

Trans-Allegheny Disptach

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2021- January - Edition I

Upcoming Events

PLEASE NOTE that all of the events in 2021 are dependent on the status of the pandemic. Please ensure that the event is not cancelled before attending.

Civil War

Sponsored

None at this time

Sanctioned

None at this time

Other Events recommended by WVRA members

Bentonsville - CANCELLED

160th Anniversary Bull Run, April 25-25

- Daniel Lady Farm, Gettysburg

Chancellorsville May 1-2, 2021 - NPS

Event - CANCELLED

New Market - CANCELLED

Stonewall Jackson Civil War

Roundtable, Second Tuesday of each month - PWA Building behind the Courthouse in Clarksburg

Gettysburg, July 1-3 - at the movie site in Gettysburg.

Beverly Heritage/Rich Mountain

Antietam, Sept 18-19 - Daniel Lady Farm, Gettysburg

Cedar Creek, Oct. 16-17 - Middletown, Va.

Other

Blue Gray Reunion, June 3-6, Phillipi

160th Anniversary of Ball's Bluff, Oct. 9-10 - near Leesburg, Va.

Other Time Periods

None at this time.

No Annual Meeting

No meeting is scheduled at this time. Because of concerns over Covid-19, the meeting is postponed until further notice. Any questions can be directed to the Executive Committee.

-- IMPORTANT NEWS -- Executive Committee Action(October)

The following two proposals were approved by the five voting members of the Executive Committee in an email vote the last week of October.

PROPOSAL #1 "In light of the current pandemic and its effects on the hobby, the Executive Committee postpones the election of new officers of the WVRA until such time that the Committee determines that it is prudent to hold the 'annual meeting' in accordance with procedures described in the by laws."

PROPOSAL #2 "The President shall have the authority to temporarily appoint, until the next duly conducted Association election, members to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee."

If any member has a concern or question about this action, please contact President Jim Barnes or myself. These actions were simply in response to how the pandemic is affecting group meetings at the moment. Executive committee members are listed near the end of every newsletter. Members are encouraged to work through your Unit Representative. If you currently do not have a Unit Rep., work through an officer. Reminder to General Members, the WVRA President serves as your Unit Representative.

Emailing the Newsletter

I continue to encounter issues with emailed newsletters from other organizations. It appears that if the list of recipients is too large, the email is labeled as SPAM. Therefore, I may experiment with smaller email lists, rather than sending emails to entire units.

Membership

I can report to you, that as of today, January 10, 2021 we have 32 members who have renewed. Last year we had 63 members so we are at about 50%.

I am not going to cajole or beg you to renew. If you want to renew, please do so.

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It is past time to renew your membership in the WVRA for 2021. To be a member you must pay dues. To **be eligible for the group insurance you must be a member**. A membership form is included with this newsletter. Return the membership form and dues to : C. L. Critchfield, 608 Skyview Drive, Clarksburg WV 26301

1. Dues are \$15 per year per person and \$25 per year for a family. If you wish to receive a paper copy of the newsletter there is an additional \$15 fee. The Email version of the newsletter is included in the membership. Family memberships are limited to family members college age or younger residing within the household.
2. **Minors:** All members under the age of 18 need the signature of a guardian to join. Those under 16 will not be allowed to carry a firearm. Those under 14 may not participate in reenactment battles. In addition the WVRA complies with the particular rules at specific events regarding age.

2021 Membership Renewals

Artillery

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| David Judy | Susan Judy |
| | 1st West Virginia |
| Jim Barnes | Keith Kopshina |
| Mike Phillips* | Jack Rush |
| Chuck Critchfield | Kevin Skaggs |
| John Ziolkowski | Chris Carroll |
| Patrick Carroll | |

25th Virginia

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| Ken Connell | Tag Ireland* |
| Dirk Behana | Jim Allman |
| Tim Glaser | Greg Watterson |

TASAS

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Peter Baxter* | Phyllis Baxter* |
| Bill Snyder* | Linda Barnes |
| Pamela Dodds | Art Dodds |
| Debbie Rush | Patty Carroll |
| Abby Ward | William Ward |

General

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Larry Teets | Senator Hunter Lesser |
| Matthew Price | William Burruss |

Newsletter mailing

Bill Snyder

* - indicates lifetime members

If you think I have left your name off the list, please contact me.

