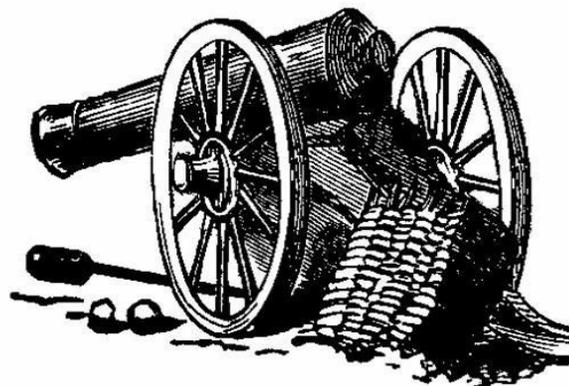


The Grapeshot

January
2019



This month's guest speaker:

Mr. Ed Bearss

Please join us as we welcome America's foremost Civil War authority Edwin Bearss for his presentation "Answering Your Questions on the Civil War."

Scottsdale Civic Library

Auditorium 6:00 p.m.

January 15, 2019

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

About Our Speaker

We are proud to spend another evening with Ed Bearss. The “Civil War Walking Encyclopedia” will be joining us again on January 15.

Edwin C Bearss, U.S. Park Historian Emeritus, is one of the foremost Civil War historians this nation has known. Growing up on a family cattle ranch in Montana during the Great Depression, and listening to his father read accounts of military campaigns, piqued his lifelong interest in military history. He had a favorite milk cow named Antietam.

Mr. Bearss is a celebrated tour guide, lecturer, author and authority on all aspects of the Civil War. The *Smithsonian Magazine* featured him in 2006 as “an American who made a difference”. He has also been called “The Homer of the American Civil War”. Mr. Bearss was a featured commentator for Ken Burns’ PBS Series *The Civil War* (1990), which is still the most popular program broadcast by that network. The Civil War Trust created the Edwin C. Bearss Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in historic battlefield preservation and made him the first recipient in 2001. This U.S Marine Corps veteran of World War 11 is a speaker who is in demand and he still maintains a busy schedule leading tours of various battlefields. In 2018, Ed was presented with the American Battlefield Trusts inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award for his many decades researching and relating the nations past to tens of millions of people, as well as his tireless advocacy for Battlefield preservation.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library Auditorium from 5:40 to 7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month Sept. thru May.



Jan. 15 Ed Bearss, *Answering Your Questions on the Civil War*

Feb. 19 James Conroy, *The Hampton Roads Conference*

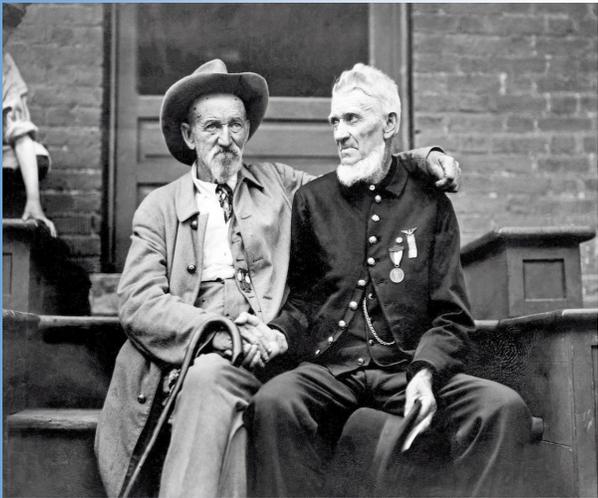
March 19 Howard Strouse, *Civil War Atrocities*

April 16 Frank O'Reilly, *Battle in the Balance: The Union Breakthrough at Fredericksburg*

May 21 Greg Biggs, *How Johnny Got His Gun: The Confederate Supply System*

History Discussion Groups

Didn't get enough Civil War at our speaker meetings? Here is the schedule for our History Discussion Group for this season. We encourage you to join us, it is casual and engaging with a lot of information. Not to mention it's a blast. The discussion group meets in the Gold room at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library from 6 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.



January 24: *Trivia Contest* with Dick Cox

February 28: *Civil War Name Game* led by Dick Cox

March 28: *Civil War Atrocities*, Howard Strouse facilitator

April 26: *Battle of Fredericksburg*, presented by John Bamberl

"I don't expect to go to Hell, but if I do, I am sure that Hell can't beat that terrible scene."

The Overland Campaign in the spring of 1864 marked a change in the nature of the war; instead of sharp, short battles followed by disengagement and rest, the armies remained constantly engaged for six weeks. The Battle of the Wilderness last two days (May 5-6), but the next battle at Spotsylvania Court House last two weeks, with major fighting on May 8,10,12, 18 and 19, while on the other days there was constant skirmishing, shelling and sniper fire. The field fortifications built during those days dwarfed those of previous battles making the scene look like something from the Western Front of the First World War.

Within those two weeks it was the events of May 12 that stood out in everyone's recollection both at the time and after the war. The center of the Confederate line at Spotsylvania was what became known as **The Muleshoe**, a protruding salient about a mile in depth and width, vulnerable to Federal attack on three sides.

To take advantage of that vulnerability a large Federal force under the command of General Winfield Scott Hancock launched a surprise attack at dawn on May 12. Union troops stormed the Rebel positions by using an unusual tactic. Instead of arraying themselves in line and firing volleys as they approached, the Union regiments aligned in deep columns and charged, not stopping to shoot, as they emerged from the fog and drizzle that morning. The rapid pace of the assault led to initial success, aided by Robert E Lee's decision to remove cannon from the salient the night before.

The Confederate line was shattered. Quickly responding, the Rebels began to counterattack, regaining some of the lost ground. Lee needed his soldiers to buy time while a new defensive line was constructed at the base of the salient. In one area a Mississippi and a South Carolina brigade fought their way back to the original breastworks. For the next 22 hours they and the Union forces on the other side were locked together, amidst rain and mud, in the most sustained, bitter fighting of the war at what became known as **The Bloody Angle**.

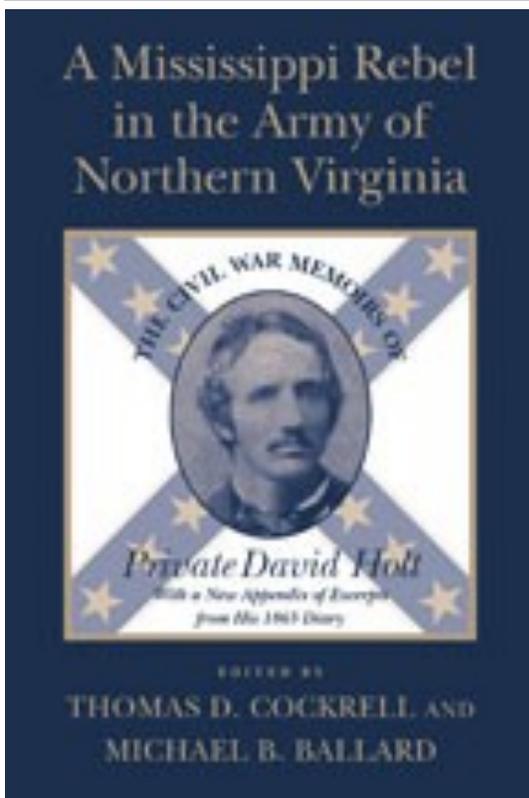
Two memoirs, one from a Union and one from a Confederate soldier bring home the horror of that sustained combat.

