

Civil War News Roundup - 04/25/2008
Courtesy of the Civil War Preservation Trust
www.civilwar.org

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Frederick board postpones vote on quarry plan
Supervisors want further study
By Robert Igoe

04/24/2008

The Winchester Star

http://www.winchesterstar.com/article_details.php?ArticleID=6253

Winchester — Nearly two years after one Frederick County board recommended the denial of a request to expand a local quarry, another board is still grappling with the proposal.

At its regular meeting on Wednesday, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on a request by O-N Minerals Chemstone, a subsidiary of Carmeuse Lime & Stone based in Belgium, to rezone 639 acres to the north and south of its current quarry operations west of Middletown from Rural Areas to Extractive Manufacturing.

After four hours of comments from citizens and company representatives, the supervisors decided to table a vote on the request until their May 28 meeting.

"I believe the devil is in the details," said Supervisor Gary Lofton when the board called for a vote at 11:30 p.m. "I do not think that I am comfortable that the applicant has provided all of the information we need. They are trying, but they're not there yet. In order to make an informed decision, I want to see the rest of this information."

O-N Minerals Chemstone is seeking the rezoning so it can mine some seams of high-grade limestone on property that it owns.

The county Planning Commission recommended denial of the rezoning request following a public hearing on June 7, 2006, during which 57 people spoke for and against the plan.

Chemstone says the mining operations will be conducted with no ill effects on nearby residents or historic properties, including the Cedar Creek Battlefield, the Belle Grove Plantation, and two family cemeteries.

One of the plan's chief opponents is Preserve Frederick, a citizens' group that believes no amount of safeguards can guarantee the protection of the historic properties or local water supplies.

Deputy Planning Director Michael Ruddy told the supervisors that he reviewed the company's latest proffer statement, submitted on Friday, and said that while the proposal attempts to address issues regarding transportation, historic areas, noise, dust, water supplies,

and other concerns, the statement is still incomplete and lacks enough specifics on how these issues would be mitigated.

"We want to make sure these impacts are analyzed before this can be approved," Ruddy said. "The board must examine these mitigation efforts."

In their presentation, Chemstone officials attempted to clarify the issues.

General Manager Spencer Stinson said just 13 percent of the rezoned property will be used for actual mining, and that the mining will be conducted in three phases.

The first phase will focus on the southern portion of the property, with operations in the northern end to begin in two additional phases beginning no earlier than 10 and 20 years later for properties north and south of Chapel Road, respectively.

Once the mining is finished, Stinson said, the pits will create five lakes and reservoirs that will be used for public water supplies and wildlife habitats.

The Frederick County Sanitation Authority already uses water from existing quarry pits, and Stinson said that procedure supplies 30 percent of the county's water and saves the county \$1 million in water-purchasing costs.

Stinson also said Chemstone provides 28 jobs that will be preserved with the rezoning near Middletown.

The local company also operates mining facilities in Strasburg and Clear Brook, and has 210 people working at its three facilities. These employees earn a payroll of \$10 million annually, Stinson said.

In the latest proffer statement, he said, the company agreed to limit its vehicle traffic to 200 truckloads per day, averaged over 30 days, and to limit access to the facility to its current entrance on McCune Road.

Stinson also said the county government would have immediate access to company records to verify compliance with the traffic limits.

Among other proffers, Stinson said Chemstone has promised to provide:

- * Three groundwater monitoring wells.
- * Earthen berms around active quarry pits, which would be 10 to 30 feet in height and be covered with decorative vegetation.
- * Assurances that the rezoned property would be used for mining operations only.

- * Creation of an 8-acre historic preserve.
- * An architectural survey of all properties in the rezoned areas prior to any mining operations.
- * Preservation and maintenance of the historic Nisewander and Tabler family cemeteries on the property.

Of the 400 residents who attended the public hearing, 60 signed up to speak.

Several of the speakers were Chemstone employees and their families, who praised Chemstone as a responsible and generous employer.

"Chemstone is a good neighbor and a good friend," said Kermit Orndorff. "When I wanted to build a home for my family, they gave me stone. Two of my children were awarded scholarships through Chemstone. When I was a Girl Scout leader, they opened their hearts and sponsored a trip for us. They donated stone for a parking lot at the church where I worship. I'm one of many people they helped."

Mary Rutherford, a truck driver from Berryville, said the company is an important employer.

"We need to keep these quarries open," she said. "This company puts food on a lot of people's tables — not just employees, but companies that work with them. What will people do when stone isn't available to build their homes?"

Among those who opposed the request was Millbrook High School junior Calvin Hunt.

"Frederick County is a great place to live," he said. "I want to live here and raise a family. But I want to live in a place that protects its natural and historic resources. These resources would be destroyed before my children would be able to enjoy them."

