



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

EDITOR'S NOTE

Nominations will be accepted at the October meeting for all offices of the Baltimore Civil War Roundtable. These include:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Asst Secretary/Treasurer and three At-Large Board Members. Elections for all contested offices will be held at the November meeting of the BCWRT. Nominations for any the above positions should be provided to an officer of the Roundtable either prior to or at the October meeting.

The Battle For Fort Stevens: How Civil War Buffs And A Church Fought Over Housing

By: Martin Austermuhle, WAMU, October 12, 2016

There are plenty of things that can trip up a development project in the District, but the Civil War probably isn't the first one that comes to mind for most people.

But that's what happened with the Emory United Methodist Church more than a decade ago, when the congregation's leaders first floated the idea of rebuilding the aging house of worship along Georgia Avenue in the Brightwood neighborhood and adding on a

multipurpose building that would be known as The Beacon Center.

The rear of the church faces Fort Stevens, the only Civil War battlefield in the nation's capital. That fact prompted a fierce, years-long fight over the project that only ended last week, when church and city officials joined together to break ground on the \$42.5 million, 175,000-square-foot facility that will include 99 units of affordable housing.

During the years that the fight went on, Civil War buffs argued that the planned five-story building would tower over the fort, diminishing the site's historical significance. But church officials and their partners said they only wanted to use their land to further their mission. As the fight dragged on, they feared that the Ward 4 project — and the affordable housing it will bring — would never get off of the ground.

"There was absolutely some fear that there would be so much control by external factors over a site that's controlled by the church," says Jacqueline Alexander, the development director at The Community Builders, a nonprofit developer partnering with Emory on The Beacon Center.

A little history is in order

Here's the (somewhat) quick rundown: Emory Methodist was founded in 1832, and built its church along what is now Georgia Avenue in 1855. In 1861, the church was demolished by the government to make way for Fort Massachusetts — later renamed Fort Stevens — one of the 68 forts built to protect the nation's capital during the Civil War.

The fort was the site of a daylong battle between Confederate and Union troops on July 11-12, 1864. It wasn't a particularly dramatic or bloody battle, spare one fact:

President Abraham Lincoln came under enemy fire during the fighting. After the war ended and Fort Stevens was decommissioned, the portion that had once belonged to Emory was returned. By 1922, a new church was being built.

By the late 1960s, the demographics of the congregation had flipped: What was once an all-white church became almost all black, much like the neighborhood around it.

In the mid-2000s, the Rev. Joseph W. Daniels, Jr. laid out his vision for not only a new church for Emory, but also a building that would surround it and serve as community space and residences. In 2009, the church started on the winding regulatory path for the project, which included getting approval from the D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment.

By 2010, the church had its approvals in hand, but rumbles of discontent were gaining in volume. The National Park Service had opposed the project, largely because the new building would block the view from Fort Stevens to Georgia Avenue, where Confederate troops had marched against the Union encampment.

Opposition from Civil War groups

The Beacon Center also drew fire from the Civil War Preservation Trust, which added Fort Stevens to its list of the nation's most endangered battlefields. The new building, it opined, "would tower over the fort, significantly degrading the visitor experience." That same year, the issue was given a national platform by New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd, who had grown up near Fort Stevens.

A number of delays hit the project, and it wasn't until late 2014 that things seemed to be moving forward, so much so that the congregation decamped from the church in



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preparation for the construction to come. In early 2015, the church applied for a raze permit, which would allow it to demolish everything but the house of worship's facade.

In response, the D.C. Preservation League applied to have the church designated a historic site, a designation that offers buildings and structures additional protections from being altered. The league, backed by a number of Civil War groups, argued that the structure was historically significant, and razing the majority of it would do irreversible damage to the site.

The historic designation — which the D.C. government granted in May — caught church officials by surprise, delaying construction, threatening their financing and sending them back to the drawing board.

"It did add some additional costs and it did delay because we essentially had to redesign the project," Alexander says. Redesigning the project cost an additional \$4 million, say church officials, and delayed the project by two years. It also threatened the project's financing, leaving many church officials worried about whether The Beacon Center would ever come to be.

It also prompted feelings of anger that a Civil War battlefield that for years had been ignored eventually could derail a project the church wanted.

"You're always going to have folks who are really committed to preserving Civil War history and just want things to stay the way they are. And here you have a church that has been around since 1832 really saying, 'We want to make sure that we are relevant today, in 2016, that we want to make sure that we have a church and a facility that can complement the needs of people today,'" Alexander says.



