This Issue:

154TH ANNIVERSARY

FROM THE PRESIDENT

CAPT. ALLAN DOUGALL
**Special Events**

March 16-17  
154th Anniversary  
“A Fighting Chance for Life”

March 23  
Hands-On History

April 5-7  
“Two Weeks of Fury” Symposium

May 4  
Hands-On History

For more information on events visit:  
https://historicsites.nc.gov/all-sites/bentonville-battlefield

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**From the Trenches**  
**News from North Carolina’s Premier Battlefield**

**Bentonville Battlefield**

5466 Harper House Rd.  
Four Oaks, NC  
(910) 594-0789

bentonville@ncdcr.gov

**Site Hours**
Tuesday to Saturday  
9:00am- 5:00 pm

Closed Sundays and Mondays  
Call for Holiday Schedule  
Admission is FREE

**Site Staff**

**Site Manager**
Derrick Brown

**Assistant Manager**
Amanda Brantley

**Programs Coordinator**
Chad Jeffers

**Site Interpreter**
Marc Fitchett

**Maintenance Mechanic**
Marc Fitchett

**Friends of Bentonville Battlefield, Inc**

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Doug Elwell  
Rob Boyette  
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Randy Sauls  
Kenny Smith  
Wade Sokolosky  
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**NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**

As a loyal reader of this newsletter you noticed in the last issue that longtime Site Manager Donny Taylor was retiring at the end of the year. December 31st was his last day and the position has been vacant since then. By the time you are reading this Bentonville Battlefield may have a new Manager (if so look for updates elsewhere in this issue), but for now we are still playing the waiting game. Nonetheless as the saying goes, “time and tide wait for no one,” and boy did the quick winter really demonstrate that adage. It has been a time for construction, clean-up, and preparation for what bodes to be a busy spring and anniversary season here at the battlefield. Being shorthanded with all these tasks to accomplish really made the past couple months fly by.

Shortly after the Holidays the Historic Sites Craft Services section began work on a nearly 200 ft boardwalk across the Morris farm ravine. This ravine was one of the last obstacles preventing us from linking the trails that originate near the visitor center with the Cole Plantation trail on the battlefield. Now only the paperwork on a small easement prevents the linking of our trails. There is still plenty of work ahead of us before this trail is opened to the public, but we are much closer than we were. While at Bentonville, the craftsmen also constructed three small bridges adjacent to the crosswalks across Mill Creek Church Road for visitor access to the monument area. These bridges are a huge improvement over the fifty-year-old crossings that were eroding away. A huge thank you is owed to the Johnston County Visitors Bureau and the Friends of Bentonville Battlefield for supplying the lumber and hardware for boardwalk and bridges. We also really appreciate the quality work done by the Craft Services crew, they really did an excellent job.

Completed boardwalk on the Morris farm trail

With the boardwalk completed our next step is trail clearing. The section of future trial near the boardwalk took a considerable beating during Hurricane Florence. We were fortunate to have a contractor cut up and split the trees that fell on our existing trails, but this new area still must be cleared. Our goal has been to have a trail workday to move wood cut up by our Maintenance Mechanic Marc, but mother nature has not cooperated. We have had two rained out workdays in a row, and I am afraid this Saturday may be a third. “Hope springs eternal” however, maybe there will be a break in the monsoon for trail work on March 2. Feel free to come join us if the weather cooperates.

Preparations continue feverishly for both our 154th Anniversary Program, a “Fighting Chance for Life,” and “Two Weeks of Fury,” our symposium and tour. This year’s anniversary will focus on Civil War medicine and its role during the battle of Bentonville. Military medical displays, both Civil War and modern will be featured around the Harper House on March 16 and 17. There will also be artillery and musket demonstrations both days. On March 16 only, there will be nighttime tours of the Harper House. Tickets are on sale now and will almost certainly sell out before the event. For more information look for Amanda’s article about this program elsewhere in this issue.

From the anniversary we will jump right into final preparations for “Two Weeks of Fury.” You may recall that this program was rescheduled for April 5-7 after flooding from Florence prevented it from taking place in September. Featuring talks and tours by Craig Symonds, John Marszalek, Eric Wittenberg, Wade Sokolosky, Mark Smith, and Mark Bradley, Two Weeks should be one of the best events of its kind to ever take place in Eastern North Carolina. Due to the rescheduling a handful of seats have opened-up, contact Amanda at (910) 594-0789 x203 to reserve your spot.

