

Society Member Presents Information About Two War of 1812 Battles in Virginia

Councilor Charles E Belfield of The Society War of 1812 in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the last week of July 2015 gave a presentation to The Preservation of the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula located in Warsaw, Richmond County, Virginia. The two battles he focused on involved senior officers and men residing in the Northern Neck and other parts of Virginia in the fall of 1814.

The first battle he described was that known as the “Battle of the White House” in Fairfax County located in what is now in the vicinity of the officers club at Fort Belvoir that took place for several days during the first week of September 1814. British ships that had ventured up the Potomac River to Alexandria where they had blockaded and received bounty from the city were descending the river to the Chesapeake Bay and were engaged in heavy firing by Virginia military forces.

The second battle that he talked about was the engagement known as the “Battle of North Farnham Church” located in Richmond County. This battle that took place on December 6th 2014 was between the Richmond County Militia and a British landing force offloaded from ships in the Rappahannock River.

The primary sources he used were the book by Patrick L. O’Neil, “To Annoy or Destroy the Enemy, The Battle of the White House after the Burning of Washington,” published in 2014 and the book by Stuart L. Butler, “Defending the Old Dominion, Virginia and Its Militia in the War of 1812,” published in 2013.

Belfield used models he had constructed of the battles that made the presentation more interesting as the attendees were able to get a visual of what occurred. He also wore War of 1812 militia attire that he demonstrated. Photographs taken follow.





