

Fort King Heritage Association, Inc.

Special Interest Articles

- Fort King Pg 1
- Grants Funds / Ft King Pg 2
- Hike # 22 Pg 2
- Ft King Rubber Stamp Pg 3
- Jackson Walker Pg 4
- Foraging through the Past Pg 5
- Meet Bill Rodriguez Pg 6
- Who was William King Pg 7

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: Archeology Reveals a Busy Outpost
Fort King archeologist Gary Ellis

Have you ever wondered about what it was like around Ft King at its heyday? Archeology can help us understand a lot about just that question. Field archeologists have conducted three surveys of the Ft King site (1994, 1998, and 2009). This work revealed evidence that the Fort was a busy place; more like a small town with lots of activity going on around it, not just an isolated outpost.

Seven structures were located outside the fort stockade. They were probably used either by personnel stationed at the fort, troops stopping at the fort on their way to another destination, and, possibly by civilians. Further analysis of the archeologists' finds will help determine more precisely what these building tell us.

In 1998, archeologists identified several in-place burned posts that may be the remains of a wooden structure (see Area 5 on the map). The remains of the posts were found along with a high density of materials like window glass, ceramics, bottle glass, and nails of a variety of sizes. Some of the nails were of an older wrought-type with rose-heads. They suggest that the building may have been

constructed between 1827 and 1836. Later cut nails and whiteware ceramics suggest the area continued to be used through the second fort period. Important for understanding the full history of the fort's history, the 1998 study also revealed the presence of burned posts related to the first fort's destruction and another wooden structure (Area 3) located near the fort's east side, perhaps serving as quarters. This wooden structure was present when Lieutenant Prince visited the fort in 1836.

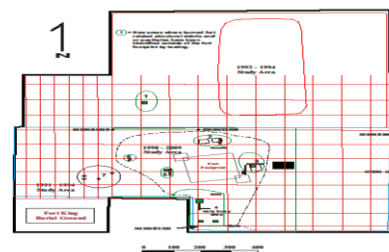
The 2009 field study found more building debris including remains of a portion of a broken limestone and brick foundation line identified south of the fort at Area 4. The remnants of the foundation extend to the east and west 25 feet and to the south another 25 feet. Here, the archeologists also recovered nails in linear arrangements within burned and decomposed wood. The abundance of window glass, bottle glass, a great diversity of period ceramics, unexpended or "dropped" shot and buttons argue for a military occupation. These building remnants may be associated with the broken foundation line just to the north.

Farther south within Area 4 are jumbled remains of another

building containing a concentration of burned debris. Here, everything has been affected by fire and burned ceramics and melted glass literally carpet the floors to 12 inches. Melted lead is also present, some of which is lead slag, or "sprue," and others simply melted shot. This area has been affected by farming which has obscured some of the remains.

Finally, four more structures were located north and west of the fort site. One of these, in Area 6, consists of a curved line of small diameter post holes describing a large circle. Could this area form part of the peace council house erected during General Alexander McComb's (1839) tenure at Fort King? That and countless other questions remain to be sorted out in the coming years by continued excavations by archeologists.

This archeological evidence makes it clear that the fort was busy place. The fact that all this evidence still exists at the site is one of the primary reasons for protecting Fort King, one of the best preserved Seminole War forts in Florida. The site is a reservoir of cultural, military, technological, and structural information and will provide many years of fruitful research into fort life, Seminole War history, and archaeology and help us better understand this period in American and Florida history.

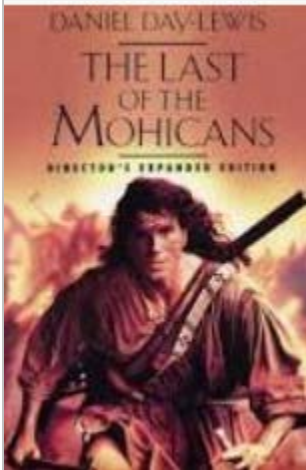


Fort King NHI Archeology Project, City of Ocala, Marion County, Florida
Descriptive Map of Fort King NHI Archeology Project Progress
Key Areas 1-7 containing wooden building remains outside of the fort stockade.

Late Breaking News:

A free evening hike is being conducted by OCALA GHOST WALKS AND HISTORICAL TOURS. It is October 3rd at the Fort King National Historical Landmark park. Please meet on the front lawn at 6:15. We ask that attendees bring a headlamp or flashlight with them. You may even want some bug spray.

