



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Groundbreaking ends 60-year struggle for permanent visitors center at Monocacy

By DAVID DISHNEAU, Herald-Mail.com

FREDERICK, Md. — March 26, 2006
The "battle that saved Washington" lasted just one day, but it took 60 years for Congress to fund a permanent visitor center for the Civil War site.

The National Park Service and elected officials broke ground Friday for the structure at the Monocacy National Battlefield, 1,647 hallowed acres bisected by Interstate 270 and surrounded by commercial and residential development. The barn-shaped building, slated to open next spring, will offer a wealth of information about the clash on July 19, 1864, that marked the Confederacy's last campaign to carry the war into the North.

Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes, D-MD., said the ceremony "sets the stage for people from all over the country and indeed all over the world to see firsthand one of the small but pivotal battle sites of the Civil War."

Exhibits at the \$3.5 million center will focus on phases of the battle that occurred when 6,000 Federal troops led by Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace engaged about 15,000 Confederate troops intent on capturing Washington, about 40 miles away. The Confederates were led by Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early.

The battle bought a 24-hour delay of the Confederate advance at a cost of 1,436 combined casualties. The Union dead numbered 123, with 603 wounded. The Confederates suffered as many as 275 dead, with 435 wounded.

The Confederates won the battle but it slowed and weakened Early's forces enough to prevent them from capturing the capital city a day later.

Congress authorized the national park in 1934 but it took another 32 years before any funds were appropriated for land acquisition.

The park opened to the public in 1991, with exhibits housed in a temporary visitor center in the Gambrill Mill, a 160-year-old building in the river's 100-year flood plain.

Congress appropriated funds for the new visitor center in 2004.

Former U.S. Rep. Beverly Byron, a Maryland Democrat, fought alongside Sarbanes to get money for the park that her father-in-law, William D. Byron, helped establish during his congressional tenure.

"It's been a long time coming," she said.

PA House OKs ban on slots in Gettysburg

By RICHARD FELLINGER, Public Opinion, Harrisburg Bureau, March 16, 2006

HARRISBURG — The House backed an effort to stop a Gettysburg-area slots parlor Tuesday night, approving an amendment to the 2004 slots law that would ban any stand-alone casinos in Adams County.

Rep. Stephen Maitland, R-Gettysburg, sponsored the amendment that passed by a vote of 199-0.

It was attached to an omnibus package of changes to the slots that now heads to the Senate, where the fate of the Gettysburg-area ban is uncertain.

Maitland's effort is meant to block the Crossroads Gaming Resort and Spa, proposed at U.S. routes 30 and 15 by a group of investors led by

Gettysburg businessman David LeVan.

Calls to a spokeswoman and attorney for the investment group were not returned late Tuesday.

In brief floor remarks, Maitland said "the vast majority of my constituents don't want a slots parlor in our county." There was no other debate on his amendment.

The House vote is the latest round in a slots debate that has attracted national attention, and it could lay the groundwork for months of legislative maneuvering over Gettysburg-area slots.

Critics say the Crossroads plan would hurt the area's historical tourism industry and disrespect the soldiers who died there, while the investors claim it would boost the Gettysburg economy with jobs and tax revenue.

If Maitland's amendment does not become law, the decision on the Crossroads plan would be left to the state Gaming Control Board. The seven-member board should decide by next year who gets slots licenses, and other proposals are in the Poconos, Lehigh Valley and suburban Philadelphia.

Group seeks \$1 million to preserve Shepherdstown Civil War battlefield

Shepherdstown, W.VA, Associated Press, March 11, 2006

The Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia's explosive growth is threatening a Civil War battlefield and a group dedicated to preserving the site is seeking \$1 million to help fend off development.

The Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association asked the Jefferson County Commission for the



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

money, saying the battlefield is among the nation's 10 most at-risk Civil War battle sites.

About 300 acres, or half of the site, remains in relatively pristine condition and can be preserved. The remainder "has been lost to real estate development," said association president Edward Dunleavy.

Jefferson County is one of the state's fastest growing counties as people from the Baltimore-Washington area move into West Virginia. The money would help the group purchase conservation easements on privately owned land, Dunleavy said.

The property, also known as Boteler's Ford, was the site of a battle fought Sept. 19-20, 1862, about one mile east of Shepherdstown. Confederate troops were attacked after they had retreated across the Potomac River following the Battle of Antietam in Maryland.

Dunleavy said it is hoped that the National Park Service, which runs the nearby Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, would eventually own and manage the property.

County commissioners did not immediately indicate if they would grant the request.

