



The Battlefield Dispatch

Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center Undergoes Rehabilitation

By Park Ranger Christopher Young

The large, antebellum-like building most visitors associate with the Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center is one of the most photographed structures in the battlefield.

In the Spring of 2013, something seemed out of place with the building's front portico. Visitors and employees who ventured to look up while standing underneath the portico, between the large columns, were met with a view of what looked like the columns separating from the roofline. Upon further observation by the park's maintenance division, it was discovered that water was the main cause of the damage.

This section of the visitor center building was completed in 1936. Therefore, almost 80 years of rain, sleet, and snow took its toll upon the structure. The building's copper gutter system allowed water to channel inside, eventually rotting the roof's interior. Thankfully, water was not able to enter and damage the columns.

A professional construction company was contracted to restore the roof. However, the roof's restoration is not a quick process. The building's original trim is no longer in existence and has to be custom made. In addition to the trim on the building's façade, windows, shutters, and outside lights are currently being restored. The project is scheduled for completion in April 2014. Although construction is underway, the main entrance to the visitor center remains

open. In the meantime, as you drive, walk, or bike down LaFayette Road and see the orange fencing and scaffolding around the front of the building, we hope you remember it takes a lot of work to preserve and protect YOUR national park.



The Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Visitor Center is undergoing column and roof restoration



A view of the rotted interior of the visitor center's roof. You can see some of the new construction in the top of the picture and one of the building's columns below

Environmental Management System (EMS) Tidbits

By Maintenance Mechanic Stacy Payne

The park began an aggressive recycling program in 2013 and would like to share some of the results with you, the visitor.

The introduction of any new activity usually presents many challenges. However, this initial year has produced some excellent results.

Here are some of the statistics from last year.

Metals	16,040 lbs
Aluminum	6,396 lbs
Electronics	2,516 lbs
Paper	1,960 lbs
Cardboard	1,829 lbs
Plastics	1,247 lbs
Tires	240 tires

With the inception of the recycling program, most of the trash receptacles were removed throughout the park. In previous years, trash disposal measured about 384 yards of waste. This year, the park estimated 240 yards of waste. By encouraging "pack in, pack out" by park visitors and the combined recycling efforts of park employees, this resulted in the conservation of approximately 144 yards of waste!

The park's EMS committee looks forward to a successful second year in the recycling program, with a joint effort from all.

Thank you again!!

By Superintendent Cathy Cook

This past November, the park completed the 150th commemorative events for the Campaign for Chattanooga. On particularly cold days this winter, I thought of the soldiers wintering in the Chattanooga area in 1863. What were the Federals doing during that long winter and early spring spent in and around Chattanooga? How did the Confederate troops fair with their dwindling supplies and the pallor of defeat hanging over them?

Union soldiers were busy building bridges, laying railroad tracks, and stockpiling supplies. An infrastructure was being developed to transform Chattanooga into a massive base of supplies for an offensive action in North Georgia that coming spring. Soldiers were also attending to other matters, including burying the dead in Chattanooga's new military cemetery. In laying out the cemetery, Union General Thomas was asked if he wanted to arrange the dead in sections by state, as had been done in Gettysburg. Thomas replied: "No, no mix 'em up, mix 'em up. I'm tired of States Rights."

Confederate troops had retreated into North Georgia and regrouped around Dalton. Soon, a major change in leadership occurred. Their commander, Braxton Bragg was relieved of duty on December 1, and a temporary commander, General Hardee was appointed. Hardee was replaced by General Joseph Johnson.

The Atlanta Campaign, overseen by Union General William T. Sherman, began on May 7, 1864, as his three armies embarked south from the vicinity of Chattanooga. When asked what Sherman's goal was, he replied "saltwater."

While the park goals for 2014 do not include reaching "saltwater," it is involved in a number of infrastructure projects that will help to prepare it for the 2016 Centennial of the National Park Service. Deferred maintenance on the front porch of the Chickamauga Visitor Center is being addressed with a complete replacement of the support beams while still retaining the historic architecture of the porch. LaFayette Road will be fully repaved, monuments will be preserved, and cultural landscapes maintained. The park will continue to launch offensive actions so that this park's treasured resources will be protected, preserved, and interpreted for generations to come.

