



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

Vol. 4 No. 1

<http://www.kettlecreekbattlefield.org>

Jan - Mar 2015

\*\*\*\*\*

**Revolutionary Days is by far  
the largest in years**

By Kip Burke



Patriot militia re-enactors fire a musket salute at the Black Revolutionary Patriot monument on The Square, part of the Revolutionary Days observance. (Story and photos by Kip Burke) After years of steady growth, this year's Revolutionary Days in Washington Wilkes was by far the largest and best attended in the event's history, organizers say. Not only were the observances well-attended, restaurants and other businesses downtown were packed much of the weekend.

"This is the largest Revolutionary Days event I've seen," Thomas Owen said. "As President of the Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution, I was very pleased and proud to see how so many people from so many different backgrounds and states came together in the Wilkes County country-side to

honor our heroes of the Battle of Kettle Creek."

Re-enactors and spectators filled The Square Saturday morning, with an obvious increase in armed militia re-enactors. "This was by far the largest turnout of Continental and militia troops in all the years of Revolutionary Days," Owen said.



Armed with his toy musket, Henry Townsend waves at the crowd during the annual parade around The Square.

Inside this issue:	
Revolutionary Days	1 -2
Kids Contest	2
Hands on Activities	2-4
Congressman Visit	4-5
Rock Study	5-6
Amphibolite Discovery	6-7
Conceptual Plan	7
Trail Extension	7-8
Wilkes County BOC	8-9
Membership Renewal	9

There were more kids than ever taking part in the event. At 10 a.m., the troops lined up at the Black Revolutionary Patriot monument for a solemn salute. “Nearly 30 Militia and more than 20 Continental troops with flags presented arms, saluted with three rounds of musket fire, observed a moment of silence, and played ‘Taps’ at the monument on The Square,” Owen said. “This was surely the largest event honoring the Revolutionary War veterans of the Wilkes County Militia, and the black Revolutionary War soldiers of not only Georgia, but all the colonials that fought for our freedom. It was a proud moment for the City of Washington.”



Hundreds of spectators watch the skirmish re-enactment in Ft. Washington Park Saturday morning, reflecting the much larger crowds that attended the observance of the 236th anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek. (Photos by Kip Burke) After the massed musket salute, the crowds lined up for the parade around The Square. “The parade generated the largest turnout of children we have ever seen,” Owen said. “We were pleased to have the Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School Band marching in the parade, and we were pleased to have a large number of militia units not only from Georgia, but from South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee that provided realism to the weekend events.”

After the parade, crowds of hundreds of spectators watched from the hillsides of Ft. Washington Park as re-enactors acted out a skirmish from the Battle of Kettle Creek, filling the air with smoke and the sound of battle, ending with the surrender of the wounded British Col. Boyd and his Loyalist troops.

### **Kids win Kettle Creek poster contest**



Washington-Wilkes Elementary School fourth-graders (l-r) N'Dyia Person, Makayla Hampton, Gabriella Arroyo, and Emily Hardy show off their prize-winning posters drawn after a visit by Sara Lesseur, a historic re-enactor who has portrayed frontier woman Nancy Hart. First place winner Person won \$20, and all the winners will enjoy dinner at the Washington Kiwanis Club, said Lillie Crowe of the Mary Willis Library, where the posters will be displayed. “This is the time of year the fourth grade studies the American Revolution,” Principal Angela McGill said, “so we incorporate Kettle Creek and Revolutionary Days into the history lessons.”

### **Hands-on Historic Activities**

Hands-on history is always the highlight of Revolutionary Days in Washington, with activities set this Sat-

urday beginning at 9 a.m. on The Square. This year's 236th anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek in Washington Wilkes will, for the first time in years, fall on the battle's actual date, February 14, and improvements at the battle site will make attending easier for



*Hands-on historic activities fill Square as Revolutionary Days returns on Sat.*

the growing number of attendees to the observance at War Hill.



"A new parking lot has been made along War Hill Road to accommodate the parking," said Thomas Owen, president of the Washington-Wilkes Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, "because the past few years we have had so many more folks attend the wreath-laying ceremony."

Although the main events fall on Saturday, February 14, this year's annual observance will provide a weekend of activities for everyone, including the popular reenactment of the Battle of

Kettle Creek, a Colonial parade and living history performances, a battleground memorial service, battleground tours, and a Colonial worship service.

This year's schedule is different from previous years. The Revolutionary Days parade will take place at 10:45 a.m. Saturday, beginning behind the Wilkes County courthouse, and the popular Kettle Creek battle reenactment will take place at 11 a.m.

