Sunken Road, ran square into the beehives in the farmyard. To get away from the stinging bees, the soldiers ran to safety – toward the Sunken Road. Obviously, they did not know what awaited them there!



Tour participants pose before the 125th PA Monument.

See ANTIETAM AAR, Page 7



## ANTIETAM AAR

[Continued from Page 6]

From the Roulette farm, we continued across the fields to get an idea of what the Union troops, French's men, saw as they attacked the area of the battlefield known as The Sunken Road. Only when you walk that



Charlie Balch and Dale Maschino and that's no bull!

portion of the field can you gain an understanding of how the terrain between the farms and this road clearly impacted the battle – and action in this “Bloody Lane” becomes palpable as you approach this third major landmark.

**The Sunken Road.** At this stop, we got the complete picture of both attacking and defending forces as we finished our hike across the fields to the edge of the Sunken Road. *It was here that Caldwell moved his troops from an excellent flanking position into a frontal assault! Go figure. But it was also here that Caldwell's troops battled their way into the Sunken Road to rake the Confederates with flanking fire, eventually taking the road.*



Kevin Anastas and Chuck “John B. Gordon” Anastas

And here is the spot where John B. Gordon

would be hit 4 times and remain on the field. The fifth shot, however, hit him in the face and would take him out of the fight -- and out of the war – but only for a few months. Gordon's plight was graphically illustrated by Chuck Anastas who marked each wound Gordon received during the fight while Kevin read from Gordon's memoirs. We are glad to report that Chuck survived the encounter with no permanent injuries.

As we moved to the head of the Sunken Lane, Kevin discussed the beginning of the Confederate retreat as both flanks were turned. It was in this area that another of those famous “battlefield misunderstandings” would take place. Some Confederate troops misinterpreted a command which somehow they heard as “about face, forward march”, and which they obeyed with some question. This, while Longstreet was trying to stem the retreat!

So ended the morning phase of the battle – and of our tour. After a short break for lunch everyone reconvened at -- **Burnside Bridge**. Although numbers vary on the attacks made at this spot, Kevin presented his interpretation as 3 separate attacks, with the final and successful assault made by the West Point dance instructor, Col Edward Ferraro and his 51<sup>st</sup> NY and 51<sup>st</sup> PA. The assault broke through at about 1:00 PM against the Georgia sharpshooters arrayed along the high ground just over the bridge. *Kevin made the point that over 9,000 Union troops attacked about 400 Georgians at the Bridge and this begs a couple of questions: Why didn't Burnside attack sooner? Why wasn't he better prepared? Why would an entire brigade (Crook's) get lost and miss the bridge entirely?* The answers continue to elude us.

**AP Hill Arrives.** We moved to one of our last stops to view the area where Hill made his arrival on the field – in the nick of time! Kevin discussed the fact that even though Burnside had a GREAT advantage in numbers, two major occurrences pretty much negated his advantage: AP Hill's fortuitous arrival on the field to stem the retreat and rally the Confederates, and the Union's accumulated lost time all during the day. The second point would prove to be the most onerous for the Union and would sabotage their chances for a clear victory.

**Final Stop, Antietam National Cemetery.** From this vantage point, Kevin pointed out another of the preservation successes of the battlefield, the “Final Attack Trail”, noting that the trail opened a year ago and is a valuable piece of ground showing Burnside's line of attack. To close out the discussion of Burnside's Bridge and Hill's approach, *Kevin highlighted the fact that Hill's counterattack protected Lee's only line of retreat back across the Potomac.* Lee defiantly waited an extra day before making his crossing back into Virginia. Burnside could do nothing but hold the high ground in front of the Bridge. McClellan, to no one's surprise, did not move.

**See ANTIETAM AAR, Page 12**

## LAURA RATCLIFFE'S HOUSE

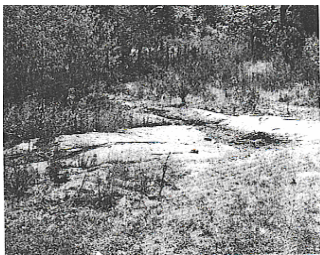
by Mark Knowles

Southern hospitality is alive and well! Several members from the Round Table had the pleasure of spending a quiet afternoon sipping tea and touring the house and grounds of Merrybrook with the current owners, Dave and Winnie Meiselman. Merrybrook is the last known surviving house owned by Laura Ratcliffe.

