

On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

Volume 7, No. 1

Winter 2003

From the President:

2002 in Review

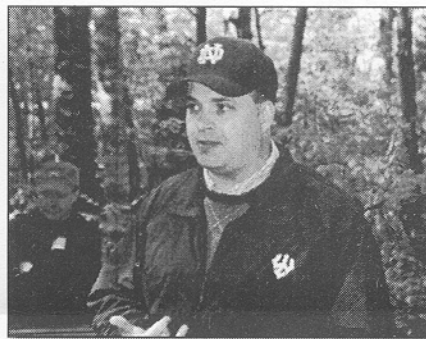
The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust has had a busy year during 2002, but the benefit to be derived from most of this effort will come later.

We spent a great deal of time working with the Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield to try to protect the scene of action of May 1, 1863.

We have offered to purchase this acreage, but the latest developer wants Spotsylvania County to rezone this land from agricultural to commercial uses before discussing its sale. Rezoning, however, will increase its market value at least ten fold.

Our group strongly supports private property rights, but no one has an inherent right to exploit the American people.

The developer purchased an option on agricultural land, which he



Recently published author Frank O'Reilly leads a tour for us at the 2002 Annual Meeting.

certainly has a right to use - for agriculture or limited residential construction. The landowner does not have a "right" to a rezoning if this action is not in the best interest of Spotsylvania County.

Our work to try to purchase this acreage continues into 2003.

The effort to preserve Chancellorsville continues, but several other items were successfully con-

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Book Signing a Resounding Success

On Friday, December 13, 2002, the CVBT hosted a book signing for Frank O'Reilly's definitive new study - Fredericksburg: Winter War on the Rappahannock.

We were able to secure advance copies from the Louisiana State University Press for this special event on what was the 140th anniversary of the battle.

While rain beat down on the streets outside, a cash bar and plenty of food kept everyone in a festive mood as the author graciously signed nearly 250 volumes.

This excellent book will stand as one of the foremost authorities on the Fredericksburg battle for many years to come.

Also on hand that evening was artist-historian Don Troiani, who has been a strong supporter of the CVBT for many years.

His most recent Fredericksburg painting depicts the Irish Brigade crossing the upper pontoon bridge into the war-torn town. Mr. Troiani's historical accuracy and eye for detail are unsur-

See *Book*, page 2

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Visit us on the web at www.cvbt.org



Member Recognition

We'd like to take this opportunity to recognize David Armstrong of Florida. Mr. Armstrong has been a faithful donor to CVBT since joining in 1998 and has, in fact, made a monthly donation for over two years.

We are sincerely grateful for his dedication to the cause of battlefield preservation! He inspires us to continue the fight to save these hallowed grounds. Thank you Mr. Armstrong.

On the Skirmish Line is published for the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust membership at P.O. Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402. The CVBT is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Virginia's Civil War battlefields. All contributions are tax deductible. A financial statement is available on our website at www.cvbt.org.



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Confederate Defensive Position Donated to Trust

Local businessman Kenny Butzner has donated approximately 7 acres of land to the CVBT, just south of the Fredericksburg battlefield.

This site was an entrenched defensive position along the Old Richmond Stage or Bowling Green Road. These works were not used during the December 1862 battle, though. Instead, they constituted part of the extensive Confederate defenses established along the Rappahannock River line during the winter and spring of 1862/63.

The terrain in this area of the Virginia Tidewater is quite flat. The donated site is on a gentle rise of ground that caught the attention of the Confed-

erate engineers. From this slight hill, a battery of cannon and their covering infantry could observe and dominate anything that moved along the road. This terrain did not see action, but it is

a solid reminder that the Confederate position at Fredericksburg could be approached from many directions, requiring the defending force to cover as

The donated site is on a gentle rise of ground that caught the attention of the Confederate engineers. From this slight hill, a battery of cannon and their covering infantry could observe and dominate anything that moved along the road.

many of them as possible with limited manpower.

The preserved ground would have made excellent building sites. Mr. Butzner is to be commended for setting aside this land and donating it to a lands trust (us) instead.

Book, continued from page 1

passed. It was our pleasure to have him with us.

Finally, we must acknowledge the generosity of Van and Deborah Perroy, owners of Fredericksburg Square where this event took place. They donated the

use of their beautiful reception area, which is one of the finest in town. The food was equally superb.

All of these components came together for a truly memorable evening.

Membership Levels

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

Review, continued from page 1

cluded this past year.

In February, we relocated our office, to gain much needed meeting space. We are still lean and hard-charging, so don't think that we have used member donations for grand spaces or sumptuous furnishings.

