



*The Dispatch*  
Newspaper of the

## CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212  
[www.AlbanyCivilWar.org](http://www.AlbanyCivilWar.org)



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### **Grant Cottage State Historical Site at Mt. MacGregor**



**This cottage was originally erected on Mt. MacGregor which had become a resort site. In the fall of 1883 the cottage was moved to its present location to make place for the Hotel Balmoral. In the early summer of 1885 Mr. Joseph Drexel of New York purchased the cottage for himself to occupy during the summer months. He then learned that Gen. Grant's physician was seeking a place around Saratoga where Grant could escape the heat and humidity of New York City. Drexel offered the cottage to Grant and his family. They spent about five weeks at the cottage as Grant finished his memoirs. After Grant's death at the cottage, it eventually was acquired by the state. It has been restored and is open to the public even though it is situated within the boundaries of a prison. Guided tours are available.**

**SEPTEMBER MEETING  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2011  
WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER  
1541 BROADWAY  
WATERVLIET, NY**

**“The Life and Times of  
Sgt. Oliver Clarke”**

**A Living History Presentation  
by Steve Trimm**

Social Hour	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Business Meeting	7:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Presentation	7:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Questions & Answers	8:30 – 9:00 p.m.
More Socializing	9:00 – 10:00 p.m.

**CDCWRT MEETING**

*The September meeting of the Capital District Civil War Round Table will be on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. This is the first meeting of the new academic year. This meeting will be held at our new location at the Watervliet Senior Center, 1541 Broadway in Watervliet. Our special guest speaker is Steve Trimm, who has been a docent at Grant’s Cottage for the past four years. Steve will present a living history portrayal of Sgt. Oliver Clarke, who was the first care-taker of the cottage from 1890 to 1917 after Grant’s death in 1885. In 1906 he published a small monograph about Gen. Grant at Mount MacGregor. It was a brief sketch of Grant’s daily life at the cottage.*

*Clarke was from the small town of Adams, NY in Jefferson County which is near Sacket’s Harbor. He initially enlisted in November of 1862. He was a sergeant in the 94<sup>th</sup> NYVI during the Overland Campaign and was captured at the Battle of Cold Harbor. He was subsequently sent to Andersonville Prison. Clarke survived his imprisonment and later became care-*

*taker at the Grant Cottage. Oliver Clarke left a 40-page account of his wartime experiences which is in a cabinet at the cottage. It remains unpublished.*

*The audience will hear Clarke’s account in the person of Steve Trimm, who has read and studied the manuscript. The Friends of Grant’s Cottage hope to publish the manuscript. Trimm will explain how and why Clarke came to Grant’s Cottage and what happened to Clarke after his tenure as care-taker.*

*Steve Trimm became interested in the Civil War as a child. He remembers his grandfather’s 10-volume set of the “Photographic History of the War of the Rebellion” published in 1911. When his grandfather died, Steve inherited this coveted collection which now has a special place in his home.*

*Steve grew up in Chatam in Columbia County and is retired from the New York State Office of Mental Health where he worked as a social worker assistant.*

**BOARD MEETING**

The August Board Meeting was held on August 1<sup>st</sup>. The treasurer reported that almost \$3000 was grossed by the sale of cachets, books and T-shirts at Gettysburg where two sites were manned by members at the Visitor Center and the Author’s Tent at the re-enactment site. Special thanks were offered to those members who participated in the 3 day event: Matt George, Regina Daly, Erin Baillargeon and Matt Farina. There was also special recognition for Art Henningson who designed the postal cancellation stamps for the event.

New member, Erin Baillargeon, was appointed to the Board as a member-at-large, replacing Bob Mulligan who resigned. The program for the November Conference was finalized as well as speakers for September and October. Expenses for stamps and special cachets were discussed. A donation was made in the memory of member, Virginia Dolins, who died.

## UP-COMING EVENTS

*The following list of up-coming events is provided to help Round Table members plan their long term calendars. These are events that involve our Round Table, especially events that provide opportunities to raise funds for our preservation activities. Some events may change as the year progresses, so members should check the list monthly. Details of Sesquicentennial Civil War events can be found on the web-site: [www.nycivilwar150.org](http://www.nycivilwar150.org).*

September 17-18 is Saratoga's Civil War Weekend which will be held in Congress Park.

October 14, 2011 is the regular meeting of the CDCWRT. Our guest speaker will be Tom McGrath and he will talk about the Battle of Shepardstown which followed the Battle of Antietam.

November 4-5, 2011 are the dates for our fall banquet and conference on events of 1861 – the Sesquicentennial. Details are listed in the insert in this newsletter.

December 9, 2011 is the holiday meeting of the CDCWRT. A special program is being arranged. There will be our annual holiday party and the election of new officers and board.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is here. The Sesquicentennial of the Civil War officially began on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Given the economic woes of the country, it has begun in a subdued fashion, but it is slowly gaining momentum. Articles have been appearing in magazines and newspapers, and new programs on TV have appeared, An up-dated version of Ken Burns' *The Civil War* has already appeared on PBS. Two new Civil War stamps were issued by the Post Office on April 12<sup>th</sup> --- a new Ft. Sumter stamp and a

new First Bull Run stamp --- that come on a sheet of twelve. Look for them.

The NYS Military Museum in Saratoga has a new Civil War exhibit. Historical societies are sponsoring programs and exhibits. Local organizations, spear-headed by the CDCWRT have created a website that lists many events for you to peruse ([www.nycivilwar150.org](http://www.nycivilwar150.org)). As I said in my message in January, the 150<sup>th</sup> comes around only once, and we should not miss it.

Attendance at local events by the membership has been scant, although the weather in May was brutal. Here is a chance to show your enthusiasm. Members of the Board have been working hard to sponsor a November conference that honors past Program Chair, Sue Knost. The theme of the conference is 1861, the first year of the war. On Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, there will be a dinner and special guest speaker. On Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup>, there will be a full day meeting at the Military Museum in Saratoga. There will be great raffle prizes, great new books on sale, exhibits, and fellowship. Seating will be limited, but I would like to see both events sold out by the end of September. The price is reasonable, even in this economy. If you saw Harry Potter in 3D or you own an I-Pad or visit Starbucks daily, you should be able to afford this conference.

All dinner attendees will automatically receive a Troiani print raffle ticket. Additional tickets can be purchased at our meetings and at the dinner. All conference attendees will receive a beautiful silk-screened cachet honoring Sue Knost. Additional cachets will be available at meetings, the dinner and the conference.

We are already planning for 1862 with a multi-day conference at Siena College, when we will partner with Siena's History Department next November.



# 1861 – WAR AT LAST

**Banquet in Albany, NY, Friday, November 4, 2011**

**Conference at the NYS Military Museum, Saratoga, NY, Saturday,  
November 5, 2011**

The Capital District Civil War Round Table of Albany, NY invites you to its first conference commemorating the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War. It is also the first memorial conference honoring Sue Knost, who served the Round Table as Chair, Vice-Chair and Program Chair for many years. Her idea of designing and selling commemorative postal cancellations to raise funds for preservation activities has propelled the CDCWRT to the forefront in donations.



All attendees of the conference will receive a raffle ticket for a framed Troiani print, *Red Devils*, valued at \$750. Additional tickets can be purchased for \$5 each. The drawing will be at the end of the conference. Although the print depicts an 1862 battle, the Duryea Zouaves fought at First Bull Run. Two of our speakers will talk about Bull Run and Zouaves.

Dinner will be at The Century House on Route 9 in Latham, Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm. Open bar and appetizers at 6:00pm. After dinner, President Lincoln will make a few remarks about the terrible war. Peter Lindemann ([lindeman@midtel.net](mailto:lindeman@midtel.net)) portrays the President. He will be followed by John Hennessy, our keynote speaker. John's topic is entitled "Into the Abyss: Virginia's Descent into War --- Secession through Mobilization." John will use Virginia, especially Fredericksburg, as an example of how states and communities across the South veered towards war, and what that ultimately meant for them.

Activities will resume at 9:15am, Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, at the NYS Military Heritage Institute on 61 Lake Ave., in downtown Saratoga Springs, NY.

## **PROGRAM**

**9:15 Welcome remarks**

**9:30 – 10:30 Michael Aikey, Director of the NYS Military Museum & Veterans Research Center**

**Topic: Sacrifice Remembered: The New York State Military Museum**

Mike will present an overview of the history of the New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center beginning with the establishment, during the Civil War, of its predecessor, the Bureau of Military Statistics. Along with the history of the Military Museum, the presentation will focus on the museum's nationally important Civil War collection and the museum's current efforts during the Civil War Sesquicentennial to enhance public access to its Civil War holdings.

**10:30-11:00 Coffee break, exhibits, bookstore, displays**

**11:00 – 12:00 Patrick Schroeder, Author and Chief Historian at Appomattox Court House NMP in Virginia**

**Topic: Colonel Elmer Ellsworth and the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Fire Zouaves**

No Federal regiment marched to war with such high expectations for military glory than charismatic Colonel Elmer Ellsworth's 11<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry, popularly known as the Fire Zouaves. The regiment was mainly composed of members of New York City's Volunteer Fire Department, men known throughout Manhattan for their physical prowess, reckless courage and swaggering bravado. The exploits of these red-shirted daredevils were widely recounted in the press, and at a time when many people believed the sectional conflict would

be settled in a matter of months, the firemen's strength and zeal promised to guarantee valorous deeds on the battlefield. What became of Ellsworth and how did they fare at the July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1861, Battle of Bull Run?

This program also covers the origin of the Zouave craze in America and Ellsworth's United States Zouave Cadet 1860 tour with several stops being in New York, including Albany. Ellsworth's uniform will be on display in the museum and the Marshall House Confederate flag will be on display at the Capitol in Albany.

### **12:00 – 1:30 Box lunch at the Museum, exhibits, bookstore**

### **1:30 – 2:30 Juanita Leisch**

#### **Topic: A Most Important Event of 1861 that Happened in New York**

After providing a quick overview of women's roles in the Civil War in New York and other states, Juanita will concentrate in this talk on the origins, accomplishments, and paradigm-shifting consequences of the creation of national charitable support for soldiers in the Civil War. This talk includes information on the U.S. Sanitary Commission and its predecessor, the British Sanitary Commission, as well as the U.S. Christian Commission. Among the artifacts to be highlighted in the talk is a bible with a bookplate identifying it to the New York Bible Society.

Juanita is a nationally known researcher, writer and speaker on the subject of Civil War civilians. Her books, *Who Wore What* and *Introduction to Civil War Civilians* are each in their 8th printings. Earlier this year, Juanita and her husband, military historian Les Jensen, were hosted on a two week trip 'down under' to give talks for the American Civil War Round Table of Melbourne Australia.

### **2:30-3:00 – Coffee break, exhibits, bookstore**

### **3:00 – 4:00 – John Hennessy, Author and Chief Historian for the Fredericksburg and Wilderness NMP in Virginia.**

#### **Topic: Legends and Lies of Manassas**

John has authored battle histories of First and Second Manassas. He will look at the Battle of First Bull Run through some of the popular perceptions and misperceptions. John is the first life-time member of the Capital District Civil War Round Table.

### **4:00 – Drawing for Troiani print and other raffle items and concluding remarks.**

**Costs:**

**Dinner alone, Friday \$50 per person (includes Sue Knost cachet)**

**Conference alone, Saturday \$70 per person (includes one raffle ticket, box lunch, coffee breaks, handouts)**

**Dinner and Conference - \$110 per person (includes cachet, raffle ticket, box lunch, coffee breaks and handouts)**

**There are seating limits for both the dinner and the conference. Early registration for both dinner and/or conference is strongly recommended. Choices for dinner include prime rib, chicken or vegetarian. Selection can be made the night of the dinner. Cash bar at the dinner, but soda is free.**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION FORM AND RETURN TO:**

**Fran McCashion phone (518) 459-4209  
84 Frederick Ave  
Colonie, NY 12205**

**ATTENDEES 1. \_\_\_\_\_**  
**AND 2. \_\_\_\_\_**  
**DINNER 3. \_\_\_\_\_**  
**CHOICE 4. \_\_\_\_\_**

**ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_**  
**\_\_\_\_\_**  
**\_\_\_\_\_**

**PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_**

**COSTS: FRIDAY DINNER ONLY: \$50 X Number \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_**  
**SATURDAY CONF ONLY \$70 X Number \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_**  
**DINNER & CONFERENCE \$110 X Number \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_**  
**GRAND TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_**

**CDCWRT  
P.O. BOX 14871  
ALBANY, NY 12212-4871**

*Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly in various locations in the Capital District. This newsletter is published eleven times per year. Annual dues are \$25. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.*

#### **THE OFFICERS**

President	Matt Farina	439-8583
Vice-President	Gene Gore	439-4569
Treasurer	Fran McCashion	459-4209
Secretary	Mary Ellen Johnson	861-8582
At-Large	Art Henningson	355-5353
At-Large	J.J. Jennings	459-7571
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President ex-officio	Matt George	355-2131

#### **THE NONCOMS**

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Program	Matt George	355-2131
Education	Matt George	355-2131
Refreshments	Cathy Febraio	330-0868
Membership	Mike Affinito	281-5583
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