

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

January 2017



www.firstdefenderscwrts.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the advent of a new year only days away, many of us traditionally look back at the year now ending with a wide range of emotions. 2016 has certainly been a wild year; it was widely anticipated the presidential canvass would feature Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton, and no one would have imagined Bernie Sanders being truly competitive or Donald Trump actually winning the election!

152 years ago, many were equally amazed that Abraham Lincoln had even been on the ballot in 1864 or that he could possibly vanquish Union hero George McClellan. After all, no president since Andrew Jackson had won a second term, and Little Mac was the darling of the country, the newspapers and his beloved soldiers.

There must have been as much head-shaking and eye-rolling back then as there is today, with a future mixture rich in promise and hope leavened by generous heapings of fear and dread. There was, after all, much uncertainty both north and south of the Mason-Dixon line when it came to the future.

We know today the past 150 years have been generally positive for the United States. We are one country that has grown into the world leader. But, that evolution has not been without its challenges and suffering; we've experienced the assassinations of four presidents, a Great Depression, World War II and a continuing struggle to define freedom and equality. Yet we have managed to persevere and move forward; can anyone doubt for a moment the impossibility of our 19th Century ancestors accepting even the notion of an African-American president? Regardless of the way you perceive the man about to leave the Executive Mansion, you cannot doubt the historic progress he represents.

We cannot know how future generations will come to view our times, nor can we well imagine the challenges they may face that may dwarf our own. But, with faith in our country, our resources and ourselves, we boldly look forward to the future as we endeavor to continue meeting every challenge while striving to maintain that "more perfect union" envisioned by our forefathers.

To each and every one, a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

For the Glory,

Craig

Round Table Business

President Craig Breneiser called the December 13, 2016, meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. at the Inn at Reading. Craig offered a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance for the 55 members in attendance. Craig informed the membership that Ed Ewing continues to recover as well as Ev Binns who also recently had knee replacement surgery. We hope to see both gentlemen soon.

Vice President Mark Quattroco gave a report on battlefield lands and leverages available for preservation at the present time. There are details in Mark's report further in the newsletter.

Mark will have forms on hand for ordering polo shirts with the First Defenders logo in January.

Programs

Dave Unger reported that all programs are in place for the current campaign. Dave is looking for our own Round Table members to make a presentation next January or February of the 2018 campaign. The program committee will be meeting in January of 2017 so please contact Dave as soon as possible if you are interested in doing this.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported a balance in the treasury of \$3678.13 as of November 30, 2016. Last month we took in a total of \$190.00 for preservation giving us a present total of \$364.00 for preservation. Our membership stands at 87. The unencumbered balance as of September's meeting stands at \$3314.13.

Membership

Dave Sweigert reported that membership currently stands at 87 but is still well below full-strength. He encourages all members to invite friends and acquaintances who may be interested in being a part of our fine organization.

Meal Captain

Kathy Little reminded everyone to be sure to order meals by noon on the Friday before scheduled meetings. A meal confirmation is sent if meals are ordered online. If you do not receive one, your order did not go through. Always give Kathy a call if you have an issue with your reservations. Her number is listed at the end of the newsletter with ordering information and menu choices.

Trips

Joe Schaeffer discussed a possible trip to Gettysburg in April to visit the Lost Avenue. This topic had been proposed as a destination for a field trip last June, but not enough members signed up for it. The nature of future trips will be less formal. Transportation will be decided based on numbers who choose to go. Stay tuned for more details.

Joe also shared a story about Longfellow's poem which became the basis for the Christmas carol "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day..." If you want to read more about it, check <https://emergingcivilwar.com>.

Preservation Corner

Our December meeting saw us raising \$187 from both the book raffle and donations. Thank You to all those who purchased tickets or chose to make a donation.

There is a huge amount of news this month in the area of Preservation:

First, the Civil War Trust is currently running a Matching Grant of \$10.48-\$1 Matching Grant to help preserve 3 Battlefields in VA. They are: Cedar Mountain, Gaines Mill, and Cold Harbor

Second, the Richmond Times reported an effort being made to preserve the remaining 900 acres of the Malvern Hill Battlefield. A land consortium has agreed with helping to raise the money needed to purchase this.

Third, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation has made an announcement where they are looking to raise money to help purchase Fisher's Hill. There is no matching grants being offered.

Finally, in a Non Civil War preservation effort, the Civil War Trust and the Advanced Institute have agreed for the Trust to purchase 15 acres of the Princeton Battlefield. The Trust is now offering a \$3-\$1 matching grant in an effort to raise \$4M dollars. The land is important because Washington led an attack against a British Brigade.

This is all I have now. Your continued support is important. I will keep everyone posted on further updates.

Until next time, have a Happy Holidays!

Mark Quattroco

Remembrance Day 2016



If you have not attended Remembrance Day in Gettysburg activities, this is a weekend of events that you might be interested in. It seems that the number of participants in the annual parade grows each year. I have never officially counted, but the number of Confederate units is nearly equal to Union outfits these days. While having lunch before the Saturday parade, I ran into our own Mark Quattroco and his fellow surgeons at Gettysburg Eddie's. Fortunately, there was no tainted or unripe food being served and there was no hardtack on the menu!

November 19, the anniversary date of the Gettysburg Address, fell on Saturday of Remembrance Day Weekend. The 19th always begins with a ceremony in the cemetery with a notable keynote speaker, a reading of Lincoln's famous address, and a naturalization ceremony for a dozen or so new citizens. Levar Burton was this past November's speaker. The Gettysburg High School Ceremonial band clad in Civil War period uniforms provides music. I find the morning's ceremony moving and always appropriate to the occasion. The parade of soldiers, civilians, cavalry--many on horseback--take the observers back in time for a few hours.

The end of Remembrance Day is signaled by luminaries on each grave in the National Cemetery. This past year the luminaries were canceled due to inclement weather. If you have any questions about the weekend, please do not hesitate to ask. Gettysburg is in our backyard and is most definitely a touchstone for most of us.

Linda Zeiber

January Program

"The Burning of Chambersburg" featuring First Defender Bob Shuman



In the summer of 1864, Confederates visited the south-central Pennsylvania town of Chambersburg for the third time. Dispatched by Lt. General Jubal Early as part of his "Second Valley Campaign," raiders under the command of Brigadier General John McCausland demanded a \$500,000 ransom from the town or they would burn the town. That amount could not be raised, and by the Rebels returned south of the Mason-Dixon Line, much of the town lay in smoldering ashes. In the North, it was considered an infamous crime (for which Early would be accused of war crimes) while Southern partisans hailed it as justice for what they had experienced at the hands of Union armies. Today, like the mythical phoenix, Chambersburg has risen from the ashes and is the seat of Franklin County.

Long-time Round Table member and Chambersburg native Bob Shuman knows as much about this often-overlooked event as anyone alive today, and has spoken on "the burning" before many audiences. An educator by trade, Bob is retired from the Pennsylvania State University where he spent more than a quarter century at the Berks Campus.

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, January 10, 2017 Meeting:

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for January include: Greek Stuffed Chicken with Spinach; Honey Roasted Ham; Key West Salmon; or Pasta Carbonara. Soup, starch,

vegetables, 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, January 6, 2017, 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.**

Speakers and Program Topics for 2016-2017

1/10/2017	Bob Shuman	The Burning of Chambersburg
2/14/2017	Paul Kahan	Simon Cameron: Amiable Scoundrel
3/14/2017	Steve French	McNeill's Rangers
4/11/2017	Ed Bearss	To Be Determined
5/9/2017	Ed Bonekamper	Myth of the Lost Cause

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net

