

On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

Town of Chancellorsville Defeated

Jim Campi

Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield

In a remarkable come-from-behind victory, the Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors voted against the rezoning of the historic Mullins Farm on Chancellorsville Battlefield. The vote was 6-to-0 with one supervisor abstaining. The Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield released the following statement after the vote:

“We are elated by the nearly unanimous vote by the Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors. The decision to reject the rezoning of the Mullins Farm at Chancellorsville is the most significant battlefield preservation victory in nearly a decade.

“The vote by the board of supervisors sends a powerful message to those who would seek to develop hallowed ground. We will no longer sit idly by while you attempt to destroy our nation’s precious Civil War heritage.

“The decision is a vindication of the Coalition’s message – the Dogwood plan was the wrong

project in the wrong place. The vote came at the end of a hard fought grassroots campaign that involved hundreds of Spotsylvania County residents and thousands of concerned citizens elsewhere in the nation. More than 300 people attended the eight-hour hearing.

“Nine months ago, few believed that Dogwood’s plans for the Mullins Farm could be defeated. In November, all seemed lost when the county planning commission voted to endorse the Dogwood proposal. However, thanks to the dedication, enthusiasm and support of its 12 member groups, the Coalition to Save Chancellorsville Battlefield was able to turn back a critical threat to this historic battleground.

“Although we savor today’s victory, the Coalition recognizes that several challenges remain. The vote against the rezoning doesn’t guarantee the preservation of the Mullins Farm property. Current zoning allows landowner John Mullins to build 225 homes and 55 acres of commercial development on the property. However, we believe a deal can be reached that both protects the land and assures Mr. Mullins a return on his investment.”

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Chancellorsville - Still One of Most Endangered

For the second year in a row, the Civil War Preservation Trust has recognized that Chancellorsville remains one of the nation's most threatened battlefields. As before, the primary threat is development that is advancing west from Fredericksburg, along State Route 3 (the wartime Orange Turnpike).

Of immediate concern is the scene of action on May 1, 1863. On that morning nearly 140 years ago, powerful Union columns moved toward Fredericksburg, after a remarkable flank march that had brought the Federal army across two major rivers and into the rear of the Confederate position. Though outnumbered, the Confederate commanders refused to become overwhelmed and swiftly developed a response with the means at hand. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson assembled a scratch force of available units and aggressively led them toward the advancing Union host.

The ground where the two sides made contact still looks much as it did when the opening volleys echoed across the landscape. The open ground to the west, where the contending sides vied for tactical advantage is also intact, and

further west still, where the National Park boundary finally begins, is the ridge that became the key to the battlefield. If the Union army held this ground, their guns would dominate the field. If the Confederates could seize this terrain, they would force the Union army back into the trees of the Spotsylvania wilderness, effectively negating the Federal advantage in artillery. This whole dramatic scene can still be preserved, but there is an immediate threat to its integrity. This ground is in imminent danger of being bulldozed for development.

The CVBT has joined with a coalition of other like-minded organizations, including the Civil War Preservation Trust, to try to acquire this ground. Our intent is to pay fair market price, but we recognize that this cost is going to be fairly high. Our group operates in an atmosphere of rampant speculation where developers routinely propose to build thousands of new houses and millions of square feet of commercial space. We appreciate your past support to confront such relentless pressure and encourage you to stay with us as we move forward. Remember that we do not have paid staff, but use donations to acquire dirt and grass.

New Publication Examines Fredericksburg History

The CVBT's new publication, *Fredericksburg History and Biography*, is available in stores and appears to be well received. In December of last year, we sent complimentary copies to Trust members who were at the Active Level or above. Many of you have been kind enough to let us know you enjoyed the selected articles.

We are already working on the 2003 volume so any feedback, good or bad, is very welcome.

