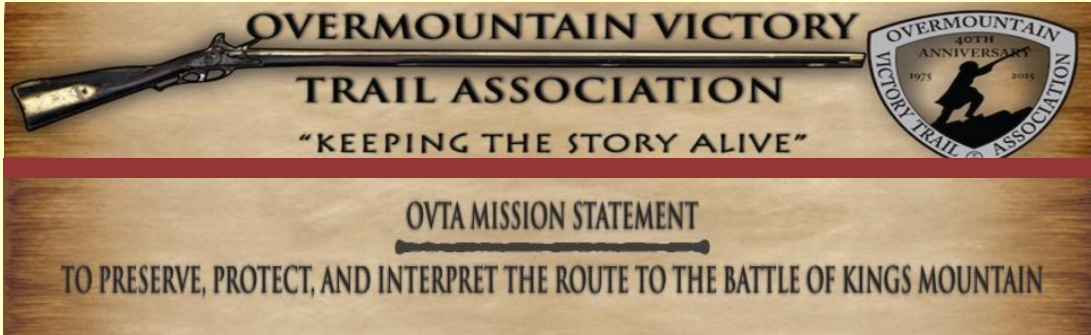




March 1, 2015



WELCOME!

The Overmountain Victory Trail Association would like to take this opportunity to say *thank you* to the patriots who have made our annual march and community events a huge success in 2014! We appreciate your support, time and effort. We look forward to an exciting 2015! To our new members who have recently joined us, Welcome! Looks like it's going to be a great year!

ABOUT US

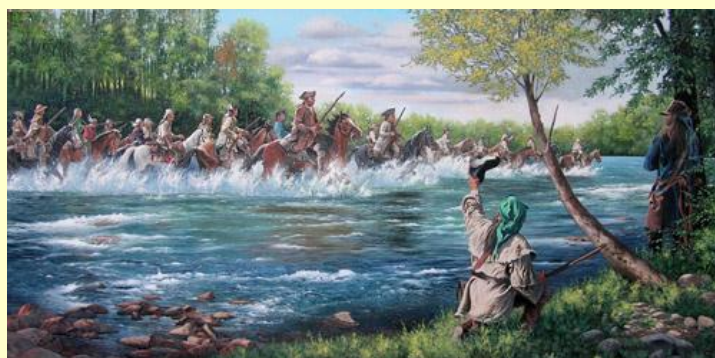
The Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) was formed in 1974 by organizing the first ever re-enactment annual march to gain recognition for the route the Overmountain Men took to the Battle of King's Mountain South Carolina. The OVTA's mission is to protect, preserve and interpret the route of the campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Our protection efforts include everything from maintaining the Pemberton Oak; a 600 year old oak tree that was the mustering point along the trail and, until its fall in 2006, was the only living remnant from the 1780 campaign; to working with civic organizations to develop the trail in their community or to oppose projects that would damage or destroy the Trail at any of the historic sites. We also work with landowners to certify portions of the trail on their property. Certification is a contract between the land owner and the National Park Service to protect the Trail. Our promotional efforts are intended to keep the story of the campaign to King's Mountain alive. We do this by giving presentations and programs, working with Chambers of Commerce, tourism bureaus and community-based organizations, and writing news articles to report trail projects and activities.

Our biggest Trail promotion is the annual re-enactment. Each year since 1974, the OVTA has sponsored a "march" on the route of the campaign to King's Mountain. As much as possible we walk the original route and camp in the same campsites. While the reenactment is NOT a primitive backpacking experience, but rather, a combination of trail and road walking along with car camping, it provides a great opportunity to relive one of the important moments in America's history. As we move down the trail, we reenact the historical events that occurred during the original campaign. We give programs to school children and conduct historical sketches for community groups showing what happened on that very spot in 1780.

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*A Call to Arms
By Richard Luce*



Pemberton Oak
Historical Significance Remains

Back Woods Wisdom

The tips of the golden rod plant always points north while the tips of the evergreen trees always points east

Did You Know?

