

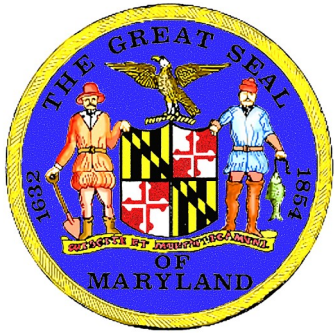
# OUR CAMP JOURNAL



Volume 27, Issue 1

"We are but few in number but formidable." -Pvt. James Shelton, 7th Md. Co. B

August 2023



## Editor's Note

*So here we go again...maybe.*

*Back by (popular?) demand, Our Camp Journal has been revived and we're looking towards the future.*

*I had forgotten how much fun it was to lay out an edition of OCJ. That said, I didn't do it alone. The all important copy came from Bill Hart, Eric Schwetje and photos from Jeff Joyce, et al.*

*We'll judge the response to this Special Edition and go forward from there. We'll lay off the demands for a monthly column unless Association Officers feel so inclined, but lets make it a collaborative effort.*

*I'm willing...are you?*

*BG Jay Henson (Ret.)*

## Living History at Falling Waters

By Pvt. Bill Hart

The 7<sup>th</sup> does not usually conduct living history outside of battle reenactments so July 8<sup>th</sup> was somewhat different than what we have done in recent years. Although members have fallen in for living history events put on by other groups – Marching through Time, Harpers Ferry and Spangler's Spring come to mind – the 7<sup>th</sup> was the driving unit for Falling Waters. (And here it comes to mind that I've neglected our soirees, base ball at Marietta Mansion, a civil war picnic at Get-

tysburg, and Civil War Days at Salisbury Christian School among others initiated by members of the 7<sup>th</sup>. Good times all.) But . . . onwards.

The (second) Battle of Falling Waters was the last action of the Gettysburg campaign as the fi-

nal elements of the Army of Northern Virginia were making their escape from Pennsylvania. As a point of clarification, the battle took place near Williamsport, Maryland. Falling Waters as a place is across the Potomac in West Virginia, the other

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**Sgt. Eric Schwetje  
President**

## President's Message

The first two weeks of July were busy for the 7<sup>th</sup> and it's been a while since we've had so much activity.

Thank you for coming out to Falling Waters and for making this 7<sup>th</sup> Maryland event successful. Being on

actual ground always makes an event more meaningful and interesting for me and hope it did for those in attendance. It was special to have three generations of Harris/Lafferty living historians there, too. The FWBF folks would love to have us back and we can use the site for drill days if interested.

Special thanks to Sarah and Kevin for setting up the camp that provided

respite from the rain and sun from Friday night to Saturday afternoon and to Jeff Joyce for the social media posting of pictures, the regimental history research, etc. that helps keep the 7<sup>th</sup> in mind. Your contributions to the unit are sincerely appreciated.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Cedar Creek, anyone?

# Upcoming Campaigns

## AUGUST

**August 11-13:** Harpers Ferry NP, Harpers Ferry, WV. Living History in the National Park.  
(COMPANY)

**August 11-13:** C&O Canal, Hawley, PA 142<sup>nd</sup> Co. G Event  
(INDIVIDUAL)

**August 12-13:** Hale Farm & Village, Bath, OH (INDIVIDUAL)

**August 26-27:** Battle of Kettle Run Anniversary (Bristoe Station)  
(INDIVIDUAL)

## SEPTEMBER

**Sept 22-24:** Heritage Weekend 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Moorefield, Hardy County, WV (INDIVIDUAL)

**[REGISTER NOW!](#) « Click on the link**

**For the 159th Cedar Creek, October 20-22 at Middletown, VA**

## Living History at Falling Waters

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end of the bridgehead.

Sarah, Kevin, and Josh arrived Friday afternoon and set up the kitchen tent, the fly, had water in the casks and firewood stacked. They departed to enjoy an air conditioned evening before the next contingent arrived.

With the comforts of home established by the first element, all that was needed for us upon our arrival was to make a fire pit, set up the grill and get a meal going. Eating was delayed several times with three or four locals dropping by to socialize at various times. A very friendly neighborhood. We ate while the sun was still up but were not motivated to set up our dog tents with the day's

heat draining what energy we had. That effort could wait 'til the morn.

Well enough we made that decision as a rainstorm came through before sunset. Strong winds and heavy rain but the fly held. Kevin knows how to set up a proper camp. The storm was over and done with within ten minutes or so but it was a soaker. We'd protected the fire so it was back and burning soon after storm. We just sat back, relaxed and felt good as the passing storm dropped the temperature some 15 or 20 degrees making the evening most comfortable. Fire flies put on a show that rivaled the best we'd ever seen at Gettysburg. These bright creatures displayed not in trees but in the fields – dense, constant flashes, brilliant, almost erupting up from the grass and grain.

We slept under the fly. After laying out our bed rolls and with a little more talk, sleep came easily. We enjoyed a comfortable and restful night. The cool of the morning allowed us to straighten up, police the area, defarb and have it ready for



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# The Ladies' Knapsack.



**Sarah Lafferty**  
Civilian

As with most things, things change with time. People, places, objects, and even events. The reenactment of Funkstown is not immune to that change, but there are several things that can determine if that change will be for the better or worse. This year, I got to reminisce a bit with Johnny, the organizer of the Funkstown event; we talked about some of the first years I attended the event, where it was just the 7th and 3rd Maryland putting on a show for the people of Funkstown. We camped back in the trees and set up tents on that steep sloping hill. The 3rd would galvanize and help to put on a small street battle and small battles in the field in the park. Even though it was small in size, the townspeople loved the events and continuously asked for more.

Before COVID, the event slowly grew in popularity with reenactors and townspeople alike. More confederate units started coming out, cavalry and artillery joined as well. The street battle was a raucous affair with banter and entertainment from both sides. Soldiers and civilians would mingle at Miss Kitty's, enjoying an increasing variety of snacks and drinks. A small ball was held on Saturday evenings, with fireworks bringing reenactors and townspeople together at the top of the hill.

While COVID may have had a significant impact on the event, so did time in general as well. The younger faces that were seen every year at the event got older; went to college, or got married, or had kids, or moved away. This was seen in the reenactor units, but also in town. Miss Kitty does not offer brunch at her house anymore; a reminder of change, but still a fond memory for those who got to experience it. One of the few pictures that I have of my mother in a Civil War era dress was taken in Miss Kitty's back yard. The union numbers have dwindled as the years have gone on. I understand the repetitiveness of the street battle can become tiresome, and the ability to recover from Gettysburg and turn around for Funkstown can be overwhelming. This year, for the

street battle, the very confederate soldiers that we used to verbally harass at the street battle put on blue sack coats to bolster the union lines for the street battle (I was told I can never yell at them again now).

I will even admit that time has changed how I interact with the event. Years ago I would and could load up the peddlers cart and traipse from camp up and down the giant hill and go into town. Regain energy and composure to yell and mingle, traipse up the hill to Miss Kitty's, and then gather myself for the long haul back into camp. There was one glorious year where the organizers loaded my cart onto one of their trucks and drove me into town, that was when I knew they truly appreciated the role I played in the event. But in recent years, thanks to my two wonderful and loving children who have sucked life and energy from me, I now claim a spot at the top of the hill, set up my peddlers cart and quilting frame, and interact with the public in a different way. I still get the same gratitude from the organizers and volunteers, and still get to enjoy my own personal role in the event. My dad even helped me out this year with running the peddlers cart while I took Della for some food. He successfully sold a quilt, and even managed to sell some soap to someone, thinking it was food. I might need to leave someone to monitor him next time. This year, the heat did seem to keep a lot of spectators away, but I still managed to raise \$155 in one day, beating last year's one day total of \$120. The past three years, all money that I have made, I have donated right back to the Funkstown event. I told Johnny that my donation this year should go to building bathrooms on the newest land they purchased (I will admit that one of my favorite things about this event is the actual bathrooms that are available).

