W. Blair Keller Jr.
February 19, 1929-February 18, 2015

W. Blair Keller Jr., was ever ready with a joke, a tall tale or to proudly tell about his ancestors who fought at the Battle of Kings Mountain. Blair joined the Overmountain Victory Trail Association in 1978. He participated in the OVTA commemorative march more than 32 times, including once on horseback! Referring to the march in 1996, Blair said, “I was fortunate enough to get to carry a flintlock rifle that was used in the actual battle…which I count as one of the most exciting things I have done.” The rifle, which belonged to William Edmondson, is now on display at the W. Blair Keller Jr., Interpretive Center at the Abingdon Muster Grounds. The Town of Abingdon recognized Blair’s service to the story of the Overmountain Victory by naming the new Interpretive Center in his honor. “Blair has done so much to preserve the trail and in passing the torch to the next generation,” said OVTA President RG Absher. “The memories of his big smile and a twinkle in his eye will continue to go with us down the trail. Blair’s legacy represents the best in the “Keeping The Story Alive.” Huzzah Blair!!!!”

To Blair-Thank you for your service! Thank you for the preservation work you did! Thank you for teaching the youth! Thank you for your friendship and for all of the laughs! We’ll miss you on the trail!

Overmountain Victory Trail Association

“KEEPING THE STORY ALIVE”

The Overmountain Men story is one of the greatest in American history. With the fight for freedom in doubt, an untrained volunteer militia from the Appalachian backcountry marched 330 miles over rugged mountains and waded through raging rivers to confront the world’s most feared and powerful army. The Overmountain Men’s defeat of the British at Kings Mountain, South Carolina on October 7, 1780 was a turning point in the Revolutionary War, setting our young nation on a course to victory. We are now more than two centuries removed from that day in 1780 when this determined band of “backwater” men stood up to oppression and secured the future of the United States as a free and independent nation. Perhaps no story in American history better illustrates the American Spirit than the bravery and dedication displayed by the Overmountain Men. The Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) serves as a strategic Friends Group to the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. Memberships help to fund communities, storytellers, reenactors, crafters, and musicians to perform interpretative activities to thousands of Americans each year. To join, speak to an OVTA member or visit www.ovta.org/join. Follow us at www.facebook.com/Overmountain-Victory-Trail-Association

OVTA
1780 Muster Place
Abingdon, VA 24210

The OVTA is a registered IRS 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Yearly, since 1975, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association reenacts the Patriots’ Campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain. Thank you for joining us as we commemorate one of the greatest expeditions in American history.

“KEEPING THE STORY ALIVE”
September 24th - October 7th

Relive the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution

FOUR STATES
TWO WEEKS
330 MILES
HUNDREDS OF MEN
WON DECISIVE BATTLE FOR AMERICA’S FREEDOM

WWW.OVTA.ORG
OVERMOUNTAIN VICTORY TRAIL ASSOCIATION
2015 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The following activities celebrate the 235th Anniversary of the Overmountain March to the Battle of Kings Mountain. These are OVTA activities in partnership with communities along the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.
Together we serve to PROTECT, PRESERVE and INTERPRET the route of the Campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain.

ELIZABETHTON, TN
Saturday, September 19 (10am)
Celebration of the Gathering of the Overmountain Men
Location: Sycamore Shoals State Park
Contact: Ronnie Lail (423)914-8677

JONESBOROUGH, TN
Sunday, September 20 (3pm)
DAR Constitution Day
Location: Jonesborough Courthouse
Contact: Tom Vaughan (423)366-8639

ABINGDON, VA - Sunday, September 20
Brody and Campbell Grave Service (2pm)
Candlelight Tour Muster Grounds and Storytelling (7pm)
Location: Abingdon Muster Grounds
Contact: Leigh Anne Surber (276)525-1050

BLUFF CITY, TN
Thursday, September 24 (4pm)
Choates Ford Crossing
Location: South Fork of the Holston River
Contact: Ambre Torbett (423)279-2603

ROCKY MOUNT PINEY FLATS, TN
Public Program Thursday, September 24 (7pm)
Contact: Gary Walrath (423)538-7396

SYCAMORE SHOALS/FORT WATAUGA
Friday, September 25 (2pm) River Crossing
Saturday, September 26 Rev Doak Sermon (8am)
Sunday, September 27 Public Church Service (9am)
Contact: Sycamore Shoals State Park (423)543-5808

SPRUCE PINE, NC
Sunday, September 27 Keeping the Story Alive
Location: Riverside Park (3pm)
Contact: Ronnie Lail (423)914-8677
Location: The Orchard at Altapass (5pm)
Contact: Bill Carson (828) 765-9531

MORGANTON, NC - Rev War Days
Saturday, September 26 (12pm-5pm)
Location: Old Burke County Courthouse
Sunday, September 27 (1pm-5pm)
Location: Charles McDowell House
Contact: Bryant & Linda Lindsey (828)437-4830

LAKE JAMES STATE PARK
Tuesday, September 29 (6:30pm)
Chad Bogart, Guest Speaker
The Backwater String Band
Contact: Bryant Lindsey (828)437-4830
Historic Burke Foundation (828)437-4104

MORGANTON, NC
Thursday, October 1 (11am)
Catawba River Crossing & The Story
Contact: Bryant & Linda Lindsey (828)437-4830
Historic Burke Foundation (828)437-4104

DYSARTSVILLE, NC
Public Program Thursday, October 1 (6pm)
Location: Community Center
Contact: Albert Dale (828)980-4548

GRAY’S CHAPEL (Polk County, NC)
United Methodist Church
Monday, October 5 Evening Program (6pm)
Contact: Linda Sheehan (828)287-3092

COWPENS NATIONAL BATTLEGROUND
Saturday & Sunday, October 3&4 (9-5)
Keeping the Story Alive Storytelling/Reenactments
Tuesday, October 6 (5pm) 1780 music by The Backwater String Band
Tuesday, October 6 (6pm) Reenactor Drama, The Night Before Kings Mountain, performed by Overmountain Men of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association

KINGS MOUNTAIN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
Wednesday, October 7 Kings Mountain Ceremonies: 235th Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain Wreath Laying program (10am)
NPS Public Program (3pm)

Spartanburg, SC - Festifall
Saturday, October 3 (11am)
Keeping the Story Alive
Location: Walnut Grove
Contact: Julius Dargan (864)591-5596

Gaffney, SC
Sunday, October 4
Living History Encampment (Noon - 5pm)
Spirits of Independence Ghosts Tours
(Tours: 5pm, 5:30pm, 6pm and 6:30pm)(Ticketed event)
Location: Cherokee County History & Arts Museum
Contact: Museum (864)489-3988 or Gaffney Visitors Center (864)487-6244
Monday, October 5 (8:00 am)
March on Main and Storytelling at the Cabin
Location: Gaffney Visitors Center
Contact: Staff (864)487-6244

www.ovta.org