

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2017- Edition 11 - September

Upcoming Civil War Events Sponsored Events

None at this time

Events Recommended by WVRA members

Cedar Creek – October 14-15 USV Sanctioned
IIOF Cemetery - November 10 (after parade)
Clarksburg

Other – 2017

Jackson's Mill – Labor Day Weekend
Droop Mountain - October 14 & 15

Other Time Periods

None at this time

Next Meeting

Discussion is underway to schedule a next meeting to discuss elections, future events and past events. Stay tuned

UPCOMING EVENTS

Droop Mountain

This email was sent in reply to Jim Barnes' efforts to find out what was happening about Droop. I spoke with Tim Walker at Bartow and really don't have anything to add at this points. Somebody posted on Facebook that the event has a Facebook page. I could not locate it.

"Jim, we will be putting the event on Oct. 14 & 15. Since we only learned that the WV Reenactors Assn was not going to do it this year we did not want to see the event disappear so will do it this year without much advanced planning (We had volunteered 2 years ago to assist them this year and take over the event after that.)"

Not sure if there will be a dance or meal this year, but we will have the event. Our advanced planning will be for next year (2018), the 155th anniversary of the battle. We will try and hold it close to the actual battle anniversary (November 6th, 2018. Not sure yet if it will be the weekend before or the weekend after since we just learned that a group of campaigners have scheduled an event celebrating the Union advance on Droop for the first weekend in November, 2018. Maybe we can join forces with them if I can figure how to contact them.

We should have a good artillery showing this year. Not sure about infantry since it the same weekend as Cedar Creek this year." - Tim Walker of Bryan's Battery.

Further discussion was held about changing the date to the first weekend of October, but the decision was made to keep it as is currently scheduled.

Editor's note: I met Tim Walker at Bartow. First, he seems to be doing better after his serious health issues. He confirmed the date and confirmed that this will be a reenactment with nothing much else planned except the battles themselves. It sounds like you can just show up and no pre-registration is available.

Jackson's Mill

Jackson's Mill is scheduled for Labor Day weekend. I spoke with Jason Jason Studenwalt at Bartow and he confirmed that the event would take place on Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend. Please contact Jason (31st Virginia) at j_rstudenwalt@yahoo.com for further information.

Bulltown

I have no information on Bulltown.

Cedar Creek

Cedar Creek is October 13 through 15. A couple members of the 1st West Virginia have registered. <https://www.ccbf.us/>

IIOF Cemetery Clarksburg

Submitted by Tonya Daft

They are still having problems getting an ok from Clarksburg to work on the Jackson Memorial Cemetery in Clarksburg. They need to repair and replace the headstones and to work on maintaining the cemetery. But Shaun (Jedju) wants everyone to help with a dedication again to the IIOF Cemetery in Clarksburg (Chestnut Street) see his email below and his contact information if you are interested....**Tonya**

I have a date on a Veteran's Day Commemoration event, November 10th, I am planning it to be after the Clarksburg Veteran's Day Parade so I am not yet sure of a time, I am also inviting numerous military members and organizations, I already have a platform donated to be used as the speaking area. The event is for the former IIOF Cemetery, I am still waiting on information from the city pertaining to the Jackson Cemetery in order to put together an effort to reset and restore the grave

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markers. Here's my phone number 609 346 4456.
Thank you for your time..... Shaun Jedju

Editor's Note - Senator Carlisle is buried in this cemetery. This is the same cemetery we have participated in this ceremony in the past.

In Memoriam Jacob R. (J.R.) Moore (1952-2017)



Figure 1 In memory of JR Moore shown here talking about his artillery piece at Rich Mountain.

