



NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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National Trust for Historic Preservation:

*West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish one of
America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places*



Evergreen Plantation (16SJB63) National Historic Landmark is part of the endangered historic landscape of the West Bank (photo courtesy of the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation).

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK

Mark A. Rees, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Summer has just begun and the days are heating up. LAS members and readers of the *Newsletter* doing fieldwork or working outdoors this summer are [advised](#) to ‘stay hydrated’ – drink lots of water – and take precautions such as rescheduling to avoid the extreme midday heat. Archaeologists who work in hot climates have a tradition of taking a break and seeking the shade of a canopy around noon. A respite from the heat and time, perhaps, to sort collections or go over field notes. The midday summer break might seem unusual, but in some regions of the world and U.S. states a routine cool-down rest period is becoming the [rule](#).

What better time for avocational and professional archaeologists to pause, reflect, and plan? This issue of the *LAS Newsletter* provides fuel for just that: thought-provoking commentary, announcements, news, and reports on recent research. Public archaeology, community engagement, and stewardship are threads that run throughout this issue, beginning with D. Ryan Gray’s insightful commentary for the regularly-featured column “Public Archaeology in Louisiana.” As reflected in the cover photo and reported by Brian Davis, Executive Director of the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation (p. 23), the National Trust recently listed the West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish as one of [America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places](#). In fact, Louisiana has two of the 11 places on the endangered list.

For those interested in artifacts, subsurface cultural features, and pre-contact sites, historic preservation and architecture might seem unrelated to archaeology. Archaeologists working in cultural resource management (CRM) will recognize the connection, however, as historic landscapes endangered by short-sighted planning and unmitigated development are the same landscapes that contain archaeological sites. Among the key elements are consultation, community engagement, and stewardship; all essential ingredients in [public archaeology](#), and arguably the rationale for CRM. Gray raises questions about National Register significance and historical context in a Section 106 process that sometimes can involve negligible community outreach or engagement.

Beyond the immediate loss of individual sites as potential sources of information, the interests of CRM and public archaeology might be better served by longer term, community-based perspectives, and heritage planning approaches to regional landscapes. This is not a novel idea, but putting theory into practice can be difficult. The

Mississippi River corridor between New Orleans and Baton Rouge is a patchwork of historic landscapes that have been, and are being transformed. The West Bank is one such remaining landscape, with National Register-listed properties, such as Evergreen (16SJB63) and Whitney (16SJB11) plantations, communities with a sense of place, and dozens of recorded archaeological sites. This summer, Evergreen Plantation Archaeological Field School is applying an interdisciplinary, community-based approach to history and culture (p. 29). Community engagement is also exemplified by recent archaeological investigations at Maison Freetown (16LY159) in Lafayette (pp. 5-12).

As no *LAS Newsletter* would be complete without mention of [Poverty Point World Heritage Site](#), Diana Greenlee provides an update on recent community outreach archaeology, human remains detection (HRD) survey, and an investigation at Poverty Point (pp. 13-18). McGimsey reports on an unusual Poverty Point-age finding from the shore of Lake Pontchartrain (pp. 18-19). The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training provided HRD training at Poverty Point and other workshops (pp. 20-22). Along with other News and Announcements, you will find the agenda, abstracts, and a few photographs from the past LAS meeting in this issue of the *Newsletter*. Read on – *and stay hydrated*.

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PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY IN LOUISIANA

CRM Practice and Community Engagement

D. Ryan Gray, University of New Orleans

This past semester I was teaching my Cultural Resource Management: Theory and Practice course at the University of New Orleans and, as we always do, we eventually turned to the topic of ethics, community engagement, and descendant communities. We had quite a bit to discuss in this regard. Our class had been working on a service learning project with multiple partners, including both [Healthy Gulf](#), looking at St. Rosalie Plantation and the Ironton community in Plaquemines Parish, and [The Descendants Project](#) in St. John the Baptist Parish.

Based in Wallace, Louisiana, The Descendants Project has been vocally opposing the construction of a massive grain terminal facility in that community. This project has raised many concerns, particularly for those who see this stretch of the historic riverfront as a uniquely well-preserved part of the historic landscape of the river parishes. It contains a number of historic plantation complexes; many already recognized as significant historic properties. Some of these are open to the public, notably [Evergreen Plantation](#) and [Whitney Plantation](#). Whitney is one of the only plantations fully devoted to telling the story of plantation slavery in Louisiana. These historic properties are interspersed with living communities, in a landscape with visible traces of post-Emancipation freetowns, historic businesses and churches, sugar fields, and cemeteries. Of course, there are also archaeological remains of all those too; some now in plowed fields, some preserved in stands of trees, and some on the grounds of recognized historic sites. It is an area of cultural and historical significance, with traces of occupation that go back far beyond the plantation era. There are numerous documented sites of Colonial-era farmsteads and pre-contact era hamlets, and many more that are still undocumented, or have already been destroyed by development.

The significance of the area as a landscape full of linked historic properties is starting to get the attention it deserves. The [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) recently named the 11-mile stretch along the West Bank of the Mississippi River, encompassing the communities of Edgard, Lucy, and Wallace, as one of the 11 most endangered historic places in the U.S. (see “News and Announcements” in this issue of the *LAS Newsletter*). This will no doubt bring attention to the scale and impact

of the proposed [Greenfield Louisiana, LLC export facility](#). The Greenfield company has applied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a permit and is thus subject to the [Section 106 process](#) under the National Historic Preservation Act. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and [Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](#) have called for this permit to be denied. The Descendants Project and other community-based groups have continued to advocate, both for the health of their community, and for their role as stewards of cultural resources within it.

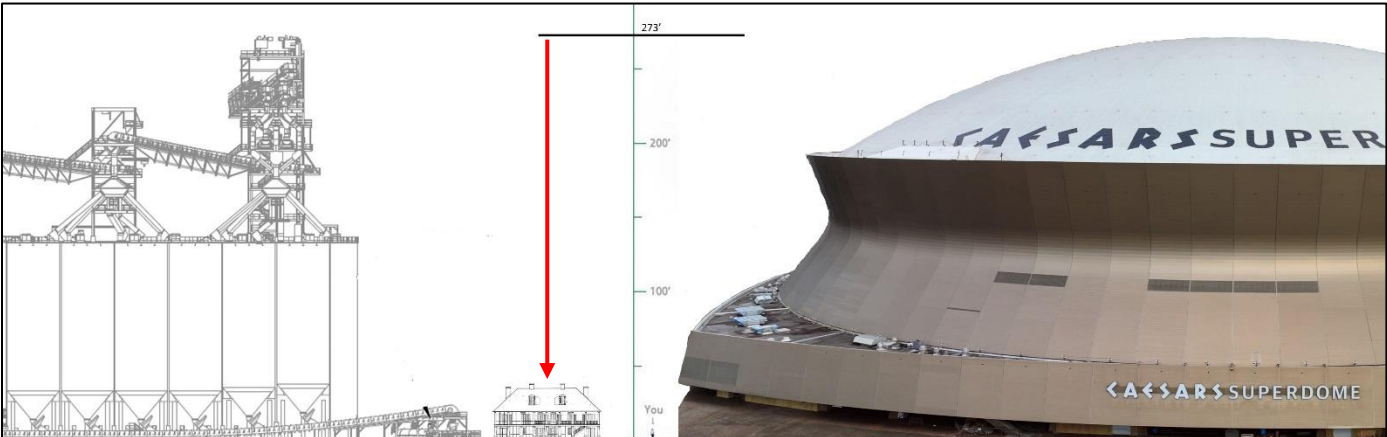
Where does archaeology fit into this? As someone who worked in compliance-based archaeology for many years, and who now teaches about it, I’ve had opportunities to think this over from different perspectives. I have attended community events with The Descendants Project in Wallace and I’ve sat in on public meetings on their behalf, even as I’ve taught my students about the legal process involved in Section 106 compliance. I must admit that I didn’t give much thought to that process during my own days working in CRM. Like many field techs, if I was on a Phase I survey, I thought my job was to go out to some designated area, and if there was something there, then I was supposed to find it. If there was nothing there, then the area would essentially be cleared for development. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) set objective standards and parameters, and we were meant to apply them.

I’ve come to see this as much more nuanced over the years, and I’ve realized that preconceptions of researchers about what is, or is not significant can influence evaluations. Archaeologists often regard NRHP evaluation as a technical problem, tied to the ability of a site to yield data about the past. But significance and integrity are thorny issues in the NRHP. Archaeologists sometimes fail to adequately consider that the way we record and delineate sites can make it difficult to see what makes them important. Often, all it takes is a little more research to find something unique and, indeed, significant about seemingly redundant or non-descript sites, provided they are considered within the correct historic context.

There have certainly been attempts to reckon with the thorny issues of significance in relation to the built

environment. It has long been recognized that NRHP criteria of eligibility initially emphasized ‘pretty buildings’ and systematically excluded the contributions to American history of historically marginalized groups, whether considered along lines of race, ethnicity, gender, or class. There are regular efforts to redress this exclusion and to identify important property types that might be getting ‘missed’ in National Register evaluations. The ACHP and SHPO might try to promulgate more

sensitive standards and guidelines for evaluation, and emphasize that the Section 106 process is meant to be public and iterative. But all of this can be slow to influence how CRM professionals see their sites, a problem that is exacerbated when compliance-based archaeology takes place with little to no engagement with local communities. Those communities often know a great deal about the significance of sites. The question is, are we prepared to listen?



Greenfield Exports, LLC Grain Elevator
Proposed for Wallace, Louisiana

Whitney Plantation
Wallace, Louisiana
Scale Figure
(Average house in Wallace is half this height)

Superdome
New Orleans - 273' tall

Top: Whitney Plantation National Register Historic District. Bottom: Comparative size of Whitney Plantation, the proposed Greenfield, LLC grain elevator, and the Superdome (courtesy of the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation).

FIELD NOTES AND RECENT RESEARCH

Community Engagement at Maison Freetown (16LY159)

Samuel M. Huey, Sadie S. Whitehurst, Gloria Church, and Erica Fox

On October 29, 2022, the *Maison Creole de Freetown* community center and Lafayette's first African American Heritage Museum co-hosted a volunteer archaeological dig with the Acadiana Chapter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society (LAS) at the Maison Freetown site, 16LY159 (Figure 1). With the support of LAS, the property owner and leader of the nonprofit True Friends of Lafayette, Mrs. Erica Fox, is working towards documenting the history of Freetown Port Rico. Excavations conducted as part of the public archaeology day held at Maison Freetown were done so in support of Mrs. Fox's goal of building the narrative on Freetown's history. Artifacts produced from the excavation are housed at *Maison Creole de Freetown*. The forthcoming report will detail excavations and artifacts recovered from 16LY159. Findings presented here are preliminary and offered as an update on ongoing research in the Freetown-Port Rico National Historic District.

These investigations are part of an ongoing partnership between the Acadiana Chapter and Maison Freetown to document the history of the Freetown-Port Rico National Historic District with the community's living descend-

ants. Mobilization for the public outreach event included a site visit conducted on August 27, 2022, to record the site, and a revisit on September 15, 2022, for Ground Penetrating Radar set-up. The site was revisited on the final weekend of Louisiana Archaeology Month 2022, and excavated by LAS members, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, residents of the Freetown neighborhood, and surrounding communities. There was a large turnout, with many children participating in the excavations. As many as 30 people were present at the site throughout the day. This was many children's and adult's first experience recovering artifacts and conducting systematic investigations. Everyone worked as a team to collect data needed to learn more about Freetown Port-Rico, a community integral to Lafayette's history and culture. As illustrated by the following site background, there is an abundance of documentation available on the Spanish occupation of the area, Antebellum plantations, Euro-American achievements, and contributions to the history of Lafayette. The contributions and roles played by People of Color are not as well documented. The archaeological investigation at



Figure 1. LAS members and staff from the National Center for Preservation Technology & Training and Louisiana Division of Archaeology during GPR testing.

