

June 02, 2015 – Spring Campaign 37

The Annual George Seligman Dinner

June 2th is our annual Seligman Dinner. As George Seligman passed away in 1985, many of you never had the pleasure to have known George. Every organization has one member who leaves an indelible imprint. It was George who led a small group of Civil War history enthusiasts from the rather formal setting of the Lehigh County Court House to the promised land of monthly dinner meetings and a membership that grew from dozens to hundreds. George, while our gregarious leader, always prodded others into the front, always encouraged others to step up and share the responsibility and the fun of being part of this wonderful round table. Our success over the years is due in part to the foundation and standard that George set.

Brief Synopsis of Our Presentation on American Brutus John Wilkes

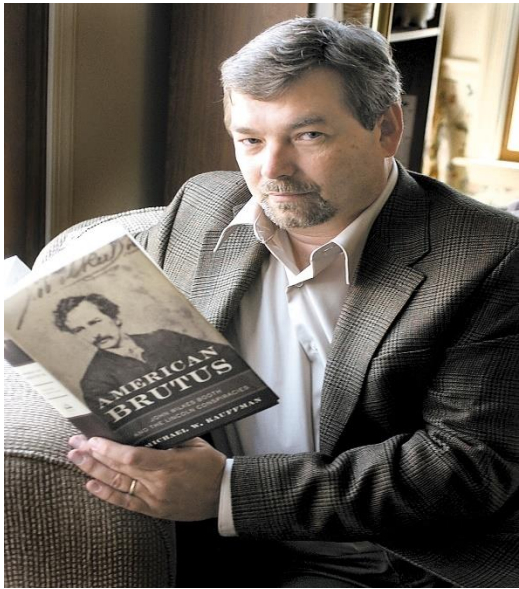
Booth and the Lincoln Conspiracies:

Michael W. Kauffman

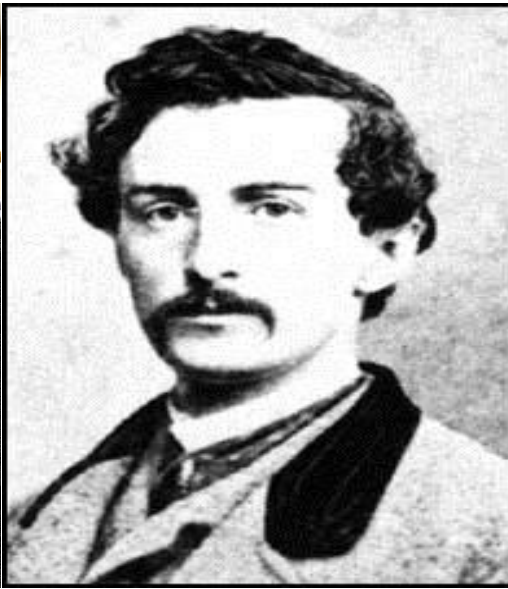
As historian William C. Davis once wrote, "no one has studied [John Wilkes] Booth longer or more in depth than Michael W. Kauffman, a well-known figure and voice of reason in the field of Lincoln assassination studies."

Kauffman has studied the assassination for more than forty years, contributing countless discoveries and writing numerous articles on the subject. He has lectured throughout the United States and the UK, and has written for *Civil War Times*, the *Washington Post*, *American Heritage*, and *Smithsonian*, among others. He has appeared regularly on television, including A&E, the History Channel, National Geographic Channel, C-SPAN, and many others. For 30 years he guided bus tours of the John Wilkes Booth Escape Route, which led the *Washington Post* to call him "legendary" in this field.

His book *American Brutus: John Wilkes Booth and the Lincoln Conspiracies*, was named by the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and other major media outlets as one of the best non-fiction books of 2004. This all-encompassing account of the Lincoln conspiracy is based entirely on primary sources, and was named by *The Wall Street Journal* as one of the five best books ever written about political violence. As the late historian David Herbert Donald said, "There are many books on [the assassination] but this is by all means the best." Its companion documentary, *The Hunt for John Wilkes Booth*, has spawned a cottage industry in assassination-related books and tours. Mr. Kauffman will speak about the many reasons why the death of Abraham Lincoln still fascinates us after 150 years.



