

The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

Capital District Civil War Round Table

P.O. Box 14871, Albany, NY 12212-4871

CDCWRT's web site: ***www.cdcwrt.org***

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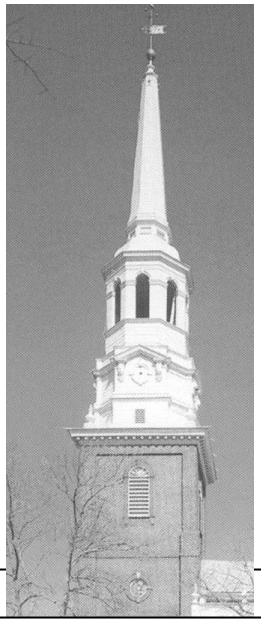
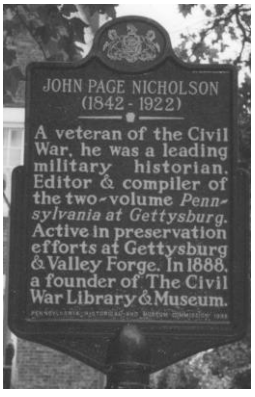




Why are these people smiling? Read about the tour of the Philadelphia region inside.

Upper left – Constitution Hall
Lower left – Liberty Bell
Upper right – Christ Church
Lower right – Plaque outside Civil War Library and Museum which serves as the home of the Old Baldy Civil War Round Table



NOVEMBER MEETING
Friday November 10, 2006
Guilderland Library
2228 Western Ave.
Women on the Home Front
Rosie the Riveter

SOCIAL HOUR	**6;00-7:00PM**
PRESENTATIONS	**7:00-8:30PM**
Q&A	**8:30-9:30PM**

CDCWRT MEETING

The November meeting of the CDCWRT will be held in the Guilderland Public Library on Friday, November 10th, at 7:00pm. The library's lecture series on World War II has been very successful. Crowds have filled the Helderberg Room, and the library has used the small conference room for refreshments. Since interest in this series has been great, the Round Table has decided to encourage its members to attend the November meeting in lieu of a Civil War topic. Next month's meeting on December 8th will be part of the World War II series but will have overlap with the Civil War. Civil War author, Jeff Shaara, will be the keynote speaker. He will talk about his new trilogy that he is writing on World War II.

The November 10th program is entitled,* "WOMEN ON THE HOME FRONT: ROSIE THE RIVETER."** ***The invited speaker is Karen Mahar, Professor of History at Siena College. The role of women changed dramatically during World War II, and expanded greatly from the time period of the Civil War. Women moved into men's jobs across a wide front, blurring what had been the "traditional role" for women during periods of war. The iconic picture of Rosie the Riveter --- the girl next door, in coveralls, arm flexed, muscles evident, a determined face --- was an important image of self-pride for Americans. However it was equally important for our Allies and the Axis Powers to see this image, to bolster the former, and to threaten the other. But the genii was out of the bottle, and never again would women return to their "traditional roles" after the War.

UP-COMING EVENTS

ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH, THE NEW YORK STATE MILITARY MUSEUM IN SARATOGA WILL OPEN ITS WORLD WAR II EXHIBIT. Members of the RT are encouraged to attend the activities in Saratoga during the day. This would be a very appropriate way to celebrate Veterans Day, and avoid the commercialism of the shopping malls.

ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH, THE HISTORY CHANNEL WILL PREMIER A PROGRAM ENTITLED, "*CIVIL WAR TERROR,*" AT 9:00 PM. Local re-enactors and Round Table members participated in the filming of this program this past summer at Lake George. If you miss it on Saturday, it will be re-aired on Sunday, November 12th at 1:00 AM.

NOVEMBER 17TH TO 19TH, FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, IS REMEMBRANCE DAY WEEKEND IN GETTYSBURG. This marks the 143rd anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Since the anniversary of the battle this year was on the actual days of the week, the address will also be the same. This is a larger event than the battle days. Anyone interested in

attending and wanting a room at the motel, should talk to Sue Knost as soon as possible.

