

Civil War Commission eyes Wallis House acquisition

The Georgia Civil War Commission, Cobb County, the National Park Service and other groups are working together to acquire the historically significant Wallis House on Burnt Hickory Road. Negotiations are currently underway to purchase the property and add it to the Kennesaw National Battlefield holdings.

The 1.27 acre property is all that remains of the original 160 acres purchased by Josiah Wallis in 1850. The home, built in 1853, consisted of five rooms with a central hall and two chimneys. A log kitchen with a cooking fire place and chimney was constructed nearby. The Wallis family departed the property as refugees during the military operations of June 1864.

The home was used as a Confederate field hospital for the wounded from the nearby battles of Latimore's Farm and Mud Creek. When the Confederate line moved southeast to nearby Kennesaw Mountain, the Federals occupied the position. On June 19 General O.O. Howard, commander of the Federal 4th Corps, made the Wallis House his headquarters for more than two weeks. The hill behind the house, currently on a seven-acre plot owned by Cobb County, was used by the Federals as a signal station and telegraph relay exchange. Since the Wallis House was located at the halfway point between Brushy Mountain on the east and the southern most Federal line near the Kolb House on the Powder Springs Road, Sherman often met at the Wallis House with Howard. The fighting on the nearby ridges was directed from this command center.

The Civil War Commission will use \$125,000 toward the acquisition, preservation and interpretation of this important property, which has an asking price of \$200,000. Cobb County will contribute \$50,000 in Greenspace funds. The property will first be held by Cobb County and at a later date will go the National Park Service.

Park Superintendent John Cissell would like to have the property acquired, added to the park and rehabilitated to a historically accurate condition by the Atlanta Campaign's 150th anniversary in 2014.

Utoy Creek property celebration postponed

The celebration for the opening of the Cascade/Utoy Creek property previously set for June 28, 2003, has been postponed. The property acquisition, for which the Commission's real estate consultant, Bob Price, received a Historic Preservation Award in May, will become a City of Atlanta Park. A new date is being considered for this fall and will be announced in the next Civil War Commission newsletter.

Development at Chancellorsville battlefield blocked

The Spotsylvania County, Va., Board of Supervisors voted unanimously against rezoning a tract of land on the Chancellorsville battlefield that would have opened the door to a 788-acre office-retail-residential development. The proposed development, which would have included 2,350 homes and 2-3 million square feet of office and retail space, would have been situated along Virginia Route 3 just west of Fredericksburg. The tract occupies

farmland which on May 1, 1863, was the scene of heavy fighting in the early stages of the battle.

Shortly after the Board of Supervisors' decision, representatives of the Civil War Preservation Trust met with the landowner, John Mullins, and his attorney to discuss options for preserving the battlefield. Mullins, who reportedly is asking \$40 million for the land, paid \$2.2 million for it in 1995. The property's assessed value is \$5.6 million.

Mullins, a Fredericksburg funeral home director, is now pursuing approval of a 273-acre development project on the land that would not require him to secure local permits. The only agency whose approval would be required for the project is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Commissioners attend McCormick Civil War Institute

Civil War Commissioners Tommy Barber and Dan Childs joined Bob Price, a consultant to the Commission, as delegates to the McCormick Civil War Institute's annual spring tour. The institute, sponsored by Shenandoah University in Winchester, Va., traveled to Petersburg for a tour of the battlefields and other sites where Union and Confederate forces were deadlocked in a siege for nine months preceding the end of the Civil War.

Jim Blankenship, a historian for the National Park Service at Petersburg, conducted the tours of the Petersburg sites. Lectures were given by Dr. Charles P. Roland, professor emeritus at the University of Kentucky, and Dr. Richard McCaslin, professor of history at High Point University. Dr. Brandon Beck of the Shenandoah University History Department is the director of the Civil War Institute, and Barber is a member of the institute staff.

Calendar

Battle of Tunnel Hill reenactment

Sept. 6-7

For more information about this special event, contact the Dalton Convention and Visitors Bureau at 800-331-3258 or 706-270-9960.

Sundays Live!

Atlanta History Center

Exploring the Military Timeline

Sunday, Sept. 7, 2 - 5 p.m.

Demonstrations, dramatic vignettes, living history interpreters and interactive programming help us explore the role of soldiers throughout history. Free with general admission. Call 404-814-4004 or visit www.atlantahistorycenter.com.

Civil War School Program:

From the Home Front to the Battlefield

Friday, Sept. 12, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. This special school program highlights the Civil War in American history. Living history interpreters with authentic clothing and equipment demonstrate what life was like on the battlefield. Admission \$5 per person; free admission for every one adult per five students. Call 404-814-4110.

Fri. -Sat., Oct. 3-5

35th Annual Great Locomotive Chase Festival

Adairsville, Ga.

Arts and crafts festival in the town that witnessed Andrews' Raiders Civil War escapade. Call City of Adairsville, Kay Aylsworth 770-773-3451.

Sat. -Sun., Oct. 4-5

Battle of Allatoona Pass

Reenactment

Free admission. Guided tours of the battlefield include stops at various cavalry, infantry and artillery demonstration sites. At Allatoona Pass Battlefield, south of Cartersville, Ga. Call Roy Queen 770-975-4227.

Twilight tours

of Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta

7 p.m., third Saturday of month

in July and August

Tours take guests back to Atlanta during the tumultuous days of the Civil War. Your "Twilight" tour badge can be redeemed for \$5 off your dinner and/or drinks at the seafood restaurant "Six Feet Under" across Memorial Drive from Oakland. For call ahead seating dial 404-523-6623.