

The Calling Card



**The monthly e-newsletter of the
Society for Women and the Civil War**

<http://www.swcw.org>

The 2023 Conference on Women and the Civil War

Registration is open for the 23rd Conference
on Women and the Civil War,
Women in Government Service,
July 28 - 30, 2023, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Space is limited!

**SWCW promises an exciting and informative event,
featuring speakers who are experts in their field;
an immersive experience at the
U.S. Army Heritage & Education Center;
plenty of time for networking and socializing; plus fine dining.**

Get all the details here: [Details for the 2023 Conference - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](https://www.swcw.org/conference-2023)

Register here: [2023 Conference Registration - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](https://www.swcw.org/conference-2023)

Conference Spotlight:

The Fashion Archives and Museum of Shippensburg University

The Fashion Archives and Museum of Shippensburg University expands knowledge and appreciation of clothing for its artistic, cultural and historical importance and its essential role in society. The 15,000-item collection consists of clothing and accessories worn by men, women and children, dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, with a focus on middle- and working- class Americans. The Museum is open to the public Monday - Thursday and by appointment. It's about an hour's drive from Carlisle.

Dr. Karin Bohleke of Shippensburg University will present a lecture and slideshow of Civil War era dresses from the museum's collection on Day 1 of the 2023 conference.



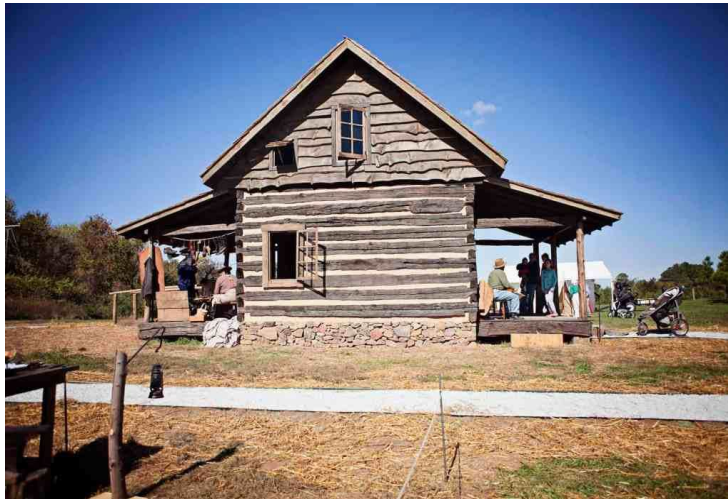
News of Note

Lost Highways: Dispatches from the Shadows of the Rocky Mountains, a podcast from History Colorado.

Season 4, episode 2, "Cathay Williams / William Cathay: Buffalo Soldier," is now available wherever you get your podcasts. This episode tells the life story of Cathay Williams: born into slavery; a contraband cook for the Union Army; and the only known woman to serve as a Buffalo Soldier. SWCW Board Member DeAnne Blanton is one of the guests on the episode.

Commemoration of the Surrender and Freedom Day Weekend at the American Civil War Museum at Appomattox.

Pallas Athena Ladies Aid Society, an Organizational Partner of SWCW, will be operating the restored 19th century farm cabin at this event on April 8-9. Centered on the theme, "What was life like for soldiers, for civilians on the home front, and for enslaved and free African-Americans?" PALAS' demonstrations will include hearth cooking, textile construction for soldier clothing, tobacco farming, wartime production of smoking pipes by local women and children, production and distribution of supplies and foodstuffs for soldiers and 19th century musical entertainment.



Civil War era restored tobacco barn cabin



PALAS Using 19th Century Sewing Machines

For more information about the weekend, please see

<https://acwm.org/commemoration-and-freedom-day/> and

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/commemoration-of-the-surrender-freedom-day-tickets-574842006917?aff=odcleoeventsincollection>.

CWRT Congress Announces 2023 Conference.

The 2023 CWRT-C *Sustainability Conference* will be held August 25-27 at the Adams County Historical Society in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Details and

registration can be found here: [2023 CWRT Congress - Sustainability Conference Tickets, Fri, Aug 25, 2023 at 4:30 PM | Eventbrite](#). CWRT-C is an Organizational Partner of SWCW.

Write Now!

Savas Beatie Publishing offers online classes for authors several times a year. Information is available on their website: [Write Now! \(savasbeatie.com\)](https://www.savasbeatie.com)

Research Resource

Records of the U.S. Christian Commission

The U.S. Christian Commission was a philanthropic organization that provided religious materials, medical care, food, and supplies to Union troops. Established by the National Committee of the YMCA on November 14, 1861, the USCC rapidly grew to 5,000 volunteers, called delegates, who worked on the warfront ministering to the troops, and on the homefront raising funds and soliciting donations. The USCC kept extensive records of its work, and this documentation was donated to the U.S. War Department in the late 19th century.



photo credit: National Park Service

The records of the USCC are kept at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC. These records are not available online, but may be viewed in person by appointment.

A listing of the records is available here: [National Archives NextGen Catalog](#)

For information about visiting the National Archives Building, see their website: [The National Archives in Washington, DC | National Archives](#)

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 2023 scholarships must be received by April 3.

2023 Membership Campaign

Now is the time to join us for the first time,
or to renew your annual membership.

