



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Lee's last letter makes a return to Lexington

Baltimore Sun, April 30, 2007

Frayda Salkin, McDonogh School archivist, took a ride down Interstate 81 this past Monday with Gen. Robert E. Lee to Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va.

Well, sort of.

What Salkin was delivering in a locked, fireproof box was the last letter written by the Confederate general turned college president, on Sept. 28, 1870.

Lee had assumed the presidency of Washington College (now Washington and Lee) six months after the surrender of his forces at Appomattox Court House, Va., in 1865.

On a cloudy, chilly late September morning before going home for midday dinner, Lee sat quietly in his college office drafting a two-page letter to Samuel H.

Tagart, an old Baltimore friend and attorney, whose letter had arrived earlier that day.

Tagart, a founder of McDonogh School in 1873 and its board's second president, was also a man of substantial business interests. He was president of the Broadway and Locust Point Ferry Co., Falls Road Turnpike Co. and the York Road Railway.

Lee first became acquainted with Baltimore beginning in 1848, when the War Department assigned the West Point graduate and Mexican War veteran to oversee the construction of Fort Carroll, which still lies unfinished just east of the Key Bridge.

Lee and his wife, Mary Ann Randolph Custis Lee, moved to a new house at 908 Madison Ave., with their three sons and four daughters.

His favorite sister, Ann, who had married Judge William Louis Marshall, also lived in the city.

The handsome young officer and his wife became popular members of Baltimore society and were communicants of Calvary Episcopal Church at Madison Avenue and Hamilton Terrace.

In 1851, the 31st Congress made no further appropriations for the fort and work ceased. The next year, Lee left Baltimore, when he was appointed superintendent of West Point.

Seventeen years and a bloody civil war would pass, before Lee returned to the city in 1869. What brought him here was promoting the building of the Lynchburg & Danville Railroad, a project that would connect Baltimore to the Carolinas and Georgia with a line through the Shenandoah Valley.

Lee arrived in Baltimore on April 21, 1869, and stayed at the home of his friend, Tagart, who gave a reception in his honor.

During his Baltimore stay, Lee spoke of the proposed railroad before the City Council, which had convened in the auditorium of Western Female High School on Fayette Street, between Paca and Green streets.

Lee remained in Baltimore visiting cousins near Ellicott City and attending Old St. Paul's Episcopal Church with his host before traveling May 1 with the Tagarts to Washington.

There they called on Ulysses S. Grant at the White House, where the president reminded his old wartime adversary, "You and I, General, have had more to do with destroying railroads than building them."

In July 1870, Lee again visited Tagart in Baltimore, returning to Lexington in early August.

"I am much better," Lee wrote to Tagart on Sept. 28, 1870. "I do not

know whether it is owing to having seen you and Dr. Buckler last summer, or to my visit to the Hot Springs. Perhaps both."

Lee added that his "pains are less, and my strength greater. In fact, I suppose I am as well as I shall be."

After signing the letter "R.E. Lee," he sealed it, and left his office for the last time.

He paused outside his office for just for a minute to sign a small photograph of himself for Percy Davidson, a college sophomore. It was the last time he ever signed his name.

After the conclusion of the midday meal, he rested until attending an early evening vestry meeting at church.

Afterward, he slowly walked through the rain; shortly after returning home, he suffered the stroke that would take his life several weeks later.

On Oct. 12, 1870, Lee died. Reportedly, his last words were, "Tell Hill he must come up. Strike the tent." At the bottom of the letter, Tagart, who died in 1892, wrote, "This is believed to be the last letter ever written by General Lee."

Presumably, the letter, which has been at McDonogh and kept in a vault for years, came through the Tagart family.

"It been appraised for \$37,500," said Salkin, who during the recent trip to Lexington never took her eye off her car when she stopped for gas or a quick meal.

"I had the box in the trunk," she said.

"The letter will be on display in the room where it was written, which has remained undisturbed since Lee's death," she said.

The Tagart letter will be on exhibition from October through January 2008 at Washington and Lee University, as



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part of an exhibition celebrating the 200th anniversary of Lee's birth.

Researchers bristle at National Archives fee increase proposal

Plan to triple quadruple fees could stifle scholarship.

By John Andrew Prime, Shreveport Times, April 26, 2007
Bossier Parish researcher and amateur historian Bobbie Cardin ordered hundreds of pages of century-old pension records to help document the life of black Union Army soldier Dave Conway, saving the legacy of the man whose lost grave lies in woods in the south part of the parish.

But proposed fee increase sought by the National Archives and Records Administration would have kept her from seeking those vital records, she said.

Among a number of fee increases, the federal agency plans to hike the fee for copying a pension record from \$37 to \$125.

"That's an awful lot of money," said Cardin, whose son Clif Cardin is the official Bossier Parish historian. She's ordered dozens of pension records in 25 years of research, and has learned much through them. "But to be truthful, if it had cost that much back then, I would not have ordered as much."

She's not alone.

"A fee hike of (almost) 300 percent will certainly discourage all but the most serious of researchers," said Shreveport historian Eric J. Brock. "NARA, like every other government agency, is feeling a very tight squeeze as the administration tries to find ways to finance the defense budget. The National Park Service is a good example."

The proposed fee increase was buried in the Federal Register on Feb. 26 but largely escaped the notice of the research and genealogy communities until March.

It would affect Presidential records, Nixon Presidential historical materials and records filed with the Office of the Federal Register and would affect both the public and other government agencies.

Unless blocked by legislation, the fee increase rule will take effect May 29. Public comments on the change are being taken on the Web and can be made until the end of day Friday. Changes that result from the public comments should be published before May 29, NARA said. In its filing, NARA argued there is not appropriated money to copy the public records, and for that reason the fees charged needs to cover the actual cost as closely as possible. NARA's request anticipated the howl over the jump in pension file fees by noting the current fee had been set with an assumption that a typical request would include 40 to 50 pages of material. Instead, it said, many requests exceed 200 pages. Rhode Island researcher and author Mark Dunkelman, who has ordered scores of pension files for his meticulous studies on New York's 154th Volunteer Infantry, also called the "Hardtack Regiment," calls the fee hike "regrettable" and said the agency needs to rethink its proposal. "Pension files can indeed run to 200 or more pages, but many do not," he said. "My great-grandfather's complete file, for example, includes 29 pages. A flat fee of \$125 for a complete file will be grossly unfair to many people ordering their ancestors' pension records. Because of the wide range of page counts in Civil War pension files, the fairest fees would

be per-page and not fixed." More importantly, the hike will discourage scholarship, Brock said. "In the end, I believe it will have a detrimental effect upon use of NARA's facilities and collections," Brock said. He added that it is "unfortunate, as this is a remarkable facility and an extraordinary resource."

Female Civil War vet Albert Cashier's house back in Saunemin

By M.K. Guetersloh, Pantograph.com, April 26, 2007

SAUNEMIN, MI -- Board by board, the house that once hid the identity of a Civil War veteran is being dismantled as Saunemin starts restoring the Albert Cashier house. Volunteers from the village board brought the building back to Saunemin after it sat for years at Pontiac's street department garage. The city moved the 12- by 22-foot house from Saunemin in 1986 in an effort to save it. But without money or a piece of land to locate the house, it sat in city storage and continued to deteriorate.

"From an historical perspective, it is great to have the house back in Saunemin," said Mayor Mike Stoecklin. The village already owns a lot Stoecklin said is "just feet" from where the house originally stood. The house has been back in Saunemin less than two weeks but already workers are dismantling it to catalogue each piece as part of a complete restoration.

Cashier joined the Union Army, and after fighting in the Civil War, relocated to Saunemin, a village about 12 miles east of Pontiac. There, Cashier worked as a handyman and drew an Army pension. It was not until a car



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accident in 1911 that Cashier's identity as a woman was discovered. Cashier really was an Irish immigrant named Jennie Hodgers.

Despite many attempts, Pontiac could not get a project together to save the house.

Pontiac City Administrator Bob Karls said the city had two problems: Finding a site to display the house and coming up with the money for the restoration.

"We knew when we did the restoration, we knew we had to do it right," Karls said.

Stoecklin said Saunemin now is a position to do a historically accurate restoration of the house.

Bringing back a piece of the village's history also gives Saunemin a more solid tie to Cashier and a tourist attraction.

"Last summer, we had Civil War re-enactors that frankly stopped in Saunemin because of that connection," Stoecklin said. "We learned a lot about him (Cashier) from the re-enactors."

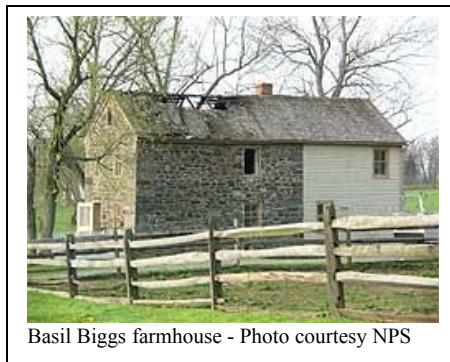
Cashier died in October 1915 and was buried in a Union Army uniform at Saunemin's Sunnyslope Cemetery.

Historic Biggs/Frey Farmhouse Damaged by Fire at Gettysburg

April 24 2007 - (Press release Gettysburg NMP/NPS)

A fire damaged the Basil Biggs House on the Gettysburg battlefield earlier today, Gettysburg National Military Park officials have announced. At 3 a.m. on April 24, smoke alarms alerted emergency responders to the situation. A fire suppression system installed in the historic house in 2002 activated and three fire companies responded to the blaze.

The fire started in the attic of the structure. The roof has extensive damage, and the interior has water damage. A park employee and his family live in the home and were able to escape with no injuries. The cause of the fire is still under investigation. No cost estimate for the damage is available at this time.



Basil Biggs farmhouse - Photo courtesy NPS

The Basil Biggs farmhouse dates to 1850-1860. Located at 350 Taneytown Road, the house was behind Union battle lines on Cemetery Ridge during the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, and troops used it for cover and concealment. Its position close to major battle action made it one of the busiest of the forward hospital aid stations during the battle.

In 2002, Gettysburg National Military Park received special funding for and installed fire suppression systems in 50 historic structures on the Gettysburg battlefield, including the Biggs farmhouse.

The Basil Biggs farmhouse is also known as the P. Frey farmhouse.

Who was Basil Biggs?

By SEAN HILLIARD, Hanover Evening Sun, 04/25/2007

The Basil Biggs Farm, which was damaged by fire Tuesday morning, served as a temporary care station during the Battle of Gettysburg.

But because it was so close to the battle itself, the wounded had to be moved by ambulance or risk being hit by the cannonade, said John Heiser, a historian/librarian with the Gettysburg National Military Park.

The farmhouse, built in the 1850s, is best known for its former owner, Basil Biggs.

But during the battle at Gettysburg, the farmhouse belonged to Peter Frey and was inhabited by a tenant farmer named Franklin Swisher, Heiser said.

Biggs didn't purchase the farm until April 1865, when he bought several Taneytown Road properties, Heiser said.

Biggs was born in New Windsor, Carroll County, Md., in 1819 as a free black, Heiser said. Biggs received some schooling before he moved to Baltimore and became a member of the Teamsters union and drove wagons.

But when he, his wife and five children moved to Adams County in 1858, Biggs became a tenant farmer, Heiser said.

Biggs also is believed to have been a conductor on the Underground Railroad up until the Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves, helping former slaves escape the South, Heiser said.

It wasn't until the years following the Civil War that Biggs became well-known, Heiser said. Samuel Weaver, of Gettysburg, became responsible for exhuming and moving the bodies of soldiers from various burial sites throughout the Gettysburg area to the Gettysburg National Cemetery.

He contracted the work to Biggs, Heiser said. From 1863 to 1864, Biggs was involved in moving 3,500 soldiers to the cemetery.

Biggs even moved the bodies of Union soldiers killed during the Battle



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of Hanover, according to a wayside marker behind Trinity United Church of Christ on York Street in Hanover.

Nineteen Union cavalymen were reported killed or mortally wounded during the battle on June 30, 1863, but by 1864 only 11 were still buried in Hanover.

Biggs helped exhume and move all of them with long hooks, shovels and his wagons, the marker said.

Home for Civil War spy wins listing on National Register

By Linda Wheeler, The Washington Post, April 28, 2007

The Floris, Va., home of Laura Ratcliffe, the Confederate spy who saved Col. John Mosby's life, is reminiscent of a fairy-tale setting. The old frame house is protected by broad oaks and graced with a sparkling creek nearby.

This rare piece of Fairfax County history, cut off by expanding highways and spreading development, gained a bit of protection last month with its listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Winifred and David Meiselman bought the place, known as Merrybrook, 35 years ago, when the family could enjoy the quiet of country life, probably just as Ratcliffe had done after the war when the property was known as Brookside.

