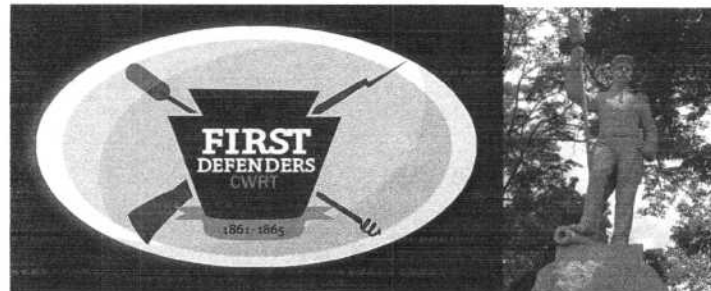


16th Campaign
9-12 - 5-13

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

September 2012 Beginning our 16th Campaign



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome. We had a great field trip to South Mountain. Many thanks to Don and Rob and anyone else who helped. A special thanks to John Hoptak. If you missed it, we have another good trip planned for next June. I hope your summer is going well and that you are all in good health. The time has come to start a new campaign.

The war is not going particularly well for the Union by September 1862. Robert E. Lee has embarrassed George B. McClellan in the Seven Days Campaign in front of Richmond. Then on August 29th and 30th, he crushes John Pope's army at Second Bull Run. The Rebel army pushes to within 20 miles of Washington before withdrawing. Abraham Lincoln believes that he has no choice, but to swallow his pride and ask McClellan to again lead the Army of the Potomac. Many in Lincoln's administration believe that McClellan did everything in his power to undermine Pope, and would like to see him hang. Lincoln knows Little Mac can restore morale.

Lee, with momentum on his side decides to invade the North. A decisive victory in above the Mason-Dixon line may lead to peace talks. The Army of Northern Virginia, in high spirits, crosses the Potomac River, into Maryland on September 5th. McClellan moving quickly, defeats part of Lee's army at the Battle of South Mountain. Lee, with the wings of his army widely scattered, is surprised for one of the few times in the war and considers abandoning the campaign. Good news comes, that Stonewall Jackson has captured Harpers Ferry and Lee with renewed hope, reorganizes on high ground in front of Sharpsburg. On September 17, 1862, along meandering Antietam Creek, the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia fight the bloodiest single day battle in the entire war. In a brilliant defense, Lee saves his army, from a massive foe, but in the end must retreat back across the Potomac. McClellan has failed to follow Lincoln's instructions to "destroy the rebel army", yet can still brag to his wife, "I feel some little pride in having, with a beaten and

demoralized army, defeated Lee so utterly." What he says holds certain truths, but in a short time, Lincoln will again grow weary of Little Mac's arrogance and insubordination. He will again be forced to turn to another general to face Lee.

Joe Schaeffer

Round Table Business

Treasurer's Report

Lori Border presented her report at the July 17th board meeting. Our balance as of July 2012 stood at \$2187.05. \$505.00 of that amount is ear-marked for preservation. The field trip income was \$3737.00 with expenses totaling \$3564.98.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2012-2013. We were once again able to avoid any increase in membership dues. Please fill out the attached form, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 9, 2012. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the September or October meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form** and **bring it along** with your payment.

We have been notified by Golden Oaks that will offer meals at no increase for the upcoming campaign. The cost remains at \$22.00 per meal.

Important Note Regarding the Collection of Monies in September 2012

There will be two separate tables set up for collecting meal money and membership dues:

#1. Lori Border and Joe Schaeffer will be collecting money for meals. Please try to have \$22 in the correct denomination if paying in cash. Checks are also acceptable made payable to the First Defenders Civil War Round Table.

#2. Dave Unger and Dave Sweigert will be collecting money for membership which is \$20.00 payable by check or cash. Bring along a renewal form filled out with your information to accompany your payment!

Election of Officers

Last May our round table held an election of board members for the new campaign. Barbara Shafer was the only officer to step down. Dave Sweigert accepted a nomination to step into the vacancy on "programs", and Tim Antosy, official photographer agreed to serve as a board member at large. All other previous board members were retained. Many thanks go out to Barbara for her years of trivia and work on the programs' committee.

Find a listing of the board and contact information at the end of the newsletter.

First Defenders Field Trip to South Mountain, June 9, 2012

by Linda Zeiber

The tour bus pulled out from Joe's office in Wyomissing promptly at 7:00 a.m. under sunny skies. By 9:00 a.m. we were in Emmitsburg, MD, picking up

our guide for the day, John Hoptak who had presented a program on the topic of the Battle of South Mountain during our May meeting, a prelude to the day's tour.

After passing through Boonsboro, MD, our first stop was Turners' Gap. We got off the bus near the Mountain House which had been there at the time of the battle September 14, 1862. John Hoptak described the overall action and placement of the Union and Confederate armies. We learned that two future U.S. Presidents, McKinley and Hayes, fought there to preserve the Union. He also gave us a history of the Dahlgren Chapel across the road from the Mountain House. It was built after the war ended by General Dahlgren's widow.

Next stop was Fox's Gap, the site of Jesse Reno's death. The Union Ninth Corps advanced against Confederates here. McClellan's hope was to keep the Confederates at bay there which was accomplished after hard fighting. Maryland's portion of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail runs along the ridge of South Mountain State Park, and it is visible and very close to Reno's death site.

Following a boxed lunch at the Community Center of Burkittsville, MD, we traveled to Crampton's Gap where the Union Sixth Corps forced Confederates out. By nightfall, they were beaten and had withdrawn from the mountain. Crampton's Gap is the site of Gathland State Park well-known for the War Correspondents' Arch (1896) which honors war correspondents, artists, and photographers. This area is the former estate of George Townsend, the Civil War's youngest field correspondent who was responsible for the construction of the arch. The Appalachian Trail also passes through Gathland State Park, crossing in front of the base of the Correspondents Arch.

John Hoptak discussed the difficulty of following the actions of the Battle of South Mountain. He presented a clear and comprehensible tour for us nonetheless. This was the site of the first major Civil War battle in Maryland to be closely followed by Antietam. The nature of the terrain makes it unique and challenging to explore. Imagine what it was like for those men in Blue and Gray 150 years ago.

Before beginning the return trip to Berks County, we returned to Emmitsburg where we enjoyed an excellent dinner at the Carriage House. The food, service, and hospitality were first rate. It was the perfect end to a perfect day. It seems necessary to mention our bus driver, Linn, from Elite. He managed driving the three gaps as if he did it all of the time. It was no easy feat considering the size of the coach and the available space at each gap!

We owe a debt of thanks to Rob Marks and Don Stripling for the time and effort that they put into planning and leading this educational and pleasant field trip for our Round Table. They covered all of the bases, and it seemed that all who attended had only good things to say about it. Know that it is appreciated, and we look forward to the next adventure in June 2013.

The Program for September: Jeffrey Wert
Topic: An Army Reborn--The Army of Northern Virginia 1862-63

Mr. Wert is joining us for his third presentation. His talk will focus on the army's leadership, morale, and fighting prowess in the campaigns from Seven Days to Gettysburg. It will analyze Lee's strategy and tactics and his relationship with subordinates and the men in the ranks.

Jeffrey Wert is the author of nine books, many articles in various publications, and numerous awards. His newest book, *A Glorious Army: Robert E. Lee's Triumph, 1862-1863* will be on sale at the September meeting. The hardback edition is \$25.00. Soft cover prices are not available at this time.

Reservations for the September 11, 2012 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Meal choices: Pasta Primavera, Broiled Salmon, Pecan Chicken, or Sirloin Beef Tips.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, September 3, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

*NOTE: Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

2012-2013 Program Schedule

September 11, 2012: Jeffrey Wert	An Army reborn ANV 1862-63
October 9, 2012: Wayne Hsieh	TBA
November 13, 2012: Mark Rigg	Home front--Songs, Poetry, etc.
December 11, 2012: Kristopher White	Fredericksburg/Marye's Height
January 8, 2013: Carol N. Waskie	Clara Barton
February 12, 2013: Chris Mackowski	Last Days of Stonewall
March 12, 2013: Ron Rhein & Mike Gabriel	Wilson Creek, MO
April 9, 2013: Edwin C. Bearss	TBA
May 14, 2013: J.D. Petruzzini	Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net



The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

October 2012--Our 16th Campaign



www.firstdefenderscwrtr.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October 1862 and the Battle of Antietam is over. Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia have failed to defeat the Army of the Potomac. Southern leaders had hoped for a victory in Pennsylvania which might lead to European recognition and intervention. They never made it to Pennsylvania. They will try again in the future, but for now Lee must regroup and prepare for the possibility that Union forces will pursue his beaten army into Virginia. George B. McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac has an opportunity to destroy Lee's army. The Union army is more than double the size of the Confederate army, yet amazingly, Little Mac manages to convince himself that Lee has twice the number of troops that he has. President Lincoln urges McClellan to act, but as the color fades in the fall landscape, it becomes apparent to the Union government that Little Mac will not move. He sits with his army north of the Potomac River and spends his time demanding reinforcements and insulting Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln is losing patience with McClellan but has other issues to deal with as well. Lincoln has come to understand that although the first aim of the war is still to preserve the Union, something else is also at stake. The nation cannot be the same again. Slavery must be abolished. The forced servitude of millions of human beings can no longer be allowed. He also knows that he needs to gradually achieve emancipation. Citizens in the Northern and border states are still divided over the issue and it is his monumental task to bring the nation around. Therefore he embarks on a plan of gradual emancipation. Some will criticize Lincoln for not moving fast enough while others will be angry that he has moved this far. Lincoln has also had enough of McClellan and after personally visiting the general he sees for himself that a change is needed. McClellan is relieved of command, bringing on the next question. Can Lincoln find a general to win victory?

Joe Schaeffer

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaeffer called the September meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with 81 members and guests in attendance. Bob Troxell offered a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Joe reported that Vice President Rob Marks has recently experienced personal problems and will not be joining the round table this year. Someone has offered to take Rob's place as a "trips" coordinator. A vice president will need to be found. Joe also announced that Greg and Sherry Stull were not present since their son had recently returned from Afghanistan. Additionally, he spoke of the 9/11 date and recalled the attack on the United States 11 years ago.

Both Bob Shuman and Tim Antosy were present. Both men have experienced serious health issues in the past months, and we were happy to find them looking well and to have them back with the round table.

Speaker Jeffrey Wert and his wife Gloria were introduced, and several new members and guests were acknowledged.

All members should be advised that historian and Antietam Park Ranger John Hoptak will be speaking at the Berks County Historical Society on October 13, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. John has given several programs at our round table and led our field trip to South Mountain this past June.

