

# Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association  
January 2024 – Edition CLX

## Next Meeting

None scheduled at this time.

## Upcoming Events

*Important note about the official calendar below. After some discussion at a recent meeting, it is the opinion of the group that liability insurance is more likely to cover events sanctioned by the WVRA. It is our opinion that to be sanctioned the event should at the minimum be listed on this calendar. Addendum, January 2022. I discussed this issue with the insurance expert of the USV and he agrees that this is a gray area. There is some question whether the liability insurance would cover WVRA members only at sanctioned WVRA events or all events. He further agreed that publishing events in the newsletter may help to make them "official."*

### Sanctioned (per by laws)

None at this time

### Other Events recommended by WVRA members

#### July

20 – Beverly Heritage Days (tentative)

## Treasurers Report

For the time period November 1-31, 2023

Beginning Balance \$1,526.68

Deposits

None \$0.00

Debits

None \$0.00

Ending Balance \$1,526.68

As reported by Rick Byrd, Treasurer/Secretary  
WVRA

## Where Things Stand

As of this day, January 5, we have no meeting scheduled yet. At some point we will have to conduct the annual meeting to elect officers and discuss the future of the WVRA.

In response to the last two newsletters, some members have stepped forward to run for office in 2024.

President – Art Dodds

Vice president – Vacant

Secretary/Treasurer – Rick Byrd

### Unit Reps

1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia – vacant

25<sup>th</sup> Virginia – vacant

Artillery – David Judy

TASAS – Pam Dodds

Webmaster – Tim Glaser

Newsletter – Chuck Critchfield

I have only heard from two officers not willing to run for re-election.

If we do not have sufficient interest to elect a slate of officers, then the membership will have to discuss the future of the association. A list of current officers can be found near the end of this newsletter.

One member responded by suggesting that because of lagging interest, the WVRA should be disbanded, any current membership dues refunded and remaining funds be donated to a preservation organization.

## Insurance

The new limited liability insurance policy went into effect on April 23, 2023. If you need a copy of the insurance certificate, please contact Secretary/ Treasurer Rick Byrd. Only current 2023 members are covered. Additionally, you must abide by the by-laws of the WVRA to qualify.

## Membership

It is time to renew membership in the WVRA for 2024. I have attached a membership renewal form to this email. Dues remain \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families. Family memberships are restricted to parents and children up to college age.

Dues are needed to cover the cost of the liability insurance policy, mailing the newsletter once a year, unit money and miscellaneous expenses. If dues are not received by May 1, the WVRA by-laws stipulate that you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

If you would like the newsletter sent to you through the U.S. Mail, the cost is an additional \$15 to cover the mailing cost.

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## Upcoming Events

For the complete list, see above. The following is any additional information submitted to the editor for the events listed above.

### Beverly Heritage Days

Beverly Heritage Day is being planned for July 20, 2024. This will be a timeline event, with all relevant historical periods welcome for living history or programming. The event is organized by Beverly Heritage Center, and WVRA is again asked to sponsor (help host) the event. Anyone interested in helping with planning (occasional virtual meetings) please contact Phyllis Baxter [phyllisbwv@gmail.com](mailto:phyllisbwv@gmail.com) or Marisa Terwilliger [info@beverlyheritagecenter.org](mailto:info@beverlyheritagecenter.org). We will share more soon about plans and special features for the event - please put it on your calendars now!

### Clarksburg History Museum

The Clarksburg History Museum plans to resume its Civil War tours in the spring. Once I have any details, I will publish. Pam and Art Dodds have been the contact for civilian impressions. Keith Kopshina is the contact for military impressions. I can provide general information.

The Clarksburg History Museum is seeking a reenactor who does a first-person Stonewall Jackson impression. Interested parties should contact Marsha Viglianco at [daycareflowers@aol.com](mailto:daycareflowers@aol.com).

### Clarksburg Cemetery Request

I was contacted by Shaun Jedju who has been involved with restoring cemeteries in Harrison County including the cemetery where John Carlile, Nathan Goff and other Civil War veterans are buried. He is seeking a reenactor with knowledge of Civil War era burials, burial customs, and related knowledge. He can be contacted at [shaunmjedju@hcwvc-pa.org](mailto:shaunmjedju@hcwvc-pa.org).

