

Summer 2003

News & Events



SEMINOLE WARS HISTORIC FOUNDATION, INC.

The Foundation Report

Seminole Youth Group Tours Historic Sites

Seminole Tribe Summer Historical Tour - Tribe leaders chose the Dade Battlefield, the Fort King site, and the Castillo de San Marcos as locations to visit during this year's youth outing commemorating the heritage of the Seminole wars. Approximately 200 tribal members and seventy five children participated, and Foundation members Billy Cypress, Henry and Patty Sheldon, Barbara Roberts-Webster, and Pam Stafford assisted with arrangements. Highlighting events was a visit to Dade Battlefield, where ranger Barbara Roberts-Webster and staff told the story of the engagement that started the Second

Seminole War. This marked the first time in park history that Seminole children toured the site as part of an educational program. The group then headed north along the route of the old Fort King Road (US 301 and Baseline Road) to Silver River State Park. After touring the museum, they proceeded to the Fort King site to hear a presentation by the City of Ocala (Paul Nugent, Pam Stafford, and city officials). Henry Sheldon also met with the group and gave a slide show on "The History of the Seminole Wars." The historical tour concluded with an optional visit to St. Augustine to learn about the history of the Castillo de San Marcos.



Kids and chaperones from the Seminole Tribe gather for a presentation at the site of old Fort King in Ocala, Florida.

President's Message

As the Foundation becomes increasingly active in the cause of Seminole wars historic preservation across the state, your involvement is more important than ever. Our mission is threefold: to create new knowledge about the Seminole wars through primary research, to preserve historic sites and historic resources pertaining to the Seminole wars, and to educate the public about the importance of the Seminole wars in state and national history. This is an ambitious mission, but it is not unrealistic or unobtainable. Our success depends on reaching out to other people committed to these same goals. Are you one of these people? If so, let us hear from you. There's plenty to do. Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Weisman".

Brent Weisman

Upcoming Events

MEMBERSHIP FALL EVENT:

Visit Fort Foster and Fort Dade! We will meet at Fort Foster on Saturday, November 8, 2003, at 10:00 a.m. for a tour of the site and then will go to Headquarters for lunch, with an optional afternoon trip to the Fort Dade archaeological dig. For more information call Foundation Headquarters at (352) 583-2974 or contact James Cusick (352) 392-9075, ext. 306, for details.

FEBRUARY TRIP PLANNED TO VISIT THE SEMINOLE TRIBE'S AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM:

Keep an eye open for information on this great event! A terrific opportunity to tour outstanding exhibits, enjoy the nature trails, and see Big Cypress Swamp. Date to be announced in the next newsletter.

Foundation to Develop Nomination of Sites to the National Register of Historic Places

The state of Florida has awarded the Seminole Wars Historic Foundation, Inc. a grant of \$11,000 to develop a National Register of Historic Places "cover nomination" for significant sites pertaining to the Second Seminole War. Receipt of the grant is a major achievement for the Foundation, noted president Brent Weisman. Nomination of a site to the Register can be a complicated process. The Foundation, through its development of a cover nomination, will establish a template

for all future applications to the Register. By outlining why sites of the Seminole war era are important to state history and national heritage, the Foundation's work can help to ensure that sites throughout Florida will get recognition and protective status. The first sites to be nominated will be the Izard and Wahoo battlefields.

The award also marks the Foundation's emergence as a recognized authority on the Seminole wars. Florida's state-level

National Register review board will use the nomination submitted for Izard and Wahoo as its guide for identifying and evaluating other promising sites that deserve Register status.

In this respect, the Foundation has become the state's "go to" authority for advice on preservation efforts and will have the chance to play a greater role in protecting sites. This is a great new project for the Foundation and enhances the prestige of our organization.

Members in the News

Jean McNary was named the 2003 Marinus H. Latour Volunteer of the Year by the Florida Historical Society. Jean, a teacher at Zephyrhills High School and long-time member of the Foundation, shares her passion about Florida history with her students and inspires them in a number of special projects. Recently, Jean led student volunteers in Terry Weik's archaeological excavations at the Peliklikaha site (Abraham's Old Town) in Sumter County. Congratulations Jean!

Distinguished historian John K. Mahon was pictured in the Winter 2003 issue of the *Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum News*.

John had a chance to visit the museum during a trip south to take in the Kissimmee Slough Shootout (February 1 and 2, 2003). *The News* quotes him as saying "I think the museum is a remarkable accomplishment and the whole setting is accurate from a historic standpoint." Well said, John!

Historian James Covington has been appointed as the new Hillsborough County Historian. He replaces Gary Mormino, professor of history at the University of South Florida's Tampa campus, who is relocating to the Florida Studies Center at the St. Petersburg campus.

Update on Fort Dade

Burned timbers and clusters of burned nails and glass are giving archaeologists from the University of South Florida their first glimpse of structural remains at the Fort Dade site, located on the Foundation's parcel of land overlooking the Withlacoochee River. As a member, you will be receiving *The Fort Dade Report* with photographs and information about the ongoing excavations. Sadly, several episodes of vandalism to the site and property within the last month have detracted from the overall success of the project. The Pasco County Sheriff's Department has begun an investigation and will be patrolling the area.