



THE DRUM & BUGLE

Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table

Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table Newsletter
December 2017, Volume 14, Issue 12

Speaker: Kirsten Talken-Spaulding
Topic: “*Fort Monroe – The Making of a Park*”
When: Monday, December 11, 2017
Location: Brock’s Riverside Grill
Times: Social Begins 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:45 pm, Meeting Begins 7:30 p.m.

Abstract on Kirsten Talken-Spaulding, our Scheduled Speaker for December 11th, 2017

By Jim Smithfield

Our scheduled speaker for the December 11th dinner meeting will be Kirsten Talken-Spaulding. She will discuss Fort Monroe and the Making of a Park. Kirsten is the Superintendent of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. She began her National Park Service (NPS) career in 1988 at Shenandoah National Park. She then, worked at NPS headquarters in Washington, D.C., Mojave National Preserve in California, National Mall and Memorial Parks in Washington, D.C., and Haleakalā National Park in Hawaii in the 1990s. In 2003, she returned to the mainland with positions in the National Capital Region, including Prince William Forest Park and National Capital Parks-East. In 2010, Talken-Spaulding was selected for the Bevinetto Congressional Fellowship, a two-year training and development program based in Washington, D.C. She served as a staff member of the U.S. Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee and as special assistant to the director of the NPS and then with the NPS Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs. From late 2011 to 2016,

Talken-Spaulding served as the first superintendent of Fort Monroe National Monument in Virginia. Kirsten received a Bachelor of Science degree from the College of William & Mary and a Master of Divinity degree from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary.

Superintendent Talken-Spaulding will discuss the colorful history of Fort Monroe and the role it played during the Civil War. She will describe the long and involved process which ultimately resulted in the designation of the site as a national monument.

“Echoes of Fredericksburg” - The Mine Run Campaign

Presented by Chris Mackowski

A Review of our November 2017, program by Greg Mertz

Union Army of the Potomac commander, George G. Meade, is explicitly tied to the Mine Run Campaign, because of the moral courage displayed when confronting a strong Confederate position. Our speaker Chris Mackowski, felt that Meade experienced his finest hour at Mine Run. Though Meade avoided disaster on the banks of Mine Run, Mackowski noticed the similarities between the Mine Run Campaign and another campaign that was a disaster, selecting “Echoes of Fredericksburg” as a sobriquet for his program.

Both the Fredericksburg and Mine Run Campaigns began in the month of November in consecutive years (1862 and 1863) with the Union army astride the Orange and Alexandria Railroad just north of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Both Union army commander, Ambrose E. Burnside in 1862 and Meade in 1863 wanted to move their armies to Fredericksburg for a shorter, more secure supply line. Lincoln vetoed Meade’s plans to return to Fredericksburg, the nation could not tolerate another defeat there.

Meade still fashioned a maneuver around the Confederate right flank, but since he was forbidden to swing as far east as Fredericksburg, he settled for targeting the Wilderness some twenty miles further west. Though the campaign was to begin on November 24, rain delayed the march for two days and the troops instead broke camp on November 26 – Thanksgiving Day. The engineers who had carefully calculated how many pontoons would be needed to construct pontoon bridges across the Rapidan River, had failed to consider how the rain would affect their mission.

When they constructed bridges at Jacob's Ford and Germanna Ford, they found that they were one pontoon short at each of those locations. Just as the Union army had been held up by the absence of pontoons during the Fredericksburg Campaign, so another pontoon issue plagued the Union forces heading toward Mine Run. Whereas Burnside and Meade had both anticipated a rapid crossing of rivers on their respective fronts, timetables of each general was wrecked. Engineers gathered timber and constructed trestles to complete the spans, and the blue-clad soldiers stumbled forward though behind schedule.

As the Union troops advanced in three columns – those crossing at Jacob's, Germanna and Culpeper Mine Fords – the men marching from Jacob's encountered another problem reminiscent of Fredericksburg. In both battles a prominent Union general failed to understand his orders – each related to confusion over which direction to move – and further complicated by failures to take prudent measures to clarify their instructions.

