

# Banner

## of the **Blue and Gray**

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

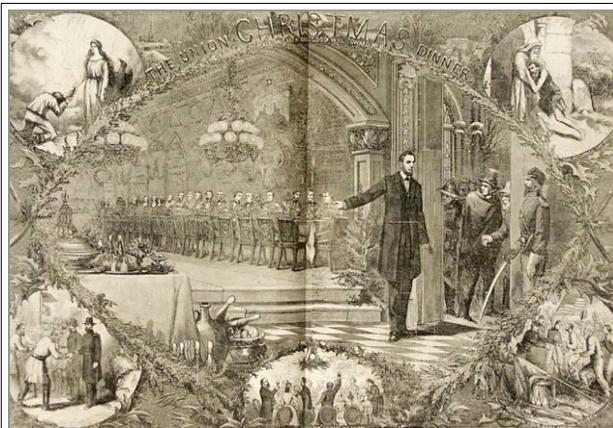
<http://frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org>



190<sup>th</sup> Meeting

December 2009

Vol. 36 Issue 4



Harper's Weekly, December 31, 1864

### A Thomas Nast Vision: "The Union Christmas Dinner"

Thomas Nast, the famous caricaturist and editorial cartoonist for *Harper's Weekly* who gave us many iconic images including Uncle Sam and the political symbols of the donkey and elephant, may be best known for creating the image of Santa Claus that we all know today. However, one of his most moving, even prophetic illustrations, printed on New Year's Eve of 1864, depicted Mr. Lincoln with an outstretched arm inviting the Confederate Rebels in from the battlefield to rejoin the Union.

The drawing features a large banquet table with empty chairs for the Southern States and is anchored by four insets, most notably one foreshadowing Lee's surrender to Grant just a few months later. Nast's vision is crowned with an overarching banner that reads: "The Union Christmas Dinner, Peace on Earth and Good Will Toward Men."

"For all the pain and all the loss of the Civil War, we see by the end of 1864 there were signs of hope. Nast created this image of hope by showing a country tired of war and willing to invite their former countrymen to once again sit at the table of fellowship and Union. Within three months of this image being made, Mr. Lincoln was dead, assassinated by John Wilkes Booth.

"However, Nast's vision of a country once again united did come to pass."

— Image and quotes from [sonofthesouth.net](http://sonofthesouth.net)



## December Meeting

### *Christmas Party*

**Date:** Thursday, Dec. 17, 2009

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Location:**

**National Museum of Civil War Medicine**  
48 East Patrick Street  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

**Speakers:** Tasker's Chance

**Subject:** *Christmas Music  
of the Civil War Era*

### Our Speakers

The historical music group Tasker's Chance will present a program on Christmas America with a special focus on the Civil War Era. Before the Civil War, Christmas celebrations in America were as diverse as the population. In the middle of the 19th Century, the way we celebrate the holidays as we know them today began to solidify. Some of our most beloved carols were brand new and gained popularity at the time.

As the War raged on, to ease the loneliness of being separated from family and friends at Christmastime, the soldiers shared their family holiday traditions. When they returned home at the end of the War, they incorporated some of those newfound customs into their



Becky Ross

own family celebrations. In both the North and South, those who remained at home found their Christmas holidays forever changed by the War.

In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant made Christmas an official Federal holiday in an attempt to unite North and South and bind the nation's wounds.

Tasker's Chance brings history alive at concert performances, private gatherings and historical special events. Becky Ross on fiddle and Deborah Colvin-Brower on guitar and percussion are a classically trained duo devoted to performing and preserving our rich heritage of 18<sup>th</sup> Century music.



Deborah Colvin-Brower

Deborah Colvin-Brower is multi-talented musician with a keen interest in history and provides strong rhythm with guitar, bodhran and bones as well as lead vocals on heartfelt ballads and stirring songs. She is a regular performer of Irish traditional music as well as a teacher of bodhran and bones throughout the Eastern United States including Augusta, WV, Heritage Workshops, The Kennedy Center, various Irish Festivals and Baltimore Irish Arts. She performs frequently at Mount Vernon and has participated in Civil War re-enactments and the Smithsonian 1876 Centennial Exhibit.

