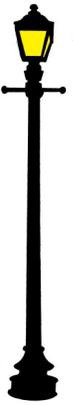




THE LIGHT POST

FEBRUARY, 2022



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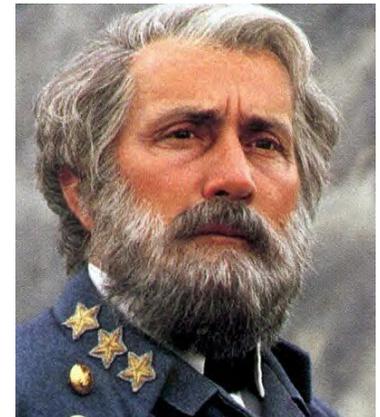
THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX: BAYONETS!!

By Carol VanOrnum

Col. Joshua Chamberlain thought outside the box during the fight at Little Round Top. So, too, did the Rufus Barringer CWRT when it planned a movie showing for its members.

For nine long months the Rufus Barringer CWRT of Southern Pines, NC held no meetings, nor did they zoom. But in April, 2021, they started up again in person with masks and social distancing. Surprisingly, their membership had grown from 68 to 83, which many reported having read more about the Civil War during the pandemic than they probably would have during “normal times.”

In July, the RBCWRT made arrangements with their local 501(c)3 theater to show the movie, *Gettysburg*. Editor Matt Farina knew that few members had ever seen the movie on the big screen—just on a flat home screen. So they chose a Wednesday, an off day for the theater and began the movie at 10:00 a.m. They stopped for a lunch break of subway sandwiches that they brought in—also popcorn, soft drinks, beer and wine from the concession stand, and then resumed the 4-1/2 hour movie. Of



Yea or Nay?

course, the lunch break occurred after Chamberlain's charge at Little Round Top.

They did not advertise the event and it was free to

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SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE AMERICAN CWRT UNITED KINGDOM

By Carol VanOrnum



The American CWRT United Kingdom is, for all intents and purposes, a Civil War round table with the same challenges and successes as many round tables have in the United States. Reaching new members and retaining the old is always a challenge. But the ACWRTUK believes that their ability to utilize the

multiple forms of social media available today makes a difference.

The ACWRTUK began in 1953. Today the growing, London-based round table has 105 members. Like their U.S. counterparts, they hold an annual conference or symposium and

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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX: BAYONETS!! (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

members and guests only. That avoided having to rent the movie from a production company for more than \$2,000. They suggested a \$15 donation for their CWRT's preservation fund. A member brought in his blue-ray DVD, for which the theater had appropriate equipment. The rental fee was \$350 for a typical two-hour movie, with \$50 per additional hour. This fee covered the first 50 people (of which 40 attended).

Matt shared that two weeks later at their regularly scheduled meeting, the topic was discussion of any aspect of the movie, including the wristwatch worn by one soldier, the jet contrails in the sky, and the poor horsemanship of the actor who portrayed General Lee (Martin Sheen). Ron Sunderland, past president and current board member, added that there was a lot of discussion, but not total agreement, re-

garding the casting, particularly Lee, Buford (Sam Elliott), and Hancock (Brian Mollon). But Sunderland makes a great point: "The members generally (but not unanimously) agreed that even with its faults, the movie made a positive contribution to the area of preserving the study of the War."

"... even with its faults, the movie made a positive contribution to the area of preserving the study of the War."

**Ron
Sunderland**

"THE SUMMER PROJECT" — A COLLABORATION

By Carol VanOrnum

A current collaboration between the Shippensburg and Cumberland Valley Civil War Round Tables has successfully worked to keep their members educated and entertained over the summer months.

Two members of the round tables, Robin Vaughn of Shippensburg and Larry Alexander of Cumberland Valley, met as members of the Gettysburg CWRT. They agreed that when their regular seasons ended in May, they would organize one battlefield tour per month during the summer and invite both memberships. Since both round tables are fairly small and located just 15 miles apart, it was a convenient plan. Plus, because they are located in a speaker- and battlefield-rich area it's been easy to find speakers to lead the two-hour tour. They discovered a gold mine of speakers in the licensed battlefield guides.

Alexander says they like to target a specific action or aspect of a battle, such as the Bucktails at Gettysburg.

Pricing is calculated based on an estimated number of participants, and then participants are charged somewhere between \$10 and \$15 – plus tip. Alexander shared, "It's been a really positive experience to both of our groups. We get a lot of positive feedback."

The round tables are planning the 2022 summer tours beginning with Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide Larry Korczyk doing a tour and talk on Col. Biddle's Brigade on July 1, 1863.

