

LOWCOUNTRY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

October 2004 Issue 40

The Naval Battle of New Orleans

PRESENTED BY ART BERGERON, AUTHOR AND RESEARCH HISTORIAN FOR THE U.S. MILITARY INSTITUTE AT CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA.



WALT HARTUNG, OUR
TREASURER & AUTHOR
OF THIS ARTICLE

New Orleans was part of the Union's grand strategy to strangle the South into submission. Known as the Anaconda Plan, the Union would blockade the entire South and cut it into two by controlling the Mississippi River, a major transportation system and ship building venue for the South. Union Flag-Officer David G. Farragut was assigned the mission to capture New Orleans.

Farragut assembled his fleet along with Commander David Dixon Porter's 20 mortar schooners at Head of Passes on the Mississippi. This strategic point lay 12 miles below Confederate defenses at Forts Jackson and St. Philip commanded by Brig Gen Duncan. In addition to these forts, the Confederates had placed an obstruction across the river to prevent ships from getting beyond these forts.

Porter's mortar schooners opened fire on the 18th, hurling 200-lb shells into and around the two forts. After six days of continuous shelling, Farragut realized that the forts were not going to be put out of action. He then ordered his crew to open a passage through the obstructions. Once completed, at 2:00 A.M., April 24, 1862, Farragut began his move up river confident that his steam-powered vessels could pass these forts. All of Farragut's ships fought their way upriver through the opened barricade. In a wild confusion of flashing artillery fire and blinding smoke they engaged both the fortifications and the Confederate fleet upriver from the forts. They successfully avoided fire rafts and the charges of the ironclad ram *Manassas* and defeated the Confederate fleet. Not one ship of Farragut's fleet was lost due to artillery fire from the two forts. Farragut's 13 vessels continued upriver to capture a defenseless New Orleans on the 25th. General Duncan surrendered the two forts to Commander Porter on April 28, 1862. Union Army General Butler and 18,000 troops occupied the port city, placing it now under Union control.

Strategic Implications: Military

The Southern military strategy to build and use ironclads to break the blockade was dealt a serious set back. The fall of New Orleans led to the destruction of two potent ironclads and the loss of five different shipyards. It also

allowed the Union to control the river, resulting in the destruction of additional ironclads and denial of construction facilities at Memphis and other locations in the Mississippi Valley. By taking New Orleans and its port facilities, the Union's Anaconda military strategy was advanced. The Valley was now in Union control, cutting the Confederacy in two, isolating it from food and supplies from the West.

(Continued on page 4)

BIOGRAPHY OF ART BERGERON



Art Bergeron is an Archivist with the United States Army Military Institute at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He was the Historian at Pamplin Historical Park and The National Museum of the Civil War Soldier near Petersburg, Virginia, from 1996 to 2003. Born in Alexandria, Louisiana, Bergeron received his bachelor, master and doctoral degrees in American History from Louisiana State University. Bergeron is a veteran of the United States Army, having served in Vietnam, 1969-1970. He is an active member of the Southern Historical Association, the Louisiana Historical Association (former President; Fellow of the Association), the Society of Civil War Historians and The Blue and Gray Education Association. Bergeron is a past president of The Richmond and Baton Rouge Civil War Round Tables. He is the author, co-author or editor of more than half a dozen books and many other articles in various publications.

Memo from Jim Hamilton Your President



JIM HAMILTON,
YOUR PRESIDENT

Greetings and salutations
Your LCWRT has reached another milestone, a significant milestone: **IRS has approved LCWRT's 501 c 3 application!** This means if you fill out a long form 1040, your LCWRT membership and any other donations to LCWRT can be exempt from your Federal Income Tax filing under section 170 of the code. Of course, you will want to check with your tax advisor as to amount.

(Continued on page 3 JIM)

Lowcountry Civil War Round Table

Discover The Difference!

