



The Picket Post

The Central Virginia Civil War Collectors Association

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August 2014

Meeting Time & Date

Our meeting location is the American Legion Hall at 2522 Indale Road in Glen Allen and our meeting date is the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:15 pm.

Our upcoming meeting is August 26, 2014. Craig Bell will present *VA Manufactured Arms & Weapons*. The Manufactory was first opened in Williamsburg and later moved to Richmond. There is a small collection at the VHS, but they are closed for renovations, so our August meeting is now the best place to come to learn about these weapons anywhere in the world!

Monthly Meeting

Relic of the Month –



While most of us were hiding indoors shielding ourselves from the sweltering 70-80° temperatures, Ron Rigney braved the heat and was rewarded with this Model 1839 "Baby" US belt plate with Pittman stamp! Ron also found an 1872 half-dime.

Ran Hundley recommended hunting in the water during these stifling months.

This Month's Presentation –

Our speaker this month was Roland Frodigh, Master Relic Restorer Extraordinaire, who presented *Relic Restoration*.

Roland asked the question, why do we do relic restoration? He likes art and art history and earth tones, so relic repair is a good fit for him.

Relic restoration has become mainstream in the relic community, but is the relic 90% original and 10% restored or 10% original and 90% restored, or even 100% "restored"? Roland cautioned that we not be fooled by a relic repaired or by one completely fabricated. A lot of repairs are done with materials that are soluble in solvents, so one way to tell is to use a bit of acetone, toluene or methyl ethyl ketone to tell the tale. He asked us to consider where the dividing line lies between relic restoration and relic replacement or fakery? Gold can be dusted on in powder form. Often, it is hard to tell what is what. He noted that digital photo enlarged is a good way to see a lot of otherwise hidden details. You also can tap on the surface to distinguish plastic fill from metal. Metal has a higher pitch compared with a thud for epoxy. He noted that a lot of shells often have epoxy on them.

To make his point, he showed several eBay examples that looked great, but that were, to him, obvious restorations that "neglected" to point this fact out. From his own collection, he displayed a VMM and two militia plates that had been folded when found. He prefers to do the minimum amount necessary to bring each relic back to a displayable condition.



Roland showed this repaired VMM plate that was folded in half when found.

In keeping with this philosophy, Roland does not like to paint plates, but leaves them as close to as they were when they came out of the ground as possible. He noted that solder fill is the hardest part of relic repair to match the finish. Accordingly, this is the first place we should look when determining if a plate has been repaired. The inner line on plate borders are also hard to repair without making it over. Silver plating is also hard to reproduce.

For his most challenging restorations, Roland makes a mold and casts his restoration with epoxy and brass filings. He uses iron dust or a cut piece of tin to restore an iron back button. A telltale sign to look for is the presence of foreign objects such as lint. To eliminate this, he burns these off with a lighter or candle. The purplish porous brass is hard to repair, but he uses super glue to fill the porosity and make it smooth. The green can be simulated. Two and three piece buttons are problematic because he does not want to tear a button apart to fix it. Shanks, however, are easily replaced. After epoxy, he uses a Dremel to create a recess where one has been repaired. Some button faces are too far gone to be fixed and must be done with an impression.

So, how does he go about repairing, for example, a button such as a two-piece script I with a cut on the front and some holes in the back. He uses mini clamps for small cracks and sometimes holds the sides together till dry. And he puts in superglue in with a fine dental tool. He has even used mold or slime to replicate the green verdigris!

What about specific categories of relics? "Bar" relics, such as a CS rectangular, must be flattened. These pose two challenges. Gutterbacks, in particular, are often honeycombed with holes. These can be drilled and put back together. Wishbones can be shimmed from repro to original metal pieces.

Spurs are repaired using a shim or pin. The "waves" on the break have to be filed down. He does not use heat because that would oxidize the surface of the relic. Larger breaks can utilize a disk biscuit instead of a pin.

Roland recommended we ask these questions when we are considering sending a relic off for restoration: Will historical value be enhanced? Will it be sold? Will the repair be disclosed? He recommends that you wait a while and "live with the relic" before deciding to have it repaired. When you are buying a relic where repair is not disclosed, ask if there can be a refund if the item is found to have been repaired.

Roland's TAT is two weeks to two months. Sometimes he likes to put a relic on the shelf because he wants to look at it later after time for thought and see if it needs tweaking. Unfortunately, he sometimes sees relics he has repaired being sold without disclosure of repair. Because of this, he requires customers of rare relics to sign a form promising to disclose the repairs upon sale.

There is no "average" cost. Roland charges what is relative to the value of the piece. He turns away a lot of the common relics since these cannot be done any more cheaply than the expensive ones.



More of Roland's repairs. He prefers doing the minimum necessary to make a relic presentable.

Displays –



Kathy Schmit rewarded Steve for surviving 65 years with this incredible 42nd Ohio image. Note the gold-painted US buckle and other brass items.



And, as if the image weren't enough, Steve also added not just an SNY plate, but the belt with it! We trust all of this was sufficient to bring Steve out of his latter-year crisis!



Jack Mountcastle displayed plates that were damaged when recovered, but were expertly repaired by Roland Fordigh.



