



Staunton River Sentinel

Volume V, Issue II

HISTORIC STAUNTON RIVER FOUNDATION

Spring/Summer 2015 Edition

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The scope and purpose of the **Historic Staunton River Foundation** is to promote, develop, and preserve: the 1864 Battlefield at the Staunton River; the Staunton River Bridge; Staunton River Battlefield State Park; the Staunton River historical areas and environs; Roanoke Station; Mulberry Hill Plantation, the ancestral home of the Carrington family; the Randy K. Wade Archaeological Site and any future archaeological discoveries in the area of the Staunton River; and the Sappony Indian Nation.



Walk Humbly In their Footsteps

By: Cathy Jo Palmer

Just close your eyes and imagine for a moment the muzzle flashes, the rumble of cannons, and the smell of campfires. This was the scene unfolding at the Staunton River Battlefield's Sesquicentennial Celebration in June 2014. The Battle depicted the ingenuity of a small-band of Confederate soldiers and local heroes overcoming the might of the much larger Union forces to save the Staunton River Railroad Bridge and keep the southern supply lines open.

My husband, David, and I were honored to be volunteers for the weekend events at the Park. The experience was more amazing, fun, and educational than we could have ever imagined. Our duties included registering the reenactors as they arrived at the Roanoke Station Depot, helping decorate Mulberry Hill Plantation and directing visitors to various sites and events being held within the Park.

The registration process provided us with valuable insight into the world of those dedicated reenactors. For these men, women, and children, the reenactment was much more than a weekend hobby; it's a lifestyle! They are dedicated to teaching the preservation of history, the value of coexisting with nature, and the importance of passing on the high moral values and principles of their ancestors to future generations. In an effort to duplicate the events of the Battle as closely as possible, they brave the elements, sleep in tents, dress in historically accurate clothes, cook and eat food of the era, and are proficient in the use of tools and weapons of the period. As the registration proceeded, we had to smile occasionally when we overheard several groups of these reenactors discussing whether they would portray a Confederate or Yankee soldier for this particular weekend. Apparently, many travel with both uniforms and fill in wherever they are needed. Now that's dedication! In the end, we registered several hundred people hailing from as far South as Texas and Mississippi and North to Pennsylvania and Ohio, with almost every other state in between being represented.

Remarkably, 150 years prior to this reenactment, my great-grandfather, Pvt. Samuel Clay Newcomb, of Co. I in the 56th VA Infantry, happened to be home on a short leave when he learned of the impending Battle for the Bridge. Living only a few miles from the depot of Randolph, he hastily answered the call and reported for duty. If he served without hesitation in 1864, then volunteering at the sesquicentennial celebration was the very least I could do. I once heard a historian state, "We should always walk humbly in the footsteps of our ancestors." Volunteering was my way of honoring my great-grandfather's service.

As both a volunteer and spectator of the weekend's activities, my only regret was for all the individuals who didn't attend. They truly missed an opportunity of a lifetime to witness a living local history and were deprived of a rich educational experience for their entire family. Events, such as this, reinforce a sense of pride in our heritage and instill the need for preservation of such a beautiful and historical site.

Each time you visit the Park, pause a minute and try to envision the events, which occurred June 25, 1864, and remember to always walk humbly in the footsteps of your ancestors.

Letter from the President



Dear Members & Friends of the Historic Staunton River Foundation,

I hope that you have had a wonderful 2015 so far. The weather has kept us indoors most of the winter. Now that spring is here and summer is almost upon us, I am looking forward to getting outside and enjoying the sunshine.

As always, there are many events planned at the battlefield in which you can participate. There are hiking trails, canoe trips, and civil war lectures that are taking place on a daily basis. Special events include the June Commemoration, the Annual Meeting in September, and the Haunted Trail in October. An event that the Board of Trustees was excited to host the dedication for the John Randolph historic marker that took place on May 17th along highway 360.

Preparations for the June 19th-20th Commemoration are also underway. Colonel Greg Eanes, USAF (Ret) will be the guest speaker, and he will be discussing the role of the Black Confederates in the Civil War.

One of the ongoing goals of the Foundation is to create a database of people who took part in the 1864 Battle of Staunton River Bridge. We are getting closer to making this goal a reality, but we still need your help. Are you or do you know someone that is a descendant of a soldier or one of the "old men and young boys" that participated in the battle? The Foundation would like to recognize as many people as possible at the June commemoration. If you are a descendant, please email the Foundation at info@historicstauntonriverfoundation.org and give your contact information as well as your ancestor's name and pertinent information.

Please remember to renew your membership for 2015 as well as encourage your family and friends to join. It is through your membership fees, donations, and support to the Foundation that allows the park to stay open. 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 or visit the website www.stauntonriverbattlefield.org.

Hope to see you at the Park!

Janet E. Johnson

President

Volunteer

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The Foundation has teamed up with other non-profits and schools across the nation to help **recycle** empty laser & inkjet cartridges, cell phones, and more!

By collecting and recycling these products, the Foundation, as a non-profit entity, receives **CASH!** A fun and easy fundraiser—but **YOUR HELP** is needed! Please save and collect

- **Inkjet (printer) cartridges & laser cartridges**
- **Cell phones (any and all pieces acceptable)**
- **Video games and consoles**

Bring them to the Visitor Center or give them to a Trustee!

Help the environment and the Foundation!
Recycle = Cash!



On Lee-Jackson day, several members of the Foundation gathered in Randolph at the "1922 Old General Store and Post Office" for a clean-up day. Two truck loads of debris and garbage as removed. Pictured are (l-r) Janet Johnson, Shane Newcombe, and Stanley Foster. Not pictured are Lucille Welch and David Newcombe.



Schedule of Events



Commemoration of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge 2015

Friday, June 19, 2015

7:00-8:00 P.M.: Please join the Historic Staunton River Foundation and the Staunton River Battlefield State Park as they host Colonel Greg Eanes, USAF (Retired), the author of *Virginia's Black Confederates: Essays and Rosters*. Col. Eanes' book is a compilation of essays with rosters and service records of over 1,600 names of Africa-Americans in Virginia who rendered service to the Confederate War effort. He will present a lecture on his book, a "Heritage of Honor" lecture series of the Civil War Sesquicentennial, with special attention being given to the heroic acts of Black Confederates from Charlotte, Halifax, and Mecklenburg Counties and the Staunton River Battlefield. Col. Eanes' is no stranger to the Foundation or State Park, as he is also the author of *Destroy the Junction: The Wilson-Kautz Raid and the Battle for the Staunton River Bridge* and active in helping develop regional tourism infrastructure through historic preservation and interpretation activities to include the Lee's Retreat and Virginia's Retreat regional consortiums, the Wilson-Kautz Raid Civil War Trails Driving Tour. The event is free and open to the public and will be held in the Conference Room of the Clover Visitors Center at the Staunton River Battlefield State Park at 1035 Fort Hill Trail, Randolph, Virginia.

8:00 P.M.-Dusk: Please join Col. Greg Eanes, the Historic Staunton River Foundation and the Staunton River Battlefield State Park as they host a "historic" wagon ride tour of the Battleground in conjunction with the upcoming 151st Anniversary of the Battle for Staunton River Bridge on Saturday, June 20. Please bring a flashlight and bug spray. The dusk wagon ride tour lasts approximately 45 minutes and this event is free and open to the public and will begin at Fort Hill at the Staunton River Battlefield State Park at 1035 Fort Hill Trail, Randolph, Virginia.

Saturday, June 20, 2015

9:00 – 9:45 A.M.: **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. If you are a descendant of a Confederate Veteran and served your country in the United States Armed Forces, please contact the Foundation at info@historicstauntonriverfoundation.org or phone 434-454-7157.

9:45 am – 10:30 am: The **Historic Staunton River Foundation** will present commemorative medals to recognized descendants of the participants of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge. A **wreath-laying ceremony** will be presented by local heritage organizations. If you are a descendant of a Confederate soldier or a descendant of the known and infamous "Ole Men & Young Boys" who fought to defend the Staunton River Bridge, please contact the Foundation.

Lunch—BBQ, Baked Beans, and all the fixings provided by **Mr. Dean Duffey**. We invite you to visit the Picnic Shelter to purchase a delicious lunch.

12:30pm – 1:30pm: **Ms. Teresa Roane**, Archivist at the United Daughters of the Confederacy Headquarters in Richmond, will give a presentation on Black Confederates. The presentation will take place in the Conference Room of the Clover Visitors Center.

Throughout the day: Living History Encampment presented by Confederate re-enactors from the **14th Virginia Infantry, Co. K** and **Oliver's Battery, 21st Virginia, Co. C** will be located next to Fort Hill. Prisoner demonstrations, camp life, weapon demonstrations, interpretive demonstrations, and Confederate cooking will be shown for public participation.

This is a "tentative schedule" and every effort has been made to maintain and keep it accurate.



Descendants Wanted



By: **Janet Johnson**

“Are you ready?” are the words that were echoed 151 years ago as circulars went out to Halifax, Charlotte, Mecklenburg and surrounding counties in an urgent plea for the defense of the Staunton River Bridge. On Saturday and Sunday, June 19-20, 2015, the Historic Staunton River Foundation in conjunction with the Staunton River Battlefield State Park will host a Commemoration of the 151th Anniversary of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge. Activities include living history exhibitions, period music, tours of the Battlefield, and much more!

The Foundation is looking for descendants of the soldiers, old men and young boys who fought in the Battle of Staunton River Bridge. A list of participants has been compiled from various documents, but the list is not complete. Many of the local residents who “answered the call” went back to their homes, farms and businesses after the battle. Their presence at the bridge never recorded, only family stories handed down from generation to generation. Soldiers on furlough passing through Halifax County and Danville responded to the plea. Some of the regulars that attended the battle came from as far away as Texas. A list of Federal cavalry brigades and companies has been compiled also. If you had an ancestor who fought in the Battle of Staunton River Bridge, please contact the Foundation through its website or by calling Janet Johnson at 434-454-7157. A ceremony will be held to recognize ancestors and descendants. Last year, almost 100 descendants were present!

Last but not least, tell your family and friends about the Commemoration and mark your calendar for June 19-20, 2015. For more information visit the website www.historicstauntonriverfoundation.org or send an email to infor@historicstauntonriverfoundation.org. Directions to Staunton River Battlefield State Park can be found on through the website www.virginiastateparks.gov managed by the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation.



All descendants that are recognized by the Foundation during the annual Commemoration of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge during the Saturday event closest to the actual June 25 Battle receive the medallion with ribbon (pictured at right). The medallion is hand-crafted in the USA in Tennessee made of brass and antiqued. The text and image of the Old Men & Young Boys is raised and provides for extra detail to honor those who participated in the Battle.



At left, all the known descendants who attended the 150th Commemoration of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge and the Reenactment pause together to honor their ancestors on the Bridge before the Memorial Wreath was placed into the Staunton River. High quality 8 x 10 copies of this photograph can be purchased by the Foundation for \$8.00 each. Email or call the Foundation to order yours today.



John Randolph Highway Marker



The Historic Staunton River Foundation was the host of the John Randolph of Roanoke Historical Highway Marker Dedication on Sunday, May 17. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 Commission have been working together to place many Highway Historical Markers throughout the Commonwealth commemorating the different locations and acts of valor relating to the War of 1812. As a result of his actions of first denouncing the War with Great Britain then pursuing the American experience of doing his duty by actively volunteering to defend his home, John Randolph of Roanoke was chosen to have a Historical Highway Marker dedicated in his memory and honor. Since the summer of 2014, the Foundation has worked closely with the Department of Historic Resources and the Society of the War of 1812 to have the Marker come to fruition. At first, the location of the Marker was in the sleepy hamlet of Randolph, but after further assessment, it was decided that a Highway 360 would provide for the greatest exposure. Within a couple of miles of downtown Randolph, the Highway Marker was placed along a gravel pull off of the west-bound lanes of Highway 360, 1.09 miles from the intersection of Roanoke Station Road.

More than 100 invitations to the event was mailed and approximately 30 people were in attendance for the Dedication and Unveiling Ceremony. President Janet Johnson presided over the Ceremony and the invocation was given by Dr. Larry Aaron, Chaplain of the Society of the War of 1812 in Virginia. Judge David Johnson delivered the keynote address. He is the author of *John Randolph of Roanoke*, an authoritative biography of Randolph, and he currently serves as a Judge of the 12th Judicial Circuit Court of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Also, in attendance, was Mr. Dennis Fritts, President of the Society of the War of 1812 in Virginia. He brought greetings from the hereditary society and made several remarks regarding the Bicentennial of the War of 1812. Dr. Jennifer Loux, Manager of the Historical Highway Marker Program with the Department of Historic Resources, represented the Commonwealth and provided an interesting background of the history of the Historical Highway Marker Program and the development of the Randolph Marker. From the point of installation to the moment of the unveiling, the Marker was draped with a cover marked with the Seal of the Commonwealth and at the appropriate moment during the Ceremony, Shane Newcombe, Vice-President of the Foundation removed the cover and unveiled the Marker. Secretary Grace Elliott gave the benediction to formerly conclude the Ceremony. With the conclusion of the Ceremony, a reception, complete with a commemorative cake, provided by Scuffletown Bakers & More, was held at the Roanoke Station Depot. A memorable time was had by all.

At the far left, following the Unveiling and Dedication Ceremony, presenters and speakers pause for a photograph with the new Marker, (l-r) Janet Johnson, David Johnson, Jennifer Loux, Dennis Fritts, Larry Aaron, Grace Elliott, and Shane Newcombe. At the center, David Johnson, Judge of the 12th Judicial Circuit Court and author provides the keynote address. At far right, a bouquet of flowers provided by Foundation Members Lucille Welch and Jeanie Geoghegan review a homemade cake made in honor of John Randolph of Roanoke, prepared by Cindy Nichols and Jenny Lou Newcombe of Scuffletown Bakers & More. More than 30 people attended the ceremony to honor John Randolph.



Nearly 30 students and faculty along with more than 15 Park representatives and Foundation members joined together for a supper on May 28 in honor of Dr. Bates and his Longwood Archaeology Field School.



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Foundation Honors Memorial Day



Members of the Foundation and Board of Trustees gathered together at the annual Memorial Day Ceremony held at the Halifax County War Memorial in Halifax Court House on Monday, May 25.

“Honoring our Fallen Heroes” was the theme of the Memorial Day Tribute that was held at the Halifax War Memorial on Monday, May 25th. A crowd of more than 100 people gathered to pay their respects to the men and women that gave their lives for the freedoms that this country enjoys. The program was led by Bill Crews, the Commander of the John M. Jordan Camp #581 SCV as well as a Trustee for the Historic Staunton River Foundation. The National Anthem was sung by Allen Anderson, and Tim Owen presented special patriotic music.

The guest speaker was Retired US Air Force Colonel H. Bryant Wilborne. He said that “This day is not about those that came home, but those that went Home.” This sentiment by the Reverend Wilborne was a concern expressed by several veterans. Memorial Day is not about BBQ picnics and going to the swimming pool, but about remembering the sacrifices that so many have made since the beginning of the United States of America.

Following the speaker, the Historic Staunton River Foundation along with other historic and patriotic organizations presented memorial wreaths. These wreaths remained posted at the Halifax War Memorial throughout the day.

The rifle salute and Taps were given by the American Legion Post 8 Honor Guard. Reverend Doug Bowen, pastor of South Boston Church of Christ, led the invocation and the benediction. The posting and retiring of colors were presented by members of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 497.

Pictured with the Foundation's wreath with the War Memorial in the background are (front row, l-r) **Bill Crews**, Trustee; **Janet Johnson**, President; **Grace Elliott**, Secretary; Ginger Gentry, local historian and friend of the Foundation (back row, l-r) **Ronnie Snead**, Foundation member; **Sue Snead**, Foundation member; **Douglas Powell**, Trustee; and **Korey Snead**, Trustee.



Giving Levels Established

The Board of Trustees in February established a series of membership and giving levels to help promote, develop, and preserve the Foundation through its scope and mission. The following levels of membership and giving are now available, and their benefits are spelled underneath. More information will follow.

Membership Levels

Student—\$5.00/individual 21 and under

General—\$15/individual or \$25/couple

Giving Levels

Friends of the Cause—\$50-99/individual/family/corporate

Benefits: Membership, Foundation Coffee Cup

Supporters of the Cause—\$100-249/individual/family/corporate

Benefits: Same as above plus Foundation Lapel Pin or Walking Stick with Battlefield Medallion

Advocates of the Cause—\$250-499/individual/family/corporate

Benefits: Same as above plus framed Mulberry Hill print or Battle for Staunton River Bridge Map, and your name engraved on a plaque to be displayed at the Battlefield

Leaders of the Cause—\$500-999/individual/family/corporate

Benefits: Same as above plus framed Judge Paul Carrington print or Battle of Staunton River Bridge Regimental Series Book by Col. Greg Eanes

Founders of the Cause—\$1,000 and above/individual./family/corporate

Benefits: Same as above plus Life Membership, Private (behind-the-scenes) Tour of Mulberry Hill Plantation & Battlefield, autographed copy of Staunton River Atlas by Dr. Trout and a recognition reception

• MEMBERSHIP IS NOW DUE !! PLEASE RENEW, INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN AND DONATE •

2015 Roll of Donors

Dr. & Mrs. Gerald C. Burnett, Advocate of the Cause

Dr. & Mrs. Harold Crowder, Jr., Supporter of the Cause

Miss Charlene Y. Martin, Friend of the Cause

Mrs. Brenda L. McDannald, Supporter of the Cause

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THANK YOU FOR FINANCIALLY
HELP SUSTAIN THE FOUNDATION
AND ITS MISSION!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION !



Current & Upcoming Events

Many Summer Events & Activities!

Call 434.454.4312 for details.....

Please see the

2015 Calendar of Upcoming Events

on our website:

www.historicstauntonriverfoundation.org.

And check your local papers for the many different and fun programs put on by the Battlefield Park throughout the week and weekends of the Summer.

They are intended for the whole family to enjoy!

Please volunteer and become a member !

June 19-20 (Saturday & Sunday) - 151st Commemoration of the Battle (all day events planned) !

Saturday, September 12—Annual Meeting, Roanoke Station Depot in Randolph. Donors, members, and guests of the Foundation gather for a pot-luck supper and learn about the happenings and policies of the Foundation and State Park, as well as enjoy a dynamic presentation. More details to come.

Visit our website for photos, updates, and more!

www.historicstauntonriverfoundation.org/

Historic Staunton River Foundation, Inc.

Post Office Box 1
Randolph, Virginia 23962



Photo taken during the 150th Commemoration of the Battle of Staunton River Bridge.



Have you remembered to **renew** your membership?
Membership runs the calendar year!
Share it with a friend or family member!

Please note that if your name is **highlighted** then your dues are up for renewal. We hope you will renew your membership and invite a friend!

Join the Foundation Today! Invite a FRIEND!

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 payment for my **annual dues**. Please add my name to the mailing list of the Staunton River *Sentinel* Newsletter and I look forward to receiving my **20% discount in the gift shop**. Dues run the calendar year. Please look on the reverse of this page for the Giving Levels

Miss/Mr./Mrs./ _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Renewal: YES / NO

_____ Volunteer: YES / NO

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-Mail: _____@_____

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

Historic Staunton River Foundation, Inc.

ARE YOU A DESCENDANT OF A SOLDIER??

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