

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table

The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

July 10th, 2023
Our 269th Issue



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July 10th, 2023, Meeting Features Harry Smeltzer, M.B.A., Speaking on the Topic *The Battle of 1st Manassas aka The 1st Battle of Bull Run*



Harry Smeltzer

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table's July 10th, 2023, in person/simultaneous Zoom meeting will feature Harry Smeltzer, M.B.A., speaking on the topic *The Battle of 1st Manassas aka The 1st Battle of Bull Run*.

The meeting will be held at the NC Museum of History's Daniels Auditorium, located just inside the south entrance at 5 Edenton St. in downtown Raleigh, NC. The wearing of a mask is optional.

Please join us at 6:30 p.m. EDT for refreshments. The program starts at 7:00 p.m. This event will also be live-streamed on Zoom for those unable to attend in person. A video recording will be made available on <http://www.raleighcwr.org>, our Raleigh Civil War Round Table website, following the event.

You should have already received an emailed invitation, including instructions and a link for joining online if you are unable to attend in person. Please send an email request to RaleighCWR@Yahoo.com if you have not yet received an invitation.

July's meeting will feature an in person presentation by Harry Smeltzer speaking on the subject *The Battle of 1st Manassas (CSA), aka The 1st Battle of Bull Run (USA)*. This was the first major battle of the Civil War and was fought on July 21st, 1861, some 30 miles west southwest of Washington City. Specifically, Harry's lecture will focus on the actions of the 69th New York State Militia Regiment, assigned to William Tecumseh Sherman's brigade.

According to his autobiography posted on his website, [Bull Runnings](#), Smeltzer lives just outside Pittsburgh, and was born and raised in southwestern PA. He earned an undergraduate degree at The Pennsylvania State University and a graduate degree at the Katz School of the University of Pittsburgh. Neither degree

was in history or any art. Therefore, he doesn't call himself a historian, although he's demonstrated competency in a number of aspects of that profession.

Harry's been published in the journals [Civil War History](#), [The Civil War Monitor](#), [Civil War Times](#), and [America's Civil War](#). He was a Contributing Writer for [America's Civil War](#) and is a Digital History Advisor for [The Civil War Monitor](#).

He is on the board of directors of the [Save Historic Antietam Foundation](#). He's presented programs on Bull Run-related topics to organizations in seven states and the District of Columbia and has organized and led tours of the battlefield of 1st Bull Run. Groups with which he's worked include Civil War round tables, libraries, historical societies, universities, and the United States Marine Corps. Harry also serves as a tour guide of the 1st Bull Run battlefield.



Smeltzer's most recent publication is an article entitled *"I Was the First Who Fell"*, a Confederate account of The Battle of 1st Manassas in the current (July 2023) issue of [Civil War Times](#), on newsstands now.

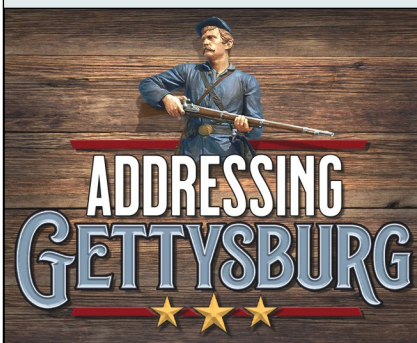
Since November 2006, Harry has hosted the website [Bull Runnings](#), which, in its masthead, proclaims itself as "[A Journal of the Digitization of a Civil War Battle](#)." In October 2022, Harry began what he thought would be a transition to retirement, brought on not entirely by his own

design. But he was OK with it as it has allowed him to spend more time hosting Bull Runnings.

In addition, 2023 has seen Smeltzer setting up his busiest speaking schedule ever, consisting of seven in person presentations on three topics, and two podcasts. His visit to the Raleigh CWRT on July 10th will mark the penultimate 2023 presentation of his own "overland campaign". He completes his tour in Aug. when he travels to Gettysburg, PA to talk about Bull Runners at Gettysburg with the crew at the podcast [Addressing Gettysburg](#) (see sidebar below).

