



SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD, INC

June 2016

www.franklin-stfb.org

**Dedicated to the Preservation, Protection, and Promotion of
Civil War Sites in Williamson County, Tennessee**

President's Message

This past month I had the pleasure of escorting two visitors from the Hood's Texas Brigade Association, from Texas, who were visiting the Franklin area for a few days. Despite the insistent rain that Saturday morning, our visitors, Liz and Mary Ann trooped along to see the highlights of local Civil War preservation. They are but two of the many visitors that take the time to stop in Franklin to learn our local history. It is important for our membership to know that Heritage Tourism is very much a key component of Civil War Preservation. We ask for your continued support in this meaningful endeavor.

I was also present for the ribbon cutting at The Masonic Hall in Franklin, as it was recognized with a Tennessee Civil War Trails marker on 10 June 2016. The Hiram Lodge #7 has a significant role in the Civil War era Franklin

There is another important change in the landscape around the Carter House. The gymnasium on the north end of the property was recently demolished to reclaim the land for the Carter Hill Battlefield Park.

Thank you for your continued support of our organization. If you are not a member of STFB we urge you to visit our web page (www.franklin-stfb.org) and join our preservation efforts with a new Pay Pal link for your ease. Visit us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Battle.1864>).

Dan Mora – President

New & Renewing Members May 2016

Nancy Bassett	Collierville, TN
C Pat Cates	Dunedin, FL
Austin CWRT	Austin, TX
Rosie Flite	Franklin, TN
Robert M Hearin Jr	New Orleans, LA
Shawn Henry	Nashville, TN
Rob Hodge	Nashville, TN
Carlton J Houghton	Essex Junction, VT
Robert D Jenkins	Dalton, GA
James Joslin	Atlanta, TX
Bill Lamb	Franklin, TN
Mel Maurer	Westlake, OH
Martin McGirt	Franklin, TN
Karen McPeak	College Grove, TN
Harold & Mary Jo Pratt	Franklin, TN
Ed Pulia	Bartlett, IL
Don Sawyer	Rochester, NY
Mike Skinner	Franklin, TN
Sean Von Loh	Greeley, CO
Phil Walker	Nashville, TN

Big News! You Can Pay Membership Dues Online

Rather than sending a check by mail to join or renew your STFB membership, you can now make your payment online by either PayPal, or by credit/debit card. Either way, the process is very simple and secure. Note - your Bank or credit/debit card information is not sent to STFB with your payment.

- Visit www.franklin-stfb.org
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Civil War Trails Marker Dedicated At Historic Franklin Masonic Hall

The Historic Franklin Masonic Hall in Franklin, Tennessee held a special Civil War Trails marker dedication on June 10, 2016. The speakers, who discussed the success of the Tennessee Civil War Trails Marker system and the local Masonic Hall history, included Franklin Mayor Dr. Ken Moore, Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson, historian Rick Warwick, Research Historian Rachael Finch, and keynote speaker, Tennessee Tourism Legislative Liaison Lee Curtis.



(center) County Mayor Rogers Anderson, Rachael Finch, and Franklin Mayor Ken Moore cut the ribbon to unveil the Historic Masonic Hall Civil War Trails Marker

As one of the more than 400 Tennessee Civil War Trails Markers, the Franklin Historic Masonic Hall marker relates the role of the Hall during the Civil War. The Franklin Masonic Hall sheltered activities for

people with allegiances to both the South and the North. In the spring of 1861, local women gathered at the Masonic Hall to sew Confederate uniforms.

During Union occupation in early 1863, the Hall became quartermaster offices and barracks for the 14th Michigan and 2nd Michigan Cavalry regiments. It was here that local Unionists met to prepare for the first Unionist rally in Franklin Saturday, August 22, 1863. The Hall also served as a field hospital after the Battle of Franklin on November 30th 1864.

Old Franklin High School Gymnasium Is Now Gone

The brick gymnasium on the north side of the Carter House has been demolished and removed. This gym property was acquired by the state in a land swap with Williamson County some 15 years ago, and will be incorporated into the Carter Hill Battlefield Park



June 9, 2016 - Tennessee Historical Commission Executive Director Patrick McIntyre addresses a group that came to witness the gym's removal

A group of 30 or so preservation supporters gathered at the Carter House on a beautiful, crystal-clear Thursday morning for a short ceremony announcing the removal of the old Franklin High School gymnasium next door. Tennessee Historical Commission Executive Director Patrick McIntyre recounted that the Commission had purchased the Carter House property in 1951 for \$20,000 when the Franklin High School was still next door. It now turns out that that purchase was the first step in assembling a Carter Hill Battlefield Park, and today's planned work is just the most recent.

The Franklin High School and gymnasium was built in 1926 with the school fronting on Columbia Avenue, where the school steps still survive. The school building burned in 1956 leaving the gym standing. The new Franklin High School was built out on Hillsboro

Pike at its current location.



The Old High School gym as it looked for many years as the Boys & Girls Club

The gym continued to be used as a community center and the Boys and Girls Club. In 1997, the county proposed building a new, expanded Community Center on the old high school property. Local preservation groups, led by the Heritage Foundation, began talks with the State and County officials to see if a land swap could be arranged. The idea was for the high school site to become part of the Carter House State Historic Site, and for the community center to be built in the bottom behind the Carter House on a larger plat where the old high school football field was once located. See STFB newsletters [February 1998](#) & [July 1998](#). After much discussion and good will on all sides, a trade was made in 1999 that included a ten-year lease extension of the gym by the Boys & Girls Club.

The gym then sat empty for several years and became derelict. The cost to renovate it as a Carter House visitor center was far more than building a new visitor center. Still, removing the building was a bittersweet moment for many Franklin residents. The gym was the social center and source of school pride during their growing up years and they are very sad to see it go. A 3-minute video of the removal was posted by Emily West https://youtu.be/NOI_PfNMTtoY

State Representative Charles Sargent led the effort to fund the THC with money to remove the gym. With the building now gone, it becomes apparent why this ground is called Carter hill. It is on the nose of a low ridge that runs west from the river. That ridge was the perfect terrain for the Federal army to build a defensive trench line. Imagine that.



Looking north 'through' the removed gym out over the Franklin downtown area. This view-shed clearly shows that the viewer is standing on a sizable hill.

Work Progresses at Carter Hill Battlefield Park

City Parks Manager Brian Walker recently had his team at Carter Hill Battlefield Park to do some preliminary work in preparation for building walkways on the new park property.



Park employees smooth and dress the grade around the Cotton Gin foundation in right foreground

The funding for the planned walkways and other improvements is included in the July 1 City budget and work can't start before then. Until then, Walker and his crew have been dressing the grade and removing trees that encroached upon the foundation. New signage will be installed as part of the walkways project.

Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc

PO Box 851

Franklin, TN 37065-0851

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June 2016

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