



Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

August 14, 2025

The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - August 20, 1866

“The GAR Civil War Museum and Archive is a hidden gem in the Holmesburg section of Northeast Philadelphia”



Walt Lafty



Mary Wible

Join Old Baldy CWRT members Mary Wible and Walt Lafty as they share the history of the Grand Army of the Republic Museum and Archive, highlight parts of the collection, share artifacts, and provide samples of records and documents of Civil War veterans and the interesting stories behind them.

The Mission of the Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum & Library is to preserve the heritage and history of the Civil War era through the presentation of historical programs, forums and exhibitions designed to promote a better understanding of American history. The Museum is located in the historically certified Lewis-Pattison House, 8110 Frankford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19136.

Meeting Notice

Join us at 7:15 PM on Thursday, August 14th

Please note: We will be meeting at the Rohrer Center. And will also gather for the pre-meeting dinner at the Kettle & Grill.

If you are not already receiving Old Baldy communications, email oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net at least 24hrs prior to request the Zoom link for the program.

Watch for the usual meeting reminders and Zoom links in your email.

"Members, and Friends of the Roundtable who receive our email communications, will automatically receive the Zoom link and do not need to request it"

Notes from the President

I hope your summer is going well and you have been able to see some interesting places, enjoy a little vacation and take some time to relax. A big thank you for displaying so much support at our mid-afternoon meeting last month featuring **Dr. Alys Beverton**. We return to the Rohrer Center this month to hear **Walt Lafty** and **Mary Wible** discuss the extremely interesting Philadelphia's Grand Army of the Republic Museum and their holdings. The meeting will start at the regular time of **7:15 PM**. For those who like socializing and sharing a meal together, a group of us meet at the **Kettle and Grill, 230 N Maple Ave, Marlton around 5:30PM** prior to the meeting. Please join us!

I have some fantastic news. Old Baldy won the **2025 Matthew Borowick Marketing Award**. Rich compiled all the marketing activities we've done and drafted the successful submission. Matthew Borowick will join us for dinner on Thursday November 13th and make the award presentation himself at our regular meeting.

I am very happy to announce that the Executive Board unanimously approved **Ted Leventhal's** nomination to replace Barney as a board member. Congratulations Ted and welcome aboard! In more great news, other members came forward last month to fill some critical vacancies.

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Paul Prentiss
President, OBCWRT

Kevin Sekula (our Facebook manager) volunteered to replace the very talented **Dave Gilson** as the Programs Chairperson, **Randy Acorcey** will oversee our Zoom programs, but we still require a Zoom meeting coordinator to assist Randy with meetings and setup, **Mike Di Paolo** will coordinate and administer our very popular "presenting author" book raffle and our lovely **Debbie Jankowski** has volunteered to handle mailing the physical newsletters. When you have a moment, please thank these members for stepping forward and volunteering their valuable time and talents. It is only through members like them that we can keep our Round Table alive and healthy. We still need a person to volunteer as Treasurer as Cal, our vice president, is acting in that capacity. Don't forget that the GEN Meade Society has graciously invited our members to join them on an exciting "**General Meade in Maryland & Pennsylvania 1862-1863**" excursion October 11, 12 & 13. Visit their website at <https://generalmeadesociety.org/> for information.

Save the date! Our picnic will be held on Saturday 13-Sep from 11-4 PM at the Red Bank Battlefield Park located along the Delaware River in National Park, Gloucester County, NJ. The reservation is all approved, but we need volunteers to assist with the food menu, set-up and clean-up. Please contact Paul Prentiss at 856-745-8336 or pprentissfamily@gmail.com.

Just two more items. With our 50th anniversary less than 18 months away, please let vice-president **Cal Kinsel**, francal@comcast.net, know if you are interested in working with the planning committee. Preliminary plans are to have the lunch event at the Adelphia Restaurant. We are in the middle of our big **Boscov Friends Helping Friends (FHF)** Fund Raiser. We need volunteers to sell the extremely popular money-saving coupon for \$5 to our friends, family and at the entrance of local Boscov stores. Please contact **Frank Barletta** to get tickets and volunteer at Frank.Barletta@comcast.net.

I look forward to seeing you on Thursday the 14th. Have a great summer, try to stay cool, keep hydrated and wear plenty of sunblock!

Paul Prentiss, President

In remembrance of Joseph George Bilby September 2, 1943 - July 21, 2025



Joseph George Bilby

A supporter and friend of Old Baldy CWRT, Joe Bilby, passed away on July 21, at the age of 81. He spoke to our Round Table on NJ African Americans in the Civil War and hosted us on a tour of the National Guard Militia Museum. Joe is perhaps best-known as a scholar of New Jersey's military history with a focus on the Civil War, and for his work with the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey. He had many interests in Garden State history included a wide range of subjects, as author, editor or co-author of twenty-one books and over 400 articles on New Jersey history and folklore, military history and outdoor subjects in both Internet and print venues and a columnist for The Civil War News and New Jersey Sportsmen News. We wish to extend our condolences to the Bilby family.

Member Profile - Michael Di Paolo

by Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member

When Philadelphia-born Mike Di Paolo was attending Drexel University for business and accounting in the mid-1970s, a time had come for him and his friends to pick an elective. Not wanting to overthink it, they chose the History of the United States Civil War. Then a light bulb, not too bright, came on. The group decided that since they had already learned enough about the Civil War in grade school and high school.... they would not go to the class unless the



Michael Di Paolo

outcome of the war changed! We have to ask: Do class clowns succeed? Does one who was born in 1956 end up as an accountant and not a baseball player because he could not hit? Yes, and yes. "Somehow I passed the course."

It is true that Mike became an accountant after he graduated from college in 1978. He also was a supply chain manager and an energy procurement manager at companies in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Retired from Solvey Specialty Polymers USA after 33 years, he and his wife Denise have downsized, moving from Wenonah, NJ to West Deptford in 2021.

Way before marrying Denise, before even thinking about adulting, Mike lived his young life in South Philly. In 1969, at the age of 13, his family migrated to South Jersey—the Chews Landing section of Gloucester Township, to be exact. He moved to Audubon in 1978 and to Wenonah seven years later.

Throughout his life, Mike has been influenced by many people, but no one quite as much as his dad, who supported Mike in school and life endeavors. "Although I was born late by his age with a large gap between me and my sister, he was always there for me. He worked two jobs; he made sure I had what I needed to survive. He instilled qualities of ethics and faith in me."

