

# Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

February, 2002

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bob Cooke

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**February 12 Meeting, St. Andrews On-The-Sound Episcopal Church  
Social Hour, 7:00p.m., Program, 7:30 p.m.**

## GETTYSBURG

**Dr. John Krohn will** speak at our next meeting on the battle of Gettysburg. Dr. Krohn, born in Cloquet, Minnesota, graduated from Carleton College (Northfield) and received his MD from the University of Minnesota. After an Internship (at St. Luke's) and Residency (at the Mayo Clinic), interrupted by tours of duty (Vietnam and the Middle East) with the Navy, he settled in Wilmington. Dr. Krohn is a member of many local organizations and will give a talk on one of his favorite subject, the battle of Gettysburg. Not only is he a Round Table Committee member, but is also a Licensed Battlefield Guide at Gettysburg! As this will be the last meeting before our Spring Trip (see insert), come prepared for a thorough examination of the battle and its participants!

**Have you been to the Graystone Inn recently?** Well, our Round Table has been invited to a reception and membership drive on Thursday, 28 Feb. (no charge, 5-7 p.m.) hosted by the **Lower Cape Fear Historical Society**. Wines and hors d'oeuvres will be served and there will be door prizes for new members (and those that bring new members!) Come by for a visit, 100 So. Third St.

**At our January meeting** Mr. Andrew Dupstadt, Assistant Site Manager at the *CSS Neuse* State Historic Site spoke about the Confederate gunboat's career during the '60's. The 18 and 1960's, that is! The construction of the vessel, he indicated, was reflective of the problems that beset the Confederacy. Of the 50 ironclads that were laid down, only 22 were completed, due in large part to a lack of skilled labor, iron, transportation and even seasoned timber. Construction of the *Neuse*, (of the same class as it's more famous sister the *Albemarle*) was begun at White Hall, (present-day Seven Springs) N.C. in October, 1862. Moved to Kinston in 1863, she finally steamed down the Neuse River in late April, 1864. As luck would have it, the *Neuse* grounded on a sand bar where it remained for a month. Inactive for nearly a year, it's last commander, Captain Joseph Price, fought a rear-guard action, later setting the vessel afire in the river at a location that became known as "Gunboat Bend." The *Neuse* remained at that spot for almost a century. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 1956 to remove the ship, but it wouldn't be until 1963 that the boat was literally pulled from the riverbed. Unfortunately, much of the boat was destroyed in the recovery. The State eventually gained control of the *Neuse* (three-fourths of the hull remain) and restoration efforts were begun. Now on display in Kinston along with over 15,000 artifacts found at "Gunboat Bend," the future of the boat is still in question. After surviving salvagers, vandalism, hurricanes and high water, the plans to build a new museum for the ironclad are stalled. Although it has been treated for preservation, humidity and temperature controls are vital to the conservation for future generations. Mr. Dupstadt indicated that even had the south been more successful in it's shipbuilding program it is highly doubtful that the outcome would have been different. As long as there are Managers like Andrew, the *Neuse* is in good hands!

**Well, it's official:** Member Wayne Carver contacted the Department of the Army with a question about Braxton and Fort Bragg. The response:

The post was named in honor of CAPTAIN Braxton Bragg, U.S. Army, an artillery officer from North Carolina who exhibited great skill and courage during the Mexican War. The same individual later became a general in the Confederate army, but the orders naming the fort explicitly named it for him in his earlier capacity.

## Naval Issues

As far as Civil War naval history is concerned, "out of sight, out of mind" seems to be the norm. There are no battlefields to examine; however, with both the *C.S.S. Hunley* and the *U.S.S. Monitor* in the news, (as well as other vessels) comes a renewed interest in the subject. So, for you nautically-minded members, here goes!

The latest on the *C.S.S. Hunley* is that there were only eight crew members aboard, not nine as had previously been thought. The sub had only seven cranking stations and remains of only eight people were found. Those remains will eventually be interred in Charleston's Magnolia Cemetery, where earlier crews are buried. The \$20 gold piece (a true "gold piece" of history) that Lt. Dixon carried was found and is said to be worth "millions." Inscribed with Dixon's initials, it also carries the legend "Shiloh April 6, 1862 My Life Preserver." Lt. Dixon's remains have been found and removed from the boat and the mystery as to why she sank still perplexes researchers. The skeletons of the other crew members were found seated at their cranks.

