

# The Signal Station

3rd Quarter 2023  
Volume 1, Issue 1

## The Newsletter is Back!

It has been almost 3 years since the last Gettysburg CWRT Newsletter. It is back on a quarterly basis. This periodical will include current and past events, interviews and show & tells. It will be a malleable and a growing organic device to stay informed in the Roundtable's happenings. It will be a flag on the horizon to keep the lines of communication open.

## A lot happens in 3 years.

Clearly too much to include in this short paper. This year alone we have moved to a new meeting location, experienced an election and celebrated the summer months once again with tours on the battlefield. On April 27th, 2023 we held our First Meeting of the CWRT of Gettysburg at the Adams County Historical Society's new museum and conference center. The awesome view of Barlow's Knoll was behind us as President, Bruce Davis, extolled the virtues of the new establishment and its past connections to the Roundtable. We held our election that evening and continued on with our speaker. Donning a flashy red sash befitting his subject, Jim Hessler's presentation was "Custer's Luck — Gettysburg to Little Bighorn: The Rise, Fall, and Misconceptions of George Armstrong Custer". The evening was a delight and we look forward to many more mid 18th century discussions in this modern space.

Now on with the news. - Jaimee



## 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

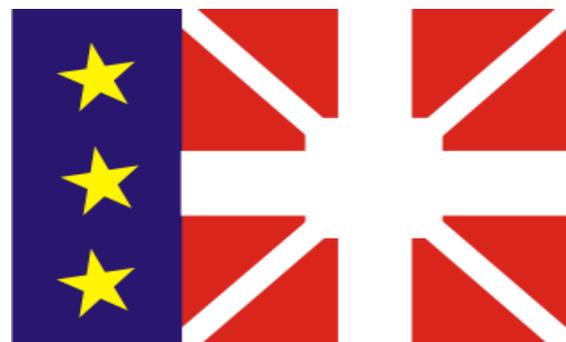
Lynn Heller, Facebook Administrator

## Board Members

---

(2024) Abbie Hoffman, Lynn Heller; (2025) Rip Engle, Roger Heller; (2026) Ted Hirt, Jaimee Umstattt

Board Member Ex Officio: Therese Orr



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

## Civil War Congress Meets at Gettysburg



Photo courtesy of Jaimee Umstadd

This memorable event occurred in Gettysburg and lasted just about 3 days but its ramifications will be around for a long time. Is it a battle? NO, it's the 2023 CWRT Congress Sustainability Conference which met August 25-27th. The Board deemed it fit to send Michele Hessler, Veronica Brestensky and Jaimee Umstadd as ambassadors for the CWRT of Gettysburg, however other members of our fine group were in attendance.

[Michele Hessler Welcomes the Civil War Roundtable Congress](#)

As the Host Roundtable for the CWRT Congress, Michele genuinely welcomed our new friends to our town (recognized as the "most welcoming city in the United States" by Booking.com).

The conference began with a welcoming reception by Pete Miele & team at the Seminary Ridge Museum with animated speaker Chris Mackowski. Saturday we enjoyed the conference room at the new Adams County Historical Society building where our own Michele Hessler provided an introduction to our Roundtable. There were four Panels; Emerging from a Pandemic, Community Partnerships, The Sustainability Challenge, and Target Marketing to Younger Members. Many notes were taken during the panel sessions. Sunday included a tour of Spangler Farm with Dr. Carol Reardon and Wayne Motts. It was perfect weather for a day in the field.

---

*“Seminary Ridge, the Peach-Orchard, Cemetery, Culp, and Wolf Hill, Round Top, Little Round Top, humble names, henceforward dear and famous,—no lapse of time, no distance of space, shall cause you to be forgotten.” Hon. Edward Everett*

---

## President's Letter

When first elected president of the Civil War Round Table of Gettysburg, the organization was blessed with one of the finest newsletters I'd ever seen produced: "The Angle." I made it a point to personally visit with editor Dave Joswick, himself a professional journalist, and his wife, Linda, who managed the Round Table webpage. Leadership transitions can be tricky and I wanted to be sure the Joswicks were onboard. They invited Nancy and me to their home and could not have been more hospitable and supportive. I would come to count both Dave and Linda Joswick as friends. When Dave passed in October 2020, America was in covid lockdown. He was, in my estimation, simply irreplaceable and I didn't even try. Instead, we pivoted to this secure group e-mail program which seems to have been well received and will continue to deliver the last updates straight to your inbox. While trying to reproduce "The Angle" seemed impracticable, there are other models. Many of you know Jaimee Umstadd from "Children of Gettysburg, 1863." She was elected to the Round Table Board in April and has been a terrific addition to the leadership team. Reviving the newsletter in a new format had been on my mind for some time; Jaimee was the first person I approached and she pretty much jumped at the opportunity. No surprise there: Jaimee is a high degree go-getter. Anyway, I'm writing this for the first edition. I'll be as interested as anyone in how it turns out. As in anything new, I suppose there will be some initial bumps, but I know this: Jaimee will produce a quality product and the group will give her our full support and encouragement. We are deeply indebted to this outstanding young woman for her volunteer service. - Bruce Davis

