



Dade Battlefield Society's  
*Fort Armstrong  
Gazette*  
AUTUMN 2012



## Remembering Those Who Struggled

On August 18 Society members were proud to be a part of the 5th annual ceremony remembering the Native Americans, Soldiers and West Point Graduates at The St. Augustine National Cemetery. As in previous years, following some words honoring the dead spoken by author Frank Laumer a Seminole War-era honor guard marched from a parade ground encampment to the actual site of the 1842 reburial of Major Francis Langhorne Dade's Command. After some brief comments by Col. (Ret.) Joseph Naftzinger, a wreath was placed in front of the three stone pyramids that cover the military remains. Before, during and after these ceremonies, the 6-pound cannon from Dade Battlefield was fired by Gary Fisher and members of the Peace River Artillery, with resulting demonstrations that Lt. Col. (Ret.) Greg Moore said "took the weekend event over the top." Society members Jerry Morris, Colonel Harry Metz (Ret.) and Dennis Marshall with his 3rd Artillery Company B rounded out what became the largest contingent of reenactors yet to contribute to this event at the Florida National Guard Headquarters. The Dade Battlefield Society plans to send even more members to this worthy event next year, and will add a musket salute to the cannon firings that honor the fallen.



Photo by Myrna Erler-Bradshaw

## First Pioneer Day Camp A Great Success

What do Second Seminole War history, axe sharpening, and Buffalo Soldiers have in common with taffy pulling, cow milking and corn grinding? The First Annual Dade Battlefield Park Pioneer Day Camp, of course!

During the final week of July, park staff and volunteers from the park and our Society joined forces to host 51 youngsters ages 8 through 12 as they were provided opportunities to experience glimpses of what life was like in early 19th Century Florida.

One of the five camp days was devoted to the significance of the setting, with 1835-era soldiers and Seminoles helping them to better understand old conflicts. Other days were spent on making and playing pioneer toys and games, what one had to do for ordinary chores that we now take for granted, and wilderness survival skills. The hard work of co-coordinators Bruce Whiting and Kristin Wood produced a very successful camp, so much so that parents are already asking to sign their children up for the summer of 2013!

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## Seminole War - Events Calendar 2012 - 2013



Dade's Cannon being fired by The Peace River Artillery at the St. Francis Barracks of the Florida National Guard. Photo by Jean Creamer.

**Oct. 12 & 13:** A Road Back in Time, Dade Battlefield Historic State Park, Bushnell

**Oct. 20 & 21:** Alligator Warrior Festival, O'Leno State Park, High Springs

**Nov. 17 & 18:** Soldier and Militia Encampment, Fort Christmas Historical Park, Christmas, FL

**Dec. 8:** Candlelight Experience at Fort

Foster, Hillsborough River State Park

**Jan. 5 & 6:** Dade's Battle Reenactment

**Feb. 2 & 3:** Battle of Okeechobee Reenactment, Okeechobee Battlefield Historic State Park.

**Feb. 9 & 10:** Fort Foster Rendezvous, Hillsborough River State Park

**Feb. 23 & 24:** Big Cypress Shootout, Billie Swamp Safari, Big Cypress Reservation

# World War II Commemoration Weekend



Photo by Becky Wanamaker

Our first 2-day World War II event was a very successful one, with more reenactors than ever before (90) and also more visitors in attendance (813) than we have seen for this theme previously. Veterans came out in good numbers, with a total of 52 registering,

20 of whom actually having served their country during WW2!

Two new features made appearances on that hot, first weekend in August. One was a realistic Armed Forces Radio show that was located in the park gazebo. DJ Ted Johnson combined live commentary and announcements with recorded music and wartime news bulletins from the 1940s. Ted has restored a 70-year-old microphone to working condition, and has also built modern digital equipment into wooden crates so as to hide the modern equipment from view.

The other new addition to our event was a series of combat encounters between enemy forces. On our regular reenactment outdoor set in front of three filled bleachers, a German

advance squad captured a medical unit without using any ammunition, only to be later captured (and some “killed”) by a superior force of American Rangers coming in on foot and Jeeps.

The summer heat and continual threat of heavy rain were the only concerns among otherwise positive and supportive comments on the event; to improve things, therefore, we decided to move the next WW2 Weekend to March 2 & 3, 2013. Your Society’s board of directors feel that the commemoration activities have the potential of making this event as large as our annual Reenactment of Major Dade’s Battle, both in participant numbers and in the public’s enthusiasm for it. And since the park was an actual Army training ground during the war, it would be absolutely appropriate to have it so.

## What’s New at Dade Battlefield State Park?

*With this issue, we begin a new series about the multitude of workshops, craft sessions, wildlife explorations and other types of interactive experiences that are being offered frequently by park staff and volunteers throughout the year.*

### **Pine Needle Basketry** by Judie Bradley

Dade Battlefield Historic State Park offers a very popular class in beginning basket weaving. One of the oldest forms of basketry, the history of which dates back over 9,000 years, is pine needle basketry. Although historical references do not indicate when pine needles were first used for basket making, due to the availability of pine needles in their area Seminoles in south Florida are noted to be the first pine needle basket makers. The Seminole Indians used a shell needle to sew bundles of pine needles together with fern roots, sisal or swamp grass.

Modern pine needle basketry is noted to have begun during Civil War times. M.J. McAfee of southern Georgia began using pine needles that she bound

together using cotton thread to replace a worn hat for her father. Living in Florida, we use longleaf pine needles because of their length and availability. Decorative stitch wrapping techniques are often used to make the basket strong as well as to add an attractive element. By adding embellishments such as colored thread, buttons, beads, nut slices, pine cones, feathers and shells, pine needle baskets can be both functional and beautiful.



**177th Anniversary of  
Major Dade’s Battle  
33rd Reenactment  
January 5 and 6, 2013  
Dade Battlefield  
Historic State Park  
Bushnell, FL**