



The Signal Station

Elections are April 24th

Positions Open

President Vice President Two - 2 Year Board Members

Your Membership must be active and you must be present at the April meeting to be given a ballot. To renew or become a member before Election Day (4/24/25), there are several ways:

1. Complete the application on the last page of this newsletter. Give it to Linda Seamon at our April meeting with payment.
2. Complete the same application and mail payment to:
PO Box 4236, Gettysburg, PA 17325
3. Online at <https://cwrgettyburg.org/membership>

Now that you have your wallet in hand, please consider this...

RESTORE OUR STORY at THE KLINGEL FARMSTEAD

On the hallowed ground of Gettysburg Battlefield/Pickett's charge, stands A WITNESS to the greatest CONFLICT on American Soil, thousands of souls' battle for SURVIVAL, and the RESILIENCE of the American People, represented in one family's struggle. With your support, the Gettysburg Foundation can ensure that the Klingel Story – OUR STORY – is never lost.

[Donate to the National Park Service](https://give.gettyburgfoundation.org/community4klengel)

Scan to visit us online and make your donation today to help preserve the Klingel Farmstead.

<https://give.gettyburgfoundation.org/community4klengel>



Thank you for your continued support!



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2nd Quarter 2025
Issue 7

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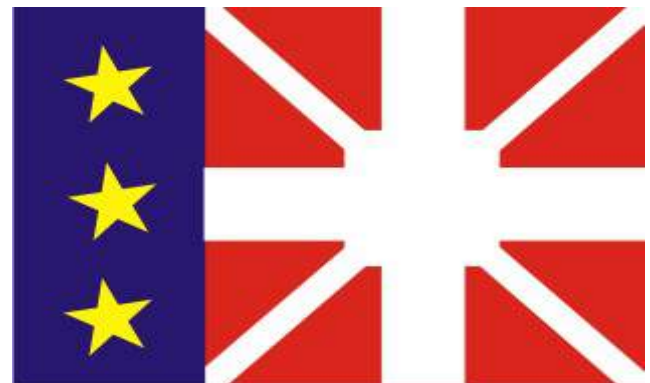
Board Members

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

Board Member Ex Officio: Therese Orr

Elections Nominating Committee

Gary 'Rip' Engle (Chair), Linda Seamon, Ted Hirt



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 received an email today from one of our members wanting to be on the May meeting agenda. It seemed strange to respond that I would no longer be presiding. The Round Table elects officers in April and I will have reached the end of even the most liberal reading of presidential term limits set out in the bylaws. While it's certainly time, if not past time, to pass the proverbial baton, I'll kind of miss it.

When I was first elected in April of 2019, Presidency of the Round Table looked to be mostly ceremonial. The work was being done by a highly engaged Board of Directors. I mostly needed to unlock the doors of the Grand Army of the Republic Hall on Middle Street, do a little emceeing and then lock up when we were done. But then along came Covid-19.

In my former life, one of my strengths was organizational problem solving. With the advent of Covid, there were organizational problems that needed solving—and quickly. We pivoted to Zoom and if the product was occasionally comical, it kept the Round Table turning. Then, just when we were thinking it might be safe to go back to the GAR, came a new wave of infection. Social distancing was the order of the day and gatherings at the historic hall had been shoulder-to-shoulder. As much as we treasured what had been our meeting place since 1957, the health risk was unacceptable. But Zoom had gotten old and the thought of retreating to that platform was entirely depressing.

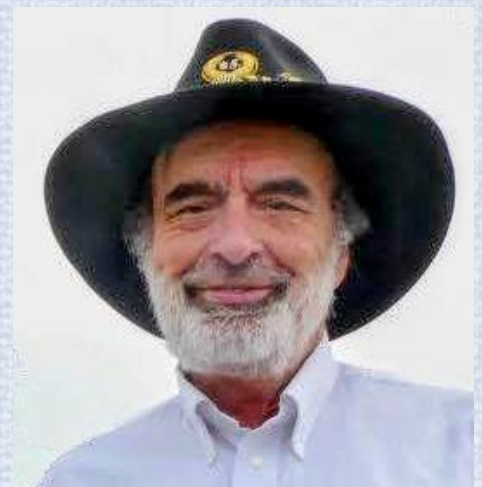
Happily, Gettysburg United Methodist opened their doors to us. The sanctuary checked all the boxes: room to spread out, ample parking, livestream capability. The latter was particularly important. While other Round Tables were going out of business during Covid, we actually added members, most of the growth coming from people scattered across the nation who had found us online.

There was never any intention of making the church our permanent home. The new Adams County Historical Society building was in the works and we very much hoped to be able to move out there when the place opened. The hope was realized two years ago and the Battlefield Overlook Events Center has exceeded even our highest expectations.

I am very excited about the top-shelf candidates who will be voted on in April. Per the by-laws, I'll remain on the Board for the next two years as "Past President." It has been an honor to give leadership to

"The Most Important Round Table,
in the Most Important Small Town,
at the Most Important Battlefield,
in the Most Important Country
in the World."

—Bruce Davis



5 MORE MINUTES... might be all we have left. Preservation 9-1-1



In February, Britt Isenberg, Interim VP of Philanthropy for The Gettysburg Foundation, was welcomed to the stage for an Update and Appeal to rescue the Klingel Farm House on the Emmitsburg Road from peril. The home nicknamed, *'The Lighthouse of the Battlefield'* for its central location to the fighting on July 2nd, 1863, is crumbling. All is not lost, however, there are plans to retain the historic scenic view. It becomes even more difficult for the eager Gettysburg pilgrim to envision the action when important landmarks are missing.

The monthly meeting also held another surprise. We were in the presence of a family that lived in the Klingel Family Homestead. I had to speak with them about their experiences after the Jim Hessler's action packed descriptions of Andrew Humphreys. They told me about sitting on the front porch and seeing the Secret Service drive by with Ike & Mamie. They would see the President's hand waving from inside their car. Their faces glowed with delight as they recalled bicycling around the battlefield avenues that surrounded their home. The Klingel house was shared through multiple generations in their family.

The National Park Service's Plan (as presented by Mr. Isenberg)

The Need: To save as much of the original Klingel House as possible to reconstruct the house and preserve the historical integrity of the site which lies within the boundaries of Gettysburg National Military Park. The log house dates to 1828 and contains logs between 8-18 inches thick. In 1874 the owners added a popular treatment at the time to protect the logs, board and batten. After multiple rehabilitation attempts by the National Park Service that began in 2010, the Klingel Farmstead is in dire need of reconstruction to save the stories preserved in its walls and the iconic view-scape along the Emmitsburg Road corridor that witnessed some of the worst fighting of the battle on both July 2 and July 3. The site is vital not only to the interpretation of the Battle of Gettysburg, but it also shines a light on the civilian experience at Gettysburg and across the country during the American Civil War. It is both a local and national landmark.

