

Sumter to Appomattox

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

Patron: Professor the Hon. Bob Carr

No. 98 January – February, 2020

Please visit our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au

A Message from Our Chairman

AGM President's Report

Our American Civil War Round Table Chapter has enjoyed a successful year since the last AGM, holding well attended meetings on 18 February, 8 April, 3 June, 22 July, 16 September and now this AGM on 25 November 2019.

The newsletters can all be found on our website and they record that the presentations at the meetings included what was to be found in uniforms and other anecdotes (Len Traynor), Diplomacy, Cavalry (Phil Shanahan), Coastal Operations (Rod Cooke), Atlanta to the Sea (John Morrison), and Anaesthetics and Surgery (Jane McDonald). They also record several short presentations on particular events and people. It is also pleasing to see that the newsletters include several profiles of particular people contributed by several members. I record here our appreciation and thanks to those who have stepped forward as presenters and contributors throughout the year. There is great knowledge and talent within our ranks.

Six editions of the newsletter have been published since the last AGM. Jannette Greenwood has evolved the style and content to some extent, and it has been an interesting record of our activities and a source of even more background knowledge and insights. The Committee has held six minuted meetings since the last AGM and has functioned well as a team with John Morrison as Program Director and Vice President, Dan Howard as Secretary, Brendan O'Connell as Treasurer, Jannette Greenwood as Newsletter Editor, Peter Zacharatos as Web Manager and (more recently) Membership Facilitator, and Bruce McLennan as Immediate Past President. I note our appreciation to all of them and my personal thanks for looking after the interests and future of the Round Table. (cont. p.3)

Our Next Meeting

Monday, 17th February

6.30 at the Roseville Club

Topic: *The Iron Brigade*
Presented by Rod Cooke

We are hopeful this will start a new series:
My Favourite Brigade.

Also, any contributions to our *Favourite Moments of the Civil War* slot will be welcome. Come along with a short prepared talk on your *Favourite Moment.*

Anyone interested in participating should contact John Morrison by email (johnjmorrison@bigpond.com) or on 0411 197 935.

This publication is the official newsletter of the American Civil War Round Table of Australia (New South Wales Chapter).

All inquiries regarding the newsletter should be addressed to the Secretary of the Chapter by telephone on 0411 745 704 or by e-mail to:

secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au

(from p. 1)

I particularly note the attention to the meeting programs, the newsletter, the efficient administration of formal requirements, the efficient provision of notices and reminders, and the usefulness of the web site. Bruce McLennan, as immediate Past President, lurks in the shadows and whispers in the collective Committee ear to ensure that we pay attention to what needs to be done. He also steps in whenever we are at risk of “slipping up”. Both his experience and wisdom are very beneficial.

I note the retirement of Brendan O’Connell from the Treasurer role and express our appreciation for his long service. It is remarkable that the Round Table has only ever had one Treasurer and he was, for a number of years, also the Secretary. Thank you, Brendan.

A wonderful development this year has been the fulfillment of Bruce McLennan’s vision of a course developed and delivered at WEA by the Round Table. “Origins of the American Civil War – How did it come to this?” is now at the half way mark. It has been well received and Bruce’s leadership of this enterprise and the team involved has been excellent.

I see the prospects for 2020 to be excellent and long may our quirky group thrive by bringing in new people to join in, contribute and enjoy.

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

Dan McIntyre

Our Last Meeting

Our Christmas Party 24th November



The ACWRTA Christmas was a festive and sociable occasion enjoyed by members and guests. It kicked off with the AGM and the reading and acceptance of the Minutes.

Ian summarized the year (see separate column) and thanked all for their contributions. He also spoke very positively about the WEA Course now running and welcomed guests at our Christmas Party who were undertaking the course. He also congratulated Bruce on his excellent contribution to the Course.

Ian also flagged a change that will take place for the Round Table in this coming year because of the need to relocate. Our venue at Roseville RSL is about to be redeveloped so it will be necessary to find a suitable new venue. Suggestions are welcome.

Our retiring Treasurer, Brendan O’Connell (thank you Brendan for your contribution), then presented the financial statement, which was accepted. We have made a small profit and have \$3444 in the bank. Dan Howard, Returning Officer, then presented information about the new committee. John Morrison proposed a vote of thanks to Ian on behalf of members.

Our new slot: FAVOURITE MOMENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

A new slot has been introduced with three members briefly discussing their favorite moments of the Civil War.

The following three MOMENTS were presented:

John Morrison: General GRANT – THE BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS AND SPOTSYLVANIA

Although General Grant was underrated as President of the USA, his leadership and decision-making in these battles changed the course of the war. The First Battle of the Wilderness was a disaster, but it was his decision (based on his reaction to his men’s comments) to march south rather than north that was unexpected. Grant used a different way of fighting and by marching south into enemy territory (against the advice of others), he stayed on the offensive and in the process, increased his men’s morale (“The men began to sing.”)

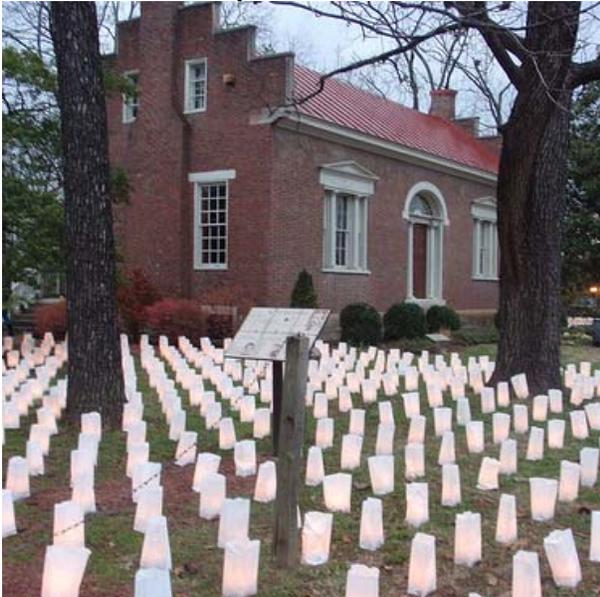


John Morrison –beside ‘On to Richmond’ plaque at the road junction where the soldiers cheered

Brian Skinner: BATTLE OF FRANKLIN (Tenn.)

