

Campaign 66  
Skirmish 7  
March 14, 2025

# The Dispatch

Editor  
Tracy Sommers  
dicktracy@gmail.com

## Newsletter of The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table

Welcome to our fellowship forum where we discuss our past, emphasizing remembrance, education & preservation.

Meetings held at Central Penn College Conference Center and virtually on Zoom.

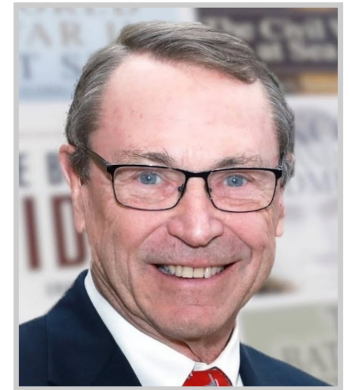
### Friday, March 14 — Dr. Craig L. Symonds David G. Farragut and the Battle of Mobile Bay

Join us on Friday, March 14, as Dr. Craig L. Symonds, one of the nation's preeminent naval historians, examines Rear Admiral David G. Farragut's stunning and consequential victory in the epic Battle of Mobile Bay.

On August 5, 1864, a federal fleet commanded by Farragut, the first admiral in the U.S. Navy, attacked a smaller Confederate fleet led by Admiral Franklin Buchanan and three forts that guarded the entrance to Mobile Bay. Here Farragut is said to have uttered the immortal words, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" (or words to that effect). He accomplished what other naval officers had not been able to do at Charleston: run past the forts protecting the harbor and take command of the bay. In so doing, he cemented his name in American naval history, while denying the Confederacy its last important port on the Gulf of Mexico east of the Mississippi, completing the blockade of that region, and hastening the end of the Civil War.

Dr. Symonds is Professor Emeritus at the United States Naval Academy, where he taught naval history and Civil War history for thirty years. From 2017 to 2020 he was the Ernest J. King Distinguished Professor of Maritime History at the U.S. Naval War College. He is the author of 17 books, including *Decision at Sea*, *Lincoln and His Admirals*, *World War II at Sea: A Global History*, and most recently, *Nimitz at War*, which won the 2024 Gilder-Lehrman Prize for Military History. His works have received numerous other awards, including the Gilder-Lehrman Lincoln Prize, the Roosevelt Prize, and the Dudley Knox Medal for Lifetime Achievement. Now retired, he is much in demand around the country as a speaker on Civil War subjects. He has spoken at Civil War Round Tables in twenty-seven states and two foreign countries.

Those who are unable to attend this engagement in person are invited to tune in to the lecture and Q&A session via Zoom. Click on the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83037646202>. No password is required. To dial in by phone, call 1-301-715-8592 or click on the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83037646202>. The meeting ID # is 830 3764 6202.



**Zoom participants should join the meeting by 7:00 pm.**

5:30 pm—Doors Open  
6:00 pm—Call to Order  
6:15 pm—Dinner

7:15 pm—Presentation  
8:30 pm—Square Table

#### Buffet Dinner Selections

Herb Marinated Flank Steak, Citrus Salmon, Olive Oil Roasted Potatoes, Sugar Peas with Julienne Carrots, Mixed Field Greens, House Made Soup du Jour, Assorted Cookies

Cost: \$32 per person

pay at the door or on our website: [harrisburgcwrt.org/events](https://harrisburgcwrt.org/events)

**Dinner reservations must be made no later than noon on Monday, March 10**

Email: Michael Margolius at: [membership@harrisburgcwrt.org](mailto:membership@harrisburgcwrt.org)



#### Executive Officers

**President**, Mo Becker  
mdbecker132@comcast.net  
**Vice President**, Mark Blanchard  
mblanchard@cvschools.org  
**Treasurer**, Steve Williamson  
steve.williamson.wccs@outlook.com  
**Secretary**, Rebecca Myers  
rev.myers2013@gmail.com

#### Web Links (CTRL + click)

[harrisburgcwrt.org](https://harrisburgcwrt.org)  
**Register For:**  
MEMBERSHIP  
[harrisburgcwrt.org/membership/](https://harrisburgcwrt.org/membership/)  
FIELD TRIPS  
[harrisburgcwrt.org/events/](https://harrisburgcwrt.org/events/)

