

THE BLAUVELT NEWS

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Gettysburg Revisited

“Cousins” and Friends Enjoy the 78th Annual Meeting and Reunion of the Association of Blauvelt Descendants

By Doris & George Blauvelt

Ghostly sights were visited; we toured the battlefields; we remembered our Ancestral Blauvelt Soldiers; we listened and learned many things about the Battle of Gettysburg; we met “Mr. Lincoln;” we ate, sang and yes, we even got a little wet from the torrential rains and winds of Hurricane “Ivan the Terrible.” We all enjoyed being together at this American historic site.

As Jim Curren reminded us, “This is the greatest number of Blauvelts returning to visit Gettysburg at any one time since July of 1863.”

Attendees began to gather on Thursday afternoon for our Thursday evening Candlelight Walking Tour, “Ghosts of Gettysburg.” Two groups left Lincoln Square to visit what might very well be the “most haunted place in America,” Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. We had no guarantees, but we did see where those *ghosts* have been seen.

Through the streets of Gettysburg, we walked and listened to our guides, stopping at houses and buildings where the wounded suffered and died and to burial sites where maybe it’s not so peaceful. The tales were interesting and, well maybe, we were lucky with no actual sightings, *or did some see something? Who knows? They’re not telling!*

Friday’s “Tour Day” began when we filled two luxury coaches that awaited us for a full day of visits to the National Military Park, the Eisenhower Farm, our Remembrance Ceremony, guided Battlefield Tours, and a fun stop at Boyds Country Bears. “Ivan” wouldn’t dampen the spirits of this group who were prepared with umbrellas and rain gear.

The morning started with a visit to the Gettysburg National Military Park including the National Cemetery, the Visitor Center and Museum and the thirty minute “must see” Civil War battle orientation called the Electric Map. The 750 square foot map with 600 colored lights and taped narration presents the area, as it looked in 1863 and shows the movements of both the Union and Confederate forces during the three day battle.

Our morning tour also included visiting the Home and Farm of General Dwight David Eisenhower, our 34th President. The property is adjacent to the Battlefield.

The rains held off a bit until we reached the close of our morning’s activities at the Eternal Light Peace Memorial for our Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony of those Blauvelt Descendants who fought in the Civil War. One hundred and fourteen names were read by seven descendants from each one of



*Please see **Reunion** on Page 59*



George & Zachary Blauvelt

Gerrit's second generation lines. A wreath was laid at this memorial, which was designed and created as a lasting symbol to the unity of the nation and a monument to peace. Our in-house artist and Board



Member **Carol Blauvelt**, made the beautiful wreath which we dedicated to honor our ancestors. During the reading, the rain turned into a deluge of *serious moisture*. It turned out to be the worst rain of the day.



We told **Sue Waite**, who was reading at the time, that it must have been her grandfather, **Louis L. Blauvelt**, Founder of the Association of Blauvelt Descendants, who was watching over us with his tears of emotion!

After the luncheon at the Grand Army of the



Republic Hall, we enjoyed an afternoon Battlefield Tour by the "Best of the Best Tour Guides." Our ABD Member #1616 **Jim Curren**, who is a member of the Civil War Round Table and spends many weekends visiting the Civil War battlefields and sites, had arranged for two of the most knowledgeable guides to be ours for the afternoon on each bus. Wow! It was fascinating to relive those three days through their eyes and depiction of the events. What a wonderful learning experience it was. It even stopped raining, allowing us to exit the bus to look at several key spots first hand.



NPS Guide Rev. Frampton at Little Round Top

Boyd's Bear Country, the world's most humungous Teddy Bear Store, ended the day's tour.

Was our day over? No way! The Friday Night Get-Together once again gave us the opportunity to meet new attendees and just relax and enjoy each other's company, as well as meet and greet "new cousins."



Boyd's Bear Country
September 17, 2004
Emily & Ashley Bear, oops! Blauvelt

One might call Saturday our "**O' Be JoyFull**" Day! As our attendees to the Annual Meeting entered the Grand Army of the Republic Hall, they were greeted by the voices of Rick Garland and Bill Vitelli of "**O' Be JoyFull**," who were singing and playing a collection of American Civil War songs. Quickly a sing-a-long took place with all joining in for a



at age 90, was **Dean Seifried**, Member #A2095. The hardy soul who traveled the farthest was ABD Member #L23, **Janice Kotuby-Amacher**, from Ogden, Utah, daughter of **Dot and George Kotuby**.

The sun was shining and an afternoon at the Swope Mansion awaited those who were ready for more touring. Owner **Dorothy Blauvelt Ralson**, Member #2397, graciously agreed to open her home and give us a personal tour of the house, including its history. She refurbished this historic house and we enjoyed seeing the results, as well as listening to Dorothy tell the many stories associated with this home, including some ghostly tales.

A Saturday evening of relaxation and fun awaited us at the Herr Tavern and Publick House. After the reception, we were greeted by the 16th President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, portrayed by Jim Getty. **Michael** and **Emily Blauvelt** of South Burlington, Vermont,



posed with President Lincoln. His one man show was an appropriate close to our activities as he entertained and took us back in history with his live portrayal "Mr. Lincoln Returns." It was time for dinner and time to be musically entertained by Tom Jolin. His music on the Hammer Dulcimer, the banjo and squeeze box was a perfect end to a busy 78th Reunion. The children enjoyed playing along with Tom on the spoons, wash boards and anything else that made "A Beautiful Noise."

The 78th Reunion was special! It was busy; it was entertaining; it was a great learning experience; but most importantly, it was a time of enjoyment, being together with "Blauvelt Cousins," family and friends. The conversations, the laughter and friendships will keep us looking forward to next year's 79th Annual Meeting and Reunion in Wilmington, Delaware on Saturday, September 17th 2005. Join us for a sail aboard the *Kalmar Nyckel* on the Christiana River as we believe Gerrit did when he first arrived at Swede's Landing in 1638!



rousing start of our traditional meeting. The ABD Business was conducted in this historic Union Veterans Hall built in 1822. **Janet Seifried**, past Board Member and Juniors Secretary, was presented with a gift in appreciation of her service to the ABD Board. **Jim Curren** enlightened our group with his presentation of the Civil War battle and Blauvelts who served from all parts of the Union.

The luncheon featured the raffle drawing of the framed limited edition of "The Day is Ours" by Dale Gallon. The winner is **Judi White**, Member #2218 from Altamonte Springs, Florida. It is a wonderful memento of this very special and historic Gettysburg Reunion. Thanks to all who participated. There were many other winners at the luncheon program.

The prize for the youngest went to two year old **Remington J. Curren**, Member #LJ164 shown on the right, son of **Jim and Marianne Curren** of Reston, Virginia, and grandson of **Mildred Saderholm**. The oldest,

