

From the President

By Carter Bertone

Members of the GWA, I wanted to take a moment to update you regarding some recent initiatives the G8 has been working as we begin to posture the GWA for the



2018 reenacting season and beyond.

As we draw to a close of the centennial of the Great War, the GWA is not only working to make our two 2018 events exceptionally memorable for

all participants, but we are seeking to posture the organization to remain vibrant, active and innovative in the years to come. I believe with creative event planning we have the opportunity not only to maintain our current numbers and enthusiasm but potentially grow the hobby as well.

2018 Spring Tactical

Both the Allied and Central Powers Combat Commanders are working diligently to come up with an

exciting tactical scenario for the Spring event. We will be trying something that the GWA has never done before during a tactical event. Key leaders and unit commanders will be briefed at the appropriate time. If everyone cooperates and the units properly execute the plan we should have a great event that the membership will talk about for years to come.

2018 " Land Swap Deal"

We have entered an agreement with the Wisers family in which we are trading some of our unused land at the site entrance for land behind the German line that will not only create a buffer between the existing CP structures and the land owned by the Wisers but will provide additional land for the CP to build bunkers, dugouts or whatever else they decide to do. The G8 is very excited about this initiative and are looking forward to the CP Chain of Command submitting plans to improve their rear area.

Long Range Site Development Plan

I have asked the Combat Commanders to work with the Trenchmasters and the respective unit commanders to

develop a long range site development plan that will serve as a guide for the GWA to make site improvements, position new bunkers, amenities (porta-johns, wells, etc), battlefield obstacles, trenches, etc. Our goal is to continue to develop the site to ensure our site continues to evolve and remain challenging.

Updated Parking Plan

Many members have expressed concern regarding the congestion in the parking lot and the lack of parking. The Vice President, Mike Landree, is moving forward with an initiative to organize the parking lot in such a way as to consolidate the vendors and tailgate-sellers into specified areas so we can maximize the remaining space for member parking. This will be an overarching plan to include vendors, trailers, non-period campers, and parking. This will allow us to better manage the area outside the tactical areas and as we grow into the future. We will distribute

the revised plan prior to the April Event and ask for your cooperation to make this initiative a success.

Volunteers

Over the next few months, the G8 will be reaching out to key individuals and units for volunteers to assist with event preparation. We will need folks to assist with registration and parking.

Town Hall Meeting

Remember, we have a "Town Hall Meeting" at 0800 on Sunday after the April Event. This is the time to voice your concerns and have them heard in person to the President, and both the Allied and CP representatives.

Your opinion matters.

VR

Carter J. Bertone
President, GWA



By Mike Landree



Members of the GWA,

First, I'd like to thank you, the membership, for placing your confidence in me to serve as the GWA's Vice President. The G8 has already made some promising

decisions in the short time I've been on the board and each of you should know that under Carter Bertone's leadership a lot of great things are happening. To that end, I know that we will rarely reach a consensus on every matter facing us, but I ask that, once given an opportunity to voice your positions, we embrace the decisions made by the G8 for the future of our organization. The board takes into consideration the membership's views and concerns and votes for what is best for the organization – that is our fiduciary responsibility.

Making our hobby even better

We have a lot of irons in the fire and over the next 2 years I can see great strides being made in our little niche hobby. There is clearly a strong desire to make our hobby even better and there are quite a few efforts underway to make us more authentic and increase the realism of our reenactments. How do we do this? I believe the answer lies in:

1. Improving our individual and collective impressions
2. Focusing on the more in the mundane aspects of the WWI soldier's life, not just combat
3. Adapting our leadership structures to better reflect

the period military models to facilitate communication

4. Cooperation and teamwork

How can we build a sense of professionalism in our culture by which we are constantly striving for better impressions? How do we positively encourage others to improve their impression?

Leadership is the answer to many of these issues. Both the Allied and German Authenticity Committees are working hard to help us build this "culture" of self and unit improvement by articulating and publishing guidelines and set uniform and equipment standards. They are building a system that identifies the quality reproductions to the membership and encourages venders to meet our standards for authenticity. This way, our members can shop with confidence knowing that when they buy an article from a "recommended vender" they are getting a quality reproduction that meets GWA standards.

More than combat

A soldier's life was not all fighting. Most of his days were spent

Cantina Open at Spring Event

Thurs from 12 noon to ?

Friday from 7 am to 7 pm

Sat. From 7 am til 12 noon

If the guys need anything other than those times they can call me

Anyone who wants straw should contact Kim at:

conoex516@gmail.com

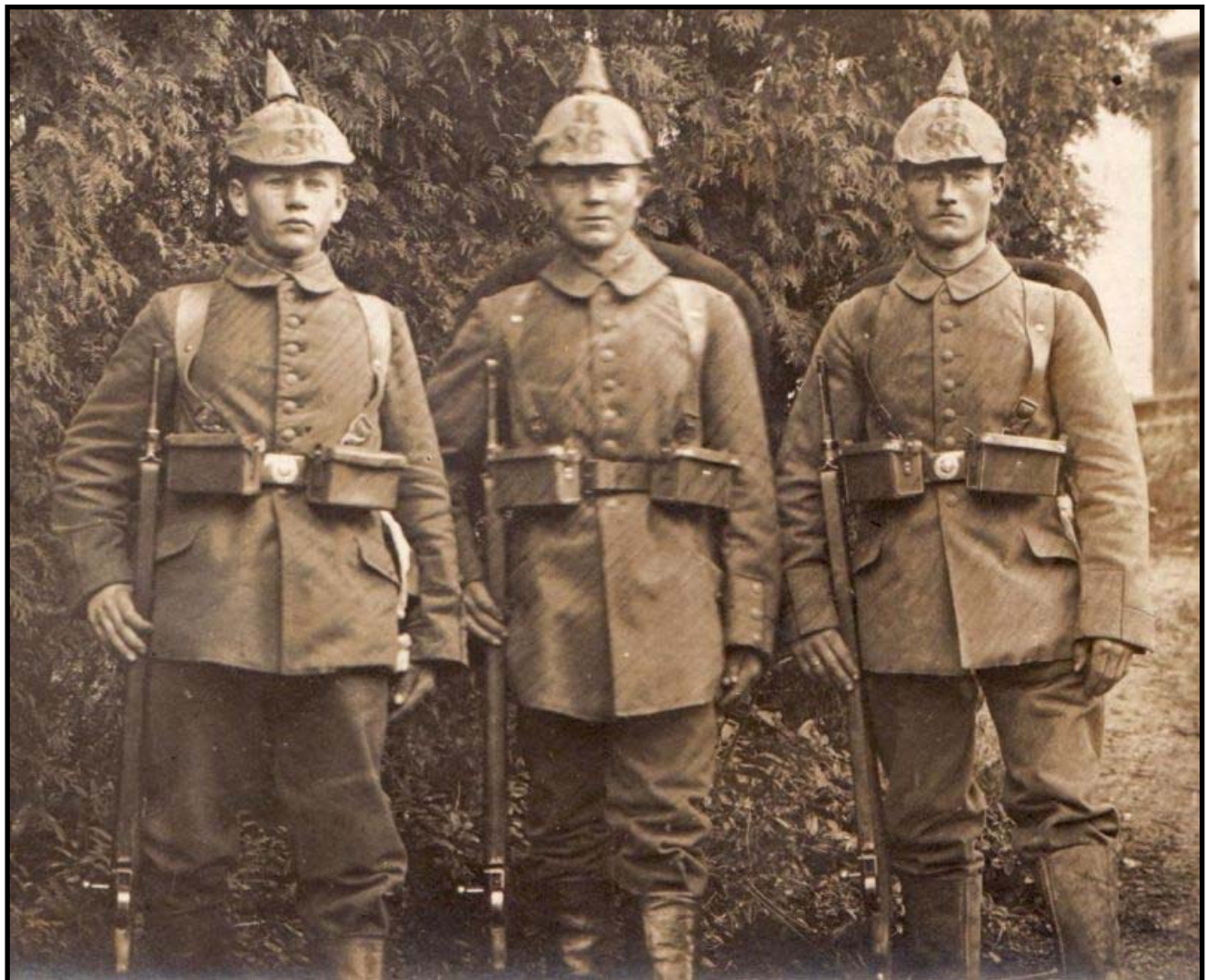
and arrange for the number of bales needed. Previously, folks have ordered straw but failed to pick it up and pay for it, so all requests will require pre-payment by check before the event.