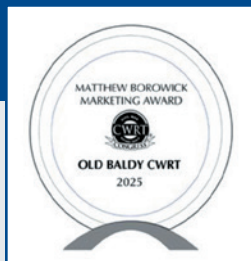
Many people may not know that Mike was a volunteer firefighter for 42 years; that he once sat on the board of directors of Robins' Nest Inc. and Gateway Regional High School; that he plays in the South Jersey Senior Softball League as well as the PA/NJ Baseball Simulation League; that he cooks Thanksgiving dinner, "Stay out of my kitchen!"

What we know at Old Blady is that Mike joined us in 2020. He was taking classes on everything from politics to sports at the Center for Cultural Engagement at Camden County College when he noticed a group with what looked like a plastic flat version of the head of General George G. Meade's 30-year-old war horse Baldy, holding meetings at the same location. He was intrigued enough to apply for membership. "I became interested in history about 10 years ago when I started taking the classes. Before that history was not even in my top ten." Mike is interested in all phases of U.S. history, and notes the abundance of material available on the Civil War and related issues.

Returning to Meade's horse—Mike took Flat Old Baldy to Greece this summer and gave him the grand tour. The flat celebrity has been traveling all over the world and back for the past four years. "It was fantastic. We were visiting relatives and touring for the first time. We did get some strange looks at the Acropolis Museum and at the Parthenon. It definitely added to the trip."

Mike's family includes two children and five grandchildren. He and Denise have been married for 47 years. (We apologize to Mike for all the teasing.)

Old Baldy earns National Marketing Award



**by Rich Jankowski
OBCWRT Past President**

Our Round Table has earned another award from the Civil War Round Table Congress. The Matthew Borowick Marketing Award "recognizes a local CWRT for presenting itself to members, enthusiasts, community partners, potential supporters, and others by using a variety of methods and channels. It requires thought, planning, and logistical support." The key characteristics judged were strategy, results, vision, and leadership. The award was a culmination of the work that has been done over the years to spread the OB message to people in different pockets of our local and, more recently, the national Civil War community.

The OB Board thanks all members, partners, and supporters who have contributed to the design and implementation of our successful marketing program. The networking, commitment, and outreach have raised awareness of OB CWRT in the national Civil War community and regional history community. This is the third Congress award OB CWRT has earned in the last four years as we continue to learn and grow while pursuing our

OBCWRT Awards

American Battlefield Trust
for 25 Year Service to the Trust
presented to OBCWRT

The Society For Women
and the Civil War
for Service to the Society
presented to OBCWRT

Civil War Roundtable Congress
The Wallace L. Rueckel
Innovation Award
presented to OBCWRT (2022)

Civil War Roundtable Congress
Sustainability Challenge
presented to OBCWRT
(2023)

Kevin M. Hale Award
for best Historical
Newsletter in New Jersey
(2017, 2022)

Candid
Gold Transparency Award
presented to OBCWRT
(2024)

Matthew Borowick
Marketing Award
presented to OBCWRT
(2025)

mission of education and preservation of the Civil War Era. The Board thanks the CWRT Congress for recognizing the work OB CWRT has done in promoting itself and setting an example for other CWRTs and history groups to emulate, learn from, and adapt in promoting their organization in their community. Matthew Borowick will present the award to our Round Table at the November 2025 meeting. Please plan to attend the ceremony and continue to spread our message within your network.

Today in Civil War History

1861 Wednesday, August 14

Eastern Theater

Unrest and indiscipline in the Union Army defending Washington is turned to mutiny in the 79th New York Regiment. The ringleaders are arrested.

Trans-Mississippi

General John C. Frémont, troubled by continuing unrest amounting almost to ferment, puts a blanket of martial law over St Louis.

1861 Thursday, August 14

Western Theater

Confederate troops under Major General Edmund Kirby Smith move out from Knoxville, Tennessee. His aim is the fertile valley of the Kentucky River, and his march will cause considerable excitement in Kentucky and Ohio.

1863 Friday, August 14

Eastern Theater

Serrell's battery is nearing completion. According to his original calculations, 2300 troops would be able to dump enough sandbags onto the sunken foundations to provide a firm firing position.

1864 Sunday, August 14

Eastern Theater

Sheridan withdraws from Early's Confederate Army in the Shenandoah, planning to go on the defensive until he receives reinforcements.

Western Theater

Sherman's bombardment of Atlanta continues, while his troops extend their trenches toward the Southern lines.

American Civil War Books

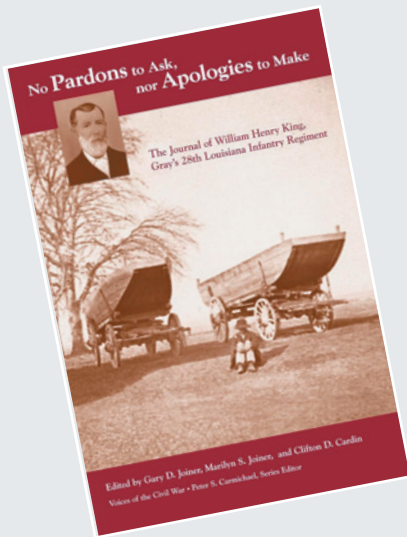
(to be released August 2025)

Compiled by Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member

No Pardons to Ask, Nor Apologies to Make: The Journal of William Henry King, Gray's 28th Louisiana Infantry Regiment (Voices of the Civil War)

by editors Gary D. Joiner, Marilyn S. Joiner, Clifton D. Cardin/University of Tennessee Press

William Henry King began war service in 1862 in Louisiana and ended it in 1865 in Camden, Arkansas. During this period he chronicled action in the Trans-Mississippi theater, producing a diary that yields one of the most important accounts from a Confederate enlisted man.

