7th Maryland mourns the loss of Steve Bush

Stephen Howard Bush, 50, former President and 1st Sergeant of the 7th Maryland Regiment, passed away Wednesday, October 28, 2014, after suffering an apparent heart attack. Funeral arrangements are pending.

An Appreciation
The Outside Influence
By Capt. Jeff Bush

This story may be familiar with some of you because I know I have told it several times. I feel I need to tell it again just so that those of you that haven't been with as long can know. I wasn’t always interested to the extent that I am today about The American Civil War. That would have to be blamed on an outside influence.

My first event was Gettysburg in 1999

President’s Message

Mid-October and the 150th Cedar Creek is over. My house had seen a flurry of activity in preparation, going over gear, assembling supplies, baking a variety of treats for the Ladies Tea, and staging everything for loading the wagon. I think all of us have been anticipating this year’s Cedar Creek with high hopes, and expectations that the weather will be cooperating once again. It was everything we had hoped.

Back on October 3rd, we assembled some of the troops from the 7th Maryland at the Tome School in North East, Maryland, for the annual 8th grade Civil War Day presentation.
Upcoming Campaigns

November 14, 2014
Federal Volunteer Brigade
Brigade Annual meeting
Gettysburg Fire Hall,
Gettysburg, PA
(7th MD Company Rep) (FVB)

The Annual Meeting will start at 7:00 PM. The company is requested to have a representative present. This is a preliminary business and review meeting for the FVB.

November 15, 2014
150th Remembrance Day Parade
Morning Ceremonies and Remembrance Day Parade
Gettysburg, PA
(7th MD Company Event) (FVB)

Join the regiment for morning ceremonies in the National Cemetery 7:30 am. Parade then forms up at Gettysburg High School and steps off at 12:00 noon through the streets of the town. Additional details and directions to come.

January 2015
Saturday 17th
FVB Business Meeting
Hoss’ Steak & Sea Restaurant
1140 York Rd, Gettysburg, PA

The annual FVB Business meeting returns to its former location for the 1865 / 2015 planning, business and election meeting. Each member company is urged to send a representative to this important meeting.

Brigade Notes

Utterly shocked and devastated. I cannot accurately relate my reaction to the phone call I received from Jeff Bush notifying me of Steve Bush’s passing. As I write this now, the tears still come. I will miss him so.

His passing renews my commitment to what we are trying to achieve here, building a solid family of friends and family in reenacting. The outpouring on social media has astounded us all. Not only the sheer volume of condolences, but the many ways Steve affected people’s lives. Some folks he had only met once, but made an indelible impression. Some lives he touched and changed for the better. Above all, he was a role model, for his zest in reenacting and his zeal for life. His legacy will be long-lived and everlasting.

As we prepare for the coming Remembrance Day festivities, we remind all that this is the most important day in reenacting. This is not the day the season ends, but begins. We look to and remember those who have fallen on the fields of battle, and our friends who are no longer able to be with us. I hope you’ll make plans to attend this most important day.

I can truthfully say that the Federal Volunteer Brigade Community Campaign was a success at Cedar Creek. Several hundreds pounds of items and necessities were donated to the Stephens City Community Church through the generosity of the 7th Maryland and the FVB. I’m hopeful that we can achieve a similar success at Gettysburg for Remembrance Day.

Also at Gettysburg the FVB will have its year-end business meeting and nominations for Brigade Commander. This will be a first for the FVB and a long time coming. Finally the rank-and-file are stakeholders in where we are going and what we will be doing.

We have a great future ahead in reenacting, and the final year of the sesquicentennial looms ahead. We will lose some from the ranks, but hopefully gain more folks as well. I just wish our old friend Steve would have been here to enjoy it.
There are few events that we attend on an annual basis that generate so many great times and memories as Cedar Creek. I don’t know if it’s because it is usually such a great event, or if it’s because it’s last big event of the year and we put so much effort into it. I can tell how much fun I have had by how long it takes for my voice to fully return! Four days…. Over the years there have been some very interesting pre-dawn tacticals. Some where the Rebs have stretched the rules and some where we have. I remember the year that a very gung ho first Sergeant rounded up a squad and went rogue, ending up on our bellies in the tall wet grass while a fire fight went on all around us, and not knowing who the good guys were!

Another year that same Sergeant took us out in anticipation of the pre-dawn tactical and camped out in no man’s land until the hour at which the tactical was to begin. That night not one of us slept because of all of the noises mother nature stirred up to convince us the entire rebel army was marching around us!

