Founded at Fort Harrison
on February 8, 1951

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RICHMOND
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

NOVEMBER 2026

"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

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THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 12, 2026
6:00 p.m.
Annual Dinner Meeting

Weinstein JCC
5403 Monument Avenue
Richmond, VA 23226
(Sisisky Room; first room on the right as you enter the building)

WILLIAM C. "JACK" DAVIS

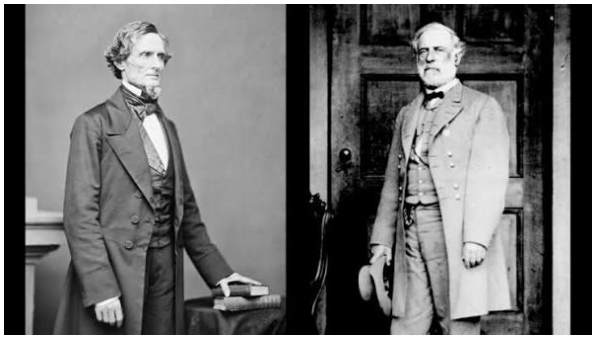
"Jefferson Davis and R.E. Lee:
A Model Relationship?"



We are in for a treat this month when noted historian William C. "Jack" Davis will detail the nature of the partnership between the Confederate president and his leading field commander, how they worked together, and what they achieved and did not achieve. They were vastly different men politically, socially, and certainly personally; Lee a Virginia blueblood, and Davis a Westerner of no family distinction; Lee a Whig and Davis a Democrat.

Fellow West Point graduates, Lee finished second in his class while Davis was lucky to finish at all. Yet when war came these two very different men forged a command duo that enjoyed phenomenal success, Lee on the battlefield and Davis supporting him in every way possible.

What they had in common was their concert in strategic thinking, their mutual grasp of the spirit of the commander-in-chief roles in a constitutional democracy, and their closely guarded, even muffled, emotional personalities. The evolving give-and-take nature of their personal and command relationship is perhaps unrivalled in our history except for Grant and Lincoln, and a century later FDR and George C. Marshall.



William C. "Jack" Davis is the former director of Virginia Tech's Center for Civil War Studies and has spent 31 years in editorial management in the publishing industry. He has consulted for numerous film and television productions and was senior advisor for the A&E History Channel series "Civil War Journal." Davis is the author of more than 50 books and is the only four-time winner of the Jefferson Davis Award of the Museum of the Confederacy for works on the Civil War and Confederacy.

Dinner will be catered by Mission BBQ and consist of: Sliced Brisket, Pulled Chicken, Mac-N-Cheese, Cole Slaw, Slider and Cornbread Combo, and four different BBQ Sauces; Kettle Chips, Brownie and Cookie tray; Lemonade and Unsweet Ice Tea. We have also received a one-day Banquet License from the Virginia ABC, so please bring your own bottle (wine or beer). <u>The cost for the dinner is $40 per person.</u> <u>*Deadline to register is Thursday, November 5.*</u> You can send your check – <u>made out to Richmond CWRT</u> – to Art Wingo, 1414 Patriot Circle, Glen Allen, VA 23059.

You won't want to miss one of our favorite and much-in-demand speakers, Jack Davis! <u>*Note the different time and day: Dinner is at 6:00 p.m., the program begins at 7:00 p.m.*</u>



A *WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT*

"And the survey says…"

The forms have been submitted, your responses have been tabulated, and you, our members, have spoken. But before I get into the details of the recent membership survey, let me tell you what the results indicate to me.

In my humble opinion, the survey results reveal a group of engaged people who are happy with where we are as a Round Table, who are still willing to help finance what we do and, most importantly, who are still in love with Civil War history. To paraphrase our U.S. presidents at every State of the Union address, the state of our Round Table is STRONG!!

Although the number of forms submitted is somewhat disappointing at a little more than 57 percent, 80 out of approximately 140 members responded to the survey. Of those total respondents, 67 members were male and 13 female. The largest number of respondents (38) were between the ages of 70 and 80, followed by 19 respondents at 80 years and older, 15 in the 60-70 range, 9 in the 50-60 bracket, and only 2 between 40 and 50.

Because most of what we do revolves around our monthly meetings, the survey questions focused mainly on how you feel about the meetings – when and where we hold them, the topics presented, and the people who present them. The majority of members surveyed (48), remain happy with our usual meeting time of 7:30 p.m., and the overwhelming majority (77) are happy with our current meeting place, the Weinstein Center. Approximately 46 percent of respondents (40) attend 8-12 meetings per year, 28 percent of respondents (21) attend 5-7 meetings, and 25 percent (19 respondents) make it to 1-5 meetings. I also know we have members who cannot attend any meetings for various reasons, but who still graciously support the Round Table with their annual dues.

