



The Second NJ Brigade

New Jersey's Civil War Brigade

Spring, 2022
Volume 8, Issue 1

The Second NJ Brigade is a 501c non profit organization. The board meets once a month and is represented by members of all Impressions. The Executive Board: President Mike Milling, Vice President Matt Belcastro, Treasurer Steff Poli-Zilinski, Secretary Abby Belcastro.



THE ADVANCE

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2022 Schedule of Events

Training Camp & Camp Geiger Reenactment – PA

April 29th – May 1st

This year, we'll be hosting our infantry training camp in conjunction with Camp Geiger. Training will take place alongside a reenactment of trench warfare tactics and an overnight camping experience.

Program Coordinator: Matt Belcastro – banshee1967@aol.com

Milford Historical Society Living History - Milford PA

May 7th

NEW! Located in Milford, PA, we'll be providing the museum with a living history and company street time-line with our Sibley tent. One-day program for all impressions.

Program Coordinator: Ron Syme – rsyme02@gmail.com

Memorial Day Parade – Jamesburg NJ

May 31st

Annual parade in which we march to thank Jamesburg for allowing us the use of their canon.

Program Coordinator: Tim Rack – timlin33@hotmail.com

Fosterfields Reenactment - Morris Township, NJ

June 11 – 12

NEW(ish)! We're bringing back one of our biggest programs! 2D will be playing host to the Fosterfields Reenactment. If you have reenactor friends outside of 2D, please encourage them to come! 2-day overnight for all fighting units and civilian stations inside the historic buildings.

Program Coordinator: Matt Belcastro – banshee1967@aol.com

Randolph 4th of July Parade – Randolph, NJ

July 2nd

PAID Event! Annual parade in which we march through the town of Randolph, followed by our annual 4th of July Picnic at the O'Grady's.

Program Coordinator: Greg Belcastro – bell1865@aol.com

Barnegat Timeline – Barnegat, NJ

August 13th

Hosted by Mike Milling, this timeline of all war impressions from Revolutionary to WWII are invited to Mike's historical home to showcase their kits.

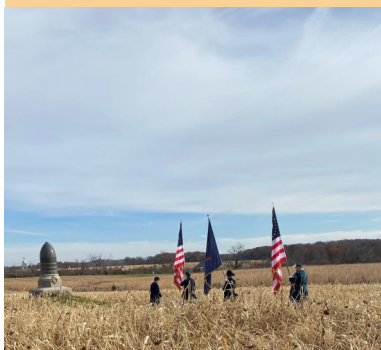
Program Coordinator: Mike Milling – millingm@wpunj.edu

Museum Village Living History – Rochester, NY

Sept. 3–4

Annual 2-day living history/skirmish at Museum Village Historic Site. Overnight camping experience.

Program Coordinator: Matt Belcastro – banshee1967@aol.com



2022 Schedule of Events, Cont.

Antietam Reenactment – Antietam, MD

Sept. 16 & 17

160th Celebration includes a 2-day full scale reenactment, overnight camping experience, and cornfield fight tactics.

Program Coordinator: Matt Belcastro – bansehee1967@aol.com

Old Wall Historical Society – Wall Twp. NJ

Oct. 15 – 16

Living history and fashion show inside the Old Wall Historic house and grounds. Overnight camping experience, lunch provided by the museum both days.

Program Coordinator: Abby Belcastro – abbyale21@gmail.com

Cedar Creek – Middletown, PA – Artillery Event

Oct. 15 – 16

158th Anniversary of Cedar Creek. Overnight camping experience. Registration is required.

Program Coordinator: Tim Rack – timlink33@hotmail.com

Remembrance Day – Gettysburg, PA

Nov. 19

Annual monument ceremony, followed by the Gettysburg parade. 2D will be marching as Veteran Reserve Corps.

Program Coordinator: Matt Belcastro – banshee1967@aol.com



Fosterfields Reenactment



We are very excited to be bringing our biggest brigade event back into action! In partnership with the staff at Fosterfields Living Historical Farm, we'll be hosting our first Fosterfields Reenactment in over a decade this summer.



Mark your calendars for **June 11th and 12th** in Morris Township.

We've been given carte blanche to use 99% of the site (as noted by the site map on the next page). All impressions are welcome, and the infantry/artillery will be doing a tactical style battle both days.

The civilians will be doing historic house tours in the newly renovated "Willows" mansion, with a focus one of the 7th's original commanders, Joseph Warren Revere, as well as cooking demos throughout the weekend.



With current commitments from the 8th New Jersey, the 118th New York, and the 44th Georgia, we have almost 150 reenactors in attendance so far. If you know of other groups or even individual reenactors who would love a full-scale reenactment, please have them contact Matt Belcastro at banshee1967@aol.com to be put on the rosters. Likewise, a few weeks before the event, Matt would like a crew of volunteers to help build obstacles for the battle scenario. If you're interested in being part of this crew, please e-mail him at the address above.

Fosterfields will be providing us with wood for our fires, bathroom facilities, water access, and full permission to camp on the property from Friday evening on June 10th – Sunday afternoon, June 12th. They will also secure us reenactor-specific parking areas for the event.

