

## The Rest of the Story

### And finally – Sandy Ridge is officially ours!

by Gary Crawford

Some time ago there was a popular radio newsman and story-teller by the name of Paul Harvey. For his daily news program he selected events from history and filled-in little-known but interesting details surrounding each story. The title of each 5-minute segment was "The Rest of the Story."

And that brings me to the story of the Kernstown Battlefield and Sandy Ridge. In the 1990s the Kernstown Battlefield Association (KBA) was formed in order to obtain the Pritchard–Grim Farm after it had been identified by the National Park Service as endangered core battlefield land. In 2000, the KBA, with the help of both public and private funds, was able to purchase 315 acres and in 2001 opened the battlefield to the public. Part of our mission was to tell the stories of the thousands who fought here during the three battles on the farm.

But there were limitations to the telling of those stories because they could only be presented and viewed from Union positions. Generally, this meant from the most obvious vantage point of Pritchard's Hill, a Union artillery strongpoint in all three battles. Those visitors wishing to also view the fields from the Southern perspective discovered that those positions were on privately-owned properties and not available to history-seekers.

One of those "missing sites" was an area along Apple Valley Road, immediately south of the KBA property and where Confederate General Stonewall Jackson brought his army in March of 1862. From there he gazed north toward the Pritchard farm and Pritchard's Hill and discovered a Federal Army much stronger than he had been previously informed. It was there that he advised a questioning aide, "Think nothing of It, we are in for it." And so were launched the tactical moves by both sides to win the day.

In 2015 a local developer, the Shockey Corporation, approached the KBA with an overview of their plans to develop a site contiguous to the KBA property. When advised of our need for a "story-telling" vantage point, the developer agreed to donate a quarter-acre site to the KBA at the place where, as nearly as possible to be known, Jackson viewed his objective. That area today is known as "Jackson's Lookout" and has a viewing platform and good signage.

At about that same time the KBA received word that the last key element for the effective telling of the Kernstown battle history, Sandy Ridge, might become available for purchase. That 37-acre elevated site lies just west of the Pritchard farm and is some 60 feet higher than Pritchard's Hill. It was to that ridge that Jackson shifted his 13 artillery pieces to provide suppressing fire onto the Union artillery positions on Pritchard's Hill. It was also the elevated area to which the Confederate infantry soon maneuvered to escape the incoming artillery fire and to maneuver around the Union positions. Counter-moves by the Union commanders soon created a "head-to-head" infantry battle that finally, at the end of the day, resulted in a Union victory and ultimately Gen. Jackson's only defeat.

After numerous starts and stops over an almost 8-year period the KBA, with the help of the American Battlefield Trust, was finally able to purchase that key Confederate artillery position that was also the arena for the concluding action of the battle. And now, after over 100 years of inaccessibility by the public, the site is open for study and tours.

To mark the official opening of Sandy Ridge, on June 17th the KBA held a Grand Opening Celebration. It included speakers History Prof. Jonathan Noyolas of Shenandoah University and Keven Walker of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation, multiple conducted group tours of Sandy Ridge and live fire artillery demonstrations.

Our many visitors were treated to four artillery pieces, sited on both Pritchard's Hill and Sandy Ridge, firing multiple volleys (sans projectiles) to allow people to view and to better understand and feel the action that took place on those elevations. The feedback from them was glowing! And for the KBA volunteers ... we're elated.

Now, at last, the KBA can allow visitors to view and understand the Kernstown history from multiple vantage points, North and South, and better fulfill our mission ..... "to preserve, protect and present Kernstown Battlefield history to current and future generations."

And now we can tell "The Rest of the Story." ■

*"Now, at last, the KBA can allow visitors to view and understand the Kernstown history from multiple vantage points, North and South, and better fulfill our mission ... 'to preserve, protect and present Kernstown Battlefield history to current and future generations.'"*



from Gary Sheppard ...

## The President's Corner

It's mid-July and we are halfway through our 2023 season at the Kernstown Battlefield. We have been busy. The big news was our acquisition in December 2022 of the southern end of Sandy Ridge. We celebrated this event on June 17<sup>th</sup> with guest speakers, tours of Sandy Ridge, and cannons ablazing! More of this in another article.