My wife and I were among those lucky enough to have visited the *Hunley* at the old Charleston Navy Yard (after Project Historian Mark Regan spoke to our Round Table, and yes, we had problems getting tickets!) and the first thing that struck me when I saw the boat was that it looked very much like a submarine. Many years ago in Germany, I saw a WWI "pigboat" of the German Navy and do you know what? They looked pretty similar (except for the batteries and that the *Hunley* was not as long as the U-boat). We've since learned that the *Hunley* could steer underwater because they had a compass and that it contained a depth gauge. Indeed, even the shape of the vessel was more "aerodynamic" than had previously been known.

What has always amazed and confounded me is the lack of credit that we give to our ancestors. Would you believe that as early 1852, the forerunner of a torpedo was invented? It was invented by an ingenious Yankee named W.O. Stone. Stone, who lived in Charlestown, Massachusetts developed what he called a "submarine rocket" which worked on the same principle of the "common air rocket." It was weighted down and buoyed up by a float, with a black powder head and sulphuric acid center. A "fusee" supplied the propulsion, "by means of which it was driven through the water." What if the technology of the Civil War mated those early torpedoes with the *Hunley*?

One last item on the *Hunley*. The Museum of Mobile, Alabama has obtained a replica of the boat (and also has artifacts from the *C.S.S. Alabama*) but the original vessel will be housed at the Charleston Museum. Mobile was where the *H.L. Hunley* was first constructed. [From *The Civil War News*; (Wilmington) *Tri-weekly Commercial*, August, 1852; *The Ramrod*, newsletter of the N.C. Civil War Round Table].

### And now on to other treasures of the deep...

"I went forward to the cabin and found water just above the soles of my shoes, which indicated there must be more than a foot of water in the vessel....all hands were put to bailing-bailing out the ocean, as it seemed....the *Rhode Island* (a vessel that had been towing the *Monitor*)...now lay her whole length against us...but not a man would be the first to leave his ship, although the captain gave orders to do so."

[*The (N.Y.) Times Herald Record*, July 25, 1999, quoting an account of the *USS Monitor's* sinking in 1862, written by Francis Butts, a crew member.]

Lost in a gale off Cape Hatteras in December 1862, the *USS Monitor* went down with sixteen crewmen. For many years, since being located in 1973, (by researchers from Duke University) the Union ship managed to thwart divers attempting to remove artifacts. At 230 feet deep, the vessel was safe from salvagers, but not from time, hurricanes and saltwater (and also depth-charging from WWII). After many false starts, U.S. Navy divers raised the engine, along with many other items. The wreckage is in danger of collapse, even though parts of it have been shored up. The steam engine, some thirty tons in weight, is said to be the best preserved from that period. It will be on display at the Mariner's Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, while undergoing conservation. The ship's anchor, successfully retrieved earlier, is already on display at the Museum. This ship was really at the center of naval evolution. Not only was it completely ironclad, but it relied totally on steam for power. Combined with a rotating turret it was, at the time, the cutting edge of naval technology. I guarantee you that it will be found to be more advanced than was thought. It has already been determined that the vessel's head, (or toilet to you landlubbers) was "one of the earliest below-the-waterline-toilets on a ship"!!

## Directions

As you know, our spring trip deadline is fast approaching. All monies must be in by 19 February and your reservations made by 20 February. You will make your own way to Gettysburg, the travel time is just about eight hours. Dr. Krohn suggests the following route: I-40 to I-95. North on I-95 to I-295 (about 10 miles south of Petersburg, Va.) I-295 to I-95 north, to Fredericksburg, Va. Take the first exit (Hwy. 17 west, Warrenton) immediately after crossing the Rappahannock River. This exit will then split, you want to stay to the left, cross the overpass and exit to the right.

Continue on Hwy. 17 to Opal, Va., about 35 miles (4-lane highway). Make a right at Hwy. 15 north at Opal. About 2 miles past Battlefield Baptist Church (on your right), Hwy. 15 will turn left at a stoplight. Remain on 15 north to Gettysburg. You will pass through Leesburg, Va. And Frederick, Md. (do not take Business 15). In Leesburg, watch for 15, it takes a right turn just before you go under an overpass. In Frederick, Hwy. 15 will make a left turn. Continue north on 15 to the Baltimore Street exit for Gettysburg, where you will leave Hwy. 15.

Turn left at the exit stoplight and proceed into Gettysburg (3 miles). As you come over the top of Cemetery Hill (you will see the Cemetery gatehouse on your left) the Holiday Inn will be about one block ahead on your right. The telephone number of the hotel is: (Holiday Inn-Battlefield) 717-334-6211. Be sure to ask for the CFCWRT rate! This trip is shaping up as one of the best excursions ever!

