



South Georgia
History Project

The Wiregrass Telegraph

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**Treeless
Edition**

Summer 2004

SGHP's Summer 2004 History

Tour..... started off hot, sweaty and buggy. But the hardcore are always up for a challenge (as much challenge as a tour bus can be!). On the way north, we saw several videos on military theory, weapons of the period and background events of Sherman's GA campaign.



Dead Angle where GA troops unsuccessfully assaulted US Infantry regiments for about 24 hours and the route of Longstreet's attack to the Dyer House on the 2d day of the battle. And of course we checked out the Visitor's Center with its enormous weapons collection.



Jimbo's in Homerville catered the first meal and then we were off to the Chickamauga battlefield in



Chattanooga. Chickamauga was the largest battle in the War of

After a night in Chattanooga, we saddled up and headed south to follow Sherman's trail to Atlanta. The first stop was at Rocky Face Ridge in Dalton where the Confederate Army wintered in 1864 and prepared for the Federal attack in the spring.

Northern Aggression (WNA). We had able assistance from Mike Godwin, a seasoned re-enactor who came along to display equipment and constantly remind us how the soldiers of those days lived. The tour of Chickmauga was only 3 hours but we saw the





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From there we traced MacPherson's route around the west flank of the Confederates through Villanow and Snake Creek Gap.



Along the way we were able to see the railroad tunnel at Tunnel Hill; built in 1850, it was the single most important strategic target in the Confederacy because it was the link between the



eastern and western Confederacy. It

exists today, very much in its original state.



When MacPherson flanked the southern Army at Resaca, he could probably have ended the war a year early, but got cold feet and missed the opportunity. We made several stops at Resaca to see the highlights of this famous battle and then headed for Cassville, the battle that never was.

There's nothing at Cassville today but it was the scene of the Confederate Army's attempt to turn and fight the quickly moving Yankees. However, Sherman was quicker and smarter and the Confederate attempt was



unsuccessful. Today there's nothing on the sight and the only records of the event are in Sherman's personal papers at Ft

Leavenworth, Kansas.



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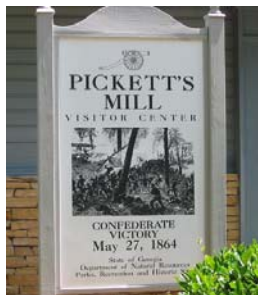
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On the way south we observed the original Western and Atlantic railroad abutments over the Etowah River before we passed the old Confederate defenses in the Allatoona Mts.



Then we headed for New Hope Church and Pickett's Mill State Park. The battle site of New Hope Church has unfortunately been almost completely covered by development....but Pickett's Mill exists today in a pristine state to protect the scene of the sharpest and most intense battle of the war.



As you can see from the picture, our guide at Pickett's Mill initiated us into the ordeal of close order drill. And yes, it was still very hot and buggy, even in north GA.



The last and largest stop was at Kennesaw Mtn, scene of a very large and bloody encounter between the armies. The action was centered at Pigeon Hill and chiefly at Cheatham

Hill where we got out and walked the route that Federal soldiers took when assaulted the entrenched Confederates. That short walk gave everyone a new appreciation for the dangers faced by Civil War soldiers.





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Our next 2 days were spent at the regional meeting of the Organization of American Historians - there was lots of GA history, book displays and interesting folks to listen to. An evening visit with Secretary of State Cathy Cox was on the agenda.



Of course, our motel was near Perimeter Mall and this editor understands that there was a great deal of clandestine shopping going on. Saturday night was a great sit-down dinner at a very good seafood restaurant enjoyed by all.

On the way out on Sunday morning, we hit the Cyclorama in Grant Park as a culminating event for the entire experience. The Cyclorama is a well known depiction of the Battle of

Atlanta that gave the entire experience another dimension. Of course the famous locomotive Texas is



housed there and we had to watch the Disney movie "Great Locomotive Chase". We were home by early afternoon with everyone safe and sound.

Everyone participating seemed to feel that this was the best way to learn a very complex subject. Not only was it fun but it brought life to the events studied, which is after all, what performance based teaching is all about. The general feeling was that we needed more visits to sites of historic importance and in-depth study based on those visits. The tour was not only a good example of "hands-on history" but an example of performance based teaching methods. We'll work toward tours to other places for the rest of the grant.