

Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc.



F O M R Newsletter

Spring 2013 - Volume 12 #1

www.FriendsOfMcintoshReserve.org



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Upcoming Events

May 18 (Saturday), 2013, 9am

Lynn Lewis-Weiss, biologist with **The National Wild Turkey Federation**, will lead the **Walk and Talk** at Moore's Bridge Park. Gather at the gate on Old Newnan Road off of Highway 16 between Whitesburg and the River.

May 21 (Tuesday) OR May 23 (Thursday)

A trail workday at McIntosh. The date selection and time will be arranged based on what works best for those who can come. If you want to join this group and help with trail maintenance and trail marking, please contact Cathe McKinnon at coyotekatega@att.net or 770-214-1507. (See projects update below)

June 15 (Saturday), 2013, 9 am

Dr. Barbara Ballentine (UWG) and Dr. Jeremy Hyman (Western Carolina) will lead a **song bird hike**, again at Moore's Bridge Park.

June 22 (Saturday): 6:30 – 9:30 pm

The Chattahoochee Story Project will hold its first event for 2013 down by the river at the McIntosh Reserve. Please put the date on your calendar and remember to come to our campfire with your stories of life on the river. Bring a picnic dinner too. Last October participants ranged from 5 to 90 years of age. So please come, one and all, and meet us at the river.

Save the date

July 20: Walk and Talk

To be arranged

August 17: Walk and Talk

To be arranged

September 14 (Saturday), 2013 9 am - McIntosh Reserve Park

Rivers Alive Come help clean up the Chattahoochee River bank and park. Serve as a group guide. Free tee-shirts and lunch for all!. This event is sponsored by the Georgia Power Company and the Park.

September 28-29: Fall Festival

We will be keeping our booth on both days to greet park visitors and chat about FOMR, area history and whatever else comes up. We always learn more than we impart. Dita implores that we will also need someone with a truck or van to transport our canopy and tables etc.- as well as someone knowledgeable in setting up and taking down the canopy.

October 19 (Saturday) 9am

Tracy Dickerson, Forester, will lead a **Walk and Talk** on the Trees of McIntosh Reserve.

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President's Corner

As president of Friends of McIntosh Reserve, I am asking you to take a moment to consider the issue of the proposed fee structure for Carroll County Parks, and specifically what it means for McIntosh Reserve.

Carroll County subsidizes all parks in the system. None of the parks generates net revenue, or even pays its own way. Trudy Crunkleton, the director of the County's Parks Department, must ask the County Commission each year to fund McIntosh's operations. Each year she asks the Commissioners to give her more money from the County's general fund than McIntosh Reserve brings to that fund. The amount of the shortfall last year was roughly 74%. In other words, the fees that McIntosh raised last year paid for 26% of its operating costs. Carroll County taxpayers covered the rest.

Trudy has told me that if McIntosh can cover more of its operating costs through the new user fees, she'll have additional leverage in the budgeting process to ask the County Commission for more funding for the Park. That is, more money to fund projects, equipment, and maintenance at McIntosh. This would put a tool into her hands that she could use to further benefit McIntosh.

There has been concern raised about the new fees leaving the park, and being sent to the County's general fund. Carroll County has no mechanism for collecting fees and keeping them

at their source. All fees collected by the County go into the general fund. I've asked, and no one has been able to identify for me any fee collected by the County that remains at its source. So it's a given that new fees imposed at McIntosh will go to the general fund. This is the same account that pays for the park's 74% annual budget shortfall.

And what about current fees being collected at McIntosh that are all going into the County's general fund? For years the fees collected at the park have been going into the general fund. These fees, plus additional funds, have been returned to the park in the annual budget. I haven't heard anyone complain about this. Does it make sense for the FOMR board to oppose new fees at McIntosh because they'll be sent to the general fund, even if those funds have been returned to the park in the past? Saying that new fees will be "lost" by going into the general fund doesn't appear to be a valid argument against collecting them.

Trudy is an accomplished and successful administrator of the County's parks. She is our champion and our advocate in the County administration, and has put significant thought and effort into creating this new fee schedule. I have complete trust in her judgment and ability and I feel that she is being as fair as she can possibly be. FOMR should support this proposal and send a notable positive message her way. I am personally in favor of supporting the park and its management. By working within the parameters of the system, we can make a difference.

On the issue of FOMR-sponsored events, Trudy has said to me (and to other members of the FOMR board) that arrangements would be made so that the parking fee would be waived specifically for attendees of FOMR Walk and Talks. She has acknowledged that our events are positive activities that bring more users to the park. But even without such a waiver, I doubt that attendance at Walk & Talks would suffer if a parking fee were put in place.

If the goals of our organization include supporting the Parks administration and having a say in matters that concern the park, then I believe FOMR must not stand in opposition to this proposal. I see nothing positive coming from such a stand. On the contrary, additional revenue at the park can lead to better amenities, maintenance, and a more positive experience for all park users.

Finally, whether the new fee structure will even be implemented has yet to be decided. The Carroll County BOC will make that decision on May 7th. For those of you who feel strongly about this issue, I urge you to take up the matter with your district commissioner.

