

Preserving History Through Archaeology



September 2022
Volume XI, Issue 7

GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Native Democratic Rule

Excerpt from an article by Bruce Bower as featured on [Science News Web site](#) on September 6, 2022

On sunny summer days powerboats zip across Lake Oconee, a reservoir located east of Atlanta. Little do the visitors suspect that here lie the remains of a democratic institution that dates to around 500 AD—more than 1,200 years before the founding of the United States Congress.

Reservoir waters, which flooded the Oconee Valley in 1979 after the construction of a nearby dam, partly cover remnants of a 1,500-year-old plaza once bordered by flat-topped earthen mounds and at least three large, circular buildings (see depiction drawing right). Such structures, which have been linked to collective decision making, are known from other southeastern US sites that date to as early as around 1,000 years ago.



At the Oconee site, called Cold Springs, artifacts were excavated before the valley became a reservoir. Now new older-than-expected radiocarbon dates for those finds push back the origin of democratic institutions in the Americas several centuries, a team led by archaeologist Victor Thompson of the University of Georgia in Athens reported in [American Antiquity](#).

That conclusion comes as no surprise to members of some Indigenous groups today. “Native people have been trying to convey for centuries that many communities have long-standing institutions [of] democratic and/or republican

governance,” says University of Alberta archaeologist S. Margaret Spivey-Faulkner, a citizen of the Pee Dee Indian Nation of Beaver Creek in South Carolina.

Read the full article at [Science News Web site](#). ■ SD

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Archaeologists of Fort Daniel

In this month's "Archaeologists of Fort Daniel" section we will be getting to know more about Catherine Long, Member of Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) Board of Directors and Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS)—actually a longtime member of both organizations since their inceptions.

Educational Background: Bachelor of Arts in History and Minor in Anthropology; Master of Arts in Anthropology and Museum Studies Certificate.

Current Employment: Served in various preservation and education roles in local government

Primary Research Interests: Preservation of historic and cultural sites and artifacts and preparing the next generation

What motivated you to become an archaeologist? I first discovered archaeology during my 8th grade Social Studies class focused on South Carolina history. It ignited a passion for me at a young age. I continued to take classes and traveled when given the opportunity. I was fortunate to be able to complete a semester study abroad in Cairo, Egypt! I also volunteered in South Carolina and Georgia to support public archaeology events. This was especially important during Archaeology Month celebrations.

What is the most interesting archaeological site on which you've worked? My most memorable was having the opportunity to excavate at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. This was his vacation home away from Monticello. I had the privilege to work with Dr. Barbara Heath on this project.

Do you work with volunteers? If so, how do interested people become volunteers? Yes, many volunteers are needed to assist in the preservation of Georgia and Gwinnett County's rich historic and cultural heritage. There are several groups that are instrumental in these volunteer efforts: The Gwinnett Historical Society, The Society for Georgia Archaeology, The Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society and the Fort Daniel Foundation. All of these organizations depend on volunteers – please join us.

What is your favorite thing about being an archaeologist? My favorite thing about being an archaeologist is discovering information about the past that can be shared with all communities. This may include a new technology, belief, or a new perspective.

What is your least favorite thing about being an archaeologist? My least favorite thing is poison ivy. Unfortunately, I am highly allergic and it makes excavation challenging

Who do you most admire in our field and why? I admire Tammy Forehand Herron for all of her work with the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program. She serves as the Curator and has devoted many years to public archaeology education in both South Carolina and Georgia. She is another example of a dedicated volunteer who has made significant contributions to the field of archaeology.

Do you have advice for people who want to pursue a career in archaeology? Participate in a field school - there are opportunities available through universities, colleges and other organizations. This is a great way to see if you have the patience to be an archaeologist. It is an exciting field but gaining experience can give you an idea if this is the job for you or help you define your area of interest. Take a variety of classes and locate a mentor who is doing what you would like to do! ■



Defending the Frontier

14th Annual Frontier Faire

Saturday, October 15, 2022

Rain Date: Saturday October 22, 2022

10AM–4PM

Fort Daniel Historic Site

(2505 Braselton Highway/GA 124, Buford)

FREE Admission

★ **Public Archaeology**

★ **Fort Daniel Museum**

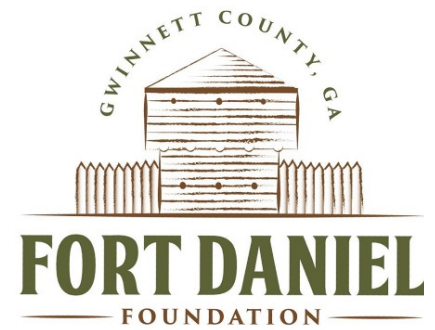
★ **Frontier Demonstrations**

★ **Historic Interpretations**

★ **Public Archaeology**

For information visit Fort Daniel Foundation's Web site: fortdaniel.com

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Statewide Historic Preservation Conference

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD), and the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions (GAPC) partner to present the Georgia Statewide Preservation Conference. This year's conference will be virtual, comprised of webinar presentations.

The statewide preservation conference brings together preservationists, non-profits, planners, architects, historians, architectural historians, archaeologists, city and county administrators, historic preservation commission members, students from across Georgia, and the general public.

The 2022 Statewide Historic Preservation Conference would be held virtually during the week of September

19-23, 2022. The conference will be using the Zoom Webinar platform to deliver 2-3 virtual sessions per day. Registrants will be sent instructions to join the sessions and will be able to participate by submitting



questions during the Q&A portion of the presentations. The conference will offer topics ranging from general preservation to economic incentives and tools for historic preservation communities.

Keynote speakers will be Seth Clark and Tracie Revis, Directors of the Ocmulgee National Park and

Preserve Initiative in Macon, Georgia.

To register or to view the agenda visit the [Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation Web site](https://www.gthp.org). ■ **GTHP**

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www.thegars.org

President: Anne Dorland
Vice President: Katie Ahern
Secretary/Treasurer: Delana Gilmore

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

FDF OFFICERS

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