At noon, a musical puppet show for kids, "The American Revolution: 1763-1789," will be performed by the Washington Little Theatre Company at the Washington Retro, 114 Spring Street. Some characters include Betsy Ross, King George III, John Adams, Sam Adams, John Jay, and Patrick Henry, Owen said.

Just as they did last year, at 10 a.m., militia re-enactors will fire a musket salute adjacent to the Black Revolutionary Soldiers monument on The Square to honor all those who fought.

Organizers encourage everyone to go to Fort Washington Park behind the courthouse Saturday morning and join the Revolutionary Days parade. "Led by the Sons of the American Revolution with Revolutionary War battle flags, we encourage everyone to participate in colonial or patriotic colors," Owen said.

As in years past, history will come alive at 9 a.m. Saturday all around Washington's Square with performances by some 30 Revolutionary War personalities portraying General George Washington, Elijah Clarke, Nancy Hart, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson among others.

"There will be opportunities to play Colonial games, drill with the Georgia Militia, learn about the Revolutionary War battle flags, sign a Patriot's Oath, and see demonstrations of daily life, such as spinning, weaving, trapping, leatherwork and other colonial crafts,"

Owen said.

The battle will be studied at some depth Saturday morning at 8:30 in the Mary Willis Library, as military historian Emory Allen Burton presents the program "Fighting at Kettle Creek on February 14, 1779." Burton will also give a walking tour of the battle site on War Hill at 10:30 that morning.

As in years past, Saturday's highlight will be the solemn pageantry of the battleground memorial ceremony starting at 2:30 p.m. at the War Hill Monument at the Kettle Creek battleground. Patriotic music, wreath presentations, and musket volleys will honor the Patriots. In addition, both the Robert Toombs House, the Mary Willis Library and the Washington Historical Museum will have special programs on Saturday. During the Toombs House "Silhouettes of the Revolution" Saturday, visitors can watch demonstrations of silhouette-cutting, then try to cut their own silhouette.

Sunday morning, a Colonial worship service will again be conducted at 9 a.m. at the historic Phillips Mill Baptist Church on Greensboro Road, with many attendees expected to worship in Colonial attire.

In Lincoln County, representatives of the CAR, DAR, and SAR organizations will gather with the public at 11 a.m. Sunday in the Elijah Clark State Park near Lincolnton. The "Heroes of the Hornet's Nest" ceremony will honor the memory of Elijah Clarke, John Dooly, and other members of the Wilkes County Militia.

Participants in the weekend will also celebrate the Battle at a Friday night banquet at the Pope Center. Hosted by the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association and the Georgia Sons of the American Revolution, the banquet will feature Daniel Battle, of Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution

speaking on "Georgia Militia at the Battle of Brier Creek."

Most Revolutionary Days activities are free and everyone is encouraged to attend.

### **Congressman visits, offers help in finding grants**

By JOE HARRIS



Rep. Jody Hice discusses the seriousness of the Revolutionary Days memorial event with Fletcher Dunaway of the Florida SAR. Newly-elected Congressman Jody Hice discussed several items of mutual interest in current battlefield development during his visit to the annual Revolutionary Days event at the invitation of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association (KCBA).

A wide variety of topics were discussed at a luncheon attended by Wilkes County Commission Chairman Sam Moore, GASSAR President Tom Owen, KCBA President Walker Chewing, KCBA Chairman Joe Harris, and others. Representative Hice holds degrees from Baptist and Methodist universities as well as from Luther Rice Seminary, so the role of religion in the Revolutionary War naturally surfaced.

Hice immediately recalled the statue of John Peter Muhlenberg, commemorating his exhortation of his Lutheran congregation to get into the fight for liberty. The statue, now standing in the U.S. capitol, represents the occa-

sion of the final sermon of Muhlenberg's ministerial career in which he is quoted to have said, "...there is a time to fight" and took off his robe revealing a military uniform. After impressive years in the Revolution, Muhlenberg entered politics.



Rep. Jody Hice and his wife Dee Dee, with Joe Harris, study the path of Patriots' pursuit of Loyalists at the Summit Trail entrance near War Hill, overlooking the battlefield site. Potential possibilities for Federal funding for battlefield development were discussed. Hice said he would ask his grants coordinator to explore options for federal funding, and that any proposal submitted by KCBA would be tracked as it moved through the evaluation process. "We can't write proposals, but our office would like to help in the capacity that it can," he said.

Hice, his wife Dee Dee, and Harris, visited the battlefield area where the UGA Vinson Institute conceptual plan for park development was described. County personnel installed an interpretive sign the previous day, and the group examined an overview of the area from the viewpoint of the Kettle Creek battle.

Hice then moved on to the afternoon memorial service on War Hill. He was introduced by Owen and spoke briefly on the seriousness of the occasion and the costs of liberty.

