

## LOCAL NEWS

# KM celebrates 'turning point' of Revolution

EMILY WEAVER

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Whether by car, by foot or by limo, over 100 people attended the 227th anniversary celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain at the KM National Military Park's amphitheater on Sunday afternoon.

Five students from Kings Mountain Intermediate School arrived at the park with Mayor Rick Murphrey and his wife Sandra in a white stretch limousine shortly before 3 p.m. For all of the students, it was their first time to ride in a luxurious limo. They filed out of the expanded back seat with smiles on their faces. A few of their parents followed behind in their cars. Austin Anthony, Dalton Cash, Kirby Hullender, Kaylen Ledford

and Tanner Orders all seemed to enjoy the limo ride and especially the ice cream at Swooger's afterwards.

Volunteer marchers with the Overmountain Victory Trail Association, following some of the 330-mile path once trekked by the Overmountain men, stepped into the amphitheater a little after 3 p.m. to mark the beginning of the ceremony. This was their 33rd annual reenactment of the campaign to Kings Mountain.

Park Superintendent Erin Broadbent said that the Overmountain men's victory in the Battle of Kings Mountain would change the course of history. "At the time they did not know that and all of them did not care. All that truly mattered is that they had defeated Major

Patrick Ferguson, the man who had threatened to march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders and lay their country 'waste with fire and sword,'" she said. "Today, we once again celebrate that victory and honor those who fought and died here."

Don Boshell, of St. John's United Methodist Church, gave the invocation. Mayor Rick Murphrey recognized his young companions and said that today they were there to learn more about the Battle of Kings Mountain. "We believe, for our youth to study and learn from our history, that it will provide a brighter and a better future," he said, adding that the battle waged on this mountain "led to the founding of this great nation."

Allen Bowen, OVTA president, said that their annual trek to Kings Mountain is "a two-week campaign that started back on September 24, with the muster up in Abingdon, Virginia, moving on down to Sycamore Shoals, crossing the Appalachian mountains, coming down through North Carolina, Spruce Pines, Morganton on down to Polk County and into South Carolina," he said, adding that another militia called up in Surry County to join the Overmountain men in Morganton. "We've been doing this for years, but something has been happening lately. Communities along this trail have been waking up. The trail has been silent for a long time, since 1780. The men that came out of the woods today when we

came in, they were to show that the 28 that died on this mountain and all of the other patriots that were on that campaign, they're still watching. They're watching what happens and they're starting to smile because the communities, the young people are starting to see the value of what they gave so much of for and that was our independence, our freedoms and our liberties." He said that over 5,000 volunteers joined the campaign this year, about 4,000 more than they had a few years ago.

U.S. Congressman of South Carolina John Spratt gave the principal address about the history of the Battle of Kings Mountain and all of the events that preceded and followed it, which led to America's independence.

## Volunteers preserve history of Battle of KM

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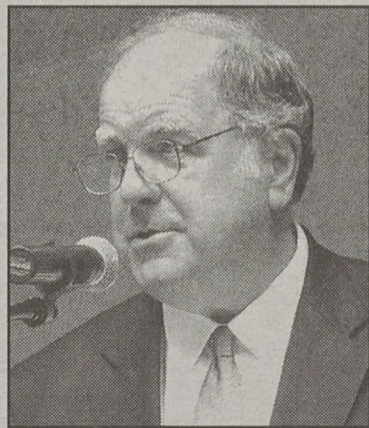
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Thousands came out to celebrate the 227th anniversary of the famous Battle of Kings Mountain at the national military park over the weekend.

On Saturday, re-enactors with the Back Country Militia and the 84th Highland Regiment breathed new life into the old historical story for the thronging crowds. "We probably had about a few thousand people come by yesterday," Rick Stuck said on Sunday. A volunteer with the Back Country Militia, he was dressed like one of the Overmountain men, who in 1780 gave a mighty blow to the royalists on Kings Mountain.

He said that they gave a lot of demonstrations of life during the Revolutionary War-era on Saturday, including games and the art of scrimshaw. Men would often carve on the horns they carried, personalizing them with art, an act called scrimshaw. Stuck had carved a beautiful bird and his name into the cow horn he carried on a string around his neck. His horn, like many others of old, was used to hold his gunpowder.

The 84th Highland Regiment had set up camp just a stone's throw away from the militia. Members of both reenactment

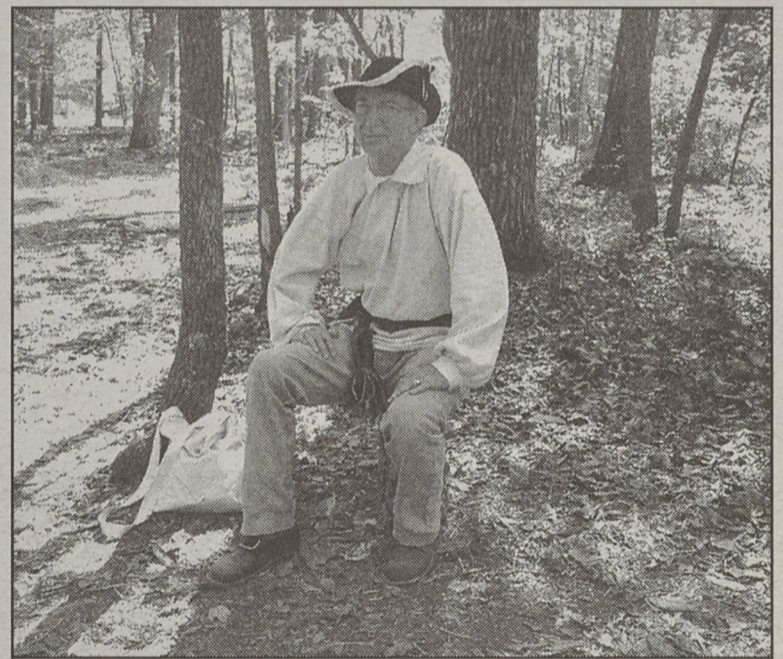


longer than today's quick zip on a machine.

Joseph was down to his normal civilian clothes on Sunday afternoon as they began to collect their belongings for the journey home. He said that they enjoyed camping at the park and they really enjoy re-enacting.

Looking through a Revolutionary War history book at the park's gift shop on Saturday afternoon was Mark Anthony, who was clad in British Revolutionary garb. He is a member of the Sons of the American Revolution and said that his relatives actually fought in the Battle of Kings Mountain 227 years ago. He was out at the park Sunday morning for the wreath-laying ceremony and stuck around for the celebration in the amphitheater. He came out for the anniversary to pay homage to his ancestors and to preserve the history of the famous battle they fought. "The love of history was instilled in me at a young age by my mother," he said.

On the air floated the soft entrancing whistle of a far away flute played by Stuck, tucked away at his camp in the thickets, around 2 p.m. The seats in the amphitheater started filling up as the second-hand of the clock marched closer to the 3 p.m. anniversary celebration.



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Don Boshell, a token French re-enactor, rests on a stump in the woods at the Kings Mountain National Military park. Left, U.S. Congressman of John Spratt gives the keynote address at the 227th anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain.

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