



GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Commissioners agree to purchase Fort Daniel site

WWW.GWINNETT

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LAWRENCEVILLE — Fort Daniel once stood on the edge of the frontier, an outpost protecting settlers during the War of 1812.

Two hundred years later, the former bulwark got some protection itself, preserving the landmark from the creeping of suburbia, subdivisions

and shopping centers.

On Tuesday, commissioners purchased the Hog Mountain spot, preserving it for future generations.

"To be able to preserve that part of history will pay dividends for centuries to come," Commissioner Mike Beaudreau said of the four acres along Braselton Highway.

While the fort, which predates the county, has been

gone for more decades than anyone can remember, preservationists with the Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society have unearthed the location of the walls and sifted through dirt for years to find artifacts. The group has lobbied the county to make the purchase and created a Fort Daniel Faire to teach kids and adults about the history and archeology.

Commissioners reached an

agreement with Ann Grant to sell her acreage and home at the appraised value of \$241,000. She will have three months to move out.

Community Services Director Phil Hoskins said no decisions have been made about the site.

"The main thing is to preserve the site," he said, adding that officials planned to discuss possible programming with the archeological group.

Fort Daniel Property Purchased!

The purchase of the Fort Daniel site was the headline news greeting readers of the *Gwinnett Daily Post* on December 12. The target time frame for the final closing is the end of 2012. Mrs. Ann Grant, owner of the site, who has been our (GARS & FDF) generous and patient benefactor since study of the site began in 2007, will be realizing her desire to move closer to her family in Henry County. That move will take place sometime in early 2013.

Jim D'Angelo, site archaeologist and President of the Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF), along with the Foundation's Vice President, Wayne Waldrip, and soon-to-be FDF Board member, Charles Warbington, will be meeting with Phil Hoskins, Director of Gwinnett County Community Services in early January. Their task is to discuss the Foundation's future role in development of the site and the program of archaeology and education that FDF has already initiated. Following this exploratory meeting, the Foundation's Board of Directors (*See Page 6*) will begin regular meetings to deal with the business of how to best proceed. ■ JJD

G A R S

Meeting & News

In lieu of the monthly meeting in January, members of GARS are invited to attend the annual meeting of the Fort Daniel Foundation to be held on Thursday, January 10. See Page 6 for details. The next regular meeting of GARS will be on February 14.

Some proposed GARS Activities for 2013 are:

- **Field Trips (Day):** Peachtree Road Tour (Gwinnett & Fulton); Kennesaw Civil War Battlefield (Cobb); New Manchester Mill Ruins (Douglas); New Echota & Vann House (Gordon); 19th c. Mill Town of Scull Shoals (Green); Roswell Mills (Cobb); GEHC walking tour including historic mill ruins site (Gwinnett); Autrey Mill and Heritage site (Johns Creek)
- **Field Trips (Overnight):** Columbus (visit Fort Mitchell, Chattahoochee Falls project, Confederate Naval Museum, Columbus Museum, historic Bickerstaff Brickworks); Macon (visit Ocmulgee Mounds and Museum, Fort Hawkins)
- **Archaeology Projects:** Graves Soapstone Site; Elisha Winn property GARS-identified sites including the Creekside Rock Shelter site.

GARS officers will be announcing field trips, excavation and survey opportunities, and monthly programs here. ■

Cultural Resource Management

Archaeological sites are being discovered and recorded all the time here in Gwinnett County. Of course, sites are being destroyed as well (See [Georgia Heritage Loss](#)). In each issue we focus on site discoveries in recent years and the context of those discoveries.

In the December issue of GAB (Vol. 1, Issue 9) I presented the interesting controversy over the meaning of NW Georgia's "mysterious" rock pile features, many of which are in Gwinnett County. Some of you, no doubt, saw the H2 Channel program on December 21 on the "Mayans in Georgia" claim that appeared in 2011 and is based, in part, on similar rock features at the Trap Rock site (9UN367).

Please consider the following, which is excerpted from an email message from Georgia Archaeologist and GCPA officer, Scot Keith:

In December of 2011 Richard Thornton claimed that an archaeological site with stone terraces and piles located in northern Georgia represents a ceremonial center built by Mayan immigrants. . . Thornton has since argued that the remains of Mayan houses and settlements are present throughout the Southern Highlands. An associate of Thornton's has also claimed that the Woodland mound center Kolomoki may have been a Mayan center . . . and that Swift Creek Complicated Stamped pottery represents the pottery of Mesoamerican/Mayan immigrants. However, . . . based on work conducted at . . . [9UN367] . . . by professional archaeologist Jannie Loubser (2010), there is no evidence that this site represents the remains of Mayan immigrants.

In Jannie's response to Thornton's claims, he says that not only is there no evidence for those claims but that these claims are . . . "out of thin air speculations." Scot continues:

Further, according to the knowledge of professional archaeologists who work within Georgia, as well as the state archaeological database, no evidence of prehistoric Mayan or other Mesoamerican immigrants has been found to date anywhere within the state.

