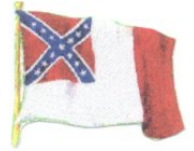




Sons of Confederate Veterans

The Hunley Torpedo



The Lt. Dixon – CSS Hunley Camp # 2016 of Sparks, Nevada

Number Seven

Website: Lacking

July 2007

Camp Report

We have one hundred members fully processed into the camp. Some applications are still outstanding. Our five delegates will be able to cast ten votes at the annual SCV convention, known as Reunion at the end of this month.

Next Meeting

It will be in September. We will also be present at the Gun Show in August. See next column.

Reunion 2007

Since our camp came into existence in 2003, we have attended each Reunion. For your future reference, these conventions are great vacations. I can appoint as many delegates as we have votes. But any number can attend. Over these four days we attend dinners, tours, business meetings, musical ensembles and the event is culminated by a Grand Ball and banquet. This year it will be held at the historic Battle House Hotel shown below. This hotel was renovated and now belongs to the Marriott.



Big Reno Gun Show

Lou Fascio, of the Big Reno Gun Show has given us permission to set up a table there this year. This will be our third time to do this. We were also there in '04 and '05. This will be a great recruiting opportunity. Many of you men first learned of the SCV through this gun show and were thus able to join our camp.

The Big Reno Gun Show will take place on:
August 17, 18, and 19th

We have eight volunteers at the moment to work the table. All others are encouraged to drop by and say hi. We will be giving out our twenty page special gun show edition to prospective members. It will be expensive to print this in quantity. Any donations toward this will be greatly appreciated.

The Confederate Scouts of America

After first learning of their existence in Reno almost two years ago, we finally made contact through Compatriot Craig Beck who saw them at the Fourth of July parade in Reno. See next page.

The Confederate Scouts of America Troop # 974

This is the first troop of its kind in Northern Nevada. There are about 450 troops (chapters) nationwide. Their headquarters is in Texas. The Confederate Scouts are modeled after the original Boy Scouts. They have however, gone back to the basics.

These boys and their leaders work really hard to produce a first rate outfit. They marched in the annual Fourth of July parade in downtown Reno. The Boy Scouts did not. They have thirteen members in the Reno Troop. A new Sparks Troop has just started up also.

They were formed by Gary Hatfield, a retired U. S. Navy Corpsman. Native of Alabama, Gary has been a lifelong scout himself. The boys attend their meetings every Tuesday night at Gary's place. They work inside and drill outside. They wear gray uniforms; have their own flag and patches.

Who can join the Confederate Scouts? Young men ages 9 through 18, their mothers and dads and ex-members of the Boy Scouts of America.

Why were they formed? "To get back to the basics" with PRIDE, HONOR, RESPECT AND DISCIPLINE, but without RACIAL, RELIGIOUS OR FINANCIAL PREJUDICE.

Where do they meet? 2050 Market Street, Room 203 (Rodeway Inn). They meet on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM. Once per month they are taken on a camping trip. They also participate in civic events such as parades and the like.

This is an extremely worthwhile organization. But there is great need here. Many of these boys come from single parent homes and the Confederate Scouts is the only positive influence in their lives outside of their individual families. Gary has totally dedicated himself to the boys. They deserve our support and I volunteered our camp to be their sponsors. They have no others.

They have certain unfulfilled needs. They want belt buckles identical to those of the Confederate Infantry with the CS on it. I pledged to get these for them. They also need the belts to go with the buckles. Anyone wishing to share the cost with me can send me a check for five or ten. The total cost will exceed \$300. No camp funds will ever be used for an outside purpose without first being voted on at a regular stated meeting by the membership. We will also invite the troop to our activities. I also spoke with Compatriot Vic Genovese, head of the re-enactors. He agreed they should be introduced to living history, and I suspect his group will sponsor the boys too.



