

Civil War News Roundup - 07/11/2007
Courtesy of the Civil War Preservation Trust

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Shipwreck Teaches Students about History

By Sonja Barisic Associated Press Writer

07/09/2007

Rock Hill Herald (SC)

<http://dwb.heraldonline.com/24hour/nation/story/3656040p-13014151c.html>

ON THE JAMES RIVER, Va. (AP) Five 13-year-olds in life jackets crowded inside the cabin of a small research boat and stared at a bank of computer monitors.

Suddenly, a dark gray mass appeared on one of the screens - a sonar image of the wreckage of the Civil War-era frigate USS Cumberland.

As members of the Cumberland Club, the kids studied artifacts from the ship, then helped researchers beam sonar to the bottom of the James River near the coal piers in Newport News to check on the condition of the ship itself.

The U.S. Navy and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration hold the summer enrichment program, which gives students a hands-on feel for what it's like to be historians, archaeologists and marine scientists.

"It was fun to be able to do things that are important that kids don't usually get to do," said Jazmine Brooks of Norfolk, who'll be in eighth grade in the fall.

The Cumberland Club, now in its second year, is free to the middle school students and funded by a grant. To be selected, students wrote essays on "Why is history important?"

Before their river outing, the 18 students spent a week studying and going to the naval museum and The USS Monitor Center at The Mariners' Museum in Newport News to learn about conservation and archaeology techniques and the history of the Cumberland.

The ship, launched in 1842, sailed to a number of Mediterranean ports, served in the Gulf of Mexico during the Mexican-American War and patrolled the coast of Africa to suppress the slave trade.

The Cumberland was anchored off Newport News on March 8, 1862, when the CSS Virginia arrived to attack a Union blockade. The Virginia pushed her iron ram into the Cumberland's side and the ship began to sink, its gun crews continuing to fire. About 100 men died.

The fight demonstrated the superiority of armored, steam-powered ships over traditional wooden sailing ships.

The next day, the Virginia and the Monitor fought a battle that ended in a standoff. The Virginia had torn off most of its iron spar when it backed away from the Cumberland, and

some historians think the Monitor was spared from further damage because the spar could have penetrated the hull below its armor.

Today, the Cumberland's wreckage is protected by law. The Cumberland Club students got to handle some artifacts that belong to the Hampton Roads Naval Museum.

On one afternoon, the students looked for damage as they turned over the pieces in their gloved hands, then photographed the items for the museum's records and wrote reports describing the objects and recommending how to conserve them.

Most of the items were fairly easy to identify: a door hinge, a pulley, a spike.

Cameron Parsons and David Hart, 13-year-olds from Virginia Beach, weren't sure what they had been given. It looked like two small pieces of wood held together by three rivets. One rivet was inscribed "Philada."

"That's cool," said Michael V. Taylor, the museum's preservation officer. "I have no idea what it is."

David, using a magnifying glass, spotted on the "Philada" rivet what looked like an engraving of the scales of justice. Maybe the artifact was associated with the ship's legal officer, Taylor told the boys.

They may get to find out for sure. NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration is providing \$1,000 for enhanced restoration for Cumberland artifacts, and the Cumberland Club voted to use the money in part to conserve the "Philada" piece.

Cameron said he enjoyed studying the artifacts "because we're finding real stuff, not recreation stuff that adults set up for us."

"And it's fun to see stuff that people used like a really long time ago," David added.

The following week, in late June, the students spent a day aboard the Bay Hydrographer, a 56-foot NOAA research vessel. They helped researchers use side scan and multibeam sonar to scan the Cumberland wreckage, as well as the nearby wrecks of the Confederate ship CSS Florida, which accidentally sank on Nov. 28, 1864, and a third, unknown ship.

James S. Schmidt, contract archaeologist with the underwater archaeology branch of The Naval Historical Center, will crunch the data collected.

Taylor believes the program will have a lasting impression on the students.

While many kids spend their summers hanging out, Taylor said, "Cumberland kids get to say, 'I went out on an archaeological expedition with The Naval Historical Center on a NOAA boat and we went to the wrecks of the Cumberland and the Confederate Florida. You know, they're important wrecks and important cultural resources.'"

Holding the Fort in Collierville

Editorial

06/07/2007

Memphis Commercial Appeal (TN)

http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/editorials/article/0,2845,MCA_25348_5616739,00.html

Every town could use a good mystery, and Collierville just happens to have one.

Namely, just where is the fort where Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman and his men holed up during a key battle in the Civil War? This could turn out to be Shelby County's version of the Da Vinci Code.

There are many clues about the fort's location, including at least one provided in the general's memoirs, but no one has been able to pinpoint it yet. An archeological dig east of town last spring was unsuccessful.

Such efforts are worth pursuing, though. And even if the exact location of the old fort cannot be found, Collierville officials should pursue plans to set up some type of exhibit to highlight this colorful part of the town's history.

As the story goes, Sherman was traveling by train from Memphis to Corinth, Miss., in 1863 when he got word of a planned Confederate attack. He ordered the train to return to the Collierville depot, where he and his men took positions in and around the fort and repelled a fierce assault.

