

# GEORGIA

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# BATTLEFIELDS

Published by Georgia Battlefields Association, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of Georgia's Civil War history and sites. Contact newsletter editor by e-mail: [info@georgiabattlefields.org](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org)

## Return to Chickamauga: Georgia Battlefields Association annual tour 27-30 March 2025

Chickamauga is one of two Georgia battles that the 1993 Civil War Sites Advisory Commission report characterized as decisive, its highest rating of significance. Our perception at the end of our 2013 tour focusing on the Chickamauga Campaign was we had covered important though less familiar events during the lead-up to the battle but left perhaps too little time to cover the combat of 19-20 September. Consequently, our 2025 tour will be four days instead of three. Our guide will again be National Park Service historian Jim Ogden. More details of the itinerary are in the [October Georgia Battlefields Association newsletter](#).

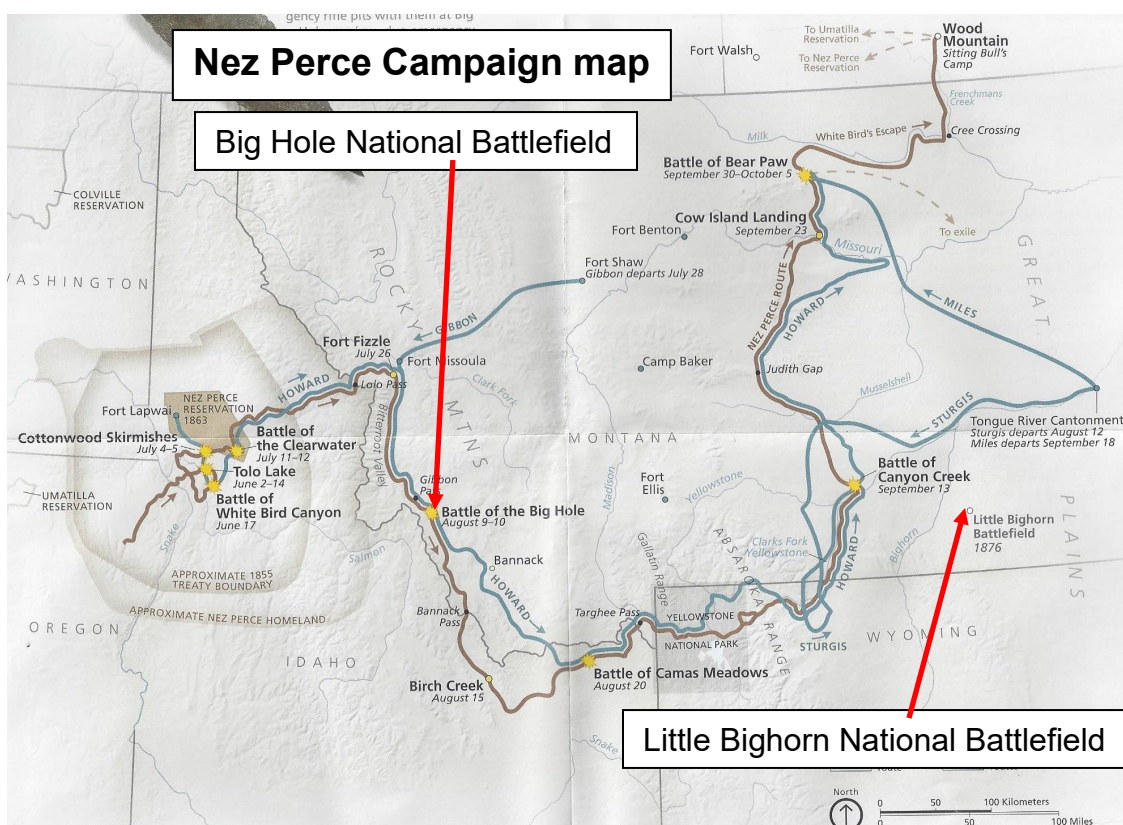
**Price:** As with our 2024 tour, this will be a three-and-a-half-day tour: All day Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, plus Sunday morning. On Wednesday evening (26 March), GBA representatives will be in the hotel lobby to hand out materials. Dinner on your own that evening. The **\$580** price includes bus transportation, handouts, three lunches and three dinners (Thursday through Saturday). If you can't join us for whole tour, send an e-mail (be sure to include your phone number) to [info@georgiabattlefields.org](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org), and we will correspond with you about a reduced price.