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The Podcast [Addressing Gettysburg](#)



The podcast [Addressing Gettysburg](#) was founded, and is hosted, by Matt Callery. Its name is a clever wordplay on Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Its motto is "Great experiences, quality programs, and a welcoming community

for those who love Gettysburg." Matt is supported by his team consisting of Veronica Brestensky (Co-Host), and regular contributors and Licensed Battlefield Guides Bob Steenstra and Tim Smith.

The following are two endorsements of [Addressing Gettysburg](#):

"Matt Callery and his [Addressing Gettysburg](#) podcast sets out with the idea that history is not boring and succeeds admirably. The podcasts explore fascinating aspects of the Gettysburg and the American Civil War and Matt asks penetrating, interesting questions that draw the best from his guests. If you have any interest in Gettysburg or how people endured and responded to extreme circumstances and conditions, you will find this podcast well worth your time investment."

— Scott Hartwig - Author, [To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign of 1862](#)

"Anyone interested in learning more about the events of July 1863, and their place in history and memory, can find something to enjoy in [Addressing Gettysburg](#). Through engaging interviews with historians, guides, experts, and other informed guests, each episode provides thorough, educational, entertaining, and informative historical content. From military tactics, to civilian and human interest stories, to the battle's lasting legacy locally and across the nation, when it comes to Gettysburg, this podcast covers it all."

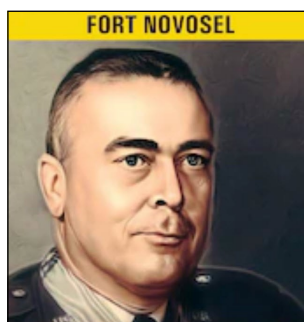
— Codie Eash - Author, Historian, Visitor Services Coordinator at [Gettysburg Seminary Ridge Museum](#)

The Renaming of Nine Southern U.S. Forts Part 2: Fort Rucker Becomes Fort Novosel

This article is part two of a nine part series on the renaming of southern U.S. forts. In 2021, the U.S. Congress created [The Naming Commission](#) in order to rename military assets that have names associated with the Confederacy. [The Naming Commission](#) was mandated by Section 370 of the U.S. National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, enacted on Jan. 1st, 2021.

Within three years of enactment, the U.S. Sec. of Defense is required to implement a plan developed by [The Naming Commission](#) and to "remove all names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America from all assets of the Dept. of Defense." On Jan. 5th, 2023, William A. LaPlante, U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, directed the full implementation of the recommendations of [The Naming Commission](#), Dept. of Defense-wide.

Table 1: The Renaming of Nine Southern U.S. Forts, on p. 3 shows the nine major southern U.S. military bases named in honor of Confederate military leaders, all in the former Confederate States of America, that will be renamed before the end of 2023. Their stories are being presented over a number of issues of [The Knapsack](#) in the chronological order of their renaming. The second fort to be renamed is [Fort Rucker](#), which was renamed [Fort Novosel](#) in a ceremony on April 10th, 2023.



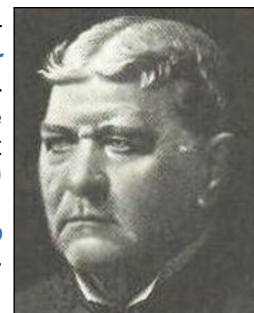
CWO 4 Michael J. Novosel, Sr.

Fort Novosel

[Fort Novosel](#) (formerly [Fort Rucker](#)) is a U.S. Army post located primarily in Dale County, AL. It is named in honor of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael J. Novosel, Sr., a 20th century U.S. Army aviator and medal of honor recipient (see sidebar on p. 5). It was previously named for a Confederate Civil War officer, Col. Edmund W. Rucker (see sidebar on p. 4).

History of [Camp/Fort Rucker](#)

The original name of the World War II post was to be [Ozark Triangular Division Camp](#), but prior to its official opening on May 1st, 1942, the U.S. War Department renamed it [Camp Rucker](#). Situated on 58,000 acres of sub-marginal farmland, and formerly a wildlife refuge, [Camp Rucker](#) had quarters for 3,280 officers and 39,461 enlisted personnel. In Sept. 1942, 1,259 additional acres were acquired to construct an airfield



