

CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL TASK FORCE
ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS
FINAL REPORT



SAVANNAH

October 1, 2020

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Executive Summary

The “Civil War Memorial Task Force Additional Recommendations Final Report” summarizes the work and recommendations of the Civil War Memorial Task Force for the consideration of the City of Savannah Mayor and Aldermen. The Civil War Memorial Task Force reconvened in June 2020 to consider supplementary interpretative signage for the Civil War Memorial site. The enclosed report was prepared in September 2020 following the conclusion of a series of meetings held between June and September 2020 during which they deliberated and came to a consensus on a series of recommendations that support and complement their original recommendations provided to the Savannah City Council in December 2017 (adopted by City Council in February 2018). The report addresses recommended next steps for City Council to undertake before considering the recommendations in a formal vote to ensure broad public engagement and citizen input. A brief historical summary of Forsyth Park and the Civil War Memorial site is also included to provide historical context to the recommendations of the Task Force. Finally, the Task Force’s recommendations are presented for the consideration of City Council.

Next Steps

The Task Force proposes the next steps in reviewing, vetting, and approving their proposed recommendations include a public engagement process that includes: staff briefing City Council fully on the recommendations; City Council then engaging their constituents through town hall meetings to gather feedback; and the City launching an online survey to gather citizen feedback on proposed recommendations for City Council’s review.

Historical Context

Forsyth Park, called Forsyth Place at the time, was established by City ordinance in 1851. The Civil War Memorial was erected by the Savannah Ladies Memorial Association as a memorial to Savannah’s Confederate dead and was dedicated in 1875. The Memorial originally featured two statues, “Silence” and “Judgement,” but was altered in 1879 with their removal, the enclosing of the middle section and the installation of a bronze statue of a Confederate soldier on the top. The Memorial grounds now feature the Bartow and McLaws monuments, bronze busts located north and south of the Memorial. These monuments to Confederate leaders were originally located in Chippewa Square and were relocated to the Memorial site in 1910. The Civil War Memorial was erected in (and the Bartow and McLaws busts relocated to) a segregated public park, identified as early as 1866 by City Council for use by whites. While segregation was illegal by federal law in municipal parks, Savannah’s public parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities were segregated by local customs through the mid-1960s.

Task Force Recommendations

After a thorough review of their work in 2017 and the original recommendations approved by City Council in 2018, the Task Force proposes the following recommendations to City Council (full explanations provided in the body of the report):

- *Revised Recommendation #5:* Remove the McLaws and Bartow monuments and place in storage until such time as the City of Savannah can identify a proper location for them
- *Additional Recommendation #9:* The City of Savannah consistently refer to the memorial as the “Civil War Memorial” in all City communications, including the City website and official City documents.
- *Additional Recommendation #10:* Include the amendment of Georgia State laws preventing local governments from altering and/or removing monuments and memorials that no longer serve the needs of their constituents to the 2021 City of Savannah Legislative Agenda.
- *Additional Recommendation #11:* Install one new interpretive sign mounted in the ground outside of the memorial fence line with a panel that incorporates a pictorial timeline of the memorial site (see Appendix B) and the text: “In 2018, the City of Savannah approved the relocation of the two busts (moved here from Chippewa Square in 1910) from the memorial’s grounds and the placement of a new plaque on the memorial that states: *This memorial was originally erected in 1875 to the Confederate dead, redesigned in 1879, and rededicated in 2018 to all the dead of the American Civil War.* A Georgia State law, strengthened in 2019, currently prevents the City from taking these actions.”
- *Additional Recommendation #12:* The Savannah City Council should establish a permanent Culture, History & Education Committee. It would have a rotating membership comprised of citizens representing Savannah’s six districts, in addition to experts in the fields of education, tourism and history. The Committee would advise City leadership and staff on ways to expand Savannah’s understanding and interpretation of all the city’s history, especially related to the experiences of American Blacks, Native Americans, and women. This would be done through new static and living memorials, as well as public engagement, outreach, education and discussion of that history in new dynamic and meaningful ways.

Civil War Memorial Task Force Members* (in alphabetical order)

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**When the Task Force first met in 2017, they were originally known as the Confederate Memorial Task Force. In recognition of City Council's February 14, 2018, approval to rename the "Confederate Monument" the "Civil War Memorial," the Task Force is now known as the Civil War Memorial Task Force. The 2020 Task Force is comprised of the original group of individuals from the 2017 Task Force, with the addition of the new President and CEO of the Historic Savannah Foundation, Sue Adler.*

Task Force Purpose and Methodology

In October 2017, then-City of Savannah Mayor Eddie DeLoach convened the Task Force to provide recommendations for the Savannah City Council regarding the Confederate Memorial in Forsyth Park. Mayor DeLoach charged the Task Force with making simple and sensible recommendations that would address ways to make the Confederate Memorial more representative of Savannah's community while also preserving Savannah's unique history. The Task Force presented a final report with recommendations in December 2017. All eight recommendations were unanimously approved by City Council on February 14, 2018, pending a review by the City Attorney's Office to ensure they could be legally implemented. In November 2018, the City Attorney's Office determined that several of the recommendations conflicted with Georgia State law.

In June 2020, after renewed community interest in implementing the Task Force's approved recommendations and ensuring the memorial site represented the entire Savannah community, Mayor Van Johnson directed City staff to reconvene the original Task Force to consider supplementary recommendations for interpretive signage at the site that would support the original recommendations approved by City Council in 2018 but would remain in line with current State law.

