

## **Civil War News Roundup - 05/03/2008**

### **Courtesy of the Civil War Preservation Trust**

- (1) Seven acres preserved at Petersburg – Petersburg Progress-Index
- (2) Historic Auburn a Culpeper gem - Culpeper Star Exponent
- (3) Students buy land at Champion Hill – Madison County Herald
- (4) Newtonia battlefield bill heads to President – Joplin Globe
- (5) Journey Through Hallowed Ground bill passes - Leesburg Today
- (6) Fort Pike is set to reopen - New Orleans Times-Picayune
- (7) Gettysburg trip changed Souter's perspective – Associated Press
- (8) Agreement on purchase at Natural Bridge – Tallahassee Democrat
- (9) Civil War cannons go high tech – Huntington Herald-Dispatch
- (10) Loudoun battlefields dominate commission's talks – Leesburg Today
- (11) Ellwood receives centennial grant – Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star
- (12) Berkeley's top Civil War sites 'marked' – Hagerstown Herald-Mail

--(1)-----

Seven acres may be added to park  
BY MARKUS SCHMIDT, STAFF WRITER

05/02/2008

Petersburg Progress-Index (VA)

[http://www.progress-index.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=19654765&BRD=2271&PAG=461&dept\\_id=462946&rft=6](http://www.progress-index.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=19654765&BRD=2271&PAG=461&dept_id=462946&rft=6)

PETERSBURG — The morning fog laid over the land like a veil. Then sudden gunfire. The date was June 9, 1864, and at sunrise, Union Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler dispatched 4,500 of his cavalry and infantry against 2,500 Confederate defenders. The fight over Petersburg had begun.

Seven acres of the land that saw some of the most severe fighting of that very first battle are now preserved for history. Farrish Properties from Chesterfield donated it to the Civil War Preservation Trust in Washington. Eventually, the property will become part of the Petersburg National Battlefield Park.

The land is located along the Dimmock Line, only a stone's throw away from the national park. H. Keith Farrish, owner of Farrish Properties, decided to donate this flat piece of land in late 2007. "People found bullets all the time," he says. "And since I'm a Civil War buff myself, I decided that these acres must be preserved."

He does not want to reveal the money value of the land.

Farrish talked to Chris Calkins, chief of Interpretation for the Petersburg National Battlefield. "Mr. Calkins recommended I'd give the land to the Civil War Preservation Trust," Farrish said. A direct donation to the National Park would not have been possible.

"We are waiting for legislation for Petersburg that allows us to expand the territory of the park," Calkins said. In the meantime, the preservation trust serves as holder of the property.

The battlefield in Petersburg has been a priority for the preservation group. In 2007, the Civil War Preservation Trust named Petersburg one of the top 10 threatened battlefields in the nation. The area around Petersburg, the site of more than 18 major battles, is threatened by suburban sprawl that will be fueled by the expansion of nearby Fort Lee, the group said.

"We are always excited about getting work done in Petersburg," said preservation trust spokeswoman Mary Koik. "Our main goal is to eventually sign over the property to the National Battlefield."

Koik finds it almost ironic that a property developer would decide to not develop property on this land and donate it instead.

The piece of property — with a 400-foot bluff — would be hard to develop and was possibly donated for tax purposes, Calkins said.

Either way, Calkins is happy. “This property is part of the 7,238-acre expansion of the national park that we are planning,” he said.

The donated piece did not only see some action on June 9, 1864. Parts of the battle on June 15 were fought there as well. That day, the Army of the James, led by Maj. Gen. William F. Smith’s XVIII Corps, launched another attack on the Dimmock Line. Confederate Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard’s men were driven from their defensive positions back to Harrison Creek. “It’s safe to say that we had some earthworks there during the war,” Calkins said.

All of that is long gone, yet the land is an important piece of history. “Every piece counts,” Koik said. “Petersburg ranks among the most endangered battlefields in the country.”

- Markus Schmidt may be reached at 722-5172 or [mschmidt@progress-index.com](mailto:mschmidt@progress-index.com).

--(2)-----

Auburn: Culpeper's historical gem  
By Clark "Bud" Hall

05/01/2008

Culpeper Star Exponent (VA)

[http://www.starexponent.com/cse/lifestyles/columnists/article/auburn\\_culpepers\\_historical\\_gem/14739/](http://www.starexponent.com/cse/lifestyles/columnists/article/auburn_culpepers_historical_gem/14739/)

More than 20 years ago when I first began researching Culpeper's rich Civil War history, I was fortunate to meet a truly memorable lady—a lady in the truest sense of that distinguished term. It is a fact that Sallie Ratrie Witten, the matriarch of Auburn, helped set the model for Culpeper graciousness, geniality and unselfishness of spirit.

And although she has been deceased for more than a decade, I can close my eyes and envision the lovely Mrs. Witten sitting serenely on Auburn's porticoed porch while relating tales of an era now gone with the wind. In her beautiful, ancient Virginia dialect, Sallie repeatedly expressed her love for Auburn—she pronounced it "Awhhburrrn"—and I know how proud she would be today of the tender care Auburn receives from her two loving daughters, her sons-in-law, and their children.