Thanks for being a supporter of McIntosh Reserve. We hope to see you at our next Walk & Talk.

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Past Events

April, 2013

Kim Cowart, horsemanship judge with the North American Trail Riders Conference (NATRC), presented the April 20 Walk and Talk sponsored by Friends of McIntosh Reserve at McIntosh Reserve Park. NATRC promotes horsemanship and horse care as they apply to the sport of distance riding by offering a variety of challenging and educational experiences designed to strengthen both horse and rider. He also discussed safety considerations to be followed by hikers, bikers, and horses on multi-use trails. Right of way protocol dictates that bikers yield to hikers, and both yield to horses. The picture shows Kim demonstrating with Cathe McKinnon and her horse Jackson how he might judge horsemanship at check-in prior to a competitive trail ride.



April 2013

The spring wildflower Walk and Talk, led by Wendell and Eleanor Hoopes, was well attended, and included many first time participants. Though the timing this year was a bit early, many old favorite plants were sighted: pippisewa, mayapple, ginger, Carolina Silverbell, rue anemone, and the pink lady slipper. A few Atamasca lilies graced the day, although the hillside by the river was not yet resplendent with blossoms. We are fortunate that Sandra Fry took a video of the hike and has placed it on the web so we might have a look. It is available on both vimeo and shutterfly in case one works for some but not the other. It is the same video, so if you are successful with the first try, no need to try the second. <https://vimeo.com/63784554> or <http://traveldump.shutterfly.com/25>

March 2013

Jonathan Stober, Wildlife Biologist with the United States Forest Service at the Shoal Creek Ranger Station, Talladega National Forest, spoke at the March 16 Walk and Talk at McIntosh Reserve Park about fire ecology and its importance in land management. He also described the ongoing surveys of endangered bird species and bats in the Talladega National Forest. Following the talk, many hiked along the Chattahoochee to view the new boat ramp.

February 2013

FOMR is sponsoring several Walk and Talks this year at Moore's Bridge Park, our sister park on the Chattahoochee River near Whitesburg. This historic park property was acquired by the county following the efforts of the Trust for Public Lands several years ago. Many historical events have occurred in this park. It is, for example, the only site of a civil war battle in the county associated with the Battle of Atlanta.



Trudy Crunkelton, Carroll County Parks Director, led the Walk and Talk on February 16 from the Black Dirt Road entrance. The hike took us to the recently discovered Young Family Cemetery with 18 graves dating from the 1850's. Sam Pyles and John Wright had previously conducted a survey of the cemetery to add to the catalogue of Carroll County burial sites. They are currently working on the names of all those buried there.

The hike then proceeded from Black Dirt Road along an old logging road down to the river near where a boat ramp has been proposed to connect a water trail to McIntosh Park. The Black Dirt road entrance to the park is being developed for equestrian use with a grant which will include a short entrance road, parking lot and restroom facilities. Initial trail layout and clearing has begun which was observed in the eastern side of the park. Several visitors from Douglas County and from Fulton County/Chattahoochee Hills attended the hike, reflecting the growing interest in this major asset in Carroll County.



January 2013



The first Walk and Talk of the year was held Moore's Bridge Park, and was led by Trudy Crunkleton, Carroll County Parks Director. Prior to the hike, Trudy provided an update on park development.

Two grants are in play to guide what will happen at Moore's Bridge Park in the near future. The first will develop the trails along the Black Dirt Road side as well as provide a parking area and comfort station. The second grant will provide for the construction of a trail along the Chattahoochee River.

A second cemetery, previously unidentified with about 18 graves, has been uncovered in the north end of the park. (This is the Young Family Cemetery discussed above.)

The Moore house has changed over the years, with improvements reflecting the passing times. There is no plan to restore the house to its original form, but the hope is that the feel and style of the place will be maintained. Eventually it is hoped that the house will serve as a visitors' center and museum.

In a brief review of what is happening at the other parks, Trudy noted that the public now enjoys modern and efficient facilities at the Little Tallapoosa Park. The Ole Tyme County Fair was held there in April in conjunction with the Two Cylinder Club's annual event.

In a discussion about McIntosh, Trudy expressed hopes that McIntosh will receive some update in facilities, including new bathrooms and an improved water system. The Spray and Splash is currently being improved and expanded. The park is also in need of an automated gate, similar to that at Little Tallapoosa Park. While a museum and visitors' center is still in the long-term plans, these other needs are more pressing at this time.

Trudy would like to see a system of interpretive signs throughout all the parks. She would like also to see a consolidated Friends of all county parks.

Following the talk, Trudy led a hike up to the Taylor Cemetery, and then down to the River to the bridge site. Photographers from the Douglasville photography club and from the West Georgia Shutterbugs provided photos.



