



ETOWAH VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*Promoting and enhancing the awareness and preservation of
the heritage and traditions of Bartow County*

Volume 38, July 2001

P.O. Box 1886, Cartersville, GA 30120

Phone: 770-606-8862

PUSHING IRON

EVHS and Red Top Mountain Succeed in Bringing the History of Bartow County's Iron Industry to Life

On May 12th, visitors to Red Top Mountain State Park had the opportunity to witness something that hasn't been seen in public in Bartow County for over a century—iron production. The demonstration was the highlight of "Hills of Iron," a day-long event celebrating the iron industry in Bartow County, sponsored by the Etowah Valley Historical Society and Red Top Mountain State Park.

Participating in the live demonstration was park superintendent James Hamilton, who donned protective attire to join members of Alabama Art Casting as they melted and poured iron for castings. "It was great to introduce it back to the county, and a real rush for me," Hamilton said. Those who witnessed the demonstration agreed it was "incredible."

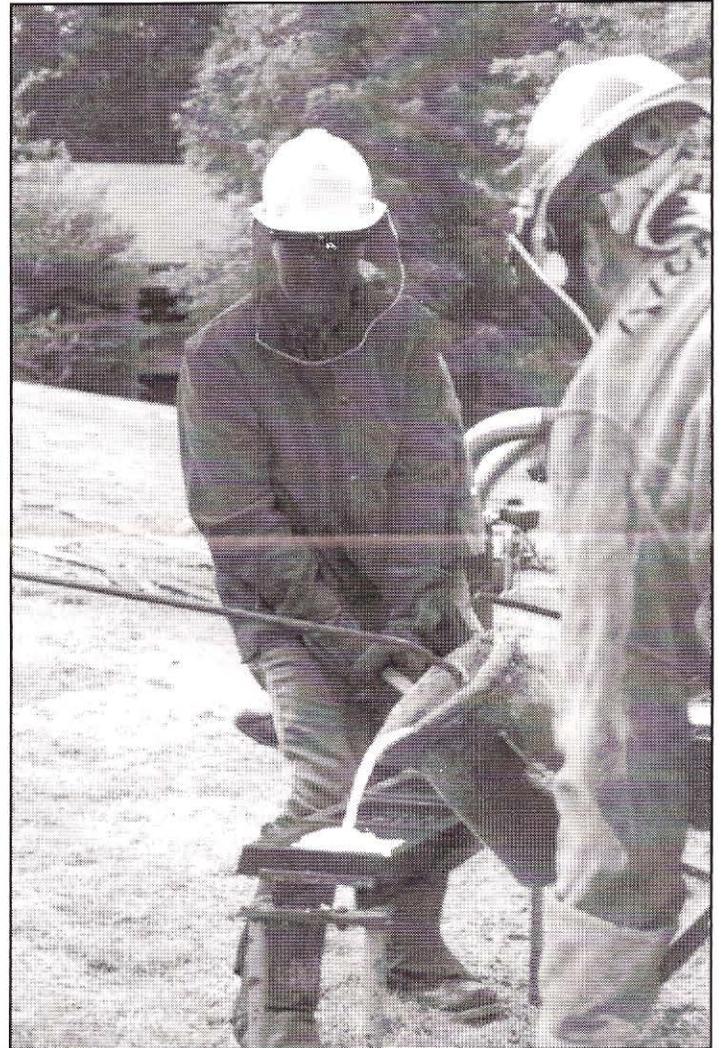
The day began with a framed photo exhibit at the lodge documenting the history of the iron industry in Bartow County. The attractive display was the result of many hours of work by EVHS members Guy Parmenter, Michael Garland, and David and Chantal Parker. The display also included a table of ore samples collected in Bartow County.

Visitors to Hills of Iron also enjoyed a mid-morning tour of Iron Hill, once a community of miners and the site of extensive mining operations. "This site has not been used much since the mid-1980s when it was used as a campground," Hamilton said, adding that plans are currently underway to develop the area into a biking trail. "It's a seldom-seen part of the park, but it's important to the history of the iron industry in Bartow County." Though vegetation covered the once-exposed site, visitors got a sense of just how extensive mining was when the tour ended in an open cut mine sixty feet deep.

