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Battlefield bucks: Gettysburg Park could get \$2.2M for expansion

By ERIN JAMES, Hanover Evening Sun, February 6, 2008

For the first time in eight years, the Gettysburg National Military Park could receive federal money to buy and preserve privately owned property within the park's 6,000-acre boundary if the president's 2009 budget for the country's national parks is approved by Congress as it is proposed.

The budget is not yet law, but it includes \$2.2 million for land acquisition within Gettysburg's park.

The last time the Park Service received land-acquisition funds was in 2001, when the federal government committed more than \$5.98 million.

Since that time, the Park Service has been under mounting pressure to preserve some of the remaining 20 percent of land within the park's boundaries that is not already owned by the park, said spokeswoman Katie Lawhon.

"It's been a concern for a long time," she said.

Land-acquisition funds can be used to directly purchase privately owned property within the park from a willing seller or to purchase easements on privately owned land so that its owner cannot develop the property.

There are still 86 privately owned tracts - as large as 90 acres and as small as a half-acre - within the park's boundaries. Some properties are used mainly for agricultural purposes while others are the sites of houses built in the 1960s or '70s, Lawhon said.

The proposed budget also increases the park's operating costs by \$689,000 over the 2008 budget for operating costs, Lawhon said.

With that money, the park could begin to fill positions that have been vacant since funding was significantly decreased about 10 years ago, Lawhon said.

A 10.6-percent increase for operating costs in 2008 made it possible for the Park Service to fill seven of 16 vacancies. If the 2009 increase is approved, the park may be able to fill the remaining positions, she said.

"We're starting to dig our way out of that hole," she said.

About 90 percent of the park's operating budget pays for the salaries of its employees, so a cut in operating funds translates into a cut in positions, Lawhon said.

Over the years, the park dealt with that problem by not replacing personnel who retired or left, she said.

"It would be completely random about which positions would become vacant," she said.

The remaining vacant positions include two park rangers, two preservation workers, one human-resources assistant, two park guides and one tractor operator, she said.

Gettysburg Group Claims Progress Preserving Camp Letterman Site

Feb. 13 2008 -CW- A threat of commercial development on a portion of what was once the Camp Letterman field hospital appears to have suffered a setback due to efforts by the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association and its supporters.

Last fall, the GBPA learned that the Target chain was considering placing one of its stores in a proposed "Gettysburg Station" shopping center on Route 30 with an access road going through where the Camp

Letterman monument marks the field hospital's entrance. Metro Commercial Real Estate had advertised for smaller businesses to locate to the proposed development, which would be anchored by a Target.

The Camp Letterman monument was erected in 1914 by the Army of the Potomac Medical Department to memorialize the Herculean effort to treat thousands of wounded and dying Union and Confederate troops, the first such joint medical facility of the Civil War.

The GBPA mounted an offensive, calling on Civil War preservationists to bombard Target and other potential developers of Camp Letterman land with letters and petitions opposing development on portions of the remaining Letterman property determined to be historically significant.

Initially, a Target representative response to letters and e-mails was a statement that the chain had "no concrete plans at this time for this location," a message that left plenty of room for plans to quickly change.

Thousands of letters and signatures later, the corporation's message has changed to become much more definitive: "Any information that Target is pursuing a store is inaccurate. In late 2007 we made a decision not to pursue a store in this area at this point in time.

"This is certainly a victory for Gettysburg preservation, but it by no means settles the issue," said GBPA President Kathi Schue. "The potential developer could still seek another anchor store or possibly even elect to build the shopping center without it.

"I would urge our friends, 'keep your powder dry' and be ready to respond with another editorial volley as the situation evolves," added Schue.



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GBPA is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization that was founded in 1959 as the first public/private partnership at Gettysburg. The GBPA has played a continuous role in purchasing endangered battlefield land such as the Meals Farm, Timbers Farm, Wolf Farm, Taney Farm, the Colgrove tract, the Willoughby Run tract, the East Cavalry Field tract, and other parcels to save them from development.

Paper, Ax, Together Make Rock Solid Lincoln Story

Historians say president wielded tool week before assassination

By Bruce Rushton, Springfield Journal-Register, February 22, 2008
Historians figure Abraham Lincoln was showing off on April 8, 1865, when, at the end of a long day, he spotted an ax at a Union Army field hospital in Virginia. He'd spent hours shaking hands with thousands of wounded soldiers. A doctor told him his arm was surely tired.

Holding his arm straight out, Lincoln picked up the ax by the butt, with the handle parallel to the ground, and held the seven-pound tool motionless. He was 56 years old — and one week away from assassination.

"Strong men who looked on — men accustomed to manual labor — could not hold the same ax in that position for a moment," wrote Francis Fisher Browne, a Union soldier who authored a biography called "The Every-Day Life of Abraham Lincoln." Lincoln also went to work chopping a log, historians say. According to Browne, someone saved the chips. Now, 143 years later, the same ax has turned up at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.



James Cornelius, curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, examines markings Thursday on an ax believed to be the last one used by Lincoln. Justin L. Fowler/The State Journal-Register

The state of Illinois, it turns out, has owned the ax since 1955, when it was donated to the Lincoln Home, then the state's responsibility. It was accompanied by an affidavit from the director of the field hospital, plus a second statement signed in 1914, verifying the tool's authenticity.

Historians at the library and museum only recently stumbled across the paperwork while going through boxes. Until then, they figured the rusting relic was a phony, just like every other supposed Lincoln ax they'd ever come across.

"We've had the ax, and we've had the affidavit," said James Cornelius, library curator. "We didn't know that they went together."

Now, researchers are handling the ax with white gloves and talking about displaying it in a glass case, temperature and humidity controlled.

The last ax used by The Railsplitter also may be the only ax in the world

that can be tied so closely to Lincoln, museum officials say.

The Smithsonian Institution has an ax that purportedly was used by Lincoln, Cornelius said, but its provenance isn't as certain as the one in Springfield. Besides physical characteristics — markings on the ax prove it was made in Pennsylvania during or before the Civil War — the ax donated to the state had been in the same family from the time Lincoln used it until it was given to the Lincoln Home, Cornelius said.

Along with the paperwork documenting the ax's authenticity, researchers have found a 1955 letter from Richard Hagen, who worked for the state Parks and Memorials Division when a woman named Mrs. A. Clement Wild gave the ax to the home.

"Since the ax properly belongs in that period of Lincoln's life after he left Springfield, we would not feel that there would be a proper place for it within the house itself," Hagen wrote.

Rather than give the ax back, the Lincoln Home sent it to the state historical library. Eventually, the ax ended up in a vault at the presidential library and museum, which is now documenting artifacts, especially ones donated before 1958, when the historical library hired its first curator. Before then, library employees typically inventoried items by writing descriptions on index cards that often ended up in different places than the artifacts, Cornelius said.

The ax's tag now reads "LR283 Ax which Lincoln held out straight."

Holding an ax at arm's length was a trick Lincoln used to perform at county fairs in Illinois, Cornelius said.

But the stunt had consequences on April 8, 1865. After chopping wood at the hospital, Lincoln spent the night with Mary Todd on a ship. There, he



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reportedly told his wife, his arm really did hurt.

"Almost everything associated with Lincoln has a story," Cornelius said. "This one has a great story."

So what's the ax worth?

That depends.

James Cornelius, curator for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, said he can't put a price on an ax used by Lincoln. With nothing comparable on the market, he said, it's worth whatever someone is willing to pay, and prices for Lincoln artifacts fluctuate. In general, though, prices have gone up.

Daniel Weinberg, owner of the Abraham Lincoln Book Store in Chicago, said it's difficult to set a price without seeing an object, but the ax could fetch as little as \$5,000 or as much as \$15,000.

However, Lincoln relics have skyrocketed in worth since the ax was donated to the state in 1955.

In 2002, a letter from Lincoln fetched \$799,500 at auction. The letter was one of 842 lots of documents and relics purchased in 1952 for a total of \$273,632, the Boston Globe reported in 2003. The record at the time for a Lincoln artifact was \$424,000 for a pair of opera glasses the 16th president brought to Ford's Theater. The glasses had been purchased for \$24,000 in 1979.

In April, Sotheby's auction house is scheduled to auction off 22 Lincoln documents. Pre-auction valuations range from \$3,500 to \$5,000 for a legal document signed by Lincoln in 1851 to \$3 million to \$5 million for a 1864 letter from Lincoln in response to a petition he received from schoolchildren who asked him to free slave children.

Gettysburg prepares to limit walking tours

By ERIN JAMES, Hanover Evening Sun, February 14, 2008

In time for the upcoming tourist season, Gettysburg officials are on schedule to approve an ordinance that places a 26-person limit for guided walking tours in the borough.

Controversy about a potential limit - which affects the town's many ghost-tour companies - was sparked last summer, when the borough's public safety committee proposed a 15-person cap.

Objections from the owners of ghost-tour companies prompted the committee to increase that number to 26, including the tour guide.

On Monday, the Borough Council gave solicitor Harry Eastman the authority to advertise the ordinance so council can vote on it in March.

If the ordinance passes in March, the regulations would be law by April 1, Eastman said.

Despite a lull of several months without action on the ordinance, at least one owner of a ghost-tour company is not bothered by the timing.

"We knew it was going to happen," said Mark Nesbitt, owner of the Ghosts of Gettysburg tour company. Nesbitt said he is also satisfied with the limit of 26 people.

Last summer, Ghosts of Gettysburg averaged about 25 people per tour, so the tour company probably will not lose money because of the regulation, he said.

Smaller tour companies could be affected, however, Nesbitt said.

That's because the ordinance, if passed, would also require company owners to hold liability insurance that includes the borough as an additional insured party - something Nesbitt said will likely pose financial issues for less-established tour companies.

Discussion about regulating walking tours began when Baltimore Street residents complained in 2006 about noise, littering and property damage because of a growing number of ghost tours in the borough. At least 13 companies conducted tours in 2006.

Also on Monday, the Borough Council voted to advertise an amendment to another ordinance, which regulates horse-drawn carriages in the borough.

As is, the ordinance does not specify the regulations refer specifically to carriage services doing business in the borough.

For example, the borough did not mean to regulate Amish buggies, Eastman said.

The amendment designates horse-drawn carriages "for hire" as subject to the regulations.

That ordinance could also be voted on in March and become effective by April 1, Eastman said.

Neighbors return after blast death of Civil War munitions dealer

CHESTER, Va. (AP) Neighbors of a dealer of Civil War cannonballs and other ordnance returned to their homes Wednesday, two days after their subdivision was rocked by an explosion that killed the dealer.

Monday, police found the body of Samuel White, 53, outside his home and unexploded military ordnance around his property.

Authorities ordered 20 to 30 homes evacuated and closed streets while they brought in explosives experts and detonated the munitions.

Late Tuesday, "they cleared the area and it was deemed safe," Chesterfield County police spokeswoman Ann Reid said



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Wednesday, so residents were allowed to return.

Authorities removed and destroyed what they said were a "significant" number of military munitions from White's detached, double-car garage. Some ordnance found on the premises left investigators uncertain about how to proceed.

They called Department of Defense officials for consultation.

"A couple of these items at the tail end have caused some concerns and some questions," Chesterfield police Capt. Steve Neal said. "They need to be examined by the experts."

Neighbors said they believe White may have been attempting to disarm a "beach-ball" size shell when it exploded Monday afternoon.

A 15-pound chunk of the cast iron shell smashed through the front porch roof of an occupied house about a quarter-mile away. There were no injuries.

On his Web site, White sold artillery, buttons, bullets and other items from the Civil War. The Web site said White would disarm, clean and preserve Civil War military ordinance.

"I use an electrolysis process which causes the good metal in the object to release the old rusted metal from the object. The process will turn an unsightly rusted item into a thing of beauty," White's said on the site.

"I've done approx. 500 artillery projectiles and still have all my fingers (I must be doing something right, knock on wood)!" the site states.

Green Groups Bolster

I-81 Suit

By Kelly Jasper. DNROnline, February 25, 2008

HARRISONBURG - A lawsuit that aims to halt the expansion of Interstate 81 has a lot more to it than just road construction, new parties to the suit say.

Earlier this month, seven groups joined the federal lawsuit against the Virginia Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration.

The new organizations represent a range of interests working to protect historic sites, farms, battlefields, natural environments and scenic landscapes, members say.

"The scale of the issue is a regional issue," explains John Eckman, of the Valley Conservation Council, a Staunton-based group that joined the suit. "Our organization has never been involved in litigation prior to this. ... That tells you how important this issue is."

New Plaintiffs

The other new parties - including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Scenic Virginia, APVA Preservation Virginia, Virginia Organizing Project, Rockbridge Area Conservation Council and Sierra Club - join Shenandoah County farmer Larry Allamong, the Shenandoah Valley Network, and the Coalition for Smarter Growth. Those three plaintiffs filed the lawsuit on Dec. 17 in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia in Charlottesville.

The organizations want to prevent the Federal Highway Administration from allowing VDOT to move forward with the proposed expansion of I-81 until the agencies have corrected what the plaintiffs call "the plan's fundamental flaws."

Many Plans Still Under Review

Since the suit was originally filed, VDOT has ended negotiations with a transportation consortium that had proposed a multi-lane addition to the highway.

But other plans involving the construction of additional lanes are still being considered, along with more modest proposals like truck-

climbing lanes and adding lanes only at key areas prone to congestion.

Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said in a statement that a multi-lane expansion would bury important historic and cultural resources and "lead to dramatically increased heavy truck traffic through the pristine landscape of the Shenandoah Valley."

VDOT: Some Expansion Needed

The plaintiff's suit says several of the VDOT proposals would allow the widening of I-81 to eight to 12 lanes throughout western Virginia.

VDOT officials have said some expansion is needed to decrease traffic congestion on the 325-mile stretch of interstate. The Federal Highway Administration approved the agency's plans in June.

The lawsuit says irreversible damage is sure to result: "VDOT's plan for I-81 would destroy 7,400 acres of developed land; 1,062 acres of prime farmland; between 1,600 and 2,400 residences; 662 businesses; 1,238 acres of Civil War battlefields; 33 acres of wetlands; 361 acres of floodplains; 23 miles of streams; and 13 threatened or endangered species."

Local Maryland

Politicians ask FERC to Reconsider Natural Gas Project

By Ed Waters Jr., Frederick News-Post, February 23, 2008

MIDDLETOWN -- Town officials and Frederick County Commissioners have asked Dominion Transmission to reconsider its plans to put a natural gas pumping station at Marker and Bolivar roads, about two miles outside the municipality's limits.

Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-6th, also weighed in on the proposal for the



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station, sending a letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

In his letter, the congressman asked for "due diligence" in FERC's environmental assessment of the land and project.

Dominion Transmission, based in Clarksburg, W.Va., is proposing a \$55 million compressor station to pump natural gas from its underground storage site in Tioga, Pa., to Virginia.

The station would use 11 acres of a 135-acre tract, and the remaining area would, according to Dominion, continue as agricultural.

At a Feb. 6 public hearing at Middletown Middle School more than 300 residents turned out to oppose the project because of air and noise pollution, and its effect on a historic vista. The site is near the South Mountain Civil War battlefield and the Appalachian Trail.

In his letter, dated Feb. 20, Bartlett asks FERC to ensure an adequate buffer zone around the station, preservation of the "viewscape." He noted the site's historic surroundings and asked the energy regulation agency consider noise levels from the 14,000-horsepower compressor.

Bartlett also noted the topography of the site, "which naturally traps and concentrates air pollutants."

The congressman cites the Clean Air Act as a point of compliance.

Bartlett and Middletown officials encouraged Dominion and FERC to consider other commercial sites for the proposed station's location.

Lisa Wright, Bartlett's spokeswoman, said FERC has been responsive to the congressman, and has taken into account the required criteria and regulations for such a project.

Citizens for the Preservation of Middletown Valley, which calls itself a

grassroots citizens' action organization, has not only opposed the station's plan, but also called on FERC and Dominion to find other sites located along its natural gas pipeline.

In a letter dated Feb. 19, county commissioners called the site "an area of multiple-layered significance," and pointed out the county's Rural Legacy Program, designed to preserve critical agricultural lands for the future.

The county letter also highlighted the Civil War connection, and that the site and surrounding area is part of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground program, a multistate partnership that will designate land along U.S. 15 as historically significant.

The county letter also mentions Fox's Tavern, an 18th century structure near the proposed station site.

"Residents are legitimately concerned about the impacts of noise, light and the industrial nature of this project in an area of agricultural and historic significance. Thus, we wish to register our opposition to the location of Dominion Transmission's proposed natural gas compressor station in the Middletown Valley," the letter said.

Robert Fulton, a spokesman for Dominion Transmission, said the station is needed to pump natural gas to electric generating plants to meet growing residential use.

Dominion has planned to begin construction in 2012 and have the station online by 2014.

Historical markers going up across Pennsylvania's Cumberland County

By Andrea Ciccocioppo, Carlisle Sentinel, February 26, 2008

Something new will soon be popping up in Carlisle, Mechanicsburg, Mt.

Holly Springs, Newville and Shippensburg, but the story behind it is history.

Historical markers — large, slanted, waist-high informational signs — will be installed this spring at eight key points throughout Cumberland County and 64 across the region. The markers will tell the stories of the Civil War and how it affected area people and places.

The markers, which are part of a collaborative effort between the state Department of Economic Development and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, will be placed at sites that address four themes as they tell the history of Gen. Lee's 1863 invasion: military operations, women and children, community life and the African-American experience.

The markers, which are part of the Civil War Trails program, are being paid for by the state tourism office and will be erected between March 15 and May 31.

Remember Jeff Davis? Many say forget it

By ALLEN G. BREED, AP, February 23, 2008

It hasn't been easy getting people excited about celebrating the 200th birthday of that tall, gaunt, bearded, Kentucky-bred president who was born in a log cabin and went on to lead his people through a bloody civil war. No, not Abraham Lincoln. Last week, President Bush himself helped kick off a two-year celebration of the Great Emancipator's Feb. 12, 2009, bicentennial that will include dozens of events in Kentucky, Illinois, Washington and beyond.

It's that other tall, log cabin-born Kentuckian, Jefferson Davis, whose 200th has turned out to be something of a lost cause.



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"The response to date has been timid," acknowledges Bertram Hayes-Davis, head of the Davis Family Association and great-great grandson of the only president of the short-lived Confederate States of America. "Nobody has said no. Many haven't said yes."

Because Davis was a former secretary of war, Hayes-Davis wrote to the Department of Defense to see if it was interested in participating in some activity "to educate the public about the real Jefferson Davis." The agency didn't even reply.

Even Mississippi, the state where Davis made his plantation fortune and to which he retired after the war, gave the idea of commemorating Davis a lukewarm reception. A bill to establish a commission "for the purpose of organizing and planning a celebration in recognition of Jefferson Davis' 200th birthday" easily passed the House, only to die in the Senate appropriations committee.

The Davis Family Association is holding its reunion May 31 through June 1 at the Rosemont Plantation, Davis' childhood home in Woodville, Miss.

And on June 3, Davis' actual birthdate, the family will gather in Biloxi for the rededication of Beauvoir House, the hip-roofed, Gulf-front mansion where Davis spent the last 12 years of his life and which was nearly swept away by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Last week, Hayes-Davis stood on the Corinthian-columned portico of the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery to re-enact the inaugural ceremony with which his ancestor formally severed the Southern states from the federal government he felt had been "perverted from the purposes for which it was ordained."

Taking his place on a six-pointed brass star marker alongside the great-great grandson of Howell Cobb, president of the Provisional Confederate Congress, Hayes-Davis placed his right hand on the Alabama State Bible used in the original swearing-in 147 years earlier. Hayes-Davis did not recite the oath, but simply kissed the Bible as his ancestor did, turned to the crowd and said: "So help me God."

Most people don't know that Davis was a West Point graduate who fought in the Mexican War under Zachary Taylor and married the future president's daughter, Hayes-Davis says. As a U.S. senator from Mississippi, he had a hand in building the Smithsonian Institution. He bolstered the nation's defenses as secretary of war under President Franklin Pierce.

"The history books, which are basically written in New York and Boston and whatever, have one sentence: 'Jefferson Davis elected president of the Confederacy,'" his descendant complains.

Historian James M. McPherson concedes that Davis' antebellum career was "very illustrious." But he says his achievements as a soldier, senator and secretary of war were "largely eclipsed" by his role in setting the stage for and then waging the bloodiest war in this nation's history.

Davis, who disparagingly referred to his fellow Kentuckian as "His Majesty Abraham the First," was what McPherson calls a "bitter-ender."

McPherson, a Lincoln biographer who won the Pulitzer Prize for his Civil War epic, "Battle Cry of Freedom," says some former Confederates, like Gen. Robert E. Lee, are palatable to modern Americans.

"Because Lee not only emerged as the foremost icon and hero of the

Civil War in the South, I think he also emerged in the postwar North and is seen even today as somebody with more admirable qualities than Jefferson Davis," he says.

Groundbreaking for Visitor Center at Five Forks Set for Mar. 28

Feb. 28 2008-Cwi-On March 26, 2008 the public is invited to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Visitor Contact Station at the Five Forks Battlefield. The event begins at 11:00 a.m. with Petersburg National Battlefield Superintendent Bob Kirby serving as host. Mr. Kirby will be joined by guests J. Randy Forbes, United States Congressman, 4th District of Virginia, local Dinwiddie officials, and the contractors for the project.

The Five Forks Battlefield is one of the most intact battlefields in Petersburg National Battlefield reflecting the 1865 Civil War landscape. The new Visitor Contact Station will be a 2,400 square-foot building with a larger exhibit space and accessible restroom facilities.

The new location will be just south of the current facility, moving it from the focal point of the battlefield. A new maintenance facility will also be added to maintain the new facility and adjoining 8 miles of new trails.

On April 1, 1865 Union troops attacked the Confederate defenders of Five Forks, a rural road intersection that protected the last Confederate supply route to Petersburg. The Federal victory prompted General Ulysses S. Grant to launch an assault all along the defenses of Petersburg and Richmond, which led to the fall of the Confederate Capital and to Lee surrendering on April 9th.



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Scanning history: Old documents digitized by historical society

By ERIN JAMES, Hanover Evening Sun, February 6, 2008

Wayne Motts is a "book guy."

That's not too weird considering Motts is a historian.

But this self-proclaimed "book guy" has recently become a digital-loving, scanner-feeding, key-word-searching type of guy as well.

That's because Motts is at the center - literally - of an effort by the Adams County Historical Society to digitize its vast collection of first-person accounts and other materials related to the Battle of Gettysburg.

The Battle of Gettysburg Research Center opened in early January at the headquarters of the county's historical society, which Motts heads as executive director.

Digitizing materials has been a goal for years, Motts said.

But the idea of opening a research center that features a digital collection of information specifically about the battle - which means the material is entered into a computer and searchable with software - was first introduced in May, Motts said.

Historical society staff and volunteers have been working toward the realization of that goal ever since, he said.

The main benefit of digitizing materials is two-fold.

First, the historical society can borrow materials from other local organizations - such as the Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides - and enter them into the center's database, making more information accessible to the public in one place.

Second, the digital collection is a huge time saver for serious researchers, Motts said.

But so far, one of the more noticeable results has been that a lot of "book guys" are turning into guys of the more digital type, he said.

Even the naysayers who first balked at the idea are getting comfortable at the keyboards of the center's two computers, Motts said.

"Now we can't get them out of here," he joked.

One-stop shopping

Tom Greaney pecks on the keyboard at the Battle of Gettysburg Research Center, searching for information on a corporal in the 9th Virginia Infantry.

It's part of his self-help training on how to use the center's new software, so that he might eventually help others find what they're looking for.

The former New York City resident is new to the center and to Gettysburg - where he jokes he recently moved for the "wild evening night life."

In reality, Greaney said he came to Gettysburg because of his love for Civil War history.

"It's kind of a one-stop shopping type place," Greaney said of the research center.

What was once available only on paper is slowly but surely being scanned into the historical society's computers and stored as information on its state-of-the-art server.

The books and binders remain on the shelves, but eventually Motts said the organization hopes to consolidate all of its materials onto the computers for easier, more convenient searching.

The first priority, however, are materials related to the battle, hence the center that bears its name, Motts said.

Particularly when it came to first-person accounts - of which the historical society has 220 -

researchers were limited by paper materials, he said.

"You could only strictly search by someone's name," Motts said.

Now, anyone can use key-word searches to narrow the field of information on a particular subject.

Much of the new information is coming from the archives of the licensed battlefield guides, a group that has its own library of materials related to the battle.

"But the regular public didn't have access," Motts said.

The center is open to the public - at a fee of \$5 per day for non-members - during regular hours of the historical society, which is housed at Schmucker Hall of the Lutheran Theological Seminary. Appointments are not necessary, Motts said.

To complement the convenience of digital searching, Motts said the center will also have regular volunteers to help researchers looking for information.

"If we don't have it, we're going to be able to point you in the right direction," he said.

Motts predicts the center will have scanned the majority of its battle-related materials by the fall. Beyond that, it will likely take more than a year to digitize non-Civil War related files, he said.

The project also includes photographs, which take time because they require accurate captions, Motts said.

Unlike the mindless job of feeding pages through a scanner, captioning Civil War-era photos requires the expertise of a knowledgeable historian - meaning the historical society must rely on volunteers, Motts said.

"Anybody can do the labor of scanning," Motts said.



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Seized Weapons Melted to Make Replica Monitor Propeller

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (AP), March 3, 2008

Northrop Grumman's Newport News shipyard can melt things down as well as build things up.

