



News from the Creek

Friends of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.

Visit our website at: www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

Volume 22 Number 2

Spring Quarterly 2019

President's Message

by Barbara Wingo



Welcome to spring at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' house and farm.

The year has opened with reflection and planning: many thanks to the board of directors of the Friends for a highly productive retreat. We will use much of the information and many of the insights obtained at the retreat in helping to develop the park's Unit Management Plan. Of course, we also look forward to programming sponsored by the Friends. Jim Stephens' *The Pound Party* will be reprised on Saturday, May 4, which day will also include the outdoor cooking demonstration that had to be postponed from an earlier date.

Spring is the occasion for the conference of our sister/parent organization, the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society. The conference was held in Tarpon Springs this year. In addition to an extremely interesting location, the conference was both educational and entertaining. I thought that I would share some thoughts about it in this column.

Even before that, perhaps it would be of interest to answer a question that has been posed to me several times: why are there two organizations supporting the legacy of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings? The simple answer is that the two organizations serve two different but related purposes. (When we return to our "Looking Forward, Looking Back" emphasis in coming newsletters, the evolution of both groups will be discussed in more detail.) The Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society concentrates on her literary legacy and that of other southern writers. The Friends is the support organization for the house and farm (the state park), concentrating on their preservation. The Society holds an annual conference; the Friends hold many events at the park and elsewhere concerning Marjorie's life, including her literary life, in Florida.

Of course, much that is presented at the conference is extremely helpful in understanding Marjorie and her life and work at Cross Creek. For example, Leslie Poole and Heather McPherson gave a presentation on "Charles Rawlings, Sponge Divers, and the Origins of Greek Salad," which was appropriate to the location of the conference, but also assisted in understanding the relationship of Marjorie and her husband at Cross Creek. And we learned about Greek salads.

Ann McCutchen gave a presentation on "Researching Rawlings: A Surprise, A Conundrum, and a Mystery Solved." Among other insights, McCutchen discussed how the discovery of a manuscript has presumably made it impossible to posit that Marjorie's writing style changed at the Creek. We also were treated to excerpts of Marjorie's letters to Hemingway in 1936 in which she invited him to Cross Creek to hunt. Kevin McCarthy, Margaret Harris and Candace Boothe presented entertaining reminiscences about Dessie Smith Prescott, a great friend of Marjorie ("Hyacinth Drift") and an important figure in her own right.

(Continued on page 3)

Saturday, May 4th, 2019
Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park

12:00p Outdoor Cooking Demonstration

2:00p *The Pound Party*

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1968 Photo of Past President Elaine Carson Spencer with her Dad, Dr. Robert E. Carson, at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings home. (See additional photo and info on page 4.)



A recent visitor to the farm

Park Manager Message

by Scott Spaulding



Greetings,

Spring is in the Air! I hope that everyone had a great winter season and are ready for the warmer days ahead.

We have been busy as usual this season with over 1300 visitors in February and even more in March. Despite the business, we were still able to make some needed repairs. Thanks to resident volunteers Andy and Terri Brightman for providing the expertise and labor, we were able to replace the rotted siding on the north side of the barn. Oleno State Park provided the lumber that was cut on the mill purchased by The Friends of Dudley Farm. We owe them all a debt of Gratitude!

We were also able to make some improvements to the tenant house. As you may know, the tenant house on the property today is not the original tenant house, although it is an authentic tenant house, moved from across the road. It is presumed to have been built in the early 1900's. It was donated to the park by Cross Creek resident and former Alachua County Commissioner Kate Barnes, whose property was once owned by the Brice Family, of whom Marjorie writes in her book, *Cross Creek*. The Friends of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc. then led by Michaelyn Luttge, was responsible for raising the funds through a matching grant to have the tenant house moved and restored to its current condition. It was dedicated in May of 2003. Recently, Tour Guide Sheila Holloway organized efforts to "spruce" it up a bit, adding furnishings to the both rooms and curtains over the windows. We are still looking for a few items for the tenant house, such as another small wood stove, period chairs, an end table and a dresser. So, if you have any of those items you would like to donate, please let us know. The tenant house is open for visitation on the inside Thursday through Sunday, so be sure to come out and look at all the improvements.



Tenant House renovations



We recently reached out to Jim Boyer, University of Florida (UF) Director of Research Administration at the Plant Science Research and Education Unit, and he came over to look over our citrus trees, which have not been producing as much lately. Mr. Boyer has recommended a fertilizer plan to help re-nourish our trees, and thanks to the UF Citrus Club, we have applied the first of six monthly fertilizer applications. The work we did scuffle hoeing and fertilizing last year seems to be paying off since the new growth is looking very green and lush. The trees blossomed a little early this year, and now tiny green oranges are beginning to grow.

