

**THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER
PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/
NOVEMBER 2015**

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, November 12, 2015

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.**

NOTE: AT THE REQUEST OF CHINA HARBOR, THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE DOWNSTAIRS BANQUET ROOM. THANK YOU!

MENU CHOICES: Mongolian Beef, Chicken, Salmon or Vegetarian

Dinner includes: salad, vegetable delight, General Tso's chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit.
Cost is \$21 for adults and \$10 for minors and college students, payable at the door, but reservations and meal choices are required. See below.

To make reservations and meal choices, use one of these options (most preferred listed first):

Click on <http://www.pscwrt.org/about/dinner-reservations.php>

Email **Rod Cameron** at: rodcam@comcast.net

Or lastly, call **Rod Cameron** at **206-524-4434**

Deadline for reservations is 12 NOON on Tuesday, November 10, 2015.

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



**FRANK "RUSTY" STARR WILL
DISCUSS MEDICINE IN THE
CIVIL WAR**, from the pre-war years through 1865,

emphasizing how the war revolutionized medicine in America, in a presentation that will include period medical instruments and artifacts. Mr. Starr is a Research Scientist in the medical field, with years of experience at Johns Hopkins and the University of Washington. He and his wife Bonnie are long time members of the Washington Civil War Association and have

reenacted for over 30 years.

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

**NOVEMBER IS BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION
MONTH**

By Mark R. Terry

The main goal of PSCWRT is to educate its members about the American Civil War, but a very close secondary goal is to help support Civil War battlefield preservation. As someone knowledgeable about the War, you know that as time (and property development) go on, the

battlefields and historical sites related to the Civil War are increasingly threatened. The best way to deal with that threat is simple: purchase those properties before the developers can.

The most effective organization in doing this is the **Civil War Trust** or CWT. Each year the board authorizes a gift to the CWT, but we can do more than that, and so we are asking you, our membership to help support battlefield preservation through:

1. Becoming a member of the Civil War Trust if you haven't already.
2. Making a donation at this month's meeting. (Details below)

Mike Movius will be bringing a few items to auction off and also the "Preservation Bucket" to pass around to each table. Remember that what you give is tax-deductible, and the tax season is closer than you think.

As you may know, the CWT has a very good record of finding and preserving places that are important to all Americans, but especially to those of us who have a special attachment to where the boys in Blue and Gray fought 150 years ago.

Remember to bring your checkbook & THANK YOU in advance for your generosity!

Donald James Murray was a long-time member of the PSCWRT. We were recently informed he had passed away. We will miss him...



Donald James Murray, born November 23, 1923, went to heaven to be with his wife of 59 years Irene, and daughter, Diane on Tuesday, September 22, 2015. Don was raised in Elma, WA, where he graduated from Elma High in 1942 before going on to serve in WWII with the Third Marine Division. Upon his return, Don studied at Washington State University graduating in 1950 and receiving a Master's Degree in Education in 1953. Don and Irene raised two beautiful children, Steven and Diane. Throughout his professional life he enjoyed a prosperous and successful career as a

Teacher in Wapato, then as a Principal in Waitsburg before moving to Seattle to work for the Washington Education Association and later Pemco Insurance. Don was a life learner and an avid hobbyist of Abe Lincoln, Geology and Jewelry making. "Boom-Boom" as his grandchildren called him, was a gentle, thoughtful man with a boisterous laugh that brought joy to everyone's hearts. He is survived by his son Steve (wife Pearl), his grandchildren Thomas (Leila), Daniel (Jennifer), and Kyle (Ethel), and great-grandchildren Taylor, Audrina, Avery, Acelin and Skyler. We will think of him every day and hold him forever in our hearts.

