

News from the Creek

Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.

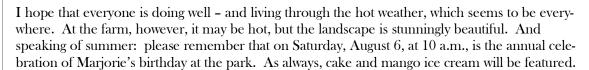
Volume 25 Number 3

Visit our website at: www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

Summer Quarterly 2022

President's Message by Barbara Wingo

Looking Forward Looking Back





In our last newsletter I mentioned our oral history/interviews project and that Sally Baskin Hooker had been interviewed at the park. Sally is a niece of Norton Baskin, Marjorie's second husband. I also promised that excerpts from the interview would be in this issue of the newsletter. They are on pages 3-5.

We have also interviewed Roy Hunt, a member of our Resource Advisory Board and one of the founders of our organization as well as being instrumental in the founding and history of the park. Many topics were covered, such as, the transfer of the park from the University of Florida Foundation to the State of Florida, the State's purchase of land for a visitor's center at the park, the writing of the Citizen Support Organization statute, the founding of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society and the Friends, and much more. One question we asked him concerned the current importance of the park. He noted that it sets the context for Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' writings, and it is important for its Cracker architecture. Moreover, it is an exemplary resource for children and adults in this country and from around the world for learning about life on a Florida citrus farm in the 1930s and 1940s.

The provision of funds and other assistance by the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., is critical to maintaining this experience. Over the last few years we have provided funds for many park projects - from ducks to a utility cart, from period dresses to an updated kiosk, and from equipment repair to citrus plantings. Please consider volunteering for the Friends or giving a gift membership to the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc. Volunteer opportunities for members of the Friends include service at special events (such as *The Yearling* events last December), selling books at the farm and at events, serving on the board of directors, and helping with publicity and social media. If you are interested in exploring these possibilities, please contact us at MKRawlingsFarm@gmail.com.

Please stay safe and stay well and see you at the farm.



Marjorie's 126th Birthday Celebration Cake, Mango Ice Cream and Music

Saturday, August 6, at 10 a.m. Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers 2022

President: Barbara Wingo Vice President: Donna Green-Townsend Secretary: Kathleen Pagan Treasurer: Anne Pierce

CSO Board of Directors

Donna Green-Townsend
Harriett Meyer
Kathleen Pagan
Anne Pierce
Tom Price
Kathlyne Walkup Sheppard
Florence Turcotte
Barbara Wingo

Resource Advisory Members

Dan Cantliffe Roy Hunt Murray Laurie Michaelyn Luttge Elaine Carson Spencer Jim Stephens



Manager's Message

by Ginger Nichols

Summer is here, and we are all looking forward to fall at the Creek. I am hoping it arrives ahead of schedule this year!

All twelve chicks hatched in the spring are doing well and growing so fast we cannot believe it.



An awful lot of mowing, weeding, and watering is happening at the farm at the time of this writing. We cut flowers in the early morning to plop in a vase here and there as Marjorie would have done. Park staff are currently removing the spent garden plants. We are considering letting the garden area rest for a year. The staff will be doing research and decide what is best.

Tours have slowed to a crawl in the current heat and who can blame anyone for choosing air-conditioning over the stifling heat. However, we are often surprised by a group of brave visitors who can stand it for a bit and are still happy to have the experience. The staff and volunteers are always ready to greet them no matter the weather and offer a cool glass of water.

Ongoing training is extremely important, and several staff members have participated in collections management recently to ensure that we are caring for the historic farmhouse, furnishings, and collections to the best of our ability. Park Rangers Geoff Gates and Joy Cotton attended interpretive training at Ichetucknee State Park earlier this month, and the staff and volunteer tour guides continue to meet bimonthly to strengthen their interpretive skills here at the park. Park staff will be training with our District staff on exotic plant management soon. We are always learning to be the best stewards we can possibly be of this wonderful place!

The house will be closed for the months of August and September for the annual cleaning and will reopen on Saturday, October 1. The farmhouse shingle reroofing project should be starting very soon as well.

Thank you all so very much for your support of Marjorie's farm. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering at the farm. We would love to have you join us.

