



# SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

June 2001

www.franklin-stfb.org

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

## *From the President*

Dear STFB member--

I am pleased to announce Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc.'s purchase of the Hyssop Hill property. These 3.22 acres of core battlefield will be preserved from commercial development, and will join the ranks of the few other "saved" pieces of the Franklin battlefield, such as The Carter House, Historic Carnton Plantation, Winstead Hill, Roper's Knob, and Fort Granger. These sites, along with additional future sites, will preserve and interpret the Franklin Battlefield for our children and for posterity.

This purchase absolutely could not have been made without the interest, faith, and generosity of you, our members! Through your pledges and donations, given on good faith, we were able to secure matching funds from Rob Hodge's Preservation 2000 (Reenactors' March), and to finalize the

sale. For the STFB board of directors, our officers, and myself, I cannot thank you enough!

Now we must begin the task of raising \$200,000 within two years to pay off our loan. With your help and support, along with that of many others, I feel most certain that this can be done!

In other news, our second ever tour of Battle of Franklin Hospital Sites was a smashing success. I look forward to seeing many of you again on our next STFB tour.

*Joe Smyth*

## **3.22 Acres of Battlefield Is Ours**

IT'S OFFICIAL - Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc. has purchased 3.22 acres of core battlefield at Franklin, Tennessee. The property, known today as Hyssop Hill, is on the extreme east end of the trench line and was the ground that General W. W. Loring's Division passed over early in the battle as they climbed the railroad embankment and got entangled in the osage orange abatis in front of the Federal trenches. "This is the first land purchase that STFB has executed," said President Joe Smyth III. "When we get this paid off, we plan to make more."

After the Battle of Franklin, the house, including a dug well, and surrounding grounds were used as a hospital for hundreds of Confederate casualties. Although trees have grown up on the property, the topography of the 3.22 acres is essentially unchanged. Much research still remains to completely tell the story of this part of the battlefield.

During the war years, Hyssop Hill was the home of the overseer of Carnton Plantation. The main part of the house was built about 1830, and has been added onto several times over the years. STFB has begun compiling a detailed history of the property. The land was recently rezoned for commercial development. After eight months of fundraising, and after enlisting the ready assistance of professional realtors and bankers, STFB was able to construct a solid purchase deal. The purchase was closed June 15, 2001.

Planned use of the property is still evolving but will probably include interpreting the site with signage and opening the grounds to the public. The property only in recent times acquired the name Hyssop Hill and STFB has used that as a working name. "We may want to see if there is a more appropriate name from the war period that better describes this battlefield parcel," said STFB Historian David Fraley. "For now," Fraley added, "it is such a relief to know that this piece of the battlefield will be preserved forever."

## News In Review by Sam Gant

**School site choice ignores Heritage Foundation pleas - *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." - 5/23/01**

**FRANKLIN** - After months of listening to arguments from preservationists about why the county shouldn't build an elementary school across the street from the historic Harrison House, school board members voted Monday to start moving dirt on the site as soon as possible. The Heritage Foundation President virtually guaranteed the foundation could find land somewhere else that meets all the board's criteria and would not have to be condemned because of an unwilling seller. One board member made a motion to delay development, but the rest of the board didn't buy it.

**Camps battle over battlefield - *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." - 6/4/01**

**FRANKLIN**-- Last-minute move not enough to prevent building school near the Harrison House -- Since the county school board began looking for land to build a much-needed southern elementary school last year, Pam Lewis has been quietly enlist the help of area preservationists and other landowners to protect her home and the land around it from new development. Lewis was so serious about preservation that she was willing to lower the value of her own land by getting a conservation easement placed on it. At the last school board the Heritage Foundation offered the board \$350,000 to move the school behind a tree line that would separate it from Highway 31 and the view of the Harrison House and asked for a 30-day delay to find another suitable site for the school. The board turned them down. The board states that it is too late to consider this offer. The school board has voted to begin grading the land for the new school. They've just been waiting for the farmer who rents the land to finish harvesting his hay.

**Decoration Day to honor Confederate war dead shows need for understanding -- Opinion, Tim Chavez --*The Tennessean* - 6/5/01**

**FRANKLIN** -- Almost a 100 people gathered in the rain Sunday to decorate McGavock Cemetery in flags and the passion of speeches, prayers and song. Yet Decoration Day to honor the Confederate war dead generally is ignored by the news media. Memorial Day--established after the Civil War to originally honor the Union dead--does not really reserve a place for those who fell for the South. Confederate heritage instead is only newsworthy when under attack and categorized as evil. That's why the concern expressed here Sunday was its survival. This heritage is not just about a war long-ended. It is a living values system: how

people conduct themselves, the role of religion and prayer in public life and schools, the right to bear arms and protect homes and a fear of a federal government that limits personal liberties. It's not that different from the conservation agenda with which the new South is identified.

