

*Celebrating our 25th
Anniversary 1985-2010*

**THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER
PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
[HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/](http://www.pscwrt.org/)
JANUARY, 2011**

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 13, 2011

China Harbor, 2040 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, Washington

Time: Social hour at **6 p.m.**; Dinner served at **7 p.m.**; Program at **8 p.m.**

MENU CHOICES: Mongolian Beef, Chicken or Salmon

Dinner includes: salad, vegetable delight, General Tao's chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit. **Cost is \$21 for adults and \$10 for those under 18 (new student rate), payable at the door, but reservations and meal choices are required.**

To make reservations and meal choices, **Contact Rod Cameron at 206-524-4434** or email him at rodcam@comcast.net. **Deadline for reservations is 12 NOON on Tuesday, January 11.**

RICK SOLOMON WILL TALK ABOUT JEFFERSON DAVIS' THREE VISITS TO THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE.

The first visit Davis made was in December 1862, shortly before the Battle of Stones River; the second in October 1863, weeks after Chickamauga; and the third in September 1864, weeks after the fall of Atlanta. Were there common trends in these visits? Rick is a long time member and Past President of the Round Table and has given several excellent talks.

NOTE: Remember to turn off cell phones before the meeting so there are no distractions for the speaker. Thank you!

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

The following is information concerning you and the PSCWRT. Please read and take notice.

MEETING ROOM CHANGE AT CHINA HARBOR- TRIAL BASIS

Due to complaints about noise and distractions from the restaurant and karaoke bar during meetings, the board has decided to move our January meeting upstairs. The acoustics in the upstairs meeting room seem much more conducive to conversation at the tables and for allowing

everyone to hear our speaker clearly. Although ADA access is limited, Pauline Morrison has indicated she can negotiate the stairs. If the “upper room” works well, we may meet there every month. However, if it is found to be unsuitable, we can always move back downstairs.

SPEAKER CHANGE FOR MARCH AND MAY MEETINGS- PLEASE NOTE

Donald Stoker, our scheduled speaker for the May, 2011 meeting will not be able to speak that month as he is receiving an award and can't come west. The good news is that Professor Stoker still plans on speaking to us at the March 2011 meeting! What this means is that the scheduled Ancestor talk by Round Table members in March will now take place in May. Please make a note on your calendars.

ANNUAL AUCTION SET FOR MAY, 2011

The annual PSCWRT Auction will take place at the CWRT meeting on May 12, 2011. Though it had previously been planned for the March meeting, having it in May gives us all more time to prepare by gathering items to donate and also for saving up money to purchase items which will help the Round Table. The change also allows Dick Miller, who has done so well as our Auctioneer, to be there, as he cannot make the March meeting.

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE PSCWRT

At the December meeting of the Round Table, several ideas were shared with those present as examples of ways we could raise attendance at meetings and also to help us get to know one another.

Student Rates

Stephen Pierce, our Treasurer/Publicity Chairman put forth the idea of having a \$10 “student rate”. This would be to encourage attendance of minors who are interested in Civil War history to attend meetings. As Stephen points out “When I was a student and visited local professional associations, etc, my attendance or membership was either free or heavily discounted. We seldom see young people at our dinners”. This is one way we can help that to happen. All you have to do is look around to know we are a “graying” group. We need to do all we can to get younger people to join up. The student rate will be implemented on a trial basis starting this month.

Publicity!

You should know that Stephen Pierce, who has been our long-time Treasurer (the job is still open to anyone who wants it, by the way) has also volunteered to be our new Publicity Chairman! He has been very busy contacting many local newspapers as well as going online to help promote our Civil War Round Table in our local area. So far, the Bothell/Kenmore-Reporter has prepared a poster that was shared at the December meeting and put it in their newspaper last month. Stephen has also contacted about 15 local groups, plus Facebook, MySpace and Craigslist event pages. Stephen encouraged members at the last meeting to put this poster up on store and library bulletin boards to let folks know we exist. If this works, Stephen said he would continue handing out fliers to the members to pass around.

