

ON THE WIRE

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT WAR ASSOCIATION

No. 26 • Spring 2017



President's Message

Ladies and Gentlemen of the GWA: This edition of *On The Wire* is another of what I expect will be many more to come down the road for informing and educating the members of the Great War Association. *OTW* has a special place in the hearts and minds of our membership as it was the first real publication of our organization and was instrumental in getting information and interesting articles out to that membership long before the various social media came to the forefront. Many, including myself, felt that even with all the new media there was still a place for *OTW* in our organization, and I hope you agree with us.

We are now in the fourth year of the anniversary of the Great War (1917-2017) on the Western Front and we will be welcoming the entry of the U.S.A. to the conflict. In 2014, we acknowledged the beginning of the world-defining moment known as World War One. In 2015 and 2016 our fall ceremonies were specifically slanted to the contributions and sacrifices of the French, English (and Commonwealth) and Germans. This year we will also recognize American contributions and sacrifices. Unfortunately —since we only concentrate on the Western Front — Russians, Austrians, and Italians are left out of the equation as major combatants, although as historians we all know of their contributions and sacrifices in the Great War (and that some Russian, Austrian and Italian units did fight on the Western Front). Geography dictated their participation on the Western Front, not a GWA policy to exclude them from our ceremonies.

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GWA Spring Combat Event: April 21-23

In our first issue of *OTW* we had several informative articles for the membership and we are following that up in this edition with more articles. I want to thank Jim Kidd (USA) and Ranger (George Walters-CP) for two excellent articles dealing with our one true enemy at the site: The Weeds and Poison (Ivy, etc.) that bedevil our efforts to work and keep our site clean. We specifically have these articles in this edition because with spring

approaching, and then the summer, they will inform you as to exactly what you are dealing with at the site and give you sound advice and battle plans to fight the enemy. We tried commercial spraying and although slightly successful the first year, the expense did not justify itself when we saw the weeds winning in the second year.

The best defense and counterattack remains the units of the GWA and their efforts on our site. It is hoped that these articles will give you a better understanding of our enemy and what will work. Unless we make our soil toxic, the weeds and growth will always be our enemies and will never go away. However, continuing and sustained efforts by our units, following the advice in the two articles, will allow us to control the enemy and keep our trenches and battlefield clean for our two events each year. That would be a victory!

In looking back on 2016, we had a great year. Membership in the GWA continues to grow. Attendance at our two events continues to grow with the fall event being our largest ever in the history of the GWA. The emphasis on safety and training, especially for all new members of the GWA, are paying dividends. Even though we still have our bumps and bruises at each event, dangerous and injury-causing behavior by members either not thinking or not knowing continues to decrease. And that is a great victory for our organization, and all those members of the organization who are helping out with this important issue deserve our thanks and appreciation. (Next event, hug an MP). The Thursday GWA/GWAA evening social continues to get better each year with more members from both sides of NML attending. We started with just a handful attending in 2007 and now average 80+. We compete with units that like to do a small get together in their lager/bunker on Thursday evening, but we keep encouraging folks to come by for keg beer, some food, and fellowship regardless of which side of NML you fight on, and then go back to the unit get together.

Cantina Open at Spring Event

The Cantina run by Kim Wiser will be open for the spring event on Friday from 7am to 7pm, and Sat 7am to noon. Anyone who wants straw should to contact Kim at "conoex516@gmail.com" to arrange for the number of bales needed. Previously, folks have ordered straw but failed to pick it up and pay for it, so all requests will require pre-payment by check before the event.

We did have an issue with juvenile and destructive behavior in our port-a-johns early last year and the membership rallied. The word got out that type of behavior would not be tolerated and we had hundreds of eyes keeping watch at our events to prevent it from continuing. We can't relax in that vigil, and our members are asked to keep watching to prevent it from returning. If it ever does, and our port-a-john company cancels our contract, we would have to cancel events. We could not continue with 600+ folks on the site and no facilities.

I am pleased to report that unit building efforts on the site are increasing and many units, Allied and CP, have projects lined up for 2017. The NML's middle road was diverted from ending at the farm house, the southern CP trenches were extended and the Allied commo trenches were widened and deepened. A parking area for members with period vehicles and trailers was built. The farm house roof leaks have been repaired. And, trees that threatened unit lagers/bunkers on both sides of NML were cut down. In 2017 we have at least two major GWA projects for the Allied side ready to start work as soon as the weather will allow. I expect at least one or two more will take shape by the spring event, so work can commence on them as well.

