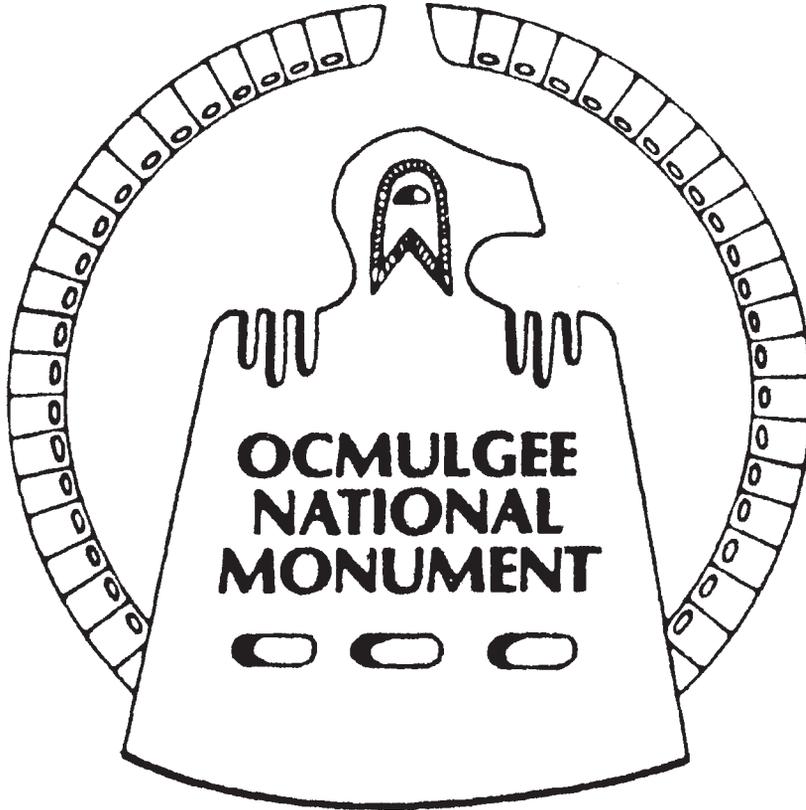


Superintendent's Annual Narrative

FY 2005



Submitted by: *James S. David*
James S. David

**SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT
FY 05**

The year saw Ocmulgee National Monument increasing its already extensive partnerships, receiving grants to assist with the museum and making progress on NAGPRA items. The long time maintenance chief retired. We struggled with budget issues. Plans were finalized for the reopening of the river trail. The Fall Line Freeway and the Ocmulgee Heritage Greenway 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 Macon Chamber of Commerce has gone on record opposing putting the road across the Old Fields and wants to extend the Eisenhower Parkway to I-16, but not go any further across. By request the Superintendent arranged a meeting between the Second Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and local leaders to discuss that as a possible compromise. The discussion was related to the acquisition of a substantial amount of the Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) for addition to the Monument. The Georgia Department of Transportation no longer considers the route as part of the Fall Line Freeway, but a local cross city connector. The EIS from the Georgia Department of Transportation is currently planned to be released in 2006. The Park Service continued its neutral stance on the route.

The Ocmulgee Heritage Greenway

New Town Macon paid the cost of building a section of trail in the Monument to serve as the Greenway trail connection. This asphalt trail runs from the Clinton Street gate to the rear of the Visitor Center. A timer controlled gate was installed to limit access to the normal open hours of the park with a release button on the park side of the gate for anyone caught inside after the gate locks. New Town also paid for new signs along this trail and these were some of the first signs produced under the new NPS sign design plan. The official opening of the trail took place in October 2005. New Town is working with the land owner to make the official connection to the rest of the trail through the old Bibb Mill property.

General Administration

FY 05 Budget

ONPS	\$802,200
VIP	1,300
Cultural Cyclic Maintenance	
Replace Roof on Dunlap House	5,500
Equipment Replacement	
Excel 4600 Range Wing Mower	29,535
Fee Demonstration	
Produce and Replace Museum Exhibits	296,000
Small Park NRPP	
Eradicate Exotic Fauna	14,400
Challenge Cost Share	
Assist in funding Indian Celebration	30,000
Cultural Resource Protection Program	
Catalog & store Archival Collection	20,000
Repair Rehab	
Rehabilitate River Trail	300,000
Narrowband Radios	53,680
Other Regional Office Assistance	
Rebuild Mower Engine	6,400
Storm Damage	12,000
Teaching American History Grant	
Miscellaneous expenditures	36,287

There was some discussion over the use of the repair rehab funds. The \$300,000 was a congressional add on by Senator Saxby Chambliss. The Senator wanted the funds to be used to reopen the river trail and the regional office said that since building a boardwalk to replace the previous dry trail was new construction the funds could not be used for that purpose. After some conversations, the park got the authorization to use the funds for the river trail.

The park received an Acquisition Management Review audit by the Regional Office and no material weaknesses were found.

The park is finding itself in a growing financial bind. At the beginning of the year we realized we were going to be in the red on the budget. We looked at ways to come closer to the allocation. We worked to reduce overtime and employees volunteered to take comp time instead in many cases. Seasonal work force was reduced and the dates those that were hired on were also adjusted. This had a significant impact on the workload of the employees that were left. Employees are showing signs of burnout from the increased workload and the necessity of "wearing many hats". This situation arose because of employees reaching their full performance level, and the difference in cost between CRS and FERS employees. The cost for FERS is much higher. With the increase in cost of supplies and materials the situation will only continue to get worse. The park has been under funded and there is no indication that anything will change in the near future. Without our partnerships, activities like the Indian Celebration would not be possible.

Personnel

Long time Maintenance Chief Homer Leslie retired after 35 years at Ocmulgee. Due to lack of funds the position was not filled for the remainder of the fiscal year. One seasonal Education Technician was hired through the Teaching American History grant. One biological technician was hired to work on the exotic fauna. Two seasonal laborers were hired for the summer. Once again the park maintained an excellent diversity profile. The permanent staff was 70% minority and/or female. The seasonal staff was 85% minority and/or female.

Travel and Training

Due to travel restrictions and budget restraints the park staff training was limited mainly to courses to maintain certifications and updates for law enforcement. There was a Superintendent's conference for the first time in many years. Supervisors all met the required training through either computer courses or off site training. Three employees continue in various stages of NPS fundamentals training.

Resource Management

A consultation meeting was held with the tribes on the repatriation of the human remains currently being housed at the Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) and the Smithsonian. Much of the discussion was on the best location within the park for reburial. The park had thought that the area next to the Visitor Center would be the chosen location; however, the tribes proposed the idea of rebuilding the funeral mound to its original size before excavation and place the remains and objects in the rebuilt portion.

Both the park and SEAC felt this was an excellent solution and have taken steps to make this happen.

Through the use of funds from the Cultural Resource Protection Program we were able to have additional work done on the archives. All the archival material was moved from the library, catalogued and stored in the archeological storage area. Lonnie Davis continued to correct storage problems in the curatorial area. Material was moved out of cardboard boxes and placed in the proper acid free boxes.

Natural resource small park funding provided for a Biological Technician for three months to work on exotic fauna. Several new hog traps were constructed and a total of 31 feral hogs were destroyed. Large areas of exotic vegetation were cleared.

The Macon Water Authority worked on the lines going through the park, enlarging some, relining others and improving their pump station. These steps should greatly reduce the chance for future sewage spills.

Maintenance

Homer Leslie retired as Chief of Maintenance after 35 years at the park. Being unable to fill the position due to lack of funds the maintenance crew was short handed for the whole season.

A tree fell on the roof of quarters 2. There was damage to the carport and part of the main house. We requested and received additional funding to fix the damage. The roof on quarters 1, the Dunlap house, was re-shingled.

Public Use

Visitation for FY 05 was 117,594. This was a 22% decrease from FY 04. This large decrease was believed to be due to a few items. One of which was that the FY 04 figure was increased in the fall of 03 by the Viet Nam Wall display that brought in many more people the end of October and the first of November than usual. A wet spring and school groups reducing their field trips and then a jump in gas prices also figured into the reduction.

Interpretation

The 2005 Ocmulgee Indian Celebration in September was another great success. There were good crowds on all three days. A new dance group, The Aztec Dancers from Mexico, were very popular and helped bring in some new people to the event. Visitation for the three days exceeded 20,000. 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 Piggly Wiggly made the event possible. Due to the opening of the Greenway trail connector in the park, New Town Macon sent their trolley out to provide transportation from the parking area to the event. A grant from the Georgia Department of Economic Development 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. The Foundation took names and address of visitors during the Celebration for a several drawings where they gave away various paintings. This information will also help to find where those visitors are coming from.

We were in the third year of the three-year Teaching American History Grant – Early American Studies Network (TAHG-EASN). This year we sent two elementary 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. The final product of this grant was a Student Activity Resource disk that was distributed to classes across the county. The disk has the three levels of curriculum that were developed with the assistance of the Bibb County teachers that attended the William and Mary workshop as well as the previously produced Teachers Activity Guide along with numerous other interpretive items.

An Interpretive Themes Workshop was held involving the park staff, SERO staff and local supporters. These themes will aid in the development of the new museum. Planning for the museum continued with several meeting and conversations with Harpers Ferry personnel. We sent out grant requests to several organizations to match NPS fund for the museum and received \$296,000 from the Peyton Anderson Foundation. The grant was requested through the Association since the Peyton Anderson Foundation could not donate to the U.S. Government.

The Ocmulgee National Monument Foundation, (John Shoemaker) contracted with Dean Quigley to produce four murals for the Visitor Center lobby. These paintings show the four major archeological periods, Archaic, Paleo, Woodland, and Mississippian. We were able to get SEAC and tribal input into the content of the murals to make them as accurate as possible. The Foundation also had time line posters produced, using the images, that are being sold to raise money for other projects.

Participation in the Lantern Light tours was very good.. There were 1,029 people on the tours, this was a 13% decrease over last year. There was one night that was a washout with only 4 people for the whole night. There were 18 tours given.

Law Enforcement

A record number of criminal incidents occurred in 2005. The division recorded six Part 1 offenses and 22 part 2 offenses. Four juveniles were arrested and charged in state court for arson following a break-in at the Earthlodge. Over \$5,000 was recovered from an Archeological firm resulting from a 19jj settlement of an ARPA violation along Emery highway. The firm was doing testing in the park as part of the Fall Line Freeway study, without a permit. A second ARPA case at the Cornfield Mound resulted in over \$29,000 in damages. 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. The park received funding to purchase narrow band radios. We had a difficult time finding a tower to place the antenna; therefore, the system was not in operation by the end of the year. On going negotiations should result in the system going up in mid 2006.

Community Relations

Community relations remained very positive. The partnerships with the numerous groups and organizations continued to result in good support of park activities. The work with New Town on the trail and their entry into assisting with the Celebration was very valuable. There is growing interest in the park expanding to acquire more of the Ocmulgee Old Fields, depending on the outcome of the Fall Line Freeway. The Superintendent continued to represent the park on numerous organizations including 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 \$74,611 in revenue in FY 05. This was a 15% increase from FY 04. This was mainly due to an increase 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 \$40,018 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.