

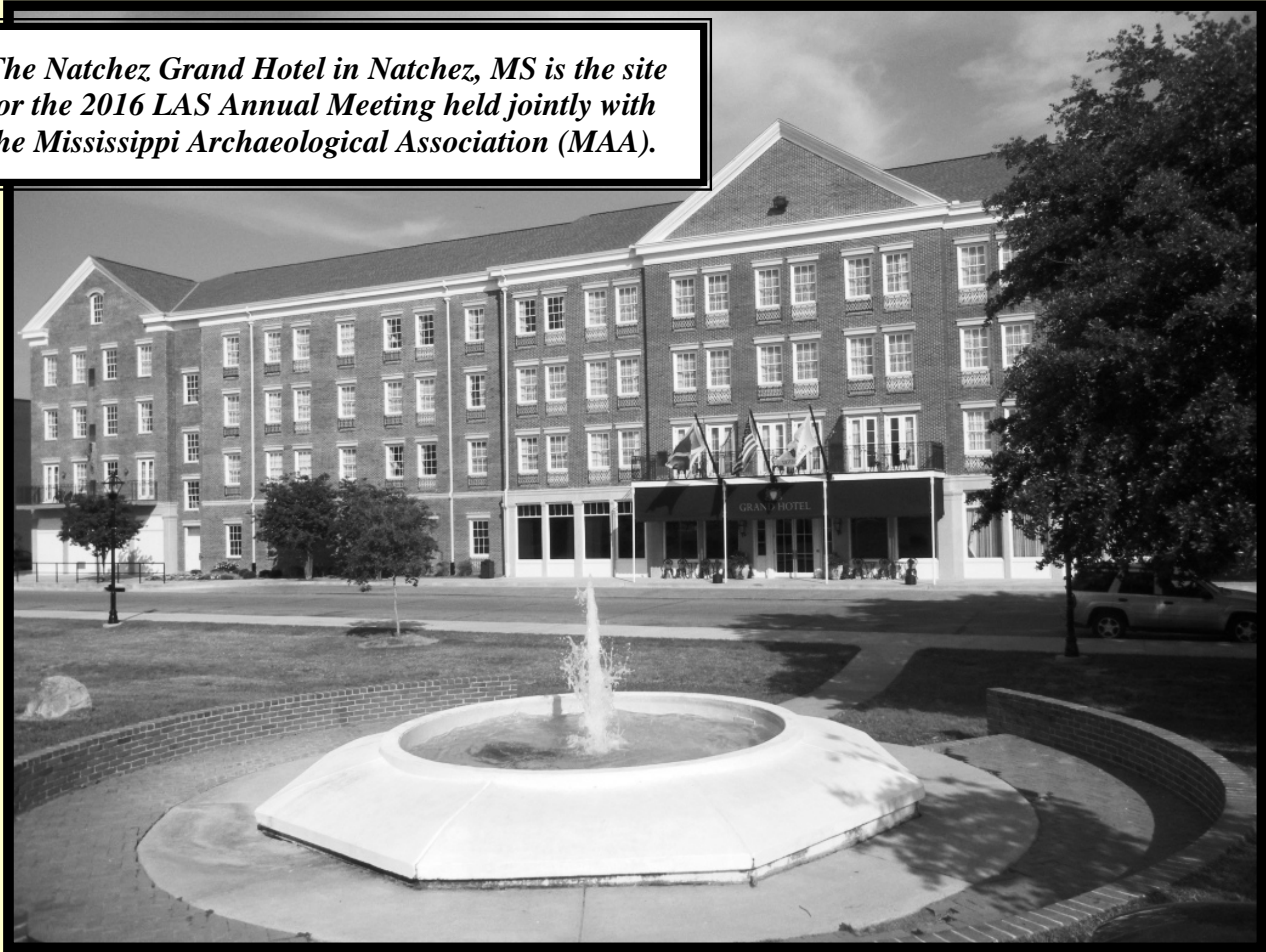


# NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Winter 2015/2016

Vol. 43, No.3

*The Natchez Grand Hotel in Natchez, MS is the site for the 2016 LAS Annual Meeting held jointly with the Mississippi Archaeological Association (MAA).*



**Details for the LAS/MAA joint annual meeting, February 19-21, 2016, are inside on pages 4 and 5.**

**LAS Newsletter printed courtesy of  
R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc.  
New Orleans**

## LAS MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER NEWS

### End of an Era, Beginning of Another: the LAS Newsletter in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

This will be the last printed and mailed copy of the LAS newsletter for most of you. The LAS Executive Committee has endorsed motions made by the LAS Editor, Dennis Jones, and LAS Treasurer, Julie Doucet, to distribute the LAS newsletter via email.

Beginning with the next issue, members with email addresses will find the LAS newsletter in their respective email inboxes rather than in their snail mail boxes. This move will save the LAS hundreds of dollars in mailing expenses. Members for whom there is no email will continue to receive hard copies of the newsletter via the United States Postal Service. Libraries and other institutions will also continue to receive hard copies.

This change will allow for LAS newsletters to contain color graphics, as well as active links to online sources concerning archaeology. The LAS bulletin will continue to be printed and mailed to the membership.

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Ho, Ho, Ho!!



*Members of the Baton Rouge chapter of the LAS lounge on the deck at the home of Julie Doucet for the 2015 Christmas party. Julie is the president of the Baton Rouge chapter.*



*Julie's husband, Gregg Pettis, checks the progress of appetizers being warmed on the device affectionately known as the Cajun microwave.*

### Do you remember the Junior Archaeological Society (JAS)?

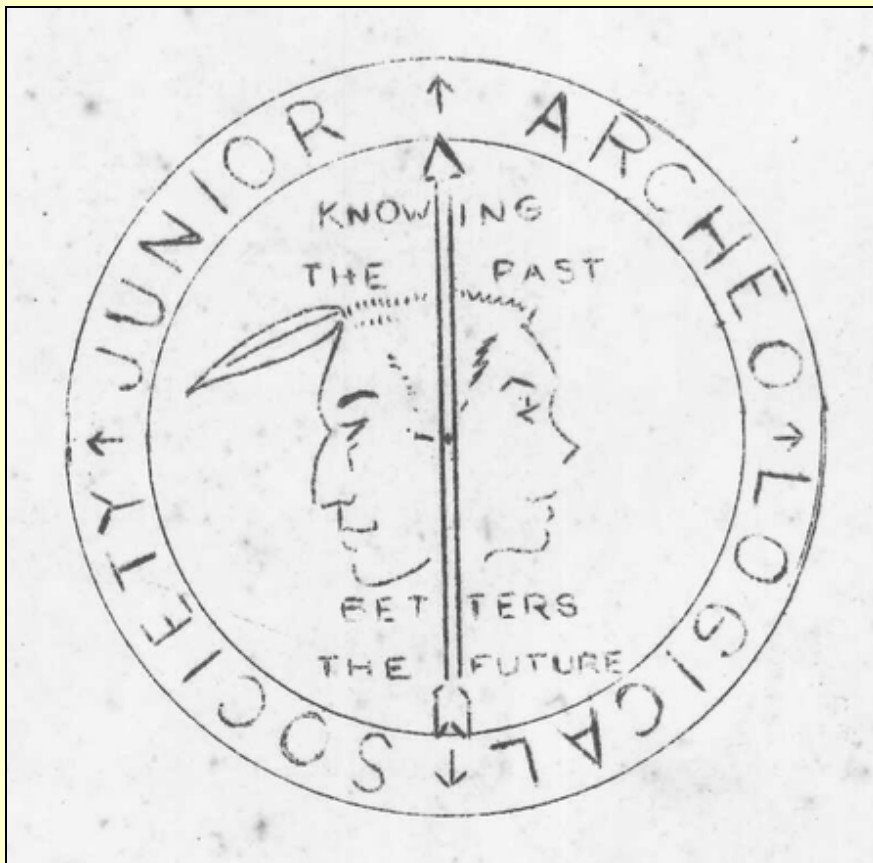
By Ashley Terry, University of Pennsylvania, ashleylterry@gmail.com.

This past summer, I had the incredible opportunity to participate in an excavation at the Smith Creek site in Wilkinson County, Mississippi. As a part of this project, which was led by Penn professor Megan Kassabaum, we opened units on two of the site's mounds. A third, however, went unexcavated.

This third mound – a burial mound likely dating to the Coles Creek Period – had previously been excavated by the Junior Archaeological Society of Baton Rouge (JAS). However, records were relatively scarce and we couldn't precisely characterize this early work. Therefore, I decided to seek out former members of the JAS in an effort to learn more about their work at the site. I have since had the good fortune to speak with a number of the Society's former members, as well as with several archaeologists who have recovered or are currently processing materials from its excavations.

So far, I have gathered that the Society was in operation from the late 1950s until the early 1970s. J. Ashley Sibley ran the organization with the help of his first and second wives, Zilda P. Sibley and Anna May Sibley. Sibley and both of his wives were educators; they taught at various times at Lanier Elementary, Walnut Hills Elementary, Broadmoor High School, and Dufroq Elementary, among others in Baton Rouge. Many students from these schools may have participated in the JAS. As part of the JAS, members joined educational field trips to sites across Mississippi and Louisiana and, sometimes, excavated portions of these sites as well.

Though I have been successful in interviewing former members and reviewing the archival materials that they have graciously sent me, I would love to know more. I am interested in all aspects of the Junior Archaeological Society, from founding, to operation, to legacy. If you know anything, or know someone who might know something, please send me an email at [ashleylterry@gmail.com](mailto:ashleylterry@gmail.com) or give me a call at (440) 320-9802! Thanks ahead of time and I hope some of the current LAS membership may know of past JAS members and pass along my request for more information.



