

# Olustee Observer

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OLUSTEE BATTLEFIELD HISTORIC STATE PARK  
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

Gary Dickinson - President, Tom Jesse - Vice-President, Mitzi Nelson - Secretary, Paul Duran - Treasurer,  
Boardmembers: James Permane, Bill Danforth, Bob Farrar, Thomas Fasulo, David Richardson, Wilhamena Lauramore,  
Frank Maloney, Arnold O'Steen, George Scott, Bud Thayer, Jim Bishop

BattleOfOlustee.org

SUMMER 2015 EDITION

June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

## *Contract Signed for Moving Forward with New Museum Construction*

### **2015 Reenactment Retrospective**

*Following up the 150<sup>th</sup>*

### **Changing of the Guard at Park**

*George "Gabby" Paxton takes the reins*

2015 – The year after the big 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reenactment. What could we expect after such a monumental remembrance the previous year? Would there be a let-down in attendance, in participation, and in general excitement and spirit? No question the 150<sup>th</sup> was a tough act to follow. With those questions in the back of everyone's mind, still, hopes were high that 2015 could stand on its own. Indeed, the 2015 reenactment weekend did continue to build on the high standards and enduring legacy so many dedicated people over the years have set in place at our Olustee Battlefield Historic State Park.

The end of the Battle of Olustee was just the beginning of a long and tense standoff. A historical favorite, Captain Winston Stephens of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Florida Cavalry, summed it up succinctly in his report - - *"Our main force rests on the west side of the branch...Their main force are entrenching on the east side of Cedar Creek."*



"Colquitt's Brigade returned to Virginia, and we [4<sup>th</sup> Georgia Cavalry] were left to duty for a time, picketing around Jacksonville and the St. Johns River." A field hospital was established at Waldo.

"In regard to the defenses of East Florida, it was recommended by the Confederate's Inspector General that coastal fortification was not practicable, 'from our scarcity of guns and from the lack of sufficient industry'...the enemy may land and at will under the protection of their gunboats...The contest with an invading force must therefore be carried on in the open woods and fields...Our only practicable preparation, therefore, must be in providing facilities for concentrating our troops in his front..namely by railroad..The coast being barren and thinly settled..to take away the railroad for at least 20 miles from the coast would materially delay the enemy..from the Atlantic side, a regiment of mounted rifles should be scattered along the coast from the Satilla River in Georgia to the Black Creek in Florida."

"The Florida Cav were in advance and as they attempted to cross this branch (Cedar Creek) the yankees who took position on the other other side poured a galling fire upon our men, who were somewhat confused and therefore ordered to retreat. Our infantry then came up and after a somewhat short but desperate contest raised a Confederate yell and crossed the bridge causing the enemy to retreat."

Both sides set about digging earthworks and rifle pits. They built small fortifications and encampments. For some time, the opposing forces, including both blue and gray veterans of the affair at Ocean Pond, squared off in a series of bloody skirmishes and minor battles. It must have been a fearful time to be a citizen of “East Florida”. Fighting men on each side entrenched for the long haul – but the fortunes of war dictated differently. Within six months, thousands of Southern soldiers would evacuate the main position at Baldwin to answer the clarion calls of Beauregard and Lee. Their services were desperately required to stave off worse disasters further north.

The CSO is in a period of entrenchment as it digs in for the long haul with the new museum. This is a big, long-anticipated project and these planning stages may prove to be the key to its success. There are some differences on the approach, in both the outward appearance of the building and the execution of the interpretation. Much of the concern hinges on the architectural limitations imposed by the budget at this time. Given this, some feel the focus should be increasingly narrowed on battle specifics and less on context. How do we arrive at a near-perfect interpretation of the Olustee story? And now – a new park manager is in place. George Paxton has been appointed as the new head-man for Stephen Foster, Big Shoals, & Olustee. How might that impact the development of the museum? In this issue, we’ll meet our new manager, Mr. George “Gabby” Paxton. In this edition, we’ll touch on the status of the project and in future issues, examine some possible next-steps for the museum committee.

*With the arrival of spring, longtime Florida Park Service employee and manager of our Olustee Battlefield Historic State Park, Michelle Waterman has completed her transfer to Big Talbot Island State Park. There, she will oversee one of the true gems in our great state – one of the last intact wilderness areas in 1200 miles of Florida coastline! It was her dream to one day return to the park where it all started for her. This is a rare opportunity and we congratulate her!*

***Thank you, Michelle, for the years of excellent service!!***



*Pictured above: a look from the tranquil shores of Ocean Pond in early Spring 2015. The water is up high and healthy. A visit to this blue beauty evokes a wonder of what it was like for the various Seminole people that built a life and respite here – or – how those Southern soldiers adjacently encamped utilized the spot or looked over its calm to draw some sense of rest before the coming storm.*

# 2015 BATTLE OF OLUSTEE REENACTMENT REVIEW

Our work was cut out for us – delivering a reenactment that wasn’t a let-down from the carefully planned 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary-commemorative of last year. Was it even possible after such a benchmark year? In the February 28<sup>th</sup> follow-up meeting, the CSO Board and Reenactment Committee aired it out.