Just go to our website:

[Join the Society - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](http://swcw.org)

Our membership year runs from January - December*

Exclusive benefits of membership include a discounted rate on our annual conference, a members-only page on our website, and access to our quarterly journal, At Home and In the Field.

The Society for Women and the Civil War is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization. **Membership dues are tax-deductible, and they enable us to fulfill our mission.** We are 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.

*New members who joined from October - December 2022 do not need to renew for 2023.

Call for Volunteers: Conference Notebook Scanning

Are you looking for a way to volunteer for the Society from the comfort of your own home? We have begun a crowd sourced project to scan and archive the contents of our annual conference binders.

This involves using your own equipment to scan the contents of a past conference

binder into PDF documents that can be placed in our online Archive for future reference and research.

We need volunteers who are interested in scanning the binders from the following years: 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019

If you happen to have one of these binders in your library, and would be interested in using your own scanner to create these PDF documents, or you'd just like more information on the time commitment involved, please contact the Chair for the project, Janet Whaley, at janet1860@charter.net.

Woman of the Month

Abigail Hopper Gibbons

social reformer and nurse, USA

Born: December 7, 1801 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Died: January 16, 1893 in New York, New York

Buried: Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York



Abigail Hopper was born December 7, 1801 in Philadelphia, to Isaac and Sarah Tatum Hopper, both of whom were Hicksite Quakers. The Quakers were well known for their abolitionist leanings and Abigail grew up as an abolitionist with visitors to her home such as Lucetia Mott.

In 1833 Abby met and married James Sloan Gibbons, also an abolitionist. They moved to New York City in 1836 and had six children - William, Sarah, Julia, Lucy, Isaac, and James. Isaac and James died in infancy and William died while a student at Harvard. Her daughter Sarah married the nephew of Ralph Waldo Emerson and became her mothers companion on her travels while during the Civil War.

In 1845, Abby became a leader in the Female Department of the Prison Association of New York City, an organization founded by her father to rehabilitate convicts. She lobbied for improvements in the city's prisons, advocated the hiring of police matrons, and urged the establishment of separate prisons for women. She frequently visited the various prisons in and around New York.

She was elected to a women's committee which oversaw The Home, a shelter for women who had just been released from prison. The name of this institution later became the Isaac T. Hopper Home, in honor of her father. In 1853, the Female Department became a separate society, the Women's Prison Association and Home, and Abby was involved for years in its management.



Abigail and James with their children, Lucy, William, Sarah and Julia, 1854

Abby's participation during the Civil War started as a member of the U.S. Sanitary Commission. As a member of the USSC she and Sarah participated in the Falls Church and Winchester campaigns. In 1862 she came to Hammond Hospital at Point Lookout, Maryland to work with the wounded there. She took control of the Protestant wing of the hospital and became its matron.

At Point Lookout she also assisted the contraband there by smuggling the men into the boats that took patients North. She made arrangements with the captains to take them to New York where she had friends to help them. Among her friends were Robert Gould Shaw, an officer in the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment,

who helped many of the smuggled men become soldiers in that unit. Abby also harbored several contrabands in her cabin when they were at risk of being returned to their enslavers.

Abby remained at Hammond Hospital until late June of 1863 when her New York home was ransacked during the Draft Riots. She returned to New York City to clean up the home. When she returned to Point Lookout in October 1863, the area had been designated as a new prisoner-of-war camp, and all women, except the Daughters of Charity, were ordered to leave.

In 1864, Abby and Sarah traveled to Fredericksburg and Belle Plain, Virginia, under the auspices of the Sanitary Commission to help with the wounded there. She wrote “our business was to supply them with ice-ware, coffee, milk, punch, farina, bread, crackers or whiskey, according to their needs.” When it was all over, the Sanitary Commission had attended to more than 3,000 wounded Union soldiers.



Hospital Yard in Fredericksburg, May 20, 1864. Photo by James Gardner. Abigail Gibbons is the woman in the center of the image.



Sanitary Commission Workers at Fredericksburg, May 20, 1864. Photo by James Gardner. Abigail Gibbons is seated at center; her daughter Sarah Gibbons Emerson is seated to her left.

In 1865, Abby was called to assist Dr. Clinton Wagner, whom she had met at Point Lookout, in the establishment of Beverly Hospital outside of Philadelphia. She remained at that hospital until the end of the war.

In the post-war years, Abby lived in New York City and continued her prison reform efforts. In addition, she was involved in several other charities, including the Labor and Aid Society, which helped returning veterans find work. Abby felt that the highlight of her life came in 1892, with the passage of The Police Matron's Bill, to establish a women's reformatory in New York City. She died of pneumonia in New York in 1893, aged 91.

Contributed by SWCW Board Member and President Emerita Susan Youhn

The Life of Abby Hopper Gibbons, Told Chiefly Through Her Correspondence, edited by Sarah Gibbons Emerson, was published in 1897, and is available at the Internet Archive: [Life of Abby Hopper Gibbons. Told chiefly through her correspondence : Gibbons, Abby \(Hopper\) 1801-1893 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet](#)

[Archive](#)

The Abby Hopper Gibbons Papers are housed at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College. [Collection: Abby Hopper Gibbons Papers | Archives & Manuscripts \(brynmawr.edu\)](#)

Solicitations

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.
