

# On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

## The Smith Run Valley Battlefield, CVBT Looks into the possibility of Preservation.

The CVBT does not currently have any property under contract for purchase, but is working on several. Potential acquisitions are being pursued at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House. In this newsletter, we highlight a site we are considering in Fredericksburg, where a sharp battle occurred on May 4, 1863, during the

Chancellorsville Campaign.

At Chancellorsville, the Union Army of the Potomac confronted the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in a tangled wilderness west of Fredericksburg. While the Northern commander, Major General Joseph Hooker, advanced with the bulk of his army into this wooded terrain, his Sixth Corps, commanded by Major General John Sedgwick, remained at Fredericksburg. Sedgwick's task was to divert Confederate commander Robert E. Lee's attention until Hooker had completed his initial deployment. Lee was not fooled, though, and left a small force to hold the Sixth Corps in place while he took all other available troops to face Hooker, to the west.

On May 3, the isolated Sixth Corps fought the

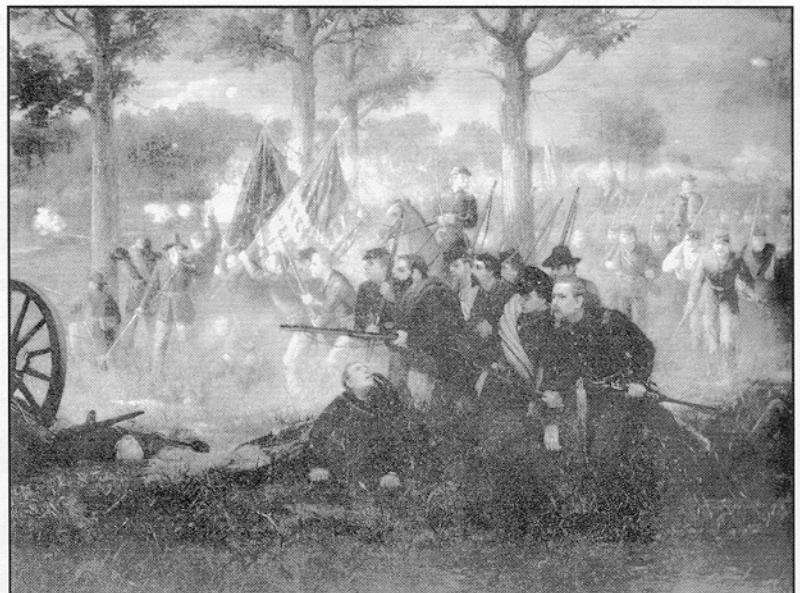
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## The Trust Saves More Battlefield

The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust has acquired another parcel of land on the Chancellorsville battlefield. The property consists of 3.854 acres on the Orange Plank Road. Late on May 2, 1863, this ground was traversed by retreating Federal soldiers of the Union Eleventh Corps, closely pursued by Stonewall Jackson's advancing infantry.

Preservation of a battlefield occurs in a series of steps. The dramatic, high-profile acquisitions, such as the Talley Farm, certainly highlight our efforts to the public and allow us to make a strong appeal for funds. More frequent, however, are small, seemingly insignificant parcels, acquired one by one. Though not individually impressive, they are all important purchases that help to fulfill our mission.

The parcel on the Orange Plank Road is one of these small, but critical acquisitions. We closed on this acreage on January 9, 2001, at a negotiated price of \$18,000. We paid this amount from cash on hand and kept moving on.



*A Vermont Brigade forms a line of battle to hold off Confederates under Jubal Early at Smith Run on May 4, 1863. (painting by Julian Scott)*

# CVBT applauds the efforts of Battlefield Preservationists Statewide

We are thrilled to hear of two other preservation organizations in Virginia. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation incorporated as a private, non-profit organization in December 2000. The group is an outgrowth of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Commission, which has been working for the past several years to develop a long-range plan to preserve historic ground related to Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign as well as the battlefields of the 1864 campaign there. Some decry the time supposedly lost in planning for the Shenandoah Valley National Historic District. Parts of the Valley are growing rapidly, they say, and like Fredericksburg, time is of the essence. The careful planning that has occurred, though, provides a sound basis for this new Foundation's efforts. The Federal government also provided start-up funds, in the amount of \$1.4 million, to begin to effect the purchase of critical terrain and to acquire easements, where ownership in fee simple is not appropriate.

