

The Dispatch

General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.

Newsletter – Winter 2017-2018

“Forget Not His Deeds”

To *Henrietta Meade*:

(*Daughter*)

CAMP AT HUNTER’S MILLS, VA. *March 13, 1862.*

“I think a great deal about you, and all the other children. I often picture to myself as I last saw you—yourself, Sarah and Willie lying in bed, crying, because I had to go away, and while I was scolding you for crying, I felt like crying myself. It is very hard to be kept away from you, because there is no man on earth that loves his children more dearly than I do, or whose happiness is more depending on being with his family. Duty, however, requires me to be here, to do the little I can to defend our old flag, and whatever duty requires us to do, we should all, old and young, do cheerfully, however disagreeable it may be. We came here, expecting to have a big fight with the Seceshers, but they have all cleared out...”

The Life and Letter of George Gordon Meade

Meade Society Lifetime Membership – The membership application on the last page of this newsletter will have a new category for 2018 – ***Lifetime Membership***. We are offering you this opportunity to provide a long term saving for our members. Individual lifetime memberships will be \$250.00 and a family of 2 will be \$450.00. Whatever category you choose, the General Meade Society appreciates your continued support.

Annual General Meade Birthday Celebration, Monday, December 31, 2017 – The General Meade Society of Philadelphia will celebrate General Meade’s birthday at Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia. The military parade and ceremony will commence at 12 noon. Military and civilian living historians are encouraged to participate. Visitors and participants are asked to gather at the Gatehouse of Laurel Hill at 11:30AM. The parade of Civil War reenactment units, civilians in period attire, heritage groups, and participants will process to the final resting place of the Victor of Gettysburg and memorialize his services to the nation. A champagne toast and reception will follow the program. A tour of the historic cemetery will be offered (weather permitting). This year marks the 26th anniversary of the Meade birthday celebration by the General Meade Society. For directions, call: 215-228-8200 Laurel Hill Cemetery. For information and registration call Dr. Andy Waskie at 215-204-5452 or awaskie@temple.edu

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.

Officers

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

Board of Directors

Albert El
Carol Ingald
Herb Kaufman
Tom Kearney
Bill Linhart
Jeanne O’Toole
Tom O’Toole
Joe Perry, Editor
Joseph Pugh
Ed Zonolowicz

www.generalmeadesociety.org

meade@generalmeadesociety.gmail.com

215-204-5452

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

The General Meade Society Champagne Brunch & Awards Ceremony - Sunday, January 21, 2018, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. - Join the Society's members and guests at Cannstatter Volksfest Verein, 9130 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114, 215-332-0121, <http://www.cvvphilly.com> Cost: \$45 per person. Deluxe Brunch (with omelet station), champagne toast, door prizes and silent auction to benefit the General Meade Society Preservation Fund. To reserve: contact Gerry McCormick at: 215-848-7753 or gedwinmc@msn.com. Reservations should be made at least one week prior to the Brunch! Go to the Meade Society web site for further details: www.generalmeadesociety.org.

Annual Major Octavius V. Catto Honor Ceremony, Saturday, February 17, 2018 at 11am - Join us at the new Octavius Catto Memorial located on the southwest corner of City Hall to honor the Philadelphia's equal rights and military leader. A wreath-laying ceremony with military units, period civilians, veterans and heritage groups. Pennsylvania National Guard "Major Catto Medal" Award Luncheon & Ceremony to follow at 12:30pm at the Union League. Information: Dr. Andy Waskie 215-204-5452 or awaskie@temple.edu

Meade Room in the Grand Army of the Republic Museum – Old Baldy, General Meade's horse's head, has been looking over a room filled with Meade historic mementos for many years. You can imagine what Old Baldy saw while riding into battle with Meade in the saddle. His noble countenance is very lifelike, and you can see him for yourself while visiting the Museum during their Sunday programs. **Here are some of the GAR programs for 2018:**

January 14 - Holiday Band Concert by the 28th Pennsylvania Volunteers Regimental Band Geary's Own

February 4 - Alan Silverman – Lincoln Line Drawing

March 4 - Randall Miller - Northern Home Front during the Civil War

May 6 - Joe Mieczkowski - After Gettysburg -Lee retreats, Meade pursues

October 7 - *A Civil War Captain and His Lady: A True Story of Love, Courtship, and Combat* by author, Gene Barr.

2017 Meade Society Fall Trip "Boston and the Civil War", October 7, 8 & 9 –

Our Hagey bus, filled with eager Civil War stalwarts, left the Cannstatter in Northeast Philly at 7:30. There must have been a tailwind as the trip to Boston went quickly. We did stop for lunch at the Old Mystic Village, Mystic, Connecticut. The weather was perfect for roaming around the shops and eating outside. Old Mystic represents a New England Village of about 1720.

