

LOWCOUNTRY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

February 2004 Issue 34

James Longstreet: The Civil War's Most Controversial General Presented by Bob Ham

When the name, James Longstreet is mentioned it stirs varying degrees of emotions. There are those who have been carrying on a crusade against Lee's "old warhorse" for nearly 125 years. The avalanche has been overwhelming and began shortly after Robert E. Lee's death in 1870 and continues to this very day. The "lost cause" advocates believe that Longstreet lost it all at Gettysburg and the glorious cause of the



Gen James Longstreet

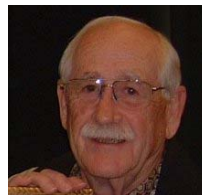
Confederacy was lost July 2, 1863, even though Vicksburg fell the following day and the war was to last for nearly two more years. Lee and Jackson, following the war, were deified and elevated to sainthood by the Lee and Jackson "cults". There were no tunes of glory for Longstreet and was branded by his detractors as the single person most responsible for the South's defeat in the entire war.

Jubal Early, who had been relieved of command by Lee, was Longstreet's most ardent critic. Early, after the surrender, made his way to Mexico and later to Canada where he hid out for 2 years fearing his fate at the hands of the Yankees. Returning to Lynchburg, Early practicing law and founded the Southern Historical Society. He published its Papers proved to be powerful weapons against anyone who questioned him. Ironically, the publications provide scholars and researchers the data to perpetuate the Longstreet myth. Much of what has been written about Longstreet can be traced back to the papers.

Early, shortly after Lee's death, read a newspaper article that stated "Lee was off-balance and in a state of agitation" before issuing his final orders for the attack of July 2nd. When he found out that the article got this impression from Longstreet, Early became incensed and soon thereafter the "attack at dawn orders" began making its way into speeches and articles. Early and William Pendleton led the way in making speech after speech condemning Longstreet. Early or Pendleton could not prove that Lee gave an order for a dawn attack and it was found that no foundation existed that such an order was ever given but this did not deter the two from repeating it over and over and enlisted others to join in. Longstreet, for the most part was his own worst enemy. He initially chose to ignore the comments and accusations being made against him. When he did choose to answer, Early, a brilliant attorney and superb

(Continued on page 4) LONGSTREET

Bob Ham



Bob is a native Georgian. He grew up in the small northeast Georgia town of Gainesville in the years prior to and during WWII. This was in an era when the South was totally segregated and the "War Between the States" was a subject mentioned early in history lessons beginning in grammar school. Many of the ladies in the community belonged to the United Daughters of the Confederacy and on Confederate Memorial Day would recruit young boys to help place Confederate flags on the old soldiers' gravesites at Alta Vista Cemetery. Today, it is an entirely different time and place. The Confederate flag is no longer welcomed and the once segregated cemetery receives burials of all races and creeds.

Bob became interested in Civil War history in the early 1950's, after having read "The Last Cavalier", a book

(Continued on page 2) HAM

MINISTER TO TURKEY



In 1880, James Longstreet was appointed as US Minister to Turkey. During his tenure he managed to negotiate terms by which a team of archaeologists from the United States could work in the country.

This photograph was taken around the time Longstreet was serving as Minister. (Brian Hampton)

Lowcountry Civil War Round Table

President's Message

The January meeting was a huge success with Bud Robertson as he spoke regarding "Civil War Medicine". Dr. Robertson forewarned us that his topic was horrible and might be difficult to hear. His warning became a reality as he described the wounds, illnesses and infections that were common.

We had 187 people to eat dinner and 60 members came at 7:00 for the speaker's presentation. The "Morning After" program on January 15, 2004, was attended by 42 members and was most informative.

Congratulations to Bill Gauger on his purchase of "The Lost Cause". The high bid was \$450 and we send a sincere thank you to Bob Ham and family for donating the picture.

Two of our members have recently passed away. We will miss Dave Lundy and Dan Sullivan. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families.