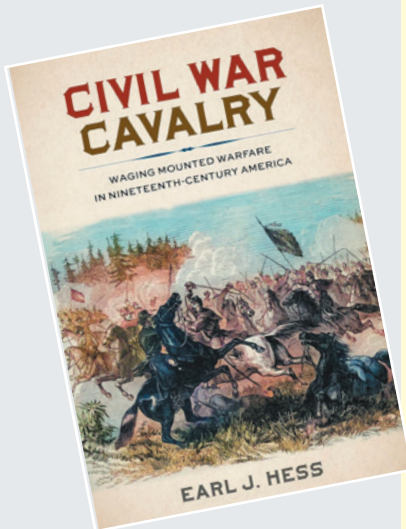


No Pardons to Ask, Nor Apologies to Make is a gritty look into the life of a soldier, with no romantic gloss. While most journals record the mundane day-to-day routine, King's consistently detailed entries—notable for their literary style, King's venomous wit, and his colorful descriptions—cover a wide array of matters pertaining to the Confederate experience in the West. King's observations about his superiors, the Confederacy, contraband, and the under-reported Trans-Mississippi campaign are especially striking. Though his long service demonstrates a certain loyalty to the Confederate cause, he writes sharp criticisms of his superiors, of military discipline, and of contemporaneous social and class conditions. His discontent is rooted within a fiery sense of independence that conflicts with centralized authority, whether it takes the form of military, government, or class control. Few published diaries capture the tension and turmoil that existed in the Southern ranks or the class resentment that festered in some quarters of the Confederacy. No Pardons to Ask, Nor Apologies to Make makes an important contribution to understanding how class functioned in the Confederate command and also provides a much-needed account of action in the Trans-Mississippi theater, where the primary sources are extremely slim.

Civil War Cavalry: Waging Mounted Warfare in Nineteenth Century America

by Earl J. Hess/LSU Press

The Civil War produced the largest cavalry force ever raised in American history. In *Civil War Cavalry*, Earl J. Hess examines that force comprehensively and from new perspectives, challenging standard views of the war's mounted arm. Hess surveys the organization, training, administration, arming, and mounting of cavalry units and examines mounted troops' tactical formations and maneuvers. He addresses the nature of cavalry operations, discussing the mounted charge, dismounted fighting, long-distance raids, the varied types of weapons used by troopers, and the difficulty of supplying horses. Hess also brings concepts from the burgeoning field of animal history to argue that cavalry mounts exercised a degree of agency in shaping their role in the large military machine. *Civil War Cavalry* is a sweeping and innovative history, establishing a new criterion for understanding how Americans waged mounted warfare in the mid-nineteenth century.



Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle on Brawner's Farm, August 28, 1862

by Lance J. Herdegen and Bill Backus/Savas Beatie

The 1st Michigan Colored Regiment: Free Men Who Fought Slavery

by Maurice Imhoff/The History Press

Rediscovering the USS Alligator: The U.S. Navy's "Lost" First Submarine

by Daniel J. Basta/Atmosphere Press

Gettysburg (Great Battles)

by Adam I. P. Smith/Oxford University Press

Reconstruction in Mississippi, 1862-1877

by Jere Nash/University Press of Mississippi

Decisions at Chancellorsville: The Sixteen Critical Decisions That Defined the Battle

by Sarah K. Bierle/University of Tennessee Press

To Succeed or Perish:

The Diaries of Sergeant Edmund Trent Eggleston, Company G, 1st Mississippi Light Artillery Regiment

by editors Lawrence Lee Hewitt, Thomas E. Schott,

Marc Kunis/University of Tennessee Press

***A Yankee Horseman in the Shenandoah Valley:
The Civil War Letters of John H. Black,
Twelfth Pennsylvania Cavalry***

***by editors David J. Cole, Stephen D. Engle/
University of Tennessee Press***

***The Union Assaults at Vicksburg:
Grant Attacks Pemberton, May 17-22, 1863***

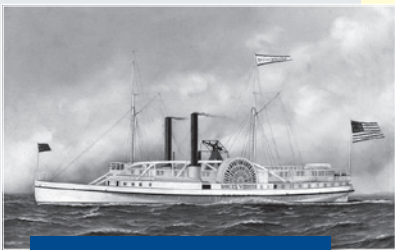
by Timothy B. Smith/University Press of Kansas

Hospital Transport Service

***by Lewis Pierpont Brockett
Woman's Work
in the Civil War
1867***



Frederick Law Olmsted



"Daniel Webster (No. 2)"

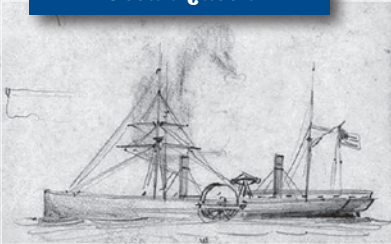


Frederick Newman Knapp

Among the deeds which entitle the United States Sanitary Commission to the lasting gratitude of the American people, was the organization and maintenance of the "Hospital Transport Service" in the Spring and Summer of 1862. When the Army of the Potomac removed from the high lands about Washington, to the low marshy and miasmatic region of the Peninsula, it required but little discernment to predict that extensive sickness would prevail among the troops; this, and the certainty of sanguinary battles soon to ensue, which would multiply the wounded beyond all previous precedents, were felt, by the officers of the Sanitary Commission, as affording sufficient justification, if any were needed for making an effort to supplement the provision of the Medical Bureau, which could not fail to be inadequate for the coming emergency. Accordingly early in April, 1862, Mr. F. L. Olmstead, the Secretary of the Commission, having previously secured the sanction of the Medical Bureau, made application to the Quartermaster-General to allow the Commission to take in hand some of the transport steamboats of his department, of which a large number were at that time lying idle, to fit them up and furnish them in all respects suitable for the reception and care of sick and wounded men, providing surgeons and other necessary attendance without cost to Government. After tedious delays and disappointments of various kinds—one fine large boat having been assigned, partially furnished by the Commission, and then with drawn—an order was at length received, authorizing the Commission to take possession of any of the Government transports, not in actual use, which might at that time be lying at Alexandria. Under this authorization the Daniel Webster was assigned to the Commission on the 25th of April, and having been fitted up, the stores shipped, and the hospital corps for it assembled, it reached York River on the 30th of April.

Other boats were subsequently, (several of them, very soon) assigned to the Commission, and were successively fitted up, and after receiving their freights of sick and wounded, sent to Washington, Philadelphia, New York and other points with their precious cargoes, which were to be transferred to the general hospitals. Among these vessels were the "Ocean Queen," the "S. R. Spaulding," the "Elm City," the "Daniel Webster," No. 2, the "Knickerbocker," the clipper ships Euterpe and St. Mark, and the Commission chartered the "Wilson Small," and the "Elizabeth," two small steamers, as tender and supply boats. The Government were vacillating in their management in regard to these vessels, often taking them from the Commission just when partially or wholly fitted up, on the plea of requiring them for some purpose and assigning another vessel, often poorly adapted to their service, on board of which the labor of fitting and supplying must be again undergone, when that too would be withdrawn.

