**The 18th Century Comes to Life at Cowpens National Battlefield on January 14 - 15**

CHESNEE, SC: On January 14 - 15, 2012, reenactors in Revolutionary War period clothing will bring the 18th century to life, and visitors can hear different perspectives about the American Revolution, as Cowpens National Battlefield presents traditional and new activities during the annual battle anniversary celebration. All activities are free and open to the public.

The event will kick off at 9:30 am on January 14 with an hour-long guided battlefield walk. The first 18th century weapons firing demonstration will be at 11:15, and the first 18th century cavalry demonstration will be at11:45.

At 10:00 am on January 14, SAR, DAR, and CAR chapters from around the country will have a wreath-laying ceremony at the 1932 US Monument in front of the Visitor Center. Afterwards, they will have a procession to the 1856 Washington Light Infantry Monument. In the past, this traditional portion of the event had been held in the afternoon. However, it has grown so much that the park moved it to the morning so that it will not be overshadowed by other event activities.

Authors will continue to give talks in the program tent, followed by book-signings in the Visitor Center. On Saturday, Spartanburg author, Sheila Ingle will give a dramatic performance entitled, A Scary Day for Kate Barry, based on her book, Courageous Kate, and will give a reading from her book, Fearless Martha, about Revolutionary War heroine Martha Bratton. On Sunday, Dr. Christine Swager will give a talk based on her book, Come to the Cow Pens; Joe Epley, will speak about of A Passel of Hate, about the Overmountain men, and the final featured author of the weekend will be Dr. Tony Zeiss, author of Backcountry Fury at 3:00 on Sunday. The authors will be available to sign books following their programs.

Additional programs in the tent include a genealogy workshop by DAR member, Darlene Dowdy, and a program on 18th century medical practices by living historian and former NPS employee, Eric Williams.

Tradition continues as reenactors tell the story of the battle on the Saturday evening lantern-lit walks. A favorite of visitors and reenactors, the improvisational walks, led by park staff, take approximately 30 minutes and depict what may have happened the night before the battle: militiamen looking for Morgan's camp, British soldiers preparing for battle, cavalry discussing Tarleton, and Continentals going over battle plans. As participants in the walks, visitors will have the opportunity to "experience" the night before the battle, and are encouraged to interact with the reenactors. Park volunteers will serve free cookies and cider following the walks.

The park is continuing to set aside a special area where children of all ages can participate in colonial era activities such as making sachets, flags, whirligigs, and drums, writing with quill pens, and learning the von Steuben weapons drill. These activities will be available from 11:00 - 5:00 on Saturday and 10:00 - 3:00 on Sunday.

New this year will be the arrival of the Morgan's March participants on Saturday rather than Sunday. First time participants will receive medals in the program tent at 2:00 on Saturday. Members of the Guilford Fife and Drum Corps will give concerts in the program tent and at the US Monument on both days and will play on the battlefield for Sunday's 9:30 battlefield walk. At 10:30 on Sunday will be a Divine Service, or 18th century church service.

The park staff is excited to introduce new superintendent, John Slaughter in the program tent on January 14 at 4:00 pm. Superintendent Slaughter encourages everyone in the area to help celebrate the anniversary of this pivotal battle, "This is YOUR National Park! What happened here on this simple pasture-land gave all Carolinians, all Americans great confidence to take the fight all the way to victory. Our nation's freedom was secured right here in YOUR backyard."

Last but not least, Superintendent Slaughter is starting a new tradition at the event. Students from area schools were invited to participate in a t-shirt design contest. The shirts, which will be sold in the park's book store, will be different every year. The winning design will make one student $100 richer through a generous donation from the park's cooperating association, Eastern National. The public can purchase this limited edition shirt after the superintendent announces the winner at 4:00 on January 14.

Cowpens National Battlefield is located 10 miles west of Gaffney, SC, and 3 miles east of Chesnee, SC at the intersection of Highways 11, 110, and 221-A. Normal Visitor Center hours are 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily, closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day.

For more information, call (864) 461-2828. Visit the Cowpens National Battlefield webpage at:
<http://www.nps.gov/cowp/planyourvisit/231st-battle-anniversary-celebration.htm> to see or print the detailed schedule.

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