



FOMR NEWSLETTER

Spring and Fall, 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 29 (Saturday) 11-3: Halloween at the Reserve. Volunteers are needed to man the games and booths. Please call Daryl Johnson at 770-830-5879 if you can help.

November 3: The annual dinner will again be held at Historic Banning Mills. If you wish to look around the area while it is still light, arrive by 6:00. Check in and social time will start at 6:30, with dinner at 7:00. After dinner, there will be a short business meeting for the election of new officers and board members. The featured speaker will be Bruce Green, the Director of the Tourism Division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development. He will preview the visit by his entire team to Carroll County in February to analyze existing and potential tourism assets and make recommendations to guide the county to realize its tourism potential. To make your reservation, please email Margery at digi@mindspring.com, or call 770-834-8679 or 770-301-4915. The cost of the dinner will again be \$20, payable upon arrival. Please respond ASAP, and no later than Monday, October 31.

November 19 (Saturday), 10 am: Sally Bethea, Executive Director of the Upper Chattahoochee River Keeper, will return to McIntosh to update us on the state of the river, especially south of Atlanta.

December 3 (Saturday) 10 am: Christmas Fern and Holly walk with Wendell and Eleanor Hoomes.

Please reserve the third Saturdays in January and February for Walk and Talks still to be arranged.

EVENTS of 2011

January: John Congleton discussed the use of a variety of mapping technologies. Following his talk, we hiked along Moonshiners Alley Trail, where he demonstrated some of the techniques he and his wife, Jacki, used in creating new maps of the trails and features of McIntosh Reserve Park.

February: A winter walk along the Chattahoochee with Dr. Jerry Stober who discussed flood impacts following the record 2009 flood, minimum river flows with future droughts and water allocations, water quality, increasing recreational use of the river

below Atlanta and the value added by proposed boat ramps at McIntosh and Moore's Bridge county parks.

April: Bird Watching at the Moore's Bridge property with Dr. Barbara Ballentine. Our trek through the woods watching and listening for birds led us to the river and the old bridge and to the wetlands. Doug Mabry also led a tour of the James Moore house on the property. There is some evidence that this pre-civil war construction may have been built by Horace King.



Bird watching at Moore's Bridge Park

April: The Spring Wildflower hike with Wendell and Eleanor Hoomes grows more and more popular. This year, some plants, such as the azaleas, were at a later stage of bloom than usual, but most were still in their glory. We again featured two hikes - the fast walkers with Eleanor, and the slow walkers with Wendell. The picture shows the fast walkers as they set out.



April (evening program): The Apalachicola Ecosystems Project with Dr. Thomas Foster. Dr. Foster spoke on how the Creek Indians and their ancestors shaped the plant and animal communities that we see today. Dr. Foster, a native of Georgia, is Professor of anthropology at the University of West Georgia, and Director of the Waring Lab. Using archaeology, history, geology, botany, and satellite imagery, he has been able to demonstrate the lasting effects of the Native Americans on Georgia's forests. The evening was co-sponsored by The Friends of McIntosh Reserve and the Carroll County Historical Society.

May: Grasses and Sedges with Dr. David Morgan. We saw about ten species of Carex (the only sedge genus that was flowering) and at least 12 different grasses that were flowering. In all, there are about 86 species of grasses and 47 species of sedges in McIntosh Reserve. We learned that grasses and sedges have no petals or sepals to protect the flowers. Instead, grasses have two bracts that hold the flowers between them, while sedges hold the flowers against the main stem by one bract. Also, most sedges have triangular, solid stems and most grasses have round, hollow stems. However, some sedges also have round stems.

June: Climate change at McIntosh with Dr. Georgina DeWeese was a wide ranging discussion of its reality and the interrelated effects on weather, plants, animals and the potential for human responses which lead to a lively discussion among the participants.

July: Snakes Alive, with Jim Rogers of Nearly New Nursery. Always a favorite, loved by kids and adults alike.



August: The August Walk and Talk on the fish of the Chattahoochee was attended by forty enthusiastic people and one goat. Brent Hess and Paul Jones from the DNR Fisheries and assisted by Brent's son, Riley, showed a number of live fish gathered from West Point Lake. They were not able to access the River due to low flows at the time. They explained the taxonomic differences between largemouth bass, spotted bass and shoal bass and reported that these species are capable of interbreeding. They explained that this can complicate the State's management priority of the shoal bass

population which is unique to this reach of the river and found nowhere else. They reported that two small dams on the Chattahoochee near Columbus will be removed which will eliminate barriers to shoal bass populations by facilitating their movement. The specificity of shoal bass for the habitat in this reach of the river brings into question the impact of minimum flows on this species which may result with eventual resolution of the "water war" with Alabama and Florida. Protection of shoal bass habitat in this reach of the river will not only be good for this species but also for a healthy river flow which will be good for McIntosh Reserve Park visitors and the growing number of folks who want to use this river.

September: FOMR participated in this years Rivers Alive event, which was sponsored by the park and by Georgia Power. FOMR members were available to serve as group leaders. This was one of the largest groups (about 330) ever assembled at the park for a Rivers Alive event. Everyone was rewarded with lunch and a lovely tee shirt..

