



The Battlefield Equestrian Society
Proudly Presents its

Annual Guided Historical Trail Ride with
The Black Horse Cavalry
4th Virginia Cavalry, Co. H.

Saturday, October 25, 2025

[\(Click here for Online Registration\)](#)

Ride and Demonstration Begins at 9:00 AM

Registration Deadline is October 22, 2025

(Rain Date Sunday, October 26, 2025)

LIVE THE HISTORY!



The Black Horse was initially formed in Fauquier County in 1859 as a Virginia militia volunteer cavalry company. The unit guarded John Brown at Harper's Ferry prior to his execution. With the secession of Virginia from the United States, it was mustered into the service of the Commonwealth of Virginia in May of 1861. At First Manassas, it initially guarded the commander but was later released to pursue the retreating Federals. As part of a squadron composed of the Black Horse Troop, Captain Payne and the Chesterfield Troop, Captain Ball, under the overall command of Lt. Col. Thomas T. Munford, it pursued the Federals to Cub Run and captured ten rifled cannon, their caissons, and forty-six horses. The company later became Company H of the 4th Virginia Cavalry Regiment. The 4th Virginia Cavalry was comprised of companies from Prince William, Chesterfield, Madison, Culpeper, Powhatan, Goochland, Hanover, Warren, and Buckingham counties, some of the finest sons of the "Old Dominion".

The roster of the Black Horse included a great many young men from the oldest and most established families of Fauquier County, in the heart of Virginia's horse country. Many had honed their skills for years before the War in foxhunting and at the jousting tournaments held in Fauquier Springs, and rapidly adapted those skills to the needs of cavalry in wartime. The Black Horse served from First Manassas to Appomattox Court House, participating in every major battle and campaign that involved the Army of Northern Virginia and never surrendering their colors. The unit produced three brigadier generals and numerous post-war elected officials.

The present Black Horse is a group of living historians established for the purpose of challenging their horses and each other in accurately reenacting and honoring cavalymen of the past. They attempt to equip and train as authentic, disciplined Confederate cavalry. The reenacting unit was founded in 1972 and participates in Civil War battle reenactments, living histories, presentations for the public, and films. Strong emphasis is placed on developing skills of a cavalryman, and members are expected to attend drills and hone their skills.

General Information

Participants may arrive beginning at 7:45 AM. Upon arrival, please check-in with ride officials. All riders must be in the saddle at **9:00 AM** and **ready to ride**. Upon mounting, you will receive an historical overview and then enjoy a brief demonstration that reflects the authenticity and dedication to the unit and its history. You will be divided into small groups based on your preferred ride speed and assigned a guide leader.

Unless prevented by weather conditions, the "long" trail course will leave Manassas Battlefield Park in order to view two key crossing sites and portions of the unfinished railroad. **For the long ride, be prepared to be in the saddle for about 12 miles or 3.5 to 4 hours ride time.** The "medium" trail will be a shortened version of the long trail with all the

history but not all the views provided in the long course. **For the medium ride, be prepared to be in the saddle for about 10 miles or 3 hours ride time.** The shorter ride is planned to largely follow the Matthews Hill Loop covering about 4.5 miles or 2 hours ride time. **If you do not feel you or your horse can handle the distance and time of the long or medium ride, PLEASE request the shorter ride.** The speed of all groups may be reduced/limited by weather, trail conditions and safety. **Horses should be prepared for water crossings in advance.** The ride will include water crossings, narrow trails, and maneuvering muddy banks.

Upon your return from the ride, lunch is on your own (we are not providing a lunch option this year). However, you are welcome to bring your own lunch and enjoy it in the staging area with the company of the Black Horse Cavalry.

Ample trailer parking is available. Parking attendants will be onsite for ease and coordination – please obey the requests of the attendants. Please bring your own water as no onsite water is available other than nearby creeks. Due to concerns with and the timing of the Government shutdown, we will not have restroom facilities onsite. For the safety of the horses, riders and volunteers, please leave your dogs/pets at home. Due to liability, BES does not allow non-registered friends/riders to ride along or park their trailers at the event site.

Registration/Cost

Pre-registration is required for all riders. Click [HERE](#) for the online registration form. No walk-in entries accepted. Entries must be received with all required documentation and be paid in full no later than Wednesday, October 22nd. After this date, please contact Stephanie Chao (Stephanie.h.chao@gmail.com or 703-868-0688) for space availability. Late entries are on a space available basis and will be assessed a \$20 late registration fee. Incomplete entries (missing paperwork or payment) will not be accepted. **Entry fees are non-refundable and will be donated towards trail maintenance unless both ride dates are cancelled.**

Online registration and electronic payment via PayPal invoice is required for this ride. Click [HERE](#) for the online registration form. You may need to copy the hyperlink and paste into your browser. The liability waiver and Coggins may be submitted electronically via the online registration form or emailed to Stephanie Chao at stephanie.h.chao@gmail.com. The registration form and liability waiver are also attached and available on the BES website (battlefeldequestriansociety.org) under the Calendar & Events page.

