

## MFA May 2018 Newsletter

The Middlebrooks Family Association

274 Wilder Drive, Forsyth, Georgia 31029

Hello Middlebrooks Family! Hope this May Newsletter finds you well and happy. Spring has sprung here in the South bringing on gardening and yardwork. I am no gardener – as my mother, Kathleen Hunter, or my cousin, Ella “Weezie” Tripp, would attest. However, I do have two small raised flower beds which provide a couple of plants that come back every year. Each Spring, I plant a few new things in the beds; and, without fail, I have some surprise plants just show up! Hopefully, our 2018 Middlebrooks Family Association Meeting will provide the same combination of those folks who always show up, some new members, and some surprises!

Jackson, Tennessee is our meeting place September 27-29. This meeting will be held at the Country Inn and Suites on 1935 Emporium Drive in Jackson. The contact phone number is 731-660-0077. I’ve had a couple of people mention that they were not given the discounted rate. However, I have spoken with the manager and that will be corrected. Just be sure you insist that there is a Middlebrooks Family Association group rate. Also, the discounted rate has been extended to include Wednesday, September 26.

Following is a *projected* agenda for the meeting:

### **Thursday, September 27**

Complimentary Breakfast

8:30-9:30 – Registration

9:30-10:00 – Welcome by Hostesses and President along with Treasurer’s Report

10:00-10:20 – J.A. Middlebrooks - Cemetery Report

10:20-10:40 – Ella Tripp – Update on Bylaws

10:40-11:00 – Break

11:00-12:00 – Guest Speaker Jim Wood from the Tennessee Room of the  
Jackson-Madison County Library

12:00 – 1:30 – Lunch

1:30 – 2:00 – Bob Middlebrook’s DNA report and update

2:00-3:00-- Guest Speaker Billie King of the Big Black Creek Historical Society

3:00-3:15 – wrap up the day and Door Prize

3:30-4:30 – Board Meeting

5:00 – Supper at the Casey Jones Restaurant along with Plectral Music. We will dine in  
Heritage Room. \$13 includes the buffet, taxes, and tip.

### **Friday, September 28**

Complimentary Breakfast

9:00-9:15 Welcome

9:15 – 10:15 – Nyah Edwards – Host of the 2012 Middlebrook Living Legacy Reunion  
and family member

10:15 – 10:30 – Break

10:30 – 11:30 – Guest Speaker Bart Horton of Century Farm Winery

11:30 – 11:45 – Wrap up morning and DOOR PRIZE

Lunch on your own.

You pick: Farmer’s Market, Library Research, Old Denmark Church

Meet at the Century Farm Winery for a tour, light meal, and wine tasting – time to be announced later.

## **Saturday, September 29**

Complimentary Breakfast

9:00 – 9:15 --Welcome

9:15—9:45 – Navigating the Web by Bob Middlebrooks

9:45 – 10:45 – Guest Speaker Judge John Marshall, Genealogist, of Memphis

10:45 – 11:00 – Break

11:00—11:30 – Middlebrooks of Harris County book presentation by  
Ri McGlamery

11:30 – 1:00 – Lunch

1:00 – 2:00 – MFA family, Bob Middlebrooks

2:00 – 3:00 – General Business Meeting

\*Future MFA Meeting – when and where

\*Elections

3:00-3:15 -- Break

3:14—4:00 -- General Reflections, survey, Group Pictures

DOOR PRIZE

Dinner --- still undecided but check out the Chandelier Café and the  
Flat Iron Grill

PLEASE keep in mind that this agenda is still “loose” and apt to have some changes. We would love to have any input anyone might have. Feel free to text or call me (870-731-4226) or email [dalekidwell07@gmail.com](mailto:dalekidwell07@gmail.com). Hope to see everyone who is reading this!!!!

### ***With sympathy, the MFA wishes to include the following obituaries:***

Atticus “George” Middlebrooks, Jr. of Brandon, Florida, passed away Saturday, May 5, 2018. He was a native and life-long resident of the area, a member of the New Hope United Methodist Church, Lodge #2383, and a US Navy WWII veteran. He is survived by his son Randy (Danielle), daughter Carol (Ruben) Rodriguez, six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. The home address is 305 Oak Avenue, Brandon, Florida 33510.

Charles Hicks Middlebrooks, 91, of Woodlands, Texas passed away April 26, 2018. He was born in Home, Louisiana on April 8 1927. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Mary Tom Middlebrooks, his son Charles Thomas and wife (Darby), and his grandson Samuel Thomas Middlebrooks.

