

National Civil War Association

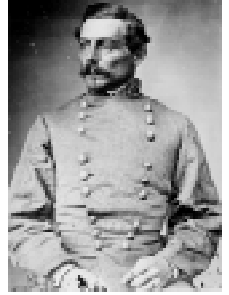
presents the

Sesquicentennial Anniversary Commencement American Civil War

**Civil War Experience
at Gibson Ranch
May 21 & 22, 2011**



April 1861 Fort Sumter
flies the Confederate colors
courtesy of the public domain



General P.G.T. Beauregard
commanded the bombardment
of Fort Sumter - April 12, 1861



A decade of Civil War living history at Gibson Ranch benefitting over 20,000 school children and tens of thousands of visitors for the Civil War Experience weekends returns to Gibson Ranch on May 20th & 21st. This year we commemorate the sesquicentennial anniversary of the outbreak of Civil War between the Southern and Northern United States.

Over 1,500 local school children will experience this living history on their special "school day event" the Friday preceding the weekend public event of May 20-21, 2011.

You, too, can be a part of this extraordinary event. Please take the time to wander through the entire encampment of this living history experience. Most of the Union and Confederate Camps will be open to the public much of Saturday and Sunday. Feel free to visit and ask questions of the participants.

The volunteers which make this event possible... "live" the event. They will treat you as a visitor to the 1860s. This is as close to the reality of what life was like then as you are likely to ever experience. And the participants are just as likely to give you the same answers to your questions that you might have received had you lived 150 years ago.

Though the Declaration of Independence clearly did not allow for the practice of slavery within its statement of human rights, eliminating the long and inherited practice of it proved a difficult and complicated process. Large landowners were so entrenched in the economic "requirements" of slave labor that it was thought the only hope of elimination of the practice was through a generational and eventual death of the practice.

Abolitionist efforts grew in earnest with the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and by 1804 all of the "northern" states had abolished the practice by statute. Nevertheless by 1850 the country was divided and passionately polarized. President Lincoln and the Republican Party strategized a gradual "suffocation" of slavery by eliminating the expansion of it. It was hoped that this might be an ultimate compromise. But Southern Democrats were too entrenched in the practice of it.

Nearly all African-Americans lived in the South and totaled about one third of the South's entire population. Hence the fear of economic collapse caused by emancipation was real and the South stated their fears within the framework of "states rights."

The assault of the Confederates on Ft. Sumter on April 12, 1861 marked the first battle of the war and divided the country for four long bloody years until the surrender at the Appomattox Courthouse on April 9th, 1865.

The 620,000 dead at the conclusion of the war still stands as the highest war casualty count in American History. Ten percent of all the young men from Northern states gave their lives and the South lost a devastating one-third of all of their young men. This was the deadliest of engagements... testing the mettle of a yet very young America.