



# SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

January 2001

[www.franklin-stfb.org](http://www.franklin-stfb.org)

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

## *From the President*

It is gearing up to be another busy year for Save The Franklin Battlefield. We are now scheduling our tours and activities for this year. Look for a calendar of events in your next newsletter.

Thanks to all our memers who have given to our Hyssop Hill land acquisition fund. For those of you who haven't, there's no time like the present!

In addition to our plan to purchase 3.3 acres of core Franklin battlefield, STFB continues to join forces and voices with other local groups, such as the Heritage Foundation and Carter House Association to promote the need for battlefield and greenspace preservation. Your membership helps support these efforts, and for that I thank you.

*Joe Smyth*

## **Noted Historian Ed Bearss To Speak To BONPS Members and Guests Feb. 20, 2001 at Richland Country Club**



The Battle of Nashville Preservation Society has invited Ed Bearss, Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Services, to speak at its Annual Dinner, Tues., Feb. 20, 2001, at the Richland Country Club, Nashville, Tennessee. A cash bar will open at 6:00 p.m., with dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Bearss, a highly decorated World War II Marine veteran, is widely recognized as the greatest living Civil War historian. Ed has published more than 40 books on the Civil War, including the definitive work on the Vicksburg campaign. Mr. Bearss has received numerous awards in the field of history and preservation, including the T. Harry Williams Award, the Bruce Catton Award, and the Bell I. Wiley Award, among others.

Mr. Bearss is probably best known, along with Shelby Foote, as one of the stars of Ken Burns' 1990 documentary, *The Civil War*, which is the most popular show ever broadcast on PBS. Mr. Bearss is also a regular on the Arts & Entertainment channel program, *Civil War Journal*. Mr. Bearss' speech at our February 20 dinner will be "Breaking of the River Barriers: Grant and Forrest in the Ft. Donelson Campaign." This speech

will be dazzling. Ed possesses not only a prodigious memory for exacting facts but the dramatic flare, too.

Please join us for a fascinating evening on February 20 at the Richland Country Club, the gates to which are located on Granny White Pike, one mile north of Old Hickory Boulevard near the Williamson County/Davidson County line. The club's telephone number is (615) 370-0030.

The cost for the Dinner is \$25.00 for Society member and \$35.00 for non-members (which fee, when paid by a non-member, will include dues for 2001 in the Society).

Please make your check payable to the Battle of Nashville Preservation Society and send it to P.O. Box 121796, Nashville, TN 37212. To ensure your reservation for the dinner, please mail your check by no later than Tuesday, February 13, 2001.

Historian Ed Bearss will be interviewed on Channel 5+ (cable channel 50) on Wed., Feb. 21 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Also appearing will be BONPS Historian Ross Massey. The program can also be heard on AM Radio 1430.



## ***"The Fight At Franklin"***

On June 4, 1863, General Forrest moved north from Spring Hill with Armstrong's and Starnes' brigades, and two artillery batteries to attack Franklin, then under the command of Colonel James P. Baird of the Eighty-fifth Indiana Regt. Some two or three miles south of Franklin the Federal picketts were driven in or captured, and Forrest pressed on. The fighting continued from the streets and the houses. Most of the Federals took refuge in Fort Granger across the river, but there were many who remained in the houses in town. Mr. Hardin Figuers, now a leading attorney in Columbia, was then a small boy living in Franklin. He tells me that (Andrew Wills) Gould had three small pieces of artillery, which were stationed on Carter's Creek Pike, about a hundred yards west of his mother's house. Forrest's objective was for this battery to draw the fire from the fort while he could capture the town or make a "bluff" in inducing the fort to surrender. Gould's cannon were very small and seemed to Mr. Figuers like pop guns compared with the heavy artillery of the fort. One of his little balls struck the arch over the gothic window of the Episcopal Church; another struck the old Presbyterian Church, and another cut a cedar tree in the (Franklin) Female Institute lot.

Gould succeeded in drawing the fire from the fort. Mr. Figuers says one of the immense shells passed just over the battery and plowed a long furrow across Mr. L.H. Moseley's bluegrass lot in the rear of Gould's position, and the battery was moved west, where it was better protected. It is said that Forrest was provoked at this, but he continued into town, capturing military and sutler's supplies. He also battered down the doors of the jail, freeing many political prisoners. Armstrong's brigade, that was east of town, was driven back across the river, and Forrest was soon shelled out of Franklin."

(This article is taken from *The Civil War in Maury County*, by Jill Knight Garrett and Marise Lightfoot. It appears that the primary eyewitness of this story was Hardin Figuers, who grew up in Franklin, but later moved to Columbia, in Maury County. It has been edited for clarity. There is no mention of this "raid" in the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion from any Confederate perspective, and only sparse mention from Federal reports.)