From Hard Marching Every Day by Private Wilbur Fisk, 2nd Vermont Regiment

But the most singular and obstinate fighting that I have seen during the war, or ever heard or dreamed of in my life, was the fight of last Thursday [May 12] . . . The rebels were on one side of the breastwork, and we on the other. We could touch their guns with ours. They would load, jump up and fire into us, and we did the same to them . . . Some of our boys would jump clear up on to the breastwork and fire, then down, reload and fire again, until they were themselves picked off. . . . I visited the place the next morning and though I have seen horrid scenes since this war commenced, I never saw anything half so bad as that. Our men lay piled one top of another, nearly all shot through the head. There were many among them that I knew well . . . On the rebel side it was worse than on ours. In some places the men were piled four or five deep, some of whom were still alive . . . *I have sometimes hoped, that if I must die while I am a soldier, I should prefer to die on the battle-field, but after looking at such a scene, one cannot help turning away and saying, Any death but that.*

As awful an ordeal for the Union soldiers, at least most who survived were rotated away from the Angle during the hours of fighting. For some of the Confederates it was worse. The recollections of one who fought for the entire 22 hours:

From **A Mississippi Rebel in the Army of Northern Virginia** by **Private David Holt**, 16th Mississippi Regi-



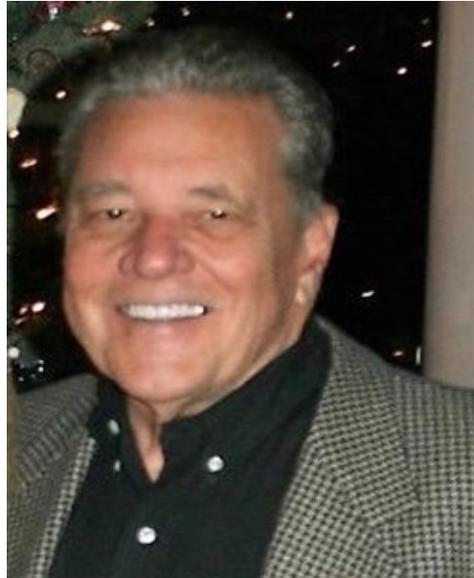
ment

Soon the Yanks made a determined charge with fixed bayonets . . . The breastwork was in a bog, and to make a charge in such a place against a line of fierce men close up, who have no idea of giving way, was more than those gallant Yanks could do.

It rained throughout the day and evening of May 12. Trees shattered by artillery fire (though one 22-inch oak was cut down solely by musket fire a dramatic event at around midnight noted in most of the surviving accounts; [its stump still on display at the Smithsonian](#)) stood over a morass of mud which became deeper as the day wore on and to which was added, as one soldier noted, a mixture of "*blood and brains*". On the Confederate side the breastworks were taller than a man. Behind were traverses; trenches dug perpendicular to the breastwork, with three sides shored up by logs with the Rebel troops huddled inside, isolated from the traverses on either side of them described as like "*being in a three sided log cabin without a roof*". This configuration led to each group of men in each traverse fighting their own battle for hours on end.

On the other side of the breastworks was a short level area and then a slope leading down to a gully. As long as the Federal troops stayed in the gully, Confederates could not shoot them unless they themselves stood on top of the breastworks. Thousands of Union soldiers eventually huddled there. But all through the day, the Union troops would regroup and launch another charge followed by a Confederate counterattack and when that happened the fighting was at pointblank range. The ferocity was such that the Bloody Angle is one of the few instances in the war where a large number of bayonet wounds are documented.

***From Around the Campfire...A Message from Our
President John Bamberl***



I first learned about the Advisory Board about two years ago when I heard Wally Rueckel speak about it at the first Civil War Congress. The New Brunswick Civil War Roundtable has 1250 members and they use the Advisory Board to get more members active. The Advisors are allowed to attend board meetings and participate in discussions and the only difference between them and the active board members is their ability to vote.

We now have 15 members on the Advisory board. Mary Jane Baetz has gone on to become our new Marketing Director. Mark Stoler has become our Program Chairman. George Bennett lives in Tucson but has become quite active on the program committee and also serves on the Greeters committee. Alan Rockman

has taught Civil War history for us at the Cocopah Middle school. James Fritsch is now active on our Editorial committee and our Program committee. Roger Huegerich is now a Greeter. Jim Henderson is on the Marketing committee and has passed out over 300 Rack cards. Gary Dorris now writes a monthly Civil War blog and has been quite active with the history committee. Alan Stearns has become active on the Greeters committee. Ted Stahr is working with Cheri Stegall on a presentation to middle schools.