The Vision: The National Park Service plan is to reconstruct the Klingel House. Reconstruction being: shoring up the roof and the interior walls and dismantling one side of the house at a time, maintaining, preserving as much of the logs as possible during that process while still using traditional construction methods to mimic the historic integrity of the house. Because of the time sensitive nature of the home's fragile state, a determination in design will be made to reconstruct with either a faux log siding to mimic what's there or return it back to the board and batten that once existed.

Please consider donating to preserve
The Klingel Family Homestead.

<https://give.gettysburgfoundation.org/saveklingel>

#SaveKlingel



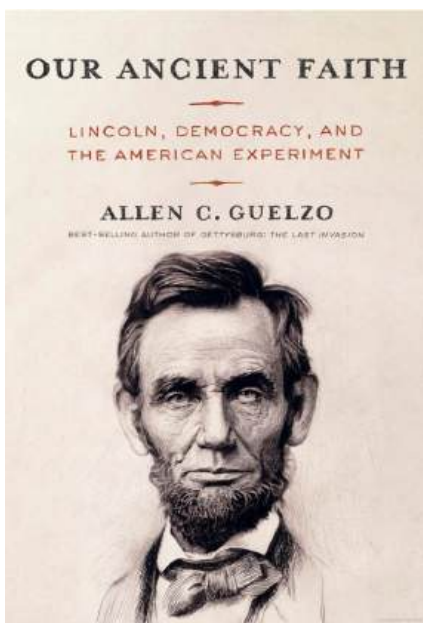
Front Row: Jeanne Barnes, Joyce Coulter, Cori Waybright
Back Row: Lynn Chronister, Burt Coulter, Jesse Coulter

Photos by Jaimee Umstattt

Member Review:

His Wisdom Persists Into Our Modern Age: Reviewing Two Books on Abraham Lincoln

by Ted Hirt



The character, career and enduring legacy of our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, continue to fascinate and inspire both scholars and the American public. Despite the publication of many thousands of books about Lincoln, one can ask if we ever will grasp his essence; he endured enormous challenges and turmoil throughout his personal life and his political and presidential careers. Perhaps the keynote point is that Lincoln articulated and applied original, novel principles in restoring the Union and in working to abolish slavery. Two well-renowned Lincoln scholars enlighten us on these issues.

In *Our Ancient Faith – Lincoln, Democracy, and the American Experiment*, Allen C. Guelzo, the author of 15 books on Lincoln, and the Thomas W. Smith Distinguished Research Scholar in the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University, has provided a rich, accessible work on Lincoln's views about our American Democracy. This is a collection of ten superbly written essays on how Lincoln steered our nation through the Civil War by applying his democratic principles and keen political judgment. Some of these essays had appeared in other formats, including magazines and lectures.¹

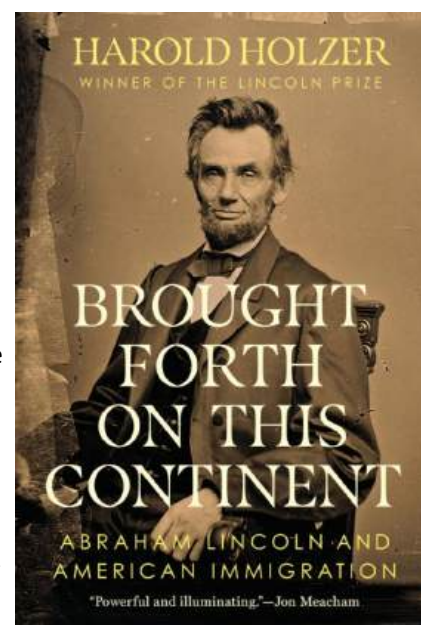
Throughout this book, Guelzo's emphasizes that the linchpin of Lincoln's philosophy was the question of how to sustain American democracy. As Lincoln remarked, nothing could be "as clearly true as the truth of democracy."² Lincoln's humble background and ability to advance in society provided him with this optimistic view of democracy. He remarked that "the principle of 'Liberty to

all' was the principle that clears the path for all—gives hope to all—and, by consequence, enterprise, and industry to all."³ Guelzo observes that Lincoln's faith in democracy was rooted in natural law principles. Our modern jurisprudence, Guelzo writes, "has relegated much of natural law to the historical attic;" but it was very much alive during Lincoln's time.⁴ In Guelzo's eyes, natural law had been "fostered mutually by the Enlightenment, Christian scholasticism, and classical philosophy." Insofar as our physical universe functions by natural physical laws, our moral world should also "reveal similar evidence of law-likeness."⁵ Lincoln applied such natural law principles to the essential message of our founding document, the Declaration of Independence;⁶ it taught him that men are endowed with "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."⁷ Lincoln proclaimed that the love of liberty was an instinct "which God has planted in our bosoms," and was the "heritage of all men, in all lands, every where."⁸ This heritage linked everyone, from the Founders to recent immigrants. Lincoln invoked this bond across the generations in his First Inaugural Address of March 4, 1861, when he appealed to the "mystic chords of memory" as a compelling reason to maintain the Union.⁹ As Guelzo elaborates, "a reasoned perception of natural law, and respect for the moral goods natural law identified, bound them to America as much as any descent of the Revolution."¹⁰

Slavery, therefore, was morally wrong.¹¹ In December 1861, Lincoln hoped that democracy would provide a "vast future" for the generations to come.¹² Even earlier, in 1854, Lincoln observed that, according to "our ancient faith," government derived its "just powers" from the consent of the governed, and that "no man is good enough to govern another man, without that other's consent."¹³ Slavery was inconsistent with that maxim.