A small-scale replica of the fort could boost local tourism. Particularly since it would dovetail nicely with the state's marketing efforts for the Tennessee Civil War Heritage Trail, which currently includes 62 points of interest.

We'll never know whether the course of events might have been different if Sherman hadn't found refuge in Collierville, but this chapter of local history definitely shouldn't be forgotten.

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Sights Set on Taking Back Battlefield — to 1863

By Andrea Stone

05/07/2007

USA Today

http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-07-04-gettysburg_N.htm

Seven years after the National Park Service took down the privately owned tower overlooking the Gettysburg National Military Park, the revered battlefield is on its way to looking the way it did in 1863, when Union and Confederate soldiers clashed there in what proved the turning point of the Civil War.

Also gone in recent years from the most-visited Civil War battlefield: a motel, a car dealership and acres of trees and other "non-historic vegetation" that obscured the landscape soldiers saw 144 years ago. Park officials say the aim is to help visitors better understand how the three-day battle unfolded.

The finished rehabilitation project is expected to cost nearly \$3.5 million in federal and private funds. The Park Service is using historical maps, photos, sketches and archival records to recreate topographic and other features. The plan calls for clearing woods, replanting orchards, restoring fencing and rehabilitating farm lanes and roads that once crisscrossed the battlefield.

Perhaps the most controversial part of the plan calls for demolishing noted architect Richard Neutra's 1962 Cyclorama, home to Paul Dominique Philippoteaux's historic circa 1884 painting of the battle.

The building is on the National Register of Historic Places. It also sits on Cemetery Ridge, the place where Union soldiers repulsed the ill-fated Pickett's Charge.

Preservationists sued in May to stop the demolition, which is planned for 2009 after a new visitors center opens next year.

Regardless of the outcome of the lawsuit, Philippoteaux's painting, now undergoing restoration, is to be moved to the new visitors center.

Gettysburg's rehabilitation is the most extensive of several efforts to restore Civil War sites to their 19th-century condition. Among others turning back the clock are Vicksburg in Mississippi, Antietam in Maryland and Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

Big Discovery Made at Wilson's Creek Nat'l Battlefield

By Erin Israel

05/07/2007

Ozarks First.com (AR)

<http://ozarksfirst.com/content/fulltext/?cid=9161>

Visitors to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield can stand on the land where soldiers fought and died during a major battle in the Civil War. And on that land, folks can see the homes and other artifacts preserved there to help generations to come connect with the past.

Now a new discovery may help explain more about that major chapter in Ozarks history. Wilson's creek National Battlefield Foundation recently acquired some land to add to the park.

And now some MSU students found what experts think may actually be the foundation to a significant farm house there. But for the students who found the farm, this lesson in history is helping to shape their futures. The Archaeology field students from Missouri State may be new to the dig, but they've made a huge historical discovery.

"The site of the Guinn farm, as Colonel Franz Sigel, who was a Union commander, is retreating from Wilson's Creek, from the battle of Wilson's Creek, he comes along the wire road and there's a small skirmish at the Guinn Farm," says Connie Langum, the historian at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

Up until now, the Guinn farm had gone undiscovered. But the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation recently purchased this property and that's when these students went to work.

"I just wanted to see if this is what I wanted to do, so I came out here and I love it, so I think that's what I'm going to do for my Master's," says Caitlin Forness, a student who helped make the discovery.

Students say they found parts of the foundation to what could be the Guinn farmhouse, but they also say they're building foundations of their own.

"Our notes that we take every day would not be returned to us; they would be given to the National Parks Service, and that's just really cool to know that, you know, my notes may help somebody in the future," says Forness.

"It's an honor actually to get to do this kind of work for the National Parks Service; they are basically the ones to set the standard for cultural and historic preservation in the United States, so to get to work on a site than more than likely will wind up on the National Register of Historic Places is, it's a great honor," says Dr. Holly Jones, Archaeology professor at MSU.

And although the work can be tedious, the lesson here is the smallest discovery can be rewarding.

"You always get excited when you find something because you can go days, weeks without finding a thing," says student Jeremiah Lockett.

So searching for the past here is helping shape the future, leaving something so generations to come can know their history. One of the best parts for the students: The artifacts they've discovered will eventually wind up on display so everyone who visits can see for themselves what went on at the Guinn farm.

Battlefields Foundation to Buy Cooley Farm Property

07/02/2007

Warren Sentinel (VA)

<http://www.shenandoah.com/stories/?headlineID=13019&sourceID=68>

As you turn down Bowman Mill Road off of Guard Hill Road, one can't help but notice the natural beauty of the surrounding area.

What is far less obvious, though, is a plot of land that holds great historical significance.

That land, Cooley Farm, was an integral part of the Battle of Cedar Creek and is currently being purchased by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF).

The acquisition of this property will allow visitors to step back in time and stand in the shoes of the men battling the Civil War.

The Battle of Cedar Creek, fought between Strasburg and Middletown, was the last great battle of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley.

