

September 2014



The Admiral's Log

Sons of Confederate Veterans

1211 Government St., Mobile, AL 36604

Raphael Semmes Camp 11



Dear Friends and Compatriots of Camp 11,

Greetings and salutations from Camp 11. I certainly hope and pray that this edition of the Log finds all of you doing well.

Hooray for September! Cooler weather, SEC football, and hunting season are close. Now that's the South! By the way, do you realize that autumn is a Southerner's reward for surviving summer? During those dead heat August days I had my doubts that September was going to get here.

Your editor has made a couple of forays to Beauvoir this month. The arts and crafts affair was fun and a success. Last Saturday we had a meeting to finalize plans for Fall Muster, specifically school day. It appears that we have several hundred middle school age students on Friday morning of the weekend event. Also, the Beauvoir Director is setting up seating on the corner of Beauvoir Road and US 90 for Crusin' the Coast. This is a first for Beauvoir and we think it will be a success as well. So there are exiting things happening at Beauvoir.

If you participate on Facebook please take a look and like of the Camp 11 page. And if you are on-line check out our Camp 11 web site. We work hard to make both sites informative and fun, so take advantage of them.

Compatriot David Smithweck has obtained all three volumes of Ralph W. Donnelly's Confederate Marine Corps books which lists all the officers and enlisted members of the Corps and gives each member's activities. David will be glad to assist any one researching the Corps for their ancestor. Thank you, Sir.

Every camp meeting is important and many are special. Our September meeting on the 29th is one of those special meetings. In September we always commemorate the birthdays of Admirals Buchanan and Semmes. Come join us at the Dew Drop Inn at 6pm for supper and the meeting at 7pm. We look forward to seeing you.

Keep the prayers coming.

Best regards,
Terry W. "Beetle" Bailey
Editor, The Admiral's Log

Minutes

Admiral Semmes, Camp 11

Sons of Confederate Veterans

25 August 2014

The meeting was called to order by Commander Joe Ringhoffer.

The invocation was given by Assistant Chaplain Sid Phillips, III.

The pledge and salutes to the flags were led by the Commander.

Following introduction of guests, the Commander introduced Dr. Lonnie Burnett of the University of Mobile. An historian, Dr. Burnett spoke on life in Mobile during the War of Northern Aggression. He discussed the political climate, the social life, and the economic realities of the time. He showed several images of Mobile during the time. The tallest structure that dominated the skyline was that of the massive steeple atop Christ Episcopal Church. The steeple, destroyed during a hurricane which weakened its support atop the roof, fell through the roof and landed in the basement. It has never been rebuilt.

Boatswain Tom Root read a selection from Admiral Semmes memoirs. The selection was the discussion of the Admiral with a British ship's captain off the coast of Venezuela when the Admiral was assigned to the Sumter. Discussing an article from a New York newspaper, the Admiral explained to the British captain why the yankees were using the false issue of slavery to wage war against the CSA. They wanted to build an empire so they needed to rob the South by imposing oppressive tariffs.

Commander Ringhoffer:

Thanks were given to Compatriots Joe DuPree and Bill Rodgers in the filing of the proposal to the Society of the Order of the Southern Cross to secure additional funding for Ft. McDermott.

Thanks were given to Compatriot DuPree for the presentation he made to the Alabama Division which resulted in another \$4,000.00 for the work being done at Ft. McDermott. Stairs should be finished tomorrow and spraying has been completed.

2018 remains an option for the National Meeting to be held at the Riverview Hotel.

Information on the 2015 National Meeting in Richmond is available.

2nd Lt. Commander Smithweck reported that the Post Master General noted the attendance at the Museum of Mobile for the first day stamp of the Battle of Mobile Bay was the best first day he has seen.

1st. Lt. Commander Bailey:

Reporting on social media, he reported for those who like the 'Today in the Civil War' will be able to find a link on the Camp's website.

Greg Stewart is the new director at Beauvoir.

The annual December meeting/Christmas party will be at the Dew Drop. The date is to be determined.

Memorials Chairman DuPree:

The powerpoint presentation on Ft. McDermott that was created for the Alabama Division will be posted on the Camp's website.

On September 19, the National Surveyor's will be onsite at Ft. McDermott. Time is approximately 3:30pm.

The 2nd National is flying at Confederate Rest.

Compatriot Kirk Barrett reported two more markers are in and the City of Spanish Fort will install them.

Paymaster Charlie Christmas reported that he has received membership renewals ahead of this time last year.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned with the benediction by Assistant Chaplain Sid Phillips, III and the reading of the charge of General Stephen D. Lee by 1st Lt. Commander Bailey.

Quotes from our Heroes

The Epitaph of the CSS Sumter by Admiral Semmes

"A brief summary of the *Sumter*, and what became of her, may not be uninteresting to the reader, who has followed her thus far, in her wanderings. She cruised six months, leaving out the time during which she was blockaded in Gibraltar. She captured seventeen ships,...It is impossible to estimate the damage done to the enemy's commerce. The property destroyed formed a very small portion of it. The fact alone of the *Sumter* being upon the seas, during these six months, gave such alarm to neutral and belligerent shippers, that the enemy's carrying-trade began to be paralyzed, and already his ships were being laid up, or sold....In addition to this, the enemy kept five or six of his best ships of war constantly in pursuit of her, which necessarily weakened his blockade.....The expense to my Government of running the ship was next to nothing, being only \$28,000, or about the price of one of the least valuable of her prizes. The *Sumter* was sold in the course of a month or two after being laid up, and being put under the English flag as a merchant-ship, made one voyage to the Confederate States, as a blockade runner, entering the port of Charleston. Her new owner changed her name to that of *Gibraltar*. She was lost afterward in the North Sea, and her bones are interred not far from those of the *Alabama*."

From "The Immortal 600

"On this diet of corn meal, with no meat or vegetables, scurvy soon came to add to our suffering, and acute dysentery was prevalent among our men. It took stout hearts to bear the burden put upon us. Many of our number physically gave way under the cruelty, but, in spite of it all, our men bore it with dignity and courage.

We expected no favors-we asked none-of a government so cruel as was the United States Government in 1861-65. The pangs of starvation became terrible; hunger drove our men to catching and eating dogs, cats, and rats. It was dainty food to starving men.

When history records the true story of the great conflict of 1861-65, I wonder what the verdict of those who will read of the wanton cruelty of the United States Government-inflicted upon its prisoners of war-will be. It was cowardly, it was cruel, it was brutal, and unjust before God and man."

THE IMMORTAL 600

J Ogden Murray

1911

TRUTHS OF HISTORY

Mildred Lewis Rutherford

Speaking of President Jefferson Davis:

"When the news came that Lee must fall back from Petersburg, which meant the evacuation of Richmond, and a possible surrender, he was found on his knees in prayer in St. Paul's Church, Richmond, Va."

A Sesquicentennial Moment

September 1864

In early September Atlanta falls to the Yankee invaders.

On September 16, 1864 General Wade Hampton lead a 4000 man cavalry raid out of Petersburg. He returned a few days later with 2400 head of cattle.

September 19th: General Sterling Price leads the last Confederate offensive in Missouri.

General Forrest is busy this month. On September 24th he captured Athens, Alabama.

Confederate Birthdays

Edward Ashbury O'Neal was a Confederate Brigadier General and Alabama Governor. He was born in Madison County, Alabama on September 20th, 1818. He was a lawyer in practice when appointed a Major in the 9th Alabama Confederate Infantry Regiment at the start of the Civil War. O'Neal was promoted Colonel of the 26th Alabama Infantry Regiment in March 1862, and he fought at the battles of Seven Pines [wounded] and Boonesboro and was promoted acting Brigadier General of Alabama in 1864. After the war, he was elected 26th Governor of Alabama in 1882, serving until 1886. During his term as governor the state Department of Agriculture and the Office of Examiners and Accounts were established. After his governorship he spent his remaining years at Florence, Alabama.

Edward Ashbury O'Neal is at rest in the Florence Cemetery.

