

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

January 12, 2017

The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - May 9, 1865



“On the Trail with Old Baldy”



Member Jim Heenehan:

Jim will do a short presentation on the Appomattox Sesquicentennial ceremonies that took place April 8-12, 2015, commemorating Lee's surrender to Grant, effectively ending the Civil War. Mr. Heenehan will cover the highlights of the Sesquicentennial, including Grant and Lee

Join us at **7:15 PM** on **Thursday, January 12th**, at **Camden County College** in the **Connector Building, Room 101**. This month's topic is **"On the Trail with Old Baldy"**

For our next Roundtable Discussion Night, we invite members to present an interesting Historical Site that you've visited. Plan to show the history, pictures, learnings, etc. Share your interests and enlighten us with your experience!

To ensure the best use of everyone's time, participation in this month's program will be limited to 3 topics of about 15 minutes each. The participation schedule will be confirmed no later than our December 8th Roundtable meeting.

If you would like to share your historical travel experience, please contact Dave ddsghh@comcast.net or Harry hj3bama@verizon.net.

Some of the topics scheduled are:

Member Kathy Clark:

On my 2015 Mississippi Gulf Coast bus tour, I visited Biloxi and the home of Jefferson Davis called Beauvoir. It survived hurricane Katrina with damage that took over ten years to repair. It now looks very much like the home as it was before the storm. The complex includes the Jefferson Davis Library and Museum, cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier, nature trails, gardens as well as a beautiful view of the Mississippi Sound from the front of the home. I want to talk about the history of the house, damage sustained as a result of Katrina and property today. If I have a few minutes would also like to talk about the Confederate Memorial Civil War museum in New Orleans. It is a small museum but has many portraits, flags and Civil War artifacts. This site too was part of my Mississippi Gulf Coast tour.

at the McLean House and the Chamberlain-Gordon "salute" preceding the Confederate laying down of arms on April 12.

Member John Galie:

A brief overview of the retreat of the Army of the Northern Virginia, Gen. Robert E. Lee Commanding, during the Pennsylvania Campaign of 1863 and the pursuit by the Army of the Potomac, MG George Gordon Mead Commanding will be presented. The logistic of the retreat as well as the overwhelming challenges faced by Gen. Lee will be detailed. The focus will be on the Battle of Monterey Pass, July 4-5, 1863 in the South Mountains of Pennsylvania in which over 10,00 soldiers were engaged; making it the second largest battle in Pennsylvania during the Civil War. Recent photographs of the my visit will be included.

Notes from the President...

Welcome to 2017! Hope your Holiday Season was rewarding with family and friends. Last year was a very good period for our Round Table as we presented the first **Michael A. Cavanaugh Book Award**, created the President's Award, sponsored a successful Symposium, reached

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**Join us at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday,
January 12th, at
Camden County College,
Blackwood Campus,
Connector Building, Room 101.**

70 members, presented some really fine programs and increase our standing in the local Civil War community.

This year will provide new adventures as we welcome a new Board of Directors who will plan new ventures for us. This will include the Fall lecture series, work with a local cemetery, day trips and more interaction with area Civil War groups. First will be our **40th anniversary luncheon on January 21st**. The first installment of our history will be available on that day. We have a few tasks to complete to make it a grand event. Please let us know how you would like to assist. Reserve your spot by completing the form and submitting a check or using *BrownPaperTickets.com*.

Be sure to thank **Bob Russo, Herb Kaufman** and **Harry Jenkins** for their service in moving our Round Table to the point it current rest. Their support has been invaluable and they will be missed on the Board. The new group you have elected will continue our improvement and growth. Remember to get your annual dues to **Frank Barletta** to

allow us to continue the informative programs you have experienced in the past few years.

Last month **Ed Bonekemper** discredited the Myth of the Lost Cause, straightening out the misconceptions that have been spread in the last hundred years. Everyone present departed with a better understanding of the truth. This month we have another member program where we will hear about visits to historic sights. It should be an interesting experience, so bring a friend to check it out.

I was proud to have represented Old Baldy CWRT at the Wreath Across America event at Beverly National Cemetery in December and met a younger version of myself. Ask me about it when I see you next. There will be several events in the next month to which we can bring the Old Baldy message. Look for further information in this newsletter and at our meeting on the 12th.

Join us at Lamp Post around 5:30 for dinner before the meeting. Travel safe.

Rich Jankowski, President

Today in Civil War History

1862 Sunday, January 12

The North

The US Navy has grown tremendously in less than a year, with nearly 25,000 seamen in service, as compared with 7500 before the attack on Fort Sumter. But more will be required. The old navy had 76 vessels mounting 1783 guns. When all vessels purchased or building are armed and equipped, the navy will have 264 vessels mounting 2557 guns.

1863 Monday, January 12

The Confederacy

The Third Session of the First Congress of the Confederate States meets in Richmond, where they hear an opening address by President Jefferson Davis.

1864 Tuesday, January 12

The North

Anyone whose name comes up in the draft is allowed to avoid military service if he can pay a \$300 fee. This gives exemption until his name is called again. However, if a drafted man can hire a substitute, his liability is at an end and he is permanently exempt. To service the increasing demand for substitutes, a class of "substitute brokers" is doing a roaring business this winter, charging a fee to find potential soldiers and inducing them to enlist. A lot of men make fast money providing the army with the sick, the useless, and the retarded. The 57 men recruited by the 6th New York Heavy Artillery this winter include 17 physically

disabled and several congenital idiots.

Mexico

Federal troops intervene in Matamoros, Mexico, to rescue the US consul. French efforts to subdue the guerrilla armies continue.

1865 Thursday, January 12

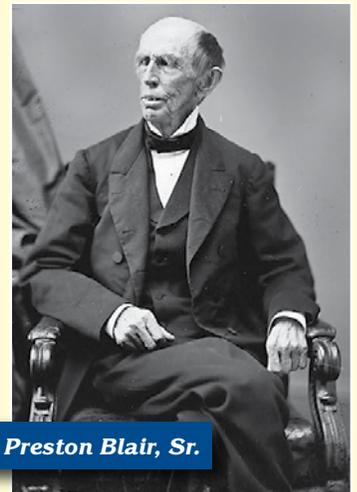
The South

Francis P. Blair meets with President Davis, who hands him a letter to pass on to President Lincoln. Davis is willing to enter into negotiations, but still insists on independence for the South.

Francis P. Blair

Francis Preston Blair, Sr. (April 12, 1791 – October 18, 1876) was an American journalist, newspaper editor, and influential figure in national politics advising several U.S. presidents across the party lines.

Blair was an early member of the Democratic Party, and a strong supporter of President Andrew Jackson, having helped him win Kentucky in the 1828 presidential election. From 1831 to 1845, Blair worked as Editor-in-Chief of the Washington Globe, which served as the primary propaganda instrument for the Democratic Party, and was largely successful. Blair was an influential advisor to President Jackson, and served prominently in a group of unofficial advisors and assistants to Jackson known as the "Kitchen Cabinet".



