

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

Cobb County artillery site likely to become parking lot

At least one artillery battery site and some infantry trenches are being destroyed by construction of a shopping center in southeastern Cobb County. As reported in the 6 October *Marietta Daily Journal* (www.mdjonline.com, search for "union artillery"), County Commissioner Woody Thompson approved construction of a Publix grocery store, saying the potential economic benefit outweighed his concern for the loss of the historic earthworks. The Cobb County Board of Commissioners approved rezoning in April, but final approval was left to Commissioner Thompson, whose district includes the site. To his credit, Thompson helped save the Kolb Farm fourth corner last year. (See December 2002 and August 2001 newsletters.)

The battery and trench segments in question were built on 4 and 5 July 1864 by Federal forces as they opposed the Confederates in earthworks known as Johnston's River Line. Cobb County now protects the remains of the southernmost portion of Johnston's River Line, including one of the unique fortifications known as a Shoupade. The battery remnant is one of several segments of the "Federal River Line" nominated by GBA as an "At Risk" site for the Civil War Preservation Trust's 2004 list of most endangered sites. (See October 2003 newsletter.)

Roberta Cook, an area resident who organized the River Line Historic Area preservation group, has fought to save the River Line sites, enlisting the support of neighboring property owners, the County Historic Preservation Commission, the Superintendent of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, the Georgia Civil War Commission, and GBA. Ms. Cook organized a protest near the site on 23 October, enlisting Confederate reenactors to protect the Federal earthworks; but the site had been excavated a day ahead of the announced schedule. Columbia Properties, developer of the site, contended that reworking the site plan was not feasible, though a spokesman said the company will contribute \$10,000 towards other preservation efforts in the county and will erect a plaque about the Federal earthworks.

To make your opinion known, contact:

- Commissioner Woody Thompson – 770 528 3312 or wthompson@cobbcounty.org
- Columbia Properties' Dan O'Neill – 770 953 6262 or doneill@columbiapropertiesinc.com
- Publix Super Markets' Brenda Reid – 770 952 6601 ext 3649 or brenda.reid@mail.publix.com

Historical marker maintenance shop closed 31 October

As reported in the September newsletter, funding for preservation-related programs is imperiled by state budget reductions. Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Lonice Barrett initially proposed closing the state historical marker maintenance shop in November 2004, but the need to stop spending precipitated a decision to close the facility at the end of October 2003. While marker maintenance has been restored by the legislature before, the General Assembly will not meet until next Winter, so the program is dead until at least Spring.

GBA again in Sandy Springs Civil War lecture series

Georgia Battlefields Association will again participate in Heritage Sandy Springs' annual Civil War lecture series, with Charlie Crawford presenting "Fighting for Atlanta: The Battles of Peachtree Creek, Atlanta, Ezra Church, and Utoy Creek" at 6 p.m. on 8 January 2004 at the Sandy Springs Historic Site, home of the Williams-Payne House (6075 Sandy Springs Circle).

Other presentations in the series:

- 22 January - "Glover Machine Works: Casting a New South" by Dick Hillman, Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History (www.southernmuseum.org)
- 5 February – "New Manchester Girl" by Cathy Kaemmerlen (www.tattlingtales.com)
- 19 February – "The Civil War History of Andersonville" by Alan Marsh, Andersonville National Historic Site (www.nps.gov/ande)

For more info, see the Heritage Sandy Springs web site www.heritagesandysprings.org or contact program director Cathleen Cooke: 404 851 9101 or programs@heritagesandysprings.org.

Chickamauga Transportation Study panel meets for 2nd time

GBA was represented at the 29 September meeting of the Chickamauga Transportation Study Stakeholder's Participation Panel (see July and August newsletters) in Fort Oglethorpe.

Two surveys in late July confirmed that traffic into Chickamauga National Military Park was considerably reduced by rerouting U.S. 27 from the LaFayette Road that bisects the battlefield onto a new bypass along the western edge of the park (October 2001 newsletter). Still, 83% of vehicles entering the park are transiting—i.e., they are not stopping at a site within the park. GBA and other preservation groups believe that park visitors' experience would be optimized if transient traffic was minimized, though we realize "zero percent" is unattainable.

Some common themes are emerging from the panel discussions:

- While the new U.S. 27 is a good road, access to it is a source of complaint. People are less likely to use the road if they perceive that getting onto or off of it is more difficult than driving through the park.
- Directional and informational signs need to be more plentiful. The cities of Fort Oglethorpe (immediately north of the park) and Chickamauga (wartime Crawfish Springs, southwest of the park) are historical attractions in their own right, but signs to this effect are lacking. Further, some historical signs were removed during road construction and have not been replaced.
- Cooperative marketing by the communities surrounding the park would compensate to some extent for the commercial area traffic decrease caused by the new bypass and the reduced speed limit and restriction on truck traffic through the battlefield.

Notes from the meetings and results of the data gathering will be posted on the study website: www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/studies/chickamauga_study/index.shtml.

While GBA tries to save sites that are unprotected, we must remain devoted to protecting "saved" sites such as Chickamauga. Since one of our goals is to have people learn from visiting the sites, we must help insure the visitors' experience is safe and conducive to learning.

Macon's Cannonball House celebrates 150 years

Begun in 1853, Macon's Cannonball House will observe its 150th anniversary in November. The house acquired its Civil War notoriety on 30 July 1864 when Federal horse artillery shelled the city from a hill to the east. One shot bounced off the sand sidewalk in front of the house and penetrated the wall above a parlor window, coming to rest in the front hallway.

Descendents of one family occupied the house for over a hundred years. In 1962, the United Daughters of the Confederacy purchased the house to save it from destruction. Today, much of the site has been restored, although maintenance is a constant struggle. The grounds also hold a Civil War museum in the detached building that served as kitchen and servant's quarters. The site is owned by Friends of the Cannonball House, Inc., which is renewing restoration efforts as part of the 150th anniversary celebration. A living history demonstration is scheduled for 15 November from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and special exhibits will continue throughout the month.

The Cannonball House (www.cannonballhouse.org) is at 856 Mulberry Street in Macon. Contact the Cannonball House docent staff at 478 745 5982 or cbhinfo@yahoo.com.

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November 2003

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