

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2020 - August - Edition VIII

Upcoming Events

A note from the Editor

I have noted on this schedule the events that have notified me, that their event is canceled. If you are interested in any event on this schedule, I suggest **you contact the event** or the contact person listed to determine if the event is canceled or not canceled.

Civil War Sponsored

None at this time

Sanctioned

None at this time

Other Events recommended by WVRA members

Fort Mulligan - (CANCELED) August 14-15 at Petersburg. Contact Dave Judy 304-749-7957

Battle of Dry Creek - (NO DECISION YET) August 14 - 16 at White Sulphur Springs W.Va
<https://battleofdroopmountain.com/2019-battle-of-dry-creek>

Burlington (Apple Harvest Festival) - October 3-4. Contact Dave Judy for more information 304-749-7957

Droop Mountain --October -11
<https://battleofdroopmountain.com/2019-battle-of-dry-creek>

Guyandotte -- Nov 5-8, 2020 (tentative) contact Roger House for more information

Other Events

Gettysburg - To be announced, 2020 - Gettysburg at the Daniel Lady Farm, info@GBPA.org (see below)

Cedar Mountain (Slaughter on the Mountain) - August 8 and 9. A Chris Anders event. **(POSTPONED until 2021)**

Cedar Creek, Oct. 17 and 18, 2020 - Middletown, Va.

Fredericksburg, Dec. 11-13, 2020,
Fredericksburg, Va.

2021

Chancellorsville May 1-2, 2021 - NPS
Event

Other Time Periods

Timeline - November 7-8, Troops and Trains. RR Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg,

PA. <https://rrmuseumpa.org/events/>

WWII - August 20-22, D-Day Reenactment, Conneaut, Ohio (SEE BELOW) Canceled.

<http://www.ddayohio.us>

Next Meeting

No meeting is scheduled at this time.

Liability Certificate

A PDF copy of the WVRA's liability or insurance certificate was emailed to members with an email address on April 6. That email also contained the April newsletter. If you have any questions, please contact me at ccritch608@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report

June 1 through June 30, 2020

Beginning balance	\$2,912.34
Credits	
Membership	\$ 15.00
Debits	
Ending Balance	\$2,927.34

Submitted by Jack Rush

Upcoming Events

Gettysburg (update)

The Gettysburg reenactment at the Daniel Lady farm east of Gettysburg is still scheduled according to the website of the Gettysburg Battlefield

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Preservation Association. The reenactment is scheduled for August 21-23. As with any activity during these Covid times, there will be some guidelines for participating in the reenactment.

From the GPBA website (Gpba.org/event)

Dry Creek and Droop

I have made enquiries about Dry Creek and Droop and it appears at this time that neither is canceled. But I would suggest that if you are interested, that you check with them before driving to the events. I also hear that these events are still being discussed by the organizers.

Event Reviews

Backyard Reenacting or A Rebuilding Year



Figure 1 An impressive "kit." His Majesty's foot soldier, James Barnes guarding the wall.

We all know that this reenacting season has been a wash pretty much. Linda and I decided to regard this as a "rebuilding year" and just work on our impressions. In an effort to keep our skills sharp and see what needs repaired or improved, we have set aside an area in our backyard to set up a camp, cook over an open fire, etc. So far, this has just involved our 18th Century impressions, but I plan to continue this as a series. I have included some pics with this note, but have more on my Facebook page if you are so inclined to check that out.

If you have friends with whom you feel comfortable socializing in this pandemic atmosphere, you might set up a camp with them. Let's all share what creative things we are doing to keep the hobby going!



Figure 2 Linda Barnes enjoying a meal at "Fort Barnes" (aka her backyard).

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come home tonight. Who will those in danger call...the police? They won't be there.

