

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

Summer 2024



[www.firstdefenderscwrts.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrts.us)

## First Defenders on Summer Break

The First Defenders ended meetings for the 27th campaign at Gianotti's Country Manor on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. President Craig Breneiser called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. with 38 members and guests present. Ev Binns offered a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Craig began by reminding everyone that Chris Mackowski will kick off the next campaign in September with "A Tempest of Iron and Lead: Spotsylvania Courthouse, May 1864.

We were joined by a guest of Bob Sharets, Joan Gruber.

Officers were called on for comments:

**Vice President Joe Schaeffer** announced that Brad Gottfried, who had been scheduled to speak at the April meeting, continued to have health problems. Brad was supposed to lead the walking Gettysburg tour on May 19, 2024, but was unable to do so. As events/programs coordinator, he stated that programs for next campaign are by and large booked.

**Preservation Leader Mark Quattro** reported that a \$400 donation had been made to the Franklin Battlefield. He informed us that we had raised \$730 for preservation for this campaign and that amount had been leveraged to a total of \$41,210 through matching grants.

Mark announced that his Blue and Gray Hospital group of reenactors will present a program in the Ford Room in the Visitors' Center at Gettysburg on May 3, 2025.

**Treasurer Lori Border** reported that our balance as of May 14, 2024, stood at \$1,142.54 as well as \$268.00 ear-marked for preservation.

**Ev Binns, Membership**, announced that membership currently stands at 53.

**Election of Officers:** President Breneiser opened the meeting to nominations for president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Joe Schaeffer was nominated to take over the president's position. Clark Zimmerman was nominated to take over the vice president's office. Lisa Breneiser was nominated to assume the position of secretary/newsletter. All nominations were seconded and unanimously accepted by voice vote.

Lori Border was reelected as treasurer with no opposition. Kathy Little agreed to continue as meal captain. Gary Hertzog will continue his work as book raffle guru which generates countless dollars for land preservation throughout the year. Gary's diligence and your support continues to generate significant amounts donated for battlefield preservation.

Many thanks to those retiring from their leadership roles; many thanks to those willing to begin serving our round table. Of course, we thank Joe Schaeffer for reprising his presidency.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Book Raffle**

Gary Hertzog held the final book raffle of the campaign by offering 8 books. At the conclusion of the regular drawing, he drew tickets for the Special Raffle that had been on-going for several months. The R. E. Lee set of books, a pen set, and a shadowbox of Cyclorama memorabilia were all won by Linda Zeiber. A framed reproduction map of the Battle of Gettysburg was won by Ev Binns.

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#### **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday Sept 10, 2024 Meeting & Program:**

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for September are:

Salad

Broiled Haddock

Chicken Parmesan

Cheese Ravioli

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, Sept. 6, 2024, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

#### **ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!!**

Giannotti's has raised the prices for the meals at our meetings. The price will now be \$32.00.

**\*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. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings \* New Section\***

This section will list events, tours and other happenings that you may have an interest. Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

Be sure to keep in mind the timing of the newsletter distribution in relation to the upcoming event, so that we are not listing an event which members may be interested in attending, but with very little time to make plans.

*Here are a few happenings to start the 28<sup>th</sup> Campaign!*

### **CIVIL WAR FRIDAYS with the CIVIL WAR CONGRESS -ONLINE EVENTS**

**REGISTER HERE:** <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/events.html>

#### ***AUGUST***

TIMOTHY B. SMITH

[THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN](#)

*FRIDAY August 9th @ 7 PM EASTERN*

DR. CURT FIELDS – FRIDAYS WITH GRANT

U. S. GRANT & ANDREW JOHNSON, PART 2

*FRIDAY August 16th @ 7 PM EASTERN*

SEAN MICHAEL CHICK

[DREAMS OF VICTORY: GENERAL PGT BEAUREGARD IN THE CIVIL WAR](#)

*FRIDAY August 23rd @ 7 PM EASTERN*

RYAN QUINT

[DRANESVILLE: A NORTHERN VIRGINIA TOWN IN THE CROSSFIRE OF A FORGOTTEN BATTLE, DECEMBER 20, 1861](#)

*FRIDAY August 30th @ 7 PM EASTERN*

*AUGUST 3, 2024 - 1:00 - 2:00PM*

**THE NATIONAL CIVIL WAR MUSEUM- HARRISBURG PA**

The National Civil War Museum will feature Dr. Scott Hippensteel who discusses his new book, Sand, Science and the Civil War - Sedimentary Geology and Combat. You won't want to miss this unique presentation.

*AUGUST 11, 2024 2:00 PM*

**TUDOR HALL- BEL AIR MD**

The Historic Home of the Maryland Booths  
17 Tudor Lane, Bel Air, MD 21025  
For mor information 443-619-0008  
Cost: \$ 5 for those 13 years and older

Asia, sister of John Wilkes Booth shares her memories of John Wilkes and the Booth Family, will be presented by Lisa Samia.

*AUGUST 24, 2024*

**SEMINARY RIDGE MUSEUM AND EDUCATION CENTER- GETTYSBURG PA**

**Summer Symposium**

A Century of Memory: Gettysburg's Blue-Gray Reunions and Commemorations  
<https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events/summer-symposium-centuryofmemory>

*SEPTEMBER 26-29, 2024*

**CHAMBERSBURG CIVLE WAR SEMIARS AND TOURS -CHAMBERSBURG PA**

Gettysburg and Beyond  
[www.civilwarsemiars.org](http://www.civilwarsemiars.org)

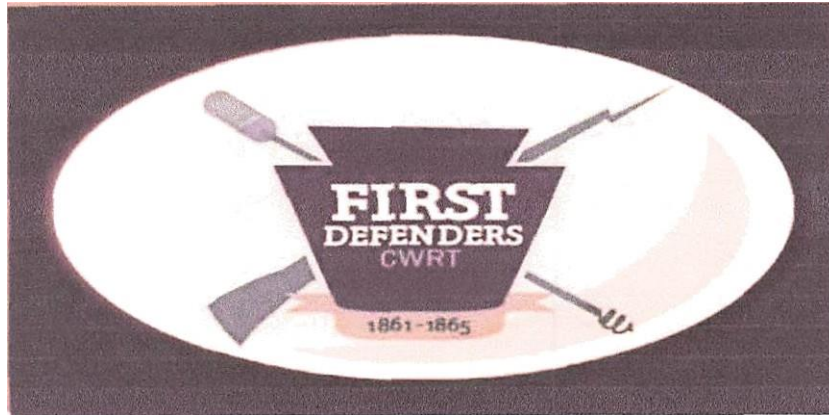
*SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2024*

**THE SEVEN DAYS CAMPAIGN – RICHMOND VA**

Holiday Inn Express, Richmond Airport  
491 International Center Dr.  
Richmond, VA

Tour cost: \$ 85.00 per person  
Room reservations 804-222-1499

To sign up: contact Dan Welch at 330-881-3516 or [dwelch1863@gmail.com](mailto:dwelch1863@gmail.com)



**FIRST DEFENDERS CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE MEMBERSHIP  
FORM 2024-2025**

***Our 28<sup>th</sup> Campaign!***

(Please Print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

The Annual Membership Fee is \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 25.00

Additional Contribution \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Due October 8, 2024**

**Please make the check payable to The First Defenders CWRT and mail it with the completed membership form to:**

**Lori Border  
30 East 40th Street  
Reading, PA 19606**

***You may pay the membership fee in person at the September 10th or October 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting.***

**(Additional contributions are not deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes but provide additional revenue to support First Defender Civil War Roundtable Programming)**

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**September 2024, the 28th Campaign**



**[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**May 8, 1864 along the Brock Road, south of Todd's Tavern, Wilderness, Virginia...**

**Sergeant Thomas Meyer is doing his best to hide his weariness from the men of Company A, 148th Pennsylvania Volunteers. The soldiers of the 148th have gone three days without rest, constantly moving and yet not finding the fight. The early morning glow in the eastern sky is to their left, a sign they are marching south. The Army of the Potomac is not withdrawing to its base; it is on the road to another meeting with the Army of Northern Virginia. A renewed sense of hope rises in their chests which the lingering stench of battle and the smoldering forest cannot overcome. Maybe, just maybe, somewhere down this road, they will defeat the Rebels and put an end to this nightmare of war. They want to go home.**

**Young men when they left the farms, lumber mills and rail yards of Centre County, they are now hardened veterans. Memories of Buffalo Run, Potters Mill and Bellefonte remain, but there is fighting ahead. They just do not know where or when.**

**Barely a year ago only a few miles to the east they stubbornly held the crossroad at the Chancellor House, buying time for the army to safely withdraw. Losses were heavy, including Colonel James Beaver who went down with a severe wound. Dozens more were captured but now have been exchanged and are back with the regiment. Two months later in the Wheatfield at Gettysburg Colonel Edward Cross placed the 148th at the center of his brigade line. Again, losses were staggering, but again they stood the test.**

**Colonel Beaver returned during the winter and again leads the regiment. Perhaps it is well that neither Beaver nor his men can see into the future as surely their hearts would sink. The war will last another year in this theater and they will miss none of it. U.S. Grant is in charge, and he has pledged to follow R.E. Lee and fight every day until Lee is beaten.**

Winfield Scott Hancock of the Second Corps is Grant's most trusted corps commander, and Grant will hurl Hancock's corps like a spear at the heart of the Army of Northern Virginia. Hancock's favorite brigade commander is John Rutter Brooke and the 148th is in Brooke's Brigade. It will be in the thickest fighting at Po River, Spotsylvania Courthouse, North Anna River, Cold Harbor, Deep Bottom, Strawberry Plains, Weldon Railroad, Ream's Station and South Side Railroad. The 148th is there at every fight.

One thing which makes the 148th somewhat unusual is its losses have been replenished by substitutes and draftees. Approximately 1,400 men will serve in the 148th and one of every four will be killed, wounded or missing. Something else also distinguishes the 148th from other regiments; The War Department in the fall of 1864, authorizes the army to provide Spencer repeating rifles to one regiment in each division, and Hancock gives that honor to the 148th.

The 148th is at Appomattox Courthouse when Lee surrenders. The survivors are discharged in the summer of 1865.

Sergeant Meyer survives the war and returns to Centre County where he becomes a teacher and then a doctor of dentistry. He lives a long, happy life and today lies in peace in the Lutheran Church Cemetery in Rebersburg.

Colonel Beaver will suffer two more severe wounds. The first at Cold Harbor and the second at Ream's Station, where he loses a leg. He also returns to Centre County, eventually to be elected Governor of Pennsylvania and President of Pennsylvania State University. Today a football stadium at Penn State, capable of seating the entire Army of the Potomac bears his name. I have attended many games in that stadium, and as I gaze to the surrounding hills I am reminded that many patriots left their homes and loved ones here to fight and save the Union.

**WELCOME BACK TO A NEW CAMPAIGN. SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER.**

*Joe*

## **Round Table Business**

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Craig began by reminding everyone that Chris Mackowski will kick off the next campaign in September with "A Tempest of Iron and Lead: Spotsylvania Courthouse, May 1864.

Joe Schaeffer announced that Brad Gottfried, who had been scheduled to speak at the April meeting, continued to have health problems. Brad was supposed to lead the walking Gettysburg tour on May 19, 2024, but was unable to do so. As events/programs coordinator, he stated that programs for next campaign are by and large booked.

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Lori Border was reelected as treasurer with no opposition. Kathy Little agreed to continue as meal captain. Craig Breneiser will assume the duties of Webmaster. Gary Hertzog will continue his work as book raffle guru which generates countless dollars for land preservation throughout the year.

