

THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER

PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

[HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/](http://www.pscwrt.org/)
FEBRUARY, 2012

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, February 9, 2012

China Harbor, 2040 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, Washington

Time: Social hour at **6 p.m.**; Dinner served at **7 p.m.**; Program at **8 p.m.**

MENU CHOICES: Mongolian Beef, Chicken or Salmon

Dinner includes: salad, vegetable delight, General Tao's chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit. **Cost is \$21 for adults and \$10 for those under 18 (student rate), payable at the door, but reservations and meal choices are required.**

To make reservations and meal choices:

Call **Rod Cameron at 206-524-4434** and let him know what entrée you would like and how many will be attending.

Deadline for reservations is 12 NOON on Tuesday, February 7.

NOTE: *Remember to turn off cell phones before the meeting so there are no distractions for the speaker. Thank you!*

RETIRED BRIGADIER GENERAL PARKER HILLS WILL DISCUSS "RECEDING TIDE: VICKSBURG AND GETTYSBURG, THE CAMPAIGNS THAT CHANGED THE CIVIL WAR", the award-winning book Hills co-authored with Ed Bearss,

arguing that the outcome of the war was determined in the first seven months of 1863. The author of *A Study in Warfighting: Nathan Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Brice's Crossroads* and the co-author of *Vicksburg Campaign Driving Tour Guide*, General Hills operates Battle Focus, conducting military staff rides of battlefields for officers and men of US and British armed forces. More information? See <http://battlefocus.com/aboutbf.htm>

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

The following is information concerning you and the PSCWRT. Please read and take notice.

Dues and the Round Table

The PSCWRT is a non-profit organization that relies on membership dues to operate. The good news is that most of our members regularly pay their dues. But recently, a board member was reviewing the roster and realized that 40% of the members on our current roster have not paid dues this season! That amounts to 35 members/families.

Most of our dues revenue go to pay for our monthly speakers, some of whom need to be paid for airfare and lodging while in town. Out of the \$21 dinner fee, only \$1 goes back into the treasury- the rest goes to China Harbor. The monthly door prizes and annual auction only supplement our dues. If you have not paid your dues for the 2011-2012 season, please do so at the next meeting or send it to our treasurer. Contact information is at the end of this newsletter.

Membership and dues will be a major topic at the upcoming Board of Directors meeting on February 20th.

By-Law change and election of New VP Successor at January Meeting

The position of Vice-President Successor has been vacant. David Palmer had agreed to be nominated as the new Vice-President Successor, but the requirements within the bylaws would not have allowed him to step into the role of President until the fall of 2013! In order to change this, President Dick Miller wrote up a new section to the bylaws, allowing the board to have the flexibility to “call for a special election whenever there is a vacancy on the board”. At the January meeting, held on the 12th, this was put to a vote and the members present overwhelmingly approved the new bylaw. Immediately following that vote, David Palmer was elected as our new VP Successor, with his term ending in May. David will take up the mantle of President this coming September! CONGRATULATIONS to David and a big “THANK YOU” to the members who were able to come to last month’s meeting and make it happen.

Annual Auction Announced

Sorry, couldn’t resist the alliteration. It was announced at the January meeting that this season’s Annual Auction for the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table will be held at the April 2012 Member Meeting. As always, please do your best to collect and bring items to the auction that will sell and help add to the coffers of the Round Table. You may also be taking home some good things as well. Items that have sold well in the past are original and printed artwork, books and book series, sports tickets, pies and other baked goods. Details will be forthcoming, but start thinking about it now.

Member Beverly Gunkel won the portrait gallery contest on the PSCWRT website. She correctly identified all 19 of the Civil War generals and other personalities. Congrats, Beverly!

