

Sumter to Appomattox

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

Patron: Professor the Hon Bob Carr

No. 82, June - July 2017

Please visit our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au

A Message from Our Chairman

A big thank you to all of you who put up notices for our last meeting and those who brought a friend. Our Patron, Professor the Hon **Bob Carr**, gave a wonderful personal account of his interest in the American Civil War. The room was full to overflowing. A wonderful presentation.

For our **next meeting** we have a very experienced presenter from Connecticut. Dr "**Mick**" **Bedard** has spoken to many Round Tables around New England (US) and many will remember his insightful presentation to our group in 2013. Mick has been in the Washington Archives recently discovering new insights into the ship's visit here.



Mick Bedard as Dr Lane Hadley, Civil War Naval Surgeon

Mick is a lifelong reader of American and world history, with particular interest in the Civil War and nineteenth century medicine. He has presented large numbers of papers on a wide variety of topics. We are fortunate to have such a renowned speaker for our next meeting. On our **Website** you will always find the date of our next meeting. Our Facebook page is also easily accessed from our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au

Our Next Meeting ...

The next meeting of our NSW Chapter of the ACWRTA will be held at:

**The Roseville Memorial RSL Club
Pacific Highway, Roseville,
on Tuesday, June 13.**

**(Please note the change of the day in the week
from Monday to Tuesday for this meeting)**

This meeting is to have an overseas speaker in the person of **Dr R M (Mick) Bedard** who has spoken to our Chapter in earlier times and whom we found to be a most engaging speaker. Dr Bedard's presentation has the title:

**The Visit of USS Kearsarge
to Sydney in 1869**

In addition to this keynote address, we will be reinstating the *Show and Tell* component of our meetings and we invite you to bring any contributions you might have to enable you to participate in this part of our meeting.

It is hoped that you will make a special effort to be at this function, thus enabling us to continue the significant increase in our meeting numbers and membership of the Chapter. In this regard, we probably will not eclipse the 80+ members and guests that attended our special May meeting (see our Chairman's Message on this page), but it is something that we can work towards!

Bruce McLennan

Our May Meeting

On Monday evening, May 1, our Chapter of the American Civil War Round Table of Australia held a special meeting to welcome our new Patron, Professor the Hon. Bob Carr, former Premier of NSW and Australia's former Foreign Minister. The attendance at the meeting was in excess of 80, which was the largest number of participants that we have had in the twenty years of the Chapter's existence. It was particularly pleasing to see Paul Kensey at the meeting. Paul was our inaugural Chairman and is presently residing in a nursing home following a continuing series of serious illnesses. This supplement seeks to provide some of the highlights of this meeting.

A Report of the Meeting:

Jannette Greenwood has provided us with a succinct report of the meeting, clearly demonstrating what a privilege it was to be part of this meeting. Her report states:

We were privileged to have our Patron, Professor, the Hon Bob Carr, address us on the topic

“How my interest in the Civil War began”.

The room was overflowing with members and guests when our Life Member and Civil War expert, Len Traynor, introduced the speaker, who is also his cousin.

The Hon Mr Carr gave a lively and wide-ranging address, explaining why this war has been of such enduring interest to him. This was a war, he said, which pitted brother against brother, involved old-fashioned military strategies such as siege warfare and yet looked to the future with strategies such as trench warfare.



Mr Carr addressing our ACWRTA (NSW) May meeting

Mr Carr spoke in detail about his enduring fascination with President Abraham Lincoln, insightfully describing his Log Cabin upbringing and later election as a minority leader to the presidency. He spoke about various events that cemented his reputation, including eyewitness accounts of meetings with him and comments by contemporary leaders.

He believes that the Civil War still has a powerful impact on the United States today as a result of unresolved slavery issues. Race underpinned the recent Presidential campaign and the *Red State - Blue State* divide and ongoing issues still have an effect on the 10% of Americans of African-American heritage. He also noted that slavery actually preceded the arrival of the Mayflower.

Mr Carr also emphasized the value of actually visiting Civil War sites to fully understand the layout and progress of battles, citing the value also. As Patron of our War Round Table NSW he encouraged exploration and understanding of this pivotal period in American history.

A lively question and answer session followed the address.

