



# The Dispatch

*Newsletter of the*

## Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

CDCWRT's web site: [timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt](http://timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt)

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Should it be my lot to die during the present struggle, let the thought that I die in the defense of my country console you. And when Peace with its happy train of attendants shall once more visit this land, let it be your greatest joy to teach my child that I was one who loved my country more than life. This is the only legacy I can bequeath to him, but it is one that a prince might well be proud of.

*James R. Woodworth  
44<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry  
killed in Wilderness, May 5, 1864*

**May Meeting**  
**Friday 05/09/03**  
**Guilderland Public Library**  
**Route 20 Western Ave.**  
**Guilderland, NY**

SOCIAL HOUR	6:00 PM
BUSINESS MEETING	7:00 PM
PROGRAM	7:30 PM

**CDCWRT MEETING**

*The May meeting of the CDCWRT will be held in the Guilderland Public Library on Friday, May 9, 2003 at 7:30pm. The Social hour begins at 6:00pm, and the business meeting at 7:00pm. Our guest speaker will be Janet Leigh Bucklew, who will talk about the "PREJUDICE, WAR, AND THE GENTLE DOVES OF THE CHURCH."*

*The battle of Gettysburg resulted in over 21,000 wounded men. In the weeks after the battle, many received care from hundreds of volunteer doctors and nurses. Among the nurses, few would provide more professional care than a most unique group of women belonging to a Roman Catholic religious order. While serving at a partially completed hospital in Philadelphia, a construction worker dubbed the nuns the "Flying Battery" Sisters, because of their unusual wing shaped headgear. Janet Bucklew will speak, in the traditional clothing of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent DePaul.*

*Janet has worked at the Gettysburg National Military Park for six years as a seasonal ranger. As a public historian, she shares her appreciation of history with*

*visitors at the park every year. One of her most interesting programs is based on Sister Juliana Chatard, a Daughter of Charity who served as a sister-nurse during the Civil War. This program, presented in both first and third person, is the story of a woman who endured tremendous hardship to care for others. This was accomplished in the face of prejudice and misunderstanding. Her story is not the story of a Catholic woman during the war, but rather the story of a woman who cared for the wounded.*

*Janet is a graduate of York College of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in History. She is presently a Masters candidate in American Studies at Penn State University. She has lived in York County for twenty years, and presently occupies a Civil War-era house with her husband, two children, two dogs and a cat.*

*For additional reading, those members who subscribe to GETTYSBURG MAGAZINE might read "The Gettysburg Wounded and the 'Flying Battery' Sisters" in volume #19, pages 112-128.*

**APRIL MEETING**

A large crowd of 280 attended the Full Duty Banquet in Montpelier, VT to hear Ken Burns speak about the Civil War. Members of the CDCWRT comprised 25% of the audience, but unfortunately, we did not win 25% of the great raffle prizes that were offered! The day began somewhat ominously when the "kneeling" bus would not "unkneel." Later at lunchtime in Burlington, service was a mite bit slow. But the weather cooperated, and sunny day was produced. A private tour of the Capitol Building and the Civil War holdings in the Capitol followed.

## BOARD MEETING

The April Board Meeting was held on April 21<sup>st</sup>. The Board discussed future meetings and the requests for Round Table participation in Civil War events. The Board agreed to purchase stamps and a number of limited commemorative postal booklets for upcoming cancellations this summer. The next Board Meeting will be on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

## UP-COMING EVENTS

**May 17<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, 11:00am to 4:00pm, is the Annual open house at Peebles Island.** This is an opportunity to explore the state historical preservation facilities. Featured this year is preservation of Civil War flags. You will be able to see the process by which the flags are cleaned and preserved. Curators will be on hand to discuss the process and answer questions. The RT will have an information booth at the open house. This is an opportunity to meet the public, and just casually talk about the RT and why you joined. Take 787 to Cohoes; Turn right onto route 470 (Ontario St.); turn left onto Delaware Ave. just before the bridge; the labs are about one mile down the road. **Volunteers are requested to contact Joe or Sue.**

**June 13<sup>th</sup>, Friday, the monthly meeting of the CDCWRT will be held in the Guilderland Public Library.** Member, Ray Wemple will speak on *The Signal Corps at Gettysburg*.

