On Saturday evening, Dec. 3, 2011, Antietam National Battlefield, in cooperation with the American Business Women's Association, will host the 20th Annual Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination in honor of those soldiers who fell during the Battle of Antietam. In the event of poor weather, the Illumination will be rescheduled for Saturday, Dec. 10, 2011.

Like strings of amber beads, 23,110 luminaries—candles representing each person killed, wounded or missing in the Battle of Antietam—will stretch across Antietam National Battlefield on Saturday.

The 23rd annual Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination, with a driving tour of the candlelit grounds, will memorialize those who fought in the Battle of Antietam—the bloodiest one-day battle in American history, Sept. 17, 1862.

"(The luminaries) bring meaning to the numbers because it's hard to visualize 23,000 of anything," said Georgene Charles, who organized the first illumination.

The 5.8-mile tour is from 6 p.m. to midnight, lasting about 20 minutes, said J.W. Howard, battlefield superintendent.

Howard said the illumination attracts about 20,000 people each year. On average, 8,500 vehicles go through the tour, many waiting as long as two hours to take the 20-minute tour. The line from the entrance has stretched as far as four miles, Howard said.

Sue Doucette and her husband, Cal, Continued on page 3

River Crossing Video

For those of you who missed the annual event or who just want to reminisce about the day’s events, you can view a video of the day on youtube.com. All you need to do is type in Historical Maryland, Potomac River Crossing.
The Confederate commander’s scheme involved the bluff that Forrest, the gambler, so thoroughly enjoyed. He knew that bluff, properly applied, could succeed, having used it liberally in the past with gratifying results. So now, with only his small number of weary troopers to help him pull it off, Forrest created phantom units and artillery pieces, displaying the only men and guns he had, time and again. He chided couriers for bringing him the news that such units had arrived and found no place in line on a field already too crowded to give them room. And when a section of Southern guns appeared during negotiations, Forrest sent a staff officer to get them to “drop back a little,” to appease Col. Streight. The section commander complied and then went instantly to “action front” to present as hostile an appearance as possible. The subsequent arrival of another gun helped Forrest bluff his Union counterpart with the number of artillery pieces he had on hand.

Forrest later recalled this final act in the race for Rome (Georgia) with the exuberant embellishment of a victor: “I seen him (Streight) all the time he was talking, looking over my shoulder and counting the guns. Presently he said, ‘Name of God! How many guns have you got? There’s 15 I’ve counted already!’” Undoubtedly pleased that his deception was having the desired effect, Forrest turned in that direction and calmly observed, “I reckon that is all that has kept up.” Streight still clung to his refusal to surrender until he knew the number of men he faced, to which Forrest replied matter-of-factly, “I’ve got enough to whip you out of your boots.” When Streight rejected this answer, Forrest played his final card. He turned to the bugler and instructed him to “Sound to mount!” Streight could afford to delay no longer and agreed to surrender. A relieved Gen. Forrest ordered the 1,466 Federals to stack their guns and assemble in a nearby field. He revealed the small number of his troops only after the Union soldiers had complied with his wishes. As he concluded: “When Streight saw they were barely four hundred, he did rear! Demanded to have arms back and that we should fight it out. I just laughed at him and patted him on the shoulder, and said: ‘Ah, Colonel, all is fair in love and war you know.’”
Sharpsburg Illumination

Continued from page 1

plan to make the hour-long drive from their home in Gettysburg, Pa. “That’s nothing,” Sue Doucette said about the drive. She said they once drove seven hours from Buffalo, N.Y., where they used to live, just to see the Illumination. The Doucettes are now volunteers and have been coming to the battlefield for the past eight or nine years, Doucette said.

About 1,400 volunteers will place sand-filled, brown paper bags with candles, each spaced 15 feet apart in strict rows, Charles said. The park uses GIS mapping to precisely plot where each luminaria should go, Howard said.

The process takes five to six hours, organizers said. cleanup takes a few hours Sunday morning. Doucette, Howard and Charles said that in all the year’s they’ve seen the lighted field, each year feels different. "I’ve been doing it for 13 years, and every time I go, there’s a lump in my throat," Howard said.

Howard said the lit fields remind him of his 20-year-old son, Brian, who’s attending school at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. "These soldiers were as old as he is," Howard said.

For the Doucettes, who perform as historical re-enactors, attending the annual event is how they spent part of their honeymoon when they married 10 years ago. “I’m not sure if there are words to describe it,” Doucette said. “The most spectacular time is the first time you see it.”

The idea to do the Memorial Illumination came in 1988, after elementary school students launched 23,110 balloons at the battlefield and after a local cemetery was lit with luminarias in remembrance of the people buried there, Charles said.

The first illumination was held in 1989. The event has since been held the first Saturday in December.

Notes: If the weather threatens, they will make the decision by 9 a.m. If there is a question, call me at my cell phone at 301-676-5225.

