



Battle Lines

Newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Atlanta
Founded 1949

PROMOTING THE SERIOUS STUDY OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

January Meeting

Join us via Zoom

Tuesday, January 12, 7:30 p.m.

Technical Help

Zoom assistance is available.
Email Wood Hughes at
wood.hughes@gmail.com.

Dues are Due

We are still collecting 2020-21 dues. Please pay your dues online at <http://www.civilwarroundtableofatlanta.org> or mail a check for \$75.00 to our treasurer:

Tim Whalen

P.O. Box 2355

Griffin, GA 30224

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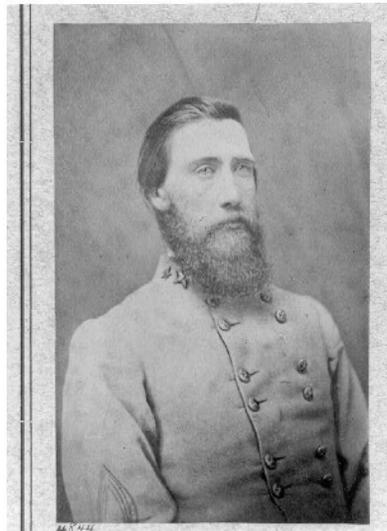
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Round Table Programs Resume

President's Message: I hope that everyone had a great Holiday Season and closed out 2020 on a positive note. Finally

being able to get back together with the Atlanta Civil War Round Table certainly helped brighten my mood. Dr. Thomas Flagel gave a great talk on the 1913 Gettysburg Reunion last month. I would encourage everyone to pick up his book for an even more in-depth study of the Reunion.



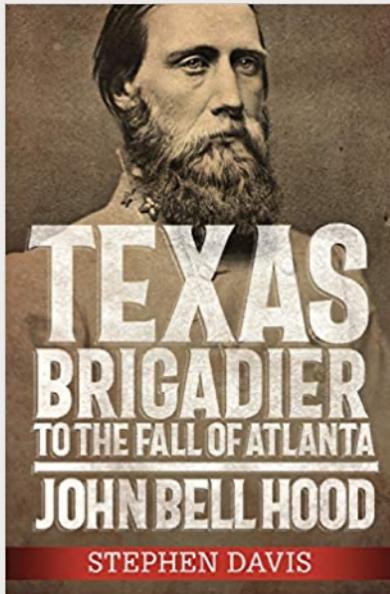
General John Bell Hood
(Library of Congress)

This month we have a local favorite, Dr. Steve Davis, speaking on "Hood's Flank

Attack East of Atlanta, July 22, 1864; or, why Jackson's flank attack

at Chancellorsville succeeded and Hood's did not." As someone who lives just off the Battle of Atlanta battlefield, that day is always of specific interest to me. I have often heard Hardee's night move was an attempt to copy Jackson's move at Chancellorsville, and I look forward to a comparison.

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New Views of Hood

Steve Davis, our January speaker, has completed a two-volume book on the life and military career of General John Bell Hood. The December *Battle Lines* featured a review from Harwell Book Award Committee Member Robert Fugate of the first volume, *Texas Brigadier to the Fall of Atlanta: John Bell Hood* (2019). A video of the review is also available on our website: <http://www.civilwarroundtableofatlanta.org>. The second volume *Into Tennessee and Failure: John Bell Hood* was published this year.

ACWRT Programs Resume (From Page 1)

Both volumes of Steve's book on John Bell Hood are out now, and I highly recommend both to anyone with an interest in General Hood and the Western Campaign.



Battle of Atlanta, July 22, 1864: Lithograph circa 1888 Kurz and Allison (Library of Congress)

Executive Committee Member John Miller has been

hard at work planning field trips for 2021 (See Page 9), and I greatly appreciate his efforts! The size of the tours will be limited and in full compliance with COVID protocols. Keep an eye out for further details and registration information.

We will most likely continue to meet in the Zoom format for the foreseeable future, but as the vaccine distribution continues there is hope that we will be able to get back together in person in the not too distant future. As always, the safety and health of our membership is primary. We will continue to improve the quality of our Zoom meetings. If anyone has any hints or suggestions please let me or anyone on the Executive Board know!

