

1-2015

Bowling Green Civil War Round Table Newsletter (Feb. 2015)

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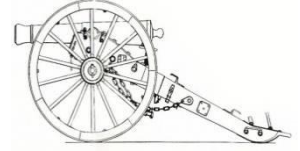
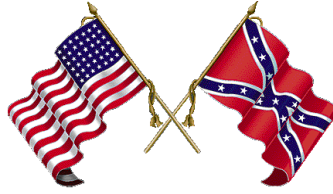
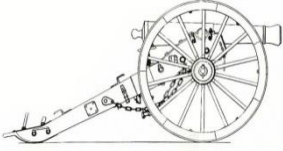


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Founded March 2011 – Bowling Green, Kentucky

Bowling Green Civil War Round Table

President –Tom Carr; Vice President - Jonathan Jeffrey; Secretary – Carol Crowe-Carraco; Treasurer – Robert Dietle;
Advisors – Glenn LaFantasie and - Greg Biggs (Program Chair and President-Clarksville CWRT)

The Bowling Green KY Civil War Round Table meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month (except June, July, and December).

Email: BGCWRT@wku.edu

Rm. 125, Cherry Hall, on the Campus of Western Kentucky University.

The meeting begins at 7:00 pm and is always open to the public.

Members please bring a friend or two – new recruits are always welcomed

Our Program for February 19th, 2015

Ron Sydnor, Jefferson Davis State Historic Site - "Jefferson Davis - The Man"

Synopsis: “Jefferson Davis was one of the most outstanding statesmen in the country during the first 60 years of the 19th Century. He was a Congressman, War Hero, Senator, and Secretary of War. He was a man of his time, but who was the MAN!”

Bio: Ron Sydnor was born in Russellville, KY. He was raised in Pembroke, KY., from the age of two years old until he joined the Marine Corps in June 1972 at age 17. He served 20 years in the Marines, retiring in August 1992 in California. He graduated from De Anza Community College in June 1995 & from UC Berkeley in August, 1997. Ron moved back home to Pembroke in September 2000.

In January 2001, Ron was hired by the Hopkinsville-Christian County Chamber of Commerce as the Executive Director for Minority Economic Development. In September 2005, Ron was hired by parks to serve as the Assistant Manager at Kenlake State Resort Park. In May 2006, he transferred to Lake Barkley State Resort Park as Assistant Manager. On May 16, 2010, Ron was assigned to Jefferson Davis State Historic Site, in Fairview, KY., as the Park Manager where he currently serves. Ron is married to Louanna Sydnor and has three daughters, Mallory Caitlin, and Michelle. He also has one grandson, Isaiah.

Our Previous Meeting: January 15th, 2015

At our previous meeting Brian Allison discussed role of African American soldiers in the battle of Nashville. The Battle of Nashville featured the largest number of African American soldiers in the western theater, whose

involvement was marked by a disproportionate number of casualties. Mr. Allison discussed the role played by African American soldiers, and the affect that their involvement had on both Union and Confederate observers in detail. Relying on battlefield accounts Brian argued that the contribution of African American soldiers has lbeen overlooked by both scholars and students of the war, and should not be forgotten. The Bowling Green Civil War Roundtable would like to thank Brian for his presentation, and extend an invitation for him to return in the future.

Upcoming Events
The Atlanta Campaign Tour
The Siege and Fall of Atlanta. March 25th through March 29th, 2015.

Please join Greg Biggs and Robert Jenkins as they take you to the sites connected to the siege and capture of Atlanta, Georgia in 1864. From Johnston's River Line through Jonesboro, the tour will cover several key battles - Peachtree Creek, Atlanta, Ezra Church, Utoy Creek and Jonesboro. There will be several stops at each of the fields. Other sides include Shoupade Park and other portions of the River Line; the Chattahoochee River Crossings and Roswell, GA, an industrial center; the site of Johnston's headquarters where he was relieved of command; the site of the Potter House and Atlanta defenses and the site of Atlanta's surrender.

We will also see a few museums on this trip with direct Civil War and Atlanta connections including the Marietta Museum; the Atlanta History Center (with one of the three best Civil War collections in the nation); the Road to Tara Museum (which has only one of two remaining Sherman Neck-ties - the melted and bent rails typical of this campaign) along with some "Gone With The Wind" sites including the museum in Marietta and the Margaret Mitchell House. We will visit the Atlanta Cyclorama as well as part of the Battle of Atlanta tour. On the way back home on Sunday, March 29th, we will tie the Atlanta campaign to Hood's Tennessee Campaign with a stop at the Allatoona Pass battlefield in north Georgia. This October 1864 battle was the first fight of the Tennessee Campaign. We will end the tour back in Franklin.