We will hope to see you at Marjorie's Birthday Party in August and the upcoming Writer's Talks once cooler weather returns to the Creek!

DVDs available:

Life and Times in Cross Creek: Memories and Reflections and Here is Home: Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Cross Creek

Life and Times in Cross Creek: Memories and Reflections produced by Donna Green-Townsend. This hour long presentation features unique historic video, audio and photos of friends and neighbors of Rawlings. The DVD is available to purchase by mail for \$19.00.

Here is Home: Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Cross Creek, a short documentary produced by Sonya Doctorian. This 40 minute presentation is a documentary of the life and legacy of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. This DVD is available to purchase by mail for \$24.00.

Please make your check payable to Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm and mail to P.O. Box 337, Micanopy, FL 32667-0337. Postage and handling are included in the price.

Sally Baskin Hooker: Reminiscences

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. Here are excerpts from that interview.

Interviewer: I just would like to start with a very general question: tell us a little bit about yourself. And then the follow-up question is: your own reminiscences about Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and your uncle. And then we'll go into more specific questions.

Sally: Well, my name is - my official name is - Sara Janise Baskin Hooker. When I was born, my dad called to Alabama to talk to the two aunts, his sisters who I was named after. And one of them said: "Poor Sally B." I did not hear "Sara Janise" unless it was in - I'd been bad or my mother was angry. I went through all of my school years "Sally B." When I was going to graduate, was standing on stage, and the superintendent called my name three times. Finally, in this loud booming voice he said: "Sally B. get over here and get your diploma." Well, total embarrassment. So that's where the name came from. I was born in Ocala in September of 1942. My parents were managing a motel/cottage there, McKay's Court, while the owner was in the Philippines in the Seabees. They realized that the tourists were not existent there in Silver Springs and Ocala so they turned the housing over to West Point cadets who were getting their pilot's license in Dunnellon. So my mother became a housemother for these West Point cadets, these future pilots. She would tell the story that when they would get their pilot's license, they would fly very low over the motel, much to the distress of their commanders, and tip their wings to let my mother know that they had gotten their wings.



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

How they got to Ocala was through my uncle Norton Baskin. He was managing the hotel there in Ocala. I grew up until I was three years old there at the motel, and then at that time Uncle Norton had moved to St. Augustine to the Castle Warden. And after the war he was approached by the men who started Marine Studios to come and operate the restaurant and the motel. Well, he went down to Marineland to check to see what he would be doing, and he realized that operating the two establishments would be a little bit too much – so he told them, "I have a brother over in Ocala who is trained in hotel management," and so my dad came over to interview. He said that I must warn you that I have a four-year-old daughter, and they said, "Oh, that's no problem." Well, little did they know – because I became the only child raised at Marineland from 1945 until 1960. I had free range of Marineland (with my mother's spies), and I swam with the dolphins; I collected fish for the tanks. I was into everything because if there was a movie or documentary being produced, I was always in the background. I've got pictures of me peaking over somebody's shoulder. The motel was the only motel between St. Augustine Beach and Flagler Beach of any size – so if there was a movie or documentary or famous people touring through, they stayed at the motel. To me, they were just people that came to my house.

Now my relationship with my Aunt Margie – and I do call her "Aunt Margie" – was one that she would come down to Marineland to the Dolphin Restaurant, and she felt that there were some people that I should meet. So she would call down to my mother, and she would say, "Can you clean Sally up?" – which meant get me out of a bathing suit or shorts and a t-shirt and put a little sundress on. And I had been groomed in Southern manners: Yes, ma'am – No, ma'am – Thank you, ma'am – Please – how to curtsy, how to shake hands. And I would walk into the restaurant, and Aunt Marjorie would take me back and introduce me to people. There was a man who had a very grizzly beard, and as it turned out it was Ernest Hemingway. There was a lady who had on a very funny felt hat, Eleanor Roosevelt. The names, of course, meant nothing to me. I would go in and shake hands or curtsy, and they would pat me on the head and say, "What a sweet little girl." And then I would be escorted back to the motel, and I would put back on my shorts and t-shirt. In my memory, one of the ones that really impressed me was this beautiful woman that had a fur stole on, diamonds on every finger – very high class. And I thought, "Oh, that's what I want to be." Well, it turned out to be Sally Rand, the stripper, but for some reason they felt that I should meet her, which I did.

