Friends of Congaree Swamp Newsletter

October, 1999

Ann Timberlake presents former Senators Rubin (left) and Bristow with the Order of the Cypress Award.

THE FRIENDS OF CONGAREE SWAMP
BESTOWS THE

ORDER OF THE CYPRESS

ON

THE HONORABLE HYMAN RUBIN
THE HONORABLE WALTER J BRISTOW

FOR TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO
AGGRESSIVELY DEFEND
THE PRESERVATION OF CONGAREE SWAMP
DURING THE SENATE DEBATE OF APRIL 1976

Words by Ann Timberlake
during the Oct, 3rd Annual Meeting:

"Try as we might to adopt written criteria for any honorary award, that award is always best defined by the nature of its recipients. I therefore can't think of any better way to define this new "Order of the Cypress" than by looking to the example and character of these men whom we are honoring today.

In years to come, there are many others to whom we will want to award the Order of the Cypress because this majestic forest was saved only through the combined efforts of hundreds of people - one of whom, Harry Hampton, will be honored with the naming of the new visitor center now under construction.

If we were to spotlight a turning point in the 4 years of intense campaigning to save the swamp, we might focus upon the spring of 1976. The successful "Congaree Action Nov/' Rally in the fall of 1975 set the stage for the campaign to flex its grassroots strength in the political arena. Bills to establish a Congaree Swamp National Monument were soon introduced in Congress.

Knowing that state political sentiment would affect the upcoming Congressional hearings on Congaree, Senator Marion Gressette, the Senate's senior member, introduced in February, 1976, a resolution (IS.744) which opposed the use of condemnation proceedings as a vehicle to obtain federal or state acquisition of Congaree. As sentiments in the State House approached the boiling point, legislators were entertained at the old hunting lodge in the heart of the Swamp.

That evening, Senator Rubin walked outside for some fresh air and made a momentous decision. Jim Elder remembers the Senator calling later that night. Rubin said he remembered the presentation Elder had made to the delegation about 1 and **1/2** years earlier and he explained how seeing the giant trees in the full moonlight that night had affected him. Rubin said to Jim, "It is a moral

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Annual Membership Meeting Held At Congaree Swamp National Monument

Francis Robinson, Events Chairman

The Friends of Congaree Swamp held their annual meeting on Sunday, October 3rd, at the picnic area of the ranger station at the National Monument. A beautiful October afternoon was enjoyed by over a hundred members and family. Nature walks were led by John Cely, Fran Rametta, David Rembert, and Chick Gaddy. Lewis Prettyman took the first twelve to sign up on a canoe trip and Martha Bogle, Park Superintendent, took several groups on a tour of the construction site of the new Education and Visitors Center.

The Friends then gathered at 6:00 P.M. in the picnic area for the Annual Meeting; Brusi Alexander, President, presided. New board members were elected and other business was conducted. One highlight of the meeting was the awarding of the Order of the Cypress to former State Senators, the Honorable Hyman Rubin and the Honorable Walter Bristow. Both men and their families were present for the ceremony honoring these men who played such a vital role in establishing Congaree National Monument. Another highlight was the introduction of S. C. Air National Guard members, Carland Allen,Project Supervisor, and Randy Hudson,Chief of Procurement, by Superintendent Bogle. All are very proud of the unique co-venture of the National Guard and the Park Service in the building of the new Visitors' Center and entry road.

Following the meeting, a delightful and bountiful picnic supper was enjoyed by all. A secretly prepared "Swamp Slush" added to the evening's merriment; winners of door prizes were pleased with gifts and "Cabin Fever" provided charming music throughout the evening.

Awards cont...

imperative that we save these trees; to do otherwise would be a sacrilege."

Meanwhile Judge Bristow, in the Senate since 1958, had concluded that the swamp was a "natural heritage which should be preserved for our children and their children." With a love for the outdoors instilled by Harry Hampton, Bristow teamed with Rubin to stand up for the swamp.

