

# ***The Knapsack***

***Raleigh Civil War Round Table***

***The same rain falls on both friend and foe.***

***November 19, 2012***  
***Our 141st Meeting***



***Volume 12***  
***Number 11***

## **Chris Fonvielle to Present at November 19 Meeting** **A Photographic History of Fort Fisher**

Our November speaker, Chris E. Fonvielle Jr., was born and raised in Wilmington, N.C.

Chris attended New Hanover High School and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, where he majored in anthropology.



Chris earned his Master's of Arts degree in American history at East Carolina University and his Ph.D. in Civil War studies at the University of South Carolina. Since 1996, he has taught in UNC Wilmington's Department of History.

Chris is the author of a number of books and articles on the Civil War, including a book published in 1997 titled *The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope* and another published in 1999, *Louis Froelich: Arms-Maker to the Confederacy*.

Chris' presentation to the Round Table is based on his most recent book, *Fort Fisher 1865: The Photographs of T.H. O'Sullivan*, published in 2011.

According to Chris, Federal forces that captured Fort Fisher were so impressed with its size and strength that the U.S. Army contracted Alexander Gardner to make a photographic history of it. One of his best photographers, Timothy H. O'Sullivan, was dispatched to do the field work on the project. The result was one of the largest collections of wartime photographs of a Confederate fort. For his book, Chris spent 30 years tracking down as many of O'Sullivan's photographs of the fort that he could locate.

*The Knapsack*

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE!**

Due to the state's observance of the Veterans Day holiday, our November meeting will be held a week later than usual. The meeting will be held on Monday, November 19. As always, visitors and guests are welcome!

### **~ Fort Fisher ~**

Fort Fisher was a Confederate fort located along the Cape Fear River that protected the important trade routes into Wilmington, N.C., during the Civil War. It was named after Col. Charles F. Fisher of the 6th North Carolina Infantry who was killed at the First Battle of Manassas in July 1861.



**32-Pound Battery**

The fort protected blockade runners throughout the war and, in 1865, it defended the last remaining supply route open to Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. When Fort Fisher fell after a massive Federal amphibious assault on Jan. 15, 1865, its defeat helped seal the Confederacy's fate.



# The Sesquicentennial



November 1862

## Burnside Assumes Command

Frustrated with Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's lack of aggressiveness, President Lincoln removes him from command of the Army of the Potomac on Nov. 5. Lincoln had been unhappy with McClellan's failure to capture Richmond in his summer offensive and his refusal to chase the defeated Confederate army following the Battle of Antietam in September.

Lincoln would replace McClellan with Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside, a Rhode Islander who had most recently commanded the Army's IX Corps.



Maj. Gen. Burnside

On Nov. 17, Confederate Secretary of War George Randolph resigned his position, angry at President Jefferson Davis' control of his department and ill with the effects of tuberculosis. During the few months that he had served as Secretary of War, Randolph was credited with improving procurement, crafting a draft law, and boosting the Confederacy's defenses. On Nov. 21, Davis appointed James A. Seddon, a lawyer from Virginia, to replace Randolph.

Also during November, Joseph E. Johnston would be given command of the reorganized Confederate Department of the West, overseeing Braxton Bragg's Army of the Tennessee and John Pemberton's Army of the Mississippi.

## Grant Eyes Vicksburg

Eying the conquest of Vicksburg, Miss., Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant occupies La Grange and Grand Junction, Tenn. La Grange was situated on a strategic high bluff and Grand Junction was an vital railroad junction that allowed for control of West Tennessee.



Grant's aim was to defeat Confederate forces in the region, gain control of the key railroad supply line, and take over the lower Mississippi River, a strategy that would effectively split the South in two.

## Midterm Elections

On Nov. 4, midterm elections were held and, for the first time since the Republican Party was founded, it lost seats in Congress.

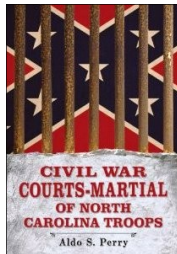


Speaker Colfax

Lincoln's party lost 22 seats in the House of Representatives, and Democrats picked up 28 of the 185 seats, a major shift. The significant losses were attributed to public dissatisfaction with the war, inflation, new taxes, the draft law, rumors of corruption, and fears of competing with slaves for jobs, among other issues. But Republicans did retain control of the House, and Rep. Schuyler Colfax of Indiana became the new Speaker. Lincoln's party did gain three seats in the Senate, as those lawmakers still were appointed by state Legislatures.

## A Unique New Resource

A new book, authored by Aldo Perry, offers a study of the courts martial of some 450 North Carolina soldiers sentenced to death during the Civil War, mostly for desertion.



The study includes details about the military crimes for which the soldiers were charged and describes the discipline they were given through military documents, letters, and other period accounts. Tales of those lucky enough to avoid their fates also are provided. The accounts are arranged by army unit, making it a valuable research tool. Perry has offered to provide a limited number of copies of the book to RCWRT members free of charge for their review. Email him at [perr7550@bellsouth.net](mailto:perr7550@bellsouth.net) if you are interested.

## Upcoming Events

**Nov. 17-18:** The CSS *Neuse* historic site in Kinston, N.C., will present a living history program titled "Fire & Metal: The Blacksmith's Role," focusing on the important role played by blacksmiths in the war effort and on the home front. Navy and Marine living history with artillery firing as well. Free. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Call (252) 522-2091 or visit <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/neuse/neuse.htm>.

**Nov. 18:** The New Bern Historical Society will host Kevin Duffus on "The Lost Light: A Civil War Mystery," a tale of the amazing odyssey of the original Cape Hatteras Lighthouse lens, which became the center of a power struggle between North and South. From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Tryon Palace's Cullman Performance Hall. For details on this free event, telephone (252) 638-8558 or go to <http://newbernhistorical.org>.

**Nov. 19:** The North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh will host Bill Brown on "Confederate Conscription Acts: A Primer," covering the 1862, 1863, and 1864 laws. Free. 10:30 a.m. For more information, call (919) 807-7310.

**Dec. 8:** The state historic site in Edenton, N.C., will host a living history artillery program featuring the Confederate Edenton Bell Battery. Call (252) 482-2637 for details or see <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/iredell/iredell.htm>.

## Antietam Photo Display

Matthew Brady's exhibit of Alexander Gardner's chilling photographs of the dead at Antietam has been restaged for the first time in 150 years. The display may be viewed at the historic Pry House museum in Keedysville, Md.

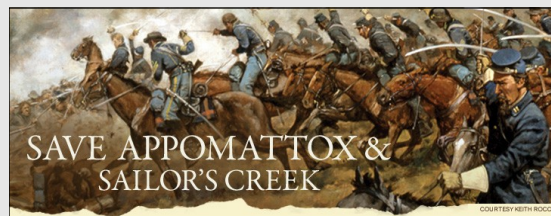


The exhibit will be available at the Pry House from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Dec. 1, after which it will be moved to the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, Md., until the end of the year.

More information is available at (301) 695-1864 or <http://waronourdoorsteps.net/the-exhibit-at-the-pry-house>.

## Preservation News

The Civil War Trust seeks to preserve 175 acres of the Appomattox Campaign battlefields, scenes of the last of the fighting in the East.



Included in the targeted property are 45 acres at Appomattox Court House where Union Gen. George A. Custer received the first Confederate flag of truce, and 130 key acres that were part of the April 6, 1865, Battle of Sailor's Creek.

The Civil War Trust's goal in this campaign is to raise \$46,198. Donations are matched 11.35 to 1.

For details on this preservation effort, visit <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/appomattox-court-house/appomattox-sailors-creek-2012>.

# News of the RCWRT



## Upcoming RCWRT Meetings

**December:** Christmas party at State Capitol

**January:** Annual event with Ed Bearss

**February:** LeRae Umfleet, Wilmington race riots

**March:** Ernie Dollar, PTSD and war's end in NC

**April:** Marvin Nicholson, the African-American experience

**May:** Sandy Barnard, a private in the Irish Brigade

**June:** Stephen Wise, blockade running

**July:** Rick Walton, Raleigh's Pettigrew Hospital

**August:** Debbi Blake, CW research at the State Archives

## Gatton Award Nominations Sought

Each year, the Raleigh Civil War Round Table honors an individual who has distinguished themselves through their work or efforts related to the study of the Civil War through its T. Harry Gatton Award. Make nominations to President Ted Kunstling, 500 Spring Valley Dr., Raleigh, NC 27609 or via email to [trkunstling@aol.com](mailto:trkunstling@aol.com). Award nominations are due by Nov. 30. The Gatton Award will be presented at our Ed Bearss event in January 2013.

## Have You Renewed?

Annual dues (\$30, individual or family; \$15, students) should have been remitted in September for the next year. If you have not renewed, please either mail your check to:

David June, Treasurer  
3912 White Chapel Way  
Raleigh, NC 27615

or, bring your check or cash to the next meeting.

## Thanks to Ashley's Art Gallery!

Ashley's Art Gallery in Fuquay-Varina, N.C., has again held a raffle of a print by famed Civil War artist John Paul Strain and donated the proceeds to the Raleigh Civil War Round Table. Our thanks to Strain and to Rick Mullen, the owner of the gallery. Visit <http://www.ashleyart.com> to see the wonderful Civil War art that Rick has to offer.



## The Knapsack

*is the official newsletter of the RCWRT and is published on Wednesday before each meeting.*

*(November 2012 Circulation: 247)*

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### RCWRT Score Card

Members	115
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The Raleigh Civil War Round Table was formed on March 12, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) "tax exempt organization." We meet on the second Monday of most months at 7:00 pm, at the N.C. Museum of History, (5 Edenton St. across from the State Capitol). Members and guests are encouraged to meet for supper at K&W Cafeteria (511 Woodburn Rd, Cameron Village) at 5:15; and for further discussion at The Mellow Mushroom (Glenwood Avenue & Peace Street) immediately after the meeting. Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$15 for students. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20.