



# The Dispatch

*Newsletter of the*

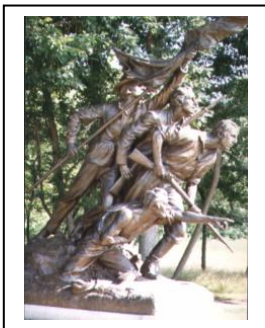
## Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

CDCWRT's web site: [www.cdcwrt.org](http://www.cdcwrt.org)

**Volume 22 Number 1**

**September 2004**



### **CDCWRT'S 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BEGINS TODAY**

The Round Table was founded in 1984, and has grown and changed to meet the needs of its membership. Throughout this Fall we will celebrate the organization's birthday with special events. Pictured above are scenes from some of our famous trips. This year is no different. Please read the details inside. Invite a friend or a neighbor to join you at any of our activities. Happy Birthday, CDCWRT!

**SEPTEMBER  
MEETING**  
**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**GUILDERLAND LIBRARY**  
**WESTERN AVENUE**

**SOCIAL HOUR                      6-7PM**  
**BUSINESS MEETING    7-7:30PM**  
**LECTURE                              7:30-9PM**

*Gettysburg, and the problems Nevin faced when he joined a dysfunctional regimental command.*

**UP-COMING EVENTS**

**CIVIL WAR FILM FESTIVAL AND LECTURE SERIES** will continue on **Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:00 p.m.** at the **Guilderland Public Library**. The feature movie will be the film, **ANDERSONVILLE**. This is a longer movie, so there will be **no speaker** before the film, which will begin at 7:00. The next film will be **Shenandoah on October 20<sup>th</sup>**.

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**On Saturday, September 11<sup>th</sup>**, Matt George and other volunteers from the Round Table will participate in Community Day activities at Mohonasen High School.

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**On Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>**, the **Irish Fest** will be held in **Altamont from 10:00am to 11:00pm**. The Round Table will have an information booth, and will be selling Civil War Irish Brigade items of course. We will be reprinting our Irish Brigade T-shirt using the official letterhead of the Brigade. Bradley Schmel, Civil War artist, has donated two of his prints to the Round Table for auction at the Irish Fest. The pair are entitled, ***Gentle When Stroked, Fierce When Provoked***. The first is a depiction of the Irish Brigade monument at Gettysburg (the Irish wolfhound lying at the base of the Celtic Cross); the second depicts the Brigade in action at Gettysburg. Tickets will be available at the September meeting.

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**CDCWRT MEETING**

*The September meeting of the Round Table will be held at the Guilderland Public Library on Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. This meeting marks the beginning of a celebration that will extend to the end of the year. What are we celebrating? IT'S THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE!! There will be a series of lectures and events locally. Check out the schedule of up-coming events for a full list.*

*The first meeting of the new year will feature guest speaker, Dana Shoaf, who is editor of America's Civil War Magazine, a consulting historian for Maryland Civil War Trails, and vice-president of the Save Historic Antietam Foundation (SHAF).*

*Dana's topic is titled, Odyssey of a Field Officer. It focuses on the travails of Major John Nevin during his service with the 28<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry, Nevin's Independent Battery, and the 93<sup>rd</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry. Using Nevin's diary, service and pension records, period photos, and other primary sources, Shoaf examines Nevin's capture by Rebel guerrillas, the VI Corps' famous march to*

**Saturday & Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, at the Stone Fort in Schoharie there will be a Living History Weekend. Members of the 125<sup>th</sup> NYVI organization will be on hand for an encampment. The Round Table will also have an information booth.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**Our Fall trip to Appomattox on Columbus Day Weekend, is still up in the air. There was considerable discussion at the August Board meeting before the Board regrettably voted to cancel the trip to Appomattox. As of August 23<sup>rd</sup>, only 21 individuals had signed up for the trip. A minimum of 35 was necessary to cover the cost of the bus, which rose by \$2000 this year because of increased fuel costs.**

**The distances are also daunting. In order for the bus to return to Albany by midnight on the 11<sup>th</sup>, the entire group would need to leave Petersburg by noon on the 11<sup>th</sup>, even if we flew out of BWI or Dulles airports. The drive from Petersburg to Appomattox is 2-3 hours. With stops at Five Forks, Farmville and Sailor's Creek, it would be a long day. For these and other reasons, the Board asked Sue Knost to explore a Civil War Washington trip.**

**On the last page of this newsletter in a proposed trip to Appomattox with a different bus company. All who want to go on this trip MUST confirm by the deadline date. A pure Washington trip presented problems in moving a group around the city on a busy holiday weekend.**

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**THERE WILL BE NO RT MEETING ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup>. THE**