Richard Dye, who owns property adjoining the rezoning area, worries how the operations would hurt his future plans.

"I hope to build my retirement home on this property, and sell 5-acre lots to other people who have the same dream," he said. "This proposal means that those houses can't be built."

Two supervisors, Philip Lemieux and Bill M. Ewing, opposed tabling the rezoning request.

Lemieux said that after waiting two years to take action, and enduring a four-hour public hearing, the residents deserved a final decision.

"There are enough flaws in this proffer statement," he said. "I'd rather see this denied, but able to come back within a year."

"These people have waited two years for an answer," Lofton said. "To put it off another year or so isn't right."

Attending the meeting in the Frederick County Office Complex were Lofton, Lemieux, Ewing, Richard C. Shickle Sr., Gene E. Fisher, Gary W. Dove, and Charles S. DeHaven Jr.

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Civil War buffs couldn't see history for the trees
By Randy Dotinga

4/23/2008

Christian Science Monitor (National)

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0423/p13s02-lign.html>

GETTYSBURG, PA. - Even though he spends his time guiding tourists through the nooks and crannies of a Civil War-era house, retired librarian Harry Conay believes that nature can trump history.

He's watched in horror as the National Park Service has tried to make the Gettysburg National Military Park look more like it did on three July days in 1863. Officials are nearly a third of the way through cutting down 576 acres of trees that didn't exist back then.

Another 275 acres will be replanted with trees and orchards that disappeared over the past 15 decades. But it's not enough to please Mr. Conay, who says the battlefield's history is partly told through the healing of the earth. After all, the trees managed to thrive on land ravaged by a deadly struggle between two immense armies.

"During those 140 years, this has become something more than a battlefield lesson," Conay says from behind the gift-shop counter at the historic house where he serves as a guide.

But the trees continue to fall, despite a flurry of protests amid preparations for this month's opening of a \$103 million visitors center and museum. And as the 150th anniversary of the Civil War approaches, at least one other battlefield is poised to restore history by chopping down countless trees.

To supporters, including park officials and amateur historians, the Gettysburg project makes perfect sense because it allows visitors to better understand the past. The enormous challenges facing generals and soldiers, they say, will finally be clear.

"It's not just about trying to create a postcard picture to make something look like it did 150 years ago," says Don Barger, a regional director with the National Parks Service, which runs the military park. "It's about protecting the elements necessary to tell the story."

New views on the challenge of the battle

The park, in southern Pennsylvania, draws about 2 million visitors each year to marvel at a crucial and bloody battle. The South, which had come close to forcing the North to the bargaining table, lost the battle and never recovered.

Dozens of tour buses traverse the 6,000-acre military park each day, bringing visitors to admire hundreds of statues and monuments and view battle landmarks such as Little Round Top and the Peach Orchard.

As part of the restoration project, park officials digitized 19th-century maps and conducted "terrain analysis" – a military strategy taught at West Point – to figure out which features of the landscape affected the battle. Then the officials made choices about adding or removing everything from trees and fences to roads and orchards.

The "rehabilitation" project – about halfway completed – will eliminate 576 acres of trees while adding 115 acres of trees and 160 acres of orchards. Thirty-nine miles of "historic" fencing will be erected, too. In addition, power poles have been removed along with a car dealership and a motel.

Among other things, the park service has cut down a stand of trees at Devil's Den, uncovering more of the rocky patch where Civil War photographers captured stunning images of the carnage.

Elsewhere, fences will be built to show the challenges facing Confederate troops who tried to ambush Union soldiers by crossing a wide field. According to the park's plan, the fences will allow visitors to see that the soldiers in the famous Pickett's Charge had to pick their way through: 12 small fields instead of one big one.

William G. Jeff Davis, an amateur historian in Gettysburg, says the restoration project has allowed him and others to better understand the maneuvers of the armies.

"It's forcing historians to take another look and perhaps even rewrite their histories to an extent. To me, that's exciting," says Mr. Davis (no relation to Confederate President Jefferson Davis).

Mr. Barger, the park service regional director, says battlefield restoration allows visitors to fully understand moments of history. At Stones River National Battlefield in Tennessee, for instance, a cotton field still stands where it did at the end of 1862. "There are records about the cotton flying in the air because of all the bullets going every which way," Barger says. "It's part of telling the story to say, 'That's where it was,' and there it is."

Critics say, 'get rid of' all modernity, then

But critics of the Gettysburg project are unimpressed and have made their views known in letters to the editor and online comments. "If you're a true preservationist, then all the monuments and access roads need to go because they weren't there in 1863," wrote a Gettysburg native to an Illinois paper. "For that matter, most of the population, infrastructure, and business wasn't there either. If you are a true preservationist, then get rid of it all."

