

OLD RANGER'S JOURNAL

FLORIDA PARK SERVICE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



NO. XXVI

www.fpsaa.org

March 2006

O'Leno Workday a Resounding Success

We knew the workday at O'Leno State Park would be successful when all nine elected officers showed up for a Board Meeting at William & Judi Maxwell's home on Friday afternoon. Any remaining doubt was erased when, after a three hour board meeting, 18 members met at Floyd's Diner in High Springs for dinner.

The next morning we began to gather at the CCC pavilion for coffee & donuts and an orientation by Dale Kendrick, Park Manager around a large campfire. By 9:30 we had 33 members and 7 or 8 family & friends divided into groups of chiefs and Indians and striking out to their respective job sites.

A portion of the crew dutifully followed James Burch (AKA Alumni project supervisor) down the trail to construct a 30 foot bridge on the River Trail. The remainder of the folks stayed behind to work closer to the coffee and campfire. Their task was to remove and replace the handrails from the suspension bridge and another nearby footbridge. As boards were removed by a demolition team they were passed along to the nail removal team. As the flurry of work continued you soon learned not to lay your hammer down or it would disappear. It was also discovered that ring shanked nails not only are difficult to pull out but not easy to nail without bending them. So Pete Hartsfield's job was quality assurance and penciled in the names of those of us who made hammering errors.



President's Message



This is my first opportunity to report to the full membership of the Florida Park Service Alumni Association, and I must admit that it makes me feel even closer to the organization than I have in the past. It is a special honor for me to be asked to serve as your president for the current two-year term, but, after only a few months on the job, I now realize that there is a lot more going on—and so much more yet to do—than first meets the eye. This realization certainly enhances the admiration and gratitude I hold for those who have preceded me in this important post. As I acknowledged upon taking office, I have gotten a free ride in the Alumni Association over the past fifteen years, and the time has come for me to help shoulder the load. I will do my best.

One comforting thing I learned in a hurry (and with much relief) was that there is already in place a very dedicated cadre of hard workers that really keep this organization going. It is always risky to start singling out individuals when there have been so many stalwarts over the years, but I have to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of at least an indispensable few: Sandy Cook and George Apthorp, for taking on so many ad hoc assignments, such as our newsletter (they may well regret that they are so close-by and easy for me to get hold of!); Judi Maxwell, for handling our secretarial duties with such skill and timeliness (and, I might add, going far above and beyond the call of duty); Bob Rundle, for balancing our books and keeping us solvent; and, of course, all of our board members and committee chairmen, for their dedicated service in a variety of ways. I hope all of you will join me in thanking these key individuals for their many, often unrecognized, contributions.

There may be reports elsewhere in this newsletter on specific projects and activities the Alumni Association now has under way, but I can't pass up the opportunity to comment on the progress we are making in a couple of areas. First, under the able leadership of co-chairmen George Apthorp and Tom Linley, the joint venture with the Division of Recreation and Parks to establish a Florida Park Service archives and museum is moving right along. Several productive planning sessions have been held, and we are optimistic that the mechanics for assembling and processing state park archival material will be in place soon. The museum project will take somewhat longer, of course, primarily because of the need to select a suitable site and obtain the required approval for site preparation and construction. Closely related to (and somewhat dependent on) the archives project, we are making plans also to proceed with the preparation of a history of the Florida state parks program. Many of you will be called on for assistance with this ambitious undertaking.

In all of these activities, we are indeed fortunate to have strong support from State Parks Director Mike Bullock and the Division of Recreation and Parks. After devoting his whole career to Florida's state parks, Mike's blood runs pure green! It is good to have someone who truly knows and understands state parks culture at the helm of our great state park system.

There are exciting things ahead for the Florida Park Service Alumni Association; but to achieve full success as an organization we will need the continuing support, participation and hard work of all our members. We have a good mix of retired and active Park Service staffers, but we can certainly use more of each group. You can help our vice president Clif Maxwell to build our membership by talking up the Association with every eligible person you see. You can also help the state parks directly by taking part in our various "work days," and, through active support of the James Cook Memorial Relief Fund, you can help bring comfort and relief to some of our less fortunate colleagues. The many opportunities for service and camaraderie through the Alumni Association are obvious. Let's combine our efforts to make the most of them.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at our annual meeting at Tomoka State Park in April.

