

THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

September BCWRT meeting to be "Member's Show and Tell"

For our September meeting the BCWRT will be trying something new. We will have a member's "Show and Tell" Other Roundtables have done this and it helps the members get to know each other and it's fun. If you are a collector of Civil War Memorabilia, or sew and wear your own period clothing, make Living History presentations or any of the many other Civil War related interests we know our members have, we ask you to bring some of what you have collected or made (or just somehow acquired) to share with your fellow BCWRT members. If it interests you and is somehow related to the Civil War, we're interested. We will provide tables to display your items, electricity and almost anything else you need. If you would like to talk for a few moments about your interests, we will have a microphone available. If you would like to participate, please contact the Editor of this newsletter at (410) 788-3525 or by email at moondance1@comcast.net so we can arrange space for your display or demonstration.

Preservation Trust Helps Secure Key Piece of Ground in Gettysburg

July 30, 2004 –Courtesy CWI premium- A favorite pastime of Civil War fans, particularly those who specialize in the study of the battle of Gettysburg, is to argue over key positions, ones which if secured by one side or the other would represent a turning point in the campaign. It is probably safe to say that a parcel of land of less than three quarters of an acre on Baltimore Pike across from Hunt Avenue has never been named on such a list before. It has attained this exalted status now by virtue of having been purchased for \$132,000 to preserve it from possible development.

The buyers admit that, like Civil War generals, they set out to secure the position to deny it to the enemy. The parcel is particularly crucial because Hunt Avenue is to be the site of the new Gettysburg Visitor Center. The Gettysburg National Battlefield Museum Foundation and the Civil War Preservation Trust went in together on the purchase as part of the campaign to prevent Baltimore

Avenue near the existing visitor center.

"Both organizations share a common mission to preserve appropriate portions of the battlefield," said Elliot Gruber, a spokesman for the museum foundation. "This is one small step to enhance the visitor's experience."

Jim Campi, spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based Civil War Preservation Trust, told the York Daily News that the parcel was targeted because of concerns that its close proximity to the new visitor's center would be an inviting target for commercial development.

"We are very, very strong advocates of the new visitor's center," Campi said. "But we recognize that the visitor's center could potentially be a magnet for additional development along that corridor."

"You don't need a lot of acres to put in a convenience store or a gas station," Campi pointed out. While the prospect of the new visitor center's location nearby may have been the impetus for the purchase, historians have long argued that the south approaches to Gettysburg are worthy of more study than they

usually receive.

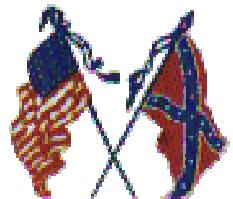
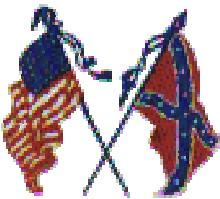
The Baltimore Pike corridor served as a key route for funneling Union troops and supplies to the battlefield, according to John Heiser, a historian in the division of interpretation and visitors services for Gettysburg National Military Park.

"It's a staging area to form a Union battle line, and it's a launching point for those troops to begin their assault," Heiser said.

Preservation in Gettysburg has for years been a battle between competing interests and mindsets. Purists, it is often claimed, would like to set aside forever every inch of land on which Gen. Lee's horse relieved himself.

Local residents, many of whom have no more interest in the Civil War than average citizens anywhere, want development--stores to shop at, homes to live in, and commercial and industrial facilities to provide jobs for the area.

As the most-visited Civil War park, even enthusiasts often assume that every part of Gettysburg that needs to be protected, already is. Groups like the Gettysburg National Battlefield Protection Association, Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, and the



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Preservation Trust struggle against this complacency.

Campi said the complacency factor is a constant battle in itself. "Sprawl is consuming a lot of our Civil War battlefields, and Gettysburg is no exception," Campi said. "There's an illusion out there that all of Gettysburg is protected, and that's simply not the case."

Park spokeswoman Katie Lawhon said the National Park Service has acquired 11 of the 26 parcels of land that sit within park boundaries along a one-mile stretch of Baltimore Pike that stretches from the borough line to Rock Creek.

She added, however, that there is plenty more preservation work to be done in that area.

"It's a piece of the puzzle," Lawhon said. "All of it is going to help us with our objective of preserving that rural look on Baltimore Pike in the area around the museum."

