



# The Foundation Report

SEMINOLE WARS FOUNDATION, INC.

SPRING 2012

## Members Meeting Recalls Historic Event at Fort Dade Site

Our Spring Members Event for 2012 began on a Saturday morning this past March. There was an early coffee gathering at the Foundation Headquarters, on the banks of the Withlacoochere River near Dade City.

Our destination for the day was to make our way across and upriver to the site of Ft. Dade. The rustic military post was constructed during the Second Seminole War in 1836 as a military presence on the Ft. King Road and to protect the bridge that crossed the Withlacoochee. The site today shows no evidence of a structure, however much lies below the wooded surface. A large portion of what was the contour of the fort is owned by the Seminole Wars Foundation, Inc. and is protected as an historical and archeological site.

At this location, an accounting of the history of the fort was presented by board member Bill Dayton and an archeological review was given by board member Gary Ellis of Gulf Archeological Research Institute.

The fort was historically significant as the place of the signing of the articles of capitulation presented by General Thomas Jesup to the Seminoles on March 6, 1837. That event was recreated on the site for our members in a reenactment featuring James Permane as General Jesup, Paul Morrison (Swamp Owl) as Halah-too-chee and John Griffin as Abraham, the Seminole interpreter.

We returned back to the Foundation Headquarters for lunch and social discussion for the rest of the afternoon.

Board member Richard Tombrick chaired the committee for the event and we thank him and all those participants who made this such a memorable experience.



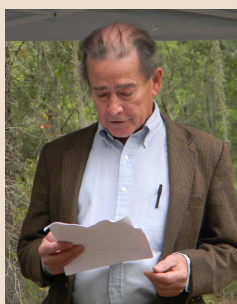
*The Capitulation is discussed*



*... and signed.*



*Left to right: Steve Rinck, Paul Morrison, James Permane and John Griffin.*



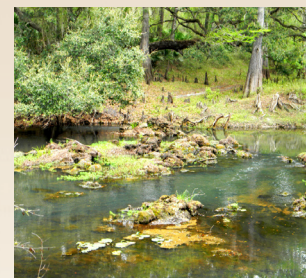
*Bill Dayton*



*Gary Ellis*



*Lunch at Headquarters*



*The Withlacoochee River*

The Foundation Report is published quarterly for members of the Seminole Wars Foundation, Inc. Anyone wishing to submit articles should contact Managing Editor Jackson Walker at 1431 Ferris Avenue, Orlando, FL 32803; 407-488-5637; or [newsletter@seminolewars.us](mailto:newsletter@seminolewars.us)  
The Seminole Wars Foundation, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1992. Its mission is to work toward the preservation of sites important to Florida's three Seminole wars and to promote publishing and education about this time period. The main office of the Foundation is at 35247 Reynolds Ave. Dade City, FL 33523. **Phone: 352-583-2711 Web: [www.seminolewars.us](http://www.seminolewars.us)**



**The Micanopy Historical Society  
Thrasher Warehouse Preservation Board  
with the  
Town of Micanopy  
will sponsor a comemoration of the  
2nd Seminole War, 1835-1842  
and the  
Battle of Micanopy**

**Featuring period crafts  
and demonstration booths, plus an authentic  
Seminole War Army Camp.**

**Dedication of the Native American Heritage  
Preserve.**

**An update on the Fort Defiance dig by the  
Gulf Archaeology Research Institute.**

**and the unveiling of a painting of the battle by  
special guest,**

**Florida history artist  
Jackson Walker**



**Town of Micanopy Historical Museum  
Thrasher Warehouse Building II  
607 N.E. Cholokka Blvd.**

**For more information:  
Town Hall (352) 466-3121 / Museum (352) 466-3200**

## *Battle of Okeechobee Reenactment*



The annual reenactment of the Battle of Okeechobee was held on February 4th and 5th of 2012 at the Okeechobee Battlefield Historic State Park just east of the town of Okeechobee. Once again, a large, enthusiastic crowd watched as the reenactors relived a portion of the battle that took place near the center of the advancing army column. Seminole warriors had set up their defenses in a thickly wooded hammock along the north shore of the big lake. In front of the hammock was a water-logged sawgrass swamp that the soldiers would have to wade through in order to reach the Indian force. The first group to attack was the Missouri Volunteers led by Col. Richard Gentry. Almost immediately, Gentry was cut down by Seminole bullets. This year, the audience was honored to have the part of Col. Gentry performed by his direct descendant, Richard H. Gentry of St. Louis. After the volunteers were stopped, elements of the Fourth Infantry advanced, and eventually carried the hammock.