“Getting to Know You” Questionnaire

Larry Cenotto, our Official Greeter, wants us all to get to know each other better. He felt that one way to do this was to introduce members at meetings and tell something about them- more than just their name. **In order to expedite this, Larry asked me to include a questionnaire he prepared into the newsletter. You will find this on the last two pages of this newsletter.**

Please check it out. If you are interested in participating, fill it out and get it to Larry per instructions on the form.

You do not have to be a board member, or even a member of the PSCWRT to come up with great ideas to help make our organization better. Please feel free to contact anyone of us with your thoughts and suggestions. You never know what may help boost attendance or make the meetings better! See the contact list at the end of the newsletter...thank you.

NEW MEMBERS!

Please note: If you are a new member and you have not been listed here, let me know. Thanks. Art Land and Kristin Fraser, Home 206-725-5174, office 206-799-7501

Why does the American Civil War Fascinate You?

President's Corner, January 2011

By Dick Miller

December 20th—one hundred fifty years ago, the South Carolina state convention voted unanimously for secession. We are little more than three months away from April 12th 2011 and the sesquicentennial's start. Already, we are seeing interest in the sesquicentennial build—the New York Times daily commentary is one example—and I, for one, am very excited to see what the next four years will offer a Civil War buff.

Why does the Civil War continue to hold our interest? Why should we be so fascinated in a period that arguably is the saddest, and perhaps most shameful, time in our history? In the first lecture of his Civil War series, David Blight questioned why we should love this war so much:

I can't tell you how many thousands of time in my public lectures—and all Civil War historians face this—people will come up afterward. Usually they want to show you their grandfather's letters, but they'll say, "I just love the Civil War." And you just want to stop them for a moment and say, "You need a shrink." Or, "What is it you love? Is it the aftermath at Antietam? Is it the trenches of Spotsylvania? Is it the latrines at Andersonville? Is it Booth killing Lincoln? What is it you love?"

Blight goes on to answer his own question. For some, he says, it is simply an interest in military history. Others are fascinated with lost causes or see the Civil War as the nation's great moment of moral reckoning, the purging of the country's sin of slavery. Some respond to the War's epic sweep or to the redemptive narrative of the North's victory over the slave-holding South. And some see today's race relations or the struggle against federal control as a reflection of the controversies that men in 1861 sought to resolve in battle.

But I think that Blight misses the very reason for our fascination in his listeners' desire to show him their grandfathers' letters. It was our grandfathers who fought in this awful war; it was they who experienced the aftermath of Antietam, the trenches of Spotsylvania, the latrines of Andersonville. And there is a part of us that wants to be connected to them and what they experienced.

I have been caught up in the Civil War since I was ten or eleven years old. For fifty years, I believed that I had no relation to any one who fought in the Civil War. My parent's parents—three of my four grandparents--were immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But a

while back, my brother sent me an article about the 1868 explosion of the Steamboat Magnolia, in which my great-great grandfather, Perry Miller, died. And I thought, if my great-great grandfather died a young man in 1868, he very likely served during the Civil War.

A few weeks ago, my father's cousin, the family's genealogist, sent me a copy of Perry Miller's discharge paper from Company A of the 59th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He had enlisted in September 1861 in a regiment that fought in all the great Western battles—Shiloh, Perrysville, Chickamauga, Stones River, Missionary Ridge, Kennesaw Mountain, the battles for Atlanta—before being disbanded in November 1864. My great-great grandfather had survived three years of the worst combat only to be killed four years later in a steamboat explosion just a few miles down stream from where he had enlisted in 1861. On my seeing the copy of his discharge paper, my connection to the Civil War became very real.

I know others of you share this experience with me. I look forward to our May meeting when I can hear your ancestors' stories. And I look forward with even greater anticipation to the sesquicentennial when we can celebrate what our great-great grandfathers did and understand better what the Civil War means to us.