Please stay safe and healthy,

Carlton Mullis

ACWRT President, 2020-2021

A Prayer Invocation for Our Meeting

When we hear the name, “Stephen Foster,” we recall songs like “Oh, Susanna,” “Camptown Races,” and “Beautiful Dreamer.” Yet many of his most popular



Dr. Mary-Elizabeth Ellard, DVM

works were inspirational.

This song, included in a collection of his work originally published during the War, continues to offer words of encouragement, even in the wake of 2020.

“Seek and Ye Shall Find”

by Stephen Collins Foster
published by Horace
Waters, N.Y., 1863
(selected verses)

Every prayer is heard above
That we sincerely feel,
Every sigh received with love,
When we repenting kneel.

Chorus:

Ask and it shall be given,
Seek and ye shall find,
Every prayer is heard in heaven
That is breathed from a truthful mind.
Life to all, our Lord has shown,
Then be to Hope resigned,
When around you, doubts are thrown,
“Seek and ye shall find.”

Chaplain Mary-Elizabeth Ellard



Our speaker, historian Stephen Davis, last addressed the Round Table in February 2017 with the program *Neither Great Nor Genius: General John Bell Hood in 1864*. Steve has spoken to us many times. An Atlantan, he is the author of six books on the Atlanta Campaign. After earning a Bachelor of Arts from Emory, Steve obtained a Master’s degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His PhD is from Emory. Steve is a prolific author with hundreds of articles and book reviews for the *Civil War Times*, the *Georgia Historical Quarterly* and many other publications. From 1985 to 2006 he served as Book Review Editor for *Blue & Gray Magazine*.

Member News:

Mitchell Now Leads Atlanta Preservation Center

Longtime ACWRT member David Mitchell has been named executive director of the Atlanta Preservation Center, a non-profit that for 41 years has protected and advocated for Atlanta's historic buildings, neighborhoods and landmarks. Previously Preservation Center director of education



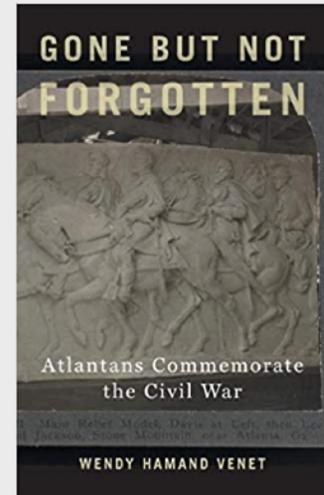
David poses at one of the original pylons at the Preservation Center's Lemuel P. Grant Mansion.

and operations, David credits the Round Table with nurturing the experience he brings to the “complex story” of Atlanta's history and landscapes. “The Round Table is one of the great spaces for discussion of historic topics that continue to impact the culture of Atlanta. It provides a remarkable opportunity to discuss the conflict from many perspectives,” David notes. Preservation is very significantly, he says, a “respectful conversation.”

In looking at historical landscapes, the “focus should be positive. Starting positively allows a clearer appreciation for the negative.”

David is from Rome, Georgia, where his father Martin Hardin “Buddy” Mitchell served for 41 years on the Rome City Commission. He grew up with a sense of civic responsibility and of respect for the importance of local community. In his father's honor, David founded the M.H. Mitchell Foundation,

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Interpreting the War

Georgia University Press has published a paperback edition of ACWRT member Wendy Hamand Venet's *Gone But Not Forgotten: Atlantans Commemorate the Civil War*, which was first published by Yale University Press in 2016. This is Wendy's third book on the subject of Atlanta and the War. When she encountered the Civil War diary of bookseller Samuel P. Richards in 2006, her interest was piqued. She edited his diary and produced 2009's *Sam Richard's Civil War Diary: A Chronicle of the Atlanta Home Front*. Her 2014 book, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta*, presents wartime Atlanta from a civilian perspective. In *Gone But Not Forgotten*, she looks at the post-war culture of memory embodied in veterans' reunions, monuments and more.