The slow moving stream known as Plum Run cuts through the center of the Gettysburg Battlefield and into the "Valley of Death" near the Round Tops.

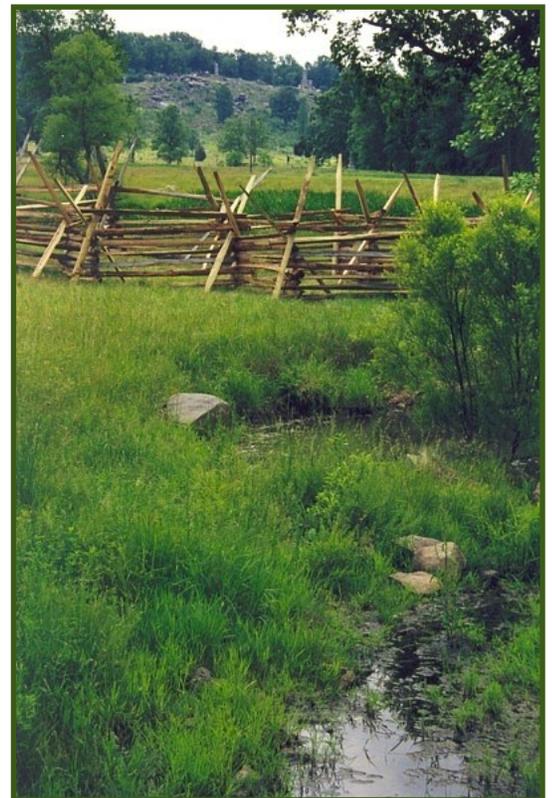


Photo courtesy of Gettysburg National Military Park

GUERRA CIVIL AMERICANA EN ESPAÑOL!

By Carol VanOrnum

Geography has never limited interest in the American Civil War. Fernando Bastidas of Venezuela studied the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s until further research and a random airing of *Gone With The Wind* on local TV sparked an interest in the American Civil War. Local information was limited, so he branched out virtually to live history events, both in English and Spanish, and mainly on Facebook. He found only three groups which had a Spanish audience from Spain and South America. He expanded his search through the U.S. internet and found a wealth of information through Civil War round tables, museums, the American Battlefield Trust, and other entities.

Fernando was especially wel-

comed by the Inland Empire CWRT of Redlands, CA, and while none of the IECWRT officers are bilingual, they enthusiastically helped Fernando organize and facilitate a bilingual event with the goal of creating a group that reached the Spanish audience. To begin, Vice President Mike Hoover suggested Fernando find some videos to broadcast on a zoom call, and Mike offered to add closed captioning.

The first event was held November 28, 2021, with closed-captioned videos on Dan Sickles in the Peach Orchard and 'Colonel' Grant. There were seven participants from Spain, Argentina, and Venezuela, including Mike Hoover and IECWRT President Brian Cieslak. Fernando provided the interpretation. Both Brian and Fernando felt it was a success.

Fernando's goal is to be able to organize one additional monthly meeting for bilingual groups. He added, "The intention of the group is to be able to reach Hispanics about everything related to the Civil War. We understand the vast majority of the information available is not in our language, but in English." With the help of IECWRT, a second live zoom meeting was held on January 9, 2022, in which Spanish author Emilio Ablanedo spoke about his book, *Confederación*. Going international has not been without some challenges. The time difference is restrictive – seven hours between Madrid and Mexico City and nine hours between Madrid and California. That forced Fernando to choose Sunday afternoons to broadcast events. Additionally, it is common for meetings to last 4-5 hours each.

The presentation normally takes between 90 minutes and two hours, followed by discussion. Fernando recognizes the differences between the Hispanic and American cultures regarding time commitments and invites all to stay and participate for however long feels comfortable.

Fernando also created a Facebook page, "Guerra Civil Americana en Español," which is where the live zoom calls now occur. To date, the Facebook page has 46 registered, consisting of four American guests and 42 Hispanics, mostly from Spain.

Because of all of Fernando's enthusiastic entrepreneurialism, the IECWRT has made him an honorary member as "Ambassador-at-Large." Watch for further meetings through the Facebook page, [Guerra Civil Americana en Español](#).



Facebook cover photo page of *Guerra Civil Americana en Español*.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Mike Movius

The CWRT Congress hopes everyone continues to be cautiously optimistic about 2022. To us, that means we are hopeful that planned in-person meetings will be held, that round table leaders will continue to encourage those who are reluctant to meet to do so via zoom and that symposia, conferences and battlefield tours remain on their living agendas.

