

19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HOMESTEAD AND GROVE ON THE INDIAN RIVER

# Field Manor E-Newsletter

## February 2020

### IN THIS ISSUE:

## Homestead News

by Korinn Braden

Here's hoping the New Year is turning into a great year! Her at Field Manor, the days and nights have been busy. This time of year sees the return of field trips, volunteers, and parties. The wedding season has ramped up again and we're happy to see other celebrations under our 40'x60' pavilion. Every guest and visitor out here raves about our river view. Some days we take the "office" to the front porch and enjoy it ourselves. The osprey and woodpeckers can be distracting but when the dolphin come to the surface, well, emails will have to wait a few minutes. And the sunsets have been spectacular!

We would like to take this time to thank our volunteers. Kurt and Lola Ruthmansdorfer return yearly and show up every week they are in town. Kurt has a very hands-on

approach and has spruced up and conserved some of our farm and grove artifacts. His wife Lola has been so much help with cataloguing our extensive collection. A recent computer crash has required us to start almost from scratch with inventory, and Lola has taken on the project with gusto, attention, and interest. We would also like to thank Jan Stewart for her weekly visits to take care of our garden. She is not only planting pretty plants, she is also working on our kitchen garden. Thanks also to Jamiann H. for her constant and much appreciated shout out to Field Manor on social media, her visits with friends to introduce them to the property, and hosting yoga/soundbath events under the pavilion. It is wonderful to have such dedicated friends and volunteers!



### Ais Village Trail at Field Manor

The community dig at Field Manor revealed more artifacts than expected! Our next open-to-the-public dig is Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10AM – 2 PM.

Page 3



### Food Truck Founder's Day!

Celebrating 152 years on Merritt Island on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, Noon – 3 PM.

Page 4

## SHORELINE CLEAN-UP IN APRIL

CALL 321.848.0365 FOR MORE INFORMATION

## Shoreline Update

From the time the Field Manor Foundation was started and to this day, shoreline restoration has been very important to us. In the past years, partnerships were established with UCF and their wind-monitoring and oyster nursery programs. We've learned a lot over the years and recently some of it was not so good: our shoreline is getting hammed by

wave action, causing erosion and the failure of the oyster bags/mats to thrive. That being said, now for some good news! Our last river clean-up revealed baby mangroves on our shore! As we all know, mangroves are essential for a healthy river shoreline, and assist with the prevention of erosion. We've been advised by UCF to empty the oyster shells where they are and remove the plastic bags, mats, and weights associated with them. In efforts to stabilize our shoreline, the advice is to utilize more rip-rap at the shoreline. Should you have any concrete building material making a pile in your space, might you think about



donating it to Field Manor to help us preserve our shoreline? In April we would like to see this happen and will be looking for volunteers to assist in the removal of the oyster bags.

## Senior Project



Over the years, we have been thrilled with the Senior projects students have done through their high school and Field Manor. From bat houses, to gardening, to creating and sewing a Victorian dress, to making a display on the Ais, these seniors have dedicated themselves and their time to work on some really interesting endeavors. Edgewater senior, Emily S., has been working on mapping the grove since the Fall and it will culminate in May. She has been mapping, identifying species

(with help from Darren Welch, our grove manager), and tracking conditions. We couldn't be more pleased with her choice of a project as it is something that will truly help us maintain accurate records of both past and present trees. This will aid Field Manor with further agricultural grants. Thank you, Emily!

## HEADING 4

**Lead Archeologist**

Alan Brech, Principal Investigator for the Ais Village Trail.

**Learning More**

Sue Nisbet Lawrence, long-time Merritt Islander pioneer and President of Field Manor Foundation sifting for artifacts.

## FAST FACTS

**Our area of Florida was called The Kingdom of Ais by the Spanish**

**1760**

Is the last year the Ais show up in the historical record.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Read Jonathon Dickinson's book about his 1696 shipwreck and rescue of sorts by the Ais.



## Revealing the Past

Visit the Ais Village Trail Facebook page.

The Ais Village Trail community archaeological dig was a huge success! We planned for two days but foul weather dictated differently. Five survey units were opened. Twenty-four St. Johns Plain and one SJP variant pottery sherds were recovered and surprisingly one small piece of historic glass. The time period of the ceramics is 500 BCE-750CE. The natives of this part of Florida were known as the Ais, and the reason the Indian River is called the Indian River. A Spanish cartographer called it El Río de Ais. The Ais were one of the few native tribes not conquered nor subjugated by the Spanish. The Spanish actually referred to them as the Kingdom of the Ais. The Kingdom ranged from Cape Canaveral to Hobe Sound.