The event continued in the afternoon when a large crowd gathered at Cooper's furnace to hear local historian David Archer relate some of the history of Mark Cooper and the town of Etowah, which now rests under Allatoona Lake, just behind the dam. Archer's focus was on the financial ups and downs of the Cooper operation and the difficulties the company had in remaining solvent.

Following Archer, Dr. Nick Honerkamp, director of the Jeffrey L. Brown Institute of Archaeology at the University

*(See **Pushing Iron**, continued on page 6)*



Red Top Mountain State Park superintendent James Hamilton joined members of Alabama Art Casting for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to relive history by pouring iron during "Hills of Iron," a day-long event celebrating the iron industry in Bartow County on May 12, 2001.



Founded 1972

Officers

- President
Guy Parmenter
- Treasurer
Robert Wilson
- Recording Secretary
Bob Redwine

Directors

- Guy Parmenter, Chairman
- Bob Redwine
- Tish Johnson
- Pat Mansfield
- Wayne Rice
- Mary Siniard
- Robert Wilson
- Wilma Cantrell
- Ed Hill

Committees & Chairpersons

- Allatoona Pass
Ed Hill
Guy Parmenter
- Cemetery Documentation
Mary Siniard
- Cemetery Preservation
Carl Etheridge
- Courthouse Office
Linda Trentham
- Genealogy
Wilma Cantrell
- Historic Awareness Signs
Dianne Tate
- Newsletter
David Parker
Chantal Parker
- Preservation
John Lewis
- Research
Carolyn Parmenter
- Tour of Homes
Tricia Simmons
Linda Denham
- Website
Michael Garland

The EVHS office and research facilities are located in the 1903 courthouse at 115 West Cherokee Avenue in downtown Cartersville.

Visit EVHS online at www.evhsonline.org

Email evhs@evhsonline.org

Family Tree Climbers Highlight Barry Colbaugh

The Etowah Valley Family Tree Climbers would like to highlight one of our members, Barry Colbaugh. Barry is an active member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stiles-Akin Camp #670. He is an enthusiastic re-enactor and has donated his time to several projects EVHS has worked on. To help us recognize our Confederate Ancestors, Barry has installed the government markers for several of us.

When we started our library at the Old Gold Dome Courthouse, Barry was one of the first to donate books. He has donated Civil War books, Alabama and Georgia county histories, and several genealogy books. This last year Barry donated over 50 books to the EVHS library.

The Family Tree Climbers want to thank Barry for his strong devotion to the preservation of Bartow County's history and the outstanding support he has given to us. Whenever we need help—no matter what the task—Barry always answers.

Thank you, Barry, from all of us at the EVHS Family Tree Climbers.



Barry Colbaugh has proven to be an invaluable friend to EVHS during the many years of his membership in the historical society.

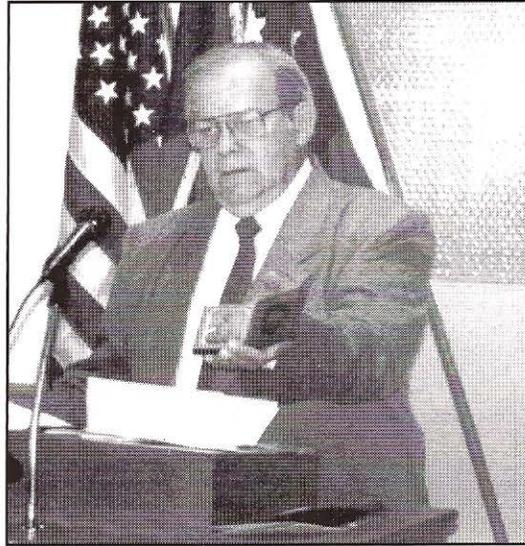
Above: As an avid re-enactor, Barry has presided, with the SCV, at numerous ceremonies and memorials recognizing the service of Confederate soldiers.

