



From the President

by **Carter Bertone**

Members of the GWA,

The end of the Great War Centennial is almost upon us. The last four years have simply been amazing for the Great War Association. We have seen tremendous growth in our numbers and we have made great strides in developing the Neville Battlefield. Many predict that interest in WWI will wane after the centennial. I simply don't see it this way. I firmly believe we are well positioned for growth and increased opportunities. As the current political climate has caused difficulties for both the WWII and American Civil War communities, the WWI time period remains free of these political entanglements.

Reenactment organizations and event planners are finding it harder and harder to find available land due to urban sprawl and a growing number of landowners seem less inclined to allow reenactors to use their property. The GWA does not face these problems. We own the land and have our own insurance. At each event I see new, and younger



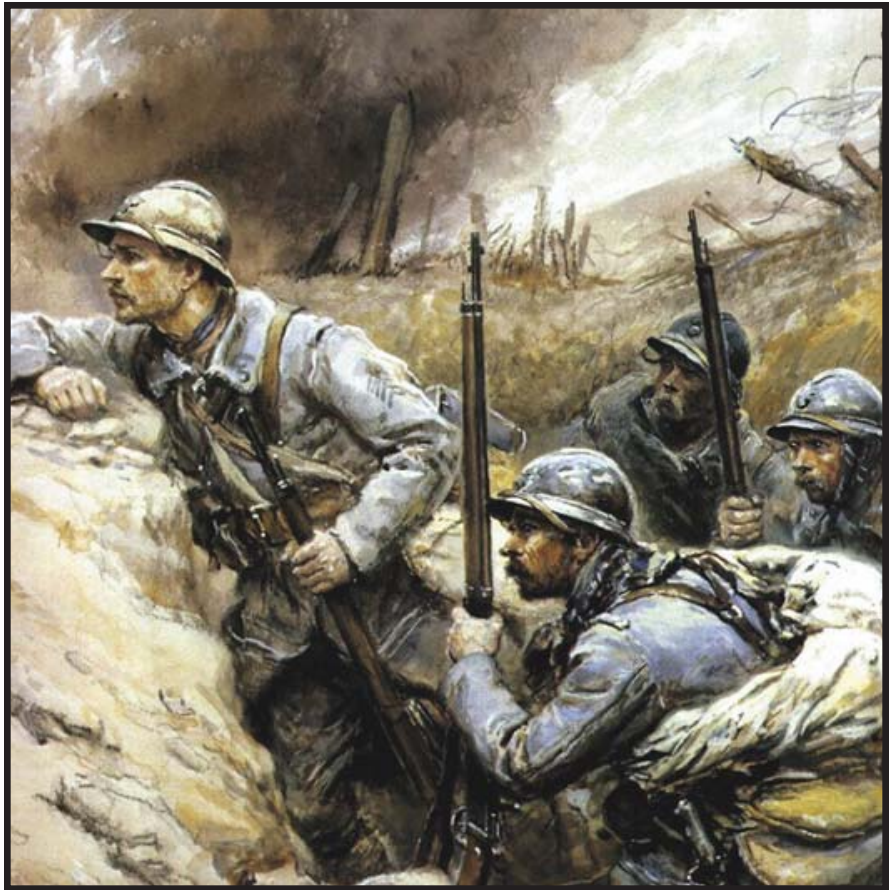
faces, breathing new life into the hobby. Each time I visit the site to work on the French sector, I see more units out building bunkers and working on positions than I have ever seen in my 18 years reenacting at Neville. As I scroll down my Facebook feed and scour the parking lot for militaria at GWA events, I see more advances in recreating WWI material culture than ever before. These are great times for WWI reenacting!

Feedback from the Spring event was overwhelmingly positive. Both field commanders worked hard on putting together the "War of Movement" scenario replicating the German Spring Offensive of 1918. This joint planning represented a great change from our normal GWA tactical action and even though it did not last as long as the tactical commanders anticipated, it was a great change of pace. A good time was had by all. This fall we will continue with this "War of Movement" theme and recreate the "Last 100 Days" allied offensive. As we move forward I will direct the combat commanders to continue to work together to develop comprehensive, realistic scenarios that challenge both individuals and units and allow for rotations off the front lines to engage in other activities such as trench maintenance, unit training, living history activities, etc. I encourage all members of the GWA to become active participants in

the organization. The G8 is not the "wellspring" of "good ideas". I encourage all members of the GWA to contribute to our planning. If you have a good idea that will make our events more realistic or enhance the WWI experience let your respective (Allied / Central Powers) representative know and we will try to work it into a scenario. Remember, the G8 works for you....the membership. It is not "My Hobby", it is "Our Hobby". Take ownership!

Special thanks go out to Jim Kidd, the Allied Trenchmaster and George "Ranger" Walters, the CP Trenchmaster for putting together a comprehensive list of projects for our "Five Year Site Development Plan" over the coming months I will be working with the Trenchmasters and the Combat Commanders to consolidate the list and prioritize all the projects and hopefully start working on projects before the November event.