As with their original charge in 2017, the Civil War Memorial Task Force took their new charge from Mayor Johnson very seriously and undertook a thoughtful and deliberative process through four virtual meetings (conducted via zoom during the COVID-19 pandemic) to

determine the appropriate type of signage for the memorial site. They revisited their original recommendations and used them as a basis to formulate new recommendations that built on and supported the original recommendations approved by City Council in 2018. The Task Force explored a range of options from a simple sign, to a series of interpretive panels complemented by mobile technology, weighing the pros and cons of each. They discussed what their role as a task force is and how it formed perhaps the first step of a larger movement of commemoration involving a greater swath of the Savannah community. These discussions led to the following recommendations, which expanded on their original charge to recommend language for interpretive signage, but which they feel support the implementation of all of the recommendations vetted and approved by City Council in 2018 and move the Savannah community forward to a more complete understanding and broader discussion of both our Civil War history, as well as the many stories and histories that make up our unique city and all of the people who have contributed to that history.

Next Steps

The Task Force acknowledges that the process in preparing these additional recommendations did not include additional public engagement, instead it built on the 2017 work which did include a public engagement component. With that in mind, the Task Force proposes the next steps in reviewing, vetting, and approving the proposed recommendations outlined in this report:

1. Staff briefs City Council on both the original approved recommendations and the new proposed recommendations
2. City Council members engage their constituents through town hall meetings to gather citizen feedback on proposed recommendations
3. The City launch an online survey to gather citizen feedback on proposed recommendations

The Task Force is willing to assist the City in these efforts, if desired, and supports all efforts to encourage citizen participation and engagement.

The Task Force has included a proposed recommendation for City Council to establish a new permanent committee to address Culture, History & Education aimed at expanding Savannah's understanding and interpretation of our history through new static and living memorials, as well as public engagement, outreach, education, and discussion of that history in new dynamic and meaningful ways (*see Additional Recommendation #12*). Regardless of what City Council and the Savannah community decide to do at the Civil War Memorial site, continuing a dynamic and inclusive discussion of Savannah's history should be a next step that the City strives to move forward on.

Historical Context

The Civil War Memorial is located in Forsyth Park in Savannah, Georgia. It was erected at the tail end of the Reconstruction era, altered at the beginning of the Jim Crow era, and additional monuments to Confederate leaders were added to its grounds at the height of the Lost Cause interpretation of the Civil War. Following the Civil War and through the early 1960s, Forsyth Park was identified as a “white” park¹ and the memorial existed in this segregated setting, which excluded a significant portion of Savannah’s population. The following brief summary of Forsyth Park attempts to address both the history of the Civil War Memorial and the Bartow and McLaws monuments, but also the park as a segregated public space and its use as a protest stage during the height of the civil rights movement of the early 1960s. This summary should not be considered an exhaustive or all-inclusive history on any of these subjects. Additional historical information on the Civil War Memorial and the Bartow and McLaws monuments can be found in the “Confederate Memorial Task Force Final Report” (City of Savannah, 22 December 2017), and a more in-depth discussion of the segregation of Forsyth Park and its use by protestors can be found in “Customary Segregation and 20th Century Integration of Savannah’s Public Parks and Playgrounds” (City of Savannah Municipal Archives, September 2020).

Forsyth Park (originally known as Forsyth Place) was established as a public park by City Council through a City ordinance on April 24, 1851, and originally bounded on the north by Gaston Street, on the east by Drayton Street, on the south by Hall Street, and on the west by Whitaker Street. In 1866, City Council tried to pass an ordinance forbidding blacks from using Forsyth Park unless they were in charge of white children. After being informed by Brevet Major General Davis Tillson with the United States Freedmen’s Bureau that this action was illegal, Council passed a series of ordinances on October 17, 1866, that charged the Chief of Police with maintaining order and decency in the park. These ordinances were written broadly enough to give the local police a lot of latitude and established the tools with which they could enforce segregation within Forsyth Park without having it officially on the books. On February 6, 1867, City Council officially added the Military Parade Ground (extending south from the original park to Park Avenue) to Forsyth Park to be an extension of the public park.²

The Savannah Ladies Memorial Association formed in 1867 and as early as 1868 began plans to build a memorial to the Confederate dead. In 1873, the Association selected the design of Canadian sculptor Robert Reid of Montreal, who would use stone from Nova Scotia. On April 22, 1874, Savannah City Council granted permission to the Association to erect the memorial in Forsyth Park, at the point where Bull and Gwinnett streets would intersect. The cornerstone

¹ “Transcript of Record: Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1962, No. 68, Nathaniel Wright, Et Al., Petitioners, vs. Georgia,” pages 44-45.

² *The Savannah City Code....* (Savannah: George B. Clarke, 1871), 113, 116; Official Proceedings of Savannah City Council June 27, 1866, July 11, 1866, July 12, 1866, City of Savannah Clerk of Council’s Office (hereafter Council Proceedings); Jastrzembki, Frank, “Artillery: General Davis Tillson,” *Emerging Civil War* (12 June 2018), available online at: <https://emergingcivilwar.com/2018/06/12/general-davis-tillson/> (last accessed 6 September 2020).