**OCTOBER MEETING WILL TIE IN WITH THE RENSSELAER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (SEE BELOW).**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, will be the celebration of the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Creek in Middletown, Virginia. The re-enactment will occur on the actual battlefield. The Round Table will be present at this event, which promises to be sizeable. Anyone interested in working with the RT should contact Sue Knost or Joe Stracuzzi.**

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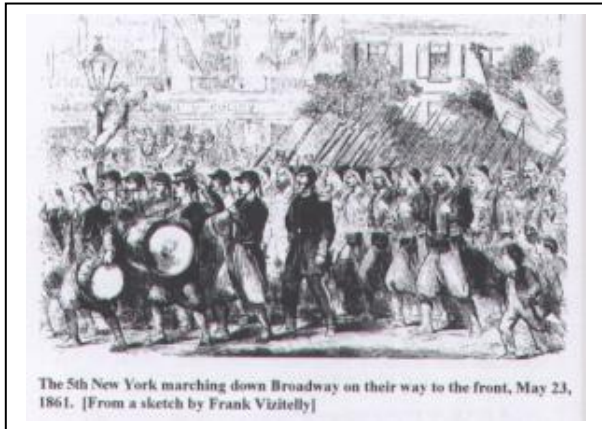
**On Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, through Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, the Rensselaer County Historical Society will host a weekend conference about "War on the Home Front." This will serve as our October meeting. Since round table member, Chris Kolakowski, was instrumental in organizing the exhibits, he plans to attend the weekend meeting. At the conference, presentations will center on events and activities, which occurred locally during wars ranging from the Revolutionary War to the First Gulf War. Details of the program will appear in next month's newsletter.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE'S 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND CELEBRATION will occur on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. The guest speaker for our Fall Dinner will be none other than our own John Hennessy. His name is attached to our preservation fund because John helped focus our activities on preservation. He headed the preservation committee when he was a**

member of the RT living in the Albany area. John is an author, historian, member of the National Park Service, preservationist and friend.

Usually we have a Civil War conference the same weekend as our banquet. This year we will link with the New York State Military Heritage Museum, which has a Civil War event on the same weekend.



On Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, the Museum will unveil a Zouave flag exhibit at the Capital. There will be a tour of the Capital at 2:00pm, and then a reception, which the Round Table will host, from 4:00 to 6:00pm. On Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, at the Military Museum in Saratoga there will be a conference on the Zouaves, including Duryee's Zouaves. There will be exhibits including Elmer Ellsworth's coat, which he was wearing when he was killed in Alexandria, Virginia. There will also be a living history Zouave exhibit. In addition there will be curator's tours of other new exhibits, including the gun vault and a spectacular U.S. Grant painting. More details will appear in subsequent newsletters.

Two short Zouave books members might want to read before this meeting are *A*

*Duryee Zouave* by Thomas P. Southwick (with an introduction by Brian C. Pohanka), and *Out of the Wilderness* by Cpl. Norton C. Shepard (edited by Raymond W. Smith of the CDCWRT).

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**Remembrance Day at Gettysburg will commemorate the 141<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Gettysburg Address. This year activities will begin on Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>.** As in the past, the Round Table will have a presence at the activities. Anyone interested in attending, and needing a room, should contact Sue Knost. The Round Table generally has a block of rooms at the Quality Inn next to the battlefield.

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**The Victorian Stroll in Troy will be held on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>.** The Round Table will have an information table at the Troy Post Office as usual. Volunteers are needed to meet the public and talk about their interest in the Civil War and the Round Table.

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The last meeting of the calendar year will be our December Meeting and Holiday Party at the Guilderland Library on Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. There will also be the election of new officers and board members. The topic for the meeting will be "How the U.S. Navy Won the American Civil War." Our speaker will be Chuck Veit, President of the Navy and Marine living History Association. He will also talk briefly about the "USS Alligator – the First Submarine." This promises to be a never-before-discussed topic for our Round Table.

## ODDS AND ENDS

The July 2004 issue of *The Gettysburg Magazine* will be available at the September meeting for \$5.00. There is an article on the 126<sup>th</sup> NYVI of Willard's Brigade. There will also be a selection of Civil War books for sale.

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Last month's trivia question: *Who was the youngest general in the Union Army?*

**Answer: Galusha Pennypacker**, born on June 1, 1844; commissioned captain in 97<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Rgt. on August 1861 at 17 years of age; wounded three times at Green Plains, VA, wounded at Fort Gilmer, VA; seriously wounded at Ft Fisher, NC; made brigadier general of volunteers to rank from February 1865 at age of 20 years, 8 months; died October 1, 1916; buried in Philadelphia National Cemetery.

There were no winners. George Armstrong Custer was a common answer, but he was born December 5, 1839 and became brigadier general of volunteers in June 1863 at the age of 23 years, 6 months.

