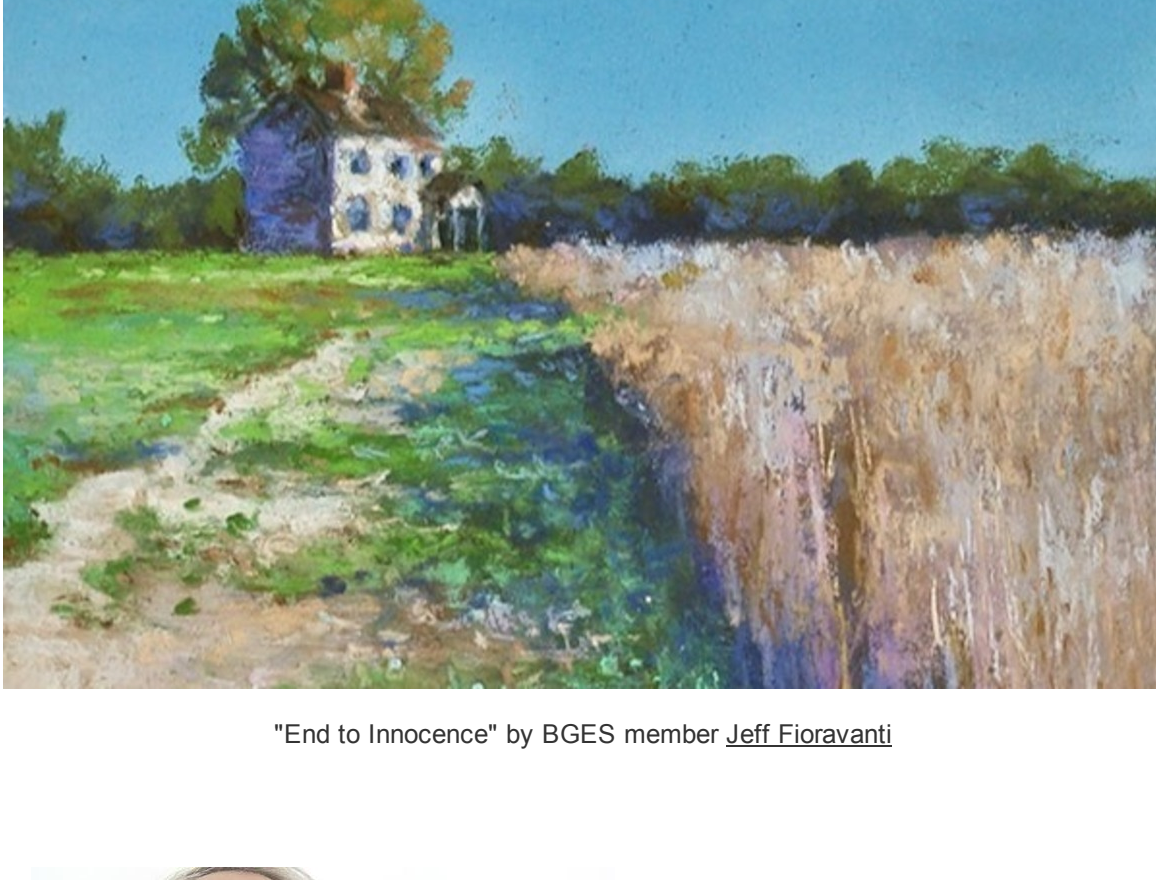




July 2020



"End to Innocence" by BGES member [Jeff Fioravanti](#)



Executive Director Len Riedel

HQ Communiqué

Hello all and best wishes. Well, we have come to live and adjust to COVID. During the past month, we made positive decisions concerning our operations in 2020 and actioned them. I won't repeat the things I wrote in the hard copy update I sent to all current members a couple of weeks ago, but we are adjusting. Let me highlight a few things for this larger audience so you will understand the congruence to what we are doing and presenting.

We have completed a data mining operation from our books to build a series of mailing lists that will support our efforts to grow our membership. We will be approaching those of you who follow our operations to seek your membership in BGES. This growth is essential to a robust organization that is necessary if we are to survive the Cancel Culture fad that is affecting historical organizations and public perception of history. If you have done business with us before but are not a current member, you may get a hard copy invitation to join our organization. If you are reading our email correspondence regularly, then you will need to see appeals and invitations to join us. We are a group of 450 active members. We need to be at 1,000 or more within a year, and our first secure plateau is 2,000 over the next couple of years.