Francis Preston Blair, Sr.

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

Blair, despite being a slaveholder from Kentucky, eventually came to oppose the expansion of slavery. He supported the Free-Soil Party ticket of Martin Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams in the 1848 presidential election. In 1854, in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he left the Democratic Party and helped found the Republican Party. Blair served as an advisor to President Abraham Lincoln during the American Civil War. In 1861, he was sent by Lincoln to offer command of a large Union army to Colonel Robert E. Lee, who declined, and instead joined the Confederacy. Blair also helped organize the Hampton Roads Conference of 1865, a failed attempt to end the war.

After the Union victory, Blair became disillusioned with Radical Reconstruction, a policy promoted by many members of the Republican Party. He eventually left the party and rejoined the Democrats. His son, Francis Preston Blair Jr., was the party's nominee for vice president on a losing ticket in the 1868 election. Blair died in 1876 at age 85.

Blair backed James K. Polk during 1844 presidential election, however, he did not establish a good rapport with Polk and was forced to sell his interest in the *The Washington Globe*. In 1848, he actively supported Martin Van Buren, the Free Soil candidate, for the presidency. Next, in 1852, Blair supported Franklin Pierce, but became disillusioned in his administration after Pierce backed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. With other anti-slavery, free-soil Democrats, Blair helped to organize the new Republican Party, and presided at its 1856 preliminary convention at Pittsburgh on February 22, 1856, forging a party block out of discordant elements of Whigs, abolitionists, free-soilers and nativists. He used his political experience, influence and persuasion to create a momentum for a new party.

At the 1856 Republican National Convention, he was influential in securing the nomination of John C. Frémont, who was married to Jessie Benton Frémont, a daughter of his old friend, Thomas Hart Benton, for the presidency. At the 1860 Republican convention, he, as delegate at large from Maryland, initially supported Edward Bates for the 1860 presidential nomination. When it became clear that Bates would not succeed, Blair supported the nomination of Abraham Lincoln.

The elder Blair took it upon himself to advise Lincoln, and both of his sons, Francis Blair, who became a Union general, and Montgomery Blair, who joined the Lincoln's cabinet, were president's trusted associates. On April 17, 1861, just three days after the surrender of Fort Sumter, Lincoln asked Francis Blair to convey his offer to Colonel Robert E. Lee to command the Union Army. The next day, Lee visited Blair across Lafayette Square from the White House. Lee blunted Blair's offer of the Union command by saying: "Mr. Blair, I look upon secession as anarchy. If I owned the four millions of slaves at the South, I would sacrifice them all to the Union; but how can I draw my sword upon Virginia, my native State?"

After Lincoln's re-election in 1864, Blair thought that his former close personal relations with the Confederate leaders, including Jefferson Davis, might aid in bringing about a cessation of hostilities, and with Lincoln's consent went unofficially two times to Richmond and induced President Davis to appoint commissioners including Alexander H. Stephens to confer with representatives of the United States. This political maneuvering resulted in the futile Hampton Roads Conference of February 3, 1865.

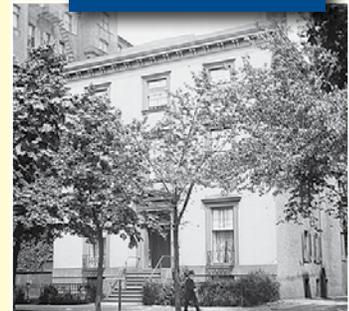
During the Reconstruction Era, Blair advocated a speedy reunification without placing much burden on the Southern states and spoke against the Radical Republicans' Reconstruction policies in the South. He became a political ally of President Andrew Johnson, and eventually rejoined the Democratic Party.

Blair House

Blair House was constructed in 1824; it is the oldest of the four structures that comprise the President's Guest House. The original brick house was built as a private home for Joseph Lovell, eighth Surgeon General of the United States Army. It was acquired in 1836 by Francis Preston Blair, a newspaper publisher and influential advisor to President Andrew Jackson, and remained in his family for the following century.



Blair House



Francis Blair's son Montgomery Blair succeeded his father as resident of Blair House. Montgomery Blair was Postmaster General in Abraham Lincoln's administration; at a conference at Blair House in 1861, it was decided Admiral David Farragut would command an assault on New Orleans during the American Civil War.

In 1939, Blair House was designated a National Historic Landmark, becoming the first building to acquire the designation; prior landmarks had been monuments and historic sites other than buildings.

Beginning in 1942, the Blair family began leasing the property to the U.S. government for use by visiting dignitaries; the government purchased the property outright the following December. The move was prompted in part by a request from Eleanor Roosevelt, who found the casual familiarity Winston Churchill displayed during his visits to the White House off-putting. On one occasion, Churchill tried to enter Franklin Roosevelt's private apartments at 3:00 a.m. to wake the president for a conversation.

During much of the presidency of Harry Truman, Blair House served as the temporary residence of President Truman while the interior of the White House was being renovated. On November 1, 1950, Puerto Rican nationalists Griselio Torresola and Oscar Collazo attempted to assassinate President Truman in Blair House. The assassination was foiled, in part by White House policeman Leslie Coffelt, who killed Torresola but was mortally wounded by him.

Notable residents

Notable guests who have stayed at the President's Guest House or the formerly separate Blair House include Vyacheslav Molotov, Emperor Akihito, Queen Elizabeth II, Charles de Gaulle, François Mitterrand, Vladimir Putin, Boris Yeltsin, Hosni Mubarak, Margaret Thatcher, Javier Perez de Cuellar, Nambaryn Enkhbayar, Narendra Modi, Hamid Karzai, and Justin Trudeau.

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In addition to foreign dignitaries, the President's Guest House has traditionally been made available by the outgoing President of the United States to the President-elect in the five days prior to his inauguration. In 1992, Bill Clinton chose to stay at the Hay-Adams Hotel instead of the guest house and, in 2009, a request by President-elect Barack Obama to take-up residence at the President's Guest House two weeks early was rejected because of its prior commitment to former Australian prime minister John Howard.

**Maximilian
Emperor of Mexico**



Lincoln Looks South

In July 1863, just weeks after the twin Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, Abraham Lincoln turned his attention to the Rio Grande borderlands of Confederate Texas. On July 31, the president wrote Francis P. Blair Sr., one of his most powerful supporters, "Yesterday I commenced trying to get up an expedition for Texas. I shall do the best I can." By November, 6,000 Union troops had landed in South Texas.