All members of the GWA are reminded that at the spring event's Friday safety briefing we will be accepting nominations for the G8 elections at the fall event. Nominations made at the Friday briefing do NOT have to be seconded. But the person nominated must accept the nomination for it to be valid. All positions on the G8 are up for nominations. Several of us, myself included, will be finishing our second term come November and can't run for the same position for a third consecutive term. I will have more on the pending elections in the *OTW* edition before the fall event. We will encourage all those running for a position to do a write up for the fall edition explaining their "platform" so the membership can make an informed decision when they vote.

In closing, I hope all members of the GWA have a great year, keep supporting the GWA, and keep working on our site — and that we'll see you at the spring event. Come prepared for another great event! We will put out another *OTW* right before the event with the schedule and any event specific information that you will need.



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Ramblings from Atop the Soapbox

By Marsh Wise, GWA Secretary



Hey everyone. So, we're back to the spring event and of the Centennial of America entering the war.

Here's where are we at from my point of view: We have the website well in hand, thanks to the hard work of webmaster Randall Chapman — Randall and I worked out what needed fixing and changing, and he made it happen! Good job Randall!! Mark Graef is back as editor of *On the Wire* and as you can see, we're getting published and with good material. Another good job there! We have the GWA's Facebook group in hand (more on this below). Last, I got the forum on our website converted to a better system — one that will tell you when someone has responded to your post or one you are involved with — the old one didn't do that. It was also very clunky to admin. I think you will find this one easier to use. Your old info and log-ins will work the same as on the old system. All old posts are still there, too. If you haven't joined, please do.

GWA Facebook Group: Something needs to be cleared up about this ... If you "add" your buddy or you try to sign up, and then don't follow the simple instructions on how to do it, your request is deleted. Yep. The G8 had received complaints about non-members joining and some considered limiting the group to GWA-only. Others argued that this was not a good idea, as we recruit a lot of new members as a result of their participation in the FB group, or by current GWA members adding their friends who reenact other periods. Nobody wanted to see spammers or trolls (something we do a pretty good job of controlling now). The consensus decision was that ALL new members of the group must send an email requesting to join, state who they are, and why they want to join the group.

If you don't follow the directions, you ain't gettin' in. Do we really need people who can't follow simple directions at our events carrying a rifle in an already dangerous environment? No. So, if you want to join, go to the group, look for the red square in the header graphic. Then in the group description read all the rules. FOLLOW THEM! PLEASE, do not think that you are an exception. We are not a happy-happy, joy-joy, do what you want organization — we have rules. This hobby can be dangerous and you need to be mindful of this — if you can't be, or can't follow directions, maybe you shouldn't be here. I hope all potential new members are people who can follow direction. They're not hard and we want good people like them. Sorry for the rant, but it gets frustrating when 9 out of 10 applicants ignore the directions.

Archives: Plans are underway to digitize our old paper records, which are now just stored in plastic tubs in the registration shed. This will be a good thing as SO MUCH

INFORMATION has been lost or forgotten. We really need to secure our past.

One more thing, I was able to re-acquire the domain www.great-war.org — this is easier for people to remember than the other two domains, which I think is important. We should have it working soon.

Last event had no major tragedies or injuries! Please, let's continue that. We all have to go to work on the Monday after events. 🧑🧑🧑

AMERICA MOBILIZES 1917

June 16-18, 2017

The Virginia War Museum in conjunction with the Great War Association

Location: Historic Endview Plantation, Newport News, VA

Commemorating the entry of America into the War, this public living history will be an excellent opportunity to interact with visitors as well as training. This is primarily an AEF event, but limited numbers of BEF/Commonwealth and French will be participating as trainers. Event participants must be GWA members, and registration is free. Other nationalities with period correct civilian clothes and grooming will be allowed to participate as recruits being processed.

This event will be on the official US and Virginia Centennial calendar of events.

For more info contact Chris Garcia at: cgarcia@nnva.gov or 757.247.8523



WW1 Fort Devens Centennial Living History

August 5-6, 2017 Devens, MA

Encampment, Displays, Base Tours, Vehicles, Museum

All WW1 Impressions Welcome

Contact Tom Sommer via Facebook or at: tsommer37@hotmail.com

Sponsored by the Fort Devens Museum

Notes from the CP Representative

First off; I hope that everyone has had a very good start to 2017 and that good fortune shines upon us all. Second; we only have a few weeks to get ready for the Spring 2017 GWA event. There is plenty of work to do at the site and the Central Powers trench lines are in need of a general tidying up and replacement/repair of damaged or missing wire entanglements.