The speaker was presented with a unique coloured portrait of President Lincoln made especially by our own Philip Shanahan.

The Presentation to our Patron

Knowing Professor Carr's interest in Abraham Lincoln, Philip Shanahan had created a colourised portrait, which was presented at the conclusion of his address:

And Finally ...

Presented below, are two photographs taken at our meeting. These include one of our Chairman, Bruce McLennan, Bob Carr and his cousin and Honorary Member of our Chapter, Len Traynor. Mr Carr is holding the presentation made to him, the colourised portrait of Lincoln.



Bruce McLennan, Len Traynor and Professor Carr holding the colourised portrait of Lincoln presented to him.

The other photograph, presented here, is the presentation made to Bob Carr, the colourised portrait of Abraham Lincoln, brilliantly crafted by Philip Shanahan.

Thanks Philip, no doubt this image will take pride of place in our Patron's office.



It Happened in June

HATCHES AND DESPACHES

June 1, 1831 – John Bell Hood (CSA) is born in Owingsville, Bath County, Kentucky;

June 3, 1808 – Confederate President Jefferson Davis is born in Christian County, Kentucky;

June 5, 1864 – On Matagorda Island, Texas, 13 black members of the Union's Corps de Afrique are hanged by Federal military authorities after convictions for mutiny;

June 5, 1864 – Brigadier General William E (Grumble) Jones (CSA) is killed in action in the Shenandoah Valley;

June 14, 1811 – Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is born Litchfield, Conn;

June 14, 1864 – General Leonidas Polk, (CSA) is killed at Pine Mountain, Georgia during the Atlanta Campaign.

COMMAND AND POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

June 17, 1862 – Braxton Bragg succeeds General Beauregard as Commander of the Western Department of the Confederate Army

June 22, 1861 – Robert E Lee is named the commander of the forces of Virginia;

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

June 1 – 3, 1864 – Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia;

June 1, 1862 – Second day of fighting in the Battle of Seven Forks;

June 6, 1862 – The Battle of Memphis, Tennessee;

June 8, 1862 - Confederate forces under "Stonewall Jackson, successfully fight off Federal attacks and achieve victory at the Battle of Cross Keys, Virginia;

June 9, 1863 – Battle of Brandy Station, Virginia, which is the largest cavalry battle ever fought on American soil. In this battle JEB Stuart was surprised by the Union forces commanded by Alfred Pleasanton and narrowly escapes defeat;

June 10, 1861 – Battle of Big Bethel, Virginia, is the first major battle of the Civil War. Although outnumbering the Confederates by more than four to one, the Union attack failed disastrously:

June 12 – 15, 1862 – JEB Stuart's spectacular four-day reconnaissance that develops into a ride around McClellan's army on the Virginia Peninsula;

June 27, 1864 – Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, Ga, results in a Confederate victory thus temporarily checking Sherman's march on Atlanta.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

June 4, 1862 – Southern planters burn huge stocks of cotton on the Yazoo and the Mississippi to prevent their capture;

June 19, 1862 – President Lincoln signs into law a measure prohibiting slavery in the territories of the United States;

June 20, 1863 – By presidential proclamation West Virginia is admitted to the Union as the 35th State;

June 23, 1861 – Federal balloonist Thaddeus Lowe observes and maps the Confederate lines over northern Virginia;

June 25, 1864 – At Petersburg, Federal engineers begin digging a tunnel towards Confederate lines that they hope will enable them to blow apart the Southern earthworks;

June 28, 1863 – Lee diverts Confederate forces from an intended drive to Harrisburg to march them towards Gettysburg;

June 30, 1865 – All eight alleged conspirators in the Lincoln assassination are found guilty.