The Congress also has a couple announcements to stimulate CWRTs and their leaders. First, we are planning our September 2022 conference to be held at the [Kenosha Civil War Museum](#). This will be our best conference with plenty of great speakers, topics of interest, and an excellent venue. The staff at the museum are anxious to meet everyone, and President Bruce Klem and the [Milwaukee CWRT](#) are gearing up to host us. The dates are September 16-18, 2022.

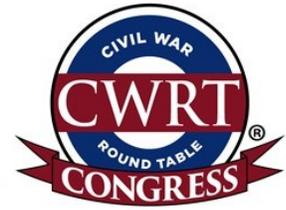
On Sunday, September 18th we will host a bus ride to the [Wisconsin Veterans Museum](#) in Madison and expect to have a memorable presentation by museum director and historian Chris Kolakowski. More information will follow as we firm up the agenda.

We are also launching two new awards. The first is an award for a CWRT that has exhibited a great amount of

innovation. We call it the Wally Rueckel Innovation Award. Wally, you might remember, was a founding member of the CWRT Congress and a founder of the [Brunswick CWRT](#) Southport, North Carolina. Brunswick, within just a few years, became the largest CWRT in the world with over 1,300 members. Talk about innovation, and Wally and his namesake award should quickly come to mind.

The second award we are calling the Dr. John Bamberl Phoenix Award. John is also a founding member of the CWRT Congress and is now the President Emeritus of the [Scottsdale CWRT](#). He led a moderate-sized round table to over 400 members prior to the pandemic. John has also been active in assisting round tables in his area in the renewal process.

Each award comes with a check for \$500, recognition on our website, social media channels, the *Light Post* and our Annual Report, and a plaque. CWRTs can nominate one another or themselves. The criteria and format for nominations can be found on our website [AWARDS](#). The CWRT Congress Board of Directors will serve as the award selection committee. If you have any questions about the awards or the nomination and selection process, please contact Dr. John Bamberl at jbamberl@aol.com. We plan to make the actual award presentation at the Saturday evening dinner in Kenosha.



IMPROVEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND NETWORKING

Save the Date

CWRT Congress
Conference

Kenosha Civil War
Museum

Sept 16-18, 2022



NORTH CAROLINA CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION HISTORY CENTER IN COLLABORATION WITH THE BRUNSWICK CWRT

By Charen Fink and Wally Rueckel, Advisors, Brunswick CWRT

The Brunswick Civil War Round Table's involvement with the North Carolina Civil War & Reconstruction History Center began after Wally Rueckel became president after the passing of co-founder and past president, Tom O'Donnell in 2012. Soon thereafter, in 2013, Wally received a call from David Winslow of the Winslow Group, who was project fund raiser, asking if Wally wanted to become an Advisor to the project's Board. David also asked if he could suggest a few women who also might be interested in becoming Advisors. Turning to the Round Table membership, Charen Fink and Musette Steck volunteered.

This then eventually led to Charen and Musette meeting with David in Southport to discuss the volunteers' interest, involvement, and next steps. At that meeting, David discussed the project in detail.

One of his major tasks was to

request from all Advisors from all North Carolina counties to solicit histories of family members who were involved in the Civil War, both Confederate or Union, military or slave. Each of the counties would be asked to provide at least two stories each. At the end of this meeting, all three agreed to become participants, along with Charen's husband Dan Fink, and Chris Fonvielle, history professor at UNCW.

The principal objective of this \$80 million project was to refresh and redirect the mission of the North Carolina Civil War History Center, later to be renamed the North Carolina Civil War & Reconstruction History Center. This undertaking would include educating and helping visitors to better understand an important piece of North Carolina and American history. Examples of the work required included restoring the site, preserving the history of the site, repairing and rebuilding the barracks and slave quarters, and repairing and rebuilding the Armory and Munitions Center. In addition, a library was planned which would include a major Civil War book

section from which books could be distributed electronically to all North Carolina schools that teachers could then share with their students.

Once the committee was formed, they needed to decide how to fund the \$80 million project. They secured a \$7.5 million commitment from the town of Fayetteville and another commitment of \$7.5 million from the county of Cumberland. They started a fundraising campaign with private donors, receiving \$12.1 million. Gettysburg donated its Cyclorama valued at \$8 million, and just recently the State of North Carolina included \$59.6 million in the State budget. They reached their fundraising goal with groundbreaking scheduled for July 2024.

