

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

September 2020, the 24th Campaign



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

The American Crisis, Thomas Paine, 1776

Though not of our "preferred" historical period, there can be little question that Paine's words from 245 years ago echo as strongly today as they did then. Regardless of our political stripe, we all recognize the United States today is much different than it was when we last met in March. Indeed, some of the beliefs and opinions that now seem commonplace are irreconcilable and incomprehensible with the understanding we have developed of the American Civil War during the many years we have met together or studied independently with "the masters."

First, we should all heed Paine's warning as we approach yet another "most important election in our history." Regardless of your political stripe, it is our duty as U.S. citizens to pay attention to the issues facing us now and into the future and to be certain to cast our vote accordingly on November 3rd. Whatever happens, we are all stakeholders in the continuing drama that is the "American Experience."

We also share a smaller common universe: the First Defenders Civil War Round Table. Our 24th Campaign is about to start, and this will be markedly different than the 23 that have passed into history. While still suffering the effects of COVID-19, we hope to be able to deliver a "blended" meeting format by holding in-person dinner sessions *AND* broadcasting our programs virtually. Regardless which format suits you, we hope *EVERYONE* will be re-enlisting for a campaign that is shaping up to be one of our best ever!

Please review the newsletter carefully as it contains detailed information about the upcoming campaign plans! And, **STAY SAFE!**

For the Glory,

Craig

Round Table Business

The Board of the First Defenders CWRT met on August 13, 2020, to discuss the upcoming campaign. Items for discussion will be shared with the membership during the September meeting. Please see Linda Zeiber if you would like to have the minutes from the meeting.

With COVID-19 dominating our lives, the most important issue was the procedure for holding meetings going forward with the new campaign. After much discussion, it was decided that we will begin the campaign in September with a hybrid format. A limited number of members will be able to attend the meeting in-person at Giannotti's, our new location. State mandates limit the number of diners allowed inside eating establishments to 25. For those choosing to avoid attending in person, meetings will be presented online. Since all of this is new for the Round Table, adjustments and changes will certainly need to be made as we venture into the COVID/virtual world.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2020-2021. Please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 13, 2020. 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.

Book Raffle News

For those members who choose to attend our meetings virtually and still want to help with our preservation efforts, you can purchase tickets by mailing your donations to Gary Hertzog at the address below. Tickets will be available at 7 for \$5. You may make as many \$5 purchases as you desire. When your donation is received, your name will be written on the correct number of tickets and placed in the basket. Since you are not physically present, you will not know the books being presented or be able to collect your book that evening, but you may make your selection from our bookshelf list which is found on our website. You may make your selection at any time and we will reserve your selection until we meet again "in person." We will not send any books through the postal system or any other delivery service. Some of you have not been interested in the book raffle, but still like to donate to battlefield preservation. You may continue to do this by sending your donation to:

Gary Hertzog
131 Knittle Rd.
Kutztown, PA. 19530

Make checks payable to: "First Defenders Civil War Round Table!"

In October, we will conclude our special raffle of Keith Rocco's print "Assault on Beverly's Ford---the 8th Illinois Cavalry at Brandy's Station, June 9, 1863". Virtual participants may also purchase tickets for this raffle with the same \$5 purchases for 7 tickets. Please clearly state whether your purchase is for the special raffle or the monthly drawing.

Thank everyone for their support of our preservation efforts. We are helping to make a difference! **THANK YOU!!!** Gary

AAP

From the National Park Website:

The 2020 Adopt A Position schedule has been suspended for the rest of the 2020 calendar year. We regret any inconvenience this has caused.

September Program

Grant's Next Chapter: Vicksburg, Chattanooga & the Rise of U.S. Grant



general who would win the war. As Vicksburg closed out one chapter, Chattanooga would begin another that would witness the rise of U.S. Grant.

Ulysses S. Grant had finished one volume of his celebrated memoirs describing the aftermath of Vicksburg during the summer of 1863. He would begin the next volume with the Battles for Chattanooga that fall. This editorial narrative transition would coincide with a similar shift in the trajectory of Grant's career, a turning point from winning general to the



Chris Mackowski, Ph.D., has become one of the most popular and energetic speakers in the modern Civil War community, and is now a favorite of the First Defenders. Kicking off a campaign for the third year in a row, Chris has previously regaled the Round Table with stories about Stonewall Jackson's last days, U.S. Grant's final battle, Richard S. Ewell at Gettysburg and the Battle that Wasn't: the Mine Run Campaign. A professor of journalism at St. Bonaventure University. Editor-in-chief of the popular Emerging Civil War series of current topics, Chris has written numerous books for the ECW library and continues to provide field tours, most especially of the Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Wilderness & Spotsylvania National Military Park where he actually resides on hallowed ground at Stevenson Ridge.



Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2020
Meeting & Program:

If possible please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for September are:

- Grilled chicken with rice & mixed vegetables
- Broiled haddock with baked potato & mixed vegetables
- Eggplant parmesan

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY Sept. 4, 2020, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

****PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. *THE MEAL COST AT GIANNOTTI'S IS \$27.00!* THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

Note: Current state dining regulations limit parties to a maximum of 25. We regret that Giannotti's and the Round Table can only accept the first 25 reservations that are received; therefore, don't delay in making your RSVP!

24th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
8 SEP 2020	Chris Mackowski	<i>Grant's Next Chapter: Vicksburg, Chattanooga & the Rise of U.S. Grant</i>
13 OCT 2020	Ron Kirkwood	<i>Too Much for Human Endurance</i>
10 NOV 2020	Jay Jorgensen	<i>Presidents at Gettysburg</i>
8 DEC 2020	Kevin Rawlings	<i>We Were Marching on Christmas Day</i>
12 JAN 2021	Joe Schaeffer	<i>"Help Yourself and God Will Help You": the Birth, Life & Death of the CSS Alabama</i>
9 FEB 2021	Hallie Vaughn	<i>Dr. Mary Edwards Walker - A Living History Portrayal</i>
9 MAR 2021	Phillip Greenwalt	<i>From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864</i>
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>



Joining a virtual First Defenders Civil War Round Table "GoToMeeting" session is easier than ever. Round Table members will either receive the meeting ID to be entered at GoToMeeting.com, or they will receive an email with a meeting link. Once the ID is entered or the meeting link is clicked, they will instantly join the GoToMeeting session. Attendees will be given the option to attend by computer, tablet or smartphone to hear and see the program, or they can call into the number provided to just listen in.

Once in the meeting, you will use the control panel on the right to participate in the meeting. Attendees will see what may be shared on the screen and hear the conversations. During the brief business meeting, an opportunity will be made available for virtual attendees to make any comments. It is recommended that virtual attendees use a wired headset for optimal audio quality, and it's best to turn off any other wireless devices nearby as they can sometimes interfere with the audio signal.

