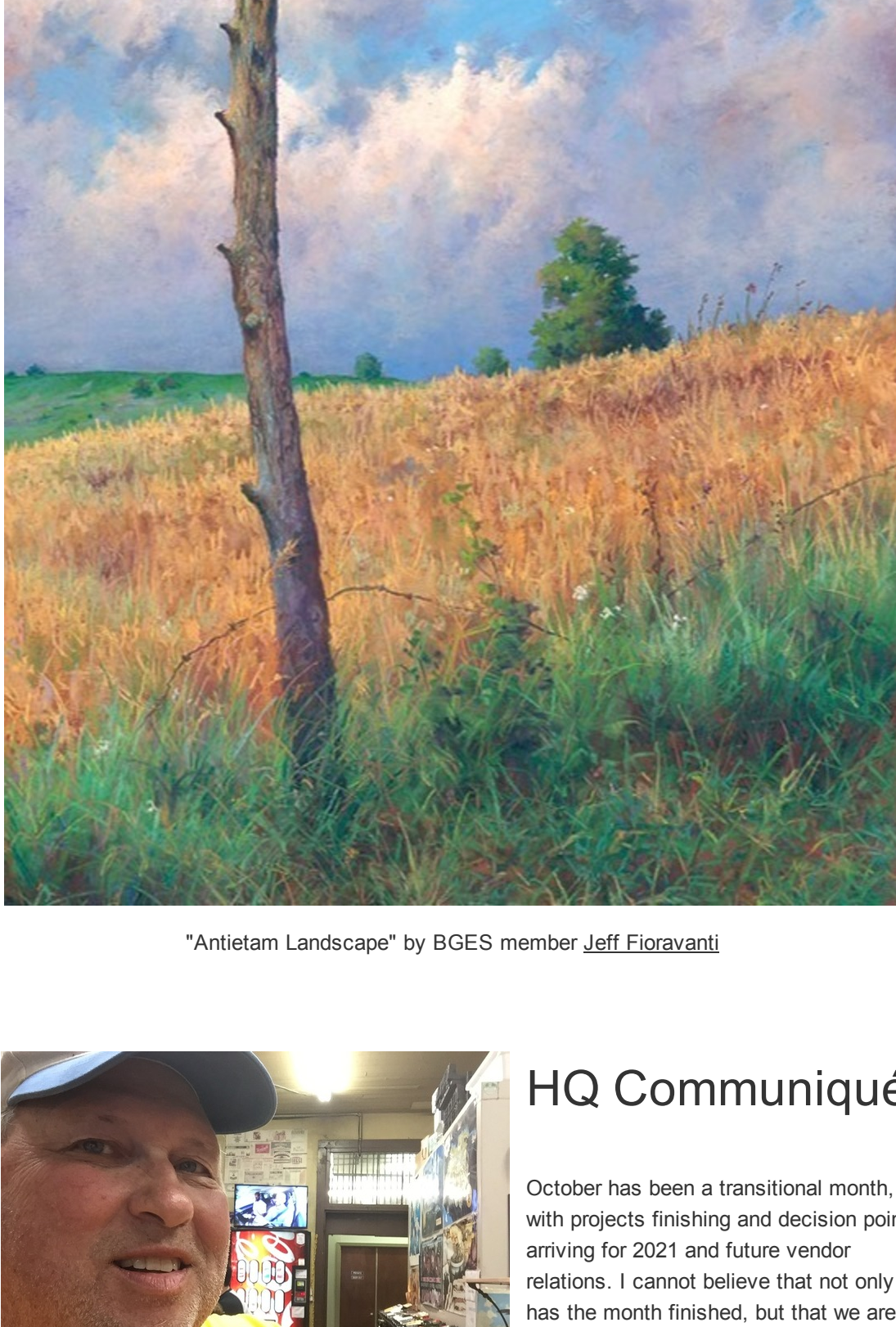
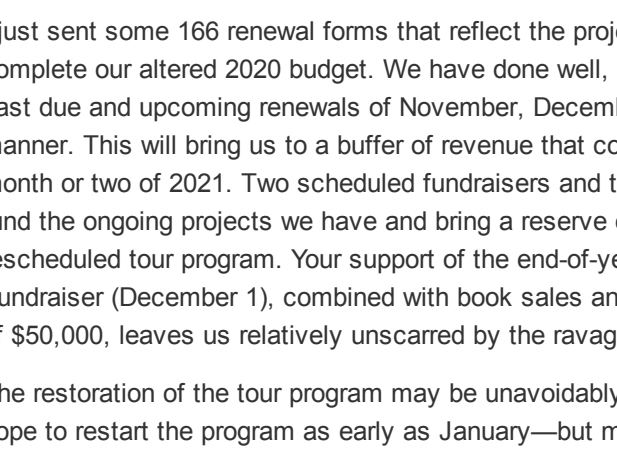




November 2020



"Antietam Landscape" by BGES member [Jeff Fioravanti](#)



Executive Director Len Riedel

HQ Communiqué

October has been a transitional month, with projects finishing and decision points arriving for 2021 and future vendor relations. I cannot believe that not only has the month finished, but that we are now past the national election and the holidays loom large. It will be another fast-paced month, but I want to address two major issues with you: the organization's passage through the remainder of 2020 and into 2021, and our Field University program.

I just sent some 166 renewal forms that reflect the projected and necessary revenues needed to complete our altered 2020 budget. We have done well, but if we are to be where we need to be, the past due and upcoming renewals of November, December, and January need to come in a timely manner. This will bring us to a buffer of revenue that covers the remainder of 2020 and the first month or two of 2021. Two scheduled fundraisers and the culmination of the BGES Book Sale will fund the ongoing projects we have and bring a reserve of revenue back to our coffers to fund the rescheduled tour program. Your support of the end-of-year Bucket Appeal and the Giving Tuesday Fundraiser (December 1), combined with book sales and membership renewals to bring us upward of \$50,000, leaves us relatively unscarred by the ravages of the coronavirus.

The restoration of the tour program may be unavoidably tied to the presidential election. While we hope to restart the program as early as January—but most likely in late February or March—Mr. Biden has indicated a priority that may restrict programs like ours in the interests of "Defeating the Virus." That could involve another lockdown or restrictions at the national or state level that would make it necessary to postpone rescheduled programs yet again. Anticipating the release of vaccines toward the end of the year and immunization efforts that would give our vulnerable clients some protection, a Trump victory could allow us to start by the spring. A Biden presidency would likely create a new timetable based upon the state of the pandemic—England has just implemented a second national lockdown. Biden did not rule that out, and his term would not start until late January.

As far as the insurance coverage and our ability to mitigate the danger, the insurance company seems to be equivocating on this, but has not denied coverage. So then it becomes a matter of how we would conduct the program? I believe that if Biden is declared the winner, and I am writing this on the day after the General Election, then I will no doubt postpone the January and February programs and move them back to same time in 2022 (as our scheduled is already packed full). Further adjustments would be tied to his management directives to control the virus. If Trump wins, then I will see what the status of the vaccines are and the plan for immunizations for the "high risk" folks. In my mind's eye, I just think the best case would be immunizations widely available by early February and that may—repeat may—let us start in late February. Realistically, I am believing that once the vaccine issue is known, it will be necessary to reset 2021 to start with March or April tours, but I want to see the timetable for the distribution and any governmental requirements or restrictions both at the federal and state levels.

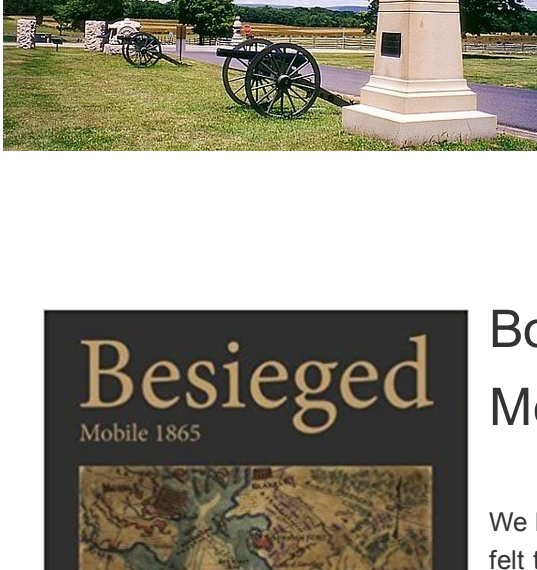
As this information breaks literally day by day, we are adapting. I believe we are getting some answers and will soon have a basis for making firm plans. I fully expect the December Communiqué will be written with sufficient knowledge of what we can and will do come January. In the meantime, please don't ease up. These fundraisers, bookstalls, and memberships are the lifeblood of our operations for the rest of the year and the first part of the next. If we achieve our goals, we will be ready to go in good financial condition and ready to get things done. Thanks again. I wish each of you a happy Thanksgiving—all problems aside, we have plenty of reasons for Thanksgiving.

