

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table

The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

October 13, 2014
Our 164th Meeting



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<http://www.raleighcwr.org>

Marvin Nicholson to Speak at October 13 Meeting On African-American Soldiers in the Civil War

Marvin Nicholson, an educator, historian, and Civil War re-enactor will speak at the Raleigh Civil War Round Table's October 13 meeting.



Born in Marston, N.C., Marvin grew up in Moore County, N.C. He graduated from Berkley High School in Aberdeen, N.C., in 1954.

Marvin served four years in the U.S. Army (Airborne) prior to getting married. He earned his undergraduate degree in elementary education from California State University in Los Angeles,

and his master's degree in administration and supervision from Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J.

Marvin worked in public education in northern New Jersey, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C. He served as a public school administrator until 1992.

In 1994, Marvin became interested in Civil War re-enacting after responding to a recruiting request to join a new unit in Charleston, S.C. That unit was Company I of the famed 54th Massachusetts. Marvin participated in a re-enactment of the Battle of Dingles Mill, S.C. Because of that experience, Marvin realized that he knew virtually nothing about the service of African-Americans in the Civil War.

Marvin now seeks to educate others about the role of black soldiers in the war.

Marvin currently resides in Conway, S.C., has five children and four grandchildren, and is an ordained layperson in the Presbyterian Church. His talk at the RCWRT's meeting will be on the service of African-American soldiers on both sides during the Civil War.

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~ The 54th Massachusetts ~

The 54th Massachusetts, the subject of the 1989 film *Glory*, was formed in March 1863. The African-American regiment was commanded by Col. Robert Gould Shaw, a white officer.



54th Monument in Boston

The unit's fame stemmed from its lead in the July 18, 1863, assault on Fort Wagner near Charleston, S.C. Among the 272 casualties was Shaw, who was killed. The 54th also served at Olustee, Fla., and Boykin's Mill, S.C., among other battles.



The Sesquicentennial

October 1864



Federal Victory at Cedar Creek

On Oct. 19, Confederate forces suffered a crushing defeat at the Battle of Cedar Creek, ending their hopes of controlling the strategically important and resource-rich Shenandoah Valley.

The battle began with a surprise attack by Lt. Gen. Jubal Early on encamped Union forces under the command of Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan, who was about 20 miles away in Winchester, Va. Sheridan had been at a meeting in Washington, D.C. Early's men drove back the Federal forces, capturing 24 cannon and hundreds of soldiers.

Dramatically riding into the battle, Sheridan rallied his troops and led a counterattack that drove the Confederate forces from the field.



Sheridan Rallies His Troops

Of the 31,610 Union men that fought in the battle, 5,764 were killed, wounded, or missing. Among some 3,000 Confederate casualties was Maj. Gen. Stephen Dodson Ramseur, a North Carolina native.

Also in October 1864, Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney died in Washington, D.C., Maryland voters adopted a new constitution that abolished slavery, Nevada became the 36th state, and the Battle of Boydton Plank Road was fought in Virginia. An Oct. 23 Union victory at Westport, Mo., also eliminated most of the Confederate strength west of the Mississippi river.

'Bloody Bill' Anderson Killed

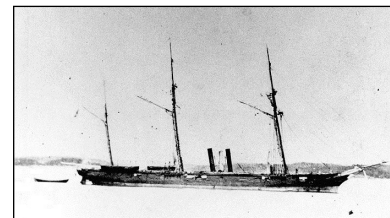
On Oct. 26, the infamous Confederate guerrilla leader William "Bloody Bill" Anderson was killed by Union troops in an ambush in Missouri.



Anderson had joined William Quantrill and other guerrillas in the August 1863 raid on Lawrence, Kansas, during which some 200 men and boys were killed, and a massacre of Union General James Blunt's forces in October 1863. "Bloody Bill" also was notorious for stopping a train near Centralia, Missouri, in September 1864 and murdering two dozen Union soldiers. His men then ambushed the 150 Federal troops that were sent in response and mutilated their bodies.

CSS *Florida* Surrenders

On Oct. 7, the famed Confederate Navy cruiser, the CSS *Florida*, was captured in the neutral port of Bahia, Brazil.



