

News from the Creek

Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.

Volume 25 Number 4

Visit our website at: www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

Fall Quarterly 2022

President's Message by Barbara Wingo

Looking Forward Looking Back

It is fall at the Creek. Rawlings described that season as beginning with the ominous threat of hurricanes and ending with stunning weather. Certainly, many are taking advantage of the weather to visit the park.



Fall is also a time when regular events take place at the park: specifically, the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., and the annual holiday party. Both of these are scheduled to be in person at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park this year. The Annual Meeting will feature a brief business meeting, the introduction of new Friends' officers, and a talk by architect Ron Haase on "The Inspiration and Influence of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings on My Architecture." Many of you will remember Ron's talk for our virtual annual meeting in 2020. This talk will be live and should be just as engaging and excellent as his previous outing. Ron is the author of *Classic Cracker* and *The Last House.* The meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m., on Saturday, December 3.

The annual holiday party, which was not held last year, is back! It will take place from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the park on Saturday, December 10. The party will feature music, food, holiday decorations, and lighting evoking the firing of an orange grove during a freeze.

And before these two events, there will be another Writer's Talk. It will be held Saturday, November 12 at 1:30 p.m., at the park. The featured author is Cynthia Barnett. Please see the article on page 2.

And speaking of the holidays: please consider giving a gift membership to the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., or a donation to the Friends to help us support the park: from repairs to furnishings and animals to citrus replenishing.

Again, many thanks to Sally Baskin Hooker for sitting down with us for an oral history earlier this year. More excerpts from that session are published starting on page 3 of this newsletter. Also, many thanks to all who attended Marjorie's 126th Birthday Party: another successful birthday bash. Finally, many of you attended the Gainesville Orchestra's performance of the suite from the motion picture *Cross Creek* on October 21. What an outstanding performance!

I hope that everyone is doing well. I think especially of those that were affected by Hurricane Ian. Please stay safe and stay well and see you at the farm.

Mark Your Calendar!



Saturday, November 12th

Writer's Talk at the Park
Author: Cynthia Barnett

Saturday, December 3rd
Friends' Annual Meeting
Guest Speaker: Ron Haase

Saturday, December 10th
Holiday Party at the Park
6-8pm
MKRHSP

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Re-roofing in progress

Manager's Message

by Ginger Nichols

Clear blue skies and cool mornings have finally arrived at the Creek. We welcome autumn and our visitors with open arms and smiles on our faces.

Farmhouse tours started on schedule October 1st even though we were not quite as prepared as we would have liked due to the new roof being installed and the storm leaving the farmyard littered with palmetto and palm fronds. The staff and volunteers were able to accommodate our visitors, and everyone is understanding of the current situation. Progress is sometimes painful, but we hope to restore order along with peace and quiet to the farm very soon!

Thank you to all our volunteers and staff for another successful birthday party event in August. A good time was had by all!

The new kiosk panels have been installed recently at the park entrance thanks to volunteers Steven Cotton and Scott Spaulding and the entire project will be completed soon. Thanks ya'll!

Thank you to all for your support of the park! We appreciate our "Friends"! Recent assistance has included two of Marjorie's chairs being re-caned in the living room, new braided rugs, door mats, boot scrapers, plants for containers and the historic garden, and period dresses and aprons for the tour guides. We cannot say "Thank you" loud enough!

Perhaps you would like to get more involved with the park. We would welcome you as a volunteer on any day for a minimum of 4 hours. Volunteers are needed to assist with tours, book sales, gardening, trail maintenance, grounds care including maintenance of the citrus trees, and events to name some of the opportunities available. Call 352-466-9273 for more information.

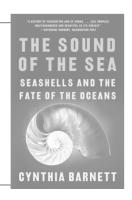
A reminder that the park is always open 9-5 each day. Tours of the farmhouse are offered on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday only at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1,2 and 3 p.m.

As we head into this new season we look forward to upcoming Writer's Talks, the Annual Friends Meeting, and the Holiday Open House on December 10th at the farm. We will look forward to seeing you then!



