

**The Grand Review
Brandy Station
Foundation
November 2009**



BSF 2009 CHRISTMAS PARTY

On December 12, from 1–4 PM at the Graffiti House, the Foundation will hold its Christmas Party. Be sure to get to the Graffiti House early on December 12th. There will be lots of delicious food & drink. There will be great opportunities for filling your gift list. Books, T-shirts, ornaments, and more! Door prizes will be given away. Come enjoy ! All are so very welcome and no RSVP is necessary.

WONDERFUL DAY AT BERRY HILL FARM



John Tole and Ann Howard of Evergreen Shade perform at Berry Hill Farm

The BSF Board of Directors had the pleasure of hosting a luncheon honoring 20th years of preservation and the men and women who have worked toward this goal by serving on the Board of Directors during that 20 years.

140 guests attended the event on September 13, a beautiful summer like day, at the historic home of the Jorge Schneider family, Berry Hill Farm. We could not have had a more gracious hostess in Geraldine Schneider and her family. Many were excited to visit this beautiful home which wasn't known to many because of its private location in the midst of a large tract of land that saw a lot of skirmishes during the Civil War. The original house was burned to the foundation in December of 1863 and was rebuilt after the War.

The event featured Eric J. Wittenberg, noted historian, as guest speaker. BSF Vice President, Ed Gentry, in one of his other talents, served a delicious lunch; and, wines from Old House winery were served. Evergreen Shade (John Tole and Ann Howard) provided the stirring music. Craftsmen were on site with their various wares and a silent auction was held to benefit the Foundation. Many partook of the opportunity to tour the home. Helen Geisler, 20 year member of the Board introduced and thanked each of the former gentlemen who have served as President of the BSF Board. Mr. B.B. Mitchell, first President and founding member Page Mitchell were on hand. Former President Willie Martin and founding member Rose Marie Martin joined in the celebration. Our longest serving President, Bob Luddy, and his lovely wife Paula Luddy continued their service to the BSF in their fun positions as wine pourers extraordinaire ! Clark B.'Bud' Hall, also a former President, spoke of the history of the BSF and thanked the many former and current members in attendance. Current President Robert Jones was unable to attend but sent his greetings.

Although this was planned as just a thank you to the Board members, through their continued generosity we were able to raise over \$2000 net for the continuing efforts toward preservation of the Brandy Station historic area.

THE LAND TRUST OF VIRGINIA CREATES THE DEBORAH W. FITTS BATTLEFIELD STEWARDSHIP FUND

In late summer of 2009 the Land Trust of Virginia (LTV) Board of Directors created a new fund called the Deborah Whittier Fitts Battlefield Stewardship Fund, as a means of recognizing and providing financial support for landowners interested in protecting properties where Civil War battles took place. Grants from this fund will be used to offset some of the individuals landowner's expenses associated with putting battlefield acreage into easement.

Ms Fitts was considered by many to be the nation's leading journalist covering Civil War preservation issues. Ms Fitts was wife to founding and current BSF Board member, noted historian, Clark B. 'Bud' Hall. Last year the CWPT honored Deborah's memory by conveying her, posthumously, the distinguished "Lifetime Achievement Award", bestowed for journalistic excellence in educating her readers about the fragile status of our nation's battlefields. The CWPT also rendered a \$30,000 grant for the purpose of inaugurating the stewardship fund. Other pledges have brought the fund up to \$60,000 and they are looking to \$100,000 by end of year.

The establishment of this fund will be of direct benefit to the Brandy Station Foundation in that landowners who may wish to bestow the responsibilities of stewardship of their historic lands on the Foundation, may be able to obtain financial support from the Fund to do so.

For further information about the Deborah Whittier Fitts Battlefield Stewardship Fund, contact LTV Executive Director Don Owen at donlandtrustva@earthlink.net or LTV Board member Childs Burden at cburden338@aol.com

SPIRITED EVENING

The rain couldn't dampen the spirits of Brandy Station on October 24, as the Brandy Station Foundation hosted its third annual Spirited Evening. The Graffiti House opens its doors for an annual community service event of ghost stories, good food and fellowship.

In addition to ghost stories from the Civil War, with a bit of a humorous bend, artfully told by costumed speakers in the upstairs rooms; there was, for the first time, tales of unexplained incidents and unnatural events that have occurred here at the Graffiti House were whispered.

Also on hand to talk to visitors were members of Virginia Paranormal Investigators, a regional group of 'ghost hunters.' The investigators displayed and explained their unique equipment and played tapes of voices they had encountered during their work. VPI has been to our house before, and each time has walked away with more evidence that something remains besides graffiti.

A special thanks to all who helped make the evening a success: Sergeant and Mrs. Bill Lacy from the 17th Virginia Infantry and Mr. Richard Girvan and Miss Erin Girvan who were our storytellers; Sarah Hudson and Kenneth Hawes from Kettle Run High School in Fauquier

County were our guides; and Jackson Hicks, Nick Hicks, Rick Allen and Casey Thompson from Virginia Paranormal Investigators. See you next year!

DOLSON FLAG UNVEILED AT THE GRAFFITI HOUSE



Descendants of Lt. John Wood Houston, D Company 124th New York were on hand for the unveiling of the Dolson flag: (L to R) Stephanie Houston (wife of Floyd D. Houston), great grandson Robert N. Houston and wife Virginia, Aaron Houston (great great great grandson) and his children: Riley Coll, Sophie, and Levi, Floyd D. Houston (USMC ret. and great great grandson).

On Saturday, September 12th, Bob Luddy, Past President and facilitator of this loan, discussed the history of the Dolson flag, on temporary display at the Graffiti House. The Dolson Flag was sewn by Liana Dolson in 1861. Bob (at left in picture above) discussed how the flag was discovered and made, its history, and the BSF partnership with the loaning museum, the Neversink Valley Art Museum of Cuddebackville, New York.

124th NEW YORK STATE VOLUNTEERS VISIT GRAFFITI HOUSE



It was 1863 all over again. The Yankees came sweeping down from the North, burst into the house and occupied it, forced the owners to make arrangements for them, started fires and forced the local population to come to them. The only difference was, this time of course, they were invited.

Members of the 124th New York State Volunteers, the “Orange Blossoms”, re-enactment group, led by Captain Chuck LaRocca traveled from New York and New Jersey, and set up a living history encampment on the grounds of the Graffiti House on October 17 and 18, 2009.

The Orange Blossoms were one of the few Federal infantry units to be present and active in the fighting on June 9, 1863, the Battle of Brandy Station. The 124th NY crossed at Beverly’s Ford with Brigadier General Adelbert Ames select infantry brigade. The unit fought on the St. James plateau and successfully held Brigadier General John Buford’s left flank as he attempted to sweep around the Confederate left over the Yew Hills.

Today's Orange Blossoms demonstrated camp life, held marching and fire drills and spoke with visitors young and old throughout the cold weekend. Over 50 guests visited the house and all enjoyed the experience. Included in the visitors was a church group from Chantilly, and students from West Springfield High School and Germanna Community College. At the end of the day, the 124th presented the Brandy Station Foundation a generous gift of \$500, and a promise to return next year.

Normally use to camping in their tents and shelter, the 124th was invited to sleep indoors, on the floors of the Graffiti House, an experience not unlike the original 124th would have taken advantage of if it was 1863. They literally occupied Brandy Station.

It was fortuitous that also at the Graffiti House during the weekend was the Dolson Flag. This flag, on loan from the Neversink Valley Area Museum in Orange County, New York, was made in 1861 by Liana Dolson. There were three Dolsons who served in the 124th New York. Though the flag likely never left New York, it is a unique piece of Civil War history and eternally linked to the 124th, past and present.

A weekend highlight for the re-enactors was a tour of the battlefield by nationally recognized authority of the Brandy Station Battle, Mr. Clark C. "Bud" Hall. The tour took them to locations in and around the battlefield in both Culpeper and Fauquier County where the original Orange Blossoms' marched, fought and camped.

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST END

It was a good run but it has come to an end. It has been the honor and privilege of the BSF to host the 124th New York Volunteers Dolson Flag at the Graffiti House since September 12, 2009.

This important historic artifact has been on loan to the Foundation through an agreement with the Neversink Valley Area Museum in Cuddebackville, New York. The Mission of the NVAM is 'to preserve, document and interpret the history of the Neversink River Valley of Orange County' and the BSF has been an enthusiastic supporter and spreader of that mission.

Having this exhibit here at the BSF Graffiti House has added to the drama that was the Battle of Brandy Station, in that this flag was made in honor of the 124th New York Volunteers, the Orange Blossoms, who fought here on June 9, 1863.

The Dolson Flag will be on exhibit at the Graffiti House on November 6th and 7th and November 13th and 14th before returning home to New York on the 16th.

The Foundation expresses its gratitude to the NVAM for sharing this fascinating artifact with our Brandy Station museum and allowing us the special opportunity to share in the inspiring and educational aspects of museum cooperation.

New Connections to Brandy Station's Past: New Signers of the Wall of Honor

For Board Member Michael Block, it has always been a distinct honor to watch a guest sign the Graffiti House Wall of Honor: "As a docent, I have this opportunity about once every other month. Well, imagine four signatures in one day – in reality over the course of two hours!"

One of the special experiences we provide to visitors of the Graffiti House is the opportunity to sign the Wall of Honor, also known as the 21st Century Wall. The visitor who is invited to do this is a descendent of a soldier who fought on either side in Brandy Station during the Civil War, or, is a descendent of a Union soldier who wintered there in 1863-1864.

The first to arrive on September 17th was Bill Yates and his wife. Bill's ancestor was Lewis William Grove, from Stephens City, Virginia. Lewis was a private in Company C of the 7th Virginia and enlisted on January 1, 1863; only to be captured just over three weeks later. Exchanged on February 12, Lewis was wounded in the lower leg at Brandy Station on that hot (in more ways than one) and humid June 9th. Considering where the 7th Virginia was positioned on the Brandy Station Battlefield that day, he was probably evacuated from the battlefield along the Carolina Road to Brandy Station. It's not inconceivable that Grove was placed along the road in the field behind the Graffiti House, in the House's yard, or in the house itself. That evening Grove traveled to Gordonsville, undoubtedly by train where he spent the night (June 9) and was forwarded to Charlottesville on June 10, where he recovered. Grove did survive the war.

Following the Yates' visit, descendents of five Confederates came to see the Graffiti House.. James Poole, from Fredrick, Maryland, can trace his ancestry to three troopers from Company B, 35th Virginia Cavalry, also known as White's Comanches: William Beall, John Oglivie Elgin and Elias Price. It is possible that all three were at Brandy Station, meaning all three swept across the St. James plain into the flanks of the 6th Pennsylvania and 6th United States Cavalry and just as possible, charged over Fleetwood Hill and into the maelstrom that took place on those green fields of today. James Poole is also related to a member of General J.E.B. Stuart's staff. That staffer, Major Benjamin Stephen White, was wounded on June 9th, in the neck during the Battle of Brandy Station. He survived his wound. One of the Poole's descendants who was not at Brandy Station on June 9th was James Mathews. Mathews served in Company K of the 6th Virginia. Why wasn't he there? Well, Private Mathews was captured on June 8th, either in Fauquier County or Winchester; it isn't

clear. He was paroled in late June 1863, so he probably also missed the fighting at Gettysburg, but was with the 6th Virginia at Brandy Station in the late summer and fall of 1863.

Our final signers that day were a father and son, Paul Heimbach and son Tom. They were visiting the Graffiti House as part of a tour led by Joe McKinney for the Society of the Old Greek Cross, a descendants group of the Army of the Potomac's Sixth Corps. Their ancestor, Corporal Levi Heimbach, was a member of the 49th Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry Regiment, part of the 6th Corps. The 49th spent the winter of 1863-64 in the vicinity of Farley, near the Hazel River. Unfortunately, that winter was to be his last. Levi would fall on May 10, 1864 during Emory Upton's attack at Spotsylvania Courthouse.

In October, we were delighted to have two more signers of the Wall of Honor: George Hovenden of nearby Locust Grove, a long time member of the Foundation, is a descendent of Lt. Dirrick DeHaven Pennybacker, 7th Virginia Cavalry.

James D. Swan, Jr., a life-long resident of Brandy Station and member of the Foundation, is a descendent of James Alexander Swan of the 39th Virginia Battery, part of Lee's couriers and scouts. Swan surrendered at Appomattox.

CONGRESS ALLOCATES \$9 MILLION TO PRESERVE AMERICA'S ENDANGERED CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS

The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) today applauded members of the U.S. House and Senate for including the largest ever single-year allocation for the federal Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Interior Appropriations Act Conference Report (H Rept 111-316).

The conference report, scheduled for a final vote in both chambers later this week, includes \$9 million for the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program, a mechanism that utilizes government matching grants and private funds to permanently protect historic Civil War battlefields throughout the nation.

"This is tremendous news that could not come at a more critical time," said CWPT President James Lighthizer. Each day 30 acres of hallowed Civil War battlefield ground are paved over and lost forever. This money will allow us to preserve historic land that would otherwise be lost to development and urban sprawl."

The Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program targets priority unprotected Civil War sites outside National Park Service boundaries. The program's matching grants formula encourages state and private sector investment in historic land preservation. . Grants from the program are competitively awarded by the American Battlefield Protection Program, an arm of the National Park Service.

The Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program was reauthorized in March 2009 as part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (PL 111-11). The legislation, introduced in the Senate by Senators Webb and Sessions and in the House by Congressmen Miller, Israel and Gordon, reauthorized the program for \$10 million a year for five years. The popular bill enjoyed considerable bipartisan support, earning 33 cosponsors in the Senate and 108 cosponsors in the House.

A LETTER To The VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The BSF Board of Directors has sent a letter to VDOT stating our opinions and objections to the Route 29 Corridor Study undertaken by this state department. The Board is concerned that the plans presented in this study would greatly and adversely affect the Brandy Station Battlefield and specifically the Fleetwood Heights area.

Clark B"Bud". Hall, in collaboration with the other Directors, wrote in the Board's letter, that "it is a lamentable fact that when Route 29 was constructed through Culpeper County, a great deal of the battlefield's famous "Fleetwood Hill Sector," was destroyed by four lanes carving straight across a wide swath of *real battlefield* where young Americans fought and died in great numbers. Therefore, you can discern it would be doubly tragic if additional sacred ground was altered or impacted in any way by future construction activity along Route 29.

A portion of Route 29, from Charlottesville to the Fauquier-Prince William County line traverses the region designated via "The Journey Through Hollowed Ground," National Heritage Area. Just this month the JTHG, which crosses four states, was awarded the federally recognized designation ' National Scenic Byway'. It is only the 99th recipient of this prestigious label in the entire country, sharing the title with areas like the Skyline Drive and the Death Valley Scenic Byway in California. Virginia news executive and JTHG Chairman of the Board, Arthur W. "Nick" Arundel, remarked on his pleasure at this award while on tour in Culpeper, stating that Culpeper is a "key part of it..... very much in the center of it". The plans, as they stand in the VDOT proposal, would take the very heart out of the Journey as well as destroy the Brandy Station Battlefield that so many have fought so long and hard

to preserve, not only for the honor of those who fought and died there, but for the benefit and education of generations to come. The letter from the Board will be posted on the BSF website. For more information on the VDOT Study, go to: http://viriniadot.org/projects/culpeper/route_29_corridor_study.asp

BRANDY STATION FOUNDATION – 2010 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes, I support the work of the Brandy Station Foundation in preserving Historic Brandy Station. Please enroll me as a member of the Foundation.

\$25 Membership Additional Donation \$

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Mail to: Brandy Station Foundation, P.O. Box 165, Brandy Station, Virginia 22714

Let me know how I can volunteer. _____

Phone Numbers: Daytime Night

Send my newsletter by email or postal service. (circle one)

The Brandy Station Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit, community-based membership 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.