Other Features

Letters to the Editor

More on Removing Statues

George Orwell in 1948 wrote the novel "1984". Mr. Orwell got the ideas right, but he was off some with the year. We are watching the destruction of our history by a mindless group of anarchists bent on bringing down this country (using Covid-19) as a smoke screen. George Orwell wrote: *The most effective way to destroy a people is deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history. Who every controls the past controls the future.*"

We have all witnessed the removal of statues by a mob of anarchists bent on obliterating our understanding of history. Whether it be George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, U.S. Grant,

Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, etc. There was a book written by Saul Alinsky "Rules for Radicals". It is a blueprint for what is going on in our nation. Under the tragic loss of human life, we are witnessing the shredding of the Bill of Rights, the U.S. Constitution, and the trampling on the graves of those men and women who throughout this nation's history have bled and died to preserve this grand experiment in Democracy.

The police, the first in line to protect us all are being vilified by the "press, etc." Every day my son puts on the uniform of a police officer. I once saw him but on his body armor. Then it hit me, he may not

Shakespeare said: "The evil the men lives after them, but the good is often interred with their bones." No man or woman is perfect, we all have our flaws, but we strive to overcome them, learn and make this country a little bit better when we shuffle of this mortal coil. A nation that destroys its past has no future, because there is no past to learn from. The Marxists under the banner "Black Lives Matter" will not care about the black on black or black violence in Chicago every weekend. In Chicago this past weekend a 1 year old black child was shot in his stroller. BLM said nothing. Don't believe me? Look up their founding charter.

In 2020, it is hard to imagine the thought process of those early founders of this country. Slavery was too often viewed as "that other problem". It took the death of 600,000 human beings to correct the omission of the Declaration of Independence that Jefferson had to remove "that offensive passage in the Declaration of Independence so that the South would sign the Declaration. I have always told school children when I did a living history, that's when the civil war began in 1776.

When they began to tear down statues of Lee, Jackson, and others, I said nothing. Then they came for the statues of Washington, Grant, and Lincoln, and I said nothing. Then they started burning churches and religious statues, I said nothing.

Now they are coming for me..... will anybody be left to say anything?

John F. Ziolkowski, USN, HM2
(and a WVRA member - Editor)

Whispers in the Grass

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For the Editor:

I enjoyed the book review in WVRA June issue about "**Whispers in the Grass**" by Brokhausen. It hit home. Some years ago as a symposium speaker in Lynchburg, VA, I got to spend an evening one-on-one with Maj. John Plaster, a member of the same SOG group, Special Forces Hall of Fame, who served in Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia. His career was a model for the video game "Call of Duty: Black Ops." Known as the "Ultimate Sniper," he teaches long distance shooting to the military, etc. He also wrote an interesting book, *Sharpshooting in the Civil War*.

I took Plaster to dinner, and we agreed to meet at the entrance of our hotel that overlooked the valley, with a spectacular view of the Blue Ridge. A line of benches were just outside the entrance, but no Plaster there. Some distance beyond, at the brink of the hill, he sat on a solitary bench that best commanded the terrain. Just where I figured he'd be.

Stay sane & safe,

Hunter (Lesser)
(and a WVRA member - editor)

ATTENTION MEMBERS

As I mentioned on the Facebook page, I invite members to send me a story on your relatives who fought in the Civil War -- or any war in particular. This was suggested by Tim Glaser and I think it is a great idea. Also, as I have done in the past with ZERO results, send me your favorite reenacting story. Or a story of your favorite reenactment.

-- Chuck Critchfield, editor

Bob Dylan

An extract from the Wall St. Journal in a column by Peggy Noonan about Bob Dylan (the first songwriter to win the Nobel Prize for Literature):

"In his autobiography, 'Chronicles,' Bob Dylan writes of how one night, when he was starting out playing the clubs in New York in the 1960's, he stumbled on a man who'd been stabbed to death. The blood made interesting patterns in the snow. This reminded Mr. Dylan of old photos of the Civil War. He began to study the war, deeply. Its meaning would shape him: "Back there, America was put on the cross, died and was resurrected. There was nothing synthetic about it. The godawful truth of that would be the all-encompassing template behind everything that I would write.'"