The Battlefield Museum Foundation's Gruber said plans are to eventually donate the land to Gettysburg National Military Park. Groundbreaking for the new facility is currently set for spring of 2005, with opening

Ed Bearss Honored by Chambersburg Forum

July 27, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium- Ed Bearss, chief historian emeritus of the National Park Service, is in theory supposed to be retired, riding nothing more strenuous than a rocking chair, and taking a break from mint juleps only long enough to accept the occasional award for his many years of contributions to the field of Civil War studies. As anyone who has seen Bearss in recent years will attest, this is not

exactly his routine. Even when he did attend a reception in his honor at the new Chambersburg Heritage Center recently he barely paused long enough to say "thank you" before returning to a discussion of the importance of the town to the Gettysburg campaign.

And rather than arrive at the reception in a limo, he pulled up in a large bus full of people he brought along to the Chambersburg Civil War Seminar, held at the Heritage Center as its inaugural event.

"Chambersburg has a lot to attract people. Heritage tourism is big," Bearss told a group of about 50 people in the center. Confederate troops passed through the Cumberland Valley railroad center three times during the war, including the route to Gettysburg in 1863 and the July 31, 1864, raid by Gen. John McCausland.

McCausland torched the town, destroying hundreds of buildings, when the borough was unable to meet his ransom demands. It was the only town north of the Mason-Dixon Line to meet that fate, Bearss noted. "If there wasn't a Chambersburg, there might not have been a battle of Gettysburg," Bearss said. It was here that Gen. Robert E. Lee decided to take his army east for a showdown with Union forces.

For years, tourists have passed through Chambersburg on the way to Gettysburg, said Ted Alexander of Greencastle, Pa., the chief historian at Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg.

"It was like we were the stepchild" of Gettysburg, Alexander told the Hagerstown Herald-Mail. The Heritage Center now gives tourists a place to stop and learn about the history of the area, he noted. The center includes displays on the

frontier history of the area, as well as the Underground Railroad, Civil War, transportation and architecture, Alexander said.

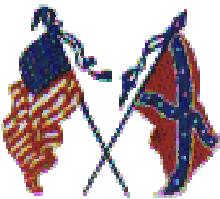
On a more personal note, Bearss said that he had first passed through Chambersburg while hitchhiking across the country from Montana in 1941, having first read about the town four years earlier in a book about J.E.B. Stewart.

That book about the Confederate leader, which included a chapter on his 1862 raid on Chambersburg, sparked Bearss' interest in the Civil War.

Bearss has come to Chambersburg a number of times since 1989, when the seminars began as part of the annual ChambersFest celebration. He is best known to the public through Ken Burns' "The Civil War" and The History Channel's "Civil War Journal" television programs.

Previously Unknown Valves May Hold Secret of Hunley Sinking

July 27, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium- Every time it is believed the Confederate submarine H. L. Hunley has finally given up the last of its secrets, another one turns up shortly thereafter. The latest discovery is a set of pipes in the bottommost portion of the boat and a valve that may open to the outside. The function of the system is as yet unknown. The excavation of the interior of the Hunley had been presumed to be effectively completed when archaeologists reached what appeared to be the bottom of the hull. They encountered an assortment of heavy metal objects which were assumed to have been loaded on



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board to serve as ballast to keep the vessel upright.

After the ballast materials were removed, however, still another layer above the hull plates was found. This one contained a complex system of pipes and what appear to be valves. The pipes connect the fore and aft ballast tanks and may have provided a system to pump water back and forth between the two. The valves may then have functioned as a bilge pump, allowing the removal of water from the crew compartment. No method of doing this had previously been found in the few existing plans for the boat or in the Hunley itself.

"If this turns out to be a bilge system, it is one of the things we thought the Hunley lacked: an ability to remove water from the crew compartment," Hunley Commission Chairman Glenn McConnell told the Charleston Post & Courier. "How those valves are turned could tell us a lot." Scientists have not yet completely analyzed the piping system, in part because the inner layers of the Hunley are still thickly coated with concretion, a mixture of mud, sand and marine organisms which form and harden on objects exposed to sea water. Removal of this hardened sludge will be a major focus of the years-long conservation effort necessary before the Hunley can finally go on display in a museum. "It would make a lot of sense for them to have a bilge system," said Maria Jacobsen, chief archaeologist on the Hunley project. "You don't have a boat that doesn't leak. There was nothing in the literature about the sub having a bilge system, but we have found these valves that allowed them to isolate the pumps. (Beyond another valve) we found a pipe that dead-ends into the bottom of the

sub."

