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RICHMOND

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

JUNE 2022

“The Civil War is the crux of our history. You cannot understand any part of our past, from the convening of the Constitutional Convention, down to this morning, without eventually arriving at the Civil War.”

Bernard de Voto

June 14, 2022

7:30 p.m.

**At the Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere Street
Richmond, VA 23220**

**“VMI and the Legacy
Of Stonewall”**

By Col. Keith Gibson



Immediately following the death of Lt. Gen. Thomas Jackson in May 1863, an international interest in creating a suitable memorial was begun. In Richmond on the capitol grounds, and in Lexington – his home for a quarter of his short 39-year life – seemed appropriate locations. VMI – his professional home from 1851 to 1861 – was the logical location. The Institute willingly accepted the stewardship and association with the celebrated Stonewall Jackson.

In recent times VMI, like many institutions of higher education and communities around the nation, has been called upon to evaluate the continued relationship with a challenging past.

Col. Keith Gibson will discuss how VMI has approached the challenge. He will describe the methodology adopted, the 18-month process of assessment, and the plan forward.

Col. Gibson is Executive Director of the VMI Museum System and Architectural Historian for the Virginia Military Institute. As Director of Museum Programs, Col. Gibson is responsible for the operation and development of the VMI Museum and the Stonewall Jackson House, both in Lexington, Virginia, and the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park in New Market, Virginia.

Growing up near Richmond, on land hotly contested during the Civil War, kindled Keith Gibson's interest in history at an early age. Col. Gibson received his bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the VMI in 1977. Graduate work at George Washington University and James Madison University helped prepare him for a career in public history. His recent published works include *Virginia Military Institute, Photographic History* and *Moses Ezekiel: Civil War Soldier, Renowned Sculptor*. An Emmy Award recipient (2001 direction, PBS docudrama *Field of Lost Shoes*), he has worked on a

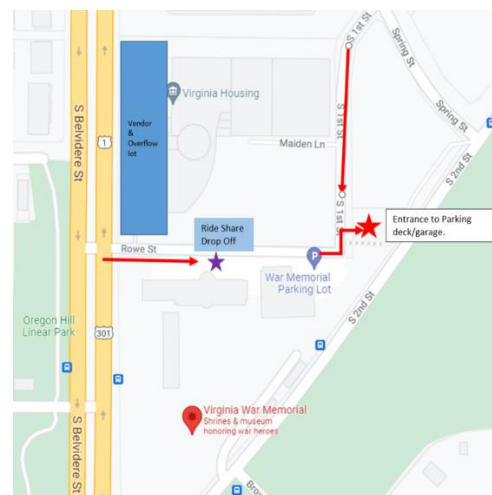
number of documentary films, made for television films, and feature films, including the 2014 feature film on the Battle of New Market, *Field of Lost Shoes*. He appears frequently as a spokesperson for historic preservation on radio and public broadcasting television programs. He was instrumental in the development of *The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and Commission Act* passed by Congress in 1996.

In 2012, Col. Gibson was awarded the Governor's Agency Star as the outstanding state employee of the year.

Virginia War Memorial Foundation is not a sponsor of this event.

*****Fully vaccinated individuals are not required to wear face coverings inside the Virginia War Memorial. Those who are not vaccinated are required to wear face coverings and are encouraged to maintain social distancing.*****

Please park in the parking garage (see map) and take the elevator to the main lobby where a security guard will direct you to the VMI Alumni Hall of Honor.



A Word from the President

As previously announced, this month we will be meeting for the last time at the Virginia War Memorial. July 12 will be our first meeting again at First Presbyterian Church since March 2020 when we had a record crowd for Gary Gallagher's talk. While it may be great to be back in familiar surroundings at the church, for me it is bittersweet because I really loved the VMI Alumni Hall of Honor meeting room at the War Memorial. It was a beautiful interim home and my thanks go out to Annie Warman, Engagement and Outreach Manager at the War Memorial, and the staff for making us so welcome and seeing to our every need.

Of course, Jack Mountcastle was instrumental in getting us there in the first place. And he has been working tirelessly in getting us back into First Presbyterian. We all owe Jack a huge amount of gratitude for all of his work on behalf of the round table. Jack has also been our audio/visual support person making sure the speakers have everything they need for their talks. Now Jack is ready to hand that responsibility over to a successor. Please consider taking over from Jack. Talk to him at the meeting or email him at mtcastle@comcast.net to find out more.

