

Olustee Observer - January 2001

P.O. Box 382

Glen St. Mary, Florida 32040



**Olustee Historical Exposition -
September 22-23 2001
Battle of Olustee Reenactment -
February 15-16-17, 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

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From the President

I hope every one had a good Christmas and a quiet New Year's Eve. We as a CSO had a good year in 2000 and are looking forward to an even better one in 2001. As always the annual reenactment is just around the corner and we need volunteers in many areas. This is our main event and we need to put forth the effort to help it go off as smoothly as possible. It takes many people and a lot of time. **Please help.** I don't think any of us know how the controversy in Lake City will effect us. We can only hope it is kept in Lake City where it is the problem, but I doubt it. I would like to take this time to thank all of the board members for their time and effort in helping this CSO to be one of the best in the state. One last "thank you" goes to Tom Fasulo for doing such a great job on the newsletter. In case I have missed anyone I need to thank everyone who has helped me this year as president. As the Gators say there is always next year! - **John Thursh**

Lake City Logo

For the past two years, Lake City, Florida, which is 15 miles west of the Olustee Battlefield Historic Site, has experienced controversy over the use of a Confederate battle flag on the city's logo. However, this year the **NAACP** has threatened to demonstrate at the Olustee Festival. This festival is often identified with the battle reenactment as both are held at the same time, although the two events have different parent organizations. As a result, even the Gainesville newspaper ran an article in which it confused the two events and stated that the NAACP would demonstrate at the entrance to the Olustee Historic Site.

The Blue-Gray Army, Inc., which runs the festival, **supports the CSO by donating firewood, hay, rations, and other materials**

to the reenactors attending our event.

We hope the festival will not suffer from the bad publicity and we wish the best to all the Lake City merchants, who provide the necessities mentioned above. - **Tom Fasulo**

Museum Status

The Museum Planning Committee received a revised proposal from Hughes/Bowman Interpretive Planing and Exhibit Design Company which it is reviewing. If the proposal is accepted by the CSO, **workshop sessions could be held in March.** Hughes/Bowman is currently working on exhibits for the St. Augustine Lighthouse, the Alligator Farm, the Jacksonville Waterpark Museum and others. Mr. Bowman formally worked for the Smithsonian Institute and is currently retained by the Florida Park Service as a statewide exhibit design provider. - **Gene Ingram**

Readin', Ritin' and History

This year the **Society of the Golden Teacup** - the Ladies Auxiliary of the 13th Indiana/8th Florida - is organizing the history displays for the school students on Friday morning. I will be in charge of this activity and request that all volunteers who contacted me attend at least one brief meeting. One meeting is Thursday evening at 7 p.m. and the other is Friday morning at 8 a.m. These meetings will be held behind the registration tent by the front gate. We have about 35 volunteers to greet the busses and escort the school groups. All, including the volunteer historians, must attend at least one meeting! - **Shorty Robb**

Reenactor Activities - Union

Long time reenactor **Jeff H. Grzelak** is the Union Infantry Commander in the field at Olustee this year. Jeff is a 25-year veteran of the reenactment and one of the Founding Board

members of the CSO. He has also been chosen the Federal Commander for Resaca. Grzelak has long been active on the Union side trying to get the troops organized and the living history program developed. Some of the old timers might even remember that for the first two Olustee reenactments he wore gray!

Jeff Grzelak reports that this year, just before the Union troops march off for the Sunday battle, there will be an organized **issue of hardtack**. The troops will then have lunch in the field. There will also be an issue of additional ammo during the battle to add some realism to the fighting.

On the way into the battle one of the Union columns will encounter a farm house, staffed by Southern Sympathizers. The house will be ransacked by the passing Federal troops. They are in need of a horse to pull a wagon. If anyone knows where one can be acquired for the weekend, please e-mail Grzelak at HQ17thConnInf@cfl.rr.com . - **Tom Fasulo and Jeff Grzelak**

At Colors

A special program is planned at colors on Sunday morning during the reenactment. I am gathering names of reenactors who attended Olustee and **who have passed away**. I have already gathered about two dozen. Their names will be mentioned in a special memorial as Olustee celebrates its silver anniversary and becomes a part of history itself. It is only fitting that we pause to remember those who helped us get this far. Any one with additional names can forward them to me (Jeff Grzelak) at the above email address or call 407-295-7510.

The Union Monument celebrates its **10th anniversary** this year! It seems like only yesterday that a group of historians gathered to pay respects to the Union dead at Olustee.

An article in the **Blue & Gray** magazine about Olustee and the unknown Union graves prompted them to erect a new monument to replace the original wooden one that was erected in 1866. After a three-year fund raising effort the new monument was unveiled in 1991 on the 125th anniversary of the battle. The new monument is in stone, with the same inscriptions as the original wooden one.

The Union Army, District of Florida, completed the project and the monument sits in the old cemetery next to the railroad tracks, based on the description given by the records. Original attendees of the 1991 ceremony are asked to bring the bunting which was given out as souvenirs. Those attending the Union Monument this year are in for a special, memorable ceremony once again. - **Jeff Grzelak**

Confederate Monument

The Confederate Monument which was refurbished several years ago is in need of a good cleaning to erase stains and water marks. The top of the monument needs to be examined once again to ensure that no water is getting inside the monument. This was suppose to be done after the sidewalk was put in with the unit inscriptions, but it is not known if it was.

- **Jeff Grzelak**

Olustee Descendants

Mike Null, of **The Blue-Gray Army**, says his organization has arranged for several special guests during the event this year. One will be Mr. Gary Loderhose, who wrote the book **Far, Far From Home** about Olustee and the Ninth Florida. The Blue-Gray Army also will be recognizing the Hunter family, direct descendants of the people mentioned in the book.

The Blue-Gray Army will also host **Lee Petry**, whose ancestor fought at Olustee, as a member of the **54th Massachusetts**.

Tom Fasulo contacted Ms. Petry and learned that her great grandfather was **Richard Henry Lee Jewett**, who initially served in the 2nd Massachusetts and then was asked by Colonel Shaw to accept a commission in the 54th. Richard Jewett was very slightly wounded at Fort Wagner and severely wounded at Olustee, After which he was sent home for three months to recuperate. He later served as Ordnance Officer in Charleston and was present at Fort Sumter when the American flag was raised there at the war's end.

Ms. Petry is a member of the Knoxville Civil War Roundtable, which is restoring Fort Dickerson on a bluff overlooking Knoxville. They have purchased a cannon and received grants from the state to place descriptive signs on the site. She says her interest in the Civil War began when she was 10 years old!

Ms. Petry says there will be more of the family at the event than planned. Her father, Richard Lee Jewett who is **the grandson of RHL Jewett**, is coming from Asheville NC; her sister, Sally Jewett DeYoung, from VA; her brother, Richard Alden Jewett, from MA; and her niece, Rumara Jewett, from NY. She says, "I planted the idea in their heads and they all thought it was a great idea!" - **Tom Fasulo and Mike Null**

James R. Terrell - KIA

James Terrell was a soldier in the **6th Florida Infantry Battalion**, which later became part of the 9th Florida. He fought at Olustee and was killed on that February afternoon. James left his wife Nancy and thirteen children, one born just days after his death. Brian Terrell, James' great-great-great grandson has shared some letters that James wrote to Nancy. These, as

well as a photo of James' tombstone, are now available on the Battle of Olustee WWW site. - **Tom Fasulo**

Web Site News

In December, The History Channel contacted me and requested that our Web site be added to its new **History Channel Network**. While Webmasters can also request to be included in the Network, there are qualifications the sites must meet. And all applications for sites are reviewed with the assistance of graduate students and faculty of the Columbia University Department of History.

As part of the listing, The History Channel allows people to access its site through the History Channel logo. The logo is now on the Battle of Olustee Awards and main menu pages. The logo includes a Java script that tracks users from our site and provides for a **10% commission** to be returned to the site for any purchases made from The History Channel.

I selected the smallest logo as the others had content controlled by The History Channel. The main page downloads a little slower than before, but not by much. I tested it on my 28.8 baud modem and determined the award and possible commissions were worth the extra few seconds wait. While I identified myself as the contact person for The History Channel Network, I told them to make any checks out to "Olustee Battlefield Citizens Support Organization." Checks will be issued once a month if the total is \$25 or more. I doubt the CSO will see many checks, but if you are thinking of buying anything through The History Channel, please access it through our site so the CSO will receive a 10% commission on your purchases.

When **The Civil War Times** says, "If you buy only one book this year on the Civil War, [this] should be it," that book is probably a worthy addition to your library. The book it speaks of is **The Civil War on the Web: A Guide to the Very Best Sites**. The authors are William Thomas, the Director of the Center for Digital History at the University of Virginia, and Alice Carter, the Product Manager for Learning - New York Times on the Web. Together they reviewed thousands of Civil War WWW sites and came up with the 95 absolute best. Our **Battle of Olustee** site was honored as one of those 95 sites. For additional reviews click on the SRC logo from our Awards page.

The soft cover edition is available for about \$16 from Amazon.com and includes a CD-ROM. **James McPherson**, the dean of Civil War historians, says this book is, "A fantastic time-saver for anyone who wants to study the war on the Web."

To say the least, I am extremely happy about the recognition and wish to **share the credit** for the success of the Battle of Olustee site to all those who contributed letters, memoirs and photographs of their ancestors.

To find the Battle of Olustee Web site, see the newsletter cover for the URL or just type the word "**Olustee**" into any Internet search engine. - **Tom Fasulo**

British Prime Time ?

Charles Thompson, a New York TV producer contacted me in December about doing a TV special on reenactors. Thompson has a commission from a British company to produce such a show. I was able to talk him into doing his filming at Olustee and connected him with several other reenactors in the Gainesville area. A single location was important as Thompson wishes to follow the

reenactors from their "civilian lives" through their transformation into Civil War soldiers and ladies. Thompson has also contacted **Valinda Subic** for the necessary permission to film at Olustee.

The six reenactors, four soldiers and two ladies, that Thompson hopes to follow are members of three different units. - **Tom Fasulo**

Newsletter News

John Thrush stated in the opening paragraph of this newsletter that he wanted to give "One last 'thank you' ... to Tom Fasulo for doing such a great job on the newsletter." Thanks, John, but the newsletter is nothing without contributors. So I want to thank John, Shorty Robb, Gene Ingram, Mike Null, Brian Terrell, Charles Thompson, Lee Petry and especially Jeff Grzelak (who knows how hard it is to write a newsletter if no one contributes material) for helping me provide the rest of the members with information on the work that our CSO is accomplishing. Please send news for the April issue to me at **fasulo@ufl.edu**.

The photograph on the cover was taken in 1993 by **Claude Levett**. The scene is suppose to be of Barber's Plantation, where the Union Army camped just before Olustee. A larger version is posted on our Web site. If you look hard you can make our several Olustee regulars. But no points for the soldier in the sergeant's stripes, as he is too easy to identify.

And one last thank you is in order. **Thank you to all those who will be helping out at the event this year**, whether you work on just that weekend or all year. Your assistance is not only much appreciated, but essential! - **Tom Fasulo**