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Gettysburg Battlefield Guides Settle on New Home

By ERIN JAMES, Hanover Evening Sun, July 23, 2008

After months of searching, the Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides has found a new home.

The organization will begin its move to Patriot Point Village this week, said Jim Clouse, who heads the association's building committee.

Clouse said the space will operate as an office, library and meeting space for the guides, who voted last week to move the association's headquarters from the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center to Patriot Point - a theater and shopping complex on Steinwehr Avenue.

"We're kind of excited about it," Clouse said. "It's new, and it's our own place for a change."

The guides' search for a new headquarters dates back to at least January, when the group voted 78-32 to move to a building behind the Farnsworth House off South Street that it had planned to lease.

Zoning issues at that property prevented the guides from moving in there, however.

The guides - created by Congress in 1915 and the only people who legally can be compensated for giving tours of the federally owned battlefield - were still searching last month, when association President Rick Hohmann said the guides would be looking elsewhere if borough officials chose not to change the zoning ruling at the South Street property.

"Looks like we found a place," Clouse said.

Clouse said the guides did not have enough room for their extensive library at the new visitor center, located off Hunt Avenue. The new

location will allow the guides 24-hour access to the library, Clouse said.

At Patriot Point, they'll have one large room and two smaller rooms, he said.

The guides will continue to offer most tours out of the visitor center, though Clouse said "it's possible that some tours could be done out of this new location."

Park officials have said the guides will continue to have office, study and meeting space at the new visitor center.

About 16 percent of visitors to the battlefield hire guides for tours, officials say.

In January, Hohmann declined to comment on reasons for the move, but the proposal came soon after the association and the park service clashed over a new reservation and payment system the Gettysburg Foundation proposed for tours.

Some guides said they stood to lose income, but foundation officials said the new system was an improvement in efficiency over the old one.

At the association's new location, there is still a need to paint and carpet the rooms. That work will begin this week, Clouse said.

The association signed a lease for one year of rent, but Clouse said he envisions a more permanent arrangement.

"I'm hoping we stay at the same place," he said.

Gettysburg's 'Old Dorm' to become a museum

By ERIN JAMES, Hanover Evening Sun, July 10, 2008

Schmucker Hall has not made its final transformation yet.

The building that was once a dormitory for seminary students and later a Civil-War field hospital currently houses the Adams County Historical Society's vast collection of photographs, artifacts and documents

related to the Battle of Gettysburg and the county's history.

But for at least a decade, town officials and historical-society members have envisioned the structure as a future museum, one dedicated to the building's own historic significance, the influence of religion in 19th-Century America and the unique history of the Underground Railroad in Gettysburg.

And by the famous battle's 150th anniversary, the historical society's director said he'd like the hall's final transformation to be complete.

"We'd love to see it up and running on July 1, 2013," director Wayne Motts said.

On Wednesday, the historical society announced it had secured its most significant funding to date - a \$175,000 grant from the First Industries Fund, a state grant-and-loan program that assists Pennsylvania's agricultural and tourism industries.

The grant will pay for part of the project's planning phase - something Motts said could take up to two years. Plans to transform Schmucker Hall - located on the campus of the Lutheran Theological Seminary - date back to at least 1998, when Gettysburg Borough's interpretive plan was completed.

The interpretive plan also included the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center, the Wills House Museum and the Lincoln Train Station - several construction and rehabilitation projects that have been completed recently or are currently being worked on.

Members of the historical society and the seminary began a joint effort last year to raise money to build a new home for the society and transform Schmucker Hall into a museum. At the time, officials said they aimed to



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raise \$22 million through the campaign called "Voices of History." The society and its ever-growing collection are crammed into every inch of the four floors of Schmucker Hall, the building the organization has been paying \$1 a year to lease since 1941. Space and temperature in Schmucker Hall, built in 1832, make it difficult for the society to preserve the 20,000 objects, 200,000 photographs and massive paper collection it contains.

During the Battle of Gettysburg, Schmucker Hall, also known as Old Dorm, was caught in the middle of the first day's fighting and served as a field hospital for about 600 wounded Confederate and Union soldiers, Motts said.

Historians believe it is the largest standing field hospital from the battle, he said.

Motts said a museum in Schmucker Hall would be built around themes not as strongly featured at the new Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center, which opened this year on April 14.

For example, religion and its impact on both civilians and military personnel during the time of the battle is not addressed at the other site, Motts said.

That's a fitting topic for a museum housed on the campus of a Lutheran seminary, he said.

Motts said he'd also like to see a focus on the black community during the battle, black Union troops and the Underground Railroad.

