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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Geology and the Civil War Program [past event]

Dr. Bill Witherspoon, co-author of the popular guide, *Roadside Geology of Georgia*, will present a public talk, “Geology and the Civil War, Knoxville to Atlanta,” at the monthly meeting of Knoxville Gem and Mineral Society [past event].

Witherspoon will explain how the geology of the area between Knoxville and Atlanta influenced the military campaigns of 1863 and 1864. In a slideshow with Google Earth perspectives and cross sections, he shows how the Valley and Ridge landscape resulted from the play of erosion on rock layers shoved into place on a system of parallel faults. Defensive positions such as Fort Sanders and Sharp Ridge in Knoxville, Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge in Chattanooga, and Rocky Face near Dalton have similar geologic explanations.

Witherspoon explores the geologic reasons for Crawfish Spring, the prolific water source that helped determine the location of the Battle of Chickamauga, second only to Gettysburg in number of casualties. In 1889 Confederate and Union veterans of the battle met at the spring to inaugurate America’s first and largest National Battlefield Park. He uncovers why a tunnel had to be built at Tunnel Hill in 1848 for the strategic railroad, why the narrow ridges from Chattanooga to Dalton give way to less defensible low hills southward to Cartersville, and why Kennesaw Mountain stands as the last barrier north of the Chattahoochee River.

The 7:30 PM program will take place at Jewelry Television, 9600 Parkside Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922.

Roadside Geology of Georgia, a full-color 320-page guide, is the 25th book in a Mountain Press Publishing series for the general reader that has sold over one million copies. “Our goal is to take the reader to Georgia’s natural wonders and explain the science that lies behind the scenery,” says Witherspoon, who taught geology to K-12 students and their teachers for 17 years at DeKalb County Schools’ Fernbank Science Center, and co-authored the 2013 book with Dr. Pamela Gore of Georgia Perimeter College.

Attendees who register for *Roadside Geology of Georgia* author events can pick up the COOL BILLION-year-old rock described at georgiarocks.us/corbin. Register at georgiarocks.us/events or “Join” in facebook.com/RoadsideGeologyGA/events. Contact for information: Dr. Bill Witherspoon, bill@georgiarocks.us.