



The Minié Ball Gazette
The Newsletter of the
Lowcountry Civil War Round Table, Inc

May 2006, Issue 55

Craig L. Symonds

Our May speaker is the Chief Historian at the USS Monitor Center, the Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia. He retired from the U.S. Naval Academy in 2005 after three decades as Professor of History. The first person ever to win both the Naval Academy's "Excellence in Teaching" award (1988) and its "Excellence in Research" award (1998), he also served as History Department chair from 1988 to 1992, and received the superior Civilian Service medal on these occasions. He served as Professor of Strategy at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island (1971-74) and at the Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, England (1994-95).



Symonds is the author of ten books, including prize-winning biographies of Joseph E. Johnston (1992), Patrick Cleburne (1997), and Franklin Buchanan (1999), as well as *The American Heritage History of the battle of Gettysburg* (2001). His most recent book is *Decision at Sea: Five Naval Battles that shaped American History* (2005). He is the editor of nine other books including *Charleston Blockade* (1976), *Recollections of a Naval Officer* (1985), and *A Year on a Monitor* (1987). He has published more than eighty book chapters or articles in academic and popular journals.

He and his wife Marylou live in Annapolis, Maryland. They have one son and one grandson.

Craig will talk about President Lincoln and his handling of the Trent Affair.

Lincoln and the Trent Affair

Abraham Lincoln had little knowledge of naval affairs when he became president. As he wrote to his new Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Wells, "I know but little about ships." Nevertheless, the press of events required him to become an avid student of war on both land and sea in order to act as commander in chief during America's only total war.

The announcement of a blockade was practically his first strategic decision as a war president. It required unprecedented mobilization, and led as well to a number of legal and diplomatic issues. The seizure of Confederate ministers James Mason and John Slidell from the British packet steamer *TRENT* on November 8, 1861, created an international crisis that very nearly brought England into the war. Why Lincoln declared a blockade, how he attempted to enforce it, and how he managed the crisis of The Trent Affair is the subject of Mr. Symonds talk.

Walt Lineberger will display prewar & wartime US made pistols. There will be a Morning After.

ATTENTION!

- Program starts at 7:00 PM, Wed., May 10, 2006 in the Bluffton High School auditorium, LCWRT elections start at 6:45 PM
- Please, no drinking, no eating in the auditorium
- Buffet starts at 5:45 PM Please sign-up early
- Morning After, Palmetto Electric, near Wal-Mart on US 278 at 10 AM, May 11th.
- MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE!

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President's Message

It doesn't seem possible that I am writing my final message as president. We had a spectacular year made possible by the efforts of all those who volunteered. Volunteers are truly the backbone of any organization. I am especially grateful for the wonderful programs brought to us through the efforts of those willing to serve on the Program Committee.



As I look over the schedule for the 2006-2007 program year I am pleased to see that we have commitments from three of the premier historians of our time: Ed Bearss, James Robertson and Richard McMurry. In addition, they will be joined by Craig Symonds, Brian Wills and Mac Wyckoff, names that should be familiar to you, as well. I expect that you will want to re-enlist without delay and I encourage you to do so.

I am pleased to report that we are financially solvent. After the final program last May, the Executive Committee utilized available funds to make charitable contributions in the amount of \$1000. By the close of the May 10 meeting this year, we will have donated an additional \$3000. We pay the travel expenses for all our speakers and this year we had two paid presenters costing a total of \$1700. Rent, insurance and production costs as well as other miscellaneous expenses will bring total budget expenses to approximately \$12,000. Our present bank balance is \$14,000 and our estimated year-end bank balance should be approximately \$1,000 less.

If it weren't for the fact that some of our members host speakers in their homes, our expenses would be much higher. We owe a debt of gratitude

to those members who provide transportation and lodging for our speakers. As you can see, it takes a great deal of money to run our organization. That's why initiation fees and annual dues are so important.

It has been my pleasure to serve you this past year and in the five preceding years. I have enjoyed the fellowship and I am indebted to all who have supported my efforts as president. I'd especially like to thank my husband, Ray, for accepting the time I spent in meetings, on the computer and on the phone carrying out my duties.

There will be an orderly transfer of responsibilities to the new officers on June 1. I look forward to continuing my membership in their expert hands.

