



The Signal Station

Back on Top!

3rd Quarter 2024
Issue 4

Little Round Top, that is. As one of the original Signal Stations in Gettysburg reopens to the public, it's time to ruminate on how well we did without it. During the last two years, LBGs and other Tour Guides have had to look at the Gettysburg Battlefield as a whole again. Shortly after the battle, David McConaughy purchased Culps Hill and Little Round Top(LRT) for two distinct reasons. Culps Hill was a snapshot of the violence as illustrated in the trees left standing. LRT secured the stone wall breastworks put in place by the soldiers holding that hill. Much like when Heracles freed Prometheus from being chained to his hillside, Guides were finally free to tell the stories of other incredible humans, while LRT was being restored to it's former glory. They spoke of Colonel David Ireland with the 137th NY Infantry and his successful swinging door maneuver on Culps Hill. (No disrespect Colonel Chamberlain. Ireland also used this tactic on July 2nd.) From Devil's Den they could explain the sacrifice of Colonel Patrick O'Rourke and the 140th NY on the southern face of the hill.

I've spoken to several guides on if they were excited to add LRT back to their toolbelt and many offered a reluctant, shoulder shrug. LBG Rob Abbott, went so far as to say, he didn't miss it. That he and several of his compatriots had no problem working around it. It was finally time for other people on the battlefield to get their moment to shine. We so easily forget how many soldiers fought here. Each with their own story before they even arrived to this bustling town in South Central PA that July, 1863. Now that LRT is open, let's continue to use the microscope to find our new favorite stories to share. - Jaimee



Photo: Jaimee Umstaddt



Officers

Bruce Davis, President

Michele Hessler, Vice President

Veronica Brestensky, Recording Secretary

Linda Seamon, Membership Secretary

David Diner, Treasurer

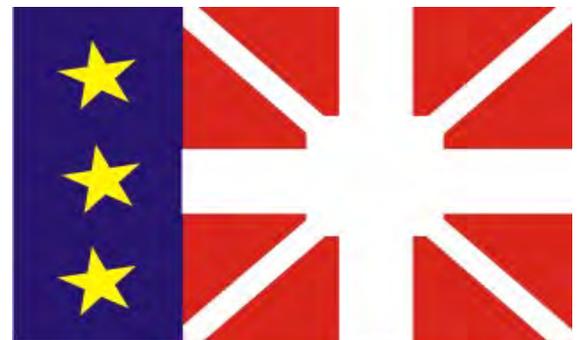
Roger Heller, Program Director

Linda Joswick, Webmaster

Lynn Heller, Facebook Administrator/Event Planner

Board Members

(2024) Abbie Hoffman, Lynn Heller; (2025) Rip Engle, Roger Heller; (2026) Ted Hirt, Jaimee Umstaddt; (2027) Randall Livingston, Beth Wheeler.



CHRONICLES OF "THE MOST IMPORTANT ROUND TABLE, IN THE MOST IMPORTANT SMALL TOWN, AT THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLEFIELD, IN THE MOST IMPORTANT COUNTRY IN THE WORLD."

Joe Mieczkowski

President's Letter

I recently participated in a military retirement ceremony at the United States Defense Health Agency Headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia. That duty done, camera in hand, I took the metro into Washington D.C. and paid respects to Union generals in bronze. I came home with fine photos of Ulysses S. Grant guarding the Capitol and William T. Sherman at the White House. (The latter was a challenge, as Sherman is mounted within the extensive fencing surrounding the Executive Mansion.) I was pleased at how George Thomas turned out, his photo enhanced by the historic church in the background. My route required a lot of walking. A trek up Massachusetts Avenue took me to Sheridan Circle where “Little Phil” is cast in mid-ride on his great horse Rienzi—the work of Gutzon Borglum, better known for Mt. Rushmore and Gettysburg’s North Carolina Monument. James B. McPherson can be found in an eponymous square a couple of blocks north of the White House. In addition to a fine statue, McPherson has his own metro stop! Ohio native James Birdseye McPherson was a Grant/Sherman protégé who commanded the Army of Tennessee (AOT) during the Atlanta Campaign. When McPherson was killed on July 22, 1864, Sherman entrusted the AOT to Oliver Otis Howard and Howard would be at Sherman’s right hand through the Confederates surrender. (Seems to me O.O. should himself merit a statue in the capital, but he does have the historic university named for him on high ground overlooking the city, which, as memorials go, isn’t too shabby.) While not specifically looking for Winfield Scott Hancock, I did stumble across him on Pennsylvania Avenue and added that photo to my collection. All these are “equestrian statues”—as in generals on horseback. Bringing us to George Gordon Meade.