16LY159 was aimed at documenting what was left out of the written record. The archaeological inquiry intends to address questions such as: when Freetown was established, whether there were free People of Color living in Freetown during Antebellum times, whether cemeteries are associated with the community, and from where the Freetown population originates.

The Maison Freetown (16LY159) site is within Freetown-Port Rico Historic District in the City of Lafayette. The Vermillion River is located about 1,350 meters to the southeast. The site falls within property owned by Rene Trahan on a map of 1776 Spanish land patents. Rene Trahan was granted the land on May 4, 1776. Rene died in 1789 and the property was passed to his heirs. Louis Trahan inherited property east of the Vermilion that was sold in 1812, following his death in 1811 (Brassieur et al. 2013:7). James Martin bought the portion of the Trahan estate that is now Freetown Port-Rico. John Norton bought the land from James Martin. Jean Mouton, Sr. purchased the land from John Norton on September 2, 1816 and combined the area with a neighboring land purchase from Andre Martin in 1812.

Alexandre Mouton acquired the land for *Ile Copal* plantation as a wedding present from his father in 1826. It is unclear if this land was part of the original grant from Jean Mouton. Alexandre sold his downtown lots in 1836 to move to *Ile Copal* with his wife. According to oral history, Freetown existed before the war and was home to free People of Color. Much is known about the Mouton Estate and family history. Far less is known about Freetown Port-Rico, and the People of Color who lived there.

Free People of Color resided in Freetown after, and likely before, 1860. The area was farmed when it was officially part of *Ile Copal* and likely continued to be farmed thereafter, as many of the residents of Freetown are still identified as farmers and farm laborers in the 1940 U.S. Census Records. The Freetown community land was surveyed using the arpent system in the 1880s. The French arpent system is traditionally applied to agrarian land organization, indicating Freetown was transformed from a sugar plantation to a suburban community. The last undeveloped property in Freetown was located behind the Maison Freetown site. This area was used for community gatherings and sporting events. This area of Freetown was a place People of Color and people from various cultural backgrounds could gather and carry on their traditions despite segregation and racial tension. Africans, African Americans, Cajuns, Creoles of Color,

Lebanese, and Native Americans were among the people living in Freetown (DOI, NPS 2015: 151).

Site 16LY159 was probably cultivated as farmland by the community of Freetown. Parts of Freetown appear on Sanborn maps in 1912, but the 800 East Vermilion block is not shown until 1928. The property was uninsured for fire protection until 1928, meaning either there were no buildings there, or the property was not deemed of sufficient value to be insured by the company. Property records for 800 East Vermilion Street state the property was developed in 1860, however, no other evidence exists for structures on the property at that time. The space was likely utilized by free People of Color during, prior, and following 1860.

Structures around 800 East Vermilion Street were built by Pierre Rudolph Roy, Sr. (b. 1871, d. 1934) around 1910 (HSS 28-01922 1991). When the house at 800 East Vermilion Street was recorded during the Freetown-Port Rico Historic Structures Survey in 1991, Pierre Roy was the owner. This is presumably Pierre Rudolph Roy, Jr. According to comments on the Historic Structures Survey, Congressman Robert Louis Mouton (1892-1956) once lived at the house. Robert L. Mouton is the brother of Anna Mouton Roy. The structure has been called "the Gassie Home," an old folk's home, and the "Mercantile."

Mobilization for the public outreach dig began on Friday, October 28, 2022, with field equipment loaned by the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab at UL Lafayette. The main purpose of the mobilization day was to organize equipment and locate artifact deposits for the public to excavate the following day. LAS Acadiana Chapter officers Sadie Schoeffler, Gloria Church, and Sam Huey conducted ground surface inspection and shovel testing to determine test unit locations. Shovel testing was conducted at 10-meter grid intervals (Figure 2). Each shovel test produced cultural materials, including brick fragments, ferrous metal, wire nails, earthenware, glass, beads, charcoal, and plastic. Based on the results of shovel testing and ground surface inspection, two 1-by-1 meter test units were laid out and an initial 5 cm was excavated to remove roots and other organic debris related to the O Horizon. Excavation ceased once artifacts were encountered. The test units were covered with plywood and plastic to protect them from rain. This initial set-up day proved vital to the success of the public outreach dig. Excavation equipment and amenities for the volunteers were stored on site in a field trailer for the following day's public outreach dig (Figure 3).



Figure 2. Southwestern view of shovel testing conducted on October 28, 2022.



Figure 3. Southeastern view of 16LY159 on October 28.

The public outreach dig began in the pouring rain. Canopies were quickly set-up, tables arranged, teaching artifact collections laid out, waters iced down, and snacks put on the table. It was raining hard and the team was lucky that two members of the public, Jerod and Mattie, arrived early to assist with setup. By around 9:00 AM, 10 volunteers were standing in the rain and ready to begin excavation. The rain began to wane after 9:00 AM and excavation of TU 1 and TU 2 began (Figure 4). The initial

level of TU 1 produced an abundance of glass, metal, gravel, and earthenware. Most of the glass was diagnostic of the 1930s, as indicated by Owens-Illinois maker marks. Several milk glass canning jar lid fragments were diagnostic of the late 1800s and early 1900s. What appeared to be pieces of a rosary were recovered throughout level 1, including a small cross collected near the base of level 1. A minor amount of Pearlware was also collected from the initial level. This was surprising, since Pearlware dates earlier than what was expected.

Excavation of level 2 in TU 1 continued to produce glass, ferrous metal, and earthenware. The frequency of gravel decreased, while the frequency of brick, glass, earthenware, and Pearlware increased. There was an increase in the recovery of charcoal in level 2. Level 3 continued to produce artifacts such as brick, glass, metal, and earthenware. No gravel was collected from level 3 and the frequency of clear glass and charcoal decreased. Earthenware, milk glass, and brick continued to be recovered with a frequency matching previous levels.



Figure 4. Eastern view of Test Units 1 and 2.

Excavation of TU 1 ended at the bottom of level 3 as day light faded. Prior to closing out the unit and backfilling, the wall profiles were mapped and photographed. A feature was observed in the southwest corner of TU 1. Evidence of the feature included a break in Stratum III, an absence of oxidized iron concretions, and a concentration of brick fragments and earthenware in the southwestern quadrant. The feature could not be further investigated due to time constraints. The feature might have been produced by a tree fall or burned-out stump. Levels 2 and 3, however, exhibited little evidence of disturbance. The Pearlware recovered from level 1 in TU 1 might have been associated with the feature, although not included with the material collected from it, because the feature was not observed until subsequent levels were excavated. Additional excavation is warranted to fully evaluate the feature.

Excavation of TU 2 encountered artifacts similar to those collected from TU 1. A thin sheet midden, containing curved and flat glass, was encountered at the transition

between strata I and II in TU 2. This concentration of glass was associated with ferrous metal and earthenware. The primary purpose of excavation was to investigate a baked clay feature visible on the ground surface. The baked clay feature was a square shape and thought to possibly represent structural remains. The baked clay feature was bisected and viewed in profile. Upon observing the feature in the bisection it was apparent that the baked clay was the product of a small fire, likely related to landscaping and burning leaves. Test Unit 2 was only excavated to 10 cm below datum. Time constraints, hard-packed soil, and the goals of public outreach and education precluded further excavation. Given the shallow depth, it is difficult to assess the amount of disturbance encountered in TU 2. Still, valuable data were collected from a single excavated level. More importantly, the children had a great time and learned a good deal about archaeology (Figure 5).

Two shovel tests were excavated east of the test units in a location identified by the property owner as high



Figure 5. Volunteers excavating Test Unit 1, base of level 1.

probability. Both shovel tests produced earthenware, metal, glass, and brick. The shovel testing revealed deposits as deep as 50 cm below datum (Figure 6). The deposits appeared undisturbed in profile and large glass bottle fragments were recovered from ST 4. The southeasternmost portion of the site would be an ideal location for future investigations.

Additional background information is provided here to understand the context of the recovered artifacts. The earliest known structures built at 800 East Vermilion Street appear on Sanborn Maps in 1928 (Figure 7). Four structures are recorded on the current property in 1928. The main dwelling is a one story, shingle roof building with two main rooms, a back room, a side room, a front



Figure 6. Western view of shovel testing.

porch, and a small rear porch. There may have been two families residing in the home in 1928. Behind the house are three small buildings shown on the 1928 map. One is a square structure labeled as a one-story, shingle roof auto house or private garage. The other is a one-story building with a slate or tin roof, but no information about its function is indicated. It may have been a general shed. The square structure in the very rear of the property is a

shingle roof stable. There are some changes in the 1940 Sanborn Maps (Figure 8). The biggest change is that a house number, 800 East Vermilion Street, was assigned by 1940. All four structures are recorded as having slate or tin rooves. In 1940 the main dwelling has only one main room, possibly indicating that by 1940 only one family resided in the house. The structure in the very rear of the property is marked as a dwelling and is about half

the size it was in 1928. The dwelling at the back of the property has a house number: 800 ½ E Vermilion Street.

Most of the artifact assemblage reflects an early to mid-twentieth century occupation of the site. This early to mid-twentieth century component, documented by the 1928 and 1940 maps, is represented by milk glass canning jar lid insert fragments, aqua glass, carnival glass, depression glass, ceramic tile, brick, porcelain electrical insulator, plastic, wire nails, fauna, and hard plastic. These early to mid-twentieth century artifacts were encountered throughout each excavated level. The frequency of wire nails, and brown and clear glass decrease with each successive level. The mid-twentieth century artifact scatter appears to overlay and surround an intact artifact deposit dating from the late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century.

The feature identified in TU 1 is the most interesting deposit encountered during the excavation. This feature was distinguished from the surrounding matrix by artifact types, frequencies, soil texture, and color. The feature walls sloped inward. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the base of the feature was not reached. Milk glass canning jar lid fragments, aqua glass fragments, and fauna were collected along with Pearlware sherds. Only a small amount of Pearlware was recovered from outside of the feature in Test Unit 1, and no Pearlware has been identified in the assemblage produced from Test Unit 2.

The Pearlware suggests an earlier date of occupation than other artifacts recovered from the site. Pearlware is typically diagnostic of the late 1700s to early 1800s, which is earlier than the dates suggested by the available historical documentation. The Pearlware could be an heirloom, or the feature in TU 1 might represent an Antebellum component. People of Color likely utilized the area, and possibly lived at the site in the interim from when Alexandre sold his downtown lots in 1836, and the property at 800 East Vermilion Street was recorded in 1860.

Free People of Color lived in Freetown following the Civil War. The Maison Freetown site might have been occupied from 1860 to 1928. The property was uninsured for fire protection until 1928, but that does



Figure 7. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Lafayette, Louisiana. Sanborn Map Company, April 1928.

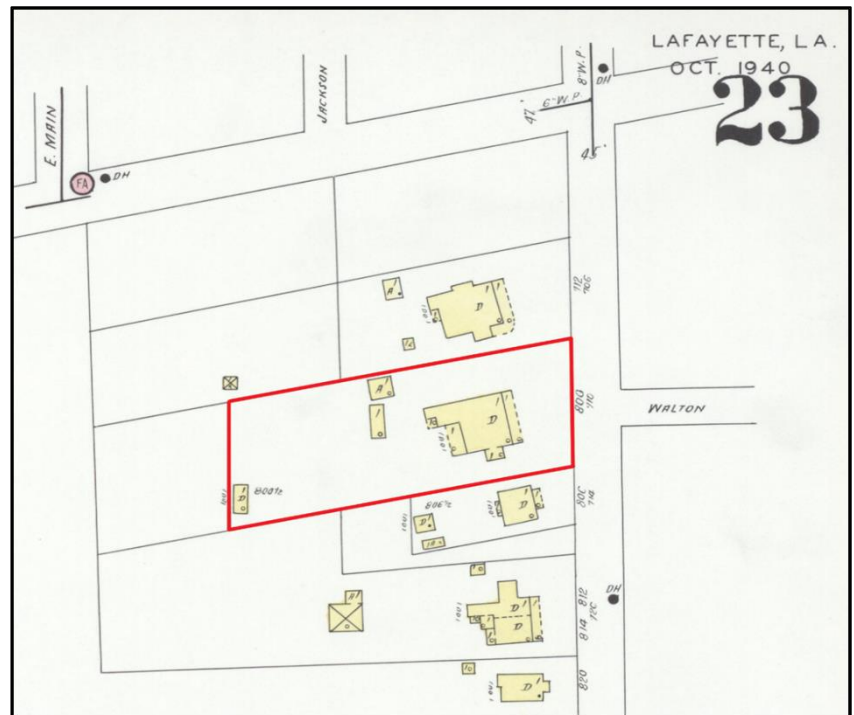


Figure 8. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Lafayette, Louisiana. Sanborn Map Company, October 1940.

not mean that a residence was not located on the property prior to 1928. The feature in TU 1 might reflect a gap in historical knowledge spanning nearly 100 years, from 1836 to 1928. The area was likely occupied by free

People of Color during this time. Further investigation is needed to understand the Antebellum, as well as later site occupancy, and the people who lived there. Upon completion of the lab work, a final report will be produced with a more detailed account of the investigation, analysis of the artifacts, and interpretations. Fine scale artifact analysis and additional archival research are needed to better understand Site 16LY159 and will be presented in the report. Following up on the results of the GPR survey, additional excavations will be conducted at the location of anomalies, as well as the feature in TU 1. Records and artifacts from this investigation will be curated at the Maison Freetown Community Center and Museum.

The public outreach dig was a major success and important archaeological data were collected. While several volunteers had degrees in anthropology, everyone gained valuable experience in archaeological excavation. Many people provided contact information and expressed an interest in assisting with future work. Mrs. Erica Fox assisted with the excavation and worked with the crew all day after driving in from Texas (Figure 9). She has a wealth of knowledge and has made valuable contributions to the Freetown community. Local media

outlets covered the event and interviewed Mrs. Fox for a news story on television and online (Figure 10). This investigation, as well as other efforts made by the Freetown Community Center and True Friends of Lafayette, are steps toward answering our research questions.

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Figure 9. Erica Fox and family at TU 1.



Figure 10. Mr. Fox and media.

Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program Update

Diana M. Greenlee

Poverty Point Station Archaeologist

The following is an update on a few of the interesting and ongoing projects being carried out by the Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program.

16CT467 (Cater-Aplin Mound)

The Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program was contacted by Lee Mizell, the current owner of 16CT467, the Cater-Aplin Mound. The property, located on the west bank of the Ouachita River in Harrisonburg, LA, consists of a Victorian-style house on a pre-contact earthen mound. The house is thought to have been built in 1905 by Judge Robert Monroe Taliaferro (Gulf South Research Corporation [GSRC] 1996). The owner was interested in learning more about the mound, in hopes that the house and mound could both be added to the National Register of Historic Places. Regardless of the site's eligibility for the National Register, Mr. Mizell is interested in learning more about and preserving the mound.

The Cater-Aplin Mound site is situated on the natural levee of the Ouachita River. The Hebert Silt Loam soils of the locale are level, somewhat poorly drained, medium acid at the surface, and strongly acid in the subsoil (Boyd 1986). While noting that this setting rarely floods, Boyd (1986:33) states that the soil is "poorly suited to homesites," but "homes can be built on properly designed mounds of soil material above flood elevations." One might surmise that this pre-contact earthwork is a "properly designed mound."

This site was first recorded in 1995 by Dennis Jones and Malcolm Shuman as the result of a Phase I survey investigating alternative approaches to a proposed new bridge over the Ouachita River (GSRC 1996). They noted that the mound was recognized as early as the 1890s, with the property labeled as the "Mound Lot" in old surveyor plats (GSRC 1996:81-82, 118). The proposed corridor crossed the yard south of the mound and would not have impacted the mound directly. Their investigation of that area included a surface survey, forty shovel tests, and one 1-by-1-m test unit. Both post-contact and pre-contact artifacts were recovered, but none of the pre-contact artifacts, which were exclusively lithics, were temporally diagnostic. Five soil probes were collected from the south half of the mound and one showed mottling consistent with basket loading. In the

end, that proposed route was not selected for the bridge approach.

In 2005, Joe Saunders and Recca Jones completed a detailed topographic map of the mound (Saunders et al. 2005). They did not collect any soil cores from the mound due to the fear of hitting buried utilities, but they noted that, given the lack of temporally diagnostic artifacts, coring will be necessary to establish the status and age of the mound. A nonsystematic surface survey of exposed ground in January 2022 revealed a single classic blade of Citronelle chert. The landowner has also found an Alba point and a chert flake or broken blade.

Soil scientists Thurman Allen (Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS], retired) and Rachel Stout Evans (NRCS) pulled two solid 5-cm cores from the mound on 16 May 2022 (Figure 1), one near the top and the other on the southern toe slope. Alternating A and E horizons within the cores revealed that the mound was built using a sod block construction technique (Figure 2), where chunks of surface soils about 10 cm thick were removed intact and stacked upside down. There appear to be more sod blocks in Core 2 (mound toe slope) than Core 1 (mound top), or at least they are more visible. While that could be the result of the differential use of sod blocks during mound construction to stabilize slopes subject to erosion (Sherwood and Kidder 2011), in this case it may also be a result of differential preservation due to the way water interacts with different slopes (i.e., the flatter surface near the top will allow more water movement downward through the mound deposits, and hence more pedogenesis of, underlying sediments than will the slope).

In their recent survey of different mound building techniques, Kassabaum and Graham (2021) summarized the incidence of sod block construction. While not exactly a common construction technique, it has been identified at several sites in the midwestern and southeastern US. The closest example of sod block construction may be Mound D of the Lake Providence Mounds (16EC6), a Preston phase Coles Creek construction (Weinstein 2005).

Van Nest et al. (2001) provide a useful model for the examination of sod block construction, even though the context of their analysis, Illinois Valley Hopewell mounds, is quite different from this mound. The texture and organic content of the sediments, pollen, and phytoliths can be informative about the source of the sod and the local landscape. Accordingly, Core #2 has been transferred to Elizabeth Scharf (University of North



Figure 1. Thurman Allen and Rachel Stout Evans coring the Cater-Aplin Mound.



Figure 2. 45-cm-long segment of Core #2 taken from the toe slope of the mound at 16CT467 (top to the left). The alternating light/dark bands reflect inverted sod blocks placed during mound construction. Photomerged image.

Dakota) for sedimentological and palynological analysis. She will also attempt to acquire radiocarbon dates on charred botanical material, if there is any, from the sod block A horizons.

Human Remains Detection Survey

In 2020, the Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program was contacted by two dog handlers, Julia Head and Georgia Baker of Crossroads K-9 Search and Rescue, about using cadaver, or human remains detection (HRD) dogs to locate unmarked graves at Poverty Point and

other archaeological sites in the region. The dogs wear a GPS tracker to log their movements as they search an area. They are trained to provide a specific alert, or trained final response (TFR), when they have detected the scent of human remains. The tracking data can be analyzed for “hot spots” of interest to the dogs that were not sufficiently strong to trigger a TFR. TFRs are recorded by the handlers and with the Station’s Trimble Geo7X, the latter involving multiple point measurements that are averaged for greater accuracy and precision.

The unmarked post-contact cemetery on Ridge 1 South noted by Moore (1913), Ford and Webb (1956), and Gibson (1987) was selected as the first test for the dogs. Haag (1990:4) described it as a “burial ground for deceased slaves in the early nineteenth century.” The handlers were not informed if, or where there might be burials in the search area. They were instructed to take the dogs toward the general area of the timber circle cylinders (Figure 3). On 14 March 2021, the handlers surveyed the general area of the cylinders, approaching from the north (the Visitors’ Center parking lot). On 21 March 2021, they approached the same area from the south. Both times the handlers used a free search (off leash) strategy. Conditions ranged from fair to overcast, with temperatures 50°-70° F, humidity 40%-90%, winds 3-8 mph, and barometric pressure 30.07-30.30 inches.

On 2 April 2021, the handlers surveyed the Mound D area. Headstones for Sarah Guier and Amanda Malvina Dawson Van Rensselaer are currently on the mound, although a resistivity survey in 1981 by John E. Keller indicated that there may be as many as four burials in the mound and that the headstones appear to be displaced from the graves (Keller, personal communication, 1981). This survey was conducted on-leash. Conditions were fair, with temperatures 44°-56° F, humidity 32%-57%, winds 6-9 mph, and barometric pressure 30.5-30.55 inches. The ground temperature was 56°-58° F.

Figure 3 shows the locations of the dogs’ TFRs for both locations. It also presents a “hot spot” analysis, ranging from yellow (less time/low interest) to red (more time/high interest). The dogs alerted in a small portion of the entire coverage area. Several of the TFRs in the Ridge 1 South area are clustered at the north end of Ford and Webb’s Cut 7 trench, relatively precise placement of which is possible because it is visible in Hargrave and Clay’s (2016) magnetic data. Ford used a tractor to scrape soil to the ends of the trench. When the trench was refilled, soil or bone fragments from the graves were likely left at the end of the trench. It is not clear why there are no TFRs at the south end of the trench, although it is at a higher elevation and scent would travel downward with air and water flow. Some of the broad scatter could reflect remains scattered by plowing.

There are three relatively tight clusters of TFRs at Mound D, with multiple dogs alerting in the same areas. The cluster located southeast of the mound is located downslope along a small drain; that is how one would expect scent to travel and it is probably not indicative of a burial there.

Binghamton University faculty and students also conducted a GPR survey of a 50-by-50-m grid over the Ridge 1 South HRD survey area. Those results are pending.

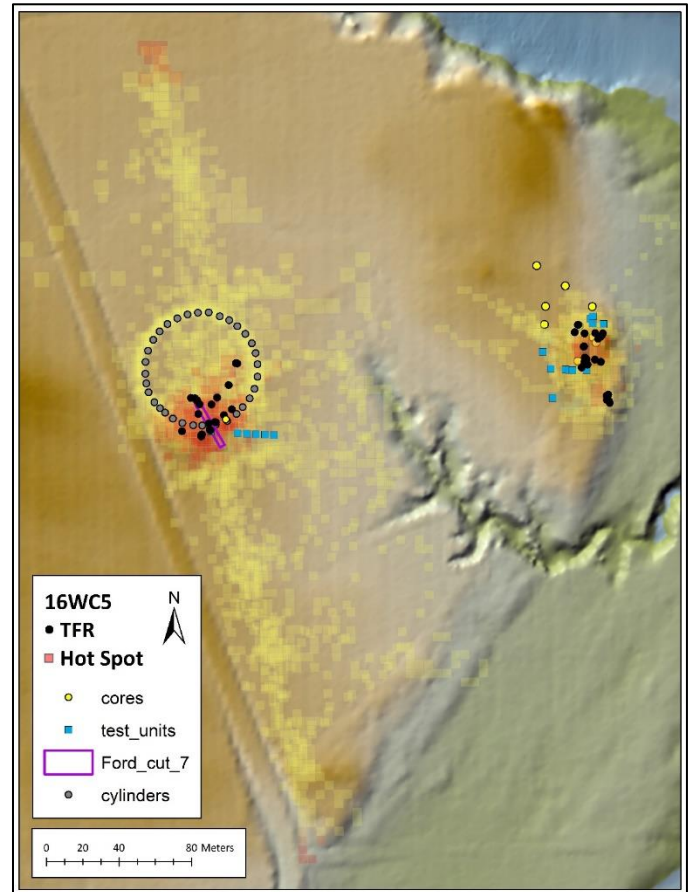


Figure 3. Trained Final Responses (TFRs) and hot spots (locations of interest) provided by the HRD dogs on Ridge 1 South (left) and Mound D (right).

Pit-Mound Structure

In 2020, the Poverty Point World Heritage Site (WHS) Maintenance Foreman had requested that the Station Archaeology Program investigate a depression and adjacent hump of earth near Mound E (Figure 4). Aerial photos indicate this location was in trees since at least 1938. It was assumed to be an example of mound-and-pit microtopography created by an uprooted tree, and the Poverty Point WHS maintenance staff hoped to smooth it over to make the area easier to maintain. That year, three 2.54 cm (1”) cores were extracted with a manual soil probe. One was located within the “pit” and two were within the adjacent “mound.” Cultural material (e.g., charred botanical remains, fired earth, and lumps of sand) extended at least to 2.56 m, the bottom of the core taken from the “pit.” This result was deemed



Figure 4. Top: Aerial photo obtained from Google Earth showing the location of the Pit-Mound Structure, circled in red. The image is dated 12/31/2009, but this is obviously not a December photograph. Bottom: Pit-mound structure. Photo taken facing south; flags indicate initial three core locations.

inconsistent with a simple treefall and additional research was warranted.

On 2 December 2020, Rachel Stout Evans and Thurman Allen extracted a 5 cm (2") core using a truck-mounted Bull soil sampler. The C4 core was in the deepest part of the depression, adjacent to 2020 core C1. The core

penetrated to 5.72 m below surface (BS) and a piece of well-preserved wood was discovered embedded in the core at 4.62 m BS (Figure 5). The wood, which is not a root fragment, appeared to be *in situ*. Our field assessment was that cultural fill extended to 5.14 m BS. In that case, the wood may have been part of a large,



Figure 5. Top: Wood fragment in the C4 core. Bottom: Sample submitted for radiocarbon dating (photo courtesy of Beta Analytic, Inc.).

deep post, like those associated with timber circles in the plaza. Its position at an “elbow” in the Mound E Ridge where it appears to turn northeastward could have been a significant location.

Later, detailed examination and description of the core suggested that the cultural fill extended to 3.21 m, or possibly 4.06 m BS, placing the wood fragment well within the Pine Island stratum. On Macon Ridge, the Pine Island stratum lies beneath the wind-deposited loess, and the wood should be several thousand years old. It was preserved well enough that a subsample sent to paleoethnobotanist Karen Leone was identified as *Pinus* sp. A second subsample was submitted to Beta Analytic

for radiocarbon determination. The returned AMS ^{14}C date was 330 ± 30 years. The calibrated 2σ age range of CE 1480-1650 places the sample mostly within the post-contact period. Thus, it is not a remnant from the Late Pleistocene epoch and it cannot be from a Poverty Point-era post. Southern pine trees can live to be a few hundred years old, thus this piece could represent old wood from a more recent activity.

If the deep fill in the depression is not a large, filled posthole associated with the pre-contact occupation of the site, then what is it? It could be a filled well or cistern, although we are not aware of these kinds of features on Macon Ridge. Cisterns often contain post-contact debris and only charcoal and fired earth were visible in the cores. It could be part of a larger gully or borrow area that was subsequently filled by Euro-American farmers. To test that hypothesis, eight 5-cm cores were extracted by Stout Evans and Allen on a 5-m grid around core C4. These eight cores were distinct from C4 in that their fill appeared to be relatively clean (i.e., no artifacts or midden were visible) and not very deep. Not surprisingly, the cores located on the edge of the Mound E Ridge had more surficial fill than the cores farther off the ridge. These data are not consistent with a filled gully or borrow area in this location.

Subsamples were removed from core C4 and two other cores for particle size, chemistry (P, K, Ca, Mg, Na, pH, and organic matter), and magnetic susceptibility analyses. The subsamples for particle size and chemical assay were submitted to the Environmental Analysis Laboratory at University of Louisiana at Monroe, while those for magnetic susceptibility were sent to Rinita Dalan (Minnesota State University Moorhead). As would be expected for cultural fill, Core C4 was much more variable in magnetic susceptibility, % organic matter, pH, and potassium content with depth than samples from the other cores, which are more like the local natural soils. Susceptibility in core C4 is quite variable to about 4.95 m BS, which suggests the wood may be in cultural fill, not below it.

The pit of the pit-mound structure appears to be an isolated feature. Its origin and function are still unclear and await further evaluation. The Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program is planning to test this feature, weather permitting, in late May and early June. Feel free to email Diana Greenlee at greenlee@ulm.edu if you are interested in participating in the fieldwork.

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An Early Poverty Point Age Lady from Lake Pontchartrain

Chip McGimsey, State Archaeologist
Louisiana Division of Archaeology

In 1985, an individual recovered a human cranial fragment from somewhere on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. The fragment was eventually given to Duke Rivet at the Louisiana Division of Archaeology, who transferred it to the Forensic Anthropology and Computer Enhanced Services lab (FACES) at Louisiana State University. Assessment of the element indicated it was likely from a 25 to 35 year-old female. She may have had an iron deficiency and exhibited a resorptive lesion resulting from an unknown cause. This analysis could not however, determine when the individual may have died and thus it was unclear if it represented a modern forensic case or an older burial.

In the late 1980s, the fragment was reexamined at the North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory but the lab could not clarify the possible death date. The lab also attempted to sample the DNA but was not able to recover a complete profile. In 2009, the St. Tammany

Parish Coroner's Office (STPCO) made a second attempt to obtain a DNA sample from the bone. The test confirmed the individual was female but produced a very limited DNA profile that was not sufficient for possible matching with any known forensic or missing person case. In 2022, STPCO reopened the investigation in an effort to determine the individual's age and whether any evidence of criminal activity could be identified.

A sample of the bone was submitted to Beta Analytic for radiocarbon dating and isotopic analysis. Analysis of the bone collagen produced a two-sigma age range of 3583-3453 (93.9%) and 3618-3605 (1.5%) cal BP (Beta-657573). The date clearly demonstrates the woman lived during the Late Archaic period (4000-2500 BP) and does not represent a modern forensic case. The age range is contemporaneous with the initial construction and use of Poverty Point (ca. 3600-3400 cal BP) in north Louisiana (Kidder 2011:111-113).

With this result, STPCO had no further interest in the human remain and released it back to the FACES lab. The FACES lab has subsequently transferred the remain to the Division of Archaeology under the terms of the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act. The Division will incorporate the remain into its collections and consult with Indian Tribes under the Native American Graves Repatriation and Protection Act concerning its disposition.

The date is interesting although not entirely unexpected. There are landforms either shallowly submerged in Lake Pontchartrain or exposed on the erosional shoreline that could contain sites of this age. Equally interesting though are the results of the isotopic analysis. The analysis conducted for this study utilized only bone collagen and the discussion below focuses on that material. Tykot (2004) is the primary source of information concerning dietary isotope ratios.

Carbon and nitrogen isotope ratios can be used to reconstruct prehistoric diet because of differential fractionation between certain plant groups, atmospheric carbon dioxide during photosynthesis, and nitrogen fixation or absorption. Different bone tissues reflect different components of the diet. Bone collagen is primarily produced from the protein part of the diet, while bone carbonate and tooth enamel (apatite) are made from a combination of dietary protein, carbohydrates, and fats. Bone collagen and bone apatite are constantly being replenished, so their isotopic signature reflects the dietary average over several years. Tooth enamel will reflect the diet during the period the tooth enamel was forming.

In general, plants in temperate zones (such as south Louisiana) utilize the C3 photosynthetic pathway and will have a carbon isotope ratio of -26.5‰, while plants (including maize) in subtropical zones utilizing the C4 pathway will have a ratio of -12.5‰. In the New World, maize is often the only C4 plant contributing to human diet and the carbon ratio is effective at inferring the presence of maize in the diet. Organisms that feed exclusively on C3 plants often have a collagen carbon isotope ratio near -21.5‰, while those feeding exclusively on C4 plants will have a collagen ratio near -7.5‰.

Nitrogen isotope ratios can vary based on rainfall, altitude, and other factors, while carbon and nitrogen ratios can vary considerably among marine organisms. However, people eating primarily terrestrial plants and animals typically have collagen nitrogen isotope values

of 6-10‰, while those eating freshwater and marine fish and shellfish may have values of 15-20‰.

The Lake Pontchartrain individual produced a carbon isotope ratio of -18.2‰ and a nitrogen ratio of 9.9‰. Comparing these results to some obtained from a series of sites in Florida (Tykot et al. 2005), the nitrogen value suggests a significant consumption of aquatic resources, while the carbon value suggests that these resources were C3 based, and likely represent inland riverine or lacustrine sources. If the individual had been eating a lot of marine fish or shellfish the carbon ratio would have been higher (in the -10 to -15 ‰ range).

At the time this individual was living, Lake Pontchartrain had just formed, as the St. Bernard lobe of the Mississippi River was developing and cutting it off from direct access to the sea. The data for this one person suggests she was eating a lot of freshwater fish or shell fish, and not utilizing many marine fish. This may support the interpretation that Lake Pontchartrain was largely brackish by this time. It is also possible this element eroded from a site that at the time of occupation was some distance inland and not directly on the coast, and thus access to marine resources may have been limited. The isotopic data do indicate some communities had ready access to freshwater aquatic resources, as reflected in this woman's skeleton.

As a final note, this is the first individual dating from the Poverty Point period to be identified in Louisiana. Perhaps she visited that site at some point during her life.

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Workshops at NCPTT

Sadie S. Whitehurst and Tad Britt

National Center for Preservation Technology and Training

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) is a branch of the National Park Service stationed in Natchitoches, Louisiana, on the campus of Northwestern State University. The center is dedicated to research and education with focuses on historic preservation in archeology, historic landscapes and architecture, and materials conservation. Each program at NCPTT hosts training workshops in its respective focus throughout the year. This year, the Archeology Program is hosting three workshops.

Detection Dogs Workshop at Poverty Point

Human remains detection (HRD) dogs, commonly referred to as cadaver dogs, are finding their way into the world of archeology and are proving to be quite the interesting tool. This approach to archeological prospection uses dogs trained in various forms of scent detection to aid in remote sensing at pre- and post-contact burial sites and cemeteries. Readers of the *LAS Newsletter* may recall learning about HRD dogs in Chip McGimsey's Winter 2022 article, "HRD Dogs and Archaeology." McGimsey describes his interactions with handler/dog teams at a couple of sites, discusses how the teams conduct a search, and elaborates on a few of the environmental factors that affect how the dogs detect scent from human decomposition materials that are hundreds or a few thousand years old. Diana Greenlee also discusses the use of HRD dogs at Poverty Point in this issue of the *LAS Newsletter*.