Left: In 1999, Barry was contacted through the SCV by Jim Skinner of Jacksonville, North Carolina, about placing a government-issued Confederate marker on his great-grandfather's grave in Oak Hill. Assisting Barry is David Parker, who now owns the house built by Augustus Skinner in the 1860s. Many other descendants of Confederate soldiers have benefitted from Barry's and the SCV's concerted effort to recognize all Confederate graves in Bartow County by placing markers.

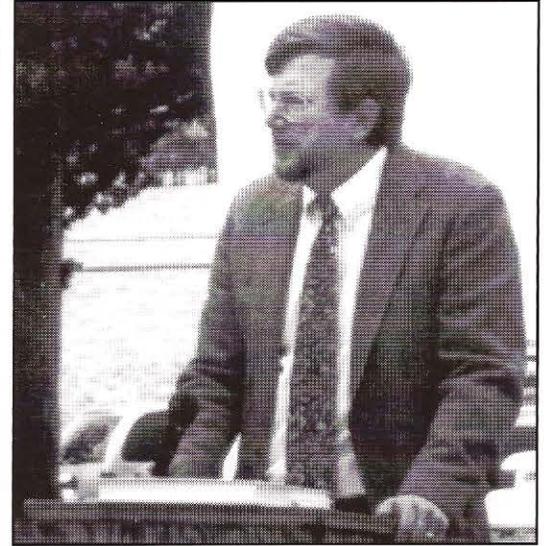
Barry Colbaugh is Adjutant of the Stiles-Akin Camp #670 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Visit their website at www.randomc.com/~nash/

EVHS MEMBERS TAKE THE FLOOR

Historians and authors Phil Secrist and David Parker aren't ones to sit around on their academic laurels. The Kennesaw professors, also members of EVHS, visited the community during Confederate Memorial Day Ceremonies in May to help ensure that old times here are not forgotten.



Dr. Phil Secrist



Dr. David Parker

At the 1903 gold-domed courthouse, during ceremonies sponsored by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, P.M.B. Young chapter, Dr. Phil Secrist spoke of his great-grandfather, Sgt. Philip Moyer Secrist, of the Tenth Virginia Infantry. The elder Secrist enlisted in May 1861 at Harpers Ferry, a member of Stonewall Jackson's Third Division, was captured at Spotsylvania in 1862, and served the last year of the war in New York's Elmira Prison Camp. Wounded twice, at Cedar Mountain and at Chancellorsville, Secrist lived to be 89 years old, and died the same year our Phil was born. It is no wonder, then, that Phil considers himself "a real link to the past." At ceremonies held at the Cassville Confederate Cemetery, sponsored by the Cassville Heritage Association, Dr. David Parker was the guest speaker. His retelling of the life and times of David Bailey Freeman, the youngest Confederate soldier, helped "give a name and identity to those soldiers who lie in unmarked graves."

Digging Graves and Dowsing Ghosts Genealogy Meeting July 12, 2001

Graves and ghosts were the topic of discussion at the July 12th meeting of the Family Tree Climbers when they welcomed guest speaker Carl Etheridge. Carl is Chief Ranger with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Allatoona Lake, a past EVHS president, and chairman of the EVHS Cemetery Preservation committee.

Carl's talk focused on his work to preserve abandoned cemeteries and the unconventional method of "dowsing" he uses to locate unmarked graves. Dowsing uses thin metal rods held in the hands which react to objects buried in the ground. An ancient art, it was often practiced early in the last century to locate underground water. But that's not all it can find.

"Everything can be identified by its signature," Carl explained. "That's how many times the rods swing over an object." In this way, he says, he can identify human or animal remains, wood, rock, paper, plastic, and just about everything else, including gold.