#### Directors

David Atkinson  
Norm Daniels  
Rick Eiserman  
Dana Ledger  
Don Madar  
Tracy Sommers

#### Standing Committees

**Audit**, Joe Boslet  
**Communications/PR**, Todd Little  
**Field Trips**, Steve Smith  
**Membership**, Michael Margolius  
**Newsletter**, Tracy Sommers  
**Nominating**, John West  
**Preservation**, Norm Daniels  
**Programs**, Steve Smith  
**Webmaster**, Dana Ledger

## President's Pen

*"Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!"*

*--attributed to Rear Admiral David G. Farragut*



As our March engagement approaches, fast on the heels of our February meeting, we have a rare opportunity to hear from one of our nation's most popular naval historians, Dr. Craig Symonds, on the epic battle of Mobile Bay, which helped Abraham Lincoln win reelection in the fall of 1864. Seldom in history has a naval battle had such seismic political consequences.

Dr. Symonds taught for 30 years at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, where his classes were always oversubscribed. He is a brilliant storyteller, and brings with him a list of awards as long as your arm. It is no accident that he was selected as the keynote speaker for the Dedication Day ceremony at the National Cemetery in Gettysburg last November. Dr. Symonds and his wife graciously accepted our invitation and will be coming all the way from Annapolis to share an evening with us.

***In short, we need "all hands on deck" for this engagement. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us for what promises to be a night to remember.***

Whether you pay for dinner online or intend to pay at the door, please RSVP to our Membership Chair, Michael Margolius, at [membership@harrisburgcwrt.org](mailto:membership@harrisburgcwrt.org) indicating your method of payment. The RSVP deadline is noon on the Monday prior to our meetings, the day by which we must inform the chefs of our headcount so they can order enough food for the event. Once we provide that headcount it commits us to pay for that number of meals, and we get charged for no-shows. We ordered 38 dinners for our February engagement, and had seven cancellations on the day of the meeting. We pass on the cost of dinners ordered but not consumed to those who ordered them.

Research indicates that volunteering is good for your health. We are actively seeking volunteers to serve as members of committees for Programs, Field Trips, Membership, Publicity, and Preservation. The future of our Round Table depends on the willingness of volunteers to step up and take on leadership roles in our growing organization. If you are interested, please reach out to John West, who chairs our nominating committee. Together let us continue to foster an enriching environment for the study and appreciation of Civil War history.

I look forward to seeing you all on Friday, March 14 for a delicious meal and a thought-provoking lecture, and to experience the rich traditions of one of the oldest and most celebrated Civil War Round Tables in the nation.

***Don't give up the ship!***

Mo Becker



*Attendees at our February engagement were treated to a provocative presentation on Grant's battle to save Reconstruction by Fergus M. Bordewich, one of the country's most prolific independent historians.*

## Fall Field Trip Photos on Website

Our HCWRT website has a photo gallery with hundreds of shots taken during our field trips. The gallery was recently updated with 64 shots from our popular "Flames Beyond Gettysburg" field trip last fall. Whether you went on the trip and would like to relive it, missed the trip and wish you hadn't, or are just curious about what our field trips are like, take a few minutes to review the latest addition to our growing gallery of photos. Simply click on this link:

<https://harrisburgcwrt.org/photo-gallery/nggallery/album/flames-beyond-gettysburg>

## Meeting Schedule—Campaign 66

**04/04/25**

*Grant's Last Battle: The Story of Writing His Personal Memoirs*  
Chris Mackowski

**05/16/25** — Nye-Sommers Lecture

*Brought Forth on This Continent: Abraham Lincoln & American Immigration*  
Harold Holzer

**06/03/25**

*We Fought at Gettysburg: The 17th Connecticut Volunteers*  
Caroline Ivanoff

## *Spring Field Trip Sold Out*

Our spring field trip, "In the Footsteps of John Brown," remains sold out with a waiting list of 13. A reminder to sign up early for our excellent field trips.