New member Clark Zimmerman, a history teacher at Hamburg High School, described a program that he started for students that was recently reported on in the *Reading Eagle*. The purpose is to make known to current students those Hamburg alumni who are veterans and are currently serving in the military. We salute Clark for his endeavor and are happy that he has become a member of the round table.

Tim Antosy spoke briefly about beginning a Facebook account for our group. We agree that it is a good idea and hope that he and/or someone with skill using technology will pursue the task.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2012-2013 if you have not already done so. The board was once again able to avoid any increase in membership dues which remain at \$20.00 a year. Please fill out the attached form, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 9, 2012. 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.

We have been notified by Golden Oaks that will offer meals at no increase for the upcoming campaign. The cost remains at \$22.00 per meal.

A New Link on the Website

Errol Steffy would like everyone to be aware that he has added a new link to the website, the US Army Center for military history. New member Roy Gehris provided this information.

Ed's Artifacts

Ed is once again thrilling us with his vast collection of Civil War artifacts. His first offering of the 16th campaign was that of militia cartridge boxes. The oldest of his display was from the Georgia infantry. The rarest box was from the 153rd Virginia. He bought it

in Winchester, VA, in 1960 for the princely sum of \$4.00. It no doubt has increased in value! Thank you, Ed, for sharing your collection and your expertise.

My Summer Vacation

by Linda Zeiber

My husband Gerry and I decided to seek cooler temperatures by traveling to the coast of Maine this past August. While staying in Kennebunkport, we took a day trip to nearby Brunswick to visit the home of one of the heroes of Little Round Top, Fredericksburg, and Petersburg, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. Michael Shaara's *Killer Angels* had turned Chamberlain into a larger-than-life figure for me many years ago which made walking through his home an unforgettable experience.

The house had been previously inhabited by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a graduate and teacher at Bowdoin College. Chamberlain also attended and then taught at Bowdoin located directly across the street from the house. In fact, the Chamberlains had the house moved a block to its current address and added a story to it. Many of the furnishings there actually belonged to Chamberlain. They had been sold off years ago but have slowly been reacquired by the group caring for the house. His office furniture from his 4 terms as governor of Maine after the war are in the first floor office. A display case exhibits his boots, repaired after being shot in the foot at Gettysburg, as well as several other military items.

About a block away stands the First Parish Church, an excellent example of Gothic Revival architecture, which Chamberlain attended. This is the same church where Harriet Beecher Stowe's husband was pastor. A short distance from the church is the cemetery where one finds the Chamberlain family plot. Chamberlain's marker is unremarkable despite his being made a brevet general following his injuries at Petersburg and serving as governor. Brunswick and Bowdoin have much history to offer the visitor. We barely had time to scratch the surface.



The Program for October: Wayne Hsieh
Topic: "Old, Unhappy Far-off Things": War and the Writing of Civil War History

The talk is about some of the moral problems in writing about Civil War military history; it's sort of a response to Drew Faust's Jefferson lecture on the topic, which you may or may not have seen, and which used as its launching point Robert E. Lee's famous line at Fredericksburg that "it is well that war is so terrible, else we should grow too fond of it."

Wayne received his Ph. D. from the University of Virginia where he studied under Dr. Gary Gallagher. He is currently serving as a history professor at the United States Naval Academy. He is the author of the critically acclaimed book *West Pointers and the Civil War: The Old Army in War and Peace*.

Professor Hsieh's book will be on sale: *West Pointers and the Civil War: The Old Army in War and Peace* at \$30 cash or check.

Reservations for the October 9, 2012 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Meal choices: Vegetable Lasagna, Broiled Haddock, Chicken Cordon Bleu, Roast Beef Marsala.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, October 1, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

*NOTE: Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

2012-2013 Program Schedule

October 9, 2012: Wayne Hsieh	"Old Unhappy Far-off Things"
November 13, 2012: Mark Rigg	Home front--Songs, Poetry, etc.
December 11, 2012: Kristopher White	Fredericksburg/Marye's Height
January 8, 2013: Carol N. Waskie	Clara Barton
February 12, 2013: Chris Mackowski	Last Days of Stonewall
March 12, 2013: Ron Rhein & Mike Gabriel	Wilson Creek, MO
April 9, 2013: Edwin C. Bearss	TBA
May 14, 2013: J.D. Petruzzi	Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net



The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

November 2012



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

From the President

Fall 1862. The Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia had each suffered horrific casualties at Antietam. Each needed to reorganize, refit and recruit. McClellan finally moved the Union army across the Potomac River on October 26, more than a month after the battle. On November 7, Lincoln replaced George McClellan with Ambrose Burnside, a rather curious choice. Where many high ranking officers were overconfident, Burnside seemed to have less confidence in himself than his detractors did. Still, he moved quickly and by November 17, his army sat on the banks of the Rappahannock ready to cross and capture Fredericksburg. Sadly, the pontoon boats needed to bridge the river did not arrive. Burnside was delayed more than a week, allowing Lee to fortify the heights dominating the town. The dilemma for Burnside now became, wait and attack this fortified position or withdraw.

Meanwhile, the Union and Confederate governments are waging a fierce battle on the diplomatic front over possible European intervention. Louis Napoleon of France pushed for helping the South in order for his troops to solidify their conquest of Mexico. He did not have the will to act alone and waited to find out what Britain would do. The British found themselves divided over the issue. Attacking the Union and weakening its power would ensure a supply of cotton from the South and make the South dependent on Britain for manufactured goods. On the other hand, they feared the growing Union navy and the loss of trade with the North. Also, as advocates in halting the world trade in slavery, how could they now back a regime committed to its continuation? British Prime Minister Palmerston wanted to intervene and had the votes in Parliament, but waited, wanting to see the Confederates prove themselves on the battlefield. Lee's defeat at Antietam and Lincoln's move toward emancipation swayed the British away from intervention and recognition. The issue was not settled, but would be indefinitely delayed.

Joe Schaeffer

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaffer opened the October meeting at Golden Oaks where 64 members and guests had gathered for our meeting. Dave Fox offered a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Our speaker, guests and new members were introduced and welcomed. Joe reminded everyone that the deadline for renewing membership has now passed. Anyone with questions should contact Dave Unger, Membership Chair.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported a balance of \$2187.05 as of September 11, 2012. Receipts totaled \$2070.00 with expenses of \$2866.76 leaving a balance of \$1,392.23 of which \$434.00 is for preservation. \$100.00 was spent for the field trip deposit.

Ed's Artifacts

Ed Ewing brought *accoutrements* for our perusal. He explained that they were in the area of the ordinance department since they had to do with guns. Included were a scabbard with bayonet, a belt, a cartridge box which held 40 rounds, and a percussion cap box. Ed explained the difference between Model 1839 flat plates and the 1864 embossed plates.

Preservation

Cathie Kennedy thanked Ron Emge for bringing a box of books from the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College which donated them for the raffle. Many members have donated books and money as well which keeps expenses down while raising money for preservation.

Field Trips

Don Stripling discussed the June field trip which will be led by J. D. Petruzzi covering Lee's retreat from Gettysburg which is also the topic of our May meeting with Petruzzi speaking.

Don also briefly discussed the addition of a fall tour in 2013. Scott Mingus will guide the tour which covers the burning of the Wrightsville Bridge and the Civil War in York County. The date is scheduled for October 26, 2013.

*NOTE: First Defenders members are invited to join the Hershey Round Table for a field trip to Antietam on November 10, 2012. Go to our website links and to Hershey Round Table for more information, or call Rick Hollis at 717-473-3725.

Miscellany

- Tim Antosy gave us an update of our Face book page and described just how useful this will be to our organization. We thank Tim for spearheading this initiative.
- Joe Schaeffer announced the November 9th opening of Spielberg's film, *Lincoln*. Daniel Day-Lewis stars as President Lincoln. The film is based on Doris Kearns Goodwin's book, *Team of Rivals*. It was

also noted that Stephen Spielberg is the speaker on Remembrance Day, November 19, 2012, at Gettysburg.

- An election to fill the position of vice president of the round table will be held at November's meeting. Three members have stepped up so far offering to fill this job. If you are interested, call Joe Schaeffer to discuss the matter before the next meeting.

News of Our Friend, Ed Bearss

As you may have already noticed, Ed Bearss is returning in April for his third presentation to our round table. What an incredible honor it is that Ed continues to find his way back to us.

Errol Steffy reports that Ed had suspended tours because of having cataract surgery, but the surgery has been successfully completed and he is back in business once again.

Ed had sent Errol a copy of *Gettysburg Magazine* a month or so ago. Many members are quite familiar with this publication that is a "no advertising" publication. Be aware that Ed writes the introductions to this prestigious history journal. Subscribe at www.gettysburgmagazine.net or call 937-461-6736.

If you would further information on any of the above, please call Errol at 610-927-4379.

Adopt-a- Position

On Monday, November 12, 2012, you have an opportunity to travel to Gettysburg to work on maintaining the monument of the 6th PA Cavalry. Barbara Shafer is the official "caretaker" of this one, and a small group of First Defenders have worked on it in the past. New fences need to be painted, and there is always raking and brush trimming that needs to be done.

Barbara is currently in talks with the Park Service to adopt a Confederate monument as well. If you have questions and/or would like to participate, contact Don Stripling at donstripling54@msn.com or Barbara at barbajeanz@juno.com.

The Program for November:

Historian: Pastor Mark Rigg

Topic: What the Birds Said: Poetry and Song in the Civil War

Description: The nineteenth century was a time of poetry and song quite different from our own. Poetry was public and popular rather than academic or "elite." Politicians, preachers, and others laced their oratory with verse; school children memorized it; and magazines and newspapers routinely published it. And while poetry in the 20th century often became complex and confessional, poetry at the time of the Civil War tended to be emotional, moral, and instructive.

From the battlefield to the hospital to the home front, this talk takes the listener back to the War through the words of those who lived it, and shows how their verse reflected the great themes and ideals of the war.

Biographical Background:

Mark Rigg is a Unionist and abolitionist through and through. Born in Wisconsin, raised in New Jersey, and educated in New England, he has lived in his adopted state of Pennsylvania for nearly 20 years. He attended Amherst College, Yale Divinity School, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He was an English teacher and chaplain at The Hill School in Pottstown and is now the pastor of Advent Lutheran Church in West Lawn. He has been a public speaker for many years, giving talks on Huck Finn, world religions, and many other topics. He is known for his lively and heartfelt presentations. He and his wife Sue have two children, Mary and Paul.