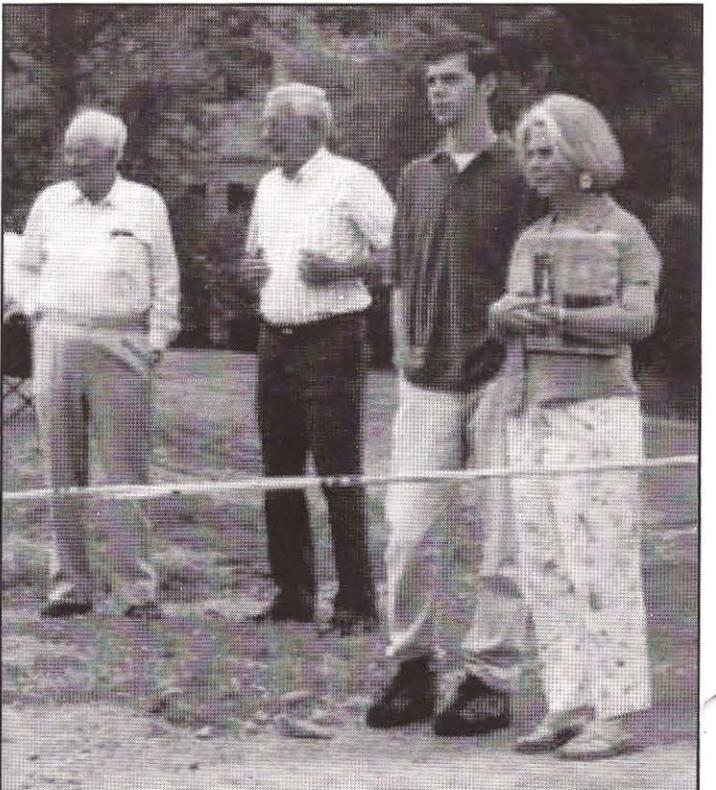
While not everyone takes dowsing seriously, Carl uses it routinely in his preliminary investigations of burial sites, which he says can be more conclusive than the conventional method of probing. Rocks, debris, and compacted dirt can undermine a probe's effectiveness. Such was the case when Carl attempted to probe for known burials in a cemetery where grazing cattle had compacted the ground. "It was liking trying to push through concrete," Carl said.

On at least two occasions, Carl has been put to the test by skeptical homeowners who called on him to locate suspected Confederate graves. Finding them, he was then asked to locate known animal burials—a pet pony, and a dog—which he succeeded in doing. In the case of the dog, when Carl marked the spot with a flag, the homeowner remarked that he had placed the flag right in the middle of the dog's back!

