

**Oldest Civil War Monument in the U.S. Will Move to a New Home**  
*Department of Veterans Affairs to place a new monument at  
Louisville national cemetery*

**The historic Bloedner (32<sup>nd</sup> Indiana Infantry) Monument, the oldest Civil War monument in the United States, has suffered significant cumulative and natural damage during the years that it has been located at Cave Hill National Cemetery in Louisville, Kentucky. Now it is being preserved by the National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs (NCA), working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO/KY) of the Kentucky Heritage Council, and through a contract with Heritage Preservation. The NCA seeks to place the original Bloedner Monument at a facility that is secure, climate controlled and available to the public at no cost. Plans also call for a new monument and an interpretative sign to be placed at Cave Hill National Cemetery. Public comment on these proposals is invited.**

An **Informational Meeting**, for those wishing to learn more and comment, is scheduled for:

Date: **September 23, 2009**  
Time: **4–7 p.m.**  
Location: **The Clifton Center**  
**2117 Payne Street, Louisville, KY 40206-2011**  
<http://www.cliftoncenter.org/>

The original Bloedner Monument was carved in February 1862 and was placed on the graves of the 13 Union victims of the Battle of Rowlett's Station, which took place near Munfordville in Hart County, Kentucky. In 1867, the remains of 11 of these soldiers and the monument were moved to Cave Hill National Cemetery, and the monument was installed on a new base. This monument is unusual as the inscription is in German. It is considered the oldest Civil War monument in the United States, and it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Due to decades of air pollution and other natural factors, the monument suffers from a significant loss of historic material, such that about half of its inscription is missing. To avoid further degradation of this historic monument, on December 17, 2008 -- coincidentally the anniversary of the Battle of Rowlett's Station -- NCA oversaw its removal from Cave Hill National Cemetery and its placement at the University of Louisville for much-needed professional conservation. This action saved the monument from exposure to the severe ice storm of January 27, 2009. The conservation of the monument is now complete.

Throughout 2009, NCA and its partners have pursued the remaining steps in the preservation project. The first step is to identify an appropriate, permanent host institution for the original monument, which must be located in an environmentally

controlled and secure space, which is accessible to the public at no cost. Second, a new and appropriate “Bloedner” Monument must be placed in Cave Hill National Cemetery, along with an interpretive sign explaining its significance and the whereabouts of the original monument.

To locate an appropriate host institution, Heritage Preservation contacted eight Kentucky organizations whose missions include local history. They were identified or verified by the SHPO/KY. Of these eight organizations, three have responded with interest and a viable proposal. They are: the Frazier International History Museum, Louisville; the George Patton Museum at Fort Knox; and the Hart County Historical Society at the Woodson House, Munfordville.

Concurrently, with SHPO/KY’s support, NCA has developed three proposed alternatives for the appearance of the new monument. They include: 1] a replica of what the original would have looked like in 1867; 2] a monument in the general shape of the original monument, with the German text on the front and an English translation on the back; and 3] a contemporary-shaped monument with German text on the front and an English translation on the back. The likely material will be a stone that is close to the same color as the original Bloedner Monument, but for durability purposes, it may not be limestone. Drawings illustrating these alternatives can be found at [http://www.cem.va.gov/pdf/Bloedner\\_alt\\_designs.pdf](http://www.cem.va.gov/pdf/Bloedner_alt_designs.pdf). For more information about this project, please visit <http://www.cem.va.gov/hist/BloednerMon.asp>

Individuals and organizations who wish to comment on the proposed institutions identified for exhibition of the original monument, or on the proposed design of the new monument, should **direct correspondence no later than September 15, 2009** to:

Mr. Lawrence L. Reger, President  
Heritage Preservation - Suite 1200  
1012 14<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.

Or electronically to: [LReger@heritagepreservation.org](mailto:LReger@heritagepreservation.org).

If you have questions about the meeting, please contact Lauren Hunley at 202-233-0800 or [lhunley@heritagepreservation.org](mailto:lhunley@heritagepreservation.org).

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**About Heritage Preservation:** *Heritage Preservation is a national non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of the United States. By identifying risks, developing innovative programs, and providing broad public access to expert advice, Heritage Preservation assists museums, libraries, archives, historic preservation and other organizations, as well as individuals, in caring for our endangered heritage, including outdoor sculpture and monuments.*

August 13, 2009