Mitchell Named Director of Atlanta Preservation Center (From Page 4)

a not-for-profit that promotes understanding of the culture of the South and historic preservation (<https://www.mhmittchell.org/mission>). David studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois and at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, Ireland. His son Liam, 14, is following the family tradition of public service. Liam was serving as a page for the Georgia House until COVID restrictions interrupted the program.

David, his wife Niamh and Liam live in Grant Park near the historic Lemuel P. Grant Mansion (http://www.atlantapreservationcenter.com/grant_mansion), headquarters for the Atlanta Preservation Center since 2008. David and Niamh are constantly active in the upkeep of the mansion where restoration is ongoing. To visit the building is to enter another time. Floor to ceiling windows with deep casings provide abundant natural light that strikes the beautiful patina of aged walls. The interior glows in a way contemporary buildings seem to have forgotten. The Atlanta History Center's *Preserved on Glass: Scenes of Civil War Atlanta* is currently presented in the exhibit space, a magnificent room anchored by a long table donated by the Commerce Club. Many of the furnishings and appointments of the house have been donated by Atlanta people and institutions. As a non-profit, the center's tight budget requires improvisation with such offerings, says

David. Historian Franklin Garrett called the Grant Mansion, built in 1856 by engineer, entrepreneur and philanthropist Lemuel P. Grant, the most historic building in Atlanta. It was nearly torched when Confederate Atlanta fell in 1864. Fortunately, when the Union arson party was shown a Masonic apron in the room where Georgia's legendary golfer Bobby Jones was later born, they spared it.



Originally three-stories, the Grant Mansion was a near ruin when the Preservation Center acquired it in 2001 (above). The ground floor has been restored (left) and is used for gatherings and gallery displays.

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A portrait of early Atlanta's Lemuel P. Grant presides in the entryway to the mansion he built (left). One of the mansion's distinctive fireplaces (right).

Mitchell Named Director of Atlanta Preservation Center (From Page 5)

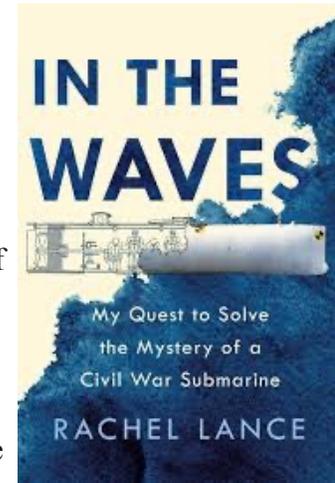
The mansion was up for demolition when the Preservation Center purchased it in 2001. Last Century *Gone With the Wind* author Margaret Mitchell who was interested in restoring the mansion, held the mortgage. The corner fireplaces were models for *Gone With the Wind's* movie sets. Pre-COVID camps for local children and other educational events took place in the mansion regularly. The Center is still open but activity is limited.

The Preservation Center is known for its historic walking tours and regular editions of its beautiful *Phoenix Flies* directory of historic tours and sites within the city of Atlanta. The non-profit Easements Atlanta, an arm of the Preservation Center, Atlanta History Center and the City of Atlanta, is also based in the Grant Mansion. Easements Atlanta works for historic easements and to help property owners maintain and preserve historic structures. Another partner is historic Westview Cemetery, site of the Battle of Ezra Church on July 28, 1864. Though COVID has interrupted its in-depth walking tours and the educational events held in the Grant Mansion and other historic spaces, these are expected to resume after the pandemic recedes. In the meantime, David remains busy networking for the Atlanta Preservation Center and treasuring Atlanta's history.

Round Table Review: *Rachel Lance's In The Waves: My Quest To Solve The Mystery Of A Civil War Submarine*

In The Waves is my new favorite Civil War companion. Author Rachel Lance is a biomedical engineer whose PhD research at Duke was based on underwater blast effects on humans. She documented her journey with this first volume.

