

Sumter to Appomattox

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

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Please visit our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au

A Message from the Chairman –

To those 36 members and guests who attended our last meeting in July to hear Dr Daniel Stowell, Director of the Abraham Lincoln Papers Project, from Springfield, Illinois, speak to us about his work, they were privileged to experience something really special. Dr Stowell has managed this most ambitious project since its inception, seeking to identify, image, transcribe, annotate and publish all documents written or signed by Lincoln and documents sent to him.

I used to think that Stephen Loosley's presentation given in the very early days in the life of our Chapter was the best Civil War lecture I have ever heard. Indeed, Paul Kensey and I regularly, but not frequently, reflected on how great was Loosley's presentation was. I need to say now, however, that in my view, Daniel Stowell's lecture surpassed that of Loosley and I am in awe of his scholarship and understanding, not only of matters pertaining to Lincoln, but of American History generally. Thank you Daniel for the privilege of allowing us to share with you what has become your life's work.

This leaves us and, in particular, our Program Director, Bruce McLennan, with a massive challenge to keep the standard of presentations at our future meetings at the level we have experienced recently. In this regard, you will see from the notice in the adjoining column that Bruce has met this challenge in his usual inimitable way. He has managed to arrange for the other Bruce, viz., Dennett, to lead the discussion.

Finally, I ask that members who have not finalised their annual subscription, the invoice of which was included with the mailing of the last Newsletter, (\$40 for Sydney Metropolitan members, \$30 for all others and these same costs apply as a family rate), do so as soon as possible. Brendan O'Connell will be happy to relieve you of this money at our meeting.

I look forward to seeing you at our coming meeting on September 24. It would be great if not only you were to come but you bring a friend.

John Cook

Our Next Meeting

The next regular meeting for this year is to be held at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, 64 Pacific Highway, Roseville on Monday, September 24**. As is our custom, the meeting will commence with a bistro-style meal from 6pm with the meeting proper to start at around 7:15 – 7:30pm.

At this meeting, Bruce Dennett will lead our discussion, which will be a continuation of the discussions at the meeting in May earlier in the year. In this regard, we will continue our discussions on the Northern Economy during the period 1861 – 1865 as outlined in the DVD shown at the earlier meeting in May. This DVD features Professor Gary Gallagher from the University of Virginia and provides some thoughtful insights into aspects of the North's Civil War economy and significant legislation that had been stalled prior to the outbreak of war, but was then able to be enacted. This legislation included:

National Banking Act, 1863
Homestead Act, 1862
Land Grant College Act, 1862 (Morrill Act)
Pacific Railway Bill of 1862

It is suggested that prior to the meeting you "Google" each of these Acts with a view to being able to have some background on their implications for the Northern population and the Federal Government during the period of the War.

Also, the very successful "Show and Tell" segment will be operating at this meeting. Members are encouraged to "hop up" (Bruce McLennan's words) and share with other members something they have found recently – a magazine article, book, DVD etc. As a guide to time for this - 30 seconds to 3 minutes. Don't hold back! (Again, Bruce McLennan's words)

As always, Bruce Dennett will offer views that are challenging and sometimes controversial and you can be guaranteed that you will need to think about the issues raised in ways that you probably have not done before. Our Chairman, John Cook, is offering a "money back" guarantee if you are dissatisfied with the presentation on the night. In this regard, John will pay for your meal and drinks for the evening!

It Happened in September

September 4, 1864 - Confederate raider and cavalry leader, John Hunt Morgan, is shot and killed in a federal raid on Greenville, Tenn;

September 6, 1819 – William S Rosecrans (USA) is born in Delaware County, Ohio;

September 10, 1836 – Joseph (Fighting Joe) Wheeler (CSA) is born in Augusta, Ga;

September 12, 1818 – Richard J Gatling, inventor of the first machine gun (Gatling Gun) used in the Civil War is born in Hertford County NC;

September 27, 1808 – Raphael Semmes, the Confederate naval commander responsible for the destruction or capture of 64 Union ships is born in Charles County, MD;

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

September 1, 1864 – Union forces under General Sherman occupy Atlanta; September 8, 1863 – General Braxton Bragg retreats into Georgia;

September 9, 1863 – Federal forces commanded by General Rosecrans occupy Chattanooga, TN;

September 15, 1862 – Confederates capture Harpers Ferry, W.VA, taking 12 000 prisoners;

September 17, 1862 – The Battle of Antietam halts Confederate advance into the North;

September 18, 1862 – Lee withdraws his Army of Northern Virginia from Maryland under cover of darkness;

September 19-20, 1863 – The Battle of Chickamauga – a Confederate victory after they exploit a gap in the Federal lines and force a hurried and confused Northern retreat;

September 19, 1864 – The Third Battle of Winchester where Federal forces commanded by Sheridan defeat Early's Confederates;

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

September 11, 1864 – Generals Sherman and Hood enter into a ten-day truce to allow for the evacuation of citizens of Atlanta, GA;

September 22, 1862 – Following the strategic Union victory at Antietam, Lincoln issues the preliminary emancipation proclamation.

Did You Know? ...

The Civil War provided the first two presidents who were West Point graduates – Jefferson Davis of the Confederate States of America and of the Eighteenth President of the United States, Ulysses S Grant.

In later times three other presidents emerged from the West Point Academy – Dwight D Eisenhower (United States), Anastasio Somoza (Nicaragua) and Fidel Ramos (Philippines).

Famous Last Words...

“My grand old division, which was so full of faith and courage then, is now almost extinguished. But one field officer in the whole command escaped in that terrible third of July slaughter, and alas! alas! For the men who fearlessly followed their lead on to certain death”

- General George E Pickett, CSA,
after the Battle of Gettysburg

“Forward! For God’s sake forward”

- General John Reynolds just
before being mortally wounded,
Gettysburg, July 1, 1863

“I’m as dead a man as Julius Caesar”

- General Stephen H Weed,
Union brigade commander mortally
wounded at Little Round Top

**Governor Harris: “General, are you wounded?”
General Johnston: “Yes, and I fear seriously”**

(These were the last words of Albert Sidney Johnston who bled to death during the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862, after being struck in the leg by a stray minie ball. A simple tourniquet would have saved his life.)

“The South has lost its best friend”

- Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain,
on Lincoln’s death

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, 2075 or e-mail secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au

Some Further Pre-Reading for our Next Meeting...

Those members with a little more time on their hands might like to consider some or all of the following questions/issues that are likely to be part of Bruce Dennett's interrogation of us at the forthcoming September meeting:

Consideration of what was needed to supply both the Union Armies and the civilian population – both agricultural and manufactured products.

How were these items to where they were needed?

What changes were taking place in methods of production of agricultural produce?

Were the beneficial structural changes the result of the War?

What was the long-term significance of the Republican legislation enacted during the War for the US economy?

You may be assured that some prior knowledge of these issues will act as a catalyst for the discussion to be led by Bruce Dennett!

Civil War Photographs

Jenny Holder, one of our members from South Australia, has provided a very interesting link to some classic Civil War photographs that members will be interested in. This link is:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2012/02/the-civil-war-part-1-the-places/100241/>

Please let us know what you think of this resource.

A Sad Note Regarding Geoff Kay...

Following our last meeting, Brendan O'Connell received an e-mail from Geoff Kay's daughter advising us that Geoff had succumbed to the Alzheimer's condition and would not be able to attend any more of our meetings.

Geoff had been a regular member of our Chapter for a number of years and was always one of the first to be at Roseville RSL Club for our meetings. His genial presence at our gatherings will be sorely missed.

In responding to this advice from Geoff's daughter, Brendan asked that if the opportunity were to present itself, to please convey the best wishes of our Roundtable members to Geoff.

Visit by Ed Bears in 2013

Our Melbourne cousins are proposing to bring to Australia the very well-known Civil War historian and guide, Ed Bears, in late March 2013. Members would have seen Bears as a key commentator in the Ken Burns' *The Civil War* series, first shown on TV in the 1990s and now available on DVD at a very reasonable price.

The advice we have so far on this proposed visit is that Ed Bears will be the keynote speaker at the Melbourne conference/symposium on March 23 and at their regular meeting the following week. The Queensland group have asked for him to speak to them on Saturday, March 16. Your Executive is seeking to have Bears speak to us at a regular meeting on the following Monday evening, (March 18).

Having access to Ed Bears for our meeting is not without cost and we have been asked to contribute 25% towards his airfare and pay his accommodation costs whilst in Sydney. The total cost of this visit is still being negotiated and members will be advised of developments as they occur. In the meantime, keep Monday evening, March 18, 2013 clear for what will be an exceptional evening meeting.

