

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

State historic marker maintenance amenable to outside funding

The state historic markers are a familiar sight along many Georgia roads. About 900 of the 2200 markers relate to the Civil War. Because they are often close to a well-traveled highway, several markers are damaged each year by vehicle collisions, while others are damaged by lichen, bird droppings, falling trees, etc. Because the state marker maintenance budget has been severely constrained for over a decade, the state is open to donations from preservation groups, historical societies, commercial entities, etc., who are willing to sponsor repair or replacement of missing or damaged markers. Repainting a marker costs \$1,020. Repair of a marker knocked off its base costs about \$1,120. Replacement of a marker costs between \$2,100 and \$2,400 depending on the amount of text. Contact Josh Headlee of the Historic Preservation Division Preservation Laboratory at 770 389 7811 or josh.headlee@dnr.state.ga.us.

Brown's Mill battlefield opens with 27 July ceremony

A crowd estimated at 500 attended the 27 July formal opening of the Brown's Mill Battlefield. The new park has a parking area, walking trails, and interpretive markers. It also shows what a dedicated and determined local group can accomplish. www.friendsofbrownsmillbattlefield.com



Interpretive markers near park entrance.



Wheeler monument and new walking trail.

GBA helps with Georgia Tech history class and exhibit

Again for the summer semester, Georgia Battlefields Association helped with Georgia Tech's Military History of the Civil War class. On 18 July, GBA trustee Mary-Elizabeth Ellard, D.V.M., presented a lecture on veterinary care during the war. As an example, during the Atlanta Campaign, Sherman's armies used over 35,000 horse and mules. Maintaining the animals was a vital and sometimes critical element in any campaign. On 25 July, Charlie Crawford led a walking tour of the Tech campus, pointing out where the Confederate fortifications were in 1864. Over 40 people joined in the journey from the Fox Theater to the west side of the campus.



Tour group assembles at Fox Theater entrance.

Photo by Bill Duke



Ponder house site by the Olympic natatorium.

Photo by Robin Puryear

On 17 July, GBA participated in a review of a proposed exhibit on wartime fortifications on the Georgia Tech campus. On 19 August, the exhibit opened on the third floor of the Clough Building. A larger exhibit is planned for next year's Sesquicentennial of the Atlanta Campaign.

www.georgiabattlefields.org

GBA helps Civil War Trust with event planning and campaign app

On 31 July, three GBA trustees met with Civil War Trust representatives to help plan a September 2014 event focusing on the battles around Atlanta, including those that occurred in Paulding, Cobb, Fulton, and DeKalb counties. On 8 August, a GBA trustee met with a Civil War Trust representative to help develop a smart-phone application covering the Atlanta Campaign.

150 years ago this month

No theater was ever devoid of action, but Virginia and the Mississippi Valley are relatively quiet in September. The focus shifts to the Chattanooga area. Plagued by bad information, faulty assumptions, and reluctant subordinates, Confederate General Bragg allows Rosecrans' Federals to cross the Tennessee River almost unopposed. Bragg abandons Chattanooga on 9 September, and Rosecrans disperses his army on a wide front. Bragg tries to attack the separated Federal corps on several occasions, but the efforts fail largely due to unclear orders and mistrust among Confederate commanders. Still, Bragg is determined to strike, and reinforcements from several areas are on the way. President Davis contemplates sending Lee himself to the west but worries what will happen in Virginia if Lee leaves. Instead, the faltering Confederate rail system brings Longstreet and 15,000 men to north Georgia; but while Bragg awaits their arrival, Rosecrans finally realizes the danger to his widely separated corps and begins to gather them about a dozen miles south of Chattanooga. Though not all reinforcements have arrived, Bragg now has more men than Rosecrans, and he attacks to cut off the Federals from Chattanooga before they can consolidate west of Chickamauga Creek. Casualties in the battle of 18-20 September surpass all others but Gettysburg: over 16,000 Federals (over 4,000 of whom are captured, many passing through Atlanta on their way to prison) and over 18,000 Confederates. Union General Thomas's determined defense after the Confederate breakthrough averts a disaster, but the Confederate victory turns barren when Bragg and his subordinates argue over what to do next. Union corps commanders Alexander McCook and T.L. Crittenden are relieved of command. The Army of the Cumberland is trapped in Chattanooga and running low on supplies, but it's largely intact. Further, help is on the way: three divisions are coming from Vicksburg, and on 23 September, President Lincoln approves the transfer of two corps from Virginia, the Federal rail system facilitating the move of over 20,000 infantry. Lincoln is dismayed when the *New York Post* reports the transfer, and when Bragg gets the news, he sends Wheeler and his cavalry to raid the Federal supply lines in an effort to force a Federal surrender before help arrives.

While the Chickamauga Campaign unfolds, Federals under Burnside take Knoxville and the Cumberland Gap. The expulsion of Confederate forces from almost all of Tennessee causes President Lincoln to direct Andrew Johnson to form a state government on 11 September. Lincoln also writes to General in Chief Halleck that defeat of the Confederate armies should be the objective of all Federal advances, rather than the seizure of fixed points such as Richmond.

Elsewhere, Fort Smith, Arkansas falls to the Federals on 1 September, and on the 10th, Little Rock becomes the fourth Confederate state capital to fall. Federal shelling of the forts defending Charleston continues, and the gradual Federal advance on Morris Island causes the Confederates to abandon Fort Wagner on 6 September. On 4 September, U.S. Grant is badly bruised when a borrowed horse falls on him in New Orleans. Also on 4 September, women protesting high food prices in Mobile resort to looting stores. On 2 September, Confederate troops rout a Mexican bandit force near Mier, Mexico. On 4 September, 5,000 U.S. sailors and soldiers leave New Orleans for Sabine Pass, Texas, to shut off ship traffic in the area; but on the 8th, Confederate artillerists force surrender of two gunboats in a celebrated incident. On 5 September, British authorities detain two newly constructed ships that they suspect will be turned into Confederate commerce raiders, thus avoiding a rift with the U.S. government. Several times during the month, the U.S. Army clashes with Indians in California and Dakota Territory.

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