

## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

---

### House Committee Says No to NPS Privatization

July 21, 2003 –Courtesy CWI Premium- In the often arcane world of lawmaking a minor and trivial point can sometimes take hundreds of pages of tortured legalistic phrasing to accomplish. On the other hand, sometimes a major and important point can be made in just a few simple words.

The Appropriations Committee of the US House of Representatives made just such an important point last week, preserving the words "federal workers will be employed in federal parks" in the bill authorizing expenditures for the Department of the Interior, which controls the National Park Service, which administers most of the major Civil War battlefields in the US. While this may sound like an affirmation of the obvious, it is intended to fend off administration attempts to privatize Park Service jobs, possibly as many as 70 percent of them according to some park watchdog groups. The NPS announced last week that the first group affected by the plan would be archaeologists, who would henceforth have to "compete" for work against bids from private companies. The National Parks Conservation Association called the committee's vote a victory for all users of federal parks.

"We hope that the Senate and conferees also stand up for our parks and do not allow the administration to put the stewardship of our parklands in the hands of the lowest bidder without full consideration for the implications to our parks," said NPCA president Thomas Kiernan after the vote.

Interior committee Ranking Member Norm Dicks (R-Wa.), and

Representatives Mark Souder (R-Ind.), Brian Baird (D-Wa.), and David Obey (D-Wis.) spoke on the House floor about their concerns with the administration's privatization policy. Even the co-sponsor of the amendment which would have removed the "federal workers in federal parks" language, Representative Tom Davis (R-Va.), said that the "administration's plans overreach."

National park positions subject to the administration's privatization plan include archaeologists, biologists, museum curators, interpreters, maintenance workers, and others whose jobs are critical to meeting the needs of park visitors, educating school groups, and protecting the parks.

"The administration's allies in the House knew there was enough opposition to their privatization scheme and did not want to risk a loss on the House floor," Kiernan added. "The key now will be for the Senate and conferees to withstand the massive pressure being brought to bear from the administration, which has threatened a veto over the provision."

As is often the case in lawmaking, which, along with sausage-making, is a process not recommended for viewing by the squeamish, one vote in one committee is not the end of the story but just one chapter along the way.

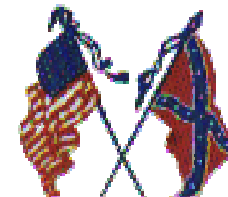
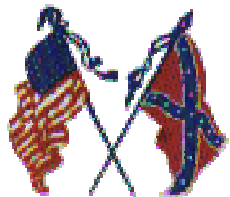
The rejection of NPS privatization must survive not only a full House vote but see matching language in the Senate version of the bill. The two versions must then be reconciled in conference committee, where nearly anything can be added or removed. Last week the Salt Lake Tribune reported that a leaked copy of an internal Forest Service memo showed

the agency is considering replacing its entire law enforcement staff with private security officers, as well as contracting out parts of its fire suppression, environmental monitoring and timber sales work force.

"The natural, cultural and historic resources contained within our national parks are too valuable to allow the job of protecting them to be traded on the open market," said Rep. Nick Rahall of West Virginia, the ranking Democrat on the House Resources Committee.

Rahall and Senate Minority Whip Harry Reid, D-Nev., introduced a bill last week to halt all privatization studies under way by private consultants on the Park Service work force and channel the study funds -- estimated by Park Service Director Fran Mainella to cost as much as \$3 million -- back to needed maintenance and operations budgets. Parks "should be managed for posterity, not profit," Reid said. The version of the Interior Appropriations bill approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee does not protect the Park Service from excessive outsourcing, although the Committee added specific language to the bill exempting the U.S. Forest Service. Floor action in the Senate could occur later this month.

Park Service Director Mainella also has expressed reservations about outsourcing. In an April memo to Lynn Scarlett, the assistant secretary of Interior for Policy, Management and Budget, Mainella said the conversions would set back efforts to bring greater ethnic diversity to the Park Service work force because most of the targeted positions are held by minorities.



## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

### Cavalry Battle Sites Get Preservation Grant

July 29, 2003 -Courtesy CWI Premium- The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) has announced another of its annual grants, this one to preserve the sites of Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville where significant cavalry battles took place as part of the prelude to the Gettysburg campaign.

The grant, in the amount of \$3000, was contributed to the Citizens Committee for the Historic Cavalry Battles of Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville. The stated purpose of the grant is to assist the committee with mapping and inventory of the battlefields.

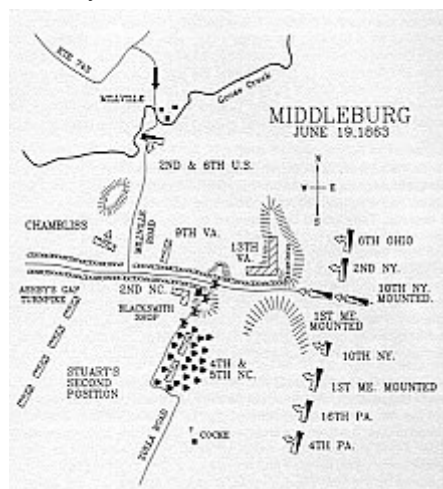
Much of the battlefield land is in what the Washington Post's Linda Wheeler described as "near pristine condition" despite its proximity to the rapidly developing Washington DC area. The land has been in private hands and is now part of large estates.

Although all three sites were the scenes of multiple actions over the course of the war, the three names are usually lumped together as part of the campaign by Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee to move his Army of Northern Virginia away from the Fredericksburg area and head north into Union-controlled lands. An important part of Lee's strategy was to avoid letting Union commander Gen. Joseph Hooker know that he was gone for as long as possible, and then to prevent interference with the move. Cavalry units were assigned to shield the movement of the army from Federal probes that might come through the three towns.

--At Aldie, on June 17, 1863, in four hours of stubborn fighting, both sides made mounted assaults by regiments

and squadrons, ending with the Confederates withdrawing toward Middleburg.

--Once in Middleburg, between June 17 and 19, furious fighting gave the advantage first to the South and then to the North. On June 19, Confederate Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart gradually fell back but was still protecting key approaches to the town from the west. --Finally, on June 21, the action



moved to Upperville, where again, there was intense fighting, ending with Stuart withdrawing to take a strong defensive position at Ashby Gap.

Although each individual battle ended with a Confederate "defeat," or at least withdrawal, Stuart is usually given credit for an overall victory since he accomplished his assignment to prevent Union interference with the Confederate movement and kept the Federal cavalymen from gathering intelligence on the army's intentions. The three actions are often overlooked for reasons of both space and time. Geographically the nearby Manassas battlefield attracts more attention as the scene of two horrific

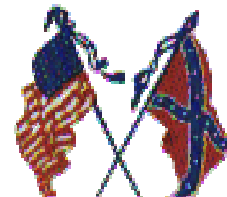
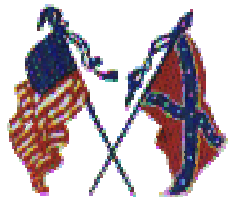
battles, First and Second Bull Run, at different periods of the war.

Despite the lack of attention the three actions were militarily important. Some 1000 casualties were incurred by both sides over the course of the five days of fighting.

### Hunley Scientists Nearing Last Phase of Excavation

July 17, 2003 -Courtesy CWI Premium-They could hold artifacts or they could hold nothing but nasty stinky mud, but the ballast tanks of the Confederate submarine Hunley are going to give up their secrets this fall, according to archaeologists working on the excavation and preservation of the historic craft. Maria Jacobsen, senior archaeologist on the Hunley project, will lead the excavation of the tanks. They have yielded unexpected surprises, including a repaired crack to the hull that suggests the Hunley might have once sprung a leak, the Charleston Post & Courier reports. "The panel was X-rayed, and you can clearly see the crack," she said. "At this time we believe it appears to be an old attempt at repairing the plate, but we don't know when the repair occurred."

