

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, April 4 — Dr. Chris Mackowski

Grant's Last Battle: The Story Behind the Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant

Join us on Friday, April 4, as Dr. Chris Mackowski recounts the remarkable story of how one of America's greatest military heroes became a literary legend.

The former general in chief of the Union armies during the Civil War, a two-term president of the United States, a beloved ambassador of American goodwill around the globe, Ulysses S. Grant was dying. The hardscrabble man who regularly smoked twenty cigars a day had developed terminal throat cancer. Thus began Grant's final battle—a race against his own failing health to complete his personal memoirs in an attempt to secure his family's financial security. In this maelstrom of woe, Grant refused to surrender. Putting pen to paper, the hero of Appomattox embarked on his final campaign: an effort to write his memoirs before he died. *The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S.*

Grant would cement his place as not only one of America's greatest heroes but also as one of its most sublime literary voices. The project evolved into an effort to secure the very meaning of the Civil War itself and how it would be remembered.



Dr. Mackowski is a writing professor in the Jandoli School of Communication at St. Bonaventure University in New York, where he also serves as the associate dean for undergraduate programs. He is also the historian-in-residence at Stevenson Ridge, a historic property on the Spotsylvania Court House battlefield in Virginia. An award-winning author, he has written or edited more than a dozen books, and is the managing editor of the Emerging Civil War Series published by Savas Beatie. A much-in-demand speaker, he has led members of our Round Table on four field trips to the battlefields in Virginia since 2019. He is celebrated for his highly informative and inspirational presentations.



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/83998107655>. 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/83998107655>. The meeting ID # is 839 9810 7655.

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

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Buffet Dinner Selections

Asian Glazed Chicken, Mediterranean Cod, Jasmine Rice Pilaf, Honey Glazed Carrots, Fruit and Nut Salad, House Made Soup du Jour, Brownies

Cost: \$32 per person

pay at the door or on our website: harrisburgcwr.org/events

☞
Dinner reservations must be made no later than noon on Monday, March 31

Email: Michael Margolius at:
membership@harrisburgcwr.org



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mdbecker132@comcast.net
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President's Pen

"Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show."
--Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (1850)



A heartfelt thank you to our esteemed March speaker, Dr. Craig L. Symonds. His captivating address on Rear Admiral David G. Farragut's attack at Mobile Bay in August 1864 and its impact on the re-election of Lincoln truly left an indelible mark on our collective consciousness.

As we turn our attention to April, I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for us to continue our pursuit of life-long learning. Our April speaker, Dr. Chris Mackowski, a highly-regarded writing professor at St. Bonaventure University in New York, will offer us insights into Grant's last battle, in which he struggled to complete his *Personal Memoirs* while suffering from terminal throat cancer, in a heroic effort to support his family after his death.

Chris is no stranger to our Round Table, having served as our guide on four of our field trips since 2019. If you were fortunate enough to have participated in any of those field trips, you know just how informative and inspiring Chris can be. If you haven't been on one of his field trips, that's all the more reason to come out and hear him speak on April 4.

For our members who usually attend the lecture only, ***I encourage you to join us for dinner in April.*** Come early, experience the camaraderie of our social hour, and enjoy stimulating dinner conversation and an appetizing meal. Consider inviting friends and neighbors to join us.

For many years, the Round Table has provided our dinner caterer the meal count on the Monday prior to our Friday evening meeting. As a courtesy to those who handle the myriad details necessary for our meetings, and to our caterer who prepares our delicious, hearty meals, ***please make your reservation by email to our Membership Chair no later than noon on Monday, March 31*** in order to be guaranteed a seat and a meal.

Note that if you reserve for dinner and fail to show up, you are expected to pay in full for the meals you reserved. Unless the meal is already paid for in advance online, the Treasurer will email an invoice to any member who ordered a meal but does not show up.

I look forward to seeing you all on Friday, April 4 for what promises to be another is a series of ourstanding presentations by a nationally-known speaker who is at the top of his game.

Mo Becker



Attendees at our March engagement thoroughly enjoyed celebrated naval historian Dr. Craig L. Symonds' riveting account of the epic Battle of Mobile Bay in August of 1864. "Damn the torpedoes...!"

