



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STATE PARKS & HISTORIC SITES

# ROADS LESS TRAVELED

*News From the Georgia State Parks, Recreation*

*and Historic Sites Interpretive Unit*

*Summer 2017*

The Mill at George L. Smith State Park

## Georgia State Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites

Summer 2017

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PRHS Interpretive  
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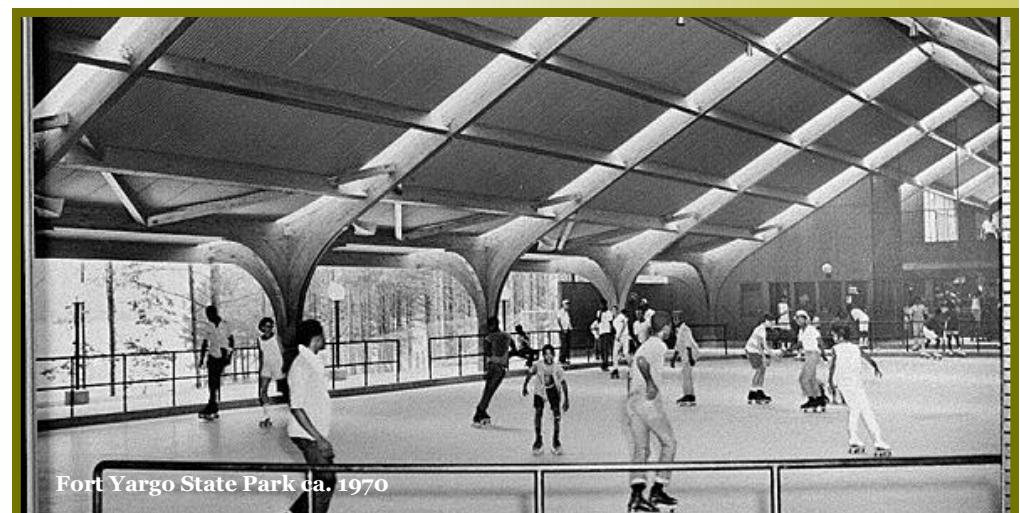
### Marketing Moment

Instagram is one of today's most popular social networks and a great promotional tool. It allows visitors to do some of our publicity for us. During programs, be sure to ask participants if they use Instagram. If they do, ask them to tag #GaStateParks and your park.

It's a good idea for each site to determine what their hashtag should be, even if staff are not personally using Instagram. You will get the most reach if all visitors use the same hashtag. It's usually best to use the park name, such as #RedTopMountain. It may be best to omit SP or StatePark, because visitors may not include this. You can search on Instagram to see what people are already using for your site.

It's up to employees whether they want to use personal phones for park accounts. Some may prefer a desktop app like Gramblr instead. If your park wants to create an Instagram account, call me at 770-389-7284 and I'll help you get started.

*By: Kim Hatcher,  
Public Affairs Coordinator*



Fort Yargo State Park ca. 1970

# ROADS LESS TRAVELED

### Interpretive News:

Summertime has arrived and visitation on our sites is in full swing. In May, the Interpretive Unit conducted its annual Seasonal Naturalist workshop and had 27 attendees from all over the state. This motivated group of interpreters are set to connect our park guests with the many resources PRHS has to offer. They will be challenged with leading hikes, creating Junior Ranger programs, conducting living history programs, and host of other cultural, natural and recreation resource-based programs. The Interpretive Unit welcomes them to the PRHS family and hopes that they and all our Interpretive Rangers, Naturalists, and other staff have a safe and happy Summer season!



### Park Spotlight:

#### Reynolds Mansion

Visiting the Reynolds Mansion on scenic Sapelo Island starts with a ride on a passenger only ferry from the mainland. The mansion, which was originally a tabby plantation house, offers guests a great mix of history and nature. Guests stay overnight in one of thirteen bedrooms, and are fed by our amazing kitchen staff. Nobody makes fried chicken like Reynolds Mansion's chefs!

The mansion's Italian Palladian architecture is complemented by the whimsical touch of famous artist Athos Menaboni, and his "circus room."

Miles of pristine beach await visitors just down the road at Nanny Goat beach. Many guests return year after year!

*By: Janet Gannon, Asst. Manager, REM*

## Meet the Interpreter: Cate Williams, Crooked River State Park

Cate Williams has been with the Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites Division for over 12 years. A Georgia native, Cate grew up on the coast of Georgia and graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in Environmental Economics and Management.