Whether it is to check out the new trail boardwalk, a visit to our 154th Anniversary, an in-depth Civil War weekend during “Two Weeks of Fury,” or just to stop by, we hope to see you at Bentonville Battlefield soon.

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Before first light on March 19, 1865, “bummers” from the 21st Michigan set out on their foraging journey to gather supplies ahead of the XIV Corps. The men under the command of Capt. Charles Belknap encountered Confederate resistance on what is now Harper House Rd. Belknap sent word back to XIV Corps First Division Commander, Brig. Gen. William Carlin to inform him of the force to their front. Carlin, believing it was just a delaying force, deployed his division to clear the road.

As the men moved onto the Cole Plantation they did not know that they faced Gen. Joseph Johnson’s army preparing for a grand assault. With Carlin’s probing attack underway, men from the first division soon started taking numerous casualties, including 13th Michigan commander Col. Willard Eaton, who was shot dead.

A hospital had been established almost one-half mile behind the Union line on the Morris farm. As the wounded poured in from the fight, surgeons began their ghastly work. During the afternoon, when the Confederate forces charged out of their works and advanced, bullets began to hit the logs of the farm house. This threat of enemy fire caused the hospital to be moved in haste. Pvt. Llewellen Sutliff of the 21st Wisconsin, had been shot through both wrists and made make-shift bandages from his shirt sleeves as he made his way to the hospital. Just as he arrived, men were shouting to get the wounded out. Sutliff was faced with becoming a prisoner or continuing down the road as the hospital evacuated. Despite heavy blood loss, Sutliff made it to the new location of the XIV Corps hospital, the Harper farm, before passing out.

During the next three days of fighting, around 600 men were brought for treatment to the Harper House, the home of John and Amy Harper. The yard, house, outbuildings, and “all other available spaces” were occupied by wounded and dying men. Col. William Hamilton described the scenes, “a dozen surgeons and attendants in their shirt sleeves stood at rude benches cutting off arms and legs…” all while the Harper family stayed upstairs in their home. Among the wounded, Pvt. Sutliff regained consciousness to find his wrists bandaged, and later found that the surgeon slipped the ill-fated bullet into his pocket as a souvenir. He lived the rest of his life as a grocer in South Dakota.

As the fighting subsided, the Union army gathered their wounded, and continued to Goldsboro. Heavy March rains had wreaked havoc on the roads, causing the wounded inside the ambulances to cry out with every bump so much so that Chaplain LW Earle said their screams would “soften even the hardest of hearts.” Meanwhile, the Harpers were left with approximately 50 wounded Confederate soldiers. The Harpers did their best to nurse these men back to health with limited supplies. Unfortunately, around twenty died and were buried by the family. These bodies were reinterred in 1895 and given permanent headstones in 2011.

This year, visitors will get the chance to experience what a field hospital in 1865 may have looked like. Ticketed evening hospital tours will be offered on Saturday, March 16 only. Visitors who have been able to see this night-time recreation in the past, will experience a different type of tour than what has been previously offered. Staff members have worked long and hard researching first-hand accounts of soldiers, surgeons, and bystanders to piece together the most realistic hospital scene to date. Col. Hamilton described the grizzly scene as “…the severely wounded who moans and cried were heart rending. Some in agony uttered curses on the men who brought on the war; other trying to send dying messages to loved ones at home; and many in earnest prayer…” This year, every wounded man portrayed in the tour will represent an actual casualty from the battle, including Llewellen Sutliff.

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During the day, visitors can speak with interpreters about the realities of Civil War medicine and what being treated would have entailed. Speakers Col. (Ret) Wade
Sokolosky will be presenting on North Carolina’s Confederate Hospitals, while historian Chris Grimes will speak on the Union army’s Letterman Plan. Visitors can also walk through Civil War camps, take a tour of the Harper House, and view weapons demonstrations.

Daily activities occur March 16 & 17 10:00–4:00 and are free. Evening hospital tours are March 16 only, tickets, $15 each, go on sale March 1 and are very likely to sell out before the event. To purchase tickets visit: https://squareup.com/store/fobb

Please be aware that this program will simulate combat trauma and is not suitable for all audiences.