*The logo for the Junior Archaeological Society (JAS) founded by Ashley Sibley of Baton Rouge. The JAS was active from the late 1950s to the early 1970s.*



Join your colleagues and friends for a special joint 2016 annual meeting of  
 The Mississippi Archaeological Association (MAA) and  
 The Louisiana Archaeological Society (LAS).  
 The Natchez Grand Hotel and the Natchez Convention Center  
 February 19-21, 2016 in Natchez, MS.

This meeting will commemorate three anniversaries important to the history and archaeology of the Lower Mississippi Valley. The year 2016 is the Tricentennial of the construction of Fort Rosalie by the French using Natchez Indian labor near the very location of the meeting! It is also the centennial of the National Park Service (NPS) an organization that recently established a presence at the Natchez National Historical Park. Finally, 2016 also will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Grand Village of the Natchez as a Mississippi State Park.

Papers, posters, and symposia that relate to the archaeology and history of Mississippi, Louisiana, or the Lower Mississippi Valley are hereby invited. Papers focusing on the archaeology of things Natchez, either the people or the place, are especially encouraged. Presentations at the meeting are limited to 20 minutes and places on the program will be on a “**first come-first serve**” basis to accommodate presenters from both organizations. Every attempt will be made to have an equal number of presentations from each organization. There will be a separate exhibit and book room at the meeting where posters can be on display throughout the meeting and publications can be purchased. Silent auction items will also be displayed in this room.

Please send proposed Abstracts of presentations to Dennis Jones at [archaeoman.jones@gmail.com](mailto:archaeoman.jones@gmail.com) by January 15, 2016. **Please limit the Abstract to 150 words.** A laser projector will be available for PowerPoint presentations at the meeting. Please make the program chair aware of any additional media needs.

The proposed general schedule of the meeting follows:

**Friday, Feb 19** – Afternoon paper presentations at the Natchez Convention Center. Reception 6-8 pm at the Historic Natchez Foundation - 108 S Commerce St, three short blocks from the Convention Center.

**Saturday, Feb. 20** – Presentations in morning and afternoon at the Natchez Convention Center. Separate MAA and LAS business meetings. Banquet and keynote address will be at the Natchez Community Center (across the street from the hotel and next to the Convention Center). Keynote speaker will be Mr. Jim Barnett, former Director of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians and author of *The Natchez Indians: A History to 1735* and *Mississippi's American Indians*.

**Sunday, Feb. 21** - Tours of the Natchez National Historical Park, including the Fort Rosalie site (weather permitting), and the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians site and museum.

Call for Papers and Posters  
 Send Abstracts to Dennis Jones, Program Chair  
[archaeoman.jones@gmail.com](mailto:archaeoman.jones@gmail.com).  
 There are 28 time slots for papers.

If you are interested in presenting, send Abstracts as soon as possible.  
 Check LAS and MAA Facebook pages and websites for updates as meeting dates approach

## HOTEL AND MEETING FACILITIES FOR THE LAS/MAA JOINT ANNUAL MEETING

The Natchez Grand Hotel at 111 Broadway Street in Natchez, MS is the newest and nicest hotel in that city. It sits on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River in a historic part of a historic town. The hotel has reserved a block of rooms for this special joint annual meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society (LAS) and the Mississippi Archaeological Association (MAA). Reservations can be made by contacting the hotel at: (601) 446-9994 or at the hotel's website: [www.natchezgrandhotel.com](http://www.natchezgrandhotel.com). Mention that the room is for the LAS/MAA meeting, Feb. 19-21, 2016. Rates are \$129 for a room with a river view and \$119 for a view overlooking downtown Natchez. The conference itself will be on the second floor of the adjacent Natchez Convention Center.

Registration for the meeting will be a very reasonable \$20 for all attendees if you pre-register. After Feb 12, registration will be \$25. The cost of the LAS/MAA banquet on Saturday, Feb. 20, will be \$30. There will be vegetarian options available at the banquet. The keynote address by James F. Barnett, Jr. former director at the Grand Village of the Natchez Mississippi State Park and author on Natchez and Mississippi Indian history will follow the banquet.

Go to the LAS website: [www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org](http://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org) for meeting and banquet registration. Payment will use PayPal. If you prefer to use more traditional methods of registration and payment, please use the form below and mail it to the address indicated. This will be a special meeting for both organizations and everyone is encouraged to attend. We'll see you there!

### LAS/MAA 2016 Annual Meeting Pre-Registration Form February 19-21, 2016 Natchez, Mississippi

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

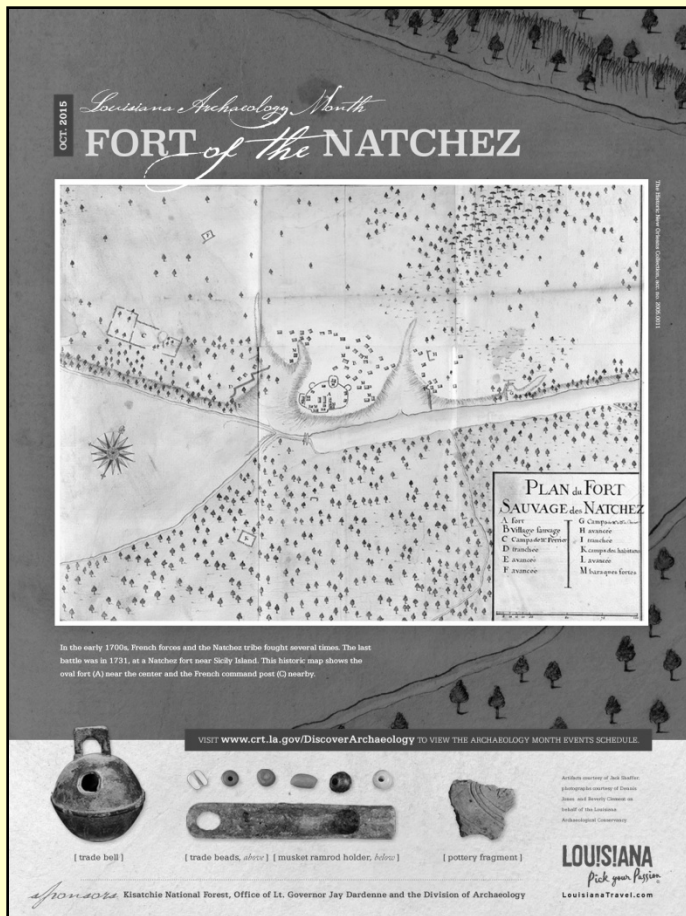
	Qty	Total
<b>Meeting Pre-registration: \$20 per person</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
<b>Banquet: \$30 per person</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
<b>Total Meeting Pre-registration</b>		\$ _____

*Meeting registration after Feb 12, 2016 is \$25 per person. Banquet is limited to 75 guests for LAS, so reserve your seat(s) as soon as possible.*

**Mail pre-registration form to:**

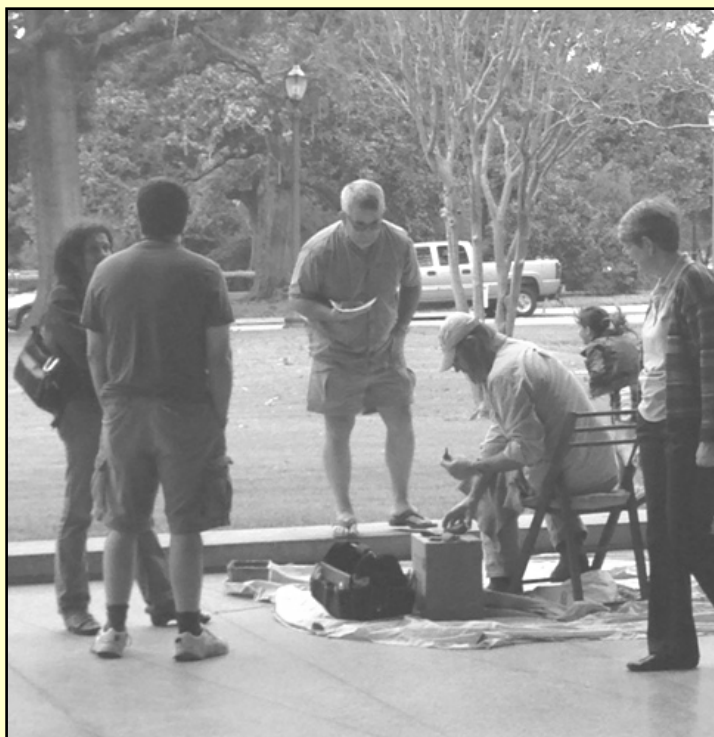
Julie Doucet, LAS Treasurer  
 7784 Castello Rd.  
 Ethel, Louisiana 70730

## REPORT ON LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGY MONTH - 2015



October 2015 was Louisiana Archaeology Month. Events included exhibits, lectures, conferences, field trips, and technology demonstrations. All of this occurred in 21 cities and towns throughout the state, as well as events in Natchez, MS related to Louisiana Archaeology.

A list of all the events is still available online at Louisiana Division of Archaeology's website: [www.crt.state.la.us/archaeology](http://www.crt.state.la.us/archaeology). Plans are already being made for next year's Louisiana Archaeology Month. Contact the Division of Archaeology if you have any ideas for 2016.



