



THE COURIER



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TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

FALL 2017

THREE CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDED: TWO NEW THC SITES OPEN THIS FALL

By Dan Brown, State Historic Sites Program Director

2017 has been an unprecedented time of success for the Tennessee Historical Commission's State Historic Sites Program, with three capital projects totaling nearly \$6 million dollars, and the long-awaited grand opening of the two newest state historic sites capping off a busy year. In addition, an increase in funding for operating grants to the state sites has been made for the first time in a decade.

Funding for three capital projects for state historic sites was provided in Governor Haslam's budget and approved by the Tennessee General Assembly during the legislative session. The projects include a new \$3.2 million dollar visitor center at the Carter House State Historic Site in Franklin, Williamson County. \$2.3 million has been allocated for the next phase of restoration work at Burra Burra Mine State Historic Site in Ducktown, Polk County. And \$400,000 was approved for barn restoration and other improvements at Cragfont State Historic Site in Castalian Springs in Sumner County. In addition, a recurring increase of \$250,000 was included to fund the partial operating grants that the Commission provides to the non-profits that operate the state sites.

At the Carter House State Historic Site in Franklin, funding was approved for an approximately 10,000 square foot new visitor's center at the site. Operated by the Battle of Franklin Trust (BOFT,) the Carter House is THC's most visited state historic site - with nearly 50,000 guests per year. A state of the art visitor center is the centerpiece of the Master Plan developed by the THC and the BOFT in 2015. "The demolition of the former school gym on the property and the associated

landscape restoration completed last year was the first phase," notes THC Executive Director Patrick McIntyre. An extensive display, interpretive space, and facilities will provide much needed support for the growing numbers of visitors. The project includes the removal of the old center, which was built very near the location of the Federal lines. This will allow for additional restoration and enhancement of the historic landscape. This is an extraordinary addition to the Franklin community's and the state of Tennessee's vibrant heritage tourism.

The \$2.3M Burra Burra Mine State Historic Site project is the phase two completion of the rehabilitation of the twelve historical mining related, late 19th and early 20th century industrial structures at this Ducktown historic site. This project will expand public access to a rare intact historical mining site as it completes the stabilization and preservation of these important structures.

The \$400,000 capital funded project at the Cragfont State Historic Site in Castalian Springs will address the stabilization and preservation of two historic barns and other site improvements. Cragfont has recently

grown with an active community interface and these barns will eventually be sensitively developed for public events. Cragfont recently hosted a yearly fundraiser on the grounds that featured seated dining and live entertainment for approximately 500 patrons.

Hawthorn Hill State Historic Site in Castalian Springs, Sumner County (495 Old Hwy 25) opened to the public on Saturday, September 30th. It is being operated by the Bledsoe's Lick Historical Association (BLHA,) in addition to their longstanding operation of the nearby Wynnewood State Historic Site and administration of the Castalian Springs Mounds State Site. This c. 1806 masonry I-house with a rare hall and parlor floor plan has been undergoing restoration for the past three years. The interior has been restored to its original hall and parlor plan. Much of the early interior stenciling and wall finishes have survived and have been revealed and conserved or professionally restored, following paint analysis. The site's interior is being interpreted with no furniture, so that the focus is on the architecture and the extraordinary interior

Projects, continued on page 5

TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION GRANTS

The Tennessee Historical Commission has awarded thirty-two matching grants from the Historic Preservation Fund allocated to community and civic organizations for projects that support the preservation of historic and archaeological resources.

Awarded annually, 60% of the project funds are from the federal Historic

Preservation Fund and 40% of project funds come from the grantee. Grants are competitive and this year the THC staff reviewed 51 applications with funding requests totaling approximately \$900,000, significantly more than the amount of funding available.

THC Grants, continued on page 2

The Tennessee Historical Commission will hold its next meeting at the McMinn County Living Heritage Museum's Exhibition Hall, at 9:00 AM, at 522 W. Madison Ave., Athens, TN, 37371.

**THC Grants, continued from page 1**

This year's selection included building and archaeological surveys, design guidelines for historic districts, rehabilitation of historic buildings, posters highlighting the state's archaeology and training for historic zoning staff or commissioners.

One of the THC's grant priorities is for projects that are in Certified Local Governments (CLG), a program that allows communities to participate closely in the federal program of historic preservation. Ten CLG communities were awarded grants this year. Additional priorities include those that meet the goals and objectives of the Tennessee Historical Commission's plan for historic preservation. Properties that use the restoration grants must be listed in the National Register.

The grant recipients and/or sites of the projects include:

- **Bedford County**
City of Shelbyville
\$2,000 to send 2 staff or commissioners to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions' Forum conference.
- **Bledsoe County**
Bledsoe County Government
\$15,600 to fund a survey of historic resources in the county.
- **Carter County**
Sycamore Shoals State Park
\$7,185 to fund paint analysis in the National Register-listed Carter Mansion in Elizabethton.
- **Cheatham County**
Tennessee Division of Archaeology
\$11,400 to fund remote sensing at Mound Bottom State Archaeological Area.
- **Davidson County**
Metropolitan Historical Commission
\$5,000 to send 5 staff or commissioners to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions' Forum conference.
\$24,000 to fund a cultural landscape plan for the National Register-listed Fort Negley.
- **DeKalb County**
Town of Alexandria
\$5,400 to fund the restoration of the National Register listed Seay Chapel and East View Cemetery.
- **Hardin County**
City of Savannah
\$12,000 to fund a mobile tour application for historic sites in the city.
- **Haywood County**
City of Brownsville (Haywood Heritage Foundation and Main Street)

\$6,000 to fund a website on historic resources in Brownsville.

