

Sumter to Appomattox

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

No. 44, January / February 2009

Please visit our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au

A Message from our Secretary –

With the resignation of our Chairman, Paul Kensey, effective from December 31, 2008, I am providing the first message to members for 2009. This situation will be a temporary one only as we will be holding our postponed Annual General Meeting at our first meeting in 2009, scheduled for Monday, February 9.

It is most important that all members keep this evening free to attend the AGM not only to elect the Executive and Committee for 2009, but to discuss the viability of our Round Table continuing to have a future.

Reflecting on 2008, our End-of-Year/Christmas function was a “boutique” function, representative of the small attendances that characterised all of our 2008 meetings. Notwithstanding this, it was a great function with John Cook’s Christmas cake living up to the standard achieved the previous year!

Getting back to the AGM, I would ask members to seriously consider standing for the Executive and/or Committee. In particular, we need to have a Chairman who will provide the leadership and vision to ensure our Round Table has a viable future. Furthermore, we need “new blood” to broaden our perspective of the direction we need to go in the future. To coin the well known phrase ... please consider.

Our Melbourne cousins are holding a symposium to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Lincoln’s birth on Saturday, February 7, 2009 at the Celtic Club in Melbourne. Details of this symposium, including various speakers and their topics, are presented in the adjoining column of this Newsletter.

The NSW Chapter of ACWRTA is giving some recognition to Lincoln, also, with the topic for presentation at our next regular meeting focusing on his defining the role of President as Commander-in-Chief. I do hope you will be able to come to the meeting to hear about this significant but often overlooked contribution he made.

Brendan O’Connell

Our Next Meeting

The first regular meeting for 2009 for the NSW Chapter of the ACWRTA will be held at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, Pacific Highway Roseville** will be held on **Monday February 9**. As is our custom, the meeting will commence with a bistro-style meal from 6pm with the meeting proper to start at 7:15pm.

The meeting will commence with the postponed AGM, where we will elect the Executive and Committee for 2009 and transact other business as required. Detail of this AGM is presented in the following pages of this Newsletter. The presentation that will follow the AGM will be given by John Cook and has as its subject:

Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief

As is our normal practice, it is hoped to have available a paper of the presentation to members at the conclusion of the meeting. Members living outside the Sydney Metropolitan Areas will have the paper mailed to them with the next Newsletter and other members will receive the paper, on request.

Melbourne Symposium

A symposium is to be held to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Lincoln’s birth from 10am – 5pm on Saturday, February 7 at the Celtic Club, 316 Queen St, Melbourne. The cost for the symposium is \$35 For ACWRTA members and \$40 for guests.

The speakers at this symposium are:

- Paul Spencer – the Path to the Presidency
- Warren Ellem – Lincoln and the Republican Party
- Alison Dwyer – Doctrine of Necessity
- Sean Young – Lincoln and his Generals
- Len Traynor – Lincoln, his Ailments and Tragedies

For enquiries and bookings, please contact Jeff Yuille, 41 Hampstead Drive, Hoppers Crossing 3029, by email at darleith@optusnet.com.au or by ‘phone 0412523199 or (03) 9748 7996.

It Happened in January

HATCHES AND DESPATCHES

January 8, 1821 – James Longstreet, CSA, is born near Edgefield, South Carolina;

January 19, 1807 – Robert E Lee is born in Stratford, Virginia;

January 21, 1824 – Thomas J (Stonewall) Jackson is born in Clarksburg, Virginia;

January 25, 1825 – George Pickett, CSA, is born in Richmond, Virginia;

January 30, 1816 - Nathaniel Banks, USA, is born in Waltham, Massachusetts;

COMMAND AND POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

January 6, 1865 – Grant asks Lincoln to remove Butler from command of the Army of the James;

January 8, 1861 – Secretary of the Interior, Jacob Thompson of Mississippi, the last Southerner in Cabinet, resigns;

January 15, 1862 – The US Senate confirms Edwin M Stanton's appointment as Secretary of War;

January 22, 1864 – Major General William Rosecrans is named Commander of the Federal Department of Missouri;

January 23, 1865 – General Richard Taylor assumes command of the Army of Tennessee which now has fewer than 18 000 troops;

