



THE DISPATCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GENERAL MEADE SOCIETY
OF PHILADELPHIA -- WINTER 2020

"Forget Not His Deeds"

**GENERAL MEADE SOCIETY
OF PHILADELPHIA, INC.
P.O. Box 45556
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19149**

The General Meade Society of Philadelphia is an educational non-profit & 501(c3) organization chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the mission of the society is to promote and preserve the life and service of Maj-Gen. George Gordon Meade, (USA), commander of the Army of the Potomac.

The Executive Board of the General Meade Society of Philadelphia meets at the Cannstatter Volkstheater Verein, 9130 Academy Road in Northeast Philadelphia. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of January, April, September and December; the starting time is 7:00 PM; the meetings are open to all society members, friends and guests.

To Contact the Meade Society:
generalmeadesociety.org
meade@generalmeadesociety.org

Of interest in this issue:

- General Meade's Birthday
- Annual Meade Society Brunch
- Octavius Catto Ceremony
- Meade History Symposium
- Contributions by the Newmans

REGARDING LINCOLN'S LETTER ABOUT MEADE'S FAILURE TO "BAG" LEE AFTER GETTYSBURG, LET US NOT FORGET...

"You should not have been surprised or vexed at the President's disappointment at the escape of Lee's army. He had examined into all the details of sending you reinforcements to satisfy himself that every man who could possibly be spared from other places had been sent to your army. He thought that Lee's defeat was so certain that he felt no little impatience at his unexpected escape. I have no doubt, General, that you felt the disappointment as keenly as any one else. Such things sometimes occur to us without any fault of our own. Take it all together, your short campaign has proved your superior generalship, and you merit, as you will receive, the confidence of the Government and the gratitude of the country. I need not assure you, General, that I have lost none of the confidence which I felt in you when I recommended you for the command.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
H. W. Halleck." ... *Letter to George Meade, July 28th*



In Memoriam:

REVEREND RICHARD O. PARTINGTON

This past year saw the passing of **Reverend Richard Partington**, a founder of the **GAR Museum** and who saved the Museum from dissolution in 1958.

Rev. Richard Partington was a great man, a man of character, values and a love for history and preservation. He was **Commander-in-Chief** of the **Sons of Union Veterans**, a 50-year member of the **Union League**, and a great supporter of the **General Meade Society**. The Reverend donated much financial support and consideration to the General Meade Society over many years. In recognition of this, in 2016 he was awarded the **Award of Merit, the Meade Society's highest honor**. A great man has passed to his reward and will always be remembered for his goodness. May he be long admired.

Donations in Rev. Partington's memory may go to either the G.A.R. Museum or Camp #1, or Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

– *Andy Waskie, General Meade Society, President*

Board of Directors - Officers

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

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

2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEADE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT LAUREL HILL CEMETERY



The customary **Annual Celebration** of the **General Meade Society** of the great General's birthday at **Laurel Hill Cemetery** took place on **December 31st, 2019!**



This marked the **204th anniversary of the birth of General George Gordon Meade** (1815-1872); it was also the **29th anniversary of the ceremony** and the **23rd anniversary of the founding of the General Meade Society of Philadelphia.**



There was a concert and musical interlude of Civil War era by **Beck's Philadelphia Brigade Band**, followed by a procession to the modest graves of the General and the Meade family. After an introduction of sponsors and various speakers, notably a **veteran of the Battle of the Bulge**, keynote speakers, **Dr. Joe Coleman** and **Paul Lader** of **MOLLUS**, spoke about Meade and his contributions.



After the speechifying there were wreath layings and honor volleys, champagne toasts to the General for his accomplishments as a Philadelphia citizen, a military hero of battles to uphold the Union and his feats of engineering surveying the Great Lakes and building lighthouses.



After the benediction by **Reverend John Brown** and champagne toasts, the audience and participants retired to the Laurel Hill Gatehouse for a luncheon provided by the **Meade Society** and **Laurel Hill Cemetery.**



The **Meade Society** and **Laurel Hill Cemetery** wish to thank all participants and contributors that made this day a very special day in celebration of its wonderful citizen!