Barger acknowledges that cutting down trees seems an unusual thing for the park service to do. "It is one of those things which seems like a contradiction at first, but only if you have a narrow scope of what the national park system protects."

The park service preserves history in addition to nature, Barger says. Indeed, 60 percent of sites preserved by the park service are historic, not natural treasures such as Yosemite or the Grand Canyon, he says.

More battlefields will be spiffed up themselves as the 150th anniversary of the Civil War approaches in 2011, and controversies over restoration projects may be inevitable. A debate is already under way at Vicksburg National Military Park in Mississippi, where Union and Confederate troops battled over access to the Mississippi River.

Under one proposal, the park would cut down stands of oak and hickory trees to allow visitors to better understand the Confederate defenses.

The key to battlefield rehabilitation, Barger says, is to create spots where visitors can "almost feel the bullets."

"That," he says, "is what you want to have happen in a battlefield."

At historic sites, looking forward while looking back

Several U.S. historic sites are being given new looks. A few notable examples:

- The Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania unveiled a \$103 million museum and visitors center in a "soft opening" earlier this month. A grand opening will be held in September, when visitors will be able to see the famous cyclorama painting of the pivotal battle, restored to the way it looked in 1884.
- As part of a \$110 million restoration project, a new visitors center and museum opened at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estates and Gardens in 2006. Visitors to the Virginia estates can watch documentary films, wander through galleries, and look at three life-sized models of America's first president, each created with the assistance of a forensic anthropologist.
- Ellis Island, where millions of immigrants first encountered New York City and America, opened a newly restored ferry building on its south side to visitors last year and is raising money to restore more buildings.
- At Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia, construction has begun on a \$55 million visitors center and museum that will include hands-on activities for children.

- A \$14 million visitors center opened in 2005 at Fort Necessity, the Pennsylvania site of the first battle of the French and Indian War. It draws about 90,000 visitors a year.

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Battlefields as green space
Hanover's Cold Harbor made list of 10 most endangered
By PHIL RIGGAN

04/22/2008

Richmond Times-Dispatch (VA)

<http://www.inrich.com/cva/ric/sports/outdoors.apx.-content-articles-RTD-2008-04-22-0010.html>

The name "Cold Harbor" is said to originate from a pre-Civil War tavern that was a haven for travelers seeking food and shelter from the cold.

The area still acts as a haven -- nearly 150 years after the War Between the States -- but mostly for plants, animals and people looking for peace and quiet in nature.

The Richmond National Battlefield Park protects more than 2,000 acres of land in its 11 units spread throughout Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover and Henrico. Other than a few small parking lots, tour roads and visitors centers, most of that land is essentially green space -- protected nature preserve.

Civil War parks "act a green space where trees and plants can grow in an area where development pressures are high," said Kristen Allen, natural resource management specialist for the park.

More than 280 acres of that sacred Civil War soil are found at the Cold Harbor Battlefield in Hanover County.

In its annual report, "History Under Siege," the Civil War Preservation Trust listed Cold Harbor in the top 10 most endangered battlefields, stating that "pressure in the Richmond area is so great that only about 300 acres of what was once at least a 7,500-acre battlefield are currently preserved."

Robert Krick, historian for the Richmond National Battlefield Park said "the purpose of the list is to increase national awareness. The upper portion of the battlefield [to Bethesda Church] is gone. The area is getting squeezed [by development].

"Cold Harbor is considered the classic example in Virginia of trench warfare," Krick said. The prolonged battle there May 31 to June 12, 1864, saw combined casualties for Confederate and Union troops reach more than 16,000.

Krick enhanced the park's historical value with this quote from "Trench Warfare Under Grant and Lee: Field Fortifications in the Overland Campaign," by Earl J. Hess: "Although small in

comparison to the total volume of works constructed here, the Cold Harbor Unit protects the most singular set of Civil War fieldworks we have."

PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Civil War Preservation Trust works closely with the local governments and park services to help improve public awareness.

"Sometimes people forget where the battlefields are located, and why they are important," said Mary Koik, spokesperson for the Trust.

"We hope communities weigh the significance of the battlefields when making decisions on development," she said, adding "we spend most of our money preserving land."

On the subject of nature preservation, Koik said that viewing "the parks as open space, green space, helps everyone -- you want to preserve something. More bang for your buck."

BATTLEFIELD AS NATURE PRESERVE

Allen helped answer some general questions she often fields from park visitors about the way the parks are maintained:

"Why don't they cut the grass or clean up the dead trees?"

RNBP lacks the personnel to maintain all of its land at the same level. Lawn areas that are around main visitor areas are maintained like one would maintain their yard, she said.

However, larger historic fields serving are typically maintained as either agricultural fields or tall native grass meadows, which provides several benefits:

- Looks more like a fallow farm field that might have existed during the 1860s than a manicured lawn;
- Requires less fuel, oil, and avoids creating air pollution associated with using tractors;
- Requires no lime or fertilizer;
- Provides much needed habitat for ground nesting birds, small mammals and reptiles.