In September of 1780, during the Southern Campaign of the American Revolutionary war, Major Ferguson's force, made up mostly of frontier Loyalists from South Carolina, was the western wing of General Charles Cornwallis' North Carolina invasion force. They were tasked with protecting Loyalist outposts from attacks by Patriots led by Isaac Shelby, Elijah Clark and Charles McDowell. Ferguson had declared that the Patriots could choose to lay down their arms or see him "*lay waste to their country with fire and sword.*" Believing they could prevent Ferguson from making good on his threat, 1,000 Patriot militiamen gathered in the Carolina backcountry, including Davy Crockett's father, John. Learning of the Patriot force from a deserter, Ferguson positioned his Loyalists in defense of a rocky, treeless ridge named King's Mountain.

Please see *President's Articles* on page 2

OVTA Highlights 2014 / 2015

The President's Desk

2015 OVTA Leadership



OVTA Officers

Term

RG Absher - President - Elkin, NC	2014-2016
Tom Vaughn - Vice President - Bristol, TN	2015-2017
Leigh Anne Hunter Surber - Treasurer - Abingdon, VA	2015-2017
Mary Bohlen - Secretary - Statesville, NC	2014-2016

OVTA Board Members

Donna Absher - Elkin, NC	2015-2017
Joella Johnson Barbour - Abingdon, VA	2014-2016
Alan Bowen - Cartersville, GA	2015-2017
Scott Bowen - Rydal, GA	2014-2016
Chivous Bradley - Rutherfordton, NC	2015-2017
George Cobb - Cedar Bluff, AL	2014-2016
Myra Cook - Elkin, NC	2014-2016
Randy Curde - Tega Cay, SC	2015-2017
Albert Dale - Dysartsville, NC	2014-2016
Mark Halback - Kingsport, TN	2014-2016
Sheba Harris - Jonesville, NC	2014-2016
Dan Hopping - Raleigh, NC	2014-2016
Rick Humphreys - Abingdon, VA	2015-2017
Aggie King - Bristol, TN	2015-2017
Ronnie Lail - Unicoi, TN	2014-2016
Bryant Lindsey - Morganton, NC	2014-2016
Mel McKay - Johnson City, TN	2014-2016
Leighann Snuggs - Gaffney, SC	2014-2016
Gary Walrath - Piney Flats, TN	2014-2016

OVTA Board Members Emeritus

W. Blair Keller Jr. - Abingdon, VA



The President's Desk

By RG Absher



It's been an amazing year in the OVTA in many ways! 2014 will go down as one of major transition in the OVTA. In 2014, we hired our first Executive Director and our first Director of Interpretation. The increased organization and leadership helped us achieve a re-organization of our web-site, a new emphasis on membership recruitment, continued commitment in trail protection projects, and growth in our outreach efforts in telling the story during the annual march.

One thing for sure, the OVTA is certainly positioning for even a bigger year ahead. Following successful implementation of the National Park Foundation Ticket to Ride Grant and the Cooperative Agreement with the National Park Service during the Annual March to Kings Mountain, we reached nearly 10,000 in our interpretive outreach numbers. That's 10,000 people who were exposed to the story of the 1780 campaign of the Overmountain Men to the Battle of Kings Mountain! I'm pleased to report that this feat came about due to the great amount of cooperation and coordination up and down the trail corridor which took place this past year!! Thanks go to so many people; Ronnie Lail-Grand Marshal, the OVTA Board, our trail partners, trail towns and communities, state and local parks, and the National Park Service. This is interesting because this kind of grass roots involvement is what made the 1780 campaign a difference maker in the American Revolution.

Also, in 2014 the OVTA committed funding to partner with the town of Elkin, North Carolina to obtain permanent land easements along a three-mile on-the-ground section of the National Historic Trail. When achieved, this will permanently set aside this section of trail for future



OVTA Board Meeting - January 2015
Asheville, N.C.

Continued on Page 5

Did You Know?

Isaac Shelby, one of the patriot leaders in the Kings Mountain campaign, later became the first elected Governor of the state of Kentucky



(L-R) Garrett Jackson, John Slaughter, R.G. Absher, Leigh Anne Surber (not shown) attended "Hike The Hill" in Washington, DC, February 7-12, 2015.



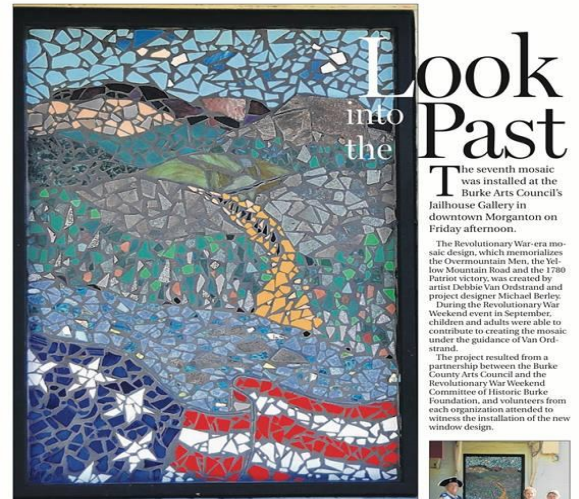
By, R.G. Absher - President, OVTA

Our visits at the nine congressional offices and the eight senatorial offices went very well. On average, we spent about 10-12 minutes at each office on Monday. For the most part, most of the offices were very supportive in what our mission is and we kept hearing, "touch base with your field office representatives and let them know when you have ribbon cuttings, and events along the trail during the annual march this year, and they will get have representation and or a member of the house (if available at that time) attend!" Yes, as appropriate on each visit, we mentioned the outstanding geographic features of beautiful and interesting national resource connections such as Yellow Mountain Gap, Roan Mountain, Shelving Rock, Lake James, Alexander's Ford, Gilbert Town, Cane Creek, Doe River, etc., especially related to the districts they serve. Of course we didn't tell everything to everybody as we had to be very efficient with our time. The trick was to be focused and not to "glaze over" the staff members' eyes as we emphasized some of the following on all visits:

Battlefield Protection Acts Projects such as Cane Creek
The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act Project - Shelving Rock
Annual Funding to the NPS - OVVI/OVNHT

We also talked about the enormous outpouring of community involvement along the trail corridor. We highlighted communities' projects like on- the- ground trails, greenways, historic preservation and interpretive awareness of the story of the campaign to Kings Mountain. We pointed out the tourism benefits of the trail along the communities and regions along the 330 mile stretch. We also pointed out the partnerships and many grassroots projects up and down the corridor. We talked about the outreach of nearly 10K students and members of the public during the annual march. We covered these points and many more!

We did have an outstanding set of meetings with the Partnership for the National Trail System (PNTS) on Sunday and Monday! John gave an outstanding presentation which talked about four park management alignments. John spoke that the Spirit of the Overmountain Men was the principle driving spirit of the Southern Campaign!! And John, Garrett, and I all had wonderful communications with Gary Werner and the National Partnership Board. I am on their leadership council as the representative of OVTA. The partnership wants my continued involvement and loves the leadership and direction exhibited by OVTA in the spectrum of all the other trail groups nationwide!



The seventh mosaic was installed at the Burke Arts Council's Jailhouse Gallery in downtown Morganton on Friday afternoon. The Revolutionary War-era mosaic design, which memorializes the Overmountain Men, the Yellow Mountain Road and the 1780 Patriot victory, was created by artist Debbie Van Ostrand and project designer Michael Berley. During the Revolutionary War Weekend event in September, children and adults were able to contribute to creating the mosaic under the guidance of Van Ostrand.

The project resulted from a partnership between the Burke County Arts Council and the Revolutionary War Weekend Committee of Historic Burke Foundation, and volunteers from each organization attended to witness the installation of the new window design.