At the March 1981 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Gettysburg, George Kauffman raised a concern: General Meade had gone missing in Washington D.C! Kauffman was a Licensed Battlefield Guide who spent 40 years teaching history to high school students in York and was President of our Round Table in the early 1960s. From what he had been able to learn, Meade was likely stored in a warehouse and Kaufmann took the position that if the nation’s capital didn’t want General Meade, the statue should be relocated to Gettysburg.



Photo courtesy of Bruce Davis

Inspired by George Kauffman, our Round Table embarked on a campaign to SAVE GEORGE MEADE! On March 14, 1983, the Gettysburg Times carried a happy report from Round Table President M.A.R. Clayman: The monument to “Savior of Gettysburg” George Meade had been located and restored. The feature article included a short history of the George Gordon Meade Memorial: It was erected in 1927 as “a gift by the people of Pennsylvania,” accepted by President Calvin Coolidge, and placed on Pennsylvania Avenue, near the White House. More recently however, the monument had been removed to make way for road and subway construction and consigned to a junk heap. The Civil War Round Table of Gettysburg was among groups “deluging” Congress to repair the monument and return General Meade to his rightful place. Clayman told the Times, *“It can be viewed amidst the newly constructed plaza at Third Street and Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.”* Which is where I found it.

The design is said to have been controversial even in the 1920s. Most notably the general is not on horseback. Grant, Sherman et al. are molded in dark bronze; Meade is cast in white marble. The following description is from the “DC Historic Sites” webpage: *“The Major General George Meade Statue stands 18 feet tall. The sculptor has conceived a circle of figures carved in marble and allegorically embodying qualities essential to the character of a great general. General Meade, in the uniform of a Civil War officer, stands in the focal point of the circle. Behind him is the figure of War whose broad wings surmount the sculpture. Around the circle are figures representing Energy, Military Courage, Fame, Progress, Chivalry, and Loyalty outlined against the sweep of War’s long wings. Chivalry and Loyalty to the left and right of Meade hold his cloak and standard of his achievements. The marble and granite sculpture rests on a granite base and is surrounded by a small plaza and public park.”*

Full disclosure: I would have preferred the monumentalized Meade was in his slouch hat, but as “the figure of War” seems to be crowning him, I suppose the head had to be left bare. Still, the Meade Memorial was the one stop where I asked a tourist to take my photo, and I submit it here as a memorial of sorts to George Kauffman and other heroes of the Gettysburg Round Table who have consistently resisted consigning Civil War studies to the junk heap.

— Bruce Davis



Photo courtesy of The Library of Congress



Spring Meeting Snapshots

Right: The CWRT of Gettysburg Board Photo taken April 25th, 2024.

Top row: Jaimee Umstatt, Beth Wheeler, Lynn Light-Heller, Michele Hessler, Rip Engle.

Bottom row: Randy Livingston, Roger Heller, Linda Seamon, Dave Diner, Bruce Davis.

Absent from this photo: Veronica Brestensky, Ted Hirt, Linda Joswick, Terese Orr.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller



Photo by Jaimee Umstatt

Left: Always with the latest, Lynn and the Announcements.



Above: Rip Engle begins the election in our April Meeting.



Left: April 25th, 5 Good Minutes with Ted Hirt, reflecting on his experience as a Living Historian.

Right: Also April 25th, Author & Living Historian, Steven Evangelista was our speaker on his latest book, Forever



Photo by Jaimee Umstatt



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller



Photo courtesy of Michele Hessler



Photo by Jaimee Umstatt

Left and Above: May 23rd, Lynn Light-Heller awards Wendy Allen the Cal Ducette Achievement Award for her selfless creation of '100 Nights of Taps' and her lively art honoring Lincoln.

Right: Lisa Samia performs her poetry for us the night of May 23rd.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller

Left: June 8th, Field Meeting with Fred Hawthorne on Hancock Ave, Places Every Guide Should Know.



Photo courtesy of CWRT Facebook page

Right and Further Right: Bruce with Jasan Hileman as he talks about Red Carroll's Brigade on June 27th, 2024.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller



Photo by Jaimee Umstatt

The Reintroduction to Little Round Top

Now that it is back, How do we navigate it?



Photo: Jaimee Umstatted, July 2022

On July 24th, 2022 locals and travelers alike rushed to Little Round Top for the last Sunset before the gates were to go up the next day. The hillside was lush, with sumac, strong thick vines, full green honeysuckle bushes. These people flocked to the top of the hill to get their last view for a while. The threat of rain didn't deter the die-hards. There were photographers, historians, view collectors, naturalists, wanderers... As locals milled about the old grounds we found friends up there and gathered. We all watched as the clouds closed in and then as if we willed it away, the sky cleared a bit. It didn't rain but the clouds stuck around just long enough to produce one of the most beautiful sunsets.

