



# THE BURNING ISSUES



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## From the Chairman

Fellow BVMA Members,

We are now fast approaching the end of an extremely busy event season. Saratoga II looks to be the largest Rev War event ever and we have played a major role in making that happen. Many of the "225th" events we have been to were average at best while others were complete flops. Most of us would agree that heat and too many events in an economically bad post-911 year were probably to blame. After all, we have all witnessed the attrition within units at events due to military service call-ups, still others have had to work more hours or find new jobs since the collapse in the economy. However, even with all these situations, the BVMA has had excellent membership turnout and performed splendidly at most if not all the events this season.

The focus on events for next season is almost entirely on us - the BVMA. It is going to be very busy again and we need to concentrate our resources and time primarily on our major "225th" events which consist of Lansing Manor (in conjunction with the "Big Three"), Upper Canada Creek, Cherry Valley, and the fall German Flatts. All other events we run will, in all likelihood, be small and interpretive. Because of this reality, many of us feel it is time to suggest that traditional annual events such as Fort Ticonderoga, Old Stone Fort, Fort Klock, and Hubbardton, as well as new events like The Mabee Farm into a bi-annual schedule after 2003; thus freeing up everyone



## Commemorating the 225th Anniversary of 1777

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### 2003 Annual Delegates' Meeting

#### Reminder:

The bylaws were amended moving the Annual BVMA Delegates' meeting to the third Saturday in January. For 2003, that makes it Saturday, January 18th. Notices will be sent out ahead of time.

## Behind the Lines

Dear BTL and BVMA members,

I would like to thank all of you for making this past season possible. The events were fantastic and they could not have happened without your support. I encourage all of you to continue planning for the coming year. We have many local events that are quickly approaching. If we wish to maintain our reputation as a group that values the family and encourages civilian portrayals, we must be creative and devise even more ideas for interpretations and programs. Another issue we must focus on is bringing the public into our interpretations, making their visit to an encampment even more memorable. This is especially important for children. The more hands-on activities that are available to them, the more information they retain.

Please help us to continue to plan our upcoming activities. Your input is valuable and appreciated. Remember that the events that are currently being planned for next season take a great deal of preparation. Please do your part by offering your opinions, assistance and support, so we can all enjoy these events. We must also start immediately if we plan to have another successful symposium this coming year. Please let us know what type of programs you would like to attend. If you would like to teach one of these classes, we would be glad to assist you in any way possible. Please contact me with ideas for programs, interpretations, and

**From the Chair** (cont'd from p. 1)

from the chaotic event schedules as witnessed this year.

Ourselves, we only had two real events of our own to speak of so far this season; Mabee Farm (also known as Snowbowl 2002) and The Flockey. Both of these events were major successes and demonstrate the talents, commitment, interpretive and organizational skills of our membership. Saratoga II, Kingston, and Ft. Stanwix should prove the same. As for next year, the BVMA begins 2003 with two War Games, two Shoots, and one Symposium (this is where your membership cards come into play) already in the works before the campaign season begins in April...be forewarned.

As for the organization, we are growing by leaps and bounds. 13 units, several sutlers, a dozen or so period demonstrators, and several new historic sites and organizations are looking to join the BVMA in 2003. Also, four probationary units should achieve full membership this year. All I can say is our reputation for low-stress, non-nonsense, historically correct, and interpretive events has put us in a new light amongst our peers and the historic/educational community as a whole.

I'll have much more to talk about by Ft. Stanwix so I'll end this by stating that the BVMA should be proud of itself! Congratulations! Well Done and Keep Up the Great Work! I Look forward to being with you all for the remainder of the season.

Your Most Hmbl. & Obdt. Servt.,

Paul Supley  
BVMA Chairman &  
Crown Commander

**"The Town Burned"**

by Todd Schnitzer, pvt.  
*Dachsteder's Loyalists*

The town Burned,  
The Indians took to pillage.  
As the patriots would learn,  
Nothing was left of their little village.

The spinning red winds  
Took no care.  
Entered every home,  
And stripped it bare.

While in the fields  
Burnt crops there lay  
Corn, wheat, potatoes and fruits,  
The loyalists even burnt the hay.