[Additional photos of the day are available on the [General Meade Society website](https://generalmeadesociety.org/annual-meade-birthday-celebration-2019/):
<https://generalmeadesociety.org/annual-meade-birthday-celebration-2019/>]



**SUNDAY
APRIL
5th
2020
12 - 5 PM**



**THE GENERAL MEADE SOCIETY
OF PHILADELPHIA
21TH ANNUAL HISTORY
SYMPOSIUM**



Cost—\$45. per person, including: lunch, program, refreshments, donations

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

TO REGISTER & RESERVE:

Call: Jerry McCormick
215-848-7753
or email: ged-winmc@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



**THE WAR WITH MEXICO;
TRAINING GROUND FOR
THE CIVIL WAR**



- 12:00pm:** *Welcome & Introductions*
- 12:15pm:** **Overview of the Mexican War 1845 - 1848**
– Dr. Andy Waskie
- 1:15pm:** **Pennsylvania in the Mexican War**
– Guillermo Bosch, Licensed Battlefield Guide
- 2:00pm:** *Luncheon & Refreshments*
- 3:00pm:** **Lt. George Meade & the Mexican War**
– Professor John Selby
- 3:45pm:** *Break*
- 4:00pm:** **The Mexican War & Civil War Generalship**
– Professor Rick Trimble
- 4:45pm:** *Final Panel Q & A*



War News from Mexico, Richard Caton Woodville (1848)

**UPCOMING
OCTAVIUS V. CATTO CEREMONY
AT CITY HALL & THE UNION LEAGUE**

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22ND
2020 AT 11 AM**

There will be a ceremony to honor the contributions of the Civil War leader; wreath laying; military salute at the **Catto Monument** at the **South Front of City Hall** at 11:00 A.M. to honor the great Black equal rights and military leader. There will be a wreath-laying ceremony. All military units, period civilians, veterans and heritage groups are encouraged to participate. Colors, wreaths and music are encouraged.



Following the City Hall Ceremony: **The PA National Guard Award Luncheon & Medal Ceremony** to follow at **12:30 PM** in the **Union League** for the **'Major Catto Medal' Award Ceremony**.

Contact: **Mary O'Brien** at the **Union League**
to reserve lunch:
obrienm@unionleague.org

Information: **Dr. Andy Waskie** – 215-423-3930
or awaski01@gmail.com

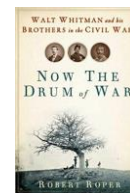
The Independence Hall Association
has an excellent website for
O.V. Catto resources at:
<https://catto.ushistory.org/>



WHAT THE GMS ARE READING ...

For suggestions to those interested in reading, this columnist thought he'd delve into a book that's been on his bookshelf for some time. Home repairs without the presence of cable television and internet gave him additional time to attack the pile of books that will outlive his ability and time to read them.

One of these books was Robert Roper's ***Now the Drum of War: Walt Whitman and His Brothers in the Civil War***. New York: Walker & Company, 2008. Pp. 432 ISBN: 0802715532. \$18.00.



It is not your usual Civil War recounting of glory and suffering, movements of troops and leadership strategy and tactics. While there were other members of the family (nine with one dying in infancy), it does focus on the relationships of Walt Whitman and his brother, George Washington Whitman of the 51st New York Infantry—George fought in *seventeen* major battles!—and his arthritic mother, Louisa Whitman. The period focuses on the years 1840 to the 1880s, and delves into the correspondence between these members of the family.

Students of domestic American history might find this more interesting than the military historian, as it gives an atypical look at an American family in the 19th century, how they lived, worked, and the economic landscape of the time.

The book is perhaps overly long, sometimes episodic, and focuses too much on psychoanalyzing the dynamics of Whitman's sexuality. Despite that, it works! [*Editor's Note*: For those who haven't read much Whitman, nor are aware of the impact of his poetry on the literature in the 19th century, his writing went beyond "O Captain! My Captain!" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" to scandalize those of the more Puritanical mindset of his era. It's pretty lusty stuff!]

Walt traveled to see his brother, wounded at Fredericksburg, and stayed in the arena to nurse and comfort wounded soldiers. There is much in this book that is interesting because it is an off-the-beaten-path book about the Civil War's impacts.

— **Ken Garson**, *The Dispatch* Editor

'GENERAL MEADE' MEETS THE CURRENT OWNERS OF A SUMMER HOME DEAR TO THE GENERAL

This from **Andy Waskie** ...

