

Civil War Roundtable of North Florida



“Where Both Sides Are Heard”
Founded in 2012

Upcoming Meetings

June 13, 2019

Phill Greenwalt
Fla Brigade at Gettysburg

July 11, 2019

Thomas Jessee
R. E. Lee Impersonator

September 12, 2019

Walker Blanton
Topic: TBD

October 10, 2019

Eric Jacobson
Battle of Franklin

November 14, 2019

Basil Gribbon
*Politics in Europe vis a vis
Civil War*

Please join us for our Next Meeting
6:30 PM Thursday, May 9, 2019
Warships on the Chattahoochee

Bruce Smith

One of the key lifelines for the Confederacy was from the Chattahoochee/ Flint River system in the deep South



Firing a CSS Jackson Brooke Rifle

which exited into the Gulf of Mexico at Apalachicola, Florida. One way to keep all the river ways open in the South was to



CSS Jackson w/Brooke Rifled Cannons

create Confederate Navy ships to negate the US Navy efforts from the rivers and bays in the South. A large Navy construction yard was built in Columbus, GA. Initial efforts were to construct a wooden gunboat at a small Navy Yard in Saffold, GA. This presentation will go into further detail

on all these issues and include images of many of these sites and ships. The efforts to raise from the *CSS Chattahoochee*, and the full size ultra-modern ironclad *CSS Jackson* from the Chattahoochee River will also be discussed.

Trinity United Methodist Church
4000 NW 53rd Avenue, Gainesville, FL
Check us out on the web: www.cwrnf.org

Last Month's Meeting

April 11, 2019

Confederate Sharpshooter Major William E. Simmons

Joe Byrd



Joe Byrd presented to us an interesting story his great-grandmother, Georgia Ambrose Byrd's husband, William Simmons in the service of the 16th Georgia. William Simmons had graduated at the top of his class at Emory College when he was only 18 years old!



Emory College Class of 1858,
Will Simmons upper left

Joe went through William's career, how he was in the middle of serious fighting at Malvern Hill as a Lieutenant in Cobbs Brigade. He was then in the bloody lane at Sharpsburg and fighting in the town of Fredericksburg delaying the Federals building of pontoon bridges across the Rappahannock River and then behind the stone wall on Marye's heights.

After the battle of Chancellorsville, a Brigade of sharpshooters was formed and approved by the War Department. It turned out that there were two other sharpshooter brigades in the Confederacy, so this became the 3rd Georgia Sharpshooter Battalion. Simmons' close friend Capt. Nathan Hutchins was promoted to Lt. Col. and given command. Simmons was also promoted to Capt. in the sharpshooters. After their selection the new sharpshooters were sent to a separate camp for training. They followed the training Genl. Rodes had given his sharpshooters. There were two types of sharpshooters in the Confederate army, "Whitworth sharpshooters" and "battalion sharpshooters". Whitworth was the very expensive and rare, but extremely accurate rifle from England. These men were usually organized separately and acted more as "snipers". The battalion sharpshooters acted as pickets, scouts and advanced skirmishers.

Simmons participated with the sharpshooters at Gettysburg in the Peach Orchard and also covered the retreat from Gettysburg. He went with Londstreet's division to Chattanooga, but missed the battle of Chickamauga. After Cold Harbor he was promoted to Major. He was finally captured near the end of the war, when he was taken to talk to Genl. Custer. Simmons survived the war and lived a long life.



DETAILS OF OUR UPCOMING SPEAKERS

June 13, 2019

Phill Greenwalt

Florida Brigade at Gettysburg



Read William Faulkner's famous excerpt on Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg from his 1948 book *Intruder in the Dust*. He mentions Armistead, Kemper, Garnett, and even Wilcox. **No mention of Lang or the Floridians.** Walk the Union line near the now famous Copse of Trees on Cemetery Ridge and you see a dated map on one of the markers. Shows the routes taken by Pickett, Pettigrew, Trimble, and Wilcox. **No mention of Lang or the Floridians.**



It took a century from the conclusion of that disastrous charge of July 3rd for a monument to be dedicated to the Floridians who sacrificed so much on two of the three days of carnage that marked the Battle of Gettysburg. Until then, besides the Perry Brigade markers, no mention of Lang or the Floridians.



Yet, a brigade of Floridians were there, comprising three regiments: 2nd, 5th, and 8th Florida Infantry. All veterans of at least a year of campaigning with the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. All understrength. At Gettysburg they fought valiantly again and loss tremendously, 62% of the 775 infantrymen that came into the engagement. Highest total of any brigade in General Robert E. Lee's army. Their role in the engagement has been marginalized and distorted. Their heroism and determination in two assaults across open ground questioned and slandered. What these three regiments attempted, with already depleted ranks, was amazing and due for more recognition than the history of the battle has afforded them. This talk will focus on the Florida Brigade at Gettysburg, discussing their role during the Battle of Gettysburg, the aftermath, and the historical memory.

July 11, 2019

Thomas Jessee

R. E. Lee Impersonator

August – No Meeting

September 12, 2019

Walter Blanton

The Student Who Challenged T J Jackson to a Duel at VMI. James Alexander Walker, Later Commander of the Stonewall Brigade

October 10, 2019

Eric Jacobson

Battle of Franklin

November 14, 2019

Basil Gribbon

Political Climate/Power Struggles Of Europe vis a vis North America and the Civil War

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 3-5, 2019, Federal Garrison at Ft. Clinch, Fernandina Beach, FL - Military activities will include guard duty, drill, firing demonstrations, and mail call.

<http://www.floridastateparks.org/fortclinch>

Location/Directions: 2601 Atlantic Avenue, Fernandina Beach, Florida 32034

May 17-19, 2019 Battle of Resaca, GA. Reenactment held on 650 acres of original battle field. Battles both days at 2:00 PM www.georgiadiivision.org/bor_eventschedule.html Just off I-75 at Exit 320

Continuing in 2019 - Raffle at the end of each Meeting

In an effort to raise more funds for continued exciting outside speakers the board has decided to hold a raffle at the end of each meeting. A Grand Prize related to the Civil War will be raffled off. In addition, conciliation prizes of books, other Civil War related items and a few fun items will be drawn for. Please see Sue Wooley to get your tickets before the meeting.



Typical of Monthly Raffle Items at each Meeting

INTERESTED IN BEING A BOARD MEMBER?

Contact one of the current board members and we'll introduce you to the excitement of organizing and running a Civil War Round Table.

Advisory Board Members

Terry Huston (352-359-1442, thuston528@msn.com)

Bill Zettler

Eric Starnes

Bob Wooley (352-325-0722, wooleyjr@gmail.com)

Sid Mayer



Confederate Flag Presentation – Lady Lake, Fla SCV – Bob & Sue Wooley