

THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER
PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/
SEPTEMBER, 2012

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 13, 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, September 11, 2012.

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

BARBARA BRUFF HEMMINGSEN WILL DESCRIBE THE INFECTIOUS DISEASES THAT KILLED SO

MANY CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS, illustrating her descriptions from the letters of Lt. Col. Joseph Bruff, 125th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. A retired Professor of Microbiology, Hemmingsen is editing the letters of LTC Bruff, her ancestor, for publication. A member of the San Diego Civil War Round Table, she has given talks to that Round Table and to other Civil War groups.

WHO IS THIS GUY?

Editor's Note: The September 2012 meeting of the PSCWRT marks the first meeting with David Palmer as President of the Round Table. I asked David if he wanted to write something up for our September 2012 newsletter. Here is what he wrote in the way of introducing himself to all of us. I hope you will get the chance to congratulate him and welcome David to his new position!

Who is our new president? I am David Palmer and I am from Olympia.

What is your favorite book among "Our Top Ten?" *The Civil War: A Narrative*, by Shelby Foote. I have been through those volumes at least 3 times. I use them as a reference when I visit a battlefield.

What is your favorite book that is not in the top ten? That varies, depending on what I have read most recently. Currently, I favor the trilogy by Peter Cozzens: *No Better Place to Die: The Battle of Stones River*, *This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga*, and *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes: The Battles for Chattanooga*. The books use maps well and read like page-turning novels.

Is there a book that you have read that you do not think anyone else in the Roundtable has read?
Notre Dame and the Civil War: Marching Onward to Victory, by James M. Schmidt.

Which battlefields do you want to visit next? Antietam and Gettysburg.

Tell us something about yourself that is not Civil War related? I am a private-practice attorney focusing on business law, non-profits, elder law, wills, trusts, and probate. I am married to my best friend Sally and we have 2 children, Andy and Emily. My interests include running (such as half-marathons), backpacking, hiking and camping, cycling, canoeing and kayaking, and Notre Dame football.

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

Trauty Mercer (December 7, 1928-March 5, 2012)

It was with sadness on June 11 this summer that we learned through member Jeff Rombauer that longtime PSCWRT member Mrs. Trauty Mercer had passed away back in March of this year. Trauty had not been attending meetings for some time, so we were wondering why... I don't know how many of you had the pleasure of speaking with Trauty, but she was always fun to talk to at the meetings. I don't think she ever missed asking a question during a speaker's post-talk Q&A. Believe it or not, she also had a "thing" for Confederate General Jubal A. Early- she thought he was very handsome! I always wished we could have found a framed portrait of General Lee's "Bad Old Man" to give her. When Trauty came to meetings, she was accompanied by Mike Duncan, her son-in-law, so a big thanks goes to him for his devotion to her interest in Civil War history.

Thank you so much, Trauty- we miss you...

Here is Trauty's obituary from the Legacy.com website:

<http://memorialwebsites.legacy.com/trauty-mercer/homepage.aspx>

Trauty Christa Mohr Mercer. Also known as Mercedes Mercer to her friends at Iglesia Cristiana de las Americas church. Trauty was born December 7, 1928 in Berlin, Germany. Around the age of 4 she was adopted by Max and Anna Mohr and was raised in Guatemala City, Guatemala. She obtained her U.S. citizenship in 1956. Trauty passed away in the early morning hours of March 5, 2012 at the age of 83 in Bellevue, Washington after a long, hard and brave 20 year battle with throat and tongue cancer. She battled her cancer with the utmost courage and strength that astonished all who knew her. Trauty attended high school in New Orleans, Alma College "finishing school" in Canada and Syracuse University. In 1954 she received her Master's degree in German Languages from Syracuse. She also met Andrew Mercer at Syracuse and they married in June of 1956. They lived for a time in Germany, then San Francisco where their three daughters were born in 1956, 1959 and 1962. In 1968 the family moved to Bellevue, Washington. Trauty and Andrew divorced in 1969. Trauty will be fondly remembered for her kindness and generosity to all, but especially to those less fortunate. She will also be remembered for her sense of humor, her mischievousness, her life stories, her love of animals, her faith in God and her German (or was it Spanish?) accent. She was a member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority, Eastside Astrological Society and **Puget Sound Civil War Roundtable**. Predeceased by her parents as well as by brother Hans Thiele, and by close childhood and lifelong friends from Guatemala - Carmen, Maggie, Romeo and her tutor Leatha Farner. Also by