For three days in April they filibustered with courage and conviction. Newspaper headlines indicate the flavor of the debate, with "Swamp Owners Oppose Preserve" and "Rubin Supports Swamp Preserve Saying 'Nothing In This State Compares'," followed by "Gressette Questions Preserve" and "Poetic Bristow turns to Verse for Filibuster" or "Bristow waxed poetic today as he recited Kilmer's 'Trees'on the Senate Floor". At one point Bristow was also recorded as saying "I have a few more pearls to cast to you" and then more seriously he surmised "this resolution would let the fate of this forest of champions rest upon the bosoms of the foresters."

After three days, Elder remembers Rubin and Bristow saying they'd done all they could; they didn't have the votes to stop the resolution but they would salvage what they could. Desperate for a way to change its meaning, they negotiated with Gressette and added one significant word, "intimidation," to the resolution. The Senate finally went on record opposing acquisition through "condemnation or intimidation." The resolution barely passed with a recorded vote of 15-12, and the compromise was hailed as a victory for the swamp forces.

A week later, at the first Congressional Hearing in Washington, Representative Roy Taylor made a point of noting for the record that the federal government never resorted to intimidation to acquire property. The Richland County delegation supported acquisition of the swamp in a letter to the House Committee and Sen. Rubin and Rep. Bill Campbell personally testified at the Senate Committee hearing later that August.

Salvaging the situation in the Senate, standing up for preservation of the Congaree against great odds, Senators Bristow and Rubin deserve our respect, admiration, appreciation and honor. At a critical juncture in the campaign to save the swamp, they unselfishly stepped forward on their own initiative and did their part. Let their example guide us as we continue to protect this natural legacy with scenery as rare on this earth as any moonscape."

Thank U'sss

For the wonderful help with the October 3rd annual meeting:

Francis Robinson,
Events Chair
Who planned logistics, food, and everything from flowers on the tables to a basket of popcorn at the reception table. She also arranged for and collected all the door prizes from local businesses.

Marian Hampton
For having registration for the meeting run so smoothly. And, to helpers Virginia & Mina Winn, Carol Jaworski, and John Grego.

John Cely, Chick Gaddy, Lewis Prettyman, Fran Rametta and David Rembert
For leading the nature tours into the swamp.

Ann Timberlake
For a wonderful and moving awards presentation to former Senators Bristow and Rubin, and the "Secret Recipe" for Swamp Slush.

Martha Bogle,
Superintendent
For leading tours of the new Visitors' Center and for freeing up staff to help give tours, lug tables, find hammers, move trashcans, et.al., to make the meeting site so pleasant.

Bobbi Simpson
Who found and interviewed Cabin Fever, the Irish folk musicians who added such musical ambiance to the event.

Carol Kososki
Whose nomination ballots were works of art.

Mary Beth Jeffords
Who received and tabulated all the registrations.

And to all the Board and Committee members
Who brought sandwiches, cookies, brownies, and such. It was all delicious.

***Thanks* go to the following businesses who donated door prizes:**

Sikes' Barbeque,

Mr. Bunky's,

Horse and Garden Hardware,

The Filling Station,

The Backpacker,

The River Runner,

None Such, and

Grice's Market.

Rembert Leads Flora Walk

Dr. David H. Rembert, Jr.

David Rembert leads the first nature walk of the afternoon.

On Sunday the 3rd of October the Annual Membership Meeting of Friends of Congaree Swamp was held. Several activities began at 4:00 pm including nature walks, bird walks, a canoe trip, and visits to the soon to be completed visitors/nature center.

At 4:00 I led the first group of members and their guests along the lower boardwalk into the swamp for observation and discussion of the plants.

The Congaree Swamp represents the last of the old growth bottomland, hardwood forest. Record size trees grow here. This environment supports a high canopy with the dominant trees being tupelo gum and baldcypress. In addition to these there are large black gums, sweet gums, several oak species, elms, hickories, and ash trees. In several parts of the swamp we also see large, record size loblolly pines.

This productive swamp is fed by the waters of the Congaree River. Often overflowing, the river deposits the rich nutrients and soils so vital to the life of the river swamp ecosystem.