It seems that every time that we gathered at the fire for breakfast after these tacticals that someone has had a great tale to tell about their exploits of that dark morning. Cold and lacking sleep but very happy that they had participated. Those that decided to stay behind to sleep longer finding themselves wishing they had participated too!

I was a bit disappointed that there was no tactical this year. I don’t know that it would have been easy to do. There was something going on nearly all of the time whether in camp or on the field!

The Grand Review was Grand a bit confusing at times but Grand.

It did take some time to get everyone assembled (it’s a good thing we were not the real numbers usually associated with this).

Soirees, Ladies Tea, oyster roasting, song singing and storytelling into the wee hours, these are the things that most of us veterans enjoy the most. I missed most of the Ladies Tea this year but I heard it was quite entertaining. I did get to hear General Henson recite some Shakespeare!

Because we are nearing the 1864 elections there were a few speeches and a lot of debate over our next President. Posters were pasted everywhere arguing for their man. Saturday night we saw shenanigans and demonstrations of allegiance parading around the camps. We were told that we would get to vote but no word of when. I am of the opinion that the General may be trying to suppress the Lincolnite’s!

With everything going on it may have been a good thing we did not deprive ourselves of any more sleep in attempting a pre-dawn tactical. Maybe next year eh? It was a great time and it usually is.

I expect to see everyone at the most important event of the year in November. Remembrance Day is what it’s all about! Dust off the uniform shine the brass and I will see you at the....coffee pot!
After the First Battle of Hatcher’s Run (also known as the Battle of Boydton Plank Road or Burgess’ Mill), October 27 1864…..no territory had changed hands, and the siege around Petersburg continued. The battle was a disaster for the Union and caused embarrassment to President Abraham Lincoln’s administration just a week before the presidential election. The month of November was occupied by scouting and reconnaissances in an attempt to get at the South Side Railroad, Richmond’s last line of supply. On the first of the month a scouting mission was sent out of Bermuda Hundred into Charles City County, southeast of Richmond followed by skirmishing in front of Forts Haskell and Morton. The fifth corps was sent out on a reconnaissance toward Stony Creek on 7 November. A skirmish at a place called Lee’s Mill occurred on 16 November and another on the 24th near Prince George Court House. On the 27th there was a suspicious explosion of the Federal vessel, Greyhound, Maj. Gen. Ben Butler’s floating headquarters on the James River, possibly by Confederate agents. On the 26th of November, our own Jacob Koogle of Company G, was promoted to Lieutenant. On the 28th Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock relinquished command of the II Corps to Maj. Gen. A.A. Humphreys due to complications from his wound received at Gettysburg.

President Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring the 24th a day of Thanksgiving! Here is the order:

It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, defending us with His guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad and vouchsafing to us in His mercy many and signal victories over the enemy, who is of our own household. It has also pleased our Heavenly Father to favor as well our citizens in their homes as our soldiers in their camps and our sailors on the rivers and seas with unusual health. He has largely augmented our free population by emancipation and by immigration, while He has opened to us new sources of wealth, and has crowned the labor of our workingmen in every department of industry with abundant rewards. Moreover, He has been pleased to animate and inspire our minds and hearts with fortitude, courage, and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war into which we have been brought by our adherence as a nation to the cause of freedom and humanity, and to afford to us reasonable hopes of an ultimate and happy deliverance from all our dangers and afflictions.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next as a day which I desire to be observed by all my fellow-citizens, wherever they may then be, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the Universe. And I do further recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers and supplications to the Great Disposer of Events for a return of the inestimable blessings of peace, union, and harmony throughout the land which it has pleased Him to assign as a dwelling place for ourselves and for our posterity throughout all generations. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 20th day of October, A.D. 1864, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-ninth.

By the President, A. LINCOLN

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President’s Message

(Continued from page 1)
This year 1st Sgt. Giovannini and his brother-in-law, Pvt. Don Miskey, were able to join the squad that included two of our Corporals, Mark and Scott Blumberg, and me. We once again were blessed with a beautiful, sunny day to hold the event, and were very happy that this trend held steady. Our display of equipment was relatively basic, representative of what the troops heading for Gettysburg might have carried; dog tent, nap sacks, blanket rolls, along with a collection of reading material provided by the 1st Sgt. and Pvt. Miskey.

After a brief introduction of the 7th Maryland and the re-enacting hobby, the two Corporals took over with a discussion of uniforms, equipment, unit structure, size and organization. The 1st Sgt. interjected additional details and helped answer some questions from the class members. The squad then provided a demonstration of the Manual of Arms, followed by Loading in 9 Times, and then fired a few rounds from formation. With attention and interest regained by the sound of the muskets, the classes were assembled into two squads for some basic drill instruction with the intent of preparing the group to march across the Emmitsburg Road during their class trip.

