GEORGIA
BATTLEFIELDS

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Time to apply for annual battlefield preservation grants

The American Battlefield Protection Program annual preservation grant process is underway. See http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp/grants/battlefieldgrants/2012grants.htm for guidelines and an application form. If you don't have access to the internet, call Kristen McMasters at 202 354 2037. Mailed applications must be postmarked by 2 January 2012.

In 2010, grants went for projects at two Georgia sites: Chickamauga and Monteith swamp. A 2009 grant went to the Mableton Improvement Coalition for research on the River Line.

Unfortunately, an ABPP grant cannot be used to acquire land.

December program at Fort McAllister

While State Parks and Historic Sites have suffered from severely reduced budgets, the dedicated staff continues to offer everyday assistance to visitors as well as special programs. A good example is Fort McAllister State Historic Park in Richmond Hill, south of Savannah. Fort McAllister was the site of several Civil War actions, in which the Confederates turned back U.S. Navy attempts to go up the Ogeechee River. The Fort fell to the Federal army in a brief but sharp fight on 13 December 1864 as Sherman's forces approached the coast at the end of the March to the Sea. The "Winter Muster and Battle" all-day program to mark the anniversary of that fight will occur on 10 December at the park, with the final assault reenacted at 5 p.m. For information, call 912 727 2339 or e-mail daniel.brown@dnr.state.ga.us.

You can find out more about all of Georgia's state parks at www.gastateparks.org.

River Line Historic Area web site includes master plan

Many GBA newsletters have addressed developments relating to Johnston's River Line and the corresponding Federal earthworks in southeastern Cobb County. A GBA representative participated in the River Line Historic Area (RLHA) stakeholder meetings two years ago, and RLHA now has a web site www.riverline.org that contains much information about preservation plans for the area as well as its history. While GBA will continue to assist the preservation efforts, you can also help individually. See the "What You Can Do" section of the web site.

GBA led part of Atlanta Campaign tour for Pamplin Park

On 5 and 6 November, GBA led part of an Atlanta Campaign Tour for Pamplin Historical Park (www.pamplinpark.org). The GBA-led portion covered the crossing of the Chattahoochee, the change of command, Peachtree Creek, Atlanta, Ezra Church, Utoy Creek, and Jonesboro.

Pamplin Park tour group at the River Line (left) and at Cleburne Cemetery in Jonesboro (right).

GBA presented lecture series for Seniors Enriched Living

From September to November, GBA presented an eight lecture series on the Atlanta Campaign for Seniors Enriched Living, based in Roswell and Alpharetta (http://sel-web.org). The intent is to increase awareness of Civil War sites in Georgia and thereby bolster support for preservation. GBA has now presented 95 lectures and guided or arranged 35 tours in the last ten years.

Annual GBA tour goes back to Savannah 9-12 March 2012

Although we'll be without Ed Bearss, we'll still visit Savannah sites not normally seen, as well as those usually visited. Note that this is a Friday evening through Monday morning tour rather than our usual Thursday to Sunday. Hotel is 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/. The tour 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.

150 years ago this month

December brings on colder, wetter, weather and a reduction in active campaigning, especially in the upper south; though this does not reduce President Lincoln's frustration with the absence since July of any major advance by General McClellan and the Federal armies in the east. Farther south, Federal forces continue their forays from their new base at Hilton Head, South Carolina. Planters on the South Carolina and Georgia coasts continue to burn their cotton rather than have it captured by the Federal expeditions.

Skirmishing persists in the border states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri; and the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) witnesses several fights, mostly between tribes choosing one side or the other but also seeking to exploit longstanding animosity.

CSS Sumter, captained by Raphael Semmes, captures a U.S.-flagged whaling ship in mid Atlantic; but the U.S. Navy's blockade of southern ports is becoming increasingly effective.

International tension precipitated by the Federal imprisonment of Confederate commissioners Mason and Slidell continues until the 26 December decision to release them.

Congress convenes on 2 December and receives the President's state of the union message the next day. In the message, Lincoln writes the "The Union must be preserved, and hence, all indispensable means must be employed." Among the legislature's early actions is formal establishment of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War.

Reports of 5 December indicate 682,971 men are in the U.S. Army and Navy. One year earlier, the Army had just over 16,000 men.

On 11 December, an accidental fire sweeps the business district of Charleston, South Carolina.

On 30 December, the U.S. Government suspends redeeming paper money for gold or silver, a prohibition that will last until 1879.

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