

# Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

September 12, 2024

The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - August 20, 1866

## “Gabriel’s Graduation Trip: Virginia and Maryland Battlefield Tour”

*Harpers Ferry, South Mountain, Antietam, Manassas (First and Second), Chancellorsville, The Wilderness, Fredericksburg and Gettysburg [with a side trip to Mt. Vernon]*



**Tom Scurria  
and his  
Glisson Grandsons  
Evan, Alexander and  
Gabriel**

Join Old Baldy member Tom Scurria on a Major Battlefield Tour of Virginia and Maryland, with New Members of OBCWRT.

One of the best ways to appreciate the passion of preserving and learning about the Civil War is a tour of where it happened. See the terrain, the physical layout of the battlefields, the rivers, streams, hills, plateaus, the valleys, the boulders, the enormity of the distances involved, the challenges of the logistics, the strategy at a high level, the tactics of the forces as they clashed the brilliance and failures of the officers, the bravery and the savagery, the movements of the infantry, the artillery, the cavalry, seeing and reading the monuments, the grave stones, the farms and buildings. Looking through a binocular with the same views the generals and officers saw. Learn about how one battle set up the next battles to come. Seeing, touching, reading, hiking the fields – no book or article can match the reality of these settings.

We followed an itinerary created by Sean Glisson. Tom Scurria and Sean did this trip in October 2021.

The trip was recreated with Sean’s three sons in June of 2023. The itinerary will be shared, the logistics, the use of guides, the lodging, maybe even the dinners. It can be done in 7 days.

## Notes from the President

**GREETINGS TO ALL!** our members in person and on zoom. As Labor Day has past, we will be thinking of leaves turning colors, nights getting longer and cooler temperatures. I send best wishes to all our members who are recovering from health issues. I hope your progress continues. Old Baldy is thinking about you. Hope many members are coming to our **Official Old Baldy Picnic** at the Red Bank Battlefield with our special battlefield tour. **Paul Prentiss** will have the signup sheet at the meeting so you can tell him what you want to bring. **Dave Gilson** is still working with Rowan to get an intern for work on our website and publishing intern. Our September 12th meeting

### Meeting Notice

Join us at 7:15 PM  
on Thursday, September 12,  
Free and open to the public. In-person  
meeting at Camden County College,  
William G. Rohrer Center,  
1889 Marlton Pike East, Cherry Hill, NJ  
08003, and simulcast on Zoom.

"Members, and Friends of the  
Roundtable who receive our email  
communications, will automatically  
receive the Zoom link and do not need  
to request it"

Please email  
[oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net)  
at least 24 hours prior to request Zoom  
access.

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## OBCWRT Awards



The Society For Women and the Civil War for Service to the Society presented to OBCWRT

Civil War Roundtable Congress The Wallace L. Rueckel Innovation Award presented to OBCWRT (2022)

American Battlefield Trust for 25 Year Service to the Trust presented to OBCWRT

Civil War Roundtable Congress Sustainability Challenge presented to OBCWRT (2023)

Kevin M. Hale Award for best Historical Newsletter in New Jersey (2017, 2022)

By Kim Weaver, Member, OBCWRT



Tom Scurria

is a very special presentation by **Tom Scurria** and his grandsons who will talk about **"Gabriel's Graduation Trips: Virginia Battlefield Tour"**. I hope many members will be able to attend in person or on zoom. Mark your calendar for these upcoming events: **Mullica Hill CW Weekend** on Saturday Oct. 12, rain date Oct. 13 and the **Glassboro Train Station** on Saturday Oct. 27, 11am-4pm, and Sunday, Oct. 28, 1pm-4pm. Election committee is coming together. If there are any other interested members who want to be part of this committee we will address it at our September 12th meeting. Don't forget your Boscov's coupon money to give to **Frank Barletta** at our meeting. See you on the 12th!

*Looking forward to seeing many members in person and on zoom at our meeting on the 12th. Hope you will stop by the Kettle and Grille to get to know our presenter and members before the meeting.*

**Kathy Clark acting president**

## Member Profile - Tom Scurria

Tom Scurria has a canine appetite for reading history, and a book collection even the most hardened bibliophile would envy.

It all started when Tom was in his late 30s and his wife, Valerie, bought him author David McCullough's, "John Adams." Reading the 750-page biography about the second president sparked Tom's interest in studying the U.S. Constitution, a document he had always wanted to better understand. He next read about the ancients: the Greek, Roman, and Egyptian people of our distant past. Tom says there is much to be learned by the thought process of those times and the mistakes that were made that caused their downfalls—our Founders specifically designed the Constitution to avoid those mistakes. Over the past 20 years, Tom has read hundreds of books and has some 400 titles packed away in boxes or archived on shelves. He had to develop a spreadsheet to stop himself from buying a book he already read.

So, Tom Scurria is a book nerd—that is only part of the story. Another is how this once shy individual became one of the most distinguished business advisors in Greater Philadelphia. Tom was born in Drexel Hill, Pa. and is the youngest of five children. His father, a WWII veteran who served under General Mark Clark in Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa, was a laborer in a textile mill. His mother worked at home taking care of their children and managing the household. Tom loved working with numbers, so after his 1973 graduation from Monsignor Bonner High School he left for Drexel University from where he earned a B.S. in accounting and later an MBA in finance. He has worked for Deloitte & Touche and Aramark, where for 23 years he held a number of corporate positions, including vice president of both planning and retail operations in its sports and entertainment division. In November 2004, Tom founded Simple Tie Ventures, a business that for 16 years owned and operated fast food restaurants. For the past six years he has been providing advisory services to small and medium sized businesses through his own firm, IAWL Advisory. Tom is vice chairman of Executive Leaders for Advisory Boards, a nonprofit organization of 45 select individuals who help companies build, enhance, and grow their business.

While Tom enjoys his work, he also appreciates his free time. "I walk 10 to 12 miles a few times a week where I live in Ocean City, NJ. And I've been fly fishing for 23 years, wading in a stream, no one around, the setting is beautiful, and I forget about the world." In June 2022, Tom went on a twelve-day Stephen Ambrose tour following the Lewis & Clark Expedition, beginning in Great Falls, Montana and ending 2,000 miles away in Astoria, Washington. "The Expedition was truly one of the greatest and most difficult explorations in world history. It changed the history of the United States." His buddy for the trip was his late son-in-law, Sean Glisson, who helped Tom plan and organize our Western Theater Symposium that was all set for April

*Continued from page 2 - "Member Profile"*

2022 but eventually canceled because of the coronavirus. Tom and Sean, a past board secretary, still made a profit when advertisers and some symposium participants waved their refunds.