At Fredericksburg, William B. Franklin had a verbal discussion with Burnside regarding an assault to the west against Prospect Hill but was perplexed when the written orders supposedly authorizing that movement instructed him to move south toward Richmond instead. Rather than seek clarification from the general of Burnside's staff who delivered the message or utilize the telegraph to communicate more directly with Burnside, Franklin and his subordinates concluded the plan had changed.

At Mine Run, III Corps commander, William H. French, marched from Jacob's Ford with Henry Prince directing the division in the lead. The army was to converge on the high ground on the Orange Turnpike called Locust Grove. When Prince reached a road junction near the Widow Morris home, he was unsure which road to take. Both roads went to Locust Grove – one was longer but was clear of enemy forces, the other was shorter but ran the risk of coming in contact with Confederates. Prince hesitated and communicated with French. Though the two officers had halted at locations that Mackowski indicated were only 300 yards apart, neither officer consulted with the other and Prince waited hours for definite instructions. French communicated with army headquarters that he was waiting for G. K. Warren, when Warren was actually already at Locust Grove waiting for French to arrive and protect his right flank.

When French eventually marched, he took the shorter route, and indeed he made contact with the enemy. Confederates were also trying to unite on the Locust Grove ridge. The Confederates that engaged French comprised only a division of 5,300 men under Edward Johnson. Marching directly behind French was the Union VI Corps – this column consisted of 32,000 men. Though Johnson was badly outnumbered, he acted aggressively attacking the Union soldiers in the bloodiest engagement of the campaign – the fight at Payne's Farm.

Once again, the Mine Run Campaign contained "echoes of Fredericksburg." In the fight at Prospect Hill, one division under Meade spearheaded the Union attack against Jackson's 34,000 Confederates – slightly larger than the body of troops that Johnson attacked at Payne's Farm. In both instances, the division attacking a body of troops six times larger was not successful, but demonstrated a great deal of pluck and caused significant problems for the opposition.

The Confederates were unsuccessful in wresting Locust Grove from the Union soldiers and fell back to the west behind a stream called Mine Run and began to fortify their lines. Union officers inspected the position, looking for a vulnerable point to attack. G. K. Warren felt that he spotted an opportunity to turn the Confederate right flank, further to the south than where any Union troops confronted the rebel line. Meade assigned Warren nearly half of the infantry in the army, but by the time he completed the maneuver, daylight had run out. Warren had to await the following morning to make his attack.

But when day dawned, Warren discovered that the Confederates had strengthened the position in front of him and he was convinced that an assault could not succeed. Just as Union soldiers confronting the stone wall at Fredericksburg had concluded that the Confederate position was impregnable, so the men staring across the headwaters of Mine Run felt that the proposed attack was doomed to failure. While the rest of the Union army bombarded the Confederate line and braced to support Warren's attack, Warren sent a message to Meade that he would not advance without peremptory orders from the army commander.

Meade was furious, proceeding to Warren's front and examining the Confederate lines himself. But he agreed with Warren's assessment, turned his army around and headed back across the Rapidan and into winter encampment. What Mackowski saw as the most significant aspect of the Mine Run Campaign was a factor that was not an echo of Fredericksburg at all. Whereas Burnside could not bring himself to cancel the attacks against Fredericksburg's stone wall once it became obvious they were failing miserably, Meade would not even attempt to assault Lee's strong Mine Run defenses. Meade knew that he would be criticized

for not trying to defeat Lee, but had the moral courage to risk being removed from command rather than send his men into what appeared to be a certain slaughter.

Ongoing Reminder

Please contact Bob Jones to order your dinner in advance and to confirm your reservations
Call Bob @ 540-399-1702 or send your e-mail to cwrtedinner@yahoo.com or bobnpeg1954@gmail.com

The National Park Service Commemoration

On Saturday, December 9th and on Sunday, December 10th, join the National Park Service to commemorate the 155th Anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg with historical programs.