was laid in a traditional Masonic ceremony on June 16, 1874. The memorial, costing approximately \$21,250, was dedicated on May 24, 1875, and featured two female marble figures, “Silence” inside the open mid-section framed by corner posts, and “Judgement” on the top. A bronze panel on the western side features the text “TO THE CONFEDERATE DEAD 1861-1865.” In April 1878, the Association voted unanimously to accept the proposal of George Wymberly Jones DeRenne to renovate the memorial at his expense by removing the two statues and placing a bronze statue of a Confederate soldier on the top. The new statue, titled “Confederate Soldier,” sculpted by the Welsh artist David Richards of New York, was installed in May 1879. “Silence” was placed on a pedestal over the Gettysburg section at Laurel Grove North Cemetery and “Judgement” was donated to the Thomasville Memorial Association, who placed it in Soldier’s Circle in Laurel Hill Cemetery in Thomasville, Georgia. Originally enclosed by a wooden fence, the memorial was enclosed by a wrought iron fence in 1882, paid for by Mrs. DeRenne. In May 1897, upon petition of the Savannah Ladies Memorial Association, the City of Savannah agreed to become custodian of the memorial and to keep and care for it forever, upon the condition that the fence shall never be removed.³

In March 1901, Savannah City Council gave consent for the McLaws-Bartow Monument Committee of the United Confederate Veterans Association to erect monuments to the memories of Lafayette McLaws and Francis S. Bartow, Confederate officers, on either side of the Gaston Street entrance to Forsyth Park, provided that the Park and Tree Commission approved of the location. However, in April 1902 the Park and Tree Commission unanimously voted to propose the monuments be placed in Laurel Grove Cemetery, stating “that the proper location for memorials of this character is in the grand circle or at the entrance of Laurel Grove Cemetery.” As a result, a compromise between representatives of City Council, the Park and Tree Commission, and the Confederate Veterans Association was reached to locate the monuments in Chippewa Square. On June 3, 1902, the Bartow and McLaws monuments were unveiled in Chippewa Square as part of the larger celebration of Jefferson Davis’ birthday. The *Richmond Dispatch* reported that the busts honored the memory of Bartow and McLaws, “gallant soldiers of the Confederate army,” that the military of the city and the Confederate veterans paraded in honor of the event, and that “during the ceremony business was entirely suspended, and the square and adjacent streets were filled with people.”⁴

³ Jordan, Michael L., *Hidden History of Civil War Savannah* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2017), 113, 115-118, 120-124; Council Proceedings April 22, 1874, May 19, 1875, May 19, 1897; Stewart, Dorothy H., “The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah,” A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department (Savannah, GA: Armstrong State College, Department of History, June 1993), 246-247, 252, 254-255, 257, 262; “Confederate Memorial,” Art Inventories Catalog, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Control Number IAS 76009997, Reference File: Monuments and Markers-Confederate Monument, City of Savannah Municipal Archives (hereafter Municipal Archives); Ladies Minutes, May 30, 1879, April 24, 1880, December 26, 1881, March 21, 1882, MS473, Ladies Memorial Association, Item 2, Account Book, June 1880, Georgia Historical Society (hereafter Ladies Accounts); “A Noble Gift,” *Thomasville Times* (June 7, 1879), 3/3.

⁴ Ordinance Book, March 6, 1901, City of Savannah Clerk of Council’s Office; Record Series 5600PC-10, Park and Tree Commission Minutes, Volume 1, April 9, 1902, May 19, 1902, June 2, 1902, Municipal Archives (hereafter Park and Tree Minutes); *Report of Hon. Herman Myers, Mayor, ... for the Year Ending December 31st, 1902, ...* (Savannah, GA: The Morning News Print, 1903), 52, 281-282; Record Series 0115-001, City Council Meeting Papers, Box 0115-

In 1909, plans for the new Oglethorpe Monument necessitated the removal of the Bartow and McLaws monuments from Chippewa Square. The Park and Tree Commission again advocated for their placement in Laurel Grove Cemetery, while the Confederate Veterans Association preferred their placement in Forsyth Park. In February 1910, City Council approved the relocation of the busts to the grounds of the Civil War Memorial (located to the north and south of the memorial) within the iron fence enclosure by altering the fence to a semi-circular shape.⁵

The Bull Street axis of Forsyth Park is additionally accented by a memorial to the Georgia Volunteers of the Spanish-American War at the southern end on Park Avenue (1931) and the Marine Monument at the northern end on Gaston Street (1947), as well as the centerpiece of the original Forsyth Place portion of the park, the Forsyth Park Fountain (installed in 1858).⁶

While the adopted local ordinances established Forsyth Park as a public park, there were no local ordinances that segregated Savannah's public parks, which would have been in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. However, Savannah's public parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities were subject to segregation that was well established by local customs through the mid-1960s. Local and state codes addressing disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, and unlawful assembly were utilized to exclude blacks from parks identified as "white" parks. Parks were informally identified as either "white" or "colored"⁷ parks by the composition of the neighborhoods around them. Those parks that were surrounded by a mix of neighborhoods, like Forsyth, automatically went to the whites. As did those premier parks with the topline amenities, like Forsyth, Daffin, and Bacon parks, which featured the City's basketball courts, tennis courts, nicest swimming pool, and the municipal golf course. Memories of local civil rights leaders testify to these unwritten rules. Mercedes Wright Arnold recalled being in Forsyth Park with her children at the swings in the late 1950s when a policeman exhibiting his nightstick in a threatening way "told her the park was reserved for whites only. Former Mayor Otis Johnson said that though Forsyth Park "was a city park... it was known to be a white park where blacks were not welcomed. Blacks could walk through the park on the way to somewhere else but were not permitted to use it for recreational purposes. All city-owned parks were segregated." Former Savannah Branch NAACP President W.W. Law recalled, "The majority of parks were white, including Forsyth." It is within this customary segregated world of Savannah's public parks, where Forsyth was identified as a "white" park as

001-A276, Folder 753, and Box 0115-001-A277, Folder 757, Municipal Archives; "Memory of Davis, Celebration of His Birthday in Southern Cities. A Big Parade In Savannah," *Richmond Dispatch* (4 June 1902), 1; "Jefferson Davis' Birthday Observed in Savannah-Unveiling of Statues of Confederate Generals," *The Wilmington Messenger* (4 June 1902), 1; "Davis' Birthday Observed; Busts of Bartow and McLaw[s] Unveiled At Savannah," *The Baltimore Sun* (4 June 1902), 1.