The Advisory Board is a great way for members to get active and find out how our roundtable functions. And it is a well organized system with well developed committee that all have a mission.

We have three meetings a year and welcome input from the membership and you are more than welcome to present your ideas and suggestions for discussion. You will be provided an agenda prior to the meeting and be allowed to make recommendations.

The roundtable needs help at this time with committees. There is very little time involved and most of the meetings are telephone calls. The Finance committee needs someone who is familiar with Excel and can type to help keep up with the Membership list.

If you would like for me to e-mail you a copy of our committee structure please e-mail me.

Officers, Staff, and Meetings

OFFICERS/BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT: Dr. John Bamberl 480-699-5844

VICE PRESIDENT: Shelly Dudley

SECRETARY: Hal Bliss

TREASURER: Michael Harris

GRAPESHOT: Brad Cox, Jim Fritsch

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN: Mark Stoler

BOARD MEMBERS (thru 5/2020): Don Swanson, Richard Cox, Mark Stoler, Mary Jane Baetz

BOARD MEMBERS (thru 5/2019): Paul Knouse, Cal Thompson and Brad Cox

COMMITTEES

Book Table: Cal Thompson

Bylaws: Richard Cox, Mark Stoler, Hal Bliss

Editorial: Brad Cox, Jim Fritsch, and John Bamberl

Finance: Paul Knouse

Genealogy: Brad Cox, Cal Thompson, Jim Davis

Greeters: John Bamberl,

History: Richard Cox

Program: Mark Stoler, Gordon Dudley, George Bennet, Jim Fritsch

Social Media: John Bamberl,

Marketing: Mary Jane Baetz, Jim Henderson

Webmaster: Mark Echeveste, Brad Cox

Meetings @

Scottsdale Civic Center Library (Auditorium)

3839 N Drinkwater Blvd

Scottsdale AZ

3rd Tuesday of the month

September thru May

5:40 PM - 7:30 PM \$35 Annual Dues (individual)

\$45 Annual Dues (family)

EVERYONE WELCOME

www.scottsdalecwr.org

I Didn't Know That...

On December 26th 1862 General Rosecrans and his 43,400 man Army of the Cumberland marched south out of Nashville Tennessee and headed for Murfreesboro where they would engage General Bragg and his Army of the Tennessee on December 31st.

As the army proceeded it would stretch for more than 35 miles long that included marching infantry regiments, cavalry regiments artillery battalions, ammo wagons, supply wagons, ambulances and beef and pigs to feed the army.

The scattered farms strewn along the way were in for a spectacle unlike they had never seen before. The glitter of the weapons, the clanking of the wagons, the sound of both foot tromping of men and horse alike must have been overwhelming. As the people sat on their porches and glazed upon such a scene, it would take over six hours for the army to pass a single porch. Now that's what I call a parade.

Scottsdale Civil War Round Table

Membership

Please Join Us!

Your membership enables SCWRT to help with battlefield preservation and attract the best Civil War experts from around the country as keynote speakers at our meetings, September thru May! Please fill out this form and return it with your check payable to Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Mail to this address:

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

#274 7349 N. Via Paseo Del Sur Ste 515 Scottsdale, AZ 85258-3749

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, & Zip _____

Phone # _____

E-mail _____

Student Membership (no charge)	----
Active Duty Military (complimentary)	----
Individual Membership \$35	\$ _____
Family Membership \$45	\$ _____
Additional contribution of \$ _____	

100% of your contribution (minus expenses) goes to battlefield preservation.

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

*Our monthly newsletter "The Grapeshot" will be emailed to you.

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable is approved by the IRS as a 501 c (3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible for federal and state income tax returns. Check with your tax consultant.

www.scottsdalecwrt.org

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

480/699-5844