

# EARLY GEORGIA

*A Special Issue*

## Resources at Risk:

Defending Georgia's  
Hidden Heritage

**What is  
archaeology?**

**Why is it  
important?**

**Sprawl and  
the destruction  
of Georgia's  
archaeological  
resources**

**A prehistory  
of the  
Southeast**

**Transforming  
citizens into  
Defenders**



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THE SOCIETY FOR GEORGIA ARCHAEOLOGY

## EARLY GEORGIA

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*Early Georgia* publishes papers on the archaeology of Georgia and closely related subjects. Submissions are welcome from avocational and professional archaeologists, educators, and students, written on any topic that will further education, conservation, and research having to do with the archaeology of Georgia. **All manuscripts submitted should be formatted following the style guidelines published in *American Antiquity* (and on the world wide web), vol. 57, no. 4 (October 1992),** except that first-level headings should be typed in lower case with major words capitalized. Manuscripts should be on 8.5 by 11 inch paper, on one side only, with double spacing between sentences, and at least a one-inch margin on all sides. Submit both a paper copy and digital copy on a floppy disk. Set text citations in parentheses, e.g., (Smith 1975). Footnotes are not permitted. Illustrations can be submitted digitally or as original line drawings and glossy prints. Include a caption with each illustration and number them consecutively. Print tables on separate pages, number them in sequence, and give them titles. The editor will gladly assist authors in preparing manuscripts for publication.

While all submissions are subject to editorial review, authors may request to have their papers reviewed through a formal peer review process. Papers accepted for publication through the peer review process will be designated as Peer Reviewed Articles. All articles submitted for publication should be sent directly to the Editor. **Submissions for the Peer Reviewed Article should include four copies of the manuscript, including tables and figures.**

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## Editor's Introduction

# *Early Georgia: A New Look for a New Millennium*

As I begin my tenure as editor of *Early Georgia*, I take on a journal that has a long and distinguished history and has a wide readership that reaches far beyond the borders of Georgia. While *Early Georgia* is healthy and well supported by the membership of the Society for Georgia Archaeology, there is still the need to encourage greater submission rates and increase subscriptions. The Society's Board of Directors and I have devised a strategy that we hope will take *Early Georgia* toward those goals, and it involves some changes to the appearance of the journal, as well as to its content.

Regular *Early Georgia* readers will surely notice that this issue looks different from previous issues. True, it is a Special Issue, so its content is slightly different from the normal research articles. Most of the basic formatting in this issue, however, will remain the same for all future issues. These changes were instituted to update the appearance of the journal, as well as make it more graphic friendly and easier to read.

In terms of content, *Early Georgia*, as a policy, will now accept manuscripts dealing with the archaeology of adjoining states. Such papers have not been excluded in the past, but this policy change makes it more explicit that *Early Georgia* will accept material from the broader region when it has a bearing on understanding the history and prehistory of Georgia. Acceptance of such papers will be at the discretion of the Editor.

Another slight change that will affect content is the creation of a new category of paper to be published in *Early Georgia*. These will be called the Peer Reviewed Articles, and, as the name suggests,

will be subjected to a formal review by selected peers from the broader archaeological community. Submitting authors may suggest appropriate reviewers, but the Editor will not be bound by those suggestions. The Editor will take into account the comments of peer reviewers, but will make the final decision regarding manuscripts. The creation of the Peer Reviewed Article category is designed to encourage graduate students and professionals, who are concerned with building publication records, to consider *Early Georgia* as a publication outlet for their manuscripts.

It is important to note that all articles submitted to *Early Georgia* **do not** have to go through the peer review process. That choice is left to the submitting authors. Manuscripts that do not go through the peer review process will be reviewed in a less formal way. Choosing to forego a peer review in no way diminishes the quality of scholarship represented by an article or the importance of the information it contains. The peer review process is simply a more formal review process that allows professionals to advance their careers through publishing in *Early Georgia*.

Let me make it clear in no uncertain terms that the basic philosophy and content of *Early Georgia* will not change. The journal is still dedicated to publishing information that is important to Georgia's archaeological community. More than ever, the journal is committed to providing a publication outlet for both professional and avocational members of our community. I cannot encourage avocational members strongly enough to submit material for publication. What you learn from the

study of Georgia's past is every bit as important as the research done by other members of the Society for Georgia Archaeology. By keeping it from the pages of *Early Georgia*, you deny others the chance to learn from you.

As the first issue of *Early Georgia* to be published under my editorship, I am pleased to offer this Special Issue *Resources at Risk: Defending Georgia's Hidden Heritage*, which has been guest-edited by Charlotte A. Smith and Jennifer Freer Harris. As with all scholarly publications, the opinions expressed in this issue do not necessarily represent

the opinions of the Society for Georgia Archaeology. As Editor, I recognize, as I hope all concerned with the archaeological record of Georgia will as well, that this issue begins a conversation that is absolutely essential to the future of Georgia archaeology. The guest editors and I hope this issue will serve as an important source of information for Society of Georgia Archaeology members as well as concerned citizens, politicians, and planners as we all look to the future.

—Adam King

## Acknowledgements

We are honored that *Early Georgia*'s new editor, Adam King, consented to let us assemble *Resources at Risk: Defending Georgia's Hidden Heritage*, the first issue of the Society for Georgia Archaeology's newly redesigned journal. *Early Georgia* has a long and honorable history, and we hope that this issue augments it. We very much appreciate Adam's sage advice and erudite assistance, which we found immeasurably helpful as we brought this issue from idea to reality.

Archaeological conservationists can find potential partners for their preservation efforts in many places, and sometimes we don't have to look very hard to find them. We found Allison Smiley, at Sprawlwatch in Washington, DC, a particularly helpful collaborator. We thank her for her speedy replies as we searched for the resources we needed.

We would like to thank the contributors to this volume, Rita Folse Elliott, Scott Jones, Elizabeth Shirk, and Allen Vegotsky. Their involvement strengthened and enhanced this issue tremendously.

We have only been able to bring the diverse topics and data presented in this issue together because of recent and long-ago dialogues with many colleagues and friends. This kind of introspective discussion is only possible after a lengthy

gestation period. We owe considerable thanks to many members of SGA, especially Paul Brockington, Daniel T. Elliott, James B. Langford, Stephen A. Kowalewski, John R. (Chip) Morgan, Thomas Pluckhahn, Keith Stephenson, Christine Van Voorhies, Dean Wood, and Karen G. Wood. For assistance and information, we thank Mark Williams and Byron J. (Bud) Freeman. We appreciate the assistance we received from personnel at the Archaeological Services Unit of HPD. We also thank those who helped us and wish to remain anonymous.

For long discussions and excellent suggestions, we extend special thanks to Bill Jurgelski, Maureen Meyers, Carol H. Montgomery, and Gordon R. Smith.

We appreciate, especially, this opportunity to investigate and explicate on a topic we are impassioned about—saving the precious, mind-expanding information that our Southeastern forebearers have left for all of us in the soil. We look forward to continuing this discussion, and labor of love, for many years.

Finally, we thank our spouses, JC Burns and Guy Harris for their love, encouragement, patience, and understanding as we labored to produce this issue.

—Charlotte A. Smith and Jennifer Freer Harris

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# Georgia's Hidden Heritage at Risk

## An Introduction

by Charlotte A. Smith

*It was the first day of field school, the summer of my sophomore year in college. I enrolled because I thought the class would be interesting, but also because I was fascinated by archaeology and wanted to be outdoors.*

*The instructor, a graduate student, lined the dozen or so of the profession's latest novices up along one edge of an unplanted, plowed field, having instructed us in the time-honored technique for scanning the ground surface for artifacts. "When you find something," he said, "give a yell!" The rich, dark soil of this field had no pebbles or stones, and the surface had a nice skin from being pelted by raindrops and baked in the sun. When I spotted a rock, I just knew it had to be an artifact. My instincts had not mislead me!*

*The instructor told the circled class that I had found a hoe made of argillite. The rock's surface was soft and decomposing from its exposure to the elements, but I had found an object that had been shaped and used hundreds of years before.*

*It was the first artifact I'd ever found, and my heart pounded!*

*Since this was a field school, we learned the next lesson of formal archaeological procedures: we filled out a site form for the state's master file. It included a map marked where I found the hoe, a description of the artifact, and noted where it would be stored, so if any future researcher wanted to examine it, she or he would know where to find it.*

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The hoe I'd spotted in that southern Michigan field became an important lesson to me, and marked a transition toward a greater understanding of a very complex field of study.

First, I learned that even though the hoe was an isolated artifact, it still provided important information to archaeologists. We found no other artifacts along with that clunky stone tool; given the excellent surface visibility, we felt we would have found something else if it had been there. Then, too, it was possible that over the years others had collected artifacts from that field, leaving the hoe behind. We also couldn't know, even by comparison to extensive collections in the university's museum, how old the hoe was. We could only assume that it had been made and used sometime during late prehistory, when the people who lived in the area maintained fields and cultivated various crops. Ironically, the hoe was found in a research plot used by a major agricultural university; clearly agricultural production was still important locally!

I now understand how important such finds are. Even though I'd found a single artifact, it helped illuminate archaeology's big picture of who did what, where, when, and what it all means. That hoe filled in a little corner of the picture of late prehistory, and helped me see that knowing about one tool wouldn't be enough for me. After I found that hoe, I wanted to see how it fit into our understanding of agricultural practices, of settled village life, and of the long thread of prehistory.

Later, that hoe became a symbol for me of the transition between what I had thought archaeology was before I found it, and what I later came to understand the field of archaeology encompasses. This realization, however, only came after considerable study and long-term employment in the profession. For a while, I thought of that difference as

a gap—a difference of attitude toward our past. However, I was wrong. It is not a gap, but merely an indication that non-archaeologists have an incomplete understanding of what archaeology is and what archaeologists do.

While many people have misconceptions about archaeology, for the most part they do understand the core of what archaeology is (Pokotylo and Guppy 1999; Ramos and Duganne 2000). What professional archaeologists must continually do is augment or expand the understanding the public has of our complex and often obscure profession. That task is a primary goal of this special issue of *Early Georgia*. When Jennifer Freer Harris and I began to guest-edit this issue, we conceived of our audience as Society for Georgia Archaeology (SGA) members—of course—and others interested in the past or fascinated by archaeology.

The fundamental message of this issue is that Georgia's hidden heritage is under siege, the protections it now has are insufficient, and if those of us who are concerned about archaeological preservation work together, we can reverse this trend. It might be helpful to briefly step through some of the challenges to archaeological preservation and the successes and strengths we can build on to increase public awareness and form workable policies for the preservation of archaeological resources.

### Obstacles to Archaeological Preservation

Today, the cause of archaeological preservation faces myriad obstacles. For example,

- Land use changes involving bulldozing and land-altering activities disturb and destroy archaeological sites before they can be recorded or even discovered.
- Looting and the resultant destruction of archaeological sites has increased dramatically due to an enlarged global collector's market, fed in part by the internet.
- Archaeology is incompletely understood by the public and even by other social scientists.
- Archaeological resource protection issues are poorly integrated into policy and planning prior to development of non-federal projects, meaning archaeological conservation is often ignored.
- The cost of long-term studies and extensive excavations are skyrocketing, yet these studies are rarely done despite the fact that the data they produce are priceless.

### Archaeology is Almost Time Travel!

To me, archaeology is the closest thing to time travel. Observations on the surface of the soil and clues from beneath the soil enable us to imagine we are mingling with people of the past, sometimes the distant past. We learn about these people in a very intimate way, how they lived, how they coped in sometimes difficult environments, and perhaps gain something about humanity that has been missed or not fully appreciated. Sometimes archaeology contradicts historic accounts, for the material artifacts carry no biases, unlike the accounts of humans. Archaeology is eclectic and brings together the best efforts of geologists, historians, social scientists of various persuasions, chemists, ecologists, pathologists, and many others.

—Allen Vegotsky, SGA Member

- The theoretical questions archaeologists ask about long-term cultural evolution are increasingly complex, and difficult to explain in the brief “sound bites” preferred by today's mass media.

Archaeological preservationists face more obstacles than those listed above. The list includes some pervasive problems, and many of them exist across the globe, not only in the US and in Georgia. The picture is not entirely bleak, however.

### Recent Victories and Successes in Georgia Archaeology

Presently, archaeological preservation in Georgia is enjoying numerous successes.

- Various laws protect archaeological sites on federal and state lands, or allow the significance of archaeological resources to be discovered and evaluated before they are destroyed by land-disturbing activities.
- The funding received by the foremost state agency dealing with archaeology, the Archaeology Services Unit of the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of Department of Natural Resources, has been greater over the last decade than ever before.
- Georgia's database of archaeological resources is more robust and detailed than ever before, and is better than many in neighboring states.
- By many measures, archaeology awareness is higher now than over the last half-century, among groups such as teachers, planners, developers, local historians, genealogists, environmentalists, etc., due in no small part to the efforts of SGA and HPD.

• The transformation of Georgia's Archaeology Awareness Week into a month-long celebration provides a high-visibility place for professionals, avocational archaeologists, and the general public to come together to learn from each other.

This is not a complete list of recent successes in archaeological preservation in Georgia, but each represents a major victory achieved through the efforts of committed amateurs and professionals.

Consider, though, that given the current situation in Georgia—a burgeoning population that is driving extensive land use changes—are these triumphs enough as we enter a new millennium?

### The Future of Archaeological Preservation

The above lists reflect both the problems and successes faced by archaeological preservationists in Georgia over the last century. As the twenty-first century begins, however, the rate of destruction of archaeological resources (both sites and the information they contain)—permanent, irreversible destruction—is growing dramatically. This destruction is the result of Georgia's growing population, and the development that currently accompanies this growth.

Unfortunately, this rate of destruction can only be expected to increase in the near future. Thus, this issue of *Early Georgia* contains a plea for change in laws and policies, and in the fabric of everyday life—a plea to halt, and, if we are very lucky, perhaps reverse the trend toward increasing destruction of basic archaeological information.

Pokotylo and Guppy neatly summarize the dire situation facing our archaeological heritage.

*The continuing loss of archaeological sites throughout the world from land development, vandalism, and looting threatens the very essence of archaeology and our ability to understand the past. These losses also strike at the significant values that archaeological sites have in the heritage and living traditions of Aboriginal peoples. In a larger societal context, archaeological information is increasingly used in legal and political areas (e.g., assertion of Aboriginal land claims and rights) as well as cultural tourism (e.g., historic sites, heritage parks, and interpretive centers). Archaeologists are dedicated*

*to archaeological site conservation and have lobbied strongly and successfully for legislation to preserve and protect material evidence of the past. Although legislation has partially controlled site destruction resulting from land development and resource extraction activities, public support for continued conservation activities remains essential. A healthy appreciation for archaeological heritage also serves to deter site vandalism and looting. (1999:400)*

Although Pokotylo and Guppy focus on problems facing archaeological preservation in Canada, the above observations can apply equally to conservation of Georgia's archaeological resources.

### Goals of This *Early Georgia*

Taking all the above into account, the goals of this special issue are:

- to expand public perception of what archaeology is and what archaeologists do;
- to call attention to the urgent need for the preservation of archaeological resources, or at least the recovery of basic information before it is destroyed; and,
- to spur discussion of new ways that Georgians can accumulate more archaeological knowledge



Smith takes a break from mapping wall profiles in a 2 x 2 meter excavation unit, Etowah Mounds State Historic Site near Cartersville, summer 1995.

and save more resources, and disseminate this new information to the public.

To meet these goals, this special issue, *Resources at Risk: Defending Georgia's Hidden Heritage*, presents a series of articles that are intended to work in concert as an overview of the besieged state of archaeological preservation in Georgia in 2001. At the same time, we hope each article stands alone to address its particular aspect of that main topic.

***Food for Thought: Archaeology Today***

Traditionally, as a subfield of anthropology, North American prehistoric archaeology has had weak ties with history. ...Archaeology, if it is to meet the needs of the people it studies, must provide specific information on unique culture histories. This is particularly vital in the modern political climate, as collaboration for mutual benefit is a prerequisite for archaeologists working with First Nations. Potential contributions archaeologists can make to Aboriginal groups include documenting ancient ties to the land and demolishing the myth of the unchanging Native. In addition, the new emphasis on studying cognitive and symbolic aspects of the past has the potential to enrich our understanding of Aboriginal accomplishments. Recognition of the "Native voice" through study of oral traditions and collaborating with modern descendant populations also enhances our understanding.

—Alan D. McMillan (1999:5)

As a collection with overlapping perspectives, these articles will, sometimes repetitively, touch on several important points:

- Archaeological knowledge is derived from survey and excavation, and archaeologists use many outside specialties (e.g., pollen analysis, radiocarbon dating, soil chemistry analysis, linguistics) to better understand the human past;
- The main strength of archaeology as a discipline is that it seeks to understand both short- and long-term patterns of continuity and change in human societies;
- The first step toward major improvements in archaeological preservation is increasing public awareness of archaeology, and thus of the value of the information archaeological studies produce;
- It is urgent that Georgians reinforce and improve programs that conserve archaeological resources, as they are increasingly threatened by land use changes; and,
- Although Georgia has several outstanding programs that increase public awareness of archaeology, it has no program devoted to systematically recording and examining archaeological resources.

***Contents of Resources at Risk***

A diverse collection of articles, sidebars, and data intended to summarize and synthesize archaeological preservation in Georgia today comprise

this special issue of *Early Georgia*. Taken together, we hope they paint a picture of who and what came before us, the history of the efforts to preserve this hidden heritage, and an overview of continued threats to its existence.

The first article that follows this introduction discusses what archaeologists think archaeology is. Without a doubt, archaeology is a complex subject, in terms of its methods and data, and in the theory behind them both. Yet, if non-archaeologists are to understand what archaeologists do, archaeologists must reach beyond sound bites to present a comprehensive assembly of the concepts beyond a mere dictionary definition of the discipline. You may prefer not to read this article in one sitting, or even from front to back. Take time to enjoy the sidebars—the short sub-articles interspersed in the main text. And, to help non-archaeologists decode the jargon of the profession, we include a glossary at the end of the issue.

The succeeding article takes over to discuss why archaeology is important. What do the insights archaeologists obtain from archaeological data mean to researchers, to students, to present-day society as a whole? The article discusses many of the ways a more complete knowledge of the past enhances our present lives. We learn environmental and ecological lessons from the choices of those who lived before us, and there is undeniably an aesthetic sense of community that comes from a clearer picture of our ancestors. Further, we share a responsibility for passing these layers of understanding on to our children and their descendants—education through archaeology can form the foundation for teaching about many aspects of how we humans live, think, and work. This conservation, preservation, and stewardship of our culture is, in itself, part of what makes us what we are.

Scott Jones, an archaeologist and primitive technologist, spends much of his time teaching, and in the next article he contributes a brief chronology of Georgia's past. Jones discusses societal change and continuity mostly through understanding the technologies used by ancient peoples to get through their daily lives. This summary focuses on Southeastern prehistory, and briefly discusses Georgia's history through 1840.

Then, we present two articles on the programs and laws that relate to archaeology in Georgia. While they are not meant to be exhaustive, they

do contain considerable detail on the subject. The first of this pair discusses existing programs and organizations in Georgia that work for archaeological education, preservation, and research. Those organizations range from governmental agencies to local museums. Perhaps foremost among them is the Society for Georgia Archaeology.

In the article that follows, SGA's immediate Past-President, Rita Folse Elliott, describes SGA's long history and current goals. Elliott chronicles an organization that is now growing, forming important alliances with outside organizations, and making efforts toward fundraising far beyond the means of its members. SGA has thus positioned itself to initiate and lead many of the changes and ideas for the future discussed later in the issue. You'll find a timeline of significant events in SGA's history included with this article.

Next, we discuss sprawl and land use change in Georgia, and the impacts of both on archaeological resources. As we go to press, population statistics from the 2000 census have just been released. The Atlanta metropolitan area continues to be among the fastest-growing in the nation, and, with a general lack of zoning to concentrate growth, it's consuming a phenomenal amount of "undeveloped" land—land that, until the heavy equipment shows up, contains important archaeological resources that can be recorded and, in some cases, preserved.

Then, to counteract a tendency we all have to think of development as centered around cities, we present a case study of a small area along the upper Chattahoochee River to illustrate that development's impact is also obvious in rural areas.

The heart of this issue is the article "The Future of Georgia's Archaeological Resources: Transforming Citizens into Defenders," in which we pull together ideas that, if implemented, could profoundly improve and intensify management of Georgia's heritage in the twenty-first century. These are by no means all new ideas. Several have been discussed before or are listed in the long-term plans of HPD and SGA.

Listing those ideas in that article, along with an overview of the heritage they would protect, is an important idea in and of itself. It is, in a sense, in tune with the model for all community or societal action: first, do what you can do NOW! Those who seek to protect archaeological resources may not be able to, overnight, bring a complete awareness of

### ***Food for Thought: Diversity in Cultures***

Despite...diversity within and between North American cultures, it is still quite common to read statements implying a uniform Native American view of nature, as if all the diverse cultural relations with particular habitats on the continent can be swept under one all-encompassing rug. The same absurdity occurs when "the Eurocentric view of nature" is taken to mean that the Swiss, Swedes, Sicilians, Slovaks, Basques, Lapps, and Gypsies all view and use wildlands in the same manner. This assumption is both erroneous and counterproductive, and it undermines respect for the realities of cultural diversity. Nevertheless, it continues to permeate land-use policies, environmental philosophies, and even park management plans. It does not grant *any* culture—indigenous or otherwise—the capacity to evolve, to diverge from others, or to learn about their local environments through time.

—Gary Paul Nabhan (1997:157)

Georgia's threatened heritage to members of the public, but this is an effective first step.

You'll find ideas in this article for

- raising awareness of archaeology and archaeological resource conservation;
- improving the efficiency of archaeological outreach and education in Georgia;
- altering both policy and legislation to protect more archaeological resources, and to obtain more archaeological data before sites are destroyed;
- expanding responsibilities of existing institutions;
- new programs for archaeological research and conservation;
- new public-private partnerships; and
- new affiliations with organizations that have goals that parallel those of archaeological preservation (e.g., natural resource conservation).

We hope that, taken together, the articles in this issue support an understanding that Georgia's hidden heritage is at risk, and point the way toward what those who work to protect Georgia's endangered archaeological resources can do to stop the trajectory of destruction.

### **Converting Ideas and Beliefs into Action: The Road Ahead**

We live in an age of many unknowns—what will the stock market close at tomorrow?, what film will

### Stewardship in Archaeology

The most fundamental goal of archaeological ethics, according to the Society for American Archaeology (SAA), the foremost archaeological organization in the New World (membership exceeds 6600), is the stewardship, or protection and preservation, of archaeological knowledge. Although the language may be a bit stilted, SAA's ethical statement summarizes the rationale we exercised in orchestrating this issue of *Early Georgia*.

*The archaeological record, that is, in situ archaeological material and sites, archaeological collections, records and reports, is irreplaceable. It is the responsibility of all archaeologists to work for the long-term conservation and protection of the archaeological record by practicing and promoting stewardship of the archaeological record. Stewards are both caretakers of and advocates for the archaeological record for the benefit of all people; as they investigate and interpret the record, they should use the specialized knowledge they gain to promote public understanding and support for its long-term preservation.*

win Best Picture at the Academy Awards?, and what's for dinner tonight?—but there's one thing we do know about the future: many archaeological sites will be destroyed tomorrow, next month, and next year. We can't stem that tide, but we can act differently in the face of it. Becoming a member of SGA is one measure each of us can take, and being an active member of SGA is even more meaningful. We hope this special issue of *Early Georgia* can serve as a useful handbook for SGA members and others seeking to know more about Georgia's fragile and threatened archaeological record—in short, all those who want to know what they can do to preserve that heritage.

To talk about the practice of archaeology today means to consider the rapid destruction of archaeological sites. As I write this, the Taliban in Afghanistan have recently dynamited a Buddhist worship site sculpted over a millennium ago. I know that bulldozers regularly carve away small and large prehistoric sites as more housing is added

across the US. I also know that the houses, stores, and churches of aging neighborhoods come under the wrecking ball, sometimes before historic preservationists are aware of developers' plans.

All around Georgia, archaeological sites are being destroyed or are under threat of destruction. While it can be argued that "development" is the natural progress of things, obliterating the past before it's been recorded and understood is not "natural," nor does it have to be an inevitable by-product of progress.

In Georgia we lack sufficient infrastructure to implement a large-scale systematic project to record archaeological resources before they disappear forever. That infrastructure cannot be constructed without public support, and that support will not emerge without public understanding. And public understanding, in turn, stems from outreach by professionals and those committed to archaeological preservation.

This issue represents our pursuit of that goal, our attempt to add to public awareness of our *Resources at Risk*. It's hoped that some of what is here inspires other professionals, committed amateurs (such as SGA members), and members of the public to make a contribution, to educate others, and ultimately to take action.

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# What is Archaeology?

## How Exploring the Past Enriches the Present

by Jennifer Freer Harris and Charlotte A. Smith

Archaeology is the single most powerful tool to know, understand, and explain the entire human saga—from our earliest ancestors to modern society. Thus, archaeology can and does make substantial contributions to modern life. Archaeology has evolved from the glorified treasure hunting of its early days to be a sophisticated social science, with far-reaching explanations of human behavior. Consequently, when professional archaeologists, like ourselves, discuss the profession with the general public, as we attempt in this article, there is some value to covering the entire discipline, with its inherent complexities.

Substantial amounts of archaeological research are conducted with public support and funding, although, in general, members of the public remain unfamiliar with the process and goals of archaeology. Yet, to effectively manage and preserve America's archaeological resources, public involvement is critical. To address misconceptions and to underscore the complexities of archaeology, this article seeks to provide a definition what archaeology is that is accessible to non-archaeologists.

### What Do You Think Archaeology Is?

When you hear the word archaeology certain images probably come to mind. Some people think artifacts are archaeology, and that the homes and offices of archaeologists must be strewn with arrowhead collections and the like. Others think “this is archaeology” when they stand atop a mound at

Etowah or Ocmulgee. Still others think “archaeology” when they gaze at “treasures” in museum displays. Actually, none of these truly represents the archaeologist's archaeology.

While archaeologists are excited by, interested in, and curious about artifacts and ancient constructions, archaeologists seek to understand the interplay of life, of society, of daily chores, of special rituals, of social and political power, and of why a community or region was abandoned or settled. In this article, we ask you to stop and reflect on the accuracy of the images and ideas you hold about what archaeology is. Does an archaeologist view the discipline differently?

### Archaeology is the Study of...

Many archaeologists begin a discussion like this with a definition: *archaeology is the study of the material remains of our human past*. While that defines the term, it does not fully capture the magnitude of archaeological inquiry. Today's archaeologists can be very sophisticated in both the questions they ask of material remains and the answers they generate when they interpret that evidence. In this essay, we dismantle that textbook definition and discuss it one part at a time. We hope this clarifies the definition of “archaeology,” and gives insights into the underlying concepts of archaeology, including its methods and theories.

As an academic discipline, archaeology has an interesting history. To some scholars, it developed

## Raiders of the Lost Ark: Dispelling a Hollywood Myth

Envision a scenario that many archaeologists encounter at least once in their careers: you are introduced as such in a social setting, facing the inevitable reaction of at least one person: "Ah, you're a real-life Indiana Jones! How exciting!"

Your new acquaintances mean well and are enthusiastic about furthering the conversation, trying to learn more about this unusual discipline, the people who work in it, and, most importantly, the artifacts you "dig up." You try hard not to bristle at the movie reference and they try not to look disappointed when you tell them that your interest is in human settlement patterns and the information they provide. They are openly dismayed to learn that you do not collect artifacts from the field at all. They are disillusioned that you do not dig anything, instead you walk over large tracts of land looking for signs of previous human activity. They are confused to learn that you leave the material remains you do encounter right where they are, after noting their characteristics.

They regain some sparkle in their eyes when they inquire about where you do your fieldwork—some-where exotic, surely, like Egypt or Mesopotamia.

Well, no, you work in the United States. Georgia, actually. In fact, your latest project was in Oglethorpe County.

All the while, the sparkle is fading from their eyes. Right here? In their own backyard? There's nothing exciting about that!

Or is there?

Many people maintain a romantic vision of what archaeologists do, where they conduct fieldwork, and what group of people they try to understand.

Archaeologists do, in fact, take part in an exciting field, but they experience that exhilaration from the

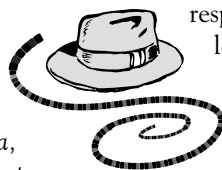
questions they ask about humankind and the unexpected answers they discover. They're excited when they discover, not an artifact, but a new way of looking at human behavior. That intensity can happen whether they are investigating prehistoric political boundaries in the prehistoric Southeast or working on a remote excavation in the Middle East. An archaeologist's questions are about people past, present and future, our similarities and our differences.

Why is the myth of the heroic treasure-seeker so harmful? If non-archaeologists conceive of archaeology as focused on artifacts, they remain unaware of the anthropological investigations that frame the questions archaeologists ask. Often, this can translate into a lack of concern for funding for archaeological preservation, educational outreach, and research.

If the public does not grasp the serious issues archaeologists explore, then why should they take responsibility for learning more about their local, national and international heritage?

Why should they advocate for strengthened public policy in regard to planning and development and its devastating effect on the network of prehistoric sites? Why should they teach their children to respect the past, the people who lived it, and the materials that remain from their existence?

It is only when the public sees archaeology for what it is, a human science; archaeologists for what they are, knowledgeable researchers; and artifacts for what they are, simple tools to understanding the people who made, used, and discarded them, that we all can ensure the preservation of our irreplaceable archaeological resources.



from geology, while to others archaeology is an outgrowth of other disciplines, including anthropology, history, or geography. Still others have argued that archaeology stands alone as its own academic discipline.

Each archaeologist views the profession with his or her own theoretical assumptions, often implicit. Here is one of ours: *archaeology and archaeological theory are part of anthropology*. While specific questions about cultural chronology and detailed reconstructions of the past are within the realm of archaeological method, the archaeologist's overarching objective is to define and understand wider cultural processes. Generating those explanatory models of human behavior is part of anthropology. Not all archaeologists agree that archaeology is a

part of anthropology. Indeed, at the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in April 2001, over 100 archaeologists gathered for an afternoon to debate this issue in an open forum.

Humans and their society, whether it is the present-day relationship between Kurds and the Iraqi government or between the Incas and their environment 2000 years ago, are within the realm of anthropological study. Anthropologists examine human behavior in all its contexts: geographic and environmental, societal, political, economic, and cognitive or cultural. Archaeologists track and explain change in all of these spheres, at multiple levels or scales, and over sometimes lengthy periods of time. Thus, archaeology is a tool for conducting anthropological research into past soci-



eties. It is a complex and sophisticated tool to be sure, with its own set of theoretical structures, but a tool nonetheless.