For additional information, including a brief explanatory video, navigate to:

<https://support.goto.com/meeting/help/how-to-join-a-meeting-g2m030001>

FOLLOWING IS THE VIRTUAL INVITATION FOR THE SEPTEMBER PROGRAM. (This information will also be emailed to all members with an email address on file.)

**First Defenders Civil War Round Table - September Program
Tue, Sep 8, 2020 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM (EDT)**

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/584236357>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3212](tel:+18722403212)

Access Code: **584-236-357**

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/584236357>

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

October 2020



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are but a few weeks away from yet another episode of "the most important election of our lifetime (or history)" when we shall determine the course of our nation for the next four years. While things are certainly chaotic with civil unrest, COVID, an economic downturn and political views that seem unable to be reconciled, one cannot help but wonder whether this election is quite as critical as that of 1860.

Of course, we have the partisans on both sides trumpeting doom and gloom if their champion fails to get elected on November 3rd, but none are suggesting (yet!) that we are looking at a sizeable portion of the country breaking away. Oh, there are those "talking heads" suggesting we are close to "another Civil War," but their claims are more headlines and click-bait than a fire bell in the night warning of imminent dissolution.

There are those who suggest President Trump will not vacate the White House in January should he lose the election just as there were those who anticipated Congress would not accept the results of Electoral College voting in February 1861 by certifying Abraham Lincoln as the 16th President of the United States. Yet even during the "Secession Winter," the tenets of the Constitution stood taut above the screeds of politicians and newspapers. The War came, but the nation persevered.

(It seems wholly incomprehensible our forebears could conduct an election of consequence 160 years ago, yet our modern technological capabilities and partisan divides seem unable to ensure the relatively simple process of casting a ballot cannot be done safely and efficiently without much wailing and gnashing of teeth!)

In the end, a president will take the prescribed oath of office at noon on January 20, 2021. About half of the country will be thrilled and the other half will be someplace in between disappointment and despair. Still, appealing to "the better angels of our nature," most Americans who are neither politicians or their fawning acolytes will go about their daily lives until the "most important election of our lifetime" next rolls around in 2024. What they won't have to do, however, is gird themselves for a fratricidal war with other Americans. For that, the entire nation should fall to its knees in prayers of thanksgiving.

Craig

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

Unless someone steps forward, this Newsletter may be the last to be published by the Round Table. Secretary Linda Zeiber announced her "retirement" last spring, but thusfar there have been no volunteers "flocking to the colors" to fill her place.

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT met on September 9, 2020, for the inaugural meeting of the 24th campaign at Giannotti's. Twenty-four members were present with eleven others joining the meeting virtually when speaker Chris Makowski began his program discussing Grant at Vicksburg and Chattanooga and his ensuing rise in the war.

The meeting was begun at 6:30 p.m. with President Craig Breneiser offering a prayer and leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Lisa Breneiser and Joe Schaeffer stepped in to collect money for meals and membership since Kathy Little and Tim Antosy were joining the group virtually.

Following Chris's presentation, the book raffle was held by Gary Hertzog. Ten books were awarded to the winning ticket holders, and \$100.00 was collected for battlefield preservation.

Those in attendance agreed that the meeting went well despite all of the roadblocks thrown in the way from the Covid 19 pandemic. President Breneiser had the technology working flawlessly, and those who attended in person seemed to put aside concerns about the virus and enjoy the company of old friends who had last seen each other in March prior to the shut-down of such gatherings and life as we knew it.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2020-2021 if you have not done so. Please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 13, 2020. 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.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported as of September 8, 2020, the balance of the treasury is \$3272.38. Our preservation account has \$324.00 not including what was collected at the September meeting. The unencumbered balance as of September's meeting stands at \$3048.38.

Book Raffle News

Our 24th Campaign is off and running. On September 8th, the Round Table met and collected \$100 for preservation through the monthly book raffle and special print raffle. A decent amount, when coupled with matching funds, that will greatly aid in efforts to save our heritage. We will conclude our special print raffle at the October meeting. Another special raffle will probably begin in December or January. THANK YOU for your support of our preservation efforts.

Gary Hertzog

Preservation

We are back! After a crazy ending to last season with having to cancel the last two meetings we are back and off to a great start to a new season. While we all would like to meet in person our first hybrid meeting was a success and Chris Mackowski gave a great presentation. I would also like to thank Chris for the comments he made about Preservation and his continued interest in our Preservation efforts.

I want to start first with summarizing our Preservation efforts from Last Season. Despite having to cancel our last two meetings the 23rd Campaign Season was our best season yet in terms of donating money to Preservation. Last Season we raised a total of \$1378. We donated \$1,072 and with all of the Matching Grants we donated to our Total Contribution for Season 23 was \$132,282. Taking in to account all of our seasons to date the Total Money we have donated is \$35,197 and with all of the Matching Grants our Total Contribution we have made is \$410,093. We are inching ever closer to the half a million mark.

With the start of the new Campaign Season we have \$324 in the Preservation fund we were able to carry over from last season. At the September meeting we raised a total of \$100 which, is a combination of the book raffle and our special print raffle. In addition, we received a gracious donation of a Mort Kunstler Print which we will use for a future special print raffle. Thank you to all of you who bought tickets and made donations. Special thanks to the member who donated the Mort Kunstler print. All of this is greatly appreciated!!

The American Battlefield Trust currently is running 6 Matching Grants. They are:

- Culp's Hill-Gettysburg, PA-\$5.38 to \$1
- West Woods-Antietam Battlefield-\$2 to \$1
- Shiloh, Raymond, and Vicksburg-\$2.70-\$1
- Brice's Crossroads and Chattanooga-\$5.17-\$1
- Perryville & Stones River-\$5.82-\$1
- New Market Heights, VA-\$2-\$1

In addition to the Matching Grants the American Battlefield Trust named David Duncan as the new President to replace James Lighthizer who is retiring. David is the Director of Development for the Trust and in my time as Vice President I have had the pleasure of corresponding with him about Matching Grants and our donations. I believe David will be a good President and the Trust will be in good hands when President Lighthizer retires.

That's all for now. Until next month!

Mark Quattrock

October Program:

PLEASE NOTE: This will be a virtual program; Ron Kirkwood will make this presentation remotely!

Too Much for Human Endurance featuring Ron Kirkwood

Logistically, the George Spangler farm may have been the most significant farm during the Battle of Gettysburg, and Ron Kirkwood argues it was, in fact, the most important. Located a short distance behind Cemetery Ridge along the Granite Schoolhouse Road, the Spangler's thriving farm suddenly transitioned into one of the largest and busiest field hospitals following the fighting in early July 1863. Kirkwood has closely studied this site, and his book reveals factors that have long been overlooked. Newly-found information about Confederate Brig. Gen. Lewis A. Armistead's time at Spangler Farm, the Spanglers themselves, the Artillery Reserve and stories of the suffering and heroism of the surgeons, nurses, wounded and mortally wounded at the two hospitals on the Spanglers' land are woven together to tell the story.



