

Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

December, 2000

NEWSLETTER

Editor: George Slaton

THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN

An Evening With
EDWIN C. BEARSS

Thursday, December 14
St. Andrew's On-The-Sound Episcopal Church
Social Hour 7:00 pm....Program 7:30 pm

Edwin C. Bearss, former Chief Historian of the National Park Service, long ago achieved a legendary status in the Civil War community. His matchless and memorable battlefield tours, his numerous publications on military history, his countless appearances and interviews on television have endeared him to everyone who has had the good fortune to meet him, to enjoy his inimitable style of presentation, and to marvel at his amazing and encyclopedic knowledge of Civil War history.

Born in 1923 in Billings, Montana, Ed Bearss joined the Marine Corps just after his high school graduation in 1941. He served with the First Marine Division on Guadalcanal and was subsequently selected to join the 3rd Raider Battalion, an elite combat group. He was so seriously wounded in action on New Britain that his recuperation in a military hospital required a two year stay. During his recovery, Ed immersed himself in CW literature, reading Douglas Southall Freeman's recently published *R.E. Lee* and *Lee's Lieutenants*.

At war's end, Ed received a degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and an M.A. in history from Indiana University. His master's thesis was on CSA General Patrick Cleburne. His first NPS position was historian at Vicksburg in 1955. During his service at Vicksburg, Ed led the effort to locate and raise the US ironclad, Cairo, from the Yazoo River. After retirement from an illustrious career, Ed continues as Special Assistant to the Director of Military Sites, National Park Service, and continues to actively raise awareness of battlefield preservation, serving as a consultant to elected officials and CW preservation groups.

Everywhere you look, you'll find something that Ed has published. If you go to Cowpens Military Park in SC, you'll find his published account of that decisive Revolutionary War battle. If you go to Richmond National Battlefield Park, you'll find his series of detailed troop movement maps of Malvern Hill. Among his other works are accounts of Nathan Bedford Forrest's victory at Brice's Crossroads MS, U.S. Grant's capture of Forts Donelson and Henry, and other engagements in Mississippi and Arkansas.

Ed's major work is the three-volume *The Vicksburg Campaign* (Morningside Press), the definitive account of the campaign which many historians consider the turning point of the War Between the States.

Our December program featuring Ed Bearss will be a real treat! We look forward to seeing each of you then!

BATTLE REPORT November 9 Meeting

Our members enjoyed a slide presentation and program on the history and recovery of the Confederate submarine, *CSS Hunley*, given by Mark Ragan. Raffle winners were Mary Royal, Wayne Brown, Beverly Blanton, Dan Geddie, Jack Kuske, and John Krohn. They received prizes donated by Ed Gibson, Rich Triebe, and Palmer and Mary Royal. Keep in mind that we continue to rely on your contributions for the monthly raffle, so look through your collection and find an item or two which you'd like to give to Mike Budziszewski who handles our raffle. A wonderful variety of refreshments was prepared and served by Mary Royal, Janine Van Der Molen, Joan Brown, and Bernice Carver! The refreshments continue to be coordinated by Karen Budziszewski and Nancy Fonvielle.

We must draw our members' attention to a most unfortunate incident which occurred at our November meeting. Karen Budziszewski's purse was stolen, resulting in the loss of innumerable items, only a few of which could be painstakingly replaced. This theft was deplorable enough, but we are most aggrieved because it affected two of our most active and generous members. So take a moment at the December meeting to share your concern with Karen and Mike and to thank them for their help at our monthly meetings. (Karen's purse, a large black cloth handbag which resembled a camera bag, was at the refreshment table along the wall near the entrance of the meeting room. If you recall seeing anyone carrying this bag, please report it to Mike and Karen, Home: 458-1370).

SABRE STROKES

The RT recently received a letter from Mort Kunstler, the well-known CW artist, urging support for HERITAGEPAC which was established in 1989 by Jerry L. Russell, the founder and chairman of Civil War Round Table Associates. HERITAGEPAC is the only political action committee registered with the Federal Election Commission which is concerned with battlefield preservation. Your financial contributions are not used for salaries or office overhead, but goes exclusively toward the cost of production, printing, and processing of mail to CW enthusiasts throughout the country, outlining actions that need to be taken to protect battlefields from urban sprawl and development. Gifts of \$5, \$10 or more are welcome. Send to HERITAGEPAC, Box 7281, Little Rock AR 72217. You can get on HERITAGEPAC's email list by contacting: heritagepac@aristotle.net.

The RT also received a current catalogue from Morningside Bookshop (Box 1087, Dayton OH 45401) which carries a full range of CW titles. Its Morningside Press has published Ed Bearss' work on Vicksburg, as well as numerous other CW books. Morningside also publishes *The Gettysburg Magazine* twice a year. Each issue contains eight to fifteen authoritative articles on the Battle of Gettysburg. A four-issue subscription is \$30. Another mailing came to us from The Longstreet Society (Box 191, Gainesville GA 30503, Ph. 404-531-0100, www.longstreet.org) The non-profit Society preserves Longstreet-associated sites in the general's postwar hometown of Gainesville and sponsors battlefield tours.

A recent note in *The Ramrod*, the newsletter of the North Carolina CWRT, gave news of the death of Rufus Barringer 82, the grandson of CSA General Rufus Barringer. Mr. Barringer of Rocky Mount NC spoke to the third meeting of our RT in January, 1995. The same issue announced the formation of a new CRWT in Durham. Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month. Look for the new web site of the Richmond VA CWRT at <http://members.tripod.com/~gcowardin/rcwrt>.

Mark your calendar for the March 2-4, 2001 Wilmington Campaign Conference and Tour led by Ed Bearss. Headquartered at the Hampton Inn, Landfall, the conference will include a dinner, a reception, and tours of battle sites and Oakdale Cemetery. The first 48 people who provide a paid registration will be guaranteed seats on the bus with Ed Bearss. For more information, contact Tommy King (O.763-7318 and H. 762-2930 or email HTKing@aol.com). You'll be hearing more about this event in the coming weeks.