Born May 28, 1836, Laura is best known for her work as a Confederate spy, providing information to Cavalry General J.E.B Stuart and Colonel Mosby.

She met Stuart while volunteering as a nurse in Stuart's 1861 winter camp "Camp Qui Vive" located at the site currently known as the Fairfax dump on West Ox Road. Their friendship deepened during the war, to a point where Mrs. Stuart became concerned. Local folklore has Stuart proposing marriage to Laura with a date to be determined after the war, but she refused the offer.

A large rock formation about one mile south of Laura's house, known as Mosby's Rock, was used as a sporadic meeting place for Col. Mosby and his men, as well as a message drop. The suspected rock outcropping still exists, but is surrounded by townhouses.



c. unknown



Sept. 2006

Laura's family owned many properties between Frying Pan (area known today as Floris) and Chantilly, VA. Both Stuart & Mosby used one of the Ratcliffe homes as an informal meeting place. The home that Laura was thought to have lived in during the war no longer stands. The suspected homestead is currently occupied by the Worldgate Shopping Center in Herndon, VA.

By war's end, the Ratcliffe properties were worn down and in need of repair. Laura's financial situation was bleak, and she spent her time taking care of her mother & invalid sister. A local neighbor, Milton Hannah, fought for the Union army and made a small fortune (unknown at this writing). Milton had a fondness for Laura & compassion for her current situation. He built an addition on property after the war to help Laura take care of her family. Ownership of the Property during the war is not clear to this writer. However, the property was known as Brookside, and was later renamed to Merrybrook.

On December 4, 1890, Milton married Laura at the St. James Hotel in Washington, DC. Seven years later, a tragic accident would leave Milton dead. Stories conflict on how he died. Laura became a wealthy widow. She spent her time restoring her land holdings, raising crops, livestock and renting her land to local folks.

In 1914, while feeding her chickens, Laura slipped on some ice and broke her hip. She never recovered from the injury and may have spent her nine remaining years bedridden.

Laura Ratcliffe-Hanna died in August, 1923. She had lived at Merrybrook for 40 years. Her body laid in state for public

viewing in the parlor of her home. Laura's headstone can be found next to the present day Marriott Hotel parking lot, just North of the Dulles Toll road, in Herndon, VA about a quarter mile north of Merrybrook.



View of parlor – Sept. 2006

The earliest part of the house was constructed c.1793, with several more additions made during the 1800s & 1900s. One of the more fascinating aspects of the house was in the kitchen. The ceiling height didn't appear to be more than 7 feet, and was thought to be made from an old canal boat.



Left side built c. 1950's, right side Site of the earliest part of Merrybrook built by Milton Hannah c.1800's

The Meiselmans have filed for State Historic Preservation recognition and are in the process of filing for recognition on the National Register of Historic Places. They invited the round table members with the hopes of fostering an awareness of the development pressures they are facing as a result of the sale of their next door neighbor's 50 acres.

The development pressure on Merrybrook is quite evident with three sides of the 4 acre estate surrounded by four lane highways. Early plans are to rezone the 50 acres into office, hotel and restaurant establishments. There is also talk of reserving some of the land for Fairfax County use, such as ball fields.

John McAnaw discussed several options and contacts that the Meiselmans might consider using to help raise community awareness of the historic homestead. It was evident to this writer that there are many conflicting facts/stories surrounding Laura's life, and Merrybrook that warrant further research. The Round Table will keep the membership apprised on future developments with preservation efforts of Merrybrook. Stay tuned . . .

Members in attendance: John McAnaw, Mark & Yvonne Knowles, Nancy Anwyll and Bev Regeimbal.

See the November issue of  
the *Stone Wall* for the  
*Potomac Belle Cruise AAR!*



## CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL HALL MUSEUM UPDATE

From: Sam Hood, CMHM Board of Directors

On this, the one year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, the Staff and Board of Directors would like to bring you up to date on the current situation at Confederate Memorial Hall Museum.

As you know, the primary source of revenue for our museum is visitor admissions, thus, visitor traffic is the lifeblood of the museum.

The museum was closed from August 29, 2005 until January 7, 2006. The visitor traffic lost during that period was approximately 4,500. On January 7 the museum reopened on a truncated Thursday through Saturday schedule, and will soon be expanded to a Tuesday through Saturday schedule, identical to that of the nearby National D-Day Museum. Unfortunately, visitor traffic for the first 7 months of operations this year is off an astounding 81% (1,924 visitors in Jan.-July 2006 versus 9,852 visitors for the same period in 2005).

