

Kettle Creek remembered

Acting on behalf of Revolutionary heroes

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WASHINGTON - The men who fought in the pivotal Revolutionary War battle at Kettle Creek wore handmade shoes and mismatched uniforms. They were Georgia and South Carolina militiamen who chose sides based on their politics and fought in their everyday clothes.

They looked nothing like their neatly dressed descendants who brought dozens of wreaths to Saturday's ceremony commemorating the 224th anniversary of the battle in Wilkes County. Women in their Sunday best and men in replica Revolutionary War uniforms represented 50 chapters of the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution as they honored the 340 ragtag rebels who successfully stopped the Loyalists as they tried to reach British re-enforcements in Augusta.

Fourteen boys and men who travel around the Southeast in period outfits showed curious onlookers a glimpse of how those patriots lived as they stood at attention through the commemoration ceremony, their muskets at their shoulders.

If she actually lived the life of the Revolution-era woman that she plays in reenactments, Susan Hanobeck would travel to battlefield campsites to cook for the men, and maybe, if she was like a handful of noted women, would fight beside them.

But, as a modern-day woman, she helped Saturday by telling anecdotes using her costume to explain tidbits of history while her boyfriend, Dale Loburger, stood at attention with his regiment.

One of the women who fought was Nancy Hart, Hanobeck explained, a

fiery redhead whose crossed eyes led Tories to believe she couldn't shoot straight. According to legend, 6-foot-tall Hart shot and killed several, Hanobeck added.

The re-enactors belong to two groups whose members spend about half of their weekends camping out in 18th century costumes.

Most of them make their own uniforms, going to great length to



■ Members of the Sons of the American Revolution, dressed as officers of the time, line up before the 224th Anniversary Observance of the Battle of Kettle Creek on Saturday in Washington.

R.C. Rique/Staff ■



■ Ian Osborn, 12, kneels behind a

row of Georgia Refugees and North Carolina Volunteers. Ian's father, Brett Osborn, is a member of the Georgia Refugees.

R.C. Rique/Staff ■

They buy their handmade shoes second-hand; a new pair of authentic shoes can cost more than \$150. Like the originals, the shoes come in just one shape; they have to be worn to create indentions that better fit the right or left foot. They are the most comfortable shoes he owns, re-enactor Charles Lecount said.

Their muskets fire, and they've studied history to such detail that they can play out historically accurate scenes at the dozens of sites they visit each year.

Don't mistake their loyalty to authenticity as a sign that they aren't adaptable.

The most important detail - what side they are on - can change at each event. Saturday, half played crown-supporting Tories and half played independence-driven rebels.

As the scene looked 224 years ago, you could only tell them apart by a small strip of red felt or a spring of greenery stuck in their hats.

Like the men they play in history, the re-enactors are of different professions and ages.

Twelve-year-old Ian Osborn has toted his drum onto the re-enactment battlefield the past three weekends, but he's only been drumming for a few months and is just getting the hang of it, he said.

Patrick Valentine has been re-enacting Revolutionary War scenes since his college days in the late 1970s.

A descendant of Tories, he offered a view of history that diverged somewhat from Saturday's theme.

"The Loyalists really believed they were fighting for the legitimate government. They did what they felt was right in their hearts," he said. "I kind of feel sad for them that they get left out."



■ Nathanael Folds, 4, sits with his mom,

search out the most authentic fabric - mostly wool and silk, very little cotton, and definitely no polyester or rayon, Hanobeck said. They sew their costumes by hand, being careful to hide seams.



■ Susan Hanobeck makes her way up the hill to join her husband and other Georgia Refugees during the 224th Anniversary Observance of the Battle of Kettle Creek on Saturday in Washington.

R.C. Rique/Staff ■

Kathy Folds, during the observance. Both are dressed according to the time of the Revolutionary War.

R.C. Rique/Staff ■

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