

THE MINIE BALL GAZETTE

LOWCOUNTRY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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Dedicated to Historic Preservation and Enlightenment

TRUST IN GOD BUT KEEP
YOUR POWDER DRY

MAY 2002
ISSUE 018

NEWS FLASH ----

MAY 8TH MEETING . . .

DENNIS FRYE SPEAKS ON "JOHN BROWN'S RAID ON HARPERS FERRY"

Held at McCracken Middle School.

DINNER RESERVATIONS MUST BE

RECEIVED BY APRIL 29TH.

Mail enclosed reservation form and check.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

JOHN BROWN'S RAID ON HARPERS FERRY!

We are pleased to welcome Dennis E. Frye, an outstanding historian, battlefield preservationist and "dynamite" speaker for our May program. His subject, "John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry in October 1859," relates to an incident that took place eighteen months before Ft. Sumter and raised both fear and anger throughout the South. Mr. Frye recently completed an important assignment as Associate Producer for "Gods and Generals," a major motion picture sequel to "Gettysburg."

A native of Pleasant Valley, Maryland Dennis was raised six miles from Harpers Ferry. After graduating from Shepherd College in Shephardstown, West Virginia, he was honored as the "Outstanding History Major." The son of a

long-time National Park Service historian, Dennis served as Chief Historian at Harpers Ferry. He was co-founder and later President of the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) and has long been a national leader in preservation issues.

Dennis has written nearly 60 magazine and journal articles. His book, "1862 Facts About Antietam & the Maryland Campaign" will be released this year. He is presently writing a book on Stonewall Jackson's siege and capture of Harpers Ferry. Dennis serves frequently as a lead guide for numerous Smithsonian and National Geographic tours and speaks at Civil War Symposiums. He has lectured to and/or presented tours to over 100 Civil War Round Tables and has been a guest historian on PBS, A&E and History Channels.

In our normal fashion, Dennis will lead a "Morning After" on Thursday morning, May 9. There he will not only take questions on unlimited Civil War topics but will furnish details about the making of "Gods and Generals" and his role as coordinator of the reenactors.

Put this date on your calendar. Don't miss what will be a most educational and exciting presentation.

by Jack Keller

To reserve your seat for the "Morning After," please call Bob Eberly at 785-5393.

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MILITARY ENGAGEMENTS

May 8 - General Meeting - Dennis Frye on "John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry" followed by the annual meeting of members
May 9 - "Morning After" with Dennis Frye at Palmetto Electric

! REENLIST NOW !

"Bud" Robertson, "Jack" Davis, Ed Bearss—what a year we've had! Programs month after month that are the envy of Round Tables across the country. How can we possibly top that? Well, reenlist now for next year and you'll see! Professor Robertson returns next January to share with us his insights on the incredible Stonewall Jackson. And Ed Bearss follows Bud in February with a talk on prisons during the Civil War. We kick off our third year in September with a performance by nationally renowned actress Chris Weatherhead. Chris will portray the noted Southern Civil War diarist, Mary Boykin Chesnut, in a one-woman show. This is a night not to be missed!

Another year of spectacular programming, good fellowship, field trips (including one to Andersonville) and more of our terrific "Morning After" events—all this can be yours if you reenlist now. Please complete the form included in this issue and return it, together with a check for your dues, to the address indicated thereon. If you have any questions regarding reenlisting, please contact John or Jo Longo, the Co-Chairs of our Membership Committee. They can be reached at 705-2780. SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!!!

MAIL CALL

By Bob Eberly

As the war ground on in the spring of 1865, life at home became increasingly difficult for the wives and families of Confederate soldiers. With Union armies marching deeper into the heart of Dixie, concern for their loved ones at home weighed heavily upon the minds of the Southern soldiers fighting in Virginia and the Carolinas. The following excerpt is from a letter Lieutenant Allen Edens of Marlboro County, South Carolina wrote to his wife on March 23, 1865:

These lines will inform you that I am in good health and hoping that you are enjoying the same—I have been attending some horses which have been sent to the rear to recruit—I have sent you a mule to plow in place of the old mair—I hear that you have no horse to work and nothing to feed on—I am anxious to hear from home to know how the Yankees left you—do try to get me a letter soon—I have no money to send you yet as I have recd none in 10 months—you had better not plant more then 2 acres of cotton and that near the house.

In January 1865 Lieutenant Edens' company was transferred to Columbia, South Carolina to oppose Union General William T. Sherman's forces. His eldest child, 16 year-old Hayne, enlisted in March 1865 and was killed later the same month. Eden's company never did surrender. They simply disbanded on April 20, 1865, and Lieutenant Edens rode home from Hillsboro, North Carolina.

From Walbrook D. Swank, *Confederate Letters and Diaries: 1861-1865* (Shippensburg, Pa.: Burd Street Press, 1992), 143.