Becky Ross (pictured on page 1) has lent her talents as a fiddler to folk music for over ten years and brings delightful counter-melodies and rich harmonies to Tasker's Chance performances. Becky also appears regularly with several Celtic groups at local festivals including Anne Arundel Scottish Games, Virginia Scottish Games and Southern Maryland Celtic Festival. She is a Board Member of Potomac Valley Scottish Fiddle Club, a D.C.-based group promoting Scottish fiddle music, and also plays regularly for Scottish and English country dancing.



### Let's Party!

This year, we will continue our tradition of serving beverages, including cider, and holiday treats at our Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> Christmas meeting. Members are asked to bring a snack or dessert to share. We will provide the necessary paper goods.

## The Prez Sez

At our December 17th meeting, you will be asked to vote on acceptance of the newly revised Constitution and By-Laws of the FCCWRT. Our Board has worked diligently on this for a while now, as it has been quite some time since these were brought up to date.

Our proposed Constitution and By-Laws are posted on our website for your convenience. So, please check them out and if you have any concerns, feel free to bring them up at the meeting before the membership vote.

Looking forward to seeing you all then.

Donnie

### Revised Constitution and By-Laws

The following changes are being proposed to the FCCWRT By-Laws:

1. The document was edited for smoother reading.
2. The spelling of the term 'Roundtable' was standardized throughout the document.
3. Article II, Sec.3: Changed to make memberships on an annual basis — September through May. This will facilitate the FCCWRT's membership roster and contact list.
4. Article V, Sec. 1:(Officers) - The position of Secretary-Treasurer was split into two separate positions. The work responsibilities for each of these positions is too much for one person.

**Reminder:** Please review our revised By-Laws posted at [www.frederickcountycivilwarrt.org](http://www.frederickcountycivilwarrt.org) prior to the December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## Just a few left . . .

### Our Official FCCWRT Collector's Cap

Our official historic FCCWRT Collector's Cap with a colorful stitched logo is still available, although there are just a few left. Caps will be available at our Thursday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>



meeting, or contact Jim Enright at 301-514-3741, [jpenright@potomacadvisors.com](mailto:jpenright@potomacadvisors.com). Donation is \$15. **Makes a great Christmas gift!**

## The Bookshelf

***General Sherman's Christmas: Savannah, 1864*** by Stanley Weintraub. 238 pp., 2009 Smithsonian Books, HarperCollins imprint, New York, NY.

Author Stanley Weintraub, a Penn State scholar who has penned numerous books on military topics studies the period from Election Day, Nov. 8, 1864 through New Year's Day 1865 as Sherman marched from Atlanta to the sea and captured Savannah, inflicting a mortal wound on the already weakened Confederacy. Sherman celebrated his achievement in a famous telegram to Lincoln on Christmas Day 1864: "I beg to present you as a Christmas-gift, the city of Savannah." The author provides a fast-paced, at times even humorous anecdotal account of Sherman's march and occupation of Savannah that makes for lighter holiday reading.

***Army at Home: Women and the Civil War on the Northern Home Front*** by Judith Giesberg. Illustrated. 232 pp., 2009. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC.

Ms. Giesberg, Assistant Professor of History at Villanova University, dispels the notion that the Civil War had little direct impact on the women of the North and that for the most part they stayed quietly at home during the War years and suffered little hardship. On the contrary, the author explores the many challenges and sacrifices the Northern women made. Many were forced to enter the workforce and run their households while continuing to rear their children. When the soldiers returned, they were surprised to find their wives and daughters so changed and downplayed their role in an effort to return to the pre-War status quo. This extremely well-researched book sheds new light on the vital contribution of the women of the Northern home front.

### For under the tree . . .

***75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary the Battle of Gettysburg, A Photographic Essay.*** Over 130 photos from the 1938 Reunion of the Battle of Gettysburg. \$30, includes s/h. Available from Lancaster County Connections, P.O. Box 207, Hershey, PA 17033.

***99 Historic Images of Civil War Charleston.*** Part of the 99 Historic Images Series. Features rare images from the Robin Stanford Collection. \$9.95 + s/h. Available from [www.civilwarphotography.org](http://www.civilwarphotography.org).