To prepare for opening Sandy Ridge, we hired the services of Timber Works to clear a lot of brush and non-native trees that had overgrown the area. This is a very expensive project and we could only afford three days of service at this time. But, it was time and money well spent. The area looks amazing.

We opened this year on April 15<sup>th</sup>. But before this, we hosted the 161<sup>st</sup> anniversary tour of 1<sup>st</sup> Kernstown with author Gary Ecelbarger leading the tour. We also co-hosted a Kite Fest with Frederick County Parks & Recreation. A very successful event with over three hundred participants, although we had the remains of two kites in our walnut trees for awhile.

First weekend in June, we had our first wedding of the year. The bride exited the Pritchard House and walked to an arbor at the three walnut trees where vows were exchanged. At the "I do's", a cannon went off! As the lovely couple was introduced as "Mr. and Mrs.", a second cannon blast rang out. Very fitting for the occasion.

A week later on June 9<sup>th</sup>, we hosted our first Kernstown Battlefield Golf Classic at Rock Harbor Golf Course, Winchester, Va. This was a very successful fundraiser. Read more about this event elsewhere in this newsletter.

We've worked on the c.1790 Pritchard Cabin and had an historical study conducted. But now, we've turned our attention to the Pritchard House and the need to replace shutters on the building.

Over the past few years, we've worked on our CREP fields. These are conservation fields for which the USDA pays us a minimal fee to encourage native plants and trees and to remove those that are non-native. After some hard work, several of our fields south of Hoge Run are finally loaded with beautiful wildflowers that we planted. Now, we need to

remove some thistle.

This is your KBA at work and we are very excited with our 2023 program and events. With an all volunteer staff, we are doing our best to address the needed projects, develop interesting events for the public, and promote the history of this beautiful property. We appreciate your financial support for these many projects through your membership in the KBA and your donations. Please continue to visit us when our gates are open and review our website, [www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org), for upcoming events. ■



Cannon fire rang out at critical moments during the wedding ceremony. The reception tent is in the background.



Brush clearing in progress on Sandy Ridge this past spring when the unwanted growth was mulched. Five historical markers have since been placed along the top of the ridge where Confederate artillery was placed and where the final moments of battle occurred.



# Images of the Sandy Ridge Open House Celebration

*June 17, 2023 - On this day the KBA celebrated the long awaited opening of Sandy Ridge with two guest speakers, guided tours of Sandy Ridge and live artillery fire from both Pritchard's Hill and Sandy Ridge depicting the artillery duel between Confederate and Union forces during the First Battle of Kernstown. The images on this page show some of the scenes encountered by our many visitors.*



Speakers at the celebration were History Professor Jonathan Noyalas of Shenandoah University (above), and Keven Walker, CEO of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (right). Walker spoke on the importance of preservation and the vital contributions of the KBA. Noyalas' topic was how civilians, especially women, were impacted by the realities of war.



Two cannons from our artillery collection sit atop Pritchard's Hill. Sandy Ridge is in the distance.



The Pritchard's Hill Union cannon crew consisted of KBA President Gary Sheppard (left) and volunteer David Wingebach.



At the Confederate position on Sandy Ridge this five person team manned two cannons. Top row from left is Nick Taylor, Kenny Winklepleck and Mike Kleinpeter. Bottom from left is Jabin Hollingshead and Isna Hollingshead. All are members of the Dulany Troop, a unit of the North-South Skirmish Association. The two cannons used belong to Kenny Winklepleck and are regularly shot in competition.



## "Sunset at the Battlefield"

### A New Kernstown Battlefield Tradition

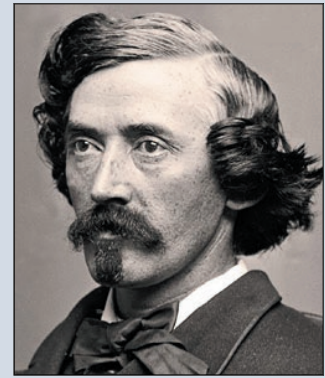
by Chuck Maurer

A year ago, the KBA held its first "Sunset at the Battlefield" program focusing on the Pritchard family's experience during the Civil War. Due to its popularity, we have decided to hold the event again. This year's program, "The Life, Death and Legacy of Colonel James A. Mulligan, USA" will be held on Friday, September 15th beginning at 6:00pm.