Admiral Raphael Semmes: September 27th 1809

Admiral Franklin Buchanan: September 17th, 1800

WBTS Usage

Knight of the Valley: A nickname for General Turner Ashby

Marse Bob or Marse Robert: Nicknames for General Robert E. Lee

parbuckle: A heavy rope usually twelve feet long with a loop in one end and a hook at the other. A parbuckle was used to move artillery.

to smell powder: to be involved in action.

Poke Salad and Poke Berries

Contributed by Compatriot Art Green [from a conversation with an internet acquaintance]

Pokeweed grows here and there in the wild parts of, and often the lateral shoots from the plants' deep perennial taproots annoyingly pop up baby plants in the middle of flowerbeds. This time of year, when I spot poke's clusters of ripening purple-black berries dangling from the fuchsia-colored stems of these fleshy plants in the untamed parts of the yard, I catch myself humming a tune from "Black and White," an album released in 1968 by swamp singer Tony Joe White: "Poke Salad Annie."

Of course, the words that that have stuck in my mind all these years, "Everybody said it was a shame 'cause her mama was working on the chain gang," have nothing to do with pokeweed.

And beyond not having retained key passages from the song that actually refer to the plant, there is the inappropriateness of using the word "salad" in connection with pokeweed in late summer. Beyond its first appearance in the spring, there is no part of this plant that would not make you seriously ill if ingested. But knowing that doesn't stop me from doing a little garden shimmy as I talk-sing, "Poke salad Annie. The gators got your granny."

White once said hippie fans believed the song was code for marijuana use and would bring him bags of pot, which they would refer to as poke with a wink and a nod. Not so.

Poke salad, or to be more authentic, poke salat, refers to the edible first leaves of the plant that rise up in the spring, before they begin to show any signs of red coloring. Although pokeweed is indigenous to this country, occurring in all Eastern states and some others, poke salat is more of a Southern tradition. Several Southern cities host spring poke festivals.

Young leaves must be boiled at least twice, and some sources even recommend boiling them a third time, discarding the water in between boils. After draining, the greens can be eaten like spinach and often are then fried in butter or bacon grease. The flavor is said to be reminiscent of asparagus.

Poke salat is an excellent source of vitamins A, C and K, and it also contains some iron, a little protein and a host of trace minerals.

Poke's berries have traditionally been used to make jellies and wine that old folks swore helped with their arthritis. They also have been used to add coloring to pale wines. Hardcore, old-timey foragers say that boiling the fruits reduces their toxicity, and others say that it is the seeds that are poisonous, not the fruit itself. Though the berries are the least-toxic of any part of the plant, with the roots being most poisonous, Penn State Extension's blow-by-blow description of poke-induced poisoning brings any inclinations I might have about culinary use of the fruit to a screeching halt:

"The first symptom is a burning feeling in the stomach, followed within two hours by vomiting, diarrhea and gastroenteritis. As the toxin enters the bloodstream and central nervous system, more general symptoms appear, including salivation, sweating, vision disturbances, weak pulse and shallow breathing. Death results when the narcotic effect of the toxin paralyzes the respiratory system."

Birds, however, are unaffected by toxins in the seeds. Mockingbirds, bluebirds, pigeons and quail are some feathered friends who dine on pokeberries and also are responsible for spreading seeds.

All parts of pokeweed were used by American Indians to treat a wide variety of maladies. Settlers adopted and expanded on these folk medicine cures. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger?

Modern medical research shows that there might be something to these curative claims. Tests indicate chemical constituents in the plants have potential as an anti-AIDs and -herpes drug, and additional research shows they might have promise in the treatment of childhood leukemia and a variety of other cancers.

Pokeberries have been used as a dye, but the color is hard to fix and quickly washes out or fades.

The berries can, however, be used to make an ink that will stand the test of time: Juice from a half-cup of berries blended with a half-teaspoon of salt and a half-teaspoon of vinegar make a pretty red ink that should be stored in the refrigerator. One of its many common names is ink plant. Letters written by soldiers during the Civil War using poke ink are still legible.

Charge to the Sons of Confederate Veterans

To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations.

**Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee
Commander-General
United Confederate Veterans
New Orleans, 25 April 1906**