Additionally, the second largest source of revenue, the Annual Gala, was canceled in January 2006.

Now the good news. The special Relief Fund Appeal was a success, raising an amount approximately equal to the net "profit" which would have been raised by the Annual Gala. Also, with the museum operating on a reduced schedule during the first 7 months of 2006, the variable operating expenses were lower than normal. (However, the fixed operating expenses remained largely static.)

The Staff and Board of Directors enter the second post-hurricane year with a mix of guarded optimism and great apprehension. New Orleans needs its residents and tourists to return, and the museum needs visitors. Until that happens, the museum will have to rely on generous benefactors and the creativity and resolve of its Staff and Board to keep the doors open.

Words cannot express our appreciation to all of you who have supported the museum in the past year with your financial gifts, and your thoughts and prayers.

Please plan a trip to New Orleans, and visit Confederate Memorial Hall Museum.

On a personal note, I live in West Virginia, and contrary to the lyrics in the old John Denver song, it definitely is not "Almost Heaven"...except when compared to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast during these trying times! I have visited New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast three times since Katrina, and I implore all of you to provide whatever support you can for the museum staff. A letter or email of encouragement, praise or appreciation can raise their spirits immeasurably. Keep in mind that in addition to the challenges involving the museum, these good people are also trying to rebuild and restore their personal lives.

## FRIENDS OF MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK SPONSOR ANNUAL BEARSS TOUR



Don't miss Ed's tour of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville on October 30 and 31. Check out the 'Friends' website at <http://www.fmnp.org> for full details.

Photo taken by Sandra Cox during the FMNP '05 2nd Manassas Tour.

\* \* \* \*

## NEW AT THE FAIRFAX LIBRARY

BRCWRT Member **Barbara Welch** is a volunteer in the Virginia Room of the Fairfax Library and tries to read every new Civil War book she comes across. She wanted to alert other members to what's new at the Fairfax Library. You can probably find this book at the Centreville Regional Library or one near you:

***Dixie Betrayed; How the South Really Lost the Civil War*** written by David J. Eicher, published by Little, Brown & Co., in 2006, follows a recent trend in Civil War historiography that takes a single aspect of the war and expands it into an entire book. This is a study on the premise that out of all the factors contributing to the Confederacy losing the war, the most overlooked was that of internal strife. By this Eicher means the bickering among southern politicians, general officers who held personal grudges against other officers, and even state versus state. The author explores the personalities of Confederate government and military leaders showing how large egos could imperil decision-making. He also covers why this subject has been overlooked by most Civil War historians: southern writers after the war purposely neglected to mention these internal problems but instead put on rose-colored glasses when they wrote a history of the war or penned their memoirs. This is an interesting book but definitely not a comprehensive study of the war.

## OX HILL INTERPRETIVE MEETING POSTPONED; VISITOR KIOSK DOWNSIZED, TEXT QUESTIONED

By Ed Wenzel



Photo By Janet Greentree

The Fairfax County Park Authority's Ox Hill Battlefield Park Interpretive Planning Team was scheduled to meet on September 15<sup>th</sup> to finalize the "overview" text for the visitor kiosk and other issues. However, the meeting was postponed and is now set for October 6<sup>th</sup>, too late for reporting in this issue.

None-the-less, there are other important developments. On August 14<sup>th</sup>, the writer received a fax from Ox Hill Project Team leader, Michael Rierson, about site-plan waivers. Mr. Rierson stated that he had been working to eliminate the need for a Storm Water Management waiver after learning from the county that the Park Authority would have to enter into an agreement with the owner of the neighboring storm water retention pond just south of the park.

To avoid that, Mr. Rierson is reducing the size of the Ox Hill visitor kiosk, including the brick area around the kiosk. With this slight reduction of the park's impervious surfaces (paved entrance road, brick sidewalk, brick floor under the kiosk and the two future monuments) there is now no need for a storm water management facility or a waiver. Mr. Rierson hoped that SWSG Engineering could complete the site plan revision in August. The revision would show the storm water calculations that justify the lack of a storm water facility, or a waiver, for the park.