Lincoln understood that democracy is characterized by sovereignty of the people; but he also recognized that governance depended on "reverence for the laws," which restrained the government from becoming tyrannical, or the people from becoming a mob.¹⁴ Guelzo notes that this conclusion was consistent with the views of a contemporary philosopher, Francis Wayland, who warned that Americans should not surrender to "the dictates of passion and venality, rather than of reason and of right."¹⁵

Lincoln urged that all Americans should swear not to violate the laws of the country, or tolerate violations of the law by others—that oath would serve as the "political religion of the nation."¹⁶ He expounded that view to a newly-arrived European envoy in November 1861, stating that the United States "maintains, and means to maintain, the rights of human nature and the capacity of man for self-government."¹⁷ But Lincoln tempered his support for democracy and majority rule by hearkening back to natural law principles, and rejected then-Senator Stephen Douglas's invocation of "popular sovereignty" that would expand slavery to the western territories.¹⁸



Guelzo also describes Lincoln's philosophy on economic issues, observing that Lincoln saw "economic self-transformation as the great gift of democracy."¹⁹ He was a proponent of what were then called "internal improvements," ranging from the development of canals and railroads to the creation of state banking systems. Lincoln and his allies fought Southern agrarian interests, who opposed such projects— interests that became increasingly tied to, and dependent upon, a slave-based economy.²⁰ Lincoln also grasped principles of economics (then termed "political economy"), and may have been influenced by John Stuart Mills's 1848 edition of *Principles of Political Economy*.²¹ Lincoln believed in the advancement of labor:

"Advancement-improvement in condition-is the order of things in a society of equals."²² Guelzo acknowledges that Lincoln's image of a free-labor economy became outdated after the post-Civil War surge of large-scale industrialization; but he also observes that our nation remains notable for its over 30 million small businesses.²³

Guelzo also addresses Lincoln's complex views on race, and more specifically, the status and future prospects of Black Americans, many of whom had endured the cruelty of antebellum slavery in the South. Lincoln's reputation faces contemporary attacks that belittle his accomplishments, while his admirers respond that the harsh criticism is "presentism— measuring people and situations from the past by the standards and sensibilities of the present."²⁴ Here, Guelzo seems to vacillate, calling Lincoln an "unhappy example of how opposition to slavery did not necessarily guarantee any sort of enlightenment on race,"²⁵ and stating that Lincoln "zigzagged" on these issues and "confined his opposition to slavery to the most minimal grade of opposition."²⁶ Yet Guelzo remarks that Lincoln has been "unnecessarily" targeted for his "backwardness on race;" he adhered to a natural law theory of natural rights, and embarked on an explicit policy of emancipation, unlike any president before him.²⁷

Harold Holzer, the Director of the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter University, and the author, coauthor, or editor of over fifty books, also has made a new contribution to Lincoln scholarship. *Brought Forth On This Continent*, a work of more than 340 pages, focuses on President Lincoln's evolving views on the role of immigration in antebellum American society and during the Civil War. I surmise that Holzer wrote this work with our 21st-century controversy in mind; he explains that there are "striking parallels between the immigration debates of Lincoln and those of our own."²⁸ The introduction provocatively quotes President Lincoln's December 1864 annual message to Congress which encouraged immigration into the United States.²⁹ Holzer acknowledges that Lincoln's statement was motivated by our nation's evident deficiency in labor caused by the diversion of able-bodied men to the Union's military forces.³⁰

Before the Civil War, America experienced a new wave of immigration, predominantly Irish-Catholic, driven in part by a potato famine.³¹ By the 1850 census, natives of Ireland constituted 43% of all foreign-born American residents.³² The nation's ethnic mix was increased by a similar migration of Germans.³³ Regrettably, Irish immigration sometimes encountered violent resistance, such as the 1844 anti-Catholic riots in Philadelphia.³⁴

How did Lincoln react to this surge in our population? Holzer notes that Lincoln acted cautiously. He expressed concerns about ballot integrity in Illinois, occasionally asserting that Irish Democrats might be voting illegally against his Whig party.³⁵ Yet, Lincoln also indicated his support for an extension or enlargement of the right of suffrage.³⁶

In a private letter to a close friend in 1855, Lincoln expressed his firm opposition to the nativist American Party (the so-called "Know Nothing" Party). The Declaration of Independence, he explained, simply stated that all men are created equal; it did not contemplate an exclusion of Negroes, or foreigners or Roman Catholics. As he remarked, "I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty— to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure and without the base alloy" of hypocrisy.³⁷

Holzer observes, however, that Lincoln's private sentiments did not necessarily reflect the views that he was constrained to utter in the public arena.³⁸ Lincoln had to strike a balance between his longer-term vision of a new political party united against the Democrats, and his recognition that a base of that support included a nativist faction.³⁹ In a 1859 lecture, Lincoln excluded several groups from his vision of an ideal American future, i.e., Native Americans, Mexicans, and Asians, thus reflecting the prevailing Eurocentric view of our culture.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, emphasizing that our country is "extensive and new" and that Europe's countries were densely populated, Lincoln welcomed those abroad who wanted to make America "the land of their adoption."⁴¹

In his early political career, Lincoln became friends with prominent German Americans; and the new Republican Party garnered substantial support from German immigrants, who had arrived in the United States in increasing numbers after the failure of the 1848 democratic revolutions in Europe.⁴² During the 1860 presidential campaign, political propaganda for Lincoln reached the German-American population.⁴³ This was an influential voting bloc for Lincoln, but some of their leaders had definite political aspirations of their own.⁴⁴ They expected to be rewarded in the new administration.⁴⁵

The problem of rewarding German-American supporters became more acute when Lincoln needed to fill the officer ranks of the Union army. America did not, at the time, have a large regular army; each state provided volunteer regiments. The surge of 1861 Unionist patriotism—enthusiasm to put down the Confederate rebellion—resulted in a clamor of prominent German-Americans to lead troops.⁴⁶ Holzer devotes much detail to the headaches this caused for Lincoln, notably the persistent lobbying of men like journalist Carl Schurz, to assume leadership positions.⁴⁷ In fairness to Schurz, however, he had been a prominent figure in the failed 1848 uprising against the Prussian monarchy.⁴⁸ The War generated commentary and ridicule, usually not justified, over the performance of some German military leaders and arguably some of their rank-and-file enlisted men too, including the song “I Fights Mit Sigel” — referring to Franz Sigel, a less-than-brilliant Union general.⁴⁹ Further complicating the situation was what many saw as a poor, even cowardly, performance of German troops at the May 2, 1863 battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia.⁵⁰ Holzer’s focus on military and political affairs also describes the emergence of Irish-Americans as zealous supporters of the Union cause. Although that group predominantly affiliated with the Democratic Party before the War, 160,000 enthusiastic Unionists swelled the ranks of the Army.⁵¹ In July of 1863, however, their reputation hit a low point when riots against a newly-imposed military draft broke out in New York City, and African-Americans were targeted in that violence.⁵² In his final chapter, Holzer returns to his introduction. In Lincoln’s December 8, 1863 annual message to Congress, the president asked for legislation to encourage foreign immigration, but with a codification of a requirement that foreign-born American residents serve in the military.⁵³ Lincoln wanted to stimulate European immigration and augment our nation’s workforce, but also assure the native-born that the new immigrants “would be required to meet their obligations as Americans.”⁵⁴ The immigration statute enacted in July 1864 created a U.S. Emigrant Office in New York City to help match foreign workers to jobs in America.⁵⁵ Lincoln returned to the immigration issue one year later, when his next annual message to Congress urged an exemption from the military draft to new immigrants, given a pattern of fraud inflicted upon them at their arrival at our ports.⁵⁶ The assassination of Lincoln in April 1865 pretermitted lawmaking on the issue during the War.⁵⁷ Holzer emphasizes that during the course of his Presidency, Lincoln, in addition to destroying slavery, had denounced the Know Nothing movement, spurred immigration, and augmented the Union’s armed forces.⁵⁸ That Presidency was transformative, for the Union not only was preserved, but the country also was set on a “path to an expanded citizenry with expanded rights.”⁵⁹ These two authors, Holzer and Guelzo, illuminate important aspects of President Lincoln’s career and accomplishments. Each book is valuable in its own particular context, but also more broadly reminds us of Lincoln’s greatness. A pragmatic politician who had to accommodate his vision to often-conflicting constituent interests, Lincoln did not veer from the path of advancing the Declaration of Independence’s principles. That included new citizens and settled traditions alike, focusing on the preservation of the Founders’ vision of a republican democratic government.