⁵ Park and Tree Minutes, Volume 1, February 3, 1909, February 4, 1909.

⁶ Stewart, 201, 482, 498.

⁷ Historical records commonly used the terms "colored" and "Negro" or "Negroes" to refer to blacks or African Americans.

early as 1866 by City Council that the Civil War Memorial was erected in 1875, altered in 1879, and the Bartow and McLaws monuments were relocated to its grounds in 1910.⁸

In the early 1960s, individuals and groups increased their protests of the segregation of the City's public parks and recreational facilities through a series of petitions and attempts at integration. A major turning point was the simple act of seven young black men who played basketball at Daffin Park on January 23, 1961. Arrested in violation of the State code for unlawful assembly, they were convicted in Savannah City Court in May 1961. Their appeal to the Georgia Supreme Court was denied and the case, known as *Wright v. Georgia*, was taken all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court by their local NAACP lawyers, Eugene Gadsden and Clarence Mayfield, assisted by NAACP Legal Defense Fund attorneys Jack Greenberg, Constance Baker Motley and Leroy D. Clark. The Supreme Court was presented all the testimony from the City Court trial, including that of the arresting officers who admitted that they arrested the seven men in part because they were black and in fact they were just playing basketball and were not creating a disturbance, as well as that of the City's Recreation Superintendent Carl Hager. Hager confirmed that it was legal for all citizens, white and black, to use all of the City's parks, but that "It has been the custom to use the parks separately for the different races," and that both Daffin Park and Forsyth Park were considered "white" parks.⁹

The NAACP attorneys argued that the Savannah City Court conviction raised four constitutional issues, including that the State statute regarding unlawful assembly was so vague as to place unlimited authority in the hands of police officers to arbitrarily designate acts to be held as criminal in violation of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, and the statute was applied to enforce racial discrimination on governmentally owned facilities contrary to the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. They asked the Supreme Court "whether the statute under which the petitioners were convicted is unconstitutionally vague in

⁸ *The Code of the City of Savannah of 1907* (Savannah: Morning News Print, 1907), 46, 48; *The Code of the City of Savannah...adopted March 6, 1946* (Savannah: D. A. Byck & Company Printers, 1946), 318; "Rules and Regulations of the Park and Tree Commission," 1898, Park and Tree Minutes, Volume 1; *The Code of the City of Savannah,...1918*, 57; *The Code of the City of Savannah, Georgia*, 1958, 517; Interview with Mercedes Wright Arnold by Walter J. Fraser Jr. and Esther Mallard (14 June 1990), Special Collections, Zach S. Henderson Library, Georgia Southern University, excerpted in Fraser, Walter J., Jr., *Savannah in the New South: From the Civil War to the Twenty-First Century* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2018), 222; Johnson, Otis S., *From "N Word" to Mr. Mayor: Experiencing the American Dream* (Brookfield, MO: The Donning Company Publishers, 2016), 58; Shoettler, Carl, "Vast Change Obvious in the South," *The Tampa Tribune Times* (15 May 1983), 7C.

⁹ "Negroes Seek Use of Parks," *Savannah Morning News* (21 July 1960); "Negroes Seek to Integrate Bacon Park," *Savannah Morning News* (23 July 1960); Hoskins, Charles Lwanga, *W. W. Law and His People: A Timeline and Biographies* (Savannah: The Gullah Press, 2013), 183, 184; Holland, Marcus, "The Magnificent 7," *Savannah News-Press* (23 February 1997); Whitfield, Archie, "Daffin Park Case: Arrest of Negroes Brings U.S. Probe," *Savannah Morning News* (1 February 1961); "Transcript of Record," pages 1-3, 5, 39-45, 47, 50, 52, 59, 62; Holland, "The Magnificent 7"; "Six Negroes Convicted in Savannah," *The Augusta Chronicle* (19 May 1961); "Supreme Court To Hear Sit-Ins," *The Virginian-Pilot* (14 October 1962), B4; "Solicitor to Argue Racial Case," *Savannah News-Press* (2 November 1962); Tuck, Stephen, "A City Too Dignified to Hate: Civic Pride, Civil Rights, and Savannah in Comparative Perspective," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* (Fall 1995, vol. 79, No. 3), 546.

that it did not apprise them that being Negro and playing basketball in a white park constituted unlawful assembly...”¹⁰

The Supreme Court agreed, and in a unanimous opinion delivered on May 20, 1963, they overruled the Georgia Supreme Court in *Wright v. Georgia*. In the final written opinion, Justice Warren spoke for the court:

*One cannot be punished for failing to obey a command which violates the Constitution, and the police officers' command violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, since it was intended to enforce racial discrimination in the park.... The convictions cannot be sustained on the ground that petitioners' conduct was likely to cause a breach of the peace by others, since the possibility of disorder by others cannot justify exclusion of a person from a place where he has a constitutional right to be.... If petitioners were convicted because a park rule reserved the park for use by younger people at the time, the statute did not give adequate warning, as required by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, since neither the existence nor the publication of any such rule was proved.*¹¹

