



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Park Service eyes December demolition of Cyclorama

BY SCOT ANDREW PITZER,
Gettysburg Times, September 5,
2008

The old Cyclorama building at Gettysburg National Military Park could be demolished as early as this winter, even though a lawsuit to save the architectural masterpiece continues to meander its way through the federal court system. "If we stay on schedule, the buildings could come down in December," GNMP Supt. Dr. John A. Latschar said regarding the old Cyclorama and Visitor Center facilities, located atop Cemetery Ridge in Ziegler's Grove. The park intends to raze both buildings and transform the land, home to Pickett's Charge in the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, back to its Civil War era appearance. But a Virginia based group — the Recent Past Preservation Network and Dion Neutra — filed a lawsuit in December 2006, arguing that the park never fully considered alternatives.

"The current contract that we have is for the demolition of both buildings, but it depends, of course, on the resolution of the Cyclorama lawsuit," said Latschar. "Even though we don't have to wait until a decision is made, the Department of Justice has advised us that it's prudent." The old Cyclorama building — built in the early 1960s to house a 377-foot-long by 42 foot-high painting that has since been moved to the new \$103 million park Visitor Center — is considered by preservationists to be a memorial. Neutra's father, Richard, designed the complex, but it has been unused since the park's new 139,000 square-foot Visitor Center

and Museum opened in April along the Baltimore Pike.

Thousands of documents have been filed in the lawsuit, and the Recent Past Preservation Network recently asked the judge to settle the case in a federal courtroom.

"There is good cause for an oral hearing in that the issues raised in the Plaintiffs' motion are complex, the Administrative Record for this case is lengthy and there continue to be significant and legal disagreements between the parties," wrote attorney Nicholas C. Yost, in court documents filed June 20.

Presiding Judge Thomas F. Hogan has not ruled on the motion. The demolition project is part of a comprehensive \$9.5 million plan to restore Ziegler's grove back to its 1863 appearance. The Gettysburg Foundation, the park's non-profit partner, is raising money for the project — the first phase is the demolition of the old Cyclorama and Visitor Center buildings. A portion of the parking lot, big enough for about 30 cars and several buses, is being left for Soldiers National Cemetery visitor parking.

"The contract doesn't include the parking lots," explained GNMP spokeswoman Katie Lawhon. Planning for the new Visitor Center and Museum began nearly 14 years ago, and after years of studies and public comment, the park opted to move to a larger facility instead of renovating its old home, which was originally built as a private residence and added onto 14 times since. The Recent Past Preservation Network contends that the park, in its General Management Plan of 1999 and the associated Environmental Impact Statement, "studiously avoids" restoration and rehab alternatives. Also, the group argues that the park's

decision to demolish the old Cyclorama building violates federal preservation laws.

Civil War re-enactor was shot with a pistol

BY MIKE HOLTZCLAW, Newport
News, Va Daily Press, September 30,
2008

Isle of Wight - A Civil War re-enactor who was injured during a documentary film shoot over the weekend was struck in the shoulder by a shot apparently fired from the pistol of another re-enactor. Isle of Wight County sheriff C.W. Phelps said the projectile that doctors removed from the shoulder of Thomas Lord Sr. was identified as a .45-caliber musket ball, ruling out the possibility that the wound was the result of an errant shot fired by a hunter from the nearby woods. The incident happened on Saturday in Heritage Park, where a film crew from Virginia Beach was shooting documentary footage to recreate a Civil War battle. The filmmakers were using Civil War re-enactors and other local residents to portray the Union and Confederate soldiers.

Phelps said Lord, a 72-year-old Suffolk resident, was portraying a Union soldier and was standing on the sidelines while the filmmakers shot footage of the Confederate soldiers charging and firing their weapons. Actors and re-enactors do not use live ammunition in such scenes, but at least one of the pistols fired a live round that struck Lord in the right shoulder.

He was airlifted to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital, where he was treated and released.

"There were at least three people with pistols in the scene at the time Mr. Lord was hit by the projectile," Phelps said. "There was a volley of shots being fired from 25-30 feet



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

away from where he was standing, and obviously someone had a slug in his weapon."

Phelps said the filmmakers are cooperating and that investigators will be reviewing the footage of the scene in which the shot was fired. "We're continuing the investigation to see if we can determine who fired the pistol," Phelps said. "We're still assuming that the shooting was accidental, but we can't know anything for sure until we determine who was involved in the shooting."

Atlanta Cyclorama needs restoration, maybe much more, some contend

City's tourism execs, historians inspired by renovation of Gettysburg exhibit

By Bo Emerson, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, September 14, 2008

Earlier this year a team of Atlanta movers and shakers flew to Pennsylvania to visit the newly renovated cyclorama painting at the Gettysburg National Military Park.

"It opened my eyes," said A.J. Robinson, president of Central Atlanta Progress.

What Robinson and his colleagues saw was an in-the-round painting as big as eight Sistine Chapel ceilings, a sweeping representation of the Battle of Gettysburg that was in the final stages of an arduous five-year, \$15 million restoration.

Over that period of time, conservators disassembled the painting's 27 panels, removed up to four layers of over-painting, laboriously remove the Belgian linen fabric in places where there were holes, removed (with scalpels) the glue crusted on the reverse side, and added 5,278 square feet of sky.