December 2012

The Christmas Ferns and Holly Hike with Wendell and Eleanor Hoomes again provided an exhilarating view of the winter greenery in the park. This year we had two visitors from the Douglasville Photography club, Stella Spyrou and Janet Newton, who provided wonderful pictures that can be seen on our website. We visited Wendell's favorite Hawthorne tree, and checked up on a few old standby's, like the pipsissewa and the wild ginger, hiding among the flashy greens of the hollies and the ferns. It was truly a magnificent day. Thank you Wendell and Eleanor - and Stella and Janet!

November 2012

Sally Bethea, Chattahoochee River Keeper, paid a visit to the amphitheater at McIntosh Reserve Park. As they celebrate their 18th birthday, the CRK is now keeper for the entire Chattahoochee River, throughout its extent from the national forest above Helen to Lake Seminole on the Florida line; the Apalachicola Riverkeeper protects the last 100 miles of the river system as it flows into the Gulf of Mexico. There are other groups throughout its range that are concerned with the health and utilization of the river, and the CRK plans to interact with these groups for a united purpose. There are 8 fulltime and 4 part-time employees of CRK. Jill Sistino, based in LaGrange, has taken on the role of coordinating activities in the West Point Lake area. Visit our website for additional information from Sally's report.

Also in November: We had a good turn-out for our annual meeting, which was again held at Historic Banning Mills. . In a talk entitled "The Wider Implications of the McIntosh Story" Doug Mabry elaborated some of his recent investigations into the period of the Creek removal and the far-reaching implications of the political and social turmoil surrounding it. One item Doug mentioned that was new to many is that at one point in its past, McIntosh Reserve Park was recommended for National Park status due to its historical significance.

Bill Chappell, Chairman of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners, was honored at the meeting with a letter praising his support of the county Parks system. He was presented with a plaque as well, stating the appreciation of the FOMR membership for his advocacy of green space and parks in the county. Other honored guests included Kevin Jackson, 5th District Commissioner, Trudy Crunkleton, Parks Director for Carroll County, and David Kuechenmeister, who was instrumental in coordinating much of the parks acquisition through his role at the time with The Trust for Public Lands.

At the business meeting, Carol Mitchell was elected to the FOMR board, and the activities and accomplishments of the group were reviewed by returning president, John Congleton. The annual booklet is available in pdf format by email if you would like to try to download the whole

thing - 2011 end of the year pictures, contact list, newsletters etc. Email Margery if you want a copy. (digi@mindspring.com)

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Projects Update

Gift Solicitation

In response to our gift solicitation letter in February, we have received \$1070 from new and renewing members. We thank everyone who contributed prior to the letter as well as in response to it. We appreciate your support. The money will be used to cover costs of Walk and Talks and other projects approved by the board.

Website and newsletter redesign

We have a new look for our website and our newsletter, thanks to the efforts of Stella Spyrou. (www.embiria.com). We think the new formats will be easier to maintain and therefore should be more useful to us all. Let us know what you think. (www.FriendsOfMcintoshReserve.org)

Hugh Mitchell Kiosk

Funds have been raised for the construction of an information kiosk, dedicated to the memory of Hugh Mitchell, in the Equestrian parking area. Cathe McKinnon and Tom Anderson researched the kiosk design, which will be used through-out the Carroll County park system. FOMR will reimburse the park for the cost of the materials and park employees will see to the construction of this kiosk.

Brochure update

In the past, we have produced a series of six brochures featuring different historical or natural features of the Park. Now, we have been asked to redesign and consolidate these into one brochure that can be more efficiently and economically distributed to Park visitors. We are soliciting the help of someone who may be interested in helping with the redesign and production of the new brochures. If you will help, please contact Dita Pickering at dpick26@gmail.com

Trail Restoration and Markers

In April, Carol Cox, Tom Anderson, Cathe McKinnon, Frank Bennett, and John Congleton met with Daryl Johnson for a session on help FOMR could offer for future trail maintenance. Daryl shared that he could use volunteer help on the trails from now until after the Fall Festival. This small group covered a section of the interior trail between the check-in station and the Splash and Play facility. Any members willing to help with trail maintenance and trail marking should contact Cathe McKinnon at coyotekatega@att.net or 770-214-1507.

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News from the Park

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Become a Friend

If you are not currently listed as a Friend, it is not too late! We invite you to contribute now at a level that is convenient for you. Contributions help us pay postage and carry out projects agreed upon by the board. Memorial donations are gratefully accepted and acknowledged.

Please print, complete and mail the membership form from the website
<http://www.friendsofmcintoshreserve.org/Contributions.html>

If you do not choose to complete the form, you may make your contribution payable to Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc. or to the Community Foundation of West Georgia (for tax purposes) with a notation that it is for FOMR. Please include your name (s), mailing address, telephone numbers and email address and mail to:

Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc.
PO Box 483
Whitesburg, GA 30185.

Better yet, Get Involved!

It is time for some new blood in FOMR. Please consider submitting your name or that of your good friend to the nominating committee for consideration for service for next year. There are many competent and imaginative members among our group – members and friends on the contact list. This is a time for growth in the organization and we need to prepare for new leadership and service. Please do not be shy. If you want to get involved, please contact a member of the Nominating committee: Cathe McKinnon (Chair), Margery Bouris, or Angie Stober .

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