

Olustee Observer - October 2000
P.O. Box 382
Glen St. Mary, Florida 32040



Major Pickens Bird - 6th Florida Inf. Bn.
Battle of Olustee Reenactment -
February 16-17-18, 2001
Olustee Historical Exposition -
September 15-16 2001

<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

Setting The Example

If you read the August 2000 issue of The Civil War News you may have noticed the following: "The 17th Connecticut Infantry of Florida gave \$100 to the Olustee Battlefield Citizens Support Organization for maintenance of the battlefield's Union and Confederate monuments and called on other units to do the same. The 17th Connecticut is also raising funds to restore the regiment's flag pole at Barlow's Knoll in Gettysburg." This piece wasn't buried deep in the newspaper, but was featured in the Editor's "Paging Thru" column on the second page. **Hurrah for the 17th!** This is an important assist to the Historic Site that others hopefully will emulate, as you will learn in Valinda Subic's announcement (#2) in this issue.

Lots of Brass

The CSO has arranged for the nationally renowned **8th Regimental Brass Band** to play at Olustee 2001. The band will perform at both Saturday and Sunday Colors, along with several concerts during the days and at the Saturday evening Ball. The 8th Regimental Band is made up of accomplished musicians from the Rome, Georgia area. The band performs original band scores and authentically styled arrangements from period piano scores are combined with original mid-19th century instruments to produce the Band's spirited sounds.

Choose Your Partner

Reenactment Ball attendees will reel with internationally renowned Dance Master -- **Mr. Tim Key**, fresh from a recent engagement in Europe. Mr. Key will hold dance classes on Saturday afternoon and perform as the dance master for the Evening Ball.

Authentic Civilian Activities

The **Ladies of the Golden Teacup** (the 13th Indiana auxiliary) plan a workshop for Saturday morning during the reenactment. The topic will probably be **Civilian Reenacting** -- how to get started and roles of civilians during the War. The Ladies will also have a nationally known speaker on Civilian/Ladies issues on Sunday (after Church and before the battle). These types of activities are common at national events and deserve to be featured at Olustee. After all, isn't it the largest annual event in the Southeast? And where else can you find over 2,000 reenactors in one place during February? The Ladies feel that this is a reasonable objective and, in addition to the annual tea, makes a good beginning for a quality Civilian program at Olustee. If successful and well attended, they plan to expand it for Olustee 2002.

History Comes Alive

Your editor has always been disappointed in the lack of an **organized living history** for the student program on Friday. That is why I am excited to hear that the 13th Indiana and its associated Ladies of the Golden Teacup are undertaking responsibility for improving this facet of the annual event. Here are the details:

1. Individuals or groups interested in providing a 10 to 15 minute demonstration should send e-mail to **US13Ind@aol.com**, or call **(904) 731-8383** to indicate the program they wish to present. This ensures we don't have five blacksmiths or 10 drill groups.
2. All presenters must attend an orientation meeting on Thursday evening.

3. Units or individuals without presentations, but interested in assisting with the living history program, can sign up to be tour guides. The guides will maneuver students (in small groups, accompanied by their teacher or chaperone) around to numbered, marked stations at 15 minute intervals.

4. The 13th Indiana and its Ladies will provide a coordinator to meet the buses on Friday and assign guides to the school groups. Stations will be marked, and a bugle will be blown to indicate time to move to the next station.

These reenactors are very enthusiastic about the opportunity to coordinate these programs. If you need any additional preliminary information, please contact **Shorty Merritt** at the e-mail address and telephone number listed above.

Park Manager's Notes

1. The statewide CSO meeting takes place November 2-4, 2000 at the Jacksonville Hilton and Towers. This annual conference will be hosted by the following: **Olustee Battlefield CSO**; Friends of Fort Clinch State Park, Inc; Sarabay Society, Inc.; and the Friends of Guana River, Inc. The meeting includes numerous informative educational sessions. Field trips will include a Fort Clinch State Park dinner [Friday night], Talbot Islands history tour, kayak trip, beach horseback ride; **Olustee Battlefield** and Guana River state park. All board members and interested CSO members are encouraged to attend. Please contact Valinda Subic at (904) 397-2733 for registration information.

[John Thrush adds that our CSO is one of several assisting in arranging tours and manning the registration tables for the conference. As such, we **need volunteers** to help at the park and at the meeting

registration. There will be a very nice authentic meal (salt pork and all four flavors of hardtack?) at Fort Clinch on Friday evening for the volunteers and conference attendees.]

2. The Division of Recreation and Parks was directed to present a 25% reduction plan to the Governor for the upcoming 5 years. If the plan is approved by the Governor and then by the Legislature, the Florida Park Service will implement a Core Concept Plan for the operation of its parks. All parks with over 5 full time employees will operate **at a minimal core level**, with the remaining **services and work performed through other means**, such as part time seasonal workers and private contractors. There are six state parks that will serve as a pilot the first two years. Stephen Foster State Folk Culture Center was selected as one of the pilot parks due to the cost of operation versus annual attendance. Currently the Olustee Battlefield Historic Site falls under the management of Stephen Foster State Folk Culture Center. **Additional funding would be required** to perform tasks the Stephen Foster Staff complete not only during special events such as the annual reenactment and Exposition but over the course of the year. Questions regarding this pilot program should be directed to **Valinda Subic**, Park Manager

[Editor's Note: We only have 70 members. If we are to continue to provide the same quality reenactment in the years to come, we need to **increase our membership** by a factor of ten or more. Spread the word - if people want to refight this battle every February, then \$10 a year for membership is cheap at three times the price. No fee is charged reenactors at our event. This could change. Obviously the politicians are looking at the number of people who support and visit the parks. Support Olustee now or see the event possibly scaled down.]