The 1st Sgt. worked separately with the students identified as Company Commanders and 1st Sgts. to review their roles and how to give commands to the troops. The Corporals each took a group and instructed the marching basics. Pvt. Miskey and I blended into the groups and assisted where needed. As usual the 8th graders picked up on the instruction very quickly and would give many experienced troops a run for their money. Smiles and laughter were abundant, the class was well-prepared for their field trip, and the entire group including the presenters had a very enjoyable time.

I want to express my sincere thanks and deep appreciation to Steve and Dawn for their participation and support of this living history activity at the Tome School. It’s a lot to give of a work day at a busy time of year, and I am very grateful for their contribution. The teachers and students have always been very appreciative of our effort and involvement over the years, and this year were very generous in contributing to the FVB food drive. Canned and dry goods that were donated by the students will be included in the 7th Maryland’s contribution to this effort.

Cedar Creek After-Action Report

We arrived home late Sunday night from Middletown, myself very tired and sore, and I will say that I think the 150th Cedar Creek was, overall, a great success. The number of troops on the field was many times over the typical number at past Cedar Creek events. This was fully expected for a 150th anniversary event, and it provided an impressive visual display for spectators and participants alike. I heard very favorable comments about the battles from numerous spectators, and we were entertained by broad smiles and enthusiasm from the fresh fish who had joined us on the field. There was a good bit of interesting action and individual acting on the back side of the hill and down in the creek bed where the FVB was engaged, and I can’t help but wonder how much of that may have been, sadly, out of view of the spectators. I certainly enjoyed the show from my vantage point.

Kudos to Pvt. Ellis for his "shell-shocked soldier" impression. I lost count of how many times I had to collect him up by his leathers and put him back in line, urging him to "never mind the bodies, pick up your musket and shoot those boys over there". And I didn’t even attempt to keep up with every-thing Pvt. Bush was conjuring, one minute skoe-daddlin’ down the hill, the next getting head-shot and dropping straight back miraculously missing a jagged rock protruding from the ground, then appearing in the line again for more. Great stuff all around.

Compliments to all those visitors and newcomers to the hobby who were with us, your sincerity and engagement was notable as you were given crash-course instructions on the manual of arms, drill, and particularly the safety aspects of our activity. My instructions and guidance to you in my role as 2nd Sergeant out on the field in the midst of the noise and confusion was met with attention and respect, and I truly appreciate the positive attitudes with which you conducted yourselves. I sincerely hope you all had a very memorable experience with the 7th.

Friendship and comradery among the Companies of the FVB continues to grow, and it was fun to see members moving up and down the line of campfires each night to share in friendly conversation and song. We held our annual Ladies Tea for our Civilian Contingent members as a token of our appreciation for all of their hard work and effort throughout the season. Planning meals to keep us all fed and hydrated, shopping, hauling, cooking, baking, and on top of that all of the sewing, knitting, needle-point, and on and on to raise funds for the 7th. We are so very grateful for what you do for us, and I hope the ladies enjoyed the entertainment and treats. With such a busy agenda each day, we literally squeezed the Tea into a very tight window, and I regret not being able to hold it in a more relaxed setting that might have made it possible for more of the FVB ladies to participate.

Next up is Remembrance Day on November 15th, kicking off a new season by assembling at the Gettysburg National Cemetery to pay our respects to the soldiers whom we portray, renewing our commitment to honor and preserve the memory of those men and women who fought to preserve the Union.

Clean up your kits, give your brass that once-a-year polish, travel safely and I’ll see you in Gettysburg.
Scenes from the 150th Cedar Creek included impressive battle lines, a captured Confederate, memorable time behind the lines waiting, and the seldom seen sight of horse drawn artillery in action.
I’m going to cover some information that spans three months, so I hope everyone is able to keep up with me. First off, I have to share the results of my adventures in making a mourning dress for a class presentation. As you may recall, last month I wrote about one of the assignments we had to work through in my Language Arts class, where we had to analyze Walt Whitman’s “O Captain! My Captain!” I was able to complete the mourning dress for a two day presentation on the background of the Civil War, some of the major events of the war (replete with photos of our 7th MD boys in action) and the Lincoln assassination. Luckily, the students really enjoyed the presentation, and were able to take away a lot of information from it. We are wrapping up the assignment with a few students completing their essays now. Now the tricky part is finding other locations to wear my mourning dress.

