

October 2, 2015

Greetings members of the Low Country Civil War Round Table,

Here is the October edition of the *Minie Ball Gazette*! In it you will find:

1. The Presidents Message
2. Oct. 14th speaker – Dr. Mary A. DeCredico – U.S. Naval Academy
3. Article about Civil War Reconstruction (1865-1877)
4. The 2015-2016 Lecture Series
5. Information about Bus Tour - “he “Battle of Port Royal 1861” - Nov. 12th
6. Cruise onboard the *Holiday* – The “Battle of Port Royal Sound” - Nov. 13th
7. This 'n That – with information about merchandise with our LCWRT logo!
8. 2015-2016 Executive Committees
9. New/Renewal Membership Form

From the heart of a friend - “May good fortune be yours, may your joys never end.”

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MINIÉ BALL GAZETTE

The Official Newsletter of the Lowcountry Civil War Round Table, Inc.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Civil War Enthusiasts,

We are rapidly approaching our second program of the year. Please renew your membership. It is very easy. If you don't have time to complete the renewal application and send the check, just come to October's meeting. Dr. Mary DeCredico from the Naval Academy will bring us an exciting and informative presentation on the Reconstruction Period following the War.

Don't forget to sign up for our three-day extravaganza in November. On Wednesday, November 11th Michael Coker will speak and discuss the "Battle of Port Royal." The largest naval battle ever to occur in North America. On Thursday, we travel to Port Royal Plantation (usually not open to the public) by bus and visit the forts attacked on the Hilton Head side of Port Royal Sound during the naval engagement. On Friday, we take the *Holiday* from Shelter Cove to see the battle from the Sound and travel the route of the "Ring of Fire." Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy the cruise!

Our September meeting received high marks from all attendees. The Ice Cream Social was a tasty success. The quilter's displays and explanations were excellent. And the presentation by the Sun City Theater Group was a dramatic look at the Civil War through the eyes of the women who lived it. I want to thank the entire Executive Team for their efforts. Special kudos goes to John Kemp and Sandi and Ken Schroeder. Honorable mentions go to Gary Welsh, Dave McColloch, and Tom McNamara.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Dale Conrad and his wife. Dale has worked tirelessly on several projects. He was the driving force behind September's event. Recently, he has been under the weather, and I missed him. He is back and the quiet, unsung hero of many of our projects. Thanks, Dale! Thanks to Sherry for letting him do it.

See you in October.

Regards,

Bob Waite

LCWRT, President

The Battle of Port Royal - November 7, 1861

After foul weather compelled an infantry landing to be canceled, Union naval officers took it upon themselves to attack the fortifications protecting Port Royal Sound, South Carolina. The resulting four-and-half hour gun battle exacted a heavy toll on the ships of the fleet as well as on the Confederate garrison. The defenders withdrew in the afternoon and left the sound in Union hands. The battle opened a vital approach to the Charleston Harbor, allowing Union ships to tighten the blockade on one of the Confederacy's largest seaports. - courtesy of the Civil War Trust

October 14, 2015 Speaker – Dr. Mary A. DeCredico
Professor of History, U.S. Naval Academy

By Caroline Wallace Kennedy

Mary A. DeCredico is Professor of History at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, where she has taught since 1986. Dr. DeCredico received her B.A. from Bucknell University, and her M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. DeCredico's specialty is the Civil War era and the Confederacy. Mary's first book, *Patriotism for Profit; Georgia's Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* received the Museum of the Confederacy's Jefferson Davis Award for outstanding scholarship on the Confederacy. She has also written *Mary Boykin Chestnut: A Confederate Woman's Life*, which is in its second printing, as well a several articles and book chapters. Her current project, *Richmond Goes to War, 1861-1865*, is under contract. Mary also serves as a member of the editorial board of the Georgia Historical Quarterly and the Naval Civil War Museum Advisory Board.