She began her career at Unicoi State Park and has now worked at eight Georgia State Parks, lending her knowledge and passion for Georgia's natural resources to visitors and students from all over the world.

Cate has returned to her coastal roots at Crooked River State Park and has refined her interpretive skills as a Coastal Kayak Instructor. She leads many kayak programs along the blue way that is prominent at Crooked River.



Balancing her love for the water with her passion for conservation and prescribed fire, Cate is also Red Card certified as a member on our state parks fire team.

Cate is always on the move as she coordinates interpretive programs for three different sites: Crooked River, Laura S. Walker, and Reynolds Mansion. She can be found anywhere from remote islands banding wood stork nestlings to wrist deep in squid dissection at local elementary school classrooms.

She shares her love for nature with her husband, Conservation Ranger Sam Williams, daughter Maggie, and new baby on the way.

*By: Jessica Aldridge,  
Assistant Manager, CRR*

## D-Day Commemoration at the Little White House



James Fowler as Franklin D. Roosevelt

On June 10, 2017, the staff and volunteers at the Little White House conducted their commemoration of the Normandy invasion, known to most as D-Day. On hand were reenactors portraying soldiers of the era. They interpreted the role of airborne troops in the invasion and the types of equipment they would have used.

Two other living historians added much to the program. James Fowler portrayed FDR and recited Roosevelt's famous D-Day prayer heard by millions on June 6, 1944, while actress and storyteller, Carol Cain, portrayed Rosie the Riveter in a first person living history program.

The site was honored by the presence of a real "Rosie," Mrs. Louise Minton who built bombers for the war effort in the 1940's. She shared her wartime experiences and period items with the visitors.

Other displays included artifacts and military equipment from both the American and German armies, by DNR's own Josh Headlee from the Historic Preservation Division and Judd Smith from PRHS.

Interpretive Ranger Ashley Aultman led several visitors on guided tours of the house and grounds and other LWH interpreters assisted the more than 350 visitors to the site that day.

Kennesaw State University provided a temporary exhibit noting the influence of women on the war effort, highlighting their roles such as pilots, espionage agents, and resistance fighters.

Overall, the program generated interest in the many aspects of World War II while showcasing the heroism of the troops fighting on D-Day. The Little White House conducts special event programming like this one every month about FDR's life and the era in which he lived.

## PRHS Canoe and Kayak Guide Training Workshop

Safe and fun canoe and kayak programs are often a highlight of park visitors' experiences. Our state park lakes, rivers, and other waterways provide hours of recreation for paddlers, both young and old.

At the forefront of water safety are our PRHS certified canoe and kayak guides. These rangers learn skills over the course of a two day training that allow them to safely lead canoe and kayak programs in flat, moving, or swift water, depending on which part of the state they operate.

Any program related to water safety entails an inherent risk, and the guides are challenged in training with meeting such hazards as righting overturned canoes, affecting rescues, and getting people out of the water without tipping the canoe. They also learn skills that allow them to instruct beginners in the proper paddling techniques

needed to navigate a canoe or kayak.

Recently, Katherine Darsey instructed a class on June 13-14, 2017 and certified five rangers. Instructors Katherine Darsey, Steve Hadley, and West Malenke are currently developing a schedule to offer this valuable training four times a year. The training is required for all employees who would be conducting canoe or kayak programs.

The skills learned in this training directly relate to PRHS commitment to support the L.E. Division and DNR agencies with the state wide SPLASH initiative. More information on SPLASH here:  
<http://gastateparks.org/info/252426>

Stay tuned for more on upcoming training workshops.



Canoe training at Indian Springs State Park



# It's Time for Camp!!

This year we have over 60 Junior Ranger camps planned in 29 different Parks & Historic Sites! Every summer interpreters plan camps and often focus on the same program topics year after year, targeting the same young campers between the ages of 6-12. This year several sites are showcasing different camp themes which is a great way to attract new audiences and repeat campers.



A happy Junior Ranger at Fort Yargo

Think of ways to theme your camps that showcases what makes your site unique. For example, General Coffee hosts a Heritage Farm Camp where campers learn what life was like for children on a farm in the late 1800s. Activities include animal care, candle making, soap making, gardening and open hearth cooking. Another idea is to consider planning a camp around the annual state-wide program theme. This year Fort King George hosted a "Soak It In" Junior Ranger Camp to focus on the importance of water and fun recreational water activities.

Consider a themed topic for your camp such as the "Survivor" theme at Mistletoe. Campers compete to see which team wins the title of "Mistletoe Survivors" by doing an

obstacle course, paddling, solving puzzles, and learning survival skills. Smithgall Woods has hosted an "Eco-Kids Camp: Caring for the Winged Ones" about birds, bats, and pollinators. Consider targeting audiences who are visiting our parks but not attending ranger-led programs such as teens, college students, or Baby Boomers. For several years Panola Mountain, has hosted an "Outdoor Adventure Camp" for teens doing archery, bouldering, tree climbing, and outdoor living skills.

My personal favorite camp was "Family Camp" that we hosted for six summers at Unicoi. Many kids stay with grandparents over the summer and it's a great way to encourage multi-generational interactions. Our goal was to encourage families to recreate together in the outdoors. We wanted them to "Get Out. Get Dirty. Get Fit." together as a family. We offered camp each morning over five days to allow families time to recreate together in the afternoons. The families ranged in ages and group sizes. Our youngest camper was two years old and she even shot a bow and arrow! We also had "Nana" who participated in every event

including the final Family Camp Challenge. One family came with one parent and child, while another had 8 family members. Family Camp benefits might include: enticing visitors to use overnight accommodations, having local families attend who may not be regular park users, and providing our rangers with additional adult supervision.

Don't forget that partnerships are a great way to have extra topics and instructors. Some partners to consider are: DNR Law Enforcement Division, Wildlife Resources Game & Non-Game Management, Fisheries Management, Coastal Resources Division, Environmental Protection Division, Georgia Forestry Commission, UGA Extension Offices, U.S. Forest Service, local fitness/dance instructors, local fire departments, and historic reenactment groups.

Have fun creating new adventures and more happy campers!

*By: Ellen Graham,  
Chief Naturalist*



Junior Rangers learning fishing at Panola Mountain

# Georgia State Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites

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**gastateparks.org**

*A Great Time, Every Time!*

Memorial Fountain and Flag Walk, Roosevelt's Little White House State Historic Site, Warm Springs, GA

## Mission

To protect our state's natural beauty and historic integrity while providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education.

## Vision

Using our system's diversity and a commitment to excellence as our strengths, we will be a national model for quality service, resource protection, outdoor recreational opportunities, ecosystems management and interpretation of our heritage. We will provide an excellent work environment for our employees through effective leadership, proper training, challenging opportunities and a guarantee of fair treatment.



## Parting Thoughts and Takeaways:

The poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson, spoke of experience as that “*untravell'd world whose margin fades forever and forever when I move.*” He meant that experience is something that we strive to find, but yet never fully possess as it is endlessly in front of us. As interpreters, the lesson taken from this is that we must forever be in search of those experiences and training opportunities that help us make our craft more perfect.

Anything from the shortest web based program to great first hand opportunities like the Wildlife Resource Division’s recent Birding Boot Camps will help to make better interpreters of us all. Obviously, time and travel constraints can limit some training, but those who choose to make a profession of interpretation must take advantage of them when they are offered. Sometimes those experiences may not be something that is in your sphere of personal interest, but it may help add a tool to the

interpretive kit.

For the younger interpreters who read this, a career with PRHS may include work at parks, historic sites, public fishing areas, and off site programming at regional, local, and national parks and other public places. The more training in varied interpretive areas you possess the better and more marketable you will be for prospective managers. Remember, one day you will be the leaders of this and other departments. Listen to others and take advice and training opportunities where they are given, even if it is something as simple as a person to person on the job learning experience.

For those, like me, who are older in our profession, we must not fall into the trap of complacency and an “if it worked then, it will work now” mentality. The world has fundamentally changed and technology is a driver of that change. Training must be accepted with a

willingness to try new ideas and concepts. We must also provide mentoring and maintain meaningful dialogues with the younger interpreters. Only when they feel valued and that their ideas are heard will we succeed in ensuring quality interpretation in PRHS for years to come.

Remember, experience should never be about the ending - it is about the journey. Whether new to the profession or a seasoned ranger, training and opportunities to learn should never be passed over lightly. As Tennyson wrote, we should always possess a yearning “*To follow knowledge like a sinking star, Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.*”

Until Next Time,

*Happy Programming,  
Judd Smith*