For those who wish to purchase copies, *Fredericksburg History and Biography* is currently available at Beck's Antiques (708 Caroline Street) and the Made in Virginia Store (807 Caroline Street). The battlefield visitor center bookstores, at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, will begin to carry copies this spring.

We have deliberately included articles that examine the broad history of the Fredericksburg area, although there is still a strong emphasis on the Civil War period.

Of great interest is a diary of a local woman written as the battle of Spotsylvania Court House swirled around her farm. It is a primary document of stunning immediacy.

Also included is a review of a recently discovered 1850 militia muster roll, with follow up information on how the listed members experienced the Civil War, a decade later.

Another piece outlines the archaeology that has been accomplished in the Market Square, work that has opened windows into Fredericksburg's history back to its early eighteenth century origins.

Related to our current efforts to preserve the May 1, 1863 battlefield, there is also a timely article by Frank A. O'Reilly that studies the battle action of the opening engagements at Chancellorsville. His carefully researched narrative emphatically proves that the ground the CVBT seeks to preserve is indeed hallowed by the blood of our forebears.

Development and History CAN Coexist

Imagine visiting the Chancellorsville battlefield, a place of intense action that in 1863 was a horribly tangled wilderness. Any tour would include following the woodland route (now called Jackson Trail) that Stonewall Jackson used to move his troops across the Union front, to get into position on their right flank. This march was a nerve wracking, but necessary prelude to the famous flank attack on the afternoon of May 2, 1863.

Not too long ago, however, 1,500 acres of private land abutting the Park Service holdings along Jackson Trail had been slated for more than 1,200 houses and a golf course. Well-manicured fairways and sand traps would have provided a decidedly incongruous element to the scene where Jackson's legions had hurried forward.

A new firm, named Whitehall, has put together an entirely different plan that will permanently protect this part of the park. Instead of 1,200 houses, they plan to construct 497. Rather than pushing their development right up to the park boundary, they intend to donate 185 acres along Jackson Trail to the CVBT. When this area is developed, the only thing visible to visitors on Jackson Trail will be trees - the same type of trees that screened the Confederate column from Federal observers. In addition, the Whitehall

developers will make a cash donation to the CVBT, providing critical dollars to help preserve other historic terrain.

If approved, and we hope it will be, the proposed development will culminate nearly 15 years of work by the National Park Service to permanently protect this area. A few years ago, the Conservation Fund acquired more than 500 acres on the south side of Jackson Trail. Ownership was turned over to Spotsylvania County, with the National Park Service holding a preservation easement. Whitehall's generosity will protect the north side of Jackson Trail.

Then, houses and a golf course would have intruded on this historic corridor. Now, the houses to be built will remain invisible from the ground trod by Confederate troops. The citizens of Spotsylvania County are tired of haphazard development that destroys the character of their community. Whitehall provides a new way of doing business, which is to carefully examine an area, determine what is important to preserve, and then design the development accordingly. In a rapidly growing area, there is the potential to ultimately protect more land by working with innovative developers than can ever be acquired by working against them. Property rights, after all, include the right to preserve as well the right to develop.

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE

Help make the CVBT Secretary's job a little easier!

When making a donation for membership renewal please include the renewal form if possible or indicate on the check that it's for membership.

If you have a specific campaign or property in mind or if it's a general donation to be used accordingly, please indicate that use on the check and/or form.

This allows us to be sure that the donation is properly recorded and acknowledged.

And we make every effort to process items in a timely manner but our all-volunteer staff sometimes slips up... please bear with us!

You can renew your membership online. Visit www.cvbt.org



Come join us in Fredericksburg, Virginia on May 3 & 4, 2003, for the CVBT Annual Meeting.

You can register on-line, or use the form on page 6 of this newsletter. Deadline to register is April 16th.

On The Skirmish Line is published for the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust membership at PO 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, upon request, from the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs. Our latest IRS Form 990 is also available on our website.

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Member Recognition

We'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the **Rappahannock Valley Civil War Roundtable** for the donation of their monthly book raffle income. The Roundtable is a Life Patron of CVBT.