The BGES is presenting the 2004 South Atlantic Civil War Symposium on March 11, 12 and 13th. It will be held at the Holiday Inn Oceanfront on Hilton Head. Richard McMurry will, again, be the moderator and he will have an excellent host of speakers. For more information, please call toll free 1-888-741-2437. (See topic list in this issue.)

We have just completed the first half of our program year. We have had excellent programs and are looking toward the remaining schedule. General James Longstreet and his influence on events during the early days of the Civil War will be the topic for our February 11, 2004, meeting. This will be presented by one of our members, Bob Ham.

Thank you to Sam and Carol Sawyer for graciously accepting the responsibility of the Dinner Committee.

We need volunteers for the 2004 - 2005 program year. Please see a member of the Executive Board if you would be willing to help us.

Please remember our Corporate Sponsors: Key Infiniti and Butler Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep. Let them know we appreciate their sponsorship. We are always open to referrals for additional Corporate Sponsors. I look forward to your attendance at the February meeting!
Bernie Covert

(Continued from page 1) Bob HAM

about the legendary Jeb Stuart. He joined a local group that met monthly to discuss various aspects of the war and to swap books about the war. He brings a unique prospective to the present having met the widow of General James Longstreet, his daughter-in-law and granddaughter. General Longstreet had long been one of Gainesville's most prominent citizens and is buried just a few steps away from Bob's grandparents in Alta Vista Cemetery. He is a former member of the Civil War Roundtable that met at the Presbyterian Church in Bluffton and a member of Lowcountry Civil War Round Table since its inception. He is also a member of the Blue and Gray Education Society and the Longstreet Society.

THE MINIÉ BALL GAZETTE

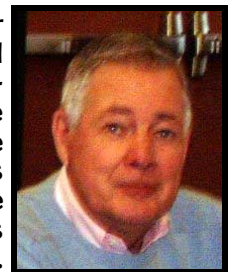
Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc.
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*Dedicated to Historic Preservation and
Enlightenment*
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Program	Paul Bucklin	705-5168
Program	Bob Zabawa	341-9142
Communications	Marian & Mitch Sackson	705-2628
Dinner	Carol & Sam Sawyer	705-5267
Hospitality	Randi Lyon	705-7110
Historian	Carol Cutrona	705-6189
Photographer	Robert Reilly	705-6072

Our Morning-After

Bud Robertson at our 'morning after' presided over a lively and informative two hour session. The discussion ranged over the entire Civil War as well as its medical aspects. The LCWRT eagerly awaits Bud's next visit.



2003-2004 Presentations
The Civil War Year of 1862

February 11 No morning-after	General Longstreet His influence on events during the early days of the Civil War when he was severely wounded by friendly (Confederate) fire. <i>Presented by Bob Ham</i>
March 17	2nd Manassas/Bull Run. A revisit, with new insights, to this battle which resulted in another victory for the Confederacy. <i>As told by the energetic, indomitable Edwin C. Bearss, one of the best known Civil War lecturers and an ardent battlefield preservationist</i>
April 14	Battle of Sharpsburg/Antietam. Considered the bloodiest single day of the entire war! <i>Presented by Dr Tom Clements, an Antietam Park Guide, a noted historian, lecturer, college professor and an expert on this important battle</i>
May 12	Seven Days Battle in Virginia. From June 25 to July 1, the hills & towns of Virginia were alive with fire. <i>Presented by R. E. L. Krick, a most informative young rising star as a Civil War historian and speaker</i>

There is a *Morning After* for all meetings (**except** as noted) at Palmetto Electric at River Walk. Call Jim Hamilton about 3 days before the meeting at 705-7575 to sign-up to allow for morning coffee and cake.

Tour With ED!



On March 18-21, 2004, the incomparable battle field historian, Ed Bearss, will lead a tour for the GA Battlefield Association which will follow Gen. Sherman's campaign in Northern Georgia. Tour headquarters will be in Dalton, GA at the Courtyard by Marriott.

The cost of \$320 per person will include lunch and dinner on Fri. and Sat., as well as cocktails on all three nights. The room price is \$69 per night.

