



ON THE
skirmish *line*
Newsletter of The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

CVBT receives generous gift from the CWRT of Eastern Pennsylvania

This past summer, the Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pennsylvania donated \$53,000 to the CVBT, to be applied to preservation of our latest acquisition at Wilderness Crossroads.

The CWRT of Eastern Pennsylvania has been a strong supporter of CVBT and a few months ago one of its members, Jack Minnich, informed us of a generous bequest from the estate of another member, Karl M. Lehr. Karl was born in Allentown and had been a 1936 graduate of Muhlenberg College. During World War Two, he served with a signal detachment and was part of the invasions of Sicily, Salerno, and Normandy. Following the war, Karl spent a few years in Cologne Germany, as a Fulbright teacher, and also taught in New Jersey and Illinois. His teaching career spanned 42 years.

The CWRT of Eastern Pennsylvania has been an active participant in battlefield preservation for 30 years. Consistent with this tradition, they added additional dollars to their member's bequest, to be able to donate a total of \$128,000 to three groups actively involved in purchasing

historic ground. The other two recipients were the Richmond Battlefields Association and the Civil War Preservation Trust. These Pennsylvanians have been exceptionally generous participants in the CVBT mission, which is a powerful statement because we benefit from the largesse of several active round tables.

Round Table spokesman Jeff Gates stated that "Karl's legacy of honor, commitment, and generosity remains. Our Board of Directors and our Preservation and Restoration Committee determined to honor him in the best possible way—by furthering the cause of historic preservation."

CVBT board member Rob Hodge travelled to Allentown to personally thank this outstanding round table and received a check for \$53,000. These funds will go directly to paying for the dirt and grass of the Wilderness Crossroads. Men like Karl M. Lehr, veterans of one war, are consistently part of ensuring a more distant war is remembered as well. We extend heartfelt thanks to Karl and the Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pennsylvania. We are proud to know you. **SL**

Save the Date for our next Annual Meeting

April 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May 2011

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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The CVBT is actively planning the 2011 annual meeting, which will take place **April 29 through May 1**. Astute readers will have noted that this is a three day span rather than our usual two day affair. For Friday, April 29th, we are planning an exceptional, behind the scenes tour, in the Museum of the Confederacy, in Richmond. Saturday, April 30, will be our usual day of tours, followed by dinner and the annual meeting itself. Sunday morning, May 1st, will also include a tour.

We will provide more details in future newsletters and on our website. At this point, we simply want our members to know we will have an expanded weekend of events so they can save those dates.



IN MEMORIAM: BILL UNDERHILL * IT IS WITH SADNESS THAT WE MARK THE PASSING OF BILL UNDERHILL, OF FREDERICKSBURG. BILL WAS ONE OF THOSE GUYS WHO QUIETLY, BUT TIRELESSLY, DOES ANY NUMBER OF GOOD THINGS TO MAKE HIS COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE. HE WAS ACTIVE IN THE FREDERICKSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND MEALS ON WHEELS, AN OFFICER OF THE FREDERICKSBURG CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE, AND A QUIET, BUT STEADY DONOR TO CVBT. PEOPLE LIKE BILL, WHO ARE TRULY DEDICATED TO SERVICE, ARE WHAT MAKE COMMUNITIES THRIVE. WE EXTEND OUR CONDOLENCES TO HIS FAMILY.



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CVBT on old Gettysburg Cyclorama building: TIME TO GO

PHOTO BY JACK BOUCHER, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



The CVBT has formally weighed in to urge the federal government to proceed with demolition of the old cyclorama building at Gettysburg. The dramatic scene restoration that has occurred on this battlefield in the last few years has been phenomenal and dramatic. It has not occurred without controversy, though. Any historic landscape changes with time and restoration always entails decisions about what changes are significant enough to preserve and which should be undone. The mission at Gettysburg has been quite clear—to return the field to its 1863 configuration, while respecting the veteran memorials period. While the monuments erected on this field will be left undisturbed, other man-made features have been found to be intrusive and have been slated for removal. The National Tower was one such structure whose demolition could not have occurred soon enough. Others, such as the cyclorama

The mission at Gettysburg has been quite clear—to return the field to its 1863 configuration.

building, have required more thought and consideration.

The cyclorama building was part of the National Park Service's Mission 66 program celebrating the fifty years of that agency's existence. This building was exciting in its day, but those 1960s visitor buildings were also placed on top of critically important historic scenes. The visitor centers at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville are similarly situated in the center of their respective battlegrounds. The cyclorama painting has been moved to another building and the old Mission 66 building is no longer considered appropriate within the heart of the battleground of July 3, 1863. We sympathize with those who see those buildings for their architectural merit, but battlefields are basically dirt and grass and that is what we are about. We support removal of the old Mission 66 cyclorama building and restoration of the historic battleground. SL

Fredericksburg/Moss Neck Tour a Grand Success.

ON SEPTEMBER 18, A FULL BUS OF CIVIL WAR preservationists joined Colonel Keith Gibson, of the Virginia Military Institute, and Frank O'Reilly, National Park Service historian, on a tour of the Fredericksburg battlefield with a side trip to Moss Neck. Moss Neck is the plantation house where Stonewall Jackson had his headquarters for a period during the winter of 1862/63 and where he entertained Robert E. Lee at Christmas.

