

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 polo shirts still available – see August newsletter for details

Recovery of *CSS Georgia* proceeding

Since mid June, U.S. Navy divers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have been retrieving artifacts and hull remnants from *CSS Georgia*, scuttled in the Savannah River near Fort Jackson in December 1864. Previous newsletters have covered the history of the ship (see especially June 2012) and plans for this latest recovery effort as part of the deepening of the ship channel. Several Savannah media reports have been syndicated by Associated Press to wider audiences, and the Corps of Engineers web site provides links to articles as well as many photos of the recovery efforts and the artifacts, which are being conserved at Texas A&M University.

www.sas.usace.army.mil/missions/civilworks/savannahharborexpan/cssgeorgia.aspx

Many of the artifacts are encrusted, but even when x-rays reveal the outline of the underlying item, some of them can't be identified because they are no longer familiar, even to experts in naval history. Consequently, the Corps asks for help from anyone who might be able to identify some of the items. Visit the web site and see if you can provide some clues.

Incidentally, the image once considered to be the only possible photo of *CSS Georgia* was revealed last April to be a hoax fabricated in 1986.



Recovered cross section of the ship's casemate, showing the use of railroad rails.



Recovery of propeller and shaft.



One of four guns recovered in latest salvage operations.



X-ray reveals manacles.

All photos from U.S. Army Corp of Engineers

Atlanta Cyclorama and locomotive *Texas* restoration and relocation

Many of you have probably read about the big changes in store for the Atlanta Cyclorama. Situated in its current building in Atlanta's Grant Park since 1921, the painting will get a new home on the grounds of the Atlanta History Center, with a new building scheduled to open in the spring of 2017. The locomotive *Texas*, famous for its role in the Great Locomotive Chase but also representing the importance of railroads to Atlanta's existence and growth, was moved into the building in 1927.

On 24 March 2015, History Center staff, including CEO Sheffield Hale, Senior Military Historian and Curator Gordon Jones, and Vice President of Properties Jackson McQuigg hosted a two hour presentation on plans for the new construction as well as the process for conserving and relocating both the painting and the locomotive. They followed this up with a 23 August event at the current building to update the plans and provide a “behind the scenes” look at the painting. While the History Center received generous gifts from the Whitaker and Montgomery families that made the move possible, more funds are needed in case circumstances require alternative processes and to provide an endowment for continued maintenance of these irreplaceable treasures.

Conservation of the painting will occur after it is moved into its new building, while the *Texas* and its tender will go to North Carolina for restoration, principally to control corrosion. The figures in the diorama currently around the base of the painting will also be moved to the new building, but the fiberglass landscape is too fragile to relocate.

For more information, visit the History Center’s web site:

www.atlantahistorycenter.com/explore/coming-soon-atlanta-cyclorama



Texas with cowcatcher & stack removed in preparation for move.



Gordon Jones is always ready to answer a question, especially from a youngster.



North face of current building. Ground will be excavated and wall will be removed to right of stairwell. *Texas* and tender will be rolled out on temporary rails and loaded onto trucks.



Back of painting where original tunnel allowed visitors to enter into the center.

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