Through the years we had a lot of famous people stay at the motel. Probably one of my notable ones that I got into an awful lot of trouble in school for expressing my feelings was Thornton Wilder. Thornton Wilder had come to St. Augustine, to the Ponce de Leon Hotel, to do some writing, local writing. Well, all the good ladies of the town were asking him to brunches and

Volume 25 Number 3 NEWS FROM THE CREEK Page 4

(Continued from page 3)

lunches and tea-time and all. And he went to the manager and said, "I'm afraid I'm going to have to leave because I can't get the time that I need for this writing." And he said, "Well, Mr. Wilder, what do you need?" He said, "I need somewhere quiet, but somewhere that I can get messages or I could have messages sent." Well, the manager knew my mother down at Marineland,

and he called her up, and said, "Mrs. Baskin, I have someone that I would like to send down there to the motel that—he needs privacy, but he needs an ability to receive messages and to send messages". She said, "That is not a problem. Please send him down." Well, he came down, and he stayed at the motel for approximately two weeks. In the afternoon I would get off the school bus; I would meet him; we'd go walk on the beach, a little fishing, collecting shells, did a lot of talking what we talked about I don't know - it was just walking down the beach. Well, about two weeks later in class the teacher said, "Oh, class, I must tell you this wonderful news. We've had a famous author here in St. Augustine - Thornton Wilder." Well, you know whose hand went up. And she says, "Yes, Sally." I said, "No, he's been at my house for the last two weeks." The note went home to the mother - my mother. She went in - and my mother was the type of person that you did not get in her face. She was a very kind, very gracious, but very positive person. And the teacher started into her about how I was a liar, that I was bragging that I knew Thornton Wilder, and just kept going. And my mother said, "And -" She said, "But she's telling this wild story that he was at her house." "Well, he has. He has been staying at the motel the last two weeks because he required privacy." "Oh." Needless to say, my continued school year was not the most pleasant time that I spent because I got labeled a brag-a-lot.



Thornton Wilder

. . . .

I grew up knowing Aunt Marjorie, but I didn't have any idea that she was an author or famous – any of her things. She was just my Aunt Margie. When she was at Crescent Beach, I would go up on Sundays to visit, and after church we would go by a little newspaper store and bring her a *New York Times*. And he always had some fresh snapdragons and some petunias so my daddy would let me get a bouquet and take to Aunt Margie. Through my childhood I would go to visit her. It was always very elegant because she would be laying back on her bed with a breakfast tray, which I thought was really special. And she would say, "Look in the closet and get a bed jacket." And so she had some beautiful silk night bed jackets and gowns. And I would put on a bed jacket and some Malibu slippers and crawl up into the bed and proceed to swap lies and talk trash – telling wonderful stories to each other. Apparently I was – I had a big imagination, and she loved to bait me with stories because I would go on and on and on and then I would just get so tired I'd say, "And then the crab bit her toe." And she thought that was very funny.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of those stories?

