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Captain's Column, September 2016

I hope everyone is enjoying (or did enjoy) their summer. Yes, it is hot but summer is suppose to be hot.

While we originally did not have an event scheduled for August, turns out we did have one after all. Thanks to an invitation from the Stonewall Brigade and Captain Austin Williams we were invited to participate in a living history program at the Winery at Bull Run right next to the Manassas Battlefield. It was just a one day event on Sunday, 21 August. I was surprised by the unit's response but we had seven members attend

Yes, it was hot. The program involved a demonstration for the public and a small battle scenario during which the skies opened up for what turned out to be quite a downpour. Nonetheless, it was great to get together with the guys. Special thanks to the Weidman brothers, Brett and Kyle, for attending. They had the farthest to go. Also, thanks to Mike Vice, Jack Alexander, and Greg and Ray Hanson.

Now that September is upon us, we do have two events scheduled for this month. The first is a company muster at Cedar Mountain on Saturday, 10 Sept. The second is a living history at Fort Harrison here in Richmond the weekend of 24-25 Sept. The muster is just the one day. The Ft Harrison living history is very similar to the Cold Harbor event we did in early June only without the candlelight tour on Saturday night. I will leave the details and the particulars for these events to Sergeant Vice. Since there is no registration fee involved with either if you originally thought you could not attend and that has changed, you can still come.

That is it for now. Hope to see everyone at both of these events. Take care and God bless!

With kindest regards,
Captain Turley

1st Sergeant's Column

Event at the Winery at Bull Run (21 Aug 2016)- This proved to be a most interesting event to say the least! Weather wise we went from hot steaming heat to being rain drenched! However, we can't say we didn't have appreciative crowds who couldn't wait to talk to us and have their picture taken w/F Co members!

At the kind invitation of the 33rd VA (Southern Division) we decided to participate in this one day event since several of our members wanted to do so as well as the possibility of potential recruiting. In my case I had a nice leisurely drive to the event w/Jack Alexander and the Weidman brothers w/arrival on site as requested by 0930. Shortly thereafter we were joined by the Hanson brothers plus Tony Turley. Having some seven members participating then myself along w/Captain Turley fell into ranks as privates. After mustering our consolidated company w/engaged in drill to insure everyone was prepared to execute Gilham's manual correctly. We moved up to the winery's main building a little before noon for a firing program scheduled at 1300, and encountered a large mixed audience which was glad to see us. The short 1300 firing program went well and garnered a great deal of interest from the visitors. Since we outnumbered the Federals by 2 to 1, for the 1400 tactical we broke the Confederates into two platoons w/2nd platoon engaging the Federals first thru an open field which was dotted w/open stands of trees. Being a member of the 1st platoon in reserve (which always suits me!) we watched as the opposing forces fought back and forth for a good 30 minutes, and as the 2nd platoon was pushed back, then those of us in the 1st platoon took up the action. We managed to get thru most of the planned one hour tactical before the thunderstorm hit. I have to tell you it was a real thunderstorm, just like monsoon rains in the tropics! Rain drove the visitors back into winery buildings while the troops found what shelter they could under outdoor picnic canopies and exhibit tents! It rained hard for a good hour and as it began to slack-up we moved to load our vehicles and depart as it was obvious that the event was done.

All in all, I'd say we were a success in our endeavors to interpret Confederate soldiers to the public of Northern Virginia, who were more than receptive and friendly to us. This is an event which we certainly ought to repeat next year!

Upcoming Events

Muster (10 Sep 2016)- This year's muster will be at Cedar Mountain battlefield which is frequently known as Slaughter Mountain for the family which owned a great deal of the mountain at the time of the battle. This is a key battlefield as the 1862 war in the East shifted out of the Shenandoah Valley, and a site which F Co has contributed money to in order to preserve the battle site.

The tour will begin at 1000 and run until mid-afternoon. Lunch to follow at a spot to be decided upon between now and the tour date, but somewhere in the town of Culpeper. Everyone needs to wear their F Co ball caps and t-shirts to demonstrate to both the Friends of Cedar Mountain as well as the citizens of Culpeper County that F Co is taking advantage of historic tourism in that locale as well as spending money locally as part of that tourist income to the county and region. Additionally, it's recommended you wear long pants along w/walking heavy shoes or boots as we will cross some rough ground and ticks will still be out. Additionally, you need to bring along water for our touring hike.

Directions - First make your way to Culpeper, VA. Then take Hwy 15 South from Culpeper for approximately 5 miles south of town. Start looking for a sign that says Cedar Mountain Battlefield on the right, and just beyond it take General Winder Road to the right. Follow the road around a sharp left curve and then begin immediately looking for a house on your right (Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield visitor center) w/sign that says visitor parking. We will all park there and then walk down to monument and battlefield site area to begin our tour.

Fort Harrison (24-25 Sep 2016)- A Richmond Natn. Battlefield site which was a key component in the defense of Richmond plus a great place to bivouac. This will be the usual NPS firing demonstrations along w/interpretation to the public. I will be arriving on Fri evening to bivouac at the Fort and your welcome to join me for an evening under the stars.

Bring a minimum of 60 rounds of blank ammunitions and at least 80 percussions caps for firing programs. Additionally, make sure you bring your musket cleaned and have needed period musket cleaning materials as the NPS will be inspecting muskets on both days prior to firing. Currently there are three musket firing demonstrations planned each day.

General Directions to Site- From I-295 on the north side of Richmond, take exit 22 and go west on Route 5 thru the first stop light. In approximately a mile turn left onto Mill Road. Then turn left onto Varina Road and then turn right onto Picnic Road. At this point you should see a sign for Ft. Harrison so continue following signs to site on Battlefield Park Drive.

Respectfully,
Michael L. Vice
1st SGT, F Co,
21st VA Infantry





Ode to Joe

