



FROM LEFT: DR. JAMES WORSLEY, GEORGE FICKETT, AND JIM DANIELS DURING THE CHESTER STATION NO. 1503 SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS MEETING.

Parks director speaks about historical parks

BY DOUG BERRY

Dr. James Worsley, the Director of Chesterfield County Department of Parks and Recreation was the guest speaker Monday, April 3, at the Chester Station No. 1503 Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting. Worsley presented an update on the capital improvements being made to the county's historical parks.

Chester Station No. 1503 Sons of Confederate Veterans is a non-profit group organized and operated exclusively under the IRS code 501 (c) (3) for educational purposes with the specific charge to "ensure that the true history of the South is told to future generations." Preserving and protecting the county's Civil War battlefields, fortifications, and other historical sites are an important part of Chester Station's efforts to educate the public about Confederate history. In the past, the camp has donated \$5,000 to the preservation of Strachan house at Historic Point of Rocks, spent several thousands of dollars to fund the creation of Battery Dantzler Park, funded several interpretive signs at the Ware Bottom Church Battlefield Park, and conducted several park clean-ups at Howlett Line Park.

Prior to Worsley's presentation, the camp presented a certificate of appreciation to George Fickett Jr., who recently retired after 45 years with the Chesterfield County government. Besides being a dedicated county civil servant, Fickett was a tireless defender of the county's historical battlefields. He first saved the Drewry's Bluff fortifications in 1985, then ten more sites, including Battery Dantzler,

Howlett Line, Ware Bottom Church, and Historic Point of Rocks. Those of Confederate heritage owe a huge debt of gratitude to Fickett for all his work preserving historical Confederate sites. Fickett promised that although he was retired from civil service he would continue his efforts to save the remaining Civil War sites in the county.

Worsley emphasized his strong commitment to preserving historical sites. He cautioned that the Parks and Recreation budget would only allow for a slow but steady pace of capital improvements to Civil War parks. Perhaps Worsley's most important statement of the evening to members was that the official designation of his department should be the Department of Parks and Recreation and Historical Resources. With that statement, Worsley confirmed in the minds of the members of Chester Station that he would provide the much-needed leadership to guide the county to an even more ambitious program of Civil War parks acquisition, development and preservation.

Members considered it a privilege to have Worsley in attendance to give his presentation to the camp, and an honor to have Fickett in attendance to receive his certificate. Chesterfield County has been blessed with numerous Civil War historical sites that when fully developed, members hope will bring recreational and educational opportunities well into the future. Chester Station No. 1503 Sons of Confederate Veterans is committed to joining Worsley and Fickett to bring this vision to fruition.

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