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Notice of Annual Meeting of Members

Pursuant to the relevant provisions of the South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Law, please take notice that the annual meeting of members of the Lowcountry Civil War Round Table will be held Wednesday, May 8, 2002 at the McCracken Middle School, Buckwalter Parkway, Bluffton, South Carolina. The meeting will take place immediately following the presentation of the evening's program. The purposes of the meeting are (i) to elect officers for the 2002-2003 year and (ii) to act upon such other matters as may properly come before the members. The Executive Committee has approved the slate of nominees proposed by the Nominating Committee and, accordingly, recommends the following individuals for election to the offices following their names:

Thomas Oliver--President
Samuel Sawyer--Vice President
Johanna Verwer--Secretary
Walter Hartung--Treasurer
Andrew Kudarauskas --At-Large member

Nominations will be accepted from the floor for any of the listed positions. It is noted that the Round Table's By-Laws provide that the incumbent Vice President (currently Mr. Oliver) will succeed to the office of President upon the completion of the term of the incumbent President (currently Robert Eberly).

**DUE TO THE EARLY SCHEDULING
OF THE MAY 8TH MEETING, YOU MUST
RESERVE YOUR DINNER BY APRIL
29TH!!!!!!**

***TIME TO PACK A HAVERSACK,
SHOULDER MY MUSKET AND MARCH ON***

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Borrowing a few lines from General Douglas MacArthur, "Old *Minie Ball* editors never die, they just fade away." Yet I'll not fade away completely!

I leave the newsletter in the capable and caring hands of Mitch and Marian Sackson who have so graciously volunteered to take over.

A mighty "thank you" to all writers who have submitted material for printing and members who have responded quickly to my calls for help.

Last but not least, I thank my humble and obedient servant, assistant editor Bob Eberly who has supported me throughout this endeavor and taught me so much!

Finally, I consider myself very fortunate to have been able to serve as founding member, newsletter editor and executive committee member for the Lowcountry Civil War Round Table. What a wild and exciting two years this has been. Good luck and God bless!

Carol J. Cutrona

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A RE-CAP OF THE APRIL PROGRAM

by George Cabaniss

At our April meeting we were very fortunate to have William C. "Jack" Davis as our speaker. Professor Davis, who has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and has won three Jefferson Davis Awards, is an acknowledged expert on the people and forces that were at work in the formation of the government of the Confederacy. The six states involved in the formation of the provisional Confederate government at Montgomery, Alabama were represented by the same number of persons that had previously represented them in the United States Congress. However, each state had only one vote.

At the start of the Convention in February, 1861 the galleries were full and the ladies of Montgomery provided free food. This was quickly stopped and the proceedings were closed to the public. Each delegate then swore an oath to not reveal any of the proceedings. South Carolina's delegation wanted only to talk and go home. Mississippi wanted to talk and then form a constitution, but Georgia thought more action was needed. Several delegates got together and wrote a suggested constitution. It was produced on one sheet of paper eighteen feet long. This constitution, which was based on the United States Constitution had some novel elements. First, it provided for a civil service (this was the first civil service in American history).

An even more radical departure was the provision barring pork barrel spending. All appropriations had to be originated by the executive departments. Of course, the constitution provided for the protection of the institution of slavery.

Naming the people for the various cabinet positions was ticklish. One couldn't handle alcohol; others were too radical. But the delegates did name a cabinet for the provisional

government. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was elected President by four votes out of a possible six. Alexander Stephens of Georgia was named vice president, even though he had opposed secession. As soon as the government was named there was a rush of lobbyists.

Many of the government officials found it necessary to find secret doors in order to be able to leave their offices and go home.

Virginia did not secede until May, 1861. And this was after three failed votes--just another close call in the formation of the Confederacy.

The "Morning After" event at Palmetto Electric, attended by twenty-four of our members, was very entertaining and educational. These intimate gatherings provide a unique opportunity for our members to explore many Civil War topics in greater detail. Kudos to Bernie Covert, Jim Hamilton and the Program Committee for hosting these meetings.

**DEADLINES PUBLISHED IN THIS
NEWSLETTER ARE NECESSARY DATES.
PLEASE TRY TO ADHERE TO THEM,
ESPECIALLY WHEN RESERVING**

ATTENTION ALL RECRUITS

Any trooper who attempts to fall in at the general meeting and is not wearing his/her name tag will be obligated to hand over \$1 to the guard. Those failing to comply may be seated in the brig for the evening.

JUST KIDDING GUYS! But we really do need you to bring or wear your name tags to each meeting.

**DON'T MISS THE MAY 8TH MEETING,
HELD AT MCCRACKEN MIDDLE
SCHOOL. FOR "MORNING AFTER"
PROGRAM RESERVATION, CALL BOB
EBERLY, 785-5393.**