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# The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

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## The *RUNNER*

### Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor **Bob Cooke**

September 2009

Our next meeting will be Thursday 08 October 2009 at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound  
(Airlie Rd.)

Social Hour at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30 p.m.

"Summer Edition"



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Once again **Mr. Tom Belton** of the North Carolina Museum of History will address our Round Table, this time on the subject of the museum's flag collection. The N.C. Museum of History has the "second largest collection of Confederate flags in a single collection. Titled "The Civil War Flag Collection in the North Carolina Museum of History", his program will examine North Carolina state flags, Confederate first and second national pattern flags, battle flags, company flags, captured Federal flags, as well as flags of post-war organizations and recent acquisitions.

Mr. Belton is a native of Surry County who attended public schools in Raleigh and received his BA and MA from NC State, has worked at the museum for 31 years. Tom, married with a daughter who lives in Atlanta, also informs us that he had ancestors who served in Company H (the "Mountain Tigers"), 21st Regiment N.C. State Troops.

Interestingly, Mr. Belton, military curator at the museum, was in the news recently. The museum donated a captured Civil War flag of the First Rhode Island Cavalry back to the Rhode Island National Guard, "in the hopes the gesture will be reciprocated." The Fifth N.C. Cavalry had made the capture in June 1863. Rhode Island soldiers captured a North Carolina flag at the battle of New Bern in March 1862 and it is this flag it is hoped will be returned to North Carolina. Please join us as Mr. Belton discusses several of the many flags in the collection!

## Raffle Winners:

*Oldest Living CSA Widow*- Tim Barton; *John Brown* - Ed Hickmon *Robert E. Lee*- John Bolger; *Civil War Curiosities*- Tom O'Donnell *Gettysburg*- Mary Royal; *Confederate States Navy*- Gary Henderson

And the winner of our grand prize, *Louis Froelich: Arms Maker to the Confederacy*- **Dick Covell**.

Thanks to those who donated the raffle items and also to **Becky Sawyer** .and **Ed Hickmon**. who generously gave up their prizes!

Member **Jack Travis** has informed us that on (Saturday) 24 October, at the gravestone of Major James Reilly in Oakdale Cemetery (Section H, 10E) there will be a ceremony at the placement of a military marker to honor Major Reilly's memory. The dedication will take place at 10 A.M...

Reilly, it will be recalled, was an Ordnance Sergeant in the "Old Army" at the outbreak of war and it was he who surrendered the keys to Fort Caswell (after obtaining a receipt for the ordnance in the fort!) and who later joined the CSA and rose to the rank of Major. When Colonel Lamb was wounded at the Second Battle of Fort Fisher, Reilly assumed command "and covered himself with glory at the fall." Descendants, the UDC, SCV and Military Order of the Stars and Bars will be on hand, as well as Confederate reenactors from the 20th N.C. State Troops. Jack has told us that a "full Confederate military salute will be given by the reenactors, Adams Battery and the Fort Fisher cannon cockers. Member John Golden will provide the music.

## Blockade Running- An Island Perspective.,

At our last meeting. **Mr. Jeff Bockert** spoke to us about an interesting aspect of blockade running- the Caribbean islands where the transshipments occurred. How those blockade running goods actually got to Wilmington was discussed. Covering Nassau in the Bahamas and St. George (Bermuda), Mr. Bockert stated that virtually all the goods that came to Wilmington came from the islands.



Nassau, which was really a "backwater" of the British Empire, was garrisoned by nearly 1,000 British troops. The islands were financially destitute with "wrecking" a major business. Many of the colonist were former Southerners who fled the U.S. after the American Revolution and were thus, very pro-Confederate.

Ships coming from England were quick to learn that by stopping first at New York, they could obtain the required customs clearance and then continue on unmolested to the islands. When the Union government found out what was happening, they then required a large bond to ensure the vessel would not divert their cargo to a Southern port.

Early in the war, ship's captains carried out the trade arrangements, by 1862, agents were sent abroad to supervise (and safeguard) government cargoes. Throughout the war, ship's captains (and many times the crew) were allowed their own space on board, giving them a larger stake in the business, in addition to their pay.

**The amount of money passing through the islands transformed them. Property values went up, sailors spent freely while captains and Confederate officials "wined and dined" merchants at the Royal Victoria Hotel (which is still extant) in Nassau. One visitor reported that so many languages were heard there that it was like the "Tongues of Babel."**

**When Wilmington fell in February 1865, there were several vessels prepared to make the run to Wilmington. "The islands role in the struggle was invaluable and the rewards received in return were no less valuable to their welfare and no less fleeting."**

**The islands economy suffered greatly and they returned to the backwater they once were, although there was resurgence during the era of prohibition. The islands were once again used as a port of transshipment for contraband cargoes of alcohol.**