## *Artillery Report*

Bob Farrar, for the Artillery Sub-Committee, had the opportunity to speak first. Remarks from the artillerists were good for both parking logistics and firewood supply. Use of the cart greatly aided behind -the-scenes in the operations of the cannoneers.

For next year, however, the artillery companies agreed to place their pieces back where the spectators can see the Confederate artillery firing position better.

The Blue-Grey Army provided food and all the artillerists were very grateful for this.

Only one gun came in late, a Howitzer, and had to be turned down gently as there was no time to conduct a safety inspection of the piece.

There ended up being 19 big guns in all.

President Dickinson spoke at gun inspection and promoted membership in the CSO. All enjoyed and appreciated the message.

Moving forward in the interests of refining safety and authenticity, a couple items were brought up. There is to be an official recommendation that full-scale guns have 50" wheels for safer transports access across the staging areas and spectator battlefield. There will also be a recommendation to no longer allow small guns (under 57") which were unauthentic to the actual battle.

Bob stressed the importance of being registered with the CSO and the Artillery Supervisory Sub-Committee before participating in the overall weekend event, especially the battle reenactment itself. In fact, it's absolutely critical for safety and planning reasons.

## *Varmint Alert!*

A couple of snakes were seen on the filed – a big rat snake and a pygmy rattlesnake. Both were safely removed.

## *Camping Report*

Modern Camping reported about 260 sites were filled. This was down from last year.

Bill Danforth cited good all-round impressions from the Federal camps. There was a suggestion to stress to Handicap campers in the future that it's better for them to park at their campsites than at the front gate.

There were some concerns about "Civilian Camping". FPS liaison Elaine McGrath suggested that the CSO revive a discussion about overall Reenactment Camping authenticity rules and regulations. There may come a proposal to have a designated representative from the Civilian Camping group (a "Camp Coordinator"), to help maintain compliance. A suggestion was also made that there be an official name for the authentic civilian camp.

## *Pyrotechnics Report*

Pyrotechnics Coordinator Clement Lindsay expressed appreciation for the Union guns, stating they were doing a great job from the beginning of the battle with the Infantry Square on through to the end.

He was concerned that the ground charges were planted somewhat out of position with the Confederate cannons this year. Another concern was the growth on the field keeping the charge wires from being buried in the ground. (as opposed to just laying on top of the ground becoming trip hazards for infantry and horses) Wilahmena added that many have tripped on the extensive roots that have broken through the ground in recent years while attempting to traverse the old farm field.

Park Ranger Jim Ellis plans on cutting down the field with a batwing mower this month, then having a burn. The whole 688 acres will be burned and big holes will be filled in.

Clement thanked the Florida Park Service for wetting down his area. It was estimated that 110-120 pyrotechnic charges were used in each of the battle reenactments (Saturday and Sunday.)

## *Sutler Report*

A few items came up including the types of guns being sold, indicating it might be necessary to revise the CSO forms in the registration packet, so that sutlers know up front exactly what the authenticity expectations are. It's the CSO's stance that maintaining a high standard of authenticity is important to an overall accurate and clear educational interpretation for the visiting public.

All sutlers are required to sign for a sutler packet of forms and information when they register. Sutler Coordinator Eric Hague indicated that in the future, getting the paperwork processed further in advance would help to stay on top of which sutlers are squared away.

President Gary Dickinson did the sutler inspection. Among the unauthentic items being sold were modern knives with laser cut alloy blades, 20mm & 30mm innate rounds of ammunition, souvenir jewelry and trinkets, pink toy guns, and cammo toys and uniforms. Sutlers selling these items complained that reenactment sales are going down and they need to offer to kids and families new to the experience. Only one sutler did not comply with putting away the modern knives. In such cases, proprietors will be sent a letter.

It's worth noting here that not all non-Civil War items are prohibited from sale. An example is period hats from 1800-1860.

There was a report that a sutler was selling out of a tent in the military campgrounds. This would be an example of breaching the authentic standard as historically, sutlers would not have been allowed to pitch their tent within rows of strictly governed military tents – not to mention this kind of thing is just too difficult to regulate, unfair to other sutlers, etc. These are just some reasons why sutlers are generally required to be congregated in the “Sutler’s Row” area at all types of reenactment events.