Best Regards to all.
Ney

HAPPENINGS

O'Leno Workday

(Continued from front page)

A third team of bridge trolls lurked under the suspension bridge. Their task was to clean, inspect and repaint all the hardware for the bridge. After a lunch break and group photo on the steps near the swimming area (reminiscent of the old Ranger Academies) the group went back to work. We finished our work assignments by 3:00 and went our separate ways until a 6:00 catfish dinner provided by park staff and the Friends of O'Leno. We were then treated to an "old fashioned" slide program by Jim Stevenson. The program theme was "The Landrum Years" and highlighted nostalgic photos of employees from the 50's through the 80's. My how some folks have changed. But what a trip it was!

The entire week-end was a trip down "memory lane." The large turn out, the slide program and the true feeling of family which pervaded the gathering. This was evident in the genuine camaraderie of the group and the hospitality of the O'Leno staff and family members who went all out to make our O'Leno experience one of fond memories.

Looking Over the Prairie

The number of participants were few but the work accomplished and fun experienced was great at the Paynes Prairie work day held on March 4, 2005. Members of the Alumni along with staff from Paynes Prairie and District 2 Administration began the day overlooking Sweetwater Creek and the process of assembling and installing a covered bench.

FPS and Div. of Historical Resources standards and oversight were observed while digging the holes for the posts in anticipation of finding artifacts. We all thought Dave Jowers was just trying to impress us. After having our pockets searched at the end of the workday we realized staff was just concerned that we might leave with some artifacts.

Continued 

After a big lunch we were treated to a hike out to Persimmon Point. We discovered the gopher tortoises were a bigger threat to artifacts security, as each mound contained an artifact. We also witnessed old fashioned FPS methods of exotic control as demonstrated by Dave Randall.

The evening was topped off by a great ranch style cookout at Hickory Ranch prepared by District Bldg Const Spec. Binion Waters. Entertainment was provided by Bill Roberson. Thanks to Dave Jowers, and his wife Claudia, for extending their hospitality to the Alumni.

Down on the Boardwalk

Guests staying in one of the CCC cabins at Gold Head Branch now have a boardwalk to the parking lot thanks to the efforts of the Alumni Association. Thirteen Alumni members showed up for the service project. As typical with most of our projects the most difficult part is getting started. Also, as is tradition, there was plenty of catching up on news with old friends and sharing photos of family and vacations. Soon after there was a flurry of determined construction activity and by days end day there was a complete boardwalk.

Thanks to Park Manger Warren Poplin, his staff and the Friends of Gold Head we had a great time and ate well. We were even invited to their Christmas party and white elephant gift exchange.

Those of us who camped started a new tradition of outdoor breakfast. It might be more accurate to call it brunch (we didn't want to rush Judi).

SEND IN YOUR NEWS

The Old Ranger's Journal is the best method of keeping up with what's happening with our members. If you have any news to share, please send it to: Sandy Cook, 460 Wakulla Park Drive, Wakulla Springs, FL 32327-0380 or sandy-george@earthlink.net.



HAPPENINGS (Continued)

Archives Project Is Re-energized By George Apthorp

It was predictable that Ney Landrum's tenure as President of FPSAA would be one of action. Ney recently sent a memorandum to all Officers, with task assignments aimed at clearing the docket of all backlogged initiatives. Tom Linley and myself were appointed as co-chairs of the "Archives Committee." Our assignment was to work with Division staff to draft a concept statement for the FPS archives, collections and museum, with a due date of October 1, 2005. This would be the first step in meeting our goal of having the Archives and Museum established by 2010, the 75th anniversary of the Florida Park Service.

I immediately scheduled a meeting between Mike Bullock, Director, FPS and Tom & myself. This meeting confirmed Mike's commitment to the archives/museum project. He appointed Steve Martin who heads the Division's Cultural Resources Section, and Heather Shuke-Nelson, the Divisions Chief Interpreter, as primary representatives on the Committee. Also, appointed were Albert Gregory, Chief Planner, Ed Bowman, Chief of Design and Construction and Steve Dana, Budget Director. A second meeting was held with the full committee and attended by Mike and Ney Landrum. Assignments were confirmed and the due date for the concept statement was moved up to September 1.

I arranged a visit to Panola Mountain Conservation Park near Atlanta, Georgia to tour the Georgia State Parks Archives and Collections operation. Steve, Heather, Tom & myself drove up and back on July 26. We received an in-depth tour and briefing of the Panola facilities by Billy Townsend, retired staff historian for GSP and Dr. Linda Bittley, Collections Manager at Panola Mountain.

The long ride up and back gave our committee ample time to draft an initial outline for our concept statement. The next step was a meeting on August 10 with representatives from the Florida Department of State, Bureau of Archives and Records Management. The purpose of this meeting was to receive their guidance for completing the Division's archives & collection project and to explore the relationship between the FPS Archives and the State Archives. We were very encouraged by our reception at BARM.

