

WHITESBOG PRESERVATION TRUST NEWSLETTER

Winter, 1996

They're Back: The Arctic Tundra Swans visit Whitesbog Cranberry Bogs

According to Martha Windisch, Naturalist for the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, "no where else in New Jersey can you observe Tundra Swans at such close range than at historic Whitesbog Village. The visitor can view these magnificent swans from their own car just by following the old bog roads leading out of the Village Common."

The swans at Whitesbog prefer the abandoned flooded cranberry bogs and reservoirs in the center of what used to be the old J.J. White cranberry farm. In March, over 500 or more swans can be seen wintering on the bogs. These swans have been featured in an article in the New York Times and highlighted on "Discover New Jersey," produced by New Jersey Network.

The Tundra swans that winter at Whitesbog are America's most common native swan. These white magnificent birds have a 6 to 7 foot wing span and their mellow and high pitched voices can be heard long before the ribbon-like flock can be seen. Each year around November, the swans begin to arrive at Whitesbog. Their peak abundance periods are mid-December and mid-February through March.

The Tundra swans that visit the Pine Barrens during the winter particularly enjoy eating the tubes of a plant called Red Root. Red Root is a weed that competes with the cranberry vines for nutrients and can be found in both the active and inactive cranberry bogs.

Join the Trust on February 8, 1997 for a guided tour (10AM and 12 Noon) of these majestic birds.

1996-97 Calendar of Events

December 1996

Full Moon Hike - Saturday, 12/28/96 - 7PM

January 1997

Winter Wonderland - Sunday, 1/19/97 - 3PM

Full Moon Hike - Saturday, 1/25/97 - 7PM

February 1997

Whistling Swan Tours - Saturday, 2/8/97 - 10AM and 12 Noon

Full Moon Hike - Saturday, 2/22/97 - 7PM

March 1997

"Elizabeth C. White" A "Woman in History" Presentation - Sunday, 3/9/96 - 3PM

St. Patty's Signs of Spring - Green Walk - Sunday, 3/16/97 - 3PM

Full Moon Hike - Saturday, 3/22/97 - 7PM

To register for guided tours, call the Trust office at 609-893-4646. Tours are \$4/person, \$9/family, FREE to Trust members.

Whitesbog Village Comes Back to Life

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust will be launching an oral history project about life in Whitesbog Village from 1930 to 1950. The documentary, titled, "Whitesbog Village: An American Company Town," will provide first-hand accounts from very different perspectives of life in an authentic American company town.

The program is made possible through a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. (Continued on next page)

The video is scheduled for release in the spring of 1998. We are interested in talking to anyone who lived in the Village between 1930 and 1950. If you qualify, call the Trust office at (609) 893-4646

Most Wanted List

The Trust has been desperately searching for a donation of the following items for its office:

Fax Machine
File Cabinets
TV & VCR
Slide Projector & Screen
Computers

If you know the whereabouts of any of the equipment listed above please notify the Trust office at 609-893-4646. Thank you.

How Much Do You Know About Whitesbog's History?

In the early 1900's, Whitesbog was the largest cranberry farm in New Jersey. The founder of Whitesbog, J.J. White, was a nationally recognized leader in the cranberry industry with a published book called, Cranberry Culture, (copyright 1870) that was considered the "hand-book" on cranberry cultivation.

J.J. White also worked for a period of time for the H.B. Smith Company of Smithville, Burlington County. This experience came in handy for Mr. White, who designed many pieces of equipment used at the time in cranberry harvesting, cleaning and processing.

In 1916 Elizabeth C. White, J.J. White's oldest daughter, collaborated with Dr. Frederick Coville, U.S. Department of Agriculture and developed the first cultivated blueberry. This was the start of a major industry both in the New Jersey Pinelands and throughout the Country.

Whitesbog Village had its own Post Office which started primarily because of the heavy shipments of blueberry cuttings and bushes (continued on page 3).

Message from the President

John Nardone became President of the Trust in April 1996. Mr. Nardone joined the Board as Treasurer in 1994. A resident of Mt. Holly, John's link to Whitesbog goes way back to his father who worked at Whitesbog picking cranberries for the J.J. White company. Previous to becoming Treasurer, John was an active volunteer with the Trust for several years.

Hello and welcome to Whitesbog. Our periodic newsletter is a way for us to provide our members with interesting facts and information on Whitesbog's natural environment and history. The newsletter is also a vehicle by which we can update you on the progress of the Trust's programs and initiatives in our continuing effort to preserve Whitesbog for future generations.