¹ Allen C. Guelzo, *Our Ancient Faith – Lincoln, Democracy, and the American Experiment* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2024) (hereafter “Guelzo”) at xiv.

² *Id.* at 19.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.* at 21.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ For a deeper explication of this issue, the reader should consult Hadley Arkes, *First Things, An Inquiry into the First Principles of Morals and Justice* (Princeton University Press, 1986) (hereafter “Arkes”) at 37-39.

⁷ Guelzo at 22.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Abraham Lincoln, *Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865* (The Library of America, 1989), at 224.

¹⁰ Guelzo at 88.

¹¹ *Id.* at 22-23.

¹² *Id.* at 23.

¹³ *Id.* at 26.

¹⁴ *Id.* at 31.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 35.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 42.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 46.

¹⁸ *Id.* at 145. See also Arkes at 36-42.

¹⁹ *Id.* at 50.

²⁰ *Id.* at 55-63.

²¹ *Id.* at 68.

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.* at 76-78.

²⁴ *Id.* at 113. See Tony Peterson, *Gordon Wood versus the New Generation of Historians* (Feb. 20, 2015), at <https://tonypetersen.wordpress.com/2015/02/20/gordon-wood-vs-the-new-generation-of-historians/> (explaining Professor Gordon Wood’s critique of “presentism.”).

²⁵ Guelzo at 116-19.

²⁶ *Id.* at 118, 121, 132 (noting his support for colonization of African-Americans in 1862).

²⁷ *Id.* at 123-25, 130.

²⁸ Harold Holzer, *Brought Forth On This Continent – Abraham Lincoln and American Immigration* (Dutton, 2024) (hereafter “Holzer”) at 11.

²⁹ Holzer at 2.

³⁰ *Id.* at 3-4.

³¹ *Id.* at 45.

³² *Id.* at 47.

³³ *Id.* at 56.

³⁴ *Id.* at 34-35.

³⁵ *Id.* at 55.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.* at 79.

³⁸ *Id.* at 81.

³⁹ *Id.* at 74.

⁴⁰ *Id.* at 116.

⁴¹ *Id.* at 163.

⁴² *Id.* at 56.

⁴³ *Id.* at 146.

⁴⁴ *Id.* at 146-53.

⁴⁵ *Id.* at 157-58.

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 181, 186-93.

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 181-84, 231-34.

⁴⁸ *Id.* at 102. See, e.g., Andre M. Fleche, *The Wars of Carl*

Schurz (June 12, 2012), at <https://archive.nytimes.com/opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/02/the-wars-of-carl-schurz/>.

⁴⁹ *Id.* at 251-53, 261.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at 263-66.

⁵¹ *Id.* at 213.

⁵² *Id.* at 272-81.

⁵³ *Id.* at 288.

⁵⁴ *Id.* at 291.

⁵⁵ *Id.* at 296-98. See <https://immigrationhistory.org/item/immigration-act-of-1864>.

⁵⁶ *Id.* at 320-21.

⁵⁷ *Id.* at 322.

⁵⁸ *Id.* at 333.

⁵⁹ *Id.* That legacy, Holzer opines, can be seen in the remark of a direct descendant of an immigrant, i.e., then-candidate Barack Obama’s November 8, 2008 victory speech that declared that “We are not enemies, but friends.” *Id.* at 334 and n.129.

Winter Meetings



Jean Howard Green: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



Roger Heller: photo by Lynn Light-Heller

January 23, 2025

Starting the year off right with Jean Green in *5 Good Minutes*.

She shared an update on The Lincoln Cemetery. Headstones are purchased! Followed by Dr. Christian Keller and his meticulous presentation on Southern Strategies.



Rip Engle: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



Michele & Dr. Keller: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



Dr. Christian Keller: photo by Jaimee Umstadd



Beth Wheeler: photo by Jaimee Umstadd



Jim Hessler: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



Michele & Jim Hessler: photo by Jaimee Umstadd

February 27, 2025

This month Beth Wheeler introduced Jim Hessler who delivered a deep dive into Andrew Humphreys and his Division here at Gettysburg. This meeting rallied to preserve "The Lighthouse of the Battlefield", The Klingel Farm (see page 3).



Photo by Jaimee Umstadd

Spring Meetings



Treasurer Dave Diner: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



Brenda Ritterpusch & Bruce: photo by Jaimee Umstattt



Michele & Cindy Beaston: photo by Lynn Light-Heller

March 27th, 2025

The sunny evening began with Brenda Ritterpusch, celebrating 20 Years of Guiding: A brief history of the Licensed Town Guides.

Cindy Beaston entertained and explained how the U.S. Engineers and soldiers were *too good* at keeping the Confederates away from her hometown Columbia on June 28, 1863. Let's just say, the bridge wasn't too keen on what happened.



Brenda Ritterpusch: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



President Bruce Davis: photo by Lynn Light-Heller



Photo by Jaimee Umstattt

On The Line with Mason & Dixon

by Lynn Light-Heller



Image Courtesy of Uncharted Lancaster

They were an unlikely pair, these two Englishmen, who were about to embark on a momentous expedition across the Atlantic to a foreign land, in order to settle the border dispute between the British colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland, which had been raging for 80 years.