Writer's Talk: Saturday, November 12

Cynthia Barnett brings her new book *The Sound of the Sea: Seashells and the Fate of Oceans* to the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park on Saturday, November 12, at 1:30 p.m. It is a book that Lauren Groff calls "as exquisite, many chambered and luminous as the shells Cynthia Barnett describes." The event will include light refreshments and music followed by discussion by the author.



Sally Baskin Hooker: Reminiscences, Part 2

On April 6, 2022, Sally Baskin Hooker, a niece of Norton Baskin (Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' second husband) was interviewed at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park. The interviewer was Barbara Wingo, Ph.D., J.D., Courtesy Professor of History at the University of Florida, and the videographer was Donna Green-Townsend, DGT Multimedia Productions. This is the second of two articles containing excerpts from that interview.

Aunt Marjorie and Uncle Norton

Sally: . . . At Marineland as I said before she would entertain at the restaurant the different celebrities, writers, friends. Uncle Norton would always arrange for them to be a guest dolphin feeder, feed the dolphins, up at Marineland. And it was – and Marineland was the place to stop for lunch because Uncle Norton put on a smorgasbord buffet that was incredible. The silver serving dishes, food you cannot imagine, and it was the place to make sure you were there at lunch time smorgasbord – because it was white tablecloth, napkins, you



Sally wearing hat belonging to Dessie Smith Prescott, a friend of Marjorie

know, really fixed up nice. . . . It was a place for people to go. The cocktail lounge was set up in a pod setting where there would be a table and chairs all around to where you could have groups of people sitting, talking, and that's where Uncle Norton and Aunt Marjorie would entertain there, in one of the pods, the different people.

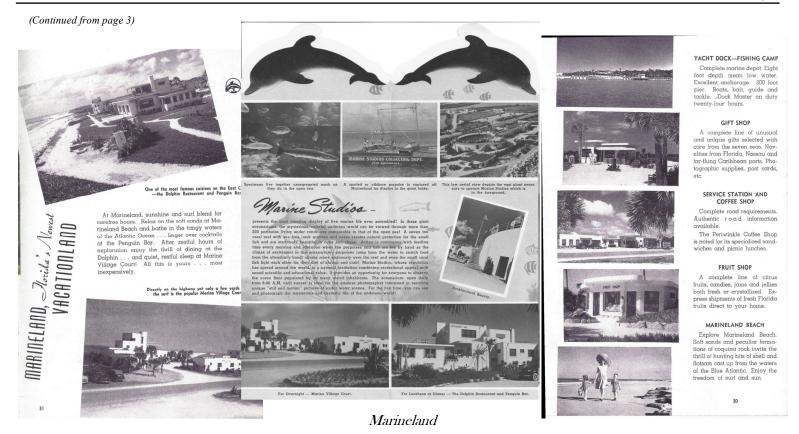
They had a wonderful bartender, Billy Nettles, that could make any drink that you could imagine. He had a way of – if someone got into their cups a little bit too much, he would fix them a special cocktail called a Donax cocktail – and what it is is a little shellfish that you boil up and make a broth. And he would get them sobered up before they had to go home, along with coffee. He was a special bartender. He was a people person, and everyone loved him, especially me, because he would tuck me over in the corner of the bar and make me Shirley Temple's and cherry drinks. And nobody could see me. But Uncle Norton would make sure I was sitting in the dark so he didn't get into trouble with having a minor – and once again he would start baiting me with stories himself, and I would tell him these wild tales.

Interviewer: So, tell me what your Uncle Norton said about Marjorie and [their] relationship.

Sally: Honestly, I thought their marriage was wonderful. I did not realize that it was [an] unusual situation where she had to be at Cross Creek to write. Of course, he was having the restaurant. It was very difficult for him to leave to come over to Cross Creek. Their relationship: I think they adored each other. He knew how to handle her, her temperament, her mood swings.

