



# The Wheeler Dispatch



*The Official Newsletter of the General Joe Wheeler Camp #1245 in Aiken, South Carolina  
A Camp built upon Duty, Honor, God and Country April 2023*



## Commander's Column

### Greetings Fellow Compatriots,

The SC Division Reunion/Convention in Columbia, SC went very well and had a turnout of about 130 Compatriots. Ken, Nathan and I were honored to represent the Wheeler Camp. The Wheeler Camp should be proud to know that you received two Division Awards in the Sandlapper Level for camps less than 30 members. (Out of the 56 active camps in SC, 29 camps are in the Sandlapper Level.) The first award was a first-place ribbon for the "Wheeler Dispatch" Newsletter. The second award was second place for the Robert E. Lee Camp of the Year Award. (See photos later in the newsletter.) Pete Peters was re-elected as the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade Commander. The 2024 Reunion is to be held in North Myrtle Beach on April 12 & 13. The host will be the Litchfield Camp #132. Hope many of you will plan to attend.

Please make every effort to attend our upcoming Ladies' Night to be held on Friday April 7 at 6:30pm at the Outing Club on Outing Club Road. We are looking forward to hearing Tom Poland as our guest speaker. Cost is \$20.00 per person. Contact me at 803-341-4142 or email me at [bmjmaiken@gmail.com](mailto:bmjmaiken@gmail.com) to add your name to the list by no later than March 31, so arrangements can be made with the caterer. You can pay at the door.

The SC Division Confederate Memorial Service will be held in Columbia on Saturday May 6 starting at the Statehouse at 9:00am and continuing at Elmwood Cemetery at 11:00am following with a picnic on the grounds, (please bring your own picnic lunch and chair).

The Aiken County Confederate Memorial Day Service will be held on Sunday May 7 at 3pm in Bethany Cemetery. Please put these two events on your calendars.

Thanks to all our members for their dedication to our Camp, it's Work, and it's Cause. Let's all try hard to keep this Camp going in the right direction with an energy and commitment that would make our ancestors proud.

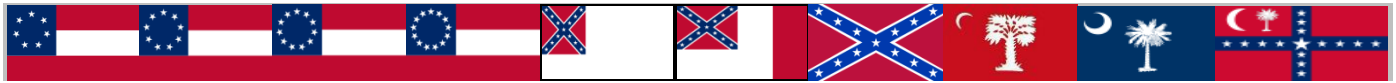
Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations. May God bless you and may God bless Dixie. Blake

**"Remember, Confederate soldiers never die until they are forgotten."**



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## *1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Commander*

The Wheeler Coins have arrived and they are beautiful. They sold at the SC Reunion very well. You can buy several at the April meeting for \$10 each for yourself or to give to friends.

### **2023 and 2024 National Reunions**

#### **Register NOW for 2023 and 2024 Reunions**

Registration for the 2023 SCV National Reunion to be hosted by the James M. Keller Camp #648 at Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas. The dates are July 19 - 22, 2023. To register, please visit the Reunion website, <https://www.2023scvreunion.org/>.

Registration for the 2024 SCV National Reunion to be hosted by the Succession Camp #4 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in North Charleston, SC. The dates are July 16 - 21, 2024. To register, please visit the Reunion website, <https://scv4.org/2024/>.

## *2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Commander*

**The following is a list of important events during the next few months  
Additional information will be added as it becomes available.**

- March 28 - Sgt. Berry G. Benson Camp #1672 celebration of Lt. General Wade Hampton's 205<sup>th</sup> birthday in the Wade Hampton Park in North Augusta at 6:00pm.
- Friday April 7 – Wheeler Camp Ladies' Night Celebration at 6:30pm at the Outing Club
- Saturday April 29– Brig. Gen. E. Porter Alexander Camp's Confederate Memorial Service at 11:00am in Magnolia Cemetery in Augusta, GA
- Saturday May 6 – SC Confederate Memorial Day Services in Columbia, SC
- Sunday May 7 – Wheeler Camp's Aiken County Confederate Memorial Day Service at 3:00pm in Bethany Cemetery
- Jack Marlar Bench Dedication will be held on June 3, 2023 at 2:00pm in Abbeville, SC

## **Jack Marlar Bench Dedication**

**Saturday, June 3, 2023  
2:00 PM - Abbeville, SC**

(rain or shine)



