



Staunton River Sentinel

Volume III, Issue II

HISTORIC STAUNTON RIVER FOUNDATION

Winter/Spring 2008 Edition

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- Jim Zanarini, Park Ranger

The purpose and scope of the HISTORIC STAUNTON RIVER FOUNDATION is to promote, develop, and preserve the 1864 Battlefield at the Staunton River Bridge, the Staunton River Battlefield State Park, and the Staunton River and its historical areas.

Mr. Bob Moates Donates to Staunton River Battlefield State Park

Bob Moates of Charlotte Court House recently donated several items from his personal collection to Staunton River Battlefield State Park. These items will complement the Park's historical displays and programs.

Among the items Mr. Moates donated to the Park are two authentic railroad signal lanterns, which were used in the early 1900s. According to Jim Zanarini, Park Manager, these items will enhance the Park's Roanoke Station Visitor Center in Charlotte County, where they will be on display.

Moates, well known in the area as a historic re-enactor, also donated a wheelbarrow that he restored. It dates from the seventeenth century. Staunton River Battlefield State Park encompasses the Roanoke Station Visitor Center along with the Fort Hill battlefield area in Clover. The Roanoke Station Visitor Center exhibits focus on Native American life along the banks of the Staunton River, while the Clover Visitor Center contains exhibits on the War Between the States. The his-

toric Staunton River Bridge is part of a self-guided, rail-to-trail that connects the two centers.



Pictured are Bob Moates of Charlotte Court House (right) presenting Jim Zanarini Park Manager two railroad lanterns and a restored 17th century wheelbarrow.

Letter from the President



Dear Members & Friends of the Historic Staunton River Foundation,

Welcome to another year at Staunton River Battlefield State Park. I am excited about the events that will be taking place during 2008.

In the Spring, Dr. Brian Bates will be here once again with the archeology students from Longwood. Be sure to stop by while they are here because they are always discovering something new. Plans are underway for the June Commemoration of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge. This year, we will have guest speakers from the Museum of the Confederacy. Contact has also been made with the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission to begin making plans for the 150th Anniversary to take place 2011-2015. It may seem too early to think about Halloween and Christmas, but special events are being planned for these as well.

The park and HSRF could not continue to bring you these special events without the support of you and the public. Please renew your membership and encourage family and friends to join. Every October, there is a dinner meeting for all foundation members and volunteers. Annual reports are given, and new trustees are welcomed.

You do not have to wait for a special event or special meeting to visit the park. The park is open daily so that you may enjoy the hiking trails or stop at the visitor's center. For more information about hours, volunteering, or special events, contact the park at (434) 454-4312.

Hope you enjoy this edition of the *Sentinel*!

Warm Regards,

Janet E. Johnson

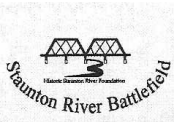
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P.O. Box 1
Randolph, Virginia 23962
434.454.4312
www.stauntonriverbattlefield.org
info@stauntonriverbattlefield.org



Pictured with new Foundation President Janet Johnson (far right) and the 2008 officers are the four new Trustees elected by the membership at the Annual Meeting held on Thursday, October 5 at the Clover Visitors Center: (back row, l-r) Vice-President Shane Newcombe; Secretary Anne Buckmaster; Treasurer Cindy Nichols; Trustee Mary Butler; (front row, l-r) Trustee John Butler; Trustee "Junior" Caknipe; and Trustee Phillip Watts.



Antebellum Christmas Open House was a very "merry" success in December. Historic Mulberry Hill plantation with many of its original outbuildings was open in the first weekend in December. Highlights included a tour of the main house and grounds with docents and guides dressed in period attire. Taffy pulling demonstrations and a Confederate encampment were enjoyed by many, as well as a visit from a jolly 'ol Santa with sweet treats and gifts. Attendance records were almost broken with close to 100 visiting over the weekend!



Park Given Kiosk

Virginia is the first state in the country to use outdoor interactive kiosks. Thirty-one of these new information systems have been installed in all of the Commonwealth's parks. Several months ago, Virginia State Parks Director Joe Elton and Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources L. Preston Bryant, Jr. were present at Staunton River Battlefield State Park as part of a Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation meeting, that featured demonstration on the interactive kiosks.

