

Newsletter of The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table
Welcome to our fellowship forum where we discuss our past, emphasizing
remembrance, education & preservation.
Meetings held virtually on Zoom
Online: harrisburgcwr.org

Board of Directors Confronts Pandemic

The HCWRT Board of Directors met on July 11 via Zoom for a very productive planning meeting. A lot of good ideas were exchanged on how we can steer our Round Table through the COVID-19 pandemic. Here's a summary of what we accomplished at that meeting:

- ◆ We resolved that we will not let our Round Table become a casualty of the coronavirus. We are determined to do everything in our power to keep our organization alive and thriving, while protecting the health and safety of our membership by avoiding unnecessary risks. We will hold virtual meetings until it is safe to resume live ones.
- ◆ We will invite the outstanding speakers Program Chair Al Mackey has recruited for Campaign 62 to make their presentations via Zoom until it is safe for us to resume our traditional dinner meetings at the Radisson. Two speakers have already accepted. See article on page 3.
- ◆ While we took a financial hit by canceling four dinner meetings and a field trip this spring, we decided not to increase dues for Campaign 62. Instead, we will encourage members who have the means to make donations to help us keep our heads above water. See article on page 3.
- ◆ We set up an *ad hoc* committee to explore ways to raffle off books, prints, magazines, and other in-kind donations from our members to help raise funds to offset operating costs.
- ◆ We decided to stop requiring new members to buy name tags, a practice that is difficult to justify when we are not having live meetings. New members will be given the option of purchasing a name tag once our live meetings resume.
- ◆ An executive committee consisting of our President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Membership Chair will reach out to all current HCWRT members this summer to see how they are coping during this pandemic, find out what their interests and desires are, and keep them informed. *If you do not receive a call by August 15, please call our new Membership Chair, Don Madar, at 814-397-0072 to check in and make sure our contact information for you is correct.*
- ◆ The board will meet again at the end of August via Zoom to hammer out a mission statement, vision, and goals for the HCWRT, and to discuss additional ways we can better serve our current members and recruit new ones.



News of the untimely death from COVID-19 of Rajni Amin, banquet manager at the Radisson, will come as a shock to the members of our Round Table who came to know him over the years and who admired his consummate professionalism and engaging personality.

Rajni worked at the Radisson for 33 years, and was loved and respected by his colleagues and clientele. To the HCWRT officers setting up monthly dinner-meetings he was a godsend. They knew they could count on his meticulous attention to detail to ensure the success of our events. He was a joy to work with, and will be greatly missed.

Rajni's obituary and tribute wall can be viewed at the link below. Please keep Rajni and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

<https://www.jessegeiglefuneralhome.com/obituaries/Rajni-Amin?obId=17488123&fbclid=IwAR2gm1FiX-trCpdArpZY06JP5LDIeu2pl2HjVhqwjkeerAP->

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Newsletter, Tracy Sommers
Nominating, Linda Meenaghan
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President's Pen

When Dr. Dick Sommers asked me two years ago to serve as a leader of our Round Table, neither of us could have foreseen the present pandemic or the devastating impact it would have on organizations like ours. Now I have a better appreciation for how George Gordon Meade felt when he was thrust into command of the Army of the Potomac just days before the battle of Gettysburg. The task before us is daunting but not impossible. I am fortunate to have the support of a tremendously talented and highly motivated board of directors.

Our board meeting on July 11 was not unlike the Council of War that convened at the Lydia Leister house. The advice I received from our board was to "stay and fight it out," much as the Union did at Gettysburg. We will fight a decisive defensive battle. If we succeed, we will survive this and move on to what Churchill called "broad, sunlit uplands." With the support of the board and of our members, I am confident we will prevail. So keep calm and carry on. This too shall pass!

Steve Smith



"Stay and Fight it Out..."