Submitted by Bryant and Linda Lindsey

Newspaper Article- Mosaic of the Yellow Mountain Road
 Memorializing the Overmountain Men in 1780



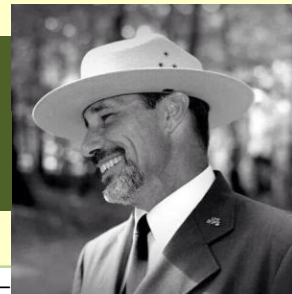
Located near Roan Mountain State Park in Carter County, TN, the Shelving Rock Encampment is one of the few extant Revolutionary War sites in Tennessee. Approximately 1,000 volunteer patriots known as the Overmountain Men camped here September 26-27, 1780, while en route to the Battle of Kings Mountain. The property includes an open field and the "shelving rock," an overhang where goods were stored to keep them dry. In addition to being recognized by inclusion in the National Register, the site is part of the National Park Service's Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. This program designates sites in Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina that lead to the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Nashville - The Tennessee Historical Commission has announced nine Tennessee sites have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. It is part of a nationwide program that coordinates and supports efforts to identify, evaluate and protect historic resources. The Tennessee Historical Commission administers the program in Tennessee. (Shelving Rock is one of the sites.)



OVTA NEWSLETTER

National Park



On August 25, 2016, the National Park Service turns 100! The Centennial will kick off a second century of stewardship of America's national parks and engaging communities through recreation, conservation, and historic preservation programs, and will celebrate achievements of the past 100 years.

Re-Enactor portraying Banastre Tarleton Cowpens National Battlefield



N.P.S. Photo

BANASTRE TARLETON, the highly skilled leader of a 550-man British cavalry Force, was called "The Butcher" after becoming infamous for his ruthless slaughter of Americans. But he met his match in early 1781 at a wooded pasture called Cowpens, where he was forced to run from DANIEL MORGAN'S sharpshooters (hero of Quebec, Saratoga, and other northern battles). It was a stunning victory for Americans! The British soon left the Carolinas to invade Virginia.

234th Anniversary of the Battle at Cowpens

The event was Saturday January 17-Sunday, January 18, 2015 (Overmountain Men were here **Saturday** only). The event was the 234th Anniversary of the Battle of Cowpens, an important Patriot victory led by Daniel Morgan. The event included about 100 reenactors, cavalry demonstrations, ranger-led battlefield tours, musket and cannon demonstrations, colonial cooking, craftsmen, author lectures, children's dummy gun drills, and various other programs. The event was very successful and well-attended. It brought about 6700 visitors into the park over the weekend.



Cowpens National Battlefield
Photo NPS

Backwoods Wisdom
Spiders make their webs facing south (if possible)



Paul Carson
OVNHT
Superintendent, NPS

The OVTA wants to
Thank you
for your dedication
and service!

NPS Photo



**American Revolution Southern Campaign Parks
Group Superintendent John Slaughter briefs the
national trails community on the consolidation of
the Southern Campaign Parks (Ninety Six NHS,
Cowpens NB, Kings Mountain NMP, and OVNHT)
and how it will revolutionize the NPS and bring
additional resources to the OVNHT community**



(L) John Slaughter

(R) Garrett Jackson

OVTA Highlights 2014 / 2015

Continued from page 2

The President's Desk

This past year we also launched the celebration of our 40th Anniversary march to the battle of Kings Mountain. We saw the popularity of the 40th anniversary coins during the annual march! In addition, we witnessed a renewed interest in the early history of the OVTA. This interest in the early years of the Annual March to Kings Mountain in the mid-seventies to the early eighties carried over to the History Symposium in Gaffney during November.

In November, participants were thrilled by an interesting variety of presentations at the History Symposium in Gaffney, SC. Hats off to the fine job the City of Gaffney did in hosting the workshop! And thanks to the OVTA History Symposium Committee that planned the Symposium. A few of the topics included Archeology along the OVNHT, the early years of the OVTA, and a presentation about the Ferguson Rifle. These history symposium's offer an up close look at some of the power in research, and compelling aspects which connect to the telling of the story that so many of us love, The Campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain by the Over mountain Men.