Our committee's report was submitted to Mike Bullock and Ney Landrum on September 1. Highlights of the report include a comprehensive list of objects identified for collection and an outline of museum exhibit themes. It also includes an archives mission statement and a discussion on eventual facility needs for the collections and the museum.

We have a very secure storage room at the Division's Cultural Resources office on Appleyard Drive in Tallahassee. Since there is no problem with security, we are very hopeful that we can soon begin receiving objects for the collection which will be the eventual source for the exhibits in the FPS museum. The following is a list of desirable objects identified to be collected as representative of the "Big 5" areas of responsibility. You will be notified when the Division is ready to receive donations. If you know of the existence of any of these items or other appropriate old items not listed please let me know.

Administration: historic signs/markers, awards/recognitions, flags/banners, uniforms/insignia, brochures, old OPMs, training programs, newsletters, role tickets, annual passes, mimeograph machine, desktop microphone, manual typewriter, old metal 2 hole punch, stationary, transit, range rods, surveyors chain, old style collator rack, check or receipt spike.

Visitor Services: large format glass slides, branding iron, living history props, Joe Kenner's camera, pre 70's concession contracts.

Resource Management: metal backpack sprayer, council rake, fire flap, drip torch, hypo hatchet, sample/specimen box or bottle.

Maintenance: Old tools (cleaning, grounds, mechanical, carpentry, plumbing, electrical) fence stretcher (come-a-long), plow, tractor, grader, gravely with sulky.

Protection: S&W 38 spec, leather set, rescue buoy, first aid box, citation book, warning book, baton, handcuffs.

HAPPENINGS (Continued)

Bylaws Revisions

Revisions to the Florida Park Service Alumni Bylaws will be considered for adoption at the 2006 annual meeting. Section X requires that any changes to the Bylaws be circulated to the membership at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting and approved by a majority of the voting membership present at the meeting. Amendments to be considered are as follows:

SECTION V - DUES AND VOTING PRIVILEGES

- G. Two dollars (\$2.00) of each individual member's dues each year shall be automatically transferred to the F.P.S.A.A. James Cook Memorial Fund, Inc., for use by that organization for its authorized purposes; except that such automatic transfers shall be suspended when the balance in the said James A. Cook Memorial Fund shall exceed \$5,000.00 and shall be resumed only when the balance in the said Fund falls below \$3,000. Nothing in this provision, however, shall preclude the Association from transferring any amount of its excess funds to the said James A. Cook Memorial Fund at any time it may deem it appropriate to do so.

SECTION VII – COMMITTEES

- A. RECOGNITION AND AWARDS COMMITTEE: The Director of Recognition and Awards will serve as chairman of this committee. The Chairman shall select two other members to serve on the committee. This committee shall be responsible for receiving nominations for various awards and citations. Nominations may be submitted to the Chairman for presentation at the Annual Meeting. This Committee shall also make recommendations to the Board for new awards and criteria, as well as recommending awards and citations to be given as part of a membership event. This committee may also appoint a sub-committee for awards or citations to be given as part of a membership event.

Two awards currently recognized by the Association are as follows:

The Carlos Maxwell Award is an award that recognizes significant contributions by individuals who have also dedicated themselves to the Florida park system and who have been properly nominated.

The Joe Knoll Heritage Award may be bestowed upon an individual or individuals who have made a lasting and significant contribution to furthering the conservation, restoration or interpretation of the historical or cultural heritage of the Florida Park Service or the Florida Park Service Alumni Association.

The Criteria for the above awards as well as nomination procedures are listed as an attachment at the end of these Bylaws.

Grammatical corrections are also proposed for Section III, paragraph E and section VI, Paragraphs A & B.

For a full set of the proposed Bylaws changes visit our web site at www.fpsaa.org

JAMES COOK MEMORIAL RELIEF FUND

Assistance Provided During The 2004 & 2005 Hurricane Seasons

2004 and 2005 proved to be active hurricane seasons impacting many of our parks and FPS family. As the multiple hurricanes crisscrossed the state most, if not all the parks were impacted. Some parks were hit hard two or more times.

The first calls received after the storms began hammering our parks were not from employees asking for assistance, but from those asking how they could help and where to send money. Retired and current employees began sending in contributions. Dan Cleary, President of the Friends of Lake Louisa sent out a plea to other park Citizen Support Organizations to support the cause. As donations were coming in employees who were in need of financial assistance were being identified. In 2004 financial assistance directly related to the hurricanes was provided to twenty-three individuals for a total of \$18,200. The 2005 hurricane season was not as severe with only two individuals receiving financial assistance. During this same period four other individuals received assistance for major medical needs. Over \$6,000 in donations was received from current and retired employees and park CSO's which helped prevent the fund from being depleted.

Some of the stories associated with the giving and receiving through the Alumni Association are heartwarming to hear. Here are some of those stories:

The Friends of St. Andrews had worked hard at raising funds for a sprinkler system in the park's visitor center. When hearing about the needs of FPS employees the park and CSO decided the funds would be better served in helping park employees impacted by the hurricanes. The funds that were to go for their project were contributed to the Relief Fund.

Navarre Beach was likely the most impacted park with most of the newly constructed facilities being either completely or partially destroyed. Three employees lost most of their personal belongings and received assistance from the Relief Fund. The staff and volunteers decided they wanted to give back to the fund and proceeded to disassemble all the twisted and damaged boardwalks putting in hundreds of hours to salvaging stainless steel hardware. Fourteen five gallon buckets of screws and nails were salvaged and sold. The Friends of Emerald Coast Parks CSO matched the funds raised through the recycling efforts and all were donated to the Relief Fund.

Recipients wrote the following notes:

"Words cannot express the gratitude I feel for your generous gift. A year from now the damage will be fixed, the heartaches forgotten and our lives will be back to normal. But your generosity will be in my heart forever."

"My family and I would like to sincerely thank you for the donation, which has enabled us to get back on our feet. We hope there will be a time when we can return the favor of generosity."

JAMES COOK MEMORIAL RELIEF FUND

(continued)

“The FPS Alumni Association was a faceless organization to me before this. Now I know who they are, a group of individuals who care about looking after people and making a difference. You made a huge impact in my life at one of the most trying times.”

“In all of my careers over the years, we have always heard the term “we are family” though I always knew they were just words. When I joined the Florida Park Service in 1997 I heard this term again, but this time I knew they were not just words, I truly felt like I had joined a family. Your generosity in helping my immediate family in this time of need completely solidifies this feeling”

“Your award came just at the right time. It created possibilities and a feeling that you were not alone, by receiving this my spirit was raised and I felt as though rebuilding was possible. Believe you me I have never lived an extravagant lifestyle on my park ranger salary and every penny of my award will be used carefully”

One recipient who returned the money wrote:

“The generosity of my fellow Park Service employees is very moving. So many people were affected by the storms, it was a difficult time across the state. I am grateful for the generosity of the Park Service Alumni, but I am returning the \$1,000 check to help other park service members. Thank you so much. I work among such kindness and it is wonderful!”

Lets all pray that future hurricane seasons will be much less devastating. However, we should remain diligent in our efforts to raise funds for the Relief Fund. You can contribute to the upcoming auction held at the Annual Meeting by donating new, handcrafted or collectable items or attend the auction and make some purchases. It offers great buys on cool items (there is usually 4 or 5 items per bidder) and provides great entertainment value.

Staff at Florida Caverns State Park continue to raise funds each year for the Relief Fund during the Sugar Cane Festival. During the 2005 Festival cane syrup, cane stalks, beeswax candles, lantern holders, cypress bluebird boxes and a handmade cedar chest were sold and raised over \$1300 for the Relief Fund. Jamie Trescott built the birdboxes and Bobby Atchison constructed the cedar chest, which was incidentally donated back to the Alumni and will be sold again at the Auction. A special thanks to ex-park manager and current CSO member Bill Maphis and current Park Manager Brian Fugate for supporting the Alumni at the event. Be sure to mark your calendars for this year's event on November 3 & 4 and come assist with the Alumni booth.



Florida Park Service Alumni Association, Inc.



18th Annual Gathering April 28 -29, 2006 **Tomoka State Park**

Come join us for the fun during our annual gathering. The Florida Park Service Alumni Association, also known as the Old Rangers Club, will gather at Tomoka State Park to explore the park, spin some yarns, raise some money for the organization through the annual auction, cover some necessary business and have a good time. You don't have to be a member to attend but once you see what good deeds the organization performs you will want to join.

Don't forget to bring your items and your checkbook for the annual auction. Auction items should be new, handmade or collectable items. This is the Alumni's biggest fundraiser for the James Cook Memorial Relief Fund, which directly benefits current and retired FPS employees. As a result of the large amount of disbursements during the 2004 & 2005 hurricane season the fund is low. We need your hand-crafted items and withdrawals from your wallets.

