



Founded at Fort Harrison
on February 8, 1951

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RICHMOND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

FEBRUARY 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

FEBRUARY 11, 2025
7:30 p.m.

VIA ZOOM and at
First Presbyterian Church
4602 Cary Street Road
Richmond, VA 23226
(The parking lot is behind the church; go up the
steps to fellowship hall on the left)

KEVEN WALKER

**"SHENANDOAH VALLEY
BATTLEFIELDS FOUNDATION"**



The Round Table welcomes Keven Walker, Chief Executive Officer of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, as our speaker on February 11.

"If This Valley is Lost': Preserving the Shenandoah Valley's Civil War Battlefields" will be the focus of Keven's presentation. He will speak about the history of the battlefield preservation movement, especially in Virginia and concentrating on the Shenandoah Valley, and how the SVBF has been leading in battlefield preservation and park creation for the last 25 years. He will also touch on historical highlights and share what to visit in the Shenandoah Valley.

Keven has been the CEO of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation since 2014, after serving for 11 years as a Ranger, a Cultural Resources Specialist, and the Acting Cultural Resource Program Manager for the National Park Service. He is the author of "Antietam: A Guide to the Landscape and Farmsteads," published in 2010.

Since Keven arrived in 2014, the SVBF has preserved more than 2,000 acres of



battlefield land and opened two visitor centers and a full-service battlefield park. The late, great Ed Bearss noted,

"Keven Walker's work has been exemplary; ranking him with the best historic preservation professionals I have known since I began my career."

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81407863233?pwd=yQy9hU8reBTdkRlvT33Dh2NVGen2iQ.1>

Meeting ID: 814 0786 3233
Passcode: 072281

We recommend that you sign in 5 – 10 minutes before the meeting starts to be sure your equipment is working and review some of the features. However, we hope to see many of you at the church to view the presentation on the "big screen."

Please be sure to thank the fantastic Brik Cash of First Presbyterian Church for his expertise and dedication in making these Zoom meetings possible for our group.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

The membership of our Round Table is most fortunate to be gaining new members at a steady pace. As a relative new member myself, I thought it would be interesting to get to know some of our history through conversations with former Round Table presidents.

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Richmond Round Table member and former president, Sandra V. Parker. In 1977, Sandy was introduced to the Round Table. Her friend and mentor, James "Bud" Robertson, recommended her as a guest speaker to Rowland Galvin, the Round Table's first secretary. Her topic was Richmond's Libby Prison, which was her M.A. thesis under the

direction of Dr. Robertson. Her parents, Roger and Bette, accompanied their daughter to the meeting. Upon their arrival the membership greeted Bette as the evening's guest speaker. No one imagined that the young woman with her would be making the presentation. At least one gentleman assumed that a twenty-something girl could not know possibly more than they did. Taking questions following her talk the gentleman asked her the same question three times. She gave the same answer all three times but on the third repeat she added that he could ask the question till the cows come home but she had done the research and her answer was correct. Now that is what I call spunk!

The most amazing follow-up to the story is that just three years later in 1980 Sandy became the first female president of the Richmond Civil War Round Table. This was quite a distinction as the first Round Table president was elected in 1954.

Sandy attended undergraduate school at Virginia Tech when it was 3 to 1 ratio of men to women. Bud Robertson, nationally acclaimed Civil War historian and author, taught a hugely popular Civil War History class open only to juniors and seniors in an auditorium that seated 125 people. As a freshman, Sandy, along with a host of others, was so determined to hear Dr. Robertson's captivating lectures that they cracked the doors open and sat on the floor in the lobby just to listen. During her graduate school at Virginia Tech, she was one of his graduate teaching assistants and continued as a

research assistant as needed when she graduated.

She pursued other graduate programs at Radford University in Adult Education and The George Washington University in Educational Administration and Policy Issues; however, she continued to provide research assistance to Dr. Robertson and other historians. In that capacity, Dr. Robertson had her review several chapters of his book on A.P. Hill.