We lost J. R. in late August after a long illness. JR was well known as an artillery reenactor, but he was known to shoulder a rifle early in his reenacting career. JR was a coal miner for over 40 years and I looked forward each campfire to talking about the coal industry with him. His wife Debbie and daughter Reagan also participated early in his reenacting career. JR lived in Daybrook in Western Monongalia County and was famous for his bear-hunting exploits also. He was a good guy and a good reenactor. Everytime I drive through Beverly, I will remember him and the windows he broke. The WVRA will make a donation in his memory to the Civil War Trust.
Chuck Critchfield

Camp Bartow/Battle of Greenbrier

On August 12 about 15 reenactors gathered at the behest of the West Virginia Land Trust to celebrate the Trust's acquisition of 14 acres of the Greenbrier River battlefield on the banks of the East Fork of the Greenbrier River.

Many of you are familiar with Travellers Repose which sits beside the old Parkersburg-Staunton Turnpike at its intersection with the road to Green Bank. Nowadays, that intersection is joined by modern route 250 on its way up the mountain and into Old Virginia. To the right of Travellers Repose and across the original Turnpike rises a knoll that overlooks the intersection and the bridge that crossed the East Fork in 1861. Atop that knoll were the remains of entrenchments and tent pads occupied by the 31st Virginia and multiple artillery emplacements. That knoll was purchased through the efforts of the Land Trust with help from the Civil War Trust, the Pocahontas County Commission, the West Virginia DOH, the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike Alliance and the First Energy Foundation.

Back in the fall of 1861, and a cold fall it was, two Federal Brigades composed primarily of Ohio and Indiana troops, and commanded by Brigadier General Joseph (not John) Reynolds, ventured down the Staunton-Parkersburg Pike to make a reconnaissance-in-force to develop the Confederate positions rumored to be along the road. On the third of the month, they ran into Confederate forces entrenched on the east bank of the East Fork of the Greenbrier and astride the Turnpike. In what turned out to be an artillery battle, the Virginia and Georgia troops under Henry Jackson, stopped the Federal advance. Each side lost several killed. The Northern force returned to Cheat Summit Fort satisfied that they had found the Confederate front line.

Because the trenches being saved in this purchase were primarily occupied by the 31st Virginia, our friends from the 31st were present to honor their ancestors. Jason Studenwalt commanded the Confederate honor guard. The Federals were represented by yours truly, Colonel Kevin Skaggs, Chris Taylor and our friend Chris Johnson who galvanized for the Federal honor guard. Also present were WVRA members Ken (Gov. Letcher) Connell, his aide, Big Jim Allman and bodyguard, Bill

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Brisendine. Taking part in the ceremonies was member Hunter Lesser and seen circulating in the crowd was Phyllis Baxter. Taking photographs was WVRA member Pam Critchfield. Mark Poling and Tim Glaser of the 25th Virginia participated.



Figure 2 Lt. Col. Kevin Skaggs addresses the honor guard

Land Trust officers opened the ceremonies in the shade of the trees behind Travellers Repose. About 100 people were present. The honor guard presented colors from both armies. We ate a light lunch and then Hunter led us on a tour. For those who were able, we ascended the knoll to the entrenchments and artillery lunette. The works were still clearly visible although the forest blocked the view towards the Federal positions located back in the present-day community of Bartow.



Figure 3 Governor Letcher (Ken Connell) and Hunter Lesser.

This was the type of event that brings joy to my heart to see land preserved. In addition it was nice to see green space saved from future development. The weather was hot, but under the trees we didn't suffer that much.

It was great to Hunter Lesser, who has become one of the foremost experts on the first year of the War in West Virginia.



Figure 4 Mark Poling in the honor guard

Part of the Confederate forces that participated in the battle was the 25th Virginia, which was entrenched on the opposite side of the Turnpike on another knoll behind Travellers Repose.

It was a great day, that was only dampened by news from events about four score and seven miles to the east.

- C. L. Critchfield

Charlottesville

Virginia was devastated by the Civil War. The armies ranged back and forth over much of the state between Richmond, Washington DC and the Shenandoah Valley. Yet right smack in the middle of this devastation, relatively untouched by the war was Charlottesville. Now it is at the center the storm.