**Vandals hit historic church, cemetery - *The Tennessean* - 5-29-01**

**MOUNT PLEASANT** - Vandals broke into historic St. John's Episcopal Church Sunday night and did extensive damage to the building and churchyard where the family of President James K. Polk worshiped and is buried. Vandals entered the 1842 plantation church, which served members of Maury County's prominent Polk family, then broke out leaded glass windows and threw a massive, 450-pound reed organ from the choir loft to the first floor. About 75 tombstones in the churchyard cemetery, which contains the remains of many Tennessee Episcopal bishops, were overturned and broken.

**History on hold--Finding a new site for school now in the hands of Heritage Foundation--*The Review Appeal*--6/20/01**

Harrison House owner Pam Lewis calls it a reprieve. Mary Pearce, Executive Director of the Heritage Foundation calls it an opportunity. On a close 7-5 vote, the Williamson County School Board gave Pam Lewis and the Heritage Foundation 2 weeks to find another site for the southern elementary school and halt of construction of the school. It was a sharp turnaround for the school board which until Monday night had refused to consider alternatives sites for the new school. It was strongly opposed by Rebecca Schwab interim director of schools. There are some stiff requirements for the Heritage Foundation--the new site must be affordable, the Heritage Foundation must pay for site improvement costs already sustained by the county schools, and the new school must be ready to open in 2002. The Heritage Foundation, Citizens for Good Growth Management, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Save the Franklin Battlefield, Civil War Preservation Trust, and other historians have opposed building the new school on land used by Confederate Troops at the Battle of Franklin. Pam Lewis is "guardedly optimistic" an alternative site can be found and the deadlines set down by the school board met.

## Financial Report On the Hyssop Hill Land Purchase By Sam Huffman

Save The Franklin Battlefield President Joe Smyth reflected on the challenge facing any non-profit group attempting to buy an expensive parcel of the Franklin Civil War Battlefield. "It is very much a chicken and egg scenario," he offered. "The bankers and the property owners won't sign a deal until you have the necessary financial wherewithal. Sincere intentions and big plans just won't do.... They want to see the money. On the other hand, many donors won't commit their funds until they are convinced that a workable deal is in hand."

After 8 months, the volunteers of STFB successfully amassed donations, pledges, and employer matching grants totaling \$21,000 in cash or pledges that could be called within a day or two. These funds came from the STFB membership, private donors, and from several Civil War Round Tables including sizeable gifts from the Capital District CWRT of Albany, New York, the Salt Creek CWRT of Wheaton, Illinois, and the San Diego (CA) CWRT. The Old Baldy CWRT in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the CWRT of North Worcester, Massachusetts also sent donations.

These funds were then matched with \$21,850 from Rob Hodge's Preservation 2000 project of dedicated reenactors from across the country, and the Central Virginia Preservation Trust. "This matching donation was the deal-closer," said STFB Treasurer Sam Huffman. "Without the generous assistance of Rob and his group, we would still be trying to make the puzzle pieces fit together."

Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc. has two years to pay off the \$200,000 interest only loan. An escrow account was established to guarantee the first few payments as fund raising gets ramped up. For now the house is rented which will pay the ongoing carrying costs and buy some breathing space. Fund raising plans include grant requests to national and governmental preservation groups, press releases to local newspapers and national Civil War publications, and a 20 minute slide presentation that is available as a meeting program to Middle Tennessee service groups such as lodges, Rotary, American Legion, etc. "If you ever need a speaker for your service group, call us at (615) 500-6612," says Smyth. "'Have slide tray, will travel' is our motto."

"We simply cannot sit back and expect to have some other national preservation group buy this property for us," said Smyth, "Our cost per acre here in Franklin is far above what rural battlefields cost, and we do recognize that those groups have to stretch their dollars." "However," he added, "we hope and do expect several preservation groups to help us to some extent. We want to add their names to the list of organizations and private citizens who have helped to rescue part of the Franklin Battlefield. When we all work together we can demonstrate that 'lost' battlefields do not have to remain forever lost."

Save The Franklin Battlefield asks you to include STFB in your giving plans for 2001-2003. Your employer may have a matching grant program that will multiply the effect of your gift - check with your HR department. Donations and pledges can be sent to Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc., PO Box 851, Franklin, Tennessee, 37065.

STFB also welcomes and can electronically accept gifts of appreciated securities - contact Sam Huffman at (615) 370-3842 or [sam@jsp.net](mailto:sam@jsp.net) for an instruction sheet for your broker. For more information, call the STFB office at (615) 500-6612 or visit the STFB web site at [www.franklin-stfb.org](http://www.franklin-stfb.org).