In the past, certain non-profit tents featuring living history/ demonstrators have been allowed to sell trinkets or related media. These are not classified as sutlers. An example might be an author or filmmaker, but even these are not allowed in the military camps.

There was also a discussion of sutlers not staying open late. For many folks at different reenactments, the best time to shop is in the evening after all the day's activities have wound down. The majority of sutlers at Olustee close because it is not profitable for them to stay open. There's also the contention that for them to stay open late and have lights to operate by and provide warmth for customers, they need to run their generators. They are allowed to stay open late, but new rules call for generators on Sutler Row to be off at 10:00 pm. They could still be open by candlelight.

A vote was held that prohibited the running of generators in the sutler area on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday until closing.

An additional proposal was set forth to make another sutler rule category for non-profit sale, relegating them to the vendor area where such as book authors would locate, while retaining their valuable presence and the unique product and service they are offering. A typical registration fee would be charged with applicable late fee incurring with registration after November 1<sup>st</sup>.

## *EMT Report*

There was a brief discussion bringing up the possibility of having a visible vehicle presence in the evening as well as having an EMT present at the ball. It was generally felt to be unnecessary at this juncture, but David added they will still always be around for the night firing.

## *CSA/USA Reenactors Report*

Representing was Vice-President Tom Jesse, who first thanked everyone for all the help.

He got some feedback that many spectators were not happy with Saturday's “tactical” demonstration battle. He and most everyone in the reenactment community are always sensitive to putting on a good show. General Jesse and General James Permane (representing Federal reenactors) will thus get together and re-strategize how the Saturday battle is presented to the public. The origin of the Saturday battle was as a tactical exercise solely for the benefit of the reenactors. However, a good thing happened. The Olustee event became more and more popular over the years and as seating around the “battlefield” is finite, the call came to put on 2 battles for the public. This is when the Saturday tactical was presented as an opportunity for the public to see a Civil War battle reenacted on another day and so it became advertised as such in the slate of events. The time for starting the Saturday battle might be revisited. Coming from the parade in Lake City has always been a logistical factor.

Tom gave high marks in his report to the initiative of having ROTC members work with the reenactment provost office and adjutant general. Moving forward, this might be a good way to generate youth interest in history and reenactment. He proposed sending a letter of appreciation to the military academy that sent these volunteers.

## *Entertainment Report*

Ladies Tea went well this year.

Both brass & string bands were great as usual!

## *Notes on Specialized Reenactors & Displays*

An Abraham Lincoln impersonator with a ponytail proved to be problematic and confusing to spectators.

A couple of Zouave reenactors were trying to go out on the battlefield as “sharpshooters” for combat reenactment and had to be turned away. The Zouaves were fascinating soldiers in Civil War history and such interpretations might be welcome in the education/demonstration area. Zouaves, however, were not present at the actual Battle of Olustee. Elaine reminded everyone that our reenactment policy states “no sharpshooters”. Bill Danforth also gave an important reminder that reenacting soldiers have to conform and be under a commander in order to be on the battlefield. You must also be dressed authentic to the units that actually fought at Olustee. It just makes sense and is important for safety reasons.

The surveillance balloon display from the SCV was very cool and added tremendous appeal to the education & demonstration area. The display also effectively covered up the group’s generator. The CSS Hunley and other naval displays continue to be a great treat for visitors to this area.

## *Blue Grey Army Report*

Unfortunately, it was reported that busses weren’t there at the park on Saturday morning for pick-up after the parade. Mitzi Nelson proposed to start having the busses run earlier Saturday morning.

## *Treasurer’s Report*

Mitzi was thanked for making handy new reimbursement forms available to CSO members and others.

Unfortunately, attendance was down significantly; in fact, the lowest since 1998. Another startling stat had us down a whopping 44% from last year’s epic 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary event. Some of that is be understood and expected, but we were also down 25% from the standard year of 2013. One reason given for the lower turnout was the extremely cold weather report predicting frigid 20 degree temps. We had our share of cold, but the deep freeze never showed up. In the end, the gate fees didn’t cover expenses, but some other fees helped to keep us in the black.

## *Treasury Report continued*

It’s interesting to note that credit card transactions were initiated for the very first time and totaled nearly \$2,000.

On a bright note, the CSO tent experienced better sales this year. A good deal of bottled water was sold. The CSO still has a lot of merchandise to move.

1,467 reenactors were tallied at this year’s event.