ACCOMODATION INFORMATION

Ten campsites have been reserved for the FPSAA Annual Meeting. Call the park directly at (386) 676-4050 to reserve your campsite. For more information on Tomoka visit their web site at: <http://www.floridastateparks.org/tomoka/default.cfm>

Hotel information: Super 8 Motel located at 1634 North US Highway 1 & I-95, exit 273 Ormond Beach off I-95. Phone Number 386-672-6222 \$49.95 per night Must make reservation by April 21, and identify yourself with the Florida Park Service Alumni Association.

Directions from the motel to the park: Turn right going south on US1 under the I-95 overpass, about 3/4 of a mile turn left at the Village of Pine Run, the street name is Pine Tree Drive which turns into Addison Drive, follow that all the way until it ends about 1 1/2 miles and runs into Old Dixie Highway. Turn right heading south, cross the Tomoka River and you are at the park.

Florida Park Service Alumni Association, Inc.
18th Annual Gathering
April 28 -29, 2006
Tomoka State Park

Friday, April 28

10:00am - Tomoka Hike by Charlie DuToit

3:00pm - James Cook Memorial Fund Executive Board Meeting

4:00pm - FPSAA Executive Board Meeting

6:00pm - Dinner

Saturday, April 29

9:00am - Registration

9:30am - Annual Business Meeting

12:00 -2:00 - Lunch, visiting & Silent Auction

2:30-4:30 - Live Auction

6:00pm - Dinner

Name: _____

Please indicate number in party for each activity below.

#_____ Friday Field Trip

#_____ Friday Dinner

#_____ Saturday Lunch

#_____ Saturday Dinner

Please provide Sandy Cook with the above information so that we have a head count for the meeting.

Address: 460 Wakulla Park Drive,
Wakulla Springs, FL 32327-0380

Phone wk: (850)224-5950 hm: (850)222-7516 Fax: (850) 561-7282

E-Mail: sandy-george@earthlink.net or Sandy.A.Cook@dep.state.fl.us

MEMBER NEWS

New Members

New members are always needed to keep an organization growing and strong with new ideas and support. We welcome the following new members to the Alumni Association:

Bill Allman	Michael Hensley
Carlene Barrett	Marla Ivory
Peggy Bentley	Tammy Levin
Andrea Bishop	Maria Lightner
Matt Bledsoe	Bridget Martin
Jim Blincoe	Steve Martin
Lani Bott	Tommy Mathen
Ed Bowman	Ed McKenzie
Sandy Carnival	Richard Reinert
Mebane Cory-Ogden	Barbara Roberts
Billie Dunford	John Roche
Joni Ellis	Pete Scalco
Larry Fooks	Carolyn Shaw
David Foster	Renate Skinner
Angela Fugate	Randall Strange
Brian Fugate	Nanci Taggart
Bill Gruber	Shelly Yancey
Michael Heare	

And welcome back to many of you who renewed your memberships after a long absence.

Not sure when you last paid your dues? Check the year printed on your mailing address label located on the back page.

In Memory

We have lost several members of our FPS family. Last June Walt Young passed away. He is survived by his wife Ilene who has asked to remain on the Alumni mail list so she can keep in touch with her FPS family. Walt & Ilene were able to join us and catch up on visiting at the 2004 Alumni Gathering at Hillsborough River State Park.

In October we lost long time Park Ranger Edwin DeJesus to a battle with lung cancer. A service was held at one of his favorite spots, the Cape Florida Lighthouse. He was remembered for his dedication, professionalism and passion for the Florida Park Service.

In August we lost Joe Knoll to a battle with spine cancer. Joe was a major contributor to the FPSAA annual auction and was responsible for many fund raising contributions. Fund raising continued after



1974 - Park Ranger Joseph Knoll Jr -
Loxohatchee River Patrol

his death as it was the request of he and his wife, Doreen, that contributions be made to the James Cook Memorial Relief Fund.

Joe was also instrumental in developing the web site for the FPSAA. He continued to update the site and documented many memorable quotes, stories and photos. He donated his time and the materials to create booklets and CD's that contained much of our FPS heritage.

Joe started his career as a Park Ranger at Chekika State Recreation Area located in the edge of the Everglades and later transferred to the Trapper Nelson Site at Jonathan Dickinson State Park. He promoted to APM at JD then went on to serve as PM at Gold Head Branch, District Manger in what is now District 5, Assistant Bureau Chief, Bureau Chief, Assistant Division Director and Acting Division Director.

OLD RANGER'S JOURNAL

FLORIDA PARK SERVICE
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