**June 14<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, historian, Robert Mulligan, will be giving a tour of "Some Interesting Veterans Buried in Oakwood Cemetery."** More details will be available in next month's newsletter, but mark your calendar now.

**On June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, Saturday and Sunday, Civil War Days will be held in Petersboro, NY.** This is also Flag Day Weekend and it promises to be a big event. Each year re-enactors, historians, history groups and vendors gather to celebrate the region's Civil War heritage. This has been a cancellation event for the CDCWRT for several years now. Volunteers are needed.

**June 28<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, to July 6<sup>th</sup>, Sunday, will mark the '140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg.** More than 25,000 Civil War re-enactors are expected to be on hand for the celebration. This will be the major event for 2003. Volunteers are being recruited for the weekend of July 4-6. This will be your opportunity to see Pickett's Charge on a life-size scale. The RT has a block of rooms reserved in a motel as close to the battlefield as the NPS allows. Volunteers who work at the booth will have 25% of their room charge paid by the RT. **The RT will have rooms available for members who just want to attend the event. The room rate is \$110 plus tax. The motel is next to the Visitor Center. Please see Sue by May 30<sup>th</sup> to confirm your room with a credit card. Unused rooms must be turned in by June 1<sup>st</sup>.** See Joe, Sue, Matt G. or Matt F. if you are interested. Car-pooling may also be available, depending on the number of volunteers.

**The July Picnic will be held on Saturday, July 12<sup>th</sup> at the Peebles Island Pavilion.** More details will follow in later newsletters.

**On July 26<sup>th</sup> in Troy there will be a special event honoring Ericksen and the Monitor, whose plates were made in local ironworks. More details to follow.**

## MISCELLANEOUS

Board member, Lew Warner, is developing an exhibit at the Guilderland Library on the History of the GAR. If any members have any items concerning the GAR (i.e. documents, photos, badges, uniforms) that they might want to loan for this exhibit, please contact Lew at 458-2282 or by email [ldwarner@nycap.rr.com](mailto:ldwarner@nycap.rr.com). The exhibit will run from mid-May until the end of June.

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Rosemary Nichols, Board member, is inviting people, who like Civil War music, and/or like to sing, to contact her to help set up a music program for the picnic in July. Rosemary's email address is [rnichols@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rnichols@nycap.rr.com).

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Are you looking for a gift or graduation present? A number of framed prints of general officers will be available at the May RT meeting. Prices range from \$20 and up, depending upon the popularity of the officer in question. There are also some special framed cachets that were autographed by Jeff Shaara and cancelled with stamp that honors the movies *Gettysburg* and *Gods and Generals*. These are priced at \$20. These make unique gifts, AND support your RT's preservation activities.

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Magpie will perform "Sword of the Spirit" in a concert on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00pm, and as a play on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00pm at the Renaissance Council Arts Studio on Main St., Middleburgh. The group wrote all the songs for the concert, and has also written the play, which was

first performed at Harper's Ferry. The play is the telling of the story of the famed radical abolitionist, John Brown. It is told through letters written back and forth to his wife, Mary Brown. Each is a full evening of entertainment.

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My editorial last month concluded with some concerns over the 'Victory at Chancellorsville.' Last fall, we had heard from an unimpeachable source that Mr. Mullins had become very upset when he heard that the developer was talking to the CVBT about a possible agreement. Mullins informed the developer that any negotiations with CVBT would jeopardize his sale of the land. Mullins did not want those preservationists to get any land.