Ron Kirkwood is the author of "Too Much for Human Endurance: The George Spangler Farm Hospitals and the Battle of Gettysburg," which was published by Savas Beatie in hardcover in June 2019 and went into its second printing in October. Now retired after a 40-year career as an editor and writer in newspapers and magazines including USA TODAY, the Baltimore Sun, the Harrisburg (PA) Patriot-News, and the York (PA) Daily Record, Kirkwood has edited national magazines for USA TODAY Sports, was National Football League editor for USA TODAY Sports Weekly and he managed the copy desk in Harrisburg when the newspaper won a Pulitzer Prize in 2012. A Michigan native and graduate of Central Michigan University, Ron has returned as guest speaker to journalism classes as part of the school's Hearst Visiting Professionals series, and has been a Gettysburg Foundation guide at the George Spangler Farm Civil War Field Hospital Site since it opened in 2013.



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13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, October 13, 2020
Meeting:

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for October:

Broiled Salmon with baked potato, vegetable, salad and dessert; Chopped Sirloin with baked potato, vegetable, salad and dessert; or Manicotti with vegetable, salad and dessert. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, Friday October 9, 2020, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

November 2020



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861

As this message is written during the waning days of another presidential campaign, we do not yet know who will be taking the oath of office next January. We can only hope, though, some influential staff member with a knowledge of history will remember Lincoln's words and shepherd them into the inaugural address. Just as Lincoln faced an uncertain future with discordant voices that had already caused fissures in the Union, we find ourselves in similar times where the "better angels of our nature" seem to be noticeably absent.

There is plenty of blame to go around, and neither Republican nor Democratic office-holders can legitimately claim to have travelled the high road. And many of us may have some difficulty looking in the mirror after a Twitter rant or Facebook post...or maybe just a good, old-fashion face-to-face argument...with a once-close friend or relative. "Brother against brother" (updated to include "sister against sister") has a whole new meaning in the 21st Century.

It is long past time to dial back the volume and balance personal passion with respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Just as a "house divided" could not stand in Lincoln's time, it cannot stand today. As students of the Civil War era, we know the terrible cost of an inability to find and travel common ground, and we tremble when recalling George Santayana's prescient warning that "those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

And so we can fervently hope and pray that Americans...*all Americans*...will heed Lincoln's admonition from long ago and our future promises that we may find and be guided by "the better angels of our nature."

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT met on October 13, 2020, at Giannotti's. Twenty-four members were present with ten others joining the meeting virtually when speaker Ron Kirkwood began his program discussing the Spangler Farm and its role during the Battle of Gettysburg.

The meeting was begun at 6:40 p.m. with a prayer offered by Ev Binns followed by President Craig Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

We welcomed Bruce Engle virtually who had recently been hospitalized. Also, our best wishes go out to Roger Cotterill who also had been hospitalized.

It was learned that at least one member had not paid dues but didn't want to be dropped from the rolls. A list of non-membership dues payers will be kept. Hopefully former members will rejoin soon. By the October meeting, Lori Border reported that 45 members had paid dues and 5 paid dues at the meeting bringing the total to 50 members currently.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2020-2021 if you have not done so. Please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment has passed, but all who have not renewed membership are encouraged to rejoin. Funding programs is not possible without membership dues. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the November meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form** and **bring it along** with your payment.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported as of October 13, 2020, the balance in the treasury stood at \$3869.34 with \$404.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of October 13, 2020, is \$3465.34.

Book Raffle News

Thanks to your support, though we may be small in number, we continue to make a difference. With our two raffles in October, we took in \$113.00 for battlefield preservation. We will probably begin another special raffle in January.

The winners of the special raffle were as follows:

3rd Prize---Jan Fisher---Bruce Catton's 3 Volume Set Centennial History of the Civil War

2nd Prize---Tim Antosy---2 Volume Set American Heritage Pictorial History of the Civil War

1st Prize---Roger Cotterill--- Copy of 1886 Gettysburg Battlefield Map

Grand Prize---Ray Kemp---Keith Rocco Print "8th Illinois at Brandy Station print

CONGRATS to all the winners!!!

We also received a new influx of books to add to our inventory from the Dave Sweigert Library. There are many interesting new books and sets to offer our members. Many thanks to Dave's family for the gift.

Website

Webmaster Lisa Breneiser asked everyone to check the “Members Only” section of the website where videos from lectures are available. If you choose to publish your information it will be available only to members of the round table. You are urged to do so.

Preservation

The American Battlefield Trust currently is running 6 Matching Grants. They are:

- Culp’s Hill-Gettysburg, PA-\$5.38 to \$1
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- Shiloh, Raymond, and Vicksburg-\$2.70-\$1
- Brice’s Crossroads and Chattanooga-\$5.17-\$1
- Perryville & Stones River-\$5.82-\$1
- New Market Heights, VA-\$2-\$1

A motion was made and seconded to send \$300.00 to Vicksburg in memory of Ed Bearss. Ed was a special friend of our round table for many years, and, of course, Vicksburg was a large part of Ed’s working life with the National Park Service.

November Program:

Presidents at Gettysburg

featuring Jay Jorgenson



On November 19, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln attended the dedication of the National Soldiers Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Asked to give a “few appropriate remarks,” he provided those present at the ceremony with perhaps the greatest speech ever given – his immortal Gettysburg Address. Since Lincoln’s visit to Gettysburg a number of Presidents have made the journey to that hallowed ground. Some, like Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, came to celebrate important anniversaries of the battle. Others, like Dwight Eisenhower and Jimmy Carter, used the trip as a means of showing foreign dignitaries the battlefield. This month’s presentation will focus on the presidential visits to Gettysburg and the men who made them.



Jay Jorgensen graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University with a BA in history, from Villanova University School of Law with a JD, and from American Military University with a MA in military history - Civil War Studies. He is a Superior Court Judge in New Jersey. Jay is the author of *Gettysburg’s Bloody Wheatfield*, which won the prestigious Bachelder-Coddington Award for best new book on Gettysburg in 2002. He is also the author of *The Wheatfield at Gettysburg: A Walking Tour*, *Edward Porter Alexander: Confederate Cannoneer*, and *Gettysburg’s Leadership Lessons for Lawyers (and Non-Lawyers too!)*. Jay is also the editor and co-author of *Top Ten at Gettysburg*. He is a frequent lecturer on a host of topics on the Civil War, the Revolutionary War, and legal matters. His books will be available for purchase and signing at the meeting.



Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, November 10, 2020 Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for November include: Marinated Chicken Breast over rice; Broiled Crab Imperial; or Lasagna. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY November 6, 2020, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

December 2020



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With more than a month to go until we can finally put 2020 in the rearview mirror, there is little doubt this year has reserved for itself a place in history as one of the more momentous laps around the Sun. We find ourselves in a world dramatically changed since a year ago, and there is much uncertainty in the days ahead. Promises and trepidations of new leadership and a new political direction are in store even as we continue to cope with a pandemic that shows no signs of abating anytime soon.

Our forbears in 1865 may have had many of the same worries and fears that we have today. Assassination and the close of a fratricidal war brought untested leadership and a new reality to the reunited and still-growing nation. An entire race of people were now free from bondage, and neither white nor black were quite sure just how that would possibly work as they peered into a murky, uncertain future.

The road our ancestors travelled has not always been easy. If we listen to some modern-day commentators, those pioneers did almost everything wrong in bringing our country to where it is today, and sound almost like teenagers willing to tell anyone who will listen just how dumb their parents are and how **THEY** will never be so stupid when they become adults! Somehow, though, we have managed to survive.

The American journey has not been easy, and hindsight allows us to see in 20-20 vision the mistakes that have been made. Our continuing adventure promises to be challenging, too, as we seek to build "a more perfect union," and it is pretty certain future generations will look back critically and wonder what we were thinking and how we could have been so foolish.

None of us know how long our time on earth will be, but we do know we have been blessed to exist within the grandeur of the American epic. We must continue to move boldly forward and embrace an uncertain future. We remember that, "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Craig

Round Table Business

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The meeting was begun at 6:30 p.m. with a prayer offered by Ev Binns followed by President Craig Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the campaign of 2020-2021 if you have not done so. Please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment has passed, but all who have not renewed membership are encouraged to rejoin with no penalty. Funding programs is not possible without membership dues. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the December meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form** and **bring it along** with your payment. There are currently 51 paid members.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported as of November 10, 2020, the balance in the treasury stood at \$4003.82 with \$124.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of November 10, 2020, is \$4179.82.

Book Raffle News

Gary Hertzog hosted the usual monthly book raffle. In addition to an interesting selection of titles, our speaker Jan Jorgensen contributed a 4-volume set of comprehensive Civil War books to entice ticket purchasers. Each book raffled each month helps preserve another parcel of sacred ground. Thanks to all who buy tickets and special thanks to those who simply donate money to the cause because they cannot fit one more book into their libraries!

Joe's Jaunts

Joe Schaeffer reported that there are no definite jaunt plans at this time. He has spoken to Charlie Fennel about doing a tour of East Cemetery Hill, but no date will be chosen until there is some improvement of the COVID-19 virus pandemic.

Preservation

Vice President Mark Quattrochio announced the most recent leverages available for battlefield land purchases. Lookout Mountain and Franklin currently have a \$53:\$1 leverage through the American Battlefield Trust. A motion was made and seconded to make a \$200 donation to take advantage of this initiative. Mark will write a detailed report for the January newsletter.

December Program:

The Army of the Potomac - Chapter 1 featuring Denton Schucker

The Army of the Potomac has gone down in Civil War history as the premier Union field force. Despite the ongoing difficulty in finding the right leader, it has generally been acknowledged the army's soldiers always fought well. It's massive power would finally be harnessed and unleashed when Ulysses S. Grant came east in 1864, and the tide of the conflict was changed.

Before Grant, though, the Army had to be created. The entire federal army in the spring of 1861 consisted of only about 16,000 officers and men, and most of those were posted in the vast expanses of the western United States. When shots rang out in the morning darkness in Charleston Harbor on April 12, 1861, no "Army of the Potomac" then existed.



How did this force come into being? How was it organized? Who would lead it? What was the Militia Act of 1795? And, perhaps most importantly, what role did Abraham Lincoln play in creating the force that came to symbolize, more than any other, the military might of the United States. This program will trace the Army of the Potomac's bumpy history from its birth in the spring of 1861 until it landed at Fortress Monroe a year later to start the Peninsular Campaign.

Denton Schucker is a veteran member of the First Defenders, and this will be his second Round Table program. A lifetime Fleetwood resident where he served as the Borough mayor and emergency management coordinator, Denton and his wife, Gigi, have been married for 50 years (!) and are the parents of three children. A U.S. Army veteran with 30 years on active and reserve duty, Denton had a front row seat with the 1st Cavalry Division during the Vietnam Tet Offensive. Now retired from the Evansville cement plant, Denton spends his spare time mowing grass and shoveling snow.

24th Campaign Upcoming Programs

Date	Speaker	Program
12 JAN 2021	Joe Schaeffer	<i>"Help Yourself and God Will Help You": the Birth, Life & Death of the CSS Alabama</i>
9 FEB 2021	Hallie Vaughn	<i>Dr. Mary Edwards Walker - A Living History Portrayal</i>
9 MAR 2021	Phillip Greenwalt	<i>From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864</i>
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>

**Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday,
December 8, 2020 Meeting**

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for December include: Pork Chops; Shrimp Scampi; or Cheese Ravioli. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY December 4, 2020, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

****PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. *THE MEAL COST AT GIANNOTTI'S IS \$27.00!* THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

January 2021



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is a strange, politically-charged time when the veracity of a presidential election is seriously questioned. Four states seem to have uncertain vote tallies, and both Democrats and Republicans are claiming victory and shrilly maligning each other. Some ballots appear to be of dubious validity, and there are innumerable reports of voter intimidation and irregularities. Party surrogates are pursuing legal actions to enforce "the will of the people," and it seems the case will yet wind up in the Supreme Court. The turmoil leads to the inevitable question: who will be inaugurated as the next President of the United States?

The answer is "Rutherford B. Hayes," and he will become the 19th president on March 4th 1877. While undeniably losing the popular vote by three-percent, Hayes would win the Electoral College by a single vote. Outraged losing Democrats would label him "His Fraudulency" or "RutherFRAUD B. Hayes." Even during the Gilded Age, politics were hardly civil.

Republicans would claim a fair 1876 canvass would have clearly given Hayes the presidency. But, determined, violent efforts by un-reconstructed Southerners suppressed Black votes, and South Carolina would even claim that all 101% of its eligible voters had cast ballots! Democrat Samuel J. Tilden undeniably captured 184 Electoral College votes to only 165 for Hayes; however, the fate of the remaining 20 in four states would hang in the balance for nearly three months after Election Day.

