

THE PALMETTO VINDICATOR

Volume XX, Issue 4

September 2007

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PALMETTO BATTALION

20TH BATTALION REUNION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27TH, 2007, BRATTONSVILLE

Hopefully you have heard we are planning a Battalion Reunion to celebrate what many of us believe to be the 20th year of the Palmetto Battalion. The reunion will be at the Brattonsville event in October on Saturday the 27th.

We need the help of unit members to contact their inactive old timers and let them know about the event. Because we had no budget and no comprehensive reliable contact information on the inactive members I am hoping you will contact your pards and let them know about the event.

Next, we need unit reps to help get an accurate head count of people planning to attend and get this head count to me in early September. Folks, it is very important to get as accurate a count as possible since we will have to pay for the food.

Many folks have done a great deal of preparation for the reunion. Several founders are going to speak and be presenters. Some members have done a great deal of research to locate former award winners, Colonels, and great stories from the early years. Others have worked on logistics, decorations, collecting and displaying memorabilia, and meal preparation and funding. The host unit, the 6th, has done extra work for the event to make the reunion possible. Please help by getting the word out to as many inactive as you can and letting me know how many are planning to attend. I am sure those who attend will enjoy the reunion.

It is my hope that we will build on the event and take an interest in having a series of 25th year reunion events. All our records and stories will be collected and stored in hopes they will make it to a 50th reunion.

Check the Battalion bulletin board for more details and contact information. Otherwise, you can contact me by email at Dayvid1861@aol.com

David Pearson

BATTALION ELECTIONS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, SESQUICENTENNIAL STATE PARK

Battalion elections will be held this Sunday, September 23rd at the Sesquicentennial State Park near Columbia. Church Service will be held at 11 a.m.. Lunch will be served around 12 with the Battalion meeting and elections being held at 2 p.m. Park shelters 3&4 at the back of the lake have been reserved for our use. Remember that absentee ballots must be sent to Lt. Mark Trimmier , c/o Community Resource Bank, 791 Broughton Street, Orangeburg, SC ,29115 by Sept. 21st, 2007. Voters must meet Battalion attendance requirements in order to be eligible.

Field Orders

Keith Powell
Colonel



Hello to everyone!

Well here it is, we are already to September and the reenacting year end season has started up. I along with a lot of other of our folks have just returned from the Harpers Ferry March and Sharpsburg combined events. The march was definitely an endurance contest and the road/hills/heat combined together to be the winner for a lot of the guys. The weight loss and work out routine I had been doing since the beginning of the year actually paid off and my now 50 year old self was able to do the entire march, including keeping my back pack on, through the end. This is not to say that it was easy. I can only say I "survived". But I had missed the last two marches through no fault of my own and now I can say "I DID IT". It was one of those magical moments crossing over the Potomac River in formation. And when I fell on my rear end it cooled me off even though it hurt my pride. I made it 90% across and slipped on a rock at the very end. So never say to yourself that "I have made it" until you get all the way across a river. I believe as soon as that thought went through my mind I slipped 30 seconds later. It was also fun forming up with the NC band and marching from the edge of the national park to Burnside's bridge.

With every one being worn out the event itself was tiring except for the Saturday evening battle (there had been two earlier ones in the day, one of which we participated in) which turned out to be great. It was right at dusk and the powder clung to the ground and the fire from the barrels stood out. It was an awesome fight. It got everyone fired up and those there were able to forget about being tired and sore. My thanks to everyone that participated, organized and helped with the march and event.

In a short time we will hold our annual elections. I would encourage everyone to attend and place their vote for the candidates of their choice. Please exercise your vote. It is important.

Also, at the end of the month there will be the Mill Spring event. I know a few are going. Hopefully, more will go at the last minute. Good luck to those that make it. I have a work conflict and will not be able to go. Then we will have Bratonsville and Secessionville to attend. I am looking forward to both.

This may be my last Vindicator Article. I am not sure if there will be another before the end of my term. So I would like to thank all of you for your support of the battalion. And I would like to thank my staff for the wonderful job they have done for all of us over the course of the last two years. It is an honor being the Colonel for the battalion. I will have many fond memories to cherish.

One other thing and as I brought up last time, we need to make sure to remember the service men and women who are in active duty now. Keep them in your thoughts, prayers, and communications. We all certainly wish for their safe return.

As with anything it is time for me to end. So let's all continue, what I hope was for all us, our year's firm resolution to determine the battalion's chosen path and to then see that it happens. We have a fine group of people and we need to act in the group's best interest. We are involved in a great hobby and we only have better things ahead of us. It is an honor being your commander. What I sincerely and most simply wish for is the best for all of us. God bless our great Country and the great State that we live in.

Your obedient servant

Keith Powell

Colonel

There is still time to register for the Battle of Mills Springs, in Mill Springs, KY on September 29th and 30th. Send \$15 Registration fee to :

Claude Sinclair
4573 Old Church Road
Lancaster, SC 29720

The battle is sponsored by the North-South Alliance. We will be in Rambo's Brigade.

Into The Breach

Lt. Mark Trimmier
Batallion Adjutant

Well it's hot. What more can I say. It's also time to think about cooler weather, putting on the wools, smell of coffee and smoke and most of all the warmth of friendship.

September will kick off the season with a bang. Sharpsburg shaped up to be one heck of an event. Lt. Blackmon and crew did an excellent job putting together what appeared to be a grand march. Even those of you who were prepared for the challenge weren't ready for the 96 degree heat on the asphalt.

Remember too Palmetto Battalion elections are scheduled for September 23rd at Sesquicentennial State Park in Columbia. Absentee ballots have been sent out and are starting to come back to me so please if you plan on voting and not attending elections, send the ballot in to me. My address is on the ballot but if you need it again it is as follows:

Mark Trimmier

c/o Community Resource Bank

791 Broughton Street

Orangeburg, SC 29115

Now I need to inform you that I will be resigning as your Adjutant.

Last week my wife was diagnosed with breast cancer. This has come as quite a shock to me and my family. We all have had to make adjustments in order to focus on what is important and that is getting Sylvia well. Archie Kennedy has agreed to complete my term as Adjutant. I encourage each one of you to help and assist Archie in every way with this responsibility. It is a hard job and he is assuming it under difficult circumstances but Archie can do it. I thank Archie for stepping up to the plate, without hesitation I might add, to help me in my time of need. Please help him in his.

Andy and I will be taking a break from the hobby for a while. Nothing is for sale and I plan to stay in touch. We have made many strong friendships within the Palmetto Battalion that I'm sure we will rely on in the days and months ahead. We both ask for your prayers during this difficult time. Soon with Gods help we will be back. Thanks you and God Bless you all.

Mark

At The Fireside

Ernie Black
Sgt. Major

Boy, I can't believe I am tired . It has been only a few hours ago that we have talked about our last duties and pards.

If my memory serves me correctly, I was talking about pards that I have met and grown to look for at each event that they are a part of.

Each day I meet new men and women that becomes a part of my life. As a reenactor and as friends in life, these young and old participants , after a time, will become a part of our family. As a family we will help each other to learn and grow. It is with this we will be able to teach that our ancestors had heart, honor and the believe that all things are possible. Their believe in a United country was possible, if not, they had the right to voice an opinion. To me this was the essence of the secession..

These men and women of honor did what they had to do after words and prayer did not, (ACT). Non-action meant we would knuckle under law makers or the money makers of the North. . We stood up for our rights as a governing state, with rights of the state. The state gave ruling and financial support to the Union of States, not the other way around.

For our stand as an independent state in a Union of States , not to be burdened with tariffs and taxation not justified; we were dubbed "Secessionist Rebels".(IT IS NOT SO). We had the right of self government and to voice an opinion, We still do, stand up and be counted.

With that , I will bid a good night in hopes I will see you " at the fireside" next eve. GOOD NIGHT.

Y F T C

SGT. MAJOR

Parade Rest!