Sally: Oh, I would just -- princesses and castles and how I built, I lived on the beach on a castle - which truly I did because the motel looked like a castle. It was an old - when they built it, it had a tower and balconies and porches and all - so I felt like I always lived in a castle. But I remember that. She would tell me about Van Hornesville; she would tell me about Cross Creek, things that she had done, people that she had met. She talked a little bit about *The Yearling*. But I did not know; I said, oh, you wrote a book, oh, OK. As a child, I was not aware. Aunt Margie had a very good friend, Edith Pope, there in St. Augustine. And Edith had a daughter, Peggy. And in St. Augustine at that time there were mother-daughter luncheons, there were events, and Edith would call up Aunt Marjorie, and she'd say, "Marjorie, you want to come, go with us?" "Well, let me see what I can do." Once again she would call down to my mother and say, "There's a mother-daughter luncheon coming up, can Sally go with me?" Or she took me to my first circus, Barnum and Bailey. At the circus - whenever she would come down, she would always bring me an outfit. There would be the dress, the shoes, the socks, the purse, sometimes gloves, hair ribbons for my hair. But the one particular time that we were going to a mother-daughter luncheon she had ordered a green velvet dress with Irish lace. When she came down with this big box, it was wrapped up with a pink bow, and I thought, "Oh, I'm getting my fur coat now." Too many movies. And I opened it up and brought out this green velvet dress with the Irish lace, shoes, socks, gloves, ribbons. We went to a hotel, the Alhambra, there in St. Augustine, and I had never had or I'd never seen velvet or felt velvet - and I was sitting there at the table rubbing my dress watching it change to different shades. And in this very soft, commanding voice, she says, "Sally B. stop petting your dress." "Yes, ma'am." Hands in the lap. The circus story is: she introduced me to cotton candy - much to her distress because I had cotton candy all over me and all over her. But we survived.

. . . .

It was mostly that I would go up to visit her, and looking back I realize how probably very sick or in pain that she was because she would be laying up in the bed with her tray – everything there. And I thought, well, she was just being very elegant, but I realize now that she was probably in a lot of pain at that time, and that was just easier on her.

(Continued from page 4)

. . . .

Interviewer: Did you ever visit Marjorie at Cross Creek?

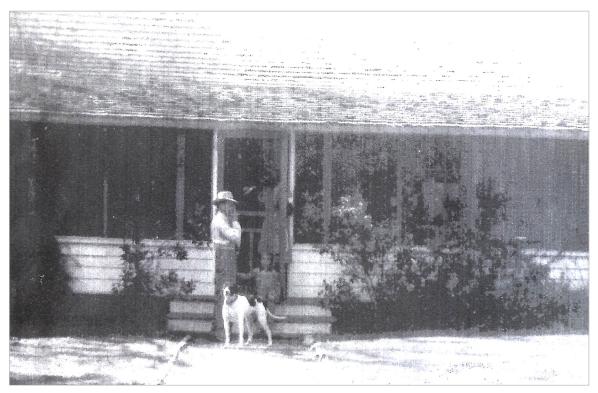
Sally: ... The picture shows that I was approximately probably four years old at the time. As I was telling the ladies earlier, when we would pull up to the walkway - of course, I was very excited about going into the house - and on each side of the sidewalk was sand spurs so Aunt Marjorie would be greeted with me crying my eyes out because I had gotten into the sand spurs. And she would holler into Idella, "Get this child a cookie or an orange or something. I've got to pull these sand spurs out." Well, Idella would get the oranges or the cookies, and she would patiently sit on the front porch step and pull the sand spurs out and calm me down. And then we would come in and visit. We usually - my dad came over to play cards with Aunt Marjorie and Uncle Norton, and they would put me on the red fainting couch, which is behind us, to take my naps out on the porch. Yes, I played out in the yard; I chased the ducks; I picked flowers; I picked fruit, and she was always getting after me about running around and frightening the chickens. Yes, we visited several times here. Coming over, we would have to come through Hastings, Palatka, and then come and get on the limestone brick road to come down here. And I would start fidgeting, and my dad would guarantee that we were going to the tunnel, which meant the large canopy trees that went over the bridge and the road so that was something to look forward to cause that was magical.

• • • •

To be continued.



Fainting couch



Thomas Baskin, Sally, Idella Parker and Pat

Volume 25 Number 3 Page 6

From the Grove

by Joy Cotton, Park Ranger

The Ol' Timers would say, "if it hasn't rained by June 6th, it will." And fortunately for us, the ol' timers were right again. After nearly two and one-half weeks of barely a drop, we got an earth-cooling rain that would not have necessarily ended a drought, but was just enough so the garden did not need watering that day. Now we have fallen into a steady pattern of good rain.

