

## SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

**July 2005** 

### www.franklin-stfb.org

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

## Dear STFB member—

There is much rejoicing here in Franklin, as the announcement that Franklin's Charge has topped the \$2.5 million mark required to receive the City of Franklin's matching \$2.5 million, comes on the heels of the pay-off of the Collin's Farm.

Each success is a bit deceiving, however, as there are interest payments and closing costs still due on Franklin's Charge's Easter Flank property, as there are repair and stabilization costs outstanding on the Collins' Farm.

What we can say is that both properties have been taken out of the hands of the developers, and now out of the hands of the bankers. They will be safely held for now by us—the preservationists. The danger is past, but in the light of the morning after, we see the work that remains to be done—preservation, restoration, and interpretation.

Additionally, we must be on the watch for other opportunities for and other threats to the Franklin Battlefield. This is often a daunting task, but we understand our successes thus far have come from you, our membership, and we know you will forge ahead with us into the future.

Thank you for your support in the past, now, and for the future.

Joe Smyth

#### The Collins' Farmhouse

The Collins' Farmhouse once again sits on its 19<sup>th</sup> Century footprint free of its 20<sup>th</sup> Century appurtenances. The south wing still remains as a free-standing unit, but the kitchen wing was demolished by the huge pecan tree falling during the February storm. The upper and lower rooms added to the west end of the house early in the last century have been removed leaving the historic part of the house much as it was some 140 years ago.

For the time being, the once-open front porch remains clad in glass, and windows from a seventy- or seventy-five-year-old renovation appear throughout the house. The roof is weighted down by seven layers of asphalt roofing covering the old shake shingles, and a small room extension still protrudes in the back. City Codes require extensive foundation and structural repair before the house can be livable or used in any way, so it is being stabilized and will remain locked with no utilities connected. But with some generous donations and help, someday in the future the historic house will be returned

to its original appearance.

Robert Huff Construction Company (owned by an STFB member) was contracted to remove the debris and to stabilize the house. They have removed later additions to the historic house, finished enclosing the porch, replaced a rotted joist, and put new siding on the exposed end of the house. The new siding needs painting as does the whole house. Here is another volunteer project for STFB members to scrape, prime, and paint the house. Perhaps the historic house could be painted in Victorian colors as another step in returning it to its original appearance.



A work in progress... An updated photo showing the progress and post demolition of parts of the Collin's Farm House as of mid July

#### Thank You To STFB Members

To-date in 2005, STFB members have donated \$16,030 to the Franklins Charge initiative to purchase the golf course north of Carnton Plantation, and have pledged an additional \$8,500 to be paid in the coming months and years. Most of this \$24,530 support came after the URGENT letter we sent you all on June 20. These amounts are in addition to substantial support that STFB members made or pledged directly to Franklins Charge at local fund raising events.

The Board of Franklins Charge was in awe that the STFB membership could and would respond in this manner. The STFB Board tips our collective hat to all of you who care so much about what happens to the Franklin Battlefield. With your enduring support and constant vigilence, we will one day have a battlefield park.

## Good News from the County & City

Good News!! The County voted on July 11 in favor of giving \$10,000 the Franklins Charge Battlefield preservation effort. The symbolic gesture by this gift is far more important than the actual dollars received. It will hold us in good stead for quite some time to come. Thank you County Commissioner Mary Brockman for introducing and promoting this Commission action.

Under the leadership of Alderman Ernie Bacon, Franklin's Board of Mayor and Aldermen at their July 12 meeting received the news from Franklins Charge that the \$2,500,000 match had been met. As a result, Franklin's BOMA passed a resolution authorizing the issuance of bonds to cover the City's obligation of \$2,500,000. As he has done so many times in the past, Ernie Bacon was masterful. The closing is tentatively scheduled for the battle anniversary of November 30. Details to follow.

#### Collins' Farm TLC-DAY

On Saturday, July 9, the Collins' Farm grounds received some badly needed TLC—that's Tough, Laborious Cleanup. The laborers were few but the results were great. The TLC crew consisted of Tommy Burnett, Mike and Barbara Walker and their sons, Michael and John, Dan and Linda Mora, Sam Huffman, Sam Gant, and Chris Cuomo.