If we are leaving the Virginia War Memorial as the place for our meetings, it does not mean we should not go back to enjoy all that it offers. The Memorial was dedicated on February 29, 1956 to remember Virginians who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II and the Korean War. Over the years the Shrine of

Memory has expanded to include the names of Virginians killed in action during the Vietnam and Gulf Wars, and America's 21st century conflicts. At the same time, the Virginia War Memorial has also evolved into a true museum and educational center. The facilities have grown to include a museum, veterans' art gallery, studio for recording veterans' stories, archives and collections, auditorium, lecture halls, classrooms, and outdoor amphitheater.

Check their website for all their programs and events: www.vawarmemorial.org.

Ulli

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

From the April 2022 issue of *Civil War News*

1. He commanded the USS *Kearsarge* in its fight with CSS *Alabama*
2. Virginia Governor led an infantry brigade and surrendered at Appomattox
3. Breechloading cannon imported by Confederates and used at Gettysburg
4. Author of *Ben Hur* who led US troops at Monocacy
5. He saw importance of the Round Tops, then led Union V Corps in 1864
6. He stopped British mail ship *Trent* and removed Confederate envoys
7. He was hung because he was commandant of Andersonville Prison
8. Multi battalion artillery unit from New Orleans
9. He commanded the Louisiana Tigers at First Manassas
10. Commander of the USS *Monitor* during fight with CSS *Virginia*

Bonus: Confederate general of Cherokee ancestry who fought at Wilson's Creek

Answers on page 6

FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Civil War Times Illustrated issues, 1974-1977 (well-loved, with some pencil markings and some water stains), and special *CWTI* issues for the following battles: Fort Sumter; First Manassas; Jackson's Valley Campaign; Antietam; Fredericksburg; Chancellorsville; Gettysburg; Vicksburg; Chickamauga; Chattanooga; Atlanta Campaign; Petersburg; Appomattox; and Guerrilla Warfare.

Contact John Coski at jmcoski1@gmail.com.

AFTER THE CIVIL WAR WHATEVER HAPPENED TO.... ...JOSHUA LAWRENCE CHAMBERLAIN



Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was born on September 8, 1828 in Brewer, Maine. His mother instilled in him religious devotion, while his father passed on a deep interest in the military. Chamberlain was accepted at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine in 1848 and graduated in 1852. He then spent three years at the Bangor Theological Seminary, but took a teaching

job at Bowdoin rather than enter the ministry. On December 7, 1855, he married Frances "Fanny" Adams. Joshua and Fanny had five children, two of whom survived to adulthood.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he wrote to Maine's governor, Israel Washburn, Jr., "I have always been interested in military matters, and what I do not know in that line I am willing to learn." On August 8, 1862, he was appointed Lt. Col. of the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

Chamberlain and the 20th Maine were participants in several major battles, but are best remembered for their role in the Battle of Gettysburg. Chamberlain would receive the Medal of Honor for "conspicuous gallantry" in the battle thirty years later. He was seriously wounded at Petersburg, but was recovered enough to be present at Appomattox Court House where he was tapped by Gen. Grant to accept the ceremonial surrender of the Confederate infantry.

After the war, Chamberlain served as governor of Maine for four one-year terms. Following his governorship, he served as president of Bowdoin College and during his tenure made some controversial changes by adding science and engineering courses to the classical curriculum, but the school reverted to its original program one year later.

He resigned from Bowdoin in 1883 and moved to Portland, where he served as Surveyor of the Port of Portland. He also began writing about his Civil War experiences, including the posthumously published memoir of Appomattox, "The Passing of the Armies."

He was very active in the Grand Army of the Republic and made many return visits to Gettysburg even though he was in continued pain from his wounds of 1864. His

last known visit to Gettysburg was in May, 1913, while involved in planning the 50th anniversary of the battle. Because of deteriorating health, he was unable to attend the reunion less than two months later.

Fannie Chamberlain died in 1905. Joshua died of his lingering wartime wounds on February 24, 1914 at the age of 85. They are buried in Pine Grove Cemetery in Brunswick, Maine. Beside him as he died was Dr. Abner O. Shaw, one of two surgeons who had operated on him in Petersburg fifty years previously.