Unit Commanders:

Please take the time to complete the recently sent out Unit Roster Excel spreadsheet and send it to the GWA Treasurer, Chris Garcia, at GWATREASURER@gmail.com if you have not done so already.

General information:

- There will be a GWA sanctioned WWI 1914-themed tactical event to be held at a site in New Windsor, MD on September 29 – October 1, 2017. Further details will be soon be posted on various GWA information outlets, or you may contact Jay Griffeth at fusilier73@yahoo.com or Joe Murray at fr9ojm@gmail.com
- There will be a 1917-themed 3rd GWA sponsored event to be held at the site sometime in January 2018. The event is still in the planning stages, and as it develops the information will be disseminated through the usual GWA information outlets. Germans, French, and Commonwealth troops will be involved, and once the event scenario is nailed down, probably even the Americans will be in the game! Stay tuned for further details.

On a more serious note:

At the November 2016 GWA event there was an incident involving a member who had become separated from his carbine during a major attack. At some point during this action a member of the opposing force had picked up this carbine and was making his way back to the lines when the attacking force withdrew. Several members of the defending force confronted this person about why he had this carbine and the carbine was eventually returned to it's owner.

There are several points to be made about this incident:

- Everyone should be aware of where their weapons and equipment are at all times
- Unit members should look out for each other to ensure a safe and fun event
- Unit members should help each other by keeping an eye on each other's weapons and equipment when they are unattended by their owner.
- **Central Powers members** — it would be a very good idea to record the following information about each rifle, carbine, pistol, machine gun that you take

out to the site for an event: Manufacturer's name, model of weapon, year of manufacture, serial number numerals, and the serial number letter suffix or prefix (if applicable). The German method of serializing weapons was standardized amongst all manufacturers in terms of how serial number numerals and letters were sequenced and applied. It is possible to have several weapons at the site with the same serial number; therefore it is imperative that a person knows the manufacturer, model of weapon, year of manufacture, serial number, and the serial number letter suffix or prefix. With all of that information there will be no confusion as to who the owner of a particular weapon is if it becomes separated from the owner and found by others.

- Other uniform and equipment items should be marked with the owner's name or other identifying mark. There are cloth or paper labels that can reproduced to mark uniforms, caps, boots, etc. The helmet, gasmask can, shovel, etc. should also have a name or ID number painted on them. There are several sources that provide correct examples of how to properly mark these items. This will also improve your personal kit, as it was standard procedure in the German Army to mark uniforms and gear.

If anyone would like to contact me about anything Central Powers related feel free to email me at: fr9ojm@gmail.com

Joe Murray
Central Powers Representative
10/Fusilier Regiment Nr. 90

GWA Treasurer's Report February 2017

GWA Account Balance **\$19,622.91**

GWA 2016 Expenditures

DESCRIPTION	Amount	%
Taxes	\$4,473.25	7.7
Non-Profit Registration	\$27.50	0
Insurance	\$2,963.00	5.1
Trench Supplies	\$20,866.13	35.8
Mowing/Defoliation/Seeding	\$5,046.58	8.7
Toilets/Garbage/Clean-up	\$7,959.28	13.7
Admin Expenses	\$944.36	1.6
Bank Fees	\$125.00	0.2
Ambulance Services	\$1,520.00	2.6
Site Work (Infrastructure)	\$2,900.00	5
Battlefield Improvement (Neutral)	\$0.00	0
CP Projects	\$6,970.00	12
Allied Projects	\$4,400.00	7.6
Total	\$58,195.10	100

Planning the Best Battlefield Pilgrimage Ever... (Hopefully)

By Randal S. Gaulke

In 2013 organizations throughout Europe began busily preparing for the Centennial Commemorations of World War 1: The famous Ossuaire de Douaumont, outside of Verdun, and other memorials were cleaned; signage and brochures were refreshed; and reenactments and commemoration ceremonies were planned. The Centennial is a perfect time for Americans considering a visit to the battlefields — or a pilgrimage to their ancestor's war — to start planning a trip. While initially it might seem a daunting task, the reader might just find that it is the journey, and not the destination, that brings the most pleasure.

Planning a battlefield tour requires several skill sets, including: Knowledge of the sites and events that the reader wants to explore; some knowledge of the language and culture; and some knowledge of the local area. With the help of the Internet and translation tools it has never been easier to piece together the details needed to plan a meaningful trip “Over There.”

