

OLUSTEE OBSERVER

Vol. 21

January 2009

Editor's Corner

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had a meaningful and enjoyable holiday season. As usual, it was too much work, too chaotic, too much indigestion, and I can't wait to do it again next year!

The newsletter this month will primarily be a copy of the last quarter's information simply because there haven't been many new activities to report since that time. The upcoming dates for meetings and events is the same, so for my editorial, please bear with me and know that it's from the heart and will hopefully prove to be educational, which is the spirit in which it is offered.

Having a reenactor as editor of your newsletter may be enjoyable for some and a pain in the patootie for others. I do want to clarify something that I believe is important. In the past few board meetings conversation has been brought up on the subject of authenticity. While this can be a sore spot for reenactors, the board doesn't necessarily need to be involved with it. However, I think it important enough to be broached, so here we go.

I found the perfect words to express my personal interest in authenticity in a book titled *The Everyday Clothing of Rural Women at the time of the Civil War*, written by Ary Vansteamburg.

She says:

"We portrayers of 19th century living history have a great responsibility to both the people of the past we enjoy representing, and to the public who attend (and thereby fund) our events to be educated about them. To both we owe honesty, and need to remember that we educate not solely by words and actions, but by our appearance as well, as the first and most lasting impression. I have always tried, therefore, to be as truthful as I could in the way I look, to reflect the real lives of real women. To do otherwise is to create not living history, but folklore."

Folklore means looking like Scarlett O'Hara and military camps full of women and children. I wouldn't be so militant as to suggest that these situations be eliminated, but I agree with Ms. Vansteamburg that a distinction needs to be made to the public as to the honesty of that impression.

At the same time, this honesty needs to be administered with tact and diplomacy. A gentleman at one of our meetings stated that his granddaughter was treated unkindly by someone who was critical of her appearance as a reenactor and he was understandably upset about it.

At another meeting the subject was brought up that the reenactor camps needed to be kept to a certain standard to ensure that they reflected, as much as can be possible, authentic camps for the public to visit. Olustee has several locations representing different types of

camping – modern, authentic, military and civilian. We as reenactors need to make sure that we are giving the public a correct impression of our camps as well as our clothing. If you choose convenience over authenticity, please camp appropriately in the modern camp.

Olustee is one of the few actual battlefields where reenactors are privileged to bring history alive year after year. Let's be mindful of our responsibility to do that honestly and accurately.

Cris

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- The next Reenactment Committee and CSO Board meeting will be held on January 10, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. respectively at Olustee Park. This is also a work day at the park. If the weather is not agreeable, the meetings will be moved to the Ranger Station offices.
- The annual District Volunteers picnic will be held on March 14, 2009 at Dudley Farms (just outside of Gainesville).

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- Please visit the Battle of Olustee website at <http://battleofolustee.org/> for up to date applications, forms, regulations and schedules for the 2009 Olustee. Kudos to Tom Fasulo, who provides a vital function in updating and maintaining this website on a regular basis.

- DVD's of the Battle of Olustee are now available for \$20.00 . Please contact Mitzi Nelson at Margaret A. Nelson@dep.state/fl.us if you are interested in purchasing one (or two or three!)
- Thomas Fasulo reports that there is now a full bookcase of research materials located temporarily in the Forestry Office at Olustee. These books will comprise what will be the research area of the new museum when completed. See a partial listing of books on page 4.
- The electronic version of *The Olustee Observer* is now available on our website: <http://battleofolustee.org/cso.htm>

ODDS & ENDS

- Please! Use your Volunteer Log Book. It's the only way to show those long hours you put in service.
- Also, **did you know** that if you fill in your booklet of volunteer hours and reach 500 hours, the park service in Tallahassee will give you a free family park pass for 1 year!
- **Membership dues** need paid? Send to Olustee CSO. Membership, P.O. Box 382, Glen St. Mary, FL 32040
- **Change of address?** Notify Cris Giddens at Chifos@aol.com or send notification with your next dues payment.
- If you are interested in what's happening for the ladies at the 2009 Battle of Olustee, check out *145th Anniversary, Battle of Olustee, Ladies Activities* at www.battleofolustee.org

Welcome New Members!

Laura & Steven Beard

Web Site Statistics
 Battle of Olustee – Monthly and Yearly Totals
<http://battleofolustee.org/>
 Compiled by Tom Fasulo

	Page Views	Total Visits	Unique Visitors
2007			
January	Site on server in Thomas Fasulo's UF lab - no data		
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			
July	Site moved to Web.com in late July		
August	7,385	2,936	1,295
September	6,856	3,776	1,539
October	8,180	4,982	2,101
November	15,218	6,387	3,076
December	16,270	7,388	2,842
2007 Total	53,909	25,469	10,853
2008			
January	23,061	11,338	4,410
February	33,110	12,280	5,371
March	16,023	8,369	3,418
April	18,559	11,334	2,973
May	23,106	12,951	3,920
June	19,214	9,241	2,492
July	21,136	9,241	2,643
August	23,233	8,587	2,695
September	12,622	3,926	2,515
October	10,575	3,335	2,619
November	13,692	4,389	3,319
December			
2008 Total	214,331	94,999	36,375
Last 12 months	230,601	102,387	39,461

CSO Library Report
By Tom Fasulo

("VG" denotes books in very good condition.)

This was Andersonville - by John McElroy - edited by Roy Meredith - VG hardback (McElroy was one of the first Union prisoners at Andersonville. I was tempted to keep this for my own library.)

The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant - by himself - NEW hardback at (Historians consider this the best memoir of the War.)

Memoirs of Robert E. Lee - by A.E. Long - VG hardback (Long was Lee's military secretary.)

The Angry Scar: The Story of Reconstruction 1865-1890 - by Hodding Carter - VG hardback (Hodding was the Pulitzer Prize-winning editor of the *Delta Democrat and Times*.)

Grant and Sherman: The Friendship that Won the Civil War - by Charles Flood - New hardback (I have a copy in my own library.)

Reminiscences of Confederate Service 1861-1865 - by Francis Dawson - New hardback (Dawson was an Englishman who sailed from his country to serve with the C.S.A.)

Shiloh — in Hell before Night - by James McDonough - VG hardback

Sea of Gray: Around the World Odyssey of the Confederate Raider Shenandoah - by Tom Chaffin - New hardback

A Diplomat in Carpet Slippers: Abraham Lincoln Deals with Foreign Affairs- by Jay Monaghan- VG large paperback (Excellent book on how Lincoln dealt with Britain and

France and some other nations. I enjoyed this book and it is in my own library.)

The Long Arm of Lee: The History of the Artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia - by Jennings Cropper Wise - VG hardback (Written in 1915 and reprinted in 1959, Wise actually spoke with men who served in the Confederate batteries. He was Commandant of the Cadet Corps at VMI when he wrote the book. I was tempted to keep this for my own library.)

Lee and Longstreet at Gettysburg - by Glenn Tucker - VG hardback (Deals with several other of Lee's generals too. However, in my opinion, the best treatment of the Lee/Longstreet relationship is to be found in **Lee Reconsidered**.)

Doctors in Gray: The Confederate Medical Service - by H.H. Cunningham - VG hardback (Good, hard to find coverage of that service.)

The Attack and Defense of Little Round Top - by Oliver Willcox Norton - VG hardback (The classic account of what really happened on that hill by a man who was there, serving as the then brigade commander's (Col. Vincent) bugler and standard bearer. My paperback copy cost me a lot more than this. Norton was a school teacher before joining the 83rd Pennsylvania Volunteers and after the War he founded the American Can Corporation. This guy really "saw the elephant" and while he missed First Bull Run, he was in every major battle through Gettysburg. As a 1st LT, he served as a line officer in K Company and acting regimental quartermaster in the 8th USCT and fought at Olustee. Private Norton and General Daniel Butterfield (his first brigade commander) jointly developed "Taps" in 1862. Norton wrote this book later in life when he was blind. He was rich and could afford the secretarial help. For more on Norton, Taps, etc., see the 8th USCT page on our Web site.)

Ocali Country Days Event By Tom Fasulo

The Ocali Country Days took place during November 4-9 at the Marion County School District's Museum and Educational Center within Silver River State Park. This 19th century living history event features "by invitation only" living historians from every period against a backdrop of actual and authentically built buildings of a mid-19th century farmstead. This year the event hosted 4,800 children and teachers during the week and 4, 400 of the general public over the weekend. See <http://www.marion.k12.fl.us/district/srm/ocali.cfm> for more details about this event.

Members of the Olustee CSO were invited to participate in this event. Thomas Fasulo, a member of the board of directors, was present all six days as a Union infantry private, exposing visitors to that time period and the uniform, accouterments and gear a soldier would carry. The Center first contacted Fasulo four years ago requesting not only his participation in the event, but help in gaining additional Civil War era living historians. One such group Tom helped bring to the event was Mary Fears and her family, who are also members of the CSO. Mary Fears portrays a free black woman who relates stories of Afro-American involvement in the Civil War period. Her husband Joel portrays a member of the U.S. Colored Troops, and her son John Alexander appears in his remarkable impression of Frederick Douglass. The event is fully supported by the Florida Park Services and is just another example of our CSO assisting with, and participating in, events at other state parks.

Battle of Olustee – The Florida Campaign February 12 – 15, 2009

James Permane, Commander of the U.S. forces, has posted the scenarios for the upcoming event on the Battle of Olustee Web site. It can be accessed through either the *Latest Additions* or the *Annual Reenactment* links from the main menu at <http://battleofolustee.org>. The scenarios include the campaign event for Friday, the Ambush at St. Mary's battle on Saturday, and the scripted reenactment on Sunday. Permane's article includes the requirements for participation in the campaign march and bivouac on Friday, as well as numerous quotes from official reports and newspaper articles from participants and observers of the 1864 Olustee Campaign.

OLUSTEE CSO BOARD MEMBERS - 2009

Eric Hague, President

Gary Dickinson, Vice President

Mitzi Nelson, Secretary

Paul Duran, Treasurer

John Thrush

Tom Fasulo

Frank Maloney

Arnold O'Steen

George Scott

Bill Danforth

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Reenactment Committee

Cris Giddens

Newsletter & Membership

HONORABLE MENTION

Ben Faure, FPS

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Elaine McGrath, FPS