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Wills House repairs at stake

By RICHARD FELLINGER, Evening Sun Harrisburg Bureau, January 25, 2006

Lawyers for a Gettysburg property owner and the federal government promised Tuesday to spend the next two weeks working on a deal to clear the way for a renovation project and museum at the home where Abraham Lincoln slept before delivering the Gettysburg Address.

The National Park Service wants to renovate the now-vacant Wills House at 7 Lincoln Square, which was owned by Gettysburg attorney David Wills in 1863. But the park service had been rebuffed until now by the owners of an adjoining property, John and Antoinette Kosciński of Cape Coral, Fla.

Though the park service owns the Wills House, it needs permission to enter the Kosciński's property because the common wall and roof are targeted for repairs.

Tuesday's development came after U.S. District Judge Christopher Conner of Harrisburg heard nearly three hours of testimony on the park service's request for an order granting their contractors access to the neighboring property.

David Lehman, the Harrisburg attorney representing the Koscińskis, proposed a list of terms for the judge to consider if he grants access, and Conner told the attorneys to negotiate it themselves.

Conner called Lehman's proposal "the outline of an amicable resolution."

Lehman asked for language addressing who has financial responsibility for unforeseen damage to the Koscińskis' property and any interruption to the business at their

property. The Cannonball Old Tyme Malt Shop is the Koscińskis' tenant.

Assistant U.S. Attorney D. Brian Simpson said language about property damage is standard in construction contracts, but he expressed concern about liability for interrupting the business. After government witnesses testified that noise should be the biggest problem for the malt shop, Simpson said he doesn't want to open the door to nuisance claims.

Conner said he'll begin to consider a ruling on Feb. 8 if lawyers for the two sides can't strike a deal.

Congress has earmarked more than \$7 million for the Wills House project, and the federal government has spent roughly \$1.5 million so far. The park service bought the property from Gettysburg Borough for \$550,000 in 2004.

A museum at the Wills House would draw an estimated 150,000 visitors a year, according to a study commissioned by the park service.

Paul Newman, an architect for the park service, testified that the inside of the Wills House is in "very poor condition." A basement wall between the two properties needs extensive work that includes a new concrete base to strengthen it, Newman said.

Even if the museum were not planned, Simpson said some improvements would be needed because the building is in such bad shape.

The park service has not asked the Koscińskis to pay for any of the work, which would add an estimated \$130,000 to the value of their property.

Clemson takes over Hunley lab

Preserving Civil War submarine may set stage for Lowcountry campus

By JAMES T. HAMMOND, The State.com, February 2, 2006

Clemson University trustees Thursday accepted the laboratory that is preserving the Confederate submarine Hunley, along with 82 acres of land, a drydock and a wharf in North Charleston.

The agreement with the city of North Charleston and the private, nonprofit group Friends of the Hunley sets the stage for Clemson University to receive \$10.3 million in state funds to begin its "Restoration Institute," a plan to create a satellite Clemson campus in the Lowcountry.

Under the agreement, Clemson will be required to finish the Hunley's preservation and deliver it to a museum to be built in the region. Failure to meet the milestones in the agreement could cause the property to revert to the city.

Senate President pro tem Glenn McConnell, R-Charleston, has been the legislative patron of the Hunley preservation since the vessel was discovered on the seabed near Charleston.

The Hunley's preservation has been funded by state and federal taxpayer funds, as well as private funds raised by the Friends of the Hunley. A complete accounting of the funds spent on the preservation remains to be done.

The pioneering Confederate submarine Hunley sank in 1864 after torpedoing a Union ship in Charleston harbor. The 40-foot, hand-cranked Hunley was lost for more than a century after it became the first submarine to sink a ship in warfare. It



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was discovered and raised off Charleston in August 2000.

Clemson plans to create the Clemson University Restoration Institute, comprising the 82-acre site on the old Navy base in North Charleston and a yet-to-be-built Clemson University Architecture Center in Charleston's historic district.

"These facilities will form the nucleus of a vibrant university research campus," Clemson President James Barker said in the cover letter to his presentation to the trustees.

The proposals for a greatly increased Clemson presence in the Lowcountry are not without controversy. The land the city of Charleston has given Clemson for its 22,000-square-foot architecture school on George Street is in the middle of historic Ansonborough, where residents are protesting the construction of a modern-style building amid their historic homes.

Clemson plans to break ground on the \$7 million structure this year.

And the Friends of the Hunley are the subject of a lawsuit in the S.C. Supreme Court over whether it must publicly disclose its finances and actions.

But Clemson officials assert the Restoration Institute will become an engine for economic growth for the Charleston region, creating at least 90 full-time jobs with an annual payroll of \$5.3 million in its first phase.

Two state-funded academic research chairs will call the institute home, including a Professorship in Historic Preservation and a Professorship in Urban Ecology.