As the Union army lay in wait, Union General George Cook's troops were positioned on the Cooley Farm property.

Several other commands were located on the Cooley property at that time. Col. Rutherford B. Hayes, future president of the United States, and Capt. Frank Gibbs were placed on the Cooley land with the hopes that they would eventually take control of the Valley pike bridge.

On the evening of Oct.18, 1864, the Confederate forces surrounded the Union. With careful strategy they used a three-column formation that allowed one column to move east and cover what is now Bowman's Mill Road.

The south received the second column as they marched along Long Meadow Road coming close to modern day Interstate-66. The last column came from the north and settled along Cedar Creek.

After lying in wait the Confederate forces moved north colliding with Hayes' troops on the Cooley property.

The battle was on and the Confederate forces tightened their grip on the Federal army — within half an hour the Union troops were frantically retreating across the Valley Pike towards the west.

As they retreated the Union troops were filtered through a ravine that became known as the "valley of death."

By the end of the hour the Union troops were feebly fighting back. Those troops who had stayed behind were defending their ground to give the rest of the retreating army time to escape north. The troops fell back to Belle Grove Plantation and held their ground to fight the Confederates later that day.

The 187 acres that the SVBF will acquire will add to the land that the foundation is preserving. This land will be devoted to entertaining and educating visitors on the events of the Civil War and their impact of the people of the Shenandoah Valley.

Civil War Era 'Blues' Band of Brothers Insist on Musical Authenticity

By Jerry Guo

07/01/2007

Pittsburg Tribune-Review (PA)

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/cityregion/s_515305.html

During the day, they're average Joes from Western Pennsylvania who work as computer technicians, schoolteachers and paramedics.

But on weekends every month or so, they don blue Union uniforms, grab original sheet music from the 1860s and make their way across the nation's Civil War battlefields.

Members of the Wildcat Regiment Band, a Civil War reenactment group based in Western Pennsylvania, bring to life the music of America's bloodiest conflict. The 24-member brass band was the featured attraction Saturday at Harpers Ferry, W.Va., during an 1860s-themed celebration of Independence Day. Two weekends ago, the band played at Gettysburg.

"When you play a song that hasn't been heard for 150 years, it can bring goose bumps," said James Roach, an alto horn player from Clymer in Indiana County.

Group members use only period instruments and hand sew their wool uniforms based on authentic Civil War designs. The unit is considered so historically accurate, it is the only band allowed to play at Gettysburg without prior approval, said Ted Cramer, a Wildcats tuba player from Cranberry.

"They do have a special status here because of their authenticity, and how the public responds to them," said Katie Lawhon, a spokeswoman for the National Park Service at Gettysburg. "They are considered by our superintendent to be the park's own band."

The Wildcats are based on the 24-member regimental band of the 105th Pennsylvania Volunteers, the largest military brass band of its time. It was highly esteemed, having played in front of Abraham Lincoln. And like its modern-day successors, it recruited members mostly from Indiana, Jefferson and Clarion counties, an area once called the "Wildcat Congressional District."

"The music we play a lot of the time are original copies we've obtained from the Library of Congress," Cramer said.

Yet the group is not above modern technology, with a Web site (www.wildcatband.com) and two CDs released so far.

The reenactment group is the largest of its kind in the country, said Marsha Wassel, spokeswoman for the National Park Service at Harpers Ferry.

"We love them, and our visitors love them too," she said. "If you're going for the best, you'll go for Bruno's band."

Band master Bruno "B.J." Pino of Home, Indiana County, and his late father, also named Bruno, founded the Wildcats 15 years ago.

"The thing that sticks with me is the number of folks who say they really felt a sense of patriotism and understanding of American culture after hearing us play," Pino said.

He said the band is a very "tight-knit family." Some players are music teachers, but most just grew up with a love of either the Civil War or band music. Pino's son plays alto horn.

Another father-son team is John and Rob Dalbey, both of Murrysville. John, who is studying to be a paramedic and is a cornet player, said he pulled his dad into the band last year as a drummer.

"I love Civil War history and music, so this was the perfect opportunity for me," John Dalbey said.

The players are such Civil War buffs they trim their beards in the style of the era and buy 19th century prescription glasses to look the part. B.J. Pino also stays in character, frequently berating audience members for standing up during the Star-Spangled Banner -- since it didn't become the national anthem until 1931.

They have played at the Kennedy Center in Washington, the governor's mansion when Tom Ridge was governor and the Smithsonian. Their next stop is a commemoration ceremony at Antietam National Battlefield in Maryland on Sept. 16.

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Opinion: Tales of Battle Set in Stone

By Marc Charisse, Evening Sun Editor

07/01/2007

Hanover Evening Sun (PA)

http://www.eveningsun.com/columns/ci_6277161

There are some things I just won't do - if only because it seems everyone else is doing them.

I may be the only living member of my generation who's never seen "Rocky Horror Picture Show." I've never eaten at a Hard Rock Cafe. And I've never been to a Gettysburg battle re-enactment.

