

# The Washington Volunteer

The Newsletter of the  
Puget Sound Civil War Round Table

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## Our Next Meeting

**IN PERSON MEETING AT THE CHINA HARBOR - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED  
USE THE "RESERVATIONS" LINK ON THE WEB SITE**

<https://echidnapistachiopluto45072.wordpress.com/reservations/>

Rick Solomon writes: "I am very pleased to announce that our speaker on April 13 is Eric J Wittenberg, who will be giving a talk based on his book *We Ride the Whirlwind: Sherman and Johnston at Bennett Place*. This talk will be about the events leading up to the surrender of Joseph E Johnston and his army to William T Sherman and his army at Bennett Place, North Carolina on April 26, 1865."

Eric Wittenberg is an award-winning Civil War author. A native of southeastern Pennsylvania, Eric was educated at Dickinson College, the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, and the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. He is a partner in the Columbus, Ohio law firm of Cook, Sladoje and Wittenberg, LPA, where he manages the firm's litigation practice. Wittenberg is the author of 22 critically acclaimed books on the American Civil War as well as more than three dozen articles published in national magazines. He is in regular demand as a speaker and tour guide, and travels the country regularly doing both. He serves on the



boards of trustees of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust and the Little Big Horn Associates, and often works with the American Battlefields Trust on battlefield preservation initiatives. Eric is also the program coordinator for the Chambersburg Civil War Seminars. His specialty is cavalry operations in the Civil War. He and his wife Susan reside in Columbus, Ohio.

Let's give a resounding Northwest welcome to him by attending our in-person meeting! The Reservations link is above. Reservations are open immediately, and will close at midnight on Monday, 10 April. **The meeting takes place on Thursday, 13 April.** Social hour opens at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7:00 p.m. Program will begin at 8:00 p.m.

## Our Last Meeting

On Thursday, 9 March, we remembered, and we sang, and we harmonized to the songs of old. Our excellent presenter, Hank Cramer, led us through the adventures of the Alabama, the memories of the fireside, the quest for the drinking gourd, and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. The background information for each song made it real for the present. It was a fun evening for the two dozen members that attended.

## President's Message: April

James L Dimond

The Civil War began in April 1861. Across five Aprils, this nation tore itself apart. April 2023, although it is quite different, brings complex challenges. The lessons of the past will empower us to face the situations of the present.

April brings baseball. Go Mariners!

April also brings thoughts of taxes. This is a gentle reminder that the Civil War Round Table is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, and in light of that we have certain responsibilities to distribute our funds to educational, cultural, and civic projects. Two such civic projects are right here in my own back yard. The Hillcrest Burial Park in Kent has several more unmarked Civil War veterans.

Government markers for two of these fellows will be readily available through the Department of Veterans Affairs. The hangup, as always, is the setting and endowment fees. Hillcrest has a rate schedule which is very reasonable. Installing the marker pair would cost \$500 or less. I recommend it as a spring project, and look forward to hearing from the membership at the next meeting on your thoughts.

A similar project is nearing completion in Bothell, and I anticipate details on it shortly.

## Book Notes: The Almost-Forgotten Surrender, Bennett Place North Carolina

Jeff Rombauer

The Civil War did not end with the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox on 9 April 1865. Quite the contrary, the final surrender took place in Indian Territory on 14 July 1865 when the governor of the Chickasaw nation formally surrendered.

Perhaps the most controversial surrender was that of what was left of the Confederate Army of Tennessee and Union forces under the command of General William T Sherman. Meeting on 17 April 1865, the two generals conceived an accord which went far beyond a simple surrender of Johnston's army, and in fact entered what Sherman perceived the late President Lincoln would have wanted.