## Event Reviews Other Features

### Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

The fine photo of the Wilder Brigade Monument at Chickamauga in the December issue of the *Dispatch* jogged my memory. John Thomas Wilder, later the brilliant and innovative leader of the "Lightning Brigade," began the war in West Virginia. As Lt. Col. of the 17th Indiana Infantry, Wilder was detailed to Camp Elkwater in Randolph County, by August 1861. Wilder's regiment was active in fortifying, picket duty, and scouting. In September, they would clash with Confederates under Gen. Robert E. Lee around Cheat Mountain.

On September 13, members of the 17th Indiana were scouting near Elkwater when they shot and killed Lt. Col. John A. Washington C.S.A., General Lee's Aide-de-Camp. It was a severe loss: Washington, the last of his family to own historic Mt. Vernon, was Lee's relative and tentmate. Lt. Col. Wilder was present when Washington's body was carried to a "grand guard" post where his identity was established.

Lt. Col. Wilder's 17th Indiana Infantry fought at the Battle of Greenbrier River (Pocahontas County) on October 3, 1861, before moving to Kentucky in November. While in West Virginia, Wilder was introduced to leaders who would later factor in his extraordinary career, among them William Rosecrans and Rutherford B. Hayes.

W. Hunter Lesser  
Elkins, West Virginia

## For Sale

From Bryan Cokeley

With regret, I am resigned to getting out of the hobby. 😞  
I just don't seem to have the impetus to get to events with Hampton having left the state. He was in Texas; he now lives in Richmond. (Apparently, he took to heart those calls of "On to Richmond!") He turns 30 in May. He was 10 when we went to our first School of the Soldier. The passage of time. Maybe we all added 5 years this past year.  
It seems wasteful for me to sit on all of this reenactment gear. I will keep my musket. I can make some young person a great deal on everything else – **a whole kit to get started**

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**in the hobby. If you know of someone interested, please let me know.**

Miss everyone! Best,  
Bryan (Cokeley formerly of the 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia)

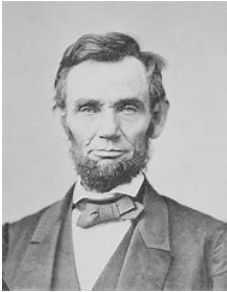
New Civil War History of Harrison County  
*A Civil War History Of Harrison County, West Virginia  
1961-65; Harrison County, Virginia in the Civil War  
1856-65. By Pete Taylor*

This new book focuses on the years just prior to and during the war between the states. Despite the rich history of the region, no book had ever been written solely focusing on this area for that time period. Therefore, I undertook the task of researching and creating this account. As a resident of Harrison County, I had access to local historians and resources.

The book is available through Amazon for \$28.00. The manuscript has been donated to the Harrison County Historical Society and all proceeds go to support that organization.  
July 2022

## They Said It (or didn't)

Quotes, misquotes and fabrications attributed to the famous, nearly famous, not famous and infamous.



***"Don't believe everything you read on the Internet just because there's a photo with, a quote next to it."***

- Abraham Lincoln, February 30, 1866  
Google shareholders meeting

*"Without slavery, the problems between the sections could probably have been worked out by the ordinary give-and-take of politics; with slavery, they became insoluble. So, in 1861 the North and the South went to war, destroying one America and beginning the building of another which is not even yet complete."*

- Bruce Catton, The Civil War, p. 9

*"Yes, I know it was about slavery. I'm from the South, of course I know it's about slavery."*

- Nikki Haley, last month after the controversy over her earlier statements about the cause of the Civil War.

Other Sites

American Battlefield Trust - [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org)  
Beverly Heritage Center -

[www.beverlyheritagecenter.org](http://www.beverlyheritagecenter.org)

Mason Dixon Civil War Roundtable -

[www.wvmasondixoncwr.org/](http://www.wvmasondixoncwr.org/)

Link to Clarksburg History Museum -

<https://clarksburgmuseum.wixsite.com/history>

Battle of Gettysburg Podcast -

Addressing Gettysburg podcast -

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation -

[www.ShenandoahAtWar.org](http://www.ShenandoahAtWar.org)

## 2023 WVRA Officers

**Andrew Valentine - President**

**Art Dodds - Vice President**

**Rick Byrd - Secretary/Treasurer**

**Pam Dodds - (TASAS) Unit Representative**

**Chuck Critchfield - Unit Rep (1st W. Va. Infantry)**

**Bill Brisendine - Unit Rep (25th Va. Infantry)**

**Dave Judy - Unit Rep (artillery)**

**Webmaster - Tim Glaser**

**Editor - Chuck Critchfield**

**Note - Webmaster and Editor are non-voting members of the Executive Committee.**

**Unit Field Officers**

**(Continue in effect until further notice. See minutes of January, 2022 meeting)**

ATTENTION - Please do not send any correspondence to the former PO Box in Buckhannon. Membership information can be sent to me. Remember you must be a member of record to qualify for membership benefits. To be covered under the liability insurance policy purchased by the WVRA, you must be a member. Karl Mulac is the administrator of the WVRA-TASAS page. I continue to use the WVRA-TASAS page to post announcements as it has been the page getting the most use.

As newsletter editor, I encourage submissions from members or readers, that are related to American history. I retain the right as editor to make a final decision on the content of this publication. Abusive or political submissions will not be published.

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## Editor's Corner

### The Editor's chance to speak

**THANK YOU** to Hunter Lesser, Rick Byrd, Phyllis Baxter, Pam Dodds, Tim Glaser and anyone else who made contributions to this issue of the Dispatch.

The information contributed by Hunter Lesser was very interesting. I didn't realize that Colonel John Wilder had such strong ties to the war in West Virginia. I know a lot of our members are not that familiar with the war in the western campaigns. Not many West Virginia Regiments or Virginia regiments fought out west. The Stonewall Brigade and the Iron Brigade are well-known brigades from the Eastern theater. But Wilder's Lightning Brigade is one of the more famous, hard-fighting units from the Army of the Cumberland. And in the Chickamauga Campaign, the Lightning Brigade earned its reputation as one of the finest brigades of the war.

**IT IS TIME** to elect WVRA officers for the coming year (2024). Please consider running. Let me or another officer (see list above) if you are interested. If you are a current officer who is NOT willing to run again, please let me or another officer now that. I have heard nothing about any upcoming meetings. Somebody may have to step forward to schedule a meeting.

**IS THE CIVIL WAR OVER?** – It has been a while since I have written about current events being influenced by the events of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. But once again, the flap over Nikki Haley's comments about the cause of the Civil War demonstrate that the conflict still resonates in the national consciousness. Then the media drug up another politician whose comments about the cause of the war was not related to slavery. I think it was Senator Josh Hawley from Missouri. The War continues to reverberate in our National memory.

**ANY MEMBER** who wants to contribute to the *Trans-Allegheny Dispatch* is encouraged to do so. I get very few items from members. Anyone who has an opposite point of view to mine, I encourage them to respond. I certainly have expressed some opinions that others might want to rebut. So, I am relying on those active at events for event reviews.

**ADDRESS** – The WVRA has a new official address. The new address is WVRA, PO Box 227, Beverly, WV, 26253. However, any correspondence about dues, membership, newsletter, etc., should be sent to me. THE OLD BUCKHANNON PO BOX IS EXPIRING. If any mail comes to the Beverly PO Box, the Beverly Heritage folks will contact me.

**IF YOU WANT TO KNOW** who is a member of the WVRA and who is not, please ask Rick Byrd or myself. We have had folks claiming membership, when in fact they are not members. I usually publish the membership list in the newsletter for a few months for all to see. But some members are uncomfortable with the list being published.

**IF YOU WANT** to rebut anything I have said, feel free to send me something.

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This newsletter is available free to members by email. It will be mailed by US Mail for \$15 per year fee. The views expressed here are not necessarily the views of the WVRA.

WVRA website - [wvra.org](http://wvra.org)  
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[ccritch608@yahoo.com](mailto:ccritch608@yahoo.com)

*"We tend to create stories that appeal to us. Then we impose those stories on the past."*

- A Wallace Collection video produced on the 500th anniversary of the battle of Agincourt -found on You Tube

*"History is dangerous. It goes after our myths and our identities."*

- Brig. Gen. (ret) Ty Seidule after receiving death threats for writing about history

*"The lack of a sense of history is the damnation of the modern world."*

- Robert Penn Warren

*All history is revisionist. By its very nature, the moment it is committed to memory it has been revised.*

- Paraphrased from several historians

*"The People made their recollection fit in with their suffering"*

-Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War

*"History and memory aren't the same thing."*

- Me