

## And the work goes on...

Chuck Maurer

Chairman, KBA History and Education Committee

*The H & E Committee is charged with the task of developing the stories surrounding the history of the Kernstown Battlefield and with bringing those stories to life for our visitors. The committee's 2022 focus is on the following major projects:*

### Cabin Restoration

After many years of discussion on the future of this fire-damaged 1790s log cabin, we have arranged a professional restoration assessment scheduled for the 13th of July. This no cost assessment will be led by local architectural historian Maral Kalbian (co-author of the 2010 Pritchard house study) with the assistance



Cabin circa 1986

of a well known historical preservationist Dennis Pouge. The intent of this assessment is to determine if the current remains of the cabin can be realistically

restored and, if restoration is feasible, to obtain a professional archaeological study and restoration plan. In any case, the KBA's intent is pay for any major cabin restoration work with grant funding.

### Sandy Ridge Trail Development

Work continues on developing historical markers for the future Sandy Ridge Kernstown Battlefield interpretive trail. This new KBA trail is slated to be connected to the current Rose Hill Park trail, thus creating one continuous loop from Sandy Ridge, site of Confederate artillery, to Rose Hill Farm, site of the fiercest fighting and conclusion of the battle. The plan is for the new markers to focus mainly on Confederate artillery and later actions of the Battle of First Kernstown. Funding for these markers has already

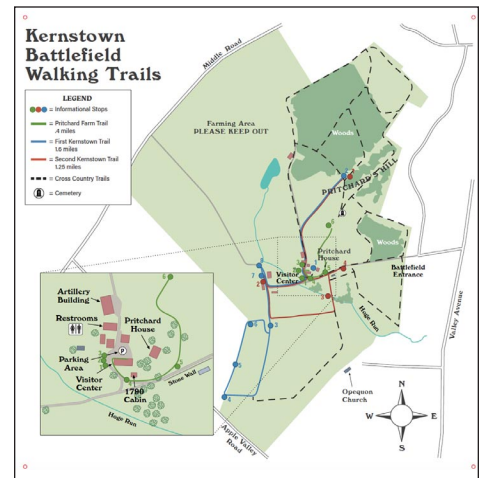
been secured by an Americana Corner grant.

### New Historical Tail Map

We have made a concerted effort to develop a new, color map of the Kernstown Battlefield "main campus" (i.e. excluding Sandy Ridge.) After several months of working group efforts, we have a final draft

map available for visitors that includes three color-coded trails: 1) First Kernstown blue trail 2) Second Kernstown red trail, 3) Family/Farm green trail. Eventually,

we will have a large map on the back of the kiosk by the Conference Center and tri-fold map hand outs.



Main campus trail map

### Main Campus Historical Trail Update, Expansion

The committee has begun work on a plan to update and finalize the color-coded historical trails discussed above. This plan will include updating/correcting and relocating a few of our current markers along with two new Battle of Second Kernstown markers. This project is projected for completion in time for the 2023 season and should pretty much complete our "main campus" trail development effort.

### Sunset on the Battlefield Program

The committee continues development of a new "Sunset on the Battlefield" program. The pilot event for this new program is titled "S. R. and Helen Pritchard -A Mixed (North and South) Marriage in Turbulent Times" is scheduled for 6-8 PM Friday, September 16th. On-line registration for this event will soon be available at [www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org). ■



from Gary Sheppard ...

## The President's Corner

Wow !! Three months and we are well into our 2022 Season. And, very, very busy with projects, visitors, and tour groups.

The season started with the dating of the structural logs of the Pritchard Cabin. This building was the target of arsonists in October 2000, and has been boarded up to protect the structure. Last summer, we had the stone foundation reinforced. Now, we are looking for ways to repair the above floors so we can open this wonderful building to the public. However, this will take funding through donations or grants.

The Pritchard House ("Brightside") was built in 1854 by Samuel Pritchard. His grandfather and father, Reese and Stephen, respectively, had to live somewhere. Records of where they may have had a house are vague, but with the assistance of local archeologists Michael Kehoe and his crew, we are exploring areas where it may have been located.