Brian referred to three aspects that he considered to be notable:

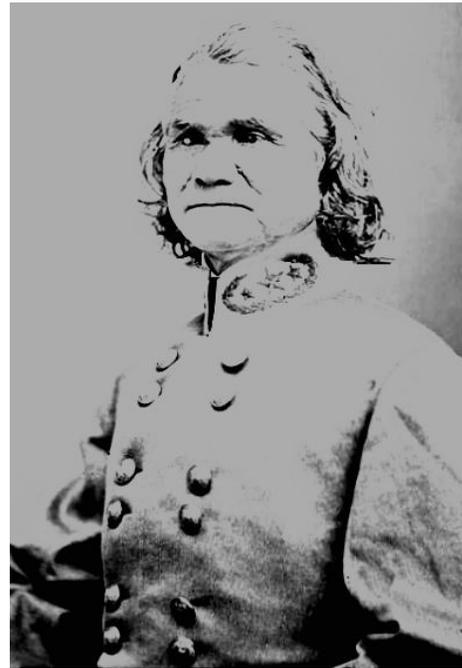
1. The Battle – 30/11/1864 – was a huge debacle, which had severe ramifications for the South. The onslaught by Confederate General Hood led to greater bloodshed in five hours of fighting than any other battle. The South lost 14 Generals, either killed or wounded – with one taken prisoner.
2. The Carter House was a significant location for Confederate troops and a centre of fighting, and was also, sadly, where the 2nd Carter son, on his first return to his home, died after being wounded.
3. Another location referred to was Carnton Plantation, where a widow, Carrie McGavock, gave over land after the war and reburied Confederate soldiers who had died on her land. Today, as recounted in the 2006 book “Widow of the South”, this is the oldest Confederate cemetery.



The Carter House at Franklin

Peter Zacharatos: Brigadier-General STAND WATIE

Stand Watie was a Cherokee plantation owner and slave owner, who became a Confederate Brigadier-General in the War. He fought on the side of the Confederates because of the Federal Government's role in the Cherokee relocation from Georgia in 1830 (The “Trail of Tears”). Watie raised the only all-Indian regiment, the 1st Cherokee Rifles. Watie's regiment played a significant role at the Battle of Pea-Ridge and the valour displayed Cherokee caused problems for the Federal Government. Watie raised further Indian regiments and waged a highly effective guerrilla campaign in the Indian Territory throughout the rest of the war. Watie remained loyal to the Confederates and was their last general to surrender.



Stand Watie

Our WEA Course
Term 4 2019

WEA Course delivery
Origins of the American Civil War – How did it come to this?

Some feedback from our course

Students who attended our eight-week course at WEA Sydney told WEA afterwards:

- *I'm really glad I attended this course ... I learnt so much and it was wonderful to be among people so passionately interested in this topic.*
- *Really well-done course. Tutors were knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The topic is very interesting.*
- *The course was most interesting, heightened by the obvious enthusiasm for the subject of the various presenters, all members of the American Civil War Roundtable.*
- *The course was very well planned, and the interesting and varied content was presented in an engaging fashion.*
- *What a fantastic course!*

The course began with our venerable Life Member Len Traynor presenting a stimulating talk *“Why it’s worth studying the American Civil War”*. His talk was videoed and is now available from the side menu on our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au .



Life Member Len Traynor presented a stimulating introduction – now available on our website

Six of our members shared the presentations of over forty topics: Ian McIntyre, Bruce McLennan, John Morrison, Dan Howard, Priscilla Adey and John Verhoeven. Many members had been involved in researching the topics in the year before the course was presented. In a novel approach, topics were presented with dual instructors taking turn about each 25 minutes or so. This approach was well-received by course participants.

The course went beyond reciting the events as they happened (particularly the convenient version) and asked why did things go so wrong? The conception of the course in this way and the structure that grew out of this approach were clearly a success. Tracing the causation from the earliest European settlers right up to the secessions, formation of the Confederacy and the outbreak of hostilities gave participants new insights and fresh perspectives on historical events which are not so well known as the events of the war itself but are essential to the understanding of history. “How did it come to this?” proved to be an excellent unifying theme.

Overall, preparing and presenting the course was a great collaborative exercise that has brought us closer together. The leadership and curating skills of Bruce McLennan were evident throughout and his modesty

should not be permitted to deny him recognition for the success of the course.

A number of students from the course will be joining us at our meetings in 2020. They will be most welcome.

For any members who missed the presentations this time, the WEA are asking for those interested to let them know on the above web address. An outline of the course content is available from the WEA website at www.weasydney.com.au/course/OACW .

YOU CAN HELP send traffic to our website

Please help us by looking for our website’s link to Len’s talk. Please copy and paste the following into your browser search the following:

Round Table of Australia NSW Chapter Why it’s worth studying the American Civil War video

When you get the results, click through to our own website home page (rather than YouTube, WEA, our newsletters etc. This way we should help get better results for our own site on Google etc.

KEEP KUPS

A few of our “conversation-starting” Keep Kups” are available for members or guests at \$5 each. Check them out at our next meeting.