trying to meet his basic needs and the needs of his unit such as; sleeping, eating, sentry duty, improving positions, training resupply, reporting, prisoner handling, and a host of other things too mundane to think about. Striving to incorporate these activities into our schedules will allow our units to experiment with activities and scenarios that will make our events more authentic and make our experiences more realistic. Some units are already moving in this direction by issuing rations in the line, improving their positions during the event, rotating back to the rear for training, handing out mail, etc. The possibilities are endless. We now have the numbers that will support these activities. Let's take advantage of this and move to

take our events and impressions to the next level.

The President mentioned the land swap, parking design, and an overarching site plan. These are important in determining how we grow and efficiently use the limited land we own. Any dynamic organization has to adapt to the environment, quickly take advantage of opportunities, and look to the future - the GWA is "moving out" and working towards our future today. We are empowering our membership to do the same. Please support the elected leadership, look for positive ways to grow our hobby, and improve our organization for future generations of GWA members. Go forth!

Mike Landree
GWA Vice President



From the Treasurer

Chris Garcia



Registration is now open, but we will be making some changes this year to accommodate the upsurge in membership with the Centennial. For the past two years we have had record attendance and record numbers of new members. That said, the treasurer like the rest of the G-8 is a volunteer. This past year registration took on the volume of a part-time job (often 4-6 hours of work after a 10-12-hour work day). Almost one-third of the membership wait until the final 3-4 days of pre-registration to register which impedes my ability to prepare for the event.

I DO NOT ISSUE CONFIRMATIONS. Every event dozens of people request them. If you pay by PayPal you can verify this yourself. If you pay by check, look at your bank statement. It is that simple.

Therefore, we are making a few changes to registration for this year. Pre-Registration will close Two Weeks prior to the event, not the usual one week. Also, all first-time attendees MUST BE PRE-REGISTERED. There will be no walk-on registration for first time event attendees for the duration of 2018. Almost one out of every six participants at the last event was new. We need to be able to provide for the safety and oversight of unprecedented numbers of new folks.

Rosters. Every registration is checked against the unit master roster you register under. If you aren't on it, you do not get to play until it is cleared. Only unit commanders are allowed to update unit rosters. It will get kicked back to

you and it is your responsibility to have your unit commander contact me. If he drops the ball hold him responsible. Units that have high numbers of people on hold will be answering to the president.

There are still a few "old timers" who do not consider themselves a part of any unit. The by-laws are explicit; **you must be a member of a GWA unit**. If you float from unit to unit every event it is YOUR responsibility to notify the unit commanders you are leaving and joining to notify me and update your roster. If not, you do not get to participate. No one is allowed to be on two rosters at the same time.

Unit commanders may not update their rosters in the two-week run-up to the event. When pre-registration closes your rosters need to be up to date.

Please pay attention to your paperwork. One of the most common errors is people registering and putting the wrong unit commander. If you do not know who your unit commander is, it tells the board there are other, bigger issues in that unit and you will be looked at by the board. Only submit ONE online registration per registrant and the e-mail on your registration MUST match the PayPal e-mail address. If I have to go hunting to find your payment you will be placed on hold. Unit commanders ensure your people know how to register. If filling out a registration form and submitting a payment is too difficult, maybe you should not be entrusted with a weapon...

I am not saying this to be a prick. Every screw up wastes time and 99% of them are completely avoidable.

If you have a question, ask! I am always happy to help.

Sincerely

Chris Garcia, GWA Treasurer

Secretary's Thoughts

Marsh Wise



So, what to write about? I dunno. I'm OtW-ed out. I've been looking at this and putting it together for about a month. Things I wanted to say then, no longer are apropos. The event is soon upon us and I think you will find that the event that's been planned should be pretty good. The Board put some good thought into it.

The Board...

Some people think that it's different than it is. It's hard to explain other than that we really try to work together to make a good event for you. It's hard to understand the Board until you're on it. As many have seen me rant: **there should be like 3-4 people running for each job on the Board.** Really! Yet, each time nominations come up... **crickets.** Step up, don't be a slacker. Don't be one of those guys who runs his mouth, yet never does anything. Enough of me venting... you must do as you think best.

The Forum

Please use it. It's the GWA MEMBER'S Forum, meaning you need to be a dues-paying member to see it and comment. We are going through and culling those who haven't paid dues in over a year. It has to be this way. If you're already there, please fill out your profile - many didn't transfer over when we moved to a new system.

GWA Facebook

Once again, this is a rant. You WILL NOT GET ON **unless** you follow the instructions, which means you MUST send the email that it references in

said instructions. It need sot say who you are and why you want to join the GWA Facebook group. It ain't hard. Do we want people that cannot follow **simple instructions** at our events carrying weapons? **"Attention to detail"** is part of any military basic training... Please do this.

We need volunteers for both Parking (see VP **Mike Landree** and CP Rep **Joe Murray**) and for registration (See ~~Minister of Finance~~ GWA treasurer **Chris Garcia**). Really, please step up and help out your organization and hobby.



Allied Combat Commander

Bret Werner

The Allied Battalion Concept

In 1995 when the GWA site in Newville PA opened for the first time many units found themselves in vast newly dug trenches. There was no revetting, no bunkers, minimal communication trenches, and very little infrastructure. Members will also recall that there was very little cohesion between units. Unit commanders for the most part called the shots and if they were feeling ambitious they may arrange a trench raid with a neighbor unit. The Overall commander would usually try to organize one combined assault, but for the most part each unit and nationality did its own thing. Was it fun? Yes, in the sense that playing cowboys and Indians is fun, was it authentic? No, not even close. Trench warfare on the Western Front was an organized affair, it had to be with a continuous front from the Chanel to the Alps. The armies of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and later the United States had to work together as a cohesive force if there was going to be any chance of victory.



Stuck in a Rut

As time passed the GWA grew, new units joined, trenches were developed, and the combat commander tried to implement more historically accurate tactics. Each member on the allied side still remained devoted first to unit, then to nationality. Each nationality had a commander, and at times these commanders would work together under the direction of the

overall allied commander, but for the most part it was still a free for all. If authenticity was to be a priority, something would have to change. That change would come in something called the Battalion Concept. Nationality groups would become companies, different units would come together to form platoons, Battalion HQ would form a staff. Did this happen overnight? No, in fact it has been a very gradual process. Did everyone support this concept? No, some came into it kicking and screaming while others embraced it outright.