In the evening we will have great presentations by Atlanta historians. Scheduled to appear are Steve Davis, noted Atlanta Campaign author and historian; Gordon Jones of the Atlanta History Center and Charlie Crawford, president of the Georgia Battlefield Association.

This all kicks off like last year with an early afternoon reception on Wednesday, March 25th, at the Lotz House in Franklin, Tennessee before boarding the coach for the direct run to Marietta. We will be staying at the Hampton Inn - Marietta as last year. We decided to add a day this time to bring more to the tour from two battlefields and a couple museums which would be impossible to do in three days of touring.

About your guides: Greg Biggs has been a student of military history for over 45 years with many interests from ancient Greece to today's wars. He is president of the Clarksville, TN Civil War Roundtable and an officer of the Nashville and Bowling Green, KY CWRTs. He has studied the Atlanta Campaign for over 30 years and lived in Atlanta for several of those years. He gave his first Atlanta tour in 1993 and also does tours of several other western campaigns. Greg was one of the guides for the first portion of the Lotz House Atlanta tour in March 2014.

Robert Jenkins is an attorney from Dalton, GA whose office is next door to what was once General Joe Johnston's headquarters. He has spent many years studying the Atlanta Campaign and was a major contributor to saving several sites in and around Dalton, Georgia. His first book on the Battle of Peachtree Creek is the definitive study of that battle and his knowledge of that field is unsurpassed. His latest book, *To the Gates of*

Atlanta: From Kennesaw Mountain to Peach Tree Creek, 1-19 July 1864, is due out any day. For those that took the tour in March 2014, Robert was a co-guide for the Dalton phase.

No refunds unless the tour does not mature or unless you substitute someone in your place. More detailed itineraries will be emailed approximately 2 weeks before departure.

There will be moderate walking, mostly at the various battlefields we visit and, of course, the museums.

Tour Package Includes:

- * Round trip luxury Motorcoach transportation from Franklin, Tn..
- * Escort Services of Cavalier Tours
- * Onboard Civil War Guides - Greg Biggs and Robert Jenkins
- * Evening speakers - confirmed so far - author/historian Stephen Davis (author of two books on the campaign including the recent *What The Yankees Did To Us: Sherman's Bombardment and Wrecking of Atlanta*); Charlie Crawford (president, Georgia Battlefields Association). We have hopefully one more evening speaker (waiting for confirmation). Steve Davis will have his books for sale.
- * 4 nights Accommodations
- * Baggage handling
- * 4 Breakfasts
- * 2 Lunches
- * Admission to Atlanta History Center (One of the three best Civil War museums in the nation. They have a surviving Union Army transport wagon with travel honors painted on it from the campaigns in which it served amongst many other artifacts.)
- * Admission to Margaret Mitchell House
- * Admission to Marietta Museum
- * Admission to Gone With the Wind Museum
- * Admission to Atlanta Cyclorama (covers the Battle of Atlanta)
- * Oakland Cemetery (Then the location of Gen. Hood's headquarters during the Battle of Atlanta. We will visit the graves of several Confederate generals and Margaret Mitchell, Gone With The Wind author)
- * Admission to Road To Tara Museum (They hold one of the exceedingly few Sherman neckties - the bent railroad track that often represents this campaign - in the country).

Rates are per person: Single - \$685 Double (2 people) - \$555 per person Triple - \$510 per person (If you want to try and split a room with someone let Greg Biggs know at Biggsg@charter.net and he will connect you.)

This Month in Civil War History

- February 3rd 1865: On the *River Queen* five men, US President Abraham Lincoln, US Secretary of State William Seward, CS Vice-president Alexander Stephens, along with John Campbell and RMT Hunter discuss peace terms at the Hampton Roads Conference near Fort Monroe. The conference was a failure.
- February 5th 1865: The Battle of Hatcher's Run occurs where Union cavalry fail to disrupt the Confederate supply trains headed for Petersburg. As a result the months long siege of Petersburg would continue until late March 1865.
- February 6th 1865: John C. Breckinridge becomes the Confederate Secretary of War, replacing James Seddon. In the four years of the Confederacy, five men held this position, with Breckinridge being the last.
- February 17th 1865: General William T. Sherman captures Columbia, South Carolina, which subsequently burns to the ground. The cause of the fire remains a source of contention, however WKU Professor Marion B. Lucas's *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia* offers compelling evidence that the Confederates inadvertently burned the city in their efforts to deny the Union the city's cotton supply.
- February 17th 1865: Charleston, South Carolina is evacuated in advance of Sherman's arrival.
- February 18th 1865: Charleston is surrendered to General Sherman as he continues his march through South Carolina.
- February 22nd 1865: Following a bombardment by Union Naval forces under Admiral David Porter, Wilmington falls to Sherman's forces.
- February 22nd 1865: General Robert E. Lee appoints General Joseph Johnston as the commander of Confederate forces in North Carolina. The Confederate army in North Carolina and Lee's Army of Northern Virginia were the only remaining armies in the Confederacy.
- February 22nd 1865: Voters approve a new Tennessee Constitution which includes the abolition of slavery.
- February 25th 1865: Joseph Johnston arrives and officially assumes command of Confederate forces in North Carolina.

Civil War Quotes

"The American people and the Government at Washington may refuse to recognize it for a time but the inexorable logic of events will force it upon them in the end; that the war now being waged in this land is a war for and against slavery" - Frederick Douglass

"Wednesday, February 1, 1865—"No improvements in our condition - terrible coughs and cramps in the bowels, verging on to chronic diarrhea and inflammation of the bowels." - Private Eugene Forbes, a prisoner at Camp Sumter, (Andersonville) Georgia.

"There is an immobility here that exceeds all that any man can conceive of. It requires the lever of Archimedes to move this inert mass." – Henry Halleck on the Army of the Potomac's failure to pursue Robert E. Lee after the battle of Antietam.

"Go on the roof on a hot summer day, talk to a half dozen degenerates, descend to the basement, drink tepid water full of iron rust, climb to the roof again, and repeat the process at intervals until [you are] fagged out, then go to bed with everything shut tight." —A Union naval officer's description to his mother of the tedium of blockade duty, 1863.

"The curse of God must have been on our people when we chose him out of so many noble sons of the South, who would have carried us safely through this Revolution." –Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, on Jefferson Davis

"Get correct views of life, and learn to see the world in its true light. It will enable you to live pleasantly, to do good, and, when summoned away, to leave without regret." Robert E. Lee

"You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out."–William Tecumseh Sherman, Letter to the City Council of Atlanta, September 12, 1864.

"Lamon, that speech won't scour. It is a flat failure and the people are disappointed." —Abraham Lincoln to Ward Hill Lamon, after delivering the Gettysburg Address.

"What armies and how much of war I have seen, what thousands of marching troops, what fields of slain, what prisons, what hospitals, what ruins, what cities in ashes, what hunger and nakedness, what orphanages, what widowhood, what wrongs and what vengeance."– Clara Barton

"Boys, he isn't much for looks, but if we'd had him we wouldn't have been caught in this trap."
A captive Federal to his fellows at Harpers Ferry in reference to Stonewall Jackson

"Before this war is over, I intend to be a Major General or a corpse."
Brigadier General Isaac Trimble to Stonewall Jackson.

"CSA stands for corn, salt and apples, the staple of the Confederate soldier."
A rebel soldier to some civilians.

"Here come them damn black hat fellers!"
Rebel soldiers at Gettysburg.

"Plainly, the central idea of secession, is the essence of anarchy."– Abraham Lincoln

"Any understanding of this nation has to be based, and I mean really based, on an understanding of the Civil War. I believe that firmly. It defined us. The Revolution did what it did. Our involvement in European wars, beginning with the First World War, did what it did. But the Civil War defined us as what we are and it opened us to being what we became, good and bad things. And it is very necessary, if you are going to understand the American character in the twentieth century, to learn about this enormous catastrophe of the mid-nineteenth century. It was the crossroads of our being, and it was a hell of a crossroads."– Shelby Foote

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE BGCWRT

- **March 19th, 2015** - Mark Hoffman, author/historian - "The 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics" (based on his book)
- **April 16th, 2015** - TBA
- **May 14th, 2015** - Gus and Traci Belt, authors/historians - "Religion and the Army of Tennessee" (based on their book)

The Correspondence of Jefferson Davis

Jefferson Davis letter to John D. Woods, 24 April 1886: Courtesy of Johnathon Jeffrey and the WKU Library Special Collection