Claude Sinclair
Lt. Colonel

During this edition of the Vindicator I am going to talk about numbers. Sometimes the numbers can serve as an indicator of what direction you are going, but sometimes they can be misconceiving. For the last two years attendance has been up for events. Not by much but an increase nonetheless. For the year of 2006-2007 we had a membership of 355. As of today for the year of 2007-2008 we have a membership of 293. That number will increase as late membership trickles in. That is a difference of 62 members. Last year we had two units that paid but didn't participate nor did they renew. That accounts for 30 past members. We have not received dues from the Calvary but I suspect that will be coming. Many members are just plain late. I would like to see this year's final membership and participation to surpass last years and I think that we will do it. Following is a breakdown:

| Company A | Members | 27 th | | Company E | Members | 10th |
|-------------|---------|------------------|--|-------------|---------|------|
| 2006-2007 | 45 | 45 | | 2006-2007 | 41 | 41 |
| 2007-2008 | 35 | 35 | | 2007-2008 | 37 | 37 |
| Difference | -10 | -10 | | Difference | -4 | -4 |
| Vote Rights | 9 | 9 | | Vote Rights | 14 | 14 |

| Company B | Members | 11 th | 14 th | 20th | 23 rd | 25 th | | Irish Vol | Members |
|-------------|---------|------------------|------------------|------|------------------|------------------|--|-------------|---------|
| 2006-2007 | 80 | 17 | 17 | 10 | 21 | 15 | | 2006-2007 | 13 |
| 2007-2008 | 76 | 14 | 16 | 5 | 25 | 17 | | 2007-2008 | 8 |
| Difference | -4 | -3 | -1 | -5 | +4 | +2 | | Difference | -5 |
| Vote Rights | 34 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 15 | 5 | | Vote Rights | 0 |

| Company C | Members | 6th | 8th | 12th | 21st | 26 th | | Others | Members |
|-------------|---------|-----|-----|------|------|------------------|--|-------------|---------|
| 2006-2007 | 57 | 14 | 16 | 11 | 9 | 7 | | 2006-2007 | 7 |
| 2007-2008 | 49 | 18 | 17 | 10 | 0 | 5 | | 2007-2008 | 1 |
| Difference | -8 | +4 | +1 | -1 | -9 | -2 | | Difference | -6 |
| Vote Rights | 22 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 3 | | Vote Rights | 0 |

| Company G | Members | 2nd | 3rd | | Company H | Members | 13th |
|-------------|---------|-----|-----|--|-------------|---------|------|
| 2006-2007 | 36 | 15 | 21 | | 2006-2007 | 27 | 27 |
| 2007-2008 | 13 | 13 | 0 | | 2007-2008 | 29 | 29 |
| Difference | -23 | -2 | -21 | | Difference | +2 | +2 |
| Vote Rights | 8 | 8 | 0 | | Vote Rights | 11 | 11 |