The four Brunswick Civil War Round Table volunteers attended the first Project Board meeting in Fayetteville, North Carolina, home of the Center. Subsequent meetings were either monthly or quarterly at the site, and attended by local and state politicians, renowned educators, bankers, local business leaders as well as several leaders from

The Brunswick CWRT volunteers are proud and pleased to have participated in this exciting and worthwhile project.

African American church groups.

The Southport contingent, i.e., the Brunswick Civil War Round Table volunteers, in keeping with its mission of contributing to other Civil War-related organizations and projects, are proud and pleased to have participated in this exciting and worthwhile Civil War project which will eventually benefit all who visit the Center.

COLLABORATIONS OF THE COLONEL HENRY RYERSON CWRT



Colonel Henry Ryerson KIA at Wilderness and a Newton NJ, Sussex County, Union Officer

By Dr. Peter Lubrecht, President

The Colonel Henry Ryerson Civil War Round Table connects to our Sussex County, New Jersey area in several ways. We meet at Sussex County Community College on the third Tuesday of each month excluding December, May and the summer months. We are members of the New Jersey History Alliance which publicizes our events, including a biannual Civil War tour of battlefields which are free to the community. We have a display table for Sussex County History sponsored by the Sussex County Historical Society and

promote our organization through the local newspapers.

Our meetings are open to the public at no charge with the hope that membership and donations will keep us going. Local speakers are the main source for presentations; many of them bring new audiences to our gatherings. Our group was founded by author Dr. Brad Gottfried when he was the President of Sussex County Community College with the objective of being an educational service to the Community.

Find us on the web!
www.cwrtcongress.org
 Facebook: **CWRT Congress**
 Youtube: **CWRT Congress**
 Subscribe and Follow

TELL US

If your round table has a unique situation or is successful in any way, please share with us. Contact Carol VanOrnum

ONLINE CLASSROOM

As more CWRTs begin to hold in-person meetings, the CWRT Congress has begun shifting its gears, too. After two cancelled annual conferences, Congress leadership decided to hold free online classes on topics that can benefit CWRTs around the country. On October 10th, we held our first class entitled, CWRTs and the New Normal. It was quickly followed by other Wednesday classes on leadership, newsletter improvement, website analysis, History Day, CWRT board organization, member retention, Sister CWRTs, marketing, and advocacy. All of our classes are designed to inspire new ways of thinking about the role of CWRTs and their leaders should be and how they are managed. Stay tuned to our growing [schedule](#). And, if you have missed a class, you will find all of them in our CONGRESS VIDEOS under [Classroom](#). We hope you will find them interesting and provocative.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE ACWRTUK (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

an annual field trip, albeit being geographically limited. They try to stay actively connected with U.S. CWRTs and for philanthropic purposes identify battlefield preservation sites that are unusual or would otherwise struggle to get funding, especially sites or projects that have a connection to the U.K. Some of their members investigate British individuals or communities' involvement in the war, such as the Navy's British crew members of the CSS Alabama. Their President, Mike Somerville, invites anyone who is interested in the American Civil War from a British perspective to reach out via Facebook.

Being at a distance has its disadvantages, but the ACWRTUK works hard to stay connected. Their organization is fortunate to have several people adept at social media. [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), Youtube, WhatsApp, and their [website](#) all work together to reach current and potential members. According to Somerville, they have 502 Facebook members, 79 YouTube subscribers, and 267 Instagram followers. Somerville shared their struggle a few years ago before deciding to ramp up their social media presence. "We are finding that people see what we have done online and are interested enough to take out full memberships." In addition, they produce a magazine, **Crossfire**,

and an e-newsletter, **Vedette**, both available in their Members' Only portal.

Facebook vs. Instagram

Instagram is all about photographs and videos, followed by a few words. Because it is so visual, it brings high engagement, especially younger people. And it is easy to share content. By adding hashtags to your posts, e.g., *#americancivilwar*, you connect with everyone who is interested in the Civil War. Plus, Instagram does the connecting work for you. Similar to Facebook's "friend suggestions," your Instagram account acts as a suggestion to someone interested in the Civil War, and

they might then decide to check out your website. ACWRTUK's Instagram account is just starting to grow, but imagine this: The American Battlefield Trust, *#americanbattlefieldtrust*, has 33,600 followers! Clearly, a direction to be explored.

Facebook, while seemingly abandoned by younger generations (my grandchildren never post anymore), seems to continue to be embraced by older generations. Many people who may not feel technologically savvy will avoid Zoom but will go to Facebook. As you will see in this issue's article on *Guerra Civil Americana en Espanol*, they are utilizing the Facebook feature to hold live broadcasts and record presentations.

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