Shots ripped from the fort.  
The patriots took careful aim  
Very few fell,  
And still the raiders came.

They left the town;  
The sun started to set,  
The patriots rejoiced  
But still it was not over yet.

Johnson turned with two cannon,  
Two big blasts ran out into the dark.  
The first cleared the fort  
While the second hit its mark.

All the way from Schenectady;  
The great fires could be seen.  
The people of Schoharie fled,  
Using the woods as their screen.

**Did you know...** that in the 18th century, ketchup/catchup was a "highly spiced flavoring agent made with wine, wine vinegar, lemon, horseradish, anchovies, spices, and such strong ingredients, used in sauces and made-dishes; not today's thickened tomato sauce".

- From *So Serve it Up - Eighteenth Century English Foodways in Eastern Pennsylvania*, by Clarissa F. Dillon (an excellent cookbook, by the way, available from Bookmasters, Inc., Mansfield, OH, or contact Clarissa on the Savory Fare or 18thC Woman's lists) - Pub.

**Behind the Lines** (cont'd from p. 1)

activities at  
BVMA\_symposiums@yahoo.com.  
I can also be reached at  
british\_annie@yahoo.com. I welcome your input.

Respectfully,  
Anne A. Clothier  
BTL Chair

**18th Century Terms of War**

*Abatis* — A defensive obstacle of felled trees around a fort. Tress were cut with branches intact and pointed away from the fortifications, making an assault difficult. A basic feature of most fortified places.

*Artificer* — Technical field soldiers skilled in mechanics who served with engineer or artillery units. They could build, repair, and maintain equipment in the field. Sometimes organized into separate units such as the Continental Regiment of Artillery Artificers.

*Chevaux-de-frise* — A portable defensive obstacle made of logs or beams bristling with spikes. One of the basic devices of the time, chevaux were used on land as roadblocks or to fill gaps in fortifications. Underwater versions blocked rivers or harbors.

*Gabion* — A portable wicker-work basket, filled with dirt, used to build field fortifications in a hurry. Could be constructed on the spot from branches or hauled into place

**Old Fort Johnson Colonial Days**

*By Jim Sparks, Old Fort Johnson*

This July, the 18th century came to life in historic Mohawk Valley. Our latest event was our first ever "Old Fort Johnson Colonial Days" held July 27 and 28, 2002. The Fort grounds came alive with the sights and sounds of the 18th century. Visitors could dip beeswax candles over an open fire, watch ladies sew garments, taste food cooked over an open hearth, play games of the 18th century, assist a blacksmith with his work, join in a soldier's muster or just enjoy strolling the grounds talking with craftspeople, local Militia or the Royal Highlander 84th regt . The Fort was also open for guided tours. The 2003 Old Fort Johnson Colonial Days is scheduled for July 26 & 27, 2003.

Photos from the event follow.



*Above: Capt. Wayne Milward, 2nd Albany Militia, training new recruits.*



*Left: Sons & Daughters of Liberty regale the public with Military Musik*

**The Private's Corner**

Instructions to the Private



As a private soldier, you should consider all your officers as your natural enemies, with whom you are in a perpetual state of warfare: you should reflect that they are constantly endeavoring to withhold from you all your just dues, and to impose on you every unnecessary hardship; and this for the mere satisfaction of doing you an injury. In your turn, therefore, make it a point to deceive and defraud them, every possible opportunity; and more particularly the officers of the company to which you belong.

If you are a sentinel at the tent of one of the field officers, you need not challenge in the fore part of the evening, for fear of disturbing his honour, who perhaps may be reading, writing, or entertaining company. But as soon as he has gone to bed, roar out every 10 minutes or so, WHO COMES THERE ? though nobody is passing. This will give him a favorable idea of your alertness; and though his slumbers may be broken he will know he reposes in security.

The Privates Corner will continue in the next issue with more ways for the private to battle and please his officers.

Next issue will concern itself with firings.