Sandy's parents inspired her love of history. Her mother served in the RAF during WW II. Her father continued his service starting in WW II until his retirement in the late 1960s. Among the Virginia military bases, she lived at Fort Lee and Bellwood interspersed with military tours to Germany. Wherever they lived, they studied and visited historical sites. Usually, it is the child that wants to get out of going to school; however, there were times that Sandy's mom sanctioned skipping school. On one of those occasions, her mom got her out of school for a morning "dental appointment" and the two of them wound up driving to Gettysburg. It was a total surprise to her dad when she had to call and tell him that they would not be coming home for dinner that evening!

The historians that she most admires include Bud Robertson, Jack Davis, who took over as director of the Civil War Institute at Virginia Tech after Bud, and RCWRT favorite, Gary Gallagher.

I asked Sandy her thoughts on the future of the RCWRT. "History is at a pivotal stage. It is re-written, re-examined and re-presented.

Organizations like ours need to preserve and present history in an objective way. Not hindsight. But view it as lived in that lens, that time, and that place."

As our talk concluded I asked Sandy to sign a copy of her book, "Richmond's Civil War Prisons," which is a part of the Virginia Civil War Battles and Leaders Series. I walked away inspired and encouraged. Thank you, Sandy.

Billie

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

**AL GOETHALS
MICHAEL SHOOP**

ANNUAL DUES NOTICE

Dues are now due and should be paid to the Secretary by February 15, 2025. The annual dues structure was voted on in December and remains the same at \$35 for single membership and \$45 for couples.

You may pay your dues in person to Andy at the meeting or send a check – made out to Richmond CWRT – to Andy Keller, 9701 Fireside Drive, Glen Allen, VA 23060. As an added convenience you may also pay your dues via Venmo this year. **Leroy-Keller-3** is the User Name.

Please note: Since the February meeting is via Zoom and if you won't be attending in person, you may pay your dues at the March meeting without penalty.

A CIVIL WAR TALE

Although you have never heard of George Kelly Turner or Callohill Menis Newman, they have three things in common: 1) both were Confederate soldiers, 2) both were POWs at Point

Lookout, Maryland, and 3) both were my 2x Great Grandfather.

George Kelly joined the ANV April 27, 1861 at Chestnut Fork (near Bedford, Virginia). He was in the 28th Virginia Infantry, Co. G. I have a very poor copy of a letter written to his hoped-to-be sweetheart from November 10, 1861, written from Camp Withers, near Centreville. Luckily, the owner of the letter had most of it transcribed at the Virginia Historical Society and it contains language of the time such as: "Much esteemed Darling," "a vain possibility for one to express the deep regard I possess for thee," and closes with "Your devoted admirer." The recipient of the letter was America Phoebe Walker from Lynchburg, and they married February 8, 1866. After a two-month leave for sickness, he rejoined the army January 21, 1863 and I have found nothing that says he wasn't with his unit on July 3rd for Pickett's Charge. He survived to be captured on April 6, 1865 and the Regimental History says at Harper's Farm. He was sent to Point Lookout until released on June 21, 1865.



Pickett's Charge (Gettysburg Cyclorama)

He is buried in Hickory Grove Cemetery in Bedford County, Virginia, but unfortunately no headstone exists.

Callohill Menis Newman enrolled on July 26, 1861 at Jamestown Island, Virginia and was in the 14th Virginia Infantry, Co. B. The May and June 1863

muster roll states that Newman was away on authorized leave and rejoined the company on the way to Gettysburg. Big mistake. Wounded in Pickett's Charge and captured, he was taken first to Harrisburg, then Philadelphia, then Ft. Delaware (Pea Patch), and finally arrived at Point Lookout October 27, 1863. He died there on August 21, 1864, cause of death is unknown. He is buried in the Point Lookout Confederate Cemetery with his name on the Confederate Monument, but he is mistakenly listed as being in the 14th North Carolina.

