

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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MYTHS OF APPOMATTOX



"The Surrender of Lee to Grant"

Louis Mathieu Guillaume (1816-1892) painted this oil painting, which hangs in courthouse at Appomattox Court House. Pictured above is a detail of that painting. Is it historically accurate?



"Surrender at Appomattox"

Tom Lovell puts the two generals at separate tables in his painting. Pictured above is a detail from the painting. But is it historically accurate? Wilmer McLean, in whose home the surrender occurred (or did it?), printed a representation where neither general sat at a table.

MONTHLY MEETING
FRIDAY, JUNE 8, 2007
Guilderland Library
2228 Western Ave.

GENERAL MEETING

SOCIAL HOUR	**6:00-7:00 PM**
BUSINESS	**7:00-7:30 PM**
PRESENTATION	**7:30-8:30 PM**
DISCUSSION	**8:30 – 9:00 PM**

CDCWRT MEETING

The MONTHLY meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Guilderland Library on Friday, June 8, 2007. Our guest speaker will be **PATRICK A. SCHROEDER,** ***and his topic will be,*** **"THE MYTHS AROUND LEE'S SURRENDER AT APPOMATTOX"**

In his memoirs, U. S. Grant noted that, "Wars produce many stories of fiction, some of which are told until they are believed to be true." The events at Appomattox certainly are not immune to exaggeration or embellishment. Did George Armstrong Custer ride up to Lee and the Confederate Army and demand its surrender? Did George snatch the table used for the surrender and give it to his wife as a memento? If all the pieces of the apple tree, under which Lee met Grant in order to surrender, were collected together, could you build a 5-bedroom colonial house? The answers to these and many other questions about Lee's surrender will be discussed by author and historian, Patrick A. Schroeder.

Patrick was born on 01/01/1968 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He grew up in Utica, NY until age 13 year. He graduated Cum Laude from Shepard College, Shepardstown, WV in 1990 with a B.S. in Historical Park Administration. He received his M.A. in Civil War History at Virginia Tech. Between 1986 and 1993 he also was a seasonal interpreter at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park. In 1993 he published his first work about the myths of Lee's surrender. Since then he has edited and published seventeen Civil War titles includes works on the Zouaves, Appomattox, the Pennsylvania Bucktails, and the life of General Ely S. Parker. Patrick is presently the historian at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park.

MONTHLY MEETING

A crowd of about 53 people heard CDCWRT member, Chris Kelley talk on the duties of the Civil War chaplain at our May meeting. There were many questions from the audience after this informative meeting. A member donated a large collection of Civil War books to the RT including a number of volumes of the Time-Life series. These sold rapidly but a few are still left.

BOARD MEETING

The May Board Meeting was held on May 21st.. The treasurer reported $2098.70 in the regular account, and $5587.40 in the preservation account. The Board has decided to move to a single date for dues, thus simplifying membership and treasurer responsibilities. This will require a change in the by-laws. All dues will be due in January of each year. Late dues will be back-dated to January, and recently paid dues will be prorated to the next January during the transition phase. The general membership will vote on the amendment at the September 14th meeting.

The Board also decided to have a one day conference in the fall on Saturday, November 10th, at the military museum in Saratoga. The general topic will be, **"New York in the Civil War." Mark Silo** will talk about his book on the 150th NYVI. **Richard Griffin** will talk about the 6th NY Independent Battery. A featured luncheon speaker is being planned.

UP-COMING EVENTS

The 15th Annual Peterboro Civil War Weekend will take place on Saturday and Sunday, June 9th and 10th. Peterboro is located on route 20 between Utica and Syracuse. The event sponsors skirmishes, period entertainment, music, crafts, medical scenarios, and a Blue and Gray Ball. The town is the site of the Gerritt Smith National Historical Landmark, which was part of the Underground Railroad. There will be tours each day. The CDCWRT staffs an information booth

and sponsors a postal cancellation.

The National Park Service will celebrate the Battle of Gettysburg from Friday, June 29th to Tuesday, July 3rd . The annual reenactment will occur on the following weekend, July 6th-8th. The CDCWRT will be there on the first weekend selling postal cachets. The RT has some rooms reserved at the motel next to the battlefield from Thursday June 28th to Thursday July 5th. Anyone interested in obtaining a room MUST see Sue Knost ASAP since unused rooms must be released.

The induction of new names to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown will occur on the weekend of July 27th to 29th. The CDCWRT will man a booth at the event where baseball items and commemorative postal cachets are sold. This is often a monetarily rewarding event for the RT, and volunteers are needed to man the booth. Please contact Sue or Mike Spaulding if you are interested.

On Friday, September 14th, and Saturday, September 15th, the Irish Fest will be held at the Fairgrounds in Altamont. This is another RT event for fund raising.

The Annual Albany Rural Cemetery Civil War Event will be held on Friday, September 28th and Saturday, September 29th. This is becoming a more prominent event each year. If the weather cooperates, it can be quite enjoyable. Future newsletters will have more details. The RT may sponsor a picnic for our members at the cemetery on Friday afternoon. This would be similar to typical activities in the cemetery during the late 19th century.

MISCELLANEOUS

Enclosed in this newsletter is an editorial from this month's **Civil War News,** entitled, ***Where Is the U.S. Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission?*** By Len Riedel. I apologize for the smaller print, but this is an important editorial about what is NOT happening as we approach the 150th anniversary of this defining moment in our history. Apathy and political correctness are just two factors. As one of the 'premier' roundtables in the country, we need to decide what position we should take in this matter.

Also enclosed on the flip side is a book review from the same issue of the **Civil War News** of William Christen's book, ***Pauline Cushman: Spy of the Cumberland.*** Bill spoke to our round table two months ago.

Also in the same issue, was an article on a former Licensed Battlefield Guide at Gettysburg, Mike Phipps. Mike is an authority on Union cavalry, and has written several articles on actions at the East Cavalry Field. He was one of our tour guides several years ago. He was serving with the First Cavalry Division in Iraq and while on patrol near Baghdad, was struck by a bullet in the left shoulder that passed through his body. He is recovering at Fort Sam Houston. Mike had served three months in Iraq in 2005 with the Pennsylvania National Guard, but re-enlisted in the regular army in January of 2007.

Finally, Chris Kolakowski just informed us that the Perryville Battlefield Preservation Association has received the Edwin C. Bearss Preservation Award for 2007. The award and a $1000 contribution is given by the CWRT of Chicago to an organization that Bearss deems most deserving of recognition and support. Way to go Chris!

FALL TRIP – LAST CHANCE

The fall trip will be to Gettysburg on Columbus Day weekend, October 5-8, 2007. Stacey Kilts will be our personal guide. We will see monuments most visitors never see. We will visit the famous cupula of the Lutheran Theological Center. We will visit the Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle where the largest collection of Civil War photographs are housed. **Unless 30 participants sign up by June 8th, the trip will be canceled**. **The cost of the trip is $425, and a $125 deposit must be made by June 8th. The deposit is NON-REFUNDABLE if the trip is a GO. If the trip is canceled because of low attendees, the deposit will be returned. The full cost of the trip ($425 per person) must be paid by August 1st.** The $425 covers bus transportation, 3 night stay in a motel next to the battlefield, snack, some lunches on the battlefield, and some dinners.