

# THE UNION VOLUNTEER

NEWSLETTER OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> MICHIGAN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY, CO. B, INC.

Volume XXXIII No. 6 June 2014



## 2014 Leadership

### New Member co-Chairs:

Jeff Verstraete (military)  
jvvismo@gmail.com  
Heather Jarrett (civilian)  
princessh15@live.com

President: Doug McComas  
Vice President: Anson Roland  
Secretary: Bill Jarrett  
Treasurer: Don Everett  
Military: Dave Slayton, Captain  
Civilian Coordinator: Katie Everett  
Board Members-at-Large:  
Marie Searles, Pat Downing,  
Jeff Verstraete

Annual Membership Dues: \$16.00 – single;  
\$19.20 – family; \$6.00 – to receive newsletter as  
non-participating/non-voting member

Website: [www.7thmichigan.us](http://www.7thmichigan.us)

### Newsletter Submission Guidelines:

Thanks to all who submitted info for this month's issue. Deadline date for submissions is the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please have all reports, articles, notices, etc. in print-ready form. I am able to accept documents in most of the usual word processing programs or formats. If accompanying maps or images are needed, please include (in jpg format), if possible. Be sure to ascertain that any items coming from another source are properly credited, or have obtained reprint permission. Personal news items are welcomed and encouraged, or photos of special events. Original articles (800-1000 word limit) pertaining to Civil War or reenacting are also desired. Email submissions to me at:

[7thminewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:7thminewsletter@gmail.com)

Or mail to:  
736 Gettysburg Ave.  
Jackson, MI 49203

Thank-you.

  
Ellyn Painter, Editor

Members of the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan at Greenfield Village Civil War Days – Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-26, 2014.  
Photo by Ellyn Painter

## President's Report

*Last Saturday I stood on the Village Green*

*holding a lantern on a pole. Not such a big deal but*

*what I was a part of is why I'm still here.*

*President's Report* continued....

The Brigade fired a perfect volley; Mark played a haunting rendition of taps and this played out across the country ending in the Spotsylvania cemetery with 15,000 candles, one for each of the dead patriots who lie there, most "known only to God". As I looked down the line the faces were older, the numbers fewer, but it remained important and relevant. I hope it is still for you and I hope you will continue to take time from your families and busy lives to once again share those moments.

Remember to reach out to those just starting in the hobby, talk to the crowds and especially the children. It is our job to tell the story of America; why it's here, and how it changed and why those simple white stones are a sacred sacrifice that MUST always be remembered. As events slip away, as members retire and move on as we are bombarded by so many choices, I ask that you choose us, the 7th Michigan. As John Kennedy said "not because it is easy; because it is hard"--everything important is.

I look forward to seeing you in the field, and I remain;

Your most obedient servant

*Doug*

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This was sent to me in April, and I forgot to put it in the May newsletter. My apologies.  
The Editor

Our Webmaster, Dennis Zank requests photos of, and information on, any/all of the original members of the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Inf., Co. B, for use on the web pages. Those who can provide such info, please send it to Denny at:  
denny\_suvcw\_camp17@ameritech.net

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"A copy of the minutes of previous Club meetings is available upon request to all members in good standing."

---William Jarrett, Club Secretary

 [bjjarrett@aol.com](mailto:bjjarrett@aol.com)

*Condolences....*

The message below was received recently by Don Everett from Patrik Gustafsson, regarding another of our Swedish friends, Mats Geschwind, who was diagnosed with esophageal cancer several months ago.

*Hello Don my pard,*

*I've sad news if you haven't been reached by them yet. Mats died at 0105 HRS 25th of May. As you know he had surgery due to cancer. He lay over 3 month in intensive care. Fought the sickness. But during his last operation his body couldn't take anymore. He didn't wake up again.*

*Britta and Alvin is coping so far and get support from the rest of us. We knew the cancer was bad, the operations many and big, his health not the best but you somehow can't think that a friend can die. We proved wrong.*

*Britta and Alvin miss their husband and father, club of western their loved president and captain, I miss my very good friend Matte.*

*If you could spread the word I would appreciate it much.*

*Take care,*

*your sad Swedish Pard*

**Members-- Please note that the 7th MI has established a matching fund for the benefit of Britta and her son, Alvin, from now until our August 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Please make out donation checks to 7th MI Volunteer Inf., Co. B, with subject Britta and Alvin, and send to our PO box.**

**(P.O. Box 16206 . Lansing, MI 48901-6206)**



# Military Minutes

## May 2014

Captain: Dave Slayton  
Lieutenant: Jim MacKinnon  
1st Sergeant: Doug McComas  
Sergeants: Dan Conklin,  
Rob Stone  
Corporals: Tom Edwards,  
Andrew McComas,  
Dennis Zank, Bill Jarrett  
Chief Bugler: Mark Heath



### Greenfield Village Civil War Days

Over the Memorial Day weekend, we had the privilege of again camping onsite and being a part of the Civil War Remembrance Weekend. We had great weather and lots of visitors, especially on Memorial Day for the annual ceremony that recognizes military veterans among the reenactors and the public that was present. It is always special to be part of recognizing what veterans of the past did and sacrificed, and what those present accomplished and sacrificed for our freedom. Honor and respect are due them all.

