Fort Wilderness Fact Sheet

Historical Dates:

Nov. 19, 1971 – Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground opens.

1973 – The Fort Wilderness Railroad begins offering steam train transportation service to guests staying at the campground.

1974 – Pioneer Hall opens in Fort Wilderness at Walt Disney World Resort.

1974 – An original version of "Hoop-Dee-Doo Musical Revue" opens at Pioneer Hall, performed by the All-American Musical Comedy Workshop (a group of college students similar to the All American College Band concept). The success of this short run leads to the creation of a permanent show with professional performers opening on Sept. 5, 1974.

1976 – The Fort Wilderness Kennel opens at Walt Disney World Resort.

1985 – Meadow Recreation Complex opens at Fort Wilderness.

1985 – The 2300 loop (Shawnee Bend) opens for occupancy at Fort Wilderness.

1986 – Fort Wilderness expansion is completed. (363 sites freed up by relocating trailers)

1986 – Pioneer Hall begins "Melvin the Moose Breakfast Show."

1996 – Crockett's Tavern at Fort Wilderness changes from a full-service restaurant to a themed full service bar.

1997 – Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground begins replacing its Wilderness Homes with log cabins.

Facilities:

At opening in 1971:

- The Settlement Trading Post
- The Tri-Circle-D Ranch
- Fort Wilderness Landing
- Nature Trail
- Reception Outpost (temporary trailer)
- Bike Barn (temporary trailer)
- 6 loops, 3 comfort stations, 232 campsites

Added in 1973:

- Permanent Reception Outpost
- Meadow Trading Post
- 13 new loops and 482 additional sites
- Fort Wilderness Railroad

Added in 1974:

- Pioneer Hall complex including the Pioneer Hall dinner show (“Hoop-Dee-Doo Musical Revue”), Trail’s End Buffeteria and Campfire Snack Bar

Added in 1976:

- Kennel
- 2 loops and an additional 111 campsites

Added in 1978:

- Permanent Cast Services Building

Added in 1981:

- Permanent Bike Barn facility

Added in 1985:

- 7 loops and an additional 363 campsites
- Recreational facility (pool, snack bar, video game room and tennis courts near Meadow Trading Post)
- Pool and laundry facility near new loops

Added in 1997:

- Wilderness homes begin being replaced by cabins (continues gradually through 2000)

Fort Wilderness Railroad

- Opened in 1973, closed in 1977
- Featured four different five-car steam engines that burned diesel fuel
- Based on narrow-gauge “plantation locomotives” that had once operated in Hawaii and elsewhere
- Trains were designed and built internally by Walt Disney Imagineering
- The four locomotives were painted green with red trim and gold striping
- Locomotive Stats:
- Scale: 4/5
- Length: 18 feet, 3 inches
- Weight: 22,700 lbs
- Track gauge: 30 inches
- Track length: 3.5 miles
- Max speed: 10 mph
- Two of the former Fort Wilderness coaches were refurbished and used as ticket booths at Downtown Disney Pleasure Island, but were later replaced with permanent buildings. Later the two coaches were sold at auction to private individuals.
- One of the train locomotives is now on display at the Winter Garden Heritage Museum

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General Fun Facts

- Opening: Nov. 19, 1971
- Acreage: 700
- Accommodations: 409 Wilderness Homes and 799 Private Campsites

How many ribs are served at the Pioneer Hall “Hoop-Dee-Doo Musical Revue” nightly?

- About 800 lbs. One rib weighs about 8 ounces.**What is the method of application and the pattern of the shingles on the Meadow Trading Post at Fort Wilderness?**
- The shingles are Cedar Shake shingles, the heavy kind (1 1/8? thick) and are layered with tar paper. The book *Roofers Handbook* by William E. Johnson describes application. The publisher is Craftsman Book Co. and the book can be obtained at any construction bookstore.**What architect designed Fort Wilderness?**
- Dick Kline at Walt Disney Imagineering**How many miles of canals in Fort Wilderness?**
- 4 miles**Is there a lawn mower imbedded in a tree at Fort Wilderness?**
- Kind of. There is a tree, called “The Lawn Mower Tree” that has lawn mower parts exposed. There is a blade which is relatively easy to see near the base. It is located about 100 feet away from the marina building, five feet off the path leading from pioneer hall to the marina. There is a sign which describes the tree.**What were the antique trucks that used to sell groceries in Fort Wilderness in the 70?s?**
- During the 1970s, Fort Wilderness guests did not have to go past the edge of their campsite for grocery supplies. Two FOT’s (Funny Old Trucks) traveled from site to site each morning and evening, selling fruits and vegetables, bakery goods, milk and the like from built-in racks and crates. One truck was made from parts of several other vehicles. The other was an actual antique: a 1928 Double A Ford. Guests knew the trucks were coming by the sounds of an old “ah-ooo-gah” car horn or a cowbell clanging just beyond the trees. **Wasn’t there a cow with Mickey Mouse markings at the campground?**
- There was! Minnie Moo, a Holstein cow born with a silhouette of Mickey’s ears on her side, arrived at Walt Disney World Resort in 1990 from Minnesota and lived first at Grandma Duck’s Farm at Magic Kingdom and was moved to the Petting Farm at the Tri-Circle-D Ranch at Disney’s Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground. In 2001, she died at age 15.

Where is all that jovial singing coming from each night?

- At Disney’s Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground, guests can roast marshmallows with Disney characters during Chip ‘N Dale’s Campfire Sing-A-Long, a nightly event that culminates with a classic Disney movie in a theater under the stars. This free event, which features a 30-minute fire lighting ceremony, rousing group renditions of favorite camp songs and appearances by Chip and Dale, is open to all Walt Disney World guests, not just those staying at the campground.
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