But these were not just any two British subjects. They both had gained recognition within the scientific community in England, for their excellent collaboration in several astrological observations. Their work was so professional and accurate, that when the proprietors in the British colonies asked the Royal Society of London, the prestigious scientific academy, for help in surveying the colonial borders, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon were recommended.

Though both excelled in their fields, and not too different in age - Both in their 30's, these gifted young men were very different in personality and temperament.

Jeremiah Dixon, the younger of the two, was a Quaker from a well-established family. He showed a talent early on for math and surveying, and became a gifted amateur astronomer. While attending the John Kipling's Academy, he became acquainted with many notable scientists. He was invited to London to be elected in to the Royal Society as an assistant to George Mason... a much-coveted honor. Dixon was not, however, your typical Quaker. Never married, he enjoyed socializing and carousing, and often sporting "flashy clothing," his favorite a long red coat and a cocked hat, frowned upon by the Elders. He was actually expelled from the Quakers for his drinking and "keeping loose company". A acquaintance wrote "Dixon was an active man of impatient spirit and nervous temperament". However, he was highly regarded as a top land surveyor.

George Mason's life was more sedate in comparison. At the age of 28 he was taken in by the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, and became assistant to Dr. James Bradley, The Astronomer Royal. As such, Mason would have become proficient in the use and maintenance of all the exotic instruments. Long nights peering at the stars, and mastering the complexities of the calculations made Mason a very skilled and diligent astronomer. A contemporary noted that he had "a meticulous observation of nature and geography, a cool, deliberate, painstaking man, but also an adventurer, witty and intelligent." Mason's wife Rebekah had died in 1759 at age 39, leaving two young sons. While colleagues at the Royal Society, Mason and Dixon were busily engaged in familiarizing themselves with their new equipment and training to use it. Because of his astronomical expertise, Mason had been chosen by the Royal Society to make the journey to South Africa to observe "The Transit of Venus" and make observations to determine the distance from the earth to the sun. Along with him as his assistant came Jeremiah Dixon. The duo received high praise for their observations. In mid-September, 1763, the pair left England on board the *Hanover Packet*, and arrived near Philadelphia on November 15, 1763 to begin their epic mission. They found Pennsylvania to be experiencing unsettling times of tension and civil unrest. Philadelphia was a crowded commercial center, home to a great deal of revolutionary thought and action. Pennsylvania was also dealing with a cycle violence between white settlers and Native Americans, aside from the ongoing border disputes. The French and Indian War had just ended, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, and the British victory helped secure Pennsylvania's frontier. The surveyors were well aware of the recent "Pontiac's Rebellion", which had occurred from 1763 - 64, when a confederation of Native Americans attempted to drive British soldiers out of the Great Lakes region. Forts had been destroyed, and hundreds of colonists killed or captured. It was into this time of upheaval that Mason and Dixon's skills in astronomical navigation and land surveying would be called upon.

The need for an accurate border survey arose out of a dispute between the Penn Family of Pennsylvania including the “3 lower counties”, (which became Delaware), and the Calvert Family of Maryland. In 1632 King Charles I granted to Cecil Calvert Maryland’s charter of all land north of the North branch of the Potomac River up to the 40th parallel. In 1681, King Charles II granted to William Penn Pennsylvania’s Southern border to be Maryland’s Northern border, or the 40th parallel, the wording of which was vague and unclear. By the time Penn’s land was granted, thousands of settlers had established homesteads in the lands considered to be in Maryland. These grants overlapped, as they were based on incorrect maps, and confusing legal descriptions. Both colonies claimed land that had been granted to the other. Maryland’s claim would



Cresap War Map Courtesy Cornell Edu

have put Philadelphia in Maryland. In dispute were the lands between the 39th and 40th parallel, some 4000 square miles. Both families had been granted land near the 40th parallel, but for 80 years, because the language was obscure, and colonial surveyors lacked the proper instruments and knowledge to carry out accurate surveys, no one knew where that border should be. Settlers didn’t know who to pay taxes to, and weren’t even sure what colony they lived in. Skirmishes and often bloody violence broke out within the disputed lands. Houses were burned; arrests were made; No resolution seemed to be in sight. Over the years, attempts were made to decide the boundary; compromises were agreed to, then refuted. The parties were in and out of acrimonious court proceedings, with no resolutions settled. To complicate matters, Penn was granted the land of “the 3 lower colonies”, which later became Delaware colony, a satellite of Pennsylvania. Calvert had considered this land part of his original grant. And a further complication...a 12-mile radius around New Castle, one of the three lower counties, had been granted to King Charles II’s brother, The Duke of York, who in turn granted it to William Penn. All of these boundaries had to be figured out before the work of establishing the more familiar 233 long east west border between Maryland and Pennsylvania could begin. The commissioners agreed that the work ahead for Mason and Dixon would be to establish the borders between the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and western Virginia, which eventually became West Virginia. When completed in 1767 the “line” would be comprised of four segments: The Tangent Line, North Line, Arc Line, and the West Line. With the arrival of Mason and Dixon, the first job at hand was for the commissioners from both colonies to reach a compromise as to where the east west dividing line between Maryland and Pennsylvania, The West Line: should lie. It was determined to be 15 miles south of the southernmost limit of Philadelphia, at 39° 43’ North. The surveyor’s first project was to determine the latitude of this designated line, and to fix the starting point. It took several weeks and was no simple matter! Over the next several weeks they readied their state-of-the-art instruments, consulted their almanacs, and hired a team of carpenters to construct their first observatory from which they were able to determine the latitude at which to survey the West Line. They employed sophisticated principles of astronomy, land surveying, plane and spherical trigonometry, and geometry, Calculations were performed using 7 figure logarithms. and were made taking into account the curvature of the earth, and observations of the stars in the night sky. They were furnished with the latest almanacs from the Royal observatory containing stars listed by declination and right ascension. The pair carried out extremely precise measurements using astronomical tables and angles based on circular arcs. To determine the latitude of the starting point, peering through their prized instrument the Zenith Sector, a state of the art 6-foot-long telescope which required them to lie on their backs in temperatures well below freezing, they made 60-star observations, followed by days mathematical calculations. It was determined to be 39 degrees, 43 minutes, 18.2 seconds North latitude.

