





**MICHIGAN CAVALRY BRIGADE, MONTEREY PASS BATTLEFIELD
FRANKLIN COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
State of Michigan
Civil War Sesquicentennial Tribute
Michigan Historical Commission Marker Dedication**

July 5, 2013

Michigan Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee Chair Brian James Egen and Michigan Historical Commission Chair Jack Dempsey attended the State of Michigan Historical Commission Marker dedication at Monterey Pass in Pennsylvania. Michigan Civil War Historian David Finney also was in attendance as he was an original driving force/motivation for the Friends of Monterey Pass (Friends) to establish the state historic marker. Mr. Egen



Welcome to the Monterey Pass Battlefield's Dedication of the Michigan Historical Commission Marker

"It was too dark to distinguish objects at any distance. The darkness was intense and in a few moments we plunged into a dense thicket... One had to be guided by sound and not by sight... Had it not been for the noise and the flashing of the enemy's fire we should have wondered away in the darkness and been lost."

Captain James Kidd, 6th Michigan Cavalry, on the Battle of Monterey Pass

Sponsored by:

Friends of the Monterey Pass Battlefield, Inc. Washington Township Franklin County, Pennsylvania

Thank you for your assistance in preserving this unique piece of our nation's history.

and Mr. Dempsey were asked to speak on the evening of July 5. Mr. Finney, not initially scheduled to speak, was asked to provide remarks and very eloquently conveyed the thoughts and praise on what the Friends had done thus far.

Agenda for the Evening

- 7:00 pm: Alicia Miller, Chair, Friends of the Monterey Pass Battlefield, Inc.
- 7:05 pm: Michael Christopher, Manager, Washington Township
- 7:10 pm: John Miller, Historian
- 7:15 pm: Janet Pollard, Director, Franklin County Visitors Bureau
- 7:20 pm: Jack Dempsey, President, Michigan Historical Commission
- 7:25 pm: Brian Egen, Chair, Michigan Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee
- 7:30 pm: Marker Unveiling

The Battle of Monterey Pass
July 4th - 5th, 1863

On the evening of July 4th, 1863, one of the most confusing battles of the Civil War occurred during the retreat from Gettysburg known as the battle of Monterey Pass.

Around 9:00 p.m. near Monterey Pass, Pennsylvania, the Union cavalry under the command of General Kilpatrick came in contact with the Confederate 1st Maryland Cavalry under the command of Captain George Emack, who had a small detail guarding the approach to Monterey, re-enforced by one cannon of Captain William Tanner's Battery.

Darkness set in during a blinding rainstorm. The Confederates wearing gum blankets, were mistaken as Union troops by Kilpatrick's cavalry as they made their way toward the summit of Monterey. Knowing that their identity was withheld, the order came to fire the cannon. When the confusion subsided, the Confederates charged, pushing the Federals back.

The battle would rage on the mountain summit for another six hours. During the battle, General Kilpatrick sent a force toward Leitersburg to attack the head of the wagon train as it came off the mountain. General Kilpatrick also sent another small force to Fairfield Gap, where a portion of the 1st Michigan Cavalry was beaten back by Confederate Cavalry who were supported by artillery.

By 3:30 am, General George Custer's brigade were in some of the hottest fighting they had seen during the war. After Custer's battle line had stalled, Major Charles Capeshart's 1st Regiment of West Virginia Cavalry arrived and pushed through the well defended Confederate battle line, toppling the cannon down an embankment, capturing and destroying wagons as they continued toward Ringgold.

By the morning hours of July 5th, more than 9 miles worth of wagons were destroyed at Monterey and Leitersburg. The Confederate killed or wounded totalled around 1,500. The Federal losses were approximately 50-70 killed and wounded.

For more information about the Battle of Monterey Pass, or how you can help save this battlefield please visit the Friends of the Monterey Pass Battlefield's web site at: www.montereypassbattlefield.org

The community was very excited and enthusiastic about the marker. Many of the local politicians and other key persons from the community attended with a good showing of folks from community. There were nearly 100 people in attendance with approximately a dozen Michiganders in attendance.

At the evening unveiling of the Michigan History Marker, Janet Pollard of the Franklin County Visitors Bureau described the county as the commencement of the Confederate invasion of Pennsylvania and the beginning of the Gettysburg campaign.

The battle of Monterey Pass occurred on July 4 - 5, 1863, as Confederate troops retreated from their loss at Gettysburg. The battle raged overnight, wounding or killing 1,500 Confederate and 50 to 70 Union soldiers. While the battle was the second largest to be fought in Pennsylvania, and included key historic figures like General George Armstrong Custer, it is often overshadowed by the battle of Gettysburg.

What began as just a hand-painted sign marking the site of the battle in the yard of historian John Miller, has grown into an official non-profit organization, The Friends of Monterey Pass Battlefield Inc.; a group dedicated to the preservation and education about the battle. The group purchased the initial acre, located at 14325 Buchanan Trail East, in December 2011 from Mary Rae Cantwell, who was among those at Friday's ceremony. The organization has developed a plan to acquire more property, install interpretive kiosks, and develop programming and an interpretive center. This grass-roots effort has inspired much of the community and they have garnered much support



Brian Egen, David Finney, Jack Dempsey

brilliantly as the sunlight streaked through mountain pass as if it was directed specifically on that spot of the site. There were a lot of photographs taken and Michigan was the center of it all! It was a great dedication with an impressive amount of positive energy and spirit – we were proud to be a Michigander! It was a great feeling to know that Michigan now had two State Historical Markers on South Mountain located about 24 miles apart in two different states.

and enthusiasm to inculcate their heritage into local tourism, educational efforts, and cultural/heritage awareness. The site currently sees about 2,000 visitors per year.

As the marker tarp was being taken off, many “oohs” and “ahs” came from the crowd. The brilliant gold lettering, against the green background, shown