



Bob Gathany/Huntsville Times

The late Phillip Trotter of Georgia loved to participate in Civil War re-enactments. Before he died, he instructed his wife to have his ashes scattered at a re-enactment. An artillery brigade pauses, left, for a moment during the playing of "Amazing Grace" before Trotter's remains are loaded in cannons and scattered, right, across the battlefield.

# Faces

Continued from page F1

Civil War battles predated the Gulf wars by some 140 years. In that respect, the crowd at last weekend's re-enactment wasn't entirely out of place.

The people and events surrounding this modern day Civil War battle must be almost as confusing as the sulfur smoke and chaos of an original. Women in period dress mingle with college girls sporting hip-hugger shorts and baby-doll T-shirts. Young men with caps on backward wrestle with Cajun turkey cookers and aluminum beer cans. Nearby, gray-capped Confederate soldiers use their cast-iron Dutch ovens and tin cups.

The re-enactors are supposed to use tobacco only in the forms of pipes, cigars and chewing tobacco because cigarettes were rare commodities during the war. Spectators around campfires had their ready-roll cigarettes, though a few rolled their own in what may or may not have been a nod to authenticity. Great store is held in the accuracy of all aspects of the period.

The doctors smoked cigars, explaining that most Civil War doctors smoked cigars to combat the horrible stench of the dead and wounded. They also had scores of original medicine bottles and were kind enough to share some historically perfect medicine from a little brown jug.

Friday night, a drum and fife corps gathered across the field and played legendary music. The pickers gathered in the modern camps and played music by modern legends. Harmonies made chill bumps stand, and the abundance of musical talent that has always graced this area of Alabama remains strong. Later, during the middle of the night, the haunting squawk of bagpipes could be heard in the distance, prompting many of us awakened to wish for a volley of musket fire and silence.

Napoleonic warfare was even more insane than most forms of war. Seeing the troops arrayed on the field at Bridgeport drives that home very well. Opposing armies lined up in long rows like ducks at a carnival and marched into the teeth of cannon fire and muskets.

It wasn't until near the war's end, at Cold Harbor, Va., that trench warfare became the

standard. The Rebels dug in and Grant ordered his men in to take the positions, anyway, resulting in the death of many thousands of Union troops and the bloodiest stain on Grant's war record. One wonders why it took so long to figure out that rocks and trees were good things to hide behind when someone was shooting at you.

The battle recreations are

living history, not celebrations of America's darkest hour and bloodiest conflict. There's no glory to be found in the carnage that took the lives of 2 percent of America's population in four years. It's estimated that death by battle and disease claimed 600,000 lives. More dead were buried than in all of America's other wars combined - so far.

Re-enactors aren't the wild-eyed bubbas many assume. They are first and foremost historians with a near-nerdy fanaticism for authentic details of the Civil War era. They are doctors, lawyers, firemen, police officers, professors, farmers, factory workers, your friends and neighbors.

Re-enactors share a camaraderie, a sense of community and a purpose found among few other hobbyists. Both sexes and all races participate. Campfire sing-alongs may include "Dixie" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic" sung by Union and Confederate soldiers in uniform and women in hoop skirts, people who aren't offended by each other's history, people who understand we share a larger, common one.

Although the actors who recreate these battles and encampments are members of historically accurate armies and units who fought in the battles, all of them own both Union and Confederate uniforms. Numbers, more than geo-

graphical allegiance, dictate which side they portray in any given recreation. The battle re-enactments are weekend events, with the same clash portrayed on both Saturday and Sunday.

In Bridgeport, the Union won on Saturday, the Confederacy on Sunday. Saturday was the historically accurate version, though it is noted that the crowd's ovation for the simulated win for the Sons of the Confederacy was louder.

The Siege of Bridgeport and other encounters ultimately proved pivotal to the Union's success in breaking the Confederate blockade of the starving Union army trapped in Chattanooga after the 1863 Battle of Chickamauga.

After Chattanooga, the pathway was open for Gen. Sherman's 1864 barbecue of Atlanta and the march to the sea that effectively sealed the doom of the Confederate States of

America.

Many of the units in Bridgeport have appeared in movies and documentaries, and portions of a movie were filmed at Bridgeport during the weekend. One re-enactor, named Joe John, had a dubious claim to fame. He appeared in the movie "Sweet Home Alabama," but the others ragged him because he accidentally tripped Reese Witherspoon during the filming. What he answered is unprintable, but was all part of the fun among friends for the weekend.

At the close of the event last Sunday, a brief memorial service was held for a long-time re-enactor from the artillery brigades, the late Capt. Phillip Trotter. After a volley in his honor, the final cannon scattered Trotter's cremated remains over the battlefield to join in spirit his brothers in arms of a century and a half ago.



Bob Gathany/Huntsville Times

Confederate troops circa 2004 pose for a photo in Bridgeport.



## Getting A Divorce?

Larry Morgan

Attorney At Law

"Helping Since 1973"

Divorce, Personal Injury & Criminal Defense

539-9933

"No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers."

