

July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

From the Event Coordinator,

Coordinating a reenactment is an emotional rollercoaster. I am on that heart-pounding ride up the hill, full of excitement at the prospect of a great event. But, at some point, I'm going to crest that hill wondering why the heck I got on this stupid ride in the first place. I'm too old for this &\$\$@, and I'm going to hurt like heck when this coaster is done throwing me around. Then the event kicks off, and it's like the ride itself when I will be silently chanting, please don't go off the tracks, please don't go off the tracks for several days. After the event, I'll be coasting back into the station. I'll only remember the good parts and wonder when I can get on this ride again.

So why would anyone put themselves through that? First, I love this hobby and the people. I enjoy the friendships and the electronic-free simplicity of the weekends. I love being up before dawn, building a fire, making coffee, and puffing contently on my pipe while I wait for the rest of the world to wake up. Most of all, I enjoy spending time with my kids, half of whom are adults now. Sharing the experience with them over the years has been a major blessing. Finally, I am a firm believer in service and giving back. That's why I buy a ticket on the event coordinator roller coaster. Once I buy that ticket, I feel obligated to deliver the best experience possible to the best of my ability. I don't want to give up the reenacting experience, so I do what I can to help its survival.

It's been a rough couple of years for a hobby that has been in decline since the heady days of the 135th and 150th cycles. However, in my humble opinion, the best way to reverse this trend is to "hold this ground at all costs" We do that by providing engaging, educational, inspirational, and fun events with the resources we have.

We attract new members by offering challenges and authentic campaign experiences to the younger crowd and a balanced, historically authentic, less strenuous garrison experience to the older generation. We maintain the best aspects of individual honor, dignity, gentlemanly behavior, and mutual respect that exemplified the period. We provide a family-friendly experience to reenactors and spectators alike.

We recognize modern society's sensitivities to the worst aspects of our shared history. We interpret and educate, leaving animosity and malice behind. We prove the worth of our hobby by consistently demonstrating our high personal standards and dedication to history. In this manner, we continue to shine a light on the lessons of History and best honor the men and women, military and civilian, for the terrible sacrifices they made. Acknowledging those lessons, we strive to continue to be "One Nation, Under God, Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All."

I look forward to seeing you at Barrett Hill Farm in Mason, New Hampshire, in October. Until then, I am open to your comments, contributions, and constructive criticisms. Together, let's make this an event to remember.

I have the honor of being your most obedient servant.

Tom Connell

Captain, 15<sup>th</sup> MA Vol Inf., 4<sup>th</sup> Rgt. AL Vol.