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# THE MAINE BUGLE

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The Maine Cavalry Newsletter

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Volume 1 Number 1

January-February 1997

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## *Greetings!*

This is the first issue of our bimonthly newsletter, **The Maine Bugle**. The Bugle's mission will be to help tie together the members of 1st & 2nd Maine by keeping them informed of events and issues that affect the unit. The content will depend on what you, the members, submit; the more that comes in, the more varied and interesting will be the content, not to mention the point-of-view. This is especially important when the more distant members of the unit are considered, for instance, the boys in Maine. All the unit want's to hear from and know what's happening with the rest of the unit. If needed, separate sections of the Bugle will be devoted to news from each region or company. Future issues of the newsletter will contain items such as event listings, readers' letters, research news, event reviews and after action reports, pictures, a roster, classifieds, comments from Major Bunker, and whatever else we can think of.

The newsletter derives its name from a newspaper first published by the veterans of the original 1st Maine cavalry as **The First Maine Bugle**. Intended to keep the regiment alive by keeping its veterans informed, it eventually became **The Maine Bugle** and served the veterans of all of Maine's regiments with news and information on such things as reunions. It is in the spirit of that original effort that we present our own **Maine Bugle**.

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## *Who We Are*

In 1959, Stevens Bunker formed a unit to take part in the upcoming centennial of the Civil War. Being from Maine and, at that time, living in Florida he chose to portray the Second Regiment of Maine Cavalry because it had operated in the region. Where ever Bunker moved, another bit of 2nd Maine cropped up. In the mid 70's he landed in Baltimore, Maryland.



While much of the unit faded away to ones and twos here and there, a new core began to grow in Baltimore which was designated Company A. In the field 2nd Maine began to earn a reputation for not being a typical "dismounted cavalry" unit. We marched, drilled, and used the tactics that the cavalry we portrayed would have used at a time when other "dismounted" units



were simply small mobs running around yelling and shooting. The company grew and during the 80's it fielded as many as 25 troopers at large events. It was not uncommon for 2nd Maine to be *invited* to events that otherwise advertised "No Dismounted Cavalry."

As the 80's wound down, the unit began to dwindle. Many of company A moved on. Going into the 90's there were few left actively participating.

In the 90's we began actively recruiting, placing ads in hobby periodicals, talking to folks at events, and working on regaining the unit's reputation in the field. Much of the "extra" equipment that was incorrect was scrapped. We reemphasized a "less is more" philosophy; that is basic uniform and equipment as was issued, in line with portraying typical Union cavalry. The unit increasingly began to mount at events, beginning with Sgt. Schumacher's sons in '92. By 1995, we would field 6 mounted troopers at most events.

The original 2nd Maine did not serve with the Army of the Potomac, but the active core of our unit lives in the region that that army operated in. For a long time the we considered the idea of portraying 1st Maine Cavalry. Many of the original 2nd Maine were veterans of the 1st Maine and had petitioned to be sent to the AOP, but the powers that be decided to send them to the Department of the Gulf instead. Last season Major Bunker and the company's NCO's decided that we would portray 1st Maine as well as 2nd Maine. Beginning with the Monmouth, NJ event in September of 96 we began officially registering as Company A, 1st Maine Cavalry, Veteran Volunteers.

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## *The Season Past*

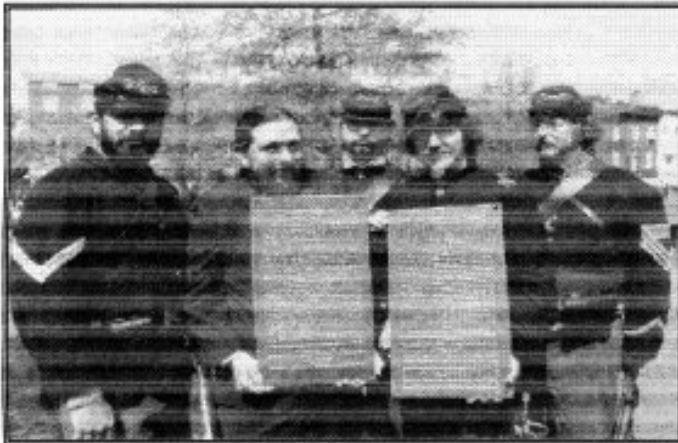
The 1996 season opened with the first annual *Members & Friends of 2nd Maine* party. Some 18 people ate, drank, and had a good time discussing the unit's past and future.