**The Jack Marlar Bench Dedication  
will take place at the Signer's Monument  
on Secession Hill in Abbeville, SC.**

**You can come in period dress if you would like,  
but it is not required.**

**We hope to have a good turnout of  
Confederate Reenactors, SCV, and UDC members.  
No seating provided; bring a lawn chair.**

**Let's show folks what Mr. Jack meant to us.**

**For more information, contact:**

**Henry Richardson (Division Lt Commander) <[scdivltcommander@gmail.com](mailto:scdivltcommander@gmail.com)>  
OR Robert Roper <[rhrill7@prteneL.com](mailto:rhrill7@prteneL.com)>**



## *Adjutant's Report*

It was great seeing our fellow Compatriots at the March meeting and being able to spend some time together in fellowship and comradery while enjoying a good meal together. Our speaker was Joe Long from the SC Confederate Relic Room. He gave a very interesting and educational talk about two Confederate Naval ship's captains, Lt. William Parker and Lt. John Maffitt and their exploits during the War for Southern Independence as blockade runners and capturers of millions of dollars of US maritime commerce.

## *From the Chaplain's Desk*



No matter the situation in life you may find yourself in this Easter, remember that the power of Jesus's resurrection remains an anchor for us all. And through His resurrection all things are made new, which includes your life, your hope and your future. So, as you look around you this Spring at the newness all around you, new buds, new leaves and the newness of the earth coming into a new beginning for another year, remember He can do this for you also. So, let go of what weighs us down, what holds us back and what brings us sorrow and look to the Cross and the Tomb. It's there that we will find sweet release into a brand-new life and hope. Let's focus on living that new life, the one God has planned for you, and live that life today! When you decide to do that, you will outshine the newness all around you because you will become that very newness, and others will want what you have. So, Happy Easter and shine on brothers. Love you all, and remember, DEO VINDICE, Ken



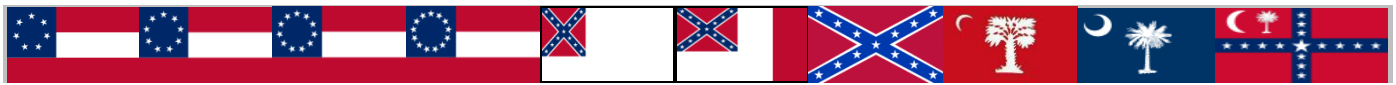
**Chaplain's Prayer List:** Please remember our fellow compatriots and their family members who need prayers:

Michael Allen, Jacob Cook, Lee Duvall and his daughter Melanie, Clair Henkes, Tom Huckabee, Ken Temples & SC Adjutant Joe and Brenda Willis

## **Cruises of the CSS Florida and Ship's Captain Lt. John Newland Maffitt**

JOSHUA HORN OCTOBER 7, 2014

The most famous of the Confederate commerce raiders was the CSS *Alabama*, but it was far from the only one. There were many ships that sailed the world under the Confederate navy jack, and another very successful one was the *CSS Florida*. She was built in Liverpool, England for the Confederate government, and was launched in 1862. But the English, as neutrals, could not legally build ships for the Confederacy. This problem was avoided by launching the ship without her weapons, and then turning her into a warship at sea. The ship that would become the *Florida* was first called the *Oreto*, and it was built alongside the *290*, which would become the CSS *Alabama*. The *Oreto* left England on March 22 and sailed to the Bahamas. There she was to meet a tender and be turned into Confederate raider. On the journey across the Atlantic she was shown to be a good sailor. The Confederate agent on board wrote, "I do not think there is a stronger vessel of her class afloat..." But as she waited in Nassau harbor, word was received that the American government was trying to convince the British customs officers to seize



the *Oreto*. She was actually searched, but they could find no reason to impound her as a warship. Eventually the *Bahama* arrived, carrying men and supplies for the soon to be *Florida*. Twelve United States men of war also came into port, and they were certain to try to capture a Confederate ship.

Photo # NH 57835 CSS Florida, by Clary Ray



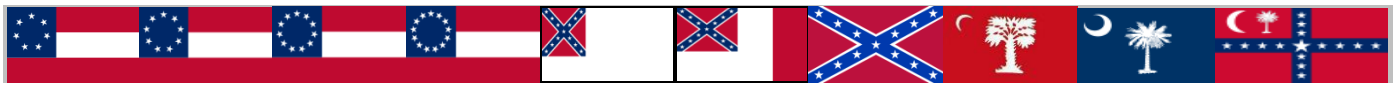
The CSS Florida



Lt. John Newland Maffitt

The Confederates waited, hoping their plan would not be discovered, until Lieutenant John Newland Maffitt, the man destined to command the ship, arrived in the harbor. Maffitt had been an officer in the US Navy, but when he came to Bermuda, he was in charge of a blockade runner. He was given command of the *Oreto*, or the *Manassas* as she was also called, as the only Confederate navy officer available. But since officially she was still a private vessel, he could not take possession of the ship, and could only secretly instruct her civilian captain. He wrote to the Secretary of War, "I have personally assumed command of the *Manassas*, which vessel I hope to have ready for service soon, and my whole soul will be devoted to giving *éclat* to our cause and annoyance to the enemy. *My difficulties are great, my ambition greater.*" Before she could get away, Captain McKillop of the British Vice-Admiralty took possession of the ship as a lawful prize. But within a day the Queen's Attorney on the island ordered that the ship be released. It was nearly certain she would be armed, but as she was not yet, it was illegal to seize her. But then she was seized yet again by the British. On June 5, 1862 she went into the Court of Admiralty to decide what should be done with her. The case opened a month later, and for six days the arguments continued over whether she could be charged. While waiting, John Maffitt wrote to his daughter, "I shall be painfully distressed if this grand chance is lost to us, but the entire affair was badly managed on the other side of the water." Finally on August 7 the vessel was declared free. Maffitt took command, and that night ran her out of the harbor with a skeleton crew before any anyone again tried to seize her. A schooner was sent back to Nassau to pick up her guns and cargo. Hard work had to be done in the hot sun to load these on board, and the wardroom steward died from it. The job was finally completed and the ship was commissioned the Confederate ship *Florida* on August 17, 1862.

Any hopes of striking the Union commerce were dispelled even before her outfit was finished. Yellow fever struck the ship, and ran rampant among the crew. There was no doctor on board, so the captain had to fill that role himself. In just five days only five men were well. The ship was useless in such a condition, and Maffitt ran her to Cuba, where he came down with the sickness himself. Yellow fever is a truly terrible disease. Only a few hours after James Maffitt first showed symptoms he was completely incapacitated, and for seven days he could remember nothing in what he called "an epoch of horror and suffering that cannot be realized save by those who have been the recipients of this fell disease." When he came to, he found the doctors did not think he would recover. When one expressed some hope, the Lieutenant "told him his prognostics were correct, as I had not time to die." No new sailors could be



found there, and there were not enough officers on board. With the cruise turning out to be a disaster, Maffitt chose to run to Mobile, Alabama. Somehow, he was able to make it there even with the condition of the crew.

He found the Union navy, tasked with blockading the port, blocking his way. His crew could not fight, not only did they lack the manpower, the equipment for their guns had not been loaded in the hurry to escape Nassau. So Maffitt ran up the Union jack, and sailed towards the entrance to the harbor. This common practice did not deceive the Federals, and their three warships came out to meet her. Onward the Confederate sailed, soon hit with the accurate fire of the three Federal vessels. One tried to cut her off, but the *Florida* kept on straight, so the northern ship pulled back to avoid a collision. Although the *Florida* was hit many times, after twenty minutes she was able to safely come to rest underneath the Confederate guns at Fort Morgan. Stephen Mallory, the Confederate Secretary of the Navy, complimented the sick Maffitt on his handling of the ship, saying “I do not remember that the union of thorough professional skill, coolness, and daring have ever been better exhibited in a naval dash of a single ship.”

Safe in a friendly harbor, Maffitt was able to recover from his sickness, recruit a new crew, and prepare the ship for a cruise. After three months of slow preparations, the ship ready for combat. The problem was now how to get out past the blockading fleet. As he prepared to try to make his escape, Maffitt wrote in his diary:

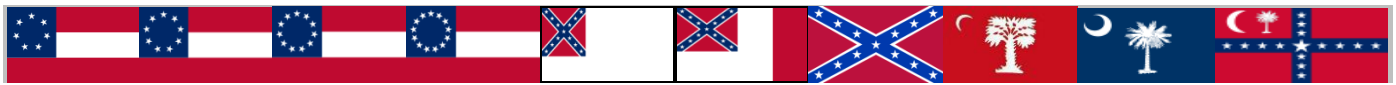
*'Tis to the interest of the Confederacy that we get out intact, as my orders are to assail their commerce only, that the mercantile part of the Northern community, who so earnestly sustain the war by liberal contributions, may not fatten on its progress, but feel all its misfortunes. As the Alabama and Florida are the only two cruisers we have just now, it would be a perfect absurdity to tilt against their more than three hundred, for the Federals would gladly sacrifice fifty armed ships to extinguish the two Confederates.*

*When a man-of-war is sacrificed 'tis a national calamity, not individually felt, but when merchant ships are destroyed on the high seas individuality suffers, and the shoe than pinches in the right direction. All the merchants of New York and Boston who had by their splendid traders become princes of wealth and puffy with patriotic zeal for the subjugation of the South, will soon cry with a loud voice, peace, peace; we are becoming ruined and the country —ed!*

Knowing they had a dangerous ship cornered, the Federals had increased their forces off Mobile.

The *Florida* was far too weak to take them head on. The Confederates painted the *Florida* a dark color, and waited for a gale to cover their exit from the harbor.

Early on the morning of January 16, 1863, Maffitt saw his opportunity. Running out of Mobile, he was in the center of the Union fleet before he was spotted. The Federal ships gave chase, but over the next day the *Florida* was able to outrun or elude all of them. She quickly entered on her mission of commerce raiding, capturing and burning her first prize on the 19. She had to stop in at Havana, Cuba, as her coal was found to be bad, but she made off the next day before the Union ships could close on her. She continued sailing off the coast of South America and the West Indians, capturing the American merchantmen. In February Maffitt stopped in Barbados for coal, after convincing the governor to ignore the requirement of three months between stops in a British port. One of the largest ships she captured was the *Jacob Bell*, which carried a cargo of tea worth \$1-2 million. Along the way he had to avoid the



US Navy ships sent after him, running away from one, and avoiding another while disguised as a merchant.

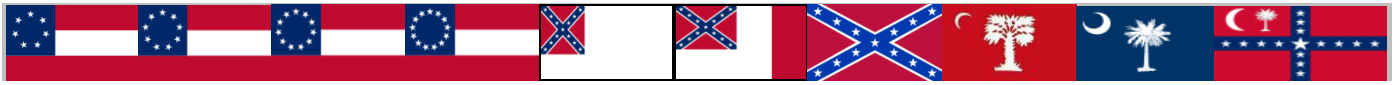
In early May the *Florida* sought anchorage in Brazil harbors to repair her engine and take on food. But neutral countries would only allow Confederate ships to stay for twenty-four hours to take on vital supplies, especially since the raider was carrying prisoners and cargo from Union ships. Maffitt protested that the refitting would take four days, and said that by giving only twenty-four hours Brazil assumed “the responsibility of ejecting a disabled and distressed vessel of a friendly power upon the ocean, an act that would receive the condemnation of all civilized powers....” With this the governor of Pernambuco relented, and allowed him into the harbor.

In May, Maffitt was promoted to Commander for his “gallant and meritorious conduct in command of the steam sloop *Florida*, in running the blockade in and out of the port of Mobile, against an overwhelming force of the enemy, and under his fire; and since, in actively cruising against and destroying the enemy’s commerce.” On July 8 the USS *Ericsson*, a side-wheel steamer, approached the *Florida*. The poor quality of the coal the Confederates had on board prevented them from escaping, but a broadside from her guns chased the Union ship away. When the *Florida* put in at St. George’s, Bermuda a few days later, she exchanged salutes with the British forts. This is something the commander of the forts should not have done, as Great Britain did not recognize the Confederacy as a nation. He was later rebuked by his government in London, and it was the only time a Confederate vessel was saluted by a foreign military.

At the end of August, the *Florida* put into Brest, France for repairs, as they had visited an English port within the past six months and so could not visit another. After months of rigorous cruising, Maffitt’s health had broken down. He turned his command over to Lieutenant Charles Morris. The seamen of the CSS *Florida* liked Maffitt as their commander, because of his “kindness and consideration,” and asked to be transferred with him to whatever ship he was given next. This probably did not occur. Maffitt returned to the Confederacy, and was given command of the CSS *Albemarle*.