Harris thanked Dwight Harley, a

Vietnam veteran and strong supporter of battlefield development, for the initial contacts with Hice's Monroe office about the Revolutionary Days events.

### **UGA Botanical Garden's workshop includes War Hill in study of rocks**



A Rocks of Georgia Workshop group, sponsored by the Georgia Botanical Garden, studied forest rock and soil conditions of the Kettle Creek Battlefield area on a recent Saturday. Dan D. Williams, UGA forester and author of *The Rocks of Georgia*, led the workshop. "It was my favorite of five stops on our field trip tour covering the Carolina Terrane" of the Georgia Piedmont Province, said Dan Williams, UGA forester. Williams is the author of *Kettle Creek Rocks*, a report for hobbyists on the concentration of calcium-rich rocks of Kettle Creek near War Hill. High calcium conditions and less acid soils affect tree growth, favoring some trees over others.

Williams' reference was to a recent stop as part of an eight-week workshop including the local field trip sponsored by the UGA State Botanical Garden of Georgia. The workshop covered the southern section of the Georgia Piedmont which extends northeast from Macon and LaGrange and barely includes the battlefield area as its northern boundary.

According to theory, forces of plate tectonics shifted this volcanic area

westward from the ancient Atlantic into the North American continent. It is high in calcium-containing amphibolite rocks which reduce soil acidity, affecting where trees grow. Williams suggests that this condition may explain the eleven-foot-diameter oaks observed during William Bartram's travels through the area in the late 1700s.

"It was a fantastic black oak forest," Williams said, Bartram located the forest, "...close to Kettle Creek on the headwaters of Little River."

Williams was brought into the battlefield area when Linda Chafin of the Georgia Botanical Garden found high-calcium indicators in the concentration of tree species in the area. Chafin is in the midst of a plant inventory of the War Hill Area and has found specimen-sized southern sugar maple, pawpaw communities on the creek banks, red cedar species and other high-calcium indicators.

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association has promoted these studies for tourism and educational purposes. Williams comes at no cost in the battlefield development project because he finds it an exciting sideline.

### **Calcium conditions at War Hill lead to amphibolite discovery**

By DR. JOE HARRIS  
Kettle Creek Battlefield Assoc.

A large number of plant species identifying high calcium conditions raised questions for Linda Chafin during her plant inventory study of the Kettle Creek Battlefield area. The Georgia Botanical Gardens specialist brought in Dan Williams of the UGA Warnell School of Forestry and author of *The Rocks of Georgia* for an explanation.

When rocks on War Hill showed no sign of calcium, a mystery unfolded. Williams began a search for the hidden

calcium source, expanding his survey and including soil samples over the 14-acre site with no results. Finally, he asked, "Where were those 80 or so casualties buried?" Without a good answer, he began studies of the creek bed some 520 feet below the crest of War Hill where large rocks were exposed. As the third geologist interested in the site, he repeated an observation, "The hill is here because rocks are here – very large rocks, maybe extending over many acres".

Williams began a search upstream from the hill and the calcium-loving concentration of plants and found the source. It was amphibolite, a metamorphic rock formed in layers from pressure over millions of years. Originally, it was igneous rock from a volcanic source.

"This streak of amphibolite is a few miles wide and maybe 30-50 miles long. It is oriented northeast to southwest, just like the Appalachians. Both resulted from the same pressures in the ancient Atlantic, pushing westward," Williams said. He suggests that flooding has brought the calcium upward into bottom land and resulted in an accumulation of calcium-loving plants like pawpaw, shagbark hickory, southern sugar maple, eastern red cedar, and others. All of these are far less common in the more acid soils of most of Georgia.

"Amphibolite is very dark in color with scattered white patches. It is high in calcium and magnesium," Williams said, "and the Indians made axes from these and other hard, crystalline rocks. When archeologists surveyed the area recently, they found one of these amphibolite axes, called celts."

Williams prepared "Kettle Creek Rocks," a booklet with with color photos, for educators and tourists of the Kettle Creek Battlefield. It will be avail-

able from the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association.

## **CVIORG Prepares for Conceptual Master Plan**



*KCBA President Walker Chewning, CVIORG Planner Chris Stebbins & KCBA board member Charles Heard*

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government planners Chris Stebbins and Langford Holbrook recently visited the Kettle Creek Battlefield as part of the effort to develop the Kettle Creek Conceptual Plan. KCBA board members present for the tour were Joe Harris, Walker Chewning, Charles Heard and Allen Burton. The visit was conducted in order to walk the battlefield and see the area of the actual movement of the Patriot and Loyalist troops, the topography of the area and the possible placement of various trails, building and signage as part of developing the site plan.