Before looking at each skill set, the planner should understand the limiting factors: What is the tolerance of one's travelling companions? How much time can realistically be planned? What are the priority sites to be visited? Answering these questions can reduce the stress that inevitably arises when it takes longer to find the town, trench line, cemetery, etc.; or when one heads 100 kilometers in the wrong direction.

What is the purpose of the trip? Is it to survey the major battlefields of the war; to visit a specific battle in depth; or to retrace an ancestor's war-time experience? There are scores of books and websites available on the war, covering the full range of topics. The trick is finding the resources that are most helpful. The best overall book for visiting American battlefields is “American Armies and Battlefields in Europe,” first published in 1938 and re-published in 1992. Its suggested one- and two-day tours are just as valid today as when they were first published. If more detail is needed, select



Exermont Church – Then

a book or two on a specific battle, a regimental or divisional history, and a good biography or two. The Internet can help guide planners; and don't forget the used book sites, www.abebooks.com and www.choosebooks.com. Scanning bibliographies and link pages can also alert the planner to other relevant materials.

It is highly recommended that the planner should gain at least some basic language skills and some understanding of the culture. Taking a French-for-travelers course or an introductory level Berlitz course will ease the frustration level of trying to communicate. Understanding foreign culture is equally important. The author takes a quick read through Polly Platt's (somewhat dated) "Savoir Flair! 211 Tips for Enjoying France and the French" before every trip. Rick Steves' publications and videos also offer solid advice for the independent traveler.

Planning the itinerary comes next; and again the Internet can be a great starting point for finding lodging, exploring sites to visit, etc. Google Maps alone helps one plan routes and appreciate distances between sites. For driving, the Michelin Orange Series 500 (1:200,000) maps are recommended. Traveling from Paris to the Meuse-Argonne and Verdun requires map numbers 514 (Ile-de-France), 515 (Champagne-Ardenne) and 516 (Alsace, Lorraine) The maps can be ordered easily online; or they can be purchased at the many oases (Aires) on France's Autoroutes. For battlefield exploring, the IGN Blue Series (1:25,000) maps are the most useful—after one has learned how to read them. They can be ordered online (www.ign.fr) or they can be purchased at the Maison de la Press in larger French towns.




Exermont Church – Now

The most important tip: Bolster the research by taking advantage of the many experts. Who are these experts? They are authors, armchair historians, tour guides, battlefield enthusiasts, etc. Where can they be found? The Internet is the best place to look. Two associations that come to mind are the U.S.-based World War One Historical Association (www.worldwar1ha.org) and the U.K.-based Western Front Association (www.westernfrontassociation.com). Both of these organizations have websites, publications, local branches and knowledgeable members experienced in visiting battlefields. Many French towns and Departments (i.e. states) have tourism websites too, including the Department of the Meuse (www.meusetourism.com/en). Finally, many individual enthusiasts or associations have knowledge on very specific areas; and they are often glad to share that

interest with others. If time is more precious than money, consider hiring them. The going rate is generally costs €250 to €300 per day. If that is not in the budget, they can often provide initial guidance and suggestions. In many cases, the experts are Europeans with good command of English and the advantage of living close to the battlefields. A partial list of tour guides and authors includes: German — Markus Klauer (www.weltkriegsbuch.de/pages/index2.htm); German — Michael Prisille (www.verdun14-18.de/en/) Belgian — Wim Degrande (wim.degrande@skynet.be); and English — Christina Holstein (Christina.holstein@hotmail.com). Americans, too, have developed very specific expertise. For example, Rob Laplander has researched the Lost Battalion extensively; and Steven Skinner has researched the life of Aviator Frank Luke.