After establishing the starting point for the West Line, they spent the year of 1764 surveying the 83-mile border between Maryland and Pennsylvania's "Three Lower Counties": Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex, which in 1776 became the state of Delaware. A compromise had been reached to divide this North South area in half at the midpoint..." The Tangent Line" ...the east half going to Pennsylvania, the west to Maryland. The southern boundary of Delaware had to be determined which became The Transpeninsular Line", and the northern border of Delaware: (The Newcastle Arc). The surveyors and their crew crossed rivers and creeks, sloggled through wetlands, and chopped their way through forests. A team of Axmen clear West Line, separating Pennsylvania from Maryland. What these surveyors possessed that other before them had not, was the knowledge of how to perform the necessary calculations, and the precision instruments provided to them, enabling the pair to gather the accurate astronomical information. In order to establish the agreed upon line of latitude, they employed geodetic astronomy, which is the art and science of determining positions of points on the earth by astronomical observations London's John Bird, considered to be the most notable maker of mathematical and astronomical instruments, built the special surveying instruments for the project, including the zenith sector for measuring latitude; the transit equal altitude instrument for astronomical observations & measuring angles; an 18" Hadley reflecting quadrant which is used to observe altitudes of celestial bodies; an astronomical clock to establish the earth's ellipticity, to protect the delicate zenith sector from damage, it traveled *on a feather bed* carried on the wagon trudging it through the rough terrain! To John Bird's collection of esoteric instruments was added a long case pendulum clock, made in Philadelphia, for timing astronomical observations. 22 yard long "Gunter's" chains were necessary when measuring distance when crossing ordinary terrain. Rough terrain was often measured with a 22 foot or 16 1/2-foot-long rod called a level. This permitted the survey crew to maintain a level line of measurement, rather than measuring along the ground going up and down hills. Surveying this line would take them and their team through heavily forested & rugged terrain, up and down mountains, and across streams and raging rivers. They would endure every kind of weather from heavy snow-falls, freezing temperatures, and scorching heat, and always on the lookout for wild animals. Disturbingly, recent news had reached them from Lancaster, PA., of a horrific & unprovoked attack by an unruly gang of frontiersmen called "The Paxton Boys", who had attacked and murdered a tribe of Conestoga Indians in their village. The surveying party was constantly fearful of threats of Native American unrest and retribution, which happily never came to fruition. Mason and Dixon were not alone in their journey across the wilderness of Pennsylvania. They started off with a crew of 5, but it quickly grew larger to 115 as they progressed westward along the line. It was like a small army moving through the woods. Friendly Iroquois Indian guides led the way, followed by the Axmen and the rest of the survey party.

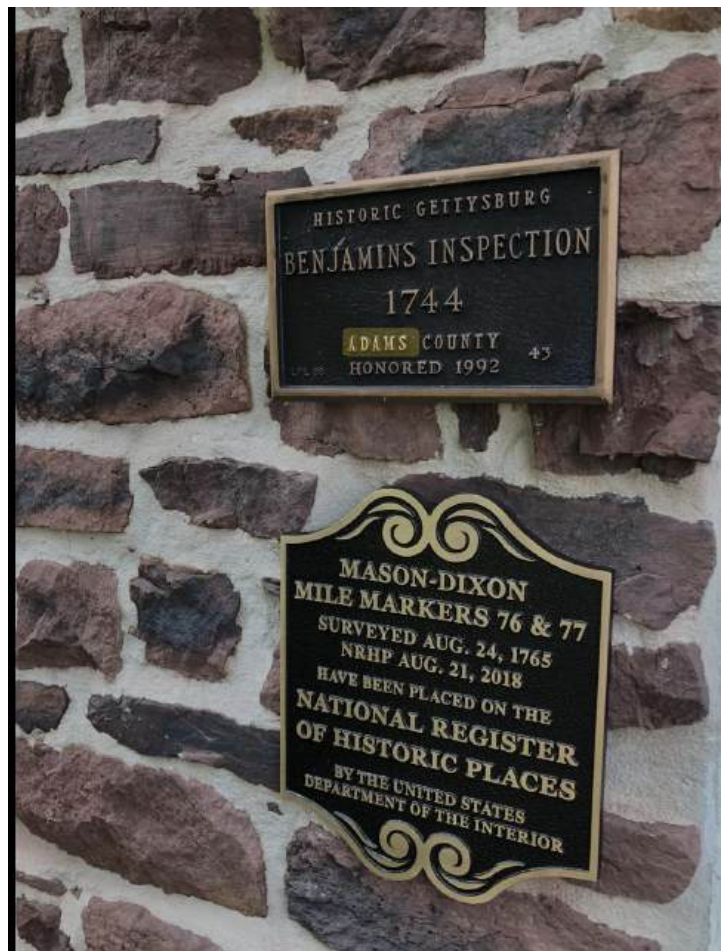


Photo courtesy Mason & Dixon Line Preservation Partnership

As the crew grew in size, it included a team of 53 Axmen to cut down the trees, making a 6 - 8-foot-wide path through the woods; 38 Pack mule drivers to haul the trees away; teams of chain carriers; instrument carriers; & tent bearers, as well as several assistant astronomers and surveyors. John Reid "The Shepherd" maintained the herd of sheep which provided food; John Power was given the title "milkmaid" and spent his days milking the herd of cows that followed the westward progression. A butcher or two were also needed. Mason oversaw the assistant astronomers. Dixon oversaw the assistant land surveyors. The party camped some nights under the stars, and spent others invited in by

local farmers, or Inns. They were fortunate to be- friend a local couple, John and Sarah Harlan, whose farm was near the line, and who offered the duo lodging in their home, and permitted them to construct an observatory on his land. The rent the couple could earn from boarding the surveyors & housing their instruments would come in very useful. The Harlan Farm would become the official winter headquarters for the team. Work halted during most inclement weather, when Mason and Dixon would gallop off to explore the country side, or to apprise the commissioners of their progress.

The complexity of surveying along a latitudinal line was evidenced by the fact that the surveyors could correctly plot their course westward only about ten miles at a time, placing wooden posts at the completion of each mile chained. At the completion of that distance, Mason would make celestial observations to determine their position and the course adjusted, if necessary, Dixon and his crew could continue chaining westward for another ten miles. Once a section was surveyed, the party would about face, and begin the tedious process of repeating the process, seeking out any errors. For the mile markers, Oolite limestone was quarried and carved on the Isle of Portland in the English Channel, and brought by barge in large numbers to Philadelphia or Baltimore for distribution along the West Line. They were then hauled overland to the survey party, where they replaced the wooden stakes. At every mile, the workers dug a hole, and a 3 - 5 foot long, 12-inch square stone was deeply placed, with a "P" carved into the Pennsylvania side, and a "M" for the Maryland side. Each stone weighed hundreds of pounds. A larger "Crown Stone" marked every 5th mile, with the coat of arms the Calvert family on the Maryland side, and a coat of arms on the Pennsylvania side. As the surveyors continued westward, the logistics of transporting supplies became increasingly difficult as the party grew in size. It became necessary to establish a system to adequately feed the work party. A storehouse was established along the line to organize and distribute supplies. Seven cooks were employed to feed the men with provisions brought from the storehouse. Mason took a keen interest in all his New World surroundings, both scientific and nonscientific. Once, when winter weather suspended surveying, he and Dixon went to New York for a couple of weeks to enjoy the activities of that colonial community. En route they stopped at "Prince Town in the Jersies" and Mason admired "the most elegant built College I've seen in America." When the party reached the Appalachian Mountains, they placed their last West Line monument #132 at Sideling Hill, on November 28, 1767. in eastern Pennsylvania. Their wagons were unable to transport the heavy limestone markers over the challenging terrain. The surveyors continued their work for over 60 more miles, but no more limestone markers were placed. Instead, they marked each mile with large piles of earth and rock cairns. Wagonloads of limestone markers had been delivered to the party, but because of the challenging terrain, were discarded and left by the way side.