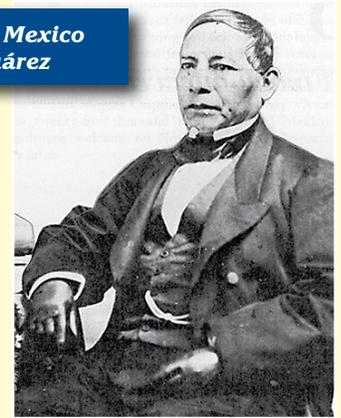
What brought this remote region of the Confederacy to the attention of the American president? The Civil War wasn't the only conflict on Lincoln's mind. Engaged in a desperate struggle for union, the administration had been unable to halt Emperor Napoleon III's deployment of French troops to Mexico in early 1862. The French leader invaded Mexico as part of his "Grand Scheme" to replace the democratically elected government of Benito Juárez with a European monarch, the Archduke Maximilian of Austria. Maximilian was but a pawn in Napoleon's complex game: By using his army to establish the Austrian on the Cactus Throne, Napoleon III sought to check the growing American influence in the Western Hemisphere and restore a powerful French presence in North America.

Much to the emperor's surprise, the vast majority of Mexicans remained loyal to their constitutional leader, Juárez, and rejected the idea of a French-backed monarchy in Mexico City. Juárez's army offered unexpectedly stiff resistance to the invaders, most notably by halting the French advance at Puebla on May 5, 1862 (the event celebrated on Cinco de Mayo today). That defeat delayed the French capture of Mexico City for a full year. It wasn't until June 7, 1863, a month prior to the Battle of Gettysburg and the fall of Vicksburg, that the French army entered Mexican capital and forced the Juárez administration into exile. In June 1864 Maximilian, who followed events from his storybook castle near Trieste, arrived in Mexico City to be crowned emperor of Mexico.

The crowning of Maximilian alarmed democrats around the world. For those in the global community who agreed with Abraham Lincoln that the best form of government was

one "of the people, by the people, for the people," the French intervention in Mexico marked an expansion into the New World of the counterrevolution against republican institutions that originated with the defeat of Europe's 1848 democratic revolts the previous decade.

**President of Mexico
Benito Juárez**



Confederate officials saw things differently. They hoped to leverage the Mexican question to help persuade the French emperor to offer diplomatic recognition to the Confederacy. In Texas, the Confederate state bordering Mexico, officials were vocal in their support of Napoleon III. In October 1863, John Bankhead Magruder, commander of Confederate forces in Texas, asked the Confederate envoy in Paris to share with the government of Napoleon III that "the sentiments ... of all the Confederate States are most friendly to France, and the occupation of Mexico has given the greatest satisfaction to all."

Napoleon III refused to recognize the Confederacy, but he was grateful for its acquiescence to his Mexican scheme. In 1863 he personally approved of the transshipment of 20,000 Enfield rifles and other munitions across the border from Mexico into Texas. The war material flowing into Texas from French-occupied Mexico played a key role in the ability of the Lone Star State to defend itself after the fall of Vicksburg in July 1863 isolated states west of the Mississippi River from the rest of the Confederacy.

Abraham Lincoln regarded the complicity of the Confederacy with the imposition of a European-backed monarch in Mexico with great apprehension. After the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg in July 1863, the president felt confident enough about the progress of the Union forces to attempt a restoration of federal authority in the region where Confederate and French officials worked most closely together, the contact zone of South Texas and north-eastern Mexico.

In early August Lincoln wrote to Nathaniel Banks, the Union commander in New Orleans. "Recent events in Mexico," he said, "render early action in Texas more important than ever." Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant hoped to move on Mobile, Ala., after his capture of Vicksburg. On Aug. 9, Lincoln wrote to Grant that the capture of Mobile "would appear tempting to me also, were it not that in view of recent events in Mexico, I am greatly impressed with the importance of re-establishing the national authority in Western Texas as soon as possible." (For Lincoln, "Western Texas" meant the Rio Grande borderlands.) Heeding Lincoln's request, 6,000 troops from the Union Army's 13th Corps landed near the mouth of the Rio Grande in November 1863 and soon the American flag once again flew over Brownsville.

Largely because of inept leadership, the Union invasion of Texas proved a failure. By the summer of 1864 Union troops along the Rio Grande – including a large number of African-American soldiers, many of them ex-slaves – retreated from the mainland to South Padre Island. The

enormous circulation of military and consumer goods between Texas and Imperial Mexico continued without interruption throughout the war's final year.

The restoration of American authority along the Texas side of the Rio Grande following the Confederate defeat in 1865 reversed the strategic situation that favored Napoleon III during the Civil War. Grant deeply opposed the French effort to impose a monarch on the people of Mexico. After the Union victory he was determined to use the Union Army to assist the republican forces of Benito Juárez regain control of Mexico.

Immediately after Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, Grant deployed 25,000 United States troops under the command of Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan to South Texas. Assigned the task of intimidating imperial forces in the Mexican northeast, Sheridan supplied Juárez's troops with tens of thousands of surplus rifles and pistols. These weapons, Sheridan later wrote, "we left at convenient places on our side of the river to fall into their hands." By the summer of 1866, the well-armed and aggressive Liberal army forced the French Imperial Army out of Matamoros. Over the next year the military situation unraveled for Maximilian. In May 1867 Juárez's troops cap-



**Major General
Phillip Sheridan**

tured Maximilian, and on June 19, 1867, he was executed on a hillside

outside the city of Querétaro.

Maximilian's death, combined with the fall of the Confederacy, marked an ebbing of the anti-democratic wave that began in Europe in 1848 and spread to North America in the 1860s. A victory by the French-Confederate alliance — a partnership that proved most successful in the contact zone along the Texas-Mexican border — would have been deeply ominous for development of republican government around the world. The dismemberment of the Union would have fatally undermined the republican experiment in the United States, a country that remains a democratic model for much of the world.

A victorious Confederacy would have served as a buffer against American intervention in French-occupied Mexico, and an important ally in Napoleon III's effort to restore an anti-democratic monarchy on North American soil. By ordering the death of the Austrian prince, Juárez announced to the world that, however imperfectly, republican government would henceforth reign supreme in the nations located on both sides of the Rio Grande.

By Patrick J. Kelly

"Stonewall's" Aviation Accident

What's that you say, "Stonewall" Jackson never even saw an airplane? Well that's a different Stonewall Jackson. The real **Stonewall Jackson**—a man who bore the name from birth—was born in Kentucky in 1891. Commissioned in the Army in 1917, he saw no action in World War I. During the inter war years he served variously as an instructor to the ROTC and at the Infantry School, attended the various Army schools, and served with the Philippine Scouts. Promoted to brigadier general in May 1942, Jackson was given command of the newly formed 88th Infantry Division, composed largely of draftees. Promoted to major general, the following year he was transferred to command the 84th Infantry Division. In October 1943 Jackson died as a result of injuries sustained in an airplane crash.