The cleanup concentrated on the entire grounds, including clearing out objects that would impede mowing. While taking the lead on individual projects, every member of the crew pitched in to help on other projects whether it was clearing away overgrowth, placing the benches, cutting trees and brush, digging out embedded stone, digging postholes, hauling brush, mowing, or the several other tasks that were done. A few days after the cleanup, the crew working on the farmhouse debris removal used a large backhoe to pull out stumps and other obstructions.

Other Collins' Farm TLC-Days will be planned. There is still much which must be done to finish cleaning up the grounds, but perhaps the biggest volunteer challenge is painting the historic Collins' Farmhouse.

The opportunity to take part in hands-on preservation work is offered to every member of STFB who lives in Williamson County or within easy driving distance of Franklin. You are invited to show your support of battlefield preservation by your donations to STFB and by your willingness to take part in the "Tough, Laborious Cleanup" of Collins' Farm, a significant site of the Battle of Franklin.

## Collins Farm Repair Funding

As you know from past newsletters, STFB has paid off the Collins Farm mortgage by using the insurance money from the storm damage last February, plus most of our reserve funds. We did make sure we had sufficient money to pay for stabilization repairs to the original house to protect it from the weather, and to remove the damaged modern additions to the house. That work is reported elsewhere in this newsletter. Our primary mission remains to preserve battlefield LAND throughout Williamson County, but we want to keep the

Collins Farm house as it 'generally looked' if that is at all possible to do without breaking the bank. The house is an important part of 'the appearance' of the battlefield. We don't foresee restoring the house interior, or opening the house to the public, or renting it.

Our challenge in the coming months and years is to recreate, as much as practical, the general external appearance of the original house. We will need your help on this. It will have to be done as funds become available rather than as one big repair project. We will conduct fund raising events later this year to pay for these on-going repairs and to replenish our 'war chest'.

So please keep the Collins Farm house in mind as you plan your year-end giving.

# Government vs. preservationists over possible Franklin school project

FRANKLIN,Tn--In 1996 when Battle Ground Academy decided to leave it's battlefield location in Franklin and move to a new site north of the city, preservationists were encouraged about the potential of converting some of the campus to a battlefield park. The prep school was started in 1894 on property considered near ground zero in the 1864 Battle of Franklin. Many of the educational buildings were becoming maintenance problems and the school needed more acreage precipitating its move. Now the Williamson Co. Dept. of Education sees the old campus location as a great place to build it's new "middle college high" facility. This school, designed for "students looking for a fresh start in their high school careers," according to it's web site, is now located in Nashville on the campus of a community college.

"Not so fast" say preservationists. Various groups have hoped the county would aggressively join the city's preservation efforts now making news in the rest of Franklin. However, those advocating taking the ground back for historical purposes knew they had a challenge when the county opened in 2003 it's multi million dollar public library also on the old campus grounds. Sam Huffman, a board member of STFB said, "We (STFB) think that our local governments should not build new structures on battlefield parcels that are public land, putting up new buildings and parking lots is simply not acceptable. It moves us in the same direction that has prevailed for the last 140 years."

But Director of Schools Rebecca Schwab has indicated she would like to see the County tear down some of the old academy buildings and build a new facility for the Middle College, rather than returning the land to its battlefield state. The County Commission had already endorsed renovating one of the buildings. School board member Ed Bailey said in The Nashville Tennessean, "Obviously, BGA determined it was better to abandon it (the old building). For the cost difference long term, it makes sense to tear it down and build a new building."

Thomas Cartwright of the Carter House museum notes that the Union forward lines were near the present day football field on the campus. Looking to the future he said, "hopefully some day there will be some type of memorial placed on that hallowed ground where brave Americans gave their lives for what they believed."