I have been quite surprised by the strength of the reaction to the events there. One might even say over reaction.

Nonetheless, I felt, as your editor I would react from a reenactors point-of-view. I was not able to come up with a simple response however but continued to experience multiple reactions.

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1) The events at Charlottesville will have an effect on the hobby. How much and how long remains to be seen.

2) All things Confederate are a lightning rod right now attracting all forms of criticism and in some cases worse.

3) We in West Virginia are not immune from all this. Stonewall's statue on the lawn at the State Capitol and on the courthouse square in Clarksburg are attracting attention from those who want to protest their existence. Mike Smith once related a story to me that there was a member or two, of state government who were not happy with the display of the Confederate flag at Droop (many of you will remember where it was once displayed). He responded by just trying to fly under the radar after that and not drawing any undue attention to the reenactment.

4) Moving or removing statues will not change things. However, if places like New Orleans or Charlottesville, through their elected representatives choose to move or remove the statues...that's their business. If done by the rule of law at work. Those who pull over statues through mob rule, as in Durham should be prosecuted.

5) Removal of monuments at those National Park's commemorating the Civil War is wrong. So far the NPS is standing strong in keeping the monuments.

6) We as reenactors complain about some of our critics wanting to re-write or revise history when some of our own hobby are doing the same thing.

7) No matter how much we, as reenactors, remind, preach, teach and shout that symbols of the Confederacy are about heritage, not hate, most Americans do not think that. We can continue to educate the public about our history, but most will continue to link the Confederate flag to other organizations and to slavery.

- Chuck Critchfield

Another View

On a personal note. I have been a Civil War reenactor for the last 25 years as part of the 25th Virginia in the organization of the West Virginia Reenactors Association. Normally do Confederate and have "fought" at over 300 events. I also do a

living history of telegraph and the Rev. Samuel R. Huston. We raised our children at these events. Two are now Presbyterian Ministers and the other an Advance Respiratory Therapist at Duke.

I have spent many a night around camp fires with literally hundreds of people talking and drinking with people who portray both Union and Confederate. in all those years and all those people there have been less than four or five people who would be called racist. Those who were, were quickly kicked out and run off. in the hyper ventilation, mob-rule rush to judgment, throw the baby out with the bath water, I fear that my beloved hobby will die along with it. I have instructed thousands of kids and their parents on telegraph and modern communications is just an extension of that. At our more advanced age the family reunion and strong personal relationships will die with it. We go to each other's weddings/funerals. That is the real tragedy in all of this.

A very small group and the overzealous press that wants to make money and fan the flames and foster more hate to generate more views and clicks, hijacked a hobby I love and the education of millions of people when they in the burn the witch at the stake kill Civil War reenacting. Because if you do Confederate then you must be a homophobic, neo-Nazi, gay bashing thug and that is the real tragedy. Biased (people) paint them with the same paint brush, that is bigotry. Instead of taking the time to listen and realize there are many ramifications of this mob rule.

Printed with permission from the author, Tim Glaser from Facebook.

Film Project

(Editor's note - this was submitted by Tonya Daft and all questions can be directed to her. Contact information can be found at the end of this story)

This is **Calvin Grimm** with Lost Valley Studios. Here is a summary of the film project we are working on and would like your reenactment group to participate in: "River of Hope" (working title) tells the real-life story of a Confederate sympathizer in the Kanawha Valley, West Virginia (Sam Cabell) who marries his African American slave (Mary Barnes), who goes on to found the first college for African Americans in West Virginia.

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The story begins in the 1840s as the couple travels back to West Virginia and eventually settles along the Kanawha River near what is now the town of Institute. It progresses through the tumultuous beginnings of the Civil War, which saw Kanawha Valley residents divided between Union and Confederate sympathies. As the war begins, the Valley being occupied by both armies and changing hands forcefully multiple times creates a strained life for Sam Cabell, Mary Barnes, their children, and their community.

