

Media Release
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CELEBRATE GENERAL JOE WHEELER'S BIRTHDAY SEPTEMBER 8

It's a birthday party! And the Alabama Historical Commission is serving up cake! Not just any old store-bought cake, but a homemade spice cake, said to be General Joe Wheeler's favorite.

On Saturday, September 8, the commission is honoring Wheeler's birthday at his home in North Alabama. Visitors to Pond Spring, the General Joe Wheeler Home, will be able to sample cupcakes made from the Wheeler family recipe.

"We have a lot to celebrate this year," says commission director Frank W. White, "it's the Year of Alabama Food." The commission just completed a \$1.66 million restoration the Wheeler house, one of three homes on the Pond Spring plantation.

Wheeler's 1880s home is the center point of the 50 acre historic site owned by the commission. The collection contains around 10,000 objects, furnishings, clothing, and papers associated with the family.

"It's astonishing," says White "the restoration is superb. There are few house museums in America with such an extensive collection of artifacts associated with a family home. It allows for fantastic interpretation."

Wheeler was a legendary Confederate General, a U.S. Congressman, and a Spanish American War General. Following the Civil War, Wheeler became a national symbol for reunification and reconciliation.

"If you want to know what North Alabama life was like in earlier times, you owe it to yourself to visit Pond Spring," said White.

The public can explore the grounds from 9am-4pm, sample cake (while it lasts), and attend a brief welcome at 10am. Boy scouts will raise a flag, re-enactors will fire a cannon, and costumed docents will be on hand. But the main event will be an opportunity to tour the recently restored home from 10:30am to 2pm.

Entrance to the grounds, the welcoming ceremony and refreshments are free. Admission to the house is \$8 adults, \$5 seniors/college students/military, and \$3 children 6-18, free under 6. Pond Springs is located in Lawrence County in Hillsboro, three miles east of Courtland, adjacent to Alabama Highway 20 (US Alt. 72).

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*The Alabama Historical Commission **protects, preserves, and interprets Alabama's historic places** and is the State Historic Preservation Office.*

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