

On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

Incremental Erosion . . . Chancellorsville on Endangered List

With the din of Route 3 traffic in the background, a group of reporters and dignitaries crowded into Salem Church to hear the fate of Chancellorsville.

On June 15th, the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced it has placed the Chancellorsville Battlefield on its list of the 11 most endangered historic places. Chancellorsville joins other sites around the country such as Mesa Verde National Park, Colo., Governor's Island, N.Y. and Cannery Row, Cal. as a "Wake-Up Call" to the nation of the plight of our historic resources.

The location of the press conference reminded everyone what the fate of the battlefield would be if nothing is done in the immediate future. The Salem Church site, related to the Chancellorsville Campaign, has been completely swallowed up by development. Route 3 traffic continues unabated, with people trying to go to the many shopping centers and sub-divisions surrounding this once hallowed ground.

"Today is a day of sorrow," Enos Richardson, president of the CVBT said. "It's sad that this area has been needlessly and mindlessly destroyed. [But] it's also a day of hope. We're hoping that we can in fact do something for what's left of the Chancellorsville Battlefield."

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Salem Church has been lost to overdevelopment and "progress." Will Chancellorsville suffer the same fate?



CVBT's Annual Meeting A Light Show and An Unexpected Hero

Renewal Note

Please check your mailing label to see if your membership is due for renewal and clip out the renewal form and send it back.

The CVBT's Annual Meeting started off with a spectacular light and wind show. On the evening of May 2nd the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust held its 2nd Annual Membership Meeting on the grounds of the newly acquired McLaws' Wedge. Shortly before the meeting started, however, a severe thunderstorm rolled in. Lightning crashing all around and the wind blew so hard that it leveled the catering tent.

With over 100 members and their guests attending, the evening could have been a total washout, but fortunately the storm was fast moving and quickly left the area. The meeting was able to start in its wake. Members were treated to a catered BBQ dinner, with CVBT Board Member John Mitchell doning the barbeque apron and preparing the Barbeque himself.

The Joe Ayres Quartet provided Civil War period music for the enjoyment of everyone

Chancellorsville. Thanks to both for helping out at our meeting.

After dinner, President Enos Richardson presided over the Annual Meeting. The membership in attendance voted the Board of Directors back in and unanimously agreed to the sale of McLaws's Wedge to the National Park Service. Enos Richardson also made several special presentations to groups who have helped the



PHOTO BY STEVEN STANLEY

CVBT members socializing before the start of the Annual Meeting, thankful that the storms have passed.



PHOTO BY STEVEN STANLEY

Robert K. Krick (in hat) purchases a commemorative postal cachet from the booth set-up by the Capital District Civil War Round Table of Albany.

during dinner. Also at the meeting was the Capital District Civil War Round Table of Albany providing all those in attendance an opportunity to have programs and special cacheted envelopes cancelled with commemorative cancellation stamps made especially for the 135th Anniversary of the Battle of

Trust in their preservation efforts. A special acknowledgement was made for 10 year old Sam Harrelson, the preservation march's unexpected hero, who as a re-enactor raised over \$800 for the Trust. Sam had participated in the preservation march earlier in the day.

The Trust's 2nd Annual Meeting was a big success and next year's meeting should be even more enjoyable and successful. To all those who attended, congratulations on making the meeting a success. To those who could not attend, we hope to see you there next year!

On The Skirmish Line

is published for the CVBT membership at 604-A William Street, Suite 1, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. Telephone numbers are 540-374-0900 (local), 888-374-0900 (toll free). The CVBT is chartered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Inc. Board of Directors

Enos Richardson, Jr. <i>President</i>	Michael P. Stevens, MD <i>Treasurer</i>	Carroll Hayden Jean W. Jones John D. Mitchell	James M. Pates Anne W. Rowe Steven Stanley
F. Baldwin Harrington, MD, <i>Vice-President</i>	Erik F. Nelson, <i>Secretary</i>		

Memorial Day 1998

Dr. Stevens Praises Trust's Work

On May 25th, CVBT Treasurer and Director Dr. Michael Stevens presented the Annual Memorial Day speech at the National Cemetery in Fredericksburg. Dr. Stevens' speech moved the crowd on hand that sunny Memorial Day. The following is just an excerpt from his speech.

"... Civil War battlefields are being lost at an ever-accelerating pace, and with every loss we lose the most direct, and potent, of all memorials. When we can stand at the very point of battle we can imagine ourselves in that place and at that time . . . We can understand the enormity of it all when we can come to the very ground they met upon, to reflect not only upon what they did but also why and how they did it. And by so doing, we can learn more about ourselves, about the human condition, about the higher virtues of

honor and duty and self-sacrifice and loyalty and love of country, about the loftier side of the human soul, about the meaning of life itself: The way it is lived and the terms upon which, at last, it must be surrendered. . . ."

