

Fort Frederick, Maryland, Circa 1756

Rifle: 50 Caliber Flintlock (in the Bedford School style), scratch built and photographed by Lance C. Bell

Also shown is a "possibles bag," patch knife, and powder horn of the same era.

Fort Frederick, built by the colony of Maryland in 1756, was named in honor of Maryland's Lord Proprietor, Frederick Calvert, Sixth Lord Baltimore, and erected by Governor Horatio Sharpe in 1756 to protect English settlers from the French and their Indian allies. Fort Frederick was unique because of its large size and strong stone wall. Most other forts of the period were built of wood and earth. The fort served as an important supply base for English campaigns. During 1763, an Ottawa Indian chief named Pontiac forged a massive Indian uprising and several hundred settlers and militia force sought protection within the fort during this brief time.

Fort Frederick saw service again during the American Revolution as a prison for Hessian (German) and British soldiers. In 1791, the State of Maryland sold the fort. For the next 131 years the fort and surrounding lands were farmed. During the Civil War, Union troops were often stationed around the fort to guard the C&O Canal.

In 1922, the State of Maryland re-purchased the fort. Throughout the 1920's, the State began development of Maryland's first state park. During the Great Depression of the 1930's, a company of the Civilian Conservation Corps was assigned to the park to reconstruct the dilapidated stone wall, perform archaeology, and

locate the foundations of the original interior buildings. Restoration continued in 1975. Today, the Fort's stone wall and two barracks have been restored to their

1758 appearance. Historic displays can be seen in the Fort, Barracks and Visitor Center. Fort Frederick State Park annually holds military reenactments and other special events. The Park's lands front the Potomac River and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal passes through park acreage. Future plans include reconstruction of the Officer's Quarters and other defensive works.

Features of the park include: America's premier stone fortification from the French and Indian War period, boat launch, cross country skiing, camp sites, camp store, food and beverage, fishing, flat water canoeing, hiking trail, historic interest, picnic shelters (available for rent), playgrounds and a visitor's center. Fort Frederick State Park offers an easy trail for hikers. The Wetlands Trail, .3 miles in length, passes along a wetlands area behind the campground. Hikers can see several species of turtles, waterfowl, birds, as well as white-tailed deer and other wildlife.

Fort Frederick is located off Interstate 70, Exit 12 at State Route 56 near Big Pool, Maryland. For more information and a list of scheduled activities visit our web site at: www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/fortfrederick.html or call the park office at 301-842-2155.



Aerial view of Fort Frederick, courtesy Maryland DNR.

