

On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

"Let Us Buy The Land:"

Coalition Forms to Preserve Chancellorsville

The Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield recently formed to oppose the imminent threat of development on historic terrain that saw action on May 1, 1863. Members include the Civil War Preservation Trust, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, the Spotsylvania Preservation Foundation, and the Spotsylvania Battlefield Education Foundation.

This group's immediate concern is a developer who plans to construct over 2,300 houses and 2.4 million square feet of commercial space on this hallowed ground. By any stretch of the imagination, construction of this magnitude and intensity will prevent anyone from ever again being able to study and understand the opening engagement of the campaign. Imagine traveling to Gettysburg and no longer having the opportunity to see the

first day's battlefield. Who could understand the subsequent two days?

The Coalition is actively working to prevent a rezoning of this ground from rural farmland to high-density commercial and residential uses. Even before the latest development plans were presented to Spotsylvania County, the CVBT sought to purchase much of this acreage. Formal efforts to initiate negotiations, however, were rebuffed. Subsequent offers to enter into good faith discussion have been similarly rejected.

The developer continues to press the county to rezone the contested land. Rezoning this acreage, however, will instantly increase its value approximately tenfold. At least one of the Spotsylvania Supervisors has admitted that they have the power to make the property owner quite rich. It is sad that public officials would consider destroying a

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Much of the May 1st battle was fought on the rolling ground in the photo above. A coalition has been formed to oppose the proposed development of this battlefield.

The Trust Releases Its List:

Hallowed Ground the CVBT has Saved

Since its formation, the Trust has systematically acquired land on all four of the area's battlefields. Our Charter Members have participated in these efforts and know them well. Newer members, however, may be interested in seeing what we have been able to accomplish over the past few years. The following summary shows the acreage that has been preserved, with your help.

Chancellorsville

McLaws' Wedge

99 acres Acquired in 1998
Sold to NPS

F flank Attack

5 acres Acquired in 1998
Sold to NPS

Nine Mile Run

5 acres Acquired in 1999

Talley Farm

25 acres Acquired in 1999

Orange Plank Rd.

3.8 acres Acquired in 2000

Smith Run

11.6 acres Acquired in 2001

Nine Mile Run

6.5 acres Acquired in 2002

Wilderness

Grant's Knoll

6 acres Acquired in 2001

Spotsylvania Court House

Po River

20 acres Acquired in 2002

Fredericksburg

Willis Hill

9.5 acres Acquired in 1997
Incorporated into Park

Pelham's Corner

2 lots Acquired in 1999

Total: 192 acres

We are actively seeking additional acreage on each of these battlefields. It should be evident that the greatest threat is on State Route 3, which runs through the heart of Chancellorsville. The May 1 battlefield that developers are seeking to get rezoned is also along this historic corridor.



These Confederate earthworks in Spotsylvania Court House Battlefield have been preserved through the generosity of our members.

PHOTO BY STEVEN STANLEY

Membership Categories

Annual Member
\$35

Active Member
\$135

Sustaining Member
\$250

Patron
\$500

Benefactor
\$1,000

Life Member
\$5,000

Life Patron
\$10,000

Corporate Member
\$500

Corporate Patron
\$1,000

On The Skirmish Line

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THE CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELDS TRUST CELEBRATES The Release of Frank O'Reilly's Book

Join the CVBT as it hosts a
Reception and Book Signing

FRIDAY, DEC. 13th

The 140th Anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg

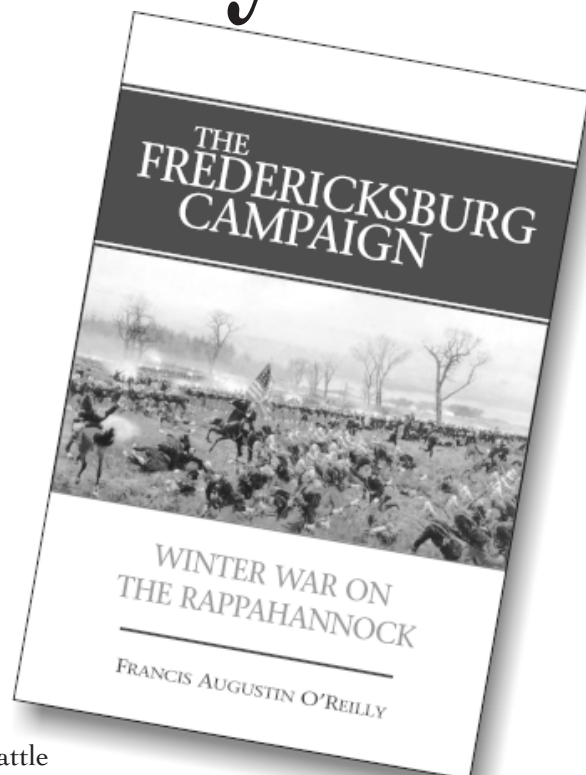
7 to 9 p.m.

