

# On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

## From the President:

### *2005: The Year in Review/CVBT's Accomplishments*

Last year at this time, it was my distinct pleasure to report that the CVBT had managed to preserve and protect a cumulative total of 484 acres of hallowed ground. A year later, I must report that this total has not changed. Still, these past twelve months have included considerable effort toward achieving our goals and I can truthfully inform you that we are moving ahead with several projects.

In the land preservation business, deals can be years in the making. Specific land that we see as a critical resource, for instance, is not always for sale. In addition, developers usually see the potential of land from a very different perspective than we do. These circumstances require that we monitor a whole list of properties with diligent patience. As a local group, CVBT meets with property owners on a regular basis, to let them know of our continued interest and to find out about their particular needs and desires. We monitor infrastructure investments that might make critical ground more attractive to development. We also evaluate local land prices, to ensure that when we finally conclude a deal, we know that we are using our member donations wisely. We have spent the past year talking with several land owners and developers and generally preparing for one of these projects to kick loose and become our next fund raising objective.

It is essential that we spend our time effectively and concentrate on the real estate we absolutely must have. Some deals can take years to conclude and development pressure gives us only a limited period in which to preserve ground before it succumbs to bulldozers. As a consequence, the CVBT has carefully identified and mapped out the land that has to be saved, both to protect the integrity of the

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park as well as to ensure that the full story of each battle can be understood and appreciated. Our emphasis on the May 1, 1863 battlefield at Chancellorsville is a case in point. This area is outside the National Park's Congressionally-authorized boundary, yet is crucial to understanding the overall campaign. Imagine visiting Gettysburg and not being able to see or understand the July 1 battlefield. Such circumstances would inevitably distort our understanding of subsequent action. It is better to identify important terrain in advance and then move forward systematically to acquire it.

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## 2006 CVBT Annual Meeting

The CVBT's Tenth Annual Meeting will take place on May 6<sup>th</sup>, this year, on the newly acquired May 1, 1863 battlefield at Lick Run. This site is tremendously important to fully understand the Chancellorsville Campaign and it will be our pleasure to host this event on historic ground that has been preserved for all time. We will host several tours, including a canoe trip on the Rappahannock River, on Saturday as well as on Sunday morning. The meeting itself on Saturday evening will include a barbeque dinner, the business meeting, and presentation of awards, including the coveted Ralph Happel Award. We will be sending out detailed information, but mark your calendars and come celebrate a decade of battlefield preservation around the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park.

# President's Message

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The CVBT has worked for years to preserve significant acreage of the May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863 battlefield at Chancellorsville. The challenge has been especially great since

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## *CVBT Receives* a Publisher's Gift

**N**orth Carolinian Thomas W. Broadfoot, the leading Civil War specialty publisher in the country, has launched a generous project to raise funds for the CVBT. Broadfoot has on press a reprint of the classic Confederate bibliographical study by Richard Harwell, *In Tall Cotton*. At the same time, he is publishing (in concert with First Corps Books) a new volume, updating the original, entitled *In Taller Cotton*, written jointly by historians Gary Gallagher, Nat Hughes, and Bob Krick. The new books will be limited to 1,000 copies and retail for \$50 each.

As a fund-raiser, Broadfoot is producing special limited editions of 50 copies of each book, signed and numbered and otherwise augmented (a tipped in page from an original Confederate imprint, for instance). The limited copies will cost \$200 per book, with the full proceeds – not just the margin above costs – going to

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this land is within a road corridor that functions as a major artery in this rapidly developing part of Virginia. Our first effort in this area occurred in 1998, when we acquired 100 acres that is called McLaws' Wedge. Though we were the new guys in Civil War preservation, this acquisition showed that we were a serious player and we experienced an exceptional outpouring of support from the local community and from around the nation. We were able to eventually transfer this acreage to the National Park Service and it is now part of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park.

This victory showed that we were on the right track, so we took on more work to the east. A relentless development was approaching from the direction where Stonewall Jackson had once aggressively moved forward to blunt powerful Union columns that had crossed to the south side of the Rappahannock River. Unfortunately, a bad situation was made worse. A few years ago, the local jurisdiction rezoned the scene of the opening shots of the Chancellorsville Campaign, to allow dense commercial development. More acreage was slated for residential subdivisions and a new highway intersection was planned to level the terrain that was so critical to both sides that first day of May in 1863.