At the last Old Baldy meeting of 2022, Tom presented Sean's three sons Evan, Alexander and Gabriel with honorary memberships. A member himself since April 2017 who served two terms on the board of trustees, Tom says, "That night was phenomenal for the kids." (Tom and Valerie, who married in 1980 and have two children, gift each of their five grandchildren with a trip for their high school graduation.) In the car on the way home from that Old Baldy meeting, everyone was throwing around trip ideas for Gabriel. "I said to Gabriel, 'How about recreating the trip your dad and I did of the East battlefields in 2021?'"

One decision has been made: Tom and his three grandsons will continue to be part of the Old Baldy family. "What I love about Old Baldy is they are good at behind-the-scenes Civil War stories, the personal experiences of those who lived during this time that forged the greatest nation in history."

## ***Today in Civil War History***

### ***1861 Thursday, September 12***

#### ***Eastern Theater***

Lee now has the bulk of the Confederate forces in western Virginia—about 30,000 men—under his command at Meadow Bridge. Rosecrans is approaching from Carnifax Ferry, and Lee anticipates that the two main armies will meet at Sewell's Mountain. But in a sudden change of direction, Rosecrans lunges for Cheat Mountain, where he meets and comprehensively beats Jackson, before pulling back to the Gauley River.

#### ***Trans-Mississippi***

Sterling Price attacks the town of Lexington, Missouri. The large Confederate force outnumbers the Union defenders at least five-to-one. Elsewhere in Missouri, three companies of the 1st Indiana Cavalry defeat a small Confederate force in an action at Black River, near Ironton. In a battle close to the Missouri, 500 Union troops of the 3rd Iowa Regiment are attacked by some 4000 rebels. After sustaining 120 casualties, the Federals retreat, and the Confederates ride away to cross the Missouri. As they approach the river, however, they run into a Union column commanded by Colonel Smith. His four cannon soon make short work of the rebels, and they are driven off in disorder.

### ***1862 Friday, September 12***

#### ***Eastern Theater***

McClellan's vanguard enters Frederick. Stuart's cavalry rear guard manages to capture a Federal brigade commander in a surprise counter-attack before withdrawing down the Hagerstown road. Frederick then loudly demonstrates its loyalty to the Union.

### ***1863 Saturday, September 12***

#### ***Western Theater***

Crittenden's XXI Corps is exposed and isolated but Polk refuses to attack as he has no way of telling what he is facing. Previous experience of Bragg's poor intelligence information does not encourage him. Bragg himself cannot make up his mind where to mount his main attack. Hill believes his commander is indeed bewildered by "the popping out of the rats from so many holes."

### ***1864 Monday, September 12***

#### ***Eastern Theater***

President Lincoln, irritated by the apparent lack of action in the Shenandoah,

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presses Grant to reinforce Sheridan rapidly to knock out Early's force in a lightning blow. Remaining in the lower Shenandoah, Early continues to threaten Maryland and Pennsylvania. His main object is to prevent movement along the Baltimore and Ohio railroad and the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, and to draw as many of Grant's troops as possible away from Lee's embattled army at Petersburg. But staying in the north of the Shenandoah exposes his army to a Union attack on his lines of communication—a danger he has to live with as there is no forage in the upper Shenandoah for his horses.

## ***"The Positive Identification of The Body of John Wilkes Booth***

***by Doctor John Frederick May of Washington City DC***

Captain Dudley Knox  
Navy Dept Washington DC

My Dear Captain Knox

I read in the Star of last Sunday May 17 an article by George Battey Jr relating to relics belonging to John Wilkes Booth and stating also in his article that there existed and still exists in the minds of many people, doubt as to whether or not the dead body brought to the Navy Yard at Washington DC and placed on a Monitor there, really was the body of John Wilkes Booth. Mr. Battey says in his article that the body of Booth was identified by Dr John Frederick May of Washington DC. This statement is absolutely correct and I have thought that it might interest the public too hear from me the facts appertaining to this identification.

I am the son of Dr JF May and my Father before and after the Civil War and in fact up to the time when his health began to fail, had all the surgical practice of this city and the surrounding country as well. He was a great surgeon and had a National reputation. During his surgical career he performed two major operations on the human body which up to his time had not been performed successfully in this country by any other surgeon. One was an amputation at the hip joint (which was done in thirty seconds) the man surviving the operation and living for some years afterwards; and the other was a ligation (or tying) of the popliteal artery which Sir Astley Cooper the most celebrated surgeon of his day spoke of as a feat of the dissecting room, meaning thereby to say that it was impossible to perform it on the living subject.

I distinctly remember the operation he performed on John Wilkes Booth in fact I assisted him (although only a boy of fourteen years of age) by holding the basin to receive the blood from the wound. We did not have trained nurses in those days. The operation was a minor one and was done for the removal of a fibroid tumor on the back of his neck, it was done without any anesthetic of any kind. Booth at the time was playing with Charlotte Cushman in Romeo and Juliet and during the play she embraced him with so much ardor that she tore out the stitches and tore open the wound. It then healed by what we call second intention and left a wide large scar that looked like the scar made by a burn. It was by this scar that his remains were identified.

When the body of Booth was brought to the Navy Yard there was doubt in the mind of Genl Barns [1] and other officers whether or not they really had the right man. A soldier was sent to our house 312 C Street NW with a summons for my Father to come to the Navy Yard and if possible identify the body that they had on the Monitor [2]. I drove him to the yard in his Doctors Gig and was present at the identification of the body and the autopsy which followed afterward.