With development running rampant in the Richmond, Virginia area, some the most critical battlefields in Virginia are in danger of being lost forever. In January of 2001 several individuals decided that they could not stand by and watch the destruction. The Richmond Battlefields Association (RBA) was born out of that frustration, a non-profit, private organization whose mission is to preserve the 1862 and 1864 battlefields in the Richmond

area. The RBA is working closely with the Richmond National Battlefield Park in preserving these precious battlefields and will also help out in the interpretation of these hallowed grounds. The RBA plans on using the CVBT as a model for how a preservation organization is to be run and the Trust is making every effort to help the RBA achieve that. Only 1,500 acres have been saved out of more than 10,000 acres of battlefield property and each month more is being destroyed, their task is not an easy one.

Others worry that too many Civil War organizations will cut into the funds that established organizations, such as the CVBT, need. We do not see a conflict because there is so much work to do. Instead of fewer groups we need more. Large, national organizations, such as the Civil War Preservation Trust, have the ability to broker deals that a smaller organization may not be able to handle. They also have the flexibility to take advantage of opportunities where a local preservation organization may not exist. Local groups, on the other hand, can focus their efforts on specific battlefields, often contending with volatile real estate markets that raise the cost of preservation. Each type of organization compliments the other. We applaud the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and the Richmond Battlefield Association. They will undertake the challenge of preserving battlefields in their respective areas of operations.

## 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

## 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. A financial statement is available, upon request, from the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs.

### The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Inc. Board of Directors

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# COME TO FREDERICKSBURG FOR A Gathering on the Rappahannock: The CVBT 2001 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust on May 5 and 6, 2001, will focus on Civil War sites in and around Fredericksburg—especially the several places at which the Trust has played a major preservation role. As has become traditional, the CVBT Annual Meeting will offer a mixture of education and good fellowship. Saturday afternoon features a trip down the historic Rappahannock on the paddlewheeler *City of Fredericksburg*, with narration of Civil War highlights en route by historian Erik Nelson. The annual meeting that evening will be hosted in a tent near the historic city dock on the riverside and in the back yard of the "Sentry Box" house. Fredericksburg's Mayor William M. Beck will give the welcome address. Throughout the Saturday evening event, the Trust will be sponsoring a silent auction of Civil War items, including a limited edition print, signed books, and other unique material. On Sunday's tour, Gary Gallagher and Bob Krick will lead a tour by bus and afoot to sites many people never get to visit, including: the Yerby House site, "Belvoir," an important CVBT project (where General Maxcy Gregg died and where Stonewall Jackson sat for his last photograph) and other outstanding Fredericksburg sites. For more information call Carroll Hayden at (540) 898-6626.

## CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELDS TRUST ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY, MAY 5TH

- Noon -2:00 p.m. River cruise on the *City of Fredericksburg* with lunch  
2:00 - 4:30 p.m. Walking tour of Fredericksburg with historian Frank A. O'Reilly  
5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Silent auction at the riverside tent  
6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Cocktails  
7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Barbecue-Style Dinner, catered in the tent  
8:00 - 8:30 p.m. CVBT Annual Meeting (election of officers)

### SUNDAY, MAY 6TH

- 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Tour of hidden Civil War sites around Fredericksburg  
*Bus and walking tour led by Gary Gallagher and Bob Krick*

### PRICE

- Full weekend package \$115 members/\$150 nonmembers (includes cruise, tours, Saturday dinner & Sunday lunch)  
One day package \$60.00 members/\$80 nonmembers  
Saturday night dinner \$20.00 adults/\$36.00 couples/\$10.00 children (under 17)

**REGISTRATION DUE BY APRIL 27, 2001**

### CENTRAL VIRGINIA BATTLEFIELDS TRUST ANNUAL MEETING 2001 REGISTRATION FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