Great Strides

The last ten years has seen the largest strides in the Battalion Concept. At the company level units have blended seamlessly, at the battalion level the companies have blended seamlessly. This is do to the hard work of the last Battalion Commander and his staff, the company commanders, the platoon leaders and each and every member of the Allied Battalion. We now have a fully functional Battalion Staff, support units like the Military Police, the Royal Engineers, the Canadian Army Medical Corps, the Salvation Army and the list goes on. There is as much going on in the rear of the lines as is in the front. That's authentic! That's how it should be! Soldiers in the Great War fought in Battalions, not as individual 8 man units doing whatever they felt like. Great War reenacting should be a fully immersive experience and the Battalion Concept should be catalyst for that. We call ourselves the First Allied Composite Battalion, this dates back at least 10 years if not longer. Was there actually a composite battalion of all nationalities during the Great War? No, not that I have any knowledge of, but composite battalions were formed for specific operations in the British Army made up of companies from several different regiments. Since we want to represent all the nations of the Great War, an inter

allied composite battalion makes perfect sense.

Continuing and Growing

My goal is to continue the Battalion Concept and make it stronger and more unified. I have already started taking the precedents from the past 20 years and standardizing them so that future commanders have guidelines to go by. These soon will be published in something called General Orders. We will strengthen the unity of the battalion through the better organization of the support services. We will continue to encourage camaraderie among the rank and file, the NCO's and the officers of the

battalion. We will look into the possibility of 24 hour operations and more accurate living history non combat type activities behind the lines. We will create new scenarios and accurate operations that lend themselves to our static situation. The hard part is over, we are a unified battalion thanks to all of you, but the work of being as accurate as possible is not, that task never ends.

Capt. Werner

O/C 1st Allied Composite Battalion



From the Allied Representative

Matt Murphy

Fellow members of the GWA:

This past December, the G8 discussed the importance of maintaining thorough and up to date guidelines for all impressions in the organization. Though these documents have already been developed for most nationalities represented at Newville, some were outdated and others hadn't been distributed.

With the goal of insuring that guidelines for the various Allied impressions are regularly reviewed, updated and made available to all, a structure has been defined for coordinating this ongoing effort. Each of the three allied sector commanders (Guy Gormley, Jim Kidd, Carter Bertone) have chosen a member



of his company to serve as an authenticity coordinator. Their task is to work with representatives of units in their company to review, discuss, and update guidelines as new/improved sources for uniform and equipment items become available. The coordinators are: Dan Comes (British/Commonwealth, attached AEF), Vince Petty (AEF), John Bracken (French, Russian, attached AEF).

Authenticity enforcement still lays at the unit level but serious infractions will continue to be addressed through the chain of command (via the sector commanders and Brett Werner, the Allied combat commander).

I encourage all members of Allied units to share new research and new and better sources for gear with their company authenticity coordinator.

See you in the trenches,

Matt Murphy (aka Mathieu Picard)

Allied Representative



Words from the Central Powers Representative

By Joe Murray

Central Powers Representative



For the Central Powers, I wanted to talk about the 600 pound gorilla in the room and that is the specter of a dreaded, draconian Central Powers Authenticity Committee. Rumors abound about what its purpose really is, what will it will be doing, and are they going to be the GWA's version of the NKVD, Gestapo, The Spanish Inquisition, or the French Revolution's Committee of Public Safety.

There will not be roving patrols of Authenticity Committee secret police lurking about the Central Powers areas of control jacking-up unsuspecting authenticity standards violators and hauling them off to some secluded Authenticity Committee re-education camp to help them rectify the error of their ways. The purpose of the Authenticity Committee is to review the GWA Central Powers uniform and equipment authenticity standards and update the standards based on scholarly research, photographic evidence, and original German military publications and orders. In the many years since the standards were first developed and implemented, there has been a considerable amount of information discovered which will require a bit of tweaking and some added information to correct some information that is not quite incorrect along with publishing of new information into the standards. When this process is complete; this updated set of guidelines will be posted on the GWA's website where they are now. The guidelines will hopefully be written in a more user-friendly format to allow a person to

quickly locate information on a particular item. I do not foresee any radically different and unreasonable authenticity standards changes being implemented.

The purpose of the GWA's basic authenticity standards is to establish a baseline of acceptable standards for uniforms and equipment for use at GWA events. That being said; **each unit is encouraged to strive to exceed the minimum standards** both in their collective unit and individual impressions. This is not a witch hunt, it is an effort to **help** members get the right stuff and make their impressions better.

Commander's Meeting

There will be a GWA wide unit commanders meeting, chaired by President Carter Bertone, at the farm house at some point on Friday.

Site Damage

The GWA site has experienced some set backs from general site use and damage from this winter's wide spectrum of weather events. Significant erosion to the trenches and roads, numerous downed trees from the recent wind storms, roads blocked by downed trees, and pieces of stockpiled construction and other materials have been blown about the site. The amount of spent plastic egg pieces, juice bottles, beer/soda cans, and other trash that is strewn about the site is becoming more pervasive. If each unit would take a few minutes on Sunday to clean their trench areas and the area of No Man's Land in front of their positions that would be a great help in reducing the amount of trash left laying about the site. Everyone's assistance in this endeavor would be greatly appreciated.

Spring 2018 Event Schedule

Spring 2018

THURSDAY

- 7 P.M. GWA "SOCIAL" first floor of the house.

FRIDAY

- 11 A.M. - Registration Opens -
- 1:00 P.M. - Living History begins on Allied and CP side of the line. All event participants are encouraged to be in uniform if they are in the Allied and CP area starting at this time.
- 3:00 P.M. Mandatory GWA Unit Commanders Meeting (All unit CO's required to attend)
- 3:30 - 4:30 - Mandatory New Recruit Training at the Fusilier crater in No Man's Land.
- 5:00 P.M. - Gate closes. ALL cars need to be removed from the GWA combat area by
- 5:00 P.M. - Registration Closes All those wishing to participate in Friday night combat, but do not arrive prior to 4:45 P.M. to obtain their trench pass from the Registration shed, MUST be preregistered. Check in will be at the MP station for the Allies, or the German HQ (92nd area) for sign in and issuance of trench pass. Walk-on's (New Recruits) will not be allowed to participate in Friday night combat unless they attend the New Recruit Safety Meeting.
- 6:00 P.M. - GWA Friday Safety meeting at the Memorial - all units/participants wishing to "play" on Friday must attend. Trench passes will be checked. This meeting is an insurance requirement.
- 7:00 P.M. - Combat/full play no restrictions
- 11: 00 P.M. - Combat ends

SATURDAY

- 8:00 - 8:30 A.M. Battalion Formation/Allied Safety Meeting/ CP Formation/ CP Safety Meeting (Separate) Make up new member safety training for those who missed the Friday meeting with each perspective safety officer.
- 8:45 A.M. - Combat.
- 10:00 P.M. Combat Ends

SUNDAY

- 8:30 A.M. Town Hall Meeting with Allied and Central Powers Representatives
- Clean Up

Slang We Still Use

By Fred Diehl, 3./F.R.73

As some of you may be aware, it is that time of year when Webster's updates the entries in its English language dictionary; All those lovely new words that get inserted, because they have become popular and are in common usage. Try as I might to use these new words properly, despite my age, I find myself feeling lost or foolish. Therefore, I have decided that in honor of this month to go back in time and discuss a few useful words and phrases that might be of interest to the German reenactor. Shall we begin with a few examples that will be familiar to most English speakers? Yes? Excellent, here we go.