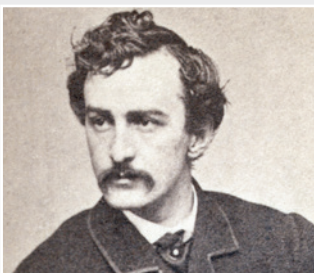
When we were on the deck of the monitor before looking at the body Dr May said to Genl Barns "If the body lying under that tarpaulin is the body of John Wilkes Booth you will find a scar on the back of his neck, and let me describe



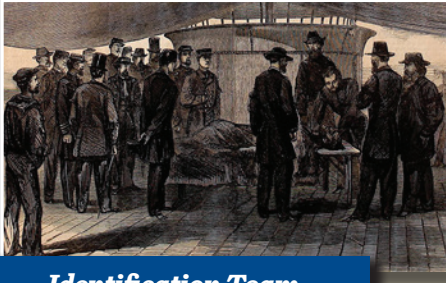
***Doctor John Frederick May***



***USS Montauk***



***John Wilkes Booth***



Identification Team

the scar before it is seen by me." Dr May then described the scar and Genl Barnes then said "you have described the scar as well as if you were looking at it." "It looks more like the scar made by a burn than the cicatrix made by a surgical operation," further speaking Dr May [3] The body being turned the back of the neck was examined and my mark was unmistakably found by me upon it; and it being afterwards at my request placed in a sitting posture standing and looking down upon it I was finally enabled to recognize the features of Booth. But never in a human body had greater change taken place from the man whom I had seen in the vigor of life and health than in the haggard corpse which was before me with its yellow discolored skin, its unkempt and matted hair, and its whole facial expression sunken and sharpened by the exposure and starvation that it had undergone. The right lower limb was greatly contused and perfectly black from the fracture of one of the long bones of the leg (the fibula). The autopsy was then made by the assistants of Genl Barnes which proved that the bullet which killed him, passed through two of the vertebrae of the neck causing their fracture and lesion of the spinal cord. The body was secretly and at night buried in the yard of the penitentiary which was not known until some time afterward.

You must thus see from the statements of my Father Dr John Frederick May that the body of John Wilkes Booth was positively identified and any doubts upon the subject should be put at rest forever. I was present at the identification of the body and also at the autopsy which followed, and I remember well what transpired upon both occasions. [4]

Very Truly Yours  
William May (?)  
(signed)

Washington City DC  
May 18 1925 1411 Hopkins Place

Notes:

[1]: Presumably this is Surgeon General Joseph K. Barnes, who presided over the autopsy.

[2]: The body was brought aboard the USS Montauk, a monitor lying at the Navy Yard.

[3]: The portion of the letter consisting of the two sentences just before this note is very badly typed and punctuated. I have made my best guess here as to what was intended. The word order is exact; only punctuation, spelling, and typing have been changed.

[4]: Other means by which the body was identified, in addition to Dr. May's identification, include: tattooed initials on one hand and the testimony of Booth's dentist, who recognized several fillings in the mouth. A total of ten persons identified the corpse as Booth. Ref: The Assassination, Time-Life Books Civil War Series. Finally, in February, 1869, the body was exhumed for re-burial in the Booth family plot and it was again identified as being John Wilkes Booth. Ref.: William Hanchett, The Lincoln Murder Conspiracies, 1983.

The Positive Identification of The Body of John Wilkes Booth  
Edited by James F. Epperson

Editor's Note: This is a transcript of a letter which appears in the CIVIL WAR NAVAL CHRONOLOGY, a book published by the Navy Department in 1971. The published letter is a photostat of the original and contains many minor typing errors, which have been corrected here for readability. Otherwise, the text is exact. The author did not type his name, he only signed it, and the signature is sufficiently illegible that I am unsure of the given name.

## "The Confederate Signal Corps"

By J. Willard Brown  
The Signal Corps, USA  
1896

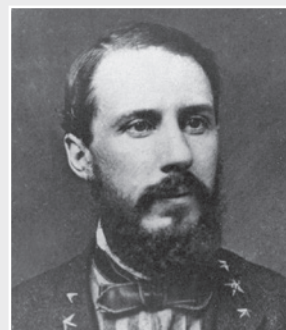
### THE CONFEDERATE SIGNAL CORPS.

Continued from last issue

He also caused his men to work out of sight as much as possible. From the commencement of the attack on Morris Island, July 10th, to September 7th, when it was evacuated, Lieut. Markoe's officers meaning occurred to him at



**Captain, CSA  
William Norris**



**Brigadier General, CSA  
Edward Porter Alexander**



**Colonel, CSA  
J. H. Alexander**

first sight, and would have occurred to any-one familiar with military affairs in that section. The alphabet or code first used by the Confederate Signal Corps was a modification of that introduced by Maj. Myer into the service of the United States. It became necessary to change it several times during the war, as from observation of messages sent, the Signal Corps of the Union Army learned the code employed, while the Confederates took the same liberty with the messages of our Corps. We early secured an advantage, however, by the introduction of cipher disks which enabled us to change the code daily, or hourly, if circumstances demanded. On this account it never became necessary to change the basal code, which remained the same throughout the war.

Early played a ruse on Sheridan in the Valley campaign. Finding that Maj. Howard, Sheridan's Signal Officer, was reading his signals, he caused the following dispatch to be sent to himself by his signal flags:

Lieut.-Gen. EARLY,  
Fisher's Hill  
Be ready to advance on Sheridan as soon as my forces get up,  
and we can crush him before he finds out I have joined you.  
" J. LONGSTREET."

When this was communicated to Sheridan, as Early intended it to be, Sheridan telegraphed to Washington, and Halleck telegraphed to Grant. In time, the information came to Sheridan that Longstreet was nowhere near Early.

The reports of Lieut. Frank Markoe, Signal Officer at Charleston, show that during the siege thousands of messages were sent from one post to another, and from outposts to headquarters, most of which could have been sent in no other way, and many were of great importance to the Confederate authorities.

Lieut. Markoe says that he read nearly every message we sent. He was forewarned of our attack on the 18th of July, 1863. He adds regretfully, however, that through the carelessness of the staff officers at headquarters it leaked out that he was reading our messages. Our officers then began to use the cipher disk. In August he intercepted the following message: " Send me a copy of rebel code immediately, if you have one in your possession." He therefore changed his code. He also caused his men to work out of sight as much as possible.

From the commencement of the attack on Morris Island, July 10th, to September 7th, when it was evacuated, Lieut. Markoe's officers transmitted nearly one thousand messages. On the night of September 5th, our forces made an attack on Battery Gregg, which was repulsed through the timely notice from the Signal Officer on Sullivan's Island, who intercepted the following dispatch: " To Admiral Dahlgren. I shall try Cumming's Point tonight, and want the sailors again early. Will you please send two or three monitors by dark to open fire on Fort :Moultrie as a diversion. The last time they were in, they stopped reinforcements and may do so to-night. Don't want any fire in the rear General Gillmore."