- SIGN ME UP FOR:  WEEKEND PACKAGE - \$115 (MEMBERS) x \_\_\_\_\_  WEEKEND PACKAGE - \$150 (NON MEMBERS) x \_\_\_\_\_  
 SATURDAY PACKAGE - \$60 (MEMBERS) x \_\_\_\_\_  SATURDAY PACKAGE - \$80 (NON MEMBERS) x \_\_\_\_\_  
 SUNDAY PACKAGE - \$60 (MEMBERS) x \_\_\_\_\_  SUNDAY PACKAGE - \$80 (NON MEMBERS) x \_\_\_\_\_  
 DINNER - \$20 (ADULTS) x \_\_\_\_\_; \$36 (COUPLES) x \_\_\_\_\_; \$10 (CHILDREN) x \_\_\_\_\_

METHOD OF PAYMENT:  CHECK  VISA  MASTER CARD  
CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. 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: Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, c/o Carroll Hayden, 4911 Guinea Station Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22407.

## Educational Opportunities Abound in Civil War Weekend Tours

Michael Hemphill and Robert Freis offer engaging two-and-a-half day battlefield tours called Civil War Weekend. Their approach is to follow events through the words of soldier and civilian participants. Freis, who is Civil War Weekend's tour guide, says, "Civil War battlefields are fragile and often beautiful places that yield a surprising amount of insight into why and how the conflict was fought."

Civil War Weekend's approach to visiting battlefields relies upon the eloquence of those who left behind rich and detailed accounts of combat. Their words convey a kaleidoscope of emotions experienced by soldiers in battle. Their words explain both critical decisions and coincidences that resulted in victory or defeat. "These primary sources are the building blocks of historical accounts," Freis says. "They ensure our tours will be accurate, comprehensive and stimulating."

Civil War Weekend invites guests to take part in one or a series of weekend trips to battlefields in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Participants gather at a designated lodge near the battlefield on a Thursday. Civil War Weekend transports them through a campaign or battle during Friday, Saturday, and until noon on Sunday. The tour fee covers lodging, most meals, information packets, and transportation to and around the battlefield. A percentage of Civil War Weekend's proceeds will be donated to education and battlefield preservation, with an emphasis on the smaller land trusts such as the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust.

Freis has been walking battlefields for more than 20 years and leading tours for the past decade. He is a disciple of Dr. Jay Luvaas, who developed and co-authored the

U.S. Army War College's series of Civil War battlefield guides. Hemphill is Civil War Weekend's tour coordinator. Participants on previous trips attest to the validity of Civil War Weekend's approach. Mark Ende, of Petersburg, VA, said: "To stand on the battlefield and listen to the words written by the soldiers who fought there gives one a completely new perspective about what happened. Anyone who has any interest in the Civil War should take one of these tours. You won't be disappointed."

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### From the Archives

Unexploded ordnance is a part of most battlefield landscapes and remains dangerous long after the troops have moved on. Although a firing train can deteriorate and allow an old projectile to be handled with relative safety, explosive shells lost in buildings or in the ground can still function as they were designed to, if jarred or heated. The following excerpt is taken from the Winchester Evening Star (19 January 1915):

#### Civil War Shell Makes Big Noise

Workmen, while cleaning out an old house on the Bradley estate in Fredericksburg a few days ago, piled the accumulated matter in a heap and set fire to it. In a short time there was a terrible explosion which shook a nearby building. Later, it was found that in the rubbish was an unexploded shell, a relic of the Civil War of fifty years ago.

### Renewal Note

Please check your mailing label to see if your membership is due for renewal. The date appears in the upper right hand corner of the label. Clip out the renewal form and send it back.

# Smith Run Valley Battlefield

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Second Battle of Fredericksburg, breaking through the thin Confederate lines and heading west toward Chancellorsville. Lee detached troops from in front of Hooker and halted the Sixth Corps' advance at Salem Church, whereupon Sedgwick withdrew back toward Fredericksburg. On May 4, the isolated Sixth Corps fought for its life on a series of hills near Fredericksburg and then withdrew across the Rappahannock Rive during the night of May 4/5.

