

Sumter to Appomattox

The Official Newsletter of the New South Wales Chapter of
The American Civil War Round Table of Australia

No. 8, March 2003

A Message from the Chairman –

Our 2003 program of meetings got off to a good start last month with our first Wednesday evening meeting. The opportunity to have a bistro meal of one's choice was greatly appreciated by a number of our members who commented on the return to this feature of the meetings.

Margaret Lee's most interesting and passionate presentation provided a perspective of the Civil War that receives too little attention and was greatly appreciated by those members and visitors who were at the meeting. Our apologies, also, for our "stuff-up" in not having an overhead projector available to show the visuals associated with the presentation but thank you Brendan for your sterling effort in holding them up for everyone to see.

Margaret was somewhat embarrassed at winning the raffle, particularly since she drew the ticket out of the "hat". At least Margaret's win puts an end to Robin "Lucky" Haines run of wins! Congratulations, also to Pauline Davis for her win in the raffle.

Thank you Margaret for your efforts putting together a great start to our 2003 program.

Next month's presentation represents a change to our normal format of meetings and I hope that members will find it an interesting variation. Please let your Committee know what you think of the new format so that we can make an informed judgement of whether we should repeat the "forum-type meeting format.

Planning for this year's conference is proceeding and we hope to have some high profile people as guest speakers for the day. Make sure you have Saturday, July 5, 2003 in your diary for the conference, the venue for which is the Gordon Club in Chatswood. Full details of the conference, including the registration form will be available with the next issue in early May.

Paul Kensey

Next Month's Meeting

Our next scheduled meeting for this year is to be held as usual at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, Pacific Highway, Roseville**, on the evening of **Wednesday, April 9**, commencing at 7pm.

As for our last meeting members will be able to meet at the Club from 6pm for a bistro style meal – something that members have indicated is what they want.

This meeting is going to be quite different from our normal meeting format with a **Members' Forum** replacing the usual presentation/lecture. This forum will focus on the subject:

Murder at Fort Pillow? A Confederate and Federal Perspective

Two teams with two members in each, will present alternative views of what happened at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864. The teams are Paul Kensey and Tony Kovacevic representing the Union perspective and David Wilson and Warren Nicholls representing the Confederates.

Members will be left then to make their own judgements of the controversy that continues even to this day, particularly with respect to the role of Nathan Bedford Forrest in the killings of the African-American troops.

A short article has been prepared relating to the alleged Fort Pillow massacre and is presented in this Newsletter together with a contemporaneous report of the "massacre" from *Harper's Weekly*. These are provided with a view to providing members with a context of the controversy prior to our meeting.

It is hoped that members will find this new meeting format both interesting and informative in relation to this controversial subject and that they will be able then to evaluate the controversy on the basis of available evidence rather than just simple ideological lines.

What Happened in March?

Hatches and Dispatches

- March 6, 1831 - Philip H Sheridan is born in Albany, New York;
- March 22, 1817 – Braxton Bragg (CSA) is born in Warrenton, North Carolina;
- March 28, 1818 – Wade Hampton (CSA) is born in Charleston S.C.

Command Changes

- March 5, 1862 – Pierre G T Beauregard assumes command of the Confederate Army of Mississippi;
- March 9, 1864 – Ulysses S Grant is named General-in-Chief of the Army of the United States;
- March 11, 1862, - Lincoln removes McClellan from his command as General-in-Chief of the Union armies;
- March 17, 1864 – Lieutenant General U S Grant formally assumes command of the armies of the United States.

Battles

- March 2, 1865 - Battle of Waynesborough – the last campaign in the Shenandoah Valley;
- March 7, 1862 – Battle of Pea Ridge (Elkhorn Tavern), the biggest battle west of the Mississippi;
- March 9, 1862 – Ironclads *CSS Virginia* and *USS Monitor* engage at Hampton Roads, Virginia;
- March 12, 1864 – Red River campaign begins under command of Nathaniel Banks (USA)
- March 16, 1865 – Battle of Averasborough, N.C.
- March 19, 1865 – Battle of Bentonville, N.C.
- March 21, 1865 – Last major effort by the Confederates to Stop Sherman's march south of Bentonville, N.C.
- March 23, 1862 – Jackson and Shields Clash at the Battle of Kernstown, VA;
- March 25, 1865 – Grant defeats Lee at Fort Stedman, Virginia.

Battles (continued)

- March 25, 1865 – Union troops begin the siege of Mobile, Alabama
- March 29, 1865 – The beginning of the final Appomattox campaign;
- March 30, 1864 – Confederates attack Snyder's Bluff, Mississippi.

Other Significant Events

- March 4, 1861 – Lincoln is inaugurated as the 16th President of the United States;
- March 4, 1861 – The “Stars and Bars” is designated as the official Confederate flag;
- March 4, 1865 – Lincoln is inaugurated for a second term as President;
- March 13, 1863 – Explosion at the Confederate Ordnance Laboratory in Richmond kills or injures 69 people;
- March 14, 1863 – Farragut leads his Union flotilla up the Mississippi past Port Hudson, La;
- March 21, 1861 – Louisiana ratifies the Confederate Constitution;
- March 26, 1863 – West Virginia voters approve the gradual emancipation of slaves;
- March 27, 1865 – President Lincoln meets with Grant, Sherman and Porter aboard the *River Queen* at City point, Virginia;
- March 28, 1865 – Lincoln offers terms of surrender;

Famous Last Words:

“Well if we are to die, let us die like men”

Last reported words of Patrick Cleburne, Franklin, 1864

This publication is the official newsletter of the New South Wales Chapter of the American Civil War Round Table of Australia. All inquiries regarding the Newsletter should be addressed to the Secretary/Treasurer of the Chapter by telephone on 9449 3720 or at PO Box 200, St Ives, NSW, 2075 or by e-mail to bpconn@bigpond.com