

Funds Needed For Bristoe Grave Search

TO THE EDITOR:

Recently the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) announced that they had saved 127 acres of the Bristoe Station battlefield. The CWPT can be justifiably proud of this preservation victory but to gain this hallowed ground in the core area of the battlefield (a fraction of the entire battlefield), other battlefield acreage must be sacrificed to the bulldozer.

A residential and commercial development called "New Bristow Village" will soon cover 211 adjacent acres, adding to the urban sprawl and traffic of Prince William County.

There is reason to believe that as

many as 500 unmarked Confederate graves remain in the vicinity of Bristoe Station. The vast majority were victims of camp diseases during the late summer of 1861. Roughly 30 men killed in Gen. Richard Ewell's rear guard action on Aug. 27, 1862, during the Second Manassas Campaign are believed to have been left behind there as well.

Gen. A.P. Hill had to bury at least another 140 men, mostly North Carolinians of Cooke's and Kirkland's Brigades, after the Oct. 14, 1863 Battle of Bristoe Station. Some of these graves are known to be within the 127 acres that will be saved and these need not be dis-

turbed. Many, however, could still lie in the path of development.

Centex Homes, the developer for "New Bristow Village", is largely responsible for the 127 acres donated to the CWPT and, after having a Phase I archeological survey completed, they have also acknowledged the potential for unmarked graves on their tract. In the spirit of cooperation, Centex has agreed to allow an independent archeological survey for the purpose of locating unmarked burial sites prior to land clearing operations.

The Fincastle Rifles Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Roanoke, Va., has taken the initiative to sponsor the independent survey and they are in the process of raising funds for the project. Funds will be used toward hiring a professional archeologist to head the project and give it credibility, for the use of ground penetrating radar and for other related expenses.

Centex has indicated their intention to begin work next year so the time to perform the survey is limited and the need to raise funds is urgent.

Anyone wishing to support this effort may send tax-deductible contributions to the Fincastle Rifles, SCV at P.O. Box 14193, Roanoke, VA 24638-4193. Checks should be made payable to "Fincastle Rifles, SCV" and please note on the check that it is for the Bristoe Station Project Fund.

If more information is needed or if you can support this project in other ways, please contact Robert (Red) Barbour at the above address. Thank You!

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