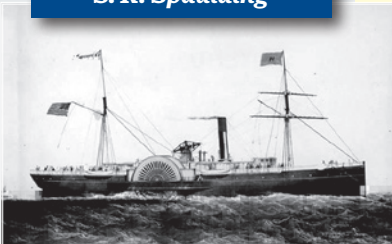
To each of these hospital transports several ladies were assigned by the Commission to take charge of the diet of the patients, assist in dressing their wounds, and generally to care for their comfort and welfare. Mr. Olmstead, and Mr. Knapp, the Assistant Secretary, had also in their company, or as they

**Katharine Wormeley****Mrs. William P. Griffin****Mrs. Eliza Howland****Georginana Woolsey****"Ocean Queen"**

pleasantly called them, members of their staff, four ladies, who remained in the service, not leaving the vicinity of the Peninsula, until the transfer of the troops to Acquia Creek and Alexandria late in August. These ladies remained for the most part on board the Daniel Webster, or the Wilson Small, or wherever the headquarters of the Commission in the field might be. Their duties consisted in nursing, preparing food for the sick and wounded, dressing wounds, in connexion with the surgeons and medical students, and in general, making themselves useful to the great numbers of wounded and sick who were placed temporarily under their charge. Often they provided them with clean beds and hospital clothing, and suitable food in preparation for their voyage to Washington, Philadelphia, or New York. These four ladies were Miss Katherine P. Wormeley, of Newport, R. I., Mrs. William P. Griffin, of New York, one of the executive board of the Woman's Central Association of Relief, Mrs. Eliza W. Howland, wife of Colonel (afterward General) Joseph Howland, and her sister, Miss Georgiana Woolsey, both of New York.

**Harriet Whetten**

Among those who were in charge of the Hospital Transports for one or more of their trips to the cities we have named, and by their tenderness and gentleness comforted and cheered the poor sufferers, and often by their skilful nursing rescued them from the jaws of death, were Mrs. George T. Strong, the wife of the Treasurer of the Commission, who made four or five trips; Miss Harriet Douglas Whetten, who served throughout the Peninsular Campaign as head of the Women's Department on the S. R. Spaulding; Mrs. Laura Trotter, (now Mrs. Charles Parker) of Boston, who occupied a similar position on the Daniel Webster; Mrs. Bailey, at the head of the Women's Department on the Elm City; Mrs. Charlotte Bradford, a Massachusetts lady who made several trips on the Elm City and Knickerbocker; Miss Amy M. Bradley, whose faithful services are elsewhere recorded; Mrs. Annie Etheridge, of the Fifth Michigan, Miss Bradley's faithful and zealous co-worker; Miss Helen L. Gilson, who here as well as everywhere else proved herself one of the most eminently useful women in the service; Miss M. Gardiner, who was on several of the steamers; Mrs. Balustier, of New York, one of the most faithful and self-sacrificing of the ladies of the Hospital Transport service; Mrs. Mary Morris Husband, of Philadelphia, who made four voyages, and whose valuable services are elsewhere recited; Mrs. Bellows, the wife of the President of the Commission, who made one voyage; Mrs. Merritt, and several other ladies.

**Ellie Strong****"S. R. Spaulding"**

But let us return to the ladies who remained permanently at the Commission's headquarters in the Peninsula. Their position and duties were in many respects more trying and arduous than those who accompanied the sick and wounded to the hospitals of the cities. The Daniel Webster, which, as we have said, reached York River April 30, discharged her stores except what would be needed for her trip to New York, and having placed them in a store-house on shore, began to supply the sick in camp and hospital, and to receive such patients on board as it was deemed expedient to send to New York. These were washed, their clothing changed, they were fed and put in good clean beds, and presently sent off to their destination. The staff then commenced putting the Ocean Queen, which had just been sent to them, into a similar condition of fitness for receiving the sick and wounded. She had not, on her arrival, a single bunk or any stores on board; and before any preparation could be made, the regimental and brigade surgeons on shore (who never would wait) began to send their sick and wounded on board; remonstrance was useless, and the whole party worked with all their might

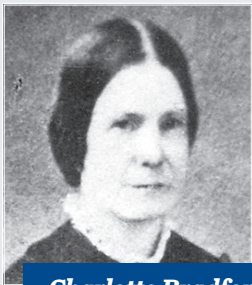
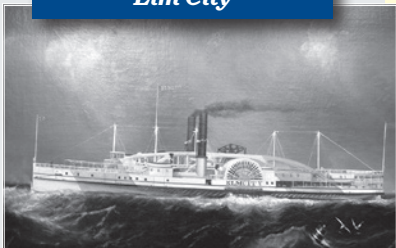


Laura Trotter



Mollie Bailey

"Elm City"



Charlotte Bradford



Amy Morris Bradley

to make what provision was possible. One of the party went on shore, found a rebel cow at pasture, shot her, skinned her with his pocket-knife, and brought off the beef. A barrel of Indian meal, forgotten in discharging the freight of the vessel, was discovered in the hold and made into gruel almost by magic, and cups of it were ladled out to the poor fellows as they tottered in, with their faces flushed with typhoid fever; by dint of constant hard work, bunks were got up, stores brought on board, two draught oxen left behind by Franklin's Division found and slaughtered, and nine hundred patients having been taken on board, the vessel's anchors were weighed and she went out to sea. This was very much the experience of the party during their stay in the Peninsula. Hard, constant, and hurrying work were the rule, a day of comparative rest was the exception. Dividing themselves into small parties of two or three, they boarded and supplied with the stores of the Commission, the boats which the Medical officers of the army had pressed into the service filled with wounded and sent without comfort, food or attendance, on their way to the hospitals in the vicinity of Fortress Monroe; superintended the shipping of patients on the steamers which returned from the North; took account of the stores needed by these boats and saw that they were sent on board; fitted up the new boats furnished to the Commission by the Quartermaster's orders; received, sorted and distributed the patients brought to the landing on freight-cars, according to orders; fed, cleansed, and gave medical aid and nursing to all of them, and selected nurses for those to be sent North; and when any great emergency came did their utmost to meet it.