Dr. DeCredico has been awarded the Department of the Navy's Meritorious Civilian Service Medal twice and the Department of the Navy's Superior Civilian Serve Medal twice. She was also chosen as one of 36 individuals to be recognized by the Secretary of the Navy to be profiled in a special exhibit celebrating the Navy and diversity at the Pentagon in 2012. Mary is a member of the Board of Directors and the Advisory Council of the National Civil War Museum, the Georgia Historical Society, the Southern Historical Association, the Museum of the Confederacy and the Society of Civil War Historians.

DeCredico's family has a long history of military service. Her great-grandfather lied about his age in 1917 to enlist in the Army at 17 years old. Her father, who died at the age of 93, was severely wounded by “a massive hit of Shrapnel” during the Battle of the Bulge.

“Right now, in Congress, only one percent of the members of the House and Senate have any military experience,” DeCredico said. “And that scares me because they will be making decisions that will directly affect the students I'm teaching now.” This quote from Dr. DeCredico was made at the Battle of Manassas from a *C-SPAN* video in 2013. (For the video: go to the web – Mary A. DeCredico at Manassas National Battlefield.)

The United States Naval Academy

The U.S. Navy was born during the American Revolution to match the Royal Navy but was demobilize in 1785 by economic necessity. By 1794, President George Washington persuaded Congress to authorize a new naval force to combat piracy on the high seas. The Naval School was established in Annapolis, Maryland in 1845 on the site of a 10-acre Army post named Fort Severn. In 1850, the Naval School became the U.S. Naval Academy. Within a month after the Confederate artillery firing on the Union garrison at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, S.C. on April 12, 1861, the Academy was moved to Newport, Rhode Island. Though it remained in the Union, Maryland was a border state and had seen civil unrest from the outset of the war, with many citizens sympathetic to the South. The Academy remained in Newport for the duration of the war.

Civil War Reconstruction (1865-1877)

by Caroline Wallace Kennedy

Since much of the Southern United States was in ruins, the South needed to be rebuilt after the war. In 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction in which he outlined his Ten-Percent Plan. Lincoln's Plan outlined that Southerners would be given a pardon if they took an oath to the Union. Each state that had seceded were required to redraft their constitutions. Re-entrance to the Union required that ten percent of their eligible voters pledged an oath of allegiance to the United States. Assassinated at the end of the War, Lincoln never had a chance to implement his Plan. In 1864, as an alternative to the "Ten-Percent Plan," Radical Republicans and their moderate Republican allies passed the Wade-Davis Bill. States could only be readmitted to the Union if 50 percent of their voters took an oath of allegiance. Lincoln refused to sign the bill before Congress went into recess. Congress did successfully create the Freedmen's Bureau, which helped distribute food, supplies, and land to the freed slaves.

Tennessean Andrew Johnson became the 17th President in April 1865. A Democrat, he supported states' rights, but during the War he was the only Southern senator to remain loyal to the Union. Using Lincoln's Ten-Percent Plan, he granted all Southerners full pardons, including plantation owners and former Confederate officials. Johnson directed the Freedmen's Bureau to return all seized lands to their original owners.* When Congress was in recess, Johnson approved new state constitutions for secessionist states – many written by ex-Confederate officials. Later Congress overrode Johnson's vote on the second try, renewing the bureau's charter. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 passed. It granted emancipated slaves the right to sue, the right to serve on juries and several other legal rights. Johnson vetoed the bill, but the Radical Republicans mustered votes to override it. The Thirteenth and the Fourteenth Amendments passed, which abolished slavery and made freed slaves U.S. Citizens.

When Congress convened in 1867, they wasted no time executing their plan for the Radical Reconstruction of the South. The First Reconstruction Act divided the South into five conquered districts, each governed by the U.S. Military until new state government could be established. Congress passed the Second Reconstruction Act to enforce this order, thereby placing the military to police southern voter registration. Some 2000,00 U.S. Soldiers were stationed through the South. They removed thousands of civil officials from their jobs and registered black voters. Fifteenth Amendment was also passed giving all American men – including former slaves – the right to vote. To limit President Johnson's executive powers, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act in 1867. Johnson ignored the act and fired Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. Reconstruction. In 1868, Johnson was impeached by Congress by a margin of one vote but was not removed from office.

The first state readmitted to the Union in 1866 was Tennessee with Georgia being the last state in 1870. White Southerners who joined the Republican party to help with Reconstruction were called scalawags. Many northerners moved South to make money off the rebuilding and were called carpetbaggers because of their carpetbag luggage.

Freed slaves were free to go where they wished. Many moved from the plantations to urban centers. On January 16, 1865, in Savannah, Gen. William T. Sherman had issued a field order to provide slave families of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina 40 acres of land and an army mule. The area included the Sea Islands and a 330-mile tract along the coast. *However, when Johnson became president, he revoked the order and returned the property to the former white owners. The phrase "Forty Acres and a Mule," has come to represent the failure of Reconstruction. Freedpeople turned to charities and the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees and Abandoned Lands for support, as did many destitute whites. Most former slaves became tenant farmers and sharecroppers by leasing land from their old masters who were bankrupt and could not hire workers. By 1880, most of the southern blacks had become sharecroppers working a piece of the land receiving a fixed share of the crop. The Union rebuilt roads, helped farms run again, built schools for poor and black children so eventually the economy began to recover.

The Southerners didn't like the Northerners moving in trying to get rich off their troubles. They were eventually driven out by Democratic state politicians in the mid-1870s. After the Compromise of 1877, President Rutherford B. Hayes was elected the president. He withdrew the federal troops in 1877 and ended Reconstruction.

The 2015-2016 Lecture Series

October 14 - 6:45 p.m. - Dr. Mary DeCredico; History Department of the U. S. Naval Academy;

Myths and Realities of Reconstruction

November 11 - 6:45 p.m. - Michael D. Coker, author; Operations Asst. Old Exchange & Provost Dungeon in Charleston; *The Battle of Port Royal - 1861* (bus tour on Thursday & boat cruise on Friday)

January 13 - 6:45 p.m.

Dr. James "Bud" Robertson, Jr.; Virginia Tech;

After the Civil War; The Heroes, Villains, Soldiers & Civilians Who Changed America

February 10 - 6:45 p.m.

Jack Davis; Virginia Tech; *Reluctant Hero: Lee's Last Years*

March 9 - 6:45 p.m.

Ed Bearss; Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service; *Vicksburg*

April 13 - 6:45 p.m.

Barry Sheey; *Urban Slavery in Savannah* (With a tour on Thursday)

May 11 - 6:45 p.m.

John White; Park Ranger Rivers' Bridge Historic Site; *The Battle of Rivers' Bridge*

(With a tour on Thursday)

July 13 - 6:45 p.m. - Ralph Peters, novelist, essayist, former career soldier who appears

frequently as a commentator on TV and radio - *1864: Our Civil War's Savage Year*

(Special Summer Meeting at Magnolia Hall in Sun City.)

NOTE: There is a \$10 Guest/Nonmember fee for any individual lecture. Students and teachers with ID are free.

Successful Submarine Attack

On the night of February 17, 1864, in Charleston Harbor, J.K. Crosby, the duty officer on the deck of the *U.S.S. Housatonic* made the rounds, on the 12 gun Federal sloop-of-war. Every Federal ship in the fleet in the naval blockade of Charleston was on the alert for enemy torpedo boats, as it was rumored that a hostile submarine lurked in the vicinity. Crosby leaned over the rail seeing something that caught his attention. Was it a plank or a log that was making its way toward the ship? Moments later a gigantic explosion erupted. A torpedo blew an enormous hole in her starboard side. The 205-foot vessel heeled over, partially righted herself then quickly sank as water rushed inside taking five crew men to their death. The silent attacker was the Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley* named after a Confederate naval engineer. The Federal duty officer had witnessed what was undoubtedly the first successful submarine attack in naval history. With the *Hunley* possibly as close as 20 feet to her target, the *Housatonic* entangled with her taking her into the muck in the harbor. Years later, when the *Hunley* was raised from the water, nine skeletons were found including the bones of her inventor Horace Lawson Hunley. - cwk

Bus Tour - "The Battle of Port Royal 1861."