The Private Soldiers' War

"Where men fell and left a vacant place other men stepped into their places and although death stared them in the face there was not a man who faltered"

- Josiah F Murphy, Private,
20th Mass Infantry

"As I witnessed one line swept away by one fearful blast from Kershaw's men behind the stone wall, I forgot they were enemies and only remembered that they were men, and it is hard to see in cold blood brave men die."

- Alexander Hunter, Private,
17th Virginia Infantry

"I looked around and I was all alone"

- George S Barnsley, Private
8th Georgia Infantry

"I marvelled as I heard the unremitting, patter, snip, thud and hum of the bullets, how anyone could live under this raining death"

- Henry M Stanley, Private,
6th Arkansas Infantry

An Injured Lee Visits Leesburg after Second Manassas...

On the afternoon of September 4, 1862, five days after the Confederate victory at the Second Battle of Manassas, throngs of well-wishers lined Leesburg's streets, including King Street behind you, to welcome the threadbare but jubilant Army of Northern Virginia as it marched through the town.

Among its 55,000 men was a horse-drawn ambulance carrying the army's injured commander, Gen. Robert E. Lee. Here, before the grand entrance to Harrison Hall, home of a distant relative of the Lees, the ambulance halted. Lee, hands bandaged—one broken, one badly sprained when his horse, Traveller, bolted at Second Manassas—was escorted inside and treated by local physician Samuel Jackson, who lived in the house to your right



That afternoon, in the first-floor room to the right of the front door, Lee quietly visited with his son Robert, a private in the Rockbridge Artillery. Later, escorted by two young daughters of the household, the general walked to the home of John Janney, which still stands at 10 Cornwall Street. Janney had served as president of the Virginia Secession Convention in 1861. Although Janney voted against secession, it was he who handed the sword of command of Virginia's troops to Lee.

The next morning, a rare conference took place, when Gens. Lee, Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, J.E.B. Stuart, James Longstreet, and Lewis A. Armistead all assembled here in the dining room. When the generals later rose from their meeting, they had planned to execute Lee's daring decision to invade Maryland, which culminated at Antietam in the bloodiest day in American history.

(This article has been provided courtesy of Jenny Holder, one of our members from South Australia.)

Is Anyone Interested?

We have recently received correspondence from a Staff Cadet at ADFA (Australian Defence Force Academy) canvassing our interest in conducting a Civil War battle re-enactment. This correspondence is presented unedited below:

"I am a Second Year Officer Cadet studying history at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra. As part of our military studies, it is prerequisite to our graduation from the Academy into the Royal Military College Duntroon (RMC-D) to successfully plan and conduct an individually assessed Leadership Project.

I have always been interested in the American Civil War and since coming to ADFA I have had for the first time the opportunity to formally study the subject. Sharing a common interest in the extravaganza of the Civil War re-enactments in the States, a like minded friend and I have been considering the possibility of staging a public Civil War re-enactment at ADFA as part of our Leadership Projects for next year, utilising volunteers from the Cadet body as actors.

While reading the September-October edition of the Australian Geographic, I noticed an article on the Fort Lytton History Alive Festival and my interest was piqued by the participation of a group called the American Civil War Round Table of Queensland. Previously I had been unable to locate any organisations devoted to the US Civil War in Australia and upon conducting research on the Queensland branch, I soon discovered the American Civil War Round Table of Australia, hence this email.

While the plan is still in its theoretical stage, as part of a feasibility check on our part, we were wondering if your organisation would be interested in assisting us in staging a Civil War re-enactment, or failing that, if you could advise us as to how we would best go about organising one.

I believe that, if properly advertised, such an event would be financially feasible with an entrance fee for members of the public to cover the costs of staging it and the further possibility of military funding. More to this, ADFA presents an excellent venue for the conduct of this activity, available to us free of charge. Finally, I believe that this activity would have the symbiotic effect of advertising and promoting the American Civil War Round Table of Australia while at the same time serving as good PR for ADFA and in a wider sense, the Australian Defence Force.

For your consideration."

Whilst a number of your Committee have minimal interest in such an activity, it may be that some members would be interested in being involved with such a re-enactment. Consequently, before directing this Officer Cadet to the Queensland group of the Round Table who is interested re-enactment activities, we would like to ascertain if there is any interest within the NSW Chapter. To this end, the matter will be raised at our forthcoming meeting on September 24.