

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2016 – Edition 3 – March

Upcoming Events

Sponsored Events

None proposed at this time

Sanctioned Events

Beverly Heritage Days, July 22-24 is up for open ballot procedure.

Events Recommended by WVRA members

Putnam Civil War Days – March 31 – April 1, 2016, <http://putnamcivilwardays.weebly.com>

Barboursville (W.Va.) Civil War Days – May 13-15

Grafton National Cemetery – Lantern Tour, May 27th; 8:30 pm, contact Mark Tennant

Philippi Blue and Gray Reunion – June 3-5, 2016

McConnellsville (Ohio) – July 8-10, register by mail. Contact ccritch608@yahoo.com for registration form.

Dry Creek (Greenbrier State Forest) – Aug 19-22

Bulltown – October 7-9, 2016 – Hosted by 10th W. Va. and Army Corps of Engineers, contact Sam Krafft for details

Elmwood Manor – Union, West Virginia, August 26-28, 2016, contact Chris Johnson at wvaca@hughes.net

Peterstown, WV (Monroe Co.) Civil War Festival Oct 7-9, 2016. Contact: Chris Johnson-wvaca@hughes.net

Guyandotte (W. Va.) Civil War Days – November 4-6

Other - 2016

Buchanan, Virginia – April 28-29 (suggested by our friends in the 24th Va/83rd Pa)

New Market – May 13-15

Barboursville (W.Va.) Civil War Days – May 13-15

Thunder in the Valley - Cross Keys and port Republic, Va. June 10-12
mike@malverngranite.com

153rd Gettysburg – July 1-3

<http://www.gettysburgreenactment.com/>

1st Bull Run – July 22-24 (at Cedar Creek Battlefield) www.ccbf.us

Jackson's Mill – September (I have been given 2 different dates), contact Jason Studenwalt

Sidney, Ohio – Sept. 16-18, 2016 (suggested by the USV)

Cedar Creek – October 14-16, 2016,
www.ccbf.us

Next Meeting

The February 27 meeting was cancelled. I has been rescheduled for this Saturday, March 5, at 1 pm, at the Weston Steakhouse. If you can't make the meeting, please send in your absentee ballot to sanction Beverly Heritage event. Vote yes, no or abstain. You can email to me at ccritch608@yahoo.com.

Beverly Heritage Days

Because the February meeting was cancelled, the vote on sanctioning the Beverly Heritage Days event has been postponed until the next meeting. I have received approximately 12 absentee ballots.

According to our by-laws: "*Sanctioned Events are those not planned or organized by the WVRA, but approved by the Association for official participation. Attendance at sanctioned events is expected of all WVRA members.*"
Note -The rest of that by-law can be found at WVRA.org.

Beverly Heritage Days – Centuries of History are scheduled for July 22 through July 24 at Beverly, W. Va. This event will be a "timeline" featuring living history and other programming from periods throughout Beverly's history. By timeline, the intent is to allow living history from multiple time periods. Preliminary planning shows living historians from the pioneer and Native American, Civil War and World War II periods. However, other periods may be represented.

Mountaineer State History Expo

Mark Tennant will be manning a table at The Annual Mountaineer State History Expo at The Marion County Court House (Fairmont) on Saturday, March 19. Mark plans to exhibit a Springfield, an Enfield and an officers sword, and is seeking other Civil War related items for display.

The Annual Mountaineer State History Expo is sponsored by the Marion County Commission and will take place from 10 am until 2 pm on that Saturday. The expo is free to the public and free to Exhibitors. Live music from bagpipes to bluegrass, a food court, historic demonstrations and displays. Jezebel will appear.

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2016 – Edition 3 – March

For further information call the Marion County Historical Society (Dora Grubb) 304-367-5398 or e-mail marionhistorical@yahoo.com

Union, West Virginia

Chris Johnson (25th Va) has issued a call to all living historians to attend the “Federal Occupation of Union, West Virginia at Union in Monroe County August 26-28, 2016. He says he needs Union troops, Southern civilians, Confederate Home Guard, and artillery demonstrations. Chris asks WVRA members to put it on their calendar now. Details will come soon.

Membership

Members are reminded to renew their membership for 2016. A membership form will be included when the newsletter is emailed. Please return the ballot to C. L. Critchfield, 608 Skyview Drive, Clarksburg, WV 26301. Do not send to the PO Box in Buckhannon. Do not send the membership to the Treasurer. When I receive the dues payments, I will send an email confirmation.... **IF** I have an email address for that member. Individual dues are \$15 and family dues are \$25. Family dues include family members living at home up to college age. This is the last reminder.

The newsletter is being emailed to dues-paying members with an email address and posted to the website. If you would like the newsletter sent through the US Mail, please add \$15 to cover mailing and printing costs.

Thank you to the members who have renewed since last issue of the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch.

1st West Virginia Infantry

Ross Wetherell
Ralph McCready

25th Virginia

Thurman Shaver
Greg Watterson

KC Staples

1st Virginia Cavalry

None

Artillery

None

TASAS

None

School of the Soldier

The 31st Va. and 36th Va. of Wise's Legion are having a School of the Soldier at Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park. The WVRA and any members (CS and US) are 'cordially' invited to attend.

31st Virginia School of the Soldier is scheduled for Friday through Sunday, April 15 through 17. This is an encampment April 16 (Editor's note: not sure what they mean by an encampment)

36th Virginia School of the Soldier, Friday through Sunday, May 27 through May 29. There is an encampment on May 16.

- Submitted by Chris Johnson

Grafton National Cemetery Lantern Tour,

On Friday May 27, at 8:30 pm, the Grafton National Cemetery will host a lantern tour. Please contact mark Tennant if you are interested. This is the same event he has helped to organize over the past several years. All registered reenactors invited to a catered meal at 6:00 pm. Gas money is available. Contact Mark Tennant for details.

McConnellsville

I received information just as I was finishing this edition of the *Dispatch* on the annual McConnellsville, Ohio event, July 8, 9 and 10. Ralph McCready, WVRA member is involved in the event and invites all WVRA members to attend. More information will be forthcoming.

As Reported – 153 Years Past

Reported in the Wheeling Intelligencer 153 ago:
Wheeling, April 21, 1863: "Thirty-seven prisoners of war, two deserters in the rebel army and two women, arrived in the city yesterday, in charge of Lieut. Smith, of the 34th Ohio Infantry, and were committed to the Atheneum. The prisoners of war were lately taken near Fayetteville, above the Kanawha Valley."

"The women are rather remarkable specimens of humanity. Their names are Elizabeth Hays and Miss Jennie De Hart. The latter is a rebel spy, and was arrested not long ago near Fayette Court House. The other is described as a very

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association

2016 – Edition 3 – March

'bad egg,' who goes by the name of Peg Leg, and claims to be a resident of Charleston. These women created quite a sensation along the streets yesterday between the steamboat and the Athenaeum, Miss De Hart, who is a red headed vixenish looking female, was very drunk. She cursed the abolitionists most outrageously and swung her bonnet about over her head, and charged around in great fury. She struck the soldier who had her in charge two or three blows with her fist, and he was compelled to push her away with his bayonet."

--- Submitted by *W. Hunter Lesser*

Book Review

Citizen-General

Jacob Dolson Cox and the Civil War Era

By Eugene D. Schmiel

The citizen-generals of the war have always been of special interest to me so the title of this book caught my eye immediately. Additionally, Jacob Dolson Cox, being a son of Ohio, as two of my direct ancestors who fought in the war were, created additional interest. Never mind, that my reading of Cox's war record has to date done little to kindle much interest previously. After reading a synopsis about the book, I decided to give it a try.

I expected that Mr. Schmiel would do his best, as most authors do, to advance the theory that Federal victory was greatly enhanced by Cox and without him, things would be much different. This seems to be a standard device among biographers.

In many respects, this book, and this general turned out to be different from those expectations. And most surprising of all, was Cox's role in West Virginia. This author argues that Cox had was key in "securing West Virginia for the Union." It is often forgotten that while McClellan moved on Philippi, Laurel and Rich Mountains, Jacob Cox's column was clearing Confederates from the Kanawha Valley. After being checked briefly at Scary Creek, Cox's men captured Charleston and pressing up river took Gauley Bridge in July of 1861. With William Rosecrans assuming command at the point, Cox assisted in keeping the Kanawha Valley in Union hands and the "line of the Alleghenies became the northern frontier of the Confederacy in Virginia, and was never again seriously broken." Cox was in

command at Charleston that winter and into 1862 before being moved eastward with the Kanawha Division where he participated in South Mountain and Antietam.