The attack on Fort Sumter, on the night of the 8th, was foiled by a similar notice. The dispatch was : -

" Gen. Gillmore. The senior officer will take charge of the assaulting party ; the whole to be under the command of an experienced naval officer."

A little later our officers used a cipher which Lieut. Markoe says he was utterly unable to unravel.

In ,June, 1864, Col. Nicodemus was displeased with a signal officer who had come to Washington by orders from Gen. Dix and Gen. Thomas, of the War Department, as a special messenger with a rebel signal code. Col. Nicodemus had previously received this code from another source; but he supplemented the slight reprimand he gave the officer with this statement: "The rebels have different signal codes for different departments, and hence the discovery of a code is only of service in the department in which it is discovered."

The first deciphering of a rebel signal code of which I find any record was that made by Capt. J. E. Hall and Capt. P. A. Taylor, reported Nov. 2, 1862. Four

*Continued on page 7*

days later, Maj. Myer wrote to Capt. Cushing, Chief Signal Officer, Army of the Potomac, not to permit it to become public "that we translate the signal messages of the rebel army."

April 9 1863, Capt. Fisher, near Falmouth, reported that one of his officers had read a rebel message which proved that the rebels were in possession of our code. The next day he was informed that the rebel code taken with Capt. Youngblood, a rebel signal officer, was identical with the one taken previously at Yorktown.

He received from Maj. Myer the following orders: -

"Send over your lines, from time to time, message11 which, if it is in the power of the enemy to Decipher them, will lead them to believe that we cannot get any clew to their signals.

"Send also occasionally messages untrue, in reference to imaginary military movements, as for instance, - 'The Sixth Corps is ordered to reinforce Keyes at Yorktown.'"

In October, 1863, Capt. Merrill's party deciphered a code, and in November of the same year Capt. Thickstun and Capt. Marston deciphered another in Virginia.

Lieut. Howgate and Lieut. Flook, in March, 1864, deciphered a code in the Western Army, and at the same time Lieut. Benner found one at Alexandria, La.

Capt. Paul Babcock, Jr., then Chief Signal Officer, Department of the Cumberland, in a letter dated Chattanooga, Tenn., April 26, 1864, transmitting a copy of the rebel signal code, says: -

"Capt. Cole and Lieut. How gate, acting Signal Officers, occupy a station of communication and observation on White Oak Ridge at Ringgold, Ga. On the 22d inst, the rebels changed their code to the one enclosed, and on the same day the above-mentioned officers by untiring zeal and energy succeeded in translating the new code, and these officers have been ever since reading every message sent over the rebel lines. Many of these messages have furnished valuable information to the general commanding the department."

An indispensable condition to the prolongation of the war was the running of the blockade of the southern ports by the swift cruisers built and fitted expressly for the purpose. Such were the profits of this business that the owner could well afford to lose vessel and cargo on his third trip if the two first were successful. No life could be more adventurous and exciting than that of a blockade runner. Every blockade runner had it's signal officer, furnished with signaling apparatus, and the key to the secret cipher. The coast was lined with stations for thirty or forty miles up and down on either side of the blockaded port. The blockade runners came in close to shore at night-fall, and flashed a light which was soon answered from the shore station. Advice was then given as to the condition of things off the port, the station and movements of the blockading fleet, etc. If the word was "go in," the beacon lights were set and the blockade runner boldly steamed over the bar and into the port. A naval officer was in charge of the office of order; and details at the several ports, whence proceeded all orders and assignments in relation to pilots and signal officers.

Capt. Wilkinson, of the Confederate Navy, in his "Narrative of a Blockade Runner," relates the following incident: -

"The range lights were showing and we crossed the bar without interference, and without a suspicion of anything wrong, as it would occasionally happen, under particularly favorable circumstances, that we would cross without even seeing a blockade. We were under the guns of Fort Fisher, in fact, and close to the fleet of United States vessels, which had crossed the bar after the fall of the fort, when I directed my signal officer to communicate with the shore station. His signal was promptly answered, but turning to me, he said, "No Confederate signal officer there, sir; he cannot reply to me." The order to wear around was instantly obeyed ; not a moment too soon, for the bow of the Chameleon was scarcely pointed for the bar before two or three of the light cruisers were plainly visible in pursuit, steaming with all speed to intercept us. Nothing saved

us from capture but the twin screws, which enabled our steamer to turn as upon a pivot in the narrow channel between the bar and the ribs. We reached the bar before our pursuers, and were soon lost in the darkness outside."

In February, 1862, Gen. Beauregard took command of the Army of The Mississippi, and assigned to duty as Chief Signal Officer, Capt. E. H. Cummins, of the Engineer Corps. C. S. A. This officer at once reported to Maj. Gen. McCrown, who was then at Madrid Bend, making preparations to defend and hold Island No. 10 and its approaches.

This point was termed by the Confederates the Thermopylo of the Mississippi river. Capt. Cummins had with him a small squad of men, who had been selected and instructed by Capt. E. P. Alexander, and a very poor outfit.

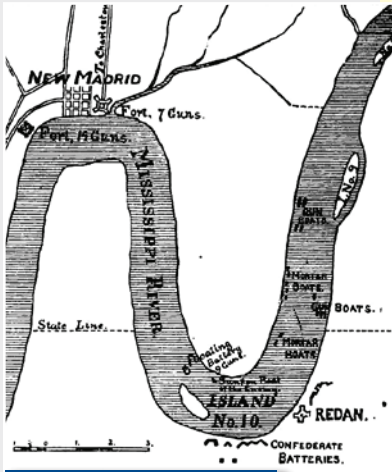
Gen. Trudeau had constructed five batteries on the bend of the river, Tennessee side, and four on Island No. 10. On the 15th of March the Federal fleet, gunboats, mortar-boats, and transports, appeared and opened fire. At 9 P. M. Capt. Cummins went to Battery No. 1, or the Redan, so called, and established a signal station which Gen. Trudeau says proved of great service through the various engagements. This Redan was the point nearest to the Union fleet. Gen. Trudeau narrates the following singular incident: -

"Towards 9 o'clock on the morning of the 16th I received a report from the officer of the day that Capt. Rucker (commanding the battery at the Redan), was making signals of distress, or else that he had shown the white flag from his battery. Amazed and mortified I ordered a skiff, and proceeded to the battery, up the river. Upon nearing it I discovered a white flag moving in various directions, and a steam-tug from the enemy, bearing also a white flag, steering upon the battery. Capt. Rucker was not aware that his signal-flag could be construed in to a flag of distress either by us or the enemy. It was too late to stop the tug; she reached the battery as soon as I did. An officer, a lieutenant in the navy, informed Capt. Rucker that he had seen his signal and had come to inquire if he wished to communicate with the fleet, to which a negative answer was given. I explained the mistake, and told him that the flag would be changed, and he left without landing. This occurrence is much to be regretted, as it gave the enemy a chance of seeing the condition of our battery, all under water, with its ammunition on the parapet, and also perhaps a good view of our other batteries; but it was unavoidable as well as unexpected."