We still direct virtually all donations to dirt and grass, with the result that our work space has the look of a field command post rather than a rear echelon office.

In May, we were surprised (and of course gratified) to receive the first annual Ed Bearss Preservation Award from the Chicago Civil War Round Table.

The windy city boasts the oldest round table in the nation and we were

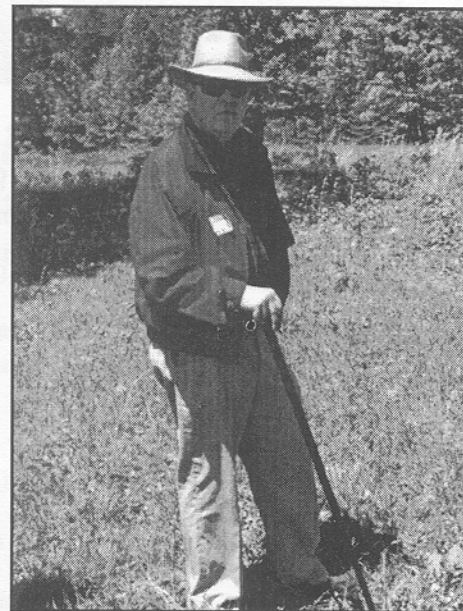
subject to the vicissitudes of the weather. We will provide details in the coming months and hope to see you there.

With all of this activity underway, we also managed to engage in our primary mission, which is to acquire land.

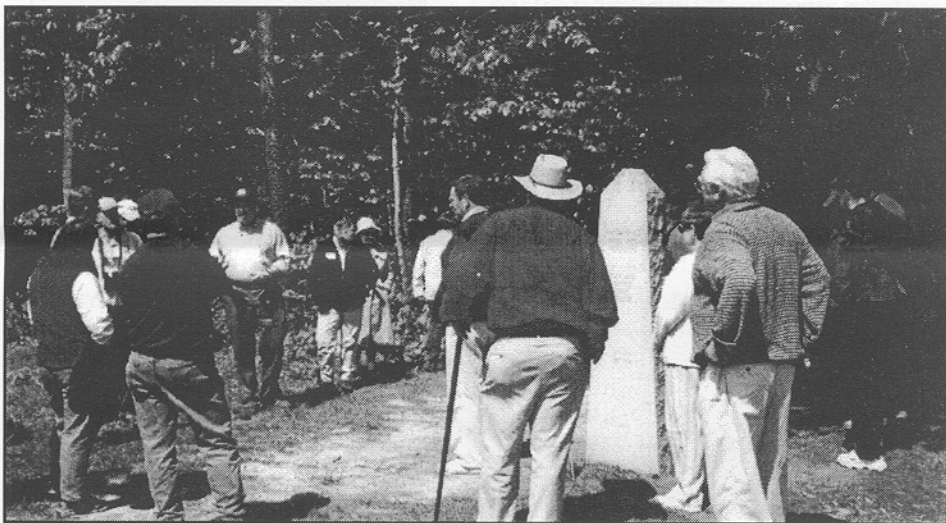
Early in the year, we closed on a 6.5-acre tract on the Chancellorsville battlefield.

For this purchase, we were able to obtain matching funds through the American Battlefield Protection Program. For every dollar contributed by a CVBT member, this program provided another. We were thus able to double our member contributions.

With recent legislation to provide



CVBT Board Member Bill Kinnamon is ready for the walking tour.



Frank has them enthralled, as usual, on his tour!

extremely honored by their recognition, especially when we learned that the recipient of this award is chosen by Ed Bearss himself.

Also in May, we held our annual meeting on the Po River, on the Spotsylvania Court House battlefield.

Those who showed up were certainly a hardy group because the weather was absolutely miserable. Still, it was fun to showcase this recently acquired acreage, with its excellent earthworks and rare picket post.

We also enjoyed catching up with our friends and supporters.

This coming year, though, our annual meeting will be an indoor event, which will leave only the related tours

federal funds for Civil War battlefield preservation, we hope to be able to swing more of these types of deals.

We also received a donation of land from a local developer at the southern end of the Fredericksburg battlefield. This ground includes Confederate earthworks that covered the Richmond Stage Road. Additional details can be found in a related article in this newsletter.

Toward the end of the year, the CVBT launched a new scholarly journal called Fredericksburg History and Biography. In our fight to protect the May 1, 1863 battlefield, we were often challenged by citizens to show that the land we wanted to protect was, in fact, his-

toric.

We were somewhat taken aback, but realized that our advocacy goals included a responsibility for historical education.

