

# Preserving History Through Archaeology



October 2021  
Volume X, Issue 8

## GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

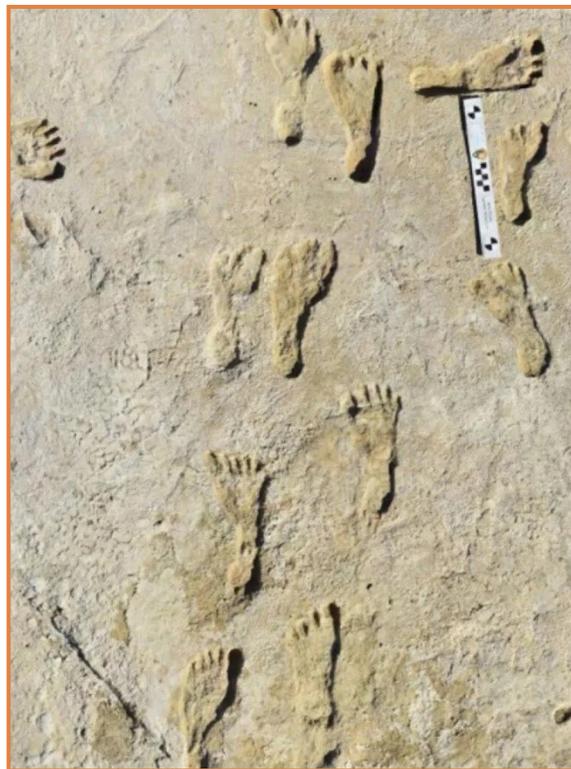
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### Prehistoric Footprints Push Back Timeline of Humans' Arrival in North America

Article featured on [Smithsonian Magazine](#) Web site on September 24, 2021

An analysis of fossilized footprints at White Sands National Monument in New Mexico offers what some scientists say is the most conclusive evidence yet that humans lived in North America long before the end of the last Ice Age. The research (published in the journal [Science](#)) dates the prints to between 21,000 and 23,000 years ago.

"We'd been suspicious of the age for a while, and so now [that] we finally have that it's really exciting," study co-author David Bustos, chief of natural and cultural resources at White Sands, tells NBC News's Tom



Metcalf. "One of the neat things is that you can see mammoth prints in the layers a meter or so above the human footprints, so that just helps to confirm the whole story."

Scholars have long been aware of the tracks, which are known as "ghost prints" because they are only visible under particular weather conditions. However, the new study is the first to clearly date them to such an early era. The researchers determined when the footprints were made through radiocarbon dating of dried ditchgrass seeds found in layers both above and below the impressions.

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## GARS/Fort Daniel News

- **WORK DAY:** In preparation for the Fort Daniel Frontier Faire (*See Page 3 for more details*) Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) and Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) members will be cleaning up the Fort area and the Fort Daniel Archaeology Lab on Saturday, October 9 from 9:30AM to 12PM. If you are interested in helping in preparing the site, please email [Delana Gilmore](mailto:Delana.Gilmore@fdr.org).
- **GARS SOCIAL:** In lieu of meeting this month GARS members are invited to a Halloween-themed Happy Hour! Keep an eye on your email and the [GARS Facebook](#) page for more in-depth details.



## MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE:

If you would like to join or renew your GARS membership, please contact [Delana Gilmore](#); and for FDF membership please contact [Cindy Horsley](#).



## More Diggin's

- **WINN FAIR:** The annual Winn Fair will be occurring the first weekend in October. See Page 5 for more details.
- **GHOST TOURS ON THE SQUARE:** Come take a 90-minute scary stroll around the beautiful historic courthouse square and by storefronts restored to their turn-of-the-century charm. You will hear stories about recent bizarre paranormal events that have happened in the businesses lining the square and learn about the night that the dead walked down main street. Tours will be ongoing until October 31. For tickets or more information visit the [Aurora Theatre Web site](#).
- **CAPTURING THE SPIRIT:** Historic Oakland Cemetery will be hosing Halloween tours from October 14–31. A costumed docent guides you through the cemetery's beautifully lit Victorian Gardens where you'll meet some of Oakland's most notable residents. For tickets or more information visit the [Historic Oakland Cemetery Web site](#).

# *Defending the Frontier*

**13th Annual Frontier Faire  
Saturday, October 16, 2021**

**10AM–4PM**

**Fort Daniel Historic Site  
(2505 Braselton Highway/GA 124, Buford)**

**FREE Admission**

**★ Public Archaeology ★**

**★ Fort Daniel Museum ★**

**★ Historic Interpretations ★**

**★ Frontier Demonstrations ★**

**For information visit Fort Daniel Foundation's Facebook Page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/fortdanielfoundation>**

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“The evidence is very convincing and extremely exciting,” Tom Higham, an archaeologist at the University of Vienna who was not involved in the study, tells *Nature*’s Ewen Callaway. “I am convinced that these footprints genuinely are of the age claimed.”

Many archaeologists have placed the start of human life in the Americas toward the end of the last Ice Age, around 13,000 years ago, reports Carl Zimmer for the *New York Times*. That’s when some of the oldest known tools (made by the Clovis culture in what is now New Mexico) appear. Melting of ice sheets as the world warmed could have allowed hunter-gatherers to cross a land bridge from Siberia to Alaska.

