



NEWS

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First Minnesota Monument at Gettysburg

MEMBER PROFILE OF THE MONTH

JIM UECKER

BY LANA BLUMHOEFER



Our featured member of the month is Jim Uecker. He joined the TCCWRT in 2014. He says that he has always been interested in the Civil War since he was in grade school. He had a replica Civil

War Union kepi that he wore every day to school and on the playground until it wore out. He was a history major at Gustavus Adolphus College where he majored in European and American History.

Jim grew up in a small town in southern Minnesota called Meridan, halfway between Owatonna and Waseca. His dad managed the creamery and there were many other small businesses there, including a studio where artist Jim Stuart lived. Today, the only surviving business is the expanded grain elevator. As a child, he was allergic to ragweed, so his parents sent him to Camp Warren in northern Minnesota from July until Labor Day every year to avoid the ragweed at home.

Jim survived a hunting accident at age 15 when a friend accidentally discharged a 12-gauge shotgun several feet from his thigh, which took the entire charge but fortunately struck only muscle.

His wife, brother, and daughter are also interested in genealogy and the Civil War. His wife Jane recently joined the TCCWRT at our September meeting.

Jim enjoys our monthly meetings and hearing the personal histories of some of our members. He finds it very interesting how 158 years after the end of the Civil War it still has an impact on our society and politics.

He has some ancestors that were indirectly involved in the Civil War. He shares that his great-great grandfather, Ferdinand Spaude, was a Private in the Hutchinson Guards during the 1862 Dakota uprising for 70 days and that they were considered a Volunteer organization of the Union Army until disbanded. Jane's great-great grandfather was in the Michigan Cavalry Volunteers which were involved in many minor skirmishes, the Battle of Cold Harbor, and were present at the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox.

Jim has toured Gettysburg twice. As a Marine stationed at Quantico, he toured Fredericksburg and Bull Run. He has personal military history as a Marine Captain artillery officer from October 1965 until December 1968 with service in Vietnam from June 1967 to June 1968. He was part of the Department of Defense's experiment with creating a Searchlight Battery, including tactics, for nighttime Firebase Defense against Viet Cong and North Vietnam regular forces. In late February 1967 he was promoted to Captain and became Commanding Officer of B Battery, 1st Battalion, 13th Marine Regiment which was then located at the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

STEVEN SCHIER'S CIVIL WAR TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

Buster Keaton made a Civil War film considered one of the best comedies of all time. What are the name and year of the film?

(See page 7 for the answer)

OUR NOVEMBER MEETING: NOVEMBER 14, 2023

“General George Sears Greene & Culp’s Hill” - Dan Welch



“Where all so well did their duty...” George Sears Greene’s Brigade at Gettysburg

Against overwhelming odds, this lone Union brigade held Culp’s Hill in a climactic action on July 2, 1863. Learn about Greene, his men, and their gallant service on the slope of Culp’s Hill in this exciting program.

Dan Welch is an educator with a public school district in northeast Ohio. Previously, he served as the education programs coordinator for the Gettysburg Foundation, and he continues to serve as a seasonal park ranger at Gettysburg National Military Park. Dan is the editor of the long-running Gettysburg Magazine. Welch received his BA in Instrumental Music Education

from Youngstown State University, MA in Military History with a Civil War Era concentration at American Military University. A lifelong student to the Civil War era, Dan has been a contributing member at Emerging Civil War for over seven years and is the coauthor of two works in the Emerging Civil War Series: The Last Road North: A Guide to the Gettysburg Campaign, 1863 and Never Such A Campaign: The Battle of Second Manassas, August 28-30, 1862. Welch has also co-edited several volumes in the Emerging Civil War's Tenth Anniversary Series, including: Grant Vs. Lee, The Summer of '63: Vicksburg & Tullahoma, and The Summer of '63: Gettysburg. Dan is also the co-author of Ohio at Antietam: The Buckeye State's Sacrifice on America's Bloodiest Day with the History Press. Dan resides with his wife, Sarah, and three Labrador retrievers in Boardman, Ohio.

