



The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

The *RUNNER*

Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor **Bob Cooke**

January 2006

Our next meeting is on Thursday, 12 January - St. Andrew's On-The-Sound Social Hour 7:00 p.m. Meeting 7:30 p.m.



Our speaker for January will be L.J. (“Kim”) Kimball, who hails from Lajunta, Colorado. The son of a career Air Force officer, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1965 and went on to receive a Masters degree in Nuclear Physics from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School; he is also a graduate of the Naval War College. Kim retired as an infantry officer from the U.S. Marine Corps in 1991, having commanded units from Platoon to Battalion and garnered specialties as a Parachutist, Ordnance System Engineer and Foreign Area Specialist.

After retiring, Kim settled in Onslow County where he continues to promote the history and proud heritage of that County. He is the author of three books dealing with local history and currently has two additional works in progress. He sits as a member of the N.C Civil War Tourism Council, the Onslow County Museum Foundation and vice-chairman of the Onslow County Museum Advisory Board. Kim is also the past president of the Civil War Round Table of Eastern North Carolina, the Onslow County Historical Society and vice-chairman of the Onslow County Tourism Advisory Board. He is a charter member of Camp 1302 of the SCV. Kim has been selected as the Historian for the proposed Marine Corps Museum of the Carolinas. He and his wife, the former Dorothy Bumar of Latrobe, Pa. Have five children. The topic of his talk will be “Cushing’s New River Raid,” (the subject of one of his books.)

We hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We are looking forward to another great RT year as well!

Upcoming News!

There are several events taking place in the near and immediate future. One is the annual reenactment of the battle of Fort Fisher. This will take place on Saturday, January 14th and will begin at 10 a.m. There will be artillery and musket demonstrations (artillery will fire on the hour, muskets on the half-hour) and please remember to take a look at the Armstrong gun behind the Visitor's Center. It will soon be heading back to Trophy Point (at West Point.) The firing will be interrupted for a short time for Bobby and Marsha's wedding (about 2:45 p.m.)

In February there will likewise be a reenactment at Forks Road (behind the Louise Wells Cameron Art Museum.) This will take place on the last weekend in February. Our RT has a special interest in this as we took up the mantle of preservation and worked to clear and restore the earthworks constructed there. We will (soon) head out to further restore the site, probably sometime in March. We will be seeking volunteers for the day, stay tuned for more information.

Our speaker for December, Tonia Smith, gave an excellent presentation on her latest article, ("Gentlemen, You Have Played This Daed Well") which appeared in the August issue of North and South Magazine. What may well have been a "lark" that two Confederate officers started out on, quickly turned deadly serious when they were charged with spying for General Braxton Bragg in Tennessee. Col. Orton Williams and Lt. Walter Peters were two unlikely spies. Dressed in Union uniforms, however, they may well have been attempting to penetrate General William S. Rosecrans lines to determine what he was up to in the spring of 1863. What made matters more important to both sides was the fact both men were cousins of General Robert E. Lee. Ms. Smith pointed out that their arrival at Fort Granger aroused suspicion from everyone except the commanding officer, (Col. J.P. Baird) especially since they wore havelocks, an item of clothing long since discarded by Federal soldiers in the field. Upon being discovered, (after having secured passes to continue their journey) they were arrested and quickly court-martialed (a court was convened within an hour!) Although the two maintained their innocence, they were found guilty of spying and condemned to death. The telegraph lines heated up as messages from the fort to the headquarters at Nashville went back and forth. A Union officer who had recognized Williams as a pre-war member of his unit tried unsuccessfully to prevent the execution. Finally ordered to "hang them," Colonel Baird was also ordered not to send any more messages to Nashville. The following day, the men were brought out in front of the garrison and were hung. Williams, it was said, took more than twenty minutes to die; at one point, he lifted himself up by his hands in a vain attempt to free himself. The repercussions were not as great as many thought they should have been. Indeed, Lee, upon hearing the news, initially stated that they got what they deserved. Upon reflection, Lee became angry and assumed the hanging was a retaliatory measure because before the war, Williams had been an aide to General Winfield Scott. William's sister, however, took a different tack. Once a year (every year) she wrote Rosecrans to tell him he was a murderer!**

From The Civil War News- Plans are in the works to restore "Ellwood [the] battlefield house used as a Union headquarters. Stonewall Jackson's amputated arm is buried in the family cemetery at Ellwood." the money, \$165,000, will be used to restore the parlor, entry hall and the north room on the first floor. Presently, the walls are in poor condition; for more information write: FOWB, P.O. Box 756, Locust Grove, Va. 22508-0576 (or www.fowb.org)