Many thanks to those retiring from their leadership roles; many thanks to those willing to begin serving our roundtable. Of course, we thank Joe Schaeffer for reprising his presidency.

### **Membership**

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2024-2025. Please fill out the membership form included with this newsletter and which can also be found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. Our membership dues remain at \$ 25.00. New this year is a line for an added donation. All donations will be put towards securing speakers.

The deadline for payment is October 8, 2024. 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.

Checks may be made payable to "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable".

### **Book Raffle News**

September is rapidly approaching and with that comes the start of our 28<sup>th</sup> Campaign of the First Defenders CWRT.

Gary Hertzog held the final book raffle of the campaign by offering 8 books. At the conclusion of the regular drawing, he drew tickets for the Special Raffle that had been on-going for several months. The R. E. Lee set of books, a pen set, and a shadowbox of Cyclorama memorabilia were all won by Linda Zeiber. A framed reproduction map of the Battle of Gettysburg was won by Ev Binns.

Congratulations & thanks to all the winners! Thank you to everyone for your support of our CW preservation efforts. Hope to see everyone at our September meeting.



Future 28th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
10/8/2024	Tom Clemens	<i>McClellan's Headquarters at Antietam</i>
11/12/2024	-To Be Announced-	
12/10/2024	Drew Gruber	<i>The Odyssey of Decimus Et Ultimus Barziza, 4th Texas Infantry</i>
1/14/2025	Everitt Binns	<i>Civil War Jeopardy - Round Two</i>
2/11/2025	Wally Heimbach	<i>Colonel Edward Cross &amp; The Fighting 5<sup>Th</sup>!</i>
3/11/2025	Chris Heisey	<i>TBD</i>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>TBD</i>

## Our September Presentation

### *A Tempest of Iron & Lead: Spotsylvania*

featuring Chris Mackowski



Stymied in the Wilderness, Ulysses S. Grant would nonetheless keep up the pressure on the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia by turning south and racing for the crossroads county seat of Spotsylvania Courthouse. There, from May 7th through 12th, the second act in the Overland Campaign would play out in the first large-scale trench warfare in the Eastern Theatre. The cost would be high as more than 18,000 Yankees and 12,000 Rebels would become casualties, and again Grant would be stymied, yet undeterred, by Robert E. Lee. The high point of the battle would come on May 12th at the famed "Mule Shoe," a salient in the Confederate line where combat would swirl for more than twelve straight hours under such a "tempest of iron and lead" that a 22-inch oak tree would be felled by small arms fire!

Chris Mackowski has been the most prolific presented to the First Defenders, and this presentation may be his last for some time. Picking up from his last program which began with Grant's rise in the Wilderness, few current historians are better versed in the Spotsylvania battle (and Chris actually resides on the edge of that bloody field!). Editor-in-chief and co-founder of the popular *Emerging Civil War* and a veteran of the National Park Service, Chris has authored, co-authored and edited dozens of Civil War books.



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Gettysburg and Beyond

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*SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2024*

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Holiday Inn Express, Richmond Airport

491 International Center Dr.

Richmond, VA

Tour cost: \$ 85.00 per person

Room reservations 804-222-1499

To sign up: contact Dan Welch at 330-881-3516 or [dwelch1863@gmail.com](mailto:dwelch1863@gmail.com)



## ***Our 28th Campaign!***

### **FIRST DEFENDERS CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE MEMBERSHIP FORM 2024-2025**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership fee is \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 25.00

Additional Contribution \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Memberships are due by October 8, 2024**

Please make the check payable to The First Defenders Civil War Roundtable and mail with a completed membership form to:

Lori Border  
30 East 40th Street  
Reading, PA 19606

(Additional contributions are not deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes but provide additional revenue to support First Defender Civil War Roundtable Programming)

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

October 2024, the 28th Campaign



[www.firstdefenderscwr.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwr.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Several members of the First Defenders volunteered to provide research and writing to the Berks History Center during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Civil War. My assignment was to cover the presidential elections of 1860 and 1864, and I had quite an awakening while spending many hours in the BHC library reading old newspapers and documents. Hopefully, you will enjoy some of what I found and about which I write.

“Americans have never been more deeply divided over politics than they are today.” Tune into any news broadcast or political interview in 2024 and you are likely to hear that statement. The phrase is disheartening, and proves the lack of historical knowledge by those who speak or believe it. The events leading to the 1860 presidential canvass tore American society apart and led to over 700,000 deaths. May we never again see that level of division!

Foreshadowing events yet to be seen, delegates to the Democratic National Convention gathered in April 1860 in Charleston, South Carolina. The Berks County delegation, being split in their loyalties, took separate paths. Travelling by train, Hiester Clymer led supporters of Stephen Douglas, a senator from Illinois and favorite of most northern Democrats. The “party crowd” was led by Frederick Lauer, a virulent racist and “beer baron,” who sponsored the steamship *Keystone State* which was piled high with kegs. The party never stopped, and grateful delegates presented Lauer with a silver cup inscribed:

*Too much champagne is very bad stuff,  
But too much lager beer is not quite enough!*

The beer and sea voyage took their toll, and most delegates arrived hung over and exhausted. Lauer threw his support with the southern bloc saying, “The object of Berks democracy is to make peace, union and harmony. The people of Berks will have nothing to do with abolitionists. If the South asks for guarantees, she must have them.” Rallies and speeches were heated, no candidate secured the nomination and the convention was suspended.

In June, Baltimore became the site for the reconvened convention. Again, no consensus was reached, and the Democratic Party officially split. The northern wing would nominate Douglas while Vice President John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky would lead the southern contingent.

The fledgling Republican Party met in Chicago that May, and the oddsmakers heavily favored William Seward of New York. Events did not go as planned, and after several ballots a dark horse candidate who was familiar to few in America would clinch the nomination. Abraham Lincoln of Illinois was championed by the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, Reading's Republican newspaper, as a "son of Berks County" whose ancestors once lived in Exeter Township. Two Democratic newspapers were printed in Reading...the *Adler (Eagle)*, still published in German, and the *Democrat Gazette*. Both lampooned Lincoln.

The campaign was raucous across the country, and so it was in Berks County. Democrats, with bands leading parades, carried signs reading "We Can Split Our Own Rails Abe" and "No Rail Splitters or Union Splitters." Republicans paraded behind "Lincoln, Hamlin and Curtin: Protecting American Industry." Douglas was the only candidate who would visit Berks County, but he garnered little enthusiasm. Carl Schurz, later a Union general, campaigned for Lincoln.

Reading, Birdsboro and other towns with growing industries were Republican strongholds while the rural areas and smaller villages were solidly Democratic since the days of Andrew Jackson.

Lincoln, as we know, would win the national election while garnering only forty-percent of the popular vote. He would carry all but eleven counties in Pennsylvania, and Berks would be a part of that minority. The vote totals were:

	<u>Berks County</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Total</u>
Lincoln	6,709	2,019	8,728
Douglas	420	73	493
Breckinridge	8,846	1,487	10,333
Bell	136	121	257

The headline on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, in the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* announced: **GLORIOUS NEWS...THE BATTLE FOUGHT AND WON...THE UNION SAFE.** Sadly, it would take four long years for this statement to become true.

*Joe*

### Round Table Business

Joe Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. Ev Binns offered a prayer and led the Pledge followed by dinner service.

At 7:20 p.m. Joe began the business meeting. He first introduced new member Wayne Blatner. Inquiry of health issues with members: Denton reported that Roger Cotterill had been hospitalized with complications due to his dialysis but was on the mend and back in his apartment with hopes of attending the October meeting.

Joe briefly discussed his plans as new president and the importance of our group becoming a legal entity. He discussed the importance of liability insurance and said that he is working on by-laws.

## **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance at the beginning of the September meeting was \$1287.13 as well as \$400 in preservation.

## **Membership**

Round Table programs are funded primarily by membership dues. In an effort to keep up with increasing speaker costs, members were invited this year to make an additional contribution to organization in an effort to enhance and elevate the quality of future programming.

Ev Binns and Joe discussed the new line on the membership form asking for donations in addition to membership dues. \$520 was collected at the September meeting in contributions!

Ensuring quality programming has been a big part of our success through the years. We thank those who have already contributed, and hope others will consider joining them soon!

Gerry Zeiber commented that he thought that dues should be increased especially in light of dwindling membership. Joe discussed a survey to come and that should be included there for board consideration.

Ev asked for information to be forwarded to him regarding historical societies, history teachers, museums, foundations that he may not be aware of since he comes from Allentown. He wants to increase membership.

As a reminder, the deadline for payment is October 8, 2024. 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.

***Checks may be made payable to "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable"***

## **Book Raffle News**

It was great to be back and our 28<sup>th</sup> Campaign got off to a good start. We raffled off eight books and took in \$100 for our preservation efforts. At our next meeting (October 8), we will conduct a "Book Bonanza" sale. All book selections will be available for a donation, whatever you are willing to offer. So, you may find some books of interest at a bargain rate!

The Book Bonanza will be in addition to our monthly book raffle of course. All proceeds go to our preservation efforts.

Thanks to everyone who donated books as we have a new inventory of books to offer our members. So, I will not be asking for any book donations until the end of this campaign perhaps.

**Thank You to everyone** for your continued support of our preservation efforts.

## **Preservation**

Wally made a motion to send \$100 to the Emerging Civil War in honor of Chris's final program with us. The motion was seconded and unanimously accepted by the membership.

Gary Hertzog will be taking over the responsibilities of preservation while continuing to hold the book raffles.

## **Mark's Final Report**

The 28th Season is off to a great start as we raised \$100 for Preservation from our monthly book raffle and donations. We continue to say thanks to all of you who bought tickets or made donations. It is greatly appreciated. We also, made a \$100 to Emerging Civil War Name in the name of our September speaker, Chris Mackowski.



The American Battlefield Trust has a several Matching Grants that are available. Here is the list:

A \$50-\$1 Matching Grant to preserve 278 acres at Bentonville, NC, Nashville, TN, Shepherdstown, WV, and Goldsborough Bridge battlefields.

A \$16-\$1 Matching Grant to preserve 85 acres at Corinth, luka, Kinston, the Breakthrough area at Petersburg and Prairie Grove

An \$11-\$1 Matching Grant to preserve New Market Heights, the breakthrough at Petersburg, and Fort Blakely

The Trust is also advertising they are now looking to save 11 acres at the Antietam Battlefield. They just acquired the land, and it is located behind the Dunker Church and part of the West Woods. This land was privately owned, and the owner sold the land to the Trust. The trust is looking to raise \$150,000 and there is no Matching Grant with this. There is also upcoming news in October about a new \$117-\$1 Matching Grant for land in TN and KY. Stay Tuned!

