Hello Everyone!

It’s been another great year for the Overmountain Men.

We have enjoyed spending the year sharing the history of the Overmountain Men and their Valiant Battle at Kings Mountain. A turning point in the American Revolution and a Victory for Freedom!

Keeping the Story Alive!

March to Kings Mountain   (Photo above)

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November 2019
On October 6, 1780, during the American Revolution, 900 Patriot soldiers left a temporary camp at what is now Cowpens National Battlefield and continued the pursuit of their British foes following local creeks. The next afternoon, they charged into battle at Kings Mountain (now Kings Mountain National Military Park) and entered our history books. The creeks they followed along this portion were dammed in the 20th century to create Lake Whelchel, a municipally-owned water source for Gaffney, South Carolina, which submerged the old paths. Previously, a 2.5 mile trail along the southern shore allowed visitors to shadow the trail of these Patriots. But in June 2019, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail partnered with the Carolina Thread Trail, City of Gaffney, Cherokee County SC, Gaffney BPW, and the Cherokee County OVT Committee to add another chapter to the story of this march.

On June 29, 2019 the ribbon was cut on the now 7.5 mile Lake Whelchel Trail. This new trail completes a portion of the OVNHT Master Planning Process to connect Chesnee, SC with Kings Mountain National Military Park. The trail now wraps around the entire lake, providing a variety of route options for the historic trail. The opening ceremony was visited by US Congressman Ralph Norman, South Carolina State Senator Harvey Peeler, and trail advocates from across the southeast. Guided walks, rides, and runs gave visitors the chance to explore and enjoy the nature and the history that can be found on the Overmountain Victory NHT.

On May 31-June 1, 2019, NPS staff from the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) and members of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) participated in a variety of “National Trails Day” programs held in Elkin, NC. Elkin is the eastern terminus of the OVNHT, and celebrates a long tradition of trails and history throughout their community.

One goal of the NPS and OVTA is to share the history of our nation and the OVNHT with children and young adults. On Friday, May 31, 50+ students from the high school were lead through stations sharing the story of the Kings Mountain campaign and how their local area played a pivotal role in gathering the eastern group of Patriot soldiers. The Wilkes/Surry Chapter of the OVTA guided children through parts of life familiar to their 18th century counterparts, including playing colonial games, using the various tools and currency in the colonies, and military training that would have happened in Elkin. A few visitors from the Trails Day celebration were able to join in the demonstrations too, and enjoyed an additional layer of historical significance to the trails they had come to explore. Reenactors of the OVTA told “The Story” of the Overmountain Men and the Battle of Kings Mountain. Volunteers guided hikes along a variety of local trails in the area, and a street fair along Main Street provided participants with food, beverage, and entertainment. It was a fantastic series of events to celebrate National Trails Day!

**BEN RICHARDS NPS**

Chief of Planning and Partnerships
Southern Campaign of the American Revolutionary Parks Group
Cowpens National Battlefield,
Kings Mountain National Military Park,
Ninety Six National Historic Site &
Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

**National Trail Days Pathways**

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**Did You Know?**
What was the Southern Strategy in the Revolutionary War? The Southern Strategy was a plan implemented by the British during the Revolutionary War to win the conflict by concentrating their forces in the southern states of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia.
Hello!

The 2019 Kings Mountain March ended a few weeks ago. It was a great March. Huzzah! Once again Thanks to everyone who marched, programed, planned and organized behind the scenes. A special Thanks to the National Park Service for all your help. It takes all of us to make the March happen. The end of our year is coming quickly. The next Board meeting is scheduled on November 16 at the Elkin Heritage Center in Elkin, NC. All members are welcome to attend.

The annual membership meeting is scheduled on February 1, 2020 in Morganton, NC. At this meeting, OVTA will tell about the 2019 year, elect new officers and directors, consider some bylaw changes and any other items that need discussing. ALL MEMBERS ARE INVITED. If you are interested in being an officer or director, send a message to Leigh Ann Hunter, OVTA secretary at info@ovta.org. She will send your name to the Nominating committee. Since the end of 2019 is near and time to decide where to make your end of year donations, don’t forget the OVTA.

