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General Orders

Walker's Brigade

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President's Comments

By Walker Agnew

I hope everyone is having a great summer, despite our excessive heat! Our board is busy preparing for our upcoming new campaign with our first meeting of the year on September 17th at Saltgrass Steakhouse located at 8943 Katy Freeway. We have many top-notch speakers lined up with topics ranging from Gettysburg to submarines to individual generals. For details on these outstanding speakers and topics, see Scott Wilkey's article which immediately follows this column.

It is never too early to mail in dues for the 2026 - 2027 year. The address is listed on page 6. Annual dues are as follows: Individual \$50.00, family \$60.00, student, faculty, out of town \$25.00. Remember, as an all-volunteer organization, we ask everyone to consider how they can assist our organization, perhaps serving on one of our committees such as membership and programs.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone soon!

Speakers/Programs for 2026-2027 Campaign

By Scott Wilkey

As announced at the end of last year's series, the HCWRT is excited about the upcoming slate of speakers for the 2026 - 2027 "campaign."

We open with our September meeting to honor our **2026 Vandiver Award** recipient, the late **Eric Wittenberg**, with a special visit by Eric's friend and frequent collaborator, author **Scott Mingus**. Mr. Mingus will be offering his recollections in honor of Mr. Wittenberg at this memorable presentation. The title of his talk is "*Wittenberg and Mingus: The Second Battle of Winchester.*"

In October, **Paul Brueske** will be introducing his latest research regarding the late-war actions around Mobile Bay during his talk about the "*Civil War Siege of Spanish Fort, 1865.*"

November's meeting will introduce the latest scholarship about one of the most famous regiments in the Gettysburg campaign, as **Dr. Jared Peatman** presents, "*A Hell of a Regiment: To Gettysburg and Beyond with the Twentieth Maine.*"

The fourth recipient of our annual **Gary L. Chandler Graduate Student Award Winner** will be honored at our December meeting. This award recognizes the work of an outstanding graduate student from one of our local universities - the future of cutting-edge Civil War scholarship.

We start the new year with one of our longtime friends of the HCWRT, **Ed Cotham**, as he presents the subject of his latest book, "*Rockets, Tanks and Submarines: The Ingenuity of Civil War Texans.*"

Our February meeting will welcome another first-time visitor to the HCWRT, **James R. Hessler**, as he discusses the subject of his book

about one of the most controversial commanders and personalities of the war, "*Dan Sickles*."

John Michael Priest was unable to join us last campaign due to a scheduling conflict, but we are happy to welcome him back to Houston in April to present his research on familiar Gettysburg legends - "*Reynolds, Iverson, Buford at Gettysburg: New Interpretations*."

The HCWRT's 2022 Vandiver Award recipient, **Dr. Timothy B. Smith** is returning to Houston in April to discuss a Texas legend who met an untimely end at the battle of Shiloh, "*The Iron Dice of Battle: Albert Sidney Johnston*."

The May meeting of every campaign is reserved for our **Frank E. Vandiver Award of Merit** recipient. We will release more information about this special evening as we get closer to that date.

We're so proud and excited to be bringing our members the best scholars from across the nation to Houston! Thanks so much to the HCWRT Programs Committee: Keith Altavilla, Eugene Boisaubin, Vince Trovato, and Chuck Cubbison for their assistance in coordinating this tremendous lineup of talent.

Jefferson Symposium

The 15th Annual Civil War Symposium will take place on Saturday, August 8th, 2026 at the City of Jefferson Convention and Visitors' Center, which is located at 305 East Austin Street in Jefferson, Texas. It is being presented by the Jefferson Historical Society and Museum.

The theme for this year's symposium is "And Still – The Trans-Mississippi." Speakers will include Scott Dearman, Bill J. Gurley, Gary Joiner, and Richard McCaslin.

For information on registration, contact the Museum at (903) 665-2775. For information on the event, contact Weldon Nash at wwnash@sbcglobal.net.

HTBAR Scholarly Seminar

Hood's Texas Brigade Association, Re-Activated will be sponsoring their annual Scholarly

Seminar on November 13th and 14th, 2026 at Seguin, Texas. This event includes a Friday tour of Seguin led by Dr. Richard McCaslin. Speakers include Dr. McCaslin, Jeff Hunt, Ed Cotham, and Richard Selcer.

Registration for this event will begin soon. For additional information, visit the HTBAR website: hoodstexasbrigade.org.