"Right over there, for example, I can show you Willis Hill. It was the center of the Confederate defensive position during the battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862, a scene of unimaginable chaos and suffering. Our group, Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, was able to help save that land from development, & I am glad to say that we're not alone in that work."

"Thank you very much."



PHOTO BY REBECCA RICKEY

Dr. Michael Stevens delivering his Memorial Day speech.

Land Transactions Trust Preserves Flank Attack Site

The Trust has recently sold as well as purchased land on the Chancellorsville Battlefield. In May, following our annual meeting and 135th anniversary event, we conveyed the 100 acre tract known as McLaws' Wedge to the National Park Service. Thanks to land acquisition funds in the federal budget, the Park Service was able to make an offer on this land which the Trust subsequently accepted. The Trust acquired this land in September 1997, for \$450,000 and had been actively raising funds to pay the note. Since the property is located within the Park's Congressionally authorized boundary, they were able to buy it from the Trust when their funds became available.

The sale of McLaws' Wedge would free up funds that the Trust could then use to save other threatened land. Before the sale could be finalized, though, another property needed immediate attention before heavy equipment moved in to prepare the site for a house. This five acre parcel stands on Route 3 (the Plank Road which served as the axis for Stonewall Jackson's flank attack on May 2, 1863). It is quite literally the site of

Jackson's first collision with the Union right flank at Chancellorsville. The Trust offered to purchase the site from the initial buyers and they readily accepted, after learning of its historic importance.

The sale of McLaws' Wedge has since been finalized so this 5-acre parcel in the flank attack area represents the Trust's sole outstanding debt. The property sold for \$74,000 and we still owe \$25,000 of this amount.

So as not to lose momentum, the Trust is actively searching for its next project. Our criteria is that the ground be historically significant or will protect significant terrain. We also have to evaluate our financial capacity to make a purchase as well as our ability to generate interest nationwide in the events that occurred there. We are not limited to land that is within the Park's authorized boundary, though. While the Park is able to purchase land from the Trust if it is within their boundary, we have the flexibility to pursue any terrain we find to be a worthwhile contribution to perserving the integrity of this area's battlefields.

www.cvbt.org

Our web page continues to expand, through the generosity of members Michael P. Stevens and Steve Stanley. The CVBT web site is well worth a visit and includes an inordinate number of links to other Civil War web sites. Pay us a visit. You will not be disappointed.

Why Purchase Land?

Many persons (obviously outside our membership) ask why we should buy more land when we, or the Park Service, cannot take care of what has already been preserved. In effect, the question is how much land will be enough? Our response is that we find it important to maintain land intact, as a national treasure for future generations. Open space or undeveloped land, though not in active use, has tremendous value. It is an asset that can help to educate as well as provide a tangible connection to our heritage. Too often, the places where we live and shop reinforce how disconnected we have become from the land. Names such as Oak Hill Estates or Rock Ridge Mall are often only reminders of what has been levelled and paved over. While growth and development are a necessary part of our lives, we should not focus on current needs without also

"We are in about the last decade during which the primary Virginia battlefields can be saved to some extent. By then, everything not preserved outright will be under a coat of asphalt."

Robert K. Krick

APCWS' Central Virginia Victories

The Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) has long been interested in purchasing specific battlefields in central Virginia and has been working diligently and patiently to do so. This Maryland-based group recently acquired land at Cedar Mountain and at Brandy Station, both of which are in Culpeper County, west of Fredericksburg. Many of our members who are also members of the APCWS will already be familiar with these efforts.

These battlefield purchases are extremely ambitious, but also gratifying. The APCWS has acquired 152 acres of the Cedar Mountain battlefield. They held a partial interest in this land for several years and were able to obtain full ownership in April of this year for \$290,000. The Brandy Station purchase included an impressive 1,543 acres for \$6.2 million. This group has also closed a deal for an additional 14 acres on a key portion of the Brandy Station field, for \$70,000. The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust applauds these considerable efforts. Well done!

looking forward. Land held in trust for future generations is a noble endeavor which we intend to continue to pursue.

Timing, in this instance, is also critical. Robert K. Krick, a noted Civil War historian, has said: "We are in about the last decade during which the primary Virginia battlefields can be saved to some extent. By then, everything not preserved outright will be under a coat of asphalt. The Shenandoah Valley sites and some others will survive much longer, giving us a later window of opportunity, but anything on or near the I-95 corridor is on the final chapter. It's depressing, of course, but ardent efforts are accomplishing some good. I keep asking myself why on earth didn't we (myself included) begin working this hard 25 years ago. Hindsight is 20/20, of course." We must press on, and quickly.

