



Banner of the Blue and Gray

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

329th Meeting, 36th Season

Volume 52 Issue # 1

Frederick County Civil War RoundTable Meeting

May 21, 2026
7:00pm

In Person Meeting
At the:

Frederick County Civil War Medical Museum
48 East Patrick St
Frederick MD, 21701

Speaker: Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan

Topic: *Marching Home*



Presentation Summary:

The Civil War visited unprecedented violence on the United States. That violence was also inscribed on the bodies and minds of the nearly two million men who donned Union blue between 1861 and 1865. How did Union veterans make sense of their physical, psychological, and emotional wounds as the nation plunged into the years of Reconstruction? How did the politics of the postwar years complicate their reintegration to civilian life and personal healing? Why were so many veterans so unwilling to let go of the war and its legacy, and what urgent messages do those ex-soldiers have for us today? Brian Jordan will explore these questions in his talk. Books will be available for purchase and signing for \$25 each (cash/check/PayPal accepted).

Author BIO:

Brian Matthew Jordan is Professor of U.S. Civil War History, Co-Director of the SHSU Civil War Consortium, and Chair of the History Department at Sam Houston State University, where he has taught since 2015. Professor Jordan earned his undergraduate degree in Civil War Era Studies at Gettysburg College (under the tutelage of Gabor S. Boritt and Allen C. Guelzo), and M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. degrees in History at Yale. His first book, *Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War*, was a finalist (one of three runners-up) for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in History. In its dissertation form, that book won the George Washington Egleston Prize (for Best U.S. History Dissertation at Yale) and John Addison Porter Prize (one of Yale's highest academic honors).

Dr. Jordan has authored or edited five other books on Civil War soldiers, veterans, and memory, including *The War Went On: Reconsidering the Lives of Civil War Veterans* (with Evan Rothera); *A Thousand May Fall: An Immigrant Regiment's Civil War*, and *Final Resting Places: Reflections on the Meaning of Civil War Graves* (with Jonathan W. White). Presently, he is at work on *Written in Blood: A New History of the U.S. Civil War*, a one-volume history of the conflict for Liveright/W.W. Norton; *Abraham Lincoln: A Reference Guide to His Life and Works* (for Bloomsbury) as well as *More Than An Eagle on the Button: Black Military Experiences in the Civil War Era* (co-edited with Lorien Foote and Holly Pinheiro, Jr.).

Brian is the founding co-editor of the series "Veterans" at the University of Massachusetts Press, and, for more than a decade, has served as Book Review Editor for *The Civil War Monitor*. He is also the Associate Editor of *Gettysburg Magazine*. In 2020, he appeared as a talking head in two episodes of the HISTORY Channel's three-part mini-series on the life of U.S. Grant. He has delivered invited lectures in thirty-five states. In August 2024, he had the honor eulogize 28 Union veterans inurned at Tahoma National Cemetery in Washington State—perhaps the last Civil War eulogy ever delivered. Dr. Jordan is a native of Akron, Ohio, and lives in Houston with his wife and four-year old daughter, Elizabeth (who, despite her youth, has already stomped several battlefields

Here's what you Missed in April....

Speaker: Jake Wynn



Topic: *Four Years at War: The Civil War Through the Diary of Sergeant Henry Keiser*

Jake gave a robust ZOOM presentation based on the Diary of Henry Keiser who recorded 1,397 entries of his Civil War army life. He was a member of the 95th and the 96th Pennsylvania Regiment. He fought at Crampton's Gap during the battle of South Mountain and several other battles. Henry Keiser was from Lykens PA in Northeastern PA in the heart of coal country.

Henry Keiser and his wife



Prez Sez:



We have made it to the end of the 2025-2026 season! Thank you to everyone who has joined us this year, members both new and old. To close out our season we have a very special guest, the Chair of the Department of History at Sam Houston State University and the book review editor for the *Civil War Monitor*, Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan! The author of six different books on the American Civil War, Dr. Jordan's first work and the focus of his talk will be on Federal veterans at the end of the war.