Reservations for the November 13, 2012 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Meal choices: Vegetable Stir Fry, Broiled Flounder, Chicken Marsala, or Meatloaf.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, November 5, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

*NOTE: Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

2012-2013 Program Schedule

November 13, 2012: Mark Rigg	Home front--Songs, Poetry, etc.
December 11, 2012: Kristopher White	Fredericksburg/Marye's Heights
January 8, 2013: Carol N. Waskie	Clara Barton
February 12, 2013: Chris Mackowski	Last Days of Stonewall
March 12, 2013: Ron Rhein & Mike Gabriel	Wilson Creek, MO
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May 14, 2013: J. D. Petruzzi	Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg



Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net

You'll Live, You'll Live, Young Fellow, My Lad **by Robert Service**

Where are you going, Young Fellow My Lad
On this glittering morn of May?
I'm going to join the Colors, Dad;
They're looking for men, they say.
But you're only a boy, Young Fellow My Lad;
You aren't obliged to go.
I'm seventeen and a quarter, Dad,
And ever so strong, you know.

So you're off to France, Young Fellow My Lad,
And you're looking so fit and bright.
I'm terribly sorry to leave you, Dad,
But I feel that I'm doing right.
God bless you and keep you, Young Fellow My Lad,
You're all my life, you know.
Don't worry. I'll soon be back, dear Dad,
And I'm awful proud to go.

Why don't you write, Young Fellow My Lad?
I watch for the post each day.
And I miss you so, and I'm awfully sad.
And it's months since you went away.
And I've had the fire in the parlor lit,
And I'm keeping it burning bright
And I'm keeping it burning bright
Till my boy comes home, and here I sit
Into the quiet night.

What is the matter, Young Fellow My Lad
No letter again today?
Why did the postman look so sad
And sigh as he turned away?
I hear them tell that we've gained new ground.
But a terrible price we've paid.
God grant my boy that you're safe and sound
But, oh, I'm afraid, afraid.

They've told me the truth, Young Fellow My Lad
You'll never come home again.
Oh God the dreams and dreams I've had,
And the hopes I've nursed in vain.
For you passed in the night, Young Fellow My Lad,
And you've proved in the cruel test
Of the screaming shell and the battle hell
That my boy was one of the best.

So you'll live, Young Fellow My Lad
In the gleam of the evening star.
In the woodlots wild and the laugh of the child,
In all sweet things that are.
And you'll never die, my wonderful boy,
While life is noble and true;
For all our beauty and hope and joy
we will owe to our lads like you.

Editor's Note:

Mike Straus forwarded this hauntingly, beautiful poem to me. Despite the probability that the young man in the poem was enlisting to fight in World War I, the narrative and lyrical nature of the poem easily applies to any war.

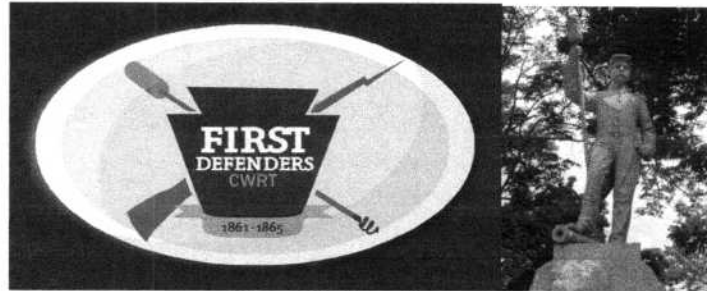
Considering that Mr. Rigg will be making a presentation about poetry, songs, and literature, it seemed fitting to share it with the members of our round table this month.

I want to thank Mike for always being on the lookout for great pieces of writing for inclusion in the newsletter.

L. Z.

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

December 2012



www.firstdefenderscwrtable.us

Christmas 1861



From the President

Thanks to Craig Breneiser for stepping forward to be our new Vice-President.

Friday night my wife and I went to see the movie, *Lincoln*. I am not a movie reviewer, but I give this movie the highest grades--superbly acted, directed and very true to the historical facts. Please go see it and encourage others as well. Every school kid in America should see this movie.

Thanks to Pastor Mark Rigg for his excellent talk at the November meeting. Our speaker for December, Kris White, will be speaking on the Battle of Fredericksburg, and you should note that our meeting falls almost 150 years from the date of the battle. I do not want to steal any of Kris's

thunder but would like to give a small notice to the heroic acts of a local forgotten hero who fought in this battle.

Jacob G. Frick is buried nearby in Pottsville, Schuylkill County. Few people today recognize what he did, but those who served with him never forgot his valor. In the late afternoon of December 13, 1862, Col. Jacob G. Frick led the 129th Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment into the hell that was the Union assault on Marye's Heights. These Pennsylvanians from Schuylkill and Northampton counties were nine month recruits, but they formed the left front regiment in their brigade's charge. Men in blue fell by the dozens. Those still standing bent their backs to the task and pushed on. Frick, noticing that the color guard was struck down, grabbed the national flag, and held it aloft. A bullet cut the staff in half and the flag fell draped over his shoulders. He continued on to the cheers of his remaining men. The 129th made it to the wall but could go no further. That night, they fell back after suffering over 140 killed and wounded. Several more were made prisoners at the wall. Col. Frick led his men in serious fighting again at Chancellorsville. The 129th was mustered out in May. Col. Frick again did service to the Union when he saved Harrisburg by burning the Wrightsville Bridge during the Gettysburg Campaign. Jacob Frick settled in Pottsville after the war and in 1892 received the Medal of Honor for his service at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. The 129th was one of those short-lived units which nevertheless saw intense fighting. Remember their deeds.

Joe Schaeffer

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaeffer called the November meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking our program presenter, Pastor Mark Rigg, to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 62 members and guests present.

Craig Breneiser was elected vice president/chaplain unanimously to serve out the term of Rob Marks. Thanks, Craig, and welcome to the Board.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from October's meeting was \$1,392.23. Receipts from the October meeting totaled \$2659.00 including \$570.00 for preservation. Expenses incurred totaled \$1807.84 leaving a balance of \$2243.39. We have also made a \$100 deposit for our June field trip.

Preservation

Cathie Kennedy's thanked those who have donated books and money for the book raffle. December's raffle will include something new in addition to the usual tickets. 1 for 1 tickets will be sold for \$1.00 each for a special gift.

A discussion ensued about 3 parcels of land all of which had good leverage involved. We ultimately decided to send \$400 to Kelly's Ford where 964 acres are available for purchase. The state of Virginia, the Civil War Preservation Trust, and a Federal grant have provided \$113.00 matching funds for every dollar donated.

A special thank you goes out to Dr. Bill and Barbara Lord for donating \$100 of the total for this very worthy cause.

June Field Trip

Ron Emge reported that an effort is being made to get Petruzzi to stop at the site where Gen. Pettigrew was killed in the Battle of Falling Waters during our field trip in June. More trip details will be forthcoming.

Ed's Artifacts

Ed Ewing provided us with a series of pre-Civil War swords and sabers. One of these was a 1796 English officer's sword surrendered on Roanoke Island in 1862. Ed's favorite was an 1840 militia sword from Barksdale's unit. There was also an 1818 Starr Artillery sword carried by O'Reilly's North Carolina Brigade as well as two eagle head sabers worth \$700-\$800 each at this time. All items were pre-Civil War, and all had much history attached to them..

Quotable

"Last night was Christmas Eve. It brought to my mind a thousand recollections of the past. The contrast is great. I sat up late in the evening at the fire...for we were under marching orders for this morning at five o'clock. A grand movement seems to be at hand. About eleven o'clock at night I heard heavy firing in the front. Where will the next Christmas Eve find me?"

--submitted by Linda Zeiber

A Civil War Thanksgiving

...As we gather at our Thanksgiving tables this year, pause for a moment to thank the two people who gave us this holiday: Sara Josepha Hale for her persistent promotion of the celebration and Abraham Lincoln for declaring it a national holiday....

By the fall of 1863, the nation was war-weary and facing another long winter of conflict. On October 3, 1863, six weeks before delivering the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln boosted the country's morale by designating the last Thursday in November as a national day of thanksgiving.

In his proclamation, Lincoln wrote of the "blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies" and the health of the nation despite being "in the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity." He concluded:

I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.

The idea was not Lincoln's alone. Sara Josepha Hale, editor of Godey's Ladies Magazine for 40 years, had vigorously campaigned for a Thanksgiving holiday in her writings and editorials for 17 years.

Years earlier in her successful 1827 novel *Northwood*, Hale described a Thanksgiving table laden with stuffed roast turkey, roast pork, mutton, beef, duckling, pumpkin pie, plum pudding, and wine. In the September 1863 issue of Godey's, Hale pleaded for a presidential proclamation declaring a day for offering gratitude for "the blessings of the year." Sensing the mood of the nation, Lincoln was swayed.

Although not officially celebrated in the military until 1864, Thanksgiving was honored in many of the camps throughout the War. Soldiers wrote home describing their

thanksgiving meals that sometimes included turkey. But in most cases, the soldiers dined on modest fare such as salt pork, fish, chicken and mince pies, fruit, nuts, and, if they were lucky, cakes from home.

In 1864, the Union League of New York City launched an appeal to provide Thanksgiving dinner for all of the Union Forces. Other organizations and newspaper editors supported the effort and donations of food and dollars rolled in. The Union forces, including the wounded in hospitals, ate heartily and gratefully on Thanksgiving Day.

Sara Hale was overjoyed. Her dream had come true--at least for the North. The South always viewed Thanksgiving as a celebration for New Englanders, and the Confederacy, of course, did not recognize Lincoln's authority. It was not until the Union was restored after the War that the South honored Lincoln's proclamation and gradually adopted the Thanksgiving tradition.

December's Program: Fredericksburg/Marye's Heights
presented by **Kristopher White**

The Battle of Fredericksburg is considered one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Army of the Potomac. The battle is often looked at as a lopsided victory for Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia. Though remembered as a folly, the battle plan that Burnside employed was solid, the execution of the plan was very flawed. We will examine the Battle of Fredericksburg, and explore how and why victory slipped through the fingers of Burnside; and why this battle turned into such a lopsided victory for Lee.

Biographical Background:

Kristopher White is a historian for the Penn-Trafford Recreation Board near Pittsburgh, PA; and teaches continuing education courses at the Community College of Allegheny County. White is a graduate of Norwich University with a MA in Military History, as well as a graduate of California University of Pennsylvania with a BA in History. For five years he served as a staff military historian at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, where he still volunteers his services. For a short time he was a member of the Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides at Gettysburg. Over the past seven years, he has spoken to more than 30 roundtables and historical societies. He is the author and co-author of numerous articles that have appeared in America's Civil War, Blue and Gray, Civil War Times, and Armchair General. White co-authored The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson with longtime friend Chris Mackowski. The two have authored numerous articles together and are currently working on a book-length study of the Second Battle of Fredericksburg and Salem Church (publication 2013). White and Mackowski are also the founders of www.emergingcivilwar.com. Their website introduces a new generation of Civil War historians to the history world.

