

A 2019 BGES Civil War Field University Program: Sherman's Infamous March to the Sea and a tour of Confederate Georgia

Of all the Civil War generals, perhaps none is more reviled than Ohio-born William T. Sherman. Elevated to a position second only to U.S. Grant, Sherman charted a "Hard War" path that was immortalized in Margaret Mitchell's epic *Gone With the Wind*. In his "path 60 miles wide, from Atlanta to the Sea," he turned his back on his major threat, the Army of Tennessee, and moved to the coast to reestablish his supply line. As this was a one-way march, we have added wonderful, oft-overlooked sites that make this truly one of those trips you really want to experience.

Our trip, taking advantage of the temperate climate of winter in south Georgia, takes us on a circuitous route to Sherman's staging area and will include the spot where Jefferson Davis was captured and another spot where man's inhumanity was on full display at Andersonville. We will take you to Fort Benning and the National Civil War Naval Museum and across peripheral lines of Sherman's march while giving you a look at the life of the overlooked and diminutive Confederate Vice-President, Alexander Stephens. All this before we pick up the march back to Savannah. It is a trip loaded with special stops and one only BGES is offering.

Thursday, January 17, 2019

7:30 PM. Eat your dinner early and then gather at the headquarters hotel near the Savannah International Airport (SAV). Perhaps no historian knows South Carolina and Georgia history better than Stephen Wise. He will kick us off with an overview of the program and a summary presentation of the war in the region and why Savannah was so important in the war. Pick up your reading books and name tags while meeting your fellow travelers. A point of personal privilege, we are not planning a formal tour of Savannah, so you would be well advised and rewarded arriving before noon and visiting the city. BGES has a wonderful walking tour of Civil War Savannah in its guidebook *The Civil War, A Traveler's Guide*. There also are some fabulous restaurants and sites in the area, including Forts Pulaski and Jackson. Hotel and dinner are on your own.

Friday, January 18, 2019

8:15 AM. Have your bags out front by 8 AM. If you are not staying at the HQ hotel, you might have to park at the airport and ride the shuttle back to the hotel, so plan accordingly. We are headed to Irwinville, where the fugitive Confederate president was captured by elements of Major General Wilson's cavalry command. We then will spend the balance of the day at the National POW Museum at Andersonville Prison and the

Civil War Museum at Americus. The day finishes at our hotel in Columbus. Hotel and lunch are included, but dinner is on your own.

Saturday, January 19, 2019

8:30 AM. Leave your bags in your room, as we are spending a second night here, but be on board the bus at 8:30. There is so much to see in the area that we will take the whole day to do so, starting with the impressive U.S. Army Infantry Museum at Fort Benning (named after a Confederate general, Henry Benning); while there, have lunch on your own. Our second stop will be the National Civil War Naval Museum, an interesting location that tells us much about the limitations on naval operations the Confederacy faced. You will appreciate the salvaged remains of the gunboat *Chattahoochie* and the *Ironclad CSS Jackson*. A special treat for you today, we'll take a side trip over to West Point, Georgia, where it's argued the last Civil War battle east of the Mississippi was fought at Fort Tyler. Hotel and breakfast are included, but lunch and dinner will be on your own.

Sunday, January 20, 2019

8:15 AM. We are on the road again and will finish in Millidgeville. Have your bags out by 8, and we will leave at 8:15. We will pass through the right flank of Sherman's march and will discuss it in stops at Thomaston and Culloden, where two American soldiers from the 17th Indiana would earn the Medal of Honor. At Forsyth, Georgia, we will see a Confederate backwater that once was site of a massive hospital and logically a Confederate cemetery. At Monticello, Sherman's right crossed the Ocmulgee River. Our highlight today will be Crawfordsville and the home of Alexander Stephens. We will finish the day with a farewell dinner. Hotel, breakfast, lunch, and dinner are provided.

Monday, January 21, 2019

8:15 AM. Hard to believe the tour is almost over, but we have a full day today, so be on board by 8:15 AM. Legend says that Sherman's men were ruthless in their march—yet having done this many times, I never fail to be amazed at the number of antebellum structures still standing. We start with one of the war's tragedies—the massacre of young teenagers in the battle at Griswoldville (we will provide you a copy of Doug Cubbison's monograph on the event). We then head to the all-but-forgotten prisoner-of-war camp at Millen Station. Camp Lawton infuriated the Union troops and with just cause: The treatment of prisoners North and South was inhumane, and mortality rates were high. We will then visit one of the most controversial sites on the march: Ebenezer Creek, where Union soldiers abandoned a trailing caravan of refugee slaves to Confederate irregulars that were following the column. The story is bone-chilling. The remainder of the route takes us past Pooler, where we started, to the capture of Fort McAllister, where the march ended with the marriage of Sherman's forces with the Union navy. We will then return to the hotel. Breakfast and lunch are provided.

You may depart at your leisure tonight or tomorrow. **Please note: If you stay this evening, you must make and pay for your own hotel. Thank you for joining us.**

About the Faculty:

Stephen Wise, the Director of the Marine Corps Parris Island Museum, is a professor of History at the University of South Carolina-Beaufort. A noted historian of the state and the Marine Corps, his books *Gate of Hell*, about the 1863 Charleston Campaign; and *Lifeline of the Confederacy* document the significance of blockade running to the Confederate economy. Steve was recently recognized by the South Carolina Humanities Council for his contributions to preservation and historic interpretation. He is well spoken and interesting, and you will enjoy yourself.

Hotel Information:

This program will start from Savannah near the airport. The headquarters hotel is **xxxx**. You are not required to stay here, as your lodging this evening is on your own. The following three nights are included in your registration fee. The final evening (January 21) is also on your own.

Transportation:

The servicing airport is Savannah-Hilton Head (SAV). The hotel will have an airport shuttle. If driving, long-term parking may be cheaply had at the airport, then using the hotel shuttle to get to and from; or, if staying at the HQ hotel, you will likely be able to leave your car until we return.

Recommended Reading:

You will be provided with a reading book and maps upon arrival. The following books are suggested to enhance your readiness for the program. Amazon.com has a program to support non-profits IF YOU SIGN UP to support Blue and Gray Education Society (EIN 54-1720582) at [AmazonSmile](#). When you sign up there rather than the normal Amazon site, one-half of one percent of your purchase price will be provided to BGES as a donation from Amazon. This will apply not only on this purchase but others you may make at other times.

Stephen Wise: [*Lifeline of the Confederacy*](#)

Samuel J. M. Andrews: [*Sufferings of Union Soldiers in Southern Prisons, Transcript of the Andersonville Trial*](#)

Burke Davis: [*The Long Surrender*](#)

John Derden: [*The World's Largest Prison, The Story of Camp Lawton*](#)

Thomas E. Schott: [*Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, A Biography*](#)

Noah Andre Trudeau: [*Southern Storm, Sherman's March to the Sea*](#)

Registration Form
Sherman's Infamous March to the Sea and a
tour of Confederate Georgia
A 2019 BGES Civil War Field University Program
Presented by Stephen Wise
January 17-21, 2019

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes three nights hotel, three breakfasts, three lunches, one dinner, all paid admissions, a reading book with maps, the academic program, support of a professional historian, tour director and transportation by passenger van. We will also provide snacks and bottled water.

_____ Registration \$1195*

_____ Current BGES member \$1125*

_____ Teacher/full time student with identification \$1075*

_____ 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 \$300 per person plus full payment for any books 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.