The \$10.3 million for an academic building at the North Charleston site has preliminary approval under the South Carolina Research University Infrastructure Act. The new 22,000-

square-foot building will complement the Warren E. Lasch Conservation Center, the site of the preservation work being done on the Hunley. The new building will be the first phase of a larger, 65,000-square-foot facility, Barker said. It would be completed in 2007 or 2008. Clemson envisions the Institute becoming home to future preservation work on items recovered from the sea.

Civil War cannon being recalled to West Point

JOHN DESANTIS, Star-News of Wilmington, NC, January 29, 2006

FORT FISHER, N.C. - To the U.S. military, it is a prized artifact and a trophy of war.

To Josephus Parker, it is a reminder of battlefield valor displayed by brave men in blue and gray.

On loan to the Fort Fisher historic site from the U.S. military since 2004, the 16,000-pound Armstrong gun - at its time a fearsome state-of-the-art artillery piece - is due for return to West Point, N.Y.

To Parker, a retired Federal Express carrier now living in Ivanhoe, about 25 miles from Wilmington, the gun's pending departure is an abomination.

"They're not doing what is just and right for the people," said Parker, a documented descendant of three Confederate soldiers and commander of the Gen. William MacRae Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

"The Armstrong gun does not belong to West Point but to the people of the United States," Parker wrote in a letter to President Bush on Dec. 12, 2004. "(It) should be located where it would do the most good for the most people."

He is not alone.

Other North Carolina descendants of men who fought in gray echoed Parker's sentiments.

The Armstrong gun, a rifled cannon, was built by Sir William Armstrong & Co. during the war between the states and found its way to Fort Fisher, historians say, by arrangements between the Crown and Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

Specially built 150-pound shells found their mark at a distance of five miles when fired from the muzzle-loader.

John McElroy, a U.S. Army cavalryman, described it in a memoir as "the finest piece of ordnance ever seen in this country."

"The carriage was rosewood and the mountings gilt brass," he wrote in an 1879 memoir. "The breech of the gun had five reinforcements."

The gun was neither pretty nor powerful enough, however, to stop the advance of Union armies at Fort Fisher on Jan. 15, 1865, when accounts say the Confederacy ran short of the special shells.

The gun was transported to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point,



Armstrong gun in position at Fort Fisher, North Carolina. Photo taken shortly after the Fort's fall in January of 1865



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where it has been on display ever since on a promontory high above the Hudson River called "Trophy Point," where other spoils from the Civil War, the American Revolution and the Spanish-American War are on display.

Attempts by North Carolina to have the gun returned to Fort Fisher, the only place where it was ever fired in combat, began at least 25 years ago, state officials said this week.

Parker, according to accounts from himself and others, initiated an attempt to reclaim the gun for North Carolina in 2002. Federal authorities gave what appeared to be an unbending "no," but Parker and his compatriots mostly other SCV members persevered.

For Parker, the issue has deep emotional roots.

His great-great uncle, Col. Marion Parker of Enfield, was Chief of Staff for the 30th Infantry Regiment of the Army of Northern Virginia. "I think he got wounded in every battle he was in," Parker said. "It parted his hair the first time he was shot."

Granting the gun to North Carolina was out of the question for the feds, but the possibility of a loan was discussed with state officials. Disheartened that the fight for all-out return had ended, Parker withdrew from activities of the ad-hoc committee that sought the gun.

In 2003 the commanding officer of the U.S. Army's Museum of Military History conceded that the looming 140th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Fisher in 2005 was an appropriate reason for a loan request, and arrangements were made.

That's why the Armstrong cannon has been on display at Fort Fisher for the past year.

Officials at West Point say they are glad to have helped, but are anxious

for its return, and do not envision any change of position that would see the gun relocated again once they have it in their hands.

"It has been on Trophy Point for 100 plus years on constant display up there, and is utilized by the cadets as part of their educational program," said David Reel, director of the West Point Museum at the U.S. Military Academy. "It belongs to West Point and is part of our national historic landmark."

Reel sympathizes but cannot oblige requests for the gun to remain at Fort Fisher.

"The piece has been at West Point longer than it has been anywhere else, and it has benefited officers of the U.S. Army through the whole duration," he said.

Be that as it may, descendants of Confederate partisans say they wish it wasn't so, although most who were interviewed recognize the Fort Fisher Museum's need to stand by its word.

"I don't think there is anyone that would not like to have that gun stay," said John Alred, a Wilmington engineer whose great-grandfather, 5th Sgt. James H. McMath of the 26th North Carolina, fought and survived the battle of Gettysburg as well as interment at a Union prison camp. "He was captured and served the last five months of the war at Point Lookout."

Tim Stewart, a diesel mechanic for Coca-Cola in Wilmington, and commander of Wilmington's George Davis Camp of the SCV, will also mourn the gun's departure.