Dear Fellow Members,

On December 14th, I was invited to present General Meade at a Holiday Reception at **Meadow Bank Farm**, the home where the General spent many hot summers in the Post-War period there with the Fishers, family friends. Across the street (Fox Chase Rd.) is the Stable where 'Old Baldy' spent his last days and, sans head & neck, still rests.

I met the present owners at Cape May when I presented General Meade at the Cape May CWRT in August. They are **(John) Jay & Jacquie Newman**, and they have a summer home in Cape May and were very interested in learning all they could about Meade.

After my visit to **Meadow Bank Farm** and a delightful and warm Holiday Reception, **they presented me a check for the Meade Society for a rather large sum of money!** I stand flabbergasted, but decidedly grateful for their extreme generosity!

Jay & Jacquie are coming to the Meade Birthday Gala. We must give them a warm and grateful welcome for their huge gift and future consideration. I am inviting them as our guests to the Brunch and giving them a certificate of appreciation.

They are anxious to join the Society. By the way, they have lavished attention to their famous abode and it looks marvelous!

— **Andy Waskie**
President of the Meade Society

The GAR Museum & Library Adds to Its Board

Joe Perry, President of the GAR Museum & Library, announced the election of **Tom Donnelly** to its Board. He and other members of the Board look forward to working with him in 2020.

THE GAR MUSEUM & LIBRARY IS REACHING OUT TO MOVE TO NEW DIGS

The **Grand Army of the Republic Museum and Library** wants – indeed needs! – to move to a new location. Located in Frankford at 4278 Griscom Street in the old Ruan House since the 1950s, its facility is extremely old and in need of very extensive and expensive repair. In addition, to meet any additional desire for greater programming, expanded collections, and educational enterprise, the Museum needs more adequate parking than is provided by the residential neighborhood where it now resides.

Newly-elected President **Joe Perry** is mounting a major fund-raising campaign to relocate its Civil War collections and archives to a more congenial location. The Board of the Museum is currently scouting for new locations, partnerships, and financial opportunities to assist them in achieving their goal: to better preserve and promote the heritage of those who served to preserve the Union and to pass along the knowledge of their sacrifice doing it.

If you are interested in this endeavor and wish to assist in some way, please see the GAR website: <https://garmuslib.org> or call the Museum at (215) 289-6484.

More on this in the next **Dispatch**.

CIVIL WAR PUZZLE FOR THIS ISSUE OF THE DISPATCH



This photo from the film **The Red Badge of Courage** shows war hero **Audie Murphy** as protagonist Henry Fleming. Question: **Who is the actor on the left**, also famous for *his* exploits in WWII? First person to email kengarson@gmail.com with the correct answer will get **one free beer** at the Cannstatter, compliments of Andy Waskie! Answer to be provided on the next **Dispatch**.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEADE CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH 2020

The **2020 Annual Meade Society Champagne Brunch** was a terrific success! Although winter's chill and illness winds thinned the crowd a bit, the Society's event had over 50 people enjoying the **Cannstatter's** abundantly fine cuisine and beverages.



The ambience was, as usual, one of great fellowship and warm camaraderie. There were the customary old-timers as well as new folks participating. Attendees hoisted several toasts to the great General and honored Philadelphian, George Gordon Meade!

Several people were honored for their service to the Society. The awardees of the **Award of Merit** were **Ginny and Tom Benner**, for their meritorious work over a decade coordinating with the Battlefield guides and mustering the troops on the Adopt-A-Position project at the Leister House Garden, Meade's Headquarters during the battle of Gettysburg.

Since Ginny Benner was nursing Tom at home; the award was accepted by **Rita Thomas**, who traveled often with rake and hoe to the Battlefield as part of Ginny's horticultural entourage.



Mike Wunsch accepted the **Legion of Honor** award for **Bernie Bujak**, currently in Florida. (Perhaps he is vacationing near the scene of **Jupiter Lighthouse**, built by George Meade!)



Judi Kearney's Silent Auction was a grand success. She also had a 'make a deal' table of interesting items and door prizes a-plenty!



Other awards for meritorious and valued service were given to those who assisted the Society in the past years.



[Additional photos of the day are on the **General Meade Society website**: at: <https://generalmeadesociety.org/annual-meade-champagne-brunch-2020/>]



2021
GENERAL GEORGE MEADE SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP FORM

Kindly remit your 2021 dues payment on or before January 31, 2021.

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, 2021.

- _____ \$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!