I believe the 2019 march was the best one that I have participated. Although the weather was hot, everyone seemed to have a good time and enjoyed telling the story and teaching history and skills. The numbers have not been calculated yet. However, the Wilkes/Surry Area programed to over 1300. There were no program cancelations this year.

THANK YOU to all who were involved in this year’s March. Those who marched, did presentations, planned activities, fed the marchers, and all the folks behind the scenes for all your help. The March could not have been a success without everyone.

There were twelve OVTA members that made the entire March. Two more were only a few days short. Several more members and friends joined the March along the trail for short periods of time. Thank you all.

David Doan-President O.V.T.A.

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Did You Know?
The fall of Charleston on May 12, 1780, was perhaps the worst defeat Americans suffered during the entire Revolution. Subsequent British victories at the Waxhaws, Camden, and Fishing Creek eliminated much of the southern Continental army and made the British confident that the South was theirs. Events in the North and South led to a feeling of Patriot desperation by the summer of 1780.
Hart Square Village

Hart Square Foundation was established in 2005 with the intention of creating an endowment to preserve Hart Square Village. Hart Square Village began as the personal collection of Dr. Bob and Becky Hart of Hickory, N.C. Their collection of early American antiques and log buildings was amassed over a fifty year period and displayed at their wildlife preserve in Vale, N.C.

The Village is now the nation’s largest collection of historic log structures. In 2017, Dr. Bob and Becky Hart officially donated the village, collection and property to Hart Square Foundation for the intended purpose of its historic preservation. (Property donation parcel ID: 269704941393)

Every cabin is furnished with Appalachian antiques, accurately displaying the various professions and nineteenth century experiences. The cabin’s interiors honor authenticity from every pewter spoon on the dining table to every butter churn or rope bed.

The expansive collection includes one of three functioning pre-civil war cotton gins in the U.S., a print shop, a doctor’s office, a one room schoolhouse, and countless artifacts that will never be found anywhere else, even in the Smithsonian

In addition to preserving and maintaining the 100 structures and 20 acres of land, the foundation provides educational programming throughout the year to share this collection with thousands of visitors.

Our annual village festival shares the crafts and trades of pioneer America with 4,000 visitors from over 15 states. Many of our artisans also engage 3,000 elementary and middle school student visitors who participate in our field trip programming between October and April.

OVTA at Hart Square Village

The Overmountain Victory Trail Association was invited to Hart Square for their 33rd annual festival which was held on October 26, 2019. The OVTA shared the Story of the Overmountain Men and their Epic journey to the battle of Kings Mountain.

Keeping the Story Alive! at Hart Square Village
The OVTA in Charleston! Victory Day Celebration! December 14, 2019
The OVTA is on the Move ... To Charleston South Carolina!

This year’s Charleston Victory Day/Tricorn Hat Day program will include a 12-man militia reenactment contingent from Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) that will deliver a 30-45 minute presentation on “The Campaign to Kings Mountain” including a Kings Mountain wreath laying for the fallen, a Mourn to Arms and a table set up to distribute OVTA educational material. Proposed Order of March: OVTA militia contingent is to be attached to the 2nd South Carolina Regiment, South Carolina Continental Line and march behind the 2nd South Carolina Regiment followed by the 6-man SAMS detail and 2-3 bagpipers to represent the battlefield contributions and sacrifices of the Over the Mountain Men that marked the turning point of the War for American Independence and the ultimate evacuation of British forces from Charlestown, SC.

OVTA will also provide a 14 x 14 foot period canvas tent and table display from Overmountain Victory Trail Association on Marion Square to further educate the population about the Battle of Kings Mountain and the people responsible for the total collapse of the British Southern Campaign.

