

Preserving History Through Archaeology



November/December 2023

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GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Happy Holidays

from GARS and FDF

EDITOR:

Delana M. Gilmore, MA, RPA
Email: gwinnettarchaeology@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR:

Jim D'Angelo, PhD RPA
Email: 4drdee@bellsouth.net

Georgia's Places in Peril

The Georgia Trust's *Places in Peril* program seeks to identify and preserve historic sites threatened by demolition, neglect, lack of maintenance, inappropriate development, or insensitive public policy. The list raises awareness about Georgia's significant historic, archaeological, and cultural resources. Through this program, the Trust encourages owners, individuals, organizations, and communities to employ preservation tools, partnerships, and resources necessary to preserve and utilize selected historic properties in peril. Historic properties are selected for listing based on several criteria: Sites must be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the Georgia Register of Historic Places; sites must be subject to a serious threat to their existence or historical, architectural, and/or archeological integrity; and there must be a demonstrable level of community commitment and support for the preservation of listed sites. In November the Georgia Trust chose the following sites for this year's *Places of Peril*:

- **Atlanta Constitution Building** (Atlanta, Fulton County) is known as "The Heart of Atlanta" because of its proximity to downtown Atlanta's historic railroad junction. The Atlanta Constitution Building has been home to two iconic Georgia institutions: *Atlanta Constitution* newspaper and Georgia Power. It has been vacant since 1972 (pictured right).
- **Broad Avenue Elementary** (Albany, Dougherty County) was built in the 1930s and served the community until 2005. As a contributing resource to the local historic district, the school building is under threat of condemnation and demolition due to its deteriorated condition.
- **Cedar Grove** (Martinez, Columbia County) was built in 1851 in the Italianate style and owned by several prominent residents of Columbia County. Our Savior Episcopal Church bought the property in 1964 converting part of the house into sanctuary, and from 1970 to 1980 the house served as Cedar Grove Kindergarten, which served as the first integrated kindergarten program in the county. Over the years the ongoing costs of maintenance and the continued use of the building have endanger the property.
- **Church of the Good Shepherd** (Thomasville, Thomas County) was constructed in 1894 and is an example of an enduring commitment to Africa-American religious expression, education, and social enrichment. Major repairs on the site have been postponed, and the historic buildings have begun to deteriorate. A commitment to preservation is required of the broader community to assist the Church in its effort to maintain its buildings and its history of service.
- **Grace Baptist Church** (Darien, McIntosh County) is located on Vernon Square, one of the four original squares in Darien that was laid out according to the Oglethorpe plan. During the Reconstruction the church was the house of worship for African-American professionals and many formerly enslaved first-time homeowners. After the congregation disbanded in the 1990s, the building fell into disrepair. In April 2022 an oak tree fell on the building damaging the roof and structure. In the past few months the City of Darien has issued a citation that may lead to demolition of the property.
- **Hogg Hummock** (Sapelo Island, McIntosh County) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as one of the last remaining Gullah Geechee communities in the United States. The community was established by direct descendants of West Africans who were enslaved on the plantations of coastal Georgia. After the American Civil War these formerly enslaved people settled on Sapelo Island and purchased over 400 acres of land. As recognized by existing zoning regulations, Hogg Hummock has unique needs in regard to its historic resources, traditional patterns of development, and threat from land speculators and housing forms. In spite of this language, recent rezoning will allow homes to be constructed that double the size of the current



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15th Annual Frontier Faire

The mission statement of Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) is to educate the public about local archaeological resources and advocate the preservation of these sites. One success story of the preservation efforts of archaeological sites is Fort Daniel, which is now a part of the Gwinnett County Park and Recreation as an archaeological park. This past October GARS along with its sister organization Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) held the annual Frontier Faire. Several people visited the Fort Daniel Archaeological Park, and through historic interpretation and demonstrations the story of Fort Daniel and Georgia frontier life was resurrected by GARS and FDF members.