Reservations for the December 11, 2012 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for December include: Cheese Stuffed Shells (Vegetarian), Shrimp Stir Fry, Chicken Picata, or Pot Roast.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, December 3, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business

phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

NOTE Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

2012-2013 Program Schedule

January 8, 2013: Carol N. Waskie	Clara Barton
February 12, 2013: Chris Mackowski	Last Days of Stonewall
March 12, 2013: Ron Rhein & Mike Gabriel	Wilson Creek, MO
April 9, 2013: Edwin C. Bearss	TBA
May 14, 2013: J. D. Petruzzi	lee's Retreat from Gettysburg

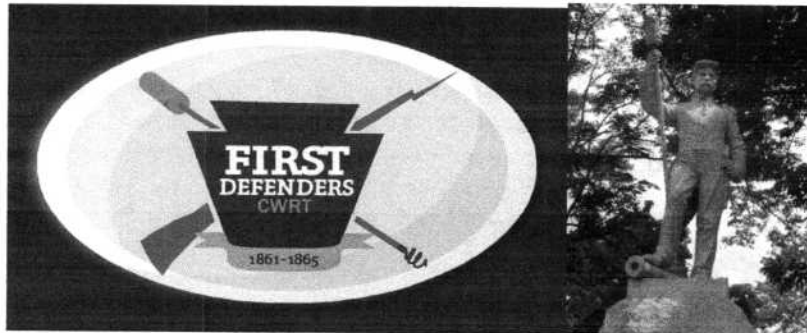


Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net

The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

January 2013



www.firstdefenderscwr.us

Emancipation Proclamation January 1861



From the President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The terrible loss for the Army of the Potomac at Fredericksburg may have been the result of the poor generalship of Ambrose Burnside and his subordinates, but the weight of the disaster fell squarely on the shoulders of Abraham Lincoln. Fear spread through Washington that George McClellan was preparing to assume command of the army and lead a military revolt to take control of the government. Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase conspired with Republican senators to undermine Lincoln's authority and remove William Seward as Secretary of State. Lincoln

despaired to a friend, "They wish to get rid of me, and sometimes I am more than half disposed to gratify them. We are now on the brink of destruction. It appears to me the Almighty is against us." The British on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean were still divided over the question of intervention. Many doubted whether Lincoln would follow through on the Emancipation Proclamation. Union armies in the field had achieved little success. Lincoln was at a low point in his Presidency.

Thomas Paine had written the immortal words of "The Crisis" during the War of Independence, as George Washington faced his low point, watching his army melt away on the banks of the Delaware River. The phrase, "these are the times that try men's souls", might just as well have been written for Abraham Lincoln. Washington, in his time, acted decisively by crossing the Delaware River, defeating the British and saving his army. Lincoln in the winter of 1862-63 acted in an equally decisive way and saved the Union and his presidency.

In mid-December, he skillfully outmaneuvered Chase's insurrection and kept his cabinet intact. On January 1, 1863 he signed the Emancipation Proclamation into law. Although many Brits still had great sympathy for Southerners, it would now be impossible to consider intervening to save the pro-slavery Confederacy. Lincoln again replaced the commanding general of the Army of the Potomac, still searching for the man to defeat Robert E. Lee. That man was proving himself in the West and Lincoln would not bring him to the East for another year. Nonetheless, in this darkest of times, Abraham Lincoln proved that he would and could strive on to lead the Union to victory.

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaeffer called the December meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking our new vice president, Craig Breneiser, to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 72 members and guests present.

Joe welcomed our speaker Kris White and his guests, a sister and brother-in-law. A warm welcome was also extended to new members Andy Ellsworth and Bob Troxel.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from November's meeting was \$2,243.39. Receipts from the November meeting totaled \$1,914.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$1763.85 leaving a balance of \$2393.54. We have made a \$100 deposit for our June field trip.

Preservation

Cathie Kennedy's thanked all for purchasing raffle tickets. \$282.00 were collected to add to the previous balance of \$318.00. December's raffle included some new tickets for two special gifts.

Ed's Artifacts

Last month Ed brought two swords, both non-regulation Union officers' that had been made in Prussia. One, an 1862 model, was found near Marye's Heights in 1959

buried in the soil. It had belonged to a Union officer who was killed during the Battle of Fredericksburg. Union officers had to buy their own equipment. The blades on both swords were "thrust blades" rather than "cut and thrust". They had metal scabbards. The Solingon factory in Prussia manufactured them. They were known for having quality work for low prices. A sword like the ones on display sold for \$15.50 originally. Each blade is etched with "US" on it. Similar swords were made by the Ames company in Massachusetts, and these sold for \$24.00-\$26.00.

Lost and Found

In addition to selling raffle tickets, Richard Kennedy was selling First Defenders baseball caps and shirts with our logo. These had been ordered several years ago and had been "mislaidd" for a while. The lost has been found and several hats were purchased at the December meeting. The Board will discuss the possibility of ordering shirts and/or hats in the future. We had added many new members since the last sale who may be interested in these items. We will keep you apprised of this endeavor in the near future.

Quotable

September 10, 1863, from Morris Island, South Carolina

"We have captured one fort--Gregg--and one charnel house--Wagner--and we have built one cemetery, Morris Island. The thousand little sand hills that glitter in the pale moonlight are a thousand headstones, and the restless ocean waves that roll and break upon the whitened beach sing an eternal requiem to the toil-worn, gallant dead who sleep beside."

September 1865 from Andersonville, Georgia

"I have looked over its 25 acres of pitiless stockade, its burrows in the earth, its stunted stream, its turf less hillside, shadeless in summer and shelterless in winter--its well and tunnels and caves--its 7 forts of death--its sentry boxes and its deadline--and the light of my eyes went out. And I said, 'Surely this was not the gate of hell, but hell itself.' And for comfort I turned away to the acres of crowded graves and I said, 'Here is at last was rest, and this to them was the gate of heaven.'"

Both quotes are from **Clara Barton**. Thanks to Mike Straus for sending them for publication.

2nd Annual HJL Archival Series From the Historical Society of Berks County

January 12, 2013 - (with a snow date of the 26th), Mark Pflum will present on George A. Durell, Independent Battery D, PA Volunteer Artillery. George Durell, started with the Ringgold Light Artillery before being given his own command. Durell is one of the men Mr. Pflum reenacts.

February 9, 2013 - (with a snow date on 23rd), Robin Costenbader-Jacobson will present on Governor John F. Hartranft. Robin is a

descendant of Gov. Hartranft, who served as Governor of Pennsylvania from January 21, 1873 - January 21, 1879. Hartranft is better known by Civil War history buffs as a Major General during the War, who received a Medal of Honor (August 21, 1886), awarded for his actions during the First Battle of Bull Run. At the end of the war, he commanded the Old Capitol Prison and was appointed a special provost marshal during the trial of the accused in the Lincoln Assassination. As a result, he read the sentence and their last rites and gave the order for their hanging.

March 23, 2013 - (no snow date), Michael Feeney will present on the Feeney Funeral Home, the Evolution of Funerary Customs and hopefully provide some insight for historians and genealogists on how to access funeral records.

All lectures will start at 1:00 in the Connor Auditorium. Non-members: \$5.00

January's Program

Professor & Historian: Carol Neumann Waskie

Topic: Clara Barton

Clara Barton was a fascinating woman. Ahead of her time, Clara tested the boundaries of Victorian social mores, while always maintaining her femininity and dignity.

She was an Educator; Administrator; a paid Washington, D.C. government employee of the patent office; Battlefield Nurse; and Founder of the American Red Cross.

This Program offers a chance to glimpse into the life of this brave, determined yet fragile Woman.

For forty-five minutes to an hour, while in period dress, I will share moments of Clara's life from her youth until after the Civil War. The talk will then be opened for questions.

Clara Barton wanted very much to be remembered by posterity. For a short time I will help her live again.

Biographical Background:

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Pa. Graduated with a BA in English Literature and Elementary Education. Continued studies in Counseling at Rutgers University.

Later pursued an advanced degree in Nursing from Gwynedd Mercy College. Since 1986 have worked in the Temple University Health System in various roles. Currently in Administration for the Physical Medicine Department.

Ms. Neumann has been involved in Civil War History for many years. Founder and Vice President of Delaware Valley Civil War Round Table from 1992 thru 2002. She has helped to found several other round tables in the area, including Doylestown Round Table and the Union League of Philadelphia Civil War Round Table.

In 1995 was an instructor for the Civil War Studies at Holy Family University, specializing in Women and the Civil War and Blacks in the Civil War.

From 1994 until 2002 was on the Board of Directors for the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery and have represented the group on NPR radio show.

For 15 years Ms. Neumann has portrayed Clara Barton in a first person style Living History

performance. She is an expert on the life of this brave and fearless woman. In 1996 became the co-owner and treasurer of History and Mystery Tours of Philadelphia. Began the first Ghost tours, "Spirits of Philadelphia". After extensive research found over 50 ghost sitings in the city, including her own dwelling. The business was featured on the Travel Channel.

Reservations for the January 8, 2013 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for January include: Pasta Primavera (Vegetarian), Broiled Salmon, Pecan Chicken or Sirloin Beef Tips

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, December 31, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

NOTE Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

2013 Program Schedule

February 12, 2013: Chris Mackowski	Last Days of Stonewall
March 12, 2013: Ron Rhein & Mike Gabriel	Wilson Creek, MO
April 9, 2013: Edwin C. Bearss	TBA
May 14, 2013: J. D. Petruzzi	Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg

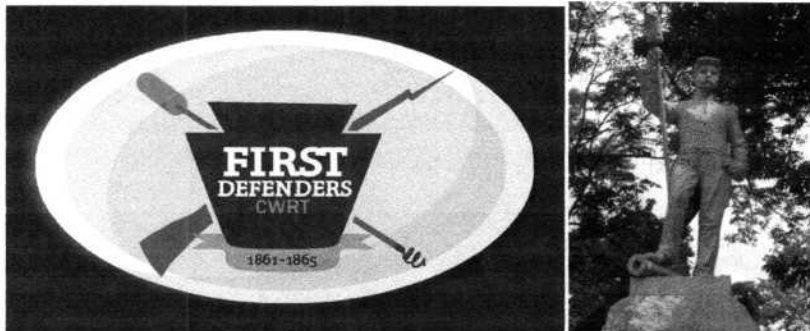
Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net



The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

February 2013



www.firstdefenderscwr.us

February 1863: Union Naval Blockade Inflicts Disastrous Impact on the Southern Economy



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President Abraham Lincoln and his advisors recognized early on that subduing the rebellious Southern states would require more than just battlefield victories. The South had few industrial facilities and prior to the war depended mostly on trade with Europe and Northern states for manufactured goods. Trade between North and South was now forbidden. The Confederate states turned to Europe exclusively and, if that trade could be disrupted, the South would slowly but surely lose the ability to wage war.