*Clockwise from top left: copy of the poster for Louisiana Archaeology Month 2015, Amy Broussard models a T-shirt for the Projet Nouvelle Acadie (New Acadia Project), and visitors at the Archaeology Day event at the Louisiana State Museum in Baton Rouge watch Ray Sibley give a flint knapping demonstration.*



*Tad Britt (right), chief of archaeology and collections at the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training in Natchitoches, uses an infrared camera to video Mike Buskie (front, left) to show him and others how the camera picks up heat signatures. Britt told Buskie to place his hand on his chest then take it off. The infrared camera picked up the heat where Buskie's hand was on his chest. Infrared cameras are used by archeologists to examine and photograph archeological features. Britt was the guest speaker at a program hosted by the Central Louisiana Archaeological Chapter of the Louisiana Archaeology Society for Louisiana Archaeology Month 2016 held in Ball Thursday. Melinda Martinez/The Town Talk*

*Julia Kebanli (right) helps out a budding archaeologist at the kids' activities table during Archaeology Day event held Oct. 3, 2015 at the Louisiana State Museum, Baton Rouge.*

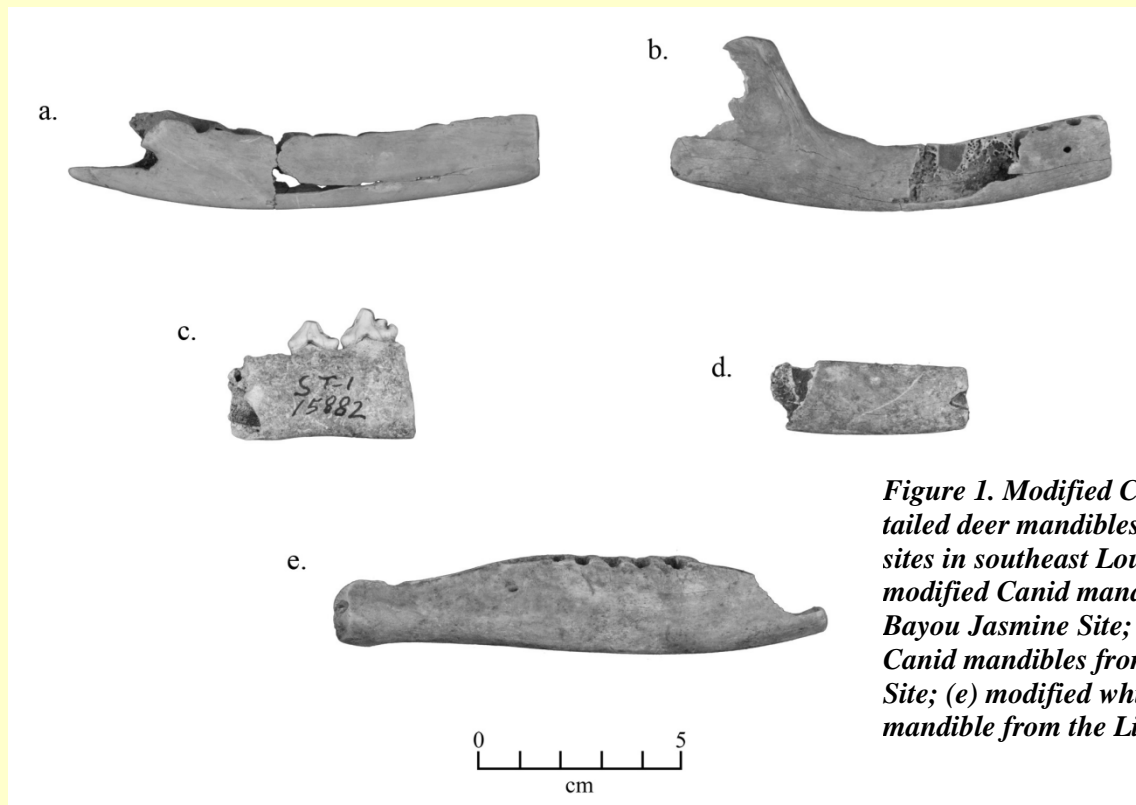


## RESEARCH NOTES

### An Unusual Class of Early Woodland Period Bone Artifacts from Southeast Louisiana

By Nathanael Heller, M.A., RPA

R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc.



**Figure 1. Modified Canid and white-tailed deer mandibles from Tchefuncte sites in southeast Louisiana: (a) (b) modified Canid mandibles from the Bayou Jasmine Site; (c) (d) modified Canid mandibles from the Tchefuncte Site; (e) modified white-tailed deer mandible from the Little Woods sites.**

This brief report examines an unusual class of bone artifacts recovered from Tchefuncte cultural sites in southeast Louisiana. These artifacts of modified mammal mandibles consist of two specimens from the Bayou Jasmine Site (16SJB2), two specimens from the Tchefuncte Site (16ST1), and one from Little Woods sites (16OR1-5, 8-10) (Figure 1). Four of these were modified *Canid* mandibles, representing dogs or wolves (Figure 1 a-d), while the fifth specimen was the mandible of a white-tailed deer (Figure 1 e). On three of the *Canid* mandibles, the teeth had been removed and the tops of the tooth sockets ground flat. Also, the forward portion of the mandible had been removed by snapping along a groove scored around the circumference of the bone, either in the vicinity of the premolars, or between the premolars and the incisors (Figure 1 a-c). The fourth specimen, which preserved two premolars intact, probably represented the end of a mandible that was removed and discarded.

Two of the *Canid* specimens were preserved to the area of the ascending ramus. On one of these specimens, the ramus had been modified by grinding, and two holes were drilled into the top of the ramus, a little behind the socket of the third molar (Figure 1 b). On the

other specimen, most of the ascending ramus had been removed, and its former location had been ground to a point (Figure 1 a). Both of these specimens had been polished heavily on all surfaces. Similarly, the single specimen of a deer mandible had its teeth and ascending ramus removed, was polished all around, and had the forward end of the mandible modified by grinding (Figure 1 e).

One possible function of these modified mandible artifacts is a musical flute. With this interpretation, the player would have blown into the forward end of the mandible, forcing air through the interior of the bone, and out through the tooth sockets and the modified ramus (or in one specimen, through additional holes drilled into the ramus). Fingers placed over the tooth sockets would control the flow of air and produce a pitch. Unfortunately, none of the specimens were sufficiently intact to test whether they could be played in this manner. Recently, two graduate students at Tulane University have expressed interest in trying to replicate these artifacts, and determine whether they indeed could function as flutes. I look forward with interest to seeing the results of their efforts.



## Tchefuncte in Central Louisiana

By James Fogleman, LAS correspondent, Morrow, LA

My interest in Tchefuncte artifacts started at an early age. Over a half century ago, La. 361 between LeBeau and Big Cane in northern St. Landry Parish was paved. A large portion of the Hicks Site (16SL4) was impacted. I was really impressed by the appearance of nearly complete human skeletons with each dozer pass. On Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> in April of 1962, I visited a friend who lived next to the site. I found two large well-made points (Fig 1) and I haven't been able to kick the habit since. Since that 'Lucky Day' I have always had a special place in my heart for these ancient peoples.

The concept of Tchefuncte had part of its origin in this very area. The original report by Ford and Quimby (1945) mentions three mounds east of Rosa, La. This is undoubtedly the Stelly Mounds (16SL1), but the amount of Tchefuncte material there is extremely minute. Ford and Quimby reported 31 Tchefuncte sherds there, but in decades of collecting thousands of artifacts at the site, I found Tchefuncte sherds nearly non-existent and well under 31. I have often wondered if Ford and Quimby had visited the Hicks site just to the north and on the same road, passed the Stelly Mounds, and ended up at the Stelly's Bar and Restaurant. Stelly's good food and cold beer are more readily remembered than a dusty road cut.

In the eastern half of Avoyelles and St. Landry Parishes, Tchefuncte sites are numerous and found in many types of terrain. For example, they occur on crevasse channels of the Teche-Mississippi: Straw Lake 16SL164, Keller Lake (16SL154), Honey Bunny (16AV-NA), and Savage (AV-68). They are also on interior areas of Mississippi Teche Meander Loops: Trader Bill (16SL-NA), Scary Lane (16AV-NA), as well as terrace edges: Hicks (16SL4), BC<sup>2</sup> (16SL-NA), and Meche Wilkes (16SL-18). Finally they are found along small distributary streams such as Bayou Gerimond (16SL-41), Bayou Little Teche (16SL-139), Bayou Petite Prairie (Deep Pot - 16SL126), Big Darbonne Bayou (Holly Mounds - 16SL112). When one considers how much of the area is covered with more recent Red River alluvium, it is likely that many more sites lay buried as was illustrated at the Deep Pot Site. It is over 1 meter below the present land surface and was only exposed during the construction of a drainage ditch.

Tchefuncte sites are inordinately common in east central Louisiana, but they seem to spring from a vacuum. The preceding Poverty Point culture is practically non-existent in the area. Only the Holly Mounds (16SL112) hints at an occupation during Poverty Point times. Tchefuncte may well be the most easily identified culture in Louisiana prehistory. Paleo artifacts are readily identifiable, but single component sites are extremely rare. Tchefuncte, on the other hand, produced the first widespread use of pottery and some sites are covered



*Figure 1: Two large dart points from the Hicks site (16SL4).*

with ceramics. The pottery is very thick, poorly made, and easily identifiable. The lack of clay preparation usually leaves laminae that are obvious to even the most novice observer. (Fig. 2) Tchefuncte pottery has lots of decorative patterns. Archaeologists speculate that the ceramic designs came from the east during the Poverty Point period [Hayes & Weinstein, 2010]. If Tchefuncte did not immediately follow or partially coexist with Poverty Point, where did this storehouse of designs roost until the time of the Tchefuncte? I speculate that Tchefuncte artisans had no predetermined guidelines so their artistic abilities run amok producing an artistic equivalent of the Burgess Shale evolutionary explosion (Fig. 2). Bases often had multiple 'legs' shaped as wedges or teats (Fig. 2). Other ceramics include fragments of tubular pipes and rare biconical Baked Clay Objects. Another aspect of Tchefuncte sherds not usually listed, but important to a country boy is that they skip extremely well across still water. Enough skips to make a parabola were not uncommon. This paper is partial penitence for such past archeological sins.

