

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

February 13, 2025

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

“The Art of Surviving: Belle Island and Beyond”



Kelly Hancock

Using Belle Isle as a starting point, delve into the horror of life in Civil War prison camps, both North and South, and discover the many ways prisoners sought to maintain sanity in the midst of squalor, disease, and malnutrition. Numerous pieces of the Museum’s POW art collection are displayed through PowerPoint.

Kelly Hancock is Director of Programs at the American Civil War Museum in Richmond, Va. Kelly oversees programs and education at the Museum for the general public, students, teachers, and senior adults, initiating the research, development, and implementation of programs for audiences both on- and off-site. A museum professional for over twenty years, she has a passion for uncovering history and bringing to light lesser-known stories from the past. Kelly is a graduate of Eastern New Mexico University.

Meeting Notice

Join us at 7:15 PM on Thursday,
February 13,

Please note: This program is virtual only on Zoom. We are not meeting at the College or the Kettle & Grill. If you are not already receiving Old Baldy communications, email oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net at least 24hrs prior to request the Zoom link for the program.

Watch for the usual meeting reminders and Zoom links in your email. We will return to the Rohrer Center in March."

"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 at least 24 hours prior to request Zoom access.

Notes from the President

Well **Punxsutawney Phil** saw his shadow predicting 6 more weeks of winter so please stay warm and enjoy the rest of winter. Thank you who were prompt in submitting your 2025 dues. Look for Frank’s message if you have not done so yet to support our programs this year. We are now less than 24 months away from our 50th anniversary celebration (2027) and preparations will begin in earnest this year. Let us know how you believe we should commemorate this milestone. There will be many opportunities to assist in planning the events. Our next social gathering will be the annual picnic. We need your input to decide if it will be a Spring or Fall event.



Paul Prentiss
President, OBCWRT

We receive word that our Round Table was awarded a grant in the amount of \$5000 from Camden County to cover some of our administrative costs. The grant allows us to expand outreach and projects.

President's Notes Page 1
Help Needed Page 2
Member Profile Page 3
"Dues Reminder" Page 3
Today in Civil War History Page 4
Civil War Books Page 5
Past President Photos Page 6
Island CWRT Page 6
Gettysburg Sharpshooters Page 7
Belle Island Page 13
A Thank You Rich Page 15
New Members Page 16
Flat Old Baldy Member Photos Page 16
Meeting/Speaker Schedule Page 16

Speaking of expansion, my 2025 goal is to get more members personally involved in the workings of our OBCWRT. The MAC Book Award team finished their work selecting a winner and the book will be announced during our meeting. **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!** Cal and I have identified many small, easy tasks that would take less than a few hours a month to execute. Interested in serving your Round Table? A list of tasks are included in the newsletter and more information will be provided at the meeting.

Our 50th anniversary is just around the corner, planning for the celebration is in the initial stage. Let us know how you think we should commemorate it and how you will be involved in the planning and execution.

There is still time to visit the New Jersey History Day website <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLScNLuMtGIMeg4.../viewform> and register to be a judge at Rutgers Camden for the Regional Competition on February 22nd. This month **Kelly Hancock** will visit us on Zoom to discuss "The Art of Surviving: Belle Island and Beyond" She will delve into the horror of life in Civil War prison camps, both North and South, and discover the many ways prisoners sought to maintain sanity in the midst of squalor, disease, and malnutrition.

Stay warm and see you virtually on the 13th.

REMEMBER our February meeting will be conducted on Zoom.

Paul Prentiss, President

Help Needed

As our Round Table grows the work on our Board Members and Department Chairpersons naturally increases. We need members to assist us in the following areas:

PROGRAMS

**Speaker Scheduling
Honoraria Preparation
Photographer
College Lecture Series**

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**Event sked Coordination
FOB Coordination
Photographer/reporter
Event setup/manning
MAC Book Award**

MEMBERSHIP

**Attendance
Welcome Package
Year Pins & name tags
Mailing
Member outreach**

MEDIA AFFAIRS

**Webmaster
Newsletter Editing
Facebook Management
Zoom Meeting Setup
Video Editing**

***Do any of these areas interest you?
Do you feel an urge to make a personal
impact on our Round Table.
This is your chance to get more involved
and make us even more successful.
Please contact Paul, Cal and Anita
to learn more about these opportunities.***

Dues Renewal...

The 2025 Membership Dues are now being collected. Dues remain the same, \$25.00 Individual Membership and \$35.00 Family Membership.

Remember they can now be paid online. Just visit our Web Page, click on, "Membership" on the top bar, which will take you to the next page. Choose a payment method, visa, etc., and click "Buy Now". This will take you to the submission page, complete form and click on, "Pay Now". Done

**As always, if you prefer to pay by check, bring it to any meeting or send to:
16 Heather Drive, Marlton, NJ, 08053.**

**Should you have any questions, please contact Paul at 609-732-3930
or theprentissfamily@verizon.net**

Member Profile - John Herr

**Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member**



John Herr

I was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania during World War II. Mom and Dad were both raised on farms in Lancaster County, but moved to the "city" prior to my birth. I spent my first 12 years in Lancaster, and then moved to Chambersburg where I spent my junior and senior high school years at a boarding school called Scotland School for Veterans Children. I developed an interest in math and science in high school and went on to attend Drexel University, graduating with a BS degree in industrial management (1967) and an MBA (1974). I have lived in the Greater Philadelphia area my entire adult life, including Lancaster, Drexel Hill, Allentown, Princeton, Moorestown, and currently Avalon.

During my high school summers, I painted barn roofs (mostly Amish farms) and washed dishes at a local restaurant. During undergraduate college, I spent three, six-month terms on co-op internships with the General Services Administration in Washington, DC.