Stonewall Jackson was one of three American generals who died during the Second World War bearing names famous from the Civil War. And although he bore no relationship to his namesake beyond his name, the other two did.

Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., the son of Confederate Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner, was born in Kentucky in 1886. Graduating from West Point in 1908, he served stateside during World War I. In the interwar years he underwent the usual routine of peace-time officers, serving as an instructor in various Army schools, attending the War College, and commanding troops. In addition, he did several tours as an instructor and one as Commandant of Cadets at West Point. Promoted to lieutenant general in May 1943, he command the Tenth Army in the invasion of Okinawa the following spring, during which he was killed



**Lieutenant General
Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr.**

in action. He was the highest ranking American officer to be killed by enemy action during World War II.

**Brigadier General
Nathan Bedford Forrest III**

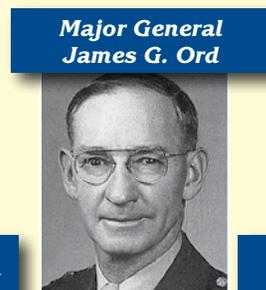


Nathan Bedford Forrest III, the grandson of the confederate lieutenant general of the same name, was born in Tennessee in 1905. After spending a year at Georgia Tech, he graduated from West Point in 1928 and was commissioned in the Air Corps. Initially a fighter officer, he subsequently transferred to bombers. During the 1930s he served with several different squadrons, attended various Air Corps schools, and rose to colonel. Promoted to brigadier general in November 1942, he was shortly afterwards assigned to the Eighth Air Force, in Britain. He was reported missing in action over Kiel, Germany, in June 1943, and subsequently listed as killed in action.

Buckner and Forrest were just two of several flag officers during World War II who were descendants of noted Civil War commanders, such as **Major General Ulysses S. Grant III**, **Major General James G. Ord**, and **Rear Admiral John Wilkes**.



**Major General
Ulysses S. Grant III**



**Major General
James G. Ord**



**Rear Admiral
John Wilkes**

The New Jersey Slaves

Although generally regarded as a “free state,” New Jersey was actually a “slave state” until the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment on December 18, 1865.

The Census of 1860 listed eighteen people as slaves in New Jersey. This apparent anomaly was a consequence of something called “gradual emancipation.” In the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, several states, including New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, adopted this policy.

Gradual emancipation was an attempt to put an end to slavery with a minimum of social and financial dislocation. States adopting this policy enacted legislation to halt all trading in human beings and then made provision for the freeing of all slaves upon attainment of a particular age, such as twenty-five.

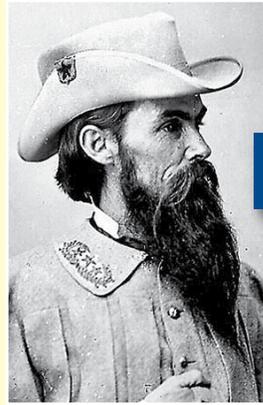
Most of the states that adopted gradual emancipation added provisions that permitted a slave to refuse freedom under certain circumstances, such as advanced age. As a result, there were still small numbers of slaves in several northern states, including New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, into the 1850s. By 1860 only New Jersey still had some slaves, eighteen elderly people living essentially as pensioners of their former masters. As a result, New Jersey was technically a slave state for some time after slavery had been abolished in most of the erstwhile Confederacy under the terms of the Emancipation Proclamation. Not until the enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment was the last New Jersey slave freed, the only living survivor of the eighteen people who had been listed in the Census of 1860.

Gradual emancipation was a way to get rid of slavery without dealing a potentially fatal financial blow to slave holders—no one seems to have wondered about the rights, financial or otherwise, of the slaves—and without throwing elderly slaves out into the street. But gradual emancipation was stoutly resisted in the heavily slave-holding regions, and, as time went on, by the increasingly radical Abolitionists as well, who had at first seen it as a practical and reasonable solution to the problem. Gradual emancipation seems to have been a notion uppermost in Lincoln’s mind during the political crisis between his election and the firing on Port Sumter. However, things had gone much too far long before then for such a policy to have worked.

“Ma’am, It’s Only a Flesh Wound.”

William Mahone was a railroad man who rose to become a major general in the Confederate Army, serving with increasing ability in literally all of the operations of the Army of Northern Virginia from the Peninsular Campaign to Appomattox, save for the time necessary to recover from wounds. He was also extraordinarily thin, almost cadaverous. Indeed, he was probably the lightest general in the war on either side, weighing in at little more than one hundred pounds. And thereby hangs a tale.

During the Second Bull Run Campaign Mahone, by then a brigadier general, commanded a brigade in Dick Ander-



Major General William Mahone

son’s division of James Longstreet’s “Right Wing” of the Army of Northern Virginia. On August 30, 1862, the general was badly wounded in the fighting for Henry House Hill. Though severe, the wound was not likely to prove mortal. One of the general’s aides decided to personally inform Mrs. Mahone that her husband had been injured.

Upon completing this unfortunate duty, wishing to soften the blow, he added “It’s only a flesh wound.”

To which Mrs. Mahone exclaimed “But the general has no flesh!”

Close Order Drill

Passing through Georgia on some military business, a Confederate general chanced to stop for a time in a small country village. The news of his presence soon reached the ears of the captain of the local home guard company. Since the captain was proud of the skill with which his little command executed the various evolutions in the drill book, he decided to put on a show for the general.

The captain had the company fall in outside of the general’s quarters and began to put the men through their paces. Within a few minutes the captain’s shouted orders and his company’s prompt and military response had attracted the general’s attention, and he came outside to watch.

The guardsmen were doing quite nicely until their commander decided to attempt a complex counter-march at the double—quick. Within seconds the neat formation which the men had hitherto maintained disintegrated and the company was left in what one observer described as a “solid circle.” In his most stentorian tone the frustrated captain cried out “Halt!” and, with some embarrassment, surveyed the mess into which he had gotten his men. The general looked on with renewed interest as the captain seemed to sink deep in thought. Then, suddenly, the captain’s face brightened. He called out “Company, disentangle to the front, march!” Within seconds the company was back in proper formation.

The general came over. Anticipating a withering blast of major general’s proportions, the captain received instead compliments on having issued the best command the general had ever heard given.

The Battle of Grand Gulf

Today, Grand Gulf, long separated from the Mississippi river from which it drew its life blood by the unpredictable vagaries of the river, lies in dreamy contemplation of the momentous events that transpired here and helped shape

Continued on page 7

the nation's destiny. In June, 1862, in reprisal for sheltering Confederate soldiers who had fired on Union gunboats and transports, Federal bluejackets had burned Grand Gulf. By 1863 all that remained of the once prosperous town were chimneys, cisterns, and a few isolated dwelling. Grand Gulf probably expected to play little part in the great conflict which had ripped the nation asunder. For a few days in April and May 1863, the War in the West focused on Grand Gulf. Its geographic position bestowed great strategic importance on the area, as mighty armies struggled for control of the North American Heartland.

