

150th Anniversary of the American Civil War



Abandoned Confederate defenses at Atlanta (GA)

Cape May County Civil War Round Table Newsletter November 2014

Meeting Schedule

Meetings are at the Jury Room in the Court House in
Cape May Court House, and start at 6:30pm

2015 Meeting Dates

No Meetings in January or February

19 March

16 April

21 May

18 June

16 July

20 August

17 September

15 October

19 November

?? December (date for Christmas dinner meeting to be
determined)

Round Table Officers

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Minutes of the Business Meeting 20 November 2014

President Runner called the meeting to order. We saluted the flag and held a moment of silence for those who stand in harm's way to protect all of us.

No one has contacted the secretary to give her any corrections or additions to the minutes. Motion made to accept the October as they appear in the November newsletter, seconded and approved.

The treasurer gave his report. Hard copy placed in file so it can be examined as needed. Motion made to accept the treasurer's report be accepted and filed for audit, seconded and approved.

President Runner presented a check from Kindle Motors to the Treasurer in the amount of \$1,114; money donated through the "Honest Neighbors Donations" program Kindle ran in 2014. They are considering running it again. When people went to Kindle to have various things done to their vehicles like oil changes, the customers had the option of having part of their funds donated to local non profit organizations. Our Round Table was one of those on the list. A letter will be sent to Kindle thanking them for their generosity.

President Runner reminded everyone that the meeting in December will be on Thurs 4 December at the Joy Buffet.

NOMINATIONS: There was no one who was interested in running for any of the offices of the Round Table in opposition to the current officers, so nominations were closed, and the current officers were reaffirmed in their positions by acclamation.

An effort will be made to reschedule John Michael Priest some time next year. The group also decided that they would like to have Tracy Evans return at some point in the future.

There are no Round Table meetings in January or February 2015, although Pres. Runner will schedule an executive board meeting at some point during the winter prior to the first full Round Table meeting of the year.

The group discussed several ways of gaining more publicity for our meetings so we can try and obtain more new members. Several suggestions were made, including attending local historical oriented events with CWRT flyers, contacting groups like the Cape May County Historical and Cultural Commission to have our meeting added to the calendar on their website, more efforts to reach out to other historically oriented groups like various city, township, and county historical societies; more publicity thru local libraries, and so on. Any of our members who have contact with such groups can ask any of the officers for copies of our fliers to hand out; if any of you need copies of old newsletters, the secretary has a number of extra newsletters that can be donated towards such efforts. In general, we ask that ALL members do what they can to spread the word about our group, even if it is just taking fliers to your local library. Any and all suggestions about other ways to get publicity for our group should be made to President Runner.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned so the presentation on the Battle of Franklin TN could begin.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Munson-Siter
Secretary, Cape May County Civil War Round Table



Civil War Timeline for January

1861

- 9 USS Star of the West fired on in Charleston Harbor
- 9 Mississippi secedes
- 10 Florida secedes
- 11 Alabama secedes
- 19 Georgia secedes
- 29 Kansas admitted as 34th state

1862

19 Battle of Mill Springs (KY)

1863

1 Emancipation Proclamation takes effect

1865

15 Fort Fisher falls to Union forces

REMINDER: Dues are Now Due, and have gone up to \$30 a year; \$35 if you want a hard copy of the newsletter mailed to you. Copy costs have gone up to \$.11 a page, so it's a lot more expensive to print the newsletter than it was even a few years ago! And you all know how more expensive it is to mail a letter, too... Send your dues to Jim Marshall!!!

Civil War Related Events January 2015

- 3 = PA = Lecture, "Robert E. Lee Comes Home from War – 1865-1870," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett
- 4 = PA = Lecture, "'Not Yet!'" Longstreet at Appomattox," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett
- 9 = VA = Lecture, "Railroad Communications in 1864," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with admission. moc.org
- 10 = PA = Lecture, "Famous Utterances on the Road to Appomattox: Importance of Rhetoric and Language in the War's Final Hours," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett
- 10 = PA = Lecture, "Freemasonry in the Civil War," at the Carnegie Library & Music Hall, 300 Beechwood Ave, Carnegie. 1 pm. Free. carnegiecarnegie.org
- 11 = PA = Lecture, "'It was, indeed, a scene of unsurpassed grandeur and majesty' — An Audio-Visual Presentation of the National Park Service's Coverage of the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett
- 11 = VA = Lecture, "Experiment in Freedom: Arlington Freedman's Village," at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St, Fairfax. 2 pm. Free. 703-385-8414.
- 14 = VA = Lecture, "Fort Fisher," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Appomattox. 12:15 pm. Free with admission. moc.org

14 = PA = Talk, reception and "1865" exhibit opening at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$10. Reservations: 717-260-1861 extension 1230.