Ride Fees

- BES Members → \$45
- Non BES Members → \$50
- All Juniors (17 & under) Members and Non-Members → \$20
- Late Registration → \$20 – After October 22nd, please contact Stephanie Chao for availability.

Your registration must be complete including application, liability waiver, Coggins, and full payment before your registration is accepted.

40th Anniversary Merchandise

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of the formation of BES. While the fanfare has been low key this year, we do have 40th Anniversary merchandise for purchase. You can view and purchase items when you register. You can also purchase items separately through this link ([BES Merchandise Store](#)). Either way, we can deliver items to you at the ride.

BES Membership

If you are not already a member, join or renew your membership now and take advantage of the lower cost Members ride entry fee! Our membership form is available on the BES website (battlefeldequestriansociety.org) and membership fees can be paid with your registration.

Directions

From I-66, take Exit 47 onto Route 234 North. Travel ~1.4 miles and turn right at the light onto Route 29 North (Stone House is on the corner). Travel less than a mile and look for signs on the right. Ride base is located between the Stone House and the Stone Bridge on Route 29.

Inclement Weather Policy

The event will be held rain or shine but may be postponed (rain date 10/26/2025) or cancelled if weather or trail conditions are considered too hazardous. If the event is postponed or cancelled, you will be notified by email (by phone if no email available) by 8:00 PM the evening prior to the ride.

Contact Information

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact:

Stephanie Chao, Ride Secretary: stephanie.h.chao@gmail.com or 703-868-0688 (email or text preferred)

Dewey Brown, BES President: gohrsecrzy@aol.com or 540-272-6368

BES Website: battlefeldequestriansociety.org

We look forward to you joining us for a great experience for you and your horse that benefits the equestrian trails at Manassas National Battlefield Park.

BES thanks you for your support.

Release and Waiver of Liability

I am a participant, not a spectator, engaged in an equine activity. I am aware that equine activities, whether riding or not, poses potentially serious risks of injuries or death to its participants. I understand that my horse or I may be injured or die as a result of my negligence, the negligence of others, or through no fault of myself or anyone else, because of the nature of the activity in which I am going to be engaged. I also understand that horses, even the best trained, are often unpredictable and difficult to control.

With this waiver I accept notice of the provision of Section 3.1-796.130 through 3.1-796.133 of the Code at Virginia, which states in part: That there are inherent risks in equine activities, including (i) the propensity of an equine to behave in dangerous ways which may result in injury to the participant; (ii) the inability to predict an equine's reaction to sound, movements objects, persons or animals; and (iii) hazards of surface or subsurface conditions. The waiver shall remain valid unless expressly revoked by the participant or parent or guardian of a minor, in writing, with receipt acknowledged by at least one of the officers or directors of the Battlefield Equestrian Society (BES).

Furthermore, with this document, I expressly assume the risk of injury or death due to negligence by the BES, its officers, directors, members, agents, employees, and staff, or guests for my own safety or for the safety of my minor child or horse. If this or any other provision of this Agreement is held invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall be unimpaired.

With the knowledge of the foregoing, and as an inducement for the officers, directors, and members of BES to allow my participation, I do hereby waive and release any and all rights that I or my heirs may have to make a claim against the BES or its members; the owners, tenants or others of interest of any property over which I may pass, ride, or by any other means be; and other participants (including guides, planners, judges, or others) arising from any damages, injury, or death which I might sustain or which might occur to any horse as a result of my participation in this equine activity. I further agree to indemnify all of the foregoing from any claims which I might make or which might be made on my behalf by others or which might be made against me by others arising from riding with the BES or following or participating on foot or by automobile. Furthermore, I agree to indemnify the BES and its members for any injury, death, and loss of or damage to any personal property, which I might cause during this equine activity.

I further acknowledge and accept that BES strongly suggests that I will wear an approved hard hat/helmet while participating in this ride.

By signing this release and waiver, I understand that I am giving up any right I have to sue or make a claim which I might have or which might subsequently arise or occur against the BES and its members and participants for any injuries I might sustain while horseback riding or present or following or participating on foot or by automobile and that I am indemnifying BES and its members if I injure anyone else, another's property, or any horse ridden by another while so engaged. It is my intent to give up those rights, and I do so knowingly and voluntarily.

Rider Signature _____ Date _____

(Rider) Print Name _____

Horse Owner Signature _____ Date _____

(Horse Owner) Print Name _____

Parent or Legal Guardian Release and Waiver

I am the parent or guardian of _____, a minor (under the age of 18), and on the minor's behalf and on behalf of all other parents or guardians of the minor, I accept the release and waiver of liability at the top of this form as an inducement for allowing my child, or this minor, to ride with the BES. I further acknowledge and accept that said minor will wear an approved hard hat/helmet while participating in this ride. I further authorize any emergency medical care, which may be necessary. I represent and warrant that I have the authority to give this release.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

Print Name _____