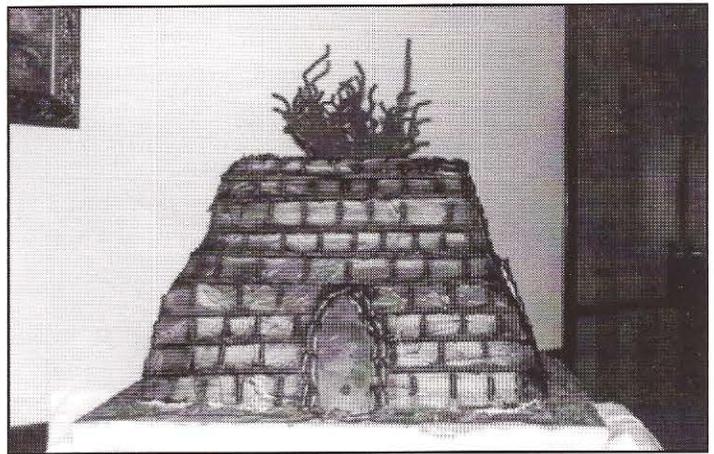
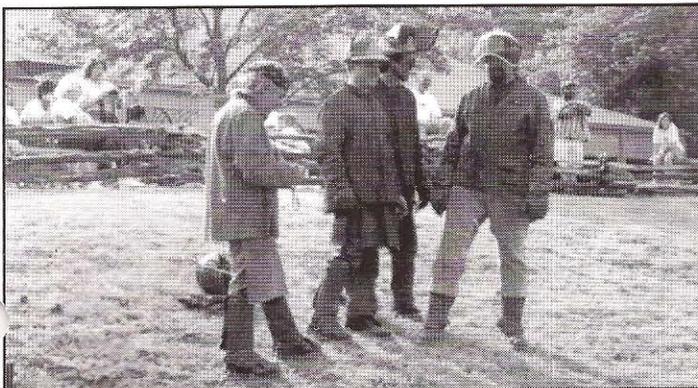
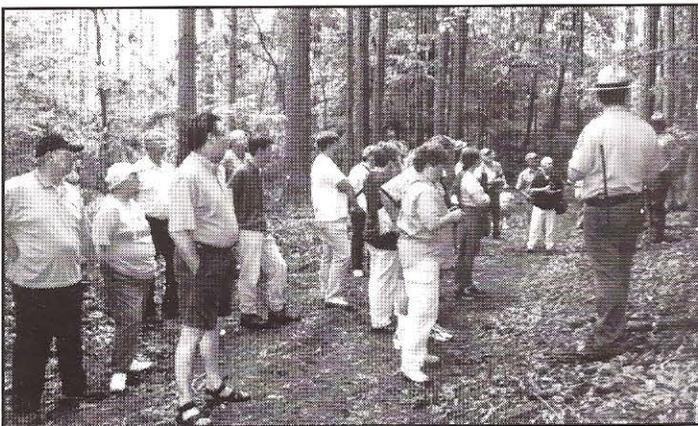
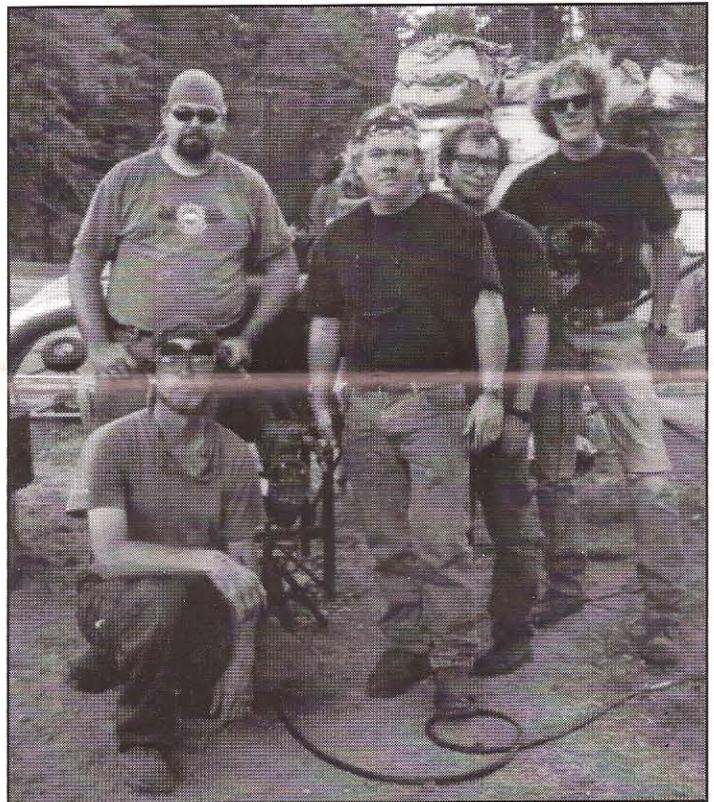
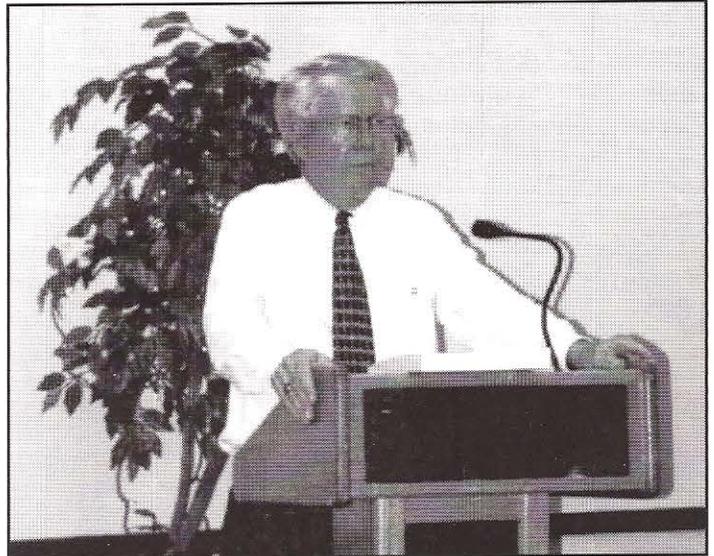
Carl isn't sure how dowsing works, but theorizes it has something to do with the body's natural energy and its connectivity through the rods to the earth. That makes sense when you consider that science has established that objects and people emit electrical charges, some more than