A generous grant from the Sunshine Lady Foundation provided the seed money to initiate this journal that encourages research into the Fredericksburg area's rich history. This journal will be an annual publication and we are proud to present it.

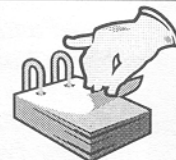
The Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield will continue to work into the new year.

I thank you for your past support and urge you to stay committed to this fight and many others as we move into 2003.

John Mitchell

Our thanks to CVBT member Lawrence Gibson for the use of these photos.

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR ...**



**ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 3 & 4, 2003**
in Fredericksburg, Virginia



Preservation of the May 1 Battlefield at Chancellorsville Is Still In Doubt

The CVBT is still working as part of the Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield. This ground is still threatened with development and the Spotsylvania County government is still being pressured to rezone this land from agricultural to commercial uses.

The Spotsylvania County Planning Commission has already voted its approval. Constructing 2,000 houses and 1.2 million square feet of commercial space is absolutely inappropriate on this battlefield and the Civil War preservation community has rallied to oppose this gross misuse of hallowed ground. Local taxpayers are also learning that the project will cost them plenty in the long term. A recent letter in *The Free Lance-Star* newspaper (Fredericksburg, VA), on December 27, 2002, provides an excellent example of local concerns:

In analyzing the plan submitted by Dogwood Development Group for developing the Town of Chancellorsville, I decided to calculate the amount of commercial use planned for the development. I was startled to discover the following:

The floor area of the structures dedicated to commercial use totaled 2,147,000-Plus square feet, or 50-Plus acres. This area is for buildings alone and does not include the land required for parking and other related uses. The enormity of this use, and its impact on the community, can best be visualized by considering that Dogwood's commercial area would be some 200,000 square feet larger than the comparable area in Central Park, only 7 miles to the east.

Armed with this data, I attended the putative Nov. 6 public hearing on Dogwood's application by the Spotsylvania Planning Commission. The purported aim of the hearing was to entertain comments from residents and others. "Entertain" may well have been the operative word. The applicant hosted a dinner for its supporters before the hearing. Those supporters then

sat through the applicant's elaborate presentation, possible hoping for a favorable decision - soon rendered.

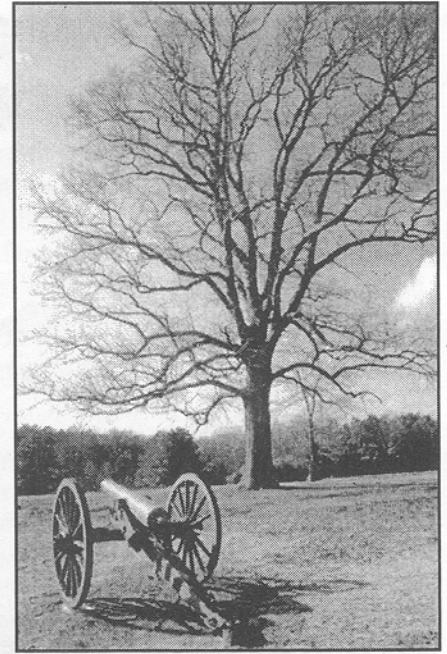
Dogwood's lengthy presentation seemed hardly necessary since the committee, or its delegates, had ongoing conferences with the applicant. By contrast, opponents were constrained to a diet of scraps - individual, three-minute segments within which they were to attempt to stem the juggernaut. Under those strictures, opponents



By contrast, opponents were constrained to a diet of scraps - individual, three-minute segments within which they were to attempt to stem the juggernaut. Under those strictures, opponents found it manifestly impossible to offer cogent, organized arguments.



found it manifestly impossible to offer cogent, organized arguments. This cavalier treatment spurred me to undertake the revitalization of long dormant skills as a consultant and expert witness in similar matters. The opening paragraphs of this commentary - a summation of the first phase of my analysis - suggest the impact of the disaster that awaits Spotsylvania County residents should the Board of Supervisors approve the Dogwood project.



No Parcel of real estate exists in a vacuum. Its size and use affect neighboring properties. While the rezoning of a small parcel may have a limited impact, developing the 900-acre Mullins Farm will have repercussions far beyond the county limits. It is the Board of Supervisors' sworn duty to protect the well-being of all county residents and to act fairly in all matters before it. The board is under no obligation to favor one owner, or to maximize an owner's profits. In fact, courts have ruled that a municipality is not an owner's "partner." Should the board approve the application, the value of nearby residences would plummet as the area's character and ambiance began an irreversible downward trend. The hallowed battlefields, for which the area is internationally famous, would be desecrated. The attendant traffic problems and the project's strain on natural resources would stretch far beyond the property's borders.