—Len Riedel

Executive Director, BGES

November Happenings: The Fall Campaign

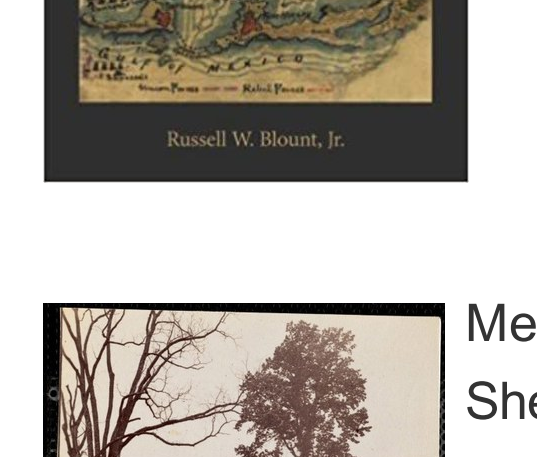
Welcome to the November 2020 issue of *Holding the Line*! This month we anticipate a time when we'll be traveling again with a conversation with Tim Smith about his March 2021 tour focusing on the horse soldiers of Grierson's Raid. In addition, we catch up with one of our historians who has interests in both Gettysburg and Antietam. BGES Executive Director reviews a book about the Mobile Campaign. Was he pleased? We also take a look at the Civil War through artists' eyes through some powerful paintings representing life back then on and off the battlefield, and reveal the info we have for the Medford Gallery photos published on the website in October. We also have some end-of-year giving opportunities and gift ideas. And last but not least, we profile a BGES member who has made a mark for himself in the round table world. Enjoy!



Tour Talk: Tim Smith & the Real Horse Soldiers

Historian Tim Smith has long been fascinated by the Civil War's horse soldiers. In fact, he will be focusing on them in his March 2021 tour that follows in the hoofsteps of Benjamin Grierson's 1863 raid through Mississippi. What should we expect?

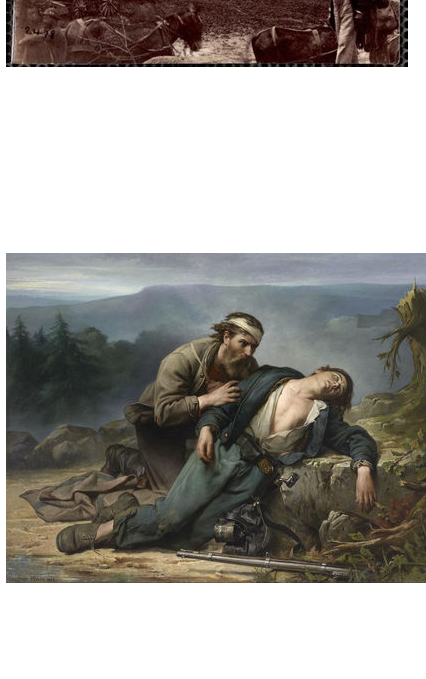
[Read More](#)



Historian Talk: A Tale of Two Battlefields

Scott Hartwig has long worked for the National Park Service at Gettysburg, though he has written several books about Antietam. What fuels this dichotomy of interests?

[Read More](#)



Book Review: Besieged: Mobile 1865

We know that BGES Executive Director Len Riedel felt that September's book on review, *The Last Siege, The Mobile Campaign*, fell short of being the definitive volume on the Mobile Campaign. Does this month's book, *Besieged: Mobile 1865* by Russell W. Blount, Jr., meet his standards?

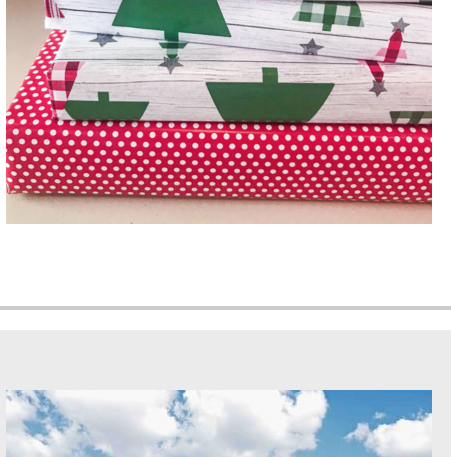
[Read More](#)



Medford Gallery Cheat Sheet

October's Medford Gallery saw photos of breastworks on Round Top, a ward in Washington, D.C.'s Armory Square Hospital, and Resaca Battlefield in Georgia, among 12 other Civil War images. How many did you get right? What new info can you provide?

