

Banner

of the **Blue and Gray**

Newsletter of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable
Frederick, Maryland
Founded January 30, 1989

<http://frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org>



194th Meeting

April 2010

Vol. 36 Issue 8

Ramblings from the Raffle Table

WIN-WIN!

(Ed. Note: We asked FCCWRT Board Member Dottie Toms to tell us a little about our monthly raffles and remind us why we have them. Dottie has been keeping our tradition for the past four years. Thanks, Dottie!)



Dottie Toms at our December raffle table

Friends, the drawing for our Special Raffle (four audio CDs on the American Civil War by Professor Gary W. Gallagher of the University of Virginia) will be held at our April meeting. If you have not yet had a chance to buy tickets, you may do so before the meeting. Tickets for this raffle item are \$3.00 each. As always, we will have our 3/\$1 Raffle. And we're not just about books!

Also, for your convenience, we have relocated our raffle table to the outer lobby. Come and see us before you grab a seat for the lecture!

Our raffle is a win-win for all of us: Our Roundtable has been donating \$500 yearly to the Civil War Preservation Trust (and we would like to push that even higher). Secondly, our membership



benefits from raffle selections of a variety of interesting used books, CDs, and memorabilia on a subject in which we all share an interest.

Again, let us take this opportunity to thank you all for your participation in both donations and raffle purchases. See you there!

Dottie



April Meeting

Thursday, April 15, 2010

7:30 PM

at the

National Museum
of Civil War Medicine

48 East Patrick Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Speaker: Larry Denton

Subject: *Could the Civil War have been prevented? The untold story of William Henry Seward*

Our Speaker

Larry Denton, whose illustrious career spans academia, government, industry, and Civil War research and writing, will discuss William Henry Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, and his little known effort to avert the War.

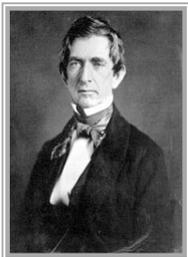
In his book, *William Henry Seward and the Secession Crisis: The Effort to Prevent Civil War*,



Larry Denton

Mr. Denton delves into the untold story of Seward's plan to save the nation from War by offering a compromise to the upper South Unionists. Mr. Denton tackles the unanswered question: Could the War have been prevented?

In the early 1860s, as the Southern states moved toward secession and the nation moved closer to war, Lincoln was the inexperienced Washington



newcomer while Seward was the most prominent and influential Republican of the day. Although Seward is best known for the 1867 purchase of Alaska, derided at the time as “Seward’s Folly,” Mr. Denton praises him as an unsung hero who, had he and not Lincoln been elected, may well have prevented our nation’s bloodiest conflict.

A native Marylander whose family members served in the Army of Northern Virginia as well as in the Maryland 7th Infantry USA, Mr. Denton also explored the state’s struggle with secession in his book, *A Southern Star for Maryland: Maryland and the Secession Crisis*. He earned his Master’s degree at Johns Hopkins University and, in the course of his career, held numerous academic posts there. He is credited with spearheading the support for what became known as the “merit scholarships.”

Mr. Denton’s service in the public sector includes accepting a presidential appointment in 1978 as Special Assistant to the Associate Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and participating in the first scientific delegation to China in 1979, where he assisted in negotiating the now long-standing international agreement for exchange of atmospheric and oceanic scientists.

After leaving NOAA in 1981, Mr. Denton became senior consultant to numerous firms involved in the environmental sciences, including GE and Lockheed Martin. From 1993 to 2004, he represented The Weather Channel where he played a role in the production of their acclaimed TV series, *Forecast Earth*.

Mr. Denton is retired and lives with his wife Susan in Oxford, Md. He continues to lecture throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, as well as in Pennsylvania, New York and Florida.

Next Month’s Speaker

David Shackelford, chief curator of the B&O Railroad Museum, will discuss the role of the Railroad in the War at our next meeting, Thursday, May 20 at 7:30 pm.

The Prez Sez



Lisa Meyer, the singer I mentioned here last February, has been named Female Artist of the Year by the Southern Heritage Music Association. I’m sure we are grateful to all those singers and instrumentalists, both local and national, who keep the history of Civil War music alive, not only for this generation but also for our children and grandchildren to understand and appreciate.