The first east-west stone was set near Stricklersville, PA, on November 5, 1765. The 132nd and final stone was set near Sideling Hill on November 28, 1767. Between those points, Mason, Dixon, and their team braved wilderness which included rugged mountains, raging rivers, wild animals, and sometimes hostile natives.

Photo courtesy of LocalNews1.org



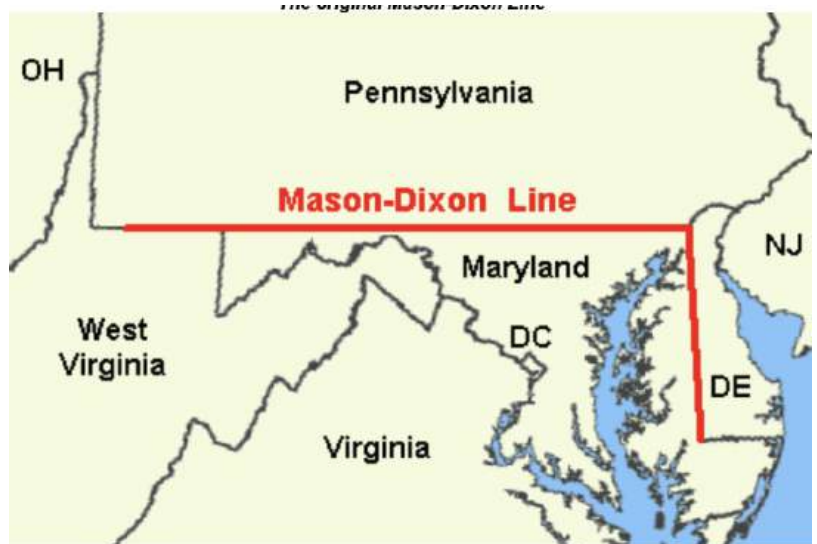
Photo courtesy of FindAGrave.com

As they continued on, they arrived at Dunkard Creek in Green County, PA. On October 9th, 1767, they were told by their Indian escorts, that they could not advance further. They had reached the limit of the area controlled by the Iroquois, and were not permitted to enter the lands to the west controlled by the Shawnee and Delaware Indians. Mason and Dixon concluded their survey at the top of Brown's Hill, just beyond mile post #233 on October 15, 1767, there they took astronomical readings, then turned back eastward, about 30 miles short of their intended survey line. The next several weeks were spent settling accounts, tending to matters, and meeting with the commissioners for a final time before heading to New York. After almost 4 years of work, the West Line survey ended, some 233 miles which divided Pennsylvania and Maryland. It was said that as they worked their way westward, the local families that they passed learned for the first time whether they lived in Pennsylvania or Maryland. By the time they finished their work, they had surveyed over 240 miles of boundary lines and placed over 220 stones. Included in the line 40 were placed in York County, 5 in Lancaster County, and 25 in Adams County. Masson's detailed and meticulous journal is preserved in the National Archives. When they had arrived in Philadelphia in November of 1763, they envisioned the project taking one or two years. But it wasn't until September 11, 1768, that Mason and Dixon set sail for England aboard the *Halifax Packet*, bringing to a close a remarkably complex and incomparably important set of land surveys. The cost to survey the land was approximately \$75,000 in 1768. This amount was split between the Penns and Calvert's.

Upon returning to England, Dixon headed to Norway to carry out additional astronomical observations. In July, he resumed his work as a surveyor in England. He died unmarried on January 22, 1779 at the age 46, and was buried in the Quaker cemetery in northern England. Although having once been repudiated by them, the Quakers apparently relented and allowed his burial. Mason returned to Greenwich where he continued his astronomical work. In 1770 he remarried, and he and his wife Mary became the parents of six children. In 1786 he and Mary, and all of his eight children, seven sons and one daughter, emigrated to Philadelphia. Shortly after their arrival, however, he fell ill and died on October 25, 1786 at age 58. He was buried in the Christ Church Burial Grounds in Philadelphia, where his friend Benjamin Franklin would be laid to rest in 1790. Notably, as a 21st century preservation organization was conducting surveys for locating and preserving the original milestones, they came across a stone that had been removed by a farmer and dumped in a ditch. Recovered by the Preservation Partnership surveyors, the 1766 quarried stone was moved from its ignoble resting place to Philadelphia, and on August 31, 2013 they dedicated the stone to mark Charles Mason's grave. In 1784, astronomers Andrew Ellicott and David Rittenhouse from Philadelphia, completed the project when the lands became more accessible, and ran the boundary to its intended endpoint - five degrees west of the Delaware River.

