

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212
www.cdcwrt.net



Volume 33, Number 1 January 2016

ROUND TABLE DONATIONS AT $1,402,959 IN ACTUAL & MATCHING FUNDS

2015 DONATIONS

1. **Civil War Trust - $1000 Antietam for 5:1 match = $5000**
2. **Museum of Cape Fear (Fayetteville Arsenal) 188 cachets = $960**
3. **Bennett Place Historical Park – 200 cachets = $1200**
4. **UGRR & CDCWRT donation of Vann print for raffle = $300**
5. **Underground Railroad Conference ad = $135**
6. **Civil War Trust $500 Fleetwood Hill for 2.06:1 match = $1030**
7. **Civil War Trust - $500 Chattanooga/Chickamauga for 5.5:1 match=$2750**
8. **Lincoln Museum of Hodgenville, KY – donated cachets = $350**
9. **Civil War Trust $3000 for 10 sites including Brandy Station & Bentonville – 10.1:1 match = $30,300**
10. **Civil War Trust $2000 for Appomattox for 8:1 match = $16,000**

TOTAL CASH OR EQUIVALENT DONATION - $9,945

TOTAL DONATIONS INCLUDING MATCHES - $58,025

JANUARY MEETING
FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2016

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER
1541 BROADWAY
WATERVLIET, NY

Annual
Potpourri
Meeting

Pete Lindeman
Dave Swart
Gene Gore

Social Hour	**6:00 – 7:00 p.m.**
Business Meeting	**7:00 – 7:15 p.m.**
Presentation	**7:15 – 7:45 p.m.**
Discussion	**7:45 - 8:15 p.m.**

CDCWRT MEETING

The January meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, January 8, 2016. This first meeting of the new year is our annual Potpourri Meeting where several members of the Round Table will provide short presentations about a Civil War relative, a Civil War artifact, a Civil War collection or a favorite short Civil War topic. This meeting also provides our members with the experience of presenting to a friendly audience. It also allows the rest of the membership to see first-hand the interests and passions of some of the members.

Pete Lindeman will talk about "The Crooked Gun."

Dave Swart will present the letters of Samuel Denison, a soldier in the 121st NYVI.

Gene Gore will present a history of Charles Caleb, a member of the 27th and 31st Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry.

BOARD MEETING

A Board meeting was held on November 16th. The treasurer reported $908.20 in the regular account and $9816.32 in the preservation account.

Rosemary Nichols and the Board wanted to thank in the newsletter, all those who attended the 5th Sue Knost Memorial Conference. The Board also wanted to thank the speakers who donated their time and energies, and did not accept honoraria. Likewise the Board wanted to thank those who provided sponsorships and ancestor remembrances. Jointly, this allowed the conference to break even. In content, the conference was a great success and attendees and speakers all heartily agreed on this.

ELECTIONS OF NEW BOARD

At the December board meeting, the following slates of officers was proposed and will be voted on by the membership at the January meeting. Any member in good standing can be nominated from the floor.

President – Erin Baillargeon
Vice President – Mark Koziol
Secretary – Rosemary Nichols
Treasurer – Fran McCashion
At Large – Steve Muller
At Large – Art Henningson
At Large – Gene Gore

The Board and membership wish to thank the out-going Board for their leadership and dedication this past year.

DUES ARE NOW DUE

UP-COMING MEETING/ EVENTS

On Friday, February 12, 2016, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Edythe Quinn, who will present "Freedom Journey – Black Civil War Soldiers in Westchester County.

On Friday, March 11, 2016, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Michelle Hamilton, who will present "Lincoln and Spiritualism."

On Friday, April 8, 2016, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Jamie Malinowski, who will talk about Commander Will Cushing.

On Friday, May 13, 2016, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Mike Reetz, who will talk about Brigadier General Horace Porter.

On Friday, June 10, 2016, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor David Hochfelder, who will talk about the Freedman's Savings Bank.

SAVING BRANDY STATTION AND FLEETWOOD HILL

Posted: Wednesday, November 25, 2015

BY THE EDITORIAL PAGE STAFF OF THE FREE LANCE-STAR OF FREDERICKSBURG

If one wants reason to give thanks, look no further than a quiet place called Fleetwood Hill. On this grass-covered rise in eastern Culpeper County, visible from miles away in Stevensburg, the public is now invited to experience the scene of momentous American history.

Here, the cavalrymen of commanders J.E.B. Stuart and Alfred Pleasonton fought fiercely for control of the strategic heights on June 9, 1863, during the Battle of Brandy Station. (Notably, Stuart called it the Battle of Fleetwood Heights.)

Here, Union troopers at last proved their mettle against Stuart's vaunted horsemen.

Here, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's Gettysburg campaign began.

Now, thanks to the Civil War Trust, the Brandy Station Foundation and a generation of preservationists, this fabled spot can be enjoyed by visitors via a half-mile interpretive walking trail and a smartphone/tablet Battle App, both brand new.

The trail's dedication last month drew more than 200 people from near and far. It capped, at least for now, decades of work by many to save major parts of the Brandy Station landscape for posterity.

Fleetwood Hill, the southern end of a 2.5-mile-long ridge that dominates the plateau sweeping down to the Rappahannock River, is a recent addition to that preserve. The 55,000-member trust bought it for $3.6 million from Culpeper resident Tony Troilo, then removed modern buildings and restored the site to its approximate wartime appearance. To that end, donations large and small poured in from across the nation.

Guided by the trail's graphics-rich wayside markers, a visitor can stroll here and come away with a vivid impression of the incredible events that unfurled on Fleetwood Hill. This is fertile ground for the imagination; just ask the young officers from Marine Corps Base Quantico who use it was a learning laboratory.