Secondly, I have to extend many thanks to everyone who was involved with the Ladies’ Tea at Cedar Creek this year, I think we all felt how busy this year’s event was. Normally, civilians are able to gauge how much free time we have by the amount of progress we make on our various projects that we bring along with us. I was able to complete a total of 7 letters on my flag project – far below my average of 40 or 50. I know that all the soldiers can talk about their packed schedules as well. However, I am so glad that we were still able to squeeze in the Ladies’ Tea on Sunday morning. I hope the civilians do not mind that I am speaking on their behalf, but thank you to all the soldiers who participated, so many very thanks.

For those who were unable to attend the tea (again, so very busy), the event started with a personal tea service from Peter Vicenzi, who helped to hand out baked goods from the ever talented and wonderful Suanne Blumberg (THANK YOU Suanne!!!!). I think my personal favorite was the Madeleines, and Peter did a wonderful job of keeping the tea flowing. The entertainment started with several selections from the 7th MD songbook, conducted by 1st Sergeant Steve Giovannini. We heard from both solo artists and small groups; the music was beautiful and it was amazing to hear all of the talents our soldiers have. Patrick Ellis and Steve Bush put on an amazing show with a recitation from Shakespeare – the bonnet was lovely. And then, all members of the 7th were able to enjoy the reprise of his original role – General Jay Henson graced us with his presence to recite “Hey-Nannie-o.”

Once again, I extend my gratitude to everyone who helped put this all together, especially considering the busy schedule, and the fact that the Ladies’ Tea ran past church call. So another thanks to Steve Bush, who was able to put together a small Bible study after the tea. But, I think the greatest thanks goes to 2nd Sergeant Steve Blumberg; without him, this would not have happened. He started organizing the tea a few months before Cedar Creek. He worked to get suggestions, ideas and volunteers, and find scripts and music to go along with the performances. Thank you so much, Steve Blumberg, and thank you 7th MD.

Now, we must look forward to Remembrance Day, which is only a few short weeks away. As part of my own preparation, I am working towards completion of a kit to go along with my mourning dress so that I can wear it at the parade. All of my warm clothes are nowhere near a black color, so now I am on a quest to complete black clothes by the morning of the parade.

We also plan to continue with our tradition of handing out candy and flowers during the parade. For those of you who are new, or have not been able to attend the parade before, we have developed a tradition – we hand out candy to children along the parade route, and hand out flowers to veterans along the route. The flowers are carnations, which would be correct for the time, but unfortunately the candy isn’t exactly period correct (we take advantage of Halloween candy being on sale). We bring baskets and split up the flowers and candy, and spread out along the sides of the street. By the end of the parade, we’ve given out almost everything, and we thoroughly enjoy the experience. We will have some extra baskets at the event, but if you would like to participate in this tradition, you can bring along your own basket to help out.

I’m looking forward to seeing everyone at Remembrance Day, this event marks my start in reenacting, and it is one of my favorite events. Best of luck to everyone’s attempts at staying warm at the event.
The annual event of the Ladies Tea was enjoyed again this year sporting an election theme. Sadly however the FVB candidate, General George McClellan lost in his bid for the office, much to the delight to many in the 7th MD.

General Jay Henson gave another rendition of Shakespeare during an understated and subdued performance.

The gathered ladies enjoyed songs sung by the troops including Don Miskey, brother-in-law of 1st Sgt. Steve Giovannini. Those two are incredibly close.
and did not take the field until Sunday for Pickets Charge. It was told to me later that day that it was about 102 degrees that day but I never noticed. The "outside influence" was on the field the day we arrived. Fully outfitted before leaving home Steve Bush (the outside influence) fell in with the 7th Maryland on Saturday morning. He had strolled through the Union camp along with his wife Cheryl and I until coming upon the ladies of the 7th Maryland. Striking up a conversation, the ladies complimented Steve on what they called his John Elway (for you younger folks, the quarterback for the Denver Broncos at the time) smile. They told us that the boys would be back soon from the battle and if we could wait we could meet them.

It may have been the heat that had them not thinking straight. It might have been their brogans were too tight. But I'd like to think that they took a liking to John Elway! Steve spent all day with the troops taking the field I believe twice with them. The smile kept getting bigger and bigger. That was it! I had to experience this myself. Shopping most of the day I acquired the minimum. I had a blue suit! In subsequent events I acquired more equipment. It took me several years to put together a kit similar to Steve's.