Although initially intended to define property rights, it has taken on a greater cultural significance as it became a symbolic divide between the north and south, particularly regarding the issues of slavery leading up to the Civil War. Over the years, many surveyors have sought to locate, document, and preserve the original milestones. An exhaustive and thorough resurvey of the Pennsylvania and Maryland border was conducted 1900- 1902. Their mission was threefold: 1. to resurvey the line with precision, without crafting a new, or corrected line. 2. To preserve all the original monuments suitable for use on the line, 3. To place on the line as many as possible of the monuments which had been taken from it or which had never reached it. They found several which had been displaced or destroyed, buried in swamps, removed by relic hunters, or used as doorstops. They reported that about 20% of the stones were missing, and the rest were in varying conditions from totally intact to those damaged or broken. When they discovered an old monument knocked over but otherwise intact, they carefully reset it. Where they found the stone to be totally missing, especially east of Sidling Hill, they either created a new one made of magnesium marble from the quarry of the Beaver Dam Marble Company of Baltimore County, or placed one of the unused monuments left by Mason and Dixon because of difficulties of transporting them through the wilderness of transporting them through the rugged terrain. Many of these monuments had become incorporated in buildings and walls and were secured with difficulty. Since 1990, the Mason and Dixon Line Preservation Partnership has been helping locate and preserve the milestones. Thanks to GPS positioning technology, instead of dragging out the bulky surveying gear, most of the work has been done with a surveying app on a cell phone. The first problem was locating the stones, as many had been overgrown with heavy brush and weeds, many on private property, or out in the woods and wilds requiring long hike to get to them. The conditions of the stones varied widely. "In many cases they're almost pristine...the carvings are clear; you can still see the fluting on the edges that the stonemasons did in the 1700's". This group has encountered similar finds as did the 1900 survey teams. "Others are in dreadful shape, and more often or not, humans do the damage. Hit by plows, vandalized broken off for souvenirs; hunters used them for target practice." As they surveyed the line, they found most stones placed by Mason and Dixon were accurate within a few feet. Of the 25 stones placed in Adams County, 24 have been found in their original location. About 15 miles outside of Gettysburg stands the Mary Penn Bed and Breakfast. This lovely stone house was built before the survey, and the line runs directly through the house. The guests either sleep in Maryland or Pennsylvania, and it splits an upstairs bathroom in half. The shower is in Pennsylvania, but the toilet is in Maryland. There are two original limestone markers on the property, one of which was found in Marsh Creek, and moved to a nearby bank of land.

In 2023, surveyors conducted an inventory of all of the Mason and Dixon monuments. The goal was to secure a place for them on the National Register of Historic Places. Adams County has two on this register; # 76 and #77, on the Mary Penn property. These ancient sentinels mark a geographic division between four states, offering a fascinating snapshot of local history. Two men, utilizing a clever combination of astronomy, mathematics, and surveying, placed stone monuments exactly a mile apart on America's frontier landscape.



Original Mason-Dixon Line Map

US Dept of the Interior - Public Domain

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.

April 5th, Lydia Hamilton Smith and Thaddeus Stevens with Mark Kelley 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lydia Hamilton Smith was the mixed-race woman from Gettysburg who came to Lancaster to share life with Congressman Thaddeus Stevens. This presentation is based on new research that establishes that these two great Americans joined their considerable talents and abilities to serve the twin causes of ending slavery and establishing laws that accorded full civil rights to people of all colors and creeds. Free for ACHS members. www.achs-pa.org

April 5th, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Weekends through October, Monterey Pass Battlefield Museum Opening for the Season. 14325 Buchanan Trail, Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania. The historic fight took place after Lee's retreat from Gettysburg in July 1863. <https://montereypassbattlefield.org/>

April 11th & 12th, History Meets the Arts Show & Sale. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Gettysburg Fire Company Community Room, Rear 35 N. Stratton St. This event features artists and authors specializing in early American history with paintings, art prints, artist and author signings, sculpture, working demonstrations, hand-forged knives, scrimshaw, hand-painted floor cloths and more. Free admission with voluntary donations gladly accepted. Donations benefit "Pink Out," a local non-profit helping women cancer survivors with non-medical related expenses. <https://historymeetsthearts.com/>

May 8th – 11th, Gettysburg Film Festival: Victory in WWII, Various Locations this Year. The Gettysburg Film Festival showcases American history on screen, from documentaries to feature films and emerging media. Launched and inspired by Ken Burns and his award-winning craft, the festival aims to bring Americans together in a shared appreciation of our history and the stories that make us who we are. Tickets are required. <https://gettysburgfilmfestival.org/>

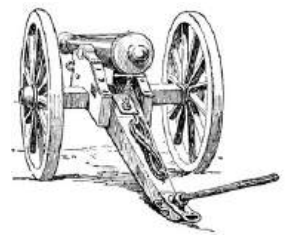
May 10th 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., Publick Tyme Interact with living history reenactors covering Colonial America all the way up to the modern era throughout the Tavern grounds. Docents will be available for the tavern, grounds, distillery & wheelwright shop. Watch demonstrations at the hearth & fiber arts. See a real blacksmith hammer wares hot from the forge or check out our colonial woodworkers in the Wheelwright Shop. <https://www.northernYorkhistorical.org/>

May 25th, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Civil War Memorial Day Commemoration. Join costumed reenactors for a Memorial Day commemoration **at the Pennsylvania Monument on Hancock Avenue.** Featuring Civil War era songs, poems and readings. This event showcases Victorian era dancing and etiquette. Guests are invited to learn how Memorial Day evolved from the Civil War era Decoration Day to the holiday it is today. For more information contact; katie.carroll@comcast.net

June 13th – 18th, Gettysburg College's Civil War Institute Summer Conference. A very special CWI conference honoring the life and scholarship of CWI's late director, Dr. Peter S. Carmichael. Explore some of the major topics that animated Pete's scholarly work, such as the culture of the common soldier, gender, politics, and honor in the Old South, doing Civil War history in public, Robert E. Lee in history and memory, and Indianans at Gettysburg. <https://www.gettysburg.edu/civil-war-institute/summer-conference/2025-cwi-conference>

June 14th, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. HGAC BarnArt Show & Sale, HGAC invites guests to celebrate Adams County's great old barns and the artists who have captured them in painting and photography. HGAC's 17th BarnArt Show and Sale features art by 50 local and regional artists. The historic **G.A.R. Hall on 53 East Middle Street** hosts the show in which every piece depicts a barn or a detail of a barn. The judge for the show this year is Wendy Allen, owner of the Lincoln Into Art gallery in Gettysburg. <https://www.hgaconline.org/>

June 28th – 29th, 52nd Annual Gettysburg Civil War Relic Show, Allstar Events Complex, Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Adults \$10.00, Children under 12 free; free parking



Upcoming Speakers

April 24, 2025
Dr. Jared Frederick
The Civil War in Cinema

May 22
Kevin Pawlak
The Second Manassas Campaign

June 14
9:30-11:30 a.m. (on-field)
Deb Novotny
A Tour of Evergreen Cemetery

June 26
6:30-8:30 p.m. (on-field)
Fran Feyock
Tour of Camp Letterman

July 24
6:30-8:30 p.m. (on-field)
Ranger Dan Vermilya
A Study of Confederate Monuments

August 28
6:00-8:30 p.m. (on-field)
Larry Korzyck
The Wheatfield Part 3

September 25
Derek Maxwell
William T. Sherman Part 2

October 23
Dr. Scott MacKenzie
Founding of West Virginia

November 20
Hampton Newsome
Gettysburg's Southern Front

December 4
Dr. James Broomall
Holiday Banquet
Topic TBD



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

