

Preserving History Through Archaeology



June/July/August 2019
Volume VIII, Issue 6

GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Discover America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places for 2019

Each year America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places list sheds light on important examples of our nation's heritage that are at risk of destruction or irreparable damage. Over 300 places have been listed in its 32-year history, and in that time fewer than five percent of listed sites have been lost.

The 2019 list includes a diverse mix of historic places across America that face a range of challenges and threats—from climate change to inappropriate development to neglect and disuse.

Find out what you can do to support the following sites:

Tenth Street Historic District (Dallas, Texas)

Primarily settled by formerly enslaved people after the

Civil War, Dallas' Tenth Street Historic District includes a collection of buildings dating from the late 19th to early 20th century (*pictured below*). A 2010



change to a local ordinance allowed the city to obtain demolition permits for houses less than 3,000 square feet without regard for Landmark Commission rulings, which is substantially increasing the rate of demolition. To date at least 70 of the district's 260 homes have been demolished.

To challenge this law a local preservation group filed a lawsuit against the City of Dallas. [Add your name to the petition telling](#)

[the City of Dallas to amend or repeal this unjust city ordinance.](#)

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More Diggin's

- **Historic Walking Tour of Downtown Lawrenceville:** Gwinnett County Parks invite you to take a glimpse of the past on Saturday, August 3 from 8:30–10AM. Let historical interpreters take you back in time as you casually stroll through the historic town of Lawrenceville. This tour is perfect for people who want to learn more about the rich history of Gwinnett County. Walking tours range from 1 to 1 ½ hour. All ages are welcome and admission fee is \$5 per person. Preregister [online](#) or by calling (770) 822-5178 with event code: IAH38403. (You need to register by the Thursday prior to the event date.)



- **Atlanta History Center's Party with the Past:** The next one will be at the Clarkston Community Center on Thursday, August 15 starting at 6:30PM. Come out and explore the most diverse square mile in America—Clarkston—to learn more about the unique history and culture of the

area. Known by many names and nicknames during its history, including New Siding and Angora Heights (referring to angora goats kept by residents in the early 1900s), Clarkston was one of the first suburban communities in the South. Beginning in the 1990s, Clarkston became a common destination for refugee resettlement. With over 50 countries across six continents represented, the City proudly proclaims itself “the Ellis Island of the South.” Party With The Past is always free to attend, but please RSVP so they will know that you’re coming. To RSVP or for more information visit the [Atlanta History Center Web site](#).

The Forgotten Frontier

11th Annual

Frontier Faire



Saturday, October 19

10AM–4PM

Fort Daniel Historic Site

(2505 Braselton Highway/GA 124, Buford)

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Nashville's Music Row (Nashville, Tennessee)

Nashville's Music Row is a world-class musical mecca that harbors more than 200 music-related businesses—making it unlike any other place in the world. Out of its modest homes and large commercial buildings has emerged an unmatched canon of music recordings across a wide variety of musical styles, which has delighted music fans for generations.



Despite its critical role in the identity, economy, and culture of internationally renowned “Music City,” Music Row is on pace to becoming a thing of the past. Since 2013 50 buildings—the majority serving music-related functions—have been demolished to make way for new development. [With a new plan to guide Music Row's future under development now is an important time to urge Nashville lawmakers to preserve and protect this epicenter of America's musical heritage.](#)



Hacienda Los Torres (Lares, Puerto Rico)

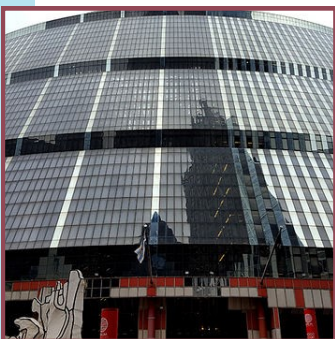
Hacienda Los Torres—built in 1846 during the height of Puerto Rico's coffee industry by Jose Maria Torres—is one of the last historic coffee plantation houses on the island and one of the oldest remaining structures in Puerto Rico. It's also associated with the “Grito de Lares” revolt and the Spanish-American War.

