

# Banner

## of the **Blue and Gray**

Newsletter of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable  
Frederick, Maryland  
Founded January 30, 1989

<http://frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org>



197th Meeting

October 2010

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### The Ghosts of Battles Past

*Soldiers wandering the battlefields, a face in the window, footsteps on a staircase, sounds of fighting, an empty rocking chair that rocks . . .*

Believe it or don't believe it, but Frederick County and the battlefields of the surrounding region are known as favorite haunts of many spirits of the Civil War. In fact, a small industry has developed around these ghostly sightings with books, tours, overnight stays at haunted inns, ghost hunts and spirit photography.

Encounters of the ghostly kind have been reported for years at both the Antietam and Gettysburg battlefields. The well-known Ghosts of Gettysburg Tour, based on licensed Battlefield Guide and Park Ranger Mark Nesbitt's six-volume book series by the same title, was named best in the nation by Haunted Tours of America. Nesbitt documents visions such as a phantom battalion that appears, marches, then vanishes.

Antietam Battlefield is considered one of the most haunted, and visitors attest to apparitions of soldiers, and sounds of singing and fighting. The Pry House's legendary woman standing at the window of a second floor room is thought to be the wife of Gen. Israel B. Richardson, who died in that room of battle wounds suffered six months earlier in the Battle of Antietam.

The National Museum of Civil War Medicine is another local hotspot for ghosts, with at least seven known spirits in residence, some thought to be soldiers haunting objects on display that belonged to them in life. And Barbara Fritchie is still with us, according to tour guides who have seen her rocking chair in motion and lights on when the house/museum is closed.

These are just a few of the many ghost sightings in the area. To find local ghost tours, such as the ever-popular Candlelight Tours of Frederick, check out <http://www.marylandghosttours.com/>.

### October Meeting

Thursday, October 21, 2010

7:30 PM

at the

National Museum  
of Civil War Medicine

48 East Patrick Street  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Speaker: George Deutsch

Subject: *Abraham Lincoln and Roger Taney:  
The Great Antagonists*

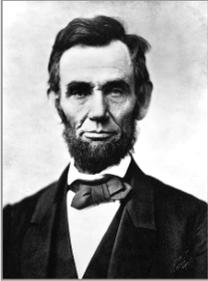
### Our Speaker

Civil War historian, author and teacher George Deutsch will explore the legendary constitutional rivalry between President



Abraham Lincoln and his Chief Justice, Frederick's own Roger Brooke Taney. The rivalry began with the Dred Scott decision of 1857 and lasted until Taney's death in 1864.

The opening salvo was Lincoln's famous "House Divided" speech in the Illinois Legislature in response to Taney's decision in Dred Scott v. Sanford. Soon after Lincoln was sworn in as president in March 1861, he faced an unprecedented crisis that threatened the nation's survival. When riots broke out in Baltimore and pro-Confederate groups cut telegraph wires and burned railroad bridges in Maryland, isolating Washington, Lincoln suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* and followed by declaring martial law and arresting John Merryman who was accused in the



rioting. Taney challenged Lincoln's authority and issued a writ for Merryman that Lincoln chose to ignore. Other challenges to presidential war powers followed, culminating in the *Prize Cases* in 1863 involving Lincoln's naval blockade in lieu of declaring war on the Confederacy. In that case, the Taney Court ruled Lincoln's action was constitutional. Taney was preparing briefs opposing both the Emancipation and Conscriptioin laws at the time of his death in October 1864.



From 1801 to 1823, Taney lived in Frederick City where he practiced law with his brother-in-law, Francis Scott Key. The restored Taney House is now a museum, part of the Frederick County Historical Society, and is

located in downtown Frederick, across from the former county Court House, now City Hall.

George Deutsch co-founded several historical organizations related to the Civil War and the War of 1812 in his hometown of Erie, Pa. He has also published multiple articles on the 83rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry and Commodore Oliver H. Perry's Flagship *Niagara* that played a major role in the 1813 Battle of Lake Erie.

Deutsch designed the wayside marker for Strong Vincent and Joshua Chamberlain at Little Round Top, worked to erect Vincent's statue in Erie, and led the effort to restore Erie County's Civil War monument. He also helped to lead the conservation of the 83rd and 145<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania's battle flags now preserved in the Erie Library.

Deutsch annually teaches Civil War history courses at the Chautauqua Institute in New York and has led more than 20 battlefield tours for roundtable and university groups.

Educated at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, Deutsch also has a degree in history from Mercyhurst College. He is writing, with a partner, a new book on the 83rd Pennsylvania, focusing on the untold history of its last year in the war. He now lives in Catonsville, Md., with his wife, Mary Fran.

## The Prez Sez



On a personal note, last May Dottie and I took a 10-day tour of Italy, starting in Venice, through Rome and cities all the way down the "Boot", even Pompei and Assisi, ending at the Isle of Capri and the Blue Grotto.