Going back to season 27, here are the final numbers for Preservation:

Total amount raised: \$974

Total amount donated: \$730

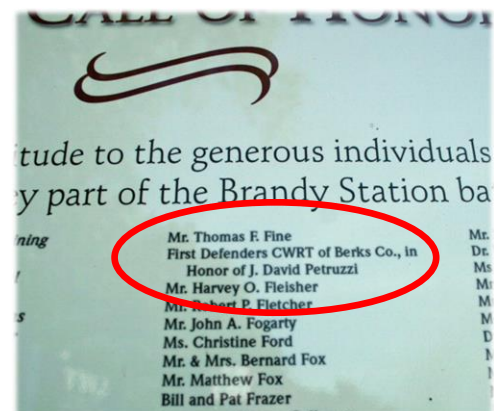
Total contributed (with Matching Grants): \$41,210

With the passing of my mother in June along with settling her estate, I am moving to Gettysburg on Thursday, October 3rd, 2024. While I will continue to remain a member of the Roundtable, October will be my last meeting, and this article is my last article for the newsletter. I am going to continue to help Gary Hertzog as he fully transitions to doing all the duties with Preservation. I wish to thank all of you for your friendship and for 13 going on 14 years as a member of the Roundtable. It also has truly been an honor having been Vice President for 8 years. You made me feel welcome when I first joined, and it has been an amazing ride. I wish to especially thank Joe Schaeffer and Craig Breneiser for all they have done to mentor and help me and to Gary Hertzog for having been an amazing partner with Preservation.

I wish all of you the best for a successful Season 28 and for many more to come. **Mark Quattrock**

### **Preservation at Work**

Much has been done to preserve the Brandy Station battlefield, scene of the largest cavalry engagement of the Civil War in June 1863. The view from Fleetwood Hill is breathtaking, and there stands evidence to the First Defenders' commitment to battlefield preservation!





## Joe's Jaunts

The next Jaunt will be Saturday, October 19, 2024. We will do a town tour (walking) of Gettysburg. Brad Gottfried will be our guide. The tour will last between 2 and 2 ½ hours with the cost \$20 or \$25. We will meet Brad at 1:30 pm in front of the Gettysburg Hotel. Street parking in Gettysburg is problematic so Brad suggests the public lot on Racehorse Alley, behind the hotel. Note, there is a fee to park there. A suggestion was made that for those interested, we could meet mid-morning and take a short visit to the newly re-opened Little Round Top area. One can stand next to the statue of Warren for a breathtaking view of Crawford Lake and the beaver clan. Possibly a Pub lunch and then meet Brad. We can discuss at the October meeting. (FYI for anyone concerned, Penn State does not play that day.)

## Newsletter

Linda Zeiber explained the situation with stored newsletters since the inception of our round table and offered any or all to anyone wanting them. All are stored digitally making the hard copies irrelevant. Chris Mackowski offered to take them for a repository at St. Bonaventure College where he teaches.

## Our October Presentation

### ~McClellan's Headquarters at Antietam~

featuring Dr. Thomas Clemens

A large brick house sits prominently on the rural farmlands surrounding Keedysville, Maryland. Built in 1844, it was the home of Phillip and Elizabeth Pry and their family. The "Pry House" has long been identified as "General McClellan's Headquarters" during the five days he spent on the east bank of the Antietam Creek directing the Army of the Potomac during the pivotal battle near Sharpsburg. But, did this house serve as his headquarters? The National Park Service marks it as such, and many other sources, including Willaim Frassanito's famous photographic study book of Antietam, agree with that assessment. Perhaps, perhaps not, as our October speaker, Tom Clemens, will present us with his evidence and let us decide for ourselves.



*Dr. Thomas G. Clemens is recognized internationally as one of the foremost historians of the Maryland Campaign, and has spent more than two decades studying Antietam. He earned his doctoral degree at George Mason University, and is a professor emeritus of history at Hagerstown Community College. Tom has published a wide variety of magazine articles and book reviews, most notably editing and annotating Ezra Carman's definitive study of the 1862 Maryland Campaign. A licensed tour guide at Antietam National Battlefield, Tom helped found and is the current president of Save Historic Antietam Foundation, Inc.*

## Programs

Clark Zimmerman was not in attendance; Joe said that Clark is working on them.

Future 28th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
11/12/2024	Dr. Warren Abbott	<i>Duties of a Civil War Chaplain: In Camp &amp; on the Battlefield</i>
12/10/2024	Drew Gruber	<i>The Odyssey of Decimus Et Ultimus Barziza, 4th Texas Infantry</i>
1/14/2025	Everitt Binns	<i>Civil War Jeopardy - Round Two</i>
2/11/2025	Wally Heimbach	<i>Colonel Edward Cross &amp; The Fighting 5<sup>Th</sup>!</i>
3/11/2025	Chris Heisey	<i>TBD</i>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>TBD</i>

## Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings \* New Section\*

This section will list events, tours and other happenings that you may have an interest. Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

Be sure to keep in mind the timing of the newsletter distribution in relation to the upcoming event, so that we are not listing an event which members may be interested in attending, but with very little time to make plans.

### **FRIDAY EVENINGS AT 7 pm- ONLINE CIVIL WAR FRIDAYS - THE CIVIL WAR CONGRESS EVENTS**

Friday's with Grant

**REGISTER HERE:** <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/events.html>

### **OCTOBER 18, 2024 -ONLINE Seminary Ridge Museum**

Join us for our first History Happy Hour of the season as we welcome author Lisa Samia to discuss her book *The Nameless and the Faceless of the Civil War: Gettysburg, Manassas, & More*.

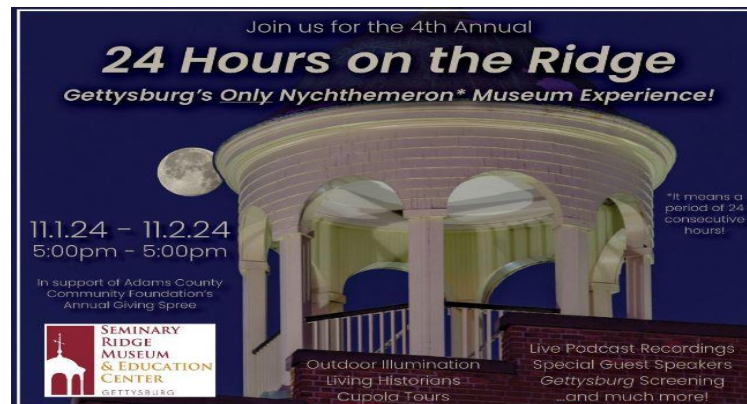
**REGISTER HERE:** <https://68664.blackbaudhosting.com/68664/History-Happy-Hour---The-Nameless-and-the-Faceless-of-the-Civil-War>

### **OCTOBER 25, 2024 – IN PERSON**

Join us as we welcome Robert Hicks to present *Wounded for Life: The Post-War Journey of Two Union Soldiers*.

**REGISTER HERE:** <https://68664.blackbaudhosting.com/68664/An-Evening-With-Robert-Hicks>

### **NOVEMBER 1-2, 2024**



**More information to follow:**

<https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events/24-hours-on-the-ridge-2>

## **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday October 8, 2024 Meeting & Program:**

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for October are:

Salad

Broiled Orange Roughy

Marinated Chicken Breast

Pasta with Grilled Vegetables

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, October 4, 2024, 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. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

Checks may be made payable to "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable".

**ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!!**

Giannotti's has raised the prices for the meals at our meetings. The price will now be \$32.00.



## ***Our 28th Campaign!***

### **FIRST DEFENDERS CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE MEMBERSHIP FORM 2024-2025**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Membership fee is** \_\_\_\_\_ **\$** **25.00**

**Additional Contribution** \_\_\_\_\_ **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Memberships are due by October 8, 2024**

Please make the check payable to The First Defenders Civil War Roundtable and mail with a completed membership form to:

Lori Border  
30 East 40th Street  
Reading, PA 19606

(Additional contributions are not deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes but provide additional revenue to support First Defender Civil War Roundtable Programming)

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

November 2024, the 28th Campaign



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**“I AM GOING TO BE BEATEN AND UNLESS SOME GREAT CHANGE TAKES PLACE BADLY BEATEN.” - A. Lincoln**

Lincoln faced this stark reality during the summer of 1864. November 8<sup>th</sup> would be Election Day, and the fate of the Union was uncertain. Lincoln's re-election depended on the success of the Union armies in the field, and the news was anything but good. Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Potomac had driven Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia back into the trenches of Petersburg, but at a terrible price: 65,000 soldiers killed, wounded or missing and for what? The campaign was at a stalemate. Little accurate news of Sherman's army reached Washington. Was he pressing Joe Johnston or was he facing imminent destruction as reported by Southern newspapers? Jubal Early drove the Yankee army from the Shenandoah Valley and threatened the Union capitol. Each week, Berks County newspapers printed the names of local soldiers who would never return home.

J. Lawrence Getz, Editor of the *Reading Gazette and Democrat* thundered at local readers with the headline: “Shall We Vote for Eternal War?” Protests and interference with the draft often turned hostile. A succession of provost marshals, including Captain George W. Durrell, were stymied in their efforts to protect recruiters attempting to fill the draft quota for Berks County. Democratic U.S. Congressman Sydenham Ancona and State Senator Hiester Clymer demanded reunification with Southern states and repeal of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Meanwhile, the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, the Republican newspaper, in its July 2<sup>nd</sup> edition invited readers to a Grand Union Ratification Pi-Nic to be held July 4<sup>th</sup> at Heiner's Spring. Editor Jacob Knabb went on to implore citizens to turn out and vote in a Special Election scheduled for August 2<sup>nd</sup> to amend the State Constitution to allow soldiers in the service of the Union to cast absentee ballots. The measure passed the State by a large margin although losing in Berks County. The *Journal* reported the vote in the Heidelbergs to be 113 in favor and 497 against. The same article went on to note that, “Richmond Township is well named, as we

doubt Richmond, Virginia could have mustered more negative votes.” The vote was 52 yea and 249 nay.

The Democratic Party nominated Major General George B. McClellan to challenge Lincoln in the general election. Little Mac, a controversial figure twice fired by Lincoln, still enjoyed much support with the soldiers and seemed to be the perfect foil. McClellan promised an immediate armistice and a call for reunification restoring the “old Union.” The *Reading Gazette and Democrat* boasted headlines such as: “How Can Any Laboring Man Vote for Lincoln?” and “White Soldiers Serving Slaves.”

Lincoln was growing more despondent day by day. On August 23<sup>rd</sup> he penned his “Blind Memorandum” which read: “This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so cooperate with the President elect, as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he can not possibly save it afterwards.” The cabinet members were instructed to sign the sealed envelope, not being allowed to read the contents.

September came and with it a change in fortunes. Lincoln received a telegram from Sherman announcing, “Atlanta is ours and fairly won.” Grant then sent Philip Sheridan to the Shenandoah Valley where he utterly destroyed Jubal Early’s forces. Grant renewed his assaults on Petersburg. On November 8<sup>th</sup>, Lincoln won the popular vote by a margin of just under 500,000 votes, but garnered a decisive electoral college victory of 212 to 21. The “soldier vote” played a crucial part going overwhelmingly for Lincoln. Lincoln again won Pennsylvania, but lost Berks County, just as he did in 1860.

Lincoln, his spirit revived, proclaimed “a day of Thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God,” to be held the last Thursday of November.

*Joe*

### **Round Table Business**

Joe Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. Ev Binns offered a prayer, written by Linda Zeiber, and led the Pledge followed by dinner service.

At 7:15 p.m. Joe began the business meeting. He thanked Chris Mackowski for his dynamic presentation last month, opening our 28<sup>th</sup> campaign.

Joe announced that a survey will be coming shortly with five questions, that will assist in guiding our roundtable into the future. Please take the time to participate in the survey. Your opinion is very important.

We had one guest this evening, Dr. John Hampson joined us.

### **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance at the beginning of the October meeting was \$ 2424.57, as well as \$400 in preservation.

## **Membership**

Ev Binns reported we currently have 48 members signed up for the 28<sup>th</sup> campaign. In addition to membership dues, \$545 was collected in additional contributions to support our speaker program.