The Federal fleet poured in it's heaviest fire upon the batteries on the 17th, finally concentrating its fire upon Battery No. 1. Capt. Rucker say: "Lieutenants Elean Jones and Samuel Rose, of the Signal Corps, were engaged with me the whole day in the defense of the Redan. Signal Officer Jones, having the staff of his signal-flag shot away thrice during the engagement, seized the flag in his hand without looking around to listen to exclamations, and continued his important message to headquarters."

Capt. Cummins, who was reading the message through a glass at headquarters, in commenting on this incident says: "The flag was probably knocked out of Mr. Jones's hand by the mud, tons of which flew in the air every time the heavy projectiles from the fleet struck the parapet." Gen. Trudeau says: "The effect of the enemy's fire upon the batteries on the bend and upon the island has been without any result. No damage of any kind done, except to the redan fort, upon which he seemed to have concentrated all his efforts. It presented the most appalling picture of ruin and desolation. The parapet was plowed up in every direction and torn to pieces. The water from the river washed into the battery, filling it with mud. Trees were hacked down and torn to shreds by the heavy shells and the rifled cannon, and yet only one man was killed in this terrific contest."

Upon the capture of New Madrid and Island No. 10 by Admiral Foote and Gen. Pope, the signal party escaped across Reelfoot Lake, taking French leave of the commanding generals, paddling across on a raft of their own construction. They repaired at once, of their own motion and without orders, to Corinth, Miss., then headquarters of the Confederate army, and reported for duty. During the battle of Shiloh they are reported merely as doing staff duty. After the battle seventeen men were detailed to be instructed for duty in the Signal



Island No. 10



Mortar Boats



Corps. As glasses were scarce, and all the country between Corinth and the Tennessee river was heavily wooded, the men were mounted, and served chiefly as scouts and couriers, while their instruction was going on, and until sent elsewhere. Among those detailed at this time was Carlo Patti, a private of the 15th Tennessee. He quickly learned his duties and was zealous in their performance. When not employed with his flags and spyglass, he was incessantly playing his violin. He was captured in a blockade runner off Havana, and never returned to the Confederate States.

On falling back from Corinth, the signalmen, having been sufficiently instructed to go on duty, were dispersed to several points in the command, Thos. H. Claggett with one party going to Mobile. M. T. Davidson with another to Vicksburg. and Elean Jones with another to Kirby Smith across the river. These all became captains in the organized Signal Corps. Elean Jones, at the close of the war, was Chief Signal Officer to Gen. Joseph E. Johnston.

The Signal Corps for the Department of Norfolk, Gen Huger commanding, was organized under orders issued Feb. 22, 1862. The company was mustered into service for the war, in Norfolk, Va., on the 25th day of April, 1862, by Maj. Bradford, Inspector General of the Department of Norfolk, with seventy-three men, rank and file, by special authority of the Secretary of War. It ultimately consisted of one captain, three lieutenants, and one hundred and fourteen non-commissioned officers and privates. The Chief Signal Officer was Capt. J. F. Milligan. His posts in the Department of Norfolk extended from Harden's Bluff, by the south side of James river, to headquarters in Norfolk. After the evacuation of Norfolk, headquarters were removed to Petersburg, and Gen. Huger's district was called the Department of the Appomattox. By orders from the Confederate Secretary of War, Capt. Milligan established lines of communication on the James, and on the Appomattox. On the James he located one post at Drewry's Bluff, communicating with Chaffin's Bluff, thence down the river to Gregory's farm, where there was a good view of the river for fifteen miles. He could not get communication lower on account of the winding character of the river. The posts on the Appomattox were from Ray's farm, on the western side of the Appomattox, to Blandfield, on the eastern side of the river; thence to Cobb's fall, between Point of Rocks and Point Walthall, on the western side of the river; thence to Clifton, on the same side of the river, at the obstructions; thence to old Blanford church, near Petersburg; from thence to McLlwain's building, on Sycamore street, near the custom house, the headquarters in Petersburg; making in all six stations between the mouth of the Appomattox and headquarters. He was able to get communication through these six posts, a distance of fifteen miles, in twenty minutes.

Stonewall Jackson appreciated the advantages of aerial telegraphy. On the 5th of April, 1862, in a letter to Gen. Longstreet, he says: "If you can let me have a man who understands Alexander's system of signals, I hope you will do so, in order that he may instruct others for me." And on the 29th of the same month, in a communication addressed to Gen. Lee, he writes: "Please send me part of Alexander's Signal Corps, if you can spare it; if not, please send me the system of signals, so that I may have persons instructed. The enemy's signals give him a great advantage over me." In response to this request Gen. Lee sent him two signalmen, and said they could readily instruct as many men as he would require. His Chief Signal Officer was Capt. R. E. Wilbourne, who greatly assisted him in the transmission of orders in the second Bull Run campaign up to the battle of Groveton, when he was wounded and succeeded by Capt. Joseph L. Bartlett, who gives the following record of his work at Manassas the next day, August 30th: -

MANASSAS BATTLE GROUND, VA.,  
Saturday, Aug. 30, 1862, P. M.

I signalled from Gen. Lee's headquarters on the Warrenton pike to Gen. Jackson's position across the pike near some wheat stacks, bearing nearly north, distance about two miles, as follows :

Gen. Jackson. What is result of movements on your left? Lee.

Gen. Lee. So far, enemy appear to be trying to get possession of a piece of woods to withdraw out of our sight. Jackson.