In addition, forested areas are divided into "managed forest" and "natural zones," she said.

Managed forest occurs on some of the park's earthworks to help prevent erosion and protect the embankments. In natural zones, dead trees are usually left standing and downed wood is usually left on the ground, providing an important habitat for cavity nesting birds and mammals, as well as reptiles and insects.

"How do you maintain the battlefield as it was laid out for the Civil War?"

Park historians, including Krick, spend time researching historic photos, maps and accounts to determine exactly what the landscape looked like at the time of the Civil war, Allen said.

Once they agree on a battlefield layout, they next develop a cultural landscape report that incorporates all historical elements with the current landscape conditions, physical history of the site, and makes recommendations for how to rehabilitate the historic landscape.

"In general this seems to strive for making the landscape look just as it did during the 1860s unless there is some issue with feasibility or biological resources," Allen said. Her example: a riparian area may have been cleared of forest vegetation during the Civil War, but that practice is now known to be environmentally unsound.

"How you maintain the Civil War earthworks?"

"Rain and wind are the two elements that cause erosion to areas of bare soil," Allen said, "especially when those areas are sloped as earthworks."

The park primarily tries to minimize bare soil and practice several management regimes for earthworks:

- Full forest cover. These are generally well protected from erosion by their thick leaf litter and thick vegetation which intercepts rain as it falls toward the ground. Only maintenance at those sites is the occasional removal of "hazard trees."
- Open forest where the underbrush is trimmed once per year and the tree canopy is allowed to remain to provide protective leaf litter.
- Covered with tall native grasses. Since these grasses are deeply rooted and grow tall, they provide good protection and require little maintenance compared to other grasses. In addition, and they allow visitors to easily view the earthworks and provide a landscape similar to that of the 1860s.

"What about the plowed land on the battlefields?"

"Our farmers understand that we are fairly restrictive on our agricultural leases because we don't want to damage our streams and soils," Allen said.

Farmers are limited in the pesticides they can use and the park avoids agricultural leases within 150-200 feet of water courses on park land, she said. Most farmers grow hay, soybean, winter wheat and corn on the battlefields.

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Civil War group tours Newtonia, Carthage sites
By Greg Grisolano

04/19/2008

Joplin Globe (MO)

http://www.joplinglobe.com/local/local_story_110183641.html/resources_printstory

NEWTONIA, Mo. — When it comes to Civil War history, Jeffrey Stark says the best way to learn is to visit the battlefields.

“You can read about it in books and you can look at maps,” said Stark, a retired computer programmer from Grapevine, Texas. “But you can’t really appreciate what’s going on until you get on the ground.”

Stark and about 30 other members of the Civil War Preservation Trust toured the Newtonia and Carthage battlefields Saturday as part of the group’s annual meeting in Springfield. About 500 Civil War enthusiasts attended the meeting — the first ever held west of the Mississippi River.

The Trust is the nation’s leading private preservation group and has purchased more than 25,000 acres of historic battlefields.

“Newtonia is neat because you’ve got two battlefields in one and they’re both important parts of what happened out here in Southwest Missouri,” said trust member Harry Thaete, a retired airline pilot from Coronado, Calif. “(Union troops) were being kept back here to keep an eye on the Confederate troops coming up through Arkansas.”

After touring the 1862 and 1864 Newtonia battlefields and visiting the nearby Ritchey mansion, which served as a headquarters and field hospital during both engagements, the group had lunch before heading to the Carthage Civil War Museum and touring the 1861 battlefield, considered by some to be the opening fight of the war.

Stark said conflicts in the Trans-Mississippi get overlooked compared to the bloodier battles back East.

Members of the Newtonia Battlefields Protection Association led the group on a tour of the old cemetery, and along a creek where some of the heaviest fighting occurred.

“I can see the potential in this battlefield,” said Blair Tarr, a historian for the Kansas Historical Society and a trust member. “The interpretive signage is very good. They have such a good opportunity to present the battlefield.”

Tarr and Thaete both said they hope to see the CWPT take a more active role in preserving the Newtonia sites, a notion that has members of the local preservation group excited.

“We’re ecstatic,” said Rick Langum, one of the Newtonia group members. “With these people coming here and realizing the significant things that happened here, they’re going to want to be more involved.”

According to tour guide Dave Hinze, that first battle at Newtonia, a decisive Confederate victory, led to the Union redoubling its campaign efforts in the region. The subsequent campaign by Union troops through Southwest Missouri and into Arkansas also gives Newtonia important regional significance.

