

53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Company C

"The Sentinel" September 2019

Newsletter of The James Creek Guards



"Clubs Are Trump!"

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I am always looking for newsletter content, so please forward your articles, book reviews, event summaries/photos, stories, etc. and your "Get To Know Your Pard" profile (if you have not done so already) to me for inclusion in a future edition of "The Sentinel". – Matthew Steger, editor

A WORTHWHILE EVENT

by [The Jersey Gallinipper](#) (reprinted with permission)

There's a good event coming up fast, "[Shenandoah 64,](#)" and the deadline for registering is Aug. 30. I'm involved, but only as a volunteer gopher, expediter, ad hoc crisis coordinator and possible cook during the event, assisting Doug Dobbs. It's a Rear Rank Productions event, and like most of the events organized by Chris Anders, it's a fine event with what I'll call "partitioned participation." It is mostly history-heavy fellows and ladies, with accommodation of people who, by choice or necessity, can't take it to the point where if you surprised them at 1 a.m., they'd be perfectly turned out and their tents/etc. look like they fell out of the Library of Congress Civil War photo archive.

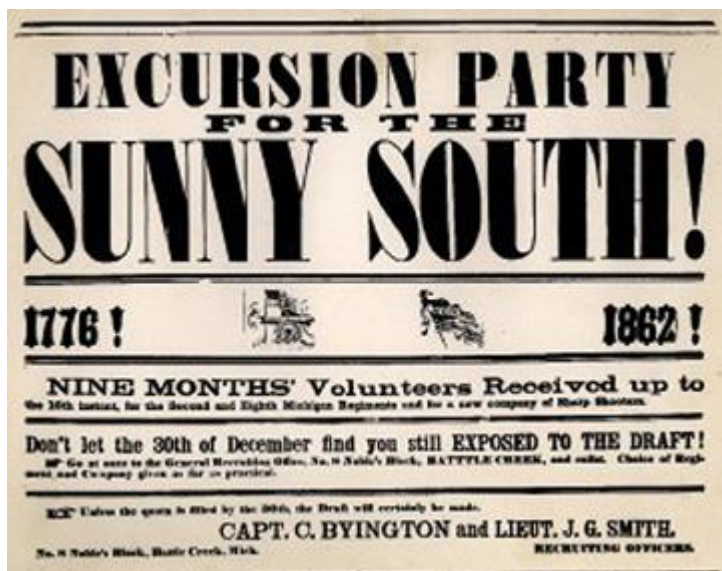
Additionally, some of the articles I've written here and elsewhere over the decades have found their way onto the site as advice and counsel and practical tips for getting more history-attuned at events without dying, hurting yourself, or feeling like you should set your hair on fire to signal your frustration. Our ancestors had no desire to live any harder than they had to, and as much time was spent then as now in figuring out how to do things smarter, not harder.

So, in the next few weeks, a barrage of new and old posts all bearing in some way on the event and the history it will strive to portray.

Here's key information:

REGISTRATION ENDS AUG. 30 and there are absolutely no walk-ons. This is an event by reenactors for reenactors, it's not for profit, and resources are closely matched to participant numbers.

The event is Oct. 4-6 in [Lovettsville, VA](#). Wonderful sight, compact but diverse with rolling hills that break up the site into handy compartments for camping and battling.

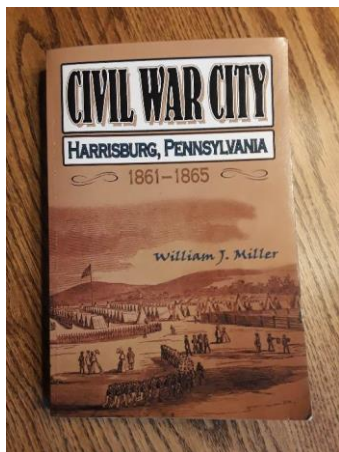


I am working with federal campaign units willing to mentor folk who want to try out a more historically appropriate experience. If you're interested, contact me at writerly1@gmail.com, subject line "INTERESTED 64".

If you have questions about the event and what you should expect, contact me at writerly1@gmail.com, subject line "QUESTIONS 64."

BOOK REVIEW – CIVIL WAR CITY HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 1861-1865

By Mike Espenshade



Paperback; 1990; White Mane Books; 337 pp. dozens of maps/pictures/engravings, bibliography, appendices, epilogue, indexed. \$24.95 at the Harrisburg Civil War Museum.