My first job after completing college (from 1967 to 1970) was with the Hamilton Watch Company in Lancaster as an engineer on an assembly line that produced one million artillery shells each month for the Vietnam War. From 1970 to 1974, I developed computer systems for Alan Wood Steel Co. in Conshohocken. This was at a time when computers were just becoming more widespread and critical to industrial activities. I have been in the computer side of business ever since, specializing in computer hardware/software, networks, and computer management. After Alan Wood, I worked in computer and automated systems assignments for three companies for 45 years including Air Products & Chemicals - Allentown, BASF - Parsippany, and Wyeth Pharmaceutical - Radnor and Great Valley. I retired in 2008.

I have been married to Sally, the love of my life for over 48 years. We enjoy taking in the wide selection of dining choices in Cape May County, gardening, reading, and puttering around the house. We also look forward to spending time with our children and their families in the summer at our beach house or making winter trips to one of their homes. We are retired and enjoy each other's company.

We have four children and seven grandchildren. Our son, David, lives in San Ramon, California. He and his wife Alison have a 22-year-old son, Zach, who is a senior at the University of Washington. Their daughter, Alexia, is a senior in high school and plans to go to college in California. Our youngest daughter, Amy, lives in Henderson, Nevada. Her husband, Sid, works in the entertainment business. They have three children: Lily is 13, Owen is six, and Jack is four.

Our oldest daughter, Denise, lives in Willow Street near Lancaster. She is married to Scott and they have two daughters. Liz finished school and works, and Grace is a senior in high school and plans to attend college. Our daughter, Kimberly, is married to Eric and lives in Marietta. She is an elementary school

Continued on page 4

teacher and is the proud owner of six adorable Pugs and a Great Dane.

After retirement in 2008, I had the time to pursue my interest in history and was invited to a Cape May County CWRT meeting. I liked it and decided to get more involved. In addition to being a member of the Old Baldy CWRT for three years, I have also been a member of the Cape May County CWRT for ten years and president for four years.

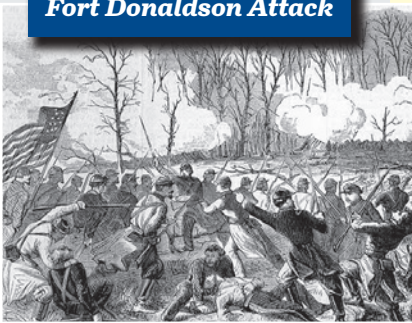
In addition to my interest in Civil War history, I am also interested in astronomy. I walk several days a week and use that time to listen to astronomy podcasts. I'm a big fan of Elon Musk and what he has accomplished at SpaceX and Tesla.

Although I did not serve in the Armed Forces my father did, and as a result I was eligible to and chose to become a member of the Sons of the American Legion (SAL - Post 331) in Stone Harbor. I am a docent for the American Legion and give tours of its meeting place, which is on the National Registry of Historical Buildings.

Today in Civil War History

1861 Thursday, February 13

Fort Donaldson Attack



Western Theater

Floyd finally arrives at Fort Donelson, even as Grant launches his attack. McClelland's division is on the left while Smith attacks from the right, although the absence of the gunboats mean this is not a full-strength assault. However, three Illinois regiments try to carry a Confederate redoubt by frontal assault and are driven back. Federal artillery bombards Fort Donelson through the day, and continues into the night, forcing the Confederates to stand to in the trenches. An added complication to both sides is the weather, which until now has been unseasonably mild for February. However, a sudden unforeseen change brings snow and sleet, which makes the night a trial for the unsheltered soldiers.

Southern troops at Bowling Green are in danger of being cut off by the action at Fort Donelson, and begin to withdraw from the town.

1863 Friday, February 13

Eastern Theater

General Hooker makes a change to the Army of the Potomac which will be of supreme importance later in the war. Union Cavalry had been scattered amongst the Grand Divisions, but in the reorganization of the army it is collected into a separate cavalry corps. This will eventually grow into a powerful arm which will at last be able to take on the swashbuckling Confederate cavalymen like Jeb Stuart. However, the one thing lacking is a commander fit to wield the weapon, and it will be some time before the new Northern Cavalry organization begins to match its potential.

Western Theater

As night falls, the new Federal ironclad Indianola sets off from the mouth of the Yazoo down the Mississippi. She drifts past the Confederate batteries of Vicksburg without detection, although close enough to hear the voices of Southern sentries.

1864 Saturday, February 13

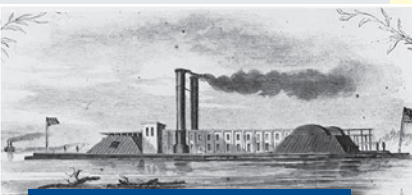
The South

Confederate forces assemble in Florida in response to the Union invasion. At Lake City 4600 infantry, 600 cavalry, and 12 guns are now ready under

Continued on page 5



USS Indianola

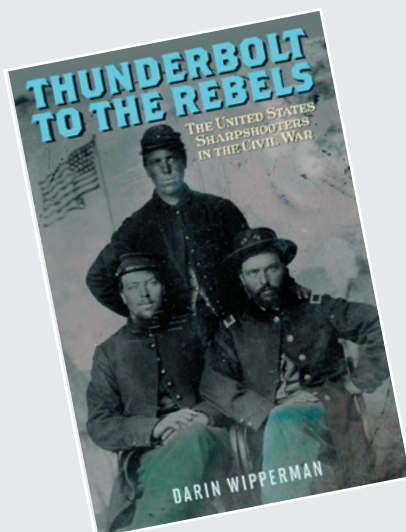
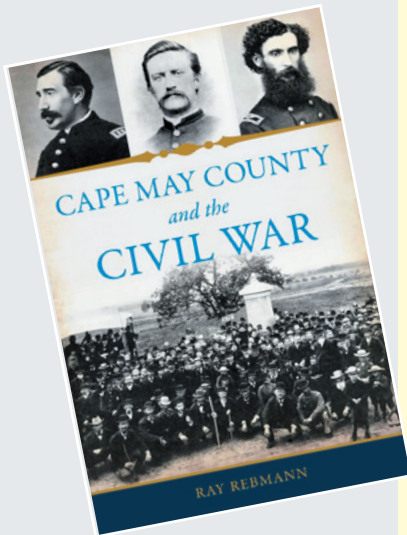


the command of Brigadier General Joseph Finegan. At Hilton Head General Gillmore issues a proclamation announcing the occupation of Florida, calling on the people to take the oath of allegiance to the Union. But Seymour remains unconvinced that there is much pro-Union sympathy in Florida and marches his troops toward the Suwanee River to break down the bridges.



