

GRANT



IN THIS ISSUE

Grant Bicentennial	
Nationwide Events	1
Grant's Posthumous Promotion	1
Tributes from Presidents, Congress, States	3
Ohio Designates Grant Day	
New Law Observes Birthday	4
Grant Bicentennial Coins	
Commissioned by the GMA	4
Top Generals on Grant	
20th Century Giants Saluted Grant	5
Richard T. Greener	
100 Years After His Death	5
Nellie Grant	
100 Years After Her Death	5
Join the GMA	
Membership Form	6
Grant at 200 Book	
A New Release	7
Wright's Flight to the Tomb	
An Aviation Milestone	8

Plus Special Insert:
Invitations to the 2023 Grant Day Dinner and the Birthday Ceremony at Grant's Tomb



Grant Monument Association

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GRANT BICENTENNIAL IS OBSERVED ACROSS THE NATION

200TH BIRTHDAY EVENTS IN NEW YORK CITY AND SITES OF FORMER GRANT HOMES

April 27, 2022, marked the 200th birthday of Ulysses S. Grant, and the Grant bicentennial was observed throughout the year with events at numerous venues connected to the legendary Union commander during the Civil War and the nation's eighteenth president. Among these observances was a March 3–5 bicentennial program hosted by the *Continued on page 2*



Official Grant 200th birthday ceremony at Grant's Tomb, April 27, 2022

Albert Trotman

CONGRESS AUTHORIZES GRANT'S POSTHUMOUS PROMOTION TO ARMY'S HIGHEST RANK

The GMA is pleased to report that Congress has passed, and President Joe Biden has signed into law, legislation authorizing the president to posthumously promote Ulysses S. Grant to General of the Armies of the United States, the U.S. Army's highest rank. This provision was passed as Section 583 of the National Defense

Authorization Act (NDAA). It confers on Grant the same rank and precedence held by General John J. Pershing, the only officer to have been General of the Armies of the United States during his lifetime. The posthumous honor of that rank was conferred in 1976 upon George Washington during the celebration of the *Continued on page 3*

Bicentennial observances, continued from page 1

Ulysses S. Grant Association (USGA) at the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library, which the USGA administers. That program included the unveiling of a traveling Grant exhibit that would make its way to various Grant sites and the dedication of a bicentennial tree on the campus of Mississippi State University, where the presidential library is located.

The last week in April naturally saw the largest concentration of Grant bicentennial observances. At Grant's Tomb, the week began with an April 24 bicentennial commemoration organized by the Sons of Union Veterans, Oliver Tilden Camp #26, in which the Grant Monument Association (GMA) participated. The GMA also assisted the National Park Service and the United States Military Academy at West Point (USMA) with their official bicentennial commemoration at the Tomb on April 27, which fell on a Wednesday. The USMA's superintendent, Lieutenant General Darryl Williams, led an impressive contingent of cadets from West Point in a salute that has long been an annual tradition on Grant's birthday. He also placed the president's wreath during the wreath-laying component of the ceremony. Grant biographer Brooks Simpson, the keynote speaker, offered reflections on Grant's personal qualities, leadership, and legacy and why they continue to hold enduring significance for the nation. General Mark Milley, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, was initially slated to participate in the ceremony, but the call of duty ultimately required him to attend a military funeral that occurred at the same time. On the evening of April 27, The GMA hosted a Grant bicentennial dinner at the Union League Club in New York City. Like the daytime event at Grant's Tomb, the dinner had significant participation from West Point, including the invocation before dinner by a USMA chaplain, Captain Raymond Akirewe, and cadets performing the national anthem and other patriotic songs. The dinner also recognized the winners of the GMA's first-ever school essay-writing contest. The top three essays about Grant among the competing twelfth graders at Frederick Douglass Academy in Upper Manhattan were awarded scholarship prizes: Shawn Riley, Yorjaris Peguero, and Don-tae Maybank.

