

The Calling Card



The monthly e-newsletter of the
Society for Women and the Civil War
<http://www.swcw.org>

The 2024 Conference on Women and the Civil War

**Registration is open for the
24th Conference on Women and the Civil War,
Women in the Western Theater,
July 26 - 28, 2024, Atlanta, Georgia**

[SWCW Conference 2024 Registration - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)



**SWCW has upped the ante this year
with our biggest conference to date
-- more speakers and more site visits --
*all while maintaining the same conference fee as 2023.***

Scheduled Presentations:

Women Soldiers in the Atlanta Campaign
The Federal Occupation of Huntsville, Alabama
African American Women Abolitionists
Black Women's Property Ownership in Maryland
The Mennonite Underground Railroad in Virginia
Evangelist Amanda Berry Smith

Federal Women in Charleston
The Women of Civil War Georgia

Scheduled Bus Tour:

The Atlanta History Center
Ruins of the Roswell Mills
The Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History
Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park

Don't miss this blockbuster Civil War history event.

Details here: [SWCW 2024 Conference - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)

News of Note

Inaugural Event of the African Americans in the Civil War Era Round Table.

Join the new AACWERT online on **February 19** at 6:15 p.m. Pacific Time to hear speaker Capt. Ed Gantt, USN (Ret.) The program is co-sponsored by the Inland Empire CWRT. Get the Zoom link on their homepage: [IECWRT](#) (inlandempirecwrt.org)

21st Annual Underground Railroad and Black History Conference.

On **February 21**, Temple University will present *Higher Power Calling: Harriet Tubman in Philadelphia* from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Eastern Time at Glatfelter Hall Room 812, Temple University Main Campus, Berks Mall at Montgomery Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The conference is free and open to the public, and also will be broadcast on Zoom. To register for the webinar, click

here: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Central Coast Conference.

The Blue & Gray Education Society will present *1864 To War's End* at Monterey History and Art at Stanton Center in Monterey California on **March 1 - 3**, wherein six preeminent historians will reflect on the people, events, and significance of the last year of the Civil War. Details here: [1864 to War's End - WOODBURY HISTORICAL TOURS \(whtours.org\)](#)

BGES is an Organizational Partner of SWCW.



Smiley Library to Celebrate Women's History Month.

A.K. Smiley Public Library, located at 125 W. Vine Street in Redlands, California, will present *Becoming Mrs. Sarah Jane Rousseau* by journalist Janelle Molony on Saturday, **March 9** at 11 a.m. Pacific Time in the library's Assembly Room and on Zoom. Molony will share the story of San Bernardino County's notable early female settler, Sarah Jane Rousseau, who is known for her 1864 diary about the overland journey to California. This presentation is free and open to the public. To watch on Zoom, please register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81203731592?pwd=cFphVndSVXZwaE5Felg5aHpMmVTdz09>. Use passcode 536433 when viewing from home.

Civil War Atlanta Downtown Walking Tour.

The Georgia Battlefields Association, in conjunction with the Atlanta Preservation Center, will offer two free tours on **March 9 and 23**. Registration will be available on February 16 at [The Atlanta Preservation Center Events | Eventbrite](#).

Chattanooga and Ringgold Tour.

The Georgia Battlefields Association will sponsor a bus tour, **April 18 - 21**, exploring the actions of October - November 1863 in Tennessee, led by National Park Service Historian Jim Ogden. Complete information is here: georgiabattlefields.org/tours.aspx

The Georgia Battlefields Association is a Contributing Sponsor of the 2024 Conference on Women and the Civil War.

Williamsburg Road Trip.

Join Old Baldy Civil War Roundtable on **May 4 - 5** in Williamsburg, Virginia. Activities for this weekend include tours of the Williamsburg Battlefield, Fort Magruder, Redoubt Park, and the antebellum Lee Hall Mansion. Old Baldy will also

dedicate a new Civil War Trails marker. For all the details, contact frank.barletta@comcast.net.

Civil War Trails and Old Baldy CWRT are Organizational Partners of SWCW.

Research Resource

Women's History Materials at Harvard's Schlesinger Library

[Subject Guides - Schlesinger Library: Subject Guides - Research Guides at Harvard Library](#)

The Schlesinger Library at Harvard University has amassed a significant collection of books, photographs, papers, and audiovisual materials relating to the history of American women. To assist researchers, the Library has created detailed subject guides to their collections.



