



MEMBER RENEWAL

The MRRT is celebrating its 56th year in 2016—and this month would be a great time to show your support by renewing your membership. Membership remains \$20 a year—or \$5 for students. Checks should be made out to Don Kadar and can be mailed to his home at 61895 Fairland Drive, South Lyon, MI 48178; or simply brought to the meeting and given to Don or Jeanie Graham. Cash is also welcomed.

Our Monday, February 29, 2016 meeting begins at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library. Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

The February meeting will include the FINAL VOTE for our fall trip destination. During our January meeting the following sites were suggested as possible destinations. 1. Antietam – including Harpers’ Ferry and South Mountain 2 Brandy Station and Cedar Mountain 3 General Stonewall Jackson’s 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign 4 Stone’s River-including Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville 5 Pea Ridge and Elk Tavern, Arkansas. We will have a preliminary vote to narrow the choices to two and then the final vote. We will have a great trip this fall!

The Roundtable welcomes MRRT member William (Bill) Cottrell, who will present “President Grant Honors Lincoln’s Legacy” on Monday, February 29th. President Lincoln was killed before peace without slavery was established. President Andrew Johnson (President, 1865-1869) almost destroyed President Lincoln’s legacy. Bill will discuss President Grant’s (President, 1869-1877) efforts to save Lincoln’s legacy to the nation. Bill is a member of the Roundtable who has spoken to our group previously, including a great presentation on *Lincoln’s Position on Slavery-A Work in Progress*”. Bill has studied Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War era for over 40 years. He is a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. He has a degree in geology from Wayne State University.



The MRRT would like to thank long time member and former President Larry Hathcock, our naval expert (AKA, “The Ancient Mariner”) for his very informative talk on The CSS Shenandoah: The Last Surrender. Larry began



his talk by noting that the latest issue of *The Civil War Times* lists the naval blockade as one of the 5 reasons the North won the war and that even most Civil War buffs are not aware of the story of the CSS Shenandoah and the late date of its exploits and final surrender to British authorities.

Stephen Mallory, the Confederate Secretary of the Navy, pushed for innovative strategies to try to offset the substantial size advantage the Union navy enjoyed as he created the Confederate navy. In addition to the use of ironclads, e.g., the CSS Virginia, to break the blockade directly, he wanted commerce raiders to be employed to attack Northern merchant shipping at sea. This would weaken the blockade by forcing the Union navy to divert warships from blockade duty to try to destroy them. Because the South could not build such ships, he sent James D. Bulloch, a former U.S. naval officer to Britain to procure the necessary ships. Bulloch knew he had to tread carefully as the British had neutrality laws which forbade the building of warships or recruitment of naval crews in Britain for foreign countries. The U.S. minister, Charles Francis Adams, employed a network of consuls and informants to try to discover Bulloch’s covert plans in the two main ship building areas – Liverpool and the River Clyde.



Bulloch was successful in procuring and safely sending 2 ships, the Florida and the Alabama, out of British waters. These two went on to do significant damage to the U.S. merchant fleet and forced many surviving Northern ships to change to British registry to protect themselves. In 1863, Bulloch's clever attempt to have 2 formidable ironclad rams built by the Laird shipyard was foiled only at the last minute when Adams' agents obtained enough evidence to convince a reluctant British government to prevent their sailing.

Mallory then decided to concentrate commerce raider attacks on the New England-based whaling fleet. A cargo ship, the Sea King, was acquired in Britain and in October 1864 sailed unarmed to Madeira where a supply ship met it and cannon and military supplies were transferred to the ship, now renamed the CSS Shenandoah. Because it was built as a merchant ship, James I. Waddell, the Shenandoah's captain, knew he could not risk a battle with a similar-sized Union warship. Also, it initially lacked the tackle needed to control the guns on deck; this was solved by removing rigging from early prizes. Another issue was the understrength crew. Throughout its voyage, Waddell would use persuasion and force to "recruit" additional seamen to man his ship. Once in the Pacific, the ship's propeller was discovered to be damaged. To affect repairs, the Shenandoah sailed to Melbourne, Australia where it was dry-docked and repaired. While there, the U.S. Consul protested this violation of British neutrality law and Waddell became briefly embroiled with the authorities, but managed to bluff his way out unscathed. He resumed his hunt and destroyed a large number of Northern whalers particularly in the Bering Sea. Waddell captured some Northern newspapers on these ships which reported Lee's surrender, but he chose not to believe them until in early August 1865, a newspaper handed over by a British ship off Mexico finally convinced him. He ordered the ship's guns dismantled and decided to sail all the way back to Britain rather than risk surrender to the U.S. **After a difficult 17000 mile voyage, the Shenandoah reached Liverpool in early November. On November 5, 1865 the last Confederate flag was lowered and the ship turned over to the British.** The damages done by the Shenandoah were included in the "Alabama" claims settlement.