Lord John Russell

Compiled by Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member



1865 Monday, February 13

England

Lord John Russell complains to Federal commissioners about the increased US military presence on the Great Lakes. The US action is in response to the St Albans raid of October 1864, the perpetrators of which have been released for lack of evidence. Canadian authorities are very anxious about this display of American strength, and demand extra British troops and improvements to Canadian defenses along the St Lawrence.

American Civil War Books

(to be published February 2025)

Cape May County and the Civil War

by Ray Rebmann/The History Press

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Cape May County was an isolated and lightly populated peninsula at the southernmost tip of New Jersey. Nevertheless, its citizens answered the call for the Union effort during the Civil War. The 7th U.S. Infantry regiment recruited substantially from the region, and the entire community came out to usher the gallant troops to war, departing from Cape Island. On the homefront, supporting rallies were staged, food drives enacted and medical supplies shipped to the front. Railroad tycoons eyeing the underdeveloped beaches of Cape May began developing the county's resorts beyond Cape Island even before troops returned home. Author Ray Rebmann presents the valiant efforts and changing times of Cape May County in the Civil War era.

Thunderbolt to the Rebels: The United States Sharpshooters in the Civil War

by Darin Wipperman/Stackpole Books

During the first year of the Civil War, Hiram Berdan proposed the creation of a unit of marksmen armed with Sharps rifles, and thus were born the 1st and 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters. Drawn heavily from the Upper Midwest and New England, as well as Pennsylvania, the soldiers had to pass a marksmanship test to join: 10 shots in a 10-inch-diameter circle from 200 yards. They were issued green uniforms for better camouflage, which also helped Confederate riflemen target them. The job of a sharpshooter was dangerous and demanding – much of it out in front of the army, much of it alone – but they made a difference on the battlefield. Thunderbolt to the Rebels tells the story of these Civil War deadeyes on battlefields from Antietam to Gettysburg and beyond.

Unforgettable Sacrifice: How Black Communities Remembered the Civil War

by Hilary N. Green and Edda L. Fields-Black/Fordham University Press

Gettysburg: The Tide Turns: An Oral History

by Bruce Chadwick/Pegasus Books

New York City in the Civil War

by Jonathan W. White and Timothy Justin Orr/Arcadia Publishing

***Hundreds of Little Wars: Community, Conflict,
and the Real Civil War***

edited by G. David Schieffler and Matthew M. Stith/LSU Press

Hidden History of Civil War South Carolina

by D. Michael Thomas/The History Press

North Carolina's Confederate Hospitals: Volume II, 1864-1865

by Wade Sokolosky/Fox Run Publishing

***Lincoln's Last Card: The Emancipation Proclamation
as a Case of Command***

by Richard J. Ellis/University Press of Kansas

***Decisions at Forts Henry and Donelson: The Twenty One
Critical Decisions that Defined the Battles***

by Hank Koopman/University Tennessee Press

Fractured Freedoms: Reconstructing Central Louisiana

by David T. Ballantyne/LSU Press

***The Rialto in Richmond: The Money War Between the States
& Other Mysteries of the Civil War***

by Joseph P. Farrell/Adventures Unlimited Press



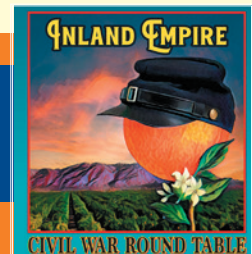
*Past President Jankowski with Swoop
and the 2024 George Halas Trophy at the
Linc.*

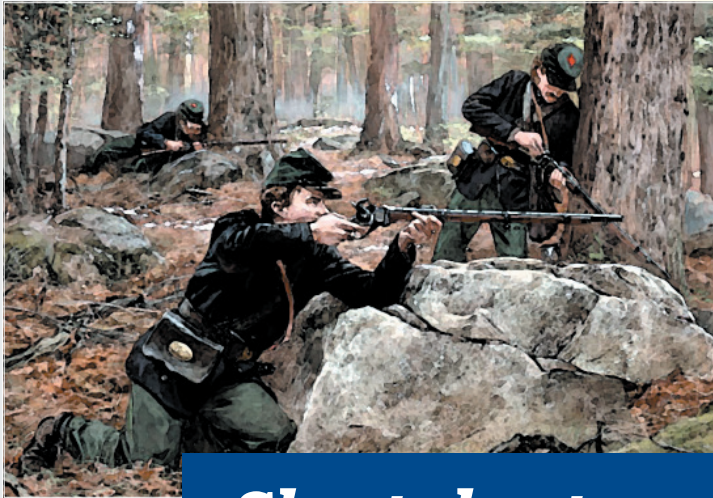
***Our Sister Round Table Inland Empire
Upcoming events***

***Wednesday, February 17 6:30 – 7:30pm,
Robert Foster - Vice President Boston Lincoln Group
"The True Meaning of the Confederate Flag."***

