

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

Ed Bearss leads great tour: Weather cooperates

Morning chill on 3-5 March yielded to three gorgeous days for the annual GBA tour led by Ed Bearss. We covered the action of 1 June to 5 July 1864, as the Federal armies forced their way across Cobb County, encountering Confederates dug into the Lost Mountain-Brushy Mountain Line, the Mud Creek Line, the Kennesaw Mountain Line, the Smyrna Line, and the River Line. Our tour also encountered numerous examples of the development that is threatening historic sites, especially those in the path of Atlanta's growing suburbs.

While most tour participants were from Georgia, the lure of traveling with Ed Bearss drew GBA members from Colorado, Illinois, Ohio, Texas, and South Carolina. All benefited from Ed's knowledge and insights and were entertained by his inimitable story-telling style.

The tour was full of highlights, but one special moment occurred at the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (KMNBP) Visitors Center. In 1964, Ed was tasked to draw maps of the movement of the armies across Cobb County. He submitted the completed maps to the KMNBP superintendent and had not seen them in the interim until park historian Willie Johnson laid them out in the visitors center education room on the afternoon of 3 March 2006. Still, Ed regaled everyone with his memory of specific unit locations.



Ed explains the fighting at Kolb's Farm. The morning chill quickly warmed to a great day.



Ed directs Jack Keller, portraying Colonel Dan McCook, and Vince Dooley, portraying an unknown private, on Cheatham Hill.

More photos from this and previous tours are on the GBA web site www.georgiabattlefields.org.

GBA received great cooperation from the KMNBP staff and from the owners of the historic sites still in private hands. We hope to help preserve the sites so future generations can enjoy similar tours and learn our nation's history at the places where it happened. Although Ed will soon be 83 years old, we anticipate many more years of him leading tours for GBA.

Future GBA tours with Ed Bearss

Here's our tentative schedule through 2010. See the GBA web site for more information.

2007 – From the Chattahoochee to Peachtree Creek. One evening event will feature a discussion of the change of command from Johnston to Hood.

2008 – The Battle of Atlanta, including the significance of the city as a manufacturing, supply, and transportation center.

2009 – Siege and Surrender, including Ezra Church, Utoy Creek, Jonesboro, evacuation to Lovejoy's Station, and surrender of the city.

2010 – Cavalry Operations of the Atlanta Campaign, including raids by Rousseau, Stoneman, McCook, and Kilpatrick.

River Line update

The Fort Drive segment is witnessing a dramatic change (see January 2006 newsletter). The tree cutting and structure demolition affords a view not seen in 50 years (see photo below). Seeing the terrain now, one gains a lot better understanding of why Shoup sited the Confederate line where he did. This view won't last long as the townhouses and single family homes are built.

On 23 February, the Shoupade saved by the Smyrna City Council two years ago (March 2004 newsletter) was the subject of a meeting at the site by representatives from the City of Smyrna, The Columns Group (developer), Georgia Forestry Commission, River Line Historic Area, Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, and GBA. With surrounding woods removed for new houses, the trees growing in the Shoupade would be susceptible to wind, potentially blowing over and seriously damaging the site. Consequently, the city removed the trees about two weeks after the meeting and will plant ground cover designed to preserve the Shoupade remnants.



12 March 2006. View north from Fort Drive. A pile of felled trees is in the middle distance.



Smyrna Shoupade cleared of trees. The land in front of the Shoupade will be soccer fields.

Preservation Trust annual conference 20-23 April in Memphis

The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) will hold its annual conference later this month in Memphis. Georgia Battlefields Association will again provide volunteer staff for the conference. Tours include Forrest's operations in Western Tennessee, Brice's Crossroads, Corinth, and Shiloh. For more info, see the CWPT web site www.civilwar.org.

Old Clinton "War Days" reenactment 6-7 May

The 25th annual reenactment of the November 1864 Federal occupation of Old Clinton occurs this year on 6 & 7 May. Gates will open at 9 a.m., and reenactments will start at 2 p.m. each day. Some of the proceeds are used to preserve the Old Clinton Historic District, which contains several ante-bellum structures. Old Clinton is about ten miles northeast of Macon, near Gray. For more information, contact Richard Durham at 478 986 5300 or rldurham1@alltel.net.

Battle of Resaca reenactment 20-21 May

The 23rd annual reenactment of the Battle of Resaca will occur on 20 & 21 May at the Chitwood Farm, part of the original battlefield. This is always one of the largest and best run reenactments. For more information on participating or spectating, see the web site www.georgiadiivision.org or write Battle of Resaca, P.O. Box 919, Resaca GA 30735-0919 or e-mail csgrizly@bellsouth.net. As usual, some of the proceeds from the reenactment will go to preserve the battlefield. The Friends of Resaca Battlefield (www.resacabattlefield.org) have been great guardians of the site.

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