

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

GBA repairs Gilgal Church markers

Thanks to Syd Kerksis, the Atlanta History Center owns several acres of property near the site of the wartime Gilgal Church (now Due West) in Cobb County. Gilgal Church was the scene of a substantial battle on 15 June 1864, and over the next three days, the Federals dug trenches and exchanged artillery fire with the Confederates. A portion of the Confederate line remains just north of Kennesaw-Due West Road and east of Acworth-Due West Road, and a reconstruction of a log-reinforced trench was emplaced twenty years ago. A hundred yards or so to the north, Federal trenches remain; and these have been marked with wooden signs indicating the XX Corps units that occupied the position. During a recent examination of the trenches, a GBA representative noted that some of the wooden markers had detached from the posts, so a repair expedition was mounted the following weekend. Before and after photos are below.



U.S. students still lacking knowledge of history

Every five years, the National Assessment of Educational Progress measures U.S. students' knowledge in history and civics. The 2006 assessment was released on 16 May.

The 2006 test was given to a representative sample of students (29,200 total) in grades 4 (6,500), 8 (11,400), and 12 (11,300). History scores for all three grades improved compared to 2001, but the results were still poor. Results are grouped into categories of basic, proficient, and advanced. We presume anything below basic is inadequate, though the report does not use that term. While more students achieved at least the basic level, there was no statistically significant improvement in the proficient or advanced categories. http://nationsreportcard.gov/ushistory_2006

While many sociological observations can be derived from the results, our gloomy conclusions from the September 2002 newsletter article (addressing the 2001 results) remain, the primary one being that people who are not aware of history are not likely to support preservation.

	2006 / 2001 percentages			
Grade	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
4 th	30 / 34	52 / 48	16 / 16	2 / 2
8 th	35 / 38	48 / 46	16 / 15	1 / 1
12 th	53 / 57	34 / 32	12 / 10	1 / 1

State budget: hope & uncertainty

The June newsletter reported on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 budget passed by the legislature. Governor Perdue subsequently vetoed the entire budget and announced his intention to call a special session of the legislature. After some political maneuvering, the governor retracted his overall veto and signed the budget, instead using his line item veto on dozens of bills. Further, in a move that appears to be without precedent, he instructed executive branch departments to redirect funds among programs in a manner different than specified by the budget legislation.

If the Governor's actions survive legislative or legal challenges, the net affect for preservation will be positive. While the legislature's budget provided only \$500,000 for sesquicentennial planning, the Governor allocated \$2,500,000 for sesquicentennial planning and improvements to the Resaca battlefield. This amount may also allow for the repair or replacement of some of the damaged and missing historical markers relating to the Civil War. Also, Fort McAllister State Historic Site will receive \$300,000 for museum expansion. The Georgia Civil War Commission did not receive a similar largesse, but will continue to get \$50,000.

Clarification: The June newsletter reported that \$60,000 for new historical markers would move from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to the Department of Economic Development (DEcD), but we incorrectly implied that Georgia Historical Society (GHS) would lose responsibility for administering the new marker program. GHS will continue to administer new markers, though the pass-through state agency will be DEcD rather than DNR.

We also reported that Dan Rowe, DEcD's deputy commissioner for tourism, resigned on 1 May; and we indicated his departure meant a loss of continuity. We're happy to report that Charlie Gatlin, DEcD's chief of staff, is the new tourism chief. Gatlin has long experience in DEcD (since 1990), and GBA representatives met with both Gatlin and Rowe just over a year ago (June 2006). While Gatlin will have many issues on his agenda, we're heartened that the Civil War sesquicentennial and historical marker maintenance won't be entirely unfamiliar topics.

Chickamauga receives grant & loan for Gordon-Lee mansion

On 7 June, Governor Perdue approved a recommendation from the Georgia Land Conservation Council and announced a \$365,000 grant and an \$875,000 low-interest loan to the City of Chickamauga towards the purchase of the Gordon-Lee mansion and 7-acre property. Federal Army of the Cumberland commander Major General William Rosecrans used the house as a headquarters before the Battle of Chickamauga and during the early stages of the fighting, and it subsequently became a hospital for wounded from both sides.

The City of Chickamauga will also raise \$260,000 towards the purchase. The rest of the estimated value of \$3,400,000 is being donated by property owner Frank Green.

This appears to be the first time the 2006 Land Conservation Tax Credit Act and the 2005 Land Conservation Act (see May 2006 newsletter) have been used to protect a Civil War site.

www.gadnr.org/glcp/index.html

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