The restored painting was then installed in a brand-new \$103 million

visitor's center with a viewing platform, a canopy and diorama, producing the same sort of shocking verisimilitude that audiences experienced when it was first unveiled in 1884.

Said David Olin, director of the Gettysburg restoration, "People go up there now and see that painting and they have vertigo; which means that it's working."

The Atlanta delegation not only admired the Gettysburg creation, it began to rethink Atlanta's own cyclorama of the Battle of Atlanta, the only other surviving example of this gargantuan art form on display in this country.

Atlanta's painting, of the July 22, 1864, clash between Union and Confederate soldiers centered near the Troup Hurt house in downtown Atlanta, was last renovated extensively from 1979 to 1982. Some viewers believe the 42-by-358-foot painting is overdue for an overhaul, especially with the sparkling Gettysburg restoration as a reference.

"The time has come for [Atlanta's painting] to be conserved again," said Sal Cilella, CEO of the Atlanta Historical Society. "I'm afraid if something isn't done in the next five to seven years, the patient could get seriously ill."

'There is no comparison'

Robinson and Cilella were joined on the Gettysburg trip by Jamil Zanaïldin, president of the Georgia Humanities Council; Atlanta History Center military historian Gordon Jones; Thomas Hills (CFO in the governor's office), and Zoo Atlanta CEO Dennis Kelly. Most were impressed.

"This is the way to see it," Zanaïldin said of Gettysburg's in-the-round presentation, calling Atlanta's rotating viewing gallery a "mistaken design."

Zanaïldin and his colleagues stress that Atlanta's painting is just as significant as the Gettysburg panorama. But the fact that the Atlanta painting draws one-tenth the number of visitors as the Gettysburg attraction demonstrates that both the Battle of Atlanta's marketing — and its surface — need refurbishing.

"We're not realizing the full potential of that painting," said Robinson. "There is no comparison. What has been done in Gettysburg, in terms of restoration work, the facility they've built — it's night and day."

The new face of the Gettysburg painting, which opens to the public at the end of this month, has prompted some tourism executives, downtown advocates and historians to envision ambitious plans for the Atlanta work.

They are discussing not just a major restoration, which could cost upward of \$15 million, but also a relocation, a new building and a new interpretation.

The Battle of Atlanta was not just a seminal event in the Civil War, they point out, but a turning point for the city. This painting, they say, is a portrait of modern Atlanta being born.

19th-century high tech

The original artists probably didn't have such an interpretation in mind.

Like the Gettysburg painting, the Atlanta Cyclorama was assembled in the 1880s by a team of painters intent not on creating art but on generating ticket sales. Cycloramas were the IMAX movies of the late 19th century. They traveled from city to city and were showcased in temporary structures where patrons would pay 10 cents to see the latest sensation.

In the 1890s, when the Battle of Atlanta opened in a drum-shaped wood-frame structure in Grant Park — historian Wilbur Kurtz called the building a "fire-trap" — 10,000 visitors



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

showed up the first week, according to director Keith Lauer. "I wish I had those kind of numbers now," he added.

After receiving the painting as a gift from businessman G.V. Gress, the city built a new "fireproof" building for it adjacent to the Atlanta zoo. That building opened in 1921. Kurtz, an authority on the Atlanta campaign and technical consultant on the movie version of "Gone With the Wind," coordinated improvements to the display during the 1930s. Kurtz commanded a team of Depression-era artisans who created the diorama that encircles the base of the painting, and he personally painted in (or out) many details of the work to make it conform to his knowledge of the actual battle.

By the late 1970s, the painting had fallen into disrepair. Maynard Jackson, the mayor at the time, got the City Council to approve a \$15 million bond issue for significant changes. Noted conservator Gustav Berger directed the preservation of the painting. His team of 15 helpers removed the lead and arsenic coating on the back, glued a fiberglass fabric backing on the Belgian linen fabric, and sealed the painted surface with varnish.

The improvements included installing a rotating audience gallery, allowing viewers to sit and spin (slowly) as the painting seemed to creep past.

'Like a shower curtain'

The road to hell, it's said, is paved with good intentions, and some contemporary conservators insist that good intentions have caused hellish problems for the Atlanta painting.

David Olin of Olin Conservation Inc. directed the \$15 million Gettysburg renovation. In 2006, at the request of the Atlanta History Center, he also

In town for the December 1939 premiere of "Gone with the Wind", stars (L-R) Vivien Leigh (Scarlett O'Hara), Clark Gable (Rhett Butler) and Olivia DeHavilland (Melanie Wilkes) visit with George Simons, Atlanta city parks manager, at the Cyclorama. AJC file photo



completed a study of the Atlanta Cyclorama.

Both paintings were hung incorrectly, Olin said recently. Hung correctly, a cyclorama painting adopts a bowed-out, or hyperbolic shape. The surface of such a painting is convex in the vertical dimension, and concave in the horizontal, like the inside perimeter of an inner tube. That shape is maintained by a certain loose tension: the painting is hung from a ring at the top and held by a ring at the bottom.

Both the Gettysburg and Atlanta paintings were instead "hung like a shower curtain," said Olin.

That lack of curvature, plus the unyielding fiberglass backing, froze the Atlanta painting in the wrong position, he said. Instead of breathing, the painting is cracking, he said. "The paint is falling off the painting."

Techniques used in the 1970s and '80s were the best techniques known at the time, Olin added, but they turned out to be wrongheaded. Conservators, including Berger, "had

no idea of the intricacies involved in conserving a cyclorama painting."