Nothing against them. I even once went to a recreation of the Olustee fight near Jacksonville, Fla.

And I suppose anyone interested in Civil War history should hear the tearful rustle of silk battle flags in the breeze, the core-shaking roar of cannons on the gun line. Albeit sanitized, those are as close to the real sights and sounds of battle as I pray I'll ever get.

But when I want to get a glimpse of the men who experienced genuine horror and heroism, I like to visit the monuments they left behind.

To casual visitors who don't know the stories behind the stones, they are just so many funeral relics marking the lines of battle. For me, though, those lifeless hunks of bronze and granite are the living touchstones of remembrance.

Here are three of my favorites, places I'll visit this year, and every year, on the anniversary of Gettysburg.

Office politics

There is nothing especially remarkable about the tarnished War Department marker and single cannon that mark the position of Page's Virginia battery on the slope east of Oak Hill below the Peace Memorial. The marker doesn't note that the casualties it lists - 4 dead, 26 wounded, 17 horses killed - represent the greatest loss of any Confederate artillery unit during the three-day battle.

It is a story of tragic ineptitude and deference to authority that slaughtered those men and horses in just a few minutes, but there is also rueful humor here that anyone who's never left the safety of their office can surely appreciate.

Page's battery was poorly deployed on the slope in full view of the Union guns below - making them a hard-to-miss target - by their division commander, Gen. Robert Rodes. Spotting their untenable position, Rodes' artillery chief, Lt. Col. Thomas Carter, rode up to

his commander and a group of high-ranking officers, and angrily demanded, "General, what fool put that battery yonder?"

An uncomfortable silence followed, and Carter knew the fool was his commanding officer. Finally, as the slaughter of the battery went on, Rodes suggested if Carter felt that way, perhaps he should move the unit.

That was it. For the Confederates, it was a story of foolishness and futile heroism best forgotten.

Too bloodthirsty

A statue of Lt. Stephen Brown stands atop the monument of the 13th Vermont on Hancock Avenue, just a couple of hundred yards south of the Angle where Pickett's Charge hit the Union position.

Brown was a popular officer who found himself under arrest when, in defiance of orders, he allowed several men to break ranks to fill their canteens on the hot, forced march to Gettysburg.

At the climax of the battle, the 13th was ordered to attack Pickett's flank, and Brown's men asked that his arrest be lifted so he could lead them. When arrested, Brown had surrendered his sword, the symbol of his authority, and it was back with the supply wagons. So he picked up a camp hatchet and led his men into battle waving it over his head.

Brown's statue depicts him holding a sword he captured from a rebel officer as his regiment helped rout the Confederates. The veterans wanted to depict Brown waving his hatchet, but that plan was rejected as too bloodthirsty an image by which to remember the great battle.

Still, if you look to the side of the monument by Brown's right foot, you'll spot his hatchet, a mostly overlooked reminder of the real story.

No playground

The huge chunk of unformed stone atop the monument of the 20th Massachusetts between the 13th Vermont and the Angle looks out of place beside all the carefully carved granite around it. But it is, for me, the most appropriate marker of all.

Certainly, the Boston bluebloods who officered the regiment could afford fancier. This was the regiment of future Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. Its commander, the grandson of patriot Paul Revere, was killed at Gettysburg.

But when the time came to remember the men who had died plugging the gap Pickett tore in the Union line, the veterans chose this ugly, conglomerate boulder.

The rock came from a playground in Roxbury, where as boys those officers had fanaticized about soldiering. Atop this rock they had played King of the Hill long ago.

This is the real battlefield, and battle, as that boulder reminds me, is no game.

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Historic Building to Open Next Year

On the eve of the Gettysburg Address in 1863, Lincoln stayed there

By Matt Casey

07/01/2007

York Daily Record/Sunday News (PA)

http://www.ydr.com/newsfull/ci_6273047

Jul 1, 2007 — Main Street Gettysburg expects the David Wills House to draw visitors to downtown Gettysburg when it opens next year, and, after an agreement signed Thursday, the nonprofit group expects it to point those visitors to local businesses.

Main Street and the Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau signed a partnership Thursday to provide visitor information services at the historic building where President Lincoln slept the night before delivering the Gettysburg Address in 1863.

"It's going to have a big effect on downtown Gettysburg," Bill Kough, chairman of the Main Street board, said.

Kough said the bureau will provide visitors with information on where to find retail establishments, dining and overnight accommodations, which will encourage longer stays and increase tourism dollars spent in the borough.

Main Street Gettysburg - a nonprofit organization committed to preserving and revitalizing the borough - expects 180,000 people to visit the historic home and soon-to-be museum each year, and expects the visitor information center to keep them in town.

The Wills House will serve as a museum for the Gettysburg Address, Gettysburg in the wake of the Civil War and David Wills.

Wills, a Gettysburg lawyer, led early efforts to set aside land to form the Soldier's National Cemetery and invited President Lincoln to Gettysburg to deliver "a few appropriate words."

He also allowed the president to stay at the house the evening before the speech.

