Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society

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SHA Public Archaeology Day 2025
New Orleans, Louisiana

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

J. Lynn Funkhouser, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Hello! I am excited to introduce myself as the incoming editor of the LAS Newsletter.

I am an Assistant Professor of Biological Anthropology at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. I specialize in bio and zooarchaeology, with an emphasis in the study of ancient diseases and how social and political choices help or hinder the spread of disease. I am also a Forensic Anthropologist and work with students on cold cases for the Lafayette Parish Coroner's Office. My research in forensic anthropology centers on distinguishing between human and animal skeletal material (medico-legal significance) and the expansion of methods to positively identify recovered individuals (biological profile).

As the new editor for the journal, I'm keen to highlight and promote student and avocational research. Please encourage students, emergent professionals, and interested community members working in the state to get more involved with the organization and keep us posted on how their work in the state is progressing. I encourage you to reach out with your ideas and feedback. Thank you for this opportunity to serve as your editor. I'm looking forward to our journey ahead.

On the cover are Society for Historic Archaeology Public Archaeology Day 2025 presentations at the New Orleans Jazz Museum. Presentations were tailored to provide area community members with an understanding of some of the current and recent work in the state and in New Orleans in particular. The final presentation of the program was an interactive introduction to underwater archaeology specifically designed for children; truly, Louisiana archaeology for everyone.

The Louisiana Archaeological Society (LAS) and the Mississippi Archaeological Association (MAA) annual meeting was held just last weekend, February 21-23, in Vidalia, Louisiana. An overview is provided by Mark Rees on page 19. Please send your photos of the conference to louisianaarchaeologicalsociety@gmail.com for the summer *Newsletter*.

Finally, bienvenue, D'Arbonne Chapter, to the Louisiana Archaeological Society! Chapter contact information can be found on page 38.

Newsletter Contents

Articles of interest in this *Newsletter* share a common theme of serendipitous opportunity resulting in dynamic and productive collaborations. These reports feature teams of researchers, many of them volunteers, working to understand, preserve, and protect Louisiana's cultural heritage. Article topics include Middle Archaic fire cracked rock near Watson Break, a privy shaft in New Orleans, a shell midden in Mandeville, and new investigations into the age of the LSU Campus Mounds - prepare to be impressed.

IN THIS ISSUE

FIELD NOTES AND RECENT RESEARCH

Watson Brake Off-Site Survey
Diana Greenlee, Poverty Point World Heritage Site

Over several years, Joe Saunders surveyed the Pleistocene terraces around Watson Brake (16OU175) to identify resource procurement sites associated with the Middle Archaic period occupation of Watson Brake (e.g., Saunders 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000). His search was limited by vegetation and dense leaf litter to locations that had been recently clear-cut or disturbed by burrowing animals. The recorded upland sites tended to be located along the terrace edge (Figure 1). Most were small, low-density clusters of lithic tools and fire-cracked rock, and Saunders (1999) argued this was consistent with short-term Archaic plant and/or animal procurement or processing sites. A few sites, identified as longer-term encampments, had denser and more diverse artifact assemblages. And, some locations located near the earthworks had qualitatively similar artifact assemblages to Watson Brake, indicating that the occupation and associated activities likely extended beyond the earthworks. Some sites produced a few pottery sherds, indicating continued use of edge locales by later cultures.

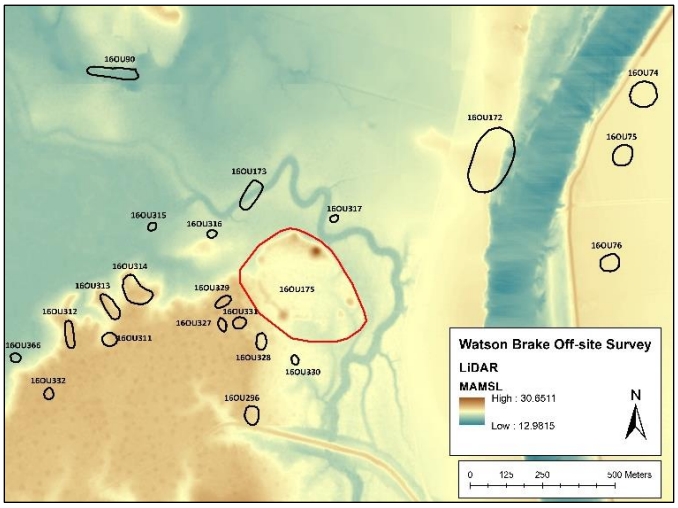

Figure 1. Watson brake (16OU175) and adjacent sites. Lidar data courtesy of FEMA and the State of Louisiana; data distributed by "Atlas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS," LSU CADGIS Research Laboratory, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Of particular interest here, in 1999, Saunders noted artifacts in the backdirt of an animal burrow on the northeast side of a small erosional knoll located on the floodplain northwest of Watson Brake (Saunders 1999). The artifacts, including six pieces of fire-cracked rock and two pieces of gravel, were not collected, but Saunders recorded the site as 16OU316, Watson Brake Survey 99#2. Given the proximity of this locale to Watson Brake, Saunders suggested it may have been an associated off-site activity area.

In the summer of 2023, trees were removed from areas north of Watson Brake. In March 2024, the Station Archaeologist and volunteers from the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (Chip McGimsey, Bailey Hall, Helen Bouzon, Sam Huey, and Sadie Whitehurst) conducted a pedestrian survey of the clearcut area (Figure 2). Artifacts were mapped with GPS and collected (Figure 3). Fire-cracked rock (FCR) was commonly observed; in this survey, its presence was noted, but those artifacts were generally not collected. The predominance of FCR is consistent with previous statements about Middle Archaic archaeological sites (e.g., Saunders 2010). Unfortunately, a fire associated with the lumber operation, which was centered on the knoll top, likely added to the frequency of heat-altered stone in the area.

Figure 2. Sam Huey and Bailey Hall surveying north of Watson Brake. Photo: Chip McGimsey.

The survey produced 414 artifacts, consisting mostly of chipped stone, along with a single hammerstone, a piece of unmodified sandstone, one fragment of fired earth, and five pieces of FCR. Notably, no aboriginal pottery was observed. The vast majority (85%) of artifacts were found in the large area adjacent to 16OU316 and that distribution is presumed to reflect a larger site boundary than originally proposed. The remaining 15% came from low areas just outside the Watson Brake earthworks, presumably representing debris dumps. If 16OU316 was a short-term resource procurement site, then it might be

expected to produce a different lithic assemblage than that at Watson Brake. If it was simply an activity area serving as an extension of the Watson Brake occupation, then a similar lithic assemblage might be expected.

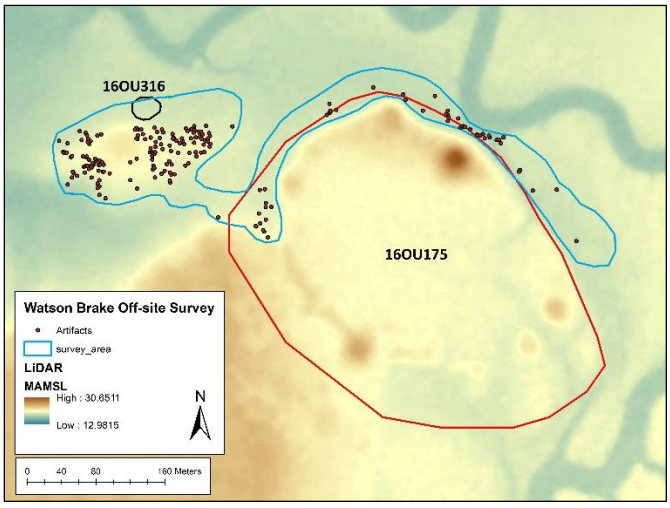

Figure 3. The distribution of all artifacts on a Lidar topographic surface model. The gap in artifacts at the top of the knoll reflects disturbance by the lumber operation and the firefighting response, and the presence of large debris piles.

Chipped stone artifacts represent 98% of the total collection. Table 1 and Figure 4 present a breakdown of the 406 pieces of chipped stone according to various simple analytic schemes. Although the sample sizes between 16OU175 and 16OU316 are vastly different, the assemblages are surprisingly similar in composition. The greatest difference appears to be in the distribution of heat-altered classes, a measure that has likely been affected, for 16OU316, by the fire that occurred during the logging operation.

Based on the number of dorsal scars, the debitage assemblages from these two sites appear to reflect a similarly early stage of reduction in the manufacture of chipped stone tools (Table 1). For 16OU316, more debitage has at least some cortex on the dorsal surface than either complete coverage or no cortex at all. Most of the debitage from 16OU175 lacks dorsal cortex, and fewer pieces have partial or complete coverage. This suggests slightly more reduction in the 16OU175 assemblage.

Few temporally diagnostic artifacts were recovered. Two bifaces commonly associated with the Late Archaic Poverty Point culture, Delhi and Macon points, were collected from 16OU316; one incomplete biface that appears to be a Gary or Maybon point was taken from the lowland adjacent to the Watson Brake earthworks (Figure 5). Gary points are considered an Archaic type, while Maybon points (which are probably a variant of Gary) are thought to be a Woodland type (Griffing 2022). Consistent with an Archaic attribution, microblade cores and several blades were recovered.

The number of artifacts collected from the surface of 16OU316 was significantly higher than at most upland sites previously explored by Saunders. This is likely due, at least in part, to better exposure, i.e., to the amount of ground surface exposed during the logging operation. The two lithic assemblages are remarkably similar in composition and, from this simple lithic analysis, it would appear that similar activities occurred at 16OU175 and 16OU316. Saunders' identification of 16OU316 as an activity area associated with the Watson Brake occupation based on six pieces of FCR and two pieces of gravel seems prescient.