He said the historical society has been talking with the 3rd Ward Concerned Citizens, a group with plans to establish a black-history museum in Gettysburg.

"Those really are items that are not covered (at the Gettysburg National



The view from the cupola atop Schmucker Hall at the Lutheran Theological Seminary is worth the climb. (Evening Sun Photo by James Robinson)

Military Park Museum and Visitor Center)," he said.

The \$175,000 grant is just the beginning of a fundraising effort for the project, Motts said.

The historical society is seeking state and federal grants as well as private donations, he said.

An initial planning phase is sure to take a significant amount of time, but even that is up in the air for now, Motts said.

"We're just at the very beginning," he said.

New SCV National Commander Elected at Convention

By John Andrew Prime, Shreveport Times, July 27, 2008

A Shreveport educator has been elected national head of Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Charles "Chuck" McMichael, 51, was elected by acclamation July 19 at the heritage society's 113th national reunion in Mount Pleasant, N.C. The group is the nation's largest Confederate heritage organization, with more than 30,000 members throughout the United States and some foreign countries. His term of office is two years.

"I am honored and gratified by the trust that my compatriots have put in

me," said McMichael, a 20-year veteran high school history and civics teacher in Caddo Parish schools.

As the group's commander, McMichael will lead efforts to commemorate and memorialize the sesquicentennial, or 150th anniversary, of the Civil War, also called the War Between the States.

"The 150th anniversary of South Carolina's secession from the Union will occur in December 2010, not long after McMichael has stepped down from the position," a release from the group states. "For the next four years, the nation will remember the numerous events, figures and battles from the bloody struggle that lasted from 1861 to 1865."

One of SCV's overall goals for the next several years will be to ensure the Southern perspective is included in the anniversary events and the information presented to the public, McMichael said. The work for that must begin now, he said.



Photo courtesy Shreveport Times

One overall goal will be working to prepare for the sesquicentennial of the Cause for Southern Independence to make sure the true history is presented to the people.



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And in all instances and everywhere uphold the honor of our Confederate heritage."

McMichael has held numerous offices in SCV since joining the organization in 1994. Before becoming its commander, he was a councilman with the Army of Trans-Mississippi, a section of SCV covering the states west of the Mississippi River, and commander of SCV's Louisiana Division, which covers this state.

Married and father of one son, he has been active in assisting people research their Civil War heritage without regard to national origin or color, and was instrumental in placing monuments and markers on the graves of Civil War veterans, including Union Army Capt. and former Louisiana Lt. Gov. C.C. Antoine.

Sons of Confederate Veterans is the successor of United Confederate Veterans and the oldest hereditary organization for male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Organized at Richmond, Va., in 1896, it serves as a historical, patriotic and nonpolitical organization and has its headquarters in Columbia, Tenn.

Restored Gettysburg Cyclorama to be "What no one's ever seen"

By LISANNE RENNER, NY Times.

July 8, 2008

GETTYSBURG, Pa. — The pair of soldier's shoes is battered and hard-worn; a hole in one leather sole suggests the many miles trudged en route to battle with a rifled musket and canteen.

These Civil War-style shoes are being pressed into duty for a battle that ended 145 years ago — not for last weekend's re-enactment of the Battle of Gettysburg but for a conflict that still rages on the canvas of an

enormous painting in the round. The Gettysburg Cyclorama, as it's called, is to reopen on Sept. 26 after a five-year restoration, and for the first time in more than a century, viewers standing in the middle of the wraparound canvas will see it as its artist originally intended.

Like props on a stage set, the lace-up shoes will join scores of other items — bayonets, saddles, cartridge boxes, canvas stretchers, knapsacks, even a full-size Union cannon with its carriage — in a diorama that will be placed in the foreground of the cyclorama's canvas. By contributing to the illusion of three dimensions, the props are meant to give viewers a sense of immersion in the chaotic carnage.

The cyclorama, which a 19th-century poster touted as a "sublime spectacle" presenting "glorious Gettysburg in all the awful splendor of real war," had become less than that over the decades, as crucial elements of its design fell by the wayside. The National Park Service and its private partner, the Gettysburg Foundation, have been reconstructing the diorama and other elements of the colossal artwork to bring back the tout ensemble that made veterans cry when the cyclorama opened in 1884.

