



THE DRUM & BUGLE
Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table
Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table Newsletter
August 2019, Volume 16, Issue 8

Speaker: Chris Kolakowski
Topic: "1864: The Fall of the Confederate Navy"
When: Monday, August 12, 2019
Location: Brock's Riverside Grill
Times: Social Begins 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:45 pm, Meeting Begins 7:30 p.m.

Chris Kolakowski, "1864: The Fall of the Confederate Navy"

Mr. Kolakowski will examine the naval war of 1864 and the various decisive clashes between the US and Confederate navies. Coming into that year, the Confederates were at the peak of their sea power. However the loss of two important ships and the Union victory in the Battle of Mobile Bay crippled the Rebel fleet.

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 his study of the 1941-42 Philippine Campaign, *Last Stand on Bataan*, was released by McFarland in late February 2016. He is currently working on a book about the 1944 India-Burma battles. Chris served as director of the General George Patton Museum and Center of Leadership in Fort Knox, KY, from 2009 to 2013. He became the MacArthur Memorial Director in Norfolk, VA, in September 2013.

“Hooker Takes Command” by Edwin C. Bearss A Review of the July 2019 program by Greg Mertz

Our speaker, prominent historian Edwin C. Bearss, described Joseph Hooker as probably the most interesting person to ever command the Union Army of the Potomac. Graduating in the lower third of his West Point class, he did not advance in rank during the Mexican War as rapidly as his other classmates, so he resigned from the army. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Hooker hoped to get back into the army. Living in California at the time, Hooker borrowed money to enable him to travel to Washington, DC and plead his case with General-in-Chief Winfield Scott, only to discover that Scott despised him.

Hooker easily made enemies, including West Point classmate William T. Sherman, who had left the army to manage a bank. Hooker was poor at playing draw poker, received a couple of loans from Sherman’s bank to help with his debts, and did not repay the loans. Hooker also made an enemy in Henry W. Halleck. By marrying a wealthy woman, Halleck had money, and Hooker had also borrowed funds from him, and as was the case with Sherman, Hooker stiffed Halleck. When Hooker allied with an adversary of Winfield Scott, he added another influential antagonist to his list, hence the snub when Hooker sought a commission from Scott early in the Civil War. Besides being a gambler and a deadbeat on his debts, Hooker drank too much and was a womanizer. It was not true, however, that Joseph Hooker was associated with prostitutes being called “hookers.” The term was in use long before Joseph Hooker was born.

Being rejected by Scott, Hooker went to the Bull Run battlefield as a civilian to observe the fight. The cocky Hooker showed up at the White House within two days of the battle. He told Lincoln that he was not sure just how good a soldier he would be, but that he was a “damned sight better general than any you had on that field.” Hooker found a kindred spirit in Secretary of War Simon Cameron, and in a short time, Hooker was a Major General commanding a division.

When army commander George B. McClellan moved the army up the Peninsula in the spring of 1862, Hooker’s division was engaged at Williamsburg, where Hooker gained a sobriquet. The press sent a dispatch that was meant to say “still fighting: Joe Hooker,” but the punctuation was left out and the nickname of “Fighting Joe Hooker” was born. Hooker claimed to dislike the label, but Bearss feels that he actually liked it quite a bit.

At the end of the summer of 1862 at the battle of Antietam, Hooker received what Bearss called “a million-dollar wound.” Commanding a corps under General Ambrose Burnside, Hooker managed to get his command detached from Burnside’s wing. When rain erupted just prior to the battle, Hooker invited the press to the shelter of a barn – he always enjoyed a good relationship with the press. Then when the fighting broke out, Hooker was shot in the foot and evacuated to Washington, DC. Hooker was able to spend a lot of time during the recovery of his slight wound by visiting capitol hill, courting the radical wing of the Republican Party.

Hooker returned to the army as one of three Grand Division commanders in Burnside's army at the disastrous battle of Fredericksburg. When a pair of generals informed Lincoln that the men in the army had lost confidence in Burnside. Hooker soon began his tenure as the army commander.