***The Way They Were: Dressed in 1860-1865, A Photographic Reference.*** Hundreds of images of men, women, and children by Donna J. Abraham. Available from [www.abrahamslady.com](http://www.abrahamslady.com)

## Calendar of Events

### **Dec. 5, Antietam Battlefield Illumination, MD, 6pm; Pry House Exhibit, 11am-5pm, Keedysville, MD**

Antietam Battlefield Illumination with over 23,000 candles, each representing a casualty. Driving tour begins at 6pm on Route 34 east of Sharpsburg. In the event of severe weather, the event will be held Dec.12. For more information: [www.nps.gov/anti](http://www.nps.gov/anti). Pry House Field Hospital Museum living history, barn and house exhibit before Battlefield Illumination gates open at 6pm. For further information: 301-695-1864.

### **Dec. 9-12, Walking Tour, Fredericksburg, VA**

Walking Tour of the 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg. Admission fee. Sponsored by the Blue and Gray Education Society. For information: 888-741-2437, [www.blueandgrayeducation.org](http://www.blueandgrayeducation.org).

### **Dec. 12, Living History Program, Hopewell, VA**

Daylong living history program, "Christmas at Appomattox Plantation," at Grant's Headquarters Unit of Petersburg National Battlefield, depicts how Christmas was celebrated by both owners and slaves. For information: 804-458-9504.

### **Dec. 12, Civil War Era Concert at Christ Church, Gettysburg, PA, 5pm**

"Songs & Stories of a Civil War Hospital" at historic Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. Candlelight period concert by professional musicians, poetry and readings. Free admission, accessible, air-conditioned, refreshments. For information: 717-334-5212.

### **Dec. 13, Candlelight Open House, Frederick MD, Noon-7pm.**

"Museums by Candlelight" free programs at National Museum of Civil War Medicine, part of annual Frederick County's Historic Sites Consortium open house. Special camp life exhibit and live music. For information, Frederick Tourism, 301-600-4047, [www.fredericktourism.org](http://www.fredericktourism.org).

### **Dec. 19, Civil War Santa, Clinton, MD, 1-2pm**

"The Legend of Santa" at the Surratt House Museum. Kevin Rawlings as Santa. Light refreshments. Free. For information, 301-868-1121, [www.surratt.org](http://www.surratt.org).

### **Through Dec. 19, Museum House Christmas Tour, Gettysburg, PA**

Candlelight tours of a Civil War Christmas at the Shriver House Museum. Admission fee. For information, 717-337-2800, [www.shriverhouse.org](http://www.shriverhouse.org).

## The Second Half



As we begin the countdown to the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War, we have an exciting lineup of programs planned for the second half of our season, from January to May 2010. At left, author Steve French signs books following his presentation at our well-attended November meeting.

### **Program Schedule:**

**Jan. 21, 2010**

**Speaker:** Ted Brennan

**Topic:** Civil War Training Camps.

**Feb. 18, 2010**

**Speaker:** Hilda Koontz

**Topic:** Wartime family letters and photos paint a vivid picture of life on the front lines and at home in Maryland.

**March 18, 2010**

**Speaker:** Michael Bunitsky

**Topic:** “The Kemp Hall Legislative Session” — the special MD Legislature session held in Frederick County at the beginning of the War.

**April 15, 2010**

**Speaker:** Dean Herrin

**Topic:** From John Brown’s Raid to Fort Sumter.

**May 20, 2010**

**Speaker:** David Shackelford

**Topic:** The B&O Railroad in the Civil War.

### In the News

#### **Frederick County Incinerator update**

On Nov. 19 the seven-member Frederick County Planning Commission voted 4-1 to reverse their October 14 ruling that the planned waste-to-energy incinerator’s proximity to the Monocacy National Battlefield was inconsistent with the County’s comprehensive plan that calls for preservation of historic sites. The reversal nullifies a pending legal battle between County Commissioners and the Planning Commission.

The vote was not on the meeting agenda and two commissioners, Joseph F. Brown III and Kai J. Hagen (also a County Commissioner), were absent. Hagen, who opposes the incinerator, said he was ill and not

### **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:

**FCCWRT**

**P.O. Box 3232**

**Frederick MD 21705-3232**

[www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org](http://www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org)

aware that the issue would be discussed. Hagen said he thinks the commissioners were pressured “behind the scenes” to reverse their ruling

To appeal further is probably useless, Hagen said, because the County Commissioners will find some way to build the incinerator.

#### **Wilderness Battlefield update**

The first court date in the lawsuit to halt construction of a Wal-mart Supercenter at the entrance to the Wilderness Battlefield in Orange County, VA, is set for Feb. 3, 2010. At stake is whether the litigation will move forward or be dismissed.