(See the reverse side for the itinerary)

## Gettysburg Battlefield Tour

**Thursday March 21-** Arrive at hotel on your own. Meet at 7:30 p.m. in the banquet room for a buffet dinner.\* After dinner Licensed Battlefield Guide and historian Paul Cooksey will talk about Daniel's Brigade engagement on Day 1.

**Friday March 22-**Board a tour bus\* at 8:00 a.m. for an overview of the entire battle by C.F.C.W.R.T. member (and also Licensed Battlefield Guide) Dr. John Krohn. After a box lunch\* at noon, John will lead us on a walk of the advance by the N.C. 26<sup>th</sup> and Iverson's Brigade. Dinner will be back at the hotel with a set menu.\*

**Saturday March 23-**We will board the bus\* again at 8:00 a.m. with local tour guide Dr. Charles Fennell, who will lead us on a tour of Culp's Hill and the North Carolina troops in action there. A box lunch\* will be served at noon on the bus. The afternoon is optional, feel free to tour the town of Gettysburg (visit the Cyclorama, the Visitor's Center, or go shopping) or continue touring the battlefield; Avery's advance against East Cemetery Hill (Day 2); walk Pettigrew/Trimble's advance in Pickett's Charge. Dinner Saturday night \* will be at the historic Monford Farm. Located two miles from town, it was the site of a field hospital set up for Confederates wounded at Culp's Hill.

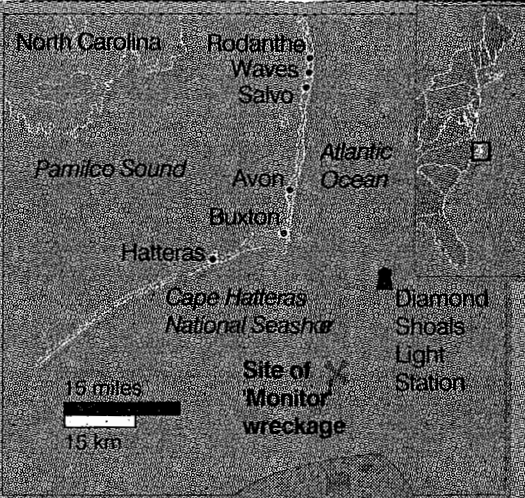
**Sunday March 24-**The tour is over and you may leave for home at your own schedule.

\* The tour includes dinner for three nights, box lunches on Friday and Saturday, the tour bus and local guides. The price is \$150. Per person, based on a minimum of 30 signing up for the tour. The maximum number of persons we can take is 45. Spouses wishing to attend only the dinners and speakers (Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights) can be accommodated for \$75.

(See the front side for directions)

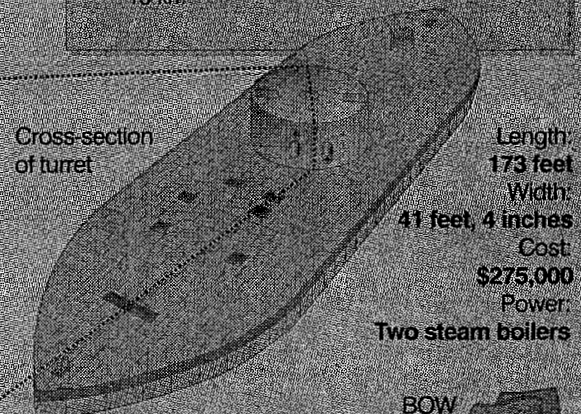
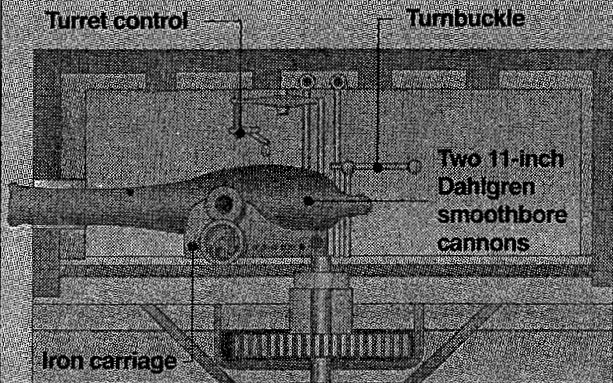
# Recovering the Monitor

Designed by John Ericsson, and launched on Jan. 30, 1862, the Monitor paved the way for steam-powered ironclads to replace wooden battleships. Famous for its battle with the Confederate ironclad, Virginia (formerly the Union Merrimack) at Hampton Roads, the ship was sunk in a storm off the coast of North Carolina on Dec. 31, 1862, taking 16 crew members with it. Since the Monitor's discovery in 1973, scientists have documented the rapid deterioration of its metal, creating an urgency to recover items from the wreckage. A look at the Monitor:



## A MILITARY FIRST

One of the many innovations incorporated into the design of the Monitor was the revolving gun turret. A look at the turret:



## MAJOR PHASES OF RECOVERY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration proposed a recovery plan that would bring key components of the ship to the surface for preservation at the cost of approximately \$22 million. A look at the proposed plan:

The Monitor rests 230 ft. below the surface

Rudder support and two-ton propeller recovered Friday

Remove armor belt and parts of hull to clear space to lift turret

Retrieve the steam engine

Recover small artifacts around the hull

Lift turret with support cradle that will be wedged underneath

Shore up ship's port side with sandbags, jacks and grout bags to support the hull, which is suspended up to 10 feet above the sea floor

Collapsed midships bulkhead

STERN

BOW

Original turret site

View from stern

Turret

Seabed

(Above, from *The Wilmington Morning Star*)

For more information on this story on the internet, go to [www.oceanexplorer.noaa.gov](http://www.oceanexplorer.noaa.gov)

## Other Shipwrecks...

There is the *U.S.S. Maple Leaf* which was discovered in 1984 in about eight feet of mud, near Jacksonville, Florida. To date, more than 30,000 artifacts have been recovered, including papers, books, photos, clothing and leather goods. For one researcher, the find solved a battlefield puzzle. Dr. Lawrence E. Babits (George Washington University) has determined that soldiers were not accidentally dropping the bullets, but were probably throwing them away. After examining several cases of bullets recovered from the site, it was discovered that many of those manufactured in 1861 had a larger diameter than those made in 1863. In 1863, he reported, "federal arsenals made bullets 1/100 of an inch smaller" to more easily fit a rifle barrel.

The *Black Warrior*, a part of North Carolina's Mosquito Fleet, was sunk in the Pasquotank River and is now being examined by students and staff from East Carolina University. Before the war, a commercial schooner, it was converted into a gunboat to protect Elizabeth City. [*The ECU Report*, Summer, 2001]

The *C.S.S. Alabama* has been in the news recently. A joint research effort, between France and the United States is underway (the Alabama was discovered in French territorial waters). Already, "deck lights, dishes, stoneware, cups, coins," as well as a cannon and an antler have been recovered! ECU sources reported that "Capt. Raphael Semmes and his officers... were invited to go big-game hunting during a brief visit to Cape Town," [South Africa]. The antler "could be from a Spring Bok or some other South African animal." [*The ECU Report*, Fall, 2000]

**Our Raffle winners were:** *Campaigns of the Civil War*, Dr. Carl Rust; *The Zulu War*, Richard Long; *Civil War Medical Equipment*, Richard Covell; *Mathew Brady's Civil War*, Ed Russ; *Century war Book*, Polly Rust; *C.S.S. Neuse, A Question of Iron and Time*, John Burns.

## Fort Anderson

**It was hard work**, but all agreed the results were astounding! Fifteen stalwart members, disregarding the threat of rain, met at Fort Anderson on Saturday to begin restoration (that's the wrong word, we did no restoration, merely clearing away years of undergrowth.) Shortly after ten, the group made it's way to Battery "A." It was quickly apparent that the gun chambers and ramparts were pretty much indistinguishable from the surrounding forest, but soon the sounds of chainsaws and trimmers were heard and the thick underbrush was slowly peeled away. One of the first discoveries was the collapsed entrance to the bombproof or powder magazine. When the sounds of modern tools were diminished (tightening chains or changing blades) one could almost imagine being back in 1862 (especially those of us with bushogs or machetes!) We soon worked our way up to the top of the mound, which overlooked the Cape Fear River! About that time, a tugboat towing a barge, following the same channel that blockade runners would have, passed within one hundred yards of where we stood. During the War, that channel was further obstructed by torpedoes.

But it was soon back to work and by mid-afternoon the growth had been cleared away, revealing a pristine mound, rampart and gun chamber! All agreed the work was well worth the sight. Congratulations to the following who participated (especially Capt. Reinheimer, who celebrated his eighty-first birthday with us at Fort Anderson!):

Sam Daniluk	Mike Budizewski	Bruce Patterson	Walter Reinheimer
Majel Reinheimer	Chris Fonvielle	Ed Russ	Palmer Royal
John Moore	John Krohn	Bob Cooke	Dale Lear
Bob Quinn	Richard Bellows	Dan Geddie	