Because anthropology (and thus archaeology) is a holistic discipline, archaeologists are likely to adopt ideas and techniques from any discipline that touches on human life. Indeed, sometimes it can seem a veritable university is bearing down on an archaeological site! The methods archaeologists use to understand the past and all of its complexity are too numerous to list here. However, it is one of the strengths of archaeology that it has so successfully absorbed so many ideas from other kinds of research in both the hard and social sciences. Moreover, archaeologists work in many arenas including academic departments, government offices, national and state parks, cultural resource management firms, museums, and other public and private institutions. (For a readable, informative summary of the above see Dark 1995.)

Archaeology may incorporate aspects of many other fields of study, but it is not limited by any of them. It is not simply art history, nor is it purely scientific human ecology, for example. Similarly, archaeology is more than a subjective analysis that shifts with the changing attitudes and academic trends of the modern world. Archaeologists examine myriad variables to generate a detailed understanding of the complex creatures we humans are.

### What Are Archaeological Data?

While the popular conception may be that archaeologist are only interested in artifacts, the reality is that archaeologists examine several different kinds of information in their quest to understand the past. Ultimately, it is not just the things that are important, but where they were found and what else was with them. Careful, systematic fieldwork allows archaeologists to recover sometimes subtle and ephemeral information from around artifacts, providing considerable detail about what they call context. Thus, archaeological data include *objects*, like artifacts and bones, but also the setting for those objects, or their *context*. Together, objects and their context form the basis of archaeological interpretation.

### Material Remains

*Most of the marks that man has left on the face of the earth during his two-million year career as a lit-*

### What is Anthropology?

Anthropology, broadly speaking, is the study of human beings. In North America, anthropology is divided into four sub-fields: archaeology, cultural anthropology (the study of present-day peoples and societies), linguistics (language), and physical anthropology (human and primate behavior and evolution). Archaeologists looking at ancient remains use theories and models of human behavior developed by cultural anthropologists, for instance, and there is informational give-and-take among all four sub-fields.

Anthropology is considered a holistic discipline because it investigates humans from so many different perspectives. Research techniques borrowed from biology, ecology, psychology, history, economics, and politics are all used to examine humans and their connections to the world around them. While it shares certain aspects with all of these fields, anthropology goes a step further by combining them in order to shed light on the totality of human culture and existence. The fields of sociology and psychology, for example, pertain to mostly urban, industrialized society, or the general mental structures of modern humans. Anthropology encompasses all peoples, urban and rural, modern and traditional, Western and Non-Western, past and present.

Archaeology is not always considered a sub-field of anthropology. In England archaeology is viewed as related to geology, because in both fields excavation is used to discover the sequence, or stratigraphy, of layers of remains (determining which layer or deposit is older—or below—which others). Other Europeans see archaeology aligned with neither history nor anthropology (Courbin 1988), and often disagree with the American focus on scientific method. No matter the discipline they ally themselves with, the archaeologist's aim is always to better understand our past.

*ter-bugging, meddlesome and occasionally artistic animal have one aspect in common: they are things, they are not deeds, ideas or words.*

—Glynn Isaac (1971:123)

As we stated at the beginning of the article, archaeologists study the material remains of the human past. Those material remains are composed of every conceivable substance on earth. If humans used, touched, cooked, ate, built with, modified, or created it, then it falls within the bounds of archaeological inquiry. Material remains are those stereo-

### Site Destruction

Sites and other archaeological resources are disappearing continuously through looting, vandalism, environmental alteration, and modern development. Even if legislators immediately implemented the most extreme measures to protect archaeological sites, we would still lose hundreds, perhaps thousands, of sites each day across the globe.

Looters and vandals, although high-profile and newsworthy, only threaten specific kinds of sites. Those sites are generally large, well-known locales that hold rare artifacts and attract individuals seeking profit in the underground (and illegal) market for stolen cultural property. Looting must be curtailed and there are specific, targeted laws and procedures in place to limit those activities.

Today archaeological sites face another threat that is more menacing and dangerous—unrestrained sprawl. Sprawl—dispersed development outside of compact urban and village centers, along highways, and in the rural countryside—is responsible for the majority of archaeological sites lost today. There are no criminals to target in this situation. The offenders are lack of planning, an uninformed public, and meager information concerning the archaeological resources being impacted.

Any discussion of the future of archaeology must involve a large measure of conservation awareness. Most sites, because they are unknown and unrecorded, are vulnerable to even the most well-intentioned individuals. The archaeological community has made great strides in the last thirty years creating a process to reverse that trend. Archaeologists often favor survey and inventory whenever and wherever possible, and preservation over excavation. New laws have strengthened legal protections for archaeological resources on government-owned lands, and archaeologists are urging the public to consider stewardship of those materials on private land a fundamental obligation. Safeguarding our cultural heritage will only succeed when everyone works together.

typical artifacts commonly associated with archaeology: stone tools, potsherds, exquisite burial goods, and so on. They include the minuscule pollen traces buried in the trash pit of an Early Archaic camp, an animal bone with barely visible butcher marks from southern France, the temple mounds of Mexico, the foundations of a medieval house, the vast terraces of some agricultural lands,

and camps along the transportation routes of an early empire. Archaeological remains can extend across an entire region or consist of a microscopic fragment of DNA.

### Context of Material Remains

So, in a sense, archaeologists *are* interested in artifacts, but that is only a small part of the story. More important than the artifact itself is where it is found and what it is found with—its context. There is much more to be learned from an arrowhead or potsherd when archaeologists know its context. They can learn who used these things, how and when they were used, and for what purposes. Similarly, an archaeological site is more informative placed within *its* context. It is then that archaeologists can see how it fits within a network of sites from the same period. Then, archaeologists can compare that network to those that came before and after. In addition to context defined by physical space, archaeologists are also interested in context as created by culturally defined spaces.

Context provides the details archaeologists need to reconstruct the past. As you might expect, context is directly affected by how material remains entered the archaeological record, and what happened to them with the passage of time. Clearly, depositional factors (or what happened to remains after they were abandoned) and variability in preservation affect the amount and kinds of information archaeologists can recover from material remains. Despite these problems, archaeologists rely on the context of artifacts and material remains to interpret the past.

The archaeologist's ability to garner information from material remains also depends on how they are recovered. Context remains a key. Context is not only the artifacts' placement over the landscape, but the linkages among artifacts, sites, settlements, and political regions (Figure 1). While painstaking, thorough excavations are important for understanding the where and when of material remains, the study of the distribution of sites and artifacts across broad areas provides important breadth to explanations of large-scale human activities. That ability to “zoom out” allows archaeologists to tackle the difficult task of explaining culture in its entirety, over long periods of time (Figure 2). This “wide-angle lens” ensures that

researchers are able to detect relationships or inter-relatedness among settlements, even if remote.

But what underlies the ability to make those cultural interpretations? Archaeologists assume that the placement of artifacts, features and settlements over the landscape is not random, but the result of human decision-making. In short, there are meaningful, observable reasons why objects are found where they are. Archaeologists take the fragments that remain from the original social system, piece them together in a way that represents the past reality, and then attempt to explain that reconstruction. That process is not as easy as it sounds and there can be pitfalls, as culture is far more than an oversized jigsaw puzzle.

To avoid misinterpretation, archaeologists try to be explicit about the process of abstracting from *Potsherds A, B, and C* to *Explanation Z*. The process is complicated and archaeologists continually seek to match their understanding of the past with the artifacts and building remains that they find. In other words, the archaeologist's work does not end at excavation; a significant part of archaeological research seeks to reveal the relationship between the material evidence that remains and the culture that left it behind. This process means that archaeologists allocate considerable time after an excavation to analyzing artifacts, drawing maps, writing reports, and other post-fieldwork activities.

### Documents

In addition to material remains and their context, another important source of information for archaeologists is the documentation generated during the research process. During the course of a project, archaeologists produce a mountain of documentation, often including field notes, maps, photographs, artifact analysis sheets, electronic databases, and project reports. After over a century of archaeological investigations in the US, the body of information represented by these documents is considerable, and their importance to new and on-going research projects has grown. Indeed, *Early Georgia* has often published restudies of old data sets accessed through existing documentation (e.g., Chamblee, Neumann, and Pavao 1998).

### How Do Archaeologists Collect Data?

Archaeologists examine a huge range of material remains, coupled with interpretations of how

### Other Ways of Looking at the Past

Archaeologists divide the past into periods, generally identified by different types of artifacts and settlement patterns, and by different styles of artifact decorations. At the same time, archaeologists realize that these are modern, artificial ideas imposed on the continuum of the past. The people who lived on those sites and made and used those artifacts did not see such breaks in time. It is not surprising, then, that their descendants conceptualize the past differently from archaeologists. Notes Roger C. Echo-Hawk,

*Archaeologists frequently say that the sites they excavate and artifacts that they recover can "speak" to us across the centuries, and physical anthropologists often think of collections of human skeletal remains as "libraries." In oral traditions, we can hear echoes of the actual voices of the people who made those artifacts and who were the original owners of those skeletons....*

*As a concept, "prehistory" interferes with recognition of the validity of the study of oral traditions because it presumes an absence of applicable records.... It may be technically correct to apply the term to periods in time for which no writings exist, but its usage as a taxonomic device emphasizes written words, while presuming that spoken words have comparatively little value. (2000:285)*

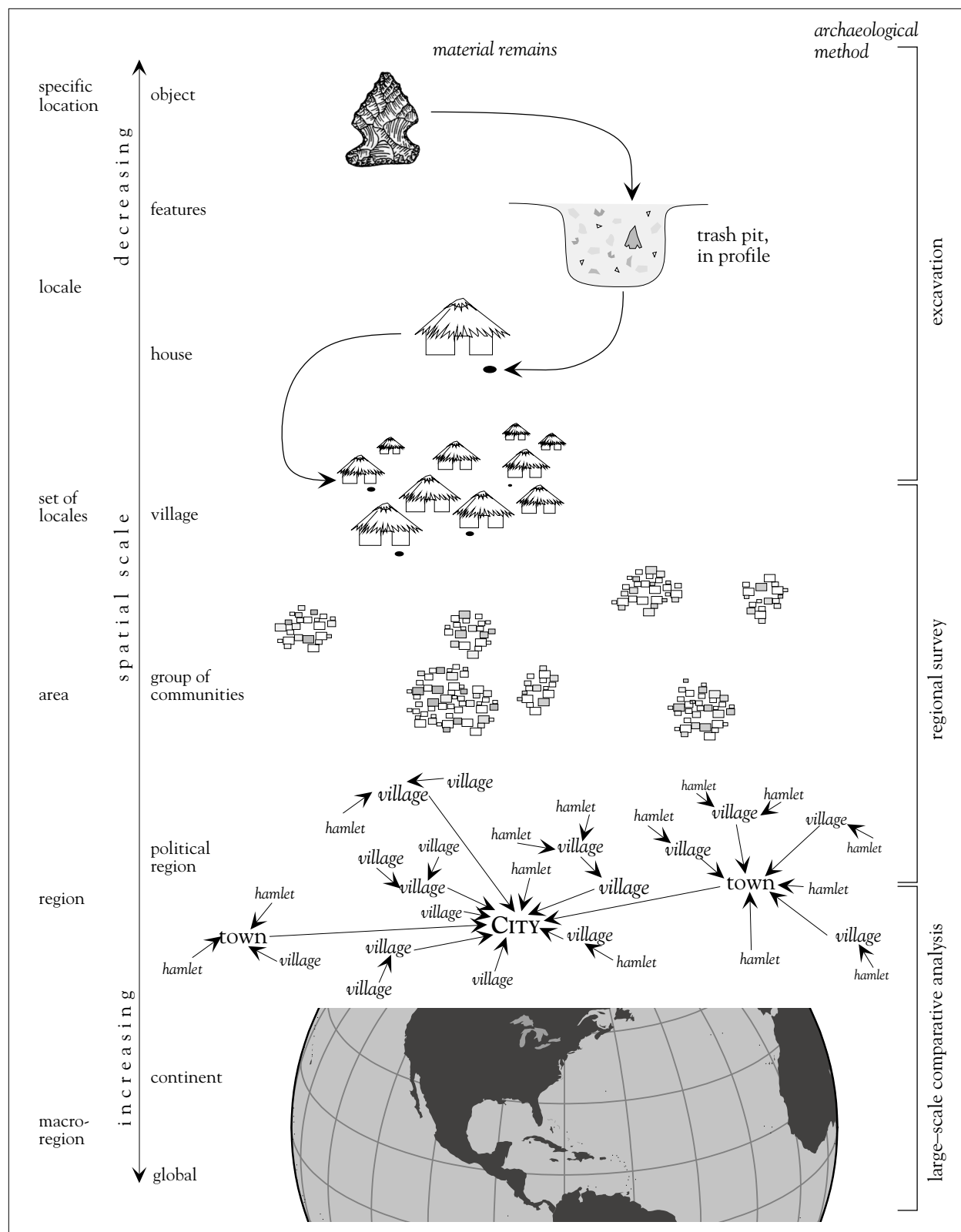
Today's Native Americans think of the past not in the periods of the archaeologist (e.g., Mississippian, Woodland, Archaic), but in terms that have continuity with their own cosmology. Indeed,

*...Mississippianism should...be viewed as constituting the context for the entire range of characteristics that provided, and continues to provide, coherence to the culture base of the Seminole and Miccosukee and Creek descendants of the Maskoki peoples today. (Wickman 1999:35)*

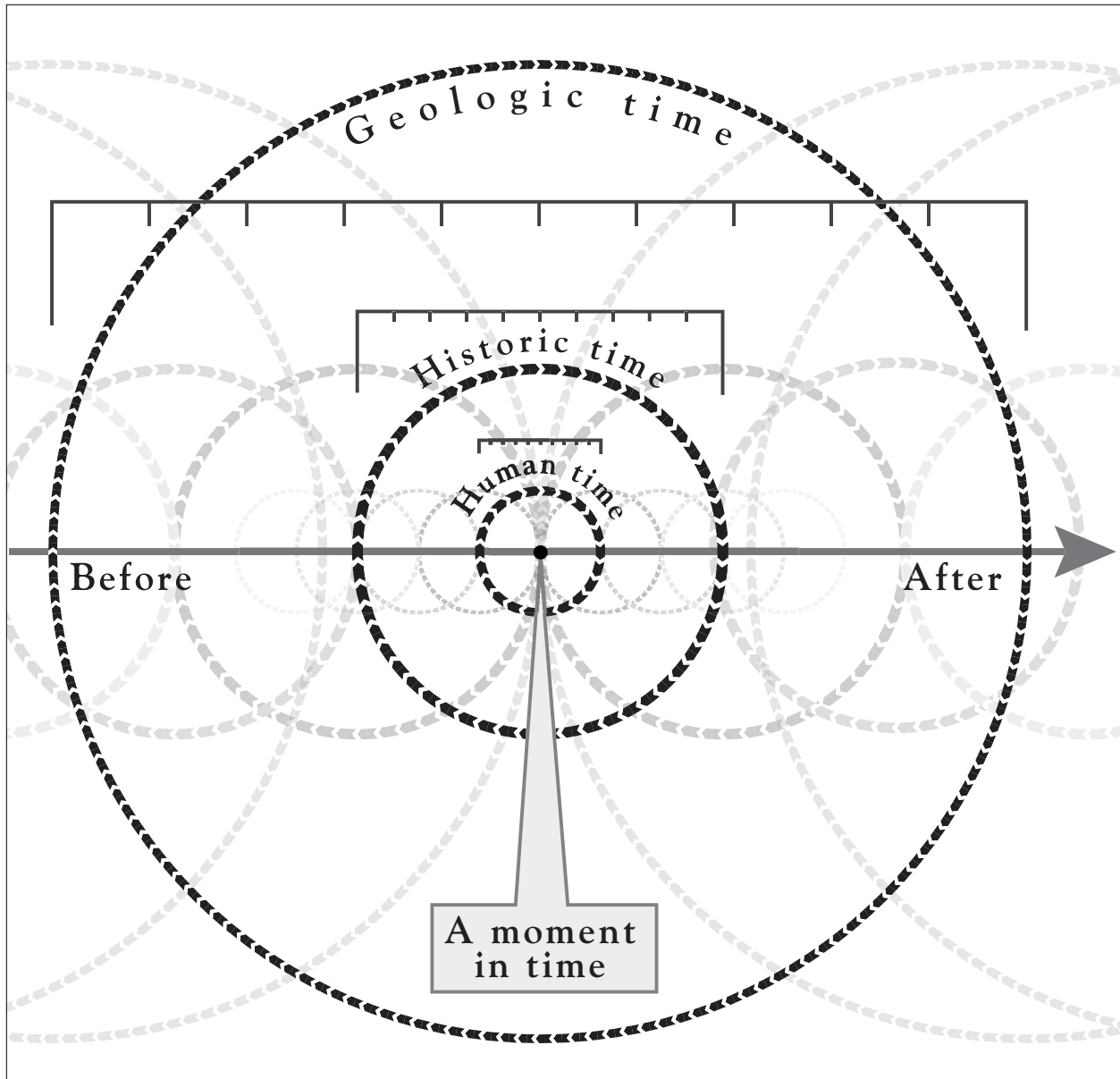
Knowing these two lines of evidence—both the oral tradition and the archaeological interpretation of the past—deepens our understanding of the past.

*Oral traditions and the archaeological record both reveal the workings of these [traceable social] processes, and both provide important knowledge about the ancient past. Archaeology is inherently multidisciplinary, so the study of oral literature should exist as one more realm of legitimate inquiry. (Echo-Hawk 2000:288)*

they were made, used, and discarded, to try to understand how people lived, loved, and died in the past. Archaeologists obtain these material remains basically using two methods: excavation



**Figure 1. Space and scale in archaeology.** Human activities occur different-sized spaces and at different scales. Archaeologists use methods carefully tailored to understanding human behavior at various scales. Shown here are scales that range from the individual artifact to the global. This is but one example of the ways in which archaeological method and theory intersect with the physical remains of a culture. *Please note: the schema above is not meant to outline a universal trajectory for all cultures, or that all societies develop along the same evolutionary path.*



**Figure 2. Time and scale in archaeology.** Although archaeologists understand linear time, they also seek to understand cyclic patterns in human and natural phenomena. At any moment in time, many types of cyclic patterns may be in play. Most of these are not evident to the people whose lives are enmeshed in those patterns. However, from a viewpoint distant in time and space, archaeologists seek to identify those kinds of patterns. This figure shows three units of time, differing in scale and rate of change. These are just three of perhaps infinite scales that might be used in archaeological or historical analysis. For more on cyclic patterns when analyzing the past, read Braudel's *On History* (1980). The three cyclic patterns in this figure do not correspond exactly to Braudel's three cycles of change.

**Geologic time.** This is a long-term cycle reflecting environmental and climatic shifts, and changes in human adaptation that span millennia. Although we live enmeshed in geological time, we tend to be unaware of these slow changes in our daily lives. Only when they hear of studies of greenhouse warming, for example, do most people realize how change on the geologic scale affects their own lives.

**Historic time.** These patterns reflect changes in social, economic, or political systems—the rise of capitalism or the Renaissance, for example. Individuals are peripherally cognizant of these changes and their impact on our lives. We know that “society was different during the 1800s,” for example.

**Human time.** This scale denotes the daily, annual, or generational changes that we all experience: birth, death, social interactions, agricultural seasons, and changes in fads or fashions. We fully experience, and are aware of, human-scale changes during our own lifetimes.

and survey. Often the two are used in combination, which means quite powerful data are generated.

*Excavations* produce information about how objects were used in a household, for instance, or the pattern of special activity areas in a community (e.g., where trash pits were in a Mississippian vil-



*Researchers examine the freshly scraped surface at the base of the plow zone for features at the Raccoon Ridge site east of Atlanta. Left to right: Keith Stephenson, John Worth, Dea Mozingo Kennedy, and Pat LoRusso.*

lage). Excavation is a labor-intensive process that begins with pre-excavation planning, including developing a research design that draws on previous research to determine what might be found and how best to collect that information. After excavation, there's also the cleaning and cataloguing of artifacts, tabulation, sometimes analysis by specialists (e.g., zooarchaeologists, palynologists, chemical analysis of ceramic composition), as well as the big job of producing a report that documents the field and laboratory work. Many archaeologists estimate they must budget at least as many staff-hours for laboratory analysis and report writing as they do for fieldwork—that's a lot of time! Excavation is also expensive because archaeologists have an ethical obligation to save all of the artifacts recovered and the documentation produced (e.g., field notes, maps, analysis forms, databases, photographs) forever.

*Survey*, or walking across the land systematically looking for evidence of previous human activity, provides a different kind of archaeological data.

Sometimes survey archaeologists can examine the ground surface directly for artifacts, for instance, in a plowed or fallow field, or along a road cut. Mostly, an archaeologist must create instead small "windows" to see what is buried under leaves or grass. To do this, they dig small holes, called shovel tests, sift the soil through a fine-mesh metal screen to collect all artifacts and examine the shovel test profile for evidence of features. By identifying these material remains, potentially including temporally diagnostic objects (ones they recognize simply by visual inspection were used at a certain time), and plotting their locations, archaeologists hope to determine how many people lived at a site and when they lived there. This basic information is used extensively in settlement pattern studies, and is crucial to understanding broad-scale issues of human cultural change.

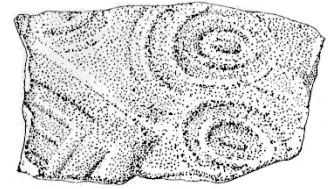
Whether archaeological research involves doing a survey or conducting excavation, archaeologists have an ethical obligation to save all of the artifacts and documents produced forever. This is known as *curation*, which is a process whereby archaeological data are organized sufficiently to insure future scholars have ready access to it, and stored in a facility that will insure their long-term protection (climate-controlled, secure, fire resistant). While curation is not part of collecting archaeological data, it is an important part of preserving those data for future generations.

Thus, archaeologists are concerned with detailed information about specific locales collected through excavation. But, they are also interested in survey data that shows how people arranged themselves across the landscape at any given time (analogous to a census), and how those patterns shifted through time. Archaeologists are unable to obtain this information, and it is lost forever, when modern land use destroys archaeological sites and the information they contain before surveys can be conducted.

### **The Who, What, Where, When and Why of Archaeology**

In a recent survey commissioned by the Society for American Archaeology (Ramos and Duganne

**Applying the who, what, when, where, and why questions of archaeology** to the Swift Creek example (for more on Swift Creek, see Bense 1994, and Williams and Elliott 1998). Archaeologists often use the name of an artifact complex to indicate a cultural group—the Swift Creek people, for instance. This is a bit of a misnomer, as such a modern name could never have been used in the past. Also, the people using the style archaeologists identify as Swift Creek may not have seen themselves as a single, integrated group, as the term “Swift Creek people” implies.



Swift Creek sherd

Archaeological Questions	
Methods and Techniques	Middle Woodland Swift Creek (0–500 AD) Example
<b>When (chronology, timeline)</b>  Dating methods are both relative and absolute. Cultural periods may be marked by specific artifact styles, but can also include entire cultural complexes (ceremonial goods, burial practices, presence of agriculture, etc.).	The characteristic marker (or diagnostic artifact) for Swift Creek culture is its complicated-stamped pottery—with distinctive curvilinear designs such as scrolls, spirals and concentric circles. Archaeologists believe that people making pottery with Swift Creek designs lived for about 500 years, or perhaps 20 generations or more.
<b>Who, What, Where</b>  Archaeologists plot the locations of sites with diagnostic artifacts to see the geographical extent of interacting groups. Some studies examine minute details to assess what people ate, their burial practices, and other aspects of daily life.	From the plotted occurrences of diagnostic Swift Creek pottery, the Swift Creek culture has now been identified across south Georgia and northwest Florida. People who used Swift Creek pottery occupied large camps along floodplains, smaller, temporary camps in upland areas, and there is some evidence for large shell middens (or trash heaps) in coastal areas.
<b>Why, How</b>  Anthropological and archaeological theories attempt to explain broad patterns of cultural change and continuity. Often these models are derived from studies of living peoples from distant parts of the globe.	During the Woodland period, which includes Middle Woodland Swift Creek peoples, archaeologists find a slow shift from hunting, gathering, and fishing, to the first attempts at agriculture. During the Woodland period, archaeologists find evidence for an increase in special ceremonial activities that suggest new political stratagems for leadership. These kinds of changes are interpreted using anthropological theories of sociocultural change (and are beyond the scope of this article).

2000), members of the public were asked what came to mind when they heard the word archaeology. Thirty-seven percent of the respondents answered “digging” in some form (digging artifacts, digging bones, etc.). If there is any message archaeologists would like to convey to non-archaeologists, it is that *archaeology is more than digging*. Excavation, trowels, and artifact recovery are tools that archaeologists use to systematically compile information about past peoples, but they are not the final objective. Most archaeologists *only* excavate if a site is threatened by destruction, and before excavation they write a well-developed research design that guides them in obtaining the maximum information from that excavation. This is because by its very nature archaeology is destruc-

tive, and there is only *one* opportunity for excavation.

To better understand what archaeologists *really* do, it may be helpful to outline the discipline’s fundamental goals. Archaeologists perform a three-tiered investigation of the human past by: 1) establishing a timeline or chronology of events; 2) reconstructing past lifeways; and, 3) providing explanations for patterns of human development (Thomas 1991). These elements build upon each other, allowing archaeologists to address a variety of complex questions about human societies.

### Asking When

One key to discussing the past is an understanding of the sequence of events, in both absolute and

## Writing: The Difference between History and Prehistory

The development of writing conventionally marks the shift from prehistory to history in a particular culture. Written documentation is used by archaeologists to either supplement or trigger their work. In turn, archaeology may confirm or refute historically-accepted events, depending on the evidence from the archaeological record. Together historians and archaeologists can present a clear, well-rounded view of the past.

Many people think the term “prehistoric” indicates the same time across the globe. Instead, writing systems developed at different periods throughout the world, so that one geographic area may be “prehistoric” at 1000 BC, while another has fully developed historic documentation.



cuneiform  
symbol  
for ox

Some of the earliest writing dates from 3000 BC in Mesopotamia. The Sumerians developed what is called cuneiform script although it was not a full writing system in the modern sense. It was used for documenting property ownership, accounting records, and other business transactions. The Egyptians developed hieroglyphics about 100 years later, perhaps as a result of a Sumerian stimulus. Soon, writing systems were created on Crete, and in Turkey, Pakistan, and China. The Greeks developed the first full alphabetic writing about 800 BC. In the New World, the Mayas are credited with the first systematic writing at about AD 300.



Maya  
hieroglyph



Chinese  
characters

relative terms (see table above). Archaeologists use many dating techniques to help them with this task, including radiocarbon, obsidian hydration, potassium argon dating, and dendrochronology to name a few (see glossary for definitions of these and other terms). For relative dating, archaeologists use seriation and artifact typologies for comparison. These techniques allow archaeologists, with vary-

ing degrees of accuracy, to establish when people used a site (the site's occupation), or when a hoe or cooking pot was manufactured. Once this is known, the occupation can be placed in a temporal spectrum (or timeline) so that it can be compared with those that came before and after. For each region of the world, archaeologists can then develop a cultural history. At an even larger scale, those regions can be compared, too.

When is a fundamental question asked by archaeologists. Only by establishing the dates of the use or occupation of a site can archaeologists determine if and how past societies changed. Once the chronology is understood, the long chain of events that constitutes the human past is more complete and the *why* questions—for instance, why did these changes occur? why did the people move away (or why did they stay)?—can be addressed.

## Reconstructing Past Lifeways

As has been stated many times, archaeologists are interested in understanding how past people lived their lives, and this is done by piecing together the information provided by artifacts and sites, and their contexts, gathered through excavation and survey. Once assembled and interpreted, these data can reveal how people obtained their food and what they ate, where they lived and in what type of buildings, how they practiced their religion, what type of social system they were a part of, and perhaps even who they married.

Most archaeologists agree that an important part of understanding how people lived in the past is a knowledge of the physical environment they inhabited. After all, the nature of the environment largely determines what kinds of food and other materials are available for people to use. Some archaeologists feel that the limitations of the environment basically make the society the way it is; others think social and economic relationships among individuals and groups are far more important than the environment in determining how a society develops.

## Asking Why and How

In the process of explanation, archaeologists develop more questions than there are archaeologists to answer them. How and why did agriculture take root in different areas of the world? How and why do cities, states, and nations develop? What happened to cultures around the globe during the



rise of European capitalism? How do political alliances affect warfare, trade, and power in the prehistoric Southeast? And how are these large-scale processes linked to the individual who herded cattle, helped settle tribal disputes, and raised three children in India a thousand years ago?

Coupled with data from excavations, regional survey is best suited to help answer broad questions about human adaptation because it allows us to investigate entire political and social systems over the span of many hundreds, or even thousands, of years. To better understand these systems, archaeologists specialize in many different theoretical and technical aspects of cultural studies: rise of chiefdoms and states, regional analysis and settlement systems, subsistence studies and ecology, political economy and commerce, along with many others. Each of those tackles a different aspect of behavior, and yet all of them touch on the central themes of our shared human trajectory.

*If history never repeats itself, and the unexpected always happens, how incapable must Man be of learning from experience!.*  
—attributed to George Bernard Shaw

## A Personal Viewpoint from the Authors

We became archaeologists for the same reasons as many of our colleagues—to add to the body of knowledge about human activities. Although we do not deny the fascinations of the discipline, archaeologists are not archaeologists for the thrill of discovery, the romance of excavation, or the beauty of the artifacts. We investigate how humans interact with each other and with the world around them. That world includes the influences of politics, society, environment, and religion that impact every person, no matter when he or she lived and died. That world also includes other peoples and other cultures. We seek to understand not only our differences, but also our commonalities.

We have focused much of this article on the subjects of spatial and temporal scale in human life and culture. We think that it is important to reinforce that point to clarify a misunderstanding about what it is we do. From our conversations with non-archaeologists, we know that many people envision our work as at a particular site (the Great Pyramids), or conclude that we focus on a particular people (the Hopi), or time (ancient Greece). One strength of archaeology lies in its ability to pool and compare data from thousands of

years of human adaptation, entire social systems, and the cultural dynamics of one civilization after another. The archaeologist's power to decipher human behavior stems from the ability to adjust the scale of study to the types of questions asked.

## Studying the Human Past

Archaeologists use time, space and information gleaned from artifacts, sites, and their contexts to explore the human past. Of course, archaeology is not unique in shedding light on past human events; history gives us volumes of detailed records spanning centuries. Instead, the essence, the necessity, of archaeology lies in its ability to reveal the entire human record. Accordingly, archaeologists include both the recent and distant past in their investigations as, contrary to public perception, archaeological research is not limited to the study of pre-literate societies, or prehistory.

Many, though not all, North American archaeologists interpret the past from an understanding of human behavior derived in large part from anthropological studies and theories. Thus, they seek to understand how people have lived not only at the small scale of the individual household, but also at the broad scale of multiple communities and regions. Archaeologists also look at the past not as a single point in time, but they seek to understand change and variation, or even continuity, over time.

Archaeology can be narrowly defined to be about specific individuals in particular locations at a certain time in history, but this is not the profession's ultimate objective. Archaeologists are, in the end, examining general patterns of human behavior. Archaeologists use painstaking methods and techniques to uncover the building blocks of the particular—for instance, an individual's daily activities, and the household and community in which these activities took place. But those pieces alone cannot explain the whole—a culture, a society, how humans behave.