January 25, 1863 – The removal of General Burnside as Commander of the Army of the Potomac;

January 26, 1863 – Joseph Hooker is appointed Commander of the Army of the Potomac;

January 31, 1865 – General Robert E Lee is appointed General-in-Chief of the Confederate Armies;

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

January 2, 1861 – South Carolina troops seize Fort Johnson in Charleston Harbour;

January 2, 1863 – Confederates defeated at the Battle of Murfreesboro (Stones River), Tennessee;

January 3, 1861 – Georgia state troops seize Fort Pulaski before Federal troops can occupy it;

January 4, 1861 – Alabama takes over the US arsenal at Mount Vernon;

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS cont'd

January 14, 1861 – Louisiana state troops seize Fort Pike near New Orleans;

January 19, 1865 – Sherman begins his march and destruction of the Carolinas;

January 19, 1862 – Federals push back Confederates in the Battle of Mill Springs (Logan's Cross Roads), Kentucky;

January 23, 1863 – Burnside's Federal army pulls back to Fredericksburg ending its famed "mud march";

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

January 1, 1863 – President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation takes effect;

January 9, 1861 – Mississippi secedes from the Union;

January 10, 1861 – Florida secedes from the Union;

January 11, 1861 – Alabama secedes from the Union;

January 13, 1863 – Federal officials formally authorise the raising of black units for the South Carolina volunteer Infantry;

January 16, 1861 – Arkansas completes a bill calling for a referendum on secession;

January 17, 1861 – The Crittenden Compromise, proposing several amendments to the Constitution in order to save the Union, is "killed" in the US Senate;

January 18, 1862 – The Confederate Territory of Arizona is formed;

January 26, 1861 – Louisiana secedes from the Union;

January 28, 1863 – A mass rally in St Louis ratifies the Emancipation Proclamation;

January 29, 1861 - Kansas is admitted as the 34th state of the Union.

Thought for the Day

"The education of a man is never completed until he dies."

- Robert E Lee

What Happened in February

HATCHES AND DESPATCHES

February 3, 1807 – Joseph E Johnston (CSA) is born at “Cherry Grove”, Prince Edward County, Virginia;

February 6, 1833 – JEB Stuart (CSA) is born in Patrick County, Virginia;

February 8, 1820 – William Tecumseh Sherman (USA) is born in Lancaster, Ohio;

February 11, 1812 – Alexander Hamilton Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy is born in Wilkes (Taliaferro) County, Georgia;

February 12, 1809 – Abraham Lincoln, 16th US President is born in Hardin County, Kentucky.

COMMAND AND POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

February 9, 1861 – Jefferson Davis is elected as provisional President of the Confederacy by the Confederate Provisional Congress;

February 9, 1865 – Lee appointed General-in-Chief of Confederate Armies;

February 18, 1861 – Davis is inaugurated as President of the Confederacy;

February 22, 1862 – Davis is sworn in as President of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia.

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

February 5, 1864 – Sherman’s Federals march into Jackson Mississippi en route to Meridian;

February 10, 1862 – The remainder of the “Mosquito” fleet is destroyed at Elizabeth City, NC;

February 14, 1864 – Sherman’s Union troops capture Meridian, Mississippi;

February 16, 1862 – Confederates surrender Fort Donelson, Tennessee, to Ulysses S Grant

February 17, 1865 – Columbia, SC, is captured and Charleston, SC, is evacuated;

February 18, 1865 – Charleston, SC, surrenders to Union troops under Brigadier General Alexander Schimmelfennig;

February 24, 1862 – Federal troops under General Nathaniel Banks occupy Harpers Ferry, Virginia;

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

February 1, 1865 – Illinois is the first State to ratify the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery;

February 4, 1861 – First session of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States of America is held in Montgomery, Alabama;

February 7, 1865 - Lincoln meets with the Confederate peace commissioners aboard the *River Queen* at Hampton Roads, Virginia;

February 19, 1862 - New Confederate Congress orders the release of 2,000 Federal POWs;

February 20, 1865 – The Confederate House of Representatives authorises use of slaves as soldiers;

February 23, 1861 – Texas voters approve secession by a wide margin;

February 25, 1862 – Federal War Department takes control of all telegraph lines to facilitate military movements;

February 26, 1863 – The Cherokee Indian National Council repeals the ordinance of secession, proclaims for the Union;

February 27, 1864 – Near Americus in Georgia, Federal Prisoners of War begin arriving at the unfinished Camp Sumter (Andersonville) prison camp.

Famous Last Words 1

“I don’t know if I am standing on my head or feet”

- Union General Joseph E Hooker,
June 1863

“... In my latest writing and utterance, I repeat my unmitigated hatred to ... the vile Yankee race.”

- Edmund Ruffin, June 17, 1865
prior to his committing suicide.

“Were the thing done over again, I would do as I did. Disappointments have not changed my convictions”

- Jefferson Davis, in his
post-war memoirs

Did you Know?

Did you know that Abraham Lincoln was born on the same day as Charles Darwin of *The Origin of Species* fame? It was February 12, 1809.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

In accordance with the relevant legislation, notice is hereby given that the postponed Annual General Meeting of the American Civil War Round Table of Australia, NSW Chapter Incorporated, will be held at 7:30pm on Monday, 16 February 2009 at the Roseville Memorial RSL Club.

Business:

- To receive the report from the Chairman;
- To receive and if thought fit adopt the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2008;
- To elect office-bearers of the Association and ordinary members of the committee;
- To transact any other business in accordance with the rules of the Round Table.

Brendan O'Connell
Secretary / Treasurer

Please Note: The financial statements for the Annual General Meeting were enclosed as an attachment to the previous Newsletter in November 2008.

Famous Last Words 2

*"If victorious, we will have everything to live for.
If defeated, there will be nothing to live for."*

- General Robert E Lee
on May 4, 1864

*"If the North can march an army right through
the South, it is proof that the North can prevail
...I will not attempt to send couriers back but
trust to the Richmond papers to keep you
advised"*

- General William Tecumseh Sherman
November 1864 to General Grant

*"Yesterday we rode on the pinnacle of
success – today, absolute ruin seems to be
our portion. The Confederacy totters to its
destruction."*

- Josiah Gorgas, Confederate
Chief of Ordnance, July 1863

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 secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au

Causes Won, Lost and Forgotten...

The eminent Civil War historian, Gary W Gallagher, From the University of Virginia, has written a most interesting book that will be of interest to many Civil War scholars and enthusiasts.

Titled *"Causes Won, Lost and Forgotten – How Hollywood and Popular Art Shape What We Know About the Civil War"* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008), Professor Gallagher suggests that although there are over 60,000 books published about the Civil War, most Americans get their ideas about the War, not from these books but from movies, television and other popular media.

Too often these portrayals overlook the fundamental ideas that motivated the generation that fought the War. Indeed, Gallagher suggests that the most influential perspective for the Civil War generation is almost entirely absent from Civil War stories being told today.

Professor Gallagher suggests that popular understandings of the Civil War have been shaped by four traditions that arose in the 19th Century and are still present today. These are:

1. The Lost Cause, in which Confederates were seen to have waged an honourable struggle against hopeless odds;
2. The Union Cause, in which sees the War as an effort to maintain a viable republic in the face of secessionist actions;
3. The Emancipation Cause, in which the War is viewed as a struggle to free the four million slaves and eliminate a perceived "cancerous" influence in American society; and
4. The Reconciliation Cause, in which both Northern and Southern whites seek to extol so-called "American" virtues and mute the role of African Americans.

A cinematic interpretation of the War is traced from the original dominance of the Lost Cause to a more recent celebration of Emancipation and to a lesser extent Reconciliation. In contrast to this trend, the contemporary art market has focused overwhelmingly on the Lost Cause. Neither film nor art provides a sympathetic consideration of the Union Cause, which in Gallagher's view carried the most weight in the Civil War era.

This book will challenge our thoughts about the Civil War and our thinking and debate on many contemporary social and political issues including the use of the military and freedom of dissent.

It is strongly recommended as a "must read" book for 2009 and the hard cover edition may be obtained online from *Amazon.com* for \$US 27:44 plus postage (approx \$US 9:00). Hopefully, the subject of this book will serve as the basis for the presentation at one of our regular meetings this year.