Restoration of Beauvoir

I have already sent this to many of you by email. It was originally forwarded to me by Compatriot John Bean. However, most of our men receive this newsletter by mail. For any who do not already know, Beauvoir was the home of Jefferson Davis in Biloxi, Mississippi. It was almost totally destroyed by hurricane Katrina. Good news! It's rising up again like a phoenix from the ashes.

Compatriots,

Latham & Company is into its 3rd month of restoration work on Beauvoir. So far, the plaster inside the home has been stabilized so work on the exterior can proceed without causing further damage to the interior. Construction of a new footing and piers for the gallery (porch) have been completed. Beams for the gallery are under construction using wood from 134 year old trees. The piers supporting the home have been re-reinforced with steel rods making them ten times stronger than before Katrina. The front & rear doors and over half of the windows have been restored. The Old Confederate Museum underneath the house has been removed opening that area so water can flow freely under the house without any obstruction. Slat for the roof will come from the same quarry in Wales that supplied the slat for the roof when Beauvoir was first built. If everything stays on schedule and a hurricane does not interrupt work, Beauvoir will be ready for reopening on June 3, 2008. The final plans and FEMA negotiations are underway for the Presidential Library and should be resolved in August. Bids will be advertised the last of August or first of September. Below are a few pictures of the ongoing work.



Dan McCaskill
Benj. G. Humphreys # 1625
Indianola, MS



Drewry's Bluff Bad News for the Yankees

Richmond-Capital of the Confederacy

As capital of the newly formed Confederate States of America, Richmond, Virginia, became the constant target of northern armies. During the four years of the Civil War, Union generals made repeated attempts to capture the city by land. Richmond, however, was vulnerable by water as well as by land. Gunboats could navigate the James River all the way to Richmond. The key to the city's river defenses lay in a small fort only seven miles south of the capital. Known throughout the south as Drewry's Bluff, northern troops referred to it as Fort Darling.

Drewry's Bluff-Key to the River Defenses

Drewry's Bluff, named for local landowner Captain Augustus H. Drewry, rose 90 feet above the water and commanded a sharp bend in the James River, making it a logical site for defensive fortifications. On March 17, 1862, the men of Captain Drewry's Southside Artillery arrived at the bluff and began fortifying the area. They constructed earthworks, erected barracks, dug artillery emplacements, and mounted three large seacoast guns (one 10-inch Columbiad and two 8-inch Columbiads) in the fort.

On May 9, 1862, Norfolk fell to Union forces. The crew of the C.S.S. Virginia, forced to scuttle their vessel to prevent her capture, joined the Southside Artillery at Drewry's Bluff. Commander Ebenezer Farrand supervised the defenses of the fort. He ordered numerous steamers, schooners, and sloops to be sunk as obstructions in the river beneath the bluff. Six more large guns occupied pits just upriver from the fort. Men worked around the clock to ensure a full state of readiness when the Union fleet arrived.

The Federal squadron steamed around the bend in the river below Drewry's Bluff early on the morning of May 15. The force, under Commander John Rodgers, consisted of five ships. The ironclad Galena and gunboats Port Royal, Aroostook, and Naugatuck joined the famous Monitor to comprise Rodgers' force. At 7:15 a.m. the Galena opened fire on the fort, sending three giant projectiles toward the Confederate position.

The five Union ships anchored in the river below the fort. When Confederate batteries in the fort replied, the whole vicinity shook with the concussion of the big guns. Southern infantry lined the banks of the river to harass the sailors. On the Monitor, the rifle balls of the sharpshooters "pattered upon the decks like rain."

On the bluff the defenders encountered several problems. The 10-inch Columbiad recoiled so violently on its first shot that it broke its carriage and remained out of the fight until near the end. A casemate protecting one of the guns outside the fort collapsed, rendering that piece useless.

After four long hours of exchanging fire, the "perfect tornado of shot and shell" ended. With his ammunition nearly depleted, Commander Rodgers gave the signal to discontinue the action at 11:30. His sailors suffered at least 14 dead and 13 wounded, while the Confederates admitted to 7 killed and 8 wounded. A visitor wrote that the Galena "looked like a slaughterhouse" after the battle. The massive fort on Drewry's Bluff had blunted the Union advance just seven miles short of the Confederate capital. Richmond remained safe.