Speculative claims such as Thornton's that are not backed up by archaeological data can be detrimental to the public understanding regarding the archaeology of Georgia. In this instance, since his original article, the United States Forest Service (USFS) found that numerous people have visited this site and that some of the rocks had been moved and/or rearranged and that trails were forming. In order to protect and preserve this important site from damage, vandalism, and alteration, the USFS cut selected trees and brush to inhibit access to the site and recently released a statement and a video debunking Thornton's claim. The Muscogee Creek Nation, the Eastern Band of Cherokee, and the United

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Places in Peril

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation (GTHP) recently announced its 2013 list of ten Places in Peril in the state. Sites on the list include: Tift Warehouse in Albany; Candler Park Golf Course and Sweet Auburn Commercial District in Atlanta; Dobbins Mining Landscape and Stilesboro Academy in Bartow County; Cave Spring Log Cabin in Floyd County; Monticello Commercial Building in Jasper County; Lexington Presbyterian Church in Oglethorpe County; Hancock County Courthouse in Sparta; and Traveler's Rest State Historic Site in Toccoa.

“This is the Trust’s eighth annual Places in Peril list,” said Mark C. McDonald, president and CEO of the Trust. Places in Peril is designed to raise awareness about Georgia’s significant historic, archaeological, and cultural resources—including buildings, structures, districts, archaeological sites, and cultural landscapes that are threatened by demolition, neglect, lack of maintenance, inappropriate development, or insensitive public policy.

Sites that have been placed on previous years’ lists have included Fort Daniel, and the Fort Daniel Park Plan is the result of a GTHP grant resulting from that listing! ■



Traveler’s Rest State Historic Site in Toccoa has been added to the Georgia Trust’s 2013 Places in Peril list.

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Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians have also countered Thornton’s claim and are working closely with the USFS in this matter.

The links embedded in Scot’s remarks will be of interest if you want to know more about this issue. Of particular interest would be the National Park Service link and their debunking video.

A final point. Archaeologists are NOT saying that a cultural link between the Mayan culture and some Indian cultures in North America is impossible. As part of the scientific method, for example, it is certainly legitimate to compare the apparent similarities of the Mound-building cultures of the Ohio River Valley and Southeastern United States with what we see in South American Maya or Aztec cultures, or even Egyptian Pyramids or Angkor Wat, and hypothesize some connection based on those similarities. However, to claim that this connection is indeed the case, or that the Maya actually immigrated to Georgia, one must have evidence. The claim of Loubser and other archaeologists with expertise in this area, is that thus far there is no evidence whatsoever linking the Maya with Georgia sites. Of course Thornton says there is. Read about it for yourself. ■ **JJD**

If you didn’t catch Jannie Loubser when he spoke at the GARS meeting, you can hear his presentation on the Maya question at the GAAS meeting January 8 at the Fernbank beginning at 6:30PM.

More Diggin's

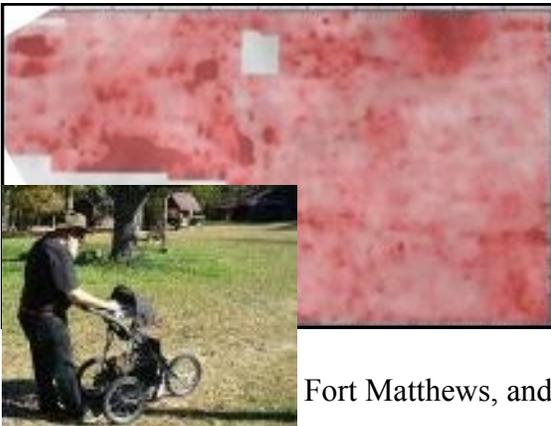
- The Chessure-Williams house has been moved to the GEHC where it will be restored as funds are available! It was hoped that GARS could do a systematic archaeology survey of the area immediately surrounding and under the house right after the house was moved, and before the soils were disturbed. Information and analysis of artifacts such as nails and ceramics, particularly their locations relative to the house's footprint, which includes a later rear addition, might have proved valuable in understanding the history of the house. The artifacts themselves, which would have no value apart from their archaeological context in relation to the house, could have provided an additional dimension to the historic and interpretative role of the house at its new location. Unfortunately, an agreement to do this could not be reached with the property's owners.. If you know of any other similar historic properties in Gwinnett County, with relatively undisturbed soils, please let us know by contacting the GARS President (Leslie Perry) or GARS Archaeological Advisor (Jim D'Angelo).