Nick K. Adams to Appear

By Mike Movius

This is a reminder that the ever-popular author and PSCWRT member Nick K. Adams will appear on Civil War Talk Radio on **November 18, 2015** at 4 p.m. Pacific. He will be discussing his latest book, "My Dear Wife and Children: Civil War Letters from a 2nd Minnesota Volunteer". The host of CWTR is a former PSCWRT speaker, historian and faculty member of East Carolina University.

You can listen to the interview at <http://www.impedimentsofwar.org> OR, you can download it as a podcast on iTunes at <https://itunes.apple.com/podcast/civil-war-talk-radio/id443517292> Any way you go, it's bound to be fun listening to a couple of old friends talking about our favorite subject.

Editor: *The following book excerpt was submitted by member Jim Dimond. He points out that there was "no copyright on this".*

Old Plantation Days: Being Recollections of Southern Life Before the Civil War

By Nancy Bostick De Saussure

Pages 79 - 83

Shortly after father and mother's departure, one morning, early, the remaining negroes came running to the house in a state of wild excitement, and said that Sherman's army was crossing the Savannah River at the next landing below my father's. I was picking oranges when the news came. Green oranges, blossoms, and ripe fruit all hung together on the tree. It was a favorite tree grown to an unusual size by the care given it, as it was always protected in winter. I have only to close my eyes at any time and see plainly the beautiful tree in all its glory of fruit and flower. We had picked from it that day a thousand oranges, the most luscious fruit, but they were left for Sherman's army to devour, for we were thrown into a panic by the news the negroes brought us, and hastily got into our carriages and fled. The negroes followed us in wagons, and we left our lovely home as if we had gone for a drive.

Our flight has always reminded me of Jacob's going down into Egypt, a caravan of people, for as we fled we first took with us our dear father and mother, then as the panic spread, one married daughter with all her children joined us, and then another, until we finally numbered about forty persons journeying northward. In order that you may understand how our numbers increased so rapidly, I must tell you that father gave each of his children at marriage a plantation with negroes and a house. These homes were in an adjoining county, that of Barnwell, and as we passed through this county different members of the family would join us.

On the second day of our journey your mother was taken with a sore throat and high fever, and as we had no bed to lay her on we took turns in holding her in our arms. Thus we traveled to the upper part of the State fleeing from the army of invaders at whose hands we expected no mercy of any kind.

An old school friend of mine, Georgiana Dargan, daughter of the Chancellor of South Carolina, had written me repeatedly during the war to come to her. She had never married and lived in a large Southern colonial mansion situated on a beautiful estate. We, in our need, thought of her and pushed on, hoping she could receive us all. We were not disappointed, the house was thrown open to us and we received a warm welcome.

It was a strange fate that Sherman followed us in our flight passing through Columbia and within ten miles of us. His scouts came in and stole all our horses, except a few which we had time to hide in the swamps. The soldiers ordered many of the negroes, choosing the best young

men, to mount the horses and go with them. All of them returned to us that night; they had broken away from camp, but were on foot. But let me tell you here, Sherman's army burned Columbia. He denied it, but we know he did it for my husband's sister, Mrs. Thomas Clarkson, who lived there, was ill, and the soldiers lifted her out of bed and laid her in the street while the torch was put to her home. Then, too, only three years ago, the burning of Columbia was admitted to me by a Northern general, General Howard. These were his words: "Sherman did not burn Columbia, but I am sorry to say his troops did." They got hold of liquor and so became mercilessly destructive. Sherman may not have given the order, but he was undoubtedly responsible for the plunder and destruction engaged in by those under his command. The people of Columbia were left without shelter or food, " Only women and children to wage war against," as a venerable judge, Judge William De Saussure, an uncle of Dr. De Saussure, told Sherman in pleading for clemency.

We were about fifty miles above Columbia, and as the army passed us they went on to Cheraw, a town lying on the northern border of South Carolina, forty miles above us.