The fact that the crack had been repaired means that it did not occur after the Hunley's historic attack on the USS Housatonic the night of Feb. 17, 1864, since it sank immediately thereafter. What caused the boat to sink is still not conclusively known. The crack was discovered as scientists began examining the bow section of the boat. It was originally thought that it might have been made in one piece, which would have made it difficult to access the ballast tanks.



## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

---

Further examination revealed quarter-panel hull plates which could be taken apart.

One quarter-panel plate, about the size of a car door's window, was removed from the portside bow just forward of the front conning tower. A first look inside showed that the tank is indeed filled with mud, but they note that the main compartment of the Hunley was too.

Paul Mardikian, the project's senior conservator, said an examination of the tank's interior will help determine whether the rivets around the crack were added to shore up a leak or were part of the sub's original design. Most officials say the crack, only a few inches long, is probably not of much consequence.

"There were two rivets close to the crack holding it together," added Mardikian.

As other parts of the sub have been completely cleaned out, attention has turned from exploration to preservation. This is proving to be even more of a challenge than originally expected, so much so that some connected to the project say they are glad the Hunley was not recovered earlier than it was. "In my opinion, it's a blessing the Hunley remained hidden for as long as it did," said state Sen. Glenn McConnell, the chairman of the Hunley Commission. "It was ahead of its time, and it waited to resurface until technology caught up with it again."

Two types of iron went into the Hunley, it turns out. Parts are cast iron and other parts are wrought iron, depending on whether they could be made by pouring them into a shaped mold (cast) or had to be pounded into the desired shape (wrought.) The two varieties of iron have different characteristics and have to be

preserved in different ways. The two types of metal traditionally aren't conserved the same way because they corrode differently, and therein lies the problem, the Post & Courier's Brian Hicks noted in a recent story.

Unless the scientists can come up with a new method for conservation that can benefit both metals, they might have to take the sub almost completely apart to restore it. "We're trying to figure out how to conserve the whole boat without having to take it apart," McConnell said. "We don't want to do that until and unless we have to."

A team led by senior conservator Mardikian and Mike Drews, a Clemson materials science professor, has surveyed the sub with an X-ray gun to establish which parts are made of which sort of iron. It appears, they note, that the propeller blades are bolted to the prop shaft. The blades, the shaft, and even the bolts could be made of different substances.

Drews is examining how much corrosion there is between the seams of overlapping metal of the hull plates. The sub may have to be taken apart just to make sure the metal in those seams gets the same treatment as the rest of the sub. The entire maritime archaeology community, including the Virginia team working on the USS Monitor, awaits the study's results.

Much of the work is groundbreaking, scientists note, and could have an impact in areas far removed from history or marine archaeology. Hunley research could help make bridges and ships safer and keep cars from rusting as quickly. The project is pushing science in several areas.

At the lab, scientists are trying to

adapt the X-ray gun that identifies metal to measure chlorine and salt deposits in the hull. Not only would that help gauge the level of conservation needed, but also Drews said if the experimental technology works it will have major implications for construction.

"The corrosion studies we are conducting on the submarine could have ripple effects that extend far past the confines of the Hunley conservation project," he said. The guns, which are used industrially by petroleum organizations to test their pipelines, could be modified to inspect bridge pilings, trusses and supports, or weak spots in ship's hulls.

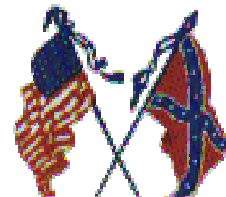
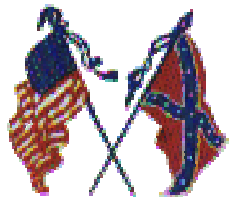
"The only way we have to measure corrosion now is destructive," Drews said.