- **Jefferson County**
Glenmore Mansion Chapter of the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities
\$36,000 to fund restoration of the National Register-listed Glenmore Mansion.
- **Knox County**
Knoxville Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission
\$3,000 to send 3 staff or commissioners to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions' Forum conference.
- **Maury County**
City of Columbia
\$18,000 to fund design guidelines and update the preservation plan for historic districts in the city.
- **Monroe County**
Monroe County Government
\$18,396.60 to restore brickwork on the National Register-listed courthouse.
- **Moore County**
Metropolitan Government of Lynchburg/Moore County
\$40,000 to restore windows on the National Register-listed Moore County Courthouse in Lynchburg.
- **Rhea County**
Rhea County Government
\$45,900 to repoint brickwork on the National Historic Landmark-listed Rhea County Courthouse.
- **Roane County**
City of Harriman
\$29,850 to fund structural assessments and work on the National Register-listed Temperance Building.
- **Shelby County**
Memphis Landmarks
\$6,000 to send 6 staff or commissioners to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions' Forum conference.
- **Wilson County**
Cumberland University
\$35,000 to fund restoration of the National Register-listed Memorial Hall.

Multi-County Grants

- **Tennessee Preservation Trust**
\$10,000 to fund the Statewide Historic Preservation Conference.
- **Middle Tennessee State University, Department of Sociology & Anthropology**
\$3,457 for posters for Tennessee Archaeology Week.

- **Middle Tennessee State University, Fullerton Laboratory for Spatial Technology**
\$49,542 to digitize data for historic / architectural survey files and for survey data entry for computerization of survey files.
- **Tennessee Division of Archaeology**
\$4,000 to test two sites of historic Rosenwald schools.
- **Tennessee History for Kids**
\$9,000 for history trading cards.
- **East Tennessee Development District**
\$36,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the East Tennessee Development District.
- **First Tennessee Development District**
\$30,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the First Tennessee Development District.
- **Greater Nashville Regional Council**
\$25,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Greater Nashville Regional Council.
- **Memphis Area Association of Governments**
\$25,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Memphis Area Association of Governments.
- **Northwest Tennessee Development District**
\$36,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Northwest Tennessee Development District.
- **South Central Tennessee Development District**
\$50,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the South Central Tennessee Development District.
- **Southeast Tennessee Development District**
\$54,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Southeast Tennessee Development District.
- **Southwest Tennessee Development District**
\$50,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Southwest Tennessee Development District.
- **Upper Cumberland Development District**
\$40,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Upper Cumberland Development District.

For more information about the Tennessee Historical Commission, please visit the Web site at: <http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>.



REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE DELIVERS PROJECTS

Under the current federal administration there has been a push to streamline regulatory processes. As such, lawmakers have put regulatory laws under the microscope, investigating different regulations' efficiency and effectiveness. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, particularly the Section 106 review and compliance process, is one such regulatory law that was investigated recently during the House Committee on Natural Resources Oversight Hearing "Examining Impacts of Federal Natural Resources Laws Gone Astray, Part II." This hearing took place on July 18, 2017 and focused particularly on concerns that the

Section 106 process delays, or even prohibits, federal projects from being completed. The representative called to speak about Section 106 was a lobbyist hired by the cellular industry WHO discussed concerns with tribal consultation on tribal lands, which we do not have in Tennessee. The other witnesses had issues about how their local communities used National Register to make local zoning decisions, unrelated to Section 106.

Section 106 is not meant to slow or prohibit projects. It is a consultative process that requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. When implemented

early in the planning process for a project, consultation through Section 106 can avoid or minimize adverse effects to historic properties, and barring this, it outlines a process for mitigating the adverse effects. It is not meant to be a prohibitive process, but rather a consultative process that helps federal agencies complete their projects while also protecting valuable historic resources.

To better demonstrate how the Section 106 process best fits within federal project planning and to show how non-prohibitive the process is, we, as the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), have joined other SHPOs across the country in responding to notices by federal agencies seeking comments on their regulations. These notices for comment have been issued because the current federal administration has tasked every federal agency to review their regulations. As part of this review, we have so far commented on notices from the Federal Communications Commission, the Department of Transportation, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. More federal agencies are expected to solicit comments on their regulations. The THC takes its Section 106 responsibility seriously to efficiently and effectively work with federal agencies to help them deliver their projects to the public.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANTS

The next round of Historic Preservation Fund grant applications is expected to begin December 1, 2017. Applications for the federally-funded matching grants will be available online or by contacting the office at that time. The exact amount of federal funds available for grants is as yet undetermined, but it is expected to be in the range of \$250,000. Completed applications must be in the THC offices by January 31, 2018. Applications will be reviewed and grants awarded later in 2018. Awarding grants may be as late as August 2018, depending on when Congress completes work on the budget.

