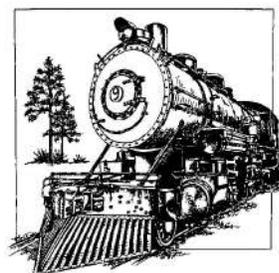


OKEFENOKEE HERITAGE CENTER NEWSLETTER



January
February
March
2021

The First Peoples of Okefenokee

By “Turtleman” Chris Adams

The South Georgia we know today is far different than that which was known by the very earliest inhabitants of this region. One place however with a familiar look about it is the Okefenokee Swamp. Having remained much the same for around 6,500 years, the landscape provides us with a glimpse back in time to understand the conditions and the environment that shaped many cultures over the course of centuries.

Radiocarbon dating from archeological sites in Florida prove that ancient man had been present in Deep South drastically different, being then a much more open and arid place not desirable to the early nomadic hunter/gatherer types of the Paleo era. It wasn't until the latter part of the Archaic era that we begin to see evidence of semi permanent presence in the general area of the swamp. Okefenokee by this time was very much the wetland we know today, hosting a myriad of plant and animal species. This would prove invaluable to the early people who would utilize its natural resources for their very survival. Plants such as “Beargrass” and Spanish moss were used for cordage making, cypress and pine were burned and scraped to construct dug-out canoes, fish and nearly all other creatures were consumed in great quantity.

With the advance of human civilization, so too came technological advancements. Throughout the Woodland and later Mississippian eras, the rise and fall of cultures through war and famine, gave way to the Mississippi River valley soon came to this area of the country. Political systems and religious ideas changed the way groups interacted with one another. Trade and commerce was widespread with known contact between native groups as far north as Illinois having been traded items from as far South as the Caribbean and the Floridian coasts. Agriculture was now the focus with crops such as corn being grown all across the Americas. The atlatl was soon replaced by the much more efficient bow and arrow. The peal of these great civilizations that stretched from the western rivers of our state to the Atlantic coast drew nigh. A new dawn was fast approaching.

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OHC Calendar

January

Art Gallery: Rachel Settle	
1— New Year's Day	
18— Martin Luther King Day	
13—Trustee Meeting	12pm
14— Tourism WCVB	6:30pm
22— History Guild	12pm
26— Art Guild	7pm
27— Executive Board	12pm

February

Art Gallery: Black History Art	
2—Groundhog Day	
3— Trustee	12pm
6— Turnpentining Pres.	10:30am
9—Rise-N-Shine at OHC	7:45am
9—Black History Guild	6:30pm
12— Lincoln's Birthday	
14—Valentine's Day	
15—President's Day	
17—Ash Wednesday	
18—Business After Hours	
22—Washington's BD	
23— Art	7pm
24—Excutive Board	12pm
25— Floating Art Reception	5-7pm
26— History	12pm

March

Art Gallery ~ Steve Bean Youth Art	
Rotating Exhibit Rm: Entertainment	
3— Trustee	12pm
9—Black History Guild	6:30pm
14—Daylight Savings Time	
17—St. Patrick's Day	
23— Art Guild	7pm
24— Executive Board	12pm
26— History Guild	12pm
28—Palm Sunday	

For more info: 912-285-4260

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome 2021! Hopefully this year will be healthier, for everyone. Here at the Okefenokee Heritage Center we are moving forward and have big plans for 2021. Our History Guild is in full force planning exhibits for the Rotating Exhibit Room as well as history lectures. Stay tuned for those! Our Art Guild is continuing with the Art Gallery shows each month and we hope you will come out to see them. The Black Heritage Guild is gearing up to start working on the Red Hill Cemetery project again. And our Photography Guild will be offering on line classes. If you are interested in joining one of our many guilds, please contact OHC to sign up. Even though we are still following the social distancing guidelines, OHC is looking forward to our upcoming events for January, February and March. Please check us out on Facebook for happenings at OHC. Again, we want say THANK YOU! to our many members and generous sponsors. YOU are helping us bring local cultural art and history to our area and we could not do it without you. The Okefenokee Heritage Center is still “On the Right Track”!! ~ Y’all Come!!