The Surprising Civil War Symposium at Texas A & M

On August 20th and 21st, 2026, Texas A&M University will be hosting a symposium on "The Surprising Civil War," part of a celebration of Andrew Johnson's declaration of the insurrection's end in 1866. The symposium will be held at the Rudder Tower on the A&M campus at College Station. Regular speaker Lorien Foote has put together two days of scholars from around Texas, including some familiar faces to our Round Table like Neil Chatelain, Catherine Clinton, and Andy Lang. More information and registration are available at calendar.tamu.edu/event/387079-the-surprising-civil-war-a-symposium-of-scholars or by clicking on the link below or using the QR code.

Registration is free but required, and lunch will be provided for registered guests on Friday August 21.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SJ5UVtA2p8DDy2myre27hALca1F1ahqMubBceEUKkAs/viewform?edit_requested=true





President Agnew with May speaker Jerry Patterson

Membership Report

By Michael Clennan

Hooray! Summer is leaving and fall is in sight! Time for the HCWRT 2026 - 2027 campaign to get underway! Let's round up the old gang and invite new friends to join us. We begin our fellowship at 5:45 pm at Saltgrass Steakhouse located at 8943 Katy Freeway. Saltgrass offers a wide selection of food and beverages. Beginning at 7:00 pm, we begin our meeting which features our Civil War book raffle followed by a challenging Civil War quiz. Our round table has nine outstanding lectures, starting this September 17th and concluding on May 20th, 2027. All are welcome! Remember, the first visit is always free for first-time guests!

Our annual individual membership is only \$50.00, and \$60.00 for families. I'll see you at the front door of Saltgrass. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (713) 864-1204.

Taps: Steve Davis

By Mike Harrington

The news of the death of Steve Davis last April at age 77 brought back a flood of memories for me. A few of them I want to share with you in this newsletter.

Guy Stephen "Steve" Davis was a prominent Civil War historian whose prolific scholarship focused on the Atlanta campaign. Perhaps it was foreordained that Steve would make the Atlanta campaign the centerpiece of his professional life, having grown up in Atlanta and possessing both bachelor and doctoral degrees from Atlanta's Emory University.

Steve was an independent scholar. He didn't hold a university chair. He was never with the National Park Service. He evidently worked mostly out of his home, reviewing books for *Blue & Gray* magazine for 20 years and most recently writing the "Critic's Corner" column in the *Civil War News*. He lectured to Civil War groups from London to wherever. A prolific author, his list of published books and articles is long. A few years ago, I reviewed his two-volume biography of John Bell Hood for the *Civil War News*, and I regard it as his *magnum opus* (a characterization he would have appreciated given his love for Latin).

It took some work and ultimately some finagling, but I persuaded Steve to present to HCWRT twice during my tenure as President. He spoke to us on General Hood and the fight for Atlanta in November 2018 and December 2020.

Steve was our house guest both times he was in Houston. He insisted on receiving an honorarium to come to Houston - a long-standing no-no at HCWRT. Realizing Steve wasn't coming to Houston on our terms, I bent the rules a bit by tucking an envelope addressed to Steve's wife under his pillow in our guest bedroom. The envelope contained a crisp new Benjamin Franklin.

Admittedly, Steve's personality lacked universal appeal. My wife thought him pompous. He offended some of our HCWRT members while acting as a guide on a tour of Georgia battlefields. Personally, I found Steve's company enjoyable, especially after a drink or two. One night, while partaking of a good California cab following a Round Table meeting, we amazed ourselves to discover that we had dated sisters - two Alabama belles - while Steve was at Emory and I at Harvard Law. Small world, indeed.

I'll end with the line from the Roman poet Catullus that Steve likely esteemed: *Ave atque vale*, my friend!

2026 - 2027 SPEAKERS CAMPAIGN

Sept. 17, 2026	Scott Mingus – <i>“Wittenberg and Mingus: The Second Battle of Winchester”</i>
Oct. 15, 2026	Paul Brueske – <i>“Civil War Siege of Spanish Fort, 1865”</i>
Nov. 19, 2026	Dr. Jared Peatman – <i>“A Hell of a Regiment: To Gettysburg and Beyond with the Twentieth Maine”</i>
Dec. 10, 2026	Reserved for 2026 Gary L. Chandler Graduate Student Award Recipient
Jan. 21, 2027	Ed Cotham – <i>“Rockets, Tanks, and Submarines: The Ingenuity of Civil War Texans”</i>
Feb. 18, 2027	James R. Hessler – <i>“Dan Sickles”</i>
March 18, 2027	John Michael Priest – <i>“Reynolds, Iverson, Buford at Gettysburg: New Interpretations”</i>
April 15, 2027	Dr. Timothy B. Smith – <i>“The Iron Dice of Battle: Albert Sydney Johnston”</i>
May 20, 2027	Reserved for 2027 Vandiver Award Recipient

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