Another bone of contention: The rotating seats for the audience hide half of the painting at a time as they turn. In Gettysburg, the entire painting is visible from the viewing platform. For Olin, that peripheral view is crucial in creating the illusion of a real view into a real battlefield.

If it ain't broke ...

Tom Ferguson was part of Berger's team from 1979 to 1982 and since then has continued to clean and care for the Atlanta Cyclorama painting. He differs in his assessment of its health.

"The proof is in the pudding, and the painting looks good," he said. "It seems excellent. It's amazingly resilient."

Dianne Harnell Cohen, the city's commissioner of parks, recreation and cultural affairs, said the "exhibit" is well-run and well cared for. "The city is certainly not ignoring it; it is one of only two in the country and is a cherished asset."



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

The city wouldn't rule out a new home for the cyclorama, said Cohen. "We are open to suggestions that make sense in terms of enhancing the cyclorama and being good stewards," she said.

Robinson, of Central Atlanta Progress, is among those who'd like to see the cyclorama downtown, to take advantage of a new wave of tourists drawn by the Georgia Aquarium and, eventually, by the new civil rights museum.

But tradition is hard to break, and for many Atlantans, a trip to the cyclorama as a school child has cemented that locale as an Atlanta landmark.

"This is where it should stay," Sherry Collier, an employee at the cyclorama, said after narrating a mid-afternoon show that drew nine visitors. (The gallery holds 200.) "It's always been here."

Visitor Jim Jackson, of Druid Hills, agreed. "This is a great place to bring a visitor or a guest," said Jackson, who was taking a Milwaukee friend on a "native Atlanta tour."

"I was last here 10 or 12 years ago, and it looks just the same."

122 YEARS OF ILLUSTRATING WAR

A brief history of the Atlanta Cyclorama of the Battle of Atlanta:

1886: Completed by American Panorama Co., Milwaukee

1887: First displayed in Detroit.

1890: Paul Atkinson of Madison buys the "Atlanta" for \$2,500 and displays it in Chattanooga.

1892: Atkinson moves the "Atlanta" to a wooden building on Edgewood Avenue in downtown Atlanta.

1893: Atkinson sells the painting to a Florida businessman.

January 1893: A freak snowstorm caves in the Edgewood structure's roof.

August 1893: The "Atlanta" is sold at auction for \$1,100 to collect rent due to the Edgewood property's landlord. Later that year the painting moves to a wooden structure in Grant Park.

1898: Atlanta businessman George V. Gress gives the cyclorama to the city.

1921: A new "fireproof" cyclorama building opens in Grant Park, with a rotunda that is several feet too short in circumference for the complete painting. Historian Wilbur Kurtz wrote that the city utilized a "Procrustean" solution: lopping off several feet of the painting to make it fit.

1979-82: The cyclorama undergoes a \$15 million renovation, which includes building a rotating gallery for the audience.

2008: Restoration of Gettysburg Cyclorama prompts calls for new restoration and possible relocation of Atlanta painting.

Lincoln's Anger Revealed in Civil War Letter

Jennifer Viegas, Discovery News,

Oct. 6, 2008

Abraham Lincoln's emotions ran high during portions of the Civil War, suggests a newly documented letter, written by the former U.S. president, in which he harshly chastises a couple for disloyalty, at one point even suggesting their line of reasoning is insane.

The letter, written Feb. 13, 1864 to a Mr. and Mrs. Vch (sic) Neagle, only recently surfaced in preparation for an upcoming Sotheby's auction of important U.S. presidential and political books and manuscripts.

Part of the letter reads, "As I understand it your husband... knowingly and willingly helped a rebel to get out of our lines to the enemy to join in fighting and killing our

people... You protest, nevertheless, that you and he are loyal, and you may really think so, but this is a view of loyalty which it is difficult to conceive that any sane person could take, and on which the government cannot tolerate and hope to live..."

Selby Kiffer, senior vice president of books and manuscripts at Sotheby's, told Discovery News he thinks Mrs. Neagle "must have approached Lincoln personally," begging him to pardon her husband, who was likely imprisoned for treason.

"Remember that Lincoln was trained as a lawyer, so usually he maintained a more neutral "sober" demeanor, so "it is uncharacteristic for Lincoln to allow himself to become so emotional. His frustration clearly comes out."

The story, however, doesn't end there. When the letter is flipped over, yet another note that Lincoln wrote to himself at a later point is revealed.

Lincoln mentions that Senator James Harlan of Iowa was "well acquainted with the (Neagle) family" who were "diligent friends." The senator proposed that Mr. Neagle's parole be enlarged so that he could visit Washington. General Edward Canby then endorsed the letter, so it is assumed that Mrs. Neagle's request was granted in the end.

James Cornelius, curator of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, was very surprised by the letter when first informed of it by Discovery News. "Harlan ended up being Lincoln's in-law," Cornelius said, referring to the fact that the senator's daughter Mary wound up marrying Lincoln's son Robert in 1868.

Cornelius, however, thinks Lincoln's final decision about Mr. Neagle was more about politics than family.

"Lincoln was not feeling optimistic at the time, as it didn't look like he'd be



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

reelected," Cornelius explained, adding that, based on other documentation, Lincoln was also sick and possibly bedridden when he wrote to the Neagles. The day before he wrote the letter, he had also suspended the execution of a man named James Taylor, who was convicted of desertion.