It Happened in July

HATCHES AND DESPACHES

July 5, 1801 – David Glasgow Farragut, the first person in US history to hold the rank of Admiral is born in Knoxville, Tennessee;

July 13, 1821 – Nathan Bedford Forrest is born in Chapel Hill, Tennessee;

July 22, 1864 – Major General James B McPherson (USA), is killed during the Battle of Atlanta;

July 29, 1820 – Clement Laird Vallandigham, leader of the Peace Democrats (Copperheads) during the Civil War, is born in New Lisbon, Ohio;

July 31, 1839 – William Clarke Quantrill, the Confederate guerrilla and outlaw is born in Canal Dover, Tennessee;

COMMAND CHANGES

July 17, 1864 – Jefferson Davis relieves Joseph E Johnston of the Confederate Army and Department of Tennessee and replaces him with John Bell Hood;

July 18, 1863 – Major General John G Foster assumes command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina;

It Happened in July (cont'd)

COMMAND CHANGES (cont'd)

July 23, 1862 – Major General Henry Halleck assumes command of the armies of the United States;

July 27, 1861 – Major General George B McClellan assumes command of the Federal Division of the Potomac;

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

July 1 – 3, 1863 – The Battle of Gettysburg ending in a significant Confederate defeat;

July 4, 1863 – Vicksburg surrenders to Union forces under Grant, thus giving the Union control of the Mississippi River;

July 6, 1863 – Fighting occurs at Boonsborough, Hagerstown and Williamsport, Maryland, as Lee withdraws from Gettysburg;

July 8, 1863 – Confederate forces unconditionally surrender Port Hudson, La., the last Confederate garrison on the Mississippi River;

July 9, 1864 – The Battle of Monocacy, Maryland., where 7000 Federals under General Lew Wallace delay Jubal Early's 15000 Confederates approaching Washington;

July 10, 1863 – Federal Forces land on Morris Island near Charleston, S. C., and begin the siege of Fort Wagner that will last until September;

July 11, 1864 – Confederates under Jubal Early reach the suburbs of Washington;

July 12, 1864 – Federal reinforcements arrive in Washington and Early begins to withdraw;

July 16, 1864 – Confederates under Johnston abandon Jackson, Miss., to Sherman's Federal forces;

July 20, 1864 – Hood fails his first big test of command of an army as his forces are defeated at the Battle of Peachtree Creek, Georgia;

July 21, 1861 – Union General Irvin McDowell is defeated at the First Battle of Bull Run, Manassas, Va;

July 24, 1864 – Confederate forces under Jubal Early inflict heavy casualties at the Second Battle of Kernstown, Virginia;

July 26, 1863 – Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan surrenders his exhausted force of 364 men at Salineville, Ohio. Morgan and his officers are sent to Ohio State Penitentiary;

July 30, 1864 – Despite a huge mine explosion, Confederates fend off the second major frontal assault on Petersburg, Virginia.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

July 11, 1864 – fellow prisoners hang eleven "Raiders" at Andersonville;

July 11, 1864 – Standing on the fortifications at Fort Stephens, Lincoln is fired on by Jubal Early's Confederates;

July 13, 1863 – Three days of draft riots begin in New York;

July 16, 1864 – Union Navy in action off Shimonoski, Japan;

July 17, 1861 – Thaddeus Low ascends in a balloon.

Famous Last Words

"Blow Gabriel, blow! My God, let him blow! I am ready to die!"

- Unknown Confederate soldier
at Appomattox, April 1865.

"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

"The war has made us a nation of great power and intelligence. We have but little to do to preserve peace, happiness and prosperity at home, and the respect of nations. Our experience should teach us the necessity of the first; our power secures the latter"

- Ulysses S Grant

"Then there is nothing left to me but to go and see General Grant and I would rather die a thousand deaths ... How easy could I be rid of this! All I have to do is to ride along the line and it would all be over. But is our duty to live."

- Confederate General Robert e Lee
Palm Sunday morning
April 9, 1865

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 of the Chapter by telephone on 0411745704 or by e-mail at:

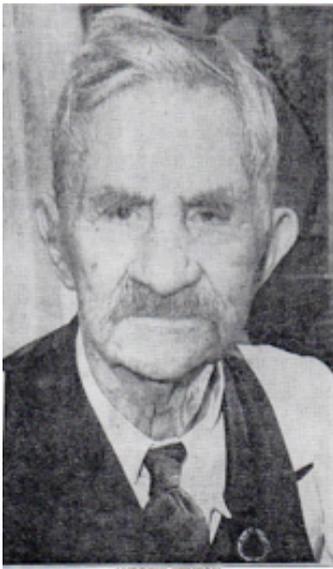
secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au

The Union's Last Ironclad Sailor

Submitted by Lt Col Steve Glazer, US Army (Retd)

On April 19, 1945, less than three weeks before the end of World War II in Europe, *The New York Times* carried an article headlined, "Veteran of Monitor, 101, Dies." The U.P. news report, datelined the previous day from Vineland, New Jersey, began, "Andrew Fenton, who served on the iron-clad Monitor during the Civil War, died today in the Soldiers Home here." Thus was born a tortuous tale that continues to this day.