Lincoln's strategists developed the Anaconda Plan, by which the Union combined naval and army forces would constrict the Confederacy like a snake strangling its prey. In April 1861 Lincoln declared a blockade of all Southern ports. Although serious questions existed about the legality of

the blockade under international treaties, Great Britain and France publicly agreed to honor it. Privately, these governments turned a blind eye to any violations.

The task facing Southern leaders was how to break the blockade for the South had no navy. The British and French had navies but refused to intervene. Rather than build a navy, the Confederacy turned to blockade runners. Goods were shipped from Europe to ports in Bermuda and the Bahamas. From there, the goods were transported to areas just outside of the blockade zones. The goods were then transferred to small fast ships to run the blockade and reach Southern docks. The most successful of Southern cities for blockade runners to enter were Wilmington, N.C., and Charleston S.C. Blockade runners were privately owned boats. Successful captains, along with their investors, made a fortune. As many as 1600 ships participated in blockade running.

The Union navy had the seemingly impossible goal of halting the blockade runners. The Southern coastline stretched for 3,549 miles and the United States Navy in 1861 consisted of 42 commissioned ships, 1,500 officers and 7,500 seaman. Yankee ingenuity went to work and, by 1865 the U.S. Navy was unmatched in the world, composed of 671 ships, 10,500 officers, and 53,000 sailors. Even the powerful British navy wanted no part of a squabble with such a fleet.

Blockade running was easy and profitable in 1861, but by 1865 the good times were over. The capture ratio in 1861 was 1 in 10. In 1865, it was 1 in 2. The total number captured or destroyed was 1500, over 90 percent of all blockade runners. Life aboard Union vessels on blockade duty was generally boring but could instantly turn to thrilling if a chase was underway. Service in the U.S. Navy could also be extremely lucrative, since the Federal government paid prize money for captured vessels and goods. Everyone from Admiral to seaman shared in the prize money. The Federal government paid a total of 31 million dollars in prize money during the Civil War.

Joe Schaeffer

Round Table Business

Vice President Craig Breneiser opened the January meeting of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table at 6:15 p.m. at Golden Oaks with 60 members and guests in attendance. President Joe Schaeffer led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a prayer. Tom Kidd, Ken Fake, and Dale Kratzer introduced their guests for the evening. One of our guests, Dr. Raymond Smith, became a member that evening.

Don Stripling announced that details regarding the June 8th field trip will be given at the February meeting.

Errol Steffy informed the membership that Ron Rhein had fallen and broken his leg forcing the cancellation of his and Mike Gabriel's March program. Ron and Mike will be rescheduled during the next campaign. Craig Breneiser offered to present a program about Andersonville prison in their place.

Dave Unger announced that current membership stands at 97 members.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from November's meeting was \$2,393.54. Receipts from the December meeting totaled \$1,956.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$1939.82 leaving a balance of \$2409.72. The current balance for battlefield preservation is \$500.00.

Weather Alert

You are reminded that any meeting needing to be canceled due to inclement weather will be done so 24 hours in advance based on forecasts. The website will have cancellation information. Those who receive a hard copy of the newsletter in the mail will be notified by telephone.

Hopefully, we will not need to cancel any meetings; however, many members travel long distances for meetings and safety is the number one priority.



Ed Bearss Birthday

Ed Bearss will be celebrating his 90th birthday June 26, 2013. We will have a card to be signed by members of the Round Table at future meetings.

Please be sure to sign the card at one of the upcoming meetings.

Press Release from the Gettysburg Foundation: NPS Issues Decision on Gettysburg's Cyclorama Building

GETTYSBURG, PA.--*The National Park Service has issued a decision regarding the future of the Cyclorama building at Gettysburg National Military Park and concluding the park's environmental assessment planning process. The decision document, known as a Finding of No Significant Impact, calls for demolition of the Cyclorama building in order to rehabilitate North Cemetery Ridge on the Gettysburg battlefield to its historic 1863 battle, and 1938-1964 commemorative-era appearance...*

In 1962 the Cyclorama was built on the center of the Union battle line on Cemetery Ridge near where Union forces repelled Pickett's Charge. The building was designed by Richard Neutra and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The park's nonprofit partner, the Gettysburg Foundation, has funds for the demolition of the building which would begin this winter.

*This has been a long, on-going process since the Cyclorama painting was removed to its current state-of-the-art facility at the new Visitors' Center. For those of us who have an indescribable draw to Gettysburg, it is long-awaited and welcome news.

Reservations for the February 12, 2013 Meeting:

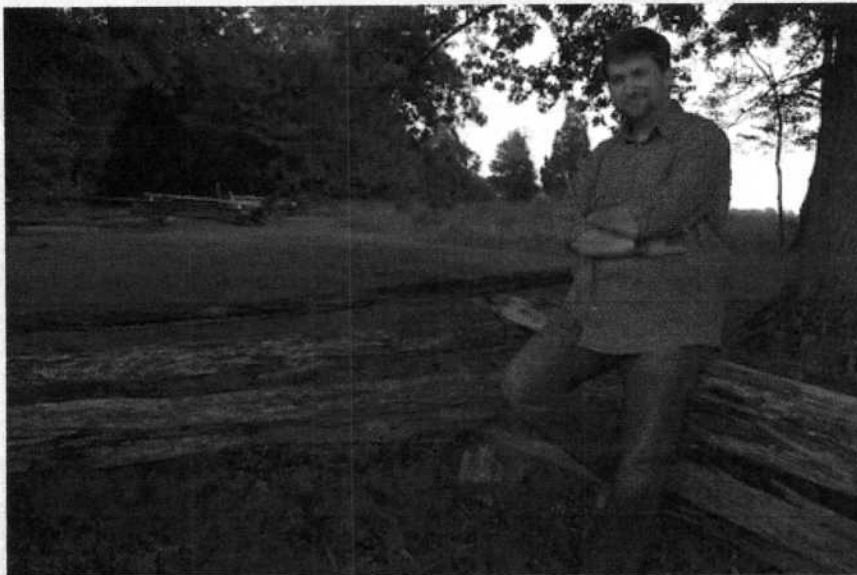
Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choice/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for February include: Vegetable Lasagna, Broiled Haddock, Chicken Cordon Bleu, Roast Beef Marsala.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, February 5, 2013, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

Note Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

February's Program

Professor, Author & Historian: Chris Mackowski



Topic: Last Days of Stonewall

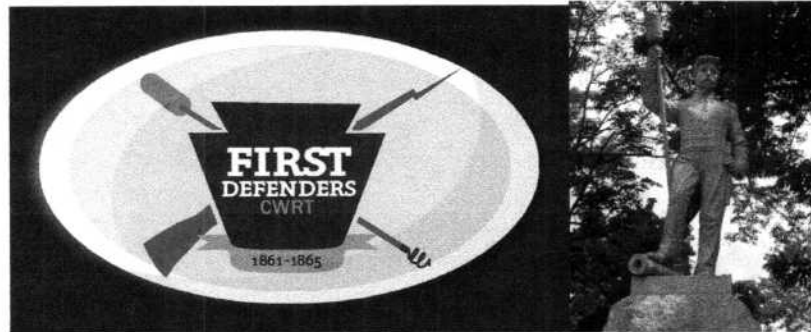
Biographical Background:

Chris Mackowski is an associate professor of journalism and mass communication at St. Bonaventure University. He also works as a historian for the National Park Service at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park, where he gives tours at four major Civil War battlefields (Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Wilderness, and Spotsylvania), as well as at the building where Stonewall Jackson died. He's the author of books on the battles of Wilderness and Chancellorsville, and with Kris White, co-author of *The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson* and monograph-length articles on Spotsylvania. Mackowski and White have also written for *Civil War Times*, *America's Civil War*, and *Blue & Gray*.

The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

March 2013



www.firstdefenderscwr.us

March 1863: Winter Camp Photo by Matthew Brady



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The opposing armies spent the winter of 1862/1863 reorganizing and keeping a close eye on each other, expecting a new onslaught in the spring. President Abraham Lincoln fretted about the state of the Union. In January he told Senator Charles Sumner that he "feared the fire in the rear more than our military chances." He had good reason to fear the peace-Democrats who railed against the war. Spread throughout the Union, but concentrated in the Midwestern states, they felt disconnected from and resentful of the power of the Northeastern states. States like Illinois and Indiana had done most of their prewar commerce with Southern states.

The war had cost them this trade. Furthermore, they saw the Emancipation Proclamation and the National Banking Act of 1863 as the greatest of insults, put upon them by the Eastern establishment.

Clement L. Vallandigham, an Ohio congressman, took up the banner for the peace-Democrats declaring, "It is the desire of my heart to restore the Union, the Federal Union as it was forty years ago." He demanded an armistice and a settlement of hostilities, allowing the continuance of slavery so as to induce Southern states to rejoin the Union. Other opposition leaders called Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation "insulting to God and man, for it declares those equal whom God created unequal."

In the press and in their letters, they urged Union soldiers to leave their regiments and return home. Was this freedom of speech or incitement to desertion? Lincoln and his allies saw it as the second choice and reacted swiftly and harshly. General Ambrose Burnside, now commander of the Department of the Ohio, issued a general order that, "any person committing expressed or implied treason would be subject to trial by a military court and punishment by death or banishment."

Vallandigham was dragged from his home in the middle of the night, arrested, tried and convicted. His attorney filed for a writ of habeas corpus, which a Federal judge turned down. Lincoln had suspended the writ of habeas corpus, citing Article 1, Section 9 of the Constitution which allowed for suspension "in cases of Rebellion or Invasion." The punishment for Vallandigham was banishment to the Confederacy. Angry peace-Democrats burned Republican newspapers. Support for the rioters was growing. Lincoln turned the tide with one his most brilliant and persuasive arguments. "Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of a wily agitator who induces him to desert?" The administration of Lincoln had barely survived another crisis.