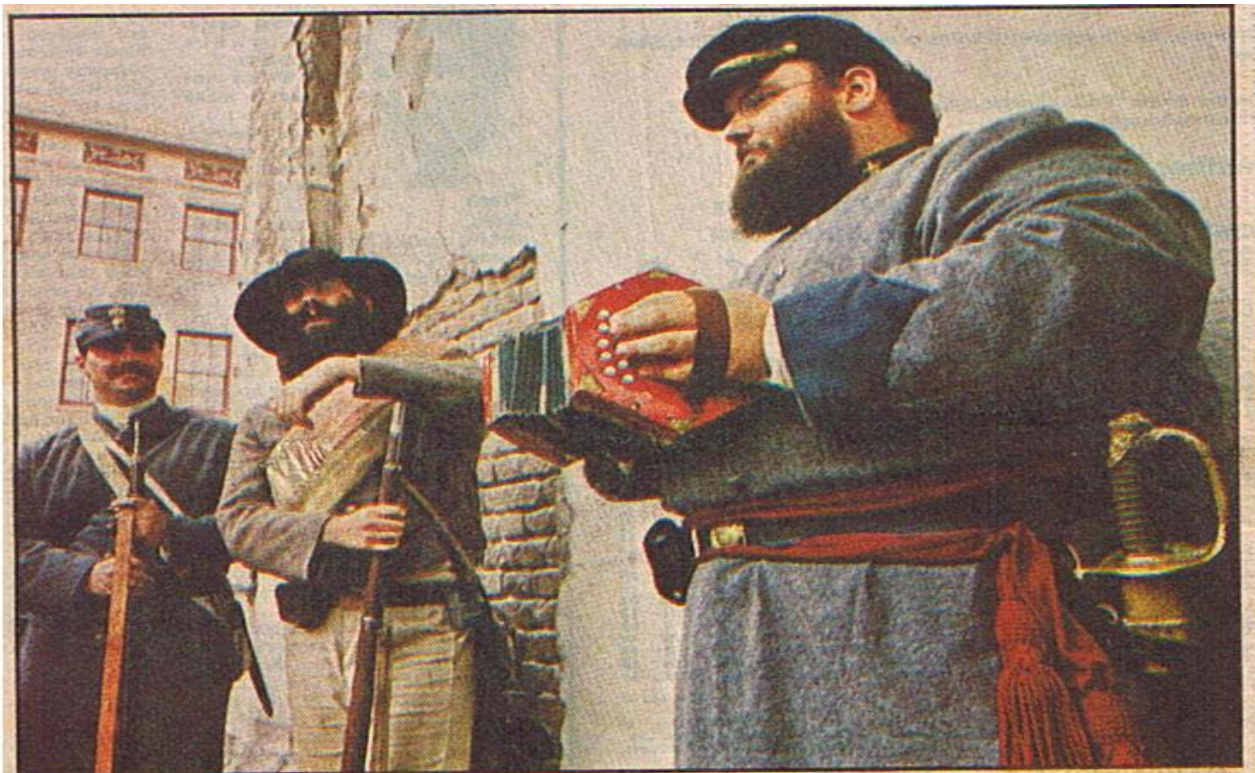
Parade Rest continued from previous page.....

| Artillery | Members | Culp | Ferg | Pal | San | Zim |
|-------------|---------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 2006-2007 | 49 | 11 | 11 | 2 | 7 | 18 |
| 2007-2008 | 45 | 14 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 16 |
| Difference | -5 | +3 | -4 | -2 | +1 | -2 |
| Vote Rights | 28 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 9 |

Your Unit Representative is your unit's line of communication. The Colonel has stated that unit reps need to have access to the Palmetto Battalion website and I will reinforce that. David Pearson posted information on the Battalion Bulletin Board during April regarding the 20th Battalion Reunion and some members have stated that they didn't know that we were having a reunion. It was also posted in the June/July Vindicator and I have forwarded messages by e-mail to about half of the battalion including unit reps. So there is a breakdown in communication but it is not at the Staff level. See ya'll at elections.

Your Obedient Servant

Claude Sinclair



Staff Photo by Wade Speas

Carolina Days

Palmetto Brigade member Bert Miller plays a camp song in front of the Confederate Museum Saturday during the celebration marking the 211th anniversary of the Battle of Sullivan's Island. See story, Page 1-B.

BLAST FROM THE PAST: The Battalion's first Colonel, Bert Miller entertains the men in Charleston, from a 1988 edition of a Charleston newspaper, (not sure which one). Courtesy of Randy Burbage.

Explosive Notes

Bob Wolfe
Artillery Commander

How long have you been a member of your battery, 1, 5, 10, 15 or more years, perhaps longer?

Who taught you what you know about artillery? Was it another member of the battery? A close friend? Somebody who is no longer a member or is now out of the hobby? Just one question seems to lead to many others.

The most important question we hear, deals with where to receive "professional artillery training" and when can we get it? First, we all have to agree on who or what organization we consider to be professional and provide the training we want. Absolutely nothing replaces good, old fashion "on the job training" assuming that the training you got was correct. Many of you, like me, received training in the military and on the field from capable and experienced artillerists, that we believed knew their stuff. A great number of them are completely gone from the hobby and many of the techniques they taught have evolved and changed.