My conclusions are simple:

No decision on a project incorporating such problems and having the potential for such adverse effects should be undertaken without studies by neutral professional planners, engineers, and economists. The board should place no reliance on the projections, of up to 15 years into the future, furnished by Dogwood.

NEW MEMBERS

*We welcome the following new members
who joined CVBT in 2002:*

Mr. Waverly B. Adcock	Mr. William K. Hoyt Jr.
Ms. Kay Wood Bailey	Mr. Danny Huckabee
Mr. Bryan J. Baine	Mr. Charles T. Jacobs
Mr. Michael C. Barber	J.E.B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust
Mr. Donald Batson	Mr. James L. Jones
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Mr. Michael Bergal	Kevin and Donna Leahy
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Mr. William F. Boyd	Mr. Donald K. Manns
Mr. and Mrs. William F. Brent Jr.	Mr. Joseph W. Marks Sr.
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Mr. James J. Campi	Mr. Robert C. Moore Jr.
Mr. Thomas C. Carty	Mosby Heritage Fund
Civil War Round Table of	Mr. Marc E. Nicholson
Orange County, California	MSG Joseph F. Nickels USA (Ret)
Civil War Round Table of St. Louis, Missouri	Mr. Frank Noll
Civil War Weekend	Mr. Ronny North
Mr. Richard T. Clark	City of Fredericksburg Virginia Office
Mr. Keith B. Clarke E.A.	of Economic Development and Tourism
Ms. Jo-Anne L. Coe	Mrs. Julia B. Olsen
Mr. William S. Craghead	Mr. Phillip S. Parrish
Mr. Alex W. Dann	Dr. William A. Phillis III
Mr. Nicholas DiGiovanni	Mr. Thomas H. Pritchett
Ms. Gail R. Dugan	Mr. Craig Rains
Mr. Nicholas A. Ferro	Mr. Earle C. Richardson
Mr. James H. Fortune	Mr. David Roberts
Mr. George W. Foxworth	Mr. Michael R. Russell
Joe and Doris Garlock	Mr. Don Sangirardi
Mr. Lawrence Gibson	Mr. Al Sawyers
John and Rose Graham	Mr. Bob Sheehan
Mr. James D. Grau	Spotsylvania Battlefield Education Association
Ms. Meredith Hagstrom	Ms. Barbara Stafford
Mr. Joseph Halldorson	Mr. Hugh Strachan
Mr. Paul J. Hanzel	Ms. Mary B. Strickler
Mr. Eugene D. Harless Jr.	Mr. and Mrs. Michael C. Wascoe
Harrisburg Civil War Round	Mr. Robert L. Webb
Table, Pennsylvania	Mr. Stephen L. Webb
Ms. Margaret Hendren	Mr. Charles J. Weissburd
Mr. Marc A. Hermann	Ms. Karen I. White
Ms. Brenda Hiott	Lois and Martin Wienshienk
Mr. Joseph D. Hofmann	Mr. Charles W. Woods
Mr. Robert E. Hogan	



The Civil War on Virginia's Silver Screen

They were schooled in the ways of war at the country's most prestigious military academy; they began their military service fighting under the American flag; yet, their glorious moment in history was the bloodiest and most costly war fought in this country. They were men from Virginia, Maine, and Pennsylvania, but they had a sense of duty to their God; the same God their forefathers worshiped and relied on as they struggled for independence from England. These men were dedicated to the service of their country, but were called to what each believed was a higher purpose. These were the men of the Civil War - Robert Edward Lee, Thomas Jonathan Jackson, Winfield Scott Hancock and Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain; the generals and masterminds behind the strategic warfare that is still studied today by historians and soldiers.

Families have passed down stories about the Civil War for years. Historians have researched letters and documents to ensure accurate accounts of the events that occurred. Author Michael Shaara created *Killer Angels*, a blend of fact and folklore that detailed the turning point of the Civil War at Gettysburg. Ron Maxwell seized this opportunity to tell this story on the silver screen by directing the major motion picture *Gettysburg*. Once again, a story has risen above the fray; a story about the time leading up to the battle at Gettysburg: *Gods and Generals*. Appropriately, this novel was crafted by Jeff Shaara, Michael Shaara's son, and again, Ron Maxwell makes magic on the big screen as he enlists Robert Duvall as Robert E. Lee and U.S. Senators Robert Byrd of West Virginia, Phil Gramm of Texas, and George Allen of Virginia as trusted members of Lee's staff. The motion picture *Gods and Generals* was filmed on Virginia battlefields and many Virginia reenactors were soldiers used to recreate battle scenes.