Terrific fighting now commenced on the left and Gen. Jackson sends for a division of Longstreet's command :



Station on Parish Church,  
Yorktown

Gen Jackson. Do you still want reinforcements? Lee.

Some half hour elapses and Gen. Jackson replies:

No; the enemy are giving way. Jackson.

Gen. Lee now prepares to move and sends the following :

Gen. Jackson. Gen. Longstreet is advancing; look out for and protect his left flank. Lee.

Gen. Lee having moved his headquarters, I also removed the signal station.

J. L. BARTLETT.

The following report of operations preceding the capture of Harper's Ferry may not be altogether devoid of interest: -

SUNDAY, Sept. 14, 1862.

My signal flag was up at daylight, and my glass bearing on Loudoun Heights after sunrise. Maj. Paxton sent the following: "Artillery coming up the road to be repaired." Before delivering this message I asked, "What artillery and what road?" Maj. Paxton answered, "Walker's and up mountains." About 10 A. M. comes another dispatch from Loudoun Heights: Walker has his six rifle pieces in position. Shall he wait for McLaws? " Gen. Jackson answers, "Wait."

Gen. Jackson and Col. Smead then come to signal station, and the general dictates the following :

SUNDAY, Sept. 14, 1862.

Generals McLaws and Walker. If you can, establish batteries to drive the enemy from the hill west of Bolivar, and on which Barbour's house is, and any other position where he may be damaged by your artillery, and let me know when you are ready to open your batteries, and give me any suggestions by which you can operate against the enemy. Cut the telegraph line down the Potomac if it is not yet already done. Keep a good look out against a Federal advance from below. Similar instructions will be sent to Gen. Walker. I do not desire any of the batteries to open until all are ready on both sides of the river, except you should find it necessary, of which you must judge for yourself. I will let you know when to open all the batteries.

T. J. JACKSON, Maj. Gen. Com'g

P. S. If you have not rations, take steps at once to supply yourself; have beef driven to your command, so that you may have enough.

Gen. Jackson and the staff then go to the left. I received, soon after, the following:

Gen. McLaws informs me that the enemy are in his rear, and that he can do but little more than he has done. I am now ready to open.

GEN, WALKER

There being no courier at the post, I carry this message to the general and find him in front on the left. He gives me an answer, and sends Lieut. Douglass back to signal station with me.

Gen. Walker. Do not open until Gen. McLaws notifies me what he can probably effect. Let me know what you can effect with your command upon the enemy.

GEN. JACKSON

Also:

Gen. McLaws. Let me know what you can probably effect with your artillery, and also with your entire command. Notify Gen. D. H. Hill at Middleburg, of the enemy's position and request him to protect your rear. Send the same message to Gen. Lee, near Hagerstown.

GEN. JACKSON

The message next in order came from Loudoun Heights :

Gen. Jackson. I am informed that the enemy are advancing by Purcellville, and have possession of the passes from the valley.

GEN. WALKER

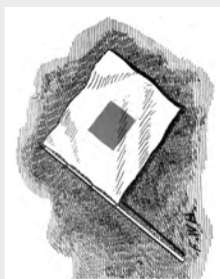
Generals ,Walker and McLaws. Fire at such positions of the enemy as will be most effective.

GEN. JACKSON

Our artillery opens from this side in front of Bolivar; Walker opens from Loudoun Heights, and Yankees are seen coming down on west side of Bolivar, to escape Walker's fire, but meet an equal one from our artillery on the left of our line.



Signal Station  
Loudoun Heights



Song of the Rebel Signal Corps

There is a flag as yet unsung,  
A banner bright and fall,  
It moves in waves of right and left,  
That banner in the air.  
The wise may look, the scholar con,  
The wondering urchin stare.  
But naught can make of the bonnie white flag  
That bears the crimson square.

Chorus:-

Hurrah! hurrah!  
For the signal corps, hurrah,  
Hurrah for the bonnie white flag  
That bears the crimson square.

To comrades true, far, far away,  
Who watch with anxious eye,  
These secret signs an import bear  
When waved against the sky.  
As quick as thought, as swift as light,  
Those airy symbols there,  
Are caught and read from the bonnie white flag,  
That bears the crimson square.

To comrades true, far, far away,  
Who watch with anxious eye,  
These secret signs an import bear  
When waved against the sky.  
As quick as thought, as swift as light,  
Those airy symbols there,  
Are caught and read from the bonnie white flag,  
That bears the crimson square.

When armed hosts in serried ranks  
Sweep forward to the fray,  
The signal flag is waving there  
To point the victorious way,  
From hill to hill, from crag to crag,  
The winged words to bear  
That gave a name to the bonnie white flag  
That bears the crimson square.

When night draws o'er the wearied earth  
Her cloak of sable hue,  
And bids us dream of home and friends.  
The soldiers staunch and true.  
'Tis then the torch that's burning bright,  
Tells by its meteor glare  
That we're on watch with the bonnie white flag  
That bears the crimson square.

Then let us know when war is o'er  
And great, and good, and free,  
We stand and boast ourselves with truth  
A model confederacy,  
That midst wars recollections oft  
We too may claim a share,  
As we fondly think of the bonnie white flag  
That bears the crimson square.

HEADQUARTERS VALLEY DISTRICT,

Sept. 14, 1862.  
Special Orders No. -.

I. Today, Maj.-Gen. McLaws will attack so as to sweep with his artillery the ground occupied by the enemy; take his batteries in reverse, and otherwise operate against him, as circumstances may justify.

II. Brig.-Gen. Walker will take in reverse the battery on the turnpike, and also sweep with his artillery the ground occupied by the enemy, and silence the battery on the island in the Shenandoah, should he find a battery there.

III. Maj. Gen. A. P. Hill will move along the left bank of the Shenandoah, and thus turn the enemy's left flank and enter Harper's Ferry.

IV. Brig.-Gen. Lawton will move along the turnpike for the purpose of supporting Gen. Hill, and otherwise operating against the enemy on the left of Gen. Hill.

V. Brig.-Gen. Jones will, with one of his brigades and a battery of artillery, make a demonstration against the enemy's right; the remaining part of his division will constitute the reserve and move along the turnpike.

By order of Maj. Gen. Jackson. M. L. JACKSON,  
Acting Assistant Adjt.-Gen.