As many of you already know, Whitesbog is a very special place. It provides an abundance of educational and interpretive opportunities about the history, culture and natural environment of the New Jersey Pinelands. Now in our 14th year, there is clear, visible evidence that the years of hard work by the Trust's volunteers and the support of our members is paying off. If you have been out recently you have noticed lots of changes. The barrel factory and workers cottages are being stabilized. We have a kiosk. There are more residential houses occupied then ever before.

A record number of visitors have enjoyed the Trust's educational seasonal series, interpretive historic tours and special events this year. Public interest in Whitesbog is spreading well beyond the boundaries of the site. Trust representatives have been invited to many senior communities, organizations, and special interest groups to lecture about the history, culture and natural environment of Whitesbog.

If you are not currently a member of the Trust, I hope you will take this opportunity to join. If you need a reason, come out to one of our events. See for yourself how beautiful Whitesbog is, how much has been accomplished, and learn how important a resource this site is to our community.

John Nardone,
President

Whitesbog History (continued from page 2)

nationwide in the early 1920's. Elizabeth was the first American to use cellophane in blueberry packaging, a practice still used today for all kinds of fruit.

During its height of operation, Whitesbog employed a work-force of 600 Italian immigrants to pick the cranberries during harvest time. These workers were recruited from neighborhoods in south Philadelphia and lived at the bogs during harvest season in two satellite villages called Rome and Florence.

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust conducts interpretive tours about the history of Whitesbog. To order a schedule of events, call the Whitesbog Preservation Trust at 609-893-4646.

What's Happening

In 1991, the Whitesbog Preservation Trust developed a "Master Plan" for the re-development and re-use of Whitesbog. The Plan has guided the work of the Trust in cooperation with the Division of Parks and Forestry in establishing programs and projects at Whitesbog to preserve it for future generations. Accomplishments to date include:

Restoration Projects:

- Water tower and water system
- Barrel Storage House
- Field Office
- Boarding House
- Suningive (Elizabeth C. White House)
- Entomologist House (Darlington House)
- Superintendents House
- Two Story Cottage
- Nature Trail

Building Stabilization Projects:

- Barrel Factory
- Workers Cottages

On-Going Education and Interpretation Programs Initiated:

Seasonal Series - regularly scheduled selection of tours on the culture, history and natural environment of Whitesbog.

Lecture Program - representatives of the Trust provide presentations to groups, organizations and senior communities throughout the state.

On-going Annual Special Events Initiated:

- Blueberry Festival
- Cranberry Harvest Tours
- Halloween Evening in the Pines
- Pickerel Catch
- Holiday Candlelight Tour

The Results.

Reaching a Wider Audience. The interpretive programs, tours and lectures are getting the word out about Whitesbog to a larger audience than ever before. Visitation to Whitesbog increased 41% in 1996 over 1995. More people are learning about Whitesbog than ever before.

Providing Community Service Opportunities. Much of the restoration work achieved in the Village has been the result of community service work by the Burlington County Day Program, the Lumberton Special Schools, Learn and Serve Program; and the Boy Scout Troop #145. Not only does the Trust get needed work done on the site but the participants in these programs learn about Whitesbog and the natural environment of the Pine Barrens

Coming In 1997...

Restoration Projects

- School House
- Workers Cottages' Privies
- Elizabeth C. White Garden
- Elizabeth C. White Potting Shed

Expanded Education Programs

- Oral History Project.

Publications: Nature Trail Guide,
Driving Tour Guide, Trees of Whitesbog
and Human Influence on Whitesbog.

Thank you to the Members of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust!!

Thank you to all of our members for your generous support over the years. We could not have achieved so much with out your help.

Three Cheers For Volunteers!!

The Trust has a great group of volunteers. We would like to recognize and thank all of our volunteers whose efforts are invaluable. Special acknowledgement is due to the two volunteers listed below.

Janet Robbins

The Trust could not survive without her. She organizes all of the Trust's special events and many of the seasonal series tours. Her loyalty to Whitesbog is unwavering. Recently, Janet was appointed Treasurer to the Trust's Board of Trustees. Thank you Janet.

Danielle Kearns

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of the many hours of time Daniel spends updating our data base. Danielle is a regular volunteer at all of our special events and provides invaluable assistance to Janet Robbins with pre-event preparations. Danielle is a student of Burlington County College majoring in Environmental Education. Thank you Daniel.

**Whitesbog Preservation Trust
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And Now, A Word for Our Sponsors

The following Foundations, Corporations and Businesses have made it possible for the Trust to continue the restoration of Whitesbog Village with substantial donations, funding, or in-kind contributions:

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