

# BENT'S OLD FORT HISTORIC ASSOCIATION

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To Preserve, Protect, and Honor the Natural and Cultural Heritage of Bent's Old Fort through Public Awareness, Program Support and Education



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## We're Back...

The board has been working on plans for the future of the Association and has some exciting news and plans for the future, some of which are described in this issue and others that will be announced at a later time.

First the Association Board wishes to apologize for the lack of newsletters in the past months. Reorganization efforts and other priorities led to neglect in publishing but those issues are resolved and a return to quarterly issues on a more regular basis is slated. Beginning in July 2011, Michael Schaub will take over as editor. In the meantime, we will do our best to get the newsletter out in a timely manner. If you have any suggestions, please contact any board member.

As part of our effort to make up for the lack of newsletters last year AND to encourage new memberships, we are making a special offer.

## Nationally Known Instructors are Coming to Bent's Old Fort

**Yours, Mine and Ours: Weaving the Stories of Interpretation into a Living Tapestry**

Bent's Old Fort Historic Association, in cooperation with Bent's Old Fort Historic Site, is extremely excited to sponsor an extraordinary opportunity for intensive instruction in the fields of interpretation and living history. Bill Weldon of Colonial Williamsburg and John C.F. Luzader of Living Museums of the West will be conducting two days of interactive and thought provoking training on Thursday April 28 and Friday April 29 of this year. The cost for this workshop is \$200, but for BOFHA members, it is discounted to \$150. More details and an application will be forthcoming soon. (Employees of the National Park Service should contact Bent's Old Fort for information about participation)

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## ★ SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP PRICE ★

**\$11.00 in 2011**

That's right...in 2011 you will pay only \$11.00 for an Individual membership and \$16.00 for a Family membership. Other categories will remain the same, but it's a still a great deal. See the attached renewal form.



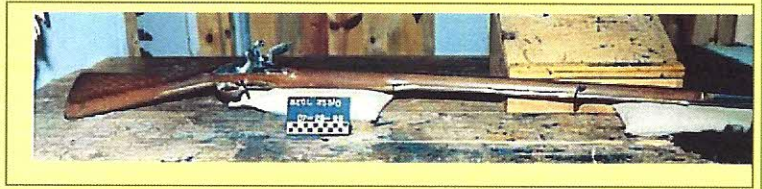
Bill Weldon is a thirty year veteran of historical interpretation, training, and program planning. He is currently the director of Historic Area Programs and artistic director for *The Revolutionary City* at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.



Mr. Luzader has been involved in cultural and living history interpretation since 1961 as a participant, trainer, and planner. In 2010, the National Association for Interpretation bestowed their highest honor, the Fellow Award, to him.

## A BIG THANK YOU

The Association would like to express their gratitude for the generous gift recently given by the El Pomar Foundation. An unrestricted contribution in the amount of \$1,500 was given by their Trustees. We would particularly like to thank Mr. Robert J. Hilbert of the Foundation and Ms. Rachel Wallace for suggesting the Association as a recipient. Thanks also go to Mr. Rick Wallner for facilitating this gift. This contribution will assist the Association in its many upcoming projects detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.



*Reproduction Brown Bess Musket*

## MORE GOOD NEWS

It has been reported that a suspect has been taken in custody for the theft of the rifles from the Bent's Fort trade room. It is quite possible that at least some of the weapons will be recovered. To read more about this story see the following from the Pueblo Chieftain.

<http://tinyurl.com/4buceq3>

## The Colt Paterson Revolver at Bent's Fort

By Michael Schaub

To my knowledge there is no documentation to support the presence of the Colt-Paterson revolver at Bent's Fort. There, are however, a number of references to these pistols in the journals of men known to have been associated with the fort.

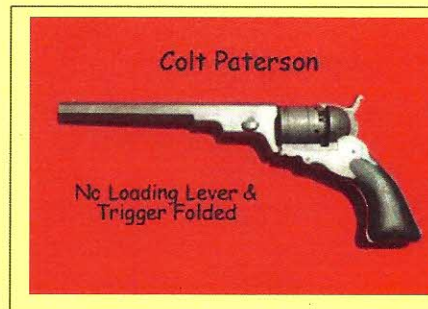
By the early 1830's Samuel Colt began planning a revolving pistol and by 1835 had obtained the first of numerous patents in regards to the design of his pistol. By 1836 he formed the Patent Arms Manufacturing Company, which began operations in an unoccupied section of a silk mill in Paterson, N.J. (producing the Colt-Paterson pistol) The Colt-Paterson was a single-action pistol distinguished by a folding trigger and which lacked a trigger guard. The pistol was manufactured both with and without a loading lever. The pistols were

relatively small, being characterized as belt pistols, rather than holster pistols and were available in .28, .31, .34, and .36 calibers. Approximately 2,000 of these were manufactured between 1836 and 1842. Starting in 1839 a larger, holster pistol, with a 9-inch barrel and in .36 caliber was manufactured (Russell).

Acceptance of this pistol was slow, and only small orders were received. Limited quantities were purchased by Army officers for their personal sidearms, some seventy-five were ordered for South Carolina Militia officers and small numbers were obtained by the new Republic of Texas for use by the Texas Rangers. The U.S. government made no official purchases of this weapon. In 1842 the

*Please see Colt Paterson on page 5*

*"Thus we can infer that those mud walls at Bent's Fort were familiar with the presence of the Colt-Paterson revolver."*



## A Few Words from the Superintendent

By Alexa Roberts

The staff of Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site is pleased to contribute to this issue of the Bent's Old Fort Historical Association Newsletter! Park staff and the dedicated volunteer Board members of the newly revitalized Association (BOFHA) have spent many an hour together in the last several months discussing shared visions, goals and priorities, and forging a partnership for Bent's Old Fort and its important stories. We are excited about some of the new projects and opportunities that are coming up, as you will read about in this and future issues, and the many ideas being generated for the years ahead. We wish to thank the BOFHA Board and members for their volunteerism and dedication to Bent's Old Fort. In this time of fiscal constraints, many important projects would not be possible without the assistance and support of the site's many friends. Beyond fundraising,

however, the power of many friends together will help us -more than we can do as a park staff alone—to raise awareness and appreciation of our Castle on the Prairie. Please join BOFHA in its efforts, and we look forward to welcoming you when you come to visit!



## From the Chief of Interp's Desk

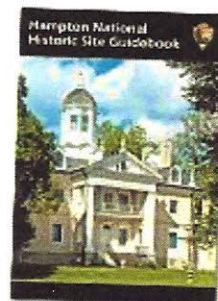
By Rick Wallner

I am very excited about BOFHA signing up to finance the new National Park Handbook about Bent's Old Fort NHS! As a park visitor, I always find these to be my favorite book to buy when visiting a park. There are over 150 titles in this series which was started by the National Park Service Division of Publications. Today, most get published by private firms and are sponsored by park Friend's groups or cooperating associations. The Donning Company Publishers have done several of these books in the last few years (most recently a guidebook for Hampton National Historic Site in Maryland).

With John C.F. Luzader and Jerri Spellman signed on as authors I am looking forward to a great product. Retailing for around \$10, this

book will fill a much needed gap at our park bookstore between the \$2.95 16-page Mark Gardner booklet and the \$21.95 400-page David Lavender tome. Besides sales at the park, this book will hopefully sell well at other outlets and provide some long-term income for the Association.

Look for the Bent's Old Fort book to be released around May 2012!



The last NPS guidebook published by Donning (2010) for Hampton National Historic site in Maryland