USV Meeting

The United States Volunteers did not hold their annual meeting in person in January as scheduled. This meeting is where I learn about large events that we might be interested in attending. However, the First Regiment, of which the 1st West Virginia is a member, did hold a ZOOM meeting on Saturday, January 9 and I have my version of the meeting minutes below.

First, WVRA member Kevin Skaggs was re-elected as Colonel of the First Regiment. Additionally I will report that the 1st West Virginia did pay its 2021 dues of \$75. You may remember that the USV raised dues to \$125 annually, but the Executive Committee rescinded that increase due to the pandemic.

Kevin opened the meeting by discussing unit matters. One provisional unit remained on probationary status and was not admitted to full status because of the pandemic. The 11th Pa. Infantry (not reserves) was given line status. It was reported by Lt. Col. Walt Dewey, that the banjo player in the 6th New Hampshire Contraband suffered stroke-like medical issues but seems to be on the mend.

Events supported by the USV in 2021:

- Battle of Bull Run, April 24-25 at the Daniel Lady Farm in Gettysburg
- Gettysburg, July 1-3 at the movie site in Gettysburg.
- Antietam, Sept 18-19 at the Daniel Lady Farm in Gettysburg
- Cedar Creek, October 16-17

Other event discussions:

- New Market, cancelled
- NPS Chancellorsville, cancelled
- Rescheduled Bentonsville, cancelled
- Ball's Bluff, near Leesburg, Va. Oct 9-10
- Somebody asked about Phillipi, which is scheduled June 3-6

All events warned that if the restrictions imposed by the Pandemic continue that some of these events may be affected, even to the point of cancellation. So continue to monitor the situation.

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Next there was a discussion of security around events in case of protests. Fort Monroe living histories are on hold.

USV commander David Childs joined the meeting at this point. He said the insurance had been paid for 2021 and reminded everyone the dues had remained \$75.

The First Regiment decided to hold another ZOOM meeting around April 1. Additional personnel matters surrounding unit command were discussed.

MATTERS NOT DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING BUT OF IMPORTANCE TO FIRST WEST VIRGINIA MEMBERS. Last year (2020) the 1st had only 15 rifles, which disqualifies us from line company status in the USV. I did not submit notice to Col. Skaggs because with the pandemic and everything else underway, I just let it slide. I can see that membership this year may not even reach 15, so later this year will probably notify the USV that the 1st W. Va. no longer has 20 rifles. I hope to attend a couple of the events above and plan to fall in with the 2nd Connecticut as I have done in the past.

Treasurer's Report

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| December 1 through 31, 2020 | |
| Beginning balance | \$2,994.08 |
| Credits | |
| Memberships | \$ 0.00 |
| Debits | |
| PO Box | \$ 64.00 |
| 1st W.Va. Unit money (USV dues) | \$ 75.00 |
| Ending Balance | \$2,855.08 |

Submitted by Jack Rush, Treasurer, WVRA

Upcoming Events

Civil War Roundtables

The Stonewall Jackson Civil War Roundtable

The SJCWRT has meetings scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month. This month, January 12 at 7 pm. Rick Wolfe will speak about the battle of Bulltown. And on February 9, Col. Pete Taylor is the scheduled speaker, His topic is to be determined. The current scheduled location is the Progressive Womens' Association located directly behind the Harrison County Courthouse. The location is subject to change in later in 2021. Anyone attending is required to wear a mask. I have no word on the Morgantown round table.

Event Reviews

Nothing at this time

Other Features

The Military History of Our Members and Their Families

*(Members are invited to submit stories about the history of their family or the member themselves. This month, once again, **Tim Glaser** submits a brief summary or relative.)*

My father was a Engineering Officer on the **USS Canberra** joining it in San Diego as the Forward engine room Officer. During a stop over in Guam, he rotated to the Rear Engine room. On the night of Friday October 13 the ship was torpedoed which hit in the forward engine room. He had to order the closing the water tight doors to that section to save the ship from sinking. Later he transferred to one of the Attack Aircraft carriers and was in charge of ballast control during take off and landings of aircraft. He spent his time after the war carrying solders back from Japan

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and other bases until 1946 when he accumulated enough points to go into the reserves.