Table 1. Comparison of lithic artifacts from the 2024 Watson Brake Off-Site survey.

Chipped Stone Classes	Biface		Blade		Core		Debitage		Modified Debitage	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
16OU175 (n=55)	2	3.64	2	3.64	4	7.27	47	85.45	0	0
16OU316 (n=351)	6	1.71	7	1.99	7	1.99	327	93.16	4	1.14

Debitage Size	1"		½"		¼"		⅛"		< ⅛"	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
16OU175 (n=47)	0	0	3	6.38	26	55.32	16	34.04	2	4.26
16OU316 (n=331)	1	0.30	40	12.08	218	65.86	72	21.75	0	0

Flake/Blade Breakage	Complete		Broken		Flake Shatter		Debris	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
16OU175 (n=51)	20	39.22	13	25.49	9	17.65	9	17.65
16OU316 (n=338)	125	36.98	95	28.11	75	22.19	43	12.72

Heat Alteration	Potlid/Luster Only		Pink/Red Color Only		Potlid/Luster/Color		None	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
16OU175 (n=51)	1	1.96	18	35.29	10	19.61	22	43.14
16OU316 (n=338)	1	0.30	168	49.70	50	14.79	119	35.21

Dorsal Surface Cortex	Complete Cover		Partial Cover		No Cover	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
16OU175 (n=51)	8	15.69	20	39.21	23	45.10
16OU316 (n=338)	35	10.36	174	51.48	129	38.17

Dorsal Scar Count	0 – 3 Scars		4 – 6 Scars		More than 6 Scars	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
16OU175 (n=42)	35	83.33	7	16.67	0	0
16OU316 (n=295)	239	81.02	54	18.31	2	0.68

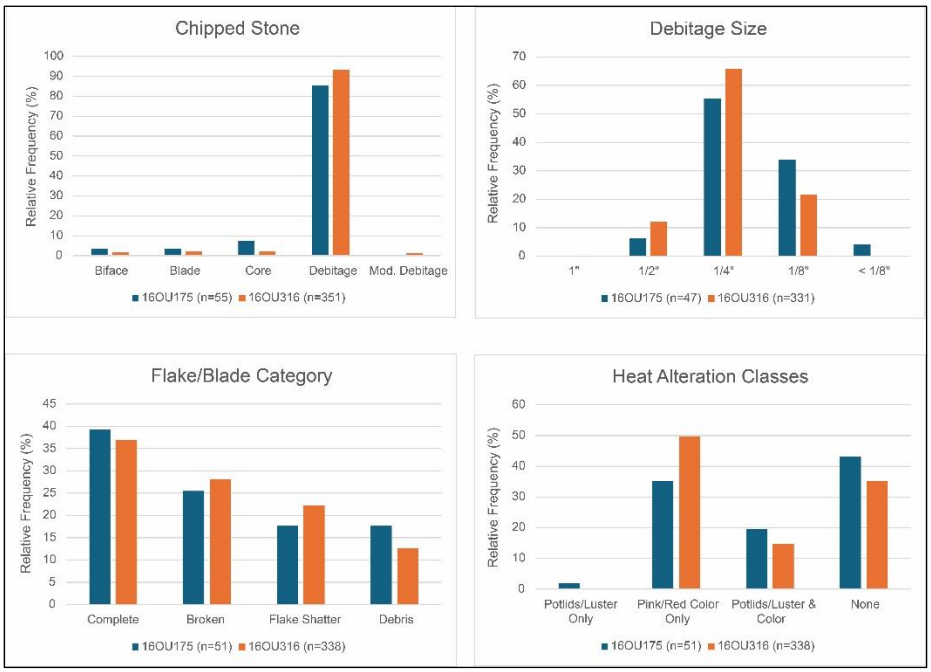

Figure 4. Comparison of lithic assemblages from 16OU175 and 16OU316.

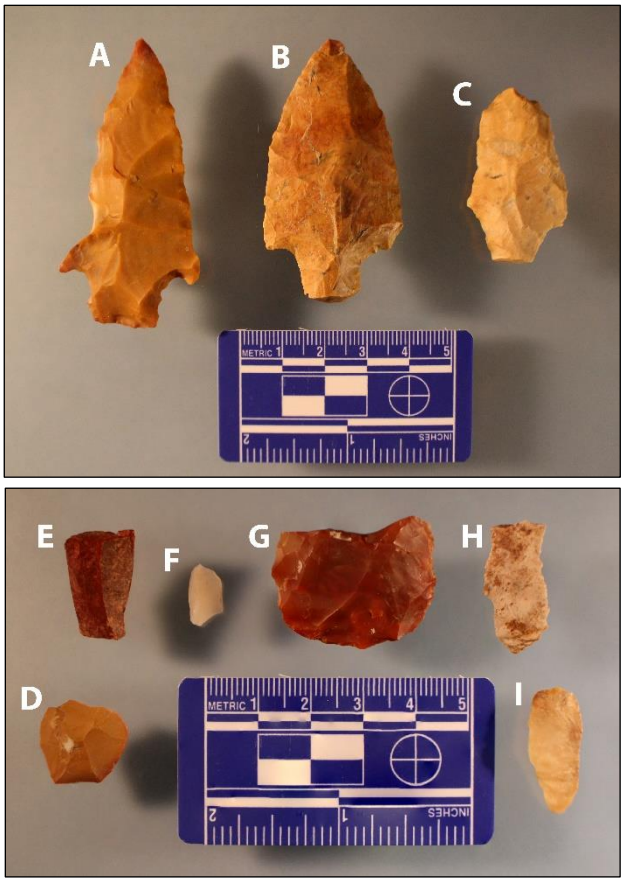

Figure 5. Select chipped stone artifacts from the Watson Brake Off-Site Survey. A) Delhi point; B) Macon point; C) cf. Gary/Maybon point; D) core "decap" flake; E) microblade core; F) novaculite flake; G) adze fragment; H, I) microblade. Artifacts C and I, 16OU175; the rest, 16OU316.

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Some Thoughts from Urban New Orleans, Part 1

D. Ryan Gray, University of New Orleans

At the University of New Orleans, we often get calls from members of the public who think they have found something of archaeological interest on their property. And, in a city like New Orleans, this often involves the remains of some sort of artifact-rich pit feature –a privy shaft, well, cistern, or trash pit—unintentionally revealed during a household construction, landscaping, or garden project. In these cases, we typically visit the site, document what we can in the field, and emphasize that preservation in place is the best outcome, as long as the site is not in imminent danger of destruction.

But what about when the feature or deposit will be destroyed otherwise? Or what if there is something unusual about it that, if we don't act, we might lose the opportunity to document? Our experience with this is not new, and it certainly is not unique to New Orleans, though it is something that is especially common in urban settings, where contemporary, private-owned development is superimposed on the historic footprint of the city. Complicating urban sites further, even a relatively small excavation may produce a massive assemblage of artifacts, something that, in turn, snowballs into many other issues. A well-intended salvage of a privy could generate months of lab processing and analyses, some of which will invariably need specialists to deal with properly. A landowner may be willing to loan a recovered collection but may ultimately want it returned; even if they are willing to donate it, space to curate collections is increasingly in short supply.

We have experimented with many ways to balance underlying ethical concerns with our role in educating the public about archaeology and doing research that contributes to the field. In these pages and in future issues of the *Newsletter*, I hope to share information about some small-scale salvage excavations we have completed in recent years that attempt to do this, with mixed results, perhaps not all of them successful. However, I do think they raise some interesting questions about how we make our data more accessible and more comparable, particularly in urban settings where it is abundant.

Urban historical archaeologists do have some advantages in this area. We often deal with factory-made mass-produced material culture, and, with some training, much of it can be fairly accurately identified, even accounting for some variation in typologies and analysts' approaches. Digital photography in all its forms has made documentation of artifacts quicker and more efficient than ever before (though, conversely, it has created new problems of storage space and of the sheer number of images to catalog and manage). There are also many ways to share data and make it consistent, whether through publicly accessible databases or cloud-based file sharing.

A small project on St. Andrew Street in the Central City neighborhood of New Orleans gave us one opportunity to experiment with salvage-based methodologies. We were contacted by a home owner, Ms. Rose Wilson, when a tree removal and subsequent landscaping in her back yard had revealed both brick courses and complete stoneware vessels in the associated fill. A site visit confirmed that this was, in fact, a brick-lined privy shaft that would have to be removed as her landscaping plans progressed. The UNO Department of Anthropology, led by the author, arranged to conduct a small volunteer-based salvage excavation of the feature. The excavation was a simple bisection, divided into stratigraphic units that were further subdivided into no more than 10 cm levels.

At the time, UNO's archaeology lab had a significant backlog of work. After consulting with the landowner, we agreed to a plan where all ceramic vessels, glass containers, and personal items/small finds would be recorded and photo-documented on site and then remain in her possession. As there was no way to adequately analyze faunal material under the time constraints, Ms. Wilson allowed this to be collected for donation to the archaeology lab for use in comparative projects.