Thursday, November 12, 2015

Three days after the fall of Fort Sumter in April 1861, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a blockade of all Southern ports. At the start of the Civil War, the present **Port Royal Plantation** was occupied by Confederate forces. Fort Walker was built in a hurry by Confederate soldiers to help protect the critical southern ports of Charleston, Beaufort and Savannah. (Fort Walker was the first fort built on the island, near the spot claimed by British Captain William Hilton during its famous expedition in 1663.)

Later in 1861, Union forces successfully attacked and captured the fort during the Battle of Port Royal Sound. They gained a strategic foothold to aid the Union blockade of the ports. That same day occupying Union soldiers freed over 1,000 island slaves. They were the first slaves freed by the Civil War.

In the Battle of Port Royal, the Confederate troops were defeated, and 13,000 Union troops landed to take control of the Island. A town quickly sprang up from the military presence, including restaurants, a theatre, stores, a newspaper and saloons along the main street known as "Robbers Row." Historical markers at **Fort Walker Park**, the **Beach House** and the **Steam Gun** (remnants of a large cannon that was operated by pressurized air) describe events that took place here and in the surrounding waters. An Earthworks installation known as **Fort Sherman** (built on top of Fort Walker) was constructed in 1862 and is widely intact today. The Union's Department of the South was headquartered there, and between 1862 and 1865, about 50,000 Union troops passed through the Plantation. Hilton Head Island has the remnants of four Civil War forts. Today, all that remains are earthworks and numerous interpretive markers. Entrance to Port Royal Plantation (rich in history) is only available by private guided tours such as ours.

Don't forget the Wednesday, November 11th meeting at 6:45 p.m. Featuring Michael Coker on "The Battle of Port Royal 1861!"

Cut here and send with a check!

Meet at Honey Horn Plantation at 9:30 a.m. and board the bus for a three-hour bus tour of Port Royal Plantation. Tour guided by Michael Coker and George Loud.

Make reservations now! \$20. each person.

Names: _____ Number in Party: _____

Address: _____

Check made payable to LCWRT, Inc. _____

**Mail to or place in lower box of John Kemp, 319 Shearwater Pointe Drive, Bluffton, SC 29909
tel: 843.473.4388 or Email: [lcwrtsc@gmail](mailto:lcwrtsc@gmail.com) (someone will answer your call.)**

The “Battle of Port Royal Sound” Onboard the *Holiday!* **Friday, November 13, 2015**

The Confederates built Fort Walker on Port Royal Sound in 1861. On November 7, 1861, the **Battle of Port Royal** became the largest naval battle ever fought in American waters. Eighteen Union warships and 55 supporting craft led by Admiral S. F. DuPont, carrying 13,000 troops, 1,500 horses, 500 surf boats, and 1,000 laborers, bombarded for over four hours Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard.

The Confederate forces under the command of *Gen. Thomas F. Drayton*, who was a graduate of West Point, a classmate of Jefferson Davis and president of the Charleston-Savannah railroad. Remarkably, his brother was Commander Percival Drayton, who led the Union Navy attack onboard the gunboat *USS Pocahontas*, which inflicted the most damage during the battle. Despite massive bombardments, there were less than 100 casualties, a significantly small number by later Civil War battle standards.

The Battle of Port Royal established Hilton Head as the headquarters for the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. The war-long attacks on Charleston started from here. Mitchelville, the first town developed especially for the newly freed slaves, was built on the Island. Mitchelville birthed the rich Gullah culture and was also the site of the first mandatory education system in the United States.

What is a Sound? According to Port Royal Sound Foundation (PRSA), “a Sound is an ocean channel between two bodies of land yet still accessible by ocean-going vessels. (The channels, which are relatively shallow and narrow bodies of water, are deep enough to allow deep-hulled ships to pass through unscathed.) The PRSA is also sometimes referred to as an embayment of the Atlantic Ocean. A bay is a body of water connected to the ocean and formed by the indentation of the shoreline. In our case, the embayment would include all the rivers, marshes, and islands that we are familiar here in Beaufort County.” The PSA has exceptionally high tides (8+ feet) because of its geographic location, and these high tides drive ocean water through a network of tidal rivers and tidal creeks that extend 20 miles inland. There are three Sounds in our area: **Port Royal Sound** – body of water between Northern Hilton Head Island and Southeastern Saint Helena and Parris Islands. **Calibogue Sound** – body of water between Southern Hilton Head Island and Daufuskie Island. And, **Saint Helena Sound** – body of water between Northwestern Saint Helena Island and Edisto Island. The Port Royal Sound Area is made up of the Port Royal Sound and Calibogue Sound. These two Sounds are interconnected and are usually looked at as one system. Rivers such as the Beaufort, Broad, and May, as well as all their tributaries, are included.” Beaufort County is the perfect example of why this coastal region of the Southeast is referred to as the Lowcountry.