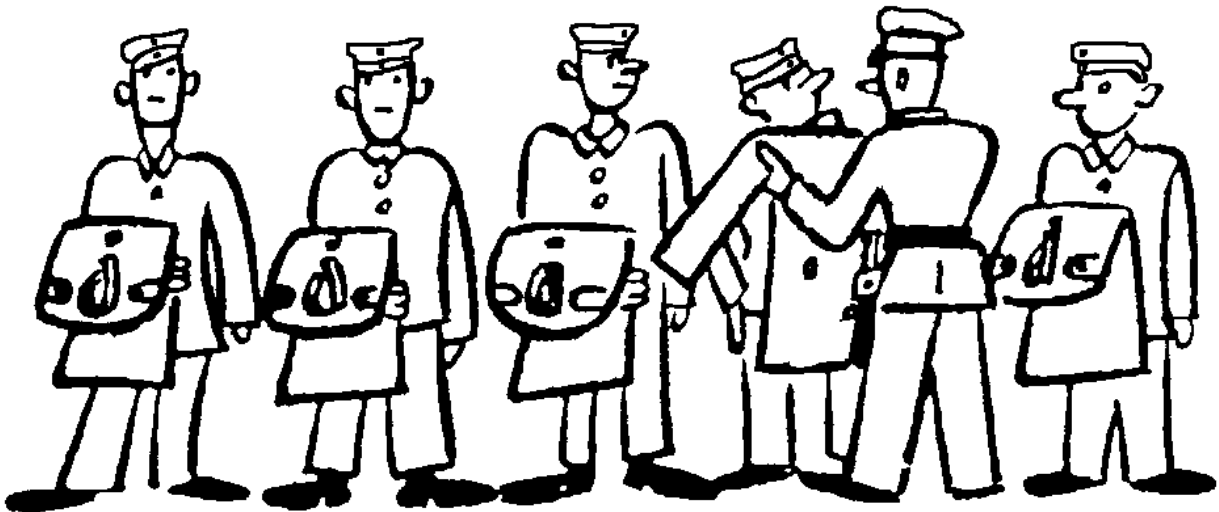
Okay

First up is a phrase that is heard very often by English or German speakers. "A-O.K." or simply "O.K.". This phrase is said to have been brought back to the United States by Doughboys returning from occupation duty in Germany after the war. "A-O.K." or "OK" in its diminutive form shortens the very common period response of "Alles ordentlich und klar" or its alternative "Alles in Ordnung, klar". We also find a diminutive formed as the question "Alles OK?" What do these mean?

Simply, everything is routine / in order (as it should be) and ready / clear (without confusion), neither bad nor good. Everything all right? So you see its meaning really did not change at all in its adoption by the English language in its now common form of usage. It is no different from a shop clerk responding "Business as usual" when you enquire as to the status of their day.

Greetings

Certain greetings that appear to be very modern have similar roots. "Hej!" or "Jo!" are both German greetings that sound exactly like their English counterparts "Hey!" and "Yo!" Both of these greetings are commonly used today and each have their own unique roots. "Hej!" was incorporated into German from the Slavic languages. These connections being formed as a result of German trade with the Slavic countries to the east; as well as from the Slavs living inside the boundaries of the German Empire. Remember, Berlin was once a predominantly Slavic city. "Jo!" has much older roots as it is derived from the Old Frisian and Dutch languages. It is used to get someone's attention where it can be interpreted as shouting "You" or to even indicate agreement (Yes). Perhaps you might have even heard it eek out in conversations amongst the members of the Amish communities



APPELL *Appell*

through their own evolved dialect from older forms of the German language. Over the centuries it has filtered its way into its various areas and languages of Europe with pretty much the same meanings.

I can assure you that the use of any of these at an event won't turn you into a New Age German rapper and wreck someone's living history trip. However; by spicing up your use of period correct German words and phrases you will pique your comrades' curiosity to learn more about the German language and up the ante in our quest to improve authenticity in our reenacting world.

Coming full circle, the idea to take away here is that all languages are truly dynamic and evolutionary. Some words and phrases may change their meanings over time, some may fade away, and what might not appear at first sight or hearing to be very authentic, might just actually be!

Have you enjoyed this article? If so; please let myself or the editor know your thoughts. If there are enough positive responses; I will do my best to produce future submissions on various topics of interest to the membership.



The Spirit of Great War Reenacting

By Marsh Wise, 1./JR23 and GWA Secretary

A reprint:

Lately, with the influx of new "centennial recruits," there has been a lot of comment about people not taking hits. I don't mean a lone guy running, but whole units just ignoring being fired at even up to being shot at with belt-fed machine guns at close range?! We know that there has been some discussion on why this, having been in the hobby a number of years and having seen a few things during that time, we thought we'd comment.

In the GWA these days, as in life in general, time marches on and now we have a fair amount of members who were never at Shimpstown – guys who don't remember Chris Aleo pacing around and yelling about how "*Everybody dies!*" That was our mantra and it's supposed to still be today. As he said then, "You've all read the casualty reports, you know how many of these men died. What should you do, you die! Remember, it's **not real**; you can get back up in a bit." Those words at **every** safety meeting kept us honest, they kept Great War special. It's something we need again. It's part of being "The Reenactor's Reenactment," a term that came about because it was true reenactors who had tired of the same old crap in other time periods joined this one because it was different – it was better! Not only did we all take hits, in fact, it was a point of honor that you did so. We weren't the "Cowboys and Injuns" of WWII reenacting or the "fambily affair" of Civil War – this was GREAT WAR – we ALL DIED! It was important then and it's important now.

Something else to note: **there is NO "winning"** in this hobby – we all DIE! It seems in today's world, there is the emphasis on "winning" well this isn't a game to win – it's a hobby –
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us recreating a period of time long gone. Just die! **And**, if some farb orders "*Don't take any hits!*" you go and ignore this goober, because he's a lot of what's **wrong with our hobby**, not what is right!

Something Special

Great War reenacting is something special, but it's not because we're all the same, it's because of our differences! It's a place where so many different people can come together to do something, and still be friends.

Gas

If you see colored smoke (blue, red, orange, yellow, green) **MASK UP**, IT'S GAS! No mask, **YOU DIE**, period. There is no "I'm holdin' ma breath" or "I'm choking, cough, cough" while continuing to fire at the enemy... anyone who has ever been in a real military simulation gas chamber will tell you, you can not function after getting a whiff of chemical smoke... you are gagging, coughing, tearing up, etc. So much that you can not do anything but want to get the HELL out of that area ASAP.

If GAS is employed, the whole battlefield is considered as GASSED, not just the trench area it is used in – again the whole battlefield is GASSED, so, no mask, you DIE.

Smoke

White smoke is just what it is ... it is used to conceal an area from view, it doesn't stop bullets from going in or out, you know you've been hit, die.

Prisoners

Do not treat prisoners with harm, they did not execute POW's in WWI, treat them with respect as a POW. If someone surrenders, take them as a POW, do not keep firing at them. If YOU are a POW, do be a dork and suddenly pull out a knife and try and kill the captors or interrogators. In the real thing, they'd kill you AND

all the other prisoners there. The war is over – you will live. Please, try and think like they did – soldiers do not want to die (well, unless they're nuts).

Flanking

There is no 'flanking' **period!** There is no end to our trenches – there are hundreds of miles of them that connect to one another and the enemy is in them ... what we see is only a small portion of all that.

Types of Great War Reenactors

I was talking to former CP Rep, Merlin Hanson once, and he had a really good take on the hobby; he said there were certain types of reenactors who come to our events.

- The **Cap Busters** (shooters?)
- The **"Poets"**?
- The **"scholars"**
- The **"Tactic Gurus"**
- The **collectors**
- The **"dress-up kings"**
- The **"gun nuts"**

What am I doing with this article? I guess trying to say "Come on guys, let's get back to what makes Great War reenacting the best! Let's all remember, we die – it's what we DO! And really, let's all try and work together – there IS **no** "winning"? in our hobby."