In addition to the battle, the Daughters of the American Revolution held a re-dedication of the battle's historic marker, which had for many years been situated in an unattractive location by the roadside east of town. The marker, a massive cement monument with a bronze plaque, was moved onto the park site several weeks earlier, and dignitaries from local government, the DAR, and the Seminole Tribe were on hand for the re-dedication.



Okeechobee Battle Marker

*Photos by Ken Hughes*

## *Ft. Cooper Reenactment*

The annual Fort Cooper Days festival was held at Fort Cooper State Park in Inverness on March 17 & 18, 2012. As part of the event, two reenactments are held of each day to portray the siege of the fort that took place in early April of 1836.



The battle reenactments are conducted on the exact location of the original fort, under the shade of large spreading oak trees. It is one of the more enjoyable reenactments for spectators, who can sit in the shade close to the action and watch the opponents move back and forth across the battlefield. By having both a morning and afternoon battle, it also gives the audience an opportunity to attend at whatever time is convenient for them.

---

## *Fort Chokonikla Encampment*

On the last full weekend of March at Payne's Creek Historic State Park, the Fort Chokonikla Encampment reenacts a major event that led to the "Scare of '49".

A trading post was set up on a creek that fed the Peace River in what is now Hardee County. The creek was named after the proprietor of the trading post, Capt. George Payne. On July 17, 1849, a group of Seminoles came to the store. Suddenly the Indians burst into the store, killing Payne immediately. It was a small renegade band that had acted without the tribe's knowledge or consent. Seminole leader Billy Bowlegs ordered the men hunted down and captured and turned over to the authorities. In December of 1855, government pressure forced the Indians to react, and the Third Seminole War began.



## **St. Augustine is planned destination for next SWF members meeting.**



This summer, on August 18, we will join the West Point Society of North Florida and the 450th Military Commemoration Committee of St. Augustine in recognition of the 160th anniversary of the interment of Seminole War casualties in 1842.

The Florida National Guard Officers Club in St. Francis Barracks will be open at 9:00 as a place to congregate. An inter-active encampment led by Steve Abolt with military re-enactors will begin the day, then to the pyramids in the National Cemetery where there will be a short commemoration ceremony to include laying of a wreath with the playing of taps.

Afterwards, we will repair to the Officers Club for lunch and the program that will include Seminole re-enactors. Frank Laumer will read the newspaper account of the 1842 re-interment parade.

LTC Greg Moore and Steve Rinck have worked out a very special treat. The 6 pounder cannon in the Dade Battlefield museum along with a 5-6 man crew will travel to St. Augustine and be on display in front of St. Francis Barracks. The plan calls for firing the cannon at 11:00 to commence the march to the pyramids, and once more before lunch as a demonstration for the guests moving into the Officers Club.

Details for this great event in historic St. Augustine are currently being finalized and will be forthcoming.

Over the years many members of the Foundation have asked to be notified if there is work that they could do to further the goals of the Foundation. We have such work in abundance. One constant need is putting handscript letters and orders into typescript on a computer disk. We have hundreds of such handwritten pages and are in the process of putting them on disks. For research purposes it is a great advantage to have them read and made into typescript.

We appeal to any of our membership who could donate a few hours now and then to read and type these pages on to a disk. If you will let us know how many pages you might be willing to handle at a time we will send them to you via e-mail. We will include instructions as to details, such as indecipherable handwriting, unfamiliar punctuation and spelling, etc. We believe that you will often find this valuable work very interesting as you read letters and orders that in many cases have not been read for nearly 200 years.

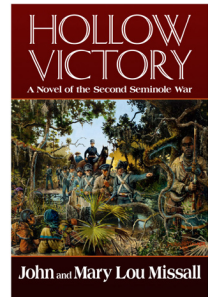
For example, in going through some recently acquired letters written to his wife by Captain Francis Belton (the man who sent Dade and his command on their fatal march), I found the wording of a note written by Dade the night of their first encampment. In fifty years of research about Dade's battle I had known that such a note was written but not the wording.

If you're interested in joining us in this work, please email me, Frank Laumer, directly at [fdlaumer@yahoo.com](mailto:fdlaumer@yahoo.com) or call (352/583-2711).

## CONGRATULATIONS!



John and Mary Lou Missall's recent book, *Hollow Victory: A Novel of the Second Seminole War* has earned the Patrick D. Smith Award from the Florida Historical Society. The award is for the best book of fiction on a Florida history topic released in the previous calendar year.



[www.seminolewars.us](http://www.seminolewars.us)

Fax: 352-583-3486

Ph. 352-583-2974

Seminole Wars Foundation, Inc.  
35247 Reynolds Ave.  
Dade City, FL 33523