If you are interested, call Jack Keller (843) 671-5260 or Olly Keller (404) 351-1211 as soon as possible, as there are only a few slots open.

Norman M. Mackay
General Manager



I N F I N I T I

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FRIENDS of the Hunley

Since the recovery of the Hunley in 2000, Hunley staff experts have worked to discover as much as possible about the eight-man crew that navigated the submarine into world history. During the preceding week of the Burial and beginning April 12, facial reconstructions of the Hunley crew will be revealed each night. Through archaeology, history, forensic analysis, facial reconstructions, and genealogical research, each event will also explore who these men were and the impact their sacrifice has had on history.

We invite you to join us as we meet the Hunley crew and take a journey that spans a century of courage, ingenuity, and technology. Tickets for the Lecture Series and Behind-the-Scenes tour of the Hunley project are available by calling toll-free 1-877-448-6539 or by the Internet at <<http://www.etix.com>>. Lecture series tickets are \$15.00 a night or \$20.00 at the door and the Behind-the-Scenes tour of the Hunley project is \$30.00. The revenue generated from these events will help defray the cost of the genealogical and forensic research of the crew.

The lectures series will be held each night from 7:00 p. m. to 8:30 p.m. at the College of Charleston, and the series will be concluded with an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the Hunley project available on the evening Friday, April 16

(Continued from page 1) **LONGSTREET**

writer outmatched Longstreet and continued to chide and bait him into unintentional blunders. Longstreet wrote a letter that was condemned in several newspapers across the South for its apparent counsel to allow Negro suffrage and to bow to Federal authority. This last was greeted with headlines of "Traitor," the first time Longstreet had ever been referred to by this term. These sins made him ripe for blame as the instigators of the "Lost Cause" cult formulated their plan to explain away the loss of the war. "Lee, the lovable commander of the Confederacy's premier army, had not failed. According to the mythology, he had been failed by one of his subordinates."

A small band of Longstreet loyalists, however, did remain true to him and defended him when given the opportunity. These loyalists were made up mostly of officers and men who served under him. He was wildly acclaimed by the enlisted men on both sides and received great ovations from them when he made public appearances, north and south. They recognized that Longstreet never sacrificed a single soldier and that he was aware of their devotion to duty and their hardships.

In the years following the war, Longstreet committed what were to many Southerners three unpardonable sins. First, he openly criticized Lee for his actions at Gettysburg. Second, he became a Republican, the political party largely responsible for the hated Reconstruction policies. Third, he wrote a letter that favored Negro suffrage, which was previously mentioned.

Blue & Grey Education Society's 2004 South Atlantic Civil War Symposium on Hilton Head March 11, 12 and 13th

Richard McMurry: *Confederate Journalism*

Bill Freehling: *Did a Great Slave Power Conspiracy
Help Break Up the Union*

Wendy Venet: *Women at War: Work, Family and
Change Among Northern and Southern Women*

Art Bergeron: *No Braver Cavalier Ever Rode to
Death, The Civil War Career of John Rogers Cook*

Alan Downs: *"The Responsibility is Great: Joseph E.
Johnston and His Revolutionary Burden*

John Simon: *Evolution of Union Command and Control,
November 1861-March 1864*

Gerry Prokopowicz: *Did Lincoln Own Slaves? Questions
and Some Answers about Abraham Lincoln*

John Hennessy: To be Announced

Stuart McGehee: To Be Announced



And the Winner Is

Bill Gauger (left) is purchaser of "The Lost Cause" shown with Bob Ham who donated the picture.

