

Civil War Roundtable



Newsletter Volume I, Number 1

Speaker

Nora Brooks

Topic

“An Evening with Mildred Childe Lee”

Date / Time

May 14, 2011 / 6:00 pm

Meeting Location

*Mama Penn’s Restaurant
2802 N. Main Street*



Mildred Childe Lee, the youngest daughter of General Robert E. Lee was a teenager during the war. Miss Lee worried over her father’s safety and remained very close to him until his death in 1870. Ms. Brooks performance brings this historical figure to vibrant life as she shares the story of life with her famous father. The convincing performance provides detailed insight into the family life of Gen. and Mrs. Lee and their children.

Nora Brooks teaches honors and advanced placement history of the United States, War for Southern Independence and the Revolution at Sun Valley High School in Union County, North Carolina. She is an alumna of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College and a recipient of the Jefferson Davis Medal for Promotion and Preservation of Southern History by the North Carolina Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Ms Brooks has given performances at special events in Virginia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina.

The meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2011, 6:00 pm at Mama Penn’s Restaurant, 2802 North Main Street, Anderson, SC. Cost is \$9.95 per person which is their choice of meat and three vegetables with drink (ice tea, coffee or soda) and includes tax and gratuity. There is an extra charge for additional side items or other beverages. If you plan to attend we would like an RSVP by May 6 to 864-224-2642 or dardowdy@att.net to assist in meeting planning.

Presidents Corner

Welcome to the Civil War Roundtable of Anderson County, South Carolina. Our organization is a journey for anyone with an interest in the true history of America's Civil War. Why study a war that began 150 years ago? This war is constantly a subject of debate. Debate topics include causes of the war, why the South seceded from the Union, why southerners still pay tribute to Confederate ancestors who fought "for slavery" or did they fight for states' rights? Our mission is not to debate these issues, but to offer a forum for education on the true facts of the War Between the States.

As we are at the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of the War Between the States, it is our duty to preserve the true history of this conflict. However, it is imperative that we know the facts of the war and hand these facts down to the next generation. Have you ever read the Ordinance of Secession? Do you know when it was signed in South Carolina? Could you recognize the flags of the Union or the Confederate States of America? What were the first shots of the war?

Hopefully, these questions have sparked your curiosity. Not everyone is a student of history or even aspires to study history. However, if you share our curiosity and want to educate yourself, then join us on our journey into America's Civil War History.

Our Inaugural Event features Nora Brooks presenting "*An Evening with Mildred Childe Lee.*" Mildred Lee was the youngest daughter of General Robert E Lee. This program will give us an insider's look at the family life of General Lee during the war years.

By becoming a Charter Member of the Civil War Roundtable of Anderson County, you will be on the ground floor of developing this roundtable and guiding the future of our organization. We look forward to having you join us on our journey.

Charleston During the Secession Period

The day the South Carolina Ordinance of Secession was passed the news spread through Charleston as local militias put on their uniforms and headed to their muster grounds. The First Regiment of Rifles, SC Militia (not to be confused with Orr's Regiment of Rifles) was already on parade when the news came. Col. J. Johnston Pettigrew their commander had them formed into a square on the Magnolia Parade Ground and read the Ordinance of Secession to their cheering.

In February 1861 a 22 year old Charlestonian named Emma Holmes began a diary she would keep till past the end of the war. She began her diary with, "*a revolution, wonderful in the rapidity with which it has swept across the country, from the Atlantic almost to the Pacific, convulsing the whole of what was once our pride and boast "The United States," now alas broken into fragments...*" "*Secession said a gentleman, was borne in the hearts of Carolina women.*"

"The city seemeb suddenly turned into a camp. Nothing was heard but the preparations for war and all hands were employed in the good cause"

On March 4th she writes, "*Old Abe Lincoln was inagurated today amidst bayonets bristling from the housetops as well as streets. His speech was just what was expected*

from him, stupid, ambiguous, vulgar and insolent, and is everywhere considered as a virtual declaration of war.”

March 22nd, *“This afternoon Beauregard reviewed the Cadets on the Citadel Green, and thousands of spectators crowded every available spot principally to see our gallant General.”*

April 11th, *“[This] is a day never to be forgotten in the annals of Charleston. A dispatch was received from Jeff Davis with orders to demand the surrender of the Fort immediately at 2 P.M.” “The whole afternoon and night the Battery was thronged with spectators of every age and sex anxiously watching and awaiting with the momentary expectation of hearing the war of cannon opening on the fort...” “All last night the troops were under arms, and, at half past four this morning, the heavy booming of cannons woke the city from its slumbers.”*

Thus the Civil War, one of the most significant turning points in the history of America began.

The Flags of Fort Sumter

The US flag that flew over Fort Sumter on April 12-13, 1861, had 33 stars: one representing each state in the Union. After the battle of Fort Sumter, President Abraham Lincoln had to decide whether to leave all 33 stars on the flag or to remove those of the seceded states. Since Lincoln’s mission was to preserve the Union, no stars were removed. Although the 34th state, Kansas, was admitted to the Union on January 29, 1861, its star was not added until July 4th of that year.