This excursion was sponsored by Logan Creek Designs, which sells hand crafted campaign furniture. The Logan Creek principals, Joe and Margaret Cress, donated all of the proceeds, once the various costs had been paid, directly to CVBT. This very generous donation will help to pay off the Slaughter Pen farm acquisition. Both of the tour guides are very well versed in the events at Fredericksburg, so participants were able to walk the ground and see its many features in intimate detail. Lunch was in Fredericksburg's St. George's Church, a battlefield landmark that shows up prominently in virtually every wartime photograph of the stricken town.

Moss Neck was a special trip in its own right. This elegantly restored Greek Revival manor house had been

built for the Corbin family in 1853. While Jackson was there, the family's young daughter Janie captured his heart and she was clearly enchanted by the General. After Jackson had moved closer to Fredericksburg, to better prepare for the spring campaigns, he learned that Janie had died of scarlett fever and the bold warrior was absolutely devastated. During this tour, the guides were able to pinpoint little Janie Corbin's grave in the family cemetery.

Artist Mort Kunstler donated a print depicting Lee as Jackson's guest at Moss Neck at Christmas 1862. We had it framed, with a generous donation from Mr. Kunstler and with a significant discount from the Grey Ghost Gallery, of Fredericksburg. The Cantleys, of Charlotte, NC were the lucky winners.

The tour participants came from far and wide, but CVBT member Mark Rothert, travelled the furthest, coming from his home in Portland, Oregon. We are always glad to see Mark whenever he is able to visit from the west coast. The day concluded with dinner at Amy's Cafe, in Falmouth, with period music by Colonel Gibson, his lovely wife Pat, and Joe Cress. The entire event was a grand success. **SL**

CVBT active in fundraising for major projects.

The CVBT is actively raising funds for two major projects, the Slaughter Pen Farm (acquired in 2006) and Wilderness Crossroads (acquired in 2009). Thanks to our members, we have made significant strides in paying down these notes, although we are by no means done. We have reduced our \$1 million pledge for the Slaughter Pen to a manageable \$150,000. For the Wilderness Crossroads, we have reduced our obligation to less than half of the overall cost, putting us ahead of schedule. We still have a balance of \$487,655 to pay off for the Wilderness property, but we are pursuing another grant to stretch our member donations as far as possible.

While we are active on both the Fredericksburg and Wilderness battlefields, we are still looking for opportunities at Chancellorsville. That battlefield stretches for miles

along State Route 3, so the Civil War preservation community jumps on any chance it gets to acquire historic road frontage. Of course, road frontage is also more marketable to commercial interests and therefore more expensive. This is why we exist, though. Recently, the Civil War Preservation Trust acquired 80 acres that are a critical component of the Jackson Flank Attack area and which are also within the authorized boundary of the National Park. The CVBT has purchased sites both within the National Park's authorized boundary as well as significant acreage outside the boundary that can be incorporated in the future.

Preserving ground at Chancellorsville is challenging, but within our defined mission. We know that time is short and we will be there when opportunities occur. **SL**

A SPECIAL EVENING WITH ED BEARSS



On November 30, the CVBT will host an intimate dinner with the incomparable Ed Bearss. This special event will be held in historic Fredericksburg at the Sentry Box, a meticulously restored Colonial period home, which was heavily damaged during the 1862 battle of Fredericksburg. This event will be a very exclusive gathering for no more than ten individuals. The evening will begin with cocktails followed by a sumptuous dinner in a setting overlooking the Rappahannock River, near one of the 1862 pontoon crossing sites. Participants will also receive a personal photo with Ed as a remembrance of this special gathering.

The cost is \$2,000 per person, most of which will be tax deductible (after we inform you of the actual cost of dinner). This price may appear steep, but the experience is a once in a lifetime opportunity to share an evening with one of the most ardent battlefield preservationists we know. The proceeds from your generosity will go directly to preserving more dirt and grass.

To reserve your place at the table, contact us as soon as possible.

Stay on the Skirmish Line!



Take a look at the mailing label on your latest Skirmish Line newsletter. You will see that it includes your CVBT membership expiration date. As a dirt and grass outfit, members can help us save on mailing costs by checking that expiration date and sending in their renewal on their own. If the date is highlighted, your membership has expired. While we would like to share the Skirmish Line with everyone, we can only afford to send it to current members. So please renew your membership at the appropriate time (we are not like magazines that like to get renewals six months in advance of expiration). You might also consider upgrading your membership level, to increase our capability to save hallowed ground in central Virginia.



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The Trust's mission is to purchase Civil War battlefield terrain and to advocate for battlefield protection at the local, state, and federal levels of government.

For information on membership, please write to the Trust at P.O. Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402; call our office at (540) 374-0900; or visit our website at www.cvbt.org.

Contributions to the CVBT are tax-deductible.

Membership Categories

Annual Member	\$ 35	Patron	\$ 500	Life Patron	\$10,000
Active Member	\$ 135	Benefactor	\$ 1,000	Corporate Member	\$ 500
Sustaining Member	\$ 250	Life Member	\$ 5,000	Corporate Patron	\$ 1,000



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