On November 7, 2015 there will be a movie at Fort King park. The movie will be *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), with Daniel Day-Lewis. Time will be from 5 - 9pm. There will be other activities before the movie starts. Music, reenactors, weapons from the movie and guided walks on the trails.



State Grants Funds for Ft King Reconstruction

State Grants Funds for Ft King Reconstruction

Great News! The Fort King park has been open for 14 months. Through the hard work of the Fort King Heritage Association, the city and Marion County, the State of Florida has awarded the site a \$238,000 grant to start reconstruction of the fort. Plans are to begin preparations for the reconstruction by the end of 2015.

Hike # 22

Hike #22

Fort King National Historic Landmark Spring Loop Trail

(Excerpt from Gary Kent's new book: Hiking in North Florida with William Bertram Volume II. Gary is a volunteer at Fort King and longtime resident of Ocala.)

"Fort King National Historic Landmark is a surprisingly unspoiled natural area with nearly one and one half miles of trails throughout forty one acres smack dab within the Ocala city limits and two miles from the town square. When you pull into the small parking lot it's hard to imagine the seclusion of these short trails and the isolation you will feel hiking them.

My favorite trail, and the one I recommend for our hike, is a 1.2 mile loop through the oldest section of the forest and passes a small stream and springs that served as the water supply for the fort.

The park also boasts a surprisingly large amount of wildlife. Fox, deer and coyote patrol the grounds while hawks and owls screech from the treetops."

http://www.amazon.com/G.-Kent/e/B009D46GHA/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1440267097&sr=1-1



Fort King Rubber Stamp



Shown above are the first users of our new stamp. They are Ocalans Dave and Kathie Paules stamping their National Park Passport book. Volunteer Jan Frazier (left) who helped in getting the stamp poses with the Paules.

The National Park Passport is fun way for travelers to remember places they have visited, by stamping their passports at cancellation stations. Although Fort King is not a National Park, we are a National Historic Landmark. Ranger Keifer Calkins learned from the Department of Interior that for sites such as ours, having a stamp is both optional and encouraged.

We are proud to report that we now have our own rubber stamp which features the Fort King logo and a date stamp. The stamps can be found next to our guest book, readily available for visitors to stamp National Park Passports, other memorabilia, or even our younger visitors' hands to commemorate their visit to the Fort King site.

You can find more information about the passport program and locations of Cancellation Stations throughout the US on: <http://www.nps.gov/poex/planyourvisit/passports.htm>

To purchase your passport book: <http://www.eparks.com/store>

Spotlight on “...Do your best”
Jackson Walker prints at the Fort King Heritage Center



By the end of 1835, the outbreak of war was imminent. The Seminole firebrand Osceola, with Wildcat, Alligator, Jumper, and other war leaders, were fomenting the Seminole Tribe to do battle with the Americans. The military foresaw the coming hostilities and were reinforcing troops and stocking war material in vulnerable outposts like Fort King (now the town of Ocala). About a hundred miles south, Fort Brooke, on Tampa Bay, was a well-established port and Army garrison. The command there ordered Major Francis Dade and a detachment of a hundred men and eight officers to proceed to Fort King. On December 23, 1835, the column moved north on the trail that connects the two forts and is known today as Fort King Road. On the fifth day of the march, they were attacked by almost 200 Seminole warriors and Negroes. Major Dade was killed with the first shot. Captain George W. Gardiner assumed command as the highest ranking officer. During the second attack, Captain Gardiner was fatally wounded. The painting shows Captain Gardiner at the moment of his death shouting to the troops, “I can give you no more orders, my lads...Do your best!” There were only two survivors that made their way back to Fort Brooke.

For more information on “Dade’s Massacre” visit:

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/America/United_States/Florida/_Texts/FHSQ/5/3/Dade_Massacre*.html

For more information about Jackson Walker and his paintings visit:

<http://www.jacksonwalkerstudio.com>

Foraging through the Past

Fort King National Historic Landmark had another chance to reach youth in Marion County and show them the wilder side of our historic park. In June, Park Ranger Kiefer took a group of 24 campers from Discovery Center on a culinary tour of our grounds.