Harvard University, Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, W379111_1

Subject guides of interest to the study of mid-to-late 19th century women include:

African American Women / Susan B. Anthony
Beecher-Stowe Family / Blackwell Family
Business / Civil War
Criminal Justice System / Education
Etiquette Collection / Fashion
Charlotte Perkins Gilman / Historic Cookbooks
Immigration / Jewish Women
Journalists / Legal Professions
Medical Professions / Musicians
Photographers / Poets and Poetry

Protest Movements and Civil Disobedience

Religion / Romance and Courtship

Scientists / Sports

Women's Suffrage

Information about visiting the Schlesinger Library is here: [The Essentials - Planning a Visit to Schlesinger Library - Research Guides at Harvard Library](#)

The Society for Women and the Civil War is dedicated to recognizing the efforts of women who lived through or participated in the American Civil War, and those who research, reenact or otherwise honor these women of the past.

Join our efforts and become a member.

[Join the Society or Renew Annual Dues - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](#)

Membership year runs from January - December.

Society Notices

SWCW Scholarship Programs

The Society offers four annual scholarships to support students, educators, and reenactors / living historians.

The Dr. Florence Williams Memorial Scholarship:

awarded to current high school students.

[Estilow and Williams Scholarships - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)

[\(swcw.org\)](#)

The Marge Estilow Memorial Scholarship:

awarded to current college students.

[Estilow and Williams Scholarships - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)

[\(swcw.org\)](#)

The Brenda McKean Memorial Scholarship:

awarded to current practicing reenactors / living historians.

[Brenda McKean Reenactor Scholarship - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)

[\(swcw.org\)](#)

The Ann Kilian Educator Scholarship:

awarded to teachers or museum professionals.

[Ann Kilian Educator Scholarship - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](#)

Visit the SWCW website for details about scholarship criteria.

Applications for the 2024 scholarships

must be received by April 1.



SWCW Welcomes its Newest Organizational Partner



**Old
Baldy**
Civil War Roundtable
www.oldbaldycwrt.org

Old Baldy CWRT, named after Gen. George Meade's war horse, was founded in 1977 and serves the greater Philadelphia area with a discussion forum for Civil War-era topics. It hosts monthly meetings and social and memorial events.

Old Baldy CWRT is a pioneer in the offering of hybrid meetings using Zoom as well as live presentations to bring the highest quality experiences to its members. It is an innovative leader amongst Civil War round tables and has received the Sustainability Challenge Award and Wally Rueckel Innovation Award from CWRT Congress; an award for 25 Years of Service to the American Battlefield Trust; the Kevin M. Hale Award for Best Historical Newsletter in New Jersey – twice; and an award from SWCW for service to the Society.

Old Baldy CWRT is also a leader in bringing to the forefront the stories of women during the Civil War, regularly running articles about individual women in its newsletter. It has consistently demonstrated support to SWCW and its mission, and served as the co-sponsor of SWCW's 2023 Conference on Women and the Civil War.

To learn more, check out Old Baldy's wonderful newsletter at its web site:

www.oldbaldycwrt.org

DONOR LIST

Maria Carrillo Colato

George Foxworth

Individuals wishing to donate to our General Fund or Scholarship Fund should visit our website at [Donations - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](http://Donations - Society for Women and the Civil War (swcw.org)). SWCW is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax-deductible.

Woman of the Month

Henrietta Cordelia Ray

Poet, Teacher, Activist



Born January 14, 1850 in New York City

Died January 5, 1916 in Brooklyn

Buried in Cypress Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn

On April 14, 1876, the eleventh anniversary of President Lincoln's assassination, an impressive ceremony was held in Lincoln Park, Washington, D.C. to unveil the Freedman's Memorial Monument to Abraham Lincoln. Charlotte Scott, a formerly enslaved woman, initiated the effort to build a monument to honor President Lincoln, immediately after he was assassinated. She made the first donation towards its construction. The total cost of the monument was financed by Freedmen, including many who were former U.S. Colored Troops.

John Mercer Langston, an African American, plus noted professor, lawyer and politician, was chairman of the National Unveiling Arrangements committee. At the request of the committee, Congress passed a joint resolution to make April 14, 1876 a general holiday so all government employees in the District of Columbia could attend the unveiling ceremony. Attendees at the celebration

included President Ulysses Grant, Justices of the Supreme Court, cabinet members, congressmen, additional luminaries and 25,000 audience members.