Author Michael W. Kauffman, left



John Wilkes Booth, right

Campaign Officers 2014-2015 Campaign Year:

Brigade Commander-Warren Beach
 Regimental Commander-Ed Oechsle
 Company Commander-Position Open
 Adjutant-Kay Bagenstose
 Paymaster-James Duffy
 Board members-
 Kim Jacobs, Kay Bagenstose, Claire Kukielka Open
 Paymaster-James Duffy-610-253-4549
 Publicity-Bob McHugh
 Brigade Clerks- Carol Detweiler-215-234-4884
 & Jim Duffy- 610-253-4549

Appointed positions with Board Approval
 Recruiting Officer- Jeff Gates jeffgates@ptd.net ,
 610-966-5773
 Newsletter Editor – Claire Kukielka clkuk@ptd.net ,
 610-398-1619
 Quartermaster-Tony Major Webmaster-Peter
 Detweiler pdetweiler@comcast.net
 Brigade Librarian-Kay Bagenstose
 Website: www.cwrteasternpa.org
 Brigade Photographer – Jeff Heller
jrheller@enter.net

Format of all meetings

Sutler's Call	6:00-6:30 p.m.
Mess Call	6:30 p.m.
Program	7:30 pm

Cost per meeting

Dinner and Program	\$25.00 per person (Reservation required)
Program only	\$5.00 (No reservation required)

June 02, 2015 PROGRAM REGISTRATION DETAILS

All Members and guests of the Lehigh Brigade are ordered to the Days Inn and Suites of Allentown, PA on June 02, 2015. **The deadline for accepting dinner reservations is Thursday, May 28, 2015.** For dinner reservations and/or information: Contact any of the following:

James Duffy – 610-253- 4549 duffysocwk@aol.com

Carol Detweiler 215-234- 4884 cdetweiler01@comcast.net

Ed Oechsle – 610-882-9228 ehoechsle@ptd.net

Brigade Call

Civil War Round Table of Eastern, PA, Inc.

[Warren Beach](#)

As we wind up another campaign of our Civil War Round Table, it's a good time to reflect on the programs that we had in the past year. The quality of these programs was truly outstanding. I dare not mention which was my favorite be assured there were no "clunkers" We only missed one meeting because of bad weather. I need to thank the board for their help to me.

DO YOU KNOW THE CIVIL WAR? A Brain- Stretching Quiz About the Historic Struggle Between the Blue and Grey

1. On which battlefield would you find "Hell's Half-Acre?"
2. During the Civil War how many casualties were a result of the fire from Quaker Guns?
3. The Confederates under Ruggles massed sixty-two cannons and fired into a Union stronghold during this battle in 1862. Which battle was it?

See page 5 for the correct responses to the quiz

Please Remember To Visit Our Website: Our website is a treasure trove of up to date information about not only our Round Table and it' activities, but links to events of interest, research aids and other organizations of merit.

REFLECTING ON OUR MAY MEETING



PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE

Warren Beach, Brigade Commander, presented Attorney Jeffrey D. Stocker a plaque of appreciation for his talk on the 153rd which was organized out of Easton, PA . This picture was taken at the May meeting.

Summary of May Meeting

Tony Major

A total of 75 members and guests were on hand at our May Dinner Meeting to hear our own Jeff Stocker explain his research techniques for his latest book *"WE FOUGHT DESPERATE"* and bring to life the members of the 153rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment.



Note the picture of the audience listening intently to Jeff Stocker's excellent presentation.



Book Raffle Winners for May 2015



The book raffle winners for the May 2015 meeting were (front) Joe Erceg (back – left to right) Chuck Cannon, Joe Riggs, Gary Weaver, Bill Frankenfield and Hazel Major (at right). Congratulations to the winners and thanks to everyone for supporting the preservation cause!

ANSWERS FOR DO YOUR KNOW THE CIVIL WAR?