With the large concentration of pottery the lead archaeologist filed with the state the next day and is to be called the Field-Gasecki site.

The next opportunity to volunteer for this super cool project is Sunday, 23 February, 10AM-2PM. Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty, wear a hat, and bring water and lunch. No experience is necessary.

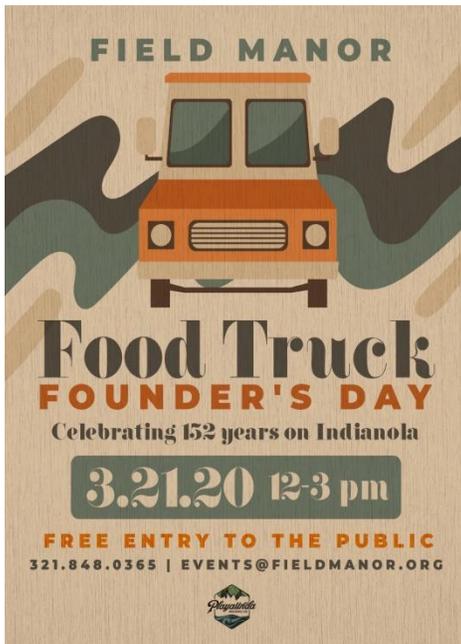
Check out their page on Facebook, Ais Village Trail, for more details. Come help us reveal history!



Shovel Test, 50cmx50cm, down to one meter.



Rick Piper, local artist and President of the Ais Village Trail, and Lola Ruthmansdorfer.



Don't forget about our Food Truck Founder's Day fundraiser on Saturday, March 21, from Noon-3PM. We'll have three food trucks, a dessert truck, a silent auction, the Ring of Fire Band, and Playalinda beer! If you're interested in donating to the silent auction, please call or e-mail. This is a day to celebrate the Field family's arrival to Merritt Island, in 1868. They were the first non-native family to settle on the island, and JR Field and his brother Sam established and fostered their little town of Indianola. They had great pride in their community, as we do today. And we hope our community will come out support Field Manor!

*We are pleased to continue celebrating our local history twice a year, working with the community and local partners. Thanks to Playalinda Brewery for stepping up yet again to help make this event a greater success!*

## A Story-Telling Suitcase

The Story-Telling Suitcase, full of material culture, tells the story of a portion of the Field's history on Merritt Island.

This suitcase has been created to take to schools and other events to showcase the Field family in an easy, convenient way.

The ultimate goal is to get the suitcase, and maybe others, into the Brevard County school system for classrooms to "check out." Field trips (no pun intended) are costly and we're hoping to provide an alternative.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you as an educator are interested in the Story-Telling suitcase, contact Korinn at 321.848.0365 or e-mail at [fieldmanor@gmail.com](mailto:fieldmanor@gmail.com).



# Partnerships And Their Importance

Field Manor realizes the importance of partnerships, especially in the not-for-profit world. We're thankful for recent collaborations with Sams House, the Museums of Brevard, the Police Hall of Fame and Museum, and Green Gables. We've donated items, they've donated their time, and together we will grow Brevard and its wonderful history into a cultural "must-see."

[www.museumsofbrevard.org](http://www.museumsofbrevard.org)

## AROUND TOWN



### Green Gables

The Schlernitzauer estate donated this dresser to Field Manor and we were able to provide it a permanent home at Green Gables, an historic home on the Indian River in Melbourne.



### China Cabinet Donation

Thanks to Gay and Wayne Phillips for the kind donation of a 1920s Empire china cabinet. It is perfect for displays!



### Pioneer Day at Sams House

It was wonderful to be included in Sams House Pioneer Day February 8<sup>th</sup>!

# Field Manor Wish List

- **A tractor with a PTO**
  - A bush hog
  - A box blade for the tractor
  - A roof to shade driver
- A golf cart that works
- A truck or other pulling device
- A road certified trailer
- An electric pole saw
- Water barrels for downspouts
- Electrical wiring for the packing house to bring it to code
- Railings for the packing house
- New stringers and planks for the dock
- A sign by the road with letters we can change
- Installation of the hand water pump
- Rip-Rap for shoreline

## Call to Volunteers:

### Education:

- Group leaders
- Group helpers
- Curriculum development
- Curriculum guidelines
- Curriculum resources
- Research

### Archives:

- Written material
- Collections
- Research

### Grove:

- Cultivation
- Historic Gardens
- Plant propagation
- Research
- Weather issues
- Water issues
- Ground testing

### River:

- Oyster bag and mat clean-up
- Trash pick-up