We can use film as an analogy. One frame of film shows a moment in time, out of context and short on narrative—a snapshot. Run a series of frames together and it shows a sequence of events and presents a more meaningful experience—a movie.

Archaeologists will never find the entire film intact, but they can splice together enough frames to follow the unfolding story of humankind.

Over a generation ago, Grahame Clark (1957: 261), a British archaeologist, wrote that in order to stimulate a consciousness of world history

...the unit of history has to be expanded from the parochial to the universal, from the history of nation or civilization to that of the world.

Archaeology is ideally situated to meet those universal criteria, both in time and space.

To understand history and archaeology is to explore our past, to ponder our future, and to enrich our perception of the present. This awareness informs us about ourselves as human beings, and opens doors to understanding other cultures, other places, and other times.

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# Why is Archaeology Important?

## Global Perspectives, Local Concerns

by Charlotte A. Smith and Jennifer Freer Harris

Archaeology plays a real and vital role in today's world, although its valuable lessons and benefits can seem removed from everyday life. This article examines how understanding and conserving archaeological resources enhances the present *and* the future. This discussion of the importance of archaeology and archaeological resources pairs well with the previous article, which outlines the complexities of archaeological research. We have, however, separated the two topics to better highlight both of them. We hope this article imparts an awareness of the importance and fragility of Georgia's archaeological resources.

### Understanding Archaeology's Importance

The preceding article describes goals of archaeology. It concludes that archaeologists seek to understand human behavior from the micro (e.g., making a stone tool) to the macro (e.g., the spice trade between Europe and Asia). In this paper, we ask why and how the study of the past has relevance for today's society. Also, we identify the contributions archaeology makes to modern life and to other academic disciplines.

The most extensive programs that unite archaeology and the modern world are so-called public archaeology projects. Public funds support archaeological investigations in the early stages of projects involving federal funds, licensing, permits, or lands. For instance, when the US Forest Service lets a logging contract, archaeologists visit the property first to ascertain what sites are there and how significant they are. Archaeologists evaluate

the sites with a set of specific criteria laid out by law. If they determine a site is significant, it is either excavated to recover the information it contains, or it is avoided and protected. This is called cultural resource management, or CRM, archaeology. CRM projects produce most of the new archaeological information recorded in Georgia, and have for years, but the lands examined by CRM projects are only a small part of the state (Williams 2000).

CRM exists because legislators and their constituents—the public and its representatives—thought archaeological preservation important enough to include in US laws, and in governmental budgets. Thus, the public has already realized the relevance of archaeology and archaeological data to people living in today's world and preparing for tomorrow's world. In this paper, we try to make a strong case for the unique and important ways archaeological knowledge contributes to and enhances our lives, on a scale ranging from the individual to the community, and to our nation.

### The Intellectual Importance of Archaeology

If archaeologists are asked why their work is important, they are most likely to respond that it is for the same reasons history is valued. By knowing our human past, we appreciate who we are and where we came from. Accordingly, by studying the past, all of us can use this knowledge to inform our decisions about the future. Reassuringly, there are signs that the public shares that perspective about archaeology, too.

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A recent poll commissioned by the Society for American Archaeology (Ramos and Duganne 2000) asked members of the general public why they thought archaeology was important. Overwhelmingly, they responded that understanding the modern world was the foremost benefit and that we learn about the past in order to improve the future. They also suggest that the field contributes significantly to international affairs and in shaping modern values. That is evidence of substantially more insight into the field than archaeologists had believed existed.

Archaeologists also see intrinsic aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual reasons for humans' interest in their past. Curiosity, too, plays a role; it is a characteristic that is particularly human and responsible for many of our greatest achievements. Although they often downplay the mystery or romance of excavation and discovery of the past for fear that it may send the wrong message about their goals, archaeologists appreciate that the captivating allure of knowing ourselves and our place in the world is the root of all learning.

Archaeology transcends the limitations of written records, and can reveal detailed stories when no documents exist. The focus of history in America has traditionally been on great civilizations, great individuals, and events relevant to Western civilization. Archaeology not only speaks of that elite few who lived dramatic lives and perhaps were interred in rich burials, but also tells the stories of ordinary people and their daily exploits. Archaeological examination calls for both a sensi-

tivity to great detail—seeing evidence left in mere centimeters of stratified deposits in soil—combined with a simultaneous ability to zoom far back in space and time to discern broad patterns of human behavior. Archaeology is, in short, a discipline that reveals truths by observing and exploring evidence in ways others overlook. Unlike written history, which is often tied to national boundaries or particular groups and may carry inherent biases, archaeology is truly a universal field, spanning the experience of all humans.

### Archaeology in Education

Archaeology's potential for fostering more intelligent, involved, global citizens is considerable. In classrooms, learning about archaeology helps students develop various skills across many disciplines, including critical thinking. Archaeology can be readily included in a comprehensive curriculum for social science, history, mathematics, environmental studies, and art. Archaeology touches on the entire spectrum of human behavior and so inspires a never-ending series of questions. Students learn to appreciate history from different frames of reference, developing a sensitivity to other people and diverse cultures. Archaeological findings provide a framework for questions about statistics, economics, politics, cultural geography, ecology, agricultural practices, and food procurement, to name just a few. What other discipline can pull together those far-reaching lessons and also teach practical applications for a global positioning system, the Cartesian coordinate system,

### Archaeology and the Education of Global Citizens

In recent years, global education has become a standard element in many primary and secondary school programs. Archaeology is a vital piece of that curriculum. Phyllis Messenger and Walter Enloe (1991:161–162) discuss specific ways archaeologists can bring the world, past and present, into the classroom, using the breadth and depth that archaeology can provide.

Archaeology permits intensive study of a single culture over time, removing the myth of an unchanging traditional past. By understanding the goals of archaeological research, students discover that their actions can influence the future, and impact both environment and society. By removing the exotic quality of another culture, and by emphasizing our human similarities and explaining our differences, teachers can instill in students a respect for other cultures and their products.

The breadth and nature of archaeological inquiry helps teachers move from lectures to hands-on learning. Archaeologists use a wide-set of resources—museums, local sites, universities, and archaeological societies—that then become available to the student. Making the most of a student's natural interest and motivation, using archaeology in the classroom can offer students opportunities for participating in positive action on the world around them (e.g., adopt-a-site stewardship programs). Finally, by understanding and appreciating the world they live in through study of the past and present, students become better-informed global citizens.

and ground penetrating radar?

Archaeological information is brought to the public through museums, interpretive sites, and cultural reconstruction. These forums provide an opportunity to reflect on the diversity of the human experience in an engaging and informative way. They convey a sense of everyday life in the past, allowing visitors to connect it to themselves and making it accessible to everyone. These forums also encourage general participation in interpreting the past and safeguarding the archaeological record. Those various forums allow professionals to translate the technical results of archaeological investigation into the popular vernacular. That communication, in turn, is a crucial link in the process of continuing archaeological research and preservation.

One of archaeology's greatest strengths lies in its ability to give voice to those who are left out and left behind in many other fields of study. The "excluded past" (Stone and Mackenzie 1990), that of minority or indigenous groups that have a scanty or absent written history, is one that is poorly understood by many of us. Only a society that examines *all* of its past can truly appreciate the powerful blend of traditions and lifeways that it carries into the present and future.

### Archaeology and Your Community

Archaeology—and its role in modern society—is more connected to your daily life than you might imagine. For example, consider the important issues in the decisions you made to choose where you live? Personal safety, distance to work, quality of schools, nearby green space and natural areas, neighborhood aesthetic quality, and community cohesiveness may have been among the decisive factors. Archaeology can reinforce those factors, or can be a tangible component in their local implementation. For instance, archaeology dovetails well with neighborhood revitalization projects, and contributes substantially to research about historic districts. Indeed, how can archaeology strengthen your local economy or support efforts at reducing sprawl in your neighborhood?

### The Economics of Our Past

Any landowner, including individuals, corporations, and large land-holding institutions may own and control archaeological resources. Yet, in many

### Historic Preservation Successes

When communities take an active interest in their past the results can be both exceptional and exciting. In Crawfordville, Georgia students from a University of Georgia historic preservation class, gaining valuable fieldwork and research experience, conducted an inventory of the historic homes and buildings (Moore and Brooks, 1996). They compiled information on date of construction, architectural design and building materials for each structure. The students presented the completed inventory to the local leaders and submitted it to the local library for future preservation and planning efforts. If other cities and towns across Georgia take similar stock of their archaeological resources they will better position themselves for intelligent planning and control over their heritage.

How else has Crawfordville made the most of its past? It has been the setting for eight movies and more than twenty television shows. Today the community continues to work on preserving and restoring downtown storefronts in the hopes of bringing more filmmakers to town.

cases they may not have any idea that that such resources are part of their real estate holdings. At the same time, many archaeologists find it very challenging to initiate dialogues with such landowners, and to suggest they may control important resources. This is a complex issue; nevertheless, some land-holders have found it rewarding to consider the role archaeological research and preservation of the past can have in enhancing community life, and in enhancing their public image.

Indeed, archaeological resource conservation and economic development are not always at odds with one another. They can become successful partners with a modest blend of foresight, guidance, and planning.

A precedent for this perspective on archaeology has been set by the many successful historic preservation programs implemented in Georgia. Historic preservation is a crucial component of community revitalization projects and the planning and development process; it is especially effective in enhancing the period character of a community. Archaeology contributes to historic preservation projects by amplifying existing records especially through carefully-planned excavations in the neighborhood.

Historic districts, often preserved through myriad efforts including neighborhood interpretive programs, historic preservation endeavors, individual donors, and the clout of National Register of Historic Places status, can mean substantial revenue for local communities. A recent report from the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (Leithe and Tigue 1999) outlines several means through which prehistoric and historic resources bring dollars into a community

- preservation creates jobs through restoration and interpretive projects;
- preservation enhances property values in historic districts;
- preservation revitalizes once stagnant communities;
- heritage sites are becoming increasingly popular with tourist destinations;
- heritage tourists spend more money and stay longer at destinations than the average traveler in the US.

These figures do not include the largest portion of dollars flowing in from the historic preservation movement through rehabilitation of homes, churches, and community centers, or local revitalization projects. Those projects impact residents at home, in their neighborhood, and in their coun-

ty—economically and culturally. In 1996 alone, historic preservation projects brought Georgia (Leithe and Tigue 1999:13)

- 7550 jobs in the construction industry and in other sectors of the Georgia economy;
- \$201 million in earnings, including wages for workers and profits for local businesses;
- \$559 million in total economic activity.

Tax incentives for income-producing rehabilitation projects, such as apartments and office space, contribute to the booming heritage economy as well. From 1992 to 1996 over \$85 million were funneled into Georgia's economy in tax credits given to approved historic preservation projects.

There are other avenues for economic benefits as well. Considering that people are now spending more on heritage tourism than on general tourism and entertainment (movies, dinners, cultural events), the market potential for heritage activities is staggering. The opportunities for growth and investment in heritage, individually and communally, have never been better.

Also, when corporations invest in local archaeological resources, or act as responsible stewards for those holdings under their authority, they gain a valuable public relations benefit. Several years ago, when the Cobb County Country Club sought to

### **Partners for the Past: Archaeological Preservation and Other Conservation Organizations**

Environmental advocates have heightened public awareness of the precious nature of our non-renewable resources, which include archaeological sites, information, and resources. Accordingly, Americans have increasingly put their dollars toward businesses that act conscientiously, with an eye toward future generations. It is not cynicism to suggest that those interested in preserving archaeological resources must make the most of that sentiment, and urge communities and organizations to act quickly to save our heritage. One way to accomplish that goal is to integrate archaeological site preservation into natural resource conservation programs, many of which already provide outstanding models for accomplishing these goals, and therefore have gained wide popular support.

The Georgia Natural Heritage Program is one such example. Created by the Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy in 1986, it is part of the national Natural Heritage Network. To preserve Georgia's natural diversity—plants, animals, biological networks—the program identifies endangered areas, inventories species and habitats through field survey, and provides an easily accessible catalog of data (maps, computer data banks, manual files) for planners, researchers, educators, and the general public. The Natural Heritage Program encourages stewardship of resources on private land by offering concise guidelines and incentives (technical assistance, tax incentives, recognition programs and other habitat conservation aid) for individuals willing to participate.

Endangered archaeological resources are protected if other conservation programs are aware that when they manage wild or undeveloped lands, those lands probably also shelter archaeological resources. If groups interested in protecting archaeological resources could effectively partner with other conservation groups, stewardship information would be extended to individuals already seeking to protect our natural resources.

For more information about the Georgia Natural Heritage program, contact the Wildlife Resources Division of the Georgia DNR (<http://www.dnr.state.ga.us/dnr/wild/natural.html>).

develop a new golf course and housing development, they incorporated many archaeological features into their design, thereby protecting them. Those features included Civil War-era trenches and rifle pits. At the same time, they included some of the artifacts recovered by archaeologists into a public museum in the club house.

This discussion, hopefully, is a catalyst for innovative thinking about archaeological resource conservation. The misconception of historic properties and prehistoric sites as large item expenditures, instead of revenue generators, can be adjusted. A preservation program for our past should not just be about old buildings—it can be expanded to include how all people lived on the land throughout prehistory and history.

### ***Environmental Lessons***

It is important to note that financial payoffs are not the only benefits for those investing in the past. In addition to the economic value, there is a substantial cultural and environmental advantage to effective archaeological stewardship. When lands with archaeological sites are set aside from development, green spaces are created and some effects of sprawl are alleviated. Community improvements like riverwalks, bikepaths, and streetscaping often accompany preservation projects. Deteriorating neighborhoods are given new life and their original character may be restored. Protected communities minimize the negative effects of development by not having to create costly new infrastructures or expand existing ones (e.g., roadways, sewer, and utility systems). Finally, pride in ownership and local identity increases substantially in historic districts, creating better environments, physically and culturally, for families and businesses. It is encouraging that the consequences of modern human environmental interaction need not all be negative, destructive, and degrading.

The long lesson of our human past provides models for judicious use of local environments and real-life cautionary tales of over-exploitation of finite resources. Archaeological studies can sharpen an understanding of the successes and failures of human decisions throughout our long existence. We would be wise to take advantage of that hard-earned knowledge, accumulated over generations, when we consider our own future.

### **Evaluating the Fish in Our Waterways: The Zooarchaeology Connection**

Byron J. Freeman, an ecologist at the University of Georgia, consults zooarchaeological reports to determine what species inhabited waterways long before written records exist. Such information is crucial in arguing for or against the reintroduction of species into river systems where they no longer reside.

Zooarchaeologists analyze the sometimes tiny skeletal remains of fish, birds, and other animals recovered from archaeological contexts, looking for not only the existence of certain species, but also at how humans used them in the past. Thus, zooarchaeological reports provide detailed species lists from historic and prehistoric periods long gone, and ecologists like Freeman can use them to track the disappearance of various species of fish, birds, and other creatures.

### **Resources for Other Academic Fields**

Archaeology is integral to research in other scientific fields, and in particular, adds temporal depth to those investigations. For example, archaeological survey and excavation produce data that aid historians in understanding unrecorded details of life. What was life really like on a coastal rice plantation or for piedmont subsistence farmers in the mid-1800s? What did De Soto and his men see as they traversed the Southeast over four years in the early 1500s?

Other types of general information that archaeologists provide include:

- the various means of making a living (especially subsistence and daily life) that humans have practiced throughout the past and the conditions necessary for their success;
- the range and types of human social and political organization that existed around the globe and at different periods of time;
- comparisons of modern and ancient adaptations to physical or cultural stimuli;
- insightful theoretical models on such diverse topics as warfare and conflict resolution, economic development, the rise of agriculture, and the development of modern nation-states.

Archaeologists also provide specific information useful to other specialists. Examples of how archaeological data are used by specialists in myriad fields include:

### Descendant Communities and Georgia's Archaeological Resources

None of us can forget that what archaeologists call archaeological sites were created by people whose descendants live on today. Thanks to the unjust Removal policy of the US government, Georgia's aboriginal inhabitants were forced from their lands during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. As a result, large Native American populations are not found in Georgia today. Native American interest in Georgia's past, however, remains substantial.

Archaeologists use material remains to reconstruct ways of living that existed in the past. Often, although not in all cases, archaeologists treat those past cultures as if they have no living descendants. Native Southeastern cultures thrive today, and to many of those people, their past lives on in their culture. For example, Wickman notes that for Southeastern Indians,

*the symbolic power of the chiefdom...in the forms of social status, political precedence, and social weight within oral traditions, persisted into the nineteenth century, and in certain ways, to the present.* (1999:39)

While the interests of archaeologists and Native Americans have often been at odds in the past, both constituencies share a common goal—to preserve the remains of the past. Indeed, many members of both groups now realize that

*[w]hen data and archives on human history are lost, there is a loss to science and to the descendants/scientists/owners/curators of those archives.* (Swedlund and Anderson 1999:574)

- *Epidemiologists* examine data for evidence of disease patterns, which help them understand the history of epidemics (e.g., the spread of Old World diseases among non-resistant peoples in the New World).

- *Linguists* use remarkable techniques to reconstruct language and population emigrations. When linguistic clues are combined with archaeological data, researchers can better understand the ways culture is shaped by language, and vice versa.

- *Ecologists* and *geographers* look to archaeology for evidence of environmental practices not recorded by history. For instance, archaeological evidence of sedimentation, when dated securely, helps show when forests were cut and erosion increased.

- *Site interpreters* extensively use archaeological data to report accurately the details of the past.

- *Exhibit designers* and *museum curators* use archaeological research for educational programs and interpretive displays.

- *Re-enactors* closely study archaeological reports and historical documents to more accurately reenact events from the past such as Civil War battles.

- *Forensic studies* use archaeological techniques to reconstruct the events surrounding the death and burial of exhumed individuals. Recently, the Society for Historical Archaeology devoted an entire issue to archaeology and forensics (Connor and Scott 2001).

The rich and varied contributions that the archaeological record can yield are limited only by the questions asked of it. The unanswered questions of experts in other fields can be the catalyst for archaeologists to conduct new types of research, to create new techniques for coaxing information from material remains, and to develop new ways of looking at past behavior.

### Archaeology is More than Our Past, It's Our Future

In this paper we have highlighted linkages, some seldom considered, between archaeological knowledge and the modern world. Clearly we all benefit from archaeological research for purely educational and scientific reasons, but the work also produces significant insights into the problems that we all face today. More importantly, it provides for the practical applications to solve them, as when archaeology examines the broad patterns of human adaptation to massive global climatic change, or when it spotlights smaller, individual community responses to local environmental shifts. An archaeological perspective is vitally important to achieving a greater understanding of how human occupation, resource consumption, and other choices about how we live affects us where we live—in nature, in our environment.

We hope you received, and will seriously contemplate, two messages from this essay. First, from economic development to understanding many cultures to helping children improve their critical thinking skills, the study of archaeology contributes substantially to everyday lives. Second, in order to use archaeology as a tool, to take full



advantage of the information that material remains embody—we must ensure that those fragile resources are protected and preserved with far more diligence than we do now.

Before that can happen, people need to comprehend the full value of archaeological research. Knowing why archaeology is important will guarantee that more of the archaeological record is available when we discover new ways to put our knowledge of human behavior to use. When archaeologists work with a community to preserve, research and interpret its past, they create a partnership that will ensure a better understanding of not only their past, but of their future.

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# An Introduction to the Prehistory of The Southeast

## or, “They were Shootin’em as Fast as They Could Make ’em...” and Other Popular Misconceptions about the Prehistoric Southeast

by Scott Jones

### A Personal Perspective

As a primitive technologist and replicative specialist, my profession leads me into working relationships with other archaeologists, educators, outdoor skills enthusiasts, and the public. Varying proportions of my time are spent doing archaeology, replicative and experimental work, teaching classes, and demonstrating prehistoric technologies. The hands-on aspect of my occupation affords me the opportunity to apply long-term experiential knowledge to archaeological interpretation, while my participation in mainstream archaeology allows me to bring sound archaeological information to those outside the profession.

As one who spends considerable time working with the public, I hear quite a few interesting lay interpretations of archaeological sites. I hear about innumerable “Indian mounds” in improbable locations, finds of “buckets full of arrowheads,” “villages” with “arrowheads all over the place,” and, as a flintknapper, one of my favorites relates the subtitle. “We found a site with literally hun’erds (sic) of arrowheads on it...they must’ve been shoot-in’em as fast as they could make ’em.” Realizing that popular culture often fosters long-standing stereotypes and misconceptions, one of my jobs is to try and guide some of this popular thinking towards an understanding of the past grounded in the best state of modern archaeological knowledge.

Likewise, in working with other primitive skills practitioners, I began to comprehend that many

competent technicians and teachers of nature-based skills often have little background in the chronology of prehistory and the dynamics of material culture change. To demonstrate a skill and declare “the Indians did this” is but one level of understanding; yet another level involves knowing *which* Indians did *what*, *where* they did it, and significant to our discussion here, *when*. Thus the nature of my work has been to bring practical wisdom to bear upon archaeology, and to bring archaeology into the thinking of both the public and the primitive skills community. This integrative approach is perhaps best characterized by my involvement with the Society of Primitive Technology, and is evident in many of the articles I have written for the Society’s journal, the *Bulletin of Primitive Technology*.

In recent years I have had requests from other primitive technologists for a brief, readable chronology of regional prehistory as an accompaniment for lectures and demonstrations. With this in mind, I drafted the basic outline of what you see here. This article is an expansion of that text, adapted for a wider audience, with the hope that it imparts a sense of context and continuity to those who are interested in the flow of time and events.

The following sections outline the four principal time periods of Southeastern prehistory, with a brief commentary on the historic era after 1540. They are compiled from numerous sources and present a broad historic perspective, with some

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Jones operates his educational enterprise, Media Prehistoria, from his home in Oglethorpe County. His work ranges from demonstrations and interpretive programs to experimental archaeology and lithic technology.

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### A Word about Time Designations

Time notations, both in scientific and popular reading, can be confusing. Most readers are familiar with the Gregorian or Christian calendar notations, where dates are either AD (Latin *anno domini*, "in the year of our Lord") or BC (before Christ). You may also see the corresponding use of CE (common era) and BCE (before the common era), which is seen as more inclusive and less Christian-centric, but refers to the same time scale as AD/BC. Finally, many archaeologists use BP or Before Present (arbitrarily the "present" is 1950, to avoid the mental gymnastics of adding or subtracting the two millennia since the birth of Christ). In addition, an archaeological report using the lower case ad/bc is discussing uncorrected radiocarbon dates. One final note: AD and ad are used before a date (as in AD 1200, or ad 500), but all other designations follow the digits.

You will notice that I employ two different time designations in this article. I used the BP notation in the Paleoindian, Archaic, and Woodland sections, and switch to the Christian calendar in the Mississippian and Historic period discussions. I did this because the dates in recent centuries are more familiar to us in the form of "years AD", and thus easier to comprehend. I hope that this makes it easier, not more difficult, to follow the timeline at hand.

specific observations on material culture based upon my own experiences in primitive technology.

### Reconstructing the Past: Archaeology and Experimentation

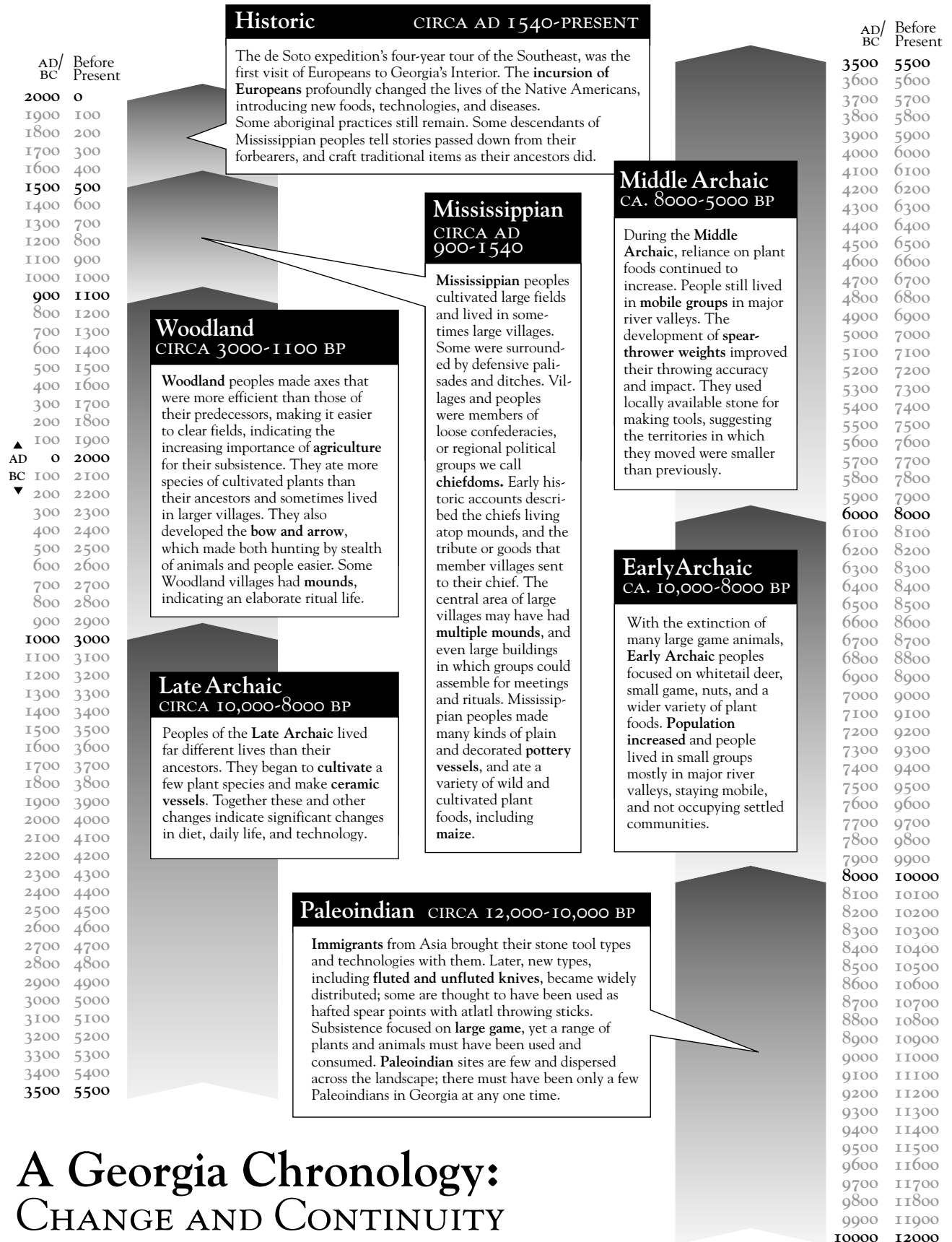
Starting with the oldest identifiable culture, the following text covers the next 12,000 years, from the long periods of hunting and gathering known as the Paleoindian and Archaic periods, to the early horticulturists of the Woodland period, and the maize-producing agriculturalists of the Mississippian period, ending with the arrival of Europeans in recent times. While some traditional crafts are still practiced by Indians of the Southeast, much of the accumulated knowledge of the past 12,000 years was lost through the unfortunate acts of the Europeans who ultimately came to dominate North America. For further reading, try *The Southeastern Indians* by Charles Hudson's (1976) and *Archaeology of the Southeastern United States: Paleoindian to World War I* by Judith Bense (1994).

Archaeologists seeking to reconstruct past lifeways rely for their interpretations on the time-worn remains of ancient cultures for guidance; here in our humid climate, we are further disadvantaged since often only the inorganic residues of prehistoric culture remain. The study of stone tools, sherds of pottery, and the scant remnants of organic items and foods have helped to reconstruct much of the detail of aboriginal life since the arrival of people at the end of the Ice Age. But, unlike our counterparts in arid regions who are able to examine directly numerous organic artifacts preserved in dry caves and rock shelters, experimental archaeologists working in the Southeast are not rigidly bound to a list of facts about the material culture of the native peoples; we seek, at best, to present a range of available technological possibilities. These possibilities extend beyond the reconstruction of material archaeological remains; by combining aspects of archaeology, ethnography, and natural history, a world of organic materials normally hidden from the archaeologist's trowel emerges. Rarely are we fortunate enough to glimpse the artistry of fibercraft, basketry, and woodworking that doubtless flourished in the prehistoric Southeast. Several flooded sites in Florida have yielded substantial organic remains; we believe that similar objects were probably commonly in use in what is now Georgia.

Such interpretive freedom is a mixed blessing since, on the one hand, one may experiment with ideas and adjust perceptions of prehistory; on the other, one must be attentive to the realities of Stone Age life provided by archaeology, and thus rein in unrealistic ideas before they wander too far afield. To the informed student of primitive technology falls the task of responsibly filling in gaps in our knowledge by recognizing, using, and documenting the wealth of possible material resources in our environments.

### Paleoindian: 12,000–10,000 BP

While a growing body of evidence suggests that people inhabited the New World by about 13,500 years ago (often referred to as the Pre-Paleoindian period), the first definable, widespread culture appeared around 12,000 years ago at the end of the last Ice Age. The dry, windswept landscape was strongly shaped by, but just out of reach of, the massive continental ice sheet that lay a few hun-



## A Georgia Chronology: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

dred miles to the north. The coastal lowlands extended far beyond the present coast, because massive amounts of the ocean's water locked up in polar ice sheets lowered sea levels. In this landscape of boreal forest and grassland, these earliest Americans coexisted briefly with numerous Ice Age mammals that are now extinct. In the Southeast were found woolly mammoth, mastodon, and ancient bison, as well as living species including caribou, elk, and deer.

Paleoindian sites are rare and their distinctive projectile points are scarce, often found in the Southeast only as isolated artifacts. Paleoindians are believed to have migrated across the land bridge connecting Siberia and Alaska (a consequence of lower sea levels during glacial times). Their lifestyle was one of hunting and gathering, and the few well preserved kill sites discovered in the Western US indicate an emphasis on large game. This is likewise reflected in their tools: well-made projectile points, sometimes bearing a characteristic channel flake removed lengthwise from the base (fluted points); long narrow flake blades



*Using friction, Jones creates an ember with which to start a fire, demonstrating one of the most fundamental of primitive skills.*

struck from prepared cores; and unifacial scrapers manufactured by the removal of many small flakes from the edge of a larger flake, thus forming a beveled planing tool.

This technology is quite similar to that of the Old World Upper Paleolithic, and attests to the origins of the earliest inhabitants of the New World. Because winters were severe, access to good stone was limited, and the animals these people hunted were often large and dangerous, the stone tools of the Paleoindians were made from the highest quality materials available and were used for as long as possible. To get the most possible use from them, they were often resharpened many times before being discarded.