In applying for the National Register, Win Meiselman turned to a "drawer full of stories" she had collected over the years about Ratcliffe. Included was the story of how Ratcliffe saved Mosby's life, as told by Maj. John Scott in his 1867 book, "Partisan Life With Colonel John S. Mosby." Ratcliffe was known to have befriended Mosby, so a Union soldier who stopped by her house at the

time, believed to have been about a mile south of Merrybrook, couldn't resist bragging to her that he and his troops were going to catch the "Grey Ghost" that night in an ambush. He wasn't worried that she would warn Mosby because the weather was poor.

When the Union soldier left, Ratcliffe and her sister set out on foot to warn Mosby, who, as a result, did not appear where he was expected that night.

Ratcliffe also let her house be used as Mosby's headquarters. He often met his men at a large rock near her home, which became known as Mosby's Rock. That was where she left him money and information. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, who admired Ratcliffe for her beauty and bravery, gave her a gold-embossed leather album with this inscription: "Presented to Miss Laura Ratcliffe by her soldier-friend as a token of his high appreciation of her patriotism, admiration for her virtues, and pledge of his lasting esteem."

The album and Stuart's gold watchband were found at Merrybrook after Ratcliffe died in 1923 at almost 90.

Vandals strike Gettysburg battlefield again

By ANGIE MASON, Hagerstown Evening Sun, 04/16/2007

A park visitor recently found damage to a Gettysburg National Military Park monument, and two others vandalized last year are still waiting for repairs.

The most recent damage discovered was to the 155th Pennsylvania monument on Little Round Top, which had already been repaired once, according to park officials.

Vic Gavin, supervisory exhibits specialist at the park, said the granite soldier's hand and the top of his musket had been missing for years. The parts were repaired in 2005, he said.

But recently, a visitor reported that the top of the musket had once again broken off, said Katie Lawhon, park spokeswoman.



"We think it was intentionally damaged. Interestingly enough, the parts were found on a nearby monument and we have them," she said.

"We're investigating it as a vandalism incident."

Two of three monuments vandalized in February 2006 – the 11th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry monument and the 4th New York Independent Artillery Battery monument – are still awaiting repairs, Lawhon said.

The 14th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry monument was also vandalized, but it was repaired within a few months.

The bronze artilleryman depicted in the New York statue was pulled from its pedestal and dragged 160 feet, Gavin said. Its head and the rammer



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for a cannon were broken off and never found.

Gavin has been working on getting the dings and scratches out of the bronze and plans to head to New Hampshire this summer to help mold a new head and rammer. A statue in New Hampshire, sculpted by the same artist, includes an exact copy of the artilleryman, he said.

"I've been waiting a little over a year because I was sort of hoping the head might turn up at a flea market or something," Gavin said.

There's no duplicate of the Massachusetts monument, only photos and drawings, he said. That statue was "so badly damaged, so much of it stolen, that C6 we will probably just have to have a new one carved out of stone," he said.

Park officials followed some leads, but they haven't been able to charge anyone with the vandalism, Lawhon said.

While some vandalism at the park is dramatic, like the damage to the monuments, there's also what Gavin calls "thoughtless vandalism" that is more subtle.

Years ago, it cost about \$2,500 to blast clean the limestone around the bottom of the Eternal Light Peace Memorial because so many visitors had put their names or graffiti in it. Sometimes visitors climb on the cannons posted around the park and break off pieces or take parts as souvenirs, he said.

For the small staff tasked with preserving the 1,320 monuments and 410 cannons – the largest outdoor sculpture collection in the world – it's tough to keep up.

"It's gut-wrenching. I mean, sort of our main thrust here is to preserve the monuments, keep them in good shape for future generations. Even that's a struggle, we have so many of

them," Gavin said. "When you have to deal with damage it just sets you back."

GETTING HELP:

About \$39,190 was donated to Gettysburg National Military Park to help cover the costs of repairing three monuments vandalized in February 2006, said Katie Lawhon, park spokeswoman.

The 14th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry monument's repairs are finished. Another \$16,000 is needed for the repairs to the 11th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry monument, and \$5,600 is needed for the 4th New York Independent Artillery Battery monument, she said. Even if donations don't come in, however, the park plans to fix the statues, Lawhon said.

"We'd find a way to get the work done," she said.