Well round two has begun. Mullins will sell the land for \$40 million or \$50,000 an acre, or seven times the \$5.6 million assessed value of the property. Mullins, a local funeral-home owner, paid \$2.2 million for the land in 1995. He stated his land will be developed as zoned--- offices and stores on 55 acres and 225 homes on the rest. If Mullins carries out his plans, none of the battlefield will be preserved, there will be no buffer on route 3, and there will be no major road improvements. A pyrrhic victory indeed.

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Recently, John J. Pullen died. He was author of *The Twentieth Maine* and *A Shower of Stars: The Medal of Honor and the 27<sup>th</sup> Maine* among other titles. The RT member who won an autographed copy of the book about the 27<sup>th</sup> Maine at the November 2001 banquet, has a unique gift.

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### *Away, Away, Away down South in Dixie*

Just where is Dixie? It is NOT the land south of the Mason-Dixon Line. This month's puzzler is to explain the derivation of *Dixie or Dixieland*. There is a book prize for the member/members with the correct answer submitted to the editor before the May meeting.

### EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The following are some items that are pertinent to two days this month, Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day. Some pertain to the Civil War; others are about soldiers of different Wars. Amid all the Memorial Day sales, which will soon be heavily advertised on radio, TV and in newspapers, remember the real meaning of the Day, whether you celebrate the 3-day weekend or traditional Memorial Day.

A special Memorial Day Ceremony was held to honor veterans of all wars and branches of service on Friday, May 25, 2001. It was conducted at the Walk of Honor and Veterans' Memorial Monument located in front of the postal facility on Old Karner Road in Colonie. CDCWRT student member, Mark Morrison, represented the Christian Brothers Academy Color Guard. A green ash Eisenhower Memorial Tree was planted on the front lawn in memory of Sgt. James Forst, a three time decorated Viet Nam veteran and former postal employee. The tree is descended from the original Eisenhower green ash, which still stands on the Denison, Texas birthplace of the president.

The CDCWRT purchased a brick in the Memorial Walkway, which honors NYS Civil War Veterans. The brick is located

near the center of the circle in front of the monument. The site is lit 24 hours a day, and there are park benches for visitors. Allow yourself more than a few minutes to read some of the names. It is a surprisingly powerful experience.

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This next item I received by e-mail. I have abbreviated it somewhat.

#### *The Things They Carried...*

*They carried P-38 can openers and heat tabs, watches and dog tags, insect repellent, gum, cigarettes, Zippo lighters, salt tablets, compress bandages, ponchos, Kool-Aid, two or three canteens of water, iodine tablets, Sterno, LRRP-rations, and C-rations stuffed in socks.*

*They carried the M-16, trip flares and Claymore mines, M-60 machine guns, the M-79 grenade launcher, M-14's, CAR-15's, Stoners, Swedish K's, 66mm LAWS, shotguns, 45 caliber pistols, silencers, the sounds of bullets, rockets, and choppers, and sometimes the sound of silence.*

*They carried the land itself as it hardened on their boots. They carried stationery, pencils, and pictures of their loved ones-real and imagined. They carried love for people in the real world and love for one another.*

*They carried the traditions of the United States military, and memories and images of those who served before them. They carried grief, terror, longing and their reputations. They carried the soldier's greatest fear: the embarrassment of dishonor.*

*They crawled into tunnels, walked point, and advanced under fire, so as not to die of embarrassment. They were afraid of dying,*

*but too afraid to show it. They carried the emotional baggage of men and women who might die at any moment. They carried the weight of the world. And they carried each other.*

Author unknown

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In an ad for the Boston Store, dated May 30, 1912, it was noted that the store would be closed "in memoriam." A poem was printed with the announcement.