3. Congratulations to **Ranger Frank Loughran** for having completed 20 years of service with the Florida Park Service and the State of Florida. Frank is the resident ranger at Olustee and handles the day to day opening, closing and routine maintenance at the site.

4. The **Olustee Museum Committee** is trying to schedule a meeting with a Museum Planning Firm [Hughes Bowman Design Group Inc. of St Augustine] to prepare an Interpretive plan for the State of Florida's Civil War Museum at Olustee. **Gene Ingram** has talked to the firm and is trying to schedule a meeting for October 28th.

100,000 And Counting

Sometime on September 25th, the award winning Battle of Olustee WWW site went over **100,000 hits**. This site averages over 100 hits per day or over 36,500 per year - for at least the last year and perhaps longer. Even considering that many of these hits are from repeat visitors, we still probably have 10,000 to 12,000 people a year learning about the Historic Site. Compare this to the approximately 10,000 spectators that attend the reenactment in February.

Tom Fasulo wishes to once again thank all those people who provided him with text and photographs of the events, units and individuals that cooperated to create the afternoon of hell that so many Civil War soldiers experienced on February 20, 1864.

Some recent contributions to the site include a further history of **Major Archibald Bogle**. His death was reported in a northern newspaper after the battle, but Bogle was captured and sent to Tallahassee. A relative provided Tom with copies of pension papers submitted by Bogle's wife after he died in California. Also included are excerpts from Major Bogle's experiences at Andersonville ,

an enlisted men's prison, where he was sent simply because he commanded colored troops.

Memoirs of **Lawrence Jackson**, Company C, 2nd Florida Cavalry, were also recently added to the site. This old man's account of meeting the elephant as a youth is an example of blurred memories and crystal-clear recollections of the time before, during and after the battle. If this account stirs you then hunt down **Bob McLendon** who will relate Jackson's behavior during the Battle of Gainesville and how he lived out his days in Alachua County.

CSO member **Edgar Crossett** provided a real treasure by sharing his great grandfather's memoirs of Florida before, during and immediately after the war. **James M. Dancy**, served for a short period in Dickinson's cavalry and then transferred to an artillery battery. His account of life in Florida during the war is so fascinating that I just had to post even those parts that didn't concern Olustee. As a result, we now have one soldier's experiences that spanned from the training camp to Olustee to Horse Landing to Natural Bridge and all the daily minutiae in between.

Major Pickens Butler Bird commanded the 6th Florida Infantry Battalion at Olustee, and was later killed at Cold Harbor. Years later one of his captains wrote Bird's son to relate how Bird died. That letter and a portrait were also recently added to the Web site.

Web Workshop

In 1997 Valinda Subic nominated Tom Fasulo for a **State of Florida Partnership Award**. This was in appreciation for the countless hours Tom spent developing the Battle of Olustee WWW site. The plaque is proudly displayed in Tom's office. Some other awards the site has received include being

chosen as one of the Top 5% on the WWW by Lycos.

Possibly as a result, Tom will be presenting a three hour workshop on developing a WWW site at the State of Florida CSO annual meeting mentioned above. The workshop is scheduled for 8:15-11:00 Saturday morning. But on Friday night, Tom will join other meeting attendees at the authentic cookout at Fort Clinch and see the living historians [among which Tom has often served] from the spectator's point-of-view. This will afford Tom the opportunity to ask all those questions living historians love to hear: "Do those guns really fire?", "Are you hot in those clothes?", "Where do you really sleep?" and "You're not really going to eat that, are you?"

Take a Seat

John Thrush reports the CSO replaced the benches in the video room at the interpretive center, with two new park-type benches. The **MacClenny UDC** chapter is planning to replace the curtains. John also reports that the CSO is in the process of obtaining knit shirts with an embroidered CSO logo.

Whoa Nellie!

John Thrush says that the CSO Board of Directors meeting held on Sunday at the recent Exposition was more than a little exciting. A cavalry reenactor fell off of his horse while playing polo (Huh?) and the horse got spooked and ran all around the camp site and through the tent the Board was meeting in. Fortunately, everyone saw the horse coming and got out of the way. No one was hurt, not even the horse. So, John, what was the final score of the polo game?

All the News That Fits

The editor wishes to thank Bill Danforth, Jeff Grzelak, Shorty Merritt, Valinda Subic, John Thrush and [blush] himself for providing the content of this issue of the newsletter. As a result of their cooperation, this is the longest issue of the newsletter Tom has yet produced.

The next issue is scheduled for late January, 2001. Please send items of interest to Tom Fasulo no later than mid-January. Tom can be reached at **fasulo@ufl.edu** or at 5128 SW 86th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32608. If snail mail, and Tom has to type in anything of length, please get it to him by early January.