

# Preserving History Through Archaeology



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## GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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### From the Vault: Brass Bells

Usually when I look outside, I am amazed at the variety of wildlife that I see at Fort Daniel—from owls and cooper’s hawks to coyotes and deer. While visiting Fort Daniel site during a Frontier Faire, Mrs. Ann Grant, the former property owner of Fort Daniel, noticed a set of brass bells on displayed in the museum. She was in awe that we found the bells and displayed them.

Mrs. Grant stated that she had these bells strung around her small garden, which was once located between the big oak tree and the fort. She stated that the bells were used to keep the deer (and other animals) out of her garden. Since deer are used to the quietness of the forest, the noise of the bells would startle them<sup>1</sup>, and hopefully, send them running away from the garden.

These particular etched brass bells are most likely “Bells of Sarna” from India. In the early 1900s Sajan Singh



Sarna immigrated to the US to go to college and study dairy manufacturing. He observed that Americans were fascinated with Indian handcrafted products. Therefore, in 1920 Sarna created an import business by importing

brass, textiles, and other products from India to the US.<sup>2</sup> In 1938 Sarna dreamed about a bell, so he traveled to Indonesia to buy bells that were to be sold in US stores. Each bell had a “story” tag attached and were popular in the 1960s.

Though these bells tell a more modern story, they still give a glimpse of how the land was

utilized after the fort was abandoned. ■ DMG

1. “Using Wind Chimes to Deter Deer.” PestPointers.com. March 2023. <https://pestpointers.com/using-wind-chimes-to-deter-deer-how-to-guide>.
2. “Antique Collectibles.” Newstimes.com. March 2023. [https://www.newstimes.com/entertainment/article/Antiques-Collectibles-Black-Forest-carvings-919632.php#:~:text=A%3A%20%22Sarna%20Brass%22%20is,\(now%20part%20of%20Pakistan\)](https://www.newstimes.com/entertainment/article/Antiques-Collectibles-Black-Forest-carvings-919632.php#:~:text=A%3A%20%22Sarna%20Brass%22%20is,(now%20part%20of%20Pakistan)).

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## More Diggin's

- **Phoenix Flies:** A celebration of Atlanta's historic sites is returning for its 20th year this March. Atlanta's historic built environment of buildings, landscapes, and neighborhoods is an integral part of the city's culture and economy. The Phoenix Flies Celebration provides an opportunity to learn about, celebrate, and strengthen these assets to the benefit of all. For information about the upcoming events please visit the [Phoenix Flies Event Page](#).
- **Gwinnett Historical Society Meeting:** The next Gwinnett Historical Society (GHS) meeting will be on Monday, March 20 at the Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center beginning at 7PM. The speaker will be David Coughlin who will be presenting on the timeline in the development of Lake Lanier. For more information visit the [GHS Web site](#).
- **GARS Meeting:** The next in-person Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) meeting will be in April at the Fort Daniel Archaeological Park. More details to follow!
- **New FDF Board of Directors Members:** During the annual Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) Annual Meeting two new Board of Directors Members were voted in: Richard Lux and Kaitlin Ahern.
- **GARS Membership Online:** Good news! You can now join or renew your [GARS membership online](#). Through the GARS Web site you can use the online membership form to join or update your information and pay for your membership fees, which are \$20 for Family, \$15 for Individual, and \$8 for Student.

## Fort Daniel Archaeological Park 2023 Event



◆ **Exploring Archaeology at Fort Daniel—  
Celebrating Georgia Archaeology Month:  
Saturday, May 20 10AM–2PM**



◆ **Fort Daniel Open Houses throughout  
the Summer: More details to come!**



◆ **15th Annual Frontier Faire: Saturday,  
October 21 10AM–4PM (*Frontier Faire Rain  
Date will be Saturday, October 28*)**

# Archaeologists of Fort Daniel

*In this month's "Archaeologists of Fort Daniel" section we will be getting to know more about Katie Ahern, Vice President of Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) and an archaeologist at New South Associates.*

**Educational Background:** PhD in Anthropology (Archaeology), MA in Anthropology, and BS in Public Archaeology

**Current Employment:** Archaeology at New South Associates

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

**What are your primary research interests?** I primarily study precontact period societies. I am particularly interested in the formation of community and the emergence of sacred places, such as plazas. I also really enjoy precontact period architecture and stone tools.

**What motivated you to become an archaeologist?** I was a very anxious child, but I found great comfort in the past. Around age 12 I decided I wanted to study the past as I naïvely thought that the past is safe as it never changes. I specifically chose archaeology as I had a childhood friend who loved archaeology and was always sharing Archaeology Magazines with me. I was also inspired by two videogames that I had played between the ages of 10 and 12, which were Pitfall Harry and the Maya Adventure and Tomb Raider II. Both videogames were very inaccurate – in both their subject material and realism.

**What is the most interesting archaeological site on which you've worked?** Both Cival and the Atalaya at Witzna. They are both Preclassic period Maya sites and involved me excavating both structures and plazas. Cival is a Preclassic period city and the Atalaya is a watchtower.

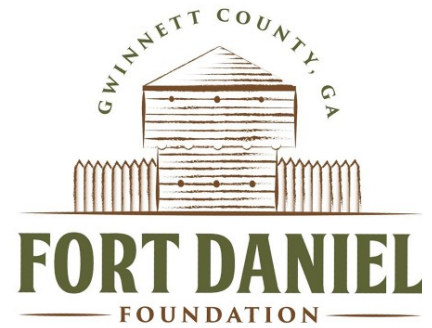
**What is your favorite thing about being an archaeologist?** Uncovering something that has not been seen in hundreds, if not thousands of years. I especially love finding plazas and floors as they are human made surfaces that despite seeing so much human activity (in the form of foot traffic) are relatively understudied.

**What is your least favorite thing about being an archaeologist?** The constant exposure to poison ivy. I also hate walking into spider webs, especially during late summer as that is when the Joro and Banana Spiders are most plentiful. I generally like spiders, but there is nothing more terrifying than walking into a spider web and seeing a massive spider inches from your face.

**Do you have advice for people who want to pursue a career in archaeology?** Participate in a field school early in your college education. Archaeology can be hard work as it involves physical labor. It is so much better to figure out early if you hate fieldwork rather than having first gotten your degree and then realized. ■



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## Old St. Mark AME Church Gains Historic Landmark Designation

Excerpt from an article written by Riley Bunch featured in the [Atlanta Journal Constitution](#) on February 24, 2023

Community organizers and local officials celebrated the official landmark dedication of a historic African-American church in the English Avenue neighborhood. The old St. Mark AME Church, which has sat vacant since 1976, was granted historic landmark status by Atlanta's Urban Design Commission in 2022. This means it cannot undergo any alterations or construction without first being approved by the city.

The building is unique for many reasons: It's one of the only stone buildings of its kind in the city and, even

more rare, is built out of Stone Mountain granite. After more than 100 years, only the four outside walls remain standing.

Built in 1920 for the Western Heights Baptist Church,



it originally served an all-white, working class congregation. The church was sold in 1948 to St. Mark AME where it became the heart of the growing African-American neighborhood.

For Atlanta City Councilman Michael Julian Bond,

who represented the neighborhood in District 3 from 1991 to 2004, the church is the "cornerstone of the community."

"When I was the district member, I demolished a lot of buildings over here — a lot of houses that had fallen into disrepair," he said. "And if you'd look at it over the span of time, there's a reason

why a lot of what remains of this building is still here.

This is really the bones of English Avenue. Even though the floors aren't in there, the pews aren't in there, the spirit is still there," Bond said. ■ AJC

### GARS OFFICERS

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

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