Built in 1855-1856 for James A. Beckham and located just west of Brandy Station, Auburn is located precisely in the center of the most beautiful 425-acre farm field in Culpeper County. Architects describe Auburn as embodying "Greek Revival" style, and this gleaming, white home situated solidly within the southern sector of the Brandy Station Battlefield repeatedly witnessed significant action during the Civil War.

Someone once inquired, "Which Culpeper farm hosted more general officers, on both sides, than any other?" My answer: "Unquestionably, Auburn." Some homes indeed received more Confederate generals (Afton; Redwood; Beauregard), while others entertained more Union generals (Farley; Rose Hill; Greenwood; Glen Ella). But, at one time or the other, Auburn observed all the top commanders, both Blue and Gray—including R.E. Lee and Ulysses Grant. (If only those old walls could talk...)

In late 1862, John Minor Botts, a cantankerous Whig from Richmond and ardent Unionist, fraudulently took possession of Auburn (long story) from a demented, incapacitated James Beckham. Franklin Stearns, a Richmond businessman and fellow Unionist, "co-owned" Auburn, and Stearns also purchased nearby Farley at the same time. Botts moved his wife, three daughters and a son into Auburn in January 1863.

Within days of Botts' Culpeper arrival, the Civil War literally landed right on his front doorstep, as General Jeb Stuart—having no love for "Yankee John Botts"—galloped up at Auburn "with his entire cavalry force." "General Stuart...took possession of every part of my premises," Botts complained, "with his highly incensed command." Little did Botts know that Jeb Stuart's harassing visit would be the least of his wartime concerns.

More cavalry battles occurred in Culpeper than any other county in this country, and most took place while successive commands advanced and retreated from Fleetwood Hill over the broad, flat

plain stretching between Auburn and the railroad tracks. Thousands of cavalry troopers crossed sabers within a bugle call of Auburn's front porch, and there is no doubt that the last structure many dying soldiers witnessed was Auburn itself.

Beginning in November 1863, the Army of the Potomac moved into Culpeper for six months and Auburn's grounds were covered with thousands of tents and drilling soldiers. Sympathetic to the North because of his political alienation from Virginia, Botts invited generals Ulysses Grant and George Meade, as well as many other Federals to dine at Auburn. Ironically, the evidence is abundantly clear that Auburn survived the war simply because Unionist Botts was "friendly with the Yankees."

John Minor Botts died in 1869 and a court decision resulted in his heirs losing the farm back to the Beckham family from which it was originally stolen. Turner Ratrie, Sallie Witten's father, purchased Auburn in 1915, and this acquisition signaled the beginning of the present ownership of this magnificent estate.

Now for some great news...Based on an extraordinarily impressive application submitted by Auburn's owners, Sarah Witten Barron and her husband, Bill Barron, and Crimora Witten Ayers, the Board of Historic Resources has placed Auburn in the Virginia Landmarks Register, honoring Auburn as one of the Commonwealth's precious historic resources. Further, Auburn has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places, meaning of course, Auburn is now recognized as a national historic treasure. What an honor!

Congratulations to Auburn's entire family! Gazing down from upon high, your beloved Sallie Ratrie Witten must be deeply proud of each of you.

Clark "Bud" Hall is the leading authority on Culpeper's role in the Civil War. E-mail [clarkbhall@aol.com](mailto:clarkbhall@aol.com).

--(3)-----

Preserving Our State's History; MMS Students Buy Land for Civil War Trust  
By Lucy Weber

5/01/2008

Madison County Herald (MS)

<http://www.mcherald.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080501/NEWS/805010314>

By looking to the future, history students at Madison Middle School are preserving the past.

A small plot of land was purchased by the school's Junior Historical Society and added to the acreage the Civil War Preservation Trust is working to save at the Battle of Champion Hill site, near Edwards.

"We helped save a part of history," eighth-grader Xavier Cheatham said.

"It's rewarding to know we got this land so it won't go to residential development," said Rod Bridges, president of the school club.

The officers and all-A students in the society got the opportunity to present their check for \$250 - earned by sponsoring a day when students could pay \$1 to wear a hat to school - to Vicksburg National Military Park Ranger Terry Winschel, a national board advisor to the Civil War Preservation Trust.

"You should be pleased and proud. Your children and your grandchildren can come to this spot and know you had a role in preserving it," Winschel told the students last week as he gave them a tour of the area where the battle took place on May 16, 1863.

"We helped save a part of history," eighth-grader Xavier Cheatham said.

"It's rewarding to know we got this land so it won't go to residential development," said Rod Bridges, president of the school club.

The officers and all-A students in the society got the opportunity to present their check for \$250 - earned by sponsoring a day when students could pay \$1 to wear a hat to school - to Vicksburg National Military Park Ranger Terry Winschel, a national board advisor to the Civil War Preservation Trust.

"You should be pleased and proud. Your children and your grandchildren can come to this spot and know you had a role in preserving it," Winschel told the students last week as he gave them a tour of the area where the battle took place on May 16, 1863.

Called the Spicer tract, the total of three acres, which includes the one-sixteenth of an acre the students bought, sits at the southeast quadrant of The Crossroads, the middle line of the battle that ended in defeat for the 22,500 Confederate troops who fell that day to the 32,000 Union soldiers under the command of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. The guns of the Alabama battery were on the spot during the battle.