Long-term deterioration and the effects of multiple hurricanes, including Hurricane Maria in 2017, threaten this historic site. [Support saving Hacienda Los Torres.](#)

Ancestral Places of Southeast Utah (Southeast Utah)

Archaeologists believe this area to be one of the country's most culturally rich but unprotected landscapes open to oil and gas extraction. In the last two years the Bureau of Land Management dramatically escalated leasing activity in the region, despite concerns from the National Trust, affected tribes, and our regional partners.

[Send a letter to the Department of the Interior urging them to recognize the cultural significance of these lands.](#)



James R. Thompson Center (Chicago, Illinois)

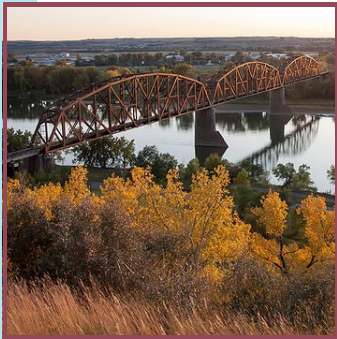
The James R. Thompson Center is Chicago's best example of grand-scale Postmodern architecture. However, Governor J.B. Pritzker recently signed legislation allowing for sale of the building within two years to help fill a state budget gap. Without preservation protections the Thompson Center could be demolished.

[Add your name to the list urging Governor Pritzker to require retention and reuse of the Thompson Center when the building is sold.](#)

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Bismarck-Mandan Rail Bridge (Bismarck, North Dakota)



The Bismarck-Mandan Rail Bridge connects Bismarck and Mandan, North Dakota. Constructed in 1883, it was the first rail bridge built across the upper Missouri River. The iconic bridge has been recognized as an International Site of Conscience for the role it played in opening the western United States to white settlement—and the resulting profound impacts to Native American communities—but it has been proposed for demolition by railway company BNSF.

The Coast Guard is in consultation with BNSF and other parties under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Coast Guard has proposed a conditional permit that would require BNSF to retain the historic bridge until after an adjacent new bridge is constructed, in order to identify a preservation solution for the Bismarck-Mandan Rail Bridge. [Tell the Coast Guard not to demolish this iconic bridge.](#)

Industrial Trust Company Building (Providence, Rhode Island)

An iconic part of the Providence skyline, the 1928 Industrial Trust Company Building is under threat due to deterioration and deferred maintenance after six years of vacancy. While this site is located within a qualified “Opportunity Zone” (an area eligible for capital gains tax incentive benefits), there is no redevelopment plan for the so-called Superman Building, and its future is in question. Advocates want to see the building used in some way, whether that’s commercial or residential.



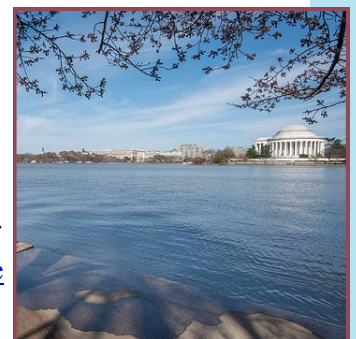
The Excelsior Club (Charlotte, North Carolina)



Listed in the Green Book, the Excelsior Club was a leading private African-American social club in the Southeast—hosting artists like Nat King Cole and Louis Armstrong during its heyday. The Art Moderne building needs significant investment. The property is currently listed for sale at \$1.5 million, but even if a buyer is found, a reuse plan and significant investments are necessary to ensure a strong future. Hopefully, its appearance on the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places list will boost visibility. For those who remember what the Excelsior Club was, the stakes couldn’t be higher.