*(See **Graves & Ghosts**, continued on page 6)*

HILLS OF IRON



MAY 12, 2001



(Pushing Iron, continued from page 1)

of Tennessee at Chattanooga and author of *Industry and Technology in Antebellum Tennessee: The Archaeology of Bluff Furnace*, described the operation of 19th century iron furnaces. Honerkamp's detailed description vividly depicted the grueling working conditions of iron production, from the laborers who hammered ore-bearing rocks into manageable pieces, to the "chargers" who loaded ore and fuel into the top of the furnace.

The day-long event concluded with a lecture by James R. Bennett, Alabama Secretary of State and author of *Tannehill and the Growth of the Alabama Iron Industry*. The Tannehill tri-furnace ironworks were constructed around 1860 by Moses Stroup, the son of Jacob Stroup. Moses expanded his father's ironworks at Etowah and partnered with Mark Cooper to develop the Etowah Manufacturing and Mining Company before migrating to Alabama in 1849, where he constructed three more ironworks.

In Bartow County, the Stroups' prominence as ironmasters was eclipsed by the success of Cooper's operation. "You're more familiar with Mark Cooper," Bennett told the audience. "But over in Alabama we're more familiar with Moses Stroup."

From the morning tour of Iron Hill to the huge furnace-shaped cake featured at a dessert reception following Bennett's talk, Hills of Iron delighted visitors and proved a great success.

"I was very pleased with today's turnout," said Red Top interpretive ranger Roy Queen. "I can see this as an annual event."

Guy Parmenter also sees the potential for an annual Hills of Iron celebration. "We were extremely happy to help sponsor this event. It was an incredible opportunity to see a working iron furnace, and we would love to see the program continued," Parmenter said. "Programs like this help us achieve our mission of educating the public about Bartow County's history and heritage."

"We've entered a new era at Red Top," James Hamilton said of the collaborative effort of the many people involved in developing the Hills of Iron program. "A lot of people spent a lot of time putting this together. Much of the credit is given to the Tannehill folks. But we simply could not have done it without the partnership of the Etowah Valley Historical Society, which developed the wonderful exhibit and the publications for the program." EVHS was also instrumental in obtaining speakers and bringing Alabama Art Casting to Red Top.

Editors Note: Many more photographs of the day's events can be viewed at our website, at www.evhsonline.org Look for Hills of Iron on the Projects Page.



(Graves & Ghosts, continued from page 1)

others—the reason why they are susceptible to lightning strikes. "There's a lot I don't understand," he said. "I just know it works."

Works too well, perhaps. Once, Carl was contacted by homeowners to unknowingly dowse for spirits. While dowsing, Carl encountered "something I never encountered before in my life." Chills and shivers accompanied the sudden outward pull of the dowsing rods just as the homeowner reported seeing a ghostly shimmer pass by. Carl found a number of unmarked burials on the property and determined that the house had been built over a cemetery. Nearby, a separate section of the cemetery had been paved-over as part of a road. "They're probably slave burials," Carl speculated. Slaves were often buried apart from but close to family cemeteries. "We may never know how many burials are there."

Carl takes ghostly encounters in stride, almost as a matter of fact. Once, when he was bent over a ground-level slab attempting to highlight the letters for identification, more than once he felt the eerie sensation of being watched. The slab had been buried under six inches of soil and would probably never have been found but for Carl. "You were lost once," he assured the unseen presence. "I promise you will not be lost again." With that, he went back to his work, discovering later that the grave belonged to Miss Lettie Rogers, who had died in her forties.

Recently, Carl came to the rescue of an unmarked nineteenth century burial in a family plot slated for reinterment in Oak Hill. Carl had dowsed a small suspected plot that rejected probes. Unable to verify the burial, archaeologists excavating the site left with what they were certain were all the remains. Carl stayed, however, and uncovered the coffin remains, including the necklace beads of a little girl. It was a moving experience for Carl, who took delight in reuniting the child with her family.

Carl's expertise in cemetery preservation extends far beyond merely locating graves. Based on excavated coffin remains and other factors, he can sometimes date a burial, even to the season of interment, and speculate as to the economic status of an individual.

Following Carl's talk, Linda Cochran announced the winner of the door prize. Gentry Parker received a beginner's genealogy kit.

EVHS Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Society will be October 6, 2001 at 6:00 p.m. Business will include the election of three new members to the Board of Directors. A nominating committee will be appointed by the President. Members do have the opportunity to submit their own nominations to President Guy Parmenter in writing on or before September 6, 2001.

The General & Andrews Raiders

Genealogy Meeting

June 14, 2001

Guest speaker to the June Family Tree Climbers Meeting was Joe Head, Dean of Enrollment Services and Director of Admissions at Kennesaw State University and author of *The General: The Great Locomotive Dispute*.

A Bartow County native and local historian, Joe is also the author of an article on Chain Gang Hill, the prison work camp located on Highway 113 in the 1940's, which appeared in the Summer 2000 issue of the EVHS Newsletter. Before the meeting got down to serious business, a number of people shared their memories of the camp and asked Joe questions.

Joe's talk was on the Great Locomotive Chase, one of the most exciting episodes in the Civil War. On April 12, 1862, the General was making a routine run from Atlanta to Chattanooga on the Western & Atlantic, one of the most important parts of the Confederacy's railroad system. Early that morning, the train arrived at Big Shanty (now Kennesaw), where the crew stopped to have breakfast at the Lacy Hotel. While the train was empty, Union spy James Andrews boarded the General with 19 soldiers from an Ohio regiment. Their plan was to destroy the W&A by hijacking the train and riding north, ripping up the tracks, burning bridges, and cutting telegraph wires along the way.

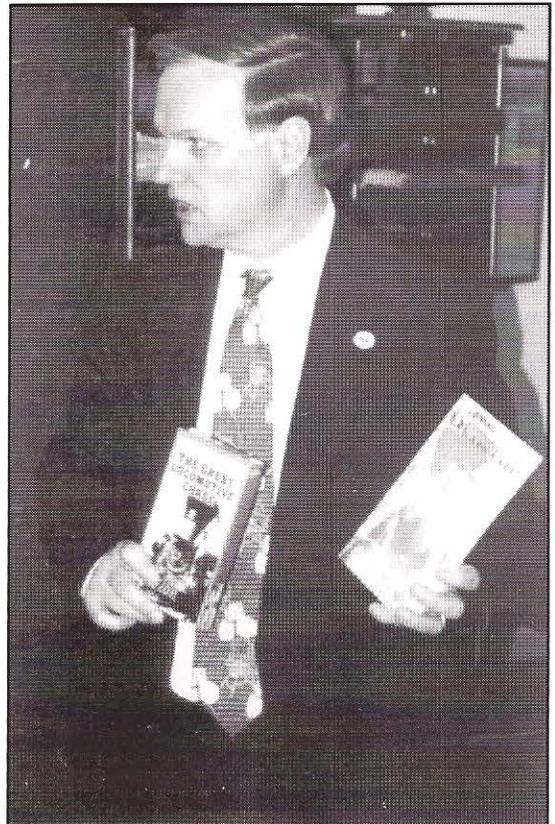
As the hijacked General headed north, it was pursued by conductor William Fuller and others, anxious to stop the train and limit the damage they knew Andrews could inflict. The chase finally came to an end a couple of miles above Ringgold, when the General ran out of fuel (water and wood). The raiders were captured and seven were hanged, including Andrews.

Joe's talk covered many aspects of the chase, including the 20th-century dispute over ownership of the General and the special role Bartow County played in the episode. Joe rightly calls Bartow "The Heart of the Chase": more of the Chase was in Bartow than any other county (43 of the entire 87 miles); all three of the locomotives giving chase to the General were acquired in Bartow (the Yonah, one of Mark Anthony Cooper's locomotives, the William R. Smith, and the Texas); and an unexpected delay in Kingston allowed the Confederates to catch up with the stolen train.

As Joe tells it, Kingston switchkeeper Uriah Stephens said he didn't believe Andrews's story, that he and his men were carrying a special load of ammunition and powder to General Bureaugard in Mississippi, and refused to switch the track. Andrews's men finally made the switch themselves, but only after a delay of an hour or more. Because of the delay, the Raiders would have no time to destroy the tracks and bridges, as they had planned; instead, they had to focus all their energies on simply getting away. Joe said he did not know much of Uriah Stephens's connection to Bartow County other than this story. A member of the audience told Joe that Stephens is buried in Oak Hill, in the largely unrecorded old Ebenezer section, hence reinforcing Joe's point about the importance of Bartow County in the Chase.

Joe ended his presentation with a quick but fascinating account of "The Great Locomotive Chase," a popular movie released by Disney in 1956.

The General: The Great Locomotive Dispute is available for purchase in the EVHS office or by visiting the EVHS Online Bookstore at www.evhsonline.org.

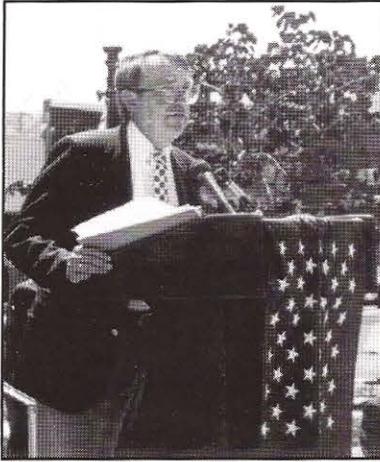


Joe Head is Dean of Enrollment Services and Director of Admissions at Kennesaw State University and author of *The General: The Great Locomotive Dispute*.

Don't Forget to support our 2001 Tour of Homes Sponsors!

New Riverside Ochre Vulcan Materials Phoenix Air Rush Home Century Bank

Mark your calendars. The EVHS 2001 Tour of Homes is scheduled for November 3rd & 4th.



**Cooper Monument
Rededication
April 28, 2001**

Master of Ceremonies David Archer presided over the formal unveiling and rededication of the Cooper Monument in Friendship Plaza. Among the honored guests and speakers were Governor Roy Barnes, Congressman Bob Barr, Cartersville Mayor Sam Smith, Bartow County Administrator Steve Bradley, EVHS president Guy Parmenter, and History Center director Michele Rodgers. The event was sponsored by the City of Cartersville, Bartow County, the Etowah Valley Historical Society, the Etowah Foundation History Center, and Mark Cooper

This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Olin Tatum

Etowah Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 1886
Cartersville, Georgia 30120
www.evhsonline.org

Inside ...

- 1... Pushing Iron
- 2... Meet Barry Colbaugh
- 3... Graves & Ghosts
- 4... Hills of Iron
- 7... Family Tree Climbers
and much more...