"The Taylor decision was more typical of Lincoln, who often viewed deserters as 'leg cases,' since he felt that many young men listened to their legs rather than to their head when they ran away from battle," Cornelius said.

Mr. Neagle, however, fell into a different group. Cornelius said Lincoln nearly always took a harsh stance in cases of treason, slave trading and rape.

"Iowa was a good, anti-slavery union state," he said, so Lincoln probably felt appeasing its leaders was more important to the country than maintaining his original decision concerning Mr. Neagle, who was likely freed from prison when the war ended.

Although Lincoln must have won favor with the Neagles and Senator Harlan, he remained unpopular with many Americans both before and during the Civil War.

"Abraham Lincoln was one of the four most hated presidents in U.S. history," explained Cornelius. "The other three are Andrew Jackson, Harry Truman and George W. Bush." The Lincoln letter will be sold at auction by Sotheby's Dec. 11, 2008. It is estimated to be worth between \$250,000 to \$350,000. Also included in the sale is an extremely rare copy -- one of only 15-20 still known to exist -- of the first volume of Thomas Paine's pamphlet series *The American Crisis*, written in 1776 when U.S. morale during American

Revolution was low. It includes the famous line, "These are the times that try men's souls."

New Lincoln penny designs unveiled

In the first change in 50 years, the penny will have four new designs, each depicting different stages of Lincoln's life.

Last Updated: September 22, 2008: 1:28 PM EDT

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- For the first time in 50 years, the penny is getting redesigned, with four versions coming next year to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, the U.S. Mint announced Monday.

While the coin will continue to depict Lincoln's likeness on the front, the reverse side will bear one of four new designs, the Mint said.

The designs show milestones in the life of the 16th president: the Kentucky log cabin of his birth, his youth working as an Indiana rail splitter, his service at the State Capitol in Illinois, and his effort to preserve the union during the Civil War as depicted by a half-finished image of the U.S. Capitol dome.

The first of the coins will debut Feb. 12, with the others following in three-month intervals. The release date, besides being Lincoln's birthday, comes a century after the production of the original Lincoln cent in 1909.

The Lincoln cent was the first circulating coin to feature a person's likeness, and also the first to depict a U.S. president.

A Lincoln commemorative silver dollar will also be released in 2009.

"These coins are a tribute to one of our greatest presidents...he believed all men were created equal, and his life was a model for accomplishing through honesty, integrity, loyalty and

a lifetime of education," said U.S. Mint director Ed Moy.



COURTESY: U.S. MINT

The last of the commemorative Lincoln pennies to be released will show the half-finished U.S. Capitol dome, a symbol of his effort to preserve the union.

Historian sentenced for stealing Lincoln letter

Reuters, Sep 19, 2008

NEW YORK - A U.S. historian who pleaded guilty to stealing letters written by former Presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln was sentenced to 18 months in prison on Friday.

Edward Renehan, 52, pleaded guilty in May to one count of interstate transportation of stolen property and admitted stealing a March 1, 1840, letter by Lincoln and two letters dated August 9, 1791, and December 29, 1778, by Washington.

The letters, part of the personal collection of former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, were taken from the Theodore Roosevelt Association. Renehan had been the acting director of the New York-based historical and cultural group.

Renehan later sold the letters to a New York gallery for \$97,000, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan said.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Jim Bruns, head of the Roosevelt association, attended the sentencing at Manhattan federal court. He told reporters the letters were "not significant to the shaping of America," but were treasured by Roosevelt, who displayed them in his library.

In sentencing Renehan, who faced a maximum of 10 years in prison, U.S. District Judge Denny Chin called the case "baffling."

"By all accounts, Mr. Renehan is a pre-eminent historian and biographer, and yet he engaged in this stealing," said Chin. "It's really hard to understand. I'm not sure that I've heard a convincing explanation."

Renehan, who has written six books including one on the Kennedys, said he has suffered from bipolar disorder, which at the time of the thefts, from 2005 to 2006, was undiagnosed.

"At the time that I took those letters... I was on an extended manic episode," an emotional Renehan said in his plea for leniency.

He was ordered to report to prison by January 2.

Collectors Try To Save Civil War Relics at Stones River Construction Site

Newschannel5.com, Oct 3, 2008

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The battle of Stones River was one of the biggest of the Civil War.

The real battlefield stretches well beyond the national park that preserves the historic site.

Collectors are trying to save Civil War relics at a Murfreesboro construction site before they disappear forever.

Over the past two days, Gordon Roberts and his friends are finding a lot of items such as a knife handle and bullets.

"It's really exciting, digging up history and holding it in your hand. You

know, the last person to touch it was a Civil War soldier," he said.

Months from now, a shopping center will stand on the site, but more than 100 years ago, it was the Harding family's house.

"Once the battle started, it got caught up in the firestorm of the battle and became a makeshift hospital immediately," said Ronnie Dowdy.

Ronnie and Audrie Dowdy sifted for items that can't be found with a metal detector such as marbles and parts of porcelain dolls.

"This was somebody's home. They lived here and had 10 or 12 children," he said.

The work has to be completed quickly before construction begins.

"The development is just going like wildfire and this gives us an opportunity to save a little bit of this," Dowdy said.

"We're all about saving history," Roberts said.