The Crossroads is in the center of the battle area and several hundred yards south of the actual Champion Hill.

"I cannot stress enough the significance of this," Winschel said. "This makes them stakeholders of our history."

In the Champion Hill area, about 2,000 acres of the battlefield are protected either through purchase or through easements.

"For 100 years Champion Hill remained intact, but now it's falling victim to development. A lot of people are moving in, unaware they're moving into a battlefield," Winschel said.

Only two markers are within the area. One was erected by the sons of a Confederate general killed in the battle. It sits enclosed in a wrought-iron fence on a small rise not far from several houses. A second one at The Crossroads erected by the National Park Service in 1977 recognizes the Champion Hill Battlefield for its "national significance in commemorating the history of the United States of America."

No historical structures that figured into the battle are still standing, Winschel said.

Owning the property, which runs from what is D.J. Johnson Road about 200 yards down to a mailbox on Jackson Road, and the other 823 acres bought by conservation groups and turned over to the state means the battlefield can be preserved.

"We hope one day this becomes a unit of the Vicksburg park," Winschel said.

The preservation of this Civil War battlefield is important, he said, because that war was a defining event in American history.

"The role of government today can be traced back to Civil War society. It helps us to understand who we are and to know what's important today."

History teacher Tom Watts, sponsor of the Junior Historical Society, suggested the students raise the money to donate to the Civil War Preservation Trust, which he is a member of.

Three society members made history themselves recently.

As the state junior division champion, the team of Jerry Ainsworth, Drake Terry and Jill Berry was selected to represent Mississippi at the National History Day Competition at the University of Maryland on June 15-19. They won trophies and checks for \$250 for being the top team at the state competition in March at the University of Southern Mississippi.

It's the first time Madison Middle has won the competition and the first time a school team entered the documentary competition, which Jerry and Drake won.

The three of them won the History Quiz Bowl, unseating a team that had won three years in a row. Jill, who won't be able to attend the Maryland competition because of a prior commitment, was second in the exhibit group.

By winning four awards, "we made Madison a history powerhouse," Jerry said.

Their 10-minute documentary is about Union Gen. William T. Sherman, Hero or Devil. In it they re-enact scenes of Southern life and burn their model re-creation of Atlanta. Jerry was the filmmaker, having attended summer film camp in Canton. Drake, the narrator, said his experience with video format was "I've watched some documentaries."

The two are fine tuning their video now with Watts' help in preparation for the national competition.

As the only Junior Historical Society in the Madison-Rankin-Hinds area, Watts said the organization is trying to get more schools involved. About 50 eighth-graders were members of the society this year, its fourth year at the school. Society members met twice each month before class for speakers.

Watts "makes it interesting for the kids to get in the club," said Jim Berry, Jill's father, adding that word among the students is "you've got to get in the history club. It's the only one that does cool things."

Each year, the club goes on a field trip to the National Military Park in Vicksburg and a field to the Capitol in Jackson. Speakers have included DAR members, World War II veterans, archaeologists, historians and government leaders.

--(4)-----

Newtonia Battlefield Bill Heads to President Bush  
By Derek Spellman

4/30/2008

Joplin Globe (MO)

[http://www.joplinglobe.com/local/local\\_story\\_121221824.html](http://www.joplinglobe.com/local/local_story_121221824.html)

NEWTONIA, Mo. — A bill that aims to determine the best way to preserve the Newtonia Civil War battlefields is headed to President Bush after securing final congressional approval Wednesday.

The bill, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Roy Blunt, authorizes the National Park Service to conduct a study to determine if the Newtonia sites could be made a separate unit of the park service or brought under the management of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield near Springfield. The bill was a piece of larger legislation that passed the House on Wednesday by a margin of 291-117. It passed in the Senate several weeks ago.

Kay Hively, a founding member of the Newtonia Battlefields Protection Association, called the bill's passage "wonderful news." She did note that the bill authorizes the study but does not necessarily provide the funding for it. Officials from the National Park Service previously estimated that such a study would cost \$250,000 to \$300,000.

The Battlefields Protection Association has not taken an official position on whether the Newtonia site should be its own independent unit or part of Wilson's Creek, Hively said. She personally thinks the latter would be the better option, at least for the time being.

"I think that would be a great way to go, myself," she said.

Being part of Wilson's Creek would provide access to historians, maintenance crews and biologists to help with preservation efforts, but it wouldn't preclude future designation as a separate unit in the park system.

Hively said many forget that Wilson's Creek started out as a unit of George Washington Carver National Monument in Diamond before it became independent.

For more than a decade, the Newtonia Battlefields Protection Association has led efforts to preserve the battlefields. Those efforts included purchasing 11 acres and the two-story Ritchey Mansion, which served as a headquarters and a field hospital during both battles at Newtonia.

Back into history

The first battle at Newtonia in 1862 saw American Indian units fight on both sides. The 1864 battle was one of the last ones fought in Missouri. About 350 soldiers were killed or wounded in 1862, and 650 casualties were reported in the 1864 battle.

--(5)-----

## Journey Through Hallowed Ground Legislation Clears Congress

By Margaret Morton

4/30/2008

Leesburg Today (VA)

<http://www.leesburg2day.com/articles/2008/04/30/news/fp555jthg043008.txt>

After a campaign that lasted for months, the legislation authorizing the creation of the 38th National Preservation Area that includes the 175-mile-long Journey Through Hallowed Ground corridor, surmounted its last legislative hurdle yesterday.

JTHG National Heritage Area passed the House by a vote of 291-117 and now awaits only the president's signature before becoming law. The legislation cleared the Senate April 10 by a vote of 91 to 4.

The language creating the heritage area that links all the many historic and cultural sites along U.S. Rt. 15 passing from Gettysburg, PA, to Monticello through Loudoun, Prince William and Loudoun counties was included in the consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008.

"By designating this corridor as a national heritage area, the route will be celebrated, honored and shared with our children, grandchildren and generations to come," U.S. Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-VA-10) said in a statement. An ardent history and Civil War buff, Wolf first introduced the legislation to establish the heritage area in April 2006. The new heritage area is modeling after the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, which Wolf helped create in the late 1990s.

Calling the natural and cultural heritage features in the new heritage area unparalleled, Wolf cited 13 national parks, 14 national historic landmarks, two World Heritage areas and more than 1 million acres of land that is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It also includes nine presidential homes, 73 National Historic Districts, the largest collection of Civil War battlefields and sites of other U.S. conflicts as well as numerous scenic roads, rivers and landscapes.

JTHG President Cate Magennis Wyatt praised the leadership of Wolf and Senator John Warner (R-VA) in securing approval of the four-state corridor as the nation's newest National Heritage Area. She also applauded the determined work of the JTHG partners, giving them the credit for their efforts and vision in achieving the national recognition. The legislation had bipartisan support, including that of four governors, state legislators and every town, county, borough council and board of commissioners throughout the 175-mile corridor, as well as from a broad coalition of local business groups, tourism officials, nonprofits, educators and historians and residents of the corridor.

The passing of the legislation was all the sweeter for Magennis Wyatt, her staff and the JTHG partners because tomorrow the Journey will hold its annual meeting at Montpelier, the newly restored mansion that was home to President James Madison and his wife, Dolly Madison.

This afternoon Magennis Wyatt was pondering that additional "plum" as she drove to Montpelier in advance of tomorrow's meeting.

"I'm overwhelmed with the four-state partnership that was created to bring the congressional act to fruition," Magennis Wyatt said, predicting that "this is regionalism on a completely new and different front."

The journey to final passage was not easy, as the bill faced several significant legislative roadblocks in the two-year effort. But the efforts of the partnership to press the case for national recognition with their political leaders. "That's what so profoundly impressed me," Magennis Wyatt said, noting the difficulties of getting the final act passed.

"Everywhere it was leadership across the board, from individual heritage sites, directors of tourism from 15 counties, landowners, government officials-everyone worked like a Swiss watch," Magennis Wyatt said as the news of the collaborative victory sank in.

Even when the effort stalled, every time the partnership took incisive and determined action oriented toward members of congress, telling them "it is important to tell our national story, this is not a whimsical process for us."

"I'm really profoundly impressed by the professional and determined effort of every partner to respond with authority and facts to the difficulties," Magennis Wyatt said, noting the partners are in the trenches every day in the fight to sustain their historic communities and promote rural businesses and fully understand what's at stake.

Tomorrow, Magennis Wyatt and all those in attendance at Montpelier will have the opportunity to fully celebrate their new National Heritage Area. If that weren't enough, attendees will hear a presentation by award-winning historian David McCullough as he presents the new National Geographic Society Book Journey Through Hallowed Ground: Birthplace of the American Ideal, with text by Andrew Cockburn and photographs by National Geographic photographer Kenneth Garrett. Pulitzer Prize winner Geraldine Brooks wrote the foreword to the book.

--(6)-----

## Eastern New Orleans's Fort Pike Is Set to Reopen

By Beth Martin

4/30/2008

New Orleans Times-Picayune (LA)

<http://www.nola.com/picayunes/t-p/nopicayunes/index.ssf?/base/news-6/1209585720209910.xml&coll=1&thispage=1>

Officially reopening Fort Pike State Historic Site this week means reconnecting a storm-severed link to the past for residents and visitors in southeast Louisiana.

The Office of State Parks, part of the Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, is reopening Fort Pike, 27100 Chef Menteur Highway, on Friday at 9 a.m. It plans to host a grand opening ceremony in several months, once picnic tables and grills and routine operation have been restored, Fort Manager Eric Wallace said.

"We've had a tremendous amount of inquiries from the public about reopening, and we want to get visitors back in," he said, referring to the site that once attracted an average of about 14,000 people annually.

The site, which was open daily with the exception of several holidays before Hurricane Katrina, will be open Thursday through Monday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. A guide will don period costume on weekends.

The public can continue using the boat launch, which reopened soon after the 2005 storm, without paying a fee. It is open 24 hours a day. Fort admission is \$2 per adult and free for senior seniors, children 8 years old and younger and large school groups. Groups of at least 15 people should call in advance of the visits, which include free guided tours.

The site has a picnic area with a covered pavilion and restrooms, which the storm wiped out in 2005, and soon will get vending machines. It still does not have exhibits, for which it needs donated or loaned authentic items or replicas reminiscent of the era from the 1820s to the 1890s, he said.

It eventually will have exhibits and a visitors center and museum, which probably will be complete within two years.

"We're preparing to work over the summer, setting up field trips for the next academic year," he said. "Two Civil War reenactment groups have expressed an interest in doing battle reenactments at the fort."

They will be present for a small reenactment on June 21.

The state has had strong support from the Fort Pike Foundation, AmeriCorps and community groups that helped in the fort reopening, financed with Federal Emergency Management Agency funds. FEMA has pledged to cover a site improvement package, expected to cost \$18 million.

Wallace said that funding was not a primary factor that kept the stately 190-year-old structure, which was submerged in floodwaters, closed for more than two and a half years.

"There was so much damage spread across the park system, including tremendous damage to recreational parks. The state got to it as quick as they could," he said. "Rebuilding the exhibits will take us (more) time."

Until recently, Fort Pike was among the top 10 most endangered battlefields on a list compiled by the Civil War Preservation Trust, a nonprofit group in Washington, D.C.

Wallace said the site by the Rigolets appeals to an array of people, ranging from military history buffs who visit preserved sites across the country to "everyday people" who remember touring the fort during a school field trip.

It also has diverse cultural significance, having been a stopping point on the Trail of Tears, home for both Confederate and Union soldiers and the training and station site for Louisiana's first African-American governor.

"Hurricane Katrina reawaked community spirit," he said. "More and more people are starting to identify with the past and the culture. People want to know about the history of the area."

Begun in 1819 and completed in 1826, the fortification was designed to withstand attack from land or sea and helped protect the strategic port of New Orleans and the Mississippi River. Its armament consisted of various types of cannons, but none were ever fired during battle, and the wartime garrison was about 400 men, according to Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

Fort Pike served as a "staging area" for troops en route to Florida during the Seminole Wars in the 1830s, a "collection point" for Seminole prisoners and their slaves being taken to Oklahoma, and as a "stopover" for soldiers headed to Texas and Mexico during the Mexican War in the 1840s.

The Louisiana militia captured Fort Pike in 1861, prior to the Civil War, and Confederates held it until evacuating when Union forces took New Orleans in 1862. The Union army used it as a base for area raids and a training center, where former slaves were taught to use heavy artillery before joining the U.S. Colored Troops, according to the state park office.

Fort Pike was officially abandoned in 1890. In 1972, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"Fort Pike was the last site reopened after the storm, but one of the first sites purchased by Louisiana as a historic site," he said. "It's structurally sound, but it may not be as pretty as it was."

For more information, call the fort office at (504) 255-9171 or go to [www.crt.state.la.us](http://www.crt.state.la.us).

--(7)-----

Gettysburg trip changed perspective of Supreme Court Justice

By Mark Sherman

4/29/2008

Associated Press (NAT)

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/politics/nation/sns-ap-souter-speaks,0,2874937.story>

CAMBRIDGE, MD - A trip to the Gettysburg battlefield changed Supreme Court Justice David Souter's perspective on handling difficult cases that inevitably come a judge's way.

In a rare public address Tuesday, Souter admitted that at least one Supreme Court case -- he didn't name it -- once prompted him to ask, "Why do I have to resolve that case?"

He found an answer last year when he and his law clerks and secretaries visited the battlefield in Pennsylvania where the Civil War changed course in July 1863.

Illustrating how a single act can alter history, Souter noted that the commander assigned to hold the far end of the Union line had employed a bayonet charge in a desperate maneuver -- one that ultimately ended a Confederate attack.

"It seems a fair assessment that one of the pivots of American history was at that place, at that moment," he said.

Looking back at his complaint about difficult cases, Souter said, "I could not ever again, under any circumstance, say it is unfair that I have to do this."

Other justices may use nationally televised interviews to expound on the court and great issues of the day, as Justice Antonin Scalia did this week. Not Souter. His speech Tuesday did not contain a word about Supreme Court cases, his philosophy of judging or his colleagues.

Instead, in flat New England tones, the 68-year-old justice told an annual conference of federal judges from Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania about the value of different perspectives. He speaks to the group most years and his talk was open to reporters, although photographs and tape recordings were not allowed.

The famously restrained justice -- who thanked someone for providing him yogurt while everyone else ate chicken for lunch -- displayed the same dry wit that surfaces during court arguments.

Recalling the "greatest fascination and pleasure" of his favorite constitutional law class at Harvard Law School, Souter said, "There was not a lot of competition."

Remarking on a portrait on display at the Supreme Court of an unnaturally svelte William Howard Taft, the rotund former president and chief justice, Souter called it "the greatest example of aesthetic weight loss in the history of American portraiture."

Souter also told the story of Judge Learned Hand, who once hurled a paperweight in anger at his law clerk Gerald Gunther. "Fortunately, he was a poor pitcher," Souter said, adding that the object missed its target.

He said he tells his clerks that though he sometimes raises his voice, he has never thrown anything at them. "They realize they are lucky, just like the judge they work for," Souter said.

--(8)-----

Agreement on state purchase of Natural Bridge battlefield  
By Gerald Ensley

4/27/2008

Tallahassee Democrat (FL)

<http://www.tallahassee.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080427/NEWS01/804270313>

The Natural Bridge Battlefield may be endangered, but the cavalry is on the way.

State officials have tentatively agreed to buy 55 privately owned acres of the battlefield — but they must exercise their option by August. If they don't, the Civil War Preservation Trust is interested.

In March, the Trust listed Natural Bridge as one of this year's 10 most endangered Civil War battlefields. The Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit purchases endangered battlefields with private donations and federal grants.

"(Natural Bridge) is such a unique site," said Mary Koik, the trust's deputy director of communications. "If we could get involved, we certainly would."

The Natural Bridge Battlefield is near Woodville. In March 1865, Confederate soldiers, volunteers and cadets from the forerunner of Florida State University repulsed three attacks by Union soldiers, leaving Tallahassee as one of only two Confederate capitals never captured.

A seven-acre portion of the battlefield is a state park, which hosts an annual battle re-enactment.

But the adjoining 55-acre portion has long been owned by the Rakestraw family. They first approached the state about buying the property in 1982. The Department of Environmental Protection resisted until two years ago, when it put the property on its priority purchase list.

The Rakestraws originally asked \$6.75 million. The DEP offered a lower amount "the sellers find acceptable," said broker Brent Pichard. But the state's option to buy expires Aug. 15 and the DEP has ordered a second appraisal. If the Rakestraws agree to the second appraisal price, the sale will be taken to the Florida Cabinet for approval before the end of the year.

"While this is an important project of historical significance," said DEP spokeswoman Marguerite Jordan, "we feel it is in the best interest of the public to re-evaluate the appraisal."

The land harbors artifacts from prehistoric Indian occupation as well as the Civil War battle. But its chief value is geologic: It sits atop three underground channels of the Floridan Aquifer.

Already, a 150-acre area near the battlefield is being developed for homesites. Pichard said the Rakestraws would seek private buyers if the state declines to buy, but the family "wants the land in public ownership."

"They've guarded the archaeology of the paleo-Indian and Civil War artifacts all these years," he said, "for the day they could be uncovered properly by people who know what they're doing."





--(9)-----

Opinion: High-tech equipment helps build Civil War cannons  
By Charlotte Weber

4/26/2008

Huntington Herald-Dispatch (WV)

<http://www.herald-dispatch.com/opinions/x1265918598>

The Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing (RCBI) has worked with all types of manufacturers since its inception in 1990. We never thought we'd be helping build Civil War cannons, however.

But that's just what we've been doing for the past few years.

The Steen Cannon & Ordnance Works of Ashland undoubtedly is RCBI's most unusual client, leasing time on some of the world's most technologically sophisticated manufacturing equipment to produce weapons from an earlier time.

Marshall Steen went into the 19th Century field artillery business in 1993. Seems he wanted a cannon to decorate the yard of a historic home he had acquired in Ashland. He soon found that original Civil War cannons were far too expensive. He couldn't find reproductions of the quality he wanted, so he decided to build his own.

Thus was born in his garage what has become a thriving small industry. Steen Cannon & Ordnance Works now is considered the country's top manufacturer of full-scale, fully-functional reproduction field artillery.

Steen's grandest achievement to date is a 30-pounder Parrott cannon, the largest fully functional Civil War reproduction cannon in the United States. The 4,200-pound weapon was fired for the first time in April 2007 at its new home, Fort Pulaski National Monument in Georgia. Steen's cannon easily eclipsed the next largest functional reproduction cannon in the U.S., a 1,750-pound Parrott. Using visitor fees, Fort Pulaski paid \$50,000 for the big gun and has a demonstration firing every Saturday.

The National Park Service, which has original and reproduction cannons at its sites throughout the country, has become Steen's best customer, particularly for gun carriages. An integral part of the cannon, the Civil War gun carriages were made of wood, which deteriorates over the years. Steen uses iron or aluminum made to look like wood to build replacements for sites throughout the National Park Service system.

Steen uses RCBI equipment to make parts for his gun carriages. With only manual machining capability in house, he employed a 2005 graduate of RCBI's machinist technology program, Jason Clagg, to operate the computer-controlled equipment he was leasing from RCBI. The advanced equipment produces parts much more quickly and with greater efficiency than manually operated machinery.

In a radio interview last year, Steen said the average price for one of his iron cannons, including carriage, ranged from \$16,000 to \$18,000. Bronze versions were priced up to \$45,000. Of course, the skyrocketing prices for metal are pushing costs ever higher.

The Steen Company is only one example of the hundreds of small and medium-sized manufacturing entrepreneurs across the region who has taken advantage of RCBI's resources. Access to sophisticated, high technology equipment is important for many who, like Steen, cannot immediately make the large investment required to begin their own American dream. RCBI makes that dream possible by providing access to the advanced technology.

Further, when firms do make the investment, their employees can be trained to operate the equipment at RCBI. In addition, our machinist technology program graduates nationally certified CNC-trained machinists ready to move immediately into industry and help alleviate a countrywide shortage.

Access to equipment and training are available through all four RCBI manufacturing technology centers in Huntington, South Charleston, Bridgeport and Rocket Center (near Keyser in the Eastern Panhandle), as well as extensive work force development, quality certification and hands-on and online business development services.

If you're looking for the most unique manufacturing technical assistance center in the region, look no more. Just give us a call or visit us at [www.rcbi.org](http://www.rcbi.org).

Charlotte Weber is director and CEO of the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing (RCBI).

--(10)-----

## Battlefields Dominate Commission's Preservation Talks

By Eric Beidel

4/25/2008

Leesburg Today (VA)

[http://www.leesburg2day.com/articles/2008/04/25/news/loudoun\\_county/9878plan042508.txt](http://www.leesburg2day.com/articles/2008/04/25/news/loudoun_county/9878plan042508.txt)

The Loudoun County Planning Commission last night heard from historians and residents about the importance of protecting the county's Civil War sites, some of which already have been buried under houses and shopping centers.

The commission is revisiting the county's Heritage Preservation Plan with the goal of suggesting "minor and editorial" changes to the document. The plan was developed by a citizen committee in 2003 but was then shelved by the previous board of supervisors. The plan has 11 chapters that contain policies and suggestions on how to identify, preserve and promote historical and natural resources.

Historians and others last night urged commissioners to add a chapter specifically on battlefields. Paul Ziluca, who chairs a citizens committee promoting the cavalry battles of Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville, even provided commissioners with a suggested draft for the chapter.

The federal government in 1993 identified 384 principal Civil War sites in the country. Four -- the battles of Ball's Bluff, Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville -- are in Loudoun.

That doesn't even begin to scratch the surface, said Steve Mazur, who served on the citizen commission that helped develop the county preservation plan.

There are several post-Civil War African-American communities that have disappeared, as well as Revolutionary War and Native American sites that should be protected also, Mazur said.

"It's not just the Civil War."

However, the majority of those who spoke to the planning commission last night lobbied for protection of known Civil War sites, including the locations of nine raids undertaken by John Mosby's Raiders, an independent group of soldiers fighting for the South's cause. It was noted that Toll Brothers already has built houses on one of Mosby's raid sites in Loudoun.

The best way to protect remaining lands means forming public and private partnerships, most of the speakers said.

This approach worked in Culpeper County, where organizations have preserved almost 2,000 acres in battlefield land, said Clark Hall, a historian from Middleburg. Before the effort gained government support in Culpeper, much of the land was bought with simple \$20 donations collected from interested residents, Hall added.

Ziluca estimated that the most significant Civil War sites in Loudoun comprise 30,000 acres. Historians acknowledge that the county can't buy that much land or spare it all from development. The preservation plan, though, can help save a lot of it, they said.

"We can deal with a few more houses," Hall said. "But we can't live with another Toll Brothers."

Civil War enthusiasts spend more money than other tourists, Loudoun Convention and Visitors Association President Cheryl Kilday. Efforts to not just preserve sites but to turn them into educational attractions would mean additional revenue for the county, she said.

Kilday said there are plenty of funding sources available to help the process, but county government needs to coordinate better with all of the private organizations to aggressively seek the money.

"If we don't do something, we're going to be full of rubble," Kilday said.

The county is looking into creating a Heritage Committee that would use the preservation plan to find ways to protect the land.

Planning Commissioner Robert Klancher (Broad Run) said he thinks the group should steer the county to be more proactive than it has been in the past with preservation efforts. Other similar efforts stalled and were essentially abandoned, he said.

Historians pointed out that most of the heritage-related tourism in the county now is handled by volunteers and interested residents rather than organized groups with big money behind them. Loudoun County Civil War Roundtable members noted that a busload of 43 people from Long Island will arrive on Saturday to tour the Ball's Bluff battlefield. A volunteer coordinated the trip, and when they arrive, a volunteer will show them around, they said.

The planning commission will continue its review of the preservation plan at its June 5 meeting, when members will review suggested changes to the document, namely the addition of specific references to battlefields.

## ELLWOOD TO REGAIN ITS GLORY VARIOUS PROJECTS GET FUNDING By RUSTY DENNEN

04/25/2008

Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star

<http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2008/042008/04252008/374321>

Efforts to restore a historic house in the Wilderness battlefield got a boost yesterday from the Interior Department.

Ellwood, the only Civil War-era house still standing on the battlefield, will receive \$240,500 toward an ongoing rehabilitation project.

And Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park will get \$40,000 for a virtual interactive map of the Fredericksburg battlefield. The military park will contribute another \$40,000 for that project--money raised from visitor's donations.

"We're really pleased with this and we're hoping that other partners will step forward, knowing that this money will be available," said Russ Smith, superintendent of military park, who was among national park officials present on the Capitol steps for yesterday's announcement by Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne.

"This first round of projects will improve parks nationwide--large and small, urban and rural, natural and historical," Kempthorne said.

The money is part of \$24.6 million awarded nationally in Centennial Challenge Projects and Programs grants to 110 national parks. That's been matched by nearly \$27 million from private-sector friends groups and other national park supporters.

The initiative aims to match up to \$100 million a year in private contributions to help prepare for the 100th anniversary of national parks in 2016.

Ellwood, built in the 1790s by William and Betty Jones, is a house rich in history.

Union and Confederate luminaries occupied the property at times during the Civil War. During the 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville, Confederates used the house as a field hospital. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's left arm is buried in the family cemetery.

In the early 1800s, Ellwood was impressive for its time, with eight rooms, a porch and a basement. The average-size house of the time was 1 rooms.

The Marquis de Lafayette stopped by for breakfast in 1825.

The National Park Service took possession of the property in 1977 when its last owner, Leo Jones, died.

Since then, the National Park Service and Friends of Wilderness Battlefield have been returning the house and grounds to their former glory.

The friends group has raised \$291,000 for renovations estimated to cost about \$496,000. Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park applied for the federal centennial funds last year.

The first phase of Ellwood's restoration--a hallway and two front rooms off the entrance--was finished earlier this year.

That included the parlor where Gen. Gouverneur Warren received a report of horrendous casualties during the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864. That room will be furnished to reflect Warren's occupancy.

The other room will house exhibits.

The second phase will be the stairway, hall and breezeway and the west room on the first floor. Then the upstairs will be restored.

Another Virginia national park also will receive centennial funds.

Manassas National Battlefield Park is getting \$72,000 for interpretive elements at Brawner Farm.

Rusty Dennen: 540/374-5431  
Email: [rdennen@freelancestar.com](mailto:rdennen@freelancestar.com)

-----

CENTENNIAL FUNDS MARK ANNIVERSARY: President Bush in 2006 announced the National Park Centennial Initiative to preserve and enhance national parks and prepare them for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016. The first round of projects range from improvements at Fredericksburg-area battlefields to saving endangered sea turtles along the Texas coast at Padre Island National Seashore.

--(12)-----

## Berkeley County's Top 10 Civil War Sites Are 'Marked'

By Matthew Umstead

4/21/2008

Hagerstown Herald-Mail (MD)

[http://www.herald-mail.com/?cmd=displaystory&story\\_id=191703&format=html](http://www.herald-mail.com/?cmd=displaystory&story_id=191703&format=html)

MARTINSBURG, WV - Historian Don C. Wood is hesitant to compile a "Top 10" list of American Civil War sites in Berkeley County.

Yet, a state Division of Tourism-led initiative to highlight the most prominent reminders of the "War Between the States" with interpretative markers in each of the West Virginia's 55 counties forced his hand.

"Each county is being allowed three (markers) by the state," Wood said Friday.

There's easily more than 10 marker-worthy sites in the northern Shenandoah Valley community and Wood hopes the county can snag a couple more of the Civil War Trails program markers not claimed by other counties.

At the top of a list compiled by Wood and Civil War historian James R. Droegemeyer were the B&O Roundhouse and Shops and the Belle Boyd house in downtown Martinsburg.

A "rolling stock" of 300 train cars and 42 locomotives and the original railroad complex was destroyed in 1861 and 1862 by Confederate troops led by Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.

Boyd, meanwhile, assisted Jackson's efforts as a spy, a famous espionage career jump-started when the Martinsburg native shot and killed a Union soldier on July 4, 1861. A brick house along East Race Street, a childhood home for Boyd, now is home to the Berkeley County Historical Society's museum.

Both sites already were added to the Civil War Trails marker program a few years ago, but Wood said he was initially unaware that the state's program was a continuation of that effort.

"A lot of people go over there," Wood said of the signs for the Roundhouse and Shops installed in a minipark across from Berkeley County Historical Society's archive and research center off East Race Street.

Wood and Droegemeyer also recommended a Trails' marker be installed at Berkeley County's historic courthouse at King and Queen streets.

"It's one of the top (sites) that so little has been said about," Wood said. County Clerk John W. Small's office in the building constructed in the 1850s was used as sleeping quarters for occupying Union soldiers, Wood said.

Also on the historians' list is the restored home of physician Allen Hammond, which was used as a Civil War hospital by Union troops, and the encampment site near Allensville in northern Berkeley County of the 106th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which was assigned to guard the B&O Railroad and was later an active part in the Shenandoah Valley campaign of the war, according to historical accounts.

"You can see (the campsites) are still there," Wood said of the Allensville property, which is part of about four acres being donated to the Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission.

The site of the Battle at Falling Waters, W.Va., recently noted as one of the most endangered Civil War battlefield sites, rounded out Wood's top candidates for the Trails signage.

The recommendations will be submitted by the Martinsburg-Berkeley County Convention and Visitors Bureau to the state Division of Tourism.

Andrea Ball, executive director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau, expects the markers eventually approved by the state will be in place by the end of the year, if not earlier. Ball expects the program to continue annually, which could accommodate several other sites that Wood said were deserving of markers.

Those include Boydville, the circa-1812 mansion spared from fiery destruction by direct order of Abraham Lincoln; the site of noted Confederate Gen. James Johnston Pettigrew's death near Bunker Hill, W.Va., after the Battle of Gettysburg; and Norbourn Hall, a school, military encampment site and the Martinsburg home of David Hunter Strother, a famed 19th-century magazine illustrator who wrote about his experiences in the Civil War as a Union topographer in Harper's Monthly.

"Civil War-based tourism could see exponential growth in Berkeley County," Ball said. "I personally think we could work on promoting it a lot more."

Currently, the county's Civil War sites are generally recognized by the "hard-core" tourists who have a greater knowledge of the engagements, Ball said.

"Belle Boyd aside, we had a lot of other things happen here," Ball said.

As for promotion, Ball touted the success of the Civil War Trails program, which has been fully embraced by Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina, where nearly 800 (often photograph- or graphically enhanced) markers have been installed.

"We think this program is a great way to start," Ball said.