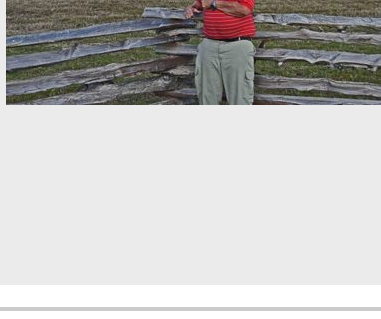
[Read More](#)



The Civil War Through Artists' Eyes

Through their paintings, artists tell us about the life and times of those who lived the Civil War, both on and off the battlefield.

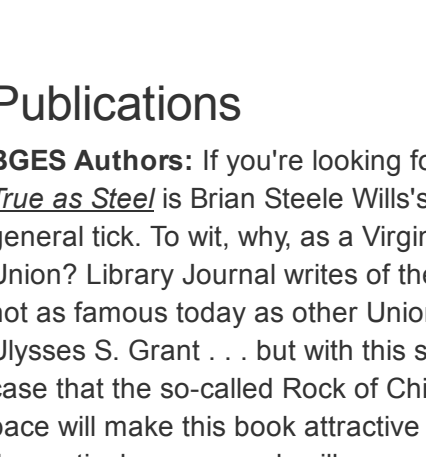
[Read More](#)



End-of-Year Giving Opportunities

As we make the final approach to the end of the year, it's time to start thinking about giving opportunities to benefit BGES. We have two great ideas for you.

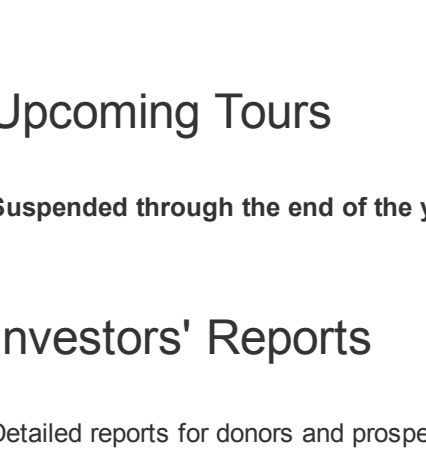
[Read More](#)



Books Make Great Holiday Gifts

Don't miss this great opportunity to purchase exclusive versions of one of BGES's best-selling books as gifts for your friends, family, postman, Amazon delivery person, and everyone else you can think of.

[Read More](#)



BGES Members Making a Difference

This BGES member hails from the West Coast, far from any Civil War action. And yet he has plunged himself deep into heart of the Civil War, through his travels as well as through his work with round tables.

[Read More](#)

Publications, Upcoming Tours, & News

Publications

BGES Authors: If you're looking for the definitive biography of George Thomas, *As True as Steel* is Brian Steele Willis's 2019 tome about what makes the elusive Union general tick. To wit, why, as a Virginian, did Thomas pledge his service to the Union? Library Journal writes of the well-received book: "George Henry Thomas is not as famous today as other Union army generals such as William T. Sherman, Ulysses S. Grant . . . but with this solid and accessible book, Willis makes a strong case that the so-called Rock of Chickamauga should be. A smooth style and quick pace will make this book attractive to readers interested in Civil War history, while the meticulous research will appeal to academics." It's definitely one to add to your collection.

In Camp Along the Monocacy: Look for the next members' newsletter, edited by Len Riedel, in mid-December. The topic will be reflections on Hood's 1864 Tennessee Campaign. If you are a BGES member and you are not getting this bi-monthly electronic newsletter, email BGES Communications at communications@blueandgrayeducation.org and ask to be added to the list. You can review archived copies about six months after they are released to the membership.

Upcoming Tours

Suspended through the end of the year. See latest schedule [here](#).

Investors' Reports

Detailed reports for donors and prospective donors are available for download from our website on [Our Mission](#) page.

BGES Recruiting Station

Membership

As a member of BGES, you will be part of a community devoted to saving our Civil War. You will receive our e-newsletter, updated info on upcoming tours, and access to some of our greatest historians. [Join here](#).

Already a member? Don't let your membership slip. [Renew here](#).

Quarter Guard Program

We would also like you to consider joining the [Quarter Guard Program](#), which supports BGES on a monthly or quarterly basis.

BGES Major Gift and Legacy Program

What Will You Be Remembered For? Be part of BGES's future by making an endowment or legacy gift. [Contact us](#) if you would like to make an endowment or legacy gift.