The benefit of experts is best illustrated in this example: A friend knew that his great-uncle served in the (Imperial German) Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 87; and that he was buried in France. He wanted to retrace his great-uncle's footsteps; but he had no knowledge of traveling in France. So he turned to the author for assistance. The author's first research step was to obtain a copy of the German regimental history — all 400+ pages — from a German friend. This was followed by a search of the German War Graves Association database (www.volksbund.de) that identified the cemetery, burial plot, and the date of death. Cross-referencing this date with the regimental history narrative yielded the front line held in June 1918. A browse through the regimental history and a reading of Alistar Horne's "The Price of Glory" also revealed that IR87 played a key role in the initial assault on Verdun. Vacation time and budgets were worked out; and it was determined that three days would be available to retrace the uncle's steps. This meant a very narrowly-focused trip: It was decided to visit the cemetery grave and the area of line held at the time of his death in June 1918 on one day; and to follow the regiment's advance in the Verdun sector for two days. IGN Series Blue (1:25,000) maps were purchased for both regions. This was an extremely successful trip, where years of experience, determination and luck all came together. The experience was in the form of understanding and appreciating the information in the German regimental history — especially the detailed maps. The determination was in the form of driving down a narrow dirt farm lane in a rental car to get to the German front line position and walking through about 30 meters of crops to enter a wooded ravine where there had once been a headquarters. The luck was in the form of finding the wooded area largely undisturbed; complete with shell holes and a few unexploded shells that the farmer removed from the field. Similarly, the combination of IGN maps for Verdun and the regimental history's maps made it easy to follow the great uncle's advance.

The battlefields of World War 1 are still there to be explored. The Internet and the information age continue to make it easier; but it takes effort and determination on several levels to make a truly rewarding trip. Bon voyage! 

How to Defeat the Real Enemy at Newville

By George “Ranger” Walters, CP Trenchmaster

No, it is not the Huns, not the Frenchies, Devil Dogs, or even the Brits. The REAL enemy that we face at our site is one common to us all. It is indiscriminating, whether we wear feldgrau, blue, gray, or khaki.

It is the weeds. The weeds attack every unit’s trenches and NML during the summer months and they are a formidable opponent, one that just never quits. While it may be true that the recently implemented herbicide spraying at our site helps alleviate the total assault in some common areas, it still remains unit responsibility to keep the enemy down in each unit’s own trench system where this commercial application can’t reach.

This is no easy task and one that requires a good battle plan. The end result can be easy or hard, depending on the amount of firepower you want to put on it early. Let’s examine the situation on the ground first.

The soil at our site at Newville is called Pennsylvania Shale from the Martinsburg Formation, from a geology POV. This type of soil overall is good for our particular needs as it drains quickly during storms and can be relatively easy to excavate and backfill. But it is also manna from Heaven for several kinds of vegetation to grab roots due to the loose nature of shale. Noxious weeds and pioneer species thrive in this kind of clear and open ground.

Let’s Take a Look at the Enemy Forces:

POISON IVY. This is probably public enemy number one at our site. It grows all over, in our trees, in our back areas, and in our trenches. Birds eat the seeds and scatter them over the site. Unless we can teach birds how to wear diapers, we are stuck with this relentless annual anal attack. These seeds are fertile as hell and



Enemy Number One: Poison Ivy

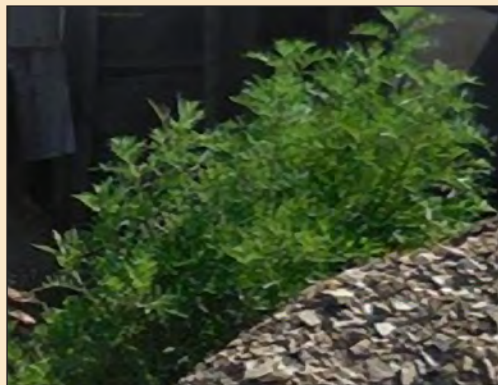
new growth will spring up everywhere, every year, in every trench. The urushiol oil in the plants causes skin rash. It should be noted that even dead poison ivy plants still contain a significant amount of this oil, so plants killed two weeks before an event are almost as toxic as the live ones. Bottom line is, if you have it in your trenches, you want to get rid of it months, not weeks, before an event.

PERENNIAL WEEDS. We have them by the score. These are the tough guys who take over disturbed, open land. Thistles, Horsetail, Knapweed, Pokeweed ... we have them all. These weeds come up almost overnight during the spring and quickly grow to knee or waist-high heights during the summer. Some grow shoulder high. Most of these plants are perennial weeds with roots in place. They come back year after year generally in the same areas.

Some grasses such as Foxtail weed or Bristlegrass are pervasive at our site and are known for their ability to spread rapidly and takeover large areas. Grasses are easier to control than some of the more woody perennials but they can be a haven for



Green Foxtail grass



Knapweed

ticks, so we may wind up trading one inconvenience for another.

We will never be able to eliminate them, it is the nature of the beast, but we can try to control them. Many of these weeds are tender when they first emerge in spring and early summer but quickly grow into more dense woody stalks by late summer. Again, the difference between attacking them early vs. late in the season is significant.

