



# The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

## CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

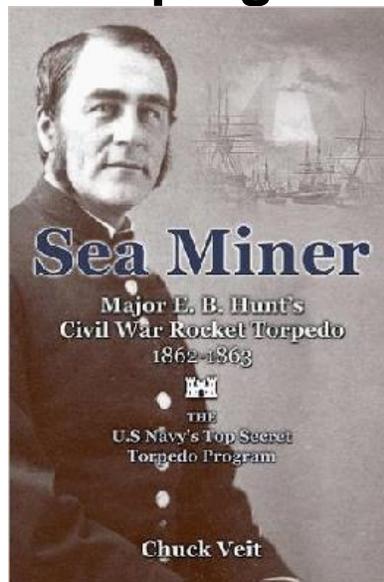
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## Navy May Be Developing Underwater Rocket



Informed sources report that Naval Officer Edward B. Hunt has been experimenting with a self-propelled, underwater device that can deliver an explosive charge below the waterline of any Confederate ironclad. The CSS Virginia was fitted with a steel ram that was designed to pierce the underwater hull of the USS Monitor after their first encounter on March 8, 1862. John Ericsson, the inventor of the Monitor, said he had submitted plans of such a weapon to Emperor Louis Napoleon III during the Crimean War. This ironclad had a globular turret with a breech-loading steam cannon. However below the waterline were two permanently mounted tubes which could fire ten foot-long projectiles equipped with an explosive head. Ericsson called these “hydrostatic javelins.” They were to be propelled by steam. This vessel was never built, but this reporter can only wonder if Hunt is attempting to develop such a device. The work has been very hush, but our source says Hunt is near success.

# MARCH MEETING

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2018

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

1541 BROADWAY

WATERVLIET, NY

## Sea Miner: E.B. Hunt & the Navy's 1<sup>st</sup> Torpedo Development

Chuck Veit

Social Hour	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Business Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Presentation	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Questions & Answers	8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

*The regular meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, March 9, 2018. Our very special speaker is Chuch Veit, and the topic of his presentation is, "Sea Miner: E.B. Hunt and the Navy's First Torpedo development."*

*Sea Miner is the long-lost story of the U.S. Navy's first torpedo development program of 1862-63. The weapon developed by soldier-scientist Major Edward B. Hunt was so advanced that nothing remotely similar would be seen for another eighty years; in fact, Sea Miner achieved results that we have yet to match even today. While the term 'torpedo' usually referred to mines during the Civil War, this secret*

*program developed the torpedo as we know it today.*

*Chuck is author of a growing number of original research books, including A Dog Before a Soldier: Almost-lost Episodes in the Navy's Civil War; Sea Miner: Major E.B. Hunt's Rocket Torpedo; and two books focusing on the salvage exploits of John E. Gowen: Raising Missouri and The Yankee Expedition to Sebastopol.*

*A fifth research book on Alligator: The Navy's First Submarine is expected in 2018, as well as a sixth on the wartime exploits of Acting Assistant Paymaster, John Stevenson.*

*Chuck has spoken at the Naval War College in Newport, RI and the NOAA Maritime Heritage Education Conference, as well as round tables and historical societies. He has published numerous articles in naval and historical magazines, such as Naval History, Historical Diving Times, Civil War Navy, and the Company of Military Historians' Journal.*

*Chuck is president of the Navy & Marine Living History Association where he speaks with several thousand visitors annually. He is married to his best friend and editor, Lori.*

## UP-COMING MEETINGS

The April 13, 2018 meeting of the CDCWRT will feature Chris Mackowski, who will talk about Spotsylvania and the fighting at the Mule Shoe.

## BUFORD'S VIEW – MARCH 2018

On February 3, I attended Pat Schroeder's excellent Civil War Conference in Farmville, Virginia. Also attending from the Round Table were Matt Farina, Rosemary Nichols and Regina Daly. While there I was reintroduced to a very remarkable young boy named Nathaniel Hayden. I had met him previously two years ago in Gettysburg on Remembrance Day when he was just 9 years old. I had our table in front of the Historian Bookstore when he and his uncle approached. Nathaniel was in full uniform and he proceeded to answer correctly 14 out of 15 questions on our Civil War Quiz. His overall knowledge of the Civil War was amazing for a 9 year old. Since that day young Nathaniel has given talks to other school groups on drummer boys.

Last spring he did a Civil War Trust Facebook Live with Gary Adelman at Manassas for the Generations Event. He did a special event with Ted Chamberlain (a descendant of Joshua Chamberlain) where he recited from memory Chamberlain's "vision place of souls" speech. I told his mother (Wendy) that if they are ever in the Albany area they would be honored guests at one of our meetings. Nathaniel lives near Richmond, Virginia.

The day after the Conference I visited the Sailor's Creek battlefield just a short distance away. Unfortunately it poured rain the entire day making it impossible to walk the ground. However, they have a new Visitor's Center where I had a great conversation with the ranger there. They were raising money for the Friends of Sailor's Creek group and to help, I purchased a print showing the 121<sup>st</sup> New York (Emory Upton) in action during the battle.

On March 3, I will be raising money for the Round Table and battlefield preservation at the Rotterdam United Methodist Church's Flea Market. It's not a big event but every

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dollar counts. March 10 and 11 is the Underground Railroad Conference where the Round Table will have a Vendors/Exhibit Table(s). The Keynote speech is Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> but unfortunately it is the same night as our regular Round Table meeting.

Our speaker is Chuck Veit of the U.S. Naval Landing Party. He will be speaking about his book *Sea Miner*. It is the long lost story of the U.S. Navy's first torpedo development program of 1862-63. It's one of those times I wish I could be in two places at the same time.

On March 24 I'll be in Peekskill for the Lincoln Society's fund raising banquet. The main speaker is Lou Del Bianco. His grandfather was Luigi Del Bianco who was the chief carver of the Mount Rushmore National Monument in South Dakota.

Finally, yesterday I attended Union College's Founder's Day Convocation. The guest speaker was Scott Greenberger the author of ***The Unexpected President - The Life and Times of Chester Arthur***. Arthur was of course the 21<sup>st</sup> President of the U.S. He was an 1848 graduate of Union College. He had a connection with the schools in Cohoes. Influenced by abolitionist views of Union President, Eliphalet Nott, he worked on anti-slavery and discrimination legal cases (one in N.Y.C. which desegregated trolley cars in N.Y. City 100 years before Rosa Parks). Serving as New York's Quartermaster General during the Civil War, he helped New York exceed its quota for troops during the war. He became President after the assassination of President James Garfield, who himself was a dark horse candidate.

Arthur is buried in Albany's Rural Cemetery. I did get Scott Greenberger's contact information just in case there would be the possibility of him becoming a future speaker at one of our Round Table meetings.

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*Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly in various locations in the Capital District. This newsletter is published eleven times per year. Annual dues are \$30. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.*

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