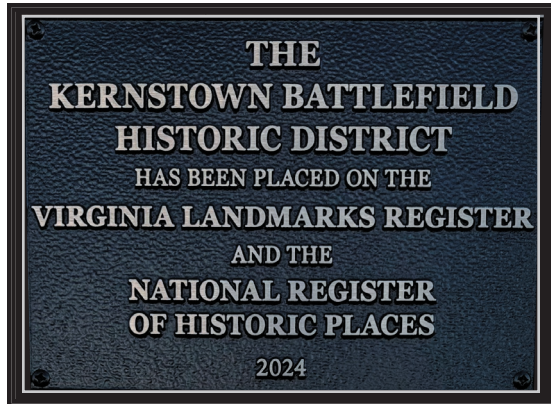


Kernstown Battlefield named to National Register of Historic Places

by Dan Heim



“The National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register listings are a great honor and testament to the historical significance of the Kernstown Battlefield”

On Dec. 17, 2024, the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) added the Kernstown Battlefield Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register honors and recognizes districts, structures, sites, and objects that embody the historical and cultural foundations of the United States, and includes places of local, state, and national significance. This followed a decision by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources to include the Kernstown Battlefield Historic District in the Virginia Landmarks Register, effective September 19, 2024.

The Kernstown Battlefield Historic District includes the 315-acre Pritchard-Grim Farm and the 37.5-acre Sandy Ridge parcel located to the west of the farm. On this property, three significant Civil War battles were fought which had a direct and decisive influence on the Shenandoah Valley Campaigns of 1862 and 1864 and the Gettysburg Campaign of 1863. The District also features several architecturally significant buildings and structures including the Greek Revival Pritchard House (ca. 1854), the Pritchard Cabin (ca. 1790) which housed farm workers and possibly enslaved persons, and the stone wall on the south side of Pritchard’s Lane which figured prominently in the closing actions of the Second Battle of Kernstown.

“The National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register listings are a great honor and testament to the historical significance of the Kernstown Battlefield,” noted Kernstown Battlefield Association President Gary Sheppard. “We greatly appreciate the assistance provided throughout the nomination process by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.”

The National Register was established in 1966 by the National Historic Preservation Act. It is the official list of structures, sites, objects, and districts that embody the historical and cultural foundations of the United States. The National Register is managed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in partnership with the NPS for properties located in Virginia. ■



from Gary Sheppard ...

The President's Corner

The Kernstown Battlefield (KB) closed for the 2024 Season over the weekend of October 25-27, 2024. Well, you would think we closed, but we were just warming up for the 2025 Season, which will start over the weekend of April 4-6, 2025.

On November 6, we held a Work Day. KBA volunteers (16) cleared our eastern boundary line between the KB and the Opequon Presbyterian Church (OPC) and Cross Creek Village, all the way to Apple Valley Road. By the way, the OPC sits on land that was originally owned by William and Barbara Hoge, who also owned 411 acres on which the KB now sits. You can visit William and Barbara at the entrance to the OPC cemetery. Also, the OPC appears in several paintings by John Paul Strain and Mort Kunstler.

A week later, Boy Scout Troop 3, which holds a winter camp on the KB, dragged the cut debris and trees into piles. The Scouts worked hard and their efforts were much appreciated. Last week, Timber Works was hired to forest mulch the entire length. Along this stretch, from the boundary fence line to the edge of the conservation fields, were small islands of non-native invasive trees (tree of heaven; Russian olive) intermingled with native trees (oaks; maples) planted by the KBA over twenty years ago. The mulcher operator did a surgical job of eliminating the bad stuff and keeping the good. We now have a more beautiful view of the 2nd Battle of Kernstown landscape and the entire farm.

Work began on the Pritchard House. Kee Construction was engaged to trench three sides of the house for a better drainage system. The purpose of this system is to move water away from the foundation and keep the foundation from bowing, sagging, and sinking. A retainer wall, perpendicular to the foundation wall, was added to hold back a small hill and divert water runoff away from the house. This retainer wall is in the location of where the two-story rear L-wing on the house once stood.