PIONEER TREES. We have our fair share of pioneer species trees such as Black Locust and Ailanthus all over our site. They are called pioneer species because they can grow in poor soil, require little in the way of nutrients and are generally the first trees to show up in cleared or disturbed ground. They frequently sprout up in and next to our trench system. Pioneer species trees grow VERY quickly. They were designed by Mother Nature to do just that. Mature trees drop numerous seeds all over the site, with or without avian help, especially closest to the forest line. They are fast-growers, appearing to be shrubs one year, small trees the next, and after 3-4 years are often over twenty feet high. If you don't want a future tree in



Ailanthus "Tree of Heaven"

your trench, a simple lopper can remove a half-inch trunk. You may need a chain saw to remove the same tree if you wait too long. This may not kill the tree, so see the paragraph below for treatment of the tree stump.

Now That We Have Seen the Enemy, Let's Take a Look at the Attack Plans:

Here are some of the current methods that units use in controlling weeds at our site, with the plus-and-minus of each.



Black Locust sapling

BURNING. Burning the vegetation with a propane-fired torch is a common practice, especially in the weeks before an event. The advantages are the ease of use and the total takedown of weeds. The downside is that the burn doesn't kill the roots of perennials and actually stimulates them (nature's way as after a forest fire) and the same plants may come back like gangbusters. These plants will send up new shoots within a week or so of flaming. Burning is most effective just before an event. If you do it in July for example, you may be surprised and sorry at the re-growth in November.

WEEDWHACKING. The sound of one-stroke engines fills our site just before an event and it is no surprise. This is how many of us deal with the problem. It accomplishes a lot in a short amount of time, and many of us don't have more time than that. That's okay. Just bear in mind that, just like mowing a lawn, we are only trimming back the enemy, not defeating him. And if this is done in the fall, when most of the growth is tall and woody, it can become a painful experience. A quick fix, that is all it is, but an effective one in the short term.

SPRAYING WITH HERBICIDE. Assuming that we have all gotten past the false notion that sprays commercially available to homeowners such as Roundup or Ortho Ground Clear will poison the site in any way, this is probably the most effective way to deal with the enemy at hand ... if (and it's a big IF) this spraying is done in Spring or early Summer. The chemical compound in most herbicides such as Roundup is glyphosate. Some commercially available herbicides use triclopyr, which is almost as effective as glyphosate and offer a cheaper alternative. Triclopyr based sprays are very effective against Poison Ivy. When sprayed on vegetation leaves, these compounds block the plant photosynthesis and kill the plant down to the root. But any spraying ideally should be done early. One problem that may arise is that if spraying is done too late in summer when weeds begin flowering, herbicides may have a negative impact on pollinators. Considering that we have neighbors near the site with bee hives, it may not be considered very neighborly.

Spraying is not the easiest method of attack, and probably not one that should be done just a few weeks before an event if you are expecting to see satisfactory or immediate results. But if herbicide applications are done early, they may offer the best results overall. One or two men with gallon-size sprayers in spring or early summer when the plants first emerge can do the work that will take a platoon to accomplish in fall.

A final note on tree saplings: You have probably noticed that if you cut down many of the tree saplings at our site, they spring back the following year with multiple shoots from the root base. It is Nature's way of survival. Locust, Ailanthus ... they all do it. If you want the kill to be permanent, you need to brush full strength glyphosate or triclopyr on the fresh cut of the sapling. Just fill a small cup with Roundup, and use a small paint brush, for example. This will kill the tree roots. A little bit now goes a long way down the road.

These are your options. Choose your weapons well. **The enemy is relentless.** 🧑🧑🧑

Defoliating the Newville Site

By Jim Kidd, AEF Commander

Our site at Newville has effectively three zones/types of areas that need attention with regard to defoliating. Each has different issues and solutions. One zone is the open areas (No Man's Land, rear areas behind trenches, camp areas). The second is in the trenches themselves. The third is the interior areas between trench lines.

The first zone has historically demonstrated that the most effective defoliating solution is mechanical, with repeated mowing and brush hogging being done via machine several times per month throughout the growing season. This keeps weed growth to a minimum and allows grasses to crowd out more vile weeds over time. It is also the easiest for GWA members, as the GWA pays Kim Wiser to do this for us. You will often note some areas of the site look like lawns while other look like jungles. The lawns are the result of Kim's efforts. The limitations in this are accessibility. Kim will mow where she can get to, without damaging her equipment (her gear has been damaged frequently in the past by run-ins with barbed wire). Areas too wired in or with ground so uneven that the mowing arms cannot effectively be used get bypassed, often yielding checkerboard of nice areas interspersed with jungle.