Renia Smith of Memphis, Tennessee. Trauty is survived by daughters Gretchen, Natalie and Becky Mercer and by her long-time companion Bob Chisholm. Also by cousin Elia Downey and her husband Bill and their son Fred (wife Laura and children William and Ava) and their daughter Stephanie (son Shanley). Also by "son-in-law" **Mike Duncan** (daughter Linnea, parents James and Juanita) and by former husband Andrew. Also by close friends June Barker and family; Pam and husband Craig Ratcliff; Ron Muir; Nestor; her beloved Pugs and many, many others too numerous to mention. Trauty's Memorial Service will be held on Wednesday, March 21, 2012, at 7:30 p.m. at the Iglesia Cristiana de las Americas church at Full Gospel Christian Center, 2011 152nd Ave NE, Redmond, Washington 98052. Remembrances can be made to Smile Train (smiletrain.org) or to Pasado's Safe Haven (pasadosafehaven.org) which were two of Trauty's favorite charities. Special thanks to Becky and her sisters, Bob Chisholm and to Overlake Hospital for Trauty's care over the past 20 years. Also thanks to Evergreen Hospice for Trauty's care over the last six weeks of her life. We miss you so much, Mama! Ever onward.

David Blight Keynote Speaker at 2012 PNW History Conference

Professor David Blight, author of [Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory](#) and [American Oracle: The Civil War in the Civil Rights Era](#), will speak Saturday, October 20, at the 2012 Pacific Northwest History Conference. Sponsored by the Washington State Historical Society, this year's conference theme is "From Civil War to Civil Rights" and will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the 50th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision ending segregation in transportation facilities. Puget Sound Civil War Roundtable members are invited to attend two days of sessions on Pacific Northwest Civil War and Civil Rights history. The conference will be held October 19 - 20 at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma.

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome Ed Malles and Aleta Elliott to our Civil War Round Table! Ed has recently moved up from Florida to this corner of the lower 48. Cell Phone is: 407-579-6484. It should be noted that Ed is a historian and author. In 1997, he published ***Bridge Building In Wartime: Colonel Wesley Brainerd's Memoir (Voices of the Civil War Series)***. Brainerd was a Major in the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, who rose to eventually command the 15th New York Volunteer Engineer Regiment late in the war. I can recommend this book, since I read it and have it in my collection.

WEBSITE UPDATE

By Mike Movius

Over the summer months, we have undertaken several maintenance projects. Most were the result of updates to the software and operating system. These have taken the bulk of the time of your Webmaster.

However, there is one update that is both exciting and useful. For those of you who use an e-book reader like Kindle or iPad, or other such contraption, you have a unique opportunity to

download primary source material for free. While on our website, go to ROUNDTABLE LIBRARY and select KINDLE. You will find a smattering of titles, many written by the likes of Charles A. Dana, David Dixon Porter and others you already know about.

The one that I've been reading lately is entitled PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF A CAVALRY OFFICER. Brevet Brigadier General James Kidd of the 6th Michigan Cavalry wrote it. Kidd was part of General Custer's command and was part of the ill-fated Kilpatrick/Dahlgren raid, Gettysburg in the East Cavalry Field, the Battle of Yellow Tavern where Stuart was killed and The Burning in the Shenandoah Valley under Sheridan. His insights are particularly revealing.

If you have access to a Kindle, take the time to download one of these great reads. You will enjoy the material.

PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE 2012-2013 MEETING **SCHEDULE**

Please take note of the dates of our upcoming speakers/meetings for the coming year. We will keep you apprised of any changes as the season progresses. A big THANK YOU to Pat Brady for putting this together!

SEPTEMBER 13, 2012: Barbara Bruff Hemmingsen will describe the infectious diseases that killed so many Civil War soldiers, illustrating her descriptions from the letters of Lt. Col. Joseph Bruff, 125th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. A retired Professor of Microbiology, she is editing the letters of LTC Bruff, her ancestor, for publication. A member of the San Diego Civil War Round Table, she has given talks to that Round Table and to other Civil War groups.