The amount of work actually performed was very great; but it was performed in such a cheerful triumphant spirit, a spirit that rejoiced so heartily in doing something to aid the nation's defenders, in sacrificing everything that they might be saved, that it was robbed of half its irksomeness and gloom, and most of the zealous workers retained their health and vigor even in the miasmatic air of the bay and its estuaries. Miss Wormeley, one of the transport corps, has supplied, partly from her own pen, and partly from that of Miss Georgiana Woolsey, one of her co-workers, some vivid pictures of their daily life, which, with her permission, we here reproduce from her volume on the "United States Sanitary Commission," published in 1863. "The last hundred patients were brought on board" (imagine any of the ships, it does not matter which) "late last night. Though these night-scenes are part of our daily living, a fresh eye would find them dramatic. We are awakened in the dead of night by a sharp steam-whistle, and soon after feel ourselves clawed by little tugs on either side of our big ship, bringing off the sick and wounded from the shore. And, at once, the process of taking on hundreds of men—many of them crazed with fever—begins. There is the bringing of the stretchers up the side-ladder between the two boats; the stopping at the head of it, where the names and home addresses of all who can speak are written down, and their knapsacks and little treasures numbered and stacked; then the placing of the stretchers on the platform; the row of anxious faces above and below deck; the lantern held over the hold; the word given to 'Lower;' the slow-moving ropes and pulleys; the arrival at the bottom; the turning down of the anxious faces; the lifting out of the sick man, and the lifting him into his bed; and then the sudden change from cold, hunger and friendlessness, into positive comfort and satisfaction, winding up with his invariable verdict, if he can speak,—'This is just like home!'

"We have put 'The Elm City' in order, and she began to fill up last night. I wish you could hear the men after they are put into bed. Those who can speak, speak with a will; the others grunt, or murmur their satisfaction. 'Well, this bed is most too soft; I don't know as I shall sleep, for thinking of it,' 'What have you got there?' 'That is bread; wait till I put butter on it.' 'Butter, on soft bread!' he slowly ejaculates, as if not sure that he isn't Aladdin with a genie at work upon him. Instances of such high unselfishness happen daily, that, though I forget them daily, I feel myself strengthened in my trust in human nature, without making any reflections about it. Last night, a man comfortably put to bed in a middle berth (there were three tiers, and the middle one incomparably the best) seeing me point to the upper berth as the place to put the man on an approaching stretcher, cried out: 'Stop! put me up there. Guess I can stand h'isting better'n him.' It was agony to both.

"I have a long history to tell you, one of these days, of the gratefulness of the men. I often wish,—as I give a comfort to some poor fellow, and see the sense of rest it gives him, and hear the favorite speech: 'O, that's good, it's just as if mother was here,'—that the man or woman who supplied that comfort were by to see how blessed it is. Believe me, you may all give and work in the earnest hope that you alleviate suffering, but none of you realize what you do; perhaps you can't conceive of it, unless you could see your gifts in use. * * * *



"Typical Hospital Ward"

"We are now on board 'The Knickerbocker,' unpacking and arranging stores, and getting pantries and closets in order. I am writing on the floor, interrupted constantly to join in a laugh. Miss —is sorting socks, and pulling out the funny little balls of yarn, and big darning—needles stuck in the toes, with which she is making a fringe across my back. Do spare us the darning—needles! Reflect upon us, rushing in haste to the linen closet, and plunging our hands into the bale of stockings! I certainly will make a collection of sanitary clothing. I solemnly aver that yesterday I found a pair of drawers made for a case of amputation at the thigh. And the slippers! Only fit for pontoon bridges!"

This routine of fitting up the ships as they arrived, and of receiving the men on board as they came from the front, was accompanied by constant hard work in meeting requisitions from regiments, with ceaseless battlings for transportation to get supplies to the front for camps and hospitals; and was diversified by short excursions, which we will call "special relief;" such, for instance, as the following:—



Annie Etheridge

"At midnight two steamers came alongside 'The Elm City,' each with a hundred sick, bringing word that 'The Daniel Webster No. 2' (a sidewheel vessel, not a Commission boat) was aground at a little distance, with two hundred more, having no one in charge of them, and nothing to eat. Of course they had to be attended to. So, amidst the wildest and most beautiful storm of thunder and lightning, four of us pulled off to her in a little boat, with tea, bread, brandy, and beef—essence. (No one can tell how it tries my nerves to go toppling round at night in little boats, and clambering up ships' sides on little ladders). We fed them,—the usual process. Poor fellows! they were so crazy!—And then 'The Wissahickon' came alongside to transfer them to 'The Elm City.' Only a part of them could go in the first load. Dr. Ware, with his constant thoughtfulness, made me go in her, to escape returning in the small boat. Just as we pushed off, the steam gave out, and we drifted end on to the shore. Then a boat had to put off from 'The Elm City,' with a line to tow us up. All this time the thunder was incessant, the rain falling in torrents, whilst every second the beautiful crimson lightning flashed the whole scene open to us. Add to this, that there were three men alarmingly ill, and (thinking to be but a minute in reaching the other ship) I had not even a drop of brandy for them. Do you wonder, therefore, that I forgot your letters?"



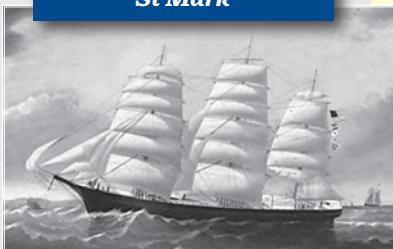
Helen Gilson

Or, again, the following:—

"Sixty men were heard of as lying upon the railroad without food, and no one to look after them. Some of us got at once into the stern—wheeler 'Wissahickon,' which is the Commission's carriage, and, with provisions, basins, towels, soap, blankets, etc., went up to the railroad bridge, cooking tea and spreading bread and butter as we went. A tremendous thunder—storm came up, in the midst of which the men were found, put on freight—cars, and pushed to the landing;—fed, washed, and taken on the tug to 'The Elm City.' Dr. Ware, in his hard working on shore, had found fifteen other sick men without food or shelter,—there being 'no room' in the tent—hospital. He had studied the neighborhood extensively for shanties; found one, and put his men in it for the night. In the morning we ran up on the tug, cooking breakfast for them as we ran, scrambling eggs in a wash—basin over a spirit—lamp:—and such eggs! nine in ten addled! It must be understood that wash—basins in the rear of an army are made of tin."

