Happy Holidays from GARS & FDF

GARS Monthly Meetings

This month’s meeting will the Annual Christmas Party to be held on Sunday, December 8 from 5–8PM. It will be at Catherine Long’s house. (An email has previously been sent out with the location and contact information.) The party will be potluck; therefore, bring a covered dish that can feed up to 20. There will be the traditional snag-a-gift exchange (AKA Dirty Santa), so please bring a wrapped gift from each person attending to participate in the swap. Thank you to Leslie and Frank Perry for organizing this year’s party!

There will be a short GARS business meeting to vote on new officers. All GARS and FDF members are welcomed, so let’s be merry together! ■
Groundwork Atlanta Project

Recently, Keith Sharp and Kathy “Riverside Kate” Hearn announced that the National Park Service has chosen Atlanta to receive EPA Brownfields Program pilot funding and technical assistance through Groundwork USA. The grant totals $275,000 over three years, which includes matching funds of $75,000 from the City of Atlanta to create a new non-profit called “Groundwork Atlanta.” The full-time staff will pursue funding and leverage resources for projects beginning in historic northwest Atlanta—at the same time as engaging local government, businesses, foundations, community groups, and residents.

Beginning in January 2014, the Groundwork Atlanta Steering Committee will undertake an intense feasibility study to identify both short and long term goals with Riverwalk Atlanta as the flagship project. Groundwork Atlanta will work to improve and care for the local environment with smart rejuvenation of communities. It will integrate environmental education and job training while reclaiming derelict lands for parks and recreation, conservation, economic development, and quality of life at the same time building community pride to insure the projects look as good or better in five years as they do on the day of completion.

In addition to the grant announcement, Wayne Waldrip, Vice President of Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) and the Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF), will serve on the Groundwork Atlanta Board of Directors where he plans to push the Fort Daniel/Peachtree Road/Fort Peachtree connection and lobby for a proposed archaeological investigation to discover the actual site of the fort that was built at Standing Peachtree in 1814.

As those familiar with Dr. Jim D’Angelo’s presentations on this subject know, he and Wayne believe they have solid evidence that the fort was not where historians and some archaeologists have claimed. The necessary fieldwork (which would be done free of charge) was proposed to the City of Atlanta two years ago by Dr. D’Angelo, President of FDF and Archaeological Advisor and founder of GARS. As a Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologist (GCPA), he provided both an historical overview and a research design, but so far nothing has come of it. Hopefully, with the incentive of Groundwork Atlanta the investigation will be approved.

American Schools of Oriental Research Annual Meeting

Most recently Jim and Natasha D’Angelo attended the ASOR (American Schools of Oriental Research) Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland. They attended presentations on Khirbet Iskander, Jordan, the Early Bronze Age (c. 2500 BCE) site with which Jim has been affiliated since 1981, as well as several other sessions on various topics including the newest technology being used in archaeology.

The Plenary Session—featuring University of Pennsylvania’s Dr. C. Brian Rose—was of special interest. At one point in his presentation on “Cultural Heritage Protection in Zones of Armed Conflict: Lessons Learned and Future Strategies,” Dr. Rose showed a photo of a banner which had been created by grateful Iraqis in response efforts to reclaim much of what was looted, damaged, or destroyed from Baghdad’s National Museum of Iraq in the wake of the US invasion, which proclaimed: A Nation Stays Alive When It’s Culture Stays Alive. “In a less poignant context,” says Jim, “I think that is what we are about when we engage in Community Archaeology here at home.”

For more on the looted treasures of Iraq you can download the From Babylon to Baghdad: Ancient Iraq and the Modern West booklet.
Recent Find at Fort Daniel

Following up on the Frontier Faire excavations, Jeff Glover and GARS members returned to Fort Daniel in mid-November. They finished excavating in the Northeast Blockhouse, the East Gate, and the South Wall area before closing the site up for the winter. Below is a picture collage of the units and the charred piece of lumbar found in the S. wall trench. Photos of additional artifacts that were found will be posted on the Web site along with artifacts from the Faire excavation, some of which were published in the November GAB.

Jeff Glover and his students from Georgia State worked in Unit 37 at the Northeast Blockhouse

Scot Keith and students worked in Unit 39 during Faire, then after a stump was removed, a post of the eight-foot gate was found. Trowel marks spot.

Prepping the 2x6x16 charred board segment for removal. The exposed portion was then covered with cling wrap...

Foam insulation was sprayed over the cling wrap...

The charred board popped right out! Leslie Perry is working on the conservation of this treasure.

Unit near the Southwest Blockhouse where Garrett Silliman found a rabbit hole and a charred piece of wood

West end of charred board found at the South Wall

The trowel points at the charred board's location in the unit at the South Wall
Fort Daniel News

- In his role as Vice President of the FDF, Wayne Waldrip recently attended a meeting of the Gwinnett Preservation Board that included Phil Hoskins, Director of Community Services, and presented a report that Jim had prepared about FDF’s progress over the past year. It was a very informative meeting that included annual reports from the Gwinnett Historical Society and the Environmental and Heritage Center.

- The Annual GARS/FDF Christmas Party will be on Sunday, December 8 at Catherine Long’s house. (See Page 1 for more information.)

- The Gwinnett Historical Society (GHS) general membership meeting will be December 9, 7 pm, which is also their annual Christmas party. The meeting, in the old Court House, is open to the public. Most importantly, FDF will be receiving the GHS Preservation Award for perseverance in saving Fort Daniel, including efforts directed at the acquisition of the site by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, and subsequent turning over of management of the site to FDF by the County. We hope you will plan to attend and please bring a covered dish.

- The FDF Annual Meeting will be on Wednesday, Jan 8 with GARS members invited (in lieu of Jan GARS meeting). Details in Jan. GAB.

A Thanksgiving Archaeological Examination

Over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend Wayne and Judy Waldrip spent the holiday in Floyd, New Mexico, visiting his daughter and family on their ranch. His son-in-law’s father showed him an interesting clay artifact (pictured right) found in the 1960s in the “heel” of New Mexico.

Wayne asked if I could identify it. After looking it over, I wrote him back stating that I think it is conclusive proof that the Maya were in the United States, and only about 1,500 miles southwest of Track Rock, Union County, Georgia sometime between about AD 250 and 1960.