I think the time that he was in as he called it "Indja" was a very stressful time for her because there were many times that she did not know where he was or who he, or what he was doing, and in reading and the stories that I have been told - he was in a very dangerous situation. He worked for the American Field Service driving an ambulance. He was behind the lines. They were surrounded by the Japanese. She would get reports - she had some very good spies - and she would get reports about where his group was. And she realized how much danger he was in. There was one particular time that they were talking about this great battle and how they were surrounded - and she thought, well, he's dead, I know he is. And she finally was able to correspond with him, and she said where the blank are you. He said, well, I'm fine. I've been off in this little town on a R&R with my friends. We've been drinking and eating and having a good time. And she said, well, thank goodness you're safe. So, it was a very stressful time for her. And then he developed an infection, and they said that he needed to be transported back to the States. Well, they were not transporting anyone that was not seriously injured. But she had friends, and she made arrangements for them to put him on a flight. Somewhere over the Atlantic he had an abscess on the liver that burst so that by the time he landed in the States he was quite ill. She rushed to his - she thought he was going to be in one place but ended up [in] a different hospital - and she rushed to his side to make sure that he had the absolute best care. And it took a long recovery for him.

. . .



Sally: The first picture is the Dolphin Restaurant as I remember it. The bottom picture is my castle, my palace, my motel. This was our office, our bedroom, living room. When Marineland had to close down during World War II it was turned over to the Coast Guard for beach walking, beach observing. The Coast Guard soldiers stayed at the motel. When we moved in, the first sight I had in the bedroom I was supposed to have was a clothesline with khaki underwear and socks hanging up. For a year I slept on the floor because they hadn't gotten furniture for us because everything had been destroyed by the different soldiers and troops. It took them probably about a year to get the motel back to where they would be able to rent the rooms. I loved the tower room – that was the honeymoon suite – as I said there was balconies, I could go out and whirl all kinds of stories in my head – the beaches for years still had the tar and oil from, that was coming from, the sunken ships there so I became very familiar with how to get it off my feet because I was on the beach most of the time.

The top picture is the yacht dock. Many famous boats, yachts came in there to dock. The gift shop was a little tiny place that – to this day when I walk into a store, I put my hands behind my back because I got my hands slapped enough by the owner, Mrs. Wiles, for touching things. The service station and the little café coffee shop – they called it the Periwinkle [also run by Norton Baskin], but most people called it the "Pennywinkle" –and there was a gas station there where you could get gas and just minor repairs. The fruit shop was run by a Mr. and Mrs. Schultz – fresh hand squeezed orange juice all the time, marmalades, jellies, ice cream. As a child when the different documentaries or film people were filming, they would need a child model background, and I could be bribed with an ice cream – so I was a frequent visitor there. As I said, I was always in the background in pictures. The bottom picture shows me, a model and Mike Rolleston, whose father was the manager of Marine Studios at the time, and this appeared in the *Life* magazine, the Kodak ad. As I said, cheap model, bribe was an ice cream.

Interviewer: Tell us a little more about some of the models, other people that came to Marineland.

Sally: They would come to do pictures for advertisements for magazines or personal portfolios. When I was 16 years old, they had Miss Florida and Miss Orange Citrus Squeeze or something coming. And they had all of these props. They had some pontoon skies that a dolphin would pull; they had a chair that was floating on some rubber tubing. And then they would have – the picture was supposed to be dolphin jumping over the top, but the last one was a platform that was submerged under water, and the model was to hold a ring and the dolphin was to jump through. Well, they needed someone to try out the equipment before they put the models on there, so I got a new bathing suit out of there – an Esther Williams bathing suit. I went up and the first thing with pontoon skies – were not secure because I was doing splits and falling between them. They decided that they had to put a brace in the middle of it. The chair, when the dolphin would jump up there was so much displaced water until it sunk the

Volume 25 Number 4 NEWS FROM THE CREEK Page 5

(Continued from page 4)

chair, so they had to redo that. But the final thing with the platform under water with the hoop -- Now that particular day I had a hot date. I had done my hair. So, they put me in a little dinghy and rode me out to the platform, stood me up. I held the ring, and the dolphin came through, and they said, oh, we really need you to move a little bit to the right. Well, when I did, they failed to tell the dolphin, and it hit me right in the chest, knocked me off the platform. My beautiful hairdo was ruined. I swam disgusted, climbing out of the stadium tank just like - I'm ruined I've got a date tonight. But through that they had to redo all of the props and get them properly to where their models would not drown.

