



FRIENDS
— OF —
CHARLESTON
NATIONAL PARKS

in a race



with time

To help save our sites, preserve their history,
and awaken people to their storied past,
this is our case for support.

rich in history



**rich in history
but in need of friends**

Friends of Charleston National Parks: We have a history, too.

Since 1999, in one form or another, Friends of Charleston National Parks (FCNP) has raised funds to preserve and promote the historically significant national park sites in the Charleston area. The earlier groups – The Friends of Snee Farm and the Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie Trust -- melded into the FCNP. They can point to some remarkable feats of collaboration and fundraising that resulted in::

- Preventing encroaching real estate development that threatened Fort Moultrie
- Preserving Civil War history through commemorations and historical waysides
- Creating an initiative to save Fort Sumter's and Fort Moultrie's rare artillery
- Educating underserved school children through immersive field trips to Fort Sumter

Such successes attest to the determined efforts of the people who make up what is now FCNP.

Today, we focus our outreach and funding efforts on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, the Charles Pinckney National Historic Site in Mount Pleasant, and on the Sullivan's Island sites of Fort Moultrie and the Charleston Light – all owned and managed by the National Park Service (NPS).

As a philanthropic partner, we raise funds to help the NPS create opportunities for everyone – especially young people – to connect with the remarkable stories of South Carolina's Lowcountry and the significant role Charleston played in American history from the Revolution through World War II and beyond.

Photos from top to bottom: Fort Sumter, a diverse wealth of stories for new generations; Fort Moultrie, inspiring in its centuries-old resilience; Charleston Light, iconic architecture and a cherished landmark; Charles Pinckney, a cultural legacy with renewed meaning.

Friends of Charleston National Parks is the official philanthropic partner of Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site.

Educational experiences that touch emotions and intellect

Past and ongoing efforts of Friends include our development of informative programs to augment the experience of a park visit. We have produced educational videos, used state-of-the-art technology, and implemented a local version of the national Kids to Parks, Open Outdoors for Kids and Every Kid Outdoors programs.

“Kids to the Parks” videos. To offer virtual field trips to Fort Sumter, FCNP produced five videos narrated by park rangers and posted them to the SCETV Need to Know website for teachers. They’re also available on the YouTube channel associated with our own website, www.friendscnp.org.

Equitable access to our landmarks, culture, history and nature

Our longstanding program, Kids to the Parks, has inspired thousands of local school children to connect and discover history by visiting our landmarks. In partnership with Charleston County School District, Kids to the Parks has been a great success for fourth graders attending our local Title 1 schools (that is, schools with low-income children and children in need of assistance in language arts or mathematics).

From 2020 to 2021, we were unable to offer the program because of the coronavirus pandemic. But in 2022, we rebooted the program at Fort Sumter to tremendous success. It included an extensive pre-trip classroom visit with a park ranger, followed by a ranger-guided visit to the park where students were immersed with their new knowledge of history.

Kids to the Parks. FCNP fundraising covers the cost of the bus and boat transportation needed to bring young students to Fort Sumter. It’s the first boat ride for many and first exposure to the work of the National Park Service.







“The work of committed and engaged partners like the Friends is integral in the National Park Service’s efforts to preserve significant places and stories and offer educational and recreational opportunities for visitors from across our nation and around the world.

Our collaboration gives us more opportunities to offer programming that connect with the public and makes history relevant, and it helps us leave parks and resources in better condition than when we inherited them.”

*~J. Tracy Stakely, Superintendent
Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Park*



Taking back time...

our work to help preserve and restore history

FCNP also has a hand in fundraising for preservation, a need that's becoming increasingly important as historic park structures continue to age and face threats from the impact of climate change.

The ravages of time and the marine environment along our seacoast have taken a toll. Our park sites have had to forego needed structural repairs for lack of a budget to keep up with the pace of decline.

Urgent funding work lies ahead. Charleston Light has deteriorated from age and needs significant repair to maintain the structure and give the public access to its singular architecture. And for years, the outer brick walls of Fort Sumter have suffered the effects of stronger and more frequent weather events.

FCNP is here to help the National Park Service with whatever preservation and improvement projects they identify for us, now and in the future.

In the meantime, the park's collection of cannons at Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter, dating from 1830 to 1890, represent the best collection of historic seacoast artillery in the United States. In 2013, our organization created the **Adopt-a-Cannon** program that continues to raise the funds necessary to conserve and treat these vulnerable historic assets.

Exploring new ways to support the National Park Service

In the coming years, Friends will be involved with park-based education for adults, as well as children. The large-scale preservation projects that NPS has on the drawing board will benefit from the development of a historic preservation maintenance skills program.

The program aims to train staff in maintaining historic resources including historic brickwork at Fort Sumter and the structure of Charleston Light to ensure the longevity of this well-loved regional landmark.

Similarly, the launch of a new preservation mentorship program for high school and college students would create a pipeline of motivated, skilled young people prepared to help protect our heritage.