--Peggy Noonan, *Wall Street Journal*, June 20-21, 2020

- Submitted by Hunter Lesser

Other Time Periods

Nothing submitted or to report.

For Sale

Tim Koch (or Cook?) a reenactor in the Morgantown area is selling a large group of Civil War reenacting equipment from weapons to clothing. As of October, he still had items remaining. For more information call Tim at 304-906-552.

FREE!!!

Two children's camp dresses, two teenage camp dresses, one adult camp dress (size 14). Contact Porter Stiles through Instant Messenger or Facebook for pictures and further information. FREE!!!!

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"They Said It (or didn't)"

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

-- Abraham Lincoln, February 31, 1866

"At the bottom the coming change simply meant that the infinite ferment of the industrial revolution was about to work its way with a tremendously energetic and restless people who had a virgin continent to exploit. One difficulty was that two very different societies had developed in America, one in the North and the other in the South, which would adjust themselves to the industrial age in very different ways. Another difficulty was that the differences between these two societies were most infernally complicated by the existence in the South of the institution of chattel slavery. 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 in the American Heritage Picture History of THE CIVIL WAR

"To Jeff Davis

*"may he be set afloat on a
boat without compass or rudder
then that any contents be swallowed
by a shark the shark by a whale
whale in the devils belly and the
devil in hell the gates locked the key lost
and further*

*may he be put in the north west
corner with a south east wind blowing
ashes in his eyes for all
eternity"*

- Author unknown. Found on a building in Winchester used as a hospital by both armies during the war. Discovered

during renovations of said building. **"The Original Civil War Buff."**

"Our nation is confronting painful chapters of our past, and there can be no single solution for how to grapple with those legacies. Some locally elected officials have, as our democracy grants them authority to do, decided to remove Confederate monuments standing in public squares and civic settings. Others have chosen to relocate them or augment them with contextual interpretation. We continue to urge, as we have previously, that these decisions must be made in thoughtful ways, understanding that taking a historical resource and placing it in a different historical context is rarely an advisable course of action. Further, we believe true learning, healing and growth require more education and interpretation, more discussion and hard conversations, and more preservation --- never less."

- Jim Lighthizer, President American Battlefield Trust.

Other Sites

American Battlefield Trust - www.battlefields.org

Beverly Heritage Center -

www.beverlyheritagecenter.org

Mason Dixon Civil War Roundtable -

www.wvmasondixoncwrt.org/

Link to Clarksburg History Museum -

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

Battle of Gettysburg Podcast -

WVRA Officers 2020

Jim Barnes - President

Ken Connell - Vice President

Jack Rush - Secretary/Treasurer

Diane Tennant - Unit Rep (TASAS)

Mark Tennant - Unit Rep (1st W. Va. Infantry)

Bill Brisendine - Unit Rep (25th Virginia Infantry)

Dave Judy - Unit Rep (artillery)

Webmaster - Peter Baxter

Editor - Chuck Critchfield

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ATTENTION - Please do not send any correspondence to the 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. The other group is labeled simply West Virginia Reenactors Association. Tonya Daft is the administrator on the West Virginia Reenactors Association page. Please address all questions to her about that page. I am not sure who is administrator to 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.

Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

THANK YOU to members Peter Baxter, Jim Barnes, John Ziolkowski, Hunter Lesser and Jack Rush for their contributions to this edition.

WITHOUT REENACTMENTS this newsletter becomes more and more a collection of information and opinions about American history. As I have said many times before, this newsletter tends to have a lot about the Federal side of the American Civil War a little about other parts of American history. I would welcome history or view points from other eras, sides or people.

GETTYSBURG - A wise sage once told me, avoid Gettysburg National Park around July 4. It is too crowded. And in the past few years another reason has emerged to avoid Gettysburg on Independence Day.

Once again some Facebook fool has fooled others into believing that an organization was planning to protest at Gettysburg on July 4. This organization is one that is blamed for many things, including anti-American demonstrations. So that attracts others from the opposite side of the political spectrum. Many individuals carrying firearms of all description were prowling around the National Park this past weekend...and apparently bothering some visitors wearing t-shirts showing slogans they did not like. Just another reason to avoid Gettysburg around July 4th.

STONEWALL JACKSON'S STATUE - A third request to have the statue moved from the lawn of the Harrison County Courthouse was made in late July. Earlier this summer the Harrison County Commission voted 2-1 in favor of keeping the statue where it is. One of those votes in favor lost his re-election bid. I would recommend that if you have strong feelings about this situation, you make them know to the Harrison County Commission. This issue is not going away.

THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST has been under some pressure to help save monuments. It is however an organization dedicated to saving battlefields. Primarily the Civil War, but in the past few years it has saved battlefields from the War of 1812 and the American Revolution. But to date they have shied away from preserving monuments.

In 2017 the ABT sent a questionnaire to its members about jumping into monument preservation and the majority wanted to stay with preserving land.

I would recommend that if you can, read on page 2 of the ABT's magazine **Hallowed Ground** in the summer 2020 issue. ABT President Jim Lighthizer presents an editorial arguing that we should be preserving more history and not less. He concludes with the following:

"History should not be glossed over or erased. It must be considered and confronted in appropriate settings and contexts – museums and battlefields among them – where honest and unflinching background can be provided. The American Battlefield Trust is committed to preserving the full scope of America's story – honestly and impartially, the heroic and the painful. Our irreplaceable hallowed battlefields offer tangible links to our past so that we can teach future generations of the cost – but also, ultimately, of the value – of freedom and justice."

A LOT HAS BEEN SAID about the Lost Cause version of Civil War history. I see it popping up in many discussions about "erasing history" and tearing down monuments. But what exactly are the basic tenets of the Lost Cause? According to historian Edward H. Bonekemper III, in his book the "Myth of the Lost Cause," they are:

1) Slavery was a benevolent institution but was dying on its own before Northern radicals waged war on their own countrymen to eliminate it at once.

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2) The protection of states' rights, not slavery, was the central cause of secession.

3) The Confederacy faced such great odds that it had no chance of winning the war.

4) Robert E. Lee, who nearly overcame those odds, was one of the greatest generals of history.

5) General James Longstreet was responsible for the Confederacy's loss at Gettysburg and thus the loss of the war.

6) General Ulysses Grant was an incompetent "butcher" who won the war with brutality and superior numbers

7) The North prevailed by waging unprecedented 'total war' against the South.

The Lost Cause was pushed by Jubal Early around the end of the war and of course he ended up in a very influential position after the war. From his position as president of the Southern Historical Society and frequent contributor to their papers and publications, he advanced his version of the history of the war.

HOW FAR will this go? There is pressure to change anything in the public space connected to slavery. Some suggesting that names of famous Americans who owned slaves or support slavery, be erased from public spaces. I believe 48 of the 55 West Virginia counties are named after a human being. Many of the names, if not all, are Americans. Many who owned slaves. Would we accomplish anything be changing these names?

PET PEEVE - I continually see posts on Facebook, normally part of a post that is promoting the benevolence of a Southern leader and the racism of Abraham Lincoln. Usually it says something to the effect that Lincoln did not want to free the slaves until forced to do so. Then the post argues that this is a revelation that is being covered up by the media, the opposite political party, the deep state, mainstream historians or whatever whipping boy the poster is attacking.

Make no mistake loyal readers, Lincoln was true to his party's platform (platforms were important in those days). And that platform stated that slavery would remain untouched in the 15 states where it existed prior to the 1860 election. But that same platform was vehemently opposed to expanding slavery into the territories or any new state. There is nothing new in this; nothing surprising; nothing has changed in 150 years.

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This newsletter is available free to members by email. It will be mailed by US Mail for \$10 per year fee. The views expressed here are not necessarily The views of the WVRA.

WVRA website - wvra.org

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"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

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

- Robert Penn Warren



Figure 3 - "LOOK AT JACKSON THERE -- STANDING LIKE A STONE WALL"