Continued from page 3

1. b. Murfreesboro
2. b. 0
3. a. Shiloh



LEHIGH VALLEY CIVIL WAR DAYS

1865 – THE CONFLICT IN THE EAST ENDS

www.friendsofcampgeiger.webs.com

- WHAT:** Annual Lehigh Valley Civil War Days at Whitehall Parkway Recreational Area.
This year's theme is "1865 – The Conflict in the East Ends"
- WHERE:** Whitehall Parkway Recreational Area, South Church Street, Whitehall Township, Pennsylvania
- WHEN:** Saturday – Sunday, June 13 – June 14, 2015 from 9:00 AM to 9:45 PM on Saturday and from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM on Sunday, rain or shine

SPECIFIC BATTLE REENACTMENTS WILL TAKE PLACE EACH DAY ALONG WITH FIGHTING IN THE TRENCHES

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- Battle re-enactments
 - 10:15 AM – Assault on Fort Stedman – Saturday
 - 1:45 PM – Appomattox – Sunday
- Each battle preceded by a battlefield talk
- Behind the scenes tour of the trenches on the hour starting at 12:00 noon
- Medical demonstrations
- Camp life scenarios
- Historic street featuring:
 - Field Hospital
 - US Sanitary Commission
 - US Sanitary Commission Cook and Quartermaster
 - Children's Games
 - Period Laundress
 - Children's Recruiting Center
 - Mourning in America

- Meet General Grant
- Meet Clara Barton
- Artillery demonstration 4:00 PM and 8:45 PM Saturday
 - Entertainment at the Lyceum featuring
 - Jason Wilson – discussion of Pennsylvania’s attempt to preserve Civil War Battle Flag
 - Victorian Secrets Fashion Show
 - Evening concert – 7:00 PM - Saturday
 - Other discussions and period music

Sutlers and food are available both days. Both Union and Confederate living historians will be available to answer questions. **CONTACT: Rob Martin (610) 419-9641 or email friendsofcampgeiger@gmail.com**

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION:



ANTICIPATING YOUR SUMMER ROAD TRIPS

We are inviting our members and friends to provide articles and pictures as they visit various historic sites during their summervacation. We would love to hear from you and publish your adventures and recommendations in the summer newsletter.

May Memories From Our Presentation by Jeff Stocker



Members enjoying Jeff's talk.



Jeff autographing a copy of his book.

2014-2015 Campaign Print Raffle Prizes



Bedlam in the Brickyard by Bradley Schmehl

The CWRT has a multitude of wonderful prizes that will be raffled off on the June 2015 meeting.

- 1. Framed Signed Print – *Bedlam in the Brickyard* – Gettysburg by Bradley Schmehl. #381/950.**
- 2. The Official Civil War Centennial Commission Commemorative Medallion 1961 – 1965.**
- 3. Framed Print Image of the Surrender at Appomattox with Surrender U. S. Centennial Postage Stamp.**
- 4. *Arms, Equipment and Atlas of the Civil War* – 3 Volume Boxed Set.**
- 5. *The Colton Letters Civil War Period 1861 – 1865.***
- 6. *The Civil War: An Illustrated History* by Geoffrey C. Ward with Ric Burns and Ken Burns.**

REMEMBER, WHEN YOU SUPPORT PRESERVATION, WE ARE ALL WINNERS!!!

[Recollection on a June Battle: The Battle of Big Bethel, One of the first Land battles After the Surrender of Fort Sumter \(Wikipedia\)](#)

The **Battle of Big Bethel**, also known as the **Battle of Bethel Church** or **Great Bethel** was one of the earliest land battles of the [American Civil War](#) (Civil War) after the surrender of [Fort Sumter](#). The battle between [Union Army](#) and [Confederate States Army](#) forces on June 10, 1861 took place in [Hampton](#) and [York County, Virginia](#), (near the present-day unincorporated community of [Tabb](#)). While small in comparison to the many larger, bloodier and more significant battles later in the war, the Battle of Big Bethel and all early Civil War military engagements attracted considerable notice, press coverage and exaggerated importance because of the newness of the war and the general feeling the war would be short.