Grumphard



*Above: Our fearless leader, Mr. Paul Supley—need we say more?*



*Above: Steven & Alessa Wylie  
Alessa is Fort Johnson Property & Event Coordinator.*

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**A Call to Arms from the Northern Brigade**Submitted by Gavin Watt, KRR

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**REVOLUTIONARY WAR REENACTMENT  
AT CRYSLER'S TORY FARM  
Morrisburg, Ontario  
11-13 July 2003****Your Hosts & Sponsors****The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield  
and the St. Lawrence Parks Commissions  
(Upper Canada Village)****Your Coordinating Units****Units of the Northern Brigade  
of the Museum of Applied Military History,  
ie. Your old friends and opposition in many a contest  
in the Hudson, Mohawk & Schoharie Valleys****The Event Site**

We will be camped near to the location of the original War of 1812 famous/ infamous (depends on your nationality) battle known as Crysler's Farm. John Crysler had been a Butler's Rangers' Drummer. His house was the British HQ building during the battle. The battle was fought on farms occupied by disbanded Royal Yorkers of Major James Gray's Company. The area was first settled in 1784 and is part of the heartland of loyalist Ontario.

Hard by the camp is Upper Canada Village, the Sturbridge or Williamsburg of the frozen north. Loyalist settlers built many of its earliest buildings. One of the most famous was the home of Jeremiah French, a native of the New Hampshire Grants, who served as a Captain in Peter's Queen's Loyal Rangers and later as a flank company Lieutenant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn, Royal Yorkers. As well, other nearby points of interest are the Battle of Crysler's Farm Visitors' Centre; the Loyalist Monument dedicated by Sir John Johnson, the 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet of New York in 1961 and a Pioneer cemetery.

While most of our activities will be conducted near the battleground, we will travel off-site about 15 minutes to the family lands of Sjt Eric Fernberg of the recreated Duncan's Coy where we will conduct some tactical wargaming on superb, challenging ground. The four original loyalist lots owned by the Fernberg family were settled by men and women of the original Duncan's Company.

For the Canucks, who are starved for genuine Am Rev sites, Crysler's Farm, Upper Canada Village and the Fernberg Patent are as good as it gets!

**Where's Morrisburg??**

This is an ideal location for our American friends. Depending on where you're coming from, there are three close border crossings. At the end of Route 81, there's the Ivy Lea Bridge near Alexandria Bay, NY. Or, by coming up through the middle of the Adirondacks, you can cross at Ogdensburg, NY. Or, you can come north on the west side of Lake Champlain to Malone, NY and cross into Cornwall, ON.

- - Continued on p. 5

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***Crysler's Farm (Upper Canada Village)****(cont'd from p. 4)*

From the Ivy Lea crossing, drive east on Hwy 401 about 70Km. Or, from the Ogdensburg crossing, drive east on 401 about 30Km. In both cases, look for the exit marked Upper Canada Village and follow the signs. Or, from Cornwall, head west about 35Km on Hwy 401 and go south at the exit marked Upper Canada Village.

**Crossing the Border with Flintlock Longarms**

There are no restrictions or special permits/licences required to bring flintlock longarms into Canada, as Canadian Gun Laws view antique and reproduction flintlock longarms as non-guns. You must declare your flintlock musket or rifle when you enter the country and answer all questions politely and directly. Your purpose on entering the country is to attend an historical reenactment at Upper Canada Village.

Do not complicate your life by bringing cartridge firearms of any type with you, as these require expensive, special permits.

**On-line Registration**

All individuals who are attending this exciting event will please register using the Cryslers Farm website:

[http://www.cryslersfarm.com/register\\_form.htm](http://www.cryslersfarm.com/register_form.htm)

**Preview: Extracts from 1778****Extract: Samuel Kirkland to Major General Philip Schuyler**

Fort Schuyler  
23 May 1778

I have now the unhappiness to acquaint Your Honour that things have taken a very different turn from what they promised when I did myself the honour to write you last.

I left the Oneidas yesterday. Your agent, Mr. Deane, requested me to inform you that the reason of his not writing was the uncertainty which attended the results of the meeting at Onondaga. However, in his opinion from what he could collect there contained very little prospects of a reconciliation with the Senecas; that the Oneidas would soon stand in need of your protection; that the German Flatts, Stone Arabia, and Cherry Valley would be attacked by the Indians in scouting parties some time next month.