Lincoln's speech is known around the world and Kough said he saw that when a young professional from India visited the Gettysburg Rotary Club, where Kough is the community-service chairman.

She told him she grew up in the world's largest democracy, and it was "so good to come to Gettysburg where democracy was defined."

Main Street and the Gettysburg National Military Park still have work to do on the house. On Thursday, park superintendent John Latschar brought a small group into the first floor of the house, still under renovation.

Against the backdrop of aged brick and bare beams, Latschar said the Park Service has exactly enough money - \$6.6 million - to finish the repairs.

The Park Service's investment will restore parts of the house to their 1863 appearance, bring the structure up to code by installing steel supports and handicapped access, and turn it into a world-class museum complete with artifacts from the Park Service and the Wills family.

Latschar said the Park Service budgeted extra money to account for unexpected surprises associated with working on old buildings, and the renovations encountered enough problems to exhaust that contingency fund.

Latschar said the house shares walls with the Masonic Lodge next door, and the wall isn't straight. The lodge was built first, Latschar said, but it was only one story when the three-story Wills House was built.

The lodge was later built higher, Latschar said, and the wall changes position based on which building was there first.

If any further complications arise, Latschar said, Main Street and the Park Service will have to scale the project back or he will have to "crawl down to Washington" to ask for more funds.

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Civil War Hero, Founder of Howard University

By Frederick N. Rasmussen

06/30/2007

Baltimore Sun (MD)

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/bal-md.backstory30jun30,0,1478753.column?coll=bal-home-columnists>

When death came quietly for Gen. Oliver Otis Howard in 1909, a veteran warrior, he was sitting in a chair in his Burlington, Vt., home.

His passing at age 79 also marked the death of the last surviving Union commander who had fought in the Civil War.

At his death, he was more than four decades removed from the bloody battlefields of the Civil War, which in part conspired to shape his destiny.

An obituary in The Sun said, "Including General Howard's services in the Indian wars, he was probably in more engagements than any other officer in the United States Army."

"The passing of Gen. Oliver Otis Howard marks the extermination of all the ranking Army officers who commanded the Union armies during the Civil War," reported The New York Times at his death.

George Heselton, a retired Gardiner, Maine, lawyer and historian, brought Howard to my attention recently, when he sent a column about the general written by Jim Brunelle, a Maine newspaperman and columnist.

In his "A Maine Notebook," Brunelle wrote that a March fire had destroyed a farmhouse in Leeds, Maine, that had been Howard's boyhood home.

He also lamented that Howard has been somewhat overshadowed by the achievements of Joshua L. Chamberlain, also a Maine native and Civil War general, who commanded the 20th Maine and waged a brilliant defense of Little Round Top during the Battle of Gettysburg.

Chamberlain also had been selected by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant to preside over the surrender of the Confederate forces at Appomattox Court House in 1865. After the war, he returned to Bowdoin College, his alma mater, to serve as its president.

"His reputation is such that he has almost totally eclipsed other outstanding Civil War figures from Maine," Brunelle wrote. "Chamberlain and that war are synonymous in our minds; no other military heroes need apply."

Born in Leeds in 1830, Howard entered West Point in 1850 after graduating from Bowdoin. He was fourth in his class at West Point at graduation in 1854, and after being

commissioned a second lieutenant, he remained at the military academy and taught mathematics.

"My country needs me," Howard said when he resigned as chairman of the math department at the outbreak of the Civil War.

He returned home in June 1861 and joined the 3rd Maine Volunteers as colonel. At the first Battle of Bull Run, he commanded a brigade.

In September 1861, he was promoted to brigadier general, and the next year he participated in the furious fighting at the Battle of Fair Oaks as part of the Peninsula Campaign in Virginia.

While leading his men in battle, Howard had two horses shot out from under him and was twice wounded, which eventually resulted in the amputation of his right arm.

A month later, he returned to his command in time to fight at Antietam, after which he was promoted to major general.

At Gettysburg, he commanded the 11th Corps and won the Medal of Honor.

While serving with Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman on his famous march from Atlanta to Savannah in 1864, Sherman wrote to Grant: "I find him a polished and Christian gentleman, exhibiting the highest and most chivalrous traits of character."

Howard, who had considered a life in the ministry before he entered West Point, was a devout Congregationalist who had been called "the Christian soldier" because he insisted that his troops attend prayer and temperance meetings.

"The two Maine men differed in one important respect. Unlike Chamberlain, Howard was a committed abolitionist from the very outset and was regarded as much a moral crusader as a military warrior," Brunelle wrote. "It was because of this that he emerged as an important figure nationally at the conclusion of the war."

On May 12, 1865, President Andrew Johnson appointed Howard commissioner of the newly created Board of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, which was a department of the Army.

Because of his support for 4 million former slaves in their quests to find homes and jobs, and because he was a champion of black suffrage, it wasn't long before Howard's efforts were denounced by white Southerners and some Northerners.