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, I called Interpretive Team leader, Mike Henry, and inquired about the kiosk. I said if the kiosk was already too small (see August/September newsletter), then how could the Park Authority downsize such an important interpretive feature? And what of the "overview" material? I reminded Mike of my July 22<sup>nd</sup> critique, calling attention to the over-generalization and omission of important information, and my suggestion that the kiosk's "overview" be broken into three parts, i.e.: Preliminary

Action, Main Battle and Aftermath. A three-part overview would require a larger kiosk, not a smaller one.

Mike replied that there could not be three overview panels. He thought the overview text, as written for one panel, was fine, but perhaps could be "tweaked" a bit. I responded that it was woefully deficient; that we have an obligation to present an overview of the preliminary action and the aftermath as well as the battle. Ox Hill is not Manassas National Battlefield Park. We won't have an orientation film shown in a visitor center, or a 3-D terrain model of the battlefield with flashing red and blue lights; or a museum; or park rangers or volunteers to answer people's questions. At Manassas, visitors get a complete overview including the preliminary action and the aftermath before they set foot on the battlefield. At Ox Hill we have a "kiosk".

The kiosk is the visitor contact station for Ox Hill. It has to present basic information needed for an intelligent overview of what happened and why. The overview may be brief, but it cannot be simplistic. Language that is too simple and sentences that are too short and choppy should be avoided. But above all, important preliminary and aftermath information, as well as the battle overview, have to be presented.

Mike countered that the park will have a web site, so we can send visitors there for the information. I disagreed and said that visitors are right there at the park; they expect to find the information there; that's what they came for. We can't shortchange them with overly simple, generalized material and then tell them to go home or to a library and consult a web site; that the Park Authority has to do better than that.

Mike replied that one third of Fairfax County's population are immigrants, and that the kiosk panels have to be written very briefly and at a simple language level because the immigrants pay one third of his salary and the Park Authority has to be responsive to them. Not believing what I had just heard, and thinking that that excuse topped all others, I gave up. I hope the members of this Round Table and other readers of the *Stonewall* can now understand the kind of Park Authority mind-set that has hindered our interpretive discussions over the past sixteen months. Be advised though, that neither the Kearny-Stevens trustees nor the BRCWRT will settle for any kiosk overview panel that omits essential information, or uses overly simple language.

Two meetings are coming up—the Interpretive Team on October 6<sup>th</sup> to finalize the kiosk text, and the Project Team (date to be determined) with the final site plan and the downsized kiosk. Look for the results of these meetings in the November newsletter.

**"We can't shortchange them with overly simple, generalized material and then tell them to go home or to a library and consult a web site; that the Park Authority has to do better than that."**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



*Note: If you plan to attend an event, please verify the information given. Advance reservation and fee may apply. If you would like an event posted, please e-mail Dale Maschino at [smasch1@verizon.net](mailto:smasch1@verizon.net).*

**7 Oct** – Richmond, grand opening of the “In the Cause of Liberty” exhibit at the American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar, Fifth and Tredegar Sts. Living history, music, and displays. Admission fee. Call 804-788-6488 or [www.tredegar.org](http://www.tredegar.org).

**7 Oct** – Tour of the Kelly’s Ford and Stevensburg area of the Brandy Station battlefield. 10 am-noon. \$5. Begins at the Graffiti House Visitor Center. Call 540-547-4106, or [www.brandystationfoundation.com](http://www.brandystationfoundation.com).

**7-8 Oct** – Richmond, living history at Drewry’s Bluff. Ranger tours and talks, encampments and demonstrations. 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 10 am-4 pm. Free. Call 804-226-1981 or [www.nps.gov/rich](http://www.nps.gov/rich).

**8-15-17-20 Oct** – New Market, “Boys, Bugles and Skirts: The Civil War in a Small Town,” living history walk with Civil War stories. 5:30 pm at the Apple Blossom Inn, 9317 N Congress. \$10 Adults. See tour web-site for other Civil War walk dates and times. [www.new-market-virginia-walking-tours.com](http://www.new-market-virginia-walking-tours.com).

**13 Oct** – “The Spirited Past of Manassas” history-themed tours of downtown. 5:30-9 pm. \$10. House tour, “Basement To Attic” tours of Liberia, a Confederate headquarters in Manassas undergoing restoration. 10 am- 4 pm. \$20. Call 703-368-1873 or, link to [www.manassasmuseum.org](http://www.manassasmuseum.org).

