

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
June, 2026 – Edition CXCI

Next Meeting

In the Fall by Zoom. Date and time to be determined

Upcoming Events

Sponsored/Hosted Events

None at this time

Other Events recommended by WVRA members

Other Events

October

10-11 Droop Mountain (battleofdrycreek.org)

17-18 Cedar Creek (Virginia) ccbf.us

WVRA Treasurers Report

I am required, as Treasurer, to issue monthly reports (if I remember correctly). Here are the past two months, since the last newsletter.

August 1-31, 2026

Initial Balance	\$	1,297.80
Deposits		
None	\$	0.00
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$	0.00
Debits		
None	\$	0.00
TOTAL DEBITS	\$	0.00
Current Balance	\$	1,297.80
Chuck Critchfield – Treasurer 10/1/2026		

September 1-30, 2026

Initial Balance	\$	1,297.80
Deposits		
None	\$	0.00
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$	0.00
Debits		
None	\$	0.00
TOTAL DEBITS	\$	0.00
Current Balance	\$	1,297.80
Chuck Critchfield – Treasurer 10/1/2026		

Upcoming Events

For the complete list, see above. The following is any additional information submitted to the editor for the events listed above.

Beverly Heritage Center This Fall

The Rich Mountain Anniversary event and Beverly Heritage Day both went very well - thanks so much to the WVRA members who participated and attended.

A few highlights coming up this fall include:

Appalachian Craftsmanship Art Exhibit; opening reception 3 pm August 29, exhibit through November 18. Also raffle of hand-crafted banjo by Bob Smakula.

Lantern Tours of Historic Beverly - October 15, 16, 17 (ticketed)

Beverly Old-Fashioned Christmas - December 5

Plus monthly live music and more

If you want to help contribute or offer living history for any events, contact Eleanor at director@beverlyheritagecenter.org or call 304-637-7424

To attend or learn more about BHC events see www.beverlyheritagecenter.org or follow on Facebook.

- Eleanor Renshaw, Executive Director

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Civil War Roundtables

The Mason-Dixon Civil War Roundtable meets the third Tuesday of the month at the Drummond Chapel behind the Suncrest Methodist Church in Morgantown. The meeting begins at 7 pm. There is no meeting in July and members go to Clarksburg for the October meeting (See below).

The Stonewall Jackson Civil War Roundtable in Clarksburg meets the second Tuesday of the month at the FOP Restaurant in Nutter Fort (Harrison County). Come at 5:30 if you a meal. Otherwise the talk usually starts around 6:30. The October meeting is at the Waldomore on Pike Street in Clarksburg. (See below)

There is not cost to attend the Roundtables. However, if you become a regular, you are requested to become a dues-paying member. Dues go towards paying the speakers' honorariums and other expenses.

If you have any questions, please let me know. I would be glad to provide you with more details.

The Stonewall Jackson Civil War Roundtable

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 1830 Hours (6:30 PM) at Waldomore, 404 West Pike Street, Clarksburg, WV. No meal is available at this meeting.

This month's program is a presentation on McNeill's Rangers and their raid on Cumberland. The speaker is Steve French.

Feb. 21, 1865, 3 A M., Cumberland, Md. A band of 65 Rebel horsemen silently makes its way down Greene Street. Thinking that the riders are disguised Union scouts, the few Union soldiers out that bitterly cold morning pay little attention to them. In the meantime, in and around the town, over 3, 500 Yankees are peacefully asleep.

But within the next half-hour, the McNeill Rangers had taken Union generals George Crook and Benjamin Kelley from their hotel beds and spirited them out of town. Despite a determined effort by Union pursuers to intercept the raiders, by that evening they had reached safety deep in the South Fork River Valley, over 50 miles away. Not long afterward, the generals were guests at Richmond's Libby Prison. Southern Gen. John B. Gordon later called the mission, "one of the most thrilling incidents of the war."

The talk will focus on the events leading up to the raid, the operation itself and its aftermath.

This program is made possible in part by a grant from the Cultural Foundation of Harrison County.

Parking is available in the city lot behind the Clarksburg-Harrison Public Library, on the street in front of the library and at Jackson Square.

Steve French is a retired middle school history teacher from Hedgesville, W.Va. He is the author of 3 Civil War books and over 100 historical articles that have appeared in publications such as Gettysburg Magazine, The Washington Times and Crossfire: The Magazine of the Civil War Round Table United Kingdom. His book *Imboden's Brigade in the Gettysburg Campaign* has received numerous national writing awards including the Bachelder-Coddington Award, Gettysburg CWRT's Book Award, and the UDC's Jefferson Davis Historical Gold Medal. (Thanks to The Bugle, the newsletter of the Stonewall Jackson Civil War Roundtable for this information.)

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Other Features

Canceled Statues Staging a Comeback?

by Hunter Lesser

A recent letter from Keven Walker, CEO of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF), updates work that organization has been quietly engaged in to preserve controversial historic monuments. According to Keven: "While many organizations chose to avoid controversy and risk, the Battlefields Foundation took a principled public stand in favor of monument protection and sought genuine dialogue even with those who held opposing views."

Among their recent accomplishments: agreements to save the only Confederate monument preserved from Charlottesville, VA, along with keeping "the Princess Anne County Confederate Monument standing in Virginia Beach." They also arranged for the Talbot County Maryland Confederate monument to be relocated to the Cross Keys Battlefield, where it will commemorate Maryland troops involved in that battle.

Despite considerable pressure to remove the Confederate monument on their museum grounds in Winchester, SVBF stood firm. They also partnered with donors from across the nation to erect new monuments on Shenandoah Valley battlefields, including one for Thomas Laws, "an enslaved man who risked his life carrying messages that helped shape the outcome of the Third Battle of Winchester."