#### Sponsor a Battlefield Marker

On December 17, 1864, the Confederate rearguard, retreating from Nashville clashed with the Federal Cavalry advance of Knipe's Division across the outer perimeter of Ft. Granger. Brief, though fierce, and fought in terrible weather, this fight included both Federal and Confederate infantry, cavalry and artillery units and resulted in substantial casualties on both sides. Captain Volney Hobson, of Co. F, 9<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry was reportedly killed beneath the railroad bridge on Liberty Pike.

STFB invites a Civil War preservation group to sponsor a marker for the Retreat from Nashville action that took place at the Old Liberty Pike/CSX railroad underpass which was within the Ft. Granger complex. Should an organization or individual be unable to sponsor the entire marker, STFB invites contributions to a "Marker Fund" where funds accumulate until enough is available to purchase a marker.

# Franklin Battlefield makes Tennessee Endangered site list.

By Gregory L. Wade

NASHVILLE, Tennessee-The Tennessee Preservation Trust (TPT) announced it's 2005 endangered list of the top ten Tennessee historical sites at a recent Nashville press conference. Included in this list of ten are the Battle of Franklin sites located about twenty miles south of Nashville. Patrick McIntyre, Executive Director of the TPT, says the primary threat is lack of "formal protection." However, he is optimistic about the future with the work now being done on the eastern flank and the local efforts to save 110 acres now used as a golf course. Noting the potential value of tourism a preserved battlefield may bring, McIntyre said, "We must take the long term view in the importance of this type of industry. There is no expiration date for heritage tourism. On the other hand, a shopping center is only good for a few years." He cited other critical pieces of property in the Franklin area that are destined for develoment if not protected in the next few years.

Another threatened site with indirect ties to the Civil War is Mount Olivet Cemetery. The 1850s era Gothic style cemetery office and chapel, designed by Hugh C. Thompson who built other significant Nashville structures such as the Grand Ole Opry's Ryman Auditorium, is in very poor condition and may be demolished. Those interred in the cemetery include about 1500 Confederate soldiers as well as seven Confederate Generals and other well known state leaders.

In attendance at the press conference were civic leaders from across the state as well as preservationists and historians interested in saving Tennessee's historic treasures. This is the fifth year the organization has released its top ten endangered locations. While homes are often noted, there are a wide variety of structures including old mining sites, a 1920's era school named after Medal of Honor winner Alvin York and a

vacant former Sears store in Memphis with its Art Deco construction.

"Our goal as an organization is to bring state wide awareness to inspire local efforts. Some of these sites have organized preservation initiatives while others have positive potential. There is no point in listing a location if there is no potential of saving it," McIntyre stated. The list is selected by an anonymous committee made up of a cross section of the preservation community. Nominations to be considered are submitted by public and private groups interested in historical preservation.

The TPT is an independent, **non** profit organization based in Nashville and works closely with various state and local organizations. It is the Statewide Partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The group currently claims over 500 members.

For more on the Tennessee Preservation Trust, check out their website at: www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org

#### 2005 Reenactor's March

This years fifteen mile march will take place on *Saturday*, *October 22*, *2005*, rain or shine (preferably shine...). The route will again be the historical one between Rippa Villa Plantation (or close to it) northward, up U.S. Highway 31, to the Carter House, and/or Collins Farm. Funds raised will go towards rebuilding our "war chest" for reclaiming the Franklin Battlefield. Please consider sponsoring one of our marchers for this most worthy event! And watch future newsletters for developing information. Thank you! Please send your sponsorships to:

Save The Franklin Battlefield, P.O. Box 851, Franklin, TN 37065-0851

(And please write in the MEMO portion of your check, "For Reenactor's March")

## New & Renewing Members June 2005

Tom & Lynn Burnett Bert Chapman Hans G Eck Howard B Foshee Kevin Gray James O Harris Barbara Hinshaw Robert L Humphrey Trent Johnson Don & Debby Jurgensen Ronald & Marty Ligon R Martin McGirt Bob & Karen Pease John & Carol Petty Scott & Kathy Speedy	Brentwood, Edisto Island, West Point, Spanish Fort, Florence, Troy, Brentwood, Franklin, Franklin, China Spring, Franklin, Franklin, Franklin, Wartrace, Thompsons Sta	TN SC KY AL MI TN
Paul Timmerman	Issaquah,	WA