After the surrender of Harper's Ferry, I was ordered by Maj. Paxton to remove my station to Barbour's house. I did so after notifying Capt. R. H. T. Adams's post on Loudoun Heights of the move, telling them to look out for my flag at that point. After locating my station at that place, however, and waving my flag for several hours, I could not get attention from Loudoun Heights to send a message sent to me by Maj. Paxton, for Gen. Walker to prepare rations and to be ready to march. I afterward learned that the post had been evacuated at that time. Thus ended the signal service at Harper's Ferry.

J. L. BARTLETT. SIGNAL OFFICE,  
CHARLESTON, Nov. 6, 1862.

Brig. Gen. THOMAS JORDAN,  
Asst. Adjutant-General, and Chief of Staff.

GENERAL : I have the honor respectfully to submit for the consideration of the general commanding the following suggestions:

The material of the Signal Corps, formed as it is of educated and reliable men, affords the opportunity of employing them to advantage as magnetic telegraph operators, the duties of which position are strictly germane to their present occupation as signalmen, and could be acquired with comparative ease and celerity.

With a corps of men thus thoroughly instructed in all the scientific methods for the early transmission of information, the general commanding would have at hand the means of taking possession of any telegraphic line already constructed, of attaching any portable apparatus to any points of such line, near which his troops may be operating, and of constructing new lines or ramifications of lines, to points either of strategic value or value as lookouts.

An operator under these circumstances would be always within reach, and being under military supervision, could be more relied upon as being at his post when required.

In point of economy it will also recommend itself to the general, as the operator will receive but his pay as signal-master, which is less than half that of the civil operator.

The use of the galvanic battery would also tend to fit some of the corps for the responsible duty of igniting such torpedoes or other marine explosives to be fired by the electric spark as may be in contemplation; also the management of the electric light.

If this suggestion should meet with the approval of the general, two portable apparatus, and a teacher for the manual operation, would be required.

JOSEPH MANIGAULT,  
Assistant Adjt. Gen. and Chief Signal Officer,  
Dept. of S. C., Ga., and Fla.



# Civil War History Weekend

Saturday & Sunday

11am-4pm

1pm-4pm

October 26th & 27th, 2024

at

Historic West Jersey Train Depot

354 Oakwood Ave- Glassboro, NJ

\*\*\*All Events are FREE to the Public\*\*\*



Dress Up with Aunt Corinne  
"step back in time!"

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment United States  
Colored Troops

Civil War Artifacts and  
Miniature Battle Exhibit

"Old Baldy" Civil War  
Roundtable

Libby Prison  
Minstrels

12th NJ Volunteers Living History



## Authentic Civil War Ball & Banquet

Saturday Night - 5pm

Glassboro VFW Post 679 ~ 275 Wilmer St. Glassboro

Renowned  
Civil War Dancers  
Learn the Reels and Steps!  
Music by Becks Band  
Aunt Corinne  
providing beautiful ball gowns



For more information contact 856-881-9230 ext.88149

Visit us at [www.glassborohistory.org](http://www.glassborohistory.org) or scan the QR code.



This program is made possible in part by funding from The Gloucester County Cultural and Heritage Commission at Rowan College at Gloucester County, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State and the National Endowment of the Arts.



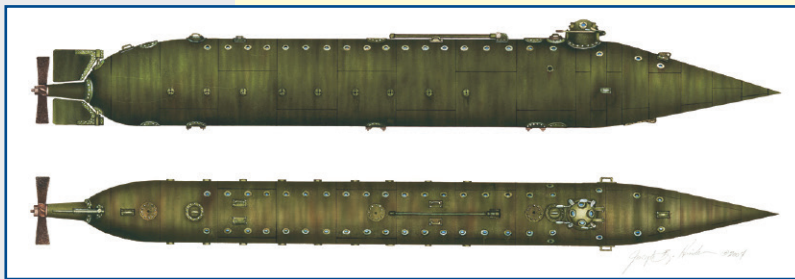


## Join the Hunt for the Alligator Junior

*The prototype Civil War submarine abandoned in Rancocas Creek.*

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

Inventor Brutus de Villeroi developed what became known as Alligator Jr. in 1859, initially as a salvage vessel, and offered her to the US Navy shortly after the start of the Civil War. The Navy was interested, but asked de Villeroi to build a larger version. That boat became the Alligator, the first submersible deployed to a combat zone with an enlisted crew. Lost in an 1863 storm off Cape Hatteras, Alligator was the focus of search efforts beginning in 2002. But after several years it became apparent that her location would remain elusive.

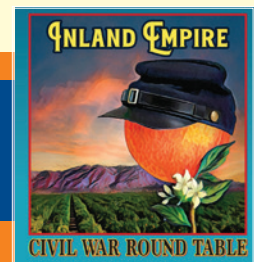


The Alligator's prototype, dubbed "Alligator Junior", is now the subject of an effort to pinpoint her location and hopefully, to begin recovery. Junior, it is believed, sits buried in the muddy bank of the Rancocas Creek in Riverside, NJ, close to the former site of de Villeroi's boatyard. Locals claim parts of her were visible into the early 1960s.

**The Original Alligator Submarine**

The next step toward identification and eventual recovery requires large-scale aerial magnetometer scans. This is the point we are at today; raising funds to pay for this work. To find this craft would be an incredible boon to the understanding of period technology and the earliest days of submarine warfare. If you would like to support this project, to find the first submarine in which the U.S. Navy took interest, please visit [www.navyandmarine.org](http://www.navyandmarine.org)

## Our Sister Round Table Inland Empire Upcoming events



### *The March Toward Civil War in Southern California*

*Tuesday, September 17th, at 6:15 Pacific Time,  
In-Person and Zoom at 6:15 p.m.*

*Guest Speaker, Maria Carrillo Colato  
Special Collections Manager at A.K. Smiley Public Library  
and the Lincoln Memorial Shrine*

*For Zoom links, and regional Round Table program times  
& locations, go to:  
[inlandempirecwr.org](http://inlandempirecwr.org) and [socalcwr.org](http://socalcwr.org).*



The Cruiser Olympia won fame in the Spanish-American War and served as a flagship in WWI



Independence Hall

# HOMECOMING 250

**OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025**

To kickoff America's celebration of its 250 years of independence, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will honor the men and women who gained and continue to defend our independence. Through our efforts, the Secretary of the Navy has announced that the Navy and Marine Corps should celebrate their 250th birthdays in their birthplace, Philadelphia, PA, and Camden, NJ. Homecoming 250 will salute their 250 years of distinguished service by hosting spectacular events, ceremonies, parades, aerial demonstrations, exhibitions, and educational programs featuring historic buildings, ships, museums, and waterfront sites on both sides of the Delaware River.



## COMING HOME TO THE BIRTHPLACE

*No better place to celebrate the Navy and Marines' 250th!*

### THE NAVY & MARINES...

- Were created in Independence Hall and organized at Tun Tavern
- Commissioned their first ships and officers here
- Launched their first missions from the Delaware River
- Relaunched the Navy and Marines at Congress Hall
- Built the first Naval Shipyard and supplied innovative ships for over 200 years

### THE PERFECT BACKDROP FOR THEIR 250TH CELEBRATION

- Independence Hall
- Congress Hall
- The site of the original and recreated Tun Tavern
- The Navy Yard
- The Navy's Most Famous Cruiser and Most Decorated Battleship
- Philadelphia's Historic Museums
- Revolutionary Churches where the Founding Heroes of the Navy and Marines Rest



US Navy ROTC Midshipmen, 2021



"The President's Own" United States Marine Band



The Battleship New Jersey, the Navy's Most Decorated Battleship, fought in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East

## JOIN US

Homecoming 250's Navy & Marine Corps 250th Celebration will be the grand opening event of the Semiquincentennial and will be its largest event honoring the military and veterans, attracting visitors from across the nation.

This event will remind us what unites us, reconnect Americans with those who serve, educate our youth, and commemorate those who bravely fought for us all.

To bring this monumental festival to life, we invite you to contribute through sponsoring and supporting this spectacular national event.

Your support will help...

- Shine an early spotlight on the birthplace of our Nation to launch the Semiquincentennial celebration.
- Ensure that this event becomes a memorable and meaningful tribute to the Navy, Marines, and veterans who have selflessly served our country.
- Provide a captivating journey through U.S. history with compelling visual displays, highlighting the pivotal role our military has played in defending our world.

To learn more, visit [www.Homecoming250.org](http://www.Homecoming250.org)

## ATTENDING ACTIVE & HISTORICAL SHIPS

- Battleship *New Jersey*
- Cruiser *Olympia*
- Submarine *Becuna*
- Tall Ship *Providence Replica*
- USS *Monitor Replica*
- Washington's *Crossing Durham Boat*
- Wasp-Class Amphibious Assault Ship
- Arleigh Burke-Class Destroyer
- Freedom/Independence Littoral Combat Ship
- Spearhead-Class Expeditionary Fast Transport

## INVITED SHIPS

- Brig *Niagara*
- Ticonderoga-Class Cruiser
- San Antonio-Class Amphibious Transport Dock
- Virginia-Class Attack Submarine
- USCG Cutter

## ATTENDING & INVITED NAVY & MARINE AVIATION

- Blue Angels (Attending)
- F/A-18 Hornets/Super Hornet
- F-35B/C Lightning II
- AV-8B Harrier II
- C-130/KC-130 Super Hercules
- V-22/MV-22 Osprey
- P-3 Orion
- P-8 Poseidon
- E-2 Hawkeye
- T-45 Goshawk
- T-34 Mentor
- F4F/FM Wildcat
- F4U/FG Corsair
- F6F Hellcat
- F8F Bearcat
- TBF/TBM Avenger
- SBD Dauntless
- SB2C Helldiver
- PBX Catalina
- AH-1Z Viper
- CH-53 Super/King Stallion
- SH-60 Seahawk
- UH-1 Iroquois



## Old Baldy Picnic September 21, 2024

**Delicious food and a private tour are waiting us on Saturday September 21st at our Old Baldy Picnic. Please RSVP via email to Paul Prentiss at [pprentissfamily@gmail.com](mailto:pprentissfamily@gmail.com) with names and items you are bringing.**

**Starting around NOON, we will meet for the picnic at the Red Bank Battlefield in Gloucester County. This historic park is located on the waterfront of the Delaware River located at 100 Hessian Ave, National Park, NJ 08063.**

**A very special private tour and description of the battle will be provided by a park docent. The walking tour of the battlefield includes a tour of the historic original Whitall House museum used as a hospital during the battle.**

**Mid-afternoon, after exploring the museum we will walk to the site of the recently discovered Hessian soldiers mass grave.**

**We will also see a huge cannon and the massive Chevaux de Frise used to obstruct British ships coming into Philadelphia via the Delaware. The cannon was discovered buried deep in the ground and remnants of the Chevaux de Frise were found, salvaged, and now displayed at the battlefield as a result of river dredging during the mid twentieth century.**

**A terrific epicurean and historical day have been planned for everyone so we really hope to see you, your family and friends on Saturday the 21st.**

## Contact Information of the Acting Leaders

Kathy Clark 856-866-0924 Klynn522@comcast.net  
Mike Bassett 856-334-5856 mikebassett609@gmail.com  
Amy Hummel amymhummel@gmail.com



### New Members

Dave Maxwell  
Sewell, NJ 08080



Arlene Schnaare getting her  
10-year membership pin

FOB welcomes member  
Bill Eldridge  
from Voorhees, NJ



## Upcoming Events that the Old Baldy CWRT is Participating In...

Saturday, October 12 (Rain Date October 13):

Mullica Hill Fall Festival

Saturday and Sunday, October 26 & 27

Glassboro Civil War Weekend

Tuesday, December 31

Meade's Birthday at Laurel Hill

WEB Site: <http://oldbaldycwrt.org>

Email: [oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net)

Face Book: Old Baldy Civil War Round Table

## Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers and Activities for 2024

October 10, 2024 - Thursday

Allen Thompson

"In the Shadow of the Round Tops: Longstreet's  
Countermarch, Johnston's Reconnaissance, and the  
Enduring Battles for the Memory of July 2, 1863"

November 12, 2024 - Thursday

Chuck Veit

"Sea Miner: Major E. B. Hunt's Civil War Rocket Torpedo"

December 12, 2024 - Thursday

General Membership Meeting and Social Night

Questions to

Dave Gilson - 856-323-6484 - [dgilson404@gmail.com](mailto:dgilson404@gmail.com)

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

Camden County College

William G. Rohrer Center

1889 Marlton Pike East

Cherry Hill, NJ

[oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net)

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