We are looking for STFB members with special skills and talents for future maintenance and repair of the Hyssop Hill house and property. If any of you have abilities as electricians, plumbers, carpenters, gardeners, or the like, please contact us at (615) 500-6612. If you own or work for a lawn maintenance company, let us know—the opportunities are large! Remember, Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization and the donation of your professional services is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

*STFB President Joe Smyth presents a check to Hyssop Hill owner Cindy Shapton for the purchase of the battlefield property.*



## Downtown Battle of Franklin Tour a Big Success!

The count is in and this year's Hospital Tour was a big success.

We had 52 total attendees - 37 paid visitors and 15 STFB members including the STFB volunteers, and 6-8 re-enactors with speaking parts. We sold some of our maps, Battle of Franklin books, belt buckle etc. We took in \$374. By way of contrast, our Hospital Tour last year had 19 paid visitors and took in \$288.

We had 3 participants from the Jefferson County, Indiana CWRT who drove down from Madison, Indiana (on the river between Louisville & Cincinnati) today just for the tour - one STFB member & two visitors.

Kudos & plaudits to David Fraley and the re-enacting crew for another great job - and to Dan & Linda Mora who helped with the booth. Several visitors commented just how impressed they were with David and the crew. For an all-volunteer effort, this was first rate piece of work. Congratulations !!!

Of course, I arranged the weather this year. ☺

*Sam Huffman, Treasurer*

## Additional "Eyewitnesses" Books By David Logsdon

The February STFB newsletter featured "Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin" by long-time journalist and historian, David Logsdon who compiled and edited eyewitness accounts of the Battle of Franklin into a softbound book that STFB was selling. The most current revision of that book now includes material from nearly 100 diaries, letters, and other first person accounts along with 27 illustrations - maps, photos, & sketches - for \$12.

We initially stocked a dozen copies for orders from our STFB members. Those sold immediately and we had to order another dozen so that we would have copies to sell during the Opdycke Marker dedication and the STFB tour of the Battle of Thompson Station in late March. Those all sold immediately as well, so we then ordered two dozen.

Now, the publisher has plenty so we have no fear of not being able to ship one to you when you order. BUT, your order may take a little bit longer than usual if we run out of stock again.

Since the books reception was so enthusiastic, we are offering two more of Logsdon's books in the STFB newsletter and on our web site. They are compiled and edited from eyewitness

accounts of the early 1862 battles at Shiloh and at Fort Donelson. They are \$12 each.

"Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Shiloh" is compiled from the accounts of more than 100 men, women, and children who were there. It is softbound 8 1/2 X 11, 108 pages, 19 illustrations with a bibliography and index - \$12.

"Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Fort Donelson" is constructed from the accounts of nearly 90 soldiers who fought each other, and the doctors and nurses who tried to save the wounded. It is softbound 8 1/2 X 11, 122 pages, 31 illustrations with a bibliography and index - \$12.

All three of these books can be mail ordered w/check directly from STFB using the enclosed order form, or by check or credit card from the STFB web site at [www.franklin-stfb.org](http://www.franklin-stfb.org)

Logsdon has also done an "Eyewitnesses" book on Stones River which is out of print now, and he is also working on a fifth "Eyewitnesses" book on the Battle of Nashville. STFB will offer both as soon as they are available.

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!!!!!!!!

We are looking for STFB members with special skills and talents for future maintenance and repair of the Hyssop Hill house and property. If any of you have abilities as electricians, plumbers, carpenters, gardeners, or the like, please contact us at (615) 500-6612. If you own or work for a lawn maintenance company, let us know—the opportunities are large! Remember, Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization and the donation of your professional services is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

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 D. Logsdon	\$12.00	
	Eyewitness to the Battle of Shiloh by D. Logsdon	\$12.00	
	Eyewitness to the Battle of Ft. Donelson by D. 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>	

## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 19

Next BONPS meeting will be July 19 at the Nashville City Cemetery. The meeting starts at 6:30. For more information visit the Battle of Nashville Preservation Society website at [www.bonps.org](http://www.bonps.org).

July 20-22, 2001

A Civil War-era **Civilian Exhibit** will be on display at the **Fort Donelson National Battlefield** July 20-22, 2001, featuring more than 100 items of civilian clothing (men's, women's, and children's), shoes, bonnets, parasols, mourning jewelry, political "tickets", publications, Northern and Southern currency, photographs, and original newspaper articles concerning Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. For more information, call (931) 232-5706.

## STFB Board Members

Joe Smyth, President  
Suzanne Burns, Vice President  
Sam Huffman, Treasurer  
Sam Gant, Secretary  
Bobby Hargrove  
Lynn Dorris  
David Fraley  
Kim Hoover  
Herbert Harper

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