The year ahead should likewise be an active one for the OVTA. The forming of an Executive Committee (as allowed under Roberts Rules), should help take some pressure off of OVTA board meetings by having the committee meet between scheduled board meetings to conduct planning, project development, and developing proposals for board meetings. In addition, the Executive Committee will better aid in coordinating day-to-day activities up and down the trail and directing the work of our current Director of Interpretation, Steve Ricker. This committee consists of OVTA President RG Absher, Vice President Tom Vaughn, Treasurer Leigh Anne Surber, Secretary Mary Bohlen, Grand Marshal Lonnie Lail, at large member of the OVTA Bryant Lindsey, and non-voting employee, Steve Ricker. We will also bring the NPS on board on for meetings involving NPS partnership-related projects. Having an Executive Committee will also help us get started earlier on planning the annual march for 2015.

So in review, I would like to urge you to jump in and assist the work of the OVTA this year. We look forward to working with some new initiatives which will be emphasized by the National Park Service during the next few years. The OVNHT Planning Conference in January 2015 set the stage in working for these projects in the year ahead.

We in the OVTA are excited in expanding our opportunities to tell the story and to protect and preserve the trail and its history. May 2015 bring you a year of happiness and great experiences along the trail. And likewise, may the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail grow in interest, participation and support up and down the entire trail corridor.

Look forward to seeing you on the Trail!!!

Back Woods Wisdom

Moss is thicker and greener on the north side of trees

In Memory**Blair Keller – OVTA Board Member Emeritus**

Submitted by W. Garrett Jackson



Another Overmountain hero has fallen. Walter Blair Keller, Jr. passed from this life on Wednesday, February 18, 2015, but not before leaving a legacy of service and passion to the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and his community.

Blair was born on February 19, 1929 in Washington County and was a lifelong resident, where he and his wife Gilda raised their two children, a daughter and a son, and enjoyed watching their grandson grow-in.

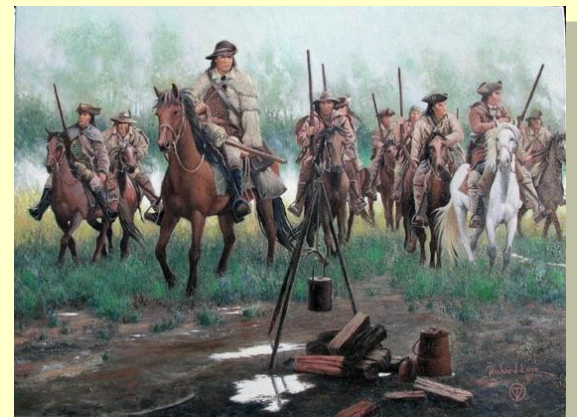
An active leader in Washington County, Blair was also very active in his church, Green Spring Presbyterian. Not just one to "play", Blair worked as a Statistician with the Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service, as a farmer, was a Charter Member of the Mount Rogers Chapter of the Appalachian Trail Club and a Charter Scout in the formation of Boy Scouts of America, Troop No. 70. In 1950, he became the first from Troop 70 to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout and continued to serve the Troop the rest of his life.

Blair's roots ran deep in Washington County, VA, making him the descendant of as many as five veterans of the Battle of Kings Mountain. In 1978, at the urging of his friend and brother-in-law David Thomas, Blair participated in the OVTA's march to Kings Mountain, which he then did annually for 32+ years, even once entirely on horseback. Blair served as a Board Member of OVTA for over 30 years, achieving the first ever "Board Member Emeritus" status by vote of his fellow board members in November 2014.

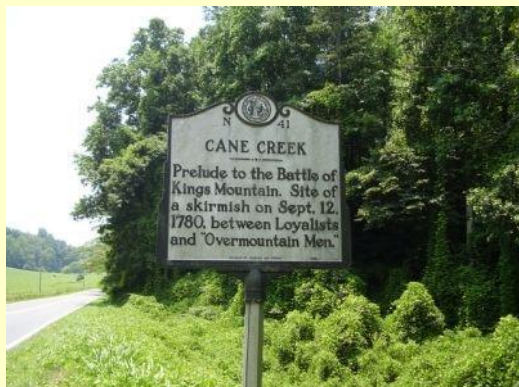
Mr. Keller was active in the creation, logistics and facilitation of the 'Call to Arms' Colonial Education Program since its inception in 2005 and was active in the purchase and certification of the Abingdon Muster Grounds in 2007, forever preserving this important piece of our Nation's history. His work on previous OVNHT segment certifications in the Town of Abingdon and County of Washington is not to go unnoticed.

