

19TH CENTURY HOMESTEAD AND GROVE ON THE INDIAN RIVER

Field Manor E-Newsletter

April 2020

STAY HEALTHY AND HAPPY!

Homestead News

by Korinn Braden

The first quarter of 2020 has certainly proven to be a time of modifications, sacrifices, routine changes, and adapting to a new normal. Here at Field Manor, at the end of half-mile, crushed-shell driveway located on the Indian River, affects were felt as well. This time of year we usually hear the rumble of school busses or caravans coming down our drive, filled with kids eager to learn about pioneer life and homesteading in Florida. It has been quite around here to say the least. And I cannot even imagine the many brides and grooms that had to do without family members and friends at their ceremony or, in our case, had to reschedule during daily updates and revisions by the CDC and government. Thankfully, our two April brides were able to reschedule their weddings. We are offering virtual tours of Field Manor if you or someone you know is looking for a venue in the future.

Due to Covid-19, we have been closed to the public since 20 March and will reopen when we are able. Like you, we cleaned, then cleaned some more, we went through filing cabinets, organized the garage, learned to operate a riding mower (ok, maybe you didn't do that), and took time to be outside. We are fortunate in that we have been able

to retain our staff, although hours have been truncated.

The last month we have also been working on our collections. Since folks are unable to visit us, we are bringing Field Manor to you, via our social media pages. Web Chat Wednesdays on Facebook has been a wonderful chance to educate viewers about early homesteading and pioneer life in Florida, as well as ask viewers if there is anything they would like to know about Field Manor and Brevard history. Our Facebook page also features History Mystery Monday. Photos of unknown people or places of the area are posted on Mondays and we are asking people to share them in the hopes of identifying the subject in the photos.

Being outside is where it is at right now. The weather has been warm, but gorgeous! Folks have been strolling past Field Manor and boaters have been enjoying the fishing. Our Brazilian pepper eradication began in late March and the work done is impressive. Areas that have not seen sunlight in years are now dappled in light and ducks can be found in the now uncluttered waterways. It is a wonderful sight and we look forward to when we re-open and you all are able to see the changes.

Another exciting development here is the addition of two new Board members. We would like to welcome Elaine Mahnke and Chuck Nelson to Field Manor! They both have been on Merritt Island for years and each has played an active role in the community. We thank them for volunteering their time and bringing their insight and experiences to the Board of Directors of Field Manor. We would also like to give a HUGE thank you to Russell Glover, who recently resigned from the board in order to serve in a different capacity. We are grateful for his time on the board and are beyond thrilled that he will continue frying oysters and fish for our annual Oyster and Fish Fry! Thanks, Russell!

This issue is more of a pictorial edition, to showcase Field Manor and to remind you to visit when we re-open.

Until then, we hope you and yours are well and staying happy and healthy!

FARMING AT FIELD MANOR

Farmer Dwayne

We welcome Dwayne Houston and his father and crew who are farming about 10 acres, growing okra, cabbage, and squashes.



Kitchen Garden



Thanks to volunteer Jan Stewart for creating this wonderful herb garden under our huge mango tree! The herbs include Thai basil, arugula, thyme, parsley, sage, dill, fennel, and rosemary. In a pinch, a bouquet of herbs and roses were made for a 55th anniversary. Very rustic and very aromatic.



AVT ARCHAEOLOGIST ALAN BRECH



Ais at Field Manor



Visitors from afar

Mo, far left, joined us from Miami, while Cindy traveled over from Orlando. Also pictured are Kurt Ruthmansdorfer and artist and AVT president, Rick Piper.

FUN FACT:

You often find tiny marine coquina shells on Ais sites. The bivalves were cooked in water, to create a type of broth, retaining the protein.

YOU CAN'T SAY YOU HAVEN'T HAD THE CHANCE TO READ THIS YET:

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

Visit the Ais Village Trail Facebook page.

Our collaboration with Ais Village Trail has been put on hold until further notice. We were on a roll, with people joining us from Miami, West Palm Beach, and Orlando, as well as Brevard County. We last met in early March. Alan Brech, lead archaeologist, tightened the grid due to the concentration of artifacts. Test holes were put in at 12.5m intervals to get a better picture of where activity was taking place. Although we have not met in a month, research continues with the ceramics and their variants. Enough charcoal was recovered for carbon dating, which we hope will happen. We will keep you updated when the dig resumes.



Ceramics and charcoal from a shovel test. The charcoal will hopefully be sent off for dating.



Youngest AVT member, Tyde. He has been working on Ais sites since birth.



The J.E. Field Store

~1920-1945

Cocoa, Florida



While exploring one of the three attics in the house, we ran across this wonderful print of Bok Tower in Lake Wales, resplendent with flamingo. It has some wear and tear, having survived from the 1920s, which is when this print first came out. It was carefully removed from the frame. The thin glass did not survive. We were surprised to look on the back to discover a label from the J.E. Field Store in downtown Cocoa Village. The store was opened from the 1920s-1940s and it was located next to the current Cocoa Village Playhouse.



AROUND THE HOMESTEAD



Pineapple
One of the first crops at the homestead



Stand of sugar cane

A sugar mill was on the property from the 1870s until 1961



Blackberry bush



Muscadine grape leaf



Swallowtail



Clearing pepper trees

This makes the ducks very happy



Banana flower
The flowers are edible



A croc in the river



Blackberry lillies

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