As victorious Confederates entered Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861, John Styles Bird, Jr., a private in the Palmetto Guard a South Carolina militia unit, placed his unit’s flag on the parapet facing Charleston. It became the first Southern flag to fly at Fort Sumter. The single star signified the independent Republic of South Carolina and the palmetto tree harkened back to the Revolutionary War. John Styles Ashe, the son of John Styles Bird, Jr., donated the flag to the National Park Service in 1979. Shortly after, a Confederate First National flag made by a Charleston ship chandler was raised over the fort.

The US flag and the Palmetto Guard Flag are on display in the Fort Sumter museum.

Snail Mail and “Free” Delivery

In today’s electronic environment we affectionately call it “snail mail” but when mail delivery was initiated it was innovative and done for a reason. US Mail delivery prior to the war was “post office to post office” and you went and picked up your mail. A Cleveland, Ohio postal clerk named Joseph William Briggs is often credited with conceiving the idea of free city delivery of mail while contemplating long lines of customers trying to keep warm as they inched toward his window in the winter of 1862.

Many were women hoping for news of loved ones in the war. Some historians have suggested this was a more prominent reason since the Post Office had become the mourning place where the news of lost loved ones first reached the families and the delivery of mail eliminated the Post Office being a place of group mourning.

Briggs enlisted local businesses to serve as staging areas for sorting customers' mail, and he began delivering mail to his patrons free of cost. Notice Briggs' interesting and novel approach for the government to provide something for FREE!

1st Regiment South Carolina Rifles, a Regiment and a Flag

1st Regiment of Rifles, known as Orr's Rifles and Orr's Regiment, South Carolina Rifles, was organized at Sandy Springs, South Carolina, in July 1861. Its members were recruited in the counties of Abbeville, Pickens, Anderson, and Marion. The unit under the command of Anderson's Colonel James L. Orr was assembled on July 19th and moved to Sullivan's Island its first station. It was called by the other troops "The Pound Cake Regiment" because of its light duty there.

On October 4, 1861 in front of the Moultrie House, Col. Isaac W. Hayne of Charleston presented the unit its flag. After Col. Orr received the flag and extended his thanks, he gave what was described as one of his best speeches. Then turning to the ensign of the color part, he said, "Sergeant Lowry, I know this flag will never trail the dust till its folds cover your body." The flag made by Mrs. Alexander H. Mazyck and Mrs. Ellison Capers was attached to a staff taken from a nullification banner of 1832. On one side of the flag is the blue field with the palmetto tree and crescent. Painted in gold leaf are, "**FIRST REGIMENT OF RIFLES So. CA. VOLUNTEERS**" and "**OCT. 4 1861**" the day it was



presented. Symbolism is common on flags. The palmetto tree has eleven fronds as a reminder that from the roots of South Carolina's secession came a Confederacy of eleven sovereign states. Also not uncommon is a different reverse side, a Confederate First National flag with eleven stars in the canton. This flag was retired when the regiment moved to Virginia in April 1862 and is in the Confederate Relic Room in Columbia.

The regiment became the first unit from South Carolina to be mustered in for the duration of the war. Orr was elected to the Confederate Senate and resigned before the regiment was moved to Virginia in April 1862 with 1,000 men. Serving in General Gregg's and McGowan's Brigades in the Army of Northern Virginia, it served with honor and distinction and paid a heavy price for its valor from the Seven Days' Battles to Cold Harbor. Later the regiment endured the hardships of the Petersburg trenches and the retreat to Appomattox with only 157 men answering the final call.

Anderson County Confederate Heritage Month May 2011

On August 17, 2010, Anderson County Council by unanimous vote declared the month of May to be Confederate Heritage Month from “henceforth” in Anderson County, South Carolina. Southern States each celebrate a Confederate Memorial Day, the majority being either in April or May. Here in South Carolina, Confederate Memorial Day is celebrated on May 10th each year. There will be several observances during May. Please join us at the following events to honor the men of the Confederacy:

- May 10, 2011, 11am – Confederate Memorial Day Service Belton Veterans Park, Belton, South Carolina Belton Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy
- May 14, 2011, 10am – Confederate Memorial Day Observance Anderson County Courthouse, Anderson, South Carolina Palmetto Sharpshooter’s Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans

For more information on these events contact Darlene Dowdy at 864-224-2642.

South Carolina Civil War Heritage Trails

Are you on Facebook? If yes you may want to visit *South Carolina Civil War Heritage Trails* and add it to your page. Two things show up that may be of great interest to those interested in the war. As events unfolded 150 years ago they come up on your page as a reminder of what was happening. In addition events planned to celebrate the Sesquicentennial in South Carolina are posted offering the information you need to know what’s going on and when. You can also get on similar pages from other states such as Alabama and Georgia.

Future Roundtable Meetings

The roundtable will meet in the future on the second Monday of odd numbered months and the meeting location is to be determined. The newsletter with meeting details will be **sent out in advance and as programs are confirmed it will include a calendar of future topics.** Meetings for the remainder of 2011 include:

July 11, 2011

September 12, 2011

November 14, 2011 (Annual business meeting in addition to program)

Charter Membership Application

Name(s): _____

Street Address or PO Box _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP Code** _____

Email: _____

Dues Category Individual (\$12.50) Family (\$17.50) Student (\$5)

Make checks payable to “CWRT of Anderson County, SC”

Send Completed Application with payments to:

Paul Dowdy, Treasurer CWRT Anderson County, SC 131 Sunset Hills Drive Anderson, SC 29626



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131 Sunset Hills Drive
Anderson, SC 29626