

On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

And Keep Moving On: The CVBT's Preservation Work Never Stops

Success in battlefield preservation does not occur in any logical sequence of property acquisition. We do not conclude one purchase and take up another when everything has been neatly tied up. Instead, the CVBT (and the CWPT) are always working on several projects at any one time. When one of them comes to fruition, as occurred at Lick Run and then Latimer's Knoll in 2004, we announce it to the world, solicit funds to help pay off any note, and keep moving on.

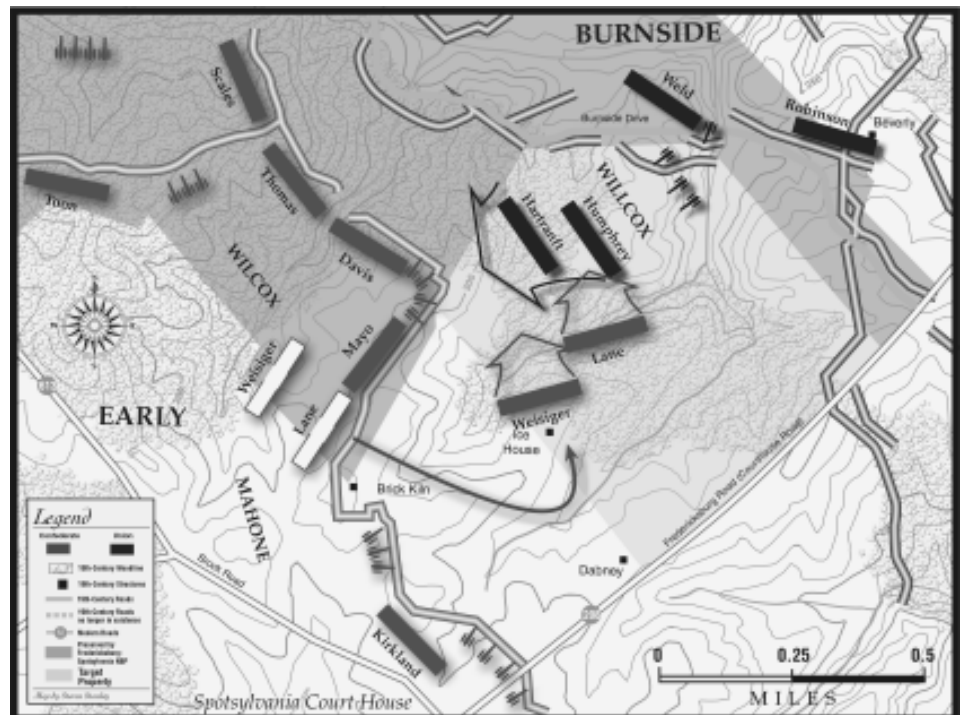
The CVBT is working on at least one project at each of the area's four battlefields and usually has several projects in the works at high risk sites. Chancellorsville, for instance, is extremely threatened because it is bisected by an east-west state highway. This existing infrastructure can support new commercial development as well as new subdivisions and it is imperative that we actively work toward acquisition of selected properties. A new road at Spotsylvania Court House has begun to exert similar pressure on that battlefield. The planned road is intended to bypass the Court House crossroads, but will also slice through an area that saw heavy fighting on May 18, 1864.

The Civil War community has worked with state and local officials

to ensure that two things occur when this road is built. The first is to ensure the new road alignment avoids the battlefield as much as possible. The second is to limit access to the area between the new road and the National Park boundary. Limited access will avoid obtrusive development pushed up against the Park resources. This area has not yet been interpreted for the public, but could be very readily, once the boundary area is suitably protected and buffered.

The story that could finally be told relates to

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The CVBT has been working on acquiring property associated with the May 18, 1864 fighting near Heth's Salient. This property would help protect NPS holdings at Spotsylvania Courthouse. Map by Steven Stanley.

2005 Annual Meeting at Latimer's Knoll

The Ninth Annual Meeting Best Yet

On Saturday, May 7th, the CVBT held its Ninth Annual Meeting on a key portion of the Fredericksburg battlefield. The site was land where the property owner

The day began with a tour of the southern end of the Fredericksburg battlefield, led by National Park Service historian **Frank O'Reilly**. Frank is the author of a definitive study of the fighting at Fredericksburg (*The Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter War on the Rappahannock*). He led a group to well known sites such as Prospect Hill and the Bernard Cabins, but he also took them to places like the Pierson Farm, known to the veterans of this battle as "slaughter farm." His intimate knowledge of the ground and his exhaustive research into the action that occurred there are without rival. Those who tramped the terrain in his company were truly well rewarded for the effort. By a twist of fate (or more likely Frank's careful planning), the tour ended at Latimer's Knoll where caterers were soon setting up a BBQ dinner and beer from the local brewery was being packed in ice.