There your great-grandfather De Saussure, who was an old man, had fled from his home in Charleston with his five daughters. In a few days news was brought us that Cheraw had been burned, and everybody was starving.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The *Alabama* Claims

By Rick Solomon

I was a History major at Lafayette College, "Home of the Ivy League Rejects" and famous for its dropout Stephen Crane who wrote *The Red Badge of Courage*. During my junior year I took a two semester course with Professor Richard E. Welch on American Diplomatic History. During that course I wrote a paper on the Alabama Claims. After 42 years I have decided to revisit this topic.

During the American Civil War several ships, including the *CSS Alabama* and the *CSS Shenandoah*, easily converted to warships, were built in private shipyards in Britain and sold to the Confederacy. The U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain, Charles Francis Adams, charged that these ships were bound for the Confederacy, where they would be used against the United States. Earlier in the summer of 1862 the British-built steam warship *Oreto*, later renamed the *CSS Florida*, was delivered to Nassau in the Bahamas with the secret understanding that it would be later transferred to the Confederate States Navy. The British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston and Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell were later forced to admit that the ships should not have been allowed to depart. The British Government had requested advice from the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, who ruled that the release of the ships did not violate Britain's neutrality, because they were not outfitted with guns at the time they left British ports.

In what was called the *Alabama* Claims, in 1869 the United States claimed direct and collateral damage against Great Britain. The United States claimed that Britain had violated neutrality by allowing five warships to be constructed knowing that these ships would eventually enter into Confederate naval service.

When Secretary of State William H. Seward negotiated the Alaska Purchase in 1867, he intended it as the first step in a comprehensive plan to gain control of the entire Northwest Pacific Coast. Seward was a firm believer in “Manifest Destiny”, primarily for its commercial advantages to the United States. Seward expected the West Coast Province of British Columbia to seek annexation to the United States and thought Britain might accept this in exchange for the *Alabama* Claims. This was endorsed by several U.S. politicians. The idea reached a peak in 1870, with American expansionists, Canadian separatists and British anti-imperialists seemingly combining forces. The plan was dropped for several reasons. Britain continued to stall, American commercial financial groups pressed Washington for a quick settlement of the dispute in cash, nationalist sentiment in British Columbia favored loyalty to the British Empire, Congress became preoccupied with Reconstruction, and most Americans showed little interest in territorial expansion after the long years, expenses and losses of the Civil War.

In 1871, Hamilton Fish, President Ulysses S. Grant’s Secretary of State, worked out an agreement with the British representative, Sir John Rose to create a commission in Washington comprising six members from the British Empire and six members from the United States. Its mission was to resolve the *Alabama* Claims, refinancing, and other international disputes between Canada and the United States by treaty. On March 8, 1871 the Treaty of Washington was signed at the State Department and the U.S. Senate ratified the treaty by a vote of 50-12 on May 24, 1871. In accord with the treaty, an international arbitration met in Geneva. The treaty included the settlement process for the *Alabama* Claims, settle disputed Atlantic fisheries and the San Juan Boundary. Britain and the United States became perpetual allies after the treaty, with Britain having expressed regret over the *Alabama* damages.

The tribunal was composed of Charles Francis Adams of the United States, Sir Alexander Cockburn (Chief Justice of the British courts), Count Federico Sclopis (a world renowned Italian legal authority), Viscount D’Itajuba (Brazil’s minister to France) and Jakob Stampfli (three time president of the Swiss Confederation). Negotiations had taken place in Suitland, Maryland at the estate of businessman Samuel Taylor Suit. The tribunal session was held in a reception room of the Town Hall in Geneva, Switzerland. This has been named *sale de l’Alabama*.

The final award of \$415,500,000 formed part of the Treaty of Washington and was paid out by Great Britain in 1872. This was balanced against damages of \$1,929,819 paid by the United States to Great Britain for illegal Union blockade practices and ceded fishing privileges. This established the principle of international arbitration, and launched a movement to codify public international law with hopes for finding peaceful solutions to international disputes. The arbitration of the *Alabama* Claims was a precursor to the Hague Convention, the League of Nations, the World court and the United Nations.