McConnell said there is one more clue that the crew may have been working with the sub's pump just before they died. The crank handles, which seven of the eight men turned to power the sub, are positioned in such a way as to give first officer Joseph Ridgaway the maximum room to operate his pump. The odds of that being coincidental are about 1 in 7. The conservation lab scientists are sifting through the hull, removing the last of the organic material that can be scraped out by hand, and searching for any remaining artifacts. In addition to the pipes and valves of the boat itself, they have turned up a number of tools in the area where captain George E. Dixon would have sat.

Archaeologists have removed an oilcan, iron wedge, hammer and metal rod. A number of wrenches and bolts were found nearby, suggesting that at the very least Dixon was trained to perform maintenance and emergency repairs on the Hunley. Some, indeed, go further than that. Friends of the Hunley Chairman Warren Lasch said the cache of tools lends credence to the long-standing belief that Dixon may have had a hand in building the Hunley. "Finding these tools by Lieutenant Dixon's station shows that he not only knew how to navigate the submarine but had a deep understanding of how the submarine worked and was actively involved in the ongoing maintenance of his ship," Lasch told the Post & Courier's Brian Hicks. In the most emotional discovery of the excavation of the Hunley, scientists found that the bodies of each crewman were positioned to indicate that they died at their posts, with each set of bones located at the seat where that man was assigned to

be. It is assumed that they became unconscious as the oxygen inside the ship was exhausted and died of asphyxiation.

McConnell said he hopes that the final conservation process can be completed within four years or so. Then the Hunley would be moved to a museum dedicated to it that is planned for the Noisette Project in North Charleston.

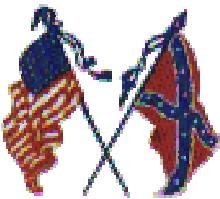
Cyclorama Painting Restoration Process Proving Very Tricky

July 27, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium— How do you clean a painting that's 27 feet high by 361 feet in length? Which is also extremely old, has been through a fire, cut up several times, damaged by previous well-meaning attempts at repair, and hung for the last half-century in a building that forced it to curve at the bottom like a set of drapes?

With cotton-tipped swabs, paper towels and benzene, and very, very carefully is the answer. The Gettysburg Cyclorama has been through a lot and the current team of conservators is determined to both restore its former glory and assure it of a more comfortable life than it has had so far.

Working in a less-than-fancy building west of Washington DC is a team that currently numbers seven, led by senior art conservator Maura Duffy, the Pennsylvania Patriot-News reports. Art conservators David Olin and Perry Huston are in overall command of the team, which faces challenges seldom encountered due to the sheer size of the work being restored.

So far the team has nearly restored



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Bradley C. Bower, Associated Press
Painting conservator Perry Huston, center, supervises the removal of a panel from the famous cyclorama painting, "The Battle of Gettysburg" at Gettysburg National Park.

two of the painting's 27 sections. That took the last eight months. "This is one of the biggest paintings in the United States, and it's got so much history," Duffy said. "When this is done, it's going to look fantastic." Besides rescuing the portion of the painting that's been hanging in the soon-to-be-demolished Cyclorama Building in Gettysburg for the last 42 years, the project involves recreating the parts of Paul Philippoteaux's monumental artwork which have been cut off, lost or modified over time.

The conservators will recreate a 15-foot high section of sky that was cut off during an earlier restoration, using photographs, other paintings and the expertise of historians. Visitors will one day view the painting from the horizon level as Philippoteaux intended.

A 5-foot section of the painting that is missing will also be re-created. The painting depicts Confederate Gen. George Pickett's July 3, 1863, charge on the final day of the battle. The restored artwork will hang in Gettysburg's \$95 million new visitor center. Groundbreaking for the center is scheduled for next spring, and it is to open in late 2007. In the new, temperature-controlled facility, the painting will be suspended from the ceiling, not attached to the walls as it had been since 1962. Weights will be used to hold the painting down and re-create the hyperbolic shape that creates the illusion of being in the center of the battlefield. The challenge for the conservators now is to remove the wrinkles which have formed in the canvas from humidity, poor treatment and installation in a space which was not properly shaped to hold it. The old Cyclorama building was built as a cylinder, with straight sides like a snare drum. The painting is bigger around at the bottom than at the top, to create the illusion for the viewer of standing under the open sky. Conservators are using a specially designed wooden shaping table to restore the painting's original hyperbolic shape, letting the wrinkles from improper display "relax out" of the fabric.

