



Rexpoede, Calais - 1917 (photo by Paul Castelnaud)

On the Wire

Official Newsletter of the Great War Association

Summer 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Great War Association,



As I wind down my final term as your GWA President, I would like to share my thoughts on the road ahead for the GWA. Specifically, I would like to talk about the GWA site itself. We are one of the few organizations in the world that owns its living history battlefield. Our site is our lifeblood. We as an organization should both continue to improve the site, and utilize it as a recruitment aid through "other timeline" events.

Let me first talk about improving the site. The site needs a twenty-year site plan, to include existing infrastructure, areas of annual maintenance, and the proposed trench line, structures and improvements for the next 1, 3, 5, 20 and 20 years. This effort will require a renewed effort by a joint (CP and Entente) Site Committee.



Night Attack Over IR92's Sector. Photo courtesy George "Ranger" Walters

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President's Message

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Secondly, I will emphasize the importance of utilizing the site for "other timeline" events. The events are a chance for various GWA units to explore other timelines as well as intermingle with members of other GWA units. Personally, I've fielded with members from French, Russian, US, British and Canadian GWA units at various timeline events.

Besides word of mouth, these events are our greatest recruitment tool. Reenactors portraying soldiers in non-Great War conflicts get to experience our site with members from the GWA as their hosts and guides. I can personally attest to a dozen or more new recruits that have joined the GWA after enjoying our site at a timeline event. Moreover, these events also provide additional money to the GWA, allowing for increased expenditures on site improvement projects.

In closing, I have to say that the future of the GWA looks brighter than ever. We have a great cadre of G8 candidates for 2026-2027 and a continued interest in our hobby by new members.

Yours truly,

Jim Boswell

GWA President, Sgt. 107th Infantry Regiment, 27th ID recreated.

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK



Fellow GWA Members,

It's been unseasonably hot here in Newville, and it's also been incredibly rainy. If you haven't been to the site in the past month, let this message serve as your heads-up that you undoubtedly have more vegetation to contend with than normal, so plan that in.

I anticipate there might be increased traffic at the site in September and October as units play catch-up from a summer of foiled work plans, so just a few brief reminders:

- Please drive with caution and courtesy on roadways in the area and on the site - there's a ton of wildlife around. On-site, please try to stay on the roads as much as possible, and be a decent human being about pulling over to let an oncoming vehicle through.
- If you see a pile of construction materials you didn't put there, it belongs to someone else, so don't just help yourself to it. Even if it's been there for a few years — somebody or somebody's unit paid for it, and will eventually use it or will decide what to do with it. As Scott and I always told our kids, "Is it yours? No? Then don't f___ with it."
- Please, for the love of all that is holy, pick up your trash, and maybe a piece or ten of someone else's. A drive around the site reveals tons of plastic Easter eggs and pill bottles from spent grenades or mortar rounds, miscellaneous food packaging junk, all kinds of stuff, and it's ghetto and gross. What we really need is an organization-wide work weekend for trash pickup, honestly.
- Also be aware that at the end of each event, units are responsible for transporting their trash up to the dumpsters by the gate (and placing it INTO the dumpsters, not just somewhere in the vicinity).
- Lastly - please try to patronize local businesses as much as possible, and be courteous in your interactions with the folks you encounter. We've come a long way toward being seen as a net positive for Newville and a good neighbor - let's keep the momentum headed in the right direction.

Erica Miller, Secretary

FROM THE CP COMBAT COMMANDER



Reenactors of the Central Powers,
Meine Herren und Damen,

I hope each of you are enjoying your Heimat Erlaub for a great rest and refit. I also hope everyone enjoyed the Spring event that we planned and executed. One of my favorite parts was the Saturday morning tactical, as well as the Saturday afternoon tactical force on force operations.

Saturday afternoon, Bret and I decided to provide a little development for our Zugführere and the Entente Company Commanders by giving them special missions. Normally, Bret and I share our plans with each other, but we chose a “free for all” tactical period between 2-4:30 pm and handed it over to our subordinate commanders. Our Zugführere were given an order to plan an attack within their zones, but I dictated their attack launch times to ensure each attack was coordinated and de-conflicted. The Entente had the same rules, but neither of us knew when and where each other were attacking. The commanders were also allowed to execute their plans if they saw an opportunity to counterattack when the Allies conducted their own attacks. What I observed was a great little tactical scenario where it was just managed chaos and a lot of fun, especially for the commanders. This is very important for me, because one of my greatest personal tasks is to develop our current and future commanders to grow within our hobby. I have a lot of developing to do before I hand the command position over to another commander. I am excited to do so, but I would like to set the conditions before doing so. In this regard, I am very pleased with each of you and I am very proud of our Zugführere and the close coordination and cooperation we share with the Entente commanders and staff.

I really enjoyed the Spring Tactical and there were so many good times that I took the moments to capture mental pictures and videos to savor later. One such moment was while hanging out in the PB14 trenches, I was congratulating Sergeant

Hunneshagen on his Eisrene Kreuz II Klasse and the Entente kicked off a general assault thrust into the position we were currently hanging out in. We were trying to take a picture, but we were close to being overtaken and captured (wouldn't the Russians be so happy with that? Maybe someone would finally earn that bottle of Vodka!). We just all started laughing and cutting up at the stupidity of the battle roaring around us and us still trying to capture a little picture. I wasn't even armed at the time! The Zentralmächte were able to repulse the assault and we were spared the embarrassment of being processed as prisoners of war.



I also really enjoyed the fighting to the North around the British camp on Saturday morning. It got really hot quite a few times and there was some great fighting in the woods, alleys, and crossroads. It's exciting to fight in areas where we've not fought before.

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FROM THE CP COMBAT COMMANDER

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I would like to thank everyone for the overwhelming support for my nomination as Combat Commander. It's nice to not be concerned about having to fight re-election and I'm humbled with your confidence in my performance so far. I promise that I take this very seriously and work for each of you. When I've accomplished what I ran for, I'll be excited to hand it off to my replacement; I just need more time first. I'm also happy that the three reenactors who were nominated for CP Representative have worked it out amongst themselves to narrow that down to one nomination. My biggest concern is tearing us apart at a time when we are doing very well building up the Central Powers. In my estimation, we've not been a singular command for a very long time and we've had decades of infighting that have destroyed any cohesion anyone has tried to create. I don't really see that currently and I hope we can continue to build a cohesive Armee behind a solid vision for our future and great leadership from the top all the way down. We need to keep petty politics, personal agendas, and faction building out of our hobby if at all possible, because I find these are the things which bring drama and infighting into something that should be fun.

The Entente Commander and I had a great discussion Saturday afternoon on the future development of our reenacting site and how we can better create opportunities for better engagements. Please refer to our joint article in this edition of Auf der Draht on this subject.

Lastly, Bret and I have worked out a great scenario for the Fall Tactical that we hope everyone will enjoy. We are working to provide a lot of "oh, shit!" moments for everyone. Eric Cleveland has been working with the Entente Artillery Officer to provide ground charges to simulate artillery barrages, including walking barrages and bombardments. We're working on procedures so that everyone will recognize when you are under artillery barrages. We are also starting to better include Aeroplanes into our pre-planned assaults. Tactics! Carl von Clausewitz would be so proud! We are roughly four months out so enjoy your Erlaub and build as many Grenaten as possible for the Fall Tactical. I'm looking forward to seeing each of y'all very soon!

„Wir haben einen Willen; Sieg oder Tod!“

Mike Landree
Otto Landrik
Hauptmann u. Kompagniechef

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Fall Event Registration Opens September 1

2025 Fall Tactical	2026 Spring Tactical	2026 Fall Tactical
November 7-8	April 17-18	November 6-7

ADDITIONAL UNIT-SPONSORED EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEB SITE:

[HTTP://WWW.GREATWARASSOCIATION.ORG](http://www.GREATWARASSOCIATION.ORG)

FROM THE CENTRAL POWERS REPRESENTATIVE

Guten Tag everyone,

It's summertime and we have another great event on the horizon. I'd like to bring to your attention a couple of incidents from April, if I may, in hopes that they won't be repeated.

The CP Training trench is ready to be built. The Entente has had a training area for quite some time, so we're about to break ground on building our own. It's to be located north east of the quarry, across the road from the Allied camp. The initial build is for one trench with the idea that we'll build another one as soon as funds become available.

In April, our safety inspections got a bit derailed by car trouble and we scrambled to fill the void. One thing that I did not have on hand was a checklist that's easy for the inspectors to use. We missed the part that says the "projectile case must exhibit a palpable flexibility under finger pressure" and approved one of the CP units mortar rounds that were made from pvc pipe. A French soldier was apparently given the opportunity to prove that helmets work, and are a good idea, by this mortar round. Travail bien fait, mon ami.

To correct this error, we're instituting two changes. In November, we intend to return to conducting a joint inspection between the CP and the Entente. This will allow us to check each other and approve the rounds that will be landing in our laps. The second is that we will provide the inspectors with a concise checklist listing the requirements for all pyro. Hopefully, this will eliminate any confusion.

During the Winterline event last year, someone 3D printed a number of mortar rounds that look very much like WWII mortar

rounds. There were only two problems with them; they are heavy and they have fins on them that could cut someone if they get hit with them. As these rounds were not intended to be used in our WWI event, they were not presented by any unit at the pyro inspection. However, someone on the Entente side decided that it would be fun to shoot them at the CP. They worked, quite well in fact, impacting MW12's position and denting some roofing tin. VP Horton and I walked the Entente line asking the mortar crews who fired it and all denied responsibility. Someone fired them, but blame isn't helpful at this point. Suffice it to say that everything fired must be inspected and approved by the Safety Committee. Do not pick up random battlefield trash and shoot it at the other guys.

The question arose last time as to when the event actually ends when some eager souls returned to the CP line with their vehicles on Saturday night. In the past, it was put on the schedule when vehicles could be brought into the line, but we haven't included that in the past few years. After the fight on Saturday night is considered by most to be a continuation of the event during which time kameradschaft is the rule of the night. A few CP members took great exception to the appearance of modern vehicles and headlights spoiling the 1918 post war ambience, and they're not wrong. In the future, barring medical emergency, please refrain from driving your vehicles into camp until Sunday morning. I have a 12 hour drive back home so I know the struggle. We'll be okay.

As some of you may know, in a classic case of miscommunication that reminded me of the real Army, the bombed out farmhouse on the

FROM THE CENTRAL POWERS REPRESENTATIVE

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right of the CP line got knocked down. Don't worry, the unit that did it is going to build it back in September. Guys, things happen. I'll just say that if you knock down GWA property, let me know about it. That way I can tell the G8 and we can avoid pictures being sent around, trying to figure out what happened, sorting out if we need to report vandalism to the Sheriff, contacting all the units, etc, etc. It's not hard to just raise your hand and say, "my bad."

Authenticity: I'd like to congratulate everyone on keeping standards high and working to improve where we can. I would like to mention one area where we can improve; full beards. In April and November, we do a 1918 impression. The German Army hair and grooming standards were by regiment, so there was some variation, BUT, gas, gas, gas.....with the use of gas, by 1918, seeing a beard in the trenches was a rare thing. They had mustaches, they had goatees (generally short so as to fit under a gas mask), but full beards had disappeared in the trenches. We have a number of people doing Landsturm impressions who stay in the rear areas and some of them have beards down to their navels, which is fine. Please ask your unit members who are going into the trenches, to at least shave their jaws. It will grow back, I promise.

Temper, temper. During the fight, a CP member was captured and was being escorted to the rear by two Allies. They hadn't searched him and "disarmed" him, so he considered himself to still be armed and decided to escape. Of course, this is historically accurate. During the scramble, one of the Allies shot him in the back at close

range singeing his uniform and slightly burning him. He was understandably upset and started walking back towards his unit through the French lines. As he was walking through the lines, a Frenchman attempted to physically stop him by putting his hand on his shoulder. The CP Soldat apparently pushed the Frenchman's arm away and they argued a bit. We got a report that a CP member had laid hands on a Frenchman while apparently it was mutual. Both of them could've taken a step back.

When the Marines were trying to teach me to shoot an '03 Springfield at Parris Island, they taught me an acronym, BRASS. Breathe, Relax, Aim, Slack, Squeeze. When I taught high school, I modified it slightly to use with my students. We all get upset and sometimes lose our tempers. When you feel the heat rising and the hairs picking up on your neck, please Breathe; take a breath, maybe two, then, please, Relax; nobody is intentionally trying to screw with you or hurt you, Aim; take a moment to figure out what the problem actually is and realize that you might be the one who screwed up, Slack; relax, think of a positive solution for both of you, then, Squeeze; apologize, fix whatever was broken, please remember that we're not really at war, nobody's really getting shot and we're all here to have fun. Let's remember to have fun.

Thank you,

Eric Cleveland
Central Powers
Representative



COMBAT COMMANDERS' CORNER



Members of the GWA, the Allied Combat Commander and I have been working together to create more realistic, authentic, and exciting experiences over the

past few years. As such, we plan and coordinate very well together and we hope this cooperation has provided better events for each of you. As we are responsible for providing the scenarios and conditions for the actual reenacting part of our hobby, we have had some long discussions on how to create better conditions for all of us. For most of our existence since we bought the Newville site, combat has waged predominantly across 'No Man's Land' between the left and right flanks of each combatant's lines. The Great War Centennial provided more access to the rest of the property and the past couple of years have expanded this even more. We are constantly looking at how to break up the monotony and provide a more fresh experience regardless of how long you've been a member.

Two issues we've been working on is 1) the expansion of the trench lines to the North and 2) how to create better opportunities for combat in our traditional combat areas. To us, these are significant issues that require a long term plan with the resources to go with it. Let me address each separately and then hopefully pull them both together.

1) GWA Site Plan. The Allies are growing and require space to spread out. Likewise, the Central Powers are growing as well and the same requirements present themselves as to how and where. There is very limited growth potential in the South so both armies are stretching Northwards. We've seen this as the BEF has stretched into the fields and woods to the North and significantly overlap the CP's right flank. The CP is now growing our 1st Zug (1st Platoon) on our right flank in an effort to grow to the North mirroring the BEF's extensions. Eventually we will grow into another

Zug and grow into a Battalion. I do not expect much time to lapse before 1. Zug reaches and passes over the middle road and extends past the quarry. However, the main issue is that we are gradually expanding to the North adding trenches as required with no real plan for how we develop our future combat lines. Bret and I have walked these lines extending far to the North all the way to our Northern property boundary in an attempt to scratch out the main lines of resistance for each side. Of note, the Swiss were preparing to build their bunker compound in the area which would have been smack dab in the middle of a combat area in five years' time had we not had conversations on land use. As such, we all agreed with the Swiss to push the Swiss area to the South and create a non-combatant area there to allow for better expansion in the North. However, we need to codify the front lines for each side NOW so that the forward expansion of our lines makes sense in the long period. We know that once trenches are cut and revetted and bunkers built, it's pretty much like a government program – we're stuck with it forever. It is our plan to have a long term GWA Site Plan which takes into account our entire site with adequate space for each side as we grow into the future. Like all plans, it will be our best plan based upon our expectations and assumptions for today. As time progresses, it will adapt, but at least we will have a Site Plan which we can adapt to rather than a series of very short sighted ad hoc decisions. There are some who say we will never grow large enough to justify such a plan and, even if our organization does, we individually won't be around for when it does. Fair enough. But I can tell you that I wish we could go back to the initial layout of our site and the assumptions made which we struggle with today – big time! One is that the Central Powers have absolutely NO ROOM to our rear. Another is that the only way the Americans can expand is to expand in depth rather than width. A long term plan will at least provide an overarching plan on how we expand and provide options for each side to develop their

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COMBAT COMMANDERS' CORNER

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defenses and rear areas into the future. Bret and I believe this is well worth the effort to codify the site use areas now before more resources are wasted on short term whims.

2) Combat Obstacles in No Man's Land. Without combat, our events are nothing more than living histories in the trenches. I want the Allies in the CP trenches and Bret wants the CP in the Allied trenches (in fact, we Germans are always planning travel vacations in Paris like our fathers and grandfathers in 1870). The dilemma is always how do we cross NML accurately without honestly depleting our entire combat strength? Some units take great pride in emplacing 2 tons of wire within 100m of trench line. This may be accurate in soldiers' defensive intentions, but unrealistic when it comes to the destructive results of artillery fire and the need to provide breaching of combatants for reenacting sake. Regardless, NML creates a significant issue in preventing combat for us all. Positions are too well defended, machine gun nests have excellent fields of fire, the terrain prevents cover and concealment, shell craters don't provide adequate protection, and the range of mortars and hand grenades prevent any real ability to fight for long within this area. The control of NML should be a significant and ongoing fight for the entire weekend! However, it is not possible to do so with what we possess currently. As such, Bret and I desire to create a long term plan for obstacles consisting of "village ruins" from the South to the North. The front lines would not shift closer than they are now, but a variety of destroyed buildings would dot NML providing obstacles to fight over. We have identified Death Valley across from the AEF and between 2.Zug and 4.Zug as the best location to start because it's centrally located, has the greatest amount of depth between the lines, and it's currently unusable for attacks due to the impregnable defenses on both sides of the line. However, we want to also have clusters of buildings in the South and the North; we just have to prioritize. With the sloping hill, we'd initially recommend a destroyed church with a belfry to post snipers in with a basement and multiple entries

and exits. We would also like to have a cluster of buildings so that you're not just fighting over one ruined building, but rather over a complex of buildings. How much will this cost? We're not sure because it's a concept, but we suggest that a certain amount of the budget is allocated each year for this endeavor (until completely built) with an overarching diagram for the entire NML as well as a detailed plan for each ruin with a prioritized list for each build. It would be a 20-30 year plan to develop and implement, but if we build one at a time with an emphasis on quality ruins, it would be a great use of our funds and greatly enhance our experiences.

Personally, I would much rather invest our limited funds into site development than event expendables. However, as an organization, we must be able to envision our long term future of what we would like to experience and then make the investment to build it. Can you see our site in 30 years and the potential it provides for the hobby? We could even increase rental fees because of the draw our site provides.

Bret and I offer these visionary ideas for what we can achieve as an organization. It's a very long term approach rather than an ad hoc, short term execution of a long term issue. Both of these mutually inclusive ideas are designed to have an overarching plan for our future and how they impact combat scenarios well into the future. Again, it is our responsibility as combat commanders to design and execute exceptional combat scenarios for you, the membership, and we see that what we currently have is good, but it can always be better. How can we improve? How can we make our experiences better? How can we best use our resources to create better events? Our only limitations are our imaginations. In my experience, our organization has the best opportunity it's had in my 25+ years with the GWA to really make a huge impact on our organization. This is our, the combat commanders', vision and we are working with the rest of the G8 to lead us into the future.

'NAM 68 EVENT RECAP

by Scott D. Miller

What good is 85 degrees F and 90 percent humidity? Perfect for a 'Nam 1968 event!

Once again, Vietnam reenactors descended on the GWA site for the annual Vietnam event, and what an event it was! With the largest attendance in recent memory (93% of those registered attended), the fighting was both intense and plentiful. The event organizers (Bret and Travis) set the event up around objectives and it worked extremely well. Radio communication was stressed on the G.I. side of the line, which added another whole layer of uncertainty. Using PRC-25's and -77's went exceptionally well, with the same communication issues that exist in the real world ("Comms are working great!" said nobody ever in the middle of a firefight!)

The event kicked off with patrols leaving the patrol base on Friday night searching for a "downed pilot" and almost immediately making contact with the communist forces. NVA and VC main force units were able to pin the patrols in place and launched a series of human wave assaults that overran two out of three of the patrols. Fortunately the pilot was recovered prior to the patrols being decisively engaged. The firefights were spread out and extremely aggressively prosecuted, making for an extremely exciting start to what can only be described as an awesome event! There's something about being engaged in a knock-down, drag-out fight and hearing multiple other fights of similar intensity going on simultaneously that are far enough away that they don't involve you or the people in the fire fight you're in. Especially at night. Monitoring and running the communications at the TOC was hectic, and quite frankly as close to real world as it gets at a reenactment. Lots of mixed chatter on multiple radios and frequencies, frantic calls for help and contact reports. Prolonged fire fights at multiple locations around you both far and near! It was absolutely awesome.

As the gunfire subsided around 2200, the various patrols filtered back into the patrol base with a mixed look of exhaustion and exhilaration. It was clear that we were off to a great start!

Saturday dawned and both sides began to search for the objectives (two radios). Once again, multiple fights broke out on opposite ends of the field, with the objectives and their extraction being in doubt up to the last minute. Multiple times the extraction vehicles were ambushed en route, forcing the patrols to defend the objectives for much longer than they expected. So much so, that ammunition became a serious concern! The day ended in a combined G.I. Australian sweep of the AO that involved lots of booby traps and ambushes and ended in the Vietnamese encampment with pretty much everyone out of ammo, exhausted, and grinning from ear to ear.

I can honestly say, having done Vietnam reenacting since 1993, from Oregon to Mississippi, this event was in the top five. Do yourself a favor and get involved! The events are only getting bigger and better! BRAVO ZULU to the organizers on an exceptionally well-run company-level event!

Scott Miller



MY HISTORY IN THE GWA

by Andrew Vandall

My first event was at Shimpstown, fall of 1988. Pure shock and awe overwhelmed me from the intensity of the fighting. The repetitive rat-atat-tat, of the machineguns, and airplanes swirling overhead, the flares at night, simply awesome. I was only ten years old, and had just started fifth grade. I can tell you, at that moment, I was hooked for life. I had been reenacting the Civil War since I was a few years old, but I could immediately tell that Civil War was nothing like the Great War, I knew that for certain. For that first event, I did a French peasant boy impression as best I could (pictured below to the left). My father, (with stahelm), wanted to see if I would like the new time period, with all the noise. Boy did I ever!

There were not many guys out in the early days, as WWI reenacting was just over a decade from its inception. Originally starting out in the mid 1970s with founding members like Rick Keller, to stir-up the excitement and to provide high quality reproductions and original relics for any level of military enthusiast. By 1980, units were publishing guidelines and crafting 'news-letters', like IR 63 to get the word out, and to build on unit guidelines. As an early pioneer, Rick was kind and very generous to me, always giving me a deal on whatever I was interested in. Some of my first 'turtle' grenades, Ersatz Picklehauben, and trinkets were from his bunker basement store in Chambersburg.



By 1989, we were into the 75th anniversary of the war. Interest was building and more men joined for the fun. By my second and third events, I was driven mad by the Airplanes, Machine Guns and Grenades. Here is me with a grenade, standing next to 'Dirty Billy', another welcoming figure in living history circles. He had a mortar, one of the first to my knowledge, and he would allow me to help him, spot, load, and ignite the mortar. It was beyond fun for a kid in 6th grade. The excitement was electric. A feeling I still hunt for at every event.



In 1990, I improved my kit, and collected a drum, harness, swallows tails, and an Ersatz Picklehauben. Being a musician helped make me feel more connected to the German Army, even though I was too young to participate in the fighting. It was never lonely being the only young one around, as many enthusiasts tried to help me with guidance on how to improve. Guys like Dexheimer, Dave DeLucia and Gary Carpenter helped show me the way. I managed to sneak into the trenches at night, help feed the 'barking' Maxim 08, and on occasion wander into dimly lit, crowded bunkers where loud voices, cigar smoke, laughter, and plenty of libations were being passed around. The days were fun, but the nights were even more fun!

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MY HISTORY IN THE GWA

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Most of the units were small at that time, and everyone pretty much knew everyone else. It was a large, eclectic family of like-minded enthusiasts, dedicated to recreating the most accurate (or what was known at the time) experience for all participants. That core belief, and agenda, still holds true today for many of the units in the field. Although, I would like to see more understanding that we are all together in recreating and remembering the soldiers of the Great War, rather than,

which side, or what unit people are in. The current inter-era bickering and hostility only weakens the hobby, and causes unnecessary conflict. We need to work together to be stronger.

As you can tell, in this Saturday morning safety meeting, Left to right, Russian, Foreign Legion, French, and at far right the beginning of the Germans, could all be captured in a few photographs. One of my most vivid memories of this era was when a



vehicle (background of image) burnt to a crisp, because a rogue parachute flare landed on it; catching the vehicle on fire. Hence, the outlaw of parachute flares. War can be dangerous.



A great example of how far WWI has come, from a small unit of French to the sea of Blue we have today. We all must recognize where we came from, to understand where we are going. Forward will be the order of the day! We are all brothers.

When 1993 came around, it was the end of the 75th anniversary, and there was interest nationally in the war. I had become well accustomed to WWI, and at fifteen, I thought my impression was pretty good. I was

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MY HISTORY IN THE GWA

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taking German language lessons at school, collecting a ton of WWI stuff, mostly helmets and uniforms, and was reading as much as I could on the conflict. I still recommend to any reenactor to read deep and wide on the era, from military histories, to personal accounts such as Storm of Steel or Poilu. Everything will help the impression.

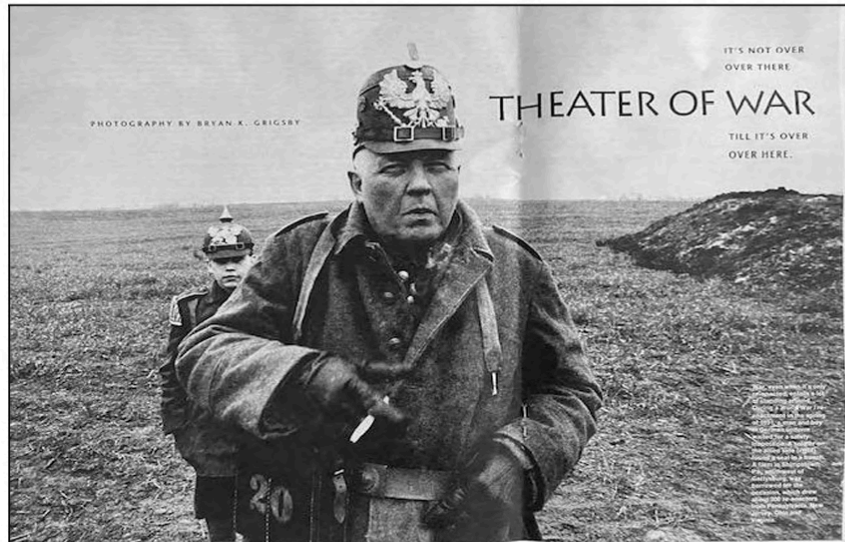
I was honored to be interviewed, with my father Dick Vandall (center) and myself behind, for the National Inquirer in 1993. It was a piece on WWI reenacting. I can't believe that was over 30 years ago.

By the early 2000s, I was deep into the university, working to get my undergraduate degree in History, and then masters in History. I still came to events at the second site of Newville, when I could. By 2014, at the 100th anniversary, it was great fun to see so many men, and living historians, that I knew the events were just going to get better and better. And they have!

Today, I feel very proud of the WWI reenacting hobby in general. The individual impressions are excellent, the diversity of living history is astounding, the knowledge sharing on weapons, uniforms, military tactics, journals and primary sources, and even the command structures are greatly improved. I do believe that we have a responsibility to continue this forward momentum, and hold each other accountable for what is appropriate (or not) for the 'period' of 1914-1918. I also believe that Newville represents a very special sliver of my life that I must defend. I hope to keep WWI focused on what is most important, and that is camaraderie, constantly improving our impressions, and having fun! I also see each event, through the eyes of a boy, and I always anticipate the events are going to be as exciting as my first way back in 1988. We have an awesome burden to maintain and improve the site for the here and distant historical enthusiasts. We have come too far, to fail, so our only option is to keep improving our impressions. Let's all work on that.

Well, to reflect on my almost 40 years in WWI, I would need a longer platform. However, looking ahead, to the future of WWI reenacting, I believe it is strong; and I only see the hobby getting better. I do advise that the Great War Association be mindful of payments from reenactors, and use those monies responsibly to maintain a strong site, ensuring that the organization is making the best decisions for all members, and that a main focus is on keeping the grounds as close to the time period 1914-1918 as possible. That is my only wish. If you see me, or we meet in the trench, say hello, and tell me about your experiences with WWI reenacting. It has changed my life in so many positive ways, that I would enjoy the conversation.

Respectfully,
Dr. Andrew Vandall
20 Machine Gun
Prussian Army



G-8 OFFICER CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Candidate for President: David Strichko

My name is David Strichko, and I'm excited to announce that I'm running for President of The Great War Association Inc. Some of you know me, and some of you don't — but I'd like to take just a minute of your time to ask for your vote.

A little about me: In my professional life, I'm the Building Commissioner for Lake County, Ohio, and have been for the past ten years, overseeing an annual budget of \$1.2 million. I run my department by two simple rules — **Consistency is key** and **Help, not hinder**. These rules speak to leadership values our organization needs.

I've been reenacting for about 25 years, and during that time I've had the privilege of helping build and lead some great organizations. I founded and served as President of both the 25th OVI Reenacted, and the Airborne Reenactors Incorporated (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit). I also served as President of Chardon Baseball, our local youth baseball league; I was a board member for ten years and a coach for about 20.

Across all these roles, the goal has always been the same: create strong, welcoming organizations where everyone feels valued.

If elected, my focus will be straightforward: **Consistency for All Members** – Fair and equal treatment across the board.

Open and Transparent Communication – No surprises, no secrets.

Planning for the Future – Ensuring the Great War Association is strong for years to come.

I believe that the GWA's strength is in its members — and together, we can make sure it continues to thrive.

Thank you for taking the time to read this message.

Best regards,
Dave Strichko
Candidate for President
The Great War Association Inc

Candidate for VP: David Horton

Dear Fellow GWA Members,

Thank you for the trust and support you've shown me over the past two years as Vice President. It's been an honor to serve the organization, and I remain deeply committed to ensuring our events are both safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Throughout my term, I've taken action to strengthen our safety protocols and streamline essential processes:

- Ensured every bunker has working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, as well as accessible fire extinguishers.
- Developed a contact list for each bunker to be used during non-event periods.
- Collaborated with the Safety Committee to streamline pyro inspections.
- Simplified the process for first-time attendees to receive safety briefings.
- Worked with the G-8 to investigate and address safety violations.

These improvements reflect my commitment to proactive leadership and transparent communication. As I seek your support for a second term as Vice President, I promise to continue advocating for safety, accountability, and shared enjoyment at every event.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve and thank you for your vote.

Sincerely,

Dave Horton

Candidate for Secretary: Erica Miller

Fellow Members of the GWA,

My name is Erica Miller, and I humbly ask for your continued confidence and support as Secretary of the Great War Association. Over the past two years, I've worked hard to modernize and enhance communication and transparency within our organization, while remaining mindful of what makes the GWA and its members so unique.

G-8 OFFICER CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (continued from p. 13)

(E. Miller, continued)

Since taking office in 2023, I've:

- ✓ Facilitated recorded G-8 meetings via Zoom with transcription, and ensured that accurate meeting minutes are compiled and distributed to the entire membership.
- ✓ Revamped and modernized our entire event registration process, enabling members to pay dues and fees via credit or debit card, electronically sign liability waivers, and streamlining the process from start to finish for a more seamless experience.
- ✓ Resurrected *On the Wire*, the official GWA newsletter, on a quarterly publication schedule.
- ✓ Created a new, more secure, and user-friendly website to replace the outdated version that expired and died shortly after I took office. While there's still plenty of work to be done there, we've made forward progress and I'm committed to continued improvements.
- ✓ Remained dedicated to open and transparent communication, ensuring that all members are kept informed and engaged.

- ✓ Worked tirelessly to project a positive and professional image for our organization.

I've proven that I'm not afraid to roll up my sleeves and tackle the tough jobs, literally and figuratively, and it remains my goal to ensure that the GWA is an organization where every member feels valued and heard. There's still work ahead, but I'd be honored to have your support for another two years to continue building on the progress we've made.

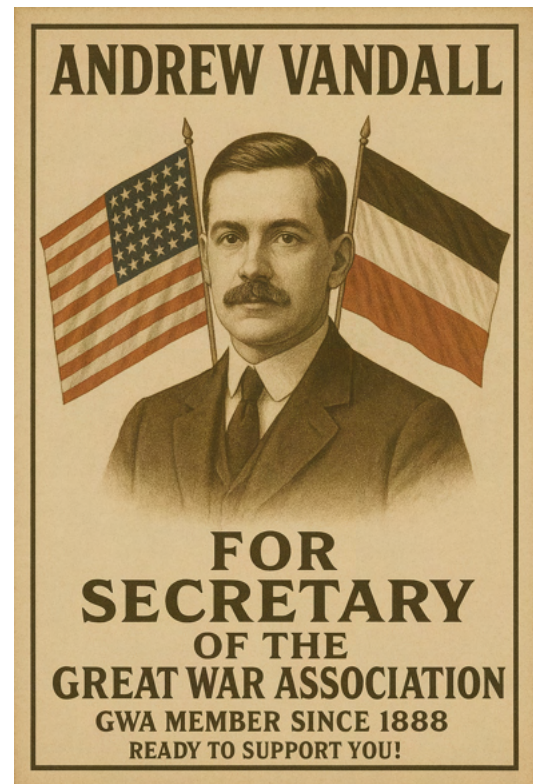
Let's keep the momentum going—together.

Thank you for your trust, your time, and your vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica P. Miller

Candidate for Secretary: Andrew Vandall



Candidate for Treasurer: Jennifer Domitrovich

I'm Jennifer Domitrovich, and I am running for the position of Treasurer of the Great War Association. I grew up an Army brat, an experience that fostered a love for travel and history, and instilled in me a keen ability to adapt to change. The values that guide me in everything I do are honesty, loyalty, family, respect, and responsibility.

I first became involved with reenacting in the early 2000s, but my commitment deepened significantly in 2013 when I became active in a World War II civilian group. I joined the Great War Association in 2017 with the 3rd RMZT (Zouaves) as a civilian supporting the French Cantine/Co-Op. In September 2022, the Zouave unit was brought into the 113RIT, so I became a member of the VAD attached to the 113RIT, and shortly thereafter became Treasurer of the 113 Living History Club (a 501(c)(3) organization).

G-8 OFFICER CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

(continued from p. 14)

(Domitrovich, continued)

I manage social media and communications for a Philadelphia-based professional photography firm. I currently serve as a Council Member for both the Rockhill Furnace Borough and the Orbisonia / Rockhill Joint Municipal Authority (water and sewer authority). I'm also an active member of the Orbisonia/Rockhill Historical Society, and Team Leader for the Orbisonia/Rockhill Community Homecoming Committee.

I decided to run for GWA Treasurer because I believe that effective financial management is crucial for the success of any organization, especially one of our size that owns tangible assets. I want to help ensure that our funds continue to be managed wisely and transparently, and that they are utilized for the benefit of all members.

As Treasurer, I'd bring several contributions to the table. First, my attention to detail, strong organizational skills, and experience as Treasurer of the 113LHC will help me to succeed in continuing all of the amazing work Treasurer Blackburn has done over the past four years to set the organization on a solid financial path. I feel it is crucial to maintain transparency and earn members' trust, since the assets of any 501(c)(7) social club truly do belong to the members. To that end, I will ensure that our financial statements are always clear and accessible to all members. Additionally, my experience in municipal government and community involvement speak to my passion for collaboration and communication. If elected, I will work closely with other G-8 members to ensure our financial strategies remain aligned with the needs of the membership and with the overall mission of fostering enjoyment of the hobby in which we all invest so much time and money.

Ultimately, the role of the GWA Treasurer is to serve **the members** through helping guide our organization's financial future responsibly and transparently, and I feel I am uniquely qualified to do just that. I would very much appreciate your vote in November and the opportunity to earn your trust.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email at j.ann.w80@gmail.com if I can answer any additional questions. Thank you so much for your time.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Domitrovich

Candidate for Entente Representative: Scott Miller

Hi! I'm Scott Miller, and I'm running for the position of Allied/Entente Representative of the Great War Association. A great many of you know me, but there are plenty of guys who don't, so I'd like to take a moment and explain to you why I'm asking for your vote.

With 40 years of dedicated reenacting experience and a proven record of leadership, I believe I am uniquely positioned to represent the interests and aspirations of our Allied/Entente membership. My commitment is anchored in honesty, transparency, and consistent, engaged representation. I believe the Allied/Entente voice deserves not just to be heard, but actively included in GWA decisions. This means two-way communication—listening to concerns and ideas, providing regular updates, and creating clear channels for feedback. It means making sure all of the members on our side of the line, not just the unit leaders, know who I am and how to reach me, and are comfortable doing so.

As the commander of one of the largest units in the line, I bring hands-on leadership experience and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities the reenacting community faces. My track record of completing projects on time and under budget speaks to my ability to turn plans into reality. Now retired, I have the time and dedication to fully commit to this role. I live right here in Newville, just minutes from the Caesar Krauss Memorial GWA site, allowing me to stay closely engaged with site conditions and progress. Over the

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G-8 OFFICER CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS

(S. Miller, continued)

past few years, I've built strong, positive relationships with local leaders and community members, which will be invaluable in fostering collaboration and supporting GWA's goals.

I am passionate about site improvements that enhance the experience for all members. From preserving the integrity and authenticity of our one-of-a-kind site to helping guide its development, I will work tirelessly to ensure our site remains a place we are proud to call our own. It truly is something special, 'World War I Disneyland,' and we shouldn't lose sight of that.

If you entrust me with your vote, I will bring decades of experience, a commitment to honest and open communication, and a proven ability to deliver results—all while ensuring the voice of the Allied/Entente community is heard loud and clear.



Let's work together to make the GWA stronger, more transparent, and better than ever.

Thank you,
Scott Miller (sm82132001@yahoo.com)



2024 TREASURER'S REPORT

Income: \$64,817.73 (total)
From: Dues , Event fees, Site rental
Credit Card: \$35,326.00
Paypal: \$23,345.73
Checks: \$2,526.00
Site rental: \$3,620.00

Expenses: \$60,654.03 (total)
Operating Expenses: \$45,290.57
Event Expenses: \$11,743.46
Credit Card/ PayPal fees: \$3620.00

Operating Expenses include:
Taxes: \$4,882.98
Insurance: \$4,061.00
Website: \$1010.88
Wufoo: \$369.94
Annual Report : \$118.50
PO Box: \$194.00
Toilet service: \$650
Trash: \$143.50
Grass cutting: \$4800.00
Site Repairs: \$4600.00
Tax return: \$850
Toilet purchase: \$5,000
2 Wells: \$18,202.56
Misc: \$397.20

Toilets and wells total \$23,202.56

Event Expenses include:
Flares: \$3318.80
Barbed Wire: \$937.65
Trash: \$353.58
Smoke: \$586.40
Ambulance: \$1487.50
Toilet service: \$4,280
Misc: \$779.53
Includes registration supplies, cones and paint for parking lot, speed limit and no parking signs, batteries for radios

ANNOUNCEMENTS & MISCELLANY

The 2nd Annual Fort Bedford River Rendezvous will be held on Saturday, June 6, 2026, from 9 AM to 3 PM at Fort Bedford Park in Bedford, Pennsylvania. While the event traditionally focuses on 18th-century Pennsylvania, the Fort Bedford Museum is expanding its historical programming as part of its efforts to recognize all eras of American history leading up to the America250 commemoration.

Event organizers are seeking to include portrayals and displays that help tell the broader story of America's military and cultural evolution. They're looking for individuals or groups that might be interested in participating in this event by setting up a WWI educational booth or display.

The registration form and more information can be found [here](#) - and the Museum's main website is <https://www.fortbedfordmuseum.org>.

Please direct any questions to Landon Defibaugh at fortbedfordmuseum@gmail.com.



4th Zug CP Forces, April 2025
(Photo taken by Eric Mink)

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

***On the Wire* Fall 2025 issue publishes October 20. Ish.**

Please submit content for the Fall issue prior to October 10, including unit updates, feature stories, pictures, etc. Something you'd like to see? Please also feel free to pass along your ideas.

Send content / suggestions to GreatWarSecretary@gmail.com.