

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

October 2016



www.firstdefenderscwrts.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I never experienced a child leaving the house for college or the military (although I often wondered when they would finally go!), so I did not have the opportunity to find out what kind of an emotional roller-coaster that could be. That is, until recently when I moved by eldest daughter into an apartment in Arlington as she started a new job. And, by the first week of October, she will relocate again, this time overseas to the United Kingdom for five months! Talk about shock!

Many First Defenders can relate to this experience as either they left their nest for other parts of the country or the world, and maybe again when their own children repeated the process. There is a mixed feeling of pride, dread and wonder at what lies ahead, along with abiding hope that a day of reunion will not be far off.

Our forbears, North and South, could certainly empathize as their young men (and sometimes women) went off to war. Diaries from the early months of the conflict when patriotism and yearning for adventure showed a measure of enthusiasm that was tempered only by the sadness of temporary parting. But, as the war dragged on, days of separation stretched on interminably along with the reality that many would never come home. The fears and desperation of the homefolk began to tell and letters written by soldiers talked more of worry, loneliness and dejection. Abraham Lincoln once said, "If there is a worse place than Hell, I am in it," and many families on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line shared in those feelings.

Without bad there can be no good, and without dark there can be no light. Like many parents before, I know I send my child into an uncertain world full of enthusiasm while I hold my breath, pray for her safety and eagerly anticipate her return. I find comfort communing spiritually with the mothers and fathers of the Civil War era...indeed, throughout history...who have travelled this well-worn path and managed, somehow, to survive. They accepted the challenge, and I can, too. I rather doubt they liked it very much, though, and in this I am in complete accord.

For the Glory,

Craig

Round Table Business

President Craig Breneiser called the September 13, 2016, meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. at the Inn at Reading kicking off the first meeting of the 20th Campaign of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table. Greg Stull offered a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance for the 61 members and guests in attendance. Craig reminded everyone to purchase raffle tickets for the evening's book raffle from Gary Hertzog, our new preservation chairman.

Craig shared with those in attendance the death of member Dennis Yerger following our May meeting. Dennis's widow sent a donation in Dennis's memory through his friend, Mike Straus. It was also reported that Ed Ewing had had knee replacement surgery over the summer. We are keeping Ed in our thoughts for a speedy recovery and return with his amazing artifacts.

Vice President Mark Quattroco gave a report on battlefield lands and leverages available for preservation at the present time. He presented our speaker, Ed Alexander, with a check for \$150 for Pamplin Park in Virginia. Lori Border moved that we send \$100 to the Shenandoah Battlefield Association and \$100 to Old Dominion for land preservation. The motion was seconded by Rodney LaPearl and approved by the membership.

Mark has articles about name tags and preservation later in this newsletter. Ron Emge brought up the possibility of having shirts made honoring our 20th year. Mark Quattroco offered to look into the details of such an endeavor and report back to the group next month.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2016-2017. Please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 11, 2016. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the October meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form and bring it along** with your payment. Dave Sweigert reported that he has received membership renewals from 50 people so far. Please be sure to renew at or before the next meeting in October keeping in mind that membership dues are used solely to fund our speakers.

Programs

Dave Unger reported that all programs are in place for the current campaign. He announced that Jeff Wert will be the October speaker. See details on the website or at the end of the newsletter for information about Jeff's program.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported a balance in the treasury of \$2515.06 as of September 9, 2016, with \$561.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of September's meeting stands at \$1954.06.

Website Changes Announced

Webmaster Lisa Breneiser announced changes to our website. The home page is now labeled "Headquarters." Signups will be done on the Muster page. The External Links section has added more links than were previously available. Those links have been categorized for ease of use. Newsletters for Campaigns 1-6 and 17-19 are now available online.

Two new tabs are in use. The first is called "Old Campgrounds" which is devoted to preservation. There is a new look with pictures, dates of donations, and "thank-you's" for what has already been given in the past. The second tab is entitled "Honored Comrades". This area will be for those who have served the round table and are deserving of special mention. A dialog will begin as to how to go about selecting and honoring those who are chosen. Please email or call Craig with your thoughts and suggestions.

Preservation Corner

The 20th Campaign Season is off to a great start as we raised \$165 from the book raffle for Preservation. Gary Hertzog did a great job for his first meeting running the raffle. Thank You Gary for volunteering to do this. In addition, we received boxes of books that were donated for the raffle. Thank you to all of those who donated books. It is greatly appreciated. Finally, to all of you who purchased tickets or donated money, **thank you** for your continued support.

In addition, I am very pleased to announce the membership has approved us donating \$350 for Preservation. We gave a check in the amount of \$150 to our speaker, Ed Alexander, to be given to Pamplin Park as a donation in his name. The membership also approved sending a \$100 donation to the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Association to help preserve 34 acres of the 3rd Winchester Battlefield. Finally, the membership approved donating \$100 to the Civil War Trust for the "Old Dominion" Matching Grant of \$10.80 to \$1 to help preserve 5 Battlefields in Virginia. They are: Williamsburg, Gaines Mill, Reams Station, White Oak Road, and Sailor's Creek. With the \$350 and the Matching Grant from the Trust, our Total Contribution this season to date is \$1330. We are off to a great start.