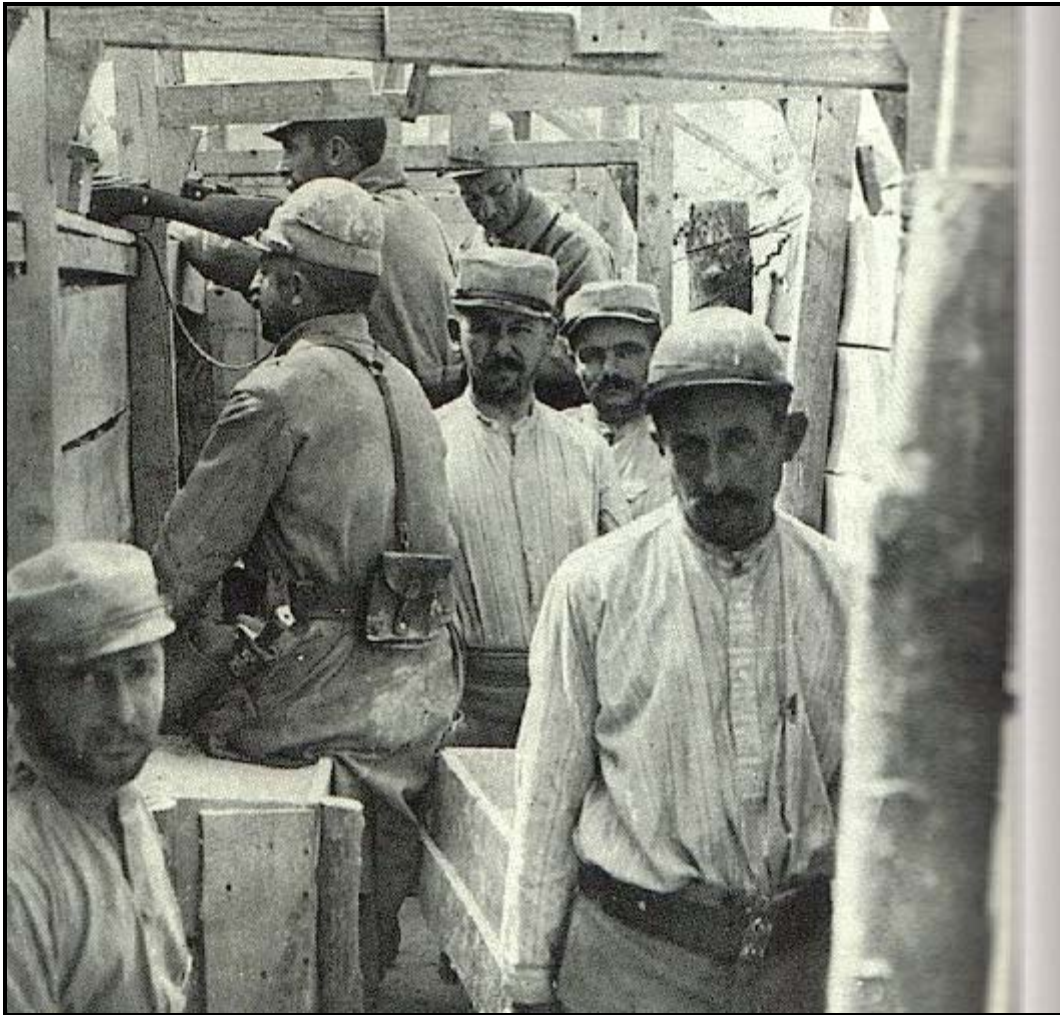
French Army Helmets 1914-1918

By Johnathan Bracken (aka *Jean Contamine*, 151RI)

<http://www.151ril.com/content/gear/uniforms/15>

As the French army's casualties rapidly mounted in the summer and fall of 1914, it became evident that head wounds would be a defining injury of the conflict. Most often these had been inflicted by shrapnel, shell fragments or other flying debris. To help reduce the number of head wounds, Quartermaster General Louis Adrian proposed in December 1914 the production of protective headgear. The first initiative was rudimentary in the extreme: a steel bowl called the *cervelière* ("skull-cap, or more literally, "brain-pan"). The idea originated with reports of the soldiers' mess-tins being struck by shrapnel balls but had not been punctured. At first, the *Grand Quartier Général* (G.Q.G.) remained reticent about the brain-pan. The belief was that the war would be over before the helmets could be produced and distributed to the troops. Yet after further convincing from General Adrian, G.Q.G. signed-off on production of the economized form of head protection.





le Casque Adrian (“Adrian helmet”)

The brain-pan was a stamped steel skull-cap intended to be worn under the kepi. In actual use, the troops took to wearing them on top for comfort. Manufactured in three sizes (small, medium, large), it was .5 mm thick, semi-spherical in shape, and had two holes drilled into either side allowing it to be hung by a cord while not in use. French troops also found another use for the brain-pans. They made for good cooking receptacles or even, when in need, as chamber pots. Between December 1914 and February 1915, 700,000 brain-pans were made, with 200,000 actually being issued to the ranks. Yet they offered only mediocre protection against small shell fragments, shrapnel and stones. Something far better was needed.

Though the brain-pan produced only marginally positive results, its use still led to a decrease in the number of casualties. This caught General Joffre’s attention, and by the end of February 1915 he was convinced of the need for head protection. He ordered that a more suitable helmet be produced and Adrian jumped to work. His idea was to create a helmet that both offered both increased protection and comfort. It had to weigh as little as possible yet be strong and easy to manufacture in large quantities. His design was largely based off preexisting helmets employed by the light-cavalry, which in turn had been inspired by the *Bourgoignotte* helmet of the medieval times. In March and April 1915, manufacturers were given the prototype of the infantry helmet. These producers had previously been making the more complicated and ornate pre-war helmet for light-cavalry, as well as those employed by the

Paris fire brigade. Adrian submitted his design to the French authorities for final approval at the end of April 1915, with production beginning immediately.

The helmet was .7 mm thick and weighed roughly 1.8 pounds. It was composed of four pieces: a shell, a visor, a neck guard and a crest. The visor was 50 mm wide (inclined at a 22 degree angle), the neck guard 44 mm (inclined at 45 degrees). Along the top edge of the crest were two ventilation slits. On the crown, a badge was attached in the form of a flaming grenade and embossed with the letters "RF" (*République Française*). The assembly of the helmet was done via stapling and soldering. Soon after production began, it was evident that the joint of the neck guard and visor would need to be reinforced. Originally the two were simply soldered together. As such, two rivets were added, either one below the other or placed obliquely to one another. (An exception appears to be with the manufacturer Japy, which continued to retain a soldered-only joint throughout the war.) The color used in painting the helmet was a light grey-blue, which was sprayed on. Once fired in the kiln, the paint darkened to a bright, luminous blue varying in shade.

The helmet liners were originally made of sheepskin but would later be changed to the more resilient goatskin. The first model liner was cut from one piece (sheepskin) and consisted of seven teeth with a copper eyelet at the end of each to take the drawstring. The leather was blackened and varnished. Beginning in the fall of 1915, a second model would be used consisting of two pieces sewn together, the leather being left natural. The liner was sewn to a strip of recycled wool (madder red or dark-blue), which was itself mounted onto four strips of corrugated aluminum. The metal strips secured to the shell of the helmet via hooks soldered to the shell. The chinstrap was similarly made of first sheepskin (blackened) and then, after August 1915, goatskin (natural brown). Two mm in thickness, it was tightened using a black-lacquered iron buckle and secured to the helmet by a brass rivet (non-regulation copper rivets were also seen).

The helmet was manufactured in three sizes A, B and C, each being subdivided into three inner lining sizes. The result was nine sizes of head circumference, from 54-62 cm.