We are all history buffs here, but just imagine Italy's awesome history dating B.C. and the Italians co-existing with enormous stone structures built through the many periods of their rich history! Actually, these antiquities are their treasure. We found it to be an amazing place — a trip of a lifetime. We highly recommend visiting there.

On a truly sad note, we have missed seeing member and old friend, John Jones, at our meetings. He had sad news to bare in our last conversation. His stepson, a brave young United States Marine, was killed some months ago in the line of duty. We are grateful for his stepson's service and recognize the sacrifice John's family endured. We again send them all our good wishes. Please keep them in your prayers.

Donnie

## At last month's meeting . . .

We had a terrific turnout at our meeting on September 16 where historian and author Steve Stotelmyer gave a riveting lecture on all things Barbara Fritche. Steve also discussed Gen. Jesse Reno, known as a "soldier's soldier" who died in the Battle of South Mountain. The evening was a great way to kick off the 2010-2011 season, our first in the initial year of the Sesquicentennial anniversary.



## **Next Month's Speaker**

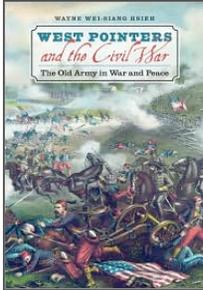
Tom Clemens will discuss "How Antietam Battlefield Was Created" at our next meeting, Thursday, Nov. 18, 2010, at 7:30 PM.

## **Reminder to Members**

If you have not paid your 2010 FCCWRT membership dues, please bring a check to the October 21st meeting. Annual dues are \$30 for individuals and \$50 for families. And feel free to bring a friend to our meetings. We welcome and encourage new memberships, which is especially important with the start of the Sesquicentennial.

## The Bookshelf

***West Pointers and the Civil War: The Old Army in War and Peace*** by Wayne Wei-siang Hsieh. Bibliography, index, notes. 304 pp., 2009. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N.C.



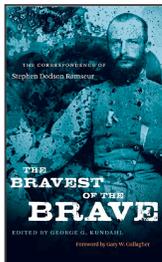
Dr. Wayne Wei-siang Hsieh, assistant history professor on the civilian faculty at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, presents a highly readable, extremely well-researched study of the birth and development of the nation's professional military from the War of 1812 to the Civil War. The author's well-substantiated premise is that the Union and Confederate armies were basically the same: a mass of untrained and inexperienced civilians who were ill-equipped for battle. It was the leaders who made the difference. West Pointers all, the leaders' professional military training and battlefield experience in the Mexican War enabled them to transform a hodge-podge of recruits into combat-ready soldiers. Dr. Hsieh contends that the officers' shared background accounts for the tactical similarities between the Union and Confederate forces and perhaps, ultimately, for the length of the war.

Dr. Hsieh emigrated from Taiwan in infancy and grew up in Los Angeles and earned his doctorate in history from the University of Virginia, received a Meritorious Honor Award from the U.S. State Department for his work in Iraq between July 2008 and June 2009. *West Pointers and the Civil War* earned the 2009 New York Military Affairs Symposium Civil War Book Award.

***The Bravest of the Brave: The Correspondence of Stephen Dodson Ramseur***, edited by George W. Kundahl. Photographs, bibliography, index, 392 pp., 2010, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N.C.

This carefully edited volume of personal letters offers an intimate portrait of one of the South's best and brightest, Stephen Dodson Ramseur. At the time of his death at age 27 in the Virginia Battle of Cedar Creek, Ramseur was the youngest West Point graduate to become a major general in the Confederate army. Ramseur was not writing for posterity; he was simply expressing his thoughts and feelings to his wife and friends back home. As such, the letters are rich in frank commentary on his experiences on the battlefield and his feelings about the conduct of the war and daily life in the camps. The letters also give insight into the culture and politics of the upper class South and is a must-read for any Civil War enthusiast.

(Continued on Page 4, See **Bookshelf**)



## Calendar of Events

**Through October, Exhibit, Living History, Battlefield Hikes, Monocacy National Battlefield Visitor Center, Frederick MD**

“To Secede or Not to Secede” exhibit and programs exploring Maryland’s turmoil over secession in April 1861, daily starting at 8:30 AM through October . Also, three ranger-led hikes to separate battlefield areas highlighting the events of July 9, 1864. Free. Additional information: [www.nps.gov/mono/](http://www.nps.gov/mono/).

**Oct. 15-17, Symposium, Petersburg, VA**

“The 1860 Presidential Election & and the Coming of the Civil War,” 14<sup>th</sup> Annual symposium at Pamplin Historical Park. Speakers include George C. Rable, Elizabeth Varon, Gary Ecelbarger, Joseph Dawson, and Russell McClintock. Additional information: 804-861-2408.

**Oct. 16 & 17, Battle Reenactment, Middletown, VA**

Cedar Creek Battlefield Reenactment for 146<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle. Living history, military demonstrations, battles, special lectures. Proceeds to benefit Cedar Creek Battlefield preservation. For information, reservations: 540-869-2064, [www.cedarcreekbattlefield.org](http://www.cedarcreekbattlefield.org).