A second project with Kee Construction was the house itself. Chuck Maurer, Chair of our History and Education Committee, took on the Shutter Project. He identified a company in Pennsylvania that would make the shutters to specifications of wood that would last many years. We identified the bad shutters, made the order, and took receipt of new replacement shutters. These shutters were paid for by the generous dedicated

donations of our KBA members over the past few years. The shutters are up and the house looks complete.

Susan Weston, Board Director, and Bru Randall, Volunteer, identified soft and broken floor boards in the foyer of the house. Susan and Bru run the Field Hospital on the first floor, saw the floor issue, and expressed a safety concern. The boards have now been replaced and the foyer is as solid as a rock. The north side of our Shed Building had rotted 8" German siding. We purchased the siding locally and David Wingenbach, Volunteer, and George Mangano, Board Director, took an afternoon and primed painted the 20 boards. Kee replaced the boards and we have leftovers for other uses. Now they need real paint. The Pritchard House Projects have been slowed due to the lousy and unpredictable winter weather we've had. Severe cold, rain, snow, heavy winds, all interfered with the work.

We weren't done with Timber Works. After the eastern boundary work, they went up on south Sandy Ridge for two days of mulching. They cleared the entrance way of trees blackened and dead from the lantern flies. They enlarged the eastern slope of Sandy Ridge in the area of the stonewall from which Lt. Col. John M. Patton commanded the 21st Va and the area in which Col. William G. Murray, 87th Pa, met his untimely death in the crossfire with the 21st Va during First Kernstown. The view-shed from Sandy Ridge to Pritchards' Hill, about a mile distance, was opened for a better view.

Just a note, Timber Works is very professional, provides excellent advice for mulching, and listens to our needs. But, the machine and operator is expensive at a cost of \$2500 per day. Sounds expensive (and it is), but that machine clears more in a day than the entire KBA Board could clear in three years. We'd really like to use them more often.

Over the last three months, Board Director Jim Cutler has been working on our 2025 Event Schedule which should soon appear on rack cards and on our website. Exciting events are coming. New trail maps have been created and the new map was just posted on the kiosk (Eagle Scout Project) outside our Conference Center. The KBA will recognize ABT Park Day this year on Saturday, April 5th, during our first weekend of being open. Work projects are being planned so if you have the time, want to be involved and contribute, come on out to help.

As you can see, the KBA is doing our utmost best to preserve and maintain the property, expand our knowledge of the 290 years the property was farmed, and present it to you, the public, for appreciation of its historical nature. Hope to see you on the Hoge-Pritchard-Burton-Grim Farm during our 2025 season. ■

2025 Marks the 25th Anniversary of the KBA Saving the Kernstown Battlefield

By Steve Chesley

This is a special year for the Kernstown Battlefield Association (KBA).

On September 28, 2000, the KBA's first President, Larry Duncan, announced that the KBA had finally purchased the Grim Farm property, which was the site of the 1st and 2nd Battles of Kernstown. The land was almost lost to developers who had an eye on turning this sacred battlefield land into a housing development.

The KBA will celebrate this anniversary on September 11, 2025, at the George Washington Hotel with a reception, dinner and speakers. The keynote speakers will be Keven Walker, CEO of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and Garry Adelman, Chief Historian with the American Battlefield Trust. Both the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and the American Battlefield Trust have been



integral partners of the KBA throughout the years and have been integral in the KBA's survival and growth.

Registration will be available on the KBA website sometime in May or June and will be announced through the KBA Facebook page, Instagram, and our Constant Contact email newsletter, which goes out about once a month. The event is only open to KBA members and specially invited guests. There is limited seating available so keep checking our website and/or Facebook page for information on when registration will open. The registration fee will be \$75.00 per person. In addition to a reception, dinner and speakers, there will be a 50/50 drawing and a silent auction, with all proceeds going to benefit the all-volunteer organization of the KBA. ■

Third Annual Kernstown Battlefield Golf Classic

by George Mangano

When: Friday, June 20, 2025

**Where: Rock Harbor Golf Club
Winchester, Virginia**

The Kernstown Battlefield Association is pleased to announce its Third Annual Golf Classic. Join us for a day of fun featuring eighteen holes of golf on one of the region's premier courses including access to its practice facilities, a golf cart, continental breakfast, lunch, beverage cart, and many raffles and prizes. All for \$125 per person.

Attention businesses: We need your support with sponsorships or gift cards for raffles.