EDITOR’S NOTE: With the recent snowfall we had in Western Washington last week- with perhaps more to come- I thought it might be appropriate to look back on how some soldiers during the Civil War handled the snow. I hope you enjoy the article below, copied from the following website:

<http://civilwarstoriesofinspiration.wordpress.com/2008/09/20/rebel-snowball-wars-fighting-winter-boredom/>

Rebel and Yank Snowball Wars: Fighting Winter Boredom

By John E. Carey

At least four rare wintertime Civil War engagements remain footnotes in history, even though the scope and ferocity of these battles received mention in many diaries and journals of the soldier-participants.

Troops from Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Virginia and North Carolina fought bravely. In one of the engagements, about 8,000 troops faced each other. In another, some 10,000 combatants participated.

A soldier recorded one of the battles as “one of the most memorable combats of the war.”

Gen. Patrick Cleburne found himself a prisoner of war but escaped. He was recaptured, and a soldier wrote that his foes “called for a drumhead court-martial; others demanded a sound dunking in the nearby creek. Still others, mindful of Cleburne’s reputation as a stern

disciplinarian, insisted that the general be meted out his own customary punishment. The idea caught on and soon the whole brigade took up the familiar order: 'Arrest that soldier and make him carry a fence rail!' "

What were these four engagements? Snowball fights. Snowball fights between men of the Confederate Army.

One grand snowball fight engulfed Confederate troops near Rappahannock Academy in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, Va., on Feb. 25, 1863. Diaries show that 8 inches of snow fell on Feb. 19. Two days later, 9 more inches of snow fell. Feb. 25, 1863, brought sunny skies and milder temperatures. The snow on the ground softened until the ideal conditions for snowball-making infected the encamped soldiers. Participants say some 10,000 men were engaged.

Gen. Robert F. Hoke's North Carolina soldiers marched toward Col. W.H. Stiles' camp of Georgians. The attack force comprised infantry, cavalry and skirmishers. The fight began with a "severe pelting" of snowballs. Reinforcements from the commissary scurried to assist the brigade under attack.

Hoke withdrew his beaten soldiers. Col. Stiles then held a council of war on how best to counterattack Hoke's retreating revelers. He decided to organize his men and march directly into their camp, snowballs at the ready. But when Stile's forces arrived in Hoke's camp they were met by a force that had just filled its haversacks with freshly made snowballs. Hoke's men, "without the need to reload," beat back their attackers, taking many prisoners. The captured were "whitewashed" with snow.

Gen. Stonewall Jackson and his staff apparently witnessed the battle; but the teetotaling, Bible-thumping Jackson resisted the urge to participate in any merrymaking. One soldier remarked that he had wished Jackson and staff had joined the fight so he could have thrown a snowball at "the old faded uniforms."

Another grand snowball fight delighted Father James Sheeran and Confederate troops on March 23, 1864. Sheeran records this battle of some 8,000 men, probably near Orange Court House, Va. Eyewitnesses recorded the snowfall at 18 inches.

Chaplain Sheeran recorded the battle this way: "Lines were so regularly formed, the movements so systematic, the officers displaying so much activity at the head of their commands, their men fighting so stubbornly, now advancing on their opposing column, now giving way before superior numbers. ... At one time we would see a body of troops marching though an adjacent woods endeavoring to flank their enemy; soon a counter movement would be made. Now a charge and a yell and many prisoners captured. For nearly two hours this battle ... lasted."

On March 22, 1864, near Dalton, Ga., the troops from Arkansas found 5 inches of new snow, and a spontaneous snowball fight erupted all across the camp.

The men of Cleburne's Division from Lucius Polk's Brigade attacked Gen. Daniel C. Govan's Brigade. Here the famous Irish Gen. Cleburne suffered the embarrassment of capture, twice. This Georgia battle became a total melee. One Arkansas soldier recalled, "Such pounding and thumping, and rolling over in the snow, and washing of faces and cramming snow in mouths and in ears and mixing up in great wriggling piles together."

When it was all over, Cleburne authorized a ration of whiskey for all the troops, who huddled around huge bonfires singing and yelling “at the top of their lungs.”