Meet about 10 a.m. at Mansfield Avenue, which is located at the north end of the battlefield. Enter in the parking area at the Clara Barton Monument. Enter the park and drive past the visitor center until the road turns right onto Mansfield Avenue. We will be located at the top of the rise near the Clara Barton Monument.

We will be putting out the illuminaries, and setting them into place in the morning.

Dress warmly. Sometimes it can be pretty cold and windy and/or wet. Please dress accordingly. Around noon or so we will break for lunch. We expect to have hot dogs, desserts, hot soup, chips, sodas and etc. About 2 p.m. we will start lighting the field. Barbecue lighters seem to work best. We will be given a limited number of car passes for the drive-through, so be prepared to team up and pool the cars. At 3 p.m. all the cars without the passes must clear the battlefield, and we park those cars that don’t have the passes down at the foot of Mansfield Avenue on the Hagerstown Pike.

At 4:15 p.m. the Memorial service begins at the Maryland Monument near the visitor center. Only the volunteers are invited to this ceremony. It features a bagpiper or a bugler playing delayed taps. As soon as the ceremony is over, the volunteers begin the drive through.

Please no alcohol beverages.

If anyone has any questions, they may call me 301-676-5225 or email at dept911@yahoo.com.
Virginia’s Black Confederates

By Walter E. Williams
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One tragedy of war is that its victors write its history and often do so with bias and dishonesty. That’s true about our War of 1861, erroneously called a civil war. Civil wars, by the way, are when two or more parties attempt to take over the central government. Jefferson Davis no more wanted to take over Washington, D.C., than George Washington in 1776 wanted to take over London. Both wars were wars of independence.

Kevin Sieff, staff writer for The Washington Post, penned an article “Virginia 4th-grade Textbook Criticized Over Claims on Black Confederate Soldiers” (Oct. 20, 2010). The textbook says that blacks fought on the side of the Confederacy. Sieff claims that “scholars are nearly unanimous in calling these accounts of black Confederate soldiers a misrepresentation of history.”

William & Mary historian Carol Sheriff said, “It is disconcerting that the next generation is being taught history based on an unfounded claim instead of accepted scholarship.”

Let’s examine that accepted scholarship. In April 1861, a Petersburg, Va., newspaper proposed “three cheers for the patriotic free Negroes of Lynchburg” after 70 blacks offered “to act in whatever capacity may be assigned to them” in defense of Virginia. Ex-slave Frederick Douglass observed, “There are at the present moment, many colored men in the Confederate Army doing duty not only as cooks, servants and laborers, but as real soldiers, having muskets on their shoulders and bullets in their pockets, ready to shoot down…and do all that soldiers may do to destroy the Federal government.”

Charles H. Wesley, a distinguished black historian who lived from 1891 to 1987, wrote “The Employment of Negroes as Soldiers in the Confederate Army,” in the Journal of Negro History (1919). He says, “Seventy free blacks enlisted in the Confederate Army in Lynchburg, Va. Sixteen companies (1,600) of free men of color marched through Augusta, Ga. on their way to fight in Virginia.” Wesley cites Horace Greeley's American Conflict (1866) saying, “For more than two years, Negroes had been extensively employed in belligerent operations by the Confederacy. They had been embodied and drilled as rebel soldiers and had paraded with white troops at a time when this would not have been tolerated in the armies of the Union.”

Wesley goes on to say, “An observer in Charleston at the outbreak of the war noted the preparation for war, and called particular attention to the thousand Negroes who, so far from inclining to insurrections, were grinning from ear to ear at the prospect of shooting the Yankees.” One would have to be stupid to think that blacks were fighting in order to preserve slavery. What’s untaught in most history classes is that it is relatively recent that we Americans think of our-selves as citizens of United States.

For most of our history, we thought of ourselves as citizens of Virginia, citizens of New York and citizens of whatever state in which we resided. Wesley says, “To the majority of the Negroes, as to all the South, the invading armies of the Union seemed to be ruthlessly attacking independent States, invading the beloved homeland and trampling upon all that these men held dear.”

Blacks have fought in all of our wars both before and after slavery, in hopes of better treatment afterwards. Denying the role, and thereby cheapening the memory of the Confederacy's slaves and freemen who fought in a failed war of independence is part of the agenda to cover up Abraham Lincoln's unconstitutional acts to prevent Southern secession.

Did states have a right to secede? At the 1787 Constitutional convention, James Madison rejected a proposal that would allow the federal government to suppress a seceding state. He said, “A Union of the States containing such an ingredient seemed to provide for its own destruction. The use of force against a State would look more like a declaration of war than an infliction of punishment and would probably be considered by the party attacked as a dissolution of all previous compacts by which it might be bound.”
Adjutant Activities

DUES:
At this moment, we have 30 of our regular members that have not renewed their membership. Any dues received after now needs to have an extra $5.00 penalty. The annual dues are $40 for regular membership without a mailed (hard copy) newsletter. It is $45.00 for a mailed monthly newsletter. Now, with the penalty, it will be $45 and $50, respectively. If you are not sure whether you have paid or not, don’t hesitate to call me at 301-831-5510 or e-mail dept911@gmail.com.