Private

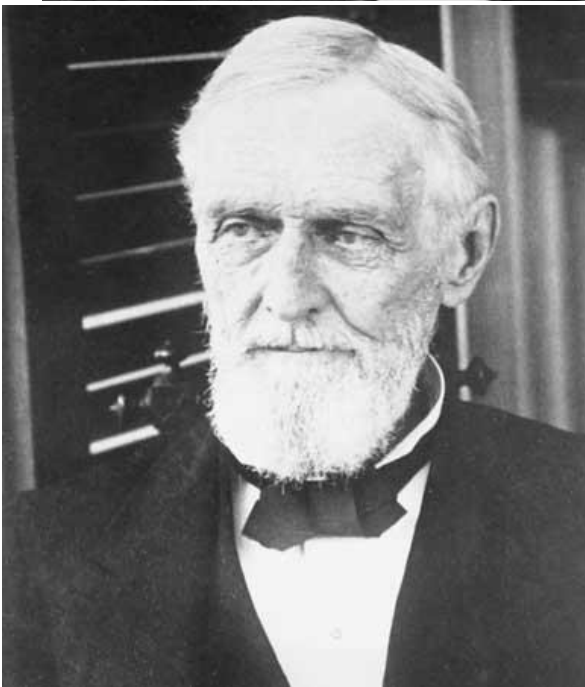
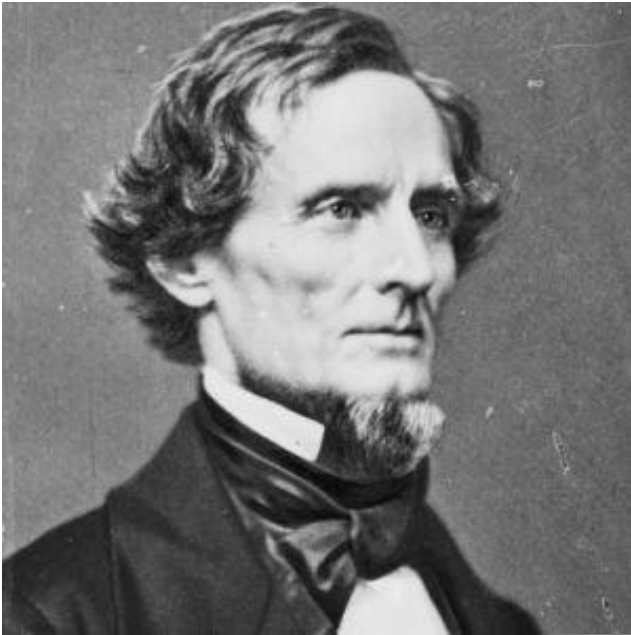
Beaumont Miss.
24th April 86.

Ans D. Woods Esqr.
My Dear Sir,

I have received your letter with the printed slip claiming to be a report of a conversation held with me. The Reporter and the Publisher of the story must have been vastly ignorant of our system of Govt. You cannot have failed to perceive the absurdity of my tendering my resignation as President to my Cabinet, should they would put Genl Johnston in my place. A schoolboy in the lowest form would be pronounced a dunce if he supposed the Cabinet could receive my resignation and appoint my successor as President of the Confederacy. I had the highest opinion of Altest Sydney Johnston, had known him long, intimately and under trying circumstances & may have expressed the opinion which I now entertain that he was better qualified for the office of President of our Govt. than myself, but I knew very well that that office did not go by appointment.

Respectfully & truly
Yours
Jefferson Davis.

A view of Jefferson Davis



Top Left: Davis as he appeared at the time of his inauguration as President of the CSA

Top Right: A monument to Jefferson Davis in Richmond Virginia

Bottom Right: Jefferson and Varina Davis

Bottom Left: A photo of Davis taken in his final years

Keeping History Alive

The following is the tentative wording of a planned historical marker from the Past Finders of Russellville, Kentucky:

Side 1: “A Union colonel with his 600 men came to Russellville, surprising a detachment of John Hunt Morgan’s confederate cavalry on Sept. 30, 1862. Both sides engaged in gunfire across the city, including this spot. 35 Confederates were killed and more wounded, and the rest retreated/

Side 2: The victorious colonel of the skirmish here was a 29 year old Hoosier named Benjamin Harrison. This was his first engagement in combat and earned him accolades. He marched with Sherman to Atlanta and became a Brigadier General. He later became the country’s 23rd President.”

If you would like to make a donation to help ensure that this important event is not forgotten then please contact David Guion at: daguion@hotmail.com