Most of the fill consisted of a single deposit, apparently a trash 'clean-out' episode from around the time the house was connected to city sewerage (probably ca. 1900). It contained a modest assemblage by urban standards. Ceramic vessels and glass containers (no more than 75 altogether) were assigned sequential numbers based on diagnostic elements. Small finds and other "personal" items were photographed in groups, and select items were photographed individually to highlight

UNO students excavation a partially disturbed privy on St. Andrew Street.

distinctive elements. All of the iron was highly corroded, but identifiable items (other than ubiquitous fragments of nails) were also incorporated into this inventory. Finally, the project was immensely aided by the fact that the fill contained surprisingly little faunal material.

You can view the resulting field documentation on our CatalogIt page, at https://hub.catalogit.app/9619/folder/c2d7a340-c985-11ef-9717-9d348aa530c8.

As numbers were assigned in the field, with limited amounts of time, there were some errors, but the ceramic and glass container lists generated appear to be reasonably accurate and complete. It was more of a challenge to rapidly catalog the small finds, as this required more familiarity with artifact types and materials to inventory properly. All inventories were hand-recorded on forms in the field. In an effort to simplify and systematize reporting, all of the artifact data as then entered into an Access database, utilizing the publicly available "SHARD" (or Sonoma Historic Artifact Research Database) format, available for free download athttps://sha.org/resources/artifact-cataloging-system/.

In the next installment of this piece, I will share the results of this cataloging effort and of another privy salvage, done under slightly different circumstances. I hope that, through this, we can contribute to efforts to help create some permanent repositories for the results of such projects, so that they can, at minimum, become comparative samples for use by other researchers.

Thanks to Rose Wilson, who reached out to us and then helped in the excavation, and to the other volunteers and UNO students who participated in the dig and documentation: Elizabeth Williams, Michael Godzinski, Joan Garner, Charlotte Jones, Melanie Walker, Lauren Davis, Noah Fulmer, Peyton Foti, Anna Stebbins, and Alexander Farbo. Sorry if I have missed anyone!

Artifacts from privy being washed and cataloged in the field.

Decorative ceramic tile recovered during excavations.

Continuing Investigations at 16ST301
Chip McGimsey, Division of Archaeology

16ST301 lies on the surface of the Pleistocene Terrace along the west bank of Bayou Chinchuba in Mandeville. There was an ephemeral Marksville-Baytown occupation of the site evident by the presence of occasional Baytown Plain sherds and stemmed dart points. But the major occupation of the site occurred during the late pre-contact when a series of small, discrete shell middens were deposited along the bayou. The site is currently known only from one lot in a subdivision but it is very likely additional shell middens are present on other lots. Five spatially discrete shell middens ranging in size from 5x5 m to 10x20 m in size are present, and range in thickness from 0.3 m to a little over 1.0 m. The landowners have explored the various middens as well as several non-midden areas of the site.

More recently, the landowners encountered what initially appeared to be two pit features associated with one of the shell middens. A second volunteer investigation was held over a three-day weekend in All the artifacts they have recovered have been loaned to the author for analysis. The author, with the assistance of volunteers, undertook a limited test investigation in 2023 of three of the shell middens along with a single shovel test transect.

November 2024. Participants included Lilyana Brocato from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Kelcey Morgan, Conan Mills, Sarah Miller, Janique Gray, Sydney Grafals, Cadence Lowry, Trent Rischer, Benjamin Winkelman, Trevor Chapman, Peyton Scoskie, and Ben Hodgin from Louisiana State University, along with Helen Bouzon from the Division of Archaeology, Bailey Hall from the Division of Historic Preservation, and Sam and Vivian Huey. A 1x1 m unit was opened over each of the two possible features (Figure 1), along with a test unit into one of the shell middens not examined previously (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Excavation of units 5, 6 and 7.

Figure 2. Excavation of Unit 8.

The results were not quite what we had hoped for. After excavation of the two feature units as well as the landowners pit between them, it was apparent we had excavated a tree throw. At some point in the past a large tree had uprooted and tipped over, leaving an elongate depression that filled in with shell and midden sediment from the surrounding shell deposit. While the artifacts recovered still represent the shell midden occupation, they are just not in the contexts we were hoping for. The 1x1 m unit in an adjacent shell midden sampled the 30 cm thick shell midden and found a very nice tree root hole masquerading as a post hole.

Analysis and interpretation of the collection is ongoing. Initial radiocarbon dates indicate occupation between 1450 and 1600 CE. The ceramic assemblage is very interesting and reflects styles typically found in the Pensacola – Mobile Bay area of the Gulf Coast (Figures 3 and 4). This site and at least one other site in the Mandeville area may represent a community of people who moved here from the east sometime after 1400 CE.

Figure 3. Pensacola Incised.

Figure 4. D'Olive Incised.

Coring the LSU Campus Mounds

Chip McGimsey, Division of Archaeology

Investigation of the LSU Campus Mounds began in 1982 when Bob Neuman pulled several cores from each mound (Neuman 1992). He recovered organic sediments from the mound base and sub-mound surface that produced dates ranging between 6700 and 4800 BP with consistent overlap between 6000 – 5000 BP. A detailed analysis of the cores, together with limited testing around the mounds formed the basis of Jeff Homburg's thesis (Homburg 1992). Examination of the cores indicated each was built in a single stage of construction. No artifacts were found in or around the mounds.

In 2009, an LSU geophysical class conducted remote sensing across both mounds (Ellwood 2009). A large magnetic and electrical resistivity anomaly was identified in Mound A. Assessment of this anomaly led to the recovery of a new core from Mound A along with a comparative core from Mound B (Mann 2009). No evidence of what caused the anomaly was identified in the Mound A core. A charcoal rich basket-load was dated to 6300-5990 BP supporting the earlier dates. A 1x2 test unit was then excavated on the slope of Mound A in an effort to define the anomaly. Although no evidence as to what caused the anomaly was identified, the unit profiles indicated the mound was constructed of A and E horizon materials (Mann 2010).

Dr. Brooks Ellwood and colleagues examined the 2009 cores in detail, including numerous radiocarbon dates based upon phytolith samples from the mound fill. Their results were detailed in an article published in 2022 where they argued that mound construction began as early as 11,000 years ago (Ellwood et al. 2022). They also suggested there was a pause in the construction of each mound around 8,000 BP with construction ending by 5,000 BP. Shortly thereafter, McGimsey and others (McGimsey et al. 2022) addressed several concerns with the proposed timing and mound construction history.

While the Ellwood et al. paper proposes a radical reinterpretation of current understanding of North American prehistory, it has done what provocative science does – it has stimulated additional research to further assess the age, structure, and construction of the LSU Campus Mounds. One article addressing certain aspects of the Ellwood model is currently under review for publication (Hormes et al. n.d.). More recently, a team organized by Tad Britt of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, and including the author, Dr. Liz Chamberlain of the University of Wageningen (Netherlands), Dr. Rolfe Mandel of the University of Kansas, and Dr. Kory Konsoer and Reilly Corkran of LSU undertook to address other aspects of the Ellwood model.

This project proposes to specifically address the age and construction history of the mounds. To that end, additional cores would be collected from each mound. One core would be used to study the sedimentological and soil development characteristics to determine if there is evidence for hiatuses in construction as well as the degree of soil development present in each mound. The other cores were obtained specifically for obtaining Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dates from each mound. OSL dates identify when a sediment sample was last exposed to light. By examining samples from the immediate sub-mound surface and initial basketloads of fill, the sample should indicate when those surfaces, and thus the initiation of mound construction, were last exposed.

In early December, the team met at the mounds and began by trying to core Mound B (Figure 1). We were utilizing the ATV-mounted Giddings soil core rig originally acquired by Dr. Joe Saunders for the Regional Archaeology Program. Unfortunately, the clayey sediments of Mound B were hard as a rock and we were unable to penetrate more than 1.2 m below surface.
So we then moved to Mound A (Figure 2). These mound sediments are comprised primarily of A and E horizon sediments and were much softer. Three cores were collected side-by-side. One for Dr. Mandel's sediment analysis and two for Dr. Chamberlain's OSL study. The OSL cores were collected inside black plastic tubes to keep them shielded from any contaminating light.

We hope to return to the site in March with a different coring rig and collect the desired cores from Mound B. And by the end of the year we intend to have the new analyses completed and obtain a better understanding of the history and construction sequence of each mound.

Figure 1. Coring Mound B; drone image provided by Conan Mills.

Figure 2. Coring Mound A; image provided by Conan Mills.

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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senna Chapman has joined the Louisiana Division of Archaeology

The Division of Archaeology welcomes Senna Chapman as our new Site Files Manager. She takes over for Sam Huey who resigned earlier in 2024. Senna got her start in archaeology with an undergraduate degree from LSU in Anthropology followed by two years working for Coastal Environments, Inc. She left Louisiana for Texas in 2010 and did contract archaeology across Texas while getting her MA degree in Archaeology from Texas State University. Her degree examined the potential for medicinal plant use in the early Later Stone Age at the site of Erfkroon in South Africa. She studied both ground and chipped stone lithics and explored modern ethnobotanical proxies for ground stone tool use among Basotho traditional healers in the Free State.
Beginning in 2015 she pursued a PhD at York University in England. Her research focused on the archaeobotanical evidence for long term resilience across two intensive agricultural landscapes: Engaruka in Tanzania, abandoned in the 18th century, and Konso in Ethiopia, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which is still in use.