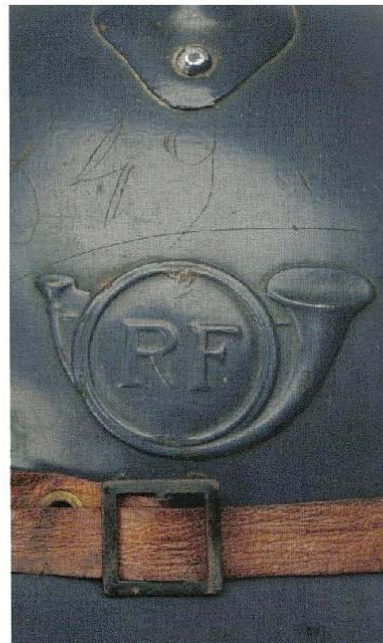
Of the roughly fifty manufactures initially called upon to put out the helmet, only fifteen are retained: two to produce the steel sheet metal, five to produce the head pieces and chinstraps, eight to manufacture and incorporate the paint and position the head piece and chinstrap. The stamping equipment was particularly delicate and complex. It required some fifty tools to create the exploding bomb insignia attached to the crown. It took a good month for production to become regular and to conform to the standards that Adrian originally set. For example, the Japy facility was contracted to have produced 529,000 helmets by 1 August 1915 but had only made 141,000 by that time. Yet Adrian remained optimistic as manufacturers steadily increased production levels. At the end of August, 52,000 helmets were being turned out daily. By the start of the Champagne offensive on 25 September 1915, 1,600,000 Adrian helmets had been distributed to the army. By the end of the year, this number was over 3 million.

The price of manufacturing each was only 3.35 francs. In comparison, a regulation kepi cost 3.80 francs each. And when compared to the price that British manufacturers were asking for each of their helmets-15.65 to 18.75 francs-this was a real bargain. Meanwhile, French industrialists, steel manufacturers and those who had declined to participate in the production of quartermaster helmets, fashioned for their personal profit a model close to the official Adrian. Primarily purchased by officers, these commercial helmets were sold at a price of 20 to 25 francs and were of a much inferior

quality, aside from a fancier liner. The metal used in its construction proved too rigid and when struck by a projectile tended to fracture into splinters, only adding to the trauma of the wound. At the end of September, Joffre prohibited the production and use of these commercial helmets in the zone of armies.

The appearance of the Adrian as standard equipment of the soldier showed an immediate decrease in the number and severity of head wounds. The helmets, at first designated to just the infantry, are soon distributed to all the branches of service. The only distinguishing characteristic on the helmet between each of the branches was in the badge mounted on the crown. For the infantry and cavalry, it was the flaming grenade; for light-infantry, a horn; foreign marksmen and zouaves, a crescent moon; artillery, two crossed canons surmounted by a flaming grenade; colonial troops, an anchor surmounted by a flaming grenade. For the non-fighting wings, the badge was, for the engineers, a cuirass and helmet; for medical, a caduceus entwined by a serpent surrounded by oak and laurel branches; for quartermaster, a fascine with a backdrop of flags and laurel wreaths. Officers sometimes had specialized badges made, which typically incorporated rank insignia. The chinstrap was often replaced with one of higher-quality make, such as braided leather.

The only serious flaw with the design process was discovered in the field and it came down to paint. Specifically, the glossy finish reflected sunlight too easily, making for an easily identified target even at long distances. As a short-term measure, helmet covers were distributed beginning in November 1915. In practice, helmet covers were already being made locally without waiting for the official order to be issued. They were made of various types of canvas, including the same material as used in French tent-canvases. The order decreed that the covers were to be made in the same iron blue-gray (cretonne) cotton used for the early war kepi covers. In reality, khaki and beige was used more extensively. Generally the construction consisted of two pieces sewn together along a central seam and equipped with a drawstring. Commonly, in the absence of a helmet cover soldiers camouflaged their helmet with mud. An unintended side-effect of the helmet covers, along with the self-application of mud for camouflage was an increased rate of infection in head-wounds, as cloth and mud particles were blasted into the wound. On 15 October 1916, both helmet covers and the improvised practice of camouflaging the helmet with mud were officially prohibited. Despite the ban, helmet covers do appear in use here and there until the end of the war. Ultimately, the helmet cover was yet another ephemeral item that defines the look of the poilu in 1916.



Example of the 1st model Adrian showing the luminous quality of the early paint, although here quite dark in tone. It bears the hunting horn badge for chasseurs. The early model liner is also shown.

In June 1916, more permanent efforts were made to reduce the visibility of the helmets by reducing the glossiness of the paint. It was found that if the helmet was fired for an extra period of time in the kilns, the result was a darker tint that had a matte grey-blue appearance. On 8 July, distribution of these less visible helmets began. Helmets distributed before the new painting process began were either reclaimed and repainted, or were painted over at the local echelon using a matte dark-gray or dark-blue. In the latter case, the paint was applied using a brush.



Example of the 2nd model Adrian in mint condition, showing the darker, more matte quality of the later paint. It bears the crossed canons badge for artillery. Details of the helmet are also shown including the early model liner metal spacers, rectangular chinstrap receiver and headband.

Meanwhile, distribution had soared to 7 million by the end of 1916. That year, France began selling the Adrian to foreign armies at the price of 6 francs each. Italy bought 1,600,000; Russia, 340,000; Belgium, 208,000; Serbia, 123,000; Romania, 90,000; Holland, 10,000. By war's end, a total of over 20 million Adrians had been made. On 18 December 1918, a decree is made awarding a helmet to each officer or soldier having belonged to an army formation. This helmet is provided with a plaque, a brass souvenir covering over the visor and bearing the inscription "Soldat de la Grande Guerre 1914-1918" ("Soldier of the Great War 1914-1918"). These ceremonial helmets are sent out on the 16 April 1916. The Adrian remained the standard military issue in the French army until after World War II, and was also used by the French police up to the 1970s.



On top row, a comparison of a 1st model Adrian with the early paint (left) and the 2nd model Adrian with the later paint (right). On bottom row, an early model liner (left) and two later model liners. All of these helmets were manufactured by Japy yet minor differences in assembly between each can be seen. The soldered joint of the visor and neck guard is also shown, an assembly feature that Japy continued for the entire war despite later regulations stating the joint should be reinforced with rivets.

Sources:

- Bernard, Gilles and Gérard Lachaux. *"L'Uniforme du Poilu 1914-1918."* Gazette des Uniformes - Hors-Série No. 19. Paris: 2005.
- Mirouze, Laurent and Stéphane Dekerle. *The French Army in the First World War 1914-1918 (vol. 2)*. Verlag Militaria: Vienna, 2008.
- **NOTE:** all images used without permission.

Parking Plan - Spring 2018 Version

By Mike Landree

This plan was designed to use the limited land available to us more efficiently and it will only work if you, the members of the GWA read and adhere to it. We all have a responsibility to follow these instructions so that everyone has room to park for the event. All parking in designated areas is a first come, first served basis. There is no reserved parking for individuals in this parking plan, only designated areas, and if you park in an area that is not designated for your situation, you will be asked to move. If you refuse to move, your vehicle could be towed and you could be processed for disciplinary action by the G8. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Vehicle Parking Lots

This section is for vehicles only and does not apply to vendors nor vehicles with trailers. Members have two choices for parking vehicles (non-vendors and vehicles without trailers) and these are the main parking lot and overflow parking lot. The white shaded areas of the map denote these areas. Stakes and tape will denote parking lines. There is an efficient way to park and there is an inefficient way to park. We need everyone to park in the lines as if the Boy Scouts are parking you at a large event - starting at the end of the line with each subsequent vehicle parking next and so forth. If someone parks in the middle of the line, we could lose many parking spaces. If 3 people do that same thing, it could affect quite a few people and the system breaks down. Please don't make us resort to draconian measures in the enforcement of the parking areas. DO NOT PARK in the vendor area as a

matter of convenience. The overflow parking area is for vehicles without trailers and non-vendors. In addition, do not park in the vendor overflow area (yellow dotted lines).. Do not park along the roads as these areas are also reserved for vehicles with trailers.

