



FOUNDED 2000

MINIÉ BALL GAZETTE

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

March 2009

ATTENTION

Next meeting: March 11, 2009

Dinner: 5:45 PM

Menu & Form on Page 4

Dinner reservations due Mar 9th

Program: 6:45 PM

Bluffton High School
Off Buckwalter Rd

Members free; Guests \$5

Morning After

10 am, Mar 12, 2009
At

Palmetto Electric
Hardeeville, SC

Annual Meeting – May 13, 2009

Please visit our Web Site

<http://www.lowcountrycwrtable.com>

Surrender at Appomattox

After an exchange of messages between Generals Lee and Grant, the historic surrender took place in the home of Wilmer McLean. Arriving at the home first, General Lee sat in a large sitting room on the first floor. General Grant arrived shortly and entered the room alone while his staff respectfully waited on the front lawn. After a short period the staff was summoned to the room.

General Horace Porter described the scene: "We entered, and found General Grant sitting at a marble-topped table in the center of the room, and Lee sitting beside a small oval table near the front window, in the corner opposite to the door by which we entered, and facing General Grant. We walked in softly and ranged ourselves quietly about the sides of the room, very much as people enter a sick-chamber when they expect to find the patient dangerously ill.

The contrast between the two commanders was striking. General Grant, then nearly forty-three, wore an ordinary pair of top-boots, with his trousers inside, and was without spurs. The boots and portions of his clothes were spattered with mud. He had no sword; a pair of shoulder-straps was all there was about him to designate his rank. In fact, aside from these, his uniform was that of a private soldier.

General Lee, on the other hand wore a new uniform of Confederate gray, buttoned up to the throat, and at his side he carried a long sword of exceedingly fine workmanship, the hilt studded with jewels. His top-boots were comparatively new, and seemed to have on them some ornamental stitching of red silk. Like his uniform, they were singularly clean, and but little travel-stained.

General Grant began the conversation by saying 'I met you once before, General Lee, while we were serving in Mexico, when you came over from General Scott's headquarters to visit Garland's brigade, to which I then belonged. I have always remembered your appearance, and I think I should have recognized you anywhere.'

'Yes,' replied General Lee, 'I know I met you on that occasion, and I have often thought of it and tried to recollect how you looked, but I have never been able to recall a single feature.'

The two generals talked a bit more about Mexico and moved on to a discussion of the terms of the surrender when Lee asked Grant to commit the terms to paper:

Continued on Page 3

Edwin Bearss

A Google search on Ed Bearss produced 35,300 hits, a testimonial to his status as a person and as a historian. We are honored once again to have him address our round table and reconstruct for us the events leading to the meeting of Grant and Lee at Appomattox Courthouse, the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, and the beginning of the conclusion of the Civil War. Below are some nuggets from this search.

Edwin Cole Bearss was born in Billings, Montana and grew up on the rugged family cattle ranch through the depths of the Great Depression. He grew up with kerosene lamps and horse-drawn plows. He remembers Civil War stories told firsthand by the hometown veteran, "Grandpa" Henderson, who used to sit around the hotel lobby displaying his reunion ribbons. Ed's early interest in the Civil War led him to name many of the ranch animals after famous generals and battles; his favorite milk cow was Antietam.

Following in his father's footsteps, he enlisted in the Marine Corps on April 1942, and by July was on a troop transport to the Pacific War. He was with the 3d Marine Raider Battalion in the invasion of Guadalcanal and the Russell Islands and 7th Regiment, 1st Marine Division, in New Britain, where he was severely wounded by Japanese machine gun fire. He was evacuated to California and spent 26 months recovering in various hospitals.

After an honorable discharge, he used the G.I. Bill to finance his education at Georgetown University, from which he obtained a B.S. degree in Foreign Service studies in 1949. Ed received his M.A. in history from Indiana University in 1955, writing his thesis on Confederate General Patrick Cleburne. In February 2005, Lincoln College awarded Bearss an honorary doctorate.

Continued on Page 3



Ed Bearss
At home on the Battlefield.

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Minié Ball Gazette

Published by

The Lowcountry Civil War Round Table, Inc

Located in the greater Hilton Head area of South Carolina

<http://www.lowcountrycwrt.com>

Contact: admin@lowcountrycwrt.com

Founded in 2000

Dedicated to Civil War history, education, and battlefield preservation

A Not-for-Profit, Charitable Organization

As qualified under section
501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code

**We thank Palmetto Electric and Honey Horn Plantation
for use of their facilities for our Morning After.**

President's Message

This is coming to you from the desk of the "B" team. Johanna will be back in full form for your next Minié Ball.

