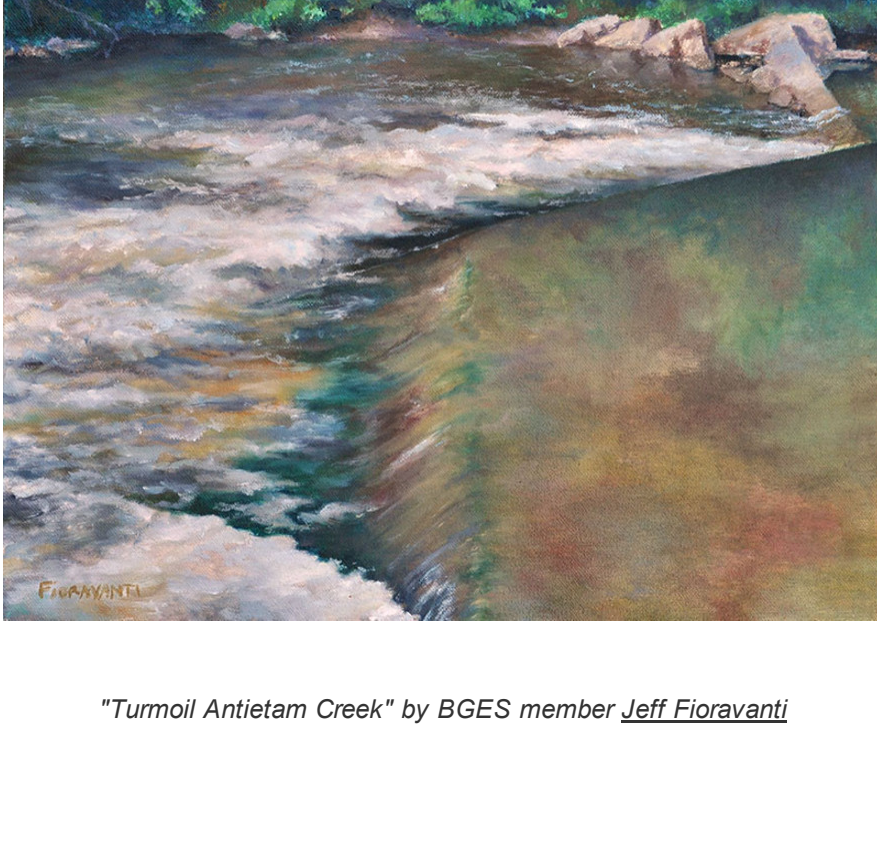
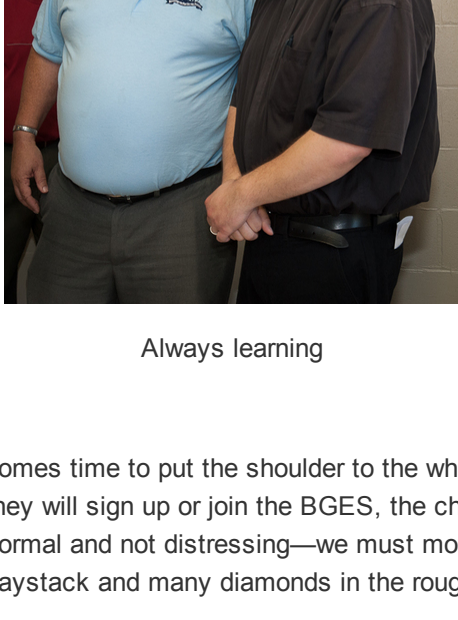




January 2020



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



Always learning

HQ Communiqué

Happy New Year! As 2020 dawns bright, I view this as the start of a new chapter in the history of the BGES. April commences the 27th year of operations. While we will continue to do what we do best, everyone will have to step up their game a notch or two. In business, if you are not getting larger you are getting smaller. We have talked about it for some time, but BGES has to get larger. With about 400 active members, we are not as large as some of the more robust Civil War Roundtables. Of course, we ask much more of our members, and our agenda is both forward thinking and in many ways self-limiting. Many people render faint praise and suggest they support what we are doing, but when it comes time to put the shoulder to the wheel, they are somewhere else, or when they say they will sign up or join the BGES, the check never arrives. After so many years, that is normal and not distressing—we must move ahead, as there are still plenty of needles in the haystack and many diamonds in the rough.

As you are online, you certainly will notice that we have stepped up our game with meaningful and interesting communications that educate and bring the BGES logo into the "line of site" of the public. We are transmitting to just about 5,000 people, and approximately 1,000 to 1,200 are opening our emails—that is a GREAT START!

Let us reflect for a moment on the structure of a "society." We are a people of common interest and shared commitment to "Help Save America's Civil War History!" In doing so, we find ourselves compelled to ensure we are "Revealing Our Past for Our Future." As we enter 2020, I am going to ask each and every one of you to do two things—just two.

First, I want you to commit to recruiting and ensuring at least one person you know joins the BGES at the Volunteer (\$75 level). Only one person that you know and with whom you share a love of American history. Let me help you with the math. If each of 400 people recruits one new member, how many members will we have this time next year? 800. Right you are! Will you do that for our society?

Second, will you give us the names, and email addresses, of at least three people who are not members of the BGES, and whom you share emails with? With that, I am going to ask you to provide us with the emails of at least two other youngsters who are not presently involved with the Civil War but are interested in history. By youngsters I mean 40 years of age or younger, down to and including high school and college students.

That is all. I suspect you could complete the task while reading this communiqué or with a phone call or visit with an old friend. It is the great mission of BGES in 2020. We must grow or we eventually will die. After 27 years, that would be a shame. I have reinforced this with a hard mailing to active members. I hope you will take the time to do your part. In the meantime, I will keep doing mine.

