

# *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](http://www.americancivilwar.asn.au)

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## A Message from the Chairman –

Last month's meeting, in which we held our elections for the Executive and Committee and discussed the future of the Chapter, attracted 18 members and provided some direction for the immediate future of our Round Table. The elections resulted in an interesting mixt of new and old personnel which, hopefully, will provide a fresh approach to our activities. The new Executive and Committee are:

**Chairman:** Paul Kensey

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Brendan O'Connell

**Program Director:** Bruce McLennan/John Cook

**Committee:** Priscilla Leece, Maureen Morris  
Robin Haines, David Hain and  
Angus Hordern,

In considering the three options for the future of our Chapter of the ACWRTA, members endorsed the Committee's recommendations and we will continue with our regular meetings on a Monday evening every two months but with an attempt to make the meetings more interactive than has occurred in the past.

As you will see from the adjoining column, the April meeting is likely to provide a great start to our new approach to our meetings. American Jack Melton Jnr has been recommended to us by our Honorary Member, Len Traynor, as a Civil War scholar of considerable note, who will be well worth hearing and questioning on his experience in the collection and recording of Civil War artefacts. Mr Melton is coming to Australia specifically to visit the War Memorial in Canberra but has accepted our invitation to stay in Sydney for an extra day to speak to us.

I urge you to make every effort to make the time to attend this meeting – you will certainly not be disappointed. I'm looking forward to catching up with you at this meeting on April 7.

*Paul Kensey*

## Our Next Meeting

Our next regular meeting, the first for 2008 will be held on **Monday, April 7** at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, Pacific Highway, Roseville**. The meeting will commence with a bistro-style dinner at the Club from 6pm with the proceedings of the meeting proper to commence at 7:15pm.

At this meeting we are privileged to be able to have obtained the services of American **Jack Melton Jnr**, a member of the Atlanta Civil War Round Table, who will speak on his personal experiences growing up in the shadow of Kennesaw Mountain near the site of the Battle of Kolb's Farm. The title of Jack's presentation is:

**"From Scavenger to Curator  
and Much, Much More"**

Jack Melton spent much of his boyhood during the 1950s and 1960s relic hunting on Civil War sites around where he lived and in his early teens developed an interest in Civil War artillery an area of Civil War study in which he has specialised ever since.

After graduation from college, Jack opened a shop near Kennesaw selling Civil War relics but, after five years, wanted to branch out into other areas. He returned to college to study photography and on graduation established himself in business full-time as a museum consultant and photographer of Civil War artefacts.

His work has appeared in numerous Civil War books, catalogues and magazines and his photographic skills are utilised by leading museums and private collectors across the United States to record the Civil War artefacts held by these individuals and institutions. Indeed, amongst his clientele are such organisations as the National Geographic, Atlanta History Center (*sic*) and the North-South Trader magazine. Jack also produces magnificent Civil War calendars that are so popular amongst Civil War enthusiasts.

Members can be guaranteed that Jack Melton's presentation will inform, challenge and raise plenty of discussion amongst our members. It is likely to be the highlight of our 2008 program of meetings. Make sure that you don't miss the meeting!

# It Happened in March

## Hatches and Dispatches

March 6, 1831 - Philip H Sheridan is born in Albany, New York;

March 22, 1817 – Braxton Bragg (CSA) is born in Warrenton, North Carolina;

March 28, 1818 – Wade Hampton (CSA) is born in Charleston South Carolina.

## Command Changes

March 5, 1862 – Pierre G T Beauregard assumes command of the Confederate Army of Mississippi;

March 9, 1864 – Ulysses S Grant is named General-in-Chief of the Army of the United States;

March 11, 1862, - Lincoln removes McClellan from his command as General-in-Chief of the Union armies;

March 17, 1864 – Lieutenant General U S Grant formally assumes command of the armies of the United States.

## Battles / Military Actions

March 2, 1865 - Battle of Waynesborough – the last campaign in the Shenandoah Valley;

March 7, 1862 – Battle of Pea Ridge (Elkhorn Tavern), the biggest battle west of the Mississippi;

March 9, 1862 – Ironclads *CSS Virginia* and *USS Monitor* engage at Hampton Roads, Virginia;

March 12, 1864 – Red River campaign begins under command of Nathaniel Banks (USA)

March 16, 1865 – Battle of Averasborough, N.C.

March 19, 1865 – Battle of Bentonville, North Carolina;

March 21, 1865 – Last major effort by the Confederates to Stop Sherman's march south of Bentonville, N.C.

March 23, 1862 – Jackson and Shields Clash at the Battle of Kernstown, VA;

March 25, 1865 – Grant defeats Lee at Fort Stedman, Virginia.

March 25, 1865 – Union troops begin the siege of Mobile, Alabama

March 29, 1865 – The beginning of the final Appomattox campaign;

March 30, 1864 – Confederates attack Snyder's Bluff, Mississippi.