SUPERINTENDENT CATHY COOK TO RETIRE AT THE END OF MARCH

By Chief of Interpretation Kim Coons



Superintendent Cathy Cook

Superintendent Cathy Cook arrived at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park during a rare ice storm in 2011. As she and her husband moved their possessions into the park superintendent's house, she wondered what she was getting into. As the ice melted in the park, Superintendent Cook began a three year process of change and new growth. Her many accomplishments include:

- Completing the Memorandum of Understanding between the park and the Great Eastern Trail Association
- Completing the Moccasin Bend Comprehensive Interpretive Plan
- Overseeing completion of the Moccasin Bend riverbank stabilization
- Leading the re-dedication of Alexander Bridge
- Working with park resource management to complete monument restoration projects including the Lytle Monument and 18th US Infantry tablet at Bragg Reservation
- Creating an Interpretive Division with a Chief of Interpretation as the lead
- Leading the planning for activities surrounding the 50th anniversary of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "March on Washington" speech
- Opening the Federal Road tract on Moccasin Bend for advanced educational opportunities
- Successfully guiding the park through sesquicentennial activities

- Completing the land acquisition of the model airplane field at Moccasin Bend
- Completing the Lookout Mountain General Management Plan Amendment
- Leading the restoration of the 1935 addition at the Visitor Center building
- Continuing the partnership with Friends of Moccasin Bend and Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMP
- Promoting a healthy work environment
- Improving visitor facilities throughout the Park

Her tenure in her first and only superintendency can be described as adapting to new challenges, including sequestration and a government shutdown. She will be missed in both big and small ways. We can truly say she has weathered the storm. The park wishes her much success and sunny skies ahead.



Superintendent Cathy Cook with members of the Cherokee Nation, the Friends of Moccasin Bend, the National Trail of Tears Association, the Chattanooga City Council, and others at the dedication of the Brown's Ferry Federal Road on October 26, 2013



Superintendent Cathy Cook speaks at the opening symposium for the 150th Anniversary of the Battles for Chattanooga

A New Kind of Cavalry

By Park Ranger Will Sunderland

Cavalry is often described as the eyes and ears of an army. Though the sound of thundering cavalry horses' hooves is gone today, protecting the cultural and natural resources in the park keeps National Park Service staff busy. In fact, the idea of having a cavalry unit to be the eyes and ears of park staff sounded like a pretty good idea to Chief Ranger Todd Roeder. Yet, lacking the horsepower of Nathan Bedford Forest's cavalry or John Wilder's Lightning Brigade, Roeder turned to another kind of steed.

Bicycles!

An avid cyclist himself, Roeder saw an opportunity to contact visitors exploring the park's history as well as those enjoying a day re-creating, while encouraging healthy lifestyles. The park law enforcement staff started patrolling by bicycle but quickly found there just wasn't enough time to both bike the battlefield and complete other duties. Roeder quickly realized his staff needed assistance and turned to the dedicated corps of park volunteers.

Starting last spring, volunteers Don Aleksejus and Troy Alton started as the first members of the park's volunteer Bicycle

Patrol program, rounding the battlefield from the saddles of their trusty bicycles. As ambassadors for the National Park Service, Don and Troy promote the understanding and protection of the park's natural and cultural resources through visitor education and assistance. They are friendly faces helping to educate the public about the importance of this piece of United States heritage, whether it is offering directions or kindly reminding visitors not to climb on monuments or cannon.

Park Ranger Todd Milsaps, Bicycle Patrol Coordinator, laughs when describing a daily patrol. "We spend a lot of time explaining to people that this is a memorial park and that kite flying and football is best done in the park's designated Recreation Field, just up the road from the Wilder Brigade Monument."

In addition to education, Don and Troy are a quick link to emergency support if a visitor is lost, injured, or notices strange or suspicious behavior.

"They are not law enforcement rangers, but they sure do help us," said Milsaps.

If you are interested in joining the park volunteer Bicycle Patrol, the park is

accepting applications for two positions. If you enjoy interacting with visitors and wish to do so while cycling around the park, contact park Volunteer Coordinator Will Sunderland at william_sunderland@nps.gov or 423-752-5213 x 137.



Members of the Park's Volunteer Bicycle Patrol gather at the Wilder Brigade Monument



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

In 1863, Union and Confederate forces fought for control of Chattanooga, known as the "Gateway to the Deep South." Confederates were victorious at nearby Chickamauga in September. Renewed fighting in Chattanooga that November provided Union troops with victory and control of the city.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Hey, Ranger!

By Park Ranger Gerry Allen

Many times, when you are visiting one of the United States' National Park sites, you will see someone dressed in green and gray sporting the iconic "flat hat" or "ranger hat." He or she is often surrounded by a number of people, listening intently, as they share stories about that park.

Park rangers have been a highly visible part of our national parks since their first inception. While the duties of these rangers have evolved through the 143 year period since the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1871, their primary function is to inform the public of the natural or historical resources relating to the parks.