Let's look for Plenty in Twenty!

—Len Riedel, Executive Director

January Happenings

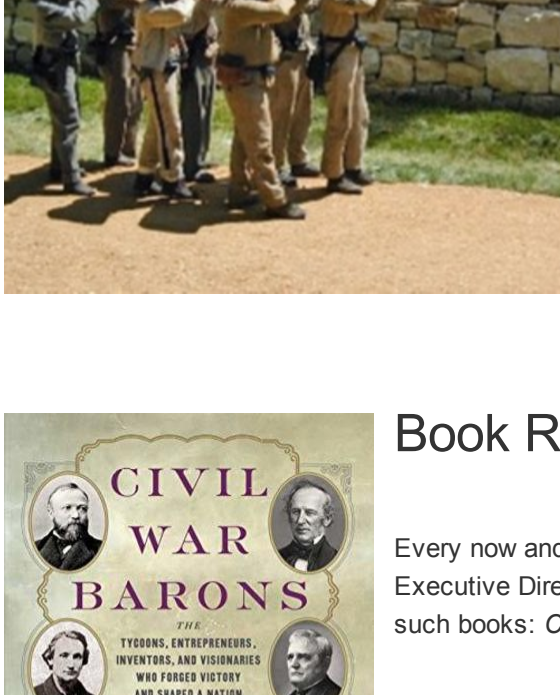
Welcome to the January edition of Holding the Line! In this issue you'll get some tips on how to make the most out of your Civil War touring and read about an exciting book reviewed by our fearless executive director. We've provided the latest update on 2020 tour registration—the first tour of the new year kicks off in February in Texas, and this is one you will not want to miss. If you saw the recent movie about Harriet Tubman, *Harriet*, you'll appreciate the scenic driving tour that we put together which follows in her footsteps through Maryland's Eastern Shore. And last but not least, we've profiled Vinney DiMattina, one of our many BGES members who is making a difference.



Upcoming Tours: Texas Two Step, with Neil Mangum

Texas history far surpasses its stereotypical Wild West image, and there's no better person to tell us about it than Neil Mangum. The esteemed historian shares some of his insights in advance of leading 2020's first two BGES tours: [The Texas Two Step 1](#) and [2](#).

[Read More](#)



How to Get the Most Out of Civil War Touring

Gary Wilson has finetuned his approach over the decades, and the BGES veteran shares his secrets [here](#).

[Read More](#)



Book Review

Every now and again a book hits you with an epiphany. Executive Director Len Riedel reviews one of those such books: *Civil War Barons*, by Jeffery Wert.

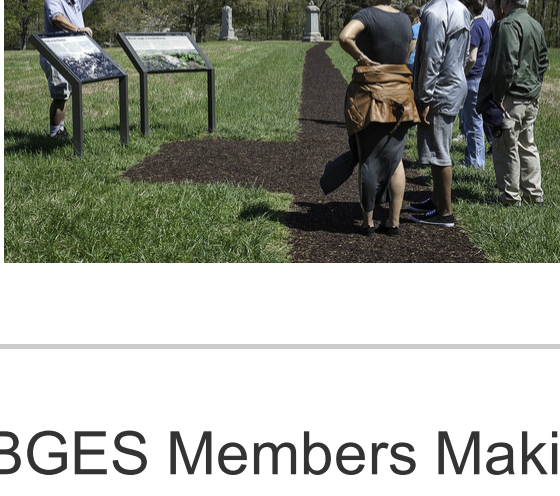
[Read More](#)



Travel Guide: Harriet Tubman Byway

Legendary abolitionist Harriet Tubman helped enslaved friends and family escape along the Underground Railroad in Maryland's Eastern Shore. Follow in her footsteps along a marked scenic drive with historic sites along the way.

[Read More](#)

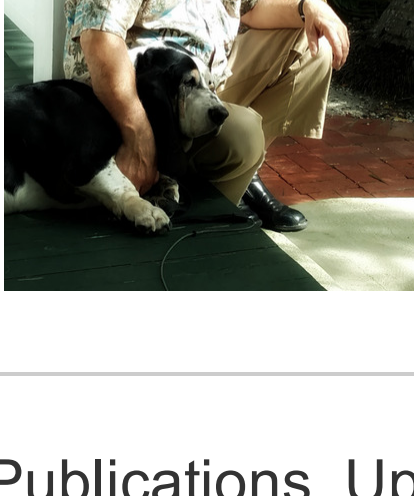


2020 Tour Update

Keep an eye out for registration forms, which we will start to post soon. The official list already has been announced, which you can check out [here](#).

[Read More](#)

BGES Members Making a Difference



A longtime devotee of military history, this veteran BGES member has shared that passion with the Yellow Ribbon Fund and other selfless pursuits.

[Read More](#)

Publications, Upcoming Tours, & News

Publications

BGES Authors: BGES tour leader Richard Hatcher has a new book coming out in May 2020 about Charleston and Fort Sumter: *Thunder in the Harbor: Fort Sumter, Charleston, and the American Civil War*. Hatcher clearly has the expertise to take on this fascinating topic. He took on the position of Historian at Fort Sumter in 1992, and since has served on the board of the Fort Sumter–Fort Moultrie Historical Trust and as chairman of its History Committee since 2017. Be among the first to preorder this book, and be sure to leave a review!

In Camp Along the Monocacy: Our members' newsletter, edited by Gloria Swift, was released online to members in mid-December. It focuses on Sea Coast fortification—the how and why they became obsolete during the Civil War. If you are a BGES member and you are not getting this bi-monthly electronic newsletter, email Gloria at 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: [Vicksburg, The Second Front](#)

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

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