After the Maryland Campaign he was ordered back to western Virginia to retake the Kanawha Valley at the request of the governors of Ohio, Indiana and the Restored Government of Virginia. He complained to his wife that he had to return to duty there because "the labor of the year past [had] been abandoned without a struggle." He became the district of Western Virginia and by the end of October, 1862, he had pushed the Confederates out of the Valley and had control up to Gauley Bridge once again.

Aside from the sections about Cox in present-day West Virginia, the book discusses the many interesting facets of a man who wore many hats. Many 19th-century men were not quite as 'specialized' as we are today. He served as a school superintendent, attorney and state senator before the war. During the war, his association with George McClellan and Ambrose Burnside had much to do with his assignments. After West Virginia in late 1863, Cox served in the IX Corps under Burnside and was the de facto commander of that Corps at Antietam when Burnside felt he was left wing commander. Later he served in the XXXIII Corps then under Schofield, joined Sherman in his advance on Atlanta. Cox was a division commander and participated in the many battles of the XXIII Corps during that campaign. After the fall of Atlanta, Schofield's army was not sent to Savannah on the march, but was kept behind to watch Hood who ended up marching into Central Tennessee.

It is during this campaign that Cox becomes heavily involved in the battle of Franklin. Some say, because Schofield was across the Harpeth River during Franklin to supervise the planned withdrawal to Nashville that Cox was in command of the Franklin defensive line. The Confederate onslaught temporarily breached the Federal lines but was quickly and dramatically by a Federal counterattack composed primarily of a brigade under the command of Cox's friend Emerson Opdycke. The credit for plugging the line would remain a controversy throughout the remainder of Cox's life. The following year the XXIII Army Corp ended up in North Carolina where Cox participates in the final Federal victory in that theater.

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association

2016 – Edition 3 – March

After the war, the book discusses Cox's tenure as Ohio's governor and U. S. Grant's Secretary of the Interior. Cox and Grant disagreed on issues and Cox resigned as a result. He finished his life as an attorney and educator. But perhaps the most interesting part of the book discusses his post-war career as a historian. He became deeply involved in the "Battle of the Books" in which George Thomas squared off against Sherman and Schofield over the way the history of the war was being portrayed and the way some Generals were being judged in those books. Cox even gets involved in the "Lost Cause" controversy, writing not-too-kindly about the Confederate interpretation of the war during the last half of the 19th century – a controversy that continues to this day.

I won't dwell too long on the intricacies of his post-war historical career. It is a fascinating look into the Federal interpretation of the war, the effort of some generals to shape post-war views of their reputations, and is probably worth a read on these issues alone, if you have never delved into that phase of post-war memory. Certainly a read about his involvement in West Virginia is worth the effort.

C. L. Critchfield

West Virginia's Last Daughter of the Civil War

(the original story appeared in the Sunday Gazette Mail and was written by Rick Steelhamer)

Rachel Perrine, a 99-year-old resident of Parkersburg, is the daughter of Harvey Smith of the 14th West Virginia Infantry. According to the article in the Sunday Gazette Mail, she is the only known surviving child of a Civil War soldier and one of 35 still living in the United States according to National Geographic. At the age of 70, Harvey married his second wife, Virginia Elliot (25), and fathered four more children including Rachel.

Smith enlisted in the 14th in August of 1862 during Lincoln's call for troops. A private in Company A (Doddridge County), he helped guard the B&O until the 14th took part in Crook's raid on the Virginia & Tennessee Railroad during which he was captured at Cloyd's Mountain. Sent to Andersonville, he managed to survive and was paroled on November 25, 1864. He spent the rest of the war recovering from his treatment at Andersonville, where he lived on "molasses and meal."

The entire article can be seen on the (Charleston) Gazette-Mail site at wvgazette.com.

