

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2020 - September - Edition IX

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

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

Droop Mountain --October 9-11

<https://battleofdroopmountain.com/2019-battle-of-dry-creek>

Hurricane Bridge Battlefield Tour - Oct. 24. (see below)

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

Other Events

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/>

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

August 1 through 31, 2020

Beginning balance	\$2,927.34
Credits	\$0.00
Debits	\$0.00
Ending Balance	\$2,927.34

Submitted by Jack Rush

Upcoming Events

Droop

I have made enquiries about Droop and it appears at this time that it is not canceled. But I would suggest that if you are interested, that you check with them before driving to the event. The link to their website is listed in the event calendar.

Hurricane Bridge Battlefield Tour

Author Historian Phillip Hatfield, PhD will host a tour of the March 28, 1863 Hurricane Bridge battlefield Saturday, October 24, from 11 am until 1:30 pm. Event is free, family friendly and if Covid-19 precautions are still in effect, will observed current guidelines. Dr. Hatfield's study of this

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battle has shown it was much larger than previously thought, and also had a key but often overlooked strategic importance for both armies. Be prepared to walk up to a half mile and dress for a wooded area outdoors. Park at Hurricane Town Elementary School parking lot. Shuttle service to the battlefield area will be provided.

GPS to the school lot is 300 Harbor Lane, Hurricane, W. Va. 25526.

@35thstarpublishing

-- Submitted by Bill Donegan

Miscellaneous Event News

Jason Studenwalt reminded me that Jackson's Mill is canceled this year. In fact the entire Jubilee is canceled. Jim Barnes emailed that the Fort Henry event in Wheeling is canceled. Both events were scheduled for the first weekend in September.

Event Reviews

None at this time

Other Features

B&O Blockhouse at Fairmont

By Jim Barnes

Some time ago, Mark Tennant mentioned the idea of building a scale model of the blockhouse built by Co. G of the 50th New York engineers for the protection of the railroad bridge in Fairmont. Mark had a period photograph of the blockhouse that we could use as a guide. Since we didn't have exact specifications, I used the height of men standing by the door as a general guide as to scale. I then sketched an outline of the base of the building and used that as a starting point. The blockhouse was entirely scratch built and is constructed from individual pieces of balsa and bass wood and a lot of white glue. While I took care of the

building, Mark hand painted the tiny 1/72 figures of Union soldiers. Hopefully, his eyesight will return to normal by hunting season!



The finished model (above) was donated to the Marion County Historical Society.



Figure 1 Jim Barnes (left) and Mark Tennant donate the model to the Marion County Historical Society. Gladys Miller of MCHS in the middle. Photo by Linda Barnes

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History Detective

Fairmont Blockhouse Continued

By Mark Tennant

In April 2019 while attending the Rich Mt. CW Symposium fellow reenactor Eric Smallwood showed me a picture of a blockhouse with 50 Union soldiers at parade rest arrayed in front of the blockhouse with the caption; Built by Detachment Co. G, 50th New York Engineers, at Fairmont, W.V. 1863.



Figure 2 Courtesy/permission of Huron County (Ohio) Library

Although I had known there had been a blockhouse located on the eastern bank of the Monongahela River where the B & O Rail Road bridge spanned the river, this was the first picture I had ever seen of it. As I love being a history Detective I decided to do some research on this very cold case. Eric said he saw the picture on an internet auction site for CW photos. I did a Google search on the 50th New York Engineers and after a long search found the same photo on a CW forum site- Civil War Talk.com. It had been posted by the owner on Jan 7, 2016. The only info he posted was that it was on a 7 X 10 inch card. There was no

photographers mark on the photo. He stated he wished it was in better condition (as it is badly faded around the outer edges). I tried contacting the owner, but never got a response.

A couple months later I was doing another Google search on Blockhouses and came across the same exact photo (although it was much sharper image, not faded out around the edges) on the Huron Co. Ohio Library website. I contacted their historian Barb Tempelman who said one of the soldiers was identified and she sent me the paperwork. I'm thinking this is great. Wrong! When I got her email the paperwork showed that the photo had been donated by a William H. Daniels born 1901 in Cleveland, Ohio and died in 1970. William Daniels was an Oscar winning cinematographer in Hollywood. He was famous for his filming of Greta Garbo but won his Academy Award for Best Cinematography for the film the Naked City in 1949. Apparently Mr. Daniels was interested in photographic history as in his description of this photo he was interested in it because the photo was taken on an antique camera - camera obscura, thus instead of this oval image. He did say he had gotten the photo from a Mrs. Jackie Hill from Attica, Ohio and the soldier with the arrow above him was her great-great grandfather who was in Co. G, 50th NY Eng. And he was from Millport, NY and had been a shoemaker but did not give his name. Damn!

I called Barb Tempelman back to see if she knew a Mrs. Hill, she didn't, but gave me the phone number of the Seneca Co Ohio Historical Society where Attica, Ohio is located. But they didn't know her either. Another dead end.

In the meantime a neighbor Tim Martin, myself and Chuck Critchfield did some scouting on the probable site of the blockhouse and although the leaves were still on the trees the slope of the hillside behind the blockhouse matched the photo.

During the Corona virus lockdown this Spring I decided to try and find Mrs. Hill. After a long internet search with several dead ends, I

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thought I found her with her phone number. I called and got an answering machine. I left my message and a couple hours later she called me back. She confirmed she was the Jackie Hill whose great-great grandfather was ID'ed in photo. His name was Charles C. Coston who was born 4-4-1818, he joined Co. G, 50th NY Engineers at Millport, NY on 8-19-1862 at the age of 44 as a private, he was soon promoted to artificer- which in the Army means skilled mechanic. He was 5 ft. 7 inches tall and had blue eyes. He mustered out with his regiment at Camp Berry, VA. on 6-13-1865. He died 10-5-1881 at Millport, NY.

