

# BENNETT PLACE COURIER

Editor: *Ryan Reed*

Official Newsletter of the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc.

Spring 2014

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## *Battle of Monroe's Crossroads*

By: Kevin E. Washington

As part of the guided tour at Bennett Place, we mention the near fist fight between cavalry generals Wade Hampton III and Hugh Judson Kilpatrick during the first day of the surrender talks.

Because we don't focus on the battles leading up to the surrender, it's about our only mention of the event that leads to the altercation – the Battle of Monroe's Crossing – as we believe the altercation highlights the tension between the two armies at the time. Both generals are disinclined to future negotiations.



More than a month before the April 17 sit-down at the Bennett house, Hampton's troopers caught Kilpatrick by surprise down near Fayetteville. A very much embarrassed Kilpatrick, who had been surprised in camp before by enemy troopers, ran from his camp in bare feet and a night shirt.

The actual battle on March 10, 1865, is the topic of Eric J. Wittenberg's finely written 366-page book *The Battle of Monroe's Crossing and the Civil War's Final Campaign* (published by Savas Beatie) from 2006.

While there are good histories of the Carolinas campaign, Wittenberg's focus on the battle at Charles Monroe's house is unique. Other books mention the battle and give some detail but miss the kind of detail that Wittenberg brings to a book length piece based on primary sources. It is what Civil War history should be.

A Columbus, Ohio-based lawyer and writer of some talent who is also an expert on Civil War cavalry, Wittenberg does an admirable job of explaining how Kilpatrick was caught napping and how the battle was fought in an easily understandable tome.

While it is often said that the Civil War was fought in 10,000 places, Monroe's Crossing is one of those obscure places which few Americans, historians included, have ever heard of. Wittenberg opines that had it taken place in Virginia in 1862, it would be a household name among those interested in the Civil War.



### *Battle of Monroe's Crossroads (Continued...)*

Lt. Gen. Hampton hits a Federal division under Brigadier General Kilpatrick with three Confederate divisions in the early morning. Casualties were counted in the hundreds instead of the thousands, but that makes it no less interesting to study.

In water-logged terrain, Kilpatrick finally pushes the Confederates out of his encampment having earned for his troubles life long embarrassment through his carelessness in protecting his troops.

Wittenberg not only writes a great battle book, but also offers us context in terms of the campaign. The Carolinas Campaign is the last gasp of the dying Confederacy and it slowed down the inevitable end to the war only a little bit. The battle, tactically won by Kilpatrick, is a reminder that the Confederate Army was still a dangerous adversary. And the Battle of Bentonville 10 days later punctuated that.

Wittenberg paints really complete pictures of the commanders here, filling in their careers before and after the battle.

It never ceases to amaze me that Judson Kilpatrick seems to be a dangerously incompetent man who consistently has luck on his side. His "Shirttail Skedaddle" is just another example of the general's goofiness. A refugee from the Army of the Potomac when he comes west, he continues to have mishaps in the field, killing troopers and failing to put up proper pickets to warn of surprise cavalry raids.

But his tactical victory here is a wonderful counterpoint to the horrible performance of the Union cavalry earlier in the war. Before 1863, Confederate soldiers must have wondered whether Union soldiers had ever seen a horse before much less learned how to fight from horseback.

Hampton's failure of organizational command during the battle turns out to be a hiccup that doesn't cost him a strategic victory. Sure his troops, like so many starving soldiers, get into Kilpatrick's camps and start acting as if it's Christmas morning trying to eat food and collect goodies, but after the battle almost none of the Confederate commanders ever take responsibility for the tactical loss. The battle buys an extra day for Confederate troops to get across the Cape Fear River and set up for the two subsequent battles.

Today, Monroe's Crossroads is nowhere near accessible enough to wander the battlefield. It is part of Fort Bragg and special permission from the U.S. Military base must be obtained to walk the battlefield grounds.

Wittenberg understands that and chocked the book full of maps, which come in handy in helping readers to grasp the action. The maps seem a little bit busy, but really, that could only be improved by showing them as moving videos like the Civil War Trust does on its web site.