The second part of GARS's mission statement (educating the public about archaeological resources) comes to fruition when the public can participate in excavating at the Fort and other archaeological sites and when students are taught archaeological investigation techniques. At this year's Faire students from Georgia State University (GSU) under the leadership of Dr. Jeffrey Glover performed shovel test pits outside the Fort searching for any possible artifacts. GARS President and New South Associates Educational Program Manager and Archaeologist Anne Dorland also had a chance to instruct the GSU students (*pictured below top right*) on how to properly dig a shovel test pit and briefed them on the history of the archaeological investigation at Fort Daniel. ■ DMG

SAVE THE DATE: 16th Annual Frontier Faire will be on Saturday, October 19, 2024.



Visitors enjoying the beautiful weather by participating in the public archaeology activities



Exhibitors and reenactors telling the story of Fort Daniel, Gwinnett County, and Georgia

More Diggin's

- **Gwinnett Historical Society:** The Gwinnett Historical Society will be holding their Annual Membership Meeting on Monday, December 11 at Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center (100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville) beginning at 6:30PM. For more details visit the [Gwinnett Historical Society Web site](#).
- **Atlanta History Center Holiday Happenings:** Celebrate the yuletide season with special events from taking pictures with the infamous Pink Pigs to holiday demonstrations at the Smith Farm. For more details visit the [Atlanta History Center Web site](#).
- **Walking Wonderland in Little Mulberry:** Kick off the new year by enjoying a guided hike and nature scavenger hunt on the trails at Little Mulberry Park (3855 Fence Road, Auburn) on Saturday, January 6 beginning at 12PM. Enjoy hot chocolate and snacks after the long hike. Participation fee is \$3 for Gwinnett residents and \$4 for non-Gwinnett residents. For more information visit the [Gwinnett Parks and Recreation Web site](#).

Public Archaeology at Paul Site

In continuing to fulfill GARS's mission statement, GARS held a public archaeology event at the Paul Site at Poole Mountain (9GW722) that volunteers surveyed back in March. The public observed GARS members (*pictured below*) investigating a possible historic mill site. The focus of the archaeology event was to bring awareness to the Poole Mountain cultural resources at the same time supporting the preservation of these resources. More details about the preservation of the cultural resources at Poole Mountain in next month's *Gwinnett Archaeology Bulletin*. ■ DMG



GARS members and the public participating in the public archaeology event at the Paul Site at Poole Mountain



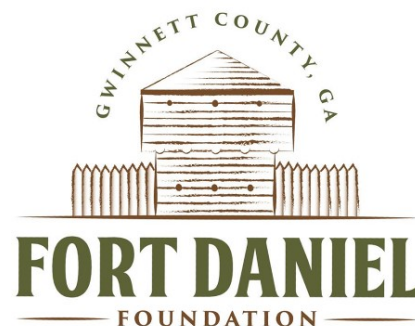
limits, which can contribute to land value increases and could further force the removal of the Gullah Geechee. This change in policy was enacted with little to no input from the public and directly conflicts with the intent of existing zoning regulations.

