



Founded at Fort Harrison  
on February 8, 1951

# RICHMOND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

JUNE 2024

“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

[www.richmondcwrt.org](http://www.richmondcwrt.org)

Waite Rawls, President  
804-501-8436  
[waiterawls@gmail.com](mailto:waiterawls@gmail.com)

Billie Raines, First VP  
804-291-6300  
[b.raines@live.com](mailto:b.raines@live.com)

Dale Harter, Second VP  
540-908-7188  
[harterdf@gmail.com](mailto:harterdf@gmail.com)

Art Wingo, Treasurer  
804-516-7508  
[Art and Diane@comcast.net](mailto:Art_and_Diane@comcast.net)

Andy Keller, Secretary  
804-382-6605  
[secretary.rcwrt@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.rcwrt@gmail.com)

Board of Directors (2024):  
Ulli Baumann  
Doug Crenshaw  
Jack Mountcastle  
Danny Witt

Editor/Webmaster: Ulli Baumann  
804-789-9844  
[ullib1101@gmail.com](mailto:ullib1101@gmail.com)

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**June 11, 2024**

**7:30 p.m.**

**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)

**WAYNE E. MOTTS**

**“PICKETT’S CHARGE  
AT GETTYSBURG”**



Join historian, author, and licensed battlefield guide Wayne E. Motts as he highlights some of the personal human-interest stories of the frontal assault at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863.

On July 3, 1863, nearly 12,500 Confederate soldiers attacked the Union defense along Cemetery Ridge manned by some 6,000 Federal troops. After a two-hour cannonade and a one-hour frontal assault over 9,000 men on both sides were casualties. There were so many individuals involved in this day's battle with compelling stories on both sides. One of the officers commanding Federal troops along Cemetery Ridge during the attack was inside Fort

National Military Park and the Eisenhower National Historic Site. Wayne is the author of *Trust in God and Fear Nothing: Gen. Lewis A. Armistead, CSA*, and the co-author with James A. Hessler of *Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg: The Most Famous Attack in American History*. Wayne has been a licensed battlefield guide at the Gettysburg National Military Park for 36 years.



Sumter and witnessed the first shots of the American Civil War.

Another young Union artilleryman was listed as dead and has a grave in the Gettysburg National Cemetery but apparently, he lived until 1926.

A Confederate officer killed in the attack, just a year before Pickett's Charge was wearing a blue uniform and fighting with the United States Cavalry. One of the Confederate battery commanders of a Southern battery involved in Pickett's Charge challenged another Confederate battery commander to a duel. The fighting at Gettysburg cancelled their meeting.

These are some of the great personal stories Wayne will illustrate in June.

Wayne E. Motts is the President Emeritus & Historian of the Gettysburg Foundation, which is the non-profit philanthropic partner of the Gettysburg

### A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

When I ran the Museum of the Confederacy, I was often urged to "just tell the truth." I always had a hard time with that assignment, because I always reflected on the "truth" as (1) knowing all the facts, (2) interpreting all of the facts absolutely correctly, and (3) weaving those interpreted facts into a narrative that was accurate. In other words, "truth" is almost an impossibility. But here's a true story about "the truth."

A few years after the war, a group of former Confederate generals were sitting around doing what former Confederate generals did back then. They were drinking whiskey, smoking cigars, and musing about the war. And the subject turned to how in the world could the invincible Army of Northern Virginia possibly have lost at Gettysburg, and a blame game emerged. (Sound familiar?) And please remember, they had all been there in Pennsylvania in July of 1863 and knew the facts.

The first man, unnamed, said, "It was J.E.B. Stuart's fault. He was Lee's eyes and ears and he had gone off gallivanting in the countryside and allowed Lee to stumble into Gettysburg not knowing where the Union Army was."

The second general disagreed. He said, "It was Old Baldy Dick Ewell's fault. That phrase 'if practicable' meant 'go do it' and he should have continued right through town on that first day and taken Cemetery Hill when the Yanks were all disorganized."

Shaking his head, the third had a different story, claiming, "It was Old Pete Longstreet's fault. We all know he's become a Republican, so everything is his fault. But, on the second day, he was pouting like a school kid because Marse Robert wouldn't try his idea to withdraw and go around the Union left. Instead, he was critical hours late in making his attack on Little Round Top and the Peach Orchard. He could have and should have turned the whole damned Union Army."