The first event of the season was **Sailor's Creek**. The park had just acquired new land, and this was the first reenactment held there in some time. It was not the event it had once been. There were simple too many Rebs. They out numbered us no less than 3 to 1! The battle was fought through dense undergrowth that made it tough going for the mounted boys, but those of us on foot did O.K. The infantry however felt differently. Many remarks were made about not returning next year.

**Stannardsville** was another matter. Held at Oakridge Plantation near Arrington, VA, the Stannardsville event was great! The one point that made the event was the dawn tactical Sunday. Oakridge has a lot of property, and we got to wander into parts of it hardly seen before. Though there were only six dismounted available, we were able to take advantage of bottlenecks in the terrain to stall the Rebs several times while our infantry got into, or out of things. Lester rode for miles doing recon duty, and we all felt like we had earned our breakfast.

In the late 70's Bunker began a tradition of placing a wreath on **President Street Station** to commemorate the Baltimore Riot of 1861. This year we marched out from the square at the foot of Broadway and marched to President Street to again place a wreath on the building. We were not alone, but for some years now other units have joined us, and an organization was formed to coordinate efforts to preserve the site. Louis Turner, an old 2nd Mainer himself, brought the bronze plaques his father had made for President Street and Camden Street Stations. These describe the events of 1861, and the roles the stations played in them. The plaques will eventually be placed on or in the buildings. That night a period dress ball was held to support President Street Station.



In May we participated in the **Wilderness** event. Depending on whom you spoke to, this event was either loved or hated. Probably the best part was the tactical representing the Wilderness battle. Enshrouded in fog, the entire thing was utter confusion and mismanagement--perfect!

June saw us at the Pumping Station Road site near Gettysburg taking part in the **Custer vs. Stuart** all cavalry event. This was a good event. While small because of it's limited nature, it was a fairly large cavalry event. Many cavalry units showed up that we see or don't see much of, including a 6th PA Lancers that came from England.

The first weekend in July was spent at Fairfield, PA for the **Battle of the Hills**. Another large event, this one was pretty good. Probably the best part was that we gained two new recruits. Many folks stayed out from the Custer/Stuart event to the Fairfield event, including Lester and his sons, Matt and Chris.

In August we did an encampment at the **Union Mills Homestead** in Maryland. We spent the weekend there training and drilling for our benefit and the public's. Bunker had a layout of arms and equipment that was impressive to us as well as the visitors.



In September we took part in a very interesting project. We portrayed the New York cavalry that pursued and killed John Wilkes Booth in a documentary about him and the assassination of President Lincoln. Bunker played the part of the man that shot Booth, while Lester played the Sergeant that pulled out Booth's accomplice. The last part of the filming was the actual firing of the barn, which was handled by the 2nd Maine Pyrotechnical Team.



The morning after the barn burning, Dave Geslois and I headed over to Essex, MD to check out the **Ballestone Manor** event. We should have slept in instead.

**Monmouth, NJ** closes out September. What makes Monmouth a good event is being in New Jersey, there tend to be fewer Rebs, and the crowd actually cheers the Union troops! Besides that, it's not too bad a site, and it has a nice little Rev War museum on it. This year was quite interesting. Dave wound up getting 11 stitches along his eyebrow after a horse poked him in the eye with a tree. I on the other hand had something blow into my eye during the tactical and wound up with a scratched cornea and a week off from work. Of all that, the only really bad part was the New Jersey turnpike. This was also the first event we registered as 1st Maine.

October means **Cedar Creek**. 1996 it meant rain. It seemed to always be drizzling, that is until they canceled Sunday's tactical, and then the battle. It was then that the sun came out and the rest of the day was quite nice, except that 90% of the troops had left already and hardly anyone was left to merit the money the spectators paid to see the show.



Wrapping up the season in November was **Remembrance Day** in Gettysburg. This parade serves more as a way to hang out with friends and visit Gettysburg than anything else. After the parade,



Dave and I went to visit the monument of the 1st Maine, to place a small flag, and take pictures. A ball was held that night and was attended by Jerry & Barb Todd, Dave Geslois, Mark & Maria Rooney

G. Todd

## Event Registration

To facilitate registering the unit for events, a centralized system has been adopted. Each member of the company deposits \$20 or more into a registration account. That money is recorded in the member's name and used only to register that member and attending family for events. When the member's account runs low, they will be prodded to send in more funds to cover any future events. Any funds left over will carry into the next season.

The event schedule will list an amount and a cutoff date for each event. The amount is how much the event is charging, per person, for registration. The cutoff date is the last day you can notify me that you will or will not be attending that event. If you miss the cutoff date, you forfeit your registration fee - it will already have been mailed. If someone can substitute for you, i.e.: use your registration, then your money will be credited back to your account.

## Upcoming Events!

### March 29-30, School of the Trooper, Port Deposit, MD

On a 250 acre site in Cecil County, Maryland we will hold our training weekend. Training will center on the basics of formation, movement, field tactics, manual of arms, weapon care and safety.

Amount: \$3.00

Cutoff: 3/21/97

### April 12, President Street Station, Baltimore, MD

A parade from Fells Point to the station to commemorate the Baltimore Riot of 1861. This year the museum in the station will be dedicated and opened to the public! We are the "host" unit for this event so maximum participation is needed! That night, from 7 to 11pm, there will be a period dress ball at the Polish Alliance Hall for which tickets are \$10 per person. There will only be 200 tickets so get them now before they sell out!

### April 19, Oakridge Plantation, Arrington, VA

13th annual event. 32 miles south of Charlottesville. A good and improving event with lots of land to play on, a manor house to check out, good campsites, and no hassles.

\$5.00

Cutoff: 2/21

### April 26, Fort McHenry National Park, Baltimore, MD

Living history encampment and garrison at the fort.

### May 16-18, Bowling Green, VA

7th annual event. We've never been, usually there was something else going on; this year there isn't.

Free

Cutoff: 4/25

### May 23-25, Brandywine, Wilmington, DE

5th annual event. Nice park, good tactical, near by.

\$5.00

Cutoff: 5/2

**June 13-15, Trevillion Station, Green Springs, VA**

Advertised as a mounted only event, if so, we grunts will go to Cecil County instead.

\$5.00 Cutoff: 3/28

**July 4-6, Pumping Station film site, Gettysburg, PA**

Gettysburg - The Forgotten Battles is the catchy name for this years dueling Gburg event that we will be attending.

\$6.00? Cutoff: 5/30 (may change)

**August 1-3, 2nd Manassass, Leesburg, VA**

At Ida Lee Park, dance Saturday evening.

\$5.00 Cutoff: 6/27

**September 12-14, Antietam, Sharpsburg, MD**

Should be great to watch, and they promise a cavalry skirmish.

\$8.00 Cutoff: 4/11

**September 26-28, Monmouth, Freehold, NJ**

A good event, northern crowd, no overwhelming numbers of Rebs, fine weather.

\$5.00 Cutoff: 9/5

**October 17-19, Cedar Creek, Middletown, VA**

Maybe it won't rain.

\$6.00 Cutoff: 9/19

**November 22, Remembrance Day, Gettysburg, PA**

Annual parade and ball, etc

Ball: \$7.00? Check with me on this.

We hope to do another School of the Trooper in June, especially if Trevillian Station falls through. We also may do an encampment, or two, at the Union Mills Homestead near Westminster, MD. Registration money and questions should be directed to:

Gerald Todd [gtodd@sprynet.com](mailto:gtodd@sprynet.com)  
8047 High Point Road  
Baltimore MD 21226-2020 (410) 360-9148

*My Two Bits*

Finally! I didn't think I'd ever get this done, but the first one's out the door (or will be soon) and that means it's time to begin work on the March-April issue. I hope to have that one out the door by the second week in March. Hey, I can do it! I ran a monthly newsletter that was in the mail by the 3rd workday of the month like clockwork, this bimonthly stuff is a breeze.

The kicker to all this is to have something to put in. I'm sure you don't want to read my ravings alone six times a year after hearing it 10 or so weekends in person. I'm counting on you, yes you, to get me stuff to print here. To start you off, scribble down what you think of the first issue of the **Bugle**, and what ideas you have for it's content. All-in-all, I expect the **Bugle** will improve in content, appearance, etc. As we go along

Some of the things I planned for future issues include:

A classified section for finding, selling, or trading things.

Everyone's picture next to their name in the roster.

A column where you can read Major Bunker's ravings.

A section with some stuff about the original regiments.

Stuff for civilians.

Next issue will focus on the training in March, President Street Station, Stannardsville, and Fort McHenry, including maps and directions. So get your registration money in!

Jerry