CSA Col. Edmund W. Rucker

July 10th, 2023

Table 1: The Renaming of Nine Southern U.S. Forts

Fort's Original Name	Confederate Namesake	Birthplace	Fort's Location (Near)	No. of Slaves Owned	Date Renamed	Fort's New Name	Namesake	Medal of Honor Recipient
Pickett	Maj. Gen. George Pickett	Richmond, VA	Blackstone, VA	0	3/24/2023	Barfoot	Col. Van T. Barfoot	Yes
Rucker	Col. Edmund Rucker	Murfreesboro, TN	Dale Co., AL	0	4/10/2023	Novosel	CWO4 Michael J. Novosel	Yes
Lee	Gen. in Chief of the Armies Robert E. Lee	Westmoreland Co., VA	Prince George Co., VA	4 families; managed 189 inherited by his wife	4/27/2023	Gregg-Adams	Lt. Gen. Arthur J. Gregg & Lt. Col. Charity Adams	No & No
Hood	Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood	Owingsville, KY	Killeen, TX	0	5/9/2023	Cavazos	Gen. Richard Cavazos	No
Benning	Brig. Gen. Henry L. Benning	Columbia Co., GA	Columbus, GA	89	5/11/2023	Moore	Gen. Hal Moore & his wife Julia Compton Moore	No & No
Bragg	Gen. Braxton Bragg	Warrenton, NC	Fayetteville, NC	105	6/2/2023	Liberty	Liberty, the state of being free	No
Polk	Episcopal Bishop & Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk	Raleigh, NC	Leesville, LA	400	6/13/2023	Johnson	Sgt. William Henry Johnson	Yes
Gordon	Maj. Gen. John Brown Gordon	Upson Co., GA	Augusta, GA	1; father (4)	Late 2023	Eisenhower	Gen. of the Army and U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower	No
A.P. Hill	Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill	Culpeper, VA	Bowling Green, VA	0; father (20); uncle (30); & brother (38)	Late 2023	Walker	Dr. Mary Edwards Walker	Yes

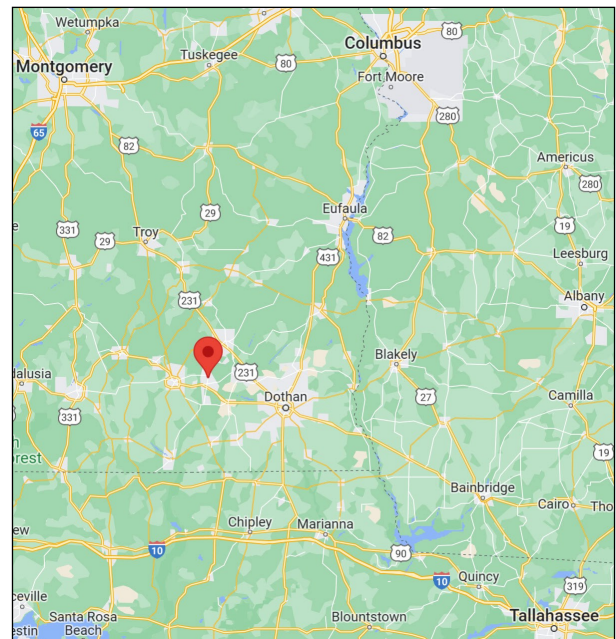
Note that four Confederate officers owned no slaves, one owned a single slave, and the rest owned between 89 and 400 slaves. Three of the forts are located in Virginia, two in Georgia, and one each in Alabama, Texas, North Carolina, and Louisiana. Four of the nine namesakes for which the forts were renamed were recipients of the Medal of Honor. One of the namesakes was a U.S. Army surgeon and the military ranks of the others ranged from colonel to General of the Army/President of the U.S.

to support the training camp.

The airfield was known as **Ozark Army Airfield** until Jan. 1959, when the name was changed to **Cairns Army Airfield**. The first troops to train at **Camp Rucker** were those of the 81st Inf. Div., which left **Camp Rucker** for action in the Pacific Theater in Mar. 1943. Three other infantry divisions received training at **Camp Rucker** during the war—the 35th, the 98th, and the 66th. The 66th (Panther) Div. left for the European Theater in Oct. 1944.

Camp Rucker was also used to train dozens of units of less than division size; these included tank, infantry replacement, and Women's Army Corps units. During the latter part of World War II, several hundred German and a few Italian prisoners of war were housed in stockades near the railroad east of the warehouse area, on the southern edge of the post. The 91st Inf. Div. was sent to **Camp Rucker** at the war's end, where it was deactivated in Dec. 1945.