The main program accompanying dinner was a colloquy conducted by General David Petraeus interviewing the authors of two recent best-selling Grant biographies: Ron Chernow and Ron White. The authors covered a range of topics from both the military and the political career of their subject, and they were struck by Grant's unlikely rise and long latent qualities that surfaced upon the outbreak of the Civil War. White recounted in vivid detail the Battle of the Wilderness, Grant's first confrontation with General Robert E. Lee's army, and said when Grant followed that battle by proceeding south rather than turning



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Ron White, Gen. David Petraeus, and Ron Chernow discuss Grant at the bicentennial dinner held at the Union League Club, April 27, 2022

back toward Washington, "that was the moment . . . that Grant was given command, not by Lincoln, but by the men of his army." Chernow called Grant's crushing of the original Ku Klux Klan "not only Grant's single greatest accomplishment as president, but . . . one of the greatest accomplishments of any American president ever." C-SPAN recorded both April 27 New York City events, which remain viewable on its website.

Also marking the Grant bicentennial in late April were Grant's birthplace in Point Pleasant, Ohio; his boyhood home in Georgetown, Ohio; his St. Louis home, White Haven, officially known as the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site; his home in Galena, Illinois; the cottage on Mount McGregor where Grant died; and the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial, the equestrian monument on the west side of the U.S. Capitol. The latter location marked its own centennial since it was dedicated on Grant's one-hundredth birthday in 1922. Even Long Branch, New Jersey, where Grant's "summer White House" was demolished nearly six decades ago, held a Grant bicentennial event in the city's new Arts and Cultural Center. There the GMA announced its work with the community to install a historical marker near the site where Grant spent so many summers during and after his presidency—which shall be dedicated on April 30, 2023.

The Grant sites in Georgetown, St. Louis, and Mount McGregor had recurring Grant programs throughout the year. The GMA took part in several of those and in Manhattan's principal Memorial Day ceremony at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument thirty-three blocks south of Grant's Tomb in Riverside Park, where the Grant bicentennial provided a theme for the observance. The Oliver Tilden Camp of the Sons of Union Veterans and the GMA returned to Grant's Tomb on July 24 to mark the 137th anniversary of Grant's death on July 23, 1885.

BICENTENNIAL MESSAGES INCLUDE ALL LIVING PRESIDENTS AND 50 STATES

The Grant bicentennial was commemorated in proclamations or other special messages issued by all six living presidents, the U.S. Congress, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and all fifty states plus the District of Columbia. These commemorative documents together provide a remarkable record of the wide esteem in which Grant is viewed nationwide, across partisan and regional lines, two hundred years after his birth.

The messages from living presidents are such an example. They come from political figures spanning different backgrounds and ideological affiliations, not to mention the changes in American politics between the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Yet all included common themes, recognizing Grant as a unifying figure and noting his contributions advancing equal rights during Reconstruction along with his military achievements. President Jimmy Carter explained

Posthumous promotion, continued from page 1

nation's bicentennial.

This posthumous promotion of General Grant is a fitting honor for the Grant bicentennial. It reflects the extraordinary importance of his military career. Washington and Grant were the top commanders of the U.S. Army during the two wars of existential importance to the United States: the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Grant, whose battlefield achievements ensured the survival of our nation amid the greatest threat it had ever faced, is regarded by many military historians as the most capable and accomplished general in American history, besides being one of the great military commanders in world history. His campaigns are still studied by the modern U.S. Army. Beyond that, his battlefield accomplishments effected the emancipation of enslaved people, and during his postwar career, he fought for profound changes to the Constitution that conferred upon former slaves equal rights, including the right to vote regardless of race. This singular record of accomplishment should stand as an inspiration to Americans for generations to come. The GMA extends special thanks to the bipartisan cosponsors of the original legislation authorizing Grant's posthumous promotion, without whose support this honor would not have been conferred. Hopefully President Biden, who signed the NDAA into law on December 23, 2022, makes the posthumous promotion now authorized in the near future, at which point this honor can be celebrated accordingly.

why "[a]s a boy growing up in Georgia, I was not taught to admire" Grant, but "[i]n latter years, I learned to appreciate him." President Bill Clinton wrote, "In a time of growing divisive tribalism, his actions to heal our nation and defend the foundations of our democracy are more important than ever." President George W. Bush added, "May his legacy inspire us to fight for what is right, lead with integrity, and create a more hopeful tomorrow for our fellow citizens." President Barack Obama invoked the bicentennial as "an opportunity to recommit ourselves to President Grant's vision of a more equal and just America." President Donald Trump praised Grant as "a consummate statesman" who "set his sights on not only rebuilding America, but renewing her broken soul." President Joe Biden recognized that "President Grant led our Nation through the most trying time in our history, the Civil War and its aftermath," and he called on Americans to "honor his legacy by carrying forward his charge to pursue hope over fear and unity over division."

