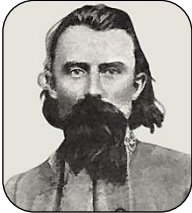


Programme of Activities

BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHAB



Saturday 14 February 2026, at 3 pm

THE FOUR LIVES OF JOSEPH ORVILLE SHELBY

Lecture by **Jean-Claude Janssens**: *The four lives of Joseph Orville Shelby*.

Joseph O. Shelby lived four lives: a first one before the American Civil War (1830-1860), a second during the war itself (1861-1865), a third in exile in Mexico after the war (1865-1867), and finally, a fourth and last upon his permanent return to Missouri, on American soil (1867-1897). Each was marked by epic events. During the war, Shelby took part in an incalculable number of actions. His greatest feat of arms was undoubtedly his great raid into Missouri in the autumn of 1863. Appointed brigadier general on December 15 of that year, Shelby was eventually promoted to major general on May 10, 1865, a promotion that was never ratified, as the Confederate government had dissolved itself on May 5. When the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department (theoretically including Missouri, the contested Indian Territory, Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana) was forced to surrender on May 26, 1865, General Shelby alone never offered his surrender, preferring exile to dishonor.



Saturday 14 March 2026, at 3 pm

THE LEGENDARY TRAINS OF THE 19th CENTURY

Lecture by **Marc Vandeplas**: *The legendary trains of the United States in the 19th century*. We set out with Marc to conquer the American West aboard some

of the legendary trains that shaped the history of the United States in the 19th century. We will devote the first part of the lecture to the *American Transcontinental Railroad*, completed in 1869. Thanks to this line, it became possible to reach California in one week instead of several months using earlier means of transportation, which we will briefly discuss in the introduction. Next, we will travel to Colorado, more than 3,000 meters above sea level, heading toward the silver mines aboard the *Durango and Silverton Railroad*. Let's be sure not to miss the stagecoach connection. We will then relive the period of the Klondike Gold Rush of 1896-1899 aboard the *White Pass and Yukon Railroad*, and we will end our journey in the company of Abraham Lincoln aboard the *Northern Central Railway* in Pennsylvania, arriving in time at Gettysburg for him to deliver his famous address.



Saturday 11 April 2026, at 3 pm

CONFEDERATE STATES NOTES AND BONDS

Lecture by **Dominique De Cleer**: *Confederate Government notes and bonds – A foretold financial ruin*. When the Civil War broke out in April 1861 and seven states had left the Union, the young Southern regime faced numerous challenges, foremost among them the task

of financing the war effort. The states' claimed right to self-government prevented the central administration from levying taxes to meet its financial needs. The first Confederate bonds and banknotes were printed in the North, in New York! In total, the face value of the notes issued during the conflict reached approximately two billion dollars. However, they were not backed by any tangible assets such as gold, silver, or cotton. By 1863, the Confederate dollar was worth only 33 cents, and by the end of the war it had fallen to just 1.7 cents. Inflation over the course of the conflict reached 9,000 %. Today, collectors trade Confederate *greybacks* for a few dollars in the case of the most common notes, and for more than \$100,000 for the earliest issues printed in 1861, at the time Davis's governing body was located in Montgomery, Alabama.



Saturday 9 May 2026, at 10 am

***EXCURSION TO FIRST WORLD WAR
SHRINES IN NORTHERN FRANCE***

Excursion organized by **Gerald Hawkins**: *The Notre-Dame-de-Lorette National Necropolis and the Canadian National Vimy Memorial*, major sites of the Great War in northern France.

Located on a strategic ridge near Arras, Notre-Dame-de-Lorette was fiercely contested during the First World War. Its height made it a key observation point over the surrounding plains. During the battles of Artois in May-June 1915, French forces launched major offensives against entrenched German positions and eventually recaptured the ridge after heavy fighting. Despite significant early breakthroughs, the lack of reserves and strong enemy counterattacks halted the advance. The battles, marked by intense artillery bombardments and costly frontal assaults, caused over 100,000 casualties. Today, the site is the largest French military necropolis, containing the remains of more than 40,000 soldiers, many buried in ossuaries. In 2014, the Ring of Remembrance was inaugurated nearby, bearing the names of some 580,000 men who fell in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, without distinction of nationality or side.

The Battle of Vimy Ridge took place from 9 to 12 April 1917 during the Arras Offensive in Artois. This strategic position, strongly held by enemy forces, dominated the Douai Plain and provided a crucial advantage for observation and artillery support. For the first time, all four divisions of the Canadian Corps fought together under unified command against the German 6th Army. Thanks to careful planning, extensive trenches and tunnels, and a precise creeping barrage, Canadian troops captured most of their objectives on the first day. The victory was however costly, with more than 10,600 casualties, including about 3,600 killed. The capture of Vimy Ridge became a defining moment in Canada's national identity. Inaugurated in 1936, the Vimy Memorial honors Canadian soldiers who died in France and symbolizes the country's emergence on the international stage as a nation capable of conducting a major military operation independently.

Price of the excursion: **50 € per person**. More details on the French page of our website or upon request. Reservation a must by email at d.decleer@scarlet.be **before May 2, at the latest**.



Saturday 13 June 2026, from 11 am

CHAB BANQUET

As in previous editions, the CHAB banquet will take place at the clubhouse of the Hoegaarden hockey club. This year, **Hubert Leroy** and **Dominique De**

Cleer are proposing a traditional barbecue: Kir – Skewer of scampi – Assortment of grilled meats and various salads – Apple crumble – Coffee, tea.

Price of the meal (drinks not included): CHAB members and their partner: €35 – non-members: €45. Please register with our secretary Dominique De Cleer by email at d.decleer@scarlet.be or by phone at 0475/77 34 60 and transfer the amount for your meal to account BE90 3100 9059 2632 with the reference *CHAB Banquet* **no later than June 7.**



Saturday 5 September 2026, at 3 pm

OPEN MEETING

For several years, the month of September has not attracted a large attendance at our meetings. Some lectures have been presented to only a handful of members. For this reason, the screening of one or another film related to the American Civil War has been included in the program. Unfortunately, the list of films on the subject available in French is rather limited. Therefore, for the September meeting, the committee has decided to somewhat modify the format. We are proposing an open meeting to which all members are cordially invited. This will provide everyone with the opportunity either to acquire or to sell books or objects related to the American Civil War or to the history of the United States. In addition, members may bring along one or more items from their collections and discuss them freely. Of course, there is no obligation to bring or purchase anything. It will simply be an ideal opportunity to chat informally and enjoy a refreshment among friends. The afternoon will be followed, from 6:00 p.m., by an optional supper of cheeses and cold cuts.

Price of the supper (drinks not included): 20 €. Please register with our secretary Dominique De Cleer by email at d.decleer@scarlet.be or by phone at 0475/77 34 60 and transfer the amount for your meal to account BE90 3100 9059 2632 with the reference *CHAB Banquet* **no later than August 31st.**
