



Friends of Fort Fremont

Preserving the Past, Inspiring the Future

Second Edition 2022 Newsletter

Editors: Marty & Ann Hupka

Possible publication submissions:
marty.hupka@gmail.com



When you visit Fort Fremont, in addition to the concrete gun placements you will see the beautiful new History Center, which was designed by Architect Michael Griffith and built by Beaufort County, pictured here. Inside this lovely air-conditioned building, you will view a replica of the original fort. The diorama was built by Dennis Cannady, a FFF Member. Dennis used US Corps of Engineers documents, so the Diorama is true to original specifications.

Fort Fremont Preserve is open from dawn to dusk. THE HISTORY CENTER is open FRIDAY and SATURDAY —Friday from 10:00AM to 2:00PM. Saturday from 10:00 AM to 4:00PM. Special arrangements can be made for large group visits, e.g. School Children and Tours Groups.

SOME VISITOR COMMENTS

Dear Mr. Fred Channels,

Robert and I wanted to thank you for the extensive time you spent with us on our tour last week. I can't imagine having a more enjoyable experience at Fort Fremont.

Your extensive knowledge brought the tour to life! We are so grateful that you devote your talents and service in such a dynamic way! We look forward to visiting again soon.

Thank you, Elizabeth Smith



This is a picture of the Enlisted Men's Barracks that was taken of the diorama. Notice how the History Center matched the architectural features of the barracks. The fort had a contingency of 109 soldiers. The diorama shows the Officer and NCO Quarters, Mess Hall, Bakery, and Barn with corral. If you visit an actual military installation from this era our diorama would depict it.

From TRIPADVISOR:

Excellent tour by Jon, he was extremely knowledgeable about the facility and had detailed narrative. Great stop for an hour or two with families. (Written July 29, 2022)

From the Pres & CEO of Beaufort SC Regional Chamber of Commerce. I took the guided tour last month and loved it, Great new destination for Beaufort.

THE SOLDIERS OF FORT FREMONT

CAPT. JOSEPH L. KNOWLTON, Commander 16th Company, Fort Fremont 1901 - 1902

Distinguished military officer with ties to Beaufort

Joseph Lippincott Knowlton was born in Joliet, IL in 1872. He entered the U.S. Military Academy in 1891, graduated 9th in his class, and was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant of artillery in 1895. In 1900, Knowlton was garrisoned at Fort Fremont as a member of the E Battery of the 2nd Artillery Regiment. In September 1901 he was promoted to captain and assumed command of the 16th Company, Coast Artillery at Fort Fremont.

While at Fort Fremont, Knowlton met Eleanor Elizabeth Danner, daughter of a prominent Beaufort merchant. They were married in October 1902 in a lavish wedding at St. Helena Parish Church, Beaufort (see insert). The Knowltons had five children of which three boys lived to adulthood.

During a 30-year military career, Knowlton served various stations in the United States, two tours in the Philippines, and France during WWI. The 60th Annual Report of the Association of Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy, June 12, 1929, reported "...[Knowlton's] service in the Army, his promotions and transfers were recognized by his commanding officers in the most appreciative and laudatory terms and in every instances reports stressed his attention to duty, his professional zeal, his intelligence and excellent judgement in the performance of his duty and in his handling and instructing of enlisted men."

Knowlton retired as a colonel in June 1921 and joined the faculties of Alexander Hamilton Institute and later the College of the City of New York in the mathematics department. Col. Knowlton died suddenly while in Paris in 1928 at the age of 56. Knowlton and his wife are buried in the cemetery at West Point, NY. The rest of the family is buried in the St. Helena Parish Church, Beaufort, in the Danner family plot.

Excerpts from The State Newspaper

Beaufort, Oct. 3, 1902

KNOWLTON-DANNER

As pretty a Wedding as Ever Witnessed in Beaufort St. Helena Church looked very pretty Thursday last, on the occasion of the marriage of Miss Eliza Danner and Capt. Joseph L. Knowlton. The two pillars supporting the gallery nearest to the chancel were draped with United States Flags, while at the rear of the chancel were two more flags. The chapel itself was dressed in pink flowers and ferns...

The bride came in on the arm of her father, Mr. W. Porter Danner, and looked very beautiful...

A marked feature of the occasion was the presence of Capt. Knowlton's company of regular artillery in full uniform. The pretty bride was met at the altar by the groom, who was in full uniform...

The couple left, amid many wishes for happiness, by the noon train for an extended bridal tour. They will be gone about a month, and on their return will reside at Fort Fremont, of which post Capt. Knowlton is commander...



Article compiled by Wendy Wilson with contributions by Ted Panayotoff and Ray Rollings

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION



Ray Rollings instructing a class from USCB Osher Lifelong Learning Institute . (OLLI)



Ted Panayotoff with students from the **Beaufort Christian School**



Cecile Dorr challenges students to “history is a mystery”!



Fred Channels explaining the history of Fort Fremont to the Step of Faith Academy.



Marty Hupka shows coal to students from the Hobbit Hill Day Camp



Dennis Cannady talks about the diorama with visitors.

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS:



Ray and Marian Rollings

Ray and Marian were part of the original half dozen volunteers drawn from a newly graduated Spring Island Master Naturalist course. The indefatigable Pete Richards drew this diverse group together, and they would form the initial nucleus of the Friends. Given Pete’s persuasive skills, we are not sure any of the group had any choice but to volunteer!

Ray and Marian are both professional civil engineers who had lengthy careers with the Army Corps of Engineers research labs in Mississippi and New Hampshire. When they “retired” and moved to Beaufort in 2005, Ray and Marian continued on contract for specialized consulting to the Air Force Civil Engineering Center until they “really retired” in 2020. They have multi-generational ties to the military, and Ray went to West Point and served 30 years as an Air Force engineering officer on active duty and in the Air Guard and Reserve. Between military ties and engineering interests, the magnificent ruins of Ft. Fremont posed a fascinating puzzle for them.

Early on Pete tagged Ray and Marian to pull together historical background and identify infrastructure issues. This triggered an odyssey to a dozen Endicott-era and older forts on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, to archives and records depositories in D.C., College Park, Carlisle, Columbia, and West Point, extensive interactions with the National Park Service at Ft. Moultrie and experts at Tybee Island, Ft. Mott, Ft. Wadsworth, and with the Coast Defense Study Group. Of course, there were also voluminous printed and on-line material to be checked out. And yet, there is always more to be done and found!

Attending lectures by Dr. Steve Wise and Dr. Larry Rowland after arriving in Beaufort certainly rekindled their interest in local history (Ray is originally from SC and Marian from GA). With the onset of the pandemic Ray started an on-line masters in military history from the Citadel.

FFF Goal is to enhance the Visitor experience! If you are interested in Volunteering please contact us at Presidentfortfremont@gmail.com

DONATION FORM

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Friends of Fort Fremont and

Mail to: P.O.Box 982

St. Helena Island, SC 29920

Or

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