Across the Mississippi and four miles above the Grand Gulf was Hard Times, the base from which General U. S. Grant planned to launch his invasion of Mississippi. Immediately above the ruined village, the Big Black River debouched into the Mississippi. The Big Black was navigable, as far as the Big Black bridge, 60 miles its mouth. Vast quantities of supplies and food from the rich lands of the Trans-Mississippi were transported up the Big Black for the use of Confederate authorities in Mississippi. By its nature, Grand Gulf was suited for the defense of this vital artery of trade. Eight hundred yards south of the mouth of the Big Black, immediately in the rear of the village, rose a line of bluffs to a height of 100 feet above the river. Six weeks before arrival of Admiral David D. Porter's fleet, the Confederates under 'General John S. Bowen began the construction of strong fortifications. By April 29 these earthworks presented serious obstacle to Union movements.

At the time of the Yankee attack, the major Rebel defenses were located as follows: Forty feet above the water, dug into the side of Point of Rock, protected by a parapet nearly forty feet thick, was Fort Cobun. Here was a battery mounting at the time of the attacks four big guns. A double line of rifle-pits and a covered way led from Point of Rock to Fort Wade, three-quarters of a mile to the south. The lower fort, Fort Wade, just behind the ruined town, was on the shelf, thirty feet above and quarter of a mile from the river. Four big guns were mounted in Fort Wade. Beginning above the cemetery and extending southward along the crest of the bluffs, the Southerners had prepared another line of rifle pits. In addition, along this ridge the Confederates had constructed several emplacements in which were mounted field pieces.

It was the intention of the Union leaders in the assaults on Grand Gulf to have the navy silence the Confederate batteries, after which the army in their transports and barges, under the cover of the ironclads, would carry the



stronghold by storm. On the morning of April 29, exactly one month after the beginning of Grant's march southward from Milliken's Bend, the stage was set for the engagement.

At 7 a.m. Porter's flotilla cast loose from its moorings at Hard Times and slowly steamed down toward Grand Gulf, Pittsburg leading, followed by Louisville, Carondelet, Mound City, Tuscumbia, LaFayette, and Benton. These ironclads mounted a total of 81 big guns, and it appeared that the 8 guns in Fort Cobun and Wade would be a poor match for this tremendous armament. General John A. McClelland, Commander of the Union XIII Corps, crowded 10,000 of his combat-ready troops on seven transports and a number of barges. These vessels followed the gunboats, remaining out of range of the grayclads' anchoring above Coffee Point, opposite Grand Gulf. Grant boarded the tug Ivy, which pulled out into the middle of the river. From the small boat's bridge, Grant could follow the process of the action and be able to signal McClelland

when he thought the time was ripe to send the troops storming ashore.

As the ironclads rounded Coffee Point at 7:50 a.m., the engagement began as the guns of Fort Cobun's fire as long as their guns would bear. Continuing downstream the four ironclads attacked Fort Wade, which in Porter's plan of operation was assigned to them. Pittsburg, keeping up her fire all the time, rounded to as she reached her station and took position close into the bank with her bow upstream. Louisville, following Pittsburg, passed her, rounded to and took station immediately astern. Carondelet and Mound City successively under-took the same maneuver. The tires aboard, the four "City Class" gunboats served their guns with efficiency and dispatch, as they bombarded Fort Wade.

Tuscumbia, LaFayette, and Benton (Porter's flagboat) trailed the "City Class" ironclads. Unlike the "turtles," these three ironclads rounded to above the devastated town at 8:25 a.m. and engaged Fort Cobun. LaFayette took position in the eddy northwest of Point of Rock and opened fire with her two bow guns -100-pounder Parrott rifles. Benton and Tuscumbia fought with their bow and starboard guns. All the vessels kept underway during the engagement, and at times they were baffled by the powerful eddies.

For three hours the forts and ironclads fought without apparent damage, or with any change of position on the part of the fleet. At 11 a.m. Porter signaled LaFayette to drop downstream and aid in the attack on Fort Wade. Shortly thereafter, a well aimed shot entered Benton's pilothouse, wounding the pilot and shattering the wheel. For the

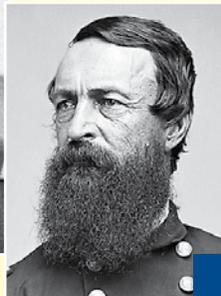
Major General John Steven Bowen



Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant



Admiral David Dixon Porter



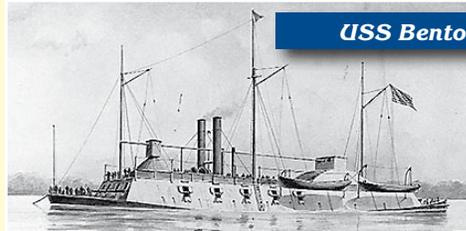
moment Benton became unmanageable, and she drifted three-quarters of a mile downstream before being brought under control. The fire of Fort Wade now slackened, and the lower division of the fleet moved up river. The fire of all the gunboats was now concentrated on Fort Cobun. At 12:30 p.m. Tuscumbia, her port engine disabled by the Southerners, was compelled to drop out of

action. The bombardment was continued by the remainder of the fleet until 1:35 p.m., when the fire of Fort Cobun, because of an ammunition shortage, slowed. Porter ordered his boats to withdraw, and himself passed up river to consult with Grant. The Confederate batteries ceased firing upon the fleet's withdrawal.

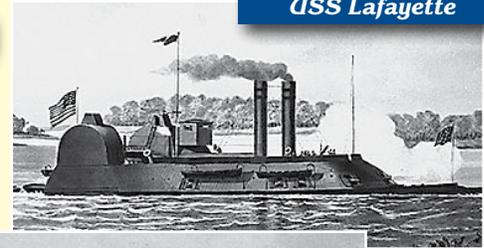
Throughout the five hour and 35 minute engagement, McClemand's soldiers had remained aboard the crowned transports and barges, ready to attempt a landing if a signal were given. Grant, who had watched the action, realized, as did Porter, that although the Confederate guns were quiet, the batteries were capable of resisting and assault. The Rebel's guns, in fact, resumed firing later in the day. The rifle-pits and covered ways behind which the greyclad infantry crouched were hardly damaged. It would be impossible to bring unarmoured transports, loaded to the gunwales with soldiers under the fire of batteries, which had held their own against ironclad gunboats. Grant determined to execute the alternate plan which he had in mind from the first- to disembark McClemand's troops and march them across Coffee Point, opposite Grand Gulf, striking the Mississippi again at Disbaroon's plantation.