# Summer Tours



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller



Photo courtesy of Jaimee Umstadd

*June 29, 2023: After a rain delay & through Canadian wildfire smoke, Peter Miele and Cody Eash led Scales Brigade.*



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller

*May 6, 2023: Kendra Debany led a tour at the site of McAllister's Mill*



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller



Photo courtesy of Jaimee Umstadd



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller

*July 31, 2023: Larry Korczyk gave us Part 1 of his The Wheatfield tour. This tour was delayed for High Temps instead of rain from the original date.*



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller

*August 31, 2023: Dr. Carol Reardon took us on a very special tour of Spangler Farm.*

## Reintroducing the Cal Doucette Award



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller

Cal Doucette was a long time member of our Gettysburg Civil War Roundtable, and active in the Gettysburg community. He held a position on our Board of Directors, and it was he who advocated for recognition of people who do something special for battlefields in general, and Gettysburg in particular. It was Cal who suggested our roundtable create an award to recognize those outstanding individuals who engage in activities which enhance the visitor's experience to the Gettysburg National Military Park, for the community, and those that contribute to the learning about Gettysburg and the Civil War. After his sudden death in 2012, the CWRT Board of Directors decided to create an award in his honor, and to memorialize his spirit. Cal took an active role in many aspects of Gettysburg and the Civil War community. He was employed by the Gettysburg Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and assisted visitors at the historic train station. He volunteered his services for a number of organizations, including the GNMP's Visitor's Center, where assisted visitors in the galleries and at the information desk. One could not encounter him without noticing the twinkle in his eye, or the smile on his face. He was a docent at The David Wills House and the Rupp House. Once a week he gave a

living history presentation at the Battlefield Bed and Breakfast, and on Sunday afternoons he would visit Reid's Winery to talk about the Civil War with visitors. In addition to volunteering, he was a member of numerous Civil War organizations at which he frequently spoke. Cal will always be remembered for his interest in living history as he portrayed Robert Harper - editor of a local Republican newspaper at the time of the Civil War - and also his portrayal of Horace Greeley. One of Cal's most endearing presentations was his reading of "The Night Before Christmas", dressed as Thomas Nast's Civil War Santa to a group of delighted children gathered round. It is probably true that one of his favorite pastimes was working with children. For many years he and his wife Sue travelled to schools throughout Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey to teach youngsters what life was like as a child in the 19th century. They explained games that were played, and gave children the opportunity to try on period clothing. Sue and Cal never accepted pay for their services, believing that the most important thing was sharing their love of history, and teaching the next generation. It is in the spirit of continuing Cal's work, in recognizing his achievements, and honoring his memory that this award was created. - Lynn Heller

The most recent recipient of the Cal Doucette Award has been chosen by the committee. Five individuals have been selected for the award since its inception. This year's recipient will be the sixth and will be announced at an upcoming meeting.

Past Award Winners are listed below.

1. 2014: Joan Pore... volunteered at GNMP and elsewhere in Gettysburg for 20 years
2. 2015: Bobby & Matt Housch... created the long standing & popular "Gettysburg Daily" web site
3. 2016: Ed Hamilton... Volunteers extensively in battlefield trash pick up
4. 2017: Barbara Finrock... Important contributions of time and energy to The Gettysburg Foundation.
5. 2019: Ron Rock... Involved as a volunteer in many GNMP activities, as well as at the Christ Lutheran Church.
6. 2023: ???

## Preservation Fund

Regarding the Preservation Fund, two local nonprofits came to the front. The Gettysburg Black History Museum is located in Valentine Hall on Seminary Ridge. Staffed by volunteers and charging no admission, the museum's vision is to "educate visitors of the trials, struggles, and contributions of Black families in American history" by preserving and exhibiting artifacts and oral histories. The museum periodically rotates its exhibits to highlight different aspects of life experiences and contributions made by the African American community here in Gettysburg. Gettysburg's Lincoln Cemetery is situated in the Borough of Gettysburg between South Washington Street and Long Lane, just north of the hospital grounds. When it was established, existing laws, customs, and practices required the segregation of Blacks even in death. Since its establishment in 1867, approximately 400 people have been interred there, including 30 United States Colored Troops (known as USCT) who served during the Civil War and veterans of subsequent wars. Due to a lack of funding, the cemetery fell into disrepair over the years, but a newly organized Board is making great strides in improving the condition of the cemetery grounds as well as the headstones and rostrum located within its gates.

- Veronica Brestensky

Jean Green was notified Lincoln Cemetery will be receiving a gift donation and she offered a tour to the board.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Light-Heller

*"And tell them all about the books you've read. Better still, buy some more books and read them. That's an order. You can never read too many books."*

— P.B. Kerr

## Now presenting... The Bachelder-Coddington Distinguished Book Award of the Civil War Round Table of Gettysburg.

The CWRTG was invited to keep the tradition of the Bachelder-Coddington Book Award alive from the sadly disbanded Robert E. Lee CWRT. Beginning with this year's award winner, the name of our annual book award will be: The Bachelder-Coddington Distinguished Book Award of the Civil War Round Table of Gettysburg. Chairwoman of the Book Committee, Therese Orr informed us that this year's award winner has been chosen. The announcement of the winning book will be made at the September meeting. The Author will be presented their award at the November meeting.