BUTLER
CHRYSLER • DODGE • JEEP

☆☆☆☆☆☆

CONTACT:
ORREN BELL

☆☆☆☆☆☆

HOURS: MON-FRI: 8:30AM - 7PM
SAT: 9AM-5PM • CLOSED SUNDAY
1555 SALEM ROAD
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA
800.995.9696
843.522.9696
BUTLERCHRYSLER.COM

Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc.
The Minie Ball Gazette
P.O. Box 2252
Bluffton, SC 29910
843-705-9898
Dedicated to Historic Preservation and Enlightenment
Editors: Mitch & Marian Sackson

Officers & Committee Chairpersons		
President	Jim Hamilton	705-7575
Vice Pres	Johanna Verwer	705-9201
Secretary	Roger Ramm	705-3806
Treasurer	Walter Hartung	705-1055
At-Large	Paul Bucklin	705-5168
Membership	Shirley & Bill Trapp	705-2455
Program	Bob Zabawa Don Walters	341-9142 379-9653
Editor & Distrib'n	Marian & Mitch Sackson	705-2628
Dinner	Phyllis Turner Anne Hamilton	705-1048 705-7575
Hospitality	Bonnie & Ralph James	705-6800
Historian	Carol & Ralph Morrison	705-6189
Photographer	Robert Reilly	705-6072




MARIAN & MITCH SACKSON EDITORS & NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Reservation for October 13th Meeting At McCracken Middle School
Dinner @ 5:45pm—Program @ 7:00pm

Menu for This Meeting
Fried Chicken • Roast Beef
Corn • Collard Greens
Broccoli Salad • Potato Salad
Butter Beans
Banana Pudding • Coconut Pineapple Cake
Rolls • Ice Tea • Coffee
Catered by Duke's of Ridgeland

TO ATTEND PROGRAM ONLY (no dinner) Make your reservation by calling Johanna Verwer 705-9201


 Dinner For October 13th, 2004


Number of Dinners: ___ @ \$11 each = ___

Names: _____

Phone: _____ Ck# _____ Date _____

Make Check Payable to: **LCWRT Inc**
Mail Check with this Form to:
LILLIAN HARTUNG
124 LAKE SOMRSET CIRCLE
BLUFFTON, SC 29909
(OR PLACE IN GREEN BOX)

New Address 



Dinner Form & Check Must be RECEIVED no later than NOON October 7th 2004

Season Schedule

OCTOBER 13 THE NAVY BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS The Union occupation was an event that had major international significance as told by Art Bergeron, who is an author and research historian for the U.S. Military Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA. He has previously served as the historian for Pamplin Historical Park and the state of Louisiana.

NOVEMBER 10 BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG On December 13, 1862, Union General Burnside built his bridges, crossed the Rappahannock, and assailed General Lee's army in its prepared position. One will also learn about the Angel of Marye's Heights via Mac Wyckoff a long time member and leader of the Rappahannock Valley CW Roundtable and sought after Civil War presenter.

JANUARY 12 FAITH IN THE FIGHT: CHAPLAINS IN THE CIVIL WAR The chaplains on both sides fought for the spiritual and physical well-being of the combatants. Dr. Robertson is one of our most informative speakers and he is the Director of the Virginia Tech Civil War Center.

FEBRUARY 9 THE JEWISH CONFEDERATES Learn about Jewish aspects of the Civil War and their contribution to the Southern war effort. Presented by Robert N. Rosen a native of Charleston and founder of The Rosen Law Firm.

MARCH 9 THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN In May and June of 1863, Maj. Gen. Grant's armies converged on Vicksburg, investing the city and entrapping a Confederate army under Lt. Gen. Pemberton. On July 4, Vicksburg surrendered after prolonged siege operations. This is excitingly presented by Edwin C. Bearss, a well known military expert and renowned Civil War lecturer .

APRIL 13 GEORGIA HEROINES The dedication and hardships that women suffered during the "War Between the States" will be highlighted. Our presenter, Mrs. Tommie Phillips LaCavera, is a noted author and very knowledgeable about the Daughters of the American Revolution, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the U.S. Daughters of 1812.

MAY 11 THE FIRE-EATERS OF SOUTH CAROLINA A closer look about those Southerners who were staunch and unyielding advocates of secession. Presented by Dr. Larry Rowland of Beaufort, SC. Dr. Rowland, a long time Professor of History at the University of South Carolina - Beaufort.

MORNING AFTER

There will be a *Morning After* for the October 13 presentation at 10am on October 14 at Palmetto Electric, River Walk near Wal-Mart. Coffee & pastries will be available. Call Johanna at 705-9201 to reserve a donut.