Work continues on attempts to identify the crew of the Hunley, whose remains were found during excavations that indicated they died at their posts. The funeral for the eight crewmen is set for April 17, 2004, in Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston, near the graves of two other crews of the Hunley who died when the boat sank during testing.

### **Former Gettysburg Park Ranger Christopher Coffin Killed In Iraq**

July 8, 2003 [Submitted by Peter Walzer, Supervisory Park Ranger, Gettysburg NMP]

Christopher D. Coffin, a seasonal ranger at Gettysburg National Military Park from 1996 through 2000 who had earlier worked at Mt. Rainier National Park and Lowell National Historical Park, was killed on Highway 8 just south of Baghdad on July 1st. Reports gathered from the



## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

---

web site of WMTW Radio News in Portland, Maine, indicate that Coffin died as result of injuries sustained when a grenade slammed into the truck that he was riding in. Two other soldiers were also injured. First Sergeant Coffin was an Army Reservist in the 352nd Civil Affairs Command based in Riverdale, Maryland.

### Pennsylvania Puts Civil War Veterans Archive Records Online

July 18, 2003 –Courtesy CWI Premium- More than 400,000 Civil War Military Service Record Cards are now available for searching online since the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission digitized the cards in question and put them up on the state database site. The system officially went live in a demonstration at the National Museum of the Civil War in Harrisburg Thursday. "The featured records bear witness to yet another critical role played by Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians in the history of our nation," PHMC Interim Executive Director John C. Wesley said at the ceremony. State Archivist Frank M. Suran and PHMC Chairman Wayne S. Spilove demonstrated the system on the museum's soldier look-up computers. The site consists of digitized images of the 3" x 5" cards which were initially prepared to serve as an index to Samuel Penniman Bates' "History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-1865," (Harrisburg, 1869-1871). The Office of the Adjutant General later expanded the scope of the cards by transcribing onto them data found on the original Civil War Muster Rolls and Related Records, 1861-1866 {series #19.11}.

The information generally includes the soldiers' names, military units, Bates' citations (volume and page), ages at enrollment, descriptions (complexion, height, color of hair and eyes), residences and birthplaces; the dates and places where enrolled; the dates and places where mustered in; and the dates of discharge. Names are spelled as they were at the time of the enlistment, which may not be the same as modern spellings in the same family. Some cards consist of little more than a name, age, regiment, date of enlistment, and date and circumstances of departure from service, if known.

"Genealogists are hungry for access to records such as these," said James Beidler, executive director of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. "As I commented when the Revolutionary War records cards were launched two years ago, the resources found on this site will lead researchers to other original source documents, which is what every family historian yearns to find about his or her ancestors." The images of the original Civil War military service cards are now part of the Pennsylvania State Archives Digital Archives section (ARIAS) on the PHMC website.

Together with ExplorePAHistory.com, developed by WITF in partnership with the PHMC and the Doc (Documentary) Heritage feature on the PHMC site, Pennsylvanians and interested people all over the nation are being provided with a treasure trove of historical and travel-related information found nowhere else. To see these Civil War records, visit the Commission site at [PAHistorical&MuseumCommission](http://PAHistorical&MuseumCommission) or go directly to [DigitalArchives.state.pa.us](http://DigitalArchives.state.pa.us)

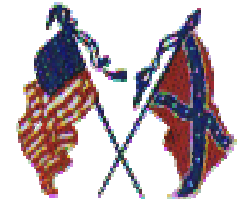
### Point Lookout Gets Rebel Flag Back; Monument Planned for Future

July 8, 2003 -Courtesy CWI Premium- A three acre plot immediately adjacent to Point Lookout, Maryland, now holds weeds, mosquitoes, gnats and a 40-foot flagpole flying the Confederate battle flag. Someday it will hold 11 more flagpoles, one for each state that seceded during the Civil War, and a monument to the Confederate soldiers who lie buried in the park's graveyard.

Point Lookout was a prisoner of war camp established after the Battle of Gettysburg primarily to hold Confederate soldiers captured in that campaign. Located on the very tip of Maryland where Chesapeake Bay meets the Potomac River, the site had a harsh climate that contributed to the high death rate. A Maryland state park marks the site, and the soldiers graves are administered by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs.