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*United States. Papers of the Continental Congress, Microfilm Group M247, Roll 173:336-38*

**Extract:**

**John Barclay, Mayor of Albany  
And Brigadier General  
Abraham Ten Broeck  
To Governor George Clinton**

Albany  
31 May 1778

We enclose Your Excellency a copy of a letter received from Schoharie. Alarming as the accounts from that quarter are, we apprehend farther danger not only from the Indians collecting at Kanasedego under Mr. Butler, an account whereof General Schuyler informs us he has transmitted to Your Excellency, but from the numerous Tories which we are informed have within this fortnight past gone off to join either the enemy that have destroyed the settlements of Cobus Kill or those collecting at Kanasedego, and at other places for hostile purposes.

Many of our Militia, Sir, are employed in the public service as carpenters, blacksmiths, bateaumen or waggoners, and it is to be lamented that we still have too many Tories, and as it is probable that the affair of Cobus Kill will oblige all the inhabitants on the Mohawk River to be in arms, the utmost distress must inevitably take place from so many hands being taken from the necessary husbandry. We have, therefore, most earnestly to entreat Your Excellency to use your influence to procure a body of Continental Troops to be sent up to your relief. Many other reasons might be urged to enforce the necessity, thereof, but we humbly apprehend what we have observed to be fully sufficient.

Not a single field piece is left us, nor any artillery men, nor any fixed ammunition.

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*George Clinton, Public Papers of (Albany, 1914), Vol. 3, pp380-381*

*Publishers Note: The above extracts are from The Butler Papers: Documents and Papers Relating to Colonel John Butler and His Corps of Rangers 1711-1777 Compiled and Edited by Lt. Col. Wm. A Smy, OMM, CD, UE. 1994*

### Three Sisters Stew

1 pumpkin  
 1 tablespoon oil  
 1 large onion, sliced  
 4 cups yellow summer squash, sliced (about 1 pound)  
 4 cups zucchini, cut into 1 inch pieces (about 2 medium)  
 4 cups butternut squash, peeled and cubed (about 1 large)  
 3 cups green beans, cut into 1 inch pieces (about 1 pound)  
 1 cup whole kernel corn cut from the cob (or frozen works)  
 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves  
 2 16-ounce cans kidney beans, undrained (or soak and cook your own)  
 1/4 cup of maple syrup - more or less to taste

Gut a pumpkin (a pie pumpkin, not a field pumpkin) that will fit inside your Dutch Oven with the lid not touching the pumpkin. If the lid touches, cut the sides down a little. Heat the Dutch Oven with a little water in the bottom. Mix all of the remaining ingredients except the maple syrup. Place the mixture in the hollow pumpkin (if the pumpkin won't stand up straight on it's own then cut a thin slice from the bottom to even it out) Put the pumpkin in the Dutch Oven without the pumpkin top. Cook in Dutch Oven until the squash is tender and the pumpkin flesh can be easily pierced with a fork. Don't overcook it or the squash will get mushy when you stir, and the pumpkin will fall apart. At the last minute add about 1/4 cup of maple syrup and stir. You can eat the stew, and then eat the mashed flesh of the pumpkin with a little more maple syrup as dessert.

A couple of notes:

- it helps to raise the pumpkin off the floor of the Dutch Oven very slightly.
- you can add garlic and a jalapeno pepper to this to spice it up if you like.

*Pub. Note: Recipe courtesy of Wendy Daxon, McDonnell's Coy. Butler Rangers*

**From the Publisher:** *The Burning Issues* will be published 3 times a year, in March, June, and September, and if necessary, December. This is **your** newsletter, and your input is needed. What would you like to see in the newsletters? Have you read any books lately relevant to our period? How about a book review? How about 'After Action Reports' after an event? Have you come across any interesting genealogy information pertinent to the Valleys? This newsletter will be what you make it, and I know we have a lot of knowledge and talent out there, so let's see some input! Thank You to those who have contributed in the past.

— Kristin

#### NEXT ISSUE SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Next issue will be published in March, 2003. Please submit articles, ideas, questions, etc. at any time or by February 28th for the next issue.

— Kristin

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