The wounded soldier returns to his pedestal Uncivil vandalism repaired at Gettysburg

By Amy Worden, Philadelphia Inquirer

GETTYSBURG, Pa. — March 13, 2006 - With a small crowd - and one nervous art conservator - watching, a crane operator gently lifted his cargo from a truck, swung it under the old chestnut trees, and set it back atop its perch overlooking the Peach Orchard battlefield.

After more than 100 hours of mending gouges and scrapes from

the worst act of vandalism at Gettysburg National Military Park in recent memory, the 120-year-old, life-size bronze of a soldier from a Philadelphia unit was back home.

"I was relieved," Vic Gavin, chief of the park's monument preservation branch, said later. "We put a lot of work into it and dropped a lot of other things."

The monument - one of 1,300 at the park - honors the 114th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, the flamboyantly dressed Zouave unit commanded by Capt. Charles H.T. Collis of Philadelphia.

It was the first monument repaired after a particularly destructive attack Feb. 15 that caused up to \$65,000 in damage to three of the park's oldest statues.

Vandals scaled them, tied each to a vehicle and drove off, ripping them from their pedestals.

A bronze statue of a soldier honoring the Fourth New York Battery, which fought at Devil's Den in the 1863 battle, was dragged 160 feet. The head from the 700-pound figure broke off and was stolen, as was a cannon ramrod the figure was holding.

A stone-and-bronze sculpture commemorating the 11th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, which defended the Union line north of the Peach Orchard, was broken into pieces. Taken were a stone forearm and hand, and a bronze sword.

"It was obviously thought out, doing damage to three monuments like that," said Tim Sorber, supervisory law enforcement officer for the park.

News of the incident spread quickly. From around the country, the Civil War faithful responded by sending checks to the U.S. Park Service to help fund repairs. Two Pennsylvania state senators have introduced a

resolution urging Congress to pony up money for restoration.

"I cried tears over this," said Jean Siderio, a former Bucks County resident now living in Gettysburg and a descendant of a member of the 114th Pennsylvania. The Zouave unit, known for its brightly colored, North African-style uniforms, modeled itself after the French colonial army units that fought for control of Algeria in the 1830s.

Some watching the return of the repaired statue Thursday blamed the vandalism on what they see as an erosion of respect for the nation's historical treasures.

"This generation no longer cares about our past," said Bill Hartley, a Civil War reenactor from Baltimore whose great-great grandfather fought at Gettysburg. "I was brought up to treat things like statues with high esteem."

People were probably saying something similar in 1913, when sledge-wielding vandals attacked nine Gettysburg monuments. One irate Philadelphian wrote to the park superintendent at the time, urging him to "secure the maniac who injured the monuments." He added, "Unless he was insane, a rope's end would be the proper thing for him."

And there have been other acts of destruction over the years. A pacifist cult in the 1990s traveled to Civil War battlefields around the country, including Gettysburg, pouring hot oil on the monuments. There has been the occasional paintball splatter to remove or a plaque lost to a souvenir hunter.

Because the monuments are more than 100 years old, anyone convicted in the most recent incident will face felony charges that carry a 10-year prison term under the Archeological Resources Protection Act.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Park rangers believe that February's vandalism was a random act because it was too destructive for a relic hunter's heist.

"What they took was worthless. It's either a mindless or drunken prank," said Vic Gavin, chief of the park's monument preservation branch.

Investigators are stumped because there is no physical evidence and no witnesses. They hope someone recognizes the statue parts and turns in the culprits to claim a \$36,000 reward.

While it could be a year or more before the other two vandalized statues are repaired, the informal ceremony for the restored Pennsylvania monument was a moment to celebrate. Jean Siderio planted a small American flag at the base of the pedestal.

Hartley gazed at the newly polished bronze statue and said, "It's a beautiful thing."

The beloved Zouave soldier, with his handlebar moustache, baggy pants and collarless jacket, was back, posed in rakish profile, surveying the Peach Orchard - everyone hoped - for all time.

BEST VIEW IN GETTYSBURG

Historical society to offer first-ever cupola tour April 22

By JOHN MESSEDER - *Gettysburg Times* - March 14, 2006

The Old Dorm cupola, from which Brig. Gen. John Buford watched Confederate forces enter Gettysburg July 1, 1863, will be open to tours next month for the first time in nearly a century. The first-come-first-served, reservations required event will be offered April 22.

The event is cosponsored by the Adams County Historical Society, which makes its home in the building,

now called the Schmucker House, and the Seminary Ridge Historical Preservation Foundation, an organization founded in 1999 to preserve and educate the public about Civil War properties along Seminary Ridge.

"Every day, practically, somebody knocks on the door wanting to go up there," said ACHS director Wayne Motts. "It has never been open to visitors."

