

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2015 – Edition 7 – May

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

Grand Review – May 17th

<http://grandreviewparade.org>

Lantern Tour – May 22, 8:30 pm, Grafton National Cemetery, see Mark Tennant

Philippi – May 29-31 -- 304-457-4265

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 – 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

committed or other questions can be directed to Tim Glaser, Treasurer. The Mid-April newsletter listed all members of record and generated some questions.

Rich Mountain

The WVRA and the Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation will team up to host the Rich Mountain reenactment the weekend after Independence Day weekend, July 10-12. Discussions about this year's event are underway. ON LINE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN. Spread the word.

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

From Rich Mounting Battlefield Found. -- Folks may sign up individually, it does not have to be by unit. WVRA paid members signing up before July 1 should identify themselves as WVRA and put 0 (zero) under fees (you are still responsible for meal cost or late fees.)

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.

Other Upcoming Events

There is a Living History/Encampment event being planned for Friday-Sunday, June 5-7, 2015 in Union, Monroe County, WV. The annual '**Farmer's Day**' weekend will be having an encampment in town and we are looking for 'Volunteers', both Federal and Confederate, to participate. If you are interested in this event we can sure use Your help!

Contact: Chris W. Johnson, 1-304-772-4712 or at: wvaca@hughes.net.

Mark Tennant tells me the **Lantern Tour** is scheduled this year at the National Cemetery, May 22. As of the date of publication of this newsletter, I have no additional information on

WVRA Business

Minutes of the March meeting were not available at press time. To my knowledge another meeting has not been scheduled at this time. The latest bank statement indicates we have \$5,246.39 in the bank. How much of that is already

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Philippi and suggest contacting the organizers. I have listed the phone number above in the Upcoming Events box.

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 me or Mark.

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 by Facebook instant message.

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 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 for the pictures. Thanks to Chris, Ed ChapdeLaine and Ralph McCready for their review of Appomattox.

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.

I have not been regular in checking emails due to a wedding, baptism, graduation and Special Olympics. So if I have missed something let em know.

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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](#)

Chuck Critchfield -editor
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Appomattox

Ed ChapdeLaine

I attended the 150th Appomattox reenactment. I left Ohio on Tuesday, April 7th, and stayed in a motel that night and drove to the reenactment on Wednesday. My original goad was to set up my tent and the go on over the National park on Wednesday and Thursday. Virginia has had somewhat of a wet spring and the dirt is very claylike. I got stuck getting in and had to be pulled out. Since I was one of the first ones there, the grass and not been churned up yet. I was told I was in I Corps so I set my tent up. Then all roads were closed. We had about an inch of rain Wednesday night and this aggravated the situation. Four wheel drive vehicles and event tractors were getting stuck. On Friday, they had a tractor with a wagon with bales of hat to sit on to take us to the sutlers. We started off and rode about 100 yards when the tractor wheels started to spin. We all had to get out and we walked about 100 yards. The tractor and wagon got unstuck and we mounted up again. This happened several more times before we finally reached the sutlers. Because of the mud, there were cars in all the camps that could not move. May folks had to leaver their stuck cars on the muddy roads and bring their stuff to the camp site walking or by way of golf carts.

I was disappointed that more fellows from the unit did not attend. Kevin was there and Ralph McCready and his son were there but fell in with another unit. I ended up with the 2nd Connecticut (Heavy Artillery – editor's note). Some guys from the Massachusetts unit that we fill in with at Gettysburg were there also, but because my tent was already set up I chose to stay where I was.

Because of the mud situation, we had two battles on Saturday as many of the spectators who paid could not get to the first battle. The Confederates outnumbered us 2 to 1 but it was a good spectator battle with over 15 cannons. On Sunday, they bussed us down to the National Park and with flags waving, we marched down the old road into Appomattox Court House for a stacking of arms ceremony. It looked just like a movie scripted out of the movie "Gods and Generals." The weather both Saturday and Sunday was beautiful.

Since we had no more rain and things dried out somewhat, I stayed over Sunday night and broke camp on Monday. I then went over to the National Park and looked around before staring back for Ohio.

The trip back to Ohio was uneventful until I got about 50 miles from home. It was about 11:30- or 12 midnight when one of my rear tires went flat. There was too much weight in the truck, so I could not get the jack under the back part. I solved that problem, then tired to take the wheel off. It was frozen on. Another fellow stopped and we beat and pounded on the wheel until it finally broke loose. By then a State Patrol stopped and they helped us with traffic and flashing lights. Triple A showed up but we were just finishing up. I got home at 4 a.m. It was a long night so far with little time for sleeping.