Post Office Box Closed

In an effort to economize, we closed our P. O. Box in Mechanicsburg. Effective immediately, all mail should be sent to : HCWRT, 500 Bonnymead Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17111

Meeting Schedule—Campaign 62

9/18/20

Common Soldiers and the Environment in 1862 Virginia
Kathryn Shively

10/16/20

The Antebellum U.S. Congress
Rachael Shelden

11/20/20

George B. McClellan and the Seven Days Campaign
Ethan Rafuse

12/10/20 (Thursday)

The Great Partnership: Robert E. Lee & Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson
Christian Keller

1/22/21

Abraham Lincoln
Matthew Pinsker

2/26/21

William B. Cushing
Jim Brommer, HCWRT Member

3/26/21

Hinsonville's Heroes
Cheryl Renee Gooch

4/23/21

George G Meade and the Pursuit After Gettysburg
Eric Wittenberg

5/21/21—Nye-Sommers Lecture

R. E. Lee
Allen C. Guelzo

6/11/21

Cold Harbor
Bert Dunkerly

Come Zoom With Us This Fall!

Although we are students of history, we are also forward thinking. Thus, the HCWRT purchased a Zoom account so we may stay connected with each other and resume our monthly meetings—virtually. Up to 100 participants may join in, without any time restrictions. Like Americans throughout history, we adapt to events!

Encouraged by our initial success using Zoom in June for a presentation by Cooper Wingert and our annual business meeting and elections, and in July to conduct our HCWRT board meeting, we've decided to use Zoom for our monthly meetings until such time as it is safe for our members to meet together again. Our first two speakers for Campaign 62 will give their presentations via Zoom.

We are not alone in the "virtual" decision; the Army Heritage & Education Center, Civil War Congress, National Civil War Museum, and American Battlefield Trust are all providing thought-provoking presentations online. Ted Alexander's Chambersburg Civil War Seminars & Tours, now hosted by Eric Wittenberg, is sponsoring a 3-day Zoom conference in October on *Infantry in the Civil War*.

We have posted a video on the *Events* section of our website that explains how you can download the Zoom app onto your computer or smart phone and dial in to our meetings. Check it out: <https://harrisburgcwr.org/events/zoom-meeting-overview-and-familiarization/> Click the blue sentence, *Joining a Zoom Call for the First Time* under the introductory paragraph. The YouTube demo is excellent, just click past the ads. Zoom is easier than you think, and a great way to keep in touch with your fellow members and enjoy outstanding presentations.

If you would like to practice using Zoom, contact our President, Steve Smith, at smith337@erau.edu or 717-433-0209. He'll gladly set up a private Zoom session for you to test your connectivity prior to an actual meeting and answer your questions about Zoom.

Dues & Donations

The HCWRT membership year runs from July 1 to June 30 so it is time to "re-up." Having lost revenue from field trips and book raffles, membership dues are our last source of income. Please use the form on page 4 of this newsletter to reenlist, and please pay your dues before the end of October so we can continue to defray the many expenses we still incur as a Round Table.

In addition to dues, we are soliciting donations, both monetary and in kind, to help us keep our head above water. While this pandemic has caused financial distress to many Americans, many others find themselves not spending what they used to on travel, eating out, and other leisure activities, while receiving stimulus payments that often go into savings. If you find yourself in this latter category, please consider making a donation. Virtual meetings save the price of our usual Radisson dinner.

Think of it as an investment in our future, and a vote of confidence in our board's attempts to keep the organization going. Donations to the Round Table are tax deductible. Our Treasurer will furnish 501 (c)(3) letters to donors. Checks should simply be made out to "HCWRT" and mailed to Norm Daniels at the address on the enlistment form. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

A donation to the Harrisburg CWRT has been made in memory of
three founding members:

Revere Ployer ❖ Mary Jane Webb Ployer Cooper ❖ Everett W. Cooper

Field Trips Postponed

While Zoom provides a safe way to conduct our monthly meetings, this is no time to be packing people into buses for hours on end. Accordingly, we have postponed our field trips for 2020 until next year.

Our spring field trip to Antietam with guide Dennis Frye is rescheduled to Saturday, May 1, 2021, and our fall field trip to Fredericksburg with guide Chris Mackowski is postponed to Saturday, October 23, 2021. **SAVE THE DATES!**

Our intrepid field trippers will ride again!



The Dispatch

The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table
500 Bonnymead Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17111

August 2020

Gen. John W. Geary
Gettysburg NMP

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Harrisburg Civil War Round Table Enlistment Form

Current Member Renewal

- Individual \$24
- Family \$36
- Full Time Student \$5

Donations

- \$25
- \$50
- \$100
- Other _____

Individual or Family Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Contact Norm Daniels, Treasurer, 500 Bonnymead Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17111

Phone 717-422-3007, E-mail hcwrt.membership@gmail.com