Editor's Note: I just had to comment on this column. Dick brings up a great question that we've probably all asked ourselves at one time or another. I caught the "Civil War Bug" the summer before my 8th birthday! And it was in Southern California- not some hotbed of Civil War history back east. I sometimes wonder if God implants a "history gene" in some of us, since I've been interested in the past all of my life... What sparked your interest in the Civil War???

150 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH: JANUARY 1861

The celebrations bringing in the New Year of 1861 did nothing to diminish the tensions that began with the November election of Lincoln, followed quickly by the secession of South Carolina in December. In fact, the action of the Palmetto State had the effect of "breaking the ice" and soon other states of the Deep South followed suit. Meanwhile, the garrison at Fort Sumter waited for help from the U.S. Government.

January 2, Wednesday

President Buchanan read a letter to the cabinet from the South Carolina commissioners. It blamed Buchanan for the impasse over Ft. Sumter. The cabinet was furious with the contents and most felt it was time to send a ship with supplies and reinforcements to the fort. Gen. Winfield Scott felt that sending a civilian ship rather than a warship would be better.

January 3, Thursday

Fort Pulaski, guarding approaches to Savannah, Georgia was captured by Georgia state troops to prevent occupation by Federal troops. This became the norm all across the Deep South in the coming days as local militia seized forts, arsenals and other Federal property, often before secession had actually occurred in their own states.

January 5, Saturday

The merchant vessel *Star of the West* left New York for Fort Sumter with supplies and 250 troops. Though planned in secret, the mission of the ship was known and telegraphed to Charleston almost immediately.

January 9, Wednesday

About midnight on the 8th, the vessel *Star of the West* arrived off Charleston Harbor and made for Fort Sumter. A South Carolina battery located on Morris Island opened fire on the ship as it

was coming in. Only slightly damaged, the captain of the *Star* nonetheless decided to pull back and return to New York. These shots could have been the opening of the war, except that Maj. Anderson in Fort Sumter did not open fire, over the protests of some of his officers.

Meanwhile the State Convention of Mississippi voted 84-15 to secede, thus becoming the second state to secede from the Union.

January 10, Thursday

Florida became the third state to secede from the Union, the convention voting 62-7 to do so. A small contingent of Federal troops moved from their barracks to Fort Pickens at Pensacola, avoiding capture of that fort, much like Sumter.

January 11, Friday

By a vote of 61-39, the Alabama State Convention adopted an ordinance of secession- the fourth state to leave the Union.

January 16, Wednesday

The Crittenden Compromise, a last ditch effort to resolve sectional issues in Congress, was killed in the Senate. It was just one of many proposals that were put forth to stem the tide of sectionalism, but all of them had one main failing- politicians just could not come to an agreement on them.

January 19, Saturday

Georgia became the fifth state to secede, its convention deciding 208-89 for secession.

January 26, Saturday

The Louisiana State Convention voted to secede, 113-17. It became the sixth state to leave the Union, and Texas was expected to soon.

January 29, Tuesday

Kansas was admitted to the Union as the 34th State. Its constitution forbade slavery and most of the state was Unionist in sentiment. It should be noted that during this month as Southern states left the Union, many Northern states issued statements in support of the Federal Government.

CIVIL WAR ARTICLE LINKS

I wanted to print these articles in our newsletter, but was stopped cold by the legal disclaimer at the end not to reprint them. Well, there is nothing wrong with posting the links!

New York, other states scrimp on Civil War Anniversary

<http://www.comcast.net/articles/news-national/20101226/US.Civil.War.150th.Anniversary/>

Civil War's 150th Anniversary stirs debate on race

<http://www.comcast.net/articles/news-national/20101210/US.Celebrating.Secession/>

Civil War message opened, decoded. No help coming.

<http://www.comcast.net/articles/news-general/20101227/civil.war.message/>

SC archaeologists say Confederate wreck found.

