

The Dispatch

General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.
Newsletter – Spring 2018
“Forget Not His Deeds”

Just before the Battle of Spotsylvania, May 8-20, 1864

Head-Quarters, Army of the Potomac, May 4, 1864

Soldiers!

Again you are called upon to advance on the enemies of your country. The time and the occasion are deemed opportune by your Commanding General to address you a few words of confidence and caution.

You have been re-organized, strengthened and fully equipped in every respect. You form a part of the several armies of your country, the whole under the direction of an able and distinguished General, who enjoys the confidence of the government, the people and the army. Your movement being in co-operation with others, it is of the utmost importance that no effort should be left unspared to make it successful.

Soldiers! The eyes of the whole country are looking with anxious hope to the blow you are about to strike in the most sacred cause that ever called men to arms.

Remember your homes, your wives and children, and bear in mind that the sooner your enemies are overcome, the sooner you will be returned to enjoy the benefits and blessings of peace. Bear with patience the hardships and sacrifices you will be called upon to endure. Have confidence in your officers and in each other. Keep your ranks on the march and on the battlefield, and let each man earnestly implore God's blessing and endeavor by his thoughts and actions to render himself worthy of the favor he seeks. With clear consciences and strong arms, actuated by a high sense of duty, fighting to preserve the Government and the institutions handed down to us by our forefathers – if true to ourselves – victory, under God's blessing, must and will attend our efforts.

Geo. G. Meade, *Major General Commanding*

From The Life and Letters George Gordon Meade

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.

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The Meade Society Endows the General George Meade School

For almost two decades the General Meade Society of Philadelphia has awarded a scholarship annually to a student at the General George Meade School, 1600 North 18th Street, Philadelphia, PA. The scholarships have benefited individual students for scholastic achievements. The Society has decided to change our annual gift so that the entire school will benefit.

We are proud to announce that this year The Society has donated the full amount needed for the Meade School's Classroom Incentives for PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention) program. The PBIS ticket system, monitored by teachers, will award students for their positive behaviors (being respectful, responsible and safe). With the tickets the students can use the school store, spend time in the "Fun Friday" room and participate in monthly events. The program is well established and a great success.

Our donation was made through The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia's *Philly FUNDamentals*. The Fund serves as a fiscal intermediary between the private sector and the Philadelphia public education system. We encourage all that have an interest in preserving public education in the City of Philadelphia go to fundamentals.thefundsdp.org and consider donating.

We will keep you updated with reports from the school and announcements of future donations.

Thanks to all our Members for making this donation possible.

19th Annual History Symposium – Co-sponsored by the Grand Army of Republic Civil War Museum and Library, the Pennsylvania National Guard, the American Legion Post 405 of the Union League and the General Meade Society. The program marks the 120th anniversary of the Spanish-American War (1898) and features Capt. Howard Serlick, USN ret., Colonel Ken McCreedy, USA ret., Major General Wesley Craig, USA ret. and Russ Dodge, military historian and Find A Grave Administrator. Their presentation topics will be respectfully: “The Navy in the Spanish-American War”; “Pennsylvania and the Spanish-American War”; “The Pennsylvania National Guard in the Spanish-American War”; and “Famous Spanish-American War Veterans at West Laurel Hill Cemetery”. The “Kearney Kommissary” will provide the lunch. Jim Schmick of Civil War and More, Mechanicsburg, PA, will display books for sale. Our special event this year will be an honor ceremony at the grave of Martha Kimball, the “Mother” of Memorial Day.

Sunday, April 8, 2018 – Noon to 5:00 p.m.

Location: West Laurel Hill Cemetery Conservatory at the Bell Tower, 215 Belmont Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, PA. Free parking at the Conservatory.

\$40.00 per person includes lunch, program and refreshments. To register contact Jerry McCormick at gedwinmc@msn.com or mail to Jerry at 3692 Stanton St., Phila. PA 19129

General Meade Society Spring Trip “Abolitionism and the Underground Railroad in Philadelphia”, Saturday, May 5, 2018 – Visits to St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church, Mother Bethel AME Church, Belmont Mansion in Fairmount Park and the John Johnson House. Lunch at McGillins Olde Ale House. Depart 8:30 a.m. from Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia and return at 5:00 p.m. \$65.00 person, RSVP by May 1st to Jerry McCormick gedwinmc@msn.com or mail by 3692 Stanton St., Phila. PA 19129

Gravesite Placement of Veterans’ Flags at Laurel Hill Cemetery Sunday, May 20, 2018 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

Memorial Day Observed at Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, Sunday, May 27, 2018 - 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 27, 2018 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. Keynote speaker, 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 will be 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).

The General Meade Society’s Night at the Phillies is scheduled for Tuesday evening, August 28, 2018 – Our nine will take on the Washington Nationals in a National League East match up. We will be in Section 106 in the lower right field bleachers. Game time is set for 7:05 p.m. Society member Tom Kearney has chosen a game that will allow fans to attend one of the *Phillies* BOGO games. Buy One Get One means if you buy a ticket at the game price of \$38.00 you will get another ticket at no charge. Basically paying \$19.00 for each ticket. Tom has ordered 60 tickets and he can be reached at 267-446-2935 or e-mail him at turkeytk@aol.com.

