

Fort King Heritage Association, Inc.

Special Interest Articles

- Fort King Pg 1
- Fort King Family News Pg 2
- Digging the Past Pg 3.
- Calendar of Events Pg 4
- Breaking News Pg 5

Board Officers

- Henry Sheldon - President
- David Laffey - Vice President
- Karl Goedert - Treasurer
- Sandy Clardy - Secretary

Contact Information

Fort King
3925 East Fort King Street
Ocala, FL 34470

352-368-5535

Highlight Web Sites:

- [Fort King Website](#)
- [Join us on Facebook](#)
- [Become a Member](#)
- [Site improvement Plan](#)
- [Our Mission Statement](#)

Ocala's Historic Birthplace



Fort King

Fort King (also known as Camp King or Cantonment King) was a United States military fort in north central Florida, near what later developed as the city of Ocala. It was named after Colonel William King, commander of Florida's Fourth Infantry and the first governor of the provisional West Florida region.

The fort was built in 1827, during United States tensions with the Seminole in Florida, a tribe of mostly Creek people who formed

in the early 18th century. Originally established to serve as a buffer between new settlers and the Seminole, the fort became an important base in the 1830s for the United States Army during removal of the Seminole and the Seminole Wars. It later became the courthouse in 1844 after the organization of Marion County, but was eventually abandoned altogether. Residents took it apart to salvage building materials. The site of the fort is

preserved as a National Historic Landmark near the corner of East Fort King Street and 39th Avenue in Ocala.

Archaeological investigation has revealed the site was occupied during two lengthy periods by varying cultures of indigenous peoples, beginning as early as 6500 BC, more than 8,000 years ago

Fort King Family News

The Fort King Heritage Association identifies "Preservation, Protection and Promotion" of the Ft. King National Historic Site as their Mission Statement. Many families in our community have expressed their appreciation to this civic minded group and others who made possible the clear walking trails and the rich educational resources in the visitors' center. The Ft. King historic family Friendly Park opens daily at dawn and closes at

dusk with the help of our City of Ocala Park Ranger. There is no charge to visitors. Public, home school and community partnerships support those efforts which help all youngsters to succeed in school and later in life. Parent/caregiver and children shared adventures often trigger family communication and this is true whether the tour of the day lasts 10 minutes or two hours. Also true, whether visitors trek down narrow

trails, up bumpy hills or straight to a picnic bench, nature observed during a visit to the 38 acre park might include jumping frogs, crafty foxes, sneaky snakes and/or dancing spiders.

Continued on Next Page

Students from Saddlewood Elementary School find remnant of an old building on their campus. We matched the bricks to their cafeteria building.



Taking smaller shovel-loads of dirt, students carefully sifted through each segment hoping to find something cool!



Students clean their discoveries and share the different things they have found.



Finding shells of all kinds led into a deep discussion on the changing and shifting of land masses over time.



Students found different kinds of rocks, some native limestone, but others smooth rounded pieces that didn't match any other rocks nearby.



Fort King Family News Continued

All excellent research materials for future journals, logs and art work. A "Walk in the Fort King Park" allows the child to focus on parent/caregiver as their most important teacher and suitable for children in either pre-school or high school. Visitors of all ages are also invited to the Ft. King Heritage Center between 12:00 and 5:00 P. M. Friday and Saturday at no charge. Children and adults will be kept busy

examining the rich collections discovered, labeled and displayed by archaeologists and other scientists. Video, audio and other groupings each tell a story, as do timelines representing the multiple countries and cultures of those settling in Florida over the centuries. The colorful variety of historical artifacts, coupled with details related to natural history make available endless resources supportive of

children in the home as students.

Community visitors are encouraged to become FKHA members.

Ron Mosby

Carol Runge

Digging the Past

It doesn't take much to get kids excited about leaving the classroom, especially if you tell them they are going to get down and get dirty by digging up their school! That's exactly what students from Saddlewood Elementary School did in a special program, "Digging the Past".

As an introduction to the field of archaeology we showed them artifacts recovered from the Fort King site, including ceramics, glass fragments, and pipe stems. We talked about the kinds of objects that can survive for hundreds and thousands of years underground and

what they might find on a dig in their own backyard.

Then they were given a set of procedures, including setting up a grid system from a starting point or datum and assigning dig areas, and were directed to treat their school yard as an archaeological site.

What we found shocked them. They were discouraged to find bits of litter at first- old pencils, candy wrappers and such but gawked at their age. We discussed the things we can find out about cultures by studying their bits of trash left behind in much the same way we study

midden mounds left by peoples of the past. Next were old bits of brick and cement. We traveled building to building trying to find out if it matched the size, shape and color of any of the buildings there. We started seeing shell fragments. This led to a long discussion about the changing structure of land masses in Florida.

Back in their "archaeology lab", which strongly resembled their school cafeteria, they were able share and compare the things they had found.