## News in Review June 2005

Local history to go high-tech thanks to grants — Franklin Review Appeal — 5/14/05 — FRANKLIN — Three federal grants totaling \$42,500 have been awarded to the city for upcoming historic preservation projects. The funds, given under the National historic Preservation Act through the Department of the Interior, will be used to reimburse the city and other organizations for upcoming historic preservation work and include: \$20,000 will be earmarked to help the city complete a digital survey of historic sites in the city's Urban Growth Boundary; \$10,000 will got to The Heritage Foundation of Franklin and Williamson County for updating the architectural design guidelines for the city's historic zoning overlay districts; \$12,500 will go to The Land Trust for Tennessee, Inc., to develop the preservation component of a land protection plan for Leiper's and Snow creeks' watersheds.

City will find money elsewhere to buy country club—
The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." — 5/16/05 —
FRANKLIN — Last week, aldermen decided against raising the city's hotel/motel tax—saying it wasn't fair to keep hitting the hotel industry up for cash when the city needs money.
Franklin's share of the Country Club property, which is considered the eastern flank of the Battle of Franklin, will be \$2.5 million—if the local preservationists raise the other half. The city will borrow \$2 million of that. The other \$500,000 will be taken from the city's general fund—and other projects will have to be prioritized, said Alderman Ernie Bacon, chairman of the city's Budget and Finance Advisory Committee.

New fire station, streetscape likely won't alter property tax — The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." — 5/17/05 — FRANKLIN — A proposed city budget for next year calls for a stable property tax rate, includes construction money for parks and a new fire station, and will get the proposed street-scape enhancement program under way. There's also money for the much talked about Pizza Hut purchase on Columbia Avenue. The site is believed to be the spot where Confederate Gen. Patrick Cleburne died during the Battle of Franklin.

Study: Historic sites aren't big tourist draw - The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." - 5/19/05 — FRANKLIN -Only one of every three people who visited Franklin's two major historic sites in 2004—the Carter House and Carnton Plantation—came from outside Williamson County to do so. Jim Lighthizer, president of the Civil War Preservation Trust, doesn't blame non-Williamson County residents for staying away. Though one of the war's bloodiest engagements happened here on Nov. 30, 1864, Lighthizer said Civil War tourists view Franklin as a disappointment and not worth making a trip because commercial development takes up battlefield space. However, Lighthizer and other Franklin preservationists are counting on recent purchases to improve tourism figures. They point to the planned \$5 million purchase of the 110-acre Country Club of Franklin, which sits adjacent to Carnton, as well as the \$300,000 sale of the Pizza Hut on Columbia Avenue battlefield ground, as steps toward attracting more people.

Franklin getting ink in 'Daily Newspaper of the Civil War" – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 5/19/05 —

FRANKLIN – Joe Avalon is the co-founder and co-editor of one of the more popular Civil War Web sites, civilwarinteractive.com, which he bills as "the Daily Newspaper of the Civil War." Avalon is launching a special Web site accessed from the main page of "Newspaper" devoted solely to Franklin and its preservation efforts. He says that this web site is "about the new Franklin. We really feel that it's sincere...The problem is the Civil War enthusiasts throughout the country had been disappointed by Franklin so often that it's a little tough to convince them that it's real." Avalon further contends that interest in the Battle of Franklin has always been there among the ranks of Civil War enthusiasts because of the battle's importance to the Civil War.

Mayor: 'negative symbol' will fall quickly – The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." – 5/19/05 — FRANKLIN – Plans are moving forward for the city to buy the Pizza Hut property, which is in the area where intense fighting occurred during the Nov. 30, 1864, Battle of Franklin. This week, a city committee endorsed a contract between the city and the current property owner, moving the matter to a full board vote next. When it comes time to close on the property, Miller hopes to have equipment on site to start tearing the building down that day. Miller's idea is to tear down the building, pull up the parking lot and any asphalt, and convert the property to a grassy area.

Pizza Hut owners accepted offer as 'good corporate citizens' – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 5/22/05 — FRANKLIN – When the owners of the Columbia Avenue Pizza Hut accepted the city's offer of \$300,000 earlier this month, Mayor Tom Miller called it a fair deal. Based on examination of comparable prices of real estate properties in Franklin, the city, in fact, appears to have found a bargain. The site has a number of factors that could have driven up its potential price.

State tourism agency hopes to attract more Civil War interest – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 5/30/05 — FRANKLIN – State tourism officials are planning to fight harder to bring in more Civil War tourists. Susan Hinchcliff Whitaker, commissioner for the state Department of Tourist Development, said last week state officials will meet in early June to discuss having the state's Civil War sites included as part of a larger driving trail/map encompassing sites in several other states — Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina and West Virginia. With 38 battles, the second-most of any state behind Virginia's 123 battles according to the American Battlefield Protection Program, Tennessee would seem to be a natural fit for a statewide driving trail map.

Local sites featured in preservation conference — *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." — 6/5/05 — FRANK-LIN — While Tennessee preservation as a whole takes the focus for this week's International Heritage Development Conference in Nashville, there will be an emphasis on Williamson and Maury counties. The conference will focus on how heritage development, conservation and revitalization "can improve the quality of life for an entire community." One workshop in the conference will include tours of sites in Franklin and Brentwood such as the Carnton Plantation, Harlinsdale Farm, the Indian burial mounds at Brentwood's Fewkes Park, and Boiling Springs Academy. A separate

workshop will be devoted to Spring Hill and include trips for attendees to Ferguson Hall, Rippavilla Plantation and Oaklawn Plantation.

New Middle College could be built on old BGA campus — The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." — 6/9/05 — FRANKLIN — The county school board will consider the possibility of tearing down part of the old Battle Ground Academy campus on Columbia Avenue to make way for a new Middle College High School facility in its place. Some wondered whether tearing down Peoples Hall would create a political problem with local historic preservationists, but the board ultimately decided to pursue the idea of replacing Peoples with a new building. Members gave Director of Schools Rebecca Schwab the green light on the notion unless opposition bubbles up on the preservation issue.

## News in Review July 2005

Residents of Winstead Hill area balk at historic designation — Franklin Review Appeal — 6/18/05 — FRANK-LIN — Faced with opposition from citizens and the lawyers of landowners in the Winstead Hill/Harrison House district, the city's Historic Zoning Commission this week backed off from recommending that area receive a historic zoning overlay designation.

Resolution seeks to protect parkland forever — Franklin Review Appeal — 6/29/05 — FRANKLIN — Alderman Dennis Phillips proposes conservation easements on parks across Franklin to protect them from development at any time. A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits the use of land in order to protect its conservation value. This easement would ensure that Franklin's parks always remained parks.

Senate panel hears case for battlefield — The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." — 6/30/05 — FRANKLIN — Though the Battle of Franklin is one of the Civil War's "lesser known" conflicts, it should be included as part of a Nation Park Service feasibility study because of its significance in American history, Franklin Mayor Tom Miller testified Tuesday to a congressional subcommittee on national parks. The legislation for this project — as well as other bills for national park projects — will be considered by the committee and then go before the full Senate for a vote later this year. If approved, the stud y would include all the historic sites in Williamson County and would still need congressional approval before moving forward.

County may join in battlefield effort — Franklin Review Appeal — 7/2/05 — FRANKLIN — County Commissioner Mary Brockman has scaled back her request for \$50,000 from Williamson County to help a nonprofit preservationist group buy the Country Club of Franklin and, instead, asked the county for \$10,000. That \$10,000 resolution, which would be funded through a \$70,000 tourism budget rather than the county's general fund, passed unanimously this week by members of the county Property Committee. If the resolution passes later this month by the full County Commission, the money would represent the first financial commitment the county has given the project.