The next opinion was preceded with a deep apology, "You fellers know that I think Robert E. Lee was the absolute best human being that the Good Lord ever put on the earth, but I think he erred on the third day when he ordered my friend George Pickett to make that fateful charge."

It so happened that the next general to speak up happened to be the last, and it was none other than George Pickett. He combed his fingers through his curly hair, stroked his small beard and exclaimed, "I always thought the Yankees had something to do with it."

Yep folks, that conversation actually happened. All of those men had been there, and all of them knew the facts. But their interpretation of the facts differed. So the question is, who told the truth? Maybe,

after hearing this story and having a friend ask you to tell the truth, you will do what I



used to do. I think what was actually being requested is that I give an interpretation which agreed with the interpretation that had already been made by that person who wanted me to "tell the truth."

*Waite*

**A Warm Welcome to Our  
New Members:**

**ZACHARY BELCHER  
DEBRA CURTIS**

## **RICHMOND NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK EVENTS**

**Saturday, June 22:** Gaines' Mill Tour, 10:00 a.m.

Join a Park Ranger for a combination car caravan-walking tour of three key areas of the battlefield. Participants will examine the early Confederate assaults, focusing on the attack of the Louisiana Brigade, then follow in the footsteps of the Texas Brigade, which broke through. Finally, the group will examine the desperate stand made by the 83<sup>rd</sup> Pennsylvania and a costly counterattack by the 16<sup>th</sup> Michigan.

The walking portions of the tour will cover uneven ground.

Water, sunscreen, and bug spray are recommended. The tour will take two hours and begins at the Mississippi Monument on Watt House Road.

**Saturday, July 6:** Malvern Hill Walking Tour, 10:00 a.m.

The fighting at Malvern Hill in the early summer of 1862 was the culmination of a week-long series of battles remembered as the Seven Days. For Lee, Malvern Hill offered him the last chance to destroy this army but he would find himself plagued by erroneous maps, vague orders, and poor communication with his officers.



Join a Park Ranger for a one-hour walking tour of the last engagement of the Seven Days' battles.

Wear good walking shoes and bring sunscreen and bug spray.

**UPDATE:**

**November Dinner Meeting Speaker**

We welcome Robert Hancock, Director of Collections & Senior Curator, American Civil War Museum, as our November dinner meeting speaker.

Gary Gallagher sent notification last month that he was very sorry, but he had to cancel his November presentation to the RCWRT. He has divided his time between Charlottesville and Los Angeles for the past 23 years and is making a permanent move to Los Angeles in July.

We wish him all the best and thank him for his many years of support of the RCWRT.

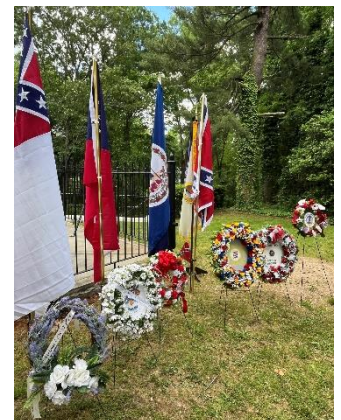
**JEB Stuart Commemoration**

Eight members of the RCWRT attended the Major General JEB Stuart Commemoration Ceremony – 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Yellow

Tavern on Saturday, May 11. Patrick Falci gave a spirited



presentation on the “Panache” of JEB Stuart. Billie Raines, on behalf of the RCWRT, participated in the wreath presentation. This program, presented by the Richmond Stonewall Jackson Chapter of the UDC, is held every May 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at the Yellow Tavern Monument.



## **EVENTS OF INTEREST**

**June 15, 6:00 p.m.:** History at Sunset Tour, Petersburg National Battlefield – “No Nobler Effort” USCT in the Opening Assaults.

On June 15, 1864, General Edward Hinks led his United States Colored Troops in an attack on Petersburg. For many of the men, it was their first battle, but they entered the fray with more to prove than their white comrades. Join a ranger as we explore the history of the USCT, their role in the Opening Assaults, and the impact that day had on black soldiers throughout the army.

Meet at Visitor Center parking lot at 5001 Siege Road, Petersburg.