More snow fell the next day and the snowball war continued. Rainy, snowy weather continued until March 31, when another huge engagement erupted. Commanding Gen. Joe Johnston organized an attack involving Gen. William J. Hardee’s Corps. Cleburne’s and Gen. William B. Bate’s divisions battled the troops of Gen. Benjamin Franklin Cheatham and Gen. William H.T. Walker. A small audience of ladies who had driven out from Dalton were delighted by the sheer joy of the scene.

One veteran recorded the day: “The noise was terrific and the excitement intense, but nobody was hurt ... except perhaps one of the cavalry men who was dismounted while charging a square of infantry.”

Most of Civil War camp life was neither joyous nor memorable, especially as the armies hunkered down for winter. But these snowball fights broke the monotony, increasing morale and camaraderie among the Confederate troops.

Great Snowball Fight of 1864: Dalton,GA

From: Stonewall of the West Patrick Cleburne and the Civil War

Occasionally the unpredictable March weather broke routine of camp life and interrupted the training schedule . On rare occasions it snowed and like children released from school , the troops treated any snowfall as an occasion for play. On March 22 dawn revealed a fresh 5 inches of new snow, and a spontaneous snowball fight broke out all across the camp. The men threw themselves into the fracas with enthusiasm. One Arkansas soldier recalled, “Such pounding and thumping, and rolling over in the snow, and washing of faces and cramming snow in mouths and in ears and mixing up in great wriggling piles together.” (Stephenson, Civil War Memoir) In Cleburne’s Div., Lucius Polk’s Brigade attacked Govan’s Brigade, pitting Arkansas against Arkansas, and Cleburne could not resist getting involved. He placed himself at the head of his old brigade and led the attack on Govan’s campsite. The snowballs flew thick and fast , and Govan’s men were getting the worst of it when they decided to launch a counterattack. They charged forward, no doubt yelling for all they were worth and Cleburne suddenly found himself a prisoner of war. After some tongue-in-cheek deliberation, his captors decided to parol their commander, and Claburne was released.

The snowball fight contined and Claburnes once again entered the fray. Atlas he was captured a 2nd time .. and this time his captors confronted him with mock solemnity about his violation of parole. According to one veteran, “Some called for a drumead court martial; others demanded a sound dunking in the nearby creek. Still others mindfull of Cleburne’s reputation as a stern disciplinarian, insisted that the general be meted out his own customary punishment. The idea caught on and soon the whole brigade took up the familiar order: ‘Arrest that soldier and make him carry a fence rail!’ ” Cooler heads prevailed, with Claburne’s defenders arguing that after all this was the 1st occasion on which he had been known to break his word and once again his captors granted him parole. When it was all over, Cleburne authorized a ration of whiskey to the troops , and they stood around great bonfires singing and yelling “at the top of their lungs” {Steve Davis “The Great Snowbattle of 1864”! CWTI (June 1976) }

More snow fell on the 23rd of March, provoking yet another snowball fight and rain and snow continued through the rest of the month. On the 31st a more serious sham battle occurred when Joe Johnston organized a mock engagement involving Hardee’s Corps. Cleburne’s and Bates’s Div. Squared off against those of Cheatam and Walker. It was a fine weather for a charge, and the troops entered the spirit of the drill, firing off a blank cartridge each, thrilling the small audiences of ladies who had driven out from Dalton to watch. One veteran recalled, “The noise

was terrific and the excitement intense, but nobody was hurt. . . except perhaps one of the cavalry men who was dismounted while charging a square of infantry.” That night, back in camp, it was peaches and cornbread again for dinner. (John S. Jackson Diary of A Confederate Soldier)

The following is an after action report of a snowball fight between the Third & Fourth Vermont and the Twenty-sixth New Jersey. Black eyes, bloody noses and all!

A snowball Battle – A soldier of one of the New Jersey regiment writes as follows:

“You are probably aware that the Second Brigade of this division consists of four Vermont regiments, besides the Twenty-sixth. During the late heavy fall of snow, the Vermonters twice made an attack on the encampment of the Twenty-sixth, sending a perfect shower of snow balls at the head of every luckless Jerseyman who made his appearance without his tent. The first attack was a complete surprise to us; but we essayed a sally from the camp, and drove the attacking party back to their reserves. Being heavily reinforced, they charged on us again, and after a desperate resistance we were driven back into camp, fighting absolutely from the shelter of our tents until darkness put an end to the contest. Our casualties were quite heavy, but those of the enemy, it is thought, exceeded ours. A few days afterwards the attack was renewed, but we took up a strong position on a hill in the rear of the camp and repulsed every assault of the foe. The snow crimsoned with blood issuing from the olfactory organs of the Vermonters, and the appearance of the battle-field indicated the fierce nature of the contest. The enemy raised a flag of truce, an armistice of a few hours was concluded, and then ensued that novel spectacle of war – men, who but a few minutes previous were engaged in one of the most sanguinary battles of modern times, harmonizing and fraternizing with clasped hands.

“But the matter did not rest. The night of the 24th had enveloped terra firma with its dusky shades. Many a waxen nose in the camps of the Second brigade snored sonorously, happily unconscious of its ruby discoloration on the morrow. Many an eye placidly closed in slumber was to be violently closed in battle ere the approach of another nightfall. And many a phrenological bump sparsely developed on the night in question was to be suddenly brought to an age of puberty on the approaching day. The eventful morning opened. Colonel Morrison sent a challenge to Colonel Seaver of the Third Vermont to engage in the open field at three o’clock P.M. The challenge was accepted, on the condition that the Fourth Vermont should be included with the Third. This was agreed to by the Colonel. Before the appointed time some of our men were detailed on fatigue duty, and at the time of the engagement we were only able to muster some three hundred men.

“Nothing daunted by the superiority of numbers, Colonel Morrison ordered Lieutenant McCleese of Company C (Captain Pemberton being sick) to fortify a small hill on our right, make as much ammunition as possible, and pile the snow balls in pyramids. This arduous duty was hastily performed. It was a strong position, a swollen brook at its base answering the purpose of a moat – too strong, in fact, for the Vermonters. The hills were covered with spectators, and the eagerness to witness the novel contest knew no bounds. Companies A and B were thrown out as skirmishers. Company E occupied the right, C was given the centre, and H rested on the left. The Colonel dashed over the field in all directions, encouraging the men to stand fast, amid the blue wreaths curling from a ‘brier wood’ nonchalantly held in his left hand, and the Adjutant danced about on a spirited charger, apparently impatiently awaiting the hour of contest, the light of battle dilating within his eyes, and a quid of ‘navy plug’ reposing beneath his cheek. Lieutenant Woods, of the ambulance corps, and Lieutenant ___ acted as mounted aids to the Colonel, while the ‘Sergeant’ and John K. Shaw, an aspiring Newark youth of eighteen, acted as perambulating aids. The line being formed and everything in readiness for the contest, a red flag was raised as a

signal, and in a breath of time a strong body of the enemy drove in our skirmishers, and fiercely attacked our centre. At the same moment another strong force advanced against our right, but only as a feint; for they suddenly wheeled to the right, and joined their comrades in a furious charge on our centre. Major Morris ordered up Company E from our right, but too late to be of any advantage, and they were completely cut off from the main body of our army. Although flanked and pressed in front by overwhelming numbers, our centre heroically contested the advance of the enemy. Animated by the presence of the Colonel, they fought like veterans, and the white snowballs eddied through the air like popping corn from a frying pan. But the enemy were madly surging upon us in superior force, and it was hardly within power of human endurance to stand such a perfect feu d'enfer any longer. Gradually the centre fell back inch by inch, the line then wavered to and fro, and finally the men broke in confusion and rolled down the hill followed by the victorious Vermonters. In vain the Colonel breasted the torrent; in vain the Major urged the men to stand fast; in vain the Adjutant White, the chivalric De Bayard of the Twenty-sixth, implore the gods for aid.

“The boys never rallied. Lieutenant Woods made an attempt to rally them and form them in hollow square on the fortified hill to the right, but he was mistaken by the boys for a Vermonter, and unceremoniously pelted from their midst. But the Colonel was not totally deserted by his men. The Vermonters seized his horse by the bridle, and made a desperate attempt to take him prisoner. The fight at this point was terrific beyond description. The men fought hand to hand. Colonel Seaver, the Achilles of the day, dashed through the combatants, seized Colonel Morrison by the shoulder, and called upon him to surrender. But his demand was choked by the incessant patter of snow-balls on his ‘physog.’ Around the rival chieftains the men struggled fearfully; there was the auburn-haired Hodge, alias ‘Wild Dutchmen’ fighting manfully. There was the fierce Teuton Captain of Company E, dropping the foe right and left at every swing of his arms; but all in vain. Amid the wild excitement consequent upon the shouting, the rearing, and plunging of horses, the Colonel was drawn from his saddle and taken by the enemy. Most of his ‘staff’ followed him as prisoners. A desperate attempt was made to rescue him, but it proved of no avail. Major Morris fared no better. Adjutant White, however, made a bold attempt to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Dashing into the dense ranks of the foe, he seized the bridle of Colonel Stoughton’s Bucephalus, and gallantly attempted the impossibility of capturing the Colonel, who was the acting Brigadier of the attacking party. But the adjutant had ‘caught Tartar,’ for the Vermonters rushed around him like the waves beating upon some lone rock in the ocean, and vainly clamored for his surrender. He fought like an Ajax mounted on a ‘Black Bass’, retaining his position in the saddle by resting his knees against the pommel. This was at last observed by a shrewd Yankee, who dexterously slipped between the two horses, detached the supporting knee, and the Adjutant fell from his lofty position like a tornado-stricken oak. This fall disheartened the Twenty-sixth, and only detached parties of a dozen, scattered over the field, persisted in an obstinate resistance. The ‘Sergeant’ received a solid shot in the back of the head, and was borne to the rear a captive, and then

‘The bugles sang truce.’

“Thus ended the great battle of Fairview; unequalled in desperateness, and the theme of many a future poet’s cogitations. Our loss was very heavy, and we were severely defeated. The spectators, acting on the well-known principle of kicking a man when he is down, pitched into us most unmercifully when our centre was broken, and prevented us from re-forming in line of battle. The slaughter of the enemy was fearful, and the prowess of the Newark ball players and fireman was displayed on their battered visages. Colonel Stoughton was honored with a black eye, and the gallant Seaver fared but little better. The following is a fair recapitulation of the casualties on both sides:

“Bloody noses, fifty-three; bunged peppers, eighty-one; extraordinary phrenological developments, twenty-nine; shot in the neck after the engagement, unknown.

“The Vermonters fought with the determined energy characterizing them when engaging Jeff’s myrmidons.”

p. 310-311

The Civil War in Song & Story

by Frank Moore

P. F. Collier, Publisher [1889]

WHAT’S NEW ON THE PSCWRT WEBSITE?

www.pscwrt.org

By Mike Movius, Webmaster

Several things have been happening with our online presence. First, we have a 10% increase in the number of people who “Like” us on Facebook. If you haven’t noticed, the Round Table is on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Puget-Sound-Civil-War-Roundtable/237302262964590>

Second, we continue to be contacted by those with similar interests. For example, Daniel Phillips of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Robert E. Lee Camp made contact to tell us about an event they are hosting at the Embassy Suites in Lynnwood in February. As a result, I created a new page called READER SUBMITTED. You can read about some things that are going on around us, and learn about new Civil War-related products and services.

Third, as a community interested in facilitating the interest and education about the Civil War, we continue to come in contact with new and interesting things. For example, Eric Running told me about a very interesting article in the New York Times and Mark Terry sent a link to a blog that claims to have located exactly where some of the most popular post-battle photographs were taken. So, I created a new page called MEMBER RECOMMENDED. Go to the website and see what your fellow members have discovered...then, share the things you find interesting with the rest of us.