**Registration:** Register online using [this link](#). Alternatively, you can mail a check to Georgia Battlefields Association at 315 S. 5<sup>TH</sup> ST, Griffin GA 30224-4343.

**Hotel:** TownePlace Suites, 6801 Ringgold Rd, East Ridge TN 37412, 423 933 2700. GBA rate for a king room is \$125 (\$147 if you include the unavoidable tax) per night. Queen double is \$135 (\$160) per night. Price includes breakfast. To book online, use [this link](#). Note that online booking will be unavailable after 25 February 2025 (one month before the tour begins).

## Battlefield road trip: Interpretation at Big Hole National Battlefield

The November GBA newsletter compared historical interpretation at Washita and Little Bighorn national battlefields. Those were essentially the bookend engagements to Lt. Col. Custer's participation in the War against the Plains Indians. He had no comparably-sized battles in the almost eight years between those two events. This month, we consider historical interpretation at the Big Hole National Battlefield, the largest fight during what is usually called the Nez Perce Campaign, though the Native Americans involved called themselves nimi-pu ("the people"). One connection between the Little Bighorn campaign and the Nez Perce campaign is the participation by Colonel (formerly Major General of Volunteers) John Gibbon and his 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.



In the summer of 1877, Brigadier General O.O. Howard was in overall command of the campaign to force Chief Joseph and 800 Nez Perce (only 200 of which were warriors) to return to the reservation in western Idaho rather than fleeing to Canada to join Sitting Bull. The 9-10 August Big Hole fight was the largest battle of the three-month campaign. Colonel John Gibbon led 146 soldiers (14 of Gibbon's 16 officers were Civil War veterans) and 34 civilian volunteers in pursuit of the Nez Perce. The battle site is in western Montana, very near Idaho.

A detachment of soldiers was able to approach a Nez Perce camp undetected overnight and attacked on the morning of 9 August, killing both warriors and non-warriors and burning some of the camp, but the Nez Perce counterattacked, drove the soldiers onto a hill, and even captured a howitzer. Overnight, the Nez Perce began leaving the area except for a few warriors whose objective was to persuade the soldiers that opposition was still present when army reinforcements arrived the next day.

Big Hole has a small but well-managed visitors' center that addresses not only the Big Hole battle but the entire campaign. A road leads from the center to another parking area where walking trails are accessible. Along the walking trails are 32 posts with numbers keyed to a 20-page brochure that recounts what happened at each location. The only monument on the field was installed by the Army in 1883 and mentions only soldier casualties. Two small Native American monuments were installed later but were subsequently removed from the field to the visitor center because of repeated vandalism.

## **Support groups for Civil War-related national parks in Georgia**

National Park Service budgets are chronically underfunded when it comes to park maintenance. Heavily visited parks, such as Kennesaw Mountain (the most visited national battlefield park, surpassing even Gettysburg), "wear out" faster than lesser visited parks: Parking lots and roads have to be repaved, visitor centers need to replace floors and repair restrooms, storm damaged facilities and trails have to be cleared of debris and repaired, etc. Aid in completing these maintenance tasks often comes from "Friends" groups who volunteer. While the American Battlefield Trust has its annual Park Day, these dedicated groups work monthly, weekly, or even daily to make the parks safe and accessible. If you have time and ability (the tasks often don't require specialized skills), please volunteer.

Here are the Friends groups for Civil War-related national parks in Georgia.

- Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park - <https://nppcha.org/>
- Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park - <https://friendsofkmnbp.org/>
- Andersonville National Historic Site - <https://friendsofandersonville.org/>
- Fort Pulaski National Monument - <https://www.nps.gov/fopu/our-partners.htm>

## **Georgia Battlefields Association still looking for a new treasurer**

Our current treasurer will be leaving his post in January. We'll be happy to discuss the duties in more detail or answer your questions if you'll first e-mail [info@georgiabattlefields.org](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org). Please provide a phone number when you respond.

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