

Barracks Committee to ask State for \$150,000

The members of the Barracks Committee of the Lower Altamaha Historical Society are taking out all the stops as they move towards their ultimate goal of getting the state appropriations board to approve \$150,000 to build the officers' quarters and soldiers' barracks at Historic Ft. King George.

According to Ken Akins, Manager of the fort, "We are dedicated and determined - this is something that *will* become a reality for the thousands of schoolchildren that come to Fort King George each year."

The Barracks Committee met recently at Archie's Restaurant for a luncheon strategy meeting, as they continue to work towards their goal of full appropriation from the state.

Committee members are quick to point out that tour groups bring a lot of money into McIntosh County, and many of the tour groups come to tour Ft. King George. Many buses from all over the country stop in our area to tour the fort, with Akins noting that many, many German tourists come through the fort each year.

"These people eat in McIntosh

help increase the tourism," according to committee members Kaye Traer and Donna Garner.

His Majesties Forces of New Inverness has raised some funding towards the new barracks, but the barracks committee is seeking the assistance of anyone in the county who might be able to help them get to the appropriations committee to help get this item in the works.

They have asked the LAHS membership to support them by writing to State Legislature representatives for this district, DNR representatives and local commissioners.

Board of Commissioners Chairman David Earl Lane has written a letter to Lonice Barrett, Commissioner of the Georgia DNR, on behalf of the board, in which he asks the commissioner "that the barracks project be made one of your top budget priorities for the coming fiscal year in the Georgia state parks."

Lane additionally states that he "will be communicating with local representatives in future months to, hopefully make this project hap-



Working for the fort - Members of the Barracks Committee of the Lower Altamaha Historical Society are pictured at their recent luncheon meeting at Archie's Restaurant. Seated, l-r, are Hugh Langford, Ken Akins, manager of Ft. King George, dressed as a colonial militiaman, and Kaye Traer. Second row, standing l-r, Donna Garner, committee chairperson, local historian Mattie Gladstone, and Dyson Flanders. Not pictured, and a member of this committee, is local artist William G. (Bill) Haynes. (Photo by Genevieve Wynegar)

"The state of Georgia has a Rock & Roll Museum in Macon, The Georgia High School Hall of Fame in Valdosta and the World Carpet Museum in Dalton. We're not asking for much--this fort just needs to be finished."

As Ken Akins adds, "Each year, many of the children on the tours ask, 'but, where did the soldiers sleep?', and we have to show them

on the map. Think how much more effectively we could bring this era to life, if we could show them the actual reconstructed sleeping quarters."

Historic Ft. King George is the

oldest fort in the state of Georgia and received an award from the Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources in 1995 for the "Most Outstanding Historic Site Operation in the State of Georgia."

For: Myrtle Newberry

Fort King George is proud to announce the funding of the reconstruction of the three remaining structures for the fort. Bids should be let this summer for the rebuilding of the Enlisted Men's Barracks, a 70' by 15' structure which will parallel the river just to the east of the blockhouse. The two other structures to be rebuilt will be the 20' by 40' Officer's Quarters and the 15' by 20' Hospital/Guardroom. All three buildings will have old English style chimneys and fireplaces made from hand-made brick. The structures will be built using the typical post-and-beam technique, the same as the blockhouse, with high-pitched roofs shingled with cypress shakes. Not only will the barracks be used to house reenactors during fort reenactments but will be used for various other functions such as colonial crafts, cooking and colonial dinners. "Adding three new structures will have the same effect as when the blockhouse was reconstructed in 1988," said Site Superintendent Ken Akins, "In one year our attendance quadrupled. We are expecting an even bigger impact this time. The blockhouse virtually paid for itself in increased revenue in 10 years. The blockhouse project was co-sponsored by the Lower Altamaha Historical Society and DNR with the society raising over \$50,000 which was matched by DNR. This effort put Fort King George on the map thanks to the hard work and dedication of the LAHS. \$136,000 has been appropriated by the Georgia legislature for the Barracks project thanks to efforts by our own Barracks Committee, Chambers of Commerce in both McIntosh and Glynn County and other interested parties. \$111,000 was appropriated from the Senate thanks to the hard work and tenacity of Senator Rene Kemp and \$25,000 will come from a Department of Community Affairs grant through the efforts of Rep. E.C. Tillman. "We have no idea when the project will be started," added Akins, "but when it happens, just like the blockhouse, it will happen quickly. By this time next year we should see the entire fort reconstructed complete with all the fort's artillery, interior walls and fascines just like it would have appeared to a visitor in the 1720's. I can't wait!"

Fort King George has experienced a marked increase in attendance this year thanks to more school groups visiting the site as well as a healthy economy.