The December meeting of the CDCWRT will be part of the Guilderland Library World War II event on Friday, December 8th. The special invited speaker will be noted author, JEFF SHAARA. Jeff is a friend and supporter of the Round Table, and we have been trying for several years to have him return to the Capital District. He was last here about ten years ago at Civil War Days at Proctor's Theater. The Library Foundation has invited him to speak on December 8th.

The Library Foundation will also sponsor a reception for Mr. Shaara, for which there will be a charge. The library will close 5:00 pm that night. A large crowd is expected, and the meeting will be in the main library, which can accommodate a larger crowd. Admission will be by ticket, but there will be no charge for the talk. An adequate number of tickets will be reserved for members of the RT. ***If you definitely would like to attend the free lecture, send a self-addressed and stamped envelope to Matt Farina, 1176 Delaware Turnpike, Delmar, NY 12054. Tickets will go to these members first since there will NOT be a meeting where we can hand them out. Once our allotment of tickets is gone, you will need to compete with the general public at the library desk.*** Details will be in next month's newsletter.

Since there will be many other attendees, we will postpone our holiday party and elections to the January potpourri meeting.

The January meeting of the CDCWRT will be held on Friday, January 12, 2007. This is our annual Potpourri Meeting and T-Shirt Night. This year it will be combined with our Holiday Party and general elections.

BOARD MEETING

The Board met on October 23rd. The Treasurer reported that there is $2287.90 in the regular account, and $6701.86 in the preservation account. The Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway Gala was a huge success. The Round Table ran the silent auction and contributed a number of items for the auction. The lecture by Col. Lance Betros on Fridasy, October 20th, covered the D-Day landings at Normandy, Operation Market Garden, and fighting up to the Battle of the Bulge. The meeting was very well attended, and a number of RT members were part of the crowd. President Matt George had another successful living history presentation for the Knox Historical Society. Up-coming events were discussed, and are listed in the newsletter.

Members of CWPT recently received a letter detailing the "raping of School House Ridge" at the Harpers Ferry battleground. A developer was seeking permission to place underground sewer and utility lines across the battlefield for a development. Appropriate paperwork had been submitted by the developer, seeking approval. It now appears this was a sham for appearance only. Early on Saturday morning, August 19th, when many of the National Park Service Staff were attending a meeting, the developer showed up with an army of construction workers, heavy equipment, night lights, and a team of three lawyers. A 45-foot wide, 2000-foot-long swath of battlefield was dug up and lines laid until completed late Sunday night. They knew that no federal judge would be available for an injunction on the weekend.

This was land that our Round Table helped purchase year ago with the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Site (APCWS) which later came CWPT. That land was then deed to the National Park Service. The NPS, CWPT, and many citizens are appealing to the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Attorney's Office to consider the most severe legal remedies permitted by law.

Members of your Board feel that the developer should be required to dig up the lines placed in addition to fines and penalties. ***This is a precedent case.*** If the developer gets off with a small fine, other developers will move onto your park lands and carry out similar actions. ***We all have been violated by this developer, just as if he had come into your house and ran a gas line through your basement without any prior approval or authority. And, by the way, when park personnel showed up with cameras to document the event, the developer gave them (and you) the finger.***

The Board will explore its own legal action if the government lets this one slide. A pro bono class action suit is being explored since part of the land purchase was made with our donated funds. **Please sign the petition, which will be at the next several meetings.**

Finally the Board wanted to remind all the active membership that yearly elections are coming up in January. ALL positions are open. Anyone interested in joining the Board should talk to any present Board member. A slate will be presented in next month's newsletter.

MISCELLANEOUS

This is a report on the recent RT trip to Philadelphia over Columbus Day Weekend. We left Colonie Center at 7:30am on Friday, and during the five hour trip we discussed, among things, the latest interpretations of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Everyone on the bus now knows what to do with a beautiful woman who is a captive. [You will have to ask a trip attendee for the answer. And you thought we just discussed the Civil War.]



