SAVE HISTORIC



September, 2010



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Not solely because the battlefield is beautiful that time of year, or because the weather starts to be cool, or because the leaves begin to turn colors, or even because it is the anniversary of the battle. Sure, these are all great reasons to come to western Maryland. The arrival of September also means great food, great music and entertainment, and great vendors at the Sharpsburg Heritage Festival. Held in the center of town, the festival features local crafters & artisans and many historical interest groups, including a table for SHAF where we'll sell our wares, including several gently used Civil War books. So everything the battlefield area has to offer is there in all its glory, and it's a fine outdoor festival as well. This year the festival is September 18, and we hope to see you there.

Also that afternoon the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association sponsors their third annual river-wading and walking tour of Shepherdstown Battlefield. Followed up by a hot dog & hamburger dinner with soft drinks, beer & wine, this tour is a bargain. You'll need to register on their website, battleofshepherdstown.org and I will lead one of the tours. We hope to see you soon,

Tom Clemens President

NEW LOGO MERCHANDISE IS HERE!

Merchandise
(hats, shirts, etc)
featuring
our new logo are
available visit
www.shaf.org for
more information.

Our Mission

The mission of SHAF is the preservation and protection of historic sites within the Antietam valley that arc related to the Battle of Antietam, the Maryland Campaign, or other Civil War activity in the region. We will accomplish our mission through public education, solicitation of funds, promotion of protective easements and advocacy.

SHAF was incorporated in 1986. It is chartered in Maryland as a non-profit corporation and is exempt from federal tax by Section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are tax deductible.

INSIDE Antietam

by Mannie Gentile

Roads Less Traveled.



"Infortunately the southern end of Park is closed for road resurfacing, so you can't drive to the bridge...but you can hike".

Variations of the above are commonplace these days at the front counter of the Visitor Center. You may have heard that the park is experiencing a major renovation in that all of the paved surfaces are being repaved. Though we only do this every sixty years or so, still, the work unavoidably leads to road closures and regrettably makes some parts of the park less accessible.

We receive daily updates regarding road closures as well as advice regarding the best access to the Bridge (which will be fully accessible by battle anniversary), and for visitors who are willing to hike, we can still get them to that famous span across Antietam Creek.

Routing this out on a trail map, in the comfort of the air conditioned Visitor Center is one thing, the reality of the trail may be another. On an early September afternoon I took some time to test my assumptions, as well as fact check what I've been telling visitors regarding the recommended hike to the bridge. Lacing up my hiking boots and filling up a large water bottle I drove out highway 34 and parked at the lot of the Newcomer house to begin my sojourn to the southern end of the field. I found the hike to the bridge to be 26 minutes in and 26 minutes back out, and that's with plenty of pauses for taking photos.

Just a note on the Newcomer House by the way. This historic structure, recently acquired by the Park will be opening to the public on September 17th as the new "Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area" Welcome and Exhibit Center, a collaboration between Antietam

National Battlefield and the Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau. How cool is that – a restored home from the time of the battle accessible to the public.



From the Newcomer House one walks toward the highway bridge to connect with the Sherrick Farm/ Three Farms trail. The trail is fairly recent and much of the trail construction was done by YCC (Youth Conservation Corps) and MCC (Maryland Conservation Corps) kids over the past few summers.



At this early point in the trek the hiker can take a moment to inspect the continuing restoration work on the historic Newcomer barn, and the stone wall that has just been completed. Acquired by the park just a few years ago this structure was brought back form the "brink" by the very talented staff of the Park's Maintenance Division.



Immediately below the barn, and on the trail proper, is a bench from which one can watch Antietam Creek make its lazy, shaded, way toward the Potomac just a couple of miles downstream.





This time of year the fence lines are thick with thistles and those thistles attract lots of birds and a variety of butterflies. Its hard to keep up a determined pace with such delightful distraction along the way.



Cows will be surveying you from shady spots as you approach the MCC bridge, another project of young energetic high-school kids under the supervision of the Park's Natural Resources staff. Shortly after the footbridge one will encounter hundreds of light-green tubes sticking up out of the ground. These protective tubes contain a saplings planted by volunteers, as a means to restore and stabilize the buffer area between the creek bank and the meadows beyond.



So far the ease of the trail can lull the hiker into thinking that the trek will be a "walk in the park" as it starts out through mown meadow alongside the Antietam creek; all very sunny, level, and easy on the feet. Further on however, the hiker will encounter more rugged terrain with a couple of steep, though, short climbs and some uneven footing. Hiking boots will trump tennis shoes by trail's end. Shortly after encountering the plantings of the buffer area the trail takes a sharp turn and a steep climb up and into the shade with Antietam Creek below to the hiker's left.



Is there anything more compelling or inviting than a sun-dappled forest trail?

I encountered several deer who were much quicker than my ability to capture them with my camera. Other fauna the hiker could expect to see would be black snakes and the occasional box-turtle. The wilted aspect of much of the plant-life is a testimonial to the dryness of this past summer, though the abundant shelf fungus along the way seems to be doing just fine.



At this point one can start to detect the sounds of construction equipment. March to the sound of the machinery and you'll know you are heading the right way. Eventually you'll emerge onto Burnside Bridge Road, the public road that does not (as one would hope from its name) lead to Burnside Bridge, for us, however it marks about the two thirds point of our hike. As one crosses the bridge and then the road, the





trail resumes, down hill, and past the popular swimming hole known as "Mollie's hole".



It is at this point that those who've been to Burnside Bridge before start to encounter very familiar territory and before long the Bridge comes into view as do



the numerous road paving vehicles across the creek and up at the parking lot area.



Pausing in the shade of that witness to the battle, the much-loved old sycamore at the foot of the bridge, one quickly realizes that during this time of construction its very easy to be a lone visitor enjoying both the bridge and the peaceful contemplation this spot can afford, until, that is, the next hardy group of hikers finds their way, just as you did, to this icon of the Antietam Creek Valley.



ID discs from the Battle of South Mountain

By Joseph Stahl, SHAF Member

ID discs during the Civil War were bought by the soldiers themselves as there was no government issue. As a result the token industry stepped in to make many different styles of discs based on Patriotic themes. These six discs were purchased by soldiers who fought at one of the three gaps on September 14th. Most of these discs were probably worn that day in September as we know that these types of discs were being purchased from the regimental sutlers in the spring and summer of 1862. Each disc reminds us of a soldier and what he went through more than 140 years ago.



Corporal Edgar Adams

Co. E. 4th Vermont Infantry. Mustered in on Sept 21, 1861 for 3 years as 7th corporal. Age 21, 5' 6" tall, dark complexion, black eyes

& dark hair, a farmer.

Born Pomfret Vt.

Present Oct 31, 1861 to Nov/Dec 1862.

July/Aug 62 Promoted to 5th Corporal.

Sept 1, 1862 Promoted to 4th Sergeant.

Absent Nov/Dec 62 sick at Patterson Park U.S.A.

General Hospital Baltimore Md. (last paid June 30, 1862). Jan/Feb 63.

Died Jan. 3, 1863 Baltimore Md. Chronic diarrhea. Muster out roll of Sept 30, 1864 says died Jan 9, 1863 Philadal Pa.

Due clothing allowance \$65.88.

Saw action at Yorktown, Williamsburg, Golding's farm, Savage Station's, White Oak Swamp, Crampton's Gap, Antietam.

Private Lewis Longton

Co. F 22nd NYSV

Mustered in June 6, 1861 for 2 years

Age 20

Born in Canada

Status Not Stated July 61 to Dec 61

Present Jan/Feb 62, Absent March/April 62 sick

Left at Binsford Va. returned May/June

Present July/Aug 62

Absent Sept/ Oct & Nov/Dec wounded left shoulder 9/14/62

In hospital Frederick Md

Present Jan/Feb 63 March/April sent to General Hospital 4/21/63 Mustered out 6/19/63 last paid March 1, 1863 Died Nov. 5, 1918

Private John Giesbers

Co. E 6th Wisc Infantry

Mustered in July 16, 1861 for 3 years

Age 28

Present July 61 to Aug 31 61

Not stated Sept/Oct, present Nov/Dec 61 to July/Aug 62

Listed as wounded Sept 14, 16, 17 1862!!

Listed as deserted 9/14/62

Listed as Missing in Action 9/14/62

War Department July 26, 1889

"The charge of desertion of Sept 14, 1862 is removed and the record amended to read "missing in action at South Mountain Md. Sept 14, 1862" - File changed to allow widow to receive a pension. Letter from 1st Lt. of Company says The Captain was killed at Antietam, the 1st Lt, 2nd Lt, 1st Sergt and 2nd Sergt were wounded so the report was made by the 3rd Sergt. 1st Lt says "he was with us in line when the Company entered the battle of South Mountain, Sunday afternoon about 4 O'clock the company remaining on the field of battle till after midnight."

Private John Moody

Co C. 4th Rhode Island Infantry Mustered in October 30, 1861 for 3 years Age 31 as a Private Not Stated Oct 31, 61 to Feb 28, 62 Listed as present March/April 62 to Jan/Feb 63 Stoppage \$1.00 by Regt QM Present March/April 63 to Jan/Feb 64 Re-enlisted as Vet Vol due Bounty \$400 Stoppage ½ value of a tent, \$11.23 Clothing allowance settled Oct 31, 63 \$10.67 Present Jan/Feb 64 to June 65 March/April 64 paid \$50 of Bounty July/Aug 64 paid \$50 of Bounty Sept/Oct 64 due \$50 of Bounty Muster Out Oct 15, 64 4th RI discharged Transferred to Co. D 7th RI Infantry March/April 65 due \$50 of Bounty Muster out July 13, 1865 Clothing allowance \$18.75 Bounty paid = \$160 due \$240 Last paid Dec 31, 1864

Owed US Gov \$6.00 for retained arms & equipment

Private Ara Adams

Co. F, 9th New Hampshire Infantry Mustered in August 5, 1862 for 3 years Age 18(?) as a Private Listed as Present from Sept/Oct 1862 and Nov/Dec 62 Absent Jan 24, 1863 send to hospital April 28, 1863 sick in Concord N.H. July/Aug 63 noted sick in hospital in Covington Ky. Due government \$9.22 for transportation Muster out roll dated June 10, 1865 lists him as due \$75 bounty Last paid on Oct 31, 1862 Note Father in same regiment. He was a musican, mustered out in 63 when bands disbanded On 1850 Census shown as age 2!! Died April 25, 1897 Saw action at South Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg

Our semi-annual work day is set for Saturday November 6 at Antietam Battlefield. As usual we will gather in the parking lot of the Visitor's Center at 9:00. Please dress for the weather, bring gloves and water, the NPS provides tools. We will postpone if there is moderate or heavy rain. Check the website SHAF.org or our Facebook page for updates and cancellation notice.

SHAF Profile: **JOHN R. POWELL**

by Mary Abroe

Of the many member profiles in our newsletter over the past few years, one point of interest for this writer has been the variety of places other than Maryland from which SHAF members hail. Not true, however, for our current subject: John Powell is a native Marylander who was born in Baltimore and grew up in Silver Spring. The source of John's interest in the Civil War, at least in part, is the "dozen summers" spent in Tennessee and Georgia, near Chattanooga, at his grandparents' farm; there he also learned that he had Civil War ancestors.

After graduating from the University of Maryland with a B.S. in public relations, John spent twenty years at the Washington Star.

Subsequently he worked in retail sales for eight years and then three years at the Piper House on Antietam battlefield as innkeeper. Since 1991 he has been a park ranger at Harpers Ferry. His volunteer activities that have benefitted area Civil War sites include a stint at Manassas National Battlefield (1978-88) and ongoing work as a volunteer and tour guide at Antietam since 1986. John belongs to the Harpers Ferry and Hagerstown Civil War round tables, and he has been a member of the Antietam Advisory Committee since the late 1980s.

John Powell tells the rest of the story in his own words: "I have had a lifelong interest in the American Civil War, American history, and world history, particularly in how we came to be the nation we are today. I presently live near Keedysville, Maryland, about six miles south of Antietam battlefield, on a hilltop that gives me a panoramic view of the whole field. I have been a Civil War reenactor since 1978, shifting from soldier to civilian after helping make the movie Gettysburg in 1990. I joined SHAF in 1988 to help preserve the battlefield and the surrounding area where the past still lingers. SHAF has had great success, but the effort to preserve this unique field must be ongoing."