See you November 12th!

Rick Solomon, President

What To Do About Confederate Monuments?

By Richard “Dick” Miller

When you visit Richmond – like I did in late October – you can’t help but notice that monuments to the Confederacy are everywhere. I spent a lot of time as I walked around Richmond thinking about the place of Confederate monuments in our country today. I came to the conclusion that not all Confederate monuments are equal, that some rightfully belong in their place in our landscape and that some should be removed altogether and that almost all need to be re-interpreted.

We all recognize the power of symbols in shaping what we believe about ourselves and our country. Symbols are important to our national identity. The problem with Confederate monuments is that they represent both the good and the bad about us. They remind us of the courage of Confederate soldiers, the dedication of these soldiers to their comrades, and the sacrifices they made to protect their homeland. But Confederate monuments also remind us of a system that subjected three and a half million Americans in 1860 to slavery. More recently, Confederate symbols, especially the Confederate battle flag, have been used to promote white supremacy and intimidate African Americans. Which narrative do we want to choose as a nation – bravery and dedication to ideals or slavery and intimidation? Is there an approach that enables us to enshrine the one and reject the other?

The Mahone monument, which stands today on the lip of the Crater at Petersburg National Battlefield Park, well represents this dilemma. Brigadier General William Mahone led the counter-attack after a massive underground explosion, set off by Pennsylvania soldiers, had ripped a hole in the Confederate line. Mahone’s men rushed to plug the gap in their line knowing that the opposing Union force outnumbered them, yet they charged with the bravery and determination commemorated by the Mahone monument today. But when the Confederate soldiers reached the edge of the Crater, according to an NPS ranger at the Petersburg Visitor Center, they were so enraged by the sight of black soldiers trapped in the depression that they gave no quarter to those US Colored Troops who attempted to surrender. What does the Mahone monument commemorate for South Carolinians and for African Americans? Does it commemorate bravery or massacre based on skin color?

Personally, I think that the Mahone monument is an integral part of the Petersburg battlefield and should remain where it stands. It marks an important spot where the Confederate counter-attack stopped the Federal effort to breach their line. But the Park Service fails to interpret the monument because there is no information at the Crater about the massacre of the US Colored Troops trapped in the Crater. Using accurate and informative plaques and signs is a critical way of modifying a narrative. I was extremely impressed with the manner in which Pamplin Historical Park tells the story of the American Civil War soldier. No Confederate flags fly at Pamplin although it is clear that the museum honors both northern and southern soldiers. The material that describes the origins of the Civil War rightly places slavery as the precipitating cause of the conflict. (Shame on the Museum of the Confederacy for down-playing slavery as a cause, but then, telling the truth might upset the museum’s principal clientele.) And Pamplin

Historical Park offers an excellent, although brief, discussion of slavery in 1860 as part of its exhibit of slave quarters.

Another way of modifying the message of Confederate monuments is to place other monuments with a new narrative close to the old Confederate ones. Perhaps the most famous example of this practice is the Arthur Ashe statue on Monument Avenue, a simple but powerful statement against the mammoth equestrian statues of Lee, Jackson, and Stuart. On the grounds of the Virginia State Capital is the Virginia Civil Rights Memorial. Located close to the statue of Stonewall Jackson, it honors the young African Americans who protested the deplorable conditions in their high schools and whose case was eventually incorporated into Brown versus Board of Education. These monuments are both excellent examples of using symbols to change the message. But unfortunately, the life-size statue of Robert E. Lee continues to dominate the Old Hall of the House of Delegates in the Capital building, ostensibly to commemorate the spot where Lee accepted command of the Virginia state troops in 1861. In a room where Virginia's representatives met from 1788 to 1904 and where Virginia voted to adopt the Bill of Rights, why give place of honor to Lee, a man who betrayed his country, albeit for the state he loved? Virginia should move the statue to another, less prominent spot in the Capital.

