Cultural Resource Management: Reconstruction

In the January and February issues of the GAB (2016, V.1 and V.2) we considered the virtues of preserving the past through preservation of sites, structures, and artifacts. In March (V.3) we looked at how the preservation of a site led to a wildlife nature preserve and the potential for public archaeology. Another way to preserve the past for future generations is through rehabilitation of historic structures (See article on Georgia Trust Projects on Page 6) or reconstruction of historic structures.

This leads us to this: Completion of preliminary (concept rather than detailed construction) plans for the Fort Daniel reconstruction project are taking shape—including interior structures and layout—thanks to the information contained in the Fort Forster (Florida) construction plans and Prickett’s Fort (West Virginia) concept drawings, which have served as a basis for the stockade and blockhouses, interior structures, and many construction details.

These have been submitted to John Ricketson for a preliminary cost estimate. Located in Macon, Ricketson is Project Manager for Hearthstone, Inc., builders of hewn-log structures and involved in Fort King George construction.

When we hear back from Ricketson, this information along with a final draft of the concept drawings will be submitted to the County for their consideration. The final draft by our architect will take into account current building code requirements. Estimated costs for construction plans, engineering, water, electric, and other considerations will be added.

The evolution of the concept plans is interesting. At Fort Daniel we only have the fort’s footprint with the two diagonally located blockhouses—based on the archaeology (pictured above).

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No traces of interior structures remain, because the surface on which these wooden buildings were constructed was plowed. The only mention of the wooden buildings are based on Major General Allen Daniel’s stipulation in his construction order: “All the houses which may be built within the fort, will be built with slanting roofs to drip in and to the centre of the fort, so that in case fire should be [set?] on them from without it may be extinguished without danger. The walls of no house within the fort shall exceed the hight [sic] of the stockading, except block house.”

Several records of stockade fort construction in Georgia from this time can be found in the State Archives, but they contain only information about the fortifications not interior structures. There are four contemporary illustrations that give an idea of how structures might have been positioned and built. These are: two 1814 plan sketches of Fort Mitchell and Fort Lawrence; George Washington’s (via Secretary of War Knox to Georgia Governor Mitchell) 1793 sketch plan of his idea of how to build a frontier militia fort; and the c. 1790s “Plan for Fort Romulus for 600 men and horses.” Sketches are pictured below beginning with Fort Mitchell.

The Fort Mitchell plan depicts seven interior structures, which six have gable roofs and separated from each other and from the stockade wall. The Fort Lawrence plan depicts ten stand-alone interior structures with gable roofs, which also separated from the stockade wall. In both of these plans there is a row of structures (4 and 3 respectively) along the south wall.

The Knox plan exhibits six structures in two facing blocks. The cabins have shared chimneys with stables running the length of each block along the back, and the blocks are separated from the palisade walls. There is no indication of what kind of roof was used.

There is no evidence that Fort Romulus (intended for an army of 600 men) was ever built nor is there any historical information—other than this drawing from the State archives. Due to its size it has blockhouses on all four corners differing from all the plans from this period that we know of (including the fortification plans mentioned above). There are four gates to access the two roads that divided the interior into four equal blocks of barracks and stables. The take-away from this drawing, besides the corner blockhouses, is the separation of the buildings from the stockade wall and the opposing gates located in the center of their respective wall.

Archaeological evidence at the Fort Daniel site suggests only one gate: not quite in the center of the east wall as seen on the site plan pictured left. The presence of the east gate was determined by a 6' break in the palisade wall trench. The same break is not present on the west wall in this or a central position, which suggests that there probably was no gate on that wall; therefore, no cross “street” present as it is labeled on the Knox plan.

Fort Peachtree, which most likely resembled Fort Daniel, is described by Lieutenant George Gilmer as having stand-alone cabins. We gather this from his recollection: “As soon as possible I had a barricade constructed in continued on next page
front of the ditch which had been dug for the palisades of the fort. In this ditch, and between the cabins and the barricade, I stationed myself and the soldiers.” To this we would add Hugh Montgomery’s statement, “In two months built two large hew’d logg block houses, six dwelling houses, one framed store house . . . .”

Examples of the shed roofs Daniel described can be seen at several military and private fort reconstructions for this period (pictured right). Except for the military forts, there is no clear historical documentation, if any, for the cabins built against the stock wall with shed roofs. There is reconstruction of Fort Mitchell, but it is not helpful on any of these points. They have only one carriage shed with a gable roof that extends above the stockade wall against which it is placed.