Note to New Members

Our membership has grown considerably through our campaign to purchase McLaws' Wedge as well as from the highly successful 135th Anniversary of the Battle of Chancellorsville Living History Program. Processing and acknowledging these new donations, however, has taken time and we did not get all our letters of thanks out until early July. Most of our members know that we operate without paid staff, but this policy bears repeating for new members.

The Trust operates through an active Board of Directors and dedicated volunteers, rather than maintaining a payroll. This policy ensures that virtually all donated proceeds are used for the purchase of historic ground (dirt and grass). Without paid staff, though, acknowledgement letters can be delayed if we must handle a large number at one time, since this work occurs after regular working hours and on weekends. We hope our new members will be encouraged, if not thrilled, that their donations are being used almost entirely to purchase land. In the meantime, we apologize for the delay.

Incremental Erosion from page 1

The CVBT is hoping that this listing will draw national attention to the situation here at Chancellorsville. Development is spreading rapidly towards the battlefield and in some places already overtaking important sites.

John Hildreth, regional director of the National Trust told the crowd, "There's a NEW Battle of Chancellorsville What we're facing is really an incremental erosion of the significance of the site." Inclusion on the endangered list will "bring attention to that fact . . . our heritage is at threat, and this is one example."

The modern-day battle pits the battlefield against plans for road expansion and development. The major threat to the area is a beltway proposed to be built around Fredericksburg. The Outer Connector, as it is called, would end less than a mile from the battlefield park site and

bring major growth to the Chancellorsville battlefield.

The CVBT has stepped into the struggle to preserve this part of our nation's heritage. Our mission consists of two components. First, we seek to acquire historic property outright for preservation. So far, we have successfully purchased three tracts of land, one in Fredericksburg and two at Chancellorsville. Second, we advocate for appropriate planning and land use in and around the Fredericksburg area battlefields. This comprehensive approach is critical in order to preserve the battlefield itself as well to ensure an acceptable context for such a significant national resource. The National Trust's designation highlights the threat that our members have already recognized and to which they have generously responded.

135th Anniversary Weekend Flank Attack March and Living History

The rain falling, as the first re-enactors arrived on Friday, May 1st, threatened to dampen the Chancellorsville Anniversary Events. By 6 a.m. the next morning, though, the rains had subsided and with nearly 200 re-enactors in camp, there was little doubt that the events schedule would take place.

On the weekend of May 2nd and 3rd, the CVBT hosted the 135th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of Chancellorsville with a preservation march on Saturday and a living history program set for Sunday. In-between both of these events the Trust held its 2nd Annual Meeting on Saturday night.

At 8 a.m., on Saturday, May 2nd, the preservation marchers formed up for the upcoming 14-mile trek. The march was a recreation of "Stonewall" Jackson's 1862 Flank March, in which Jackson marched around General Joseph Hooker's Union army and then launched a surprise attack on their flank. The re-enactors

started on McLaws' Wedge and culminated their march at the Wilderness Baptist Church. The attained an emotional pull almost immediately, as the re-enactors marched past the bivouac site where Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson met for the last time exactly 135 years earlier on

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Preservation marchers recreating Jackson's Flank Attack March on Saturday, May 2nd.

PHOTO BY STEVEN STANLEY

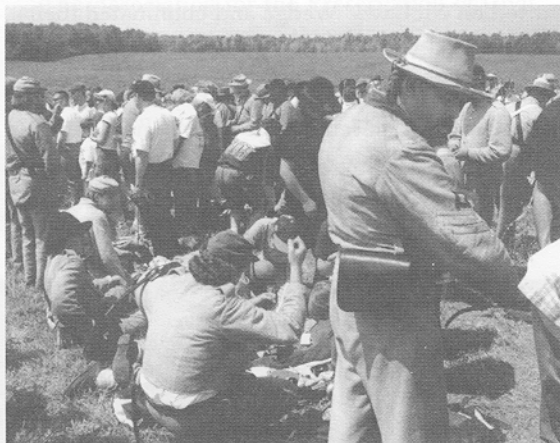
135th Anniversary Weekend from page 5

Saturday, May 2, 1862. Heavy rains fell sporadically throughout the day, but did not deter the re-

enactors from completing the march. The days end not only raised blisters on their feet, but also raised nearly \$30,000 for the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust. Ten-year-old Sam Harrelson, of Virginia Beach, by far the youngest participant in the march, not only walked the 14-mile march, but raised over

\$800. Our thanks to Sam and the re-enactors for all their efforts. That evening the Trust held it's annual meeting on McLaws' Wedge with over 100 members in attendance (see separate story).

