

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 our Chairman –

Our last meeting was the Christmas function and AGM. I felt the meeting had a great sense of camaraderie. A highlight of the evening was the presentation of a Life Membership to our long-serving Secretary-Treasurer, Brendan O’Connell. Since then Brendan has also been recognised in the Australia Day Honours list (see separate item). Congratulations to Brendan.

We also acknowledged the significant contribution of John Cook as our Chairman since 2009 and Program director before that. Thank you, John.

The Executive and Committee elected at the meeting are listed on the last page of this Newsletter. Congratulations to these members for stepping up to contribute. We propose to hold committee meetings one or two weeks before each full members meeting – at the Roseville club, at the same time as the bistro meal for full meetings.

As the year progresses committee members will take on specific jobs. In particular, a specific item at each meeting will be **recruitment** of new members and retention of existing members. In this context, we should acknowledge the great work of Peter Zacharatos in attracting new members via our Facebook page – accessed from our website.

Our Program Director, Philip, is keen to better understand the interests and wishes of members and has prepared a questionnaire for your feedback. I encourage you to fully contribute to this study. The first meeting of the year will comprise a panel session and a discussion of lessons **NOT** learnt from the Civil War.

Our Next Meeting

The first regular meeting for 2016 for the NSW Chapter of the ACWRTA will be held at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, Pacific Highway Roseville** will be held on **Monday, March 7**. As is our custom, the meeting will commence with a bistro-style meal from 6pm with the meeting proper to start at 7:15pm.

As noted by our Chairman, the first meeting for the year will be devoted to a panel discussion and the lessons **NOT** learnt by both sides of the conflict during the Civil War.

This discussion will be lead by our Program Director, **Philip Shanahan**, and all members present are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the evening’s proceedings. In this regard, we are not looking for consensus but a lively and, hopefully controversial discussion!

In addition to this panel discussion, we will continue with the popular part of our regular meetings, the **Show and Tell** segment and members are asked to bring with them for presentation any item that they consider would be of interest to members.

Our Secretary/Treasurer Honoured in The Australia Day Honours List

It is with the greatest of pleasure that we can report that our Secretary/Treasurer, **Brendan O’Connell**, has been recognised for his service to the community in the Australia Day Honours List with **the award of the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)**. The citation in the Sydney Morning Herald of January 26, reads:

*“Brendan Patrick O’Connell, St Ives, NSW.
For service to the community through a range
of organisations.”*

Congratulations Brendan, this is an award so richly deserved. It is really great to see such awards given to the “right” people who are the “backbone” of our community organisations.

Bruce McLennan

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.

Meeting Dates for 2016

For noting in your diary, the meeting dates arranged for this year are as follows:

Monday, March 7, Rose Room
Monday, May 2, Rose Room
Monday, July 4, Pacific Room
Monday, September 12, Pacific Room
Monday, November 28, Rose Room

The venue for all of these meetings is the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club**.

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 – the Confederate Provisional Congress elects Jefferson Davis as Provisional President of the Confederacy;

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

A Piece of Trivia - 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.

Results of Our Annual General Meeting -

As part of our Christmas / End-of-Year function, we held our AGM and elected the Executive and Committee for 2016 - 2017. The results of this election were as follows:

Chairman: Bruce McLennan
Secretary/Treasurer: Brendan O'Connell
Program Director: Philip Shanahan
Newsletter Editor: John Cook
Associate Editor: Jennifer Kirkby

Committee Members:

David Cooper
John Morrison
Margaret Neil-Smith
Peter Zacharatos Jnr

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 you can whip Lee and I can march to the Atlantic, I think that Uncle Abe will give us twenty days leave of absence to see the young folks."

- General Sherman communicating his plans to Grant prior to the March to the Sea, November 1864

"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

"If the North can march an army right through the night, it is proof positive that the North will prevail ... I will not attempt to send couriers back, but trust to the Richmond papers to keep you well advised. I can make this march and make Georgia howl."

- General Sherman to Grant, November 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 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 of 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.

The Kindle edition is currently available online from Amazon.com.au for \$14:37. Hopefully, the subject of this book might serve as the basis for the presentation at one of our regular meetings this year.