And here is one more such story: "We were called to go on board 'The Wissahickon,' from thence to 'The Sea—shore' and run down in the latter to

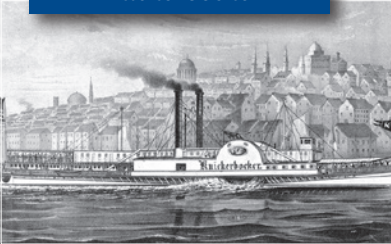
"St Mark"



West Point, to bring off twenty-five men said to be lying there sick and destitute. Two doctors went with us. After hunting an hour for 'The Sea-shore' in vain, and having got as low as Cumberland, we decided (we being Mrs. Howland and I, for the doctors were new and docile, and glad to leave the responsibility upon us women) to push on in the tug, rather than leave the men another night on the ground, as a heavy storm of wind and rain had been going on all the day. The pilot remonstrated, but the captain approved; and, if the firemen had not suddenly let out the fires, and detained us two hours, we might have got our men on board, and returned, comfortably, soon after dark. But the delay lost us the precious daylight. It was night before the last man was got on board. There were fifty-six of them, ten very sick ones. The boat had a little shelter-cabin. As we were laying mattresses on the floor, whilst the doctors were finding the men, the captain stopped us, refusing to let us put typhoid fever below the deck, on account of the crew, he said, and threatening to push off, at once, from the shore. Mrs. Howland and I looked at him! I did the terrible, and she the pathetic,—and he abandoned the contest. The return passage was rather an anxious one. The river is much obstructed with sunken ships and trees; the night was dark, and we had to feel our way, slackening speed every ten minutes. If we had been alone it wouldn't have mattered; but to have fifty men unable to move upon our hands, was too heavy a responsibility not to make us anxious. The captain and pilot said the boat was leaking, and remarked awfully that 'the water was six fathoms deep about there;' but we saw their motive and were not scared. We were safe alongside 'The Spaulding' by midnight; but Mr. Olmstead's tone of voice, as he said, 'You don't know how glad I am to see you,' showed how much he had been worried. And yet it was the best thing we could have done, for three, perhaps five, of the men would have been dead before morning. To-day

(Sunday) they are living and likely to live. Is this Sunday? What days our Sundays have been! I think of you all at rest, and the sound of church bells in your ears, with a strange, distant feeling."

"Knickerbocker"



This was the general state of things at the time when the battle of Fair Oaks was fought, June 1, 1862. All the vessels of the Commission except "The Spaulding"—and she was hourly expected—were on the spot, and ready. "The Elm City" happened to be full of fever cases. A vague rumor of a battle prevailed, soon made certain by the sound of the cannonading; and she left at once (4 A. M.) to discharge her sick at Yorktown, and performed the great feat of getting back to White House, cleaned, and with her beds made, before sunset of the same day. By that time the wounded were arriving. The boats of the Commission filled up calmly. The young men had a system by which they shipped their men; and there was neither hurry nor confusion, as the vessels, one by one,—“The Elm City,” “The Knickerbocker,” “The Daniel Webster,”—filled up and left the landing. After them, other boats, detailed by the Government for hospital service, came up. These boats were not under the control of the Commission. There was no one specially appointed to take charge of them; no one to receive the wounded at the station; no one to see that the boats were supplied with proper stores. A frightful scene of confusion and misery ensued. The Commission came forward to do what it could; but it had no power, only the right of charity. It could not control, scarcely check, the fearful confusion that prevailed, as train after train came in, and the wounded were brought and thrust upon the various boats. But it did nobly what it could. Night and day its members worked: not, it must be remembered, in its own well-organized service, but in the hard duty of making the best of a bad case. Not the smallest preparation was found, on at east three of the boats, for the common food of the men; and, as for sick-food, stimulants, drinks, there was nothing of the kind on any one of the boats, and not a pail nor a cup to distribute food, had there been any.

No one, it is believed, can tell the story, as it occurred, of the next three days;—no one can tell distinctly what boats they were, on which they lived and worked through those days and nights. They remember scenes and sounds, but they remember nothing as a whole; and, to this day, if they are feverish and weary, comes back the sight of men in every condition of horror, borne, shattered and shrieking, by thoughtless hands, who banged the stretchers against pillars and posts, dumped them anywhere, and walked



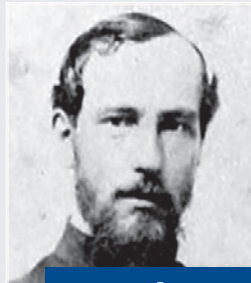
Charles G. Sawtelle

over the men without compassion. Imagine an immense river-steamboat filled on every deck: every berth, every square inch of room, covered with wounded men,—even the stairs and gangways and guards filled with those who were less badly wounded; and then imagine fifty well men, on every kind of errand, hurried and impatient, rushing to and fro, every touch bringing agony to the poor fellows, whilst stretcher after stretcher comes along, hoping to find an empty place; and then imagine what it was for these people of the Commission to keep calm themselves, and make sure that each man, on such a boat as that, was properly refreshed and fed. Sometimes two or even three such boats were lying side by side, full of suffering and horrors.

This was the condition of things with the subordinates. With the chiefs it was aggravated by a wild confusion of conflicting orders from headquarters, and conflicting authority upon the ground, until the wonder is that any method could have been obtained. But an earnest purpose can do almost everything, and out of the struggle came daylight at last. The first gleam of it was from a hospital tent and kitchen, which, by the goodness and thoughtfulness of Captain (now Colonel) Sawtelle, Assistant-Quartermaster, was pitched for the Commission, just at the head of the wharf, and near the spot where the men arrived in the cars. This tent (Dr. Ware gave to its preparation the only hour when he might have rested through that long nightmare) became the strength and the comfort of the Commission people. As the men passed it, from cars to boat, they could be refreshed and stimulated, and from it meals were sent to all the boats at the landing. During that dreadful battle-week, three thousand men were fed from that tent. It was not the Vale of Cashmere, but many dear associations cluster round it.