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On the Overmountain Victory Trail with Tim Massey and Others

If one word could describe this year’s march it would be “smooth.” At least that was the word I kept hearing over and over. No calamities, no drama, just smooth from beginning to end. The Doanes had to switch trucks in the beginning but, thanks to Tom Vaughn, that issue was quickly solved. It had been three years since I had been on the march. There were some new faces and the familiar ones. It’s hard to go on the trail and not think back on all the good times with Blair Keller, The Bowens, the Lails, Tom Holmes, the Dahls, the Kings, the Cobbs, Leigh Van Blarcom, David King and on the list could go. There always seemed to be a bit of drama - and that was outside of the story telling “The Story” has always been well presented but the additional educational element is a bonus for presenters and students as well. In the last 20 years I have seen the OVTA go from walking, to walking and talking, to mostly talking - telling “the story” that is. Places have changed too. We used to stop at the Shelving Rock, now it is just a drive by. Dysartsville, that traditional two day stop, is no more. Communities along the trail have taken up the mantle and embraced the history of “the story.” Schools all along the trail take advantage of the exceptional educational opportunity. I must admit the OVTA folks have gotten more professional in presenting history through educational stations for school and adult programs I remember the days when we had to scrap for a handful of people to come listen. People now seem more excited and eager to come hear the story of the Overmountain Men. Fourteen years of sharing the story has made Steve Ricker masterful with Richard Luce providing the lead in. At Gilbertown Randy Curd, Pappy Hawthorne and I rotated through the day with the different school groups. George Cobb was with us at the first, but Mark Halbach stepped in masterfully and Pappy also presented the Doak sermon well. Mark also added an ending summing up the end of the war years. Everywhere the story was told when Ferguson got too close to the edge and “ole sweetips” was called upon Dalton Wade fired the fatal shot nearby.

I remember the first year I was on the trail and about freezing to death at the Shelving Rock with temperatures in the mid-30’s. One year there, it was cold and raining but we had tents and a few people, including Congressman Roe, came out and the story went on. There was a blacksmith there that year with forge going and shoeing a horse in the cold rain. That had to be about as close as one could experience Shelving Rock as it was in 1780

To Be continued in next Newsletter

Tim Massey
Columnist at The Greeneville Sun, Photo Journalist at Tim Massey Historic Photography and Publisher and CEO at Shiloh Road Publishing (photo left)
Fred Bowen

Fred is a Historian Artist who has created a series of twelve works in watercolor of the Overmountain Men. Fred Donated one of his original works to the Overmountain Victory Trail Association. We appreciate his generosity and passion for history! If interested in Fred's work, visit him on Facebook!

The Muster of the Overmountain Men

by: Chad A. Bogart – Museum Curatorial Assistant, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park

September at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park is always met with patriotic anticipation as we eagerly await the arrival of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association during the yearly march to Kings Mountain. Sycamore Shoals preserves the site chosen by Colonels Shelby and Sevier to muster the frontier army whose mission was to search out Major Patrick Ferguson and his loyalist force after his threat to destroy the backwoods settlements. This historic gathering is commemorated each year by several events held on the park grounds.