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Brandywine River Museum at Chadds Ford, PA. The museum had a major exhibit on ***The Art of Illustration,*** including many pieces by Howard Pyle. Perhaps one of his best known was ***The Nation Makers.*** There was a generous sprinkling of Revolutionary War art. However a major part of the museum was art from the Wyeth family, including N.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth, and Jamie Wyeth. Two 30-minute tours of the artists' works were led by Andre Wyeth's grand-daughter, who provided personal insight into each artist's perspective. After checking into our new luxurious motel near Valley Forge (we were the first bus group to use the motel), we went a nearby historic

village for a Friday evening town festival with outdoor bands and vendors. The governor of Pennsylvania was just leaving the restored foundry where many of the 3-inch ordinance rifled cannon of the Civil War were produced.

Saturday morning we girded ourselves with a full breakfast at the motel, including personalized omelets (all included in the price of rooms) for a long day touring. The first stop was a personalized tour of the **Union League of Philadelphia.** The League occupies an entire city block in the center of Philadelphia and has approximately 250,000 square-feet of floor space. It was founded in 1862 as a patriotic society to support the policies of Abraham Lincoln. Although other Leagues were formed in other cities, the Philadelphia one was perhaps the most important because of the strong pro-Southern sympathies that existed in Philadelphia. **What was that! Why pro-Southern sympathy in Philadelphia?** The city was the largest 19th-Century textile center in North America, if not the world. Since this centered on cotton, there was a large southern presence in the city. Pierce Butler, the second largest slave owner in the south, lived in Philly with his family. When Lee first invaded the north, he was expected to march into Philadelphia by October 1, 1862. A mansion in central city had already been rented for Lee's headquarters. This was reported in the pro-Southern newspapers in the city. After Lee retreated after Antietam, the League was formed.

Inside the classic French Renaissance-styled building, the traditional décor is accentuated in rich leather, patinated wood and polished marble. Adorning the walls and hallways is the League's distinguished art collection, including Revolutionary War and Civil War art. These included paintings, bronzes, medallions, artifacts, and flags.



There is a larger than life Lincoln statue with a stern face and clenched fists (not a usual portrayal of Lincoln). There is a Lincoln portrait that none of us had ever seen before, that may serve as a future cachet for the Round Table.

After we left the Union League we stopped at the home of the Old Baldy Civil War Round Table, the Civil War Museum of Philadelphia. In this four-story 19th-Centrury building is house an unbelievable collection of items starting with the preserved head of Meade's horse, Old Baldy. There was Meade's bridle and saddle, and his uniform, and John Reynold's uniform, and Hancock's chair, and the list went on and on. Everywhere one looked, there was some artifact on a wall, or in a case. We spent several hours in this place where only half of the artifacts the museum possessed are on display. The museum will move to a new site nearer to the Town Hall in the future.

After a box lunch on the bus, we switched gears and went back to the American Revolution. We started at Carpenters' Hall where the first meeting of our Founding Fathers was held. We saw remnants of the Franklin house where he spent his last years. Then on to Christ Church there the Reverend (also a Civil War devotee) gave the RT a personalized tour of the Civil War connections of the Church in addition to the Rev War connections. In 1695 the first Anglican parish was established in the city. By 1754 the steeple of the church was the highest structure in the colonies. The church is magnificent, but equally fascinating was the cemetery were over 4000 people were buried, including Benjamin Franklin and his family.

The afternoon was completed with a visit to the Liberty Bell and Constitution Hall. We returned to the motel and prepared for our banquet at a restaurant that was a Tory tavern at one time. The food and companionship were the perfect end to a day that was rich in history.

Sunday started with breakfast and then a short bus ride to Norristown, the boyhood home and burial site of Winfield Scott Hancock. We had a walking tour of the cemetery, which was provided by members of the Hancock Society. The weather was bright and sunny with a breeze. The tour ended at the Hancock mausoleum, which was rescued from ruin and oblivion by members of the society.