Fort Stevens is the only Civil War battlefield in the nation's capital. Seen towards the back of this image is Emory Methodist Church, which is moving ahead with plans for The Beacon Center, a five-story building that will surround the church and offer community space and affordable housing. — WAMU, Martin Astemuhl

And historic preservation groups had their own frustrations. They say they warned that the designation application would be filed if the church applied for a raze permit, and expressed anger over the church's rejection of a proposed land swap engineered by the National Park Service. Under the swap, The Beacon Center would be built on NPS land across the street from the church. But church officials said it would be too expensive, since they would have to redesign the entire building.

"All they have to do is put it across the street and we'll be happy. I would support them," says Loretta Neumann, a Ward 4 resident and president of the Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington. "If they need a fundraising drive to help them raise money for something, I'd be the first to help them. I'm not against them, I'm not against the church, I'm just against the location of where they want to build this massive building."

The battle comes to an end

But work continued towards making The Beacon Center a reality. A historic mitigation plan was drafted, which includes an archeological dig on the site for any Civil War-era

artifacts. And church officials agreed to keep the majority of the church intact — the interior will be fully renovated — and give up one of the two levels of underground parking they had planned for the site.

And NPS will even get something out of it: space in the building for a visitors center for Fort Stevens.

Financing eventually came together, including a \$17 million investment from D.C.'s Housing Production Trust Fund, which will help pay for the affordable housing units. Of the 99 being built, 91 will be set aside for renters making 60 percent or less of the Area Median Income. For a two-person household, that's roughly \$45,000 per year.

Despite the historic designation, Civil War buffs still feel the project is a mistake, and remain frustrated that church leaders rejected the land swap proposed by NPS.

"It's one of the most historic sites in all of Washington," says Neumann. "We have no problem with the church. It's this massive development around the church."

But for church leaders, the fight is now behind them. Speaking at the Friday groundbreaking, the Rev. Daniels sounded a note of God-given relief that The Beacon Center would be built.

"Over 12 years and over four mayoral administrations, there must be a God somewhere, and that God is here right now," he said, to loud cheers from the crowd.

Monocacy learns more about fallen Rebel soldier and the Bible that took a bullet

The Civil War Picket, October 2, 2016 Park rangers at Monocacy National Battlefield have had seen success and setbacks in their bid to learn



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more about the life and death of a Confederate soldier wounded when a bullet passed through his Bible and went through his chest.

Pvt. Thomas Cox, a member of the Red House Volunteers, Company A, 21st Virginia Infantry, was wounded and captured on July 9, 1864, at the battlefield near Frederick, Md. The 33-year-old farmer from Carroll County died on Aug. 15, 1864, at a Baltimore hospital.

A park intern conducting research this past summer learned that Baltimore hospital records had been damaged or destroyed, possibly in a fire, curator Tracy Evans told the Picket.

What is known about Cox' final weeks was that he asked a fellow prisoner at the squalid West Building's Hospital to inscribe a message in his battered Bible.

"The ball that struck this book entered my left brest (sic) and came out of right – it saved instant death & will be the means of saving my soul. Thomas Cox," reads the penciled writing on the margins of a few pages. On succeeding pages is written: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

In 2015, the park **purchased the New Testament** for \$12,500 for brokers in Petersburg, Va.

The park intern learned that Cox and his wife had two children before the war and one on the way when he enlisted in 1861. The soldier was able to return to his farm several times during the war and fathered two more children. He recuperated from two illnesses at home while on medical leave.

The 21st Virginia had seen considerable action, including at Gettysburg, before the fight at Monocacy.

"After the men forded the Monocacy River, they formed up in battle line

and assaulted the Union line. 5 According to Sgt. John Worsham, the men in the 21st tore down a fence railing and with the years of hardened experience behind them, rushed forward in a charge against Union positions without orders from their officers. Somewhere in this rush and exchanging volleys of fire, Private Cox was struck by a bullet," intern Chris Sniezek and ranger Kelly Henderson wrote.

Cox died five weeks later of infection and was buried in Baltimore, where he remains buried.

Evans said the research led to emails to potential descendants, but officials have not heard back. They did learn from research of a relative in the Confederate unit that Cox' widow remarried and was believed to have additional children.

The bullet-struck Bible is remarkable in its own way. There's a gaping hole in the center of the book. "We are thinking it must have gone in sideways," said Evans, adding that is perhaps the reason Cox was not killed outright.

Officials want to display the Bible next year, but they know it likely can hold up only to certain lighting conditions, and perhaps for brief periods of exposure. They are looking for more information on Cox and other soldiers whose names and information were written on the Bible's pages. There is no known photo of the soldier.