## *Sanitation Report*

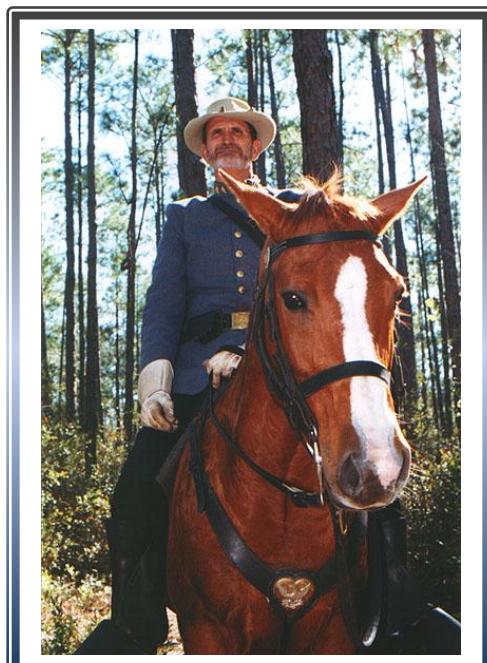
There were reports of some drinking out of the port-o-let sinks. A reply was made that anything originating out of the faucets is good.

## *Advertising Report*

There was a consensus that promotional freebies need to start much, much earlier – like in March for the following year!

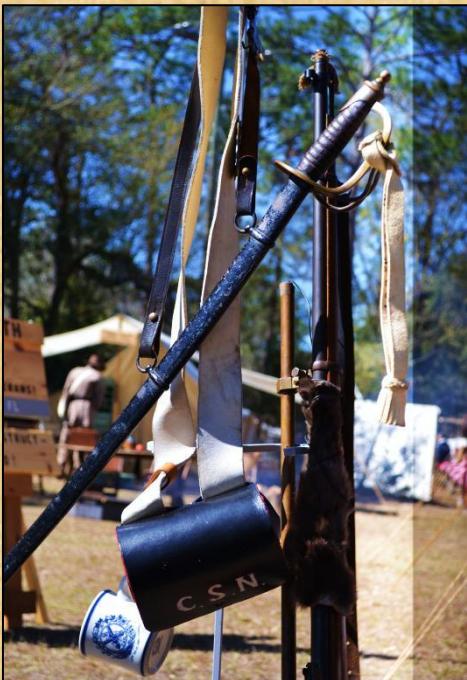
There was good media coverage in Lake City, Gainesville, and Tallahassee. The only media coverage in Jacksonville seemed to be online. The Times-Union had a little bit of coverage. Gary had some signage placed strategically in the River City. To better tap into this market, it appears we will have to call and contact each one of the television stations. (Since ad revenues have been down, it’s more difficult to get coverage or the presence of live trucks unless it’s a crisis news story.)

It’s worth noting that free ticket giveaways at radio stations were down from last year (only 100).

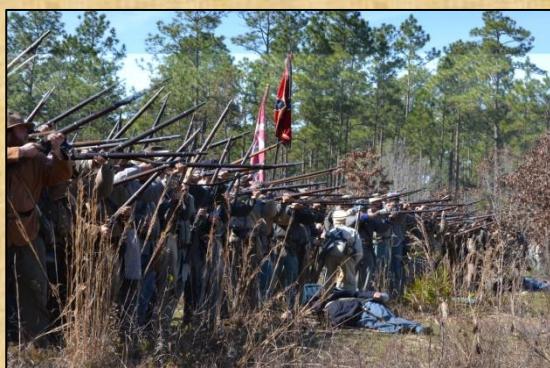


# 2015 REENACTMENT WEEKEND PHOTO GALLERY

Featuring the photography of *Paul Duran*



Top left: Recon balloon that was all the talk. Bottom left: CSN accoutrement display. Top right: Veteran cavalry reenactor & CSO Boardmember Jim Bishop, Middle right: Union flutist. Bottom right: Veteran USCT reenactor



Top: Opposing commanders and real-life CSO Board members Tom Jesse and James Permane lay a wreath at the Union monument. Middle left: Confederate front about to fire. Middle right: Soldier doing some leather work. Bottom left: Federals around their fire. Bottom right: Mary Fears puts on another superb program.



Top: Union reenactors leaving the morning ceremony. Bottom: "Tenting Tonight". Photographer and CSO Officer Paul Duran has compiled an excellent collection of photos from 2015 that represent all aspects of the Reenactment event. We'll see more of his work in future editions.

