Dynamic Borders: Modern-Day Incursion

The theme for the Georgia Archaeology Month event last May derived from the Society of Georgia Archaeology’s (SGA) “Dynamic Borders” theme. The upcoming 8th Annual Frontier Faire stems from this also and is “Dynamic Borders: The Creek Indian War and Settler Incursions Around Hog Mountain.” Explicitly, the “incursions” theme is directed at how settlers’ dealings with the Creeks and other Native American groups led to the 1813 war. Indirectly, the “incursions” theme has a broader and even contemporary relevance.

As you may recall seeing in the press earlier this month, North Dakota lands considered sacred to Standing Rock Sioux Tribe—containing burials and a large stone feature—were bulldozed by Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) workers. Video showed pipeline security workers using attack dogs and pepper spray on demonstrators who were protesting the bulldozing of the recently identified sacred sites.

According to a Canadian online publication, DESMOG, “Following Saturday’s bulldozing, Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman Dave Archambault II said in a statement: ‘They did this on a holiday weekend, one day after we filed court papers identifying these sacred sites. The desecration of these ancient places has already caused the Standing Rock Sioux irreparable harm. We’re asking the court to halt this path of destruction.’ After

continued on Page 3

Photo by Robyn Beck / AFP / Getty
Dynamic Borders

8th Annual Frontier Faire
Saturday, October 15
10AM–5PM
Fort Daniel Archaeological Site
(2505 Braselton Highway/GA 124, Buford)
Admission: Individual = $2
Family = $5

Fort Daniel Museum ★ Archaeology Lab
ArchaeoBus ★ Trading Post ★ Demonstrations

PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY
Supervised Excavations & Activities for the Family

REENACTORS
Exhibiting 19th Century Frontier Life

STORYTELLING
By Barry Stewart Mann at 10:30AM

For information visit www.thefortdanielfoundation.org.

The Frontier Faire is cosponsored by the Fort Daniel Foundation and Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society. Fort Daniel Archaeological Site is owned by Gwinnett County and is managed by the Fort Daniel Foundation.
the initial destruction Saturday, Dakota Access workers returned to the area and
dug up additional grounds before dawn on Sunday, Archambault said. ‘These
grounds are the resting places of our ancestors. The ancient cairns and stonepray-
er rings there cannot be replaced. In one day our sacred land has been turned into
hollow ground.’”

This incident was part of an ongoing dispute that is itself part of a larger issue:
Namely the issue of tribal sovereignty and the fact that the US government has
long history of entering into treaties and then breaking them in one way or anoth-
er. (See sidebar right.) Sometimes, as with settler incursions in Georgia in the late
18th through early 19th centuries, it was the State government that acquiesced.
However, for the Native Americans, a “rose by any other name…” A rose with
thorns, we should note.

According to the executive director of the Indigenous Environmental Network’s
Facebook page that Sunday: “Dakota Access literally plowed through a burial site
and a significant ceremonial site that was JUST identified by the landowner and
tribal experts a few days before. This was off-reservation. (See sidebar below
left.) The tribe filed the discovery with a federal judge that is deciding whether to grant an injunction against
Dakota Access. However,…in order for construction to be halted, the ND State Historic Preservation Office
(SHPO) had to come and officially survey the site, because it was in their jurisdiction. So what did Dakota Ac-
cess do? They plowed through the land before the SHPO could come do their surveys.”

The background to this story is a bit complicated but also necessary to appreciate
what is going on here. The advent of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing
has made the oil potential in North Dakota’s Bakken formation huge. The USGS
estimates 7.4 billion barrels of oil, and the 1,172-mile pipeline project is expected
to carry half a million barrels daily—equaling 374 gallons of gasoline a day. Pro-
ponents argue that the pipeline is the safest and most cost effective way to
transport the oil and will generate jobs and sales and income tax revenues.

Dakota Access submitted its plan for the pipeline to the Iowa Utilities Board
(IUB) on October 29, 2014. In March 2016, after Dakota Access secured volun-
tary easements on 82 percent of Iowa land, the IUB granted the permit, including
the use of eminent domain, but not without some controversy. A year before a
Des Moines Register poll found 74 percent of Iowans opposed to the use of eminent domain condemnation on
behalf of a private corporation. Afterward, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources approved a sovereign
lands construction permit in three counties where the pipeline would cross the Big Sioux River and the Big
Sioux Wildlife Management Area, which are historic and cultural sites of the Upper Sioux tribe. In May the
US Fish and Wildlife Service revoked the permit. In August the Sioux Tribe, on the Standing Rock Indian Res-
ervation, brought a petition to the US Army Corps of Engineers suing for an injunction against construction,
and a protest was began at the pipeline site in North Dakota.

Native Americans are protesting the pipeline because it endangers (and now has destroyed) sacred sites and
drinking water resources. Not unlike the Keystone XL controversy, opponents also argue that there are serious
environmental and climate issues associated with any new fossil fuel pipeline projects—the drinking water is-
ue being only one of these. This is not the immediate issue surrounding the Standing Rock standoff; and we

continued on next page
shouldn’t let it obfuscate the Historic Preservation issue of the Corps’ violation of the tribes’ rights by not properly consulting with them with the ensuing disaster for cultural resources.