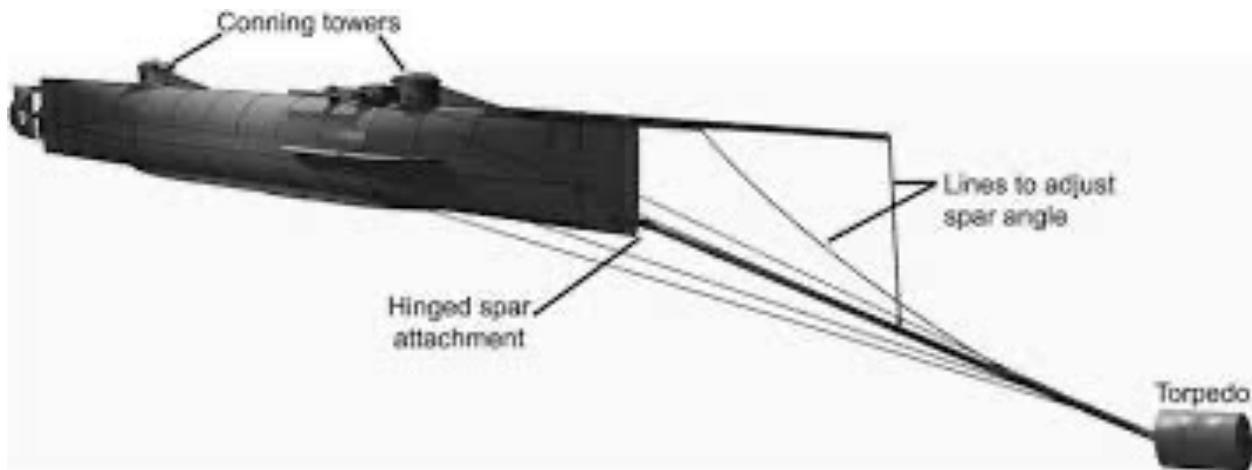
Dr Lance is from Detroit and matriculated at the University of Michigan's College of Engineering. After her Master's studies she gained employ with the US Navy. Her background with the US Navy's dive center at Panama City, Florida, which included her development of strong working relationships with the Navy's technical experts at Coronado, California, and more especially at Indian Head, Maryland, leveraged and refined her analytical skills in preparation for additional postgraduate biomedical engineering studies at Duke University. So she decided to base her calculations and modeling on the submarine *HL Hunley*, which sank the warship USS *Housatonic* outside Charleston harbor in February 1864.



In The Waves is a masterful story which combines history, physics, and a young woman's rise to professional prominence in a highly technical field. It is clear that Dr Lance never compromised her creative writing studies while she waded through the calculus and neural science of her undergraduate engineering curriculum. Dr Lance delivers a detailed description of the genesis of submarine expertise in the technology-starved Confederate states, including innovations of the Rains brothers, design and construction of the Augusta Canal powder works, even the persistence and determination of fire-eater Edmund Ruffin to try to break the Union's chokehold on Charleston.

Dr Lance proves to be a masterful storyteller, neatly weaving equations, historical facts, evidence, contemporary correspondence, and fresh hypotheses with her own tale of professional education at a Research 1 university. She has personalized the *Hunley's* attack on the *Housatonic*, giving names and faces to the sailors and offering her highly visual account of the nascent submarine's encounter, reminiscent of the classic 1955 novel *Run Silent Run Deep* by Captain Edward L. Beach Jr. and Tom Clancy's *The Hunt For Red October*. Along the way we learn much about a young woman who cares nothing about glass ceilings or interpersonal constraints. One grows to believe that nothing can stop her.

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The Hunley: 'inadvertently designed to kill her own crew.'

Round Table Review: Rachel Lance's *In the Waves* (From Page 7)

Most ACWRT members are familiar with the story and many have visited the Charleston museum. A number of theories of the *Hunley*'s demise have been floated since that fateful night in 1864. Did a sharpshooter cause her sinking? Was the crew asphyxiated while submerged? Did the cold and exhaustion overwhelm the crew? Or did the blast itself incapacitate the sailors, leaving them unable to return to shore? After examining the many theories, Rachel Lance advances her own opinion of what happened to the *Hunley* following the attack on the *Housatonic*, and she thoroughly documents her research to support this idea. Among her other epiphanies, Dr Lance found that the angle of the torpedo spar was crucial to the ultimate fate of her crew. *Hunley*'s designers determined that the torpedo/mine had to be lower on the *Housatonic*'s keel in order to bring about the most damage. This caused the blast to propagate upward into the bottom of the *Hunley*, resulting in the greatest amount of shock inside her. According to Lance, "The *Hunley* was inadvertently designed to kill her own crew."

In The Waves could be helpful reading for anyone about to seek a PhD, especially in a science or engineering field. It is a roadmap for success, while acknowledging the tortuous path and numerous dead ends and difficulties to be encountered in academia.

Rachel Lance gives me much hope for our future. If this Renaissance woman is representative of the next generation of scientists, then our grandchildren may yet inherit some worthwhile legacy. I hope you enjoy reading *In The Waves* as much as I did. And I cannot wait to see what Rachel Lance does next.

John Miller Atlanta Civil War Round Table Executive Committee

Atlanta Civil War Round Table Tours Resume

ACWRT activities are alive and well with several tours scheduled for this Spring.

Each tour will be COVID-careful and limited to 10 participants, who will provide their own transportation (no bus, sorry), bag lunch, and water, and will closely adhere to CDC guidelines for masking and social distancing. There will be no fee but we will offer links to websites for online donations to help local preservation efforts. We know you will be generous.

March 27 we will join Charlie Crawford for a walking tour of Confederate lines on what would soon become the campus of Georgia Tech. Charlie has a wealth of well crafted handouts that will bring to life the wonderful Ponder House essay by John Dietrichs from last month's ACWRT *Battle Lines* (see our website, Newsletter Archives). Online contributions will support the Georgia Battlefields Association, so look for this sign-up near the end of January.



ACWRT's Charlie Crawford will lead a Ponder House (Pictured Above) tour in March.

April 17 we will join Jim Ogden for a day at Chickamauga. Everyone loves Jim, and our only challenge is how to decide which element of the battle to cover. We could easily spend months at Chickamauga!

May 15 will find us in Jonesboro as we venture out with Bill Dodd. Bill has spent decades studying this crucial phase of the Atlanta campaign and is a delightful resource for our Round Table.

For June we will either be at Sweetwater Creek State Park to learn more about the New Manchester Mill—or we may be at Kennesaw. One or the other of these will shift to the Fall, and much hinges on our ability to mitigate health risks associated with COVID.

We are excited to welcome 2021 and we hope to see everyone together soon. Please stay safe!

John Miller Atlanta Civil War Round Table Executive Committee



The Last Civil War Widow

Helen Viola Jackson, the last living widow of a Civil War veteran, died at the age of 101 last month. She married Union veteran James Bolin, Company F, 14th Missouri Cavalry, on the 4th of September 1936, according to Brian C. Pierson, Commander in Chief of the Sons of Union Veterans. At the time Helen Jackson was 17 and James Bolin was 93. Helen’s father had volunteered her to stop by Mr. Bolin’s house each day to assist him with chores as she headed home from school. Mr. Bolin refused to accept charity and asked Helen to marry him so he could provide her with his Union pension. She accepted and Mr. Bolin recorded the wedding in his personal Bible. He died in June of 1939. Helen never remarried and she never applied for a pension. In later years, her status as widow won her some celebrity. (Photo Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Helen-Jackson-Last-Civil-War-Widow-267640127284018>)

War and Remembrance

Join us Tuesday, February 9 at 7:30 p.m. for the program *War and Remembrance*. Our speaker Caroline E. Janney is the John L. Nau III Professor in the History of the American Civil War and Director of the John L. Nau III Center for Civil War History at the University of Virginia. Her presentation will be based on her 2016 book *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*, University of North Carolina Press, Littlefield History of the Civil War Era. In *Remembering the Civil War*, Caroline looks at the Civil War Era generation, those on both sides of the conflict and of all races. Her work demonstrates that as early as 1865, Civil War survivors were purposely shaping what would be remembered. Caroline is also author of the 2012 book, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause*.

Atlanta Civil War Round Table

Officers and Executive Committee 2020-2021

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
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Bill Dodd; Tom Prior

At Large Executive Committee First Year:

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