

History

In the early 1700s, Spain claimed Florida while Britain colonized the lands to the north along the Atlantic coast. Africans enslaved to the British were emancipated in exchange for serving with the Spanish militia and fled south to Spanish Florida.

By 1738, nearly 100 former slaves, risking their lives to escape captivity from the British colonies, found refuge in the small town of St. Augustine. Under the leadership of African-born Francisco Menendez, they constructed a log fortress north of town as a northern defensive line for the Castillo de San Marco. The following year, war was declared between Spain and Britain.

In May 1740, as the British soldiers from newly colonized Georgia marched toward Fort Mose, its inhabitants were safely evacuating to St. Augustine. The British troops set up camp at the abandoned Fort Mose. In the pre-dawn morning of June 26, three hundred Spanish soldiers, including the black militia, staged a surprise attack on the British encampment, recapturing the fort and leaving 68 British dead and taking 34 prisoners. The remaining British soldiers retreated to Georgia.

With the original Fort Mose demolished, African settlers lived inside St. Augustine until 1752 when the fort and town were rebuilt on higher ground to the northeast. Besides being on call as soldiers, the townspeople worked as sailors, fishermen, blacksmiths, cowboys and builders. They farmed, hunted and fished to feed themselves.

In 1763, Florida was ceded to Britain and those living at Fort Mose evacuated along with other Spanish citizens to the northwest coast of Cuba.

Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Fort Mose Historic State Park

c/o Anastasia State Park
1340A A1A South
St. Augustine, Florida 32080
(904) 823-2232

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- The Visitor Center is open Thursday through Monday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The grounds are open daily from 8:00 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required.
- All plants, animals and park property are protected. Collection, destruction or disturbance is prohibited.
- Pets must be kept on a hand-held leash no longer than six feet and well behaved at all times.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the museum.
- For information about joining Fort Mose Historical Society, visit www.fortmose.org.
- Florida's state parks are committed to providing equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the museum.

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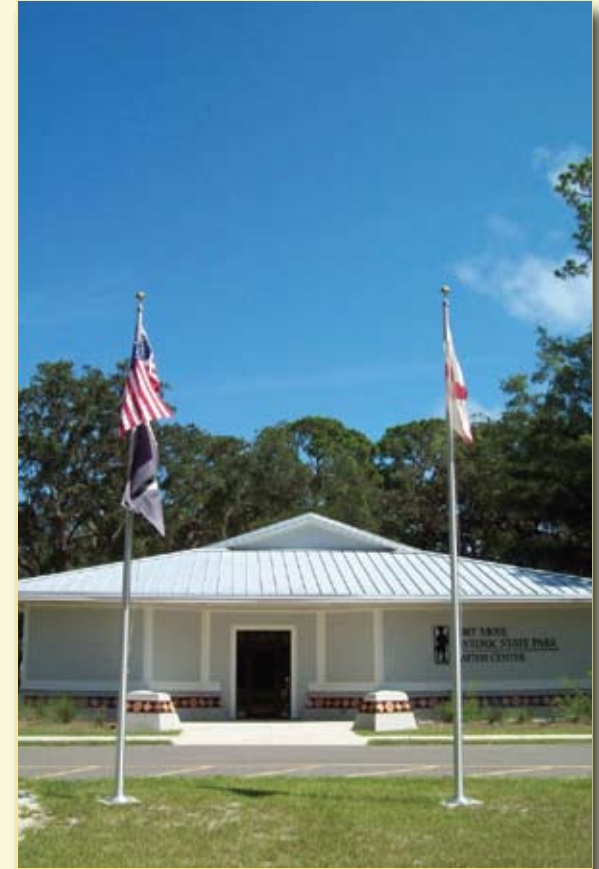
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