Joe Schaeffer

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaeffer opened the February meeting of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks with 73 members and guests in attendance. Vice President Craig Breneiser led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a prayer. New members Jane and Bob Brubaker, as well as re-enlisting member Dave Klopp, were welcomed. Since the February meeting, Ken Miller has joined the First Defenders bringing total membership to 101 according to Membership Chair Dave Unger.

We were informed that former board member and Vice President Ron Rhein is facing surgery on his broken leg. He will be in a cast for 4-6 weeks following surgery. We wish him a speedy recovery and miss seeing him at meetings.

Joe announced that no guests will be permitted at the April meeting when Ed Bearss is once again returning to us as a speaker. Of course, anyone is welcome to join the round table prior to that meeting. Because of the large turnouts for Ed's previous programs, the decision was made to keep the event this year for members only.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from December's meeting was \$2,409.72. Receipts from the January meeting totaled \$1,413.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$1549.85 leaving a balance of \$2272.87 as of January 19, 2013. The current balance for battlefield preservation is \$617.00.

Book Raffle

Cathie Kennedy announced that all books awarded during the April meeting will be those of Ed Bearss. If you have one of Ed's books and would like to donate it or if you would prefer to purchase one of Ed's and donate it to the raffle, please bring these to the March meeting. Any monies that we can save by not purchasing books ends up buying acreage at battlefields.

Preservation News

Member Barbara Shafer wants to remind all of us about the banner year of saved acreage by the Civil War Trust during its 25th year of existence. From their recent press release:

In 2012, the organization closed 39 separate transactions at 26 individual battlefields in eight states. The battlefields where land was preserved in 2012 are: Resaca, GA; Mill Springs, Perryville and Rowlett's Station, KY; Mansfield, LA; Averasborough and Bentonville, NC; Gettysburg, PA; Fallen Timbers, Franklin, Johnsonville and Shiloh, TN; Appomattox Court House, Cedar Creek, Cedar Mountain, Chancellorsville, Cool Spring, Cross Keys, Gaines' Mill, Kelly's Ford, Middleburg, Mine Run, Petersburg, Tom's Brook and the Wilderness, VA; and Summit Point, W. VA.

Weather Alert

You are reminded that any meeting needing to be canceled due to inclement weather will be done so 24 hours in advance based on forecasts. The website will have cancellation information. Those who receive a hard copy of the newsletter in the mail will be notified by telephone.

Hopefully, we will not need to cancel any meetings; however, many members travel long distances for meetings and safety is the number one priority.

Ed's Artifacts

Ed's table of fascinating items reappeared in February. All things were connected to the 93rd PA Light Infantry. Ed told us that four companies of the 93rd were from Lebanon. A 22 cal. Smith & Wesson 1861 revolver had been owned by David Smith. It is a 7-shot rim fire. This particular weapon had been inexpensive at first. Smith was in the 6th Corps and had charged Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg. All other items were attributed to the 93rd as well. Thanks, Ed.



Ed Bearss Birthday

Ed Bearss will be celebrating his 90th birthday June 26, 2013. We have a card to be signed by members of the Round Table at the March meeting. If you have not already done so, please be sure to sign the card at the upcoming meeting. Check with Linda Zeiber if you cannot locate the card.

Craig's Calendar...



<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Contact</u>
FEB 23	"African American Men & Women in Medicine During the Civil War" National Museum of Civil War Medicine	301-695-1864
FEB 23	"HJL Archival Workshop PA Governor John Hartranft" Historical Society of Berks County	610-375-4375
APR 6	"Longstreet's Assault on Day 3 - A Field & Walking Tour" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
APR 12-13	"Andrew's Raiders & the Great Locomotive Chase" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
APR 13	"Mid-Nineteenth Century Wars & Military Medicine" National Museum of Civil War Medicine	301-695-1864
APR 17-20	"Shiloh & Corinth:" Campaigns for the West - A Field & Working Tour" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
MAY 2-3	"Chancellorsville: Lee's Greatest Victory" Civil War Tours	860-485-3603
MAY 17-19	"Chancellorsville" Chambersburg Civil War Seminars & Tours	717-264-7101

"Craig's Calendar" is derived from a variety of sources, and is neither an endorsement or an exhaustive list of events of potential interest to First Defenders. Anyone with any additional sources is asked to provide contact information to craig.breneiser@gmail.net. Thanks!

JUNE 8 BUS TRIP

Details for the upcoming bus trip (Lee's Retreat From Gettysburg) are now available. For those receiving a mailed newsletter, the trip flyer is included in your newsletter. For those receiving the newsletter electronically, the flyer will be posted on our website under the June 8 Bus Trip heading. There also will be copies of the flyer available at the March and April meetings. The all-inclusive cost for the trip is \$70 – make checks payable to the First Defenders CWRT.

Reservations for the March 12, 2013 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choice/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for March include: Vegetable Stir-fry, Broiled Flounder, Chicken Marsala, Meatloaf.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, March 4, 2013, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

Note Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

March Program

Member & First Defender VP: Craig Breneiser

Topic: "Is this Hell?: "The Tragedy of Andersonville"

Craig's program focuses on the life and horrors of Camp Sumter, Georgia, better known as Andersonville. Craig has personal connections to the infamous prison camp: his great-great grandfather, Private Franklin Breneiser, 1st PA Cavalry, was a "guest" of the Confederate government, and his fiancée, Lisa's, great-great grand uncle, Private Josiah McHose, 4th PA Cavalry, rests eternally in grave 1858 at the Andersonville National Cemetery.

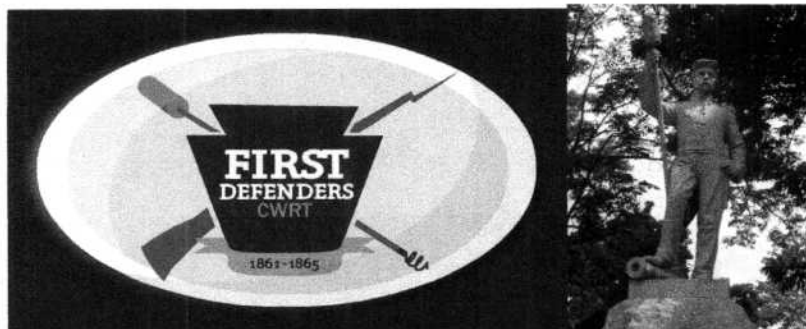
Biographical Background:

Craig was educated at the Pennsylvania State University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism and a master's degree in public administration. He retired as the director of Berks County's 9-1-1 center in 2009 after 29 years of service, and currently provides public-safety consulting and project management services through his own company. His interest in the Civil War began with his first trip to Gettysburg during the battle's centennial year, and he spends most of his free time relaxing in his library with books old and new covering a wide range of Civil War topics.

The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

April 2013



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the coming of spring in 1863, it was academic that campaigning would be renewed with increasing fervor. Southern fortunes seemed bright while Northern determination was yet to wane.

In the West, Ulysses S. Grant was continuing his quest for the Holy Grail that was Vicksburg. Turned away at Chickasaw Bluffs in December, Grant continued to seek new avenues into the Confederate Gibraltar. He would continue to court near-disaster on the Yazoo River and at Steele's Bayou but would not release his bulldog grip on the prize. Finally, the Union gunboats ran a gauntlet of fire to get south of Vicksburg, beginning what would ultimately be a successful campaign to wrest control of the Mississippi River from the South.

In the East, "Fighting Joe" Hooker was molding his Potomac soldiers into "the finest army on the planet." He would confidently sally forth seeking to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia, but he failed to gain the acquiescence of Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson who would confound his plans near the crossroads of Chancellorsville. Historians continue to debate whether Lee and Jackson defeated the Army of the Potomac, but no such questions arise with regard to the utter defeat of Hooker.

On the waters, the Union ironclads would be stymied in another attempt to secure "the cradle of secession" in their assault on Charleston. (Hopefully, President Schaeffer is having better fortunes in his "assault" of the South Carolina coast as he does what all presidents seem to do!) The navy would try again, but Charleston would remain defiant until the war's end.

The C.S.S. *Georgia* would take to the sea in the spring of '63, another Confederate cruiser seeking to prey on the Northern merchant fleet. While less celebrated than her sister ships *Florida*, *Shenandoah* and the redoubtable *Alabama*, she nevertheless drew Northern blood on the high seas.

In Richmond, the famous "bread riot" would bring Jefferson Davis to the verge of having to have troops open fire on obstreperous women who had broken into shops seeking food (and, apparently, other nice things, too!). Fortunately, the crowd would disband and save Davis from certain ignominy that would have been his had blood been shed.

1863 would, for all intents and purposes, prove to be the penultimate year of the war. As spring would give way to summer, a small village in Pennsylvania and the Mississippi town on the bluff would be the scenes of Independence Day celebrations heralding the beginning of the end. But, there was still a long way to go, and tens of thousands of men would continue to give their lives in defense of causes they deemed holy.

Craig S. Breneiser

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaeffer opened the March meeting of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks with 77 members and guests in attendance. Vice President Craig Breneiser led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a prayer. New members Chris Drayer and Donald Brensinger were welcomed. Total membership of the round table currently stands at 108 according to Membership Chair Dave Unger.

Joe announced that no guests will be permitted at the April meeting when Ed Bearss is once again returning to us as a speaker. Of course, anyone is welcome to join the round table prior to that meeting. Because of the large turnouts for Ed's previous programs, the decision was made to keep the event this year for members only.

The Schuylkill River Heritage Association has asked for a speaker for June 3, 2013, in the evening to give a Civil War talk at Aqueduct Park in Gibraltar. If anyone is willing to do this, please let Joe Schaeffer know as soon as possible.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from February's meeting was \$2,172.87. Receipts from the February meeting totaled \$1,890.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$2,068.76 leaving a balance of \$1,994.11 as of March 12, 2013. The current balance for battlefield preservation is \$573.00. A total of \$70.00 has been held for the June field trip.

****Important Note**** Lori has asked that all attending the April meeting have the exact amount of money to cover the cost of your meal. We expect attendance to be high, and this will help to expedite moving the line by not having to make change.

Book Raffle

Cathie Kennedy announced that all books awarded during the April meeting's raffle will be those authored by Ed Bearss. Thanks to members who have donated many of these books thus keeping costs minimal. Any money that we can save by not purchasing books ends up buying acreage at battlefields. One of the many things that makes our round table such a hit with Ed Bearss is our dedication to preservation.

JUNE 8 FIELD TRIP

At the end of the March 12 meeting over half the seats available for the June 8 Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg bus trip were filled. Since the trip has only been "advertised" for a month, there's a good possibility the trip will be sold out. If you plan to be with us on June 8, it's suggested you get your registration form and check in ASAP, definitely no later than the April 9 meeting.