OUR 2023-2024 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

2023

December 19th “General Grant as Commander-in-Chief of the Union Armies”
Christopher L. Kolakowski

2024

January 16th “Civil War Ciphers & Codes Wartime Evolution”
Derek Lee

February 20th “The Concept of “Cowardice” in the Civil War”
Dr. Lesley Gordon

March 19th “Food and Hunger During the Civil War”
Prof. Anne Rubin

May 21st “U.S. Colored Troops at War”
Dr. David Wright Falade

THIS MONTH IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY – NOVEMBER

10th 1860 – South Carolina Senator James Chestnut Jr., husband of famed diarist
Mary Boykin Chestnut, resigns his seat in the U.S. Senate.

11th 1860 – Senator James H. Hammond, South Carolina, also resigns his seat in the
U.S. Senate.

- 17th 1863 – Confederate General James Longstreet lays siege to Knoxville, Tennessee.
- 23rd 1863 – Battle of Orchard Knob, Tennessee.
- 25th 1864 – Confederate agents attempt but ultimately fail to set fire to New York City hotels and Barnum’s Museum.
- 28th 1862 – Battle of Cane Hill, Arkansas

CIVIL WAR BIRTHDAYS – NOVEMBER

- 1st 1815 – Brig. General Douglas Hancock Cooper C.S.
- 1st 1825 – Brig. General Joseph Benjamin Palmer C.S.
- 5th 1832 – Brevet Major General William W. Averell U.S.
- 7th 1798 – Rear Admiral Silas H. Stringham U.S. Navy
- 8th 1817 – Brig. General Claudius Wistar Sears C.S.
- 13th 1809 – Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren U.S. Navy

TCCWRT MEMBERS WITH NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 11/2 Bill Heise | 11/16 Brian Glass |
| 11/3 Gerry Briggs | 11/17 Jim Joyce |
| 11/8 David Wilson | 11/28 JoAnn Martin |
| 11/12 Julie Williams | 11/29 Kirk Sikorowski |
| 11/13 Gary Carlberg | 11/29 Rudi Martignacco |

THE SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE ** BY CAROL VANORNUM**

Many of you know that the CWRT Congress held its Sustainability Conference this last August in Gettysburg. My friend, Bill Jayne, is President of the Cape Fear CWRT in North Carolina. He wrote this for their newsletter, *The Runner*, and I thought it was worth sharing. The conference was a great way to hear what other CWRTs are doing and how they’re moving forward. Reprinted with permission.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Bill Jayne, President Cape Fear Civil War Round Table



Upon being asked to serve as a panelist, I grasped the pleasant opportunity to travel to Gettysburg for the Civil War Round Table Congress "Sustainability Conference" from August 25-27. It's always inspiring to visit Gettysburg and it was energizing to share an intensive conference experience with dozens of others from around the country who are dedicated to the round table movement. About 88 attendees represented approximately 35 round tables from as far away as Puget Sound, Washington. Plus, many organizations such as Civil War Trails, American Battlefield Trust and Central Virginia Battlefield Trust were represented.

The conference began on Friday evening with a reception at the Seminary Ridge Museum and Education Center. This is the original building of the Lutheran Seminary and attendees got the chance to climb to the belvedere where Union Cavalry General John Buford viewed the approaching Confederate units converging on Gettysburg. The evening ended with Prof. Chris Mackowski's tour d'force presentation titled "What if Stonewall Had Been at Gettysburg." Chris will make his second visit to our round table in February 2024. Don't miss it! Chris is a top-notch historian who is also extremely entertaining.

The meat of the conference was concentrated on the Saturday session at the beautiful Adams County Historical Society building. We had a huge and well-appointed meeting hall equipped with the best presentation technology. There were three panel discussions.