A 15-man Electoral Commission is appointed to adjudicate the dispute. Five congressmen from the Democratic House and five senators from the Republican-controlled upper chamber would join with five Supreme Court justices to review the disparate claims from each state. Ultimately voting along party lines, they would award the Electoral College delegates of Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina and Oregon (!) to Hayes. (At the same time, informal closed-door meetings resulted in grudging Democratic concurrence to accept Hayes in return for Republican agreement to remove the remaining federal troops from southern states to effectively end Reconstruction. Other political promises were included in the deal, but many would never materialize.)

Notwithstanding those in our own times, the Election of 1876 still ranks as the closest and most Constitutionally-challenging presidential contest in United States history. Yet somehow, the ship-of-state continues to float even when sailing turbulent seas. Even the obviously dejected and disappointed Samuel Tilden could find some serenity in his loss when he commented, "I can retire from public life with the consciousness that I shall receive from posterity the credit of having been elected to the highest position in the gift of the people without any of the cares and responsibilities of the office." Sadly though, much of a history-starved posterity has never heard of Samuel Tilden or has any notion of the starring role he played in the contentious Election of 1876.

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT met on December 8, 2020, at Giannotti's. Twenty-four members were present with ten others joining the meeting virtually when speaker Denton Schucker began his program discussing "The Army of the Potomac, Chapter 1."

The meeting was begun at 6:35 p.m. with a prayer, originally prayed by a Union soldier during the war, offered by Ev Binns followed by President Craig Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

The business portion of the meeting began at 7:30 p.m. by welcoming former member Mike Straus as a guest. A brief report was given concerning the health of member Roger Cotterill who has experienced complications following implantation of a pacemaker and is currently seeking an in-house physical therapy facility. We all look forward to his speedy recovery and return to the Round Table.

President Breneiser opened up a discussion about the future of meetings considering the uptick in COVID-19 infections in our area. It was suggested that the dining room tables at Giannotti's need to be opened up further for safer social distancing. Several members also spoke out in favor of meeting in person as long as Giannotti's is open for business.

Membership

If you have not renewed your membership for the 2020-2021 campaign, please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment has passed, but all who have not renewed membership are encouraged to rejoin with no penalty. Funding programs is not possible without membership dues. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the January meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form** and **bring it along** with your payment. There are currently 55 paid members.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported as of December 8, 2020, the balance in the treasury stood at \$3,763.35 with \$137.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of December 8, 2020, is \$3626.35.

Preservation

The December meeting has come and gone and we are continuing to raise money for Preservation. At the meeting we were able to raise \$101 from our book raffle and from those who made donations. Thanks again to all of you who bought tickets and contributed. The \$101 is in addition to the \$113 we raised in October and \$100 that we were able to raise in November.

As of now we have made two donations to the American Battlefield Trust for Preservation. The first one is a \$300 donation made in the name of Ed Bearss towards a \$2.70 Matching Grant for Shiloh, TN, Raymond, MS, and Vicksburg, MS. Our total contribution for this donation was \$810. The second donation we made was in the amount of \$200 to go towards a \$53-\$1 Matching Grant for Lookout Mountain at the Chattanooga Battlefield and Franklin, TN. The total contribution for this donation is \$10,600.

In Season 24 we have now raised to date \$504. We have donated, not including matching grants, a total of \$500; and our total contribution with matching grants is \$11,410. This puts the total amount we donated for all of our seasons to present at \$35,697 and our total contribution with matching grant for all of our Seasons at \$421,503.

You can see the money we are raising is making a difference not just in the amount of our total contributions but for the number of battlefields that we are helping to preserve. Your continued support is greatly appreciated!!

Happy Holidays everyone! Stay safe and well!!

Mark

Book Raffle News

Happy New Year everyone!!!

Thank you to everybody for continuing to support the book raffle and our preservation efforts. In December, we took in \$101 for battlefield preservation. We do make a difference. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 situation, I will absent myself for a few meetings until the number of cases returns to a lower level. Hopefully, this will be for a short duration. Mark Quattrock will run the raffle until I return. Thank you, Mark! I will be attending the meetings by our virtual presentation. Once again, THANK YOU for your support.

Gary

Website

Webmaster Lisa Breneiser explained directions for logging in to the "Members Only" section of our website, www.firstdefenderscwrt.us. Lisa is in the process completing work on this section and uploading presentations from the current campaign. Members will be able to access these to view at leisure, but that access will require the use of a password.

January Program:

"Help Yourself and God Will Help You"- the Birth, Life & Death of the C.S.S. Alabama presented by Joe Schaeffer

"Help Yourself and God Will Help You" was stamped in French in bronze letters on the ship's wheel of the Confederate raider, CSS Alabama. Most of us know the basic story of this infamous vessel. Joe will explore some of the intrigue and characters involved in the birth of the ship, its campaign of destruction, and the ultimate duel-to-the-death with the USS Kearsarge. Stay tuned to learn of the lives of the main characters after the war and an interesting connection to another famous American.



Joe Schaeffer grew up in Douglassville. Graduating from Daniel Boone High School, received a degree in Secondary Education, Social Studies, in 1975 from Bloomsburg University. Joe has worked his entire adult life in the Land Title industry, eventually owning and managing Heartland Settlement Company from 1996 until 2015. Since then he has partially retired, but still works as a consultant in the industry. History, especially American history, is never far from his mind. Joe is a charter member and former president of the First Defenders, and is making his fourth presentation.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM NOTE!

As the newsletter has been prepared, Pennsylvania COVID restrictions for restaurants are scheduled to expire on January 4th, 2021. Giannotti's plans to re-open at that time, and is prepared for our January program (meal and reservation information is included in this newsletter). *In the event state regulations change and we cannot meet as usual, Joe Schaeffer's presentation will be re-scheduled. There will, however, be a virtual program on Fort Jefferson presented by Round Table President Craig Breneiser.*

24th Campaign Upcoming Programs

Date	Speaker	Program
9 FEB 2021	Hallie Vaughn	<i>Dr. Mary Edwards Walker - A Living History Portrayal</i>
9 MAR 2021	Phillip Greenwalt	<i>From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864</i>
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, January 12, 2021 Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for January include: Veal Marsala; Breaded Fantail Shrimp; or Pasta with Grilled Vegetables. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included.

The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY January 8, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

February 2021



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Insurrection. Sedition. Treason. Disconcerting words. Frightening words. Serious words. Like "faith," "hope" and "love," words that should not be bandied about carelessly, without due consideration of how they are to be construed or in ignorance of knowing that words do matter.

Was Jefferson Davis guilty of insurrection? Did Robert Barnwell Rhett promotion sedition in the pages of the *Charleston Mercury*? When Robert E. Lee resigned his army commission to go "home" to Virginia, did he commit treason? The simple answer to all three questions is "no" since none of these men were even so much as charged with a crime let alone found guilty of one.