Rangers have many duties, including park tours, school programs, historic weapons demonstrations, historical presentations, natural resource hikes, law enforcement and other activities which help visitors understand the mission and importance of preserving and protecting the park they are exploring.

So, the next time you have a question about the park you are visiting, be sure to look for one of these individuals. Their purpose is to help you understand the uniqueness of the park. If they cannot answer your question directly, they may direct you to another source within the park. Don't worry about bothering the ranger – it is his or her job to aid you in the natural wonders or history of these national treasures.



The iconic "flat hat" of the National Park Service is seen in all 401 park units

Chattanooga Forts – Siege Town, Garrison Town

By Park Historian Jim Ogden

Today, many people know of Chattanooga's Fort Wood neighborhood, named such for the Union earthwork that once stood atop the rise over which the community is draped. Some know of the 30-pound Parrott Rifles at 850 Fort Wood Street, or the guns at Oak and Palmetto, or the bronze "S. W. Angle of Fort Wood" tablet at 849 Vine Street – features that help indicate the fort's previous presence. A few may even know of these tablets for points in Fort Sherman at Lookout and 5th streets or the one associated with Battery Erwin at 540 McCallie Avenue. Although many of these commemorative features and others have over the years been removed or destroyed by theft, expansion, and redevelopment, they are often hidden aspects of the national military park. In the national military park's early years, the veterans marked many headquarters and fortification locations within Chattanooga by erecting mostly bronze tablets at or near those locations.

However, these markers are not indicators of the system of Union fortifications around the town from the Siege of Chattanooga in the fall of 1863.

Instead, a re-worked system of fortifications the Federals constructed, beginning in the early months of 1864 and continuing to the end of the war, is primarily what those markers indicate. Chattanooga, during this last year and a quarter or so of the war, was first the forward base for General William T. Sherman's drive on Atlanta, then a forward Union garrison town on the edge of Northern controlled territory.



View of Lookout Mountain - 1864

This new role for Chattanooga—base and garrison town instead of battlefield—also meant that the area that needed to be defended and the area that could practically be defended was much smaller than that which had been required when Chattanooga was the position of the Army of the Cumberland between late September and late November 1863.

As a result, beginning in early 1864, the Federals redesigned the system of fortifications to enclose little more than the town proper. The major works of the fall of 1863, Forts Wood and Negley, were turned into freestanding, entirely enclosed fortifications and renamed respectively after fallen Union officers Creighton and Phelps. The lines of works connecting them were obliterated. New or much expanded works were constructed, like Fort Jones on the rise behind Warehouse Row on Market Street or Battery Erwin McCallie Avenue in the area of the Tennessee State Office Building. This shorter, inner, line of works, still anchored on the Tennessee River, is what defended Chattanooga in the last days of the war.

Today, if you encounter one of the remaining tablets that marked the Union's second system of Chattanooga fortifications, take it as a reminder that the city known as the Gateway to the Deep South did not finish its Civil War as the echoes of the last shots on Missionary Ridge died away just a little more than 150 years ago.

What Does the Park Mean to You?

By Park Ranger Christopher Young

Recently, I was sitting at home thinking about the 150th anniversary and all the amazing programs provided by the park staff when my mind wandered back to a photograph from my childhood. This photo, taken when I was 5 or 6 years old, showed me sitting on the steps of the Alabama Monument at Chickamauga Battlefield.

I also remembered visiting Antietam National Battlefield with my parents, my first true exposure to an interpretive program by a park ranger. My parents said, "that would be the perfect job for you with your love of learning history and the Civil War."

Well, like any 12-year-old kid, I did not put much thought into my career. However, as I grew older and found myself in college, things began to change. I was provided the opportunity to work at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, a place I visited and had grown to appreciate 20 years prior.

Yet, the meaning of this place goes far beyond my personal experiences. You could say it runs in my veins.

As a youth, I spent hours every Sunday afternoon in the Calhoun County Public Library in Anniston, Alabama, researching family members who participated in the Civil War. During my many searches, I found numerous relatives who fought over the very ground on which I currently work. Some of these men survived to fight another day, while others were badly wounded – one succumbing to his wounds at home in Alabama.

So, when I ask myself "What does the park mean to me?" – it defines a part of me.

We would love to hear your stories about what Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park means to you!

If you would like to share, please send your stories to Park Ranger Christopher Young at christopher_young@nps.gov or mail them to 3370 LaFayette Road, Fort Oglethorpe, GA 30742.

The Battlefield Dispatch is a quarterly publication of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

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