Marjorie wrote in *Cross Creek* of a storm that occurred on the longest day of the year. It was the summer solstice, and she had expected company for the afternoon, but what came put a touch of fear in both her and Adrenna.

In the west, a white cloud rolled itself together and turned gray. Thunder boomed across the lake. The sound was muffled, as though the detonation came from under the water. Lightening flickered like a tongue, then went, tasting the south.



Her words, written more than 80 years ago, still hold true today. The week of the solstice, we experienced oppressive heat and incredible storms, paralleling her portrayal of summer weather at Cross Creek perfectly: the wind, the side-ways cooling rain, and the torrents of sound of ominous storms.

Spring has left us, and now we have fallen into the rhythm of summer. The cicadas with their procession of hums, and the frogs' chorus add to the lyrical and rhythmic process of the days work of caring for this special place tucked in the rich hammock. With these long days stretched before us, we nurture the spirit of this enchanted place that inspires us to continue the work with admiration of others before us. With each passing season, we continue the work of the many talented and dedicated volunteers and staff, all following in the footsteps of Marjorie, Idella, Martha, Snow, and the many others from her wonderful stories.

Pausing in the shade of Marjorie's great magnolia or taking the long way through the hammock offers sweet refuge from the sweltering heat. These long days provide rewarding work; even the chickens and ducks can't ignore their primal instinct to linger as long as they can in the shade searching for bugs, baby lizards, and insects before they are corralled into the safety of their pens for the night.

Summer brings a slower and quieter time, and just as Marjorie wrote, we notice the thousands of minute things that may go unnoticed through the busy time. Staff is making plans and getting ready for the annual archival cleaning, set for August and September, while the home is closed for tours. A thorough, top-to-bottom cleaning of the interior and exterior of structures and contents is accomplished with the utmost attention to detail, ensuring that the park's collection of resources is methodically cared for. Slow and steady is the pace, all set by the tune of what summer must bring. Overall, it is an awe-inspiring two-month event. The more helping hands, the better. Consider coming for a day, two days, or even a week and be a part of this long tradition.

The red birds are a brilliant red against the rich green hues of the grove. They among many other species still enjoy black sunflower seeds in Marjorie's myrtle. Sadly, the hand-woven pine needle basket made by a volunteer that held the seed for years fell into an irreparable state. And the poor replacements and make-shift finds from the pantry have too fallen victim to the wind, rain, and overzealous squirrels. If anyone has a good feeding gourd or sturdy basket they no longer need, the birds would love to call it their own.

Incredibly, the hens are still giving us a plentitude of eggs. They find creative spots to lay their clutches that even the chicken snakes can't seem to find. A few weeks ago, a brother and sister who regularly visit the Rawlings grove and garden to play, excitedly ran up to me to report they found a nest of big brown eggs. With all the enthusiasm that children are graced with, they led me out to the grove, and hidden under the fronds of a cabbage palm was truly a beautiful collection of perfect brown eggs. We gathered the eggs to take in the house, and with their newfound motivation, they continued in search of more eggs, which led to

(Continued from page 6)

more questions and great discussions of their curiosities. If you would like to rediscover your inner 5 and 7-year-old self, there are eggs to gather as well as untrampled corners to explore. Speaking of too many eggs, a fellow ranger from another historic state park recommended a preservation technique that dates to the 1800's: essentially making "glass eggs" using lime. All we lack in Marjorie's kitchen is a large half gallon or gallon size jar with lid to preserve some of those beautiful eggs, both brown and blue from our healthy hens. If, by chance, someone has one such jar collecting dust in their closet, we could put it to good use in Marjorie's pantry. Just as she wrote, "Nothing is wasted."

Any day is a good day to help out and volunteer at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park. The work is rewarding, gratifying, and fulfilling of our own spirits. If you would like to join us for a day, half day, or even a couple of hours, we would love to have you come share in this enriching work. Whether it is pulling weeds in the garden or around the citrus, cleaning Marjorie's home, sweeping porches, giving tours, or selling merchandise to our park visitors: there is always something to do and the days fly by. Come help out with chores and tours and experience the wonderful reasons why Marjorie stepped off that impersonal highway.