Camp Rucker was inactive from Mar. 1946 until Aug. 1950. It was reopened during the Korean War. The Minnesota Army National Guard's 47th Inf. Div. was



Site of Fort Rucker near Dothan, AL, 100 miles SSE of Montgomery, AL, as the crow flies

mobilized and sent to **Camp Rucker** in the fall of 1950. This division provided cadre that would conduct basic training of soldiers, who would later on be sent as replacements to units in Korea. The 47th Inf. Div. would remain at **Camp Rucker** throughout the war. After another short deactivation, the camp reopened and expanded when it became a helicopter training base. The name was changed to **Fort Rucker** in Oct. 1955.



Fort Novosel Main Building

Aviation Museum.

In the years before the Sept. 11th, 2001 attacks, the main post (except airfields and other restricted areas) was an open post with unmanned gates allowing civilians to drive through. Following the attacks, this policy was changed, and the post is now closed to unauthorized traffic and visitors.

The U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence is the dominant military facility at **Fort Novosel**. Training, doctrine, and testing are all key parts of the center's mission to develop Army Aviation's capabilities. All Army Aviation training has been undertaken at **Fort Novosel** since 1973, as well as training of U.S. Air Force and ally helicopter pilots and air crew. The center is home to the U.S. Army Aviation Technical Test Center, which conducts developmental aircraft testing for Army Aviation. The U.S. Army Operational Test and Evaluation Command's Test and Evaluation Coordination Office and TH-67 Creek primary and instrument training are both located at Cairns Army Airfield.

Operational units on the post include the 1st Aviation Brig. and the 110th Aviation Brig. handling Army Aviation training, and the USAF 23rd Flying Training Squadron for the training of Air Force helicopter pilots and air crew.

Additionally, due to the large number of warrant officers stationed there, the Warrant Officer Candidate School and Warrant Officer Career College are both located at Fort Novosel. Aviation-branched warrant officers remain at **Fort Novosel** to complete flight training and the Aviation Warrant Officer Basic Course. Upon completion of their training, aviation warrant officers receive the Army Aviator Badge.

Support and other facilities at **Fort Novosel** include the Lyster Army Health Clinic, U.S. Army Aeromedical Research Lab, U.S. Army School of Aviation Medicine, and the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center.

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Confederate Col. Edmund W. Rucker

Edmund Winchester Rucker (July 22nd, 1835 – April 13th, 1924) was a Confederate officer during the Civil War. After the war he became an industrial leader of Birmingham, AL. **Fort Rucker**, now **Fort Novosel**, in Alabama was previously named in his honor.

Edmund Rucker was born near Murfreesboro, TN, on July 22nd, 1835. He was the grandson of Gen. James Winchester, a veteran of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. After a basic education, Rucker moved to Nashville in 1853, working as railroad surveyor before becoming an engineer. He was the city engineer of Memphis during the late 1850s. He owned no slaves.

When the Civil War broke out, Rucker enlisted in the CSA as a private in Pickett's TN Company of Sappers and Miners. Sent to KY, he was promoted to Lt. On May 10th, 1861, he was transferred and promoted to Capt. of Company C, 1st Tennessee Heavy Artillery, his unit being primarily composed of men from IL. His company was part of the garrison during the Battle of Island Number Ten on the Mississippi River. When the island fell, he escaped and was commended for his valor.

Rucker was transferred to the cavalry with the rank of major and assigned to enforce conscription laws in East TN. His unit became the 16th TN Cav. Bn. In early 1863, Rucker was promoted to colonel and given command of the newly-created 1st East TN Legion, also known as Rucker's Legion. With his legion, he participated in Pegram's KY Raid, the Battle of Chickamauga and the Chattanooga Campaign.

In Feb. 1864, Rucker was assigned to Forrest's Cav. Corps in MS. Given a brigade under Gen. Abraham Buford, he fought in the battles of Brice's Crossroads and Tupelo, where he was wounded in the arm and leg.

In Nov. 1864, Rucker was appointed acting Brig. Gen., but his commission was never confirmed by the Confederate Congress. Even so, from that time on until his death, he was referred to as "General".