Ev asked for information to be forwarded to him regarding historical societies, history teachers, museums, foundations in Berks County that he can reach out to, to promote our roundtable. He can be emailed at Ebinns1@gmail.com.

## **Book Raffle News**

At our October meeting in addition to our monthly book raffle, we also ran a "Book Bonanza Sale". Members had the opportunity to purchase items for a donation---whatever they wished to offer. The membership responded well to the sale as we took in \$61 in addition to the monthly book raffle, which took in \$107 for a total of \$168 which will go our Preservation Fund. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our preservation efforts.

A new fund-raising program is planned for our November meeting or, at latest, by the December meeting.

As a reminder, book donations cannot be accepted for the foreseeable future.

## **Preservation**

Mark Quattrochio gave his final report on preservation this evening and made the motion to donate to two American Battlefield Trust preservation opportunities.

The Preservation Fund began with a balance of \$400. At the October meeting, we made two contributions to American Battlefield Trust:

1. \$100 was donated to "*Preserve the Most Important 11 Acres Left to Save at Antietam*" in recognition of and thanks to our speaker, Dr. Thomas Clemons, who spoke on the Pry House at Antietam. The land being targeted for preservation is near the famed Dunker Church and where Alexander Gardner took many photos of the carnage of the battle. The Trust has a goal of \$150 thousand dollars to raise. There was no matching grant for this fund.
2. \$100 was donated to "*Help Preserve History at Five Critical Battlefield Sites*".

278 acres are being targeted:

1. 2 tracts at Bentonville Battlefield, NC (71 acres for action of 3/20/65)
2. Battle of Nashville, TN (1 acre for action of 12/16/64)
3. Battle of Shepherdstown, VA now WV (150 acres for action of 9/20/62)
4. Battle of Goldsborough Bridge, NC (56 acres for action of 12/17/62)

The Trust is seeking to raise \$62,500. There is a \$50 to \$1 match for this grant.

Mark reiterated that he is going to miss us all as he relocates from Reading to Gettysburg, but will be back from time to time. We all wished him the best with his new journey.

Gary Hertzog will be taking over the responsibilities of preservation while continuing to hold the book raffles.

## Joe's Jaunts – cancelled for October 19, 2024

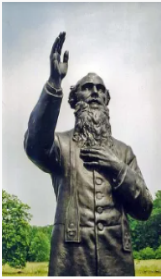
### Website

Craig noted there will be some changes coming to the website. If you are having an issue with the site or ordering meals, please reach out to Craig. Bucks County's Civil War Roundtable is holding a series of talks from a "Woman's Perspective" by women; a link will be posted on the website. The YouTube site has many podcasts related to the Civil War, the Civil War Congress, Emerging Civil War, the GAR channel and many others, who regularly provide programs and videos of interest.

### Our November Presentation

#### *~Duties of a Civil War Chaplain: In Camp & on the Battlefield~*

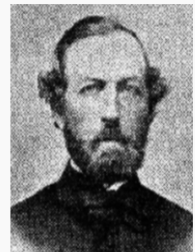
featuring Dr. Warren Abbott



The work of chaplains during the Civil War has been given short shrift by many historians and scholars. While the more general topic of religion's role during the war has been researched and documented, the men (and one woman) involved in the work of ministering to soldiers has not received quite as much attention.

Religion was the great comfort for an overwhelming number of Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. For many, it was their first time away from home for an extended period, away from the influence and support of their families. Temptations were many, and chaplains looked after the spiritual well-being of the armies. One Union soldier stated plainly, "Our chaplain is a father to me and keeps me straight."

But the work of chaplains often went beyond the spiritual needs of their soldiers, and they would fulfill a host of other duties including courier, postmaster, carpenter, nurse and, sometime, combat soldier. They would bless their flocks, and, sometimes, die for them.



*Dr. Warren Abbott is a graduate of the Pennsylvania State University and the Concordia Theological Seminary. A member of the Independent Lutheran Diocese, Dr. Abbott is also a living historian.*

Future 28th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
11/12/2024	Dr. Warren Abbott	<i>Chaplains During Battle and Encampment</i>
12/10/2024 *	Allen Thompson	<i>In the Shadow of the Round Tops</i>
1/14/2025	Everitt Binns	<i>Civil War Jeopardy - Round Two</i>
2/11/2025	Wally Heimbach	<i>Colonel Edward Cross &amp; The Fighting 5<sup>Th</sup>!</i>
3/11/2025	Chris Heisey	<i>TBD</i>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>TBD</i>

*\* Denotes program change*



## **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday November 12, 2024 Meeting & Program:**

Three orders made using the website were not received. Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy to order your meal.

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for October are:

Salad  
Broiled Salmon  
Pork Chop  
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, November 8, 2024, 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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Checks may be made payable to "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable".

**ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!!**

Giannotti's has raised the prices for the meals at our meetings. The price will now be \$32.00.

## **Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings**

This section will list events, tours and other happenings that you may have an interest. Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

Be sure to keep in mind the timing of the newsletter distribution in relation to the upcoming event, so that we are not listing an event which members may be interested in attending, but with very little time to make plans.

### **THE CIVIL WAR CONGRESS EVENTS- Fridays with Grant – Online Presentations**

*FRIDAY EVENINGS AT 7 pm*

**REGISTER HERE: <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/events.html>**

**SEMINARY RIDGE MUSEUM- Gettysburg PA – November Events**

<https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events>

**BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE –“Seeing the Elephant at Bull Run”**

*November 2, 2024-9am- noon*

Where: Manassa National Battlefield

Cost: \$ 30 members/ \$ 45 non-members

Contact: [cforman@manassasbattlefield.org](mailto:cforman@manassasbattlefield.org) with questions

[www.manassasbattlefield.org](http://www.manassasbattlefield.org)

**BUCKS COUNTY CIVIL WAR MUSEUM ROUNDTABLE – Online Presentations**

Dominish Miller	November 1, 2024
Dr. Maria Angela Diaz	December 3, 2024
Dr. Angela Zombek	February 4, 2025
Dr. Jen Andrella	March 4, 2025
Carol Ivanoff	April 1, 2025

Sign up at: [Civilwarmuseumdoylestown@gmail.com](mailto:Civilwarmuseumdoylestown@gmail.com)

RSVP [civilwarmuseumdoylestown@gmail.com](mailto:civilwarmuseumdoylestown@gmail.com)

**The Bucks County**  
CIVIL WAR MUSEUM

THE WHITE ROSE OF YORK CWRT

NOVEMBER 12, 2024  
6:40-7:00 PM

SPECIAL GUEST TED SAVAS  
JOINS JAMIE NOERPEL

7:00 PM

**Dominish Miller**  
presenting

**“Women At War: The Female  
Soldiers of the American Civil  
War and Those That Wished  
They Were.”**

Room Opens at  
6:30

This is a Public  
Service Series. All  
are welcome.

RSVP  
[civilwarmuseumdoylestown@gmail.com](mailto:civilwarmuseumdoylestown@gmail.com)

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**December 2024, the 28th Campaign**



**[www.firstdefenderscwr.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwr.us)**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**“LET US STRIVE ON TO FINISH THE WORK WE ARE IN...”**

Elections have consequences, or so we are reminded every four years. Therefore, in lieu of a Christmas story, I decided to write about the follow up to the Election of 1864. President Abraham Lincoln, when writing his Blind Memorandum on August 23, 1864, expected to lose the Presidential Election. Three months later after events on the battlefields had turned in favor of Union forces, he decisively won re-election and, with it, a mandate to finish the war. Lincoln had the support he needed, but he knew the will of the people would last only as long as they could see an end in sight for this terrible nightmare. The next few months would prove to be crucial as the administration turned its attention to a list of objectives which, if successful, would end the war quickly. The first was an item long overlooked.

The city of Wilmington, North Carolina, was the last remaining major port of entry for blockade running vessels. Like ghosts in the night, one in two of these supply ships still evaded Yankee blockading squadrons by slipping through one of two inlets into the Cape Fear River. Once there, they fell under the protection of the powerful guns of Fort Fisher, the Gibraltar of the South. Thirty miles upriver lay Wilmington, then the largest city in North Carolina. From there, trains on the Weldon Railroad ran north connecting to Petersburg, Virginia, bringing the few supplies still reaching the Army of Northern Virginia. Robert E. Lee warned President Jefferson Davis, “If Wilmington falls, I cannot maintain my army.”

Wilmington might have been a target earlier in the war had it not been for the political obsession with taking Charleston and the enormous land and naval forces required to subdue Fort Fisher. Now the Lincoln administration was convinced the effort was necessary. A combined land and sea assault was planned. U.S. Grant gave his consent and agreed to release some troops from the Petersburg siege. Grant chose General Godfrey Weitzel and 7,000 troops of the Army of the James; however, before Weitzel could act, his superior, Benjamin Butler, interposed to take command. Grant would soon regret not intervening at this moment. Admiral David Dixon Porter would lead the Atlantic Blockading Squadron, a fleet of 64 warships, totaling 630 cannon. Butler and Porter despised one another, Butler even

refusing to meet Porter on his flagship. Cooperation between these two egos was non-existent.

Their first experiment, on Christmas Eve, involved loading an old ship with tons of gunpowder, maneuvering it close to the fort and detonating it, intending to knock down a portion of the seawall. The attempt was a disaster, amounting to a nice fireworks display and nothing more. This was followed by the Navy pouring thousands of shells into the sand walls of the fort to no effect. Butler, after landing his troops on the beach, lost interest and sailed back home. His men were left to extricate themselves which they did with Navy help. Grant was furious and fired Butler. Porter blamed Grant for sending him the most incompetent general in the army. Porter's pride was hurt and he wanted another shot.

Confederates expected another attempt. Davis sent Robert Hoke and his 8,000 veteran North Carolinians to Wilmington to aid in the defense. In an ironic and comical twist, as if to balance the scales of the Butler debacle, he sent Braxton Bragg to command all Confederate forces in Wilmington. The *Richmond Enquirer*, upon hearing the news, printed the following: "General Bragg is going to Wilmington. Goodbye Wilmington."

Lincoln and Grant knew they must neutralize Wilmington. Grant was known to learn from his mistakes.

*Joe*

### **Round Table Business**

Joe Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. Dr. Abbott, our speaker for the evening, offered the prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and dinner.

At 7:25 p.m. Joe began the business meeting. Joe noted that David Fox is ill and couldn't be with us. Joe reminded us of the inclement weather procedure noting that a decision will be made the day before the meeting, if it will be cancelled; he will err on the side of caution. He also noted it will be posted on the website. A phone call will also be made.

The survey link was included in the meeting notice. It will be posted to the website. The survey is intended to aid the officers in charting the future direction of the Round Table.

Joe updated us on the progress with the non-profit status, announcing our application is at the State awaiting approval.

We had one guest this evening, Tom Dowd who joined the Round Table.

### **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance at the beginning of the November meeting was \$ 2,342.05, as well as \$368 in preservation.

### **Membership**

Ev Binns reported we have 52 members signed up for the 28<sup>th</sup> campaign. In addition to membership dues, \$545 was collected in additional contributions to support our speaker program.

Ev asked for information to be forwarded to him regarding historical societies, history teachers, museums, foundations in Berks County that he can reach out to, to promote our roundtable. He can be emailed at Ebinns1@gmail.com.

## Book Raffle News

At our November meeting, we began a Bonus Raffle to supplement our efforts to raise money for battlefield preservation. The raffle will run from now until the April meeting unless inclement weather would force us to miss a meeting, then we will conclude the raffle at our final meeting (May 2025).