We will continue to keep you posted in all of the latest preservation news and information on opportunities for us to donate.

Until next time!

Mark Quattrock

Name Tags

We are continuing to take orders from those of you who wish to purchase a new First Defenders Name Tag. You may submit your order by e-mailing me at mquattrock@outlook.com or you can print the order form off our web site and hand it to me at the October meeting. The October meeting will be the last day put in your order before we submit everything to Weikel Sportswear.

Once the order is placed I will let everyone know how much is owed and will start collecting money. Don't delay! If you are interested in a Name Tag please, submit your order now.

Thanks everyone!

Mark Quattrock

Save the Date for AAP

October 27, 2016, is First Defenders date to work at our sites at Gettysburg National Park.

We will meet at Lowes on Rte. 724 around 9ish and carpool to Gettysburg, or you may meet us there. We work on two of the sites, have lunch, and then work on the remaining sites. Tommy's Pizza is a popular spot although we have eaten at other restaurants.

First Defenders has adopted two sites, Gregg's monument located at East Cavalry Field and 18th PA Cavalry located at Big Round Top.

First Defenders is completing the paperwork on two additional sites, WV 1st Cav (Farnsworth) and Benning's Brigade (TX) on South Confederate.

We also work on the 6th PA Cavalry and 8th PA Cavalry sites adopted by Barbara Shafer.

The 6th PA Cavalry fence will need to be painted. Roger Cotterill is the fashionista on dressing for the occasion, but clothing suitable for painting might be your best choice.

If time permits we have done some shopping and would like to visit The Round Barn in the future.

To accomplish this we need YOU to volunteer, please let Don Stripling or Barbara Shafer know of your interest. We may also be able to have a Ranger give a talk about a site or the Park.

The purpose of the Adopt-A-Position (AAP) program is for volunteers to maintain the historic setting of the battlefield.

Volunteers (VIPs) help by doing field maintenance and labor that otherwise would not be completed due to budget and/or staffing restraints.

VIPs donate time and labor in preserving regimental positions, battery locations, or brigade lines. The Park provides equipment and supplies that are needed for the sites. There isn't any monetary involvement by the volunteer. Individuals and/or groups can volunteer to participate. The criteria is a two-year commitment to work a minimum of one day each during the spring and fall program. The individual or contact representative for a group will arrange a date two weeks before the time that a work party will be at the adopted site. All work at the project site must be pre-arranged with the AAP Coordinator. The coordinator at Gettysburg Park is: Alyce Evans at [\(717\) 338-4479](tel:7173384479).

I have been doing Adopt A Position for about 10 years and the list of available sites has been cut in half. This means that sites have been adopted but there are still sites available both Union and Confederate.

If you would like a current list of sites to adopt you can contact contact Alyce Evans at Gettysburg National Military Park. You may prefer to talk to Barbara Shafer at 484-336-8995 about getting involved. Barbara can answer questions and address concerns.

FYI: The Civil War across the Pond

If you think that Americans are the only ones interested in Civil War history, think again. Better still, take a look at the newsletter entitled, "Vedette," of the American Civil War Round Table of the United Kingdom. Craig Breneiser found this fascinating organization. You will find their lengthy and engaging newsletter at www.acwrt.org.uk. They also have a Facebook page for their round table.

October Program--Jeff Wert

"Mosby's Rangers"

No single battalion was more feared during the Civil War than the 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry. As one contemporary said, "They had...all the glamour of Robin Hood...all the courage and bravery of the ancient crusaders." Better known as Mosby's Rangers, they were an elite guerilla unit that operated with stunning success in northern Virginia and Maryland from 1863 to the last days of the war. Jeff Wert, and old friend and popular Round Table speaker, has written an exciting account of what may be the most famous command of the Civil War, and will bring that story to the First Defenders.



Jeffery D. Wert is the author of eight previous books on Civil War topics, most recently *Cavalryman of the Lost Cause* and *The Sword of Lincoln*. His articles and essays on the Civil War have appeared in many publications, including *Civil War Times Illustrated*, *American History Illustrated*, and *Blue and Gray*. A former history teacher at Penns Valley High School, he lives in Centre Hall, Pennsylvania, slightly more than one hour from the battlefield at Gettysburg. Jeffery D. Wert is the author of eight previous books on Civil War topics, including *Cavalryman of the Lost Cause*, *Gettysburg- Day Three* and *The Sword of Lincoln*. His articles and essays on the Civil War have appeared in many publications, including *Civil War Times Illustrated*, *American History Illustrated*, and *Blue and Gray*. A retired history teacher from Penns Valley High School, he lives in Centre Hall, Pennsylvania, slightly more than one hour from the battlefield at Gettysburg.

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, October 11, 2016 Meeting:

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for October include: Stuffed Chicken with sausage and sage; Homestyle Meatloaf; Potato Crusted Cod with dill cream sauce; or Linguini Forno with fresh grilled vegetables tossed in garlic sauce and pasta. Starch, vegetables, salad, dessert, rolls, coffee, tea, and water are included. The price is \$25.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or a confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon Friday, October 7, 2016, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

IMPORTANT NOTE Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations for any reasons after noon on the Friday preceding the meeting. **This is the policy of the Inn at Reading, and the Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not.** Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation and not cancelled prior to the aforementioned time period.

****PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

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