By then his brigade, now in the division of Gen. James R. Chalmers, had seen massive change due to attrition. He participated in the battles of Franklin and Nashville and was wounded and captured in the latter. Rucker had his left arm amputated and was imprisoned at Johnson's Island in OH. Gen. Forrest organized a prisoner exchange for him, and Rucker was with the army again when it surrendered at Gainesville, AL, on May 9th, 1865.

After the war he returned to Memphis and the railroad business, working with Forrest. In 1869, he moved to AL as superintendent of a railroad. Rucker relocated to Birmingham in the early 1880s. He worked with former Gen. Joseph E. Johnston and became an industrial magnate, dealing with coal, steel, sales, and land, as well as being in the banking business.

Rucker was married twice, first to Mary Adele Woodfin (1855–1883) in 1873, and after her death to Mary T. Bentley (1860–1941) in 1886. He had a son and three daughters with his first wife. He died on April 24th, 1924.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael J. Novosel, Sr.

Michael J. Novosel, Sr. (Sept. 3rd, 1922 – April 2nd, 2006) of Enterprise, AL served in the U.S. military during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. He flew the B-29 Superfortress bomber in World War II. In order to serve in the Vietnam War, he gave up his rank of Lt. Col. in the Air Force Reserve and became a Chief Warrant Officer in the Army. He was awarded the Medal of Honor, the U.S.'s highest military decoration, for his bravery in conducting a medical evacuation under fire in the Vietnam War. **Fort Rucker**, AL was renamed **Fort Novosel** in his honor on April 10th, 2023.



**CWO 4
Michael J. Novosel, Sr.**

Novosel was born in Etna, PA, the son of Croatian immigrants, and grew up during the Great Depression. He joined the Army Air Corps at age 19, just ten months prior to Pearl Harbor, and was a captain by 1945, flying B-29 Superfortress bombers in the war against Japan. He was honored to pilot one of the B-29s that flew over the surrender ceremonies in Tokyo on Sept. 2nd, 1945. Following the war, he left the service for a brief time due to reductions in force, settling in Fort Walton Beach, FL to raise his family.

Novosel joined the Air Force Reserve and went back on active duty to serve his country during the Korean War. He left the service again in 1953 and was promoted to the rank of Lt. Col. in the Air Force Reserve in 1955.

In 1963, Novosel was working as a commercial airline pilot when he decided to return to active military duty. By then, he was 41 and the Air Force did not have space for any more officers in the upper ranks. He made the decision to give up his rank of Lt. Col. in the Air Force to join the Army and fly helicopters as a chief warrant officer (CWO4) with the elite Special Forces Aviation Section.

He served his first tour in Vietnam flying medevac helicopters with the 283rd Medical Detachment. His second tour in Vietnam was with the 82nd Medical Detachment. During that war, Novosel flew 2,543 missions and extracted 5,589 wounded personnel.

Novosel and his son, Michael J. Novosel, Jr., were the only father/son medical evacuation pilots in Vietnam, together evacuating more than 8,000 wounded and, over the span of a few weeks, rescuing each other after their helicopters went down.

On the morning of Oct. 2nd, 1969, Novosel, Sr., set out to evacuate a group of South Vietnamese soldiers who were surrounded by several thousand North Vietnamese light infantry near the Cambodian border. Radio communication was lost and the soldiers had expended their ammo. Without air cover or fire support, he flew at

low altitude under continuous enemy fire. He skimmed the ground with his helicopter while his medic and crew chief pulled the wounded men on board. Novosel completed 15 hazardous extractions, was wounded in a barrage of enemy fire, and momentarily lost control of his helicopter, but when it was over, he had rescued 29 men. For this, he would be awarded the Medal of Honor. He completed his tour in Mar. 1970.

On June 15th, 1971, President Richard Nixon placed the nation's highest award for valor in combat, the Medal of Honor, around Novosel's neck. Among his many other awards, Novosel received the Distinguished Service Cross (which was later upgraded to the MOH), Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Purple Heart.

Novosel was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1975. He retired as the most senior chief warrant officer with the Warrant Officer Candidate Program on Mar. 1st, 1985. He had been a military aviator for 42 years and was the last World War II military aviator in the U.S. to remain on active flying duty. He accumulated 12,400 military flying hours, including 2,038 in combat.