If the militiamen at Hog Mountain followed Daniel’s orders, then cabins like those at Pritchett’s Fort would have been built. If not, then probably something like we see in the sketches of Forts Mitchell and Lawrence. In the latter case, it would not be the first time that orders were not carried out to a tee by a local commander. Indeed Daniel had ordered the fort to be built to accommodate 200 men—and that clearly was not done!

The only thing certain about a Fort Daniel reconstruction would be the fort’s footprint with two diagonally placed blockhouses and the single off-center gate. Since the interior is educated guesswork and the Pritchett’s Fort structures show both the shed roof cabins constructed against the stockade wall including gable roofs, the decision was made to do both. However, because Pritchett’s Fort is 110 ft. sq. and Fort Daniel’s footprint is only about 75 ft. sq., we can’t have the same number of buildings. The number of buildings has also been limited by our desire to have an open area within the fort that Pritchett’s Fort does not have. This would allow flexibility for various demonstrations, encampments, and so on while still having space to include ramparts for the stockade wall gunports. While the final arrangement of buildings may be changed (and there is a Plan B), we have submitted the plan shown on Page 2 done by Chad Alexander Smith, Archaeological Institute of America.

On a final note, the type of log structure most common in the South is hewn log (plank) construction with dovetail corners. This is what we see in the Jackson and Woods Cabins (see January GAB V.1, pp. 4,5) among other places. Pritchett’s Fort is built with “V” notching, but I believe we don’t see this in existing old cabins in Georgia. Our concept drawings have called for hewn plank with half-dovetail construction, which in our judgment is a safe bet for the time period and the region. ■ JJD

Phoenix Flies: Standing Peachtree

Sponsored by the Atlanta Upper West Side, for the second year Wayne Waldrip and Jim D’Angelo gave presentations on the history of Peachtree Road and Fort Peachtree and their connection with Fort Daniel. They also spoke about the related attempt to supply the Georgia Militia Army and General Jackson in “Alabama Lands” during the Creek Indian War via the Chattahoochee River and discussed the GARS/FDF archaeological investigations at the supposed site of Fort Peachtree. Posters, artifact displays, the Fort Daniel stockade fort, and Bourke’s keel boat models helped the visitors to visualize the history of this area. ■
**GARS News**

- **Button Gwinnett Day at Georgia Gwinnett College** will be on **Wednesday, April 13**. GARS and Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) will be setting up tables to inform students and facility members about Gwinnett County’s history and how its historic sites are being preserved.

- This month’s GARS meeting will be on **Tuesday, April 19 at Fort Daniel Archaeological Site beginning at 7pm**—gathering in the Archaeology Lab and Meeting Room located in the basement of the house. Guest speaker **Corey McQuinn** will present his personal research on convict labor used in archaeology throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. McQuinn works at New South Associates as an Archaeologist and Outreach Specialist. He conducts all phases of archaeological investigations for projects throughout the Southeast, and as Outreach Specialist, he directs a number of programs providing archaeological education opportunities for schools and organizations—including the Society for Georgia Archaeology’s Abby the ArchaeoBus! Additionally, Jim D’Angelo will give an update on the proposed Fort Daniel reconstruction.

- **Field Trip:** On **Sunday, April 24** GARS members will be returning to the Campbell “1784” rock art site (pictured right) to document some additional glyphs that Dorsey Campbell has exposed. Please meet at the **9GW656 rock art site** (2643 New Hope Road, Dacula) at **12:30pm**. We’ll also take a short hike (.55 mile) south of the site to the Alcovy River/Palmatree Creek confluence to examine an area where a Native American village was reported in an early deed. In Volume II of his *History of Gwinnett County*, Flanigan wrote: “...the John B. Coffee place,” a farm located between the Alcovy and Palmatree Creek, “An Indian village was at one time located on this farm. . . . Pottery, pipes, beads, tomahawks, arrows, and rocks to beat corn and hominy were found there.” The area is now part of Harbins Park. Although Jim did the archaeology for this park when he worked for TRC, this area was never archaeologically surveyed, because it was added to the park as a donation sometime later. Therefore, it will be interesting to see what there is to see.

**Fort Daniel News**

- **Archaeology Lab Days at Fort Daniel** will be on **Saturday, April 2 and 16** beginning at **10:30am**. (Notice the new time!) Volunteers will be trained in processing Fort Daniel artifacts.