The recovery project is a joint effort between the Cumberland Plateau and Middle Tennessee Metal Detectors clubs and Middle Tennessee State University.

Shiloh Park awarded \$1M grant

The Jackson Sun, September 23, 2008

Gov. Phil Bredesen joined state and local leaders at the Shiloh National Park Monday to award a transportation enhancement grant totaling \$1 million for Phase 1 of the preservation and interpretation of the Battle of Shiloh in Hardin and McNairy counties, according to a press release.

The grant funds will be used to acquire additional areas of the battlefield at both Shiloh and Fallen Timbers, properties considered to be in the core and study area of the battlefield as defined by the Civil War

Sites Advisory Council, the release said.

State Rep. Randy Rinks, D-Savannah, stated, "This battlefield draws visitors from around the nation and has a positive impact on the economies of both Hardin and McNairy counties. This is an important investment in preserving our nation's history for future generations."

The Tennessee Wars Commission, a division of the Tennessee Historical Commission, will oversee the project.

"This grant will allow us to acquire and interpret some of the most endangered Civil War battlefield property in Tennessee," said Fred Prouty, director of programs for the Tennessee Wars Commission. "We're thrilled to be able to partner as co-applicants with the Civil War Preservation Trust and utilize this grant to protect these significant sites for future generations."

The grant is made possible through a federally funded program administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

"TDOT has funded more than \$189 million in transportation related projects through our Enhancement Grant Program," said TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely. "This program provides funds to cities, counties and state organizations to fund activities such as the restoration of historic facilities, bike and pedestrian trails, landscaping, streetscaping and other non-traditional transportation projects."

The federal grant program was established by Congress in the early 1990's to fund activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the nation's transportation system.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Judge formally dismisses Hunley lawsuit

CHARLESTON, SC, AP, September 10, 2008 - A federal judge has formally dismissed a lawsuit over who found the sunken Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley off the Charleston coast.

Senior U.S. District Judge Sol Blatt Jr. issued an order Tuesday ending the case.

Underwater archaeologist Lee Spence said he found the Hunley in 1970. But the state gave shipwreck hunter Clive Cussler credit for finding the sub in 1995.

Cussler's National Underwater and Marine Agency later sued Spence, arguing his claim damaged the agency's reputation. Cussler asked last month that the suit be dismissed, saying it had caused Spence mental trauma and physical ailments.

The Hunley became the first submarine to sink an enemy warship when it rammed a black powder charge into the Union blockade ship Housatonic in 1864. The Hunley sank about the same time.

HBO Developing Lincoln Assassination Mini-Series

Project reunites Homicide's Simon, Fontana

By Marisa Guthrie -- Broadcasting & Cable, 9/15/2008

HBO is developing *Manhunt*, a miniseries from David Simon and Tom Fontana about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the frantic 12-day hunt for his killer, John Wilkes Booth.

The project reunites the network with the creative forces behind two of its former critical hit series—Simon created *The Wire* and Fontana

created *Oz*—as well as the two writers themselves. Simon and Fontana have not collaborated since Fontana turned Simon's book *Homicide: A Year on the Killing Streets* into the cop drama *Homicide* for NBC.

"The chance to put another project on the boards with [Fontana]," Simon told *B&C*, "there's something psychically cool about that."

The would-be mini comes at a time when HBO has continued to find critical and viewership success with miniseries while struggling to mount new, enduring series hits. HBO posted a less-than-spectacular open for its most recent series debut, the heavily marketed vampire drama *True Blood*, which attracted 1.4 million viewers to its Sept. 7 premiere. It was an anemic debut compared to recent HBO drama premieres including *Big Love* (4.6 million), *Rome* (3.8 million) and the failed *John From Cincinnati* (3.4 million).

It also comes on the heels of another HBO miniseries in the American history genre, *John Adams*, which enjoyed critical and viewership success, and piqued Fontana's attention.

A history buff, Fontana's historical métier is the American Revolution and the Lincoln assassination. Fontana, in fact, grafted his Lincoln obsession onto one of his *Homicide* characters. Simon also possesses more than a passing interest in the Lincoln assassination.

"So when HBO did *John Adams*, I was like, 'What? You did *John Adams* without me? How is that possible?'" Fontana told *B&C*.

Executives at HBO Films brought *Manhunt* to Simon, and Simon says he knew whom to call. "I have

hundreds of books about the Lincoln assassination," Fontana says.

The mini is based on James L. Swanson's best-seller. HBO Films optioned the title from Walden Media, which scooped up *Manhunt* before it hit stores in 2006 with the intention of turning it into an action film.

Simon and Fontana are writing the miniseries script, and if production is greenlighted by HBO Films, will serve as executive producers along with Lawrence Bender and Kevin Brown and Walden Media. Representatives for HBO and Walden declined to comment.

Simon and Fontana will explore the assassination not from Lincoln's or Booth's point of view, but through the eyes of the little-known players, according to Fontana. "If you use Sept. 11 as the touchstone," he explains, "I don't want to see the story of Sept. 11 told through Rudy Giuliani's eyes. I want to see it told through the fireman and the teacher and the guy working in the bakery on the corner and the wife sitting in Connecticut wondering how her husband is. That's the approach we're taking."

When the project was being developed as an action picture, Harrison Ford was attached to star as the heroic cavalry officer who finally corners Booth near Port Royal, Va. That option ran out, and it's highly unlikely that he will be re-approached given the new direction of the project in Simon and Fontana's hands. Says Simon, "I don't do action."