Join us as we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the KBA and help us to preserve the history and natural beauty of the Shenandoah Valley.

For details about sponsorships and to register, go to our website at www.kernstownbattle.org

Or contact George Mangano, Golf Classic Chair
georgemangano134@gmail.com

Kernstown



Update: Middle Road Properties

by Gary Sheppard

During 2023, three tracts of historical land became available for sale on Middle Road, Winchester, Virginia, that directly impacts the historical preservation mission of the Kernstown Battlefield Association (KBA) and the Kernstown Battlefield. These properties are in direct line between Pritchard's Hill and south Sandy Ridge, historical Civil War sites on the current KBA property. These properties included a 68 acre tract owned by the Glass-Glen Burnie Foundation (GGBF); a 36+ acre lot known as the Jones Tract; and a 3+ acre lot known as the Chasen Tract.

These three land tracts played a significant role during the Civil War history of Kernstown. Their preservation would be a significant contribution to the First Kernstown, Second Winchester, and Second Kernstown Battlefield landscapes, especially in the face of ongoing development pressures. On March 23, 1862, Union Colonel Nathan Kimball sent regiments across these lands to assault Sandy Ridge and suppress or capture the Confederate artillery. Many Americans on both sides were wounded or killed on these tracts of land during these battles.

The Jones and Chasen Tracts (40 acres) have been successfully negotiated by the American Battlefield Trust (ABT). The ABT is now seeking financial assistance for funding their purchase and preservation.

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation (SVBF), New Market, Virginia, entered into negotiation with the GGBF during August 2023 for the 68 acre tract. These negotiations were off and on and finally during November, the GGBF broke off the talks and was reportedly dealing with a developer to buy this Hallowed Ground. This is when the KBA joined the battle.

Local media was advised of the negotiations. The Winchester Star ran with the information and produced two very well written articles about the history of the property, the negotiations, and the GGBF. By going to a developer, the GGBF was in direct contradiction with their 501(c)3 mission statement to support historical preservation.

The KBA sent letters to the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (MSV), owned by the GGBF. The KBA Board knew that the MSV was not a part of the negotiations, but would bear public criticism should the sale go through. The MSV was asked to step up and exert pressure on the GGBF, especially the Texas faction that was driving this sale, as the property impacted our local history. The MSV did just that – stepped up and pressured the GGBF to re-enter the negotiations. The efforts of the KBA Board led to the GGBF returning to negotiations with the SVBF.

During these efforts, the KBA reached out to its membership for special donations dedicated to assisting the ABT and SVBF fund the purchase of these historical properties. Thanks to your generosity, close to \$20,000 was received. The KBA plans to match this amount using KBA General Funds (memberships and non-designated donations), dividing it between the two groups as needed. As the KBA President, let me assure you that every single penny that was or will be donated for this purpose, will go directly to the purchase of these properties and not any other project.

The KBA Board is very grateful to its membership and is excited about working with the ABT and SVBF for the future use of these properties. ■

In the News

Civil War Park Day

By Larry Turner

On Saturday, April 5, 2025, the Kernstown Battlefield Association (KBA) will participate in the American Battlefield Trust Civil War Park Day. This is an annual event spanning the country asking for volunteers to donate time and effort toward preservation of American battlefields. The KBA participates annually and volunteers who come have been invaluable.

We ask that you arrive at 8:30am for registration in the battlefield conference center. At 9:00am there will be an orientation to the day's projects and introduction of the project leaders. Work projects will stop at noon, and the KBA will provide a light lunch, or you may bring your own. KBA docents will remain until 4pm for those who wish to participate in short historical tours of the property.

Planned activities include sweeping and dusting of museum and antebellum home interiors, mulching gardens, loading cut-up trees and brush into trailers for removal, cleaning and resetting wayside interpretive sign pedestals, and some painting (weather permitting) of building exteriors. Projects are indoors and outdoors. Several of our museums are not heated. While we do not require you to bring any tools or supplies, we do ask that you wear weather-appropriate apparel, work clothes and shoes, and gloves. COVID masks are optional. In the instance of inclement weather, our Park Day projects will continue as planned.

The Kernstown Battlefield Association is a 501c(3) non-profit, all volunteer organization. We are located at 610 Battle Park Drive, Winchester, Virginia off of Valley Avenue next to Creekside Station and the Subaru dealership.