Johanna Verwer, President

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The Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc. is a not-for-profit, charitable organization as qualified under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code

Officers & Committee Chairpersons

President	Johanna Verwer	705-9201
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Program	Bob Ham Chris Clayton	842-9836 681-1956
Editor /Historian	Walt Hartung	705-1055
Dinner	June McIntyre	705-5049
Hospitality	Don & Margaret Hubsch	705-7786

Bud Robertson Seminar: *Campaigning with Lee*

Dr. James I. "Bud" Robertson's 28th Anniversary "Campaigning with Lee" seminar will be held on June 18-24, 2006. The location is the Stonewall Jackson Hotel and Conference Center, Staunton, Virginia. Seven members of our Round Table currently plan to attend. If you are interested, **contact Jack Keller (671-5260) as soon as possible.**



LCWRT thanks Palmetto Electric for allowing us use of their meeting room for our *Mornings After* and EXCOM meetings.

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Nominations for Office 2006/2007

President— Paul Bucklin
Vice President— Bob Ham
Treasurer—Jack Forster

Secretary—Wendy Glasgow
At Large—Bernie Covert

Chattanooga

General Rosecrans, commander of the Army of Cumberland, fought and out maneuvered Confederate General Bragg's Army of Tennessee, finally forcing him out of and occupying Chattanooga on 9 Sep 1863. Later on, Rosecrans fought and lost a major battle at nearby Chickamauga Creek to Bragg's forces, causing him to retreat back into Chattanooga. Rosecrans' army was now besieged in Chattanooga, as Bragg's forces took up positions in the mountains around the city. At left is the position of one of Bragg's cannons on top of Lookout Mountain overlooking Chattanooga.



An entire Union army was trapped in Chattanooga and in danger of capture, forcing Washington to act. It consolidated the separate departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland and the Tennessee under Major General U.S. Grant, pictured at right, and sent him to the beleaguered city to take charge. His first move was to open and



secure the supply line to Chattanooga. While Davis ordered Longstreet and his forces to Knoxville in order to settle dissention between his two commanders, Sherman and his 17,000 men were reinforcing Grant, who now decided on a major offense against Bragg.

On November 24, 1863, Hooker attacked Lookout Mountain, overwhelmed the defenses and won a decisive victory, forcing the Confederates to retreat. On Nov 25, Grant began the battle to drive the Confederates from their fortifications on Missionary Ridge. In a somewhat coordinated three front attack, he sent Sherman's Army of the Tennessee against the north end of the ridge. Thomas attacked the center and Hooker the south end. Sherman could not dislodge the Rebels, but he did succeed in drawing Bragg's one reserve division and one from Lookout Mountain, eventually benefiting the successful attacks of Thomas and Hooker. The Confederates in the center and south broke and ran as the Union attacked. By the evening, Union forces held the middle and south ends of Missionary Ridge; Bragg's Army of Tennessee was defeated and in full retreat. Hooker pursued them to Ringgold Gap, but after heavy losses was forced to withdraw. His victory at Lookout Mountain was overshadowed by this defeat; his losses were nearly three times greater than at Lookout Mountain.

The battles around Chattanooga ended in one of the most complete Union victories of the war. Bragg's army was defeated, men and materiel captured, and the Confederates driven south to Georgia. Now, there were no Confederate defenders between Tennessee and Atlanta, the South was wide open for a Union incursion.

The Union victory demonstrated the tremendous importance of an adequate and secure supply line. Bragg as the besieger had no better lines of supply than did the besieged Rosecrans, and as a result the Confederacy was denied victory.

With Chattanooga secured as a base, the way was open for Sherman's conquest of Atlanta. In December, Savannah fell to Sherman. As these southern dominoes fell, so did the hopes of the South for victory, independence and slavery.

In losing Chattanooga, the South lost the state of Tennessee: Lincoln achieved his political objective of providing relief for Union sympathizers in Tennessee. This decisive victory enabled Tennessee to be the first southern state to be readmitted into the Union. As such, it became a social, political and economic test bed for reconstruction.

On March 14, 2007, Ed Bearss will return to the Lowcountry Civil War Round Table to describe in detail the battles of Chattanooga, including Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain. This will be one meeting not to be missed!

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LCWRT Program for 2006/2007

Sept 13, 2006, Chancellorsville. Mac Wyckoff will tell us why Chancellorsville holds a unique place on the roll of America's great battles. Fought in the early days of May 1863, it was the most complex campaign of the Civil War. It witnessed the most intense and concentrated few hours of fighting of the entire war. It ranks as the most remarkable of Robert E. Lee's victories and the most disheartening of Union defeats. It was the start of the much heralded campaign of the new commanding general *fighting* Joe Hooker. For the South the fate of *Stone Wall* Jackson turned it into the most hollowed of victories.