The specific hunting weapons used by Paleoindians are the topic of speculation; while some projectile points are large enough to be used as tips for heavy thrusting or stabbing spears, most of those found in the Southeast are small enough for use on lighter projectiles thrown with a spear thrower. No direct evidence for spear throwers has been found, and the scarcity of Paleoindian sites does not favor the recovery of an actual spear thrower, yet the Old World flavor of the artifact assemblage favors the presence of this weapon for the pursuit of large, dangerous, and now largely extinct prey.

### **Archaic: ca. 10,000–3000 BP**

#### ***Early Archaic: ca. 10,000–8000 BP***

At the close of the Ice Age about 10,000 years ago, a people who once lived by hunting a variety of large game were forced to alter their way of life in the face of a changing climate. In the Southeast, the extinction of mammoth, mastodon, and the ancient bison, as well as the disappearance from the region of modern species such as elk and caribou, left the whitetail deer as the principal large game animal. Along with deer, the new climate allowed forests with the same species we see today to flourish; they were dominated by oak, hickory, chestnut (now almost gone due to disease), and pine. Focusing on deer, black bear, small game, and mast (nuts) from the mature forests, Early Archaic peoples adopted a generalized hunting and gathering lifestyle with a greater reliance upon plant foods than their Paleoindian ancestors.

Although population increased rapidly in the new, temperate environment, Early Archaic peoples still ranged far and wide, often using major river valleys as territorial corridors for foraging and travel between the Coastal Plain and the interior. Following the example set by their Paleoindian ancestors, they sought high-quality material for their stone tools. Well-made, easily maintained tools were a necessity for highly mobile bands of hunter-gatherers; yet their mobility allowed them to choose the best material from within their territory. The bow was unknown to these people; the primary weapon remained the spear-thrower (or atlatl), and the side- and corner-notched stone points they used are not really arrowheads at all. They are, in fact, tips for darts thrown with the atlatl. Using spear throwers to hunt swift game,

hunters equipped lightweight darts with detachable foreshafts that allowed the stone points to serve double duty as both knife and projectile point, and also permitted easy replacement of an accidentally broken tip.

### **Middle Archaic: ca. 8000–5500 BP**

By about 8000 years ago, a minor climatic shift (called the Altithermal) imposed its effect upon the increasing human population of the Southeast. Warmer and dryer conditions west of the Appalachians influenced people to concentrate into river valleys, while the wetter climate that prevailed to the east resulted in a general migration into the uplands. Perhaps in response to their growing population as well as climatic change, Middle Archaic peoples increased their reliance upon plant foods. Their preference for locally available stone from which to make their deceptively simple, contracting-stem projectile points indicates that they foraged in smaller territories than their ancestors. Using simple chipped-stone axes to fell modest-sized trees needed for shelter and tools, they continued to forage in much the same way as their Early Archaic predecessors.

During the Middle Archaic, stone spear-thrower weights first appear, an innovation that improved the weapon's performance. Although we suspect spear throwers had been used since the end of the Paleoindian times (and probably before), perforated stone weights provide the best hard evidence for the existence of this weapon in the Southeast.

### **Late Archaic: ca. 5500–3000 BP**

Although many of the trends of the Early and Middle Archaic continued into the Late Archaic, it differed from them in some significant ways. In addition to relatively large stemmed projectile points, the Late Archaic was characterized by the first fired clay ceramics in North America. Plant fiber added to the raw clay strengthened (tempered) the unfired vessel. The fiber burned during the firing process, yielding a sturdy vessel bearing the impressions of plant fibers. Fiber-tempered pottery appears around 4500 BP in the Coastal Plain of Georgia and South Carolina.

More commonly found in the southern Appalachians and piedmont of northern Georgia and adjacent states are fragments of soapstone bowls. Contrary to popular belief, these carved stone bowls actually appear after the invention of

ceramic pottery, about 3500 BP. The appearance of ceramic and stone vessels signaled the beginning of the end of the 8500 year-old hunting and gathering way of life that had endured since the earliest humans arrived in North America. The invention of pottery indicates a more sedentary lifestyle that included an early form of horticulture for cultivating squash (*Cucurbita pepo*) and gourds (*Lagenaria siceraria*). For in-depth information about fiber-tempered ceramics, soapstone bowls, and other Late Archaic cooking technology, see Kenneth E. Sassaman's *Early Pottery in the Southeast: Tradition and Innovation in Cooking Technology* (1993).

The transition from hunting and gathering to sedentism is further evidenced by intensive gathering of shellfish for food along many of the rivers in the Southeast. This practice left immense piles of discarded shell, which sometimes extend for hundreds of meters along creeks and estuarine margins. Increased sedentism likewise brought about changes in axe technology. The simple chipped stone axes that well-served the needs of earlier peoples were refined to suit the rigors of house construction and limited land clearing. While hafting of Late Archaic grooved axes was apparently similar to earlier flaked stone types (a flexible twig or splint wrapped around a groove or constriction), greater durability and maintainability were accomplished by pecking and grinding the surface, and polishing the edge.

### **Woodland: ca. 3000–1100 BP**

By about 3000 years ago, the horticulture experiments begun by Late Archaic peoples became a way of life for people of the Woodland period. Despite the name, Woodland peoples were perhaps less dependent upon the forest environments of the Southeast than their predecessors. Taking the refinements of stone axe technology a step further, the grooved axes of an earlier time gave way to a polished tapered form called a celt. Instead of fastening a flexible sapling around a groove to form a handle, the blade was fitted into a hole in the end of a club-like handle. With friction holding the celt blade securely in its haft, the club-like handle provided additional weight and momentum. This allowed Woodland farmers to clear yet larger areas of land for villages and fields.

During the early part of the Woodland period, corn (maize) was virtually unknown, with food production based almost entirely on native culti-

gens—mainly lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium berlandieri*), marsh elder (*Iva annua*), sunflowers (*Helianthus annuus*), maygrass (*Phalaris caroliniana*), knotweed (*Polygonum* sp.), as well as squash and gourds. Although Woodland peoples probably retained some of the hunting and gathering mobility of their ancestors, large-scale production of native seed plants provided a margin of security against food shortages during the lean months of late winter and early spring. Starchier than most wild plant foods, cultivated foods require longer cooking times. As dependence on these foods increased, so too did the demands placed upon pottery. Heavy fiber-tempered pottery gradually was



Jones demonstrates the use of a bow and arrow. Jones made this bow using traditional methods. The arrow is made of rivercane.

replaced by thinner, more refined sand- and grit-tempered wares that made a lighter, sturdier vessel.

As they struggled with the new challenges of sedentism, food production, and territoriality, Woodland peoples experimented with ways of adapting their weapons to new circumstances. Surplus food afforded the luxury of remaining longer in one place, and as villages grew, competition for arable land and other resources was inevitable. Also, ambush hunting in food plots

became a practical alternative to long-distance hunting forays, while serving to protect increasingly valuable food crops from animals. The venerable spear thrower—an Ice Age legacy of hunters and gatherers in nearly every part of the world—became obsolete in the face of the need for efficiency, stealth, and increased rate of fire. Although requiring a greater initial labor investment than the spear thrower, the bow—one of the most recognizable symbols of native ingenuity—became the weapon of choice for hunting and warfare. And sedentism—the practice of living more or less permanently in one place—allowed adequate storage and seasoning of bowstaves, a cumbersome commodity requiring shelter.

As with many technological innovations, the core idea of string-and-wood propelled projectiles did not spring suddenly onto the stage of prehistory; indeed, the bow was merely a technological refinement of flexible spear-thrower technology. During the developmental phase of the technology, simple, light draw-weight bows could be constructed easily from readily available materials and used for fishing or hunting small game. While a mobile hunter/gatherer could easily carry additional two-foot long wooden blanks from which to produce atlatls, the same wanderer, in seeking to make a more substantial weapon, could scarcely afford to travel about the countryside with a five-foot long nonfunctional bowstave; nor could he leave it behind to be potentially exposed to the destructive elements of the humid Eastern US. In other words, archaeologists think Woodland peoples had to stay in one place long enough for the bowstave to season, before they could finish the bow.

As in other parts of the world, the advent of agriculture and sedentism, along with necessity, resulted in the development of the bow-and-arrow, the ultimate Neolithic weapon. During the transition from spear-thrower to bow, a profusion of projectile point designs were tested as hunters sought lighter, faster projectiles. Dominated by a variety of small stemmed types and relatively large triangular points, the triangular style ultimately succeeded all others in the Southeast. By the end of the Woodland period, triangular projectile points had become much smaller. Although often called "bird points" in the mistaken belief that only small game could be taken with such a small projectile point, these tips are among the few types that may be con-



### Archaeological Site Reporting

*So you've found an archaeological site...maybe just a few stone flakes, a projectile point, or some broken pottery. If you're not familiar with the procedures for site reporting, then you may find yourself contemplating many baffling questions: Is the site large enough to be important? What agency or organization do I contact? What procedure is involved in notifying that agency? Will they—whoever they are—want me to give up my artifacts? For answers, read on.*

To begin, let's consider *site size as a factor in reporting a site*. The small site you located in your yard, garden, or vacant lot is of value to archaeologists. Each piece of information is added to a growing database, and cumulatively that helps refine our understanding of the past. Even if you only find a few pieces of pottery, that can tell archaeologists something about the type of settlement and the people who lived there. The data from each and every site are important.

*How do I report a site, and whom do I contact?* The Georgia Archaeological Site Files maintains Georgia's archaeological site records. Site forms for noting pertinent information about sites are available from the GASF, either on-line (<http://quat.dac.uga.edu/gasf/>) or by calling 706-542-8737. Simply, fill out the site form as completely as possible and return it to the GASF. For the map on a site form, a simple sketch map is sufficient. However, if you have access to US Geological Survey 7.5-minute topographic maps, using them would greatly assist GASF personnel. The site form also contains a section for recording the type

of artifacts found, and an area to note cultural periods. If this is beyond your available information, you may wish to consult with an archaeologist or amateur to learn more. There are many knowledgeable persons in the state, many of whom are active in the Society for Georgia Archaeology, and would be happy to assist you in artifact identification.

*Your site will be assigned an official state site number* consisting of three parts. For example, my home is an archaeological experimental area, and its site files number is 9OG445. Each state is designated alphabetically, so all sites in Georgia begin with 9. (This system was implemented before Alaska and Hawaii became states, and they are 49 and 50, respectively.) The "OG" indicates that the site is in Oglethorpe county. The last digits are numerical ranking of sites within that particular county. Thus, 9OG445 is the official number that lets me know I'm dealing with a site in the state of Georgia, in Oglethorpe County, and the 445th site recorded in that county.

As for *your collection of artifacts*, you needn't fear that any professional archaeologist covets them. So as long as your artifacts were obtained legally (i.e., surface collected), you may keep them. By recording the site from which they were collected, you have provided a beneficial service to the field of archaeology. If, however, you wish to contribute further, you may give your collection to the GASF for permanent storage. This makes the artifacts available to researchers who may find them informative for future projects.

fidently called arrowheads. Attached to river cane arrows launched from powerful bows by skilled archers, the tiny arrow points proved fatal to the largest creatures of the Eastern Woodlands, whether deer, bear, or human.

The Woodland Period also signals the beginning of the construction of earthen mounds. Sedentism brought with it the necessity for greater social organization, and also permitted the accumulation of material goods. From this came the concept of status, and by Middle Woodland times some individuals were interred in conical earthen mounds, often with elaborate funerary items and trade goods acquired from great distances.

### Mississippian: ca. AD 900–1540

Corn—or more correctly, maize—is known only sporadically in the preceding Woodland period, and certainly not until late Woodland times is it

present in sufficient quantity to qualify as a significant food source across the Southeast. Yet by the time new varieties of maize as well as new ideas arrived from Mexico around AD 900, the cultural mechanisms for large-scale food production initiated in the Woodland period were firmly in place. With nearly 2000 years of horticulture experience, maize claimed a central place in Southeastern Native American culture, alongside beans, squash, sunflowers, jerusalem artichokes, gourds, and tobacco.

The Mississippian period, so called because of the extensively cultivated bottomlands of the Mississippi River, represents the most complex political organization and extensive social stratification achieved in North America prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus and his ships. While political structure in much of North Carolina and the mid-Atlantic states continued

the Woodland tradition of tribe- or clan-based villages, the Mississippi River drainage and much of the Southeast was dominated by an array of polities (or political units) known as chiefdoms. Though much of our knowledge about the geographical size



See this mound at Etowah Mounds State Historic Site near Cartersville. Three large mounds on this site date to the Mississippian period.

of chiefdoms is lost, it is believed that some (such as Coosa, in northwestern Georgia) were quite large. Each chiefdom consisted of several villages, each of which was answerable to a central (paramount) chief or leader believed to have god-like powers, who resided on the flat-topped earthen mound, often with one or two other influential leaders living atop lesser mounds in the village compound. The head man exacted agricultural tribute from his subjects, and, during lean times he oversaw the redistribution of food and other goods to his subjects. In return, the people were required to provide labor to the chief. They constructed his house upon the spot where his predecessors had lived; upon his death, his subjects often buried him beneath the dirt floor of his mound-summit residence. Then, in accordance with custom, the house was often burned. In preparation for the new heir, a new mantle of earth was added to the mound, and a new house constructed. Thus were the great mounds of the Mississippian Indians constructed.

In addition to the chiefly mounds, the village compound often included residential houses with walls constructed of upright posts interwoven with

cane or twigs, and covered with clay, roofed with thatch or bark; a council house, which occasionally took the form of a semi-subterranean earthlodge; and a central plaza, which served as a gathering place and game court. In the plaza, the men played *chunkey*, a game wherein spears or sticks are thrown at a rolling, wheel-like stone (a *chunkey stone*), often accompanied by copious gambling. The plaza was also used as a ball court for the ball game, the southern equivalent of lacrosse. A rough (and occasionally fatal) enterprise, the ball game was known as "little brother of war," and was used to settle disputes between hostile groups as a way of avoiding outright warfare.

The chiefdom was a formidable political and military force, and Mississippian towns, enclosed in their palisades of sharpened, upright timbers, often contained populations numbering in the thousands. Equipped with powerful bows, their arrows tipped with tiny triangular stone points, garfish scales, antler, or often just sharpened cane alone, warriors defended their towns and villages. But they were entirely unprepared for that which was to come.

### **Historic: ca. AD 1540–1840**

With the entrance of Hernando De Soto into the interior of the Southeast in 1539, the region's history was forever changed (Hudson 1997). De Soto's initial exploration was followed by more expeditions, first by other Spaniards (Hudson 1990), and then by the English and French (Hudson and Tesser 1994). Iron tools and other trade goods, diseases to which the natives were not immune, and the inherent disadvantages faced by Indians who survived European diseases and depredations all contributed to the devastation of Indian culture. Some groups, like the Muskogee-speaking Creeks further south, maintained considerable cultural identity, although still dependent upon European trade goods. The Cherokees of northern Georgia, however, attempted a different strategy. By the late 1700s their material culture differed little from that of their Euroamerican neighbors. Even with log houses, farms, orchards, slaves, porcelain, and a written language, they suffered much the same fate

as their native kinsmen. Throughout the 1830's they were removed to the Oklahoma Territory by decree of US President Andrew Jackson, and their homes and land were seized by white settlers. The rest is literally "history."

### Concluding Remarks

Despite great efforts to extirpate Native Americans from the Southeast, Indian culture is nonetheless alive and well. Just as the foregoing chronological descriptions depict this culture as dynamic and ever-changing, Southeastern Indians today still retain distinct elements of their respective cultures. Regardless of what many Americans (and archaeologists) think of casinos and the all-encompassing pan-Indian movement that identifies all Native Americans with tipis, feather headdresses, and New Age spirituality, the threads of modern Indian life will ultimately be woven into this cultural tale. Strangely, it is this renewed identity that places archaeologists and Native Americans in an unlikely alliance.

The relationship between archaeologists and Indians has traditionally been adversarial. In the past, the principal concern for archaeologists was to recover information in the form of artifacts. These artifacts were obtained by digging, and excavations often focused on burials. In an effort to retain some cultural privacy, Native Americans were (and are) opposed to digging burials as a matter of principle. In recent decades, changes in the goals of archaeological research and a greater sensitivity to other cultures has resulted in a decrease in the focus on burials. Difficulties imposed by legislation also worked to make archaeologists reluctant to disturb burials. These factors alone, however, did not provide sufficient impetus to mend the rift between the two groups.

Faced with rampant development and site destruction on a massive scale, in recent years archaeological interest has begun to focus on site preservation. This

is reflected in the large amount of archaeological work conducted in compliance with historic preservation laws. For once, Indians and archaeologists are working for similar ends, albeit for different reasons. Native American groups are increasingly aware that their goal of site protection is attainable by cooperative work with archaeologists.

As archaeology seeks to preserve sites, the way in which sites are investigated and interpreted has changed accordingly. Instead of digging high-status burials for ornate funerary objects, research now emphasizes goals that are achievable through broad, often non-invasive techniques such as surveys of timber clearcuts to study prehistoric settlement patterns. Specific sites are sometimes excavated with painstaking thoroughness. These are often sites that will be impacted by development or construction, portions of which must be dug completely. By recovering subtle information from features, hearths, and the physical distribution of artifacts within a site, much can be learned. Fragile remains of pollen, charcoal, botanical and faunal remains reveal much about everyday life in the past. From the few sites so scrutinized, better-



*De Soto was the first European to travel through the Interior Southeast. Archaeological and historical data have been used together to reconstruct his route.*

informed inferences about other sites (whether recorded through survey or reported by amateurs) are possible.

Looting is also a serious problem that faces archaeologists and Native Americans. While an uneasy truce unites these two groups, looting of archaeological sites for art objects continues unabated. Two different, though equally specious, arguments are sometimes proffered as a feeble defense for looting. The first asks: why should beautiful artifacts that are excavated by archaeologists be stored away where no one can see them?

The second states: artifacts that are in the earth are unavailable and therefore cannot be properly "appreciated."

Both of these views treat artifacts as art objects, with an implied value beyond the historical information they provide. Most sites excavated by archaeologists produce few artifacts to which great value could be attached; the majority of artifacts are stone flakes, fragmentary tools, or small pottery sherds. While these provide the necessary data for sound archaeological interpretation, they are in no other

way valuable. Stored in a climate-controlled, secure environment, these artifacts are available

for examination by researchers engaged in legitimate pursuits. As for the latter of the two above statements, archaeologists and Native Americans generally agree: artifacts do not exist solely for aesthetic appreciation by modern peoples. Apart from controlled storage in a federally approved facility, the only better environment for artifacts is, of course, in the ground.

In closing, it should be said that the information contained in the chronology section is the result of much tedious work by innumerable researchers over many years. Our knowledge about dates, tools, technology, population, environments, and paleobotany stems from the careful excavation of subtle clues to the past. Looting destroys this information in an attempt to recover material art objects. As looting and development threaten increasing numbers of sites, preservation of intact sites remains a priority for everyone, professional and amateur. So, too, does the reporting and recording of sites. All persons who are interested in archaeology can contribute positively to the present state of knowledge about the past.

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Jones is working to dehair a whitetail deer hide stretched taut on a wooden frame. In the 1700s, Indian hunters traded thousands of deer hides annually to white traders living near Georgia's coast.

# Archaeological Resource Protection in Georgia

## Federal, State, and Local Legislation and Programs

by Jennifer Freer Harris

Georgia's archaeological resources reveal the incredible story of more than 12,000 years of human drama. They form a legacy that should be known and appreciated by Georgia's present and future generations. If we do not strive to protect those resources, the rapid and accelerating rate of development will destroy them. Once archaeological resources are lost, they can never be renewed. The loss is permanent.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, lawmakers enacted legislation to provide some measure of protection for archaeological resources on federal lands. Also, projects requiring federal licensing or permits (e.g., a new power plant or expansion of the electrical grid) or federal monies (e.g., matching funds for community development projects) must comply with laws protecting archaeological resources. While many archaeological sites are discovered and avoided through enforcement of federal laws, those sites are only a small percentage of the sites in this state.

Georgia's legislators have passed similar laws, but protections are not as extensive. Lands managed by the state's Department of Natural Resources, for instance, are examined for archaeological sites much as are federal lands. It is encouraging, following a recently strengthened Office of the State Archaeologist, to see a trend toward wider awareness and protection of Georgia's archaeological resources at the state level.

Cultural resource protection in the United States began with the Antiquities Act of 1906. As part of the historic preservation and environmental movements of the late 1960s and 1970s, cultur-

al resource preservation issues garnered the attention of the wider archaeological community, and of the general public. With the Airlie House conference in 1974, and subsequent *Airlie House Report* in 1977 (McGimsey and Davis), a comprehensive proposal for future directions in conservation archaeology, the discipline embraced archaeological resource management with renewed vigor. Since then, archaeologists have made great strides in getting legislative mandates passed, and in public outreach and education. Archaeologists, and those concerned about archaeological preservation, must continue to build on that foundation and improve outreach and conservation law.

Before beginning a discussion of regional resource protection, I define my use of *archaeological resources*. They are not simply artifacts in the ground. Instead, the definition encompasses artifacts, the context in which they are found, the site or non-site area (sometimes referred to as landscape), as well as the reports and analyses accompanying any legitimate investigation. The term also extends to wide-ranging sociocultural insights that are the goal of the efforts of archaeologists. These interpretations are archaeologists' most significant contributions to the public, to the academic world, and to the general body of knowledge.

Today, all Americans benefit from legislation and policy that originated with efforts of historic preservationists and lawmakers a generation ago. In this article, I review the legislative foundation for preservation programs in Georgia, and briefly describe key agencies and programs that deal with

archaeological preservation and public education in this state.

### What is an Archaeological Site?

Throughout this issue of *Early Georgia* we've used the phrase "archaeological site." An archaeological site is a place where human activities occurred in the past. Traditionally, archaeological sites are the unit of management, analysis, and record-keeping used in cultural resource management; they are one type of archaeological resource.

"Archaeological site" has no specific legal definition, but Georgia's Office of the State Archaeologist defines a site as the location of a significant event, occupation, or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archaeological value.

Thus, an archaeological site has a defined boundary and exists in a spatially-delimited area. Within that boundary many human activities may have occurred, or only a few. Those activities may have happened over a very long time, or a very short time. Some archaeological sites are under water!

Most frequently, archaeological sites are discovered and their limits are defined based on the extent of artifact scatters. The artifacts may be seen on the ground surface (in a plowed field, for instance) or discovered through systematic subsurface shovel testing. Archaeological sites may include structural remains, like a chimney base or foundation. They may also include features, or the remains of specific activities. Features include trash pits, wells, privies, burials, cellars, and even post holes. Features may contain many artifacts, or none at all. Sometimes they are impossible to remove to the laboratory, and the best evidence of them that can be preserved are recorded in photographs, videotapes, sketches, and field notes.

Archaeologists sometimes describe archaeological sites as "multicomponent." This means the site was used during more than one archaeological period. A Mississippian village that has a nineteenth century house atop it is a multicomponent site.

Recently, the term "archaeological resource" has been expanded to include traditional cultural properties (TCPs). TCPs are legally defined as places that have a pronounced special value to a racial, ethnic, or cultural group that exists today. The Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places has determined that Ocmulgee Old Fields TCP, near Macon, is an eligible resource, making it Georgia's only designated resource of this kind.

### A Brief History of Federal Legislation

The development of the notion of cultural resource management (CRM), or compliance archaeology, has been a long time in the making. There has been some awareness of archaeological and historic preservation nationally since the early 1800s when the focus was limited to historic documentation and collecting items connected with public figures and historic military events (Carnett 1991). From this budding awareness grew an increasingly sophisticated framework for the long-term stewardship of our heritage.

The first substantial Supreme Court case involving cultural resources came in 1896 with *US vs. Gettysburg Electric Railway Company*. This decision recognized the power of the federal government to condemn private property in order to preserve an historic site. It did not address whether the government could use regulations to facilitate historic preservation, or whether the government could acquire sites with no apparent historic connections; that would come much later. Within a few years, many communities adopted zoning policies that would "preserve the character" of their towns. It is also during this period that the first substantive legislation for archaeological resource protection was enacted.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 created a permit system for investigation of archaeological sites on federal or tribal lands. It gave the President the power to establish national monuments for the purpose of protecting landmarks, structures or other objects. It also specified protection of antiquities on all land owned or controlled by the federal government, and gave authority for their management to the Department that has jurisdiction over those lands. There were no provisions for felony or criminal misdemeanor charges or penalties. In general, this was a move toward control over resources, instead of just acquiring them as "holdings."

The Organic Act of 1916 created the National Park Service under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. Its purpose was to conserve natural and historic objects, as well as wildlife, in National Parks and Monuments. This was a step forward because it provided the staff and the means to act as preservationists.

The Historic Sites Act of 1935 declared a federal policy to preserve historic and prehistoric properties of national significance, and made the

National Park Service the lead agency for protection. The Secretary of Interior was given authority to conduct surveys and inventories of cultural resources nationally. The Historic Sites Act established the National Historic Landmarks Program, which set standards for identification and preservation of landmarks. It had no section on enforcement.

The National Historic Preservation Act (1966, amended 1980 and 1992), or NHPA, established as federal policy protection of historic sites, which can include prehistoric resources. NHPA authorized the National Register of Historic Places, created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and developed procedures for approved state and local agencies. NHPA also allowed 50-50 matching grants involving federal monies. NHPA required State Historic Preservation Offices to prepare and implement historic preservation plans. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider impacts to historic properties (cultural resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places) and ways to minimize those impacts as part of overall project planning. The amendment in 1980 codified portions of Executive Order 11593 (see below) and required federal agencies to develop programs to inventory and evaluate historic resources. It also allowed those agencies to charge reasonable fees to licensees and permittees.

Executive Order 11593, signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon in 1971, required federal agencies to inventory the cultural resources under their authority. It called for federal agencies and Secretary of the Interior to work together with state agencies to develop plans for survey, evaluation, and preservation of significant sites. CRM archaeology developed rapidly in the 1970s as EO11593 and the Moss-Bennett Act (Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974) brought archaeology into the mainstream of NHPA compliance.

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) established the first significant criminal penalties for vandalism, alteration, or destruction of sites on federal or tribal lands, or for sale, purchase, or transport of any archaeological resource (including artifacts). ARPA made it illegal to excavate without a permit, or written permission, from the agency that controlled the land. Also, ARPA required archaeologists to submit a research design prior to beginning fieldwork. A research design is a

### Your Tax Dollars Pay For CRM Projects

Federal laws enacted in the 1960s and 70s established a new kind of archaeology, called public archaeology or cultural resource management. Recognizing the importance of protecting their ancient past, states followed suit, enacting similar legislation that applied at the state level. CRM projects are those mandated by law. Both public and private monies support CRM projects. Large, notable CRM projects in Georgia include those that preceded construction of all recent reservoir basins, and extensive excavations in Brasstown Valley, described in *Early Georgia* (vol. 28, no. 2).

Most of the archaeology conducted today in the US and in Georgia are CRM projects.

*CRM addresses a variety of archaeological site types in the widest possible array of settings because of legal mandates and agency requirements for inventory, assessment, and data recovery or preservation of significant resources regardless of their types or locations. Paradoxically, while routine, unimaginative field and analytical methods and boiler-plate reports characterize large parts of the field, the CRM environment also can reward and encourage innovation....* (Green and Doershuk 1998:130)

We all benefit from the considerable cross-fertilization between CRM archaeologists and those working in the academic setting. Thus, information generated by your tax dollars is far-reaching; indeed.

*The direct products of CRM archaeology, beyond documents that assist in agency compliance and planning, range from significant advances in knowledge, to useful regional and local information, to detection of resource presence or absence, to useless low-quality work.* (Green and Doershuk 1998:143)

plan for research, fieldwork, laboratory analysis, and report-writing; it specifies the questions the researcher seeks to answer by excavating a site, because excavations are by nature destructive, and can never be done a second time. Another purpose of ARPA was to increase communication and exchange of information among government entities, professional archaeologists, and the public.

Over the last century, lawmakers and archaeologists have made tremendous progress toward protecting our nation's archaeological resources. US law moved from passive protection of specific historic objects to planned preservation and inventory of complete archaeological sites, including their entire cultural and environmental context. A

### HPD's Principal Duties

Carrying out the mandates of the National Historic Preservation Act, with some administrative and financial support from the Department of the Interior, Georgia's Historic Preservation Division helps to preserve the historical, architectural, and archaeological resources of Georgia by:

#### *Identification and Evaluation of Cultural Properties*

- Identification of properties through field survey or reports from communities and individuals;
- Evaluation includes nominating eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

Armed with that information, HPD encourages development projects that preserve or rehabilitate significant cultural properties.

#### *Implementation of Tax Incentive Programs*

- Including the 1980 Tax Treatment Extension and 1986 Tax Reform Act;
- Provides evaluations, application assistance, and recommendations to individuals or organizations who employ preservation practices;
- Provides some matching funds for survey and planning projects with the Department of the Interior, and maintains data about other sources of funding for preservation projects.

HPD is a vital resource for planners and developers who want to take advantage of the financial incentives involved in sound cultural resource management.

#### *Guidance, Review, and Planning Assistance for State, Federal, and Community Projects*

- Assists project directors and planners to comply with federal and state requirements;
- Guides and informs communities about zoning, legislation and preservation procedures;
- Aids Regional Development Centers through funding for Regional Preservation Planners.

HPD's responsibility involves knowledge of, and assistance in, compliance with federal and state preservation laws.

#### *Technical Assistance and Information*

- Through professional architects and other preservation experts, HPD offers qualified assistance to preservation programs across Georgia;
- Acts as a clearinghouse for historic preservation information;
- Partially funds the state's archaeological site database;
- Handles queries from the general public;
- Offers general information via their web page.

**HPD acts as a central resource for preservation planning in Georgia.**

trend toward more effective communication, not only among agencies but also between professionals and the public, has been an important part of the evolution of national policy toward archaeological resource protection. There also has been an important shift toward uniform standards for inventory, identification, and evaluation of resources, as well as stronger enforcement of and penalties for breaking preservation laws on the books.

### State Laws Protecting Archaeological Resources

The history of cultural resource protection and archaeology in Georgia is an interesting one, involving many federal and state agencies. In the 1940s and 1950s, the Smithsonian Institution oversaw the National Park Service's River Basin Survey. During this period, archaeologists investigated Clarks Hill, Allatoona, and Lanier reservoir basins. Many early surveys and excavations, especially in the 1950s to 1970s, were conducted through the Highway Salvage Archaeology program. The old State Highway Department, and what is now the Federal Highway Administration, funded most of that early work.

Recently, Georgia's legislators enacted several laws aimed at protection of archaeological resources, most of which parallel federal regulations. These include:

- the protection of certain cemeteries and burial grounds;
- a review and notification process in cases where prehistoric or historic burials are encountered, either by professionals or private individuals;
- the mandate to identify and evaluate natural and archaeological resources that may be impacted by state projects;
- authorization of state agencies to manage any historic properties under their ownership;
- the Georgia Historic Preservation Act, promoting the protection of the state's heritage and guiding local communities in developing their own local preservation policies.

The above is only a partial list. Bills that affect Georgia's archaeological resources continue to be introduced into the legislature. Some bills seek to clarify existing laws, and others introduce substantive changes or new topics.



