

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

Published by Georgia Battlefields Association, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of Georgia's Civil War history and sites. Contact newsletter editor by e-mail: info@georgiabattlefields.org

Chickamauga may again be threatened by heavy traffic

The October 2001 newsletter reported on the re-routing of U.S. 27 to reduce traffic, especially large trucks, through the Chickamauga battlefield. Some citizens of the communities around the national park are pressuring the Park Service and U.S. Representative Nathan Deal to restore the speed limit on the Lafayette Road that bisects the battlefield. More importantly, they're arguing for an end to the restrictions on commercial vehicle traffic. Park Superintendent Pat Reed held open comment sessions on 18 and 22 April and accepted written comments through 26 April.

The minimal publicity about these proposed changes played into the hands of their advocates. The majority of public comments favored the higher speed limit and the end of truck restrictions. Still, you can send your comments to Superintendent Reed at P.O. Box 2128, Fort Oglethorpe GA 30742, fax them to 423 752 5215, or e-mail CHCH_Administration@nps.gov.

Chickamauga is a national park that belongs to all of us. While the park must be considerate of its neighbors, a return to higher speeds and truck traffic will increase the danger of accidents and dramatically decrease the tranquility of the park. Constituents of Representative Deal should write him at 2437 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515-1009, or e-mail him through his web site: www.house.gov/deal. Those living outside Representative Deal's district should contact Senators Max Cleland (461 Senate Dirksen Building, Washington DC 20510; fax 202 224 0072; e-mail through <http://cleland.senate.gov>) and Zell Miller (257 Senate Dirksen Building, Washington DC 20510; fax 202 228 2090; e-mail through <http://miller.senate.gov>).

CWPT annual award recipients include Kolb Farm Coalition

The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) recognized Kolb Farm Coalition as one of four preservation organizations of the year for its efforts to save the "fourth corner." The award was presented at the CWPT annual conference, held 25-28 April in Chattanooga. Accepting the award were John Pape of the Coalition and John Cissell, Superintendent of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, which will eventually receive the land. Among other notable awards, the Ed Bearss Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Jerry Russell, founder of Heritage PAC. CWPT is the premier national non-profit battlefield preservation organization.

Keeping port open means danger for Civil War artifacts

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is in a constant battle with nature to keep the port of Savannah operating safely and efficiently. Unfortunately, periodic dredging and harbor improvements pose a threat to Civil War artifacts both in and on the Savannah River.

When Confederate forces abandoned Savannah in December 1864, they scuttled *CSS Georgia* in the Savannah River by Fort Jackson. This effort to frustrate use of the port continues to have an impact. A buoy dangerously near the main ship channel marks the site of the sunken ironclad. Past dredging and channel maintenance operations have done some damage to *CSS Georgia*, but divers report the hulk is in a remarkable state of preservation. While historians hope to one day raise and conserve the ship (at considerable cost) so that it can be further studied and seen by many more people, it is safest now if it remains underwater to prevent rapid deterioration.

The Corps of Engineers' latest plans for improvement to Savannah harbor acknowledge the presence of *CSS Georgia* and Fort Jackson, but one erring dredge could do irreparable harm. The Coastal Heritage Society (www.chsgeorgia.org) asks for your help in preventing damage to the ship or erosion to the foundations of the fort. You can convey your concerns to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Attn: PD-E (Bailey), P.O. Box 889, Savannah GA 31402.

The Corps of Engineers helped with preservation of a Confederate torpedo dredged from the ship channel in May 2001 (see GBA newsletter for July 2001), and the Corps also helps preserve the Civil War sites near Lake Allatoona. GBA hopes for continued cooperation as the Corps tries to reconcile its mission of managing water resources with the need to preserve our history.

Marker repair program remains in state budget

A December 2001 *Georgia Battlefields* article reported that Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Lonice Barrett had listed historical marker maintenance as an item that might be cut in response to Governor Barnes' directive to reduce the 2003 budget, but when the Governor submitted his budget to the General Assembly, \$211,000 for marker maintenance was included. The spending bill as passed by the legislators retained the funds for marker maintenance. The budget also has a \$75,000 grant to the Georgia Historical Society for placement of new markers.

Georgia Civil War sites brochure revised and reprinted

Presence of the Past, a short guide to Civil War sites throughout Georgia, has been extensively updated and reprinted because the 1995 black and white original edition was almost entirely out of stock. The new, color edition features updated phone numbers and the addition of e-mail and web site information. One unchanged aspect of the revised brochure is designer Dan Childs, currently a member of the Georgia Civil War Commission (GCWC) and formerly president of GBA. Much of the research was done by Rich Elwell, longtime GCWC administrator.

The brochure should be available at state welcome centers, parks, and museums shortly; or you may request a copy from the Georgia Civil War Commission, 156 Trinity Ave SW, Ste 104, Atlanta GA 30303-3600.

Youngest Confederate Soldier a Georgian

In the Etowah Valley Historical Society newsletter, David Parker writes that David Bailey Freeman was the youngest boy to become a Confederate soldier. In April 1862 at age 10, Freeman and his older brother enlisted at Cartersville in the cavalry battalion of Smith's Legion.

The brothers participated in The Army of Tennessee's campaign into Kentucky in the fall of 1862. The subsequent retreat through Cumberland Gap was cold and miserable. Freeman later wrote: "I took sick from the exposure and was carried to a farmhouse, where I was placed on a pallet with my feet to the fire. My feet cracked open and ran blood."

Discharged to his home, Freeman recovered and joined the 6th Georgia Cavalry Regiment. In September 1863 at age 12, Freeman fought at Chickamauga. The 6th Georgia then participated in Longstreet's expedition to Knoxville. As part of Major General Joe Wheeler's Cavalry, Freeman recalled: "For privations and peril, I am satisfied there was no more trying service in the war. ... We never had a whole night's sleep." In the spring of 1864, Freeman's company served as escort for General Joseph E. Johnston during the Atlanta Campaign.

Surviving the war, Freeman did well in the newspaper business and was active in the United Confederate Veterans until dying of a heart attack in 1929 at age 78. Freeman's grave is in Cartersville's Oak Hill Cemetery.

Send us preservation news

GBA is always looking for news about preservation efforts in Georgia, especially those outside the area of the Atlanta Campaign. If you have preservation-related information that should be in the newsletter, please write Charlie Crawford at 1598 E. Nancy Creek Dr., Atlanta GA 30319, or e-mail info@georgiabattlefields.org.

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