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MONOCACY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
FOUNDATION
PRESERVE • PROTECT • ENHANCE

The Dispatch



A Quarterly Newsletter of the Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation

In this issue:

**160th Anniversary
Celebration*

** Check Out the
Foundation!*

**What's New in the Park?*

**Upcoming Events*

Park Marks the Battle's 160th Anniversary



Artillery fire sounded from both sides of the Monocacy River during the 160th Anniversary celebration, July 5-7. Cannons fired at the Visitors Center were answered by others from the Thomas Farm.

Submit...

We welcome your photos and articles about people, places, history, and natural resources of Monocacy National Battlefield and Frederick County.

Please send them to monocacynbf@outlook.com

Mary Turner, Editor



The celebration began Friday evening with a dinner sponsored by the Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation followed by a panel discussion of the battle. Panelists included (from left) Jennifer M. Murray, PhD, teaching assistant professor at Oklahoma State University who teaches and writes in the field of Civil War history; Gail Stephens, former Battlefield Volunteer

and author of Shadow of Shiloh: Major General Lew Wallace in the Civil War; Ranger Ryan Quint from the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania Military Park in Virginia and the author of Determined to Stand and Fight: The Battle of Monocacy; and James J. Broomall, PhD, who is an associate professor of history at Shepherd University and serves as director of the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War and the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education.



Saturday morning began with guided hikes at the Worthington and Thomas Farms. The latter was led by Gail Stephens (second from left) and the former by Ranger Tracy Evans.



Authentic period music was provided by The Monocacy Field Musicians; they also interpreted musicians and the role they played in Civil War military units.



The living history volunteers were representing the 87th Pennsylvania Infantry. Numerous different organizations came together to create a company-sized formation as it would have been in 1864. Additionally, there were numerous civilian living history volunteers portraying the civilian relief societies that helped support the war effort.



This was the Battlefield's first opportunity to display the brigade groupings where they were positioned on the battlefield. The flag stands were a successful Eagle Scout project from last year and their position on the field represented the approximate location of various brigades during the battle. Each was marked with the flags of those states represented in the brigade.



There were talks on the Battle of Monocacy by Ranger Cameron Mallow (above) and the Battle of Fort Stevens by Ranger Bryan Cheeseboro (right), from Fort Stevens.



The Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation's tent, ably staffed by Foundation Board of Directors President Lynn Bristol, welcomed all to the Visitors Center. It included a display on the work of the Foundation, copies of The Dispatch, and free candy.

The last day ended with a celebratory selfie by the staff including (from the left) Ranger Tracy Evans, intern Brenna Hadley, Ranger Cameron Mallow, Ranger Brian Robinson with service dog Kaiser, William Risk, intern Connor McKenzie, and Ranger Matt Borders.



All photos are courtesy of Monocacy National Battlefield.

Check Out the Foundation!

Foundation Sponsors First Bus Tour

The Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation (MNBF) sponsored a historical bus tour of the battles that saved Washington in 1864 as a prelude to the 160th Anniversaries of the Battle of Monocacy (9 July 1864) and the Battle of Fort Stevens (10-11 July 1864). Our tour guides were Ranger Matt Borders of the Monocacy National Battlefield; Gary Thompson, President of the Alliance for Preservation of Civil War Defenses of Washington; and Charles Mitchell, author of books and articles that focus on politics and slavery in Civil War Maryland.



Our presenters: Ranger Matt Borders, Charles Mitchell, and Gary Thompson speaking at our first stop, Monocacy National Battlefield.

Our second stop was Zion Church and Cemetery in Urbana, a property of Frederick County Landmarks Foundation (FCLF). The FCLF graciously opened the doors to the church interior for us. Ranger Borders then shared the story of Lt. Col. William O. Tavenner of the 17th Virginia Cavalry.



Photo Courtesy of Ruth Hall

Another special feature of the tour was our visit to the Stonestreet Museum of 19th century medicine on the grounds of the Beall-Dawson House in Rockville. We were greeted by Clarence Hickey, reenactor of Dr. Edward Stonestreet



with the Montgomery County Historical Society, and author of Send for the Doctor. He gave an excellent presentation on Civil War medicine and field hospitals.

At Fort Stevens, Ranger Bryan Cheeseboro of the Civil War Defenses of Washington joined us to share the story of the battle for Washington at the northern forts.



Photo Courtesy of Ruth Hall



Our final stop of the day was at Battlefield National Cemetery, where several Federal soldiers that perished at the Battle of Fort Stevens are interred.

Author Speaks at Juneteenth Celebration



The Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation celebrated Juneteenth with a presentation by Dr. Emilie Amt at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. Dr. Amt presented her extensive research on the social history of the African American experience in Washington and Frederic Counties in the era of slavery. Her fascinating presentation included primary reference materials and interviews with extended families in the area. Dr. Amt is the author of *Black Antietam: African American Experiences of the Civil War in Sharpsburg*.

Dr. Amt is professor emeritus of history at Hood College in Frederick and her presentation was part of the Foundation's "Meet the Author" series.

Photo by Mary Turner

Errata

In the announcement of the Foundation's bus tour in the previous issue of *The Dispatch*, Charles Mitchell was mistakenly identified with the University of Maryland. Though he was well-trained at UMD, he is an independent historian and the author of several books and articles that focus on politics and slavery in Civil War Maryland.

