



THE CHEROKEE RANGER

2004, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2004

American Civil War Reenactors
And
Historic Interpreters

19th Alabama Infantry, Co. I
And
42nd Indiana Vol. Infantry
Co. I

Proud Members of the
First Confederate Legion
And First Confederate Division

2003 Christmas Party by W.G. Rambo, Brigadier General

On the 27th instant, I had the honor to be invited to a period Christmas party hosted by the 19th Alabama. The gala affair was held at "Elm Springs," an antebellum mansion in Columbia, Tennessee which is also the headquarters of the SCV.

The house and grounds were in wonderful condition (My compliments to the Sons). Period Christmas decorations adorned the house throughout with the First National prominently displayed over the portico (Our time frame was December '62). A mixture of military and civilian gentlemen were present along with many ladies, almost all of whom were most appropriately (and most authentically) dressed and coiffured. There were probably 30-40 people in attendance. Two drawing rooms were opened up to accommodate the crowd with several tables joined together to form a long stemmed "T". The tables were covered with tablecloths and candelabras. The lighting in the house was either by candle or electric chandeliers with the lighting subdued to resemble candlelight giving a tremendous period effect.

I had been secretly asked by Major Rhodes and Captain Eldridge to interrupt the soiree as "General Nathan Bedford Forrest" and the officers of his escort. "Captain J.C. Jackson" (Captain Larry Gunnin) and "Lieutenant Nathan Boone" (Lieutenant Don Huskey) made the trip with me. At the appointed time, Captain "Jackson" knocked on the door and asked to be taken to Major Rhodes on official business for General Forrest. General "Forrest" marched in not far behind, and showed Major Rhodes his map giving the latest intelligence, and declaring that ALL the men in the room, military and civilian, were needed immediately to fill in a gap in the outposts ringing Murfreesborough.

Before the "troops" could be assembled however, Lieutenant "Boone" arrived with a dispatch informing Forrest that the necessary troops had already arrived and there was no further need for reinforcements tonight. Whereupon "Mrs. Looney" the gracious host of Elm Springs, invited the General and his staff to supper . . . And of course, General "Forrest" would never want to disappoint a lady (and General Rambo would never want to turn down a free meal.

Red wine flowed to accommodate the excellent meal. The glasses were kept filled by four young maidens, properly dressed in common folk clothing. All conversation was period, yet not contrived, stuffy or silly—Something that could only be accomplished by people who study and love the period as we do.

After the meal, the ladies moved upstairs to do . . . whatever it is ladies do, and the men adjourned to the front portico for brandy and cigars. "General Forrest" made it a point to converse with the civilian gentlemen present, seeking out shirkers or war profiteers, and I'm happy to report that to a man, all were gainfully employed at vital occupations in support of the war effort.

One would have thought that nothing else could be done to add to a perfect evening, but the 19th wasn't through. The entire assemblage was recalled into the main room for a presentation by a Scottish "conjurer" who dazzled us with his magic and tickled us with his wit. As one might imagine, his wit was greatly aided by audience participation (which was greatly aided by good brandy).

Afterwards, accolades to the hosts were duly awarded (including my admission that I didn't think the 33rd could top this), and the party ended with everyone strolling down the driveway to their "carriages" (which was yet another example of the planning put into this event—Parking the cars down the hill fifty yards made it seem in the darkness that there were no cars. It was great!

My compliments to Major Jim Rhodes, Captain Danny Eldridge, Ms. Ann LaFramboise, and ALL the men and women of the 19th Alabama and the 19th Alabama Civilians. It was a wonderful affair.

I only hope that the gauntlet is now thrown to the 33rd (Dueling period parties - Life is good!).

You are Invited To a

*Supper Shower in Honor of
Karen Borski and Andy Somers*

Saturday, January 17 at 5:30PM

At the home of Sam ad Diane Campbell

113 Stoneway Trail, Madison, Alabama (256)895-9343

Please bring a covered dish and a favorite recipe

Karen and Andy are registered at Dillard's, Bed, Bath and Beyond, & Crates and Barrels

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

January 24, 2004– 1st Confederate Legion Meeting
The Confederate Memorial Park
Clanton, Alabama

19th Alabama Annual Meeting

January 31, 2004

Founder's Hall
Athens State University

5PM