Out thanks also to some of our frequent contributors. This list is by no means complete!

David Urban, Fairfax, Virginia (Annual Member)

Tim Pence, Bowling Green, Kentucky (Active Member)

Edward C. Browne Jr., Pomfret, Connecticut (Active Member)

Volunteers

Throughout the seven years that CVBT has been in existence we've worked to try and make our members feel "involved" beyond making donations. But as our organization has no paid staff, no office and no big administrative requirements we've not often been too successful on this count! While we invite all of you to the Annual Meeting, send you newsletters and keep you informed via our website we haven't had too many opportunities for individual members to lend a hand.

After much discussion at a recent Board meeting we'd like you, our members, to think about the following suggestions for "volunteers" and provide us with YOUR input via letter or e-mail.

- Speak at meetings of your local Civil War Roundtable, reenactment units, civic organizations or other groups. See if your local library might have opportunities for you to speak to groups about preservation.
- CVBT Board member, Dr. Mike Stevens, has always expressed an interest in getting our message across to schools and educational groups....but we've never come up with the best way to approach this. Do any of our members have experience with this, has anyone come up with a program that might work for CVBT to approach schools on opportunities to speak to students about preservation?
- Fundraising, always the key element for any non-profit! The source of grants and endowments continues to grow smaller with more groups competing for funds. Do any of our members have expertise in grant-writing, knowledge of who best to approach for funds? And funds not just for purchasing property but also for maintaining sites that CVBT holds.
- Property maintenance will eventually become an issue for us as we purchase more sites outside the NPS boundaries, sites that we must maintain. We have an excellent relationship with other preservation groups here in Fredericksburg who've offered to help with this but are there any other ways that members could help us with property maintenance?

These four topics were our main concern. We look forward to hearing your ideas. You can email: cvbtvolunteer@cvbt.org

CVBT CHARTER MEMBERS

As we enter our seventh year, we'd like to take a moment to recognize the Charter Members listed below that continue to support CVBT.

Mr. and Mrs. Mcguire Boyd	Mr. & Mrs. Monroe D. Macpherson
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry H. Brent	Mr. Tom Mangrum
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Buttacavoli	Mr. Charles G. McDaniel
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Ms. Miriam Funk	Ms. Caroline O. Ritter
Mr. Lewis R. Gaty II	Roanoke CWRT
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Mr. David A. Langbart	Mr. Dana L. Wooley
Mr. Hugh E. Lee Jr.	Bill and Barbara Wright

Membership Levels

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

CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELDS TRUST ANNUAL MEETING 2003 REGISTRATION FORM

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER CHOICES:

Please make your selection, indicate medium or well done if you select steak. Servers will re-confirm your choice that evening

1. _____ **TOP SIRLOIN STEAK**, hand carved seasoned Black Angus served medium or well done with red-skin mashed potatoes and a vegetable medley circle choice: Medium / Well-done
2. _____ **CHICKEN PARMESAN**, breast of chicken lightly breaded and seasoned, topped with marinara and parmesan cheese served with potatoes and vegetables
3. _____ **ANGEL HAIR POMODORO**, angel hair pasta in olive oil with roma tomatoes, fresh basil, garlic, white wine, and fine herbs

All dinners include a house salad with balsamic vinegarett dressing and a choice of coffee, tea or soda.
Dessert will be cheesecake or a chef's choice (seasonal availability)

SUNDAY LUNCH CHOICES:

Box lunches will be served, please indicate your preference so we might have an idea of what type of sandwiches and drinks to order:

Sandwiches: _____ Ham _____ Turkey
Drinks: _____ Soda _____ Diet Soda _____ Water

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ PHONE/E-MAIL: _____
(contact) _____

