

Preserving History Through Archaeology



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GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Cultural Resource Management: The Fort Search

This is about how one clause in a sentence in an relatively obscure article from 60 years ago can turn a research project on its head. The case in point: Let's call it "The Search for Beard's Fort."

It all began when, in my research on Jackson County forts, I came across a reference to a fort at "Beard's." What I didn't realize at the time was this was a reference to Fort Telfair at Beard's Bluff with which I was already very familiar. Rather, what came to mind was the illustration of what could be a blockhouse on an old Milledgeville map (pictured right) labeled "Beard's."

Therefore, I contacted an independent researcher from



1806 plat of Milledgeville depicting a structure identified as "Beard's" along a tributary of Fishing Creek. (Plat courtesy of the Georgia State Archives)

Milledgeville that I've known since he helped me out with information for my 2005 study for the Milledgeville Riverfront Park along the Oconee River, which is when I first encounter this map. I asked Dutch Henderson what he knew about "Beard's." Dutch and some friends went out there and metal detected on a hill overlooking Fishing Creek and old road below in lot 8 depicted on the map. He reported the startling find depicted in picture on Page 3.

Dutch reported to me that a military expert told him that, "By the War of 1812 the Shako (military cap) badges were a plate with the eagle on them in

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GARS News

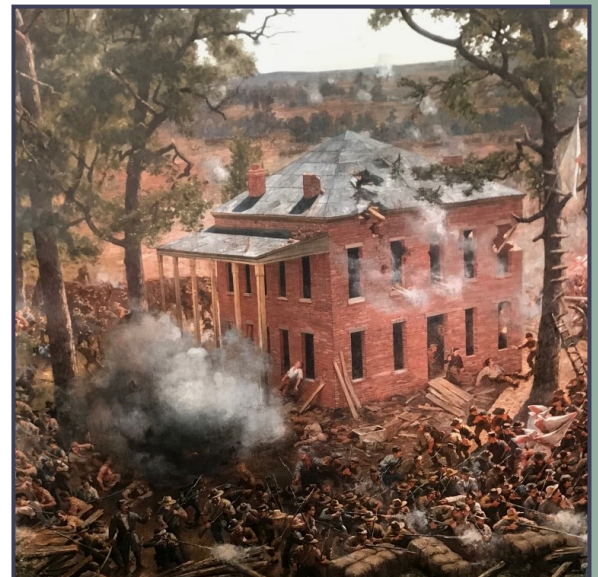
- **GARS Meeting:** *Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS)* will be meeting on Tuesday, March 19 at Fort Daniel Historic Site beginning at 7PM. Guest speaker Dr. Jera Davis, Archaeologist at New South Associates, will be presenting “Stairway to Heaven: Iconography, Afterlife, and Landscape at the



Moundville Site.” American Indians across much of North America interpret the Milky Way as a path on which the souls of the dead must walk before settling in an afterlife beyond the edge of the earth-disk. Art and iconography from the Mississippian period Moundville site allude to this concept, as well. Drawing on a large-scale remote sensing survey and four seasons of archaeological excavations, my research finds allusions to the “Path of Souls” in Moundville’s monumental plan as well and suggests that the site was engineered from its inception to serve as a conduit between the world of the living and the realm of the dead.

Dr. Davis joined New South Associates in 2017, where she serves as an Archaeologist. She is a four-field anthropologist specializing in archaeology with over a decade of experience designing, conducting, managing, and reporting archaeological projects in both academic and professional settings. Her academic research has focused on Pre-Columbian art, religion, and landscape at sites in the southeastern United States—principally Moundville in west-central Alabama but also Late Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian sites in the Tennessee River Valley and elsewhere. Her work has been featured in *American Antiquity*, *Journal of Archaeological Science*, *Southeastern Archaeology*, and in edited volumes published by the University of Alabama Press and the University of Florida Press. Upon earning her Ph.D. in 2014, she began full-time employment at the University of Alabama’s Office of Archaeological Research (OAR), where she directed the reanalysis of NAGPRA-eligible funerary objects in TVA collections and served as lead author on Moundville Archaeological Park’s bid for UNESCO World Heritage Site status. Dr. Davis’s field experience spans the states of Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and Tennessee, as well as the coastal highlands of Holguín Province, Cuba.

- **Field Trip:** With the recent opening of the *Battle of Atlanta* Cyclorama at its new location, GARS members have an opportunity to see the new painting as part of the Atlanta History Center’s *Cyclorama: Big Picture* exhibit on Saturday, April 27 at 10AM. Space is limited. If you are interested, please [email GARS President Delana Gilmore](#) as soon as possible.
- **Archaeology Month:** Archaeology Month is coming in May. GARS will be participating in the New South Open House on Saturday, May 4 at Stone Mountain and will cosponsor the Fort Daniel Open House on Saturday, May 11.



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raised relief. But the American Legion would have had a stand-alone eagle. There were several installations around Milledgeville and Flat Rock [Rock Landing ?]. A company of the American Legion [probably means 'Legion of the United States' as the American Legion was not established until 1910] stationed there from post-Revolution through the Oconee Wars." He supplied Dutch with the illustration pictured below left.

I had also consulted with Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) member Eli Stancel, who is a War of 1812 army reenactor and historian. Eli told me something similar to what Dutch's contact had told him that the badge would not be of War of 1812 vintage as those were a full rectangular plate for all service branches and ranks, but it could possibly be that of a sub-Legion of the United States. There was a company of the sub-division stationed at Rock Landing beginning around the 1790s.

Dutch asked me if I would come down and lead a survey of the site, using students of another old acquaintance, Dr. Bob Wilson, history professor at Milledgeville's Georgia College and State University. Because of the fact that the artifact was an 1820s military badge and the map illustration of the structure at "Beard's" could be a blockhouse, I tentatively agreed. However, because the artifact was found on State property (the State Prison at Milledgeville), I asked Dutch to clear this with Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR Staff archaeologist Aimee Bouzigard thanked Dutch for providing the information and agreed that the site should be examined. Normally, they would do it themselves, she explained, but being tied up with other projects, thought I would be a good person to conduct the survey. Aimee then wrote me that they were discussing the SOW (scope of work) and would get back with me.



Photo of 1820s Infantry cap badge.

James Bonner: "In 1820 . . . guards wore the same uniforms as State Militia, had the same rations and pay, and were under the same discipline." I sent this information to Aimee and she wrote back: "That is some very interesting information indeed! We will put this email in the file for this property. At this time, the closest project is timbering across the roadway. I definitely agree with you in that there is no real urgency in surveying the area where the emblem was found. We are closely monitoring the area for any potential upcoming projects and will deal with survey on an as-needed basis. And all I can say to Dutch is—keep up with the research!"

Dutch's next plan is to look at the spot on the map that is actually marked with an asterisk as "Beards." I now suspect that this is not a blockhouse, but supposed to be Beard's house—as it is situated along the creek and not on the bluff above. It is now fairly clear that the insignia probably was lost by one of the guards from the prison. Bonner's article also mentions the prisoners working in a vegetable garden outside the prison's walls, which could have been where the cow pasture now is now located. A question does remain about the insignia, however. According to Bonner, the guards wore State Militia uniforms, but the insignia has only been identified as belonging to the Legion of the United States, the Federal Army. Furthermore, it is not clear why the guards' uniforms would have included a cap with an infantry insignia! ■ JJD



Artifacts recovered during metal detection by Dutch Henderson: brass wing fragment, cut nail, and blue glazed ceramic. They could be dated from as early as the 1820s

Archaeologists Getting Closer to Figuring Out What Happened to the Lost Colony

Excerpt from an online article written by Bob Ruesegger for [The Virginian Pilot on February 18, 2019](#)

Archaeologists are getting closer to figuring out where members of the Lost Colony went, according to Nicholas Lucchetti, the principal investigator and archaeologist with the James River Institute for Archaeology. Lucchetti's presentation in late January at the Isle of Wight County Museum in Smithfield focused on the "possible relocation" of some of the Roanoke Island colonists to a site in eastern North Carolina named Site X. However, he said others from the Lost Colony, maybe even a large group, might have migrated to somewhere near Site X.

Explorers, historians, and archaeologists have been trying to figure out what happened to the Roanoke colony since at least 1590 when John White, tasked by Sir Walter Raleigh with setting up a new colony in 1587, returned to the colony after gathering supplies from England to find it deserted.

Lucchetti and the First Colony Foundation subscribe to the proposition that the colonists went to a new location and have been conducting archaeological and historical investigations to figure out where. Recent archaeological excavations—backed by the historical record and some highly respected theories—indicate that Site X in Bertie County, North Carolina, might be a step in the right direction. Dozens of 16th-century, English-associated artifacts excavated at Site X include lead seals from bales of cloth, firing pans from snaphaunce firearms, aglets for shirt-lace strings, shards of Border ware (ceramics), and tenterhooks for stretching hides, Lucchetti said. There is also the argument that the English colonists deserted their site on Roanoke Island because of extreme drought and poor living conditions and migrated to northeastern North Carolina, to find sustenance with the Weapemeoc people. However at present, Lucchetti says the Lost Colony "is still lost."

"It all seems to be pointing us pretty close to where we are (Site X)," he said. "We're not real sure what it is, but we know what it is not. It is not the relocation site of a major group of the 1587 colony. It tells us that maybe there was a big group of them somewhere close."

Lucchetti and the First Colony Foundation are among a long list of explorers and archaeologists who have examined the Lost Colony. In 1608 when John Smith went to trade with the Warrosquoake Native Americans in what is now Isle of Wight County, he left some men to travel south with Warrosquoake warriors to try to find the Roanoke colonists who had disappeared, said Tracey Neikirk, the museum's curator.

"That was one of the tenets of the Jamestown charter. They had to look for the Lost Colony—the folks of Roanoke. They didn't find them—obviously," Neikirk said.

Despite the failures of the colonies at Roanoke, the English, according to Lucchetti, learned a lot from Raleigh's early expeditions. They learned some of the Native Americans' language, Algonquian, and they learned how valuable copper was to them. Copper was worn as jewelry and conveyed status according to Englishman Thomas Harriot, member of the 1585 Roanoke expedition.

When Harriot returned to England, he wrote a report about the natural resources, plants, and animals in the area and what the English had learned from the Native Americans. Harriot wrote a memo regarding a partial phonetic alphabet of the indigenous people and also advised future expeditions to carry thin copper plates for trade with the Native Americans.

"On the memo, it says to take copper plates as thin as paper and cut them up into squares and circles of different sizes," Lucchetti said. "Harriot knew that the Indians didn't want European copper objects. They wanted what were status objects."

Lucchetti contended that the intelligence regarding the value of copper provided by Harriot, may have—two decades later—saved Jamestown from complete annihilation by the Powhatan. ■ TVP

Fort Daniel News

- **College Day at Fort Daniel:** *An open house for archaeology and history college and university students from the greater Fort Daniel area is being planned for Saturday, April 13 from 10AM to 3PM.* This event will include an introduction to the history and archaeology of the site and hands-on archaeology and lab experience. Doc Watson also will be holding one of his class sessions that day, so that visitors will get to see our blacksmith operation in action. Invitations and posters will soon be going out to the six schools that serve students in this area.



- **Work Day:** On April 9 (with an April 16 rain date) a work day is being organized. Among the many projects that need to be addressed this Spring, which have been sent out to FDF members, is completion of the NE Blockhouse area, now that all excavation there has been ac-

complished. By the time of our Spring events—College Day and Archaeology Month Open House—we hope to have the NE blockhouse and a new flag pole done.

- **Archaeology Lab:** The Fort Daniel Foundation is happy to announce that it has hired Karen Lomba to prepare the Fort Daniel artifacts for entry into the S.H.A.R.D. database as part of our artifact conservation and curation effort. Karen holds an M.A. in Anthropology, Archaeology Concentration, from GSU. She was one of four candidates from UGA and GSU—three of whom were interviewed by Jim D’Angelo and Jenna Tran. Karen has participated in the GSU’s mini-field school at Fort Daniel and is currently also working at GSU on curating the extensive Marta collection. She will be directly supervised by GARS V.P. Jenna Tran, who is an archaeologist with New South. GARS Presidents Delana Gilmore and Jim D’Angelo will also help with the project. In connection with the project, the Foundation has purchased a steel storage cabinet that will house the artifact’s related conservation supplies.

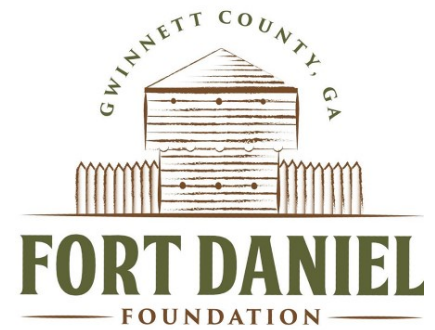
More Diggin’s

- **Phoenix Flies:** A celebration of Atlanta’s historic sites is returning for a 16th 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 view the [Phoenix Flies 2019 brochure](#).

- **Historic Oakland Cemetery Benefit:** Cocktails and Conversation will be on Sunday, March 24 at the Wimbish House, home of the Atlanta Woman’s Club beginning at 6PM. Guests will enjoy heavy hors d’oeuvres, period cocktails, live music, and more. The evening will also include a silent auction and a wine pull. Proceeds from the event will support the restoration of the 1908 Women’s Comfort Station at Oakland Cemetery. The Women’s Comfort Station is a small, single-room structure located near the Jewish Grounds at Oakland Cemetery. Constructed in 1908 as a restroom and place of refuge from rain or excessive sunlight, the historically and architecturally significant building has remained vacant for roughly 50 years, deteriorating from weather and neglect. After restoration, the hope is to turn the building into a revolving exhibit for panels about the history of Atlanta and Oakland.



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Pottery Reveals America's First Social Media Networks

Excerpt from an online article written by Gerry Everding for Washington University in St. Louis's [the Source on February 18, 2019](#).

Long before Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and even MySpace, early Mississippian Mound cultures in America's southern Appalachian Mountains shared artistic trends and technologies across regional networks that functioned in similar ways as modern social media, suggests new research from Washington University in St. Louis.

"Just as we have our own networks of 'friends' and 'followers' on platforms like Facebook and Twitter, societies that existed in North America between 1,200 and 350 years ago had their own information sharing networks," said Jacob

Lulewicz, lecturer of archaeology in the Department of Anthropology in Arts and Sciences. "Our study found a way to reconstruct these indigenous communication networks," he said. "Our analysis shows how these networks laid the groundwork for Native American political

systems that began developing as far back as 600 AD."

Published February 18 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, the study utilizes sophisticated social network analysis to map social and political connections that helped unite friends and families in dozens of Native American villages well before the arrival of European explorers.



The findings are based on a messaging archive that is preserved not in bytes, but in bits of pottery sherds unearthed over many years in archaeology digs at dozens of Mississippian culture sites scattered across southern Appalachia. Focusing on subtle evolving changes in the technologies used to temper and strengthen

pottery and the cultural symbols used to decorate them, the study provides a detailed chronological map of how new pottery techniques signified connections between these communities. ■ TS

To read the full article visit the Source [online](#).

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