

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2018 – Edition VI - Mid-May

Upcoming Civil War Events

Sponsored Events

Beverly (see below) - July 13-15

Events Recommended by WVRA members

2018

New Market - May 19-20

Gettysburg 155 - July 5-8;

www.gettysburgreenactment.com/reenactors

Henderson Hall - June 16,17 near Parkersburg.

McConnellsville - August 3-5

Cedar Creek - October

Remembrance Day - November

Other Events

Philippi - June 1,2 and 3

www.blueandgrayreunion.com

Bulltown - October 12 -14, 2018 contact Sam

Krafft (cwarcapt@yahoo.com)

Droop Mountain - October 12-14, 2018.

Other Time Periods

Beverly Centuries of History - July 13-15

Editor's note - if you plan to attend events, please work with your Unit Rep.

- Discussed the day's activities at University High School.

- A motion was made to make a \$50 memorial donation in the name of Gary Goetze to an appropriate Civil War organization. The motion passed. Mark Tennant took responsibility to follow up with the Goetze family concerning what organization would be preferable.

Mark Tennant moved and Ralph McCready seconded a motion to adjourn.

Submitted by Chuck Critchfield

Gary Goetze Passes Away

Gary A. Goetze, WVRA member, well-known for his impression of Senator John Carlisle, senator from the Restored Government of Virginia, passed away on April 14. The WVRA will make a donation in memory of Gary to an appropriate organization.

Gary was a native of Michigan, and was a resident of Mt. Clare in Harrison County. He is survived by his wife Millie Anderson Goetze, who portrayed Mrs. Carlisle at numerous events. He is survived by three children and six grandchildren.

Gary and Millie were active on their farm which provided produce and eggs to various farmers' markets in the area. He sang in the Blue and Gray Choir and was a skilled wood worker,



The late Gary Goetze with his wife Millie as Senator John Carlisle. (editor's photo)

April 20 Meeting Minutes

WVRA Meeting

April 20, 2018

Approximately 3:15

University High School Fields

Nine members present

President Jim Barnes called the meeting to order.

- Jim stated that he had just one item to settle. He opened the floor to discussion about the proposed new application. Some of the questions that had arisen in the most recent meeting were brought forward for discussion, including the need for a question about age, the reason for the question about criminal background and the reason for a question about veteran status. After discussion Jim asked if it was acceptable to begin using the new application and the members present unanimously agreed that it was.

- Jim reported that Jack Rush is sending in the insurance forms. Jim and Jack have not made connections to confirm that such has been done.

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Next Meeting

None scheduled at this time

Insurance Policy

Jack Rush has submitted the papers for the WVRA's liability insurance and received confirmation that we are now insured. If you have any questions, please contact the Executive Committee. This covers members of the WVRA. If you have not renewed your membership, you are not covered.

Any questions about the policy should be directed to President Jim Barnes who worked hard to get this insurance. Thanks to Jack, who helped to file the paperwork!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Beverly Heritage Days

Editor's Note - the WVRA has voted to make this a sponsored event.

Living historians from 1750 until 1950 eras are invited join our timeline heritage event to share the history of settlement, conflict, and daily life in the Tygart Valley. Beverly, West Virginia was the original county seat of Randolph County, and was a crucial crossroads through settlement, Civil War and 20th Century history. Located 6 miles south of Elkins along US Rt 219, Beverly is an active heritage tourism destination with town historic district, Rich Mountain Battlefield, and multiple museums and shops anchored by the Beverly Heritage Center. Beverly Heritage Days is our primary heritage event of the year.

Living history camps will include Native American, Pioneer, Civil War, and World War II eras. For this year we are seeking additional representation from post-Civil War periods, including World War I and civilian life. Living history, first person impressions, demonstrations, heritage crafts and displays are all welcome. The event will welcome music from a variety of periods, and a "timeline" dance Saturday evening will feature music and dancing from 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

We welcome input and suggestions from WVRA or other participants, as we plan the activities for the. If

you have a suggestion or would like to participate on the planning committee, please contact event chair Phyllis Baxter, phyllisb@meer.net or call BHC at 304-637-7424.

Participant info / registration for Beverly Heritage Days is posted on the website. For the direct link, <http://beverlyheritagecenter.org/BHD2018participa nt.html> or go to beverlyheritagecenter.org and there is a link on bottom left in the news block.

Beverly Heritage Days - Centuries of History is presented by Beverly Heritage Center and Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation. Editor's Note: nothing is planned at Camp Garnett or on Rich Mountain.

McConnellsville

The annual reenactment at McConnellsville, Ohio, will be held in August this year. Normally held in July, the event has been moved to August 3-5 according to WVRA member Ralph McCready (himself).

Ralph writes: "This year we are changing the battlefield for Sunday's battle and having it at the fairgrounds. We will be reenacting Buffington Island. Have reenactors contact me for more information and registration forms. E-mail: irishman1020@hotmail.com or phone: 740 - 638-2126.

Philippi

Eric Smallwood, former WVRA member, stopped by at University High School to discuss Philippi. It sounds like Philippi will be much as it has been in the past with the exception of the Saturday battle. Eric has been involved in recruiting reenactors to portray Co A., 1st (West) Virginia and the Barbour Grays.

The 1st fought at Philippi in civilian dress and Eric is seeking reenactors willing to participate as such. He is also seeking early war impressions for the Barbour Grays. Eric is probably best contacted through Facebook.

See www.blueandgrayreunion.org for more information.

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Treasurer's Report

For the period April 1-30, 2018

Beginning Balance	\$4,340.79
Credits	
Membership dues	\$30.00
Debits	
RMBF (Wheeling Ambulance)	\$375.00
Insurance	\$672.73
Ending Balance	\$3,598.26
Submitted by Jack Rush May 1, 2018	



Figure 1 - Linda Barnes joined the WVRA members making presentations to Monongalia students and the general public. She is well bundled against the cold morning temperatures before the crowds arrive on Saturday morning. (photo by Jim Barnes)

AFTER ACTION REPORTS

University High School Civil War Days

Over 300 students kept about 10 members of the WVRA very busy on April 20, as middle school students from Mountaineer Middle and Westwood in Morgantown and Clay-Battelle Middle in Blacksville joined high schools students from Morgantown's University High School to visit reenactors camped beside the high school.

On Saturday, the camps opened to the general public and about 100 people, all very interested in what we were presenting, filed through .

It was very interesting, busy and rewarding to make presentations to students and others with an interest in Civil War history. Nine stations were set up Friday starting with Allen Pinkerton presented by Ralph McCready. The Barnes and Mark Tennant at station two were followed by an impressive multi-faceted station manned by members of the 1st Virginia Cavalry and our Artillery members. Of course the cannon station was very popular as Stormy Brasuk can verify. The remaining stations were populated by the 27th Virginia, Walt Whitman, Jenny Smith of the WVRA doing a grieving widow, a couple infantry demonstrations and the final one by Eric Smallwood and friends.

Saturday saw only five stations manned and a smaller crowd but it was fun talking to the public Shmembers who were truly interested. Several adults brought children and all who attended seemed interested in what we have to say.

Phil Caskey, the award-winning teacher at University High School who organized this program, is to be congratulated on putting together another excellent program that gave a first-hand experience to those students who were motivated to engage with us.

The weather was frosty both mornings but warmed to a much more comfortable and sunny spring-like temperature both days.

OTHER FEATURES/NEWS

To Elevate, or Not To Elevate That is the Question

There seems to be a Facebook debate underway in the reenacting community about elevating weapons when firing at the enemy. This discussion is the second part of a larger discussion that began as a discussion about ramrods.

In this discussion, a reenactor describes four test fires, each of which involved the firing of a ramrod from a weapon. Now that discussion really gets down into the details of how it was conducted, etc. Needless to say, the firing of these ramrods produced various results, none of which were safe. But part of the fallout from this discussion was the practice of elevating weapons.

One of the conclusions of this discussion was that elevating a weapon created a trajectory that allowed the ramrods to travel farther than they would have

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otherwise, had the weapons been aimed on the level. This drew further comments that elevating weapons when conducting opposed firing scenarios is actually less safe than level fire.

This discussion evolved further into the practice on not drawing ramrods in reenactments. Most argued that we should be allowed to use ramrods. Of course others pushed back for the reasons we are all know.

But back to the question of elevating our rifled muskets. We all too often are firing at distances less than 50 yards or less. And I still feel elevating is a good idea at distances that close (or not firing at all). Distances greater than that, maybe there is a legitimate point to not elevating. Theoretically anything fired accidentally would go to ground when fired on the level.

I have been burned twice by residue from a discharged weapon that was fired directly at me - once at Allegheny Summit and once at Oglebay. Both times at distances inside 10 yards. Neither time seriously. Both times with ringing ears. Both times as a result of an unsafe decision. So, good judgment continues to be the most important component of safety in reenacting.