Our December Dinner Meeting

By Bob Jones

Our annual RVCWRT Auction will be held during our December dinner meeting: Items being Auctioned include; a 2018, Mort Kunstler Christmas Tree ornament; four (4) books signed by the author; two (2) Kunstler prints; a Stivers print; and a Lesser print; a cross-stitch from the Salem Church; and another 8 framed CW related prints. Please come that night and bid on these great holiday gift items.

RVCWRT 2018 Slate of Candidates

The RVCWRT Nominating Committee (Marc Thompson as chair, Conway Richardson, and Scott Walker) presented the 2018-2019, slate of candidates at our November dinner meeting. Voting will take place at our January dinner meeting:

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|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| President/Dinner Meetings: | Bob Jones | Scribe: | Greg Mertz |
| Vice president/Programs: | John Sapanara | Member-at-Large: | Robin Donato |
| Secretary: | Melanie Jordan | Member-at-Large: | John Griffiths |
| Treasurer: | Bob Pfile | Member-at-Large: | Barbara Stafford |
| Asst. Treasurer: | Ben Keller | | |

RVCWRT Credit Card Acceptance

By Ben Keller

Overview: The Executive Committee of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table has determined that credit cards shall be accepted, and has commissioned this research. This briefing discusses current types of credit cards and credit card systems, the pro's and con's of these types as they relate to current RVCWRT routine processes, makes a considered recommendation for Executive Committee discussion, and highlights concerns and potential issues of which the Round Table officers will need to be aware.

Executive Summary: Credit Card technology, as with all computer systems, is rapidly changing. The Round Table membership age is also changing, and new members are less likely to carry checkbooks or cash. The commonality of Round Table membership (focused on the American Civil War) contrasts with the diversity of membership ages. Many current members do not use a smart phone or they are only marginally competent in its use. The types of credit cards in use today are dominated by Master Card and Visa brands, but outlying brands (American Express, Discover, ABN, EC, etc.) are many. Most credit card systems in use today require a battery-powered internet communication, or a powered dedicated connection.

The Overview: The Executive Committee of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table has determined that credit cards shall be accepted, and has commissioned this research. This briefing discusses current types of credit cards and credit card systems, the pro's and con's of the types as they relate to current RVCWRT routine processes, makes a considered recommendation for Executive Committee discussion, and highlights concerns and potential issues which the Round Table officers need to be aware. One-time costs vary from less than \$100 to over \$300, depending on the system type acquired. On-going costs vary to over \$1.00 per transaction, depending on transaction size, card-type accepted, system used, and processor used for transactions. These costs are covered in detail in following paragraphs.

Technology: As briefly mentioned above, is changing rapidly. One banker we talked with opined the current paper check systems will disappear within ten years, with physical credit cards gone in a further ten years. Retinal/iris imaging and/or facial recognition will eliminate security issues (hah!). One company, Coinizy, already offers a Visa debit card with Bitcoin transactions. Chip-readers and phone-payment are the current 'big changes,' but more changes are in progress, including phone-based ATM systems and virtual on-line transactions. Many of these changes are being made in the search for greater security against thieves, yet

thieves (including scammers) seem to be only a half-step behind. This all goes to say that whatever system is adopted by the RVCWRT, needs to be monitored for utility and will likely require upgrading at some point. The acceptance of credit cards by the RVCWRT is assumed to substitute only for acceptance of cash and checks, only for members or attendees of RVCWRT events. The close relationships among persons within the RVCWRT minimizes security issues. Bob Pfile reports that in the five years he has been active in RVCWRT finances, we have NEVER had a bad check (e.g., fraudulent). Use of a RVCWRT system that expands to debit cards, internet/website use, strangers, etc. will magnify risks and are specifically ruled out by this recommendation. If the ExCom determines any of these restrictions are excessive, a different system than that recommended may be required for adequate security.

Use of a credit card system by any/all members of the current ExCom Finance Committee (Bob Pfile, Barb Stafford, the writer) will require written operating procedures and training. These procedures and training need to be couched in plain English, not requiring vocabularies based on smart phone apps and internet acronyms. Introduction of persons to the Finance Committee more fluent in those vocabularies could change the recommendation.

Summarizing the Executive Summary: The credit card system adopted by the RVCWRT needs to be chosen based on current technology, one-time and on-going cost minimization, fraud concerns, and make-up of the current Finance Committee.

