

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

John Cissell is newest GBA trustee

John Cissell, former superintendent of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (November 2004 newsletter), has been elected to the Georgia Battlefields Association Board of Trustees. His expertise and counsel have already been useful in our efforts to preserve Cobb County sites.

Dan Brown named Kennesaw Mountain superintendent

Dan Brown, interim superintendent of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park since January, was announced as the full time superintendent in late July. Dan's last position was at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve in Louisiana. He has already helped oppose the recent rezonings that endangered Civil War sites in Cobb County. GBA looks forward to working with Dan and continuing to work with his excellent staff at Kennesaw Mountain.

Transportation funds will add to Kennesaw Mountain Park

The recently passed federal Transportation bill includes \$3 million to help purchase 34 acres for Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (KMNBP). This largest addition to the Park in 60 years contains Federal trenches that supported a 24-gun battery site already within the Park.

Several people and organizations deserve credit for preserving this site:

- Property owner Sam Hensley, a former state representative, bought 24 acres of the parcel in 1957. He now owns 70 acres and has repeatedly refused higher offers from developers: Nearby land is selling for over \$200,000 per acre. Hensley will retain 36 acres to pass along to his children, but the most historically significant land will go to the Park.
- The Park staff, especially former superintendent John Cissell, who advocated buying the land for the Park for several years.
- The Trust for Public Land, which is buying the property until legislation is signed and funding obtained, at which time the Trust will transfer the land to the National Park Service.
- U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson, who has long supported the Park and worked both as a representative and senator to pass the necessary legislation.

While the Transportation bill provides the bulk of the \$3.6 million total price, the Park must still raise \$600,000 from non-federal sources to complete the purchase. This will be a priority for new Superintendent Dan Brown (see related article).

GBA nominates River Line to most endangered list

Georgia Battlefields Association has again nominated the River Line as a most endangered battlefield. The Civil War Preservation Trust's list of most endangered and at risk sites is released in February of each year. While the River Line did not make the list for 2005, recurrent threats to this historic site justify the renewed application (see July and August newsletters).

Johnston's River Line contains unique earthworks begun in June 1864 and occupied by the Confederates from late on 4 July to early on 10 July. The opposing Federal line was constructed from 5 to 10 July. Both lines continue to be threatened by development (Sept 2004 newsletter).

Chickamauga Campaign Heritage Trail

Fifteen city and county governments in northwest Georgia and southeast Tennessee have joined with the Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop the Chickamauga Campaign Heritage Trail, which will note the sites traversed by the opposing forces before the September 1863 battle. The group already has a web site (www.chickamaugacampaign.net) and plans to print 100,000 brochures and install around 30 interpretive signs.

While the trail is designed to promote heritage tourism, an underlying objective is to increase awareness of the sites and—through public awareness—increase support for their preservation.

GBA in media to increase awareness

Particularly because of recent threats to Civil War sites, GBA representatives have been quoted in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *Marietta Daily Journal*, *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, and on WGST AM640 radio over the last two months. Typically, only a line or two is used from a half-hour interview, but we hope that any mention in the media will lead to increased public awareness of the destruction of historic sites and increased public support for preservation.

Please respect private property

We're usually glad to publicize the rediscovery of earthworks or efforts to preserve well-known sites. One unsavory aspect to this publicity is the intrusion on private property. After a map of the Fort Drive area appeared in an *Atlanta Journal Constitution* article on efforts to save part of the River Line, one property owner complained to GBA and other preservation organizations that people were showing up on his land with metal detectors. One person with a shovel even began digging up the owner's plants and, when challenged, replied that he figured the owner wouldn't need the plants because the property was going to be developed.

Relic hunting—and plant removal—without the property owner's permission is not only illegal but just plain rude. Further, it often results in damage to the site and can tempt the property owner to destroy the earthworks so that they no longer interfere with his or her privacy or ability to sell the property. We appreciate the many people who have earthworks on their property and do what they can to preserve the site. Please don't endanger the integrity of privately owned Civil War sites by failing to respect the property owners' rights.

Trenches analyzed east of Grant Park

A property owner recently contacted the Georgia Civil War Commission about earthworks on his land east of Grant Park in southeast Atlanta. Upon inspection, the Commission's Barry Brown found apparent trenches running north-south through the property and a circular earthwork that might have been for an artillery piece. The earthworks appear to be too far east to be part of the Atlanta defense line that coursed northward from Fort Walker in the southeast corner of Grant Park. Further, the trenches appear to be facing westward, towards the Confederate line.

The 22 July 1864 Battle of Atlanta—particularly the fight for Bald Hill—occurred a half mile northeast of the property, and the Federal infantry departed the east side of Atlanta a few days later en route to the 28 July 1864 Battle of Ezra Church on the southwest side of the city. Our surmise is that the earthworks may have been prepared by dismounted Federal cavalry when they were responsible for the left flank before and after the late July raids that culminated at Sunshine Church. If our readers have any ideas about the origin of the earthworks, please let us know.

LSU Press publishes book by GBA member

GBA member Mark Dunkelman of Providence, Rhode Island, has established himself as the historian of the 154th New York Volunteer Infantry. He has written several articles on the unit and a previous book titled *The Hardtack Regiment*. Last Fall, the LSU Press issued Mark's latest book titled *Brothers One and All*, which draws on more than a thousand letters and two dozen diaries written by members of the regiment. The book is available through online booksellers or directly from the LSU Press: 800 861 3477 or www.lsu.edu/lisupress.

Mark first contacted GBA a few years ago to seek information on the 154th NYVI's involvement in the Atlanta Campaign, in which the unit fought after its campaigns in the eastern theater.

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