“Battles don’t happen in vacuums, they happen as part of campaigns,” said Hinze, a historian from Rolla. He wrote a book on Carthage’s Civil War battle. “This becomes a turf war for control of lead mines, grain fields, the grist mill, which could feed troops. This is very valuable land to control through here.”

The 1864 Newtonia battle was one of the last ones fought west of the Mississippi. About 350 soldiers were killed or wounded in 1862, and 650 casualties were reported in the 1864 battle. Total casualties for the July 5, 1861, engagement at Carthage are listed at 244.

In Congress: A bill sponsored by U.S. Rep. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., that aims to determine the best way to preserve the Newtonia battlefield sites was approved last week by the U.S. Senate. It awaits final approval in the House. The bill authorizes the National Park Service to conduct a study to determine if the Newtonia sites could be made a separate unit of the National Park Service or brought under the management of Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield near Springfield.

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Battlefield Adds 382 Acres at Lookout
Chloe Morrison

4/18/2008

Chattanooga Times Free Press (TN)

<http://www.tfponline.com/news/2008/apr/18/battlefield-adds-382-acres-lookout/?local>

At a time when many Civil War battlefields and even national parks are squeezed by outside development, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park is growing.

Park officials and the Trust for Public Land received federal support to purchase 382 acres in March to add to the western flank of the Lookout Mountain Battlefield.

“It is important to recognize that land associated with battlefields is really threatened, mostly due to encroachment and development,” Park Superintendent Shawn Benge said. “If you think about the percentage of land that is out there where these battles occurred, it is really, really a small amount of property, but it is very valuable.”

A desire to protect the land where thousands died was what led to establishment of the nation’s first and largest national military park at Chickamauga and Chattanooga in the 1890s.

The park’s new land flanks the Wauhatchie area in Lookout Valley west of Lookout Mountain and up to the western bank of Lookout Creek. It reaches almost to the CSX rail lines on the floor of the valley and stretches south to the Georgia line.

On Monday, officials will gather at Point Park to celebrate the latest park purchase with a ceremony that will include a walking tour of part of the area where the fabled Civil War “Battle Above the Clouds” was fought.

Officials have worked on this latest addition to the park since 2006, said Rick Wood of the Trust for Public Land. The land was bought in three parcels from CSX Railroad Co., and the entire deal was completed on March 31, he said.

Mr. Wood said teamwork was essential to the acquisition of the land, including federal support rallied by U.S. Rep. Zach Wamp, R-Chattanooga, and U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn.

“Those relationships are critical to making these kinds of transactions happen,” Mr. Wood said. “We are delighted to have played a part of knitting together these historic lands.”

The property was acquired with \$4.8 million in congressional appropriations over three years, Mr. Bengé said, but it provides priceless opportunities to preserve the past, especially since the Chickamauga Battlefield unit cannot expand.

The 382 acres come on top of the addition of Moccasin Bend to the park's property, which became official when President Bush signed legislation in 2003.

HISTORY OF LAND

The new property was crossed by 3,600 Union troops on Nov. 24, 1863, before they forded Lookout Creek and worked their way up Lookout Mountain to help drive Confederate troops off their perch above Chattanooga and the Tennessee River, park historian Jim Ogden said.

Mr. Ogden said Union Gen. Joseph Hooker knew Confederate positions were too strong for a direct assault across the creek, so he sent some troops south. Gen. John White Geary's division of 3,600 took that task, moving south to a place to cross the creek, then attacking Confederate troops from the side and rear, Mr. Ogden said. Eventually, Confederate soldiers were forced to give up the most important part of the mountain.

"It was a blow in the physical sense that the mountain sat astride the most important road routes into Chattanooga," Mr. Ogden said.

The victory allowed Union troops to prepare for the next day's assault on Missionary Ridge and started a series of critical setbacks for the South.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PURCHASE

As well as gaining land to buffer against the push of development, the new acquisition will help tell a more complete history of the area and events, said Kay Parish, executive director of Friends of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

Rep. Wamp, who lives in the Lookout Valley area, said preserving the land helps excite and educate young people about the nation's history.

"It really engages the next generation in who we are as a people, and that determines the path you take in the future," he said.

Preservation and conservation also are a tourism draw for Tennessee and a boost to the economy, Rep. Wamp said.

The land also is part of Cherokee history. And Rep. Wamp, who said he has some Cherokee ancestry, said he feels a special connection to the Lookout Valley land.

"When I'm at home and I see the sun set across the valley, I know that this is the same sun, the same sky, the same mountain, the same streams, the same watershed that these people

lived on,” he said. “It is a supernatural kind of feeling and, as a result, I’m motivated constantly to do my part to extend this posterity, to extend this incredible history to the next generation.”

