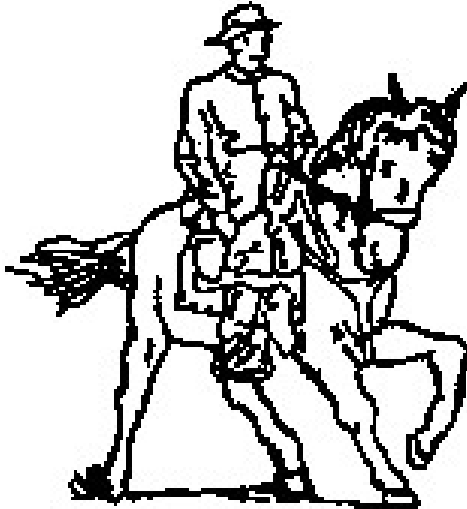


Williamsburg Civil War Roundtable  
2021 Newsletter



## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 2**

**October 27, 2020**

**MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE  
TUESDAY, October 27, 2020 at 7 PM**

**Our October presentation is  
"Hoop Skirts and Gunpowder"  
A "Shades of Our Past" Performance  
by Lee Ann Rose**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all email recipients no later than October 26<sup>th</sup>.***

On Friday March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1863, shortly after 11:00 AM, there was a terrible explosion at the Confederate State Laboratory, located on Richmond's Brown's Island on the James River.

The Richmond Examiner described the initial reaction thusly:

“ A dull, prolonged roar in the direction of Brown's Island, across the James River from the foot of Seventh Street, startled

that portion of the city and directed attention to the Island, on which is located the Confederate Laboratory Works, for the

manufacture of percussion caps and gun cartridges,,, a tide of human beings, among them the frantic mothers and kindred

of the employees in the laboratory, immediately set towards the bridge leading to the island, but the Government authorities,

soonest apprised of the disaster, had already taken possession of the bridge, and planting a guard of soldiers, allowed

passage to none except the workmen summoned to rescue the dead and wounded from the ruins.”

The explosion was blamed on 18-year-old Mary Ryan.

Hear tonight from her sister, the story of what really happened,  
what the inquiry into the explosion found out,  
and was it wholly her sister's fault?

Learn of the works and lives of the girls and women who worked the  
Laboratory,  
and hear some of the names and stories of those that were lost the  
fateful day.



Lee Ann Rose is the co-owner of "Shades Of Our Past LLC", which provides historical education and entertainment ranging from America's founding to WWII. She received her Theatre Degree at Davis and Elkins College and studied also at Richmond College in London, England. Lee Ann is not only an historical interpreter, but also a playwright writing such plays as "Are We Not One", and "Back to Our Kitchens". She is also currently performing a one woman show entitled "Stowaway on D Day", a performance about Martha Gellhorn. Along with Susan B Anthony, she also plays Suffragist Victoria Woodhull, and First Ladies Martha Washington, Mary Todd Lincoln, and Edith Roosevelt.

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## **Upcoming Meetings and Speakers**

- **October 27, 2020** - Lee Ann Rose - Hoop Skirts and Gunpowder
- **November 24, 2020** - Scott Mingus - Flames Beyond Gettysburg: The Confederate Expedition to The Susquehanna River - June 1863
- **December 8, 2020** - Ken Rutherford - "America's Buried History - Landmines in the Civil War"
- **January 26, 2021** - Steve Phan - Early at The Gates: The Battle of Fort Stevens
- **February 16, 2021** – Tom Clemons – Special Order 119- myths, misconceptions, and facts related to Lee's lost order
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## **Upcoming Outside Events**

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## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 3**

**November 24, 2020**

#### **MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE**

**Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 7 PM**

**Scott Mingus will present**

**"Flames Beyond Gettysburg:**

**The Confederate Expedition to The Susquehanna River**

**- June 1863 "**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all email recipients no later than October 26<sup>th</sup>.***

In late June 1863, two powerful columns of Confederate troops approached the Susquehanna River in south-central Pennsylvania. One, under Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell, marched northeasterly from Franklin County through Carlisle toward Harrisburg and the other, under Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early, headed eastward through Gettysburg and York towards Wrightsville/Columbia. This PowerPoint talk covers Early's expedition as his division seized control of Gettysburg after a series of skirmishes on June 26 and then two days later occupied York, the largest Northern town to fall to the Confederates during the entire war. Early ransomed York for \$100,000 and supplies and surrounded the town with artillery and troops. Hastily organized state militia defended the river crossing at Wrightsville against John Gordon's Georgia brigade and then burned the world's longest covered bridge to prevent the Confederates from passing into

Lancaster County, from which Jubal Early had hoped to threaten Harrisburg.

Scott Mingus is a retired research scientist and current consultant to the global pulp & paper industry. He holds U. S. patents in self-adhesive postage stamps and bar code labels. The Ohio native graduated from the Paper Science & Engineering program at Miami University in 1978. While working for Avery Dennison, he was part of the research team that developed the first commercially successful self-adhesive U. S. postage stamps. He has written 22 Civil War and Underground Railroad books. His biography of General William “Extra Billy” Smith won multiple awards, including the Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr. Literary Prize for Confederate History. He has also written several articles for Gettysburg Magazine, as well as for various historical journals. Scott has appeared on C-SPAN, C-SPAN3, PCN, and other TV-networks.

Mingus and his wife Debi live in Manchester Township north of York. For more than a decade, he has written a popular blog on the Civil War history of York County ([www.yorkblog.com/cannonball](http://www.yorkblog.com/cannonball)). He received the 2013 Heritage Profile Award from the York County History Center for his many contributions to local Civil War history. He also has written six scenario books for Civil War miniature wargaming. His great-great-grandfather was a 15-year-old drummer and rifleman in the 51st Ohio Infantry in the Western Theater, and other family members fought at Antietam and Gettysburg in the 7th West Virginia of the Army of the Potomac.

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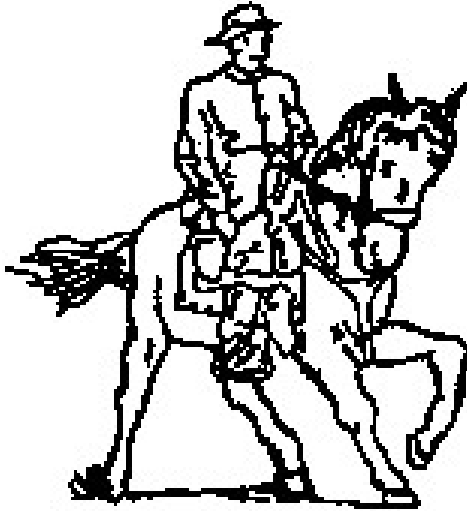
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## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 4**

**December 8, 2020**

**MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE  
Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 7 PM**

**Dr. Kenneth Rutherford  
"America's Buried History -  
Landmines in The Civil War"**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all email recipients no later than December 6<sup>th</sup>.***

On December 8, 2020 at 7PM Dr. Rutherford will present "America's Buried History - Landmines in The Civil War." Dr. Rutherford will trace the development of landmines from their first use before the Civil War, to the early use of naval mines, through the establishment of the Confederacy's Army Torpedo Bureau, the world's first institution devoted to developing, producing, and fielding mines in warfare.

Dr. Rutherford, who is known worldwide for his work in the landmine disciplines, and who himself lost legs to a mine in Africa, relies on a host of primary resources to highlight the widespread use of landmines across the Confederacy. His work and passion spans over two decades in more than 40 countries, including in Vietnam to bring assistance to survivors, and in Bosnia, where he escorted Princess Diana to visit landmine victims and their care providers in an effort to bring attention to their plight.