The Times' report drew the attention of numerous historians over the years. Professor Jay Hoar of the University of Maine wove an elaborate tale describing how Fenton suffered the partial loss of sight and hearing in action against Fort Sumter when one of the *Monitor's* guns unexpectedly discharged, and how he later dramatically survived the iconic ironclad's sinking. (*The North's Last Boys in Blue*, Higginson Book Co., 2006, pp. 352-57.) Hoar largely relied on an interview of the old sailor published in 1938.



On the other hand, John Quarstein, Director of the USS *Monitor* Center in Newport News, Virginia, concluded that there is no proof for Fenton's purported service on the *Monitor*. Indeed, Quarstein goes much further. He categorically and repeatedly asserted in his book on the ship's crew that "there is no indication of any naval service" by Fenton. (*The Monitor Boys*, The History Press, 2011, pp. 299-301.) The *Monitor* Center's website similarly now asserts that "no records of naval service have been found" for Fenton.

Hoar and Quarstein, as well as *The Times*, were mistaken. Moreover, there are abundant official records documenting Andrew Fenton's distinguished military service, making him New Jersey's last known survivor of the Union Navy, and the nation's last known veteran of the Civil War's ironclad monitors, albeit not the USS *Monitor*.

Andrew Fenton was born in St. Augustine, Florida, on Christmas 1843, but his family moved to Philadelphia when he was still an infant. According to unearthed naval records, Fenton enlisted for three years as a 1st Class Boy at the U.S. Naval Rendezvous in Philadelphia on September 2, 1862, on the receiving ship *Princeton*. Soon thereafter, he was sent to the USS *Patapsco*, a *Passaic*-class ironclad monitor first launched later that month from Wilmington, Delaware, by shipbuilder Harlan & Hollingsworth. *Patapsco* was commissioned on January 2, 1863, when Fenton was formally assigned to her according to his service records. Fenton and his ship would be engaged in combat operations for the next two years.

Veteran of Monitor, 101, Dies

VINELAND, N. J., April 18 (U.P.) —Andrew Fenton, who served on the iron-clad Monitor during the Civil War, died today in the Soldiers Home here at the age of 101. Mr. Fenton was flag-bearer when the United States took possession of Alaska. He leaves a widow, a son, five grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

The New York Times
Published: April 19, 1945

According to naval records, on the afternoon of November 2, 1863, while firing at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, a premature explosion of one of *Patapsco's* guns instantly killed a crewmember and injured several others, including then-landsman Andrew Fenton. (*Official Records*, Ser. I, Vol. XV, p. 88.) And on the night of January 15, 1865, the *Patapsco*, on station for picket duty some 700 yards from Fort Sumter, struck a large torpedo and sank in the harbor's channel within 15 seconds, taking the ship's complement with her. Most perished, but Ordinary Seaman Andrew Fenton survived. (*Official Records*, Ser. I, Vol. XVI, pp. 178-79.) Two weeks later, Fenton reported for duty on the USS *Pawnee*, which saw action the following month in South Carolina against numerous Confederate artillery batteries.

On July 26, 1865, *Pawnee* was decommissioned at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where Fenton was honorably discharged the same day, according to the ship's final muster roll. However, Fenton was not done serving his country. One year later he re-enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and after that term expired, he enlisted yet again.

After his years at sea, Fenton made his home in Fairfield and Mount Holly, New Jersey, as well as in Philadelphia, where he was a member of Anna M. Ross G.A.R. Post No. 94. In 1881, he married Susan Cecelia Bamford of Bridgeton, New Jersey, one year later having a son, Andrew Percy Fenton. On April 18, 1945, the ancient mariner passed away in Vineland, being buried in Overlook Cemetery in Bridgeton, marking the end of a direct link to the Civil War and its transformation of naval warfare.

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The above are photos taken of the 2016 tour compliments of John Morrison

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