On Capitol Hill, Senate Concurrent Resolution 36, introduced by Senator Roy Blunt, was passed on Grant's birthday, noting several military and political milestones and Grant's place "among the most influential military commanders" in U.S. history. Chairman Mark Milley issued a letter hailing Grant as "an inspiration for all of us that wear the cloth of our Nation."

Among the fifty states, the governors in most cases recognized the Grant bicentennial through proclamations, typically designating April 27 as Ulysses S. Grant Day in their states, or through special messages or other commemorative documents. In other jurisdictions, state legislative leaders were the officials who recognized the bicentennial. In nearly every case, the tributes referenced both Grant's military and his political career. They often included highlights among Grant's battlefield triumphs during the Civil War, his magnanimity toward his conquered foes, and his contribution to emancipation before turning to presidential accomplishments. In the latter category, Grant's record advancing equal rights and peace abroad figured prominently. Some states added feats that were of distinctive regional significance, such as Wyoming's recognition of Grant signing into law the creation of Yellowstone as the first national park.

The unanimity of the bicentennial proclamations and messages and the extension of the various tributes beyond Grant's military career reflect the resurgence of Grant's reputation from where it stood for much of the twentieth century. Fifty or seventy-five years ago, history books tended to overlook or demean Grant's public career after Appomattox, and in many circles in the South, his role was often seen as little beyond the man who con- *Continued on page 4*

Bicentennial messages, continued from page 3
 quered the region. In 2022, former Confederate states expressed their appreciation not only for the preservation of the Union, but also for aspects of Grant's legacy to which they contributed—and which a number of proclamations noted. A majority of former Confederate states voted for Grant both times he ran for president, even factoring out the three states that were still under military rule during Grant's first election. Nearly all of the states that had been in rebellion ratified the Fifteenth Amendment.

These commemorative documents are a landmark not only in the narrower category of Grant's own changing reputation, but also of the values that the states themselves have come to highlight over time.

The bicentennial messages are archived on the GMA's website, and hard copies are in the possession of the National Park Service at Grant's Tomb. The presidential messages and the letter from Chairman Milley are also reproduced in *Grant at 200*, the just released collection of essays for Grant's bicentennial published by Savas Beatie (see page 7).

NEW LAW DESIGNATES GRANT'S BIRTHDAY AS ULYSSES S. GRANT DAY IN OHIO

Following other honors across the nation for President Grant during his bicentennial, on January 2, 2023, Governor Mike DeWine signed into law House Bill 423, which among other things designates Grant's birthday, April 27, as "Ulysses S. Grant Day" in the State of Ohio. This designation does not entail closing public buildings, as would occur for a full public holi-

day, but it ensures that the birthday of this extraordinary American leader will receive special recognition every year.

The GMA applauds this measure. Special thanks to the U.S. Grant Homestead Association in Georgetown, Ohio, for making this measure possible, and to Senator Terry Johnson and Representative Adam Bird for their work to get it through the state legislature. At its most recent board meeting, the GMA resolved to encourage other states to adopt similar measures recognizing Grant's birthday.

For years after Grant's death in 1885, his birthday was celebrated in numerous locations—a tradition the GMA recently revived in New York City. The notion of official government recognition of Grant's birthday is not new. In 1888, a group of veterans, both blue and gray, used the occasion of Grant's birthday in New York to hold a meeting chaired by General William T. Sherman to lobby the federal government to declare Grant's birthday a national holiday. That never happened. Incredibly, in later years, numerous states instead officially observed the birthdays of leaders of the Confederacy. General Robert E. Lee and Confederate President Jefferson Davis were given this honor in several states—not only in the former Confederate states, but also in Kentucky, which had remained in the Union during the Civil War. The trend has been to repeal such observances in recent years. Still, observed GMA president Frank Scaturro: "It is a sorry commentary that historical memory was so corrupted over the course of generations that Grant would be excluded from honors that were instead given to those adversaries who fought to defeat him. The causes for which he fought in war and in peace deserve much better. Hopefully, other states will follow the example of Ohio with similar recognition of Ulysses S. Grant Day going forward."