**MFA will be installing some new officers and board members at our 2018 meeting. Anyone who is interested in serving our organization in such a capacity, please let me know! Anyone with any suggestions, please feel free to contact me as well. 870-731-4226 and/or [dalekidwell07@gmail.com](mailto:dalekidwell07@gmail.com)**

## Contest

The hostesses of the 2018 Middlebrooks Family Association encourage you all to register early for the meeting in Jackson, Tennessee. We are serious with our encouragement and have decided to have a little contest. Everyone who registers for the meeting by July 27, 2018 will have their name put in a drawing for a crisp \$100 bill!!! Nothing like a little cash to motivate folks.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is excitement in the air as we look forward to our September meeting in Tennessee. This brings up an important point. We need a location and a host for our 2019 meeting. Our organization depends on volunteers to step up and help when needed. If anyone has suggestions or wishes to volunteer to host the meeting, please get in touch with Dale Kidwell our Vice President.

Meanwhile we have a change in our Y-DNA Project posting. We will still use Family Tree DNA (FTDNA) for our lab work but the website where we have been posting the analyzed results will be deleted as of May 23, 2018. The owner operators have helped us in the past with guidance and allowing our Y-DNA spreadsheet to be on their website. The spreadsheet with analyzed results will now be found on the Middlebrooks Family Association website at <http://middlebrooksfamily.org/> under the tabs MFA Projects/DNA Project/DNA Project.

*In honor of Mother's Day and the many contributions of all women today, I thought you all might enjoy a reprint of an article submitted by Jarrelyn Lang which first appeared in the July 2008 Newsletter.*

### Tennessee's "Sidesaddle Soldiers"

Frustrated because their gender held them back from enlisting to fight in the Confederate Army, a group of girls living in Rhea County, Tennessee, created an "army" of their own in 1862. Rhea (pronounced Ray) County is located on the northern bank of the Tennessee River in eastern Tennessee. These ladies, most of whom had fathers and/or brothers serving the Confederacy, were not content merely to make occasional deliveries of food and clothing to relatives and sweethearts stationed in the area. Sometime in the summer of 1862, the Rhea County Girls' Company was formed. Dubbed "sidesaddle soldiers," they became the only female cavalry company serving on either side during the Civil War. They could not possibly know it at the time, but most of these young ladies would one day be prisoners of war held by the Union Army. Mary McDonald, oldest of the group, was elected captain. Caroline McDonald, probably Mary's sister-in-law, was named first lieutenant. Chosen second lieutenant was Anne Paine, and

Rhoda Tennessee Thomison became the third lieutenant. Noncommissioned officers named were: Jane Keith, first sergeant; Rachel Howard, second sergeant; Sallie Mitchell, third sergeant; and Minerva Tucker, fourth sergeant. No corporals were elected, so the remaining eighteen members of the group had to be content to serve as privates.

The next order of business was selecting an appropriate martial name, and thus they became the Rhea County Spartans. The average age of these ladies was 18; the oldest was 27. Even after Union General Ambrose Burnside entered eastern Tennessee in the summer of 1863, the lady "soldiers" continued to hold their secret meetings, mainly to keep up their spirits and to exchange news of the war. It is highly likely, however, that they may have engaged in a bit of spying and information-gathering for the Confederate Army. Although the Spartans never had any official connection with either the Confederate Army or the state of Tennessee, at least one Union Army officer took them quite seriously.

Following a sound defeat at the Battle of Nashville in December 1864, Confederate General John Bell Hood resigned his command. Union troops gained control of Rhea County and remained there for the remainder of the war. The 6th Tennessee Mounted Patrol, Co. B (Federal) was the most active unit. Formed in October 1864 to serve for one year, the 6th was composed of some genuine Unionists, but its ranks were mostly filled with Confederate draft-dodgers and deserters. Its primary objective was to combat any bands of Confederate irregulars who were still operating in the Cumberland Mountains. Captain John P. Walker of Company B, a Rhea County native, decided that the Rhea County Spartans was just such an organization.

Walker, a 38-year-old farmer, eluded Confederate conscription until the Union forces gained an upper hand. Eager to join the Union victors and share in the spoils, he quickly acquired a reputation for harshness toward Southern sympathizers. One of his first acts was to order the mass arrest of the girls' company, to "teach the rebellious Southern ladies a lesson" ("All-Girl Rhea County Spartans," TheHistoryNet). Walker managed to persuade his commanding officer, Lt. Colonel George Gowin, to go along with this plan.

On April 5, 1865, Walker sent his men out to round up the girls. Being a Rhea County native, he knew who the Spartans were and where to find them. Thirteen women were rounded up and forced to march to Walker's home. From there, they continued their march toward Bell's Landing on the Tennessee River. It was dark and rainy, but the exhausted women were forced to march in the mud while Walker and the other Union soldiers traveled on horseback. Once at the landing, the women were joined by three others. Several of the girls had eluded captivity, but sixteen of their number were not as fortunate. Once at the river, they were put aboard the USS Chattanooga, a small steamboat built by the Union Army to engage in foraging expeditions along the Tennessee River (not designed for carrying passengers). All 16 prisoners were crowded into the crew's dining room, with armed guards at both doors. Once they reached Chattanooga, Walker marched his prisoners to the provost marshal's office. Captain Seth B. Moe, assistant adjutant of the Union Army's Department of the Etowah, was on duty. Not knowing how to handle the situation, Moe immediately sent for his commander, Major General James B. Steedman.