Fredericksburg Square
525 Caroline Street

\$20.00 per person

ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY*

*Reception consists of light refreshments and a cash bar.



Be a part of this momentous occasion, the 140th Anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg, by attending this "advance release" reception and book signing of Frank O'Reilly's latest book: **The Fredericksburg Campaign**. Books are available for signing for \$34.95 each. Please pre-order your book(s) with your admission ticket order, they will be available for pick-up at the event. A limited number of books for purchase will be available that evening. If you are not attending the book signing, advance orders will be shipped by Dec. 18th at an additional cost. For more information, call Steven Stanley at (540) 659-6819 or email to coltype@erols.com or visit the CVBT website at www.cvbt.org.

All ticket and book orders must be received by December 1st to meet publishers deadline.

Order your book today and receive it in time for Christmas gift giving.

This book is NOT AVAILABLE in stores until January 2003.

CVBT'S RECEPTION AND BOOK SIGNING FOR FRANK O'REILLY'S LATEST BOOK

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

SIGN ME UP FOR: ☐ RECEPTION AND BOOK SIGNING - \$20 PER PERSON x _____ = \$ _____

☐ I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER "THE FREDERICKSBURG CAMPAIGN" - \$34.95 x NO. OF BOOKS _____ = \$ _____

☐ PLEASE SHIP MY COPY(S) TO ME - \$4.95 SHIPPING AND HANDLING (1ST BOOK); \$1.50 EACH ADDITIONAL BOOKS = \$ _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT: ☐ CHECK

☐ VISA

☐ MASTER CARD

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____

EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (REQUIRED FOR CREDIT CARD ORDERS) _____

Please return completed registration form with credit card information or a check payable to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust**.
Mail completed form to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, attn: Steven Stanley, PO Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402.**

Brian Pohanka Expresses Concern In a Letter to Spotsylvania Supervisors

Numerous folks have contacted the elected officials of Spotsylvania County to express their concern about plans to develop the May 1, 1863 battleground at Chancellorsville. Opponents of preservation have argued that since this area is not already included in the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, then it must not be that important. Such assertions are nonsense. The Battle of Chancellorsville unfolded across more than 20,000 acres. Of this number, approximately 7,500 acres is considered core battlefield (where the

heaviest fighting occurred). The National Park Service, however, owns no more than 1,600 acres on behalf of the American people. The May 1, 1863 battlefield is significant, but not protected.

Brian Pohanka has written an elegantly worded letter to the Board of Supervisors that we reprint here in its entirety. It is an eloquent appeal by someone who has been a friend to the CVBT and to battlefield preservation in general. It also quietly addresses those who claim this land is historically insignificant.

August 28, 2002

As a long time student of the American Civil War, and with an abiding devotion to the heroic legacy of the soldiers who gave so much in that terrible conflict, I wish to add my voice to those who object to the large development proposed for Chancellorsville.

There is a place for a project such as this. But adjacent to a National Park, on ground that undeniably witnessed combat and casualties in a great battle, is the wrong place. Not only would the development in question destroy much of the first day's battlefield, but the resulting pressures of traffic (with demands for wider roads), future construction and inevitable sprawl, will have a detrimental impact upon the remaining battlefield acreage, including that within the National Park boundaries. Especially in these times, the place where brave Americans fought and died should be honored and maintained by lower density zoning for historic land in the environs of a national battlefield park.

One of those who perished on May 1, 1863, on ground that is in fact within the proposed development, was a young man named William James Temple. He was only 2 months past his 21st birthday, and was the guardian for his orphaned siblings—four sisters and a brother. He left his college studies to serve his country and he gave his life at Chancellorsville commanding a company of the 17th U.S. Infantry. Captain Temple risked all and gave all, from a sense of patriotism and duty and hope. He was but one of many soldiers, North and South, who made that ultimate sacrifice. Surely their memory, their legacy and the inspiration of their service for us today is worthy of a tangible remembrance and an enduring respect. I hope that the impact of this project will be seriously questioned, with a sense of the history of that ground, and the imperishable worth of those ideals.

