# The Camp Olden Gazette

## News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Fall, 2010

#### Presidents Gavel

Fall 2010

I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer and are looking forward to the fall. I also hope everyone enjoys our speakers every month including our very special speaker in July - Pulitzer Prize winner Dr. James McPherson who spoke on the topic of "The Lincoln-McClellan Relationship". He covered McClellan's career from entry into West Point to his dismissal from command of the Army of the Potomac. After a lengthy question and answer session, Dr. McPherson graciously autographed copies of his books for attendees. We had a full house with standing room only. I was extremely pleased and so was the board. I would like to thank Tony Travaglione and his committee for their outstanding efforts to get the word out - it obviously paid off!



Dr. McPherson and Bruce Sirak,

#### Future Meetings:

Join The Camp Olden Civil War Round Table of Hamilton on September 2nd when Dr. David Martin will return to discuss the Union Corps Commanders at Gettysburg and how they would have played together as a baseball team. The October 7<sup>th</sup> meeting will have Michael Wunsch discussing "Philadelphia, City of Jubilee" and the November 4<sup>th</sup> speaker will be Kevin Rawlings discussing his book; "We Were Marching on Christmas Day: A History & Chronicle of Christmas during the Civil War

#### Gettysburg casino controversy:

The casino controversy still rages in Gettysburg.

Here's an editorial and response that was in the Burlington County Times recently:

#### A battle brews in Gettysburg.

People are all fired up about a proposed casino near the sacred Civil War site, forgetting that there's a McDonald's nearby. Though they may be marching to the sound of the guns, critics of the Gettysburg casino are firing blanks. We have trouble in agreeing with the opponents of a proposed casino that would be built near Gettysburg National Military Park. This is the second attempt to put a casino near the site of the famous conflict that has been called the high tide of the Confederacy. In 2006 the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board rejected a proposed casino near the park in Adams County. Gettysburg native and businessman David LeVan, who was part of the earlier effort, is involved in the new initiative.

The Mason-Dixon Resort and Casino would be built just south of the national park on Emmitsburg Road and would include a 600-slot casino and 300-room hotel. It's about a mile from South Cavalry Field, a part of the park that is probably rarely visited. Recently Adams County commissioners- the equivalent of our freeholders - voted 2-1 to approve the plan. It still has to go before the state gaming commission Aug. 31. Supporters and critics have expended plenty of ammunition over the project since it was unveiled.

Adherents believe the project could help the area's economy, while critics say it would dishonor those who fought at the battle-field and possibly drive away heritage tourists. One of the problems with the critics is that many of them don't live in Gettysburg or pay the high taxes. Another problem is that they need a sense of perspective. The casino is hardly "close" to the battlefield. It would be about 3 miles from the southern section of the park that

includes the celebrated Round Tops.

Indeed, if you wanted to visit the casino, you would not even have to drive through Gettysburg itself, but could use Route 15, which comes down from the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Those who love the battlefield would in all likelihood visit it rather than the casino. And if some gamblers decided to tour the park and the town, so much the better for both. Those who argue that the existence of a casino defiles hallowed ground should reflect that a McDonald's is within walking distance of the battlefield. Though it may be a good place for a quick meal, the eatery is hardly one to inspire memories of man's fight for a great cause.

If you're really a history purist, the battlefield was "contaminated" long ago. Huge monuments - the Pennsylvania tribute is especially glaring - were placed all over the field from the 19th century on. Roads were also constructed to facilitate travel. Culp's Hill, where some terrible lighting took place, has an observation tower as well as a paved road leading to the top. None of this was present in July 1863.

These comments should not be taken as an attack on the National Park Service, which has done a wonderful job of preserving and expanding the park in the past 50 years. But one has to recall that many changes have taken place at the battlefield since the guns fell silent more than 140 years ago. If one wants to see a "pure" battlefield, consider tiny Cedar Run in Virginia, which has been preserved by two private groups. There isn't much on its 150 acres except for some interpretive signs. And all around, farmland and quiet fields prevail at this Culpeper County site. There isn't a McDonald's or CVS in sight.

In the end the casino project may have a minimal effect. It could bring in more jobs and revenue to Adams County; then again it could fail in a couple of years. Such is the risk in business ventures. The final verdict must be rendered by the people who live in Adams County and not by historians or Civil War enthusiasts who live hundreds of miles away and don't pay taxes in the community.

And now for the other side of the coin written

## by Camp Olden member Jane Peters Estes published August 22, 2010

Dear Sir:

This letter is in response to your recent editorial entitled "A Battle Brews in Gettysburg" (8/12/10). Please be assured that despite my objection to the proposed casino in Gettysburg, I have not "forgotten that there is a McDonald's nearby." In addition, there is also a Friendly's, several pizza parlors and General Pickett's Buffet (my apologies to the General). While these establishments may sully the landscape, they serve the purpose of providing food for the thousands of people who visit the battlefield each year. While pristine battlefields (i.e. your example of "Cedar Run," which I assume you meant Cedar Creek) are certainly desirable, the reality of modern life is that tourists expect a certain level of comfort when they travel and food is high on the list.