"The Bible itself has been given an initial condition assessment and will likely go for light preservation next year with recommendations on how it should be put on display and for how long," said Evans. "We would also like to have a better analysis done of possible blood on the Bible." She cautioned there is no evidence of blood, but officials are curious as to

whether small traces remain on the pages.

Conservation experts at the National Park Service's Harpers Ferry Center also will give advice on mounting of the Bible and whether it should be displayed opened or closed.

In an article prepared for an upcoming issue of Civil War News, the park researchers also delved into the story of the Bible's publication. This one was published in 1862 by Wood, Hanletter, Rice and Company of Atlanta.

"Prior to the Civil War, Bibles were mostly printed and distributed by the American Bible Society based in New York. When the war broke out, the American Bible Society decided to continue distributing Bibles to Confederate soldiers, but a Union blockade soon left the South in a severe shortage. Faced with this shortage, the Confederate States Bible Society was established to print and distribute new Confederate Bibles."

The dying Cox got the writing assistance from Pvt. H.S. Shepherd, a Confederate who was captured at Gettysburg in July 1863 and assisted sick comrades while serving as a ward master at the Baltimore hospital. "I was with Thos. Cox when he died," Shepherd wrote in the Bible. "He was willing ... & appear ready to leave this world for a better one to come."

Another inscription indicates Cox asked that his ring be sent to his widow, Frances.

A Changed Landscape at Lee's HQ

By Chris Mackowski,
emjergingcivilwar.com, October 13,
20146

Visitors to Gettysburg recently have seen a remarkable change in the Day One landscape: Lee's headquarters



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now sits alone on the north side of Route 30, overlooking the field.

Owned at the time by the widow Mary Thompson, the house served as Lee's headquarters for the battle of Gettysburg beginning on the afternoon of July 1, 1863. It later became a museum and, eventually, the site of a motor lodge for tourists.

In 2014, the Civil War Trust acquired the property, calling it "one of America's most significant unprotected sites." Since then, the Trust has worked to restore the property to its wartime appearance. And now, the project is nearly complete.

"This project involved some of the Trust's most ambitious work to date," Trust President James Lighthizer told supporters in an email earlier this month. He called it a "landmark preservation achievement" and reiterated its standing as "some of the most significant land in the country."

On October 28, the Trust will officially cut the ribbon on the completed project. "We will unveil the restored Mary Thompson House, present historically appropriate landscaping, and open a new interpretive trail," Lighthizer said.



Civil War Trust photo

All traces of the old motor lodge are gone, as are the surrounding parking lots. Even the Rufus Dawes gas

pump, commemorating the old Lincoln Highway, has been removed.

You can see a time-lapse chronicle of the Trust's work at Lee's Headquarters at civilwar.org, including behind-the-scenes photos of the restoration and that master planning that went into the project.

Champ Ferguson

Opinionator, NY Times

The notorious CHAMP FERGUSON was one of only two men tried and executed for war crimes after the Civil War concluded.

In the words of author Ron Soodalter, "there is, perhaps, room for extenuation in the case of [Henry] Wirz [commandant of the notorious prisoner-of-war camp at Andersonville, Ga. who is the only other man who was tried and executed], an ineffectual martinet clearly out of his depth. The same cannot be said for Ferguson. While some romantics have doggedly held to the image of Champ Ferguson as a much wronged Southern patriot and freedom fighter, he was in fact a vicious killer who took life with neither conscience nor compunction."

In Albany, Kentucky there is a plaque which reads: "Civil War Terrorist Champ Ferguson born here in 1821. Guerrilla leader with Confederate leaning, but attacked supporters of both sides thruout [sic] Civil War in southern Ky., Tenn. Over 100 murders ascribed to Ferguson alone. Hunted by both CSA and USA."

"In 1858, [Champ Ferguson] killed his first man, stabbing a local constable over a financial dispute. According to his own account, when he joined the war three years later, it was less because of his commitment to the Southern cause than as a means of escaping prosecution. By this time Ferguson was 39, but despite the late start, he would soon add dozens of