For Simon, Lincoln's murder took on new relevancy with the Bush administration's post-9/11 policies. "People have been fascinated by the Lincoln assassination since it happened," he says. "It's a pivotal moment in American history. The stakes were extremely high for the



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

nation as a whole. The characters are grandly dramatic. So there would be reasons enough to be interested even if it were all an anachronism. But I don't think it is an anachronism. If you look at everything from Guantanamo to the Patriot Act to the debate over military tribunals versus civil prosecution, there's a lot of analogous stuff."

Historical Mapping Project Excites Preservationists, Historians

By Pam Sohn, Chattanooga Times Free Press (TN), August 28, 2008

Local historians and preservationists are pushing science to map Civil War history on today's landscapes.

"We plan to overlay historical battle maps and charts with today's landscapes. When the new maps are done, we can trace the events of the Civil War locally right over the buildings and roads and addresses we see now every day," said Jim Ogden, historian for the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

Combining Geographic Information System technologies, historical maps and the Internet, yesteryear explorers such as Mr. Ogden will give the rest of us an interactive way to see what was happening not just in the military parks but also on the streets and in local communities when the Blue and Gray clashed in the 1863 Campaign for Chattanooga.

What might such maps show?

Main Street, once named Moore Road, was the path used by Union troops commanded by Gens. Philip H. Sheridan and Richard Johnson to drive Gen. Braxton Bragg's Confederate troops from their commanding perch on Missionary Ridge, Mr. Ogden said.

The properties in the vicinity of what is now Hawthorne and Main streets once were the site of an overnight camp spot where soldiers spent a long, cold night awaiting the next day's battle that many believed was a suicide mission, he said.

Aside from intriguing Internet learning, the resulting "new" maps — paid for with a \$41,120 grant from the National Park Service — also will serve a needed planning function, said Rick Wood, director of the Chattanooga office of Trust for Public Land, which is managing the project.

The effort will enable officials to identify areas for future preservation, he said. Policymakers, developers and preservationists can know quickly if property may have historical significance in need of protection.

To accomplish the mapping project, one of only 32 in the nation, officials and contractors will convert six historic maps of area battlefields into geographic information data for integration into data already on hand for Hamilton County's geographical information, Mr. Ogden said.

Once completed, the maps easily can be updated as land uses change, he said. More historic information and links also can be added, he said.

"This, in a lot of ways, is the foundation of something that can grow again and again," he said.

Sprawling history

Kay Parish, executive director of the Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, said the park already preserves several important areas, but the city of Chattanooga and its smaller neighbors have grown up over what once was a giant field of battle.

The Campaign for Chattanooga covered a large regional landscape and is viewed by many historians as a turning point in the war. The

Union's victory here opened the Deep South to General Sherman's march to Atlanta and the sea, according to historians.

But what most excites her about the project is the future, she said.

"The new history layer will be a great tool ... for proactive land planning," Ms. Parish said. "Our Civil War history is a crucial part of our heritage. Hundreds of thousands of visitors come here each year to explore that history."

Mr. Wood said the project is funded with a grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program, a branch of the National Park Service.

"This kind of historical mapping (with GIS) is not out there everywhere yet," he said. "It makes protection and awareness just so much more visible than anything else."

Shawn Benge, superintendent of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, said the public interest in local Civil War history is high, but property-specific information has not been easy to find.

"I'm unaware of any place that information is housed," he said.

Mr. Wood and Mr. Ogden said the six historical maps by then-Chattanooga engineer Edward E. Betts provide a wonderful opportunity to try the new project here. Mr. Betts, whose family still does engineering work locally, was commissioned shortly after the war to make the historical maps, which show troop movements, engagements and encampments during the 1863 Campaign for Chattanooga.

Mr. Benge said he would like to see the geography of historical geographic information mapping be extended beyond the immediate Chattanooga area.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Ms. Parish said she looks forward to adding more historical detail and additional interactivity.

"Some day we might be able to add 1863 street patterns and landscape features — even the monuments that are sprinkled across the county — so that if you clicked on a monument or troop location, you would be linked to the text of the physical plaque or to information about the troops marked on the map," she said.

Yard might contain buried Civil War remains

Associated Press, September 29, 2008

SPRINGFIELD, KY — A couple in Central Kentucky will soon know whether the yard around their house, thought to have served as a hospital during the Civil War, is the final resting place of hundreds of war dead.

The Danville Advocate-Messenger reports that Ben and Susan Breeding, owners of the old Jack Arnold House in Washington County, think more than 300 Civil War graves and some human limbs are buried on their property. They think limbs were tossed over the porch after surgery. But Ben Breeding thinks he already has all the evidence he needs.

Besides intuition and historical knowledge, Breeding has a secret weapon — his dowsing rods. He said metal such as steel can detect buried human remains and water lines.

Archaeologists Philip Mink and Donald Handshoe of the Kentucky Archaeological Survey have gone over the grounds using ground penetrating radar technology. It will take several weeks for results to be finalized.