The May 1963 *Wright v. Georgia* ruling should have been enough to integrate all public parks and recreational facilities, but old habits proved hard to break and Savannah was still working through a tough summer of integration negotiations and escalating protests, with marches and rallies on both sides of the racial divide. Forsyth Park served as a staging ground, particularly for those advocating for segregation, including members of the Cavalcade of White Americans, the White Citizens Council, and the Ku Klux Klan. Henry S. Brooks, a leader for the Cavalcade of White Americans and a former City detective, spoke at the park, urging segregationists to boycott businesses that hired or served blacks and blamed the City administration for the racial unrest in Savannah. At one of the KKK rallies in Forsyth Park, Grand Dragon Calvin F. Craig called for a white economic boycott.¹²

¹⁰ “Transcript of Record,” pages 3-4, 10, 42-45, 47, 59; *Records Briefs United States Supreme Court, Volume 206: Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1962, No. 68, Nathaniel Wright, et. al., Petitioners, vs. Georgia* (New York, NY: Record Press, Printers, 1962), available online at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4zk3fwk> (last accessed 4 September 2020).

¹¹ “Negroes in Park Case: Conviction of Six in Savannah Upset,” *Savannah News-Press* (21 May 1963); “United States Supreme Court, WRIGHT v. GEORGIA (1963), No. 68, Argued: November 7, 1962 Decided: May 20, 1963,” pages 284-285, available online at: <https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/373/284.html> (last accessed 4 September 2020); Shoettler, “Vast Change Obvious in the South.”

¹² Correspondence, Mayor Malcolm Maclean to “Dear Fellow Savannahian” (17 June 1963), and Resolution (17 July 1963), Record Series 5600MY-20, Mayor’s Office – Speeches File Books, Volume 3, Municipal Archives; Fraser, 231, 234, 235; Clark, Benjamin Van, “Siege at Savannah,” *Freedomways* (1st Quarter 1964), available online at: <https://www.crmvet.org/info/savanah1.htm> (last accessed 4 September 2020); “March Cancelled,” *Pampa [Texas] Daily News* (15 July 1963), 1; “Negroes Call Off March in Savannah,” *The Shreveport Journal* (15 July 1963), 9; Hoskins, 96, 195-196; *The Times News [Idaho]* (23 June 1963), available online at: https://archive.org/stream/The_Times_News_Idaho_Newspaper_1963_06_23/The_Times_News_Idaho_Newspap

By October 1, 1963, a committee of leading Savannah business, church and social leaders, supported by City government, had come to an agreement regarding comprehensive desegregation of public and private facilities, eight months ahead of the Federal Civil Rights Act, which was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964. “Title III: Desegregation of Public Facilities” of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 helped secure the desegregation of public facilities and ensure access to public parks and recreational facilities to all citizens regardless of race.¹³

er_1963_06_23_djvu.txt (last accessed 4 September 2020); “Savannah March Dropped by Klan; City Warned Against It,” *The New York Times* (21 July 1963).

¹³ Tuck, 542, 547, 551; Shoettler, “Vast Change Obvious in the South”; City Council Proceedings, February 5, 1964; Hoskins, 198; “Pool Closed as Negroes Seek Entry,” *Savannah Morning News* (26 June 1964); Kemper, Bob, “40 years ago, segregation was defeated,” *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (2 July 2004), A1; Public Law 88-352, July 2, 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1964; “The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom, Epilogue” Library of Congress Exhibitions, available online at: <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/civil-rights-act/epilogue.html> (last accessed 4 September 2020); Bell, Danna, “The Civil Rights Act of 1964 – Titles II and III: The Right to Go Where You Want,” Library of Congress: Teaching with the Library of Congress (13 February 2014), available online at: <https://tinyurl.com/yyc2tesq> (last accessed 4 September 2020); Hoskins, 198.; Maclean, Malcolm, “Remarks re. desegregation” to the Practicing Law Institute NYC (December 1964; 8 March 1965), Record Series 5600MY-20, Mayor’s Office – Speeches File Books, Volume 4, City of Savannah Municipal Archives.

Task Force Revised Recommendation

As part of their discussions regarding new interpretive signage and supporting recommendations to further those approved by City Council in 2018, the Civil War Memorial Task Force conducted a thorough review of all eight approved recommendations (see Appendix A). They unanimously affirm their original recommendations numbered 1-4 and 6-8 and look forward to when the City will be able to implement those recommendations. However, after careful consideration, they propose a revision to *Recommendation #5: Relocate the McLaws and Bartow monuments to Laurel Grove North Cemetery* (see Appendix A for the full recommendation explanation) as follows:

Revised Recommendation #5: Remove the McLaws and Bartow monuments and place in storage until such time as the City of Savannah can identify a proper location for them

Explanation: The McLaws and Bartow monuments were added to the Forsyth Park site 35 years after the erection of the Civil War Memorial and are distractions from the original memorial. While the memorial honors the Civil War fallen, the busts are monuments to two specific Confederate leaders (only one of whom died in the Civil War), shifting the focus from all to the individual. The Task Force originally recommended their relocation to Laurel Grove Cemetery. However, after recent vandalism targeting the McLaws and Bartow gravesites and the Confederate section in Laurel Grove Cemetery, it has become clear that this original recommendation would only further endanger these grave sites, as well as Laurel Grove Cemetery as a whole. The Task Force recommends moving the McLaws and Bartow monuments to secure City-owned storage until the City can complete a legal analysis as to the proper location for the monuments.

