

Olustee Observer - January 1999
P.O. Box 382
Glen St. Mary, Florida 32040



Battle of Olustee Reenactment -
February 12-13-14, 1999
Olustee Historical Exposition -
September 25-26, 1999

<http://battleofolustee.org/>

Olustee Battlefield Citizens Support Organization Membership Application

I wish to become a member of the Olustee Battlefield Citizens Support Organization,
and to support its efforts in maintaining a part of Florida's, and our nation's, history.

Check one: new member renewing member

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE: work _____ home _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Please select your membership category:

Individual \$10 Family \$15 Patron \$30 Organizational \$50
 Individual Life \$100 Corporate Friend \$500 Corporate Sponsor \$1000

Make checks payable to: "Olustee Battlefield CSO," and mail to:
Olustee Battlefield CSO, P.O. Box 382, Glen St. Mary, Florida 32040

Battle of Olustee

The 135th anniversary and 23rd annual reenactment of the **Battle of Olustee or Ocean Pond** is scheduled for **February 12-14, 1999**. Complete information on the battle and the event, including the daily schedule, accommodations and regulations, is available on the Battle of Olustee World Wide Web site at: <http://battleofolustee.org/>

This is the major event of the year for the CSO and it is very time and energy consuming for those individuals who participate in its planning and execution. It is also the major source of funding (through spectator and sutler fees) that allows us to **maintain** the Olustee Battlefield Historic Site and **provide improvements**, some of which are detailed in this newsletter. Please continue to support this event by publicizing it through every available media. A poster is available from our WWW site which can be recopied for distribution.

Exposition Rescheduled

The next annual **Olustee Battlefield Historical Exposition** was scheduled for September 18-19, 1999. However, a large national Civil War event, the reenactment of the Battle of Chickamauga, Georgia, is also scheduled for that date. Many of the reenactors who regularly attend the Exposition will be making the trip to fight in the Union Army of the Cumberland or the Confederate Army of Tennessee. As a result, the Olustee Exposition is rescheduled for September 25-26, 1999.

Museum Update

Gene Ingram reports that he and **Alice Williams** wrote **Keith Lawrence**, the USDA's Olustee District Ranger, explaining our interest in **building a museum** on U.S. Forest Service

property east of the existing Florida State Park Service property on the Olustee Battlefield. They requested his assistance and direction, and **Greg Lussier**, of the U.S. Forest Service, has agreed to serve as consultant to the Olustee Planning Committee for the Museum Project. A Museum Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for 11:00 am on Saturday, February 13th, at the Olustee Battlefield dance tent.

If you are interested in working on one of the many committees associated with the museum project, please contact Gene Ingram, planning chair at capgene@juno.com or (309) 471-0765; or members of the sub-committees: Jerry Herrin - **Building**; Paul Duran, Bob McLendon and Joe Howard - **Exhibits**; Valinda Subic - **Sales Area**; Susan Kett - **Office/Audit**; or Brian Kepner, Dicky Ferry and David Coles - **Library/Research**.

Interpretive Trail

At 1:00 pm on January 22nd, the CSO held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new interpretive trail at the Historic Site. The new signs are in color and include photographs of participants in the battle. The museum project was also officially announced at that time.

Photo Exhibit

An exhibition of photographs from Battle of Olustee Reenactments, that are artistically enhanced using creative photographic techniques by artist Lydia Parker will be on display at The Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum, 101 West 1st Street, Jacksonville, Florida 32206. (904) 356-2992. While the exhibit runs from February 1-26, the **exhibition premiere** is on February 11, 1998, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Reenactors will be present as living historians. The exhibit will also tour to several other cities nationwide.

Olustee Son Dies

Lonnie Parker, the last surviving son of any soldier who fought at the Battle of Olustee, recently passed away. Mr. Parker was extremely interested in the Historic Site and gave his full support to the CSO. An interview with him is included in the Battle of Olustee video, in which he describes his father's recollections of the battle. Mr. Parker was respected by all who knew him. The CSO Board of Directors voted **to rename** the existing Interpretative Center in Mr. Parker's honor and **to dedicate** the 23rd Annual Reenactment of the Battle of Olustee to him.

Why They Fought

Reenactors are often asked **what the Civil War was all about**. Their responses often include: "The War was fought over state's rights," "The Civil War was about slavery," or "The Civil War wasn't about slavery," and "The War was fought to preserve the Union." The arguments for or against any of these responses are as varied as the reenactors themselves. A good way to determine what the Civil War **was** about is to read the documents written by those who fought it almost 140 years ago.

Four states - Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas - issued **Declarations of Secession** in which their legislators detailed for history the reasons why these states voted to leave the Union. The Olustee WWW site has - under **Tom's Related Civil War Topics** - a link to all four of these documents, plus a link to the Causes of the Civil War WWW site which lists hundreds more. Click on "**What Was The Civil War All About**." And please remember that the personal beliefs of those Americans who lived so long ago should not be judged by today's standards.

Spectator Liability

While reenactors acquire volunteer status, and thus eligibility for workman's compensation, when they register for the event at the registration tent, spectators do not. In the past the U.S. Forest Service has assumed liability for any spectator injuries. However, beginning this year the Forest Service can no longer do so. As a result, the CSO must purchase liability insurance to cover spectators at the event. This may cost as much as **\$1,500**.

WWW Site

The Battle of Olustee WWW site won another award recently. This time it was a 4-Star Award from **Civil War Interactive** - the "Internet's Most Popular Online Civil War Magazine." Our site won 4 and ½ stars out of 5 and the review stated, "Wow! Don't know how we missed this one so long. A truly remarkable site dedicated to the largest battle in Florida. Smartly organized and loaded with well written histories of the battle. Great site for an often overlooked battle!" Of course, **credit for the site is shared by all** those who have contributed information on the battle. This includes many private individuals who have shared the letters, diaries and photographs of their ancestors. The award logo on the Olustee WWW site is linked to the Civil War Interactive site. The WWW address for the Olustee site is listed on the cover of the newsletter. As of January 17th, our site has registered over 51,000 "hits."

A Place To Sit

We previously reported safety problems with the deteriorating condition of the bleachers. Fortunately, **Valinda Subic** announced that the **Florida Park Service** has provided \$10,000 to rent eight large sets of bleachers.

Appalling Casualties

If you ask how many casualties the Civil War produced, the most common answer you will receive is **622,000 dead soldiers**. But this is incorrect, as the casualties of the Civil War numbered in the **tens of millions**.

Our cover this month features **Zachary James Lee and his wife Emily**, who married in Meriwether county, Georgia when he was 18 and she was 17. James' whole life was his wife, his children and his farm. And then he was conscripted into the 64th Georgia in February of 1863. As with the family of **James Flynn**, 7th New Hampshire, who was featured in our last issue, the Lee family was torn apart by the war. The letters and documents of both families are available on our WWW site, as are the poignant love letters of **Edmond and Susan Jones**. Edmond Jones also served in the 64th Georgia. The men, women and children of these three families represent just a few of the tens of millions of casualties caused by the Civil War. Casualties that included dead men and women, the broken hearts of widows, orphans, parents, brothers, sisters and the uncounted waste of precious years and their personal contributions to our nation, stolen from their future and our past.

Admittance Fees

Sutler fees went up a little this year. **Spectator admission** to the Battle of Olustee Reenactment on Saturday and Sunday will be \$4 for adults and \$2 for children under 12 years of age. Passes for the buses that travel between the **parking areas** at the Lake City Airport and the Baker County Correctional Facility - both on State Route 90 - will be \$1 for adults and \$0.50 for children under 12. **Admission to the park on the "School Day" is free to students and their adult sponsors, and, on all three days to reenactors.**

Olustee Video and Booklets

If you are interested in becoming a **distributor** for the CSO historical materials: the video, booklets, maps, post cards, etc., contact **Alice Williams** at (904) 259-3965 for details on wholesale prices and quantity. An order form for the video, booklets and other materials is available on the WWW site. The video is also an excellent gift for your neighborhood school.

Advice For Spectators

Tom Fasulo added a file to the Battle of Olustee WWW site offering spectators advice on making the best use of their time at the reenactment and other important information. Look at **The Authentic Spectator** under **The Annual Reenactment** link on the main page.

No News Is...

Tom Fasulo, our newsletter editor, requests that members **provide him with news** of Battle of Olustee and CSO related activities **on a continuing basis**. Please send such news items to Tom at 5128 SW 86th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32608; or at fasulo@ufl.edu

The next issue is scheduled for late April. However, please send items to Tom as they occur so that he can plan for the newsletter size, production and mailing.

Annual CSO Meeting

This meeting, to which all members are invited and at which several members of the **Board of Directors will be elected**, is scheduled for 7:00 pm, April 28, 1999 at McClenney, FL. Contact CSO President Alice Williams at (904) 259-3965 for details.