Sign me up for: Weekend Package - \$125 (members) x _____ Weekend Package - \$160 (non-members) x _____
 Saturday Package - \$75 (members) x _____ Saturday Package - \$95 (non-members) x _____
 Sunday Package - \$75 (members) x _____ Sunday Package - \$95 (non-members) x _____
 Dinner - \$30 (adults) x _____; \$50 (couples) x _____; \$20 (children) x _____
 Trolley tour only (\$12.50) x _____; children (\$5.00) x _____

Amount of payment:

Method of payment: **Check** **Visa** **Master Card**

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiration 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: CVBT, Annual Meeting, PO Box 3417, Fredericksburg VA 22402-3417

“Fighting Today for Yesterday: Preserving the Chancellorsville Battlefield”

The CVBT 2003 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust on May 3 and 4, 2003, will focus on 1863 with tours at both Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg. Saturday afternoon join National Park Service Historian Mac Wyckoff as he traces the events of May 1-3, 1863 along the Confederate right flank east of Chancellorsville. CVBT has been successful in the acquisition of land in this area and continues to be an integral part of the coalition currently working to stop a planned major development on the May 1 battlefield. The annual meeting will be held Saturday evening at Brock's, a downtown restaurant overlooking the Rappahannock River. Our featured dinner speaker will be Ed Bearss, Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service. On Sunday, join Ray Brown, Cultural Resource Manager at Manassas NBP, and Erik Nelson, CVBT Board member, as they relate the events of the Second Battle of Fredericksburg and Salem Church. See first-hand the CVBT's efforts to reclaim this "lost" battlefield. This year we will be offering an optional trolley tour of historic downtown Fredericksburg on Sunday for spouses or others who don't wish to do the battlefield tour. (A minimum of 20 people must sign up for the trolley tour in order for CVBT to have an exclusive tour) For more information call Rebecca Rickey at (540) 899-8011 or Donna Leahy at (540) 374-9223, or e-mail us at annualmeeting@cvbt.org Information on events and lodging are available on our website at www.cvbt.org

CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELDS TRUST ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE

Saturday, May 3rd

1:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Chancellorsville tour (May 1 battlefield)
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Cash bar at Brock's Restaurant
6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Dinner at Brock's
7:00 – 7:45 p.m.	Guest speaker Ed Bearss
8:00 – 8:30 p.m.	CVBT Annual Meeting (election of directors)

Sunday, May 4th

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	2 nd Battle of Fredericksburg and Salem Church tour
11:00 a.m.	Optional trolley tour of Fredericksburg (@ 1½ hours)

PRICE

Full weekend package	\$125.00 members/\$160.00 nonmembers (includes tours, Saturday dinner & Sunday lunch)
One day package	\$75.00 members/\$95 nonmembers (includes Saturday dinner or Sunday lunch)
Saturday night dinner	\$30.00 adults/\$50.00 couples/\$20.00 children (under 17)
Trolley tour (extra)	\$12.50 adults/\$5.00 children (6-16)

REGISTRATION DUE BY APRIL 16, 2003

Register early... Bus availability limits us to 90 seats per tour. The custom of "first-registered-first-served" will be observed.

LODGING TIP: The Fredericksburg Colonial Inn is offering CVBT members a 10% discount, the location of the Inn is noted on the map. Rooms have recently been updated, some in period antiques. Continental breakfast is available, ample parking. You can visit their website at www.fcil.com.

ALSO GOING ON THAT WEEKEND:

FRIDAY, May 2nd

8:00, 8:30 and 9:00 pm Chaos in the Night: The Wounding of Stonewall Jackson, National Park Service, Chancellorsville Visitor Center – 60 minute historian-guided walking tours

RENEW TODAY!!

Renewing Member New Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

email address: _____

Membership Category:

 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

Method of Payment:

 Check VISA MasterCard

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Signature (required for Credit Card) _____

Please return completed renewal form with credit card information or a check payable to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust**
 Mail completed form to: **CVBT, Attn: Membership, PO 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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