Think back 20 years, when there were few really professional artillery groups that we would trust to train our members. Most of us could not agree on what the training criteria should be or what period manual would be used and few of our members had the credentials to be properly called "a War Between the States artillery expert" in legal matters.

Fast forward to the present and enter the National Civil War Artillery Association (NCWAA). They have been around a long time and their presence and popularity has grown in the last 10 years, so much so, that now they have come to the forefront in our hobby. They have the training we need to receive, to do our, each and every time we perform for the public. That job simply put, is to "think and act SAFELY, while we entertain the spectators and then go home in one piece".

On August 18, 2007, representatives from EVERY one of the Palmetto Battalion's artillery batteries from all over the state, gathered near Lexington SC, to receive the first formal artillery training and pre-qualification for our batteries given in this state, in many years. Additionally, the NCWAA has trained two (2) new South Carolina Instructors, who will be at events and they will help to further educate all of our artillerists. It is no longer necessary to travel out of the state to West Virginia or Georgia to get this training and the qualification that comes along with it.

What are the benefits of artillery qualification? Consider these points:

The NCWAA is a nationally recognized artillery organization with over 2,800 members, representing more than 85 individual batteries, located in more than 30 states.

- Their training course is designed to promote SAFE operations for all gun crews.
- Their training courses are for age 14 up and regardless of what you already know about artillery the NCWAA will add new perspective to your knowledge and abilities.
- Training courses are available for specific guns, including Mountain Howitzers and Coehorn mortars, as well as Naval guns.
- Training courses have been reviewed and they are constantly updated by expert Artillerists, including former US Army personnel.
- The NCWAA has training for all re-enactors regardless of the period you portray, including Rev War and live the fire training used by the North-South Skirmish Association (NSSA).
- Qualification is offered in several phases; these include: Basic Artilleryman; Gunner; Gun Commander and Instructor.
- Qualified members can prove their abilities by showing their cards to other gun crews.
- An NCWAA qualified gun crew MAY be exempted from gun drills and inspections, when participating at national events.

Qualified members are eligible to purchase individual accidental death/ injury insurance, through their batteries at a reasonable rate, in conjunction with the Kanawah Artillery Association.

The training included presentations on powder performance, additives to use less powder or make more noise, the DOT/ BATF and Homeland Security laws/ regulations on powder possession and transport. I cannot overemphasize the importance of being knowledgeable in this area and the best source for information lies with the BATF and DOT, right at their online websites. This is a very important issue and because it is lengthy, the discussions will form the basis for my next article.

With Big "Bobby" Goodwin and his son, Little "Bobby" or B.E. Goodwin (both from Culpeper's Battery), who are our new SC Instructors, each of the Palmetto Battalion batteries can easily get their members qualified and then select members to attend Gunners and Battery Commanders training. This will not be a fast accomplishment, as the training requires a minimum time in each grade to advance, but once they have been achieved, the battery will be better off for its investment. This training was not only GOOD for those who attended; it is an absolute necessity for all Palmetto Battalion artillerists.

Nobody goes to the field intending to have any kind of an accident, so we try to down play them down, by saying things like "I have been doing this for 10 years and never had an ac-

continued on the next page

Explosive Notes Continued.....

cident". Let's take a few minutes to examine a few artillery accidents. We viewed a great new video of a recent accident and discussed it in depth and I believe it caused many to re-think their knowledge, with the realization that bad things happen very FAST.

Think about these types of artillery accidents, noting that nothing like them has ever happened in South Carolina and we want to keep it that way.

- We are not talking about skinned knuckles, cuts, bruises, minor burns, falls or back injuries from lifting or loading our guns while at events; we are dealing with serious incidents.

- We are talking accidents operating or firing the guns that result in severe injury or death to one or more of our members; this has happened in other parts of the country in years past.

- We are talking accidents operating or firing the guns that result in any injury or death to a spectator at any event.

- We are talking accidents with powder at the limber boxes, caused from rifle fire or smoking, that result in an explosion in the limber chest or an uncontained detonation of a blank round. This happened at a European event last year and we have a photo many of you have already seen.