The ship, which had captured 37 Union vessels, was caught defenseless in a night attack by the USS *Wachusett*. The illegal assault occurred while the *Florida's* commander and half her crew were on shore leave.

Medal of Honor Awarded

More than 151 years after he was killed facing “Pickett’s Charge” at Gettysburg, 1st Lt. Alonzo Cushing of the 4th U.S. Artillery was awarded the Medal of Honor.



1st Lt. Alonzo Cushing

Cushing was born in Delafield, Wisc., and grew up in Fredonia, N.Y. In command of Battery A of the 4th U.S. Artillery, Cushing was killed at the age of 22 by a bullet wound to the head while defending Cemetery Ridge on July 3 against the Confederate assault. He was awarded the medal Sept. 15 for “refusing to evacuate to the rear despite his severe wounds, he directed the operation of his lone field piece continuing to fire in the face of the enemy” until he was killed during this “heroic stand.”

Upcoming Events

Oct. 16: Quail Ridge Books in Raleigh hosts Pulitzer prize winning author James McPherson, who has written a new book on Jefferson Davis’ role as commander in chief. Free. 7:30 p.m. For more information, visit <http://www.quailridgebooks.com> or telephone (919) 828-1588.

Oct. 24 - 26: The N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources holds a 150th anniversary bus tour that includes Bennett Place, the Museum of History, State Capitol, Fort Fisher, Bentonville Battlefield. \$395-\$475 per person. Call (919) 807-7394 or see <http://www.ncdcr.gov/CivilWarTour>.

Oct. 25: Bentonville Battlefield in Four Oaks, N.C., holds a free Fall festival and living history event from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. That evening, beginning at 9 p.m., a night tour of the Harper House and grounds involving the care of wounded soldiers will be provided for ticketed visitors. Go online to <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/bentonvi/bentonvi.htm> or call (910) 594-0789 for details.

Nov. 1: Wake County’s Southeast Regional Library in Garner, N.C., hosts a living history event with Civil War era music beginning at 2 p.m. and a talk by Harry Watson at 3 p.m. Free. Call (919) 662-2839 for more information.

N.C. Newspapers Online

More than 3 million pages of historic North Carolina newspapers have been digitized and put online.



The UNC-Chapel Hill University Library worked with Newspapers.com to make the resource available. UNC’s North Carolina Collection was provided to the company, which digitized and posted it online. The collection includes 970 newspapers from around the state that date from the mid-eighteenth century to the early twentieth century.

Access to the research tool is available through UNC or via a subscription to Newspapers.com. Free access also is available to visitors to the State Archives offices in Asheville, Manteo, and Raleigh.

Preservation News

The Bennett Place State Historic Site near Durham, N.C. seeks to raise \$310,000 by the end of October.



The funds are urgently needed to purchase two acres near the site’s “Unity Monument.” The largest Confederate surrender of the Civil War took place in April 1865 at the Bennett Place.

Donations may be sent to: Bennett Place Support Fund, 4409 Bennett Memorial Rd., Durham, NC 27705.

For details on the effort, call (919) 383-4345 or email bennett@ncdcr.gov.

News of the RCWRT



Upcoming RCWRT Meetings

2014

November: Noah Trudeau, Sherman's March
December: Holiday party at the Capitol

2015

January: annual Ed Bearss event
February: Brenda McKean, The Home Front
March: Patrick Schroeder, Appomattox
April: Mark Bradley, End of the Civil War in NC
May: Lee Craig, Economics of the American Civil War

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. The person may be an author, scholar, artist, historian, speaker, or anyone whom the RCWRT's Board of Directors believes should receive this honor.

Prior winners are: Ed Bearss (2008), Nora Brooks (2009), Charles Hawks (2010), Mark Bradley (2011), Leslie Rivers (2012), David Waller (2013), and Tom Kearney (2014). Members wishing to nominate someone for this honor should send the name of their nominee and reasons they believe that person should be considered to President Ted Kunstling, 500 Spring Valley Dr., Raleigh, NC 27609 or via email to trkunstling@aol.com. Award nominations are due by Nov. 30. The Gatton Award will be presented at our Ed Bearss event in January 2015.

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:

Griff Bartlett, Treasurer
908 Kinsdale Drive
Raleigh, NC 27615

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



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RCWRT Score Card

Members	125
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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.