**Oct. 29, Anniversary Ceremony, Gettysburg, PA, 10AM**

100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ceremony at the Father William Corby Statue on the battlefield. For information, [wbaker15@cox.net](mailto:wbaker15@cox.net), [www.aoh.fairfax.org](http://www.aoh.fairfax.org).

**Oct. 30, Symposium, Washington, DC, 9AM-4PM**

“The Passage to War” at Navy Memorial Hall. Speakers include Michael Chesson, Stephen Vlladek, Elizabeth Pryor and Russell McClintock. Free lunch if admission is paid by Oct. 22. Proceeds to benefit the Lincoln Archives Digitization Project. Information: 434-250-9921, [www.blueandgrayeducation.org](http://www.blueandgrayeducation.org).

**Oct. 30, Walking Tour, Warrenton, VA 1 & 3 PM**

Walking tour with Col. John S. Mosby & the Mosby Players at Warrenton Visitor’s Center, Old Warrenton. Includes tour of the Old Courthouse. Information: Paula Johnson, 540-341-7019, [pauladrdr@aol.com](mailto:pauladrdr@aol.com).

**Nov. 5, Bearss Symposium, Blue Ridge Summit, PA, 6-10PM**

Battlefield preservation symposium, “An Evening with Ed Bearss.” Noted historian Ed Bearss will discuss the retreat from Gettysburg. Speakers also include Ted Alexander and John Miller. Refreshments. All proceeds go to Washington Township toward purchase of battlefield land at Monterey Pass. Discount for advance tickets. For information, [www.emmitsburg.net/montereypass](http://www.emmitsburg.net/montereypass).

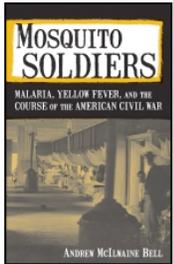
### Ramblings from the Raffle Table

To give Members and guests a second chance to buy, we held over our current Special Raffle of *Tarnished Scalpels: The Court-Martials of Fifty Union Surgeons* by Thomas P. Lowry, M.D. and Jack D. Welsh, M.D. The drawing will be held at this month's meeting.

Just for fun, to go along with a Halloween-y theme for October in our 3/\$1.00 Raffle, we have included several curious books, such as *An Illustrated Guide to Ghosts and Mysterious Occurrences in the Old North State* by Nancy Roberts, *Strange Tales of the Civil War* by Michael Sanders; and a couple of Civil War Curiosities by Webb Garrison. Come see. Good luck — and Happy Halloween!

### Bookshelf (continued from Page 3)

***Mosquito Soldiers: Malaria, Yellow Fever, and the Course of the American Civil War***, by Andrew McIlwaine Bell. Illustrated, appendices, bibliography, 192 pp., 2010, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, La.



While it's acknowledged that disease killed more Civil War soldiers than rifles and cannon shot, author Andrew Bell names the ubiquitous mosquito as the chief villain. Bell describes yellow fever- and malaria-carrying mosquitoes as the "third army," an opponent so fierce it debilitated armies and determined when and where battles were fought. The author details many campaigns that were significantly compromised by malaria and yellow fever, and includes primary materials such as medical reports and newspapers of the period in his research.

Bell's research unearths many interesting, even odd, facts. For example, Arkansas was considered the most malaria-prone area at the time, and a popular myth was that African-American soldiers were immune to the tropical diseases.

Not everyone may agree with Bell's theory that mosquito-borne illnesses were a decisive factor in military operations. But agree or disagree, this book highlights the often underestimated role of disease in the outcome of the War. The book is available at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick.

### MISSION

**TO** cultivate and preserve Frederick County's Civil War heritage and broaden the understanding of the Civil War Era and its impact on our nation.

**TO** explore the many facets of the Civil War from the battlefield to first-person narratives, including guest lectures by writers and historians.

**TO** support historical projects and activities aimed at increasing public interest and appreciation of our Civil War history, both locally and nationally.

### 2010-2011 Board of Directors

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Communications, dues, questions or comments for the Roundtable should be directed to:

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**P.O. Box 3232**  
**Frederick MD 21705-3232**  
[www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org](http://www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org)

### A Call for Public Opinion on Fate of Gettysburg Cyclorama Building

In response to a March 2010 legal ruling, the National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public opinion on the fate of architect Richard Neutra's well-known Cyclorama building at Gettysburg National Military Park before deciding on whether to demolish or save the building. The restored painting now hangs in the new Gettysburg Museum and Visitor Center.

According to Bob Kirby, Gettysburg National Military Park Superintendent, the park asks the public to consider demolition vs. non-demolition options and requests "thoughtful evaluation and comments" on the planning issues and alternatives the public thinks should be considered. The Civil War Preservation Trust favors demolition of the 1961 building and restoring Gettysburg's Cemetery Ridge to its appearance at the time of the 1863 battle.

For further information, go to [www.nps.gov/gett](http://www.nps.gov/gett), click on Park Management, then click on Public Involvement. To email your comments, go to the NPS contact information page.