Work continues on the Family Cemetery. Steve Chesley is taking particular care in minimizing the soil erosion on the site and Susan Sheppard is planting vinca on the site as a historical ground cover.

The Fulkerson/Garnett Assault Path of the First Kernstown Battle has been opened with three new historical signs. You can now walk the actual path taken by the Confederate regiments as they stepped out of Barton's Woods to assault Pritchard's Hill and capture Union artillery. Walking this path and imaging Union artillery raining down on you is more thrilling than walking the path of the infamous Pickett's Charge.

Eight acres of our conservation fields (CREP) have been seeded. As the season progresses, you can watch oats, barley, a mixture of wildflowers and sunflowers start to pop-up. If the deer and the birds didn't eat the seed, it should be a beautiful sight. Speaking of birds, we partnered with a group that put up four bird boxes to encourage the return of the American Kestrel. Just

another conservation effort by your KBA.

We've already hosted two battle tours this season. Gary Ecelbarger, noted author of *We're In For It*, led the 1<sup>st</sup> Kernstown Tour on March 23<sup>rd</sup> for the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that battle. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, Jerry Holsworth, a local author, led the tour for the 159<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Winchester which was initiated across the Pritchard Farm. On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Scott Patchan, noted author of *Shenandoah Summer*, will lead a tour for the 158<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 2<sup>nd</sup> Kernstown, the last Confederate victory in the Valley.

The Pritchard House is getting a facelift. The first floor foyer and the room used as a field hospital during the Civil War, are being re-plastered. It is a slow process because of the humidity and black snakes who apparently resent being disturbed. Hopefully, it will soon be completed and we can again open those areas to the public.

A new trail map is being created to include our new historical signs and give our visitors a better perspective of our property. We have made plans for the anticipated transition of the Sandy Ridge property to the Kernstown Battlefield property. These plans include creating trails connecting to Rose Hill and historical signs explaining the significance of the property to the three Civil War battles that crossed that property.

We received two new acquisitions this year. We were gifted a reproduction Mountain Howitzer by Kenneth Winklepleck. We used this howitzer to begin the Frederick County Half Marathon which started on Pritchards Lane. We were also gifted two beautiful carriages by Bernice Rowan. One is a Doctor's Carriage, the other a Surry. The howitzer and the carriages are on display in our Artillery Building for you to see.

Well, this is your KBA at work. As you can see, we are very busy. To maintain this wonderful property and keep it open to the public, we can always use your help. You can volunteer to assist in our buildings welcoming visitors, become docents leading tour groups, or by donating money to help us with our many projects.

Come on out and see what's going on the Hoge-Pritchard-Burton-Grim Property - the Kernstown Battlefield! ■

# Research Reveals Signal Corps was First Used at the First Battle of Kernstown...NOT Antietam

Steve Chesley

Thanks to Gary Ecelbarger, author of “We Are In For It”, and the great research of Winchester historian, Mike Robinson, it is now confirmed that the first use of signal corps was at the First Battle of Kernstown on March 23, 1862, not at the battle of Antietam, as has been previously recorded throughout the years.

Due to the fact that the union commanding General, James Shields, had been wounded the day before by shrapnel that broke his left arm and was holed up in the Seever house in Winchester, he needed a way to communicate with the officer now in charge on the field, Colonel Nathan Kimball, who was five miles south of Winchester, on Pritchard’s Hill in Kernstown. The Signal Corps had never been used in the field before and was the brainchild of Major Albert Myer. There were six signal corp stations set up from Sandy Ridge to Pritchard’s Hill to Hillman’s tollgate to Bowers Hill to Shield’s headquarters.

To see the whole story please see Mike Robinson’s article on his Winchester Tales Facebook page. We have copies of all of Robinson’s “Winchester Tales” books on sale in our visitor center as well as Ecelbarger’s book on First Kernstown, “We Are in For It”. ■

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## Kestrel Boxes Rise at Kernstown

Charlie Hagan



The American Kestrel, our smallest falcon about the size of a pigeon, is a diminutive raptor which feeds on grasshoppers, mice, and an occasional sparrow. These colorful and acrobatic flyers face reductions in habitat and cavity nest sites and have suffered a population decline by 50% in the last half century. KBA is pleased to accept the new role of Kestrel host with our local raptor support team headed up by Bob Dean (pictured above), who regularly spends half his time building boxes and searching for sites to support Kestrel habitat. We now have four boxes in inconspicuous corners of the Kernstown Battlefield, where the habitat is near perfect according to Mr. Dean. Bob will be monitoring the boxes and hopefully will get a chance to band the next generation of Kestrel chicks. ■

# Fun at Kernstown!

Jim Cutler

On Tuesday May 31st Kernstown hosted three Fourth Grade classes from the Frederick Douglass Elementary School in Winchester. Two buses rolled up at 10:30 and approximately 50 students and teachers spent the next two hours experiencing a sunny day outside and learning some history.

We set up three stations manned by five docents for the classes to rotate through. Bru Randall and Jim Cutler were at the top of Pritchard's Hill where the students could see the mountains of the Valley and learn its early history as well. The students learned about Winchester during the war and all the actions at Kernstown that happened close to where their school is located.

We stopped at the Pritchard family graveyard on our way back down the hill and viewed the location of the 14 graves that had been discovered through ground penetrating radar.

Docent Chuck Mauer led a family, agricultural walk as the students looked at various buildings (hog pen, corn crib, smoke house, etc.) and discussed cash crops (wheat then apples) and other farming that went on at the Kernstown Battlefield property.

Docent volunteer Susi Weston displayed various medicinal remedies and first aid methods that would have been used during the Civil War.

In the Artillery Building, KBA President Gary Sheppard had the students perform the various roles necessary for an artillery crew to fire the canon.

The students then enjoyed their lunch in the shade along Pritchard's Lane. It was a great experience for the students, teachers and our dedicated KBA volunteers. The teachers indicated that they would like to work together with us again in the future. ■



4th graders from Frederick Douglas Elementary



Atop Pritchard's Hill with Docent Jim Cutler



Lunch in the shade on Pritchard's Lane



Instruction on artillery from KBA President Gary Sheppard

# In the News ...

## Snakes on the Lane

Chuck Maurer

As some of our members may know, the battlefield is home to lots of wildlife, and to the angst of some of our volunteers (and the occasional visitor), this includes a large number of non-poisonous black snakes. While appreciated as mousers, they can be occasionally disruptive when, for instance, they poke their heads through the ceiling of the Pritchard House Field Hospital room while a tour is going on.... hence one of the reasons for the on-going re-plastering effort.

Other stories of battlefield snake encounters abound with one of the most notable encounters taking place during a recent visit of Frederick Douglas fourth graders. As these students began making their way up to the Visitor Center from their buses parked on the Pritchard lane, yours truly moved a very large black snake from their path only to have it slither up to a smaller group of students I was leading on the Family and Agriculture activity later that morning (see pic below). Unlike some of our docents (and again, the occasional surprised visitor) these students handled the unexpected wildlife very well, showing respectful curiosity thus quickly turning the family and farm focused activity into an impromptu biology class.

This "snakes on the lane" encounter is just another example of the wide range of experiences you can have when visiting wild and wooly Kernstown Battlefield on the Pritchard-Grim Farm! ■



The 4th grade students stand back as a resident black snake approaches through the grass.

## Second Battle of Kernstown Tour scheduled for July 23

Author Scott Patchan will be leading a walking and driving tour of the Second Battle of Kernstown on Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. The tour will begin at 10:00 am and run until approximately 2:00 pm. Participants will meet at the Visitors Center, where you can also pick up a copy of Scott's book entitled "Shenandoah Summer, The 1864 Valley Campaign".

The tour is free and, while it is not required, we would ask that you register at [www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org). ■

## Unsung Heroes

Steve Vaughn

Over the life of the Kernstown Battlefield Association, we typically have had a dependable force of approximately 20-25 members who provide man hours to keep the grass mowed, buildings repaired and the visitor center manned to provide tours for visitors. These members all know each other and are good friends.

Once in a while we have a special project that requires professional expertise that no one in our core group has. Electrical projects fall into that category. Lucky for us, we have a member who is a retired high voltage electrician who can work anything from milliamps up to 500KV. When we have an electrical project or need advice on an electrical issue, Paul Augsburger always steps up and lends a hand.

One of our most recent electrical upgrades was completed in our artillery building. We display artillery pieces and equipment in the building, and also support Shenandoah University track meets several times a year as well as various gatherings that require heavy electrical loads. T-shirt presses for cross country shirts, coffee pots and hot plates have occasionally overloaded our circuit breakers.

Paul installed heavy, three wire circuits to eight electrical outlets that now have the amperage to handle heavy loads. We no longer have to worry about resetting circuit breakers and will be able to better serve those who pay us a rental fee for use of the building.

Below are a couple of pictures of Paul working on the installation. Paul is a true unsung hero for KBA. If you see him around say hello and thank him for his help. ■



Paul Augsburger finishing up electrical installation work.

# Improvements Continue in the Pritchard House

Steve CChesley

Once upon a time, volunteer Susi Weston would be in the middle of giving her fabulous talk in the Pritchard House on medical practices and illnesses during the Civil War when an unwanted visitor would poke its head out from a hole in the ceiling. Thanks to the many donations received from visitors and the dues from our members, we are almost finished with plastering work that will keep our slithering guests from joining Susi's tour group in her field hospital rooms on the lower level of the house.

Completion of this work finishes the plastering of the entire first and second floors of the house which has been a continuing project for several years.

The Pritchard House is the crown jewel of the Kernstown Battlefield so we work very hard to keep it in good shape for visitors. From plastering work, to window repair, shutter replacement, roof repair, and many other projects, the 1854 Pritchard House is always in need of both major and minor repairs and upkeep.

This work would not be possible without the donations from our visitors and members. We thank all of you for your support and hope you will continue to support our efforts to keep the house and property in good condition for future visitors. ■



*While the field hospital has been closed for plastering and repairs, our in-house Civil War Medicine Tour Guide, Susi Weston, has continued to present a hands-on interpretation of the natural remedies used to treat the sick and wounded. She explains how the plants and trees which grow in the southern states were used as ingredients to make medicines, and then she demonstrates how pills were formed by using an authentic period pill roller. ■*



The walls and ceiling of the first floor have been terribly damaged over the past century and a half of the life of the Pritchard House. Left: A snakeskin hangs from a hole in the ceiling.



The Pritchard House circa 1990s before the KBA purchased the property.



The Pritchard House today.

## **KBA MEMBERSHIP**

The Kernstown Battlefield Association is a privately-owned all-volunteer non-profit organization. We rely solely on your membership dues and donations to operate and maintain 388 acres of core battlefield property.

Since obtaining the property in late 2000, improvements have steadily been made to the land and buildings almost exclusively by dedicated volunteers with the help of your dues and donations.

If your membership has expired, please consider renewing at this time.

If you are not a member, please consider joining.

Additional contributions beyond the \$25 annual membership fee are greatly appreciated.

Use the enclosed remittance envelope to donate or go to our website at [www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org).

The KBA is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation.  
Contributions are tax-deductible.



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**Help us  
preserve  
Kernstown  
Battlefield.**

**Join  
~  
Donate**

## **Notice of Annual Meeting of the Kernstown Battlefield Association**

The Officers and Directors of the Kernstown Battlefield Association cordially invite its members to its Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 23, 2022 from 1pm to 4pm.

- ~ Refreshments will be served ~
- ~ There will be a silent auction and door prizes ~
- ~ Our speaker will be announced later on our website (SEE BELOW)  
and in our periodic Constant Contact email updates ~

(IF YOU WISH TO BE ADDED TO OUR EMAIL LIST, CALL THE  
NUMBER BELOW AND LEAVE A MESSAGE WITH YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.)

**Please RSVP at [www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org)  
or call 540-450-7835 (LEAVE A MESSAGE)**

We look forward to seeing you. You will be amazed to hear all that we have accomplished this year and to witness our progress first hand.