Also, in this April of 2010, let’s not forget that hectic and horrible April of 1865:

- **April 9** — Robert E. Lee surrenders the South
- **April 14** — Abraham Lincoln is shot by actor John Wilkes Booth
- **April 15** — Abraham Lincoln dies, Andrew Johnson becomes President
- **April 26** — John Wilkes Booth is shot and killed.

Donnie

FCCWRT Business

Our season is fast coming to a close, and we will be holding our annual election of officers at our May 20 meeting.

The following Board of Directors members are completing their second year of service and will be up for re-election:

Donnie Toms, President
Phillip Dean, Vice President
Dottie Toms, Director
Jeff Arey, Director*

*Jeff is finishing Betty Ridgely’s term. Betty would have completed her second term in May.

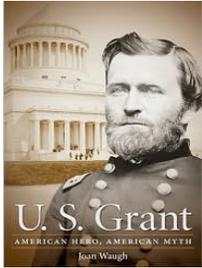
At our March meeting . . .

Longtime Frederick educator and lecturer Michael Bunitsky gave our members an insightful and detailed understanding of what unfolded in Frederick’s Kemp Hall during the fateful Spring and Summer of 1861 when a special session of the State Legislature met off and on for six months to determine whether Maryland would stay in the Union or follow Virginia into secession. Michael’s excellent presentation was enthusiastically received by our members.



The Bookshelf

U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth by Joan Waugh. Illustrated, notes, 373 pp., 2009. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC.



Not content to allow Grant's reputation to remain tarnished, Joan Waugh has written a skillful, rewarding biography that reveals a fresh portrait of the man and the general. When Grant died 20 years after Appomattox, he was widely revered as one of our nation's great military leaders. But by the 1930s, public opinion had shifted and his image had lost much of its luster. Through meticulous research, the author counters Grant's well-publicized flaws, especially his drunkenness and failure of leadership at Shiloh. Yes, Grant drank, but he was not the drunken general as he was so often portrayed. And the extreme number of fatalities at Shiloh had more to do with being scapegoated than with his failure as a military leader.

Well-written and enlightening, this book restores the reputation of one of our country's true heroes and deserves a place on the list of must-read biographies.

Encampment: A Novel of Race and Reconciliation by Carl Eeman. 375 pp., 2009, Melange Press, Round Lake, NY.

In his imaginative first novel, Carl Eeman re-visits the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1913 — and adds a twist: What if the 5,000 US Colored Troops who had fought bravely in that battle had also been invited to attend? Would that have signaled the beginning of the end of racial hatred in our country? In fact, all of the 54,000 Union veterans from 47 states who attended, along with 200 reporters and 100,000 civilians who came daily to see the event, were white.

In the novel, we follow the fictional reunion of white and black soldiers through the eyes of three veterans in their 70s, including one who served in the all-colored 2nd Carolina Union Volunteers. The tale ends on a note of reconciliation. Although wishful thinking, the story gives us pause about the history of race in this nation and points us toward a brighter future.

... and don't forget our Special Raffle item:

The American Civil War by Gary W. Gallagher, 4 CD set & cover book, Teaching Company, Chantilly, VA. Gary Gallagher, American Civil War History Professor at the University of Virginia, goes beyond the battlefield to explore a myriad of aspects of the War.



Calendar of Events

April 7, Civil War Lecture, Frederick, MD, 7PM
Historian and author Dan Toomey will discuss the 1st Maryland Regiment USA and CSA and how they met and fought at Gettysburg and Front Royal. Reception, 5:30; dinner, 6:30; lecture, 7PM. At the Delaplaine Arts Center, downtown Frederick. Advanced registration requested. Information: 301-695-0880, Ext. 126; AppalachianChapter@gmail.com.

April 8-12, 17 & 18, Virginia 145th Anniversary of the Surrender, Appomattox Court House, VA

April 8-12 at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, special lectures, tours, living history, all starting at the Visitor Center. April 17 & 18, US and CS encampments, demonstrations. Under age 15 free admission. For information, 434-352-8987; www.nps.gov/apco.

April 9-11, Living History, 145th Anniversary of Lee-Grant Surrender, Clover Hill Village, VA

Living historians portraying Lee, Grant & their officers will recreate the final days leading up to surrender. Location is 1 mile from original site. Information, Carolyn Davis, casonclee@aol.com or 304-466-2030.