Confronting this pressure head on, the CVBT identified 300 acres that would provide sufficient historic integrity to make preservation of this critical ground worthwhile. Over the years, the Trust kept the lines of communication open, discussed

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*[The McLaws Wedge] victory showed that we were on the right track, so we took on more work to the east.*

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# Fredericksburg History and Biography: *The 2005 Volume is Now Available*

**T**he CVBT is pleased to announce that the fourth annual volume of *Fredericksburg History and Biography* (2005) is on the street. This particular issue includes letters from a Delaware soldier at Fredericksburg, an article on how the Union army recovered and buried their dead at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House in 1865 (a year after the fighting had occurred there), as well as an index of names from a register of freed slaves in Caroline County (compiled by the Freedmen's Bureau in 1865). Also of interest is a report on the archaeological investigation that finally discovered the Spindle House site, on the Laurel Hill battlefield. In addition to all this fine material, we are proud to have been able to publish a set of photographs taken in Fredericksburg in the early post war period.

At a special event on December 18<sup>th</sup>, the full set of photographs was displayed in a local antiques store for the public to enjoy. We also had most of the authors on hand to sign copies of the journal. This occasion became quite an event as the small shop became inundated with shoppers and enthusiasts. Sales were brisk and suggest that the CVBT journal is a good quality product that resonates with the reading public.

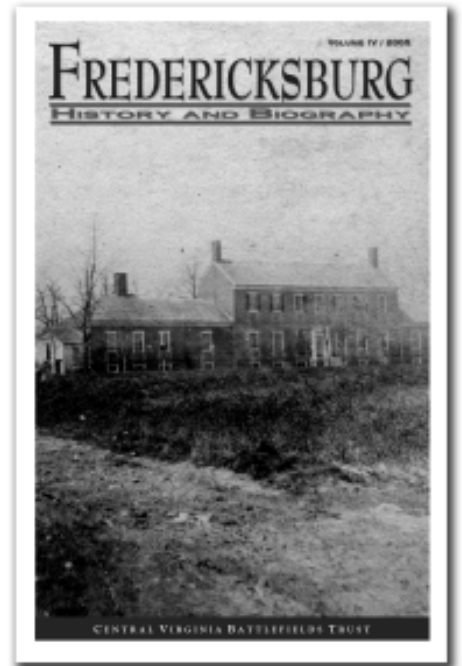
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## Publisher's Gift

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preservation: the CVBT in the case of *In Taller Cotton*, and the Civil War Preservation Trust for the reprint of Harwell's work. Purchasers will be able to deduct 80 percent of the price as a charitable donation. Members interested in either edition of either book can reach Broadfoot Publishing at 910-686-4816.

CVBT members who are at the Active Level or above will receive a complimentary copy of this year's journal, at our cost. A generous donation from the Sunshine Lady Foundation makes this possible. For those individuals who have become members this year, through a fundraising event, and who wish to upgrade their membership to the Active Level or above, we will forward a complimentary copy of this year's journal as a token of our appreciation. Additional copies as well as back issues are available for \$14 each (postage included).



## Texans Donate to CVBT's Cause

**T**he annual Texas Civil War Preservation Seminar in Hillsboro, Texas, on Saturday, November 19, 2005, devoted two-thirds of its profits to the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust. Dan Laney of Austin, one of the most dedicated preservationists in the country, has been arranging the annual conference for twelve years. The 2005 program included presentations by historians Gordon Rhea and Ed Bearss, and attracted some 220 participants. These seminars, annually hosted by Hill College's Simpson History Center, have raised more than \$150,000 for battlefield preservation, with an attendance of nearly 3,000. This year's seminar, supplemented by an Austin Civil War Round Table fund-raising dinner, generated donations of **\$11,000.84** to the CVBT.

## President's Message

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### Membership Categories

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

its goals in conjunction with the goals of the property owners, and eventually participated in a deal that protected 140 acres. Participants included the Spotsylvania County government, a developer named Tricord, and the Civil War preservation community. New ownership allowed a new name for this land and it is now called the Lick Run Battlefield.

This victory came in 2004, five years after the McLaws Wedge acquisition. The lesson here is that patient persistence is the key to battlefield preservation and can be accomplished by a local organization that can stay in contact with property owners, develop a relationship of mutual trust, and work toward goals that meet the needs of all parties.

As 2005 comes to a close, the second half of the Lick Run Battlefield is in play.

A residential developer called Toll Brothers has agreed to sell an additional 75 acres of prime real estate, which also happens to be hallowed ground, to the Civil War preservation community. This sale would take place once a portion of the rest of the property is rezoned to allow additional homes to be built. In return for this intact battlefield land, the developer will be able to construct homes just over the ridge and out of sight of this terrain.

Encouraging situations where all parties win sets the stage for additional preservation. The CVBT's original goal of 300 acres has not been achieved, but a total of 215 acres of battlefield land at Lick Run is a wonderful legacy for the developers, the Spotsylvania County government, and the Civil War preservation community. Everyone can be proud of these deals, which should also serve as models for additional preservation. When everybody wins, we can truly gain momentum to protect additional threatened land.



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