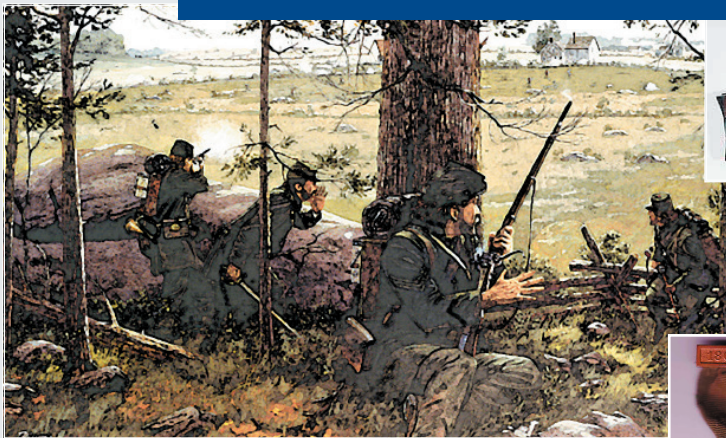
***Tuesday, February 18 6:15 – 7:45pm
Ken Frey, living historian "General George Pickett"***

***For Zoom links, and regional Round Table program times
& locations, go to:
inlandempirecwrt.org and socalcwrt.org.***





Sharpshooters at Gettysburg



Sharps Rifle



Sharpshooter Service Medal

by Don Wiles
 OBCWRT Member
 Photos...GNMP, LOC,
 VHS, Don Wiles
 Watercolor Sketches
 from original art

SHARP SHOOTERS WANTED !

Volunteers wanted for the Penn. company U. S. Sharp Shooters, (Berdan's).

This Distinguished branch of the service is undoubtedly too well known for any comments. This company is commanded by Lieut. Ira J. Northup, and desiring to fill the company he invites all good marksmen to call at his office and examine the rifle for themselves. It is the Improved Sharp's hair trigger breach-loading rifle, superior to any other arm in the service.

The mode of fighting as skirmishers and Sharpshooters, for which this branch is particularly used, is indeed preferable, the advantages &c., of the breach-loading rifle, in taking cover, is truly worthy the notice of those desiring to enlist.

Any person desiring to enlist in this company can be attached to any ward of any city, town or county, sub-district or District, or Congressional District, in the State of Pennsylvania, in order that they may receive for their benefit, the full Bounties paid by the United States, which are as follows: for Veteran Volunteers \$402,— to all others \$302, as heretofore, until the first of March, 1864. Full particulars given at the Rendezvous, at the Rail Road House, Brookville, Jefferson county, Pa.

LIEUT. IRA J. NORTHUP,
 Recruiting Officer
 January 20, 1864.

No man would be enlisted who could not put ten bullets in succession within five inches from the center at a distance of six hundred feet from a rest or three hundred feet off hand".

A potential recruit was required to fire his own open sight rifle, fire ten consecutive rounds, reloading as fast as possible, at two targets. Targets were a 10 inch circle. The first target was 200 yards away and fired at using a rest, the other target was paced at 100 yards and fired at offhand. A contestant missing the targets or averaging more than five inches (known as the string of 50) from the center was disqualified.

The Sharpshooters' uniform as being; a dark green coat and cap with black plume, green trousers and leather leggings, presenting contrast to the regular blue of the infantry. The knapsack was of hair covered calf-skin, with cooking kit attached.

United States Sharpshooters
 Established by and commanded by Colonel Hiram Berdan was made up of two Regiments, the 1st United States Sharpshooters and the 2nd United States Sharpshoots. These Regiments were in the Army of the Potomac.

They were in use everyday of the fighting at Gettysburg. In every case they helped to delay several of the Confederate advances long enough to allow Union troops to consolidate their positions.



Colonel Hiram Berdan
Commander
1st United States
Sharpshooters
LOC

Third Army Corp USA, General Daniel Sickles
First Division - First Brigade
1st U.S.Sharpshooters, Colonel Hiram Berdan, (10 cos)
(Engaged: 312 Casualties: 49)

- New York (Companies ABDH)**
- Michigan (Companies CIK)**
- New Hampshire (Company E)**
- Vermont (Company F)**
- Wisconsin (Company G)**

2nd United States Sharpshooters, Major Homer R. Stoughton (8 cos)
(Engaged: 169 Casualties: 43)

- Minnesota (Company A)**
- Michigan (Company B)**
- Pennsylvania (Company C)**
- Maine (Company D)**
- Vermont (Companies EH)**
- New Hampshire (Companies FG)**



*"to the brave men of
this command who fell
at Gettysburg"*

1st United States Sharpshooters
New York (Companies ABDH)
Third Corps - USA
First Division - Second Brigade
Company A-Captain Rudolph Aschmann
Engaged: NA Casualties: NA
Company B-Captain John Wilson
Engaged: NA Casualties: 3
Company D-Captain Charles D. McClean (MW)
Engaged: NA Casualties: 5
Company H-Captain William Winthrop
Engaged: 38 Casualties: 1
Location: Berdan Avenue
Dedicated: July 1889



**First Sergeant
Lewis J. Allen**
VHS



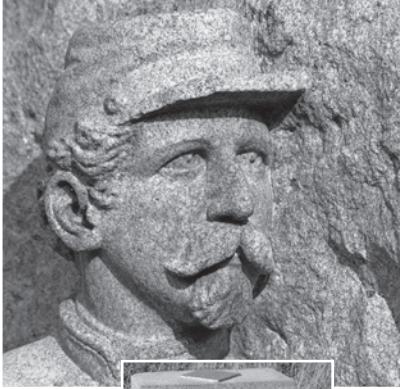
**1st United States
Sharpshooters**
Vermont (Company F)
Third Corps - USA
First Division - Second Brigade
Captain Edmund W. Hindes (W)
Engaged: 44 Casualties: 6
Location: Berdan Avenue
Dedicated 1889

First Sergeant Lewis J. Allen
Vermont, Company F,
1st United States Sharpshooters
Descendant of Ethan Allen



**1st United States
Sharpshooters
Left and Right Flank
Markers**





1st United States Sharpshooters
Wisconsin (Company G)
(Advance Position Marker - July 2)



1st United States Sharpshooters
Wisconsin (Company G)
Third Corps - USA
First Division - Second Brigade
Captain Frank E. Marble
Lieutenant Charles A. Stevens
Engaged: 48 Casualties: 9
Location: Emmitsburg Road
Dedicated: July 1888