On April 15, 1861, the day after the small U. S. Army garrison at [Fort Sumter](#) formally surrendered to Confederate forces, [President Abraham Lincoln](#) called for troops to suppress the rebellion. [Virginia](#) refused to provide soldiers for this purpose and its State government leaders reconvened a convention in [Richmond, Virginia](#), which voted to secede from the Union on April 17, 1861, subject to ratification by a popular vote on May 23, 1861. A small United States [Regular Army](#) garrison was able to hold the powerful and strategically located [Fort Monroe](#) on the southern end of the [Virginia Peninsula](#) and the [Chesapeake Bay](#) and the north side of [Hampton Roads](#).^[1] The fort could be reinforced and resupplied by water without threat of attack and was approachable by land only over a narrow causeway and narrow isthmus of land. By April 20, 1861, the U.S. War Department was able to reinforce the fort with two trained and ready Massachusetts volunteer militia infantry regiments. On May 23, 1861, [Major General](#) of volunteers [Benjamin F. Butler](#), a former Massachusetts politician and lawyer, took charge of the growing garrison. By May 29, 1861, he established a camp with cannon range of the fort at nearby [Hampton, Virginia](#) and a fortified camp at [Newport News, Virginia](#) about 8 miles (13 km) from the fort.

On May 21, 1861, Virginia's chief military officer, [Major General Robert E. Lee](#) responded to the growing threat from Fort Monroe by putting Colonel (later Major General) [John B. Magruder](#) in charge of the Virginia (Confederate) forces in the southern Virginia Peninsula area. Magruder assumed command on May 24, 1861 and set up headquarters at [Yorktown, Virginia](#). He began fortifying a line along the [Warwick River](#). On June 6, 1861, Magruder sent a force to fortify a strong advanced position mostly on the north side of a branch of the Back River at Big Bethel Church, about 13 miles (21 km) south of Yorktown and 8 miles (13 km) from Hampton. A smaller outpost was established at Little Bethel Church, which was about the same 8 miles (13 km) distance from both Union camps.

Butler and an aide, Major [Theodore Winthrop](#), devised a plan for a coordinated dawn attack on June 10, 1861, after a night march by federal forces from their two main bases outside Fort Monroe, to drive the Confederates back from their threatening advanced positions at Little Bethel and Big Bethel. The inexperienced Union officers and forces could not execute the plan. In a precursor of the conflicting uniform mixup at the [First Battle of Bull Run](#), one Union regiment mistook another Union regiment dressed in gray for Confederates in the dark and began firing on them. Not only did the attacked Union regiment suffer several killed and wounded, but the gunfire alerted the Confederates to the movement of the Union forces. Nonetheless, the Union field commander, Massachusetts militia brigadier general [Ebenezer W. Peirce](#),^[2]

pushed on. In an ill-coordinated attack over broken and swampy ground, the Union forces attacked well-fortified Confederate positions at Big Bethel which had well-placed artillery support. One Union regiment made a difficult flanking march only to find they were unsupported and cut off when they closed for an attack. Another regiment prematurely withdrew from the field through an error by its commander, leaving the remaining force on the field which had advanced to a vacated Confederate position quite vulnerable and the advance force also had to withdraw. After a few more Union attacks were thwarted, Peirce decided further attacks would have been futile so he ordered the Union forces to retire from the field and returned to their bases. The Union forces suffered 76 casualties, with 18 killed, including Major Winthrop and Lieutenant John T. Greble, the first regular army officer killed in the war. The Confederates suffered only 8 casualties, with only 1 killed.^[3] Although Magruder subsequently withdrew to Yorktown and his defensive line along the Warwick River, he had won a propaganda victory and the Union forces attempted no further significant advance on the Peninsula until the [Peninsula Campaign](#) of 1862.