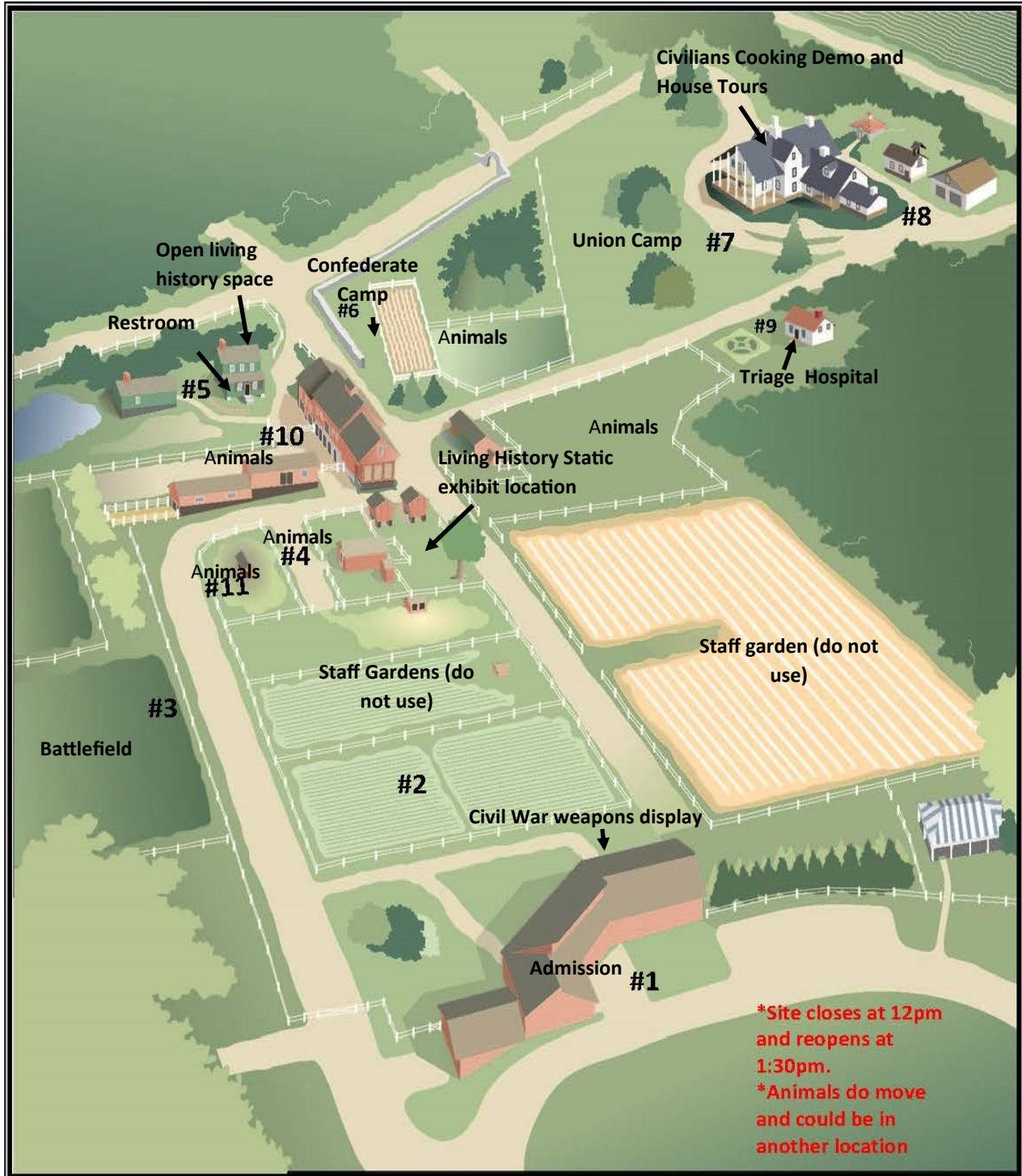
If you only make it out to one event this year, let it be this one. We want this to be the biggest event of the year, but we can't do it without your support.

Spread the word!

Please direct any questions about this event to Matt Belcastro, banshee1967@aol.com or Abby Belcastro, abbyale21@gmail.com.



Reenactment Map



Lost & Found

One Woman's Quest to Memorialize the 22nd USCT



Our own Brian Daniels, with Lisa Money, at the 2019 Ceremonies.

Back in 2019, the brigade received a request to help honor lost members of the 22nd USCT at the opening ceremonies of The Buffalo Soldiers - 22nd Regiment United States Colored Troops Cemetery.



Our salute to the 22nd troops

A project begun by local resident, Lisa Money, who discovered the lost cemetery on one of her school bus routes, Ms. Money and her family and friends spent almost a decade clearing underbrush and trees from the abandoned ground, discovering an entire graveyard of 22nd USCT vets, as well as Buffalo Soldiers and World War I & II veterans hidden beneath the flora.

Word of this forgotten cemetery soon spread, and local veteran societies assisted Ms. Money in finding help to take care of the grounds, as well as providing funding for a sign. The Glouster County Institute for Technology also assisted her in creating renderings of the restored cemetery, and provided her with a volunteer cleanup day where they rented backhoes and heavy machinery to clear out all the underbrush. The Glouster Lowes also donated paint and shrubbery to beautify the fence line around the cemetery.