# First is Good.

As the area's first hospital in 1895, Huntsville Hospital has led the way in offering the most advanced services in the region. From the first cardiac catheterization performed in 1979 to the 10,000<sup>th</sup> cardiac surgery performed in 2002 no other hospital within 100 miles has more experience and more services than Huntsville Hospital. With a 24-hour chest pain unit, angioplasty services, drug-eluting stents, and the latest cardiac surgical procedures, Huntsville Hospital is first in services, first in experience and first in hearts in north Alabama.



# More is Better.

Huntsville Hospital has the only dedicated free-standing hospital for Women & Children in north Alabama, providing more services for mothers, babies, and children than any other hospital in the region. At Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children you'll find the Regional Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, the only Pediatric Intensive Care Unit north of Birmingham, and the only Pediatric ER in the area.

# Experience is Everything.

Huntsville Hospital is the unquestioned leader when it comes to healthcare experience in north Alabama. It's been that way for 109 years. With nearly 5,000 employees, 2,000 nurses, and 600 physicians on staff, our team is unmatched in its credentials and experience. From cancer care to the latest surgical procedures, Huntsville Hospital leads the way with experience. It really is the difference.



**HUNTSVILLE HOSPITAL**  
Experience. The Difference.

**Controlling ADD/ADHD Without Drugs**

Class Date: Thursday, April 15, 2004 Time: 6:30 PM  
 Speaker: Terry Wingo, RPh Cost: \$20  
 Location: Madison Drugs Register: 837-1778

**Madison Drugs**  
The Physician's Resource  
Compounding Pharmacy • Natural Pharmacy

7131 University Drive • Huntsville • (256) 837-1778

**Potomac Plantation Shutters**

A Louver Shop Exclusive!

- All Wood Shutter w/PVC Louvers
- Standard Paint Finishes
- Free Measure & Installation

**FACTORY DIRECT PRICING!**

**\$14/SQ. FT.**

7 ft. minimum

**The Louver Shop**  
(256) 535-0930  
800-528-7866  
www.louvershop.com

Sale Ends 4/17/04

**ORECK VACUUM STORES**

Guaranteed & Serviced FREE for 21 years!  
 The Next Generation Oreck's are INCREDIBLE!  
 • Extremely Powerful!  
 • Amazingly Quiet  
 • Advanced Hepa-Celoc® Filtration  
 • Lightweight & Easy To Use

**The Next Generation Compact Canister!**

with purchase of XL21 upright system \$199 Value!  
**FREE!**

**DRY CLEAN YOUR CARPET!**  
 Rent the Oreck Multi-Purpose Floor Machine  
 Only \$19.95/day!  
 • Incredibly Easy To Use  
 • Reduces Allergens 75%

**ATTN: Allergy Sufferers**  
 "Breathe easy with our Air Purifiers. You'll call it a miracle!"  
 Table Top Air Purifier  
 Reg. \$224.95  
**SALE \$199<sup>95</sup>**

**3 FOR \$299!**  
 NOW for just \$299 get the 2 WEEKS ONLY!  
 • Famous ORECK XL® Upright  
 • Super Compact Canister  
 • FREE Cordless Iron  
 The Famous 8lb. ORECK Upright

• Hotel Strength  
 • Deep Cleans Carpets & Bare floors  
 • Lightweight & Easy To Use

5lb Compact Canister \$169 Value!  
 Model XL2400  
**BOTH FREE** with any upright!  
 Cordless Speed Iron™ \$100 Value!  
 NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER

**Carpet Stain Remover®**  
 Our bestseller removes pet stains & odors instantly!  
**Save \$5**  
 Reg. \$17.95  
**SALE \$12.95**

**FREE FINANCING** 6125 University Dr. (Across from Wal-Mart Supercenter) Huntsville • 964-8440  
 M-S 10-6 • Closed Sun.

1101-B Beltline Rd. (Big K/Kroger Shopping Ctr.) Decatur • 308-1007  
 M-S 10-6 • Closed Sun.

**FREE HOME DELIVERY**

# Date

Continued from page F1

has been booked for six months," says Katie O'Reilly, the school's director of special events, "but nobody will touch September 11th. They'll call up (looking for a September date), and I'll say, 'We have September 11th.' And they say, 'No, we won't take that.'"

Uberphotographer Steve Gross says he may have to take the day off. "It's been years since I've had an opening on a Saturday in September, but I haven't had a single inquiry, and I don't expect to get many calls," he says. "I wouldn't want my anniversary date to be September 11th."

For some brides, though, the day has shed its stigma - and the opportunities are too good to pass up. Osmond didn't even realize the significance of the date until her brother pointed it out. "We're so used to hearing it referred to as 9/11, we didn't even realize it was September 11th," she says. "By that time we had wrapped our heads around the date, and we just decided, we have the perfect venue, it's a September date, we're going to go for it. We're going to create a new day of happy memories for our families."

02025954

02025970

02025951