Commo trench at Newville

GWA units can help themselves by maximizing their areas with regard to accessibility. For wire entanglements out in front of positions, the use of mobile wire obstructions (knife rests, Spanish riders, etc.) are useful, as units can pull them back into their lines at the conclusion of the April event (no need to pull back after November), allowing a clear front for mowing. For units that use fixed entanglements, large gaps in their wire must be made to allow access to open areas behind them AND they must keep the areas within and immediately surrounding their wire clear all summer (If Kim can't see for certain amongst the weeds that there is no wire, she will give it a wide berth, and each month the jungle grows). Spraying of the wire entanglements before the growing season is the most advisable course of action.



Summer jungle in a front trench

The last limitation to mowing is the bermed up rims of shell holes and trenches. The digging of trenches produces such ridges and they are generally useful; they impede mowing but only in a limited manner. Shell holes are another matter; shell holes, from an authenticity standpoint should not have bermed rims (explosions don't dump dirt neatly outside of the hole they create, the spread it over a wide area!) and these raised rims make for limitation in mowing otherwise accessible areas. These then need to be physically or mechanically cleared. Past GWA administrations have discussed having these "farby" rims removed, which would coincidentally increase the areas for mowing and with extended cutting areas, cut down weeds inside shell holes to boot. However that effort has not been undertaken (though it is highly advisable).

The second zone is in the trenches themselves. Here revetting is the optimal foliage control, but also the most expensive one for units. For unfinished trenches in their sector, their next best option is spraying. Note that I do not refer to GWA wide area spraying, which has historically been of limited effectiveness, but unit spraying. This means a man in his trenches with a garden sprayer of defoliant. Personal experience has taught me that the right product (Ortho Ground Clear is a good product that is readily available in home improvement stores) sprayed at the right time (on bare earth before the growing season) in good concentration (think painting the walls) is very effective as holding off most growth throughout the year. Do it once and well in April, and you have no worries until next April. This works equally well for spraying your fixed entanglements and inside of shell holes and trench lips. A jug of concentrate costs around \$28.00 (less than \$20 at Costco when they have it!).




View from front line in July. NML beyond wire has much less vegetation due to regular mowing.

amount of area for unit spraying (too much product needed), but are inaccessible to mowing (unless we developed bridges for driving into such areas). Granted these areas, while ugly when overgrown, do not impact events at the site and so are a low priority, but they do limit the visual effects we seek and the weeds that flourish their provide plenty of weed seed for other growth. Absent a better solution, that might be the area for the GWA to target with wide area spraying.

But for units:

- Keep your front NML and rear areas accessible to mowing when considering your wire entanglement designs; pull your wire in, where possible, after every April event. Spray inside and 2 feet around all sides of your fixed entanglements;
- Revet your trenches to the greatest extent and spray your unfinished trenches liberally with Ortho Ground Clear prior to (or just after) the Spring Event; hit your fixed wire and shell holes too.

Do this and the GWA can use its remaining resources for other problem areas and the concerns about the Newville jungle each year will go away. Intelligent wire design is simple and costs nothing extra. Pulling wire in where it is mobile takes 30 minutes on the Sunday of the event while you are policing your area. A few guys with sprayers putting in a couple of hours on the Thursday or Friday (or Sunday) of events, can save the many man hours of work (and extra trips to Newville) you'll otherwise need in the Fall to clear your area for play.

These things are easy, cheap (relative to our hobby), and are no-brainers. Do these yourself; don't wait for the GWA to do them for you. 

Check this box if you have changed your address since the last event or this is your first event

Print first letter of your Last name in this box

Check this box if you are a unit commander

SPRING 2017 REGISTRATION

**GWA Membership and Registration Form for the SPRING Combat Event
Caesar Krauss Great War Memorial Site, Newville, PA
MUST BE RECEIVED BY FRIDAY APRIL 14, 2017**

Part I — Member Information — Please Print Legibly

Last Name: _____ First Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____

Country: _____ Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Unit Commander: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

I certify that I am 18 years of age or older _____

You must be at least 18 to register. You may be asked for proof of age. (Sign here)

Part II — Unit Affiliation

This box must be filled out, using the units and abbreviations on the back of this form. If you do not belong to one of these units, you are an independent.