New cemetery sign

At the cemetery's unveiling in 2019, over 100 people turned out for the dedication, and since the cemetery's unveiling, many Franklinville and Glouster County locals have come to visit the site, looking to see if a lost ancestor is buried there.

In light of people searching for loved ones, Ms. Money was successfully able to have a plaque created to put in the cemetery with all the names of the 22nd USCT, as well as stories about their significant contributions during the Civil War, so that descendants can come and find the names of their ancestors, similarly to the war memorials in Washington D.C. Why does she believe this is important?

"They did so much, there's so much history. The 22nd Regiment also helped Harriet Tubman bring 1,500 slaves from the South to the North. I want them to be recognized...So many people come and visit the cemetery, why not do a wall for the soldiers? So when you come and visit, you'll find your ancestors who fought in the Civil War for the Union in the 22nd Regiment." - Lisa Money

Brian saluting the colors during the memorial service



The new plaque, bearing the names of all the 22nd USCT will be unveiled and dedicated at the cemetery on Saturday, May 28th, and Ms. Money has asked the 2nd to participate in the dedication once again. If you would like to be a part of the ceremony, please contact Bob Bowell at robertbowellsr@gmail.com for times and specifics.



Grave of Andrew Jackson, 22nd USCT

New Gettysburg Monument

by Bruce M. Form

Coming on the weekend of April 1-3, 2022 a new statue will be unveiled at Gettysburg.

Thaddeus Stevens, “The Great Commoner,” author of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and one of the most influential politicians of the Civil War era, will have a statue erected in his honor in front of the Adams County Courthouse on Baltimore Street on April 2nd, 2022.

When Thaddeus Stevens died in 1868, there was no doubt that there would be statues aplenty to the man who helped set our country on a course towards a more equitable society. Major newspapers devoted their entire front pages to his life. He was honored and laid in state in the Capitol Rotunda and 20,000 people attended his funeral in Lancaster, PA.

“Monuments will be reared to perpetuate his name on the earth....Art will be busy with her chisel and her pencil to preserve his features and the image of his mortal frame. All will be done that brass and marble and painted canvas admit of being done.” said Horace Maynard, a Tennessee congressman on the floor of the House of Representatives in 1868.

Yet, 154 years after Stevens’ death, there is only one statue, and that was dedicated in 2008, at the Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology in Lancaster, PA.

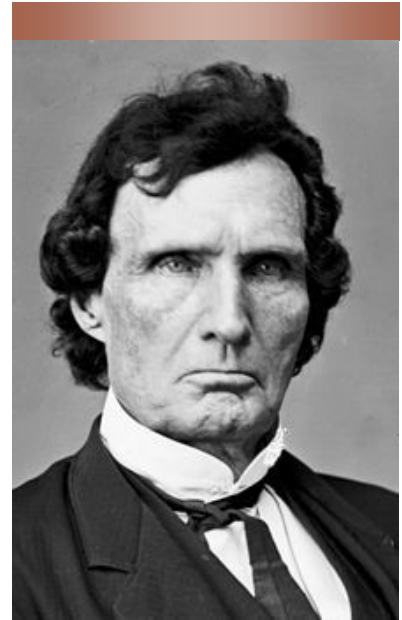


“Great Commoner”
Sculpture

But, now a second one is coming to Gettysburg, the town where Stevens lived from 1816 to 1842.

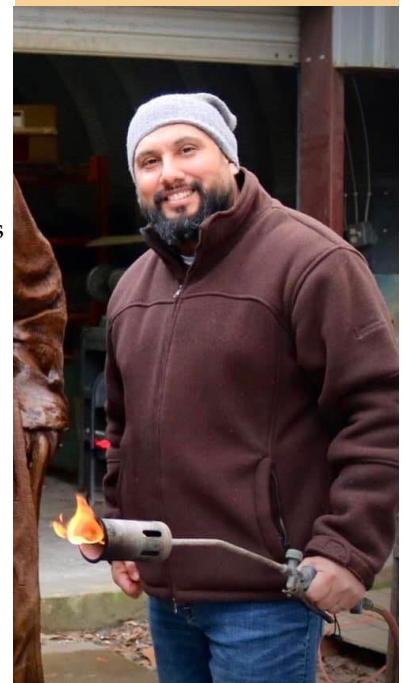
This new bronze statue, titled “Men in Pursuit of Justice Must Never Despair,” was inspired by a quote of Thaddeus Stevens. The statue is Stevens’ height of 6 feet and he is clutching a copy of the 14th Amendment, one of his greatest achievements. He is standing on a base in the shape of Pennsylvania. Accompanying the statue will be a wayside sign next to it that highlights Stevens’ achievements and describes the map on the statue’s base that shows important locations from Stevens’ life: York, Gettysburg, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Caledonia and Philadelphia.

The artist who made the bronze statue, Alex Paul Loza, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, has a Youtube video available to watch on his process for making the monument. You can watch it here: <https://youtu.be/J-hixFKkW4>



Photograph of Thaddeus
Stevens by Matthew
Brady, 1860

Artist Alex Paul Loza, of
Chattanooga TN, working in
his studio on the final details
of the Stevens sculpture.



