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Departments partner with Museum to present history, archeology mini-conference

March 1, 2013

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Georgia Southern Museum and the Department of History have partnered to present “Captive Warriors: The History and Archaeology of POWs,” a half-day lecture series, on Tuesday, March 12, at Georgia Southern University. The mini-conference will feature three speakers from Georgia Southern – historians Brian Feltman and Michael Van Wagenen and archeologist Lance Greene. Special guests include David Bush of Heidelberg University, the lead archeologist from Johnson’s Island, Ohio – a Union prison camp for captured Confederate officers – and historian John Derden, the author of The World’s Largest Prison: The Story of Camp Lawton. Event lectures will focus on the experiences of prisoners of war from the Civil War through World War I, with special emphasis on Civil War prisons.

“This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in history or archaeology, or anyone currently learning about the major wars, especially the Civil War,” said Peggy Hargis, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. “We’re very excited to be able to bring John Derden to campus: He was working on the history of Camp Lawton before Georgia Southern archeologists uncovered the site, and is a wealth of information about the prison camp.”

“Captive Warriors” events begin at Georgia Southern’s Nessmith-Lane Conference Center. From 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Feltman, Van Wagenen, Bush, and Greene will present. At 5:30, there will be a short recess and intermission, during which attendees will be able to purchase copies of Derden’s The World’s Largest Prison: The Story of Camp Lawton, Van Wagenen’s Remembering the Forgotten War: The Enduring Legacies of the U.S.-Mexican War and Bush’s I Fear I shall Never Leave This Island: Life in a Civil War Prison. Those interested in buying books are asked to bring cash or check. Derden’s lecture will begin at 5:45.

Immediately following the presentations, a book signing and reception will be held at the Georgia Southern Museum. A graduate student from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology will serve as a docent for the Camp Lawton exhibit, and museum admission will be waived for the evening.

Presentation titles include “A Different Sort of Battlefront: Surrender and Wartime Captivity from the Civil War to the Great War,” “Rivals No Longer: Improving History through Archaeology," “Unearthing Camp Lawton: Recent Discoveries and Future Research,” “Twenty-five years of Historic/Archaeological Research at Johnson’s Island” and “The Resurrection of Camp Lawton.”

All events are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Hargis at har_agga@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-5443.