We know from our study of history that 2021 was not the first time in our nation's history that enflamed passions have resulted in disconcerting, frightening and serious words, and we know those raw emotions 150 years ago would lead to the death of more than three-quarters of a million people and property damages untold.

For all of our political posturing, the United States has a remarkable forbearance when it comes to treason. Of the thirty individuals who have been charged with that crime since the nation's founding, only one-third ever saw the inside of a cell. Just four were executed (all during the Civil War era), and two of them met their fates for treason *against a state!* (By contrast, the British are not nearly so squeamish as the Empire has routinely executed traitors, suggesting Benjamin Franklin may not have been far off the mark in July 1776 when he opined, "We must all hang together, Mr. Hancock, or we most assuredly will all hang separately.")

Davis, Rhett and Lee all believed in and defended their actions. While there remains a spirited debate over the propriety of their acts, they, along with many others, have passed into history without conviction and remain admired (and despised) fifteen decades later for having taken a stand on what they believed was right and how they viewed their duty. It remains for the historian to debate the past when everyone else has moved on. As it was then, so it shall be today.

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT met on January 12, 2021, at Giannotti's Country Manor. Twenty members were present with nine other members and one guest joining the meeting virtually when past president Joe Schaeffer began his program entitled "Help Yourself and God Will Help You"—the Birth, Life & Death of the C.S.S. Alabama.

The meeting was begun at 6:28 p.m. with a prayer, originally prayed by a Confederate soldier during the war, offered by Ev Binns followed by President Craig Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Dinner was then served.

The business portion of the meeting began at 7:30 p.m. Craig announced that Don Stripling has given up his role in the Adopt-A-Position initiative at Gettysburg National Military Park. Barbara Shafer, who has been instrumental in the program, will now be solely responsible for AAP. (See additional information following below.)

President Breneiser advised all in attendance to be prepared for the possibility of another restaurant shutdown for our February meeting. Nothing official is known at this point, but we are all aware of the tenuous nature of the Covid world that we are living in.

Membership

If you have not renewed your membership for the 2020-2021 campaign, please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment has passed, but all who have not renewed membership are encouraged to rejoin with no penalty. Funding programs is not possible without membership dues. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the February meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form** and **bring it along** with your payment. There are currently 55 paid members reported by Lori Border, membership chair.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy presented his report for the December 2020 meeting. Our balance as of January 12, 2021, stood at \$3874.83 with \$238.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of January 12, 2021, is \$3536.83. There is a total of 55 paid members.

Preservation

While Vice President Mark Quattrock does not have a formal preservation report for this newsletter, he did explain to us that The Spangler Fam and the Gettysburg Foundation will be working together from now on. Both organizations are formalizing an agreement.

Book Raffle News

Eight books were raffled off at the January meeting to the delight of the ticket purchasers. Plans are still being worked on for an efficient way to enable those attending meetings virtually to participate. Our round table has always been proud of the generous donations to battlefield preservation. Thank you to everybody for continuing to support the book raffle and our preservation efforts.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 situation, I will absent myself for a few meetings until the number of cases return to a lower level. Hopefully, this will be for a short duration. Mark Quattrock will run the raffle until I return. Thank you, Mark! I will be attending the meetings by our virtual presentation. Once again, THANK YOU for your support. Gary

Website

Webmaster Lisa Breneiser explained directions for logging in to the “Members Only” section of our website, firstdefenderscwrt.us. Lisa is in the process of uploading presentations from the current campaign. Members will be able to access these to view at leisure, but that access will require the use of a password.

AAP Update

Barbara Shafer received the following information from Gettysburg National Military Park regarding Adopt-A-Position:

Due to the continuing COVID restrictions and cautions, the 2021 Adopt-A-Position (AAP) has been cancelled. The park had to make a decision on the year as a whole because there are staff brought in specifically to handle this program, which without this program would not otherwise be needed. Thank you for your continued interest and dedication to the AAP program, we will communicate any additional updates or volunteering opportunities as they arise.

Those of us who have participated in the initiative hope that next year will bring a return of the program. It is a worthy “job” to look after several monuments twice a year. It was always a time of fellowship spending the day together in Gettysburg.

Website Post of Interest

If you haven’t spent time recently on our website, take a minute and check out the recent post of January 14, 2021. Our president, Craig Breneiser, was interviewed by WFMZ Channel 69 during which he explained the “First Defenders” called to Washington many years before the National Guard of today was called to safeguard the recent inauguration. It is a great newsclip. Well done President B.!

February Program:

Doctor Mary Edwards Walker- featuring Hallie Vaughan

Mary Edwards Walker stands out as one of the more interesting and unusual personalities of the Civil War era. Born in 1832, she would earn a medical degree from Syracuse Medical College in 1855 and pursue a profession that was virtually unheard for a “proper” Victorian Era lady. Throughout her 87 years, she would be an abolitionist, prohibitionist, a prisoner of war and a Civil War surgeon. Along the way, she would become the only woman to ever receive the Medal of Honor.



Doctor Walker would volunteer her services to the Union Army at the outbreak of the War, breaking what today we would call a “glass ceiling.” She was captured by the Confederates when she crossed enemy lines to treat wounded civilians, and was arrested as a spy. Doctor Walker would remain a “guest” of the Richmond government until finally being exchanged. After Appomattox, she would receive the Medal of Honor, but would spend much of her life fighting to keep it.

Hallie Vaughan has been a Berks Countian since age 12. Graduating from Wilson High School, Slippery Rock University and Gratz College, she taught in the Muhlenberg School District for 35 years during which time she developed an interest in women's history. Hallie has continued doing research on the subject, and has lectured at Alvernia University Seniors College while also presenting to a wide assortment of community and school groups as well as “anyone who wants to listen!” A docent at the Berks History Center, Hallie also volunteers at the Berks County Veterans Affairs Office. She is married and has two sons and four grandchildren.



Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, February 9, 2021 Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for February include: Chicken Piccata; Broiled Crab Cake; or Risotto. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY February 5, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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24th Campaign Upcoming Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
9 MAR 2021	Phillip Greenwalt	<i>From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864</i>
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

March 2021



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the Christian faith, we ask God, "...to forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." This teaches we need to forgive the sins of others in order for our own sins to be forgiven.

Following the hell that was the American Civil War, it would seem almost impossible for the Northern victors to forgive the defeated South for the pain and suffering endured over four years of conflict. Yet forgive they did, albeit sometimes imperfectly, as the warring foes worked together to build a new nation "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

The post-war years were hardly idyllic, and simmering hatreds and animosity continued then and, some would argue, have to this day. Yet it is instructive to note many leading Confederates would become American patriots once again. John Brown Gordon, third in command of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox, would serve in the U.S. Senate as would cavalry commander Wade Hampton. The fourth-highest ranking southern general, Joseph E. Johnston, would become a United States congressman as would former Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens. Cavalry officers Fitzhugh Lee and Joseph Wheeler would return to the U.S. military as generals before the end of the 19th Century. These examples are not mere outliers; thousands of former rebels would once again become patriots for the United States.