Their projectile points were generally shoddy and of local chert. However on occasion they made some points of considerable skill. Those illustrated by Hayes and Weinstein [Hayes & Weinstein, 2010] are almost certainly the crème of the crop. Most may represent what we used to call 'Go to Church' points. For example, of the 63 whole or nearly whole points from BC<sup>2</sup>, only a dozen would rate better than poor. Of course if you visit any sportsman's home, you will see 5+ pound bass on the wall while most of his catch would be far smaller.



**Fig. 2:**  
*Laminations in sherd; typical Tchefuncte Designs of zoned punctations and thumbnail punctations, 'wedge' pot base; and 'teat' podal base of vessel. All sherds are from the Savage Site (16AV68).*



**Fig. 3:**  
*Chert cobble celt, unmodified quartz crystal fragment, chipped quartz drill; and worked quartz point. All from Savage site (16AV68).*

*Continued from Page 9*

Typically projectile points from Tchefuncte sites have contracting stems, with a few that have square bases and fewer still with expanding bases. Celts occur and are generally larger than in succeeding cultures (Fig. 3). Bar weights and plummets are widespread with some of exotic materials including 'greenstone' and hematite. (Fogleman 2012 & 2015). Micro tools are also present and appear little changed from nearby Middle Archaic sites. Beads are rare and cruder than those of the Middle Archaic and Poverty Point times.

Exotics are limited but in this area, no group before or after had greater numbers. The points from the above mentioned BC<sup>2</sup> site has 63 projectile points. All but one are local materials. Novaculite appears in small numbers at well under 5% of lithics. Quartz crystals are widespread and occur as unmodified, chipped, and polished crystals (Fig. 3). The BC<sup>2</sup> site yielded nearly a dozen crystals, including projectile points and drills. One of the beads from the Savage site is some type of igneous rock. Other types of exotic materials occur in even smaller quantities.

Judging by the size of sites and the number of sites, Tchefuncte and Coles Creek represent the most widespread and prolific prehistoric occupations. In his report on the area just to the south (Gibson 1990), Gibson notes Tchefuncte sites and Plaquemine sites are inordinately common. The same situation occurs here with the only bone of contention being whether the sites are Coles Creek/Plaquemine rather than pure Plaquemine. Site sizes range from a tenth of a hectare to several hectares like the Savage Site. While the region is omitted from the map of Tchefuncte occupations (Hays & Weinstein 2010:106), a future map would need to add the 'Savage Phase'.

Several questions come to mind concerning Tchefuncte culture in east central Louisiana. For example, were the sites occupied by many people for a short time, or for a very long time by fewer people? Another is why do populations ebb and flow over time. Why was the floodplain the place to be during Tchefuncte and Coles Creek/Plaquemine times, but much less so for other cultures? Hydraulics seems a likely possibility. During the twentieth century, settlement patterns changed greatly after the West Atchafalaya Guide Levees were built. It is likely that the answers to these questions lie in the numerous sites of St. Landry and Avoyelles Parishes

***Two tubular ceramic pipes recovered from the Tchefuncte site (16ST1) on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. It is important to learn if ritual smoking occurred at other Tchefuncte sites in Louisiana. Photo from [www.crt.state.la.us/dataprojects/archaeology/tchefuncte/](http://www.crt.state.la.us/dataprojects/archaeology/tchefuncte/)***

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Credit: R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates

## Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program Update

By Diana M. Greenlee, Poverty Point Station Archaeologist

Wind thrown trees and their associated rootballs have long been a problem at the Poverty Point World Heritage Site (WHS). They disturb archaeological deposits and present opportunities for further damage, either through the activities of burrowing animals or surface water runoff. Stripping the soil and artifacts from the rootballs, removing the tree remains, and refilling the roothole is one strategy for stabilizing the impacted area. Over the years, many volunteers have contributed their time and energy to help with this process at Poverty Point. Recently, work was completed on one especially large rootball that was dislodged by a windstorm in 2011 (Figures 1-4). The multi-year project to clear the root system and refill the hole was aided by several individuals, student interns, members of UPPA (Friends of Poverty Point), and personnel with the Office of State Parks.

The artifacts recovered from the soil of the rootball were a fairly typical assemblage for Poverty Point: many hundreds of fired earth fragments (most probably pieces of Poverty Point Objects [PPOs]); whole PPOs; chert biface fragments; microliths; chert chipping debris; steatite; sandstone; hematite plummet fragments; and a few pottery sherds. However, one unique ceramic artifact (Figure 5) was recovered from this rootball. It is 17-20 mm thick, with a maximum length of 67 mm and a maximum width of 55 mm. There is a well-defined depression in the slightly concave surface on one side (Figure 5, left) and it is roughly flat on the other (Figure 5, right). The flat surface and the top of the “head” contain several short linear impressions; otherwise there are no decorative elements. Because of its relative flatness, the object could be a tablet or palette, although those artifacts are typically made of stone at Poverty Point. Its outline is similar to a clay figurine from the Norman site (Webb, Ford and Gagliano 1970; Figure 24 h,h’), although this one has no apparent anatomical features. If it is a figurine, one “leg” appears to have been broken off. To my knowledge, no similar artifacts have been documented at Poverty Point WHS.

Webb, Clarence H., James A. Ford, and Sherwood M. Gagliano, with collaboration of Roger T. Saucier 1970 *Poverty Point Culture and the American Formative*. Unpublished manuscript on file, Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program, Epps, LA.



**Figure 1. Alisha Wright contemplating treefall 2010-2011 “E,” located on Ridge 4 North at Poverty Point WHS.**



**Figure 2. Rain delay from clearing dirt from the rootball. Left to right: Diana Greenlee, Alisha Wright, Jylene Livengood, and Pam Melder.**



*Figure 3. Johnny Guy and the volunteer crew from UPPA (Friends of Poverty Point) filling the hole following removal of the rootball and trunk. Photo courtesy of UPPA.*



*Figure 4. Same location, following stabilization*



*Figure 5. Unusual ceramic artifact from treefall 2010-2011 “E.” Wood cube scale is 1 × 1 cm. Photos courtesy of Jenny Ellerbe.*

## Advocates for Poverty Point (APP) Plans for 2016

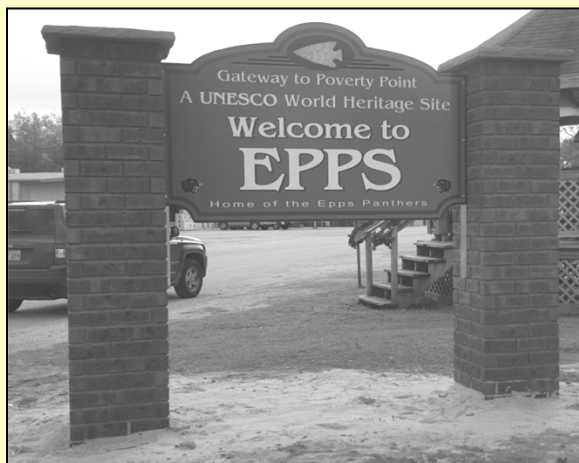
By Robert Connally, APP President

As the newly installed President of the Advocates for Poverty Point (APP) I am excited to be once again actively promoting the archaeological site where I was first employed after completing my graduate studies in 1996. The excellent stewardship provided by the Office of State Parks and the Division of Archaeology over the years, culminating in the recent World Heritage Site designation, sets the stage for many opportunities for the APP. Under the able leadership of Gary Stringer and the rest of the Executive Board over the past two years, a firm organizational foundation and an initial set of accomplishments were achieved by APP. Such outstanding leadership allows us to immediately begin building on those successes.

In alignment with APP's goals of increasing public awareness, assisting with educational and outreach activities, serving as an advocate with public officials, and raising funds for the Poverty Point World Heritage Site, here are some of the activities being planned for the next year:

- On April 23, we will host a special Advocates for Poverty Point Members Day that will feature a special behind the scenes tour, presentations by Station Archaeologist Diana Greenlee on current and future research plans and Site Manager Stephanie Perrault on special events and interpretive plans for the site, and of course a fine Northeast Louisiana meal. APP members will also have the opportunity to work with Dr. Greenlee in analyzing the steatite cache recovered by Clarence Webb in the 1940s.
- Diana and Stephanie report that Poverty Point has many volunteer opportunities that include helping to process artifacts, maintaining trails, staffing the museum, serving as tour guides, and helping to staff special events. APP members will certainly want to take advantage of these opportunities.
- APP is pleased to have provided the funds for new signs in Epps that prominently highlight the Poverty Point site. We are grateful to Dr. R. Guthrie Jarrell whose generous donation to APP was specifically earmarked to support this project. The signage leading to Poverty Point is now truly fitting for the World Heritage status.
- In the coming months we will expand APP's online presence, principally through our website. We want the APP website, [www:advocatesforpoverty.org](http://www.advocatesforpoverty.org), to be a place with a diversity of engaging content about the Poverty Point site.
- We also intend to launch an e-newsletter in 2016 to keep everyone up-to-date on activities at Poverty Point.
- An educational activity that we discussed launching this coming spring is an oral history project that collects information from the 1950s excavations up to the present day. We want to highlight both the avocational and professional contributions that proved instrumental to the World Heritage Site designation. We are fortunate that Dr. Jon Gibson is also very excited about this project and will be our first interviewee! Related, see the November 2015 issue of the SAA's Archaeological Record ([www.saa.org](http://www.saa.org)) for an article on the role of Clarence Webb and Carl Alexander in Poverty Point research.

Are our plans for the APP too ambitious? We think not. We know that LAS members, family, and friends will want to continue playing a key role in the activities of this first and only prehistoric UNESCO World Heritage site in the Southeast United States. With your help we can assure visitors of a World Class Experience at our World Heritage Site. If you are interested in participating in any of the activities we have planned for the coming year, drop me a note at [rconnolly@memphis.edu](mailto:rconnolly@memphis.edu) for more information about volunteer opportunities. If you are not already a member of the Advocates for Poverty Point we invite you to join us today. Drop me a note for more information on joining.



**New  
signs in  
Epps,  
LA**



## LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE MEDIA

### UL-Lafayette researchers update public on efforts to trace first in Louisiana

By Zach Carline-Special to the Baton Rouge Advocate, Nov. 14, 2015

LOREAUVILLE — When the British expelled them from Nova Scotia, the first Acadian settlers made their new home somewhere in present-day Iberia Parish, near the village of Loreauville. The specific location of the 1765 campsite, however, is unknown.

More specifics about those first Acadians are what researchers from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette hope to uncover with the New Acadia Project, which started in 2013.

The project's latest public meeting took place Saturday afternoon in the Loreauville High School gymnasium, where researchers, headed by Mark Rees, of the UL-Lafayette archaeology department, explained the project's goals and fielded questions.

Alan Broussard, head of the New Acadia Project steering committee, said while the records that are available are limited, each one is helpful in their search.

Rees, a descendent of Beausoleil Broussard, the leader of the first Acadian settlers, said based on church documents from the time period, researchers know there were named settlements in multiple locations where 35 of the first settlers were buried in the first year after their arrival. "We know one thing's for certain, and that is, we don't know where New Acadia is," Rees said.

But the team has marked off a large area south of Lake Fausse Pointe as potential sites of burials of the original settlers or encampments, and most of the research being done has led Rees to remain optimistic they will find the spot. As Loreauville Mayor Brad Clifton put it, "We know they were here" and it's just a matter of finding out where.

Rees said much of the research is archaeological digs, which have led them to eliminate certain sites as the campsites or burial sites, narrowing the search area.

All of the research being conducted by the team is occurring on private land, so Rees used the public meeting to hear input from the community and the landowners about how they felt the project was going.

The feedback from the audience was overwhelmingly positive. Russ Erikson, of Loreauville, whose land was used as a dig site by the archeologists, said the team's members have conducted themselves with great professionalism and he was excited to have them tracing the origins of the Acadians. "They were quite likely our ancestors," Erikson said.

Rees called on the crowd to spread word of the project and come forward with any information they may have.

A possible oral history, spread down through generations could be of use, as well as any information the locals found through genealogical research could be of use to the team, Rees said. "Digging in the archives is just as important as digging in the ground," he said.

The team has four sites it hopes to examine through the coming winter and they are hoping to find a good lead during that time. Funding for the project extends through May 2016, but Rees is trying to obtain grants to extend the project past that date.

The project has both local government and private sponsors. As with most research, Rees said, finding money and sponsors is always a challenge. He said the team could have made much more progress if it had greater financial resources. Clifton said it is an exciting time right now for Loreauville. In addition to the research, there is already a proposal for an Acadian Odyssey Monument Park for the village.

The most important thing for Clifton isn't for his community to hold the bragging rights as the original Acadian settlement, but rather to keep the history of the Acadians alive. There are plenty of historical questions to be answered through this research, Rees said. Important issues such as answering the question, "Did they have a crawfish boil on their first night?" he said jokingly.

*Next Page*



***Advocate Photo by BRAD KEMP - Loreauville resident Kenneth Dugas, left, talks to Mark Rees, PhD, right, principal investigator of the New Acadia Project, Director of the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab, and Professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, after a public meeting on excavations for the New Acadia Project Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015 at Loreauville High School in Loreauville, La. UL researchers are looking for artifacts related to the first Acadian settlers in the area.***



***Very small sample of photos from the Facebook page for Projet Nouvelle-Acadie/New Acadia Project. Check out their progress as the project continues into 2016.***



**WWII vehicles, planes may be in containers buried under Kisatchie National Forest**

By George Morris, Baton Rouge Advocate, November 7, 2015

A conversation 34 years ago convinced Morton Hurston Jr. there is buried treasure in Central Louisiana, and he thinks he's found it. One thing stands in the way of him finding out for sure: government permission.

Under the yellow clay soil of the Kisatchie National Forest, Hurston said he believes, is all manner of World War II equipment — tanks, half-track vehicles, trucks, jeeps and even P-40 fighter planes packed in their original shipping crates. Hurston, of Baton Rouge, calls this a virtual gold mine of a time capsule, a potential source of exhibits for museums and other military displays. The P-40s, packed in corrosion preventative, might be in mint condition.

“There are only six P-40s flying in the world,” he said. “This could be a very significant historic site.” Hurston believes the equipment was buried in 1943 at Camp Claiborne, an Army facility north of Forest Hill in Rapides Parish used during World War II, mostly for basic training and artillery practice. Camp Claiborne closed in 1948 and, except for signs on La. 112, little of it remains today.

In 1981, Hurston, an Army veteran of the Vietnam War and then an East Baton Rouge sheriff's reserve deputy, met Jackie Peters, then a full-time deputy. Peters told him that his brother's father-in-law, Sam Rathburn, of Baker, had described how he was a heavy equipment operator who helped dig three long trenches. A railroad spur was built, and the equipment was brought to the site, driven into the trenches, then covered with the soil, forming three berms.

Why? Neither Hurston nor Peters, who also has tried to investigate the site, has found any paperwork acknowledging the equipment burial. Peters said he thinks the equipment, which was no longer state-of-the-art, had been sold to China, but it couldn't be delivered because Japanese forces had cut off land access to that country. So, it was buried to prevent sabotage and, it seems, forgotten. But not by Peters or Hurston.

When Peters was in the Navy Reserves in the 1980s, he knew men in an antisubmarine squadron who had an aerial magnetometer. He asked them if they could explore the area.

“They flew over and did a magnetometer sweep,” Peters said. “They said there was so much junk down there, ‘we couldn't tell what was down there. It just blew us off the screen.’” Peters also enlisted the help of helicopter pilot Reggie Fontenot, who approached Forest Service officials in Louisiana roughly 10 years ago about conducting an exploratory dig.

“They flatly said no, no way,” Fontenot said. “These are people that I knew and worked with, and they said they weren't even going to entertain the thought of a request on it. ... They said they didn't see it as in the interest of the federal government.” Unbeknownst to Peters, Hurston also has visited the site several times, and, in the past two years, he intensified his efforts. Remembering what Peters had told him about the site's location, Hurston found three long, elevated areas on a topographical map and discovered berms, or small hills, overgrown with pine trees and bushes.

In 2014, Hurston spoke to U.S. Forest Service archeologist Velicia Bergstrom, who said she had never heard of such a site. Hurston hired a Houston firm, Ground Penetrating Radar Systems, to see if the berms covered anything unusual. Because he had to clear brush for the electromagnetic imaging equipment to work, there was time to survey only 100 feet of one berm. The equipment detected five objects at least the size of an automobile, Hurston said. Surveys of the ground adjacent to the berm turned up nothing.

So, Hurston said, something is definitely down there. “We think that many items could be restorable because the compacted clay, according to my geologist friends and according to the ... archaeologists, compacted clay forms like an impermeable membrane,” he said. “It can encase like concrete to prevent air and water intrusion that causes oxidation. Specifically, we believe that if, in fact, those aircraft are there ... that they can be in good condition for restoration.”

Hurston wants to do a more detailed electromagnetic survey and, if that shows promise, do an exploratory dig to determine exactly what is buried. To break ground, he needs Forest Service permission. That's where things have stalled.

*Continued from previous page*

He has gone up the Forest Service hierarchy through to Michael Kaczor, federal preservation officer in Washington, D.C., who referred him to Jim Caldwell, public affairs officer for Kisatchie National Forest. They spoke last week, and Caldwell directed him to District Ranger Lisa Lewis.

“I think it’s very interesting what might be out there,” Caldwell said. “The more knowledge we can gather, the better. If there’s really something out there, wouldn’t it be something if we had a hand in getting it to a museum so everybody could see it?”

That’s what Hurston wants. “That is our (the public’s) stuff,” he said. “The Forest Service does not own that. They manage the surface area of the forest. That’s their job: to keep that managed. They don’t own that stuff.”



***Advocate file photo by Bryan Tuck - Only six WWII era P-40 fighter planes like this one are still flying today. But Baton Rougean Morton Hurstons Jr. believes a trove of the planes and other WWII equipment is buried in Kisatchie National Forest.***



***Advocate staff photo by George Morris- Morton Hurston Jr., right, describes to, from left, Charles Mqyeux, Gordon Hutchinson, and Larry Rivet how military equipment may be buried in Kisatchie National Forest in the berm on which they are standing.***

## Coastal erosion is washing away our archaeological footprint

By Brian Ostahowski, Contributing Writer

New Orleans Times-Picayune, November 20, 2015



*Forrest Trvirca III walks along Port Fourchon Beach as he searches for artifacts from Prehistoric American Indian settlements in Caminada Headland, La., June 28, 2011. The sites were discovered in 2010 during the intense cleanup of the headland's beaches after the BP oil spill. Since then, archeologists have found human and animal bones, fragments of pottery, primitive weapons and other items scattered over the beaches here. Archaeologists say the sites date to at least 700 A.D., well before European contact in the 1500s. (Gerald Herbert, The Associated Press)*

Abandoned settlements, buried villages, sagging forts and submerged outposts, all along the sinking Louisiana coast. Today the remnants of these places and the remains generated from the peoples that occupied them appear as artifact scatters along a marsh island shoreline, decaying wood in a back-bay or bayou and eroding shell mounds along modern-cut canals. They together represent the archaeological record of coastal Louisiana. The state's coastal land loss is an incredibly complex issue that poses serious threats for both current and future coastal communities. But connected with this issue is a loss in another respect, one related to our physical history, the known and yet discovered.

Dozens of terrestrial archaeological sites that were recorded by both professional and academic archaeologists, a lot of which were identified within the past 30 years, are today fully-submerged offshore, sometimes by several hundred feet or more. As our coastline is lost through the combined processes of erosion and subsidence, archaeological sites that were once situated on land erode-away with it and end up submerged, damaged or destroyed fully. It's hard to measure the actual rates of archaeological site loss because, after all, we can measure only the loss of sites we know about. However, what can be said is that coastal parishes that have experienced dramatic land loss, like Plaquemines, St. Bernard and Jefferson, have also experienced the highest number of terrestrial site loss.

So what exactly happens to a sinking archaeological site?

As waves crash against archaeological sites, artifacts and what are called features, such as cooking hearths or refuse piles, are kicked out of their primary contexts (that is, the soils they were originally deposited onto way-back-when). They are displaced along the bayous and bay floors. Sometimes these artifacts are carried onto the nearest shoreline, but without knowing the origins of where artifacts came from or what they were associated with, their potential insight into the past is reduced greatly, if not totally. This insight is reduced because the locations of artifacts and features relative to each other are paramount to archaeology; it informs archaeologists about the historic or prehistoric contexts these remains were used and discarded in. For example, a historic oyster camp site could be identified by locating large piles of oyster shells associated with historic artifacts (like ceramics and metal), but if these shells and artifacts were spread over a hundred miles of shoreline, do you think you'd be able to still identify the site? Or would the artifacts even retain the same kinds of interpretive potential for understanding the past? Probably not. Unfortunately, this example is disturbingly apt for what's happening today to Louisiana's coastal archaeology.

Though of course erosion will happen. It is, after all, a natural process and a crucial ingredient of the archaeological record. It's often even a good way to discover buried archaeological sites in the first place, especially for regions with a lot of sand like the Southwest. But Louisiana's land loss situation plays

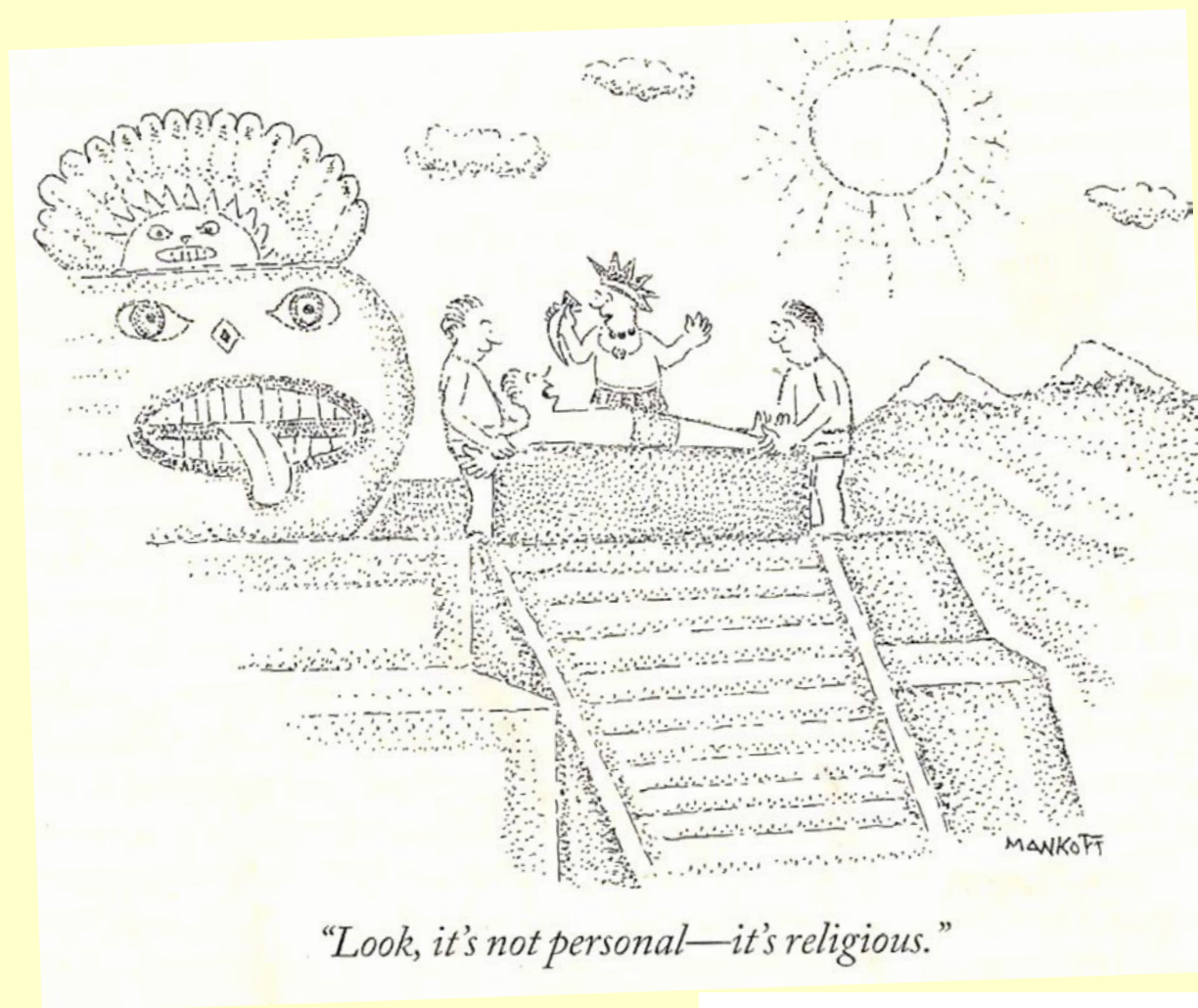
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differently with our archaeology because it's becoming clearer that what we risk losing outweighs what may be revealed. What is increasingly revealed is a type of site where artifacts are washed up on our shorelines, intermixed from now-submerged archaeological sites, from different time periods and different cultures.

There is no way to measure what we've already lost or to undo what's already been done: archaeology (and history) is a non-renewable resource. However, fortunately, there are many dedicated cultural resource management professionals, academics, local community members and avocational groups that have been, for many years, working to record, protect and monitor these resources and the adverse effects of land loss to them. And as we move forward with the plans to restore Louisiana's coast, don't forget that the future of our coastal archaeological record is in our hands, too.

Archaeology is often the only evidence of past human behavior, particularly for peoples without a written record, either because they pre-dated written language or didn't have access to it. And archaeology has, on more than a few occasions, demonstrated that what we learned in our history books was either skewed, distorted or just plain wrong. What archaeology reveals, truly, is not about a history that's over with, one that we're divorced from, but about real potentialities within our past and within ourselves. But this can only be understood within its context, one that is worth considering when you think about coastal land loss.



-cartoon from *New Yorker* magazine

## Digging for old: Civil War artifacts sought at Algiers Point

By Jed Lipinski, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune, December 03, 2015

Nine years ago, a man in camouflage attire began digging holes in a vacant lot near the Algiers Point riverfront. He usually appeared at night, alarming the neighbors. Some thought he was a homeless person searching for copper wire to sell. Others called the police, fearing he might be burying bodies.

As it turned out, this shadowy figure was Shane Mears, a New Orleans native and Algiers Point resident who calls himself an "archaeological historian." Mears works as a waiter and bartender in the French Quarter, but his primary occupation, judging from the hours he puts in, is hunting Civil War artifacts. His trophies so far include bullets, buttons and belt buckles presumably discarded by Confederate and Union soldiers more than 150 years ago.

"If I don't see Shane's light out there at night, I start to think something's wrong," said Cathy Smith, whose house sits across the street from Mears' digging site. "He's become a fixture of the neighborhood."

A brawny and excitable 47-year-old, Mears estimates that he has dug more than 80 pits in a grassy lot at the intersection of Slidell Street and Brooklyn Avenue, half a block from the Mississippi River levee. Most of those pits were former privies, which 19<sup>th</sup> century Americans also used as trash receptacles. But as Mears discovered, these privies contain a trove of Civil War memorabilia.

"I'm constantly finding Union and Confederate stuff in the same holes," Mears said on a recent afternoon, standing beside a newly excavated privy. The evidence, he said, suggests that a Confederate unit camped on the grounds prior to the occupation of New Orleans in 1862, after which Union soldiers moved in.

According to The Historic New Orleans Collection, Confederate and Union armies were stationed in Algiers during the early years of the war, though the exact locations of the camps are unknown. Lawrence Powell, an emeritus professor of history at Tulane University, said Mears could very well have uncovered an important archaeological site.

**Despite his interest in the field, Mears has no training in archaeology.** [Emphasis added- editor] Nor is he trying to make money in antiquities; he said he trades and gives away most of his finds. "I just love the time period," he said. "By doing this, I feel like you become part of the past."

Raised in Metairie and Gentilly, Mears spent a good part of his boyhood fishing and trapping animals. He sometimes took a metal detector with him, using it to search for bullets and

cannonballs at Port Hudson and other Civil War battlegrounds

He put his hobbies aside after college, and worked as a car salesman in Grand Isle and Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., for 14 years. "I was making great money," he said.

But his job left little time for outdoor adventures. After Hurricane Katrina, Mears moved to Algiers Point and found work in restaurants owned by his uncle, the restaurateur A.J. "Poppy" Tusa. In his off hours, he consulted Civil War historians and collectors such as Charlie Cook, who has years of experience digging antique bottles out of privies across Louisiana.

"Shane called me one morning and said he was standing inside a hole," said Cook, whose amateur guide to digging outhouses Mears had read online. "He wasn't sure whether he should dig any deeper, so I gave him some advice. I think that started it all."

Mears said he chose his current site on Brooklyn Avenue because of its proximity to the river, an old railroad line and the former Marine Hospital, all of which, he concluded, made an ideal spot for a Civil War encampment. The property now belongs to Blaine Kern Sr., owner of Mardi Gras World. Mears said Kern allows him to dig on the land. Reached through a spokesman, Kern acknowledged that he is "aware" of Mears' activities.

**Mears' excavation process bears little resemblance to the careful and meticulous approach of a professional archaeologist.** [Emphasis added- editor] To locate a privy, he plunges a 4-foot spring steel probe into the ground. A crunching sound

*Next page*



*Shane Mears holds a brass belt buckle, Mears found the buckle and other artifacts while digging out privies in Algiers Point. Ted Jackson, NOLA.com / The Times-Picayune.*



*Shane Mears standing by his pit in Algiers Point. Ted Jackson, NOLA.com / The Times-Picayune*

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indicates that he has hit glass, pottery or oyster shells, all promising signs. "New Orleans didn't have trash collection in the mid-1800s," Mears said, "so people threw trash they couldn't burn into privies." When confident that he's in the right spot, he begins digging with a shovel, reaching depths of up to 15 feet. If bailing buckets of mud by hand proves too difficult, he drags a rusted metal hog trap over the hole and rigs up a makeshift pulley system.

The work is dirty and exhausting, especially in the mid-afternoon heat. As a practical measure, Mears began digging at night under a drop light. Residents didn't know what to think. "I'd see them watching me through the window curtains," Mears said. Police routinely asked what he was up to. But over time, he said, people concluded he was harmless and left him alone.

Residents have since come to embrace Mears as a friendly neighborhood curiosity. One homeowner across the street lets him plug his extension cords into an outlet on the porch. Smith, another neighbor, lets him store his tools under her house.

"I've got three crates in my attic full of buttons and bottles and other things he's found," she said during a recent visit to the site. Nearby, Mears waved a metal detector over a fresh pile of dirt. "I'm thrilled he's found so many artifacts. It makes us culturally richer."

Many of the things Mears uncovers -- scraps of clothing, chicken bones, shattered chamber pots -- hold little or no value, but he said some are worth as much as \$4,000. Taken together, they offer a window into mid-19<sup>th</sup> century life in New Orleans. Scattered throughout Mears' apartment are tin tobacco cases, painted clay marbles, Confederate belt buckles, brass buttons from a

Union frock coat and blue bottles embossed with the words Pablo and Co., a soda and mineral water company that once existed on Royal Street.

This was a good find," he said, holding up a small, partially eroded china doll. Known as a Frozen Charlotte, the doll was likely a century-old precursor to the king cake baby. "It came straight out of a privy."

Digging holes in Algiers Point is not Mears' only outdoor pursuit. On YouTube, he has posted dozens of videos of himself under the name Cajun Swamp Whisperer engaging with Louisiana wildlife. He adopts a Cajun accent and performs various feats of daring, such as wrestling a wild boar to the ground and yanking a beaver out of its dam by the tail.

A few years ago, a production company saw the videos and cast Mears in a reality show called "Bayou Brothers." Mears, playing the owner of a fictional animal rescue business, starred opposite the Playboy Playmate and professional wrestler Taryn Terrell. A 15-minute pilot episode for television appeared on the CMT Channel in 2013, but the project soon dissolved.

His eccentric YouTube presence notwithstanding, Mears said he harbors no dreams of reality TV stardom. He is content to keep digging for relics that have eluded him, like a cathedral pickle jar or items belonging to the Corps D'Afrique, the famed free-black regiment that fought beside the Union army and is believed to have camped in Algiers.

Digging alone at night by the Mississippi River offers its own solace. Sometimes, after scooping a 150-year-old boot sole out of the ground, he looks up to see a glittering cruise ship pull into the Port of New Orleans. "I just love it when the past and present merge like that," he said.

**Relics must be handled properly to preserve history: A letter to the editor 12/9/2015**

As someone who specializes in the historical archaeology of New Orleans, I have concerns about the story "Digging for old: Civil War artifacts sought at Algiers Point" and the false impressions that it may give to your readers. The sort of thing that Shane Mears is doing is selfish and reckless, destroying an irreplaceable part of this city's heritage without documenting it for posterity. It may be technically legal, but that does not mean that it is responsible or ethical. He is taking something that is priceless, not only from the property owner — apparently with his consent — but also from the city and the nation. As an archaeologist, I can't stop what he does, but I expect responsible media coverage to acknowledge the objections that professionals have with this type of work. Allowing Mr. Mears to get away with calling himself an "archaeological historian," without explaining the difference between what he does and what we do is extremely short-sighted.

Archaeological remains at sites like this are a valuable part of our heritage, but they are a finite resource with very few legal protections. Therefore we count on individuals to help us catalog and conserve sites on private property, keeping them intact for future generations if they are not in danger of being destroyed. Unfortunately, the sort of activity in which Mr. Mears is engaged is a major source of destruction of these sites. Actual archaeologists don't keep artifacts from the sites they excavate. We document items as we find them, clean and catalog them, make our findings available to the public, and either return them to the property owner or curate them with a qualified archive. Their context is an essential part of their story, and once it is lost, we lose an integral piece of the past.

There are a number of great resources for archaeology in the state, among them Louisiana's own Division of Archaeology (part of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism), a local chapter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society, and professionals working at area universities and for local cultural resource management firms. Individuals with any of these groups and organizations are happy to help the public deal with archaeological resources in a responsible manner.

As the city approaches its tricentennial, more attention than ever will be focused on its history. The activities described in this article are not making us culturally richer; they are satisfying one person's vanity and curiosity in service to a hobby. My problem is not simply with Mr. Mears' hobby itself. Rather, my problem is with the unreflective validation that it is offered to it in coverage like this.

**D. Ryan Gray, RPA (Register of Professional Archaeologists)  
Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of New Orleans**

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**Archaeological sites are a non-renewable resource: A letter to the editor, 12/16/2016**

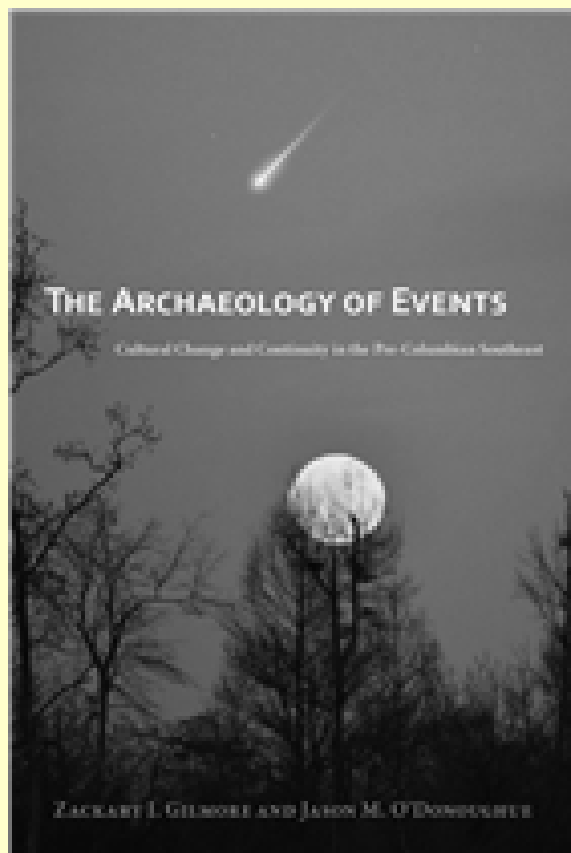
While I appreciate enthusiasm for history and public interest in archaeology, I am concerned about an ongoing excavation in Algiers Point that, based on the NOLA.com article, does not seem to comply with professional standards and codes of ethics in contemporary archaeology. Excavation is an important activity, and we can learn a great deal about the past through digging sites and analyzing archaeological finds, but excavation effectively dismantles archaeological sites.

For archaeologists, then, the most important aspects of excavation are, first, attempting to understand the deposits that are present at sites and documenting the contexts where artifacts are found. Without that information, vital clues about the significance of artifacts are lost. As exciting as it is to find artifacts while digging in the ground and sifting the dirt, documenting excavations is essential, so that the results of archaeological investigations can be made available to professionals and the public alike. It is generally the case that it takes longer to figure out what we have found than it does to dig it up from the ground, but archaeological sites and artifacts deserve that kind of focused and thorough investigation, and archaeological finds deserve careful curation.

It does seem that the site has potential to shed important light on Civil War history in New Orleans, and it probably deserves formal archaeological investigation and protection. There is a community of professional archaeologists in Louisiana that could potentially contribute to the study of sites like this one and many others — including archaeologists affiliated with government agencies, universities and museums, and cultural resource management firms. As a community, we should support study and stewardship of historic and archaeological sites as well as programs in archaeology and historic preservation. It is important to discover what we can about the past, while also preserving it for the future, and making it accessible to everybody. Archaeological sites are nonrenewable cultural resources, and they are part of our shared heritage.

**Chris Rodning  
Associate Professor of Anthropology, Tulane University**

## PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST TO LAS MEMBERS



Traditional accounts of pre-Columbian societies often portray them as “cold” and unchanging for centuries or millennia. Events-based analyses have opened up archaeological discourse to the more nuanced and flexible idea of context-specific, rapidly transpiring, and broadly consequential historical “events” as catalysts of cultural change.

*The Archaeology of Events*, edited by Zackary I. Gilmore and Jason M. O'Donoghue, considers a variety of perspectives on the nature and scale of events and their role in historical change. These perspectives are applied to a broad range of archeological contexts stretching across the Southeast and spanning more than 7,000 years of the region's pre-Columbian history. New data suggest that several of this region's most pivotal historical developments, such as the founding of Cahokia, the transformation of Moundville from urban center to vacated necropolis, and the construction of Poverty Point's Mound A, were not protracted incremental processes, but rather watershed moments that significantly altered the long-term trajectories of indigenous Southeastern societies.

*The Archaeology of Events* is the first volume to explore the archaeological record of events in the Southeastern United States, the methodologies that archaeologists bring to bear on this kind of research, and considerations of the event as an important theoretical concept.

### **The Archaeology of Events: Cultural Change and Continuity in the Pre-Columbian Southeast**

Edited by Zackary I. Gilmore and

Jason M. O'Donoghue. University of Alabama Press

<http://www.uapress.ua.edu>

### **Mississippi's American Indians**

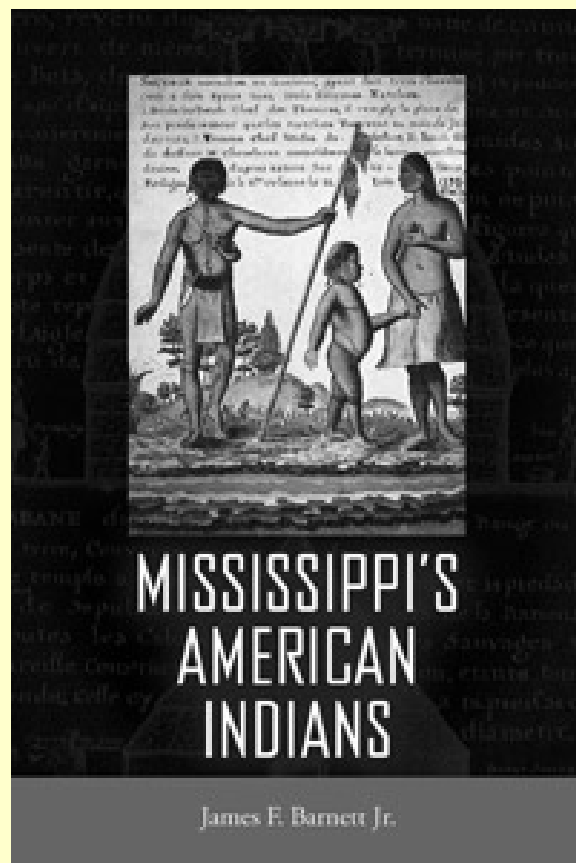
By James F. Barnett Jr.

University Press of Mississippi

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, over twenty different American Indian tribal groups inhabited the lands that became Mississippi. Today, the state is home to only one, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

In *Mississippi's American Indians*, author James F. Barnett Jr. explores the historical forces and processes that led to this sweeping change.

James F. Barnett Jr., Natchez, Mississippi, is retired director of the division of historic properties at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in Natchez. He is the author of *The Natchez Indians: A History to 1735*, also published by University Press of Mississippi.





CHERYL CLAASSEN

## Beliefs and Rituals in Archaic Eastern North America

AN INTERPRETIVE GUIDE



### ***Beliefs and Rituals in Archaic Eastern North America: An Interpretive Guide***, by Cheryl Claassen.

University of Alabama Press, [www.uapress.ua.edu/](http://www.uapress.ua.edu/)

This book describes, illustrates, and offers nondogmatic interpretations of rituals and beliefs in Archaic America. In compiling a wealth of detailed entries, author Cheryl Claassen has created both an exhaustive reference as well as an opening into new archaeological taxonomies, connections, and understandings of Native American culture.

Richly annotated and cross-referenced for ease of use, *Beliefs and Rituals in Archaic Eastern North America* will benefit scholars and students of archaeology and Native American culture. Claassen's overview of the archaeological record should encourage the development of original archaeological and historical connections and patterns. Such an approach, Claassen suggests, may reveal patterns of influence extending from early eastern Americans to the Aztec and Maya.

**Cheryl Claassen** is a professor of anthropology at Appalachian State University, the author of *Feasting with Shellfish in the Southern Ohio Valley: Archaic Sacred Sites and Rituals*, and coeditor of *Women in Prehistory: North America and Mesoamerica*.

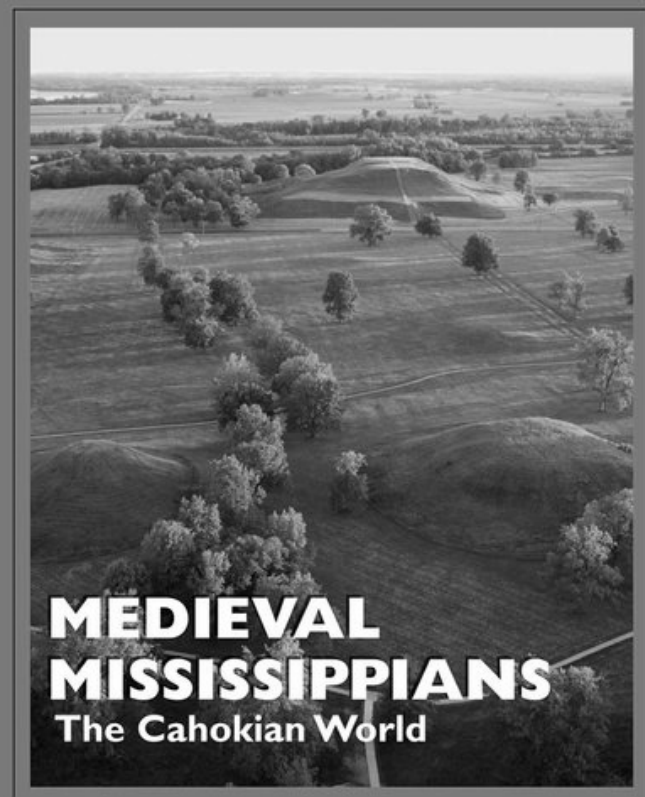
### **Medieval Mississippians**

Edited by Timothy R. Pauketat and  
Susan M. Alt

**2015.** 168 pp., color plates, figures, maps,  
suggested reading, index, 8.5 x 11

*Medieval Mississippians*, the eighth volume in the award-winning Popular Archaeology Series, introduces a key historical period in pre-Columbian eastern North America—the “Mississippian” era—via a series of colorful chapters on places, practices, and peoples written from Native American and non-Native perspectives on the past. The volume lays out the basic contours of the early centuries of this era (AD 1000–1300) in the Mississippian heartland, making connections to later centuries and contemporary peoples. Cahokia the place and Cahokian social history undergird the book, but Mississippian material culture, landscapes, and descendants are highlighted, presenting a balanced view of the Mississippian world.

SAR (School for Advanced Research) Press:  
[www.sarweb.org/](http://www.sarweb.org/)



Edited by Timothy R. Pauketat and Susan M. Alt

## MEETINGS, FIELDWORK, EXHIBITS, WEBSITES, ETC.



**Joint Annual Meeting February 19-21, 2016**  
**Natchez Grand Hotel and Natchez**  
**Convention Center, Natchez, MS**  
 See pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter for  
 details

*ARCHAEOLOGY* Magazine's editors reveal the year's most compelling finds

# Top 10 Discoveries of 2015

This year's *Top 10 Discoveries* reach us from vastly different cultures and across eons. Some raise new questions about what it means to be human and what separates us from our species' relatives. Others bring us face to face with individual people, their travels, their faith, their hold on power. Several, covering matters as diverse as slavery and the origins of art, come to us via newly applied scientific methods. Taken together, this year's discoveries present an array of insights into endeavours, large and small, spanning millions of years. Go to [www.archaeology.org](http://www.archaeology.org) to see the list.



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CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS**

Contact George Avery at [averyg@sfasu.edu](mailto:averyg@sfasu.edu) or  
 Tim Perttula at [tkp4747@aol.com](mailto:tkp4747@aol.com) for more information.

**Louisiana Archaeological Society  
Membership Application and Dues Renewal**

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