At South Mountain I purchased a blanket and eating utensils. Steve volunteered to go out on an evening tactical and of course I was able to tag along. When we assembled in front of a most serious looking Captain, he looked at me and asked where my leathers were and if I had any ammo. I told him I had no leathers and no ammunition. He scowled and snorted "why can't they send me equipped privates?" I just knew I was in trouble, but Steve stood there and let the Captain stew for a moment and then told him that he had my ammo.

We headed out into the darkness fearing every noise. During the fight we ended up captured. I had never been so humiliated. The rebels pushed us along through the woods and at one point I heard one yelling at someone in the rear of the column of prisoners to "keep moving". It was Steve he was yelling at! Steve reminded the pushy reb that if he had not been shot that his legs might work more to his liking!

As months went on and we became regulars, it always seemed that then Captain Henson would in the heat of battle bring to my attention Steve writhing on the ground after taking a hit. The Captain would ask "is he alright"? I would look at my brother and recognize his theatrics and assure Captain Henson that he was just fine.

The theatrics didn't stop on the field either. The man could sing...man could he sing! Then there was New Market one year, Steve and I put on a fight in camp. This frightened Captain Henson enough that he thought we might hurt each other. One day at Funkstown the first "Bush Brawl" took place while waiting to go into battle. It must have been convincing enough and because neither of us appeared injured that Captain Henson requested it on occasion in camp at later events! We had often schemed that if the opportunity presented itself we would start a fight at a dress parade! Several years later it almost happened.

In between antics Steve would often be found doing something that just fit the moment. There were several times at night he would pop popcorn for his daughter Emma. At first she would be seated on his lap. Later when she was little older she would sit beside him wrapped up against the night air watching the fire. I am not sure if he (Continued on page 10)
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he was trying to worry the Captain, Colonel, General or anyone else that was gullible enough to believe what they thought they saw was real.

Private Steve Bush quickly began getting promoted. He was given Corporal stripes very early on. It didn’t take long before he was our 1st Sergeant. The funniest moment for me was the first time I heard him say “quiet in the ranks”? Up until he got those stripes he was often the cause for the ruckus in the ranks. Along the way he also won the coveted “Farby Barbie Award”. We followed him anywhere because we knew something was going to happen if he had to cause it himself.

First Sergeant wasn’t the top; he went on to Sergeant Major! He was no longer responsible for just the 7th Maryland; he had the whole of the FVB! All of this time I was always a few steps behind. I made Corporal by default (no others would take it). Later I made Sergeant and then I ended up with straps! When he stepped away from the hobby he was replaced as Sergeant Major. Upon returning he came back to the 7th as a private. He had stretched it out on me again! He did give me something to shoot for though.

There are many more tales I could tell. The knot on his head at Appomattox from his own rifle, the Monty Python (Holy Grail) horse ride through camp to deliver a giant pancake to the Colonel, being brought before the Colonel for cowardice and nearly getting a promotion! There are many more, just ask me sometime.

There is no doubt that every time Steve arrived at an event that he influenced many of us. He always had that big smile unless of course he was the very same way, a loving husband and father and a sincere friend, deeply compassionate about his family and church.

I learned very early on to stay out of the way of the freight train called Steve. Many times while behind the rear ranks, he would tumble backwards taking a “hit”, and if I was not paying attention, would roll up my knees crippling me for the rest of the afternoon. Later on he would lumber to my tent, salute and profusely apologize, all the while with a huge smile on his face and eyes rolling. How could you not love him for that?

The many, many tales of his antics in the field and in camp are legendary. But he was very much alive there. His stalwart support of the 7th MD earned him and brother Jeff the moniker “The Heart and Soul” of the company. I will always be indebted to him for his role as the 7th Maryland President for several years and his leadership within the NCO ranks. He has left a lasting legacy with the 7th MD and his community. He was a role model for everyone, friend to all, and I will miss him very dearly. --Gen. Jay Henson

Steve was a man full of life, a friend to all and will be deeply missed. On a personal note, when I attended my first reenactment at Funkstown, Private Steve Bush was there. Years later when I became 1st Sgt of the 3rd MD at New Market, 1st Sgt Steve Bush was there. When I became Adjutant of 1st Regiment, Sgt Major Steve Bush was there. Steve and I served on then Col Henson’s staff for 3 years together, until he stepped down due to medical reasons. He once told me, he loved being a private, it’s how he started in the hobby and how he wanted to leave tied on page 11)
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the hobby. As Sgt Major, Steve was a complete pain in my ass, and drove me crazy and we both loved every minute of it. As we continue, Steve will be there, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Please remember his family in your prayers. --Capt. Steve Wagner

Memories of the Color guard during Recon 3, The Wilderness. We built a shebang in the pouring rain. We couldn’t all fit so Steve slept in the rain next to the fire under his quilt. Talking over drinks at O’Rorks after Remembrance Day, "The Grand Old Flag" at Cedar Creek. Watching "Life of Brian" and "Once Upon a Time in the West." Harmonizing "Amazing Grace" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Throwing Steve under the bus for opposing fronts--the stimulus--the strong, terrific game, Red battles with their slaughter.--The hot contention of opposing fronts--the long maneuver, Spell of all brave and manly hearts--the trains of Time through you, and like of you, all fill’d, With war, and war’s expression. Adieu, dear comrade! Your mission is fulfill’d--but I, more warlike, Myself, and this contentious soul of mine, Still on our own campaigning bound, Through untied roads, with ambushes, opponents lined, Through many a sharp defeat and many a crisis--often baffled, Here marching, ever marching on, a war fight out--aye here, To fiercer, weightier battles give expression.

— Walt Whitman

When I was a youngster in the regiment Steve Bush was my Sergeant Major. He was an imposing, respectful, figure who taught me a sense of my duty when I was out of line, and I was quite often. Now I strive to fill his shoes. I give youngsters the same grief he gave me and I pray to god that it makes the same impression upon them.

On our last fight together, a Sunday at Cedar Creek 1864, he slipped me a note that he wished delivered to General Baldwin. The note read that he "... was sorry and that it was him who was on guard mount that morning, he just didn’t see the Rebels coming. That’s the kind of games he liked to play and these are some of my favorite memories of my dear friend whom I will never forget. A man who shaped my military career, a man whose impact will live on in our regiment forever because he inspired men like myself to be like himself. --Sgt. Maj. John Zabawa

Steve, I’m going to miss you. It seems selfish and trivial to say that when I am not his wife, not his daughter, not his brother. Those are the folks who are really going to miss him. Nonetheless, it’s true. I will miss him as I know we all will.

He was one of a kind and I am thankful that we had him in our lives. He has left us all with a lot of memories. I tossed around in bed the night after receiving the notice of his death, thinking of him, couldn’t get him out of my head. I could see him vividly, picture him in various incidents over the years, hear his voice.

I remember him when we performed a ceremony at the cemetery in Hagers-town about 11 years ago. When we were done, a couple of us wandered around the grounds a bit and came upon a circular paved area. Without missing a beat he began circling around me, acting out a scene from The Good The Bad and The Ugly. I can see him.

I remember looking over at him as we lay under our collapsed dining fly in the rain and deciding together that it was just foolish to stay there and then taking shelter in an abandoned tent. He had remained with me in a storm to

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make sure I was okay when most everyone else had gone off to sleep in a dry barn. He always looked out for this old guy, making sure I wasn’t overtaxing myself, was able to keep up with the company, always asking if I was okay.

I recall a time when our company was surrounded on three sides by rebels with our lines rapidly collapsing and him sidling up behind me as I was trying to reload and saying to me, "What do you think about the Little Big Horn now Mr. Custer?"

I remember lying to sleep under a tree, beside a stream, our heads at the trunk with soft grass beneath us in a warm night that needed no blankets. I remember him running up to me as I was firing away at approaching rebels and bringing to my attention (I was totally oblivious) that our only escape route was about to be cut off and then running like the devil was on our heels and laughing together when we reached safety.

Walking behind him and Ellis as the company made its way up the street in Gettysburg to assemble at the high school for the Remembrance Day parade, ice cream at Kilwins after the parade. Listening to him rag on Patterson about the countermarch and Dan’s ancestor’s inability to find his way around the field at Gettysburg.

I recall standing around his backyard sanding wooden rifles (in the dark!) to have them ready for the kids at Salisbury Christian School who were coming out to camp with us. His service to others was a vital part of his life. I can picture him sitting up against a tree on the Lutheran Seminary campus on a Sunday morning giving one of his services for the troops. Family, hugging Emma, arms around Cheryl, popping popcorn for Emma, . . .

Those are only a few of the many hours of memories that went through my head. So many more, I not only have those memories, I can see him in each of those circumstances, picture him exactly and clearly, hear him speaking. I’m sure everyone who knew him has their own large collection of enjoyable memories. I look forward to gathering together to share some of these memories with one another.

Steve left a lot of himself among a lot of people. Not many people in our lives have that capacity. At Cedar Creek less than two weeks ago we talked about our experiences at New Market. I had more thoughts on the subject that I intended to share with him next time I saw him. Now that will never happen. Damn.

My brother - younger - died in 1987 at the age of 39, unexpected. I can share with the family that the pain will recede but the memories will live with you forever.

Steve, my thoughts and my love go out to Cheryl, Emma, Jeff and your entire family. –Pvt. Bill Hart

Steve was at my very first event, and a good many of them since. It’s tragic and heartbreaking to hear that he’s no longer for this earth, but am I thankful to have known him! One darn fine reenactor, and man. My deepest condolences to Cheryl, and Emma, and Jeff. I know how hard it is to lose a family member. My heart is with you all. –Pvt. Noah Webster

This is shocking, devastating news! We have lost a dear, dear friend! A great loss to all of us that called him friend! But, I know from our many conversations over the years he is safe in the arms of Jesus! —Col. Denny Rohrbaugh, Birney’s Division

My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Steve was a charitable soul with a giving spirit. He got me into the hobby, and I think everyone that knew him was inspired by his passion for it. He will be missed. May God greet him as a friend. —Stephen Lynch

When I joined the 7th Maryland in April of 2010, it was a rough time in my life. My parents had recently separated, and I had struggled in my first semester of college. I came out to the regimental drill day at a highway rest stop in Emmitsburg. Like most fresh fish, I had no idea what I was doing.

Today I can only remember snippets of that drill, a few bits of conversation. The one clear memory I have is walking off that field at the end of that drill, and seeing Sgt. Major Steve Bush in his purpling frock coat, cutting an imposing figure as he strode over the rocky, brambly field towards me, every inch the reenactor I hoped to become. I naturally assumed that I had done something wrong and he was going to correct me. I remember thinking that I must have really messed up bad, if an important looking guy like him was coming to talk to me. I said to him "well, how do you think I did?" His response has stuck with me to this day. "Did you have fun?" When I told him I had, he replied that if I had fun, then I had done well.

Steve’s infectious spirit of good natured fun and his dedication to authenticity has guided me during my time with the 7th. Whether he was writing letters to Generals apologizing for his failure on guard mount, or incurring the considerable wrath of the Civilian Coordinator by splashing water everywhere while doing the dishes, Steve always made sure everyone had a smile on their face.

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Steve Bush, An Appreciation

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He always seemed to be having a good time, no matter the situation. He was truly one of the happiest men I've ever met in life, nothing could ever seem to get him down. Our hours long road trips from Salisbury were always more lively and cheerful with him there.

Steve’s rough and tumble kit was a sign of his dedication to the hobby. I once walked into a liquor store in Salisbury, and saw him there, weathered, crumpled forage cap perched on his head. He told me he wore it everywhere he could, so that it looked appropriate for his impression. I honestly don’t have that same level of dedication to having fun and being in character that he had, but I will continue to strive to reach his level for as long as I still carry the musket. He was a fantastic pard, and an even better person. He will be missed.

–Pvt Michael A. Lafferty

I first met Steve Bush at the Battle of Gettysburg Reenactment in 2006. I was a spectator, there with my sons, Mark and Scott. They had asked to celebrate their 9th birthday by attending the Gettysburg event for the entire weekend, which is how we ended up in the Union camp, on the 7th MD street, on Sunday before the scheduled battle. 1st Sgt. Bush and his pard saw us comin’ a mile away, and my boys were swallowed up in the warm embrace that was the signature of Steve Bush and the 7th MD, something I came to see again so many times over the years.

We accepted an invitation to join the 7th at their next small event at Renfrew in Waynesboro, where I saw clearly that Steve was the heart, soul and conscience of the group. I don’t remember ever being made to feel more welcome and comfortable in any new endeavor, or seeing anyone engage and involve my sons so effortlessly. By Sunday they were in, hook, line and sinker.

Steve was always such a huge part of our experience with reenacting, watching him enjoy every second in camp and on the field, engaging and encouraging us and everyone around him to join him in the impression, always smiling, ready for a laugh and to make others laugh, forever scheming for the next adventure. I always found myself keeping one eye on Steve when we were out on the field, because he would without fail come up with something that was worth watching, something that could be built upon, sort of like throwing out the first line of an improv and having the rest of the troop follow the lead.