The selection process for successful grants will emphasize projects such as architectural and archaeological surveys, design guidelines for historic districts, and restorations of historic buildings listed in the National Register that have a public use. Priorities for grants will be based on the preservation plan A Future for the Past: A Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation in Tennessee. Priorities include areas experiencing rapid growth and development, threats to cultural resources, areas where there are gaps in knowledge regarding cultural resources, and communities that participate in the Certified Local Government program. Proposed survey projects should identify and record historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant to

Tennessee's history and built before 1968. Surveys may be for a specific geographic area or for sites associated with themes or events significant in the state's history, such as the development of railroads in the 19th century or post-World War II residential development. Preservation plans for towns, neighborhoods, and historic districts and the preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places are other areas for possible grant funding. In addition to the restoring buildings, predevelopment work necessary to undertake rehabilitation is an acceptable area for a grant. Restorations of historic buildings must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The grants are matching grants and will reimburse up to 60% of the costs of approved project work. The remaining 40% must be provided by the grantee as matching funds. Contact the THC, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37214 or download an application from the web. For further information or for an application, contact the THC at (615) 532-1550. Applications may also be downloaded from the Tennessee Historical Commission website <http://www.tn.gov/environment/article/thc-federal-preservation-grants#>.

Completed applications must be received in our office by January 31, 2018.

HISTORICAL MARKERS

At its meeting on June 16, 2017 the THV approved eight historical markers: *The Black Sulfur Spring*, Blount County; *Thomas Jefferson Stump*, Cheatham County; *Norris Freeway*, Knox County; *Standing Stone*, Putnam County; *Enon Meeting House*, Rutherford County; *The 1960 Memphis Sit-In Movement* and *the Ernest C. Withers House*, Shelby County; and *James Brigham*, Sullivan County. Those interested in submitting proposed texts for markers should contact Linda T. Wynn at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0442, or call (615) 770-1093.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NEWS

By Caroline Eller

Spotlight: Tennessee Valley Authority Hydroelectric System, 1933-1979



Melton Hill Dam and Powerhouse.

The *Tennessee Valley Authority Hydroelectric System, 1933-1979* multiple property cover documentation, approved by the National Park Service on April 12, 2016, documented the historic significance of twenty-five hydroelectric projects constructed during this period in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Individual TVA hydroelectric properties nominated under this cover are noted as being significant in several areas, including conservation, engineering, industry, recreation, social history, and transportation.

The cover document summarizes TVA's impact:

The 1933 Tennessee Valley Authority Act established the TVA as a quasi-governmental body with the autonomy to devise an economic development plan for the Tennessee River Valley region. The multi-purpose legislation sought to improve navigation and flood control of the Tennessee River, spur agricultural and industrial development in the Tennessee Valley, and provide for national defense. To achieve these goals, the Act authorized the TVA Corporation to acquire real estate for the construction of dams, reservoirs, power houses, transmission lines, or navigation projects at any point along the Tennessee River and its tributaries. Between 1933 and 1979, TVA completed twenty-five hydroelectric sites comprising a number of identifiable and consistent property types essential to TVA's multi-faceted mission.

Several types of historic resources that are associated with the TVA hydroelectric properties



South Holston Dam, powerhouse, and surge tank.

are noted in the cover form, including dams, powerhouses, control buildings, pipelines and canal, switchyards, storage and support buildings. Transportation-related resources that are associated with the dams include navigational locks, lock operation buildings, vehicular roadbeds, and bridges. As a result of TVA's efforts to provide public access to various recreation-related buildings and structures were also constructed during this era. Recreational resources include visitor buildings, picnic areas, campgrounds, fishing piers, boat ramps, and swimming beaches. Additionally, ongoing maintenance for these massive hydroelectric complexes necessitated the construction of grounds operation offices, garages, and storage sheds, many of which remain today.



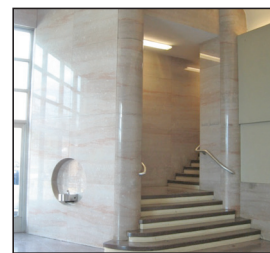
Watauga Dam Morning Glory spillway.

In August 2017, fourteen individual TVA hydroelectric projects in Tennessee were listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

Watauga Hydroelectric Project, Carter County; Normandy Dam Project, Coffee County; Tims Ford Hydroelectric Project, Franklin County; Chickamauga Hydroelectric Project, Hamilton County; Pickwick Landing Hydroelectric Project, Hardin County; Cherokee Hydroelectric Project, Jefferson County; Fort Loudon Hydroelectric Project, Loudon County; Melton Hill Hydroelectric Project, Loudon County; Tellico Dam Project, Loudon County; Nickajack Hydroelectric Project, Marion County; Ocoee No. 3 Hydroelectric Project, Polk County; Watts Barr Hydroelectric Project, Rhea County; Douglas Hydroelectric Project, Sevier County; South Holston Hydroelectric Project, Sullivan County.

One of the most interesting aspects of these properties is that TVA made great efforts to make them publicly-accessible and provide an enjoyable and informative visitor experience. Visitor buildings often incorporated well-designed lobbies with Streamlined Moderne forms and quality materials like marble walls and floors, murals, and elliptical viewing decks. The most notable of these building subtypes are found at Watts Bar, Fontana, North Carolina, and Norris. Fontana features an incline cab that

was designed for visitors to be transported to the powerhouse from the visitor building. Fontana and Watts Bar both were designed with elliptical observation bays, which allowed viewing of the dam. After 1945, TVA constructed several new visitor buildings in the International Style, evident in the design details like concrete and stone veneer exteriors, one-story forms with flat or butterfly roofs, and central breezeways faced with wood siding. Some of these were built into the sloping terrain on site and featured multi-level designs that allowed for housing of security on the lower level with reception areas above, like those at Douglas, Fort Patrick Henry, and Melton Hill. Reception rooms in these later visitor buildings often featured terrazzo floors and displayed TVA information.