Winter in the Civil War: A First-Hand Experience

“The Mullica Misérables”

By: Matthew Dignam, Pvt. 7th NJ Co. A



Cooking in the snow

Winter camping is an interesting challenge when it comes to reenacting. For the soldiers and civilians of the Civil War, it must have been a daunting experience. But one they all must have gone through and learned from. During this past January, myself and three other members of the 7th went out for a Civil War winter campout. Why we did it and why I went, I do not know, but I saw the possibility of an event and took the opportunity to go. We did not know what was in store for us for the weekend but, we went out and tried to experience the Civil War on the run. And it proved to be as difficult and miserable as it sounds.

The point of this trip was so that we could get the feel of what it was like for soldiers during a post Fredericksburg desertion and what they would have gone through had we been in their shoes. It had snowed a day or two before and was below freezing when we arrived out there. So, there was a fresh layer of snow on the ground and biting cold for the entire weekend. For the sake of authenticity, it was remarkably accurate to the conditions of 1862-63.



Packing for this trip proved to be something more difficult than usual reenactments. Since we were trying to go for soldiers on the move, we brought what we thought we could carry and what would benefit us in the

nighttime. I was unsure of what was necessary and unnecessary, but eventually came together with a relatively well packed knapsack and a few other items. For this event, layering up was no problem and I brought almost every article of period collect clothing and wore it to keep warm.

We cooked a few popular staples of the time for dinner, including salt pork and coffee. The fat from the pork proved to be very useful and we used it to fry up some potato slices. Some salt would have made them taste a lot better, but we had none (even though it was salt pork fat). It was not a feast, but it did suffice for what we were doing.

The entire night was cold and silent, most of the time we spent in the shelter and near the fire because it was too cold to leave it. It got to about 19 degrees Fahrenheit that night and the wind made it much colder. So, we had plenty of cold to go around. Before falling asleep, we took a tip from Civil War Digital Digest on changing your socks before bed for comfort and warmth. It does make a massive world of difference.

We burned logs all throughout the night for warmth and ran into another issue. We all went to bed around the same time, and no one stayed up with the fire to keep it going. So, every two or three hours, we would have to rebuild it completely. I could not tell you how much wood we burned that night. We brought a lot in and burned through almost all of it. If I had to estimate, we burned enough wood to build maybe a small cabin and a tree branch on the ground about eight feet long. We even burned the walls we constructed to keep the cold out which in the end proved to let cold in. Who knew?

Sleeping proved to be quite difficult that night and many of us woke more than once because of the cold and to stoke the fire. It was a long night indeed. Once it was the early morning and the sun just started to rise, we packed up as fast as we could and got out of there. We just threw everything in the vehicles and drove back to the visitors center so we could all go home.

The whole experience was a trying and difficult one, but we had realized this in the end: We learned that trying to survive in the winter during the Civil War was extremely difficult. There were extreme cold and difficult conditions out that prevented an easy trip. For one night, we got to see what it was like. For them however, it must have been a daunting daily experience. In the end, it was a fun experience and one I would gladly do again, on a much warmer day. But, because of our determination and resolve to succeed in this trip, we earned the title "Mullica Misérables."

Digger and Charles at the campsite



Why does Ron think Authenticity is so Important?

“Our uniforms may be identical in appearance to the public, but often the more expensive uniforms are made with accurate materials, and fit and look much better than the cheaper ones. And at the root of the hobby, we are trying to represent real people. The 7th NJ was a real regiment made up of real men, and we are portraying them. I feel as reenactors we should try to do so as authentically as we can so that we may do them justice and honor. Lastly when you have a uniform that is accurate, it makes you feel better about yourself as a reenactor. Personally, since I've upgraded my uniform, it makes me want to reenact more.”

Ron's Resources

Dirtybillyshats.com

Kwindahlco.com

Wwandcompany.com

Civilwardigitaldigest.com

Campaigner Quality
Blanket Group

Farb to Fab: Upgrading Your Uniform with Ron Syme

Everything has a beginning, and reenacting is no different. We join up and are so excited to go to our first event. We find a blue wool uniform jacket and shirt on E-bay. We buy our first trousers and canteen from Regimental. We slap on a belt with US stamped on the buckle and are ready for the field.

In the beginning, we do what we can afford. We do what we think looks right after a few cursory images searches. But the longer we reenact, the more we start to notice that something about our uniform doesn't seem right. It's the same color, same style, same gear, but it feels suddenly...wrong. And we don't know why.

Ron Syme experienced this personally, and decided that 2021 was the year he was going to find out what the difference was between reproduction dress-up and authentic historical representation.

Ron:

The start of my research began from talking with the other guys in the regiment and seeing what they wore compared to myself. They would tell me about uniform pieces the actual 7th N.J wore, such as the gaiters or the frock coats. I also read a book on the history of the 7th, and the author made a short list of items issued to the 7th when they were issued their equipment in September of 1861, so that helped me learn some of the “final” pieces I was missing. I also looked at actual images from the war to see how they wore their uniforms. The way we wear modern clothes is very different from how they wore them in the 1860s. A few guys in the 7th have said looking at the photos of the soldiers is just as important as reading about them because you can literally see them and how they did things. For example, wear your belt over your belly button, not below the waist like we wear belts today.

