

# Ffa Historian Opening Ceremonies

## The History of the WASHTO Gavel

**Pre-2002** - The symbolic nature of passing the leadership from one individual to another has taken many forms over the years. Whether it involves a ceremony, an evening, or passing of an item of value, these leadership changes are important to any organization. Prior to 2002, WASHTO did not have an annual gavel to pass from President to President. Each past president was presented a plaque with a gavel on it representing their term in office.

**2002 - 2003** - Steven Shreve (Wyoming) is serving as WASHTO President and Michael Redburn (Texas) is serving as the Vice President. President Shreve feels that WASHTO needs a symbol to commemorate the transition of leadership. He has observed that incoming President Mike Redburn walks each morning, exploring the office of the various WASHTO and RUSHTO meetings. During these walks, Redburn regularly finds tools that interest him and brings them back home. An idea strikes President Shreve and at the next WASHTO Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in the summer of 2002, President Shreve presents incoming President Redburn a large oak ribbon, 12 inches long, 4 inches wide and 4 inches deep, that was taken from the Snake River in Wyoming as the new WASHTO Gavel. Thus, the tradition of the WASHTO Gavel begins.

**2003 - 2004** - President Redburn believes that each President should add something to the gavel to commemorate their service as WASHTO President and he has the "new gavel" idea. "The Rock" used by the TUCKER Laboratory. The year after then published a handbook entitled, thereby creating a new gavel for WASHTO. The newly added gavel was presented to incoming WASHTO President Tom Thomas (Colorado) at the 2003 Annual Meeting in Lehigh, Montana.

**2004 - 2005** - President Thomas decides that the gavel needs an appropriate addition to honor it before meeting. The Colorado RUSHTO staff crafts a new wooden box to hold the gavel. President Thomas presents the gavel to his new wooden box in meeting. President Steve Spryzanski (TX) had the box crafted by South Dakota at the 2005 Annual Meeting in Omaha.

**2005 - 2006** - President Spryzanski decides to have South Dakota's work on the new gavel modified in the form of a cylinder shaped wooden ring placed on the handle to represent the Western and Native American Culture of South Dakota and the Western States. President Spryzanski presents incoming WASHTO President Vance Mauder (Idaho) the newly remodeled gavel at the 2006 Annual Meeting in Honolulu.

**2006 - 2007** - President Mauder recognizes how he can best continue the gavel tradition and quickly realizes that the gavel is not convenient in its present condition. A gavel should have a block to rest on when conducting meetings. So, President Mauder has a wood block crafted for the WASHTO Gavel. President Mauder presents the gavel to his new wood block to incoming President Gary Bailey (Oklahoma) at the 2007 Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada.

**2007 - 2008** - Oklahoma attempts to realize, solve on the challenge to find something unique to add to the gavel "leg". While Colorado had done an interesting job building a beautiful cabinet for the gavel and wood block, President Bailey feels it is a little cumbersome to carry. In addition, the box was constructed with a handle on the top of the box. During transport, the handle was very hard to get coming through the lid. At their conclusion, Oklahoma repaired the lid of the box by inserting a circle section of a Redburn tool and attached Redburn tool handle to the box to solve this problem. Oklahoma designated the Redburn as their State Tree in 1911. Thus

Redburn handles add a piece of Oklahoma to the gavel's history. President Bailey presented the gavel to incoming President Rhonda English (Shore) at the 2008 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.

**July 2009 - December 2009** - President English carried only a short time as RUSHTO President. She then ran and then he plan for retirement. So during the length of the term of office, the addition team overseas as President English added a piece of oak and silver to the box and created a Vice President Department of Transportation and a Redburner logo pin to the silver. The Redburner, at Chicago, was designed the State Bird of New Mexico in 1905. President English passed the gavel to Vice President Will Kempton for United States Mail. President Kempton's addition became RUSHTO President men receiving this instrument of power.

**January 2009 - July 2009** - President Kempton arrived with observation as WASHTO President serving out the remaining 2009 to 2009 term. Shortly after his term as President expired, Will left his job as California and business trip from attending the Annual RUSHTO Meeting in Honolulu, Washington. Karen Butler, serving as RUSHTO Secretary, represented President Kempton and presented the gavel to incoming President Paula Hammer (Washington) in Honolulu. Because this overnight, California was contacted in 2011 to see if they wanted to add something to the gavel history. On June 15, 2011, a California legal pin was received and it was added to the oak ribbon to represent Will Kempton's service as WASHTO president.