Spring Field Trip Sold Out: \$70.00 Balance Due by April 3

Our spring field trip, entitled "In the Footsteps of John Brown," will take place on Saturday, May 3, 2025. More details on the trip are on our website at <https://harrisburgcwr.org/events/spring-2025-field-trip-in-the-footsteps-of-john-brown-with-dennis-frye/>. The trip remains sold out, and our Treasurer, Steve Williamson, has created a wait list. As this newsletter went to press, there were 13 on the wait list. Deadline for those who have only paid their \$25.00 deposit to pay Steve the \$70.00 balance is April 3 (or you can pay him in person at our next engagement on April 4).

Meeting Schedule—Campaign 66

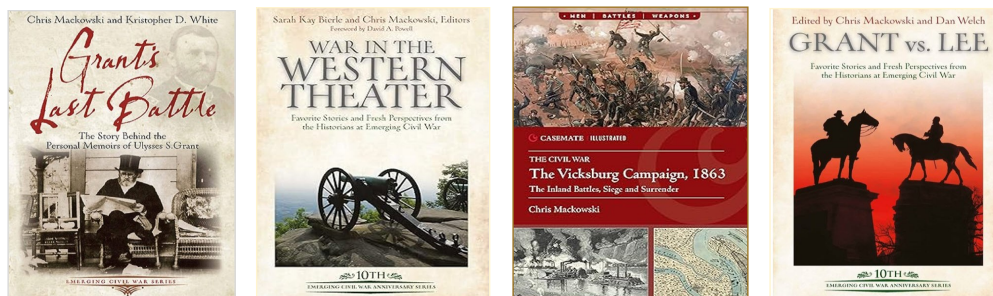
05/16/25—Nye-Sommers Lecture
Brought Forth on This Continent: Abraham Lincoln & American Immigration
Harold Holzer

06/03/25
We Fought at Gettysburg: The 17th Connecticut Volunteers
Carolyn Ivanoff

Upcoming Events

- **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*, at Dickinson College's Anita Tuvin Schlechter Auditorium. <https://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/2025/01/22/fergus-bordewich-to-deliver-2025-wert-lecture/>.
- **Thursday, March 27, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm:** Free showing of a documentary, *Abolitionists and the Underground RR in South-Central PA*, at Messiah University's Parmer Cinema in Grantham. Talking heads include Dr. Matt Pinsker, Scott Mingus, and Jim Schmick, among others.
- **Thursday, March 27, 7:00 pm:** Cindy Beaston's talk, *Wrightsville-Columbia and the Bridge in the Gettysburg Campaign* at the Gettysburg CWRT at the Adams Co. Historical Society.
- **Thursday, April 3, 7:00 pm (via Zoom only):** The National Civil War Museum hosts a lecture by Dr. Lesley Gordon of the University of Alabama on her new book, *Cowardice and Combat in the Civil War*, at <https://www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org/event/dread-danger-cowardice-and-combat-in-the-american-civil-war-via-zoom/>.
- **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.
- **Saturday, April 26, 1:00 pm:** The National Civil War Museum hosts a live book talk at the museum with Temple University's Dr. Judith Giesberg on her book, *Last Seen—The Enduring Search by Formerly Enslaved People to Find Their Lost Families*.
- **Saturday, May 3, 1:00 pm:** The National Civil War Museum hosts a live interpretive presentation by Mary Ann Jung, *Clara Barton: Red Cross Angel*, at the museum.

Speaker's Books

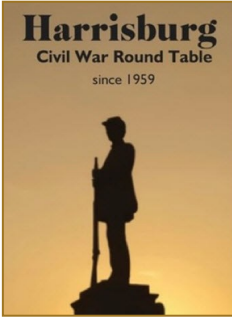


Silent Auction of Currier & Ives Prints

During our April engagement, we will be taking silent auction bids on Currier and Ives prints from the collection of the late Dr. Richard J. Sommers. The winners of these prints will be determined at our April engagement. Don't miss this opportunity to own a piece of Civil War history with an impeccable HCWRT pedigree! Proceeds will support our battlefield preservation efforts.



Make your dinner reservation now! It will be a great meeting!



The Dispatch

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

April, 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



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Harrisburg Civil War Round Table Enlistment Form

Membership

Current Member Renewal

New Member Enlistment

Individual \$24

Family \$36

Full Time Student \$5

Individual or Family Name _____

Address _____

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