Twenty-one different military actions took place along the ridge. Virginia historian Clark B. Hall says it "witnessed more fighting, more often, than any other piece of ground in this country, in any war."

And talk about colorful characters. Just think of J.E.B. Stuart, Rooney Lee, John Buford or George Armstrong Custer. They were all here in the heat of battle, shaping history.

At nearby Beauregard, Union troopers hurtled past that fine home unaware that Robert E. Lee and much of his high command were inside, within pistol range. That is one of the war's more delicious what-if scenes.

The most critical part of Confederates' defensive "Dare Mark Line," Fleetwood Hill guarded the approach from the river toward Culpeper Courthouse. Control of it was pivotal to any military enterprise.

"There was no movement of troops across the borders of Culpeper that artillery did not blaze from its summits and charging squadrons, on its slopes and around its base, did not contend for supremacy," noted Culpeper native Daniel A. Grimsley, a Civil War cavalry officer who later became a county judge.

Looking forward, there is still work to be done at this storied place. Across Fleetwood Heights Road from the hilltop trail sits the Mitchell house, in the living room of which the Brandy Station Foundation was born in 1989. The trust is raising money now to buy it and 10.5 acres where activists B.B and Page Mitchell long resided.

Most importantly, local and state players are engaged in a feasibility study to determine if key parts of the Brandy Station and Cedar Mountain battlefields should become a state park.

We fervently hope so.

That huge accomplishment would outshine everything but the nitty-gritty preservation spadework done bit by bit, against the odds, over so many years.

Molly Nesbitt, Development Associate, at the Civil War Trust sent the CDCWRT an email thanking us for our contributions and referred us to the above editorial. Exactly what has the Round Table done to preserve this battlefield?

Our support goes back to the time when the Civil War Trust (CWT) was known as the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), and back further when it was known as the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS). And still back further when there was just a local preservation group known as the Brandy Station Foundation (BSF) and some rich developer wanted to put a formula one auto race track there, to attract crowds of 100,000 to see auto racing on weekends. But he was going to preserve a few acres in front of the entrance to the race track as a preservation memorial to the soldiers who fought and died there.

A group of dedicated preservationists like Bud Hall, tenaciously fought to block the developer's efforts by making the public aware of the changes that would occur to this pristine landscape that is similar to its appearance during the war. That included highways to bring huge crowds to the track**,** acres of asphalt to park their cars, dozens of fast-food restaurants to feed them, rows of motels for them to sleep in, millions of gallons of water to bathe them and flush their toilets and wash their hands, and miles of sewer lines to divert their waste to sewerage plants to remake that water potable. All this to hear the 100 decibel roar of powerful engines in a countryside where previously you could hear the soft whisper of a summer breeze blowing through a lush crop of timothy hay.

And if you listened closely with the ear of the historian, you could just hear the ghostly shouts of cavalrymen and the whinnies of

their mounts as they struggled in battle. Undoubtedly, the bones of both men and animals still lie in unmarked graves just inches beneath the soil of Fleetwood Hill.

Those preservationists first struck deals with the farmers who owned the land and then began acquiring the land after the developer pulled out. Land was to be purchased, but to maintain the land as farm fields (as they were at the time of the Civil War), the farmers who sold the land, were allowed to harvest hay off the land as part of the deal. Thus the appearance of Brandy Station would remain similar to its appearance during the War.

But they also needed funds ---- cold hard cash ---- to pay for that land, and that's where the CDCWRT came in. Below is a listing of donations made by your Round Table, financed by the sale of those humble postal cachets that we sold for $3.00 each. If you go to Brandy Station, you will see first-hand how paper (in the form of an envelope) has been turned into sacred soil (in the form of battlefield dirt). And if you bought a cachet, you have a direct connection to that dirt.

1996 - $11,000 to APCWS for Brandy Station

1998 - $13,000 to Brandy Sta. Foundation

1999 - $2600 to Brandy Sta. Foundation

2002 - $5000 to Brandy Sta. Foundation

2008 - $1000 to CWPT ($3100 in 3.1:1 match)

2008 - $1100 to CWPT ($6600 in 6.1:1 match)

2010-$1028 CWT ($119,267in116:1 match)

2013 - $1000 to CWT ($16,360 in 16.36:1)

2015 - $500 - CWT ($1030 in 2.06:1 match)

2015 – $3000 - CWT for 10 sites including Brandy Station ($30,300 in 10.1:1 match)

This totals $39,228 in actual donations and $208,257 in actual + matching funds.

The most critical donation to me was the $13,000 donation in 1998. At that point the Foundation had committed all their funds for land purchase. Unexpectedly, a portion of Fleetwood Hill came up for sale, but the deal had to be signed and a large deposit made within a matter of weeks. Bud Hall contacted us because we had made a sizeable donation two years earlier. He asked if we could help out. If memory serves me, a deposit of $20,000 was needed. The Board voted to give the Foundation all we had --$13,000. The foundation could not believe the Round Table's generosity. But we were proud to have such a stake in this land.

It was this generosity that cemented our relationship with Bud Hall, who served as our personal tour guide at Brandy Station, gratis, the next year. It also began our relationship with Ed Bearss, who has called the CDCWRT the "premier Round Table in the country," because of our commitment to preservation.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we report that Peggy Ann Dorrian, a long-time member of the Capital District Civil War Round Table died peacefully at home on October 25, 2015. A sympathy card was sent to the family by the Round Table.

DUES ARE NOW DUE, STARTING IN JANUARY.

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