Well footnoted, the book also sports excellent appendices with orders of battle (which should never be missing from any book on any battle), a list of casualties and a 21-page bibliography. I am especially gleeful about all of this, because a book should not only be a comprehensive explanation of an event but provide years of follow up. Reading through the notes is, for me, the icing on the cake of the book given that they explain tangential issues which would bog down the narrative. The notes here are excellent.

The appendix that deals with the lady who Kilpatrick was with the evening of his skedaddle is especially interesting. Wittenberg says that it is still a mystery whether the woman known as Alice was Marie Boozer, a 17-year-old girl from Columbia, or someone else.



## 149TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LARGEST SURRENDER

**BENNETT PLACE PRESENTS:**

### ***THE MANY ROADS TO SURRENDER***

#### **Special Guest Speakers Include:**



**Appomattox Court House National Park**

**Patrick Schroeder, Park Historian**

**Richmond Battlefield National Park**

**Bert Dunkerly, Park Ranger**

**Bennett Place State Historic Site**

**Ryan Reed, Historic Interpreter**



**North Carolina Maritime Museums**

**John Hairr, Curator of Education**

*Visit the Bennett Farm where the largest surrender of the Civil War occurred and meet Union and Confederate Soldiers and hear their stories about the end of the war.*

*Exhibits and table displays by the Sons & Daughters of Union and Confederate Veterans*

*Authors & Book Signings*



**April 26-27, 2014**

**Saturday, 10am-4pm, Sunday, 10am-3pm**

**For More Information:**

**Bennett Place State Historic Site**

**919-383-4345 or [bennett@ncdcr.gov](mailto:bennett@ncdcr.gov)**

**[www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com](http://www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com)**





## ***THE GRAND BLUE & GRAY BALL,***

### ***BENNETT PLACE MUSEUM BENEFIT***

*Hosted by the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc.*

Join us on the actual date of the surrender, **APRIL 26th**, for an evening of dancing, socializing and enjoying the atmosphere of the American Civil War at the Old Murphey Schoolhouse located along Old Highway 10, the road which General Johnston traveled to meet Major General Sherman at the Bennett Farm

for one of the most important meetings of the Civil War.

***FEATURING: THE HUCKLEBERRY BROTHERS BAND***

# **APRIL 26, 2014**

## **Saturday, 7pm-11pm**

For More Information:

**Bennett Place State Historic Site**

**919-383-4345 or [bennett@ncdcr.gov](mailto:bennett@ncdcr.gov)**

**[www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com](http://www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com)**



# Upcoming Events

**March 29-30:**

## *Cruelties of War*

*Witness what life was like for a wounded and sick soldiers during the Civil War. Medical staff will demonstrate the practices of medicine during the war.*



**April 5:**

## *Civil War Park Day*

*Join volunteers at Bennett Place as we assist with various projects to enhance this historic landmark. Support Bennett Place on this national volunteer day of Civil War Historic Sites.*

**May 24-25:**

## *Memorial Day Remembrance*

*We will honor our American soldiers throughout United States history with a military timeline and exhibition. United States veterans will be present and share their stories of military service. A memorial service will be held on Sunday.*





## *Christmas In the Carolinas*

December brought some cold, wet weather to the area but no snow. Our Christmas event reflected what life was like for families as December of 1863 rolled around. There were more shortages of food and other day to day items and the heavy loss of North Carolina soldiers during the battle of Gettysburg in July made families more solemn at Christmas. This was normally a time when families enjoyed the festivities of the season with gifts, good food and the fellowship with family and friends. Despite the shortages though, families did their best to bring some joy into their lives.

On Saturday members of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina portrayed soldiers who were on their way home for the holiday. These men were among the lucky few to receive a furlough. They stopped by the Bennett farm to rest before continuing on their journey home. While they were here, they received gifts and a meal from some of the ladies of Orange County which they thoroughly enjoyed. As they prepared to leave, the ladies bid adieu to those brave men. The following day brought sunshine and warmer weather and another small group of soldiers from the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina. They also received a few gifts and some food to help them on their way.





