

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table

The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

February 10, 2014
Our 156th Meeting



Volume 14
Number 2

Aldo Perry to Speak at February 10 Meeting About North Carolina Civil War Courts Martial

Aldo S. Perry, a local Civil War author and historian, will be the presenter at the Raleigh Civil War Round Table's February 2014 meeting.



Al was born in Mystic, Connecticut in 1924 and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II aboard the USS *Killen* (DD-593).

From 1949 through 1985, Al worked as a project engineer for IBM. He has taken more than 20 history courses at North Carolina State University and enjoys

international travel and research.

In 2012, McFarland published Al's book, *Civil War Courts-Martial of North Carolina Troops*. The book offers a study of the courts martial of some 450 North Carolina soldiers sentenced to death during the Civil War, mostly for desertion.

The study includes details about military crimes for which the soldiers were charged and describes the discipline they were given through letters, military documents, and other period accounts. Tales of those men lucky enough to avoid their fates also are provided in Al's book.

The accounts are arranged by unit, making the book a valuable research tool.

Al is a widower with four sons and makes his home in Raleigh. His presentation to the RCWRT at our February meeting will be based on his recently published book.

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~ Desertion ~

Desertion was a serious problem for both the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War, and one of the more common reasons soldiers faced a court martial and death sentence.



Approximately 100,000 Confederate soldiers have been estimated to have deserted during the Civil War. Most of those desertions — between 14,000 and 23,000 — are said to have been by soldiers from North Carolina. More than 400 of those men were sentenced to death for their military crime.



The Sesquicentennial



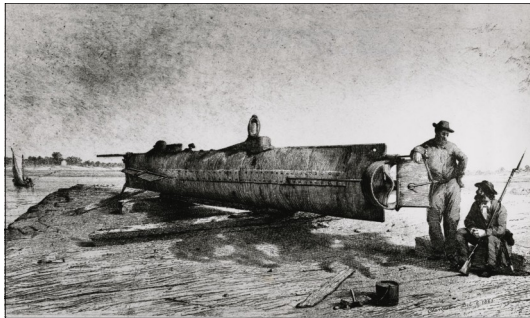
February 1864

Warship Sunk by Submarine!

On Feb. 17, the Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley* made naval history by sinking the warship USS *Housatonic* in the harbor off Charleston, S.C.

The *Housatonic* was a 1,240 ton sloop-of-war that was part of a Union blockading force. During the evening of Feb. 17, the *Hunley* rammed a torpedo that was mounted on a rod extending from her bow into the federal warship's side.

Shortly after the torpedo was attached, it exploded, sinking the *Housatonic* and injuring an unknown number of Union seamen. However, the *Hunley* also would sink for undetermined reasons, killing the eight men aboard the submarine.



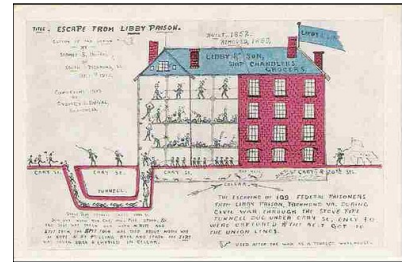
H.L. Hunley

On Feb. 26, the U.S. Congress enacted a law to restore the grade of lieutenant general, represented by three stars. The rank previously had only been held by George Washington and Winfield Scott (brevet promotion). President Lincoln nominated Ulysses S. Grant for the rank a few days later.

Also in February 1864, a Union force led by Gen. William T. Sherman captured Meridian, Miss., and destroyed buildings and railroad infrastructure in the town. Also that month, North Carolina's Braxton Bragg was recalled to Richmond after his defeat at Chattanooga, and the first federal prisoners began to arrive at Camp Sumter near Andersonville, Ga.

Prison Break in Richmond

Beginning late in the evening on Feb. 9, more than 100 Union prisoners made a daring escape from Libby Prison in Richmond.



Led by Col. Thomas Rose, the men escaped through a passage they had made between the first and second floors and a tunnel that had been dug over the previous 17 days.

Of the 109 men who escaped, 59 reached Union lines, 48 were recaptured, and two drowned in the James River.

Big Battle in Florida

On Feb. 20, Confederate forces inflicted a stinging defeat on a Union expedition in what would be the largest Civil War battle that was fought in Florida.



At the Battle of Olustee, also known as Ocean Pond, some 5,500 Confederates would hold off a Union force of about the same size that aimed to cut Confederate supply lines, recruit for black regiments, and establish a pro-Union government in east Florida. Union casualties would number 1,861 and Confederates would have 946 men killed, wounded, or missing.

