

The Grand Review Brandy Station Foundation June 2024



*President: Howard Lambert; Vice President: Gregory A. Mertz; Treasurers: Peter Mocarski and Peggy Mocarski
; Secretary: Peggy Misch (newsletter editor)
Board of Directors: Elicia Belle, Jane Brookins, Don Carlson, Helen Geisler, Wilfredo Golez, Myra Lane, Larry Pullen, and Paul Warmack*

Brandy Station Foundation Open House June 8, 2024 / Commemoration of the 161st Anniversary of the Battle of Brandy Station



The Graffiti House in Brandy Station

The Brandy Station Foundation will hold an Open House on June 8, 2024 from 10-4:30 PM at the Graffiti House, 19484 Brandy Road in Brandy Station. The Open House commemorates the 161st Anniversary of the Battle of Brandy Station and the opening of the first phase of the Culpeper Battlefields State Park. The event includes speakers, period music, a living history encampment by the 23rd United States Colored Troops, Graffiti House tours, and the Bowles food truck. Timed program for all events will be posted on the Brandy Station Foundation

website, <https://www.brandystationfoundation.com>. At 2 PM, our keynote speaker, Gregory B. Elder, Chief Historian, Defense Intelligence Agency, will present “The Bureau of Military Information and the Intelligence Campaign in 1863”. The Bureau of Military Information (BMI), the first formal American intelligence agency, was active during the Civil War.

During his 25-year career with the Intelligence Community, keynote speaker Gregory B. Elder served roles as a President’s Daily Briefing briefer, deputy defense intelligence officer, senior intelligence officer, analyst, and interrogator. He also completed rotations as a course director and instructor in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and an instructor of tradecraft at the Academy for Defense Intelligence; in his role as course director, he was one of a six-member team recognized with the 2023 National Intelligence Professionals Award for Teaching. As the chief historian, Elder initiated and oversaw a nine-battlefield IC staff ride program focusing on leadership and intelligence and developed a 20-part lecture series on intelligence in the Civil War. He is a frequent speaker at Civil War roundtables and other events. Elder is also a routine guest on podcasts such as Addressing Gettysburg and Ed Helms’ SNAFU, which won the 2023 Signal Award for best history podcast series. He is the recipient of two gold and one silver Telly Awards for excellence in broadcasting and has consulted on projects such as Hulu’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*. Elder holds Master of Arts degrees from Northeastern University and the United States Naval War College and completed graduate studies at National Intelligence University, Norwich University, and the University of Maryland. He holds more than thirty professional certifications and has been an adjunct professor of intelligence at Johns Hopkins University since 2017.

Other speakers during the day include: “Civil War Trailblazers and Trouble Makers” presented by Gene Schmiel (featuring some of the trailblazers and trouble makers who were at Brandy Station during the battle on June 9, 1863; includes book signing) ; Period Music and Interpretation presented by Master musician John Tole; “Juneteenth - A Day of Celebration” presented by Rev. Adrian Sledge (Juneteenth, the June 19th federal holiday, is the date which celebrates the enforcement of Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation in Texas on June 19, 1865); “Battle of Brandy Station” presented by Frank O’Reilly.

The living history event at the Graffiti House will feature re-enactors with the 23rd United States Colored Troops. Approximately one-third of the men who served in the 23rd Regiment United States Colored Troops (or 23rd Regiment United States Colored Infantry) were from Virginia. More Culpeper born USCTs joined the 23rd than any other regiment (12). The 23rd was organized at Camp Casey, in Arlington, VA (near the location of the Pentagon today).

During the Civil War, both Union and Confederate soldiers occupied the Graffiti House. USCTs were in the Brandy Station and Kelly’s Ford area in May 1864 as part of the Union Army’s Overland Campaign. There were twelve members of the

23rd from Culpeper and they crossed the Rappahannock River back into Culpeper on May 8, 1864.



23rd United States Colored Troops reenactors at the Stafford, Virginia Juneteenth 2021 event.