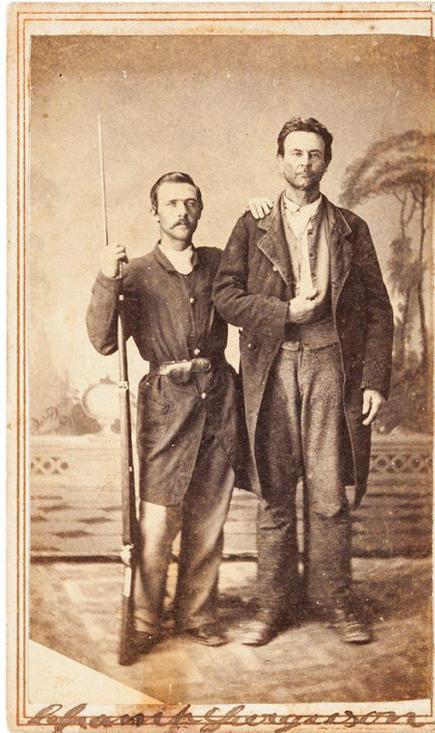
killings to his tally ... his war had less to do with fighting for Southern independence than settling scores with neighbors – and in some cases, with blood kin — who happened to be on the wrong side. He himself later described his guerrilla band's theater of operations: "We were having sort of a miscellaneous war, up there, through Fentress Co[.], T[N], and Clinton Co[.], K[Y], and all through that region ... Each of us had from 20 to 30 proscribed enemies, and it was regarded as legitimate to kill them at any time, at any place, under any circumstances ... His first victim was a neighbor, William Frogg [who was ill and whom] Champ accused ... of having contracted his illness while visiting the Yankee recruitment center at nearby Camp Dick Robinson, which Frogg vehemently denied. Ferguson simply drew his pistol and shot Frogg twice in front of his wife and child, killing him on the spot. He then ransacked the cabin, looking for weapons ... [And so it went with many other killings of former friends, neighbors, and opponents.] Throughout the four years of war, Ferguson killed regular soldiers, members of the Home Guard and simple farmers. He slew helpless prisoners and the children of his enemies. At one point, he berated one of his men for sparing the lives of fleeing boys, screaming, "Goddamn them ... you ought to have shot them!" He murdered five men in one day alone, the last just 16 years old. Although he sometimes used his pistol or rifle, he reportedly preferred to do his killing 'up close and personal' with a Bowie knife ... clergyman Isaac T. Reneau wrote in a letter to the Tennessee governor and future president Andrew Johnson, 'Ferguson has been engaged in horse stealing on a large scale ever



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since the great rebellion began, and, it is supposed, has stolen thousands of dollars' worth of property."

"The most deliberate, coldblooded murders perpetrated by Champ Ferguson occurred in October 1864, after Battle of Saltville in southwestern Virginia. Following the fighting, the Union lieutenant Elza C. Smith of the 13th Kentucky Cavalry lay wounded in the Emory and Henry College Hospital, along with several of his white and African-American soldiers. Suddenly, Ferguson burst into the ward at the head of his band. He strode across the room, and when he came to Smith's cot, he raised his rifle and snarled, 'Do you see this?' He placed the muzzle a foot from Smith's forehead as the injured man lay helpless, pleading for his life. Ferguson drew back the hammer, and ... "click!" The weapon misfired. He cocked his rifle and pulled the trigger twice more, with the same result. Finally, mercifully, on the fourth attempt the gun discharged, and Lieutenant Smith lay dead on his cot, a bullet through his head. Both before and after the killing of Lieutenant Smith, Ferguson and his men rampaged through the hospital and the grounds, slaying injured black troopers where they found them, as well as the white soldiers and officers with whom they served."



Six-foot tall Champ Ferguson posing on August 31, 1865 with one his guards when he was imprisoned awaiting trial for murder. He had less than 2 months to live when this view was taken.

Carte de visite sold by Heritage Auctions on June 7, 2014

"So outraged was the Confederate high command at Ferguson's conduct at Saltville that it ordered his arrest. He was jailed on Feb. 8, 1865, but by this time, Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was on the run, and the war was all but lost to the South. Brig. Gen. John Echols ordered Ferguson released within days of Lee's surrender, and – with the Confederacy crumbling around him – he was soon back in the Cumberland, weapons in hand, resuming his bloody personal war. He slew his last two men on May 1, and within days, Union Maj. Gen. George Thomas ordered that Ferguson be declared an outlaw, and his surrender refused ... By month's end, Ferguson was

arrested at his home and charged with murdering 53 men."

The October 24, 1865 New York Times reported: "CHAMP FERGUSON was executed at noon to-day [October 20], at the Penitentiary grounds just outside [Nashville] ... The noose was here placed around his neck, and then, for the first time, he gave signs of emotion, and his face blushed to a deep scarlet. The perspiration broke forth profusely from his face, and his lips closed with a convulsive quiver. The realization of his awful situation seemed to have flashed over his mind in all its fullness, overpowering his fortitude." He was quoted as saying ""I don't know some things in those specifications. But I don't deny anything I ever done"

National Civil War Museum files legal action against city of Harrisburg

By Christine Vendel, pennlive.com, October 20, 2016

HARRISBURG — Like the first shot fired at Fort Sumter that kicked off the Civil War, the National Civil War Museum has launched legal action against the city of Harrisburg that could kick off a protracted legal battle.