The FKHA had a chance to show off at the Silver Springs Knap In. The event title, Knap In, refers to flint knapping- a specialized way of shaping stone chert or flint by breaking off parts of the stone to create sharp edges. The festival featured expert flint knappers, potters, hide tanners, bow makers and other specialists in prehistoric skills. Besides the knap-in, visitors explored the Silver River Museum, hike or bike the trails of the state park, take a tram ride through the woods, or canoe and kayak on the pristine Silver River.



This was the presentation display we used at the Silver River Knap-In on February 22, 2015. Pictured from left to right are Robin Corsiglia, Jim Philips and Ron Mosby.



This is a picture of (left to right) A.T. Thomas, Ray Mayer, and Gary Kent at the Ocala Cattle Drive February 21, 2015. Ray designed and constructed the displays. Computer graphics were provided by Grafito Advertising, and printing of the displays was donated by Conimar Corporation.



This was our set up at the "Go Green" event at Silver Springs, March 14, 2015. Gary Kent and Ron Mosby were there manning the booth for the FKHC with tools of the period. Two buck saws, a scraper and a hatchet were some of the items shown.

Who's Who?

Board of Directors

Henry Sheldon - President
 David Laffey - Vice President
 Karl Goedert - Treasurer
 Sandy Clardy - Secretary
 Robin Corsiglia
 Bob McCall
 Bill McCall
 Ron Mosby
 Gloria Seddon (DAR)

FKHK Trustees

Brent Malever - City of Ocala
 David Moore - Marion County
 Scott Mitchell - Marion County School Board
 Tribal Representative - Seminole Tribe of Florida
 Gary Ellis - Trustee
 Pam Stafford - Trustee

Park Hours

Park and walking trails open from 7AM to 7 PM daily.
 Visitors Center Hours
 Friday and Saturday
 12:00 to 5:00 PM

This and That

DAR Lot

As I write this we are working on putting up the last of the fence that will close in the DAR Memorial Lot (two lots west of our entrance) and also remove the fence in between. So our trail visitors will be able to explore that land. We're looking forward to this addition. When the Gulf Archaeology crew was there to supervise the holes dug for the new fencing they did not find much of anything. The ground there is so disturbed, laid with fill dirt, dredged and dragged. So nothing has been or will be harmed by the addition of these fences.

Over the next couple of months the face of that property will change. A Boy Scout has chosen to improve the DAR lot as his final project. He's been working with our City landscaper on the project and we expect his work to really add to the site.

Prints on Display

The Fort King Heritage Association is proud to own

prints of Jackson Walker that are on display at the Fort King Heritage Center. For those not familiar with his work, this is an introduction to the artist. Here are some excerpts from his book "Recovering Moments in Time".

For over two decades, Jackson Walker has gathered subjects from the long Florida history. With thorough research, consulting with historians and experts on any given subject and with painstaking attention to detail, the stories are rendered in his traditional realistic style. He takes the viewer into a place as it would have appeared in reality, and at that time.

From the early Spanish adventures to the home we know today, the saga of Florida history has been recorded in many ways. This unique view has been created, giving visible testimony to the many tales of triumphs and tragedies that have become our history. The native-born artist

Jackson Walker has undertaken the task of bringing this legacy to life in his large oil paintings. For more that twenty-five years he has selected subjects from Florida's long history to present.

Members please look for the next newsletter issue for the start of the Jackson Walker series!

Thank You,
 FKHA

Who We Are

Fort King Heritage Association:

The Fort King Heritage Association, Inc. is a Florida not-for-profit corporation formed to protect, preserve and develop the history of Fort King. The association serves as a citizen support group to cultivate and sustain a public private partnership with private donors and our local, state, and federal governments. The association answers to, and is authorized by, the Marion County Commission and Ocala City Council.

Breaking News

On May 28, 2015 one year after we effected the opening of the Fort King Site to the Public, the FKHA with financial assistance from the Felburn Foundation, and legal assistance from the City of Ocala and Marion County secured a critically important 2.6 acre addition to the Greater Fort King National Historic Landmark Site.

This addition, referred to as Parcel A in the Master Plan of the Greater Fort King Site, will serve as the future visitor entrance to the Fort King National Landmark Site providing for safe vehicle entry and exit via NE 41st Avenue to Fort King Street. In so doing it will enable vehicle parking to be removed from the historically important area immediately adjacent to the Fort.

Parcel A will allow us to develop a dramatic entrance to Fort King Site including construction of a new Visitor Center and a Timber Bridge across the forested ravine.

On-going field investigations also indicate that Parcel A contains significant cultural artifacts (ceramics, implements, buttons, etc.) dating to military occupation of Fort King.

I wish to express my appreciation, pride, and honor of working with no finer group of dedicated people in achieving this acquisition.

It is important to read and write History. But, it is more important to make History. Today we made History. Tomorrow we will make more.

Henry A. Sheldon, President