

2023 SOCIETY FOR PENNSYLVANIA ARCHAEOLOGY  
**SUMMER BUS TRIP “THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CIVIL WAR  
BATTLEFIELDS AND SITES”** by John Nass, Jr.

Twenty three participants gathered at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant in New Stanton for the four-day adventure (Thursday, June 8 to Sunday, June 11). Most arrived early and enjoyed a savory lunch before boarding the Lenzner Coach Lines bus for Gettysburg. Our driver this year was George, a teacher in West Virginia for most of the year. After arriving at the 1863 Inn of Gettysburg, and after getting our room assignments, we reconvened at the Historic Farnsworth House Inn for a buffet dinner at 7:30 PM followed by an



orientation and socializing. The buffet we selected featured what the tavern described as its Yankee or Union fare. A highlight was the game pie.

Everyone enjoyed the food and liquid refreshments, as well as the furnishings, and the service by the staff in period clothing. After dinner most returned to the hotel while others visited shops that were still open.



The 1863 Inn at Gettysburg.



View of Farnsworth House Restaurant from across the street.



Ken and Cheryl Burkett and Robert Luderer relaxing and talking outside of the restaurant.



Jean Nass, Mary Kay and Vince Karolelwics, Kristina Gaugler and her father Gilbert at the Historic Farnsworth House Inn



Ken and Cheryl Burkett, Bob Luderer, Chuck and Judy Duritsa waiting their turn for the buffet.

### Friday Morning, June 9<sup>th</sup>

After breakfast Friday morning, we were on the bus by 8:00 AM heading to Antietam National Battlefield, the site of the single most bloody day of the entire Civil War. Upon arriving, we watched the newly made film about the battle at the visitor's center. Afterwards, we met Dr. Stephen Potter, former Regional Archaeologist, National Capitol Region, and Karen Orrence, NPS Capital Region Archaeologist, who shared with us the archaeological research being



conducted at the park. After boarding the bus for a short trip to a parking area along the tour route we began an hour-long walking tour led by Dr. Potter introducing us to the archaeology of the battlefield.

Research at the battlefield has been ongoing for over 20 years. Much of this has taken the form of metal detecting of selected areas of the

battlefield, such as the Piper Orchard, to locate ammunitions expended during the battle. Since rifle ammunition can be linked to the soldiers using it, troop movements and engagements can be documented using the distribution of these artifacts, as well as munitions from cannons.



Dr. Potter and Karen Orrence standing against the stone wall that parallels the sunken farm road or Bloody Lane. Dr. Potter is holding an original musket like that used in the battle by federal troops.



The group walking towards the sunken road known as Bloody Lane as part of the walking tour. During the walking tour Dr. Potter pointed out where metal detecting had taken place and what types of artifacts has been located.



View of the observation tower at the far end of Bloody Lane.



Following the walking tour, we had lunch at a nearby pavilion. Shown in top picture, clockwise, are Margaret Zabo, Kristina Gaugler, Gil Gaugler, and Laura DeYoung.



In the bottom picture, clockwise, Randy Fertelemee, Robert Luderer, Ken Burkett, Gil Gaugler, and Ruth Fertelemes

After lunch, we boarded the bus and travelled to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.



**Harpers Ferry** has notoriety for two important reasons: it was the location of an arsenal and armory that produced armaments for the U.S. Government, and 2) it was the location of John Brown's infamous raid in 1859. Commanding the government force to stop Brown's ill-fated raid was then Colonel Robert E. Lee.

After watching the video about Harpers Ferry, the group met with Darlene Hassler, CRM specialist, 106 coordinator and archaeologist. Darlene presented a PowerPoint program about the



recent archaeology being conducted on the location of the former armory.

Group in the conference room listening to Hassler discuss the excavations at the site of the armory, artifacts found, and her assessment.



Map of the armory and arsenal along the Potomac River.



Overview photo of the area tested by archaeologists to assess the remains of buildings from the armory.

Below, gunflints recovered from the armory complex.



After the briefing, the group explored Harpers Ferry and its shops.



The National Park Service Museum and orientation center.



Phil and Sarah Neusius exploring the historic district.