Little Round Top has been at the top of our hearts and minds for the past 2 years and we are being reunited with one of the most iconic parts of our National Military Park. We will have an updated NPS Map, new wayside markers and the 'social trails' have now been formed into true walking paths. The days of having your ankles chewed up by stinging nettles, just to visit Strong Vincent on the 83rd PA Monument is only a painful memory.

So the time has come and here are some best practices when it comes to visiting our old friend, Little Round Top.

South Confederate Ave is that long winding road through the woods halfway up Big Round Top and to the Dinosaur Footprint bridge. This road has been a wonderful play area for joggers, bicyclists and hikers alike. They have been able to safely traverse this road with reckless abandon for 2 years so be careful when driving this road this Summer. If we have learned anything waiting for this road to reopen, it's that change can be a challenge and patience is a virtue.

Warren, Sykes, Wright, South Confederate Avenues:
This intersection of 4 park avenues now features more parking at the base of LRT. Now you will find lined car & additional bus parking. With a few short steps you are with Joshua Chamberlain and the 20th Maine. When you drive to the top and find all 24 car spaces on the Left of the road taken, you can park in formal spaces below the hill and take one of the 6 nonslip pathways up the hill. Albeit, you may be pushing a stroller but it is not a 1,200 lb cannon like Hazlett's Battery had to do on July 2nd, 1863 over rocky terrain. Below is a list of the permanent parking lots that have been installed.

Summit: 24 car spaces (four of which are accessible).
Wright Avenue at 20th Maine monument: 3 car spaces
Warren Avenue: 5 car spaces
Gravel parking area at Wheatfield and Sedgewick: 19 car spaces
Overflow Parking on South Confederate Avenue & Sedgewick Avenue – right side of road, all 4 tires on pavement.

For our Bicyclists, there is a Bike Rack at the North End of Sykes Ave on the Summit. There are no bike paths up there but you are welcome to use Sykes Ave to ride up if you stay within the speed limit of 25 mph or you can walk your bike up Chamberlain Ave.

Are you coming up with a Bus Tour or the Family RV?
No problem. There is space for you.

Summit: 4 spots for oversized vehicles/buses on right side at top.
North Slope of Sykes Ave: 3 oversized spaces on right side of road.
Warren Avenue: 1 oversized space
Overflow Parking on South Confederate Avenue & Sedgewick Avenue – right side of road, all 4 tires on pavement.



Photo: Jaimee Umstatted, June 2024

When History is lost.



Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

empty field with the hope one day it could be more. This land sat vacant for many years leaving room for local historians to dream of a day Camp Letterman could be saved. Early Spring of 2024, the bulldozers pulled in and began to mercilessly shear off the layers of Earth, to create canals for water to drain off. Today just as in 1863, stagnant water is not beneficial to anyone but the mosquitos and bacteria. Metropolitan Companies of Wyomissing has plans for this place. Their website declares, "A 30-acre parcel located on the east side of Gettysburg. It will consist of a mixed use site with both retail shops and luxury residential apartments." The only two reminders of the struggles and importance of the plot are two interpretive panels in the Giant grocery store parking lot and the monument placed by the War Department in 1914 telling of the story of the death and lives saved here. Will we remember their sacrifice when we see the Aldi grocery store and the apartment complex and clubhouse? When an ambulance siren wails, will they think of Jonathan Letterman?



RESERVE AT ROCK CREEK
1115 YORK ROAD GETTYSBURG, PA

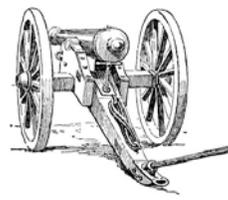
<https://mmgaps.com/property/reserve-at-rock-creek/>



Photo: Jaimee Umstaddt

"The conduct of the medical officers was admirable. Their labors not only began with the beginning of the battle, but lasted long after the battle had ended. When other officers had time to rest, they were busily at work and not merely at work, but working earnestly and devotedly." Jonathan Letterman Official Records Volume 27.

Events and Programs!



Our humble town boasts opportunities to listen and learn year round, so celebrate Gettysburg and join us at these Upcoming Events with our Community partners.

June 28th – July 5th, Battle of Gettysburg 161st Anniversary on the Ridge. A full week of activities at Seminary Ridge Museum & Education Center. Begin your experience walking into Mary Thompson's house as General Lee did 161 years ago. July 1-4th features hours of Free presentations with Author book signings. Capping the week with An Evening with Dr. Allen C. Guelzo (registration required for this one.) See the website for all details.

