

## **BGES Presents Chris Kolakowski's Tour: Battle for the Bluegrass: The Perryville Campaign, A Sesquicentennial Reflection, September 19-22, 2012**

Abraham Lincoln said in 1861, "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game." Several battles in 1861 and 1862 (Camp Wildcat, Mill Springs, Richmond, Perryville) helped decide which side would control the divided Bluegrass State. Christopher Kolakowski sums up the importance of those battles in the introduction to his book **The Civil War at Perryville**:

*Kentucky's military story is dominated by the Civil War period. U.S. President Abraham Lincoln and his counterpart Jefferson Davis were each native Kentuckians, and both men realized the importance of having the Bluegrass State on their side. Kentucky was a slave state, but remained with the Union in 1861 after an abortive attempt at neutrality was violated by the Confederate forces. Still the men of Kentucky reflected the sensitivity of the decision: 100,000 fought for the United States, while 40,000 carried arms for the Confederacy. Prominent politicians and generals on both sides came from the state.*

*The Civil War was also the last time the Bluegrass State suffered invasion. After the state's neutrality was violated, Union and Confederate armies jockeyed for possession of the state in 1861, a contest won by the Union. Repeated Confederate cavalry raids inflamed Kentucky's countryside for the entire war. But the largest and most important invasion of the state came in 1862, as the Confederacy attempted in one grand invasion to turn Kentucky to the Southern cause. For 10 weeks in the late summer and fall of 1862, the fate of the Bluegrass State hung in the balance as Confederate armies surged into Kentucky and Union armies maneuvered to prevent them from taking control. The issue was decided forever on October 8, 1862 at Perryville, a crossroads town in the center of the state, here two major armies clashed and the dream of a Confederate Kentucky suffered a mortal blow. The Bluegrass State remained in the Union camp for the rest of the war.*

*The 1862 Kentucky Campaign was the largest and bloodiest military operation ever mounted in Kentucky. By the time it was over the contending armies had covered almost all of the central and eastern parts of the state, from the Tennessee border in the south to the Ohio River in the north. The campaign produced Kentucky's largest and bloodiest battle at Perryville, the state's second-largest battle at Richmond, and one of the largest U.S. surrenders of the war at Munfordsville. These dramatic events together represent the "High Water Mark of the Confederacy" in the West. In many ways, both the fate of Kentucky and the fate of the United States rested on the outcome of the campaign and battle of Perryville.*

This tour will examine the war in Kentucky, with particular emphasis on the 10-week Confederate invasion that culminated at the Battle of Perryville. In every instance, you will leave the event having had a rigorous intellectual exercise in the best venue -- our outdoor classroom. It makes BGES' Civil War Field University a continuous learning environment.

## Wednesday, September 19, 2012

Check into the hotel in Lexington, KY. At 6 P.M. we will register and open the program with a presentation about *Kentucky in the Civil War*. Kent Masterson Brown has been invited to deliver the talk. Afterwards, BGES will take you to supper at a classic drive in featured in the Food Channel hit show, *Drive-ins, Diners and Dives*. Nothing like a little local flavor to spice things up.

## Thursday, September 20, 2012

Our first day on the field will be spent examining the early battles in Kentucky that later helped set the stage for the Kentucky Campaign. The Battle of Camp Wildcat (21 October 1861) was the first Union victory west of the Appalachian Mountains, and stopped the first Confederate incursion toward the Central Bluegrass. Mill Springs (19 January 1862) secured Eastern Kentucky for the Union and also brought a Virginia-born officer named George Thomas to the stage.

After leaving Lexington, we will travel down I-75 to Camp Wildcat Battlefield and spend the morning examining this engagement in detail. Virtually the entire battlefield has been preserved and networked with trails that give a good feel for the rugged terrain. Earthworks and the Federal campsite remains are still visible. We will then travel to Somerset, where we will eat lunch.

The afternoon will be spent discussing the Battle of Mill Springs, which occurred all day on 19 January 1862. After severe fighting in the morning, the Confederates fell back to their winter camps and that night evacuated across the Cumberland River in a Dunkirk-style operation. We will follow the battle's course, ending at the Cumberland (now Lake Cumberland) and then head back to Lexington.

## Friday, September 21, 2012

After Mill Springs the Federal tide washed over Kentucky for several months, until in mid-August 1862 Confederate armies surged back into the state in an effort to win it over to their control. This day will be spent examining the campaign that led to the Battle of Perryville.

First stop is Richmond, the campaign's first major battle and the most complete Confederate victory of the war. Fought on 29 and 30 August 1862, the battle pitted 7,000 raw U.S. troops against 10,000 Confederate veterans. Fighting lasted all day and

stretched from Rogersville to Richmond. The Southern forces inflicted 300 casualties and captured 4,400 men, while losing less than 1,000. Their victory also laid the Central Bluegrass bare. The tour will follow the battle's course, while visiting sites like the Visitor Center, Armstrong House, and Richmond Cemetery.

We will lunch in Richmond, then follow the campaign's course northward past Lexington to Frankfort, Kentucky's capital city and the only loyal state capital captured by the Confederates during the Civil War. A walking tour of downtown Frankfort will highlight several sites of interest, including the home of Senator John J. Crittenden and the Old State Capitol. The group will see the site of the installation ceremony for Confederate Governor Richard Hawes on 4 October 1862, an event disrupted by Federal troops. After leaving Frankfort we will return to Lexington.

## Saturday, September 22 2012

This day will focus on the campaign's climactic battle at Perryville, which also ranks as the largest and bloodiest engagement ever fought in Kentucky. After leaving Lexington we will drive to the Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site. Our tour will follow the battle's general course and highlight the key locations and actions. After a stop at the visitor center, we will walk the battlefield's north end (Open Knob, Cornfield, and Starkweather Hill) and have lunch on the field. The center and southern parts of the field (Sinkhole Valley and Doctor's Creek/Bottom House area) will be covered by a walking/driving tour, and the group will end up at the Dixville Crossroads, where darkness ended the fighting. Time permitting, we will stop in downtown Perryville to examine the Civil War's first major street fighting that occurred there.

We will return to Lexington via Harrodsburg, following part of the Confederate retreat route after the battle. Participants may depart that evening or on the 23d.

About the Faculty:

**Christopher L. Kolakowski** is a native of Fredericksburg, Virginia. He received his BA in History & Mass Communications from Emory & Henry College and his MA in Public History from the State University of New York at Albany. He has devoted his career to interpreting and preserving American military history, having worked for the National Park Service, New York State government, the Rensselaer County (NY) Historical Society, the Civil War Trust, Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site, and the U.S. Army Reserve. He is the author of numerous articles on various aspects of military history, and the books *The Civil War at Perryville: Battling for the Bluegrass* and *The Stones River & Tullahoma Campaigns: This Army Does Not Retreat*, both part of the History Press' Sesquicentennial Series. This spring the U.S. Army will publish his history of the 1862 Virginia campaigns. Currently Chris works as Director of the General George Patton Museum of Leadership in Fort Knox, KY.

**Site and Hotel:** Lodging is not included with this registration fee. Check back here for the hotel information. We expect to post it by July 1<sup>st</sup>. You will need to guarantee your room with a credit card.

The headquarters hotel for this program is the Crowne Plaza -- Campbell House, 1375 South Broadway, Lexington, KY 40504. The rate of \$91 plus tax is good until September 14th after which the hotel is available at the prevailing rates. Located just 4 miles from the Lexington airport, the hotel has a complimentary shuttle. You can call the hotel directly at 859-255-4281 and ask for group code CVW. You can also use this link to the block:

<http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/crowneplaza/hotels/us/en/lexington/lexsb/hoteldetail?groupCode=CVW>

**Airport and Transportation Arrangements:** The servicing airport is Lexington (LEX). Both Louisville (SDF) and Cincinnati (CVG) are within easy range with a rental car.

**Key Publications and Recommended Reading (includes shipping and handling)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Chris Kolakowski, **The Civil War at Perryville: Battling for the Bluegrass**, \$23

\_\_\_\_\_ Kenneth Noe , **Perryville, This Grand Havoc of Battle** \$28

\_\_\_\_\_ Ed. Kent Masterson Brown, **The Civil War in Kentucky, Essays on the War** \$35

\_\_\_\_\_ Kent Brown, DVD, **Henry Clay and the Struggle for the Union** purchase at [www.witnessinghistoryonline.com](http://www.witnessinghistoryonline.com) for \$25

**2012 BGES Registration Form**  
**BGES Presents Chris Kolakowski's Tour:**  
**Battle for the Bluegrass: The Perryville Campaign, A Sesquicentennial**  
**Reflection, September 19-22, 2012**

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Registration \$775    \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Family Member \$625

\_\_\_\_\_ Deposit only—per person \$300 Net Due on or before September 19th, 2012

\_\_\_\_\_ BGES member \$725    \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Family Member \$575

\_\_\_\_\_ Full time Teacher or student, confirmation may be required, \$650

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not a member of the BGES send me membership information

\_\_\_\_\_ Send me the books I've indicated. I've enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Make checks payable to BGES and mail to PO Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531-1176 or call 434-250-9921

Charge my Discover Mastercard VISA American Express \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Vin Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

You may fax your credit card registration to 434-432-0596 or register on line at [www.blueandgrayeducation.org](http://www.blueandgrayeducation.org) using PayPal