National Mall Tidal Basin (Washington, DC)

This iconic cultural landscape comprises some of our nation’s most renowned monuments and famed cherry blossom trees—home to the Jefferson Memorial and famed cherry trees and the newer memorials to Martin Luther King and FDR. It’s estimated that as much as \$500 million is needed to upgrade and maintain one of the most popular and visited sites in the National Park System. [Join the three-year campaign to ensure the Tidal Basin is preserved for future generations.](#)

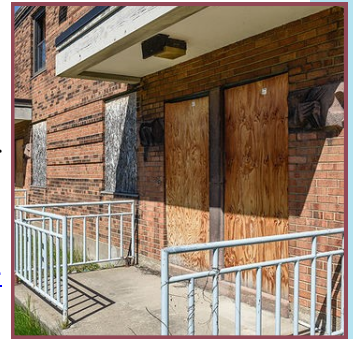


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Willert Park Courts (Buffalo, New York)

This complex, a unique example of early Modernism with bas-reliefs depicting scenes of everyday life, was New York State's first housing project constructed specifically for African Americans. Today the site is vacant and many of its structures are open to the elements. The Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority has proposed demolishing the complex to construct replacement housing. [Ask the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority to preserve and redevelop rather than demolish this important site.](#)



Mount Vernon Arsenal and Searcy Hospital (Mount Vernon, Alabama)

This arsenal was held by the Confederacy during the Civil War and housed Geronimo and approximately 400 Apache prisoners of war during the 1880s and 1890s. The hospital complex served as a segregated mental health facility for African Americans after 1900. The complex closed in 2012 and is currently vacant and deteriorating. [Tell the Alabama Historical Commission that you support the site's preservation.](#)

For more information about how to support and preserve these irreplaceable sites go to the [National Trust for Historic Preservation's Web site](#). ■ NTHP

GARS News

- **GARS Meeting:** *The next Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) meeting will be in September. More information will be provided at a later date.*
- **SGA Spring Meeting:** This past May GARS members were able to attend the Spring Meeting of the Society of Georgia Archaeology (SGA) at the new University of Georgia Laboratory of Archaeology in Athens, Georgia. The theme "Heritage Under the Waters" was reflected throughout the displays and main speaker presentation, which focused on Georgia's archaeological sites that were lost when the reservoirs were created. Special guests this year were representatives from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation who held a panel discussion on collaboration with university anthropology/archaeology departments and the State of Georgia. Pictured right, GARS members were able to have lunch with the representatives and learn more about what they are doing to preserve their history and how we can help them.
- **Fort Daniel Open House Celebrating Archaeology Month (A month late):** Due to a heavy rain prediction in May, the Fort Daniel Open House was rescheduled. Three excavation units were opened for the June 22nd Open House. Catherine Long supervised a unit for Scouts working on their Archaeology Merit Badge. Pictured left are three visitors/parents looking on at the Scout Unit with Catherine on right. Two Scouts are behind the adults and two off screening. In the background another unit was supervised by Dr. Jim D'Angelo, the GARS Archaeological Advisor, and Tyler Holman, a University of North Georgia student and a member of the Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) Board, for older students and adults. FDF Vice President Leslie Perry supervised another unit adjacent to the Northeast Blockhouse, which ended up exposing a maze of roots from a tree that Wayne



Stancel had removed earlier in the year. The wonderful gathering was exceptional with people enjoying the public archaeology, seeing the museum, and learning about the lab.

Underwater Archaeologists Probe York River for Clues to Battle That Won Independence

Excerpt from an article by Michael E. Ruane as featured on [The Washington Post Web site](#) on June 24, 2019

What are you doing for the summer? Well, underwater archaeologist Josh Daniel and others have been searching the murky bottoms of the York River for the remains of British ships sunk off Virginia in 1781. Recently, Daniel and veteran underwater archaeologist, John D. Broadwater, have found potentially important clues near two, maybe three, encrusted cannons that the team had found. This discovery recalls a dramatic episode during the Revolutionary War when French gunners blasted a British warship, HMS *Charon*, which caught fire and drifted ablaze across the river setting two other ships alight before all three sank. It was all part of the climactic battle of the war, in which the young United States, with the help of the French army and navy, besieged and defeated the British at Yorktown in 1781—and ensured American independence declared in 1776.

