



COLORADO RIVER RED, WHITE & BLUE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Number 5

April 2014

Welcome to this issue of your Colorado River Chapter, AZSSAR newsletter. The Colorado River, Red, White & Blue is an official publication of the Colorado River Chapter, AZSSAR.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter and the updates and information it provides.

in the Conference Room just off the Main Library area.

IN MEMORIAM TIMOTHY KEITH

Chapter Meetings

**Next Chapter Meeting April 12th
Mohave County Library
Lake Havasu City**

Colorado River Chapter rotates meetings between Kingman and Lake Havasu in hopes that one location will be more appealing to you than the other..

Our meeting location in Kingman has been the Mohave County Community College, 1971 Jaegerson Ave, Kingman, which is about 4-5 miles north of I-40. The meeting room is in the Library Building in a really nice conference room across from the Library itself. A great place to talk about your Patriot Ancestor's contribution to our Freedom and Chapter future plans.

Our meeting location in Lake Havasu has been the Mohave County Library in the K-Mart Plaza at 1770 North McCulloch Blvd, Lake Havasu City. We meet



Compatriot Timothy Dale Keith, Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, passed away 12 Feb 2014. Tim was the son of Fred Arthur Keith and Zella Mae Stephenson and was born 9 May 1954 in North Platte, Neb. He was the loving husband of his high school sweetheart and wife of 41 year, s Sue. Tim had been a member of the Colorado River Chapter since Nov 2007. Tim's Patriot ancestor was Nathan Peak a Private/Sergeant in the 1st Maryland Regiment who was wounded and taken prisoner at the battle of

Guilford Court House, Guilford County, North Carolina.

Change in Officers for 2014

With the untimely passing of Compatriot Keith the March 8th meeting was dedicated to looking into duties and requirements of the Secretary and Treasurer of our Chapter.

After much discussion and review of files from Tim, the following changes were voted on and passed by members present:

Mike Boop will assume the duties of Secretary in addition to his previous duties as Sergeant of Arms, and will be assisted by Jimmie Bodenhamer

Ray Lackey will assume the duties of Treasurer in addition to his previous duties as Vice-President.

The position of Board of Managers will be left vacant.

Note: Since the March meeting, J. Michael Jones has agreed to continue to represent Chapter at state meetings until a replacement can be found.

At the April 12th meeting we will look at more of the documents and papers from Tim's files to determine disposition.

Your Chapter Officers would appreciate any members who would help us by assuming responsibility for any of the additional tasks.

Please consider pitching in to help your Chapter.

Campaigns and Battles of the American Revolution (1775-1783)

Our series on Battles of the American Revolution continues with this issue's installment – Battles of Hog and Noodle Islands. I hope you find it interesting and informative!

Battle of Bunker Hill (Boston Campaign)

17 June 1775

Bunker Hill is in the Boston area of Mass, located on the Charlestown peninsula which is across the Charles River from Boston proper. Charlestown peninsula is about one mile long and one-half mile wide and runs generally northeast to southwest. There are three pieces of high ground which dominate the peninsula. At the northern end is Bunker Hill (110 feet), followed by Breed's Hill near the middle (75 feet) and finally Moulton's Hill (35 feet) in the southeastern corner. A narrow point in the northeastern corner of the peninsula known as the "Neck" connects Charlestown peninsula with the mainland. The town of Charlestown on the peninsula was located in 1775 in the northwest section and the bulk of the land on the peninsula was open ground.

After the battles of Lexington and Concord on 19 April 1775, Colonial militia took the initiative and laid siege to the British occupied Boston. This siege kept the British restricted to Boston and the heights along Cooper's Hill. However, even with this restricted movement the British retained access to the sea which helped them improve troop strength, leaderships and move in additional naval warships.

The situation in the Boston area prompted British General Gage to call together his war council consisting of Generals Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne to review the situation and determine how the British

could best maintain control of the harbor and access to the sea. This review prompted the war council to decide that they need control of key terrain on Dorchester Heights and Charlestown on the northern side of Boston was critical.

British plans were put together for operations to occupy the high ground on the Charlestown peninsula, including strategic high points like Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill. British commanders were astounded on the morning of 17 June to find out the colonists had not only occupied the heights, but constricted elaborate redoubt worthy of an organized army to oppose any British advance.

The American commanders learned on 13 June of the British plans to attempt to take control of the heights on Charlestown peninsula. So on 16 June Colonel Prescott led 1,200 militia soldiers to the high grounds on Charlestown peninsula with the mission to fortify these key features. Other Militia commands joined his men on Charlestown peninsula. The plan was to seize Bunker Hill, constrict fortifications during the night and be prepared to meet the anticipated British assault.