In modern times, a backyard garden may be the closest thing today's population has to foraging. Youth today have limited exposure to wild forms of food. So to give them the real foraging experience, Ranger Kiefer provided a walking and tasting tour. Samplings of smilax are most easily identified by the triangular leaf and thorny climbing vine. The way to harvest smilax is examine the tender end of the vine see if the vine snaps clean between your fingers. Only the soft new growth is edible.

Probably the favorite of the trip is the sour weed, Sheep Sorrel or Rumex Acetosella, common throughout North America. It's a common weed in most yards- growing easily where the soil has been disturbed and cleared for fresh growth.

Throughout history mankind has experimented with foraging different foods with mixed results. A popular example is the coontie plant, whose toxic root is edible under the right processing procedures. A soaking, straining, soaking, straining, soaking and straining repetition washes away the toxin cycasin and makes the starchy root safe for consumption.

After an enjoyable day exploring the vast acreage of FKNHL, the Discovery Center campers left with an appreciation of foraging. Come explore the park, see what you can discover!

<http://www.eattheweeds.com/smilax-a-brier-and-that%E2%80%99s-no-bull/>



<http://essiacfacts.com/health-benefits-of-the-sheep-sorrel-herb/>



Meet Bill Rodriguez:

Bill Rodriguez is the new Ft King Historical/Natural Resource Program Manager. Bill has been involved with environmental education for over 20 years with the National Parks Service, Sarasota County and various agencies in the private sector. He is a “Leave No Trace” Master Educator. This program focuses on expanding a commitment to preserving and protecting our wild lands. Bill’s favorite part about teaching is engaging the younger generation and creating in them a passion for the outdoors as well as for our historical resources. Bill’s ultimate goal is to create stewards of our lands for future generations to come.

Bill is the father of three. His son, Jared, is a soldier in the 82nd Airborne Division and has served two tours in the war. His daughter, Payton, is majoring in biology at Stetson University and his younger son, Gavin, is a 5th grader who takes up all of Bill’s free time! During his limited down time Bill enjoys salt water fishing, hunting, hiking, climbing and kayaking.

Drop by the visitor center, introduce yourself, and learn about the many new events being planned at Ft King.



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

Who was William King

Ocala's Fort King was named after William King, a military leader and Governor of West Florida. He was of English descent and born in Delaware sometime in the late eighteenth century. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant of the 5th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army in May 1808. He was promoted to 1st lieutenant in 1810 and served from March 1811 until July 1812 as Regimental Adjutant (Officer in Charge of the administrative unit). In July 1812, King was promoted to captain in the 15th Infantry Regiment and served on the Niagara frontier during the War of 1812. He commanded a detachment of 150 men at the Battle of Frenchman's Creek on November 28, 1812. In 1813, King rose quickly promoted to Captain in March and then to Colonel in July of that year. He also served as the Adjutant General of the Right Wing of the 9th Military District. He was appointed Colonel of the new 3rd Regiment of Rifles in February of 1814 and transferred to the new 4th Infantry Regiment in March 1815. In this capacity, he served under Andrew

Jackson during the First Seminole War. He was with Jackson during his controversial 1818 invasion of the Spanish colony of West Florida and the occupation of Pensacola. The operation resulted in the surrender of the Spanish. Jackson interpreted the terms of surrender as giving the United States control over the entirety of West Florida and appointed William King Military Governor on May 26, 1818.

As military governor, King was charged with upholding Spanish law in the colony, overseeing Spanish property, and caring for soldiers wounded in Jackson's campaign. After Jackson's departure from Florida on May 29, he also oversaw the dispersal of the Tennessee and Kentucky militia. However, Jackson's invasion of Florida threatened to derail the United States efforts to permanently acquire Spanish Florida. To advance that goal, President James Monroe's administration wanted West Florida restored to Spanish control. King served in his post until February 1819 when he was relieved by Edmund P. Gaines on orders from

Secretary of War John C. Calhoun. He was succeeded by José María Callava, West Florida's final Spanish governor.

King was discharged from the Army in June 1821, and died in January 1826.

Fort King was constructed in 1827 and was named in honor of Colonel William King.

Help us learn more about William King.

Information about William King is scarce and we'd like to enlist your help in learning more. If you claim descent from William King or know how to research the biography of early United States figures, please Contact Fort King at 352-368-5517. We'd love your help in learning more about Fort King's namesake!

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.