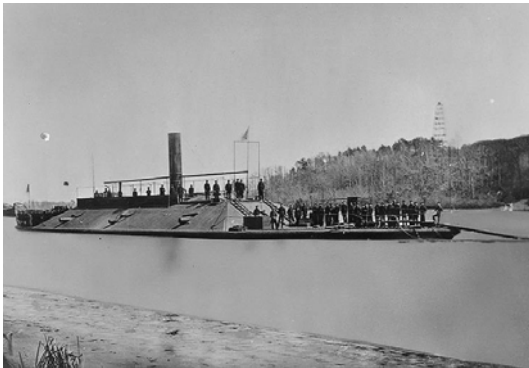
MRRT Minutes for January 25, 2016: The **Call to Order** 6:35 pm, with 25 people present for the business meeting **Pledge** Dedicated to the Marines killed in the Hawaii helicopter crash **Introduction of Guests and New Members** Doug Kline (new member!) who plays in the 5th Regimental Band with member Gene Kramer, Bill Newill (new member!), Bob's brother, and Suzanne Clinton **Secretary's Report** Approved **Newsletters** Bob Newill read from the Indianapolis Hardtack, Cincinnati Canister, Cleveland Charger, and NYC Dispatch **Preservation** Joe Epstein's report stated that 202 acres at Appomattox Court House can be saved with an 8-1 match. The purchase price is \$900,000, but with grants from the state and the federal government the Civil War Trust only needs \$50,000. The property includes the Historic Morton house, which was there at the time of the surrender. Virginia has decided to create a state park at the sites of Brandy Station and Cedar Mountain. There is a serious effort to restore Antietam's East Woods. The site is owned by the park so is not eligible for government grants. A lot of restoration work is required. A monument to Michigan men at Antietam is being worked on. Our June speakers will discuss the Antietam monument building efforts. **Website** Gerry Furi updates the website for us **Program** Jim has scheduled 9 of the 10 speakers for 2016 **Items of Interest** George Crouch was disturbed by the news that southern monuments with Confederate themes may be removed. He said, "If we're only going to study what the Union did, we don't need Roundtables" **Old Business** None **New Business** None

Quiz Questions: This month's questions and answers pertain to "President Grant Honors President Lincoln's Legacy".

1. Besides preserving the Union and ending the institution of slavery, name two other legacies President Lincoln hoped would be accomplished?
2. Which one of these legacies did President Andrew Johnson actively campaign against?
3. Which of these legacies did President Grant refer to in his Inaugural Address when he hoped for "a healing commonality of all Americans in a restored Union"?



4. What action did President Grant take to expand the powers granted to the Attorney General during the Reconstruction period?
5. What Congressional legislation allowed President Grant to move so effectively against the KKK?
6. BONUS QUESTION: Who exactly is buried in “Grant’s Tomb”?



Civil War Essentials - The *CSS Atlanta* sails into the U.S. Supreme Court

One of James Bulloch’s duties as Confederate agent in Britain was to buy ships to be sent through the Union blockade with much-needed guns and munitions. One of his early acquisitions was the *Fingal*. Bulloch loaded it with a valuable cargo including about 7500 Enfield rifles and 17000 lbs. of gunpowder and sent it to Savannah where it safely ran the still-porous blockade in November 1861. Although intended to return to Britain with a cargo of cotton, various issues delayed its departure until the Confederate authorities concluded that the blockade had become too tight to successfully evade.