Over the course of the Chancellorsville Campaign (April 27 through May 6), the Federal army suffered a total of 17,278 casualties - killed, wounded, and missing. More than 25 percent (4,610 killed,

wounded, and missing) of these losses were sustained by the Sixth Corps. In a campaign characterized by hard fighting, this figure is significant, yet many of the scenes of the Sixth Corps' struggles have been developed and are no longer recognizable as battle-grounds. Salem Church is the only battle site associated with this Union corps within the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, but is mostly paved over. There is one area, however, that remains relatively intact. This site, along a stream called Smith Run, was where the Vermont Brigade held off attacking Louisiana and North Carolina troops in the late afternoon of May 4, 1863. The action was short, but intense, and in the years after the war, four Medals of Honor were awarded to Union veterans who had fought there.

This obscure battleground does not really have a name. The citations for the Medals of Honor are no help in identifying the battle's geographic location. Two of the citations reference Salem Heights, another indicates Fredericksburg Heights, while the last one notes Banks Ford. Clearly, this action was overshadowed by the larger campaign and even the various histories of the Chancellorsville battle cover these events quickly. Still, there is an opportunity to preserve a token area of this battlefield and we are exploring whether the CVBT will be able to effect a purchase. We will keep you posted on developments.

[www.cvbt.org](http://www.cvbt.org)

*Our web page continues to expand, through the generosity of member Gary Embry. 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.*

## Civil War Tours

*continued from page four*

The current schedule for 2001 is as follows:

### Gettysburg

April 12-15, June 14-17, July 19-22,  
August 30-September 2

### Antietam

April 26-29, May 31-June 3, July 5-8

### Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville

May 17-20

### Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House

June 28-July 1

### Petersburg-Appomattox Campaign

September 13-16

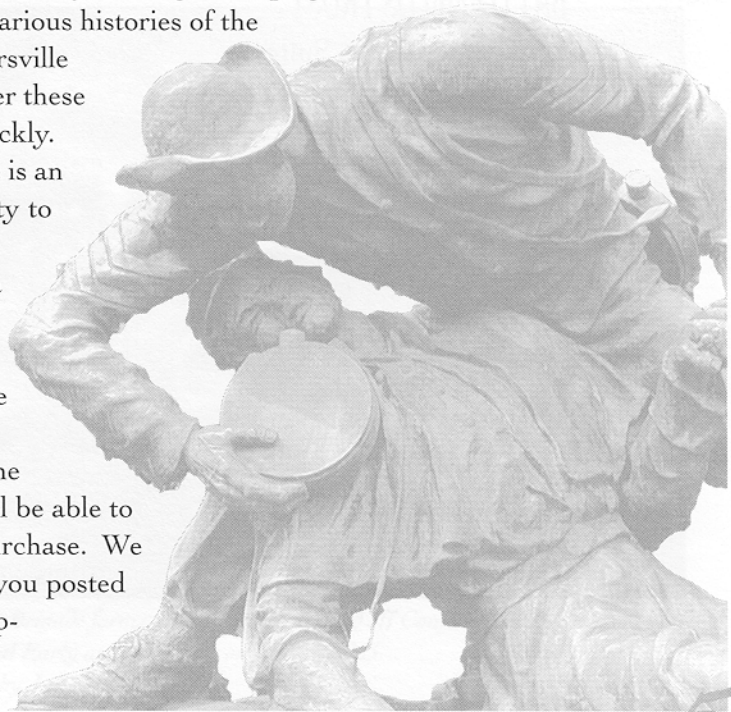
### Second Manassas

September 20-23

### Seven Days Battles

Autumn Date To Be Announced

For further information, contact Michael Hemphill or Robert Freis at 1-866-CWW-TOUR (299-8687) or visit their website at [www.civilwarweekend.com](http://www.civilwarweekend.com).



# 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

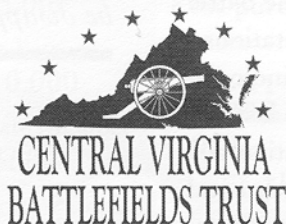
CREDIT CARD NUMBER

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, the CVBT publishes 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 you 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.



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Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
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[www.cvbt.org](http://www.cvbt.org)