The children who visited us were pleased to see that Santa made it through the blockade. As the war progressed and families were not able to make or purchase toys or other gifts for their children, parents often told their children that Santa was not able to visit because he couldn't get past the Yankee blockade. For the children who visited us this year, they were mighty pleased that Santa in deed had made it through the blockade to listen to them tell him what they wanted for Christmas. For those who didn't wish to sit on Santa's lap, they wrote him a letter. In addition to visiting with Santa, children were able to make cornucopias to decorate their trees which were then filled with a few cookies for them to enjoy. At the historic house area, Mr. Pat Haggerty brought his games and toys for the kids to try.

In the main house two ladies from the North Carolina Gourd Society brought with them a large assortment of gourds of varying shapes and sizes. Some of the gourds were turned into bowls and dippers and some were strictly ornamental. These were either carved or stained and, to our delight, we found several very tiny gourds on our Christmas tree. They left behind several packets of seeds that we will plant in the garden this year. They were a pleasure to have and we look forward to them joining us again at a future event. Over in the kitchen, the women prepared food using what little they had. Meat was no longer available due to the lack of salt, but there were still plenty of vegetables and beans so a nice soup was prepared and molasses and honey replaced sugar in some of the sweets they prepared. Since coffee was so expensive the ladies prepared a warm apple cider to drink to ward off the chill of the cold, winter day.

As the year came to a close in 1863 many families wondered what the next year would bring. They prepared for more hardships and battles but more importantly, they prayed that the war would end soon.





## CONTRIBUTION BENEFITS

### *All Levels:*

- *Membership Card*
- *Newsletter (issued quarterly)*
- *Notification of Special Events*
- *10% Discount at Gift Shop*

### *Major to President:*

- *Certificate*
- *Permanent Recognition at Site*

### *President:*

- *Framed Certificate*
- *Special Gift*

## *Help Support Bennett Place!*

*Please note our membership levels have expanded to include businesses and larger donors!*



**Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc.**  
4409 Bennett Memorial Road  
Durham, North Carolina 27705

*Contributions are Tax Deductible!*

Name: (Individual, Family, Group, or Company)

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Signature:

Date:

Amount:\$\_\_\_\_\_



*Thank you for your support!!!*



## **Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc.**

### **Bennett Place State Historic Site Mission Statement:**

To preserve and interpret the history of the largest surrender of the Civil War and the lives of 19th century yeoman farmers such as the Bennetts.

### **Bennett Place Support Fund Mission Statement:**

The Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc., is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing financial assistance to the Bennett Place State Historic Site. Monies from the Fund are to be used for educating the general public about the site's role in the Civil War, assisting staff in its research and interpretation of 19th century farm life, and encouraging volunteer participation and community involvement.

We wish to help in preserving and developing this North Carolina Historic Site and need your assistance. Please consider making a contribution to the Support Fund today!

#### **President (\$5,000 and Above)**

Lynn M. Everett

#### **Governor (\$2,500)**

Thomas S. Kenan, III

Rosalie Reynolds

Chevron Humankind c/o Dennis Buckley

#### **General (\$1,865)**

Mr. & Mrs. Rob Everett

Charles Thissen

#### **Colonel (\$500)**

William A. Kirkland, Jr.

Robinson Everett, Jr.