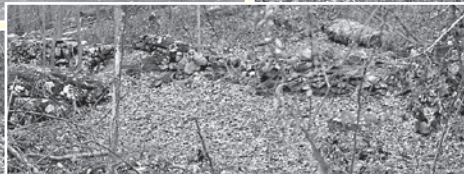
John Snyder Farm Site
The Snyder farm was in the middle of the Confederate attack on July 2, 1863 and served as a field hospital. It was also involved in the Cavalry charge on July 3, 1863. (This is the residence of a park employee and should be respected as such.)
Location: Confederate Avenue (South)



**John Snyder Farm Field Stone Walls
John Snyder Barn Yard Stone Walls**

These walls were used as field fences and barn yard fences and were used by the Union Sharpshooters to delay the charge of Hood's Division. Approximate total length of field walls 3600 feet and 20 feet by 25 feet for barn yard.

Location: Confederate Avenue (South)



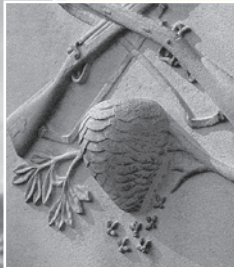
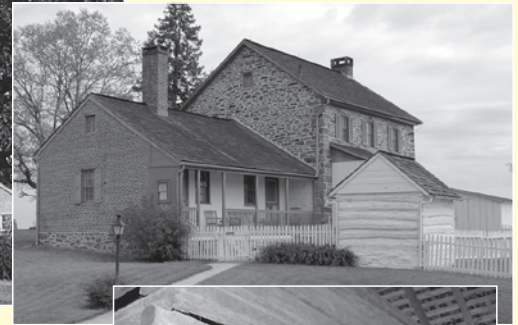
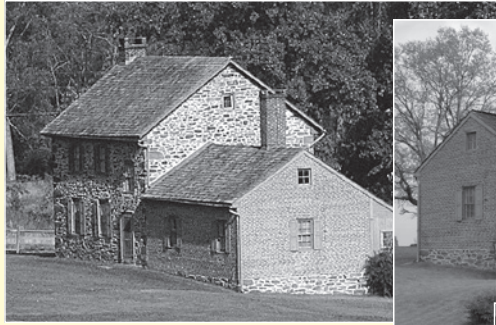
2nd United States
Sharpshooters
Pennsylvania (Company C)
(No Marker)
Third Corps - USA
First Division - First Brigade
Captain Samuel J. Howard (W)
Second Lieutenant Ira J. Northrup
Engaged: 17 Casualties: NA

2nd United States
Sharpshooters
Minnesota (Company A) (Also
known as 1st Company of
Minnesota Sharpshooters)
(No Marker)
Third Corps - USA
First Division - First Brigade
Captain Abraham Wright
Engaged: NA Casualties: NA

**George Bushman Farm Site
(David Essick Tenant)**

The Bushman farm was in the middle of the Confederate attack on July 2 and most likely served as a field hospital. (This is the residence of a park employee and should be respected as such.)

Location: Confederate Avenue (South)



**2nd United States Sharpshooters
Vermont (Companies E and H)**

Third Corps - USA

First Division - First Brigade

Company E-Second Captain Francis D. Sweeter

Engaged: NA Casualties: NA

Company H-Captain Albert Buxton (W)

Engaged: NA Casualties: NA

Location: Confederate Avenue (South)

Dedicated: October 1889



Log Construction
Shows some of the original log construction inside the Bushman barn.



Major

Homer R. Stoughton
GNMP



**2nd United States Sharpshooters
Maine (Company D)**

Third Corps - USA

First Division - First Brigade

Captain Jacob McClure (W)

Lieutenant Daniel L. Cummings

Engaged: NA Casualties: 11

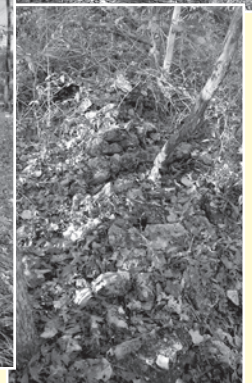
Location: Confederate Avenue (South)

Dedicated: October 1889

"2nd United States Sharpshooters Walls"

Some of the farm walls around this area do not exist now and some have deteriorated. Most of them were used by the Sharpshooters to delay the charge by Hood's Division

Location: Confederate Avenue (South)



**2nd United States Sharpshooters
Minnesota (Company A) (Also known as 1st Company of Minnesota Sharpshooters)
Michigan (Company B)
Pennsylvania (Company C)
Maine (Company D)
Vermont (Companies EH)
New Hampshire (Companies FG)
Third Corps - USA
First Division - First Brigade
Major Homer R. Stoughton
Engaged: 169 Casualties: 43**



**1st United States Sharpshooters
Michigan (Companies C,I,K)**

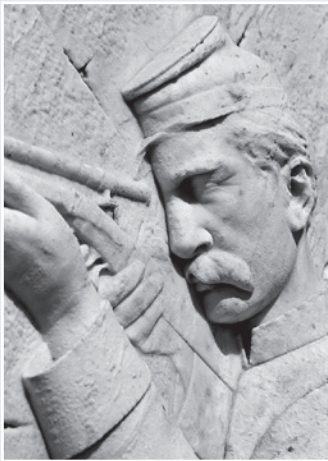
Third Corps - USA
 First Division - Second Brigade
 Company C-Captain James H. Baker (W)
 Lieutenant Edwin A. Wilson
 Engaged: NA Casualties: 7
 Company I-Lieutenant Henry C. Garrison (W)
 Captain James H. Baker (W)
 Engaged: NA Casualties: 5
 Company K-Captain William Nash
 Captain James H. Baker (W)
 Engaged: NA Casualties: 2
 Location: Little Round Top
 Dedicated: June 1889