Below is the Bio from *Wikipedia World War II*. Leaving Boston in January 1944, escorted by the destroyer **USS Norman Scott**, Canberra sailed to Pearl Harbor via San Diego, and joined Task Force 58 in midFebruary. In late February, the ship provided bombardment support during the Battle of Eniwetok. During March and April, the cruiser formed part of the **USS Yorktown** carrier task group, supporting the aircraft carrier during air raids on Palau, Yap, Ulithi, and Woleai during 31 March and 1 April. On 13 April, Canberra was again escorting when **Yorktown's** aircraft provided support to amphibious landings at Hollandia and Wakde. From 29 April to 1 May, the cruiser was attached to the **USS Enterprise** group for air attacks on Truk; during the operation, Canberra detached to shell a Japanese airbase at Satawan. The cruiser was involved in raids on Marcus and Wake Islands during May, and in June joined operations to capture the Mariana and Palau Islands.

As part of this campaign, Canberra participated in the Battle of the Philippine Sea, and shelled Japanese bases in the Bonin Islands. During August and September, the ship performed raids on the Palau and the Philippines, provided support during the Morotai landings. **Canberra** took part in Task Force 38 in 1944. At the start of October, Canberra joined Task Force 38, which was tasked with performing air raids on Okinawa and Taiwan, in preparation for the landings at Leyte. On 13 October, an air-dropped torpedo from a Japanese aircraft hit the cruiser below her armor belt. The explosion killed 23 personnel and exposed the engineering spaces to the ocean, stalling the ship. **USS Wichita** took Canberra under tow for a rendezvous with the tug **USS Muncruiser**, which took over the tow after putting a salvage crew aboard.

Book Review West Virginia History: Dunmore's War

When I took West Virginia history in Junior High, one of the events briefly discussed was Lord Dunmore's War and the Battle of Point Pleasant. We didn't spend a lot of time on it, but mostly learned that it took place before the American Revolution and involved Virginia colonists and the Shawnee Indians. The colonists won. That was about it. Nowadays, Point Pleasant is mostly famous for the appearance of the Mothman. I doubt that the two events are connected.

I have been aware for some time that a reconstructed Fort Randolph exists at the approximate site of the battle and that there is usually an annual reenactment of the battle. However, I have never made it down there. That may change this year, having just read Dunmore's War by Glenn F. Williams. Westholme Publishing 2018.

Mr. Williams is a historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History and is author of a number of books and articles. He has written an in-depth discussion of the Virginia governor's campaign against the Shawnee and their allies, which was the last time that American colonial militia took the field under British command. There was a lot of backstory to the brief war and he helps the reader understand why events worked out as they did. His account is balanced and seeks to give credit where due as well as blame where it is due, without being either anti-colonist or anti-native. It is a well-written and very readable history.

The book comes in at about 315 pages in paperback with additional extensive notations. I picked it up at the Pricketts Fort bookstore. It is also available on Amazon.

- Reviewed by Jim Barnes

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Antietam/Sharpsburg

Reading history is one thing. Reading that history and standing on the actual ground is another.

In an effort to get out of the house and take a pandemic-safe trip, Pam and I took a 36-hour journey to the east - including a stop at Antietam battlefield.

I made a concerted effort to hike the trails around Burnside Bridge as it was an area that I never seemed to get to, in my many visits to battlefield. The saga of the Federal attack on Burnside's Bridge always has been a mystery to me in that I wondered why it took so much effort to defeat the small Confederate force on the hill above the bridge. But my recent visit shed some light on that.

Standing on the west side of the creek, above the bridge it was evident that the Georgians had a sweeping field of fire in their front. The "Georgia overlook" downstream from the bridge was high atop a hill that crested right above the stream and was perched on a bend in the Creek that jutted eastward. This advantage allowed them to fire northward on any regiment approaching the bridge from those fields and also directly down upon the ill-fated attacks coming up the road from the south. That advantage and some Federal command failures showed me why it took the Federals a few hours to cross despite having a huge numerical advantage. The Georgians, running low on ammunition, in danger of being outflanked from Snavelly's Ford and realizing another frontal attack was likely to carry the bridge, evacuated to the ridges nearer Sharpsburg

I also took time to walk through the West Woods where John Sedgwick's Division was badly mauled by Stonewall Jackson's men.

There were a number of monuments there I had never encountered.

Finally, I viewed the State of Maryland monument (see picture below) which is unique in that it honors the Confederate and Union sons of the state. Finding any Confederate monuments on these battlefields is unusual. For instance, Federal veterans fiercely resisted any Confederate memorials at Gettysburg. And there are few regimental monuments among the forest of Federal regimental monuments. Only later did Southern states begin to erect state memorials at Gettysburg and at the edge of the Cornfield at Antietam (Texas, Georgia and Mississippi I believe).

The bronze plaque on the side of the stone gazebo offers to history this inscription which neither condemns nor extols either side:

*"ERECTED BY
THE STATE OF MARYLAND,
TO HER SONS,
WHO ON THIS FIELD OFFERED
THEIR LIVES IN MAINTAINENCE
OF THEIR PRINCIPLES"*



The State of Maryland Monument at

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Antietam National Battlefield on a cold
December afternoon at the end of 2020.
- Chuck Critchfield

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"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 31, 1866

"I have, Senators, believed from the first that the agitation of the subject of slavery would, if not prevented by some timely and effective measure, end in disunion. Entertaining this opinion, I have, on all proper occasions, endeavored to call the attention of both the two great parties which divide the country to adopt some measure to prevent so great a disaster, but without success. The agitation has been permitted to proceed, with almost no attempt to resist it, until it has reached a point when it can no longer be disguised or denied the Union is in danger. you have thus had forced upon you the greatest and the gravest quest that can ever come under your consideration -- how can the Union be preserved?"

- last speech of John C. Calhoun, March 4, 1850

"I wis that I Cold hug with you though I Cant doo it but I hope the time ant far off {when I can] Sleep with you all the time."

- Wright Vinson, 57th Georgia Infantry

"I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the Army and the Government needed a Dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes, can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship."

- Abraham Lincoln to Joseph Hooker

*"Let us close our game of poker,
Take our tin cups in our hand,
While we gather round the cook's tent door,
Where dry mummies of hard crackers*

*Are given to each man;
O hard crackers, come again no more!
Chorus
Tis the song and sigh of the hungry,
Hard crackers, hard crackers come again no more!
Many days have you lingered upon our stomachs sore,
O hard crackers, come again no more!"*

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 -
Addressing Gettysburg podcast -

Current WVRA Officers

Jim Barnes - President
Ken Connell - Vice President
Jack Rush - Secretary/Treasurer
Vacant - Unit Rep (TASAS)
Vacant - Unit Rep (1st W. Va. Infantry)
Bill Brisendine - Unit Rep (25th Virginia Infantry)
Dave Judy - Unit Rep (artillery)
Webmaster - Peter Baxter
Editor - Chuck Critchfield
Note - Webmaster and Editor are non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

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 of 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.

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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

PERSONALS - Bill Snyder sent a Christmas card to the WVRA wishing the organization a Merry Christmas.

THANK YOU - Jack Rush for taking care of our official PO Box and the checkbook. Tim Glaser for the article. Jim Barnes for the book review.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE to create your own historical record, jot down your recollections of January 6, 2021 and keep it for future generations to read.

THE ELECTRONIC world gets much less attention from me then it once did. But recently I noticed a couple of old historical posts on the "book of face." Once again the Corwin amendment popped up with narration claiming that North really was not trying to free the slaves. And the age old posting trying to argue that the Republican and Democratic parties of the 1860's have a straight line connection to the parties of the 2020's.



Droop Mountain, many a year in the past. I am guessing this is from the 1990's. Photo courtesy of Mike Butler or a member of his group. Here is my best shot at identifying the group: first row Jeff Zickefoose, Jim Barnes, Justin, Eubank, Dave Eubank, Mike Kelly, unknown, Peter Baxter. Second row: Chuck Critchfield, Mark Tennant, Robbie Freeman, Mike Phillips (?), Jack Rush, unknown.



Figure 1 Harpers Ferry looking towards the east

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The official publication of the West Virginia Reenactors
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- Edition XII

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
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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