<http://www.comcast.net/articles/news-national/20101222/US.Confederate.Shipwreck/>

CIVIL WAR QUIZ

After a one month hiatus, the Quiz is back. I hope you missed it last issue...Answers on the final page of the newsletter.

1. Richmond wasn't the first capital of the Confederacy. Which city was first? For how long?
2. Alexander Stephens, the Vice-President of the C.S.A. was a politician from Georgia. He was a member of the Secession Convention. How did he stand on secession?
 - a. Strongly in favor
 - b. In favor with qualifications
 - c. Opposed
 - d. Abstained
3. Prior to Lincoln's Inauguration, seven states seceded from the Union. South Carolina was the first. Which state was second? To make it harder, name the final five (in order). *Hint: the answers are found in this newsletter. Can you get them right without referring to the article?*

*On behalf of the Officers
and Board Members of the
Puget Sound Civil War
Round Table, I wish all of*

*you a very HAPPY
NEW YEAR in 2011!*

*Sincerely, Mark Terry
Editor, Washington Volunteer*

We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the February, 2011 Washington Volunteer is Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!

2010-2011 OFFICERS

Elected*

President, Richard Miller, 425-201-3234 or 206-808-8506, Milomiller882@msn.com

Vice-President/Successor, Steve Bass, sbass@monsonandbass.com

Immediate Past-President Mark Terry, 425-337-6246, markimlor@comcast.net

Vice-President, Programming, Pat Brady, 206-246-1603, patsbrady@comcast.net

Vice-President, Newsletter, Mark Terry (info above)

Treasurer, Stephen Pierce, 425-640-8808, horseless1@juno.com

Secretary, Larry Jilbert,

**Except for Immediate Past President, which is an automatic position.*

Appointed

Publicity Chairman, Stephen Pierce, (info above)

Assistant Treasurer, vacant

Dinner Reservations Coordinator, Rod Cameron, 206-524-4434, rodcam@comcast.net

Webmaster, Gary Larkin, 206-510-7033, gary.larkin@sound60.com

Official Greeter, Larry Cenotto, cenottothe5th@yahoo.com

Elected Board of Directors

Jeff Rombauer, Jim Dimond, Larry Jilbert

Website: <http://www.pscwrt.org/>

Puget Sound Civil War Round Table meets on the second Thursday of each month, September through May. The PSCWRT is a 501c3 organization, and as such, donations you make to the organization are tax deductible.

Membership Dues

Dues are \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a couple. You can mail your dues to the PSCWRT, c/o Stephen Pierce, 8008 190th Street SW, Edmonds, WA 98026. **Questions?** Email is horseless1@juno.com, or call him at 425-640-8808.

PSCWRT MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill out and return to Larry Cenotto via reply e-mail at: cenottothe5th@yahoo.com, or a PDF attachment via reply, or it can be faxed to **(425)256-2367**.

Thanks! Larry Cenotto: Official Greeter/Sergeant-At-Arms/Raconteur In Chief/Toastmaster General

Name: _____ “Nickname(s)” _____

PSCWRT Member Since: _____ Offices Held With PSCWRT:

What first got you interested in the Civil War?

Where did you attend College? _____ When did you graduate? _____

With a degree in what? _____

Present Occupation? (If retired, put most immediate past occupation)

Did you see Military Service? _____ If so, where? _____

With what branch? _____

Have you ever authored any books or articles?

What awards of note have you won?

Married, or single ? _____ If Married, wife or husband's name? _____

Children? _____ If so, name(s) and ages? _____

Other interests besides CWRT?

Sports you have played, and other clubs you have belonged to?

What is one fact about you either nobody or very few at PSCWRT knows about you?

Civil War Battlefields Visited?

Thank You ! Please Know That The Club will only use this information to roast you tastefully and in good humor !

Answers to Civil War Quiz: 1. Montgomery, Alabama. Under four months. 2. c.
3. Mississippi. Followed in order by Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas.