

Local Walking Trail

By Marylou Stone

THOMAS FARM TRAIL MONOCACY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

The Thomas Farm Trail is a 1.75 mile loop that gives the hiker a chance to walk right on top of history. The trail traverses the Thomas Farm where the heaviest fighting took place on July 9, 1864 during the Battle of Monocacy. This battle is known as the "Battle that saved Washington" because it delayed Confederate General Jubal Early one day and gave Union General Ulysses Grant time to bring reinforcements from Petersburg, Virginia to Washington D.C.

The trail itself is gently rolling and for part of the distance follows a farm road where you walk right beside corn, alfalfa, soybean and wheat fields. The rest of the trail follows the borders of the fields. Watch out for the many ground hog holes.

To reach the trail, go south on Rt. 355 from Frederick. Cross the Monocacy River and turn right onto Araby Church Road. Turn right onto Baker Valley Road and then turn right into the first small gravel drive next to a white cinder-block house where there is a small parking area. Be sure to pick up a trail guide at the beginning of the trail, as it will explain the different numbered stops.

The National Park has put out a wonderful booklet describing the trail and the battle that took place there. It can be purchased at the visitor's center.