Norton Baskin's Ground Beef Stroganoff

When asked about memorable food served by her Aunt Marjorie and Uncle Norton, Sally Baskin Hooker immediately mentioned beef stroganoff. Here is Norton Baskin's recipe from Gertrude Booth's *Kings in the Kitchen* (1961). The comments in brackets are my own. - Barbara Wingo

1 lb. ground beef (lean) ½ cup minced onion

½ cup butter

1 minced clove garlic

2 tbsp. flour

2 tsp. salt [Less salt may be used.]

½ tsp. Accent

1 cup sour cream

¼ tsp. ground pepper

¼ tsp. paprika

2 small cans mushrooms [drained]

1 can cream of chicken soup (undiluted)

1 cup water chestnuts (sliced) [drained]

chopped parsley [optional]

Sauté onions in butter until golden. Stir in beef and all other ingredients except soup, sour cream and parsley. Sauté 5 minutes. Add soup and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes. Stir in sour cream. Sprinkle with parsley and serve on hot crisp Chinese noodles [La Choy Asian Style Crunchy Noodles]. [Do not boil after sour cream has been added – just heat.] Serves 4.

LIFETIME MEMBERS

Ginny and Gunter Arndt Judy Baker Kate Barnes Sheila Barnes Catherine Beazley Diane F. Beck Roger and Linda Blackburn Robert Blauer Sybil Ann Brennan Mary W. Bridgman Arden Brugger Dan Cantliffe Ginger and Kevin Carter Norma Davis Patricia Ann Davis Sheila Dickison Barbara E. Dupont John and Balinda Ferree Sue Gaintner Ordy Greenly Ronald Haase Robert E. Haines J. C. Harrell **Judith Harris** Candace Henderson Sheila Holloway John and Phyllis Holmgren Roy Hunt Claude and Katie Jarman Deanne Clark & William H. Jeter, Jr. Ashlev Iordan Brenda Keith Mary J. Kelly Shirley Kiser Richard Knellinger, P.A. Angel Kwolek-Folland Murray Laurie Shirley Lucas Michaelyn Luttge Colleen, Frank and Lana Mahonev Janet Matthews Ruth Maughan Iudith McFadden Mary Lisa McGaughran Robert D. McReynolds Eleanor Merritt Elinor N. Midgette W.L. Miller James R. Nici Rebecca Nullier Spence Perry Marsha Dean Phelts Margaret Anne Pierce Liz Poolev A.L. Rhinehart Art & Edda Ross Tom and Luisa Sheer Martha Steward Angela Territo Shirley Thompson M. List Underwood, Jr. Pamela Lydick Whiting Colleen Whitlock Barbara Wingo

CORPORATE MEMBERS

Blackadder Brewers (Life)
Blue Highway Pizzeria
Dancing Cows Ranch
Mobley Pharmacy Services of Gainesville



Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc. P.O. Box 337 Micanopy, FL 32667-0337 Presort
Standard
US Postage PAID
Gainesville, FL
Permit #1

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!

Mark Your Calendar!

Saturday, August 6th Marjorie's Birthday Party, 10 a.m.

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park

Saturday, November 5th
Saturday, December 3rd
Saturday, December 10th
Writer's Talk at the Park
Friends' Annual Meeting
Holiday Party at the Park

www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

Туре	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr	Lifetime	We invite yo
Individual	\$30	\$85	\$140	\$270	\$ 500	tion (CSO) f Marjorie Kir contribution
Family	\$35	\$100	\$165	\$320	\$ 600	information calling 1-800
Educational	\$35	\$100	\$165	\$320	\$ 600	dorsement, a Name
Corporate	\$60	\$175	\$290	\$570	\$1,000	Address
	type of m		-	-	Effective 9/1/2021 your check to:	City/State/Zi

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

Membership Information

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.

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Phone_____

Email