“Preserving the Lowcountry with its beauty and history is very personal to me. I’ve been part of what is now FCNP since 2011 and have helped battle against the disinvestment threatening Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter. No one else is doing the work we do -- raising funds and inspiring appreciation for four small parks that are so hugely rich in history. It’s why I continue to give. We love our NPS attractions, but they need love in return. They need your support -- locals and visitors alike -- if they are to continue to tell the story of our rich history.”

*~Jim Thompson, Advisor
Friends of Charleston National Parks*







Photo Credit: NPS



looking ahead

LOOKING AHEAD **to 2026 and America's 250th birthday:** **An honor and a challenge**

To add to the pressing needs of our mission, the eyes of the nation and the world will soon be upon us. Alongside Boston, New York City and Philadelphia, Charleston was named by the U.S. Congress and America's 250 Commission as one of the four largest colonial cities that played a significant role in the founding of our Nation, establishing expectations for more meaningful and special programming.

Besides commemorating the American Revolution, the 250th anniversary is an opportunity to share Charleston's history in ways that fully explore the diverse people and complex dynamics of our past. Therefore, the FCNP will work with the National Park Service to expand our interpretation and educational programs with as yet untold stories of the people who have historic connections to all our sites.

We will also help with improvements to the visitor experience at Fort Moultrie, a site whose history ties directly to our country's founding.

Milestones on the Way to Becoming Friends

**Over the years,
the effective efforts
of key grassroots
groups have evolved
into the streamlined
organization that
is now Friends of
Charleston
National Parks.**

1988

Private citizens organize the nonprofit Friends of Historic Snee Farm Plantation to purchase a 38-acre plantation remnant once owned by Charles Pinckney, a contributing author and signer of the U.S. Constitution. Their significant financial assistance allows the National Park Service to acquire the site.

1999

A consortium of citizens works to purchase a small parcel of private land with a building encroaching on Fort Moultrie and its historic vista of Charleston Harbor. Thus, the Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Historical Trust is born. It transfers the property to the National Park Service.

2009

The Trust begins work to commemorate the 2011 American Civil War Sesquicentennial with historical waysides, public ceremonies and speakers.

2011

The Trust funds a local version of a program created by the National Parks Trust. The new "Kids to the Parks" program enables 4th grade children from Charleston's high poverty public schools to visit Fort Sumter. The group also sponsors a commemoration of a 1776 Revolutionary War battle at Thomson Park at Breach Inlet. Friends of Historic Snee Farm is absorbed into Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Trust making it the administrator of projects for the Charles Pinckney National Historic Site.

2013

The Trust begins raising funds that allow the Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie Historical National Park and Clemson University to conserve rare historic cannons by creating the Adopt-a-Cannon program.

2022

Given the added responsibility to help raise funds for the Charleston Light (gifted to NPS in 1990 by the U.S. Coast Guard) and Sullivan's Island Life Saving Station (transferred to NPS in 2008), the Trust chooses to expand its role and rebrands the organization.

2023

The newly branded Friends of Charleston National Parks enters a new era of philanthropic support for its four sites: Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie Historical National Park, Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, and Charleston Light at Sullivan's Island.

mission ready

Poised to understand, prepare, program, and sustain our core mission responsibilities.

Our mission at Friends of Charleston National Parks is to support the appreciation and preservation of Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie Historical National Park, Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, and Charleston Light at Sullivan's Island. We advocate for their continued importance and educate new generations about their historic significance as they relate to the events and people of the past.

These national treasures reflect our continued learning and evolving society as we move toward a better future. The FCNP seeks to support living history at its best.

Friends of Charleston National Parks and the National Park Service work together to develop partnership projects and programs that address the priorities of these four sites and have the potential to attract philanthropic support.

The Mission of the Friends of Charleston National Parks is to support Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie Historical National Park, Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, and Charleston Light at Sullivan's Island by building a broad network of philanthropic supporters dedicated to committing their financial resources to preserve these parks.

Friends of Charleston National Parks builds pathways toward educating the community about our park resources and their contribution to Charleston's substantive role in American history, the importance of their preservation, and the benefit of engaging visitors in the culture, lives, stories and struggles of our forebears.

mission & vision

friends of friends

We are grateful for the support of many partners in achieving our mission to promote and protect Charleston's national parks today and for generations to come.

We add our own unique strengths to those of our philanthropic partners National Parks Foundation, Explore Charleston, National Park Trust, and South Carolina ETV.

An articulated set of values guides our staff, board members, advisors and volunteers...

1

Listening

Our source of insight, empathy and innovation.

4

Impact

We are results-oriented and bold in our actions.

2

Respect

Our best work is produced when we treat each other with respect.

5

Gratitude

We are thankful for our supporters.

3

Collaboration

By working together, we achieve our best outcomes.

6

Accountability

We are accountable and transparent to our donors and stakeholders.



FCNP maintains a presence
online and in social media
to stay in touch with the
general public, promote
our programs
and encourage fans
of our national historic parks
to get involved.

Donate
Attend
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Volunteer
Support a Campaign

Visit www.friendscnp.org



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