I had been asked to participate in the first panel titled "Emerging from the Pandemic." Every member of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table should be proud that our club went from a low of less than 40 members in January 2021 to more than 90 members today. We survived the COVID phenomenon and we are stronger now than we were before it. I shared the stage with the moderator representing the Civil War Round Table Congress board of directors and three great representatives of the round table movement from Indianapolis, Cleveland and Harrisburg, PA.

My presentation focused on how we emphasized speaker quality, fundraising and diversified outreach to bring membership levels back up to a healthy level. In addition, we added value to the round table experience with popular tours and special events. We also, like most successful round tables, ultimately decided to use Zoom to maintain connection with our members during the months when we were unable to meet in person.

The period from April 2020 through August 2020 was particularly trying because we were unable to meet and had not yet decided to try Zoom. Some months we thought we would be able to meet only to have the Governor or the county say, “No, you can’t meet after all.” Throughout this period, Ed Gibson and Bruce Patterson were indispensable. I can’t thank them enough for their help.

Next was the “Community Partnership Panel” where round tables talked about the potential for strengthening the club by means of partnering with agencies and organizations involved in historic preservation, education and planning. We have a strong historic preservation community in the Wilmington area and we can do a lot more in terms of partnering with them. For example, we can have joint meetings. Scholarships and awards can help build relationships with educational agencies. We can do joint trips to battlefields and other attractions. Outreach at public events—“tabling” as it’s called—can be expanded beyond what we now do with Fort Fisher once a year.



The next panel talked about the CWRT Congress’s “Sustainability Challenge,” a formal plan with ten modules for improving sustainability. Check out the Sustainability Challenge here: <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/challenge.html>. Finally, a high-powered panel of young historians and history professionals talked about “Target Marketing Younger Members.” “Go where they are!” was one strong message. How about we have a special meeting at a brewery? We’re already talking about that one. Homeschoolers may be an audience. One young historian, Jonathan Noyalas from Shenandoah University, pointed out that “Facebook is for old people,” according to his students. After years of hard work—thank you, Yelena Howell—we have a good Facebook group page but now it looks like we may have to develop an additional social media channel.

So, what’s next? I’ve empaneled a committee of leaders, including our officers, to develop a set of bylaws for our club. We’re starting our 30th year but we don’t have a written set of rules for governing the round table. Historically, our presidents have served for an average of six years.

In this day and age, the challenges are too great for just naming a “president for life” and hoping that he or she will hang in there for six years before leaving this mortal coil or just walking away. So, I will step down in August 2024 and we will have some bylaws to govern the choice of our next president and slate of officers.

It’s gonna be great! Wait and see.

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS



Left to right:

John Martin, JoAnn Martin, Jeff Denesen, Jean Denesen, Ed Edmonds, Fred Morgan, Leslie Sharpe, and Rolf Westby

STEVEN SCHIER'S TRIVIA QUESTION ANSWER:

The General, 1927.

Researching Civil War Soldiers: A New Resource

Stephen E. Osman

New and better search opportunities are always welcomed by those of us who have researched Civil War soldiers for decades. The Gopher Records web site <https://gopherrecords.com/> recently launched, and has proven a useful portal that corrects problems with earlier sites like the National Park Service's *Soldier and Sailor System* <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and->

[sailors-database.htm](#) . Basic searches are free, unlike several other sites that offer similar search engines for an annual membership fee.