Your next supposition is that, because I do not reside in Gettysburg, I should not be permitted to have a voice in this decision. First, many residents of the town do not agree with the placement of a casino in the area. It has become an extremely divisive local issue. But I would remind you that Gettysburg is a National Parkwhich means that all Americans have stewardship of this land--not just those who reside nearby.

In addition, Soldiers National Cemetery holds the graves of more than 3,500 soldiers who died fighting for what they believed--whether it was to preserve the Union or eliminate slavery. Today the cemetery also has over 6,000 graves from all of America's wars. These individuals gave "...the last full measure of devotion" to their country. Are you suggesting it would be acceptable to build a casino near Arlington National Cemetery? Why should the dead at Gettysburg be treated with any less respect?

Yes, the citizens of Gettysburg pay high taxes. We have high taxes in New Jersey, too. I am sure you remember the promises we were given when casinos came to Atlantic City (lower taxes, assistance for senior citizens, etc.). Have the residents of Atlantic City seen the boon they were assured would accompany the advent of

casinos in their town? Has the presence of casinos improved their quality of life or, as you implied, "helped the area's economy?"

You question whether a casino would "....drive away heritage tourists." While casinos and historic sites may not be mutually exclusive, they do not usually attract the same clientele. In fact, they attract very different audiences. When was the last time you saw a Boy Scout troop, school groups, or children who are home-schooled visit a casino? They are, however, at Gettysburg all the time.

I agree with your comment that the battlefield was "contaminated long ago." It started almost immediately after the battle ended in 1863. But that does not mean we need to continue this trend or worsen the conditions--many of us are working diligently to preserve the land and its historical significance for future generations. Funds have been raised to bury electrical wires underground to improve the view at the site of the High Water Mark. A new visitors' center opened less than two years ago. Land that was cleared of trees at the time of the battle has been restored to its 1863 appearance. Many individuals and organizations are supporting the effort to help "de-contaminate" the battlefield as much as possible.

So you believe that only the residents of Adams County should determine the future of this important national landmark? Extrapolating on your supposition, only the residents of Washington, D.C. would determine whether a casino could be built next to the White House. Is this truly the legacy you want to leave for future generations?

Next year will mark the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War. Why not plan a trip to Gettysburg, walk the battlefield, visit the historic buildings - then see how you feel about a casino in this national treasure?

It would be most appreciated if you would reconsider your opinion on this topic.

"I must keep some standard of principle fixed within myself." - Abraham Lincoln

I couldn't agree with Jane more!

Your Obedient Servant,

Bruce

### Reminder --- Bring A Dish!

Remember hospitality for the **September 2<sup>nd</sup>** meeting is a covered dish. Bring your favorite last taste of summer or first taste of fall food to share. **Special start time is 6:00 PM.** •

#### Junior Camp Olden:

On June 19th the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table hosted "Junior Camp Olden" at the Civil War and Native American Museum. There were twenty campers in attendance (five walk ons) who were divided into three groups and shuttled between the six stations. Each station presentation lasted thirty minutes. There was a morning break and an hour lunch and the last event was the scrimmage at two o'clock. Considering that two new people were running it (John Maleski and myself), I felt the event went very well. All the parents I spoke with were very pleased and anxious to bring their child back next year.

Of course an event like this doesn't just happen. There are people working behind the scenes to pull it off. I now wish to thank the people that made this possible: Bruce Sirak, Andrejco, Pete Andrejco, Bob Dunphy, Conrad Brenfleck, Kim Daly, Heather McClintock, Jon Bachmann, Connor Timmony, Doug Mount, Dana Mount and Bruce Smith. I also want to thank Doug Mount's buddy Norman whose last name I did not get. Also, Bob Dunphy and his associates Jeff Underwood, Rob Stevenson and Pat Harding. They all have my sincere thanks! If I left anyone out, please do not think it intentional. Last, I wish to thank John Maleski. He was the driving force behind this event. (Take my word for it) In an incredibly short span of time, he put this thing together and made it work.

On behalf of John, myself and the Camp Olden Civil War Roundtable, thanks to everyone who was involved. See you next year!

Warren M. Spengler, Event Coordinator Camp Olden Civil War Roundtable. ◆

#### Special Event:

Summer is almost over and autumn will be on its way with thoughts of ghosts and goblins, witches and vampires. What better way to spend an October evening than learning about Victorian morning customs!