William Miller, the author, was surprised to learn that among the thousands of books written about the Civil War, almost nothing had been written about Camp Curtin, arguably the North's largest Camp of Instruction considering that well over 300,000 soldiers passed thru the camp and/or Harrisburg. Miller took it upon himself to remedy this hole in Civil War literature. This well-researched and heavily foot-noted history of Camp Curtin and the war-time role of Harrisburg was a joy to read and rates as one of my favorite and *informative* CW books. Example = Appendix III alone lists the (145) PA Volunteer Regiments and (64) PA Militia and Independent units that camped within Harrisburg locale, their arrival and departure dates, their head officers, and their muster out dates. App. III also lists the 40 non-Pa regiments that camped within Harrisburg locale for at least one day.

If the army met with misfortune and more men were needed, Camp Curtin would spring to life and be crowded with recruits and volunteers to form State Militia, State Volunteer, or Regular Army companies/regiments. If the army fought a major battle, the camp hospital, the barracks, and even the schools and churches of Harrisburg would be flooded with wounded fresh from the battlefield.

The result is a fast moving and detailed description of many of the soldier's experiences, as told by the men themselves, at Camp Curtin and interactions with inhabitants of Harrisburg. Miller follows many officers/enlisted men from their pre-war lives into the camp then out to the battlefields, through their unlucky war-time wounding, infirmity, or death, or back again to the camp and then into post-war lives. As Miller puts it, "... for only in that way can the reader begin to truly understand the innocence and unruliness of the recruits of 1861 and 1862 or the sadness and anxiety of the returned veterans of 1864 and 1865 waiting to be mustered out and sent home."

The author has done a superb job at bringing the thoughts, emotions and behaviors of these men back-to-life and into our living room. Their experiences are, at times unpredictable or horrible or full of discomfort, sometimes joyful, most of the time uneventful, sometimes humorous, and sometimes very sad.

I highly encourage you to benefit yourself by reading this book. I imagine that our very own John Heiser, Gettysburg Park Ranger Deluxe, thinks quietly that you should pay me \$45 to borrow my copy.

Honoring the Original 53rd PVI

Thanks to Marc Benedict for providing this info

Priv. Marshall R. Grover - born in Dec., 1841. He was a 22 year old farmer living in Coudersport, PA. He stood 5'9" with hazel eyes, brown hair, and a light complexion. He enrolled on March 25, 1864 in Coudersport. On April 4, 1864, he mustered into Co. D for 3 years as a private in Harrisburg, PA. He was discharged by a Surgeon's Certificate of Disability on June 7, 1865. He died in 1918 and is buried in North Bingham Cemetery, North Bingham, PA.



Priv. Ralph W. Grinnell - 38 year old lumberman living in Shippen, PA. Born about 1827, he had blue eyes, a light complexion, dark hair and stood 5'9". He enrolled on March 15, 1864 in Coudersport, PA. On April 4, 1864, he mustered in for 3 years as a private in Co. D. in Harrisburg, PA. He mustered out June 30, 1865. He died Sept. 10, 1888 and is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Priv. Charles F. Gray - born in 1833 in Canada. He was drafted and mustered in Aug. 24, 1863 as a private in Co. F, 145th PVI for 3 years enlistment at Norristown, PA. He was 30 years old, 5'8 1/4" with brown hair, grey eyes and a light complexion and listed his occupation as "Sailor". He was captured Dec. 2, 1863 probably near Brandy Station. He was transferred to Co. F, 53rd PVI at an unknown date. He died in 1888 and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery, Bradford, PA.



Priv. George W. Grabb - born in 1819. He was drafted for a one year enlistment mustering in Sept. 27, 1864 in Co. E at Troy, PA. He mustered out May 31, 1865. He died Oct. 3, 1897 and is buried in Riverside Cemetery, Black River Falls, Wisconsin.

Gettysburg Living History Review-

Another Gettysburg living history and come and gone and it was another good event. We had a good turnout overall (22) with the help of our ELF friends (7th PA Res., 3rd MD, 1st MD). Weather was perfect.. temps in the 70s, low humidity, and a light breeze most of the time. There was a good regular showing of spectators throughout the weekend. I made sure I posted some info about the event in the various Gettysburg Facebook groups to try to help 'market' the event ahead of time. I do know that a few of the spectators came to see us due to these posts. Dinner Sat. evening was Gumbistöpfel (sausage, bacon, tart dried apples, cabbage and onions.). We did 3 firing demos Sat., and 2 on Sunday. 53rd Attendees: Steger, Fasnacht, Espenshade, Porterfield, Z., Porterfield, T., Bohnenblust, Shick, Benedict, Volpe, Mitchell.





A word from our president.....

Pards,

I hope this finds you well. It's hard to believe that we're drafting the September newsletter! We're on the downhill side of another campaign season. For those of you attending the Shenandoah event, I look forward to seeing you in the field for our final military event of the year. Thank you for making the commitment to this event. It was a "light" year as far as the NR is concerned. This one should be one that we remember for a long time to come. Looking forward, our next events are the Adopt A Position day at the 53rd monument and Remembrance Day. With the light schedule this year, I hope we can have a strong turnout to end the year.

