

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

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Symposium on Atlanta: Into and Out of the Ashes, 1860-1870

Atlanta Civil War Round Table is sponsoring and hosting a symposium at 10:30 on 16 July at Dunwoody United Methodist Church. Presentations will focus on Atlanta's recovery from the Civil War, including the role of railroads, public safety services (police, firefighters), and the U.S. Army. Consistent with GBA's education mission, two of the speakers are GBA trustees. Registration is \$20 and includes lunch. To register or for more information, see <http://atlantacwrt.org> or e-mail Tim Whalen whalen315@aol.com.

Rocky Face Ridge Park grand opening ceremony set for 25 July

Grand opening of Rocky Face Ridge Park is set for 4:30 p.m. on 25 July. Park is on Crow Valley Road, north of Dalton. Location and more info about the park are at [this link](#).

GBA expenditures: What we do with your contributions

Georgia Battlefields Association (GBA) treasurer Bill Gurry expanded his periodic review of our financial status to provide a summary of expenditures since GBA was founded in 1995. Data for some of the early years (1995-1999) is imprecisely categorized, but here's what Bill found.

GBA's recurring administrative expenses are minimal. None of the trustees (current or former) has ever received a salary, and none has ever claimed travel expenses. Even our in-person meetings (most business is done via e-mail) have been hosted at a trustee's home with meals provided at trustees' expense. With the transition (begun in 2001) from mailed to e-mailed newsletters, printing is now donated by a trustee, and postage is less than \$10 a month.

Our mission has two major components: buying battlefield land or arranging for conservation easements on battlefield land, and educating people about battlefields through presentations (including videos), tours, historical markers, and monuments. All presentations have been developed by trustees at no expense to GBA, and no travel expenses have been claimed, even when the presentation is made at a distant location: Springfield, Missouri, seems to be the record holder so far. In 2008, we paid a professional videographer to record our Civil War Atlanta Downtown Walking Tour and then paid for production of CDs, a total expense of \$4,680; but we then sold the CDs and made a profit. We also contributed \$5,000 to American Battlefield Trust earlier this year to help fund its trip to video sites in Georgia. See [May 2022 newsletter](#).

We do spend money on tours, chartering buses, providing meals, paying travel and lodging expenses for Ed Bearss and Jim Ogden (note: Ed and Jim never took a fee), and paying entrance fees to historic buildings or renting space at historic venues (the most recent example being Macon's Cannonball House) for dinners. In this latter category, we have spent \$10,957.65 over the years, but our tour revenue has always (thankfully) exceeded expenses, continuing to be our largest single source of funds. Further, we make donations to historic sites that hosted our tours but did not charge a fee. For example, our recent tour of Old Clinton was provided gratis by Earlene Hamilton. In appreciation, we donated \$300 to Old Clinton Historical Society. Expenses of this type have totaled \$12,450.

For historical markers, GBA has installed its own, and we have also funded (and sometimes provided content for) historical markers installed by other preservation organizations, notably [Georgia Historical Society](#). Expenses in this category have been \$26,945.

Our monument efforts have been narrowly focused. GBA has contributed \$10,000 towards restoration of the 22 July 1864 Battle of Atlanta death site monuments for Confederate Major General W.H.T. Walker and U.S. Major General James B. McPherson. We also contributed \$1,099 for a battlefield bench monument honoring the late GBA trustee Olly Keller, who was instrumental in saving a large part of the Resaca battlefield.

Understandably, the largest expenditures, totaling \$228,000, have been outright purchases of or conservation easements on battlefield land. We often do this through or in conjunction with the [American Battlefield Trust](#). Contributions in this category have been: \$125,000 for Resaca,

\$23,000 for Griswoldville (our first purchase), \$20,000 for Kettle Creek Revolutionary War battlefield, \$15,000 for additions to Chickamauga NMP, and \$5,000 for Kolb's Farm. We also provided \$40,000 (the entire purchase amount) to Save the Dalton Battlefields to buy (in two transactions) Picket Top/Potato Hill in Crow Valley, scene of engagements in early May 1864.

If you add all the above, you'll see that GBA has spent just under \$300,000 on the preservation mission since 1995. We are always looking for more opportunities and currently are pursuing a few, again in cooperation with other preservation organizations. We have tried to be good stewards of the funds our members—past and present—have provided through their membership dues or outright donations, and we thank them all.

Selected battlefields that Georgia Battlefields Association has helped to save



Potato Hill ceremony April 2014



Cherokee battery at Resaca



Griswoldville

Savannah River dredging yields more war artifacts

Earlier this year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was nearing the end of the 22-year Savannah Harbor Expansion Project to deepen the Savannah River shipping channel from 42 to 47 feet to accommodate today's larger cargo ships and maintain Savannah's status as one of the busiest ports in the U.S. Planning in the early years of the process included discussions about how to salvage *CSS Georgia*, a Confederate ironclad that was reduced to the status of a floating battery that was never used. Most of the *CSS Georgia* recovery was accomplished in 2015, and conservation of the artifacts continues. See Georgia Battlefields newsletters: [June 2012](#), [December 2013](#), [November 2014](#), and [September 2015](#).

In January, a dredge pulled up a large cannon from a spot near Fort Jackson and not far from where the bulk of *CSS Georgia's* remains had rested for 150 years. Three other similar cannons had been found last year and quickly identified by archaeologists as being from the Revolutionary War era rather than additional armament for *CSS Georgia* or another Civil War ship. That initial find prompted another sonar sweep that indicated twelve probable guns were still deep underwater. Currents, tides, and continued transit by large ships complicated the recovery effort, but all twelve cannons were eventually recovered and, under existing law, became property of the Corps of Engineers. Research indicates all 15 guns (including the three recovered in 2021) are from British ships sunk in September 1779 to prevent French ships from advancing up the river to support a combined Colonial, French, Irish, and Haitian land effort to retake Savannah from the British. The guns are being kept in water to prevent rust while a full conservation effort proceeds. On GBA's 2023 tour, you'll see the section of the river where the guns and the bulk of *CSS Georgia* were recovered.

For more about the cannon recovery, see a [YouTube video](#) hosted by our friend Rita Elliott.

As with the recent find of an artillery shell at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (see [June newsletter](#)), artifacts of wars on American soil remain underground and under water. More apparent and accessible are the trenches and artillery positions that remain on our landscapes, which is a good reason to preserve every one of them to help us learn our history.

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