Task Force Additional Recommendations

In a thorough review of the original recommendations approved by City Council in 2018, the Civil War Memorial Task Force offers the following recommendations to further that work. As with their original recommendations, they are presented as individual recommendations and can be acted on by City Council individually. However, the Task Force believes that collectively, when combined with the original 2018 approved recommendations they are the best solution for preserving and interpreting the Civil War Memorial for the entire Savannah community, while also furthering the discussion and interpretation of a more complete history of Savannah.

Additional Recommendation #9: The City of Savannah consistently refer to the memorial as the “Civil War Memorial” in all City communications, including the City website and official City documents.

Explanation: In keeping with the recommendation to rename the “Confederate Monument” the “Civil War Memorial” adopted by City Council on February 14, 2018, the Task Force recommends that the City make a concerted effort to move forward with recognizing the memorial by this name in all official records and communication. All references to the memorial on the City website should be updated and staff should be directed to use the name “Civil War Memorial.”

Additional Recommendation #10: Include the amendment of Georgia State laws preventing local governments from altering and/or removing monuments and memorials that no longer serve the needs of their constituents to the 2021 City of Savannah Legislative Agenda.

Explanation: The City of Savannah has a well-established public process for the approval and erection of public monuments, memorial and markers through the Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission and Savannah City Council, allowing for public comment and participation at the local level to ensure that monuments going up represent the community. Currently Georgia State laws restrict local municipalities from making similar decisions, with the input of their citizens, regarding the alteration or removal of some of their monuments that no longer serve the needs of the community. Local history is told at the local level and these decisions need to be made by the community in which these monuments and memorials reside.

Additional Recommendation #11: Install one new interpretive sign mounted in the ground outside of the memorial fence line with a panel that incorporates a pictorial timeline of the memorial site (see Appendix B) and the text: “In 2018, the City of Savannah approved the relocation of the two busts (moved here from Chippewa Square in 1910) from the memorial’s grounds and the placement of a new plaque on the memorial that states: *This memorial was originally erected in 1875 to the Confederate dead, redesigned in 1879, and rededicated in*

2018 to all the dead of the American Civil War. A Georgia State law, strengthened in 2019, currently prevents the City from taking these actions.”

Explanation: The Task Force affirms their original recommendations to affix a bronze plaque to the Civil War Memorial rededicating the memorial to all the Civil War dead and to remove the McLaws and Bartow busts from the memorial site. Until such time as the State law is changed allowing the City of Savannah to move forward with all the recommendations adopted in 2018, the Task Force recommends installing a sign outside of the memorial’s fence that conveys through text the City’s intentions for the memorial and the McLaws and Bartow busts, and the reason the City is unable to move forward at this time. The proposed sign also includes visual images showing the memorial as it was originally erected in 1875 and the original location of the busts in Chippewa Square. The style of signage recommended (see Appendix C), allows the panel to be easily updated or replaced as needed with future changes at the memorial site, if the community desires a change in interpretation, or if replacement is necessary due to vandalism.

Note: The Task Force debated at length the option of installing four educational interpretive signs (one on each side of the memorial site) that explored various aspects of Savannah Civil War history. After considerable discussion, they settled on the above recommendation, which supported their original recommendations #1, 3, 5 and 8 approved in 2018. However, they recognize that the memorial has changed over time with changing community needs and Savannah’s community ultimately will drive the future interpretation of this site. With that in mind, they recommend that if future generations want additional interpretive signage at the memorial site it should support the purpose of the memorial as a place to acknowledge all the dead of the Civil War, by exploring the stories of those who lost their lives during the Civil War period (both on the battlefield and the home front; both those supporting the Union and the Confederate causes from Savannah), as well as the stories of those who lost loved ones during the Civil War period (including the Savannah women who erected this memorial). In keeping with the broader interpretation of the Civil War Memorial supported by all of the Task Force’s recommendations, any additional panels should reflect a variety of people and experiences and should go through a dynamic public input and approval process.

***Additional Recommendation #12:* The Savannah City Council should establish a permanent Culture, History & Education Committee. It would have a rotating membership comprised of citizens representing Savannah’s six districts, in addition to experts in the fields of education, tourism and history. The Committee would advise City leadership and staff on ways to expand Savannah’s understanding and interpretation of all the city’s history, especially related to the experiences of American Blacks, Native Americans, and women. This would be done through new static and living memorials, as well as public engagement, outreach, education and discussion of that history in new dynamic and meaningful ways.**

Explanation: The Civil War Memorial Task Force recognizes that there remains much work to do to continue to expand on the documented and interpreted stories of Savannah, both from

the Civil War, as well as before and after it. However, they feel this work is better served by a standing and ongoing committee comprised of a larger body representative of a broader segment of Savannah's population. The work should be ongoing, engaging with a rotating body of citizen representation, and connect City staff and officials with ideas, partners, and resources to keep momentum continuous. This work needs to address outreach and education at all levels of our community and therefore needs to be highly engaged with our educational leaders as well as the tourism industry.

Appendix A: Confederate Memorial Task Force Recommendations Approved by City Council on February 14, 2018

February 14, 2018 City Council Meeting Minutes available online at:

<http://agenda.savannahga.gov/publishing/february-14-2018-city-council-regular-meeting/minutes.html>

Task Force Recommendations

The Confederate Memorial Task Force presents the following recommendations to the Savannah City Council. Our intent is to make the Confederate Memorial more representative of Savannah's entire community (both currently and during the Civil War) while preserving the artifact in situ as a part of Savannah's unique history. These recommendations are in keeping with the spirit of Savannah, her dedication to the principles of preservation, and her recognition of history. These recommendations address Savannah's Confederate Memorial, the memorial's history, and not the history of the Civil War in general. As the Confederate Memorial was altered in 1879 and again in 1910 to better meet the needs of shifting community ideals, the Task Force believes this memorial is not a static object, but one that can adjust with community mores. This memorial is not alone in being modified over time: the Nathanael Greene Monument in Johnson Square, erected in 1825-1830, was modified and rededicated in 1886 and altered again in 1902. The Task Force also acknowledges that there is room for future generations to tell additional stories and expand the lessons from Savannah's history.

While the following recommendations are presented as individual recommendations, the Task Force believes that collectively they are the best solution for preserving the Confederate Memorial for the Savannah community.

Recommendation #1: Rename from "Confederate Monument" to "Civil War Memorial"

Explanation: The Confederate Memorial is historically referred to as the "Confederate Monument." The name placed the focus on the Confederacy, while the use of the word "monument" over "memorial" belied the original intent of its purpose as a memorial to the Confederate dead, as reflected in the goals of the Savannah Ladies Memorial Association. Renaming it to "Civil War Memorial" serves two purposes: "memorial" returns to the original intent of it being a memorial to the dead; and "Civil War" rather than "Confederate" makes it more inclusive to all of Savannah's Civil War fallen.

Recommendation #2: Preserve all historical material on the memorial*

Explanation: In keeping with Savannah's long tradition of preservation, the Task Force recommends removing no historical material from the memorial as it was erected in 1875 and altered in 1879 by the Savannah Ladies Memorial Association. While the Task Force explored options for replacing the "Confederate Soldier" statue at the top (swapping it with "Silence" in Laurel Grove Cemetery; or returning "Judgement" from Thomasville; or installing an entirely new statue; or even leaving the top empty), in the end it was decided the statue represented the "everyman" soldier rather than a specific individual. Additionally, there were conservation concerns that swapping or reinstallation of "Silence" or "Judgement" might bring.

**Added clarification note 8/19/2020: This recommendation refers only to the Civil War Memorial. The Bartow and McLaws monuments are addressed in Recommendation #5.*

Recommendation #3: Install a new bronze plaque on the blank horizontal panel on the south side of the memorial with this text: “This memorial was originally erected in 1875 to the Confederate dead, redesigned in 1879, and rededicated in 2018 to all the dead of the American Civil War.”

Explanation: Affixing a bronze plaque to the memorial emphasizes the move by the community to formally rededicate the memorial and makes it more historically comprehensive. The proposed plaque text also honors the memorial’s complete history. The addition of the new plaque should only be done after the proper assessment of that area of the memorial by a stone conservator to ensure that the stonework is sufficiently stable to support such a plaque.

Recommendation #4: Do not alter the blank vertical panel on the south side of the memorial

Explanation: As the Task Force recommends making use of the blank horizontal panel to make the memorial more representative of Savannah’s history, they encourage leaving the south-facing vertical panel blank so that future generations will also have the opportunity to make contributions to this memorial as they see fit.

Recommendation #5: Relocate the McLaws and Bartow monuments to Laurel Grove North Cemetery

Explanation: The McLaws and Bartow monuments were added to the Forsyth Park site 35 years after the erection of the memorial and are distractions from the original memorial. While the memorial honors the Civil War fallen, the busts are monuments to two specific Confederate leaders (only one of whom died in the Civil War), shifting the focus from all to the individual. In keeping with the Park and Tree Commission’s recommendations from 1902 and 1910, these monuments to individuals are more appropriate in Laurel Grove North Cemetery, where both are buried and where the Gettysburg section is located. Possible locations for relocation include Bartow’s and McLaws’ respective burial lots, the Gettysburg section, and the Grand Circle first proposed by the Park and Tree Commission in 1902. The Task Force recommends that a conservator examine the monuments to recommend the safest way to relocate them without damage, and that the Cemeteries Department determines the best location for their preservation and access within the cemetery.

Recommendation #6: Do not replace the Bartow and McLaws monuments at the memorial site

Explanation: The McLaws and Bartow monuments, once relocated from the memorial site, should not be replaced. Their relocation would once again make the memorial the focal point within the fence enclosure, restoring the memorial’s prominence at this site.

Recommendation #7: Preserve the fence around the memorial in the current elliptical shape

Explanation: In keeping with the 1897 acceptance by City Council to care for the memorial in perpetuity upon condition that the fence shall never be removed, the Task Force recommends

the fence be maintained and preserved. It is recognized that its current elliptical configuration reflects the 1910 alterations, but it is not recommended the fence be changed back to the pre-1910 square shape as it aligns with the configuration of the park's walkways.

Recommendation #8: The community expands the story of the Civil War, its causes, and its effects throughout Savannah, other than at the Forsyth Park Confederate Memorial site

Explanation: The Task Force's purview is limited to the memorial and the confines of the surrounding fence. After lengthy debate regarding additional memorials and interpretive signage to tell additional stories about the people, places and events of the Civil War and Savannah, the Task Force believes that the Confederate Memorial in Forsyth Park, within the enclosure of this fence, is not the place for these stories. The addition of new memorials and signage at this site would take away from the Confederate Memorial as a memorial to the Civil War dead. By relocating the McLaws and Bartow monuments, renaming the memorial, and adding the bronze plaque to the memorial, they hope to restore this memorial to what it was intended to be, a memorial to the fallen, but in a new light, inclusive of all of Savannah's Civil War fallen. With that said, Savannah needs to expand its Civil War interpretation throughout the city, as well as the contributions to Savannah by African Americans, such as Susie King Taylor, March Haynes, and Rachel Brownfield. The dialogue regarding additional memorials and monuments needs to be ongoing; there are other stories to be told throughout town. The Task Force recommends individuals and organizations use the existing avenues available to them to propose new memorials, monuments and markers, including the City of Savannah's Historic Site & Monument Commission, administered by the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, and the Georgia Historical Society's Historical Marker Program.