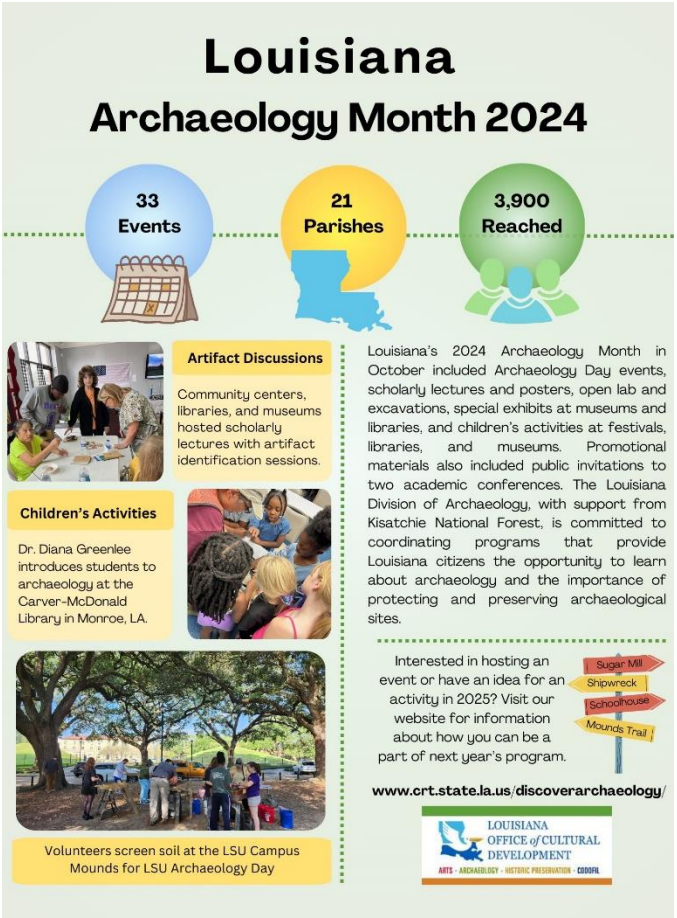
She returned to the States in 2018 and continued working contract projects in Texas for several years. This included a stint reviewing projects in Puerto Rico for Section 106 compliance. She transferred to Coastal Environments, Inc. for a second stint in early 2024.

LSU Campus Mounds in the News

Louisiana State University has released an overview of the new Campus Mounds investigations conducted by the Louisiana Division of Archaeology.

Louisiana Archaeology Month 2024

Louisiana Archaeology Month 2024 was a success to be trumpeted and celebrated! Please reach out to https://www.crt.state.la.us/cultural-development/archaeology/discover-archaeology/ if you're interested in hosting an activity or event in 2025.



HISTORIC CEMETERY DATABASE

An exciting announcement and press release! The Louisiana Trust has combined the known historic cemeteries from the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (LA DOA) and the Louisiana Cemetery Board (LCB) to create the Louisiana Register of Historic Cemeteries, which launched in late September 2004. The Trust is asking the public to share more information and photos about the sites, for research, maintenance and preservation purposes and will share information they receive from the public with the LA DOA.

The Louisiana Trust has certified 70 cemeteries, several which were not previously known by the LCB or LA DOA, in the first three months. An available GIS map makes it easy for anyone to see what cemeteries are known and access some general information about those that have been certified. Over the next several months, the Trust will be adding a visual glossary and other resources to the site. If anyone has questions, please feel free to reach out to Brian Davis at bdavis@LTHP.org.

LOUISIANA TRUST for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **September 30, 2024**

Name Brian M. Davis, Executive Director
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Phone 318.267.5220

LOUISIANA TRUST LAUNCHES HISTORIC CEMETERY DATABASE

The Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation (LTHP) announces the launch of the Louisiana Register of Historic Cemeteries, a public database to increase awareness of historic cemeteries for their protection, maintenance and respect for those buried within them.

Starting with a list of approximately 8,500 cemeteries across the state for which the name and location is known, the program will rely on help from the public to provide photos and more information about the age, size, boundary, and condition of burial grounds. There is also an opportunity to share information about cemeteries which are not currently shown on the map, which may be abandoned or known by only a few people. In order for a site to be certified on the Louisiana Register of Historic Cemeteries, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- Must be 50+ years since the first burial; and/or
- Must contain the burial of a person of local, state or national importance by reason of civic, public, or military service, cultural achievement or historical significance; and/or
- Must contain structures that are considered architecturally significant.

With the popularity of home DNA kits, digitalization of archives and records and genealogy programs like Ancestry and USGenWeb, people are discovering connections to their past which have been difficult or impossible to know before. The Louisiana Register of Historic Cemeteries offers the opportunity for people from around the country to learn where their ancestors in Louisiana are buried. This can lead to increased tourism as well as improved maintenance of historic cemeteries, once descendants learn about sites with a family connection. The database also has the opportunity to reduce damage to historic burials and added expenses and delays to construction projects like buildings and roads, when an unknown cemetery is discovered once a project is underway.

The website also offers a list of resources on cemetery legislation, conservation and documentation, as well as the meanings of symbolism most often found. Information is also available about the various types and replacement of damaged military markers. "We want this site to be a tool for the public to use for education and preservation of historic cemeteries around our state," says Brian Davis, executive director for the Louisiana Trust. "We work in all 64 parishes and see historic cemeteries in all conditions from well-manicured, to abandoned to endangered. Cemeteries from cities to the coast and the information they tell about a community are under threat from erosion, storms and subsidence, like those in Leeville, in lower Lafourche Parish."

To see which historic sites are in your area or to contribute information and photos about a historic cemetery, visit https://historic-cemeteries.lthp.org/. There is no fee for nominating a cemetery to be certified in the Louisiana Register of Historic Cemeteries.

The Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation was founded in 1979 with the mission to advocate, promote and preserve historic places representing our diverse culture. It is the statewide historic preservation 501(c)3 non-profit organization, working in all 64 parishes and donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For more information about the Louisiana Trust and their work, visit LTHP.org.

Old Jackson Cemetery, West Feliciana Parish

Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society and Mississippi Archaeological Association

Mark Rees
Louisiana Public Archaeology and Osteology Lab, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

An annual joint meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society (LAS) and Mississippi Archaeological Association (MAA) was held in Vidalia, Louisiana on February 21-23, 2025. The meeting was held at the Clarion Suites on Front Street, across the river from Natchez, Mississippi, and overlooking Old Muddy. There were approximately 130 meeting attendees: 70 or so from the LAS and around 60 from the MAA.

The LAS Executive Committee met on Friday, with onsite registration followed by a reception and social gathering at the hotel bar. Papers and posters were presented from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, with a catered lunch, morning and afternoon breaks, and a catered banquet in the evening. The LAS silent auction was held once again and proved to be exceedingly popular among bibliophiles and a resounding success. Megan Kassabaum delivered a fascinating and impressive keynote address, "On Elevated Ground: Interpreting 7,500 Years of Platform Use in the Lower Mississippi Valley." Sunday morning dawned in a cold gray rain, with uncertain numbers of waking conference goers gathering in the hotel parking lot for a tour of area archaeological attractions across the river, including the Anna, Foster, and Emerald mound sites. The tour began at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, guided by the one and only Vin Steponaitis. For those readers of the LAS *Newsletter* unable to attend the annual meeting, plan to do so next year!

Conference goers touring the Emerald Mound site, with Vin Steponaitis pointing the way (Photo courtesy of Nikki Mattson).

LAS – MAA JOINT ANNUAL MEETING
February 21-23, 2025

SCHEDULE OF PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Saturday Morning

8:30 a.m. Samuel M. Huey, Ryan Seidemann, and Christine Halling —Pending Catastrophe Facing Sites Located in the Morganza Spillway

8:50 a.m. Olivia Baumgartel and T.R. Kidder—Radiocarbon Revelations: New Radiocarbon Data from the Cedarland and Claiborne sites

9:10 a.m. Emily K. Dale and Paul D. Jackson — Deconstructing the Wilderness Plantation: Examining the Construction Phases of a Historic Plantation in East Baton Rouge Parish

9:30 a.m. Karla Oesch — Sunken treasure: a collection recovered from a safe in Lake Pontchartrain

9:50 a.m. Simon P. Sherman III, PhD — Reassessing Lithic Diversity at Poverty Point (16WC5): Insights into Multi-Layered siliceous material resources

10:10 a.m. **Break**

10:20 a.m. Ryan Seidemann, Christine Halling, and Samuel M. Huey — Heritage Protection in Forgotten Spaces: the Morganza Spillway Cemeteries

10:40 a.m. Bryan S. Haley, Douglas C. Wells, Lindsey Howell Franklin, Robert F. Westrick, Walter Hano, Richard A. Weinstein, Stuart G. Nolan, Sherry Pinell— Probing, Augering, and Offshore Remote-Sensing Investigations at Two Prehistoric Shell Middens (16SMY17 and 16SMY95), St. Mary Parish, Louisiana

11:00 a.m. Grant Snitker, Claudine Gravel-Miguel, Katherine Peck, Jonathan Paige, Miguel Martinez, Alex Fetterhoff, and Matthew Helmer— The Kisatchie National Forest Lidar Project: machine learning and remote sensing applications for forest-wide cultural resource management and research

11:20 a.m. Tom Fields — Union Museum and the Fields Site on Middlefork Bayou, Union Parish, Louisiana

11:40 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Catered Lunch with an update on the Evans Point Study from James Green and John Guy**

Saturday Afternoon

1:00 p.m. Robert F. Westrick and Charles E. Pearson — El Nuevo Constante Shipwreck – Forty-Five Years Later in Retrospect and the Search for the Corazón de Jesús y Santa Bárbara

1:20 p.m. James Fogleman – Tchefuncte, the Ugly Duckling Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley and Surrounding Areas as Seen from Upper Atchafalaya Basin

1:40 p.m. Church, Jason – Novel Approaches to Archeological Interpretation Using 3D Modeling

2:00 p.m. Erlend Johnson, Matt Helmer, Mark Rees, and John Mayer— New Insights on Iatt Lake Bluff (16GR591): Preliminary Report on the 2024 Excavations in the Catahoula District of Kisatchie National Forest, Louisiana

2:20 p.m. Christopher Wilson— The Growing Importance of Drone Surveys

2:40 p.m. **Break**

3:00 p.m. Michael Carpenter — Don't Just Write It Off: Research Potentials at the Kindle Site (22GR986).