Shop owner: Steinwehr businesses "devastated" by Visitor Center's move

By ERIN JAMES, Hanover Evening Sun, September 24, 2008

In the past, some business owners in Gettysburg said they were worried about the impact of rising gas prices and a suffering economy, but now some say it could be the new Visitor Center they'll be worrying about. "Seven dollars and fifty cents undercuts all of the private attractions in town," said Eric Uberman, owner of the American Civil War Museum, shown above. "Question is, should the park compete with the citizens of Gettysburg?" (Evening Sun Photo by James Robinson)

When tourist season began this spring, Tom Crist was not yet convinced Gettysburg businesses would suffer as a result of the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center's move to a more remote spot.

The Steinwehr Avenue shop owner and president of the street's business organization was, in fact, "optimistic" tourists would still find their way to restaurants, souvenir shops and other venues.

Four months later, Crist says there's "no doubt about it."

Businesses haven't just suffered this year because of the visitor center, which used to be located just down the street from the popular tourist hub. They've been devastated by it, Crist said.

"It's not just Steinwehr Avenue," he added. "It's all over town."

And now business owners have a new reason to worry.

The park's private partner, The Gettysburg Foundation, recently proposed charging an admission fee to the visitor center in an effort to

make up a \$1.78 million projected shortfall in revenue.

Business owners are left to wonder: If visitors are now going to spend \$7.50 - or \$30 for a family of four - just to walk through the museum's door, will they be less inclined to spend money elsewhere?

"Seven dollars and fifty cents undercuts all of the private attractions in town," said another Steinwehr Avenue business owner, Eric Uberman. "Question is, should the park compete with the citizens of Gettysburg?"

Monday is the last day the park will accept public comments about the proposal. Park Superintendent John Latschar could make a final decision as early as Tuesday.

But even if the park doesn't accept the foundation's proposal as is, something almost certainly is going to change. The foundation can't afford to lose nearly \$2 million in one year, and officials said at a recent public hearing that no Plan B exists.

At that hearing, most members of the public spoke out against the admission-fee proposal for one reason or another.

A common concern was the potential effect on Gettysburg businesses. That's just one of several arguments, however.

Gettysburg is the premier Civil War battlefield attraction in the country, and the artifacts that bring the story to life should be available to the public free of charge, some say.

Others have said mismanagement is the reason for the park's current dilemma, and the issue should be resolved internally - at no cost to the public.

And to those who share Uberman's point of view, the admission-fee proposal equates to a broken promise.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

The park's general-management plan - adopted nine years ago - never entertained the idea of an admission fee. Its artifacts would be on display free of charge, officials had always said.

"The Park Service should keep to their word," Uberman said.

COMPETITION

When it comes to the question of whether to charge an admission fee to the new visitor center, Uberman said the issue is like a "double-edged sword" for local businesses.

On one hand, charging a relatively small fee like \$7.50 could potentially take money out of tourists' pockets that they may have otherwise spent elsewhere.

But on the other hand, he said the admission fee should really be higher than the Gettysburg Foundation is proposing - a minimum of \$15, said Uberman, a longtime critic of the Park Service who owns the American Civil War Museum on Steinwehr Avenue.

Though counter-intuitive and slightly ironic, Uberman's argument is that it will be very difficult for other museum venues in town - such as his own - to compete with a fee of \$7.50 at the \$103-million museum.

Tourists may choose to visit only one museum, and they'll likely go with the cheaper rate, he said.

But Gettysburg Foundation President Robert Wilburn said the goal is to keep costs low for visitors.

"We tried to keep the price as low as we possibly could and still cover our operating costs," he said.

The general-management plan didn't include a charge for the museum because there was no expectation of a revenue shortfall, Wilburn said.

He conceded that a \$7.50 charge would be competitive. But the main attraction, he said, would remain open at no cost.

"The battlefield still is free, unlike many other places," Wilburn said.

If the admission-fee proposal goes through, Uberman said, the foundation is in effect adding yet another commercial niche to the visitor center that will take money from other businesses.

The Gettysburg Foundation has projected \$422,260 in annual revenue from sales at the cafeteria, and they expect to make \$1.9 million annually at the gift shop.

"Now it wants to compete with museum venues," said Uberman.

He said that will include competition with the soon-to-open David Wills House and the Eisenhower Farm, two sites also operated by the Park Service.

If the added competition puts other museums out of business, Uberman said, it will have widespread consequences. It would mean a loss of amusement-tax revenue for the borough, which is already fighting its way out of a deficit.

Foundation spokeswoman Dru Neil said the intent has never been to deter tourists from visiting other places in town.

In fact, the park and foundation encourage visitors to include downtown destinations in their plans, she said.

Criticism from the business community has been significant, however.

Gettysburg businessman Bob Monahan said he is worried about the community -- especially Steinwehr Avenue, where he said foot traffic is "non-existent" now.

"It makes a difference to the economy here in Gettysburg," Monahan said of the visitor center's fee structure.

At the public hearing, Tammy Myers said officials might be surprised by the interest in the newly restored

Cyclorama painting, and ticket sales could account for at least part of the projected shortfall. The 22-minute film titled "A New Birth of Freedom" has been disappointing in ticket sales, but the Cyclorama didn't open to the public until Friday.

"I think it's a little premature," Myers said of the admission-fee proposal. "I hate to see you undercutting the private sector here."

In response, Latschar said the park has heard from both ends of the spectrum as far as the price. Some say the cost is too low and would be unfair competition for other Gettysburg venues. Others say it's too high and would absorb too much of tourists' spending money.

