Friends of the Colby Symposium
Minutes
Oct. 1, 2015
12:00-1:30 p.m.

L. Egan, S. Egan, R. Huntley, G. Huntley, B. Knauf, A. Liptak, M. Liptak, C. Lotz, R. Lotz, L. Cahill Lord

• Welcome and Introduction

Ron Lotz introduced the organization and opened the first Fall meeting of the Friends of the Colby Symposium. He reflected on his personal experience with the Colby Symposium, which celebrates its 21st year this spring.

Lotz highlighted the importance of the Colby and its role bringing notable personalities to campus to bring different viewpoints and provide intellectually stimulating dialogue. He also discussed the importance of the Meet the Authors dinner as an opportunity for students to practice and learn social graces, confidence speaking with distinguished guests, and the ability to make conversation and network.

• History of the Colby

Bud Knauf, Colby Campus Director, briefed the members on the 21-year history of the Colby Symposium. Established in 1996, the Colby Symposium was founded by Carlo D’Este and W.E.B. Griffin to bring military writers to campus. The event has grown a two-day event with a literary award component, the Colby Award, that presents a $5,000 author prize.

The Colby Symposium is being transitioned to fall under the newly established Center for the Study of Peace and War, an academic center that falls across disciplines. This will allow for engagement from students of a variety of majors, and gives the Symposium a “home” under the academic center.

• 2016 Colby program update
The 2016 Colby Symposium will take place on Wednesday and Thursday, April 6-7, 2016. The theme of the event is “Going to War: The Cost to Families, Communities, and Nation.”

Four guest panelists have been confirmed:

- Karl Marlantes, the author of *Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War* and *What It Is Like To Go To War*.
- Documentary filmmaker Benjamin Patton, executive director of the Patton Veterans Project and I WAS THERE Film workshops.
- Jason Redman, founder and spokesperson of the nonprofit Combat Wounded Coalition and Wounded Wear and author of *The Trident: The Forging and Reforging of a Navy SEAL Officer*.
- Retired U.S. Army Colonel Jon Coffin, former Vermont National Guard staff psychologist.
- A fifth female veteran panelist has not yet been confirmed.

The event will once again include author classroom visits with undergraduate students; author presentations; book signing; undergraduate original research presentations related to the theme; Meet the Authors reception and dinner; moderated panel discussion on the program theme; and presentation of the 2016 Colby Award

- “Why I Support the Colby”

Andrew Liptak discussed his involvement with the Colby Symposium over the past twelve years and why he continues to support the program. Beginning in High School, at the recommendation of a teacher, he attended the event. He observed that each year provides a deep dive into a particular topic, including recent moves to post-war topics, and access to authors. Liptak underlined the importance of the event to undergraduate students and to the public. Having presented a paper and facilitated a reading in past events, Liptak encouraged expansion to include graduate students in the symposium.

Megan Liptak updated the members on the Master’s of Military History and Master’s of History programs at the College of Graduating and Continuing Studies. Having earned a Master’s of Military History herself, and presented at a past Colby Symposium, she recommended the Colby Symposium as a good venue to bring those graduate students back
to campus to participate. There are about 7,000 CGCS alumni that we could engage with the event, and could be a pool to draw new supporters and attendees. There is a segment of MMH alumni who are retired and may be good candidates to drive to Norwich to attend the event.

Liptak suggested advertising the symposium to current MMH or MA Hist. students, and consider a WebEx or streaming component to allow them to participate from anywhere.

Guy Huntley suggested that an element of academic credit could help incentivize attendance for students. Megan Liptak suggested professional development credit opportunities as well.

Guy Huntley recommended that the Colby Symposium continue to include undergraduate students in the programming as was done the previous year. This will give them more of a vested interest in the event.

Robin Huntley suggested that the past participant authors remain included in outreach. She told the members about Logan Beirne, the 2014 Colby Award winner who returned for the 2015 event as a guest.

*Action Items:* Lindsay Cahill Lord, Megan Liptak and Andrew Liptak will coordinate outreach to CGCS current students. Via the Alumni Office, CGCS-specific outreach will also occur. Explore the possibility of a MMH “reunion” occurring during the Colby. Lindsay Cahill Lord will work with Bud Knauf to update the contact list for authors and mail the Friends of the Colby Symposium newsletter to them and work to keep them involved.

- Formation of Committees

Ron Lotz appointed a Publicity Committee made up of members of the Friends of the Colby to brainstorm ways to improve outreach and publicity to get new attendees to the event and increase involvement. He appointed Guy Huntley, Robin Huntley, Andrew Liptak, Megan Liptak, and Joe Ojile to the committee.
Andrew Liptak suggested that a Programming Committee be stood up in the near future to make suggestions to the content of the Symposium.

- **Election of Officers**

Ron Lotz appointed Steve Egan as Vice Chair of the Friends of the Colby Symposium. Egan accepted the appointment. There was no opposition from the members to the appointment.

Steve Egan told the Friends that he wanted to be involved with the Friends of the Colby because it was important for him to continue to be involved with the university. A former Board of Fellows member, he enjoys talking to and connecting with students.

- **Other Business**

Megan Liptak told the members about a new business partnership between Norwich University and the Vermont Air National Guard. She suggested opportunities exist to promote the 2016 Colby, given its timely and relevant topic.

_Action Items: Megan Liptak and Lindsay Cahill Lord will connect on the business partnership opportunities._

Ron Lotz gave closing remarks. He requested that the members work to get the word out about the 2016 symposium.

Meeting adjourned at 1330.