**2nd United States
Sharpshooters
Michigan (Company B)**

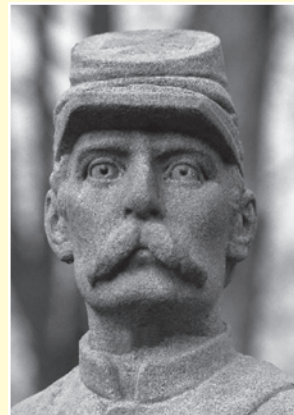
Third Corps - USA
 First Division - Second Brigade
 Captain Adolphus Guest
 Engaged: 25 Casualties: 4
 Location: Little Round Top
 Dedicated: June 1889

**Massachusetts Sharpshooters
(Andrew's Sharpshooters)
(2nd Company)
(Attached 22nd Massachusetts
Infantry)**

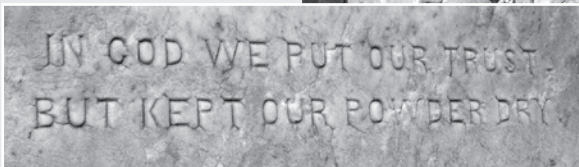
Fifth Corps - USA
 First Division - First Brigade
 Lieutenant Robert Smith
 Engaged: NA Casualties: NA
 Location: Sickles Avenue
 Dedicated: October 1885



"In God We Put Our Trust
But Kept Our Powder Dry"



NOTE: The Rifle Barrel is
not broken off the
monument. The
monument was designed
and carved that way.



**Massachusetts Sharpshooters
(Andrew's Sharpshooters)
(1st Company)**

(Position July 3, 4, 5, 1863)
 Second Corps - USA
 Second Division - Unattached
 Captain William Plumber
 Engaged: 42 Casualties: 8
 Location: Hancock Avenue (North)
 Dedicated: February 1912



**1st United States Sharpshooters
New Hampshire (Company E)**

Third Corps - USA
 First Division - Second Brigade
 Captain William G. Andrews
**2nd United States Sharpshooters
New Hampshire (Companies F,G)**
 Third Corps - USA
 First Division - Second Brigade
 Company F-Captain Edward T. Rowell (W)
 Second Lieutenant Samuel Murry
 Company G-Captain Howard P. Smith
 Location: Hancock Avenue (South)
 Dedicated: June 1886

**1st Minnesota Infantry
Monument
(2nd Company Minnesota
Sharpshooters Attached
(Company L-1st US
Sharpshooters Regiment)**

Second Corps - USA
 Second Division - First Brigade
 2nd Company Sharpshooters
 Captain Emil A. Burger
 Location: Hancock Avenue
(South)
 Dedicated: July 1897



1st and 2nd United States
Sharpshooters (New Hampshire)
Left and Right Flank Markers

A Union Sharpshooter's Trip from Gettysburg to Raleigh...

by Don Wiles
OBCWRT Member

In 2006 on another side trip on my way back from my three week trip to Georgia and Florida to visit family. I wanted to get some photographs in the cemeteries of Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina where Confederate Dead from the battle of Gettysburg were reinterred... My last stop was Oakwood Cemetery in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Cemetery is historical, beautiful and well kept... Oakwood Cemetery in Raleigh, North Carolina.



The Monument to the Confederate Dead killed at Gettysburg

"Within its 102 acres, the Confederate Cemetery, located on the original two and one-half acres given for that purpose by Henry Mordecai in 1867. Herein lie nearly 1,500 Confederate soldiers. Adjoined with the Confederate Cemetery is the impressive House of Memory. Erected in 1935 to commemorate those brave soldiers of the Confederacy, today its bronze memorial plaques recognize the many North Carolina service men and women who have served our country in times of conflict." ...www.historicoakwoodcemetery.com

There is a monument to the Gettysburg Dead and recently a small White Oak Tree from Seminary Ridge at Gettysburg was planted...



One of the more interesting stories I heard from Sharon Freed, Office Manager of Oakwood, was that a Union soldier had been buried by mistake with the Confederates... He was Private John O' Dolson of the 2nd US Sharpshooters Regiment, Company A and from Minnesota... he was killed at Gettysburg and was mistakenly buried on the battlefield with Confederate dead... so when the Daughters of the Confederacy had the Confederates reinterred to North Carolina, John went along...



The White Oak from Seminary Ridge

When I was taking photos I saw an American flag by a CSA headstone so I took the photo not knowing the story... On September 23, 2007 a ceremony to replace the CSA headstone with a USA headstone was held with full Civil War Military Honors...

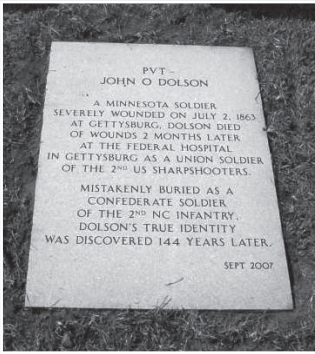
Oakwood Cemetery, Raleigh, North Carolina
(Union soldier found buried with Confederate Gettysburg dead)