OCTOBER 11, 2012: Janet Oakley will talk about William F Osborn, Assistant Surgeon, 11th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, at Gettysburg. On July 1, 1863, after, only two months in uniform, a country doctor found himself on a battlefield that would become sacred ground. Janet Oakley, great-granddaughter of Osborn, will tell what he did there, based on his pocket journals. An author and historian living in Bellingham, she has been the curator of education at the Skagit County Historical Museum. Her articles appear on Historylink.org, and she has published an award-winning historical novel about the CCC.

NOVEMBER 8, 2012: Rick Solomon will discuss the feud between two of the best generals in the Army of Northern Virginia, Stonewall Jackson and A. P. Hill. He will describe their earlier history as classmates at West Point; their problems with others before Hill became Jackson's subordinate; the steps Robert E. Lee took to make peace between them; and, last, a deathbed peacemaking of sorts after Jackson was wounded at Chancellorsville. A longtime member and newsletter editor, Rick is a past and future president of the Round Table.

DECEMBER 13, 2012: Lt. Col. Clay Mountcastle will discuss Confederate Guerrillas, Union Reprisals, and the Destructiveness Debate, about how the Union response to guerrilla warfare affected Southern civilians and the outcome of the Civil War. Lt. Col. Mountcastle, Ph.D., has

served as an Army officer and historian for 18 years, has taught at West Point, led development of the Military History curriculum at the US Army Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, and is Professor of Military Science and Chair of Army ROTC at the University of Washington. He is the author of *Punitive War: Confederate Guerrillas and Union Reprisals*.

JANUARY 10, 2013: Steve Raymond will tell of *The Birth of a Regiment*, the 78th Illinois Infantry, established in late summer 1862. He will consider where its soldiers came from, why they enlisted in 1862 when they had not done so a year earlier, how the regiment was organized, who its officers were, and how they were appointed. In their own words, its soldiers describe how they adapted to camp life and learned to cook for themselves, cope with ill-fitting uniforms and poor weapons, and deal with the miseries of military drill. After just three weeks in service the regiment was summoned to what its soldiers thought would be the front, but instead turned out to be a long series of very unpleasant experiences. Steve Raymond, retired Seattle Times editor, is a long-time PSCWRT member. The story of the 78th Illinois is told in his tenth book, *In the Very Thickest of the Fight*, published by Globe Pequot Press.

FEBRUARY 7, 2013 (THE FIRST THURSDAY, NOT THE USUAL SECOND THURSDAY) Ethan Rafuse will discuss “Fighting Joe” Hooker, “Snapping Turtle” Meade, and the Challenge of Commanding the Army of the Potomac in 1863. Early that year Joseph Hooker took command of an army torn by discord in its higher ranks and demoralized by the loss of its beloved first commander and its bitter defeat at Fredericksburg. Although Hooker restored the army's morale, his reverse at Chancellorsville ushered in his removal by President Lincoln. Hooker's replacement, George Gordon Meade, gave the Union a needed victory at Gettysburg, but a few months later the war in the East seemed once more in stalemate. Dr. Rafuse will consider the difficulties, defeats, and achievements of those who commanded the Union's most publicized army during this turbulent year in the middle of the war. A Professor of Military History at the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, he is the author of many articles and books, including *Stonewall Jackson: A Biography*.

MARCH 14, 2013: Kevin Weddle will discuss Admiral Samuel Francis Du Pont. At the start of the Civil War, Du Pont was considered one of the finest officers in the US Navy. Yet a little more than two years into the war, he was disgraced, having been relieved of his command after his failed naval effort to take Charleston, SC. Today Du Pont is little more than a footnote. Kevin Weddle, Ph.D., Colonel (Retired), US Army, and Professor of Military Theory and Strategy at the US Army War College, will talk about this all but forgotten officer who actually made a significant contribution to US Navy success before and during the war. Professor Weddle is the author of *Lincoln's Tragic Admiral: The Life of Samuel Francis Du Pont*.

APRIL 11, 2013: Nick K. Adams will describe the Civil War service of David Brainard Griffin in the 2nd Minnesota. In September 1861, Griffin left his wife and three young children to manage their Minnesota prairie homestead without him, while he answered Lincoln's call for volunteers by enlisting in the 2nd Minnesota, formed at Ft. Snelling. For the next two years he wrote home almost every week, 104 letters in all, describing in vivid detail his marching and fighting in the Western Theater, through Mill Springs, Perryville, and the Tullahoma Campaign, until he was killed in 1863 along the Reeds Bridge Road that crosses Chickamauga Creek. His great-great-grandson, Nick Adams, will relate the personal story told in Griffin's letters. A

retired teacher in Tacoma who speaks often on the Civil War, Mr. Adams is the author of *The Uncivil War: Battle in the Classroom*, winner of the 2012 Pinnacle Book Award for Juvenile Fiction.

