



February 2020



"Weikert Farm" by BGES member [Jeff Fioravanti](#)



Recent board meeting in Tampa

## HQ Communique

A new year is upon us, and the first month is gone already. In all the hubbub of transitioning out of 2019 and into 2020, we have already had a Board of Directors meeting in Tampa and have conducted a symposium in Fernandina Beach Florida. Tomorrow I leave for Texas and our Texas Two-Step Program, which will have me gone most of February. What I want to share with you is the great start in membership for 2020.

As we enter February, we have 394 active current members and have added 15 new members in the first month—this compared to right at 250 when we brought membership back to Chatham in June 2019. Many of these have come as a result of our increased communications effort, and my thanks go to Gloria, Barbara, and the contributory historians whose willingness to share their fun stories and research findings have created a vibrant and interactive community. We currently see approximately 1,000 people opening our emails twice a week—that is a 100% increase over what we used to see with our smaller communications network six months ago. A number of our readers are sharing the postings, thus increasing our outreach. The more the merrier.

Of course we celebrate the work Barbara is doing in getting our monthly electronic newsletter out to nearly 5,000. Not only is the content excellent, but the photography and information regularly imparted is informing not only our membership but people who are interested in what we do—one day they too may become members.

The excitement of these statistics is measurable. Registrations on tours is up and steadily increasing with each passing day. Nearly 50 people so far have sent back their questionnaires, and another 60 have requested info about our tours. All this exchange of information displays BGES in its best light as we go about doing the things we do best.

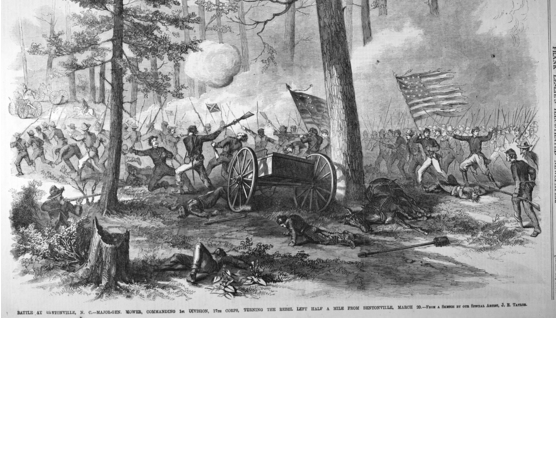
This first month of 2020 has truly been encouraging, with nearly \$60,000 in revenue—we had just \$330,000 in all of 2019, so the uptick is very satisfying. Do your part—find one new member and recruit them into BGES. Give us five new email addresses of your friends interested in the Civil War and History. Make sure you are getting our dispatches—if not, let us know. If you are not, you are missing some really significant and rewarding information. Watch as we expand it to Civil War photographs in March.

Well, as you get this a few days late, know it wasn't Barbara's fault—I was late getting this to her. But cut me some slack and enjoy the marvelous painting by BGES member Jeff Fioravanti that heads this publication—wouldn't these look good on your wall? Gotta run.

Have a great February,  
—Len Riedel, Executive Director

## February Happenings

Welcome to the February edition of Holding the Line! In this issue you'll get the lowdown on one of our upcoming tours headed by a BGES dynamic duo, and a field report on a recent visit to Civil War Charleston. We've provided the latest update on 2020 tour registrations—the first tour of the new year kicks off in just a short time in Texas, and this is one you will not want to miss. While most of you are tried and true Civil War aficionados, our travel segment, "Southern Cities 101," is for those who might appreciate an entry level overview to the Civil War in the South—and those who might like a refresher. We are, after all, introducing this year several tours for Civil War neophytes. And last but certainly not least, we've profiled Richard Britton, one of our many BGES members who is making a difference.



## Upcoming Tours: North Carolina in 1865

A BGES dynamic duo talks about the fierce fighting in North Carolina, at the convergence of the eastern and western theaters.