Finally, some symbols need to be removed all together. Petersburg Virginia's population is almost 80% African American. Yet Petersburg still has Pegram Street, which recalls Confederate Brigadier General John Pegram, killed at the Battle of Hatchers Run, and Confederate Colonel William Pegram, killed at the Battle of Five Forks. Petersburg needs to change any street name that honors a Confederate soldier and if that is too expensive to accomplish, it should add a second name that honors one of its foremost African American citizens.

What to do with Confederate monuments? I don't think the argument that we should leave them alone so that we don't "change history" holds much water. We need to tell the truth about our history and that means that we need to add more information close to the monuments, erect adjoining monuments with a new narrative, or remove those that egregiously flaunt what the Confederacy represented.

THE LAST WORD

A "House Divided"?

By Mark R. Terry

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3rd. Though I believe it is the duty of every American citizen to vote, that is not the reason I brought it up. I mention it because in every election cycle there are at least two parties vying for your vote. At times, things can get pretty heated (and they will get even more intense in the coming year!). However, at the end of the day, it is the ballot box and not bullets that decide who the winners are. We congratulate the victors and move on.

150 years after the Civil War, members of our Puget Sound Civil War Round Table meet nine times a year. We meet together for various reasons, but mostly because of our fascination with the conflict and the many aspects of it that interest us and touch our lives. But because we are all

individuals and come at the subject from our own experience, backgrounds and values, we don't always look at the War the same way.

Last month I published two items in the Washington Volunteer, first a petition originating with the Civil War Trust that would preserve every American war memorial and keep them from being removed or destroyed. The second article was one I reprinted in full in this column entitled "*How many symbols do you want to purge?*" by Mr. A.V. Gallagher describing the attack on Confederate symbols and memorials, basically asking the question "when will enough be enough?"

At least one member of the Round Table respectfully disagreed with the articles that I published and asked that an article showing the other side of the issue be published in this month's "Volunteer", which I have done.

Here's where my election analogy comes back into play. Even after 150 years, certain aspects of the history of the War Between the States are still controversial. No matter what side your own views may fall on, at the end of the day we need to support one another and the PSCWRT. Is winning an argument worth losing a friend or dividing our organization? Can we "agree to disagree" and be tolerant of one another's viewpoints? I believe that we can and must do this. I am not advocating that controversial topics be banned, but if and when they do come up, I hope we can discuss them reasonably, rationally and without rancor.

As Lincoln, quoting Jesus, said "A house divided against itself cannot stand".

DUES & DONATIONS

The PSCWRT season goes from September to the following May. Dues should be paid in September. Dues are payable either at the meeting or by mail: \$20 per individual, \$25 for a couple. Also, donations are gratefully accepted. These will help secure speakers for our meetings. Please note that all donations are tax deductible as the PSCWRT is a 501(c)3 organization. Mail to: Jeff Rombauer, Treasurer, 22306 255th Ave. SE, Maple Valley, WA 98038-7626. Call 425-432-1346 or email: jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com.

We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the December 2015 Washington Volunteer is Monday, November 23, 2015. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!

2015-2016 OFFICERS

Elected:*

President: Rick Solomon, ricksolo@ricksolo.com

Vice-President-Successor: Mike Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Past-President: David Palmer, davidpalmer7@comcast.net

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

Vice-President-Editor: Mark Terry, 425-337-6246, markimlor@comcast.net

Vice-President- Membership: Marilyn Rexilius, marilyn.rexilius@frontier.com

Vice President-Social Media: Mike Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Vice President-Reservations: Rod Cameron, 206-524-4434, rodcam@comcast.net

Treasurer: Jeff Rombauer, 425-432-1346, jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com

Secretary: Larry Jilbert, 253-891-4022, LJilbert.CJilbert@comcast.net

**All, except for Past President, an automatic position.*