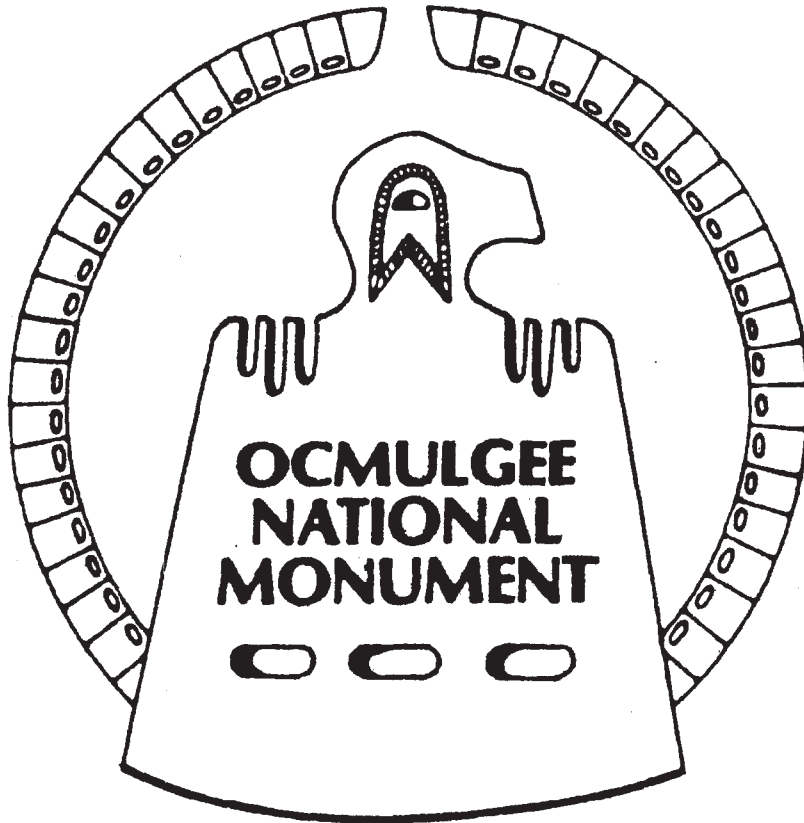


Superintendent's Annual Narrative

FY 2004



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**SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT
FY 04**

Ocmulgee National Monument started the fiscal year by moving back into the Visitor Center after being in trailers for a little over 6 months. The fiscal year ended with holding the Indian Celebration in between hurricanes. We held another major event that drew large crowds and created some excellent public relations. A traveling version of the Vietnam Wall was placed on display in front of the Visitor Center. We also were able to remove the steps from the funeral mound. The Fall Line Freeway, the Ocmulgee Heritage Greenway, and the possibility of lighting I-16 continued as the major external issues.

The Fall Line Freeway

Local support for putting the Fall Line Freeway through the Ocmulgee Old Fields continues to decrease. The major push now is to extend the Eisenhower Parkway to I-16, but not go any further across. The desire of several local groups is to reach a compromise with the tribes and environmental groups to allow the intrusion into the Traditional Cultural Property, (TCP), to make the connection to I-16. The trade off would be that a substantial amount of the TCP would be acquired and donated to Ocmulgee National Monument to help insure its future preservation. The anticipated EIS from the Georgia Department of Transportation has still not been produced; it has been rumored since 2002. The Park Service continued its neutral stance on the route.

The Ocmulgee Heritage Greenway

New Town Macon produced a plan for bringing the trail into the Monument by coming in by the Clinton Street gate; running through Drakes Field and along the boundary fence with a bridge over the creek to connect with the Monument's present trail system. Plans were placed on Regional Office review and only minor questions were raised. The trail should be completed sometime in 2005.

Lighting along I-16

GADOT held a meeting with NPS, Federal Highways and US Fish and Wildlife to discuss the effect of the road and to gain information on animal species and how they might be affected. Since there was very little material available on the effects of such lighting on animals GADOT could not see any reason to halt the project. The park continues to express its concern on the loss of night sky, and affects on animal populations.

General Administration

FY 03 Budget

ONPS	\$766,800
VIP	2,000
Cyclic Maintenance	
Replace steps on Opelofa trail	3,500
Remove infested trees	74,600
Cultural Cyclic Maintenance	
Remove Funeral Mound Steps	31,500
Fee Demonstration	
Upgrade Earthlodge program	10,000
Equipment Replacement	
Law Enforcement Vehicle	32,000
Small Park NRPP	
Eradicate Exotic Flora	14,300
Cultural Resource Protection Program	
Improve ability to monitor and protect collection	21,000
Catalog/Store Archival Collection	20,000
Public Land Corps	
Rehabilitate Trails, using SCA crew	20,000
Challenge Cost Share	
Assist in funding Indian Celebration	20,000
Other Regional Office Assistance	
Vietnam Wall Experience	8,800
Install Backflow Preventers on water system	7,800
Replace Computers (required by WASO)	3,300
Storm Damage Tropical Storm Frances	18,261
Teaching American History Grant	
Miscellaneous expenditures	19,420

Personnel

Long time Administrative Officer Debbie Boyd transferred to Fort Donelson and Tanya Perkins-Brown was hired from Manhattan Sites to replace her. Lonnie Davis was converted to full time to fill the Cultural Resource Specialist position. Two seasonal Education Technicians were hired through the Teaching American History grant. One seasonal ranger and one biological technician were also hired. George Fuller was hired through competitive outsourcing. Due to Jerome Blackmon being called to active duty in Iraq George was kept on most of the year. Once again the park maintained an excellent diversity profile. The permanent staff was 63% minority and/or female. The seasonal staff was 86% minority and/or female.

Travel and Training

The whole Service was under a mandate to reduce travel costs. Park staff training was limited mainly to courses to maintain certifications and updates for law enforcement. There were no Division chiefs meetings held in the region. Three employees were involved in various stages of NPS fundamentals training. Lonnie Davis started on obtaining the necessary training needed to advance in his new position.

Property

Property was properly maintained. Inventories were made and all equipment was properly accounted for. Records were updated.

Resource Management

Discussions continued with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation on repatriation of the human remains currently being housed at the Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC). Discussions also continued on the best location within the park for reburial. A date in early 2005 was set for a consultation with all the tribes related to repatriation and reburial.

Cultural Resources funded a \$21,000 project to improve our ability to monitor museum environment and protect objects from adverse environmental conditions. These funds were utilized to purchase steel shelving units to replace the aged wooden ones, curatorial cabinets, gaskets for the old museum storage cabinets, and other storage and monitoring equipment including placing UV filters on all the windows in the Visitor Center. Cultural Resources funding also provided \$20,000 for archival work. Sixty linear feet of archives were sorted, processed, rehoused and prepared for storage and cataloging as part of the Backlog Catalog Program. Tommy H. Jones of the Southeast Regional Office completed a Historic Structures Report for the Ceremonial Earthlodge.

Section 106 compliance and tribal consultations were completed for the Funeral Mounds Step removal project. This project was successfully completed.

The lighting in the Ceremonial Earthlodge was replaced and significantly improved. A contract was let to replace the recorded message.

Natural resource small park funding provided for a Biological Technician for three months to work on exotic vegetation control. Kudzu, Chinaberry and Privet Hedge were the principal exotics worked on. Approximately twenty acres were treated twice for Fire Ants.

Feral hog activity was noticeably less in 2004. Where activity occurred, heavy damage continues to cultural and natural resources in the park. Trapping remains the most cost-effective method of control. Two traps are being used. Ten animals were removed, seven female and three male. One animal exceeded 200 pounds of live weight. Heavy hog activity continues at the Lamar Unit, to date no traps have been set in this unit.

Further discussions were held with the city of Macon to try and find a solution to the trash flowing into the park via the storm water runoff. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division has directed the city to find a solution to the trash problem.

Maintenance

The fiscal year started out with the move back into the Visitor Center. We had been operating out of trailers next to the VC while the HVAC system was being installed. The staff seemed to have had less sinus problems since moving back in so the mold problem does appear to have been corrected with the new system.

The steps were removed from the Funeral Mound. These steps had been installed in the 1960's and were a source of contention with the various tribes since we were encouraging the public to walk on this mound. We agreed that visitors should not be on that mound and removed the steps and placed a low fence along the parking lot to serve as a visual deterrent to going on the mound. We are also in the process of developing a sign, in coordination with the tribes, explaining the sacredness of the mound and why we do not want people on it.

The floors were refinished and the kitchen cabinets were replaced in the Dunlap house. Both houses were pressure washed. The chimney in quarters two was rehabilitated.

We had an eight-person crew, six workers and two supervisors, from SCA working on trails. They worked on the dry portion of the river trail, cleared boundary fence and cleared the top of Mound A at Lamar. Again this year their campsite was set up on the forest edge next to the Civil War Earthworks.

Public Use

Visitation for FY 04 was 152,002. This was a 5% decrease from FY 03. While this was still a very good figure, the small decrease was mainly due to the cancellation of the School Day portion of the Indian Celebration and the effects of the numerous tropical storms in the fall. Once again our public satisfaction rate was a fantastic 99%. On August 4 we celebrated our 6 millionth visitor since 1936. The Macon CVB awarded them a basket of items and the Association donated a pine needle basket. We received very good media coverage of the event.

Interpretation

The traveling "Vietnam Wall Experience" came to Ocmulgee in October and was a great success. We partnered with numerous local groups to make the event work. The park was open twenty-four hours a day for the event. The Wall was a ¾ size version of the original. We also had displays of material left at the Wall in Washington, items from Andersonville of Vietnam era POW items and the uniform of Rodney Davis, Macon's only Medal of Honor recipient. Several special programs were presented including one with US Senator Chambliss as keynote speaker. There was an evening music performance and fireworks display and a JROTC drill team competition. Volunteers from local veterans groups, schools, scout troops and local citizens assisted park staff and rangers from other Southeast Parks. More than 20,000 people visited the event.

The 2004 Ocmulgee Indian Celebration in September was held in the midst of two large Tropical Storms. Strong winds and torrential rain associated with Hurricane Ivan forced the cancellation of School Day. However, the weekend had the best weather in two weeks. Visitation for the weekend exceeded 15,000. A grant from the Challenge Cost Share Program, along with our partnerships with John Shoemaker, Riverside Ford, the Ocmulgee National Monument foundation, the Ocmulgee National Monument Association, and Food Max made the event possible. A grant from the Georgia Department of Industry trade and Tourism aided in our ability to promote the event, including advertising in the Macon Telegraph, Southern Living Magazine and using six billboards in the surrounding area.

We were in the second year of the three-year Teaching American History Grant – Early American Studies Network (TAHG-EASN). This year we sent two high school teachers from the Bibb County school system to the College of William and Mary and worked with them to develop appropriate curriculums to be distributed to local schools. We also organized and presented a Teacher's Workshop using native people from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to help facilitate understanding of Native American cultures. This was a three-day workshop offering free professional learning units to area teachers.

Participation in the Lantern Light tours was excellent. There were 1,190 people on the tours, a 49% increase over last year. Extra tours were added making a total of 17 tours.

Earth Day 2004 continued a Macon tradition with twelve presenters from various cultural and natural resource related groups. Six hundred free trees donated by the Georgia Forestry Commission were given to the visiting public. Visitation that day was 940.

As part of the Lewis and Clark celebration we were able partner with a local supporter to bring in a Native American storyteller from the Blackfeet Nation, Curley Bear Wagner, to present a program on the Native American perspective on the expedition. He presented two programs to over 140 people.

Law Enforcement

During 2004 the park recorded two Part I and thirty-one Part II offenses. The Chief Ranger continued to serve the Region as a firearm instructor. The fence around the Lamar Mound B was damaged by one of the Hurricanes and has been repaired. Ranger Starkey apprehended a park neighbor poaching in the park adjacent to the Bibb Auto Parts. It is believed that this individual has poached on the park for many years. Through the equipment replacement program the park was able to replace its Law Enforcement vehicle. There were no major incidents at the Indian Celebration. There were several missing children reports, with most being located in a very short period of time.

Community Relations

Community relations remained positive. With two major events this year, the Indian Celebration and the Vietnam Wall exhibit, we gained even more positive feedback from the public and were able to develop several new partnerships. The Superintendent continued to represent the park on numerous organizations including serving on the Board of Directors for the Keep Macon-Bibb County Beautiful Commission, the Macon-Bibb County Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Tourism Advisory Council, and the Kiwanis Club of Macon. Other organizations include the Macon Arts Alliance, the Ocmulgee Heritage Greenway Committee, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Cooperating Association

The Ocmulgee National Monument Association had \$64,688 in revenue in FY 04. This was a 12% decrease from FY 03. This was due to a small drop in donations to the Association for the Indian Celebration and other promotions. As usual, the Association continued with its excellent support of the park programs with \$38,345 being donated for park programs and other assistance. The Monument is fortunate to have good support from the Association. Many programs such as the Indian Celebration could not be held without their assistance. Patty Ellis continues as the business manager and is a very strong supporter of park activities.