With the cessation of the bombardment, Bowen took inventory of the damages caused by the 2,500 projectiles the Yankee sailors had fired into his works. Despite the terrific shelling which one of the veterans of Green's Brigade said "... beat Oak Hill (Wilson's Creek), Elkhorn (Pea Ridge), Hutchin's Bridge (Hatchie), or anything I ever heard" the damage was not extensive. Fatigue parties were turned out: the parapets were repaired, and guns remounted in case the Yankees resumed the attack. In adding up their casualties the greyclads found they had lost 3 killed and 18 wounded.

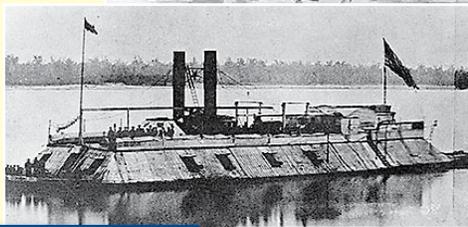
The honors of the battle rested with the Confederates. With only 8 big guns, they had stood off seven of Porter's gunboats. The ironclads of the Federal squadron mounted 81 guns, many of them 42- pounder rifles and VIII-inch Navies. A limitation to the firepower of the gunboats had demonstrated at Grand Gulf. As at Fort Donelson, the advantage given by commanding heights could not be overcome by the boats. In this battle the Yankees lost 19 killed and 50 wounded.



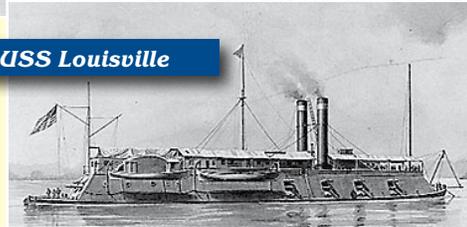
USS Benton



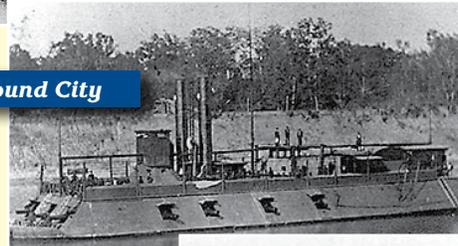
USS Lafayette



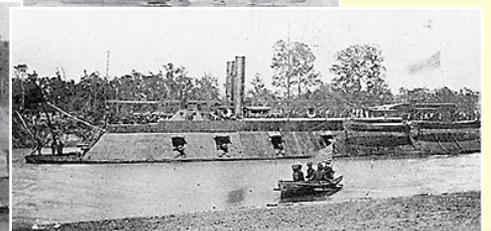
USS Carondelet



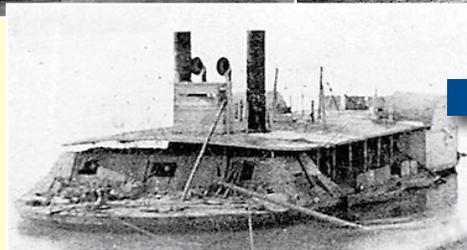
USS Louisville



USS Mound City



USS Pittsburg



USS Tuscumbia

The visitor to the Grand Gulf Military Park will see the well preserved remains of the earth-

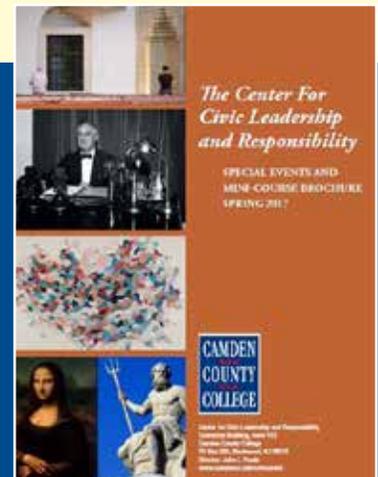
works thrown up by the Confederates. These works are in a much better state of preservation than those within the Vicksburg National Military Park. After a thorough reconnaissance of the defenses, he will agree with Admiral Porter that "Grand Gulf is the strongest place on the Mississippi."

by Ed Bearss

Camden County College

Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility

Special Events and Mini Courses for the Spring of 2017 856-227-7200 x 4333



December 8th Meeting

“In the Information Age, Myths Abound”

by Bill Pacello

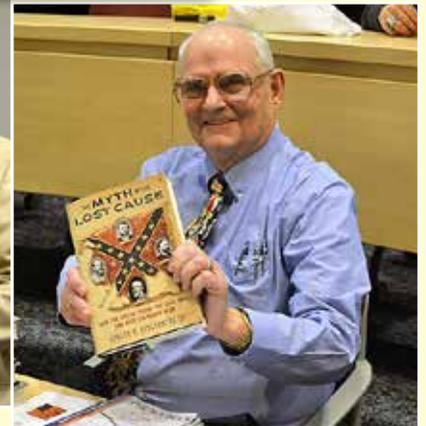
As “Fake News” headlines many of the mainstream media outlets this political season, the Old Baldy Roundtable was calibrated this December by **Dr. Edward H. Bonekemper, III**. Dr. Bonekemper is a military historian, teacher, and writer who specializes in the American Civil War. Dr. Bonekemper graduated cum laude from Muhlenberg College with a bachelor's degree in American history, and later earned his master's degree in the subject at Old Dominion University. He is also an attorney from Yale Law School and a retired Coast Guard Reserve Commander.

Discussing his 6th and latest book entitled, “The Myth of the Lost Cause,” Dr. Bonekemper dispelled some of the popular myths of the Civil War. At the heart of these myths are, secession due to “states’ rights,” slavery, a “beneficent” institution, slavery would naturally perish, the South never had a chance, and possibly the most controversial posit that elicited some healthy debate, that Robert E. Lee was inappropriately deified, especially as

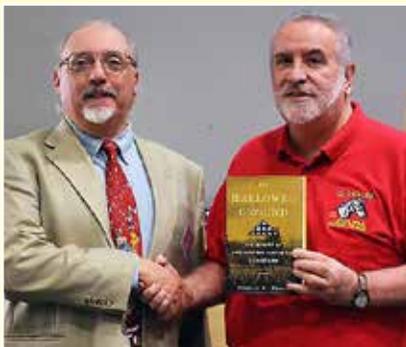
compared to Grant who was often defamed as a “drunk and a butcher.” As a learned expert on the subject, Dr. Bonekemper not only used statistics and demographics to debunk some of the lore, but also cited several other texts of that period. The accounts of the lives of the slaves, the cotton belt’s great need for slaves as written in their states’ own admissions, the attempts by Lincoln and other officials to avoid or end the conflict that would not placate the Confederacy, and the implementation of sharecropping and what Bonekemper calls “quasi-slavery” practiced by the South until around 1940, are just hints of the support for his dissertation. As many of these myths were propagated after the war until the 1900s, we were reminded that “fake news” is nothing new at all.