On a warm, humid summer day in June divers Daniel, Broadwater, and Bill Waldrop, along with backup Mike Nusbaum were digging through the mud and oyster shells on the river bottom for remnants of the battle. They were guided by GPS data and a crude diagram of objects on the bottom that Daniel drew in a notebook. The nearby wreck of the *Charon* had been located and studied extensively years ago, but details about the other two ships are scarce. A charred wood fragment, along with the newly found suspected cannon, could be from one of the other ships.

The day—the second of a two-day dive—began with what appears to be a major discovery. In the morning Waldrop had gone into the water to resume a search he had started the day before. It was at a previously unexplored site that looked promising—based on an underwater survey done several weeks ago. Waldrop plunged in and dived about 23 feet. He was just starting to feel around when his knees bumped against something protruding slightly from the bottom. The more he dug, the more excited he became. As he felt along the length of the object, he reached what felt like the rear. He knew the rear end of old cannons had a large knob called the *cascabel*, used to handle the gun. As he probed, there it was. He thought, “This is a damn cannon.” The suspected cannon, about seven feet long, is “almost certainly British,” Broadwater said. “It’s not big enough [to be from] a warship. It’s probably [from] one of the merchant vessels that was here. Almost all of them were armed, with anywhere from three-pounders to four- or six-pounders.”

The *Charon* carried 44 guns and 300 men, although most of the crew and the guns were ashore. It was the biggest ship the British had on hand. It was anchored off Yorktown to protect a critical British defensive position, according to historian John O. Sands. However, French soldiers had a trench nearby. They also had a special oven in which they heated cannon balls before firing them. On October 10, 1781 one of these “hot shots” lodged in the main deck of the *Charon* and started to smoke. The crew dislodged it, put it in a kettle, and doused it with water, a British sailor recounted later. Then a second shot landed in the ship’s room where extra sails were kept, and the vessel caught fire. “As it started to burn, it burned through the anchor cable,” Broadwater said. The ship drifted across the river on fire. “We have eyewitnesses that said it was burning so intensely that it bumped into at least two other ships and set them afire.”

Broadwater, a retired chief archaeologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, first studied the York River shipwrecks in the mid-1970s. There are believed to be scores of them in the river, many scuttled by the British just off Yorktown to prevent amphibious landings. Fewer than half have been located. Broadwater said he has never stopped researching the wrecks, and they hope to reassemble later this year for further dives and investigation of the site. ■ TWP

The first wreck that John Broadwater excavated in this group of some 40 ships that had been identified by sonar but never seen by an underwater archaeologist due to the York River’s very low visibility was the supply ship Betsy. Close to shore in only 12ft of water, it was possible to surround the wreck with a steel cofferdam and replace the water around the wreck with purified river water. I had met John at an annual joint meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology and Conference on Underwater Archaeology and offered to try to do 3D photography of the wreck—a new technique I had been recently trained in at Harvard’s Peabody Museum. So, with my twin air tanks and two 35mm camera in underwater housings, I spent a couple of days working on the wreck. Unfortunately, the application, designed for architecture and artifacts, proved unworkable within the confines of the Cofferdam. I did get and got a cook’s tour of their lab and the work they were doing on the ship’s artifacts. For several years until I moved to Georgia, John and I would get together at those annual meetings and catch up on each other’s work. ~JJD

Fort Daniel News

- **THANK YOU:** Fort Daniel Foundation will like to thank everyone who has been able to come out this summer to do some work around the site. A special thanks goes out to Wayne Stancel for bolting together and securing the timbers for the Northeast Blockhouse outline.
- **New Discovery:** Recently, Tyler Holman was doing some research on Fort Harrison site and came upon some information about General Pinckney being at Hog Mountain Fort with a detachment in 1814!!!! Eli Stancel and Tyler are following this discovery up with more research; details will be in the next *Gwinnett Archaeology Bulletin*.