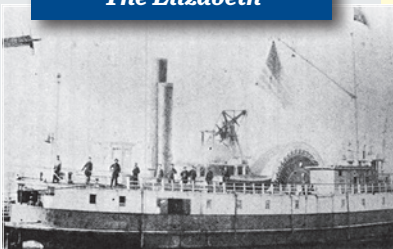
After the pressure was over, the Commission went back to its old routine, but upon a new principle. A member of the Commission came down to White House for a day or two, and afterward wrote a few words about that work. As he saw it with a fresh eye, his letter will be given here. He says:—

"I wish you could have been with me at White House during my late visit, to see how much is being done by our agents there to alleviate the sufferings of the sick and wounded soldiers. I have seen a good deal of suffering among our volunteers, and observed the marvellous variety and energy of the beneficence bestowed by the patriotic and philanthropic in camp, in hospital, and on transports for the sick; but nothing has ever impressed me so deeply as this. Perhaps I can better illustrate my meaning by sketching a few of the daily labors of the agents of the Commission as I saw them. The sick and wounded were usually sent down from the front by rail, a distance of about twenty miles, over a rough road, and in the common freight-cars. A train generally arrived at White House at nine P. M., and another at two A. M. In order to prepare for the reception of the sick and wounded, Mr. Olmstead, with Drs. Jenkins and Ware, had pitched, by the side of the railway, at White House, a large number of tents, to shelter and feed the convalescent. These tents were their only shelter while waiting to be shipped. Among them was one used as a kitchen and work-room, or pantry, by the ladies in our service, who prepared beef-tea, milk-punch, and other food and comforts, in anticipation of the arrival of the trains. By the terminus of the railway the large Commission steamboat 'Knickerbocker' lay in the Pamunkey, in readiness for the reception of four hundred and fifty patients, provided with comfortable beds and a corps of devoted surgeons, dressers, nurses, and litter-bearers. Just outside of this vessel lay 'The Elizabeth,' a steam-barge, loaded with the hospital stores of the Commission, and in charge of a store-keeper, always ready to issue supplies. Outside of this again lay 'The Wilson Small,' the headquarters of our Commission. As soon as a train arrived, the moderately sick were selected and placed in the tents near the railroad and fed; those more ill were carried to the upper saloon of 'The Knickerbocker,' while the seriously ill, or badly wounded, were placed in the lower saloon, and immediately served by the surgeons and dressers. During the three nights that I observed the working of the system, about seven hundred sick and wounded were provided with quarters and ministered to in all their wants with a tender solicitude and skill that excited my deepest admiration. To see Drs. Ware and Jenkins, lantern in hand, passing through the trains, selecting the sick with reference to their necessities, and the ladies following to assuage the thirst, or arouse, by judiciously administered stimulants, the



Dr. Robert Ware

"The Elizabeth"



failing strength of the brave and uncomplaining sufferers, was a spectacle of the most touching character. If you had experienced the debilitating influence of the Pamunkey climate, you would be filled with wonder at the mere physical endurance of our corps, who certainly could not have been sustained in the performance of duties, involving labor by day and through sleepless nights, without a strong sense of their usefulness and success.

"At Savage's Station, too, the Commission had a valuable depot, where comfort and assistance was dispensed to the sick when changing from the ambulances to the cars. I wish I could do justice to the subject of my hasty narrative, or in any due measure convey to your mind the impressions left on mine in observing, even casually, the operations in the care of the sick at these two points.

"When we remember what was done by the same noble band of laborers after the battles of Williamsburg and Fair Oaks, in ministering to the wants of thousands of wounded, I am sure that we shall join with them in gratitude and thankfulness that they were enabled to be there."

But the end of it all was at hand; the "change of base," of which the Commission had some private intelligence, came to pass. The sick and wounded were carefully gathered up from the tents and hospitals, and sent slowly away down the winding river—"The Wilson Small" lingering as long as possible, till the telegraph wires had been cut, and the enemy was announced, by mounted messengers, to be at "Tunstall's;" in fact, till the roar of the battle came nearer, and we knew that Stoneman with his cavalry was falling back to Williamsburg, and that the enemy were about to march into our deserted places.

"All night we sat on the deck of 'The Small' slowly moving away, watching the constantly increasing cloud and the fire-flashes over the trees towards the White House; watching the fading out of what had been to us, through these strange weeks, a sort of home, where all had worked together and been happy; a place which is sacred to some of us now for its intense living remembrances, and for the hallowing of them all by the memory of one who, through months of death and darkness, lived and worked in self-abnegation, lived in and for the suffering of others, and finally gave himself a sacrifice

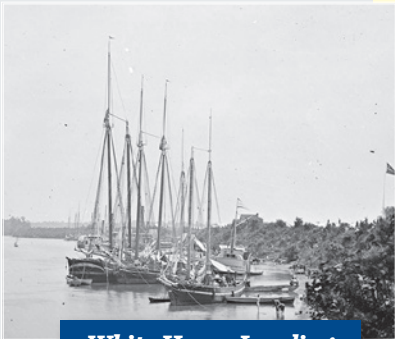
for them."[F]

[Footnote F: Dr. Robert Ware.]

"We are coaling here to-night ('Wilson Small,' off Norfolk, June 30th, 1862). We left White House Saturday night, and rendezvoused at West Point. Captain Sawtelle sent us off early, with despatches for Fortress Monroe; this gave us the special fun of being the first to come leisurely into the panic then raging at Yorktown. 'The Small' was instantly surrounded by terror-stricken boats; the people of the big 'St. Mark' leaned, pale, over their bulwarks, to question us. Nothing could be more delightful than to be as calm and monosyllabic as we were. * * * * We leave at daybreak for Harrison's Bar, James River, where our gunboats are said to be; we hope to get further up, but General Dix warns us that it is not safe. What are we about to learn? No one here can tell. * * * * (Harrison's Bar, July 2d). We arrived here yesterday to hear the thunder of the battle,[G] and to find the army just approaching this landing; last night it was a verdant shore, to-day it is a dusty plain. * * * * 'The Spaulding' has passed and gone ahead of us; her ironsides can carry her safely past the rifle-pits which line the shore. No one can tell us as yet what work there is for us; the wounded have not come in." * * * *

[Footnote G: Malvern Hill.]