Adapted from *The Wikipedia Legends Of The Civil War*



PRESERVATION NEWS

By Bert Dunkerly

Recently, the Capital Region Land Conservancy preserved 51 acres of land at the battle site of Ware Bottom Church in Chesterfield County. The engagement, fought May 20, 1864, was part of the Bermuda Hundred Campaign. Future plans for the site include walking trails and historic markers. This is an important victory in a largely developed area. More information can be found here:

<https://capitalregionland.org/2022/05/ware-bottom-church-battlefield/>

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR
NEW MEMBERS:

LAWRENCE AND SUSAN
SMITH

THE BATTLE AT WARE BOTTOM CHURCH

After severe fighting at Drewry's Bluff on the James River blunted a Union offensive against Richmond, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler's Army of the James withdrew to the Bermuda Hundred peninsula. On May 20, eight Confederate brigades under Gen. Pierre G.T. Beauregard attacked Butler's advance picket lines near Ware Bottom Church. Nearly 10,000 soldiers from both sides clashed in the vicinity of the structure. At the end of the severe fight, over 1,400 men were left either dead or wounded.

After the battle, the Confederates constructed the Howlett Line, a series of strong defensive works from the James to the Appomattox River, effectively trapping Butler's army on the Bermuda Hundred peninsula.

The church itself stood for four weeks after the battle, until it was destroyed by Parker's Virginia Battery on the Howlett Line, who were harassed by Union sharpshooters inside the church. Confederate gains at the Bermuda Hundred battles allowed Beauregard to send Brig. Gen. Robert Hoke's division to reinforce Lee's army at Cold Harbor, while Grant was reinforced with the Union Eighteenth Corps from Butler.

In June, Grant's movement against Petersburg caused Beauregard to abandon the Bermuda Hundred line in order to help

Lee defend that strategic city. For a short while, the Ware Bottom Church area once again lay behind Union lines.

From *battlefields.org*

EVENTS OF INTEREST

June 25: Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute, in partnership with the Fort Collier Civil War Center, will offer a walking tour with Prof. Jonathan A. Noyalas, "They Have Completely Surrounded Stine's House" – The Construction and Early Use of Fort Collier during the Civil War. The one-hour tour, beginning at 9:30 a.m., will be held at Fort Collier, 922 Martinsburg Pike, Winchester, VA. The event is free and open to the public; no pre-registration required.

July 16: Another walking tour by the McCormick Civil War Institute will commemorate the 158th anniversary of the Battle of Cool Spring at Shenandoah University's River Campus at Cool Spring Battlefield, 1400 Parker Lane, Bluemont, VA. The tour with Prof. Jonathan A. Noyalas will highlight the stories of individual soldiers and the battle's impact on soldiers and families. The tour begins at 9:30 a.m. and will last approximately 90 minutes. The event is free and open to the public; no pre-registration required.

For more information on both tours, contact Prof. Noyalas at jnoyalas01@su.edu, or call at 540-665-4501.

From the May issue of
Civil War News

SPREAD THE WORD...

If you have a Facebook account, why not "like" our page and let your friends know about our round table by promoting the June – or any month's – meeting. The meeting announcements can easily be shared to your page. There may be future members out there who did not know about our round table.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

July 12: Dr. Jennifer M. Murray, "Meade at War"

August 9: Michael C. Hardy, "Feeding the Army of Northern Virginia"

September 13: Dr. Gary Gallagher, "The Overland Campaign"

October 11.* Dr. Charles Fennell, "The U.S. Sharpshooters at the Battle of Gettysburg"

November 8: Annual Members Dinner
William C. "Jack" Davis and Sue Heth Bell, "The Letters of Gen. and Mrs. Gabriel Wharton"

December 13: Frank O'Reilly, "The Battle of Fredericksburg and Christmas Along the Rappahannock"

****It is with deep regret that we learned of the passing of our scheduled speaker, David Keller. We thank Dr. Fennell for agreeing on relative short notice to come to Richmond in his stead.***

Attendance at May Meeting: 42

Trivia Answers:

1. Commodore John A. Winslow
2. General/Governor Henry Alexander Wise
3. Whitworth rifle cannon
4. General Lewis Wallace
5. General Gouverneur K. Warren
6. Captain John Wilkes
7. Captain Henry Wirz
8. Washington Artillery
9. Roberdeau Wheat
10. Captain John L. Worden
11. Bonus: General Stand Watie