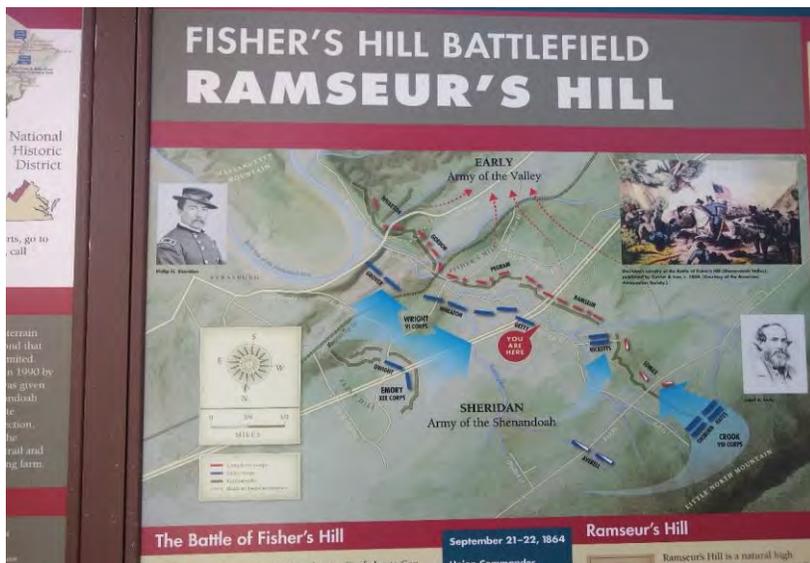
View of Historic District



Waiting for the bus to return are Mary Kay and Vince Karolelwics, Jean Nass, Sarah Baughman, and Susan Baughman.

From here we traveled to the Fairfield Inn and Suites in Winchester, Virginia for the night. Since it was a long day, some of the group ate supper in the Old Town portion of Winchester, while others chose to eat near the hotel or have delivery.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, we boarded the bus and traveled a few miles to visit a lesser known, but still significant battle in September, 1864, at a place called Fishers Hill in Virginia. The battlefield represented one of several engagements in 1864 campaign between



Confederate General Early and Union General Sheridan for control of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. The sequence of battles is shown in the next slide on page 10.

Early did not concede control of the valley until after the battle of Cedar Creek which occurred in late

October. With control of the valley, Sheridan initiated his scorched earth campaign destroying most of the agricultural bounty of the valley.

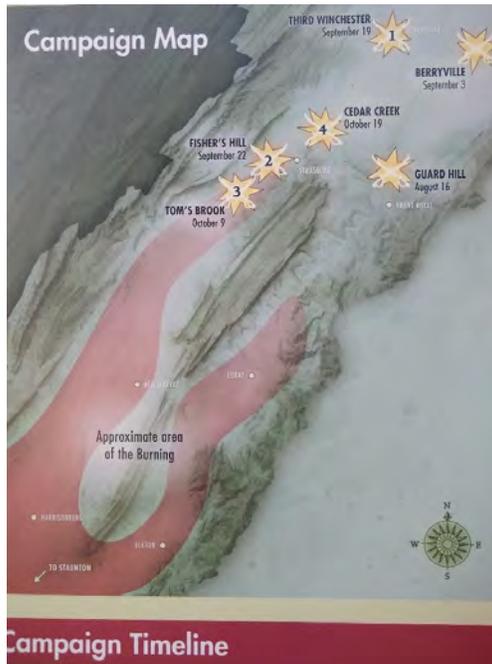
The battlefield is accessible via a trail or path across a stream and through a cattle pasture. After this, Sheridan transferred to Georgia where he burned his way across that state after defeating the confederate army in several engagements. The rest of this story is well known and need not be repeated here

## The Battle of Fisher's Hill

Following his defeat at Third Winchester, Confederate Gen. Jubal A. Early withdrew here to the imposing defensive position of Fisher's Hill. Unfortunately for Early, he no longer had enough men to defend the four-mile-long defensive line.

Union Gen. Philip H. Sheridan approved a plan to use his VIII Corps to swing around to the west and strike Early's vulnerable left flank. While Gen. George Crook's VIII Corps marched, hidden by darkness and fall foliage, the Union VI and XIX Corps massed north of Fisher's Hill and seized Flint Hill, north of Tumbling Run.

At approximately 4 p.m. on September 22, Crook's two divisions surged "like a western cyclone" toward the Confederate left. Dismounted Confederate cavalry failed to slow the advance, and soon Crook's men rushed into the main line of Confederate infantry—its left flank resting here on Ramseur's Hill. Pressured on the flank and by subsequent frontal assaults from Flint Hill, the Confederate defenses collapsed, and the rebels retreated south along the Valley Pike.



## Campaign Timeline

### August 6

Union Gen. Philip H. Sheridan is made commander of the new Army of the Shenandoah, opposing Confederate Gen. Jubal A. Early's Army of the Valley.

### August 16

The two sides fight the small and inconclusive **Battle of Guard Hill**.

### September 3-4

The armies fight another indecisive battle at **Berryville**.

### September 19

Sheridan decisively defeats Early at the bitterly-fought **Third Battle of Winchester** (#1). The Confederates withdraw to Fisher's Hill.

### September 21-22

Early's army is defeated at **Fisher's Hill** (#2) and retreats south through the Valley.

### September 23-October 8

Sheridan moves south to Staunton, then withdraws northward as Union cavalry systematically destroys or confiscates barns, mills, crops, and livestock during "**The Burning**."

### October 9

Federal cavalry units defeat their pursuing southern counterparts at the **Battle of Tom's Brook** (#3).

### October 19

At **Cedar Creek** (#4), Early's brilliant surprise attack overwhelms much of the Union army, but the Federals rally and counterattack, routing the Confederates and all but destroying Early's command.



From Fishers Hill, we traveled to Manassas National Battlefield Park in Virginia, our fourth stop. Also known as Bull Run, Manassas was the site of the first two significant battles of the Civil War. First Manassas or Bull Run after the creek

overlooked by the battlefield occurred on July 21, 1861, while Second Manassas happened on August 28-30, 1862. Both battles were confederate victories.



**Ranger Burgess talking to our group about the union artillery in placement during second Manassas.**

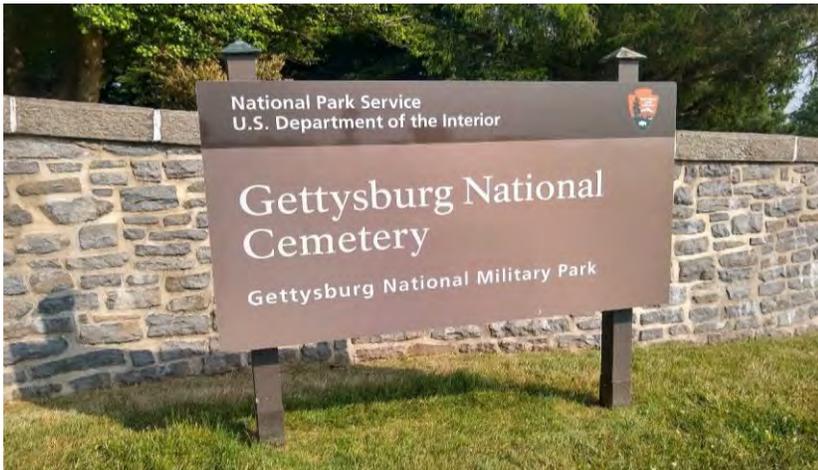
Upon arrival at Manassas, the group viewed the new NPS video. As everyone left the theater, there was not a dry eye to be

seen. While informative, to me personally, the video was very tragic and sad to watch. My impression was shared by others of our group.

After the video and a second visit to the gift shop, we met Park Ranger Jim Burgess and NPS Archaeologist Karen Orrence who escorted us on a walking tour of the battlefield and talked

about the archaeology battlefield program at Manassas. The guided walk lasted about an hour, ending at the Old Stone House where interpreters talked about the role it played in both battles. While the others walked the mile or so to the Stone House, Phil and I walked back to get the bus and meet the caterer from “Moes’s Southwest” at a picnic area about a mile away. Once the caterer delivery was made, George drove to the Stone House to get the group while Phil and I sorted out the Burrito Boxes and Burrito Bowls. Karen Orrence joined us for lunch and shared with us the details surrounding the discovery of a surgeon’s pit and the accidental discovery of three Civil War burials at Manassas. The remains from the surgeon’s pit and the three burials have been examined by Dr. Doug Owsley, forensic anthropologist, Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Dr. Owsley shared his analysis of the surgeon’s pit at the annual meeting of the Eastern States Archeology Federation at Langhorne, Pennsylvania, in 2019. The excavation of the recently discovered burials has become a flashpoint between the Park Service, the Department of Defense, and the Office of the State Historic Preservation Office. Suffice to say that the discussion between the three parties regarding the jurisdiction and final disposition of the remains, as well as the remains recovered from the surgeon’s pit, is far from settled.

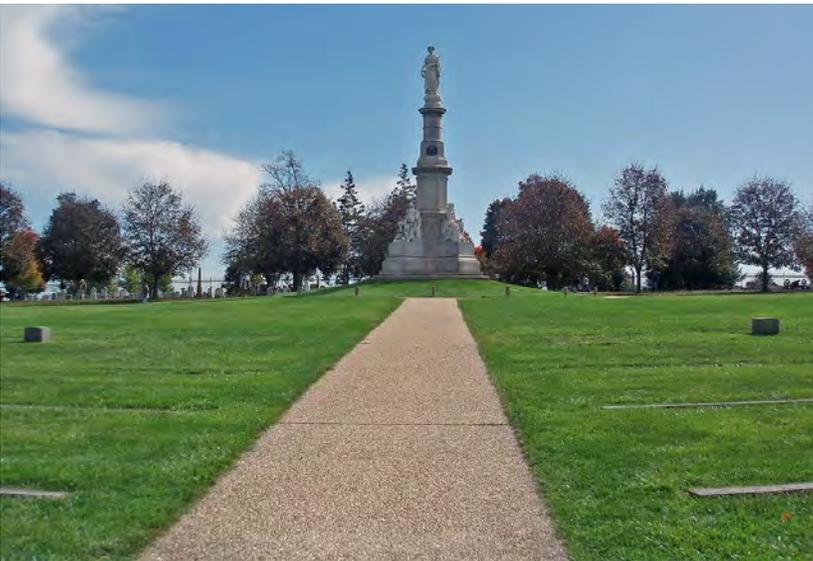
After lunch, we departed for Gettysburg, stopping at the National Military Cemetery before checking into our rooms for the night at the 1863 Inn of Gettysburg. The cemetery for the United



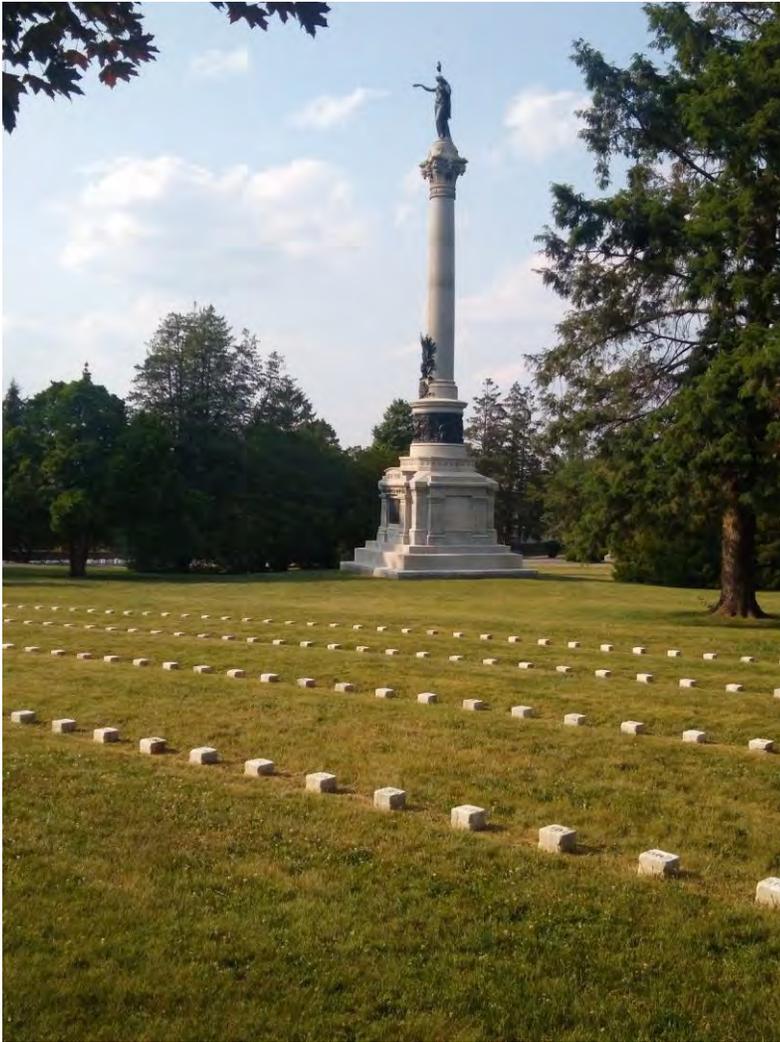
States soldiers who died at Gettysburg was dedicated in November, 1863. It is at the dedication of the cemetery that Lincoln read his most famous speech, now known as the Gettysburg Address.



Lincoln Speech Memorial, pertaining to Lincoln and his legendary Gettysburg Address. The words of the address are engraved on the bronze plaques on either side of his bust.



Soldiers Monument at Gettysburg dedicated in 1869.



The New York Monument in the National Cemetery at Gettysburg. In the foreground are the graves of unknown soldiers.

Following our visit of the cemetery, we traveled back to the 1863 Inn of Gettysburg for the evening. Supper was on our own, but several of us returned to the Farnsworth Tavern and ate in the outside courtyard.

Sunday was the last day of the trip. After breakfast and stowing our luggage, we traveled a short distance to the Visitor's Center. There we watched the movie "A New Birth of Freedom." After the film, we had the option of attending the cycloramas, or visiting the gift shop/bookstore, or venturing into the museum to view the various temporary and permanent exhibits.



Following the cycloramas and shopping, our group met with NPS Cultural Resource Manager Jeff Irwin, and NPS archaeologist Kaitlyn Ball for a presentation on the recent archaeology in the Devil's Den and Little Roundtop areas within the park.



NPS archaeologist Jeff Irwin showing some of the discoveries made during the extensive metal detecting survey of Devil's Den. Kaitlyn Ball is seated at the table arranging artifacts found during the metal detecting survey.



Although the image on the screen cannot be seen, Jeff Irwin talking about the metal detecting survey of Devil's Den.



Group members around table (clockwise, Judy Durista, Bob Harris, Robert Ludeer, Ken and Cheryl Burkett, Jean Miewald, and Ruth and Randy Fertelemes examining some of the artifacts found during the metal detecting surveys.

After the presentation and an artifact show and tell, there was about an hour of free time to further explore the exhibits and visit the

**Commented [SN1]:** I think that might be Don Rados behind Ruth but amnot sure

gift shop/bookstore before we were to rendezvous at the Visitor's Center picnic area for our delicious box lunch provided by BiggerStaff Catering from Gettysburg.



Relaxing after lunch at the picnic area. Seating at the nearest table, clockwise, is Roger DeYoung, Vince Karoleiwics, Mary Kay Karoleiwics, Laura DeYoung, Ruth Fertelemes, and Randy Fertelemes.

In the afternoon we had a guided bus tour of the battlefield. Our Gettysburg battlefield guide Debra Novotny, explaining how to distinguish between an authentic cannon barrel vs. a



commercially produced barrel. Debra, now retired from teaching history at Gettysburg High School, has been a licensed guide at Gettysburg for many years, and has the distinction of being the first licensed female guide at Gettysburg.



One of many stops, including the location of Pickett's charge.



Debra sharing with us a humorous story during our bus tour of the battlefield. We were truly lucky to have her as our guide.



Group standing on the steps of the Pennsylvania Monument.



Boarding the bus for our trip back to New Stanton.

**2023 Civil War Trip Attendees**

**Sarah Baughman  
Susan Baughman  
Ken Burkett  
Cheryl Burkett  
Roger DeYoung  
Laura DeYoung  
Chuck Durista  
Judy Durista  
Randy Fertelemes  
Ruth Fertelemes  
Kristina Gaugler  
Gilbert Gaugler  
Robert Harris  
Vince Karolelwics  
Mary Kay Karolelwics  
Robert Luderer  
Jean Miewald  
John Nass  
Jean Nass  
Phil Neusius  
Sarah Neusius  
Don Rados  
Margaret Zabo**