## **PHOTOS FROM THE SC DIVISION REUNION**





Confederate Table of Honor



Robert Hayes recipient of the John Amasa May Lifetime Achievement Award



Commander Smith presenting Blake the Ambrose Gonzales Newsletter Award for Electronic First Place Sandlapper Level

## South Carolina Division



Sons Of Confederate Veterans  
Presents The

**Ambrose Gonzales Newsletter Award**  
**Sandlapper Level**  
**Electronic**  
**First Place**  
To The

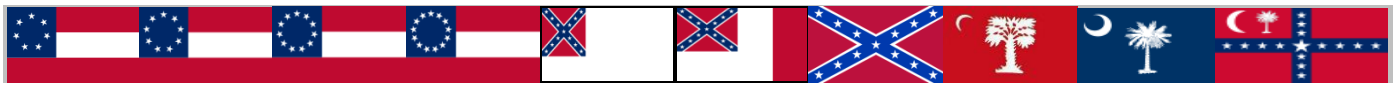
**Gen. Joe Wheeler Camp #1245**  
**The Wheeler Dispatch**  
**Editor Blake Moore**

On This, The 11<sup>th</sup> Day Of March  
In The Year Of Our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty Three



*Perry J. Smith III*  
Commander Perry J. Smith III

*Mark Sheppard*  
Awards Chairman Mark Sheppard



Commander Smith presenting Blake, Ken and Nathan the Robert E. Lee Camp of the Year Award for Second Place Sandlapper Level

## South Carolina Division



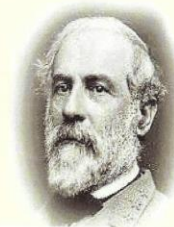
Sons Of Confederate Veterans  
Presents The

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To The

**Wheeler Camp #1245**

On This, The 11<sup>th</sup> Day Of March  
In The Year Of Our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty Three



*Perry J. Smith III*  
Commander Perry J. Smith III

*Mark Sheppard*  
Awards Chairman Mark Sheppard

# Happy Birthday!

## Camp Compatriots for April

Michael Allen – April 8

Mike Harber – April 9

### 2023 – 2024 Camp Officers

Blake Moore– Commander  
Lee Duvall – 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Commander  
Mark LeGrand – 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander  
Danny Brown – Adjutant

Bob Ritter - Treasurer  
Ken Temples – Chaplain  
Nathan Oxner – Color Sergeant  
Nicholas Ward – Judge Advocate





## Change in Proration Policy effective March 4, 2023

*Proration of members who have been delinquent over 2 years is now allowed*

**March 9, 2023**

### **Compatriots:**

**At the March meeting of the GEC, the Proration Policy was changed, allowing proration for members that have been delinquent for over two years. The GEC hopes this new policy will help camps bring delinquent members back into the ranks.**

**The policy is included below for your convenience.**

**Best wishes,**

**Adam Southern  
Executive Director**

### **DUES PRORATION** (effective for the year 2022/2023) fiscal year 2022

This is the way the prorated dues system works: The membership voted to raise dues from \$30. to \$35.00. This affects the proration amounts.

The SCV operates on a fiscal year (not calendar) beginning August 1st of one year and going through July 31st of the following year. The current fiscal year, August 1, 2022, through July 31, 2023, is shown as status 2022 on your roster, and it means the member's dues are paid through July 31, 2023. Additionally, there is now a 1-month grace period from August 1st through September 1st when members are still current while camps work to collect the annual dues for the next fiscal year. **Dues submissions postmarked after September 1st of each year are now subject to a \$5 late fee in addition to the normal \$35 annual dues. This extra \$5**



**fee also applies to all delinquent/former members wishing to reinstate but cannot be prorated anymore.**

If someone joins as a new member in **February, March, or April 2023** (which is technically the 3rd quarter of our fiscal year) he can pay his \$35 yearly dues and the \$5 processing fee, and he has the option to pay an additional \$17.5 for a total of **\$57.50** to join for both the current fiscal year as well as the next fiscal year as status 2022, meaning his dues will be advanced & paid through July 31, 2024. The \$17.50 counts for the remainder of the current year, and the \$35 is for the following year. You may **not** just pay \$17.5 to finish the current without paying for the following year as well.

