

**Twenty-Second Annual Appomattox Court  
House National Historical Park and  
Longwood University  
Free Civil War Seminar**

***EXPERIENCING ASPECTS OF THE CIVIL  
WAR VIRTUALLY***

**Saturday, February 6, 2021**

**Schedule**

**Saturday, February 6**

9:00 a.m. Introduction by Dr. David Coles and Patrick A. Schroeder

9:10 a.m. Robert “Bert” Dunkerly  
*Victims of the Brown’s Island Explosion*

10:00 a.m. Elizabeth C. “Betsy” Dinger  
*“We should never have war like this again.” The Siege of Petersburg – Poplar Grave and the Stories the Cemeteries Tell.*

11:00 a.m. Charles Johnson  
*English Artists: Secret Weapons of the Civil War*

12:00 p.m. Ronald S. “Ron” Coddington  
*Faces of Civil War Nurses*

**\*Subject to change**

**No reservations or registration needed. A link will be emailed to those that receive this.**

## SPEAKERS

### **RONALD S. CODDINGTON**

Coddington is the Editor and Publisher of *Military Images*, a quarterly magazine that showcases, interprets and preserves photographs of the Civil War period. His work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *NPR*, *Civil War News*, *Civil War Times*, *The Civil War Monitor*, and other publications. He is a career journalist who has worked for *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *The San Jose Mercury News* and *USA Today*. He is currently the Editor for *Visuals and Data at The Chronicle of Higher Education*. *Faces of Civil War Nurses* is Coddington's fifth and final volume in the Civil War Faces series of books published by The Johns Hopkins University Press. The others feature Union soldiers, Confederates, African Americans, and Navy men. Born in New Jersey, Ron earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a concentration in illustration from the University of Georgia. He lives in Arlington, VA, with his wife, Anne.

### **ELIZABETH C. "BETSY" DINGER**

Dinger is the lead Park Ranger at Poplar Grove National Cemetery on the Petersburg National Battlefield in Virginia. After obtaining her BS in History from Frostburg State University in MD, she began her National Park Service career in 1988, working at Shenandoah National Park, Valley Forge National Historical Park and Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. In the 23 years she has worked at Petersburg she has become the battlefield's "cemetery specialist," creating various searchable databases from the original burial records, and finding new ways to share the soldiers' stories. A native of Warren County, NJ, she learned from her grandfather that "every tombstone is a biography." The best part of her job is connecting a descendant to the ancestor for whom they have been searching. Her work has led her to form a deep interest in military cemeteries worldwide, particularly those relating to World War One.

### **ROBERT "BERT" DUNKERLY**

Dunkerly is a historian, award-winning author, and speaker who is actively involved in historic preservation and research. He holds a degree in History from St. Vincent College and a Masters in Historic Preservation from Middle Tennessee State University. He has worked at fourteen historic sites, written twelve books and numerous scholarly articles. His research includes archaeology, colonial life, military history, and historic commemoration. He is a past President of the Richmond Civil War Round Table, and serves on the Preservation Commission for the American Revolution Round Table-Richmond. He has taught courses at Central Virginia Community College, the University of Richmond, and the Virginia Historical Society. Dunkerly is currently a Park Ranger at Richmond National Battlefield Park. He has visited over 500 battlefields and over 1000 historic sites worldwide. He enjoys exploring local bookstores, battlefields, and breweries, not necessarily in that order.

### **CHARLES JOHNSON**

Johnson is a former educator and Living Historian for Appomattox Court House National Historical Park. He is actively involved in living history and a team member of the Civil War Digital Digest Youtube Channel.

## PROGRAMS

***Victims of the Brown's Island Explosion:*** The April 1863 explosion at the Brown's Island Laboratory in Richmond was the worst industrial accident in the Confederacy during the war. About fifty were killed, mostly teenage girls. While the cause of the accident has been well established, the fate of the victims has not. This talk will explore the details of the explosion and its aftermath, the fate of those who survived, and follow clues to track down the burial sites of the dead.

***"We should never have war like this again." The Siege of Petersburg – Poplar Grave and the Stories the Cemeteries Tell:*** The final resting place for those that died during the Siege of Petersburg and the Appomattox Campaign are in several cemeteries in and around Petersburg. Each one of those graves has a story to tell as does the cemetery itself. This presentation will delve into some of those stories and also tell of the recent rehab of the National Cemetery at Poplar Grove.

***English Artists: Secret Weapons of the Civil War:*** Two of the famous Civil War combat artists were both born in England. Alfred Waud, being probably the most famous, sketched of the Army of the Potomac throughout the war. The other is Frank Vizetelly who sketched images from across the South. Sketch artists were not only important for war time propaganda, but also captured moments that would have otherwise been lost.

***Faces of Civil War Nurses:*** Northern and Southern women radiated patriotic fervor equal to their male counterparts during our Civil War. They contributed to the war effort in countless ways: forming charitable societies, becoming nurses, or even marching off to war as vivandières, or unofficial attachés to the regiments. This program will give insight into some of the women of all ages and walks of life who provided care during the war as nurses, aid workers, and vivandières. Their personal narratives are as unique as fingerprints: each provides a distinct entry point into the larger social history of the brutal and bloody conflict. Coddington uncovers the personal histories of each intrepid individual as well as their postwar stories. He also will explain how the bonds they formed continued long after the cessation of hostilities.

**This annual seminar is sponsored by:**

Appomattox Court House National Historical Park and The Department of History, Political Science, & Philosophy, and the Center for Southside Virginia History at Longwood University

This seminar is **FREE** and open to the public. No reservations or registration needed.

Patrick A. Schroeder, Historian  
Appomattox Court House National Historical Park  
P. O. Box 218  
Appomattox, VA 24522  
434-352-8987 Ext. 232  
434-352-8330 Fax  
[patrick\\_schroeder@nps.gov](mailto:patrick_schroeder@nps.gov)