3:20 p.m. Tony Boudreaux and Vin Steponaitis — Investigating the Early Eighteenth-Century Cultural Landscape of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians

3:40 p.m. Allison Belcher – Climate Change and Its Impacts on Archaeological Sites in Louisiana

4:00 p.m. Julian Blaine – Shells on the Shore – Middens and prehistoric lifeways around Lake Maurepas

4:20 p.m. Tristram R. Kidder, Anthony Ortmann, and Ilaria Patania – Open An Update on Investigations of Mound C at Poverty Point

4:40 p.m. Jeffrey T. Lewis, JR – Settlement Patterns in the Pine Hills of Mississippi

5:00 p.m. LAS Business Meeting in the Ballroom (immediately following the talks)

5:30 p.m. MAA Business Meeting in the Ballroom

Saturday Evening

7:00 p.m. Banquet and Keynote Address in the Ballroom (included in registration fees)

POSTER SESSION

Saturday

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Carr, Cody, Dienes, Audrey, Pratt, Gregory, and Stephenson, Bailey – Einscan Pro HD 3D Laser Scanner vs Scaniverse: A Comparison of New Technologies

Church, Gloria – Analyzing the Proximity of Early Caddoan Archaeological Sites to the Red River

Elton, Brileigh and Long, Kelly– Working the Graveyard Shift: An Attempt to Relocate the Bayou Desiard Cemetery

Greenlee, Diana M., Sherwood, Sarah C., and Dalan, Rinita A. – Re-investigating Deposits in Ridge 2 Northwest at Poverty Point World Heritage Site

Hale, E., Watts, J., Tuccillo, A., and Lovelace, V. – Practical and Ethical Concerns of Archaeological 3D Imaging

Mills, Conan – Using Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (sUAS) for Conservation of Mound A at Poverty Point World Heritage Site, Initial Results

Robicheaux, Ian — Remote Sensing Applications in Identifying High Probability Archaeological Locales on the South Central Louisiana Coastline

Strader, Catherine Taunton– Royalty in Bondage: Preserving the Legacy of Prince Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima and the Archaeology of Foster's Fields.

Strader, Catherine Taunton– Reviving Rivercane: Ecology, Culture, and Archaeology

Treloar, Steve – Curating 50 Years of Archaeology at the Kisatchie National Forest

Torrens, Shannon – Taking Shape: Exploring the Zoomorphic Beads of Poverty Point

PAPER AND POSTER ABSTRACTS

(Alphabetical by Last Name)

Baumgartel, Olivia Baumgartel and Kidder, Tristram R.—*Radiocarbon Revelations: New Radiocarbon Data from the Cedarland and Claiborne sites*
The Cedarland and Claiborne sites at the confluence of the Pearl River and Mississippi River in Southwest Mississippi have been placed together temporally based on five radiocarbon dates obtained in the 1960's and 1970's. This paper details new radiocarbon dates sampled from collections, challenging previous assumptions of the connection between Cedarland and Claiborne, and their connection with the Poverty Point site. These results show Cedarland pre-dates Claiborne by approximately 500 years while Claiborne is the same age as Poverty Point. By reassessing the temporal status of these sites, we offer fresh insights that prompt new interpretations of other Late Archaic sites in the region and throughout the Southeast.

Belcher, Allison – *Climate Change and Its Impacts on Archaeological Sites in Louisiana*
Until the 21st century, the relationship between climate change and its effects on archaeological sites remained relatively underexplored. However, the topic has since become a focal point for researchers as the impacts — both positive and negative — are becoming increasingly apparent. Shifts in temperature, precipitation patterns, extreme weather events, and other environmental changes are now unmistakable. While these changes affect the natural and material world, they also pose significant risks to cultural heritage. Louisiana, a region prone to extreme climatic events, offers an ideal setting for such an investigation. The state has long experienced coastal erosion, severe weather events, and rising temperatures, all of which are projected to intensify over the next century. This study seeks to examine how Louisiana's cultural sites, particularly those located along the coast and near inland waterways, may be affected by a rapidly changing climate.

Blaine, Julian – *Shells on the Shore – Middens and Prehistoric Lifeways around Lake Maurepas*
Shell middens are a ubiquitous feature in the prehistoric archaeology of Louisiana. In December 2024, archaeologists with ELOS Environmental, LLC conducted a Phase I terrestrial cultural resource survey along the northwestern shore of Lake Maurepas between the mouths of the Amite and Tickfaw Rivers. During the course of this investigation, two new middens were discovered, and an already established midden was found to be much larger than originally thought. While seemingly unextraordinary, these findings have the potential to add to our understanding of the past in the Lake Maurepas area. In this spirit, this presentation will examine these middens in the context of other prehistoric sites around the Lake Maurepas area as well as explore the possibilities and obstacles in investigating their relationship to prehistoric settlement and subsistence patterns around Lake Maurepas.

Boudreaux, Tony and Steponaitis, Vin – *Investigating the Early Eighteenth-Century Cultural Landscape of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians*
A robust, eighteenth-century documentary record and significant archaeological research at the Fatherland Site (22AD501), the location of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians during the early eighteenth century, has made it one of the best-known archaeological sites in Mississippi. The recent analysis of eighteenth-century French maps and other historic documents indicates there still is much about Fatherland's history that we do not know, including the existence of multiple, previously undocumented mounds. In this paper, we discuss the results of documentary research and fieldwork

that confirm the existence of two "new" mounds at the Fatherland site and of efforts to reconstruct the battlefield from the 1730 attack and siege that forced the Natchez to abandon the Grand Village.

Carpenter, Michael – *Don't Just Write It Off: Research Potentials at the Kindle Site (22GR986)*
The inevitable march of time makes the archaeologist working under Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) now, as of 2025, consider archaeological sites nine years younger than the law itself. But what is the research potential of Mid-Twentieth-Century archeological sites? There is research potential of these sites, but it requires examination of the particular dynamics of the period of interest. Though earlier than the NHPA, archaeological sites dating to the 1930s and 1940s often are written off as lacking research potential. The 1930s and 1940s was dynamic time America, with many farms both large and small having failed. To halt this and also to improve the lives of suffering Americans, the New Deal policies of the Rosevelt administration pushed for direct and indirect aid to the American Farmer. One agency created to help was the Farm Security Administration or the FSA. The FSA backed loans for tenant farmers to purchase their own farms and loans both owners and tenants of small for making improvements on these farms. These programs came with education for these new farm owners, which taught modern-and-scientific farming and management skills. These programs helped numerous tenant farmers throughout Mississippi and the south and had a high success rate with borrowers repaying these loans decades early. These programs can be seen at 22GR986, which consists of the farm of George and Freddie Mae Kindle. The Kindles, who were recipients of one of these loans, purchased an 80-acre farm in Granada County, Mississippi. The potential avenues for archaeological research on Depression and World War II area archaeological sites can be seen at their farm 22GR986.

Carr, Cody, Dienes, Audrey, Pratt, Gregory, and Stephenson, Bailey – *Einscan Pro HD 3D Laser Scanner vs Scaniverse: A Comparison of New Technologies*
This poster compares the effectiveness of the Einscan Pro HD 3D Light Scanner, a professional grade scanner, to the Scaniverse iPhone application, a portable scanning application. We chose four artifacts of varying colors and materials in order to fully explore the capabilities of each scanning method. These four artifacts were a bronze bracelet, a carved bone figurine, a Calene ware bowl, and a plaster cast. The Einscan scanner uses a non-contact structured light scanning technique to create a model of an object, while Scaniverse uses light detection and ranging to scan and create a model of an object. Furthermore, Scaniverse has two methods of scanning objects: Mesh and Splat. Mesh uses traditional LiDAR to create a triangular mesh of the object, while Splat uses Gaussian processing to create data points that form the model. Through our testing, we found that the Einscan Pro HD 3D Scanner created great three-dimensional models, but it did not always perform as well as the Scaniverse application in recreating intricate textures. Within Scaniverse, we found that Splat made more successful models of objects with curved edges, like the figurine and the cast, and Mesh created more successful models of objects with hard edges, like the bracelet and the bowl.

Church, Gloria – *Analyzing the Proximity of Early Caddoan Archaeological Sites to the Red River*
Archaeologists have long highlighted the significance of the Red River in referencing the location of early Caddoan archaeological sites. Although the river is frequently mentioned in Caddo archaeological reports, the actual importance of its proximity to site placement has been unclear. This study examines major early Caddoan sites across the region to assess their average distance from the Red River. Using QGIS, a cumulative cost-analysis function was employed to calculate the walking distance from each site to the river. The results provide an

estimate of how far these sites are, on average, from the Red River, offering new insights into site location preferences in relation to this geographic feature

Church, Jason – *Novel Approaches to Archeological Interpretation Using 3D Modeling*
One of the challenges in presenting archeological artifacts is conveying the object as a whole so that the average museum viewer can understand the shard or fragment's context. The museum standard of today it to make a close replication of the whole object that incorporates the found shard. Many times, the museum viewer is confused as to which piece is the artifact and which piece is the replica. Without the replicated whole, most viewers cannot envision what the small fragment was out of context.
This novel approach utilizes a 3D model of the object. This model can either me made in the 3D software or from scanning a similar historical object such as a vessel. The whole vessel is then 3D printed in a contracting color from the artifact (such as while or clear plastic). The archeological object is then incorporated into the newly printed "ghost vessel". This approach allows the viewer a clear view of the archeological fragment as well as the interpretation of the whole vessel.
The presentation outlines work currently being done at NCPTT and will showcase examples of 3D modeled works.