The 23rd Regiment United States Colored Troops became the first colored troops to fight in “directed combat” against Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia. The skirmish took place at the intersection of Catharpin and Old Plank Roads (originally Orange Plank Road) on May 15, 1864, near the Chancellorsville Battlefield in the Fredericksburg, Virginia area. The 23rd and the rest of the 4th Division of the IX Corps were guarding the wagon trains of the Army of the Potomac. The 23rd was at the Chancellorsville ruins, when the Union 2nd Ohio Cavalry was chased by General Thomas Rosser’s Confederate Cavalry Brigade. The 2nd Ohio sent an urgent request for help and the only soldiers nearby were General Edward Ferrero’s 23rd USCT. The 23rd USCT moved at the double quick two miles to the intersection and drove back Rosser’s cavalry. The Black soldiers were cheered by the 2nd Ohio, who then gave chase to Rosser’s cavalry. This battle action proved to the white troops that Black soldiers would fight against the Confederate army.

In December 1864, the 23rd along with the USCT units in Meade’s army were combined with General Benjamin Butler’s USCT unit in the Army of the James and formed the XXV Army Corps (an all-Black Corps of more than 20,000 soldiers) in the Army of the James. Immediately following the surrender at Appomattox, they

were assigned to the XXV Corps where they served with the Department of Texas.

President's Corner

Greetings,

I would like to take this opportunity to say a thank you to all members, friends and invited guests who attended our annual meeting. The meeting was held again this year at the Old House Vineyards in Culpeper County. A special thank you to Greg Mertz for presiding over the annual meeting this year.

Congratulations go out to the newly elected members to the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee. We welcome Elicia Belle and Wilfredo Golez to the Board of Directors and Betty Franklin to the Advisory Committee. They are a welcome addition to the Brandy Station Foundation and I look forward to working with each of them in the weeks and month ahead.

It is my honor to share with you good news on the Culpeper Battlefields State Park. On Saturday, June 8th at 10:00 AM the Culpeper Battlefields Station Park Dedication Ceremony will take place. This is an INVITATION ONLY event. All invitees must be approved by the State and the Governor's office. Over the last several months, the Foundation has been working closely with the Department of Historic Resources and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to meet all requirements to execute the transfer to DCR of approximately 22 acres of BSF property for the establishment of Culpeper Battlefield State Park - Phase I, including the removal of debris on the Golden Oaks parcels. Of course, our support of the state park goes back to 2015. I offer my heart felt thank you to the leadership and past members of the Board for your hard work in making the Culpeper Battlefields State Park at Brandy Station a reality.

Turning to other events in 2024, in May we awarded two scholarships in the amount of \$1,000.00 each to students at the Culpeper County High School and the Eastern View High School, both in Culpeper County. The Brandy Station Foundation Annual Scholarship is in honor of the Mitchell and Ritter families. Mr. B. and Mrs. Paige Mitchell and Mrs. Nancy and Mr. Sidney Ritter were instrumental in the formation of the Foundation and without whom many would not have the pleasure of visiting the Battlefield or the Graffiti House.

We recently kicked off our Sunday Guest Speaker Series with Gene Schmiel on "Civil War Virginians." The series is scheduled to run on multiple third Sundays through September. Please visit our website for the complete list of speakers and topics of discussion. In addition to our Guest Speaker Series, we will also host an Open House at the Graffiti House and on the grounds on June 8th. The list of activities include multiple guest speakers, period music, living history encampment, Civil War print raffle, food truck and tours of the Graffiti House

throughout the day. The keynote speaker will be Greg Elder, Chief Historian of the Defense Intelligence Agency on the "Creation of the Defense Intelligence Agency." The event is free to the public.

In July, there will be a viewing of the movie "Glory" at the Packard Theatre at the Library of Congress in Culpeper County. Following the viewing there will be a Question and Answer session with members of the Co. B 54th Massachusetts reenactors from the movie, Russell Williams II, two time Oscar winner, and other invited guests. During the Civil War Robert Gould Shaw fought at the Battle of Cedar Mountain and William Lightfoot from Culpeper fought in the Co. B of the 54th Massachusetts. The event is scheduled for the 13th of July at 2:00 PM and is free to the public.

Meanwhile, we continue to make great progress with repairs and improvement to the Graffiti House. Over the last month, we renovated the bathroom to be ADA compliant and repaired the handicap ramps. Special thanks to Peter Mocarski, Head of our Building and Grounds for his many hours of dedicated service to the Brandy Station Foundation. In the weeks and months ahead, plans are to paint the exterior and make improvements to the foundation as well as make repairs and pave the driveway.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your supporting the Brandy Station Foundation over the last year. It is not lost on me that you have many other options to give your time and treasure. Thank you on behalf of the Brandy Station Foundation. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events in 2024.

Sincerely,

Howard Lambert, President, Brandy Station Foundation

BSF Annual Dinner & Meeting

The BSF Annual Meeting and Dinner was held in April 19, 2024 at the Brewery Pub at Old House Vineyards in Culpeper, VA . Our speaker was BSF Advisory Committee Member Dr. Michael Hill and his topic was Brevet Lt. Colonel Alexander T. Augusta, M.D. the first African-American surgeon and the highest ranking African-American officer in the Union Army at the time. The Brandy Station Foundation 2024-2025 officers are President, Howard Lambert; Vice President, Gregory A. Mertz; Treasurers: Peggy and Peter Mocarski; Secretary, Peggy Misch. The Board of Directors include Elicia Belle, Jane Brookins, Donald T. Carlson, Helen Geisler, Wilfredo (Willy) Golez, Myra L. Lane, Larry Pullen, and Paul Warmack. The Advisory Committee members include Betty Franklin, Dr. Michael Hill, Mike Kalis, Joseph W. McKinney, John Orr, Cecilia Schneider-Vial, Anthony Seidita, and William Truitt, Jr.

Park Day at the Graffiti House 2024



On Saturday, April 6th, BSF Board members and community volunteers helped out at the Graffiti House and Foundation property. The Graffiti House sign was moved to a new location. It is in close proximity to the former sign but provide a better view of the sign and the Graffiti House from the highway.

Above right, BSF Treasurer and Building and Grounds manager Peter Mocarski oversees a new brick walk up to the new Civil War Trails marker in front of the Graffiti House. BSF Volunteer and new Advisory Committee member Betty Franklin, left, is pictured sweeping the ramp at the Graffiti House.

Brandy Station Foundation Annual Scholarships



In May two \$1,000.00 Brandy Station Foundation Annual Scholarships were awarded in honor of the Mitchell and Ritter families. Shown at left is BSF President Howard Lambert with Eastern View HS scholarship winner Casey Dodson. Above are BSF Board Members Myra Lane (left), Elicia Belle, and Culpeper High School scholarship winner Carley Layden. Students wrote essays on the Civil War's effect on Culpeper County or What the student finds most interesting about the Civil War.

July 13th Special Showing of the Film "Glory"

On July 13th from 2-5 PM, there will be free special showing of the film "Glory" at the Packard Theatre at the Library of Congress' National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Culpeper County. Following the viewing there will be a Question and Answer session with members of the Co. B 54th Massachusetts reenactors from the movie, Russell Williams II, two time Oscar winner, and other invited guests.

Brandy Station Foundation

P.O. Box 165

Brandy Station, VA 22714-0165

Return Service Requested

BRANDY STATION FOUNDATION – MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please start/renew me as a member of the Foundation. Please mail to: Brandy Station Foundation, PO Box 165, Brandy Station, VA 22714-0165 \$ ____ Annual Membership (\$ 30.00 individual; \$40.00 family; \$10.00 student) \$ ____ Additional Donation

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Send my newsletter by EMAIL (please give email address) or POSTAL SERVICE (circle one) _____

The Brandy Station Foundation is a 501(c)-3 non-profit group dedicated to preserving the natural and historic resources of the Brandy Station area of Culpeper County, Virginia. It relies on tax-deductible donations to meet its goals. More information at: www.brandystationfoundation.com