**13-14 Oct** – Conference, “Crossroads of War: The Civil War and the Homefront in a Mid-Atlantic Border Region,” at the Frederick Community College. The event, sponsored by the Cotocin Center for Regional Studies, includes sessions on John Brown’s raid, a Gettysburg family, the Battles of Antietam and Monocacy, and period music. A choice of Saturday afternoon tours will cover civilians and area battlefields. Noted historian Ed Bearss gives the keynote address Friday morning. Cost is \$35 per session, or \$60 both days. Lunch is included. Call 301-624-2803 or, [www.catocincenter.frederick.edu](http://www.catocincenter.frederick.edu).

**20 Oct** – Bus tour of Orange County sites, sponsored by the friends of the Wilderness Battlefield. \$65. Reservations: E-mail [dwrightmottet@aol.com](mailto:dwrightmottet@aol.com). Or call 540-972-3204.

**21 Oct** – Walking tour of the First Kernstown Battlefield at Rose Hill near Winchester. 1-4 p.m. \$6 adults. Call 888-556-5799, or [www.shenandoahmuseum.org](http://www.shenandoahmuseum.org).

**21 Oct** – Bus tour, four-hour Richmond trip includes such sites as Tredegar Iron Works and Church Hill plus a couple of battlefields. 1 p.m. Begins at the Valentine History Center, 1015 E. Clay St. \$20. Reservations Call 804-649-0711 option 4.

**28 Oct** – “The Haunting of Liberia Plantation”, lantern

tours uncover the eerie history of this 181 year-old Manassas landmark. 5:30-9 p.m. \$20. Call 703-368-1873 or [www.manassasmuseum.org](http://www.manassasmuseum.org).

**28-29 Oct** – “The Battlefield Embalmer: Preserving The Civil War Dead” at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, MD. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free with admission. Call 301-695-1864 or, [www.civilwarmed.org](http://www.civilwarmed.org).

**4 Nov** – Tour of the Buford Knoll and Yew Ridge area of the Brandy Station Battlefield. 10 a.m. to noon. \$5. Begins at the Graffiti House Visitor Center. Call 540-547-4106, or [www.brandystationfoundation.com](http://www.brandystationfoundation.com).

## PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION HOSTS TOURS

### BRISTOE STATION BATTLEFIELD TOURS

Walking tours of the Bristoe Station Battlefield will be given on **Saturday, October 14**, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and **Sunday, October 15**, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission to the program is free.

Tactical demonstrations, battlefield tours and living history displays will be held throughout the day. Parking will be available on Iron Brigade Unit Drive.

Candlelight tours will also be held Saturday night at 7 p.m., 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. Admission for the evening tours is \$3 per person and reservations are requested.

For more information please contact (703) 792-4060 or [dborn@pwcgov.org](mailto:dborn@pwcgov.org). Dave Born is the new site manager of Bristoe Station.

### BRENTSVILLE COURTHOUSE HISTORIC CENTRE NOW OPEN

The Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre is now opened to the public for site tours. **The site will be open weekends through Sunday, November 5**, from noon to 4 p.m. The site will close for the winter and reopen in the spring.

On Saturday, October 14, from 11 a.m. until 8 p.m. the Historic Preservation Division will hold an Open House. The event is free to the public and is a great opportunity to see the newly completed restoration of the courthouse and Union Church.

For more information please contact the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre at 703-365-7895 or [historicpreservation@pwcgov.org](mailto:historicpreservation@pwcgov.org).



## WENZEL'S MAP DISPLAYED AT CENTREVILLE DAYS

By Nancy Anwyll

Ed Wenzel's large handcrafted and skillfully rendered map, made with the help of Charlie Balch, showing Centreville as the central focus of Civil War historic sites in the region, was displayed in two exhibit areas of Centreville Days on September 16<sup>th</sup>.