Douglas Dam marble staircase.

For those powerhouses that were constructed pre-1945, TVA Chief Architect Roland Wank utilized a strikingly similar exterior design for the majority of these buildings. Exteriors reflected the Streamlined Moderne style, with smooth exterior walls, flat roofs, and large window groupings.

Powerhouses often featured visitor lobby areas, where a common wall detail was metal lettering with the slogan: "Built for the People of the United States," with the dates of construction noted to either side. For several decades, TVA welcomed visitors into the powerhouses at their hydroelectric projects; unfortunately, post 9/11 security concerns have led to the majority of the powerhouses being closed to the public, though visitor buildings are still widely accessible.

TVA continues to produce large amounts of power for the region, and the majority of historic resources at their hydroelectric projects retain integrity, a testament to the high quality construction and operational standards.



Ocoee No. 3 Dam.



NEW STAFF MEMBER

Justin Heskew joined the Tennessee Historical Commission in September as a Historic Preservation Specialist in the Review and Compliance Program. Heskew replaces David Calease, who left in August for a position with the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Heskew completed his degrees in International Studies and Foreign Language and Literature from the University of Southern Mississippi (USM.) His interest in architectural history and urban planning was sparked by a year-long exchange program with the University of Bonn in Germany. Following USM, Justin worked as the Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Hattiesburg, MS, and also worked in the Architectural History Section at the State of Mississippi Historic Preservation Office. Prior to coming to THC, he was employed as the GIS Coordinator at the MS Air National Guard. In



Justin Heskew

his free time, Heskew enjoys running, cycling, and traveling.

Projects, continued from page 1

finishes. The site features professionally developed exterior interpretive signage. At this time, the property is open by appointment through BLHA's contact number (615) 452-5463.

Sabine Hill State Historic Site will celebrate its grand opening on November 1st 2-4 p.m. at 2328 West "G" Street in Elizabethton. The property will be operated by the nearby Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park. The c. 1818 frontier Federal style, timber-framed clapboard I-house

features extraordinary interior marbling faux finishes throughout. Some of it is original and the remainder is being painstakingly restored based on a professional paint analysis. The interior also features accurate, Adelphi wallpapers in original 18" x 18" hand block printed sections. Application of the wallpaper followed period details as well, with natural glues and a muslin base. It has been under restoration for the past three years. Regular visitation hours will be established soon, and site visits may be arranged through Sycamore Shoals at (423) 543-5808.

NEW THC MEMBER

Don Roe of Jackson was appointed to the Tennessee Historical Commission by Gov. Haslam in September. A native of Jackson, Mr. Roe has an M.A. in History from the University of Memphis and a B.S. in History and Political Science from Lambuth University in Jackson. Mr. Roe is the middle school principal at the University School of Jackson (USJ.) He has taught history at the high school level and as an adjunct at the college level for over twenty years, including a long tenure in the Jackson and Madison County public schools. He is in his sixth year at USJ, an independent school in Jackson. In his spare time, Mr. Roe enjoys visiting historic sites and reading, running, baseball, and spending time with his family. He has been married to his wife Melinda for twenty years, and the couple has a ten year-old son, Max.



Don Roe



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State Programs and Publications Editor

Public Comment Solicited

The Tennessee Historical Commission is again soliciting public comment and advice on its administration of the National Historic Preservation Act. Especially, we are seeking input on such matters as geographic areas or classes of properties which should be a priority for survey and/or registration efforts, criteria and priorities which should be established for restoration grants, and ways and means through which local efforts at preservation of historic properties can be most effectively assisted. Comments and advice on other areas and issues of a more general nature are also encouraged. Activities carried out by the Commission under the mandate of the Act include efforts to survey and inventory potentially-historic properties across the state and to nominate the most significant to the National Register of Historic Places. Other activities involve programs to protect and preserve properties once they are identified by reviewing Federal projects to determine if they will adversely affect historic properties and wish to earn the investment tax credits which are available; awarding and administering grants for the restoration of National Register properties; and providing technical assistance and advice to local governments which are attempting to establish local programs and ordinances to protect historic properties. Besides the restoration grants program, some of these activities are carried out in part by the provision of grant support to local groups and agencies. These grant funds are federal funds which are appropriated under the authority of the National Historic Preservation Act to assist states in carrying out the purposes of the Act. The comments received will be used to structure the annual application to the National Park Service for these funds. The Tennessee Historical Commission expects to solicit applications for grants-in-aid in June of this year for the 2017 Fiscal Year (10/01/2016-9/30/2017). The public input and advice which we are soliciting now will help to set both general office objectives and to establish priorities and criteria for the review of grant applications. Comments are requested by April 15, 2017, and may be addressed to Claudette Stager, Assistant Director for National Register Programs, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37214.

This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Tennessee Historical Commission, Authorization Number 327324, 16,800 copies promulgated at a cost of \$0.23 per copy, 06/17.