Brian C. Pohanka
Alexandria, Virginia

FROM THE DESK OF Brian Pohanka

August 28, 2002

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Brian C. Pohanka
Alexandria, Virginia

Email Alert

One of the many wonders of our day is the way in which we can correspond with one another electronically. The Trust occasionally sends out e-mail alerts to members who have provided us their e-mail address. If you desire to be included in this network, please forward your e-mail address to our webmaster. The obvious way to do this, of course, is through our website, at www.cvbt.org.

Chancellorsville

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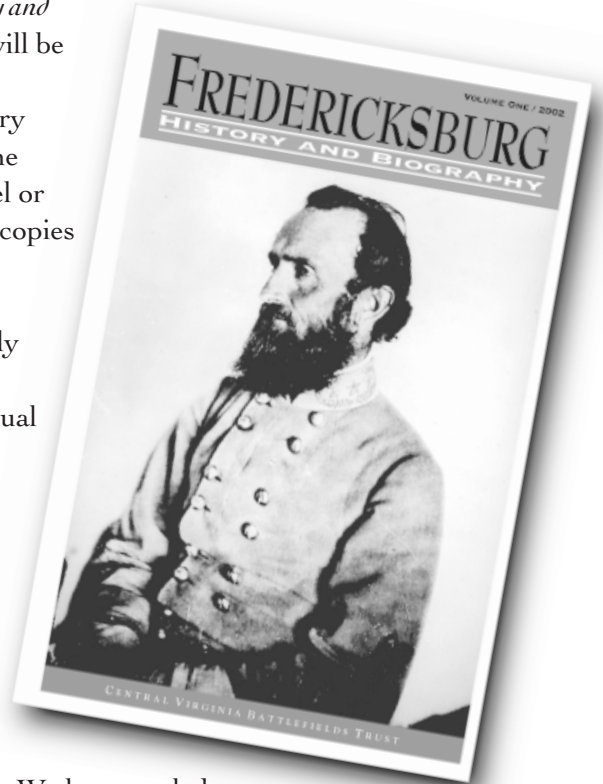
nationally significant resource without seeking any lasting benefit for their constituents. Development of this magnitude will strain existing county services and result in increased taxes for current residents. There is certainly the potential for revenue to be generated from this site, but when? Commercial development will be considered only after the hundreds of new homes generate sufficient traffic to meet standard investment formulas. In addition, commercial uses on this property will not necessarily provide tax revenues in excess of what could be realized by visitor spending for lodging and restaurants. Visitors, after all, don't demand county services such as water, sewer, and schools.

During this rezoning process, the CVBT has formally indicated its desire to purchase this ground. Trust president John D. Mitchell has also publicly stated: "Let us buy this land!" Unfortunately, we have not even been given the opportunity to make an offer.

New Gift for CVBT Active Members

Later this year, the CVBT will introduce a new serial publication called *Fredericksburg History and Biography*. A copy will be provided, with our compliments, to every member who is at the Active Member level or greater. Additional copies will be available for purchase.

We had previously sent members at the Active Level an annual gift consisting of a pewter medallion. These items were tokens of our appreciation for members' interest and assistance. Our pewtersmith, however, has decided to move on. We have settled on this new publication as an alternative that we think our members will enjoy.



CVBT President John D. Mitchell announcing the Trusts cooperation in saving the Chancellorsville battlefield at a July 31st press conference.

RENEW TODAY!!

☐ Renewing Member

☐ New Member

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

☐ PATRON - \$500

☐ CORPORATE MEMBER - \$500

☐ ANNUAL MEMBER - \$35

☐ BENEFACTOR - \$1,000

☐ CORPORATE PATRON - \$1,000

☐ ACTIVE MEMBER - \$135

☐ LIFE MEMBER - \$5,000

☐ SUSTAINING MEMBER - \$250

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METHOD OF PAYMENT:

☐ CHECK

☐ VISA

☐ MASTER CARD

CREDIT CARD NUMBER

EXP. DATE

SIGNATURE (REQUIRED)

Please return completed renewal form with credit card information or a check payable to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust.**

Mail completed form to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, PO Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402.**

In a constant endeavor to keep our costs down, the CVBT publishes a renewal form in all issues of "On The Skirmish Line". Please check your mailing label to see if your membership is due for renewal and clip out the form above and send it back to our office. If your membership is current, but you know of someone who would like to join, please pass this membership form on to them. The CVBT would be glad to include them in our ever growing list of members.



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Fredericksburg, VA 22402

(540) 374-0900 ■ fax (540) 371-4505

www.cvbt.org