BATTLES FOR CHATTANOOGA

- * After defeat at Chickamauga, Ga., on Sept. 20, 1863, Union troops retreated to Chattanooga. Confederate forces pursued and occupied Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge and Chattanooga Valley.
- * Artillery placed on high ground helped Confederates lay siege to Chattanooga and choke off Union Gen. William Rosecrans’ forces.
- * Union reinforcements came with Gen. William T. Sherman and Gen. Joseph Hooker. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant assumed command.
- * On Nov. 23, 1863, Gen. George “Rock of Chickamauga” Thomas’ troops took Orchard Knob.
- * Nov. 24: Fog covered Lookout Mountain as Gen. Hooker’s troops advanced toward the western slope. Gen. John Geary’s division crossed Lookout Creek at a point included in the new park land. Union troops took the mountain in the “Battle Above the Clouds.”
- * Nov. 25: Gen. Thomas’ troops moved from Orchard Knob to the base of Missionary Ridge. Then, without orders, they charged up the slope and routed Gen. Braxton Bragg’s forces.
- * Nov. 25-26: Under cover of darkness, Confederate troops retreated into Georgia.
- * Aug. 19, 1890: President Benjamin Harrison signed a bill establishing Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.
- * Sept. 18-20, 1895: The park was dedicated.
- * 1905: Point Park was built to commemorate the Battle Above the Clouds.

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Civil War buffs touring Missouri sites
By Todd G. Higdon

04/17/2008

Neosho Daily News (MO)

http://www.waynesvilledailyguide.com/state_news/x1498097990

A unique group is in Southwest Missouri through Sunday to tour area Civil War sites, including Newtonia, Carthage and Wilson Creek near Springfield.

“The Civil War Preservation Trust is holding their annual meeting for their membership,” Wilson Creek National Battlefield historian Connie Langum said. “And when they have these meetings, the whole purpose is to get these folks out to see these battlefields. That is why there are tours.”

This is also unique in the fact that this organization has never held their annual meeting west of the Mississippi. It is usually held on the East Coast or thereabouts.

The CWPT is “America's largest non-profit organization devoted to the preservation of our nation's endangered Civil War battlefields,” according to their mission statement. “The trust also promotes educational programs and heritage tourism initiatives to inform the public of the war’s history and the fundamental conflicts that sparked it.”

The events include history lectures, book shows, panel discussions, an author book signing and color bearer tours.

“Color bearers are those folks that have donated quite a bit of money to the organization,” said Langum. “We are anticipating 300 people coming in. I am impressed with the number of people coming in. It is more than I anticipated. It is a good number, an excellent response.”

Invited speakers include Edwin C. Bearss, David Hinze, Langum, Arnold Schofield, William Shea and Richard Sommers.

On Friday and Saturday, those in attendance will have the opportunity to tour the Civil War sites, they can pick one of following each day. Wilson Creek (either bus tour or hiking tour), the battles of Newtonia and Carthage, Battle of Pea Ridge in Arkansas, Oklahoma Civil War tour (Friday only) including Cabin Creek and Honey Springs; the Kansas Civil War sites of Fort Scott and Mine Creek (Saturday only), museum and historical homes of Springfield (Friday only) and Missouri (Saturday only).

Those touring Newtonia will have the opportunity to see the Ritchey Mansion, the Old Civil War Cemetery, talk about where the old barn was located at and see the cornfields where the

second battle was fought. The first battle at was in 1862 and saw an unprecedented number of Native American units fight on both sides. The second battle in 1864 battle was the last one fought in Missouri, a state that had more Civil War clashes than any other beside Virginia and Tennessee. Approximately 350 soldiers were either killed or wounded in 1862, and 650 casualties were reported in the 1864 battle.

Asked how the area would benefit from having the trust coming in, Langum broke it down to five words. "They know where we are," Langum said. "That is the big benefit. They are here and again, they have never been west of the Mississippi before."

"The money that they (CWPT) is used for land acquisition, to buy battlefield land," Langum said.

What is next?

The CWPT will host the 2009 meeting at Gettysburg, Pa.

Langum was asked where she sees Newtonia, Carthage, and other battlefields in the next five years. "I see the development that threatens the East Coast is coming our way," said Langum.

"If we don't do something with help from the trust or others, we are going to end up just like the East Coast. Wilson Creek is probably the exception, because we are federal, we are fairly well protected, but not as well as we like, but it is coming. As far as significant, these battles right here rank up with anything on the East Coast. Missouri was third in the number of battles next to Virginia (first) and Tennessee (second)."

For more information about the CWPT, please visit the Web site www.civilwar.org

The event will conclude on Saturday with a banquet and awards ceremony in Springfield.

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State Battles Sprawl: Budget Amendment Would Make Millions of Dollars Available For Preserving Virginia Civil War Battlefields

By Rusty Dennen

4/16/2008

Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star (VA)

<http://www.fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2008/042008/04162008/371747>

Civil War battlefield preservation efforts here could get a big boost from the state--and private donors.