### The books considered this year were:

*All Roads Led to Gettysburg - Troy Harman*

*Gettysburg Faces - Ronald Coddington*

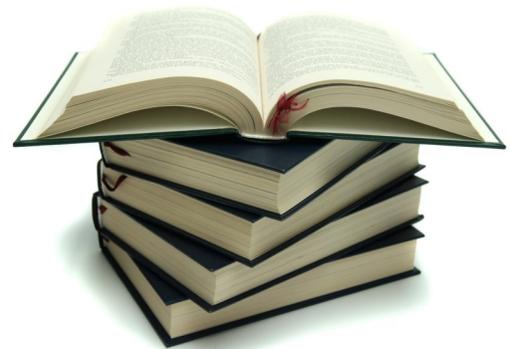
*Gettysburg's Lost Love Story - Jeffrey Harding*

*If We Are Striking for Pennsylvania, Volume 1 - Scott Mingus and Eric Wittenberg*

*Lee Invades the North - Bradley Gottfried*

*The Battle of Gettysburg 1863 Part 1 - Timothy Orr*

*The Lion of Round Top - H. G. Myers*



## Welcoming the Fall Months

Our humble town boasts opportunities to listen and learn year round, so celebrate Gettysburg and join us at these Upcoming Events with our Monthly Roundtable Meeting and Holiday Banquet. You will also find our members at our local partner events.

**October 9th 8 a.m.—5 p.m.** Adams County Day: Adams County, Pa. residents are invited to the Museum & Visitor Center to enjoy free admission to the Film Cyclorama & Museum Experience and discover Adams County highlights and treasures on Columbus Day. Co-sponsored by Gettysburg National Military Park and the Gettysburg Foundation

**October 13th—October 15th** Gettysburg Movie Celebration: Join Director Ron Maxwell and members of the Cast in Gettysburg, for a weekend long festival as the acclaimed film Gettysburg celebrates 30 years! Main Street Gettysburg, the American Battlefield Trust, Destination Gettysburg, the Adams County Historical Society, Seminary Ridge Museum & Education Center, the Gettysburg Foundation, and Gettysburg National Military Park to create a weekend long celebration of the film.

**November 3rd-4th 5 p.m.—5 p.m.** 24 Hours on the Ridge: Gettysburg's Only Nychthemeron Museum Experience. Special Guest Speakers, Outdoor Luminaria, Living Historians, Film Screenings, Cupola Tours, and more at the Seminary Ridge Museum.

**November 18th 5 p.m.—9 p.m.** Remembrance Day Illumination: Join us to commemorate the Gettysburg National Cemetery dedication in Nov. 1863. This solemn event features a luminary candle on all of the 3,512 Civil War soldiers' graves. Names of the fallen soldiers are read throughout the evening. Free and open to the public by the Gettysburg Foundation.

**November 18th 7 p.m.—8 p.m.** 25 Hours: Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Visit to Gettysburg: Abraham Lincoln spent just 25 hours of his life in Gettysburg, but during that time, he put the finishing touches on, and delivered the most famous speech in American history. Join ACHS and historian Tim Smith as we explore the president's visit to our town, highlighting the memories and reminiscences of the local civilian population who witnessed first-hand the events of November 18 and 19, 1863

### *Reynolds Woods Witness Tree Pen Set for Sale*

In 1987, the CWRT of Gettysburg bought a slab of the Witness Tree that fell in the Reynolds Woods. They used it to create wood bases for a pen set. Recently these wood bases were rediscovered and the CWRT has made the pen sets available again for purchase.

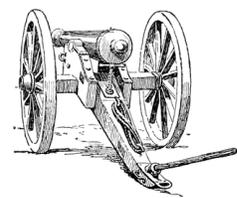
Don't forget to purchase your Reynold's Tree Pen Set! You'd better hurry up. There are only a handful left. They are for sale at Mr. G's gift shop and the Seminary Ridge Museum store.

Get them before they are history...



**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.



### Upcoming Speakers

September 28  
Bradley Gottfried  
Comparing Antietam and  
Gettysburg

October 26  
Dennis Doyle  
Illinois Regiments at Gettys-  
burg

November 16  
Janet McCabe  
The Story of Rufus Weaver

Wednesday, December 6  
Holiday Banquet at The  
Dobbin House  
Jill Titus  
Gettysburg in 1963

### 2024

January 25  
Codie Eash  
The Summer of 1869:  
Gettysburg's First Blue-Gray  
Reunion

February 22  
Bruce Davis  
Defending General O. O.  
Howard

March 28  
Allen Thompson  
In the Shadow of the Round  
Tops