Conservators are now dabbing final brushstrokes onto the canvas and setting up the pieces of the diorama. When its \$15 million restoration is done, the cyclorama will be displayed in the Gettysburg National Military Park's new museum and visitor center here, filling a building that evokes a Pennsylvania round barn. With all illusion-making machinery in place, the effect should be like putting on special glasses at a 3-D movie. The restored oil painting — now larger at 377 feet in circumference and 42 feet tall — combined with the

recreated diorama, an elevated viewing platform, proper hanging of the canvas and other features, can once again exert its visual trickery.

"No one's ever seen what we're going to get to see," Sue Boardman, a historian for the Gettysburg Foundation, said.

The stagecraft at work here has fittingly been abetted by those pros at pretend, Civil War re-enactors. A call went out to them and their suppliers, who donated more than 100 diorama items that had done duty in re-enactments if not actual battle. Although the National Park Service owns thousands of period artifacts, scattering them around a diorama without proper security and climate monitoring would be curatorially unwise. So replicas are stepping into the breach, and those that have been banged up through military make-believe seem particularly apt for the assignment.

"We have all their beat-up brogans — shoes — and all their beat-up jackets and their canteens that had been out there," Ms. Boardman said. "But no bullets, no blood."

The first to gaze upon "The Battle of Gettysburg" with its accompanying diorama were the people of Boston in 1884, when cycloramas were a popular form of entertainment. The painting traveled from city to city, and the enthralled lined up by the hundreds to step inside it and feel enveloped by a historic moment.

The work's creator, the Frenchman Paul Philippoteaux, took great pains to ensure the historical accuracy of his project: he interviewed survivors, researched uniforms and military strategy, and hired a photographer to record the landscape. His work depicts Pickett's Charge on July 3, 1863, the battle's climactic bloodbath, in which some 19,000 soldiers



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clashed and the tide of the Civil War turned in favor of the Union Army.

"The whole purpose of the painting, originally for the artist, was to draw people into the battle, and it's really from the common soldiers' perspective," said Robert C. Wilburn, president of the Gettysburg Foundation.

The canvas shows a sweeping panorama of farm fields and woodlands, a bucolic setting exploded by the frenzy of fighting. Soldiers writhe in agony, cannonballs shatter trees, munitions explode, guns thunder, flags wave, horses charge and fall.

Dioramas became standard components of cycloramas, and Philippoteaux considered them integral to his artwork; they provided an artifice that blurred the boundaries between two-dimensional canvas and three-dimensional reality. When planning his work he tied props into the painting. For instance, when he painted a well with a tripod of sticks above it holding the rope and pulley for a bucket, he purposefully omitted one leg of the tripod; that stick would be real, part of the diorama.

Similarly, rutted dirt roads on the canvas would extend to actual dirt in the diorama, and rail fences and stone walls would snake beyond the canvas to the diorama, all to reinforce the sense of depth and perspective.

As The New York Times described the effect in an 1882 interview with Philippoteaux: "The wonderful skill of the painter is called into play in this foreground. Where the actual material things begin and where imitative art commences must be so well done that the deception must be invisible."

Men who fought in the battle testified to the veracity of art's imitation of war. "I never before had an idea that the eye could be so deceived by paint

and canvas," Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt, the former Union artillery chief, wrote in 1884 upon seeing the cyclorama.

conservators used these photos to decide which features to recreate. All the assembled pieces, from the shoes to the cannon, come together

Photo: Jessica Kourkounis for The New York Times



Recreating that deception required extensive historical research because the original diorama had disappeared somewhere between the cyclorama's 1891 exhibition in Philadelphia and the painting's 1911 display, as cut-up panels, in a Newark department store. (The artwork finally came to Gettysburg as a tourist attraction in 1913, and the federal government acquired it in 1942.)

Philippoteaux made four Gettysburg cycloramas, each painted slightly differently and with its own diorama, and each bound for separate tours. Only two cycloramas are known to have survived, and Gettysburg has the only one on view. Ms. Boardman, the historian, spent a decade collecting photographs of every version. These 3-D stereoview images and mounted pictures, originally sold as souvenirs, provided tantalizing glimpses of the dioramas, which could vary slightly from location to location. Historians and

for a 15-minute narrated show that will include some smoke and strobe lights to simulate artillery fire but otherwise unleash limited special effects. The 19th-century artwork can hold its own without 21st-century wizardry, said Ryszard Wojtowicz, who has conserved battle-theme cycloramas in Poland and Hungary and is now working with Olin Conservation on the Gettysburg cyclorama.

Handful of Confederate Widows Still Remain

Belleville News-Democrat, July 31, 2008

As unbelievable as it seems, there are a handful -- perhaps more -- of widows of Confederate vets still alive and kicking nearly 150 years after Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House.