But the thing that inspired me most was a little presentation Don Lopuzzo did at training camp, 2020 on “how to improve your impression”. It really stuck with me and it made me realize all the things I was doing wrong. I always strived for accuracy because I want to really live like they did, wear what they wore and be as close to what it was like as possible. However, for a very long time I was doing things I thought were right that were actually very wrong. And I was wearing stuff that I thought was accurate that really wasn't. I was a farb. So after his presentation, I really researched good makers, started looking at more period photos, and studying things to improve my impression.

I used a number of sources, the first being, as mentioned above, other members of the regiment. They taught me the importance of buying from quality makers along with what I needed specifically for a 7th NJ impression. The next thing I used was Youtube. The Civil War Digital Digest has a TON of information on uniforms and equipment, and a few units have Youtube channels where they make videos on “proper” field gear and other really helpful information. Another resource I used was social media. I follow a number of Civil War accounts on instagram where they post some rare images of soldiers. Books were also incredibly helpful. Two books I used were *Give it to them Jersey blues!* by John Hayward and *Civil War: A Complete Photographic History* by William C. Davis and Bell L. Willey. Reenactor Facebook pages and forums are also great places to learn.

After researching, I made a little shopping list of things I needed and where I could find them. Then I started buying.

I bought a number of pieces from a variety of places. The first thing I bought was a new quality hat from Dirty Billy's in Gettysburg. Next I bought a N. Sekela frock coat second hand from another member of the regiment, Charles Clayton. If you want a great frock coat, N. Sekela or K. Windahl are the places to go. The next place I went to was Wambaugh, White & Co. They are a super amazing company that offers a number of items from tents to blankets to uniforms. And if you are good at sewing, or know someone who is, pick up one of their uniform kits. It saves you a TON of money and you get to make your own uniform, I bought a Canteen cover kit from them for only \$25, and though small, it was an upgrade in authenticity to my uniform. They also make super high quality and accurate Federal Issue Blankets.

While it's pretty hard to stay "on budget" while upgrading your impression, there are ways to save some money. First off, BUY SECOND HAND!!!! You can save a ton of money buying used gear from guys who are looking to get rid of some extra stuff they have, or are leaving the hobby. So ask around your own regiment before buying anything new. Next, I would recommend joining the Campaigner Quality Trade Blanket Facebook group. It's all quality uniforms and equipment, and sometimes you can buy some used-like-new gear for a pretty good price. However, some items are just always going to be expensive, and you're just going to have to bite the bullet on what may seem like a simple thing. But the upside is its brand new and you will have it for a very, very long time. The quality will more than pay for itself over time.

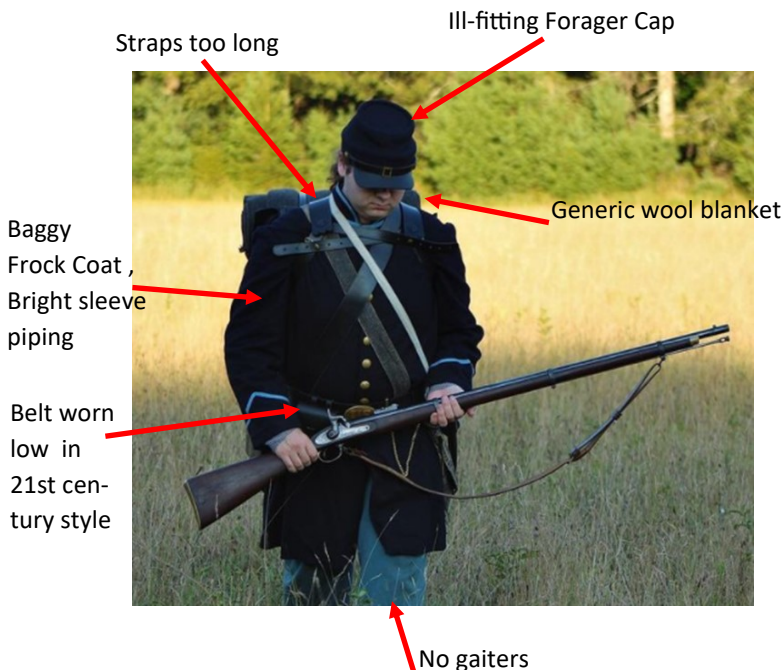
Some tips for starting your own authenticity journey are:

- ◇ Start with your hat and jacket. They are the most noticeable things we wear.
- ◇ Wear your gear correctly. Shorten the straps on the canteens and haversack, they should be worn a bit below your armpit. Like I said before, wear your belt over your belly button, this is where they wore them, not at the waist like today.
- ◇ Know the details of what the soldiers in the unit you're portraying actually wore.
- ◇ Lastly, make sure you're getting good quality gear from reputable sellers.
 - * Hats – Dirty Billys
 - * Frock coats- Kwindahl or NJ Sekela
 - * Fatigue blouse/sack coat- WW& Co
 - * Blanket- WW& Co
 - * Other reenactors!!!

By Ron Syme, 2022

Edited for space by Abby Belcastro

Before Authenticity Research



After Authenticity Research



WHO'S WHO?

Showcasing Our Brigade Membership: Brian Egbert



Meet Brian!



Brian's quartermaster impression



Signal Corps. reproductions Brian made based off period originals.

Brian has been with the Brigade since the beginning. In his long tenure with the 7th, Brian has created three impressions, served continuously on the board of trustees, and made hundreds of historically authentic reproduction pieces for not only his own impressions, but other members' as well. From sewing to woodworking to recreations and reproduction, there's nothing Brian can't make.

His newest impression, the *USS Resolute* navy man, with authentic fabrics and colors and hand-sewn button holes, was a huge hit at the 2021 Randolph 4th of July parade. In our ever-present quest towards authenticity, I sat down with Brian to talk about what draws him to creating such detailed reproductions.

AB: When did you join the brigade and how did you find us?

BE: I joined the 7th in 1994 with Jim Jennings as my mentor. My wife worked with a founding member, Mr. Adrian Tudor. He found out that I was interested in the Civil War and talked me into coming out to an event. The rest is history!

AB: How did you get involved in Civil War History? What is the thing you find most interesting about it?

BE: I have a discharge certificate of my great-great grandfather, George F. Egbert, which was handed down through the family. I decided to dig deeper into the war and his role in it. George enlisted in 1861 in the 8th N.J and fought in all the battles, getting wounded in the left arm by cannon fire at Chancellorsville. He was put into the Invalid Corps and served out the rest of his time at Carver hospital in Washington DC. He became a one arm policeman after the war, and while tracking a young girl and her boyfriend, he got hit by a train in Elizabeth N.J 1882. He is buried in Newark N.J.

I also own a sword from his cousin (also named George) who was the Col. of the 183rd PA, and he is honored in the Union hall in Philadelphia. I have roughly 76 members of my family in the war on both sides of the field in all branches of the service. The thing I find most interesting is how much the men endured over those years and how they made do, with sometimes nothing at all. I think it's incredible.



Brian's new navy uniform



VRC Uniform

AB: I know in your early years you were part of the Hospital. What did you do for that impression, and how did you end up branching out into Signal Corps and Veterans Reserve?

BE: I went to the hospital so my children could come out with me, and from there I started the Invalid Corp. I based it off the original Invalid Corp that was started in early 1863. It had also been a part of the Revolutionary War, but disbanded. The way it worked was soldiers signed 3 year papers and the government held you to it. You would go in front of a panel of surgeons who would use your abilities to free up an able body person for the front line. Amputees were in the 2nd battalion, while others were in the 1st. In 1864, they changed the Invalid Corps to the Veterans Reserve Corps.

One, because the invalids got made fun of a lot, and two: '64 was the year they opened the ranks to veterans who still wanted to finish out the war. The Veterans Reserve Corps gave them the chance to serve in places behind the lines.

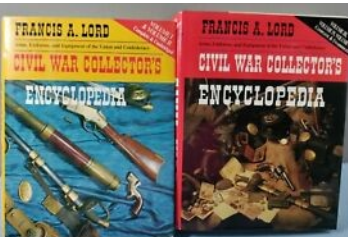
As I was doing this, I thought that we needed another place besides the hospital that families could go where their kids could get involved until they were old enough to carry a musket. When talking it over with Captain Lou Kaufer, he mentioned that he would like to see the Signal Corps developed and operating. One of my favorite moments with the Signal Corps was one time Paul (my son) was on the field and Lou Kaufer and I were behind the lines, and with Paul's orders we directed the battle with the signal flags. That was very cool.

AB: You're known in the brigade for making beautiful reproductions and props. How did you get started with this and how has it deepened your understanding of the Civil War?

BE: I have always been happy working with my hands and building or creating things. As I researched the different impressions, I came across something that interested me or that was missing from the impression, and I would try to reproduce them and make them as accurately as possible.

AB: What inspires you to be meticulous about authenticity in your pieces? And what kind of process or research do you use to make your pieces?

BE: I feel that if you are showing it to the people it should be the best representation that it can be. I research the piece through Lord's Encyclopedia, pictures from auctions, and the internet.



One of Brian's favorite resources. Available on Amazon

AB: Is there a reproduction you'd love to tackle that you haven't done yet? Why this piece?

BE: I don't know. I guess I'll know it when I see it. Some members want me to build a ship for the Navy impression. Meanwhile, I have been keeping busy by making scale models of Civil War battleships and submarines.

AB: What advice would you give to newer members who are just starting out? How can they learn how to make some of their own pieces at home?

EB: To new recruits I would say do your research and ask questions. Everyone is more than happy to share their knowledge. We each have our own talents and gifts. Try different things until you find yours, then research how that fits into history and go from there. Some members are great at quilting and sewing, others are talented woodworkers, painters, musicians and photographers.



Authentic shave in the Signal Corps

AB: What does reenacting mean to you?

BE: Reenacting, for me, is more than just shooting and marching, running and falling. It's more about honoring our ancestors and about the friends you make along the way. It's about the bonds you forge around the campfire.



Spools for telegraph

Repro telegraph wire spools



Reproduction Stock



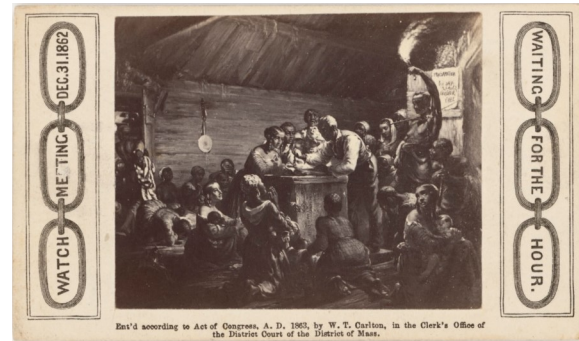
Period box Brian reproduced from photographs of an original from the 1860s.