Among Gov. Tim Kaine's amendments to the 2008-2010 budget bill is a \$5 million addition to the Civil War Historic Site Preservation Fund.

The infusion of cash, supported by House Speaker Bill Howell, R-Stafford County, could be used to purchase important, privately owned land.

Private preservation groups such as the Civil War Preservation Trust have to raise \$2 for every dollar they receive in state funding for the purchases.

The General Assembly will take final action on Kaine's budget plan April 23. The preservation fund addition is one of 41 amendments on the table, totaling about \$8.9 million.

"This is crucial. It's something we've been working on for three years," said Jim Campi, spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based Civil War Preservation Trust.

About \$500,000 from the fund, created in 2006, was used by the national nonprofit preservation group toward its \$12 million purchase of the 210-acre Slaughter Pen Farm along Tidewater Trail in Spotsylvania County.

About \$200,000 was used last year toward the purchase of land at the Glendale battlefield near Richmond. There, as in the Fredericksburg area, Congress sets the battlefield boundaries and some significant land remains in private hands within and outside the boundaries.

Preservationists told the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission last fall that those parcels must be obtained quickly before they are swallowed by development. The years 2011-2015 will mark the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

"There are some key properties that we still think need to be acquired land associated with Chancellorsville and Spotsylvania, the Wilderness and at Brandy Station in Culpeper," Campi said.

Howell, who chairs the sesquicentennial commission, has been a supporter of battlefield preservation and supports the budget amendment.

"It's very important It's a good public-private partnership," Howell said yesterday.

Without CWPT's efforts and the money from the state fund, "Slaughter Pen would be a shopping center," Howell said. The farm, part of the 1882 Battle of Fredericksburg, earned its name because of the fierce fighting on the property.

State Sen. Edd Houck, D-Spotsylvania County, also worked to secure the state funding.

"This is a huge deal," said Linda Wandres, executive director of the Fredericksburg-based Central Virginia Battlefields Trust.

"Though we were not involved with the discussions with the state, we hope to jump in and use the process," Wandres said.

"We care about this because there are so many economic, environmental and educational reasons for saving this land," she said, along with promoting heritage tourism.

"The ground itself has to be seen and walked for someone to understand the depth of commitment and sacrifice" of the soldiers who fought and died, Wandres said.

In a report last week, the National Parks Conservation Association warned that 1.8 million acres of private land within national parks is under growing pressure to be developed or sold.

Most national parks, including the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, have little or no money for land acquisition. So private, nonprofits are taking up the slack.

The military park includes the Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania Courthouse, Wilderness and Chancellorsville battlefields.

"This may be the last best chance to preserve Civil War battlefields in Virginia," said Russ Smith, superintendent of the military park.

Dinwiddie County Battlefield Gets a New Visitors Station

4/15/2008

Petersburg Progress-Index (VA)

http://www.progress-index.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=19484148&BRD=2271&PAG=461&dept_id=462943&rfi=6

A new visitor station at Five Forks Battlefield will help tourists gain a better understanding to one of the climatic battles of the Civil War.

The \$3 million visitor center complex will nearly double the amount of exhibit space — from 388 square feet in the former gas station currently used to 730 square feet.

The 2,400-square-foot visitor station will be set back in the woods to allow people to decompress from their car trip. In addition to a new visitors center, tourists will be able to now wander down miles of new trails.

Chris Calkins, the National Park Service's chief of interpretation for the battlefield, calls the April 1, 1865 clash "the battle that broke the camel's back."

Union troops broke through Confederate lines during the battle. By the next day, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee was forced to withdraw from Petersburg and the capital in Richmond. In little over a week — April 9, 1865 — Lee surrendered his army to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

The visitor station, which is expected to be finished next year, will be key in explaining the complex story of the siege of Petersburg and how that was a catalyst in ending the Civil War.

Dave Schulte, executive director of Petersburg Area Regional Tourism, said there is a burgeoning market for history tourism.

"Civil War history is the major product we have to sell. The story of the siege of Petersburg is a complex one that stretches 36 miles from City Point [in Hopewell] to this battlefield," Schulte said.

That assessment is a key to the area's economic success. Much needs to be done in the region to further capitalize and capture the area's history-related tourism. The new visitor station is a key part of that effort.

“Dinwiddie County is proud of its Civil War heritage,” said John Talmage, chairman of the Board of Supervisors. “Hopefully this will be of great economic and historic value for Dinwiddie.”

We think it will.

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Humble, but hallowed

Civil War Preservation Trust names earthen works in Savannah one of nation's 10-most 'endangered' sites.

By Chuck Mobley

04/05/2008

Savannah Morning News (GA)

<http://savannahnow.com/node/475701>

As the 147th anniversary of the start of the Civil War approaches, a group of concerned Georgians is fighting to save earthen entrenchments from that struggle that still surround Savannah.