## Local Legal Protections

Local communities may augment, or enhance, legal protections established at the state and federal level. Cobb county has long been in the forefront of local involvement in CRM. In 1968, the county initiated an archaeological survey, in response to rapid growth and development, that continued until 1993 (Wallsmith 1998). This is perhaps the first locally-sponsored survey in the region, and the materials and data collected will remain an invaluable resource for years to come.

In 1984, Cobb county established the first local ordinance of its kind in Georgia, creating the Cobb County Historic Preservation Commission. Members of the preservation commission recommend specific buildings, districts, sites, structures, or works of art to receive historical designation. They make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners for sites to be placed on the Cobb County Register of Historic Places and to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), for nomination to the National Register. Other communities in Georgia can, and do, work with the SHPO office to create policies tailored to their own areas, preserving a piece of their local heritage.

## Federal Programs and Agencies

All federal agencies operating in Georgia must observe laws protecting archaeological resources. Those with large landholdings, such as the Department of the Interior (National Park Service), US Department of Agriculture (Fish and Wildlife Service and US Forest Service), and Department of Defense have the greatest obligations. The following sections describe the contributions some of these agencies make to the management of archaeological resources in Georgia.

### *Southeast Archeological Center*

Since 1966 the Southeast Archaeological Center (SEAC) in Tallahassee, Florida, has helped national parks meet the requirements of federal law, regulation, and policy regarding archaeological resources. SEAC does this through professional support, technical assistance and partnership projects. Specifically, SEAC conducts archeological research, manages collections, and provides database management for the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service. In addition, SEAC oversees a wide-ranging outreach and pub-

Some agencies and organizations involved in archaeological resource management, public education, research, and archaeological preservation activities in Georgia, and the geographic extent of their efforts.

organization	geographic locales
CRM firms	across the state
National Park Service	on park lands
Georgia Department of Transportation	along generally narrow corridors across the state
US Forest Service	on National Forest lands
University System of Georgia	across the state, but generally near the school
regional museums	generally on or near the facility
DNR's Historic Preservation Division	across the state
US Army Corps of Engineers (entire Southeast)	along waterways, including reservoirs, across the state, and on military bases
Nonprofit organizations	specific locales

lic education initiative that focuses on the long-term protection, appreciation, and use of the archeological resources in national parks.

### *National Register Programs (NRP)*

This office of the National Park Service oversees and reviews aspects of state-level historic preservation programs mandated by the NHPA. In addition, it provides support, grant reviews, and technical assistance to State Historic Preservation Offices and other agencies.

### *The US Forest Service*

The Forest Service oversees the archaeological resources on its lands through survey, inventory, and planning. Additionally, it offers education and outreach programs to heighten awareness of our archaeological heritage among the general public. With only two archaeologists currently on staff in Georgia, the Forest Service contracts with CRM firms for large-scale survey and excavation projects.

### ***The US Army Corps of Engineers***

With regional offices in Savannah and Mobile, Alabama, the Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for survey, inventory, and protection of archaeological sites on lands impacted by Corps projects and along lakes and rivers under their management. Generally, landowners requesting a permit from the Corps are responsible for insuring compliance with all provisions of the NHPA, usually by obtaining the services of a CRM firm.

### ***Military Bases and Properties***

Military bases constitute a significant percentage of lands in Georgia managed by federal agencies. Like other federal properties, military lands are managed in compliance with federal preservation laws. Some of Georgia's military bases have archaeologists on staff, but most large-scale projects are contracted to CRM firms.

### ***Georgia's Archaeological Programs***

The vast holdings of state and federal lands in Georgia mean many agencies manage cultural resources. In addition, Georgia is rich in museums and other organizations involved with archaeological resources. Together (see table), they cover a variety of activities (education, research, and administration) and carry out legislative mandates at many levels (local, state, federal). They involve professional archaeologists and historic preservationists, as well as knowledgeable and informed volunteers. By far the greatest number of staff hours allocated to archaeology in Georgia are in compliance or CRM archaeology. The following discussion will give you a brief description of each type of archaeological program in Georgia.

### ***The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division (HPD)***

Within state government, the Historic Preservation Division is the nerve center for protection of and information about archaeological and historic resources. By law, each state must have an State Historic Preservation Officer to oversee implementation of federal mandates regarding historic resources. Georgia's HPD also includes the Office of the State Archaeologist. The State Archaeologist, and his staff in the Archaeological Services Unit (ASU), carry out the mandates of the Georgia Antiquities Act and are the archaeo-

logical specialists within HPD. The ASU promotes the identification, documentation, and protection of archaeological sites in Georgia, especially those on state-owned lands. HPD provides crucial expertise and guidance in the protection of all archaeological resources, historic and prehistoric, in Georgia. The State Archaeologist and his staff also evaluate whether each CRM report and the recommendations it contains satisfy federal regulations as to the significance of archaeological resources.

### ***Georgia Archaeological Site File***

The Georgia Archaeological Site File (GASF), established in 1976, is the central database for site information in Georgia. Located at the University of Georgia, this repository contains detailed data about known archaeological resources across the state, including site forms, reports, manuscripts, and some artifact collections. Through the GASF, qualified researchers can find information concerning a site's location, when it was occupied, and what types of artifacts and features have been found there, and what previous research has been conducted on it. The growing GASF database now has information on over 35,000 prehistoric and historic sites in Georgia (Williams 2000, personal communication 2001).

### ***Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT)***

Georgia's extensive highway construction program, funded with state and federal dollars, results in a continuous series of archaeology projects. Within the DOT's Division of Preconstruction is the Office of Environment and Location. This office, based in Atlanta, maintains a permanent staff of seven archaeologists who are responsible for the investigation and assessment of archaeological resources in advance of DOT construction. The DOT has, on average, 2000 programmed projects located statewide, including maintenance projects, intersection improvements, bridge replacements, and major highway reconstruction. About 60% of all DOT programmed projects are investigated and assessed by staff archaeologists. These investigations mirror similar work conducted by CRM firms in scope, standards, and compliance in regards to the evaluation of prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. The remaining 40% of DOT projects are completed by CRM firms. These contracted projects, usually large in scale or mitigative

in nature, are managed by GDOT staff archaeologists who provide logistical and information support, and CRM firm oversight to ensure DOT's compliance with state and federal regulations.

### **The Council on American Indian Concerns**

The Council, created in 1992, works to protect Indian graves and burial objects from both inadvertent and deliberate desecration. It is authorized by the Georgia legislature, which also created the laws on the books that strengthen the protection of Native American burial sites. The Council focuses on two goals: protecting Indian burial sites and facilitating the repatriation (return) of Indian remains and burial objects not subject to federal law, from museums and other institutions. The Council is composed of nine Governor appointees (four are Indians native to Georgia, three are scientists with expertise in Native American culture, and two are members of the public at large).

### **Cultural Resource Management Firms**

Several private firms conduct archaeological and historic preservation projects across the Southeastern United States and work extensively in Georgia. CRM firms employ about two-thirds of the working archaeologists residing in the state. Each CRM project must meet all state and federal criteria for the evaluation of prehistoric and historic cultural resources, as well as conduct laboratory analyses, curation, and reporting consistent with the law and established professional practices.

Public agencies and private organizations may be required to investigate and assess cultural resources in order to comply with federal and state laws. The reports from these compliance projects, conducted by CRM firms, are reviewed by the SHPO. Ultimately, approved reports are filed at the GASF in Athens, and any artifacts collected and field notes generated during the project are curated in an appropriate facility. Curation preserves them for future researchers to interpret to the public.

### **Society for Georgia Archaeology**

SGA is a member-based organization that works to raise public awareness of archaeological resource

planning, protection, and research through various outreach activities. It also supports the identification and investigation of archaeological sites throughout Georgia.

One of SGA's most important recent undertaking was to spearhead establishment of Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week, which has been proclaimed by the Governor each year since 1994. In 2001, this was expanded to Georgia Archaeology Month. To promote archaeological awareness, SGA sponsors and organizes various activities around the state and annually produces a widely distributed poster and teacher packet with prepared lesson plans. To accomplish its goals, SGA extends its capabilities by partnering with federal and state agencies, as well as CRM firms and non-profit organizations. SGA has no permanent staff, and is operated by volunteers. (For details on SGA, see Elliott, this issue.)

### **Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists**

The Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists (GCPA) was created in 1988 to further cer-



*SGA members examine Cooper's Furnace, located below Allatoona Dam next to the Etowah River, during an annual spring outing.*

tain goals of the state's professional community. The GCPA's primary mission is to facilitate communication and exchange of information among archaeologists working or studying in Georgia. It also serves as an advisory council to other organi-

### Who Owns Archaeological Resources?

To answer that philosophical query, we pose the following questions as food for thought and to spur discussion. Some of the answers may surprise you. As one archaeologist points out, some of the best stewards of archaeological resources are concerned property owners. In fact, there are times when a publicly held site is among the least cared for. This is not meant as a legal discussion, but as an exercise in the ethical questions archaeological preservationists face every day. For an insightful discussion, see Charles McGimsey's *Public Archaeology* (1972).

You are a private landowner and come across some artifacts on your property. Are they yours to collect and keep? Can you dig for more? Must you have a college degree to practice archaeology?

If a private organization funds an archaeological project, are the results and material remains theirs to use as they wish? Must they hire a professional archaeologist to conduct the fieldwork?

You are an archaeologist busy with teaching and research. If you encounter a collector, should you cooperate with that individual? Or should you strongly discourage all collecting, stating the illegality, and threaten to turn the person in? Are you meeting your responsibility by noting his or her collection and initiating a discussion about the importance of reporting a site and taking diligent field notes?

Please consider the following as you contemplate the above questions:

- *The overarching goal is to maintain the association of the artifacts with the context in which they were found.* That relationship is the information that makes up archaeological knowledge. It is the responsibility of each individual involved in archaeology to guarantee that data are recorded and communicated.

- *No one can claim exclusive ownership, professional or amateur, to any cultural material, data or information.* The past belongs to all of us, and no individual has the right to endanger, destroy or control any form of the public's heritage, be it material remains or the results of research.

- *Archaeology is a discipline well-suited for amateur and volunteer contributions.* The general public is an invaluable resource for information about site locations and artifacts, as well as for insightful, out-of-our-academic-box interpretations of human behavior. Often, a volunteer who has spent years involved in a particular region does, in fact, contribute more to understanding the prehistory of that area than a full-time professional in the field.

zations, in and out of the discipline, and works to heighten professional standards in archaeology. The GCPA also acts as a powerful advocate for archaeology in promoting and preserving cultural resources throughout the state.

### Academic Programs

Academic programs in archaeology, like those at the University of Georgia, Georgia State University, Valdosta State University, Georgia Southern University, and the State University of West Georgia are vital centers for training professional archaeologists. The faculty in these departments instruct undergraduate and graduate students in archaeological theory and method, while their departments offer broad anthropological training. CRM firms employ many technicians with undergraduate degrees to work in laboratories and do fieldwork, as well as individuals who generally have graduate degrees to supervise crews, write reports, and oversee projects.

Universities also provide Georgia's archaeologists with support services such as extensive library collections, laboratories and comparative collections, curation facilities and technical assistance. For instance, holdings of the Georgiana Collection of the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, housed in the Main Library on the University of Georgia campus, are extensive, and an invaluable resource for historical researchers.

### Other Educational Endeavors

Museums, parks, historic sites, and private facilities all raise awareness of archaeological and historical resources in Georgia. Through interpretive exhibits, informal classes, and hands-on activities for children and adults, these facilities can translate formal research results into the public vernacular. While some do employ professional curators and house substantial collections of both prehistoric and historic materials, these institutions generally conduct archaeological fieldwork only infrequently, and their staff rarely includes professional archaeologists.

### Nonprofit Organizations

Although not an exhaustive list, the four nonprofit organizations discussed below focus on various aspects of archaeology including research, conservation, and public education. The Archaeologi-

cal Conservancy is a national, nonprofit organization, created in 1980, that purchases and preserves significant archaeological sites across the US. It has acquired more than 200 endangered sites, prehistoric and historic, thereby ensuring that future generations will enjoy and benefit from our cultural heritage. Funded by private citizens and corporations, it is on the front line of the conservation battle.

The LAMAR Institute and Coosawattee Foundation (CFI) both emphasize archaeological research and education. LAMAR Institute projects have been conducted around the state, on both prehistoric and historic subjects and sites. CFI projects focus on the Calhoun area along the Coosawattee River. Both the LAMAR Institute and CFI conduct extensive archaeological outreach programs for a diverse public.

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation promotes the protection of Georgia's historic heritage, focusing on standing structures throughout the state.

### Artifact Collectors

Some Georgians collect artifacts. Those who only pick up material on the surface and keep track of where they find things, preserve important archaeological information—context. These collectors can be very helpful to archaeologists interested in reconstructing the past. Indeed, the database of known Paleoindian and Early Archaic projectile points established by the SGA drew heavily on collections held by private individuals (Ledbetter et al. 1996). Unsystematic digging for artifacts divorces them from their context and destroys important information. Those who dig up Indian burials and sell the artifacts on the black market not only destroy information and desecrate sacred areas, but they also break the law.

### A Look Back: Recent Successes

Archaeological preservationists are often discouraged by the current threats to the our collective buried resources, but there has also been substantial progress in archaeological resource preservation and public education in Georgia. Some successes since the 1970s include:

- appointment of the Georgia Archaeological Research Design Task Force;
- an outline for a series of 36 *Archaeological Research Design Papers*, approximately two-thirds of which had been published by the end of 2000;

### Protecting Sites on Private Land

The National Park Service (2000), recognizing the power and importance of private individuals in cultural resource management, has compiled the following tips and strategies for protecting archaeological sites on private land:

- Protection in place is the first option to consider.
- The strongest and surest way to protect an archaeological site is through outright ownership.
- Establish priorities for site protection. Responsible site protection can be best achieved through a long-term management plan.
- Research the funding options. A variety of methods and sources of funding exist for site protection.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships and networks.
- Share information about archaeological sites with partners and decision-makers.
- Know the roles and authorities of different levels of government, including relevant laws and regulations.
- Know and educate members of your state legislature and local officials.
- Make archaeology a part of your community's zoning process.
- Serve as an archaeological site steward. Help monitor and record sites in your community.
- Support land trust activities by becoming a member. Volunteer to help on projects.

Source: *Strategies for Protecting Archaeological Sites on Private Lands* (National Park Service 2001), <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/pad/strategies/>

- creation of the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists;
- transfer of all information from the original paper site forms at the Georgia Archaeological Site File into a readily accessible computer database;
- publication of an introspective pamphlet entitled *The State of Archaeology in Georgia* by GCPA (Crook 1992);
- Office of the State Archaeologist moved to Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia DNR, with increased staff and funding;
- increased membership base of the Society for Georgia Archaeology;
- discussions of a state-wide archaeological stewardship program; and,
- passage of the Georgia Environmental Protection Act into law.

By any measure, these are significant improvements and offer encouragement for future endeavors. Still, complacency is a hazard and those concerned with the future of our archaeological resources must create new ways to work together for future success.

### Working Together to Preserve Our Past

The archaeological record is an important resource for all Georgians. Our precious archaeological resources, once lost, can never be replaced. Together, archaeologists, legislators, activists, and people from all walks of life have worked to build the legal armor to preserve our heritage. They have made great strides in the past decades; current laws emphasize long-term survey and inventory so that effective planning can occur before excavation is necessary, and we can all build on that mandate.

Still, one huge gap remains: private land and preservation. While around the globe approaches to managing cultural resources vary greatly (Cleere 1989), in the US private landowners own the archaeological resources on their property. Unless they undertake development projects or other actions that activate federal, state, or local laws, they can do as they wish with those resources. There are few state laws that address preservation of significant sites on private land and none exist at the federal level. Moreover, it seems unlikely that the American emphasis on the rights of individuals, sometimes to the exclusion of the community good, will ever be compromised. Nor am I arguing that archaeologists see such a compromise as the only solution to this problem. It is worth pointing out, however, that the idea of private rights to a communal heritage does pose a philosophical dilemma for some. Perhaps the solution to this conflict between private and communal rights lies in the preservation of archaeological data, through the recovery of information, rather than the preservation of archaeological sites. Clearly, the preservation community must find a solution to the problem of rapidly diminishing resources on private land before there is no archaeological record left to preserve.

It will take all of us—archaeologists, historic preservationists, policy makers, and an interested and informed public—to communicate outside the institutional channels and boundaries within which we have become comfortable. We must

evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of our current programs and laws and consider new or additional objectives that will help us better manage our archaeological resources. We must join forces to instill a sense of communal ownership of, and responsibility for, our past. It will necessitate new relationships between each partner in preservation and new alliances among the programs and institutions just discussed. It will mean discovering and implementing fresh approaches to reaching these goals.

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## An SGA Timeline

### 1933

The Society for Georgia Archaeology meets for the first time on October 13, consisting of influential citizens (judges, doctors, attorneys, a general, and prominent businessmen) who are interested in Georgia's prehistoric past (Smith 1939).

### 1934-1940

SGA encourages and supports efforts by the Federal Works Progress Administration to conduct a substantial program of archaeological excavations in Georgia, including at Ocmulgee mounds.

Society continues to meet regularly.

### 1934

Macon residents, led by prominent members of SGA, raise \$25,000 to purchase 2000 acres that would become Ocmulgee National Monument (Hally 1994:19).

### 1938

The fall meeting of SGA is held on the University of Georgia campus in October, shortly after the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology is established.

### 1940s

Documentation on SGA sparse for this period; World War II adversely affects the organization and its members.

### 1950

Society for the Preservation of Early Georgia History (SPEGH) organized. Publishes vol. 1, nos. 1 and 2 of *Early Georgia* journal.

## This Is Not Your Mother's SGA

by Rita Folse Elliott

Following a request to write this article, I decided to do a little light reading. Thirty years of SGA newsletters and a few assorted newspaper clippings from the 1930s have their revelations. The cyclical history of SGA is obvious even to those not trained in recognizing patterns of human behavior. When I took office as President of SGA in 1998, little did I know that I would be repeating some of the very same thoughts and phrases that had been repeated so many times before me by so many others. In fact, it is probably a good thing that I did not read all the newsletters at that time, or else I may have despaired at ever breaking out of the cycle that SGA had endured for more than five decades.

Traveling back in time to the SGA of the 1930s, 1950s, 1970s, and 1980s provides a very good way to evaluate our SGA of 2001. This journey, along with a more intensive study of SGA activities during the past decade, leads to the inevitable conclusion that SGA finally has escaped its prior destiny of struggling to maintain its very

existence! But it is not enough to escape; we must continue to forge a new destiny now that we are free to do so.

### Flashbacks

1930s—"Macon Meeting to Mark High Point in Archaeological Research in Georgia: to be attended by Noted Scientist"—newspaper announcement about Smithsonian archaeologists speaking at upcoming SGA meeting (Atlanta Constitution 1934).

"When, during the middle Thirties, the Government entered the field of archaeology to provide work in conjunction with WPA relief, a group of Macon citizens headed by Dr. C.C. Harrold succeeded in obtaining a project to excavate the large mound-site directly across the Ocmulgee River first described by Bartram. The land was acquired through the efforts of the Society for Georgia Archaeology, of which Dr. Harrold was president, and is now Ocmulgee National Monument" (Waring 1977 [1945]:295).

"The Georgia Society has brought about many fine things and I wonder if it should not be given a great slice of credit for the establishment here at the

Elliott led SGA as president from 1998 to 2000, and was instrumental in "growing" Archaeology Awareness Week into Archaeology Month.

University of Georgia of a department of archaeology" (Jones 1939, quoted in Bailey 1986:68).

1954—"After the printing of the first two issues of Early Georgia in the Summer and Fall of 1950, it was found that expenses were greater than income and publication had to be suspended. Now Early Georgia will try again with a slightly reduced format, and in the beginning with subsidies from a few public spirited citizens" (Caldwell 1954: inside back cover).

1957-1975—No issues of the journal, Early Georgia, are published.

1968—"One of the major problems discussed at that meeting was the long dormancy of the Society for the Preservation of Early Georgia History." (SPEGH newsletter 1968:1)

1974—"The Editor reported...the Spring meeting of the Society...would be held in Rome. The question that seems to be valid now is whether or not the meeting will be held at all. No word has been circulated...and it is beginning to look like the Society has merely gone through its annual twitch. We need a strong state archaeological society in Georgia. It would be a shame if the society were allowed to die again." (Garrow 1974:2)

1976—"Please pay your dues. We need the money. Encourage others to do so." (Johnston 1976:2).

1982—"As many of you know, there has been some concern about the delay in Early Georgia publication...only rarely have we been able to produce more than one issue of Early Georgia per year.... Therefore, to facilitate a catch-up in journal publication, only one issue...will be published a year. Only if possible, once we are caught up, will each volume consist of two issues." (Blanton, 1982:1)

While today's SGA may not be your Mother's SGA, certainly she

would recognize many of the same elements that have been present from the 1930s through the dawn of the twenty-first century. The society has had numerous name changes throughout its history, from "The Society for Georgia Archaeology" to "The Society for the Preservation of Georgia Antiquities" (which may have been the shortest-lived title) to "The Society for the Preservation of Early Georgia History", to the "Georgia Archaeological Society," and finally back to "The Society for Georgia Archaeology" (Wauchope 1966; Kelly 1995a:46, 1995b; SPEGH 1968). That in itself is cyclical! Regardless of the change in nomenclature, the focus has always been the same. The 1930s organization consisted of Georgians interested in learning more about the past and preserving it in Georgia.

The first objective of the Society for the Preservation of Early Georgia History in 1950 (SPEGH Newsletter 1974:4) was

*To study, collect data, publish information, and in every way practicable to sponsor projects of investigation and education calculated to inculcate a wider public understanding and appreciation of the sites and landmarks perceived to possess unique or outstanding significance in the cultural history of the State of Georgia.*

SGA's revised Mission Statement of 1998 reads

*The purpose of the Society is to unite all persons interested in the archaeology of Georgia and actively work to preserve, study and interpret Georgia's historic and prehistoric remains.*

The Mission Strategy is

*The society accomplishes its mission by advocating archaeological site preservation; encouraging the*

#### 1954

SPEGH publishes vol. 1, no. 3 of *Early Georgia*.

#### 1956

SPEGH publishes vol. 1, no. 4; and another (indeterminate) issue of *Early Georgia*.

#### 1957

SPEGH publishes vol. 2, nos. 1 and 2 of *Early Georgia*.

#### 1968

Membership totals 113 people.

#### 1969

Vol. 2, nos. 3 and 4 of *Early Georgia* published.

SPEGH establishes Augusta chapter.

#### 1974

The ninth issue of the SPEGH newsletter is produced.

SPEGH briefly reincarnated as the "Georgia Archaeological Society," and then as the "Society for Georgia Archaeology," a name that had been used for the organization as early as the 1930s.

By-law changes are made.

#### 1975

SGA membership totals 37 people.

Publication of *Early Georgia* resumes with vol. 3, no. 1, after a 19-year hiatus.

#### 1976

Newsletter title changes from *Early Georgia Newsletter* to *Newsletter of the Society for Georgia Archaeology to The Profile*.

SGA membership totals 25 people.

#### 1979

SGA hosts Fall meeting in conjunction with The Conference on the Archaeology of Coastal Georgia, South Carolina, and Eastern Florida at Armstrong State University, Savannah.



**1980**

June—first official SGA logo chosen.

**1982**

SGA sponsors experimental archaeology project at Etowah Mounds in which members document the construction of a replica Mississippian period Native American house, its later burning, and subsequent excavation.

**1983**

SGA committee appointed to make recommendations to formulate a program for a state-wide survey of artifacts in private collections.

**1986**

Survey of fluted points initiated, in coordination with SGA.

**1988**

SGA memberships total 104.

**1989**

SGA incorporated.

SGA brings concerns to the University of Georgia's president about substandard conditions for artifacts curated at the university, and offers support for expansion of the university's Museum of Natural History. (Funding later provided for improved curation facilities.)

Bylaws and constitution revised.

Committee appointed to formulate a program for a state-wide survey of artifacts held in private collections, implemented by SGA chapters.

**1990**

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources invites SGA representatives to speak at hearing concerning the Historic Preservation Administration Act and the National Preservation Policy Act, Savannah.

SGA contacts SE office

*scientific investigation, study and interpretation of those remains under professional guidance; publishing and distributing the results of these investigations; and educating the public about the archaeology of Georgia.*

Such elements as the quest to understand who we are and how we arrived at our present state of awareness, the thrill of shared knowledge and important discoveries, and the ever present desire to preserve in Georgia these vanishing traces of ourselves, have alternately burned brightly as enthusiastic flames or been reduced to a few glowing embers in SGA and its members. The ever-changing fires of SGA are now fueled by the winds of a new millennium. The growing preservation movement, ecotourism, the world wide web, an increasingly educated public, and even development, itself, is our cordwood. The winds of politics, public and private funding, educational opportunities, marketing skills, and organizational strategies will feed this fire only if we operate the bellows in a much different way than we have been accustomed to during the first fifty years of gentle stoking.

Our "usual way of doing business" was admirable, but it is what put SGA in its more than 50-year rut. The ever-plodding-ahead-while-making-few-real-strides-forward didn't even work well back in the mid-twentieth century, much less now. That old thought process is the shackles that have threatened to keep the organization struggling to maintain a decent membership in a state with a population of more than eight million. That thought process is the fetters that result in

the repeated plaintive cry of society president after president (this author included) to implore member participation in meetings. Such antiquated thinking narrows our focus like blinders until we cannot see any goal except an immediate one involving our own little cadre of 18, 50, 100, or 300 members.

Happily, SGA has begun to abandon the shackles of our "small club" mentality and to replace it with a new millennium worldview. Sure we can still have meetings with paper presentations and camaraderie, but we can also do so much more. We have recognized that we need a huge membership, while acknowledging that the type of membership we need is broad-based. Not all will want to attend meetings to hear presentations, not



*Learning about archaeology by making rubbings of casts of Swift Creek pottery.*

all will be interested in field-day demonstrations, not all will read *Early Georgia* from cover-to-cover (if you can imagine that!). We have

discovered that we must look beyond our traditional membership targets and seek out members who want to belong because they see the organization doing good things for archaeology across their state, and know that their dues are money well spent on supporting the preservation of archaeological sites or the



Public outreach through SGA's booth at COASTFEST in Brunswick.

discovery of new information about our past. We have acknowledged the need to target more institutions that wouldn't want to be caught without all the back and future issues of our now timely, now aesthetically pleasing journal, *Early Georgia*.

Events beginning in the 1990s and continuing today have shown that SGA is becoming a driving force in Georgia Archaeology, as it once was in the 1930s. We have learned that we CAN call some of the shots, we CAN affect the future of preservation in the state, we CAN create educational programming on a large scale, and we CAN develop and initiate quality research. But we can do none of this if we continue to carry the small-town baggage we have lugged for decades.

SGA actions during the past decade have given the society the sweet taste of success, albeit in small drops. Such victories have only served to whet the appetite—to give us a taste of what COULD BE in Georgia. We need to remember how to “think big”, just as SGA did in the 1930s when members persuaded Smithsonian archaeologists to come to Georgia, and convinced the WPA to choose Ocmulgee and other sites in the state for excavation, and then actually set about to raise the funding necessary to purchase Ocmulgee so it could become a national monument. And just as SGA did when it was instrumental in the establishment of a department of anthropology

at the University of Georgia. SGA thought big then, and is finally beginning to think that way again. We need to become known again as the vanguard of site preservation, just as SGA was in the 1930s when the newspaper reported, “The State Archaeological Society renders a high service in its efforts to safeguard [archaeological sites] for the general good” (*Atlanta Journal* 1935).

### Funding

SGA is becoming more familiar with “thinking big.” A recent example involves a public education project. In 2000 the Society purchased the copyright of *Frontiers in the Soil*. This accurately written and cleverly illustrated book about Georgia archaeology was created

of the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding concerns over the current status of archaeological resources on their properties.

### 1990

SGA hosts joint Fall Meeting with Alabama Archaeological Society at the Columbus Museum, Columbus.

### 1991

SGA presents first Joseph Caldwell Award.

*Early Georgia* publication schedule caught up to date to current year.

SGA sponsors excavation of the Native American burned house replica constructed in 1982.

SGA joins with the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists (GCPA) to represent archaeological concerns regarding Indian Burial legislation.

SGA sponsors public Poster Design Contest.

SGA sponsors joint Spring Meeting with the Archaeological Society of South Carolina, Augusta.

### 1992

State legislation regarding site protection and American Indian burials passed, including many revisions suggested by a joint SGA and GCPA committee.

Governor's office asks SGA and GCPA for input regarding appointments for the creation of the Council on American Indian Concerns.

SGA publishes *The Profile Papers*, a compilation of the technical articles in the 1968-1992 issues of the organization's newsletter.

SGA publishes a special public archaeology education edition of its *Early Georgia* journal targeting educators.

#### 1993

SGA members and chapter members begin dialogue with the Georgia Forestry Association and the timber industry about concerns over site looting on forest land.

#### 1994

SGA sponsors first annual Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week with the publication and distribution of a poster, curriculum materials, and a calendar of public events.

SGA sponsors a symposium on Archaeology and Education at the Georgia Council for the Social Studies Conference in Atlanta.

First biennial SGA meeting in a new format, offering archaeological tours and a banquet with a keynote speaker, Columbus.

#### 1995

SGA representatives attend Archaeology Con-fab meeting at Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon to stress the need for a funded State Archaeologist position, and funding for numerous other archaeological issues.

SGA organized two workshops, Maritime Archaeology and American Indian Issues, at the state preservation conference, Augusta.

SGA, the Historic Preservation Division, and the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, co-sponsor a teachers' workshop, Teaching With Historic Places, Macon.

#### 1996

SGA conducts the most comprehensive Archaeology Week events to date during the third annual celebration, including intensive educational events at colonial New

for school children, but appeals to both children and adults. Unfortunately, this wonderful book had been out of print for years and the last available copies were hoarded by archaeologists, teachers, and the general public. Several past attempts by various entities to get the book reprinted were futile. After studying the situation, SGA decided to purchase the rights to the book and is currently preparing several grant applications for approximately \$20,000 while seeking alternative publishing sources to meet its goal of slightly updating the book, evaluating it in academic settings, and reprinting it in its former glory.

### Policy

The last decade has taught SGA that we cannot succeed in preserving Georgia's archaeological sites, researching our past, and educating the state's citizens without understanding the political climate of the state. The Society has matured in its acknowledgement that, whether for better or worse, our archaeological goals are affected by politics and it is to our own peril that we do not stay attuned to the drafting of laws and the movements of our legislature. We have already enjoyed successes from our advocacy for archaeology.

- In the mid 1930s SGA was instrumental in the purchase of the Ocmulgee mounds site.

- In 1989 SGA helped get fund-

ing to bring the University of Georgia's curation facilities to national standards.

- In 1991 SGA helped support efforts to redraft potentially crippling legislation related to archaeological site excavation.