In closing I need to remind everyone that this summer has been exceptionally hard on the site. The massive amount of rain we received has inundated many of our positions and the site is overgrown with vegetation. It will take a monumental effort to get the site ready for the November event. I encourage all units to review their calendars and plan as many unit work days as feasible to get the site ready for November. Unit commanders must be especially attentive to their positions. Many of the positions will need a great deal of work to ensure they are safe to occupy during the event. In closing I am really looking forward to November and thank each and every one of you for your support.



Armistice Commeration

There seems to be some consternation regarding the GWA social event we plan for Saturday night at the November event. Several members have expressed grave concern that this planned social will turn into college fraternity keg party complete with Hawaiian shirts, red solo cups, garbage can punch, Jello shots and the Steve Miller Band blaring from stereo speakers. This was certainly never the Board's nor my intent. Clearly the "messaging" as it relates to this portion of the event has been vague and unclear. I take full responsibility for that failure. I will do better next time. This should clarify the plan and what is going to occur and the standards that are expected.

The former President, Thomas "Scampi" Galleher has volunteered to take lead and set up the event. To be clear, I have provided guidance that this is not to be a "free for all Farbfest". Limited food will be available inside.

The "Keg" will be outside and covered. Participants will be expected to stay in kit and bring period vessels to drink from. We will try to supply period music using a blue-tooth speaker that will be concealed. I expect we can also have a bonfire and potentially some live music. This "Social" is an opportunity for the membership to wear their "Walking out" uniforms, but these are not mandatory. All participants are expected to be in period attire. Firearms will not be allowed. The drinking age is 21. GWA members who are under 21 are absolutely welcome to attend but I expect Unit Commanders to identify their members that are under 21 and ensure that they are not drinking. Unit commanders will be held responsible for their members just as they are in the field.

The social will start at approximately 7:30 PM and will start with a formal toast and the social will end NLT 9:30 PM.

Numerous individuals have inquired and some have "demanded" that the gates be opened so that they can bring in their vehicles and depart early. The G8 has decided that this will not occur. Units have informed me that they plan to conduct numerous Armistice related activities such as "gift exchanges with the enemy", "mess activities", "formal toasts", etc. It is simply discourteous to allow non-period vehicles on site and disturb these individuals / units who see the Armistice and Cease Fire as an opportunity to conduct other authentic living history activities. Individuals who desire to leave early will have an



opportunity to bring excess equipment such as bedding up to their vehicles prior to the start of combat at 0900 on Saturday morning. A little prior planning will go a long way and will be appreciated by your peers.

I appreciate your cooperation.

VR

Carter J. Bertone
President, GWA

Vice President's Corner

by Mike Landree

Ladies and Gentlemen of the GWA,



With the Fall GWA event, we reach the conclusion of the Centennial of the First World War. For many of us, years and years of reenacting the Great War culminated in this great celebration over the past 4 years. For others, the ability to

reenact a war during a great celebration period was the impetus. We have seen in the past few years great periods of celebrations from the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the Napoleonic Wars, the Sesquicentennial of the War Between the States, the 75th Anniversary of WWII, the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War, and many others - and we will see in 7 years the movement back to the Revolutionary War for the 250th Anniversary. Regardless, we have faithfully, as an organization, done our best to honor those men of every nation who fought during the Great War. Many of our reenacting brothers will most likely end their WWI reenacting careers after this event - and many were waiting for this to occur specifically for this purpose. For those who will never again shelter behind the parapets of the GWA site or throw a grenade at another reenactor who was creeping up on them, we thank you for your comradeship and the many years of detailed research and support to the GWA.

Change and Your Part In It

For those who will continue to reenact in our great hobby, I would ask you fill the void of our departing comrades and dedicate your efforts to making this hobby even better. This organization is changing. At the last event we had over 700 participants. This represents a doubling in size from our first days

at Newville. We simply can't manage these numbers using the same practices that worked when we only had 300 members. Change is not always bad. As an organization we must constantly reassess our organization and practices to determine if what we are doing is indeed working or can be run more effectively and efficiently. This G8 is working diligently to posture this organization for the future and ensure this organization remains vibrant and innovative for the next 30 years. . We also have great leaders in place and



our organization is growing. Find your place and make a difference.

Safety

On the safety side of things, I would like to address a few thoughts for you to digest. First, the reenacting community is very small, regardless of the timeframe(s) you are active in. Don't just worry about making friends among the members in your unit. Embrace the "other side" as friends,



because we are all living historians regardless of the impression. A true spirit of brotherhood will prevent 80% of the safety issues we will face as an organization. I've said it many times that we all arrive to events in good physical shape and we expect to leave the event in the same general condition (minus occasional bruises, sore joints and muscles, and money). Safety is everyone's responsibility and you must be thinking of the guy you face as your friend and fellow reenactor, not the Boche, Heiney, Tommy, Frog, or Yank.