But deciding on the figure was simply a matter of math, Latschar said. The foundation needs to charge a fee that will bring in enough revenue to cover its operating costs.

The park is not without its supporters, even among local business owners.

At the same hearing, Maggie Abbott-Fowler of American Historical Art spoke in support of the foundation's proposal, and she took issue with the harsh critiques of others.

"What we have now is (a chance) to change the future," she said.

She suggested a better marketing strategy for the movie, what she called "one of the best things I've ever seen on the Civil War."

And for some, the jury is still out on whether an admission fee would mean dramatic losses in revenue for downtown businesses.

Ted Streeter, a current member and former president of the Gettysburg Borough Council, insisted it's still too early to say whether Gettysburg businesses will suffer. In fact, it could help businesses, he said.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Tourists could choose to spend their money downtown rather than pay the \$7.50 admission fee, he said.

"It could really work either way for Steinwehr Avenue," Streeter said.

'SHOULD BE FREE'

Kathi Schue is "not happy" about the idea of paying money to see the Battle of Gettysburg-related artifacts on display at the new museum and visitor center.

Many of those artifacts were sold to the park from the Rosensteel family in 1971 in the spirit that they would be available to the American public for free, said Schue, who serves as president of the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association.

"That's where we have a problem," Schue said.

Schue said she understands the difficulty of raising money, but she thinks fewer people will ultimately experience all the museum has to offer if an admission fee goes into effect.

"It's sad that we've had to come to this," she said. "I think it's going to deter people altogether."

Several others made a similar point at the Sept. 18 public hearing.

One woman said she believes there should be no charge to see the artifacts because low-income families could be deterred from visiting Gettysburg.

Barb Adams, a foundation volunteer, said she believes charging a fee is "wrong."

The argument that Gettysburg's history should be on display free of charge was articulated by a representative of the Rosensteel family, which sold a large number of artifacts to the park in 1971.

Walton Jones, made the point that the park's artifacts - 38,000 of which came from the Rosensteel family -

"should be free to the American people."

"Americans have a right to view these relics free of charge," he said.

The Rosensteels operated the former site of the visitor center for 50 years, "but they never charged a cent for little girls' and boys' families to view the relics," Jones said.

Wilburn, however, said the new center has much more to offer, including an emphasis on context and seven short movies that play within the exhibit gallery.

"It's really very difficult to compare this to what was done before," he said.

MANAGEMENT

Eric Uberman calls the Gettysburg Foundation's admission-fee proposal both an "act of desperation" and a "classic case of mismanagement."

Management is to blame, and that's who should bear the burden of fixing the situation, Uberman said.

Instead, the foundation is asking the public to pick up the tab, he said.

"Their fix is you," he said. "It's not their fix."

At the hearing, two people pointed to high salaries paid to Gettysburg Foundation employees. The results don't justify the salaries, they said.

Gettysburg business owner Gene Golden got applause from the crowd when he made the point that it will take 52,364 admission fees at \$7.50 each to pay Wilburn's salary of \$392,735

That's the amount Wilburn made between 2006 and 2007, according to the foundation's tax filings. Staff salaries totaled \$1.6 million for that period.

Wilburn has declined to comment on his salary, saying he accepted the offer of the foundation's board of directors.

Others have insisted it was a mistake not to relocate the Electric Map in the new center. When the attraction closed in April, the map was bringing in an average of \$777,926 annually, though park officials say attendance had dropped off significantly since its peak year in 1994.

FOLLOW THE PATTERN

Eric Uberman has no doubt the admission-fee proposal will go into effect sometime soon.

After all, he said, it's no longer surprising when the Park Service abandons plans.

"They've changed so many things so many times that nothing is as presented 10 years ago," Uberman said.

"Everyone worked on the basis of what the Park Service said - that the museum would be a free exhibit,"

Uberman cited the foundation's use of taxpayer dollars to fund part of the visitor center's construction, something that the park didn't solicit but originally didn't figure into the plans either.

Wilburn emphasized that less than a third of the center's cost was paid for with taxpayer money.

In fact, Wilburn said he is "amused" by the argument that taxpayer money should not have been used. That's a common practice, and the state of Pennsylvania contributed money to the project because officials saw it as an investment, he said.

"There's no apology on my part," he said.

Wilburn also defended the proposal by saying all of the donors who contributed money to the visitor center's construction have been notified of the proposed changes, and none of them have objected, Wilburn said.

In fact, many of them have asked, "Why aren't people that are enjoying it paying something?" he said.



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Neil said that they've heard from many visitors shocked that the museum is open free of charge.

Uberman said he believes the park's next step could be a charge to see the battlefield.

"If one believes in patterns, this would fit the pattern," Uberman said. "Is this (Latschar's) way of telling people of what is yet to come?"

The park and foundation, however, strongly reject the implication that a battlefield charge is in the future.

They've used the free battlefield to justify charging for the museum, considering that many other national parks for battlefield visits.

And, Latschar has said it would be impractical for Gettysburg to do so with 17 points of entry throughout the entire 6,000-acre field.

But Uberman is not the only one with concerns.

Monahan also raised the issue at the public hearing, saying he worries about "where this is all headed."

Park and foundation officials, however, insist the admission-fee proposal is the best way to cover operating costs and will be a better value for tourists.

"We really believe this is the best visitor experience," Neil said. "Some people may not believe that. (But) we really want people to come here and leave here wanting to come back."