GMA COMMISSIONS GRANT BICENTENNIAL COIN

In 2022, the GMA commissioned a limited edition commemorative coin for the Ulysses S. Grant bicentennial. Aysse Corp. generously donated their services to its production. The coin features a relief of President Grant on the front. The back depicts Grant's Tomb with the inscription "Let us have peace." These words, written by Grant upon his acceptance of his first nomination for president in 1868, represented a major theme of his public career and are engraved as the epitaph on Grant's Tomb. The metal coin measures 1.5" in diameter and has an antique silver finish. Each coin is packaged in an archival sleeve that is clear for easy

viewing and safe for long-term storage. The coins are available for purchase on the GMA's website, grantstomb.org (\$18.99 plus \$5.99 shipping). Proceeds from sales will go to the GMA.



U.S. GENERALS OF THE 20TH CENTURY SALUTE GENERAL GRANT

The reputation of Ulysses S. Grant declined dramatically early in the 20th century after the publication of books vilifying him as a butcher and a drunk. Despite his fall from grace in the eyes of the American public, many top United States generals recalled a different leader.

In his *Reminiscences*, published in 1964, Douglas MacArthur characterized Grant as "the great strategist and victor of the Civil War."

Dwight Eisenhower, interviewed by Walter Cronkite in July 1964, said that Grant "was one of the greatest American generals, if not the greatest."

In his memoirs, John Pershing praised Grant. "I regarded him then and do now as the greatest general our country has produced."

When reporters asked Norman Schwarzkopf Jr. which military leaders he most admired, he told them Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman.

The 20th century was unkind to the memory of Ulysses Grant as a general. However, it should be unsurprising that America's top generals of the 20th century thought otherwise.

RICHARD T. GREENER

Richard Theodore Greener lived an accomplished life as an educator, lawyer, and diplomat. He was born in Philadelphia in 1844 and moved during his childhood to the Boston area. A graduate of Phillips



Richard Greener

Academy at Andover, he studied at Oberlin College before transferring to Harvard College. In 1870, he became the first African American graduate of Harvard. He was an advocate for civil rights legislation and part of a delegation that had met with President Grant, who would sign the Civil Rights Act of 1875 into law.

During the early 1870s, Greener taught and served as a principal at schools in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. He briefly served as an editor at *New National Era*, a newspaper published by Frederick Douglass. He subsequently was hired as the first African American professor at the University of South Carolina, where he received a law degree.

The racially integrated university was closed in 1877 by South Carolina's Democratic state government, and Greener moved to Washington, where he worked in the Treasury Department and became the dean of the law department at Howard University. Upon Grant's death in 1885, Greener became the first secretary of the GMA and spearheaded the organization's efforts to raise funds to construct Grant's Tomb. He also worked as an examiner for the New York City Civil Service Board.

Greener's tenure as secretary of the GMA ended in 1892, by which time a design for Grant's Tomb had been selected and ground broken, but he would remain a trustee of the organization. In later years, he became a diplomat. During the administration of William McKinley, Greener served first as consul to Bombay and later as U.S. commercial agent in Vladivostok, Russia. He left the diplomatic service in 1905.

Greener's dedication to Grant's memory remained through his later years, during which he lived in Chicago. In 1915, he presented a portrait of Grant, once owned by the general himself, to Phillips Academy during the 50th class reunion of what he called the "Appomattox Class of 1865." Greener died in Chicago on May 2, 1922, five days after Grant's 100th birthday.

NELLIE GRANT

Ellen "Nellie" Wrenshall Grant was the only daughter born to Ulysses Grant and his wife, Julia. She was born on Independence Day in 1855 at Wish-ton-wish, the farm on the Dent estate where her family lived in St. Louis. She spent time in her early life in "Hardscrabble," a home Ulysses personally built and where the youngest of her three brothers was born, and in Galena, Illinois, where the family moved in 1860. Nellie maintained a special relationship with her father as he wrote to her during grueling Civil War campaigns. Growing up, she attended boarding school and traveled to England, where she met her future husband, Algernon Charles Frederick Sartoris. They were married in the White House, but the marriage



Nellie Grant Jones during her later years

Continued on page 6

Nellie Grant, continued from page 5

turned out to be an unhappy one. Algernon was a womanizer with a drinking problem, but the couple had four children together. Ulysses had been wary of the union from the beginning. Eventually, Nellie, who had moved to England, took her children back to the United States to be with her father before his passing in 1885. Algernon died in 1893, and Nellie subsequent-

ly lived with her mother in Washington, D.C.

Nellie married Frank Hatch Jones, a Chicago attorney and banker, in 1912 but suffered a disabling stroke early in her marriage. She died on August 30, 1922, a few months after the nation observed her father's centenary, at the age of 67. She is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois, which is also the location of the tomb of Abraham Lincoln.

JOIN THE GRANT MONUMENT ASSOCIATION



The life and extraordinary public service of General and President Ulysses S. Grant is reflected in the grand monument in New York City that serves as his final resting place—popularly known as Grant's Tomb. The Grant Monument Association, the successor to the organization of the same name that built and administered Grant's Tomb until it was transferred

to the National Park Service in 1959, was formed to ensure that this important part of our heritage would be preserved. You may become a member of the Grant Monument Association or renew your membership for the current year one of two ways. You may mail in this form or use your credit card online via our secure PayPal server.

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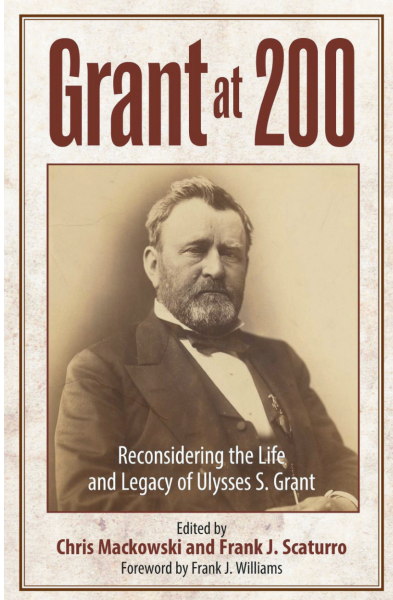
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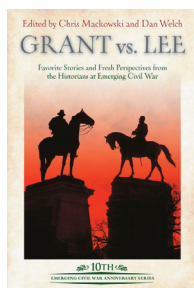


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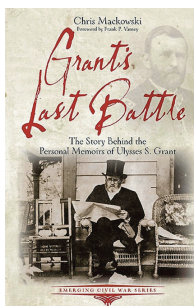
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NEW RELEASE: *Grant at 200* *Reconsidering the Life and Legacy of Ulysses S. Grant*

Chris Mackowski and Frank J. Scaturro, editors

Proceeds from this volume will go to support the Ulysses S. Grant Association and the Grant Monument Association.

Ulysses S. Grant stood at the center of the American Civil War maelstrom. The Ohio native answered his nation's call to service and finished the war as a lieutenant general in command of the U.S. Army. Four years later, he ascended to the presidency to better secure the peace he had helped win on the battlefield. Despite his major achievements in war and peace, political and sectional enemies battered his reputation. For nearly a century, his military and political career remained deeply misunderstood.

Since the Civil War centennial, however, Grant's reputation has blossomed into a full renaissance. His military record garners new respect and, more recently, an appreciation for his political career—particularly his strong advocacy for equal rights—is quickly catching up.

Throughout these decades, his personal memoirs marking him as a significant American "Man of Letters" have never gone out of print. *Grant at 200: Reconsidering the Life and Legacy of Ulysses S. Grant* celebrates the bicentennial of the birth of a man whose towering impact on American history has often been overshadowed and, in many cases, ignored. This collection of essays by some of today's leading Grant scholars offers fresh perspectives on Grant's military career and presidency, as well as underexplored personal topics such as his faith and family life.

Praise:

"An unmatched collection of brilliant, compelling, and insightful essays that convincingly establish Grant as 'America's Ulysses' and 'The Man Who Saved the Union'—the incomparable Civil War commander without whose exceptional strategy, indomitable leadership, and sheer determination Lincoln might have lost the election of 1864 and the United States as we know it would have ceased to exist. With contributions from top Grant scholars and featuring impressive new research, these essays contribute to the striking reassessment of Grant that has taken place over the past two decades and has restored Grant to the pedestal on which he rightfully should stand and from which he never should have been toppled." —General David Petraeus, U.S. Army (Ret.), former Commander of the Surge in Iraq, U.S. Central Command, and NATO/Forces in Afghanistan, and former Director of the CIA

About the Editors:

Chris Mackowski, Ph.D., is the editor-in-chief and co-founder of Emerging Civil War, and the managing editor of the Emerging Civil War Series (Savas Beatie). He is a writing professor in the Jandoli School of Communication at St. Bonaventure University, where he also serves as the associate dean for undergraduate programs, and the historian-in-residence at Stevenson Ridge, a historic property on the Spotsylvania Court House battlefield.

Frank J. Scaturro is an attorney and the author of *President Grant Reconsidered* (1998) and *The Supreme Court's Retreat from Reconstruction* (2000). He is the president of the Grant Monument Association, which is dedicated to the preservation of Grant's Tomb. He previously served as counsel for the Constitution for the Senate Judiciary Committee and as special counsel to the House Select Investigative Panel. He now serves as vice-president and senior counsel of JCN.

Savas Beatie

Independent, scholarly, and a bit old fashioned.

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Wright Caps 1909 New York Triumph With Round-Trip Flight to Grant's Tomb

Wilbur Wright thrilled more than a million spectators with three flights over New York harbor on September 29, 1909, two of them around the Statue of Liberty, as part of a celebration commemorating historic voyages of Henry Hudson and Robert Fulton up the Hudson River. But to collect his \$15,000 payment, the pioneer aviator needed to complete a flight at least 10 miles in length or one hour in duration. His arch-rival, Glenn Curtiss, whom Wright happened to be suing for patent infringement, had failed to make a 20-mile round trip flight from Governor's Island to Grant's Tomb, and Wright apparently took this golden opportunity to show him up.

Flying over water was new and risky, so Wright had attached a red canoe to his plane to keep it afloat in case he had to land on liquid. On October 4, at 9:53 a.m., he took off in this unusually equipped bi-

plane, a life vest within reach. As hundreds of thousands cheered and countless boats whistled, he flew up the Hudson to Grant's Tomb and returned to Governors Island 33 minutes and 33 seconds later.

Besides earning \$15,000 and triumphing over Curtiss, Wright notched two firsts: the canoe was the first large object to be carried on a plane, and the trip to the Tomb was the first long flight over U.S. waters.



Wright returning from Grant's Tomb in 1909. The small wings are on the front of the plane.

Harper's Weekly



The GMA thanks the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS) for its generous support in bringing this newsletter to you. Since 1865, Union officers and their descendants have worked through MOLLUS to perpetuate the memory of the struggle for the Union.

The Grant Monument Association

cordially invites you to a dinner commemorating the
201st Anniversary of President Ulysses S. Grant's birth.

Dinner shall be accompanied by a colloquy between

General David H. Petraeus

and

Grant biographer
Brooks Simpson

Monday, April 24, 2023

Reception at 6:00 p.m. Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

**The Union League Club
38 East 37th Street
New York, NY 10016**

Business attire

Dinner tickets: \$250

Host committee: \$750

Table of ten: \$2,500

RSVP to the Grant Monument Association at (646) 504-1865 or gma@grantstomb.org.

Pay online at grantstomb.org/gma-dinner or send payment to

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General Grant

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



General Grant National Memorial



Join us on the Plaza in front of the Mausoleum
to celebrate President Ulysses S. Grant
Birthday!

Military Honor Guard Ceremony on Plaza

11:00am-12:00pm

USMA West Point Honor Guard and Keynote Speaker
Louis L. Picone, Author of the book Grant's Tomb: The
Epic Death of Ulysses S. Grant and the Making of an
American Pantheon

Reception and Refreshments on Plaza

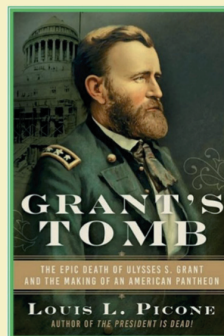
12:00 pm to 12:30 pm

Refreshments courtesy of Grant
Monument Association

Special Presentation on Plaza 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Join Author Louis L. Picone, Key Note
Speaker

Please RSVP by email at gegr_info@nps.gov or calling at
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Ulysses S. Grant's 201st Birthday

Thursday April 27, 2023



Grant Monument
Association

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT

Plan Your Visit

The Memorial is located at Riverside Drive and
122nd Street in Manhattan, New York City.

General Grant National Memorial is open from
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For more information:

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