Annual General Meade Birthday Celebration, Sunday, December 31, 2017 - The General Meade Society of Philadelphia celebrated the General Meade's birthday at Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery. The military parade of over 100 Civil War reenactment units, civilians in period attire, heritage groups, and participants marched to the final resting place of the Victor of Gettysburg and memorialize his services to the nation. A champagne toast and reception followed the program. A tour of the historic cemetery rounded out the festivities. This year marked the 27th anniversary of the Meade birthday celebration by the General Meade Society.

Annual Meade Society Champagne Brunch, Sunday, January 21, 2018 - In addition to the awards ceremony at the Brunch, a silent auction, headed once again by Judi Kearney, was held. Mike Peter, Society Vice-President, offered the toast to General Meade before the sumptuous brunch offered by our host the Cannstatter catering service. Following the meal Andy Waskie, Jerry McCormick and Mike Wunsch presented the General Meade Society awards:

Award of Merit

Blair Thron

The Legion of Honor

American Legion Post 405 at the Union League
Represented by Post Commander Jon Peterson and John Voris

Certificates of Achievement

Dr. Gary Grove
Pat Caldwell
Alex Palma
Ken Garson
Ed Zongolowicz
Joe Perry

Honorary lifetime memberships were awarded to Bernie & Marge Bujak, Gary Grove, Carol and Jack Lieberman, Carol Yaster and Bill Levant. They were recognized for their outstanding monetary generosity and support of the Meade Society.

Major Octavius V. Catto Honor Ceremony and Catto Pennsylvania National Guard Medal Award Luncheon at the Union League held on Saturday, 2/17/18. The ceremony began at the City Hall Catto Statue. This was the first year the ceremony was held at City Hall. Previously, it was held for 24 years at 6th & Lombard St near where Catto lived, worked and voted on the fateful election day (10/10/1871) on which he was cruelly assassinated while called to active duty with the PA National Guard to protect voters in his community.

Catto was serving as a Major in the Pennsylvania National Guard, the highest-ranking officer in the US Army at that time.

Major Catto also was the inspector general of the 5th Brigade, 1st Division of the National Guard of Pennsylvania, a position that required him to have a horse, sword, and sidearm. (<http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/murder-of-octavius-catto/>)

Among the ceremony participants were members of The Octavius V. Catto Society, founded in 1994.

The unveiling of the 127th United States Colored Troops Regiment's battle flag highlighted the fourth annual Pennsylvania National Guard Catto Award ceremony at the Union League. It has been completely restored and will hang in the Union League until Flag Day and then return to the Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum.

The flag was painted by famed Philadelphia Black artist, David Bustill Bowser. It is the only one of the flags that he painted at the time of the Civil War to survive.

The Union League helped to raise the regiment and sponsored the awarding of the Battle flag. Octavius Catto was a prominent member of the Committee at the Union League that helped to recruit the troops from the Philadelphia Black community. The dedicatory address at the Flag presentation ceremony at Camp William Penn in September 1864 was delivered by prominent Philadelphian Charles Gibbons, a founder of the Union League.

The Pennsylvania National Guard recipients of the Catto Medal this year were Sergeant Laura Colvin and Sergeant First Class Melissa Singer.

Meade and Lee After Gettysburg: The Forgotten Final Stage of the Gettysburg Campaign, From Falling Waters to Culpeper Court House, July 14 to July 31, 1863

(Savas Beatie 2017) is the first volume of a trilogy written by Jeffrey Wm Hunt which explores the Civil War in the Virginia Theater from July 14 to December 31, 1863.

Author Interview: Jeffrey Wm Hunt

Question: Many reviewers say that your book represents an important addition to the previously understood story of the Gettysburg campaign. How so?

Most books on the Gettysburg Campaign end on July 14, 1863 when the Army of Northern Virginia retreats across the Potomac back into Virginia. In fact, the campaign did not end there. For the next two weeks Meade and Lee played a cat and mouse game on either side of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Confederates were trying to slip through that geographic barrier and regain their old positions on the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers. The Federals were trying to stop them. Both sides were operating on limited intelligence and their operations produced a flurry of sharp combats, the most significant of which was the fight in Manassas Gap (the Battle of Wapping Heights) on July 23. It's a dramatic and fascinating period and has been largely neglected in print, although virtually all-serious Gettysburg scholars recognize the campaign doesn't end until the two armies regain the Rappahannock line. So in that sense you could say that my work is shedding light on an important part of the Gettysburg story that has long been ignored.

Question: Do you think your work sheds new light on Meade?

That is a great observation and an issue that more and more scholars are paying attention to. Meade does live in the shadow of Grant. It would probably be possible for a casual student of the war to forget he even existed after July 14, 1863. Of course Meade had command of the Army of the Potomac from just before Gettysburg all the way to Appomattox. He is hardly an inconsequential figure, even after Grant arrives in Virginia. However, outside of a couple of recent biographies on Meade, his generalship has largely gone unexamined except during the period he is paired with Grant. My book, and the volumes that follow, look at the five and half months between Gettysburg and the onset of winter quarters in December 1863. During that time Meade was on his own in Virginia—it was his show and his alone—and thus an in-depth study of the period does allow us our best chance to judge Meade on his own merits. He is a very interesting person and an intriguing figure. I certainly hope my work helps readers and historians come to a fuller understanding of Meade as an army commander. At the very least it should stimulate the discussion of his post-Gettysburg generalship – as well as that of Lee.

*The next volume in the trilogy, **Meade and Lee at Bristoe Station: The Problems of Command and Strategy from Brandy Station to the Buckland Races, August 1 to October 31, 1863** will be out in September 2018.*



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***

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

