**CMH Staff Ride and Support Request Form**

The U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) develops and leads staff rides for organizations and units looking to incorporate a battlefield or other historically significant event as an outdoor classroom as part of their unit training program.

Staff rides are designed to apply military history to professional military education and development. They use military history as a vehicle to promote critical thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and the exercise of creativity as applied to military decision-making. Staff Rides use terrain and battle and campaign histories to help individuals and organizations understand the challenges of leadership, operational art, strategy, and to experience and appreciate the timeless aspects and complexities of decision-making in the context of combat. A staff ride is not a battlefield tour or a leisure recreational activity. Units seeking battlefield tours should contact the National Park Service or tourism organizations. CMH will gladly and professionally facilitate staff rides as a valuable training event for organizations and units with tailored themes and training objectives that CMH will assist units to develop if necessary.

The staff ride requires detailed preparation and active participation by members of an organization, with CMH experts providing training, guidance, and mentoring to help the organization meet its objectives. Please note that the requesting unit/organization is responsible for all logistical and administrative issues, to include transportation, meals, and personnel accountability. Any transportation costs or any associated TDY costs for CMH historian(s) must be paid by the requesting organization.

**CMH’s Target Audience:** Priority will be given to the Joint Staff, the Army Staff, TRADOC staff and units, Foreign Delegations and Liaison Officers, and other Army General Officer level commands. CMH also seeks to provide support to Army and government organizations within the greater National Capitol Region (NCR). All other units will be supported as we are able. If we cannot support your staff ride directly, we will provide you with resources to help you execute your training.

**CMH Support Requirements:** If within the NCR CMH can generally support staff ride requests with little to no out of pocket expense to the unit. If CMH personnel must travel outside the NCR then any transportation costs or any associated TDY costs for CMH historian(s) must be paid by the unit. This could be a local DTS voucher for mileage if within the greater NCR or could be significant TDY associated costs if multi-day travel is necessary outside of the greater NCR. These associated costs are of course dependent on the staff ride location selected. Depending on your group size multiple CMH historians may be required to support. We generally recommend a ratio of one historian for every 25 participants. This keeps group sizes manageable for ease of communication and maneuver on the staff ride.

**Staff Ride Execution**

A staff ride consists of three phases and an After-Action Review (AAR):

1) **The *Preliminary Study Phase*** consists of a class session designed to prepare unit participants for its visit to the actual terrain of the battle or campaign. The preliminary study phase can be completed in person or via MS Teams. If the unit does not wish or cannot schedule a class, **as a minimum, participants MUST** read the read-ahead materials provided by CMH.

2) **The *Field Study Phase*** incorporates and continues the efforts of the preliminary phase by placing the unit on the actual terrain and expanding upon their knowledge and analysis of the significance of the events across the terrain.

3) **The *Integration Phase*** consists of a formal or informal opportunity for individuals and the unit to reflect upon their collective staff ride experience, building upon the preliminary and field study phases, in an effort to analyze the terrain’s effects and the possible enduring lessons that can be drawn from the event to apply in the contemporary context.

4) The ***AAR*** provides a vehicle for both the unit and CMH to review desired outcomes and training objectives of the staff ride. The AAR is critical to allow both organizations to learn and incorporate feedback from the facilitators and the target audience to make future training events more productive and valuable for each organization.

**Staff Ride Methodology (units will select one or more methods to employ during the staff ride):**

***Role-Playing*** – Allows staff riders to assume the persona of a major military or civilian actor. Individual participants become a limited subject-matter expert for their character. Along with fellow role players of equal preparation, this methodology facilitates a rich and triangulated discussion among participants.

***Socratic Dialogue*** *–* This methodology solicits engagement among the entire group rather than targeting single participants to summarize the actions of selected characters.

***Operational Decision Gaming***– “reenactment” in the Clausewitzian sense of the term- places the participant in the mind of the decision-maker at critical decision points in a campaign or battle to walk through why a decision was made, without the prejudice of what occurred historically. The idea being for students not to judge historical leadership in an operation, but to develop their own solutions to problems given the same knowledge as the historical leader. In doing so, the student exercises true critical thinking via analysis and creativity.

***Devil’s Advocate*** – Participants react to opinions expressed in the above techniques and challenge them with different points of view/strategies. Employing this methodology prompts participants to consider multiple perspectives and a variety of strategies/tactics employed by leaders during the battle/campaign.

**Staff Ride Themes and Training Objectives:**

Theabove methodologies can be incorporated into a training plan in a variety of ways, tailoring a staff ride experience to meet your unit or organization’s training objectives and commanders’ intent. Training objectives will vary based on the unit however techniques that can be used on staff rides include:

 ⦁ Warfare at the tactical, operational, or strategic levels

⦁ Principles of War

⦁ Warfighting Functions

⦁ Leadership

⦁ Communication

⦁ Large Scale Combat Operations

Examining these elements in their historical context and how they relate today in the contemporary environment can provide valuable insight from the past that help us accomplish our organizational missions today. One staff ride technique is for participants to conduct their own research ahead of time and provide a short brief of their assigned topic. This can be conducted individually or as group/staff section assignments. Your staff ride facilitator can provide a list of topics and assignments if this is something you would like to incorporate.

**Current CMH Staff Ride Offerings:**

**American Revolution:**

Lexington & Concord

Brandywine/ Valley Forge

Trenton / Princeton

West Point

Monmouth Court House

Saratoga

Yorktown

**Civil War:**

First Bull Run

1862 Peninsula Campaign

Second Bull Run

1862 Maryland Campaign & Antietam

Fredericksburg

Chancellorsville

Gettysburg

Wilderness/Spotsylvania

Petersburg/Appomattox

Lincoln Assassination (Non-Traditional)

John Wilkes Booth Escape (Non-Traditional)

**World War I:**

Cantigny

2nd Marne

Meuse-Argonne

Belleau Wood

Saint-Mihiel

Bonus Army (1932) (Non-Traditional)

**World War II:**

Normandy

Salerno

Anzio

Nuremberg / Dachau

Huertgen Forest

Battle of the Bulge

WWII Mobilization (Non-Traditional)

**Other:**

Custom staff rides in support of specific training needs or location (e.g. Valcour Island, Homeland Defense)

Civil-Military Relations (Non-Traditional)

**Detach the form below and return to CMH:** **usarmy.mcnair.cmh.mbx.military-programs-staff-ride@army.mil**

**CMH STAFF RIDE REQUEST FORM**

**Name and Location of Unit/Organization**:

Unit/Organization Name:

Point of Contact Name:

 Phone Number:

Email:

**Staff Ride Campaign or Battle Preference**:

**Requested Staff Ride Date(s) & Time(s):**

**Alternate Date(s):**

**Requested Date(s) for Preliminary Session:**

**Preliminary Session Format (In Person / MS Teams):**

**Approximate Number of Participants:**

Officer:

NCO:

Civilian:

Senior person (if GO or VIP, please provide names and grade):

**Transportation Plan** (i.e., how will you be moving around the battlefield? Bus? GSA vans? POVs? Some battlefields are not accessible by some forms of transportation):

**Feeding Plan** (i.e., brown bag lunches, sit-down restaurant, etc. Keep in mind that sit-down lunches can often cut into time on the battlefield):

**Desired Training Objectives and Themes:**

1.

2.

3.

**Methodology/methodologies to be used during the Staff Ride (see above):**

**Would you like to include participant stands/briefing subjects?**