With the suspension of our tour program, we determined that that would create a \$65,000 shortfall in funding to maintain our other programs and operations. We have a plan to make up that deficit through January 2021. Phase one is to sell 1,000 copies of our special leather-bound National Geographic Society books: *Fields of Honor*, *Receding Tide*, *Shiloh 1862*, and *The Civil War, A Travelers Guide*. Each volume is \$45, and we will net \$39 from each sale. That goal of \$39,000 should be realized by October 15. We have already sold 103 books in just eight days, and you will have your opportunity online each month for the next four months—we are suggesting one book a month, although many have bought all four at once. They really are outstanding books: blue leather with gold gilding and a blue satin bookmark; superb gifts at a time when we really should stand up for SAVING AMERICA'S CIVIL WAR HISTORY. When the opportunity comes knocking, please answer the door.

Membership in the BGES can also help us close that deficit. Other fundraising opportunities will be presented in the next few months.

We closed June strongly paying two longstanding and substantial debts in full, thus putting BGES in a much better financial position. We also honored our commitment to Pamplin Historical Park, paying \$5,500 as our share of a new all-weather gun carriage for the cannon we helped purchase for their Adventure Camp. I would like to pay tribute to you folks who stepped in when, at the last minute, the major donor defaulted on their pledge to donate \$3,000 to the project. In less than 60 hours, 44 people on Facebook and our email list donated \$5,200, leaving us with approximately \$3,700 to start the refurbishment of the old wooden carriage in anticipation of it getting a new tube and life at another park or organization. Thank you.

Our layout specialist is finally able to get access to his equipment and is starting the design of our signs for the earthen fortification at Fort Branch, North Carolina. We are anticipating the delivery of those signs this fall. On its heels is our interpretation at Fort McNair associated with the Trial and Execution of the Lincoln Conspirators. Our 20th monograph is in production now and should be distributed to members in late August. The subject is the Grand Gulf and Raymond Scenic Byway. It is written by Parker Hills and includes tours of Grand Gulf and the Raymond Battlefield, plus the central narrative of the key role played by the historic road in the 1863 Vicksburg Campaign.

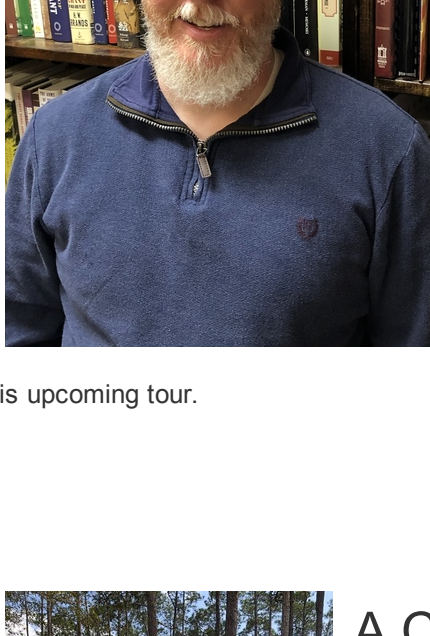
In closing this month's thoughts, everyone seems energized to probe new opportunities while maintaining and increasing their support for BGES. I am receiving timely renewals, supplemental checks, and, of particular note, about 80% of all renewals have been increasing their level of support from 20% and up to 100%. It is very heartening. Our dispatches are reaching nearly 7,000 people three times a week. Effective July 6 we are adding a fourth weekly dispatch. "BGES' Monumental Monday" will focus on Civil War monuments without partisanship—we will feature Union, Confederate, African-American, Native American, and civilian monuments. You will learn about the featured monument, how it came to be, what if any political bias emerged with it, and who put it up. We expect to better educate people and hopefully local organizations on the more effective arguments to help local communities determine the appropriate future for monuments in their midst. As with all these, we encourage you to share these and promote the historical community. We have to educate ourselves and push back where it makes sense. These belong to all of us as does our history. Thomas Paine said it well when he talked about Patriots and Sunshine Patriots: "These are the times that try our souls." We must be up to the challenge.

See you next month.

—Len Riedel, Executive Director

July Happenings: The Summer Campaign

Welcome to the July issue of *Holding the Line!* This month you'll read about the man who won the Civil War—based on a tour by foremost Grant historian Tim Smith (which has now been moved to 2022). We learn what it takes to preserve history at Fort Clinch, and BGES Executive Director Len Riedel gives his candid review of a book about Gen. Sterling Price's 1864 Missouri Raid by BGES member Kyle Sinisi. Was he pleased? We share how to benefit BGES with the click of a purchase, which, thanks to many of you, has already seen payback. And last but not least, we profile an amazing BGES member who had a hand in creating the Naval Academy's Honor Concept. Enjoy!