Charles Thissen

#### **Major (\$300)**

Eugenia Paine

Caroline Odom

Kevin Odom

Mr. & Mrs. Don Scott

JW Web Solutions c/o Rick Sheets

#### **Captain (\$100)**

Alexander & Janet Floyd

Gary H. Pendleton

Martha W. Dunnagan

Dr. Henry S. Zaytoun

NC Division Children of the Confederacy

Chuck Wilson

Peter J. Brock

#### **Lieutenant (\$50)**

Sandra Wilson

Dominic Dal Bello

Bob Pfeiffer

Allen Tomlinson

#### **Sergeant (\$35)**

Alexander Stick

Capt. Granville H. Oury c/o Lynn Crawford

SCV Camp 1708

Josie Walker



## Fundraising Projects for The New Museum

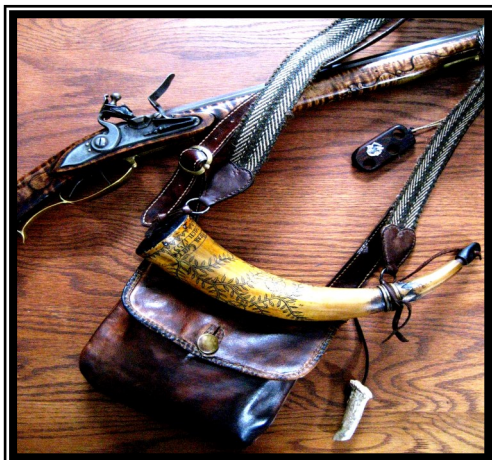
### *Quilt Raffle*

We are still selling tickets for the quilt our ladies auxiliary is making. All proceeds go toward the new museum, which is scheduled to be completed by spring 2015. Tickets are available in the Visitor Center and are for \$5.00 or 3 for \$10.00.



### *POWDER HORN RAFFLE*

Introducing our new Powder Horn to be raffled off in 2014 at our Annual Memorial Day Remembrance. If you are interested in participating in the Raffle, tickets are available for purchase in the Visitor Center. Price for tickets are 1 for \$5.00 or 3 for \$10.00.



### 2014 Memorial Day Remembrance Raffle *Support our Museum Project*



1842 Black Hawk War Powder Horn  
in the Style of Tim Tansel  
by Rick Sheets



One Ticket \$5.00 - Three Tickets \$10.00



150th Anniversary Surrender Commemoration Raffle - 2015  
*Support our Museum Project*

Win a Reproduction 1858 Remington Civil War Revolver Set featuring Dan Nance's "Dawn of Peace" and an American Black Walnut Fitted Case by Richwood LLC.

One Ticket \$5.00 - Three Tickets \$10.00

## *Pistol Raffle*

Introducing our newest Museum fundraising item. A unique 1858 Remington Revolver set, complete with Reproduction Revolver, Powder flask, Bullet mold and 150th Civil War Commemorative medallion. Box made by Richwood LLC. And features Dan Nance's "Dawn of Peace". If you are interested in purchasing a ticket stop by our Visitor Center and they will be One Ticket for \$5.00 or Three Tickets for \$10.00.

*Thank you for your continuing support !!!*

## *Volunteer Spotlight: Kevin Washington*

Kevin E. Washington has been a volunteer at Bennett Place since the summer of 2013. Fascinated by history, Kevin spends much of his time soaking up the history of slavery and the Civil Rights Movement, and America's participation in various wars including the Civil War and the Pacific air war. Born in New York City to former civil rights workers, Kevin spent the last years of his childhood in Durham where he graduated with honors from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (class of 1985) with a major in journalism and a concentration in history. He went on to become a reporter, columnist and editor at the *Miami Herald*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, *Plain Dealer* of Cleveland and *The Baltimore Sun*. Reporting and editing articles on topics from law enforcement to technology, he retired from the profession about 10 years ago. Five years after he left college, Kevin joined the reenactment community for a four-year stint marching with the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts, which was featured in the classic film, *Glory*. and other units. He still laments that while attending high school in Durham, none of his history teachers ever mentioned Bennett Place across town. But on battlefields across the South, people would ask him about the Bennetts once they found out he was from Durham. And so when he moved back to the city in 2006, he began to make monthly pilgrimages to the site to learn as much as he could. In turn, he has become one of our most enthusiastic interpretive guides.



**Kevin portrayed a U.S cavalry trooper of the 1870's when he recently took part in the Guilford Courthouse Battlefield Veterans Day Celebration.**



## *Site Manager's Corner*

***IT HAS BEGUN!!*** The dreaming, the hoping, the anticipation is now over! We have started the actual process of our new museum exhibit gallery, which will open in time for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of the Surrender April 17-26, 2015. The process will begin with a new HVAC system, a replacement of ductwork and some electrical and lighting enhancements. Next, our design team will create the exhibits, which will be more colorful and pleasing to the eyes with a more detailed storyline of the events that occurred on the Bennett Farm in April 1865. The storyline will be accompanied by some never before seen artifacts, which will also be a splendid enhancement.

During this process we continue to plan the grand finale of the American Civil War with our own commemorative reenactment and activities. Notable guest speakers, special tours, and living historians will be among the many enjoyable and educational experiences we will provide. Details are forthcoming for all of our North Carolina State Historic Sites and supportive non-profit sites, which have a vested heritage in this time period.