We hadn’t seen much of Steve over the past few years, but at Cedar Creek not two weeks ago he was still doing it better than anyone out there. I couldn’t keep up with all of his shenanigans, one minute skedaddlin’ from the Rebs, the next back in line again to take a dramatic hit, then up again to play some more. More than once I watched his impression of a wounded and dying soldier bring medics and officers running because they weren’t sure if it was real or not. I knelt to comfort him during one of these scenes, and another soldier I didn’t know came to help, playing a concerned and fearful part. He looked to me and said, "He doesn’t look good", to which I replied, "I fear it’s a mortal wound, there’s nothing to be done." The guy looked at me again and said, "No, seriously, I don’t think he looks good", and I realized this other guy wasn’t acting. I said, "Steve, thumbs up for this guy," to which he flashed a brief and subtle thumbs up. The guy looked at me one last time and returned, "Damn, he’s good!” and he was on his way. That was Steve, right there, doing his best to make the experience as real as he could for anyone that got anywhere near him. And yes, he was that good at it.

Steve took as much if not more joy in causing a commotion in camp, too, whether it was harassing a private, or complaining to the Captain or the Colonel or the General, or trying to steal rations from the next street, he was always up to something that would draw everyone in like the gravity of a planet. I’ll miss being in his universe. I’ll miss listening to his stories of reenactments past, of being in film casts, of jokes played on friends.

But then we’ve all learned a great deal from Steve, about the reenacting hobby, about the ‘acting’ part of reenacting, and particularly about greeting each day and everyone in it with joy, open arms, and a warm and loving heart. He set a great example for us, and left some big, ragged

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November 22 - Battle of Griswoldville, Georgia.

November 25 - The Confederate plot to burn NYC, fails.

November 28 - Battle of Buckhead Creek, Georgia.

November 29 - Action at Spring Hill, Tennessee. Failed Confederate attempt to trap part of the army defending Tennessee against Hood’s invasion. Sand Creek Massacre, Colorado militia kills about 150 peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians including Cheyenne chief One-Eye.

November 30 - Battle of Franklin, Tennessee. General Hood, commanding the Confederate army left behind by Sherman, attacked a well defended Union position. Although the Union troops withdrew overnight, Hood’s men suffered three times their losses, crippling the army.

November 30 - Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina. (Broad River).

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Other Significant Events the Civil War in November 1864

November 4-5 - Battle of Johnsonville, Tennessee. Nathan Bedford Forrest’s cavalry and two captured Union boats move up the Tennessee River to Johnsonville and attacked the Union supply depot there causing major damage.

November 7 - The Congress of the Confederate States of America met in Richmond. Jefferson Davis spoke in an optimistic manner underplaying the loss of Atlanta.

November 8 - Republican Abraham Lincoln defeats Democrat George McClellan to serve a second term as President of the United States. Andrew Johnson, a unionist from Tennessee is his Vice President.

November 10 - On the 10th of November the movement may be said to have fairly begun, General Sherman in his memoirs regarding the “March to the Sea.”

November 12 - General Sherman in Cartersville sends his last message to General Thomas in Nashville, Tennessee. He will be out of communication with the North until December 13.

November 14 - Sherman enters Atlanta and divides his 60,000 men into a Left Wing and Right Wing.

November 16 - Some historians use this date as the start of the March to the Sea. By this time Sherman had marched almost 100 miles, destroyed all or part of Rome, Cartersville and Marietta, Georgia and torn up all the Western and Atlanta RR track between Dalton and Atlanta.

November 18 - Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia.

November 20 - The Confederate Congress approves the Lee-Taylor Plan to retreat and avoid a direct confrontation with Sherman.

November 21 - On Lee’s advice, Hood orders his men to abandon Atlanta.

November 22 - Sherman occupies Atlanta.

November 23 - Sherman sends a message to General Thomas in Nashville, Tennessee: “We are now in a position to reduce the map of Georgia to a sheet of paper.”

November 24 - Sherman begins his withdrawal from Atlanta.

November 25 - Sherman begins his march to the sea.

November 26 - Sherman moves his Army of the Tennessee to the town of Columbus, Georgia.

November 27 - Sherman moves his Army of the Cumberland to the town of Adairsville, Georgia.

November 28 - Sherman moves his Army of the Tennessee to the town of Cartersville, Georgia.

November 29 - Sherman moves his Army of the Tennessee to the town of Emerson, Georgia.

November 30 - Sherman moves his Army of the Tennessee to the town of Rome, Georgia.

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shoes to fill. I’m grateful to have known Steve, and to have shared the stage with him a few times, and I am particularly grateful that he was a part of my sons’ lives. They were touched by him just as I was, and they got to see close up what it looks like to swallow people up in your loving embrace. Rest in peace, my brother, and thank you for inviting us in and changing our lives.
—Sgt. Stephen Blumberg

A sunbeam to warm you
A moonbeam to charm you
A sheltering angel,
so nothing can harm you.