It was then decided to convert the *Fingal* into an ironclad ram to help break the Union blockade of Savannah. After this conversion, the ironclad, now the *CSS Atlanta*, was 191 feet long with a 100 foot long casement. The casement armor was 4 inches thick at a 29 degree slope. The ship carried 4 Brookes cannon – a 7” pivot gun at either end of the casement and a 6” gun in each broadside. A long spar torpedo could be deployed from the bow. Lt. William Webb was captain. The *Atlanta* traveled downriver on June 17, 1863 trailed by several small wooden vessels to attack the Federal blockaders.

Because of its presence, the Union Navy transferred two monitors, the *USS Weehawken* and the *USS Nahant* to strengthen the blockading forces. These ships were improved versions of the original Monitor with relocated pilot houses and one of the two 11” guns replaced with 15” smoothbore Dahlgren cannon firing a 400+ lb. ball. A smaller wooden ship, the *USS Cimmerone*, was also on duty in Wassau Bay.

The battle, which involved none of the wooden ships on either side, was short and one-sided. The *Atlanta* fired once at the *Nahant* but missed. The *Weehawken* fired one 15” ball which badly damaged a portion of the *Atlanta*’s casement and wounded a number of its gun crew. After moving closer, it fired guns, damaging the *Atlanta*’s pilothouse and wounding the men in it. The *Nahant* advanced, intending to open fire at close range but before it could do so, the *Atlanta* had surrendered. The *Atlanta*’s crew was sent to prison in Boston harbor and the ship was “libeled” as a prize of war in the U.S. District Court of Massachusetts. The U. S. Navy pressed the ship into service and deposited \$350000 in the Treasury. As the *USS Atlanta*, it served in the James River for the rest of the war.

The legal disputes over this action involved the distribution of the prize money between the various parties. U.S. Prize Law stated that **all** the prize money would go to the officers and men who made the capture **if** the U.S. force was **inferior** to the captured enemy. If the U.S. force was superior, ½ would go to the government and ½ to the crew(s). The District Court judge ruled that even though only the *Weehawken* had fired on and damaged the *Atlanta*, the *Nahant* had been maneuvering to fire and thereby presented a real threat to the *Atlanta* (the Confederate crew refused to testify). Thus the two monitors constituted the U.S. force and were superior. Therefore ½ of the money was to go to the government. In addition, the *Cimmerone* crew must be included because it was within “signaling distance” as specified in the law. The *Weehawken* crew, unhappy with his ruling, appealed to the Supreme Court.



In early April 1866, the Court upheld the District court findings – the *Nahant* was part of the threat that forced the surrender and the *Cimmerone* must be included as it met the law’s definition of being within signaling distance. However, even splitting ½ the money between three ships, the crews did okay. The *Nahant*’s cabin boy received \$176.16, reportedly equal to 14 months of his pay!

Civil War Essentials – Civil War Research the “Bible” of Civil War research is The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Clerks spent years going through the War Department’s “attic” collecting official reports, correspondence, and general orders to create an ‘authentic’ history of the war. Most of the work was completed during the late 1800’s with the last set of information released in 1900. There are 128 volumes with 140,000 pages and 1,500 battlefield maps. Confederate material primarily came from “over 90 large boxes” shipped from Richmond after the war ended.

After the war, **Union veterans created approximately 700 unit histories** to ‘serve as an inspiration for future generations’. Preparing unit histories required several years of time-consuming work. Asa Bartlett of the 12th New Hampshire spent most of a decade talking to former comrades scattered all over New England about their recollections of the battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Jacob Smith of the 107th Ohio examined “the dangers, labors, and hardships of the common soldiers while in the discharge of duties belonging to that sphere of life” in Camps and Campaigns of the 107th Regiment.

Century Magazine became the self-appointed ‘cultural steward’ of late 19th Century America. Both Confederate and Union veterans, almost exclusively officers, were requested to submit articles discussing the exploits and personalities of the war. George McClellan, Joseph Johnston, Fitz John Porter, Daniel Harvey Hill, and Henry Kyd Douglas were among those having articles published. Very few of the thousands of common soldiers’ submissions were published by the magazine.

The articles were collected and released in four volumes as Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. The volumes are in print today.

Confederate Veteran, published by Sumner Archibold, was the leading periodical for Southern veterans.

Quiz Answers

1. Reconciliation not revenge. Social and political equality
2. Social and political equality
3. Social and political equality as expressed in the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.
4. The Department of Justice under the U.S. Attorney General
5. The Enforcement Act (1871)
6. General and Mrs. Grant