There are 4 prizes being offered:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize---*"The Last Meeting"* a print (26 ½" H X 21½" W) of Robert E. Lee & Stonewall Jackson at the Battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863. Painter-Everitt B.D. Everitt. Engraver-Fred Halpin
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize---*"Lee's Lieutenants (A Study in Command)"* by Douglas S. Freeman. 3 volumes ©1942-1944.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize---*"The Official Military Atlas of the Civil War"* by Maj. George B. Davis-US Army and Leslie J. Davis & Joseph W. Kirkley-civilian experts. Compiled by Capt. Calvin D. Cowles, 23<sup>rd</sup> US Infantry. This is a supplement to the Official Records of the Rebellion.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Prize---A pair of 6" Busts of Robert E. Lee & Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson by Designmasters Ltd.

Ticket prices are the same as our monthly raffle.

At our November meeting, the monthly raffle took in \$102 plus \$10 (Bonus Raffle) for a total of \$112. Thank You to everyone for your support of battlefield preservation.

## Preservation

Our Preservation balance at the start of the November meeting was \$368. The membership voted to donate \$150 to American Battlefield Trust. Our preservation total for December to \$330.

Our November donations (\$150) went to "Help Us Save Hallowed Ground in TN & KY". The Trust is attempting to save 24 acres at 4 battlefields. The four battlefields are: Belmont Battlefield (located in MO), Franklin Battlefield (TN), Nashville Battlefield (TN) and Richmond Battlefield (KY).

The largest acreage is on the Richmond BF (20 acres) with the remaining 4 acres divided among the 3 other battlefields. The matching grant is \$117 to \$1-one of the largest matching grants ever offered by the Trust. Total cost for the acquisition is \$13.75 million with the Trust trying to raise the final \$118 thousand.

The Trust has several matching grants that we can consider throughout the campaign.

1.Help Save the "Final Mile" at Franklin, TN. 0.6 acres. Match \$50-\$1. Trust target \$100 thousand. Total cost \$5 million.

2.Help Save 64 Acres at Four VA. Battlefields. Match \$37-\$1. Trust target \$60 thousand. Total cost \$2.2 million. 4 Battlefields are Chancellorsville (18 acres), 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Kernstown (40 acres) and Ware Bottom Church (6 acres).

3.Save 184 TN Western Theater Acres at Shiloh & Stones River. Match \$20-\$1. Trust target \$421 thousand. Total cost \$8 million. Shiloh BF-152 acres. Stones River-32 acres.

## Website

Craig noted their will be more consistent posting on the website. He is currently stiving to have one new post per week. Dr. Clemens talk from October is now available for viewing on the website.

## Joe's Jaunts – TBD

### Good of the Service

Rodney noted that he hiked the 3rd Winchester over the summer following “The Last Book of Winchester” driving and walking tour. The walking tour measures about 4-5 miles in length.

Linda reported that Craig Symonds will be the Remembrance Day speaker in Gettysburg.

Joe took the opportunity to thank all the veterans who proudly served our country.

## Programs

### Our December Presentation

#### *In the Shadow of the Round Tops*

featuring Allen Thompson

Samuel Johnston's July 2nd morning reconnaissance is of the most enigmatic events of the Battle of Gettysburg. Though not well understood, it has remained one of the major factors in the Confederacy's loss of the battle. Despite being one of the most well-documented events in history, the vast majority of our knowledge comes from the words of the veterans and civilians who experienced it. In short, the story of the Battle of Gettysburg is simply the compilation of the memories of those who fought it, but memory is anything but objective. A variety of factors affect individual memory, and this presentation will explore how individual soldiers' memories have created a cloud over Johnston's infamous reconnaissance. In short, many people saw part of the puzzle, but no one saw all of it. By comparing and sifting through those memories, a much clearer picture of the reconnaissance, its impact on the actions of July 2nd and the battle itself comes into focus.



Allen R. Thompson is a practicing attorney in New Jersey, where he lives with his wife and three kids. His writing focuses on reevaluating primary source materials to examine the standard interpretations of historical subjects, from legal doctrines to historical events. His articles have appeared in the *St. Thomas Law Review* and *Gettysburg Magazine*. His book, *In the Shadow of the Round Tops*, can be found anywhere books are sold.



Future 28th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
1/14/2025	Everitt Binns	<i>Civil War Jeopardy - Round Two</i>
2/11/2025	Wally Heimbach	<i>Colonel Edward Cross &amp; The Fighting 5<sup>Th</sup>!</i>
3/11/2025	Chris Heisey	<i>TBD</i>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>TBD</i>

## Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings

This section will list events, tours and other happenings that you may have an interest. Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

### **THE CIVIL WAR CONGRESS EVENTS- Fridays with Grant – Online Presentations**

*FRIDAY EVENINGS AT 7 pm*

REGISTER HERE: <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/events.html>

### **SEMINARY RIDGE MUSEUM- Gettysburg PA – December Events**

**“Friday’s On The Ridge”**

**History Happy Hour 6:30-7:30 pm**

<https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events>

### **BUCKS COUNTY CIVIL WAR MUSEUM ROUNDTABLE – Online Presentations**

Dr. Maria Angela Diaz	December 3, 2024
Dr. Angela Zombek	February 4, 2025
Dr. Jen Andrella	March 4, 2025
Carol Ivanoff	April 1, 2025

**Sign up at:** [Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com](mailto:Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com)

### **CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELD TRUST- SPRING SEMINAR-March 15,2025**

The theme of this year's seminar is "The Road to Fredericksburg," and will cover topics and events happening in the late summer and fall of 1862 that led up to Fredericksburg.

These Five well-respected and popular historians including Dennis Frye, Greg Mertz, John Hennessy, James Broomall and Frank O'Reilly will round out the speakers with fascinating topics!

A Boxed lunch will be provided as part of your admission.

**Sign up here:** [https://cvbt.networkforgood.com/events/77382-2025-cvbt-spring-seminar?utm\\_campaign=dms\\_email\\_blast\\_3567025](https://cvbt.networkforgood.com/events/77382-2025-cvbt-spring-seminar?utm_campaign=dms_email_blast_3567025)

## **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, December 10, 2024 Meeting & Program:**

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy to order your meal.

Our meal choices for December are:

Soup  
Steamed Shrimp  
½ Black Diamond Steak  
Manicotti

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, December 6, 2024, 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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Checks may be made payable to "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable".

Giannotti's has raised the prices for the meals at our meetings. The price is \$32.00.

***In the event inclement weather requires cancelling the meeting and program, a decision will be made by noon on the day before the meeting. A notice will be posted on the website, and a phone call will also be made.***



# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**January 2025, the 28th Campaign**



**[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY, TRY AGAIN**

The Battle of Fort Fisher and the Wilmington Campaign have held a fascination for me, made especially intriguing by the men involved. The list of names and a brief overview of their successes and failures stands as a story you simply could not create in a novel.

The first attack on Fort Fisher, Christmas 1864, ends in humiliating failure for the Union. U.S. Grant has seen enough of Ben Butler. He is fired, never to command Union forces again for the balance of the war. Grant now turns to a young Brigadier General, Alfred H. Terry, a lawyer by trade and not a West Point officer. He has won his promotions and the respect of superiors and soldiers through discipline, intelligence and a calm demeanor. Now he is being sent to launch a joint Army/Navy operation with the capable, but arrogant, Admiral David Dixon Porter. Porter initially scoffs at the idea that Grant is sending this youngster declaring, "Don't be surprised if I send him home with a flea in his ear." After meeting Terry, though, his impression has changed: "I found General Terry a genial, clever officer. He had no staff, no spurs and no sword. He had a good head, full of sense and we soon understood each other."

Still, not everything goes as planned. Sometimes even an officer of otherwise sound record could manage to tarnish his reputation. I give you Brig. Gen. Adelbert Ames, Terry's immediate subordinate, whose division is tasked to lead the assault on Fort Fisher. When the army flotilla sails from Hampton Roads on January 6<sup>th</sup>, Ames cannot be found. Repeated attempts to locate him are unsuccessful and the ships sail without him. Ames commandeers a fast boat and catches up with the flotilla. He never offers an explanation for his absence, instead accusing brigade commander N. Martin Curtis of deliberately sailing without him and demanding he be court martialed. Terry refuses to listen to his childish fit. Ames continues to cause trouble, including disobeying Terry's orders during the assault, leading to Terry benching him. Curtis leads the attack, receives a grievous wound and, although left for dead, survives. Ever after, in letters and at army reunions, Ames and Curtis argue and fight. The rank and file back Curtis, one of the true heroes of the battle.

Not to be outdone is Jefferson Davis. The autumn of 1864 finds Braxton Bragg with little to do. Davis sends him to take command of the District of Cape Fear, encompassing Wilmington and Fort Fisher. Bragg arrives with 8,000 North Carolina veterans under the command of Robert Hoke, intended to reinforce the fort's defenses. Ignoring repeated pleas from the officers in Fort Fisher, he withholds the troops, saving them for the defense of Wilmington. Bragg also fails to use them to stop the Federals from landing on the beaches. Years later he goes to his death insisting his was a humanitarian decision as he believed the Union navy would annihilate them. Historians tell us that the only hope to stop the Federals was to commit these troops.

Inside the fort waiting for reinforcements is the officer who Bragg replaced. Maj. Gen. William H. Chase Whiting boils in frustration. Whiting graduated first in the West Point class of 1841, achieving grades never surpassed by any cadet until Douglas MacArthur, decades later. A brilliant engineer, he has led infantry during the first two years of the war. Arguably the smartest officer in the war, he unfortunately never ceases offending superiors and fellow officers with his contentious and arrogant demeanor. Davis hates him and Whiting hates Davis and Bragg. Bragg refuses Whiting's every plea for help. Leading a counter-attack at the height of the battle, Whiting receives a serious leg wound and will die in a Union prison camp hospital of dysentery. On his deathbed writing to Robert E. Lee he denounces Bragg as follows: "That I am here and that Wilmington and Fisher are gone is due wholly and solely to the incompetency and imbecility of Braxton Bragg."

Fort Fisher falls in hand-to-hand fighting on January 15<sup>th</sup> and Wilmington surrenders on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Less than two months later, Lee abandons Petersburg, Richmond falls and the Confederacy fades into history. Grant has again learned a lesson and overcome the odds.

If this inspires anyone to read about this campaign, I recommend *The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope* by Chris Fonvielle, the authority on this subject. Also very good is *Confederate Goliath: The Battle of Fort Fisher* by Rod Gragg.

*Joe*

### Round Table Business

Joe Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Ev Binns offered the prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and dinner.

At 7:35 p.m. Joe began the business meeting. Joe noted that Bruce Englehart is home from the hospital and plans to rejoin us at the next meeting, and Tim Antosy is scheduled to have a knee replacement. Joe reminded us of the inclement weather procedure noting that a decision will be made the day before the meeting if it will be cancelled; he will err on the side of caution. He also noted it will be posted on the website. A phone call will also be made.

It's official! We are now chartered as the "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable of Berks County" and registered with the state.

We have one new member who has joined the regiment, his name is John Hampson. Please welcome him when you see him. We also had no guests this evening.

Only half of the regiment has participated in the membership survey. Joe would really like everyone to participate. It's only five questions and it will help us with planning for the future.

## Treasurers Report

Lori Border reported the balance at the beginning of the December meeting was \$ 2,342.05, the ending balance is \$ 2,002.05, as well as \$330 in preservation.

## Membership

Ev Binns reported we have 53 members signed up for the 28<sup>th</sup> campaign. In addition to membership dues, \$570 was collected in additional contributions to support our speaker program.

## Preservation & Book Raffle

We started December with \$330 in our Preservation Fund. We had three matching grants in our December newsletter, which will be available for the foreseeable future, and are favorable matching grants. At the December meeting, we looked at two Gettysburg battlefield sites which are presently running, but not very favorable matching grants.

However, it's Gettysburg. The two sites that are targeted by American Battlefield Trust are:

1. Save 11 Acres---Nearly untouched at the extreme left flank of the Union army near North Fairfield Road, it's a \$1.63 to \$1 match, seeking to raise \$315,000 with a total price of \$515,000.
2. Preserve 15 Acres in Gettysburg---Willoughby's Run. It's a \$2 to \$1 match, raising \$750,000 with a total price of \$3 million.

Our December speaker, Allen Thompson, informed us of the National Park Service attempt to raise money for the restoration of the Daniel Klingel Farm on the Emmitsburg Road. Since Allen did not accept a speaker's fee, the membership voted to make a \$100 donation to the Gettysburg Foundation in gratitude and recognition in his honor. The motion was made by Craig Breneiser and second by Wally Heimbach with all in favor.

The Book Raffle took in \$113 in December and our Preservation total to start January is \$343.00. A reminder that the Bonus Raffle is still running into 2025.

THANKS TO EVERYONE for your support of battlefield preservation thru the book raffle and your donations!!!

## Programs

Future 28th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
1/14/2025	Everitt Binns	<i>Civil War Jeopardy - Round Two</i>
2/11/2025	Wally Heimbach	<i>Colonel Edward Cross &amp; The Fighting 5<sup>th</sup>!</i>
3/11/2025	Chris Heisey	<i>TBD</i>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
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Clark Zimmerman reported that the November 2025 meeting will have a new date to accommodate Craig Symonds. The meeting date will be November 19, 2025 which is a Wednesday. John Greenspan has also been scheduled for the next campaign to speak on the Anti-Slavery movement.

## Our January Presentation

Our January presentation emceed by Ev Binns, will be **Jeopardy, Round Two!** This is a participatory program with categories based on the Civil War.

## **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, January 14, 2024 Meeting & Program:**

Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy to order your meal.

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

Soup  
Breaded Haddock  
Grilled Chicken  
Rigatoni with Tomato Sauce

If you make your reservation online and 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, January 10, 2025, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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## **Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings**

This section will list events, tours and other happenings in which you may have an interest. Please feel free to share anything of which you are aware and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please email them to me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

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Dr. Angela Zombek	February 4, 2025
Dr. Jen Andrella	March 4, 2025
Carol Ivanoff	April 1, 2025

**Sign up at:** [Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com](mailto:Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com)

### **CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELD TRUST- SPRING SEMINAR-March 15,2025**

The theme of this year's seminar is "The Road to Fredericksburg," and will cover topics and events happening in the late summer and fall of 1862 that led up to Fredericksburg.

Five well-respected and popular historians including Dennis Frye, Greg Mertz, John Hennessy, James Broomall and Frank O'Reilly will round out the speakers with fascinating topics!

A Boxed lunch will be provided as part of your admission.

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# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

February 2025, the 28th Campaign



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The lights strung from the pergola cast a peaceful glow on the snow. They glimmer like stars in the sky and I have a feeling of peace. Then I remind myself that seated by the warm fireplace and gazing out the window, my eyes and body are not truly in touch with the world outside. This morning in the “Alsace Alps,” as we affectionately call them, the thermometer registered minus 3 degrees, the real-feel being somewhat lower. Like most people who went out to their frozen vehicles at 6:30 am, I whined about the dark and cursed the frigid air. For the first time in several years, we are experiencing winter as we remember it to be. How inconvenient it is that we must scrape ice and shovel snow. How spoiled we have become.

Allow your mind to wander for a few moments and reflect on what we understand as students of history. Our ancestors, the men and women who gave us this wonderful nation, lived, worked, fought and sometimes died, in the harshest of winter weather. Think of the Continental Army struggling to survive through arctic temperatures in 1777 at Morristown and 1778 at Valley Forge. Remember the American soldiers in Europe in 1944/1945, not only fighting to stay alive in the cold and snow, but dying by the thousands to halt the last Nazi offensive. Let us not forget the Marines and Army infantrymen in Korea, in weather so cold they could not find words to describe the hell they faced. And what of those left behind, the wives, girlfriends and families left to tend the farms, raise children and work in the cold shops?

I guess what I am trying to say is that maybe the next time I’m feeling sorry for myself that I have to scrape a frozen windshield, I should pause and thank the Lord for those who came before. This winter will soon pass away, but so long as we remember the men and women who gave us this land, they are never really gone. God Bless America.

*Joe*

**P.S.:** I want to apologize for cancelling the January meeting. It was a difficult decision, and I feel bad for those who expected to attend. My sincerest regrets go to Ev Binns for the work he did in preparation and to Craig Breneiser for helping him round it out. More of an explanation can be found in "Round Table Business."

On a positive note, we have a great meeting set for February. Our own Wally Heimbach will present a talk on Colonel Edward Cross. We all know Cross for the actions of his brigade in the Bloody Wheatfield on July 2<sup>nd</sup> at Gettysburg. My friend, Wally, has taken me and several friends to New Hampshire to visit the grave and other sites connected to Colonel Cross. Cross had a fascinating life, so there is much more to his story. Please attend and support Wally.

### **Round Table Business**

Unfortunately, the attendance, for a number of reasons, was rather small this month. As a result, and because of another event at Giannotti's, we were asked to relocate to a smaller room. However, upon taking a look at that room, it became evident that it was a bit more difficult to access, would have been too cramped and potentially noisy. Also, while the current weather forecast seemed positive, the temperatures were too low to melt much of the ice that was still around which may have made both driving and walking treacherous.

We'll keep "Civil War Jeopardy" in our back pocket in case of an unanticipated speaker cancellation, and we look forward to our February meeting and program featuring our own Wally Heimbach and his presentation of "Colonel Edward Cross and the Fighting Fifth New Hampshire." Circle February 11<sup>th</sup> on your calendars, and watch for the meeting/program announcements in your email!

### **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance at the beginning of the December meeting was \$2,342.05, the ending balance is \$2,002.05, as well as \$330 in preservation.

### **Membership**

Ev Binns reported we have 53 members signed up for the 28<sup>th</sup> campaign. In addition to membership dues, \$570 was collected in additional contributions to support our speaker program.

### **Preservation and Book Raffle**

Hello everyone! Hopefully the year has gotten off to a great start for you and we can get together for our February 11, 2025 meeting. We have received news from the ABT that there is a \$54 to \$1 matching grant in progress for 5 battlefield tracts at 4 sites---a total of 161 acres. They are:

1. Fort Heiman/Fort Henry- Less than an acre of land situated on the site of Ft. Heiman along Tennessee River in KY.
2. Brown's Ferry/Chattanooga- 31 acres in TN where Union troops landed beginning the Cracker Line supply route to lift the CSA siege of Chattanooga.
3. Spring Hill, TN-12 acres of the Nov. 29, 1864, which led up to the disastrous Battle of Franklin for the CSA.

4. Bentonville, NC- 2 tracts totaling 118 acres on the February 19-21, 1865 battle site. It was the final large-scale battle, where the CSA was able to mount an assault.

The total cost of the land is \$3.8 million. However, with matching grants the ABT will be able to acquire the land for \$70 thousand. The goal for the match must be reached within 60 days.

Besides this matching grant, there are 2 grants at Gettysburg that are running. A reminder to membership that a special raffle is continuing and will now proceed to the final meeting of our 28<sup>th</sup> Campaign. Thanks to every one for your support.

## February Program

### *Colonel Edward Cross & the "Fighting 5th"*

featuring Wally Heimbach

Edward Cross did not aspire to be a soldier, but at the outset of the Civil War he would receive a commission as colonel of the Fifth New Hampshire volunteers which, under two years of his leadership, would see action on the Peninsula, at Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. The "Fighting 5th" was considered one of the best combat regiments in the Army of the Potomac, and Cross would be one of the best colonels who never wore a general's star. Twice wounded, Cross was known to wear a red bandana on his head when going into battle so his men would recognize him. With a premonition of his own death on the afternoon of July 2nd at Gettysburg, Cross would sport a black bandana while on his way to action in the Wheatfield. He would be mortally wounded early in the fight, and succumb the following day in a field hospital. This program traces the recruitment and reputation of the "Fighting 5th" and its beloved colonel, Edward Cross.



*Wally Heimbach is a long-time First Defender who has previously presented programs on Winfield Scott Hancock and Philip Kearney. Once the youngest ever Gettysburg licensed battlefield guide, Wally is known to almost every modern-day Civil War historian and researcher.*

Future 28th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
3/11/2025	Chris Heisey	<i>Seeing the Light: Momentous Places of Our Civil War</i>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>Twelve Decisions Affecting the Battle of Shiloh</i>

**Joe's Jaunts – TBD**

## Website

Craig noted there will be an effort at more consistent posting on the website. He is currently striving to have one new post per week.



## **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, February 11, 2024 Meeting & Program:**

Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy Little to order your meal.

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for February are:

Soup  
Broiled Crab Imperial  
Veal Parmesan  
Cheese Tortellini

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, February 7, 2025, which is also the deadline for online reservations.**

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Carol Ivanoff	April 1, 2025

**Sign up at:** [Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com](mailto:Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com)

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**March 2025, the 28th Campaign**



**[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **BLAME PHIL...**

Five hours ago, I was standing at the end of our shared lane spreading two hundred pounds of sand on the ice and cursing myself. A few months back I was boldly predicting to anyone stuck listening to me that the critters were telling me something: woolly bear caterpillars showed colors of a real winter, juncos (snowbirds) arrived weeks early and the coats on fox and deer were observed to be very thick. Therefore, I predicted a real winter. I like winter. Today as I labored in the frigid polar blast, I remembered my mother's admonition; "Be careful what you wish for." In my defense, I only asked for a real winter, not a long one. Phil is entirely to blame for our recent cancellation. Truly, I do apologize, but caution must rule our decisions. In point of fact, we did start to see snow here in the Alsace Alps about the time our meeting would have ended. Remember, I live one mile from Giannotti's. We will get Wally's talk in next year.

What I really want to briefly discuss, though, are the results of the survey we conducted and convey my thanks to those who responded. Last summer at the Board meeting, I informed those present that it was my decision to expand the scope of our topics beyond the Civil War. The Board members advised that maybe a Presidential Order was not the way to go. Better that we have the membership decide by doing a survey. I am eternally grateful for that advice. I then put some ideas together for questions. I was told there was a (Survey) Monkey that could clean up and properly reconstruct my questions. So now you know the secret: a monkey can do my job.

Question #1 asked if we should expand the scope of our talks to include other topics in American history. The survey showed 70% of respondents answered "yes."

Question #2 asked those who said "yes" to vote on subjects of interest. The War of Independence/Founding of the Republic came in around 86%, followed by World War II at 64%. There was also substantial interest in the French & Indian War, War of 1812 and World War 1. The Program Committee will continue to be primarily focused on the Civil War and perhaps two or three from other periods.

Question #3 asked if we should provide meetings in a virtual format in addition to in-person. 51% said “no,” while 49% said “yes.”

Question #4 then asked if the respondents had attended any of our meetings virtually. 55% said “no” and 45% said “yes.” WiFi access at Giannotti’s has been less than adequate which has often resulted in failures. If we can make it work, we must be grateful and if we cannot, we must be understanding.

Question #5 asked what our dues should be for next year. 45% said \$35.00, 40% said \$30.00, 7.5% said \$25.00 (same as currently) and 7.50% said “other.” AS you know, our dues support our speaker programs, so we will examine this further before making any decision.

Now, let us all hope that when Chris Heisey visits on March 11, he brings Spring along. See ya then!

*Joe*

### **Round Table Business**

With the cancellation of the February meeting, there is no new business to report. However, the following reviews and reminders are provided for the membership:

### **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance at the beginning of the December meeting was \$2,342.05, the ending balance is \$2,002.05, as well as \$330 in preservation.

### **Membership**

Ev Binns reported we have 53 members signed up for the 28<sup>th</sup> campaign. In addition to membership dues, \$570 was collected in additional contributions to support our speaker program.

### **Preservation and Book Raffle**

Hopefully, the third time is the charm for the March meeting. The good news is the ABT’s matching grant is still running. It is a \$54 to \$1 match for five battlefield tracts at four sites in the Western Theatre. They are:

1. Fort Heiman/Fort Henry- Less than an acre of land situated on the site of Ft. Heiman along Tennessee River in KY.
2. Brown’s Ferry/Chattanooga- 31 acres in TN where Union troops landed beginning the Cracker Line supply route to lift the CSA siege of Chattanooga.
3. Spring Hill, TN-12 acres of the Nov. 29, 1864, which led up to the disastrous Battle of Franklin for the CSA.
4. Bentonville, NC- 2 tracts totaling 118 acres on the February 19-21, 1865 battle site. It was the final large-scale battle, where the CSA was able to mount an assault.

The total cost of the land is \$3.8 million. However, with matching grants the ABT will be able to acquire the land for \$70 thousand. The goal for the match must be reached within 60 days.

**The Special Book Raffle will continue till the end of the campaign in May. The prizes to be won are:**

1. **“The Last Meeting” a print (26 ½” H X 21 ½” W) of Robert E Lee & Stonewall Jackson at the Battlefield of Chancellorsville. Painter- Everitt B D. Julio. Engraver-Fred Halpin**
2. **“Lee’s Lieutenants (A Study in Command)” by Douglas S Freeman. 3 volumes ©1942-1944.**
3. **“The Official Military Atlas of the Civil War” by Major George B. Davis and Leslie J. Davis & Joseph W Kirkley-civilian experts. Compiled by Captain Calvin D. Cowles, 23<sup>rd</sup> US Army. This is a supplement to the Official Records of the Rebellion.**
4. **2 busts of Robert E Lee & Stonewall Jackson (6”H)**

**Ticket prices are the same as our monthly raffle.**

## **March Program**

### ***Seeing the Light: Momentous Places of Our Civil War***

**featuring Chris Heisey**

Battlefield preservation has long been the aim of Chris Heisey's evocative imagery taken at more than 400 hallowed battlefields. Peaceful, solemn and sublimely beautiful, America's battlefields offer us quiet places to revel in the beauty of what still abides on these treasured lands. He shares his



stories behind the images as well as his historical insights that he pulls from his nearly half-century of studying the Civil War. Whether it is a raging blizzard or mysterious fog shrouded landscape, Chris' images are designed to inspire and motivate us to save what is still threatened by the continuous assault of mindless sprawl. This program features the evocative imagery captured since 1990 when Chris was moved to begin photographing battlefields in every imaginable weather after watching the Ken Burns' *The Civil War*. Sharing 32 images from battlefields near and far that touch on the war's crucial pivotal

moments and in his commentary, Chris will provide primary and secondary source information that is worth exploring. He will also chronicle his great, great grandfather's harrowing three-year volunteer stint with the 155<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania which began at Antietam and ended at Appomattox.

*Chris Heisey has collaborated on 14 Civil War book projects with esteemed authors Gordon Rhea and Kent Gramm, and currently partners with Emerging Civil War's Chris Mackowski to furnish imagery and writing pieces to complement the recent popular 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary series publications. With more than 350 worldwide photo credits, Chris continues to be America's most published battlefield photographer with his imagery earning five National Merit Awards and a Photo of the Century Award in 2000. He has worked as a photojournalist for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg for 38 years and lives in Mechanicsburg, PA.*



<b>Future 28th Campaign Programs</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Program</b>
4/8/2025	Brad Gottfried	<i>Race to the Potomac</i>
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>Twelve Decisions Affecting the Battle of Shiloh</i>

## **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, March 11, 2025 Meeting & Program:**

Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy Little to order your meal.

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for February are:

Soup  
Breaded Shrimp  
Pork Rib Eye  
Spaghetti with Tomato Sauce

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, March 7, 2025, 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. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

Checks may be made payable to "First Defenders Civil War Roundtable".

**Giannotti's has raised the prices for the meals at our meetings. The price is \$32.00.**

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### **Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings**

Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

#### **THE CIVIL WAR CONGRESS EVENTS- Fridays with Grant & Other Online Presentations**

REGISTER HERE: <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/events.html>

#### **SEMINARY RIDGE MUSEUM- Gettysburg PA - "Fridays On The Ridge" History Happy Hour 6:30-7:30 pm**

REGISTER HERE: <https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events>

#### **BUCKS COUNTY CIVIL WAR MUSEUM ROUNDTABLE – Online Presentations**

Dr. Jen Andrella	March 4, 2025
Carol Ivanoff	April 1, 2025

**Sign up at:** [Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com](mailto:Civilwarmuseumdoyelstown@gmail.com)

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

April 2025, the 28th Campaign



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### THE RACE IS ON! OR SHOULD IT BE THE RACES ARE ON?

We are all hoping the third time is a charm. On two previous occasions, we cancelled Brad Gottfried's talk due to circumstances beyond our control. On April 8<sup>th</sup>, however, Brad will join us to give a talk based on his newest book, *Race to the Potomac*, published by Savas Beatie as part of the Emerging Civil War series. Please take special note this book is co-authored by his wife Linda. I only became aware of that fact while watching an interview Brad gave with Chris Mackowski on an Emerging Civil War podcast. Brad noted that Linda takes the photographs, creates the structure for location of photos and maps and advises him on various aspects. Let us be sure to provide a warm welcome to Linda as well!

Trusting that I am stealing no thunder from Brad's talk, I thought it appropriate to point out that while Lee was racing to cross the Potomac to safety in Virginia and Meade was racing to cut him off, another race was already under way. I am referring to the race to influence the press and powerful politicians in Washington, by those who would discredit Meade, seek to have him fired and replaced as commander of the Army of the Potomac (AOP).

On Sunday morning July 5, 1863, Major General Daniel Sickles, minus one leg, reached Washington. That afternoon he was visited by President Lincoln. Bear in mind that Lee and Meade are just beginning their race to the Potomac and Sickles is already telling his tale. In his version, Meade had given an order on July 2<sup>nd</sup> to withdraw the army to the Pipe Creek line, thus intending to surrender the field at Gettysburg to Lee. Only Dan Sickles' aggressive move forward forced the confrontation with Longstreet's Corps. The Army of the Potomac was thus saved, the battle won and Sickles in sacrificing his leg, was the hero. Until his death on May 3, 1914, Sickles never failed to tell the same story to anyone and everyone who would listen and, which like the proverbial "fish story," grew ever more grand.

The newspapers ate it up. The *New York Times* boasted that, "General Sickles has literally carved his way to fame with his sword." A joint resolution of Congress approved on January 28, 1864, credited Joe Hooker ahead of Meade for the victory at Gettysburg. The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War convened in

February to investigate the Union's inability to score battlefield victories. Meade became their main target. Radicals hoped to sack Meade and restore Hooker to command of the AOP and Sickles to corps command. Dozens of Union officers appeared, some to attack Meade's actions and others to defend. In the end, the reorganization of the Union war effort in the winter of 1864 helped save the job for Meade. Grant assumed command of all Union armies and endorsed Meade to retain command of the AOP for the remainder of the war.

The Joint Committee issued its report on May 22, 1865. Lee had surrendered, Lincoln had been assassinated and the war was coming to an end. The report neither condemned nor cleared Meade, but the damage to his reputation lasts to this day. The struggle for power and the race to judgment echoes throughout history.

*Joe*

### Round Table Business

Joe reviewed the findings from the survey of 5 questions presented to the membership. There was a total of 40 participants in the survey.

1. Should the First Defenders expand the scope of program topics beyond the Civil War to include other periods in American history?
  - a. Response: YES 70%; NO 30 %
2. If YES, to #1, what would your interest be in?
  - a. War of Independence (most popular) % 86
  - b. WW 2 – 65 %
  - c. French and Indian War – 54 %
  - d. War of 1812 – 50 %
  - e. WW 1 – 40 %
3. Are you interested in meeting being provided virtually in addition to in-person?
  - a. Response: 51% NO; 49% YES
  - b. Concerns: The Wi-fi is not always reliable and we will have to look at this more closely
4. Have you previously attended a virtual program?
  - a. Response: 45% YES; 55% NO
5. Looking forward to the 2026 Campaign should dues be-
  - a. \$ 35 = 45 %
  - b. \$ 30 = 40 %
  - c. Remain the same = 7.5%
  - d. Other not specified = 7.5 %

Joe announced that Kathy Little will be relinquishing the position of Meal Captain at the end of the campaign and Lori will also be stepping down as treasurer. If you have an interest in either position, please reach out to Joe. We can't thank them enough for their service to the organization. (As the newsletter was being published, it was learned that Vicky Heffner has volunteered to assume the Meal Captaincy for the next campaign!)



## **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance as of March 11th was \$1,824.45, as well as \$343 in preservation.

## **Membership**

Craig reported in Ev's absence that we have 56 members signed up for the 28<sup>th</sup> campaign. In addition to membership dues, \$570 was collected in additional contributions to support our speaker program.

We had one guest this evening, Carol Freeland from the Berks History Center.

We have one new member who has joined the ranks, please welcome Chris Antosy when you see him.

### **Member Updates:**

Kerry Williard had surgery and is recovering; we wish him a speedy recovery. It is reported that Bruce Updegrove is dealing with a medical issue and it was also noted that we lost Bob Sharretts and Lori Border's husband, John; we send our condolences to their loved ones.

Errol Steffy brought before the membership the idea of moving the dates of our meetings to the summer months, as we have lost two meetings this campaign and last campaign due to inclement weather. Wally Heimbach noted that the Binghamton CWRT holds their meetings August-Dec and resumes April-June with virtual meetings in the winter. This will be considered further.

## **Preservation and Book Raffle**

After a 3-month hiatus, our CWRT was able to get together for our monthly meeting. The membership voted to make a donation to ABT for \$250 to "Save 161 acres in the Western Theatre of the Civil War". With the 54-to-1 matching grant the value of our contribution rises to \$13,500. The ABT seeks to raise \$70 thousand of the \$3.8 million price tag. The targeted land is located on 4 different battlefields located in KY, TN & NC. The motion was made by Wally Heimbach, second by Clark Zimmerman, and passed.

Craig Breneiser informed the membership that the American Battlefield Trust (ABT) is attempting to raise the final amount of 475 thousand dollars to save 15 acres south of the Chambersburg Pike & along Willoughby Run, where on July 1, 1863 the Battle of Gettysburg began. This is where significant fighting took place at this important battle. The ABT is hoping to acquire the site before the 162<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the battle in July 2025. While there is no matching grant for this acquisition, the membership may be interested in saving this area which is so close to us. We can discuss this in April.

