



## Cold Harbor Battlefield Dedication

### BEULAH CHURCH SITE OPENED TO THE PUBLIC

Late last year, the Richmond National Battlefield Park officially dedicated the 18-acre Beulah Church site on the Cold Harbor battlefield. Representatives from the National Park Service, the Civil War Trust, and the Richmond Battlefields Association joined in unveiling several new interpretive panels. Afterwards historian R.E.L Krick led attendees on a walking tour of this new addition to the park.

Located directly across from Beulah Church, this ground saw significant fighting on May 31, June 1 and June 3, 1864, during the Battle of Cold Harbor. On May 31, Union forces won control of the Old Cold Harbor intersection south of the church. A June 1 Confederate counterattack on the property and along Beulah Church Road failed to retake the intersection. The original church, one of the more prominent landmarks on the battlefield, burned during the battle.

*The Centennial will celebrate the achievements of the past 100 years, but it is really about the future. I can't think of a better way to excite the public about National Parks and American history than by opening up important battlefield land and telling its story."*

— David Ruth, Park Superintendent

Across this ground, the Union 18th Corps launched its major attacks, under heavy fire, on both the afternoon of June 1 and the morning of June 3. While the June 1 assault met with partial success, the June 3 attack failed disastrously. The unfavorable terrain channeled Federal troops into the ravines feeding the Gaines Mill pond. Emerging in front of the Confederate line the Federals were mowed down by intense rifle fire and double-canister artillery, resulting in one of the costliest and most infamous repulses of the entire war.

Grant's army suffered thousands of casualties in a matter of minutes and the Cold Harbor offensive faltered. After almost two weeks of stalemate, the Union army withdrew and crossed the James River to strike at Petersburg, launching the nine-month siege of Petersburg.



COLD HARBOR—Unveiling of new interpretive panels at Richmond National Battlefield Park on land saved by RBA with assistance from the Civil War Trust. Tom Gilmore (CWT), Dave Ruth (NPS), Bernie Fisher (RBA).

The entire 18-acre tract is intact and retains its Civil War features, including well-preserved earthworks and traces of wartime roads. The property was preserved by the Richmond Battlefields Association in two phases beginning in 2009. The Civil War Trust assisted with the second phase by providing a crucial loan.

RBA president Bernie Fisher remarked, "It is the culmination of a preservation effort that began here 7 years ago... Our success here at Cold Harbor, is a shining example of the winning combination of a local preservation group backed up by a superb national organization... This is indeed a proud moment for RBA and for all Americans concerned with preserving our nation's history."

The National Park Service, celebrating its 100th birthday, provided special funds from the NPS Centennial Initiative to restore the battlefield landscape and make it accessible. The project included archeology, maintenance, interpretive waysides, a parking area and removal of non-historic structures. Visitors to the Richmond National Battlefield Park are now able to walk this historic ground, and in the process gain a better understanding of the earliest actions that shaped the Battle of Cold Harbor. ❖

[www.cafepress.com/richmondbattlefields](http://www.cafepress.com/richmondbattlefields)

— SHOP ONLINE FOR RBA APPAREL —

You can now buy RBA Gear at the new Richmond Battlefields Association's online store, and at the same time support battlefield preservation. You'll find a wide choice of logo apparel including hats, T-shirts, golf shirts, hoodies and more. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of goods in our online store goes to fund our battlefield preservation efforts. You can use the url above or link directly from the RBA website. Get your RBA merchandise and show your support for battlefield preservation! ❖



— DONATE TO RBA ONLINE —

Richmond Battlefields Association has added a new tool for supporting our battlefield preservation efforts. RBA now accepts credit card donations through a secure online platform -- GiveRichmond.org. Powered by GuideStar, this service is provided by The Community Foundation serving Richmond & Central Virginia nonprofits. Use the url below or link directly from the RBA website. ❖



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— HISTORY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS —

Are you a history lover? Membership in RBA says yes. Tap into Google's "Field Trip" app for your iPhone or Android smartphone. Field Trip can help you find nearby historic places & events. You select the local feeds you like and the information pops up on your phone automatically, as you drive or walk near those places. Discover something new by tapping on cards in map view to pull up points of interest around you. This fun and informative app is available free of charge on Google Play or Apple App Store. More info at [www.fieldtripper.com](http://www.fieldtripper.com) ❖



— MEMEBERSHIP REMINDER —

Richmond Battlefields Association has always been an all-volunteer grass-roots organization. Your support is crucial to further our mission of preserving Civil War Battlefields in Central Virginia.