After arriving at our motel in Dedham, Massachusetts, we had time to explore the new Legacy Place Shopping Center – 675,000 square feet containing 75 brand stores including the brick-and-mortar Amazon Store that features a mix of books based on customer reviews and electronic devices. This was our excursion into the present before exploring the past.

Page 3

The Saturday night pizza party, hosted by our Treasurer and Trip Organizer, Jerry McCormick, was highlighted by the recognition of those who have been on these Meade historical trips for the past 5, 10 and 15 years. We have been very successful over the past 16 years in filling the bus for these weekend visits to Civil War sites, with occasional side trips to wineries, breweries and America's natural wonders.

Day 2 at Quincy Market, Boston's historic market complex near Faneuil Hall. It was constructed in 1824-26 and named in honor of Mayor Josiah Quincy. It is a National Historic Landmark that is the largest market built in the United States in the first half of the 19th century.

Part of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park is Georges Island home our next destination, Fort Warren. It was a beautiful fall morning when we boarded the ferry and then cruised past the Boston skyline. Fort Warren is an impressive pentagonal star-shaped fort constructed between 1833-1860. The Fort served as a prison for Confederate officers and government officials. James Mason and John Slidell, the Confederate diplomats seized in the Trent Affair, were among those held at the Fort. Also held at the Fort were Confederate Vice President Alexander Stevens and Postmaster General John Reagan.

Our guide wore an old ranger hat and long coat with countenance to match. He led us into the bowels of the Fort where we literally had to hold hands in the total darkness in order to find our way out. He told us the story of the Fort's reputed ghost, the Lady in Black. She was the wife of a Confederate prisoner. After hearing that her husband was imprisoned in the Fort she was compelled to free him. On a stormy night in January 1862, she rowed across to Georges Island and went ashore. She cut her hair, dressed as a man and armed herself with a pistol. She signaled to her husband by whistling an obscure southern tune, to which he signaled back. After squeezing through the slit-window of his cell she was hidden by the Confederate soldiers.

The plan was to dig a tunnel to the center of the Fort and then overtake the guards and obtain weapons. Unfortunately for them the tunnel was discovered. As The Lady sprang from the tunnel, she succeeded in surprising an officer who slapped the pistol from her hand. The pistol went off and the bullet struck and killed her husband. She was condemned to death by hanging and her final request was to be given female clothing. A search of the Fort produced nothing but some black robes. She was executed in these robes and buried on the Island.

In the afternoon we were back to Quincy Market for lunch – clam chowder, baked beans and brown bread, lobster rolls and Boston cream pie. A sextet street band playing Star Wars jazz provided the entertainment.

Then it was time to meet our guide for the afternoon, the very entertaining and Boston legion, Richard Goldfine. Our first stop was Harvard University's Memorial Hall. This High Victorian Gothic building was built to honor the sacrifices made by Harvard men in defense of the Union during the Civil War – "a symbol of Boston's commitment to the Unionist cause and the abolitionist movement in America". The Memorial Transept consists of a 60-foot high gothic vault above a marble floor, black walnut paneling and stenciled walls. There are 28 white tablets commemorating 136 Harvard men who died fighting for the Union, including Robert Gould Shaw, Colonel of the first all-black 54th Massachusetts Regiment.

We next stopped at the Boston Public Garden and in front of the Wendell Phillips Statue, the famous abolitionist and advocate for Native Americans. Above the statue is his quote, "Whether in chains or in laurels liberty knows nothing but victory".

Crossing the street from the Garden we reached Boston Common, home of the August Saint-Gaudens bronze relief sculpture depicting Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the Massachusetts 54th Regiment marching down Beacon Street on May 28, 1863. It was unveiled may 31, 1897. An inscription on the relief reads Omnia Relenqvit / Servare Rempvblcam (He left behind everything to save the Republic).

Our last day started at Mount Auburn Cemetery, the first rural cemetery in the United States, dedicated in 1831. Its abundance of classical monuments set in a rolling landscaped terrain was a very pleasurable experience. It is not only a cemetery, but and arboretum and event place. It is Watertown's largest contiguous open space and extends into Cambridge.

The cemetery has three notable buildings; the 62-foot tall Washington Tower, Bigelow Chapel and the Story Chapel and Administration Building. More than 93,000 people are buried in the cemetery. Among them are Mary Baker Eddy, Edward Everett, Fannie Farmer, Felix Frankfurter, Curt Gowdy, Julia Ward Howe, Henry Cabot Lodge, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Charles Sumner.

We made a quick stop at the Bunker Hill Monument before heading to the Boston Navy Yard and a visit to the recently refurbished U.S.S. Constitution, "Old Ironsides" and the U.S.S. Cassin Young, a World War II destroyer. Captain Cassin Young (1894-1942) was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism at the attack on Pearl Harbor and was later killed in the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal.

Our last stop was at the birthplace of Clara Barton in North Oxford, Massachusetts. She was born there on Christmas day, 1821. Currently there is a fresh air camp for inner-city youth on the surrounding property as a living memorial to Clara's philosophy of helping others. On the this site there is also The Barton Center for Diabetes Education, a separate independent corporation that administers health education programs.

Another successful trip organized by Jerry and Betty McCormick. We thank you them for another great job. – Joe Perry

Gen. Meade Society of Philadelphia --- 2017 Picnic Day - On Saturday, September 9, 2017 friends and members of the Gen. Meade Society of Philadelphia gathered in the shadow of the Gen. George G. Meade Equestrian Monument (Alexander Milne Calder, Sculpture) on Landsdowne Drive, in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park for the organization's 'Volunteer Picnic Day', the picnic commemorated the 130th anniversary of the monuments Philadelphia Art Association unveiling and dedication near Centennial Hall on October 18, 1887.

Page 5

The Picnic Day Committee of Jeanne & Tom O'Toole and Michael Wunsch worked diligently to make the event a most enjoyable one, and succeeded in fine fashion. The four-hour picnic featured a beautiful Fall day, and Philadelphia favorites hoagies and light beverages compliments of the society, additionally the attendees supplied wonderful side dishes, salads, desserts, camaraderie and spirited conversation about the good General.

The committee extends a thank you to all those who supplied tables, chairs, ice, and all the amenities that made the day a comfortable and pleasant social experience!

At the Alexander Milne Calder designed Meade Equestrian Monument, a flag placement was held as the faithful stood in its front, and a moment of silence was observed for Gen. Meade, his contemporary military officers, and the brave soldiers under his command.

Picnic Committee member Mike Wunsch offered words of welcome, and asked that the attendees remember and visit the many Gen. Meade related sites in the city. (Gen. Meade Equestrian Monument, GAR Museum and Library, Laurel Hill Cemetery, the Smith Memorial, the Meade Home on Delancey Place, and Saint Marks Church)

Society President, Anthony Waskie recalled the character and career of Gen. Meade, and echoed the words of General Alexander Webb, Gettysburg hero, Medal of Honor recipient and Meade's Chief of Staff, when Webb referred to General Meade as, "The soul of honor, the soldier, scholar and gentleman", also giving praise and encouragement to members and friends of the Gen. Meade Society of Philadelphia to continue its fine efforts.

The keynote address was delivered by society member Robert Hanrahan in the person of General John Gibbon, friend and army commander, "Gen. Gibbon" remarked in his oration at the 1887 Dedication ceremony, that "We are gathered here today, nearly fifteen years after this distinguished soldier crossed the great river, to inaugurate in his honor, this fitting memorial to his bravery and distinguished services as a soldier, his high toned honorable character as a man and his virtues and integrity as a citizen of this great republic."

At the conclusion of the ceremonies at the monument, Professor Waskie conducted a tour of the Smith Memorial, the Smith Memorial Arch is an American Civil War monument at the South Concourse and Lansdowne Drive. Built on the former grounds of the 1876 Centennial Exposition, it serves as a gateway to West Fairmount Park. The Memorial consists of two colossal columns supported by curving, neo-Baroque arches, and adorned with 13 individual portrait sculptures (2 equestrians, 3 figures, and 8 busts); two eagles standing on globes; and architectural reliefs of 8 allegorical figures.

The statue of General Meade by Daniel Chester French atop the south column is the highest monument to Gen. Meade in the nation, funded by Richard Smith (1821 - 1894) beginning in 1891, its last sculpture was completed and placed in 1912. - Michael Wunsch



2018

GENERAL GEORGE MEADE SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Kindly remit your 2018 dues payment on or before January 31, 2018.

As a member of **General Meade Society of Philadelphia**, 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, 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, 2018.

- _____ **\$10.00 Student Membership (18 years & younger)**
- _____ **\$20.00 Individual Membership**
- _____ **\$30.00 Family Membership**
- _____ **\$250.00 Individual Lifetime Membership**
- _____ **\$450.00 Family of Two (2) Lifetime Membership**
- _____ **Additional tax-deductible donation to the *General Meade Society of Philadelphia***
- _____ **Contribution to the *William H. Boehmer Preservation Fund***
- _____ **Contribution to the *General Meade Society Foundation*
(The General Meade School, Philadelphia)**
- _____ **\$10.00 Additional for USPS paper mailing of *The Meade Post - Dispatch***

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check Number: _____ Date: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!