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On December 20th, 1860, following the election of President Abraham Lincoln, South Carolina voted to leave the Union created by the signing of the Constitution of the United States on September 17th, 1787. The Union had lasted seventy-three years, three months and three days. Even before President Lincoln took office in March of 1861, conventions in seven southern states had voted in favor of secession and banded together to form the Confederate States of America. At a constitutional convention held at Montgomery, Alabama in February, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was elected provisional President by acclimation. On February 19th, 1861, President Davis appointed Leroy P. Walker of Alabama Secretary of War of the newly formed Confederate States of America.

Lacking standing armies of sufficient size to conduct war on a grand scale, both Confederate and Union governments called for volunteers to join provisional armies, intended to be disbanded when no longer needed. On March 6th the newly formed Confederate Congress authorized an army of 100,000 volunteers to serve for twelve months. In May 1861, following the outbreak of armed conflict, the Confederate Congress authorized the further enlistment of as many as 400,000 volunteers for three-year terms. President Lincoln, with a standing army of less than 16,000 soldiers, responded to an attack on Fort Sumter in April 1861 by calling for 75,000 state militia troops to serve for 90 days. The Militia Act of 1797, under which Lincoln acted, had never been adjusted to reflect an increase in the population of the United States from 5.3 million in 1800 to more than 31 million in 1860. The act limited the time militia could be compelled to serve to three months in a given year and the maximum number that could be called for to 75,000 soldiers.

People on both sides displayed an optimism bordering on the absurd. Politicians asserted that the fighting spirit and abilities of their people far exceeded that of the opposition. Leroy Pope Walker, for instance, promised to “sop up all the blood spilled with a handkerchief.” Despite a relatively small number of military aged white males in 1861, approximately one million aged fifteen to thirty-nine, the South had more volunteers than it could arm and equip, forcing the army to turn away some 200,000 volunteers. In June 1863, the population of the Confederate army peaked at almost 475,000 soldiers but would decline steadily thereafter. Before the war ended in 1865, some 2.3 million men served in the Union army, with more than 1 million in uniform at the end of the war.

Both sides soon realized the war would not end quickly
On 16 February 1897, Captain Allan H. Dougall received a Medal of Honor for his actions at Bentonville on 19 March 1865. “In the face of a galling fire from the enemy he voluntarily returned to where the color bearer had fallen wounded and saved the flag of his regiment from capture,” states the citation on the medal. Who was this soldier?

Allan Houston Dougall was born on 17 July 1836 in Glasgow, Scotland. His father was an owner of several cotton mills in Scotland. In 1858, the family immigrated to America and settled on a farm in St. Joseph, Indiana. At the start of the Civil War, Allan’s youngest brother, William, enlisted.

On 02 August 1862, Allan enlisted with twelve members of the St. Joe Wide Awakes. The Wide Awakes were a youth organization cultivated by the Republican Party during the 1860 presidential election with chapters primarily in the Northern states. Mr. Dougall was the captain of the local chapter for which he made speeches in the interest of electing Abraham Lincoln.

His military career started as a private in Company D of the 88th Indiana. He was promoted to quartermaster sergeant, then lieutenant, then adjutant to Col. C.E. Briant, and then to captain by Indiana’s Governor Morton.

He was shot in the right arm and shoulder during the Battle of Resaca. At Peach Tree Creek, he was wounded in the left leg. He sustained another wound to the left leg during the Battle of Bentonville.

After the war, Captain Dougall served as the first city clerk of New Haven, Indiana where he was later buried. He also served with the local internal revenue department before working with the Federal government. In various roles, he worked in Alaska, Mexico, Cuba, and the Philippines. He had visited every state and territory in the United States.

He continued to be active in Grand Army of the Republic organizations. He wrote a history of the 88th Indiana regiment in 1897.

He had married Josephine Griffin and had four children. He died on 22 May 1912 and is buried in the IOOF Cemetery in New Haven, Indiana.
Become A Member

Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site marks the site of the largest land battle fought in North Carolina during the American Civil War and one of the last engagements of the entire war. Today the battlefield retains much of its wartime appearance. The soldiers who struggled here would recognize this land and be able to say, “I know this place, I was here at Bentonville.”

We cordially invite you to become a member of the Friends of Bentonville Battlefield and help us preserve this land and tell the story of the men who fought and died here.

For more information and to join visit: www.fobb.net

Hands-On History Brings 19th Century to Life

This year, site staff have added more dates to the “Hands-On History” series. This program series features staff interpreters providing demonstrations of historic weapons, medical equipment, and civilian life for visitors. In February, the kitchen came to life with open-hearth cooking and weapons displays.