April 10-11, Bell & History Days, Monocacy National Battlefield, Frederick MD, 8:30 AM

Monocacy National Battlefield will open its Spring season with a focus on Frederick's unique contributions to history and the vital role of the railroad in the Civil War. Special programs include a model train display. Information: 301-662-3515.

April 10-11, Seminar, Gettysburg, PA

13th Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar, "The Aftermath and the End of the Campaign." For registration, information and fee, 717-334-1124, Ext. 3251; www.nps.gov/gett.

April 17, Maryland Parade and Ceremony, Baltimore, MD, all day starting at 10AM

Annual President Street Station Parade commemorating "Maryland, My Maryland," 149th anniversary of the Baltimore Riot, first bloodshed of the Civil War. Parade forms in front of Fells Point Recreation Pier. Information: 410-461-9377 or 437-4467; reyeser@hotmail.com.

May 1, 2, 146th Battle of Wilderness Anniversary, Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania County, VA

Battle commemoration programs & events, hosted by Friends of Wilderness Battlefield & Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park. Free. Information: www.fowb.org.

National Archives launches extensive two-part Civil War exhibit April 30



Save the date! On April 30, complete with the Federal City Brass Band, the National Archives will launch the nation's commemoration of the Civil War Sesquicentennial with a groundbreaking exhibition,

Discovering the Civil War. Drawing from the unparalleled Civil War treasures of the National Archives, the exhibit promises to "peel back 150 years of accumulated analysis, interpretation, and opinion to reveal a Civil War that is little-known and even more rarely displayed."

Taking a fresh approach in every way, the exhibit offers a thematic rather than traditional chronological design and features touch-screen interactive technology that allows visitors to experience the War in a new way. Themes include "Spies and Conspiracies," "Prisoners and Casualties," "Emancipation," "Global War," and "Raising Armies."

Displaying seldom-seen documents including letters, diaries, photos and maps, the exhibit prompts visitors to solve mysteries, unlock secrets and discover unexpected events in the Archives' Civil War records. Highlights of Part I include the original Virginia ordinance of secession, Lincoln's "substitute" in Union Army, and the Chinese connection to the War.

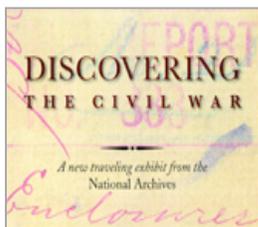
In Part II, visitors explore firsthand accounts of the Battle of Gettysburg at the veteran's 75th reunion filmed by the Army Signal Corps, and discover that Congress proposed two 13th Amendments. Part II also showcases the original Emancipation Proclamation

in a special 3-day display. Part I of the exhibit runs April 30 through Sept. 6, and Part II, November 19 through April 17, 2011.

A Civil War film series, family days, expert panel discussions and Noontime Civil War author lectures round out the Commemoration. At noon on May 7, Stephen C. Neff will discuss his book, *Justice in Blue and Gray: A Legal History of the Civil War*.

Worth noting: The National Archives and Footnote.com are working as partners to bring increased access to Archives holdings. This includes the name index to the Civil War and Later Pension Files, with over 3 million entries, the Mathew B. Brady Collection of Civil War photographs, and records of the Southern Claims Commission.

The National Archives is located on the National Mall on Constitution Avenue at 9th Street, NW. All programs and exhibits are free. For more information: 1-877-874-7616; www.archives.gov/nae



MISSION

TO cultivate and preserve Frederick County's Civil War heritage and broaden the understanding of the Civil War Era and its impact on our nation.

TO explore the many facets of the Civil War from the battlefield to first-person narratives, including guest lectures by writers and historians.

TO support historical projects and activities aimed at increasing public interest and appreciation of our Civil War history, both locally and nationally.

2009-2010 Board of Directors

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Communications, dues, questions or comments for the Roundtable should be directed to:

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www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org

Last Chance!

We want to hear from you!

In June, our FCCWRT Board will meet to choose the nine speakers for our 2010-2011 season starting in September. The coming year is the first year of the Civil War Sesquicentennial and we want to know what programs you'd like to see in the new season.

- Do you have a topic you would like to suggest?
- Have you heard a presentation about the Civil War that you think others would enjoy?
- What areas of Civil War history would you like to hear more about?

Send your suggestions to our P.O. Box 3232, or email Phil Dean, our vice president, at pd10X@comcast.net.