- C. L. Critchfield

The Reenactor's Lady

*She's a wife, and she's a mother
A sister, and daughter too;
She's the sweetheart you've been searching for
And vowed to e'er be true*

*She braves the wind and wood smoke,
Her skirts oft trailed in mud.
To Cook, and sew, and carry on....
The heritage of your blood.*

*She's the one you call when buttons pop,
Or your trousers let in air.
She sleeps beneath wet canvas
With straw wisps in her hair.*

*Have you paused to thank this woman
For her patience and her toil....
And for all the pots of coffee
That she has set to boil?*

*Have you shown appreciation
With a flower and a kiss?
For if she should ever go away....*

Her presence you would miss.

*Have you left the field of battle
To tell her of your love....
Have you walked with her and whispered
As the stars shine up above?*

*Do not take her for granted,
Do not leave her on the vine.
For if she were not beside you....
You would sip bitter wine.*

*A reenactor's way of life
Is not easy to uphold --
A true reenactor's lady
Is worth her weight in gold!
-- written by Sgt. Benjamin R. Gormely
April 28th, 1991
Submitted by Jenny Smith*

FOR SALE

Former member Rob Freeman is selling some of his Civil War period clothing that was worn by himself and his father. He is selling shirts, a military vest and civilian vest, a almost new Union frock coat, a Confederate sack coat with Virginia buttons and two pairs of sky blue pants. Contact Pam Nicholson jmpnicholson@aol.com or Rob at rffreeman1373@gmail.com for more information.

Jim Barnes reports that at the Clarksburg Gun Show, a National Guard recruiter stopped by and said he had a nice Civil War officer's desk he wants to sell if anyone is interested contact Jim Barnes.

155 Years Ago

May 1863

Jones-Imboden Raid

155 years ago, the Jones– Imboden Raid dominated Civil War activities in this area. The raid was a Confederate military action conducted in western Virginia (now the state of West Virginia) in April and May 1863 during the American Civil War. The raid, led by Brig. Gens. William E. Jones and John D. Imboden, was aimed at disrupting traffic on the vital Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and reasserting Confederate authority in the Trans-Allegheny region of Virginia in an effort to stop the statehood movement in the region. Voters in the future state had in March approved a new

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Constitution and statehood only awaited Congressional and Presidential approval.

Raiders claimed success from a military vantage, since they severely damaged several railroad bridges (though not the two most critical), as well as an oil field and other critical Union resources. Raiders also captured valuable supplies and gained recruits. From a political standpoint, however, the raid failed, for it had little effect on pro-statehood sentiment, and West Virginia was admitted as the 35th state of the Union in June.

The defense of Rowlesburg by elements of the 6th West Virginia Infantry at the start of the raid, is an interesting part of the whole raid. The WVRA participated in a reenactment there, although we did the battle of Greenland Gap, several years ago. The geography and railroad make Rowlesburg an important and tough part of the raid. The Tray Run Viaduct is just northeast of town and a prime target for the raiders. Rowlesburg, like Harpers Ferry sat at the junction of three valleys with hills high overhead and the B&O running through the town.

At this point in the raid, Grumble Jones troops and John Imboden's troops were split. Jones' 2900 men hit the B&O at Oakland on April 26, capturing the town and burning a railroad bridge. Imboden entered the Trans-Allegheny region capturing Huttonsville on the 23rd.

From Oakland they proceeded to Terra Alta (Cranberry Summit) and then to Aurora on the Northwest Turnpike. Jones and his force reached the Cheat River Bridge early on the afternoon of Sunday, April 26. Before he crossed he dismounted several companies and sent them up and over Palmer's Knob to attack the east end of the rail road bridge at Rowlesburg. If all went well, this group would attack the east end while Jones and the remainder attacked the west end of the bridge. However a Mr. Morris, a captured resident of the town informed Jones that there were upwards of 1600 troops in Rowlesburg. To be safe Jones only sent 250 of his men ahead to Rowlesburg to feel out the defenders and find out how many men there were guarding the railroad, before committing his whole force.

Opposing the Rebels were troops from companies F, K, L and O of the 6th West Virginia infantry (250 in number) commanded by Major John Showalter. Meanwhile, the Confederates climbing over Palmer's Knob were spotted by a Rowlesburg resident who raced into church services underway in town to alert

the defenders. The regular troops quickly prepared defenses on the north end of town where they were joined by a couple hundred local citizens. Soon the defenders were exchanging fire with the outnumbered attackers who decided to withdraw.

Showalter sent a detachment north towards the Tray Run Viaduct to prevent Jones from surprising him from the rear. He sent another small detachment to watch the road from the Cheat River where they ran into the advance party from the Jones' 250-man force headed towards Rowlesburg. The Confederates funneled into the narrow bottom were unable to climb the mountain to their left nor ford the high Cheat on their right to get around the Federal detachment.

Grumble Jones, uncertain of what he was facing, returned to the Northwest Turnpike bypassing Rowlesburg, the tunnel at Tunnelton and the Tray Run Viaduct. All points once destroyed would cripple the B&O for weeks.

Showalter, meanwhile was receiving reports of Confederates at Terra Alta and points to the north along with the unknown force he had just faced from the south. He soon headed his men north all the way to Pittsburgh to escape what he felt was a deathtrap.

Despite the resourceful defense of Rowlesburg, Major Showalter's decision to move north was criticized by his superiors and he was ordered to return to his post.

- Wikipedia, Gray Days in Morgantown, An Achilles Heel: The B&O Railroad at Cheat River Gorge.

They Said It (or didn't)

"The only persons who do not have a revolver and a knife are those who have two revolvers," New York Congressman James Hammond describing the Congress of 1859-60,

"We all want this rebellion crushed. We all want to return to our homes. War is not our profession; we are mechanics, tradesman and laborers. We of the North work for our living, but if called upon to fight for the preservation of our National existence, we can fight and we will fight. If we succeed, the problem whether man is capable of self government will be solved; there will not be a king, queen, or emperor in Europe in twenty years. But if we fail, the sooner we get a king to rule over us the better it will be for us."

R. H. Milroy on the occasion of his promotion to major general, 1863.

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Sites of Interest

Beverlyheritagecenter.org – Beverly Heritage Center
WVRA.org – our website
<http://www.wvmasondixoncwr.org/> -- W. Va.
Mason Dixon Civil War Round Table (Morgantown)
Civil War Trust – civilwar.org

WVRA Officers 2018 (executive board)

President – Jim "Hawkeye" Barnes
Vice President – Ken Connell
Treasurer /Secretary – Jack Rush
Newsletter editor - Chuck "Pathfinder" Critchfield*
Website – Peter Baxter*
1st W. Va. Rep – Mark "Quiz Whiz" Tennant
25th Va. Rep – Bill "Beal" Brisendine
1st Va. Cavalry – John Brasuk
Artillery – Stormy Brasuk
TASAS – Diane Tennant
*Union Rep - Debbie Rush ***
*Confederate Rep - Sherri Skidmore Goff ***
*20th Century Rep - Linda Barnes ***

* Non-voting member of executive board

** Not members of executive board

Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

THANK YOU to everyone who made contributions to this issue - Ralph McCready, Jenny Smith, Peter Baxter. A big thank you to Jim Barnes and Jack Rush for completing the paperwork successfully for the WVRA insurance policy.

GRAFTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - There is nothing planned at the Cemetery this memorial day.

A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK - Ralph McCready lost his period reading glasses while tearing down his impressive camp impression on Saturday, April 21 at University High School. The glasses had not been turned in by anyone and a search was organized quickly. Jim and Linda Barnes along with Stormy Brasuk found the missing spectacles in that enormous field!! Well done!!

BILL SNYDER - has anyone had any contact with Bill? He has not responded to me. I dropped by his house but got no response.

PHILIPPI - The annual Philippi reenactment is scheduled for the first weekend in June. (as usual it's

the weekend I am with Special Olympics). Eric Smallwood has posted an announcement on Facebook about the event and the 1st West Virginia, Co. A. Also, he talks about the Confederate company (K Barbour Mountain Guard) that becomes part of the 31st Virginia. He is soliciting participation. You can find the posting on Conference of West Virginia Reenactors Facebook page.

BEVERLY HERITAGE CENTER - announced that rehabilitation work on the 1841 Randolph County jail sitting behind the Heritage Center in Beverly, will start in 2018. Beverly is also embarking on our their annual growth campaign to provide funding for improvement projects. Please donate. beverlyheritagecenter.org.

PERSONAL - Jack and Tonya Daft ask that you keep their family in your prayers.

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. Insurance questions about the 1st Virginia Cavalry should be directed to the Unit Representative.

There are two Facebook pages currently in use as avenues of communication by WVRA members. One is the WVRA-The Trans-Allegheny Soldiers Aid Society group page. 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 (by far) over the past 3 years.

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This newsletter is available free to members by email. It will be mailed by US Mail for \$10 per year.

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

WVRA website - wvra.org

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Figure 2- Jim Barnes and Mark Tennant at University High School. Let's play rounders. (Photo submitted by Jim Barnes)

Ralph McCready's tent



Figure 3 Stormy Brasuk talks to an UHS student.



Figure 4 - Mike Phillips talks to students in Upshur County