Gods and Generals director Ron Maxwell knew Virginia is home to countless Civil War enthusiasts and was not disappointed when they answered his casting call. One such reenactor is

Henry Kidd from Colonial Heights, Virginia, who portrayed a 1st Sergeant in Virginia's 5th Infantry in the film.

"It is important that *Gods and Generals* was filmed on Virginia soil, the same soil on which our ancestor's fought," said Mr. Kidd. "This war was a war of military strategy, a war of brotherhood, a war of conviction. These men fought against family members, against classmates, and against neighbors. These soldiers had large hearts for their leaders and for their cause. Reenacting is a family connection for Virginians and it is a way to defend the honor of men who are sometimes misunderstood." Reenactors who participated in the filming and local Civil War historians alike are eagerly awaiting the release of the movie.

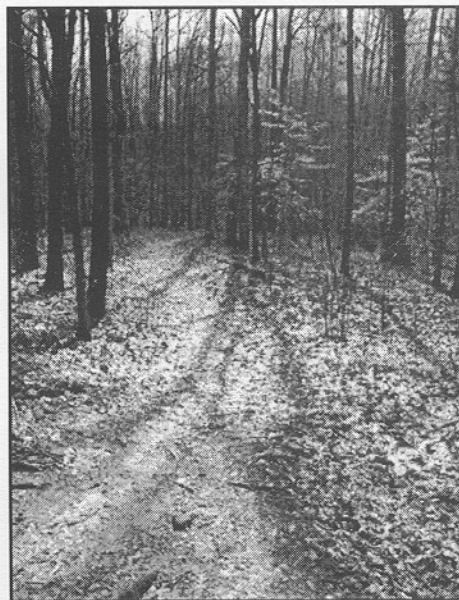
Virginians - from elected officials to Civil War enthusiasts - are proud to take part in the Richmond premiere of the film on Tuesday, February 18, 2003, at The Carpenter Center. The premiere,

with invited guests including Governor Mark Warner, Senator George Allen, Ron Maxwell, Robert Duvall and Jeff Shaara, will serve as an opportunity to increase awareness of area Civil War battles, to raise funds to preserve historic battlefields throughout Virginia, support area Civil War institutions, and to promote Virginia as a living monument to history. Proceeds from the evening's event will benefit the Tredegar National Civil War Center Foundation, The Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond Civil War Roundtable, The Center for Civil War Living History, and The Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia. Organizers are hopeful that a successful premiere event will send a message to Civil War enthusiasts and to filmmakers that Virginia's Civil War heritage transcends time.

For additional information about the event and for tickets call (804) 344-8081.

Chancellorsville, continued from page 5

Dogwood belittles the importance of the portion of the overall battlefield the firm would develop. This is the site of the opening battle of Chancellorsville - the largest battle ever fought on American soil. It was here that Robert E. Lee's skills as a commander won an



overwhelming victory for the Confederacy, representing the apogee of his military career.

Anyone who served in the infantry would never disparage the importance of the opening phase of a battle. This is the period when skirmishes tend to reveal opponents' intentions, skill, equipment, and morale. The knowledge so earned on May 1, 1863, influenced operations throughout the whole battle.

There is no legal assumption that the zoning change sought by the applicant is his "right." The reverse is true. The burden of proof falls on the applicant to provide convincing evidence of the need for, and the appropriateness of, proposed changes. The primary duty of the board is to rule on such applications in light of the well-being of the community.

As a matter of justice, opponents of the project must be allowed to voice their objection in full.

The above letter was written by Frank Flynn, of Spotsylvania, Virginia.



CENTRAL VIRGINIA
BATTLEFIELDS TRUST

Annual Meeting 2003

Don't forget the Annual Meeting

May 3 and 4, 2003

in Fredericksburg, Virginia

Tours tentatively scheduled to highlight Chancellorsville
as well as properties preserved by CVBT.
Saturday lunch on a CVBT property.

Saturday night dinner will be indoors this year!!!

*Join us at Brock's Restaurant in
Historic Downtown Fredericksburg*

Guest Speaker: Ed Bearss

Watch for special mailing with details.

*Information will also be available on our website at:
www.cvbt.org*



RENEW TODAY!!

Renewing Member New Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

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<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member-\$500	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Patron-\$1,000		

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Mail completed form to: **CVBT, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402.**

We do everything we can to make sure your donations go to "**Dirt and Grass**". To help keep our costs down we rely on you to check your mailing label to see if your membership is due for renewal. If your membership is current, but you know of someone who would like to join CVBT, please pass this membership form on to them.



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