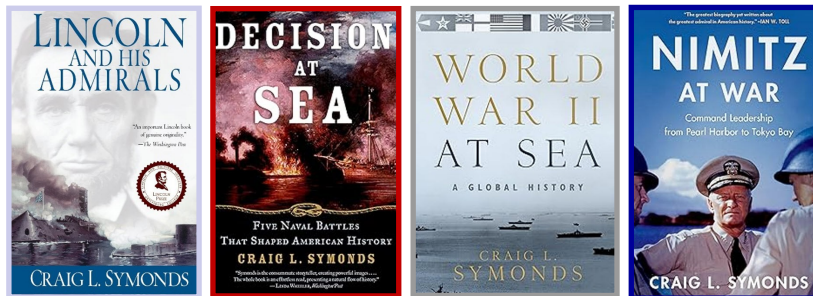
---

## *Upcoming Events*

- **Thursday, February 27, 7:00 pm:** Author and Licensed Battlefield Guide Jim Hessler will discuss "Humphrey's Division at Gettysburg" at the Gettysburg CWRT's February meeting at the Adams Co. Historical Society, 625 Biglerville Road. The talk will also be livestreamed.
- **Saturday March 8, from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm:** Military Used Book Sale at AHEC in Carlisle.
- **Saturday, March 8, 10:00 am:** Free showing of documentary film by Bryan Wade on the Underground Railroad in South Central PA at All Saints Episcopal Church, 310 Elm Ave., Hershey.
- **Thursday, March 20, 7:30 pm:** Part II of LBG Mary Turk-Mena's talk on General George G. Meade at the Hershey CWRT, Vietnam Vets of America Hall, 8000 Derry St., Harrisburg.
- **Sunday, March 23, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm:** Free Civil War dance class sponsored by the Victorian Dance Ensemble at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg's Reservoir Park.
- **Tuesday, March 25, 7:00 pm (doors open 6:00 pm):** 2025 Wert Lecture by Fergus M. Bordewich on his book, "Congress at War," to be held at Dickinson College's Anita Tuvin Schlechter (ATS) Auditorium. <https://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/2025/01/22/fergus-bordewich-to-deliver-2025-wert-lecture/>
- **Thursday, March 27, 7:00 pm:** Cindy Beaston's talk on Wrightsville-Columbia and the Bridge in the Gettysburg Campaign at the Gettysburg CWRT at the Adams Co. Historical Society.
- **Saturday, April 5, 2:00 pm:** Lecture by Dr. Mark Kelley on Lydia Hamilton Smith and Thaddeus Stevens at the Adams Co. Historical Society in Gettysburg. \$10 charge for non-ACHS members.

---

## *Speaker's Books*

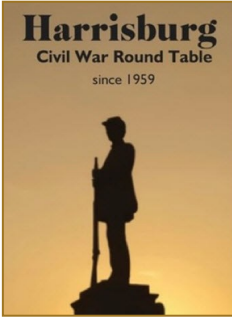


---

## *Silent Auction of Two Prints*

During our upcoming March and April engagements, we will be taking silent auction bids on reproductions of two Currier and Ives prints from the collection of the late Dr. Richard J. Sommers. One depicts the attack on Fort Fisher in Wilmington, NC, in January 1865, and the other portrays the capture and fall of the port of Charleston, SC in February 1865. The winner of these matching prints will be determined at our April engagement. Don't miss this opportunity to own a piece of Civil War naval history with an impeccable HCWRT pedigree! Proceeds will support our battlefield preservation efforts.





## The Dispatch

The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table  
121 Windrush Lane  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-9236

March, 2025

130th PA Monument  
Antietam National  
Battlefield

### The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table

Where we discuss our past, emphasizing remembrance, education & preservation. **All Are Welcome**  
Meetings are held at Central Penn College Conference Center, 600 Valley Road, Summerdale, PA



Follow the Harrisburg Civil War Round Table on Facebook



### Harrisburg Civil War Round Table Enlistment Form

#### Membership

Current Member Renewal

Individual \$24

Individual or Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

New Member Enlistment

Family \$36

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Full Time Student \$5

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

An additional \$10 for a name badge is optional. If you want a badge, name should appear as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Donations\*

\$25     \$50     \$100     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*If your donation is made in memory or in recognition of someone, please provide name(s) here: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contacts:

For questions email: Michael Margolius, Membership Chair, membership@harrisburgcwr.org

Mail checks to: Steve Williamson, Treasurer, Phone 717-580-0443, 121 Windrush Lane, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-9236