Picture from the Gwinnett Historical Society
Chessure-Williams house c. 1896

- From Richard M. Pettigrew, Ph.D., RPA, President and Executive Director, Archaeological Legacy Institute:
Launched in October 2010, the *Video News from The Archaeological Conservancy (TAC)* has presented stories on a variety of topics in the US and other countries. *Video News* program details can be found on the [TAC's Web site](#). We urge you to support this public service by participating in our [Membership](#) and [Underwriting](#) programs. Only with your help can we continue and enhance our nonprofit public-education and visitor-supported programming. We also welcome new content partners as we reach out to the world community.
- As previously reported, Dan Elliot, with Greg Beavers' assistance, did a GPR survey during the November field trip to the Fort Hollingsworth site in Banks County (see Vol. 1, Issue 9, p.3). Dan reports that he sees "various things in the . . . GPR map . . . a semicircle of anomalies that surrounds the house . . . also two large features that

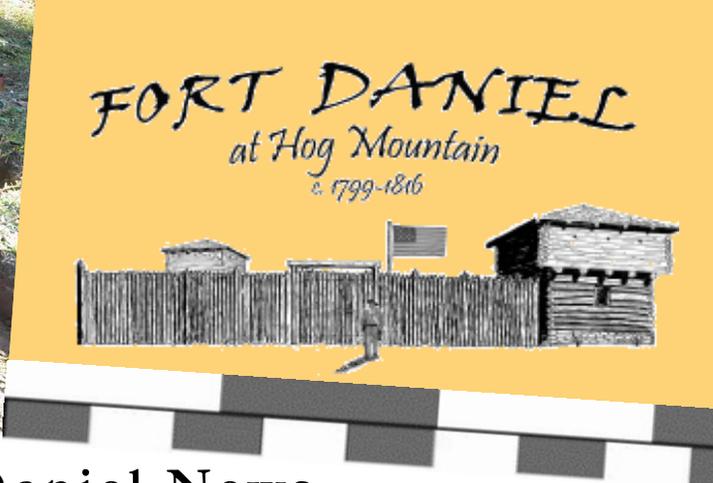
are likely the wells and cellar mentioned by the land owner. . . the large, irregular-edged anomaly near the backdoor is interesting. . . looks like a large deep disturbance, maybe a cellar. . . At any rate GPR shows promise for excavations at this site with excellent feature potential." If you're trying to make sense of Dan's map (*pictured left*) why not come to the FDF Annual meeting on the 10th and learn more about this mysterious thing called remote sensing and Ground Penetrating Radar. We used GPR at the Fort Daniel site (and the Winn property) with Sheldon Skaggs, and Dan has been using it at Fort Hawkins, in the search for Fort Matthews, and at other locations including Civil War battlefields and mounds sites.



Fort Matthews, and at other locations including Civil War battlefields and mounds sites.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Two GARS and FDF officers will be busy this upcoming year. The new GARS President, Leslie Perry, is the new President of SGA, and FDF Secretary, Vicki Watkins, is the new Gwinnett Historical Society President. Congratulations to you both!



Fort Daniel News

2013
GARS OFFICERS
www.thegars.org

President:
Leslie Perry
Vice President:
Wayne Waldrip
Secretary:
Delana Gilmore
Treasurer:
John Hopkins

2013 FDF OFFICERS
www.thefortdanielfo

2013

[undation.org](http://www.thefortdanielfoundation.org)

OUR WEB SITE
HAS BEEN UPDAT-
ED AND IM-
PROVED. MORE
IMPROVEMENTS
AND ADDED MA-
TERIAL ARE
FORTHCOMING!

President:
Jim D'Angelo
Vice President:
Wayne Waldrip
Secretary:
Vicki Watkins
Treasurer:
Betty Warbington

- The big news, of course, is the purchase of the Fort Daniel property by the County. This assures that the site will be preserved, which was the first goal of the Commissioners. The next goal will be development of the site—both physically and programmatically. For an idea of the possibilities for this site (and hopefully, future expansion of the site), please view the Master Plan located on the FDF's Web site. This proposed plan for an historic and archaeological research park was developed by jB+a Associates, Inc. of Atlanta in 2009 as part of a matching grant from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation. It gives an idea of what can be done with this property.
- Proposed new FDF Board members are Georgia archaeologist Garrett Silliman of Terminus Archaeological Research, LLC), who is actually nominated for a second four-year term, and Chuck Warbington, PE, Executive Director of Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District (CID). Leslie Perry, the new President of GARS, is automatically a member of the Board. Other Board Members are as follows: *Class of 2013*—Paul Willis, Principal of Fort Daniel Elementary School; Carole Boyce, member, Gwinnett Board of Education, District 1; *Class of 2014*; Catherine Long, Program Director, Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center, SGA past President and GARS past President; John Hopkins, businessman and direct descendant of Allen Daniel; *Class of 2015* Richard Lux, representing the Board of the Gwinnett Historical Society. **Thank you to outgoing Board members Betty Kinsaul and Shannon Coffee for your service!**

Fort Daniel Foundation Annual Meeting

The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend FDF's Annual Meeting. It will be on January 10 beginning at 7:30PM and will be at the Gwinnett County Justice and Administration Building (Conference Room A) located at 75 Langley Road in Lawrenceville.

The keynote speaker is Georgia archaeologist, Dan Elliot, who will speak on the application of non-destructive remote sensing technology to military constructions in Georgia. Dan is President of the Board of Directors of the Lamar Institute and may be best known to GARS and FDF members for his work at Fort Hawkins. In addition to Dan's presentation, there will be a brief business meeting including election of new Board members and announcements pertaining to the new status of the Fort Daniel site. ■