- **Old First Baptist Church** (Augusta, Richmond County) was constructed in 1901 in downtown Augusta on land rich with religious history. On this land the Baptist Praying Society was established in 1817, and the Southern Baptist Convention was founded in 1845. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 as an example of Beaux Arts architecture. The property is now privately owned and stands in a state of disrepair—particularly the sanctuary.
- **Pine Log Mountain** (Rydal and White, Bartow County) is a privately owned wilderness that represents three significant phases of Georgia history: a Woodlands era rock wall and several burial cairns, 1840s stone iron furnaces, and the remains of the Sugar Hill Convict Labor Camp. Remnants (*pictured left*) of complicated Southern history exist throughout Pine Log Mountain, and this space serves as a frame of reference for understanding Georgia’s history. The private property is up for sale following the end of a lease to the Department of Natural Resources. Bartow County plans to rezone much of the property from agricultural to low-density housing, high-density housing, and industrial mining.
- **Piney Grove Cemetery** (Atlanta, Fulton County) is a historic African-American burial ground in the Buckhead neighborhood. The cemetery’s founding dates back to the 1800s and has over 300 burials—some of which are believed to be burials for enslaved individuals. The cemetery has unique characteristics including irregular burial patterns, a variety of hewn and native gravestones, and terraced landscaping. In the early 2000s, a residential developer acquired the property and sought to remove the cemetery to develop the land. After opposition by the descendants, the land was sold to a commercial developer with conditions for access and maintenance as part of City of Atlanta zoning conditions. Ultimately, a condominium complex was built adjacent to the cemetery. Despite zoning conditions and state law requiring the condominium homeowner’s association to allow descendants and members of the public to use and enjoy the cemetery (in the view of the Friends of Piney Grove Cemetery) the homeowner’s association has never complied with the obligation to maintain the historic Piney Grove Cemetery, and this has resulted in the cemetery’s becoming overgrown and inaccessible with damage to headstones from falling trees, vegetation, and trash.
- **Sugar Valley Consolidated School** (Sugar Valley, Gordon County) was built in 1927 as a public school in Gordon County. The school was established by an act of the Georgia Legislature, written specifically to benefit Sugar Valley, to eliminate independent school systems. It operated for almost 50 years before closing its doors in 1974. Deemed unsafe by the County, the Board of Commissioners has announced a plan to demolish the school to construct a fire station. The threat to this historic school is imminent, jeopardizing the preservation of its rich history and significance to the community.



Founded in 1973, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation works for the preservation and revitalization of Georgia’s diverse historic resources and advocates their appreciation, protection, and use. As one of the country’s leading statewide nonprofit preservation organizations, the Trust generates community revitalization by finding buyers for endangered properties acquired by its Revolving Fund and raises awareness of other endangered historic resources through an annual listing of [Georgia’s Places in Peril](#). ■ GT

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From the Vault: Mystery Metal Artifacts

If you have visited the Fort Daniel Museum, you would have noticed on displayed a selection of metal artifacts. Additionally, you would have sighted the unique descriptions: “Mystery Brass Valve, Mystery Cast Iron Leg (pictured right on top), Mystery Metal Hook (pictured right on bottom), Mystery Thing-A-Ma-Jig.” (Yes, the word *thingamajig* can be used in a scientific way.) In 2007 one of the first detailed surveys of Fort Daniel included metal detecting and ground penetrating radar (GPR). It was during this survey that several of the displayed metal artifacts were found.

The most common metals found at archaeological sites are cast and wrought iron; copper and its alloys (brass, bronze); lead, tin, and their alloys (pewter); and zinc (either plating or alloyed with copper and lead). Metals can be identified by looking at what the color is, how heavy/dense it is, what the surface appearance feels like, and any mechanical or physical markings are on it (e.g.;

forge marks, stamping). Another way to identify the metals is by determining if the metal is magnetic, which is not always 100% accurate. The best way to identify metals is to performed a detailed elemental analysis (which can be costly for a volunteer organization).



Most of the Fort Daniel metal artifacts seem to be made from iron, and the most common type would be nails—coming in a variety of forms (e.g.; wrought iron, horseshoe, cut, wire). Nonetheless, other types of unknown metal artifacts have been found. Recently, after preparing for the Frontier Faire, GARS member Greg Beavers did some

metal detecting around the site—anticipating not to find much. Surprise! Greg unearthed two musket balls (one being a reproduction), an antique key replica, and another mystery metal fragment (which might be a nail fragment). The musket ball that was not a reproduction was found outside of the southwest blockhouse and the Fort. This area would be explored more in the future. ■ DMG

GARS OFFICERS

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

www.fortdaniel.com

President: Eli Stancel
Secretary: Cindy Horsley
Vice President: Tyler Holman
Treasurer: Betty Warbington

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