PART II:

“Old Hickories Punch Through: The Beginning of the End of the Great War”

By Michael E. Birdwell, Ph.D., Chair, Tennessee Great War Commission

On September 20, the American II Corps received orders telling them to prepare to leave Belgium to fight in France. They advanced to the Gouy-Nauroy sector under the command of the British 4th Army, east of the infamous Somme salient. The assault on the Hindenburg Line was imminent.¹ By September 25, the combined forces (British, Australian, Canadian, and American) were poised for action in the St. Quentin Canal zone. Defenses in that sector comprised three trench systems that incorporated the St. Quentin-Cambrai Canal, and its adjacent tunnel that passed through the town of Bellicourt. Built by Napoleon’s army between 1802-1810, the brick and reinforced concrete tunnel ran underground for three miles with ninety-eight camouflaged exits, and at least fifteen galleries that ran to the east and housed reinforcements and materiel. German engineers updated the tunnel, providing it with its own electrical supply, hot and cold running water, and comfortable barracks with beds, linens, and pillows. Shafts located several yards apart along the vaulted masonry ceiling, supplied fresh air into the tunnel. Atop the canal, where the shafts opened up, the Germans had in some cases constructed pill boxes, fortifying hardened machine-gun emplacements. Another feature of the tunnel was that it allowed made it easy for German troops to enter and exit the trenches above without fear of being seen. A narrow gauge *Decauville* railway ferried supplies to enemy troops while canal boats provided transportation across the watery expanse,

and also acted as artillery platforms and billets within the tunnel. The opposite side of the canal and tunnel were fortified with several belts of triangular-shaped barbed wire entanglements up to fifty feet thick, machine-gun emplacements, and pillboxes. Roughly forty-feet wide, the canal was over thirty-feet deep in places, adding to the difficulty of capturing the fortified bunkers behind it. The canal essentially acted as a moat. To make matters worse, Allied soldiers would have to get through the five belts of barbed wire entanglements, scramble down a steep, scrubby twenty-foot tall embankment, cross the deep frigid waters of the canal, and try to ascend the steep hill on the other side to engage the enemy. From the German perspective, one of the best aspects of the canal was that tanks could not cross it. Captain Nathaniel Callen, who participated in the assault, remembered the terrain and the Hindenburg Line vividly, and remarked, “it appeared that the ground had been built to fit the trenches instead of the trenches being built to fit the ground.”²

Australian Lieutenant General Sir John Monash intended to succeed where other previous commanders had failed in frontal assaults on what the Germans referred to as the Siegfried Stellung. The Hindenburg Line proved impregnable during earlier attacks, which the heavily fortified Germans easily repulsed. Monash considered dozens of scenarios before he found what he believed to be a weak point in the line at Bellicourt where the tunnel and canal intersected. He planned a two-day artillery barrage employing 438

artillery pieces, to be followed by the 3rd and 5th Tank Brigades escorting the infantry into position, and then punching through the German defenses. Aiding in the attack, and acting as his eyes were 337 planes attached to the British Royal Flying Corps (RFC) 5th Brigade. The planes served a second purpose in that they provided noise that helped cover the advance of the tanks to create an element of surprise. Seventeen squadrons of planes of varying description provided reconnaissance, light bombs, and supplies.³

Preparation for the assault improved when the British captured a schematic depicting the defensive positions along the Hindenburg Line between Oise and Bellicourt. The plans revealed the locations of all the enemy’s batteries and calibers of weapons, in addition to troop strength and deployment. On September 26, the 114th and 115th Field Artillery launched a heavy barrage against German lines. For eight hours the artillery shelled the Germans with “persistent gas,” after which they used a variety of field guns in an attempt to destroy the belts of enemy barbed wire. The heavy bombardment was intended to keep the Germans in the tunnel, and to keep the reinforcement far behind the front lines in reserve trenches in the town of Bellicourt.⁴ The 27th Division, which had fallen behind the 30th, attempted to straighten out its line and get into position, but failed to do so, taking heavy casualties a result. The failure of the 27th to reach its objective made the British even more skeptical of the capabilities of American soldiers.

Great War, continued on page 7

¹The assault on the Hindenburg Line was part of a three pronged attack intended to hit the Germans hard on three different fronts. The British II Corps went directly at the German’s last line of defense, while King Albert of Belgium in concert with British Generals Herbert Plumer and William Birdwood attacked Germans occupying Belgian channel ports on the North Sea, and General John J. Pershing commanding the AEF in conjunction with French forces in the Meuse Argonne.

²Worth P. Stewart, *The History of Company “K” 117th Infantry in the Great War* (Chattanooga, Tennessee: Self Published, N.D.), 39, hereafter Stewart, Co. K, John H. Cates, *Company E, 117th Infantry, 30th Division in World War I* (Johnson City: East Tennessee State University Press, 1964), 39; Gary A. Mead, *The Doughboys: American and the First World War* (New York: Overlook Press, 2000), 302; Elmer A. Murphy and Robert S. Thomas, *The Thirtieth Division in the World War* (Lepanto, Arkansas: Old Hickory Publishing Company, 1936), 93; Nathaniel Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” (Fort Benning, Georgia: U.S. Army, N.D.), 7-11. Construction of the St. Quentin Canal actually began in 1769, but was not completed until Napoleon ordered it to be finished.

³Captain Joseph Hanson Mills, “Breaking the Hindenburg Line: The First Complete Story of Our Combat Operations,” *The Independent* 105 (November 27, 1920), 296-297, 315-317; Mitchell A. Yockelson, *Borrowed Soldiers: Americans Under British Command, 1918* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 116-117, 130; Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 21. The bombardment of the tunnel did little to discourage the Germans because of how well it was constructed of steel-reinforced concrete.

⁴Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), 171, 286-287; Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 19.

**Great War, continued from page 6**

In the predawn darkness, a detachment from the 105th Engineers laid the white jumping-off tape, held in place by rocks and clods of dirt, amid bursting shrapnel and steady machine-gun fire. Combined with the 5th Australian Division and the 27th “Silk Stocking” Division from New York, soldiers prepared for their assault on the Hindenburg Line. Determined Aussies were prepared to swim across the St. Quentin Canal and were equipped with small life preservers and siege ladders which were to be linked together to create footbridges to cross the canal. Several soldiers carried bits of planking with them to use as improvised rafts to cross the canal; others stripped down to their underwear and tied their kit in a bundle as they determined to swim across the chilly canal to engage Fritz in battle.⁵

Their combined efforts helped turn the tide of the war, smashing through the German defenses, making it possible to defeat the Kaiser’s army. General Monash ordered two battalions to lead the initial attack, followed by a third battalion whose job was to mop up, clear booby traps, capture German stragglers, and ferret out snipers. The objective of the 30th Division, on paper at least, was simple: Penetrate the bulge in the line where it curved in front of the tunnel and proceed 4,000 yards behind the lines, creating a firebase that would allow the Australians to leapfrog beyond the Old Hickory Division, opening a secure avenue to the enemy’s rear. Or as Worth Stewart put it, “[W]e were to go through the gate protected by a barrage and swing back on the Germans from the rear, hemming them in between us and the ditch they had figured on as a wall of protection.”⁶

At 4:30 a.m. on Sunday, September 29, 1918, Sammies, Tommies, and Diggers checked their gear, somberly wrote their last

wills, read quietly, smoked, and waited in the foggy pre-dawn gloom for the signal to attack. They left behind overcoats, blankets, and other kit at company headquarters, and carried with them their weapons, extra ammunition, gas masks, five grenades, a small amount of food and a raincoat as they moved to the jumping off tape. Captain Nathaniel Callen remembered, the “British. . . were quite ready to permit the Americans elbow room on the front, under the general impression that it was time we did some fighting after, as they often expressed. . . we had waited four years to get in.”⁷ The Old Hickories knew they had to succeed where the British had failed in the past and were determined to do so.

The British served the soldiers a tumbler of rum moments before the charge.⁸ At 5:30 the artillery opened fire. In the cacophony, infantrymen poised to go forward into the pea-soup fog, made murkier by roiling dust and smoke created by the artillery barrage. Most soldiers donned their gas masks when they received the signal to move out. “[A] person could not see at a distance greater than five yards,” Coleman Carnway wrote, reflecting upon the advance on Bellicourt and the St. Quentin Canal. Fog, smoke, dirt, and noise created confusion on a massive scale. “No one, except with the aid of a compass, could keep the proper direction, consequently the Companies became very much mixed and scattered. . . .”⁹ To make matters worse for the soldiers lurching forward, the artillery “was charged with laying down and maintaining a smoke screen on the flanks of the corps sector along the right and left boundaries,” of the battlefield.¹⁰ Worth Stewart said the doughboys emerged from their defensive positions and descended into a ravine filled with smoke. “Within five minutes after entering the valley we had lost our way.”¹¹ Captain Nathaniel Callen stated, “Hardly had we begun to move until units got lost.

. . . we had missed our destination. . . some 400 yards to our left.”¹² Some groped along using telephone lines to guide them. At 5:50 the infantry continued its confused lurch forward, as “whiz-bangs” screamed over head and exploded. Thirty-four British Mark V Star tanks were supposed to lead them, but in the smoke, shelling and confusion, a contingent of the advance troops set off before the tanks rumbled underway. Several tanks were crippled in the attack and unable to move forward, while a few wandered into narrow ravines and got stuck. Some may have fallen victim to friendly fire. Due to the cold temperatures and wet uniforms, some men fell out suffering from hypothermia. Lacking protection offered by tanks, infantrymen stumbled and groped blindly in the smoke and fog. Units lost touch with each other; men reassembled into mixed-up groups of differing platoons and nationalities, goaded into action by determined leaders who pushed on toward the enemy. The thunder of roaring guns made communication practically impossible. Many Americans found themselves shoulder-to-shoulder with their Australian allies and fought under their direction during the two days of the battle.¹³

Major General Edward M. Lewis, commander of the 30th Division, later recalled his observation of the battle: “the air was a hell of torturing sound. . . the scream of bursting shrapnel, the whistle of bullets, the splintering explosion of grenades, the staccato bark of countless machine-guns. . . that all helped to build up a direful symphony of battle.”¹⁴ While allied troops pushed onward through the fog and smoke, several lunged through a gap in the enemy line created by the artillery. Unfortunately, most of those troops were killed, wounded or captured because members of the American 27th Division to their left could not keep pace with the advance. Meeting stiff resistance, the 27th

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⁵ Murphy and Thomas, 94; Coffman, 286-287; Dale Blair, *The Battle of Bellicourt Tunnel: Tommies, Diggers and Doughboys on the Hindenburg Line, 1918* (London: Front Line Books, 2011), 50. Hereafter Blair, *Bellicourt Tunnel*. There were four lines of defenses in this sector devised by the Germans—Hindenburg Line, *Gieslher Stellung*, *Kriemhilde Stellung*, and the *Freya Stellung*. Some British soldiers lugged rubber rafts with them for crossing the canal.

⁶ Stewart, *Co. K*, 40.

⁷ Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 16.

⁸ Henry Berry, ed., *Make the Kaiser Dance: Living Memories of the Doughboy* (New York: Arbor House, 1978), 216.

⁹ Coleman A. Carnaway and George A. Shuford. *History: 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U.S.A.; Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919* (Wilmington, North Carolina: Wilmington Printing, 1920), 46.

¹⁰ Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 22.

¹¹ Stewart, *Co. K*, 40; *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1938), 373-393.

¹² Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 26.

¹³ Blair, *Bellicourt Tunnel*, 51-52; Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 35. Nearly all the tanks got lost in the smoke, shell, and fog. Seven almost made it to their objective but were destroyed by the enemy.

¹⁴ Quoted in Yockelson, 179.

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was halted in its tracks, leaving the left flank of the 30th Division exposed and vulnerable. Additionally, troops from the 30th Division's 119th Infantry Regiment outran their support units and breached the Hindenburg Line at about 7:30 a.m., far ahead of schedule. In their dash forward, they passed several enemy

machine-gun emplacements draped in fog and smoke and failed to destroy them. Now, with no support, they were sitting ducks surrounded by the enemy and some fell as a result of friendly fire that targeted the Germans in that sector.¹⁵ In the confusion that followed, Sergeant Joseph B. Adkinson of Egypt, Tennessee in Lauderdale County, took action. In the words of his Medal of Honor citation:

When murderous machine-gun fire at a range of fifty yards had made it impossible for his platoon to advance, and had caused the platoon to take cover Sgt. Adkinson alone, with the greatest intrepidity, rushed across the fifty yards of open ground directly into the face of the hostile machine-gun kicked the gun from the parapet into the enemy trench, and at the point of the bayonet captured the three men manning the gun. The gallantry and quick decision of this soldier enabled the platoon to resume its advance."¹⁶

By 7:30 a.m. a considerable portion of the 30th Division had crossed the canal and punched through the no-longer-impregnable Hindenburg Line. The tide of the war began to turn in favor of the Allies on that fateful day.

Adkinson was not the only Tennessean to respond to the crisis. Sergeant Milo Lemert of Crossville, Tennessee, clambered up the eastern slope of the canal in an attempt to silence a machine-gun emplacement that

hammered away at the 119th's exposed flank. All the officers in his company fell dead, so Lemert re-organized the remnant and led by example. In the face of heavy fire he rushed the machine-gun nest single-handedly, killing the entire crew with grenades. Rather than turn back and return to his comrades, Lemert continued along the enemy trench in advance of the company. He reached a second machine-gun nest and charged it, screaming while hurling grenades in the direction of the gun. He finished the gunners off with quick bursts from his rifle. Lemert then changed directions, charging a third machine-gun which opened up on him from the left. Remarkably, with similar skill and bravery he destroyed the gun and its crew also. He continued to attack a fourth machine-gun nest, but to no affect. German gunners riddled his body with a hail of bullets that nearly cut him in two, killing Milo Lemert as he reached the emplacement's parapet. Lemert's resolve led to the silencing of the fourth gun by his fellow soldiers from Company M. His courageous action prevented many casualties among his company and aided in the eventual capturing of the Hindenburg Line. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in October 1919.¹⁷

As the morning drizzle turned to mist, the sun slowly rose above the battlefield, burning off the fog. Around 9:00 a.m. a stiff wind picked up that helped clear the air. Soldiers caked in mud, grime, and blood found themselves exposed in the growing sunlight and hastily sought cover from enemy machine-gun fire. Though daylight helped bring order to the confusion of the early stages of the battle, the Germans then began pounding them with mustard gas.¹⁸ As the fighting wore on, combatants fired at each other from point blank range. Some engaged in hand-to-hand fighting. "Grenades were thrown like rocks in an alley scrape," recalled Captain Nathaniel Callen. The soldiers of the 30th Division along side their Digger pals from Australia fought bravely in a battle of

tremendous ferocity under highly adverse conditions.

While Lemert sacrificed his life to save his men, the left flank of the advance was still exposed to enemy fire, and a battalion from the 118th Infantry pushed forward to plug the hole and brace for a counterattack. Worth P. Stewart, who was a part of the advance, recalled:

In advancing through the deep trenches previously held by the enemy we were obliged to wade through mud. . . . To say that there was more water than land underfoot is no exaggeration, and with very little exception these long stretches of water were dark red. . . . We were actually wading ankle-deep in blood. All about were discarded rifles, bayonets, machine-guns, belts of ammunition, packs and clothing, and scores of dead Germans lying in every conceivable position. [They] testified to the accuracy and deadliness of the artillery fire.¹⁹

Shortly after noon, Australians and Tennesseans occupied the front line trenches above the canal. Regrouping, they poised for another attack that took place on September 30th. Meanwhile, German prisoners were being escorted to the rear. "[T]he road from Hargicourt to Bellicourt was practically filled with them during the entire day. These prisoners seemed overjoyed at the fact of their capture, especially by an American Unit."²⁰ Francis Whiting Halsey described some of the prisoners as "masses of limp clothes—all the fight and will of the war had gone out of them. The plaint exprest [sic] by all of them was, 'The war is over for the Hindenburg Line has been broken.'"²¹ Even in their demoralized condition, Captain Nathaniel E. Callen of the 117th Infantry recalled, "Say what you may of the German war policies and the German war

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¹⁵ Murphy and Thomas, 102; Shipley Thomas, *The History of the A.E.F.*, Reprint (Nashville, Tennessee: The Battery Press, 2000), 269.

¹⁶ *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe*, 379, emphasis added; James B. Jones, Jr., "Tennessee's World War I Heroes," *The Courier* XXVII:1 (October 1988): 5.