While talking to Johnny, even though he complained about the lack of preregistration, he still talked about all the improvements he hopes to continue to make to the event. The city of Funks-

town recently purchased farm land just outside the city proper, and the past two years that land had been used

for the Saturday afternoon battle. Pregnancy last year, and heat this year, kept me from going out to see that battle, but Johnny is very excited about the opportunities that land possesses for the reenactment. He has always been driven to grow the event, and he has plans for the new land, which include new camp sites for the reenactors, more room for spectators, and of course, the conversion of already present farm buildings to glorious bathrooms. And Johnny spoke of how he sees every reenactor at the event as his family, and that he wants to take care of his family. I see that every year in how he checks on units, offers water and Gatorade, provides transportation from camp to parking, and is a visual presence all weekend. This year, he even had a small shuttle bus that he used to transport reenactors between camp and battles, and I could see how grateful they were for that service with this year's heat.

Just like everything else, the Funkstown event is not immune to change. While some changes have not been desirable changes, the ultimate goal is for Funkstown to change for the best. Della attended her first Funkstown this year; she spent most of the day running around in her chemise and digging in the dirt. She learned the muffin flavors that were available and even told a few people about those flavors. She used her wooden blocks to kill a multitude of lantern flies. And when given options to leave early, she stubbornly turned them down each time. Funkstown has the ability to experience change for the better, we just have to either have the patience to wait for that change, or even try to be a part of that change. Hopefully, I can keep playing a small part in the latter, even as I continue to go through my own changes.



# Living History at Falling Waters



*(Continued from page 2)*

visitors as well as set up the dogs for our camp display. That was all done well before seven with visitors not due to arrive until ten. The rest of gang trickled in over the next several hours and we were ready to go.

Besides us, the stars of the seventh, there were a few rebels set up in their own area, a self-guided walking tour laid out, a talk and book signing by a historian and author, tables with displays including civil war weapons and equipment, a variety of prize finds by several relic hunters, civil war medical equipment, and a model of a pontoon bridge.

As always The Seventh drilled. Corporal Paterson insisted and led us under the diligent eye of Major Harris who observed all with a dis-

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# Living History at Falling Waters



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# Living History at Falling Waters



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*(Continued from page 4)*

cerning eye. By afternoon, it was becoming brutally hot so the corporal mercifully ended the session but we were ready for any rebs that might arrive.

We had a good number of visitors all of whom were most interesting. The locals were in two categories. Some had lived their whole lives in the area and had explored the land and been finding relics since they were youngsters. Others had come from elsewhere and bought homes before finding that they were living on a battlefield. The newcomers had their own stories of relics and rifle pits they had found on their properties. Many of these local residents were as much interested in sharing their knowledge and stories with us as seeing what we had to offer.

A family from Michigan came and let us know that the father's great-great-great uncle had been killed during the battle. One of Custer's wolverines. No gravesite is known for him.

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# OUR CAMP JOURNAL



*Civil War Re-enactors;  
America's Living Historians.*



## ...Falling Waters

*(Continued from page 6)*

A gentleman from Pennsylvania was reading about and visiting as many sites as he could related to the Gettysburg campaign. There were so many people with their own stories. We likely got more information from them than they did from us. With one notable exception, the families of the neighborhood are absorbed in the history of their area and supportive and involved in its preservation. It was an enjoyable day interacting with so many interested and interesting people.

Somewhere during the day we found time to fit in both breakfast and lunch deliciously prepared by Miss Sarah and near the end of the day broke into our care package to find what treasures had been left. A few somewhat bizarre bits of clothing, letters from home for the luckiest of us, also several letters for soldiers not present and one to a soldier unknown to any of us although we did read his letter revealing him to be somewhat of a scalawag.

Each of us also received a

small remembrance.

**Present were:**

### Military:

Major Kevin Harris  
Corporal Dan Paterson  
Private Bill Hart  
Private Mike Lafferty  
Private Erik Schwetje  
Private Caleb Gosmeyer (Rose)  
Private Jeff Joyce

### Civilians:

Josh Harris  
Sarah Lafferty  
Della Lafferty  
Liam Lafferty  
Tim Rose  
Clara Rose