# ***George Paxton made new manager of Olustee Battlefield Historic State Park***

Please join us in congratulating George (Gabby) Paxton as the new park manager of Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park, Big Shoals State Park, and Olustee Battlefield Historic State Park. Gabby started his FPS career as OPS at Dudley Farm Historic State Park. He went on to become a Park Ranger at Lake Kissimmee State Park before advancing to Park Services Specialist at Colt Creek State Park. Gabby's most recent position has been as the Assistant Park Manager of Stephen Foster/Big Shoals/ Olustee where he gained valuable experience in the operation and management of these complex units. Gabby's positive attitude, work ethic, and integrity will serve him well as he takes on the challenge of leading these parks into the future.

A little bit about Gabby: ***"I am a 7th generation Floridian coming from a pioneer family that came here to Baker County in 1834. My 4<sup>th</sup> great grandfather fought in the second Seminole Indian war, and his wife was killed by Indians around Baxter. Their son, my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather was a Confederate soldier but was captured early in the war. I had family that fought in the second Florida cavalry at Olustee, and I believe I also had other relatives that fought there as well, but am in the process of researching that. I grew up in High Springs and also spent a great bit of time at my grandparents' farm in Glen St. Mary. Before I went to work with the Park Service I day worked cows and farmed for a living as well as guiding hunts and doing various other odd jobs."***

Congratulations Gabby!!

*Special thanks to FPS media specialist Andrea Thomas for contributing to this report.*

| Upcoming Meetings & Events  | Articles of Interest  | Odds & Ends  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Questions and membership dues can be mailed to: Olustee CSO, P.O. Box 382, Glen St. Mary, FL 32040</p> <p>The 2016 Annual Reenactment of the Battle of Olustee or Ocean Pond will be February 12-14.</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://floridareenactorsonline.com">floridareenactorsonline.com</a> for a list of living history &amp; reenactment events throughout Florida.</p> <p>The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter CSO board meeting will be held Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at the park. The general CSO meeting will be preceded by the next Museum Committee meeting at 9:30 a.m.</p> | <p>By-laws of the CSO and its Board of Directors have been updated. Copies are available through the CSO.</p> <p>Enticing corporate membership packages are being developed (including comp tickets at will-call). More on this later.</p> <p>Please visit the website at <a href="http://www.battleofolustee.org">www.battleofolustee.org</a> for updated applications, forms, regs, &amp; schedules</p> | <p>The Expo has been temporarily put on hiatus while we work on the new Museum/Visitor Center.</p> <p>A thank you goes out to Sleiman Enterprises for allowing placement of reenactment weekend advertising on their various retail properties throughout Jacksonville. A big thanks also goes to Emory Manufacturing for storage of the Jacksonville signage.</p> <p>For more information on the Osceola National Forest and other national forests in Florida, visit <a href="http://www.fs.usda.gov/florida">http://www.fs.usda.gov/florida</a> .</p> |

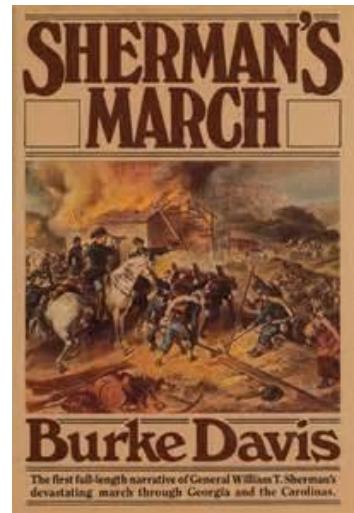
# The Reviewer

Reviews and recommendations of related books, music, & film....

## CIVIL WAR

*Sherman's March* by Burke Davis

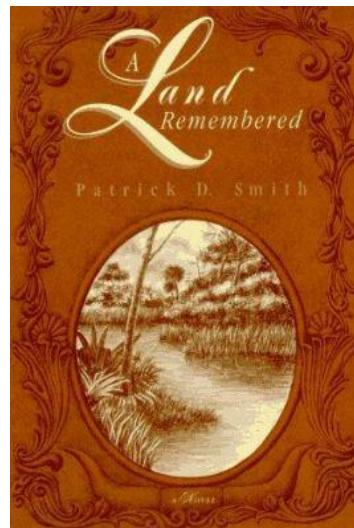
Much has been made of William T. Sherman's epic, awful, sometimes horrific march through the Southland. It birthed enmities that have only just begun to fade. Yet the man remains a fascinating American portrait. Here was an icon of steely resolve who knew our state of Florida well, having served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Seminole War. The aura of Sherman gave name to the tank some 70 years later that helped win WW2. Despite the "total war" he waged, he had the undying respect of some Confederate generals such as Joe Johnston who served as his pallbearer. This 1980 publication is the first full-length narrative of General William Tecumseh Sherman's march through Georgia and the Carolinas. Of great regional interest are many details and stories from Savannah and the Lowcountry. What author Davis has done with *Sherman's March* is deftly weave together hundreds of documented eyewitness accounts into a cohesive, chronological narrative. This is not an analysis or a compilation. It is pure story that lifts the haze of history and engages the reader as if it happened yesterday. From Random House New York Publishing and available at [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) - Terrell