The festivities included the sounding of chimes from Metropolitan M.E. Church; the booming of cannons; a grand parade to Lincoln Park with several bands, numerous African American organizations, prominent dignitaries in decorated carriages; and much more. By special request, all flags were flown at half-mast. The program included musical compositions, various prayers, grand oratory and a special poem in honor of President Lincoln that Henrietta Cordelia Ray was commissioned to write.

Miss Ray was an accomplished African American poet, a successful school teacher, and a committed activist. Her father, Charles Ray, initially a blacksmith, served as a Congregational minister after receiving training at the Wesleyan Academy in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. In addition, he was also an editor and owner of the abolitionist newspaper *Colored American*. Her mother, while managing six children, was co-founder of the African Dorcas Association, a support group for the free African schools, and the first president of the New York Female Literary Society (originally known as the Colored Ladies Literary Society.) The family's home functioned as a station on the Underground Railroad.

At a time when doing so was uncommon, Miss Ray's parents provided intellectual opportunities for their daughters as well as their sons. She graduated from the University of the City of New York (now New York University) with a master's degree in pedagogy. She was one of only three African American graduates in her class. Her academic endeavors included the study of French, Greek, Latin and German at the Sauveur School of Languages where she earned a teaching certificate. She used her teaching skills at regional and national conferences for African American teachers and was active in community building, being especially noted for amassing funds to support the New York Colored Orphan Asylum.

Miss Ray's poems appeared regularly in African American publications such as the *AME Review* and the *Woman's Era*. Eventually, she compiled and published a collection of her poems, *Sonnets*, which received a flurry of reviews and high praise.

Samples:

- Hallie Q. Brown wrote in *Homespun Heroines* that she "may be likened to the quaint, touching music a shell murmuring of the sea, a faint yet clear note sounding all the pathos and beauty of undying life."
- Gertrude Bustill Mossell in *The Work of the Afro-American Woman* asserted that she has, "won for herself a place in the front rank of our literary workers."
- Victoria Earle Matthews in a *Woman's Era* editorial called her, "our sweet-voiced poetess."

The praise from prominent African American women activist and writers, plus various commendations from literary circles was instrumental in the rise to prominence of her poetry.

But Miss Ray was most well known for her Lincoln poem. Various newspapers reprinted or excerpted it, facilitating its popularity. Numerous pamphlets were also printed to provide a full account of the celebratory day's proceedings. In addition to honoring Lincoln, her commemorative poems also honor Civil War era notables such as Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Charles Sumner, Robert G. Shaw, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and her father, Rev. Charles Bennet Ray.

Despite being acclaimed with much public recognition during her lifetime, her work, regrettably, fell into obscurity. Her ode to Lincoln was read after President Grant unveiled the Freedmen's Monument. February, the month wherein we celebrate

Black History as well as Lincoln's birthday, is an appropriate time to unveil and remember Henrietta Cordelia Ray's tribute to President Abraham Lincoln.

It begins:

*To-day, O martyred chief, beneath the sun
We would unveil thy form; to thee who won
Th' applause of nations for thy soul sincere,
A loving tribute we would offer here.
'T was thine not worlds to conquer, but men's hearts;
To change to balm the sting of slavery's darts;
In lowly charity thy joy to find,
And open "gates of mercy on mankind."
And so they come, the freed, with grateful gift,
From whose sad path the shadows thou didst lift.*

Henrietta Cordelia Ray's contribution to the unveiling celebration was indeed wonderful!

-- Lavonda Broadnax



To read Miss Ray's complete poem, click here: [Lincoln; written for the occasion of the unveiling of the freedmen's monument in memory of Abraham Lincoln](#)

Submissions Requested

The Calling Card accepts notices of the achievements of our members; activities of the Civil War & Women's History communities; educational and archival resources; and essays for our Woman of the Month column.

Send your submissions to swcw1865@gmail.com

with *Calling Card* in the subject field.
(Submissions may be edited for brevity or clarity.)

The Calling Card is distributed on the 15th of each month, and our deadline
for same-month submissions is the 10th.

Editor: DeAnne Blanton, SWCW Board Member and President Emerita