When they made the *Revenge of the Creature* there at Marineland, that was the first time that I got paid as an extra. I got ten dollars to be an extra. I was in the crowd scene. If you ever see the video, I'm the one just before the little girl trips over the rope in the video, CD, or movie. So that was my claim to fame. I was also in the crowd thing.

When Buster Crabbe, Rosemary Clooney and there was one other person, oh, Lloyd Bridges, came, they stayed there at the motel. I was in the background, of course, somewhere. Rosemary Clooney, each day she had [a] silk practice outfit that was pants and very loose shirt, and she would go through three or four, you know, because it was so hot. And so, her assistant got with my mother and said, well, we're going to have to send these out each day to be dry cleaned. Well, the dry cleaners would only come twice a week from St. Augustine. So, my mother would hand wash Rosemary Clooney's practice outfits and stand up there and patiently iron them, get them ready. She would have them ready for her the next day. And when Rosemary Clooney was going to leave, she came in and thanked my mother. She said, oh, I want to find out who the laundress is; I want to hire her because the pleats were perfect, everything was. And my mother says, well, I don't think she's for hire.

Lloyd Bridges is the one who taught me to scuba dive. He put me down in the rectangular tank with the sharks and, as I said and was telling my husband, things that I did down there, no one could get away with now. But he took me and once he established that I knew what I was doing, he let me go down into the rectangular tank with all of the reef fish and the sharks and the eels. And that was quite an experience. Buster Crabbe – of course, he was Tarzan, and I loved Tarzan – so I was very impressed by him.

I was trying to think of - there were many celebrities. I don't know if anybody remembers *Sky King*. It was a TV series. Well, he walked in and I just - my eyes got so big. And he sent me a decoder bracelet and a membership to the Sky King club. Marlin Perkins stayed, and I was very impressed with him because he knew all about animals. And there were many ones there at the motel.

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Interviewer: Let me show you this picture.

Sally: OK, there's Miss Sally at the Moby Dick.... This is the Moby Dick lounge. This is when they reinvented the bar, and someone came up with the idea of having a rocking bar. It could be – they could start it up, and it would start rocking, and a lot of people: oh my, I think I'd better have the cut-off time. But that was one of their famous things. This was a postcard, and that is me right there. As I said, model., background.



Crescent Beach House

Sally: Well, of course, my Uncle Norton was very special to me. He was . . . very generous with his nieces and nephews. I have no idea how many college educations he paid for and I'm not talking just four-year, I'm talking about lawyers and everything, but he contributed to their benefit. I think in the delivery room my mother said to me: you will not ask your uncle for a penny. We will take care of you, and this was the knowledge that I had. And so, I think he was very kind to me. We loved being together; we loved doing things together. I guess being an only child, I was the one – if he needed to drive to Jackson-ville – he'd call down and say would you like, can Sally ride to Jacksonville with me. Uncle Norton loved old dead trees. He liked to see the shapes. And on the way up to Jacksonville, near Bayard, which was just a little space, we would turn down this road because there was a magnificent old tree that he wanted to go visit. In later years someone painted that tree for him. Now what happened to that picture I have no idea, but it hung proudly in his home at Dolphin Drive.