Dale, Emily K. and Jackson, Paul D. – *Deconstructing the Wilderness Plantation: Examining the Construction Phases of a Historic Plantation in East Baton Rouge Parish*
Last year, TerraX conducted a Phase III archaeological mitigation at a plantation home dating from the early to late nineteenth century in the backcountry north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Initial research indicated that the existing mansion, built during or just after the Civil War, was constructed on the site of a smaller, earlier home. During the excavation, we documented several construction phases of the residence, including the footprint of a house from the 1820s and a detached kitchen. Additionally, our investigations revealed a collection of nearly 3,000 largely unused English and French gunflints. This paper will discuss the excavations and provide interpretations of the site.

Elton, Brileigh and Long, Kelly– *Working the Graveyard Shift: An Attempt to Relocate the Bayou Desiard Cemetery*
Our poster discusses our ongoing attempt to relocate the Bayou Desiard Cemetery in Monroe, Louisiana, after its headstones were displaced by development and the boundary of the cemetery was not documented. We explain how our archival research, oral histories, as well as the employment of human remains detection dogs, have provided us with a new proposal for where the cemetery might be. We discuss our future plans for ground-truthing this theory with GPR imaging, as well as goals and hopes for the preservation of the headstones and cemetery, once located.

Fields, Tom – *Union Museum and the Fields Site on Middlefork Bayou, Union Parish, Louisiana*
The Union Museum of History and Art is a small-town Museum, publicly funded and with a unique format. Traveling exhibits and historical events are displayed six to eight times a year while an archeological exhibit remains year-round. The museum also houses the Archeological Research Center tasked with uncovering the first people of Union Parish. Union Parish is located in the hills of Central Louisiana. Numerous bayous cross the area and feed the Ouachita River. The area is ripe for hunter/gatherer communities with trade opportunities. Several reports have identified the area as lightly researched. The Darbonne Diggers explored one site on the Middlefork of Bayou D'arBonne. Forty STUs were dug and eight 1X1 meter units were excavated. After 9 half day digs, cleaning, sorting, storing and databasing it was identified that the team had uncovered 3072 plain sherds, 217 incised sherds, 31 projectile points, 848 chips, 52 bone fragments, and 1 bead. Carbon 14 tests were conducted

from two excavations and corroborates with located pottery. One site is 500 years BP and contained the Maddox engraved shards while the second site is 800 years old and accompanies Mazique Incised and Coles Creek Incised sherds. The last day of the dig uncovered two Dalton Points. The Diggers will be back on site for three weeks in April and then two weeks at two other sites in May.

Fogleman, James – *Tchefuncte, the Ugly Duckling Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley and Surrounding Areas as Seen from Upper Atchafalaya Basin*
Tchefuncte is generally seen as a bland place holder between Poverty Point and Marksville. In the upper reaches of the Atchafalaya Basin, Poverty Point is a minor component and Marksville, despite the great names sake's mounds, leaves a surprisingly small archaeological footprint. Tchefuncte more than takes up the slack. It has some of the largest sites along with the greatest diversity of artifacts and exotics. Overall, it appears to be late archaic with a large side of ceramics. The sites have a high correlation between certain geological formations, especially Teche- Mississippi crevasses.

Greenlee, Diana M., Sherwood, Sarah C., and Dalan, Rinita A. – *Re-investigating Deposits in Ridge 2 Northwest at Poverty Point World Heritage Site*
In 2021, we re-opened two 2 x 2 m excavation units originally dug in 1991. The goal was to apply new methods to better understand the unusual stratigraphy observed in the original excavations. Our minimally invasive approach used a combination of photogrammetry, in situ and laboratory magnetic susceptibility, and sediment micromorphology. The new data provide insight into the origin and deposition of strata associated with ridge construction and use that included a maintained earthen floor built on a prepared surface. The last activities, mostly involving fish processing and cooking, were preserved under a subsequent distinct fill.

Haley, Bryan S., Wells, Douglas C., Franklin, Lindsey Howell, Westrick, Robert F., Hano, Walter, Weinstein, Richard A., Nolan, Stuart G., and Pinell, Sherry – *Probing, Augering, and Offshore Remote-Sensing Investigations at Two Prehistoric Shell Middens (16SMY17 and 16SMY95), St. Mary Parish, Louisiana*
In 2023 and 2024, archaeologists from Coastal Environments, Inc., and Louisiana State University, along with members of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, conducted terrestrial and underwater investigations at sites 16SMY17 and 16SMY95 to identify potentially intact midden remains that will be protected by the placement of a living-shoreline barrier within the adjacent, shallow water of East Cote Blanche Bay. Using funds provided to the Chitimacha Tribe by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the research included terrestrial and offshore probing, terrestrial augering, and offshore side-scan, magnetometer, ground-penetrating radar (GPR), and sub-bottom profiler surveys. The side-scan and magnetometer surveys utilized an autonomous survey vessel (ASV), while the sub-bottom survey employed a typical profiler and standard survey boat. The GPR survey was unique as it entailed placement of the GPR unit within a small dinghy that was propelled by a trolling motor. Using all techniques, areas of subsided and potentially intact midden were recognized offshore, along with disturbances from past oil and gas activities.

Hale, E., Watts, J., Tuccillo, A., and Lovelace, V. – *Practical and Ethical Concerns of Archaeological 3D Imaging*
(Abbreviated) This poster will give an overview of the emerging method of photogrammetry as it relates to the field of archaeology. While practical benefits of three-dimensional scanning will be covered, the focus will be on ethical concerns around three-dimensional scanning. The main ethical considerations presented by this poster will be centered around cultural sensitivity and remaining respectful of the

communities whose ancestral artifacts and sites are being studied. The introduction will provide a definition of photogrammetry and will discuss the applications of the application in archaeology. It will briefly outline the rest of the content of the poster, including the positive aspects and ethical concerns involved in both creating the scan and making it available to researchers and/or the public. The next sections will focus on the several reasons this application has grown in popularity over the past decade. It will be discussed that this is mainly due to 3D scanning providing the visualization of a site or artifact in a portable and noninvasive manner. Scanning can be used to preserve the integrity of features that exist on a constantly transforming landscape or preservation of a perishable artifact. Experimental archaeologists can also use these scans to reconstruct and reverse engineering the site or artifact scanned. Following this, the poster will highlight a variety of ethical considerations that must be considered when creating these models. Specifically, how creating and potentially disseminating these models can affect the agency of these artifacts. The idea that not just individual artifacts but even potentially entire sites can be digitized, uploaded, and disseminated across the internet raises questions about who should be able to view, publish and create these images. These issues can be especially challenging when scanning objects that may have important cultural context or sensitive topics. When scans and 3D models of objects are easily available online it becomes difficult to retain ownership and control of the objects.

Huey, Samuel M., Seidemann, Ryan, and Halling, Christine – *Pending Catastrophe Facing Sites Located in the Morganza Spillway*

The Morganza Spillway was constructed in 1954 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project. It was designed to divert excess floodwaters from the Mississippi River into the Atchafalaya Basin to help prevent catastrophic flooding in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and other areas downstream. It was first opened in 1973 and has only been operated twice in its history, once in 1973 and again in 2011. The Morganza Spillway, located near Morganza, helps ensure that the Mississippi River maintains its current channel, which is essential for commerce and trade. However, the combination of silt deposition in the Mississippi River channel and increased precipitation due to climate change has set the stage for an unparalleled disaster. When opened to offer protection to population dense areas coastal communities and archaeological sites located within the Atchafalaya Basin, as well as coastal zones impacting sites located int Pointe Coupee, St. Landry Parish, St. Martin Parish, Iberia Parish, St. Mary Parish, Assumption Parish, and Terrebonne Parish will be severely impacted if not scored from the surface.

Johnson, Erlend, Helmer, Matt, Rees, Mark, and Mayer, John – *New Insights on Iatt Lake Bluff (16GR591): Preliminary Report on the 2024 Excavations in the Catahoula District of Kisatchie National Forest, Louisiana*

Iatt Lake Bluff is one of the largest and most significant precolonial sites in the Catahoula District of Kisatchie National Forest (KNF). Since its recording in 1995, the site has stood out for its unusually high density of indigenous pottery and cultural features. The site has also been subjected to illegal digging. Excavations in 2024 by UL Lafayette, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, and KNF Heritage Program recorded 55 features, including post molds, pits, and hearths. Diagnostic artifacts indicate a major Coles Creek habitation, with later and earlier activity dating from the Paleoindian period. While analysis is ongoing, this presentation highlights preliminary findings and interpretations.

Kidder, Tristram R., Ortmann, Anthony, and Patania, Ilaria – *An Update on Investigations of Mound C at Poverty Point*

We know very little about Mound C at Poverty Point. In this paper we use various analyses to investigate Mound C with a focus on understanding the pace of construction and possible ways it was used. Mound C is composed of two sections, built in horizontal stages, often brightly colored and made up of multiple sediment types. Our investigations use micromorphological and microartifact analyses to analyze the construction history. We argue that the microstratigraphic features on the two portions suggest the mound was built rapidly as parallel ridges. No evidence of occupation surfaces is visible at micro- or macro- analytic scales, and in most instances, the various stages have very few artifacts of any sort, even down to the microscopic scale. The exception to this is the mound cap, which contains many artifacts with considerable functional and raw material diversity. Whatever the use of Mound C, it was not residential, but in many ways, it parallels the ridges in form, construction methods, and tempo.

Lewis, Jeffrey T. JR – *Settlement Patterns in the Pine Hills of Mississippi*
This paper examines the changes in settlement patterns of ancestral Native Americans from the Late Archaic (5800 – 3200 B.P.) to Late Woodland Period (1500 – 1000 B.P.). During the transitions from the Archaic to Woodland Periods and the beginning transition into the Mississippian social phenomenon, there were dramatic changes in subsistence practices, social organization, social hierarchy, production, and exchange strategies. Throughout Eastern North America, these changes in lifeways impacted the location of settlements, camps, and other occupational areas on the landscape. Additionally, archaeologists routinely note that the desired location for new settlements pays tribute to ancestral communities and landscapes. Examining the variety of impacts on settlement patterns, these investigations seek to understand the changes among ancestral Indigenous communities within the Pine Hills of Mississippi.

Mills, Conan – *Using Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (sUAS) for Conservation of Mound A at Poverty Point World Heritage Site, Initial Results*
Over the last ten years, Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (sUAS) have been used in archaeology to create orthomosaics, and three-dimensional models for site recording, and analysis of landscapes. Poverty Point World Heritage Site in Louisiana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was built over 3,000 years ago near Bayou Macon in West Carroll Parish. Mound A, a monumental earthen structure, is a significant archaeological landmark that is not immune to erosion and degradation. In the past, site staff needed to make repairs to Mound A, using sterile dirt, to correct the effects of erosion. This research leverages sUAS photogrammetry to generate high-resolution digital elevation models, three-dimensional models, and orthomosaics of the mound, providing detailed topographic data for informed conservation efforts. By analyzing these models, using tools within geographic information systems, areas of erosion, vegetation growth, and human impact can be identified, enabling targeted interventions to mitigate damage. Regular monitoring using sUAS photogrammetry allows for the tracking of changes over time, facilitating timely responses to potential threats. The research presented here is the initial results of a long-term study to identify changes to Mound A highlighting areas that may be in danger because of environmental damage. This non-invasive approach provides a powerful tool for preserving Poverty Point for future generations while minimizing disturbance to the archaeological record.

Oesch, Karla – *Sunken Treasure: A Collection Recovered from a Safe in Lake Pontchartrain*
In 2014, a construction company was dredging a section of Lake Pontchartrain when they recovered the remains of a safe and some of its contents. The recovery area is state property, and the material was turned over to the Department of Justice because the safe was thought to have been stolen and discarded. In 2024, the items were transferred to the Division of Archaeology. The artifacts were stored

in a cloth bag and had not been opened in 10 years. On initial inspection, it appeared to be a collection of flatware. The cleaning and restoration process revealed a surprising variety of items that were likely of significance to the owner including over 150 coins, a complete matching flatware set, and a gold watch. The artifacts, while not part of an archaeological site, can provide dates of when the safe was stolen as well as some information about the person or persons who owned the safe.

Robicheaux, Ian – *Remote Sensing Applications in Identifying High Probability Archaeological Locales on the South Central Louisiana Coastline*

Archaeological sites along Louisiana's coastline are threatened by adverse coastal processes, such as erosion and subsidence. The reality that many sites face risk of total loss and destruction creates an adverse circumstance for archaeologists' efforts to protect and interpret the invaluable data within prehistoric coastal sites. Sites along the coast are often difficult to locate and nearly impossible to access. With environmental conditions making site access incredibly difficult, we are required to reevaluate the way we identify areas of high probability before entering the field. Using remote sensing, spatially defining locales where there is a high probability for archaeological sites is possible. Focusing on the areas of Vermilion and Cote Blanche Bay, I have applied the use of LiDAR shaded relief data along with patterns in the geography throughout the area of interest to identify the previously mentioned high probability areas. When considering how to visit and identify new coastal sites, a method to better qualify the search remotely is incredibly useful for shortening the identification process and guiding researchers more directly toward new discoveries.

Seidemann, Ryan, Halling, Christine, and Huey, Samuel M. – *The Morganza Spillway Cemeteries: An Example of Climate Change's Postmortem Casualties and Recommendations for Minimizing Impacts*

The Morganza Spillway, near its namesake town in Louisiana, can divert massive volumes of water into the Atchafalaya Basin. The area where the Spillway is located used to be habitable land. Construction of the spillway required that people leave the area, abandoning both their homes and their ancestors. A superficial examination of the Morganza Spillway's floodway in 2019 revealed that at least 20 cemeteries are threatened that area with the possible opening of the spillway. As part of a pair of presentations, this first one examines the existing sites identified in 2019 with no meaningful technical assistance and the applicable legal framework. The second presentation includes a more GIS-based example of what such a survey and predictive model could look like. Through the cemetery lens, we propose to examine resources that are often overlooked in climate assessments, but are likely to be impacted with increasing frequency in the coming years.

Sherman III, Simon P., PhD – *Reassessing Lithic Diversity at Poverty Point (16WC5): Insights into Multi-Layered Siliceous Material Resources*

During the Late Archaic period (4000–2500 cal yr BP) in the southeastern United States, the Poverty Point culture (PPC) in northeastern Louisiana exhibited an unparalleled use of exotic materials, including cherts, copper, and steatite. The Poverty Point site (16WC5), occupied around 3600-3100 cal yr BP, features massive earthworks and diverse artifacts but lacks burials, making it unique among Late Archaic cultures. The function of the site remains debated, with emerging research on siliceous stone sourcing offering new insights. This study advances chert sourcing methodologies through non-destructive Visible/Near-Infrared Reflectance (VNIR) and Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), analyzing 845 bifaces against an expanded dataset, including Edwards Plateau limestone from west Texas and Missouri samples such as Jefferson City Chert, Robidoux Chert and Quartzite, Reed Springs Chert, Gasconade Chert, Pitkin Chert, Burlington Chert, Silexite, and Aphanitic Rhyolite. Dimensionality

reduction using PCA and LASSO regression refined spectral data, enhancing prediction accuracy and addressing key gaps in artifact classification and raw material origin analysis.

Snitker, Grant, Gravel-Miguel, Claudine, Peck, Katherine, Paige, Jonathan, Martinez, Miguel, Fetterhoff, Alex, and Helmer, Matthew – *The Kisatchie National Forest Lidar Project: Machine Learning and Remote Sensing Applications for Forest-Wide Cultural Resource Management and Research*

The logistics, costs, and capacity needed to complete extensive archaeological pedestrian surveys to inventory cultural resources present significant challenges to public land managers. To address these issues, the USDA Forest Service and DOI Fish and Wildlife Service, in partnership with the New Mexico Consortium's Cultural Resource Sciences program, have led a new initiative to link aerial lidar-derived imagery and deep learning models tailored for cultural resource management on public lands. In concert with traditional archaeological methods, these next-generation tools have the potential to amplify agencies' abilities to efficiently identify above ground archaeological sites/features and monitor their condition over time. In this presentation, we explore the successes and challenges of designing, developing, and deploying lidar and machine learning methods to support cultural resource management priorities on the Kisatchie National Forest. Specifically, we will discuss 1) the logistics of flying and processing forest-wide, high resolution lidar datasets, 2) our approach to machine learning object detection and its implications for inventorying surface archaeological sites, and 3) examples of successfully deployed models for the Kisatchie National Forest. We will outline what has worked best so far, avenues for potential improvement, and new approaches to archaeological data science and synthesis that can benefit heritage programs and academic research alike.

Strader, Catherine Taunton – *Royalty in Bondage: Preserving the Legacy of Prince Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima and the Archaeology of Foster's Fields.*

This study examines the legacy of Prince Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima, an enslaved West African royal in Washington, Mississippi, and the significance of preserving sites associated with his life. Historical records document Ibrahima's journey from enslavement to his attempted return to West Africa, highlighting the resilience of the African diaspora. Foster's Fields, where Ibrahima was enslaved, likely contains an unmarked cemetery and remnants of enslaved life. Despite years of plowing, erosion, and surface collections, intact deposits may still exist, emphasizing the need for preservation. This study recommends combining historical research with archaeological technologies such as Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) and LiDAR to identify and protect these significant sites. These noninvasive methods help mitigate risks from erosion and development while deepening our understanding of the pre-Civil War enslaved experience in Mississippi. This research honors Ibrahima's legacy by integrating historical and technological approaches and contributes to the broader study of African diasporic history and migration.

Strader, Catherine Taunton– *Reviving Rivercane: Ecology, Culture, and Archaeology*

Arundinaria gigantea (rivercane), one of three native U.S. bamboos, thrives in southeastern wetlands, especially the Mississippi River Valley. Once forming vast canebrakes, their habitat declined due to agriculture, overgrazing, and disrupted Indigenous land management practices. Rivercane plays a vital ecological and cultural role by supporting biodiversity, improving soil and water quality, and serving as a critical resource for Indigenous communities. Restoration efforts, led by Indigenous groups and conservation organizations, aim to preserve traditional

knowledge and address understanding gaps in its life cycle. Archaeologists can support these efforts through non-destructive practices, mapping canebrakes, and recognizing rivercane's role in preserving cultural and archaeological sites through erosion control and habitat restoration.

