

Circular No.} 1

Headquarters Southern Division

21 April 2015

The commemoration of the surrender of the Army of Tennessee occurring this weekend at Bennet Place officially closes the sesquicentennial cycle. This 'closure' and the resulting changes to our hobby, or 'avocation', has been much anticipated and discussed. Some expect greatly reduced participation, smaller events, fewer venues, reduced public interest, and the inevitable changes of command within established organizations. Most or all will come about to greater or lesser degree.

I however believe that the Southern Division will be the 'constant' during this time of change. Built upon sound guiding principles of "operating in a military manner; being true to those that served; presenting the history as it occurred ; and being fair and cooperative with other organizations" has established a proud reputation for the Southern Division. Under Chris Anders' leadership we also built a reputation for creating and executing some of, if not the best, events of this cycle. Those facts combined with the depth, breadth, and competency of the leadership in all of our member organizations, which largely remains unchanged, are our strength and foundation going forward.

The Southern Division will of course go through some changes also. Gen'l Anders retirement and my assumption of command (with the unanimous consent of member organizations) is but just one. The change however will be relatively seamless. Re-organization of the Brigades into a battalion structure is another perhaps greater change; it being agreed to by all parties to better reflect the expected drop in participation. Division Staff will likewise be reorganized to reflect the new battalion structure. The first change is achieved, the second started, and the third yet to come.

Everything mentioned above was anticipated and planned for. All will be accomplished quickly and smoothly in preparation for the future. We will largely take the remaining portion of this year to rest and recruit, pursuing an array of 'unit' events closer to home. That 'R&R' period does not however mean that the Division is either stagnant or "resting upon its Laurels". We have already started planning future events, beginning with the Carnifex Ferry event this September and extending through the end of 2017 – almost all being Southern Division sponsored events. All will be announced by mid-June.

The future of the organization is bright and with your continued support our future may well exceed our past.

R. Watters, Brig Gen'l, cmdg

Southern Division