From four stories above the highest hill in Gettysburg, and at least a full story above the tops of surrounding trees, the cupola gained its place in history as the observation post from which Brig. Gen. John Buford reported to Gen. John Reynolds on the progress of the Rebels' advance. "How's it going, John," Reynolds reportedly shouted up from where he was seated on his horse.

"The devil's to pay," Buford responded.

The building is one of the three most photographed structures in post-Civil War Gettysburg. The other two are the gatehouse at Evergreen Cemetery, and Pennsylvania Hall — the main building at Gettysburg College.

The cornerstone for the Old Dorm was laid in 1831, beginning construction of a design by Chambersburg Architect Nicolas Pierce. When it was completed the following year, at a cost of \$8,726.95, it became the centerpiece of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, initially about 20 acres purchased for \$1,166.15 from William McClean and Samuel H. Buehler.

It became the dormitory and scholastic hall for the Lutheran Theological Seminary, which moved from its starting location on South Washington Street. In fact, it was

home for the entire seminary, except the two professors' homes.

During the Battle of Gettysburg, it was one of three buildings on Seminary Avenue, flanked to the south by the home, built in 1833, of the Rev. Samuel Schmucker, and to the north by the home, built in 1834, of professor Charles P. Krauth. From July through September 1863, it surrendered its role as an educational center, and served as a hospital for 600 wounded soldiers of both sides. Initially, a house steward, Mary Ziegler, contributed a piece of her red petticoat to hang from the cupola, marking the building as a hospital until an official hospital flag, yellow with a green H, could be hung.



Lutheran Seminary building Cupola.
Photo courtesy sscnet.ucla.edu

Preservation Plan Brings Together CWPT, Reenactors

March 12, 2006-CWi- To acknowledge the invaluable contribution of reenactors to battlefield preservation, the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) has joined with some of the most dedicated and preservation-minded living historians in the nation to create the Civil War Reenactor Advisory Council. The new Advisory Council will reach out to all segments



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

of the battlefield protection movement and bring them together to increase the preservation presence at threatened Civil War sites across the nation.

To create the Advisory Council, CWPT is partnering with Mike Chapman of Arlington, Va. and Doug Cooper of Boise, Idaho – two reenactors who have consistently worked to further the battlefield preservation cause. As a result of their efforts, their reenactment units, the Stonewall Brigade (headquartered in the mid-Atlantic region) and Chaps Pacific Northwest Living History Group (headquartered in the mid-West) were the 2005 recipients of the CWPT Reenactment Unit of the Year Award. CWPT President James Lighthizer said that he expects the Advisory Council to play a vital role in the Trust's preservation efforts. In outlining his vision for the new Advisory Council, Lighthizer said: Cooper supported Lighthizer's enthusiasm. "The Advisory Council hopes to serve as the 'eyes and ears' of CWPT, alerting them to possible preservation issues at the local level. We will be vigilant in our monitoring of the potential development and sale of battlefield land. And we will do our utmost to help raise money to rescue endangered hallowed ground." CWPT intends to coordinate with the Advisory Council to ensure reenactor resources are targeted toward the most timely battlefield preservation efforts.

Chapman hailed the creation of the Council when he said: "The Reenactor Advisory Council plans to help organize more living history events on CWPT land in the future. Last year, we held a small, authentic, preservation-oriented event on CWPT's property at Mine Run that

raised more than \$10,000!" Lighthizer expressed his appreciation for the contributions that reenactors have already made to CWPT and its mission to save Civil War sites. He said: "Time and experience have proven that the crusade to preserve historic sites associated with the Civil War is an uphill battle, but one that can be won through dedication and hard work. With the help of the living history community, CWPT can achieve even more success." In making the announcement, Lighthizer also recognized the immense contribution of the late historian and author Brian Pohanka (a member of the Duryee's Zouave reenactment unit), whose work and vision, he said, "is carried forward by the many living historians invited to join in the Council's important mission."

Anyone interested in participating in the Civil War Reenactor Advisory Council is encouraged to contact Mike Chapman at dustyswb@comcast.net or Doug Cooper at coop2911@msn.com. With 75,000 members, CWPT is the largest nonprofit battlefield preservation organization in the United States. Its mission is to preserve our country's remaining Civil War battlefields. Since 1987, the organization has saved more than 22,300 acres of hallowed ground nationwide. CWPT's website is located at www.civilwar.org.

CWPT Launches Plan to Save Fredericksburg's "Slaughter Pen"

March 29, 2006 –Courtesy CWi- The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), America's largest nonprofit battlefield preservation group, today announced the beginning of a \$12 million national

campaign to preserve the historic Slaughter Pen Farm, a key part of the Fredericksburg battlefield. The 205-acre farm, known locally as the Pierson Tract, was the scene of bloody struggle on December 13, 1862. Historians estimate that more than 5,000 casualties were incurred on the property.