Torrens, Shannon – *Taking Shape: Exploring the Zoomorphic Beads of Poverty Point*
Stone beads from the Poverty Point culture's lapidary industry offer fascinating and rich insights into identity, exchange, and interaction. The Beads, reflecting a variety of shapes and levels of production, have been counted in mass at the large mound centers of Poverty Point and Jaketown, as well as smaller sites like Slate. Effigy beads, depicting locus, owls, and other avian figures, have been found at major and minor Poverty Point sites throughout Louisiana and Mississippi, and even as far away as Florida. The sheer volume of production and diversity of styles suggest that beadmaking occurred rapidly and makers utilized different toolkits to achieve their results. By studying bead production and mapping their distribution across the landscape, we can gain insight into the ways these beads might have been worn, disseminated, and the roles they played during interactions between communities of the Lower Mississippi Valley and Gulf Coast.

Treloar, Steve and Helmer, Matt – *Curating 50 Years of Archaeology at the Kisatchie National Forest*
Archaeological investigations on Kisatchie National Forest are nearing the 50-year mark, and significant efforts have recently begun to curate, catalog, and synthesize one of the largest contiguous artifact collections in the state. Kisatchie's artifact collections have been brought up to modern curation standards through collaborative efforts with Northwestern State University, University of Louisiana Lafayette, and Louisiana Tech students and researchers. The first-ever comprehensive artifact database for KNF was developed, facilitating better management and accessibility of these significant collections. Additionally, points, stone tools, and other lithic materials are being sorted and analyzed for sourcing and distribution studies in collaboration with researchers from UL Lafayette. Technological advancements have also played a key role in synthesizing KNF's vast dataset. The New Mexico Consortium is leveraging AI-driven analysis to examine thousands of archaeological site records and associated artifact descriptions, providing new perspectives on settlement patterns and long-term cultural changes in the region. This poster details the preliminary results and goals of artifact curation and synthesis including management implications, and highlights the importance of ensuring the preservation of Louisiana's rich heritage for future research and public engagement.

Westrick, Robert F. and Pearson, Charles E. – *El Nuevo Constante Shipwreck – Forty-Five Years Later in Retrospect and the Search for the Corazón de Jesús y Santa Bárbara*
In 1979, a shrimper accidentally snagged three large copper disks in his nets. This led to the discovery of a partially buried shipwreck in about 19 feet of water. The state claimed ownership of the wreck, and the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, issued a contract to Coastal Environments, Inc. to conduct professional excavations and historical research on the site.
This archaeological project produced a wealth of information about the ship and the events leading to its loss. The site represents one of the most significant historical shipwrecks ever discovered in Louisiana state waters. This paper will focus on the discovery in retrospect, and the search for the Corazón de Jesús y Santa Bárbara, a vessel wrecked during the same storm believed to be located off the coast of Louisiana or southeastern Texas.

Wilson, Christopher – *The Growing Importance of Drone Surveys*
According to Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan, archaeological sites have five main threats: coastal subsidence and erosion, rapid urban and industrial development, land leveling, oil and gas development, and natural and man-made disasters. Land loss due to coastal subsistence and erosion is the main threat, for we have lost 2,000 square miles of land since the 1930s and stand to lose another 3,000 over the next 50 years. But what are we to do? Drone surveys may be the answer. They offer the opportunity to scan, photograph, and use remote sensing technologies across vast areas quickly, efficiently, and with minimal costs. Large amounts of data can be collected, processed, and studied in a short amount of time. We have the technology to study the areas with the highest threat level before it is too late. This presentation will present the advantageous use drones can be set toward.

Conference goers in the ballroom listening to the keynote address.

LAS President Sadie Whitehurst and Vice President Samuel Huey presided over the annual business meeting.

T.R. Kidder presenting research co-authored with Anthony Ortmann and Ilaria Patania on Investigations of Mound C at Poverty Point.

Megan Kassabaum delivering the keynote address, “On Elevated Ground: Interpreting 7,500 Years of Platform Use in the Lower Mississippi Valley”

Conference goers at Anna Mound site watch with rapt attention as Tony Boudreaux demonstrates his uncanny ability to heal dead leaves (Photo courtesy of Nikki Mattson).

Vin Steponaitis gives an opening presentation on the guided tour at the Grand Village of the Natchez (Photo courtesy of Nikki Mattson).

Conference goers milling about at the Grand Village of the Natchez on a lazy Sunday morning (Photo courtesy of Nikki Mattson).

Conference goers standing in the middle of the road on a gray and rainy Sunday morning, unaware of the large truck laden with logs speeding towards them (Photo courtesy of Nikki Mattson).

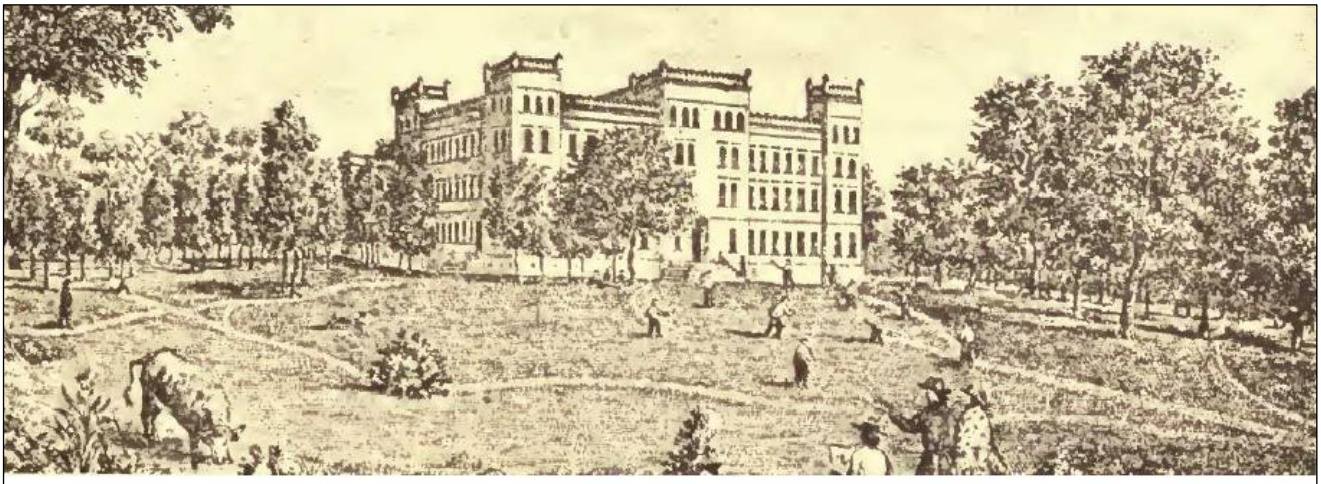
A packed house. Photo courtesy of Sadie Whitehurst.

MEETINGS

The 90th Annual Meeting of the **Society for American Archaeology** will be held on April 23–27, 2025, in Denver, Colorado. For more information, go online to: https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting

2025 Annual Meeting of the **American Anthropological Association** will be held on November 19-23, 2025, in New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information, go online to: https://annualmeeting.americananthro.org/

FIELD SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENT



Archaeology Field School

at the Old LSU Site (16RA49), Pineville, Louisiana
Dates: 27 May – 27 June 2025

Louisiana State University's (LSU) Department of Geography & Anthropology will be hosting an archaeology field school at the "Old LSU Site" (16RA49) located in the Kisatchie National Forest in Pineville, LA. LSU originally opened under the name Louisiana Seminary of Learning and Military Academy on January 2nd, 1860, under the leadership of William Tecumseh Sherman. The school closed between 1861 and 1865 for the Civil War. In May 1863, under orders from General William Taylor, the school was used as a hospital by the Confederate Army until March 1864, when the Union Army captured Alexandria. When the civil war ended, the school opened again in 1865 and was in operation until the night of October 15, 1869, when the school caught fire and burned to the ground.

This field school is organized to teach:

- Hands-on scientific and systematic methods of archaeological field research while taking part in applied research.
- It will emphasize:
  - Site mapping.
  - Site testing.
  - Controlled excavation.
  - On-site documentation.
- Earn undergraduate, graduate-level, or transfer credit.
- On site lodging will be provided.
- Enrollment is limited so apply early.

For more information contact

Dr. Matthew Helmer
matthew.helmer@usda.gov

Conan Mills
cmil247@lsu.edu

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LSU
Department of Geography & Anthropology

LAS CHAPTERS

Acadiana Chapter
The Acadiana Chapter of the LAS meets regularly and hosts a speaker series in partnership with the Anthropology Society at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Check our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/AcadianaLAS/ or email acadianalas@gmail.com for future dates and locations.
Acadiana Chapter Officers are:
Ian Robicheaux, President
Parker Chouest, Vice President
Sarah St. Germain, Secretary
Sam Huey, Treasurer
Gloria Church, Social Media/UL Lafayette Liaison

Baton Rouge Chapter
Contact: Brandy Kerr or Margeaux Murray, Co-Presidents
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To receive information about our meetings, please email batonrougelas1975@gmail.com.

D'Arbonne Chapter
Contact: Tom Fields
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Delta Chapter
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.
The Delta Chapter has a Facebook page at:
www.facebook.com/DeltaChapterLAS

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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 at https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/

Information for Contributors

Email all news, notes, announcements, reports, and *Newsletter* correspondence to the editor at: louisianaarchaeologicalsociety@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 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 at: https://www.laarchaeologicalsociety.org/

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