Part III — Dues and Event Fees

A. 2017 dues (Annual dues are due at the Spring Event each year) **\$25.00**

B. FALL 2017 Event fee if pre-registered (see below) **\$25.00**

C. Optional site development donation

D. Pre-registration subtotal (A+B+C as applicable)

E. **Gate registration fee**

\$15.00

F. Gate registration total (D+E) \$

Pre-registration: Members are encouraged to pre-register to save the gate fee. If you pre-register but are unable to attend, your event fee (only) will be carried forward to the next event. All pre-registrations must be received by the Registrar on or before April 14, 2017. If your pre-registration is not received by this date, you must pay at the event — including the \$15 gate fee. Your original mail pre-registration will be held unopened.

Make checks to "Great War Association." Send form and check to:
Chris Garcia,
GWA Treasurer
418 Chinaberry Ct
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
Correspondence e-mail: criostalmiceal@aol.com

Register online with PayPal
To register dues and registration are \$25.00 each (\$50.00 if paying both). Payments should be sent to:

GWAtreas@gmail.com

All information on Parts I and II of this registration must be filled out on the Paypal registration

**Payment must be received by
Friday, April 14, 2017**

CONFIRMATIONS WILL NOT BE ISSUED

GWA Unit List (use abbreviations only when filling out registration form)

Allied Battalion Staff ABSTAFF

Central Powers Battalion Staff CPSTAFF

STAFF REGISTRATIONS ARE ONLY AUTHORIZED IN WRITING BY THE COMBAT COMMANDERS

American

27AEF 27th Div., 107th Inf. AEF
109AEF 28th Div., 109th Inf. Co. L., AEF
116AEF 29th Div., 116th Inf., Hdqtrs. Co., AEF
165AEF 42nd Div, Headquarters Co, 165th Inf.
(*Probationary*)
42AMB 42nd Div 117th Sanitary Train
(*Probationary*)
80AEF 80th Div., 318th Inf. AEF
372AEF 93rd Div., 372nd Inf. AEF
67CO 5th Marines, 67th Co., AEF
78CO 6th Marines, 78th Co., AEF
1AEF 1st Infantry Division

British

2SRFC No. 2 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps
1BWBEF 1st Btn., Black Watch, BEF
BRBEF The Border Regiment, BEF
BUFF 6th Buffs Rgt., BEF (*Probationary*)
GDSDIV Guards Division
2GORD 2Btn Gordon Regiment BEF
ROYENG Royal Engineers
SWB South Wales Borderers
2RIR 2 Btn, The Royal Irish Rifles
DRAKE Drake Battalion, RND

Commonwealth

5AIF 5th Btn. Australian Imperial Force
PPCLI Princess Pat's Canadian Light Infantry
42BNCEF 42nd BN, Black Watch, CEF
CAMC Canadian Army Medical Corps

French

8BCP 8 Btn. Chasseurs à Pied
18RL 18^{ème} Régiment d'Infanterie (Régiment de Gâtinais)
151RL 151^{ème} Régiment d'Infanterie de Ligne
3RMZT 3 Regiment Mixte des Zouaves et Tirailleurs

Russian

RL Légion Russe

Austrian

63KUK 63rd KuK

German

1LR Königliche Bayerische Leib Regiment
5SB 5.Sturm-Pionier-Bataillon "Rohr"
8KUR 3. Feldesk., Kürassier Regt. Nr. 8 (Rheinisches)
12MWK 12. Minenwerfer Komp. 12 Division
14PIBTL 2. Kompagnie Badisches Pionier-Bataillon Nr. 14
20MG 20. Maschinengewehr-Scharfschützen-Bataillon
23JR Infanterie-Regt Nr. 23 (2. Oberschlesisches)
52JR Infanterie-Regt Nr 52 (*Probationary*)
63JR 3. Komp., Infanterie-Regt. Nr. 63 (4. Oberschlesisches)
73FR Füsilier-Regiment Nr. 73 (Hanoversches)
90FR 10.Komp., Füsilier-Regiment Nr. 90 (Mecklenburgisches)
92JR Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 92 (1. Braunschweigisches)
124JR 3.Komp., Infanterie-Regt. Nr.124 (6. Württembergisches)
129JR Infanterie-Regt Nr. 129
459JR 8.Komp., Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 459 (Rhein.Westf.)
236RIR 5. Komp., Reserve Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 236

Non-Military

DRK Deutsches Rotes Kreuz
INDP Independent (*non-combat, G-8 Approval only**)
SA Salvation Army
PILOT GWAA Pilot
VENDOR Parking lot only, no trench access