Summer at Fort Daniel

Article by Catherine Long

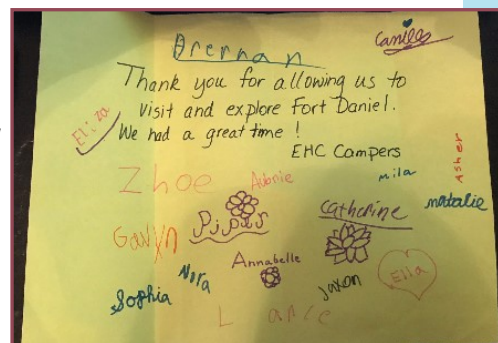
This past June volunteers welcomed campers from the Environmental and Heritage Center on Thursday, June 27 for a site visit. During the day campers learned about the science of archaeology and had the chance to get dirty. They received a good lesson in patience as they assisted in the excavation of a small unit (*pictured right*). Volunteers led by Catherine Long advised them on the process of digging and screening the dirt. The group worked diligently to seek the remaining part of a quartz biface found at the annual Open House event. A piece of quartz shatter was recovered.



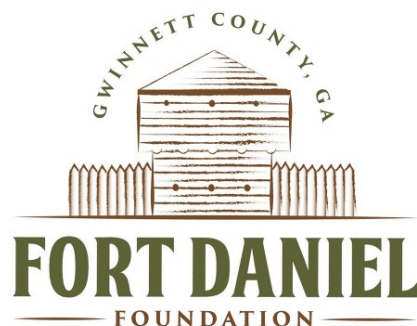
The campers discovered how to determine between a rock and a prehistoric tool. Leslie Perry explained the types of stone material available to native people and explained the process of tool making, flintknapping. Additionally, they learned about the significance of this frontier period fort and its role in protecting the community. Knowledgeable volunteer Frank Perry explained the types of tools used in the construction of the fort and a few others used for gardening and life on a farm (*pictured left*). Delana Gilmore provided a tour of the lab where the artifacts are processed and explained the procedure for what happens after artifacts have been recovered. Specific artifacts were highlighted to speak specifically on how artifacts provide archaeologists with an interpretation of the fort and the people who lived there. Campers received hands-on laboratory experience by putting fragments of modern pottery back together.



It was a wonderful day to provide active instruction to these campers, and they were invited back to the 11th Annual Frontier Faire in October (*see Page 2 for information*). In return the campers were so thankful to come and visit the site that they sent a card to the Fort Daniel volunteers (*pictured right*). Since outreach is critical in encouraging awareness of archaeology and the stewardship of archaeological sites, Fort Daniel volunteers will continue to teach its history at the same time preserving it through public archaeology. ■



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Atlanta History Center Acquires Rare Historic Flag

The Atlanta History Center has acquired the regimental flag of the 127th United States Colored Troops (USCT), a rare and important Civil War artifact, through Morphy Auctions in Pennsylvania. The flag is one of fewer than 25 known examples carried by African American regiments during the war.

The History Center purchased the flag for \$196,800 (a hammer price of \$160,000, plus buyer's premium) in June. The winning bid represents the most money the History Center has ever paid for a single artifact. The History Center rarely makes major purchases for its collections, which have grown organically over nine decades mainly through donations of artifacts. However, History Center leaders considered the acquisition of the flag an extraordinary opportunity in line with the institution's strategic plan for inclusivity.

The central scene painted on the 72-by-55-inch silk banner flag depicts a black soldier carrying a rifle and bidding farewell to Columbia, the mythical goddess of

liberty. A motto above reads "WE WILL PROVE OURSELVES MEN" (*pictured below*). On the reverse side a US eagle bears a ribbon with the US motto "E PLURIBUS UNUM"—or "Out of many, one."



This is the only surviving example of 11 flags painted with similarly inspiring scenes by African American artist David Bustill Bowser (1820-1890). He was a noted Philadelphia sign-painter, portraitist, and anti-slavery activist noted for his portraits of John Brown and President Abraham Lincoln.

At least 180,000 African Americans served in the United States Colored Troops, a special branch of the US Army formed after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Though these were segregated units commanded by white officers, the USCT represented a revolutionary shift from slavery to freedom and beyond. It is thought that three-fourths of the soldiers were formerly enslaved men. ■ AHC

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www.thegars.org

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

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