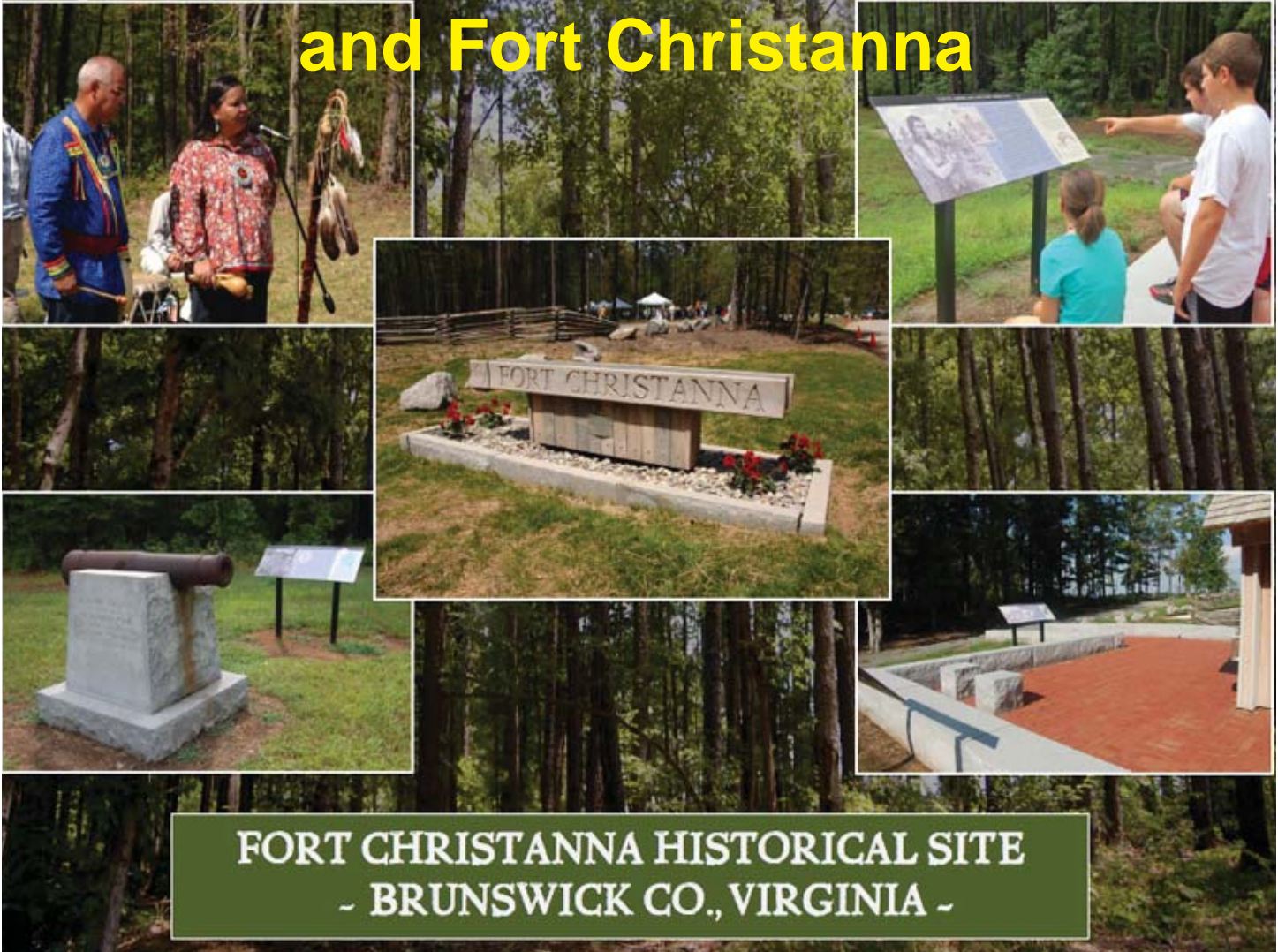


# Visit Brunswick County and Fort Christanna



## FORT CHRISTANNA HISTORICAL SITE - BRUNSWICK CO., VIRGINIA -

### FORT CHRISTANNA HISTORICAL SITE

In 1714, Gov. Alexander Spotswood began construction of Fort Christanna on Virginia’s western frontier. The 3.5 acre five-sided fort was built, in part, to defend both the local settlers and the Indian tribes that were allied with the English. Fort Christanna was situated within a 36 square mile tract of land set aside for the Saponie and Occaneechee Indians.

Gov. Spotswood’s fort included the creation of an Indian School. He personally paid the salary of the schoolmaster, Charles Griffin. At the school, the students were taught English and Religion.

A visitor in 1716 reported that the Indian students knew the Lord’s Prayer and could recite the Anglican catechism. As many as 100 students were in the Indian School at Fort Christanna. Having Indian children within the walls of the fort was a strategy to prevent an Indian attack.

However, by 1717 the fort and the school at Christanna had lost its support in London and Virginia. The Indian School closed, and its schoolmaster went back east to teach Indian students at the College of William and Mary.

The Fort Christanna experience brought to tribes of the region new ideas, a new language, a new religion and new dependency on Europeans trade goods.

The old tribal ways and traditions fast fell away as the Virginia colony expanded. But the tribes whose children were educated at Fort Christanna adapted and endured. Several tribes in Virginia and North Carolina today are proud descendants of those students at the Christanna Indian School.

The Fort Christanna site is managed by the Fort Christanna Site Development Committee and the Brunswick County/ Lake Gaston Tourism Association, Inc. For more information, contact Brunswick County/Lake Gaston Tourism Association, Inc. at 434-848-6773. **SOURCE: [www.brunswickco.com/ftchris.asp](http://www.brunswickco.com/ftchris.asp)**