It was a short ride to Valley Forge and a box lunch. We toured the visitor center and the encampment. There were re-enactors and a tour of Washington's headquarters. While no battle was fought here, it was at Valley Forge that the Continental Army matured into a more professional army. The greater portion of the 2000 deaths at Valley Forge were due to disease during the warmer months of March, April and May. After touring the site, we had a more informal dinner at one of the best local Italian restaurants. Once again, excellent food and companionship were the order for the end of the day.

Monday began with a full breakfast again. We then had a special personal tour of the Laurel Hill Cemetery outside of Philadelphia, which was established in 1836. Over 100,000 people are buried in this 19th-Century cemetery, which contains over 12,000 dynasty plots. Included among these is Major General George Gordon Meade, who is buried in a family plot with a simple stone. Among the many notables are Matthias Baldwin of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, Bvt. Brig. Gen. Henry Bingham, Bvt. Maj. Gen. Samuel W. Crawford of Gettysburg fame, John Dahlgren, the father of modern naval ordnance and his son, Ulric, Henry Deringer, Joshua Lippincott, founder of the distinguished publishing company, Lt. Gen. John Pemberton, of Vicksburg fame and the only Confederate general in Laurel Hill, and Gen. Jonathan Williams, the first superintendent of West Point.

After the cemetery tour, we boarded our bus and again traveled back in time. On the way home we stopped at the location where General Washington crossed the Delaware River that famous Christmas Day's Eve to surprise the Hessian encampment at Trenton. This victory kept the American Revolution alive when the Continental Army had almost disintegrated. It was a beautiful fall day when our bus stopped for touring and a box lunch. We then completed out trip to Albany, arriving just after 6:00pm.

All who went on this trip had an excellent time. Our only regret was that for the lack of only five additional attendees, we missed the opportunity to stay in the guest rooms at the Union League of Philadelphia. Three nights in the League with all of its history and artifacts would have been fantastic. The additional cost of the rooms would have been met by just five more attendees. This trip almost was cancelled because of the small number of attendees, but by rearranging where we slept and ate, we were able to carry it for the planned cost. Whether or not we even consider another long distance trip in the future is entirely in the hands of the membership of the Round Table.

A PICTURE OF J. J. JENNINGS, OUR RESIDENT EXPERT ON WINFIELD HANCOCK WAS TO HAVE BEEN INSERTED HERE.

HOWEVER THE EDITOR MANAGED TO MISPLACE THE PHOTO AND NEEDED TO GET TO NEWSLETTER TO THE PRINTER.

THE PHOTO OF J.J. AT HANCOCK'S CRYPT WILL APPEAR IN NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.

THE EDITOR WILL NOT INCLUDE THE PICTURE OF J.J. STEALING QUARTERS FROM THE GRAVE STONE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

LINCOLN MEN AND SONS OF DIXIE

We would like to continue this feature over the next year. If you have a brief biography of a Civil War relative, and would like to share it with the Round Table, please send it to the editor of *The Dispatch.* If you have a photo of the individual, we would include it with the article.

VETERANS AND THE VOTE

By the time this newsletter arrives, the elections this November will be over. The rancor and bitterness in this year's campaigns has been more than in years passed. Issues it seems have become secondary to personal attack. What is more important however is whether you voted or not. In the election of 1864, the Civil War soldier voted as well as the families on the home front. American soldiers in the past have put their lives on the line to maintain our privilege to vote. This election was no different. We all have an obligation to participate in the selection of candidates who should try to represent their constituents. If we as voters are dissatisfied with our representatives in government, then we should express that by voting for those who may bring change. This bold experiment is far from ideal, but it has to be better than anything that has been tried in the past several centuries.

We will bring our troops home. The when and how and what we leave behind, is yet to be determined. Those men and women, who are now serving in the military, are representatives of our way of life and government. They deserve our moral support, our emotional support, and our participatory support in government. Remember that this weekend, and not the end of year auto sales and the pre-holiday sales.