New Foundation Board Member: Joseph Collins



Photo by Lynn Bristol

Joseph Collins has a B.A. in Social Studies from Juniata College (1960), earned his Provisional Teacher Certificate from California (PA) State University in 1963 and an MBA from Hood College in 2010. He retired from Allfirst Bank (now M&T Bank) as a vice president in the Commercial Real Estate Finance Division in 2000. A native of western Pennsylvania he has lived in Maryland since 1984 having moved from the Annapolis area to Frederick in 2004. A widower (wife Nancy passed from cancer in 2000) Joe has three children and seven grandchildren. He has volunteered at Frederick Health Hospital since 2005, with more than 7,000 hours of volunteer service and is currently First Vice President of the Frederick Health Auxiliary, an Auxiliary Past President and a former member of the Hospital Board of Directors. He is a member of the hospital's Development Council Special Gifts Committee, chairperson of Auxiliary Fundraising Committee, a member of the Auxiliary Nominating Committee and a Main Information Desk Volunteer. He is former President of the Maryland Association of Hospital Auxiliaries and a former member of the

Advisory Board of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. He is a master docent and a walking tour guide for Heritage Frederick specializing in the Murder and Mayhem Tour and a board member of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable. Joe was the winner of the 2018 Unsung Hero Frederick DoGooder Award and in October 2024 will be inducted into the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. He is the Executive Director of the Nancy Collins Memorial Cancer Foundation, a non-profit charity that holds an annual golf outing (2024 was the 22nd annual event) with proceeds benefiting the Frederick Health Hospital and Frederick Health Hospice.

Joe has written three books related to the American Civil War. His first book *Farmers That Helped Shape America* follows the Van Sickle branch of his family, who were early settlers in Garrett County, Maryland and their service during the Civil War as members of Maryland's Third Potomac Home Brigade.

His second book *The Battle of West Frederick, July 7, 1864* brings to light the overlooked fierce fighting that took place in the farm fields west of Frederick City two days before the Battle of Monocacy. The book details the many events leading up to this engagement, its many participants and the vital role that the Van Sickle family members and the men of the Third Potomac Home Brigade played in the fighting and the battle's impact on Frederick. The book and the assistance of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable led to the installation of an historical marker at the site of the fighting on U.S. Route 40 in front of the Red Horse Restaurant and the Comfort Inn.

Joe's third book, *The Battle for Jug Bridge*, details the heroics of the Ohio National Guard units and their valiant defense of the Jug Bridge, where the National Road crossed the Monocacy River. This vital bridge protected the right flank of the Union defenders fighting to the south at the B&O Railroad bridge and Georgetown Turnpike bridge that crossed the Monocacy River and provided the eventual Union escape route.

Joe is working on his fourth book, titled *Maryland's Forgotten Civil War Soldiers*, that will tell the story of the Maryland citizens who fought as members of the Potomac Home Brigades, specifically the history of the Third Potomac Home Brigade. Joe also continues to research his family history and plans to write a family history.

What's New in the Park?

Changes in the Administration



There have been some major changes in the administration of the Monocacy National Battlefield this spring and summer. Site Superintendent Andrew Banasik left to become site superintendent at

Antietam National Battlefield. The staff and volunteers were sad to see him go and wished him well in his new position.

Chief Ranger Travis Baker was named Acting Superintendent for a short time until the Park Service named Jim King as Acting Superintendent. Mr. King served the Southeast Region in Atlanta as Regional Fire Marshal for fourteen years. He then moved to the National Capital Region in Washington, DC where he served as Fire Marshal and managed the structural fire program, wildland fire program, physical security, and the emergency

management programs. Prior to coming to the National Park Service and after four years in the U.S. Coast Guard, he worked for the State of Delaware for twenty-seven years mostly at the Office of State Fire Marshal. At the end of his tenure as Acting Superintendent, Mr. King plans to retire in Delaware to spend more time with his family, especially his two grandchildren.

In July, Ranger Tracy Evans became the Chief of Resource Education and Visitor Services. Ms. Evans had acted as chief officially and unofficially for nearly two and a half years. She was born and raised in Hagerstown, Maryland, where she lives with her husband and son. She received her bachelor's degree in history from Frostburg State University and a master's degree in Historical Studies focusing on American history from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. She first came to Monocacy National Battlefield during her undergraduate studies as an intern. She returned in 1997 as a seasonal park ranger and became part of the permanent staff in 2003.

Upcoming Events

Artillery Day at the Monocacy National Battlefield

September 7 @ 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

FREE

The sound and fury of cannon fire will shake the ground of Monocacy National Battlefield on Artillery Day. Various types of cannons will be fired throughout the day, at 11am, 1pm, and 3pm, at the Monocacy National Battlefield Visitors Center. Visitors can experience the acoustic and the concussive differences both at the point of firing (Visitors Center) and from the downwind position of 1.5 miles (Gambrill Mill) by planning their day around two firings.

Stop by our tent to meet the directors of the foundation in front of the Visitors Center. Get a free copy of our newsletter, *The Dispatch*, and sign up to join our mailing list. We need you (and a small donation goes a long way.)

"In the Streets" Festival by Celebrate Frederick

September 14 @ 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

FREE

Meet and mingle with foundation board members at "In the Streets", Frederick's showcase of its local, non-profit organizations. Listen to the story of our mission. Get a free copy of our newsletter, *The Dispatch*, learn about our events programming and co-partnership with the National Park Service's Monocacy National Battlefield. Look for a special activity at our table under our tent.

More information about the Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation and its activities may be found on our website at www.monocacynbf.org or on our FaceBook page. "Like" us there to stay up-to-date!