"This is the most ambitious nonprofit battlefield acquisition in American history," remarked CWPT President James Lighthizer. "The veterans themselves referred to the farm as 'the slaughter pen' because of the enormous amount of blood that was shed there. Despite the price tag, we simply could not sit idly by and watch this irreplaceable battleground become an industrial park. We will raise the money needed to save this historic treasure – because we must." Historians agree with Lighthizer's assessment that preserving the Slaughter Pen Farm should be a national priority. According to Ed Bearss, Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service, the farm is "without a doubt the most significant part of the battlefield at Fredericksburg that is not protected. Its acquisition will provide an opportunity to permit visitors to walk in the footsteps of history." Historian Frank O'Reilly, the author of *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter War on the Rappahannock*, calls the Slaughter Pen Farm "the very heart and soul of the Fredericksburg Battlefield. This is the point where the battle was won and lost."

The Slaughter Pen Farm is the largest remaining unprotected part of the Fredericksburg Battlefield. It is also the only place on the battlefield where a visitor can still follow the Union assault on that bloody day from beginning to end. Nearly all the other land associated with Union attacks at



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Fredericksburg – either on the southern end of the battlefield or in front of Marye's Heights – has been destroyed by development.

"This is our last chance to save an irreplaceable portion of the Fredericksburg Battlefield," stated Central Virginia Battlefields Trust (CVBT) President Mike Stevens. "Standing on that last unblemished landscape, where so many men gave their lives on a cold winter day, it is clear that such sacrifice and valor must be preserved to inspire future generations." Stevens also noted that CVBT intends to play a key role in the campaign to save the Slaughter Pen Farm.

For years, the fate of the Slaughter Pen Farm has hung in the balance. The farm is located along historic Tidewater Trail (U.S. Route 2), which has witnessed tremendous industrial and commercial growth in recent years. The property is zoned for industrial use, and is immediately adjacent to a major north-south rail line, making it extremely attractive to developers. When the property was put on the market in December 2005, the listing agent described it as "one of the best industrial sites in the Commonwealth of Virginia." "Under the circumstances, preservation of the farm seemed a long shot at best," noted Lighthizer.

Once the Slaughter Pen Farm was placed on the market, preservationists were in a race against time. Fortunately, CWPT was able to secure the assistance of Tricord, Inc., a local family-owned development company that had previously cooperated with preservationists to save the 140-acre First Day of Chancellorsville Battlefield (formerly known as the Mullins Farm). Tricord brought to the table financial resources, a

comprehensive knowledge of the area, and the wherewithal to move quickly to take the property off the market. Tricord and CWPT have an agreement that turns the Slaughter Pen Farm over to CWPT to be preserved in its entirety – no strings attached.

"Tricord has once again shown itself to be an exceptionally community-minded corporation," Lighthizer stated. "They gave of their time and talents to secure this property, without any benefit other than the satisfaction that they were helping to save hallowed ground." Stevens also lauded Tricord, noting: "Tricord deserves praise for allowing love for this community to guide their decisions; who, simply put, did an honorable and noble thing in helping to make this all possible."

Russ Smith, Superintendent of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, also expressed enthusiasm for a cooperative effort to save the Slaughter Pen Farm: "We view this as a rebirth of the Fredericksburg battlefield. Preservationists had long ago given up on maintaining a vista from Union to Confederate lines, but CWPT and Tricord have given this historic landscape a second chance."

In April 2005, CWPT presented Tricord, Inc. with its Shelby Foote Preservation Legacy Award, for its role in saving the First Day of Chancellorsville site. During its May 2005 annual conference in Fredericksburg, CVBT presented Tricord with a similar honor.

Reaching the \$12 million goal for the Slaughter Pen Farm campaign is not going to be easy. CWPT intends to work with federal, state and local government officials to secure matching grants to help pay for acquisition of the property.

Government grants will be leveraged with private sector donations from CWPT members, corporations and other conservation groups. According to Lighthizer, "we anticipate an unprecedented response for this fundraising effort from our members and all those who care about this great nation."

Maryland's last son of Confederate veteran honored

LAVALE, Md., WAVY.com, March 7, 2006 - An Allegany County man reputed to be Maryland's last living son of a Confederate veteran has been honored by the local Civil War Roundtable.

Eighty-five-year-old Albert Comer says he's used to people responding with disbelief when he tells them his father was a Civil War soldier.

But the Sons of Confederate Veterans organization says it has verified that Comer is the son of James Comer, who joined the Confederate army in 1861 at age 14 in Virginia. Albert is the youngest child of James Comer's second wife.

He was honored last week at a ceremony that included his induction into a Sons of Confederate Veterans chapter based in Moorefield, West Virginia.