Albert Gallatin Home In Need of Help

(the original story appeared in the Sunday Gazette Mail and was written by Rick Steelhamer)

The nonprofit group that spearheaded the effort to preserve and re-use the 1835 Albert Gallatin Jenkins plantation house at the Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area as an interpretive center has called on U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and U.S. Rep. Evan Jenkins, R-W.Va., to investigate spending practices by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in restoring the historic structure. The aging structure stands vacant and unused after at least \$3 million, and possibly as much as \$4.5 million, has been pumped into the project.

"We desperately need your help," wrote Ned Jones, President of the The Breen Bottom Society, in letters to Senator Manchin and Congressman Jenkins, the latter of who is not a descendant of the plantation's owners. The letters included copies of the signatures of roughly 1,450 petitioners who support the request. Although the letters were sent in October, Jones said he delayed making them public until last week, in response to media inquiries. Jones, a Huntington real estate developer and a former state senator, said Thursday that the Corps of Engineers' handling of the project "could be a poster child for government waste and mismanagement."

"If it were not so tragic, it would be almost laughable to think that our government could spend over \$4 million on a four-room house in Cabell County, where no house has sold for more than 1.4 million." This \$4 million house has no kitchen, no working rest rooms, no drinkable water and an interior in need of much repair. Most of the restoration work on the home, once the home of Confederate General Albert Gallatin Jenkins, took place between 2008 and 2012, when a "Preserve in Place" plan was activated by the Corps.

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association

2016 – Edition 3 – March

All the work had to be done according to the very strict guidelines of the National Environment Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act,” which substantially increased the cost of the project, Aaron Smith, project manager for the Corps on this .

For more information see <http://www.wvgazette.com/news/20160221/nonprofit-calls-on-congress-to-complete-jenkins-house-restoration-environment-waste#sthash.1uEpQBZV.dpuf>

WVRA Officers 2016 (executive board)

President – Mark Tennant

Vice President – Bill Brisendine

Treasurer – Jim Barnes (new)

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 – to be determined

TASAS – Diane Tennant

* Non-voting member of executive board

Springfields

Gentlemen,

As an old Springfield shooter, I (*Kevin Skaggs*) have seen that problem before with the Lock Plate screw being a bit too long and it interfering with the hammer. As you said, back the screw out just a little and the hammer will clear it. Just remember to check the screw before and after a battle to make sure that you still have it.

The biggest problem with an 1861 Springfield is that it will misfire A LOT. The easiest way to correct that is add an extra step to the load. After “CHARGE CARTRIDGE” and you go to the “READY” position before “PRIME”, turn the musket over so that the Lock Plate/Hammer is pointed toward the ground and then hit between the two Lock Plate screws with the heel of your hand. What this does is to knock a little bit of powder into the chamber below the nipple so the spark from the cap will not have to make a 90 degree turn to fire the main powder charge.

- Thanks to Kevin Skaggs (who is responding to a question about a common problem with Springfields)

Quotes

“You cannot appreciate the beauties of tent life in the driving, drenching, howling storms we have had lately. We live in a sea of mud and an atmosphere of water – cold water at that.” Jacob Colson Cox to his wife in the fall of 1861 while campaigning in West Virginia

Editor’s Corner

I received a couple of updates right at the last minute and squeezed them into the March edition. More information will follow. Thank you to Hunter Lesser, Chris Johnson, Mark Tennant and Kevin Skaggs for information used in this *Dispatch*.

I continue to be surprised by the number of reenactments in West Virginia. At a time when the number of reenactments around the country seems to be declining, every little town in West Virginia has a reenactment. At “press time” Chris Johnson has sent me yet another West Virginia event, this one in August in the Eastern Panhandle.

I have been asked about where pre-rolled cartridge papers might be available other than at sutlers at larger reenactments. Hand-cut, hand-rolled, 58 caliber paper cartridges are available at Widow Maker’s Cartridges. Email seanbrettmom@yahoo.com for prices and quantities.

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. TASAS members who are also spouses of 1st W. Va. members are covered under the USV insurance.

The newsletter is being sent by email to members of record who provided a VALID email address. It is posted on the WVRA website also. It is mailed to anyone who pays the \$15 annual 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.).

Yours truly, has no connection to the TASAS-WVRA Facebook page and takes no responsibility for it. Nor do I have any responsibility for the WVRA Facebook page. I would suggest that the TASAS-WVRA Facebook page seems to have more up to date information.

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

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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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