- In 1995 SGA helped make significant recommendations for Georgia's first full-time, state-funded archaeologist and staff.

- In 1996 SGA members and chapter members helped halt the bulldozing of the Soapstone Ridge National Register of Historic Places site, which resulted in the formation of Historic District guidelines regulated by county commissioners.

- In the late 1990s SGA helped support enactment of the Coastal Zone Management program and the Georgia Heritage Fund.

- In 1998 SGA, in conjunction with the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists, brought suit against the University System's



*Brownie Scouts enjoying hands-on learning through SGA.*

Board of Regents for non-compliance with the Georgia Environmental Policy Act. Although the plaintiffs lost, SGA was able to bring the problems with this act

and its ineffectiveness in protecting archaeological sites to the attention of a significant political audience.

SGA needs to continue to think big (or bigger) in the political arena. Why do we expect politicians to know about archaeology and its significance? They suffer from the same lack of archaeological education as most Georgians;



Young volunteers "sifting sand" during 1996 Archaeology Week excavations at New Ebenezer.

only they are now in a position to do something about it. They will not, or cannot come to us; therefore it is our job to educate them. We must, within the realm of our nonprofit status, create every opportunity to educate, wholesale, Georgia politicians. Once they see Georgia's archaeological past themselves, they cannot help but seek to preserve it. On a related level, why does SGA allow archaeology to be beaten down in the political game? Of course we will not receive our fair share of funding if we continue to roll over whenever the school bully comes around for lunch money. We will not receive if we do not ask. Twenty-first century think-

ing requires SGA to seek out and use new sources of funding in addition to claiming those funds which are rightfully ours, as we seek to preserve our rapidly dwindling archaeological sites and educate the rapidly growing numbers of Georgia residents.

### Public Education

SGA has begun to think big in areas of public education. It started the very first Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week, in spite of the fact that the equivalent projects in many other states were conducted by state governments. By the third year of this annual event, SGA was ready to think big.

In preparation for the 1996 Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week, the project raised \$10,000 in cash and tens of thousands of dollars in labor and in-kind support, while sponsoring a myriad of activities in addition to the usual poster, teacher resource materials, and calendar of events. How did we do that, when the first two such annual events were relatively small as we "tested the waters?" Simple. We thought big. We didn't call up potential sponsors and say, "We hope to have some things going on this year for Archaeology Week." We confidently said, "SGA is going to have a week-long event with excavations, hands-on activities for children, tours, re-enactors, etc." It didn't matter that, for the first twenty phone calls we didn't have a single tangible thing to support this statement—no funding, no workers, no activities, no events, nothing! Soon however, we had a sponsor or two, then we had dozens of school teachers making reservations for fieldtrips, then we got a grant...and an army tent...and a keynote speaker...and more spon-

Ebenezer and activities across the state.

SGA representatives participate in public hearing supporting institution of the Coastal Zone Management program and preservation of archaeological sites.

SGA members and chapter members attempt to stop bulldozing of the Soapstone Ridge National Register of Historic Places archaeological site; created a historic district by the county in 1997. A portion of the site is subsequently purchased and protected by the Archaeological Conservancy.

SGA works with GCPA and the Department of Natural Resources on an Anti-Looting Task Force.

#### 1997

SGA forms the Committee for Program Renewal (CPR) in an effort to further invigorate the society.

#### 1998

SGA publishes the 100th issue of *The Profile* newsletter.

SGA and GCPA bring a joint lawsuit against the Board of Regents, University System for non-adherence to the Georgia Environmental Policy Act.

SGA adopts new Mission Statement and Mission Strategy.

SGA membership totals 259 individuals and organizations.

Representatives participate in public hearings of the state legislature's Joint Study Committee on Historic Preservation, supporting a state underwater archaeology program, Savannah.

SGA sponsors fifth annual Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week, and begins a stronger partnership with the Historic

Preservation Division to reach more Georgians through this educational venue.

SGA creates an organizational web page on the world wide web.

SGA co-sponsors the public archaeology component of the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference, Atlanta.

#### 1999

SGA awards first George S. Lewis Archaeological Stewardship Award.

SGA holds first in a series of biennial Board Planning retreats for long-term goals and strategies.

SGA gets a permanent mailing address and voice mail telephone number.

SGA membership totals 289.

SGA representatives attend the Legislative Reception in Atlanta.

Series of educational, hands-on workshops presented at Fall meeting.

#### 1999 / 2000

SGA becomes affiliate member of various organizations, including the Georgia Historical Society and the Georgia Council for History, Preservation, and Political Education.

SGA members attend public hearings to support allocation of Georgia Heritage 2000 funds.

SGA makes contact with, and offers support to, like-minded organizations, including the Upper Etowah River Alliance, Riverkeepers, Forestwatch, the Natural History Museum at UGA, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Trust for Public Land.

SGA representatives attend public hearings throughout the state to support Governor Barnes' Greenspace Program and the resulting preservation of archaeological sites.

sors...by thinking big. Thinking big must, however, be preceded by in-depth planning and followed by hard work! Archaeology Week is now Archaeology Month and represents the eighth such annual celebration.

Thinking big requires constant re-evaluation. Sure, we can continue to print and distribute 4000 Archaeology Week (now Month) posters, but why not find a mutually good reason to partner with a billboard company and plaster the state with so many archaeology billboards (in addition to posters) that the message couldn't be missed? Or design a partnership with Post Cereals for a kid-based archaeology message on the box back, or a series of "archaeology trading cards"—one in each specially marked box. The point is,

thinking small gets SGA nowhere, and acting without continually evaluating our actions will get us right back into that 1950s to 1990 rut.

Thinking big requires thinking differently. Recent work by the SGA's Board Development Committee illustrates this extremely well. For the first time since the 1930s, SGA actively sought to recruit board members interested in archaeology, but with a diverse set of skills and talents often unavail-

able in our traditional membership. These individuals with experience in advocacy, fundraising, nonprofit organizations, public trusts, banking, and a host of other highly valuable, sought-after skills were invited to become members of SGA and asked to serve on its Board. Board retreats have revealed the wisdom in diversifying among preservation-minded individuals, and SGA now enjoys strategic planning and well-defined long- and short-term goals. SGA now operates less from crisis-to-crisis, and looks into the future with a pro-active stance. Board members chair numerous active



*Stalwart SGA President (2000-2002) Betsy Shirk conducting public outreach at an SGA exhibit.*

and important committees designed to meet the Society's planned goals. Other non-board committee chairs serve critical niches in rounding out the organization's work. There is no doubt that SGA's recently defined long-term goals, including a major membership drive, a capital campaign and major donor program, and a statewide collector survey loom brightly, and achievably, on the horizon.

So how do we continue to think

big in the twenty-first century? We write a well-developed and thoughtfully researched plan for public and private funding for \$300,000 to cover start-up and first-year costs of a multi-year,

can establish actual working partnerships with like-minded organizations. We can seek and obtain funding from private, state, federal, and member sources. We can think big, talk big, act big, and be big!



Preparing for Archaeology Week visitors to SGA events at historic New Ebenezer, 1996.

state-of-the art "collector survey" of Georgia. You remember the collector survey that had its roots in 1938 with Robert Wauchope's visits to arrowhead collectors in northern Georgia, and with visits made by A.R. Kelly and Joseph Caldwell as they traversed the state as late as the 1950s. You remember the infamous collector survey...targeted in 1983 (if not earlier) by an SGA committee appointed to make recommendations to formulate a program for such a project...targeted in 1989 by a committee appointed to formulate a program for such a project.... Sure, in 2001 we could appoint a committee to formulate a program.... Or we could just THINK BIG and do it.

We need to target new audiences, such as the Boy Scout Council of Georgia (rather than individual scouts or troops), and establish an effective, systematic partnership that works for them and for us, while their scouts earn the Archaeology merit badge.

What are other ways SGA can continue on its path to success? We

When archaeologist Robert Wauchope (1966:xvii) returned to Georgia on a visit he declared,

*Another thing that I should like to mention here is the astonishing change that the Georgia landscape underwent in the twenty years from 1938 to 1958.... I had expected that in twenty years a few old things might have changed.... But I was unprepared for the wholesale changes that had taken place....*

While he was speaking of the natural environment, Wauchope could have just as easily been referring to the environment of SGA, which lay almost dormant in the mid-twentieth century. If Wauchope were here today, I would hope he would say the same thing, because in the twenty years following SGA's reorganization in the mid-1970s, things have changed tremendously. The SGA of today is propelling itself into the twenty-first century with new ideas and new ways of implementing them.

This is not your Mother's SGA. Let's make Mother proud!

Volunteers create high-quality portable exhibit showcasing SGA.

SGA applies for, and receives 501(c)3 status as a nonprofit organization.

SGA purchases copyright of unique archaeology book, *Frontiers in the Soil*, by Roy Dickens, with plans to reprint and sell.

SGA holds its first annual Great American Archaeology Auction fundraiser, netting over \$600 at the spring meeting, Unicoi State Park.

More than 400 people visit SGA's exhibit and hands-on activities booth at DNR's COASTFEST celebration, Brunswick.

SGA cosponsors portions of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference (SEAC), Macon.

SGA achieves over \$1500 in sales of books and merchandise at the SGA booth in the SEAC's conference book room.

#### 2000 / 2001

SGA applies for several grants to fund reprinting of *Frontiers in the Soil* book.

#### 2001

SGA transforms its eighth annual Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week to the first annual Georgia Archaeology Month.

First purchases made for SGA's archaeology video lending library.

The second SGA Board Planning Retreat including intensive strategies for public education, organizational marketing, preservation, and advocacy.

SGA exhibit and members attend the Legislative Reception in Atlanta.

SGA committee prepares grant for full-time, multi-year, collector survey.

SGA spring meeting focuses on underwater archaeology, Savannah.

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## SGA: Full Steam Ahead!

SGA has had its ups and downs, as Rita Elliott's article clearly reveals. However, the winds of change began to blow in the mid-1990s and SGA now stands poised to fulfill its destiny, defined in the 1930s by its founding members: helping all Georgians understand the significance of their archaeological sites so that they will support archaeological preservation, education, and research. Until this is achieved, our organization must attain a more visible profile, increase accessibility to the public, and strengthen the political environment for archaeological site preservation. By mapping a challenging future for SGA, we the members will be excited not by where we are now, but by the direction in which we are moving. Yes, we've come a long way, but the journey is only beginning.

—Elizabeth Shirk, SGA President





# Sprawl and the Destruction of Georgia's Archaeological Resources

by Charlotte A. Smith and Jennifer Freer Harris

Today, widespread development, or sprawl, is destroying archaeological sites, both prehistoric and historic, at an unprecedented rate. Sprawl is taking a drastic toll on the archaeological record and the critical information it contains. If archaeological preservation efforts are not intensified, Georgians risk losing precious resources forever.

Sprawl is one threat among many to Georgia's hidden heritage, including looting and land altering activities such as reservoir construction, agriculture, and logging. Here we focus on sprawl because of its two most disturbing aspects: the dramatic rate of current urban expansion, and little evidence that the expansion will end soon.

Legal protection for most archaeological resources on private land are minimal. While federal agencies and federal projects are required to mitigate the negative impact that their activities have on archaeological resources, most land in the United States is held privately and falls outside that jurisdiction (see "Archaeological Resource Protection in Georgia," this issue). Making a bad situation even worse, the United States Department of Agriculture (1997) reports the average number of acres of private land developed in Georgia is rising dramatically.

Although some of the information included in this article may seem cumbersome, we do not intend to aimlessly bombard you with numbers and statistics. We illustrate the impact of increasing population and landscape development by looking

both at Atlanta (the state's largest metropolitan area), and at a small area that remained rural until recently. Although these two areas are not statistical samples of the state, they do show that Georgia's demographic expansion has disturbed or destroyed thousands of archaeological sites.

Many human activities have the potential to alter, disturb, or destroy archaeological sites. This has been true, in fact, throughout history and prehistory—wherever humans have stopped, settled and earned their living, they likely disturbed the archaeological record of those who came before. This preliminary study shows that sprawl has affected thousands of sites in Georgia.

In this article we examine Georgia's rich archaeological heritage, and archaeological

site density in Piedmont Georgia. Then, we look at development in urban and rural Georgia, using Atlanta's metropolitan area<sup>1</sup> and a 4661 acre area near Suwanee as case studies. Finally, we discuss the implications of these two case studies for archaeological preservation.

## Georgia's Archaeological Record

To realize the impact development and sprawl can have on archaeological resources, one must first understand the distribution of those resources across the landscape. Humans have roamed what is now Georgia for thousands of years. Over those long years, people have left considerable evidence

*It is possible that from a land consumption perspective, Atlanta has grown faster than any human settlement in history.*

—Christopher Leinberger

of their occupation and use of the landscape. Each place with that evidence is called an archaeological site, of which thousands are recorded in the Georgia Archaeological Site File (GASF).

### ***Land Use Trends in the Georgia Piedmont***

Prehistoric occupation of Georgia's rolling Piedmont, technically the area between the sandy, flat, Coastal Plain and the more rugged Appalachian mountains, began at least 12,000 years ago, with sparse occupation and use of the landscape (see Jones, this issue). Over the last several thousand years before Europeans arrived, villages and individual households were scattered across the Piedmont. Villages tended to cluster near creeks and rivers that were bordered by good agricultural lands. Thus, Georgia's landscape was never evenly occupied. Access to important resources, such as good hunting areas, fertile agricultural lands, and other features of the natural landscape, influenced people's preferences for places to visit and live, as did where *other* people lived (they either wanted to

be near them, or they preferred to avoid having neighbors—just as people do today).

Euroamericans began to enter the Piedmont Southeast in large numbers late in the eighteenth century, and tended to settle along rivers and overland transportation routes. Later settlements dotted the landscape as farming predominated. By the early 1900s, much of Georgia's Piedmont was cleared and planted in cotton. Then, the boll weevil struck, devastating cotton production, along with the economy of much of the rural South.

Today this pattern is reversed and formerly rural areas (except for parts of South Georgia) are now being more intensively occupied. Many new inhabitants are not farmers, and much of what had been open farmland in the 1920s, and become woodlands by the 1970s, is once again being cleared. Much of this new wave of rural development is residences and small businesses that tend to cluster along roads or in new housing developments.

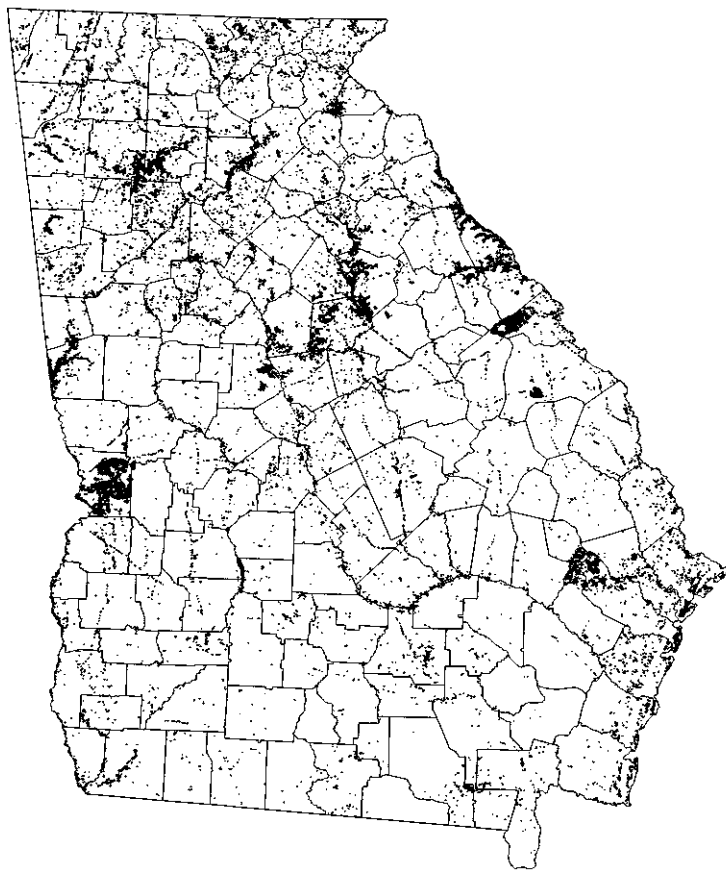
### ***The GASF Database***

The GASF is a facility maintained in Athens to record archaeological data from around the state. It is supported in part by funds from the Department of Natural Resources. If you report a new site, this is where that information is stored.

As of January 2001, the GASF included approximately 35,000 identified archaeological sites (Williams personal communication 2001). Since sites often contain evidence of more than one period of occupation, the GASF has data on 48,000 components. While "site" refers to a definable area that has archaeological materials, "component" refers to a particular time period a site was used. Site counts, then, are the total number of places with archaeological resources, while component counts suggest the changing intensity of human settlement over time. Thus, both counts are important.

### ***Archaeological Site Density in the Piedmont***

The GASF data do not directly measure site density in Georgia. As Williams (2000:10) points out, most of the reported site locations reflect only areas where archaeologists have surveyed (or looked for sites). Those areas, in turn, often parallel

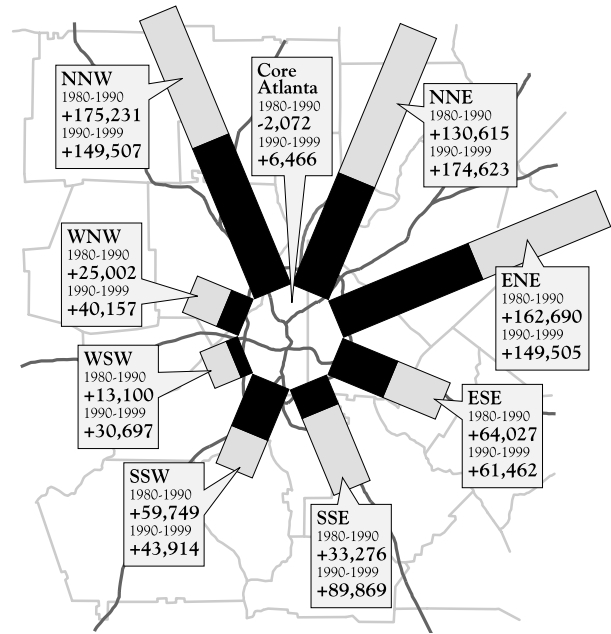


As of 1 April 2001, the GASF lists over 35,000 archaeological sites. (Map courtesy Mark Williams)

large government-funded projects (e.g., reservoirs) and federally owned properties, on which archaeological inventory and evaluation are required by law. Williams' map (page 66) shows very dense site distributions, for instance, at Fort Benning and Fort Stewart. Nevertheless, from intensive studies of specific areas, archaeologists feel they can create estimates of site densities to be expected on similar lands. Indeed, some archaeologists specialize in constructing models for projecting site densities.

The site densities used in this article are based on two estimates. One is derived from three surveyed areas near Athens (Elliott 1981; Freer 1989; Pluckhan 1994). These three areas had an average site density of 1 site per 14 acres (Elliott 2000). The second site density is from a small tract partly within the Suwanee case study area discussed below. The site density in that tract, which is along a broad ridge crest, is 1 site per 28 acres. Thus, these two site densities are drawn from actual archaeological surveys. The variation, with one area having twice as many sites as the other, is not surprising. We already know that previous human use of the Georgia Piedmont, and thus site densities, are variable.

Keeping in mind these land use patterns and how archaeological sites are distributed across them, the next two sections present case studies of recent development in the Georgia Piedmont. First, we examine growth and land use changes around metro Atlanta. Then, we examine a small



Direction of growth in metro Atlanta (data from ARC 2000).  
Bold figures are population counts.

area in rural Georgia. Together they indicate the magnitude of development and land use changes occurring in Georgia today, and the accompanying impact on Georgia's hidden heritage.

## Metro Atlanta and Out-of-Control Growth

Although metro Atlanta is consuming the surrounding land at a record pace, the challenge of smart growth is not exclusive to Georgia's capital. Sprawl is a national issue, and recently ranked as

### What is Sprawl?—Not Even the Professionals Can Decide

There is no universally accepted definition of sprawl; however, here are two descriptive definitions:

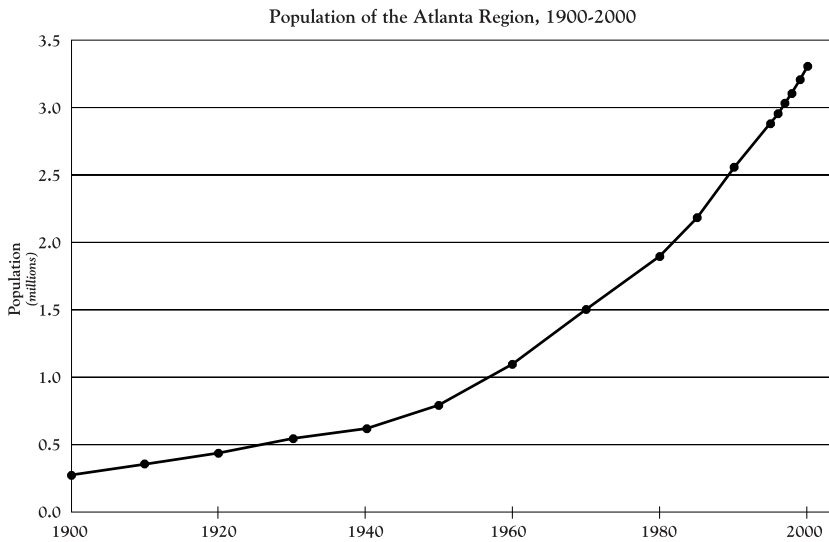
- ...*Sprawl is growth that makes automobile access the first priority. It requires a car for every move we make—to work, to shop, even to cross the street.* (Bennett and Renfro 1997)
- *Suburban sprawl, now the standard North American pattern of growth, ignores historical precedent and human experience. It is an invention, conceived by architects, engineers, and planners, and promoted by developers in the great sweeping aside of the old that occurred after the Second World War. Unlike the traditional neighborhood model, which evolved organically as a response to human needs, the suburban sprawl is an idealized artificial system... Unfortunately, this system is already showing itself to be unsustainable. Unlike the traditional neighborhood, sprawl is not*

*healthy growth; it is essentially self-destructive.*

(Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck 2000:4)

Policy analyst Anthony Downs (1998), identifies ten "traits" associated with sprawl:

1. unlimited outward extension
2. low-density settlements
3. leapfrog development
4. fragmentation of powers over land use among many small localities
5. dominance of transportation by private automotive vehicles
6. no centralized planning or control of land-uses
7. widespread strip commercial development
8. great fiscal disparities among localities
9. segregation of types of land uses in different zones
10. reliance mainly on the trickle-down or filtering process to provide housing to low-income households



*Atlanta's population change from 1900–2000 (ARC 2000).*

high as crime and violence in importance among American voters (Conley 2000). Politicians are

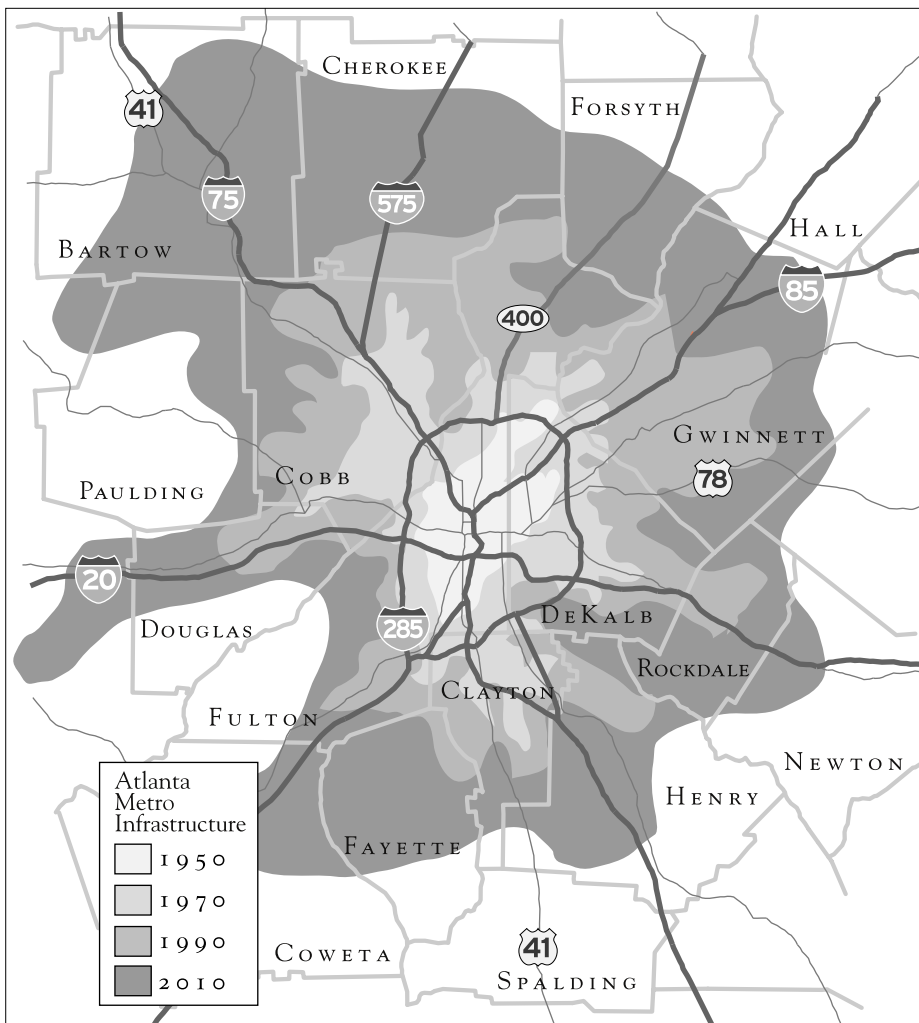
beginning to react, and 11 states have passed controlled-growth legislation over the past few years, including Georgia. In addition, the legislature has established both the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, aimed at reducing pollution and other traffic problems, and Governor Barnes' Greenspace Program, to help curb some of the destructive impact of expansion.

Atlanta is one of the most rapidly expanding urban areas in the nation. Urban analyst Christopher Leinberger concludes that each 1% in population growth around Atlanta results in 10–20% growth in land consump-

tion (cited in Turner 1997). Although it is certainly the largest urban area in Georgia, and indeed in the US Southeast, Atlanta is not the only city in Georgia that is expanding. Remember as you read this that this same phenomenon is occurring in Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah—and it is not just the larger urban areas that are expanding. Growth is also evident in many of Georgia's smaller towns, such as Clayton, Danielsville, and Shiloh, and across rural areas.

### **Population**

There is no doubt that Atlanta is growing rapidly. During the 1990s, metro Atlanta added enough people to create a city the size of Birmingham, Alabama. In fact, metro Atlanta's population grew faster in the 1990s than any other US city except Los Angeles (McCosh 2000). And urban expansion is not limited to Atlanta. An astounding growth rate has been characteristic of most of Georgia's demographic pat-



*Metro Atlanta growth since the 1950s. The 2010 area is a projection by the ARC (2000).*

tern. Gilmer county's population growth is up 75%, Dawson county 70%. Bryan and Camden counties, along the coast, were up 52% and 45% respectively (Chapman 2001).

According to the Atlanta Regional Commission (2000), the population increase in metro Atlanta from 1970 to 1990 was up 84%. Population density, however, *decreased* from 2690 to 1883 persons per square mile (a 30% decrease), evidence of the trend to consume more land for each individual. In April of 1999, the population in the ten-county region reached 3.2 million, a near record increase in a one-year period. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) projects Atlanta will gain over one million new residents by 2025. In simpler terms, Fayette county now has over seven times the number of people it did in 1970, and Gwinnett county has six times the population over the same period. The infrastructure necessary for this influx is enormous (e.g., housing, roads, schools, commercial centers, water and sewer lines, etc.), and so is the impact on archaeological resources.

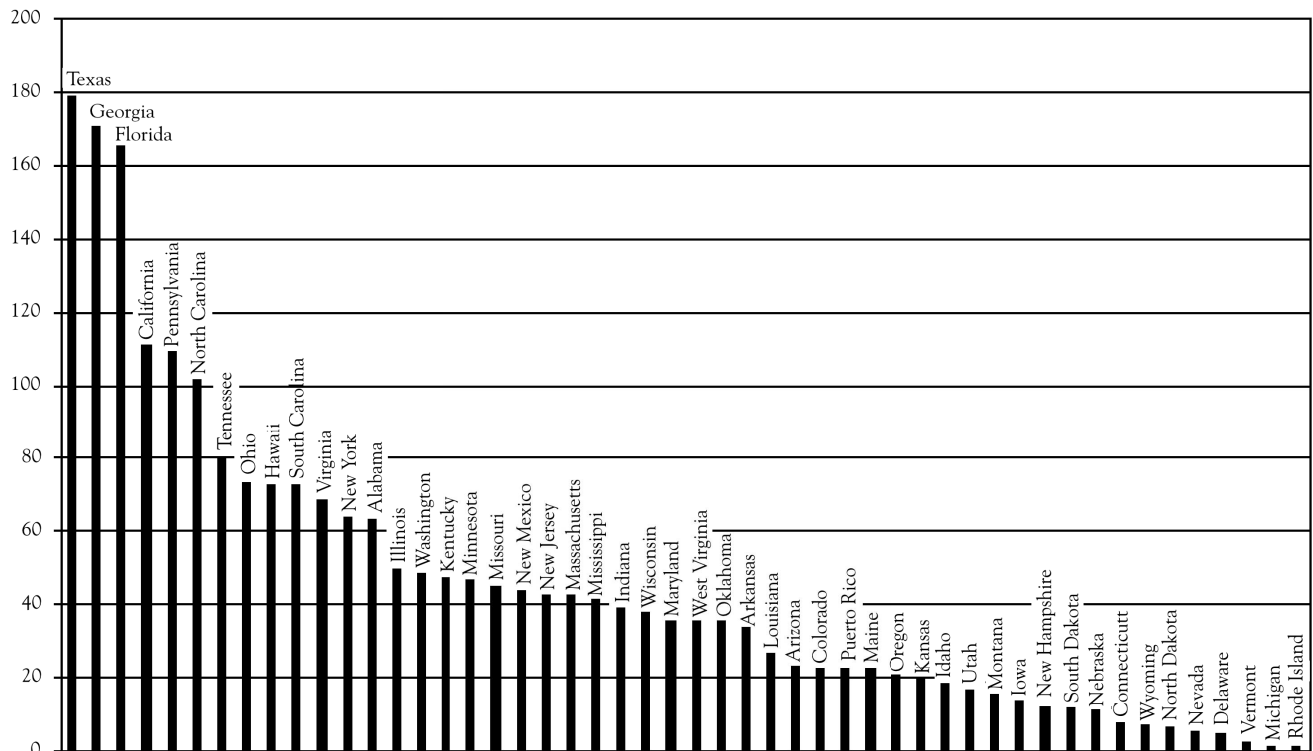
#### **Land Consumption and Construction Patterns**

Uncontrolled growth is catastrophically chang-

ing the environment. Many areas in Georgia, like others across the US (and indeed around the globe) are experiencing substantial population increases. For the most part, zoning and other controls do not focus residential development in Georgia in already occupied areas. Therefore, Georgia's rural landscape is being engulfed by suburban development, commercial areas, strip development along transportation corridors, etc. Here are some statistics about growth in Georgia, and in Atlanta.