The local engagements of the Battle of Scary Creek and the Battle of Charleston both greatly affect their livelihood and home. As the war comes to a close, Sam Cabell, although married and living with one of his former slaves and their mixed-race children, sustains his heritage to "old Virginia". His sympathies and discourse for the defeated Confederate cause result in returning Union army veterans conspiring to kill him at his own home in Institute. Turning tragedy into prosperity, his African American widow Mary Barnes then works with the Governor of West Virginia, Aretas Flemming, to found what would be become West Virginia State University - the first college for African Americans in West Virginia.

That about summarizes the film, and the three aspects I would like your reenactment group to assist with are:

- 1) Reenactment of the Battle of Scary Creek
- 2) Reenactment of the Battle of Charleston
- 3) Filling spots as military officers and soldiers during sporadic other scenes

The biggest logistical challenge will be finding a suitable place to reenact the Battle of Charleston. The location requires two somewhat substantial rivers meeting (resembling the Kanawha and Elk Rivers) and also featuring an old-fashioned bridge across one of the bridges - the one which was cut/destroyed by the Union Army as the fled Charleston was a suspension bridge, but anything "old fashioned" will work. We obviously won't be destroying or harming the actual bridge - I will do that with special effects

As I mentioned before, the filming of the battle scenes for the project will likely be in the early spring of 2017. Historically, Scary Creek was fought in July and Charleston was fought in September. Clear spring days should mimic July and September accurately enough for our purposes.

I greatly appreciate your time, and I really look forward to hearing back. I'm very excited about this project.

Take care and best regards,

Calvin Grimm Owner/Director - Lost Valley Studios, LLC

(Tonya's note: I think he meant 2018 because he has not started yet...Tonya. Please contact me if you have any interest so I have contact information for everyone.

Tonya Daft (304-825-6103)...rebeld4h@yahoo.com...Facebook
Tonya Fluharty Daft by private message)

Treasurer's Report

August 30, 2017

Beginning Balance:	\$4,209.51
Credits (memberships):	\$20.00
Debits:	
Donation for meeting space	\$30.00
Ending Balance:	\$4,`99.51

Submitted by J. Rush,
Treasurer

Jack Rush reports that the mysterious web hosting site has stopped taking automatic withdrawals from our checking account. Peter Baxter and Jack are investigating.

WVRA Officers 2017 (executive board)

President - Jim Barnes

Vice President - John Brasuk

Treasurer /Secretary - Jack Rush

Newsletter editor - Chuck Critchfield*

Website - Peter Baxter*

1st W. Va. Rep - Mark "Quiz Whiz" Tennant

25th Va. Rep - Tim Glaser

1st Va. Cavalry - John Brasuk

Artillery - Stormy Brasuk

TASAS - Diane Tennant

* Non-voting member of executive board

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155 Years Ago

First (West) Virginia

In August of 1862 the First was in the thick of the maneuvering in Northern Virginia, yet never quite in the thick of the fight.

Joshua Winters wrote to his sister: "i recon you have heard of the battelling out hear on the ninth (Battle of Cedar Mountain). we wasint in the fight. we was six mils back." After Stonewall Jackson's troops pushed the Federals from the field of battle during the day, the Confederates pushed northward trying to press their advantage and reach Culpepper Court House. They soon ran into Carroll's Brigade which included the First (West) Virginia Infantry. "our brigaid wnet in front on pickit" wrote Winters. "the first thing we node we was in one hundred yards of the rebell battery in the woods....i was on gard in front of our regement. the canons opend, we laid close to the ground. the balls went over us....sum of thair collum laid to our right. we could see them, hear them and thout it was our min. we fell back before day light. Our regement got off safe. one man was wounded."

The First withdrew from the area and headed north. Meanwhile Stonewall and his force would head north in a couple of weeks and get in the rear of John Pope's Federal army, forcing Pope back towards Washington. As Jackson occupied ground near Manassas Junction, Longstreet's Corps raced north to support Jackson's Corps before the full weight of Pope's army and McClellan's army coming up from the Peninsula fell upon Jackson. During these maneuvers Rickett's Division, in which the First marched, moved west to Thoroughfare Gap to block Longstreet's eastward march to Manassas. Rawlings does not write much about this battle, in which the Confederates finally outflanked Ricketts and forced him back towards Haymarket, Virginia. He describes the fighting as "very warm" and says Thoburn's Brigade held its assigned position until 6 pm.

The next day, the First would join the fighting of the first day of the battle of Second Bull Run. Rickett's Division would be assigned to the right flank and witness the fighting there. Neither Rawlings nor Winters talk much Second Bull Run's fighting. The First appears to have played a supporting role for the most part. The First did suffer casualties at Bull Run and Winters writes his company suffered five or six casualties and states that "the Kirlen is not expected to liv." After the battle the First with most of the

Federals would retreat to the defenses around Washington.

- From History of the First Regiment West Virginia Infantry by C. J. Rawling. Civil War Letters and Diary of Joshua Winters, edited By Elizabeth Davis Swiger.

12th (West) Virginia Volunteer Infantry

155 Years ago, the 12th Virginia Volunteer Infantry was mustered into service on August 30 at Camp Willey on Wheeling Island in Wheeling, Virginia. Field Officers were Colonel John B. Klunk of Grafton, Lt. Colonel R. S. Northcutt of Clarksburg and Major Francis P. Pierpont of Harrisville. The 10 companies were generally from the following counties.

A - Marshall
B - Marshall
C - Marshall
D- Brooke
E - Harrison
F - Marion
G - Harrison
H - Taylor
I - Marion

"The Twelfth was made up of exceptionally good material. The men were mainly American born and native Virginians. They were a hardy, robust, vigorous, self-reliant class of men, mainly from the farming districts, of more than average size, many of them mountaineers. They enlisted under trying and embarrassing circumstances, and in great measure from patriotic impulses, their surroundings and circumstances in many cases tending to lead them to join their fortunes with the Rebel cause. It was a common thing for a West Virginia Union soldier to have friends and relatives in the Rebel army, and in some cases for brother to fight against brother. "

From the History of the 12th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry by William Hewitt.

Sites of Interest

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

They Said It

"It is said that the admission of West Virginia, is secession, and tolerated only because it is our secession....Well, if we call it by that name, there

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is still difference enough between secession against the constitution, and secession in favor of the constitution." Abraham Lincoln

"Secession is nothing but revolution....Still, a union that can only be maintained by swords and bayonets, and in which strife and civil war are to take the place of brotherly love and kindness, has no charm for me. If the Union is dissolved, the government disrupted, I shall return to my native state and share the miseries of my people. Save in her defense, I will draw my sword no more." (putting Robert E. Lee's famous quote in context. Letter to his son, 1861)

Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

SO YOU THINK that the Civil War is ancient history...well, this month I really don't need to find some obscure news story to point out we still feel the effects of the war and to point out the war still affects us. Charlottesville took care of that point for me.

THANK YOU – Thanks to Peter Baxter for his help with the Dispatch. Thank you to Jack Rush, Jim Barnes. Thank you to former member Ethan Moore for information on JR Moore. Thank you to Tonya Daft for information on the movie.

CHARLOTTESVILLE - If anyone has any thoughts on Charlottesville, please feel free to send your thoughts. I reserve the right to edit for clarity and profanity.

CONFEDERATES - Once again, I suggest to you boys in gray, that most of what I print here in this newsletter seems to be Federal in nature. I welcome anything Confederate-related.

QUIZ - Camp Bartow was named for whom?

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.

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Figure 5 Escorting the President and the First Lady are WVRA members Chuck Critchfield, Kevin Skaggs, Ron Wenig, Mark Tennant and Chris Taylor.