"I never could conceive how a man could become a better laborer by being made to carry an over heavy and wearisome burden which in no way facilitates his work. I never could detect the shadow of a reason why the color of the skin should impair the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," he wrote in 1865.

A believer in education for ex-slaves, Howard was joined in his efforts by 10 white Congregational churchmen in establishing with Freedmen's Bureau funds a theological seminary in 1867 that would eventually become Howard University in Washington.

The seminary was named for its founder, and Howard served as its president from 1869 to 1873, when he resumed his Army career relocating Indian tribes onto reservations in the West. He also later served as superintendent of West Point.

He retired as a major general in 1894, wrote 10 books and is buried in Lakeview Cemetery in Burlington.

Nash Farm Battlefield Receives NACo Achievement Award

06/28/2007

Henry Daily Herald (GA)

http://www.henryherald.com/readersubmissions/local_story_179214543.html

Henry County has been awarded a 2007 National Association of Counties Achievement Award for Nash Farm Battlefield in honor of the park's valuable contribution to citizens of this community. Henry County is one of just 97 counties nationwide to receive this award, which recognizes innovative and successful programs in a wide range of service areas, including arts and historic preservation, children and youth, community and economic development, and several others.

"We are very excited to be selected," said Julie Hoover-Ernst, Henry County's communications director, who submitted the application. "Nash Farm Battlefield is an innovative blend of historic preservation and greenspace acquisition with fun, educational, and cultural programs that bring the community together and enhance tourism at the same time. We are thrilled that NACo agrees."

The county's vision for Nash Farm Battlefield was explained in the Achievement Award application as follows:

"With tourism being a \$554 billion industry, and Cultural Heritage Tourism one of the most lucrative subsets, Nash Farm Battlefield will significantly enhance the state and local economy. In addition, the size of the site allows Henry County to host much larger community events and festivals than has been possible with its other park properties, which allows the Henry County Parks & Recreation Department to better serve the community and garner more visibility for its other programs and services. Moreover, there is a significant educational aspect that will enable thousands of school children, through the museum, living history exhibits, and battle reenactments, to learn about life during the 1860s as well as Henry County's rich Civil War history."

Over the past year, the county has been working diligently to enhance the park's facilities. Through a combination of volunteer labor, donated materials, and work by the Henry County Parks & Recreation and Facilities Maintenance Departments, there has been a great deal of progress that will make the park more enjoyable for citizens and draw more tourism to the community.

Though the park is not yet open every day for passive recreation, significant progress is being made toward that goal. Walking trails are being graded that will eventually meander through the woods, across the meadow and around a tranquil pond that will be surrounded by restful benches. Bathrooms will be constructed soon, thanks to state appropriations grant. A playground and a picnic pavilion are also planned for the near future.

The Carriage House has been renovated into a reception hall that is ideal for wedding receptions, family reunions and small corporate events. A gazebo now perches in front of the Carriage House and will soon be surrounded by a flower garden of native and heirloom plants, creating a picturesque setting for outdoor weddings. Several groups have already made use of the facility for their annual meetings, and numerous other inquiries have been made.

The Events Barn currently gives BlazeSports a home for its Wheelchair sports programs and provides dozens of summer day-campers a place to play out of the sun. It is getting a new roof, the labor and materials for which were donated by Tim Jones Communities.

Work on the farmhouse has been temporarily halted while the county pursues a grant to ensure any renovations are historically accurate. This house will eventually be converted into a Civil War museum.

Due to its large size, multiple structures and available parking, Nash Farm is able to host large scale events that simply weren't possible in Henry County prior to this park opening. In addition to the reenactments which drew thousands of people from across the southeast to these multi-day events, drive-in movies have brought out hundreds of local residents for family-friendly films. And thousands of children were up to the challenge of Henry County's first flashlight Easter egg hunt.

Next week, Nash Farm will host the Georgia Independence Day Festival, complete with festival foods, fun activities for the kids, colonial living history, music and fireworks. The two-day event will be held on July 3-4 from 3 p.m. – dusk.

For more information about the NACo Achievement Award, visit www.naco.org. For more information about Nash Farm Battlefield and its upcoming events, including the Georgia Independence Day Festival, visit www.henrycountybattlefield.com.

Monocacy Battlefield opens new visitor center

By Karen Shih

06/28/2007

Frederick News-Post (MD)

<http://www.fredericknewspost.com/sections/news/display.htm?StoryID=61875>

The Battle of Monocacy lasted just two days. The struggle to protect and preserve the battlefield went on for decades.

Victory in that second battle could be declared Wednesday with the opening of the new Monocacy National Battlefield visitor center.

"We are thrilled that it's finally open," said superintendent Susan Trail. "I think our visitors will love it. You can really spend time here."

Keynote speaker former Rep. Beverly Byron described the difficult history of preserving the battlefield which opened to the public in 1991, almost 20 years after Congress began to buy up the land south of Frederick.

The Battle of Monocacy, fought July 8 and 9, 1864, delayed a Confederate attempt to take Washington, helping to change the course of the Civil War.

The new visitor center shows the sequence of the battle through interactive displays and a fiber-optic map.