Perry Cummings displayed some "before" restoration relics, including a rare Provost Guard badge and an SNY buckle that put up a brave defense, but lost to the plow!



This spur is what many collectors would consider as the quintessential Confederate spur. It has arms that gradually curve into the strap plates, beveled corners of the strap plates, unequal size hand-filed strap slots and nice mold and file marks. Only problem is that this is one of a dozen pairs recovered from the Steamboat Arabia (www.1856.com - a MUST-SEE), which sank in 1856! Did this design serve as the model for CS spurs?

CVCWCA Caps & Patches!

Thanks to David Garnett for taking the initiative to do a new run of CVCWCA caps and patches. These have the club logo as shown on the upper left of this page, which David personally designed. \$17.00 for hats with patches sewn on. \$5.00 for patches alone. Contact David at 746-4668.

CVCWCA on Facebook!

Thanks to Robyn Bradshaw, our club treasurer for taking the initiative to create a Facebook page for the club. Visit us today, search for CVCWCA and become a friend!

Thoughts and Prayers

Lloyd Pugh's wife, Patty, went to be with the Lord on July 30. Though we may grieve now, we will not grieve forever. Cards and e's will be welcomed at 103 Red Fox Road, Colonial Heights, VA 23834 and at e.pughjr@comcast.net.

John Frawner successfully underwent double-bypass surgery and returned home on July 30 to begin his recuperation. After several follow-up visits with his cardiologist, he will begin

several months of cardiac rehabilitation. He will appreciate any and all cards or emails that we can send to 6501 Norman's Bridge Road, Hanover, VA 23069-1536 and jfawner@rcn.com.

Upcoming CVCWCA Programs

Ideas Wanted – David Garnett requests that members submit ideas for upcoming programs. If anyone wants to give a presentation, please also let David know.

Sept 23 – *Club Mini Relic Show*, an annual favorite.

Oct 28 – *Club Annual Meeting at the MOC*, hosted by Robert Hancock

(MISSING MONTHS ARE TBA,
EXCEPT DEC. WHEN THERE IS NO MEETING)

President	Jack Mountcastle, 789-9818
Vice Pres./Show	Allen Lane, 928-1006
Vice Pres./Programs	David Garnett, 746-4668
Secretary	Bob Baird, 798-5555
Treasurer	Robyn Bradshaw, 339-0469

Upcoming Shows & Events

Remember, before traveling any distance to attend a show, be sure to call and verify the dates and time!

Sept. 6, 2014 Car-caravan tours, "Petersburg Wartime Hospitals and Prisons," NPS ranger-led tour begins at North Market and West Old Street, in downtown Petersburg. 10:30 am and 2:30 pm. Reservations: 804-732-3531 extension 222.

Sept. 10, 2014 Talk, "Sherman's Atlanta Campaign and the March to the Sea," at the Museum of Confederacy in Appomattox. 12:15 pm. Free with museum admission. moc.org

Sept. 13, 2014 Car-caravan tour "The Great Beefsteak Raid," NPS ranger-led tour begins at the Petersburg National Battlefield visitor center. 10 am-3 pm. Free with park admission. Reservations: 804-732-3531 extension 205. nps.gov/pete

CVCWCA Newsletter

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Sept. 13, 2014 Illustrated talk, "Siege of Richmond in 3D," at the Henrico Theater, 305 E Nine Mile Road, Highland Springs. 2 pm. Free. 804-652-3409.

Sept. 20, 2014 Talks, "The Forgotten Fourteen," USCT Medal of Honor recipients, at the Petersburg National Battlefield visitor center. 10 am and 2 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/pete

Sept. 27, 2014 Bus tour, "Battle of Peebles Farm/Fort Harrison," all day NPS tour in the Richmond-Petersburg area. 804-335-8100.

Sept 27-28, 2014 Living history, ranger talks, "Battle of Peebles' Farm," at locations along the Western Front tour, Petersburg National Battlefield. nps.gov/pete

Sept. 27-28, 2014 The Maryland Militaria Show sponsored by North South Traders Civil War magazine. Held at the Timonium Fairgrounds in Lutherville-Timonium. Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-3Info. Stephen Sylvia 540-672-4845.

Sept. 27-28, 2014 Reenactment, "Battle of New Market Heights, Campaign Before Richmond 1864" near the Malvern Hill battlefield southeast of Richmond. Camps and demonstrations open 9 am each day. Battles at 11 am and 3:30 pm Saturday, noon Sunday. Full info: civilwarhenrico.com

Sept. 27-30, 2014 Anniversary activities, "Battles of Fort Harrison and New Market Heights," near Richmond. NPS ranger tours and programs, living history and more. nps.gov/rich/planyourvisit/150th1864.htm

Oct. 25-26, 2014 The Autumn Civil War Show held at Allstar Events Complex at the Eisenhower Inn. For info. 717-642-6600 or 540-672-4845.

Nov. 15-16, 2014 The Capital of the Confederacy Civil War Show. Held at Richmond International Raceway in Richmond for info. 770-630-7296.

*Thanks to Dennis Madison for the
Calendar of Events for this month's newsletter!*