

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

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GBA helps with Civil War Trust tour of Resaca

As part of the Civil War Trust's Grand Review and aided by the Friends of Resaca Battlefield, GBA led a tour of Resaca on the morning of 18 September. About 25 people attended. GBA is glad to be recognized by the Civil War Trust as an organization capable of conducting a tour that relates the history and preservation status of battlefields in Georgia.



Left photo: Ken Padgett (pointing) explains the action in Camp Creek Valley.

Right photo (l to r): Friends of Resaca Battlefield (FORB) President Ken Padgett, Civil War Trust President Jim Lighthizer, FORB members Jeff Henderson and John Guider, GBA President Charlie Crawford, and GBA members Jim Wentworth and Larry Peterson at the Confederate Cemetery. Photo by GBA Vice President Cindy Wentworth.

2012 GBA tour goes back to Savannah

Our 2012 annual tour will be held in Savannah, which we last visited in 2002. Note that we're adjusting the schedule to avoid the Saint Patrick's Day weekend: Rather than meeting from Thursday evening through Sunday morning, we will gather on Friday evening, 9 March, and tour through Monday morning, 12 March 2012. Also note that **Ed Bearss will not be able to join us** because he will be attending a special Sesquicentennial event in New Bern, North Carolina.

On Saturday, 10 March, we'll focus on the seaward defenses of the city, which saw action on several occasions in 1862 and 1863. This will take us to some of the usual attractions, such as Fort Pulaski and Fort Jackson, but we also plan to visit lesser known sites, some of which have restricted access. Dinner on Saturday will be at the Savannah History Museum, operated by the Coastal Heritage Society (www.chsgeorgia.org).

On Sunday, 11 March, we'll focus on the landward defenses that came into play in December 1864 when Federal forces approached the city at the end of the March to the Sea. While this will include the well-interpreted state park at Fort McAllister, we'll also visit lesser known sites with seldom seen earthworks. Dinner on Sunday will be at Noble Fare (www.noblefare.com).

Monday, 12 March, will feature a walking tour of downtown Savannah's Civil War-related sites, of which there are many. We'll finish by noon.

The hotel will be the Courtyard by Marriott in the historic district at 415 West Liberty Street (www.savannahcourtyard.com). The GBA group rate is \$169 plus tax and includes breakfast, but parking is additional, either valet at the hotel (\$12 per night) or in the nearby public parking garage (\$10 per night). You can make reservations at 912 373 1284 or through a special web site <http://cwp.marriott.com/savdt/gabattlefieldassn/>. We know the room rate is higher than on some of our other tours, but the hotel is extremely convenient to downtown and our dinner venues.

The price remains \$395, but you must be a GBA member to participate. Your place is reserved when your check to GBA arrives at 7 Camden Rd NE, Atlanta GA 30309. Please plan to join us in Savannah 9-12 March 2012.

Davis' Crossroads cell tower plan proceeds with modifications

Since March 2009, GBA has been commenting on a proposed cell tower to be built a mile west of Davis' Crossroads in McLemore Cove Historic District. Along with representatives from Chickamauga National Military Park and Georgia Civil War Commission, GBA recommended preserving the viewshed by relocating the tower, reducing its height, and camouflaging its appearance (December 2009 newsletter). This area was the site of action on 10-11 September 1863 during the Chickamauga Campaign www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp/Battles/ga003.htm.

After several studies and comments, American Tower Corporation was unwilling to relocate the tower but proposed reducing the height from 278 to 199 feet, using a monopole construction rather than a lattice, and painting the tower "to blend into the surroundings." The State Historic Preservation Office approved this proposal on 23 August, which obviated the concurrence of GBA and other concerned parties. GBA declined to become an invited signatory, which will not affect the outcome but will avoid the appearance of our approval.

150 years ago this month

Throughout October, both governments hear grumbling about why the respective armies aren't more active, especially since the weather remains favorable. Command issues also plague both presidents. For the Federals, 75 year old Commanding General Winfield Scott is devoted to the success of the government but in failing health, so he requests retirement from the U.S. Army after 52 years of active duty and 47 years as a general. Also, Lincoln worries about Kentucky, where he assigns Brigadier General William T. Sherman to replace Kentucky native Robert Anderson, considered the hero of Fort Sumter but showing the strain of command. Sherman will soon show that department command affects him, too.

For the Confederates, Generals J.E. Johnston and G.T. Beauregard argue with President Davis about rank (of themselves and others), troop dispositions, and plans. Davis attempts to clarify the situation on 22 October, when he appoints Johnston to command the Department of Virginia with subordinates Beauregard in the Potomac District, Theophilus Holmes in the Aquia District, and T.J. Jackson in the Valley District. In western Virginia, R.E. Lee's military failure is compounded when the people vote to secede from Virginia and form a new state.

Skirmishing occurs in Missouri, Kentucky, and western Virginia, but the most publicized fight is on 21 October at Ball's Bluff, Virginia, 30 miles up the Potomac from Washington. Ordered by McClellan to probe across the river, Brigadier General Charles Stone precipitates a fight in which Colonel Edward Baker, a close friend of President Lincoln and a U.S. Senator, is killed; and the withdrawal across the river turns disastrous, with bullet-riddled and drowned soldiers floating past Washington in the following days. Though a small fight (about 1,700 troops on each side), Ball's Bluff is the largest battle in the east since First Manassas. Inflamed by the loss and Baker's death, Congress establishes the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War. The Committee's frequent hearings will bedevil Federal commanders for the next four years.

In naval developments, the Federal blockade is increasingly effective though by no means impenetrable. On 4 October, President Lincoln approves a contract for construction of ironclad ships, one of which will become *U.S.S. Monitor*.

Another predictor of the substantial Confederate economic difficulties to come occurs when Alabama Governor Andrew Moore issues a 2 October proclamation against exorbitant prices.

On 7 October, the Pony Express is discontinued after an 18-month existence. On 24 October, the first transcontinental telegraph becomes operational.

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