Of course, we still have many terrific living history and lecture programs between now and then, including our Memorial Day Remembrance, which will encompass a military timeline of living historians portraying soldiers from the 1700's to present day. We will also have military veterans as our special guests. Throughout the summer we will continue to have our hourly tours of the farm and Civil War related demonstrations. Our Soldiers of the Old North State living history will take place in June, and our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Tar Heel Harvest Fair and Farmer's Market, which was a huge hit last year among families, will be held in September. We finish the year of 2014 with Christmas in the Carolinas During the Civil War in December. So even though we have some grand plans to complete for 2015 we continue to provide a continuous line of wonderful educational programs for Civil War enthusiasts, families, and those who simply enjoy the great outdoors.

Please enjoy visiting our website of North Carolina State Historic Sites @ [www.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.nchistoricsites.org) as well as our North Carolina Culture website @ <http://nccultureevents.com> that has an extensive listing of special events throughout the Old North State. Coinciding with these extensive websites is a newly created website, North Carolina Civil War Sesquicentennial @ <http://www.nccivilwar150.com>, which is devoted completely to the anniversary commemoration.

For those who are most interested in keeping up with the overall 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the American Civil War throughout the entire country an excellent website to follow is the Civil War Traveler. [www.civilwartraveler.org](http://www.civilwartraveler.org).

Enjoy this edition of *The Bennett Place Courier*.  
Thank you again for your continued support.



## ***Surrender at Bennett Place 150th Anniversary Commemoration***

***April 17-26, 2015***



Join us for the grand finale of the ending of this 150th Anniversary Commemoration of the American Civil War, 2011-2015. During this week long commemoration, we will host special guest speakers, historians, and authors, living historians and the reenactment of the largest surrender of the American Civil War between Major General Sherman and General Joseph Johnston.

Details on the schedule of events, living history programs and presentations, and special guests can be found on our website: [www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com](http://www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com).



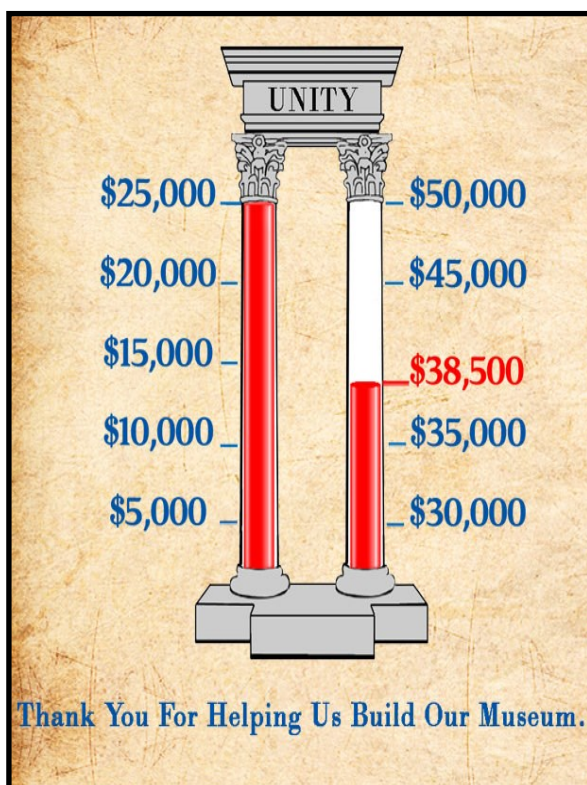


## *New Merchandise Items in Bennett Place Gift Shop*



Visit the Museum Gift Shop and purchase a wonderful book on the history of the American Civil War or North Carolina, a coffee mug, Civil War T-shirt or hat, a decorative box, DVDs and musical CDs, a musical instrument, toy soldiers, or a magnet for the refrigerator and in time for the holidays, **GIFT CARDS!** All proceeds go to support the preservation and educational programs of this historic landmark.

## *Help Us Build Our Museum Exhibit Gallery!*



*Please help us complete our new museum gallery. Every donation helps. Our grand opening is scheduled Spring 2015.*

<http://www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com/museum-fund/>