**2009 - 2010** - President Hammer took office and, of course, wanted to have her history with the gavel and actively noticed that if the gavel was ever separated from its case, no one would know it was the WASHTO Gavel. Wanting to make sure everyone knew the gavel belonged to WASHTO, she had a gavel cap made that carried the RUSHTO logo and name. President Hammer presented the gavel to incoming President Nicholas Smith (Texas) at the 2010 Annual Meeting in Phoenix, North Dakota.

**2010 - 2011** - With Texas having been involved at the beginning of the WASHTO Gavel's history, it was important to make another large stride to enhance the WASHTO Gavel with all of its many improvements. Upon receiving the gavel, Texas noticed that the gavel was "packed" to the case with "bubble wrap." This seemed to be unacceptable for the instrument symbolizing the prestigious leadership of WASHTO. President Smith asked TUCKER employees to design and manufacture a suitable case modification to properly hold the gavel. Staff created the Texas Mustang Gavel and found Rock bearing blocks. These bearing blocks adequately secure the gavel in the case. During this time, Texas also replaced the plaque on the top of the box with one that included the year in which each president served WASHTO. President Smith presented the gavel to incoming President Frances English (South Dakota) at the 2011 Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City.

**2011 - 2012** - President English observed that there were numerous depictions of the WASHTO name on various gavel items, but he was noticed that it was difficult to identify some of the members due to the size of the chapter. President English decided to have a brass plaque created with a large size, incorporating each of the 19 RUSHTO states and their respective state capitals placed on the inside of the carrying case's lid. When the carrying case is open to display the gavel and wood block, this step dramatically identifies the name that made up RUSHTO. President English presented the WASHTO Gavel to incoming President John C. Case (Wyoming) at the 2012 Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

FFA Historian Opening Ceremonies play a critical role in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization, serving not only as a formal introduction to meetings and events but also as a means to celebrate the achievements and history of the FFA. The historian's responsibilities encompass maintaining accurate records, documenting events, and sharing the rich legacy of agriculture and leadership within the organization. This article will delve into the significance of FFA historian opening ceremonies, the duties of a historian, the structure of the ceremonies, and tips for creating an impactful presentation.

## Understanding the Role of the FFA Historian

The FFA historian serves a vital function within the chapter, acting as the keeper of memories, achievements, and the organization's history. The role extends beyond mere documentation; it involves storytelling, engagement, and fostering a sense of belonging among members.

## Duties of the FFA Historian

The responsibilities of an FFA historian can be broken down into several key components:

- Record Keeping:
  - Maintain accurate minutes of meetings.

- Document events, activities, and member achievements.
  - Archive photographs and memorabilia related to the chapter's history.
2. Communication:
    - Prepare newsletters or updates to inform members and the community.
    - Utilize social media and other platforms to showcase events and successes.
  3. Presentation:
    - Develop creative presentations for opening ceremonies and special events.
    - Create displays or exhibits for fairs and competitions to highlight the chapter's accomplishments.
  4. Collaboration:
    - Work closely with other officers and members to gather information.
    - Partner with local media to promote the chapter and its achievements.
  5. Education:
    - Educate members about the history and significance of FFA.
    - Engage younger members through storytelling and historical presentations.

## **The Structure of FFA Opening Ceremonies**

Opening ceremonies are an essential part of any FFA meeting or event. They set the tone, create a sense of unity, and allow for the introduction of the chapter's leadership. The historian plays a pivotal role in these ceremonies.

### **Components of the Opening Ceremony**

1. Call to Order:
  - The president or designated officer initiates the meeting.
  - The historian may assist in this process by ensuring that all materials are prepared and ready for presentation.
2. Pledge of Allegiance:
  - A moment of patriotism where members stand to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - The historian can encourage members to participate actively.
3. FFA Opening Ritual:
  - The FFA creed is recited, instilling the values and mission of the organization.
  - The historian may take this opportunity to share a brief history of the creed and its significance.
4. Introductions:
  - The historian introduces chapter officers and special guests.
  - This segment may include sharing a few historical facts about notable

alumni or past events.