The September Walk and Talk was a fall hike to check on the longleaf pines planted last year. We did find some survivors, along with many chiggers.

Also in **September, the Fall Festival** was a big success. Our well-manned booth was frequently visited by people interested in our park, as well as in the new parks coming on line in Carroll County. Our booth was next to that of the Chattahoochee Bend State Park, which also drew many intrigued visitors.

October: Lynn Lewis-Weis and Al Keller with the National Wild Turkey Federation had a great audience for the October Walk and Talk on Saturday the 15th. With lots of scouts in the group, Lynn, a wildlife biologist with the Federation, talked about the come-back of the wild turkey in the United States. From a low of about 30,000 in all of the country in the 1930's, it is estimated that there are now about 300,000 in Georgia alone. Because the wild turkey is a generalist, efforts to preserve its habitat benefit many plants and animals in the forests, including the deer. After the talk, Lynn took the children on a short walk to find plants that provide food for turkeys and other animals and showed them how to identify turkey tracks and find the spots where turkeys have taken sand baths.



PROJECTS UPDATE

There are now a number of interpretive signs that effectively increase the educational impact of the Park. Using funding through Georgia Tourism Development grants, the Park has installed signs for *The Reserve*, *Chief McIntosh*, *Council Bluff*, *A Railroad*, *The Treaty of Indian Springs*, and *The Chattahoochee River*. Funded by a matching grant from the Community Foundation, FOMR was able to add *Geology*, *the Atamasco Lily*, and the *Chattahoochee Water Power* for a total of nine interpretive signs.

All of the brochures funded by matching grants from the Community Foundation of West Georgia have been completed. We now have brochures on: *The Bowen Family Cemetery*, *Wildflowers*, *The McGarity Trail*, *The Town that Never Was*, *Geology of McIntosh Reserve Park* and the *Trails of McIntosh Reserve Park*. For the last two, our organization is deeply indebted to Dr. Timothy Chowns and John Congleton, both with the UWG Geosciences Department.

Plant Survey: The native plant survey continued through much of 2010 to take advantage of the opportunity to assess the effects of the flooding on plant distribution in the park. After the flood of 2009, the river recovered with a remarkable resiliency.

While some plants along the river, particularly on the island, were washed away, essentially the same plants remain as listed in our survey/inventory. Some new plants were deposited, mainly invasive ones. Dr. Morgan and Wendell Hoomes continue to provide presentations of the data to interested groups.

Recommendations by the Nominating Committee

At the annual meeting on Nov. 3, the nominating committee will recommend the following slate to serve for 2012:

Directors continuing for two-year terms ending 2013: Robert Claxton, Cathe McKinnon and Laura Richards

Directors continuing for one -year terms ending in 2012: Randall Herrin, Georgia Keene and Doug Mabry

Directors to begin three-year terms ending in 2014: Wendell Hoomes, John Congleton, and Jerry Stober.

The committee will recommend to the Board that the following serve as officers in 2012:

John Congleton – President
Georgia Carter – Vice President
Wendell Hoomes – Immediate Past President
Dita Pickering – Recording Secretary
Margery Bouris – Corresponding Secretary
Rhonda Rowell – Treasurer
Cathe McKinnon – Membership Registrar

Ways to Get Involved

As always, if you take digital pictures and get something great at the Reserve, Daryl would appreciate it if you would put it on a CD and make it available for his use on the County website and for various publicity purposes. We'd also like to have them for our newsletters and our website. We are still looking for someone to take on the revision and updating of our website.

Help with light trail maintenance is an on-going need at the park. We would like to schedule workdays from time to time to walk the trails with clippers and loppers to remove briars and small limbs that interfere with hiking, and drag limbs and debris off the trails. Let us know if you would like to take on the organization of this function. (Removal of any large limbs and trees should be left to park management to handle.)

If you have a great idea for jobs, projects, Walk and Talks or evening programs, please let your interest be known! We would love to hear your suggestions. Contact any officer or board member. A few contact numbers are listed below.

Contact numbers

McIntosh Reserve Park: 770-830-5879
Wendell Hoomes: 770-854-8919, homes2@gmail.com
Rhonda Rowell: 770-834-5739, rowell98@yahoo.com
Randall Herrin: 770-834-3747, cantu@bellsouth.net
Dita Pickering: 770-834-4091, dpick26@gmail.com
Cathe McKinnon: 770-214-1507, cathe@joimail.com
Margery Bouris: 770-834-8679, digi@mindspring.com
Jerry Stober (for Walk and Talks): 770-854-4258, ajstober@earthlink.net

Become or update your Friendship status

We are trying to streamline our "friendship drive" so that contributions to FOMR are collected in the fall, for budgeting the following year.

If you are not currently listed as a Friend, we invite you to contribute to the Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc. at a level that is convenient for you. Your contributions help us pay postage and carry out projects agreed upon by the board. Also memorial donations are gratefully accepted and notification to the family will be made by FOMR.

Mail your contribution payable to **Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc.** PO Box 483. Whitesburg, GA 30185. Please include your name (s), mailing address, telephone numbers and email address.