To utilize the new web site, start here with an excellent overview of the available records coupled with links to sources available on line. <https://gopherrecords.com/blog/how-to-research-your-civil-war-ancestor/> The Gopher Records search engine allows a wider variety of searches, multiple spellings, and wild cards. However, that search engine is rather difficult to find from the home page and has a different web address:

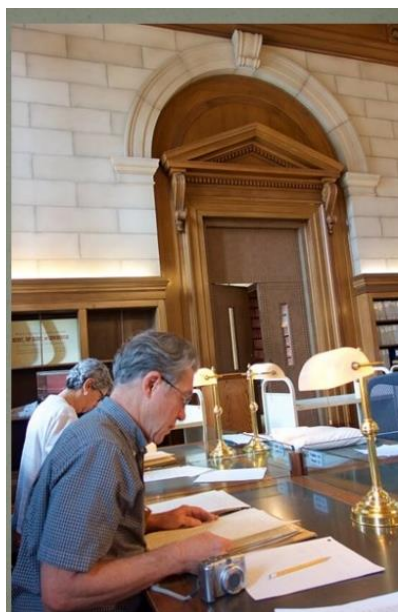
<https://betersoldiersandsailors.com/advanced?w=y> . You might want to bookmark that page once you've explored the other useful features of the main Gopher Records site. It is essential to confirm the branch of service and unit number for a soldier or sailor - mandatory to do additional research or to order records.



Gopher Records is in business to sell copies of records that their staff retrieves from the National Archives and Records Administration facility in Washington. I've spent many productive, happy and sometimes

frustrating weeks within that massive document warehouse. While research there is free, registering, learning how to submit requests, and then waiting for document pulls can be time consuming. With the original documents finally in front of you, photocopy machines or your own digital photography is used to get copies. Most researchers, however, opt to order copies through the NARA web site.

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/pre-ww-1-records>. This is increasingly expensive, and it can take months before your packet of records arrives. The whole system shut down during COVID to the chagrin of diligent researchers.



Gopher Records encourages users to complete a free registration which is simple and quick. Registered members have the option to request a free records assessment before actually ordering copies of records.

I've not tried this, but the interface seems pretty simple. Researchers can order copies of Service Records (simple cards that recorded a soldier's presence in a unit for a two-month period) or Pension Records (often far more useful for genealogical or service disability research.) The firm provides a cost comparison against NARA (and they are cheaper) plus offers an approximate 30 day turn around (laughable for NARA staff.)

Record Type	NARA Price	Our Regular Price	Our Member Price*	Difference from NARA
Service Records	\$30	\$20	\$18	40% off
Pension Records	\$80 for the first 100 pages. \$0.70 per page thereafter.	\$50	\$45	44%+ off
Example < 100 pages	\$80	\$50	\$45	44% off
Example 150 pages	\$115	\$50	\$45	61% off
Example 200 pages	\$150	\$50	\$45	70% off
Example 250 pages	\$185	\$50	\$45	76% off
Example 300 pages	\$220	\$50	\$45	80% off
Bounty Land Application File	\$30	\$22	\$19.80	34% off
Land Entry Case File	\$50	\$25	\$22.50	55% off

Give the site a try, if only to read the blogs about what types of records are available and where.

And if you would like to meet with other local researchers who share a strong interest in the Civil War period, the Dakota Conflict, and early Minnesota history, consider attending a meeting of the *informal* **19th Century Researcher Group**. I've moderated this spirited gang of researchers for over a decade. We meet every month, with a more formal meeting on the odd months, and an informal "social meeting" on the even months. Meetings are the third Tuesday from 10 AM to noon. In warmer months we meet at the pavilion in Hidden Falls Regional Park on the east bank of the Mississippi southwest of the old St. Paul Ford Plant. In winter we meet at the Ramsey County Public Library on Hamline just south of Highway 36.

The formal meetings include short reports by researchers covering what they are currently working on and their requests for research assistance. A good historical conversation usually follows. The informal meetings are more free ranging, but always mid-19th related. There are no membership or reservation requirements, and those who have interest can be included on our email list to receive meeting invites, and detailed minutes of our formal gatherings.

CONTACT US:

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<https://tccwrt.com/>

Can you contribute to a future newsletter? Writers are wanted to submit Civil War related articles to this newsletter.

Please submit your drafts to Bruce Cooper: earlofbuce@hotmail.com