The first thing I want to say is, "WHAT A SPECTACULAR February PROGRAM!" I honestly cannot think of how to improve that program. Recognition and many thanks should be given to Dale Conrad and to Jack and Joyce Keller for making it all possible.

Mike Vezeau and Paul Ricker are now working on the "trip" survey. Thanks to every-one for filling out the survey at the January program. We now have enough responses to arrive at an accurate evaluation. As soon as the data is compiled, we will report the results in the Minié Ball.

Bob Eberly and I will be preparing an application for the "Roundtable of the Year" award from CWPT. In the application, we will have to submit an estimate of the gifts that LCWRT and its members have made over the years to the Civil War Preservation Trust or to any other Civil War organization. This information will be held in strict confidence, and we promise it will serve no other function outside of this application. If you have made such contributions or are active in Civil War organizations, please contact either Bob Eberly at 843-785-5393 or myself at 843-671-2236 as soon as possible with the relevant information. Your information is needed to help us to convince the CWPT that we deserve this recognition.

I am still seeking assistance from a person who has experience in "grant writing". In tough times like these, it is most important to try to maximize the revenue flowing into our round table. If you can help, please give me a call.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who helped in the February meeting at BHS. Your hard work made that dinner and program a very successful and memorable event. Thank you all!

John Monkaitis
Vice President

We need your help....

The Nominating Committee is looking for individuals to fill the positions being vacated by members of the Executive Committee. Specifically, we need to fill the positions secretary, treasurer, and member-at-large. If you wish to be considered for one of these positions or if you know of someone who might be willing to serve, please contact our chairperson, Anne Hamilton, at 705-7575.

Surrender at Appomattox continued

"'Very well,' replied General Grant, 'I will write them out.' And calling for his manifold order-book, he opened it on the table before him and proceeded to write the terms. The leaves had been so prepared that three impressions of the writing were made. He wrote very rapidly, and did not pause until he had finished the sentence ending with 'officers appointed by me to receive them.' Then he looked toward Lee, and his eyes seemed to be resting on the handsome sword that hung at that officer's side. He said afterward that this set him to thinking that it would be an unnecessary humiliation to require officers to surrender their swords, and a great hardship to deprive them of their personal baggage and horses, and after a short pause he wrote the sentence: 'This will not embrace the side-arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage.' To view the terms of surrender, please go to: <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/appotrms.htm>

Grant handed the document to Lee. After reviewing it, Lee informed Grant that the Cavalry men and Artillery men in the Confederate Army owned their horses and asked that they keep them. Grant agreed and Lee wrote a letter formally accepting the surrender.

"At a little before 4 o'clock General Lee shook hands with General Grant, bowed to the other officers, and with Colonel Marshall left the room. One after another we followed, and passed out to the porch. Lee signaled to his orderly to bring up his horse, and while the animal was being bridled the general stood on the lowest step and gazed sadly in the direction of the valley beyond where his army lay - now an army of prisoners. He smote his hands together a number of times in an absent sort of way; seemed not to see the group of Union officers in the yard who rose respectfully at his approach, and appeared unconscious of everything about him. All appreciated the sadness that overwhelmed him, and he had the personal sympathy of every one who beheld him at this supreme moment of trial. The approach of his horse seemed to recall him from his reverie, and he at once mounted. General Grant now stepped down from the porch, and, moving toward him, saluted him by raising his hat. He was followed in this act of courtesy by all our officers present; Lee raised his hat respectfully, and rode off to break the sad news to the brave fellows whom he had so long commanded."

It was not, however, until May 11 that the last land engagement was fought at Pametto Beach, Texas, which was won by the Confederates!



Wilmer McLean Home

Ed Bearss continued

It was on the battlefield of Shiloh in 1954 that he made a career decision inspired by the park's historian Charles E. (Pete) Shedd: interpretation of battles on the field is preferable to their academic study in an office. As an historian at Vicksburg National Military Park, he started interpretative touring as part of his official duties, leading eight one-hour tours a day. It was here that he met his wife, Margie Riddle Bearss (1925–2006), also a Civil War historian. While at Vicksburg, he did the research leading him and two friends to the long-lost Union gunboat U.S.S. Cairo and also located two forgotten forts at Grand Gulf, Mississippi.