Reservation for February 11th Meeting At McCracken Middle School Dinner @ 5:45pm—Program @ 7:00pm

Menu for This Meeting



Fried chicken • Roast Beef

Beets • Butter Beans

Creamed Corn • potato casserole

apple Salad • strawberry salad

German chocolate cake • Peach cobbler

Rolls • Ice Tea • Coffee

Catered by duke's of
Ridgeland

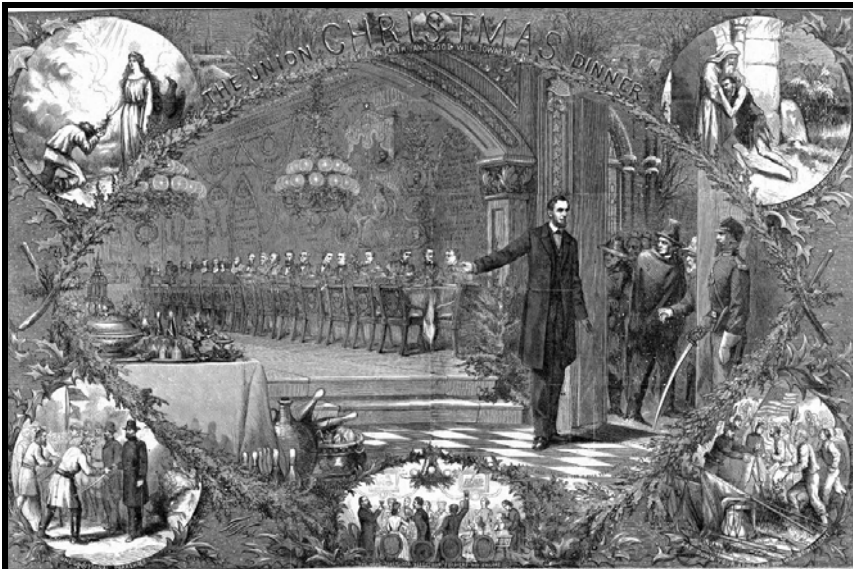


Dinner For February 11th, 2004
 Number of Dinners: ___ @ \$11 each = ___
 Names: _____
 Phone: _____ Ck# _____ Date _____
 Make Check Payable to: LCWRT Inc
 Mail Check with this Form to:
 Frank Bulson
 37 Strobhar St.
 Bluffton, SC 29909

TO ATTEND PROGRAM ONLY

(no dinner) Make your reservation by
calling Jim Hamilton at 705-9898

**Dinner Form & Check Must be
RECEIVED no later than February 6th
2004**



Our President pointing to our "Reserved Table" at dinner

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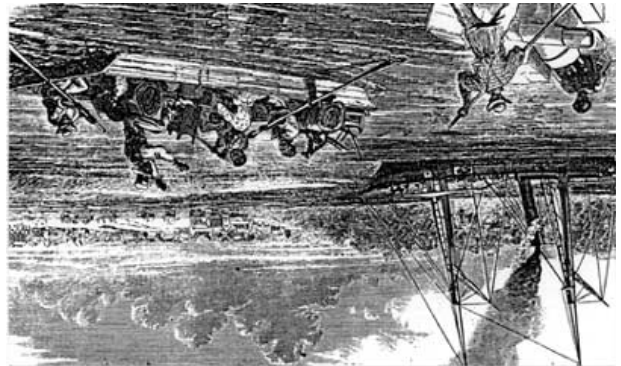
CONTACT:
ORREN BELL

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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February 2004 Issue 34

An 1861 engraving shows Blacks escaping from slavery to the Union fort at Hilton Head



THE MINIE BALL GAZETTE
Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc.
P.O. Box 2252
Bluffton, SC 29910

March 10th 2004 Meeting

2nd Manassas/Bull Run Campaign

By Edwin C. Bearss

Our Web Site: [lowcountrycwr.org](http://www.lowcountrycwr.org)

Read the *Longstreet Chronicles* at
<http://www.tennessee-sev.org/longstreet/>

Notice

Please tell your friends who might be interested in joining our group that they can attend the next four meetings (Feb-May) for **HALF-PRICE**.
Have them call Bill Trapp at
705-2455.

Welcome New Members

Noel Gettman

George Hooper

John Hudson

Tom Lehrer

Harlee & Jim Newlands

Muriel & Dick Smith

Sharon & Rich Smith

Joe Weikel