



KCBA THE BATTLEFIELD DISPATCH

P. O. Box 729

Washington, Georgia 30673

Newsletter of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc. Editor: N. Walker Chewning

Vol. 6 No. 3

<http://www.kettlecreekbattlefield.org>

Jul ~ Sep 2017

Caravaners visit Kettle Creek Battlefield to hear about his- tory, geology, and flora



A group from the Airstream Caravan hears Joe Harris as he describes the natural history of the battlefield area. Through arrangements of Beth and Edward Jones of Virginia, about 40 retirees with a strong interest in history visited the Kettle Creek Battlefield recently.

Leaving their Airstream trailers or motorhomes at Mistletoe State Park, they arrived on a recent morning at War Hill where the group divided to hear both the battle history by Allen Burton and site natural history by Joe Harris. They had a half-hour session with each. They had come from 12 states including Nebraska and Massachusetts and were on a 41-day tour of Revolutionary War sites.

Burton described the 1779 defeat of the Loyalists to the English crown by the three Patriot militias of Pickens, Clarke, and Dooly. He emphasized the death of Boyd on the outcome. Harris described the natural and social history of the site emphasizing geology and flora and the mother church of Presbyterians in Georgia (Liberty).



RoseMarie and Gary Anderson sit with Beth and Edward Jones (l-r) during lunch at the Jockey Club. The Joneses organized a trip for an Airstream Caravan group to the Kettle Creek Battlefield and Washington as part of a 41 day tour of Revolutionary War sites. The

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group had scheduled lunch at the Jockey Club after which Dr. Mark Waters described the last days of the Confederate gold. In a previous three-year caravan (30 days each year), the Caravan group had visited major Civil War sites, so Waters' study was highly interesting and raised many specific questions from the group. Discussion continued on the sidewalk until about 2:30 in the afternoon. "I was exhausted," Waters said later.

Cliff Hargrove, using the van offered by the First United Methodist Church, carried visitors up War hill for Burton's talk. Hargrove, as well as Harris, Burton, and Waters were invited for lunch with the park visitors. "Interesting to have Methodists to help out," said Beth Jones, "I'm Methodist and all of this is just like small town hospitality."

The Joneses organized this tour, as they had that of the Civil War sites with the Caravaners. "It was always scheduled for 41 days but we had to change our itinerary for several days due to uncertainty about Hurricane Irma's path, so we lost five couples. Yet we had 12 states represented with larger numbers from Virginia and Texas," said Mrs. Jones.

"This was a larger group and their interests both broader and more specific than usual. Yet they were quite representative of the heritage tourist attracted to the battlefield, highly educated and able to follow their interests," Harris observed.

Hice sends word he will advocate for development



Spencer Hogg (second from right), from Congressman Jody Hice's office, met with KCBA directors including (l-r) Dr. Jim Granade, Ruth Clements, Charles Gannett, President Walker Chewning, and Lou Ricciuti. Joe Harris and David Chesnut were also in attendance. At its regular monthly meeting, the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association (KCBA) board of directors heard a report from Spencer Hogg, a representative speaking for United States Congressman Jody Hice, who said that Hice's office could advocate for park development. Hogg's visit was in response to the KCBA's request for tracking of its proposals to Federal agencies.

Hice and his wife have visited the battlefield and he spoke at a Revolutionary Days event early in his current term of office. They know the significance of the battle and the need for national recognition of such sites as this through a directive from Congress to the National Park Service (NPS).

In fact, Hogg reported, he had a recent lengthy conversation with an NPS representative on the status of a proposal to the American Battlefield Protection Program for a 182-acre addition to the current 75 acres owned by Wilkes County.

Hogg stayed for the entire two hour meeting which covered a wide range of topics including further studies of possible burial sites scheduled for coming months, trails development and maintenance and funding sources, and better promotion of Revolutionary War sites.

Historical videos for high schools to be developed using battlefield

Bill Speer (l) and Mike Joiner from Advanced Technology Leaders in Augusta visit Washington as they prepare an in-



Bill Speer and Mike Joiner

structional video on leadership figures Elijah Clarke and Nancy Hart. The Georgia National Guard sponsors the project. The Georgia National Guard is sponsoring development of a series of historical videos for high school students which would illustrate unsung heroes, little known events, and the Army core values as well as those of Elijah Clarke whose leadership in the 1779 battle at Kettle Creek would carry the message.

The videos will be produced by Advanced Technology Leadership of Augusta and Eagle Video Productions of Raleigh, N.C. They are scheduled to film on location at the battlefield site in mid-November. The Washington square and the Black Patriot memorial will be included; the Nancy Hart story will also be given time.

The objective of the National Guard is to bring students into contact with history, to bring life to values of the past. Thus, filming would feature a young narrator with her interest in history and also that of a local retired professional football player, Avery Sumner, who knows the battlefield site, having worked on developing trails for a couple of years.