When Sunday, May 3rd arrived, the sun was shining brightly and skies were free of rain when the third part of the Trust's commemoration



On Sunday, spectators were able to inspect infantry equipment and have questions answered.

began. The gates opened at 10 a.m. with cars streaming onto the McLaws' Wedge property. More than 3,000 people visited and enjoyed the living history program. Everything from infantry demonstrations to children's programs made it a fun filled and educational time for the entire family. The crowd bravely stood their ground as Confederate troops charged in a mock infantry



Infantry demonstrating tactics used during the Civil War.

attack that ended one of the infantry demonstrations. A big crowd pleaser was the artillery demonstration which shook the ground. Spectators were also able to interact with the re-enactors between demonstrations, learning about what a soldier would carry into battle, field surgeon techniques, and Civil War era photography. Historian Ed Bearss led several groups on tours of the fighting on McLaws' Wedge, for a most enjoyable experience.

The main tent held several attractions. Author and historian Gary Gallagher was in attendance to sign copies of his latest books. The Capital District Civil War Round Table of Albany provided their special 135th anniversary postal cancellations. The Trust also a booth set up to answer questions about the CVBT and to sign up new members.

Later that afternoon, our guest speakers took center stage starting with John Hennessy of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. He reiterated the need for civic involvement in battlefield preservation. Next, well known historian and author Brian Pohanka also spoke on the need for more preservation.

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PHOTO BY STEVEN STANLEY

PHOTO BY LINDA G. POWELL

1997 CVBT Financials

Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Inc.

Balance Sheet
Year Ended December 31, 1997
(unaudited)

ASSETS

Current Assets:	
Unrestricted cash	\$ 43,690
Board restricted cash	4,279
Deposit on land contracts	<u>100,000*</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 147,969</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 147,969</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities:	
Note payment	<u>\$ 75,000</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 75,000</u>
Net Assets:	<u>\$ 72,969</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 147,969</u>

*Deposit on purchase of the Ashley Tract

Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Inc.

Income Statement
Year Ended December 31, 1997
(unaudited)

Revenues:	
Dues and donations	\$ 91,811
Interest	<u>231</u>
Total revenues	<u>\$ 92,042</u>
Expenses:	
Rent	\$ 1,800
Telephone	1,076
Licenses and fees	1,536
Insurance	145
Printing and Postage	4,280
Office expenses	643
Supplies	150
Dues	200
Promotion	993
Repairs and maintenance	175
Internet web site	575
Grans and donations	<u>20,000*</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 31,575</u>
Change in Net Assets	\$ 60,469
Net Assets, beginning of year	<u>12,500</u>
Net Assets, end of year	<u>\$ 72,969</u>

*Payment for the acquisition of Willis Hill

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The highlight of the afternoon was the always animated Ed Bearss, former Chief Historian of the National Park Service, who described in detail the action on McLaws' Wedge, while in the background infantry demonstrated the action that he was describing. The effect was that of a living diorama.

A most enjoyable weekend was had by all, with the Trust raising over \$40,000. This figure was a combined amount from the preservation march, the living history program, and souvenir sales. Shortly after the event, the property was sold to the National Park Service and now is preserved so that all Americans can walk and savor this hallowed ground.

The Trust would like to thank all those who made this event such a success. A special thanks to Robert Lee Hodge who was instrumental in organizing the re-enactors, and to Rebecca Rickey for organizing the overall event. Thank you one and all.

Further Acknowledgements

In acknowledging the great number of donors who contributed funds in support of the re-enactment of Stonewall Jackson's flank march, we find that we do not have addresses for many of the re-enactors. Consequently, the following list is the best we can do to recognize the contribution of a total \$3,264.00. We would be happy to include these persons in our membership if they will let us know their addresses. In the meantime, we gratefully accept and acknowledge these donations from the following persons.

Erik Auger, Mark Bingham, Bryce Burgess, Brian Egen, Luke Gammache, Albert Graybill, Richard Greathouse, Scott Grimm, Gerald Harlow, Hensel Phelps Construction Co., Gordon M. Howard, John Krausse, Joe MacGreal, John Pagano, Steve Peck, Tom Stafford, Kevin Stewart, William L. Tapp, Jr., Randolph Ubben, David Wilson, and an unknown donor of \$155.

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

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

LIFE PATRON - \$10,000

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, 604A William Street, Suite 1, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.**

In a constant endeavor to keep our costs down and holding to our unofficial motto of "Dirt and Grass", the CVBT will not be sending out reminders of when your membership is to be renewed. To help facilitate your renewal efforts, we will publish 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 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.



CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELDS TRUST

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