Tour Talk: Tim Smith Discusses "Grant Moves South"

U. S. Grant may reign as the savior of the Union, but this greatly admired man is more complex than originally portrayed. No scholar has done more to advance the discussion than Dr. Timothy Smith, who has written multiple books on Grant's western campaigns. He's slated to lead a BGES tour in 2022 that probes the successes and failures of this important military figure. In the meantime, we caught up with him to discuss Grant and his upcoming tour.

[Read More](#)



A Cannon for Fort Clinch

It takes a lot to preserve history. In the case of a full-scale operating 10-pounder Parrott Rifle artillery piece, BGES stepped in to help organize a fundraiser to purchase it for Fort Clinch, just north of Amelia Island in Florida. Here's how it happened.

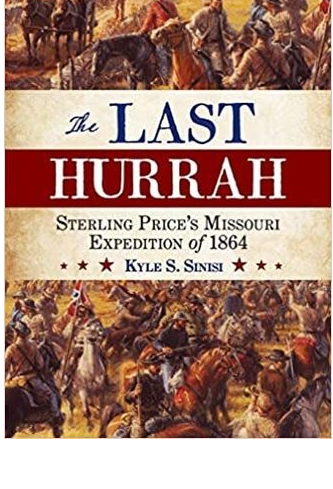
[Read More](#)



#GivingBack

What if every time you purchased a book, music, or gift, a little bit of money would be donated to the nation's foremost organization dedicated to preserving history? It's possible, with AmazonSmile! And it's simple to use. So what's keeping you from benefiting BGES?

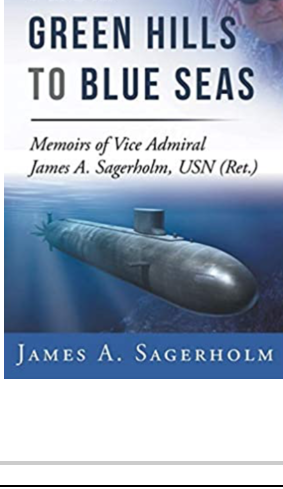
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Book Review

BGES Executive Director Len Riedel has reviewed *The Last Hurrah* by BGES member and tour leader Kyle Sinisi. The tome tells the tale of Gen. Sterling Price's four-month raid into Missouri in late 1864 in an effort to liberate the state from Union occupation as well as to divert attention from the besieged Confederate armies near Atlanta and Petersburg. Is it worth a read?

[Read More](#)



BGES Members Making a Difference

Vice Admiral James Sagerholm served his country for more than three decades. A lifelong student of the Civil War, he ruminates on leadership, the importance of understanding history, and the 440.

[Read More](#)

Publications, Upcoming Tours, & News

Publications

BGES Authors: Historian Timothy Smith, whom we profiled in this newsletter for his upcoming Grant tour, has written a solid list of Civil War history books that have won high acclaim for their "exhaustive research" and "quality of his scholarship." He is an "indispensible force in the field of Civil War military history," writes another reviewer. If you need to read up on some of the Civil War's key battles, look no further than Smith's *Corinth 1862: Siege, Battle, Occupation* (2012), *Shiloh: Conquer or Perish* (2014), *Grant Invades Tennessee: The 1862 Battles for Forts Henry and Donelson* (2016), and, his most recent, *The Union Assaults at Vicksburg: Grant Attacks Pemberton, May 17–22, 1863* (2020), all published by the University Press of Kansas.

In Camp Along the Monocacy: Look for the next members' newsletter, edited by Len Riedel, in mid-August. The topic will be "Reflections on the 1862 Peninsula Campaign," featuring Dr. Paul Severance, Bert Dunkerly, and Len Riedel. 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 until at least September 2020. 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](#).

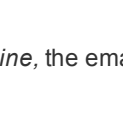
Already a member? Don't let your membership slip. [Renew here](#).

Quarter Guard Program

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

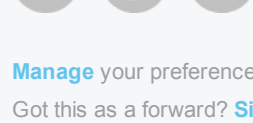
BGES Major Gift and Legacy Program

What Will You Be Remembered For? Be part of BGES' 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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