Grave desecration case resolved

By Linda Wheeler, The Washington Post, April 19, 2007

Three men from Hancock, Md., pleaded guilty in an illegal relic hunt last May in the C&O Canal National Historical Park that included digging up the Civil War-era grave of Mary Blackwell Ohr in a small historic cemetery, according to Leigh Zahm, district ranger supervisor. The grave desecration was reported last June.

Jonathan Carroll, 29, and Christopher Pelchat, 24, admitted digging into the grave and pleaded guilty Jan. 15 to a violation of the federal Archaeological Resources Protection Act, Zahm said. Carroll's father, James Carroll, 53, pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of disturbing the cultural and archaeological resources of the park, Zahm said.

The men will have to reimburse the park a total of about \$3,600. Pelchat and the younger Carroll had to

surrender their metal detectors and each agree to do 25 hours of community service in the park, Zahm said. They also will serve one-year probation and are banned for two years from any National Park Service site.

Franklin Board votes to buy Collins' historic farm

By MATTHEW WHITE, Tennessean.com, April 26, 2007

FRANKLIN — Money appeared to drive debate at Tuesday night's special session of the Franklin Board of Mayor and Aldermen, but not as you might expect.

The less the board tried to spend, the more it debated.

A proposal to spend \$1.9 million to bury a utility line for the new Nissan headquarters received brief comments from the board before a quick, unanimous approval. The agreement was one of several the board considered relating to the Nissan project, and the only one that called for city money.

But a \$45,000 purchase of Collins' Farm for the town's growing roster of Civil War battle sites won approval only after hand-wringing and irritated words between board members and an "epiphany" from Alderman Dana McLendon.

The Collins' Farm, at 418 Lewisburg Ave., was the site of heavy fighting during the Battle of Franklin at the end of the Civil War. It now belongs to a local preservation group that recently offered to sell the land to the city for \$45,000 — well below what it could fetch on the open market — if the city would agree to preserve the land.

The city's Battlefield Preservation Plan Task Force approved the deal last week, but complicating the deal is a home on the property of dubious historical value.



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During Tuesday's meeting, Aldermen Dan Klatt and Beverly Berger asked Mayor Tom Miller several skeptical questions about the purchase, wondering if the price was right, if a different preservation organization could be found to buy the property, and how much maintenance of the property was likely to cost the city.

Joining the debate, Alderman Dodson Randolph added, "I just have a problem with buying something so the city can take over maintenance of the property."

Miller broke into the discussion saying he was "very disappointed in this conversation." He argued the sale was both a bargain and in line with the board's longstanding policy of preserving as much "core battlefield" property as possible, with the long-term hope of establishing a major battlefield park.

When McLendon's turn came, he said he had arrived at the meeting planning to vote against the measure, but had spent the discussion period considering how he would justify that vote to his children in 10 years if the town's dreams of establishing a major battlefield park fell apart. Calling that vision an "epiphany," he said he had decided to support the deal.

The measure passed 4 to 1, with only Randolph against.

Monocacy Farm tour offers view of Civil War history

By Pamela Rigaux, Frederick News-Post, April 29, 2007

URBANA -- A farm on the west side of Md. 355 at the Monocacy National Battlefield previously open for special tours is about to open to the public on a regular basis.

The Best Farm's new visitor center will open in a barn-shaped building at the edge of the battlefield June 27,

according to Barbara Justice, a National Park Service ranger.

The subject of Justice's tour Saturday was what happened at the homestead the day of the Battle of the Monocacy -- July 9, 1864.

Most of the battle occurred outside of stone houses gracing the 200 acres of gently rolling fields. The homes, a two-story stucco and a stone settlement house, were built in the late 1700s by the Vincendieres, a family of French planters who came to Maryland from the West Indian colony of Saint-Domingue, Haiti, Justice said.

They sold the farm in 1828 to another family who then leased it to the Bests, she said. The Best farm provided one of the best views of troop movements. The property was important for its proximity to three landmarks: the Monocacy River with its covered bridge; the B&O Railroad tracks; and Georgetown Pike, the road to Washington.

The Monocacy Junction, a thriving train station with warehouses and homes that brought troops to the area, was next to the Best farm.

On the day of the battle, Union Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace's plan was to guard the junction, Justice said. The confederates, under the command of Lt. Gen. Jubal Early, had 15,000 troops compared to the Union's 5,800.