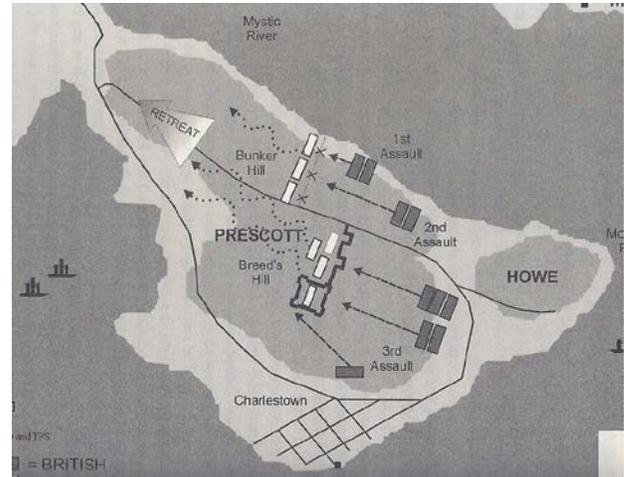
As the Militia commanders arrived, a long discussion ensued before it was decided to also put redoubts on Breed's Hill, the mound southeast of Bunker Hill. Fortifications were dug on Bunker Hill which offered more strategic value to the Americans and was easier to defend. The exact commander of this operation is unclear, however General Putnam was likely in overall command, but Colonel Prescott seems to have exercised tactical control.

As morning arrived on 17 June 1775, British General Gage ordered General Howe to attack the colonists and remove them from Charlestown Peninsula. As Howe prepared his men for the assault, British navy and artillery continued a largely ineffective bombardment that lasted much of the day.

Finally around 1:00 p.m. British soldiers landed unopposed at Moulton's Point which is on the southeastern end of the peninsula. The initial British plan was to push around the Americans open left flank along the Mystic River beach and envelop the

redoubt while a holding attack pinned the American in their fort.

However, to counter the British attack, Colonel Prescott reinforced his exposed left flank by sending soldiers to take a position behind a stone and rail fence. A breastwork of stone extended the line from where the fence ended down to the Mystic River bluff and beach area.



The fully equipped British infantry marched against the beach breastworks and John Stark's New Hampshire men in columns of four. Stark ordered his men to fire low and pick off British officers, but the Americans held off their fire until the heavy British formations stepped with 50 yards of their positions.

Stark's men were organized in three ranks, one of which was always firing, which allowed the colonists to open up deadly volleys against the British ranks. This heavy fire stalled the British primary attack which angered Howe, who personally moved forward to lead the assault against the American center at the rail fence. The heavy and accurate fire stunned the Regulars, who stopped to wage an uphill battle against a well-defended position. The British were unable to advance and were taking fearful casualties, Howe was forced to withdraw, but he reorganized to mount a second attack. The holding attack against the main redoubt did not fare any better.

The colonist defenders withstood a second British assault fifteen minutes later which was primarily

aimed against the redoubt on Breed's Hill, and it was repulsed in much the same manner.

The frustrated fully equipped British professional soldiers organized yet again and with reinforcements, launched a third push against the redoubt, but this time without heavy knapsacks and personal baggage. But at the same time the Americans were running low on ammunition when the third attack began, and at some point General Putnam famously ordered his men not to "fire until you see the white in their eyes".

With close artillery cover the British made it up to the fort and spilled into the redoubt. Desperate hand-to-hand bayonet and clubbed musket fighting ensued. Colonel Prescott barely escaped with his life. The colonists waged a fighting retreat to Bunker Hill and then, utterly exhausted, across the "neck" to the mainland.

As an outcome of this battle, the American willpower and morale soared as the hope of reconciliation and an early end to the fighting ebbed. However, undeterred by the ominous strength of the British military, the colonists demonstrated their ability to stand in the face of Europe's finest soldiers, albeit behind breastworks.

As many historians have noted, the key to the defensive action was the effective veteran leadership of Colonel Prescott and General Putnam. In turn the British realized the war would be long and bloody and for the part of a year did not launch another offensive action.

For the British this early battle was one of the bloodiest fights of the entire war, even though General Howe emerged tactically victorious.

Casualties were: British 1,154 killed and wounded of 2,500 soldiers put into the fight (or a loss of about 46% of his men). Detail analysis is 226 killed, 828 wounded. According to some credible sources 1/8 of those killed and 1/6 of those wounded during the entire war were lost at Bunker Hill.

Americans had 140 killed and 301 wounded of their total soldiers of 1,400. Most American losses occurred during the retreat from the redoubt.

Sources: A Guide to the Battles of the American Revolution by Savas and Dameron.

NEXT: Siege of Fort St. John (Canada Campaign), 4 September – 2 November 1775.

Member Birthdays

April 2014

None

May 2014

None

Current Officers

Donald Reighard – President – (928) 680-4087

Ray Lackey – Vice President – (928) 754-1941

Mike Boop – Secretary – (928) 753-7968

Ray Lackey - Treasurer – (928) 754-1941

Jimmie Bodenhamer – Registrar/Genealogist – (928) 692-6636

Michael Boop – Sergeant at Arms – (928) 753-7968

Membership

If you need assistance with a membership issue, or know someone interested in joining the NSSAR, please provide me the contact information and I will work the issue for you.

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Newsletter Editor

Hope you enjoyed this newsletter and I look forward to any comments or suggestion. Jimmie Bodenhamer, Editor, jimmieb@frontiernet.net.

Need another copy of this Newsletter? It is on our AZSSAR website link.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 1st – Chapter Newsletter Mailed

April 12th – Chapter Meeting
Mohave County Library
Lake Havasu City

April 13th – Palm Sunday

April 15th – Passover

April 18th – Good Friday

April 20th – Easter

May 11th
Mother's Day

May 17th – Chapter Meeting
Mohave Community College
Kingman

May 26th
Memorial Day

June 1st
Chapter Newsletter Mailed

June 14th
Flag Day

June 15th
Father's Day