CVBT president Mike Stevens called the meeting to order as folks finished up dinner. He reported that the Trust had begun the year, in January 2004, with the respectable accomplishment of having preserved 224 acres of battlefield ground. He then proudly announced that by the end

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CVBT president Mike Stevens presents Tricord representative M. Lee Garrison III with the Trust's Preservation Leadership Award, for that firm's success in coordinating preservation of the May 1, 1863 battlefield at Chancellorsville.

had donated an easement for maintaining the historic ground intact. It was our pleasure to be able to share with our members the experience of standing on this hallowed ground, to better understand its tactical value.

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Annual Meeting

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of the year, the CVBT had helped to preserve a total of 484 acres (which included the 104-acre easement, where the meeting was being held).

Mike also noted that the CVBT had presented its 2nd Annual Ralph Happel Award to **Brian Pohanka**, in December. Brian has since passed away, taken by cancer at an all too early age. We are glad we were able to recognize his many contributions to land preservation while he was still able to visit with old friends and inspire new ones. Mike also thanked the Sunshine Lady Foundation for their continued support of the Trust. This charitable organization has been instrumental in cleaning up acquired sites, so they will not continue to be used as dumps, and with capping wells, so they will not present a danger to those who might tramp through them. Sunshine Lady funding has also ensured that CVBT can produce its journal *Fredericksburg History and Biography*.

Jerry Brent made the Treasurer's Report. For specific information on the CVBT financials, members are directed to our website at www.cvbt.org.

Mike noted that the CVBT Board of Directors was losing Lloyd Harrison that year as well as Linda Wandres. Linda, however, was going to serve as the new Executive Director. Erik Nelson then presented a slate of nominees for the CVBT Board. There were no additional nominations from the floor. Nominations were closed and the following members duly elected by a vote of the membership present:

Doug Horstman (first term). Doug is a resident of Spotsylvania County and brings a wealth of knowledge related to



Taylor Welsh picks the winner of the Don Troiani print 'Jackson's Flank Attack.' Trust representatives Mike Stevens and Mike Greenfield are trying hard not to look too menacing.

fund raising.

Jerry H. Brent (second term). Jerry is a lifelong resident of Fredericksburg and is a very able treasurer for the Trust. He works for the federal government his forebear fought against, when he served in Company M, in Micah Jenkins' Palmetto Sharpshooters.

John D. Mitchell (fourth term). John is a founding member of the CVBT and has served as its president. He is a skilled lands negotiator.

Erik F. Nelson (fourth term). Also a founding member, Erik is the Trust's secretary. He also edits the Trust's publication *Fredericksburg History and Biography*.

Michael P. Stevens (fourth term). Dr. Mike is the CVBT president and a committed preservationist who tirelessly supports battlefield protection anywhere where such work is being accomplished.

Following the vote, Mike introduced the full Board to the membership, but saved his most heartfelt praise for the members themselves:

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Annual Meeting

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Your energy and very generous support clearly reflects the depth and sincerity of your commitment to CVBT and to battlefield preservation, and because of you, hallowed ground has been saved forever and for all time.

In a place like Fredericksburg, there is a wealth of historic places that are of national interest. Many are protected, but many others are not. No one organization can effectively preserve everything that needs to be protected, so partnerships become critical to success. Mike presented the CVBT's Preservation Leadership Awards to some very good folks who



Tim Welsh accepts a Preservation Leadership Award for his easement to protect Latimer's Knoll, on the Fredericksburg battlefield.

partnered with us to achieve some very good things within the community.

The first award recipient was the **Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors** who had actively worked with developers and preservationists to protect a significant

portion of the May 1 battlefield at Chancellorsville. This terrain is known as the Lick Run sector and this governing body helped to work a deal that benefited all parties. Mike praised their vision and willingness to understand the land's importance to history as well as the community.