"Hospital Transport 'Spaulding,' July 3d.—Reached Harrison's Bar at 11 A. M., July 1st, and were ordered to go up the James River, as far as Carter's Landing. To do this we must pass the batteries at City Point. We were told there was no danger if we should carry a yellow flag; yellow flag we had none, so we trusted to the red Sanitary Commission, and prepared to run it. 'The Galena' hailed us to keep below, as we passed the battery. Shortly after, we came up with 'The Monitor,' and the little captain, with his East India hat,



White House Landing



trumpet in hand, repeated the advice of 'The Galena,' and added, that if he heard firing, he would follow us. Our cannon pointed its black muzzle at the shore, and on we went. As we left 'The Monitor,' the captain came to me, with his grim smile, and said, 'I'll take those mattresses you spoke of.' We had joked, as people will, about our danger, and I had suggested mattresses round the wheel-house, never thinking that he would try it. But the captain was in earnest; when was he anything else? So the contrabands brought up the mattresses, and piled them against the wheel-house, and the pilot stood against the mast, with a mattress slung in the rigging to protect him. In an hour we had passed the danger and reached Carter's Landing, and there was the army, 'all that was left of it.' * * * Over all the bank, on the lawns of that lovely spot, under the shade of the large trees that fringed the outer park, lay hundreds of our poor boys, brought from the battle-fields of six days. It seemed a hopeless task even to feed them. We went first into the hospital, and gave them refreshment all round. One man, burnt up with fever, burst into tears when I spoke to him. I held his hand silently, and at last he sobbed out, 'You are so kind,—I—am so weak.' We were ordered by the surgeon in charge to station ourselves on the lawn, and wait the arrival of the ambulances, so as to give something (we had beef—tea, soup, brandy, etc., etc.) to the poor fellows as they arrived. * * * * * Late that night came peremptory orders from the Quartermaster, for 'The Spaulding' to drop down to Harrison's Landing. We took some of the wounded with us; others went by land or ambulances, and some—it seems incredible—walked the distance. Others were left behind and taken prisoners; for the enemy reached Carter's Landing as we left it."

The work of the Commission upon the hospital transports was about to close. But before it was all over, the various vessels had made several trips in the service of the Commission, and one voyage of "The Spaulding" must not pass unrecorded.

"We were ordered up to City Point, under a flag of truce, to receive our wounded men who were prisoners in Richmond. * * * * * At last the whistle sounded and the train came in sight. The poor fellows set up a weak cheer at the sight of the old flag, and those who had the strength hobbled and tumbled off the train almost before it stopped. We took four hundred and one on board. Two other vessels which accompanied us took each two hundred more. The rebel soldiers had been kind to our men,—so they said,—but the citizens had taken pains to insult them. One man burst into tears as he was telling me of their misery: 'May God defend me from such again.' God took him to Himself, poor suffering soul! He died the next morning,—died because he would not let them take off his arm. 'I wasn't going to let them have it in Richmond; I said I would take it back to old Massachusetts.' Of course we had a hard voyage with our poor fellows in such a condition, but, at least, they were cleaned and well fed."

Events

GENERAL MEADE SOCIETY FALL EXCURSION

"General Meade in Maryland & Pennsylvania 1862-1863"

The GEN Meade Society has graciously invited our members to join them on an exciting excursion over the Columbus Day weekend. The trip includes deluxe motor coach, driver tip; free parking; snacks & beverages on board; tours of the Wheatland Estate in Lancaster PA, lunch at the Lancaster Brewing Company, wreath laying at Lancaster Cemetery for Gen. Reynolds; a stop in Frederick, Maryland; on board guide on Sunday visiting Monocacy, South Mountain and Antietam battlefields, Saturday night Pizza Party, and Sunday dinner, Two night accommodations at the Comfort Inn and Suites, Hagerstown MD(breakfast included).

Price TBD, check our website -- www.gemeralmeadesociety.org for updates.

A \$50.00 per person deposit required to register.

Send checks to : Gen. Meade Society, PO Box 394, Abington, PA 19001,
and include your contact info

forget not his deeds...





The Volunteer Center of South Jersey and Jersey Cares are hosting a School Supply Drive to support under-resourced children in acquiring the necessary supplies to succeed academically.

If you would bridge the gap, the Items ACCEPTED for the School Supply Drive include:

Visa or Amazon Gift Cards
Backpacks (may be new OR gently used)
NEW 1, 3, and 5 Subject Notebooks
NEW Composition Notebooks
NEW 2-Pocket Folders
NEW Pencil Cases
NEW #2 Pencils
NEW Pencil Sharpeners
NEW Erasers
NEW Pens
NEW Hi-lighters
NEW Crayons, Washable Markers, and Colored Pencils
NEW Calculators
NEW Child Safety Scissors
NEW Glue
NEW Rulers (12")
NEW Headphones

If you would like to donate items, please bring them to the August 14th meeting at the Rohrer Center in Cherry Hill. They will be collected and given to the Volunteer Center to be distributed. Thank you for your generosity.

Find more information at

<https://www.jerseycares.org/School-Supply-Drive>

**"If you are unable to attend the August 14th meeting,
contact Rich Jankowski
[CWHHistory2@gmail.com, 856-904-5481]
to arrange a pickup of the supplies."**



 **ONE DAY ONLY** 
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22ND 2025



The Cruiser Olympia won fame in the Spanish-American War and served as a flagship in WWI

HOMECOMING 250

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025

To kickoff America's celebration of its 250 years of independence, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will honor the men and women who gained and continue to defend our independence. Through our efforts, the Secretary of the Navy has announced that the Navy and Marine Corps should celebrate their 250th birthdays in their birthplace, Philadelphia, PA, and Camden, NJ. Homecoming 250 will salute their 250 years of distinguished service by hosting spectacular events, ceremonies, parades, aerial demonstrations, exhibitions, and educational programs featuring historic buildings, ships, museums, and waterfront sites on both sides of the Delaware River.

Our Sister Round Table Inland Empire Upcoming events

**Monday, August 18, Presentation Time 6:30 and
Zoom Time 6:15 P.M. Pacific Time
Author and Historian, Sarah Kay Bierle will present
"John Pelham's Fall & Rise of a Confederate Legend"**

**For Zoom links, and regional Round Table program times
& locations, go to:
inlandempirecwrt.org and socalcwrt.org.**





**FOB Welcomes
Award and Visits from
afar...**



**Mike Di Paolo
5-year pin**



**Dr. James Jewell
Gets a visit from
FOB in Idaho**

Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers and Activities for 2025

September 11, 2025 - Thursday

Erik Mollenhauer

Red Bank Battlefield and the Promise of America.

October 9, 2025 - Thursday

Alex Rossino

**Lee's Army in Maryland: A New Perspective on the Campaign
of September 1862**

November 13, 2025 - Thursday

Ellen Alford

Abolition and the Underground RR in South Jersey

Questions to

Dave Gilson - 856-323-6484 - dgilson404@gmail.com

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

Camden County College

William G. Rohrer Center

1889 Marlton Pike East

Cherry Hill, NJ

oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net

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