## ANTEBELLUM/CIVIL WAR FLORIDA -

*A Land Remembered* by Patrick Smith

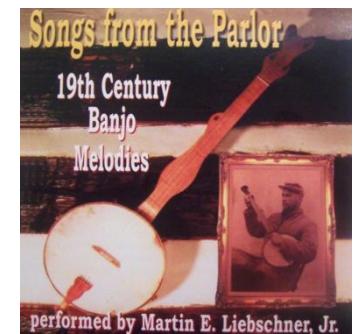
Tobias then said, "Good God almighty! They're going to have the battle down here and not up there where they built all them barricades! And we're going to be caught right in the middle of it!" "I guess they couldn't direct the Federals where to fight," the man next to Tobias said. "But I tell you one thing for sure. We better be to hell and gone from here when they start fir'in them cannons at each other." Last quarter featured a documentary film on Patrick Smith. This week, we feature the classic Florida story that made him a household name in the sunshine state. In *A Land Remembered*, a Confederate captain had come calling on local settlers for help cutting wood for fortifications. It wasn't long afterwards that Tobias McIvey found himself in the crossfire of one of the most violent battles in the Civil War. The Pulitzer-Prize nominated book of poor sodbusters coming into an empire of land has become a gold standard in Florida fiction. The New York Times called it, "The personification of frontier life...the elemental struggle of man and nature." And the Augusta Chronicle perhaps said it best – "Few novels come along with power to equal this one." We're proud to recommend it. – Terrell



## ROOTS & FOLK MUSIC -

*Songs from the Parlor – 19<sup>th</sup> Century Banjo Melodies* – Martin E. Liebschner, Jr.

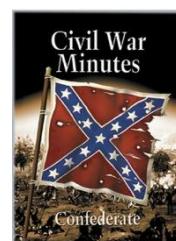
Liebschner has been making period banjos and playing them for decades. He has quietly been attracting a stream of followers and introducing a new generation to the simple joys of roots music. This living history educator and musician has also been the site manager for Old Fort Jackson on the Savannah River. In fact, I was first turned attracted to his music during a visit to the gift shop there. Old songs I never would have listened to now get me a little misty-eyed the way Mr. Liebschner breathes into the lyrics: *Old Dog Tray* and *Uncle Ned* to name a few speaking of lives so well-lived so long ago. Available at Old Fort Jackson ([chsGeorgia.org](http://chsGeorgia.org)) – Terrell



## FILM -

*Civil War Minutes* – Inecom Entertainment Productions

Simply put, both the Union and Confederate boxed-set editions are some of the best Civil War 101 I've seen yet. For novice historians and beginning reenactors, these documentaries are a great place to start. And it goes beyond the basics: renowned artist Dan Troiani called these, "A treasure trove of information not to be found elsewhere on video." Available at [CivilWarMinutes.com](http://CivilWarMinutes.com) - Terrell



# Historical Profile

Lt. Colonel John William Pearson

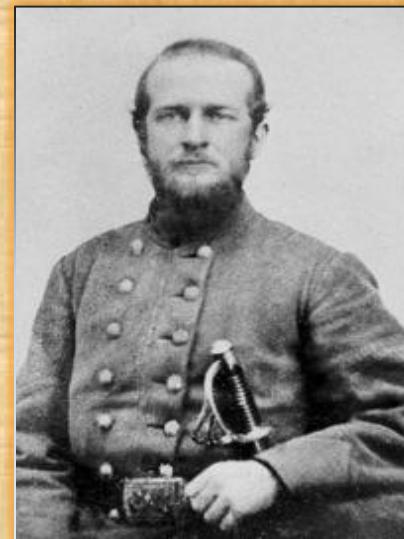
John William Pearson was a Confederate veteran of the Battle of Olustee. Serving as a captain in the 6<sup>th</sup> Florida Infantry Battalion, he experienced some of the most ferocious fighting on the far right flank against the USCT regiments.

Pearson was a successful businessman who established a popular health resort in Orange Springs near Ocala as well as a hotel, grist mill, and a machine shop. However, the Colonel is best known for forming the Oklawaha Rangers, named after the river in Orange Springs. The Oklawaha Rangers were used in the Civil War for guerilla tactics against the Federal troops throughout North Florida and Central Florida.