Northrop Grumman said Monday that it used its foundry to melt more than 1,200 guns and knives either seized by Newport News police or turned in during a weapons buy-back program. Shipyard volunteers dismantled the weapons and loaded them on Saturday into an induction furnace used for making steel castings for Navy aircraft carriers and submarines. The furnace, which gets as hot as 2,800 degrees, melted the weapons in eight hours.

Workers poured the molten metal into molds that will be used to cast a propeller for a replica of the Civil War ironclad ship USS Monitor on display at The Mariners' Museum.

Sam Upham's Fakes

By Fred Reed, Coins Magazine
February 12, 2008

A Southern gentleman wrote the Confederate Treasury secretary late in 1861 telling him that northerners in New York and Philadelphia "were preparing a large issue of counterfeit Treasury Notes of the Confederate States.

"The counterfeits are to be sent in and flood our country, with a view to destroy the genuine notes as a currency," the Georgian proclaimed. "It seems to be encouraged by the authorities."

In hindsight there is scant credible evidence that a plot was undertaken by Federals. It is undeniable, however, that northern-made bogus Confederate facsimiles circulated

south of the Mason Dixon Line during the war.

These pseudo-Confederate notes plagued the Southern officials, their economy and sapped their morale. Sam Upham, whose imprint can be seen on the note shown here, was a snake oil salesman who is famous in the numismatic hobby for bogus Rebel notes. By his own estimation, this carry hawker was the "best abused man in the Confederacy." Sifting fact from fancy when talking about Upham is like trying to separate the skin of the bubble from the air inside. &whoosh it just disappears. Upham, by his own account, began his rise to "fame" in March, 1862, when he purchased an electrotype plate from the publisher of the Philadelphia Inquirer that had been used to produce a replica Confederate \$5 note in that newspaper's Feb. 24, 1862, issue. Upham's stock in trade was patent medicines. His best sellers were his Asthma Cure said to remedy "cases of ten to twenty years standing," his Pimple Banisher that "softens the skin and beautifies the complexion," and his Japanese Hair Stain whose coloring "will not fade or wash out." He was also an author, and publisher of patriotic envelopes, letter sheets, song sheets and the like. All of these are highly collectible today. As a printer he became interested in reproducing Rebel currency to extend his sales line. It was a smart move, and Upham's facsimiles are rabidly collected by hobbyists today. Sam Upham was a showman, a genuine 19th-century pitchman. A biographer once called him "Satan's Paymaster." In his defense, Upham draped himself in the Union banner. He claimed his efforts harmed those engaged in insurrection.

Typical of his ads is:

"CONFEDERATE MONEY \$20,000! - TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS in fac-simile REBEL NOTES of different denominations sent, postpaid, to any address, receipt of \$5 by S. C. Upham, 403 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia."

Upham's ads commenced April 12, 1862, in Harper's Weekly and continued there until Feb. 7, 1863, whereupon he returned to advertising his toiletries.

In all he claims to have reproduced 15 varieties of Confederate postage stamps and 28 types of Confederate notes, including scrip. Upham's business grew until, by his own admission, he produced 1,564,050 facsimile Confederate notes worth at face - he estimated - \$15 million. Upham wasn't alone as a Confederate faker. But if this supreme Rebel note hawker did indeed print \$15 million nominal value of his fakes, sales at the rate of \$5/\$20,000 grossed him a nifty \$3,750 for his "patriotic" efforts. By comparison, a government clerk of that period took down about \$1,000/annum and a Union private but \$156 yearly. So Upham's business was pretty good for 11 month's work!

There's little doubt that this most famous of Rebel counterfeiters did plague Southern finances to some extent. Shortly after Upham cranked up his presses, a Pennsylvania private wrote home to his brother from camp near Culpepper Court House in Virginia about the fake CSA ten spots like the one shown here. "The boys buy a good many of them around camp for ten cents apiece and after steeping them in coffee to give them color they would take them to the Farmers and pass them for good Confederate Money."



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Arizona High School seeks charges over destroyed diorama

By Stephanie Anderson, The Arizona Republic, Feb. 27, 2008

A Highland High history teacher said his students will not accept their diorama from the Texas Military Forces Museum unless criminal charges are pursued against the museum's director.

Jeff Hunt said he dismantled the Highland diorama of the Battle of Palmetto Ranch because its depiction of the last battle of the Civil War was historically inaccurate.