Volume 25 Number 4 Page 6

(Continued from page 5)

The Crescent Beach house was a wonderful beach house. The living room was a dark wood, if I remember it was a kind of a gray-green wood. Going down the hall there was a little bathroom, and on the wall were some naughty pictures . . . I loved to use that bathroom – and they would encourage me to use a different bathroom. But loved to go in there because there were some naughty pictures, drawings, that had been done in France. On the other side was a bedroom, a small bedroom, and then Aunt Marjorie's room was very large to accommodate the king-sized bed. She had windows looking out onto the ocean, a door going out to a little concrete sidewalk. There was a dressing room, a very elegant bathroom for her in the very end. The living room was set up with a – I believe the couch was probably eight feet long. Uncle Norton had his chairs. There was a bookshelf of different books, first editions. Behind the door leading to the hall was a picture which is here at Cross Creek. It's of [a] twine wreath. But it hung behind the door. And Uncle Norton always told the children that there was a snake there, and I guess it was to keep us from touching it because it was a beautiful picture. The kitchen at Crescent Beach was very small, but he turned out some fantastic meals from there. He had a friend Owen D. Young who would loan him his manservant to come up and do special dinners there at Crescent Beach. There was a pantry just full of wonderful dishes and glasses, and a lot of that is here at Cross Creek now. The patio – well, I must say, in the living room the windows were up high.

And back several years ago we went to a book signing, and this person was going around and saying: oh, look at this painting over the fireplace, that was one of Marjorie's favorites – well, that was one of Marjorie's favorites over the fireplace here at Cross Creek. I tried my best to keep my mouth shut. And she said, oh, look at these windows, she loved these long windows. No, the windows were up high; they had gone in, renovated the house and put windows in. They had cut doors on each end of the fireplace to go out onto the porch – which were not there. Went out onto now the porch, which was always terrazzo tile, and it is a kitchen. I never believed a kitchen could be put out there, but that was the gathering place for everyone. There was: wrought iron chairs, cushy cushions, tables – it was an entertainment area. Uncle Norton after a time built the studio on for Aunt Marjorie so that she would be able to write there at Crescent Beach, but she never was able to go use it for writing.

For the book signing, this person was going around and identifying things as being Marjorie's favorites, Norton's favorites, and trying my very best to keep my mouth closed. And finally, someone came to me and said what is there here at the house that's original. I said there is one wrought iron table with a glass top out on the porch; that is the only thing I have found that is original to the house. And as I've said they've renovated -- it's a beautiful home, beautiful home, but there were just some things that were not quite right. . . . I'm very happy for the people who have gone in there and been able to do that.

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Mothers, Aunt Marjorie's Passing

Sally: When Aunt Marjorie would have a speaking date, now this is probably three occasions that I can remember. She had a fur stole that Uncle Norton bought for her when they went over to Europe.... But what I really remember was Owen D. Young, her friend, grew orchids, and he always made sure that she had a large orchid or a spray of orchids to pin on the fur jacket. She would come by Marineland or by the motel and show me her orchids because I loved flowers too. And I thought elegant, again.

The last time I saw Aunt Margie she was going down to the Youngs, the Owen D. Young's house, to play cards. My mother had surgery, so she stopped by the motel, and she brought her a beautiful silk gown and went back and talked to her for probably about an hour. The car that Mr. Young had sent was sitting out there, and she walked out, and she ushered me into the back of the car. And she, I think she put her arm around me, and she said, "Sally, always remember mothers are very special people. Please take care of yours." And I, of course, "Yes, Ma'am, I will." And I didn't realize for years and years until I read *Blood of My Blood* just what she and her mother had gone through and how I truly think she loved her mother, but wanted to be her own person, not what her mother wanted her to be. And that's my opinion. And it explained a lot. And that was the last time that I saw her.

And she developed the very bad headaches and went to the hospital. Uncle Norton had gone up to visit her, and he had left the hospital there in St. Augustine, and they figure he was probably on top of the Bridge of Lions when she had the cerebral hemorrhage so when he got to Marineland he had a phone call, and he immediately came back in. But that was last time I saw Aunt Margie, was in the back of that car, telling me, take care of your mother, they're very precious people.