Pearson was drawn to Florida from his native South Carolina because of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Seminole War in 1835. He was a volunteer in Hindley's Company in that 7 year conflict. In Marion County, he became partners with David Levy Yulee (the famous first Jewish Senator). The two men jointly bought property at a spring called Orange Springs in 1848. As civil war became all but inevitable, Pearson was a supporter of Southern right. He visited Charleston where he became emotionally stirred by the fire-eaters. It was here he purchased 125 smoothbore muskets and 100 colt revolvers. He returned to Florida and asked Governor Perry to start a militia under his command.

The Oklawaha Rangers were first assigned to protect the town of Palatka. A Union sailing yacht called American had been sunk in Dunn's Lake. Union forces were attempting to raise the ship. Pearson was ordered to go to the creek and block the entrance to the St. Johns River. Finding the Federals and failing to prod them into a fight sent Pearson flying into a rampage. He arrested both black and white civilians, charging them as "Union sympathizers" and "trouble-makers". He drove whole communities into the woods in the process.

Pearson's high points began later- in 1862. The Rangers were ordered in June to protect the town of Tampa at Ft. Brooke. The *USS Sagamore*, Commanded by Union Captain AJ Drake, was seen closing in on the fort. The Federal gunboat maneuvered broadside and began opening fire on the old Indian war fort initiating the Battle of Tampa. The gunboat launched 20 men bearing a flag of truce to shore. Captain Pearson sent 18 men to meet Drake's men in a brief conference. Drake's ultimatum was for Captain Pearson to surrender Brooke and Tampa unconditionally. However, Pearson only responded with "we do not understand the meaning of the word surrender; there is no such letter in our book; we don't surrender." Drake told them that Tampa would be shelled as a consequence and Pearson responded with "pitch in." The next day, the Captain cornered the edge in a ship-to-shore artillery standoff then hoisted the stars and bars over the old fort. In March of '63, a Union gunboat called the *Pursuit* appeared in Tampa Bay. The Captain devised a plan to disguise his men as black and paddle out the Federal gunboat as fugitive slaves. The captain of the



*Pursuit* believed they were fugitive slaves and ordered his men to rescue them at Gadsden Point. When the Federal forces met Pearson's disguised fugitive slaves, they were met with a hail of bullets. Four Federals were wounded and they managed to escape back to the *Pursuit*.

After the big battle up at Ocean Pond, Pearson's company patrolled North Florida and settled in Orange Springs. On April 28, 1864, the ten companies of the 6<sup>th</sup> Florida Battalion were reorganized into the 9<sup>th</sup> Florida Infantry Regiment.

On May 18, 1864, the 9<sup>th</sup> Florida was ordered on a 9-day trip to Virginia where they joined Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Hanover Junction. Pearson saw his most intense fighting yet on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Battle of Cold Harbor. The 9<sup>th</sup> filled a gash in Breckinridge's line and many of the Floridian fell under a withering Federal fire. Afterwards, as part of Mahone's Division, the 9<sup>th</sup> helped capture a vital supply line to the Deep South. General Mahone ordered an assault to repel the Federal troops. At this Battle for the Weldon Railroad, Pearson was mortally wounded, struck in the chest with bits of shrapnel while leading a charge across a cornfield. In the Brigade hospital, he drafted a letter of resignation. This letter was accepted and his commission resigned. He was given leave to journey home to Florida. Along the way he was forced to stop in Augusta, Georgia because of his wound. He never made it home to his Orange Springs. He died there in Augusta on September 30, 1864 and was later buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery in Savannah.

(Descendants, credits, and references on next page)

*...continued from "Historical Profile"*

Through John Williams' daughter, Eliza Pearson, he is the grandfather of Maxey Dell Moody, Sr., who established the oldest family owned construction equipment distributor in the United States. The company, *M.D. Moody & Son, Inc.*, founded in 1913, gradually grew to become at one time the largest crane dealer in the Southeastern United States. Moody's grandson, J.R. Moody, is a graduate in History from the University of North Florida. "J.R." has traveled extensively in his international shipping and heavy equipment company duties. Currently, Mr. Moody is doing work as a defense contractor. He holds over 60 patents pertaining to the defense industry and is in the process of negotiating with FN of Belgium for manufacturing a new product for the M240 multi-purpose machine gun. Indeed, the genes of entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership run strong through this Pearson family line. Moody is also an author, penning the spiritual-sociological work *Pabulum Priests & Milk Toast Ministers- The Meltdown of Moral America*. He currently resides nearby in Fruit Cove, Florida.

