

G E O R G I A

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

Nominate an endangered Civil War site

Last year, the Civil War Preservation Trust, the nation's pre-eminent non-government preservation organization, asked Georgia Battlefields Association for a list of endangered sites. GBA responded with the following list (also in the November 2001 newsletter):

- Ringgold Gap – White Oak Mountain, Taylor's Ridge
- Rocky Face Ridge, Mill Creek Gap, Crow Valley
- Allatoona Pass – Star Fort and Anchor Fort
- Dallas area – trench lines and battery revetments
- Kolb Farm – “fourth corner”
- SW Atlanta – Federal trench line
- Brown's Mill – cavalry battle
- Griswoldville – viewshed

Our response was based on these general criteria:

- Significance – How important was the event that occurred on the site?
- Condition – How much does the site resemble its wartime appearance?
- Availability – Is the property owner ready to sell? Is a developer planning to build?

The Southwest Atlanta site indeed made CWPT's 2002 list of ten most endangered sites, and substantial preservation has occurred at Rocky Face Ridge (see newsletters for June and January 2002 and November 2001), Kolb Farm (January 2002 and November 2001), and Brown's Mill (July 2001). While the remaining sites will again be proposed for CWPT's 2003 endangered list, we're asking GBA's members—using the criteria outlined above—to suggest other sites that are endangered. Please send your suggestions to Charlie Crawford at 1598 E. Nancy Creek Dr, Atlanta GA 30319-1731, or e-mail info@georgiabattlefields.org. Thanks for your help.

New “Heartland of the Confederacy” tour brochure

In an example of cooperation among historic site managers and tourism promotion agencies, several organizations in northeast Georgia have published a brochure on historic sites in the “Heartland of the Confederacy.” The Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau is the lead agency.

The “Leaders Trail” starts in Gainesville and proceeds through Jefferson, Athens, Lexington, Washington, Crawfordville, and Philomath. While the majority of sites are related to Civil War personalities (such as Longstreet, Howell Cobb, Robert Toombs, Porter Alexander, etc.), others relate to notable pre war or post war events. A second trail covers the last few days (August 1864) of Stoneman's Raid and passes through Madison, Rutledge, Watkinsville, and Winder before ending at the site of King's Tanyard, where hundreds of Federal troopers were captured.

Rather than a comprehensive trail system that includes directional signs, standardized markers, chronological sequencing, and roadside pull-offs for vehicles, the Heartland of the Confederacy brochure is a compilation of information on and directions to established historic sites.

The brochure is in full color on high quality paper and provides a map as well as background information on the sites and the people. David Evans, author of the definitive book on Federal cavalry operations during the Atlanta campaign ([Sherman's Horsemen](#)), was the lead historian. More information is available from the Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau (800 653 0603 or 706 357 4430) or the Washington-Wilkes Chamber (706 678 2013).

Blue & Gray Trail brochure reflects successful regional effort

The already established Blue & Gray Trail in northwest Georgia represents a good collaboration among convention & visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, welcome centers, roundtables, and other community organizations. The trail brochure provides descriptions of and directions to 64 Civil War sites from Chattanooga to Atlanta. As with the Heartland of the Confederacy effort (see article above), the Blue & Gray Trail involved no new signs or parking areas. In addition to the trail's web site at www.ngeorgia.com/travel/bgtrail.html, the brochure is available online at www.sherpaguides.com/georgia/civil_war/blue_gray_trail/index.html.

Statewide Civil War sites brochure available

Both the Heartland of the Confederacy and the Blue & Gray Trail efforts could be described as more detailed, regionalized versions of the recently reprinted *Presence of the Past* brochure, which lists sites throughout the state (see May newsletter). While Heartland of the Confederacy and Blue & Gray Trail represent local or regional initiatives, *Presence of the Past* is issued by the state-chartered Georgia Civil War Commission. To get a copy of the brochure, visit a state park or welcome center, or call Barry Brown (Historic Preservation Division) at 404 657 7294.

Progress on Civil War trails, but no statewide coordination

As previously reported in the newsletter, two efforts are underway to develop comprehensive driving trails that link Civil War sites in Georgia. Unlike the trail brochures mentioned above, these initiatives will involve standardized marker formats, sequential references in the marker texts, and construction of new parking areas and pull-offs.

- The Georgia Civil War Commission is sponsoring two trails (one mostly in Cobb County and the other from Macon to Ball's Ferry) that will involve county governments and existing historic sites as well as adding markers at sites that are currently unrecognized.
- Georgia's Civil War Heritage Trails, Inc. (GCWHT) won a substantial Federal grant to develop two trails tracing the Atlanta Campaign and the March to the Sea. GCWHT plans to place more than 80 markers, build pull-offs and parking areas, print brochures, and develop a web site for a trail system that will extend across 31 counties from the northwest corner to the coast of the state. In April, GCWHT submitted an 800-page report on its progress to the Georgia Department of Transportation and Department of Natural Resources as well as to the Federal Highway Administration. Georgia Battlefields Association made a \$5,000 contribution to GCWHT's effort.

While we're glad that both these efforts will raise awareness of historic sites and enhance their chances for preservation, we remain convinced that cooperation between the groups is necessary to prevent duplication, confusion, and consequent inefficient use of preservation resources.

At the monthly meeting of the Georgia Civil War Commission on 7 May, commission member Gene Hatfield commented cogently. Dr. Hatfield remarked, "The purpose of our trails effort was to create an integrated whole throughout the state." Responding to comments citing Virginia's Civil War trail system as a model, Dr. Hatfield said, "The Virginia trails program prospered because Civil War sites in Virginia were already widely known. Georgia is not in a similar position. Other than Chickamauga and perhaps Andersonville and Kennesaw, people don't think of Georgia as having Civil War sites in the same way as Virginia. Tourists were already coming to Virginia. For Georgia, the trails program must also draw people to the state. We should aim for a single, comprehensive system."

Disagreements about the trails efforts often arise over the issue of control. If a statewide agency controls formats and placement of markers and reserves the right to review content for historical accuracy, local support can wane. Unfortunately, disagreements are often exacerbated when individuals feel slighted. Still, Georgia Battlefields Association will continue its efforts to reconcile the groups to prevent dueling trails, brochures, and web sites.

Receive the newsletter via e-mail and reduce GBA's costs

Postage rates increase on 1 July, so we're again asking members to receive the newsletter via e-mail. If interested, contact the newsletter editor at info@georgiabattlefields.org.

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