Steedman already viewed Walker's commanding officer, Gowin, with contempt, and viewing this spectacle very likely strengthened that feeling. Walker, instead of being

congratulated on his victory as he expected, was sharply reprimanded by the general for taking up his time with such "foolishness" (ibid). Steedman then required the women to take the oath of allegiance to the Union, and they complied, thereby giving Walker no more excuses to harass them. Steedman, in an effort to show the women that not all Yankees were barbarians, had Captain Moe escort them to the Central House Hotel. There they were allowed to clean up then treated to the finest meal the hotel could provide. After the meal, Moe escorted them back to the Chattanooga for their return trip home. The accommodations hadn't improved, but this time there were no armed guards. However, Walker managed a last gesture of revenge. Ordered by Steedman to escort the ladies to their homes, he instead simply walked away at the Rhea County landing, leaving them to fend for themselves.

The Spartans disbanded after their arrival back in Rhea County. The war would soon be over, and the ladies returned to their ante-bellum way of life. General Steedman wrote to Major General George H. Thomas in Nashville, recommending that the 6th Tennessee Mounted Infantry "be turned over to the State authorities of Tennessee and replaced with good cavalry" (ibid). Union Colonel Lewis Merrill added his concerns: "The Sixth Tennessee and First Georgia (Union Regiments) are, in General Steedman's opinion, utterly worthless. My own observation of the first named confirms this opinion. They are simply cowardly thieves – useless, except to keep a community embroiled and encourage guerrillas by running whenever attacked" (ibid). Captain Walker was discharged from the Union Army a short time later. He managed to use his experience to gain appointive offices during Reconstruction then faded into obscurity.

*Sources: "All-Girl Rhea County Spartans." TheHistoryNet; MacLean, Maggie. "Civil War Women: All-Girl Rhea County Spartans." civilwarwomen.blogspot; "The All Girl Rhea County Spartans." home.att.net.*

**As excited as we are about our 2018 MFA Meeting, we must plan even further ahead! Location and Hosts are the first steps. Since 2005, meetings have been held in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. This year we will add Tennessee. Obviously, MFA is not opposed to a good road-trip! Feel free to share your ideas before the 2018 meeting.**

## Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc.

2017-2018 Officers

Bob Middlebrooks, President

Dale Kidwell, Vice President

Kathleen Hunter, Secretary/Treasurer

### Board of Directors

Bob Middlebrooks, President 2016-2018

Dale Kidwell, Vice President 2017-2019

Kathleen Hunter, Secretary/Treasurer 2017-2019

Neal Middlebrook 2016-2018

Charles Middlebrooks 2017-2019

J.A. Middlebrooks 2017-2019

Leonard Middlebrooks 2016-2018

Leslie Shealy 2016-2017

Ella Tripp 2016-2018

### Ancestor Team Leaders

*Isaac born 1753:* Leonard Middlebrooks and Jean Shroyer

*John b. 1754:* Neal Middlebrook

*John b. 1755:* John David Middlebrooks and Leslie Shealy

*Joseph b. 1610:* Leonard Middlebrooks

*Joseph b. 1773:* Dave Clark

*Micajah b. 1758:* Mary Baker

*Nathaniel b. 1764:* Ella Tripp

*Robert b. 1766:* J.A. Middlebrooks

*Sims b. 1762:* Neal Middlebrooks

*Thomas b. 1763:* Joyce Arnold

*England Middlebrooks:* Ian Middlebrook and Neal Middlebrook

*Unknown Ancestors:* Leonard Middlebrooks and J. A. Middlebrooks

### On-Going Projects

*Cemetery:* J.A. Middlebrooks and William Sterling

*DAR-UDC:* Jean Shroyer

*DNA:* Bob Middlebrooks and Dave Clark

*Family Register Update and Repository:* Leonard Middlebrooks

*MFA Newsletter:* Dale Kidwell

*MFA Website:* Dave Clark and Leonard Middlebrooks

*Military Register Update:* Kerry Middlebrooks

### Email Directory

Joyce Arnold

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*Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc. (MFA)* was found in 2001 for the purpose of assembling and preserving genealogical and historical material for our future Middlebrook/e/s generations.

*MFA Web Site:* <http://middlebrooksfamily.org/>

The *MFA Newsletter* (currently MFA's only publication) is published and sent to all present and former members and is available to the general public each February, May, August, and November. You may request to be removed from this list by contacting Dale Kidwell at [dalekidwell07@gmail.com](mailto:dalekidwell07@gmail.com)