

## **Manassas Battlefield Ride: Member Event**

The Battlefield Equestrian Society (BES) of the Manassas Battlefield sponsored a fund raiser and historic ride on Sunday, 23 June 2002. There were 45 riders. Of those, seven were Icelandic horses. A number of people who could not make the ride asked me to let them know how it went. In sum, I think we all had a great time.

The organizers gave us our own guide. Jim was a sergeant in the Black Horse Troop of the 1st Virginia Cavalry. He set a good pace so we could do a lot of trotting. (My horse is a slow walker, so I put him at the end and we did a lot of trotting and cantering to catch up.) Jim showed us some of the principal areas of the battlefield. He did a good job explaining the history of the battle, cavalry tactics, and interesting facts about life as a Civil War soldier. We even got to form some military formations and to move in pairs as a troop. We came back to the starting point after about 90 minutes, took a short break, watered the horses, and went out to a different area for about an hour. Jim offered to stay out longer, but most of us had had enough. On the way back to the starting point, Jim got on an Icelandic and joined us trotting. He said he could learn to love it. We were then given lunch and relaxed.

The battlefield has beautiful riding trails. The BES does a great job keeping them up. The Icelandics drew a lot of attention and people were impressed as we wizzed by them on the trails. The organizers would love to have us back and asked us to put them on our club calendar for next June. They also offered to provide guides if we wanted to do a ride on our own. They asked us if we wanted to form an Icelandic horse troop in the Confederate Cavalry! Anyone interested?"