**Registration is requested at our website
www.kernstownbattle.org**

Author tours set for 2025

By Donna Crawford

This new season brings a another year of our very popular author-escorted walking and driving tours of the First and Second Battles of Kernstown.

First off is our First Kernstown tour escorted by historian Gary Ecelbarger, author of the definitive book on First Kernstown, " 'We are in for it!' - The First Battle of Kernstown".

The tour takes place from 9:30am – 4pm on March 23, the actual date of the 1862 battle. Check-in begins at 9am in the Visitor Center.

Next up is the Second Battle of Kernstown tour escorted by historian Scott Patchan, author of "Shenandoah Summer". This tour will be on Saturday, July 26 from 8:30am – 1pm. Check-in begins at 8am in the Visitor Center.

Over the past twenty-five years, both Ecelbarger and Patchan have been huge supporters of the KBA, annually donating their time and talents to present to our visitors the stories of these important battles. Both of their books will be on sale in our gift shop.

Registration for the tours is requested and will be available on our website beginning three or four weeks prior to the tours.

**There is no fee for these tours.
Donations are appreciated.**

Historical Trails Update, Expansion

By Chuck Maurer

After several years of concerted effort and with financial support by the Blue and Gray Educational Society of Virginia, we have completed the update and expansion of our historical trails. This major project included: numerous new and updated markers on our "main campus" Battle of First and Second Kernstown trails; new mass grave related marker and grave boundary site rail fence on our Sandy Ridge property; and replacement markers (less the metal state installed sign) at the Opequon Church circle. This project also includes a new large trail map on the kiosk outside our Conference Center along with an updated trifold trail map brochure. We encourage our members to come out to the battlefield to check out our expanded and updated battlefield trails. ■



Chuck Maurer at the kiosk showing the new trail map



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The Kernstown Battlefield 2025 Schedule of Special Events

Sun, Mar 23 9:30am–4pm	First Battle of Kernstown (163rd) – Walking and driving tour with Gary Ecelbarger, author of “We are in for it!” (REGISTRATION REQUESTED)*	Aug 23–24 Sat–Sun	Civil War Soldier Living History – 28 th Virginia, Co. D Daily 10am–4pm
Fri, Apr 4 10am–4pm	OPENING DAY at the Kernstown Battlefield Visitor Center Open. Tours available	Sun, Aug 24 Noon–1pm	“1864 Valley Campaign Overview” – a presentation and tent activity by the National Park Service
Sat, Apr 5 9am–3pm	American Battlefield Trust Park Day 2025 – Volunteer Work Day (REGISTRATION REQUESTED)*	Fri, Sep 12 3pm–8pm	Shenandoah University Twilight Cross Country Race
Sat, Apr 12 10am–4pm	Civil War Soldier Living History – 2nd Maryland	Sun, Sep 21 Noon–1pm	“1864 Valley Campaign Overview” – a presentation and tent activity by the National Park Service
Sun, Apr 13 1pm–4pm	Kite Fest – Sponsored by Frederick County Parks & Recreation (Battlefield open 10am–4pm)	Sat, Sep 27 9am–1pm	Shenandoah University Hornet Harrier Invitational and Commonwealth Challenge Cross-Country Race (Battlefield Open 10am–4pm)
Sun, May 11 Noon–1pm	“1862 Valley Campaign Overview” a presentation and tent activity by the National Park Service	Sat, Oct 4 8am–1 pm	Judges Classic – John Handley High School Cross Country Meet (Battlefield open 10am–4pm)
Fri, Jun 20 7am–2pm	3rd Annual Kernstown Battlefield Golf Classic fundraiser – Rock Harbor Golf Club, Winchester (see our website for registration and details)	Sat, Oct 11 12pm–4pm	Kernstown Battlefield Association Annual Membership Meeting (Battlefield open 10am–4pm)
Sat, July 26 8:30am–1pm	Second Battle of Kernstown (161st) – Tour with Scott Patchan, author of “Shenandoah Summer” (REGISTRATION REQUESTED)*	Sun, Nov 2 10am–4pm	SEASON CLOSING DAY at Kernstown Battlefield

* PLEASE REGISTER AT WWW.KERNSTOWNBATTLE.ORG