- We are talking accidents while firing the guns, from the vent or muzzle blast or the gun rolling over a member. Remember, gun wheels can break legs/ arms, vent blasts can take off fingers; muzzle blasts can kill. Vent and rolling gun injuries happen every year, sometimes multiple times.

- We are talking accidents due to improperly maintained guns when fired, the spokes, fellows or trail gives way or breaks, making the gun and its blast uncontrollable. This happened at an upstate New York event in 1991 and injured men on the next gun, which was positioned too close.

- We are talking about anything SOLID that has been introduced in the charge (wads/ sabots/ packing/ shot) that will leave the muzzle and could hit anyone down-

range on the field.

- We are talking premature detonation of the round or an explosion due to improperly loaded guns (triple charges) because the gun tube has never been checked for cracks and the barrel or breech lets go without warning. This happened in 1988 in Ohio and more recently in the video that we saw.

- We are talking accidents where the gun crew has a loaded piece and forgets to clear the round after the event and it is detonated. This actually happened in Virginia in 1983 and resulted in the death of a member during the loading of the gun.

We are talking the gun rolling or falling off the trailer and injuring a member; this happens every year, sometimes multiple times.

Most of us do not have insurance to protect our members from accidents like these, but litigation will be expensive and in the end we will probably lose, complete a huge settlement lodged against the battery, the Palmetto Battalion and the land owner. It will not be pleasant and failure could result in all artillery being banned from the field. Our NCWAA training will help to minimize this potential.

This is why it is so important for every Palmetto Battalion battery member to come to the training and receive highest knowledge on this subject and for your batteries to remain vigil in their artillery inspections, especially when working among people you do not know.

You must report "unsafe actions" and you must do it automatically and for selfish purpose; these reasons include: Your safety. The safety of your family. The safety of your members. The safety of the Palmetto Battalion Infantry. The safety of the land owner. Lastly and most importantly: The safety of the spectators. These responsibilities have always been part of every artilleryman's job out on the field.

Let me state our goal again; its simple and the same as that of the NCWAA: "SAFETY ABOVE ALL ELSE".

I am satisfied that this training was the first step in a long and beneficial relationship between the NCWAA and the Palmetto Battalion and the fact we all love history, is why

we were there. We will continue to come together out on the field for fun and fellowship; to all be safe, play safe and then go home in one piece, with absolutely no injuries or accidents.

I've said enough for one sitting, so chew on this for awhile and feel free to contact me by E-M A I L a t : "boomboomwolf1863@yahoo.com" or call my cell phone at 843-992-5489, anytime.

Schedule of Events

Aug 19-20
Camp of Instruction

Sept. 6-7
A.P. Hill March

Sept. 8-9
Antietam

Sept. 23
Battalion Elections

Sept. 29-30
Mill Springs, KY

October 27-28
Brattonville

November 10-11
Secessionville



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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
PALMETTO BATTALION

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Battalion Reunion

Brattonsville, October 27 & 28th

The *Palmetto Vindicator* is published six (6) times a year and is the official newsletter of the Palmetto Battalion. No information may be reprinted or used from this publication without the expressed written permission of the Vindicator editor. Inquiries should be directed to Bruce Blackmon at bblackmon63@yahoo.com.

We're on the web!

www.palmettobattalion.org



The 20th SC at Ft. Sumter 1987: This is a photo of the 20th portraying the 13th US regulars. The 20th was one of the first units in the Battalion to have a standing Federal impression in addition to their Confederate impression. The 20th was the first reenacting unit to be offered to do living history at Sumter and at Ft. Moultrie. Mike Lott was 1st Sgt. then, 4 pictured members are still members of the 20th. (David Culbertson (deceased), Mark Watts, Mark Deloach and Gary Byrd) .

Gordon Jones (2nd SCVI, later the 20th SCVI) is pictured on the front row, dark hair, full, long beard, He is the man who planned the first Battalion, AP Hill march. He was a founding member of the Battalion along with Gary Byrd.