Secondly, as the head of the Safety Committee, I'd ask for members to think about how we can make the event better. We have industrious members who are constantly inventing and adapting.. We want to be able to clear every munition and every weapon system for use - especially if you've gone through the effort and investment to produce them. We want to assist, but

we have a responsibility to ensure that these are safe. Most times, weapons and munitions show up already mass produced and we can either say, "yes" or "no." If no, then it's a significant undertaking to modify on the spot if possible or forbid the use. You can do two things to assist yourself in getting the answer "yes." The first is to reach out to your safety representative (either Central Powers or Allied) or myself to assist you in your design. Second, weigh and test your simulation beforehand to determine if it meets the specifications and requirements we will conduct on it at the safety meeting. Lastly, we will keep one of each munition you use. If you have stores of munitions from past events, we still need to test each type or variation of before the event starts. If there's a problem or it's questionable, we will want to test it again. Marking your simulated munition with a paint pen will assist in us cataloguing these and finding the

unit if we have a problem during the event. No one wants to stop fighting as we investigate.

In closing, we have a great event planned this fall. Many hours have gone into the plans and preparations. Assist as you can. Support those who ask you to do something. Remember that no one is paid to do these jobs. Be courteous in your parking - park according to the plan so that others have the ability to park and enjoy the reenactment.

Parking Plan - Fall 2018

Reenactors,

Bottom line up front - trailer parking is moving to allow those with trailers to pull through rather than backing in. Parking for Modern Camping (only) will take over the parking lot across from the Modern Camping area. **Park in designated parking spots or risk being towed.** Please see map for specific parking areas.

I was tasked with coming up with this plan. Is it perfect? Nothing is, but we're trying. Is everyone happy? No. But let me say that parking was better during the spring event than past events and most people supported it. Why have a parking plan? Because the fall GWA event will be the largest event hosted at this site with the largest numbers of reenactors and vehicles transporting them...with limited parking space. If members follow the rules and be courteous to each other, everyone should have a place to park their vehicles.

Past Issues

Issues we had in the spring were mostly people who were selling out of their vehicles not parking in the trunk vendor parking areas and taking up too much space. This was especially burdensome on Friday afternoon when people set up their trash to sell and reenactors coming in didn't have a place to park. Once the event started





and selling was over, we had massive areas of the vehicle parking lot open and vehicles double and triple parked in other areas. Most vendor violators fell into three categories: older non-fighting day trippers, those ignorant of the rules, and those who are simply inconsiderate. The vast majority of violators were older members who no longer reenact (still claim unit membership), but come in Friday to sell and then pack up and leave. The ignorant ones claimed they didn't know about the plan (even though it was published in the "**On the Wire**" and signs marked the areas). The ones who we found most frustrating were those who knew the plan, didn't like the plan, and chose to do what they wanted. All violators were warned and either asked to move or given a warning. The warning is over - violators will risk being towed and will be responsible for towing charges, rides to the towed lot, etc. For gross violators, the G8 can determine if that person's membership should be revoked and take appropriate action.

Memorial Drive

Please remember, **DO NOT use** Memorial Drive to access the site. That is a private drive to our neighbor's homes, It is **NOT** our property. Be a good

neighbor. And yes, the new gate and driveway are planned to be open.

Important

It must be reiterated - commanders are responsible for their membership - all that they do and all that they fail to do. This applies to all members even if they don't take to the field. Everyone who comes onto GWA property, even to just vend, must pay registration fees and be registered. This is a GWA requirement.

We will have to resort to roving parking attendants this event to ensure the parking plan is adhered to. In my mind this is a shame because of the inconsiderate actions of a few. I know that everyone would prefer to show up and reenact rather than play babysitter, but the more people who assist in doing the right thing, the easier it is on the all-volunteer members who do so much to make this event enjoyable for all. Do your duty and do the right thing for the right reasons.

Mike Landree

GWA Vice President

From the Treasurer

by **Chris Garcia**

Cash on Hand (as of 9/15/18):

\$23,831.73 in the GWA Checking Account

\$3,164.27 in PayPal Account

\$825 in Checks waiting to be deposited.



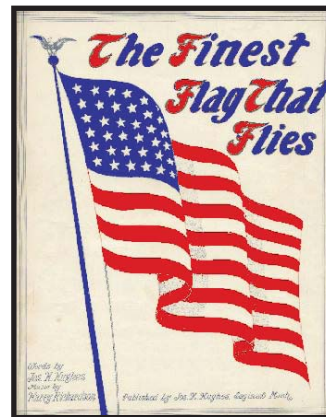
Registration

Registration is proceeding smoothly. To avoid problems, it is simple: Follow directions.

1. Remember every GWA member MUST be a member of a GWA unit or an AUTHORIZED independent. It is **YOUR** responsibility to make sure that you are allowed to register with a unit. It is your UNIT COMMANDER'S responsibility to maintain an up to date roster of unit members. If you aren't on the roster, you cannot participate or even register. I understand there are unit commanders who simply do not update their rosters and you get put on hold. It isn't hard. All unit commanders were sent the authorized standard GWA roster to fill out. We track units that have issues with registration and the unit commanders are reported to the relevant representative and the president.
2. If you are using the online registration form YOU MUST pay immediately with PAYPAL and the PayPal address MUST match the e-mail on your registration. I

need to be able to instantly trace that payment to your registration. If you have separate e-mail addresses, then just send a direct PayPal to gwatreas@gmail.com (the online registration form is not mandatory). If utilizing the online registration, please only submit ONE form. We are printing out over one thousand pages of required documents for each event and toner is not cheap. If you want to submit multiple forms you will help defer the cost by paying a \$15 penalty before you can participate. Of course, if you follow directions everything will flow smoothly.

Remember, for the duration of 2018 registration closes **TWO weeks** before the event. All new members must be pre-registered. Returning GWA members can still do walk on registration and pay the \$15 gate fee on Friday Nov 5th.



Trench Stores

I frequently get asked about trench stores. I order trench Stores based upon what the Allied and CP trench masters indicate they need typically 4 months prior to an event and what is needed is ordered. I receive the stores

and issue them to the trench master, who issues them to units. Occasionally units will ask that I order extra sandbags for them, which I am happy to do and the unit pays the GWA the cost of the items, but you need to be asking for them at least 4 months out, not a few weeks before the event.

Sincerely

Chris Garcia,
GWA Treasurer

Secretary's Thoughts

by Marsh Wise

Armistice Commemoration thoughts

On the scenario for the upcoming Fall event. this is a once in a lifetime event: commemorating the end of the Great War. It's not the same old "usual event." The scenario is going to be different too. Like in the Spring, Bret Werner has put together a really great plan. After the Saturday stand-down, we will commemorate the end of the war. Ex-President Tom "Skampi" Galleher has been put in charge of this and most of you know he does a good job. Many units will be doing private ceremonies to commemorate the end of the war.



What it's Not

I'm sorry that some are unhappy with the way it has been planned, but this Armistice "party" has been in the planning FOR YEARS, over multiple administrations – no, not some big formal thing, but many of us have discussed it and talked on it. We are commemorating the **end of the Great War** – it will happen **once**. Yet, we have a few members that are up in arms because they are going to miss some "trigger time." Really? This is the Great War Association. We're here to commemorate the Great War. It's not all about busting caps.

We've had a number of new people come in over the last few years... Many come from Civil War or WW2 and want to bring the notions that are popular there to our hobby. It's kind of like me coming into your home and telling

you that you make your broccoli soup wrong and that you should make it MY way. Why? What we do here is special and different from other time periods. We're all Americans (at least most of us) and this "party" is meant so that we can all come together **as members of the GWA** to commemorate the end of the Great War. **"Together"**... That is in of the Spirit of Great War Association.

Why We Do things a Certain Way

Often people don't understand WHY we do things a certain way, They decry our methods, but... in the words of my friend Tim Fensch: *"What some of the newly arrived don't understand, is that many of the things they think should be done differently, have been tried in the past and didn't work."*

Truth. Re-inventing the wheel.

Anyway, we're here to honor those men and women who might have, and all too often, gave their lives in this war.

Parking "Volunteers" Needed

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.

Don't forget, each unit WILL have to provide a couple of volunteers to help with parking. There you go... Instead of wandering around and grumbling, you can help! Unit Commanders, contact VP Mike Landree on this.



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. Danielle Worell is assisting in this. IF you have a problem, please ask her – nicely.

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 needs to 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.

Proposed New Bylaws Amendment to be voted on at Fall 2018 Event

We have a Bylaws Change to vote on at this event... please read this below. It's a good thing

Current bylaw wording

After completion of the above requirements, the probationary unit's admission as a member unit into the GWA shall be voted on by the full membership. This vote shall be conducted by a show of hands at the first National Event following the unit's probationary period. A simple majority shall be required for admission of the unit

Petition new wording

We the undersigned members of the Great War Association do hereby request that a ballot be put before the membership at large. for a vote to change the method in which we remove units from Probationary Status.

Currently, units are removed from this status by a majority "voice" vote taking place at either the spring or fall events on Friday during the formation located at the monument.

We feel that this method leads to GWA members feeling "peer pressured" into voting for the affirmative, so as to not be singled out or targeted by those present, who also include those being voted upon. This leads to those members feeling like they are incapable of fully expressing how they actually feel in the matter they are voting for without receiving undue consequences.

For the sake of a more professional organization, an accurate representation of the membership of the GWA and a precise accounting of said membership's votes; We would like to put forth the following recommendation:

That the procedure for removing units from a probationary status be changed to a written secret ballot of the membership, certified by the G-8 and to take place at either the Spring or Fall events.



Allied Combat Commander

by **Bret Werner**

Update from The Allied Combat Commander

To the Allied Battalion, it has been a very busy interim between events. I have been working with my counterpart on the German side to develop a 100 days/end of the war scenario that we hope will be a truly memorable experience. Your Company Commanders and I have been very busy working on the tactical plan for November that is actually based on an actual set of orders used during the 100 days campaign, (My thanks to Capt. Gormley). I know some of you have seen the schedule and are wondering why we are ending early on Saturday. Well, this event was meant to be different than our standard events to commemorate the end of the war, rest assured the combat will be heavy and more importantly it will be authentic. I am continuing to build the battalion by adding our 4th official company designation, HQ Company. HQ Company is made up of all the units that provide support roles to the battalion, MP's, Medical Personal, RE's etc. This is not a permanent company like the other three, as I am well aware that many support units have formed to support their original units. HQ Co. is a combat designation that will be implemented when we engage in battalion sized operations. My goal was to be as inclusive as possible and make sure that no one was being left out.



Site Improvement

I am currently working with the G8 and the trench master on plan for site improvement. I am utilizing a very large wish that was submitted to me by your company commanders and trying to narrow that down to a plausible plan that will be beneficial to all members of the GWA. Following the November event my plan is to further develop the 24 hour scenario plan for April that I know so many, (including myself) have expressed interest in. More on that to come in the near future.

Your Input

If you have ideas, comments or concerns please reach out to your company commanders and the Allied Rep. I talk to these people on weekly basis and good ideas do float to the top. The Battalion staff is always looking at ways to improve events and improve the overall experience for the members of the battalion. We will never be perfect, but we should always strive for perfection in what we do. As always, I am honored to be entrusted with the position you have all given me and will continue to strive to make the Allied Battalion of the GWA the most enviable reenacting organization in the living history community.

Maj. Werner

O/C 1st Allied Composite Battalion



From the Allied Representative

by **Matt Murphy**
Allied Representative

Esteemed membership,

This past winter the G8 decided to insure that a process was in place for creating, updating, and sharing impression guidelines for units represented at Newville. The three Allied company commanders were asked to select individuals who would be tasked with the aim of generating guidelines for their company and updating them when necessary. As of today, we've received updated guidelines for all but a few Allied impressions and our webmaster has posted them to the unit listings page of the GWA website.

Status of All Night Scenarios

Earlier this year I wrote all Allied unit commanders asking if they and/or their members would be interested in participating in all-night activities on Fridays. The activities would include those commonly experienced during an average evening in a peaceful sector: man listening posts, patrol, do trench work, move supplies, etc (no combat). Allied unit commanders reported that there was a total of at least 75 members who wanted to be participate, which is more than enough to allow forming a night-time "composite company" with multiple shifts.



Given the expected size of the November event and the exceptional activities that the combat commanders have integrated into the event, leadership has decided to delay the forming of regular Friday night "composite companies" until the Spring event.

Site Defoliation and Your Part in That

It's already been mentioned but is worth repeating: all units must do defoliation work before the November event. We're used to seeing a lot of growth over the Summer but apparently, it's much worse this year.

See you in the trenches,

Matt Murphy (aka Mathieu Picard)

Allied Representative



Words from the Central Powers Representative

By Joe Murray
Central Powers Representative



In preparation for the Fall event; please remind everyone in your unit to go to the GWA web site and either print out a hard copy of the registration form for mail in registration or follow the link to register via PayPal. Registration forms

must be received by the GWA Treasurer no later than October 19, 2018 to avoid the \$15 additional fee to register after this date.

Schedule

You will find the event schedule for the Fall GWA event elsewhere in this newsletter; please take a look at it. Please share this information with your unit members and make sure that everyone understands that there is a change in the time that tactical operations cease: 5:30pm on Saturday.

Friday Safety Meeting Changes

There will be a Remembrance Ceremony at the 5:00 pm Safety Briefing on Friday evening. There will be an ad hoc multi-nationality volley firing party participating in this ceremony. We would like a couple of members from the German and Austrian units to participate in this volley firing team. If any your members are interested in participating in the firing party for this ceremony on Friday evening; please contact the GWA Vice-President, Mike Landree, at mlandree@hotmail.com.

On Another note (and Time Period)

There will be another GWA sponsored winter immersion event during the weekend of January 11-13, 2019. It will have a winter of 1917-1918 theme with American, French, and Commonwealth units attending. There will be further details about the event and what the specific scenario will be in the near future.

If anyone has any questions or comments; please contact me and I will do my best to assist you.

Best Regards,

Joe Murray (aka Josef Murtiz)
Central Powers Representative



100th Anniversary of the Great War Armistice Social

By Skampi



Attention/Actung:

As part of the celebrations being conducted at our fall event to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War, we will have a Social at the Farm House on Saturday, 3 Nov, 7:30pm to 9:30pm. Volunteers from the GWA and GWAA will provide

cold beer, other adult spirits and hot and cold food.

A First Stop

Knowing many units plan on doing something special within their own units to mark this special occasion, it is hoped that the members of the GWA will start their evening's social activities by first coming to the Farm House to enjoy the available beverages, food and fellowship with their fellow members, regardless of the uniforms they wear and the countries they represent. The event is still live and all standards still apply for our WWI weekend. We will do our best to camouflage the beer kegs and keep the Farm House as period as possible.

Flags

We need flags! It would be greatly appreciated if we could display flags of the nations involved on the western

front to decorate the Farm House and outside. Bring it with you to the social and then remember to take it with you when you leave to return to your lager/bunker. Bring a period drinking vessel to enjoy the beverages and maybe a chair as sitting is always at a premium.

We are unique in many ways from all the other reenacting time periods. And, I believe the most unique part of our organization is the brotherhood we all share in our passion for the Great War. We work on our site and we play hard on our site. We all have ownership for what we have on our site. Come and celebrate what we have created and mark the end of the first 100 years since the end of hostilities in the trenches of France.

We provide the opportunity to come together every Thursday evening at our events. This weekend is unique and different than all the other weekends that have passed or will come in the future for our organization (unless you have figured out a way to be here come Nov 2118) because we can officially mark the anniversary by coming together Saturday evening. We hope you will join us!!!



Fall 2018 Event Schedule

THURSDAY

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

FRIDAY

- 10 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.
- 3:30 - 4:30 - Mandatory New Recruit Training at the Fusilier crater in No Man's Land.
- 4:30 P.M. - Gate closes. ALL cars need to be removed from the GWA combat area! NO one is allowed inside the gate after this time not in full uniform with helmet and gas mask.
- 4:30 P.M. - Registration Closes. All those wishing to participate in Friday night combat, but do not arrive prior to 4:30 P.M. MUST be pre registered, these late arrivals will check in 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 or check in after the event has started.
- 5:00 P.M. -Mandatory GWA Friday Safety meeting at the Memorial - all units/ participants wishing to "play" on Friday or Saturday must attend. Trench passes will be checked. This meeting is an insurance requirement. If you are on site you must be at this formation! No exceptions.
- 6:00 P.M. - Full combat/full play no restrictions
- 10: 00 P.M. - Combat ends

SATURDAY

- 8 A.M.- CP Battalion Formation and safety meeting.
- 8:45 AM - Allied Battalion Formation (Individual Companies formations will be announced by Company CO's).
- Note: Make up new member safety training for those who missed the Friday meeting will be with each sides perspective safety officer immediately following the CP formation and prior to the allied battalion formation.
- 9 A.M. - Combat resumes. The 100 Days...
- P.M. Late Afternoon - Trench Combat Resumes
- 5:30 P.M. Re-Creation of the 11/11 Armistice.
- Sunset: 6:04 PM
- GWA Armistice Party 7:30-9:30 pm

Sunday

- Clean up.
- 8A.M. GWA Town Hall Meeting with the President, Allied and CP reps.

Uniform Maintenance for the Reenactor

Edited and written by **Erich Crăciun, Randall Chapmann, Marsh Wise, others**

A note here, this article was submitted by Randall Chapmann of IR63. It is a meshing of numerous sources and, whilst it should have some pix to break up the wuurrddzzz for modern video types, in this instance, we will let you be like your forebears and use your imagination.

The original form of this article originates from the publication **Kampfbereit!** – originally from the 1941 edition (12th edition) of **Der Dienst Unterricht im Heere** by Major Dr. W. Reibert [usually referred to as a “Reiberts manual”], pg. 76: **Behandlung und Reinigung der Bekleidungs und Ausrüstungsstücke** (Maintenance and Cleaning of Clothing and Equipment) translation by Herrn Erich Crăciun and was published in the old IR63 newsletter **Die Frontsoldat Communiqué** by Marsh Wise. I know, you are already pointing a finger and shouting, “But that’s WWII!” Guess what? It’s the German Army and things did not change all that much. But I am aware of that fact, and in order to develop hopefully a more useful guide, I have altered and updated with additional information obtained from on Major Wenzel’s **Dienstunterricht des Deutschen Infanteristen** by Eckart Wurmb, Verlag von R. Eisenschmit, Berlin, 1915 and **Dienstunterricht für Kriegsrekruten der deutschen Infanterie**, Transfeldt, Berlin 1916/17, 52. Auflage – these publications are contemporary and more applicable for us. And, where I found appropriate, I included information from modern sources for relevance, and of course, my own practical experience. By the way, I am lazy, so I did not footnote or otherwise annotate where each fact came from.

The italicized passages are translated from the original publications, the rest is either my summaries of other parts, or my own commentary.

The soldier is bound by duty to keep his clothing and equipment in good condition. He can do this on his own initiative in the following ways: brushes, cleaning and sewing, also cloth and paper towels; the soldier must [have these items with his equipment. To acquire these items, the pay [a soldier receives] is earmarked, above anything else he may purchase.

As noted above, the soldier was expected to purchase his own brushes, cleaning and re-pair materials – and he was expected to keep those tools in good serviceable condition as well. Dirty cleaning materials, and worn out brushes would provide inferior results. As re-enactors, we don’t have much choice but to buy the cleaning materials and take care of our own stuff.

The maintenance and care of clothing and equipment is done during the „Putz und Flickstunde“ (cleaning and repair instruction time). During the instruction the soldier must show the Abteilungs-führer the items that he has repaired/ cleaned. In special circumstances the equipment may be thoroughly checked.

As a reenactor, YOU are the one that pays the price for uniform and equipment that is not properly taken care of, but it cannot be stressed enough that you do represent the Central Powers and your unit at events and at a certain point your appearance will reflect badly on the unit.

It is fundamental that the soldier should take care of small rips and tears in his clothing and equipment by himself. It is a matter of pride, to appear in an orderly uniform with good clean leather items. Even in exercise and in maneuvers the good soldier will find the time to care for his leather and equipment.

Tuchsachen (cloth items)

Wool clothing items are to be cleaned by beating (with a stick or carpet beater) or by brushing. The collar and buttons should also be cleaned. For the Ausklopfen (beating out) of uniforms and pants, two men should work together; for overcoats-three men, and articles should be pulled out taking care not to tear the collar. The items should be beaten from the inside to the outside. Brushing should be done along the weave of the material. To do this, the article of clothing should be laid on a clean surface. The pockets should be cleaned with soap and allowed to dry. Spots should be cleaned away with a wet cloth. Chemicals that might damage or stain the uniform or change its color should not be used.

It should also be noted that wool clothing items should never be grabbed and beaten against anything, this could damage or rip the material, break or knock buttons loose, and in general is much harder on the material. When brushing away dirt, do not run the brush over the buttons, work the brush in completely around the buttons and brush in the direction of the line of the cloth.

Before brushing and beating, the garment should be inspected for repairs, small rips should be stitched back together, larger holes can be darned up or have patches applied. All buttons should be checked and stitched tight or replaced as required. And as stated in the recommendations above, spots and stains should be treated and washed with a mild soap.

One amusing notation was one where the Hosen was singled out as the item most often needing spot cleaning due to ham-handed Soldaten dribbling food into their laps.

Wet wools should never be twisted or rung out (or in this day and age, dried in a tumble dryer or dried by heat), it

can damage the wool, instead stretch it out and allow it to air dry. When hanging tunics and coats, they should never be hung by the shoulder boards or in a manner that places stress on any of the buttons or straps (in the case of the overcoat).

Shirts, breadbags, and drill uniforms may be washed in soap and water. Never use bleach, it will weaken the materials. Never toss in a tumble dryer. Stretch them out and let them air dry in a ventilated area. Zeltbahnen should only have the dirt beaten from them. It is interesting that recommendations for shirts were to be changed once every 8 days, but socks were recommended to be cleaned daily in consideration of those around you.

Underpants: must be changed often. Over-tightening of the ligaments should be avoided as this may easily result in tourniquet in the feet or abrasions of the lower leg with subsequent boils.

Nothing noted on washing, but please, wash them WELL ...

The exterior of the Tornister, especially the flap, should be cleaned by beating out the dirt, taking special care not to damage the wood frame. The inside of the knapsack is brushed out, paying particular attention to the corners.

The neck band: requires special attention. Keep that part of your suit that sits on your bare skin daily as clean as your shirt and underpants. Wash them once a week with soap, otherwise boils appear on the neck, and if they need to be lanced, it is more inconvenient to expend a little effort in the washing.

Ledersachen (leather items)

Below is a set of guidelines for leather care. For specific methods and products, this article online is recommended:

<http://www.jarnagin-co.com/leather%20preservation.htm>

Items made of leather are to be cleaned with brushes and with large amounts of leather cream [Schuhecreme]; the leather must be kept soft (especially shoes). The leather cream should be applied and rubbed in with the hand.

There were many rules for the care of boots, because everything related to the ability to march is of paramount importance. And leather sufficient for the making of boots was a precious commodity to the Germans due to the British blockade, so taking utmost care for what they had was critical.

It is always necessary to wear the boots intended for the service in question, and this may only be deviated from with the permission of the commander.

The leather of the boots should be kept properly cleaned and oiled, the cleaning should always take place first and the leather fully dry before adding oil or grease - the addition of oil and grease to a damp boot can produce acid that can eat away at the leather. According to recommendations, too frequent rubbing and scrubbing of the upper shaft on the Marschstiefel eats the upper leather, especially in the folds, and shortens the load capacity of the boot. Therefore, this portion of the boot is recommended to be treated with oil rather than a leather grease or paste product.

Boots should always be cleaned immediately and never left to sit dirty, dirt and dust will turn the leather hard and brittle, nor should they be deposited in an unventilated area if damp. Also, leather should never be dried by heat, especially a fire or stove, as the rapid drying will shrink and crack the leather.

Loose or lost boot nails and hobnails are to be replaced, small seam rips are to be

repaired. The immediate recognition and repair of small items extends the life of boots and shoes. The hammering of hob-nails by oneself though, is forbidden.

We do not have the luxury of a unit cobbler, so unless you know of one, you will need to replace your own hobnails. I recommend procuring a small number of proper hobnails, and replace them when they fall out (and **they will**). Often the new hobnails will not fit snug in the old holes, so many a reenactor is tempted to try and glue them back in - **DO NOT USE silicone adhesive** - the silicone will draw and hold moisture in the leather. Locate and purchase an adhesive designed specifically for leather or footwear, and be sure the leather is clean and dry before setting new hobnails.

To remove dirt and sweat from shoes and boots, the soldier should rub the items with a damp cloth as often as possible.

Belts, ammunition pouches, bayonet frogs, rucksack straps, shovel harnesses, etc. are to be cleaned with leather cream.

Pay close attention to the stitching and condition of the attachment straps/loops, and for any loose stitching. Re-stitching is not hard, the holes in the leather do not close up, so it is easy to sew them back. Waxed linen thread can easily be located at a leather store, or online.

Helmet liners (and helmet interior) should be wiped clean often.

Schanzzeug (Entrenching Equipment)

The wooden handle should be varnished. The blade should be rubbed with leather cream or oil to guard against rust.

Actually, the wood handles on WWI period shovels were **not** varnished, instead, they were recommended to be "oiled" to keep the wood from becoming brittle. Ballistol is an all-around excellent product for oiling just about anything. including the wood and metal

of your Schanzzeug – the only negative I can tell you about Ballistol is that it smells bad, but if you work in a ventilated area, it will lessen when it has air-dried and soaked in.

The above also applies to your bayonet, the metal should be clean, rust removed, and rubbed with a cloth dampened slightly with oil. The wood can be treated the same way or rubbed with boiled linseed oil. The scabbard can be treated with a liquid cold blue compound, or painted with a coat of semi-gloss black.

Naße Sachen (wet items)

Clothes that have been dampened by water or sweat are to be hung up in ventilated “drying” rooms or hung up outside to dry. Thrown into a pile, or hung up inside an unventilated area, could lead to mildew or mold and create an unhealthy environment and ruin the garments. Wet items should not be placed too close to a hot stove or heating unit. Cloth items could burn and leather items dry out easily and become brittle.

Cookwear

The cookware is, without being dented, cleaned with dry chalk and a cloth or knitted with black paint.

I struggled with the term “dry chalk”, but I know it was common for metals to be rubbed with a fine sand to clean the surface and restore the shine. This came from the 1914 manual when messkits were aluminum – I did not find anything in the wartime manuals for when construction would have been enamel.

Weapons

While not technically a “uniform”, the cleaning, maintenance and care of your rifle is critical for its function and appearance. The rifle sling is of course leather, and falls under the section on leather above, but rifles should have their metal portions cleaned and properly oiled to prevent rust and keep parts from wear. For us, blank fire is very rough on the moving parts, significant deposits – and often these deposits may be corrosive depending on where the blanks come from, or what may have been used in the gunpowder. Ideally, weapons should be lightly cleaned EVERY Friday evening after combat, Saturday afternoons in the downtime, and thoroughly cleaned after combat ends on Saturdays. If not, they should be cleaned immediately after you return home. NEVER should they be stored for the offseason without being cleaned.

The wood should also be cleaned and oiled, to protect the wood when it gets dinged up (and it WILL). After cleaning you can use gun oil or touch up with boiled linseed oil.

All Soldaten are encouraged to know how to remove the floorplate so the magazine and chamber can be cleaned, and should know how to disassemble and clean the bolt and firing pin, and of course oil and reassemble them. I have not prepared a tutorial for this, however, a quick Google search will yield an endless number of YouTube videos – we recommend you watch several to get idea of who really seems to know what they are doing. For a photo tutorial, I recommend this one <http://www.dererstezug.com/98kbreakdown.htm> – yes it is for a K98k, but functionally, except for a couple of small assembly steps, is nearly identical.

Why?

Why does **On the Wire** look so primitive and different now? Because I, the secretary Marsh, now have 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