But with Lincoln's assassination, the mood in Northern states had changed drastically. Terms of this first accord were rejected by Secretary of War Stanton and the new President. Grant was sent to North Carolina to make sure that Sherman only accepted the surrender of Johnston's army. Sensitive to Sherman's feelings, Grant stayed in the background when a new surrender accord was signed 28 April 1865 at Bennett Place. However, details of the first accord were leaked to the press by Stanton, causing lifelong enmity between Sherman and Stanton.

For additional information, the following books are recommended.

Johnston, Joseph E. *Narrative of Military Operations Directed During the Late War Between the States*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959.

General Johnston's personal account of the surrender negotiations can be found in Chapter 12 of his narrative. Johnston updated his account in an article in the August 1886 edition of *The North American Review*, to counter the narrative of Jefferson Davis in his book *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*.

Sherman, William T. *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman by Himself*. New York: D Appleton & Company, 1875.

Chapter 23 in Sherman's memoirs covers the end of the war in North Carolina, his negotiations with General Joseph E Johnston to surrender, and the controversy over the first accord reached on 18 April 1865 (which was rejected by officials in Washington DC as it included items regarding civil affairs). The Union general includes a significant amount of correspondence in this chapter to defend his position in this matter.

Arnett, Ethel Stephens. *Confederate Guns Were Stacked Greensboro, North Carolina*. Greensboro: Piedmont Press, 1965.

The author covers events in Greensboro during the months of April, May and June 1865. Besides the surrender negotiations which took place between Sherman and Johnston, she also covers the reaction to Lincoln's assassination in Greensboro and the myth of Confederate gold.

Bradley, Mark L. *This Astounding Close: The Road to Bennett Place*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

Relying on a wide source of primary and secondary sources, Bradley presents the best modern account of the events in North Carolina during March, April, and May of 1865.

Dunkerly, Robert M. *To the Bitter End: Appomattox, Bennett Place, and the Surrenders of the Confederacy*. California: Savas Beatie, 2015.

From Virginia to Texas, Dunkerly briefly covers the surrender of each of the Confederate armies.

# Features

No features this month. Please consider submitting an article.



*Library of Congress Image, Monument at Bennett Place, also known as Bennett Farm, a North Carolina Historic Site in Durham County Digital ID: (original digital file) highsm 47190 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.47190>*

## The Vacant Chair

Peter Jensen, long-time member of the Round Table, passed away on 4 March 2023. Mark Terry relates, "I knew Peter from both reenacting and from the Round Table. I believe he gave a presentation on John Brown when we were at the Nexus Motel for a short time. His wife Karen was also a member before she passed away. Peter was an accomplished artist and taught art at Everett H.S. until he retired. He was an alumnus of Ballard HS, class of '51, so we had that in common, as I graduated from there in 1976, 25 years later."

At our meeting in March, Mark again paid tribute to Peter. We left the vacant chair in Peter's honor, and raised a glass to him and to our other absent friends. May they rest in peace.

# Ye Olde Editor's Close

FOR THE 2023-2024 YEAR, WE WILL NEED A NEW TREASURER. Following several years of faithful service, Chris McDonald is "retiring" in June. Step up!

Please visit our reconstructed Web site at [www.pugetsoundcwrt.org](http://www.pugetsoundcwrt.org) for the latest in news, events, and announcements. Please consider contributing an article or two! Until next time, please stay safe and healthy.

Officers 2022-2023:

James L Dimond, President ([shinodad@gmail.com](mailto:shinodad@gmail.com))

Rick Solomon, Past President ([ricksolomon192@gmail.com](mailto:ricksolomon192@gmail.com))

Richard Miller, Vice-President Programs ([milomiller882@msn.com](mailto:milomiller882@msn.com))

VACANT, Vice-President Editor (Jim Dimond pinch-hitting!)

David Otis, Vice-President Marketing ([davidotis81@gmail.com](mailto:davidotis81@gmail.com))

Arthur Banner, Vice-President Membership ([banneras@comcast.net](mailto:banneras@comcast.net))

VACANT, Vice-President Reservations

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