**5. Approval of Minutes:**

- The historian presents the minutes from the previous meeting.
- This is an opportunity to highlight key achievements and events that occurred since the last gathering.

**6. Treasurer's Report:**

- While primarily the responsibility of the treasurer, the historian may assist in communicating financial achievements related to events documented in their records.

**7. Old Business/New Business:**

- The historian helps transition between discussions, reminding members of past events and how they tie into current discussions.

## **Creating a Memorable Opening Ceremony**

An impactful opening ceremony requires careful planning and creativity. Here are some tips for historians to enhance their presentations:

**1. Engage the Audience:**

- Use storytelling techniques to make historical facts relatable and interesting.
- Incorporate multimedia elements, such as slideshows or videos, to illustrate points.

**2. Practice Delivery:**

- Rehearse the presentation multiple times to build confidence and ensure smooth delivery.
- Pay attention to body language, eye contact, and vocal variety.

**3. Incorporate Themes:**

- Choose a theme for the ceremony that resonates with current events, such as sustainability or community service.
- Use decorations and materials that reflect the theme.

**4. Invite Participation:**

- Encourage members to share their experiences or memories related to the topics being discussed.
- Create interactive segments, such as quizzes or polls, to keep the audience engaged.

**5. Highlight Achievements:**

- Use the occasion to recognize outstanding contributions from members, fostering a sense of pride and motivation.
- Showcase awards, scholarships, and noteworthy projects.

# The Importance of FFA Historian Opening Ceremonies

FFA historian opening ceremonies are more than just formalities; they embody the spirit of the organization and its commitment to leadership, personal growth, and community service. Here are some key reasons why these ceremonies are essential:

## 1. Fostering Unity:

- Opening ceremonies create a shared experience for members, fostering a sense of belonging and unity within the chapter.

## 2. Celebrating Achievements:

- They provide a platform to celebrate individual and collective accomplishments, motivating members to strive for excellence.

## 3. Preserving History:

- By documenting events and sharing historical insights, historians keep the legacy of the FFA alive for future generations.

## 4. Encouraging Participation:

- Engaging presentations can inspire members to become more active participants in chapter activities and leadership roles.

## 5. Building Leadership Skills:

- The experience gained through planning and delivering ceremonies helps historians and other officers develop important leadership and communication skills.

# Conclusion

In summary, FFA historian opening ceremonies are a vital aspect of the Future Farmers of America organization. They serve to honor the past, celebrate the present, and inspire future leaders in agriculture and beyond. Through diligent record-keeping, engaging presentations, and a commitment to fostering unity among members, the historian plays an indispensable role in ensuring that the FFA's rich heritage is preserved and appreciated. By honoring the achievements of members and sharing the stories that define the organization, these ceremonies empower future generations to embrace the values and mission of the FFA. As members gather to reflect on their journey and the road ahead, the historian's contributions will undoubtedly resonate, creating a lasting impact on the community and the agricultural industry.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the purpose of the FFA Historian during opening ceremonies?**

The FFA Historian is responsible for documenting the chapter's activities and maintaining a record of events, which helps to promote the history and achievements of the chapter.

## **What items are typically included in the FFA Historian's opening ceremony script?**

The opening ceremony script for the FFA Historian usually includes the presentation of the chapter's history, a summary of the year's activities, and an acknowledgment of member contributions.

## **How does the FFA Historian contribute to maintaining chapter traditions during opening ceremonies?**

The FFA Historian plays a key role in preserving chapter traditions by sharing historical anecdotes, recognizing past achievements, and reinforcing the importance of the organization's legacy during opening ceremonies.

## **What skills are essential for an FFA Historian to effectively perform during opening ceremonies?**

Essential skills for an FFA Historian include strong communication abilities, organizational skills, attention to detail, and a passion for storytelling to engage the audience during opening ceremonies.

## **How can FFA chapters enhance their opening ceremonies with the involvement of the Historian?**

FFA chapters can enhance their opening ceremonies by incorporating multimedia presentations, such as slideshows or video clips, showcasing the chapter's history and achievements, as presented by the Historian.

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