16 = VA = Lecture, "One Bright Moment: The Wedding of Hetty Cary and John Pegram," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with admission. moc.org

16 = VA = Lee-Jackson Symposium at the Holiday Inn Express in Lexington. Speakers 1-5 pm with evening reception. leejacksonday.webs.com

17 = PA = Lecture, "Rocking the Cradle of the Confederacy — Sherman in South Carolina, 1865," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. www.nps.gov/gett

17 = VA = "19th Century Game Day" at the Museum of the Confederacy in Appomattox. 11 am-3 pm. Free with admission. moc.org

17 = VA = Lee-Jackson Day in Lexington. 10:30 am wreath laying at Jackson grave, 11:15 am parade, noon memorial in Lee Chapel followed by lunch. leejacksonday.webs.com

18 = PA = Lecture, "The Civil War — A Waypoint in American History," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett

21 = VA = Stonewall Jackson's Birthday Celebration at the Stonewall Jackson House in Lexington. Free tours and cake. 10 am-3:30 pm. Free. stonewalljackson.org

22 = VA = Lecture, "The Civil War as the First Modern War," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. 6:30 pm. \$5. moc.org

24 = PA = Lecture, "What Gettysburg Meant: Civil War Veterans Reflect on America's Most Famous Battle," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. www.nps.gov/gett

24 = VA = Lecture, "Honoring President Robert E. Lee," his post-war role at Washington College, at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. 2 pm. Free. 703-591-0560.

24 = VA = "Ghost Watch," annual scary Civil War stories at Centre Hill Mansion in Petersburg. 6 pm. \$10. 804-733-2401.

25 = PA = Lecture, "If These Things Could Talk — 1865," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. www.nps.gov/gett

25 = VA = Book talk, "That Furious Struggle: Chancellorsville and the High Tide of the Confederacy, May 1-4, 1863," at the Manassas Museum. 2 pm. Free. manassasmuseum.org

30 = VA = Book talk, "Unionists in Virginia: Politics, Secession, and Their Plan to Prevent Civil War," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with admission. moc.org

31 = PA = Lecture, "The Final Fourteen Days of Father Abraham," at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 1:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett



Powered by: **The Patriot-News** (Pennsylvania)
Should Civil War re-enactments be abandoned?



(Donald Gilliland)

By [Donald Gilliland | dgilliland@pennlive.com](mailto:dgilliland@pennlive.com)

Email the author |

on July 06, 2013 at 7:30 AM, updated July 07, 2013 at 2:55 AM
HISTORY AND RE-ENACTMENT

Civil War commemorations and re-enactors are practically synonymous, but as the Gettysburg hoopla began last week, the Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College said very publicly the commemoration would be better without all the men in blue and gray pretending to be soldiers.

On June 29, the Wall Street Journal ran a story that said, "Peter Carmichael, a professor of history at Gettysburg College, calls re-enactments an 'unfortunate distraction' from a deeper understanding of the Civil War, including the motivations of those who fought and its legacy."

Later that same night, Carmichael quoted himself to me at the media reception in Gettysburg sponsored by the college: "unfortunate distraction."

Across town, **in a field of canvas dog tents** next to the Pennsylvania Monument, Tom Downes told me, "A lot of guys in this camp have probably done more research than a lot of academics - they just haven't written a book: they wanted to know what kind of cartridge box was used in 1862 in Virginia."

Downes, 63, has been re-enacting for 33 years. He's the founder of the 8th Ohio re-enactment group and **leader of the National Regiment**, one of the two re-enactment organizations the National Park Service asked to do **Living History demonstrations** on the battlefield during the July 1-3 commemoration.

There's a mutual simmering resentment between historians and re-enactors. It's not a war or a battle - the hackneyed terms used for any controversy in Gettysburg - but it is a tension over who should tell the story of the war and how.

Call it the eggheads versus the interlopers.

Like any good American feud, it includes perceived differences in class, propriety, work ethic and honor.

The professional historians are clearly the establishment, and the re-enactors the literally unwashed masses.

But it's not a black and white, blue and gray kind of spat. It gets complicated.



Peter Carmichael, Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College

When I spoke with Carmichael, he was particularly interested, it seemed, after I mentioned that I was embedded with re-enactors camped on the battlefield and had participated in re-enactments during the preceding year in preparation for Gettysburg.

Carmichael told me he had once been a re-enactor himself.