"We were dealing with the federal government, and they pretty much set the guidelines," he said. "The plan was to bring the gun home for good and replace it with a replica.

"That gun belongs at Fort Fisher," he said. "It was taken as a spoil of war,

and the war has been over for 140 years now."

Stewart's great-grandfather, William Julius Wilett, born and raised in Brunswick County, was among Fort Fisher's defenders.

Wilett was later taken captive and imprisoned at Elmira, N.Y., about 200 miles north and west of the place where a placard takes the place of the gun until its return from Fort Fisher. Although he and Parker have had philosophical differences on some SCV-related issues, they agree on the matter of the gun.

"He's got my support 100 percent, and I think we support each other," Stewart said.

But at West Point, officials remain firm. There is no way they can see the gun returning to Fort Fisher after it is taken in February, unless another loan is brokered.

Leslie Jensen, curator of arms and armaments at the West Point Museum, said he is sensitive to the emotional appeal the gun has to descendants of Confederate fighters. But as part of West Point's culture for more than a century, he said, it has taken on a history of its own far from the battlefield.

Jensen, once curator of the Museum of the Confederacy at Richmond, pointed out that Gen. Robert E. Lee was once commandant of cadets at West Point and had no doubt spent time on Trophy Point himself. Additionally, Jensen noted, Lee promoted unity between the north and the south once the war was over.

"Gen. Lee would probably say it is in its right place," he said, referring to the New York venue.

Parker is unconvinced.

"That's wrong. Everybody knows it should be in Fort Fisher," he said. "I think Gen. Lee would say the soldiers gave their all and it is a piece of



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history that should be where they gave their all."

He has vowed to continue writing letters and lobbying for the gun to have a permanent home overlooking the ocean toward which it once fired.

"I'm not going to give up," he said.

"I'm not going to raise a white flag."

"Gettysburg" Magazine Publisher Dies

Jan. 12, 2006 – Cwi - Bob Younger, owner of the Detroit, Michigan based Morningside Press and Bookstore and publisher and editor of Gettysburg magazine, died on Wednesday evening Jan. 11 2006.

He is survived by his wife Mary Younger, who served as president and manager of Morningside while his titles were "founder, publisher and editor."

According to a statement on the Morningside website, funeral services for Mr. Younger will be held at Newcomer Funeral Home on Wednesday, January 18, 2006 from 5-7p.m. They are located at 3940 Kettering Blvd. Kettering, OH 45439.

Mr. Younger was perhaps best known in the Civil War community for his dedication to scholarship in both historical research and bookmaking. Gettysburg Magazine, published twice a year without advertising, was a rare non-academic, noncommercial outlet for studies of a specific battle.

As a publisher, Younger concentrated on reprints of rare or classic works which had gone out of print. One major endeavor was keeping in print the classic works of Gettysburg historian John Bachelder, who compiled correspondence with participants in the battle while they were still alive. As Chicago writer Lawrence Lee Hewitt described the set,

"For decades Civil War scholars and buffs have benefited from the efforts of Bob Younger and the staff of Morningside House, Inc. His reprints, original publications, magazine Gettysburg, even his catalogues, have prominent places on Civil War bookshelves. His most recent prodigious project was the works of John Bachelder, the leading historian of the battle of Gettysburg until his death in 1894."

Besides individual works and reprints, Younger was a major force in keeping the massive *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* in print in their original form, on paper. The effort cost the company financially in recent years as "the OR," as the work is known, became available in digital form first on CD-Rom and later on DVD. The digital versions often sold for under \$100, while the print set costs \$2500 and requires storage space for 70 large volumes.

No plans for the future of either the company or the magazine were available on Thursday night.

Gift of Civil War relics means Atlanta has the 'finest collection in the world'

By Bill Hendrick, Cox News Service, January 18, 2006

Pvt. Ben Schumpert was only 17 when he fell dead at Chickamauga in September 1863, shot through the head. He was buried, wrapped in a blanket, near the spot where he died, but his unusual striped uniform, carefully stitched of pillow fabric by his loving mother back in Americus, was retrieved by a cousin in his unit and eventually made it home.

Complete with jacket and trousers, the blood-stained uniform is one of the most poignant and important of

the nearly 1,000 rare Confederate relics obtained by the Atlanta History Center late last year.

With the addition of these items gathered by the late Atlantan George Wray, the center now has the world's finest Civil War collection, said John Sexton, the Atlanta historian and dealer who helps collectors worldwide determine the value of their artifacts. The number, quality and "richness" of Wray's items makes the collection unique, Sexton says.

Some items are so rare, no one even knew they existed.

There are dozens of weapons, including sniper rifles smuggled into Southern ports from Europe, pistols, saber bayonets, rifles made in the South, a bazooka-sized cannon and other big guns that show Georgia was one of the Confederacy's most important arsenals.

