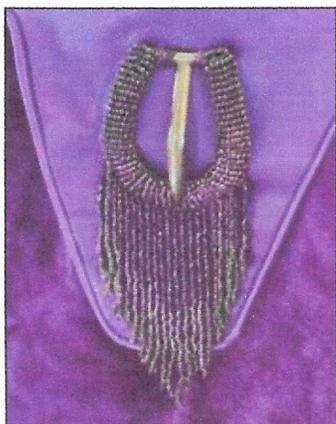


Local Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War Restore Katherine Wilson Curtin's 1880s Dress



One of 12 buckles on the bodice and skirt.



Karen Hazel, Becky Crossley, and Linda Kao after setting up the dress.



Back view of dress.

We would like to thank the Katherine Wilson Curtin Tent 62, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War for their program on the conservation of Katherine's French-made purple velvet and satin dress ensemble for the Central Pennsylvania Civil War Round Table and Centre County Historical Society joint meeting-program in December. We are grateful that the dress was shared for a few days for public exhibition at the Centre Furnace Mansion.

During the talk, Sue Kellerman explained that the Katherine Wilson Curtin Tent 62, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (DUV), 1861–1865, was established in Boalsburg in 2014. Each local DUV group is called a "Tent" and is named after either an Army nurse who served in the Civil War or a loyal woman of the Civil War era whose patriotic deeds were recorded. While a specific nurse was not identified, research uncovered the history of Katherine Wilson Curtin, and Tent 62 was named in her honor.

The presentation recounted Katherine's background as the wife of Gov. Andrew Gregg Curtin, the serendipitous discovery of her dress, its conservation journey, and, finally, its visit to Centre County.

As part of their ongoing research, Tent 62 members scheduled a behind-the-scenes visit to the National Civil War Museum in 2017. To their surprise, the Curator of Collections revealed that the museum had Katherine's dress, which had been part of

their collection since 2013. This discovery sparked more questions than answers about the dress's provenance, whether it could be restored, and if it could be brought to Centre County—if so, when, where, and for how long? Tent 62 set out to answer these questions and, in the process, learned even more.

The National Civil War Museum did not have funds for the dress's conservation, so Tent 62 sought a cost estimate from Philadelphia textile conservator Nancy Love, which proved to be cost prohibitive. Meanwhile, Tent 62 members made several visits to Harrisburg to measure and document the dress. Fortunately, the group had also been in contact with the Fashion Archives and Museum at Ship-

pensburg University. Director Karin Bohleke proposed several treatment options, including one that allowed Tent 62 members to stabilize the dress themselves under their supervision. Eight members and friends of Tent 62 were trained to help with the stabilization, preparing the dress for eventual display. In all, four years, 29 trips to Shippensburg, 349 hours (114 hours travel time), were spent in Tent 62's conservation efforts.

To hear the complete story about the Katherine Wilson Curtin dress, the December program was filmed and may be viewed at: tinyurl.com/253bbdje on the CCHS YouTube channel, or scan the QR code.

Special thanks to Tent 62 members: President Becky Crossley, member and historian Sue Kellerman, Sisters Karen Hazel, Linda Kao, and Cheri Banks for this presentation and subsequent exhibition.

Program Co-Sponsors:

Centre County Historical Society
Central Pennsylvania Civil War Round Table

The Katherine Wilson Curtin Tent 62, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Happy Valley Adventure Bureau



Left: Front view of jacket.



Center: Buttons were made of steel with brass backings, typical of the period.



Right: Back view of jacket.