If someone joins as a new member in **May, June, or July 2023** (which is technically the 4th quarter of our fiscal year) he can pay his \$35 yearly dues and the \$5 processing fee, and he has the option to pay an additional \$8.75 for a total of **\$48.75** to join for both the current fiscal year as well as the next fiscal year as status 2022, meaning his dues will be advanced & paid through July 31, 2024. The \$8.75 counts for the remainder of the current year, and the \$35 is for the following year. You may not just pay \$8.75 to finish the current without paying for the following year as well.

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT NEW NOTICE: CHANGE OF PRORATION POLICY!  
March 4, 2023**

**Proration of reinstatements of members who have been delinquent over 2 years is now allowed.**

Please remember that the shortened grace period to pay dues without a \$5 late fee beginning Aug. 1st is now only 1 month ending each Sept. 1st & **this prorated dues option is now only available for brand new members joining in the 3rd or 4th quarter.**

**Proration of reinstatements/delinquents less than 2 years is not an option.**

**There is not an option to pay only the partial dues** for the remainder of the current fiscal year. This prorated dues policy, originally adopted at the 2005 Nashville Convention, is a great improvement over the past practice when men who joined during the last six months of the fiscal year had only one option which was to pay the entire \$35 for the remaining months in the fiscal year only to get hit up for dues again when the new fiscal year begins each Aug. 1st. The proration period does not begin until February 1st of each fiscal year & cannot be prorated until then.

**\*\*\*PLEASE DO NOT JUST SEND THE PARTIAL PRORATED DUES AMOUNT WITHOUT INCLUDING A FULL YEAR'S DUES WITH IT\*\*\***



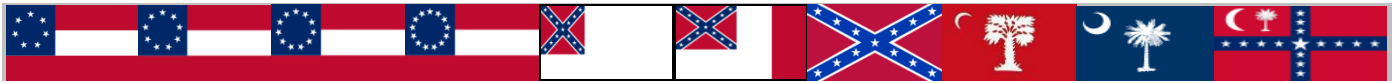
## Are Southerners Still Welcome in Our Military?

The Sons of Confederate Veterans oppose the recently recommended actions by the Naming Commission in conjunction with the Department of Defense. Their actions to strip the names of Confederate officers and heroes from our military assets will raise serious doubts as to whether young Southerners are welcome in today's military. A vocal and ambivalent minority has embarked on a vicious attack against American history. They have fought long and hard, have lobbied those in power, and have



championed the cause to change the names of military bases, naval vessels, and historic flags. In other words, all things connected with Southern valor displayed on the field of battle during the War Between the States are to be purged. This action is a rejection of the same vigor that inspired many Southerners to join the military and heroically defended the United States, many in her time of need, and in communion with the valor displayed by their Confederate ancestors.

This was true when the blitzkrieg raged, and the relentless attacks in



the Pacific continued as World War II found the entirety of humanity engulfed in the flames of war. It is meaningful that the highest-ranking general officer to be killed in action was General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., the son of Confederate General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Sr. Moreover, the highest-ranking naval officer in the Pacific Theater during that great conflagration was Admiral Chester Nimitz, the grandson of Confederate Captain Charles Henry Nimitz, while the Commander-in-Chief at the end of WWII, President Harry S. Truman, was the grandson of a Confederate Veteran, who was also the President responsible for desegregating the U.S. Armed Forces in 1948. In every war after the War Between the States, Southerners volunteered in large numbers to patriotically support our nation and to display her might abroad.

Despite the cadre of Confederate descendants, the Naming Commission cannot help but continually berate and even attack Confederate Veterans. As a result, fathers and grandfathers of the South now question if their children are welcome in an environment that displays such animosity toward our shared heritage. Even more capricious is the desire to destroy the Reconciliation Memorial sculpted by Sgt. Jacob Moses Ezekiel (Battalion of Cadets VMI) in Arlington National Cemetery which was meant to reunite a fractured nation after its victory in the Spanish-American War. Evidently, it appears that the official policy is to discriminate against Southern heritage and the esprit décor that transcends from Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Nathan Bedford Forrest to their descendants today. The Sons of Confederate Veterans oppose rewriting America's history. We understand that it is not only Southern history being attacked, but all traditional American values including our Founding Fathers from Washington to Jefferson, and even Benjamin Franklin.

R. S. Jason Boshers  
Tennessee  
Commander-in-Chief  
Sons of Confederate Veterans

Walter D. Kennedy  
Louisiana  
Lt. Commander-in-Chief  
Sons of Confederate Veterans