The Confederate uniforms are especially significant because most soldiers who lived to return home wore theirs for plowing or other work until they fell apart. Only a few survived, mostly belonging to those who died, treasured for sentimental reasons, or high-ranking officers.

Wray also secured hats and caps and a small bag used to carry rice by Cadet Pvt. John M. Hazelhurst of the Georgia Military Academy in Marietta. Another important item is the flag of the 1st Georgia Infantry, which flew over Battery Wagner near Charleston during the famous attack on July 18, 1863. The futile charge, led by the all-black 54th Regiment of Massachusetts, was depicted in the 1989 movie "Glory."

History center director Jim Bruns, gleeful at showing off just a tiny part of the collection, said it would be months before the objects were available for public viewing. The



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entire trove hasn't even been unpacked yet.

"We now have the finest collection in the world," said Bruns, pointing at some of the most important relics in a tour of a vault. "There now are two [Civil War] pilgrimage sites ... Gettysburg and us. And ours is the best."

He would not reveal the exact cost of the acquisition, saying it was in the "multimillion-dollar" range. The artifacts are stored in climate-controlled vaults at the center.

Wray, who died last year at 68, wanted his personal collection displayed along with the center's award-winning Turning Point exhibition. His friend Bo DuBose of Atlanta found and donated most of those, but stopped collecting years ago. Wray kept searching for items right up to the week he died.

One of Wray's few last wishes was that his pride and joy — kept in a large room above his garage — be sold to the history center.

"George's collection shows the Confederacy's attempt to arm itself," said DuBose, 65, a member of the center's board.

The Smithsonian Institution and the National Park Service own a substantial number of Civil War artifacts, both Union and Confederate, but they are spread across many federal sites in the South and Northeast. And the Museum of the Confederacy has "the best collection of officers' uniforms," says DuBose, "but they don't have that much from the common soldier." Wray retired as an International Silver Company executive and bought or traded for items only after painstaking research on their provenance and authenticity.

Wray's wife, Anne, 64, said he kept it all in the room over the garage

because she didn't want it in their house. She's delighted the collection has found a permanent home at the history center. Wray started collecting relics at age 12 and his last piece was delivered only three weeks before he died, she said.

"It is quite a legacy," she said. "He had a complete file on each piece, 'womb to tomb,' as he said it."

The center has no plans to enlarge the space used for Turning Point, so will start rotating in pieces of the Wray collection within months. Bruns said recently acquired letters written by Union Gen. William T. Sherman on his march to Atlanta, purchased for "several hundred thousand dollars," will be added a few at a time.

The DuBose collection, donated in 1985, consists mostly of cannons and rifles, the majority of Union origin. Turning Point also contains the largest collection of Civil War artillery projectiles in existence. They belonged to Thomas S. Dickey, who donated them in 1988.

Gordon Jones, the center's chief historian and a man not given to superlatives, couldn't stop grinning when showing off some of his personal favorites, saying they "tell great stories," like the uniform of Schumpert, who died at Chickamauga.

Wray has a large file on Schumpert that reveals the teenager was a member of Company E of the 3rd South Carolina Infantry. Born in Columbus but raised in Americus, he had an older brother who died of typhoid fever in September 1861 while in the 11th Georgia. Ben and his cousin, Osborne Lamar Schumpert, were attending college in Newberry, S.C., and enlisted together in February 1862 along with other students. They fought together through the Seven Days battles of

July 1862, Gettysburg in '63 and on south to Chickamauga in North Georgia as Union troops headed for Atlanta.

"After the battle, [Ben's] cousin Osborne found his body on the field, removed the bloodstained jacket and trousers, and wrapped his body in a blanket," Jones said research shows. "He eventually managed to bring the clothing back to Ben's family in Americus, who saved it."

His uniform is "one-of-a-kind," Jones said, because it is knee-length and hand-sewn of beige, brown and yellow cotton ticking.

"The bloodstains are the darker brown splotches on the collar, shoulders and back," Jones said. "This uniform set is one of the most important surviving Civil War artifacts, both as an unusual uniform and as a poignant story of sacrifice. Can you get any closer to death than this bloodstained coat?"

Jones also is fond of the jacket of Cadet John McNish Hazelhurst of the Georgia Military Institute. Born in Waynesville to a family of rich planters, he joined at 17, participating in the flurry of battles around Atlanta, and was among the handful of troops harassing Sherman's army on its march to Savannah. He survived the war and died in 1884 of skin cancer.

The jacket is the same one Hazelhurst is wearing in a daguerreotype photo that is also part of the collection.

It is becoming increasingly hard for museums to compete with private collectors for expensive Civil War relics, Jones said. Prices are skyrocketing especially for Confederate items.

"If the Wray collection had been sold off to an auction house, you'd never see it again — ever," Jones said.