MAY 9, 2013: Mary Ann Gwinn will discuss recent Civil War books, including Amanda Foreman's *The World on Fire: Britain's Crucial Role in the Civil War*, a superb account of Confederate spies plotting in London; English lords and ladies debating whether North or South was right; and British eccentrics taking up arms in the American bloodbath. Ms. Gwinn is the Seattle Times Book Editor.

THE LAST WORD

By Mark R. Terry

The summer went by so fast- as it always does. My hope is that you all had as refreshing of a time as our family did!

Therefore, the deadline for publishing our first edition of the 2012-2013 Washington Volunteer snuck up on me. I hope that this issue- like all issues of the "Volunteer"- will be one that is informative and interesting. Of course, much of that depends on what members/readers submit. If you have something that you think would be interesting to the membership related to the Civil War, PLEASE submit it to me- I will seriously consider publishing it. One consistent "submitter" has been our past president, Dick Miller. Over the past two years he has written many interesting and thought-provoking columns in the "President's Corner". Thanks so much, Dick! I'm looking forward to our new President David Palmer's insights as the year progresses. At our recent PSCWRT board meeting, David said one of his goals as president is to really concentrate on increasing membership. Let's face it- we need to grow as a Round Table. As you know from reading this, we lost another valuable member, Trauty Mercer, last March. None of us are getting any younger, and gray hair seems to be the norm rather than the exception at our meetings. Please, in your regular course of life, at work or at play, when you converse with people, bring up something about the Civil War. You may be surprised at how interested an acquaintance may be and that they might want to come to a meeting. You never know until you ask...

Also, please consider getting more involved with the Round Table. Find ways to use your gifts and talents to help the club. Volunteer to be on the board. Many of our board members have been in a leadership role for some time. Fresh faces often create the opportunity to enhance what we do, so please consider this. Thanks to all of you for your membership and participation in the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table. Nothing would happen without YOU!

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

Unlike other trivia questions we've had, you will NOT find the answers in the newsletter. Instead, we will ask these Civil War Trivia questions at the September meeting. One of the correct answers will allow you to have first pick of the door prize books!

150 years ago, it was the late summer/early fall of 1862...

1. What two famous units faced one another at Brawner's Farm on August 28, 1862, the opening engagement of the Battle of Second Manassas?

2. The Battle of Chantilly on September 1, 1862 was a rearguard action by the Union Army of the Potomac following their defeat at Second Manassas (2nd Bull Run). What noted Pacific Northwest figure was killed in this battle?
3. Lee's "Lost Order" was found on the Best Farm, near Frederick, Maryland on September 13, 1862, exactly 150 years ago today. Name the battle that took place there in 1864.
4. Which Confederate General wrote "A little before this I had seen...the vast army of McClellan spread out before me. The marching columns extended back as far as the eye could see in the distance...It was a grand and glorious spectacle, and it was impossible to look on it without admiration. I had never seen so tremendous an army before, and I did not see one like it afterward"? What battle was about to take place?
5. Few battlefield landmarks become associated with a general as much as Burnside's Bridge did with Ninth Corps commander General Ambrose Burnside on the battlefield of Sharpsburg/Antietam on September 17, 1862. Locally, there were two names for the bridge- what were they?

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, or at: jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com

We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the October, 2012 Washington Volunteer is Wednesday, September 26, 2012. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!

2011-2012 OFFICERS

Elected:*

President, David Palmer, davidpalmer7@comcast.net

Vice-President/Successor: Rick Solomon, ricksolo@integraonline.com

Immediate Past-President, Richard Miller, 206-808-8506 or 206-236-5247, Milomiller882@msn.com

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

Vice-President, Newsletter, Mark Terry, 425-337-6246, markimlor@comcast.net

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

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

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

Elected Board of Directors:

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

Mike Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Appointed:

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

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

Webmaster, Michael Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Official Greeter, Larry Cenotto, cenottothe5th@yahoo.com