Since the 1970s, other archaeological work has suggested that humans arrived on the continent earlier, perhaps between 16,000 and 17,000 years ago, traveling down Pacific Coast routes that became passable while the continent’s interior was still icy, writes Maya Wei-Haas for *National Geographic*.

Some researchers have also published evidence of a much earlier human presence in North America, including stone tools dated to as long as 30,000 years ago. However, others have questioned whether the discoveries were really tools shaped by humans, and whether estimates of their age are correct.

The new White Sands research is different because the prints were obviously made by people, study co-author Vance Holliday, an archaeologist and geologist at the University of Arizona, tells *National Geographic*. “It’s just screamingly obvious,” he says.

Ciprian Ardelean, an archaeologist at Autonomous University of Zacatecas in Mexico who co-authored one of the earlier studies of ancient tools but was not involved in the new research, tells the *Times* that the paper provides definitive support for the idea that humans lived in North America at the height of the Ice Age.



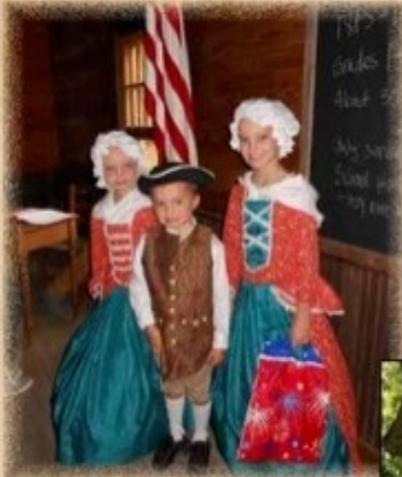
Not everyone is as fully convinced. Loren Davis, an archaeologist at Oregon State University, tells *National Geographic* that without a second dating method the radiocarbon dating can’t be completely trusted. Aquatic plants like the ones the researchers used for dating can pick up “old” carbon from nearby materials in what’s called the freshwater reservoir effect, which gives the false impression that plant material is older than its true age. However, the researchers say they accounted for that issue. According to *Nature*, the team dated hundreds of seeds from different layers. The seeds’ radiocarbon dating fell in line with their place in the geological record, with older seeds on the bottom and younger ones on top, rather than the more random distribution expected with the reservoir effect.

Even if the study’s findings hold up, the question of what became of North America’s Ice Age inhabitants remains. Andrea Manica, a geneticist at the University of Cambridge who was not involved in the study, tells BBC News’ Paul Rincon that clear evidence of ancestors of modern Native Americans splitting from Asian populations 15,000 to 16,000 years ago exists.

“This would suggest that the initial colonists of the Americas were replaced when the ice corridor formed and another wave of colonists came in,” he says. “We have no idea how that happened.” ■ SM

# 2021 Winn Fair

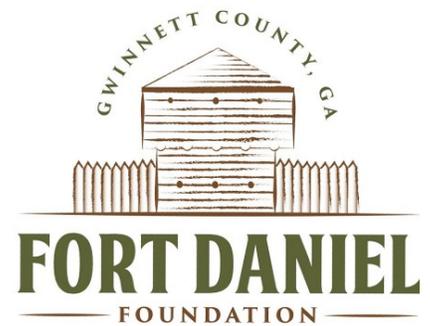
Join us for a Winn House tour, food, craft vendors, and music.  
Living history—blacksmith, weaving, spinning, militia reenactors.



**October 2 - 3**  
**10 AM to 5 PM**  
**908 Dacula Road**  
**Dacula, Georgia**



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## “Rose on Peachtree” to Begin Restoration Process

Excerpt from an article featured on the [AJC](#) Web site on September 10, 2021

After years of delay, the stage is set to finally restore one of metro Atlanta’s oldest buildings. Located at 537 Peachtree Street, the Rufus M. Rose House was acquired by UC Asset, an Atlanta-based real estate investment firm, earlier this summer.

“Our goal has always been to use real estate to positively engage and impact the Atlanta community,” Christal Jordan, Executive Director, UC Asset, said in a press release. “Acquiring the Rufus Rose House was a great beginning to our commitment to the city. . . . Our long-term goal



is for the Rufus House to become a symbol of hope and legacy for the city, celebrating its rich history while forging ahead to create a progressive new future.”

The home is the only Victorian mansion still standing in the central district. The 1901 build is a late Victorian Queen Anne-style home. It’s been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977. The City of Atlanta designated it as a Landmark Building Exterior in 1989. Plans are in place to fully restore the home to preserve its history and promote a future of diversity and inclusion in Atlanta. ■ **AJC**

### GARS OFFICERS [www.thegars.org](http://www.thegars.org)

President: Anne Dorland  
Vice President: Jenna Tran  
Secretary/Treasurer: Delana Gilmore

To keep up with the latest digs and activities from GARS follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

### FDF OFFICERS

President: Eli Stancel  
Secretary: Cindy Horsley  
Vice President: Leslie Perry  
Treasurer: Betty Warbington

To stay up to date with the latest news from FDF follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).