

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

Lovejoy's Station site scheduled to open 20 August

The Nash Farm historic site bought by Henry County last November (see January newsletter) is scheduled to be open to the public in a ceremony at 2 p.m. on 20 August, the 142nd anniversary of Kilpatrick's raid. The site relates to both the cavalry raid and the 3 September 1864 infantry engagement when Confederate forces reassembled at Lovejoy's Station after evacuating Atlanta. The web site www.henrycountybattlefield.com provides more details about the ceremony and the history of the Nash Farm. Donations to the development and maintenance of the site may be sent to Nash Farm Battlefield, 140 Henry Parkway, McDonough GA 30253.

Wallis House needs funds before Park Service can accept

The Wallis House is on the north side of Burnt Hickory Road, just east of the intersection with Barrett Parkway, in Cobb County. In 1864, it was used as both a headquarters and a hospital during the Kennesaw Mountain campaign. In late 2003, Cobb County bought the property with major funding help from the Georgia Civil War Commission (see March 2004 newsletter).

Cobb County's intent was always to donate the house and property to the National Park Service for inclusion in Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. The Park Service has advised that over \$450,000 in restoration and safety items will be required before it can accept the house.



These photos, taken in early 2004, show the Wallis House and the Wallis Farms development (since completed) immediately to the west of the house. The new road in the foreground of the right photo climbs partially up a hill that was used as a signal station. The Wallis House is barely visible through the trees immediately to the left of the development sign. Obviously, development is occurring in this area, and the Wallis House property would be a prime site.

Kennesaw Mountain Historical Association, a private, non-profit preservation group, will try to raise the funds required by the Park Service. They have two years to raise the money, and they could use your help. See their web site www.kmha.org, e-mail info@kmha.org, call 770 422 3696, or drop by the Kennesaw Mountain visitors' center and ask how you can help.

Cindy Wentworth joins GBA Board as secretary

Georgia Battlefields Association had been without a corporate secretary since Elaine Rivers resigned earlier this year (see February newsletter). At a 4 June meeting of the Board of Trustees, Cindy Wentworth was elected secretary and trustee. Cindy currently works for the U.S. Forest Service and lives in Blairsville. She grew up in several states both north and south (Louisiana, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio) but has roots in Virginia: Goodwin Neck, a peninsula near Yorktown, is named for an ancestor. We're glad to have her on the board.

Of the eight GBA trustees, four are still working full time, and the others volunteer with several civic groups. We can always use more help: Please e-mail us at info@georgiabattlefields.org.

Evaluating Civil War sites for preservation

GBA's successful nomination of the Chattahoochee River Line for the Civil War Preservation Trust's most endangered site list has resulted in some inquiries about how we choose sites for preservation efforts. In general, four factors are considered:

- **Significance** – What happened at the site? Some sites are both well-known and important, such as Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Andersonville, etc. Others are less-known and had less effect on the course of the war, such as Resaca, Sunshine Church, or Ebenezer Creek. Still, every site is worth considering, and we never dismiss a site simply because what happened there had little impact. The reality is that if we are faced with a choice of defending Kennesaw Mountain or Armuchee Creek, we'll choose Kennesaw Mountain.
- **Condition** – How does the site appear today? One of the great virtues of Pickett's Mill is that the terrain is much like it was in 1864. While Peachtree Creek was arguably a more significant battle, the site of Peachtree Creek was lost to development 50 to 100 years ago. Again, if forced to choose which site to defend, we'll choose Pickett's Mill.
- **Availability** – Is the property for sale? If presented the opportunity to buy a site or to have the state or local government buy it, especially if the price is reasonable, we'll focus our efforts on that site, even if it is of lesser significance. We prefer willing sellers and are very reluctant to advocate use of eminent domain because it will harm our negotiations with property owners. Implicit in availability is the fairness of the price. For \$400,000, we can buy one acre at some sites and ten acres at others. This is obviously a consideration.
- **Threat** – How imminent is the threat? In some cases, bulldozers are ready to roll before we're informed of the threat. More often, we have the chance to advocate for certain conditions at a rezoning hearing, even if we can't compete monetarily with the prospective buyers.

Ideally, GBA and other preservation organizations could be proactive, with all of Georgia's Civil War sites (by one count, more than 400) listed in order of significance and a well-fortified checkbook to buy the sites, starting with the most important. Realistically, we're often reactive, scrambling to save at least part of a less significant site before it's gone forever.

Publicity is good: Saving sites is better

GBA has garnered good publicity recently. Based on our nomination, the Civil War Preservation Trust named the Chattahoochee River Line one of the ten most endangered sites for 2006, resulting in stories by the *Marietta Daily Journal*, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, and CBS46 News. Our 2-5 March tour led by Ed Bearss led to another story by the *Marietta Daily Journal*. The GBA-led 8 March tour of the Battle of Atlanta in Inman Park was part of the Atlanta Preservation Center's Phoenix Flies series, covered by Atlanta-area media. The 7 April installation of the Mill Town historical marker led to another story in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. On 23 June, a documentary film company, making a program about the ten most endangered sites, visited the Fort Drive section of the River Line.

While we're gratified at the positive coverage of GBA and preservation efforts in general, we remain aware that publicity is a means to an end—i.e., increasing awareness of the threat to historic sites so that more people, organizations, and governments do whatever they can to save the battlefields. Please take the opportunity to communicate with your legislators, participate at rezoning hearings, and mobilize local opposition whenever a historic site is threatened.

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