



United States
Field Artillery
Association

United States Field Artillery Association
Loyal Train of Artillery Chapter
Florida Artillery School

AFTER ACTION REPORT

DATE OF ACTION:

23 August 2008

CONTACT OFFICER:

Safety Officer:

Colonel William B. Speir, Jr., RHRA
P. O. Box 781533
Orlando, FL 32878-1533 USA

Senior Instructor:

Colonel Arthur Street, USFAA
32721 E. 161 Street S.
Coweta, OK 74429-3555 USA

ACTIVITY:

School of the Piece Taught in Orlando, Florida.

In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Fay, which impacted the central Florida weather far worse than anticipated, the first USFAA sanctioned School of the Piece was taught at Turkey Lake Park in Orlando, Florida with two cannons – the 6-pound gun of the 2nd Florida Light Artillery and the 3-inch Ordinance Rifle of the Kilcrease Artillery. Nineteen students registered and 17 students attended the one day class, which covered artillery safety (lecture and demonstration), artillery structure and history, artillery ordnance, rolling proper artillery charges, as well as hands on drilling, including the misfire drill.

The school started at 8:30AM. The normal agenda was modified to take advantage of the first sunny day in several weeks. After the introductions and overview of the course was given in the indoor pavilion, the outside drilling commenced immediately so the students could have as much time on the guns before the afternoon rains arrived. During lunch, a round-table discussion was held. Topics included live fires, St. Barbara, the USFAA, the Henry Hunt letter, and other topics related to artillery in history. After lunch, the safety demonstration was conducted, which included the burn tray demonstration, lighting a live round on the ground, and firing the cannon with the meat/glove over the vent and the scarecrows in front of the muzzle. Then, the drills resumed with emphasis on the misfire drill until the first roll of thunder could be heard approaching the park. The cannons were loaded on the trailers, and the remainder of the day was spent indoors completing the lectures. Critique sheets were filled out, and the course certificates and cards were handed out to the participants. The school ended at 5:30PM.

RESULTS:

The students attending, which were a mix of experienced artillerists, as well as infantry soldiers wanting to know more about artillery, generally wished the course had been longer and many expressed interest in attending additional schools to get more hands-on practice with the guns and to learn more advanced topics of instruction. While there will be one “annual school” scheduled each year, the current plan is to take smaller schools to local artillery units and provide personalized instruction to them throughout the year.