## Other Significant Events

March 4, 1861 – Lincoln is inaugurated as the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States;

March 4, 1861 – The "Stars and Bars" is designated as the official Confederate flag;

March 4, 1865 – Lincoln is inaugurated for a second term as President;

March 13, 1863 – Explosion at the Confederate Ordnance Laboratory in Richmond kills or injures 69 people;

March 14, 1863 – Farragut leads his Union flotilla up the Mississippi past Port Hudson, La;

March 21, 1861 – Louisiana ratifies the Confederate Constitution;

March 26, 1863 – West Virginia voters approve the gradual emancipation of slaves;

March 27, 1865 – President Lincoln meets with Grant, Sherman and Porter aboard the *River Queen* at City point, Virginia;

March 28, 1865 – Lincoln offers terms of surrender;

## The Confederacy's Crippling Trio

*This article appeared in an earlier Newsletter, and has been reproduced, on request.*

The breakdown in relations between Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Generals Joseph E Johnston and P G T Beauregard has become legendary and some historians see in it the makings of the doom of the Confederacy. There can be no question that these commanders and their Commander-in-Chief were at such cross-purposes that it compromised their best efforts for the cause.

The problem lay not so much in events but in the personalities of the men themselves. - Beauregard the egotist; Johnston, suffering the deadly sin of pride whilst constantly fearful of taking responsibility; Davis, unable to accept any questioning or challenge to his ideas. Despite the best efforts of colleagues and friends, the three could not be "harnessed to the same wagon without thinking he ought to be the lead horse." Interestingly, of the three, only Davis was able to rise above the pettiness and bickering, but then only occasionally. Their problems with each other may not have doomed the cause, but it certainly crippled the hard luck Army of Tennessee, and many historians would argue that it was this Army that lost the "shooting war" for the Confederacy.

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 [bpoconn@bigpond.com](mailto:bpoconn@bigpond.com)

## A Great Tribute to Mothers!

*This is one of the best family stories from Civil War times, gleaned from the latest issue of the American North and South magazine*

America's Civil War resulted in many families being divided. One such family was the Chormleys from Chilbowee in the Smokey Mountains of East Tennessee. Mrs Nancy Chormley had five sons, two of whom served with the Confederates, whilst the other three and two grandsons wore the Union blue.

From time to time during the War, the boys would drop in at home for a visit and their mother's home-cooked meals. On one occasion Mrs Chormley's two grey-clad sons, one the Provost Marshal for Tennessee and the other a Confederate recruiting officer, popped in for a visit. Just as they had stabled their horses in the barn, the five Union members of the family turned up.

For a moment the two groups glared at each other across their mother's yard, then words were spoken and the situation became quite heated. At this point, Mrs Chormley stepped out of the house and said:

*"Gentlemen, leave your guns and swords in the yard and come into dinner. You are all my children"*

Whereupon the family came inside and a good meal was had by all.

- Source: *North and South Volume 10, No. 5*

## High Standards or Dumb Students?

Although sixty-eight cadets entered the Class of 1854 at the Citadel in Lexington, South Carolina only thirteen graduated. Was this an indication of the rigour of South Carolina's new military Academy or just testimony of the lack of preparation of many of its aspiring cadets?

## Braxton Bragg

*"Bragg is not the general (sic) that Lee is and the western army can't fight like the Virginia army. If general Lee was here (sic) he would have had the yankees drove out of Tennessee"*

- Corporal Milton Barrett, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Georgia Sharpshooters, Chickamauga

*"You have played the part of a damned scoundrel and are a coward and if you were any part of a man I would slap your jaws and force you to resent it ... I say to you that if you ever again try to interfere with me or cross my path it will be at the peril of your life"*

- Nathan Bedford Forrest, September 1863, to General Bragg for failing to follow-up the victory at Chickamauga and for his restructuring elements of Forrest's command

## Where to Now?

The Chapter's Annual General Meeting which was held during our February meeting affirmed your Committee's recommendations to continue with our Monday evening meetings during 2008 on a two-monthly basis. As Chairman Paul Kensey pointed out, we are looking for a "fresh start" and, to this end, we are asking our regular members to assist our meeting numbers by contacting the less well attendees prior to each meeting to boost the numbers – **each one bring one** - is the principle we wish to apply.

Feedback from individual members has revealed a number of features of our meetings that we need to change and others that we must keep going. This feedback revealed that:

- The opportunity for a meal and social conversation prior to the meeting was greatly valued and must be retained at all costs;
- A small but significant number of members considered that the presentations given as part of the meeting itself were too long;
- Most members thought that the best format of the meetings were ones where there was interaction amongst all present;
- In this regard, the "*Will the Real Abe Lincoln Please Stand Up*" presentation held late last year was very popular and similar activities have been suggested;
- Notwithstanding this, quiz nights were not at all popular, possibly because the conduct of a quiz is seen to be threatening to members; and
- The opportunity to socialise after the meeting was not a particularly popular option, but may have some potential for the future.