His son George M. Coston, age 21 enlisted 8-21-1862 at Millport, NY in Co. E 50th NY Engineers but transferred to Co. G 11-1-62 to be with his father. I believe he is the soldier standing beside Charles Coston in the photo. George mustered out 9-20- 1864 at Elmira, NY.

The drummer in the photo is I believe Augustus H. Paterson, age 19, enlisted 8-23-1862 at Elmira as a musician. Paterson is also mentioned in a letter to the editor of the Democrat & American newspaper dated May 10, 1863 at Fairmount (sic), Va. As he was the only drummer I could find that was with Co. G at that time, I think the drummer is Augustus Paterson. Another letter to the editor dated June , 16, 1863 stated Sgt. Silas Taylor along with 60 soldiers of Co. G were still at Fairmont.

Co. G of the 50th NY Engineers had been stationed at Harper's Ferry. After the Confederates had blown the 600 foot long iron railroad bridge into the river on April 29, 1863. A detachment of Co. G under the command of 2nd Lt. Charles F. Carroll with 61 men were ordered to Fairmont, (West) Virginia on May 7, 1863 with pontoon material for bridging the Monongahela River at that point. The pontoon bridge was completed on May 9, 1863 and troops and material were off loaded by train on one side crossed over the pontoon bridge and got on another train on the other side. The temporary wooden railroad bridge was completed by the middle of May. A letter I

have in my possession from a soldier in the 106th NY Infantry said there were 24 or 26 pontoon boats holding up the bridge when he marched across it. On May 9, 1863 after the pontoon bridge was finished Co. G started building the Blockhouses to defend the new wooden RR bridge. Sgt. Taylor and 60 men of Co. G didn't rejoin their regiment in Washington D.C. until early August 1863 as they had been in West Virginia building Blockhouses.

I had my cousin, Mike Roberts colorize the photo. He did a really great job. It brought the photo to life. Meanwhile, I talked Jim Barnes into building a diorama of the blockhouse. Jim did a wonderful job building the blockhouse. My contribution was painting the tiny Union soldiers for the diorama. We presented the diorama and 3 photos of the Blockhouses to the Marion Co. Historical Society.



Figure 3 Colorized version of the picture. See details in Mark Tennant's article above.

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I may be getting too old to portray a Civil War soldier, but I can still have fun doing research and being a history detective.

West Virginia Federal Civil War Regiments

West Virginia regiments, on the Federal side, had a unique habit of becoming something other than what they were first mustered into the service to do. Some infantry became mounted infantry and finally then cavalry. The remnants of four regiments consolidated into two veteran regiments at the end of their 3-year term of service.

- 1st Infantry eventually consolidated into the 2nd Veteran Infantry in Dec. 1864
- 2nd Infantry became the 2nd Mounted Infantry in June of 1863 and the 5th W. Va. Cavalry in January 1864 and consolidated with the 6th Cavalry to become the 6th Veteran Cav. in December, 1864.
- 3rd Infantry became mounted in 1863 and finally the 6th Cavalry. It consolidated with the 5th Cav. in December 1864 to become the 6th Veteran Cav.
- 4th Infantry combined consolidated with the 1st Infantry to become the 2nd Veteran Infantry in Dec. 1864.
- 5th Infantry consolidated with the 9th Infantry to become the 1st Veteran Infantry in Nov. 1864
- 6th Infantry (Bloody 6th guarded the B&O)
- 7th Infantry (With the Army of the Potomac)
- 8th Infantry became mounted and then the 7th W. V. Cav.
- 9th Infantry consolidated with the 5th Infantry to become the 1st Veteran Infantry in Nov. 1864
- 10th Infantry 1862-1865
- 11th Infantry 1862-65
- 12th Infantry 1862-65
- 13th Infantry 1862-65
- 14th Infantry 1862-65
- 15th Infantry 1862-65
- 16th Infantry (Washington DC)
- 17th Infantry 1864-1865

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. 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

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)"

Quotes from 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 31, 1866

"A member of the Stonewall Brigade gloated: 'We took prisoners claiming to be of Virginia Regiments -- a mean, low thing in the federal government to form regiments of foreigners and call them Virginia Regiments.' "

- From Conquering the Valley, by Robert Krick, p. 434.

Other Sites

American Battlefield Trust - www.battlefields.org

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Beverly Heritage Center -

www.beverlyheritagecenter.org

Mason Dixon Civil War Roundtable -

www.wvmasondixoncwrtable.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

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 Jim Barnes, Mark Tennant, Peter Baxter and Jack Rush for their contributions to this edition.

WE WERE VERY SADDENED to hear about the death of former member Charlie Stewart on August 18. Condolences can be sent to The Stewart Family, PO Box 212, Lynco, WV, 24857.

I TRY TO STAY OFF FACEBOOK as much as possible these days (with limited success - it is a black hole.) So I am not sure, but I think the furor over Confederate monument removal has subsided - for now. However if you think it's over - think again. Calls for removal of the Stonewall Jackson statue in Clarksburg will return with the election of a new member to the Harrison County Commission.

So, we can sit here and complain - and that's one thing we reenactors are good at. Or we can take action and continue to let our elected leaders know how we feel about our statues.

And that is not limited to Stonewall at the Harrison County Courthouse. Remember there is pressure to remove him from the State Capital grounds in Charleston (although I have to admit, I have always wondered why he has such a place of honor on West Virginia's Capital grounds when he never lived in the STATE of West Virginia.) So letting your state level elected officials know how you feel also.

GETTYSBURG - For those of you who have asked, I was registered to attend this past month but decided not to go for reasons related to caring for aging relatives.

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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

Chuck Critchfield - Editor

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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