



Founded at Fort Harrison
on February 8, 1951

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RICHMOND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

APRIL 2025

"The Civil War was the biggest thing that ever happened to us. It was
our Iliad and our Odyssey – and it remains our least understood war."
Bruce Catton

**APRIL 8, 2025
7:30 p.m.**

**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
6000 Grove Avenue
Richmond, VA 23226**

(From the parking lot, enter the church
through the double glass doors and follow
signs to the Large Fellowship Hall)

PHIL STONE

**"LINCOLN'S VIRGINIA
FAMILY"**



Our April speaker will be Philip C. “Phil” Stone, former president of Bridgewater College and a former board member for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

Stone’s presentation will be on Abraham Lincoln and his Virginia connections. President Lincoln’s ancestors settled in Rockingham County before the Revolutionary War, and his cousins remained there until very recently. His great-grandparents are buried in the local family cemetery, as are four additional generations of Lincolns. At least three houses built by Lincolns in the early 19th century remain standing and occupied. Some of the Lincolns were slave owners.

He will also give his observations on Lincoln’s legacy and his qualities as a leader and address the question of whether he presents a worthy role model for current presidents and other leaders.

Abe’s grandparents, “Captain Abraham” and Bathsheba Herring Lincoln, lived and married in Rockingham, and all five of their children were born in the county, including the president’s father Thomas, in 1778. While in Congress in the 1840s and 1850s, Lincoln wrote to his Rockingham cousins to ask for more information about the family. These letters have been digitized and can be read at the [Papers of Abraham Lincoln Digital Library](#).

Just before the Civil War broke out, Lincoln met with residents of the area who said they were there “to stop a war.” During the war, several of his cousins fought in the Confederate Army, including Confederate guerrilla leader Albert Curtis “Al” Lincoln. At least one cousin’s barn was burned by Sheridan’s troops.

For the past 50 years, on February 12, Stone has held a ceremony in honor of Lincoln’s birthday at the family cemetery,

located just north of Harrisonburg on VA State Route 42. At this year’s ceremony, as reported in Harrisonburg’s *Daily News-Record*, Kathy Burke, a member of the Massanutten Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, said, “Phil Stone is a wonderful speaker. I wouldn’t miss it. I’m standing here in six inches of snow. Last year, we stood here in the rain with umbrellas.”

In 2004, he founded the Lincoln Society of Virginia to honor the president and preserve the history of him and his family in Virginia. Later this year, Phil will be honored by the Abraham Lincoln Association with its Lincoln Lawyer Award for his work in promoting Lincoln’s legacy and his own contributions to the field of law.

A native of Bassett, Stone earned his BA in Economics from Bridgewater College, then continued on to earn his JD from the University of Virginia School of Law. He practiced law for 24 years with Wharton, Aldhizer & Weaver, the Shenandoah Valley’s largest law firm, before accepting a call in 1994 to be the seventh president of Bridgewater College. During his 16 years as president, the college’s enrollment almost doubled and their endowment grew dramatically. For three of those years, he was chair of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which accredits almost all schools of higher learning in 11 states.

After retiring from Bridgewater College in 2010, he formed the Stone Law Group in Harrisonburg with three of his children. When Sweet Briar College was facing financial difficulties and the prospect of closure in 2014, Phil took a break from his law practice to become the president of Sweet Briar and put it back on its feet. He and his wife Cherill live in Harrisonburg.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was particularly pleased to talk with Dan Balfour, 1972 President, and a 50 year-plus member of the RCWRT. I had heard that during his presidency the Round Table supported a unique program – the Prison Civil War Round Table at the State Penitentiary. Founded in 1962, a group of about 15 prisoners from all backgrounds including men from Canada, and as far away as Belgium, met weekly to hear a speaker discuss the Civil War.

The prisoners had access to a good library. They were very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the topic. Dan and fellow Round Table members George Todd, Sandy Parker, Dennis Madison and Roland Galvin were among the featured speakers over the years. Guest speakers including Bud Robertson and Ed Bearss readily agreed to piggyback their Richmond CWRT appearance with a talk to the Prison Round Table.

Dan vividly remembers walking into the prison holding cell and the iron doors clanging behind him. “It was hard not to feel apprehensive, but once you were in the meeting room it was like any other Round Table.” The program closed in 1989 as the state began the process to shut down the prison.

Dan, as a child, was spell-bound listening to his maternal grandmother telling of the adventures of her father, Lemuel Joyner of the 41st Virginia Infantry. A favorite story was his return from a Maryland campaign, either Antietam or Gettysburg, when he stopped to rest by a tree stump. The stump was hollowed out and

inside was a true treasure.... six silver spoons hidden by a local family. Those spoons are now Dan’s family heirlooms. On his maternal grandfather’s side, Dan’s ancestor, Major Joseph Gillette, briefly commanded the 13th Cavalry before he was mortally wounded at the Battle of Second Brandy Station in October, 1863. Dan and fellow member, Waite Rawls, were members of the Franklin Round Table as high schoolers and Dan formed a Round Table at W&L.

Dan’s interest in both his home county and his Confederate ancestors led him to author two books for the Virginia Regimental Histories Series: “Thirteenth Virginia Cavalry” and “Franklin and Southampton County in the Civil War.” He also wrote “A Pictorial History of Franklin and Southampton County.”

Two fond memories of his time as Round Table President were Show & Tell and Quiz Nights. Show & Tell nights consisted of members having a minute or two to share a Civil War relic, family keepsake, or favorite book. On Quiz Night, the Quiz Master would divide the group into three 12-15 member corps with remaining members making up the audience. A battle or campaign would have been pre-selected for the evening’s questions. It was a fun evening that kept the audience thoroughly entertained.

As a Washington & Lee University graduate, Dan puts R.E. Lee at the top of his list of favorite Civil War personalities. He is particularly interested in Lee’s significant contributions after the war. Dan’s favorite books include Douglas

Southall Freeman's trilogy "R.E. Lee," the 1930's "JEB Stuart" by John W. Thomason, and "The Killer Angels" by Michael Shaara. These are among my favorite books as well, but his last recommendation is a book I immediately ordered: "The Story of the Confederacy" by Robert Selph Henry. Douglas Southall Freeman wrote the foreword stating, "the one book with which to begin one's study of the period and the book to which to return when everything else on the subject had been read."

When asked who are the most impressive author/historians he has met he mentioned Gary Gallagher, Hobson Goddin and Roland Galvin.

In regard to the future of the RCWRT, Dan highlights our great attendance numbers. "Seventy-five to one hundred members and guests is impressive. We haven't seen numbers like that since the 1960's centennial." Thank you, Dan.

Billie

**A WARM WELCOME TO OUR
NEW MEMBERS:**

HERBERT AND SHARON LOVELESS

EVENT OF INTEREST

April 6, 1:00 p.m.:

**Richmond National Battlefield Park's
"Civil War and Emancipation Day:
Lincoln in Richmond" Walking Tour.**
The tour begins at 1700 Dock Street,
Richmond.

FAMOUS CIVIL WAR QUOTES WHO SAID IT?

1. "My plans are perfect, and when I start to carry them out, may God have mercy on Bobby Lee; for I shall have none."
2. "Peace won by compromise is usually a short-lived achievement."
3. "A ship without Marines is like a garment without buttons."
4. "I was always a friend of southern rights, but an enemy of southern wrongs."
5. "There was a nuisance in the service known as the army correspondent."

Answers on page 6

One hundred-sixty Years Ago

"The end came on April 9, at a little town named Appomattox Court House. Federal cavalry and infantry had got across Lee's line of march, other powerful forces were on his flank, and a huge mass of infantry was pressing on his rear. He had no chance to get in touch with Johnston, no chance to continue his flight toward the west, no chance to put up a fight that would drive his foes out of the way; Lee had fewer than 30,000 soldiers with him by now, and not half of these were armed and in usable military formation. The rest were worn-out men who were pathetically doing their best to stay with the army, but who could not this day be used in battle.

The break came just as Federal infantry and cavalry were ready to make a final, crushing assault on the thin lines in Lee's front. Out between the lines came a Confederate horseman, a white flag fluttering at the end of a staff, and a sudden quiet descended on the broad

field. While the soldiers in both armies stared at one another, unable to believe that the fighting at last was over, the commanding generals made their separate ways into the little town to settle things for good.



So Lee met Grant in the bare parlor of a private home at Appomattox Court House and surrendered his army. For four long years that army had been unconquerable. Twice it had carried the war north of the Potomac. Time and again it had beaten back the strongest forces the North could send against it. It had given to the Confederate nation the only hope of growth and survival which that nation ever had, and to the American nation of reunited North and South it gave a tradition of undying valor and constancy which would be a vibrant heritage for all generations. Not many armies in the world's history have done more. Now the Army of Northern Virginia had come to the end of the road, and it was time to quit."

From "The Civil War"
by Bruce Catton, 1960

RIDE NEEDED TO OUR MEETINGS

Former Round Table member David Yates would like to attend our meetings again; however, he is in need of a ride. If you can help, please give David a call at 804-272-2370 (home), or 804-873-3236 (cell). He lives at 9030 Western Road, near Buford and Forest Hills.

RICHMOND BATTLEFIELDS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING AND TOUR

May 3, 2025, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Seven Pines Battlefield: *"Contrasts in Command: The Battle of Fair Oaks"* with Victor Vignola. Meet at the Adams Farm, 231 Hanover Road, Sandston, VA 23150.

Once believed to be lost forever, the Seven Pines battlefield has been given new life. The Richmond Battlefields Association (RBA), together with the Capital Region Land Conservancy, has secured a historic 24-acre site where the Irish Brigade made its stand during the 1862 clash. Join us for a free tour led by celebrated historian Victor Vignola, who will bring to life the dramatic Battle of Fair Oaks and the strategic choices that shaped its outcome. Bring a chair, invite a friend, and step into this defining moment of history!

Flyers will be available at the meeting.

Bernie Fisher

LEE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

General Order No. Nine

"After four years of arduous service marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources.

I need not tell the brave survivors of so many hard fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but feeling that valor

and devotion could accomplish nothing that could compensate for the loss that must have attended the continuance of the contest, I determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen.

By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from a consciousness of duty faithfully performed; and I earnestly pray that a Merciful God will extend to you His blessings and protection.

With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your Country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration for myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell."



Answers to "Famous Civil War Quotes"

1. Joseph Hooker
2. Winfield Scott
3. David Dixon Porter
4. Benjamin Butler
5. Daniel Harvey Hill

From *Civil War News*,
January-February Issue

"The charges were now withdrawn from the guns, the campfires were left to smolder in their ashes, the flags were tenderly furled – those historic banners, battle-stained, bullet-riddled, many of them but remnants of their former selves, with scarcely enough left of them on which to imprint the names of the battles they had seen – and the Army of the Union and the Army of Northern Virginia turned their backs upon each other for the first time in four long, bloody years."

Horace Porter, April 10, 1865



UPCOMING MEETINGS

May 13: Joe Stahl and Matt Borders, "Faces of Union Soldiers at Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Culp's Hill"

June 10: Clayton Butler, "True Blue: White Unionists in the Deep South During the Civil War and Reconstruction"

July 8: Barton Myers, "Lincoln's Commanders from the Old Dominion"

August 12: Peter Luebke, "Death Loves a Shining Mark: St. Joseph Tucker Randolph's Civil War"

September 9: Dr. Lesley Gordon, "Cowardice and Combat in the Civil War"

October 14: Mike Gorman, "What's New in Civil War Richmond History"

November 11 (annual dinner meeting): Jonathan White, "Shipwrecked: A True Civil War Story of Mutinies, Jailbreaks, Blockade-Running, and the Slave Trade"

December 9: Dr. Elizabeth Varon, topic to be determined

Attendance at March meeting: 65