

MEETING NOTICE – FEBRUARY, 2015

After you recover from this year's Mardi Gras, join us on Ash Wednesday because one of the great people of the Civil War community is returning for another visit. Ed Bearss will be addressing us on February 18th. Please make certain to attend and bring a guest.

DATE: Wednesday, February 18, 2015
PLACE: Smilie's Restaurant
SPEAKER: Ed Bearss
SUBJECT: The Petersburg Campaign – The Western Front Battles
TIME: 6:30 p.m. Social
7:00 p.m. Dinner (\$25.00) (Optional)

OUR SPEAKER: Ed Bearss is a remarkable individual by any standard of comparison. Perhaps equally known for his legendary battlefield tours and his appearances at countless forums, Ed enjoys a near mythic status among Civil War historians and buffs for his prodigious command of facts and knowledge and his seemingly inexhaustible personal energy.

Ed grew up in Montana and visited the nearby battlefields of the Indian Wars as a child. Later, touring Civil War battlefields for the first time after reading many books, he continued his childhood interest in the War, and thereafter served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was severely wounded after participating in the invasion of Guadalcanal and New Britain and spent 26 months recuperating in various hospitals. He went on to get a B.A. from Georgetown and a M.A. from Indiana University.

The National Park Service hired Ed as an historian in September, 1955, to serve at Vicksburg; and what a great hire the N.P.S. made! During his many years stationed at Vicksburg, Ed helped to discover and raise the wreck of the *U.S.S. Cairo* and authored many scholarly articles and books including *Decision in Mississippi* (Pioneer Press, 1962); *Rebel Victory at Vicksburg* (Pioneer Press, 1963); *Steele's Retreat from Camden and the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry* (Pioneer Press, 1966); and later, *Hardluck Ironclad – The Sinking and Salvage of the Cairo* (LSU Press, 1966) before becoming a Research Historian and then Chief Historian of the N.P.S. based in Washington, D.C. He also edited *A Louisiana Confederate—Diary of Felix Pierre Poche* (Northwestern State Univ., 1972). Perhaps his greatest literary achievement was his masterful three-volume history of the Vicksburg Campaign.

Dozens of books, articles, tours, speaking engagements, and appearances have followed over the years; and Ed seems to have devoted much of his life to educating Americans about the War. Our Round Table honored Ed many years ago by naming him as a recipient of the Dufour Award.

THE SUBJECT: As most students of the War learn, The Petersburg Campaign was not one or two battles by the Union to break through the Confederate defenses in and around Petersburg but a series of battles and skirmishes that took place over a span of several months.

Ed Bearss has authored many books and his latest works are two volumes on the Petersburg Campaign. Ed discussed the Petersburg Campaign as it related to the Eastern Front Battles, June – August, 1864 during a previous visit to our Round Table. Volume I was co-authored with Bryce Suderow, and appeared in 2012.

Volume II appeared in 2014. This latter volume is entitled The Petersburg Campaign Volume 2 – The Western Front Battles, September 1864 – April 1865. Volume II was also co-authored with Bryce Suderow.

Ed will discuss the Battle of Five Forks and will no doubt include brief remarks about lesser known engagements at Peebles’ Farm, Burgess Mill, Hatcher’s Run, and the defense of Front Stedman.

Join us on Wednesday, February 19th, for the legendary Ed Bearss.

LAST MEETING: James Conroy visited us last month and spoke to about two dozen members on “One Common Country: Lincoln & the Hampton Roads Peace Conference”. Obviously, the Hampton Roads Peace Conference did not result in a negotiated settlement of the War or any peace whatsoever between North and South. But, many of the facts surrounding this meeting were very interesting to learn, especially that President Abraham Lincoln and Vice-President Alexander Stephens personally attended together with a few other representatives. When all of the attendees first met, they no doubt would have “exchanged pleasantries” as all of them had been in Congress together.

BOOK RAFFLE: This writer is not revealing any secrets in mentioning again the precipitous drop in money collected from the book raffle. A couple of years ago we reduced the books offered from four to three. Now, we will offer two selections. This month, the two books offered are:

Conquering the Valley - Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic (hardback) by Robert K. Krick and donated by Judy Mills; and,

The Orphan Brigade – The Kentucky Confederates Who Could Not Go Home (paperback) by William C. Davis.

MEMBERSHIP: A very busy personal and work schedule has prevented me from reaching out to members, or former members, who have not renewed their membership. This writer remains hopeful but we have to acknowledge the reality of a very small membership in the immediate future and the impact on our sixty-year old Round Table.

NEXT MEETING: Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 18th. Our speaker will be Russell Bonds. His topic will be “War Like the Thunderbolt: Battle & Burning of Atlanta”.

This newsletter is published nine times a year by the Civil War Round Table of New Orleans, Inc. Please address all correspondence and changes of address to Charles J. Nunez, Editor, 3537 Tolmas Drive, Metairie, LA 70002, or by e-mail at charlesjnunez@gmail.com.