The Grave of Private John O' Dolson



The Grave of Private John O' Dolson with new headstone

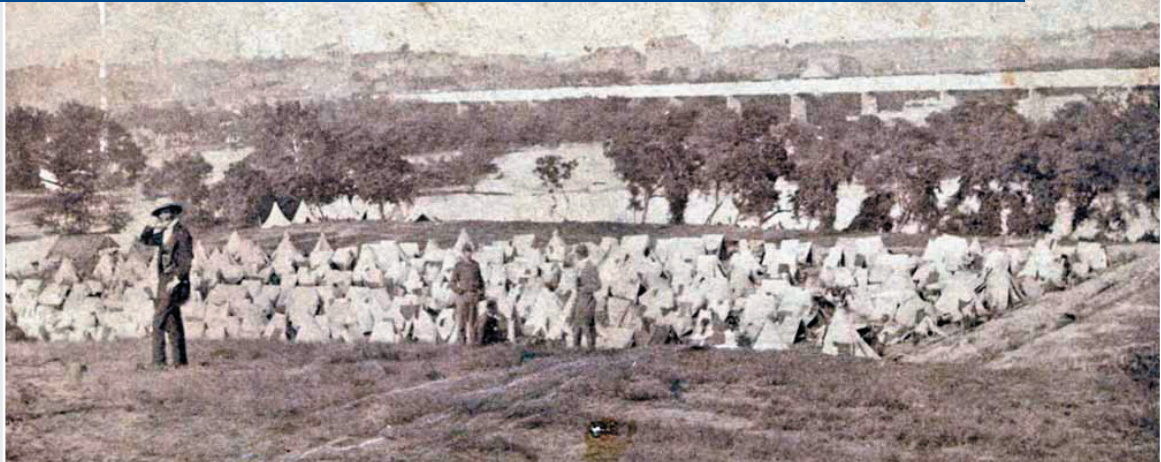


Plaque with Private John O' Dolson's story



The Honor Guard
2nd U.S. Sharpshooters
and the
6th NC Infantry Regiment

Belle Isle Prison Camp



Encyclopedia Virginia
Angela M. Zombek

In the summer of 1862, Richmond suffered from an overpopulation of Union prisoners of war. To remedy the situation, Confederate officials purchased a fifty-four-acre island in the James River from Old Dominion Iron and Nail Works. The island, formerly a vacation spot for the people of Richmond, was located at the fall line of the James River, and Confederate authorities reasoned that the site's swift rapids would discourage escape attempts. In the meantime, the bridge connecting the island to the city could facilitate the movement of prisoners to the Richmond and Danville Railroad for easy transfer to points outside Richmond.

Although Belle Isle's isolation was ideal in terms of discouraging escape attempts, its location proved less than ideal in terms of shelter. Unlike Castle Thunder and Libby prisons, both brick structures located in Richmond, Belle Isle was an open-air stockade. The prison's six-acre perimeter consisted of earthworks that stood roughly three feet high, and the prisoners' only shelter came from three hundred or fewer Sibley tents (conical, pole tents invented by Henry Hopkins Sibley), which slept about ten men each. This limited shelter proved grossly inadequate, especially as the number of prisoners steadily grew.

The prison's first commandant was Captain Norris Montgomery. Considered lenient with the prisoners, he was replaced in August 1862 by Captain Henry Wirz, a Swiss-born medical doctor who was hanged after the war for his treatment of prisoners at Andersonville in Georgia. Wirz revoked all privileges, in part due to overcrowding. On July 11, 1862, the *Richmond Enquirer* reported that 5,300 prisoners were held in the 3,000-capacity facility, although the paper noted that "their friends in the North may be perfectly satisfied that they will pass a pleasant summer at Richmond."

On September 23, 1862, Confederate authorities shut down Belle Isle when the prison emptied due to the exchange of prisoners. On January 17, 1863, however, after the Battle of Fredericksburg (1862), they briefly reactivated the site, doing so again on May 13 after the Battle of Chancellorsville and the breakdown in exchange negotiations. By the autumn of 1863, Belle Isle's population swelled to at least twice the prison's capacity, with estimates ranging from 6,000 to 8,000. On October 5, 1863, the *Richmond Examiner* complained that the capital was overrun with the "azure-stomached' race this winter."

The overcrowding led to numerous health problems among the prisoners—including, most notably, the smallpox outbreak of December 1863. Moreover, during the summer of 1863, the prison's conditions came to the attention of the Northern media and were thereafter used as a major source of

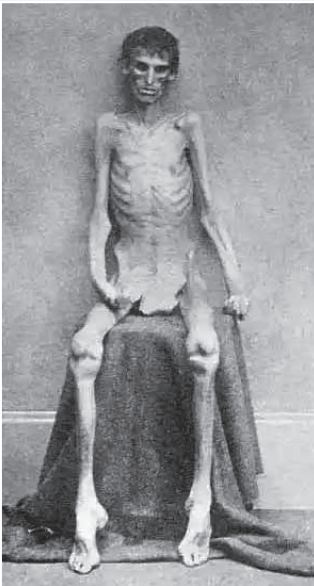
propaganda regarding Confederate cruelty to prisoners. According to the diary of John Ransom, a soldier who was incarcerated there, "Stormy and disagreeable weather. From fifteen to twenty and twenty-five die every day and are buried just outside the prison with no coffins—nothing but canvas wrapped around them." In his entry for February 11, 1864, Ransom implies that prisoners were robbing each other of rations and blankets: "... a good deal of fighting going on among the men ... [They are] "just like so many hungry wolves penned together."



Winter at Belle Isle

Confederate authorities established officer and guard tents outside the prison compound, in addition to hospital tents, a graveyard, and a wooden cookhouse. Confederate guards placed tight restrictions on the actions of Union inmates, allowing them to bathe in the river only under strict guard; preventing them, for security reasons, from using the latrines during the night when the prison became significantly overcrowded in 1864; and bucking and gagging inmates for stealing food. (Bucking and gagging was a type of punishment in which one piece of wood was tied in a prisoner's mouth, and another piece of wood was tied behind his knees, thus rendering the prisoner unable to move.) In 1864, Belle Isle inmates were not adequately supplied with food due to overcrowding and Confederate authorities' inability to supply the prisoners because of Richmond's dire economic conditions. Swelling numbers of prisoners drove up the price of food in Richmond and consequently caused a cut in their rations. At this time, the average ration consisted of a square of cornbread and thin soup that the men claimed was almost inedible.

In February 1864, Confederate authorities began to evacuate Belle Isle, sending its inmates south to Andersonville, Georgia; Danville, Virginia; or Salisbury, North Carolina, in order to relieve overcrowding in Richmond. By October 1864, all of Belle Isle's inmates had been transferred south and the prison was closed. Confederate authorities then returned Belle Isle to its previous owners, and in 1900 the site was sold to the Virginia Power Company.