As per the bylaws, nominations for the upcoming election are due in October. This year's ballot will be for the office of President. Mike Espenshade has agreed to head the election committee again this year. I'll ask for two other volunteers to assist. The first two (not on the ballot) who respond to me will be on the committee.

I provided a copy of the proposed NR bylaws amendments to everyone earlier this year. They will be voted on at this year's annual NR meeting on Remembrance Day weekend. If anyone has any feedback on the bylaws, I need to hear from you ASAP.

I've been loosely mentioning the upcoming annual Holiday Party for several months now. As you all know, this year's event will be the 40th anniversary celebration of our unit. I hope that you all will plan to attend. The event is open to anyone who has served in the 53rd's ranks at any point in the past 40 years. This unit continues to grow. We're adding new members each year. The holiday party is the one and only event that the newer members have a chance to hear first-hand about the bond that formed our foundation four decades ago. If you have contact info for even a single member that may not be on our contact list, I encourage you to reach out to Pete Zinkus or myself so we can include them in the formal invitations when they go out. We'll be gathering in Gettysburg on January 11, 2020.

Eric

Upcoming events –

4-6 Oct. – Shenandoah 1864 (Lovettsville, VA) – NR MAX EFFORT EVENT

The National Regiment's only big event in 2019 so register NOW (meaning right now, the deadline is 30 Aug.). The info released to this point indicating that this will be a very good event that everyone should seriously consider participating in. The location is Lovettsville, VA which is about an hour from Gettysburg and located in the northern tip of VA. Registration is now closed.

2 Nov. – Monument Cleanup – Gettysburg NMP

Our annual cleanup of leaves and other debris on Brooke Avenue at the 53rd PVI's monument. Meet at the monument by 10AM and bring tools (rake, loupers, work gloves, etc.) We are normally finished by noon.

Save The Date! January 11, 2020

The 53rd PVI Company C will soon be celebrating our 40th anniversary! This event is open to anyone who has ever been in our ranks. Stay tuned for more details. If you know of a past member of the 53rd PVI and have their contact information, please forward it to Eric and Pete asap.

For Sale –

(if you have something for sale or are looking for something, email me to include it in a future edition)

All items in good shape unless noted otherwise. Listed by Rick Kramer for a friend; contact Rick directly for any inquiries/questions - auction8@comcast.net

Unlined Sack Coat (approx. xlarge)	30.00	CnD Jarnigan Great Coat (approx. Exlarge)	100.00
Keune McDowell Kepi some brim cracking	20.00	Grey Blanket with black stripe	50.00

If you have not submitted your "Get To Know Your Pard" profile yet, please send it to the editor ASAP for inclusion in a future newsletter! We still have quite a few members who have yet to share theirs with their pards. This isn't meant to pry into your private life, but simply a fun way of letting your pards get to know you more.

2019 Calendar of Events -

12 Jan. — Annual Holiday Party — Dobbin House (Reservations/Payment due by 31 Dec.)
2 Feb. — Winter Drill — Landis Valley (weather back up date is 16 Feb)
16 Feb. — Cartridge Rolling Party — Mark Fasnacht's home (9 March back up date)
2-3 March — NR School of Instruction — Gettysburg Fire Hall
5 April — Ephrata Middle School — Civil War Day event with Michael Fedorshak
6 April — Spring Adopt A Position
13-14 April — NR Camp Of Instruction — Ft. McHenry **NR MAX EFFORT**
18-19 May — USAHEC (Carlisle, PA) — PAID Event **53rd MAX EFFORT**
27 May — Hummelstown Memorial Day Parade
5-7 July — Gettysburg GAC — 2ndary Event
20-21 July — Landis Valley Civil War Days — **53rd MAX EFFORT**
28 July — Gruber Wagon Works (Reading, PA) **53rd MAX EFFORT**
24-25 Aug. — 53rd Gettysburg Living History — Spangler's Spring **53rd MAX EFFORT**
4-6 Oct. — Shenandoah 1864 (Lovettsville, VA) **NR MAX EFFORT**
19-20 Oct. — Cedar Creek (Middletown, VA) - 2ndary Event
2 Nov. - Autumn Adopt-A-Position — spring cleanup at the 53rd PVI Monument
16 Nov. — Remembrance Day Parade — Gettysburg
7 Dec. — 53rd PVI Annual Meeting (Mark Fasnacht's home)
11 Jan. — Annual Holiday Party — Dobbin House (Gettysburg)



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<http://nationalregiment.com>