With May being our last talk of the season, the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable has been meeting to plan out the upcoming seasons. We have a great line up planned. So keep an eye on our website and social media regarding the 2026-2027 season and its speakers. As always, if you have a particular speaker or subject you want to hear about, do let us know! Your feedback gives us a better idea of who to pursue and the topics of most interest.

Finally, with the summer coming on it is once again primetime for travel. With that in mind don't forget to support your local and regional historic sites, be they national, state or local. From parks and battlefields to museums and historic buildings, we have an abundance of sites to visit. The roundtable board hopes you and yours can enjoy our shared history this summer.

See you all on May 21, at 7pm at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine!

Most Respectfully,

Matt Borders,

President, FCCWR

April Book Review By Matt Borders

Midnight on the Potomac: The Last Year Of The Civil War, The Lincoln Assassination, And The Rebirth of America” by Scott Ellsworth, 320pgs., notes, index, pictures, \$32.00 (hardcover), ISBN:9780593475614. Review by Matthew Borders

One of the most discussed and lauded Civil War books of 2025 was Scott Ellsworth’s *Midnight on the Potomac*. This work was an in-depth review of the last year of the American Civil War taking in both the military and political elements of that time. A professor at the University of Michigan, Scott Ellsworth is a former historian with the Smithsonian Institution and has written history for multiple media outlets. He has also written numerous books on a variety of historical subjects, but *Midnight on the Potomac*, is his first work of Civil War history.

Midnight on the Potomac has made a big splash primarily due to just how readable it is. Weaving together elements of military, political and social history, as well as the personal narratives of many historical characters, Ellworth’s work was a delight to read. The short, focused chapters keep the pages turning and the narrative growing the more one reads into the work.

The aspect I found most interesting about *Midnight on the Potomac* was the focus on the Confederate Secret Service and their involvement in social and political disruptions in 1864-1865, as well as the Lincoln Assassination. While other authors have looked into this relatively unknown element of the Confederate government, particularly in *Come Retribution* and the more recent, *Manhunt*, the wide variety of stories and events attributed to them are rarely put together. More importantly Ellworth laid out how the efforts of the Confederate Secret Service, particularly those stationed in Canada were attempting to keep up a constant pressure campaign as opposed to random, disjointed raids.

These narratives, and the rest, are driven by Ellworth’s special attention to the historic figures of his narrative. While the Lincoln’s and Grant play big parts in the work, so do the Booth brothers, as well as soldiers, nurses and Washington, DC itself. The capital is a character as well, having grown from a somewhat sleepy, and very much unfinished state at the beginning of the war, to the seat of power by its end. Where *Midnight on the Potomac* is troublesome is not the narrative style, but in the lacks way the narrative is backed up with sourcing. While each chapter has a notes section, this is more of a listing of works cited for that chapter as opposed to proper citations. Throughout the chapters quotes are used to hammer a point, only to come up somewhat lacking when the specific page and context of that quote cannot be determined from elsewhere. That is problematic and not ideal for a work of history. These concerns aside, *Midnight on the Potomac* is extremely readable and would be a great addition for anyone interested in the Civil War, the Lincoln Assassination, the intelligence war or the people caught up in all these harrowing events.

FCCWRT 26/27 Season Schedule

2026/2027 – Stay tuned for next seasons meetings and Speakers

FCCWRT Lectures Available

For those of you who may have missed any of the Virtual Presentations from the previous seasons of the FCCWRT, all presentations can be found on the National Museum of Civil War Medicine YouTube channel found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/nmcwm/videos>

Our NMCWM Partner links

National Museum of Civil War Medicine Facebook Page, offering Facebook live opportunities weekly: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/CivilWarMed/videos/>

National Museum of Civil War Medicine now offering its own YouTube Channel, tons of content available: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdGkf5-Y7aEZsXEBhRhEKjg?>

Events at the NMCWM

One Vast Hospital – Downtown Frederick Walking Tour

Saturday -May 9th @ 10:30 am

Sunday - May 10th @ 12:00 pm

Greet Greg the Gardener at the Pry House

Tuesday May 12 @ 2:00pm –

Pry House Field Hospital 18906 Shepherdstown Pike Keedysville, MD

Monocacy's Lost Battalions – Park Ranger Matt Borders

Saturday May 16th @ 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

National Museum of Civil War Medicine

Antietam Institute Events

Civil War Lecture Series kicks off on June 1, 2026. Indoor programs are held in McKinley Hall at St Paul's Episcopal Church on Monday evenings at 7pm.