FEATURING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Your newsletter will feature each month a group of **volunteers** without whose efforts the LCWRT would not be as great as it is today. The Editors will arrange for photos to be taken during the course of this season.



BILL & SHIRLEY TRAPP YOUR MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE. THEY RECEIVE & MAINTAIN THE MASTER LIST & PROVIDE LABELS FOR THE NEWSLETTER & BADGES FOR NEW MEMBERS

READING ON NEW ORLEANS

Go to the following web site for an interesting excerpt of a yeoman who served under Farragut.

<http://www.civilwardiary.com/>

(JIM Continued from page 1)

This time consuming effort was started back in 2000 by Bob Eberly and our attorney and, with persistence, Tom Oliver, Bernie Covert and Walt Hartung continued to follow-up with the IRS and with many thanks to them, we now have this sought after and valuable IRS ruling! It's there for your use!

On another subject, the LCWRT is blessed with many active Committees and volunteers who develop and make our programs, activities and trips happen.

Our Editors, Mitch & Marian Sackson, will introduce you in each issue to our many volunteers, such as the Executive Committee which is composed of your officers, a member at large and the Committee Chairs. The many other volunteers include the Program Committee, Hospitality, Dinner and the Bulletin Delivery Group. All-in-all there are about 50 people who fulfill all of the various tasks which make your LCWRT run smoothly.

In the coming issues of The Minie Ball Gazette, Mitch and Marian will continue to introduce our other Committees and their volunteers. I hope you will enjoy reading about them and appreciate their efforts on your behalf.

See you at our next dinner meeting on October 8th.

All the best. Jim

SEPTEMBER MEETING HAD WONDERFUL MUSIC BEFORE & WITH OUR MEAL, PROVIDED BY WELL KNOWN BLUFFTON SINGER BILL DUPONT JR. ALAN DOWNS THEN PRESENTED AN INTERPRETATION OF GEN JOSEPH E JOHNSTON



Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc.
The Minie Ball Gazette
P.O. Box 2252
Bluffton, SC 29910

The Union's use of steamships to defeat fixed fortifications resulted in a significant naval victory. Their proven naval tactics led to subsequent naval victories at Mobile Bay and in the upper Mississippi River Valley.

Political

Union control of New Orleans was one more argument in their continuing strategy of persuading England and other powers not to recognize or support the Confederacy. The Union demonstrated its will and might in a decisive victory, causing these nations to respect America's desires. Its loss would continue to sway England and France from intervention.

The Confederacy believed the Union blockade denied European powers cotton, tobacco and other valuable and much needed Southern products. When the European factories ran out of cotton, they would have to do something about the blockade. Recognition of the Confederacy and European intervention, including arbitration, was the action the South was hoping for. This would end the damaging Union blockade of Southern ports and enable their survival as an independent nation. Loss of New Orleans at best postponed and at worst precluded this very important recognition sought by the Confederate States.

Leadership

Farragut emerged as the Union naval hero. He would later provide further Union naval victories upriver and at Mobile Bay. His remark, "Dam the torpedoes, full speed ahead" at

Mobile Bay became a US naval motto for courage, determination and sheer guts for future generations of American sailors. His legend as a naval hero remains to this day.

Domestic

The Confederates believed that offering use of the Mississippi Valley to Northern states for commerce through the Confederacy would induce them to either support, e.g., by voting for Democratic candidates, or join their cause. This concept was shattered by their loss of New Orleans. Those northwestern states which depended upon the Mississippi for commerce would now have no reason to support the Confederacy or to vote for Democratic candidates.

Economic

The loss of New Orleans was a severe economic setback for the South. The Union gained a valuable economic asset at the expense of the South. New Orleans and the Mississippi River served as the vehicle for commerce throughout the entire Mississippi Valley, bringing the produce of all the states along this valley directly to markets throughout the world. The loss of New Orleans ended the economic benefits that this commerce brought.

The loss of New Orleans denied Louisiana its cotton market and the foreign exchange paid to the South for the exported cotton crop. No longer will cotton's value play a financial role in bankrolling the war. The South could no longer use cotton as security for European loans, since it lost its primary cotton port. *Written by Walter Hartung*