

The DISPATCH

General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc. Newsletter – Spring 2017

“Forget Not His Deeds”

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, FREDERICK, July 8, 1863.

I arrived here yesterday; the army is assembling in Middletown. I think we shall have another battle before Lee can cross the river, though from all accounts he is making great efforts to do so. For my part, as I have to follow and fight him. I would rather do it at once and in Maryland than to follow into Virginia. ...I see also that the papers are making a great deal too much fuss about me. I claim no extraordinary merit for this last battle, and would prefer waiting a little while to see what my career is to be before making any pretensions.

I did and shall continue to do my duty to the best of my abilities, but knowing as I do that battles are often decided by accidents, and that no man of sense will say in advance what their result will be, I wish to be careful in not bragging before the right time. ...From the time I took command till to-day, now over ten days, I have not changed my clothes, have not had a regular night's rest, and many nights not a wink of sleep, and for several days did not even wash my face and hands, not regular food, and all the time in a great state of mental anxiety. Indeed, I think I have lived as much in this time as the last thirty years. Old Baldy is still living and apparently doing well; the ball passed within half an inch of my thigh, passed through the saddle and entered Baldy's stomach.

The Life and Letters of George Gordan Meade. Vol.II, p. 132.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017 - THE GENERAL MEADE SOCIETY 18TH ANNUAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM -

CO-SPONSORED BY THE PENNA. NATIONAL GUARD & AMERICAN LEGION POST 405 OF THE UNION LEAGUE. WE WILL BE EXPLORING THE HISTORY OF THE US ENTRY INTO THE GREAT WAR (1917) ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A FOCUS ON PENNSYLVANIA AND PHILADELPHIA.

Cost—\$40 per person, including: lunch, program, refreshments, donations

The General Meade Society of Philadelphia is an educational non-profit 501c3 organization chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The mission of the Society is to promote and preserve the life and service of Major General George Gordon Meade (USA), Commander of the Army of the Potomac. The Society's Board of Directors meets at the Cannstatter Volksfest-Verein, 9130 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114, on the 2nd Thursday of designated months starting at 7:00 P.M. All Society members are welcome.

Board of Directors

Officers

Andy Waskie, PhD, President
Mike Peter, Vice-president
Jerry McCormick, Treasurer
Michael Wunsch, Corresponding Secretary
Joe Hauptmann, Recording Secretary

Directors

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Blair Thron

www.generalmeadesociety.org

meade@generalmeadesociety.gmail.com

215-204-5452

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-General-Meade-Society-of-Philadelphia/175046292538630>

Symposium Program:

- 12:00pm: Welcome & Introductions
12:15pm: *Philadelphia in World War I*
- Peter Williams, Author
1:15pm: *The 28th Division, PA National Guard
in World War I*
- Major General Wesley Craig
2:00pm: *Lunch with the 'Kearney Kommissary'*
3:00pm: *The 79th Division (Pennsylvania Draftees)
in WW I,*
- Colonel Ken McCreedy
3:45pm: *Break*
4:00pm: *A Philadelphian Civil War Veteran in Service
with the German Imperial Army in WW I*
- Dr. Andy Waskie
4:45pm: **Final Panel Q & A**

Book displays, artifact displays, historical demonstrations

Distinguished Speakers & Books; Print Sales & Signings; Lunch & Refreshments

TO REGISTER & RESERVE:

Jerry McCormick
Call: 215-848-7753
or email: gedwinmc@msn.com

LOCATION:

**West Laurel Hill Cemetery -
'Conservatory' at the Bell Tower**
215 Belmont Avenue
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
<http://westlaurelhill.com/about/visit>

FREE PARKING at the CONSERVATORY

Thanks to our attendees; Moderator Prof. Joe Pugh; Meade Society members; Jim Schmick (Civil War & More); Tom & Judi Kearney & Kommissary; John Meko and the Union League; West Laurel Hill; the PA National Guard and our distinguished speakers and guests.

Meade Society Spring Trip "Rail Lines and Vines. Saturday, May 6, 2017, 8 a.m.

DEPART & RETURN: WHITMAN SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER, ROOSEVELT BLVD. & GRANT AVE., PHILA., PA \$75.00 per person includes round trip motor coach transportation, two hour narrated train ride on the Colebrookdale Railroad in Boyertown, PA., lunch and a tour of the Manatawny Creek Winery.

The Colebrookdale Railroad was built by returning Civil War veterans to service the burgeoning iron industry in Montgomery and Berks County Pa. We will travel in a restored 1920's era passenger car and there is also an open-air car, weather permitting. Locomotive power will be diesel. We have a 10:30 AM departure.

Lunch is at Durango's restaurant, one block from the train station. The restaurant is on the first floor of a former hotel. You have a choice of Durango Burger (cheeseburger with batter fried onions and barbecue sauce); Chicken Cheesesteak or a Portobello Mushroom sandwich. Soda is included. Beer and wine is not.

We then board the bus for a 20 minute trip to Douglassville Pa and The Manatawny Creek Winery. This is a privately owned business nestled in a valley surrounded by mountains. The tour is conducted by the owner and is both outdoors and indoors. Wine tasting is optional and voluntary for a \$5.00 fee that includes up to 7 wines and is deducted from your bill if you purchase wine.

We should finish at the winery by 3:45 PM and be on our way home for an arrival approximately 5:00-5:15PM.

TO RESERVE- CONTACT JERRY MC CORMICK,(215) 848-7753, gedwinmc@msn.com
SEATING IS LIMITED. PLEASE RESERVE BY APRIL 30TH. For trip information, contact Joe Hauptmann. jjhaupt51@comcast.net.

Gravesite placement of veterans' flags at Laurel Hill Cemetery Sunday, May 21, 2017 -
Meet at the gatehouse of Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, in Philadelphia {[215-228-8200](tel:215-228-8200)} at 10:00 AM. The group assembled will place US flags on the graves of veterans' of all wars. As time and manpower permit, the cemeteries to be covered include Laurel Hill, Mt. Peace & St. James the Less. Refreshments and lunch provided. All welcome!

Laurel Hill Cemetery contains the graves of thousands of Civil War veterans. Many of those who engaged in battle, fighting on the sides of both the Union and Confederacy or on the home front now rest at Laurel Hill. The site also holds sacred the remains of many prominent Civil War-era Philadelphians, including volunteer nurses, surgeons, and supporters of the war effort. **Open to the Public**

Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132.

Free Parking is available ([215\) 228-8200](tel:215-228-8200) or online at www.thelaurelhillcemetery.org

Annual Memorial Day Observed at Laurel Hill Cemetery, Sunday, May 28, 2017 -

Recreating the Original G.A.R. Decoration Day Service of 1868: The traditional Decoration Day service of the Grand Army Meade Post #1 will be recreated at Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Ave. Philadelphia on Sunday, May 28, 2017 at 12 noon. All are welcome to attend and participate in the ceremony.

Laurel Hill is the site of the first Memorial Day Observance in Philadelphia on this date in 1868. Special bronze veterans' markers will be dedicated at the graves of veterans. Speakers, ceremonies and pageant will highlight this special ceremony. Afterwards the entourage will gather at the grave of General Meade, hero of Gettysburg to perform the traditional service to honor all veterans who fell defending the Nation. Wreath-laying, speeches, music and honor guards will enhance the ceremony. Historical groups, veterans, and citizens are urged to participate. Wreaths, military contingents, color guards, music and period civilians are encouraged to participate. Refreshments served after the ceremony. Tours of the historic cemetery available. Co-sponsored by the General Meade Society of Philadelphia; Friends of Laurel Hill; American Legion Post #405; MOLLUS, Union League; Sons of Union Veterans. For information, call: [215-228-8200](tel:215-228-8200).

Meade at the Phillies – Save the date, Thursday, August 10, 2017. Flyer on the way.

MEADE SOCIETY CELEBRATES 2017 AT ANNUAL CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH

Sixty-two champagne glasses were lifted in unison at the Cannstatter restaurant on Sunday, January 22, 2017, as General Meade Society Vice President Mike Peter proposed this toast: "To the men and women who support the Meade Society!" Once again the annual General Meade Society Champagne Brunch was a celebration of history, camaraderie, and service.

Prior to the toast the program had been introduced by Jerry McCormick, master of ceremonies and Meade Society treasurer, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, recording secretary Joe Hauptmann made welcoming remarks, and Ken Garson (subbing for Joe Perry) spoke about the silent auction. Proceeds from the auction are allocated to a host of deserving organizations and causes, such as the Meade Foundation, the GAR Museum, Spangler Farm at Gettysburg, the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, DC, Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery, the U.S. Army Historical Museum in Carlisle, PA, and more.

It was then time to partake of the hearty buffet offerings, which included an omelet station and other traditional breakfast fare, as well as another line serving hot luncheon entrees, green salad, and the Cannstatter's famous German potato salad. After ample time to enjoy the fine food, the formal program resumed.

The brunch is a vehicle not only for socializing with fellow members and friends of the Meade Society, but also for honoring individuals who have given outstanding service and assistance to the organization. Corresponding secretary Mike Wunsch presented award certificates to Emma Stern and other Laurel Hill Cemetery staff to thank them helping to facilitate events celebrating the Society's 20th anniversary in 2016. Also honored were Bill Linhart, who has joined the board of directors, and Society charter members Mary Ann Hartner, Jane Peters Estes, and Pat Caldwell (the latter two in absentia).

President Andy Waskie took the podium and made announcements regarding several future events, including the following: a possible special tour/talk led by the legendary Ed Bearss, WWII vet and chief historian *emeritus* of the U.S. Park Service; the May 6th one-day spring trip, "Rails and Ales," which will feature a train ride and a visit to a brewery; and the three-day fall trip, which will be going to Boston in October 2017.

Andy then gave out as tokens of special recognition flag holders created by Blair Thron using wood from of the Meade witness tree, that magnificent Norwegian maple that had presided over Meade's grave since 1872, but then was dying and had to be felled for safety reasons last May. The recipients were Bob Hanrahan, the Liebermans, Jack and Carol, and faithful Meade Society donors Bernie and Marge Bujak in appreciation of their generous monetary contributions, Stan Saperstein, who hand-crafts historic walking sticks ("dress sticks"), including several carved from the witness tree also received a flag holder.

Andy then announced the names of the recipients of the 2017 Legion of Honor awards: Carol Ingald for her hard work keeping membership records up-to-date and Gettysburg certified guide Guillermo Bosch (in absentia), who served as master-of-ceremonies at the Meade Remembrance Day symposium. Linda Gillette, who has made so many beautiful wreaths laid with honor at so many special ceremonies and a former Legion of Honor recipient was also honored.

The Society's most prestigious award, the Award of Merit, was given this year to Hugh Boyle, noted Lincoln scholar, and president of both the GAR Museum and the Del-Val Civil War Round Table. As Hugh was on a Caribbean cruise to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary with his wife Rose, Mike Peter accepted the Silent Sentry statuette on his behalf.

After Ken Garson announced the results of the silent auction, Betty and Jerry McCormick gave away raffle prizes to twenty lucky winners, and a few more upcoming events were announced: Octavius Catto ceremony at 10:00 am on February 25th at Philadelphia's Star Garden; the GAR annual luncheon on March 18th at the Cannstatter featuring Celtic music by Charlie Zahm, and the Meade spring symposium on Sunday, April 2 in the Conservatory at West Laurel Hill. The focus of the 2017 spring symposium will be the U.S. entry into World War I, as this year marks the 100th anniversary.

Kudos to all the Meade Society members who worked so hard to put together yet another excellent champagne brunch, as well as to Cannstatter general manager Roman Gardyas and all his staff. – Kerry Bryan

The Annual Major Octavius V. Catto Honor Ceremony was held on **Saturday, February 25, 2017 at 10am** at the Star Garden Center at the Corner: 6th & Lombard Streets, Philadelphia, PA. A large crowd attended in beautiful weather. The keynote speaker was General (ret) Carol Eggert of Comcast. 4 wreaths were laid to honor the fallen hero followed by honor volleys and taps by bugler Tom Herman. **The PA National Guard Major Catto Medal Award Luncheon** followed at 12:30pm in the Union League. The keynote speaker was Col. David Wood, PA National Guard and Andy Waskie giving the historical background.

The great Civil War Era African-American leader and civil rights martyr from Philadelphia, Octavius V. Catto (1839-1871), was a professor at the Institute for Colored Youth, forerunner of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania. Catto was an eminent scholar, scientist, philosopher, educator, professional level baseball player and crusader for equal rights for all citizens. Catto recruited his own African-American students as Soldiers during the Gettysburg Emergency call up in the Civil War and led the successful campaign to desegregate the streetcars in Philadelphia in the 1860s.

After the Civil War, Catto joined the Pennsylvania National Guard's 5th Brigade at the invitation of the Brigade Commander, General Louis Wagner. Catto was promoted to Brigade Inspector General with the rank of Major, making him the highest ranking African-American in the military services at that time.

During the election campaign of 1871 there was an attempt by political opponents to prevent African-American citizens from voting. During this campaign, Catto was activated for service to help quell the riots and prevent the murder of Black voters. After he was called to active duty with the Pennsylvania National Guard, Catto was shot and killed near his own home by political opponents of the Black vote. The public funeral held in his honor by the City of Philadelphia was the largest since that of Abraham Lincoln in 1865. Though widely known and greatly respected in his own time, Catto nearly was forgotten in Philadelphia until recently, when efforts began to educate the public about his exemplary life and career. A monument to Catto will soon be erected at Philadelphia at City Hall.

The Pennsylvania National Guard and the Catto Society honor him annually with a ceremony and researchers have completed an acclaimed biography on Catto entitled, "Tasting Freedom."



2017
GENERAL GEORGE MEADE SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP FORM

Kindly remit your 2017 dues payment on or before January 31, 2017.

As a member of **General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.** your annual membership dues and contributions support the nation's only organization devoted to "promoting and preserving" the memory of the life and service of Major General George Gordon Meade. Members receive *The Dispatch* via email or by the USPS (additional fee required) as they choose, and also an invitation to all Society events and monthly meetings, including the annual business meeting in April.

Mail to:

The General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.

P.O. Box 45556

Philadelphia, PA 19149

Annual membership dues cover the calendar year – January 1st to December 31st, 2017.

_____ **\$10.00 Student Membership (18 years & younger)**

_____ **\$20.00 Individual Membership**

_____ **\$30.00 Family Membership**

_____ \$10.00 Additional for USPS mailing of *The Meade Post - Dispatch*

_____ Additional Tax-deductible donation to the *General Meade Society of Philadelphia*

_____ Contribution to the *William H. Boehmer Preservation Fund*

_____ General Meade Society Foundation (The General G. Meade School, Philadelphia)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check Number: _____ Date: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT