

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Galena welcomes Ulysses S. Grant Association**

*Annual meeting will be held from May 6-8 in historic Galena, Illinois*

GALENA, Ill. – While he did not live in Galena long, Ulysses S. Grant considered it his home town during the most momentous times of his life. In July of 1865, upon being gifted the Grant Memorial Home on Bouthillier Street, he said of Galena, “I hope to retain my residence here...I expect to cast my vote here always.” The Grant Home and a number of historic Grant and Civil War-related attractions will be showcased for members of the Ulysses S. Grant Association (USGA) at their annual meeting, May 6-8, in Galena, Illinois. The public is invited to participate in a variety of events as well.

Founded in 1962, the USGA is a membership organization which illuminates not only Grant himself, but a period in U.S. history when the country stood on the brink of the modern era, facing new and difficult challenges. Headquartered at Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University in Starkville, the Association executive director is Dr. John F. Marszalek. “We are looking forward to gathering in historic Galena for our 2011 annual meeting,” stated Dr. Marszalek. “Studying and touring the Grant sites in Galena will help our members gain greater insight into important aspects of the life of Ulysses S. Grant.”

The three-day conference kicks off on Friday evening with a wine and hors d’oeuvres reception at the DeSoto House Hotel, sponsored by the Community Development Fund of Galena. The group will be escorted by Galena’s nine Civil War Generals to Fried Green Tomatoes for dinner, then walk to Turner Hall to hear from keynote speaker General Josiah Bunting III. The title of the evening program is *U.S. Grant: Strategy, Character and Military Legacy, 1941-1945*. Bunting’s 2004 nonfiction book entitled *Ulysses S. Grant* is one of six he has authored. He served as Superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute from 1995 to 2003.

On Saturday, a customized guided tour will include stops at the Washburne House, Galena History Museum, Greenwood Cemetery, and a lamplight tour of the Grant Memorial Home. The driving tour will highlight homes, neighborhoods and storefronts of Galena’s Civil War heroes. A guidebook published by the Galena Historical Society will serve as a permanent keepsake for tour guests. Lunch at 111 Main will bring a welcome midday respite.

From 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, a Grant authors ‘meet and greet’ will be held at Turner Hall on Bench Street. Waugh, Bunting, and several other authors of U.S. Grant books will be available for book signing. Books will be available for purchase. The event is free and open to the public.

Dinner on Saturday evening will be at Vinny Vanucchi's, followed by a short stroll to Turner Hall where author Dr. Joan Waugh, professor of history at the University of California at Los Angeles, will present *U.S. Grant at Appomattox*. In her 2009 book *U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth*, Waugh uncovers the reasons behind the rise and fall of Grant's renown, underscoring the fluctuating memory of the Civil War itself. Waugh also was author or coeditor of two other books about the Civil War.

Rounding out Saturday evening, also at Turner Hall immediately following the lecture, will be a Civil War-era concert by the Fever River String Band from 9 to 11 p.m. Historic attire is welcome and period dancing is encouraged. A cash bar will be available.

Sunday morning will include a USGA board meeting, followed by historical presenters at the DeSoto House ballroom. At 9 a.m. Larry Werline will present a first-person interpretation of *Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox*. At 10 a.m. grant collector Bill Margeson will discuss *Ulysses S. Grant: A Collector's Perspective*. The conference will conclude after the final presentation by first-person presenters Larry and Constance Clowers: *Around the World with General Grant* from Gettysburg, PA.

All activities, admission fees and meals for the three-day event are included in the conference registration fee of \$200 for USGA members or \$300 for non-members. Visit the USGA website at <http://library.msstate.edu/usgrant/register.asp> for online registration. The historic DeSoto House Hotel, from which Grant ran his 1868 presidential campaign, will be the host hotel.

The public may partake in the following individual events for the fees noted: Galena Generals and General Bunting presentations, 8 to 9:30 p.m., Friday, May 6 (\$5); guided tour and lunch, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, May 7 (\$75); Saturday evening lecture and concert/dance, 7:30 to 11 p.m. (\$15); Sunday morning presentations, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (\$15). Tickets for the public events may be purchased at each onsite location; advance reservations are not required.

A complete listing of events and fees is available at the Galena Historical Society website, [www.galenahistorymuseum.org](http://www.galenahistorymuseum.org). Questions may be directed to Nicole Louis, Galena Historical Society assistant director, at (815) 777-9129 or [admin@galenahistorymuseum.org](mailto:admin@galenahistorymuseum.org) or to Elizabeth Coggins, Grant Collection Library Associate, Mississippi State University, at (662) 325-4552 or [ecoggins@library.msstate.edu](mailto:ecoggins@library.msstate.edu). Co-hosts for the conference are Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University, the Galena Historical Society, the City of Galena, the Community Development Fund of Galena, and [VisitGalena.org](http://VisitGalena.org).

For information about additional room availability, shopping, dining, attractions, events and more, go to [www.galena.org](http://www.galena.org), the Web site of the Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention & Visitors Bureau, or call 877-464-2536 toll-free.

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