Though outnumbered, Wallace held his ground at the covered bridge and junction long enough to significantly delay the Confederate advancement to Washington.

Though the battle is considered a Union defeat, for which Wallace was removed from his command, his position was later restored, and history views his out-manned, out-gunned stand on the banks of the

Monocacy River with esteem, Justice said.

The Confederates put the Best barn to use by setting up sharpshooters in it, Justice said.

"Confederate sharpshooters looked down at the Union soldiers. The Union couldn't locate them until they noticed small puffs of smoke from a barn."

While Union troops struggled at the Best property, the Confederate Calvary crossed the Monocacy River downstream and threatened to flank the Union troops.

That happened around 10 a.m., she said. An hour later, Union troops burned the covered bridge. Eventually, they started retreating. Union Lt. George Davis didn't know it. He continued to hold the line for more than an hour until he saw the retreating Union soldiers and realized he had to leave then or never.

According to Justice, he wrote: "The enemy came up on us with such overwhelming numbers it seemed we would be swept in the river."

Two years before that battle, a Union soldier with the 27th Indiana Regiment resting at the Best farm looked down and found an envelope or a piece of paper rolled around cigars that remains a mystery known as the "Lost Orders," Justice said.

"It was Gen. Robert E. Lee's special orders."

He was giving orders to the commanders about where he wanted the troops to be, Justice said. It was a few days before the Sept. 14, 1862, Battle of South Mountain.

What exactly was found or who found the Lost Orders might never be known, Justice said. But whatever the case, the orders were mostly expired by the time they were discovered.



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War's sites go virtual Exploration with Google Earth coming soon for state's Civil War Trail

By ANGIE MASON, York Daily Record/Sunday News

Apr 8, 2007 — Within the year, anyone interested in Gettysburg's history could get close enough to the battlefield to read monument inscriptions with just a click of the computer mouse.

Internet users will be able to use Google Earth to zoom right into Civil War sites throughout the state, thanks to a partnership between Google Earth, the Pennsylvania Department of Tourism, the National Civil War Museum, Carnegie Mellon University and NASA.

New gigapan cameras - which combine thousands of digital images to create a panoramic view - will be placed at sites throughout the seven counties, including Adams and York, that are part of the Pennsylvania Civil War Trails initiative.

The initiative is aimed at telling stories of the Civil War that led up to the Battle of Gettysburg, including lesser known accounts, such as the role of women, children or African Americans.

Now, those stories will be layered into Google Earth, said Mickey Rowley, the state deputy secretary of tourism.

Google Earth users will be able to click on select Civil War attractions, and "zoom in so closely you'll be able to read the inscriptions on some of the monuments," said Carrie Fischer Lepore, spokeswoman for the Pennsylvania Department of Tourism.

A few sites will have multiple cameras. About 40 or 50 sites will have just one camera, Rowley said. Camera spots are still being selected, but Gettysburg will have some. "We will most definitely have a camera on

Big Round Top or Little Round Top," or in Gettysburg's downtown, he said. Stacey Fox, spokeswoman for the Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, said anything that can visually expose potential visitors to what's available in Gettysburg is a good thing. She's happy to see that the project will spread its focus beyond the battlefield to other sites in town and throughout the county.

"Our stories are beyond the battlefield," she said.

The technology will also allow visitors to look into attractions, restaurants and lodging near the sites, to help better plan their trips. "Before you go, you could take a virtual tour of today's Gettysburg," said Lenwood Sloan, the state's director of cultural and heritage tourism.

The technology is expected to be working by Nov. 19, the anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Sloan said. The project is funded by a \$285,000 grant.

Fredericksburg Relic Looters Nailed With Felony Charges

NPS--(Press release, National Park Service)

On Sunday, March 11th, Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park ranger Chuck Lochart saw three men - Fenton Terembes, Jeremy Burroughs and Vincent Williams - metal-detecting and digging relics up in the Spotsylvania battlefield. The three men were apprehended as they left the park by Lochart and rangers Craig Johnson and Tad Pultorak.

Their metal-detecting equipment and nearly 200 artifacts were seized. Over 450 excavated holes were found on and around park earthworks where the three had been digging.

Rangers, an NPS criminal investigator and Spotsylvania County deputies executed a search warrant at the homes of two of the men and found and seized a number of items, including a computer that may have been used to sell relics on eBay.

