

# GEORGIA

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# BATTLEFIELDS

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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](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org)

## Public meetings on new Cobb County parks

Georgia Battlefields Association representatives attended Cobb County master plan public input meetings (see August 2019 newsletter) for the Kemp Property on 5 August and the Henderson Road property on 8 August. We were pleased that several other preservation-minded people attended and spoke in favor. In both cases, we were encouraged that County Parks representatives and master plan contractor representatives appeared favorably disposed towards preserving the earthworks on both sites. The County has put summaries of both meetings online. <https://www.cobbcounty.org/parks/news/parks-bond-properties-public-meetings-second-round>

GBA has advocated for chain link fence to protect the earthworks, while the county appears to favor two rail fence. While we concede a two rail fence appears nicer, it is too easy for people to breach it or even remove the rails to allow access for all-terrain vehicles or bicycles, let alone foot traffic. Everyone favored interpretive markers as well, but protecting the earthworks should be the priority.

## Zero Milepost site again accessible

Last year, Atlanta History Center dug out the original Zero Milepost and put it on display near the locomotive *Texas*. (December 2018 and July 2018 newsletters). The Milepost had not been routinely accessible in several years since it was in a closed state government building. The explanatory historical marker had been in the hard to access basement of a nearby state government building. In May, Atlanta History Center installed a replica milepost (more legible since it's not weathered) and a new interpretive sign, and Georgia Historical Society installed a recast marker.



Both are now accessible under the Central Avenue Bridge near its intersection with Wall Street.

The replica milepost also allows visitors to see where the northeast corner of the Car Shed, or main passenger depot, stood before its destruction in mid November 1864.

## Support for Pickett's Mill Battlefield State Historic Site

Georgia Battlefields Association was contacted by a Pickett's Mill Battlefield State Historic Site volunteer, who reported that the site had been criticized for one of its visitors' center displays that described the battle as a Confederate victory. <https://gastateparks.org/PickettsMillBattlefield> The volunteer asked if GBA would write a letter providing our assessment of the battle. Here is what we sent:

Georgia Battlefields Association preserves historic sites regardless of who won or lost a battle, and we try hard to be accurate in our publications and presentations and on our interpretive markers. There's no doubt that slavery was the root cause of the Civil War, and there's also no doubt that the North won; but it's also true that the Confederates won several battles, such as the one at Pickett's Mill.

By all measures, U.S. forces achieved none of their objectives on 27 May 1864 at Pickett's Mill. They suffered more casualties than the Confederates, were unable to turn the Confederate flank or drive the Confederates from their position, and were ultimately driven back by an exceptional nighttime counterattack. This would be the second time (the first being 25 May 1864 at New Hope Church) in three days that the Federals would be unsuccessful in breaking or turning the Confederate line. The Confederates were similarly defeated on 28 May 1864 at Dallas. The tactical results of these three engagements were clear Confederate victories at New Hope Church and Pickett's Mill and a Federal victory at Dallas. To assert otherwise would be inaccurate.

## Contextualization of Atlanta Confederate monuments proceeds

Unable to remove or hide monuments due to state law, the City of Atlanta decided to install markers to contextualize four monuments within the city limits: The small Civil War/Great War monument on the island dividing Peachtree Battle Road near its intersection with Peachtree Road; the Peace monument in Piedmont Park; and the Obelisk and Lion in Oakland Cemetery. The contextualization markers were installed in August. Historic Oakland Foundation—assisted by historians from Kennesaw State and Georgia State—drafted the cemetery markers, while the other markers were drafted by Atlanta History Center, which has made a case study available online. <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/assets/images/Atlanta-Monuments-Case-Study.pdf> The texts had to be approved by Atlanta Urban Design Commission’s Office of Historic Preservation and city council member Carla Smith, who chaired the subcommittee that determined what action to take based on recommendations in the November 2017 report from the Advisory Committee on City of Atlanta Street Names and Monuments Associated with the Confederacy. See May 2019 newsletter. The city’s efforts to deal with Confederate monuments has drawn coverage from local, national, and international media.

Opinions on what to do with Confederate monuments range from destruction on one end to no change on the other. Contextualization draws opposition from both ends, but Atlanta History Center CEO Sheffield Hale said he hopes that contextualization at least reduces the instances of vandalism against monuments. GBA hopes he is correct.



Peachtree Battle monument with marker



Oakland Cemetery Obelisk marker



Peace monument with two markers



Cemetery Lion monument and marker

## Oakland Cemetery tour

GBA trustee Carlton Mullis will lead a Civil War-related tour of Oakland Cemetery for GBA members only at 1 p.m. on 9 November. Register by e-mail to [info@georgiabattlefields.org](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org).

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**Address correction requested**

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