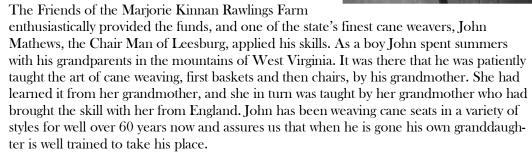
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Marjorie's Eastlake Chair Restored By Geoff Gates, Park Ranger

No matter how many times you have gone through Marjorie Rawlings' living room you probably haven't noticed it: a straight back wooden chair sitting at the game table, until very recently a sweatshirt laying over its cane seat to cover the gaping hole. The chair is in the so-called Eastlake style, the predominant style of American factory-made furniture of the late 19th Century. Was this Marjorie Rawlings' chair? Almost certainly. The original 1954 inventory of the farmhouse contents following the author's death mentions several wooden chairs. Since no detailed descriptions are provided, we can't be absolutely sure the Eastlake is one of them. It makes its first appearance in a striking photograph of the living room taken at the time Robert Carson was the house's caretaker (1968-71): there it

is, in pristine condition, among iconic pieces such as the library table, the couch and Robert Camp's magnolia portrait, prominently placed on the right side of the hearth. A 1988 inventory tells us it belonged to Rawlings and locates it in the display room. Ten years later another inventory tells us alarmingly that the Eastlake chair is missing.

And so it was until 2020 when Trey Asner, a young man who knows an astonishing amount about antiques, spotted it sitting at the game table, a couple of dozen feet from its last recorded position – with its seat smashed out. A story comes down to us of a staff member standing on it to replace one of those famous light bulbs dangling from the ceiling. Be that as it may, the Eastlake chair was in desperate need of re-caning.



For the Rawlings Eastlake chair John used a traditional variety of rattan bamboo which grows as a vine in the rainforests of Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. He applied lemon oil to both cane weave and wood to moisturize. Nothing else. "You leave them alone as much as you can," he says. "I don't think of it as original patina that I'm preserving. I think of it as the fingerprints, all the people that have touched it over all those years, a part of them left behind. Sometimes I feel so honored to work with these pieces. Oh yes, if only they could talk! The stories they could tell."

(Continued from page 6)

As I've said, in the years after Aunt Marjorie passed, Uncle Norton felt that it was his duty to continue her legacy, continue her name. He hated public speaking but would speak. He loved to talk, and he would talk as much as you would like. But he did not like big crowd talking. He, I think, to his last days that was his thought: was keep the legacy of Marjorie going.



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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. Visit www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org to join or renew or you may fill out and send a check with the form below.

If your membership is current, we thank you!

Marjorie's Donax Broth

With the mention of Donax broth and the Periwinkle Café, it seems only appropriate that we look at Marjorie's recipe for Donax Broth in *Cross Creek Cookery*. Here it is:

Midway between high and low tide along the Florida coasts – and perhaps along other coasts, too – there bubble up from the sand the diminutive clam-like molluses called Donax. We also call them periwinkles, inaccurately, of course, and the multicolored pastel shells are the substance of our coquina rock, used by the Spaniards in much of the old St Augustine construction. Gathering the Donax is a race against time and tide, for they appear only briefly. We scoop them into sieves or colanders, washing out the sand in the surf as we go. It takes about six quarts of Donax to make a quart of broth. After washing well, do not quite cover with cold water. Cover the kettle and bring slowly to a simmer, stirring every now and then. The tiny molluses pop open, and the sweet clam like juice adds itself to the water to make a delicate and delicious broth. When the kettle reaches the boiling point, let simmer several minutes, stirring twice. Drain immediately. The broth needs no salt. It may be chilled in the ice-box and served clear as a cold and refreshing consommé. I like it best with two tablespoons thin cream and a small lump of butter added to each serving, and served piping hot.

Effective September 1, 2021 new membership dues are as follows							
Туре	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr	Lifetime		
Individual	\$30	\$85	\$140	\$270	\$ 500		
Family	\$35	\$100	\$165	\$320	\$ 600		
Educational	\$35	\$100	\$165	\$320	\$ 600		
Corporate	\$60	\$175	\$290	\$570	\$1,000		
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Membership Information

Effective 9/1/2021

Name_

Comments:

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

or visit our website at marjoriekinnanrawlings.org to join or renew your membership online

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

We invite you to join or renew your membership in the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) for the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park. Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., is a 501(c)(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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**Please Note: Our dues structure was updated September 2021 **