Oct 11, 2006, Gettysburg. Rev. Jeff Miller will examine Gettysburg, the strategies of Lee and Meade, and the aftermath of the Confederate loss. The three days of Gettysburg, July 1-3, 1863 are called by some the turning point of the Civil War or the "high tide" of the Confederacy. General Lee marched into Pennsylvania expecting to win his third major battle in six months; but now he entered the enemy's country and the outcome was quite different. From the gallantry of Pickett's charge to the bravery on Little Round Top, Gettysburg has become the symbol of the War Between the States.

Nov 8, 2006, The Western Theater. Richard McMurry will talk on the Western battles: Forts Donnellson and Henry, Shiloh Church, Vicksburg, Chickamauga and many others in what is referred to as the trans-Mississippi region. These battles have until recently been relegated to a position of less importance than the battles in the Eastern states, yet they represented, for the Union, the most significant victories. What was the Unions strategy and why were they more successful?

Jan10, 2007, Battle Losses and Aftermath. James I. (Bud) Robertson will be with us once again. Someone said that the Civil war was the defining event for America — more so than the Revolutionary War. It is estimated that 620,000 Union and Confederate soldiers died as a result of battles and disease. The devastation in the South took over a hundred years to rebuild. Bud will examine these events and their impact on us as a nation.

Feb11, 2007, Role of Colored Troops. This presentation will depart from our usual format and present a living history when the Charleston Re-enactors Group becomes the 54th Massachusetts and portrays their role in the battle of Battery Wagner. We will discuss the events that led to the formation of the so called "Colored Troops" and their role in the Civil War. Also, we will show the uniforms and customs of this regiment and discuss details of the battle.

Mar 14, 2007, Chickamauga & Chattanooga. Ed Bearss will return to examine the battles of this region of Tennessee, including Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain. The name Chickamauga was an old Cherokee word meaning river of death and it lived up to its name as each side lost nearly a third of its men. Chickamauga was a Union disaster. As September 1863 ended the federals held Chattanooga but were on the verge of surrender. The Union was galvanized by the potential destruction of the Army of the Cumberland and dispatched large numbers of troops quickly by rail from the Eastern Theatre.

Apr 11, 2007, Fort Pillow. Brian Steel Wills will tell us what really happened at Fort Pillow. Situated on a high bluff on the eastern bank of the Mississippi river about forty river miles above Memphis, TN, it became part of a chain of Federal garrisons. In April 1864 it was manned by 295 white Tennessee troops and 262 U.S. Colored Troops when Nathan Bedford Forrest, the famous (or infamous) Confederate cavalryman, attacked and the fort surrendered. Casualties were high and only sixty-two of the U.S. Colored Troops survived the fight. The Confederates were accused of massacre, a controversy that continues today. Fort Pillow became the subject of a Federal joint Congressional investigation. Was it a massacre, revenge or "war as an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds"?

May 9, 2007, Mobile Bay. Craig Symonds is back with us to elaborate on the added significance of Rear-Admiral Farragut's naval victory at Mobile Bay in light of Sherman's victory in Atlanta. Farragut, aloft in the rigging of his flag ship Hartford, directed the battle as his ships outmaneuvered the feared rebel iron clad, *Tennessee*, so that she struck no blow but went to the bottom under federal gunfire. The capture of Mobile Bay left only Wilmington, North Carolina as the only open port for blockade runners in the closing days of the war.

RE-UP TODAY TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT TO THIS GREAT PROGRAM

See Renewal Form on Page 5

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Buffet Reservations for Wed., May 10th, 5:45 PM. Reservations due by noon Fri May 5th

Total Number of Dinners: ____ @ \$12 each = \$ _____

Mmbr Names: _____

Guest Names: _____

Member Phone: _____ Ck# _____ Date _____

Make Check Payable to: **LCWRT Inc**

Mail Check with this Form to:

JIM STROHECKER

125 LAKE SOMERSET CIRCLE

BLUFFTON, SC 29909

(or place in Green Box)

May 10th's Buffet Menu

BBQ Pork, Chicken, String Beans, Beets, Potato Salad, Broccoli Salad, Apple Salad

Banana Pudding, Peach Cobbler, Iced Tea & Coffee

Low Country Civil War Round Table Membership Renewal Form

Last Name First Name Badge Nickname

Last Name Family/Household Membership First Name Badge Nickname

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone () _____ E-Mail _____

Please tell us in which of the following areas you can help

Program _____ Communications _____ Hospitality _____ Membership _____

Finance _____ Newsletter _____ Distribution _____ Elected Office _____

Single Membership: Renewal: \$26 _____ Family Membership: Renewal: \$38 _____

For additional information, please contact Paul Bucklin at 843 705-5168

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