



Copyright 2007, by the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Inc.

The Trust's mission is to purchase Civil War battlefield terrain and to advocate for battlefield protection at the local, state, and federal levels of government.

For information on membership, please write to the Trust at P.O. Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402; call our office at (540) 374-0900; or visit our website at www.cvbt.org.

Contributions to the CVBT are tax-deductible.

Membership Categories

Annual Member	\$ 35	Patron	\$ 500	Life Patron	\$10,000
Active Member	\$135	Benefactor	\$ 1000	Corporate Member	\$ 500
Sustaining Member	\$250	Life Member	\$5,000	Corporate Patron	\$ 1000



Central
Virginia
Battlefields
Trust

Post Office Box 3417
Fredericksburg, VA 22402
540-374-0900
www.cvbt.org

NONPROFIT ORG. U.S. POSTAGE PAID FREDERICKSBURG, VA PERMIT NO. 500



ON THE
skirmish *line*
Newsletter of The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

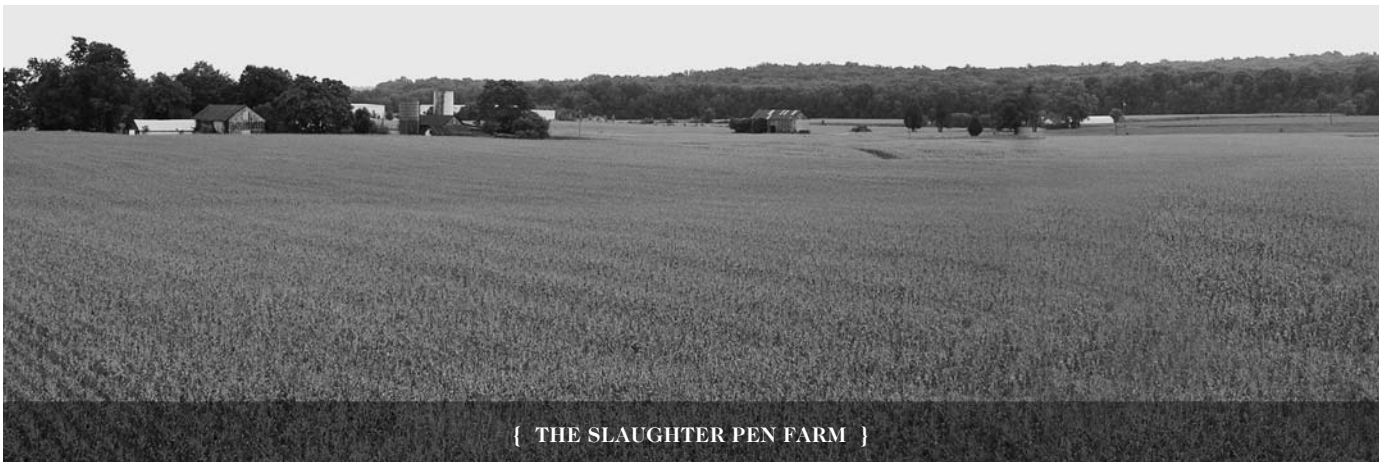
DON'T MISS THE
Annual Meeting in May!

The CVBT is preparing for its next annual meeting, to be held on the 205-acre farm known as the Slaughter Pen. This key part of the 1862 battle of Fredericksburg is blood soaked ground that is the object of our latest fund raising campaign, in partnership with the Civil War Preservation Trust. This weekend event will take place on May 5-6, 2007 and members should have received official notice of this meeting as well as a less formal invitation to participate in the planned activities. Members will be able to tramp this hallowed ground, which looks much as it did when the armies came.

Historian Frank O'Reilly, author of *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter War on the Rappahannock*, will lead a

tour of the Slaughter Pen on the afternoon of May 5th. Frank has studied this ground for years, as is evident from his book, and he will generously share his insights. Members who choose to participate will not be disappointed.

The Saturday tour will end at our meeting site on this battlefield and there will be time to socialize with old friends and new, to partake in our traditional barbeque dinner (we still cannot agree on which is best, Virginia or Carolina style, so of course we will have both), and to attend the CVBT annual meeting. At our meeting, we will inform the membership of the state of their organization, elect and re-elect board members, and present our Ralph Happel Award. Our featured speaker will be Park Historian Noel Harrison. { CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 }



{ THE SLAUGHTER PEN FARM }



Annual Meeting in May { CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 }

On Sunday, we have arranged for a morning tour of the Braehead mansion, the antebellum home of the Howison family (see contemporary sketch at left). Robert E. Lee had breakfast in this house on the morning of the December battle. The CVBT has contracted to purchase this dwelling and its surrounding acreage, with the intent of re-selling it with preservation easements. As a consequence, this may be the only chance to view this property.

The cost for the entire weekend, including all tours and dinner, is \$110 per person. Those who just want to come for dinner can pay \$30 per person. There is no charge for the annual meeting. We look forward to seeing as many of you as can attend. **SL**

CVBT Board Member's Film Company Wins EMMY

Many of our members recognize CVBT Board member Rob Hodge from the cover of Tony Horwitz's book *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*. Rob does more than pose for jacket covers, though. He is also an accomplished film maker associated with Wide Awake Films, which has won a regional Emmy for a documentary on the Battle of Franklin. Wide Awake Films specializes in historical documentaries and high-tech museum video productions. Their Emmy was won in Documentary/Historical category at the 21st Annual Midsouth Regional Emmy Awards, in Nashville Tennessee.

The Northwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences judged nearly 700 entries, and made 267 nominations that recognized individuals and teams from 54 television stations and companies. Wide Awake's award winning original documentary, *The Battle of Franklin: Five Hours in the Valley of Death*, detailed the desperate 1864 battle in Tennessee and qualified for the Emmy nomination after being broadcast on WNPT, the Nashville PBS affiliate, in November 2005.

Wide Awake Films is a Kansas City-based motion media production and creative content company. *The Battle of Franklin* and other award-winning Wide Awake Film titles are available at www.civilwargoods.com. Rob and his partners are currently working on a new film called *Perryville: The Invasion of Kentucky* and are about to release a film on the 1850s Kansas-Missouri border war. As Rob has noted, he has "lots more to do between now and the 150th anniversary of the war!" **SL**

Membership Renewals

The CVBT continues to grow as new members join those of us who have been helping to preserve battlefields since the early years. One result is that we must take the time to do things that we have previously avoided. Membership renewals, for instance, have been handled by friendly reminders in this newsletter to check individual mailing labels, in order to know when to send in dues. This system worked reasonably well, but we are past the point where such an informal system can be considered effective. As a consequence, we will begin to send renewal notices following our annual meeting. We suspect that most folks will welcome a simple reminder rather than looking for a date in small print on a mailing label. **SL**



ON THE SKIRMISH LINE is published for the CVBT membership at P.O. Box 3417, Fredericksburg, VA 22402. Contact CVBT at 540-374-0900 or www.cvbt.org. The CVBT is chartered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. A financial statement is available, upon request, from the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs.

The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Inc. Board of Directors



Michael P. Stevens
President

Harriett Condon
Vice-President

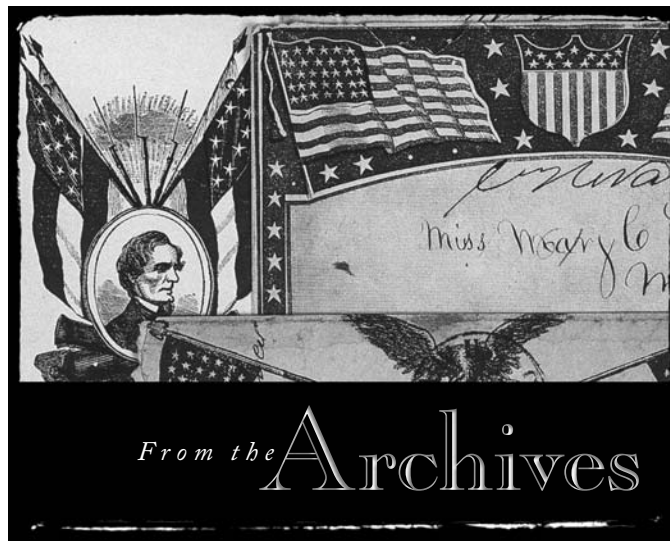
Jerry Brent
Treasurer

Erik F. Nelson
Secretary

J. Michael Greenfield
Robert Lee Hodge
Doug Horstman
William J. Kinnamon, Jr.
Robert K. Krick
Jerry Logan
Tom Van Winkle

RICHARD HENRY WATKINS (1825-1905) joined the Prince Edward Dragoons in 1861 and fought with that company of the 3rd Virginia Cavalry. By 1863, he had advanced to the rank of captain, having survived a severe wound and other close calls. He commanded the company in the summer of 1863 when the 3rd Cavalry camped around Fredericksburg.

The condition of the war-ravaged Fredericksburg stunned the troopers. One of the men, William C. Corson, wrote to his fiancée on August 9: “The once beautiful and flourishing city.... is for the most part in ruins and nearly deserted. What few of its



inhabitants remain [are] poor creatures.... It is impossible to buy any thing in twenty miles of this place.” Watkins rode into Fredericksburg in company with Lt. Col. William R. Carter and described vividly on August 5 what he saw around the famous Sunken Road: “A Mr. Watson who

lives near by pointed out to us the trenches and ice-house in which they [dead Yankees] were buried, two ditches containing about 340 each and a large ice-house filled, supposed to contain about 500. Mr. Watson’s house is completely riddled by grape & canister & minnie balls,

and Mr. Marye’s on the top of the hill was struck by 20 cannon balls & other balls, without number. His dwelling which was a most beautiful one, cannot easily be repaired. I enquired of Mr. Watson if any citizens were killed in Fredericksburg and especially if any women & children. His reply was not one. Only one citizen wounded, he an old man whose limb was amputated by a Yankee surgeon who immediately after performing the operation turned and broke the poor man’s trunk open before his eyes and robbed it of its contents. This citizen died mainly I suppose from the carelessness of the operator. SL

Cell Tower Proposed in the Wilderness

Spotsylvania County has been a strong supporter of battlefield preservation and the CVBT views the County Board of Supervisors as trusted partners. While we have the relative luxury of being able to focus on one basic item —preservation, the Board must address a myriad of services related to the quality of life of all county residents. One critical service is public safety, which requires fire and rescue personnel and county sheriffs to be able to communicate effectively throughout a far-flung jurisdiction. The necessary communications towers, however, are potential intrusions on the historic landscape.

The County is working with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to address applicable state and federal legislation related to providing communication services without adversely impacting historic sites. An attractive tower site for the County is land they own along the

Orange Plank Road. Unfortunately, this site is just east of its intersection with the Brock Road, the very storm center of the Wilderness battlefield. In addition, a 300-foot tower in that location would also be visible from the flank attack sector of the Chancellorsville battlefield.

In this instance, the provision of basic services appears to be in conflict with battlefield preservation, but Spotsylvania County has been a committed partner in battlefield preservation and conscientious discourse should result in an acceptable solution. SL

Check out CVBT’s Improved Website

Check out CVBT’s Improved Website

Over the past year, members will have noticed a new and improved CVBT website. The up to date content is the work of board member Tom Van Winkle, whose commitment to keeping the site fresh has been absolutely spectacular. We are not only seeing an increase in the number of hits per day, but many of those hits result in folks spending time on the site. If you have not viewed the site recently, take a look. We are especially proud and trust you will be too. SL