Vendors

This includes anyone selling items either under a tent, out of a trailer, or out of their vehicles. Larger (hard stand) vendors or vendors with trailers are to be set up in the area depicted in red on the map. Vendors who are selling out of their vehicles are to park in the yellow area denoted on the map. If we need overflow vendor areas, then we will use the yellow dashed lines, but these are overflow areas and reserved for such. Be considerate and take only the room you absolutely require and no more. Also, set up starting at the end of the lot and subsequent vendors set up next to the last vendor to maximize efficiency of the land. Do not park in the parking areas reserved for vehicles. If you are set up in the vehicle parking area, you will be asked to move.

Non-period Camping

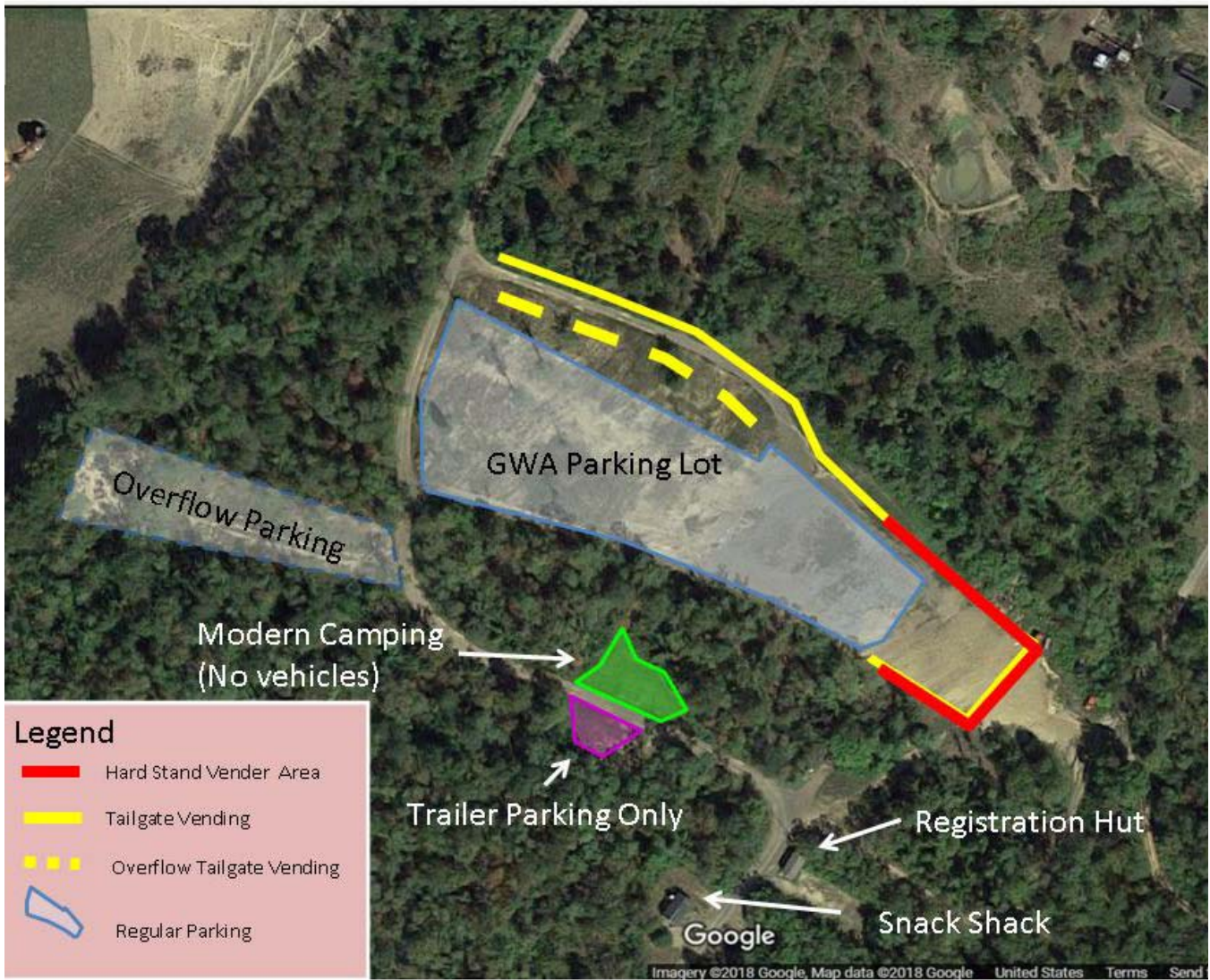
This area is set aside for people who do not camp in the tactical area. NO VEHICLES ARE TO BE PARKED in this area. Not only is the mixing of vehicles and tents inefficient, it is a safety concern. If you are parked in this area, you will be asked to move it. Do not park in the trailer parking area or use the trailer parking area as an overflow for tents. All tents must be within the non-period camping area so be considerate and

set up in a way to allow for others to do the same.

Trailers

This applies to all trailers, except vendors who use their trailers to sell out of. This area

is specifically for vehicles with trailers. Vehicles without trailers are not allowed to park in this area. This is also not an overflow for non-period camping. Vehicles with trailers may also park along the road going out the exit.



A Needed Reprint:

Memorial Lane and our Neighbors

By Marsh Wise, *GWA Secretary*

This is important, especially for you new guys... DO NOT drive on Memorial Lane at the front of our site off of Middle Rd. It cuts through Steve Wiser's property and causes him great angst. It has been posted numerous times over the years not to do this; yet every year, someone new thinks they've discovered the equivalent of sliced bread. Some members incorrectly believe that it's on our property, but Memorial drive is NOT. Please don't drive on it. Feel free to ask questions on this. Wiser is not a bad guy (gasp, Marsh, have ya gone crazy?). The problem is twofold (look at Marshy get all jiggy with fancy terms): our members need to understand that he's not our "employee" and that he doesn't "have" to do things. If you need something done at the site, you really need to go through your Rep first, either Matt Murphy for the Allies or Joe Murray for us good guys :-P.

If you want digging done, call your TRENCHMASTER **first**, don't be pestering Steve Wiser to do stuff for you. If he asks you (more likely tells you after you're the 36th guy to do it) to not drive on Memorial Lane,

don't get all honked off and mad at this "redneck guy" telling you what to do on "our" property. You probably (especially if new) don't know all the boundaries of the site and the "why's" and "why nots" of our site/property. I have included some images showing where to go. One is a satellite photo with markings and the other is a survey map with things more cleanly identified. I am also thinking we should have these enlarged and displayed at the registration shed.