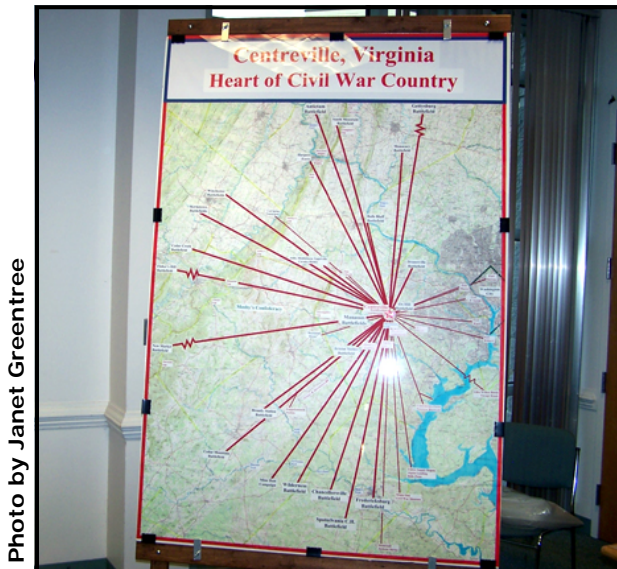


Photo by Janet Greentree

The map was first located at the Stone Church adjacent to a new Civil War Trails sign that was dedicated at 1:00 pm. After the dedication, Ed's map (Made from USGS 1:100,000 scale topographic quadrangles with graphics added) was relocated to the BRCWRT exhibit area near St. John's Episcopal Church for the rest of the afternoon where many visitors were able to view the map, ask questions and pick up information about the BRCWRT.

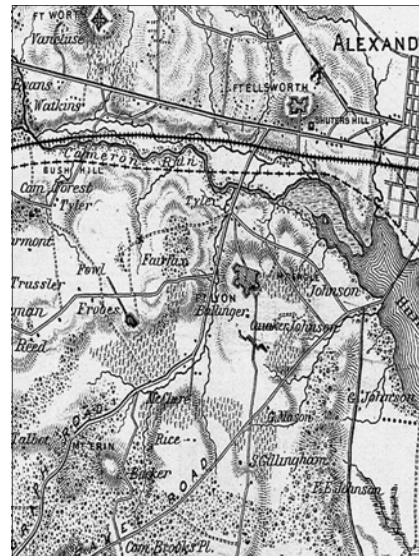
Local dignitaries, including Gerald Connolly, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and Michael R. Frey, Sully District member on the Board of Supervisors, who viewed Ed's map at the Stone Church, agreed that the map conveyed an important message about Centreville's history.

The crowds at Centreville Day were one of its largest. Ed's sign and BRCWRT volunteers helped to educate the community about Centreville's significance in the Civil War.

Mike O'Donnell gave two presentations in the Stone Church where he showed photographs of Centreville in the Civil War and the locations of soldier huts, forts, and entrenchments. John McAnaw led a walking tour of Civil War sites in Centreville in the afternoon. Keith Young, Dale Maschino, and Nancy Anwyll assisted at the exhibit area, explaining Ed's map and handing out BRCWRT brochures.

## MCDOWELL MAP OF N.E. VA—1 JAN 1862

The BRCWRT is producing and selling large, legible black and white copies of the famous McDowell Map. The copies are of a 31 x 33 inch section of the map reproduced at the original scale of 1 inch to the mile. The area covered encompasses: Haymarket to the west, Dranesville to the north, Alexandria to the east, and the confluence of the Occoquan and Potomac Rivers to the south. Order your copy at the next meeting. The cost is **\$10.00** and all proceeds go to the Round Table.



## ANTIETAM AAR [Continued from page 7]

Kevin took us on a short tour of some of the graves in the cemetery and used archival photos to match up some of the original burials on the field with their corresponding gravesites in the cemetery. He noted that of the 4,776 burials in this cemetery, approximately 38% are unknown.

**Our final stop was at the grave of Patrick Howard Roy, a Fireman Apprentice who was killed during the attack of the USS Cole.** Roy was buried in 2000. Although we spent the day walking in the paths of those who fought 144 years ago for their rights, their freedoms, and, therefore, for OUR rights and OUR freedoms, we ended the day standing at the grave of a single sailor, pondering the sacrifices for freedom that continue today.

Our Round Table's mission states that "it is our intent to honor the memory of those who gave the 'last full measure'". It is fitting that we ended our tour doing just that.

Tour participants: Kevin Anastas, Chuck Anastas, Charlie Balch, Mike Buckley, Dominic & Effie Bumbaca, Bill Carritte, Lance Carroll, Don & Marcia Clements, John De Pue, Tim Duskin, Don Franklin, Gerald & Kathi Froelke, Bob Hickey, Jill Hilliard, Dan Jenkins, Ken Jones, Michael Jones, Mark Labeda, Harland & Sharon Lenius, Tom Lennon, Lyle Loveall, Dan Lundeen, Dale Maschino, Randy Moller, Rose Nelson, Tim O'Hearn, John Pearson, Bob Persell, Maureen Quinn, Mike Rumsey, Alex Sabol, Fred Schmidtman, Mike Shannon, Ken Smith, Ed Wenzel, and Patty Wheeler.