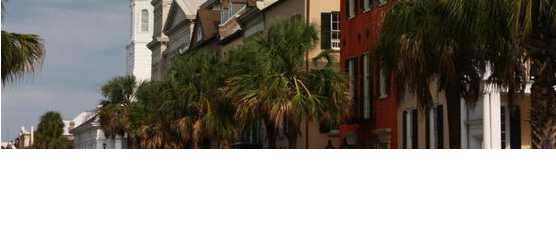
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## Field Report: Charleston

What was it like to be in Charleston during the Civil War? What was the role of this elegant city? Laurence Schiller recently took part in a BGES tour that delved into these issues and more. Here's what he learned.

[Read More](#)



## Travel Guide: Southern Cities 101

The Civil War can be daunting. Here are five cities for neophytes to dip your toes and whet your appetites. Fitting—since we are introducing several History 101 tours this year.

[Read More](#)

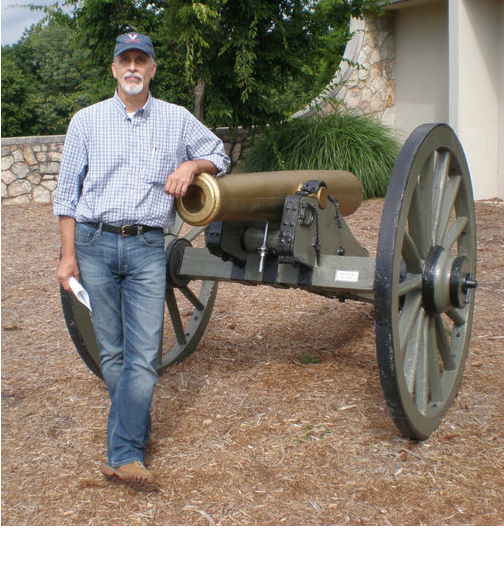


## 2020 Tour Update

Registration forms for BGES tours through July 2020 have been posted on the website. Don't miss out on this year's offerings, ranging from Texas' expansive history to Gettysburg 101 to the Indian Wars on the Northern Plains.

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## BGES Members Making a Difference



A modern-day Renaissance man with a love for the Old Dominion and maps, this BGES veteran has contributed much to the U.S. historical narrative.

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## Publications, Upcoming Tours, & News

### Publications

**BGES Authors:** A leading expert of the Carolinas Campaign, Col. (Ret.) Wade Sokolosky is co-leading the BGES tour, "[To the Bitter End: North Carolina in 1865](#)," in March 2020. Whether you're signed up for the tour or not, anyone interested in this aspect of the Civil War will be happy to learn he has co-authored several must-read books about the subject, including: [To Prepare for Sherman's Coming: The Battle of Wise's Forks, March 1865](#), published in 2015; and [No Such Army Since the Days of Julius Caesar: Sherman's Carolinas Campaign from Fayetteville to Averasboro, March 1865](#), published in 2017. *Midwest Book Review* wrote about the latter: *Expertly researched, yet accessible to readers of all backgrounds, "No Such Army Since the Days of Julius Caesar" meticulously reconstructs the entire campaign, enriched with a handful of black-and-white maps and photographs, appendices, and an index for quick and easy reference. Highly recommended, especially for public and college library Civil War collections.* Definitely two to add to your own library collection.

**In Camp Along the Monocacy:** Look for the next members' newsletter, edited by Gloria Swift, on February 17. It focuses on Frederick Douglass, with insights Mike Antonioni, on staff at the Frederick Douglass home. If you are a BGES member and you are not getting this bi-monthly electronic newsletter, email Gloria at [BGESHistorian@yahoo.com](mailto:BGESHistorian@yahoo.com) and ask to be added. You can review archived copies about six months after they are released to the membership.

### Upcoming Tours

#### February 2020

February 7–11, 2020: [The Texas Two Step, Part 1](#)

February 12–17, 2020: [The Texas Two Step, Part 2](#)

#### March 2020

March 4–8, 2020: [The Siege of Vicksburg](#)

March 25–28, 2020: [To the Bitter End: North Carolina in 1865](#)

### Investors' Reports

Detailed reports for donors and prospective BGES 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](#).

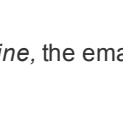
Already a member? Don't let your membership slip. [Renew here](#).

### 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' future by making an endowment or legacy gift. [Contact us](#) if you would like to make an endowment or legacy gift.



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