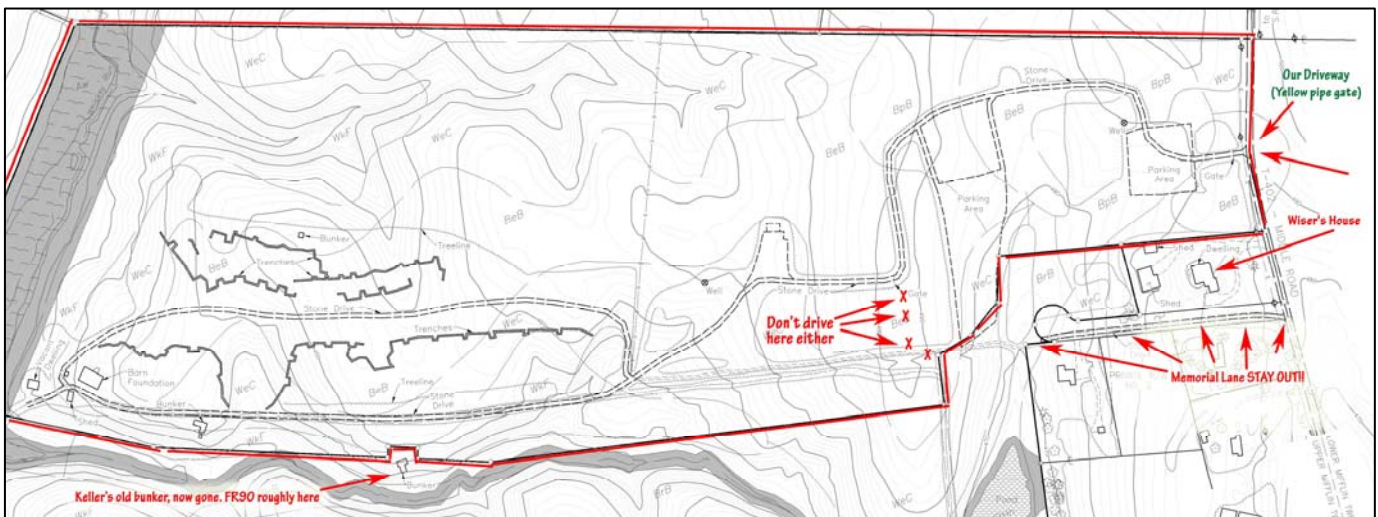
One other note: Steve, of course, needs to understand that our members a: do this for a hobby, b: are not rich, c: are not (all) stupid city boys. And that many just simply don't know all the ins and outs of the site. It's a sin of ignorance, not of malicious intent.

Signage

We need more signage - no, not a big skull and crossbones with "Trespassers will be shot" or "Poison gas in use" on them. Joe White of IR92 has made us some great new signs!! Thanks Joe!

Another Thing to Help

It's my belief that the East end of the parking lot needs to be blocked off or gated - certainly during events! Same with the road that continues on when we turn at the gate/registration shed (thanks



for fixing the gate Steve!). Last, where the road comes up past the CP authentic camp ground... That needs a visible, solid block. Guys need to respect Steve's (and other neighbor's) wishes and property rights. Do you really want to be a bad neighbor?

A note from Skampi:

"The other neighbors who live off of Memorial Lane don't like it either, when GWA members drive on it. This was a problem back in 2007/08 and we made it go away. New folks think they have discovered something new and all they are doing is pissing off our neighbors."

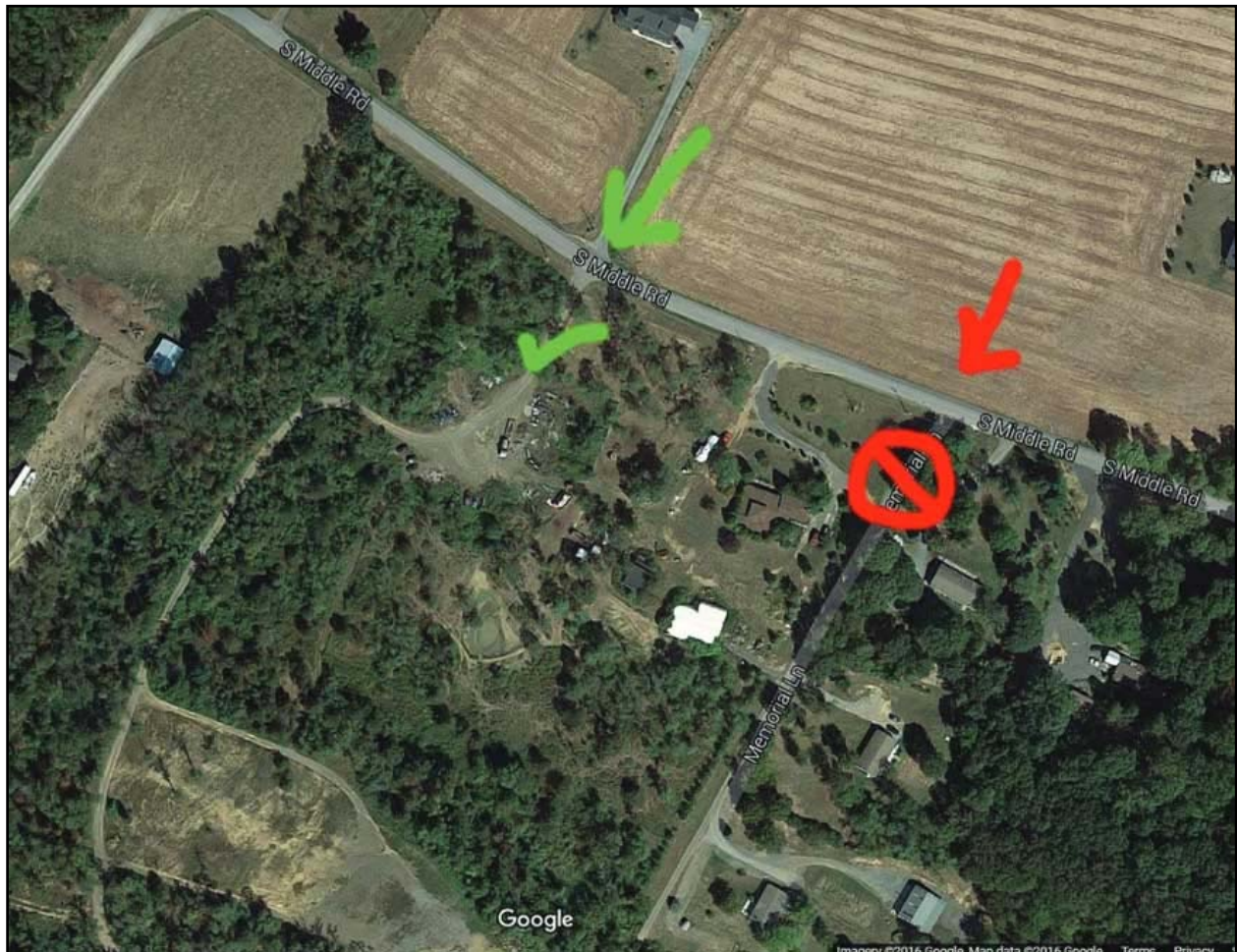
Our Fault

New people, we've probably let you down in not defining things exactly. Please don't assume just because you saw someone else do something that

it's okay ... If you have ANY questions as to the site, ask your Trenchmaster and the Reps.

As the GWA Secretary, I plan on improving communication and making things clearer. If you have a question, ASK, please don't assume. There are no dumb questions in the GWA. If you feel someone will laugh at you, PM, call or e-mail ME. I will do my best to help you or get you an answer - certainly, I can help you get with the person who CAN help you...

And again, please understand that our relationship with Steve Wiser is a symbiotic one. Steve looks out for our site and ... he is a member - both he and his wife Kim joined the GWA. A lot of problems in the past have been due to assumptions and we all know what happens when we "assume," **right?**





Why?

Why does *On the Wire* look so primitive and different this edition? Because I, the secretary Marsh, had to do it, due to Editor Mark Graef starting a new job and pressing real-life commitments. Also, because it's a **newsletter** – I like to make newsletters look like newsletters and not something they're not. It has pix and whitespace because we don't actually have to pay for printing and postage, so we can have longer articles and colour. Yay. If you have an article, please send it in. :-)