Credit Card Acceptance Necessity: As the ExCom discussion revealed, use of cash and checks by the American population is becoming less as time goes on. The RVCWRT is constantly attempting to increase its membership, and understands that the future of our club depends in large part on attracting younger members. At the same time, this group of younger people that the RVCWRT is targeting is especially keen adopters of non-cash non-check payment systems. Given these flows by both the American population and the RVCWRT, acceptance of credit cards is a necessity.

Types of Credit Cards: There are dozens of credit cards in use in the world today, not counting the hundreds of brand-cards associated with certain retail enterprises such as gas stations, airlines, etc. The types most common in the USA are Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express. Each of these four main companies have different but similar policies and rules (e.g., fraud protection, extended warranty, rental car insurance, etc.), methods of reconciliation and charge-backs, and transaction rates. American Express has a relatively costly transaction rate, and Discover also charges a small premium over Visa and MasterCard. Visa had 50.6%, MasterCard 22.6%, American Express 22.9%, and Discover 4% of all U.S. credit card transactions in 2016. The transaction rates applicable to the RVCWRT will be approximately 1.5%, with Amex approximately double this. In addition, our payment processor will also charge a fee for each transaction. A payment processor is the Company that takes the money from the credit card association and puts it into our bank account. Processors are multitudinous, with bargain basement outliers continually launching and disappearing. The bank with our account will probably perform the payment processing for a relatively high fee per transaction, approximately 30 cents with proof of our IRS non-profit 501(c)3 status.

Officially a Manual Imprinter: These have been in use since the late 1960's, types of Credit Card Acceptance Systems. The device affectionately nicknamed the '*knuckle buster*' or '*zip zap*' is, when embossed credit cards began to be issued. As late as 1974, this writer received a credit card issued by a department store that had no numbers on it. Beginning in 2003, some consumers were issued un-embossed cards, but these still have numbers on them and a signature block on the back. In many third world countries, including the hinterlands of China, knuckle busters are still the only method of credit card acceptance. Last year, when Ed Bearss spoke to the RVCWRT, Eastern National sold his books using a knuckle buster. A knuckle buster, initial pack of self-carbon paper slips, and imprinted merchant plate costs less than \$30.00. Replacement sales slips cost \$3.35 per 100. If a bank change or other event occurs, a new imprinted plate costs approximately \$15.00. The process involved is to place an embossed card on the machine with a filled in self-carbon slip installed, roll it, have the consumer sign the pack, check the signature and/or ID, give the consumer the bottom copy and keep the top copy. At the end of the night or the next day, call the 800 merchant number provided by the processor chosen, enter the numbers from the retained slips via your phone, and, voila, 24 hours later the money (less transaction costs) is in your account. Un-embossed cards require numbers to be written on a self-carbon slip. No electricity, wi-fi, or internet is required at point of sale.

Payment Terminals: Point of Sale or *POS Systems* range from simple to esoteric, with costs ranging from approximately \$60 (refurbished Verifone) to over \$700 per machine (VIVOpay Kiosk II). Transaction costs amazingly are similar to the knuckle buster. These systems typically allow swipe, chip, and/or manual keyed entry, late addition of gratuities, will transmit the data for approval via dedicated phone/internet, will allow rejection and telephone inquiries, caching for later printed reports, and thermal or other paper printouts. These all require internet connections and routine preventive maintenance/paper and ink replacement. Highly publicized security breaches of these systems have caused them to become more and more

disfavored (think Target or add-on scanners at the gas station). Even ATM's are being threatened by hackers, with Wells-Fargo just announcing a change to one-time passwords for smart phone users.

Computer/cell phone systems: Typically these systems require some type of collection hardware (i.e. Ryan's Square) or RFID/NFC technology that allows contactless communication. Although much more secure than POS terminals, hackers have been ingenious when open or barely encrypted communication systems have been used (i.e., public Wi-Fi, older internet protocols). Costs of the collection hardware are minimal (Square \$6.45 at Amazon, USB reader \$17.45, etc.) but either a smart phone, tablet, or computer is required, with data contract, air card, and/or Wi-Fi connection. Plus, of course, familiarity with the hardware, applications, data contract, reports, etc. Samsung Pay, Apple Pay, and similar systems will likely be our preferred method of the near future to at least partially replace these systems. Retinal scanning or facial recognition is approaching.