A Confederate flag flew over the mass gravesite for a number of years, apparently on the initiative of a caretaker of the grounds. After visitors objected, Veterans Affairs officials ruled that, as at other national cemeteries, only the United States flag was to be flown at the site. A group called the Point Lookout POW Descendants, along with the Sons of Confederate Veterans, lost several lawsuits brought to try to force the VA to allow the Confederate flag over the burial site of Confederate soldiers, the Washington Times reported.

Patricia Buck, founder and president of the POW group, said building the



## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

---

memorial on private land will allow the descendants to fly the flag year-round next to the cemetery. She said the 1,120-member POW association had been hunting for a memorial site as early as 1992, well before the court cases.

"We're not doing this to get back at the VA," she said. "We're doing this solely to honor our ancestors who died there."

The group raised \$32,000 to buy the 3-acre site, but the fundraising isn't over yet. So far they have \$5,000 of the estimated \$100,000 cost of building the complete memorial it has proposed for the site. Besides the main pole with the Confederate battle flag, and the poles for the state flags, their design calls for a statue of a Confederate soldier as well as a marker with the names of all those who died at the site that they have been able to identify. Although the first thing that went up after the association purchased the land was the flag, Buck said it was not meant to be offensive. She said it's meant to serve as a reminder of the cause for which soldiers buried nearby fought. Those who object to it "don't know history," she said. The tent camp called Point Lookout held about 52,200 Southern prisoners from mid 1863 until the war ended in 1865. Some of the 14,000 or more who died there are buried in a mass grave marked by two obelisks and plaques engraved with 3,000 names. Confederate groups gather there once a year and fly the battle flag to commemorate their ancestors with speeches, re-enactments and prayers.

"All of us feel it is appropriate to fly the Confederate battle flag over the graves of Confederates. That is the flag they chose to go into battle under," said Patrick J. Griffin III, a

member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans who has been part of several lawsuits against the VA.

Local residents interviewed by the Times ranged from endorsement of the idea as historically accurate to opposition to the project as racially offensive.

### South Mountain Tribute to North Carolina Soldiers Making Progress

July 10, 2003--Now that Maryland has voted to make the scene of the Battle of South Mountain into a state park, a group of volunteers is helping a North Carolina man in his project to place a statue honoring his state's troops at the site where they fought. Their first challenge was to find the site in question, and it turns out the easiest way to get there is to take the Appalachian Trail.

Rex Hovey has been working for seven years on the South Mountain monument project, he told the Charlotte Observer. Most of the project has been funded by small donations from people who simply trusted that he would spend the money on statuary and not beer and pizza.

"I had to see this thing through or else my reputation in North Carolina would be ruined," said Hovey, 53. Recently Hovey and a group of 15 volunteers, many from the Living History Association of Mecklenburg, a Civil War re-enactors group that is backing him on the project, went to take a look at the site where they want the statue to be placed. When Hovey first visited the area in 1995 he said he had trouble getting local people to give him directions to

the scene of the Battle of South Mountain. Once he got there he understood their confusion--there was nothing there but brush, branches, bristles, sticker bushes, poison ivy, and other unattractive foliage. In 1862 the area was open field, with a house nearby that had a garden. The garden had a stone fence around it to protect it from foraging animals. During the battle North and South Carolina regiments were pinned down near the garden wall and about to be overtaken by Union troops. A flag bearer jumped up on the wall and waved his flag wildly, Hovey said. The sight was so startling the Union soldiers were taken aback and firing slackened. As they paused to take aim on the waving flag, 75 percent of the trapped Confederates managed to withdraw.



Virginia-based sculptor Gary Casteel is creating the monument, a 10 foot high, 6 foot long combination of bronze and granite, topped by a life-size sculpture of a dying soldier. The group hopes to have the monument's official unveiling in October.