Everyone should have received a registration form; the registration form can also be downloaded from www.firstdefenderscwr.us from the June 8 2013 events link. Checks should be made out to the First Defenders CWRT. Any questions – contact Ron Emge (304.579.4888) or Don Stripling (610.750.3998).

Ed's Artifacts

Ed Ewing brought two rifles for our perusal, numbers 3 and 4 on his list of favorite popular weapons. Number 3 is the Burnside carbine. The ammunition for this carbine was on display as well. These strange-looking cartridges often would not eject forcing the soldier to dig them out, a real drawback. 55,000 of these rifles designed by Ambrose Burnside were made.

Number 4 carbine on Ed's list is the Smith. It was not in favor in the early part of the war. It used a paper cartridge that ordnance eventually switched to foil ones. The 7th and the 17th PA Cavalries carried these weapons at Gettysburg. The biggest problem for the Smith was quality control of the ammunition.

Both of these guns have unique loading systems. It was quite interesting seeing and learning about the weapons as well as the ammunition used in them. Thanks, Ed.

Craig's Calendar...



<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Contact</u>
NOW - JUN 8	"First to Serve: Berks County & the Path to the Civil War" Historical Society of Berks County	610-375-4375
APR 6	"Gettysburg & Beyond" Chambersburg Civil War Seminars & Tours	717-264-7101
APR 6	"Longstreet's Assault on Day 3 - A Field & Walking Tour" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
APR 12-13	"Andrew's Raiders & the Great Locomotive Chase" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
APR 13	"Mid-Nineteenth Century Wars & Military Medicine" National Museum of Civil War Medicine	301-695-1864
APR 13	"Mosby's Confederacy: A Field & Walking Tour" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
APR 17-20	"Shiloh & Corinth:" Campaigns for the West" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
APR 27	"Battlefield BBQ at the Pry House Field Medical Museum" National Museum of Civil War Medicine	301-695-1864
APR 30 - DEC 31	"The War Came by Train" B&O Railroad Museum, Baltimore	410-752-2490
MAY 2-3	"Chancellorsville: Lee's Greatest Victory" Civil War Tours	860-485-3603
MAY 11	"Union & Confederate Artillery at Gettysburg" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
MAY 17-19	"Chancellorsville" Chambersburg Civil War Seminars & Tours	717-264-7101

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A Soldier's Story

Errol Steffy's distant cousin on his father's side of the family, Joseph Stephen (the spelling 'Stephfen' is found on his enlistment), enlisted in the Union Army for three years in Allentown on October 2, 1862. His age was listed as 18, but research has made it clear to Errol that, since Joseph Stephen's older brother was born on April 18, 1845, he could not have been

born earlier than April of 1846. He was no more than sixteen years of age at time of enlistment.

Key West Florida Sep. 27th, 1863
Co. D 47 Regt. P. V.

My Dear father

By these few lines I let you know I am well at present. I hope this few lines will find you the same state of good health. And further I let you know I dont no whats the matter it is I dont get no letter. I think you dont want to write any more. If you dont want to write me any more then say so then you could inspect to have any more letters from me. You write few months ago for my likeness. Now I got it taken. Now you must give me an answer before I sented to you and if you don't give me an answer then you cant have it.

Now I must come to a close with my news by hoping soon an answer.

Written By

Mr. John Joseph Stephen
Co. D 47 Regt. P. V.
Fort Taylor Key West Florida

The letter following, which has been transcribed, was no doubt written home by a friend or officer. It is doubtful that Joseph could write much of anything, including his own name. The copy of the original letter seems to show an attempt at his signature at the end.

One can only imagine the loneliness experienced by this young man serving so far from home. He longs for a letter to make a connection with anything or anyone he left behind. Apparently his father had asked him to have his picture taken which he did. No one in

the family knows what happened to that likeness. Nor does anyone know the fate of John Joseph Stephen. He was declared missing in action on October 19, 1864, at Cedar Creek. At the end of the war, he was declared dead.

If you would like to see a copy of the original letter, I am sure that Errol would be happy to share it with you.

Reservations for the April 9, 2013 Meeting:

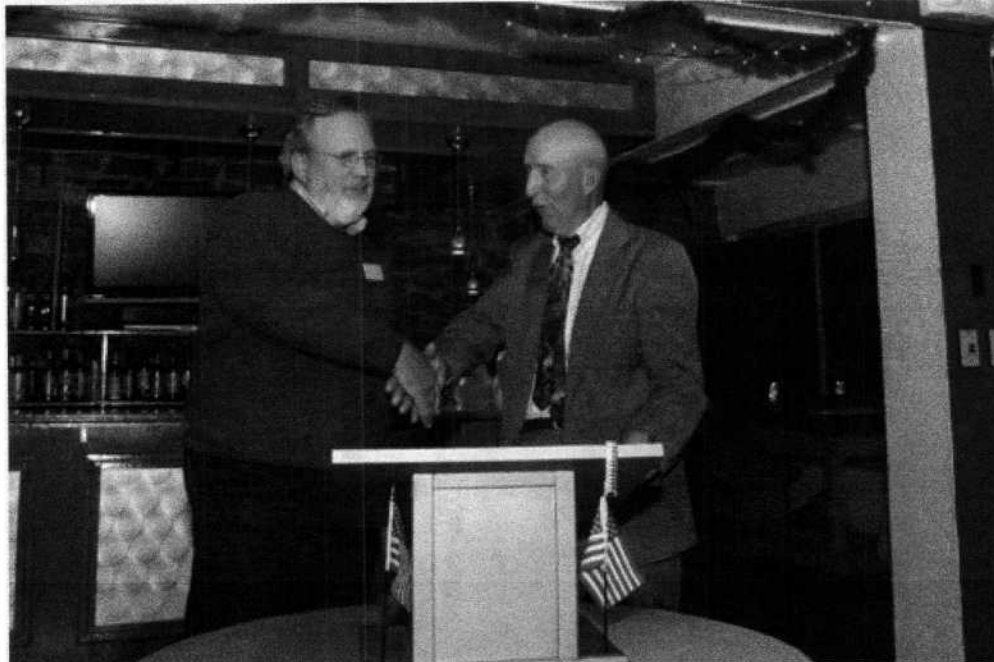
Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choice/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for April include: Cheese Stuffed Shells, Broiled Flounder, Chicken Marsala or Pot Roast.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, April 1, 2013, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

Note Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. 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.

April Program

Historian, Author, Guide: The One and Only: Edwin C. Bearss-This is Ed's 4th Program.



Topic: Brandy Station

Edwin C. Bearss is America's premier battlefield historian and the historian emeritus of the National Park Service. Since retiring in 1995, Ed has led historical tours approximately 275 days per year. Ed is the author of 13 books, including Fields of Honor. He has also served as a consultant on numerous documentaries and films,

including Ken Burns' The Civil War. Ed now lives in Arlington, Virginia.

He is the recipient of the Department of the Interior's Distinguished Service Award, the highest award given by the department.

Mr. Bearss comes from a long line of Marines. His father was a Marine and a close relative of "Hike'em" Hiram Bearss who was a Marine General who won the Medal of Honor. Mr. Bearss served in the Pacific during WWII where he was severely wounded, hit 4 times while he was pinned down by a creek bed. He has three children. Two are former Marines and one is an historian.

Mr. Bearss has a new book: Receding Tide-Vicksburg and Gettysburg.



Edwin C. Bearss: A FRIEND TO THE 1st DEFENDERS

2013 Program Schedule

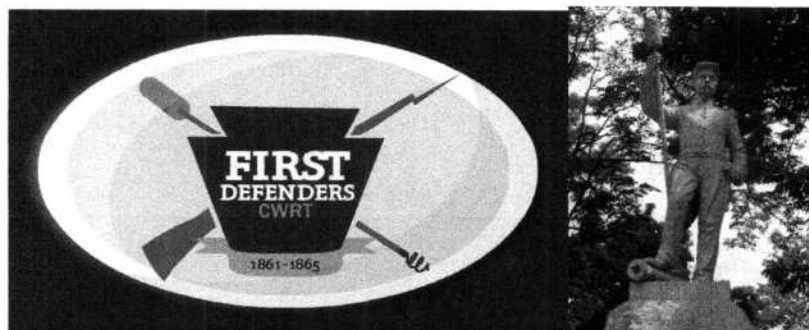
May 14, 2013: J. D. Petruzzi
June 8, 2013: Field Trip led by Petruzzi

Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg
Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg

The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

May 2013



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MAY 2013

Thank you to all members and especially to all Board members for another successful campaign. I look forward to our next campaign starting in September and wish you all a healthy and happy summer.

Instead of an overview of events in May 1863, I decided on something different this month. The following is a list of books which I think are interesting reading for the summer, as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Campaign. This list is not intended to be complete or authoritative but merely a good overview and some of my personal favorites.

ROADS TO GETTYSBURG by John W. Schildt – Long and detailed, but follows the journey of both armies in great depth.

THE CONFEDERATE APPROACH ON HARRISBURG by Cooper H. Wingert – Author is a teenager with incredible knowledge.

FLAMES BEYOND GETTYSBURG, THE CONFEDERATE EXPEDITION TO THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER, JUNE 1863 by Scott Mingus – Author is our tour guide for the fall trip to Wrightsville.

PLENTY OF BLAME TO GO AROUND, JEB STUART'S CONTOVERSIAL RIDE TO GETTYSBURG by Eric J. Wittenberg and J. David Petrucci – Fair and balanced approach to a much-argued event.

THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN, A STUDY IN COMMAND by Edwin B. Coddington – Still stands as the foundation for others to build upon.

GETTYSBURG, THE FIRST DAY

GETTYSBURG, THE SECOND DAY

GETTYSBURG, CULP'S HILL AND CEMETERY HILL, 3 books by Harry W. Pfanz – Start any one and be hooked.

GETTYSBURG DAY THREE by Jeffrey Wert – Excellent author and speaker who has visited with us.

LEE'S REAL PLAN AT GETTYSBURG by Troy D. Harman –
Controversial, thought provoking and an easy read. One I keep going back to.

LEE AT GETTYSBURG

HANCOCK AT GETTYSBURG, 2 books by A.M. Gambone, Author was Norristown native. Sadly passed away before we got to have him as a speaker.

DEVIL'S DEN, A HISTORY AND GUIDE by Garry E. Adelman and Timothy H. Smith – A lot of great stories you did not know.

PICKETT'S CHARGE IN HISTORY AND MEMORY by Carol Reardon –
Good book on the evolution of the story.