The tour is co-sponsored by Petersburg National Battlefield and the Petersburg Battlefields Foundation. The program is free. Call 804-732-3531 ext. 200 if you have any questions.

**September 13-15:** “Seventy Square Miles of Hell!” – Central Virginia Battlefield Trust 2024 Annual Conference, with speakers/presenters Ted Savas, Gordon C. Rhea, Stephen Cushman, and William “Jack” Davis. The conference focuses on the Mine Run Campaign and the Wilderness.

To register, go to:

[www.cvbt.org/cvbt-annual-conference](http://www.cvbt.org/cvbt-annual-conference).

### *WHO WAS*

### *ANNA ETHERIDGE*

Lorinda Anna “Annie” Blair Etheridge was a Union nurse and vivandiere who served during the Civil war with the Fifth Michigan regiment. She was born on May 3, 1839 in Wayne County, Michigan. She enlisted with her husband in the Second

Michigan. Her husband soon deserted, and Etheridge served throughout the war with the Fifth Michigan. Armed with pistols for her protection and saddlebags filled with medical supplies, she frequently rode into the front lines on horseback to aid wounded soldiers.

Etheridge was repeatedly exposed to the same hardships as the soldiers, such as sleeping on the ground in camp. Various accounts locate her at notable battles, such as both battles of Bull Run, Williamsburg, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg. In 1864, all women were ordered out of camp as a result of an order from General Grant. As a testimony to Etheridge’s admirable service, numerous officers signed a petition to allow her to remain in service on the field. “Gentle Annie” then worked for the Hospital Transport Service, a subcommittee of the U.S. Sanitary Commission. For her work and courage, she received the Kearny Cross.

Her service ended with the Fifth Michigan in Detroit on July 1, 1865. After the war, she married and worked in the United States Treasury Department, eventually receiving a monthly pension of \$25 for her unpaid military service. She died January 23, 1913 and was buried with veteran’s honors in Arlington National Cemetery.

Excerpted from  
Wikipedia Legends of the Civil War



## **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS TOUR**

On Saturday, April 27, members of the Round Table were once again treated to a tour of the Special Collections at the American Civil War Museum by the Director of Collections and Senior Curator, Robert Hancock.

Robert took the time to show us many diverse items in the magnificent collection of the Museum, among them: John Hunt Morgan's pistol; the swords of Heros von Borcke, Sterling Price, and Wade Hampton; hair jewelry; John Bell Hood's frock coat; Varina Davis' half mourning dress; draperies from the Confederate White House; the incredible rifle collection; and the swords and sabers collection.

It was a great morning, and we thank Robert for devoting part of his Saturday to our group.



## *WAR TIME NEWS*

Richmond, May 28, 1864

Dear Editor,

We have just been ordered to cook our rations as the enemy is reported to be advancing along the Ringgold and Cleveland Road. The thunder of cannons and small arms fire can already be heard clearly here in camp, and I have no doubt that we will

have a battle soon and, with God's help, we will defeat the enemy.

If the enemy is defeated here and in Virginia, it must have a tremendous influence upon the citizens of the Northern states, and an early peace could then certainly be expected.

Our soldiers here are in high spirits, and they are convinced that should a battle occur, they will teach the enemy a hard lesson.

From *The Richmond Advertiser*

Thank you, Bert Dunkerly

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**July 9:** Frank O'Reilly, "Yellow Tavern and the Death of JEB Stuart"

**August 13:** Brad Gottfried, "The Antietam Paintings by James Hope"

**September 10:** Scott Mingus, "If We Are Striking for Pennsylvania: The Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac March to Gettysburg"

**October 8:** Bobby Krick, "W.H.F. 'Rooney' Lee"

**November 12: Annual Dinner Meeting**

Robert Hancock, TBA

**December 10:** Sarah Bierle, "John Pelham: His Five Years at West Point"

Attendance at May Meeting: 79

## **Notable Quote**

"Even now I can hear them cheering as I gave the order. 'Forward!' I can feel their faith and trust in me and their love for our cause. I can feel the thrill of their joyous voices as they called out all along the line, 'We'll follow you, Marse George. We'll follow you, we'll follow you.'" Oh, how faithfully they kept their word, following me on, on to their death, and I, believing in the promised support, led them on, on, on. Oh, God!"

George Pickett,  
July 6, 1863