Effort to reclaim history is in itself historic — The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." — 7/3/05 — FRANKLIN — With a July deadline for raising \$2.5 million arriving this past Friday, battlefield preservationists in Franklin's Charge have begun celebrating, confident they can pare down the \$195,000 they lack plus cover an additional \$350,000 in anticipated interest payments. With just a few weeks before the end of the month, they appear to be well on their way by raising an addition \$40,000 in cash and pledges at a Thursday fund-raiser at Carnton Plantation.

'Widow' give new life to Historic Carnton — The Tennessean, "Williamson A.M." — 7/5/05 — FRANKLIN — If Robert Hicks' historical fiction The Widow of the South captures the American popular imagination as officials and publishing people anticipate, the novel could propel Franklin, Carrie McGavock and efforts led by Hicks to create a battlefield park here to a worldwide audience. As of this week, Warner Books has received 199,000 presale orders from booksellers for hardback editions of The Widow of the South, which goes on sale September 1.

Future of old BGA campus still unclear — Franklin Review Appeal — 7/13/05 — FRANKLIN — Marked by a storied past and some recent controversies, the immediate future for Battle Ground Academy's old campus along Columbia Avenue won't likely involve ever being sold to developers for new development, county commissioners say. That's about the only consensus among some commissioners about what should become of the site. "I just don't think there's any doubt that preservation is a key issue to the BGA property," said County Commissioner Mary Brockman, chairwoman of the County Property Committee. Commissioner Tom Moon stated that he wants to ensure that whatever happens takes the school's historic connection into account and that it is battlefield property, but he wants to see the valuable land put to good use rather than sit vacant. He suggested that perhaps the future for the old BGA property might involve a throwback to its past as an academy. Commissioners voted in support of a possible Williamson County Schools plan to renovate Peoples Hall to house the county's Middle College, a non-traditional high school program.

# Williamson Co. Contributes to Franklin Efforts

FRANKLIN, Tenn-The Williamson County Tennessee Board of Commissioners recently voted to contribute \$10,000 to help preserve Battle of Franklin acreage. The funds, are to be used for the purchase of the Country Club of Franklin which preservationists plan to convert back to it's original battlefield state. Williamson County is home to some of the fastest growing areas of Tennessee increasing the sense of urgency among battlefield preservation groups. Franklin is the county seat.

The County has not been active in the Country Club acquisition effort and preservationists had originally hoped for a \$50,000 donation. However, there was opposition by some who questioned the long term plans for the project. The measure passed by a 17-6 vote.

#### Save the Franklin Battlefield Membership / Renewal / Order Form

Name(s)				
Address			City	
State	Zip	Phone	E-mail	

QTY	ITEM	PRICE EACH	TOTAL
	Annual Membership: Individual \$20 ~ Family \$30 ~ Corporate \$50 (circle one)		
	Donation: Marker Fund ~ Land Purchase (circle one)		
1999 & 2000 Day By Day Civil War Calendar Set  "Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville" ~ limited & numbered reprint edition, hardcover			
	Commemorative Belt Buckle	\$10.00	
NEW!! ~ Battle of Franklin Map ~ laminated & in full color		\$6.00	
Save The Franklin Battlefield Bumpersticker			
"Eyewitness to the Battle of Franklin" ~ David Logsdon, paperback  "Eyewitness to the Battle of Shiloh" ~ David Logsdon, paperback  "Eyewitness to the Battle of Ft. Donalson" ~ David Logsdon, paperback		\$12.00	
		\$12.00	
		\$12.00	
	"Eyewitness to the Battle of Stones River" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	NEW!! ~ "Eyewitness to the Battle of Nashville" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	Cleburne or Forrest Prints, signed by the artist (circle one ~ or both for \$30)	\$20.00	
	ORDER SUBTOTAL		
	SHIPPING & HANDLING (items only) ~ under 10.00	\$1.00	
	\$10 to 24.99	\$2.95	
	\$25 and up	\$4.50	
	ORDER TOTAL		

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

**July 2005** 



PO Box 851 Franklin, TN 37065-0851



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