The church is located at 209 Main St with a small parking area off the alley. More parking is available on Main and Hall Streets. Lectures are free to the public.

Monday, June 1st, @ 7:00pm –

Speaker: James L. McLean Jr. –

Topic: 14th New York State Militia and the regiment's actions in the 1862 Maryland Campaign

Monday, June 8th, @ 7:00pm –

Speaker: Retired Ranger Keith Snyder

Topic: The Marines Land in Sharpsburg

Check out their Facebook page at www.antietaminstitute.org for additional dates, updates and any changes to the schedule

Volunteer Opportunities

Interested in volunteering to keep the FCCWRT running and growing?

- Let us know at a meeting or send an email to our President Matt Borders (mattborders@comcast.net).
- Areas of need are listed below.
- Board elections were held in November, but there is always room for those who will help with our mission.

Areas in which to assist the Round Table:

- Programs (help with acquiring possible speakers, field trips, etc.)
- Website (maintain and update group's website)
- Outreach, Marketing, Newsletter, Others
- **Members are encouraged to submit items for our newsletter. I'm always looking for events to add period themed events that may not be part of a battlefield schedule.**

Book Raffle

*Please arrive a little early for our meeting and participate in our book raffle!
Please consider purchasing a book from our speaker at online sites, our previous and scheduled speakers as well*

Who We Are, Where to Find Us

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

<https://www.facebook.com/fccwrt> Gary Dyson is our “face” for Facebook, help us spread the word about OUR FCCWRT!! 2.7K likes and 2.9K followers!

Also visit our website at: <http://www.frederickcountycivilwarrt.org/>



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.

As President Borders stated, our membership drive for the year is ongoing! Please consider supporting the Round Table during the 25-26 season, by renewing your membership as well inviting friends to join. Your membership provides the space for our meetings, attracting well known speakers, and website and P.O. Box maintenance.

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! If we had more members, we could do more to promote our Civil War history!

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 (\$25.00 for current dues paying members.)
- \$50.00 for a family up to four
- \$5.00 for out of state members and members under 16 years of age

You can renew your membership at our meeting or by mail. The membership form is attached and may also be downloaded from our website at <http://www.frederickcountycivilwarrt.org/>.

2025-2026 Board of Directors

Matt Borders, President /Webmaster

Bob Smart, Vice President

Bob Kozak, Treasurer

Roberta Legdon, Secretary

Gary Dyson, Facebook

Lucy Tannozzini, At Large

Joe Collins, At Large

Tom Dumm, At Large

For questions, comments or dues, contact:

FCCWRT

P.O. Box 3232, Frederick MD 21705-3232

www.frederickcountycivilwarrt.org

NEW *or* RENEW ANNUAL FCCWRT MEMBERSHIP



NAME (If family membership, please list all names and email addresses)

STREET ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS/ADDRESSES

BEST PHONE NUMBER TO REACH ME

NOTE: *We will protect your privacy. None of the above information will be shared.*

ANNUAL DUES: Individual - \$30; Family - \$50 (Please make check payable to FCCWRT)

AMOUNT PAID \$ _____ **DATE** _____

I would like to volunteer to assist with registration and other tasks at our monthly meetings

I am interested in helping with outreach activities

MAIL TO:
FCCWRT
Box 3232
Frederick, MD 21701

**For additional information about the FCCWRT and to see meeting dates and times
and our roster of speakers for the season, check our website:**

www.frederickcountycivilwarrrt.org