

THE BANNER

Volume 110, Number 3 • The Journal of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War • Spring, 2006





Civil War Monument in Buck Eye State Remembered

By Randy McNutt

The 100th anniversary of the Butler County Soldiers, Sailors and Pioneers Monument, a Buckeye State Civil War memorial and museum, will be celebrated July 4 in Hamilton, Ohio.

The neoclassical style monument was planned and promoted by Civil War veterans and financed by a levy approved by Butler County voters in 1899. One hundred feet high and forty feet square, the building occupies the original site of Fort Hamilton, built in 1791 and named in honor of Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury under President George Washington.

Work started on the monument's limestone shell in 1902 and was completed in 1904, when it was also called the Memorial Building. The community refurbished and rededicated the building on July 4, 1988, and today the monument remains open to the public on a regular basis and operated by the county.

Two GAR cannons and a massive Union soldier guard the building, which was built mostly by Hamilton workers and artisans. County GAR

members were instrumental in planning the project, which cost about \$72,000.

The monument features two large, colorful stained glass windows that recognize the contributions of women during the war. One window, almost two stories high, depicts the mothers, wives and sisters of Civil War soldiers making bandages for the wounded. Other stained glass windows celebrate the state and the GAR.

The museum also features research materials, medals, posters, period newspapers, uniforms, weapons, and other military memorabilia.

This year's ceremony will be held a century after Governor Andrew L. Harris, a Civil War veteran and Butler County native, dedicated the monument on July 4, 1906. His name is one of more than 4,300 carved into the interior marble walls. The building was originally dedicated on Independence Day with "the hope and with the prayer that the eyes and hearts of future generations may be as loyal to the flag of our free government as the persons whose names are enrolled on its sacred walls."

On top of the building's temple dome stands a 17-foot, 3,500-pound bronze statue officially named "Victory, the Jewel of the Soul," but commonly known as "Billy Yank." His right hand holds a musket. His foot stands on an unexploded shell. He lifts in cap in his left hand and shouts "Hurrah" at the realization that the war has ended. The statue, created by German immigrant Rudolph Thiem of Hamilton, was placed on the monument in December 1904.

"At the ceremony, we will show the magnitude of the building," said Bill Craig, assistant curator and a World War II veteran. "We want to remind people of the sacrifices and service of our ancestors. The monument is the most outstanding building on the Hamilton skyline. Inside we maintain displays and artifacts from all wars.

"The interior walls are engraved with the names of men from Butler County who served in the War of the Rebellion; they are listed by regiment and company. Also inscribed are the names of pioneers who settled Hamilton and fought in other wars through the Spanish-American."

Curator and veteran Don Shollenbarger keeps more recent veterans' names on computer.

For more information on the July 4 celebration, contact the Butler County Soldiers, Sailors and Pioneers Monument at 513-867-5823. Or view its Web page at www.butlercountyohio.org/monument.

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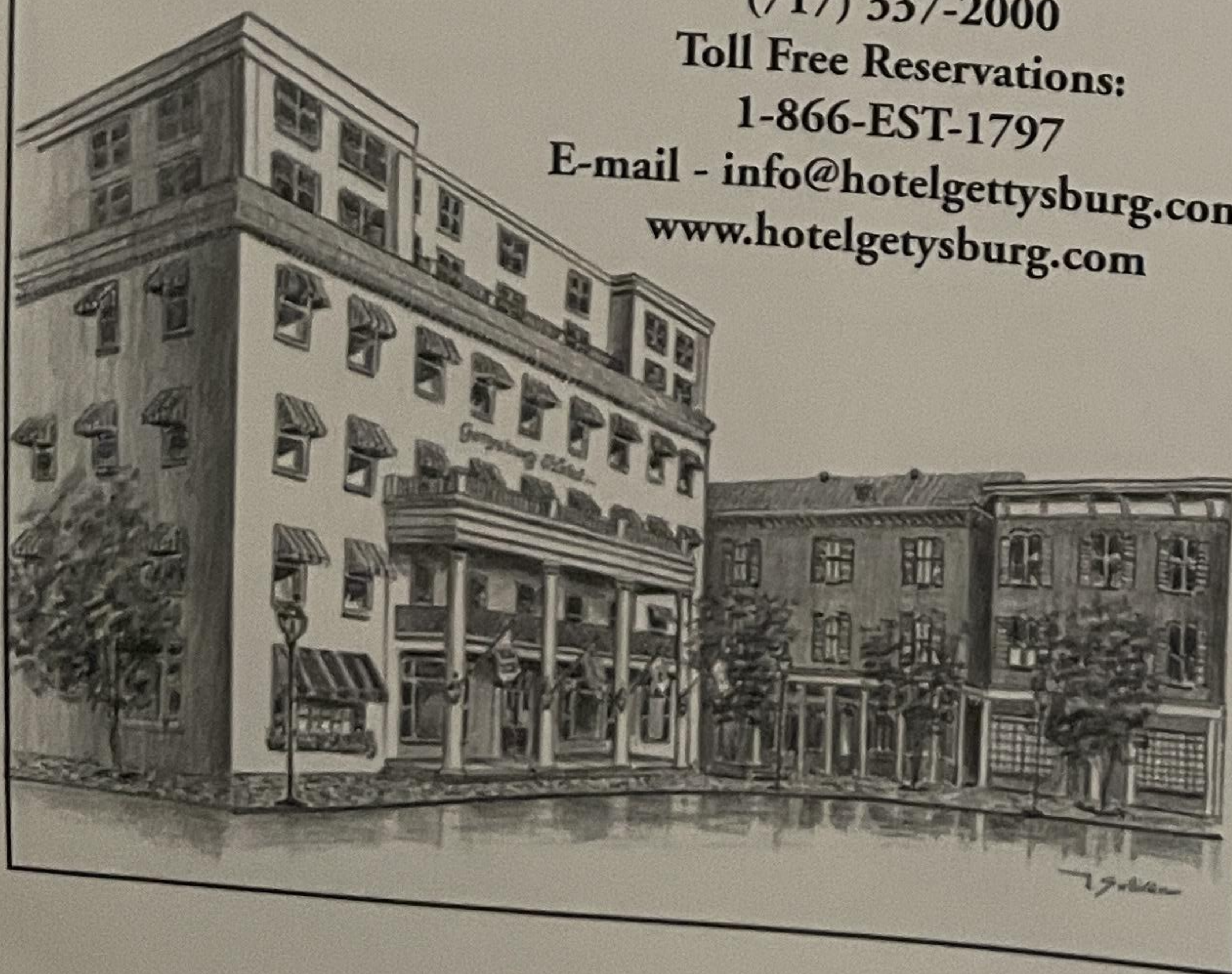
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Westport Camp of Missouri remembers Colorado Calvarymen



The Westport Camp of Kansas City, MO, installs monument honoring six Colorado Calvarymen killed by bushwackers July 17, 1864 near Fredericksburg, MO. Principals dedicating monument, at left, are, from left: Brian Smarker, Secretary/Treasurer of Westport Camp; Charles McCorkendale, Westport councilman; Jim Beckner, Councilman; John Martin, commander and Dept. of Mo. commander; Bud Marks, Senior Vice Commander, Bob Grover, Patriotic Instructor and Councilman and Dirk Stapleton, a member of Westport Camp.

President Lincoln, portrayed by Max Daniels of Illinois, inspects the troops assembled to fire the salute during dedication services in Wood Heights, MO. The memorial is located in Pisgah Cemetery.



Members of the 2nd Colorado Calvary Renactment Group, named in honor of the six men and their company honored at the dedication, prepare to fire canon salute at the ceremonies. The ceremony took place on the 141st anniversary of the battle, July 17, 2005.