Visit Oakwood Cemetery Digitally

Raleigh's Historic Oakwood Cemetery has released a digital application that enables you to search the records of people who are interred or entombed on its grounds.



The service uses GPS navigation functionality to help locate any of the cemetery's 22,000 graves and provides information and photos of people buried there. Some 2,800 Confederate soldiers are among those interred at the cemetery.

For more information, call Oakwood at (919) 832-6077 or download the app from iTunes.

Upcoming Events

Feb. 8: Petersburg National Battlefield in Virginia holds a car-caravan tour focusing on United States Colored Troops. \$5 vehicle fee. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For details, go online to <http://www.nps.gov/pete/parknews/index.htm>. Make a reservation by calling (804) 732-3531, ext 222.

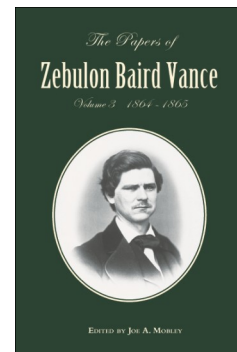
Feb. 15-16: The Fort Anderson State Historic Site near Winnabow, N.C., commemorates the 149th anniversary of the fort's fall with a living history program. Details to be announced later. For more information, see <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/brunswic> or call (910) 371-6613.

Feb. 22: Duke Homestead State Historic Site in Durham, N.C., presents "A Reluctant Sailor: Washington Duke's Confederate Naval Career." Free. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Visit <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/duke/duke.htm> or call (919) 477-5498 for details on the lecture.

Feb. 25: Lynchburg College in Lynchburg, Va., will host James Robertson, who will give a lecture titled "Whatever Happened To?...The postwar lives of Civil War soldiers." Free. 7:30 p.m. Go to <http://www.lynchburg.edu/content/lecture-postwar-lives-civil-war-soldiers#.UuWHVrQo5dg> or telephone (434) 544-8325 for more.

Gov. Vance's Civil War

The North Carolina Office of Archives and History has released the third volume in its "The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance" series.

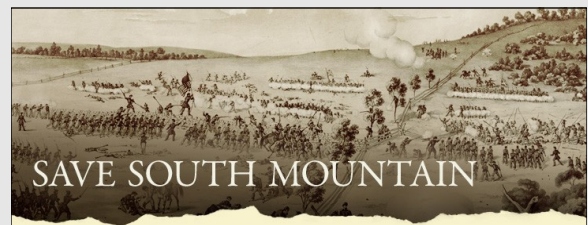


The volume details the last 18 months of Gov. Vance's term at the end of the Civil War through 502 letters and other personal documents. Among the topics are the draft, peace, and desertion.

Copies of the hardbound book are available for \$58.71, which includes tax and shipping, from the Office of Archives and History. To order a copy, call (919) 733-7442, ext. 0 or go online to <http://nc-historical-publications.stores.yahoo.net>.

Preservation News

The Civil War Trust is seeking to preserve 45 acres of key land at the South Mountain battlefield, where North Carolina troops engaged the Union advance at the start of the 1862 Maryland Campaign.



The effort aims to preserve an important piece of Fox's Gap, where some of the heaviest fighting of the South Mountain battle took place.

The Trust's goal in this campaign is to raise \$112,500. Donations are matched 4 to 1.

For details, see <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/southmountain/south-mountain-2014>.

News of the RCWRT



Upcoming RCWRT Meetings

March: Bob Zeller, photographic history

April: William Davis, CSA secret servicewoman

Kearney Given Gatton Award

The recipient of the RCWRT's 2014 T. Harry Gatton Award is Tom Kearney. The award was presented at the Round Table's Ed Bearss event in January.



Ted Kunstling and Tom Kearney
(photo by Frederick Walton)

Tom Kearney was born and raised in Goldsboro and is a 1965 cum laude graduate from Wake Forest as a history major. He completed his PhD coursework in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Tom taught American history at N.C. State University from 1970-1978 and now has a radio program on WPTF 680 AM (Raleigh) at 9 p.m., and RCWRT members have been his guests.

The T. Harry Gatton Award was made possible through a generous endowment by Mary Gatton in the memory of her late husband to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the understanding of and appreciation for the American Civil War. Previous awardees are Ed Bearss (2008), Nora Brooks (2009), Charles Hawks (2010), Mark Bradley (2011), Leslie Rivers (2012), and David Waller (2013).

New Members!

The RCWRT welcomes our newest members, Paul and Carolyn Carruth, Gordon and Judith LeGrand, and Jan Weber and Tana Carlton, all of Raleigh. If you know someone that has an interest in the Civil War, please bring them to a meeting and encourage them to join!



The Knapsack

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RCWRT Score Card

Members	110
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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.