Not one person in the survey reported that they were unsatisfied with the speakers and the topics presented in the past five years. Of the total number of respondents, 38 said they were "very satisfied" with the speakers and topics and 39 said they were "satisfied." Three members responded as "neutral." Although some people indicated an interest in holding a game night in lieu of a regular meeting, a resounding 74 percent (59 respondents) reaffirmed that speakers are your priority.

Because your elected leaders and board members want to continue to offer the kinds of programs that you want to see and hear, we asked what some of those topics might be. You responded with: the impact of the war on women in Virginia; politics both North and South; the Western theater and personalities; Lee's retreat from Gettysburg; local battles (including Petersburg, Bermuda peninsula, Dahlgren Raid, Gaines's Mill, and Cold Harbor); Shenandoah Valley battles (including New Market); photography; equipment; music; clothing; artillery; cavalry; medical topics; mapmaking; specific units like the Iron and Irish Brigades; and individual personalities (including Lincoln, D.H. Hill, Charles Sumner, Nathan Bedford Forrest, John Taylor Wood, Sally Tompkins, Kate Stone, John Wilkes Booth, and Raphael Semmes). Suggested speakers included Brian Burton, Will Greene, Michael Hardy, Chris Hartley, Bobby Krick (of course), Chris Mackowski, Paul Quigley, Vic Vignola, and Bill Waldrop. As the incoming Second VP for 2027, I will take all of these suggestions into consideration when selecting speakers for 2028.

We also wanted your opinion on whether or not we should still hold our annual banquet and field trip. The survey revealed that only 24 percent (19 respondents) always attend the banquet, and that only 16 percent (12 respondents) always attend the field trip. Members reported different reasons for not attending these events: just interested in regular meetings; don't have the time; medical reasons related to food diet; conflicts with business or family commitments; mobility issues for the field trip; prior commitments; and a combination of cost and schedule. Based on

these results and because they can incur added costs beyond membership dues, we might want to discontinue these events in the future. But before we decide to continue or discontinue either event, we will need to gather more detailed input from you. If you would like to provide additional input regarding these two events, please let me know by email at harterdf@gmail.com.

The most heartening response to the survey, in my opinion, was the response to a dues increase. Out of 80 responses, 79 supported a dues increase of $10. This demonstrates that you appreciate the value of our speakers, our monthly meetings, and a safe, modern facility in which to meet. At the December meeting members will have the opportunity to vote on the dues level for 2027, as well as Officers and Directors for 2027.

Last but not least, the survey showed something that most of us already know. We are a graying membership. If we want to preserve the study of Civil War history and pass on the love and reverence we feel for it, we need to attract new, and younger, members. If you know of a high school or college student who is interested in Civil War history, let them know about our Round Table and that student membership is free. Or, if you have a child, grandchild, or great-grandchild who is still in school, invite them to a meeting.

On behalf of the other elected officers and board members, I want to thank you for participating in the survey and for continuing to support the Richmond Civil War Round Table.

Dale

CIVIL WAR QUOTES: WHO SAID IT?

1. "Please help my poor family, my dear wife and children. War, cruel war, has swept everything from me, and today my wife and children are beggars. My life is demanded as an atonement. I am willing to give it, and I hope after a while I will be judged differently from what I am now. If any one ought to come to the relief of my family, it is the people of the South, for whose sake I have sacrificed all."
2. "The impression produced by the size of Lincoln's extremities, and by his flapping and wide projecting ears, may be removed by appearance of kindliness, sagacity, and the awkward bonhomie of his face."
3. "These rebels are not half-starved. A more sinewy, tawny, formidable-looking set of men could not be. In education they are certainly inferior to our native-born people, but they are usually very quick-witted, and they know enough to handle weapons with terrible effect. Their great characteristic is their stoical manliness. They never beg or whimper or complain, they look you straight in the face with as little animosity as if they had never heard a gun fired."
4. "Grant will get every man he can. Unless we can obtain a reasonable approximation to his force, I fear a great calamity will befall us."
5. "As we say out West, if a man can't skin he must hold a leg while somebody else does."

Answers on Page 6

THE FUNERAL OF STONEWALL JACKSON
"Aftermath of Victory"

May 12, in Richmond, all of the church bells were tolling, the flags were at half-mast, minute guns were fired, and government offices and places of business were closed. Thousands of people stood bareheaded in the streets to see Stonewall Jackson's coffin go past.