It was another enlightening presentation at the Old Baldy Civil War Round Table. “The Myth of the Lost Cause” is a library “must have.” Members can get the book from the usual sources including betterworldbooks.com, Alibris.com, Amazon or one of the standard outlets. You can also see a two-hour presentation at www.cspan.org; search for “Edward Bonekemper” or “Myth of the Lost Cause.”

Ed Bonekemper



“A Thank You to Bob Russo”



“Thanks Bob for representing Old Baldy as VP with dignity and class. As incoming VP have big shoes to fill an many things to learn. Being honored at Nov. meeting for all the accomplishment you have made for Old Baldy was well deserved. Bravo!”

Happy New Year with the hope that through our uncertain year ahead we will know that our democracy will continue just as our forefathers envisioned for all who live in our United States of American. We HONOR all the service men and women who serve our country and will continue to do so in 2017. May the year ahead be blessed with good health, happiness, and peace for all of us!

2017 Dues are Due

Return to Iwo Jima Print

The drawing is a pen and ink rendering of the flag-raising on Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima, Japan, on February 23, 1945, during the battle for Iwo Jima.

A framed limited edition (1/25) Gyclee print on 100% Acid Free conservator stock, glass is Ultra Violet and Glare-Free.

Signatures include: last surviving Medal of Honor recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams from the battle; Samuel Holiday, a Navajo Code Talker; a Corpsman; Mike "Iron Mike" Mervosh, a Marine Corps legend, the non-commissioned officer's club on Camp Pendleton MCB is named after him- all the signatures are veterans of the battle.

Also included is a portion of Black Sand from the invasion Beach area.

Tickets for the print drawing are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00
Contact information: Rich Jankowski - Phone: 856-427-6966
jediwarrior11@verizon.net

Mail Ticket Sales: Bob Russo - 856-424-2155
15 Lakeview, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
RJRUSO58@yahoo.com

Drawing will be held at the
40th Anniversary Luncheon - January 2017.



Coming Events

Saturday, January 14; 1pm

Friends of the Tower present "Cape May in World War I". Learn about the role of Cape May with a Power point presentation by Robert Heinely at the Cape May Lutheran Church, 509 Pittsburgh Ave., Cape May, NJ. Contact: Bob Heinely ay 609-224-6032

Sunday, January 15; 2pm

Kassie Hilgert, president and CEO of ArtsQuest, tells the story of the development of a National center of Art, Music, history and entertainment rising from the loss of 35,000 steel jobs. Historic Bethlehem, PA: The Rising Phoenix presented at the Florham Park Library, 107 Ridgedale Ave., Florham Park, NJ 07932. Information call 973-377-2694

Sunday, January 15; 1pm.

The Tewksbury Historical Society will hold its annual membership meeting at the Mountainville Meeting Hall, 60 Water street, Mountainville, NJ. After the meeting author Linda Barth, will present a program on the historic Delaware and Raritan Canal. Linda Barth will introduce you to the people, bridges, locks and aqueducts that make the canal work. Information: www.tewsburyhistory.net or 908-832-6734

Sunday, January 15; 2pm

Author and professor Michael Rockland will present a history of our garden state from Dutch, Native Americans, the East and West Jersey and other facts of the origin of NJ. Benjamin Temple House, 27 Federal City Road, Ewing Township, NJ 08638. Information call: 908-832-6734

Sunday, January 15; noon-3pm

Peachfield Plantation, 180 Burrs Road, Westampton, NJ: Showcase Sunday series lectures followed by a tour. Reservations required. Free. Topic: Sulgraves Manor Ancestral Home of the Washington family. Information: www.colonialdamesnj@comcast.net or 609-267-6996

Sunday, January 15; 2pm-5pm.

The Heritage Trail Association will host a combination lecture and "pop-up" museum event related to the theme of immigration to America. Advanced registration is required by Wednesday, January 11. Register at www.heritagetrail.org or 732-356-8856. The lecture is at the Van Horn House, 941 E. Main Street, Bridgewater, NJ 08807. Walter Choroszewski, noted photographer and lecturer on NJ topics will talk about how immigration has shaped NJ history and our state's culture. To learn more about Walter Choroszewski information at www.walterc.com, 908-369-3777 or walter@walterc.com

Winterfest at Cooper River Park,

5300 N. Park Drive, Pennsauken, NJ. The YMCA sponsors the park transformed into a Winter Wonderland with ice shows, treats and family ice skating. Hours: 5pm-9pm Mon-Thurs.; 5pm-10pm Friday; noon-10pm Saturday; noon-9pm Sunday through February 14. Admission \$6/adult; \$4/children ages 5-12 under free. Information: www.skatewinterfest.com or 856-341-3416

Second Saturday Tours of Paulsdale

noon every month on the second Saturday. Alice Paul Institute, 128 Hooten Road, Mount Laurel, NJ. Contact: claires@alicepaul.org or 856-231-1885. www.alicepaul.org/newsevents/

Delaware Valley CWRT Civil War Institute at Manor College

Our updated Civil War Institute at Manor College class format has undergone several changes that allow a greater variety of choices for students who in the past have found it difficult to attend 3-week or 6-week courses.

Our semesters now include multiple-week courses, 2-week courses and 1-night seminars. Classes may be taken as part of the certificate program or individually. Completion of four core courses, and any 12 nights of electives (any combination of length) will now be required to receive the certificate.

40th Birthday Celebration Luncheon

Still Time

January 21, 2017 • 11:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Adelphia Restaurant
1750 Clements Bridge Road
Deptford Township, NJ 08096

Cost: \$37.00 or (2) \$70.00 for Buffet Lunch

Charlie Zahm, Civil War Music Presentation and Performance

Door prizes and Iwo Jima Print Raffle
installation of New Board
Memories, Pictures, and Fellowship.

Information: 856-904-5481 • OldBaldyCWRT@verzion.net • OldBaldyCWRT.org • Old Baldy Facebook

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table Clothing Items

1 - Short Sleeve Cotton Tee - \$23.00

Gildan 100% cotton, 6.1oz.
 Color Options: Red, White, Navy, Tan
 Sizes: Adult: S-3XL Adult Sizes: S(34-36); M(38-40); L(42-44); XL(46-48); XXL(50-52); 3XL(54-55)

2 - Long Sleeve Cotton Tee - \$27.00

Gildan 100% cotton, 6.1oz.
 Color Options: Red, White, Navy
 Sizes: Adult: S-3XL Adult Sizes: S(34-36); M(38-40); L(42-44); XL(46-48); XXL(50-52); 3XL(54-55)

3 - Ladies Short Sleeve Polo - \$26.00

Anvil Pique Polo - 100% ring-spun cotton pique.
 Color: Red, White, Navy, Yellow-Haze
 Logo embroidered on left chest
 Sizes: Ladies: S-2XL Ladies
 Chest Size Front: S(17"); M(19"); L(21"); XL(23"); 2XL(24")

