

Historical society sets date to dedicate Dalton Civil War marker

by The Dalton Daily Citizen

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The Cook-Huff house at 314 N. Selvidge St. (Matt Hamilton/The Daily Citizen)

The last time Dalton got a new historical marker the dedication brought in dignitaries from across the state. The Georgia Historical Society has erected a new historical marker and the society is planning a big ceremony for this one on Thursday, July 14, at 10 a.m.

"We have the time and date set, but we are still working on all the other details," said Brandy Mai, director of communications for the society.

The Georgia Historical Society has placed a marker in front of Dalton's Cook-Huff House to commemorate its role in Civil War history. The

house, at 314 N. Selvidge St., served as Confederate Gen. Joseph Johnston's headquarters when the Army of Tennessee wintered in Dalton in 1863-64.

The marker notes that on Jan. 2, 1864, Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne presented his fellow Confederate officers with a proposal. The Confederacy, he said, was facing a manpower shortage and was losing the war to the numerically superior Union forces. To end that shortage, Cleburne proposed emancipating slaves who volunteered to enlist in the Confederate army and fight for the South.

Most of the other generals opposed the idea, and it was more than a year later, shortly before the South's final defeat, that the Confederacy began drafting blacks into its army. But only a handful were drafted and few saw combat, according to the text on the marker. By contrast, nearly 200,000 free blacks served in the U.S. Army and Navy.

The historical society placed a marker on Fort Hill last fall to commemorate the role of black soldiers during the Civil War. Fort Hill was chosen because it was the site of the only battle in Georgia in which black troops took part.

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