In addition, there was one of those once in a lifetime happenings, that being the National Park Service "Reverberations Ceremony". It was conducted Saturday night at sunset, to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of General Grant's Overland Campaign of 1864. The Henry Ford was one of only 6 or 7 locations across the country that held a ceremony at the same time which was live streamed on the internet. A candlelight illumination was a part, with remarks by National Park Service ranger John Hennessy, a prominent Civil War historian. Fourteen reenactors with lanterns on poles, including three from the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan, were in the middle of the Village Green, seven on each side of the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan's flag as it appeared after the Battle of Gettysburg. A volley was fired by the combined Confederate and Federal Battalions, and then Mark Heath played taps that was echoed by another nearby. Taps started with Mark at Greenfield, and then the other locations across the nation played taps one after the other until ending at the Fredericksburg National Cemetery in Virginia, where there were 15,000 luminaries to honor the fallen Civil War soldiers resting there. It was fantastic and moving to be a part of that. Here's the National Park Service website: <http://www.nps.gov/rich/frspreverb.htm>

Thanks to Lt. Jim MacKinnon, Sgt Doug McComas, Sgt Dan Conklin, Sgt. Rob Stone, Cpl Andrew McComas, Bugler Mark Heath and Privates Dan Malick, Craig Crispin and Scott Timoszyk for attending and representing the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan so well. We had the 116<sup>th</sup> fall in with us on Saturday (Dave as Captain) and Sunday (Jim as Captain), and on Monday we only had five left so joined with the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan with Captain Russ Paul. Thank you all for the excellent job you did, and the camaraderie we had. And the tip from Sgt McComas about the giant chocolate chip cookie ice cream sandwich location.

**Cascades Civil War Muster** (August 22-24, 2014, Jackson, Michigan). Tom Emerick reported on the military side of details gleaned from the walk-through held by the event organizers at Cascades Park on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Plans include slightly expanding the battlefield and turning it 90 degrees from last year. This will provide the spectators with a "look over the shoulder" of the men fighting the battles in front of them both days. Jackson County Parks is planning to provide scrap tree trunks, limbs, brush, etc. For use as temporary breastworks. The wood "supply" is to be delivered on Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>. Any help on Friday in building simple breastworks and obstacles for the battles will be deeply appreciated.

Union and Confederate infantry camps will be switching locations this year. The Union infantry camp will be located near the driving range. In keeping with an 1864 impression, Union infantry will not be assigned formal company streets. Each company will be assigned a large bivouac area. Unit commanders will determine what tentage their troops will bring and whether a formal street will be set up. Units are being encouraged to camp campaign-style although we will not be restricting types of tentage. Jackson County Parks has granted permission to camp in the woods by the driving range and have cook fires. Company commanders desiring to bivouac in the woods please notify Tom in advance.

Saturday's battles will be taken from the Wilderness campaign. The first scenario is a recreation of the Saunders Field engagement. The second scenario simulates the Widow Tap Farm portion of the battle. Sunday's battles are taken from late 1864 Tennessee campaign. The first scenario will be a recreation of the Union Army (Schofield) slipping by the CS Army (Hood) and the subsequent Battle of Spring Hill. The second scenario recreates the Battle of Franklin to include the stampede of a portion of Gen. Wagner's division (US).

Please feel free to contact Tom at <mailto:tomjoanemerick@hotmail.com> or (517) 669-5607 if you have any questions.

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## Upcoming 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jackson Event

This year the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan will be celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Jackson Civil War Muster. Thirty years of dedication and perseverance in organizing, working at, joining with other co-hosts and community groups in putting on this event needs to be honored and celebrated. So for the Military I am setting a goal of having 30 soldiers in our company. I desire the 7<sup>th</sup> to be the biggest and the best unit on the field to honor and remember all the work put in by our members, past and present. So gentlemen of the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry, Company B, please look at your calendars, and plan on attending this very special event. In your service, Captain Dave Slayton.