Cyclorama paintings were popular forms of entertainment in the days before motion pictures and often added elements on the foreground such as dirt, grass, wagons and other objects to further enhance the feeling of "being there."

"I see it as a cultural artifact," Olin said. "I can't wait to see the restoration of an 1880s Victorian concept in a 21st-century environment."

Maryland Group Working to Present Consequences of War

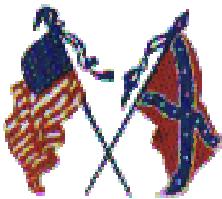
July 19, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium- A group called Forest Glen Commonwealth helped a local school film a movie about injuries in the Civil War last year, and hoped to buy the property where the film was shot, which held a farmhouse once used as a hospital.

That plan has fallen through, but the group has turned its sights to another historic property, this one at the corner of Greencastle and Cearfoss pikes. The project has also expanded to include medical and military histories from other wars in which America has participated. The proposed Cearfoss Heritage Education Center would be on the trail where Confederate Gen. John Imboden led 13,000 wounded soldiers retreating from Gettysburg, Pa., in July 1863, Chairwoman Rebecca L. Rush told the Hagerstown Herald-Mail.

Among those working with the historical group on the project is Richard Imboden of Silver Spring, Md., who is the general's great-great-great grandson. The group plans to lead an interpretive driving tour retracing Imboden's trail after Gettysburg.

The group has an educational partnership with the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, Md., a partnership with the U.S. Library of Congress and its Veterans Oral History project.

Rick Lank, president of Forest Glen Commonwealth, said that the group is holding a free educational event Aug. 14 and 15 on the grounds of the Western Maryland Hospital Center in Hagerstown that will include a Civil



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War encampment, a re-enactment of a Civil War field hospital and a presentation on how emergency response works in the present day. Among those who will be at the event is Imboden, dressed in full costume like his famous relative, as well as one person dressed as former President Ulysses S. Grant, Lank said.

Organizers say that anyone wanting information about the group or the event can call 301-588-6503.

Park Police Chief Officially Fired for Telling Truth

July 12, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium- Teresa Chambers, chief of the US Park Police which guards monuments, memorials and other sites in Washington DC, was officially fired late Friday afternoon by the National Park Service and US Department of the Interior. Chambers had been on suspension for seven months since speaking to media outlets about funding and staffing shortages on the force. She was placed on suspension and subjected to a gag order Dec. 5, 2003, after giving interviews to the Washington Post and other media noting that new rules had been sent down requiring increased police presence at major monuments. This, she said, was forcing reductions at other, smaller and lesser-known parks throughout the city, with resulting increases in drug use, vandalism and other crime around them. The Park Police also perform patrols on the George Washington Parkway where traffic stops often result in gun or drug arrests. Interior Department spokeswoman Tina Kreisher did not give specific

reasons for Chambers termination, but she did say that Chambers was "off base" with complaints that her department did not receive enough money.

"There's been a lot of talk about from Chief Chambers about the Park Police budget. I'd like to report that the Park Police operating budget has increased by 39 percent since the Bush administration took office," said Kreisher.

The agency spokeswoman made no mention of the increased responsibilities to which the Park Police were subjected.

Chambers had fought back against the suspension, filing appeals with the Merit Systems Protection Board, a quasi-judicial agency which makes sure federal workers are protected against abuses by agency management. She has also received support from a group called Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER).

According to statements on a website set up to support Chambers' case, www.honestchief.com, Friday's firing was in response to the MSPP appeal. A decision from that group is not expected until later this month. The Interior Department said Chambers was dismissed after a review of her case by Interior deputy assistant secretary Paul Hoffman. The U.S. Park Police patrol the National Mall, parks in Washington, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island in New York Harbor, San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge and Presidio, and some scenic parkways in Maryland and Virginia.

The force employs nearly 680, but vacancies have left it 15 percent below its authorized strength. In the interviews which initially got her in trouble, Chambers said her department had a \$12 million budget

shortfall at the time and needed \$8 million for the upcoming fiscal year. Two weeks after those interviews, the Washington Post reported Friday, the National Park Service moved to fire her, charging she broke federal rules against public comment on budget discussions and lobbying.

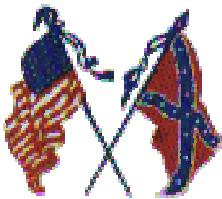
Chambers became the first woman to lead the U.S. Park Police in February 2002, after serving as police chief in Durham, N.C. Before that, she spent 21 years as a police officer in Prince George's County, Md.

