

AAR for Gettysburg 147th Anniversary Reenactment

This past weekend (1-4 July) saw: Darwin, Lisa, Bob, Aaron, Mike, Michelle, Andy, Eli and Wayne attend the 147th anniversary event at Gettysburg, PA.

Weather: While in Gettysburg it was warm temperatures in the mid 80's during the days and nice for sleeping at night in the mid 50's. When we left at noon on Sunday the temp was 91.

Thursday: 1 July

Bob, Aaron, and Wayne, arrived at Gettysburg around 1100. We eat lunch at Friendly's as the rest of the troops were a couple hours away. After lunch we proceeded to the Richmond Howitzers' Marker, 20th Maine trail, rode by Little Round Top, Devil's Den, Wheatfield, Peach Orchard, Trostle's Farm, PA monument, and High Water Marker. Since the rest of troops were still a little ways away we visited the NPS Visitor's Gift/book shop. Around 1400 we all meet at the registration barn near the reenactment encampment. Very soon after, we were at our campsite putting up our tents and fly. We are getting very good at setting up camp. We waited around for a little while for the rest of Knibb's Battery to arrive. Around 1800 we departed the area and had dinner at General Pickett's Buffet. After dinner Bob, Aaron and Wayne went back to the Richmond Howitzers' Marker to place a flag and then visited Little Round Top, The High Water Marker, Cushing's Battery and Armistead's Monument. The rest of the troops decided to "walk-off" dinner by doing some shopping. We meet back at camp and most turned in after an early start and a long day.

We meet and spent some time throughout the weekend with Ron & Emily as they have joined the 2nd Richmond Howitzers out of Richmond, VA and were present at this reenactment.

Friday: 2 July

Breakfast: French toast and bacon

We observed Knibb's Battery and then we took our turn and did "our Drill" on the 12 lbs Parrott. We then got instructed on how we need to modify our procedures in order to pass inspection. Things such as saying "Prepare" instead of "Prepare to fire." Due to the size of the cannon compared to ours we needed to learn a new way of doing "Misfire Drill." Which we did. During the Inspection we did pretty good, but were asked to practice ramming technique so that the number one position was more inside the wheel for protection and distance from the muzzle. Upon being re-tested we passed with little comments.

Lunch: Sandwiches

After lunch most people took a short visit to the Sutlers' Town.

At 1700 we hooked up the two cannons to two different trucks and proceeded to the battlefield 20 minutes away.

At 1800 the "Battle at the Brickyard" began. It was very cool to be in Gettysburg firing a "large" cannon alongside a dozen other cannons. We fired as a Battalion and fired a "Wave of Thunder." We also fired as a battery of four cannon. We fired as a section of Knibb's Battery and we fired independently. In total we fired 9 rounds. We had no major problems. After the battle, we once again hooked up the cannons and proceeded back to camp for a little relaxation and dinner.

Due to the late battle, we didn't eat dinner until 2100 but it was worth the wait as we had venison stew and cornbread. We finished the night with some fun conversation and just hanging out.

Saturday: 3 July

Breakfast: Scramble eggs and sausages

At 1100 we departed for the battlefield for a 1200 Independence Day Artillery Commemoration where we fired 1 round as part of the salute.

Since we were already down near the Sutlers and the cannons was going to remain on the field for the afternoon battle we stayed and had an ice cream Sunday to hold us and did some shopping. In addition, some of us saw a first person presentation by General Longstreet.

1630 found us back on the battle field readying for the 1700 Battle of "The Wheatfield – Harvest of Death" This battle was for the most part (Cav being the exception) played out in front of the spectators. While the cannon always were position in a great location for spectators, earlier battles had both the Infantry and Cav on the upper field making it more difficult for spectators to see and enjoy the action. The Infantry lined up in our rear and after we fired 3 rounds they proceed to move forward between the cannons and by the artilleryman who position themselves close to their guns. Once it was clear, we were able to fire 3 more rounds [total fired 6 rounds for this battle] before the action stopped. We hooked up the cannons and returned to camp.

1900 Dinner: Pork roast and corn on cob

2030 Reenactor's Dance found Cadet Andy with not one but two dates for the dance. He took two Cav girls. What is it with women who ride horses and wear boots? As I understood it Andy broke a many of other hearts of pretty women who vied for his attention.

Back in camp, Ms. Eli [aka "Card Shark"] took on the task of instruction Captain Wayne and Pvt. Bob on the finer points of playing cards. The men never stood a chance and went down in flames as Ms. Eli soundly beat them and won the game

By 2230 most people had returned and were turning in for the night.

Sunday: 4 July

We were up by 0600 breaking camp and packed up and by 0800 we were off to Lincoln's Dinner for breakfast. After breakfast Bob, Aaron and Wayne was off to NPS Visitor's Center where we saw the movie, cyclorama, and visited the gift shop before we head home at noon. Darwin, Lisa and the Brady's visited Devil's Den and other parts of the battlefield. At 1300 Lisa, Michelle, Andy & Eli took a one hour tour of the battlefield by horseback. Shortly after the ride they too were off for home.

I wish to thank all that made the extra effort to attend this event.

I believe it was well worth it.

Maybe for the 150th (in three years) we can do it again.

Respectfully submitted

Captain Wayne

Commanding Officer

1st Co., Richmond Howitzers