4 - Mens Short Sleeve Polo Shirt - \$26.00

Anvil Pique Polo - 100% ring-spun cotton pique.
 Color: Red, White, Navy, Yellow-Haze
 Logo embroidered on left
 Sizes: Mens: S-3XL
 Chest Size Front: S(19"); M(21"); L(23"); XL(25"); 2XL(27"); 3XL(29")

5 - Fleece Lined Hooded Jacket - \$48.00

Dickies Fleece Lined Nylon Jacket 100% Nylon Shell;
 100% Polyester Fleece
 Lining: Water Repellent Finish
 Color: Navy or Black
 Logo Embroidered on Left Chest
 Size: Adult S-3XL
 Chest Size: S(34-36"); M(38-40"); L(42-44"); XL(46-48"); 2XL(50-52"); 3XL(54-56")

6 - Sandwich Caps - \$20.00

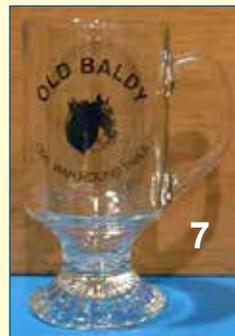
Lightweight Cotton Sandwich Bill Cap 100% Brushed Cotton;
 Mid Profile Color: Navy/White or Stone/Navy
 Adjustable Closure

Orders will be shipped 2 weeks after they are placed. All orders will be shipped UPS ground, shipping charges will be incurred. UPS will not ship to PO Boxes, please contact Jeanne Reith if you would like to make other shipping arrangements.

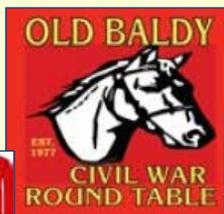
Items are non-returnable due to customization, please contact Jeanne Reith if you have questions on sizing.

Jeanne Reith Tuttle Marketing Services 1224 Gail Road West Chester, PA 19380 jeanne@tuttlemarketing.com 610-430-7432

<https://tuttlemarketing.com/store/products/old-baldy-civil-war-round-table-651>



7 - Irish Fluted Glass - \$7.00
 Can be used with either Cold or Hot Liquids



Items can be seen and ordered from the Old Baldy Web Site or the Manufacture's Web Site.

Our core courses are being reduced from six weeks to four weeks each. This will allow a student to earn a certificate after attending 56 hours of instruction (32 hours of core courses plus 24 hours of electives), instead of an average of 72 hours of instruction.

Manor College is located at 700 Fox Chase Road in Jenkintown, PA. You may call (215) 884-2218 to register or for an application for the certificate program, or online www.manor.edu/cont-ed/civil-war/courses.php

Class hours are 6:30 till 8:30 pm, unless otherwise noted.

*** Indicates Core Course**

**** Indicates Elective Course/Seminar**

Spring 2017

The following seminars and courses will be offered in the Spring 2017 semester. Of special interest are two classes that will – for the first time – add material on World War II to the Institute's curriculum. All classes will begin at 6:30 p.m. on the dates specified.

****Washington in the Civil War 2 hrs**

The Union capital had a unique role, especially as it was situated in the midst of Confederate sympathy. Explore life in the city during this tumultuous time.

**Instructor: Hugh Boyle
Thursday, January 12**

****The Battle of Antietam 4 hrs**

Sept. 17, 1862, saw the bloodiest day in American military history, and one of the most decisive battles of the war. Federals and Rebels pounded each other through the Cornfield, across the Sunken Road and over Burnside's Bridge. The narrow Union victory gave President Lincoln the chance to announce the Emancipation Proclamation.

**Instructor: Jerry Carrier
Mondays, January 23 and 30**

***Life of the Common Soldier 8 hrs**

Who served in the armies of the Blue and the Gray? What were their living conditions? What were their thoughts as they marched into battle? This class describes the soldier's life, which has been described as "weeks of utter boredom, interrupted by moments of sheer terror."

**Instructor: Herb Kaufman
Thursdays, February 16 and 23, March 2 and 9**

World War II Seminar

****Pearl Harbor: The Surprise Was Complete 2 hrs**

The shout of "General Quarters" rang throughout the fleet. Explore the political background, eyewitness accounts and historical analysis of the attack that brought the United States into WWII.

**Instructor: Herb Kaufman
Monday, March 13**

****The Role of Horses in the Civil War 2 hrs**

Horses and mules played a critical role in the Civil War – as mounts for officers and cavalry, or as mobile power for artillery and supplies. This class also describes some well-known and lesser-known horses of the Civil War

**Instructor: Nancy Caldwell
Wednesday, March 22**

****Philadelphia in the Civil War 2 hrs**

The city and its citizens played a major role during the Civil War, particularly as suppliers of war materiel.

**Instructor: Herb Kaufman
Wednesday, April 5**

****The Battle of Fredericksburg 4 hrs**

On Dec. 13, 1862, the Army of the Potomac, under Ambrose Burnside, suffered its most disastrous defeat. Futile assaults on Confederate positions brought about the slaughter of many Union soldiers. This class will explore why the Union lost, portray the brave men who fought, and the strategies and blunders that made this battle one of the most memorable in the Civil War.

**Instructor: Walt Lafty
Wednesdays, April 12 and 19**

World War II Seminar

****The Music That Got Us Through World War II 2 hrs**

During the war, radios were filled with new patriotic and sentimental songs. The music, highlighted by many original 78 rpm records, that has been woven into the fabric of our American culture is presented. Learn about the composers, bands and singers that got us through the war.

**Instructor: Herb Kaufman
Wednesday, May 3**

****The Irish in the Civil War 4 hrs**

Both Blue and Gray had a generous touch of green. So why did these men fight and die so bravely in a country that was new to them? And what generals were more gallant than the Union's Phil Sheridan and the Confederacy's Pat Cleburne?

**Instructor: Hugh Boyle
Mondays, May 8 and 15**

Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers and Activities for 2016/2017

**January 12 – Thursday
"On the Trail with Old Baldy"
Member's Historical Site Trips
(Round Table Discussion)**

**February 9 – Thursday
"This will make a man of me: The Life and Letters
of a Teenage Officer in the Civil War"
James Scythes
(Author, Historian)**

**Questions to
Dave Gilson - 856-547-8130 - ddsghh@comcast.net**

**Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia
Camden County College
Blackwood Campus - Connector Building
Room 101 Forum, Civic Hall, Atrium**

**856-427-4022 oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net
Founded January 1977**

**President: Richard Jankowski
Vice President: Bob Russo
Treasurer: Herb Kaufman**

Annual Memberships

Students: \$12.50

Individuals: \$25.00

Families: \$35.00

**Secretary: Bill Hughes
Programs: Dave Gilson
Trustees: Harry Jenkins
Kathy Clark
Frank Barletta**

Editor: Don Wiles - cwiles@comcast.net