Upon his retirement, he received a rare honor for a living hero when the main street at **Fort Rucker**, AL was renamed **Novosel Street**. He also received the Distinguished Service Medal during his retiring ceremony.

Novosel remained active in the military community while residing in Enterprise, AL during his retirement, and he was frequently invited as an honored guest for military lectures and ceremonies throughout the nation. His book [**Dustoff – The Memoir of an Army Aviator**](#) was published in 1999.

Novosel was diagnosed with a recurrent cancer in Nov. 2005, and underwent a series of highly successful treatments at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. The cancer tumor was greatly reduced in Dec. 2005 and Jan. 2006. In Feb., he concluded chemotherapy and other treatments and waited to regain strength in preparation for surgery on Mar. 7th. His prognosis appeared excellent, yet he never fully recovered from the shock of the surgery. He died on April 2nd, 2006, and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, VA.



Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Regiment transporting Novosel's casket during his funeral procession at Arlington National Cemetery.

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News of the RCWRT



Upcoming 2023 RCWRT Meetings

The wearing of masks continues to be optional in the NC Museum of History, our monthly-meeting venue.

Date	Speaker(s)	Topic
Jul. 10 th , 2023	Harry Smeltzer, M.B.A.	The Battle of 1 st Manassas, aka 1 st Battle of Bull Run
Aug. 14 th , 2023	Kevin Shroyer, B.S.	Virginians in Blue
Sept. 11 th , 2023	Rob Orrison, M.A.	The Battle of Bristoe Station
Oct. 9 th , 2023	TBD	TBD

1962 Topps Civil War News

Civil War News was a set of collectible trading cards issued in 1962 by Topps to coincide with the centennial of the American Civil War. Aimed primarily at a teenage market, the set featured highly detailed colorful painted artwork and was characterized by vivid colors, graphic depictions of violence, death, and blood, and exaggerations of warfare. It remains controversial even today. (An example of a mint condition card is shown at right.)

The complete set consists of 88 cards, including a checklist card. While the fronts of the cards features painted art, the backs were designed as a newspaper, telling the history of the American Civil War through a brief history of a campaign battle or person presented in an article-like fashion, complete with headline.

The cards were issued five to a wax pack and were accompanied by facsimiles of paper currency of the Confederate States of America. There are 17 different bills with denominations ranging from \$1 to \$1,000. These bills were folded in half to fit inside packs.

The original selling price was five cents per package, with each package including the familiar flat rectangle of bubble gum. Topps later issued the cards in cellophane-wrapped strips ("cello packs").

The combination of compelling subject matter, memorable tone, and classic artwork have helped make Civil War News one of the most popular trading card sets ever. Today, singles still move briskly as collectors look to build their sets. Unmarked checklists are particularly rare and command a significant premium over other cards in the set, e.g., \$385 for one currently listed on eBay. The complete 88-card set in very fine-to-excellent condition can command a price ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000.



The Knapsack

is the official newsletter of the RCWRT and is published around the 1st of each month.

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Bob Graesser, Editor

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Griff Bartlett

Readers are encouraged to submit photos, events, & articles for publication to Bob Graesser, Editor (RaleighCWRT@yahoo.com; 919-244-9041)

RCWRT Board of Directors (2022-24)

Name	Position
Charlie Knight	President / Program Committee
Griff Bartlett	Secretary / Treasurer
Bob Graesser	Knapsack Newsletter Editor / Webmaster
Ted Kunstling	Member / President Emeritus
Jessica Hoover	Member
Lynda Turbeville	Member

Paying Memberships / Total Members: 107 / 129

We welcomed 2 new members to the RCWRT in June:

John Miller, Tucker, GA (was active in the Atlanta CWRT)
 Marcus Locklear, Wilson, NC



Card #79: Council of War – Lincoln & Grant – Nov. 1, 1864

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table was formed on March 12th, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) "tax exempt organization."

We meet on the second Monday of each month. Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$10 for teachers. Student membership is free. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20. Dues should be submitted to Griff Bartlett, Treasurer, 908 Kinsdale Drive, Raleigh, NC 27615-1117 by **Sept. 15th** each year.