The second award went to **Tricord, Inc.** for coordinating the overall effort to preserve the Lick Run battlefield. This firm voluntarily reduced its potential profits, in order to assist in preserving this important ground. Mike and Craig Jones are the owners of Tricord, and their engineer Lee Garrison was on hand to accept the award. These folks will be able to develop a portion of the ground without compromising the integrity of the historic ground. The CVBT prides itself on figuring out ways for everyone to win. This effort is meant to ensure that battlefield preservation can always be considered a viable option

The next award went to **Tim Welsh**, who owns Latimer's Knoll. He donated more than 100 acres in an easement to the CVBT, to ensure that its historic integrity would be protected for all time. We could not be more thrilled with this gift since the easement precludes development on the most desirable portion of the site, the knoll upon which Confederate guns fired on December 13, 1862. Another award was presented to the **Lansdowne Properties LLC**, as they were also involved in the easement at Latimer's Knoll.

Mike called upon Tim's daughter, Taylor Welsh, to draw the winning ticket for the Don Troiani print, *Jackson's Flank Attack*. Taylor solemnly drew the name of **Greg Mertz**, who was on hand to take possession of this work that depicts Stonewall Jackson's troops in motion, on the afternoon of May 2, 1863, just moments

Annual Meeting

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before bursting out of the woods on the Union flank.

As darkness descended, folks gathered around a fire to listen to period music, played by The Virginia Serenaders, from Mine Run, and to socialize with old friends and new.

On Sunday, National Park Service historian **Eric Mink** led a tour of the recently purchased ground at Lick Run (the May 1 battlefield of the Chancellorsville Campaign). This terrain is the easternmost bit of ground that will ever be preserved at Chancellorsville, as the Salem Church and Zoan Church ridges have been paved or are in the process of being paved. The Lick Run sector is a wonderful addition, however, to the visitor experience at Chancellorsville. The ground where the opening shots of the campaign were fired is protected and the decisive high ground to the west still looms large, as it did to the troops who fought there in 1863.

This tour group saw the seedlings (hundreds and hundreds of them) where volunteers had already begun to reestablish the historic tree line (based on an 1867 War Department map). In time, visitors will be able to better understand the limits of the open space as the trees grow and mature. The housing development that was part of the purchase agreement will be fully screened by this thick band of trees and the May 1 field will regain an exceptional integrity.

We are proud of the projects we have been involved in, in partnership with Tricord, Inc., Tim Welsh and the Lansdowne Properties LLC, the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors, and the



Eric Mink (foreground) explaining the intense fighting that took place on the newly acquired Lick Run battlefield following a work day earlier this year. Photo by Steven Stanley.

Civil War Preservation Trust. We are glad that our members were among the first to stand on Latimer's Knoll and to tour the Lick Run field.

For our annual meetings, we like to provide new battlefield experiences for those who are so instrumental in preserving them. Next year will be no exception. Hope to see you then.

In Memoriam: Charles E. Hudson

The CVBT wishes to recognize a number of donations that were made to the Trust in memory of Charles E. Hudson. Mr. Hudson was a prominent Alexandria businessman and commercial real estate developer, who served as president of Gates, Hudson & Associates. We wish to thank Mr. Hudson's family for their thoughtfulness in remembering the CVBT. Contributions in Mr. Hudson's name were made by: Laurie Blackburn, Dwight P. Blankenbaker, Heidi & David Bowman, James E. Hauptman, Stephen Melko, Irene & Conrad Mills, Karen O'Gorman, Alan Walker, and Karen Wax. We extend our condolences – and sincere thanks – to all of these individuals

Keep Moving On

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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

U.S. Grant's assault on May 18, 1864. Four divisions (elements of the Union 2nd and 5th Corps) were to attack across the abandoned mule shoe salient (already within the National Park) while two brigades from Ambrose Burnside's 9th Corps were to advance to their left. A Confederate salient (within the Park but within mere feet of land that could be developed), occupied by Henry Heth's Division, jutted out in Burnside's sector and the advancing Federals remained oblivious to its existence until the assault column began to take fire on its flank. When the Confederates opened fire to their front as well, the resulting crossfire rivaled what Union

soldiers had experienced at Fredericksburg, in 1862. Burnside's attack collapsed, as did the Union assaults to his right. The next day, at the Harris Farm, the two sides fought their last engagement around Spotsylvania Court House and the battles in that area came to an end. The next action would be at the North Anna River.

The next action for the CVBT, however, is to ensure that Heth's Salient is not compromised by the Virginia Department of Transportation. An adequate amount of land must be acquired to protect this battleground. The state highway department, however, has tried to enhance access to the land adjacent to the Park, which would ensure new development. The CVBT and the CWPT are watching this process carefully, to ensure an opportunity to preserve this area is not lost.



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