Carla Cornett King, Executive Director



***Corporate Sponsor
of the Month:***



Special Thanks to:



Continue from Front...

By the arrival of Spanish explorers such as Hernando de Soto, many of the once great chiefdoms were now gone. Evidence such as the grand temple mounds were a lasting monument to the people who built them. The local population of native people now consisted of bands or tribal groups living in different areas of the state. The Spanish first gave Okefenokee the name “Laguna de Oconia” on account of the swamp. The Spanish soon established two missions within the swamp for the purpose of religious reform. By the 17th century a group called the Timucua sought refuge here. These people used the densely wooded areas to evade capture by Carolina militia and enemy tribes who would sell them into chattel slavery to be used on plantations along with African slaves.

The days of native people living within the swamp were drawing to a close by the 1830’s. Tensions ran high among the settlers that came from the Carolinas by way of the newly constructed wagon roads. Conflict was soon on between these pioneers and the people called the Seminoles who used the Okefenokee as a staging area during the Florida wars. A string of forts was constructed around the swamp and toward the state line in an effort to increase military presence for the protection of these homesteaders. One incident in the summer of 1838 which spurred the removal of the native people from this area was known as the “Wildes Massacre”. Several members of the Wildes family living near Kettle Creek were killed by a small band of Seminole warriors. A Georgia and General Charles R. Floyd was tasked with leading an expedition through the swamp to capture any remaining hostiles for removal west. Raids by the natives government soldiers. Talk of “Indian signa” in the area was common until around 1842.

CHECK OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING!

February is Black History Month

This month the Okefenokee Heritage Center Art Guild will be hosting the Annual Black History Show, featuring artists from this area, such as Emmanuel Lewis, Lena Lewis, Phyllis Perry, and Jessie Williams (Pictured)

Black History Art *Floating* Reception:
Thursday, Feb. 25th 5 to 7pm

Please come out to show your support for these wonderful local artists. Their work will be on sale as well.

Art Guild hours: Tues-Fri. 9am—2pm and
Saturday 9am—12pm
(call for special appointment)



Turnpentining in Wiregrass Georgia

Presented by:
"Turtleman" Chris Adams



If you're interested in one of Georgia's oldest industries and would like to learn more about it's history, come on out!

Sat. Feb 6th, 10:30am

Free admission or
\$5 Donations

Social Distancing
Will be practiced

Entertainment History of the Okefenokee Area

In March The Okefenokee Heritage Center History Guild will be featuring "Entertainment History of the Okefenokee Area" in our Rotating Exhibit Room. We will also host a lecture spotlighting the movies in the Okefenokee Swamp as well as entertainers who performed at the City Auditorium.



Check our OHC Facebook page for details!

CHECK OUT WHAT'S COMING UP!



Spaces Available for:
Music Lessons with Crystal Murphy
706-781-7044



Okefenokee Heritage Center

1460 N. Augusta Avenue
Waycross, GA 31503
912-285-4260

www.okefenokeeheritagecenter.com

OHC Mission Statement:

The Okefenokee Heritage Center is a cultural art center and local history museum for all people, which seeks to promote an appreciation of the arts and an increased understanding of history and development of the Okefenokee region through its cultural and educational programs, collections, and exhibitions.

Proudly serving Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Pierce & Ware.

**A special thanks to ALL of our
OHC Members!!
“We’re on the right track”!**

Invite a friend to join the Okefenokee Heritage Center

Individual	\$36
Family	\$60
Heritage Club	\$100
Small Business	\$150
Business Sponsor	\$500
Corporate Sponsor	\$1,000
Corporate Partners	\$5,000

All donations are tax deductible



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RENT OUR SPACE

You can rent the facilities at the Okefenokee Heritage Center for parties, reunions, etc.

Conference Room	\$150
Depot	\$200
The Venue	\$200
Warehouse	\$300
Grounds	\$150

For more information, call:
912-285-4260

Visit us on FB