Mark your calendars for our next program on March 23!

Top: Andrew Duppstadt talks about Civil War artillery with visitors.
Right: A sweet potato pie fresh out of the oven.
As the fighting drug on and on, casualties mounted, and the harsh realities of war became apparent, enthusiasm naturally waned. More soldiers were needed, but the number of volunteers fell. The north was forced to turn to both money bounties and forced conscription.

While the need for soldiers to put down the rebellion was pressing, the Lincoln administration wrestled with the idea of authorizing the recruitment of black troops, concerned, however, that such a move would prompt the slave-holding border states remaining in the Union to secede. Early in the war, proclamations by Gen. John C. Frémont in Missouri and Gen. David Hunter in South Carolina that both emancipated slaves in their military regions and permitted them to enlist were immediately revoked by Washington. By mid-1862, however, the escalating number of former slaves liberated by Union occupation of southern territory, the declining number of white volunteers, and the increasingly pressing need of the Union Army for recruits pushed the Federal Government into reconsidering the ban.

After Lee’s first attempt to invade the North was turned back at Antietam, Maryland in September of 1862, the Emancipation Proclamation was announced. When it took effect in January of 1863, black recruitment began to be pursued in earnest. Recruitment, slow at first, increased dramatically when black leaders such as Frederick Douglass encouraged black men to become soldiers to ensure eventual full citizenship. In May 1863 the Government established the Bureau of Colored Troops to manage the growing numbers of black soldiers. By the end of the Civil War, roughly 179,000 black men served as soldiers in the U.S. Army and another 19,000 served in the U.S. Navy. Nearly 40,000 black soldiers died over the course of the war—30,000 of infection or disease.

After volunteering, men on both sides, most lacking even the rudiments of military training, were mustered in camps of instruction. The training they received was minimal, consisting mainly of the manual of arms and basic squad, company, and regimental drill. Once trained, a regiment could be quickly deployed to the front. A soldier might find himself in battle within weeks of reporting to camp and enter the fighting without ever having fired his musket. This lack of training no doubt greatly increased the chaos of a Civil War battlefield and contributed to the appalling casualties suffered on both sides. Before the four-year war ended, more than 250,000 Confederates had died of wounds and disease while more than 360,000 soldiers and given their lives for the Union. These figures represent only documented deaths, the actual total of soldiers dying in the war more than likely exceeded 750,000.

In 1861 Americans answered the call for volunteers in astounding numbers. Some volunteered to defend their ideals and way of life, some to preserve the Union and others for freedom itself. By doing so, these citizen-soldiers wrote one of the most fascinating stories in American history and helped transform the United States into one of the richest and most powerful nations the world has ever seen. A nation where freedom rules and whose citizens enjoy the right to participate in what Abraham Lincoln called “this grand experiment in democracy.” There are many was to show our respect and appreciation for the millions of volunteers who went to war in 1861. One way is to volunteer your service, just as they did. Just like them, no experience or prior training is necessary.

This year the Friends of Bentonville Battlefield, all of whom are volunteers, will host the extremely popular hospital program in March, “Two Weeks of Fury,” a symposium on the culminating battles of General Sherman’s 1865 Carolinas Campaign in April. Planning for the 155th anniversary reenactment of the battle to be held in March of 2020 is already underway. Throughout the year, special events and workdays will be hosted and your support is both needed and welcomed. Please consider becoming one of those special people who volunteer their time and talents and help preserve the sacred ground of Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site. Join the FoBB today.

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Save the date!
155th Anniversary Reenactment
March 21-22, 2020
The Battle of Bentonville, fought March 19-21, 1865, was the last full-scale action of the Civil War in which a Confederate army was able to mount a tactical offensive. This major battle, the largest ever fought in North Carolina, was the only significant attempt to defeat the large Union army of Gen. William T. Sherman during its march through the Carolinas in the spring of 1865.

Today, visitors can take a self-guided driving tour of the preserved battlefield and view seven wayside exhibit areas, follow walking trails to view original trenches from the battle, and visit the Harper family cemetery and monument area. The visitor center contains exhibits and a brief orientation film. Guided tours of the c.1855 Harper House, a Union field hospital, are available on the hour beginning at 10:00am, with the last tour at 4:00pm.