On Saturday, September 14th, inside the reconstructed Fort Watauga, the Tennessee Society Sons of the American Revolution celebrated the 239th “Gathering at Sycamore Shoals” with a memorial service and wreath laying ceremony. Several OVTA members were present including President David Doan who brought greetings on behalf of the organization. On Friday, September 20th OVTA members assisted the Washington County NC Militia, host living history organization at Sycamore Shoals, with a unique after-hours twilight program entitled “Lanterns & Legends of 1780”. Visitors experienced the sights, sounds, and emotions of the 18th century as they were guided through the historic encampment of the Overmountain Men by lantern light. They met legendary figures such as John Sevier, Mary Patton, Rev. Samuel Doak, and others as they told the dramatic story of the historic gathering which led to one of the most decisive victories of the Revolution. During the following weekend the park hosted the annual Overmountain Victory Trail Celebration which offered visitors the chance to step back in time and witness many aspects of life on the 18th century frontier with an emphasis on the Overmountain Muster. Programs included militia drill, weapons demonstrations, baking in the earthen oven, open hearth cooking, frontier medicine, and the story of black powder maker Mary Patton. Many individuals hold membership in both the OVTA and the Washington Co. Militia, and when these two organizations come together at the park our visitors are treated to some of the best 18th century historical interpretation around. The commemorations culminated with the 44th annual crossing of the Watauga River always held on September 25th to honor the arrival of the Virginia militia. Members of the OVTA have recreated this historic occurrence since 1975. Following the crossing OVTA members presented the story of the campaign to Kings Mountain to the assembled crowd of around 75 visitors with the historic Sycamore Shoals of the Watauga in the background. Finally, during the week of the crossing, members of the OVTA, Washington Co. Militia, and Sycamore Shoals Park Staff programmed to nearly 700 students as every 4th grader in the Elizabethton City and Carter County School Systems visited the park. I briefly spoke with Carter County Director of Schools Dr. Kevin Ward, during his visit on the county education day, and he was very impressed with the venue and the content of the programming. The events held at the park were a huge success due, in large part, to the assistance of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association. On behalf of park manager Jennifer Bauer and our staff I wish to express our deepest thanks and appreciation to our friends in the OVTA. Congratulations on a successful march, and we look forward to next year!

Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

Face the Hill
OVTA Story Presented To NC State DAR Conference

The Sons of the Revolution in North Carolina (SRNC) has a Speaker’s Bureau primarily made up of OVTA members. We often present the story of the March to Kings Mountain since it is so important to the story of North Carolina and the success of the founding of our Constitutional Republic.

In April we were honored to be allowed to present the story of the March to Kings Mountain to the 119th NC State DAR Conference in Raleigh, NC. The DAR has a long and distinguished history of keeping the story of the American Revolution alive and relevant. This conference was attended by almost five hundred DAR members from across North Carolina with attendees from the National organization and many other state societies as well. The SRNC had four OVTA members at the event dressed as NC Militia of 1780.

Did You Know?

The tide of battle was soon to turn, however, in a sequence of events. First, overmountain men defeated forces under Patrick Ferguson at Kings Mountain on October 7, 1780. General Cornwallis, in command in the South, abruptly stopped his push into North Carolina and fell back to South Carolina to protect its western borders. About the same time, George Washington selected General Nathanael Greene to salvage the situation in the South. Greene, against contemporary military wisdom, split his army so that they could move more widely throughout the Carolinas.

After the presentation, Carole Weiss, the North Carolina State DAR Regent presented the OVTA with a very generous sponsorship.

We were made to feel welcome and we had a great time. We owe a lot to the DAR who does more than any other organization to preserve the Revolutionary War sites and memory.
SRNC Provides Grant to OVTA

The Sons of the Revolution in North Carolina (SRNC) has again provided a $1,000 Grant to the OVTA to assist in keeping the story of the March to Kings Mountain alive. The SRNC was chartered and organized to perpetuate the memory of the men who, in military, naval, or civil service, by their act or counsel, achieved American Independence.

The objectives of the Society are:
To keep alive the spirit of patriotism
To foster devotion toward the institutions of our country
To encourage historical research in relation to the Revolution
To preserve documents, relics and individual records of the Revolutionary period
To promote the celebration of patriotic anniversaries
To impress the importance of these subjects upon the rising generation

The SRNC believes that the OVTA embodies these same objectives by bringing the story of the Revolutionary War to the rising generation. The OVTA brings the story to the school children in a manner that they will always remember. Not dry dates and period politics but dramatic recreations by living historians authentically outfitted to the 1780.

We would like to challenge other heritage organizations to do the same. We cannot let another generation go by without understanding the history of how the country was founded.

Visit Our Website!

Www.ovta.org

Find us on: facebook®

Home Base- to the Overmountain Victory Association

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276-525-1050
Open Daily 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.