



# Guale News

MARCH 1994

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## GUALE RAMBLE

Grab your jacket, insect spray and come join members and guests for a morning exploration!

**FRIDAY, MARCH 11.** Visit John Floyd's Bellevue Ruins and Family Cemetery at Fairfield. Meet 8:45 SHARP at Harriett's Bluff Exit off I-95, at the Huddle House.

If you aren't on time you will not be able to "catch up" since the group will have an escort to enter Rhone Poulenc property in Floyd's Neck. After a morning of seeing some of the most interesting tabby ruins on the Georgia coast, then a Dutch Treat lunch is planned at a restaurant to be announced. Please note, that this trip is on Friday, for that is the only time that Guale Historical Society could enter the company property.

## BELLEVUE AND FAIRFIELD

In 1800, South Carolinians Charles and his son John Floyd moved from McIntosh County to Camden. Here, in what was to become known as Floyd's Neck, they established two plantations Bellevue (Charles) and Fairfield (John). After the death of Charles, John moved to Bellevue where he built a mammoth tabby three story anchor-shaped dwelling. The Fairfield site then became the home of John's son Charles Rinaldo - and here the family cemetery is located, as well as a smaller graveyard where Charles R. is buried.

The Floyds also had townhouses in St. Marys which was not uncommon for Camden County plantation owners. Their lives, however, centered around the plantation where, in addition to their agriculture enterprises, they also built boats for the coastal trade - led an active social life with other plantation owners and practiced their military skills as head of militia units on the two hundred acre parade ground, so hardpacked after years of use that no trees grew for over a hundred years, until the land was plowed for timber production.



John Floyd. Credit: Bryan-Lang Historical Library

In season, snowdrops may be found around Bellevue as lone survivors of the original landscaping that included many plants imported from the West Indies.

The John Floyd house itself remained in the family until the 1870s when it was sold to former Floyd slave Pompey Floyd, who lived there until his death. His widow still held the property until bought by Howard Coffin in the 1920s when he began putting together various tracts into what became known as the Sea Island pasture. (For more information, join Historical Society members for the March 11 outing.)

Floyd Trivia: Charles R. Floyd headed the expedition to chase the Indians from the Okefenokee.

John Floyd supervised the building of a string of forts from the

Ocmulgee River to Alabama to protect the settlers there, and then led battles against Indians in Georgia and Alabama.

America's first hunting club was organized in Floyd's Neck.

At one time John Floyd owned Little Cumberland, where he had a potato patch.

Charles R. Floyd was a gunsmith, as well as a military man, poet, and artist. It is said that he made Old Betsy, the gun that Davy Crockett still held at the Alamo.

It is said, too, that the last slave ship, the Wanderer, was hidden in one of the Floyd's Neck Creeks. (This story has several versions.)

Floyd property stretch from the Satilla to Crooked River, and from the Intercoastal Waterway to U.S. 17.

These tales and more to be told along the trek to the Floyd property on March 11. Come join us!!

## ORDERS CAN NOW BE PLACED FOR THE REVISED AND UPDATED CAMDEN'S CHALLENGE

The book will be available early summer, but you must order before May 1 to take advantage of the pre-publication price of \$26.50. After publication the price will be \$30.00. See reverse side for order blank.

This updated county history includes chapters on Camden's background, as well as communities, schools, civic organizations, churches, modern Camden, Kings Bay and 456 families! It is a limited edition hardcover book, sponsored by the Camden County Historical Commission and published for them by W.H. Wolfe Associates, who specialized in county and family histories. If you have questions, call Eloise Thompson at 882-4587.

## 1994 SCHEDULE

March - Tour Bellevue and Fairfield. 8:45, meeting at Harriett's Bluff Exit, Friday, March 11.

April - General meeting, to be announced.

May - Ramble to Frederica and Lighthouse Museum on St. Simons

June-August - Vacation

September - Ramble to Waycross Heritage Center

October - Trip to Cumberland, members only

November - General Meeting, Officers installation.

## ADDITIONS TO 1994 OFFICERS

Directors: Gwen Thomas, Dot Barker, Jeanne Hurt

## DUES! DUES! DUES!

Check your mailing label, if a red star appears, this means that the Society records do not show that you have paid. If this is true, then mail to Mildred Walko, 800 Margaret Street, St. Marys, GA 31558. \$2 - student. \$8 - Individual. \$15 - Family. If you have paid, then get in touch with Mildred at 882-5294.

Continued from last month, and updated to 2/21: Robert Ruchhoft, Cincinnati, Ohio; Bill Blankenship family; Flem Hall family; Henry Williams family; Roy Norton family; Stanley Walko family; Mayebelle Gillsillan, Monte Vista, Col.; Bill Joyner; Kent Chauncey (new), Orem, Utah; Louise Bailey; Dot Barker; Pauline Bosserdet; Howard Davis, Jr. family; Harold Heagy; Daphne Junk; Beula King; Yates Meeks; Linda Wells; Edith Willingham; John Christian.

## MORE ON WOODBINE'S CENTENNIAL

Sorry some of you had to miss February's meeting. Woodbine's history was well told in video. This collection of old photographs and movies - added to modern scenes and narrated by Chock Perry was an evening well spent. If you would like copies of this - which was made as part of Woodbine's Centennial Celebration you may order from the Bryan-Lang Historical Library, P.O. Box 725, Woodbine, GA 31569. \$25.00 plus \$3.00 postage. Videos of the Womanless Wedding held in Woodbine may be ordered from the Library also. These are \$15.00 plus \$3.00 postage.

Keep watching for further Woodbine Centennial happenings - A Walking Tour of the Historic District led by Senior Citizens well versed in the towns history will be on Saturday, March 26th.

Coming up in April will be a locally written and produced historical pageant. Watch for dates and times.

## OF INTEREST

**"Uneasy Legacy: The Lynch-Greene Partition on Cumberland Island, 1798-1802"**

Society member Mary R. Bullard's article appears in the winter issue of *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* and answers many of the questions about General Nathaniel Greene's ownership of Cumberland Island. This writing with its many maps fills a gap in the island's early history, so you will want to read it!! Copies are in the Bryan-Lung Library.