(Continued on page 3)

Presidents Message (Continued from page 1)

There were many other worthwhile presentations - including an excellent one by our own board member Flo Turcotte on *The Secret River* and Christopher Still's presentation on his paintings of Florida. But I would be remiss if we did not return to, and end with, Marjorie herself and some of her thoughts about spring:

It is generally believed that the northern spring is more portentous than the tropical or sub-tropical spring, because the contrast between cold and warmth, between frozen sterility and hot fertility is more apparent. This is not true when, as in the sub-tropics at Cross Creek, spring is so well known that its coming is as important as a smile across a beloved face. A very clever poet, Wallace Stevens, ended a poem with saying, "But there is no spring in Florida." He did not know Florida. He came as a stranger, a traveler, to Florida, and the lushness of spring was to him was only lushness. He could not differentiate among the shades of green, which at Cross Creek tell us when to plant and when to fertilize and when to cultivate. He did not know when the red-bird begins to sing again, and when the cypress bursts from gray bareness into a dress of soft needles and the swamp maple puts out young passionate red leaves. At the Creek, spring is as definite and exciting as in Greenland.

This spring please come visit Marjorie's farm at Cross Creek.

Park Manager Message (Continued from page 2)

Speaking of growing, with the help from staff and resident volunteers Tom and Mary Ann Corcoran, we recently removed the winter garden, and prepared the ground for planting the summer garden. To assist with our efforts, students from UF, who are members of the ethnobotany society, have been coming out and helping prepare the garden as well. In fact, they just came out and planted the summer garden for us. They are involved in a North Florida Heritage Garden Project this year and are planting a garden like ours on campus. With the recent rain, we are already beginning to see plants sprout up.

Dr. Steve Noll, who teaches history at UF, brought out his class as he does every year for a tour of the farmhouse and a lecture on Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Rick Mulligan was the Tour Guide on duty that day, and he was happily surprised that UF President, Dr. W. Kent Fuchs decided to join Dr. Noll for the afternoon. Along with Dr. Noll and Dr.



Mary Ann and Tom Corcoran

Fuchs, we had the pleasure of a reading from Cross Creek by none other than Flo Turcotte, Literary Manuscripts Archivist at the UF George A. Smathers Libraries, and long-time board member of the Friends of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc. What a surprise!

Be sure to join us on May 4th at 2pm for a reprise of the *Pound Party* play, written by local resident, Jim Stephens and *Cross Creek* expert to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the book Cross Creek in 2017. We will be cooking outside that day so come around noon and enjoy some food.

Until next time, we wish you well, and hope to see you out at the park real soon!



The Yearling Book

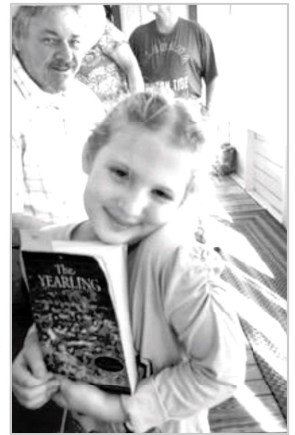
by Rick Mulligan

Pictured is young Izzabella hugging her complimentary copy of *The Yearling* presented to her at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park.

The Yearling books are provided to the park by the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society. The purpose is to present them to young readers who have come through the house and have shown an interest and are eager to learn more.

It is especially enjoyable when there is a family at the park with several children who are of the age or near the age to understand *The Yearling* but don't have a copy of the book at home. A book is presented to the eldest sibling with the understanding that when they finish reading it they will then give it to the next eldest sibling to read. We are able to provide a "Marjorie experience" that the family can enjoy for years, and at the same time help establish a new generation who have an interest and appreciation for Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings.

We greatly appreciate the support that both the Friends of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc. and the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society provide to the park.



March 2, 2019, Scrub Trip

by Anne Pierce

Unfortunately, again this year, we are not able to go on the Yearling Trail for our Scrub Walk. The trail is in the Juniper Prairie Wilderness area referenced below in the Forest Service Advisory:

"Date(s): Feb 13, 2019 - Mar 13, 2019

Juniper Prairie Wilderness is temporarily closed to protect public health and safety due to increased bear activity. It will reopen on March 13, 2019."

Twenty of us went on an alternative scrub adventure. The sites that we visited are all a part of *The Yearling* story. We walked the two-mile Salt Springs Run Observation Trail just south of the town of Salt Springs on Highway 19. This was where Penny and Jody crossed the run in pursuit of Old Slewfoot. The other sites visited included Hopkins Prairie and the spring boils at Silver Glen Springs Recreation Area. After lunch, which included Marjorie's gingerbread, some participants took a (cool) dip in Silver Glen Springs, and others walked the Lake George Trail (2 miles). (Photos of the trip are on the back page.)