What is Juneteenth?

2021 marked the first year Juneteenth was recognized as a federal holiday. However, the African American Community has celebrated slavery's official abolishment on June 19th since the end of the Civil War.

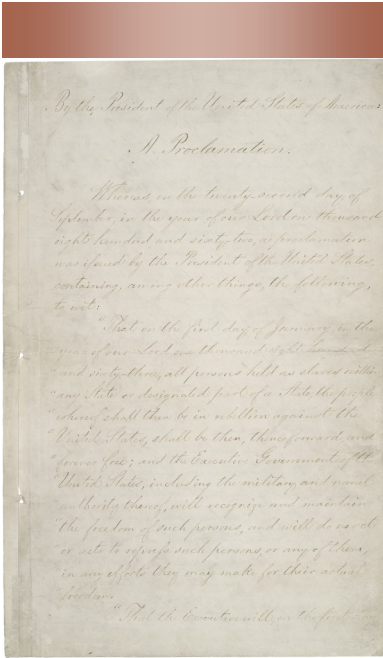
But why June? The Emancipation Proclamation was declared on January 1st, 1863. Why not celebrate it then? The answer, like all of history, is complicated and multi-faceted.

While the Emancipation Proclamation 'freed' all enslaved peoples in the Confederate states in 1863, and many African Americans walked off their plantations as soon as they heard about the decree, thousands more were still stuck in slavery. The Union had little power to enforce the new law, even in Union occupied territory, since the Civil War was still actively raging and the outcome was unsure. If the Confederacy won, the proclamation would turn null and void. This meant that many states, especially those of the far-west Confederacy, were able to ignore the proclamation, leaving multitudes of African Americans enslaved for another two years.



How were the Confederate states able to do this? First, by the system already in place. Slaves were kept entirely reliant on their masters for everything. Even those who knew about the proclamation had few options to leave their situations unless they were willing to flee north through literal war zones where, depending on the war's outcome, they still risked being caught and re-enslaved. For many, while slavery was hell on earth, it was also all they knew, and leaving enslavement would ultimately mean leaving their family & community.

Owners also simply kept the Proclamation secret from their slaves. Unlike our 24-hour news services and instant social media updates, information was difficult to obtain in the predominantly agrarian south. While the telegraph revolutionized communications during the War, the only way to get telegraphs was to be near a telegraph line. Most southerners, slave or not, still relied on letters, newspapers, and public notices to be informed of national news. Slaves, 99% of whom were purposely kept illiterate, would have had no way of knowing about the proclamation unless told so by their masters or peers.



Lincoln's draft of the Emancipation Proclamation

Northern publishers demanded mass production of copies like the one below to get the word to as many slaves as possible.



To alleviate this, northern publishers printed millions of copies of the Proclamation to be distributed to slaves everywhere in Union occupied territory. And as the armies rolled into the Carolinas, Georgia, etc. many slaves left their plantations for the safety of freedom behind Union lines. But this still left the border Confederate states like Alabama and Texas out of range. Almost half a million slaves in these remote areas had no idea they'd been emancipated.

So what exactly did the Proclamation achieve if not actual emancipation? Most importantly, it changed the national image behind the war. Prior to 1863, the Civil War was all about preserving the Union. Aside from the vocal abolitionists of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, most Americans didn't view slavery as part of the issue. But *after* the Proclamation, ending slavery became the war's driving force, due, in part to the estimated 200,000 African American men who signed up to fight with the Union. These soldiers brought information about the Proclamation to illiterate enslaved populations, and acted as liberators for slaves who may have been torn about leaving the only home they'd ever known. It also lit the already smoldering fire under northern abolitionists who upped their financial efforts to support the Union cause, giving the Union army access to better supplies and medical care than their Confederate counterparts.



USCT in front of a slave hut in occupied Union territory

So how does June 19th play into all this history?

After the Civil War's conclusion, Texas was still ignoring the Emancipation Proclamation, and many slaveholders had moved from Union occupied territories to Texas between 1863-1865 to keep their slaves in bondage. But on June 19th, 1865, 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston to take control of the state and officially enforce emancipation. The last 250,000 slaves of the U.S. were finally free, and celebrations broke out among the newly freed people around the state.

While the 13th amendment was ratified six months later, officially declaring the end to slavery, the real celebratory moment for freed people was the hot June afternoon when General Gordon Granger read General Orders #3, citing "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the executive of the Unites States, all slaves are free" in Galveston, Texas.

In 1866, a group of Texas freedmen organized "Jubilee Day" to commemorate June 19th as the day when the last slaves of the U.S. were emancipated.



Through the later 19th Century, Black Texans celebrated "Jubilee Day" annually with barbecues, prayer services, and commemorations. As they began to migrate to other states, they took "Jubilee Day" with them, introducing it to new Black communities throughout the nation. The holiday evolved into "Juneteenth," a shortened version of "June Nineteenth," in the 20th Century, and in 1979, over 100 years after the first "Jubilee Day", Texas was the first state to make Juneteenth an official state holiday. The rest, as they say, is history.