The archeological community picked up on the potential for HRD dogs in archeology in relatively recent years. Archeologists and handlers know the value of using HRD dogs as a supplementary layer of validation in conjunction with other remote sensing techniques, such as ground penetrating radar (Baxter and Hargrave 2015; Greenlee 2021). While many questions remain, recent peer-reviewed literature and professional symposia suggest the community is serious about understanding and standardizing this new, and frankly, intriguing tool (Glavaš and Pintar 2019; Grebenkemper et al. 2021; Irish and Dilkie 2022; Martin 2023; Riezzo et al. 2014).

NCPTT, along with many others in this field, recognizes the need for formal training and exposure for archeologists planning to work with HRD dogs on their CRM and research projects. NCPTT, the Poverty Point World Heritage Site, and Friends of NCPTT facilitated a

three-day workshop on May 9 to 11, 2023, for archeologists to learn about the theory and practice of HRD in archeology. Poverty Point's Dr. Diana Greenlee and site manager Mark Brink were wonderful hosts, providing a space for lectures in the archeological dormitory, tours of the site for the workshop participants, and locations to conduct field exercises with the handler/dog teams.



K9 Rip waits for students returning from Poverty Point Mound D.



Instructor Dr. Alexander and K9 Rip instruct students on HRD search strategy near Poverty Point Ridge 1 South.

Instructors Dr. Ben Alexander, K9 Training Coordinator at the Texas State University Forensic Anthropology Center, Lisa Higgins, founding member of Louisiana Search and Rescue, and Dr. Cat Warren, canine handler and professor at North Carolina State University, provided lectures on scent detection, soil science with decomposition, history of search and rescue animals, best practices in the field, and more. The most beneficial aspect of this workshop, in our opinion, was the

conversation between instructors and participants about how to standardize this practice and conduct research that is shareable and replicable. Overall, this workshop brought together like-minded, driven people with a common goal of understanding and using a new tool for archeologists.



Dr. Cat Warren begins the workshop with an overview of the history of search and rescue canines.



LASAR's Kirsten Watson with K9 Quest as he marks a spot with his "trained final response" behavior (sitting).

Archeological Prospection Workshop at Etzanoa

The 2023 Archeological Prospection: Advances for Non-destructive Investigations Workshop took place May 22 – 26 at Cowley College in Arkansas City, Kansas. Field exercises were conducted at a component of Etzanoa called the Country Club Site (14CO3). The site ensured an intriguing learning experience as a truly fascinating location to practice remote sensing techniques. This offering marked the 30th year in which the Archeological Prospection workshop was offered and facilitated through NCPTT, the Midwest Archeological Center, and Friends of NCPTT. We learn about remote sensing techniques in school and on the job, but a full five days

dedicated to studying and practicing the methods makes for an effective, in-depth training that is applicable to our everyday work.



Highlight from the 2018 workshop: magnetic susceptibility survey at the Marksville State Historic Site, Louisiana.

There is much chatter in the news as of late about Etzanoa, one of the many Great Bend aspect sites in and around Arkansas City, Kansas. Wichita State University's Dr. Donald Blakeslee conducts archeological research on Etzanoa, characterized as an extensive Indigenous Wichita settlement active generally between AD 1450 and 1700. There are also Spanish contact components, making this an ideal location to study the different signatures of features collected by remote sensing tools such as ground penetrating radar, magnetometry, metal detection, earth resistance, electromagnetic techniques, and aerial imagery techniques. Students learned the theory and history of each of these methods, gained hands-on experience in the field, and practiced data interpretation. We hope to continue offering this training opportunity for years to come; please contact us at NCPTT if you have questions.

Coming Up: Archeology of Firearms Workshop

In Springfield, MA, this October 17 – 20, 2023, NCPTT, the Springfield Armory National Historic Site, and Friends of NCPTT are hosting the Archeology of Firearms Workshop. Firearms are a distinctive and common element of post-contact material culture. There are many elaborate parts to guns and ammunition that require a trained eye to identify and understand their interpretation in an assemblage. This year's workshop expands to include a greater discussion on the safe handling of ammunitions and unexploded ordinances. The registration for this workshop is not yet active, but

NCPTT will share an announcement on all platforms when the registration is open.



Highlight from the 2022 workshop: practicing interpretation of an assemblage of firearm parts.

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**LOUISIANA
 STATE HISTORIC
 PRESERVATION
 OFFICE**



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish on the NTHP Endangered List

Brian M. Davis, Executive Director

[Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](#)

Edgard, LA - The entire West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish was added to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of [America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places](#) this week. Since 1988, the National Trust has used its list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places to raise awareness about the threats facing some of our nation's greatest treasures.

Plans for industrial development threaten the last untouched section of Louisiana's "German Coast," an area which all Louisiana students learn about in their state history class. At risk of loss are not only a local

population with a rich and complex culture, but also 300 years of agricultural tradition, historic sites, archaeological records, existing film and tourism industries, and a delicate natural ecosystem.

The region that is now the West Bank of St. John Parish was settled by Europeans as a farming community in 1724 and known as the Second German Coast. Its unique history has been preserved through its agriculture, rural landscape, urban form and collective cultural memory and traditions. In fact, the survival of early New Orleans can be attributed to the German immigrant farmers who took their produce down the river to market each week.

The three historic villages of Lucy, Edgard (parish seat) and Wallace contribute to the interwoven, linear community along the Mississippi River. There are



Evergreen Plantation National Historic Landmark (courtesy of the [Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](#)).



Whitney Plantation National Register Historic District (courtesy of the [Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](#)).



Marathon Oil facility and San Francisco Plantation on the East bank (courtesy of [Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](#)).

numerous historic sites located within this stretch, including Whitney and Evergreen Plantations, both of which are nationally renowned for their interpretation of the experience of enslaved persons. The village of Wallace was founded immediately after the Civil War by Black soldiers who joined the Union Army to gain their freedom and afterwards, returned home to their families. This area is still overwhelmingly populated by descendants of persons who were enslaved at local plantations.

The latest threats to the way of life in St. John the Baptist Parish come from several sources. If permitted, a proposed grain terminal by Greenfield Louisiana, LLC would be the same size as the Louisiana Superdome and located adjacent to the village of Wallace. Assisting Greenfield is the Port of South Louisiana, whose 30-year Payment in lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement established the tax-exempt state agency as the landowner and Greenfield as the lessee of the development. This agreement would allow Greenfield to avoid paying just over \$200 million in property taxes over that time period. The permit application for the grain terminal is under review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine potential impacts to nearby nationally-significant historic sites.

A diverse group of advocates opposes construction of the Greenfield Terminal. The West Bank is recognized as a local historic district by St. John the Baptist Parish and as a Louisiana Cultural District by the state, and the 11-mile linear stretch of river is currently being studied by the National Park Service. Opponents of the Greenfield Terminal are asking the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to

deny the permit for the proposed development because of numerous potential impacts.

Louisiana Economic Development lists four other large agricultural sites in west St. John the Baptist Parish as available for industrial development. A port facility at any of these locations would open the West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish to heavy industry and result in a loss of people, existing industries, and culture. Brian Davis, executive director of the [Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](#) says, “If a port and industrial sites are allowed to get a foothold in the West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish, this distinctive culture, its historic record and what the people can teach us will be lost within the next twenty years. When your family has existed for generations in a rural setting, you don’t want your kids to live entrenched in the noise, pollution and bright lights of an industrial zone.”

In 1988, the Washington Post broke a story about high miscarriage and cancer rates concentrated in the village of St. Gabriel. Since then, this 85-mile stretch of the Mississippi River has been known as “Cancer Alley” because of the millions of pounds of toxic pollutants released into the atmosphere each year. The West Bank has remained agrarian, with fields and houses on the high ground closest to the river, just 15 feet above sea level. From the levee, land descends to bayous and cypress swamps that flow into Lac Des Allemands (Lake of the Germans), an important seafood habitat and sport fishing destination.

Katherine Malone-France, Chief Preservation Officer for the National Trust, says, “The West Bank is a remarkable and profoundly important cultural landscape, with

historic villages, plantations, cultivated fields, and archeological sites that are integral to telling the full history of our country. The potential construction of Greenfield Terminal threatens to dramatically harm this place and the multi-faceted community and culture that are inextricably tied to it. We stand with local and national advocates, including the descendants of people enslaved in the area, to draw national attention to this place, its centrality to the identity and culture of those who call it home, and the potential it represents for all Americans to come together to protect our shared history.”

Also included on the list of America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places this year is the Holy Aid and Comfort Spiritual Church in New Orleans’ 7th Ward. This 1880 building was first home to the Perseverance Benevolent and Mutual Aid Society, with its main hall doubling as a jazz venue, during the genre’s formative years. Impacted by repeated hurricane damage, the remaining portions of the building are threatened with collapse. Working in partnership, the pastor and congregation of Holy Aid and Comfort and the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans are seeking funding and support to stabilize the remaining historic fabric and reconstruct the rest of the building for congregational and community use. To support the renovation of Holy Aid and Comfort Spiritual Church, visit the [Preservation Research Center of New Orleans](http://prcno.org) at prcno.org. The [Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation](http://lthp.org) was founded in 1979 with the mission to advocate,



Entrance to the Greenfield property. Community of Wallace in the background (courtesy of the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation).

preserve and protect historic buildings and sites in all 64 parishes. The West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish was added to the [Louisiana’s Most Endangered Places List](#) in 2022. For more information about programs, resources, membership and how you can help west St. John the Baptist Parish, visit LTHP.org. The [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) was founded in 1949 to support the preservation of America’s diverse historic buildings, neighborhoods, and heritage through its programs, resources, and advocacy. For more information or to become a member, visit savingplaces.org. All three organizations are member-supported non-profits.



Google Earth image of the Mississippi River between the communities of Wallace and Edgard, showing Whitney and Evergreen plantations, and other National Register-listed properties. The West Bank is south of the river, with industrial development across the river to the north.

USS *Arizona* Gunboat Research Donated to the Louisiana Division of Archaeology

Karla Oesch, Collections Manager
Louisiana Division of Archaeology

On February 24, 2023, the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (LA DOA) received a donation of Ronald (Rob) Christopher's research on the potential location of the USS *Arizona* Gunboat. Christopher was a fourth-generation Arizonian who first became interested in the Civil War vessel's location while conducting research for his thesis at Arizona State University. Tragically, Christopher was killed in 2011 and the project was left incomplete. Christopher's family has donated the research to the LA DOA in hopes that someone will be able to continue the search. This article provides a brief history of the USS *Arizona* Gunboat, information about Christopher's research, and how to find out more information about the project.

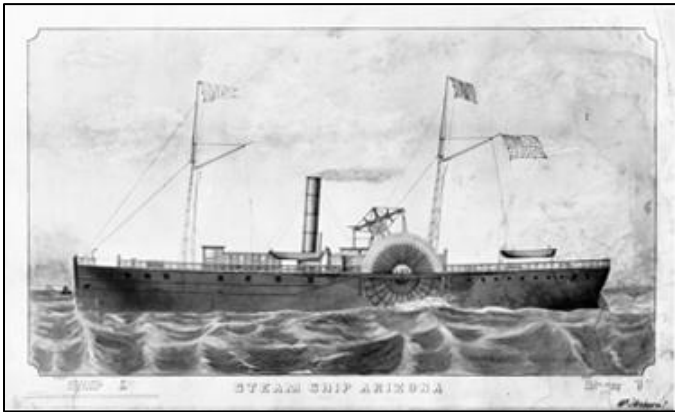


Figure 1. Image of USS *Arizona* Gunboat.

USS *Arizona* Gunboat

The USS *Arizona* was an earlier predecessor of the more famous namesake and battleship that is part of the Pearl Harbor National Memorial. The USS Gunboat *Arizona* was a 950-ton side-wheel steamship launched in 1859. The ship began her career as a civilian vessel traveling primarily between New Orleans and Texas. In 1862, the Confederate Navy seized and renamed her the CSS *Caroline*. The *Caroline* (*Arizona*) was a blockade runner. Union forces captured her in late 1862 (Mooney 1991).

By 1863, the rechristened *Arizona* was modified to a well-armed gunboat for the Union Navy. The *Arizona* served primarily as a means of communication and troop transport but assisted in blockades and strengthened the Union's efforts to penetrate confederate-held territory north of Port Hudson. In April, the *Arizona*, along with

USS *Estrella* and *Calhoun* engaged the CSS *Queen of the West* in Grand Lake. The *Queen of the Lake* caught fire and eventually exploded after running aground. The *Arizona* participated in several engagements that opened waterways throughout Louisiana (United States Department of Navy 1914).

The *Arizona* underwent some major repairs in August of 1863. Major personnel changes occurred aboard the ship as well. Lieutenant Upton, who had commanded the ship up until then, received a court martial. He eventually deserted his post in the Navy and another member of the crew was given command (United States Department of Navy 1908).

Despite the repairs, the *Arizona* continued to have engine troubles. In September, the ship and three other vessels moved to the Sabine Pass and attempted to take a Confederate battery. Two of the ships were lost while the other two (*Arizona* included) were forced to return to New Orleans. Additional issues for the *Arizona* included two outbreaks of yellow fever and an involvement in a mutiny at Fort Jackson.

The *Arizona* continued to serve inland waterways and along the Texas coast until May 1864. Later in 1864, the ship returned to New Orleans for condition assessment. Several repairs were needed; most importantly, raising and rebuilding the boiler. On February 27, 1865, the *Arizona* traveled upstream to New Orleans when a fire broke out. The commanding officer eventually ordered the crew to abandon ship. Four crew members were lost due to the fire (Naval History and Heritage Command 2015).

Many questions still exist about the USS *Arizona* and the circumstances around its demise, including personnel involved, effectiveness of upgrades, and overall amount of flammable material still on board during the fire.

The Project

In 2001, Christopher received the first permit from the Department of the Navy to conduct a non-invasive examination of the possible *Arizona* shipwreck. The survey area was the west bank of the Mississippi River to the north and south of Ironton, LA. Sonar imaging depicted several anomalies, which the researchers believe are part of a vessel matching the size of the *Arizona*. At the time of the survey, the vessel was resting at approximately 80 feet below the surface. No artifacts have been recovered. Further investigation is needed to conclusively say this is the *Arizona* (USS *Arizona* Civil War Project Fund 2015).

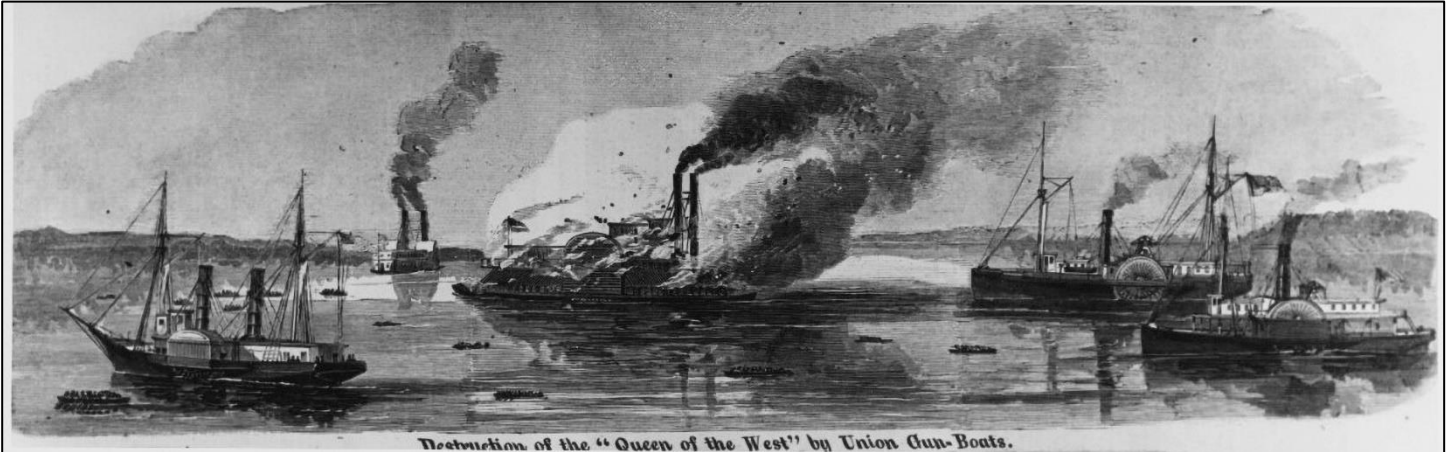


Figure 2. Destruction of the 'Queen of the West' by Union Gun-Boats. The CSS *Queen of the West* is shown being destroyed in Grand Lake, Louisiana, during an attack by the USS *Estrella* (extreme left), *Calhoun* (extreme right) and *Arizona* (second from right), 14 April 1863 (image courtesy of Naval Heritage and History Command).

Research Donation

During his research, Christopher set up the USS *Arizona* Civil War Project fund. Its purpose was to raise funds and support activities necessary to locate the USS *Arizona* wreck. After his tragic death, Christopher's research remained with his immediate family. In 2022, his sister reached out to LA DOA in hopes of finding a long-term home for her brother's research. The LA DOA accepted the donation the following year.

The donated material consists of thousands of pages of documents that include information about the vessel and her movements, research about the crew assigned to this boat, and interpretations of other Civil War and military strategies. Presently, LA DOA is attempting to locate the digital copies of any of the sonar imagining, if these still exist. Christopher hoped to conduct more field research to definitively identify the *Arizona*'s final resting place.

Rob Christopher began his research into the USS Gunboat *Arizona* because of the name of the vessel and his interest in history. He continued the research because the *Arizona* had been lost to history and he wished to tell that story. Tragically, Christopher did not get to see future research into his discovery. The wreck remains underwater, awaiting the next researcher to continue what Christopher has started.

Acknowledgments

The vast majority of information in this article is a result of Christopher's unpublished research. If you would like

more information about Christopher's research into the *Arizona*, there is a website set up through the fund at <https://www.ussarizonacivilwar.org>. If you are interested in conducting further research, please contact Karla Oesch at the Louisiana Division of Archaeology to access the available research.

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UL Lafayette – Kisatchie National Forest Archaeology Field School

Mark A. Rees, Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab and Anthropology Program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL Lafayette) is conducting its Summer 2023 Archaeology Field School in Kisatchie National Forest (KNF), as part of a participating agreement between the university and the U.S. Forest Service. This collaborative research partnership is providing the U.S. Forest Service with Phase III data recovery of sites within the KNF Calcasieu Ranger District, while providing students at UL Lafayette, Louisiana State University, and other universities with practical training and experience in archaeological fieldwork.

Erlend Johnson, UL Lafayette field school instructor and project director, is working with Matthew Helmer, KNF Heritage Program Manager, and John Mayer, KNF Zone Archaeologist, to accomplish the data recovery

investigations and provide everyone with a unique and memorable learning experience. Data recovery is focused on two sites in the KNF Calcasieu Ranger District (16VN3504 and 16VN3508). Fieldwork began on May 8, 2023 and the field school commenced on May 15. The Louisiana Ecological Forestry Center has graciously provided accommodations for field school students and crew. Updates on this investigation and announcements on future archaeology field schools will be posted in upcoming issues of the *LAS Newsletter*.

For additional information on the ULL – KNF Archaeology Field School, email erlend.johnson@louisiana.edu. Email rees@louisiana.edu for information on the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab and Archaeology Concentration in the Anthropology Program at UL Lafayette.





Above and previous page: Students and crew at the Summer 2023 UL Lafayette – KNF Archaeology Field School.

Evergreen Plantation Archaeological Field School

Jayur Mehta, Florida State University

Evergreen Plantation Archaeological Field School is working in Edgard and Wallace, Louisiana, this summer to uncover the untold stories of enslaved Africans and free people of color through an interdisciplinary program taught by professors of archeology, black studies, and African-American literature. This program teaches students the skills they need to interpret buried histories

as they uncover artifacts and architecture with their newly sharpened trowels.

Students in this program come from universities all over the country. They will be sharing their results with the local community on June 16, 2023 in St. John the Baptist Parish. Reach out to Dr. Jayur Mehta at jmehta@fsu.edu if you'd like to attend these student presentations.



Jayur Mehta (left) with students at the 2023 Evergreen Plantation Archaeological Field School.

Louisiana Archaeological Society 2023 Annual Meeting

Mark A. Rees

The LAS held its 2023 annual meeting on February 24 – 26 at the historic Hotel Bentley in downtown Alexandria, Louisiana. The event was hosted by Matthew Helmer, who served as Program Chair, with co-organizer, Velicia Bergstrom. Elizabeth Chamberlain delivered an engaging keynote address: “Interdisciplinary Approaches to Study and Protect Coastal Archaeological Sites.” The customary Silent Auction was held, back issues of the *LAS Bulletin* were available, and Saturday was filled with interesting presentations, posters, and conversation on Louisiana archaeology and related (or unrelated) topics. The Conference Agenda and Abstracts are included in this issue of the *LAS Newsletter*, along with a few photographs for those who missed this unique, once-a-year event, or would like to read and reminisce.



Velicia Bergstrom, Matthew Helmer, and Elizabeth Chamberlain (left to right) at the LAS 2023 conference.



LAS 2023 annual meeting photographs: some of the attendees from UL Lafayette (above left); a meeting of minds over lunch (above right); Elizabeth Chamberlain delivers the keynote address (bottom).

Louisiana Archaeological Society 2023 Annual Meeting Conference Agenda

Friday - February 23, 2023

- 3:00 to 5:00 pm REGISTRATION (Ballroom)
 5:00 to 6:00 pm EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING (Board Room)

Saturday – February 25, 2023

- 8:00 – 9:00 am REGISTRATION
 9:00 – 9:10 am Opening remarks
 9:10 – 9:30 am Chip McGimsey – *Where We Are Now – Louisiana Archaeology in 2023 and the discovery of the Brookhill Shipwreck*
 9:30 – 9:50 am Dennis Jones – *Digging the Dug: Prehistoric Borrow Pits and What They Can Tell Us- The Filhiol Mound Site (16OU2) in Ouachita Parish, La*
 9:50 – 10:10 am Diana M. Greenlee, Rinita A. Dalan, Michael L. Hargrave, R. Berle Clay, Arne Anderson Stamnes, and Davide Oppo – *Dishing the Dirt on Buried Mounds at Poverty Point*
 10:10 – 10:30 am BREAK
 10:30 – 10:50 am Adam Fuselier – *Porter Homestead (22FR1810): An Early Statehood Homestead in Southwest Mississippi*
 10:50 – 11:10 am Robert Westrick – *Born, Bred and Died in the Saddle: the Failed Texan Charge at the Battle of Lafourche Crossing – New Archaeological Evidence of Louisiana’s Bloody but Forgotten Battle*
 11:10 – 11:30 am Steven J. Filoromo, Paul D. Jackson, Margaret Schultz, and Raychel Durdin – *Personal Landscapes and the “Hazardous” Homeplaces of Van McMurray Playground (16OR752), New Orleans, Louisiana*
 11:30-11:50 am Nathaniel Heller – *Historic Archeology of the McDonogh No. 5 School 1882-1930) in Orleans Parish, Louisiana*
 11:50 am – 1:30 pm LUNCH
 1:30 – 1:50 pm Richard A. Weinstein, Douglas C. Wells, Bryan S. Haley, and David B. Kelley – *Archaeological Investigations at Two Shell Middens (16TR29 and 16TR210) on Bayou De Cade, Southern Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana*
 1:50 – 2:10 pm Natalia Moonier, Paul Jackson, and Steve Filoromo – *Filling the Gaps in Everyday Experiences: Point Pleasant and the Coles Creek Period in Louisiana*
 2:10 – 2:30 pm James Fogleman – *Bannerstones, Gorgets, Boatstones & Bar Weights from St. Landry and Avoyelles Parishes*
 2:30 – 2:50 pm Kevin Rolph, Steven Filoromo, and Paul Jackson – *Feasting in the Fisher’s Village*
 2:50 – 3:10 pm BREAK
 3:10 – 3:30 pm Eddie Templeton – *Bead Making Technology During the Middle and Late Archaic Periods*

3:30 – 3:50 pm	Francis Broussard, Andy Licausi, Chip McGimsey, and Samuel Huey – <i>Sites Recently Recorded in Washington and St. Tammany Parishes by Avocational Archaeologists</i>
3:50 – 4:10 pm	Mark A. Rees – <i>Atakapa Mythistory and the Elusive Ishak Villages</i>
4:15 – 4:45 pm	BUSINESS MEETING
5:00 – 7:00 pm	RECEPTION & KEYNOTE: Elizabeth Chamberlain – <i>Interdisciplinary Approaches to Study and Protect Coastal Archaeological Sites</i>

Sunday February 26, 2023

Tours: At your leisure, we encourage folks to visit nearby sites:

Old LSU site (Yes, the original site where LSU got its beginnings!)

Fort Randolph and Fort Buhlow Historic Site (open at 9:00)

LAS 2023 Conference Abstracts

Chip McGimsey (LA-DOA)

The State of Louisiana Archaeology 2022

A brief review of what happened in Louisiana Archaeology since the 2022 LAS meeting will be provided. Notable events such as the discovery of the *Brookhill* shipwreck will be highlighted.

Dennis Jones (LAS)

Digging the Dug: Prehistoric Borrow Pits and What They Can Tell Us-The Filhiol Mound Site (16OU2) in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana

Earthen mounds are the most obvious elements on the North American landscape that signal a prehistoric presence. Archaeological investigations at hundreds, if not thousands, of mound sites have included excavations into and around mounds that focused on their composition, as well as other features such as domestic structures, middens, associated artifacts, and plaza/mound arrangements. However, borrow pits, the sources of the fill from which mounds were built, generally have received little archaeological attention. Excavations at a borrow pit at the Filhiol site (16OU2) as part of the fulfillment of Section 106 requirements for highway expansion made significant contributions to investigating how and when the mound at this particular site was built. In turn, this contribution points to the importance of studying borrow pits to better understand prehistoric Native American mound building societies.

Diana M. Greenlee (ULM), Rinita A. Dalan (MSUM, Emerita), Michael L. Hargrave (CERL, retired), R. Berle Clay (CRA, Inc., retired), Arne Anderson Stamnes (NTNU Museum), and David Oppo (ULL)

Dishing the Dirt on Buried Mounds at Poverty Point

From the surface, the large, nearly flat plaza at Poverty Point WHS does not strike one as exceptional. Although it appears to be just natural ground defined by the immense C-shaped earthen ridges, the plaza is, instead, a constructed feature of this monumental, created landscape. Recently, two buried mound-like topographic rises were discovered in the southern plaza. Without visible indication at the current plaza surface, they were identified through geophysical survey. Because these anomalies are directly adjacent to, but do not overlap, timber circles, these features were likely present, recognized, and responded to by the people of Poverty Point as they shaped the plaza landscape. But the question is, what are they? We use multiple lines of complementary data to characterize the structure and composition of these unique features and consider various hypotheses to account for their origin.

Adam Q. Fuselier (USFS-NFM)*Porter Homestead (22FR1810): An Early Statehood Homestead in Southwest Mississippi*

On March 2, 1820, John Porter was given a land patent in Franklin County, Mississippi. Precisely 200 years later to the day, his homestead was recorded as site 22 Fr 1810. The Porter Homestead is one of the best examples of an early 19th century homestead in Franklin County Mississippi, containing multiple brick features and early 19th century historic ceramics. This presentation will discuss the initial site recording of the Porter Homestead.

Robert F. Westrick (JMB Companies, Inc.)*Born, Bred and Died in the Saddle: The Failed Texas Charge at the Battle of Lafourche Crossing – New Archaeological Evidence of Louisiana’s Bloody but Forgotten Battle*

Just south of Thibodeaux, Louisiana lies an old railroad trestle spanning Bayou Lafourche, near a quiet neighborhood of graceful older homes with well-manicured expansive lawns. The only indication that anything of any significance ever occurred nearby is a small historical marker alongside State Highway 308. If you are traveling south on the highway, the marker is on the righthand side of the road about a tenth of a mile north of Bartley Lane. Blink and you’ll probably never see it. Such signs are often easily overlooked or simply ignored. However, if one takes the time to stop and read the sign you will quickly learn that something historically significant indeed occurred there 169 years ago. The weathered black lettering reads... *On the east side of Bayou Lafourche was fought the most important battle in Lafourche Parish during the War Between States. On June 20 and 21, 1863, units of the 23rd Connecticut Volunteers and the 25th New York Battery, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Albert Stickney, which were guarding the crossing of the New Orleans, Opelousas & Great Western Railroad, repulsed two major attacks by Second Texas Mounted Rangers, Colonel Charles L. Pyron, Commanding.* This brief account only tells a small portion of the story; that story that continues to be written.

Steven J. Filoromo, Paul D. Jackson, Margaret Schultz, and Rachel Durdin (TerraXplorations, Inc.)*Personal Landscapes and the “Hazardous” Homeplaces of Van McMurray Playground (16OR752), New Orleans, Louisiana*

From the heart of the Central City Historic District, the Van McMurray Playground is a unique palimpsest of hundreds of years of colonial and capitalist projects on a variety of scales. While the park now marks a historic “Great Society” investment, the area was a thriving block home to a neighborhood marked by transition and movement. Shifting throughout history, the social composition of the neighborhood varied between the enslaved and emancipated Black residents of the area, to the working-class Jewish, German, and Irish immigrants. The homes within the block were eventually targeted by mortgage lenders as a “hazardous” neighborhood during the height of redlining. Our paper addresses the relationships between people, place, and time within the park through an investigation of the spatial organization and object itineraries of 19th-century deposits. During our regulatory investigations of the site, we identified midden deposits and structural remains of several homes that mark the personal histories and landscapes from 19th-century through the mid-20th century. We examine this project through a lens of class, race, and personal practice to investigate the personal histories of the neighborhood block from the bottom-up.

Nathanael Heller (R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc.)*Historic Archaeology of the McDonogh No. 5 School (1882-1930) in Orleans Parish, Louisiana*

In 2020-2021, R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc. completed extensive archeological investigations of Site 16OR738, the former location of McDonogh No. 5. This public primary school served the residents of the Algiers Point neighborhood from 1882 until 1930. Operating as a racially segregated institution, McDonogh No. 5 originally served the African American children of the community, while in 1907 the school was renovated and converted for the use of white children. The excavations revealed extensive remains of the main school building,

play yards, and outbuildings including two large school privies, one of which contained abundant artifacts associated with the students and school staff from the period when McDonogh No. 5 accommodated African American children. Excavations also investigated the former home of the school portress, and also identified possible evidence for a military encampment within the site during the mid-nineteenth century. To date, the excavations of McDonogh No. 5 represent one of only a few inner-city public schools ever to be investigated archeologically and has provided a wealth of data regarding the education of African American children in the south during the Jim Crow Era.

Richard A. Weinstein, Douglas C. Wells, Bryan S. Haley, and David B. Kelley (Coastal Environments, Inc.)
Archaeological Investigations at Two Shell Middens (16TR29 and 16TR210) on Bayou De Cade, Southern Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana

From April through June 2022, archaeologists with Coastal Environments, Inc., conducted National Register eligibility testing at two prehistoric sites (16TR29 and 16TR210) in the marshes of southern Terrebonne Parish. Investigations included terrestrial and offshore probing, use of a hand-turned bucket auger, and the excavation of 1-by-1-m units. Although no intact remains were found at 16TR29, a partially subsided shell midden was present at 16TR210. That midden produced very few artifacts; however, it did provide evidence of the fish and shellfish collected by the site's inhabitants, along with a consistent series of AMS dates indicating occupation during the fourteenth century A.D.

Natalia Moonier, Paul Jackson, and Steve Filoromo (TerraXploration, Inc.)
Filling in the Gaps in Everyday Experiences: Point Pleasant and the Coles Creek Period in Louisiana

Archaeological knowledge pertaining to the settlement of Native American communities during the Coles Creek Period largely rely upon the investigations of earthen platform monuments, despite a majority of recorded sites not containing these mounds. The Louisiana Division of Archaeology's Excavation Database includes 1,275 archaeological sites at the Phase II or Phase III level, 236 of which were affiliated with the Coles Creek cultural period at the time of research. Analysis of this database demonstrated the overwhelming majority of these to be nonmound sites. Here, we recenter our perspective on the everyday experience of communities during the Coles Creek Period by integrating the results of our Phase III investigations with other pertinent regional data. We argue that nonmound sites are essential in understanding the lifeways of prehistoric peoples such as the Coles Creek.

James Fogleman (Independent Researcher)
Bannerstones, Gorgets, Boatstones and Bar Weights from St. Landry and Avoyelles Parishes

Numerous sites in St. Landry and Avoyelles Parishes contain among their respective assemblages a very small group of problematic ground and polished stone items. These objects consist of bannerstones, gorgets, boatstones, and bar weights. Their chronology and frequency will be discussed. The earliest of these intentionally shaped stone artifacts appear during the Middle Archaic. They consist of fragments of gorgets and bannerstones found associated with Middle/Late Archaic artifact concentrations. The next group is bar weights and boatstones which occur most frequently in Tchefoncté times before all disappear in early Coles Creek times.

Kevin Rolph, Steven Filoromo, and Paul Jackson (TerraXplorations, Inc.)
Feasting in the Fisher's Village

Feasting represents a durable tradition that promotes social integration and cohesion at multiple scales. In southern Louisiana, studies of feasting and community integration often rely upon those associated middens recovered from mound-based contexts, though such sites are not fully representative of the regional population. During our excavation of the Point Pleasant Site (16IV199), a large St. Gabriel Phase Coles Creek site

in Iberville Parish, two large pits were uncovered and recorded. Here, we discuss the diverse assemblages of ceramic and faunal materials to compare against similar feasting events identified at contemporaneous sites. Through our analysis, we emphasize the significance of the site to contribute to a bottom-up view of Coles Creek lifeway and social cohesion in southern Louisiana.

Eddie Templeton (Independent Researcher, Mississippi)

Bead Making Technology During the Middle and Late Archaic Periods

Stone beads are occasionally found on Middle and Late Archaic sites in Mississippi and Louisiana, but they are by no means common and large bead-manufacturing sites are even scarcer. The small chert drill bits used in the manufacture of stone beads are often overlooked, and early stage preforms, and bead blanks are sometimes misidentified. Our limited understanding of the manufacturing processes and technologies utilized in the manufacture of stone beads has been gleaned primarily from the study of collections from large bead manufacturing sites where material evidence is most abundant. In Mississippi, these sites include the Middle Archaic Loosa Yokena and John Forest sites and the Late Archaic Slate and Parker Bayou sites. A large cache of jasper beads, bead blanks and preforms discovered in Lawrence Co. Mississippi in 1875 also provides important clues about Middle Archaic technology. Several bead making technologies will be described, and photographs will be used to illustrate stages of manufacture.

Francis Broussard (Independent Researcher), Andy Licausi (Independent Researcher), Chip McGimsey (LA-DOA) and Samuel Huey (LA-DOA)

Sites Recently Recorded in Washington and St. Tammany Parishes by Avocational Archaeologists

Recording archaeological sites discovered in Louisiana with the Division of Archaeology is paramount for determining eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The State site numbering system facilitates research and substantive discussion of post-contact, as well as pre-contact archaeological remains. Majority of the sites recorded with the Division are documented as the result of Section 106 driven investigations; however, these survey areas are limited. Efforts made by avocational archaeologists to record archaeological sites are vital contributions to the archaeological record. Members of the community often possess a familiarity with local history and the environment that affords the ability to locate sites. Avocational archaeologists often have a thorough understanding of historical cultural sequencing and are well versed in formal typologies. Francis Broussard and Andy Licausi are two such avocational archaeologist who have discovered sites throughout the Florida Parishes. Both men have been gracious enough to take Dr. Chip McGimsey and Samuel Huey on tours of numerous sites which were recorded during the visits. The sites are often situated on low knolls and ridges near waterways, which provide a pleasant scene. The artifacts collected from these sites are impressive. A discussion of these artifacts and sites is offered.

Mark A. Rees (University of Louisiana at Lafayette)

Atakapa Mythistory and the Elusive Ishak Villages: A Call for Archaeology to Articulate Hidden Histories of the Hiye'kiti Ishak

The Atakapa of the northwestern Gulf Coastal Plain are wrongly portrayed in historical narratives as now-extinct nomadic cannibals on the periphery of the civilized world. The *Hiye'kiti Ishak* or eastern people are lumped into the Atakapa "savage slot," along with the Akokisa and Bidai. Like earlier myths of a lost race of mound builders, myths of the Atakapa are reliant on historical silences that do not stand up to scrutiny. Archaeologists have acquiesced to these myths through perpetuation of the anthropological "other" as prehistoric, foraging bands. The eastern people were ranchers, traders, farmers, military reservists, and entrepreneurs who resided in numerous villages along the Vermilion and Mermentau rivers during the eighteenth century. The locations of at least two villages are well documented but have been mostly ignored. One of these locations, Skunnemoke's village on the Vermilion, was recently visited. The results of a brief archaeological investigation were

inconclusive but indicate the area has been extensively disturbed. *Ishak* history is silenced through disciplinary segregation and limited selection of diminishing sources. An interdisciplinary archaeology of the *Ishak* is critically needed to articulate these hidden histories before the remaining sources of evidence are made further inaccessible or destroyed.

Poster Abstracts

Matthew Helmer (USFS-KNF), Velicia Bergstrom (USFS-KNF), David Moore (USFS-KNF), Rose Greer (JBCI Traditionalist) and Kayla Hill (La Tech)

America's Bamboo: Revitalizing Rivercane on Kisatchie National Forest, Central Louisiana

Rivercane (*Arundinaria sp.*) is the only bamboo native to North America and is a critical species for southeastern ecosystems as well as for traditional cultural uses. Unfortunately, rivercane has disappeared from more than 98% of its original habitat. Kisatchie National Forest has been working with affiliated American Indian Tribes and other partners to study, propagate, and revitalize rivercane on the Forest and other areas. Over the past three years Kisatchie has conducted pilot plant propagation with the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, begun plans to establish a rivercane nursery on the Forest for plant exchange, and are inventorying extant cane patches throughout the forest to better understand cane habitat. This poster provides a general overview of Kisatchie's various rivercane revitalization projects and preliminary results in light of achieving long-term rivercane ecosystem resilience.

Reagan Hoehl, Sarah Tarry, Gloria Church, and Erlend Johnson (University of Louisiana at Lafayette)

Exploring Kisatchie's Deep Past: Findings from 16VN3416

This poster presents preliminary findings from the excavation at Site 16VN3416 in Kisatchie National Forest. It focuses on two test units with a high number of diagnostic artifacts, which range from the late Paleoindian (8000 BCE) through the Woodland period (1200 CE). The findings examine the site's occupation periods and activities, as well as taphonomic processes affecting archaeological contexts since the deposition of artifacts. There is evidence of significant soil disturbance and bioturbation due to long-term taphonomic processes. These complicate chronological reconstructions and behavioral inferences about the site. Nevertheless, the density and richness of finds provide context to shed light on 10,000 years of Native American lifeways in one area of Kisatchie National Forest.

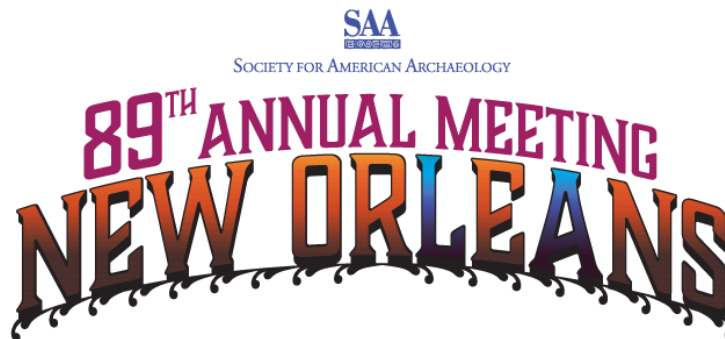
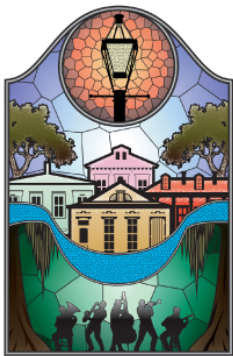
Keynote Speaker

Elizabeth Chamberlain (Wageningen University, The Netherlands)

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Study and Protect Coastal Archaeological Sites

Coastal landscapes are changing rapidly in response to climate and human pressures. New, interdisciplinary approaches are needed to study and protect endangered archaeological sites positioned within these dynamic regions. Interdisciplinary approaches also open doors to view archaeological sites as a record of human-landscape dynamics, and this is of immediate relevance to the pressures that coastal communities face today. In this keynote, I recap several recent studies by my team exploring the coupled archaeological and geological records of coastal Louisiana. This synthesis shows how human history is inherently tied to the physical landscape, how prehistoric archaeological sites are valuable keystone landforms that must be considered in coastal restoration, and how approaches to Louisiana archaeology have evolved over the past century. From this perspective, I aim to ignite discussions of future needs and initiatives for archaeological research in Louisiana.

FUTURE MEETINGS



APRIL
17-21,
2024

SAA 2024 in New Orleans!

The 89th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) will take place April 17 – 21, 2024, at the Sheraton New Orleans (500 Canal Street) and the New Orleans Marriott (555 Canal Street). The SAA meeting is the largest gathering of archaeologists in the Americas, with attendees from across the U.S. and around the world. The SAA previously met in New Orleans in 2001, 1996, 1991, 1986, and 1977. This will be the sixth SAA meeting in New Orleans and the first in 23 years.

The SAA 2024 President's Forum will take place on Wednesday, April 17, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. This will be followed by sessions, papers, posters, forums, workshops, meetings, and other events from early Thursday, April 18, through midday Sunday, April 21. Plans are taking shape for local field trips and events of interest to the public.

Archaeologists are encouraged to develop ideas for sessions of talks or posters focused on the archaeology of the southeastern United States, which will be featured on the conference program as part of the "Southeast Session Series" for the conference. Make plans to come to New Orleans for the conference, and to participate in, and contribute to conference proceedings.

The annual SAA meeting [website](https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting), submission portal, registration, and additional information can be found here: <https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting>. The deadline for all submissions, both session and individual, is Thursday, September 7, 2023, 3:00 p.m. eastern time. SAA membership is not required for conference registration, but registration fees are lower for SAA members than for non-member registrants.

The SAA 2024 logo and banner (above) were designed by Liam Murname. David Carballo from Boston University is the SAA 2024 Program Committee Chair and Chris Rodning from Tulane University is the SAA 2024 Local Advisory Committee Chair.

Individuals interested in volunteering can apply to help staff conference registration tables and booths, the SAA conference-site-office, and the SAA session rooms. Volunteers who cover two four-hour shifts may be eligible to receive complimentary registration for the conference. Prospective volunteers need not be SAA members. Questions? Email meetings@saa.org for information on how to volunteer.



Southeastern Archaeological Conference

The 79th annual SEAC meeting will be held at the Chattanooga Convention Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on

October 25-28, 2023

See the [SEAC website](https://www.southeasternarchaeology.org/annual-meeting/details/) for more information:
<https://www.southeasternarchaeology.org/annual-meeting/details/>

LAS CHAPTERS AND MEMBERSHIP

Acadiana Chapter

Contact: Sadie Schoeffler, President
Gloria Church, Vice President

Email: acadianalas@gmail.com

The Acadiana Chapter is planning a fall 2023 speaker series, with tentative dates of August 8, September 5, October 3, and November 8. Email acadianalas@gmail.com for locations, times, and additional information, or go online to <https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/acadiana-chapter>.

Baton Rouge Chapter

Contact: Brandy Kerr or Margeaux Murray, Co-Presidents

Email: batonrougelas1975@gmail.com

To receive information about our meetings, please email batonrougelas1975@gmail.com.

Delta Chapter

Contact: Brian Ostahowski

Email: brian.ostahowski@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/DeltaChapterLAS

The Delta Chapter hosts a monthly speaker series from August through April. The Delta Chapter meets the 4th Thursday of each month at Tulane University, Department of Anthropology, Dinwiddie Hall, at 7 pm in Room 201. For more information, email Brian Ostahowski at brian.ostahowski@gmail.com.

Northwest Chapter

Primary Contact: Tad Britt

Email: tad.britt@gmail.com

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West Louisiana Archaeology Club

Contact: John Guy, President

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Rockey Rockholt, Vice President

Email: richardrockhold@yahoo.com



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LAS Newsletter Information

The *Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society* is published digitally three times a year for the society. Louisiana Archaeological Society (LAS) members receive email invitations for *Newsletter* content and regular notifications with links to the online *Newsletter*. Past issues of the *Newsletter* are available on the [LAS website](https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/) at <https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/>

Information for Contributors

Email all news, notes, announcements, reports, and *Newsletter* correspondence to the editor at: laarchaeology@gmail.com. Submissions should be in MS Word.

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Membership Information

LAS members receive the digital *Newsletter*, one print copy of the annual LAS Bulletin, *Louisiana Archaeology*, and are invited to attend the annual LAS meetings. Annual membership dues are: \$30 for individuals; \$5 for associated family members; \$15 for students (with a valid student ID); \$45 for institutions such as libraries and universities. Life memberships for individuals or institutions are \$300. Members can also choose among the following chapter affiliations: Acadiana; Baton Rouge; Delta; Northwest; West Louisiana.

Visit the [LAS website](https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/) at <https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/> to join or renew. Membership requests, dues, and changes of address can also be directed to the LAS Treasurer:

Rachel Watson, LAS Treasurer
Louisiana Division of Archaeology
P.O. Box 44247 Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Make checks payable to the *Louisiana Archaeological Society*.

LAS publications, including issues of *Louisiana Archaeology*, as well as shirts, hats, and other gear can be ordered from the [LAS website](https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/) at: <https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/>



LAS Officers for 2023

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Visit the LAS website: www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org for additional information or to join the LAS.

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