We had a grand day!



To the left is a 1968 photograph of Dr. Robert E. Carson showing his sketches of Marjorie's home and of the bridge in Cross Creek. Pen and ink sketches of Marjorie's home and of the bridge in Cross Creek were done while the Carsons were at Marjorie's home. Dr. Robert E. Carson and his wife Estelle were the first hosts at Marjorie's home from 1968-1970. Carson was a humanities professor at the University of Florida (1946-1971).

Dr. Carson's daughter and Friends board member Elaine Carson Spencer recently completed a video documentary on her father, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Cross Creek. It is entitled "Artistic Ties Between Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Robert E. Carson." The videographer was board member Donna Green Townsend. The documentary may be found on YouTube. (Search for "Elaine Carson Spencer.") It has been 50 years since the Carsons were at Marjorie's home giving tours so it is a fitting time for this project to have been completed. For more information, please contact Elaine by email: elainecspencer@gmail.com.

Here is Home:
Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Cross Creek Video Project
 by Anne Pierce

Sonya Doctorian created a 40-minute documentary, *Here is Home: Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Cross Creek*, about Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' life and work using five oral history interviews, interviews of researchers and scholars, numerous site visits and library research. This film previewed at an event on October 12, 2018, at the Matheson History Museum to a standing room only audience of 125 people. The program included a discussion by Sonya Doctorian, author of the piece, and a brief talk by Ann McCutchan, narrator of part of the video and Rawlings biographer. There was enthusiastic praise of the production by all who viewed it. After the event the creator made some changes and collected and added some video to create the final product.

The cost of the production was covered by multiple sources. Funds were provided for travel, production costs, and the preview event by a \$5,000 grant from the Florida Humanities Council and a \$1,500 travel grant from the Smathers Special Collection at the University of Florida. The Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm provided support or general expenses for catering the preview event reception. Other support sources included the following:

- Matheson History Museum: venue for the preview event, publicity, and event programs.
- Smathers Library Special Collection, University of Florida: access to Rawlings materials, interview with Florence Turcotte, curator of the Rawlings collection
- Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park: cooperation by staff in the filming of scenes at the Farm and interviews with staff
- Home hospitality: Michaelyn Luttge and Steve and Anne-Marie Orlando.
- Sonya Doctorian, video producer 321 hours of professional services.
- Ann McCutchan, Rawlings biographer, spent many hours being interviewed, discussing the format of the film with Doctorian, and narrating parts of the film.
- Hours of oral histories were gathered from the following: J. T. Glisson, Carol Fiddia Laxton, Hettie Ross, Mrs. Dorsey Townsend, Bobby Townsend, and Roy Bass.
- Four members of the Friends of the MKR Farm Board of Directors contributed expertise and time to the completion of the project. They were James Stephens (author, former Friends board member), Donna Green-Townsend (Friends board, Cross Creek resident and professional film maker), Barbara Wingo (President) and I (Treasurer, Project Director).

The produced video will be placed on the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm web site and a shorter version will be on the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park site. In addition, we hope that it will be aired on public television and other educational venues.

A DVD version of *Here is Home: MKR and Cross Creek* will be available at Friends events, including our May 4th *Pound Party* and outdoor cooking event, for \$20. It is also available by mail. Send a check to Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm for \$22. (mail to P.O. Box 337, Micanopy, FL 32667) for a mailed copy.

The Friends and all those who admire Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings wish to express heart-felt thanks to everyone who participated in this project.

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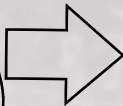
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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?
Please check your address label. The date that you see on the label is the date your dues are due. If your membership is current, we thank you!




Like us on Facebook at The Friends of the Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Farm. Our Facebook page shares photos, videos and events related to the Friends of the Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Farm.

.....Photos from 2019 Scrub Trip.....

Be sure to visit us at www.floridastateparks.org/marjoriekinnanrawlings

<i>Membership Information</i>					
Effective July 1, 2014 new membership dues are as follows					
Type	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr	Lifetime
Individual	\$25	\$70	\$105	\$200	\$ 450
Family	\$30	\$85	\$130	\$250	\$ 550
Educational	\$30	\$85	\$130	\$250	\$ 550
Corporate	\$55	\$155	\$255	\$500	\$1,000

Please circle type of membership and send with your check to:
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P.O. Box 337
Micanopy, FL 32667-0337

Membership in the Friends of Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Farm, Inc.

We invite you to join or renew your membership in the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) for the MKR Historic State Park. Friends of the Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Farm, Inc., is a 501©(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling 1-800-435-7352 (toll-free within Florida). Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.

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