So this is the tale of my grandfathers. I think I have other ancestors that served in the Confederate Army, but further research is needed. I did some of the above research myself. Many thanks to my friend Dany Schutte, who did the majority of the work.

Danny Witt

From the Round Table Archives
RCWRT BULLETIN –
Volume II, Issue 1
January 1959

The Gilliam Place at Five Forks

One of the less well-known and unfrequented places at which great drama was enacted is the ancestral home of the Gilliams near Five Forks, Virginia. This great plantation, which was plundered by Tarleton's raiders in 1781, whence it got its name "Burnt Quarter," was again despoiled in early April 1865 by Federal vandals.

It was at this point that the final breakthrough occurred on the eve of Lee's long retreat to Appomattox. Out of this debacle censor and shame was to be affixed

to the name of Union General Warren of the V Army Corps, and here also grave charges of misfeasance were to be laid upon several notable Confederate commanders.



The Five Forks area is hardly marked today – a deplorable situation which merits the attention of historically-minded groups. Present occupants of Burnt Quarter, the J.P. Gilliams, retain the gracious hospitality that must have distinguished the conduct of their forebears.

A Book Not So Good on A.P. Hill

When, about two years ago, William W. Hassler gave us a fairly good account of Hill in Lee's Forgotten General we hoped that an even better study might follow from the pen of one of the five or six other writers who were said to be essaying the same subject.

A second Hill biography has now appeared. Its title is Up Came Hill and its author is Judge Martin Schenck. But we must confess that Schenck assumes to know a great deal more about the personality of Hill than any extant accounts or records will substantiate. For this and other limitations we prefer to give the accolade to Hassler's study – at least until a more definitive work appears. At the same time we applaud the jurist from Albany for his efforts.

AFTER THE CIVIL WAR.... WHAT HAPPENED TO BELLE BOYD

Isabella Maria Boyd (May 9, 1844 – June 11, 1900), best known as Belle Boyd, was a Confederate spy in the American Civil War. She operated from her father's hotel in Front Royal, Virginia, and provided valuable information to Confederate General Stonewall Jackson in 1862.

Jackson wrote a note of gratitude to her: "I thank you, for myself and for the army, for the immense service that you have rendered your country today." For her contributions, she was awarded the Southern Cross of Honor. Jackson gave her captain and honorary aide-de-camp positions.

Boyd was captured by Union officials on July 29, 1862 and was held in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D.C. before being released on August 29, 1862 when she was exchanged at Fort Monroe.

In March 1864, she attempted to travel to England, but she was intercepted by a Union blockade and sent to Canada. She met Union naval officer Samuel Wylde



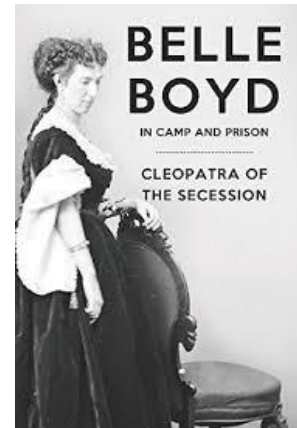
Hardinge and the two married in England, where they had a daughter named Grace. After her husband's death in 1866, Boyd and her daughter returned to the United States.

Boyd married two more times and began touring the country giving dramatic lectures of her life as a Civil War spy. She published a highly fictionalized narrative of

her war experiences in the two-volume *Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison*.

She died of a heart attack in Kilbourn City, Wisconsin on June 11, 1900 at age 56. She was buried in Spring Grove Cemetery in Dells,

with members of the Grand Army of the Republic as her pallbearers.



UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 11: Steven Longenecker, "Pulpits of the Lost Cause: The Faith and Politics of Former Confederate Chaplains During Reconstruction"

April 8: Phil Stone, "Lincoln's Virginia Family"

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 January meeting: 55
(36 in person/19 via Zoom)**