Expansion at Drewry's Bluff 1862-1864

Following the repulse of the Union flotilla in May 1862, Drewry's Bluff saw no battle action for two years. Captain Sydney Smith Lee (General Robert E. Lee's brother) took command of the site and supervised its expansion and strengthening into a permanent fort. While some workers constructed an outer line of entrenchments to protect the land approach to Richmond, others built improvements for the fort, including a chapel, barracks, and quarters for the officers.

During this time, Drewry's Bluff became an important training ground for the Confederate Naval Academy and the Confederate Marine Corps Camp of Instruction. In May 1864, the fresh threat of an attacking Union force disrupted the daily routine at Drewry's Bluff.

Drewry's Bluff in the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, 1864

On May 5, 1864, Union Major General Benjamin F. Butler and his Army of the James landed at Bermuda Hundred, a neck of land only 15 miles south of Richmond. Marching overland, they advanced within three miles of Drewry's Bluff by May 9. While several Union regiments did manage to capture the fort's outer defenses, delays by Union generals spoiled the success. Confederate infantry under General P.G.T. Beauregard seized the initiative and successfully counterattacked on May 16. Once again a Union drive on Richmond met defeat at Drewry's Bluff. The area remained an integral part of Richmond's defense until the fall of Petersburg in April 1865.

Drewry's Bluff at the End of the War

The garrison at Drewry's Bluff took part in the evacuation of Richmond and Petersburg on April 2-3, 1865. Soldiers, sailors, and marines from the fort joined the movement westward, ultimately surrendering at Appomattox Court House. Many of the sailors served as infantry during the fighting along the way.

Eyewitness Accounts

We soon began to see that she (the Galena) was being roughly used as shot & shell went crashing through her sides, still she held out & the thunder of her guns pealed out from the sulphurous cloud that enveloped her sending their iron messengers with remarkable accuracy. We could see large clouds of dirt & sand fly as shell after shell from our vessels exploded in the rebel works....

William F. Keeler, aboard the Monitor

Our experiment with the Galena was fully tried... the Rebels demonstrated fully that she is penetrable. The Galena did most of the fighting-her sides look as though she had an attack of smallpox.

Commander John Rodgers

Acting as sharpshooters we occupied the banks of the James immediately above the Monitor, Galena, and Naugatuck. These vessels so thoroughly protected their men that we could only pick off one occasionally, but [our] battery did terrible execution.

Lewellen Southgate, 6th Virginia Infantry

Images of Drewry's Bluff

Drewry's Bluff



CSA Ordnance Depot below the Fort

Interior View



Confederate Obstructions in the James River



Church and Graveyard at the Fort



Another Interior View





The Heritage Page



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Confederate Cemetery Vandalized

On the evening of June 20th the Oakwood Cemetery in Richmond had its Confederate section vandalized. Little is known at the moment about who perpetrated the crime or why the damage was done. The monument dedicated to those killed on Brown's Island is destroyed and a large obelisk in Section G was toppled and subsequently broke into three pieces. The recently restored ornate grave of Lt. Duncan Stafford of South Carolina was also vandalized and his tombstone destroyed. The restoration cost over \$6,000 and was borne by the South Carolina SCV.

At first it made me sick to read this story and then to see how little the city cares with their quick fix of the obelisk (gorilla glue is what they used) but then I see Lee Hart of the SCV on top of the matter repairing Lt Stafford's grave and I realize what a great organization we belong to.

Left: Oakwood after the War Between the States

Right: Oakwood today



CSS Muscogee
AKA
CSS Jackson

She was built in Columbus, Georgia in 1864 but never used in battle. She was burned by the Yankees when they captured the city in April of 1865. The remains of this ship were raised and can be viewed in the museum there in Columbus.

