

# Preserving History Through Archaeology



March 2020  
Volume IX, Issue 3

## GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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### Preservation Agency Reviewing Possible Artifacts at Construction Site

Excerpt from an article by the Associated Press featured on [Times Daily Newspaper Web site](#) on February 23, 2020

Alabama's preservation agency is investigating whether pottery sherds, bone fragments, and spearheads found near where a subdivision is being built might be evidence of an ancient settlement. The Alabama Historical Commission is reviewing reports of nearby residents and an Army archaeologist who raised concerns about items found near a development called Flint Crossing, located in Huntsville, Alabama, near the Flint River.

Jeff Benton Homes began building the subdivision last year, but nearby residents reported finding items that could be linked to a onetime Native American settlement in and around the site. They contacted Ben

Hoksbergen, post archaeologist at the US Army's Redstone Arsenal, who said he informed the developer and the city about the finds in mid-2019.



Pottery sherds similar to this one found at Fort Daniel were also found at the possible Native site in Huntsville, Alabama.

Jeff Benton, owner of Jeff Benton Homes, said in an email the company had no prior knowledge of "significant artifacts" or human burials on the site. "Prior to development, we engaged a local geotechnical engineering firm to do a site evaluation on this property," Benton said. "They reported no significant historical/archaeological features on the property."

However, Hoksbergen said he found an assessment conducted by a private archaeological firm in 2010 that showed significant

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## GARS/Fort Daniel News

- **GARS Meeting:** The next Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) meeting will be on Tuesday, March 17 at Fort Daniel beginning at 7PM. Guest speaker will be Patty McMahon, Archaeologist at New South Associates. She will be talking about the Gullah Geechee. After Emancipation, formerly enslaved people from plantations across the South often created their own self-sufficient communities. Needwood (located on US 17 between Darien and Brunswick in Glynn County, Georgia) is an example of one such community. Needwood had a church and school as well as a commercial center—consisting of three stores that operated during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. New South Associates, on behalf of the Georgia Department of Transportation, excavated the location of one of these stores as well as at least one continuously-occupied residential lot in the community. Meeting is opened to the public!
- **GARS Field Trip:** GARS members will be visiting the Etowah Mounds on Saturday, March 28. The tour will be about two hours and will include a tools/weapons demonstration, a tour of the grounds, and a film. Admission will be \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and \$4 for youth. If you are interested, please RSVP by [emailing Anne Dorland](#) by March 20. More information will be sent out to those who are interested.
- **CONGRATULATIONS:** GARS member William Chatham completed the rank of Eagle Scout on December 14, 2019, at the age of 14. (He turned 15 the next day.) It is unusual for a scout to finish before he is 17 years old. He received his Eagle Award with two Palms for completing ten merit badges—including the Archaeology Merit Badge. He did a conservation project for his Eagle project. He worked with the naturalist at Fort Yargo State Park to determine an area of need within the park. The park naturalist, Charlie Evans, had noticed a decline in the Eastern Blue Bird population in the park. William researched and found that there were no good nesting boxes for the Blue Birds within the park. He used research data to locate prime nesting sites and properly space nesting boxes for the birds to use. William then worked with the park naturalist to determine prime areas for the nesting boxes, developed a project plan for building, and placing the nesting boxes in the appropriate area. *Congrats, William!*



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evidence of a Native American village at the site from roughly 500–900AD. Some bones found at the site were most likely those of deer, Hoksbergen said, but some appeared to be fragments of a human leg bone, skull, and teeth. Hoksbergen said he informed the developer and the city the construction may violate laws protecting human burial or historic sites, but construction continued. He also told the Alabama Historical Commission, which is conducting a review. The Alabama Historical Commission said it couldn't comment on an active investigation, but law requires that construction stop if human remains are found at a site.

Hoksbergen said an assessment of the site conducted a decade ago by Tennessee Valley Archaeological Research found a large number of artifacts. “Normally when we find five artifacts or more, we consider it high density and potentially National Register eligible,” Hoksbergen said. “Some of their (TVAR) shovel tests had well over 100 artifacts in each test. So that’s extraordinary, especially in an upland area like this.” ■ AP



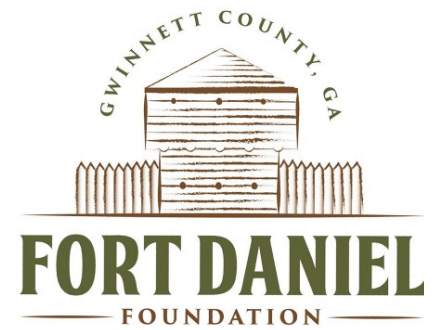
Unfortunately, new construction destroying Native sites is common. For example, the Watson Site (GAB June-July Issue 2018) pictured above overlooked the Walnut Creek near Braselton but was cleared for development—even though several points were found dating to the Archaic period.

## More Diggin's

- During the month of **March** the **Atlanta Preservation Center's Phoenix Flies** event will be occurring. Several events throughout the metro area will highlight the history of Atlanta. For more information visit the [Atlanta Preservation Center's Web site](#).
- **Greater Atlanta Archaeological Society (GAAS) will be meeting on Tuesday, March 10 at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History beginning at 6:30PM.** Guest speaker **Dr. Gunter Stout**, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Associate Director at the Center for Mind, Brain, and Culture at Emory University, will be speaking on “Stone Tools and Human Evolution.”
- **Atlanta History Center's next History After Hours will be on Friday, March 27 beginning at 6:30PM.** Enjoy cocktail crafts and craft cocktails paired with seasonal bites, bees, live music, and garden tours. Hang out and learn more about the cocktail ingredients grown on Atlanta History Center's very own farm! Staff experts will be on hand to lead guided tours of the vegetable gardens, encounters with honeybees, and a make your own bitters workshop. Food and drink will be available for purchase. Tickets are \$20 for not-yet members, \$15 for members. For more information visit the [AHC Web site](#).
- **Atlanta History Center's Craftsoul will be on Saturday, April 4.** Connect to the multicultural roots of craft in the South through demonstrations with modern artisans who draw on traditional methods. There will be showcased at the event historic foodways, song, cloth making, botanicals, and many other traditions that encompass the complex, nuanced, and shared history. Additionally, the traditional sheep shearing will occur during Craftsoul. Discover how today's culture is a result of international customs colliding, influencing, and speaking to each other through time. Tickets are included with the cost of general admission. For information visit the [AHC Web site](#).



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## Historic Rufus M. Rose House Being Restored

Though we have heard a lot about historic sites being torn down or destroyed, it is wonderful to hear news about old buildings being restored. Recently, Inman Park Properties purchased the historic Rufus M. Rose House (*pictured right*) with plans to renovate and re-purpose it into restaurant space. This 119-year-old Victorian home is located on Peachtree Street and has been empty since 2001 when the Atlanta Preservation Center moved out.

Originally built in 1901 for Dr. Rufus Rose by architect Emil Charles Seiz, this Queen Anne-style house is an unique example of nineteenth-century town



house built for one of Atlanta's wealthy citizens. Additionally, it is one of the last historic houses remaining on Peachtree Street. The Rose House

still maintains most of its original architectural features. Since the Rose family moved out in 1921, the house operated as a rooming house, government offices, an antique store, and museum.

The timing of the Rose House renovation is impeccable when other historic buildings—like the 1920s Medical Arts Building (located a few blocks away) becoming a boutique

hotel—are being brought back to life and to their original radiance. ■ DMG

### GARS OFFICERS

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Vice President: Jenna Tran  
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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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