150th Appomattox

By Chris Johnson

I made the 3-hour drive from southeastern West Virginia to Appomattox, Virginia in a leisurely manner and arrived at the 'Reenactor Entrance' at approximately 1000 hours. The two 'Staff Members' there informed me that the road was "washed out" from the recent rains and that I would have to drive around to the Commercial Park entrance. No big deal, until I arrived to find a parking lot full of reenactors waiting for the event staff to get Mulch hauled in to base the muddy roads into the event site. After waiting about two hours for the road to become passable, a caravan of four-wheel drive only vehicles were allowed to go in and 'make camp'. This I did quickly and soon had my vehicle out of the camp area and up to the parking area. All the while truckloads of Mulch were being hauled in to make the roads passable. Our camp was near the artillery park area and all throughout the day Thursday and into Friday night the 'gathering crowd' arrive to slip, slide, and generally get stuck in the 'muddy morass' that was soon becoming our campsite. Despite our best efforts, and to our chagrin, to keep vehicles from driving thru our camp to get to theirs, it soon became a scene of 'stuck vehicles and frustrated drivers' Much of it was quite amusing to watch and the farm tractors were very busy pulling vehicles out one, two, sometimes three times!

My 'Pard' Guy Covey and myself made camp with the fine folks of Wise's Legion and all through Friday the

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camp increased in size with the likes of the 36th, 31st, 13th Virginia, 59th Tennessee, and others, mostly from the 5th Regiment. The evenings were cool and the ground wet, but the musicians present made a 'Joyful Noise' and Johnny 'slung the bowl around' and much merriment was had by all. The Confederate Camp was quite large and I proceeded to meander around a bit to see if i could find dear friends. I was quite the "Vagabond" (i.e. Solo soldier) before joining the WVRA and the 25th Virginia and I had many 'Pards' scattered about the hills and dales of the Appomattox Virginia countryside that evening. It sure was good to see friends!

Early Saturday at around 0500 hrs there was a 'tactical' that awakened the slumbering. Only the Hardy souls would/could make the 'morning muster' were privy to the sights and excitement of a pre-dawn engagement. I was not one of those, but my friend Guy was glad to be engaged in an early morning skirmish that, as I understand, led to some 'friendly fire' predicaments! Guy made it out 'alive' with a grin on his face! Later that morning it was supposed to be just a 'dress parade formation', but soon we found our way marching into a late morning engagement with our fine northern 'friends'. The musketry was 'hot' and the Federals were 'stubborn'... not wanting to yield, but the sustained 'firepower' of the 'Southron' won the day! A 'lull' of about 2 hours soon found ourselves once again up against our nemeses and Johnny found himself against a blue host determined to 'avenge' the previous losses. We soon found ourself locked in hand-to-hand and there was many a 'bayoneted and rifle butted' combatant. Rest assured that the 'combat' was civil and no one was hurt. It was really quite exciting!

Saturday evening was very enjoyable and I found myself up at the dance tent listening to the sweet refrains of the '2nd South Carolina String Band'. Of course the evening finished with a rousing rendition of 'My Personal Favorite'... DIXIE'S LAND!! Even the Yanks were joining in! I made many a new friend and tasted some fine Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia 'Shine'. I 'did' make it safely back to my camp and soon found myself with dreams of home and friends running thru my head.

Sunday, 12 April dawned early, and as a result of the 09 April meeting between Gens. Lee and Grant, the ceremonial 'Stacking of Arms' was to take place. All

was somber in the Confederate camp... For we knew what was to transpire next. Orders one final time were given to 'fall in' and the army was 'formed up'.

Our Sergeant Major was NOT going to let the Yankees have our Battle Flag, so he went around to each remaining veteran of 'the Cause' and each cut off a piece of the 'Honored Banner' that we defended for so long... "Right Face, Forward March", and we stepped off to march one more time 'under arms' to the appointed place of our surrender.

The Union army was waiting... silent... at 'Carry Arms' as we approached, in good order, faced 'Front', 'Fixed Bayonets', then 'Stacked Arms'. Silence was the tone, General Lee's final order and farewell was relayed to the troops. I must say, at this time, I was filled with emotions that only a reenactor knows, and in particular, a Confederate reenactor can feel. I was crying... it was a 'Period Moment', if only for an 'instant'. "Right Face", "Forward March", and off we stepped to pass before our fellow 'soldiers'. The Army of Northern Virginia ceased to exist as a fighting force!

This article appeared in the 'Richmond Whig', April 25th, 1865

General Lee's Army Paroled And Disbanded
The paroling of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, was concluded on Friday the 14th inst. The men, as they were paroled left in squads, except Anderson's Georgia Brigade, which went away in a body. General Grant has been officially informed that the army has been paroled and disbanded and the property turned over to the United States. According to the official report, Gen. Lee surrendered 26,115 men, 159 pieces of cannon, 71 stand of color and 15,918 stand of small arms. The number of wagons, caissons, etc., is estimated at 1,100 and of horses and mules at 4,000.

Your Obedient Servant,

Pvt. Chris 'CW' Johnson
25th Virginia

**Report – Appomattox 150th
Anniversary**

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By Private Ralph McCready

We comrades in arms, Ralph and Sean McCready and Sgt. Ross Wehterell arrived at the Union Camp around 6:00 pm Friday evening only to find that the road into the camp was impassible to all without 4-wheel drive. Those that had com in earlier got in, but after the rain could not get out. We got help from a comrade who had 4-wheel drive. Many vehicles sat in camp most of the weekend until it dried out. This was very unusual for a National event. Knowing that the 1st West Virginia were not expecting many troops at this event, we fell in with the 4th Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

The good news is that they had busses that shuttled people from the camp to the National Park about 5 miles away. We spent the whole afternoon there touring the Appomattox Court House, McClean building and museums. They had a large crowd of spectators there. Around 3:00 pm they reenacted the stacking ceremony. One regiment of Union soldiers marched in and lined the street in front of the court house. I believe it was Vincent's Brigade. I recognized the 20th Maine colors. About 10 minutes later the Confederate army marched in from the opposite direction, faced the Union troops and stacked arms. All the time the Confederate army was there a regimental band played music. Hymns, somber hymns. They also played "Auld Lang Sine." The Confederate color bearers then walked their colors down the line and every Confederate soldier reached out with tear-filled eyes and touched the flag. It was sad, very sad. If it were not for the music you could have heard a pin drop. The colors were then laid on the stack. The Confederates then marched out followed by the Union army. We then heard some shouting. A lone negro woman with a digging tool over her shoulder was in the audience cheering the Union army. She wasn't sad—she was free.

Saturday night they had a program at the entertainment tent. A gentleman did a first-person impression of a Confederate soldier. And through dialog and song related his life through the war and even into the reclamation. He then portrayed his great, great grandson who found a box with several of his ancestors' belongings including a picture and a battle flag. These things he concluded, needed to be persevered, passed down and told about. When the program ended they brought Al Stone up on stage. Al was retiring from portraying Robert E. Lee. He

had been doing this impression for the last 25 years. They then presented him with a commemorative pistol. Al then asked the audience of about 150 people to pray with him. He took a knee and bowed his head and within 5 minutes half the audience was around the stage on their knees. This sight alone was to me, as they say "worth the price of admission."

We were able to get over to the USV camp and talked to Kevin and Ed ChapdeLaine. Colonel Skaggs says they were invited to do the stacking ceremony at the National Park on Sunday afternoon and invited us to join them. Unfortunately with a seven-hour drive back we had to decline.

Sunday they had a reenactment of the stacking ceremony at the reenactment although area, although none of our officers knew exactly where it was to take place. The Army of Ohio was not nearly as organized as our USV. The USV marched out of camp and onto busses which were then to take to a monument on the battlefield in the National Park. They were then to march a mile or so to the court house. Back at camp the rest of the Union reenactors proceeded to reenact the stacking ceremony to a very sparse spectator crowd. Confederates at the ceremony probably outnumbered the Union there about two to one.

The reenactment organization was very poor. But the trip as a whole was very much worth the trip.

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1 - Guy Covey and Chris Johnson of the 25th Virginia



3 - Stacking of arms



2 Time for some coffee



4 - Lt. Col. Skaggs along with USV 1st Regiment field officers march into Appomattox Court House. This is the National Park Service event. (Col. Dave Childs center and Major Ray Manzi on right)