Bill Speer is a historian who grew up in Pennsylvania and spent his adult life in Texas. He has 30 years of teaching experience which continues but from a different perspective. The educational opportunity attracted him to Georgia. He has worked with Steve Rauch, former military historian at Fort Gordon and Revolutionary War scholar.

Mike Joiner, his associate, has a military background, retiring some years back as a Colonel in Army Military Intelligence.

In conversation with Dr. Joe Harris of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Speer was appreciative of the organization's website but pointed out the need for a good map to the site location through Google Maps. He and Joiner had been directed to a Kettle Creek hamlet before finally reaching the War Hill site.

Natural prairie found at Kettle Creek battlefield

By JOE HARRIS



Dr. Joe Harris and Dr. David Noble, Heather Alley, and Walker Chewning prepare for a brief study of the small Piedmont Prairie of the Kettle Creek Battlefield. In Georgia, conditions in several counties have resulted in small natural prairies, sometimes called pocket prairies. According to Linda Chafin of the Georgia Botanical Gardens, they were not always small.

"In the 1760s botanist William Bartram, then in his late 20s, described several sites north of Augusta in Cherokee Territory. He said these were '...expansive plains, detached groves, chains of hills with dry barren summits,'" Chafin recently reported. Some of these were maintained as grassland due to Cherokee and Creek practices of using fire to

rout animals for hunting.

Chafin found one of these sites in her 2015 plant inventory of the original 12-acre Kettle Creek battle area, purchased by the Kettle Creek DAR Chapter in 1900. She observed that basically, “piedmont prairies are supported by high magnesium and iron rock which weathers to form dense clay soils fostering grassland and discouraging trees. Amphibolite, is the most common such rock in the Georgia Piedmont.” Grassland habitats support populations of rabbits, voles, and woodchucks which also negatively affect seedling and young tree growth. “This helps maintain the grassland ecosystem,” Chafin said.

A recent review of the Kettle Creek Battlefield prairie site by Restoration Ecologist Heather Alley of the Georgia Botanical Garden resulted in recommendations for return of the small acreage to its natural state, likely to that of the times of the Cherokees. Alley met with Dr. David Noble who initiated the meeting, KCBA President Walker Chewning, and KCBA Board Chairman Joe Harris. They toured the Liberty Church and Hammett Ridges of the battlefield then stopped for study at a relatively grassy area on the southwest side of War Hill Ridge and near Kelley Branch. This grassy area had been identified by Chafin as an example of a Georgia Piedmont Prairie.

Upon exploring the area and discovery of false aloë with conspicuous flower buds, Alley exclaimed, “That’s a signature species.” She said that it might produce up to 60 flowers on a two-foot single, leafless stem. “These are very attractive to moths which find the sweet, fruity fragrance at night,” she said. Satisfied with the prairie designation, Alley took many notes, then toured the War Hill area with Noble and Chewning. Discussion continued through lunch. Alley’s suggestions were released a few days later.

2018 Annual Celebration of the Battle of Kettle Creek



It’s time to prepare for the annual celebration of the Battle of Kettle Creek. This year the event will take place on February 9th, 10th and 11th, 2018. The celebration will include parades, a battle reenactment, living history characters from the colonial period, wreath laying ceremony at War Hill, church service on Sunday morning and the celebration dinner on Friday evening.

This years the dinner will be especially memorable because of all of the recent archeological discoveries and information on the effort to preserve the historic Kettle Creek Battlefield.



The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association

Invites you to join in celebrating the Battle of Kettle Creek
at the annual banquet to be held on

Friday, February 9th, 2018

Pope Center
48 Lexington Ave
Washington, GA 30673

Speaker: David Noble

“Archaeological Findings at the Kettle Creek Battlefield ”

Dinner Cost: \$35.00 per individual

Please make your checks payable to the KCBA
Cash Bar & Reception 5:00 P.M.

Dinner at 6:30 P.M.

Mail to:

KCBA

P. O. Box 729

Washington, GA 30673

Please include your email address

Dinner reservation must be received by January 31, 2018

For questions contact: Walker Chewning

Cell: 678-409-4644

NOTE: Those wishing to sit as a group or family please designate
on your RSVP—Tables seat “6” and will be assigned by number

2018 Membership Renewal

Membership Levels & Donations

Patriot Membership

- Adult: \$25.00
- Family: \$50.00

Life Membership

- Col. Andrew Pickens Member \$500.00
- Col. John Dooly Member \$1,000.00
- Col. Elijah Clarke Member \$2,500.00
- President George Washington \$5,000.00
- Kettle Creek Battlefield Legacy Member \$25,000.00

Life Members can continue to reach higher levels of membership through cumulative gifting. Additional donations can be made separately or along with the membership renewal.

We need your continuing support in order to preserve the historic Kettle Creek Battlefield

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Please make your check payable to **Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc**

Send to :

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