

A 2019 BGES Day of History Program: Confederate Pensacola

We all know the Civil War started with the firing on Fort Sumter. But what is not widely known is that the war could very easily have started in Escambia Bay, as Federal troops defended another important fortification at Fort Pickens. Isolated but not inaccessible, the southern insurrectionists plotted to seize the important fortification and, given a few more weeks, perhaps the first shots would have occurred here. Once the Confederates evacuated Pensacola, the town became a thorn in the side of Confederates holding Mobile Bay, and which subsequent operations throughout the remainder of the war are staged. A great location, with winter gripping the rest of the country and the warm Gulf of Mexico constantly in view all day long!

Sunday, February 10, 2019

8 AM. We will meet at an easily accessible and designated location in central Pensacola just off I-110. You can leave your vehicles there all day as we head for Santa Rosa Island. Our first stop will be the iconic Fort Pickens at the tip of the island overlooking the entrance to Escambia Bay. The interpretation will focus on the start of the war and the Confederate occupation of the fort. A secondary interpretation will discuss the third-tier fortification system of the United States that produced places like Pickens, Sumter, and Monroe, among many others. After lunch, we will head into Pensacola for Fort Barrancas, which is one of the most significant preserved fortifications in the United States. While there is not a great deal of active military activity, there is much to discuss about the symbiotic relationship with Pickens and the control of the harbor. While we are there, we will discuss the use of the town by the Federals as a staging area for operations against Mobile Bay and then Marianna, Florida. Our final stop will be at the land fortification of the Outer Redoubt that protected Barrancas from ground assault. Here we will finish the tour by discussing the overland operations as the Federals moved to assault Spanish Fort and Fort Blakeley in April of 1865. A really full day with a lot of fulfilling information with the Executive Director of the BGES.

About the Faculty:

Len Riedel is the Executive Director and Founder of the Blue and Gray Education Society. The BGES, founded in 1994, is the only national Civil War Educational organization in the country with a long record of educational and charitable projects and achievements. Riedel is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute with a Master of Arts degree in History from Old Dominion. He designs every one of the BGES study programs and is often thought to have encyclopedic recall of information that is well synthesized. That knowledge was on display in his role conceptualizing and editing the best-selling Civil War guidebook, *The Civil War, A Traveler's Guide* (2016), in a publishing partnership with the National Geographic.

Hotel Information:

This one-day program does not require a hotel, but we will depart from a designated central location in Pensacola where you may leave your car for the day.

Transportation:

The servicing airport is Pensacola (PNS), which is served by Southwest Airlines. It is generally more expensive to fly into Mobile (MOB). New Orleans (MSY) is a bit farther, but is all interstate from the airport to Pensacola, taking about 2 3/4 hours.

Recommended Reading:

You will be provided with a handout upon arrival. The following books are suggested to enhance your readiness for the program.

George Pearce: [*Pensacola During the Civil War: A Thorn in the Side of the Confederacy*](#)

Dale Cox: [*The Battle of Marianna, Florida*](#)

John Driscoll: [*The Civil War on Pensacola Bay, 1861-1862*](#)

Registration Form
Confederate Pensacola
A 2019 BGES Day of History Program
Presented by Len Riedel
February 10, 2019

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes lunch, handouts, the academic program, support of a professional historian and transportation by passenger van. We will also provide snacks and bottled water.

_____ Registration \$250

_____ Current BGES member \$200

_____ Teacher/full time student with identification \$100

_____ I am not a member but would like to join so that I can get the member's rate or I am a member who is past due to renew. Please accept my donation of

\$_____ (must be \$75 or more which is tax deductible)

_____ I am sending a deposit of \$100 per person and or memberships. Total enclosed is \$

I will pay the balance due before the event.

_____ Check enclosed

Charge my (circle one) MC VISA AMEXP Discover \$_____

Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to BGES Seminars, PO Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531, or fax credit card registrations to 434-432-0596 . You may also register on line at www.blueandgrayeducation.org.