One case is fully documented: Maudie Celia Hopkins, now 93 and -- as of last week -- living in a nursing home in Lexa, Ark., according to Martha Boltz, public relations



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chairman of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Richmond, Va.

Maudie was just a teen when she wed William M. Cantrell, who had enlisted in the Confederate Army at age 16 in Pikeville, Ky. He served in Gen. Samuel G. French's Battalion of the 7th Virginia Infantry before being captured in 1863 and then being released during a prisoner swap.

By the time he met Maudie, he was a widower in his 80s looking for someone to care for him in his last years. With the country in the midst of the Depression, Maudie, who came from a large family to begin with, couldn't say no to cleaning his house and cooking his meals.

"My daddy couldn't make a living, and I didn't have shoes," she said later.

"Then, one day he asked her, 'Why don't you move in down here?'" said Boltz, who lives in Vienna, Va., just up the road from Maudie's son-in-law, Fred Chamness. "She said, 'Oh, that wouldn't be proper.' He told her, 'Well, then, if you marry me, I will give you my property (a house and 200 acres) when I die.'"

So, on Feb. 2, 1934, Cantrell, 86, married 19-year-old Maudie.

"Many people have tried to make this a terrible thing," Boltz told me. "Here's this young woman latching onto this old guy. Well, it wasn't exactly that way. It fulfilled a need for both of them. She loved him, and it worked out. And, they weren't the only ones." Cantrell supported his young wife on his pension of \$25 every two or three months until he died at age 90 after being thrown from a mule. But while she inherited his property, Arkansas soon voted to deny widows' benefits to young women who married Civil War veterans, figuring they were just in it for the money. Maudie, who had three children with her second

husband, wound up being widowed three more times.

Today, Maudie is in somewhat frail health but otherwise doing as well as can be expected for a 93-year-old, Boltz said.

Boltz made sure she didn't write "last surviving widow" when describing Maudie. That's the trouble the media got into on May 31, 2004, when writers and broadcasters trumpeted the passing of Alberta Martin of Elba, Ala., as the death of the last surviving Confederate widow. On the very day Martin was buried, Boltz issued her story about Maudie.

Boltz has heard of two other Confederate widows living in Tennessee and another in North Carolina, but "they don't want to be found." Gertrude Janeway, who died Jan. 17, 2003, in Blaine, Tenn., at age 93, is presumed to have been the last Union widow, but Boltz figures there may be others still out there, too.

Gertrude, by the way, was barely 18 when she married 81-year-old John Janeway. Janeway had met her when she was 16, but her mother refused to allow her to marry, so they waited two years until she reached the age of consent. After he died 10 years later, she went on to live a widow's life in a three-room log cabin for more than 65 years, collecting her husband's monthly \$70 check from the Veterans Administration until the day she died.

Like Maudie, she and the others probably wondered what all the fuss was about, Boltz said.

"Maudie just said, 'I don't know what they're doing all this for,'" said Boltz, who went to Arkansas to honor Maudie a couple of years ago. "I said, 'Miss Maudie, you just don't realize that you're one of the last links with a generation we don't know anything

about.' And she said, 'Well, he was just my husband, you know?'"

First Donation Made to Falling Waters Battlefield Preservation

By Matthew Umstead, Hagerstown Herald Mail (MD), July 3, 2008
MARTINSBURG, W.VA. —

Advocates of preserving land where the Battle of Falling Waters was fought 147 years ago in northern Berkeley County announced the first donation to the cause Wednesday, the anniversary of the Civil War engagement.

The donation of less than a half acre (0.43 acres) along Hammonds Mill Road near St. Andrew's Drive near Spring Mills, W.Va., was finalized in February, said Gary Gimbel, president of the Falling Waters Battlefield Association.

Allen Henry made the donation on behalf of Panhandle Builders & Excavating Inc., the company he leads.

"Mr. Henry has always been a strong supporter of the community and we are extremely grateful for his company's generosity in donating this important piece of the battlefield to the association," Gimbel said in a press release.

The land donated is known as Stumpy's Hollow, according to Gimbel, and was where the battle began and where Confederate Col. J.E.B. Stuart and members of the 1st Virginia Cavalry were able to surprise and capture almost an entire company of Union infantry.

The Battle of Falling Waters was the first Civil War engagement in the Shenandoah Valley, and helped start building the "mystique" that would surround Stuart, Gimbel said.

The developer's land donation came just before the Civil War Preservation



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Trust in March placed the battlefield site, also known as Hoke's Run, on its list of threatened battlefields for the first time, Gimbel said.

An interpretive Civil War Trails marker has been approved by state officials for the battle site, which Gimbel said many Falling Waters area residents have admitted not knowing anything about.

"We hear that all the time," Gimbel said.

Stumpy's Hollow is less than a half-mile west of Interstate 81 at Exit 20. It is the low spot where St. Andrew's Drive splits as it intersects Hammonds Mill Road (W.Va. 901), creating a triangle containing a number of large oak trees.

Gimbel said the battlefield association still hopes to preserve the Porterfield house, a historic home built, in part, by Davy Crockett's grandfather in the 1700s. The home is part of the battlefield area not far from the intersection of U.S. 11 and W.Va. 901.

"We haven't given up," Gimbel said.

Franklin Coalition Acquires Acre in Battle Hot Zone

By Bonnie Burch, Nashville
Tennessean (TN), July 2, 2008

FRANKLIN, TN - A one-acre tract of Columbia Avenue property has been through many changes since 1864, when it was covered with injured and dying Civil War soldiers.

Now, plans are to turn the spot at 1219 Columbia Ave. once again into open space as a memorial to the men who fought and died there more than 140 years ago.

Franklin's Charge Inc., a coalition of 11 nonprofit historical and preservation organizations, has bought this core piece of battlefield property for \$950,000 in private funds

with the intention of creating a park. The newly acquired property is adjacent to 4 Star Market & Beauty Supply and La Villa Market and diagonally across the street from the Carter House.

Already, the city owns a small park area at Columbia Avenue and Cleburne Street where a Pizza Hut restaurant once stood until 2005. The Heritage Foundation of Franklin and Williamson County also owns the adjacent Carter Cotton Gin property to the south of the new Franklin's Charge acquisition, while the Carter House has the land to the property's north side. Both organizations are in the coalition.

"This is a significant puzzle piece which will bring us closer to having a Civil War battlefield park," said Ernie Bacon, Franklin's Charge president.

A two-story beige house on the property — formerly the offices of Kenneth Holt Construction Co. — will be moved. The land the 1904 farmhouse sits on is more significant than the structure, which was not around for the bloody battle, Bacon said.

"We hope to attract a homebuyer," he said. "You can have the house as long as you take it with you."

But a portion of the current house will stay behind and become a centerpiece of the new park. Originally, a cenotaph memorializing Confederate Gen. Patrick Cleburne, who was killed on the spot, was erected. But when the lot was sold and subdivided long ago, the new owner took down the monument and used it as the rock in the house's foundation, said Robert Hicks, an author and Franklin's Charge board member.

The group hopes that enough of that cenotaph remains that it'll be re-erected once the house is gone. The

park setting should be set up by 2011.

"It's not simply acquiring this and other land," Hicks said. "I firmly believe we'll all live to see the rebuilding of the cotton gin and the trench in front, and the rebuilding of the cenotaph."

But if all goes as planned, the Holt property will not be the last bought by the coalition. The group hopes to purchase additional land important to the Civil War battle with money received through individuals, private companies and other donations and various fundraisers.

Re-enactor accidentally shoots himself in foot

BY RICK FULTON, Gettysburg
Times, **August 4, 2008**

A Civil War re-enactor participating in a mock skirmish at the American Civil War Museum Sunday was injured in an apparently accidental self-inflicted "gun shot."

The re-enactors were using blank cartridges at the time which lack a projectile and consist solely of black powder.

Police and emergency personnel responded at 3:28 p.m. to the scene of the shooting.

Patrick Williams, a re-enactor from Hagerstown with the 42nd Mississippi, identified the injured compatriot as a member of the 15th Alabama.

He said he thought the injured soldier was around 17 years of age. Williams stated that the units involved in the living history event at the 297 Steinwehr Ave. museum were staging a skirmish at the time of the incident. "The shooting was almost over," Williams said, when the victim accidentally shot himself and "got the very tip of his boot."



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Philadelphia Museum: Civil War surrender document no photocopy

By DAN ROBRISH Associated Press,
July 31, 2008

PHILADELPHIA—A small Civil War museum made an intriguing discovery while sifting through storage: A document long treated as a photo reproduction of the terms of Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender appears, upon closer inspection, to contain actual signatures and date to 1865.

Museum officials believe they have one of the three original documents signed by representatives of the Union and Confederacy in Appomattox Court House, Va., on April 10, 1865, a day after Lee's surrender.

The National Park Service historian at Appomattox said it's more likely a souvenir copy signed by the same men at that time—still a significant discovery, he said, even if it's not one of the official copies.

The Civil War & Underground Railroad Museum of Philadelphia has held the document since the early 20th century. It was pulled out of storage and re-evaluated as museum officials prepared to shut down for a move to a new building.

Museum curator Andrew Coldren said that he is certain officials knew what they had when the document was donated, but over time its significance was forgotten because of a lack of record keeping.

In a 1967 inventory, someone wrote "Copy??" in reference to the document.

Coldren said it had been glued to a cardboard backing and varnished in what was an apparent attempt to preserve it.

"Old photostat copies from the '20s and '30s are shiny like that, so this is why you'd think this is not a real document," he said.

Coldren said museum officials examining the document recently noticed that the indentation of pens into the paper was visible. He said they also noticed that the ink on the document was darker and lighter in places, as would be expected with the pens used at the time. The lines on a photostat would be of consistent darkness.

"You can see where they're dipping the pen in to get more ink," he said.

Details of the terms and conditions of the surrender were worked out by six men in Appomattox Court House, Va., the day after Lee and Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant agreed on the broad terms of the surrender.

Three copies were made, according to the memoir of Union Gen. John Gibbon, whom Grant put in charge of working out the details of the surrender.

Gibbon kept one copy, according to his memoir and a letter he wrote to the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore when he donated his to the society. Another copy was sent to Grant's headquarters and is now in The National Archives.

By process of elimination, the museum believes it has the Confederate copy.

Patrick A. Schroeder, the historian at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, said that while there were three official copies, "it doesn't mean that there weren't more copies made."

Schroeder, who saw a photograph of the document, said the stationery looks more like the paper soldiers used to write letters to their loved ones than the paper used for legal documents.

He suggests that someone may have made a personal transcript of the document as a souvenir—a common practice at the time—then asked the six men to sign it.

"I would say it's probably a souvenir copy done at the time and signed at the time," Schroeder said.

Schroeder said without knowing where the donor of the document got it, it is hard to determine whether it is the official copy provided to the Confederacy. But he said it would be wonderful if that were confirmed.

"I hope it is," he said. "That would be great to have another mystery solved."

The document was donated to the museum by Bruce Ford, a wealthy businessman and son of a Union veteran. He joined the veterans' group that formed the museum about 1917, and the document was noted in an inventory in 1935. How Ford got the document is unknown.

New York memorabilia dealer Keya Morgan said if the document is indeed the missing third copy, what he called a "holy grail to Civil War collectors," it would be worth \$500,000 to \$700,000 at auction, even in its poor condition.

The museum hopes to get a grant to pay the estimated \$6,000 cost of restoring the document, said Sharon A. Smith, the museum's president and chief executive. The museum's new home is scheduled to open in 2010.

Ill. slashes hours at Lincoln historic sites

Associated Press, July 31, 2008

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. - Illinois may be the Land of Lincoln, but when it comes to making ends meet during a budget crunch, not even the 16th president is spared.

The state is slashing hours at several Abraham Lincoln historic sites



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because of a massive deficit, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency officials said Thursday.

Starting Monday, visitors will see "closed" signs two days a week at Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site, the Old State Capitol and Lincoln's Tomb. The office where Lincoln practiced law will close every day except Saturday.

All four sites had been operating seven days a week.

Kim Rosendahl, director of tourism at the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, said the reductions in hours will have a "huge impact" on the state capital, where up to 80 percent of tourists come because of Lincoln.

And the timing is terrible, she said, as Illinois and other states gear up for the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth in 2009.

"It's a really devastating thing, especially leading into what should be for visitors to Illinois a banner year in 2009," Rosendahl said. "It's a national celebration, and who has the most Lincoln in the world? Illinois."

Gov. Rod Blagojevich is making cuts after lawmakers approved a budget with a \$2 billion deficit. That leaves the preservation agency searching for ways to chop \$2.8 million, and spokesman David Blanchette said even more cuts are coming.

The agency is cutting about 80 seasonal workers statewide, saving \$180,000, he said.

Half of the job cuts are in the Springfield area at the Lincoln sites. Because they used most of the seasonal workers, they're feeling the impact first, Blanchette said.

New artifacts on display at Monitor Center

By MARK ST. JOHN ERICKSON,
DailyPress.com, July 10, 2008

NEWPORT NEWS - Visitors to the award-winning USS Monitor Center will get the chance to see the historic Civil War ironclad in several new and often curious ways this month as The Mariners' Museum unveils a battery of recently conserved, acquired and loaned artifacts related to the Monitor and the CSS Virginia. The objects range from detailed cutaway views of the historic ships to original parts of the Monitor. They also include a remarkable commemorative anchor forged from iron salvaged from the wreck of the Virginia.

"The exciting thing about the Monitor Center is that there's always something new and interesting to see," said Anna Holloway, chief curator of the Monitor Center.

"Our conservation team is continually at work treating Monitor artifacts that have been recovered from the wreck site by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Navy. As these artifacts come out of conservation, it is our goal to unveil them."

Among the newly conserved objects from the Monitor is a copper oil can that is believed to have contained whale oil — an important 19th-century lubricant and a hallmark sign of the Monitor's historic status as the world's first mechanized warship. Conservators also have completed work on a 10-foot-long iron deck plate, which is believed to have been installed over the vessel's original plates as a strengthening measure during a refitting at the Washington Navy Yard. The conservation treatment incorporated special measures that will both protect the

plate and — in a rare exception to standard museum practice — enable visitors to touch the historic surface. Among the newly loaned objects on view is a commemorative anchor commissioned in 1929 by a Norfolk Police Department sergeant and forged from iron salvaged from the wreck of the CSS Virginia. Other loans include two contemporary images created by award-winning artist and author James Gurney, who is well-known for his popular *Dinotopia* books, for *National Geographic* magazine. The first depicts the "Sinking of the Cumberland" — a powerful Union sailing ship destroyed by the Virginia during the March 1862 Battle of Hampton Roads. The second uses period photographs, ship's plans and written accounts to create detailed cutaway views illustrating the vastly different designs of the Monitor and Virginia.

"We're continually acquiring other artifacts related to the Civil War ironclads that will help us interpret this historic battle," Holloway says. "This summer, we're pleased to feature several items on loan to us from some generous individuals and institutions."

The Monitor Center's interactive exhibit gallery — "Ironclad Revolution" — recently received the 2007 Excellence in Exhibition Award from the American Association of Museums.

The \$30 million, 63,500-square-foot facility opened in March 2007 and features a full-scale replica of the Monitor and a high-definition theater recreating the Battle of Hampton Roads as well as a state-of-the-art conservation center.



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Story of "Valley Forge" Tent Once Owned By Mrs. Lee Questioned.

Fabric research shakes the foundations of a Valley Forge tent tale.

By Nancy Petersen, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 7, 2008

For decades, George Washington's tent anchored the visitors' center at Valley Forge National Historical Park. Not only did its monumental size dwarf all the other relics in the room, but its very presence could be mesmerizing as visitors imagined Washington huddled inside with his advisers during the harsh Valley Forge winter.

"I would compare it to standing in the room at Independence Hall where they drafted the Declaration of Independence," said Don Naimoli, president of the Friends of Valley Forge Park. "It has that same aura."

A description written in 2002 by the park and the American Revolution Center says: "In the sleeping tent on exhibit at Valley Forge, Washington met with significant figures from the American Revolution and issued orders which changed the course of the nation."

But some historians now suspect that this tent - actually the 21-by-13-foot roof and one side panel - was not the one that sheltered Washington in Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-78. Instead, they say, it is one he picked up shortly after leaving the encampment that June.

Evidence uncovered during preservation work on the tent strongly suggests that is the case, said Dona McDermott, a National Park Service archivist who works at Valley Forge.

According to a bill from Philadelphia merchant Plunket Fleeson, the material for a set of tents made for

Washington in 1775 was red-striped ticking, linen fabric with a distinctive weave, McDermott said. The "stripes" are faint red lines in the weave, she said.

It was assumed that a Fleeson-made tent was displayed at Valley Forge, but the forensic work showed that the fabric had thin blue lines.

The order for that tent was placed only during the winter encampment, according to a letter book belonging to James Abeel, who was in charge of all camp equipment and quartermaster stores at Valley Forge. Abeel's letter book and Fleeson's invoice are in the Library of Congress, McDermott said. That tent, and others ordered at the same time, were delivered in June 1778, according to Abeel's records.

"It is clear that the surviving pieces were not the ones used at Valley Forge during the encampment," McDermott said.

Not so fast, said R. Scott Stephenson, curator of the collection owned by the American Revolution Center, which includes the tent.

"The research is very much a work in progress," he said. "It suggests that it may have been constructed during the encampment winter, but this is all very tentative. It is very early to be making definitive statements."

Stephenson compared the issue to five blindfolded people putting their hands on an elephant and then trying to describe the creature.

"It is a very complex process," he said. "Some take a little bit and run with it. I say wait until the jury's in." He wants more sophisticated testing done on the tent material.