On April 5th, the three were arrested, taken before a U.S. magistrate in Richmond and charged with felony ARPA (Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979) violations. A damage assessment is being done by regional NPS archeologists.

In a separate incident on the afternoon of March 17th, a park volunteer reported two people metal-detecting in the Hill-Ewell Drive area of Wilderness battlefield. Ranger Steve Davis responded and apprehended two juveniles who he saw metal detecting and digging in the park.

They were issued mandatory citations and are scheduled to appear before a U.S. magistrate in Charlottesville on April 12th.

Man injured in battlefield crash

By SEAN HILLIARD, Hagerstown Evening Sun, April 12, 2007

A Gettysburg man was airlifted to York Hospital after his vehicle crashed through two fences Sunday at the Gettysburg National Military Park, officials said.

The man, who was not identified because the accident report was incomplete, was driving on Emmitsburg Road in Cumberland Township at 3:11 p.m. when the crash happened, said Supervisory Park Ranger Tim Sorber.

The vehicle left Emmitsburg Road just north of Wheatfield Road and crashed through a post-and-rail fence, then spun around and hit an older, wooden plank fence, Sorber said.



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The man was flown to York Hospital by STAT MedEvac medical helicopter, Sorber said. His condition is unknown.

A damage estimate for the fencing was not available, Sorber said.

Woman's Body Found At Civil War Battlefield

WBAL Radio and The Associated Press, April 12, 2007

A woman killed herself by jumping off an observation tower at Gettysburg National Military Park, the county coroner said.

The body of Mary L. Pastirik, 47, of Annapolis, Maryland, was found Tuesday by high school students from Quebec on a field trip to the Civil War battlefield, authorities said.

Evidence at the scene led to the finding that the death was a suicide, Adams County Coroner Patricia Felix said Thursday.

The 76-foot Longstreet Tower has an open deck and provides a panoramic view of the battlefield as well as the Eisenhower National Historic Site, the retirement home of President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

CWPT Honors, criticism given to activist

By MEG BERNHARDT, Hanover Evening Sun, 04/28/2007

An Adams County anti-casino activist received two awards this month for preservation and peacemaking in the community, but local casino advocates are criticizing her selection.

A casino proposed for the Gettysburg area by a group of investors led by David LeVan drew opposition and support before state gaming regulators chose other locations for slots licenses in December 2006.

Many have attributed the gaming board's choice against awarding a

license to local grassroots opposition group No Casino Gettysburg.

This week, the national Civil War Preservation Trust recognized No Casino leader Susan Star Paddock as the recipient of its Carrington Williams Battlefield Preservationist of the Year 2007 award. The local Interfaith Center for Peace and Justice also chose Paddock as Peacemaker of the Year 2007. The Peacemaker award was given to Paddock at the Adams County Public Library on the same night the Rev. Karl Mattson, of Gettysburg College, received the Peacemaker of a Lifetime award.

Paddock said the awards should be directed at all of the volunteers who helped in the 20-month campaign against the casino.

Paddock was chosen for the trust's award because of her extraordinary effort to protect the character and atmosphere of Gettysburg, said Civil War Preservation Trust spokeswoman Mary Goundrey. She said Paddock received a standing ovation from everyone in the room when it was announced.

"This is just a huge victory for everyone," Goundrey said, noting Paddock had put her life on hold for two years to lead the fight.

But Pro Casino Adams County, a citizens group in favor of the casino proposal, criticized Paddock's selection for both awards.

"It is as if Ms. Paddock is saying, 'Look at me! I'm the big hero of those who agree with my moral stand on an issue, and I don't care about anyone else,'" said Pro Casino member Debi Golden. "Ms. Paddock in no way acted as a peacemaker regarding the casino issue. She was a self-righteous combatant."

And Pro Casino member Jeff Klein asked how Paddock could be given

an award for battlefield preservation without preserving any "hallowed ground."

"I think Mr. LeVan and Jennifer LeVan should have gotten that award," Klein said. "They donated \$30,000 out of their own pockets to restore the monuments at Gettysburg."

The award givers expected the controversy, said Interfaith president Denise Weldon-Siviy, but Paddock was chosen anyway.

"Obviously the people who had a vested interest in the casino would not agree with this, but many, many people in town and particularly people involved in peace issues looked at the long-term effect on things like the effect of gambling on poverty and crime, and things like that really are peace issues," Weldon-Siviy said.

And Goundrey said the trust believes Paddock deserves to be recognized for preservation.

