

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2015 – Edition 8 – June

Upcoming Events

More information will be added later if made available to the editor

[WVRA Sponsored Events](#)

Rich Mountain – July 10-12

<http://www.richmountain.org/reen15/reen15prelim.html>

Droop Mountain – October 9-11

Droop Clean-up – August 8

[Events Recommended by WVRA members](#)

Old Bedford Village – June 12-14 (USV supported)

[eventhttp://www.oldbedfordvillage.com/events.php](http://www.oldbedfordvillage.com/events.php)

McConnellsville, Ohio – July 10-12 (Contact Ralph McCready for more information)

Bulltown Heritage Days – July 26. (Contact Sam Krafft for more information)

Fort Mulligan Day – August 15, Petersburg, WV

Dry Creek – August 14-16, White Sulphur Springs

Carnifex Ferry – Sept. 11-13 (FULL IMMERSION EVENT???)

Zoar, Ohio – Sept. 19-20

Locust Grove – October 23-25, Walkersville, Va. (ANV max effort event)

<http://www.oldbedfordvillage.com/events.php>

Guyandotte – Oct. 30-Nov. 1

Other events

Matewan, W. Va. – June 19-21

St. Marys, W. Va. – Sept. 4-6

Logan State Park – Sept. 25-27

June Newsletters

The members have been very generous in their contributions to the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch in the past few weeks. As a result of your generosity, it is necessary to publish a mid-June edition. In this edition, I report the required information (minutes, treasurer's report, upcoming events, etc.) and catch up on some information sent to me in the past couple months that hasn't made it into the *Dispatch* yet. Reports from the Grand Review, Phillippi and Memorial Day events will be reported then.

Next Meeting

At Rich Mountain, Saturday July 11 at Rich Mountain reenactment. Time and location to be determined.

May Meeting Minutes

PHILIPPI REENACTMENT ON SATURDAY, MAY 30TH.

President Mark Tennant called meeting to order at Pavilion near Covered Bridge at 2:30 PM. Dispensed with reading of last meeting's minutes as apparently misplaced. Tim Glaser gave Treasurer's report balance of \$3,500.00 including \$1500.00 Droop grant.

Chris Johnson discussed 25th Virginia's membership with 2nd Battalion Army of Northern Virginia (ANV). 2nd Battalion will be making Droop maximum effort. 25th has to attend 2 ANV events this year with at least 5 members to become regular members of ANV. Jeff Goff has insurance cards for 25th members.

President Mark Tennant reminded all present that everyone needs to pre-register for Rich by July 1st and will have registration paid by WVRA. (editor's correction – WVRA will pay early registration fee). He also asked everyone who is coming to Droop clean-up on Saturday Aug. 8th to tell their Unit Rep. so we will have count for meal WVRA provides those who help with clean-up. Those who want can camp overnight at Park.

Went over future events- June 20 unveiling of Francis Pierpont statue at Wheeling; June 5-7 Farmer Days at Union in Mercer County. See Chris Johnson: Dry Creek Aug. 14, 15th: Ft. Mulligan, Petersburg, WV - Aug. 15th.

President Mark Tennant reported on two recent events, the Grand Review on May 17. About 1,500 Union reenactors marched down Pennsylvania Ave. Seven members of 1st WV and 4 members of 25th galvanized as Federals marched in the parade. Mark hosted Lantern

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Tour at Grafton National Cemetery on May 22, over 100 spectators attended and 14 WVRA members helped with the tour.

Next meeting at Rich Mountain reenactment on Saturday afternoon after battle in July at a shady spot near camps.

Mark will contact Chuck Critchfield to check on membership of Thurman- said he is listed as General member when he is actually member of 25th. (editor's note – Thurman registered as a General Member, but that can be changed.)

Also Dave Eubank came to meeting and rejoined 1st, paid his membership. Dave indicated his father had recently passed away. Mark expressed condolences on behalf of the WVRA.

Ken Connell is looking for someone to donate a Union sack coat for display at Stonewall Jackson Dam to be used on a mannequin display of CW engineers.

Rich Mountain

You are cordially invited to participate in the Battle of Rich Mountain reenactment, July 10, 11, 12 at the Rich Mountain Battlefield Civil War Site near Beverly, West Virginia. With a focus on history and small town welcome, this is an event you won't want to miss. NEW on the schedule -- Tower Street Stringband will present Civil War era music after the Saturday skirmish.

Early registration is only \$5 through May 23. You may register individually (indicate your unit on the form.)

For more information and on-line registration see:
<http://richmountain.org/reen15/reen15prelim.html>

WVRA paid 2015 members - your registration fee will be paid by the organization if you sign up by July 1. Please indicate this and put 0 for registration owed on your registration form. You

are responsible for your own meal costs or late fees. PLEASE pre-register so we know how many to prepare for.

Everyone - we are looking for interesting living history scenarios to share with our visitors on Saturday afternoon. If you have an impression you can do, or the idea for one, please share that with us for planning leading up to the event. (Contact Phyllis Baxter or myself).

See you there!

*Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation and
West Virginia Reenactors Association*

Droop Mountain

Droop will be held at its normal weekend October 9th through the 11th, while the leaves are in their full glory in the Greenbrier Valley. The WVRA voted overwhelmingly to hold the event, so please overwhelmingly support and volunteer to help the event. *Droop Mountain clean-up* is scheduled for August 8. Please let your unit rep (see list below) know if you are coming.

Mark Tennant reports that the **Francis Pierpont** statue will be unveiled at Wheeling's Independence Hall on June 20th this year. As the June 20th date is a Saturday, maybe some of the 1st should attend. Mark wants to know if anyone is interested. Please contact Mark Tennant soon.

WVRA member Jenny Smith was participating in a 'promote West Virginia tourism event' on Saturday, June 20 from 10 am to 4 pm at the I-79 rest stop at the Pennsylvania state line north of Morgantown. She has had to cancel and is seeking a replacement. You can bring a display but mostly it is interacting with the travelers at the Welcome center. She has requested that you contact her at 304-288-5702.

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Editor's note – I recently attended a family wedding in the Confederacy. Charlotte, N. C. to be exact. While there, my first cousin, Bill Barnard, discovered this marker ironically on April 24, 2015, exactly 150 years after the original event took place. It marks the spot of the last Confederate Cabinet meeting. The marker is on a sidewalk in the busy downtown area.

B&O Railroad Museum

By Howard Swint, Sunday Gazette-Mail

April 19, 2015

Submitted by Mark Tennant

BALTIMORE — Does West Virginia exist because of a private railroad that originated in Maryland? And did just one viaduct on that railroad in Preston County determine the outcome of the Civil War?

Those questions and many more about antebellum western Virginia are explored in the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore.

The museum is a restored railroad roundhouse where a perfectly balanced center turntable still allows vintage locomotives to be repaired and set on alternate tracks with the pull of a rope.

It is a marvel in and of itself, but the rolling stock is the big draw to the museum. On display are some of the earliest transportation vehicles in American history — and most have ties to western Virginia.

There is a replica of a Conestoga wagon that once plied the Great Wagon Road down the Shenandoah Valley through the Eastern Panhandle, and a restored stage coach from the National Road Stage Company that carried passengers from Baltimore to Wheeling, on the nation's first interstate highway.

For railroad aficionados, some of the earliest locomotives are preserved as original equipment — as the B&O was the nation's first commercial rail carrier with its mainline from Baltimore to Wheeling and a spur from Grafton to Parkersburg.

But it is the exhibit "The War Came by Train," commemorating the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, that significantly broadens the museum's experience, including for children.

American history buffs of every stripe will be drawn to the various exhibits that are richly detailed and rigorously researched, in keeping with the high standards of the Smithsonian Institution, which co-sponsors the exhibit.

For West Virginians it should be nothing less than a pilgrimage, as western Virginia's critical role in the Union effort is a common thread throughout the entire exhibit.

One display shows how the B&O telegraph line — a technological marvel in its own right — sent news of John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry almost instantaneously to Washington, resulting in a quick response from then-Col. Robert E. Lee of the U.S. Marines.

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Another display is devoted to the Blockhouse, a raised hexagonal fortification that was hailed as a “force multiplier,” due to a field report that stated “a single company of infantry could hold off an entire regiment of cavalry as long as it did not have artillery.”

The first blockhouse was deployed adjacent to the Tray Run Viaduct on the B&O mainline near Rowlesburg, a massive iron bridge whose strategic importance was so great then-Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee stated its destruction would be “worth to me an army.”

Gen. Stonewall Jackson’s Great Train Raid of 1861 in Martinsburg is chronicled whereby 56 locomotives and 386 railcars were either destroyed or disassembled and transported down the Valley Pike by horse and oxen for the Confederate cause.

That raid was so devastating the B&O was forced to accelerate an advanced design and construction program for replacement locomotives, the first of which, the Thatcher Perkins, launched in 1863, survived the war and is now displayed inside the roundhouse.

Yet another exhibit profiles the 1864 Greenback Raid on one of the B&O mainline passenger trains by the fabled Mosby’s Rangers in Duffields. It is considered the most lucrative of the war when Confederate forces commandeered \$173,000 and pocketed \$2,000 each.

But perhaps the most compelling story of all is the B&O Railroad itself.

Conceived out of economic desperation by Baltimore civic leaders who feared they’d lose the race for western commerce to the C&O Canal, they embarked upon one of the biggest economic gambles of their generation.

With the ceremonial laying of the first stone in Baltimore on July 4, 1828, by Charles Carroll, the last remaining signatory to the Declaration of Independence, the railroad would take 25 years to construct to its charter’s terminus in Wheeling in 1853.

And when completed, it resulted in the most technologically advanced transportation system in the world, rendering both the National Road and the still-under-construction C&O Canal obsolete and giving Baltimore direct access to the all-important Ohio River.

Its physical construction techniques revolutionized engineering and brought economic prosperity to virtually every town and city it served, especially in northwestern Virginia.

One display includes an antebellum photograph of Martinsburg’s roundhouse where the B&O’s new iron-constructed pot hopper railcars are on display, heralding the opening of western Virginia’s coalfields to Eastern markets.

So sweeping were the railroad’s industrial and economic advances that historians have stated they were tantamount to the nation’s moon shot a century later.

As to whether the successful defense of the Tray Run viaduct in Preston County — then the largest in the world and featured in the London Times — determined the outcome of the Civil War is hard to say, but its importance to the Union effort earned the mainline the moniker “Lincoln’s Lifeline.”

And as to whether West Virginia owes its very statehood to the B&O Railroad? Probably — but that’s difficult to conclude. What is certain is that the railroad and the viaduct are forever memorialized on the seal of the governor and the reverse side of the Great Seal of West Virginia. “The War Came By Train” exhibit at the B&O Railroad Museum

WHEN: Exhibit runs through Dec. 30. Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday

WHERE: 901 W. Pratt St., Baltimore

COST: Museum admission free for members; nonmember admission is \$18 for adults, \$16 for seniors (60 and older), \$12 for children (2-12)

INFO: For more information, visit www.borail.org/ or call the museum at 410-752-2490.

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WVRA Officers 2015

President – Mark Tennant
Vice President – Bill Brisendine
Treasurer – Tim Glaser
Secretary – Jack Rush
Newsletter editor - Chuck Critchfield*
Website – Peter Baxter*
1st W. Va. Rep – Chuck Critchfield
25th Va. Rep – Chris Johnson
1st Va. Cavalry – John Brasuk
Artillery – Sam and Connie Krafft
TASAS – Diane Tennant

* Non-voting member of executive board

Registration Fees – WVRA Events

By vote of the membership, the WVRA will pay for any member, who registers for a WVRA sponsored event. The WVRA will reimburse at the EARLY registration rate. Members will be responsible for any amount over and above the EARLY registration rate and any other costs such as meals. Members must register to be eligible. Walk-ons will not be reimbursed. PLEASE SEE INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT REGISTERING FOR RICH MOUNTAIN.

Editor's Corner

Thanks to Chris Johnson, Ron Wenig, Jim Barnes, Mark Tennant and anyone else for contributions to this issue. Welcome back to Dave Eubank and Greg Watterson who have renewed memberships.

My apologies to those folks who sent me pictures, reviews, etc for the Grand Review, Phillipi and Monroe County memorial celebration. I will get them in the next issue. If anyone has a pictures from the Grafton Memorial Day ceremony please email to me.

Thanks to Mark Tennant for the article on the B&O Railroad. Attached is information from Ron Wenig about Appomattox.

A big thank you to Peter Baxter, who continues to provide valuable support to the production of the *Trans-Allegheny Dispatch*.

Our condolences to Dave Eubank on the passing of his father.

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 respective insurance policies that the 1st West Virginia and the 25th Virginia infantry units participate in, you must be a member of record.

The newsletter is being sent by email to members of record. It is posted on the WVRA website also. It is mailed to anyone who pays the \$15 mailing costs. It continues to be my plan to publish related articles of interest in addition to the items mandated by our by-laws (meeting minutes, treasurer's report, etc.)

Please contact your unit rep (listed to the left) with any questions about your unit.

As always, if anyone has anything for the Dispatch, send it along.

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The views expressed here are not necessarily the
views of the WVRA

WVRA website - wvra.org

*Facebook - WVRA - TransAllegheny Soldiers Aid
Society*

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Col. Craig Mullin and John Kwiecien, both members of a Civil War reenactment group, donated various food items Saturday afternoon to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank in Lynchburg.

ASHLIE WALTER/THE NEWS & ADVANCE

Reenacting Group Donates Food *Raised more than 1,000 pounds of non-perishable items*

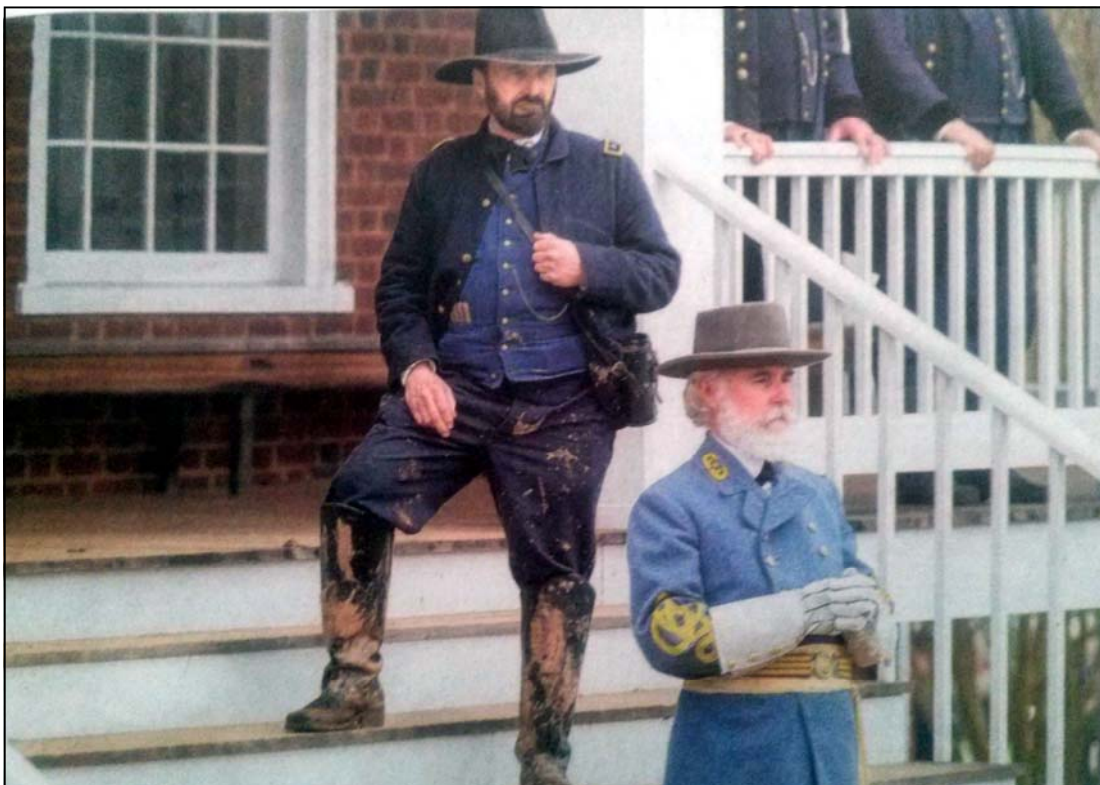
ASHLIE WALTER/ THE NEWS & ADVANCE

One of the largest Union Civil War reenacting organizations donated about 1,000 pounds of nonperishable food to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank on Saturday afternoon. The U.S. Volunteers donated the food as a symbolic gesture in observance of the 150th anniversary of the surrender at Appomattox Court House.

The food items were collected in Pennsylvania and delivered to the South, stopping first at the Lynchburg warehouse, according to a news release. "Many of the Union soldiers took things out of Appomattox. We wanted to give something back; there's still a lot of healing to be done," said John Kwiecien, one of the U.S. volunteers who helped with Saturday's donation. Part of the reason the Confederacy surrendered at Appomattox was because of the lack of food supplies. Lynchburg Branch Manager Jim

Scrivener said the donated food will be split between the food bank and the Lynchburg Community Action Group.

Gen. Robert E. Lee leaves the McLean House as Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant (portrayed by reenactors Thomas Jessee and Kurt Fields, respectively) looks on Thursday as part of the 150th anniversary commemoration of the surrender of Appomattox, ending the Civil War.



Autumn Perry/ The News & Advance