McDermott said Washington used the tent in 1781 at Yorktown, Va., where the British surrender effectively ended the war.

Not in dispute is the chain of ownership of the tent. After the war ended in 1783, the tents were stored at Washington's home at Mount Vernon. They then descended through the family of Martha Washington to her grandson George Washington Parke Custis, who bought them after her death and took them to his home at Arlington, Va.



Photo courtesy The American Revolution Center

In 1909, the Washington tent was displayed adjacent to Washington Memorial Chapel in Valley Forge. It's now in storage, awaiting display at the American Revolution Center.

In 1824-25, the tents were again set up at Yorktown and Baltimore to celebrate the return of the Marquis de Lafayette. Eventually, they went to Custis' daughter, Mary Custis Lee, the wife of Civil War Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee.

Included were the sleeping tent, also known as the "marquee"; an inner chamber; and a dining tent.

During the Civil War, Mrs. Lee left her home, and the tents and other relics were sent to Washington for safekeeping. When the war was over, she asked President Andrew Johnson to return them, but some Republicans in Congress thought it was inappropriate to return them to a Confederate general's wife.

In 1901, President William McKinley intervened and ordered them returned. And in 1907, her daughter sold the outer part of the sleeping tent



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for \$5,000 to the Rev. W. Herbert Burk, who bought it on behalf of the Valley Forge Historical Society.

Later, the inner sleeping tent went to Colonial National Historical Park, which includes Yorktown, and the exterior of the dining tent went to the Smithsonian Institution.

The American Revolution Center assumed ownership of the tent when it acquired the society's collection in 2003. That October, the tent was carefully dismantled, removed from the park, and taken to Williamsburg, Va., for the conservation work.

Today, it remains in storage with the rest of ARC's collection, carefully wrapped and boxed until it can be displayed again. It is expected to be the centerpiece of the museum ARC is proposing to build in Lower Providence.

That project, on privately owned land within the congressional boundaries of Valley Forge National Historical Park, is being challenged by several residents and the National Parks Conservation Association.

For Naimoli, the tent turns the mythical Washington, father of the country, into a real human being.

"To see that tent grounds him," he said. "To look at this and imagine George Washington actually used it, I think that's impressive. I don't care where it was used. It was Washington's."

National Portrait Gallery plans exhibit on Lincoln

ArtDaily.org, July, 24, 2008

WASHINGTON, DC.- Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12, 1809–April 15, 1865) is one of America's most revered presidents. His leadership during America's most divisive crisis, the Civil War, was essential to the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the union. In this exhibition, "One Life: The Mask of

Lincoln," National Portrait Gallery historian David C. Ward continues the museum's "One Life" series with an exploration of how Abraham Lincoln crafted his public persona. "The Mask of Lincoln" will open Nov. 7, in anticipation of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, and will continue through July 5, 2009.

"The National Portrait Gallery is pleased to participate in the events surrounding the commemoration of Abraham Lincoln's birth," said Martin E. Sullivan, director of the National Portrait Gallery. "Lincoln's role in shaping America cannot be understated, and this exhibition uses portraits from our collection to offer us insight into how he shaped his identity and personality."

The exhibition includes more than 30 images of Lincoln; most are from the Portrait Gallery's extensive collection, such as the "tousled hair" portrait taken in 1857, and a Mathew Brady photograph that was taken just before Lincoln's groundbreaking 1860 speech at the Cooper Union. The latter image is known as the "photograph that made Lincoln president." The same photograph appears in a handsomely mounted gold campaign pin. Also in the exhibition are the "cracked-plate" photograph of Lincoln by Alexander Gardner, one of the last formal portraits taken of him; a drawing by Lambert Hollis, which is an eye-witness account of Lincoln's arrival in Richmond only two days after the Confederate government evacuated the capital city in April of 1865; and an engraving of the reading of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Americans in the 19th century identified themselves nearly equally by their religion and political party. This exhibition demonstrates that

Lincoln was attuned to these cultural customs and used the emerging technology of photography to craft his image and keep himself in the mind's eye of his fellow citizens. He sought out opportunities to be photographed and produced a continuous portrait record of his time in office.

The "One Life" series is one-room exhibition that features the life of one person chosen by a curator or historian. "The Mask of Lincoln" is the fourth installment in the series and follows "Kate: A Centennial Celebration," "Portraits of Sandra Day O'Connor" and "Walt Whitman, a kosmos."

"One Life: The Mask of Lincoln," is one of many exhibitions and programs planned at the Smithsonian that celebrate the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln.