

Report by Jim Moyer and Fay Dutton

My wife and I really enjoyed the trip on August 8, 2009 Saturday from 9am to 5pm. I am guessing that tour was probably more than 20 years of weekends in the making where Norman L. Baker, our tour guide, had walked all those places, documented all those spots, poured over satellite and aerial maps and topo maps, and photographed parts of the Braddock Road.

Norman pointed out that some wrong things in history continue to persist:

- 1) The State highway marker about Seller's Fort is wrong, and is located in the wrong place...
- 2) Washington was Colonel and commander of the Virginia Regiment, and should not be referred to as commander of the militia...he "was unhappy with the militia." There is a plaque at Fort Cumberland that wrongly states Washington as commander of the militia.
- 3) Only those forts "established as military fortifications were prefaced with the title of Fort." All other forts run by the owners of the property or by the local militia should have the word, Fort come after the person's name, such as Cresap's Fort, instead of Fort Cresap. All else was not official or just "country forts" or block houses "surrounded by stockades."
- 4) At Fort Cumberland the town workers mistakenly paved over the inlaid markers on the road delineating the boundaries of the old fort. This is an alert to our organization wanting to show the boundaries of Fort Loudoun by having the city put inlaid markers in the sidewalk and street. We should have some system to alert city workers paving the road not to over-pave the markers inlaid on the road.

Some highlights:

This bus tour held 22 of us. We drove out west on what was called the Old Wagon Road and drove back to Winchester's Fort Loudoun on stretches of the Braddock Road. This tour encompassed what was mostly the old large Frederick County that emerged from an older Orange County.

Grey cloudy day soon became bright and sunny for most of morning and early afternoon.

The docent at Edward's Fort was happy to see us. And we enjoyed our visit there and enjoyed his friendly and informative presentation. They have a great selection of books to buy as well. The docent did remark that everyone around these parts thinks their road is part of Braddock's Road but Norman Baker might

be the only researcher who used some logic combined with the map studies to make what is the real Braddock Road.

Mercer's men were attacked by the Indians - some were scalped. The wounded retreated to this Edward's Fort which no longer exists but they are excavating the site.

At Cocks's Fort on Patterson's Creek we ate box lunches provided by Royal Haven, Assistant Living facilities in Winchester, Front Royal and Woodstock, owned by Norman's wife, Suzanne Baker. It was very good. And we all ate every bit of it. We also celebrated our temporary titular former Vice President Steve Resan for his birthday that day. Later on the way back we drove by Steve's house which is on the original Braddock Road.

Cocks's Fort was the only fort called "Washington's Fort." Cocks's Fort was for an extended period formally identified by Washington as Fort Washington and was supposed to be bigger than Fort Loudoun with 500 men but the name did not persist nor did the fort get that big. Owner bought the abandoned place in 1975. Ironic and interesting too was that this property was abandoned when Smith, one of Washington's men, wrote in his diary some 200 years ago about camping there. There was discussion of the location of what was called the "Indian House," with the owner, Jeff Green, explaining that "Indian" means anything or before white settler memories. The Indian House site was near the "well" and the ford of Patterson's Creek. A spring was also on the site a short distance to the north.

Fort Cumberland was an official fort, showing its boundaries in the street of which some of the inlaid markers were unfortunately paved over, as mentioned earlier. The library and courthouse were there. Hills overlooked the fort where the Indians could lob fire into it. Washington and Daniel Morgan came back to this fort on their way to quell the Whiskey Rebellion.

On the way back to Winchester's Fort Loudoun, the bus took us along several miles of the original Braddock Road. Going out to Cocks's Fort was on the Old Wagon Road.

Cresap's Fort is on the Maryland side where a new Liberty Tree was planted to replace the last remaining Liberty Tree that got destroyed in 1997 by Tropical Storm Floyd. Cresap was called the Rattlesnake Colonel by a Braddock officer. When George Washington was 16 and surveyed for Lord Fairfax it was Cresap that introduced him to the first Indians he would see.