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## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 5**

**January 26, 2021**

**MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE  
Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 7 PM**

**Steve T. Phan  
"The Capital Can't Be Taken-  
The Civil War Defense of Washington"**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all email recipients no later than January 24<sup>th</sup>.***

On January 26, 2021 at 7PM Steve Phan will present "The capital can't be taken!" The Civil War Defenses of Washington

Fortress Washington was under siege. Three years of extensive construction, expansion, and training—all at the expenditure of exorbitant resources—had come down to a race. The Confederate Army of the Valley District commanded by Lt. Gen. Jubal Early, advanced south along the Rockville-Georgetown Pike on the morning of 10 July 1864. The day was hot and humid, and dust covered the road as the exhausted rebel force aimed to complete their campaign by seizing the Federal capital. General Robert E. Lee's "Bald Old Man" was running out of time. The previous day, Early's infantry and cavalry columns unexpectedly ran into heavy Federal opposition

along the Monocacy River on the outskirts of Frederick, Maryland. Token Resistance was expected, however. Elements of the Federal Middle Department (8th Army Corps) commanded by Major General Lew Wallace operated in the area for several days. Wallace cobbled together a hodgepodge mix of rear-echelon, garrison, and part-time troops to engage Early long enough for reinforcements to arrive on the field, and most importantly, to secure Baltimore and Washington. Support appeared on the waterways. The Federal high command outside Petersburg, Virginia at last responded to ominous reports of a large Confederate force operating in the Shenandoah Valley and advanced north into Maryland. Wallace's prospect of delaying Early improved dramatically with the arrival of veterans from the Army of the Potomac. Brigadier General James B. Rickett's 3rd Division 6th Corps led the vanguard of reinforcements dispatched from the trenches of Petersburg. It was Rickett's division that Early's collided with on the morning of 9 July, turning a minor action into a major pitched battle. The blue-clad defenders outgunned and undermanned—a rare occasion for Civil War battles—retreated in disorder toward Maryland after an 8-hour fight. As a result, recalled one of Early's division commanders, Major General James B. Gordon: "The way lay open to Washington."

Awaiting the Confederate army was one of the most heavily fortified cities in the world. By summer 1864, the elaborate defensive system encircling Washington D.C. comprised 60 forts, 93 detached batteries, 5 blockhouses, fortified bridges, over 30 miles of military roads, and armament massing 800 cannons. Supplementing the defenses was a garrison of over 30,000 men. The capital defenders comprised heavy artillery—expertly trained to operate the large caliber artillery pieces mounted in the forts—together with a mix of infantry and cavalry regiments. Nominally, such a heavy force entrenched in fortified positions made an enemy advance on Washington D.C. foolhardy and desperate. But 1864 called for desperate measures by both the Union and Confederacy.

Steve T. Phan is a Park Ranger and Historian at the Civil War Defenses of Washington. He has worked at Richmond National

Battlefield Park, Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, Stones River National Battlefield, Rock Creek Park, and Buffalo Soldiers National Monument. A military history scholar of the Civil War era, Phan's research focuses on military occupation, operational command, and fortifications during the Civil War. He is the author of articles about Asians and Pacific Islanders in the Civil War and the Defenses of Washington for numerous publications. He was nominated for the National Park Service Tilden Award for Excellence in Interpretation (2019). He holds a master's degree in American History from Middle Tennessee State University.

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## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 6**

**February 16, 2021**

**MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE  
Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7 PM**

**Dr. Thomas G. Clemens  
“Special Orders 191”**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all email recipients no later than February 14<sup>th</sup>.***

Join us for the next meeting of the Williamsburg Civil War Roundtable via Zoom meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 (**note change of meeting date to third Tuesday**).

On Tuesday, February 16, 2020, Dr. Thomas G. Clemens will present “Special Orders 191”. **A map of the Antietam campaign and special orders 191 are on our website at <http://www.wcwr.org/so191.jpg> and [www.wcwr.org/Antietam-Campaign-3-to-17-1862-June.jpg](http://www.wcwr.org/Antietam-Campaign-3-to-17-1862-June.jpg). Please download both before the meeting.**

Arguably one of the most famous incidents of the Civil War is the loss, and discovery, of Special Orders 191 and its impact on the Maryland Campaign of 1862. Many authors have speculated about Williamsburg Civil War Roundtable Newsletter



the effects of this event on Lee's first invasion of the North. Did it seal the fate of Lee's invasion? Was McClellan slow in reacting to its discovery? Was it part of conspiracy by a spy in the southern army? Or was it a scheme to confuse and delay the Union forces under McClellan? Who lost it? Who found it? Where and when was it found? What was the impact on the siege of Harpers Ferry? Likewise, the battle of South Mountain? Even Antietam/Sharpsburg? What did it tell McClellan and what didn't it tell him?

All these questions, and more, will be addressed in Tom's talk. Much has been written about the impact of SO 191 on the Maryland Campaign, and he will provide a brief summary of past writers and their take on the importance of SO 191. His views may seem unconventional to some of you, as he challenges some of the well-ingrained traditions about SO 191. It is Tom's intent to offer his views but leave ample time to engage in questions and discussion with the members of CWRT

Dr. Thomas G. Clemens received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in history from Salisbury University, and his Doctorate in History Education from George Mason University, where he studied under noted Civil War historian Dr. Joseph L. Harsh. Tom came to Hagerstown Community College in 1978 and spent most of his 34-year career at HCC teaching American History, retiring as Professor Emeritus in 2012.

Tom has written many magazine articles in various Civil War magazines, many book reviews and appeared in several documentary movies and television shows focused on Civil War topics. He appears as an on-camera historian in the introductory film shown in the Visitor's Center at Antietam National Battlefield.

He edited and annotated General Ezra A. Carman's 1,800 page narrative of the Maryland Campaign of September 1862, which has received awards from the Army Heritage Foundation; the third and final volume was released in March of 2017. His monograph about General Joseph K. F. Mansfield was published in Corps

Commanders in Blue in 2014. An upcoming book from LSU Press on Maryland in the Civil War will include a chapter by Tom on the Confederate invasions of Maryland. His latest magazine article, published in the June 2016 issue of Civil War Times, proved the Pry house at Antietam was never McClellan's Headquarters.

Tom is a founding member and current president of Save Historic Antietam Foundation Inc., a non-profit historic preservation organization. In the past 5 years SHAF and the Civil War Trust have cooperated to purchase four properties, comprising 60 acres, inside the battlefield boundary. We have demolished six non-historic structures on these properties, and more non-historic structures will be removed soon.

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## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 7**

**March 16, 2021**

**MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE  
Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 7 PM**

### **Michael E. Block**

**"A Rusty Sword, Five Friends, and "As Perfect a Beauty Ever  
Born on the Soil of The Old Dominion - The Battle of Cedar  
Mountain, August 9, 1862"**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all  
email recipients no later than March 14<sup>th</sup>.***

Join us for the next meeting of the Williamsburg Civil War Roundtable at 7 PM on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 (note change of meeting date to the third Tuesday).

On Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, Michael E. Block will present "A Rusty Sword, Five Friends, and 'as perfect a beauty ever born on the soil of the Old Dominion.'" Incidents and anecdotes from the Battle of Cedar Mountain, August 9, 1862.

The Battle of Cedar Mountain is considered by some as the opening fight in the Second Manassas Campaign, others a one-off fight. Mike will give an overview of the Cedar Mountain Campaign and the battle

itself. But his focus will be on the experiences soldiers who participated in the battle. Their stories are typically lost in the recounting of the fight, so tonight's presentation features their tales.

Michael E. Block is a recently retired government consultant, having served 20 years in the U. S. Air Force and 19 with the firm Booz Allen Hamilton. He was recently the Vice-President of the Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield, but still volunteers for the organizations. He has been published in Blue and Gray Magazine, Hallowed Ground and will have his first book published, "The Carnage Was Fearful: The Battle of Cedar Mountain", in 2021. His specialty is the Civil War in the Virginia Piedmont, with an emphasis on Cedar Mountain and the Winter Encampment of 1863-64. He resides in Williamsburg, Virginia with his wife of 39 years, Caryn. They have two married sons and three granddaughters.

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- **May 25, 2021** - Matt Atkinson - TBA

**Upcoming Outside Events**



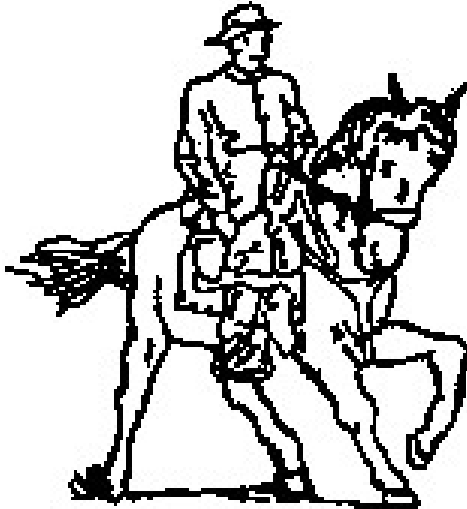
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# *Williamsburg Civil War*

## *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 8**

**April 27, 2021**

**MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE  
Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 7 PM**

**Chris Kolakowski**

**“Perspectives of the 1862 Virginia Campaigns”**

***The meeting will be via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to all  
email recipients no later than April 25<sup>th</sup>***

Join us for the next meeting of the Williamsburg Civil War Roundtable at 7 PM on Tuesday, April 27, 2021.

On Tuesday, April 27, 2021, Chris Kolakowski will present "Perspectives of the 1862 Virginia Campaigns". The spring and summer of 1862 in Virginia witnessed campaigns and bloodshed unlike any before in North American history. Those campaigns - Valley, Peninsula/Seven Days, and Second Manassas - are some of the most famous of the conflict. The results of the fighting also marked a transition point in the Civil War. This talk will examine lesser-appreciated aspects of those campaigns and their contexts.

Christopher L. Kolakowski was born and raised in Fredericksburg, Va. He received his BA in History and Mass Communications from Emory & Henry College, and his MA in Public History from the State University of New York at Albany.

Chris has spent his career interpreting and preserving American military history with the National Park Service, New York State government, the Rensselaer County (NY) Historical Society, the Civil War Preservation Trust, Kentucky State Parks, and the U.S. Army. He has written and spoken on various aspects of military history from 1775 to the present. He has published two books with the History Press: *The Civil War at Perryville: Battling For the Bluegrass* and *The Stones River and Tullahoma Campaign: This Army Does Not Retreat*. In September 2016, the U.S. Army published his volume on the 1862 Virginia Campaigns as part of its sesquicentennial series on the Civil War. He is a contributor to the Emerging Civil War Blog, and a reviewer and contributor to the Air Force Journal of Indo-Pacific Studies. His study of the 1941-42 Philippine Campaign titled *Last Stand on Bataan* was released in late February 2016. He is currently working on a book about the 1944 India-Burma battles .

On January 6, 2020, Chris became Director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, after serving as MacArthur Memorial Director from September 16, 2013, to December 6, 2019.

### **Last Month**

On Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, Michael E. Block presented “A Rusty Sword, Five Friends, and ‘as perfect a beauty ever born on the soil of the Old Dominion.” Incidents and anecdotes from the Battle of Cedar Mountain, August 9, 1862.

The Battle of Cedar Mountain is considered by some as the opening fight in the Second Manassas Campaign, others a one-off fight. Mike will give an overview of the Cedar Mountain Campaign and the battle itself. But his focus will be on the experiences soldiers who participated in the battle. Their stories are typically lost in the recounting of the fight, so tonight’s presentation features their tales.

Michael E. Block is a recently retired government consultant, having served 20 years in the U. S. Air Force and 19 with the firm Booz Allen Hamilton. He was recently the Vice-President of the Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield, but still volunteers for the organizations. He has been published in Blue and Gray Magazine, Hallowed Ground and will have his first book published, "The Carnage Was Fearful: The Battle of Cedar Mountain", in 2021. His specialty is the Civil War in the Virginia Piedmont, with an emphasis on Cedar Mountain and the Winter Encampment of 1863-64. He resides in Williamsburg, Virginia with his wife of 39 years, Caryn. They have two married sons and three granddaughters.

**Dues for September 2020-May 2021** will be waived until in-person meetings resume.

**2020-2021 Officers of WCWRT:**

President: Bill Miller	Vice-President: Lee Underwood
Secretary: Gene Danko	Treasurer:

The Executive Committee consists of the elected officers, the immediate past president and other members appointed by the incoming president. Those members include Debbie Bedosti, Tom Lamb, and Teresa Teopke.

**Upcoming Meetings and Speakers**

- **May 25, 2021** - Matt Atkinson - "The Battle of Gettysburg - A Simple Overview"

**Upcoming Outside Events**

Visit the **Williamsburg Battlefield Association**

(<http://www.williamsburgbattlefieldassociation.org/>)

(<https://www.facebook.com/WilliamsburgBattlefieldAssociation>)

WEBSITE: Be sure to frequently visit the site for newsletter info, announcements, future and past speakers, and an up to date calendar of events in the Civil War world. It's available anytime you need the info. <http://www.wcwrt.org>.

**The purpose of this organization shall be to promote discussion and study of the Civil War and to further stimulate interest in all aspects and phases of the Civil War period.**



## *Williamsburg Civil War*

### *Roundtable*

**Meeting Place**

***Williamsburg, VA***

**Volume LI Number 9**

**May 25, 2021**

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**Matt Atkinson  
“The Battle of Gettysburg -  
A Simple Overview”**

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email recipients no later than April 25<sup>th</sup>***

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On Tuesday, May 25, 2021, Matt Atkinson will present "The Battle of Gettysburg – A Simple Overview". The name Gettysburg is synonymous with American History. Three days of battle that brought the country from the brink of destruction to a “new birth of freedom” at a cost of 51,000 casualties.

Today, despite Gettysburg being one of the most studied battles in the world, many Americans do not even have a simple understanding of the battle. If you are one of those people, this program is for you.

Join Matt Atkinson for a 50 minute overview packed with information and stories about Gettysburg.

Matt Atkinson hails from Houston, Mississippi. (Grierson's Raid came through his town.) He attended Ole Miss and graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in History. In 2016, Matt earned a Master of Arts in History at the University of Louisiana-Monroe. His thesis is on the Battle of Chickasaw Bayou or, as he would like to call it - "Dead Yankees in a Swamp."

Matt grew up in Mississippi loving the Civil War. His parents took him to local battlefields such as Vicksburg and Shiloh. Matt always asked, "Dad, did we win here?", and Dad always responded, "No, not here." At age seven, Matt and his parents made a trip to Washington, D.C. On the way, they stopped at the Manassas Battlefield. Finally! A victory! Alas, his mother was sick, and the family had to move on. It would take another 20 years for Matt to return, and he still has yet to forgive his mother.

Matt currently resides in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania with his twin girls, Emma and Aubrey, and his son Benjamin Lee. He is employed at the Gettysburg National Military Park and enjoys listening to sad country songs.

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**Upcoming Meetings and Speakers**

- **Tuesday, September 28, 2021**- Chris Makowski: "The Battle of Spotsylvania's Bloody Angle"
- **Wednesday, October 26, 2021** - Dennis Frye - "Stonewall's Greatest Victory"



- **Tuesday, November 23, 2021** - Dr. Charles Ross - "Breaking the Blockade: The Bahamas during the Civil War"
- **Tuesday, December 21, 2021** - John Fox III - "The Confederate Alamo – Fort Gregg"
- **Tuesday, January 25, 2022** -Kevin Pawlak - "In the Wake of Antietam – The Loudon Valley Campaign of 1862"
- **Tuesday, February 22, 2022** - Dr. Jonathan White: "A House Built By Slaves: African American Visitors To The Lincoln White House"
- **Tuesday, March 22, 2022** (To Be Determined)
- **Wednesday, April 13, 2022** - Dr. Curt Fields & Thomas Jessee, portraying General Ulysses S. Grant & General Robert E. Lee, respectively: "Appomattox – The Last Forty-Eight Hours"
- **Tuesday, May 24, 2022** - Dr. Jerry Wooten - "Johnsonville"

### **Upcoming Outside Events**

- **June 12, 2021** - free tour of the" Opening Assaults on Petersburg in June 1864" from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm @ Petersburg National Battlefield! [details](#)

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