¹⁷ There is a memorial to Milo Lemert at the old Crossville Courthouse, which was renamed in his honor. According to Lemert's brother Nathan, Milo's last words were, "I am finished boys; give them Hell." He died on his one year wedding anniversary leaving behind his widow, Nelli Snodgrass Lemert.

¹⁸ Callen, "The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line," 27.

¹⁹ Stewart, *Co. K*, 44-45.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 47. The men of the Old Hickory Division captured forty-seven officers and 1,432 soldiers.

²¹ Francis Whiting Halsey, *The Literary Digest History of the World War: Compiled From Original and Contemporary Sources: American, British, French, German, and Other; in 10 Volumes* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1920, Vol. VI), 15.

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leaders. . . you cannot but admire the dogged patient bravery of her soldiers.”²²

A contingent of soldiers from the 118th and 119th Infantries helped Australians take possession of the St. Quentin Canal near the location designated Tunnel Sap on the southern end of the canal. Doughboys hauled supplies from the rear to the Diggers. Heavy artillery pounded the canal and provided an opportunity for the Australians and Americans to charge the tunnel. Several Germans took cover in the tunnel and refused

to come out. Australians and Americans commandeered a German howitzer and fired it at point blank range into the mouth of the tunnel, prompting several Germans to

come rushing out in a mad panic as Diggers and Yanks mowed them down with machine-gun fire. When Allied soldiers breached the tunnel entrance they found it littered with dead and wounded Germans. Among them was a man whose body had been thrown into a large vat in the kitchen by the force of an

explosion, which prompted Australians to spread the rumor that the Huns were rendering down human bodies for lard.²³

In spite of such lurid rumors, the men of the 30th Division went on to fight up until the war’s end. Five Tennesseans from that famed unit earned the Medal of Honor, while several more were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Their bravery in the face of impossible odds helped pave the way to the silencing of the guns on Armistice Day, November 11, 1918.

²² Callen, “The 30th Division Attack on the Hindenburg Line,” 5.

²³ Blair, *Bellicourt Tunnel*, 123-124.

PUBLICATIONS TO NOTE

By Linda T. Wynn

Assistant Director for State Programs & Publications Editor

Publications of Louisiana State University Press, 338 Johnston Hall, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803 includes:

Remembering Reconstruction: Struggles Over the Meaning of America’s Most Turbulent Era, edited by Carole Emberton and Bruce E. Baker. Academic studies of the Civil War and historical memory abound, ensuring a deeper understanding of how the war’s meaning has shifted over time and the implications of those changes for concepts of race, citizenship, and nationhood. The Reconstruction era, by contrast, has yet to receive similar attention from scholars. *Remembering Reconstruction* fills this void, assembling a lineup of ten Reconstruction historians who examine the competing social and historical memories of this momentous and violent epoch in American history.

Notwithstanding the calamitous repercussion of the war, the memory of Reconstruction in the American consciousness and its grip on the country’s fraught history of identity, race, and reparation has been mostly ignored. The essays in *Remembering Reconstruction* advance and broaden one’s perceptions of the complex revisions in the nation’s collective memory. Notably, these younger authors and scholars uncover the impetus behind the creation of black counter-memories of Reconstruction and the narrative of the “tragic era” that dominated white memory of the period. Furthermore, by questioning how Americans have remembered Reconstruction and how those memories

have shaped the nation’s social and political history throughout the twentieth century, this volume places memory at the heart of historical inquiry. This work goes beyond the well-known work of historiographical arguments that have occupied the attention of researchers since the nineteenth century. Within this tome the contributors struggle to define the meaning of Reconstruction in “autobiographies of politicians, late nineteenth-century gatherings of reformers, local commemorative celebrations, textbooks, and popular novels.” As stated by Kate Masur, “*Remembering Reconstruction* is important. . . for anyone hoping to understand how the Civil war and its aftermath shaped American history.” **Hardcover, \$45.00.**

Publications of The University of Tennessee, 110 Conference Center, 600 Henley Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996 includes:

Otis Sanford’s *From Boss Crump to King Willie: How Race Changed Memphis Politics* is an in-depth view of how race played a pivotal role in the political evolution of Memphis, from the rise of longtime political boss Edward Hull Crump to the 1991 election of Dr. Willie Wilbert Herenton as the first African American mayor of the “Bluff City”. Replete with lucid details on the workings of municipal politics, the work explores the nearly century-long struggle by African Americans in Memphis to secure recognition from local leaders and to gain a viable voice in city affairs. Sanford, who holds the University of Memphis’ Hardin

Chair of Excellence in Economic/Managerial Journalism and serves as the political commentator for WREG-TV in Memphis illustrates how Crump won his first election as mayor without African American support. However, soon thereafter he successfully courted the African American vote, which helped him maintain his political machine for the next sixty years. Often at odds with local newspaper editors, this work also examines the press’s influence on both the civic and political life of Memphis. In spite of the omnipresence state of racism and poverty, the African American community produced many notable leaders within the business, religious, and political spheres, many of whom had an affable affiliation with Crump. *From Boss Crump to King Willie* also examines the political vacuum that occurred after the 1954 death of Crump and the factors that led to the African American community becoming the majority voting population in Memphis following the 1968 assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Through the modern era’s Civil Rights Movement to the 1991 election of Dr. Willie W. Herenton, African Americans pursued their struggle for recognition and inclusion. An alum of LeMoyne College (now LeMoyne-Owen College) Herenton served in that position for the next eighteen years, resigning in 2009. This tome should interest anyone wanting to grasp the Bluff City’s past political experiences. **Hardcover, \$29.95.**

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