

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table

The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

April 14, 2014
Our 158th Meeting



Volume 14
Number 4

April 14 Meeting to Feature William C. Davis Presenting “Who Was Loreta Velasquez?”

William C. “Jack” Davis, author and historian, will be the speaker at the Raleigh Civil War Round Table’s April 2014 meeting.

Jack is a native of Independence, Missouri and earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Sonoma State University in northern California. He worked for 20 years in the book and magazine industry and, in 1990, began another decade working as a writer and consultant. In 2000, he became a professor of history at Virginia



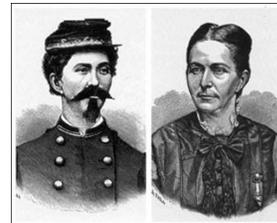
Tech, also serving as the executive director of that institution’s Virginia Center for Civil War Studies. He retired from those posts in September 2013.

Jack is the author and editor of more than 50 books on the Civil War and Southern history, including *The Battle of New Market* (1975), *Jefferson Davis: The Man and His Hour* (1991), *The Cause Lost: Myths and Realities of the Confederacy* (1996), *Lincoln’s Men: How President Lincoln Became Father to an Army and a Nation* (1999), *An Honorable Defeat: The Last Days of the Confederate Government* (2001), and *Look Away! A History of the Confederate States of America* (2002). Jack’s latest book is *Rogue Republic: How Would-Be Patriots Waged the Shortest Revolution in American History* (2011).

Jack is a three-time winner of the Jefferson Davis Award for book-length works on Confederate history, has served as a consultant for the “Civil War Journal” and several other television shows and films, and was an advisor on the designing of the U.S. postage stamp featuring Jefferson Davis, among other honors and efforts. His talk to the RCWRT at its April 14 meeting is titled “Who Was Loreta Velasquez?”

~ Loreta Velasquez: Soldier, Spy? ~

Loreta Janeta Velasquez (or Velazquez) claims to have been born in Cuba in June 1842. Most of what we know of her comes from assertions in a book she published in 1876. Are they fact or fiction?



When the Civil War began, Velasquez says that she tried to join her husband in the Confederate Army by disguising herself as a man, Lt. Harry T. Buford. She claims to have located her husband, but he was killed just a few days later in an accident. ‘Loreta’ asserts that she served as a both soldier and a spy during the war and was wounded by exploding ordnance.



The Sesquicentennial



April 1864

Massacre Alleged at Fort Pillow

On April 12, Confederate forces under Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest would capture Fort Pillow in Tennessee. The event would be known as the “Fort Pillow Massacre” because of the reported killing of black Union soldiers attempting to surrender.

Fort Pillow was located about 40 miles north of Memphis on the Mississippi River and had been controlled by both Confederate and Union forces. In March 1864, Forrest had launched a cavalry raid with about 7,000 horsemen in western Tennessee and Kentucky. As part of his efforts in the region, Forrest attacked Fort Pillow with about 2,500 men.

The Confederate cavalrymen seized the high ground around the Union defenders and killed the fort’s commander, Maj. Lionel F. Booth.



The Fort Pillow ‘Massacre’

Forrest demanded the unconditional surrender of the garrison comprised of 295 white Tennessee cavalymen and 262 U.S. Colored artillery troops, now led by Maj. William F. Bradford. After Bradford refused to surrender, the garrison was overrun and the Federal forces would suffer an extremely high rate of casualties. Only 62 black soldiers survived the fight and Union defenders claimed that many USC troops were killed while they tried to surrender.

Also in April 1864, the U.S. Senate passed the 13th Amendment, a new state constitution abolishing slavery was adopted by Louisiana, and the U.S. War Department reduced rations for Confederate prisoners following reports about the mistreatment of Federal prisoners.

Prisoner Exchange Suspended

In April 1864, Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered the halt of prisoner exchanges with the Confederate Army after he was asked to consider the matter.



Grant believed that the exchanges only prolonged the conflict. He also sought the equal treatment of black soldiers in such transfers and discovered that paroled Confederate prisoners captured at Port Hudson and Vicksburg were returned to combat and captured again a few months later. In January 1865, Grant would allow the exchanges to resume as he saw the war was winding down.

A Tragic Death

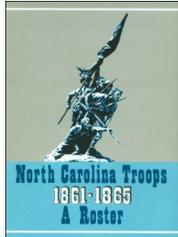
On April 30, tragedy struck the Confederate first family when President Jefferson Davis’ young son died after he fell 15 feet from a porch at the Confederate White House in Richmond, Va.



Joseph Evan Davis was five years old when he died and was said to be very bright and the best behaved of the Davis children. Although some say “Little Joe” was pushed by his older brother, Jeff, there is no evidence to support that rumor.

New N.C. Troops Title Out

The N.C. Office of Archives and History has made available “Volume XIX: Miscellaneous Battalions and Companies,” the latest in its series on North Carolina troops who served in the Civil War.



Unit histories and troop rosters for six battalions and 25 independent companies of North Carolina soldiers are included in the new volume. Most of the battalions and companies featured were formed for local or special service.

The hardbound volume is available for \$50. Call (919) 733-7442, ext. 335 or go online to http://www.ncpublications.com/nc_rostr to order.

Upcoming Events

April 12: The City of Raleigh Museum is holding a Civil War walking tour focusing on the “rapidly changing” world of April 1865, led by Ernest Dollar who will use diaries, letters, and photographs in his presentation. 10 a.m. Cost is \$20 and tour limited to 25 people. Coincides with the State Capitol’s living history program (see below). Call (919) 996-3022 or go online to <http://www.raleighnc.gov/museums> for details.

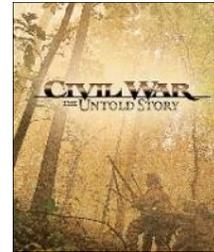
April 12: The State Capitol in Raleigh will host a “Raleigh Occupied” living history program with an encampment and using the perspective of different characters based on accounts of the time. Tours available, but reservations are recommended. 9:45 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Call (919) 733-4994 or visit <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/capitol>.

April 12: The Vance House Museum in Statesville, N.C., sponsors a living history program on the end of the war in the town. Free. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. A seminar and dinner with book authors also are available for a fee. See <http://www.thevancehouse.org> or call (704) 880-3067.

April 25-27: Plymouth, N.C., holds its 24th annual living history weekend with encampments, presentations, naval demonstrations, book signings, boat rides, music, more. Costs vary. Go to <http://www.livinghistoryweekend.com> or telephone (252) 793-1377 for more information.

‘The Untold Story’ of The West

A new public television series that focuses on the Western Theater of the Civil War will begin airing on certain PBS stations in April and May 2014.



The documentary series is made up of five episodes and examines the war from the perspective of the Western Theater battles between the Appalachians and Mississippi River rather than the often-featured events that took place in the eastern states.

Look for the “Civil War: The Untold Story” on your local PBS station. The series will be available on DVD from PBS for \$49.99. Call (800) 531-4727 or go to <http://www.shopPBS.org> to order.

Preservation News

The Civil War Trust is seeking to preserve land at the heart of the Glendale battlefield in Virginia.



In June 1862, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia narrowly missed crushing the Federal Army of the Potomac at Glendale after Union forces were reinforced. The land targeted for preservation are 57 acres along the Long Bridge Road, where the armies clashed.

The Trust’s goal in this campaign is to raise \$113,975. Donations are matched 4.25 to 1.

For details, see <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/glendale/glendale-2014>.

News of the RCWRT



Upcoming RCWRT Meetings

May: William Harris, Lincoln and the Constitution

June: Earl Hess, Petersburg

July: Keith Hardison, Jefferson Davis

August: Stephen Davis, Battle of Atlanta

September: Margaret Humphreys, Civil War medicine

October: Marvin Nicholson, African-American experience

November: Noah Trudeau, Sherman's March

Donation Made to Wyse Fork

At its March 10 meeting, the RCWRT board approved a \$550 donation to The Civil War Trust in honor of Ed Bearss and designated for their preservation efforts at the Wyse Fork battlefield near Kinston, N.C. The funds were from the proceeds generated by our January 2014 event with Ed.

Civil War Books Available!

The Western North Carolina Civil War Round Table is making available for purchase some of its large collection of Civil War books. Before making them more widely available, the group is offering the books to members of other round tables. Visit <http://www.wnccwrt.org/books.html> or contact George Ferguson at (828) 550-0784 for details.

Important Notice

Due to increasing printing costs and access to email, the RCWRT board voted March 10 to end the mailing of print versions of *The Knapsack*. Copies of the newsletter are available on our website at <http://www.raleighcwrt.org>.

New Members!

The RCWRT welcomes our newest members, Steve Blake (Apex), John Kucik (Raleigh), Dave Malarkey (Cary), and Skip Orser (Raleigh). If you know someone that has an interest in the Civil War, please bring them to a meeting and encourage them to join!



The Knapsack

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RCWRT Score Card

Members	120
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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) after the meeting. Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$10 for teachers. Students are free. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20.