"We have totally new exhibitions," Trail said. "Visitors will be able to experience the whole battle from the very beginning to the very end."

A series of vignettes shows the battle through the eyes of Confederate and Union soldiers, as well as civilians. The center also has an enlarged museum store, ranger offices and a park library.

The battle started at the Best Farm, where the new visitor center, which resembles a barn, was built.

"It orients you to the battlefield," Trail said.

The entire second floor is devoted to exhibitions. Timelines detailing events before, during, and after the war line the tops of the walls. Visitors can see authentic relics from the battle, such as guns, swords, clothing and a rare 17th Virginia Cavalry flag.

"We have a great deal more of our collection on exhibit now," said curator Tracy Shives. "Finally, people can come here and experience what there is to learn É to take in all sides of the battle."

The old visitor center at Gambrill Mill was much smaller and had fewer displays.

"It is just so vastly improved," said Dolores Gebus, who volunteered at the mill.

Interactive question boards let visitors guess the answers to queries about the battle, and visitors can listen to readings of soldiers' accounts of the two-day clash. Visitors can use mounted binoculars on a balcony area of the second floor to view battle locations.

In the middle of the room, part of the Best Farm is recreated as it looked during the war; an exhibit tells the story of a six-year-old boy who witnessed the battle from the farm.

Olivia Thews, a young descendant of a Confederate cavalryman, was at the center's opening with her two brothers and her father. She liked the hands-on stuff for kids, she said.

"It's pretty cool."

She liked putting on a jacket and hat like those a Civil War soldier would have worn. "It's a fantastic preservation of Frederick and Maryland history," said her father, Dean Thews. "It really brings alive the history."

Trail hopes that the new center will bring more visitors. "I believe they will (come), now that visitors can really spend time here," she said.

Gordon Honored for Battlefield Preservation

06/27/2007

Murfreesboro Post (TN)

<http://www.murfreesboropost.com/news.php?viewStory=5031>

WASHINGTON – In honor of U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon’s stalwart support of Civil War battlefield preservation, the Civil War Preservation Trust awarded him its National Preservation Leadership Award.

“Tennessee is steeped in Civil War history,” said Gordon. “While my hometown of Murfreesboro was the site of a major battle, skirmishes and other battles took place all across Middle Tennessee. I know firsthand what unique and valuable resources Civil War battlefields are, and I take my responsibility for preserving them very seriously. I am truly honored to be recognized for work that preserves an important part of our nation’s past.”

Gordon, a founding member of the Congressional Battlefield Caucus, has long been an advocate of the federal Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program. The matching grants program has become a principal tool for protecting battlefield land in the United States.

Gordon also was instrumental in the creation of the statewide Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area. Through a proposal written by the Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation, Gordon introduced legislation to form the heritage area, designed to promote tourism and economic development in all 95 counties. Congress approved the legislation in 1996.

“Without the help of this distinguished gentleman, the work that we do would simply not be possible,” said Civil War Preservation Trust president James Lighthizer. “Rep. Gordon’s commitment to the cause of preservation and his leadership in the halls of Congress have been pivotal to the success of this organization.”

The Civil War Preservation Trust is the largest non-profit battlefield preservation organization in the United States. Since 1987, the organization has saved more than 24,000 acres of hallowed ground nationwide.

Bill to Delay Power Corridors Fails in Congress

By Paul Smith

06/27/2007

Rappahannock News Times Community (VA)

http://www.timescommunity.com/site/tab4.cfm?newsid=18526617&BRD=2553&PAG=461&dept_id=506086&rft=6

U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf, R-10th, called it a fight between "big city and suburban/small town."

The Virginia Congressman was referring to the U.S. House of Representatives turning down a bill June 20 that would have placed a one-year moratorium on the federal government's authority to permit the construction of electric power lines without state approval.

Wolf and Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey, D-N.Y., proposed the measure, which was defeated 257-174.

Rep. Eric Cantor, a Republican who represents the 7th District that includes Rappahannock County, voted against the bill.

"The power companies had paid lobbyists there, while we had farmers and environment groups," Wolf said. "Power to New York City and the Mid-Atlantic won out.

"However, we did educate a lot of people," he continued. "If you make a mistake here, you've made it for life. You can't replace a vista or battlefield. Power companies, though, think you can go from point A to point B."

What's next?

"I would hope some senators would be moved to deal with this issue in the U.S. Senate," Wolf said. "It'll be an uphill fight."

Hearings set

The State Corporation Commission has scheduled four public hearings concerning Dominion Virginia Power's proposed 500,000-volt power transmission line from Frederick County to a substation in Loudoun County.

The first hearings will be July 26 and 27 at Fauquier High School in Warrenton. The first day will begin at 1:30 p.m. and reconvene at 7 p.m. On July 27, the meeting will start at 9:30 a.m.

Meetings will also be held at Marsteller Middle School on Aug. 9 and 10 in Bristow. Other meetings are set for Aug. 13 and 14 at James Wood High School in Winchester and Aug. 15 and 16 at Front Royal's North Warren Volunteer Fire Department. The same times will be in effect for all meetings.