- America's rural landscape is disappearing at the rate of 3 million acres a year, according to the USDA's (1997) *National Resources Inventory*. Nearly 16 million acres were altered nationwide through development between 1992 and 1997. Georgia is no exception. During that period, it ranked second among all US states in the average annual rate of land development (see figure below).

- According to a recent report by a US environmental advocacy group, Georgia ranks fourth in the nation for states at the greatest risk of losing rural and natural areas. Noss and Peters (1995) estimate that in 90 years Georgia may be completely developed.<sup>2</sup>



**States ranked by average annual rate of land development, 1992–1997.** Georgia ranks second, after Texas. The vertical scale is in thousands of acres per year (data and chart from the USDA's 1997 *National Resources Inventory*; Alaska data not reported). The NRI's definition of developed land includes urban and built-up areas, and rural transportation land.

- Georgia ranks third in the nation among states converting farms and forest into suburban sprawl, according to a national study released last year (Smith 1999).

- The ARC (2000) figures show Atlanta's urbanized area has increased 163% between 1970 and 1990. In the five years from 1990 to 1995, 132,920 acres were developed and 324,700 people moved into the region. That land consumption rate equals an area the size of Douglas county. The ARC predicts that between 1995 and 2020, 526,464 more acres will undergo development, with 1,287,200 more people added to the metro area. The amount of land altered during this period, assuming the rate doesn't increase, will equal the area of DeKalb, Gwinnett, and Rockdale counties combined (see map below).

- Part of Atlanta's dramatic expansion is due to large-scale projects, both residential and commercial developments. Such developments not only involve vast land areas, but they require upgraded infrastructure, including roads, sewage and storm drains, electrical service, etc. Often other businesses open nearby, too. Thus, large projects often instigate a cascade of development.

- In addition, Atlanta's building patterns are dominated by low-density residential and commercial development—for example, over 67% of

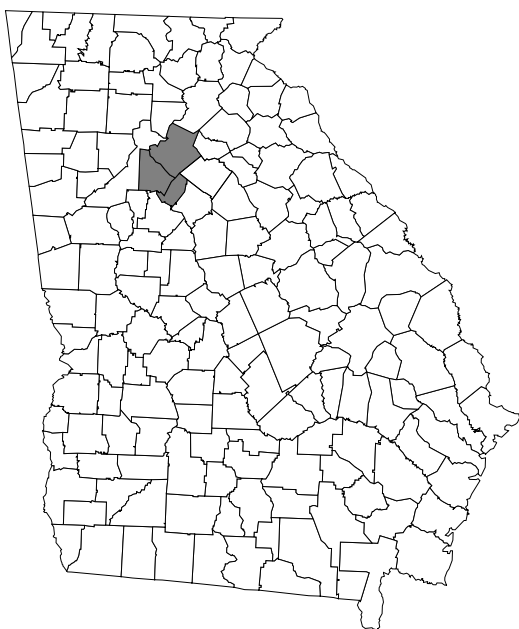
### Declines in Quality of Life

Growth in metropolitan Atlanta has taken a toll on natural and human resources that may never be fully understood. Some aspects of the impact of growth can be quantified. We can count the number of lost trees and open space acres and the miles of impaired streams. We cannot, however, count the personal loss residents face as the state's natural and historic landscape changes beyond recognition and their quality of life is diminished.

—Susan Rutherford (2001:1)

Atlanta's existing housing is single-family homes (ARC 2001). Another housing trend involves the jump families make to move away from the city center and past existing suburbs in order to afford suitable housing or obtain large lots. This is one reason metro Atlanta's size (area) is growing so rapidly and explains huge construction increases in Cherokee, Forsyth, and Henry counties.

We have only touched on a few of the consequences of unrestrained growth in Atlanta. Other results of this hyper-growth are equally important, including unbalanced growth, increasing division along racial and economic lines, traffic congestion and pollution, and quality of life issues. In this discussion, the focus is on the impact urban and suburban growth has on our archaeological record.

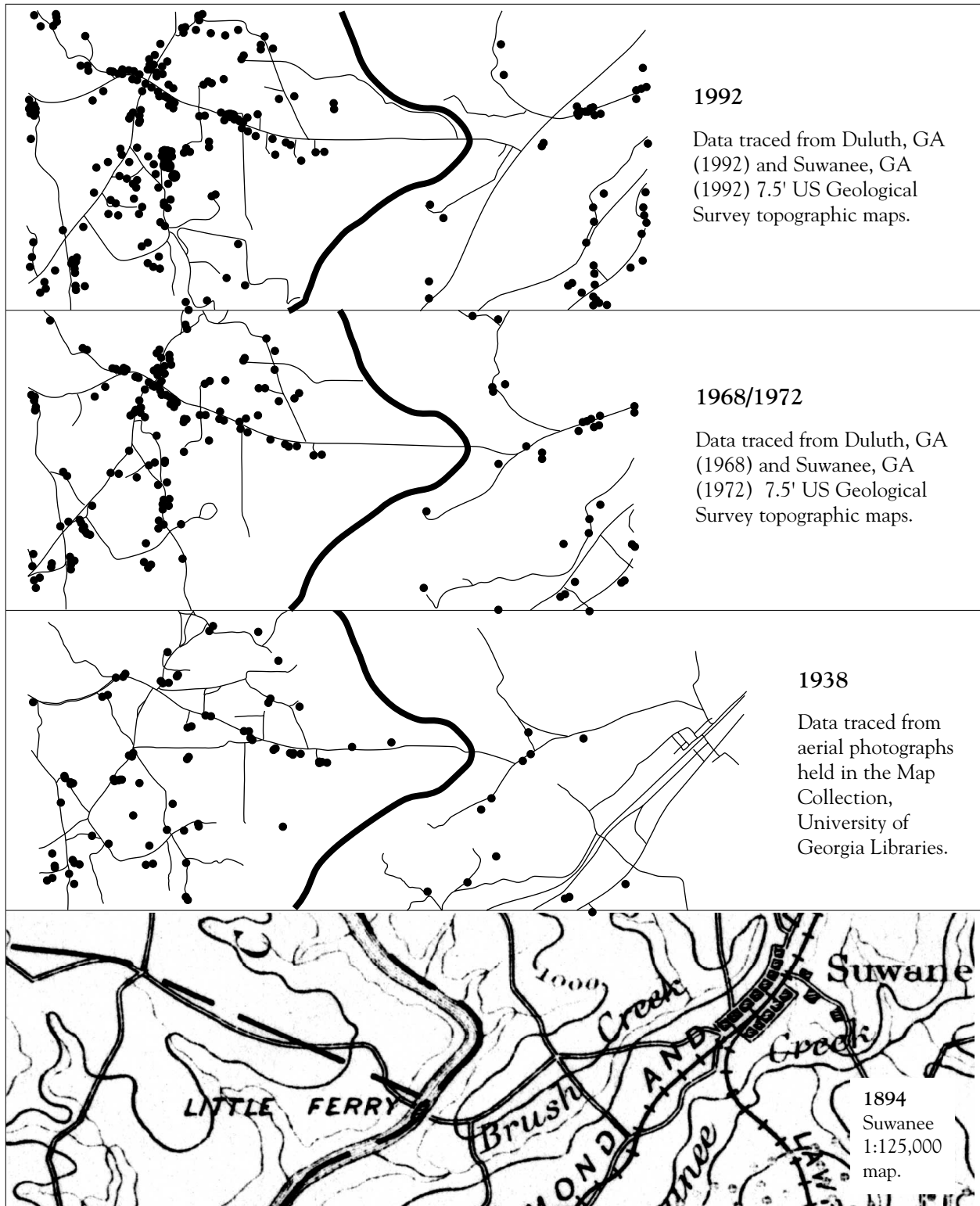


Map showing size of DeKalb, Gwinnett, and Rockdale counties relative to all of Georgia. This is the amount of land estimated to be developed around Atlanta from 1995–2020.

### Once-Rural Georgia: A Case Study

Sprawl is engulfing parts of rural Georgia. In this section, we examine a 4661 acre (18.86 square kilometers or 7.28 square miles) area near Suwanee (next page) to see land use change over the last century in a specific situation. This area, located on the northeast edge of Atlanta's development today, would have been considered rural Georgia until the last decade or so. Indeed, Suwanee is on the edge of the 1990 sprawl zone shown on page 68. The purpose of this case study is to examine the transformation of rural Georgia into sprawl, using a simple measure of intensification of land use: changing building counts.

By looking at a series of maps and aerial photographs, archaeologists, historians, and demographers, can chart changes in the physical and human landscape. For this study, we present data from four years: 1894, 1938, 1968/72, and 1992. For the building counts presented below, we do not



Increased density of buildings and roads just west of Suwanee, north of Atlanta. Dots on the top three maps represent buildings, including houses, barns, churches, chicken houses, and possibly some rural stores. The thin lines are roads (as well as the railroad through Suwanee), many of them unpaved; some are driveways or well-used field roads. The thick line in the center is the Chattahoochee River. The 1894 map does not show buildings, except schematically in the town of Suwanee. Note that in 1894 travelers crossed the Chattahoochee by ferry, and that the ferry crossing was south of the later bridge. The area shown in the upper two maps, and the area for which buildings are shown in the top three maps, is 4661 acres, or 7.28 square miles (1886 hectares).

include Suwanee proper. Building counts, like population, are an indicator of intensification of land use, and increasing building counts suggest an increase in land-disturbing activities that may have destroyed archaeological sites. Of course, many kinds of land use do not result in building construction, such as farming (including plowing), logging, road building, etc., but do have the potential for disturbing archaeological resources.

An 1894 map shows buildings only in Suwanee; this is probably a generalization, as some houses and other buildings undoubtedly were outside the established towns. We can assume some, if not most, of the land was under cultivation at that time. By 1938, aerial photographs show 94 buildings and extensive open fields, representing intensified activity in the study area. By 1968/1972, the area had 169 buildings, and fewer open fields. By 1992, the maps show 264 buildings, as well as evidence of more changes in roads and land use. For instance, a new highway passes through the area, between Suwanee and the Chattahoochee River, but bypassing Suwanee.

In general, the Suwanee case study area matches the pattern of land use change described above for the rural Georgia Piedmont. Fields on upland ridges that were in use early in the twentieth century were abandoned, and returned to woodlands by mid-century. By the end of that century, those forested areas began to be opened once again, mostly for single-family homes. This pattern did not occur along the Chattahoochee, where all of

the fields evident in the 1938 aerial photos were still unvegetated in 1992. This is probably because of the high agricultural productivity of those lands. Overall, this pattern shows an intensification of land use by the end of the century that likely impacted, or disturbed, archaeological resources.

Populations increased in this area, as they have in most rural Piedmont towns. Suwanee census figures show an increase of 261% from 1990 to 2000:

year	1980	1990	2000
population	1026	2412	8725

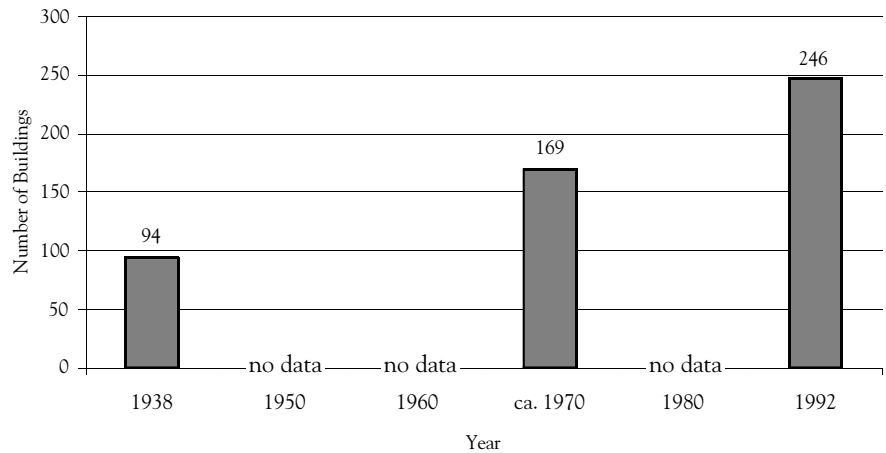
Although Suwanee’s population is centralized, nevertheless, the community’s area is increasing. This is another characteristic of sprawl.

**Archaeological Sites Destroyed by Atlanta’s Growth**

Now that we have discussed archaeological site density and the dramatic land use changes that accompany sprawl, we can turn to the impact those changes have on the archaeological record. In following calculations, we assume that archaeological sites on any land encompassed by Atlanta’s sprawl were totally destroyed. Although we realize this is probably not, strictly speaking, true, we do believe that development disturbs or destroys a high percentage of the archaeological resources it encompasses.

According to the ARC (2000), 26,584 acres were developed around Metro Atlanta each year, on average, from 1990 to 1995. Thus, if the average site density in the Piedmont uplands surrounding Atlanta is 1 site per 14 acres, that means each year during that period, on average, 1899 sites were destroyed. If that rate continues to the present, and the development obliterates any archaeological sites within the developed area, over the twelve-year period from January 1, 1990 to December 31, 2001, an estimated 22,786 sites will have been destroyed.<sup>3</sup> This is approximately 65% of the 35,000 sites reported in the GASF.

On the other hand, if the average site density was 1 site per 28 acres, as was found near Suwanee, Atlanta’s develop-



**Increase in building counts** over the last half-century in a 4661 acre area just west of Suwanee. Data are given approximately every ten years. Most buildings are houses, but others are barns, churches, and other non-residential structures. Buildings are used as a proxy for population and development in this area.



ment, if it averaged 26,584 acres each year for twelve years and destroyed all archaeological sites within the developed area, suggests 11,393 sites were destroyed, or approximately 33% of site count in the GASF.<sup>4</sup>

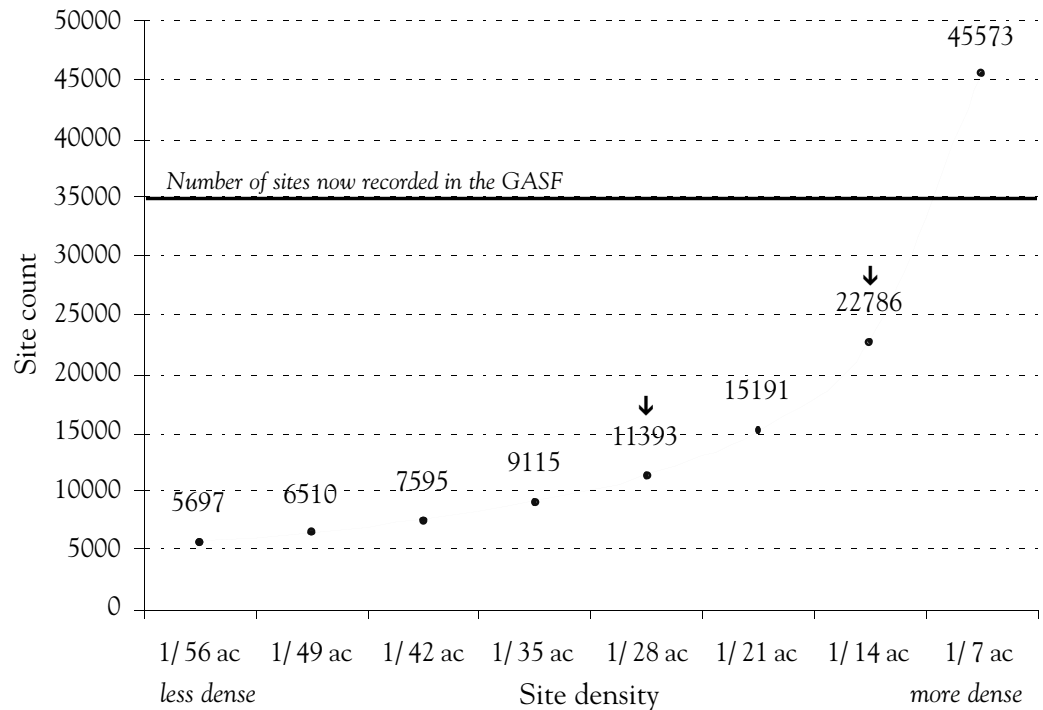
Because of the variability in site density we know occurs in the Southeastern Piedmont, we present a graph of estimated sites destroyed over the twelve-year period discussed above, based on archaeological site densities that are both more and less dense than

those derived from the two situations reported above. Even using some of the lower density estimates presented here, we believe thousands of archaeological sites have disappeared over the twelve-year period from 1990 to 2001 (inclusively) as Atlanta has expanded.

Of course, these estimates are only for a twelve-year period. If we were to consider the area already within metro Atlanta at the start of that period (in 1990), the number of sites estimated to have been destroyed might double. If we then added the sites destroyed by Georgia's other cities, towns, and communities, the number of sites destroyed by modern development might triple.

### Sprawl and Archaeological Resources

Archaeologists and environmentalists accept that sprawl is a fact of life today. Sprawl and land-disturbing activities do, without a doubt, disturb and destroy archaeological sites. The report above argues that the development Georgia has already experienced has destroyed thousands of archaeological sites, and the development predicted for the next few decades will destroy thousands more.



**Estimated number of sites destroyed in the Atlanta area** over the period 1990 to 2001, inclusively, assuming 26,584 acres were developed each year, and all sites within developed areas were destroyed, at various site densities. The densities 1/28 acres and 1/14 acres are drawn from actual archaeological surveys in the Georgia Piedmont (see text). The other densities are given in recognition of the variability in site density known for the Georgia Piedmont.

What does that loss of archaeological resources mean to the both the general and archaeological community? On the most basic level, information from the past is no longer available. Once a site is destroyed we can never discover the important basic building blocks of archaeological data it contained can never be known: the time of occupation, the size of the site, and its location. Further, interpretation and analysis regarding the relationship among sites during any given period is diminished, if not destroyed completely. That interrelationship of human settlements, along with their relationship to features in the natural environment, provide a qualitatively different set of data than the material remains and their context alone, which are also very important. There is also such a thing as a unique site—one that represents a particular activity or role in past society.

Sadly, the special knowledge contained in Georgia's archaeological resources, which represent thousands of years of human endeavor, can be wiped away by land-disturbing activities as easily as a spider's web by the swipe of a cat's paw.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In this article, “metro Atlanta” refers to ten counties—Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale—covering nearly 3000 square miles.

<sup>2</sup> “In this projection we assumed that the rate of increase in developed land from 1982 to 1992 would continue into the future, compounding the amount of developed land every ten years. We expect compounding because as a region develops it attracts more people who in turn cause more development. We used a simple exponential growth formula where the finite rate of increase is the number of acres developed in 1992 divided by the number of acres developed in 1982. The amount of land developed at time  $t$  is

$$A1992(\lambda)^t$$

where  $A1992$  is the developed area in 1992 and  $t$  is the number of 10-year intervals from 1992. ... We recognize that in reality land protection and other countervailing forces will slow development before all presently underdeveloped land is developed. Nonetheless, our estimate of time until complete development gives a good indication of the extent of development threat in a state and shows that present development rates are unsustainable over the long term. Data is from the US Bureau of Census.” (Noss and Peters 1995)

$$^3 (26,584 \times 12) / 14 = 22,786$$

<sup>4</sup> Now that we have proposed estimates of site density and loss in two areas of Georgia, we must emphasize the strengths and weaknesses of those results and the process we used to obtain them. We cannot stress enough that these calculations do not provide an exact measurement, but are used as a rough estimate of the magnitude of destruction of our archaeological resources. First, in discussing site density, we include only data from the Piedmont. That means we did not examine the results from archaeological survey in river bottoms, the Coastal Plain, or the mountain regions of Georgia. All have different site densities than the Piedmont. Also, we examined relatively small areas of land. If we had the survey results to calculate site density from a larger area, the site density numbers could be higher or lower. Still, we do have confidence that our estimates reflect the actual site density across the Piedmont. Finally, the figures that we propose in this article can not be extrapolated across the state, as we know different parts of Georgia were occupied with more or less intensity throughout the prehistoric and historic past.

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## Growth in Numbers

- The Atlanta region is home to four of the nation's ten fastest-growing counties—Forsyth, Gwinnett, Henry and Paulding.
  - Average number acres of privately held land in Georgia developed each year over the period indicated:  
 1982-1992: 76,630      1992-1997: 210,640  
 Percent developed by 1997: 12.3
  - An average of 50 acres of trees are cleared daily for development in metro Atlanta.
  - Atlantans drive 33.4 miles per capita daily (fourth among major cities).
  - Thirteen Atlanta metro counties are violating federal air pollution standards.
  - Seventeen metro counties have no public transportation.
  - Temperatures reach 12 degrees higher in most paved areas of Atlanta—a result of the so-called “heat-island” effect.
  - 1,000,000 metro Atlantans use septic tanks—the highest of any major US city. There are no new sewer hookups allowed in parts of the fast-growing north Fulton County.
- (Sources: Auchmutey 2001, Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy 2000, USDA 1997)

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# The Future of Georgia's Archaeological Resources

## Transforming Citizens into Defenders

by Charlotte A. Smith and Jennifer Freer Harris

In a sense, this article is the heart of this issue of *Early Georgia*. It discusses the uncertain future of our fragile and besieged archaeological resources. The preceding articles effectively foreshadow the theme discussed here. They also provide considerable detail on various aspects of this discussion. Nevertheless, we hope this article also stands alone and will invigorate discussions about the preservation and conservation of our endangered heritage—objects and information representing thousands of years and hundreds of thousands of lives that came before us. In a best-case scenario, this article will spur individuals to convert discussions into action. Only time will tell if it achieves that goal.

### Are You a Defender?

In writing this article, we envision our readers as falling into one of two categories of people: Defenders of Archaeological Data and Resources, aka DADARs—or Defenders for short—and those who might become Defenders. If you are concerned about preserving our heritage, you're a Defender. If you're a Society for Georgia Archaeology (SGA) member, you are definitely a Defender. If you aren't, join! Become a Defender!

Whether you are a Defender or not, we ask you to consider what can be done to foster preservation of Georgia's archaeological resources. Should existing programs be enhanced? Should entirely new programs be created?

None of us can stop Georgia's rampant development, even if we want to. We can, however, begin

to discuss, and then implement, far-reaching changes in the policies, processes, and preconceptions that govern the protection and research of our archaeological record.

### Basic Assumptions

The following are some essential assumptions about the nature of archaeological resources and the processes used to glean meaning from them.

- Our archaeological resources are fragile, valuable, important, and irreplaceable.
- The archaeological record belongs to all people for all time.
- Site destruction due to massive changes in land use is accelerating.
- Only a very few archaeological sites currently are protected by law.
- Only by understanding an extremely broad sample of archaeological sites (more than already have been recorded and analyzed) can researchers obtain a detailed understanding of the past.
- In the future, techniques that have not yet been invented will be able to extract information researchers are presently unable to tease from archaeological resources. (Prior to the development of radiocarbon dating techniques, for instance, archaeologists did not think they would have a way to know with a fair degree of precision how long ago a house was built or burned.)

### Basic Archaeological Data

Other articles in this issue discuss the important information contained in an archaeological site, in

its related artifacts, and in its relationship to other archaeological resources. That important information includes where the site is, when was it occupied and for how long, who lived there, and what

ing from the objects and features that the archaeologists find and record in the field, is the final step in the archaeological process. This step is the heart of archaeological research. After exiting the field, archaeologists spend an enormous amount of time counting, measuring, and analyzing artifacts, structuring data, posing questions, testing hypotheses, and making knowledgeable interpretations from the data. This does not finish the job, as the researcher then must communicate the final results of the project to colleagues and the public. Indeed, some archaeologists believe that public education is one of the most overlooked obligations professional archaeologists face.

Thus, generating basic archaeological data is only part of archaeology. Developing hypotheses about what those data mean are among the most complex issues the archaeologist (as a social scientist)

grappling with. Archaeologists seek to understand very complex social processes, and how they varied over time and across space. Then, the responsible archaeologist completes a report on the field data; that report, then, forms a part of our national patrimony (Drennan 2001).

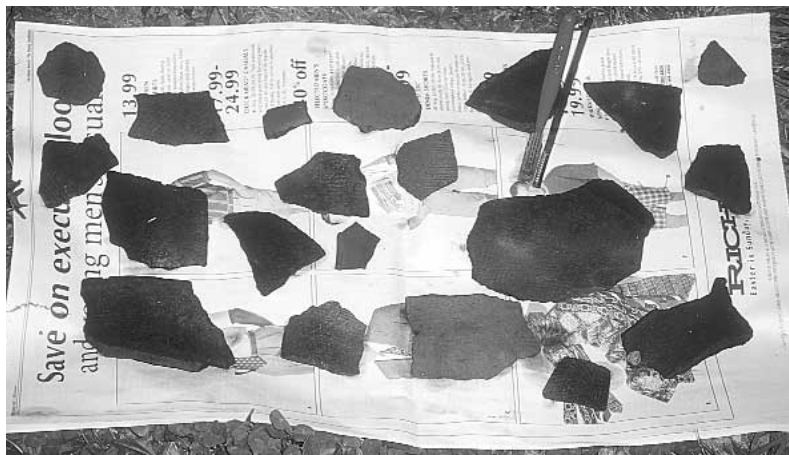
### Problems Facing Archaeological Preservation Today

Unrecorded basic archaeological data only will continue to be available if effective archaeological preservation programs exist and are implemented. Georgia does have some good programs today, however, there are problems with those programs. The principal problems are:

- *inadequate protective measures*—(laws) that are usually curative and based on salvage archaeology, instead of proactive and preventative.

- *inadequate use of archaeologists in the planning process*—projects often do not use archaeologists to help design and plan land modification projects, etc. Indeed, it is sometimes very difficult to judge when it is appropriate and cost-effective to excavate an archaeological resource, and when it is wisest to avoid it (which often entails another set of costs);

- *inadequate or non-existent funding*—this means goals set forth for interpretation, outreach, and even research must often be overlooked by government agencies and other institutions because of



Sometimes archaeologists quickly wash artifacts in the field to see what they have found before they leave the site. These sherds came from the Etowah Valley.

their activities were. Those are the *fundamental data* on the mind of an archaeologist when she does research. These do not comprise the entire scope of archaeological enquiry, but they do form the foundation of field research. Indeed, the basic building blocks of archaeological data are derived from two kinds of investigations:

- During an *archaeological survey*, researchers examine the landscape to find evidence of past use of distinct locales (sites). Then, they seek to determine the size of a site and when it was used. If the land is vegetated, researchers may use small subsurface (shovel) tests as “windows” into the soil, to see if artifacts can be found. If the ground surface is not obscured, archaeologists will walk back and forth in a systematic manner, looking for visible artifacts. They examine blocks of land that may be as small as a field or extend across thousands of acres. Artifacts do not have to be collected in an archaeological survey.

- *Excavation* of archaeological sites, when done in a detailed, systematic way, recovers amazing amounts of information about our hidden heritage. Archaeologists do not make the choice to excavate lightly, because excavations can never be replicated or repeated. There is only one chance to dig a site, and to recover the maximum information it has to offer.

Understanding the basic data, or pulling mean-

low staffing levels, and inadequate funds for maintenance of existing programs, development of new programs, and even travel;

- *limited public awareness* and appreciation for archaeological resource protection and existing protective laws.

- *limited opportunities for problem-oriented research* that might illuminate long-standing questions about the past, and a lack of comprehensive syntheses of large bodies of data (notwithstanding the state's *Archaeological Research Design Papers* and articles like Williams 2000).

None of these are problems that can be solved easily or inexpensively. None will be affected if Defenders do not THINK BIG, and lay the groundwork for change.

### New Directions for Georgia Archaeology

Now, let's consider the "next steps" those concerned for the future of Georgia's archaeological resources might take. In doing so, we are *not* presenting these ideas as a template for change, or a laundry list to be checked off. Many, if not all, of the issues and ideas we mention here may already be under discussion by SGA, by Georgia's principal agency for archaeological and historical resource preservation, the Department of Natural Resources' Historic Preservation Division (HPD), and by others. Indeed, all existing efforts are important, vital, and appreciated. We seek only to increase that momentum. The present forward movement includes the increased profile of the Office of the State Archaeologist, a revitalized SGA, stronger political advocacy from the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists, and more and stronger legislation for archaeological resource protection. Our aim now is to encourage a wider dialogue that will lead to integrated activity among existing institutions and individuals. We hope such a dialogue will increase the profile of cultural resource protection in Georgia, resulting in the preservation and recording of more archaeological data.

### Ideas for Change

In general, we propose several avenues of approach. Some ideas aim to increase the number of Defenders across the state by boosting awareness of archaeological issues. Other ideas bolster or expand existing programs. We have modeled yet other strategies on those employed successfully by organizations seeking to improve natural resource protection. We believe the problems and difficulties with expanding archaeological resource preservation often parallel those they encountered, and hope to learn from their experiences. We propose that THINKING BIG will be more successful if a variety of lines of attack are used simultaneously.

### Clearinghouse

Communication and access to information is essential to any endeavor and, in the preservation field, where being understaffed and overworked is the norm, it is fundamental. What can archaeological preservationists do to make information collection and assimilation more effective and effi-



*The yard of this historic home in Madison is an unreported archaeological site.*

cient? One solution is to create a central clearinghouse of information that is easily accessible and well organized. That information might include legislation briefs, site locations and descriptions, educational resources, and public outreach resources. It should also function as a referral center for other resources such as educational materi-

### Get Your Hands Dirty and Get Involved!

We invite your enthusiastic involvement in archaeological preservationists reach their goals.

- Become an active participant, a Defender of Archaeological Data and Resources, aka Defender, by spreading the word, by becoming a member of SGA, or by volunteering at your local museum or historic site.
- Contact your state and federal representatives and advocate for increased funding for national parks, state historic preservation offices, and other archaeological programs.
- Demand tougher laws to protect your cultural heritage.
- Encourage a strong archaeology component in curriculums in local schools.
- Learn more about the past by visiting historic and prehistoric interpretive sites, taking classes, attending local SGA presentations and demonstrations, and volunteering on archaeological projects.
- If you are a private landowner, take seriously the idea of a cultural resources inventory. Call the Georgia Archaeological Site File in Athens (706-542-8737) for help in filling out a site form when you find artifacts on your property, or see their web page at <http://quat.dac.uga.edu/gasf/>. See page 41 for details.

*Become a Defender! Get involved with archaeology, you never know what you might discover!*

als produced by the SGA, the Society for American Archaeology, the Society for Historical Archaeology, the Archaeological Institute of America, websites, museums, researchers, cultural resource management (CRM) firms, government agencies, and other individuals and institutions.