Please join us to hear the engrossing story of this true, but relatively unknown, American hero. Led by enthusiastic and well informed KBA docents, you'll learn about this college educated, devoutly religious, leading Irishman from Chicago who willingly gave his life for his country right here on the Pritchard farm.

On-line registration will soon be up and running on our website ([www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org)).

*We hope to see many of you there!*



Col. James A. Mulligan, USA

## Author Scott Patchan leads tour of the Second Battle of Kernstown

by Larry Turner



In the Conference Center, Patchan gives an overview to tour participants.

On July 22nd, in commemoration of the anniversary of the Second Battle of Kernstown, the Kernstown Battlefield Association was proud to host a walking and driving tour led by noted author Scott Patchan. Twenty-one energetic visitors and five KBA volunteers attended the tour and were blessed by unusually mild weather. KBA docents Larry Turner and Steve Chesley provided support.

Patchan led off the tour with a 30-minute overview in our Conference Center, after which he led the group to the top of Pritchard's Hill. From that vantage point he pointed out the key terrain features necessary for the attendees to understand where the battle's deciding events took place.

The next stop was at the stone wall along our entrance road. Here, Scott explained the final phase of the battle and highlighted where Union division commander, Col. James Mulligan, was mortally wounded as he rallied his men to make a final stand against overwhelming Confederate forces. Scott also took the time to explain how General George Crook, commander of Union forces in Winchester, failed to understand the scope of the battle and gave orders to Col. Mulligan and other commanders to advance into the teeth of the 20,000-man Confederate force. Scott

described the overall battle as Gen. Crook, thinking he was a large fish going after a rather small Confederate minnow, when in fact the Confederate forces under General Jubal Early were a giant whale that swallowed up the Union forces in what one Confederate soldier described as "the most easily won battle of the war".

After a brief break, Larry and Steve organized a car convoy to drive the visitors westward to our newly opened Sandy Ridge property. Here Scott explained how the Union forces inadvertently separated from one another, enabling Gen. Stephen Ramseur's Confederate division, anchoring the western flank of Gen. Early's battle line, to swing east and attack the Union right flank.



Atop Pritchard's Hill, Patchan points out key terrain features necessary to understand the battle.

The group then drove to the east of Kernstown to the final stop where Scott was able to show how Confederate Gen. John Breckinridge hid his men behind a ridge and surprised the left flank of Col. Rutherford B. Hayes' division forcing him to retreat leaving Col. Mulligan's left flank exposed. This contributed to the rout of the Union forces.

After the group returned to the KBA Visitor Center, many stayed for tours of the house and to peruse the gift shop and artifact displays. ■



# In the News ...

## The First Battle of Kernstown Author's Tour: Gary "E" is back in action!

by Chuck Maurer and Larry Turner

Back in March, for our first official event of the 2023 season, author and Civil War expert Gary Ecelbarger led an enthusiastic group on his annual First Battle of Kernstown tour. While



threatened by heavy rain early on, the skies quickly cleared and the walking and driving tour was on in full force. As always, Gary provided a detailed and very enlightening description of the battle from various locations that included Pritchard's Hill (Union artillery and supporting infantry positions); the south fields (site of initial Confederate assault); Rose Hill Park (location of the initial infantry fighting); and on

our newly acquired Sandy Ridge property (Confederate artillery positions and location of the final infantry fighting). As usual, the tour was very well received by all participants.

The KBA greatly appreciates Gary E's continued support of this annual event and many other KBA matters over the past two decades. We are extremely fortunate to have such a strong relationship with one of the key historians who never fails to provide richly detailed accounts of significant events that occurred on the Kernstown Battlefield. ■

## What's new at the Civil War Field Hospital Exhibit

by Susi Weston

Last year, we introduced a discussion of the use of native plants for medicinal purposes. We are continuing along this avenue with the introduction of an instrument used during the Civil War to turn those medicinal ingredients into pills that could be administered in the hospitals. Stop by to see the pill roller and perhaps try your hand at making pills!

The Civil War Hospital Exhibit is the last stop on the Pritchard House tour which begin in the Visitor Center. Please ask a volunteer about house tours and see what's new. ■

## Battlefield Kite Fest

by Gary Sheppard



During early spring, I was approached by Frederick County Parks and Recreation about hosting their annual Kite Fest. Their event is usually held at Sherando Park, but the park has become overcrowded with organized sporting events and the growth of trees, thus limiting open space.

This was brought to the KBA Board of Directors for discussion. There are a lot of pros and cons to an event like this. The "con" for this event was the wear and tear on our infrastructure, including Pritchard Lane, our bathroom facility (a septic system), field parking, and our buildings. The big "pro" was that this event would open our property to another segment of the larger community – young people and young families who were probably unfamiliar with the battlefield, farm, and our history. After discussion, the Board voted unanimously to host the event.

The event was held on Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 2-5pm, before the Kernstown Battlefield was even open for the season. Our volunteers had mowed a field area for parking and directed traffic into that area. Parks & Rec brought in Johnny Blues for bathrooms and a food truck. The event went off perfectly. Weather was very cooperative – sunny skies, a nice wind, and cool temperatures. A local hobby shop even set up a table to sell kites. Many community entities were incorporated into this event.

Over three hundred young and old enjoyed the day, laughing and running around. Kites filled the air on Pritchards Hill. Some, however, got a little too close to our walnut trees on the side of the Pritchard House. For two kites, these became the "Charlie Brown kite-eating trees!" The volunteers on duty that day entertained a lot of questions about the property and its history. The main "pro" of hosting this event was accomplished and the public enjoyed their time on our property. ■

# Stewards of the Property

by Gary Sheppard

The Kernstown Battlefield has 40 acres enrolled in the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Conservation Resource Environment Program (CREP). These 40 acres straddle Hoge Run from the Spring Pond southeast towards the Opequon Presbyterian Church, down the eastern fence line, and across our south property border.

We entered this program under the first contract eighteen years ago as a way of gaining guidance on protecting and enhancing the quality of our property while receiving some compensation from the USDA. The main goal of this program was to create a better animal habitat by growing native plants and trees and removing non-native species, especially the Russian/Autumn Olive and Tree of Heaven. Sounds easy enough, but it's not.

For the first fifteen years, we received little or no guidance from the USDA, but we did receive compensation funds, albeit small amounts. For the past three years, the USDA has required additional work on the CREP fields that exceeds the funding they provide. What USDA does not consider is that we are not farmers with the available equipment needed to work the land. The KBA is all volunteers, not farmers, and we have to rent the equipment needed.

Even in light of the above negatives, the CREP has provided some guidance on how to improve our fields to be better environmental stewards, encourage the growth of native plants, and to attract wildlife, especially butterflies and bird



life. After working hard the past three years, improvements have been realized and the USDA is impressed with our progress. Several of our fields are now loaded with beautiful wildflowers to include chicory, yellow coreopsis, gaillardia, rudbeckia, verbascum, and yarrow.

What we learned from the CREP fields we've applied to our gardens at the Visitor Center and the Conference Center, as well as the Pritchard Family Cemetery. We're incorporating native plants, especially yarrow, used as a medicinal plant by Native Americans, and vinca, which was used in colonial times to cover gravesites.

You may also notice four large new bird boxes that were placed this past fall. These were installed to reintroduce the American Kestrel, the smallest falcon. Usually it takes a year or two for the Kestrel to establish their presence, but we had at least one, possibly two, boxes inhabited by Kestrels by the spring. In one, six hatchlings were confirmed.

Hopefully, you'll have some time to walk these fields, observe the wildflowers, birds, and butterflies and enjoy the work that has been done. Pretty amazing and nice to be good stewards of the property entrusted to the KBA. ■

## Kernstown Battlefield – One volunteer's perspective

-an anonymous KBA volunteer

I started volunteering at Kernstown Battlefield several years ago and have gotten to know the members of the Board of Directors and the other volunteers. Each volunteer is passionate about the battlefield and preserving our nation's history. Because there are no paid positions, we are compensated for our efforts in ways that bring meaning to our lives and joy to our hearts.

The volunteers that mow the grass and trim back nature from taking over everything are equally as important as are the tour guides who are among the most knowledgeable about the Civil War, the battles, and their commanders. We all have our strengths when it comes to keeping the gates open and inviting visitors to the battlefield. It is this shared belief that we are contributing to something greater than any one individual and that keeps us coming back and looking forward to greeting visitors and sharing our slice of history. ■



## Does This Picture Make You Shudder?

by Chuck Maurer and Dan Heim



Maybe not. But it's a stark reminder to our dedicated KBA Gazette readers about the severe toll that weather and other elements can take on an old building such as our 1854 Pritchard House.

And in a related note, here is your KBA member trivia question of the day. How many shutters were there on the original Pritchard

House? Answer: We aren't sure as the ell (rear two story extension of the house) was demolished long before we could get a count. What we do know for sure is there are 54 individual shutters (of four different sizes) on the current standing house, but some of these shutters were in such poor shape they had to be removed. Others are just barely hanging on, making for a somewhat unsightly appearance on this otherwise magnificent house and centerpiece of the KBA property.

After a few years of fits and starts, the KBA is now making a concerted effort to replace almost two dozen of the Pritchard House shutters with a goal of having them in place before the beginning of the 2024 season. And to keep to the KBA's exacting historical standards, these shutters will be identical to our current premium wood, mortise and tenon constructed shutters. And of course, this means these replacement shutters will not be cheap!

The good news is we have a strong lead on a grant that will cover a good portion of the project's anticipated cost, but we are still seeking donations from the KBA membership to help us defray the cost of this very important restoration project. Every dollar of your targeted contribution will go towards this ongoing effort. To contribute, use the enclosed donation envelope or visit our website ([www.kernstownbattle.org/jointhekba.html](http://www.kernstownbattle.org/jointhekba.html)).

Thanks for your ongoing support! ■

## Kernstown Battlefield 2023 Classic Golf Outing

by George Mangano

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the KBA launched our inaugural golf tournament, held at the Rock Harbor Golf Course in Winchester. The goal of this effort was two-fold: to generate funding in support of ongoing battlefield preservation efforts, and to raise awareness

within the community of the many benefits that the Kernstown Battlefield site provides.



In spite of some "iffy" weather conditions in the days preceding the event (thanks to Canadian wild fires), the 9<sup>th</sup> turned out to be a fine day indeed. We were blessed to have pleasant temperatures, no rain and no smoke. Eighty-one golfers participated in a shot-gun start, captain's choice format. Prizes were awarded to the first and second place teams in both flights, along with closest to the pin and longest drive awards. With generous support from local businesses and the participants, we were able to raise over \$4,700.

Having the event at one of the area's premier golf destinations was certainly a draw. The course was in excellent condition, the staff was, as ever, both pleasant and professional. A free "domestic brews" beverage cart and a fine lunch afterwards ensured everyone had a memorable time.

We are most grateful to our wonderful sponsors who helped make this first-time event a success.

- Jordan Springs Estate
- Reading Landscapes, Inc.
- Sidney Enterprises
- Shenandoah University
- Daria Farkondepay, Wells Fargo Financial Advisor
- Drs. Kerry & Brent Bertschinger, Bertschinger Chiropractic
- Minkoff Company, Inc.
- Chris & Melissa Ferguson
- Myrias Group LLC
- Oak Stone Craft Pizza

We're looking forward to teeing it up again in 2024! Visit our website in the spring of '24 for details. ■



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## **KBA Focuses on Shutters!** A critical preservation project!

As seen elsewhere in this issue of the *Gazette*, Pritchard House shutter replacement is a current fundraising priority for the Kernstown Battlefield Association. Deterioration of the shutters is progressing at a rapid pace and replacement is critical.

This preservation project will require approximately \$25-30,000. Should our grant request be approved, it will cover some of this cost ... but not all. Your support is crucial to our success.

Please consider a donation targeted to this important project. Use the enclosed donation envelope to send your contribution. Or go to [www.kernstownbattle.org](http://www.kernstownbattle.org) and on the home page click on "Donate/Join". If you are not already a KBA member, please consider joining. If you are a member, we thank you for your faith in us to fulfill our mission of preserving the Kernstown Battlefield and hope that you will continue to renew your membership in years to come.

*The KBA is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Contributions are tax deductible.*