"As new houses, commercial establishments and roads are built, the western defense lines remnants are in danger," said Charlie Crawford, president of the Georgia Battlefields Association, referring to the earthworks Confederate forces erected late in 1864 as Union soldiers approached Savannah.

An earlier series of strong points, put up shortly after the war started on April 12, 1861, to guard the seaward approaches to the city, is likewise threatened. "Several of the earthen forts and batteries have been lost," Crawford said, "and others are eroding."

The situation spurred the Georgia Battlefields Association to action, and its efforts have placed the Savannah fortifications on "History Under Siege," an annual listing of endangered battlefields that's announced to wide media coverage by the Civil War Preservation Trust.

"This report is more than a list of threatened historic sites," the CWPT said. "It is also a plan for saving the last remaining links to a moment in history that defined us as a nation."

Fort still stands at Wormsloe

Since its list was first released in 2001, the CWPT's efforts have averted threats to sites across the nation. The latest list cites encroachments onto several famous battlefields, including Antietam and Cold Harbor. But it also seeks to save locations that have largely been forgotten, such as Fort Wimberly, now a heavily wooded and rarely visited outpost at Wormsloe Historic Site.

"This is a gun emplacement," said Joe Thompson, pointing to a level spot that looks out onto the Moon River. Carefully moving through shrubs and bushes and up and down embankments, Thompson - the manager at Wormsloe since 1981- laid out the boundaries of Fort Wimberly.

It was a massive structure during the war, tall, thick and imposing, with emplacements for several pieces of artillery. Now, it's indistinguishable from the rest of the shoreline, and its distance from the museum and main interpretative area has kept it off the tour of the site, Thompson said.

That doesn't mean, however, that no one goes there.

"A shovel did that," said Thompson, looking at a divot near the gun emplacement. "That's a relic hunter's mark."

He then turned and walked to the top of one of the embankments and considered a much larger threat to Fort Wimberly - the causeway that crosses the Moon River.

Future plans call for putting another bridge across the river, Thompson said, adding two more traffic lanes, and a bike path, to the heavily traveled route to Skidaway Island.

Thompson didn't try to diminish the need for the expansion, but he lamented that the proposal, as it stands now, would place the new lanes on the side of the road closest to Wormsloe, bringing traffic within a few feet of the old fortification.

He fears the new lanes will bring added attention and easier access to Fort Wimberly, allowing "relic hunters," vandals and others to roam across it at will.

Development endangers 1864 entrenchments

Barry Sheehy, a businessman with international interests and a home in Savannah, has been at the forefront of the effort to save positions on Chatham County's westside that were manned by Confederate and Union soldiers during December 1864.

He's experienced success - the trenches and gun positions behind Savannah Christian Preparatory School have been preserved; and failure - an adjacent set of trenches was demolished by a developer.

He's also authored a Georgia Historical Quarterly article ("Forgotten Battles: Engagements at Monteith Swamp and Shaw's Bridge During the Savannah Campaign in 1864) on this portion of the city's history, carefully assessed what remains of those fields and lines, and amassed encyclopedic knowledge of the old roads and paths that once ran through that area.

The key to saving as many of these positions as possible, Sheehy said, is actually pretty simple - tell the public about them.

"When something is identified as being historically important, nine out of 10 people will do the right thing," he said.

Sheehy's sentiments were echoed by Crawford of the CWPT.

"We try very hard to raise public awareness of the more than 400 Civil War sites throughout Georgia," he said, "because people normally support preserving the sites once they are aware they exist."

That step, saving the site, preserves a tangible link, Crawford said. Once you go to a Civil War battlefield or site, and see the actual ground, "it's much easier to understand what happened," he said.

Battered batteries

A list of earthen forts, compiled by the Georgia Battlefields Association, that once helped guard the approaches to Savannah from the sea:

Rose Dhu: Privately owned, eroding from adjacent river.

Beaulieu: No remains.

Wimberly: On Wormsloe State Historic Site, but threatened by causeway expansion.

Daniels (Isle of Hope): No remains.

Grimball's Point (Isle of Hope): No remains.

Thunderbolt: No remains.

Turner's Rock: Privately owned, not threatened by development.

Gibson's Point: Privately owned, some reported remains.

Causten's Bluff: Inside gated community, partially intact.

Bartow: Inside gated golf community, partially intact.

Lee: On commercial property, largely eroded into Savannah River.

For information

To learn about the Civil War Preservation Trust, go to www.civilwar.org.

To learn about the Georgia Battlefields Association, go to www.georgiabattlefields.org.

To learn about the Georgia Historical Society, go to www.georgiahistory.com.

To learn about Wormsloe Historic Site, go to <http://gastateparks.org/info/wormsloe>.