The tour started at the base trail which loops around War Hill. It then proceeded up the Settlement road to the site of Liberty Church. Then to the area where Pickens, Clarke, and Dooly divided their militia forces for the attack on Boyd's Provincial troops. The tour then proceeded along the old road to the Hammett farm area. Chris and Walker then walked toward Kelly Branch to the area of possible Tory encampment and the route of the attack-

ing patriot militia under command of Pickens.

The group then road to the south side of Kettle Creek where the final action of the battle took place. This view from the south side of Kettle Creek emphasized the importance of the area where the Tories made their last stand and the direction of their retreat to Wrightsboro.

The tour included a view of the area for the Youth Camp, the Camping and recreational areas. With this view of the actual site the CVIORG planning team gained a better understanding of the history and possible uses of the Kettle Creek Battlefield for both historical, recreational and tourism. The CVIORG was now ready and eager to proceed with the development of the site plan.

## **Summit Trail Extended at Kettle Creek Battlefield**

By Joe Harris

As of a recent extension, the Kettle Creek Battlefield Summit Trail now connects the War Hill Loop Trail with the new parking lot. The first section, cleared and in use for a year, went north from the Loop Trail to Settlement Road, an old road now used for logging. The extension reaches further north to the new parking lot for a total length of less than a mile. The older length of the trail has already been used by eighth graders. Throughout its length, it offers a view of the 1779 battle scene from the Settlement Hill southward to War Hill.

Walter Cook, retired UGA forester, flagged the extension followed by local retirees Joe Harris with a machete and Ed Anderson with a chainsaw. "The chainsaw job is by far the toughest but the machete job is the meanest, because of the blackberry patches", said

Harris; “blackberries came in following the last logging operation”.

Anderson took out half a dozen 12-year-old pines to give the trail about a six-foot width for easier walking and for a look ahead. Cook likes a few curves “...that provide an in-your-face encounter with trail features of interest or importance”, he said; “buckeye is one of those, kids used to think the dried fruit brought good luck and carried it in their pockets.” He had found a buckeye beside the trail.

Cook accompanied Linda Chafin of The Georgia Botanical Garden, who spent most of the day collecting specimens for a site inventory, and a friend, Anne Brightwell, a retired math teacher who had, coincidentally, known of Ed Anderson from professional connections in Oglethorpe County.

An unusual orchid which grows like a mushroom was found by Chafin and Brightwell. “It is a heterotroph, having a different food source and looking somewhat like an albino plant”, Chafin said; “individual plants are 8-10 inches tall. They grow in clusters and are difficult to distinguish from forest litter.”

Retired forester Walter Cook donates his time designing woodland trails. Linda Chafin, a botanist, is supported by the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association in the plant inventory project which “... might list more species in these fourteen acres than in the whole of Elbert County”, she said.

### **Wilkes County BOC Update**

Involvement within the community is an important objective of the KCBA. If we are to preserve this historic battlefield and create a viable recreational space for the community and for visi-

tors it is helpful to keep the community informed on the progress at the Kettle Creek Battlefield. One way to accomplish this is to work with the Wilkes County Board of Commissioner on our activities and the progress of the KCBA in preserving this important site. Joe Harris and other KCBA members regularly attended the BOC meeting and report on the activities at Kettle Creek Battlefield.

In January Joe Harris, chairman of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association (KCBA), told the commissioners that several members of the organization had written letters and are working against Georgia HB170 which would result in a significant loss of sales tax revenue for Wilkes County. He also promised to pursue the issue further if needed depending on any changes that might be made to the proposed legislation.

At the February BOC meeting Dr. Joe Harris, KCBA board chairman, reported that some months ago, Moore had asked for a “wish list” based on what the organization would like to accomplish at the Kettle Creek battle site. “That put us on track for a more comprehensive plan for site development,” he said. “Out of that has come our Kettle Creek Battlefield Recreational Park plan and we’re calling it our ‘2020 plan,’ suggesting some visionary items involved.”

The year 2020 also happens to be the 240th anniversary year of the naming of the City of Washington for General George Washington. “It will be a commemorative year, from that standpoint,” Harris said, “so we thought that might be an appropriate time in the city and the county to have an opening ceremony or something like that. We think we will be in a place where we

can recognize the site as a recreational park at that time.”

Calling 2014 a year of historic achievement for KCBA, Harris provided written descriptions of the progress made in development, research, support, public use, and plans at the site.

He also distributed illustrative maps and a schedule of activities coinciding with the coming weekend’s Revolutionary Days celebration.

## 2015 Membership Renewal Final Notification

### Patriot Membership

- Student: \$10.00
- 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.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Send to :  
Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc.  
P. O. Box 729  
Washington, GA 30673

*Thank you for your support*