Hooker took advantage of the fall of Burnside. The morale and health of the army Hooker inherited was poor. The men in the ranks were not being paid, so Hooker sought out one of his contacts, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, about making sure the troops were paid on time. The men were not being properly fed either, and Hooker made sure that the army quartermaster was honest and not cheating the government, resulting in a better diet and healthier soldiers.

Hooker established the Cavalry corps, though Bearss joked that Hooker should have checked with a doctor before appointing the commander of the army's mounted branch. The cavalry was led by General George Stoneman, who had hemorrhoids, and had to be replaced after his raid during the Chancellorsville Campaign. He also created the Bureau of Military Information, and as opposed to his selection of cavalry command, made a superb choice in Col. George Sharpe to head the army's intelligence agency.

Lincoln visited the army, reviewing the troops, and he liked what he saw and the reforms Hooker had implemented. Hooker told Lincoln what he was going to do, but did not explain to the commander-in-chief how he was going to accomplish it.

In the opening phases of the Chancellorsville Campaign, corps commanders George G. Meade and Henry W. Slocum, leading a flanking maneuver against the Confederate left, were impressed by the initial success of the march. But on May 1, 1863, the first day of the battle of Chancellorsville, Confederate corps commander Thomas J. Jackson intercepted Hooker near Zoan Church, and Hooker lost his nerve. Jackson and army commander Robert E. Lee then "did their magic" according to Bearss. They seized the initiative away from Hooker, and defeated him, despite being outnumbered two to one.

Then as Lee took his army north into Pennsylvania, Hooker followed. Hooker then made a blunder. He gave Lincoln an ultimatum. He demanded that Lincoln either order the Union division at Harpers Ferry to report to him, or accept Hooker's resignation. Lincoln did the latter. Soon Meade took over the army. The Bureau of Military Information knew more about Lee's army than Lee knew himself, Bearss contended, and many of the improvements that Hooker made to the Union army contributed significantly to Meade's victory at Gettysburg.

Hooker returned to service in the field by commanding a corps in the Chattanooga and Atlanta campaigns, with two subordinates who had no use for him – former Army of the Potomac corps commanders Oliver O. Howard and Slocum. When the Army of the Tennessee commander James B. McPherson was killed in the fighting around Atlanta, Hooker was bypassed with Howard given the premier assignment. As one whom Hooker blamed for the defeat at Chancellorsville, the promotion of Howard over him was more than Hooker could bear. Hooker was reassigned to the Department of Cincinnati for the remainder of the war.

Hooker would marry a wealthy woman, enabling him to afford to commission a large painting of the Battle of Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, featuring Hooker as the star of the battle. The family wealth also resulted in two prominent monuments to Hooker – one over his grave at Cincinnati and another at the Boston State House.



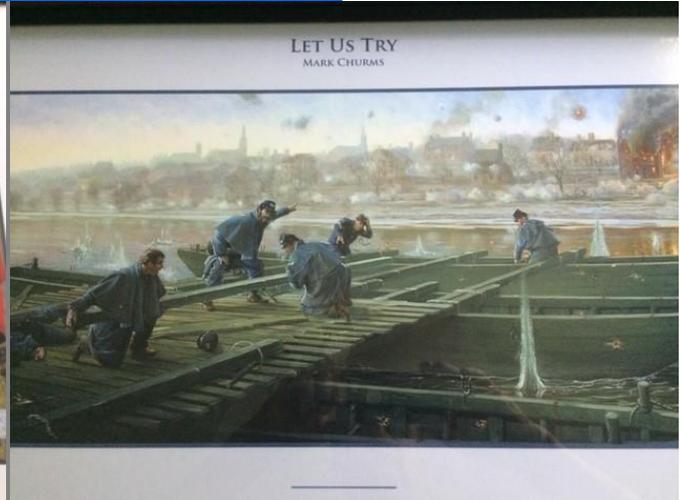
Ed Bearss at our July meeting

L – R: Bob Jones, President; Madelyn Shiflett, RVCWRT sponsored NPS summer intern; Ed Bearss, Austin Sundstrom, NPS summer intern, Roger Leturno, CWRT Fredericksburg President

RVCWRT ART PRINT RAFFLE

RVCWRT is raffling off two professionally framed and matted Civil War prints, “Let Us Try” by Mark Churms and “Lee’s Headquarters” by Bradley Schmehl. Each measures 18 ½” x 26 ½” including frame. These prints are from the 2012 Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemorative Exhibition at the Fredericksburg Area Museum.

Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. A maximum of 150 tickets will be sold. First ticket drawn wins choice, second ticket drawn receives the remaining print. Proceeds benefit the RVCWRT scholarship fund. Tickets will be sold at the June, July and August RVCWRT dinner meetings. Drawing will be at the September 9, 2019 dinner meeting. Winners need not be present to win. **Tickets can also be reserved by contacting John Sapanara at jsapanara7891@gmail.com.**



Ongoing Reminder

Please contact Bob Jones to order your dinner in advance or to confirm your dinner reservation. Please call Bob Jones @ 540-399-1702 or send him your e-mail at cwrtedinner@yahoo.com



The Civil War Round Table of Fredericksburg By Bob Jones

As a courtesy, the RVCWRT provides as a regular feature each month, the ongoing scheduled speakers for the CWRTF's 2018 Program Year. The Civil War Round Table of Fredericksburg normally meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month (except for one meeting held on the third Wednesday of June 2018). Dinner Meetings are held at the UMW's Jepson Center located at [1119 Hanover Street, Fredericksburg, VA](http://1119HanoverStreet.com), dinner cost is \$32.00 per person. Advance reservations should be made by email: dinner@cwrtf.org or telephone: 540-361-2105.

CWRTF's Scheduled Speakers for the 2019 Program Year:

Sept. 25, 2019	Brian E. Withrow	"Ulysses S. Grant in Character"
Oct. 23, 2019	Michael K. Shaffer	"In Memory of Self and

		Comrades: Thomas W. Colley's Recollection"
Nov. 20, 2019	William Freehling	"Becoming Lincoln"
Jan. 22, 2020	Ryan Longfellow	"Grant and the Battle of the Wilderness"
Feb. 26, 2020	Chris Kolakowski	"Perryville and the Kentucky Campaign"
Mar. 25, 2020	Dr. Caroline E. Janney	"Burying the Dead, But Not the Past. The Ladies Memorial Association"
Apr. 22, 2020	Gordon Rhea	"The Generalship of Lee and Grant in the Overland Campaign"
May 27, 2020	John Biemeck	"Civil War Ordnance"
Jun. 17, 2020	Paul Kahan	"The Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant: Preserving the Civil War's Legacy"

2019 NPS Intern Scholarship

The Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table (RVCWRT) provides a \$2,000 scholarship to a National Park Service (NPS) intern serving at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park. Under the provisions of this scholarship program, an intern will be defined as any individual who is, or will be, an undergraduate or graduate student at an accredited college or university; who has served at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park (beginning their service between July 2018 and July 2019) and who has completed a minimum of 350 hours of service to the park in good standing. For complete details, go to the website, www.rvcwrt.org
The scholarship will be awarded at our August meeting.

Who we are

The Drum and Bugle Newsletter is published monthly, by the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table, Post Office Box 7632, Fredericksburg, VA 22404. Each month, The Drum and Bugle newsletter is also placed on our web-site, www.RVCWRT.org. Yearly membership dues are \$35.00 for an individual, \$45.00 for families, and only \$7.50 for students. Membership is open to anyone interested in the study of the Civil War and the ongoing preservation of Civil War sites.

The RVCWRT Executive Committee:

President/Dinner Meeting:	Bob Jones	Member at Large:	Robin Donato
Vice President:	John Sapanara	Member at Large:	John Griffiths
Secretary:	Melanie Jordan	Member at Large:	Barbara Stafford
Treasurer:	Ben Keller	Media & Events Coordinator:	Paul Steir
Meeting Scribe:	Greg Mertz	Past President:	Marc Thompson
Membership Chair:	Pail Steir	Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:	Dan Augustine

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Post Office Box 7632
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22404