*Submitted by David Fraley*

## **Some News in Review**

*[The Williamson County government has recently made the decision to move the future site of the new County Public Library from a downtown location to the old Battle Ground Academy campus on Columbia Pike The following letter was published in both the "Williamson A.M." section of the Tennessean and the Review-Appeal.]*

To the Editor:

As a resident of Williamson County for the past 20 years, and president of Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc. for the past two, I am deeply troubled with the county's apparent lack of concern for historic preservation. Recently we had the announcement that proposed a new county school be located across Columbia Pike (31-South) from the historic Harrison House. All students of Franklin history know the part this house played during and after the horrific Battle of Franklin. And now the announcement comes that in the eleventh hour, and despite numerous hours of fact-finding, surveys, and public discourse, the proposed site for our new Williamson County Library is being moved to the old BGA campus. Let's look at what "BGA" stands for—Battle Ground Academy. Yes indeed, men fell wounded, bled, and died on the grounds of BGA.

Save The Franklin Battlefield feels that the choice of Battle Ground Academy for our new and anxiously awaited library is, at best, a poor one. In addition to concerns raised by the Heritage Foundation and the Downtown Franklin Association, we feel the continued development and re-development of precious battlefield land here in Franklin and Williamson County is unconscionable. Remember, for literally thousands of men both Northern and Southern, and their families—this was their Gettysburg. If, by the time of this letter's publication, the library at Battle Ground Academy is a "done deal," Save The Franklin Battlefield hopes that the site plan for it will protect the existing green space along Columbia Pike, that the 12 acres will not disappear under paved parking lots, and that the Battle Ground property will not be ground zero for a county administration office complex.

We cannot change the Past—we can, however, affect our future.

Sincerely,

Joe Smyth III, President Save The Franklin Battlefield

Save The Franklin Battlefield Membership/Renewal/Order Form

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: Save The Franklin Battlefield~P.O. Box 851~Franklin, TN 37065-0851  
**Membership is annual, donations are tax deductible.**

Quantity	Description Annual Membership (Choose One)	Price Each	Total
	2000 STFB Day by Day in Middle Tenn. Calendar	\$5.00	
	1999 STFB Day by Day Bicentennial Calendar	\$5.00	
	Both Calendars 1999 and 2000—different pictures in each!	\$10.00	
	“Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville” Book Reprint	\$20.00	
	1989 Commemorative Belt Buckle	\$10.00	
	1989 Commemorative Paperweight	\$10.00	
	1997 Self-Guided Driving Tour Map	\$3.00	
	Save The Franklin Battlefield Bumpersticker	\$1.50	
	Eyewitnesses to the Battle of Franklin by David Logsdon	\$12.00	
		<b>Order Sub-Total</b>	
		<b>Shipping/Handling</b> under \$10 \$0.75 \$10 - \$24.99 \$2.95 \$25 and up \$4.50	
	-Individual	\$20.00	
	-Family	\$30.00	
	-Corporate	\$50.00	
	Donation—Marker Fund		
	Donation—Land Purchase		
		<b>Order Total</b>	

Please note that the commemorative items listed above for sale can be viewed on the STFB website at:



## **Salt Creek Civil War Round Table in Wheaton, IL helping STFB**

Salt Creek Civil War Round Table, Wheaton, Illinois, has joined with Save the Franklin Battlefield, Inc. in a program aimed to help in the interpretation of the 1864 battle. By offering "Partners in Preservation" T-shirts as premiums, the Round Table is attempting to raise funds to have a historical marker erected. The marker, which will indicate the advance positions of Col. John Q. Lane's and Col. Joseph Conrad's Brigades of Brig. Gen. George D. Wagner's Division, will be placed on the Colombia Pike. It was Wagner's decision to deploy these two brigades less than a half mile from the main Federal line that contributed to the Confederate breach and heavy fighting around the Carter House.

Last year Salt Creek donated to STFB's Land Purchase Fund to help pay down the debt on the Carter Cotton Gin site. "We truly appreciate this financial help that the Salt Creek CWRT brings to the Franklin Battlefield," said STFB President Joe Smyth III. "And this gift once more demonstrates that there are many people across America who feel there should be a battlefield park at Franklin."

Information on the program and T-shirts may be obtained by writing to the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table at P. O. Box 4873, Wheaton, Illinois 60189.

Save The Franklin Battlefield  
PO Box 851  
Franklin, TN 37065-0851  
615-500-6612  
[www.franklin-stfb.org](http://www.franklin-stfb.org)