Battlefield Preservation at Big Bethel

Most of the Big Bethel battlefield, and the whole Little Bethel site, have not been preserved. Today the sites are generally covered with residential and commercial development. Marsh Creek or Brick Kiln Creek has also been dammed, creating the Big Bethel Reservoir on the battlefield site. The fragments of the site that remain are not readily identifiable.^[4] The site of Lt. Greble's death is now a convenience store. A group of local preservationists has developed a plan to preserve areas, currently located on [Langley Air Force Base](#), containing a remnant of an earthwork and the memorial to Henry Lawson Wyatt, the only Confederate soldier killed in the battle.^[5]

Notes

1. The water area known as Hampton Roads is one of the world's biggest natural harbors (more accurately a roadstead or "roads"), and incorporates the mouths of the Elizabeth River and James River with several smaller rivers and itself empties into the Chesapeake Bay near its mouth leading to the Atlantic Ocean.
2. Authoritative sources, including his tombstone, show Peirce is the correct spelling of the general's name although in some accounts it is mistakenly shown as "Pierce."
3. Some reports showed 9 wounded rather than 7.
4. Salmon, John S. *The Official Virginia Civil War Battlefield Guide*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001. [ISBN 0-8117-2868-4](#). p. 72
5. Quarstein, John V. "First Blood at Big Bethel." *Civil War Times* vol. L, no. 2 (April 2011): p. 79

Speaking of Classes...For All of Those Interested in Expanding their Knowledge of the Civil War, please consider taking a class from The Civil War Institute

After some confusion with the content of our Summer Session, the course names and descriptions have been settled, and the classes are ready to go.

Classes may be taken as part of the certificate program or individually. Completion of your choice of any four of six core courses, and any four elective courses is required to receive the certificate. Call (215) 884-2218 to register or for an application for the certificate program, or online at www.manor.edu/cont-ed/civil-war/courses.php Class hours are 6:30 till 8:30 pm. Manor College is located at 700 Fox Chase Road in Jenkintown, PA.

*** Indicates Core Course**

**** Indicates Elective Course**

****Civil War Officers: Heroes and Fools, Patriots and Duels - 6 hrs.** – When we think of the Civil War, we often concentrate on the valorous acts of bravery and leadership among the officers. However, there is much more that rarely is told.

This course takes an in-depth look at the lives of Civil War officers, the heroic and brave, as well as the rogues and cowards.

DATE: Thursdays, May 21 to June 4

FEE: \$79

INSTRUCTOR: Herb Kaufman, M.Ed.

This course is an expanded and revised course that contains different material than was included in the "Meet the Generals" course.

****Life From the Home front to the Battlefield - 6 hrs.** – A comprehensive look at the varied and sometimes little-known roles civilians played during the Civil War. The course offers an overview of 19th century life with an emphasis on women in the literary, medicine and nursing worlds, as well as in the military service. DATE:

Wednesdays June 10-24

FEE: \$79

INSTRUCTORS: Paula Gidjunis, M.A., M.B.A. and Sandy Kaufman, M.Ed.

This course was previously offered as "Civilians During the Civil War".

****Gettysburg: Aftermath of a Battle - 6 hrs.** – The biggest battle ever fought on American soil obviously had a major impact on the outcome of the war and on the men who fought it. But it also changed the lives of the civilians who lived in the little Pennsylvania crossroads town. When the armies left, the people of Gettysburg had to pick up the pieces.

DATE: Mondays, July 13-27

FEE: \$79

INSTRUCTOR: Nancy Caldwell

The Civil War Institute's Fall semester format has been changed to allow a greater variety of choices for students whose schedules or finances make it difficult to attend three-week or six-week courses. The semester will include one six-week course, two three-week courses, two two-week courses and three one-night seminars. They include:

- **Lincoln: A Life**, a six-week Core course taught by Hugh Boyle.
- **Civil War Medicine**, a three-week course taught by Herb Kaufman.
- **Opening the War in the West**, a three week course taught by Jerry Carrier.
- **First Bull Run**, a two-week course taught by Pat Caldwell.
- **Confederate Commerce Raiders**, a two week course taught by Matt Bruce.
- **Researching the Civil War and Your Ancestors**, a one-night seminar taught by Herb Kaufman.
- **Abe and Mary**, a one-night seminar taught by Hugh Boyle.
- **Philadelphia in the Civil War**, a one-night seminar taught by Herb Kaufman.

Look for dates and times, and more details on the classes in the June issue of *Case Shot & Canister*.

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF EASTERN PA, INC.

P.O. BOX 333 ALLENTOWN, PA 18105

FIRST CLASS MAIL