In addition to the cathedral-like trees encountered on this perfect Sunday afternoon we observed several plants in the understory and forest floor habitats. The first plant in bloom that we observed was Hercules club (*Aralia spinosa*), a shrub or small tree with a very large paniculate inflorescence. Close by were several wild sensitive plants (*Cassia nictitans*) in fruit. Several ferns were in abundance along the first part of the boardwalk including the southern lady fern (*Athyrium asplenioides*), the royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), the cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), the sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), and the ebony spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*). Some additional plants observed as we walked along the boardwalk, either in flower or fruit, were the American beauty bush (*Callicarpa americana*), false nettle (*Boehmeria cylindrica*), clearweed (*Pilea pumila*), climbing hempweed (*Mikania scandens*), *waxweed (Cuphea carthagensis*), marsh fleabane (*Pluchea foetida*), the cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), jewel-weed or touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*), Walter's hypericum (*Hypericum walteri*), and one species of ladies tresses just beginning to bloom (*Spiranthes sp.*). We also saw the day flower (*Commelina virginica*), the switch cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*), an invasive grass (*Microstegium vimineum*), the duck-potato (*Sagittaria latifolia*), and a sedge (*Carex sp.*). Several vines were prominent as they climbed the many tree species in the swamp. These included the ever present poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), supple jack (*Berchemia scandens*), the climbing hydrangea (*Decumaria barbara*), cross vine (*Bignonia capreolata*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), and grape vines (*Vitis aestivalis*).

Our walk in the swamp was free of biting insects, and enhanced by the occasional butterfly, lizard, and bird; by drifting clouds, and a gentle breeze. We are truly blessed to have such a natural treasure here in the midlands of South Carolina.

Highlights of 1999

The second year of the FRIENDS group officially started in April of this year. We have had some solid accomplishments, along with 4 Board meetings during that time. Here are some highlights of those 6 months:

The newsletter has been upgraded, and placed on a regular schedule.

The Executive Commitee has been quite active and has met regularly.

Our first membership renewal letters went out, and the returns have been good. Also, selected solicitation letters for new members have been sent out with good returns.

Our non-profit 501(c)(3) status is finally official and we have completed the Charitable Reporting paperwork for the Secretary of State.

Work has been done on a grant which will help the YWCA send disadvantaged youth to the Swamp, to see nature as they have never seen it before.

The Friends have met with staff of the new state children's museum to discuss an environmental component of the museum.

We have given input into regulatory matters which might affect the wellbeing of the Swamp.

Thanks to efforts of many people last year, Congress has this year approved $1 million for land acquisition within the authorized Park boundaries.

The Friends contacted 2 individuals about purchasing land for inclusion within the Park. Norfolk Southern has been asked to donate a small parcel within the Park's eastern boundary. The company appears receptive. (The S.C. Rail Road Company purchased this parcel before the Civil War: an interesting complication to this situation is that public records proving ownership of the parcel burned in 1865 when Sherman came through Columbia.)

The Friends have written letters and made calls to the Congressional delegation in favor of increasing the Park's operating budget and staffing.

The Research Committee has done excellent work on projects within and outside the Park. John Grego has written 1 grant and proofed 2 others for the Park Service.

Discussions are underway concerning the 25th anniversary of Congaree Action Now, the overwhelmingly successful grassroots campaign which led to the saving of Congaree Swamp. It is hoped that this will be done in conjunction with the grand opening of the new Harry R.E. Hampton Visitors Center.

Thank You for being a member of the Friends, and for caring about this marvelous place we call Congaree. You are what make the difference. Please join us again for the year 2000!

Membership Committee Report

Mary Beth Jeffords

Membership has been increasing. Invitational letters to join Friends were mailed out to 143 prospective members in September and response has been good from that mailing.

A Membership Committee meeting was held in early August. New membership application forms have been printed and these were included in the September mailing and are being distributed to places around town. Committee members have made calls to members needing to renew their memberships. We have also gotten information on all the festivals in the state.

Please help us increase membership by encouraging others to join. Invite friends along for a swamp outing!