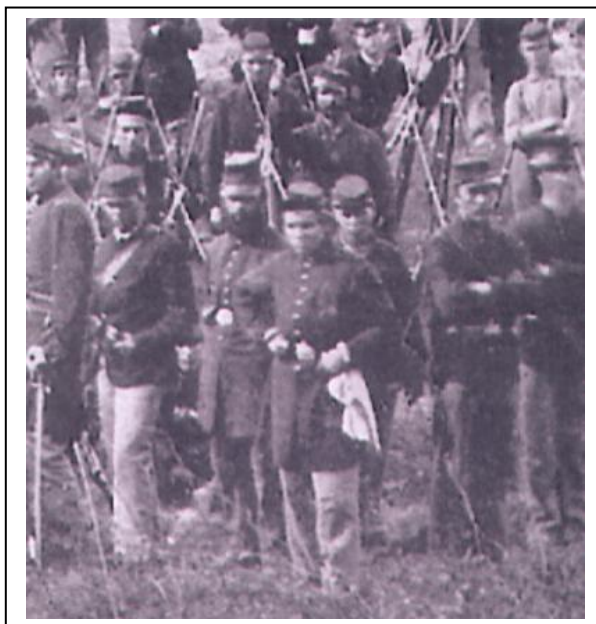
**This month's trivia question: Where is the following quote found?**

*"No refuge could save the hireling and slave from the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave."*

\* \* \* \* \*

Karen Marshall Peters is president of the Wilmington (NY) Historical Society. She is also a friend of Matt George. She recently sent to him the following:

*Here is the photo of my great-great-grandfather, Oscar Frances Maynard, in the Civil War. He was in the 93<sup>rd</sup> NY Volunteers as a private. I believe you have a copy of his war autobiography. At the time this photo was taken, he decided to put a white towel in his belt so that he would be able to recognize himself if he ever saw the photo again! I am enclosing the entire photo, as well as a close-up of just him. He was about 17 years old at the time.*



The 93<sup>rd</sup> NY or "Morgan Rifles" were so excellent in drill and soldierly efficiency, that Gen. McClellan picked it as his headquarters guard. It was present in nearly all the battles of the Peninsula Campaign and with the Army of the Potomac. It suffered 60% casualties in the battle of Wilderness.

## THE ALLIGATOR

*From the Raleigh News & Observer*

*The Navy's first submarine, an odd-looking cylindrical ship named the USS Alligator, sank into obscurity during the Civil War.*

*The Office of Naval Research and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will hunt for the Alligator in a large block of ocean southeast of Ocracoke, about 20 miles off-shore. The vessel sank during a storm in April 1863 while being towed from Washington to Charleston, S.C., to battle the Confederate Navy.*

*The unmanned Alligator met a fate similar to the USS Monitor, the famous iron-plated gunboat that sank in a storm off Cape Hatteras in December 1862. But the Union sub didn't receive the attention from scholars or the public as did the Monitor and the Confederate sub, CSS Hunley, which sank near Charleston after sinking a Union ship. Catherine Marzin of the National Marine Sanctuaries program said the Alligator was largely overlooked partly because it had been a secret weapon and had a short service life.*

*Marzin said the Alligator was significant because of its place in history as the "grandfather" of modern submarines and its engineering features. The ship, which was painted green, had an airlock designed to allow a diver to leave while submerged and place explosives on enemy ships. It also had an air-purification system, a standard feature on later submarines. Originally powered by oars that jutted out the sides, the vessel was refitted with a hand-cranked screw propeller.*

*Despite the technological innovations, the Alligator never gained glory in battle. Following its launch from a Philadelphia shipyard in 1862, the ship was sent to Virginia to destroy bridges over the Appomattox River and to clear obstructions in the James River. But the sub was unable to dive in the shallow rivers, so it was pulled back to Washington to avoid capture by the*

*Confederates. The Alligator was dispatched to Charleston in March 1863. According to historical accounts the USS Sumpter was forced to cut the Alligator adrift when the vessels encountered a fierce storm.*

*Marzin discovered drawings of the Alligator in France last year while researching the sub's French designer, Brutus de Villeroi. She said some people suggest that Villeroi's inventions inspired the depictions of a submarine in Jules Verne's "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea."*

## BOARD MEETING

The August meeting was held on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Board voted to move the separate operating account and preservation account to Charter One Bank. New members were voted into the RT. Member will be reminded that the letters, **DD**, on the address label means that dues are due. The new website is operating, and some of our more expensive cachets and T-shirts can be purchased on line.

Program Chair, Sue Knost, presented the preliminary schedule for the rest of year as the Round Table celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> year. There was considerable discussion on the Columbus Day trip to Appomattox. Higher travel costs and a smaller group were other issues that were discussed. The Board voted to cancel the Appomattox trip, and to explore a Civil War Washington trip. The deadline date for trip confirmation will be probably Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.

We will be linking with two other groups for our October and November meetings. As usual cachets will be fore sale at many events, and as usual, cachets remain the major source of funding for our preservation activities,