The book raffle took in \$100 in March. After our March donation our preservation total stands at \$193. Our Special Raffle continues and several members supported this venue at our March meeting. Thank you to everyone for your support of our preservation efforts.



## April Program

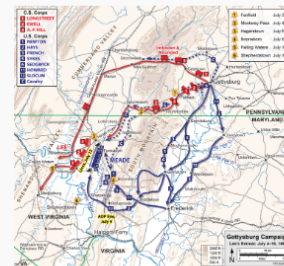
### *Race to the Potomac: Meade's Pursuit & Lee's Retreat*

featuring Brad Gottfried

The nation held its breath for eleven days after the Battle of Gettysburg. Would Meade be able to destroy Lee's beaten army or would it escape to Virginia to fight another day? Would Lee's wagon trains filled with supplies and the wounded safely reach the Potomac River, despite the marauding Union cavalry? This stimulating presentation follows the activities and exploits of each army as they make their way to the Potomac River after the battle. The presentation will also consider whether Meade was too slow, whether Lee conducted an effective retreat, and whether Lincoln was justified in his frustration with Meade.



Bradley Gottfried was born and raised in Philadelphia and, after receiving his Ph.D. in zoology, he embarked on a 40-year career in higher education. He retired in 2017 as the president of the College of Southern Maryland, and has written 17 books and numerous magazine articles pertaining to the Civil War. Although perhaps best known for his campaign "map books," Brad has also written on Gettysburg, the Point Lookout prisoner of war camp and the Hope Antietaam paintings. He is an Antietaam Certified Battlefield Guide and a Gettysburg Licensed Town Guide. Brad and his wife, Linda, live in Fayetteville.



28 <sup>th</sup> Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
5/13/2025	Greg Mertz	<i>Twelve Decisions Affecting the Battle of Shiloh</i>

**\*\* The November 2025 meeting will be held on an alternate date to accommodate Craig Symonds' presentation. Stay tuned! \*\***

### Events / Tours/ and Other Happenings

Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

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#### SEMINARY RIDGE MUSEUM- Gettysburg PA –

"Fridays On The Ridge" History Happy Hour 6:30-7:30 pm

REGISTER HERE: <https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events>

#### **2025 Civil War Institute Conference June 13-18, 2025**

Join us from June 13-18, 2025 for a very special conference honoring the life and scholarship of our late director, Dr. Peter S. Carmichael. Lectures, small-group discussions, and battlefield tours will explore the major topics that animated Pete's scholarly work, including the culture of the common soldier; gender, politics, and honor in the Old South; doing Civil War history in public; Robert E. Lee in history and memory; Indianans at Gettysburg, and more.

The conference will also explore a wide range of additional topics, including Gettysburg documents from the National Archives, the generalship and postwar life of James Longstreet, the freedman's village at Arlington, the Battle of Perryville, archaeological discoveries from Little Round Top, emancipation and early Reconstruction in the South, and more.

Seminary Ridge Museum Members receive special discounted registration! For more details, reply to this email or contact Rob Williams, Director of Outreach, at 717-339-1354.

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### **Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, April 8, 2025 Meeting & Program:**

Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy Little to order your meal.

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for April are:

Salad

Broiled Crab Cake

Veal Parmesan

Linguini with Mushroom Sauce

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, April 4, 2025, 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

May 2025, the 28th Campaign



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A soothsayer in *Julius Caesar*, Act 1, Scene 2 warns Caesar to, “Beware the ides of March.” Caesar, at the pinnacle of his power, ignores the prophecy and meets his demise. Shakespeare’s famous line has since entered our everyday lives as a catch phrase. The ides, for those unaware, are the approximate middle of each month, although in modern times are rarely referred to other than in March. The exact date has varied ever since Roman days.

As I pondered my writing for this month, a thought crossed my mind that if one looks at the month of April for a few days on either side of the ides, a number of historic, and for some, tragic events transpired. As a student of history, all but a few of these events popped into my head without researching. Allow your thoughts to wander for a moment over this short list.

- April 6 & 7, 1862: The Battle of Shiloh, Tennessee. U.S. Grant’s Union army defeats the Confederate army under A.S. Johnston and P.G.T. Beauregard.
- April 9, 1865: Robert E. Lee surrenders the Army of Northern Virginia to U.S. Grant’s Army of the Potomac and Army of the James at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. The beginning of the end of the Civil War.
- April 10, 1919: Popular Mexican revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata is assassinated.
- April 10, 1963: USS Thresher, atomic submarine, sinks killing the entire crew.
- April 11, 1814: Emperor Napoleon abdicates and is exiled to St. Elba, from which he will escape a year later.
- April 12, 1861: Confederate forces open fire on the Federal garrison in Fort Sumter, signaling the beginning of the Civil War.
- April 12, 1945: Franklin D. Roosevelt passes away at Warm Springs, Georgia, thrusting Harry S. Truman into the presidency.

- April 13, 1970: NASA Mission Control receives this verbal message from Apollo 13: "Houston, we've had a problem." (Note: this is often misquoted as "we have.")
- April 14, 1865: John Wilkes Booth shoots Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theater. Lincoln dies the next morning, April 15.
- April 14, 1912: 11:40 pm, ship's time, RMS Titanic strikes an iceberg in the North Atlantic. She will sink less than 3 hours later on April 15, taking the lives of some 1,500 souls.
- April 16, 2007: A student at Virginia Tech University shoots 49 people, killing 32, before taking his own life.
- April 17, 1943: While journeying from Truk to Rabaul for an inspection, Japanese Admiral Yamamoto's plane is intercepted by a squadron of American P-38 Lightning fighter aircraft. The Admiral's plane is shot down and he perishes.
- April 18, 1906: An earthquake in San Francisco destroys much of the city, killing an unknown number, but certainly totaling thousands.
- April 19, 1775: British soldiers clash with American Colonists at Lexington and Concord. The "shot heard 'round the world."

Perhaps we should "Beware the ides of April?"

See you all on May 13 when we welcome back Greg Mertz for a talk on "Twelve Decisions Affecting the Battle of Shiloh."

*Joe*

### **Round Table Business**

Joe called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. He brought an idea up for discussion to change the meeting dates moving forward. His concern for bringing this to the group is that over the past few years, the winter meetings have been cancelled out of caution over bad weather. He said some groups hold their meetings from April to December or March to November, avoiding the months that seem to have the most chance of being cancelled. He checked with Gianotti's and they could accommodate us. Joe received favorable comments and is looking to see if we can fill the summer session for this campaign. Stay tuned!

There were no guests in attendance this evening.

Our May meeting will include election of officers. All offices are open to all members. Joe, Clark and Lisa are willing to serve another term, and Chuck Bezler has agreed to stand for election as treasurer to replace Lori.

### **Treasurers Report**

Lori Border reported the balance as of March 11th was \$1,541.94, as well as \$193 in preservation. As we reported last month, Lori has decided to retire her Treasurer position after many dedicated years of service.

## **Membership**

Our membership now stands at 57, having one new member, Carolyn Freeland from the Berks History Center, who joined us last month as a guest. Welcome Carolyn!

### **Member Updates:**

Ev was not able to with us this evening, as he is tending to a torn rotator cuff. He hopes to return soon!

## **Preservation and Book Raffle**

At the April meeting, the members voted to make two donations:

1. Help Save 15 Hallowed Acres at Gettysburg (No matching grant)
2. Save 210 Important Acres in Virginia (matching grant-\$6.44 to \$1)

The Gettysburg tract is located south of Herbst Woods (today' McPherson's Woods) between McPherson's Ridge & Seminary Ridge just north of the Fairfield Rd. The first day's battle surged over this ground with the CSA forcing the USA troops off the ridges and pushing them thru the town to the south of Gettysburg. The Trust secured a \$ 3million purchase price for the land & now needs \$475 thousand to reach a final settlement. They are hoping to complete the deal by July 2025 in time for the 162<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the battle.

The membership voted to donate \$100 to the effort.

The Virginia Campaign tract covers 4 different battlefields-Malvern Hill (1862), Brandy Station (1863), New Market (1864) & New Market Heights (1864). The price tag for this acreage is \$2.7 million. Due to grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the federal government, other preservation groups & private individuals, the trust needs to raise \$429,500.

Our membership voted to contribute \$100 at the matching amount.

If we wish we may add additional funds to either of these campaigns. At our April meeting, we took in \$101 from the book raffle. After the \$200 donation in April, our beginning preservation balance for May is \$94.

**At our May meeting, we will conclude our Special Raffle. Thanks to everyone for your support of our fund-raising efforts!**

### **Preservation Totals for 28<sup>th</sup> Campaign:**

**Total Amount Raised---\$694**

**Total Amount Donated---\$1000**

**Total Contribution with Matching Grants---\$37,994**

### **Preservation Totals for All Campaigns**

**Total Amount Donated---\$39,421**

**Total Contribution with Matching Grants---\$559,847**

## May Program

### *12 Decisions Effecting the Battle of Shiloh*

featuring Greg Mertz

"Attack at daylight and whip them" —that was the Confederate plan on the morning of April 6, 1862, as the unsuspecting Union Army of the Tennessee gathered on the banks of its namesake river at a spot called Pittsburg Landing, ready to strike deep into the heart of Tennessee.



Confederates, commanded by General Albert Sidney Johnston, planned to take the fight to the Federals by attacking at daylight and driving them into the river. A brutal day of fighting ensued, unprecedented in its horror -- the devil's own day, one union officer admitted -- as darkness settled over the surreal scene. The next morning, though, it would be the Union army that would attack at daylight with the intention of whipping the Confederates. The bloodshed that resulted from the two-day battle exceeded anything America had ever known in its history, and this program will focus on twelve decisions that effected events at Shiloh turning a Southern surprise into a Northern victory.

*Greg Mertz retired after 40 years with the National Park Service, the final 36 at the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park. Greg grew up on the Shiloh battlefield, hiking its trails and exploring its fields. His most recent book, "Attack at Daylight and Whip Them" taps into five decades of intimate familiarity with a battle that shocked a broken nation and rewrote America's notions of war.*



Expanded 28 <sup>th</sup> Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
6/10/2025	TBD	
7/8/2025	TBD	
8/12/25	Wally Heimbach	Colonel Edward Cross & the "Fighting 5 <sup>th</sup> "

***\*\* Scheduling Alert: The November 2025 meeting will be held on an alternate date to accommodate Craig Symonds' presentation. Stay tuned! \*\****

## Website

Craig reported the website is having some issues with online reservations. It is being looked at by our web designer. If you do not receive an email confirmation from Craig after placing your dinner selection, please contact Kathy Litte by telephone to place your order. We are working diligently to get this resolved.

The Central Virginia Battlefield Trust held its spring seminar in March which featured five excellent speakers. A six-part series reviewing the seminar and its presentations is being posted weekly on the website. Check it out!

**Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, May 13, 2025  
Meeting & Program: Deadline to order is May 9<sup>th</sup>, noon**

Please make sure you receive an email confirmation that your order was received. If not, please call Kathy Little to order your meal.

**\*\* Vicky Heffner will be assuming the Meal Captain position starting in June, please welcome her into her new role! \*\***

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website.

Our meal choices for May are:

Salad  
Broiled Crab Imperial  
Chicken Picatta  
Risotto

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, May 9, 2025, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

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Please feel free to share anything that you are aware of and would like added to the monthly newsletter. Please send them to my email me at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com).

Spring is upon us and there are a variety of opportunities to take part in! Our Battlefields, Battlefield Trusts, and other historical outlets, including our local Berks History Center, have a variety of tours, seminars and events to fulfill your summer! See you in the fall!