The SCC plans to meet in Richmond on Jan. 14 at 9 a.m. and will hear public comments at the start of that meeting. The meeting will be on the second floor of the Tyler Building, located at 1300 E. Main St.

For details, visit www.scc.virginia.gov/caseinfo.htm.

State Grants Nearly \$1M to Battlefield Park Project

By KEVIN WALTERS Staff Writer

06/26/07

Nashville Tennessean (TN)

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070626/COUNTY090101/70626043>

FRANKLIN – The state of Tennessee is now poised to become one the largest investors in Franklin’s Civil War battlefield park.

More than a year after Franklin officials bought the 110-acre Country Club of Franklin, the state's Heritage Conservation Trust Fund today approved a \$900,000 grant for the project.

The group’s executive committee approved 3-0 the grant request from Franklin’s Charge, the private coalition of local groups supporting the land purchase.

"We are excited about moving forward on this in the months and years to come," Robert Hicks, co-chairman of Franklin’s Charge, said. "It’s not like Franklin’s Charge won anything today. I think all of Tennessee is a winner today."

This grant nearly equals the \$1 million combined in grant money from both the Washington, D.C. based Civil War Preservation Trust and the American Battlefield Protection Program.

The land purchase cost \$5 million, with half coming from city public funds and the rest provided by a loan secured by Franklin's Charge. That loan would be repaid by the group through pledges and donations.

Hicks credited the numerous, smaller donations of just a few dollars as being as important to the project as the large grants.

"You still could not have done it without the literally hundreds and hundreds of individuals," Hicks said.

Missouri's Civil War history provides nirvana for Ozarks enthusiasts

By Jeremy Elwood Springfield Business Journal Staff

6/25/2007

Springfield Business Journal (MO)

http://www.sbj.net/industry_article.asp?cID=f&aID=29137275.10348702.1012362.1627334.4442759.187&page=1

To some people in the Ozarks, a mention of the Battle of Carthage or “Bloody” Bill Anderson will draw a blank stare or puzzled look.

But to the area’s Civil War history buffs, the mention of one of those names is the start of a fascinating conversation.

That’s because Missouri was one of the most fiercely contested states during the war, a result of its location smack in the middle of the nation.

“People don’t realize how much Missouri was involved (in the war),” says Hal Funk, a retired elementary school teacher and Missouri State University education professor. Funk is involved with the Civil War Round Table of the Ozarks and regularly gives presentations on a number of historic topics. “People think about the southeast and the Carolinas, and Kentucky. But only two states had more battles fought there than Missouri. And the guerilla warfare was worse in Missouri than anywhere else where the war was fought.”

There was a reason for all the tension and violence in Missouri, especially in the Ozarks, according to John Rutherford, a historian with the Springfield-Greene County Library District.

The Confederacy favored continuing slavery, due in large part to its dependence on cotton, which had to be picked by hand. Missouri was split on the issue, Rutherford said, because of the state’s varied topography.

“The kind of anomaly is that because this was rocky terrain, cotton didn’t grow very well down here (in southwest Missouri), and that seems to me to be the reason for the strong connection to the union,” Rutherford said. “On the other hand, if you look along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, those were very strong areas for cotton, and for confederate support.”

Steve Buffat is not a native Missourian, but the manager of Massachusetts-based Nantero’s operation at the Roy D. Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center has always been a Civil War buff. He has a large collection of Civil War-era pictures, including daguerreotypes.

Buffat also specializes in document collecting and analysis, a hobby he enjoys for several reasons.

“It’s bringing history to life again,” Buffat said. “When I pick up a document, or buy one from a dealer, I immediately go to work on that document to understand who the person was and what they were going through. I don’t just buy a cannonball or something willy-nilly.”

And for Buffat, the Ozarks is a Civil War enthusiast’s Nirvana, with several battles that occurred in the area: Wilson’s Creek, Carthage, Springfield, Hartville and Pea Ridge.

“When I moved to this area, I realized there was a lot more of the Civil War here,” said Buffat, an Idaho native. “This was a sought-after state during the war, and everywhere you look there was something happening here.”

Did you know... The Battle of Wilson’s Creek was the first major Civil War battle west of the Mississippi, a victory for the Confederacy, and the site where the first Union general was killed in combat. Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield, 6424 W. Farm Road 182 in Republic, is a popular site for Civil War enthusiasts. The battlefield is maintained by the National Park Service and has remained relatively untouched since the battle on Aug. 10, 1861. The museum and visitor’s center on site have an extensive collection of books, documents and artifacts about the Civil War west of the Mississippi River. For more information, visit the battlefield Web site at www.nps.gov/wicr.

Interested? The Civil War Round Table of the Ozarks holds its next monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. July 11 at the Library Center, 4653 S. Campbell Ave. Round table members will show off relics from Civil War-era relatives. Visitors are welcome, and admission is free.

For more information, visit <http://history.missouristate.edu/WGPiston/CWRT/cwrt.htm>