MINUTES:
• The meeting was called to order by Commander Steve Gill after the Pledge Allegiance to the American Flag, the salute to the Confederate Flag and the reading of the SCV Charge.
• There were 10 members and guests attending including compatriots. Robert A. Jones, Robert P. Jones, Frank Brown Jr., Dave Redden, Don Beck, Tom Keefer, 1st Lt. Commander Bob Brewer; Camp Commander Steve Gill and Adjutant/Treasurer Harold Ford. Our special guest was Kate Brewer.

Civil War Trust
Nicholas Redding, Deputy Director for Advocacy, Civil War Trust spoke of the activities and mission of this most worthwhile organization.

Christmas Party Announcement

Please come and join in the fun and great food as we have an annual Holiday Dinner meeting this coming Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 7 p.m. This is a family event. The dinner meeting will be at the usual VFW meeting location in Gaithersburg. This is always one of our best meetings as nothing of substance is usually discussed except holiday cheer and how good the food is.

This year the Camp will provide the Holiday ham and turkey as the featured meat entrees (prepared by Katie Brewer). We need all good and attending Norris Camp compatriots to round out our Christmas Dinner by providing the following:

For Those Last Names Starting With The First Letter Of: Then Bring To The Dinner:
A - E Veggies & Salads (green beans, sweet potatoes, etc.)
F - Q Starch & Rolls (rolls, butter, rice and potatoes, etc.)
R - Z Desserts & Drinks (non alcoholic)

Please plan on arriving right on time or a little earlier would be better yet. Any questions AND RSVPs, please contact Bob Brewer at 301-977-0087 (before 8 p.m. please) or brewer000@comcast.net (anytime).
Guest Speaker

While other kids in his Middlesex, N.J., neighborhood were collecting baseball cards, 14-year-old Ron Coddington was browsing flea markets looking for old photographs. Little did he realize after he purchased his first photo in 1977 that collecting historic images would become a lifelong pursuit. He originally collected various formats of vernacular photography dating from the 1840s to the 1890s. Over time, he focused his collection on Civil War era cartes de visite, a paper format popular during the 1860s.

In 2001, he began writing "Faces of War," a regular column in the "Civil War News." Each month, Ron profiles a soldier, each illustrated with an original, wartime carte de visite photograph. His subjects are enlisted men and non-commissioned officers, and officers below the rank of colonel. Ron believes that appreciating the role of the volunteer soldier is key to understanding America's greatest conflict. He writes, "The history of the Civil War is the stories of its soldiers."


In 2011, he became a contributing author for the New York Times Disunion series.

Ron has participated as a speaker at numerous Civil War-related events and at meetings for round tables and other organizations.

A 1985 graduate of the University of Georgia, Ron lives in Arlington, Va., with his wife, Anne, and pugs Missy and Bella. He is currently Assistant Managing Editor, Visuals, of The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Book Club

The book club meets at the Rockville Barnes & Noble at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month.

The selected reading for November will be "Bloody Crimes: The Funeral of Abraham Lincoln and the Chase for Jefferson Davis" by James Swanson.

For those that would like to get an early start on our December/January book, we'll be reading "Shadow of Shiloh: Major General Lew Wallace in the Civil War" by Gail Stephens.

Hope you enjoy the reading.

Stephen Harris
Civil War Enthusiasts and Descendants

I am working on a team of volunteers with the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts (an AMA accredited museum) to do a “fine arts meets the industrial arts” exhibit on the Civil War to run for 13 months from June 2012 through July 2013. It will be high end and well-promoted. It will run in conjunction with the 150th anniversaries of Sharpsburg/Antietam and Gettysburg.

We are working with many institutions and collections, and are working to even secure such marquee artifacts as regimental colors from the State Archives (pending). I am even lending a couple of my best pieces, too.

We are looking everywhere and anywhere for institutions and collectors and descendants willing to offer quality artifacts on loan for the exhibit...Union, Confederate and civilian, African-American and post-war veteran. Everything will be secure, and WCMFA practices all current museum standards. Appropriate artifact loan documents will be provided to lenders. If you have something in your collection or from your great-great-grandfather, you might be interested in lending to the exhibit. Please contact me. It need not be Gettysburg or Antietam specific.

The museum’s website is www.wcmfa.org if you would like to learn more about the museum.

Thank you for considering this request. I can be reached via email at bockmiller@comcast.net, which is my preferred means of communication for this, but my cell, if you would like to call is 240-291-3128.

Stephen Bockmiller
Waynesboro, Pa.
Member: SCV—Col. Harry Gilmor Camp 1388, Baltimore Md.
MOSB—Maryland Line Chapter
SUV—Battle of Gettysburg Camp 112, Gettysburg Pa.
The newsletter of the Colonel William Norris Camp #1398 is published 12 times a year by the camp as a service to its membership and to the public.

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