Appendix B: *Pictorial Timeline of Civil War Memorial Site*

Image 1



Confederate Monument, circa 1875-1878 (before 1879 alterations)

Photographed and Published by Kilburn Brothers, Littleton, N.J.

Courtesy of Hugh Stiles Golson

Image 2



**“Confederate Monument, Savannah, Ga.,” between 1890 and 1901
(reflecting original square configuration of the wrought iron fence)**

Detroit Publishing Company Photograph Collection. Retrieved from <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016797861/>.
Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Image 3



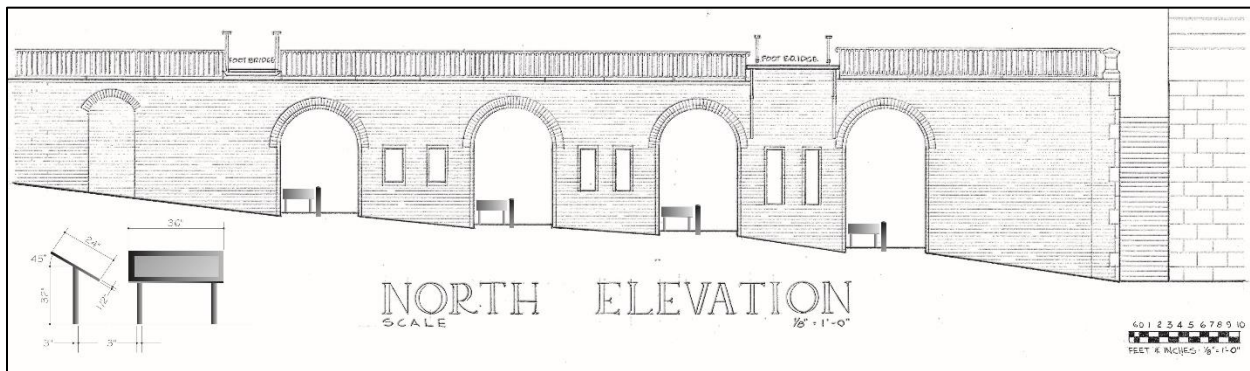
**“Chippewa Square, Savannah, Ga.,” undated (circa 1902-1910)
(showing McLaws and Bartow busts’ original location in Chippewa Square)**

V. & J. Duncan postcard collection, Item 1121-057_0528.

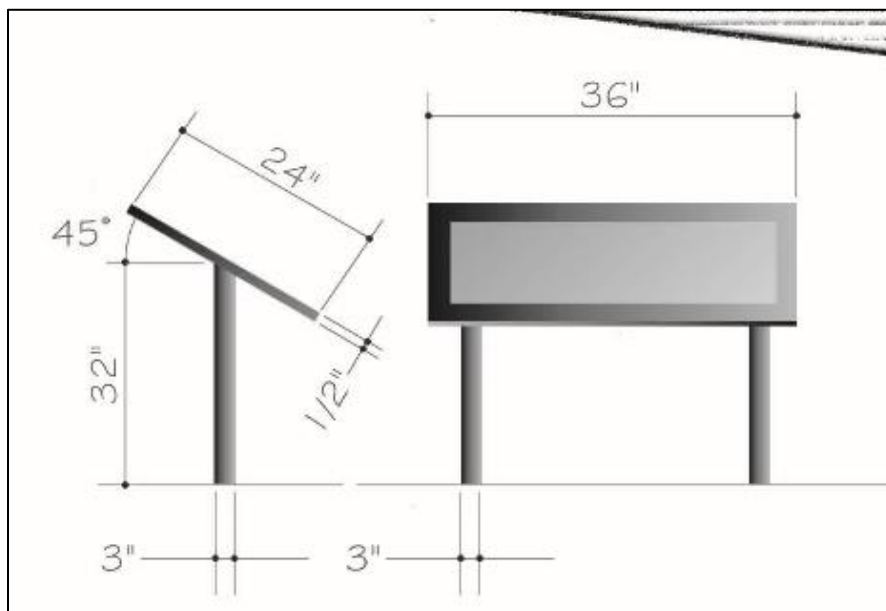
Courtesy of the City of Savannah Municipal Archives on behalf of V. & J. Duncan Antique Maps & Prints.

Appendix C: Example of Recommended Interpretive Signage

The Civil War Memorial Task Force recommends the style of interpretive signage utilized in the Cluskey Embankment Stores (aka Cluskey Vaults), east of City Hall, for the Civil War Memorial site. This style of signage lends itself well to the incorporation of both text and visual materials, and the panel can be swapped out easily if the information needs to be updated to reflect changes on the memorial site (for instance when the original Task Force recommendations approved by City Council in 2018 are successfully implemented), changes in interpretation of the memorial as desired by the community, or if the panel needs to be replaced due to vandalism. Below are some images of the panels at the Cluskey Embankment Stores site to provide a visual of what this style of signage looks like. Other historical sites in Savannah that have utilized this style include the Battlefield Memorial Park and Georgia State Railroad Museum, both operated by the Coastal Heritage Society, and the Savannah Riverfront Walk, maintained by the City of Savannah.



Elevation of the Cluskey Embankment Stores Interpretive Signage



Dimensions of the Cluskey Embankment Stores Interpretive Signage



Members of the Shinhosier Leadership Institute and Savannah City Council dedicate the Cluskey Embankment Stores Interpretive Signage, May 11, 2016

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