Board of Directors and Committee Chairmanships

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Officers: LaBruce Alexander, President
Carol Kososki, Vice-President
Richard Watkins, Secretary
Margaret Stilwell, Treasurer

At Large: John H. Temple
Marian Hampton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

LaBruce Alexander ..... (h) 803-776-3578
Clinch Belser, Jr. ..... (h) 803-799-8540
John Cely ..... (h) 803-782-7450
Charles Cole, Jr. ..... (h) 803-738-8192
Gregg Fagan ..... (h) 803-781-1870
John Grego ..... (h) 803-783-9270
Marian Hampton ..... (h) 803-776-2867
Mary Kelly ..... (h) 803-782-9960
Carol Kososki ..... (h) 803-787-1706
John Nelson ..... (h) 803-252-1417
Zoe Sanders Nettles ..... (h) 803-782-2478
David Rembert, Jr. ..... (h) 803-771-4967
Margaret Stilwell ..... (h) 803-782-3890
John H. Temple ..... (h) 803-736-3734
Ann Timberlake ..... (h) 803-799-8298
Kelvin Washington ..... (h) 803-353-1003
Richard Watkins ..... (h) 803-432-4253

COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS:

Advocacy:
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Education:
Carol Kososki ..... (h) 803-787-1706
Events:
Francis Robinson ..... (h) 803-254-6360
Fundraising:
Clinch Belser, Jr. ..... (h) 803-799-8540
Membership:
Mary Beth Jeffords ..... (h) 803-782-5234
Newsletter:
Virginia Winn ..... (h) 803-787-1592
Public Relations:
Lee Ann Stoddard ..... (h) 803-783-3662
Research:
John Grego ..... (h) 803-783-9270
Strategic Planning:
Jim Prater ..... (h) 803-252-8499

Please call the committee chairman (above) if you wish to participate on a committee.

Board Members Elected October 3rd

The Board of Friends of Congaree Swamp would like to thank the following members, who have rotated off the Board, for their term of service: Barbara L. Davis, Mildred Myers, and Rebecca Sharitz.

The following persons were elected to serve for a three year term on the Board of Friends of Congaree Swamp:

LaBruce Alexander

Current President of Friends of Congaree Swamp; founder and Executive Director of SC Nature Conservancy and national Vice-President of The Conservancy; began ACE River Basin Preservation Effort; Stock & No-Load Mutual Fund advisor.

Clinch H. Belser, Jr. (New to Board)

Clinch is a lifelong resident of Columbia interested in the community, the environment, and the Congaree Swamp. He is married and has three children. He has practiced law in Columbia since 1974.

Charles T. Cole, Jr.

Executive Vice President of Wachovia Bank, N.A. He is based in Columbia and serves as regional executive for the Palmetto Region. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Friends of Congaree Swamp.

Mary Kelly (New to Board)

Finance Director of South Carolina Department of Disabilities & Special Needs. Has been employed with State for 20 years. Has a strong interest in Congaree Swamp.

Carol Kososki

Director of the South Carolina Occupational Information System; Legislative chair for four national associations and has taken an active role in advocacy for 20 years; Certified Internal Auditor. Current Vice President and member of Board of Directors Of Friends of Congaree Swamp.

John Nelson (New to Board)

Curator of the A.C. Moore Herbarium at the University of South Carolina. Received his Ph.D. in Biological Sciences from Florida State University in 1982; MS in biology from Clemson University in 1975; and BS in Biology from USC in 1973.

Memorials and Honorariums

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Sent by:

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Please notify:

Name _____

Adress _____

_____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Mail to: Friends of Congaree Swamp,
PO Box 7746, Columbia, SC 29202

Membership Application

Individuals & Families:
- ❑$15-34—Individual
- ❑$35-49—Family
- ❑$50-99—Advocate
- ❑$100-499—Partner
- ❑$500-999—Benefactor
- ❑$1000-up—Patron

Organizations, Businesses & Corporations
- ❑$50-99—Non-Profit Org.
- ❑$100-499—Affiliate
- ❑$500-999—Associate
- ❑$1000-up—Corporate

Amount Enclosed: $_____

Name:
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Address:
_____
_____
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Home Phone:
_(_____)_____
Work Phone:
_(_____)_____
Fax:
_(_____)_____
E-Mail Address:
_____

The ***Friends of Conagree Swamp's*** newsletter is published quarterly. If you have an article or photographs you wish included please get them to the editor by the following schedule:

Jan 15th — 1st Quarter
Apr 15th — 2nd Quarter
July 15th — 3rd Quarter
Oct 15th — 4th Quarter

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October, 1999

Get a friend to be a "Friend."

Help us increase our membership!