<https://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org/events/>

July 1st-3rd, Sacred Trust Talks & Book Signings Through a signature series of thought-provoking talks, Sacred Trust brings the lessons, teachings and inspiring stories of Gettysburg to today's audiences in commemoration of the anniversary of the 1863 battle.

<https://www.gettysburgfoundation.org/exhibits-tours-events/sacred-trust>

July 2nd-4th, Adams County Historical Society offers *Company K: The Boys that fought at home* by Phil Spaugy on Tuesday, a tour of *The Women of Cemetery Hill* on Wednesday. All events require prior registration. <https://www.achs-pa.org/news-events/>

July 4th at 10:00 a.m. Flutes on the Fourth Flute players of all ages and skills gather in front of the Gettysburg Hotel on July 4th to perform patriotic and Civil War music.

<https://www.ermusicrepair.com/flutes-on-the-4th>

July 1st-31st, One Hundred Nights of Taps Continuing until Labor Day. 5:30 p.m. LBG free interpretive program; Taps sounded at 7 p.m. each night.

July 6th, 10:00 a.m.—5 p.m. ACHS New & Used Book Sale at Beyond the Battle Museum.

July 6th-7th, 161st Anniversary of The Battle of Gettysburg Reenactment at the Daniel Lady Farm. The official 161st Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg reenactment. Educational Speakers, military Demonstrations, a Living History Village, Sutlers, children's activities, Tours of the House and Barn Hospitals and lots more. End each day with a spectacular battle reenactment. <https://danielladyfarm.com/events>

July 21st, Civil War Sisters Tour at The Elizabeth Ann Seton Emmitsburg, MD. On this specialty tour, discover all that the Sisters and Daughters of Charity experienced during the American Civil War as they tirelessly endeavored to provide hope and healing to a nation torn apart by conflict. <https://setonshrine.org/civil-war-tour/>

July 20th, 160th Anniversary of the Burning of Chambersburg This exhibit will be open to the public beginning Saturday July 20, at 10:00 AM "Heroes & Angels: 160th Anniversary of the Burning of Chambersburg," curated by museum director Ann Hull

<https://www.franklinhistorical.org/>

July 26th-28th, Elmira Civil War Symposium Presentations will cover a range of topics related to Elmira's Civil War history. Scheduled activities will take place on the historic Elmira College campus. Keynote Speaker, Wayne Motts.

<https://www.elmiraprisoncamp.com/2024-symposium>

September 21st, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., HGAC Historic Barn Tour of Gettysburg/ Adams County

<https://www.hgaconline.org/hgac-barn-tour-2023>

Upcoming Speakers

July 25
(Rain date July 29)
Larry Korczyk
The Wheatfield — Part 2

August 22
(Rain date August 26)
Ralph Seigel
11th Corps Program TBA

September 26
Derek Maxfield
General William T. Sherman's
Civil War

October 24
Carolyn Ivanoff
"We Fought at Gettysburg" The
17th Connecticut

November 21
John Heiser
The George Rose Farm of Gettysburg

December 5
Holiday Banquet
Charles Fennell
Culp's Hill "Rediscovered"

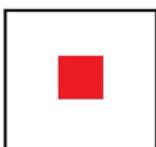
Stay Tuned for 2025

*"What death more
glorious can any man
desire than to die on the
soil of old
Pennsylvania fighting for
that flag!"*

-Colonel Strong Vincent

Our meetings are the Fourth Thursday of each month.

We meet at ACHS Battlefield Overlook Events Center, 625 Biglerville Road, Gettysburg, PA. The doors open at 6:30 pm. Meeting starts at 7:00 pm.



◆◆◆

The Civil War Roundtable of Gettysburg, PA **2024 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

The Civil War Roundtable of Gettysburg, PA welcomes new and returning members to join us for our monthly meetings and activities. Individual membership dues are \$30 a year. A family membership is \$45 a year per family living at the same address. Your membership runs from **January 1 to December 31 of the calendar year.**

New members can join anytime during the year and dues are prorated as follows:

<u>Join</u>	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Family</u>
January – December	\$ 30.00.....	\$ 45.00

Please fill in the information requested below and return it with your dues payable to **Gettysburg Civil War Roundtable • PO Box 4236 • Gettysburg, PA 17325.** You may pay your dues with PayPal using the link at <https://cwrgettysburg.org/membership.htm>. For further Gettysburg Roundtable information, please visit our website at cwrgettysburg.org.

NEW MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL \$ _____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (LAND LINE CELL) _____ E-MAIL _____

If you would like notifications to be sent to more than one email, please list the emails below:

Thank you, and welcome to the Civil War Roundtable of Gettysburg, PA