Men who fought in southern armies would go on to government work, return to the army and navy and become leaders in science, education, commerce and industry as the nation was re-established and poised to become a world power. None of which could have happened had there not been a national consensus to "forgive."

Just over two months ago, President Joseph Biden assumed the office of President of the United States with a call for unity. Thusfar, this seems more of a "voice calling from the wilderness" that has largely gone unheard. Unity today necessarily requires learning the forgiveness expressed by our forebears who brought this nation back from a far darker place than most of us have seen in our lifetimes. Really, forgiving "those who trespass against us" isn't that hard if we want. And we can always look heavenward for help.

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT meeting and program scheduled for February 9th was cancelled due to inclement weather. Our program on Dr. Mary Walker featuring Hallie Vaughan will be re-scheduled for the upcoming Silver Anniversary Campaign that will kick off in September.

In place of our regularly-scheduled event, President Breneiser presented a virtual tour of Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas which is somewhat off the beaten track and not visited by many Civil War enthusiasts. A dozen members were in attendance.

March Program:

From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864

featuring Phil Greenwalt

The pivotal Red River Campaign in the Trans-Mississippi theater was fought by Union General Nathaniel Banks' army with naval support from Admiral David Porter's flotilla against Confederate General Richard Taylor's Army of Western Louisiana. Largely eclipsed by events east of the Mississippi River, the fighting along the Red River and bayous of western Louisiana had an adverse impact on Union grand strategy in 1864. What transpired resulted in a tactical Confederate victory that was nullified due to command issues and competing visions within the high command. The ramifications of only limited success would reverberate across the Confederacy to as far as the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in 1864.



Phillip S. Greenwalt is co-founder of Emerging Revolutionary War and the Emerging Revolutionary War Series as well as a full-time contributor to Emerging Civil War. He is the co-author of three volumes of the Emerging Civil War Series and two volumes of the inaugural volumes of the Emerging Revolutionary War Series.



Phill has a graduate degree in American History from George Mason University and a bachelor's in history from Wheeling Jesuit University. He is currently a Supervisory Park Ranger for Everglades National Park. He is a native of Baltimore, Maryland.

Note: Phill will be presenting this program virtually!

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, March 9th Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for March include: Broiled Orange Roughy; Chicken Parmesan; or Cheese Tortellini. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY March 5, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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24th Campaign Upcoming Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>

First Defenders CWRT March Program Tue, Mar 9, 2021 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM (EST)

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/517052269>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(669\) 224-3412](tel:+16692243412)

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

April 2021



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As a matter of course, the past months have usually provided a modern inspiration for a relationship to the Civil War era. While it would be naive to suggest McClellan-esque that "all is quiet along the Potomac," the coming seasonal rebirth suggests a more introspective, hopeful message to be in order.

April is upon us, and we know this month saw both the beginning of our national crisis at Fort Sumter and its symbolic end at Appomattox Courthouse four years later. (As we will learn during our upcoming program, there were still Confederate armies in the field, and the largest would not surrender for another two weeks, long after Lincoln's assassination.)

We know the cessation of hostilities did not end the animosities and issues that caused the conflict originally, and we also realize that we have become heirs to some of that angst. Much of the discord of today can be traced back to the 19th century (and earlier), and those who love the study of history are often saddened and conflicted by the way we see it interpreted (or misinterpreted!) today.

In keeping with Easter and the season of earthly renewal, a passage attributed to French-born Quaker missionary Stephen Grellet seems timely. Although he had died before armed conflict gripped the nation, perhaps things would have been different had more people taken heed of his advice...

"I expect to pass through this world but once.

*Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show
to any fellow creature, let me do it now.*

Let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again."

Grellet's counsel could have saved an enormous amount of blood and treasure 160 years ago. Perhaps taking more heed now will allow us to avoid repeating the tragedy.

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table met on March 9, 2021, at Giannotti's Country Manor. Twenty-one members were present when President Craig Breneiser called the meeting to order at 6:19 p.m. (five additional members joined the program virtually). A prayer was offered by Ev Binns followed by President Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Dinner was then served.

When the business portion of the meeting began at 7:30 p.m., Craig announced that former member Bob Troxell had passed away in February. He additionally informed the membership that Gary Hertzog's mother had passed away recently. Vice President Mark Quattroco stepped in for Gary selling raffle tickets and conducting the book raffle during which eight books were raffled off.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report Tim Antosy presented his report for the March 2021 meeting. Our balance as of March 15, 2021, stood at \$4023.31 with \$386.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of March 15, 2021, is \$3637.31. There is a total of 56 paid members.

Joe's Jaunts

Joe Schaeffer gave an update on the fall 2020 jaunt that was postponed because of the pandemic. Charlie Fennell is still scheduled to lead a tour of East Cemetery Hill when it becomes feasible for a group to travel to Gettysburg, hopefully this coming fall. Stay tuned for a date to be named.

Joe also reported that five speakers have been set for the next campaign to begin in September.

April Program:

The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro featuring Robert Dunkerly



While Appomattox is seen as the ending of the Civil War, in fact that was just one of several surrenders. At Greensboro, NC, two weeks after Appomattox, another surrender took place. The North Carolina surrender had more twists and turns than that in Virginia, and was much more violent and disorganized. We will discuss the details of the surrender, how it unfolded, and how it fits into the larger ending of the war.

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



Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, April 13, 2021 Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for April include: Steamed Shrimp; ½ Black Diamond Steak; or Linguini with mushroom sauce. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY April 9, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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

24th Campaign Upcoming Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>Searching for George Gordon Meade</i>

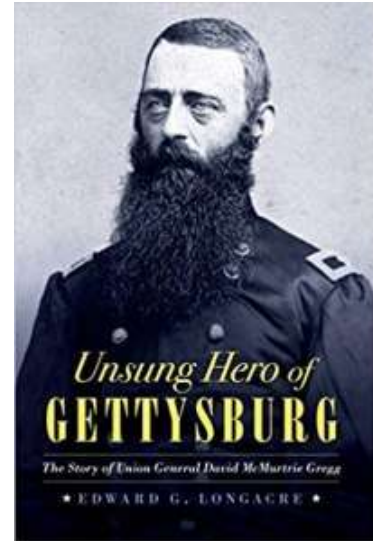
Upcoming Gregg Biography has a First Defenders Connection

Prolific Civil War author Edward Longacre's soon-to-be-released biography, *Unsung Hero of Gettysburg: the Story of Union General David McMurtie Gregg*, has some local Round Table "flavor" added as long-time Gregg student and First Defender Dave Fox has provided the author with the benefit of his wisdom on the subject.