- **Back to the drawing board!** It’s back to “start” for the proposed plans to construct an entrance to the Fort Daniel field house basement that meets ADA-standards. Betty Warbington informs us that she and John Hopkins met with a contractor recently, and he gave an estimate of $18–20,000 for the project! Since there are no longer any County or State grants to assist with handicapped/disabled projects like this, the project has been put on hold. If anyone knows where funding might be available, please let us know!

- **Basket Weaving at Fort Daniel** will be on **Saturday, April 30 beginning at 12pm**. Jenna Pirtle will be conducting a basket weaving class where you will be weaving modern Cherokee double-walled baskets. This activity is best for anyone 8 years old and above. The limited items need to be kept wet often during the weaving, so please wear clothes that you are not afraid to get wet or dirty. If you are interested in attending, please use the Facebook event’s page to sign up for the class. **There will be a program fee of $3 for GARS/FDF members and $5 for nonmembers.**
More Diggin’s

- **Sheep to Shawl at Atlanta History Center** will be on **Saturday, April 9 from 10:30AM to 4:30PM**. Get a unique view into the process of cloth making though demonstrations and activities ranging from sheep shearing and dyeing to spinning and weaving. Gather for a full day of fun that also includes open hearth cooking, blacksmithing, candle making, and much more at Smith Family Farm. This year journey from Sheep to Shawl to Sequins and Chanel while exploring the new Swan House exhibit, *Fashion in Good Taste: Women in Atlanta from 1920–1969*. Interactive activities give families a fun opportunity to learn how mass production, major events of the twentieth century, and daily life influenced women’s clothing. *This is included in the cost of general admission.* For more information visit the [Atlanta History Center Web site](#).

- **Spring Planting Festival at McDaniel Farm** will be on **Saturday, April 16 beginning at 10AM**. Join the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center (GEHC) for a fun exploration of farming in Gwinnett County. Come view historical demonstrations of past skills and techniques from the pioneer period. Participate in activities and games and assist in the planting of the McDaniel Farm cotton field. Be prepared to sweat and get dirty—like farmers! (McDaniel Farm is located at 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth.) There is a program fee of $8 (GEHC members free). Preregistration is suggested but may pay day of the event. For information visit the [GEHC Web site](#).

- **May is Georgia’s Archaeology Month!** This year’s Society for Georgia Archaeology (SGA) theme is “Dynamic Borders: The Archaeology of Cumberland Island.” GARS and FDF members will be participating in several events throughout the month. Below are just a few:
  - New South Associates Archaeology Day on Saturday, May 7 from 10AM to 2PM. Free to the public!
  - Dynamic Borders: The Creek Indian War & Settler Incursions Around Hog Mountain at Fort Daniel on Saturday, May 14 from 10AM to 4PM. There will be several ongoing demonstrations and activities occurring throughout the day along with Archaeology Lab and Museum tours.
  - The SGA Spring Meeting will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 20–21 in St. Mary’s & Cumberland Island as part of Archaeology Month. For information visit the [SGA Web site](#).
  - Celebrating History at the GEHC on Saturday, May 21. Hands-on activities will highlight each of Gwinnett’s historic sites and feature activities like archaeology, writing with a quill feather, listening to stories, and participating in artwork. For information visit the [GEHC Web site](#).

**Membership Fees:**

If you would like to join or renew your GARS membership, please contact [John Hopkins](#); and for FDF membership please contact [Betty Warbington](#).
Preserving History Through Archaeology

As reported in the Annual Report of the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation (GTHP) through its program of easement and preservation agreements, the Trust continues to save properties that otherwise would be demolished or altered in a way that would destroy their architectural integrity and, therefore, their historical value. It was with a 2009 Places in Peril grant from the GTHP that the Friends of Fort Daniel (now FDF) were able to fund a master plan for the site (now Fort Daniel Historic Site and Archaeological Research Park). “Subsequent promotion of the site and program, including this master plan graphic, helped to get us where we are now,” says FDF president and site archaeologist, Dr. Jim D’Angelo.

In this report, printed in the spring issue of the Rambler, there is a focus on adaptive reuse of old school buildings as community centers, for-profit multiuse spaces, and as schools. Another project has been the rehabilitation of the Trust’s Atlanta headquarters in Rhodes Hall, which many of our readers know. Some of these preservation efforts are made possible by a Revolving Fund, through which the Trust purchases properties and then markets them to preservation-minded individuals who promise to rehabilitate and maintain them—26 to date—as seen in the above picture.

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