THE “LAST WORD”

By Mark R. Terry

It is gratifying when two separate Civil War research projects actually end up coming together!

Since 1991, I’ve been researching the Civil War diary of Sgt. Barnabas James Lay of the 50th New York Engineers. After I gave a short presentation to the Round Table in 2000, Pat Brady gave me a copy of the diary of Sgt. James Snook, another member of the same regiment.

Meanwhile, in 1999, I began research on the battle of Bristoe Station, fought on October 14, 1863. That research was used by the Museum of the Confederacy to help ID two Confederate battle flags. Later, Dr. Earl J. Hess and Rod Gragg used the research in their books on North Carolina troops. My interest in Bristoe Station has continued since then, but always separate from my progression on the Lay and Snook Diaries of the 50th N.Y. Engineers.

That is, until last month...

I went to the local National Archives branch at Sand Point to find out if James Snook had applied for a pension. Given that Snook was from New York State, I expected his residence to be there. Instead, it was Virginia! Using Census records and the Internet, I found out he had lived in the vicinity of Bristoe Station. A few days after sending the Snook Family information to John Pearson, a historian who lives in the area, the following reply arrived via email:

Mark,

Your deed references were the key to an awesome discovery.

Eureka! The Chapel Springs Farm is the northern half of the northeast quadrant of the Bristoe Station Battlefield...The Alabama Cemetery (as well as the Mississippi Cemetery) was on this property.

The pieces are starting to fit together. I recall an account from someone who wanted to protect the Alabama Cemetery around the turn of the century who wished to purchase the cemetery plot, but were turned down by "a daughter of a Union veteran". This must have been Snook's daughter.

A very small world indeed!...

Regards and keep up the good work,

John

As members of this Civil War Round Table, we all have an interest in the War Between the States. It might be a certain campaign or battle, an ancestor who lived during that time, generals and politicians or perhaps some aspect of society in the 1860's. Whatever it is, I encourage you to find those special areas of interest, research them, and find out as much as you can. It is these sometimes small discoveries that add to the overall knowledge of what took place during this most crucial era in American History.

DUES & DONATIONS

Now that the new season is beginning, here is your third reminder that membership dues are payable either at the meeting or by mail: \$20 per individual, \$25 for a couple. Also, donations are gratefully accepted. These will help secure speakers for our meetings. Please note that all donations are tax deductible as the PSCWRT is a 501(c)3 organization. Contact Treasurer Jeff Rombauer, 425-432-1346, jeffrombauer@foxiinternet.com

We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the March, 2012 Washington Volunteer is Wednesday, February 22, 2012. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!

2011-2012 OFFICERS

Elected:*

President, Richard Miller, 425-201-3234 or 206-808-8506, Milomiller882@msn.com

Vice-President/Successor: David Palmer, davidpalmer7@comcast.net

Immediate Past-President Mark Terry, 425-337-6246, markimlor@comcast.net

Vice-President, Programming, Pat Brady, 206-246-1603, patsbrady@comcast.net

Vice-President, Newsletter, Mark Terry (info above)

Treasurer, Jeff Rombauer, 425-432-1346, jeffrombauer@foxiinternet.com

Secretary, Larry Jilbert, 253-891-4022, ljjclj@comcast.net

**Except for Immediate Past President, which is an automatic position.*

Elected Board of Directors:

Jim Dimond, 253-277-3783, shinodad@gmail.com

Mike Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Rick Solomon, ricksolo@integraonline.com

Appointed:

Publicity Chairman, Stephen Pierce, 425-640-8808, horseless1@juno.com

Assistant Treasurer, **vacant**

Dinner Reservations Coordinator, Rod Cameron, 206-524-4434, rodcam@comcast.net

Webmaster, Michael Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Official Greeter, Larry Cenotto, cenottothe5th@yahoo.com