

Chief of Maintenance Office
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Bally Archives

SCOPE OF COLLECTIONS

Gulf Islands National Seashore

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Gulf Islands National Seashore, in the States of Florida and Mississippi, was established in 1971:

- 1) to preserve for public use and enjoyment certain areas possessing outstanding natural, historic, and recreational values.
- 2) to provide for the recognition of certain historic values at Fort San Carlos (correctly known as Barrancas Water Battery), The Advanced Redoubt, Fort Barrancas, and Fort Pickens in Florida, and Fort Massachusetts in Mississippi.

The national seashore comprises the following gulf coast islands and mainland areas, together with adjacent water areas:

Mississippi

Ship, Horn, Petit Bois Islands
**Davis Bayou Area(including Marsh Point)

Florida

Perdido Key Area
Pensacola Forts Area
Naval Live Oaks Area
Fort Pickens Area
Santa Rosa Area
Okaloosa Day Use Area
* Okaloosa Area
* Navarre Beach Area

The scope of collections for Gulf Islands National Seashore exemplifies both cultural and natural resources within the national seashore. The purpose of the collection is:

- 1) to provide background information to the park interpreter or resource manager.
- 2) to satisfy visitor inquiries.
- 3) to provide exhibit objects.

** 600 acre boundary adjustment and increase authorized by PL95-625.

* These sections are authorized, but presently owned by Eglin Air Force Base.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The general interpretive theme for the history at Gulf Islands National Seashore concerns coastal defense system 1796-1946.** In order to implement this interpretive theme, it will be necessary to collect several categories of specimens representing military life and activities. These categories are:

- I. Military objects used during the above time periods in this area including weapons and their accessories, field equipment, and other personal gear, mess equipment, uniforms and related accouterments, insignia and awards, vehicles and their accessories, tools, flags, and colors and documentary materials (e.g., maps, manuals, forms, diaries, etc.).
- II. Items of civilian life which might have been used by soldiers in their everyday life and off-duty time. Such items might include clothing, personal grooming and adornment articles, musical instruments, and other recreational devices, reading matter, tools, etc.
- III. Furniture, decorative accessories, equipment, tools, supplies and other objects necessary for the furnishing of restored rooms and other structures within the national seashore. Restoration periods vary with each structure.
- IV. Examples of the types of tools, equipment, and instruments used in the construction of the fortifications and supporting structures.
- V. Objects such as weapons, utensils, clothing, tools, equipment, games, crafts, and shelters used by prisoners of war at the fortifications. These specimens must be authentic as to age.
- VI. Objects relating to the Chase and Breckinridge families in Florida.
- VII. Any historical artifacts of known and documented provenience relating directly to Gulf Islands National Seashore history or to any of the military personnel who served there, provided that such artifacts are dated within the historic period.
- VIII. Original documents, manuscripts, or printed material directly related to planning construction and operation of the historic structures.

** The time period will extend to the present when Eglin Air Force Base releases the Navarre Beach and Okaloosa Areas.

Secondary cultural interpretive themes cover these periods:

Florida and Mississippi:

I. Prehistoric Peoples

All archeological materials recovered from within the boundary of Gulf Islands National Seashore. Three representative pieces of each archeological period will be retained at the national seashore. Additional material will be placed in the archeological research collection at Southeast Archeological Center.

Florida

II. European Exploration and Settlement in Pensacola Area (1500-1821):

Objects relating to colonial exploration activities.

Mississippi

III. European Exploration - 1669-1750 Along Mississippi Coast:

Objects (diaries, letters, journals, etc.) related to colonial exploration activities of early explorers to the gulf coast, Florida to Louisiana.

Authentic items associated with d'Iberville and his party.

IV. Lighthouse Era on Ship Island (1852-1885):

Equipment, uniforms, and related objects used by lighthouse keepers essential to the operations of both types of lighthouse structures.

Authentic drawings, prints, negatives, letters, reports, diaries, and other documents concerned with lighthouse operations or family life.

V. Quarantine Station, Ship Island - East Circa 1878-1893:

Authentic documents, reports, manuscripts, photographs, and other printed material directly relating to planning, construction, occupation and operation of the hospital complex on East Ship Island.

Authentic printed and non-printed material illustrating incidents of hospital life.

Medical/surgical equipment and related objects utilized to treat patients.

Gravestone markers are periodically uncovered that identify patients who died at the hospital complex. Attempts should be made to acquire markers that might be in private ownership. The national seashore holds several of these markers in storage.

VI. World War II Biological Warfare Site, Horn Island (1943-1945):

Original objects (military uniforms, personal items, etc.) used by military/civilian personnel during the period when the U. S. Army acquired Horn Island on March 23, 1943, until the unit was declared excess on August 13, 1945.

Original documents, illustrations, photographs, maps, and memorabilia relating to military life on the island during the wartime efforts. Particular emphasis should be paid to scientific experimentations with biological agents developed for defense against chemical warfare. Such objects as laboratory equipment and related paraphernalia should be included.

VII. Joe Graham American Legion Post on Ship Island (1933-1972):

The Joe Graham American Legion Post of Gulfport, Mississippi, used Fort Massachusetts for dancing, gambling, and other recreational pursuits.

VIII. Keesler Air Force Base on Ship Island - East (1942-1945):

Keesler Air Force Base used the former Quarantine Station on Ship Island - East, as a rest and relaxation area during World War II. Photographs, authentic written narrative reports, official descriptive literature and oral historic reports relating to these time periods of the American Legion Post and Keesler Air Force Base.

Natural Resources

The overall natural history interpretive theme is barrier islands are geologically very dynamic land forms which demand specialized adaptations for survival of plant and animal communities.

A secondary theme is barrier islands protect adjacent water and mainland areas which in turn are unique ecologically--be it a salt marsh, a bay, a sand pine association, a live oak stand, or a bottomland mixed pine-hardwood community.

Based on interpretive needs and collections in the possession of nearby institutions, the following recommendations are made:

Geology:

Lands within the national seashore are primarily composed of sandy type soils with no rock formations. Therefore, no geologic collections are needed. However, reference material including books, pamphlets and scientific reports pertaining to the geology of barrier islands and their adjacent submerged lands and mainland should be maintained. In addition, an active program of beach monitoring through beach profiles should be continued either by park personnel or through cooperative agreements.

Flora:

The Mississippi reference collection shall contain the Gerald J. Miller 1972 collection and the Anne S. Bradburn 1976 collection. These collections shall be used for datum reference until they are replaced with a more recent herbarium collection. Only plant specimens received from competent sources will be accepted for inclusion in the herbarium. One specimen of each, including flower, fruit, leaf, stem, and root system of every botanical item found in Gulf Islands National Seashore is necessary for a general identification process.

Specimens will be mounted according to accepted procedures and supported by complete ecological data.

Microscopic plants will not be kept in the collection. However, a checklist of all flowering and non-flowering, macro and micro forms will be maintained.

Fauna:

In general, only those forms of animal life that are necessary to the continuance of the interpretive programs or for exhibits purposes will be collected and stored. Overt collecting of the higher forms will not be done, but road kills and specimens resulting from injury or sickness that can be adequately preserved can be saved.

Terrestrial and marine invertebrates useful to the interpretation of the seashore ecology should be collected and properly labeled and stored to make them available for use.

Reference collections for research purposes are maintained by the Environmental Protection Agency, the University of West Florida, and Pensacola Junior College in Florida, and Gulf Coast Research Laboratory in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Fairly complete collections of the lower marine life are represented.

A representative collection of all shells common to the area will be maintained.

In addition to actual specimens, the collections will contain at least one 35mm color transparency of all animal species found in the seashore. Microscopic forms will not be collected.

Checklists of all animal species will be maintained and made available for distribution to the visiting public.

Limits on Collections

Space:

Mississippi - Until the new visitor center is complete at Davis Bayou, a room 8 feet by 8 feet with 4 cabinets, is available for collections.

When the new visitor center is complete at Davis Bayou, a room 8 feet by 19 feet will be available for museum storage.

To complete the full spectrum of seashore resources, reference collections can be used at:

Gulf Coast Research Lab, Main Campus, Ocean Springs
Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Education Center, Biloxi
Coastal Field Research Laboratory, NSTL Station
Environmental Protection Agency, Pascagoula
Biology Department, Biloxi High School, Della McCaughn
Beavoir - Jefferson Davis' Home, Biloxi
Mr. James Stevens - local historian, Gulfport

Florida - Presently a historic artifacts room 8 feet by 15 feet is available. There are three cabinets 29" by 32" for cultural history, and five cabinets 29" by 40" for natural history.

Additional space will be available when the headquarters staff moves to Naval Live Oaks Area.

To complete the full spectrum of seashore resources, reference collections can be used at:

Pensacola Junior College
University of West Florida
Environmental Protection Agency-Sabine Island
Florida State Department of Environmental Regulation
Pensacola Historical Society
Fort Walton Temple Mound Museum
Historic Pensacola Preservation Board
T. W. Wentworth Museum

Security:

In Mississippi, the museum storage space has central air-conditioning and heating. A dehumidifier is available in the one storage room shared with Eastern NP&MA.

The visitor contact station has a burglar alarm system.

The new visitor center will have a full complement of climatic and burglar alarm systems.

In Florida, the museum storage space has climatic control by a wall air-conditioning unit and a dehumidifier. No heating is available, except through the adjacent room (heated by a gas stove).

Cabinets for the marine specimens and herbarium have no air-conditioning and gas heat in the winter. Remodeling is planned for 1979 for climatic controls for the wing with the museum storeroom and where the herbarium is located.

Locks are used on all doors. No burglar alarm system exists.

Status of Curatorial Records:

Florida District

168 accessions have been recorded since November 1972. These represent 1715 artifacts. Original records are sent periodically to a central depository. Copies and file cards are kept in the interpretive offices.

Records are up-to-date to within a 3-month backlog.

Mississippi District

439 accessions representing 509 artifacts have been recorded thus far. Copies of the inventory cards are kept in a metal cabinet in the interpreter's office.

Records are up-to-date to within a 2-day backlog.