For reservations - cut here and send with a check!

Meet at Shelter Cove at **9:30 a.m. and board the *Holiday*
for a five-hour boat tour of Port Royal Sound.**

Guided tour by Michael Coker and Dr. Stephen Wise.

\$30 each person. Water provided. Bring your lunch, and wear a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent!

Names: _____ Number in Party: _____

Address: _____

Check made payable to LCWRT, Inc. _____

Mail to or place in lower box of John Kemp, 319 Shearwater Pointe Drive, Bluffton, SC 29909 tel: 843.473.4388 or
Email: [lcwrts@gmail](mailto:lcwrts@gmail.com) (someone will answer your call.)

This 'n That

Merchandise with the Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Logo

Visit: <http://www.cafepress.com/worldvue/12413135>

Our vice president Gary Welsh has found some great items online that can be printed with the LCWRT Logo. Check out the Mugs for \$12.99, T. shirts from \$19.99, hats for \$12.99, and mousepads for \$12.99.

Wanna Good Laugh?

In 1976, Carol Burnett along with her ensemble cast of Harvey Kornman, Tim Conway and Vicki Lawrence performed “Went With the Wind” a parody of “Gone With the Wind” the 1939 historical drama by Margaret Mitchell. Burnett played Starlet O'Hara, Kornman played Rat Butler, Conway played Brashley, and Lawrence played Sissy. The guest star was Dinah Shore, who played Melanie. Starlet O'Hara's dress was made out of curtains with the curtain rod still attached. The dress was designed by Bob Mackie and is on display in the Smithsonian. Starlet said, “Thank you I saw it in a window and I just couldn't resist it.” Check out YouTube Part 1 and 2 for a funny version of Starlet and Rat at Terra Plantation in Georgia. - cwk

Did You Know?

Did you know that President Abraham Lincoln offered Robert E. Lee command of the Union Army before Lee accepted a position with the Confederate Army? Lee decided to lead the Confederate army instead as he could not bring himself to lead troops against his native Virginia. Despite the Confederates being vastly outnumbered and not as well equipped as the North, Lee and his right-hand man, Gen. Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson, managed to post victory after victory against the North.

Did you know the King of Siam offered elephants to President Lincoln to assist in the war effort? Lincoln's reply pointed out that steam power had overtaken the need for the heavy animal power of this kind. Can you image a battalion of war elephants at Pickett's Charge or angry pachyderms emerging from the forest lines at Shiloh?

Did you know that a famous “conductor” known simply as “Moses” on the Underground Railroad was actually Harriet Tubman and escaped slave? Slaves hoped a savior would deliver them from slavery just as Moses had delivered the Israelites from slavery. Many slaves dreaming of freedom sang the spiritual “God Down Moses.”

Did you know Lt. Gen. Joseph Wheeler “Fighting Joe,” a graduate of West Point from August, Ga., battled Sherman during the March to the Sea. He was captured and held in prison after the war. He later served in Congress, and when the war with Spain broke out, he rejoined the federal army as a general of volunteers. After returning from Cuba, he was sent to the Philippines for service in the Philippine-American War. This service entitled him to be buried in Arlington, one of a few Confederate soldiers to be honored. - cwk

Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc.
2015-2016 Executive Committee

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Civil War Innovations . . .

The first battle between ironclad warships. The first mass transport of land forces by railroad. The first use of aircraft (balloons) in war. The first naval aircraft carrier (for balloons). The first submarine to successfully sink an enemy ship. The first widespread, effective use of rifles in battle. And the first use of machine guns in battle.