## AFTER ACTION REPORT: TOUR OF SAILOR'S CREEK BATTLEFIELD AND OTHER SITES ASSOCIATED WITH THE 5-9 APRIL PHASE OF THE APPOMATTOX CAMPAIGN

By John McAnaw

With our shibboleths ("Strike Deep! Live Cheap!") ringing in our ears, a small band of dedicated members and guests headed out of Fairfax and Prince William Counties early on 12 August 2006 toward the tour start point at Amelia Court House. Everyone, including Chief Tour Guide David Born arrived at that location by 11:30. Following lunch on the grounds of the impressive Court House, we set out at 12:15 pm. following the route of General Lee's retreating Army of Northern Virginia during the period 5-9 April 1865.



Chief Tour Guide David Born

In addition to the Sailor's Creek Battlefield, other sites visited on 12 August included Jetersville, Amelia Springs, Deatonville, Burkeville and Farmville. Much of the afternoon and early evening was spent on the Sailor's Creek Battlefield. David Born was superb in the sequence of actions that led to the collapse of engaged Confederate forces. Incidentally, David played a major role in the improvements made relative to the interpretation of this battlefield. During part of the afternoon, Dave was assisted by another historian, – Greg Eanes.

Every member of our tour group enjoyed the time spent at Sailor's Creek Battlefield State Park. Several participants commented on how quiet it was. I did not see or hear an airplane all day. The Park's staff was very helpful and the Confederate reenactors were well trained and courteous. By the way, where else can you stand in three Counties at the same time?

To say that David Born is well known in that part of Virginia is an understatement. From Amelia C.H. through the Sailor's Creek Battlefield, and even beyond, numerous drivers and passengers waived at him as they passed by. He knew them all. I believe he would have beaten the Governor in a recognition contest. Space prevents me from covering more fully the sites associated with that "Black Day of the Army of Northern Virginia," 6 April 1865. Needless to state, this park is a "must visit" site for serious Civil War buffs. What a pleasant surprise!

We spent the night of 12-13 August in Appomat-

tox. By this point in the tour, a number of participants had to leave the group due to other commitments. This happens whenever we have an overnight tour.

We spent most of the morning of 13 August at Appomattox Court House National Historic Park (ACHNHP). This park also exceeded expectations. The natural setting of the park is quite impressive. The Court House, the McLean residence and the other buildings of this Civil War-vintage village appear to be well maintained. Also, the Visitor Center in the Old Court House is definitely worth a visit, with a staff that is courteous and knowledgeable. Summing up, we had ample time to cover the events that occurred on the terrain surrounding Appomattox C.H. during the period 8-10 April 1865. I thought that the North Carolina monument, tucked into a wooded landscape was the most impressive one in the Park. As far as I know, it is the only one erected by any of the former Confederate States.



The Surrender! Can you identify the half-hearted Yankee, er Rebel?

After departing the ACHNHP we visited several other locations, including Gen. Lee's last headquarters site, before heading for home. All told the "Strike Deep! Live Cheap!" bunch traveled 395 miles during this tour! This two day sojourn stretched us to the limit. Regardless, I think I write for our entire tour group when I state that it certainly was worth it.

The following members and guest participated in either part or the entire two day tour: Nancy Anwyll, Greg Eanes, Charlie Balch, Jay Gordon, Dom and Effie Bombaca\*, Janet Greentree, Jim Lewis, David Born, Dale Maschino, Harriett Condon, John McAnaw, Norm and Kay Cooper, Fred Schmidtman, and Mike Craven.

Note: The asterisks after the names of two tour regulars, Dom and Effie Bombaca, indicate that they were involved in an auto accident on the way to join us at Amelia Court House. Thankfully no one was injured. Since they were "participating" when the accident occurred, they are included on the list.



John McAnaw, a man outstanding in his field!

Photos taken by or provided by Janet Greentree

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## **BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

**The Stone Wall**

**P.O. Box 2147**

**Centreville, VA 20122**

### **2006 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—\$15.00. Family—\$25.00. Student (age 22 and under)—\$10.00.**

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

**Mark Knowles, Treasurer**

**169 Applegate Drive**

**Sterling, VA 20164**

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