Service superintendents have been speaking out about budget shortfalls throughout the park system. Statements from high NPS bureaucrats, while touting Administration claims that budgets have increased, have also suggested hiding the fact from the public that staffing cuts are requiring reduced hours and services at parks. A recent memo, leaked to the press by Park Service retirees groups, suggested that the term "service level adjustments" should be used in public announcements instead of "shortfalls," "cutbacks" or "layoffs."

Fredericksburg Dumping Admission Fees

July 8, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium- Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Battlefields Park has decided to discontinue the charging of admission fees, acknowledging that the program was simply unworkable for an establishment that doesn't have a front gate at which tickets can be sold.

According to a recent issue of "Battlefield Bullets," the quarterly newsletter sent out by Fredericksburg park officials, the fees will be changed from overall park admission



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to ones specifically charged for viewing the new films recently unveiled.

"The park has received permission from Washington to drop out of the Fee Demonstration Program," Superintendent Russ Smith said. "While the fee proceeds have been very helpful in many ways, the collection system has never been successful and was beyond our ability to fix it."

"Our current plan is to have Eastern National handle fees for the park's new films at Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg Visitor Centers starting October 1 and to be more proactive in seeking donations and recovering costs," he added. "The new system will allow us to fund seasonal positions, which the Fee Demo system did not. Details are still being worked out."

A working group consisting of government and interested local groups has begun to discuss a regional approach to promoting and enhancing Civil War tourism. A committee will finalize a draft plan and a proposal for governance and working committees for the approval of participating organizations. Other Fredericksburg programs have been working out well, the newsletter noted. "History at Sunset," the popular series of ten free Friday evening tours began June 11 with John Hennessy's "City of Hospitals" tour. The event drew 72 people. Topics of recent interest at the park include:

Sunken Road Project - A pre-construction meeting is set for July 14 to discuss the beginning of the utility work on Sunken Road. The construction start date will be the date that will be proposed to the city for closing the road.

Hospital Hires Expert to Review Civil War Structures

July 29, 2004 —Courtesy CWI Premium- Apparently embarrassed by accusations that they were destroying one part of history to promote another, officials of the hospital company that bought land holding Civil War redoubts from Colonial Williamsburg have announced they are bringing in an expert to evaluate the situation. John Quarstein, director of the Virginia War Museum and administrator of historic services and museums for Newport News, will conduct the survey of Civil War sites on the property, which includes at least two surviving redoubts, officials of Riverside Health System announced earlier this week. Quarstein is considered an expert on the Civil War history of the Peninsula, the Virginia Gazette reported. Rick Pearce, CEO of Riverside Health, said that his company was determined to treat the land with "sensitivity" and protect any historical resources found on it. The land holds two known Civil War earthworks known as redoubts. The structures were used to protect artillery positions and shield the guns' operators from incoming enemy fire. The importance of the Civil War to the area has long been overshadowed, many say, by the Colonial-era emphasis of Colonial Williamsburg, a privately owned historical theme park. The Battle of Williamsburg, fought over two days in May 1862. Like most of the battles on the Peninsula it covered a wide area as armies jockeyed for position. Williamsburg was fought along a line that stretched from Quarterpath Road

almost to Queens Creek, an action that Quarstein called "extremely significant."

"It was a very critical engagement," he said. "[Gen. George] McClellan could have destroyed the Confederate Army and ended the war had he pressed the Battle of Williamsburg in a better way. But that was not to be."

At the time, the Battle of Williamsburg was the bloodiest in the east, Quarstein added. And it provided a "strong awakening" for many soldiers who had never been in battles before. "It woke them up to the horrors of war."

Hoping to calm the fears of Civil War enthusiasts who were concerned the new owner would simply bulldoze the site, Quarstein said Riverside's plans "go the extra mile" beyond mere preservation. The health-care organization plans to support the creation of trails, historical interpretive signs, easements and endowments. "Those things take a long time," Quarstein added. "For the short term, the sites will be preserved. For the long term, we've been able to create a partnership to ensure that rather than just formations in the woods, these redoubts will become dynamic parts of our community. "We are going to develop a long-range plan and help shepherd those earthworks into a fashion where they can be properly preserved and interpreted," Quarstein said. "In saving Redoubts One and Two, they've done more for the preservation of the Battle of Williamsburg than was ever done before. That's extremely significant."