



Guale News

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FINAL RAMBLE OF THE SPRING

Saturday, May 21 - on to Fort Frederica on St. Simons

Meet 8:30 at Woodbine Exit on I-95 at Pump and Pantry (Minute Market) for a brief business session, departing shortly thereafter. Carpooling available. Some walking at the fort and a small entrance fee! A movie will be shown giving the background of Frederica - history all the way! If you have not been - this trip is a must for understanding the English impact on Georgia. If you have been - you will want to return for a brush-up in Georgia history.

Reservations have been made for 20 Society members and guests, so please call Henry Williams (576-5421) or Eloise Thompson (882-4587) to be counted.

OTHER SITES ON ST. SIMONS

After the visit to Fort Frederica, some of you may want to visit nearby Christ Church and Cemetery where many of the St. Simons earliest families worshipped and are buried.

Or a trip to the St. Simons lighthouse and museum will be worthwhile. These are under the auspices of the Coastal Georgia Historical Society

And shops, art galleries and the beach are other possibilities for a full day.

FORT FREDERICA

The town of Frederica was established by James Oglethorpe in 1736, three years after Savannah. This strategically placed settlement was the most important in early Georgia history, being a first line of defense against the Spanish to the south. At its peak of population, Frederica was home to 1,500 people, and the fort itself was said to be the "largest, most regular, and perhaps most costly" of all British fortifications in North America.

The first group of settlers arrived in February and March in 1736, 116 men, women and children. They at once built the fort overlooking the inland waterway. Behind the fort the town, made up of 84 lots, 60 by 90 feet, was laid out. The settlers quickly built rude huts which they later replaced with more comfortable houses. Some homes were of log, others of brick or tabby.

Since this section of Georgia which Frederica occupied was disputed land, claimed by Britain, Spain and France, Oglethorpe soon realized a need for military reinforcements. So he secured a 650 man regiment to man Frederica defenses and other British posts (including two on Cumberland Island).

The War of Jenkins' Ear between Great Britain and Spain broke out in 1739, and ended with the Battle of Bloody Marsh near the fort (and still later, a minor skirmish on Cumberland). Oglethorpe's outnumbered troops defeated the Spanish soldiers in July 1742, ending the Spanish threat to Georgia.

The next year the regiment was disbanded. The town's economy was destroyed with the loss of the military payroll, and shopkeepers moved elsewhere. In 1758, a fire destroyed most of Frederica's buildings. The last of the soldiers left in 1763, and Frederica became one of Georgia's dead towns.

In 1792, an attempt was made to revive the town with the survey and sale of lots to support an Academy in Glynn County. Several surveys were made, but, according to C.C. Jones in his "Dead Towns of Georgia", "the fort became a white ruin, its public parade a pasture ground, and its streets and gardens a cotton field".

Interpretations made possible by historical and archaeological studies offer an exciting lesson in early Georgia history!

RECOMMENDED READING

If you would like to review Frederica's story before going over, these books are among those you will find of interest and that can be found in some libraries:

Margaret Davis Cate: *Our Today's and Yesterdays* and *Early Days of Coastal Georgia*. Phinizy Spalding: *Oglethorpe*

in America. Webb Garrison: *A Treasury of Georgia Tales*. Albert Saye: *New Viewpoints in Georgia History*. Caroline Couper Lovell: *The Golden Isles of Georgia*. Trevor Reese: *Frederica: Colonial Fort and Town, Its Place in History*. Burnette Vanstory: *Georgia's Land of the Golden Isles*. More in-depth papers may be found in the Bryan-Lang Historical Library files - writings of the Reverend Stanley Dedman of England, who presents a British perspective on Oglethorpe.

Also records of the Fort Frederica Association giving details of its organization are in the library's files.

FORT FREDERICA FACTS

General Oglethorpe named Frederica in honor of Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George II and father of King George III (the king of the Revolutionary War).

The tabby works of the fort was sawed into blocks and used in the first St. Simons lighthouse. Other materials in the abandoned town were utilized for structures of later St. Simons settlers.

Some of the fort's cannons were carried to Cockspur Island in the Savannah River, others were used during the Revolution to fortify Ft. Morris at Sunbury.

In 1903, the remains of the fort and a small lot surrounding it were donated by the Stevens family, who then owned it, to the Georgia Society of Colonial Dames. Under their leadership the small segment still standing was restored thus saving it from destruction.

Fort Frederica Association was organized in 1941 and funds raised to purchase additional lands. In 1947 this area was dedicated as the Fort Frederica National Monument.

KINGSLAND COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT NAMED TO NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Dr. Elizabeth Lyon, State Historic Preservation Officer, announced in April that this site is now listed among properties that are considered historical and worthy of preservation.

This district is located on south Lee Street (US 17) between King (Highway 40) and William Streets and includes the original bank building built in 1912 and located on Railroad Avenue. The remaining buildings are all of brick or stucco and were constructed between 1912 and 1943.

Mara Peterson is to be congratulated for the hours spent doing all the research and paper work necessary for these properties to receive this designation.

DUES REMINDERS

Response has been good this year to dues renewal, but some members have still forgotten - if so - look for the red mark on your label. If there is a mistake, please let Mildred Walko know. If you still need to renew, send payment to her at 800 Margaret Street, St. Marys 31558. Family \$15. Individual \$8. Student \$2.

Renewed since last newsletter and through April 23: W.C. King, Avondale Estates; Agnes McArthur, Mary McLaughlin, Jacksonville; George Hannaford; Pat Williams; Audrey Proctor, Carol Rowland, Fernandina; Elizabeth Davis, St. Augustine; Lois Hemminger; Caroline Anderson, Fernandina; Selma Bunkley family, Brunswick; Joe Chaney family, Brunswick; George Long family; George Simon family (New); W.C. Kirby family, Hubert Lang family, Brunswick; Douglas Nelson family, Fernandina; Bert Rhine family, George Sweat family, Jacksonville; L.T. Hogan family, Jacksonville; P.B. Howell family, Leesburg.

Paid through 1995: R.B. Raymund, Carlton Bunkley, Dot Holstun

OTHER ITEMS

Video Concepts has reproduced many old photographs of Woodbine which was on display during the Crawfish Festival. They plan to donate these to the Bryan-Lang Library, where

they will be preserved. If you would like copies, please tell Dr. John Christian at the library.

Huxford Genealogical Society will meet Sunday May 15 at the library in Homerville. This will be a worthwhile meeting for all of you who are interested in this region. The Society has recently bought nine volumes of the American State Papers, and Mr. Clifford Dwyer will give instructions in using them.

BOOKS

As you remember from previous newsletters, the new *Camden's Challenge*, the history of Camden County will be available this summer. If you have the older edition, printed in 1976, you may also want this updated one that has an additional 50 pictures, many more families and a chapter on Kings

Bay, as well as new material on city and county changes in the last seventeen years.

Order blank is at bottom of newsletter.

You also might want copies of James Vocelle's 1914 *History of Camden County* or a small history prepared by the Camden County Historical Commission. These are found at the Bryan-Lang Library, Orange Hall or the Bookseller in St. Marys.

REMINDER

Lang Reunion, second Sunday in June Crooked River State Park.

Trip to Ft. Frederica. (Historical Society's last meeting until September), Saturday, May 21.