



# Friends of Fort Fremont

## Spring 2022 Newsletter

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This is the first issue of the Friends of Fort Fremont's quarterly news letter. Our mission in the news letter is to inform everyone of the Fort and Volunteer activities; and provide historical information about the Fort and details of the military Staff.

Since the opening, there have been over 1900 people from 25 states and 5 countries who have visited the History Center.

### GRAND OPENING!!

On November 11, 2021, more than 180 people came out to celebrate the Grand Opening of the History Center in Memory of Pete Richards at the Fort Fremont Preserve. FFF worked with Beaufort County (BC) for many years in the planning of the building. Construction was overseen by the County.

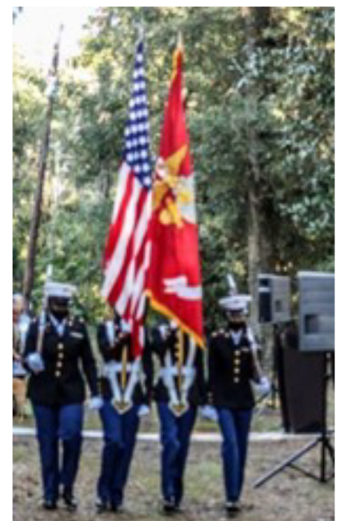
FFF worked hand-in-hand with BC in the planning of the event. BC Passive Parks Manager, Ms. Stefanie Nagid presided over the event that included: a Presentation of the Colors by the Whale Branch Early College High School Marine Corps JROTC color guard, a Gullah/Geechee honoring ritual by Queen Quet; welcoming addresses by BC Administrator Eric Greenway, BC Councilman Paul Sommerville, and FFF President Kathy Mixon. FFF Marian Rollings gave the memorial address for Pete Richards and presented his wife, Betsy, with a commemorative plaque. The atmosphere of the ceremony was enhanced by patriotic music provided by members of the Parris Island Marine Band.



Who are the Friends of Fort Fremont (FFF) In 2006 a group of local Master Naturalists were prompted by Pete Richards to develop a plan to clear the overgrown, graffiti filled Batteries, and work with Beaufort County to achieve the goal of an interactive history center at the site. We would not have reached this point without the many volunteers who contributed countless hours in pursuit of the mission to preserve and promote the educational, historical, cultural and natural resources of The Fort Fremont Preserve. Volunteers conducted historical research and site clean-up, website and social media design, community outreach, exhibitions and docent tours, tree identification, and have developed, dioramas and an award-winning documentary.

Members act as Docents and Guides at the History Center on Fridays and Saturdays to welcome visitors and lead guided tours.

Whale Branch Early College HS  
MARINE CORPS JROTC



## UNIFORMS AT FORT FREMONT



Docents Ted Panayotoff and Fred Channels in typical uniforms of the period. Ted (on the left) is wearing a service uniform. Fred (on the right) is in work clothing.

Although it appears that the uniforms were two tone, they in actuality were the lighter color. It appears that the gentlemen were shaded partially and created a shadow on each .

*SUBMITTED BY WENDY WILSON*



**Drill and Work Detail Clothing** The occupational work of the Coast Artillery was a messy business. The nickname of "Cosmoline Soldiers" was well founded. For the Enlisted men manning and maintaining the big guns and cleaning of the equipment was constant . To preserve their olive drab uniform from oil and grime, they were issued denim work overalls. *(Picture from CDSG site. Other Fort about 1910.)*

## National Military History Organizations Visit Fort Fremont

Submitted by Ted Panayotoff

The Coast Defense Study Group (CDSG), a national organization devoted to the study of the nation's coastal defense fortifications and the Council on America's Military Past (CAMP), a national organization devoted to all aspects of our military history held their annual conferences in the area. Approximately 60 members of both groups visited Fort Fremont on the morning of October 15.

The tour was organized by Ted Panayotoff, AKA Sgt. Ted. Volunteers spent countless hours cutting back vines and other vegetation and cleaning up the grounds to get ready for the tour. The Beaufort County Passive Parks Manager, Stefanie Nagid opened the History Center before the official grand opening to accommodate the group.

Visitors were shown the exhibits in the new History Center including the diorama of the fort as it existed around 1910 by FFF member and diorama creator Dennis Cannady. The two concrete gun batteries were described by FFF member docents, some in period uniforms. Visitors made use of a new smartphone downloadable guided tour with narration and historic photos. Refreshments (traditional coffee and donuts) were served in the new picnic pavilion by an appropriately dressed "donut dolly".

The groups appreciated all the effort made on their behalf. The CDSG newsletter stated, "A new visitors' center has just been completed and opened especially for the CDSG visit. This was a pleasant surprise. The nice grounds, cleaned up batteries, and great phone app interpretive tour was a welcome change from the neglected batteries of 20 years ago."

Kudos to everyone who made this tour a success. It was great national exposure for Fort Fremont!



FFF member Dennis Cannady demonstrating his diorama of Fort Fremont



'Donut Dolly' FFF Secretary Jane Forsythe passing out refreshments in the pavilion.



FFF member Ted Panayotoff, in uniform, describing a fort battery to the visitors.



FFF member Marian Rollings with her award winning quilt of the Fort

## IN MEMORY



**Pete Richards 1942-2020.** Pete, founder and first president of the Friends of Fort Fremont, was the driving force for rediscovering Ft. Fremont's legacy in its appropriate local, national, and international historical context. His energy, enthusiasm, and dogged determination transformed an unknown historical ruin into a recognized historical relic of interest to many. In 2021, *Beaufort County recognized Pete's contributions by naming the Fort Fremont History Center in Memory of Pete Richards.*



**Carl Dorr 1924-2021.** Carl was an engineer, Army aviator, race car driver, and a man of many passions. He had a life-long love of military history and was an ardent supporter of Fort Fremont for over 50 years. A memorial fund has been established in Carl's name. The funds will be used to preserve the Fort.

*SUBMITTED BY WENDY WILSON*

FFF goal is to enhance the Visitor experience! If you are interested in volunteering please contact us at [presidentfortfremont@gmail.com](mailto:presidentfortfremont@gmail.com). Our web site is '[www.fortfremont.org](http://www.fortfremont.org)'

## DONATION FORM

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