"I think the key here, in terms of battlefield preservation, is that buying an acre of ground isn't the only way to preserve battlefields," Goundrey said. "A casino would have affected the character and the overall feeling and atmosphere."

Paddock herself anticipated the questions about her awards.

"Some people may be surprised that I'm being given this (peacemaker) award when I have led a 20-month campaign and spoken out so forcefully on a controversial issue. Can you challenge the powerful and make peace at the same time?" Paddock asked in her acceptance speech. "When the controversy is public, polite silence does more than erode our character. It can erode our democracy, and indeed it has – in our community and our nation."

Paddock said she was surprised and happy to receive the awards and



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described the award ceremonies as very moving. But she said the awards should really recognize all the volunteers in the No Casino movement.

"I think there's perhaps too much attention to me as an individual even by getting these awards because again I believe the awards belong to hundreds of dedicated workers and to the whole group," Paddock said.

Paddock said she never expected to receive the amount of fame, or infamy, she did when she became No Casino chairwoman.

"I felt called to do it by large numbers of people who were very, very concerned, and I was asked to do it, and I just stepped in," Paddock said. "You know, fools rush in."

Klein criticized No Casino for negative statements about the proposed casino operator, leaders and even the LeVans' dog. He said Paddock is one of the last people who should have won the Peacemaker award.

The Interfaith organization, which also organizes an annual county heritage festival and a Peacemaker camp, is painting the opposite picture. "We felt she handled it especially well," Weldon-Siviy said. "It was not confrontational, at least not coming from the No Casino side."

Paddock said the campaign taught her about the importance of Gettysburg and speaking up in a democracy.

"I think being active locally is the key to maintaining our democracy," Paddock said. "I feel this very strongly that in order to maintain our democracy people must become more involved locally. Even when everybody said it was a done deal, (you can see) committed local people organizing together can make a difference."

Octogenarian makes dog treats to help Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg

By MEG BERNHARDT, Hagerstown Evening Sun, 04/16/2007

An 82-year-old man in a town near Pittsburgh has been selling homemade dog treats to raise money for the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg.

This year, the Friends have found a benefactor who will match every donation up to \$200,000 to fund a utility-line-burial project in the Devil's Den area, in the southern part of the battlefield.

Ken Bridgen spent the past few weekends sitting outside of hardware and grocery stores in Sewickley, Pa., and selling bags of homemade dog treats for \$3 donations. Even in the cold. Even when fellow Sewickley residents look at him like he's a little crazy for his dedication to the Civil War battlefield.

"This is the kind of guy I am," Bridgen said. "I love to be involved, I love to learn. The more I learn, the better I feel about it. As long as you're learning, you're not going to go senile."

Sewickley is northwest of Pittsburgh and its name means "sweet water," though Bridgen said the town water is lousy.

The history lover would have moved to Gettysburg long ago if he had his way, but his wife doesn't want to leave.

Still, he treasures the early morning drive to Gettysburg Sunday for the annual Friends fundraising march. He plans to get there this year in time for breakfast at the Lincoln Diner and then meet up with fellow Gettysburg-lovers.

So far, he's raised \$500 for the nonprofit preservation group, which is part of the Gettysburg Foundation. And with a few weeks left, he hopes to top his past personal best of \$923.

The retired industrial supervisor takes pride in how much he raises. At first, Bridgen begged donations on the street corner. Then he started selling buttons and Christmas cards. Finally, he decided dog treats were the way to go.

The treats, made of beef broth, margarine, powdered milk, salt, eggs and whole-wheat flour, are a secret recipe Bridgen was given by a friend. Since then, he's made a few alterations and named them Dixie Do's, after his 5-year-old Papillon dog, Dixie.

He will spend more than 40 hours baking hundreds of bags of dog treats for the fundraiser.

"The worst part is rolling the dough out because it's so thick, it's like elastic and bounces back," Bridgen said. "But it's worth it."

Some other Friends members have been just as creative to raise money. Bridgen said one woman gave away horse rides for children, while a postman left envelopes in all the mail boxes on his route.

Bridgen spent five days wandering all over the battlefield and reading the text on every monument when he visited the battlefield in the 1950s. He believes any work to bring the battlefield back to its 1863 appearance will help increase understanding of the battle. That goes for power lines, too.

"Sure, there was no electricity in 1863," Bridgen said.