Apparently, the Corp did not require an archaeological survey of the all of the corridor but relied on “historical studies” and, in this case, a 1985 study that missed the burials and a large stone feature that were bulldozed. The Sioux conducted their own study and filed court papers identifying these sacred sites on Friday, September 2. The required review by the SHPO could not have begun earlier than the next business day, Tuesday. However, on Saturday, a national holiday, the bulldozers destroyed the site.

This a cynical act—endeavoring to nullify the Tribe’s effort save a part of their heritage; while not commonplace, it is more commonplace than most would think—as many archaeologists and historic preservationists can attest. I had personal experience with the tactic some years ago on three occasions: with the attempt to bulldoze Indian burials at a site I was monitoring, the demolition of an historic house (which I had recommended NRHP eligible to my SHPO the day before!), and the mysterious burning of another.

The core of the Standing Rock incident, as Saha writes, “centers around the issue of tribal sovereignty and claims that the US government approved the project without consulting tribal governance; something they are obliged to do according to US treaties and the United Nation’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.” It is something to think about as we realize that the settler incursions of hundreds of years ago are not just relics of some part of the historical past but may point to a tendency endemic to our culture and, perhaps more profoundly, to our nature. ■ JJD

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More Diggin’s

- **Haunted Halloween at the Atlanta History Center** will be on **Friday, October 21 beginning at 6:30pm**. From the family friendly chaos of a turn of the century carnival to the startling and chilling trails, come and join the fun—if you dare! The special holiday program is $10 for members; $15 for nonmembers; and $8 for children. For information visit the [Atlanta History Center’s Web site](http://example.com).

- **The 73rd Annual Southeastern Archaeological Conference (SEAC)** will be held in **Athens, Georgia, on October 26–29**. There will be many talks given by people from the Atlanta-metro area—mostly on Saturday. For more information visit the [SEAC Web site](http://example.com).

- In lieu of their annual Fall Meeting the **Society of Georgia Archaeology (SGA)** will be hosting an **archaeology fair at this year’s SEAC in Athens, Georgia**. Called **Georgia, Can You Dig It?**, the fair will be held at the Classic Center in Athens on **October 29 from 8am–2pm**. This event is free and open to the public! Come visit the ArchaeoBus and explore archaeological exhibits from Georgia Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Southern, and Georgia State University. For information visit the [SGA Web site](http://example.com).

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It is to be noted that these lands were accorded to the Sioux by the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868. However, the lands were ceded back to the US government 11 years later in a new treaty renegotiated, under threat of starvation, after they lost the Great Sioux War that had been incited by the government!
Exciting things are happening at Fort Daniel in preparation for the upcoming Frontier Faire!

- The Major Tandy Key Blacksmith Shop (pictured right) is coming along. Wayne and Eli Stancil and others have been busy working on it—trying to get ready for the upcoming dedication of the Blacksmith Shop at this year’s Frontier Faire. (See below for information.) Along with the donated logs, fieldstone has been donated to be used around the blacksmith shop and for a forge.

- Descendants of Major Tandy Key have been invited to be special guests at the Fort Daniel Frontier Faire this year. (See Page 2 for information about the faire.) A dedication of the Blacksmith Shop, which was named after the fort’s commander Major Key, will occur at 1:30 PM on Saturday, October 15.

- The past few years Storyteller Barry Stewart Mann has performed at the annual faire. This year Mann will present a new dialogue—specially created for Fort Daniel—at 10:30 AM.

MEMBERSHIP FEES:
If you would like to join or renew your GARS membership, please contact John Hopkins; and for FDF membership please contact Betty Warbington.

GARS News

- Last month GARS members visited the Atlanta History Center and enjoyed seeing the new renovations. Members were given guided tours of the Swan House and the Smith Family Farm (pictured below).

- Because of the many events in October, there will not be a GARS meeting this month. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 15 beginning at 7 PM.

- Nominations are being accepted for GARS officers. The names will be presented and voted on at a special business meeting before the annual Christmas Party. If you are interested in becoming an officer to GARS, please email Delana Gilmore.

- GARS President Delana Gilmore and Jenna Pirtle will be presenting at this year’s Southeastern Archaeological Conference (SEAC) in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, October 29. They will give a 15-minute presentation on Fort Daniel and the future of public archaeology at the site. If you would like to come and support them, please visit the SEAC Web site for information about the conference.
As the oldest known earthen mounds in the Western Hemisphere, the Louisiana State University (LSU) Campus Mounds (pictured below) are an important record of the indigenous past and important to the cultural heritage of Louisiana. However, the mounds have a long historical tradition of use—including political, religious, and leisure events—which are quite distinct from their archaeological importance. After the mounds were incorporated into the LSU campus design, they have become significant for their modern cultural uses and their importance to local and regional groups.

The two mounds are part of a mound-building complex not ascribed agricultural groups but to hunters and gatherers who used them for ceremonial gatherings. The mounds are a high feature sitting on a natural bluff overlooking the Mississippi River; however, today Tiger Football and other LSU buildings block the view of the river. Limited archaeological investigations have taken place at the mounds. However, recently, remote sensing was conducted and indicated that the mounds were eroding and slumping. Concerned archaeologists, professors, administrators, and students decided to take action to preserve these mounds by denying access to them during the 2010 LSU football season.

As the highest feature on campus and within close walking distance to Tiger Stadium, the mounds have become a popular tailgating spot. Many tailgaters disagree with LSU attempts to restrict access during home games.

Knowing the mounds’ history has helped to further involvement in protecting the site. The restriction of the mounds on football game days has insured that this public space will continue to be a place that everyone can share.