Photos show much of the diorama was destroyed, not dismantled.

Col. Bill Meehan, the museum's public information officer, said the museum's officials met late last week, but no formal decision has been made about whether they will return the diorama to the Gilbert high school.

"We are in conversation about this," Meehan said. "This is important to us, but I have nothing to discuss right now," he told *The Republic* Wednesday.

Returning their work is not enough for the Highland diorama crew, said Glen Frakes, the teacher who supervised the 3½-year project that took more than 6,000 hours to complete. Frakes said the Highland students still want a chance to rebuild the diorama, but not without knowing that some disciplinary action will be taken against Hunt.

"It is our position that Jeff Hunt is guilty of criminal vandalism and until this matter is resolved, we will not accept the diorama back," Frakes said.

The \$23,000 diorama was commissioned by a non-profit organization comprised of museum

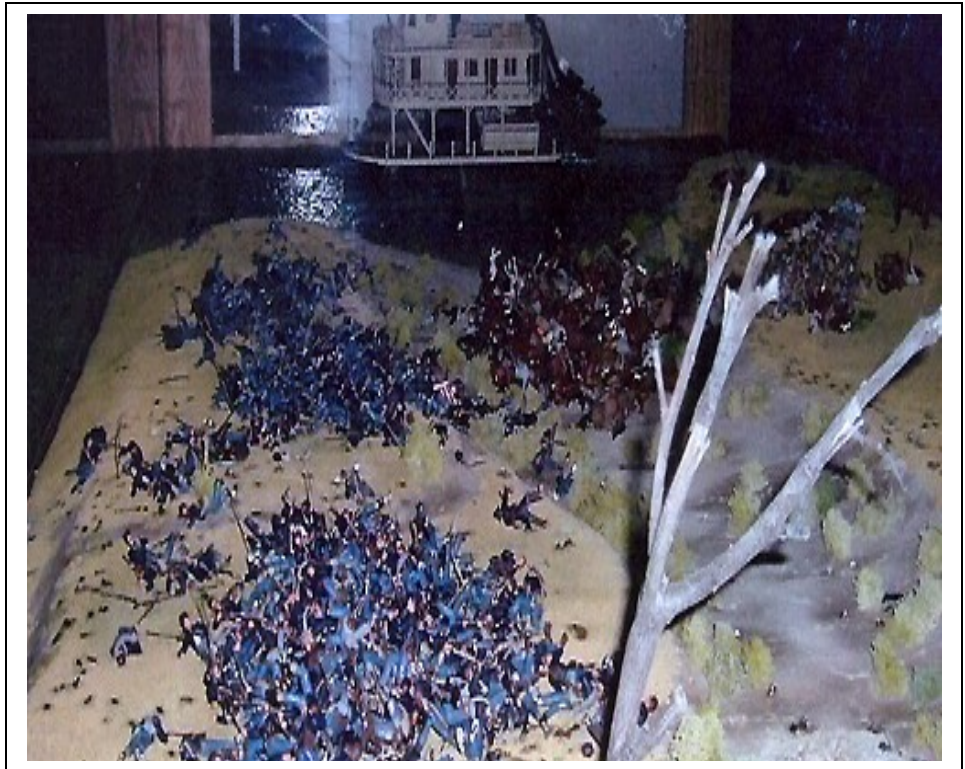
volunteers, said retired Col. Pat W. Simpson, who was the museum's director before Hunt.

The museum is under the Texas National Guard.

Simpson said several letters have been written by museum volunteers and Texas residents to Texas Gov. Rick Perry and other publicly elected officials but no action has been taken against Hunt or the museum.

"At the membership meeting back in January, he told us it was the worst diorama that he had ever seen and that he simply couldn't put it on display," Simpson said.

Frakes, who has directed the construction of 21 dioramas, said the Battle of Palmetto Ranch diorama was based on a book Hunt wrote. Hunt was dismissed from his previous job with the Nimitz Museum and



The destroyed diorama.

Courtesy of Ted Aanenson

Hunt, in an interview by Fox 7 in Austin last week, was shown holding some of the soldiers wrapped in acid-free paper. He said he had about 250 of the diorama's original 750 figures and that they would be used for another project.

Simpson, the former museum director, says that contradicts earlier Hunt statements.

National Museum of the Pacific War in July 2006 because he failed to follow agency policy, said a spokeswoman with the Texas Historical Commission.