I didn't ask if he grew out of it or followed a 12-step program; his question to me - didn't I find most of the re-enactors to be blue collar? - suggested other factors were at play.

I told him in my year of re-enacting the thing that has struck me most was the variety of people involved in the hobby: I have met architects, insurance adjusters, congressional staffers, delivery men, computer specialists, members of the military (both active and retired), professional artists, college librarians, retired coal miners, law clerks, engineers, high school teachers, a state government cabinet secretary and the Policy Director for NASA.

I asked Downes. He told me that in the 8th Ohio, he has had "two multi-millionaires as members of the unit and five

military officers in various branches. One today is a retired judge, and was an active judge when he joined. I've got truck drivers and loading dock supervisors. A rarity are teachers: I've got one. There are three PhDs in my company."

Two of the PhDs were there doing Living History: an economist and an historian.

The historian was Bradley Keefer, a tenured professor at Kent State, who said, "re-enactors are generally looked down on and not taken seriously" - except when it comes to battlefield preservation.

But Carmichael's condemnation was not universal: he told both the Wall Street Journal reporter and me that living history encampments, like the one Downes was leading on the battlefield, were preferable to re-enactments. "They do a good job," he said.

But better yet, the best thing people can do - "All you need to do," he said - is spend the day on the battlefield with a certified guide.

That's the hierarchy of respectability outside the lecture hall.

But the National Park Service invites re-enactors to the battlefield regularly to present Living History demonstrations; it's something of a badge of honor among re-enactment groups that they are "good enough" to be invited.

Re-enactors clearly have value of some sort. A Park Ranger told members of the National Regiment the 150th commemoration couldn't have been done without them.

After I participated in the National Regiment's appearance at the commemoration of Pickett's charge on Tuesday and as I was walking to my truck in full uniform with my musket, a gray-haired man came up to me and said "Thank You" in the earnest tone I've heard people use with active duty servicemen. It unsettled and embarrassed me because there's not even a remote equivalence. Perhaps - I hope - he didn't intend one. But the earnestness of that "Thank You" was more than the proof I needed that visitors to the battlefield like to see re-enactors.

And that's really the rub.

The spectator stands for **the battle re-enactment that continues today and tomorrow** came to Gettysburg straight from the U.S. Open. They're massive. They have to be. Roughly 40,000 people are expected to visit the re-enactment over its four-day schedule. That's as many people as visited the battlefield for the official commemoration of Pickett's charge on Tuesday.

From Carmichael's perspective, big battle re-enactments like this weekend's attract people who would be better served, he thinks, learning real history on the battlefield itself, spending the money they'd otherwise drop at the re-enactment on a licensed battlefield guide to be properly instructed in history.

I'm not sure the two are exclusive, but the historians sense there's a competition for people's time and minds.

If there were no re-enactments, people would have to go to the battlefield and do it the right way.



Tom Downes, right, has been re-enacting for 33 years and leads the National Regiment.

But even Downes is uneasy with at least one aspect of re-enactments: the media coverage which creates the image of re-enactors.

"The media always focuses on the yahoos and goons - the ones with crossed bandoleros and feathers in their hat," he said.

Or the many Robert E. Lees.

One doesn't join a re-enactment group and decide he's going to be a general. Those people - the impersonators - tend to operate alone, or soon find themselves alone.

Most serious re-enactors start as simple common soldiers, and many never do anything but.

Downes described his "meteoric 25 year rise" to the rank of colonel. "Our philosophy has always been: Are you a good private? That's what we judge you by."

It's not about glory and attention, but something much different.

Carmichael questions the propriety - when the country is in the midst of war - of turning war into "a spectator sport."

War as entertainment may be distasteful to many, but given the fact the "Call of Duty" video game - just one of many featuring explicit and realistic World War II shooting scenarios - sold 6 million units in one month after its release in 2009, Civil War re-enactment is a small drop in that bucket.

While battle re-enactments may be of limited value to the spectators, they are important to re-enactors and sustain the Living History demonstrations valued by the Park Service and its visitors.

Generally, those who are good enough to do Living History for the National Park Service got that way by going to lots of battle re-enactments.

One of the reasons Downes group was invited to do Living History is they are very good at **Civil War military drill** - how the groups of soldiers moved from point A to point B.

Downes likes drill; he learned it not only from books but from doing it with older re-enactors who had become really good at it.

They practiced at re-enactments.

Downes said the experience of re-enacting colors and enlivens his reading of history and vice-versa. He has read letters and accounts written by men who served and sometimes could immediately relate to what they were describing, and at

other times, he'd be on a re-enactment field and see something happen and realize that's what he'd read about.

Re-enactors generally have a deep interest in the history of the Civil War, read extensively about it, often do original research and enjoy re-enacting because it helps them better understand the reality of the common soldier.

Re-enactors don't pretend to be professional historians, and don't try to compete with them, but they do bridle at the condescension they sometimes receive from the Ivory Tower. Some of the professional historians, they suspect, wouldn't know Left Wheel from Shoulder-Arms.

In my experience, most enjoy sharing what they know with others, and they don't hesitate to acknowledge when they don't know.

And part of their appeal to the public, I think, is the fact they aren't professors and are both more accessible and approachable.

Downes said he believes there are three dimensions to popular history: reading a book, going to battlefields and museums; and re-enacting.

"What brings history into third dimension is re-enacting," he said: "wear the clothes, eat the food, experience the conditions."

I've experienced the conditions, and they are anything but comfortable. I've nearly frozen at Antietam in mid-September, laying on the cold, hard ground under the stars in nothing but my uniform and a wool blanket. I've marched in uncomfortable shoes until my feet were numb. I've mucked about through mud the color and consistency of pig excrement at Shiloh. I've drunk bad coffee, eaten hardtack and gone hungry.

As I lay in my tent on the battlefield at Gettysburg earlier this week, damp and back aching, I wondered why these men do it. Really.

I watched several of them crawl from their tents at Chancellorsville, gripping their backs and groaning in pain. I saw a guy whack his hand with an axe, and come back from the hospital and continue re-enacting with a bandaged hand. I saw a man who has to sleep with an air pump and mask for his sleep apnea bring it to camp camouflaged in a period-appropriate wooden ammunition crate.

And they aren't crazy, most of them.

Ask them why they do it, and most say it's for the fun.

Even Downes says, "I take the hobby seriously, but not too seriously."

There is a campfire camaraderie among men - and women - who share a deep interest in history, a sometimes silly hobby and an agreement not to discuss politics or religion. They share war stories - both real and re-enacted.

And yet they suffer doing it.

And that suffering was perhaps the key, I thought, as I lay there in the tent.

It reminded me of the hermit saints of the middle ages who deprived themselves to step closer to and honor God.

In some odd, unspoken way, it seemed like the re-enactors' suffering - though not religious - was an homage to the men who fought and died in the Civil War.

So I asked Downes if there was something to that or if I was just a nutter.

There's something to it, he agreed.

"It's the old boys we do this for, and it's the old boys who were here."

That kind of participatory history simply can't be found with a licensed guide on the battlefield.

Civil War history becomes 'real' for high school students



Moorestown High School sophomore Ryan Zimmer (left) examines the sword of Lt. Col. T.L. England, great-uncle of Winston Parker of Moorestown, under the watchful eyes of students Anna Sabet-Payman and Emily Liu, and Lenny Wagner (right), president of the local historical society. (CLEM MURRAY / Staff Photographer)



By Edward Colimore, Inquirer Staff Writer

POSTED: MARCH 02, 2014

MOORESTOWN For weeks, the students of Moorestown High School had read about the American Civil War in books. They completed homework assignments and took quizzes.

But on Friday, the war came to them in a more personal way - through the uniforms, swords, letters, images, and diaries of Moorestown residents who actually fought it.

The Historical Society of Moorestown brought its entire exhibit on "Moorestown During the Civil War" from its headquarters at the Smith-Cadbury Mansion to the school.

The media center was transformed into a museum where students were introduced to Joseph Hugg, a Navy surgeon who served on the Hartford, a flagship commanded by Adm. David Farragut.

They learned of William Gold, a sailor aboard the Cumberland, which was sunk in a battle with the CSS Virginia, formerly the USS Merrimack.

And they heard the story of George Wiltshire, a farmer who joined the Union Army at 19, was wounded twice, and was held as a POW at the Confederacy's dreaded Belle Isle Prison Camp.

But more than that - during the war's 150th anniversary - they could see uniforms worn by some of those veterans and read letters they penned.

"This makes it more real," said Felicia Aukett, 15, a sophomore. "This is specifically from Moorestown residents.

"You can connect to them," she said. "They're from my town."

Nearby was an image of Hugg, ramrod straight in a Union uniform with a double row of buttons.

In a letter to his sister, he wrote:

"In a breathing spell between two battles, I sit down to write a few words to you if I am not called away too soon for we are expecting every minute to get underway. . . ."

On a nearby table, sophomore Ana Sabet-Payman, 15, picked up a sword. "I didn't realize how heavy they were," she said. "I didn't know Moorestown played such a big part in the Civil War."

Though home to many Quakers, the town also had plenty of warriors, even among the Friends, who were conflicted because of their pacifist beliefs and antipathy toward slavery.

The idea for bringing the exhibit to the school was hatched last fall by Lenny Wagner, president of the society, and Andrew Forshay, a history and economics teacher at the school.

"One of our goals was to grow our audience and have more people learn about the collections" at Smith-Cadbury, said Wagner. "One way to do that is to take our exhibits to where the people are."

Besides partnering with schools, the society hopes to present its collections to churches and Rotary Club events, he said.

On Friday, about 200 students saw the Civil War exhibit. Many of them said they had never visited the society's headquarters at 12 High St. - and probably wouldn't have seen the artifacts if they did. The exhibit at Smith-Cadbury Mansion is open from 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and 1 to 3 p.m. Sundays.

"We're always looking for ways of working with the schools," Wagner said. "We think the more the kids learn about their town, the better citizens and students they'll be."

Getting so many students to the exhibit at the society, though, was a problem.

"We said, 'Wouldn't it be great if the kids could see this exhibit about their own community?'" Forshay said of his meeting with Wagner. "It would give them a greater awareness of the [Moorestown] people who fought in the war."

The exhibit in the media center was a hit all day Friday as class after class toured it, saw a video on Moorestown's Civil War participation, and performed Internet searches.

Moorestown residents fought in many of the greatest battles, including Gaines Mill, Va.; Sharpsburg, Md.; Fredericksburg, Va., and Gettysburg.

Some of Wiltshire's descendants live in Cherry Hill, North Jersey and Richmond, Va., Wagner said. It wasn't clear whether the descendants of other veterans remain in the area.

"The students looked closely at the displays and took notes," said Forshay. "They were engaged. There was very little off-task behavior."

The 10th graders were "asked to identify certain people and items, and give descriptions of something that had an impact on them," said media center specialist John Bishop. "That helped keep them on task."

Seeing the relics and letters "gives you perspective," said student Kiara Serrano, 15. "What were they thinking? Who did they know and who did they love? You get into their minds a little bit."

The impact of the war on Moorestown surprised student Dominick Caprarola. "I didn't know there was an Underground Railroad stop [in a house] on Main Street," he said, after seeing a photo of a familiar location. "That's really cool."

"I pass that house every day," added Max Argentieri, 16. "I wouldn't have known. I've got to read more to get specific information."

Some of the items on display were personal. They included Hugg's diary as well as his flute and toiletry case.

While students studied them, the eyes of soldiers and sailors stared from faded images.

"I like the swords," said Eurim Kahyaoglu, 15. "They look so ancient."

"I didn't know a lot about the Civil War," he said, "and now I'm learning how much Moorestown people impacted it."

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PODCASTS NOW AVAILABLE

Cold Harbor (June 1, 1864) Hanover County, Virginia

The Union attack here June 1, 1864, nearly resulted in a critical breakthrough.

7-stop, 1-mile walking tour
Narration: Ed Sanders, NPS
historian/ranger

Introduction: John Fieseler

Music: **Southern Horizon**

Production:

CivilWarTraveler.com and
Richmond National Battlefield Park

Playing time: 24:15 minutes

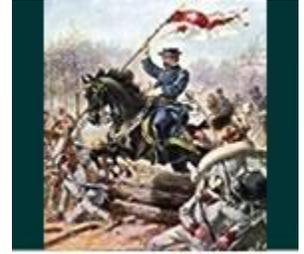
File size: 5.7MB



Cold Harbor

Five Forks Battlefield Petersburg National Battlefield, Virginia

The Five Forks intersection was critical to the Confederate defense of Petersburg and ultimately Richmond in the spring of 1865. Learn about the decisive battle here on April 1.



Sheridan at Five Forks

5-stop driving tour

Narration: Tracy Chernault, NPS
historian/ranger

Introduction: Marc Ramsey of **Owens & Ramsey Historical Booksellers**

Music: **Southern Horizon**

Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and Petersburg National Battlefield

Playing time: 22:15 minutes

File size: 5.3MB

Little Round Top, Gettysburg

Little Round Top on the Gettysburg battlefield was the scene of some of the most dramatic moments in American history, July 2, 1863.



The Warren Statue

4-stop walking tour

Narration: Eric Campbell, NPS
historian/ranger

Introduction: John Fieseler

Music: **Southern Horizon**

Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and Gettysburg National
Military Park

Playing time: 53:02 minutes

File size: 12.5 MB



The Hunley



Winter on the Potomac

Cape May County Civil War Round Table
www.cmccwrt.com





DESTRUCTION OF THE ALBATROSS.