Recommendation: Given the state of current technology, relative costs, type of membership, and current make-up of the Finance Committee, I recommend we acquire a Manual Imprinter and begin to use it for routine RVCWRT sales of goods and services. Given approval of this recommendation with its restrictions and As noted below, we should be able to implement it within 30-45 days. Restrictions and Prerequisites 1) As with everything else associated with the RVCWRT, trust is required with this change. We will always need to err in favor of the member, and rectify any mistakes quickly and completely, with sincere apologies. Change is hard, and this change may excite some members more than others. 2) We need to accept Master Card and Visa credit cards only, no Discover, American Express, or other cards. We don't want to accept debit cards initially. These restrictions may be relaxed at a later date, after we have more experience with plain vanilla cards. 3) Strangers, e.g. people with no connection with the RVCWRT or its members, must be banned from using credit cards, or from charging more than some agreed limit (\$30.00)? Thieves today are numerous, they love credit cards, thus require precautions. 4) A standard operating procedure must to be written before 1st use of the machine. All members of the Finance Committee and anyone else who may need to operate the system need to be thoroughly trained in the SOP. Routine operation of the machine is simple, it's the exceptions/issues that can destroy trust.

References: This is intended as a briefing, not a formal paper meant for general publication. Thus no footnotes, weblinks, trademarks, or copyrights have been incorporated. Most of the information shown here is from personal experience, Wikipedia, conversations with a professional banker and friends, or the Amazon website. Should a purported fact shown above be disputed, please contact the writer for backup. If one of this writer's opinions be disagreed with, please accept my apology.

RVCWRT 2018 Memberships are due

By Jim Smithfield

Please note your next year's dues for membership renewal can be paid upon check-in at the front table at Brocks. As a reminder our 2018 dues are:

\$45.00 for a family membership
\$35.00 for an individual membership
\$10.00 for a student membership

RVCWRT Scheduled Speakers for 2018

By John Sapanara

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| January 8 | Geoff White: | "Ex Uno Disce Omnia - The Wartime Experience of Orson W. Bennett" |
| February 12 | Gil Gibson: | "The Confederate Marine Corps" |
| March 12 | Carolyn Elstner: | "Burying the Dead - J. Horace Lacy and the Founding of the Fredericksburg Confederate Cemetery" |
| April 9 | Joseph Rose: | "Grant Under Fire - An Expose' of Generalship and Character in the American Civil War" |
| May 14 | Tom Perry: | "Brothers in Arms - J.E.B. Stuart and his Brothers" |
| June 11 | Gary Castellino: | "Whatever Happened to Pemberton? The Life and Times of John C." |
| July 9 | Ed Bearss: | "Nathan Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Fort Pillow" |
| August 13 | Richard Lewis: | "Cloaked in a Mystery - Confederate Generals and Their Uniforms" |
| Sept. 10 | Peter Maugle: | "Medal of Honor Stories from Area Battlefields" |
| October 8 | Daniel Davis: | "George Crook and the Battle of Fisher's Hill" |
| November 12 | Bruce Venter: | "Custer vs Kilpatrick in 1863" |
| December 10 | Michelle Hamilton: | "I Would Still Be Drowned in Tears - Spiritualism in the Lincoln White House" |

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 individuals, \$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:

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|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| President/Dinner Meeting: | Bob Jones | Webmaster: | Dan Augustine |
| Vice President: | John Sapanara | Membership: | Ryan Quint |
| Secretary: | Ben Keller | Research/Historian: | Joyce Darr |
| Treasurer: | Bob Pfile | Member at Large: | John Griffiths |
| Assistant Treasurer: | Barbara Stafford | Member at Large: | Conway Richardson |
| Meeting Scribe: | Greg Mertz | Member at Large: | Paul Stier |
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