**Please Renew Your Membership Today**

For those receiving a hard copy of the newsletter, check the mailing label for your renewal date. The pdf version of the newsletter is distributed via broadcast email. As more members opt for electronic delivery, it will be increasingly difficult to prompt individuals with their renewal dates. Please check your records and review your membership status. Your support of battlefield preservation through membership in RBA is vitally important! ❖

*Masthead photo on page 1:*  
New Interpretive Panels at Cold Harbor Battlefield



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*“At the Battle of Second Deep Bottom more than 3,500 northern and southern were killed, wounded or captured and yet it is not one that is well recognized. But at the Battle of Second Deep Bottom you were just as dead, or just as badly wounded, or you suffered just as much from the heat as you did in battles that have become parks.”*

These words are not lost on the members of RBA. Indeed, the fallen of the Battle of Second Deep Bottom have not been forgotten. ❖

**ANNUAL MEETING RECAP - SECOND DEEP BOTTOM TOUR**

Last Fall, historian James S. Price joined RBA board members Ben Brockenbrough and Mike Andrus in leading a tour of RBA’s most recent battlefield acquisition on the Second Deep Bottom battlefield. These 25 acres along Darbytown Road were the scene of intense back & forth combat on August 16, 1864. Participants visited the ruins of Fussell’s Mill, the open fields of the Union breakthrough, and the “dry ravine” where Confederate Colonel William C. Oates lost an arm leading a desperate Confederate counterattack.

*And if you’re not a member of the RBA, please consider supporting them – for a small organization, they have scored some incredible preservation successes over the last decade.*

— Jimmy Price, National Museum of the United States Army

**PVT. HARDENBERGH—  
MEDAL OF HONOR**

Along Darbytown Road, a state highway marker describes the Federal assault that took place on Aug. 16, 1864 across RBA’s Second Deep Bottom property. The 39th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment helped lead the 200-yard charge against the Confederate entrenchments here. By mid-August, sunstroke and sickness had reduced the regiment to half strength, from 400 to just over 200.

Pvt. Henry M. Hardenbergh, a young carpenter from New Bremen, served as the regimental color bearer. He was a member of Co. G, called “The Preacher’s Company” because it was organized by a Methodist circuit-rider.

While carrying the colors, Pvt. Hardenbergh was shot in the shoulder, but continued on to the Confederate earthworks. In hand-to-hand combat, Hardenbergh

mortally wounded the color bearer of the 10th Alabama and captured his flag, which he later presented to his corps commander, Maj. Gen. David Birney.

Hardenbergh’s heroism resulted in a recommendation for a Medal of Honor and an officer’s commission. He did not live to receive his commission as a 1st Lt. in the 36th U.S.C.T. Two days later, while on picket duty in the trenches of Petersburg, he was shot through the head by a rebel sharpshooter, killing him instantly. Hardenbergh’s Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously on April 6, 1865. He is buried in Poplar Grove National Cemetery outside Petersburg.

Out of the 224 men of the 39th Illinois that fought at Second Deep Bottom, 104 were either killed or wounded. In August 1995, on the 131st anniversary of the battle, none other than Ed Bearss spoke at the state highway marker dedication ceremony:

Published for the RBA membership

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The RBA is chartered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. A financial statement is available, upon request, from the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs.

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## RICHMOND DISPATCHES

**A WORTHY OBJECT.** — Since the appearance of Grant's army in the vicinity of Richmond untold misery has been inflicted upon those of our citizens who were residing in the neighborhood occupied by them. Some of them were caught between the two armies, and as a natural consequence their house and other property were destroyed and the occupants themselves compelled to beat a precipitate retreat. Many were forced to leave home with only the clothes they had on...

**SUFFERING IN HANOVER.** — In the neighborhood of Haw's Shop ...many families have been stripped of every comfort of life, and unless immediate relief is given the women and children, many of them may perish for want of food. The Yankees swept the neighborhood of corn, bacon, and cattle of every description, besides ruining the growing crops. Until other arrangements are made, contributions may be left at the counting room of the Dispatch for these suffering people.

- *The Richmond Dispatch*: Jun 14-15, 1864

In early June 1864, civilians in Hanover County suffered greatly as the two great armies of Lee and Grant once again locked in combat on the old Gaines' Mill battlefield. After this appeal for relief, the newspaper reported daily on the charitable contributions coming in. It was never enough and many Hanover families never fully recovered from the devastating effects of the war.

**PRESERVATION NEWS!** RBA was recently awarded a 50% matching grant from the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund for our two 2015 acquisitions on the Second Deep Bottom Battlefield. Details to follow. ❖

*Yes!*

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