Blair had served on the Abingdon Muster Grounds Steering Committee since 2008 and along with his fellow committee members, assisted in the development of this National Park Service certified site, for the enjoyment and education of all.

Always the true Boy Scout, he was a strict adherent to the tenet to "Do a good turn daily" and more importantly, to "Be Prepared", having always at the ready a joke and a smile and ever ready and willing to go out of his way to help his fellow man, making even the most distant stranger feel comfortable and proving that Blair Keller was one of our county's true, "National Treasures".



John Sevier and the Wataugans By, Richard Luce



The Battle at Cane Creek was a skirmish between Patriot forces under the command of Colonel Charles McDowell and Loyalists led by British Major Patrick Ferguson. The battle took place along the edge of the South Mountains near the current boundaries of Burke, McDowell and Rutherford counties. McDowell County Public Library hosted Archaeologist and Historian Ken Robinson for a presentation about the battle.

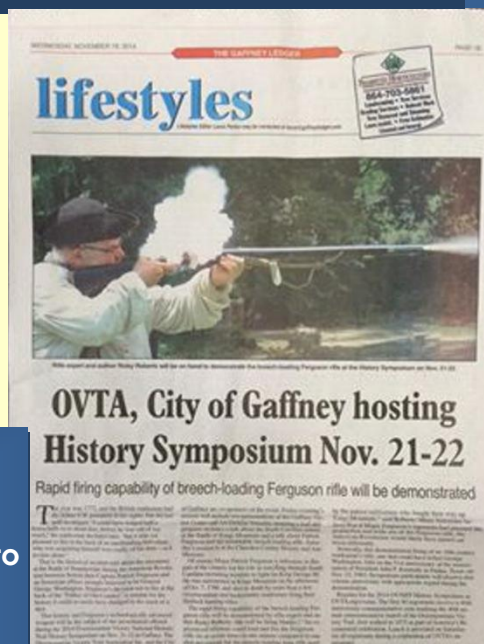
"The battle was short but vicious, and it resulted in casualties on both sides. It was a prelude to a definitive battle a few weeks later at King's Mountain," Robinson said.

Special thanks to Andrew Kota with Foothills Conservancy, Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Superintendent Paul Carson, the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program, and lead Archeologist/Investigator Ken Robinson. And special thanks go out to OVTA Board Member Albert Dale who is a principal landowner where the Battle at Cane Creek likely occurred.

Along The Trail



Hats off to the fine job the City of Gaffney, SC did in hosting the workshop. And thanks to the OVTA History Symposium Committee that planned the Symposium. Huzza!



Heritage Day
Bluff City Middle School
2014



Recipe- Hashed Hominy

- 2 Cups Hominy
- 4 Well beaten Eggs
- Butter as needed
- Salt & Pepper

Brown the hominy in a skillet over low fire. Use 1 tablespoon butter, add beaten eggs with hominy. Season, then stir. When hominy gets brown, it's time to serve.



Ladies of the OVTA



George Cobb
As the Reverend Samuel Doak

Back Woods Wisdom
Like the Moon
From day to day
Let my sorrows wear away



Susan Tanner
Abingdon Muster Grounds



40th Anniversary Commemorative Collector's Coin
Available for Purchase

Overmountain Victory
Trail Association

"Keeping the Story Alive!"

1780 Muster Place

Abingdon VA 24210

Phone: 276-525-1050

Fax: 888-447-9574

E-Mail: rg.absher@ovta.org



"The Patriot Victory at Kings Mountain"
By Richard Luce

We're on the Web! Visit us at:



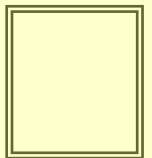
www.ovta.org

Overmountain Victory Trail Association

"Keeping the Story Alive!"

1780 Muster Place

Abingdon VA, 24210



Member's Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code