Fortunately, HPD has begun to build such a clearinghouse of information. For instance, HPD partially supports the Georgia Archaeological Site File (GASF), and also curates state-owned artifact collections, archives compliance reports, maintains a library of educational materials, manages files relating to legislation and planning, directs individuals and organizations to the resources they need, and acts as an outreach office for archaeology in Georgia. Nevertheless, it is a political reality that there are many hungry fish in the same pond as HPD's Archaeology Services Unit, and HPD monies cannot, and should not, be funded only to its archaeological programs. Indeed, it is in the best interests of Georgia's archaeological resources that

funding and staffing also be increased to all parts of HPD. For instance, funds augmenting general historic preservation and Civil War programs also benefit archaeology, since historic research is improved and amplified if illuminated by archaeological data. Indeed, the buildings and landscapes valued by historic preservationists simultaneously consist of archaeological resources.

### Archaeological Data Collection and State-Wide Survey

Historically, the accumulation of archaeological information is slow but continuous. Over the past fifty years, we have added, bit by bit, data to the existing archaeological database. The more than 35,000 sites recorded at the GASF (Williams 2000, personal communication 2001), for example, have resulted from survey after survey and the work of hundreds of individuals. Yet, with the changing pace of development, that slow, opportunistic data collecting is no longer viable.

It is no longer viable because resources on private land are left vulnerable by current legislation. These are the thousands of sites that are open to the irreversible impact of development, looting, and other destructive forces, yet hold invaluable archaeological information for all of us.

It is not that archaeological data from privately owned lands are completely unknown. Indeed, some private landowners (including foundations) do, in fact, report sites and their associated artifact assemblages to the GASF. Additionally, archaeologists occasionally conduct research on private land, but those opportunities tend to be few.

We think the inability to consistently obtain information about archaeological resources on private land, or to help protect those resources (if desired by the landowner), is the weakest link in the pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of Georgia's past. A state-wide survey, on both public and private lands, is the most potent weapon in the battle to preserve that crucial information from the archaeological record. While you may agree that such a project is necessary, the enormity of both the physical project and the concept in general may overwhelm any sense of actually accomplishing such a goal. The compilation of such basic information as site locations, size, and type (small village, hunting camp, flint quarry, etc.), means that even if large areas undergo extensive land



altering activities, we have preserved meaningful material not only for current research, but also for future study.

### **Artifact Collector Surveys**

While private collections are sometimes donated to museums, archaeologists have greater success obtaining the important information such collections contain by systematically interviewing collectors and examining and photographing their collections. Such endeavors yield important information, sometimes about sites that no longer exist.

Often collectors are apprehensive that archaeologists will “take their collections,” but this is not so. Instead, archaeologists are interested in information, not the artifacts. Collectors often focus on “whole points” and large potsherds; both, due to stylistic details, tend to reveal when the site they came from was occupied. Most collectors remember where they found individual artifacts, which is very important to archaeologists. Thus, from dis-

cussions with collectors and brief examinations of their artifacts, archaeologists can obtain basic data about archaeological sites—location, periods of use, and site size. Unfortunately, if the collector passes on, such information is often lost. To alleviate this problem, archaeologists recommend that surface collectors draw maps of where they find items, and place the objects in labeled bags that correspond to the maps.

SGA has recently renewed its interest in systematically seeking collectors to examine their collections and add information about them to the statewide database.

### **Stewardship Program**

An informed, supportive, diverse public is one of the most effective ways to assure broad-spectrum archaeological resource protection. Some of the best examples of focused public involvement are state-wide stewardship programs, like that in Arizona. In addition to instilling a sense of shared

### **Stewards of the Past: An Arizona Solution**

The challenge to increase public involvement in site protection is real and constant, but there are model programs for Georgians to consider. For instance, Arizona has created a powerful volunteer-based organization to help preserve its archaeological and paleontological resources.

The Arizona Site Steward Program is sponsored by the public land managers of Arizona and Tribal governments. Its volunteers, or Stewards, are selected, trained and certified by the State Historic Preservation Office and the Archaeology Advisory Commission. Their mission is to report any destruction or vandalism of archaeological or paleontological sites in Arizona through site monitoring. Stewards are also involved in public education and outreach.

The following is a summary of their goals:

1. To *preserve major prehistoric, historic and paleontological resources* for the purposes of conservation, scientific study, and interpretation.
2. To *increase public awareness* of the significance and value of cultural resources and the damage done by artifact hunters.
3. To *discourage site vandalism* and the sale and trade of antiquities.
4. To *support* the adoption and enforcement of national, state, and local *preservation laws and regulations*.
5. To *support and encourage high standards of cultural resource investigation* throughout the state.

6. To *promote better understanding and cooperation* among agencies, organizations, and individuals concerned about the preservation of cultural resources.

7. To *enhance the completeness of the* statewide archaeological and paleontological *inventory*.

In addition to reporting damaged or looted sites, Stewards may also:

- Act as a liaison between local communities and the SHPO.
- Document archaeological and paleontological sites in danger of vandalism, destruction, or deterioration.
- Document and photograph sites not previously recorded.
- Monitor construction activities to see if buried sites are exposed.
- Document private artifact collections.
- Assist in activities such as surveys, mapping and rock art recording.
- Collect oral histories.
- Present talks about the Steward Program or preservation of heritage resources.

By investing in volunteers through training and fieldwork, the Stewardship Program cultivates a strong legion of knowledgeable activists to carry out preservation objectives. These Stewards make a crucial contribution to preserving their cultural heritage by working closely with Federal, State, Tribal, County, and Municipal agency archaeologists.



*A visitor at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield near Marietta feels history come alive as he examines a cannon on the park grounds.*

responsibility and appreciation for our archaeological resources, these programs provide a ready-made educational setting to train Defenders in responsible archaeological methods.

Stewardship programs can be structured to involve individuals and entire organizations. Volunteers effectively become research and preservation assistants to the limited number of professionals already seeking to preserve archaeological resources. Finally, sites can be protected and cared for by a group of concerned citizens, providing those individuals with a sense of purpose and accomplishment, and directly linking them to the past. In the end, stewardship programs can provide an active relationship between those of us living today and those who lived and died long before; perhaps, that is its greatest contribution.

#### ***State-Wide Education Program***

Outreach and education are vital in the development of a new generation of archaeological stewards and an important aspect to any cultural resources management program, university with anthropology or archaeology courses, and any archaeologically related museum or government agency. Although many individuals, the HPD staff, and SGA members and programs have done a tremendous job in educating Georgia's citizens about our archaeological heritage thus far, they cannot accomplish this feat alone. Having a cen-

tralized program would streamline the process of building an extensive educational program and make efficient use of staffing resources. The goal of such a program would be to turn citizens into Defenders.

A well-planned series of lessons, field excursions, and archaeological activities held throughout the year—unified by a common message regarding the meaning and value of understanding our past—would create a solid foundation in archaeological education for all Georgians. A beginning is SGA's Archaeology Week (now Month), currently the major extant program for archaeological awareness in Georgia. Nevertheless, this is a small program that operates with a minimum of funds and no permanent staff; sadly, there is a limit to what a committee of volunteers can accomplish.

#### ***Production of Teaching Materials***

For an outreach movement to be effective, the general public will need access to archaeological information that is compelling, exciting, and understandable. SGA has long recognized that by supplying basic, easy-to-use curriculum materials to teachers, they foster the efforts of many Defenders to establish new cadres of young Defenders.

Intimately tied to an effective general education program is the need for high-quality, dynamic educational materials for teachers and students, including video, print, and CD-ROMs. The materials would be tied to the Quality Core Curriculum and Quality Basic Education objectives that Georgia teachers must cover. Connecting the two is an easy task because archaeology is a multidisciplinary and allows students to learn many intangibles, such as logic, reasoning, teamwork, and research skills (see "Why is Archaeology Important?," this issue). Such products raise awareness of archaeology and disseminate accurate information about archaeology, encouraging citizens to become Defenders.

#### ***Training Programs—Formal and Informal***

Defenders need not all seek advanced degrees to effectively contribute to the research and preservation of Georgia archaeology, but a broad, practical

background in archaeological method and theory should be available. Perhaps universities and colleges could schedule more classes for those interested in more formal archaeological training, but not interested in obtaining a degree. Additionally, structured formal programs can give highly motivated and interested people the opportunity to be thoroughly trained as amateur archaeologists, effectively extending the labors of the professionals who supervise them. Arming individuals with even the basic skills and knowledge—how to complete a site form, prepare artifacts for analysis in the laboratory, or enter data for reports—makes a substantial difference. An increased number of well-trained hands and minds leads to better archaeological staffing and a greater base of support for archaeological protection (Smardz and Smith 2000).

Some of Georgia's institutions of higher learning do offer courses and training that help prepare undergraduates to become archaeological technicians for CRM firms. If these programs were bolstered, Georgia would have more archaeologists trained in-state. Although some of these new archaeologists would undoubtedly seek employment outside of Georgia, an influx of in-state graduates would benefit archaeological preservation.

### ***Excavations Allowing Volunteer Participation***

Excavations refine our knowledge of the past by showcasing responsible archaeological practices. Inviting public participation under the direction of a professional archaeologist gives well-monitored groups the opportunity to experience archaeology. When people get involved in the hands-on work of archaeology, they readily realize what tremendous information can flow from the soil around them. Opportunities for such participation create a passionate, committed corps of supporters—a new group of Defenders!

Archaeologists, however, only reluctantly excavate archaeological sites. Instead, they prefer preservation in place, or leaving sites as they are. Sites threatened with disturbance or destruction, when that threat cannot be removed, are ideal candidates for excavation projects in which members of the public can participate.

### ***Train More Site Interpreters***

By placing more educators, interpreters, and archaeologists at State Parks and privately and publicly owned historic sites, we improve the availability of archaeology to the general public. Such a strategy also creates Defenders. Traditionally, archaeologists have not had the skills or time to bring the results of their research to the public in an interesting and easily understood format. But recently this has changed, and apparently a shift is underway as more archaeologists are involved in public outreach to broad audiences.

The staff at parks and historic sites provide an effective means to reach and teach individuals of all ages and backgrounds—children and adults, families and groups, tourists and international travelers. Defenders know that archaeological resources are almost everywhere in Georgia; active Defenders can let others in on the secret and invite them to share their knowledge and passion for the past.

### ***Public-Private Partnerships***

Increasingly, many successful quality-of-life changes develop in communities and across the nation from public-private partnerships. Such partnerships remove the burden of funding and organization from the tax-base, and shift it to interested and committed individuals and organizations in the private sector. They also can increase the potential for action and the speed at which new policies can be implemented.



*This elegant wall with archways and elaborate decorations is in the Historic District on Jekyll Island.*



*Historic standing structures come in a variety of sizes and shapes. This is a private home known as Passaquan, not far from Columbus; it is open most days to visitors for a small fee.*

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), for example, after losing half of its federal funding allocation, realized it needed a new strategy. In 1995, the NTHP made an unprecedented decision to give up federal allocations for

their core program. Prior to 1995, in each funding cycle, the NTHP devoted significant staff efforts to obtain funding anew. Instead, the NTHP took an entrepreneurial approach to raising funds. Through partnerships with individuals and organizations that act as co-stewards, NTHP successfully increased its revenue by a remarkable 15%, in staffing, programs, and services over the last five years.

As Elliott (this issue) has pointed out, SGA has reached a more sophisticated awareness—indeed an eye-

opening realization—that there is a diverse world of sponsors and supporters it has yet to target in efforts at promoting a healthy archaeological future. A strong, concerted effort to take full advantage of new sources of support is no less than a prerequisite to moving forward.

### **A Case for Cooperation**

Unifying historic preservation and the environment almost succeeded in 2000 after The Georgia Trust, The Georgia Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, and other groups worked together to support the Heritage Fund (Saporta 1999). The Fund would be used to purchase endangered historic properties that are then sold to individuals who are committed to preserving them. The groups supported a referendum that would have increased the real estate transfer tax and directed those proceeds into the Fund. The referendum failed but the partnerships created to fight for its passage have only become stronger.

Although more initiatives are necessary, the environmental movement is making substantial headway in the struggle to protect the world's natural resources for future generations. Its use of various tools, from grassroots advocacy to legislative policy, has brought endangered species, biological niches, and entire regions back from the edge of near annihilation. There is a lesson for the archaeological community here: we must become actively involved if we want our message heard and our resources preserved.

### **Partnerships with Like-Minded Organizations**

To increase awareness of archaeology and sensitize Georgians to the issue of a seriously threatened cultural heritage, thereby creating Defenders, we must join forces with other organizations and efforts already underway. Defenders can find ready-made constituencies in environmental conservationists and historic preservationists; we need only make our archaeologically oriented voice heard. Individuals who support natural resource conservation, for example, will no doubt share values and concerns with Defenders working to preserve what remains of our cultural environment. It is also time well-spent reviewing the successes and failures of similar organizations and programs, so that Defenders need not “reinvent the wheel” in their efforts. Making the most of different skills and expertise, sharing experience and energy, strengthens each partner and makes each a qualitatively better organization.

### **Fostering Partnerships with the Native American Community**

Recently, archaeologists and Native Americans have been slowly building a working relationship

to promote preservation of archaeological resources. Although each group values the resources for different reasons, stronger preservation laws and policies are a common goal. Both groups advocate stronger protection for our hidden heritage, and can continue to work closely to produce effective, long-term plans for archaeological resource management.

### ***Developing Tax Incentives***

In other states, tax incentives have proven an effective tool in improving conservation by landowners of both natural and archaeological resources. However, any discussion of tax incentives is politically charged, and they are very complicated to implement. To begin discussions of tax incentives for Georgia's archaeological resources, preservationists must become conversant in broad political issues in Georgia today.

### ***Promotion of Sustainable Tourism***

Archaeological and historical sites have the power to draw tremendous numbers of visitors. And, when people travel, they spend money—they buy food and meals, they need overnight lodging, and they buy other items. Such purchases provide an inflow of cash into a local economy. They also stimulate employment. These are tremendous ben-

efits to the areas close to heritage sites. The challenge is to encourage tourism without sacrificing the special character of the place tourists seek to visit, hence the term "sustainable tourism."

### ***THINKING BIG!***

The above discussion is, as we said, is not a formula for changes that would benefit archaeological awareness and preservation. Many other tactics might be employed. Here is one idea that satisfies the "THINK BIG" approach that Elliott describes in her article on SGA: *get the state to issue license plates for archaeological preservation, like the wildlife plates that are so popular.*

We challenge you Defenders to THINK BIG. What ideas do you have? Please send your ideas to the SGA President, or attend the next SGA meeting (they're held twice a year at locations around the state) and speak up!

### ***A Final Word***

As guest editors and authors, we hope that this issue of *Early Georgia* helps to clarify basic conceptions of what archaeology is and why it is important, and put that understanding in the context of our fast-changing, modern world. We thought this discussion timely and important because of the tremendous, ever-increasing threat to the archaeological record by land-disturbing activities and the enormous loss of self-knowledge that all Georgians, indeed all Americans, face.

To help you understand the type of action we believe is necessary, compare the ideas listed here to two modern examples aimed at documenting human knowledge and experience. In one Works Progress Administration project, a massive, federally funded initiative that provided thousands of jobs during the Depression of the 1930s, writers and researchers interviewed elderly informants in the southern US, including Native Americans and African Americans, to record their memories, experiences, and testimonies. In a similar vein, historians are currently traveling the globe, seeking out and interviewing Holocaust survivors before they pass away. Historians know that they have only ten to twenty years to complete that endeavor and feel a weighty responsibility to future generations. In such situations, researchers race against the clock, and human mortality, to collect and record precious information before it disappears

### ***Food for Thought: Ecology and Government***

Growing concern with ecological issues has led to the development of conservationist watchdogs and lobby groups, more informed public opinion, and the establishment of government regulatory bodies. Yet governments are generally unwilling to take stringent action or even adequately to consider long-term negative environmental impacts. It is feared that what might be learned would indicate the need for controls that would interfere with short-term economic goals which might enhance a government's chances of remaining in office. Few democratic governments are prepared to think beyond the next election. Despite efforts by ecological lobbies, ecological issues are rarely high enough on the public agenda to have a significant impact on politics. In state-managed economies the desire to promote development for military and political reasons has resulted in economic decisions repeatedly being made without adequate study of environmental impacts or opportunities for objections to be voiced at the local level.

—Bruce G. Trigger (1998:197–198)

forever. Archaeologists find themselves in the same position, but with a larger database and without the institutions or funding to carry out that task.

It is here that we ask for your help. If Georgians develop successful programs that transform concerned and responsible citizens into Defenders of Archaeological Data and Resources, there will be a substantial force to advocate for strong policy, funding, legislation, and support for programs to collect, record, interpret, and archive archaeological data.

We are not suggesting that every site be preserved or excavated, or that all development in Georgia be stopped. Instead, we ask for a reasonably rapid and comprehensive response to massive changes to Georgia's landscape and the devastating toll that takes on the archaeological record. That response, if it includes collection of wide-ranging archaeological data, will create a comprehensive archive of information for use and research both now and in the future, providing opportunities to interpret that data to a diverse public audience through various formats.

- The first step is awareness and discussion. We hope this series sparks both.
- The next step, implementation, will involve varying degrees of institutional alliance and coop-

eration, creation and change.

Some activities involve individual choices and action—for instance, a Defender reaching out to recruit new Defenders—and some involve creating new organizational structures—a clearinghouse and a state-wide survey. Both require the nurturing, support, and involvement of Defenders.

Archaeology is a voice for all of us, and all of us must find our voice for archaeology.

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# Jargon Commonly Used by Archaeologists

## A Glossary of Terms

by Jennifer Freer Harris

- aborigine**—of, or pertaining to. an original or native inhabitant of a region.
- absolute dating techniques**—the methods that determine when an event occurred in calendar years (before the present).
- ad**—like AD, but indicates uncorrected radiocarbon dates.
- AD**—from the Latin *anno domini*, designates the period after year 1 in the Christian or Gregorian calendar.
- agriculture**—the intensive cultivation of soil and production of crops, farming.
- anthropology**—the study of humans and their cultural behavior from a holistic perspective, involving the following four sub-fields: archaeology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, and physical anthropology.
- archaeological record**—the material remains of past human activities, including any features or alteration of the landscape.
- archaeological site**—a place where past human activity took place and material remains were left behind.
- Archaic**—a New World cultural period, about 10,000–3000 BP, marked by a mobile hunting/gathering life and a mostly egalitarian social organization.
- archaeological resources**—artifacts, sites, their contexts within the physical and cultural environments and the information that can be garnered from them.
- archaeology**—the study of past human culture by analyzing the material remains (sites and artifacts) people left behind.
- artifact**—any object made, modified, or used by humans.
- assemblage**—a group of artifacts found together and were used at the same time for similar tasks.
- atlatl**—an early weapon that increased both the force and distance that a spear could be thrown, used primarily for large game.
- attribute**—a characteristic of an artifact, such as size, shape, or color.
- basketry**—baskets or other items made from woven fibers or other flexible materials, the art of making baskets.
- band**—an egalitarian form of social organization, based on kinship and marriage.
- biface**—a stone tool, such as a projectile point, that has been modified on both sides
- blade**—a long, thin flake.
- bc**—before Christ, for uncorrected radiocarbon dates.
- BC**—before Christ in the Christian or Gregorian calendar, the period before year 1
- BP**—designation for years before present; 1950 is the year from which BP dates are calculated.
- cache**—a set of artifacts placed aside and intended for later use.
- Cartesian coordinate system**—a three dimensional coordinate system in which the coordinates of a point are its distances from each of three intersecting perpendicular planes along lines parallel to the other two.
- ceramics**—pottery.
- chiefdom**—a form of human social organization that incorporates multiple communities into one social unit that has, as a basic part of its structure, institutionalized differences in social status (ranking).
- chronology**—the arrangement of cultures or events in time.
- clan**—a social unit tracing descent from a common ancestor.
- classification**—a system of arranging artifacts into groups or categories according to certain set of criteria.
- commensal**—a relationship in which two or more organisms (e.g. humans and mice) live in close association and in which one may derive benefit from the other, but neither harms the other.
- compliance project**—an archaeological project, involving survey and possibly excavation, as required by law.

**context**—the location or placement of an artifact, feature, or site, including its relationship to other artifacts, features, and or surrounding environment.

**core**—(in lithics) nucleus of stone from which flakes have been removed.

**cultural anthropology**—the study of modern humans and their learned behaviors and culture.

**cultural resource management (CRM)**—in general, this term applies to the recording and investigation of archaeological sites uncovered or impacted by public construction and engineering projects.

**culture**—the set of learned beliefs and behaviors shared, and passed on, by the members of a society.

**culture history**—the descriptive who, where, and when of a particular culture.

**cuneiform**—an early form of writing used in Mesopotamia from the third to the first millennium BC, consisting of symbols carved into clay using a reed tool.

**curate (curation)**—to preserve and protect an item (e.g., artifacts) in perpetuity.

**debitage**—the stone debris resulting from making stone tools. Some of the debris may be used as tools themselves.

**dendrochronology**—dating technique based on the number and variation in tree rings. There is one ring for each year of growth and specific climatic changes will be evident in thickness of ring. Dendrochronologists compare the growth rings from many trees or wood found on archaeological sites to make a combined plot of ring thickness that stretches back many centuries. By comparing tree-ring dates with radiocarbon dates, scientists realized that radiocarbon dates need to be calibrated, to reflect calendar dates.

**depositional factors**—effects, either natural (like flooding) or human-induced (like plowing), on the material remains and features of the archaeological record. They must be taken into consideration before any interpretation or dating of a site can occur.

**De Soto**—Hernando De Soto was one of the first European explorers traveling into the interior of the Southeastern US (in the early 1500s).

**diachronic**—over time, through time.

**diagnostic artifact**—an item that indicates use during a particular period or by a certain group.

**ecology**—the study of the relationships between organisms (here, humans) and their environment.

**ethnography**—a descriptive study or report, using comparative information from modern culture, of early or technologically primitive society.

**excavation**—the systematic, planned digging of a site in order to obtain information about the past society that lived there.

**experimental archaeology**—investigations designed to uncover the natural or man-made processes that pro-

duced and/or modified artifacts and sites.

**feature**—evidence at archaeological sites which are not structures. Examples of features include fire pits or hearths, trash pits, post holes from structures, wells, and burials.

**field notes**—the written materials, including notes, drawings, sketches, etc. that an archaeologist takes during a field project. They are often held (curated) just like artifacts.

**flake**—debris from stone tool making that may or may not be used as a tool.

**flintknapper (knapper)**—a person who makes stone tools.

**funerary objects**—goods, either everyday or exotic, that are placed in a burial. They often signify the status of their owner (leader, shaman, mother, husband, etc.).

**geographic information systems (GIS)**—a computer system that records, stores and analyzes information about the earth's geographical features. The database is organized in layers, which represent different types of information (like soil and topography). Those layers (you can have as many as up to 100 or so) can be compared or totaled selectively to see how different features or variables relate to one another.

**geology**—the study of the origin, structure and history of the earth.

**global positioning system (GPS)**—satellite technology used to pinpoint ground locations when doing fieldwork, including to make accurate, detailed maps, or for locating existing archaeological sites.

**gourd**—an early plant domesticate in the SE US, in the pumpkin, squash, and cucumber family. It was used more for its vessel/utensil characteristics when dried, than for food.

**grid**—uniformly spaced squares that divides a site into units; used to measure and record provenience.

**ground penetrating radar (GPR)**—a remote sensing device that sends a radar pulse deep into the soil, allowing the archaeologist to interpret the anomalies or images that are detected.

**historic**—the portion of the past defined by the presence of written records.

**historic preservation**—Besides being a social movement aimed at preserving America's heritage, it is more formally defined as the process of sustaining the form and extent of historic properties; also see **preservation**.

**holism**—an approach used by anthropologists that emphasizes the whole rather than parts of human society, including the physical and cultural influences on human behavior.

**horticulture**—the cultivation of fruits, vegetables and flowers, gardening

**ice age**—any of a series of cold periods marked by alternating periods of glaciation and warming.



**impact**—any effect on the archaeological record, in most cases this term is used to describe the damage construction or other development projects makes on archaeological resources.

**Indian**—see **Native American**.

**in situ**—the original placement of an artifact or feature encountered during survey or excavation.

**kill site**—a location where an animal or animals were killed and sometimes butchered.

**level**—a layer of soil in an excavation, it can be measured in regular units (e.g., every 10 cm) or may correspond to natural strata.



*This is the Nacoochee Mound, near Helen. Many place names used around Georgia are from Native American languages, like the word “Nacoochee.”*

**lithics**—stone fashioned into artifacts, or used as tools.

**linguistics**—the study of language and culture and their interaction.

**looter**—a person who illegally collects artifacts or destroys archaeological resources; many do this to make a profit.

**material remains**—any artifacts, features or other items used or produced by humans.

**midden**—an area used for trash disposal.

**Mississippian**—a prehistoric period in the Southeastern US, from about AD 900–1540, characterized by peoples who practiced maize agriculture, lived in chiefdoms, had populous villages, and constructed earthen mounds.

**mitigation**—the excavation of a site to obtain archaeological information before it is destroyed by a construction project or other development. Mitigation removes the significant information a site that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places has, so that the site may be destroyed or disturbed without the significant information it contains being lost.

**mound**—an earthen structure, constructed by humans through one or periodic episodes. For example, many mounds in the SE US are burial mounds. After each burial a fresh cap of earth was added to the existing

mound. In some cases, the leader, or chief, would construct his house on top of the mound. When he died, the house was burned, to be covered with a new cap of earth and a new house.

**Native American**—a member of the aboriginal peoples of North and South America, or pertaining to their culture.

**Neolithic**—a prehistoric period generally characterized by the development of agriculture, use of ceramics and the manufacture of technically advanced stone tools.

**New World**—geographical area that includes North, Central, and South America, and the Caribbean.

**obsidian hydration**—a dating technique that measures the amount of water molecules absorbed on the fresh surface of obsidian artifacts.

**Old World**—geographical areas including Europe, Asia, and Africa.

**Paleoindian**—a cultural period from about 12,000–10,000 BP characterized by cooperative hunting and high mobility of small groups (bands) of people. This is the first widely identifiable culture in the New World.

**paleolithic**—the earliest designated cultural period (Old World) beginning about 750,000 years ago, characterized by the first chipped stone tools.

**paleontology**—the study of fossil remains of plants and animals.

**paleobotany**—the study of fossil or ancient plant remains.

**political economy**—system of economics and political structure within a particular culture.

**physical anthropology**—the study of human and other primate behavior, evolution and adaptation.

**post hole**—a hole that is dug to receive an upright timber for a building, wall, or other structure. As the structure decays, traces of the posts are left in the soil, usually seen as a stain (the post) within a stain (the hole), if well preserved (see **feature**).

**potassium-argon dating**—a technique used to date material remains based on the rate at which radioactive potassium reverts to argon when it decays; useful on remains that are too old to be dated by radiocarbon (e.g., more than 50,000 years old).

**pot hunter**—someone who takes artifacts from sites for non-scientific reasons, such as to add to their collection or to sell. Pot hunting on federal and most state lands is illegal.

**potsherd** or **sherd**—a broken piece of pottery.

**prehistoric**—the period of time before written records; the prehistoric period varies from region to region.

**Pre-Paleoindian** (also **Pre-Clovis**)—refers to aboriginal occupations of the New World that date to the time before Clovis. Although somewhat controversial in American archaeology, evidence is mounting that humans occupied the Americas before Clovis times.

**preservation**—the act of maintaining the form and integrity of a structure as it presently exists, and halting any further deterioration or decay. It does not include any significant rebuilding.

**primitive technologist**—a specialist in the manual arts and skills of the past; someone who can replicate and often interpret use of by-gone technologies.

**projectile point/knife (PP/K)**—a term encompassing the stone points that were attached to spears or arrows, or stone tools used as a knife. Early examples are often erroneously termed arrowheads.

**provenience, provenance**—the exact location of an artifact or feature within a site, based on its placement in a grid and its depth below the ground surface.

**psychology**—the science of mental processes and emotional behavior of humans.

**public archaeology**—see **CRM archaeology**.

**radiocarbon dating**—a method of dating organic material, which is based on the decay rate of radioactive carbon-14 atoms that are present in all living things (humans, trees, etc.). By comparing tree-ring dates with radiocarbon dates, scientists realized that the radiocarbon dates drift, or need to be calibrated, to reflect actual dates.

**reconstruction**—the process of describing, explaining and interpreting all facets of life of a previous culture—from the ways people made a living, to the clothes they wore, to the type of social organization of which they were a part. The information for reconstruction often comes from detailed excavation, but is accumulated over time by all archaeologists.

**regional analysis**—the study of entire cultures or political units, especially through the investigation of settlement systems over a long period of time.

**relative dating techniques**—methods that determine when an event occurred in relation to other events (before, simultaneous, after).

**relic**—an object from a previous culture, an artifact

**rock shelter**—a shallow cave on a cliff-face, some were occupied for extensive periods of time prehistorically.

**scraper**—a stone tool designed for use in scraping hides, bones and other materials that has been flaked (knapped) on one side.

**sedentism**—used to describe a social group's lifeways in which members live in one place, and are not mobile or migratory.

**seriation**—a dating technique based on the popularity cycle of cultural styles that allows archaeologists to place objects in a chronology.

**settlement systems**—the distribution of humans across the landscape and the cultural and physical variables that affect that distribution.

**site**—any area showing evidence of human activity as revealed through artifacts and/or features.

**site steward**—a volunteer who watches a site, reports on any activity such as vandalism and looting, and assists archaeologists and land owners in preserving it.

**sociocultural**—pertaining to social institutions and culture.

**sociopolitical**—pertaining to political structures and culture.

**sociology**—the study of human social behavior and institutions, especially that of the modern world.

**Stone Age**—the earliest period of human culture, characterized by the use of stone tools.

**stone tool**—an implement used in prehistoric cultures made from stone (see **lithics**).

**stratigraphy**—the sequence of layers of soil and/or artifacts on a site. If they are undisturbed, the more recent layers will lie above the older layers. The relationship between the cultural deposits in the layers help the archaeologist understand what happened at a site over time.

**strata**—the layers of soil and artifacts in a site.

**subsistence**—the means through which humans make a daily living, usually referring to how they procure food.

**survey**—the systematic examination of the landscape for evidence of human activity, may be done by examining the ground surface for artifacts or digging small probe holes (shovel tests).

**synchronic**—during a single period of time.

**taphonomy**—the study of the processes that effect organic remains in the formation of fossils and archaeological materials.

**temper**—a substance added to the clay when manufacturing pottery, usually to harden or strengthen the material. Temper may be shell, crushed stone, sand, or other substances.

**trade goods**—items that were traded over sometimes very long distances prehistorically. They tell us about relationships between cultures or peoples and often ownership of these items carried prestige.

**tree-ring dates**—see **dendrochronology**.

**tribe**—a generally egalitarian form of social organization, with a more complex kinship system than a band, and having some temporary leadership roles.

**typology**—the classification of a group of artifacts into types, and the study of their change through time, to help understand the development of human cultures.

**Woodland**—a cultural period in the Southeastern US from ca. 3000–1100 BP, characterized by increasing horticultural expertise, use of ceramics, and increasing sedentism and social complexity when compared to the previous Archaic period.

**zooarchaeology**—the study of animal remains from prehistoric and historic sites.

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