The coffin was covered with a Confederate flag topped by evergreen sprays and wreaths of flowers, and in the lid

there was a glass plate so that when the coffin lay in state at the capitol everybody could look at the pinched waxen face; and in the tense silence there was awareness that this death meant more than the loss of a great warrior. As the devout very well knew, death was swallowed up in victory, but this all-consuming victory was personal to General Jackson; what the Confederate cause had won might not be enduring, might even mean much less than it had at first seemed to mean. When this man was cut down people were compelled to examine the hopes that had rested upon him.



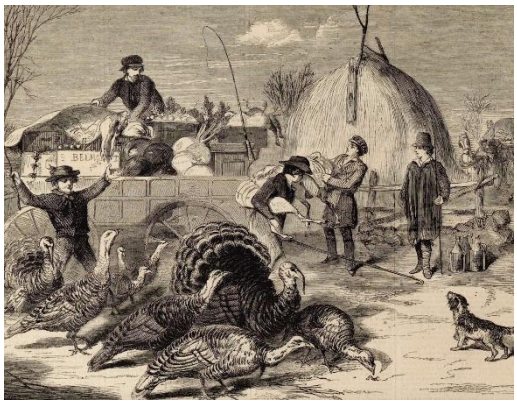
The pallbearers following the hearse were all general officers. President Davis rode behind them in an open carriage, looking drawn and haggard, members of the cabinet walked after him two by two, and there was a long procession of state and city officials, government clerks, ordinary citizens, and such military detachments as were available. Men who watched remembered black plumes everywhere, the general's riderless horse led by a servant, "a common sorrow too deep for words," and the measured *thud-thud* of the minute guns; and up by the Rappahannock, on the edge of a forest reeking with unburied bodies and powdered with gray ashes from burned underbrush, General Lee sent word that unless his army could be strongly reinforced he might eventually have to retreat to the defenses of Richmond."

Bruce Catton, 1965
Never Call Retreat (Volume 3 of the *Centennial History of the Civil War*)

THANKSGIVING

On October 3, 1863, President Lincoln issued a proclamation designating "the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving." Lincoln's announcement marked the culmination of a multi-decade campaign by Sarah Josepha Hale to make Thanksgiving into a national holiday. Although Lincoln wrote the vast majority of his state papers, the Thanksgiving Proclamation was in fact drafted by Seward. It reads in part,

"…. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the



lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union."

RCWRT FIELD TRIP TO THE MARINERS' MUSEUM IN NEWPORT NEWS

by Christine Wynd, Second V.P.

The annual field trip for 2026, held on Saturday, October 24, was a big success. We had 19 members and guests in attendance. A big shout out goes to our volunteer van drivers, Danny Witt and Dale Harter, who got us safely there and back. Our guide, John, met us at the museum entrance and took us through the museum. We watched an excellent, immersive film about the Battle of Hampton Roads and the meeting of the ironclads, the *USS Monitor* and the *CSS Virginia.* This naval battle is very interesting in itself, but the history of the ironclads and their development is fascinating. I am in awe that these ships stayed afloat for as long as they did!!

Lunch was catered by the restaurant at the museum, *Column 15*, and after lunch we had a presentation by Mr. Will Hoffman, Director of Conservation and Chief Conservator. He talked about the recovery and restoration of artifacts from the *USS Monitor* after it sank off Cape Hatteras in 1862. He summarized the history of the *Monitor* and told us about the recovery of the turret from the depths of the ocean. There is a lantern in the museum that is in excellent shape. This lantern was the last piece of the *Monitor* to be seen as the ship sank during a hurricane. This lantern was also the first artifact found by divers after the wreck was located. This lantern confirmed that divers had indeed found the *USS Monitor.* Mr. Hoffman also discussed restoration of the *Monitor*, a highly technical and scientifically based, long and arduous process, but Mr. Hoffman made it interesting and understandable. The *Monitor's* turret is held, submerged in water, in a huge lab extension of the museum. The lab was built around the turret after it was brought to the Newport News site.



After the presentation, participants had time to explore the museum further.



The museum focuses on maritime history in addition to its important Civil War events. There is a wonderful display of model ships and ship figureheads. I think everyone enjoyed the day.

Answers to "Civil War Quotes"

1. CS Commandant of Andersonville Prison, Henry Wirz, in a letter to the *New Orleans Daily True Delta*, November 10, 1865
2. William Howard Russell, *Times* (London) Correspondent, Diary entry, October 9, 1861
3. U.S. Colonel Theodore Lyman, letter to his family, May 18, 1864
4. General Robert E. Lee in a letter to President Jefferson Davis, November 2, 1864
5. General U.S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs, Vol. 2,* 1886

LAST MEETING IN 2026

December 8: Hampton Newsome, *Gettysburg's Southern Front: Opportunity and Failure at Richmond*

Attendance at October Meeting: 66