*Almost the entire above article, with small modification edits for space, comes courtesy of Wikipedia. Thanks to the writer for their thorough research. The photo comes courtesy of BattleOfOlustee.org used with permission from Jane Dux DuPont. Special thanks to authors Gary Loderhouse and David Pearce. Research credits include the following:*

*"Orange Springs Once Thriving Resort" article by David Cook, from the Ocala Star-Banner (12/6/87)*

*"Way Down Upon the Suwannee River: Sketches of Florida During the Civil War" by Gary Loderhouse*

*"Savage Conflict: The Decisive role of Guerillas in the American Civil War" by Donald E. Sutherland, from the University of North Carolina Press*

*"Discovering the Civil War in Florida: A Reader and Guide" by Paul Taylor, from Pineapple Press, Inc.*

*"Sixth Florida Infantry Battalion" by David Pearce from the BattleOfOlustee.org website*

*"Soldiers of Florida in the Seminole Indian – Civil and Spanish-American Wars" by W.S Jennings, from the Board of State Institutions*



*Photo courtesy of Paul Duran, Battle of Olustee Reenactment Weekend 2015*

## **Osceola National Forest Highlights**

**Mt. Carrie Trail** – Here's a trail for families and beginning hikers. Mt. Carrie Trail is located on US Highway 90 between Olustee and Lake City Fl. This one mile interpretational trail meanders through Longleaf Pine forest. Get out and enjoy this beautiful Indian Summer weather we're having. You might spot a gopher tortoise or the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker in this habitat.

# Wilderness Graphics submits initial museum interpretation proposal



The Olustee Battlefield Citizen Support Organization signed a new contract with the architectural firm *Barnett Fronczak Barlowe* of Tallahassee, allowing the company to move on past the initial planning phase and move forward with actual construction design and execution.

While BFB has been green-lighted for the building, the museum interpretation deliberations are just beginning. The renowned interpretive exhibit design firm, *Wilderness Graphics* has stepped up to the plate with its initial “rough” of the Olustee & “Civil War Florida” presentation. Many exhibit ideas were put forth, all based on input from the December charrette. As we move forward, expect many of these to be retained, refined, removed, or added to with as-yet undefined exhibits.

**The building exterior might present the following array of durable, weather –protected exhibits:** A large eye-catching (from Hwy. 90) “Step Back in Time” Welcome Panel, Civil War & Battle of Olustee Informational Display Panels in the dogtrot with extending information on Civil War area history/context and a large interactive Olustee battle map.

**Tactical displays for the kids might include:** “Pull Your Weight” Interactive Rope showing how much pertinent items weighed, Barrel Use Display, and the “Train Pull” intimating the challenge faced by the 54<sup>th</sup> in getting the wounded back to Jax.

**Gathering spaces were proposed in a “Corner Porch” sitting area and a fire pit circle.**

**Inside the museum’s exhibit hall, it is proposed to develop further and deeper layers of the Olustee story:** Rotational Exhibit Units & Panels, Retractable Wall Displays, Rolling Display Cabinets, high-security Special Collections Area for temporary/seasonal displays of valuable artifacts & relics, Graphic Art Backdrops on the walls, Command Center Theater for documentary play, and a Gift Cart.

The Olustee Museum Project Committee will continue working throughout the summer to polish the interpretive exhibits plan and to kick off the formal building design process.



**“FROM THE OCEAN POND PHOTO ARCHIVES”**



“Confederates Faces on a Florida Trail”

Terrell, 2001

(Battle of Olustee Reenactment Photo Gallery Archives)

## EDITOR’S CORNER

My history travels just recently afforded me a very special discovery. Some of you may be aware of this place; others perhaps not. In any event, I’d like to take this opportunity to share it with you.

Deeper into the Osceola National Forest down Gum Swamp Road is an antebellum home – the Owens-Kellogg House, probably better known as the Kellogg Plantation. Legend has it this was a field hospital far back in the Confederate rear during the Battle of Olustee. As my ancestor received a mortal wound probably later in the battle, he ended up in a field hospital. More than likely, he was taken to one nearer the battlefield, perhaps one of the Brown Farm structures, but possibly he ended up in this Owens House. I may never know for sure, but needless to say, my interest was “peaked”.

I first found the home on a historic home realty website. Yes, the home is for sale. Just imagine! With the kind consent of the realtor and owner, I made a pilgrimage there. Nothing about the home and property failed to enchant. It has been lovingly cared for all these years. I hope the old place makes its next transition into equally skilled and dedicated hands. Here are some pictures.





The home has had additions and internal remodeling over the year so it is not readily available to be listed on the National Register. For more information on purchase & history and to view additional pictures, visit the following webpage:

<http://www.countryrivers.com/listing/107504723-150012808/5221-ne-gum-swamp-lake-city-fl-32055/>

Until next time - -

*Brian Terrell  
Editor*