Your Committee has taken "on board" this feedback and we hope that the 2008 program planned so far will meet your needs. The April meeting will have a most interesting presentation from an overseas Civil War scholar, Jack Melton Jnr. We are looking forward to this meeting providing a lively interaction between speaker and members on a topic we have not canvassed in the past.

At the June meeting we are going to consider the life and times of George Brinton McClellan in the form of both a short talk and the interactive presentation:

*"Will the Real George McClellan Please Stand Up?"*

We trust that these attempts to enliven our meetings will be successful and our members will again be flocking to our meetings.

It really is now up to you!

## The 2009 Lincoln Conference

The planning for the February 2009 conference to coincide with the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln is now up and running. A reply has been received from the US Consulate General, Sydney, advising that the consulate staff can lend assistance in areas of research and locating information. The US Information Resource Centre will assist, also, in identifying possibilities for keynote speakers, film releases and other related materials. It is intended that our Chairman and Program Director will meet with the Centre officers shortly to gain information on private organisations in the United States that could be approached for sponsorship.

We will keep you informed.

## Grant's Image in the South

*The following article is based on some personal correspondence with the late Mrs Connie Boone, an American and Civil War enthusiast who generously shared her Civil War Knowledge and resources to another enthusiast newly trapped by the Civil War bug. What appears below is the substance of an e-mail sent in response to a query on the last days of Grant.*

"...Two weeks ago I discovered I had a book in a box I keep in the back of my van. I've had it for a couple of years, but never read it. Just forgot it. Published in 1885, the back of the book is a detailed description of Ulysses S. Grant's funeral as well as eulogies published in papers around the country.

I found the death announcements from the South particularly interesting. Following are a few snippets that make me wonder: When did Southerners begin to hate Grant? These are the people who lived the war and had personal reasons to revile him and yet they did not. Even allowing for the hyperbole inherent in late 19th century journalism, the essence of admiration and a desire for complete reunification shines through. Not one called him a butcher, a fool, a drunk. Instead he was called a genius, a great soldier, magnanimous, a King of Men. These papers could have remained silent or merely published a death notice. None waved the Confederate battle flag nor pontificated with lost cause rhetoric.

I would love to know why Southerners changed their mind. Me thinks it is a new phenomenon that has little to do with General Grant or the causes of the war, but rather with individual disenchantment and cultural regret that evolved after the turn of the last century after the veterans of the Civil War passed to eternity. Maybe some of you Southerners can explain this to me."

Presented in the adjoining column are the quotes from Mrs Boone's 1885 book –

L T Remlap, "Grant and His Travels", 1885  
pages 707 - 709

*Savannah, GA, The Morning News:* The news of Gen. Grant's death will be read with profound sorrow in this country and with deep regret throughout the civilized world. Gen. Grant was a great soldier...His magnanimity at the Appomattox surrender showed that he was as generous as he was brave.

*Mobile, AL, The Register:* He is gone. The grave closes over a brave soldier, a man whose impulses, had they been properly directed, (I assume southward), would have made him the foremost man of his times. The South unites with the North in paying tribute to his memory. He saved the Union. For this triumph – and time has shown it to be a triumph for the South as well as the North – he is entitled to and will receive the grateful tribute of the millions who in the course of time will crowd this continent with a hundred Imperial States and spread to the world the blessing of republican freedom.

*Richmond VA, The Dispatch:* He is not only one of the immortals, but he is one of them by right. He was an Agamemnon – a "King of Men."

*Charleston SC, The News and Courier:* The North had no thought save of the man of Appomattox and the South had no thought save of him who told the worn and ragged Confederate soldiers of Lee's army that they must take their horses home with them, . . . . There is peace throughout the land – peace in the North and peace in the South. The country is one again in heart, and thought and hope...In this time of peace there is naught but regard and regret for him for whom strife and disquiet are no more.

*Louisville KY, The Commercial:* The greatest soldier since the day of Napoleon is dead.

*New Orleans, The Picayune:* Brethren of the North and South let us join mournful hands together around that newly opened grave

...  
*New Orleans, The Chronicle:* A united country mourns an honored son. His private virtues were equal to his patriotism and military genius.

*Galveston, TX, The Evening Tribune:* Those of the gray who had fought against him are earnest in their sorrow that a gallant soldier has gone to his long resting-place.

Mrs Boone's questioning of why and when Southerners changed their minds about Grant raises some very interesting issues. Perhaps, as she suggests, one of the Neo-Confederates from the present day could add some light as well as heat to this issue!

In this regard, all contributions are welcome and will be published in subsequent Newsletters.