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH

Books, Classes, Seminars, & Tours

Reporting from Gettysburg: Family Friendly Fun

By Bruce M. Form



*Visit the Children
of Gettysburg 1863:*

*April 1st – Mid-November
Hours: Daily 12:00 – 5:00*

*Mid-November – March 31st
Hours: Thursday – Sunday,
12:00 – 5:00*

*For additional infor-
mation visit, [Gettysburg-
Foundation.org/Children-
of-Gettysburg](http://Gettysburg-Foundation.org/Children-of-Gettysburg)*



Some people think that nothing new has happened in Gettysburg since the battle here on July 1st – 3rd, 1863. For those folk, whose only perspective is that of the town where the battle raged and the National Military Park now stands; they often forget that it is a well-visited tourist town in South-Central Pennsylvania. Sure, they are drawn or motivated to come here because of the Battle, but what about the rest of the family?

Seeking out alternate places to occupy interests other than shopping or food establishments that would be rewarding for your entire family may become difficult and could be expensive. Then there is the interest level of the elementary school age children in the family who could be “younger historians”, or bored to death children on the brink of revolt, resulting in a meltdown that would ruin the visit. Well seek no more! Because ‘there is something new in Gettysburg.’

The Children of Gettysburg 1863 Museum is a new interactive adventure for youngsters. This new museum fills the gap between the adult type history that the rest of the family enjoys and the parts children may find tiresome. Visiting this museum gives children the opportunity to see Gettysburg through the stories and experiences of children around their own age, as well as tweens and teens who lived in Gettysburg during the time of the battle.

The museum has been specifically designed using an interactive hands-on strategy, giving kindergarteners to 5th graders a chance to touch, lift, pull and learn their way through the battle of 1863 in an engaging and fun way.

By focusing on specific younger residents of Gettysburg, your family can become more aware of the civilian experience during the battle and help the younger members of your family relate more closely to what went on during Gettysburg’s most pivotal three days. By the end of your visit, your family members will have completed a full compliment of emotions and experiences from what it was like to grow up in Gettysburg in the mid-1800’s, to rumors of soldiers coming, witnessing and surviving the battle here, and those who came later to commemorate and remember the Battle of Gettysburg.

Located at The Rupp House, 451 Baltimore Street.

Admission is free for youth/children ages 12 and under with a ticketed adult.

Reporting from Gettysburg: Research Findings that Amaze at Times

By Bruce M. Form

There are instances in researching various aspects of the Civil War where items of interest and fascination just pop out at you. One of these that I encountered recently, purely by accident, when I was looking into the various Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) information on Captain Myer Asch of Philadelphia's GAR Meade Post No.1.

I found the Wenk family of New York (further research showed that is where they lived). They were one of the many families who had multiple members who fought in the Civil War. I had run across families on either side with two members or even three members of the same family who fought, sometimes even a father and son, or brothers, who fought together. But what made this article fascinating was that I had hit upon six, Yes 6!

Six brothers from the same family fought in the Civil War. The following appeared on page 3 of *The National Tribune*, Washington D.C., in the July 1, 1882 edition. (as stated by its publisher in 1877, "The National Tribune is a monthly newspaper published in Washington, D.C, with information of interest for Soldiers and Sailors of the recent war")



"A Family of Soldiers"

"Three brothers of a family of six sons, all Union Soldiers during the late war, participated in the Grand Army parade at Baltimore. They were all born in Germany and came as children to America with their parents when the eldest of the sons was just sixteen years of age. The eldest, who is yet a young man, is Jacob Wenk, a member of the Wilson Post, Baltimore. He was a private in the Eleventh New York regiment. No. 2, Aaron Wenk, a resident of Philadelphia, is a member of the Barnet Post in that city. During the war, he served in the Sixty-sixth New York. No. 3, August Wenk, served four years in the Sixty-sixth New York regiment and died of consumption after the war, No. 4, Joseph Wenk, is a resident of New York City; was wounded in the left arm at Fair Oaks, June 1, 1862. He lost his right arm at Fredericksburg, December 12, 1862, which happened to be his 18th birthday, No. 5, Leopold Wenk, served through the war in the Fifty-first New York, and is still in the service as a member of the Fifth United States cavalry in the Arizona Territory. No. 6, Julius Wenk, is now a resident of Albany, New York, and was in the Forty-second New York, known as the Tammany Regiment. The three brothers who participated in Wednesday's parade were Jacob, Aaron and Joseph."

For those of us who research the Civil War, it has its fascinating facts; sometimes when you are not even expecting them!

The 2D Board

Is there something you'd like to bring to the Board's attention? A new idea? A new impression? Something that can make the brigade better?

We'd love to hear what you have to say! Please contact your impression head and ask them to bring your idea to the Board's attention. Or, contact president Mike Milling, and ask if you can make a special presentation to the board at one of our meetings.

COMMITTEES

We have created three committees as part of our Board:

Advertising:

Abby Belcastro
Paul Egbert
Amery Vasso
Brian Zilinski

Recruiting:

Brian Zilinski
Rich Walker
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Safety:

Matt Belcastro
Hans Artz
Michelle Catona
Rich Walker

Have ideas for how we can advertise our programming better, recruit more members, or work on our safety? Please contact our committee members with your ideas!

SEE YOU IN



THE FIELD