



# Banner of the Blue and Gray

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

255th Meeting

December 2016

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## No Meeting in December



After two years of declining participation we've decided to cancel our December meeting. We'll return on the third Thursday in January (the 19<sup>th</sup>) **at a time to be determined** at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine on East Patrick Street. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! There is always something to do in downtown Frederick and Frederick County!

# NEARBY DECEMBER EVENTS

December 10- "Museums By Candlelight," in Frederick County. Music, living history, open houses and more at many of Frederick County's historic sites and museums, many with Civil War associations. [visitfrederick.org/calendar/view/7081](http://visitfrederick.org/calendar/view/7081)

December 10- Tours, "Civil War Washington," with Ed Bearss. Includes walking tours of Arlington National Cemetery, Lincoln's Cottage, Lafayette Square and more. 8 am-6 pm. \$200. [smithsonianassociates.org](http://smithsonianassociates.org) (click Civil War).

December 17- Lecture, "Christmas in the Hospital: The Holidays in Frederick's Civil War Hospitals," at the National Civil War Medical Museum in Frederick. 2:30 pm. Free with admission. [civilwarmed.org](http://civilwarmed.org)

December 26- 30th Annual Historic Houses of Worship Tour. The 30th annual "Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship" allows visitors to go into 12 of the historic churches in downtown Frederick. All are decorated for the Christmas season. Almost all of them have musical programs throughout the evening. Most of them have hospitality rooms with cookies and hot beverages. Come bring your family and experience 12 of Frederick's historic churches! 4-9pm. <http://www.visitfrederick.org/>

Downtown Frederick  
19 E Church St.

This list is by no means all inclusive. Some of these events will repeat during the month. You can always use our Facebook page to connect with members taking their own tours during the month. What better way to explore local battlefields and historic sites than to go with your fellow members!



## In Case You Missed It.....

At our November meeting we heard William Connery's presentation on John Mosby in Civil War northern Virginia. About 25 were in attendance. We learned that the young Mosby had been kicked out of the University of Virginia, spent time in prison, and became a lawyer. Early in the Civil War he captured during the peninsular Campaign but was exchanged quickly since he was wearing an officer's uniform although he was a private. His rise to fame happened in early 1863 when

he captured General Edwin Stoughton at Fairfax Courthouse. He was so feared that each night the planks on the Chain Bridge were taken up so his battalion couldn't attack Washington DC! Herman Melville even wrote a poem about him. When four of his men were hanged in 1864 by Sheridan as irregulars Mosby hanged Union men in retaliation. His last raid occurred the day after Lee's surrender at Appomattox and his 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of Virginia Cavalry disbanded before the end of April 1865. Some in the group interpreted Mosby's role in the war as equivalent to that of a modern day terrorist while others believed he was more of a patriotic partisan or raider.

After the war Mosby befriended U.S. Grant and supported Grant's reelection. Despite his battlefield heroics for the south he was maligned for his postwar allegiances. He was the US Consul to Hong Kong from 1879-85 and served with distinction and honor. Afterwards as a lawyer for the Southern Pacific Railroad he mentored the young George S. Patton while in California and provided considerable influence on the future general's career. After returning to his home in Virginia he passed away on May 30, 1916 and was buried in Warrenton.

*PREZ SEZ*

## STATE OF THE FCCWRT

As you may be aware from Gary Dyson's previous announcement that our Dec.15th meeting has been canceled. I wanted you know that our present level of membership is not large enough to carry our monthly expenses, i.e., speaker fees, rent, etc., however, we intend to finish the year (Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May) 2017 even if we likely incur a deficit. Good news, I'm pleased to report that your Board of Directors has come up with enough funds to complete the balance for the scheduled meetings (Jan - May).

In addition to trying to bring back former members as well as gaining new ones, your board is looking at some exciting new strategies which will be announced to you in the coming months, meanwhile have a joyous holiday season and I will see you on Jan. 19, 2017.



## FCCWRT SNOW POLICY



The winter storm season is upon us. Due to foul weather conditions, we may need to cancel our monthly meeting. If Frederick County Schools and/or the National Museum of Civil War Medicine (meeting location) announce closures for the afternoon/evening of the meeting our meeting will be cancelled. We will make every attempt to send an email and Facebook notification as soon as the cancellation decision is made. Please use your best judgment in making safety your top priority.

### Ramblings from the Raffle Table

Even though we are not having a December meeting, I want to tell each of you how much I look forward to seeing you at every meeting. You have all been so supportive of our Raffle Table and for that we are deeply appreciative. Stay tuned, I've got some good ones picked out for next month!

So here are **Happy Holiday Wishes** to you all from Jolly Old St. Nick who has been bringing cheer to everyone since 1860 (via Thomas Nast).

Thank you and we'll see you in January, Kathi



## BOOK REVIEW by Matt Borders

Marion V. Armstrong - *Disaster in the West Woods: General Edwin V. Sumner and the II Corps at Antietam*. Western Maryland Interpretive Association, 2002. 77 pp. Maps, photos, notes, bibliography, index. \$5.98 (paper), ASIN: B0014SER8S

*Disaster in the West Woods* can be seen as a precursor to Vince Armstrong's much larger and better known *Unfurl Those Colors! McClellan, Sumner, and the Second Army Corps in the Antietam Campaign*. This small work, as you may have guessed, deals specifically with the ill-fated attack of Major General John Sedgwick's Division of the Union II Corp into the West Woods during the Battle of Antietam. Personally led by their corps commander, Major General Edwin V. Sumner, Sedgwick's Division was the last of the three major Union attacks in the northern part of the battlefield that morning. The attack been intended to put the original Union battle plan of rolling up General Robert E. Lee's flank back on track, but as the work describes, the arrival of Confederate reinforcements catch the Union division in the flank and rear, crushing it and sending it fleeing North and Northeast to link up with elements of the I and XII Corps that had gone into action earlier that morning.

The book lays out this disastrous attack in detail, looking at not only how Sedgwick's Division moved across the field, but also why they did so with apparently little support. Armstrong also looked at the effect of the Union repulse on not only the fighting in the Northern portion of the battlefield, but also on the men themselves and their commanders. Reading about the uncertainties of the situation following the Union repulse and the attempts by several different commanders in the northern portion of the Antietam Battlefield to get clarification of what they were supposed to do gives the reader a better sense of just how confusing and chaotic just this one portion of the field was, let alone the whole thing.

Being as this is the holiday season and everyone's time is limited I highly recommend this book for getting a quick, but well researched, read in. This book can easily be read through in a couple of days or over a long afternoon after the family has gone home. *Disaster in the West Woods* also makes a great stocking-stuffer or small gift as the book's physical size allows it to be placed or hidden anywhere. Following your festivities this book also makes it a helpful companion for tromping through the West Woods or across the Miller Pasture following in the footsteps of this attack.

Finally, this work is a great introduction to Armstrong's study of the Second Corps and its opposition which can be found in his two other works, *Unfurl Those Colors! McClellan, Sumner, and the Second Army Corps in the Antietam Campaign* and the more recent, *Opposing the Second Corps at Antietam: The Fight for the Confederate Left and Center on America's Bloodiest Day*.

**We are on Facebook! Please check out our page for timely updates, local events, or comments. Please read and share our posts!**



<https://m.facebook.com/fccwrt>

Gary Dyson is our "face" for Facebook.

Help us spread the word about OUR FCCWRT!! We have 115 "likes" to date. This number fluctuates at times. I haven't figured out just why.

Join Facebook. Share posts with friends! You'll get more timely notice of events when you check us out on Facebook.

### **Our 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.

### **Looking Ahead**

While our speaker list for this season is set, please let us know of any topics or speakers that you'd like to hear about. We hope to see you at our next meeting, January 19th!

### **2016-2017 Board of Directors**

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**Our membership drive for this season has not been able to keep up with the needs of our organization. We can't continue this Roundtable without your support and format modifications may be forthcoming. We're always looking for new members to join our ranks too. Recruit your friends! Please renew your dues before the end of this month so we can plan ahead!**

For those who remembered to renew your FCCWRT membership, thank you! Your dues make it possible for us to continue to fulfill our mission. We can't continue without your support! Please ask your friends to join so we can do even more!

As a member of our group, you'll enjoy these benefits:

- receive the current newsletter
- receive email updates of local events related to Civil War history
- always have a place to be on the third Thursday of the month

Our yearly dues are:

- \$30.00 for an individual
- \$50.00 for a family up to four