Prisoner from Belle Isle

TIMELINE

June 1862

Confederate authorities purchase a fifty-four-acre island in the James River and establish Belle Isle Prison for Union privates and noncommissioned officers.

July 22, 1862

The Dix-Hill cartel, allowing for the exchange of prisoners, takes effect, alleviating Richmond's prisoner-of-war crisis.

August 1862

Captain Henry Wirz replaces Norris Montgomery as commandant of Belle Isle Prison on the James River in Richmond. A Swiss-born medical doctor, Wirz will be hanged after the war for his treatment of prisoners at Andersonville in Georgia.

September 23, 1862

Belle Isle Prison on the James River in Richmond closes as Union prisoners are exchanged.

January 17, 1863

Belle Isle Prison on the James River in Richmond temporarily reopens after the Battle of Fredericksburg, but is soon closed.

May 13, 1863

Belle Isle Prison on the James River in Richmond is reactivated after the Battle of Chancellorsville.

May 25, 1863

The Dix-Hill cartel, allowing for the exchange of Union and Confederate prisoners, breaks down.

February 1864

Confederate officials begin evacuating Belle Isle Prison on the James River in Richmond and sending Union prisoners of war south.

October 1864

Belle Isle Prison on the James River in Richmond is completely evacuated.

Bob Russo
OBCWRT Member

I can't let another newsletter go by...

I can't let another newsletter go by without writing something about Dr. Richard Jankowski and his years of work and leadership with Old Baldy Civil War Round Table. I lost track of the years, but I believe I first met Rich close to 15 years ago. I had attended the Antietam Class at the Civil War Institute at Manor College. That program was developed and maintained by the Delaware Valley Civil War Round Table, which meets in Trevoise, Pennsylvania. I attended their meeting to simply thank them for a great class and pointed out that my travel from Cherry Hill, New Jersey to the class which was in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania was well worth my time. I also pointed out that I was so impressed with the class that I joined their Round Table. Within two seconds of me speaking, someone sitting four rows in front of me pivoted around pointed at me and shouted, "Don't leave without seeing me! I have a much easier ride for you!"

The someone was Rich! He WOULD NOT let me get away that night without giving me the OBCWRT speech. A few months later I was nominated and elected Vice President of this great Round Table. I remember attending my first OBCWRT meeting and there were only 8 or 10 people in the meeting. It seemed that everyone but me were long term members of the organization. I couldn't help but wonder if the low turnout was the norm. At that time, it was. Except for the die-hards. Thank God for them. They were always there. I decided not to name, names here, because I will forget someone, and I don't want to do that. Also, this writing is about Rich.

Rich started pushing for the group to attend different history events as far away as Cape May to help recruit new members. We purchased a canopy, we prepared a three-piece photo board, printed brochures, talked up the Round Table, and invited people to attend our meetings. With Rich's leadership and never-ending energy, and the help of our members, we picked up a new member here and there. The process was very slow, but it was working. Rich's push and energy never slackened. He was always inspirational and motivational through his dedication and commitment to our Round Table.

Eventually we started having conversation about OBCWRT's birthday. Rich wanted to have a big event to mark the occasion. The event was planned to take place at Adelphia, in Deptford with Civil War people from throughout the region. I admit I had concerns. Were we thinking too big? If Rich had concerns, he never showed them. He just kept working and pushing. Always asking for help but leading by example. Always wanting to collaborate with members to build a feeling of partnership between members. No great leader, ever works, and gets things done alone. Rich knows that and always wanted and encouraged others to be part of the plan.

At one point I had a very frank discussion with Rich about where the Round Table was heading. He said to me that things were difficult, and that others, were advising him to, "shut it down." That the organization had done great work but perhaps it's day was over. I asked Rich why he didn't shut it down. In one second, he looked into my eyes and said, "NOT ON MY WATCH!" If you look on the side of Rich's OBCWRT hat, you will see embroidered, those exact words. Putting that inscription on a hat was a great idea from Frank Barletta. I'm glad we did that as a surprise for Rich. It was enormously fitting. I know Rich was humbled by that...and proud! He should be proud. He earned it.

Rich's attitude never changed even when things were going great. I believe his leadership, hard work, endless energy, and his desire to keep telling the story of the American Civil War, is the main reason, that OBCWRT still exists and why it is so much stronger today, that it was the day that I met Rich. I fully know over recent years, numerous people helped and jumped in, but ultimately, I believe that Rich was the key during those difficult years. And that Rich is the main reason we now have a great organization. I would encourage you to thank Rich when you see him. Rich, I know you will still be involved but whatever your next big journey is, I have no doubt of your success. That's who you are!

GOD BLESS YOU and YOUR FAMILY and THANK YOU!



**FOB Welcomes
New Members
and
Awards**



**Susan Prentiss
10-year pin**



**Gabe Glisson
Hammonton**

**Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT
Speakers and Activities
for 2025**

**March 13, 2025 - Thursday
Phil Roycraft**

**“The Plot to Perpetuate Slavery: How George McClellan,
Southern Spies and a Confidence Man Nearly Derailed
Emancipation”**

**April 10, 2025 - Thursday
Ron Kirkwood**

**“Tell Mother Not to Worry: Soldier Stories From
Gettysburg’s George Spangler Farm”**

**May 8, 2025 - Thursday
Walt Lafty**

“The Battle of Stones River”

Questions to

Dave Gilson - 856-323-6484 - 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
Founded January 1977**

**President - Paul Prentiss
Vice President – Calvin Kinsel
Secretary – Anita Schwartz
Treasurer: TBD**

**Director – Alex Glisson
Director – James Heenehan
Director – Barney Yetter
Past President – Dr. Rich Jankowski, Jr.**

**Programs: Dave Gilson
Membership: Amy and Dan Hummel**

Editor: Don Wiles - cwwiles@comcast.net

**WEB Site: <http://oldbaldycwrt.org>
Email: oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net
FaceBook: Old Baldy Civil War Round Table**