On October 27th Camp Olden CWRT member Jane Peters Estes will bring Victorian death and dying to life with her "tongue - in - cheek" look at Civil War era funeral customs. Jane will wear Victorian-era clothing during the presentation and the following question and answer session.

She will speak the dying words of some famous people, explore some of the odder aspects of that time and present a display of mourning memorabilia along with a brief slide show demonstrating headstone symbolism. As she says "A virtual walk though the cemetery without leaving your seat".

Circle **Wednesday, October 27** at 7 p.m. on your calendar to go to the Belmar Free Public Library, 517 10th Ave., Belmar, NJ. Call 732-681-0775 to reserve a seat and get directions if necessary. ◆

#### Who Am I?

I was the only soldier to win two Congressional Medals of Honor during the Civil War and was the brother of a Union General. Although only a teenager, I enlisted as a private in Company H, 21<sup>st</sup> Ohio on September 2, 1861. I saw action at Stones River, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, and in the Atlanta Campaign, before being mustered out of the service at the completion of my three-year term on October 10, 1864.

Appointed second lieutenant in the 6th Michigan Cavalry, on November 8, 1864, I was promptly assigned to the staff of my brother in the Shenandoah Valley. I moved with his Division to the lines around Petersburg and participated in the final victory at that place and in the campaign to Appomattox.

On April 3, 1865, I captured a rebel flag in a fight at Namozine Church. Later that month I was given the Medal of Honor for this exploit. Three days after my first heroic display, I earned a second medal at the battle of Sayler's Creek. In this action,

according to General Sheridan, "he leaped his horse over the enemy's works, being one of the first to enter them, and captured two stand of colors, having his horse shot under him and received a severe wound." In this charge, with the 2nd Ohio Cavalry, I was wounded in the face but after turning the captured colors over to my brother I wanted to return to the fray. He had to place me under arrest to get me the needed medical attention. I was also honored by being brevetted through grades to major of volunteers and later to lieutenant colonel in the regulars.

After the war I was commissioned directly into the regular army and soon joined my brother's regiment, the 7th Cavalry, with which I went to my death fighting Indians in Montana. (Mitchell, Joseph B., "The Badge of Gallantry")

Who Am I? (Answer on page 6.)

Source: Historical Times Encyclopedia of the Civil War ♦



The Camp Olden CWRT Civil War and Native American Museum has undergone some recent renovation. The shutters have been painted Union blue and Confederate green. It looks great! Stop by and visit the Civil War and Native American exhibits and the reference library. Hours of Operation are 1 PM to 4 PM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> full weekend of the month! ◆



## Trostle Farm - Pennsylvania Style Bank Barn



"Doors Open Gettysburg" - sponsored by the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, permits interior access to several historic buildings for one day. Most visitors to the Gettysburg National Park only get to view the Trostle barn from the outside. Below are pictures of the interior of the barn.



1 Interior of the ground level



2 Brick Ventilator



3 Hand Hewn Post



4 Hole from Confederate Artillery Shell



5 One of the rooms in the basement area

Submitted by Leslie Peck and Terri Paglione

#### Coming Events -

Friday, September 10 - Sunday, September 12 - Civil War Weekend at Historic Cold Spring Village living history museum, Cape May. Living history, battles 2 PM each day with street fighting through village, Sunday service.

Sunday, September 12 - Hamilton Township's annual SeptemberFest Community Day will be held in Veterans Park.

Friday, September 24 - Sunday, September 26 - Civil War weekend for youth at Teetertown Ravine/Mountain Farm Section, Hunterdon County Department Parks, Califon.

Saturday, October 9 - Sunday, October 10 - 15. Reenactment in conjunction with town's Fall Festival at Liberty Park, Allentown.

Saturday, October 9 - Sunday, October 10 - Annual Civil War weekend at historic Mullica Hill. Skirmishes, weapon displays, drill, camp life. Ladies auxiliary demonstrations, Saturday evening guided lantern tour of camps. Sunday morning fashion show, period church service. •

#### Answer to "Who am I?"

Thomas Ward Custer (1845-1876), brother of George Armstrong Custer. ◆

#### New or Renewing Members!

The membership form for 2010 membership (new or renewal) in the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table is available at:

http://www.campolden.org/pdf/memberapp.pdf .

Share your experiences with round table members. Explore a battlefield? See an interesting museum exhibit? Read a new Civil War book or reread a favorite one? Jot down a couple of lines and send your photos and your thoughts to <u>oldennewsletter@optonline.net</u> or mail your article to:

C. & M. Mazzocchi 1430 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue Wall, NJ 07719

Camp Olden
Civil War Round Table
and Museum
P.O. Box 10565
Hamilton, New Jersey 08690



For meeting information visit us on the Web: www.campolden.org.