As popular interest in the Civil War increased with the centennial celebrations, Bearss was recognized as more knowledgeable on the battlefields than virtually anyone else and he was enlisted to develop a variety of new parks, including Pea Ridge and Wilson's Creek. During his long NPS career, he also led efforts in Fort Smith; Stones River, Fort Donelson; battlefields around Richmond, Bighorn Canyon; the Eisenhower Farm at Gettysburg; the gold miners' route over Chilkoot Pass; President Lyndon B. Johnson's Ranch; Fort Moultrie; Fort Point; William Howard Taft House; Fort Hancock at the Boston Navy Yard; and the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.

On November 1, 1981, he was named Chief Historian of the National Park Service, a position he held until 1994. From 1994 to 1995 he served as special assistant to the director. After his retirement in 1995, he received the title Chief Historian Emeritus, which he holds to this day.

Currently, Bearss, in his eighties, continues to lead numerous battlefield tours—traveling as many as 200 days per year—around the United States, the Pacific, and Europe. He routinely outpaces his much younger guests in charging over rough terrain, recreating the color of famous infantry and cavalry attacks.

Bearss has received a number of awards and honors in the field of history and preservation, including:

- * Bruce Catton Award
- * Alvin Calman Award
- * Bell I. Wiley Award
- * T. Harry Williams Award
- * Man of the Year at Vicksburg in 1963
- * Harry S. Truman Award for Meritorious Service in the field of Civil War History
- * Fellow of the Company of Military Historians
- * Distinguished Service Award from the Department of Interior in 1983
- * Commendation from the Secretary of the Army in 1985
- * The Civil War Preservation Trust created the Ed Bearss Award for achievements in historic preservation and made him the first recipient in 2001
- * Texas Star Award from the Texas Civil War Preservation Seminar in 2002

To learn more about Ed Bearss's 2009 Civil War tours

Please visit: <http://www.civilwartours.org/>

Or email David Ward at: dward@civilwartours.org

Or call David Ward at:
860-485-3603

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

April 8, 2009 *Vital Rails – The Charleston and Savannah Railroad.* **Dr. David Stone, Jr.** of Florence, SC will tell us about this vital link between the two Confederate port cities that unbelievably lasted for most of the war. Why could the Union not sever this vital link until the fall of Savannah? What happened to this line after the war?

May 13, 2009 *Confederate Navel Hero, Raphael Semmes.* Our concluding program for the 2008-2009 season will be a talk by **Dr. Jeffery Seymour** on the Confederate navel hero Raphael Semmes and his vital role in the war. We will learn about the epic voyage of the CSS *Alabama* and its battle with the USS *Kearsarge* off the coast of France in June 1864. How did this dramatically impact our modern day merchant marine?

This will also be the **Annual Meeting for LCWRT, Inc.** members at which time **elections** will be held for a new slate of officers for next year.

Golden Coral's Dinner Menu for WEDNESDAY, March 11, 2009

Rotisserie Chicken, Meat Loaf, Salmon, Carrots, Okra & tomatoes, Mashed Potatoes
German Chocolate Bar, Cherry Crisp, Cookies, Fruit
Garden Salad & Dressings, Sweet & Unsweetened Tea, Lemonade, Decaf Coffee

Cost is \$14, which includes taxes and gratuities

A guest charge of \$5 per person is due and payable at the door

Reservations are required ONLY for Dinner
And MUST be Received BY
MONDAY March 9, 2009

Clip & Submit with your check.

DINNER RESERVATIONS FOR WEDNESDAY, March 11, 2009 **Meal served promptly beginning at 5:45 PM**

Total Number of Dinners Ordered: _____ @ \$14 each = _____ Member Phone #: _____

Member # 1 Name _____

Member # 2 Name _____

Guest: _____ [Please pay guest charge at the door]

Guest: _____ [Please pay guest charge at the door]

List Guests on additional paper if necessary.

Make Check for dinner only Payable to: **LCWRT Inc.** and deliver together with this form to:

Anne Gilliam
605 Argent Way, Bluffton, SC 29909

Lowcountry Civil War Round Table, Inc.

Johanna Verwer, President
16 Trescot Lane
Bluffton, SC 29909

**MEMBER NAME
& ADDRESS**