



# The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

## CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212  
www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org



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## CDCWRT CACHETS FROM 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Above are four cachets for the Sesquicentennial of the Battle of Five Forks. Note the new Five Forks stamp that was issued. These are First Day Covers. The CDCWRT still has a few of these left for \$3.00 each or two for \$5.00. Contact Matt Farina, editor, if you desire some. Art Craft ceased printing of their envelopes (upper left) after the 150<sup>th</sup> Appomattox.

# MAY MEETING

FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2018

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

1541 BROADWAY

WATERVLIET, NY

## The Battle of Five Forks, and the Controversy that Brought Down a General

Mike McCarthy Ph.D.

Social Hour 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Business Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Presentation 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Questions & Answers 8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

*The regular meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, May 11, 2018. We are honored to have as our special speaker, Dr. Mike McCarthy, a former member of the CDCWRT. His lecture is “The Battle of Five Forks and the Controversy that Brought Down a General.”*

Gen. Lee's Army had been locked into the defenses of Petersburg and Richmond for more than eight months when Gen. Grant struck beyond his far left flank to break the extended Rebel lines. A series of battles led up to April 1, when Gen. Phil Sheridan's forces struck at Five Forks. The attack surprised and collapsed Gen. George Pickett's Confederate command and turned Lee's right flank. An attack

along the entire front the following morning broke the siege and forced the Virginia army out of its defenses and, a week later, into Wilmer McLean's parlor to surrender at Appomattox.

Despite this decisive Union success, Five Forks spawned one of the most bitter and divisive controversies in the postwar army when Sheridan relieved Fifth Corps commander Gouverneur K. Warren for perceived failures connected to the battle. Warren and his allies tried to restore his reputation by demonstrating that Sheridan's action was both unfair and dishonorable. The struggle climaxed with a Court of Inquiry that generated a more extensive record of testimony and exhibits than any other U.S. military judicial case in the 19th Century. Participants included Gens. U. S. Grant and Winfield S. Hancock, and a startling aggregation of former Confederate officers.

Michael J. McCarthy is a graduate of LeMoyne College, where he received his MA in American history. Circumstances led him to a government career and he received degrees in public finance from the University at Albany and in public management from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. During his long career with New York State he never lost his love of Civil War history. As he approached retirement, he went back to school and received his Ph.D. in American history from the University at Albany in 2010. His interest in the Battle of Five Forks was kindled during a CDCWRT trip to the battlefield, and his book is a re-edited version of his thesis.

## **UP-COMING MEETINGS**

**The June 8, 2018 meeting of the CDCWRT** will feature Bob O'Connor. The title of his presentation is yet to be announced.

**The September 14, 2018 meeting of the CDCWRT** will feature Wanda Burch, who will talk about dreams and imagination in Civil War letters and journals.

## **BUFORD'S VIEW – MAY 2018**

I just returned from the Mosby Heritage Area bus tour of "Lee's Retreat From Gettysburg" with Eric Wittenburg. It was an excellent trip covering almost every confrontation of Union and Confederate forces from Monterey Pass to Falling Waters. Even though I already had a copy, everyone was given a signed copy of "One Continuous Fight" by Wittenburg, Petruzzi and Nugent. I kept my free copy and will donate it to the book raffle at our next meeting.

We stopped at the newly opened visitor's center in Monterey Pass. Another one of the highlights was a stop at the Donnelly House at Falling Waters. The owner, George Franks not only bought the property to preserve it, but, he and others have created the "Battle of Falling Waters Foundation, Inc." dedicated to education and preserving the Donnelly house and the land around it. Confederate General Pettigrew was killed there (in his back yard). They are looking to buy additional acres for preservation (much to the unhappiness of some of the neighbors).

I would also like to report that the Avenue Restaurant in Gettysburg has CDCWRT

reopened under new management after having been closed for at least a couple of years.

On Sunday May 6, the Ten Broeck Mansion will be holding its annual Living History Day from noon to 4:00 PM. The Round Table will have a table at this event.

Our next meeting will feature Mike McCarthy a former member of our Round Table who now lives in Rhode Island. He will be speaking about his new book "Confederate Waterloo –The Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865, and the Controversy That Brought Down a General". The dust cover features a recommendation by Round Table member Mark Silo. Of course, the controversy is the one between Sheridan and Warren.

Incidentally while in Gettysburg, I asked Eric Wittenburg about Sheridan and the argument about where he was born. Eric said definitely that he was born in Ireland (not Albany or Ohio, or on a ship). He knows because he was in Ireland at the house where he was born.

I'll be at the C.W.T. Conference in Newport News, Virginia from May 29 to June 3. I'll be traveling by train. On June 9 & 10 there will be talks on White's biography of Grant and also on Elmer Ellsworth at Grant Cottage. In July we will be at the Gettysburg Reenactment doing a commemorative postal cancellation again. If anyone is interested in going, let me know (it may be already too late to reserve a hotel room). The theme of this year's envelope will be historic structures on the battlefield including Lee's Headquarters, Meade's

Headquarters, the Klingel House and the Trostle House.

On August 4 we will have a table at the Clarksville History Day. From August 17-19, I will be representing our Round Table at the second Civil War Round Table Annual Conference. The host this year will be Wayne Motts and the Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. One of the historians who will be attending is Chris Mackowski who spoke to us at our last meeting on Spotsylvania. The Conference will also feature a bus tour of the battlefield at Gettysburg and a behind the scenes tour of the museum. October is also a month with many events which I'll talk about in later columns.

## ONE OF OUR OWN

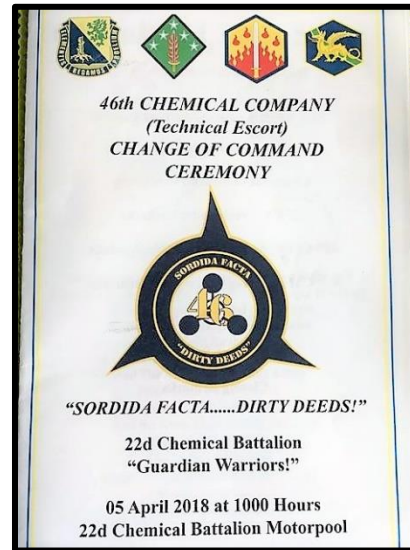
On April 5, 2018, one of our former young members of the CDCWRT assumed command of the 46th Company in the 22nd Battalion of the 20th CBRNE Brigade (chemical, biologic, radiation, nuclear, explosives). This is her first Company Command, and will last 18 months before her next assignment. Her unit is under the 1st Armored Division at Ft. Bliss.

She has responsibility for about 75 soldiers and junior officers, 59 vehicles which bear mobile labs and analytical devices for biologic and chemical agents as well as radiation detectors. The vehicles carry about eight .50 heavy machine guns and about the same number of 5.56 mm light machine guns. Soldiers and NCOs carry M-16 or M-4 rifles. She will carry a pistol.

Wegman's mission is the exploitation of chemical, biologic and nuclear sites for

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discovery, analysis, decontamination, or removal of agents. She has a number of Explosive Ordnance soldiers for disarming/disposal of bombs.



## Cover of the Ceremony Program



CPT Roxanne Wegman

CPT Roxanne Wegman grew up in Albany, NY. She graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point with a Bachelor of Science Environmental Geography in 2012. She completed the CBRN Captain's Career Course and earned a Master of Science in Environmental Management in 2016. CPT Wegman's military awards include the Army Commendation Medal and the Army Achievement Medal.

CPT Wegman is a lifelong endurance athlete, who competed in Division I Track, Cross Country and on the Army Triathlon Teams. She is a USA All-American Triathlon, 2011 National Collegiate Half Ironman Champion, and member of Team USA. Her other interests include playing violin, Civil War history, Chinese language and history, exploring our national parks and photography.

## **NEWS FROM THE SOUTH**

Ground was ceremonially broken in Fayetteville on April 18, 2018 for a \$65 million museum complex dedicated to the Civil War era, the most divided period in American history.

Participants at the event said they hope the complex will be an educational resource and help heal racial and cultural divides that persist in the United States more than 150 years after the war ended.

The North Carolina Civil War & Reconstruction History Center is to be built next to the remnants of the Fayetteville Arsenal. The arsenal was originally built by the federal government, but was seized by the Confederate government at the start of the war. Some of the equipment seized from the Arsenal CDCWRT

at Harpers Ferry was moved to Fayetteville. So far, organizers have obtained \$27 million in government commitments and private donations to pay for it. They plan to ask the state, which has contributed \$5 million, for another \$25 million.

Backers say the history center will be a nexus of knowledge about the 1861 to 1865 failed rebellion of the Southern states. And it will cover the Reconstruction Era, a difficult period immediately after the war when the United States government brought the former Confederate states back into the union and approximately 4 million newly freed slaves into American citizenship and society.

The first phase involves rehabilitating and moving three historic buildings on the property to form a "village," said Mac Healy, the president of the North Carolina Civil War & Reconstruction History Center Foundation.

One will be a support center, and one will be a digital education center for distance learning, Healy said. The third will be a center for the study of the Civil War and Reconstruction period, Healy said, run in partnership with Fayetteville State, UNC Pembroke and UNC Wilmington. Healy hopes to complete the first phase and open to the public in the next 12 months.

Organizers hope the second phase, which is to include a 60,000-square-foot museum building, can start construction in 2020 and open a few years after. The new museum building will replace the Museum of the Cape Fear, a small history museum on the site that opened in 1987.

The proposed History Center will be unlike any other Civil War era museum in the country. Quoting from the Center information brochure, "Until now, no state has ever presented a comprehensive view of the effect of that time on **all** of its peoples. It is a story of home front North Carolina, and it includes the experiences of women, children, the elderly, yeoman farmers, and African-Americans, freed and enslaved. It is a story of Quaker pacifists and strong secessionists living side by side. It is about the 5,000 African-Americans who lived in a part of North Carolina that was occupied by the Union for most of the War and who fought on the side of the North."

Using current interpretive technologies and anticipating trends that will be available at the time of its completion, the N.C. Civil War & Reconstruction History Center planning committee envisions a state-of-the-art institution that embraces a historic site, a facility that conveys the significance of its historic charter and a digital dimension that extends its reach across North Carolina.

Part of its efforts have been to gather oral histories of people, places and events, told and retold down through the generations of what the state was like before, during and after the Civil War. The stories are still being sought, from women, children, the elderly, farmers and businessmen, Native Americans, African-Americans, the freed and enslaved and those of all faiths.

Another part of the effort will be peer-reviewed research from history professors within the University of North Carolina system, which will be used to write a Civil War history curriculum for the NC Department of Public Instruction, for

use by schoolchildren. In North Carolina, the Civil War is taught in public schools to fourth and eighth grade students and included in U.S. history courses in the eleventh grade. Students and teachers will be able to access course materials online from the Center.

At the ground-breaking, the bitter divide from 150 years ago still cast its shadow as 14 dignitaries used 14 gold-colored shovels to heave scoops of dirt into the air to mark the first phase of the complex's construction. More than 300 turned out for the occasion.

State Rep. Elmer Floyd, a black Fayetteville legislator who did not attend the ceremony, later described Fayetteville's black residents as lukewarm toward the project. They question government support for the Civil War complex while their neighborhoods lag economically and some just outside the city are prevented from being annexed into the city to obtain basic amenities like sewer service.

Speakers at the groundbreaking recognized that many black Americans would have little enthusiasm for something they perceive as a monument to a war waged to keep their ancestors in slavery.

"Standing as the second African-American mayor of our city in over 250 years, this was a difficult project for me to embrace initially," said Fayetteville Mayor Mitch Colvin. Nearly 160 years ago, Colvin said, his grandmother's grandfather and other relatives were sold at the Market House in downtown Fayetteville.

Colvin said he told the History Center's board of directors that "the Civil War is

not a pleasant time for me and my community and my family personally.” The board told him the project will tell the full story of the war and its aftermath, Colvin said. He found that encouraging.

Now Fayetteville’s City Council members, the Cumberland County commissioners and the county’s state lawmakers “have the obligation to educate our community, to educate our constituents, to let them know that is something that will bring us together, not to increase our divide,” Colvin said.

The History Center will create opportunities for empathy among people, said Chancellor James Anderson of historically black Fayetteville State University. He indicated that even today, when he walks by the Market House, he can “hear” the cries of anguish from slaves that were sold there. After hearing their stories, Anderson said that he hopes whites will feel empathy for blacks whose families were sold there.

“By the same token, we African-Americans have to understand that there are whites who support and honor the death of their loved ones during the Confederacy,” Anderson said. “I can have different feelings about the Confederacy, but I can still empathize with the death of a loved one.”

The groundbreaking included two former governors: Jim Hunt and Jim Martin. They are the honorary chairman of the history center’s board of advisors. Hunt said when he was growing up, he was never taught details about the Civil War and Reconstruction.

“You need to know about the Civil War. You need to know about Reconstruction — the real facts, how African-Americans

were treated after that war,” Hunt said. “Not good here; even worse through the Deep South.” The History Center must focus on facts and tell the story fairly and completely, Martin said.

“It must be our commitment and our private prayer that this facility, its staff, the research that’s done here, the collection of exhibits, the community programs, the interaction with others across the state and across the nation, will, to the best of our ability, be an instrument of healing through our part of a divided country,” Martin said.

CDCWRT member, Matt Farina, was asked by museum staff to design two envelopes and a postmark for the event.

*(Portions of this report are the work of staff writer Paul Woolverton of the Fayetteville Observer, and the press releases of the History Center.)*

## **SILENT SAM VANDALIZED**

Once again a black Ph.D. student vandalized the statue of the Confederate soldier, Silent Sam, by smearing blood and red ink on the base of the statue. The statue was erected by the Daughters of the Confederacy in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century to honor the faculty and students from UNC-Chapel Hill who fought in the Civil War. The student was arrested and charged with vandalism and released. The University has not yet commented. The student, Maya Little, said she was attempting to add context to the statue. “You should see him the way we do, at the forefront of our campus covered in our blood.” The monument is not state property, but is privately owned. The museum’s monument commission has not yet decided whether to recommend its removal to a different site such as a museum.

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*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 \$30. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.*

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