The embattled museum filed documents against the city in Dauphin County Court earlier this month, PennLive has learned. It was served to the city solicitor on Oct. 7 by attorney Kandice Hull, of McNeese, Wallace and Nurick, according to documents obtained by PennLive.

The writ notifies the city that a legal action is forthcoming, but it doesn't



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lay out specifics of the museum's lawsuit.

Museum officials, however, told PennLive that the action is designed to recoup up to \$250,000 in capital expenses that the museum has had to incur since 2009, even though the city is obligated to pay those expenses.

Gene Barr, former chair of the museum board, said the legal filing acts as a "placeholder," to preserve the museum's rights under its lease with the city.

"We were advised by our legal people that this is something we ought to do," he said.

The court filing essentially stops the clock on a potential four-year statute of limitations for breach of contract lawsuits.

Harrisburg Mayor Eric Papenfuse wants to cut tourism dollars for the National Civil War Museum because he says the facility should be self-sustaining.

At issue is who should pay for capital improvement and repairs at the city-owned building in Reservoir Park that houses the museum. The city owns the building and most of the artifacts displayed inside, but the museum is operated by a nonprofit board.

The non-profit organization has contracts with the city and various agencies locking in \$1 annual rent until 2031 and a locking down a chunk of the county's hotel tax money until 2023. The contracts were put in place by former Mayor Stephen Reed before he left office.

A provision in the contract says the city is responsible for capital improvements and repairs. But city officials previously have countered that the contracts were "backroom deals" that weren't publicly vetted, the museum should be paying fair-

market rent and the goal for the museum was always that it would be self-sustaining.

Harrisburg Mayor Eric Papenfuse came out swinging against the museum shortly after taking office in 2014 when he asked Dauphin County commissioners to halt hotel tax money that flows to the museum. The mayor also asked the museum to start paying \$183,000 in annual rent instead of the token \$1 listed in the contract.

Museum officials fired back that the city had fallen short of its obligations by not paying for capital expenses as required under the lease. Museum officials also noted that they pay \$17,000 annually for insurance because the city will not cover the expense.

After trading barbs for months, the dispute between the mayor and the museum died down, at least publicly. The legal action was launched this month, said Burt Snyder, chair of the museum board, because the museum needs to be able to recoup as many expenses as possible from the city.

"The impetus on our end was the statute of limitations," he said. "Every day that went by without any type of formal action, a day was dropping off at the front end and we didn't want that to continue indefinitely."

The museum inside Reservoir Park pays for its own upkeep and repairs, and generates more than \$5.7 million in direct economic benefit to the area, museum officials said Friday.

The depth and length of the legal battle will be determined by the city, Snyder said. He noted the city hadn't paid for capital expenses long before Papenfuse took office.

"This is not a new issue," he said. "It's been going on for over 10 years

that we've been incurring expenses."

Snyder said he's sympathetic to the city's delicate financial situation, but he said the museum is cash-strapped as well.

"We rely on funds from different sources, but a large source is contributions," he said. "Contributors would like to have their money used to enhance the museum's mission, its displays, the presentation to students, to make history alive. That's what they'd like their contributions to go for, instead doing capital repairs."

City officials declined to comment about the legal action.

The depth of the litigation will depend on how the city responds to the writ, Snyder said.

"This is the first step," he said.

Bomb squad detonates Civil War weaponry exposed by hurricane Matthew

CNET, October 10, 2016

Hurricane Matthew scoured the Florida and southeastern coast of the US over the weekend. The damaging storm acted like an archaeologist in South Carolina when it uncovered a potentially dangerous piece of history at Folly Beach.

The Charleston County Sheriff's Office was called in to deal with the cache of Civil War-era ordnance on Sunday.

The metal shells appear worn and pitted, which isn't surprising considering they date back to nearly 150 years ago. This region of South Carolina was a major staging area for Union troops. "Despite the the jungle-like foliage, the soldiers constructed roads, forts, an artillery battery, and a supply depot," stated the City of Folly Beach.



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The artillery could still be explosive despite the age of the shells and thus needed to be detonated. The Post and Courier reported that nearby residents could hear the explosion when the sheriff's bomb squad detonated some of the ordnance on site.



Photo courtesy Charleston County Sheriff's Office

US Air Force explosion experts also examined the weaponry. The sheriff's office posted this final update: "Folly Beach ordnance detonation successfully completed. Small amount will be transported to Navy Base."