*The Boys in Blue*

*"Comrades, in memoriam, we've formed our ranks today,  
Old friendships fast abiding. For those who've passed away.  
We bring remembrance flowers: and we pass in fond review,  
Our service with the men who've died, men who were boys in blue.  
"The day brings countless visions of battle scenes long gone ---  
Of picket line and campfire, of story and of song,  
Or shoulder to shoulder, steadfast, lined up, firm and true---  
Many we knew missed rollcall, many a boy in blue.  
"Those days, thank God, are over---the days of shot and shell,  
Of battle line and furious charge. Oh, brothers, it is well,  
We march again, with thinning ranks; each year, a lean review  
Of graying heads and slower steps---we the old boys in blue!  
"To the flag, as to the grave mounds, we bend the tired knee---  
The same old flag we stood up for, the flag of liberty,*

*Now, South and North; its clustered stars, united lead the way:  
And all are comrades, those who wore the blue and wore the gray."*

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**"In great deeds something abides. On great fields something stays. Forms change and pass; bodies disappear; but spirits linger, to consecrate the ground..."**

**Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain**

Although Chamberlain was referring to battlefields, it can be stated that Civil War battlefields are cemeteries.

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*Washington, D.C.  
May 25, 1861*

**To the Father and Mother of Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth:**

**My Dear Sir and Madam,**

*In the untimely loss of your noble son, our affliction here, is scarcely less than your own. So much of promised usefulness to one's country, and of bright hopes for one's self and friends, have rarely been so suddenly dashed, as in his fall. In size, in years, and in youthful appearance, a boy only, his power to command men, was surpassingly great. This power combined with a fine intellect, an indomitable energy, and a taste altogether military, constituted in him, as seemed to me, the best natural talent, in that department, I ever knew. And yet he was singularly modest and deferential in social intercourse. My acquaintance with him began less than two years ago; yet through the latter half of the intervening period, it was as intimate as the*

*disparity of our ages, and my engrossing engagements would permit. To me, he appeared to have no indulgences or pastimes; and I never heard him utter a profane, or an intemperate word. What was conclusive of his good heart, he never forgot his parents. The honors he labored for so laudably, and, in the sad end, so gallantly gave his life, he meant for them, no less than for himself.*

*In the hope that it may be no intrusion upon the sacredness of your sorrow, I have ventured to address you this tribute to the memory of my young friend, and your brave and early fallen child.*

*May God give you that consolation which is beyond all earthly power.*

*Sincerely your friend in a common affliction,*

*A. Lincoln*

The funeral of the 24-year old Zouave leader, the first officer to die in the War, was held in the East Room of the White House.

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**We sleep safely in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would harm us.**

**George Orwell**

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My most moving personal moment in my Civil War trekkings occurred on the Second Manassas Battlefield with John Hennessy as our guide. It was a damp, cool, misty Sunday when John took us to the Sudley Church, which was near the end of Jackson's line. John related to us that the church had been converted into a hospital, and some of those soldiers who died there,

were buried on a wooded hill nearby. He took us to the site, and pointed out the shallow depressions in the ground where the graves had been. Years later, the bodies had been moved to military cemeteries, but the depressions remained. John explained to us that the greatest fear of the soldier was to die in battle where no one knew where he had died. He would lie in an unmarked grave, forgotten, and even his family would never know where and how he died.

He then related several stories of soldiers, but finished with a letter written by James R. Woodworth, 44<sup>th</sup> NYVI.

*Should it be my lot to die during the present struggle, let the thought that I die in the defense of my country console you. And when peace with its happy train of attendants shall once more visit this land, let it be your greatest joy to teach my child that I was one who loved my country more than life. This is the only legacy I can bequeath to him, but it is one that a prince might well be proud of.*

As John read these inspired words on that quiet damp hilltop, the sun began to break through the fog, and shafts of sunlight streamed through the leafless trees and fell upon us, and the former graves. There was not eye among us. This was no random circumstance. A message was being sent to us across time. We stood there reverently for several minutes, as swirls of fog slowly rose from the wet ground and the woods became brighter by the minute. By then the moment had passed, and we reluctantly began to leave that sacred place and move back towards the bus.

We must never forget men such as these, eloquent or not. It is our duty to remember them as Lincoln asked us in his Gettysburg Address.