In January, the outgoing Governor of Virginia transferred ownership of the Confederate monument from Arlington National Cemetery to SVBF. An agreement between the Commonwealth and the Department of the Army "will see this monument respectfully returned and re-erected at its original location" at Arlington.

Also in January, SVBF took possession of the statue of Robert E. Lee that once stood at the Virginia Capitol. Removed under cover of night in July 2020, the statue was placed under a 100-year loan to SVBF by Gov. Youngkin for exhibition in the Shenandoah Valley. They also filed suit against the city of Richmond in an effort to preserve statues removed from Monument Avenue, stored at a wastewater treatment plant.

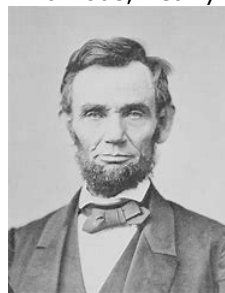
Finally, SVBF has secured custody of monuments to Stonewall Jackson, Gov. Extra Billy Smith and Dr. Hunter McGuire that had been removed from the Virginia Capitol grounds. Language enabling this transfer was recently signed by Gov. Spanberger.

As SVBF CEO Walker wrote: "The path has been challenging and often controversial, but we are making a lasting difference. We are saving monuments that would otherwise have been lost forever, ensuring that future generations will be able to stand before these powerful works of art, reflect on our shared history, and find inspiration for their own lives."

For more information see www.shenandoahatwar.org or 540-740-4545.

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 30, 1866
Google shareholders meeting

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"Mr. Jesse Headington, one of our subscribers...came in last week to settle his account, and bid us good by, stating that he had volunteered and was about going to war. Jesse is the sixth volunteer this family has furnished to put down the rebellion – he having already five brothers in the service. Two of these brothers fought in the Mexican war. Their father, Laban Headington, served his country in the war of 1812, and their grandfather was one of the gallant men who assisted in achieving our independence in the War of the Revolution. It is scarcely necessary to add that all these men, grandfather, father and son, have been Democrats, for men who have so faithfully stood by their country could not be suspected as having belonged to any other party."

- Mount Vernon Democratic Banner, 1862

"At the bottom the coming change simply meant that the infinite ferment of the industrial revolution was about to work its way with a tremendously energetic and restless people who had a virgin continent to exploit. One difficulty was that two very different societies had developed in American, one in the North and the other in the South, which would adjust themselves to the industrial age in very different ways. Another difficulty was that the difference between these two societies were most infernally complicated by the existence in the South of the institution of chattel slavery. Without slavery, the problems between the sections could probably have been worked out by the ordinary give-and-take of politics; with slavery, they became insoluble."

- Bruce Catton

Want Ads

New member Robert Durham of Fayette County is seeking equipment so he can re-enter the hobby. About a dozen years past he reenacted with the 14th Indiana and still has his rifle. However he is seeking the rest of the gear. If you are interested in selling or donating, please get in touch with me. (ccritch608@yahoo.com). He seems to be more interested in a Federal impression, but is willing to galvanize.

His sizes are: coat 47 L; shirt XL; waist 38-40; pants 32-34 L; brogans 10 ½ - 11.

2026 WVRA Officers

Rick Byrd - President

John Arnold - Vice President

Phyllis Baxter – Secretary

Chuck Critchfield - Treasurer

Webmaster – Tim Glaser

Board Members at large

Bill Brisendine

Mary Mullenax

Vacant

Vacant

Editor - Chuck Critchfield

Note - Webmaster and Editor are non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

ATTENTION - Please do not send any correspondence to the former PO Box in Buckhannon. Membership information can be sent to me. Remember you must be a member of record to qualify for membership benefits. Karl Mulac is the administrator of 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.

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 blatant political submissions will not be published.

Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

KEVIN SKAGGS/BHC EQUIPMENT – Currently all of the reenacting gear (primarily camping equipage) resides with the Beverly Heritage Center. BHC is also storing some of the period costumes.

In an effort to keep track of all of this equipment, the WVRA has established a "loaner" policy, printed above. In the past, our loaner uniforms, accoutrements, weapons have just floated away somehow. We felt a responsibility to put some formality into the loaner process.

HAVE AN OPINION you would like to express? Want to rebut something I wrote? Send it to me. As regular readers know, I tend to concentrate on the Northern soldier and the Unionist viewpoint. If you have different opinion, send it in.

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SELLING YOUR GEAR? – Some longtime members have retired from active reenacting and have expressed a desire to sell some part of their kit. See the Want Ads above. We have a new member looking to buy equipment.

JOHN ARNOLD AND OTHERS. – I don't have an update on John. He is having a tough time with his treatment and would be happy to get some encouragement from his fellow WVRA members at whitehawk111@protonmail.com. Linda Barnes is recuperating from a badly broken ankle.

INSURANCE - The liability insurance policy for the WVRA HAS EXPIRED. The Association at its July, 2025 meeting, voted to not renew the insurance policy. Members choose to rely on liability insurance from larger umbrella organizations, rely on personal liability insurance or go uninsured.

All history is revisionist. By its very nature, the moment it is committed to memory it has been revised.

- Anonymous

"The People made their recollection fit in with their suffering"

-Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War

"History and memory aren't the same thing."

- Me



Hunter McGuire statue removed from the grounds of the Virginia State Capitol which may get a new home with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation, along with two other statues. See the article above.

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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

**WEST VIRGINIA
REENACTORS ASSOCIATION**

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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

"History is dangerous. It goes after our myths and our identities."

- Brig. Gen. (ret) Ty Seidule after receiving death threats for writing about history

"The lack of a sense of history is the damnation of the modern world."

- Robert Penn Warren