If you have any memorable  
Muster photos from the last 30  
years that you'd like to share with  
the club, please send them to  
DougMcComas  
dougmccomas@comcast.net

### *Military Minutes* continued ...

#### Upcoming Events

Please check your schedules and availability to attend the maximum events listed below as they are the "maximum effort" events the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan decided to support. See especially the request on the next page about the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jackson Event.

June 1<sup>st</sup>: Rose Parade, 1:00pm in Jackson Meet at 11:00 am at Ella Sharp Park (off of 4<sup>th</sup> St.) in the parking lot by the soccer / ball fields, and have transport available to the parade staging area, leaving at 11:30 am. Turn east at the entrance (Hickory Ave). Turn left on Elmdale, then right on Birchwood and follow that around to the back.

June 14-15: Turkeyville (north of Marshall, website: <http://www.turkeyville.com/>

[http://www.turkeyville.com/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=99&Itemid=238](http://www.turkeyville.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=99&Itemid=238)

Please let me know as soon as possible if you will attend, and I will send in the registration for the 7<sup>th</sup>, which is supposed to be mailed by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

They have built some great earthworks for us to use, so it will be fun to incorporate into the battle scenarios

July 19-20: Charlton Park, Hastings

August 23-24: Jackson Muster

*This is the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this premier Michigan event. PLEASE consider coming this year for the special activities, but also to see if we can field a 30 man company. Let's be not only the biggest company, but the best unit on the field. Mark your calendars!*

September 20-21: Van Raalte Farm, Holland

October: Harvest Ball, Lansing

**PLEASE NOTE**, the next meeting will be after the parade in Jackson on June 1<sup>st</sup>, back at the parking lot where the 7<sup>th</sup> gathered before the parade at Ella Sharp Park. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Most respectfully, Your Obedient Servant:  
Dave Slayton, Captain  
slaytondave@juno.com (517) 663-4161





Photo courtesy of Tom & Joan Emerick

# Greenfield Village

May 24-26



**JACKSON**  
**CIVIL WAR MUSTER**  
**30TH ANNIVERSARY**

August 23 & 24th, 2014 - FREE ADMISSION!  
 Cascades Park - Jackson, MI

Sponsored By:  
**TRIPP'S**  
*Auto shop*  
 Collision Centers

Look who's pictured on the rack cards advertising this year's Jackson Civil War Muster. Go, Don!

Watch for the newly remodeled website [www.civilwarmuster.org](http://www.civilwarmuster.org) scheduled to launch June 1. (I just looked tonight-June 5- and it's still under construction).

Kim Conant, President of the Jackson Civil War Society (formerly Cascades, Inc.), was present at the April 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan club meeting to share information concerning the new 501 C3 nonprofit status that is now being established for the organization.

The new name will officially go into effect once the 501 C3 status is finalized, and until then, any donation made to the Muster event will be processed through the County Parks. The Tripp family has pledged an additional \$25,000 per year for the next 3 years to the event. A 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary medal will be given to all registered reenactors at the August event.

The Editor



# AFTER ACTION REPORT

## RESACA, GEORGIA – MAY 16-18, 2014

By Tim Cunningham, Field Musician

Back in May 1992 I had the thrill of attending my first major reenactment at Resaca as an infantry private in the 6<sup>th</sup> Ohio, Cumberland Guard. These 22 years later I wanted to make one last pilgrimage to this sacred place in the pines of North Georgia. The 150th anniversary reenactment of this horrendous battle was reason enough to make the six hour journey from Cincinnati. There was also the fact that Resaca is one of the few places where major events can occur on the battleground itself.

*Resaca Battlefield. Photos by Tim Cunningham*

The tiny rail village of Resaca was the scene the first major clash of arms in the William T. Sherman's decisive campaign for the Confederacy's second most important city, Atlanta. The campaign began the first week of May as five corps of the Federal Army confronted the Confederate Army of Tennessee at Rocky Face Ridge near Dalton. Rocky Face is a 30 mile long ridge running north and south standing some 300 feet above the valley floor. Its steep slopes were well guarded by over forty thousand veteran infantry and 250 pieces of field artillery.

Rather than lose half his army in a futile attempt to gain this natural fortress, Sherman sent two corps, under the command of James McPherson, south through Snake Creek Gap eighteen miles south of Dalton, to cut the Western and Atlantic Railroad, and break the Confederates' only supply line to Atlanta. C.S.A General Joseph E Johnston had no other choice but to move his army off Rocky Face and defend his communications at Resaca.

On May 12 a single Confederate cavalry brigade of Polk's corps making its way north from Atlanta, camped on the Oostanaula River. In the morning they could hear the roar of fifes and drums approaching from the west through Snake Creek Gap. McPherson, not expecting to find any enemy there stopped and ordered his command to entrench. Thus was lost a golden opportunity to cut the Confederate supply line and perhaps destroy Johnston's army. By May 14<sup>th</sup> both armies were well dug in around Resaca. After a series of attacks and counter attacks on the 15<sup>th</sup>, in which both sides suffered heavy casualties, Sherman decided to flank again. His engineers dropped a pontoon bridge over the Oostanaula at Lays Ferry and the Rebels were forced out of their position.

Resaca is still a small village of less than a thousand residents in Gordon County, Georgia. Route 41 splits the town in half and I-75 runs just to the west. Just east of town is the heavy working railroad on the same ground as its predecessor. The annual event is sponsored by the Georgia Division of Reenactors. It has the unique distinction of being held on private land that is confirmed to be part of the field of action. Scars on the red earth are still visible where the soldiers dug fortifications 150 years ago.

May 17<sup>th</sup> of this year dawned cool and sunny. After a quick breakfast, morning parade for both sides was at 8.00 AM. Being a field musician it was my time to shine. I was surprised to see the blue and gray in about equal numbers for that far south.



*Federals preparing for battle - in the rain.*



*---concluded next page*



## - Civil War Reenactment -

By battle time at 1.00 PM the sunny skies were now dark clouds and a fine rain brought out the ponchos. The Federal Army led by General Earl Zeckman of the 125<sup>th</sup> Ohio made a forced mud march down the westside of the rail line. By doing so we were able to attack the Confederates on their right flank. Myself and the drummer hammered out "Hell on the Wabash" as the Federal Army crested a hill and swarmed onto the field. After several good attacks we drove the Boys in Gray back to their trenches to the roar of a large crowd.

That night the misty rain turned into a biblical deluge. I had spent the evening making yet another visit to nearby Chickamauga National Military Park. When I returned I was glad for my strong new tent and the fact that I had plenty of dry straw. By the morning, both armies had lost considerable strength. The rain poured on, but the battle went on as planned. It took ATV's to free the numerous cars stuck in the muddy fields. The event organizers had obviously been through a rain event before and were well prepared for it.

In spite of the weather it was a great event. I'm glad I made it one more time.

RESACA  
150th Anniversary  
May 16 - 18, 2014

## *More good Civil War Vacation Sites*

**The Siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi** – May 18-July 4, 1863 – was the final major military action in the Vicksburg Campaign. Following the failure of two assaults to take the strongly fortified city, resulting in heavy casualties, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant decided to besiege Vicksburg, beginning on May 25. Naval action played a vital part in securing this port city on the Mississippi River. During the siege, Union gunboats lobbed over 22,000 shells into the town and army artillery fire was even heavier. With no reinforcement, supplies nearly gone, and after holding out for more than forty days, the garrison finally surrendered on July 4.

Vicksburg National Cemetery - established in 1866 for the internment of Union Civil War dead. Veterans of later wars were also buried here until 1961, when the cemetery was closed to further burials. In all, 17,000 soldiers have been laid to rest here, of whom 13,000 are unknown.

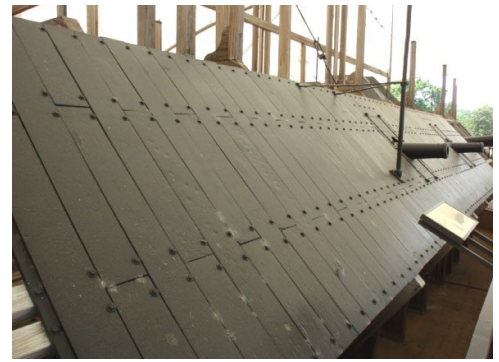
The Union ironclad gunboat U.S.S. Cairo was commissioned in January 1862. and named after Cairo, Illinois. In December of that same year the boat was sunk when it struck two mines. In 1964 the Cairo was raised, and found to be in excellent condition, due to the fact that it had rested in river mud for 102 years. The U.S.S. Cairo can be seen at Vicksburg Battlefield Park.







See the U.S.S. Cairo at Vicksburg Battlefield Park. Left: U.S.S. Cairo stern guns; Right: U.S.S. Cairo starboard side guns  
Photos by Jim Kirschensteiner



The actual Monitor gun turret. In the Mariners' Museum. Photo by Jim Kirschensteiner



Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia. Photo by Jim Kirschensteiner.

*"This is a really cool place.*

*Takes a full day to see."*

*— Jim Kirschensteiner*







*Photos by Ellyn Painter*