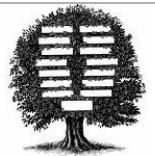
"It is a one-of-a-kind system in the world. We hope these new systems will entice the public and also break down many barriers that often separate them from nature," stated Elton. The user-friendly information stations feature touch-screens that allow park visitors to access GPS-based trail information, wildlife spotting guides, information on specific park amenities, programs, descriptions, schedules, and much more. Customizable maps that highlight features like biking, hiking, or wildlife viewing can be printed onto thermal paper with waterproof ink. Interactive virtual tours of every park throughout the state are also accessible. These systems are being provided at no cost to the public. Dominion, one of the largest producers of energy headquartered in Richmond, is the principal sponsor.



The systems have been tested to handle extreme temperatures ranging from -27 to 95 degrees and they contain internal air conditioners to remove moisture and to keep them cool. The easy-to-use touch screens are made of bulletproof glass surrounded by heavy-duty coated enclosures.

In Search of Ancestors ??

If you or someone you know is a descendant of an "old man or young boy" who fought to defend the Staunton River Bridge, then the Foundation would like to hear from you. We are continually compiling information and resources on as many of the "veterans" of this significant battle. Our goal to identify as many volunteers and enlisted men as possible. We annually recognize descendants of Confederate soldiers and the "old men and young boys" during the Commemoration for the Battle held in June. Please contact Vice-President Janet Johnson at 434.454.7157 if you are a descendant, would like to share your genealogy, or would like help in tracing your ancestor.





Notice: Membership Renewal



Members are reminded to renew their membership at the beginning of each calendar year. **Dues are \$15.00.** Your financial support helps the Foundation to continue its mission of promoting, developing, and preserving the Staunton River Battlefield State Park.

Benefits of membership include:

- a 10% discount in the gift shops,
- subscription to the *Sentinel* Newsletter, and
- invitations to special events.

Foundation members are encouraged to get involved. Members can attend monthly meetings and are especially urged to attend the Annual Meeting which is held each October. Serving on various committees is another way to show support and be involved. Consider giving a membership to a family member or friend!

The Foundation also collects artifacts and historical memorabilia for display and works to preserve the integrity of the Staunton River environs and archaeological sites. Donations, either material or monetary, help promote, develop, and preserve the 1864 Battlefield at the Staunton River Bridge, the Staunton River Battlefield State Park, and the Staunton River and its historical areas.

Trustee Speaks on Carrington Family & Mulberry Hill Plantation

On Saturday, March 8 at the Charlotte County Public Library, Shane Newcombe spoke to the South Central Virginia Genealogical Society (SCVGS) on the subject, "Judge Paul Carrington's Mulberry Hill Plantation." Newcombe is Vice-president of the Historic Staunton River Foundation, a private organization dedicated to the promotion, development, and preservation of the 1864 Battlefield at the Staunton River Bridge, the Staunton River Battlefield State Park, Mulberry Hill Plantation, and the Staunton River, along with its historical areas. SCVGS is a membership based non-profit organization that acquires genealogical and historical data on 13 counties in Southside Virginia. Pictured on the front steps of the historic Charlotte County Public Library are (l-r) Brady Fitts, SCVGS Researcher; Dorthie Price, SCVGS member and volunteer; Shane Newcombe, presenter; Cora St. John, SCVGS President; Jackie Gray, SCVGS Treasurer. The SCVGS meets on the second Saturday of each month at the Charlotte County Public Library.





Battle Commemoration Schedule



Friday, June 22, 2007

8pm-Dusk: Wagon Ride and Tour of the Battleground will depart from Fort Hill at 8pm. Please arrive a few minutes early and please bring a flashlight.

Dusk: Night Cannon firing demonstration by Cumming's Battery/Cape Fear Light Artillery in Fort Hill.

Saturday, June 23, 2007

Tentative Schedule

9:00am – 10:00am: Military Service Award Ceremony at Fort Hill near UDC monument, presented by the Halifax Chapter of the **United Daughters of the Confederacy** and the Historic Staunton River Foundation. These service awards are presented to veterans who are lineal descendants of Confederate veterans. The **Historic Staunton River Foundation** will present commemorative medals to recognized descendants of the participants of the Battle for the Staunton River Bridge.

10:00am – 1:00pm: Members of the Sappony Indian Nation will be present at Roanoke Station in Randolph with displays pertaining to their heritage and history. Sappony will demonstrate wood carving methods and the art of using a blowgun. In addition, Sappony food and merchandise will be available for purchase.

10:30am-12:00pm: Guided Battlefield tour and narration. The walking tour will begin at the Roanoke Station in Randolph and conclude at the Clover Visitors Center. Parking is available at both locations, and a bus will be provided for transportation.

11:30am: Lunch - Hotdogs, BBQ, chips, and beverages will be available for purchase at the Picnic Shelter at the Clover Visitors Center.

1:00pm – 1:30pm: “Jeff Davis and the White House of the Confederacy,” a lecture presented by **Abdur Ali-Haymes** in the Conference Room of the Clover Visitors Center. He joined the staff of the Museum of the Confederacy in 2000 after spending 30 years in the army as a Command Sergeant Major. He is a native of Halifax County.

1:30pm – 2:00pm: Sam Craghead, Marketing Outreach Specialist for the Museum of the Confederacy, will speak in the Conference Room about the expansion of the museum that will be coming to Appomattox.

Throughout the day: Living History Encampment presented by Confederate re-enactors from the **14th Virginia Infantry, Co. K, Oliver's Battery, 21st Virginia Artillery, Co. C,** and the **23rd Virginia Infantry, Company I, Central Guards** will be located next to Fort Hill.

Throughout the day: Cannon firing demonstrations by Cumming's Battery/Cape Fear Light Artillery in Fort Hill. A “firing schedule” will be available in the Clover Visitors Center.

This is a “tentative schedule” and every effort has been made to maintain and keep it accurate. If you or someone you know is a descendant, please inform a representative from the contacts below. Let us know if you are interested in helping plan or volunteer for this or one of the Foundation and Park's many other events held throughout the year. For more information on the Battle Commemoration and upcoming events, please visit the Foundation's website at www.stauntonriverbattlefield.org, email info@stauntonriverbattlefield.org, or call the Battlefield Park at 434.454.4312



The Staunton River Fight



(The following is the 4th reprint in our series of a Letter to the Editor of the Charlotte Gazette written by James T. Gilliam, who was a mere boy of 16 at the time he participated in the Battle. This article was originally published on December 10, 1891.)

After a march of 32 miles due east, the command halted for the night, near Oak Grove. A march of 88 miles brought them to the Iron bridge, across Stony creek, here they had a severe engagement with the rebels, losing heavily, and at Reams' Station, which Wilson supposed was in the possession of the Yank's, he found Mahone across his line of retreat, when abandoning his artillery, ambulances, wagons, &c, by a wide detour avoided the rebels and regained their own lines." (From History 1st D.C. Cavalry)

As soon as this charge had been repulsed all of the troops in the ditches on the Halifax side of the river were hurried across to the Charlotte side, and stationed along the riverbank. This movement of troops from one side to the other gave strength to Mrs. McPhail's statement of the arrival of re-enforcements.

INCIDENTS OF THE BATTLE

The artillerists on the enemy's side were regulars, and said to be the best marksmen in the Northern army. They threw a perfect shower of shot and shell right down on us in the fort, and about ten steps back =from the earth-works, the ground was fairly swept with deadly missiles. Right here, Mr. Paul McPhail, who was a sort of a staff officer or courier for Col. Farinholt, met the Colonel with a verbal message of some sort. They were not more than fifteen steps from the writer, Paul had hardly commenced the delivery of his message when over came a shower of shells, and one bursting right in front of them completely hid them from view in the dust and smoke. Immediately, above the din and roar of battle was heard a voice: "Dar now, Old Farinholt done killed." So I thought, but when the smoke cleared away, Col. Farinholt was standing as if nothing unusual had happened. Paul was somewhat excited, if one might judge from his wide gesticulations.

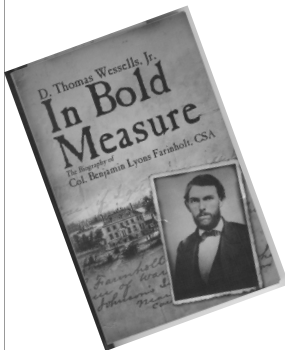
Just as the enemy's shot and shell began to fall thick and fast around us, and before they were in range of any of our pieces, in a ditch just above the bridge – Halifax side – and down to the river bank, were heard these words: "Let us pray." Here were stationed the Drakes Branch Home Guards, composed entirely of graybeards and commanded by Capt. Henry E. Vaughan, and the above words were uttered by Rev. W. T. Gilliam, and was followed by an earnest appeal to God of battles to be a shield and protection to them all and let non falter or fail to go where duty might call. This company marched bravely across the bridge to the Charlotte side at the word of command, held another season of prayer before laying down on their arms for the night, arose the next morning and again invoked the Divine protection and aid. They laid claim to more than one dead Yankee, found on the field of battle, and Mr. Wm. G. Friend captured a live and unhurt Yankee on the field of battle. Rev. W. T. Gilliam, Rev. Dr. H. A. Brown, Rev. Jno. D. Southall, with their respective Deacons, Elders, and Class leaders made up the rank and file of this Company. Was there ever another such Ministers and Deacons meeting held in old Virginia?

The killed on our side, were Dr. Sutphin, whose head was shot off at the rail pen in the ditch parallel to the railroad, Rev. Mr. Burke, whose head was shot off by solid shot directly under the abutment of the bridge on the Charlotte side. A young man fell between the fort and bridge, shot through the thigh and bled to death. Of the enemy there were about sixty left dead on the field.

Annual Meeting

The Foundation held its Annual Meeting in the Clover Visitors Center on Thursday, October 4. The pot-luck-supper was enjoyed by many Foundation members and volunteers. Following a great meal, Dr. Thomas Wessells, Jr., spoke on his book, The Biography of Colonel Benjamin Lyons Farinholt, CSA. His informative book discusses the "fate that placed Farinholt in the center of major events from the siege of Yorktown to the surrender at Appomattox....[Farinholt] met with Lee and Davis....was commander of the post at Staunton River Bridge in 1864 and saved Lee's only supply line to Richmond and Petersburg." Following his presentation, Dr. Wessells answered questions and autographed copies of his book.

In Bold Measure: The Biography of Col. Benjamin Lyons Farinholt, CSA is available for purchase at the Foundation's Gift-Shop. It traces the life of Col. B. L. Farinholt, the commander of the post at the 1864 Battle for Staunton River Bridge; includes many photographs and images of significant places and people in his life as well as many of his letters. **\$20 (members \$18)** To order call 434.454.6219 or email info@stauntonriverbattlefield.org. Please visit our Clover Visitors Center gift-shop to purchase these and many more items. Foundation members receive a 10% discount.



Scenes from the March 29 Easter Egg Hunt



Current & Upcoming Events

Many Summer Events & Activities!

****Call for details.....****

Annual Meeting—Thurs., Oct. 2; 6-9PM, Visitors Center (VC)

Haunted Harvest Hayride—Sat., Oct. 25; 7PM-until, VC

Board Meeting & Elections—Thursday, Nov. 6; 7PM, VC

Antebellum Christmas—Sat. & Sun., Dec 6 & 7; 1-4PM, Mulberry Hill

Many other events like nature walks, bird watching, river runs, and other interpretive programs will be offered through the coming months. Call the Park for details.

Be sure to check us out on the web, with our re-designed and up-to-date website at:
www.stauntonriverbattlefield.org.

Don't forget to renew your membership. Foundation membership runs the calendar year. Dues are just \$15 with so many benefits included!

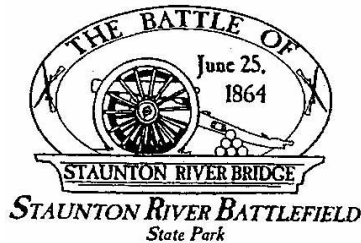
The Clover Visitor Center is open Monday thru Saturday from 9:00 a.m. til 4:30 a.m., and on Sundays from 1:00-4:30 a.m. Hours for Mulberry Hill and Roanoke Depot can be arranged by calling the Park Office.

Be sure to mark your calendar with these important dates! Check our website for more upcoming and exciting events!

Call the park for exact program details and times.
434.454.4312

Historic Staunton River Foundation, Inc.

Post Office Box 1
Randolph, Virginia 23962



Check out our website:
www.stauntonriverbattlefield.org

Join the Foundation Today!

You are invited to join the **Historic Staunton River Foundation**. The mission of the Foundation is to promote, develop, and preserve the 1864 Battlefield and to preserve the integrity of the Staunton River environs and archaeological sites. Donations and monetary contributions are tax deductible.

Yes, I would like to join the Foundation. Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 for annual dues. Please add my name to the mailing list of the Staunton River *Sentinel* Newsletter.

Miss/Mr./Mrs./ _____

Address: _____

City

State

Zip code

() _____

Phone

E-Mail

Mail to: (checks payable to Historic Staunton River Foundation)

Historic Staunton River Foundation, Inc.

Staunton River Battlefield's Web Address:

P.O. Box 1

www.stauntonriverbattlefield.org

Randolph, Virginia 23962

Foundation's E-mail Address: info@stauntonriverbattlefield.org