Thanks to Dave, we already know that Gregg proved to be one of the most successful Civil War cavalry commanders. He eschewed the flash and glory-hunting of the Stuart and Custer stripe, focusing on quiet competence without seeking personal recognition.

Gregg's service record in the pre-war army and during the first two years of the Civil War show a solid officer and leader. The highlight of his service most likely occurred during the afternoon of July 3, 1863, in the fields a few miles east of Gettysburg as his command, aided by Custer's Michigan troopers, repulsed J.E.B Stuart's cavalry that was looking to cut its way into the rear of the Union position on Cemetery Hill and Ridge. While Longstreet's Assault had already been defeated, there is no telling what might have happened if Gregg had not thwarted Stuart's legions.

The Berks History Center is hoping to generate enough orders to have a supply of Longacre's book made available locally following its May 1st release date. The price is \$34.95 before any applicable tax or shipping/handling. If interested, reach out to First Defender Vicky Heffner (education@berkshistory.org) to order your copy today!



The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

May 2021



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Fondly do we hope ~ fervently do we pray ~ that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away."

As Abraham Lincoln spoke these words on March 4th, 1865, it was clear the end of the Civil War was in sight. Five weeks later the Army of Northern Virginia would surrender at Appomattox, and other Confederate armies would begin to lay down their arms in the ensuing weeks. The scourge of war would, indeed, pass away.

Lincoln's words seem apropos as the First Defenders reach the end of its 24th Campaign hoping and praying the scourge of COVID may speedily pass away. While we have managed to carry on since last September, there have been "vacant chairs" around our tables as many of us have been forced into unhappy isolation to safeguard the health of our loved ones and ourselves. While there is reason for optimism that some degree of normalcy may soon return, the pandemic is still among us and has not yet passed away.

We have done our best to carry on though our numbers are reduced. It seems only a short time ago that "our regiments were full" and the room was packed for programs featuring in-person historians. Now we find ourselves reduced to a couple of dozen socially-distanced attendees with another 8-10 folks tuning in to our programs that have mostly been virtual.

While we may be reduced in strength, our morale remains high. Our silver anniversary campaign is less than five months away, and we already have most of our programs locked. With some luck, modern medicine and an affirmative answer to our prayers, we may yet again have the opportunity to meet together in person, welcome our friends back and recruit new members.

There is so much more for us to learn and experience! And, we can look forward to the 25th anniversary of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table, as timely and significant today as it was on April 15th, 1997.

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table met on April 13, 2021, at Giannotti's Country Manor. Twenty-two members were present when President Craig Breneiser called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m. A prayer was offered by Ev Binns followed by President Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Dinner was then served.

At 7:30 p.m., the evening's presenter, Bob Dunkerly began his program, the Confederate Surrender at Greensboro, virtually. Five additional members joined the program online. A brief business meeting followed the program during which Craig reminded everyone that May's meeting will see the annual election of officers. All who are currently serving are holdovers from the year before the pandemic arrived. All offices are available for anyone interested in serving our Round Table.

Dave Fox spoke about a new book written by Ed Longacre, *Unsung Hero of Gettysburg*, which was set for publication on May 1st. Dave helped with the research on General Gregg as did the Berks History Center. If you are interested in purchasing a book, email Craig Breneiser. Longacre has written much about Civil War cavalry so this is bound not to disappoint.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report Tim Antosy reported a balance in the treasury of \$3,908.79 as of April 13, 2021. The Preservation Fund stands at \$386.00 plus \$150.00 for a special preservation project giving us an unencumbered total of \$3,372.79 in our treasury.

Our membership stands at 56.

Preservation

Despite COVID we are continuing our preservation efforts. Thanks to all of you who purchased tickets for the book raffle or donated money. We raised \$118 during our April Meeting. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Also, during our April meeting those members who were present approved a \$200 donation to the American Battlefield Trust to be put toward an \$8.90 to \$1 Matching Grant for Mansfield, the Wilderness, and First Deep Bottom Battlefields. This puts our total contribution at \$1780 for these 3 Battlefields. Great job everyone!!

It is hard to believe that we are coming up to our last meeting for the season in May. Let's make the May meeting a really good one and end the season on a high note.

Mark Quattrock

Book Raffle News

It was certainly exciting to return to "in person" CWRT meetings again. Hopefully, we are turning a corner on the pandemic and, in the fall, we may have a more normal setting for our meetings. But despite the challenge of the past campaign, our preservation efforts have continued, and we have soldiered on in our fund-raising efforts. During our April meeting we took in \$118 for battlefield preservation and with matching funds that donation will go further.

Looking ahead to the 25th Campaign, we will probably return to some additional raffles as we have a number of prints, book collections and miscellaneous items to auction off. Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the round table and its preservation efforts. See you in May.

Gary

Joe's Jaunts

Joe Schaeffer had no additional information since last month's meeting about the fall "jaunt", but announced that next campaign's speakers have been lined up with the exception of one more slot to fill. It sounds like good things to come once again.

Member Information

Long-time Member Roger Cotterill has been having ongoing health issues for a while. Dave Fox recently spoke with Roger and shared an update during the April meeting. Roger would welcome hearing from members. The following is his contact information:

Roger Cotterill
The Providence Place, Apt. 326
149 South Hunter Highway
Drums, PA 18222
570-708-2689 (No calls Monday, Wednesday, or Friday)

May Program:

Searching for George Gordon Meade: the Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg

featuring Tom Huntington

Who was George Gordon Meade, and why has he been pushed into the shadows rather than being feted as one of the most important generals of the Civil War? A solid soldier who had command of the Army of the Potomac thrust upon him only three days before the climactic Battle of Gettysburg, Meade's reputation was quickly diminished by the press, Radical politicians, the irascible Dan Sickles and the looming shadow of Ulysses S. Grant. Meade once grumbled, "I suppose after awhile it will be discovered I was not at Gettysburg at all."

The search for George Meade reveals an interesting life, a solid antebellum military career and an impressive Civil War experience that is often overlooked. The victor of Gettysburg would be the last commander the Army of the Potomac ever had, but many do not realize that because Meade was eclipsed by Grant. His is an interesting story that is worth

discovering.

Tom Huntington developed a love for writing that merged stories from the past with journeys of discovery in the present. That was an approach he took with his first two books, Ben Franklin's Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Civil War Trails, and one he continues with Searching for George Gordon Meade: The Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg.

Huntington lives in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Beth Ann, and his children, Katie and Sam, and is currently an editor for Stackpole Magazines.



Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, May 11, 2021 Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for May include: Breaded Haddock; Veal Piccata; or Spaghetti with tomato sauce. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY May 7, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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

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