FIGHTING FOR THE CONFEDERACY, THE PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF GENERAL EDWARD PORTER ALEXANDER by E.P. Alexander – If there is a better witness book, I have not found it. His section on Gettysburg is masterful.

ONE CONTINUOUS FIGHT, THE RETREAT FROM GETTYSBURG by J. David Petruzzi, Eric J. Wittenberg and Michael F. Nugent. Mr. Petruzzi will guide us on this journey for our field trip in June.

I hope you will find a book here that you have not read. Thank you. Joe

Round Table Business

President Joe Schaeffer opened the April meeting of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table at 6:23 p.m. at Golden Oaks with 88 members in attendance. Vice President Craig Breneiser led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a prayer. New members Mark Fegley, Brian Hassinger, Luciano Filippini, and Vince Santa Maria were welcomed. Total membership of the round table currently stands at 111 according to Membership Chair Dave Unger.

Joe thanked Craig Breneiser for writing the monthly newsletter message in his absence. He also acknowledged the presence of past president Mike Gabriel and past vice president Ron Rhein following his accident.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from March's meeting was \$1,994.11. Receipts from the March meeting totaled \$3,333.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$1,728.82 leaving a balance of \$3,595.29. The current balance for battlefield preservation is \$764.00. A total of \$1,545.00 has been received for the June field trip.

****Important Note** Lori has asked that all attending the May meeting have the exact amount of money to cover the cost of your meal. This will help to expedite moving the line by not having to make change.**

Preservation

Tom Tate announced that he had received a thank-you note from the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust for the donation sent in honor of Chris Mackowski, our program presenter in February.

Additionally, Tom has received information about a land project that the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust is undertaking. It is a land restoration and requires the demolition of a large modern structure. The trust wants to raise the money for its removal. When that is done, a major portion of the Chancellorsville Battlefield will be restored and greatly enhanced. Bob Krick has narrated a brief video which may be accessed at:

<http://youtu.be/LBRnZyHdfT4>

Book Raffle

All twelve books raffled during the April meeting were written by our guest speaker Ed Bearrs. Ed graciously autographed all of the those books for the lucky winners. One of the many things that makes our round table such a hit with Ed Bearss is our dedication to preservation. Thanks to all who donated so many books.

From Don Stripling--2013 BUS TRIPS

The June 8 trip (Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg) has been sold out – there are no seats available.

The details for the October 26 trip (York/Wrightsville) will be posted on the website before the May 14 meeting. Registration forms will be included in the summer newsletter. Registration for the October trip will be opened to the public after our September 10 meeting.

BERKS COUNTY MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS IN THE CIVIL WAR by Dave Unger

There are three Berks County Medal of Honor winners in the Civil War. The Medal of Honor was first created for the Navy in 1861 and the Army version was established in 1862. Originally only privates who distinguished themselves in battle were eligible to receive the Medal of Honor but fairly quickly that was changed to all enlisted men and then to all officers. Here are the stories of the three Medal of Honor winners from Berks County in the Civil War all of which are buried in Charles Evans Cemetery.

William L. Graul (1846-1909)

William Graul was born in Reading on July 27, 1846. At the age of 18, William enlisted in the 3rd Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery. By this time the Civil War was in its third year. Soon after he enlisted William was transferred to the newly formed 188th Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment. On April 18th, 1864, William was mustered in as a corporal in Company I, part of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, 18th Corps of the Army of the Potomac. On September 1, 1864 he was promoted to Color Sergeant to carry the state flag. Many of the Medal of Honor winners during the Civil War had something to do with the colors.

On the night of September 28, 1864 the 18th Corps crossed the James River about seven miles southeast of Richmond, Virginia. At dawn the next day, the 188th attacked the well fortified works called Fort Harrison. As the unit left the protective woods, they came into a clearing and came under heavy fire from the heavy guns mounted in the fort. The fort was some 1,400 feet away when Sergeant Graul led a column across a plowed field, under heavy fire, mounted the parapet, drove the enemy from his guns, and planted the flag on one of its massive transverses. He carried the flag past Fort Harrison on to Fort Gilmore but the troops were forced to retreat. While falling back, Graul saw the flag of the 4th New Hampshire fall to the ground and he carried it off to safety along with his own.

On June 30, 1865, Graul was mustered out of the service and returned to Reading. He bought in Temple which was known for its fine food. In 1874 his first wife, Marietta, died and he eventually remarried. It was not until April 6, 1885 that William Graul of Reading was awarded his Medal of Honor for being the first to plant the colors at Fort Harrison. Graul died in August of 1909 when his car was hit by a train in Douglassville. He was buried on September 7, 1909 in Charles Evans Cemetery.

William Sands (1835-1918)

William Sands was born in Reading on October 14, 1835. At the age of 25, William enlisted as a corporal in Company B, 88th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry on September 12th 1861. Companies A, B and H were filled with men from Berks County. Corporal Sands enlistment papers describe him as 5'8" , brown eyes, sandy hair with light complexion. His occupation was listed as a painter.

On April 10, 1863, Corporal Sands was promoted to Drum Major of the Regimental Band. Bands were considered important parts of the regiment used to buoy the morale of the troops. In January of 1864 most of the men of the 88th Pennsylvania, who had only seven months left on their enlistment, took advantage of the bounty paid to state troops to re-enlist. Drum Major Sands received a \$400 bounty to reenlist as a 1st Sergeant of G Company, 88th Veteran Volunteers.

On February 6th, 1865, the 88th was moved across Hatcher's Run, a small creek in Virginia and moved toward Dabney's Mill. At 3 p.m., the regiment was formed in line of battle, and charged the enemy twice over an open field towards the enemy works. Captain Bright, the commanding officer of the 88th reported the regiment was fired upon from the rear by the 6th Corps. The 88th then moved to the right, where they again were thrown forward twice at the enemy works. They were repulsed each time with heavy loss of life. In Captain Bright's report the officers and men behaved nobly with special mention of First Sergeant William Sands of Company G. William Sands was awarded the Medal of Honor on November 9, 1893 "for grasping the enemy's colors in the face of a deadly fire and brought them inside the lines."

Less than one week before Robert E. Lee surrendered, William Sands was wounded at Amelia Courthouse, Virginia. The wound was a gunshot wound to the right thigh. William was transferred to the Summit House General Hospital in Philadelphia. On May 31, 1865 William was given a medical discharge and turned over to the care of his wife. The next years of his life are obscure and he

lived until October 31st, 1918 when he died in Norristown, Pennsylvania. He was buried alongside his wife Hettie, in Charles Evans Cemetery, in an unmarked grave.

Martin E. Scheibner (1842-1908)

Martin Scheibner was born in Germany but, as a young man, made his way to America and eventually settled in Reading. At the age of 21 on September 22nd, 1861 he enlisted in as a substitute for another man in Company G of the 90th Pennsylvania Infantry. At the Battle of Mine Run, Virginia, only two months after Martin enlisted, an enemy shell fell among his comrades. Without regard to his own personal safety, Private Scheibner "voluntarily extinguished the burning fuse of an enemy shell", saving the lives of men around him from certain death. For this act of bravery, Private Martin Scheibner was promoted to corporal but only not awarded the Medal of Honor until June 23, 1896.

On May 5th, 1864, Martin was wounded in the leg at the Battle of the Wilderness. One year later he was given a medical discharge from the Army due to this wound. Martin returned to Reading where he became principal of Reading Boys High School from 1881 to 1899. After he retired from teaching, Martin and his wife moved to Camden, New Jersey, where he died on November 29, 1908, at the age of 66. Martin Scheibner's body was brought back to Reading where he was buried in Charles Evans Cemetery.

Reservations for the May 14, 2013 Meeting:

Dinner Reservation Procedures: If possible, please make your meal choice/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for May include: Pasta Primavera (vegetarian), Broiled Salmon, Pecan Chicken, and Sirloin Beef Tips.

The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, May 6, 2013, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.

Note Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the Round Table should you not attend after having made a reservation.

May's Program

Author & Guide: J. D. Petruzzi

Topic: Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg

Biographical Background: One of the country's leading authorities on the Gettysburg campaign and cavalry operations, J.D. is a co-author of two books on these subjects. *Plenty of Blame to Go Around: Jeb Stuart's Controversial Ride to Gettysburg* (co-authored with Eric Wittenberg) is a best seller on this subject. Along with Wittenberg and Michael Nugent, he has co-authored *One Continuous Flight: The Retreat From Gettysburg and the Pursuit of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, July 4 - 14, 1863*. In addition to these books he has written several articles for periodical Civil War magazines such as *America's Civil War*, *Gettysburg Magazine*, and *Blue & Gray*. A member of the Civil War Trust, he is an active supporter of battlefield preservation. J.D. lives in Brockway, PA, with his wife Karen and daughter Ashley and runs his own insurance agency.

Craig's Calendar...



Seminars & Exhibits

<u>Date</u>		<u>Contact</u>
NOW - JUN 8	"First to Serve: Berks County & the Path to the Civil War" Historical Society of Berks County	610-375-4375
APR 25	"The Railroad's Impact During the Civil War" - Carol Adams Heidelberg Heritage Society, Wernersville	610-678-4405
APR 27	"For God's Sake Forward!: Reynolds in 1863" - Michael Riley National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg	717-260-1861
APR 27	"Battlefield BBQ at the Pry House Field Medical Museum" National Museum of Civil War Medicine	301-695-1864
APR 30 - DEC 31	"The War Came by Train" B&O Railroad Museum, Baltimore	410-752-2490
MAY 15	"Deserter Country: Pennsylvania Draft Resistance" - Robert Sandow National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg	717-260-1861
MAY 23	"An Evening with General & Mrs. Robert E. Lee" - Frank Orlando Heidelberg Heritage Society, Wernersville	610-678-4405

Trips & Tours

<u>Date</u>		<u>Contact</u>
MAY 2-3	"Chancellorsville: Lee's Greatest Victory" Civil War Tours	860-485-3603
MAY 11	"Union & Confederate Artillery at Gettysburg" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
MAY 17-19	"Chancellorsville" Chambersburg Civil War Seminars & Tours	717-264-7101
MAY 29 - JUN 1	"Bermuda Hundred Campaign" Blue & Gray Education Society	434-250-9921
JUN 7-9	"7th Shenandoah Valley Conference: Turner Ashby" Civil War Education Association	800-298-1861
JUN 7-9	"Charleston, 1861" Blue & Gray Education Society	434-250-9921

Anyone with any additional sources for "Craig's Calendar" is asked to provide contact information to craig.breneiser@gmail.net. Thanks!