

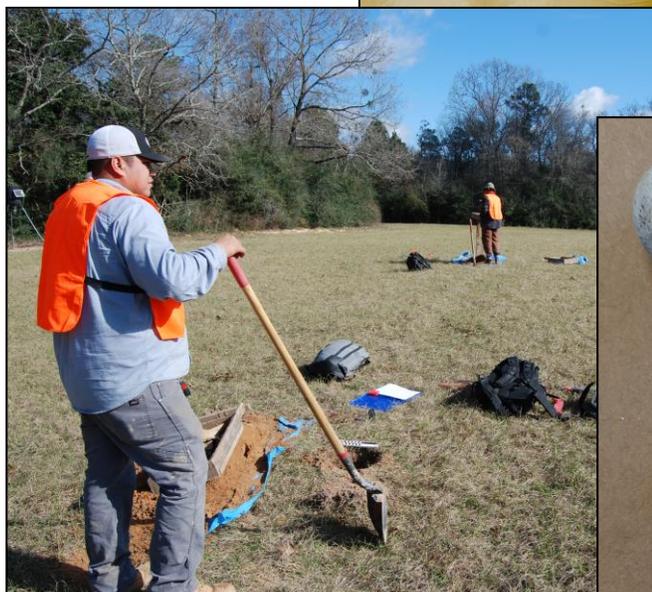
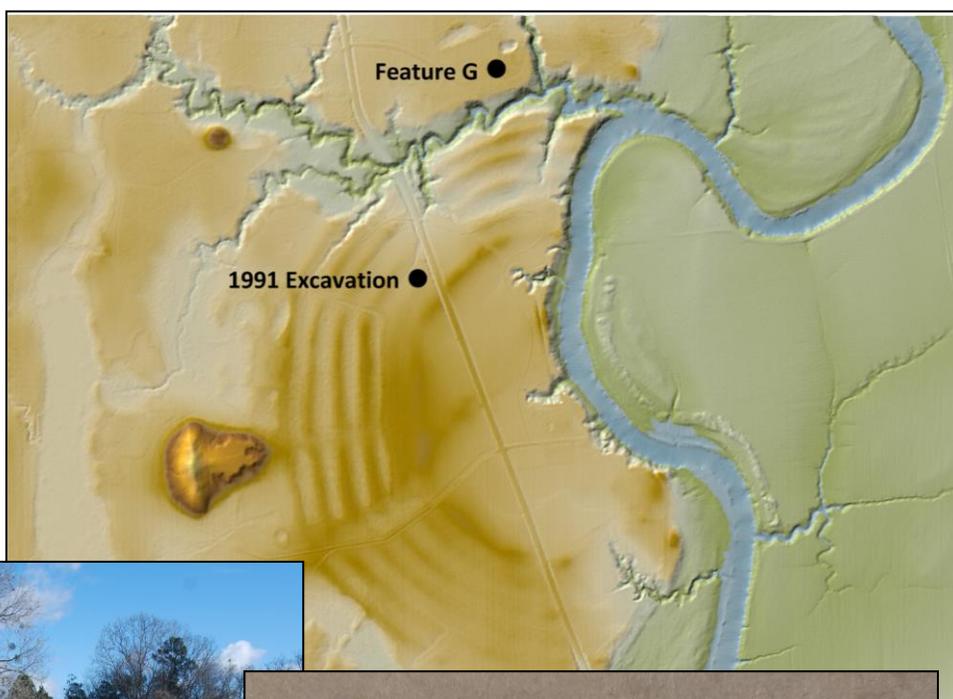


# NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Winter 2020/2021

Vol. 48, No.3

**Despite COVID-19,  
a surprising amount  
of archaeological  
work is still taking  
place in Louisiana.  
Look inside to learn  
what has been going  
on in the field and in  
the lab.**



**LAS Newsletter printed courtesy of R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc.  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

## LAS CHAPTER AND MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Maegan A. Smith joins the Division of Archaeology

At the end of 2020, the Louisiana Division of Archaeology's Outreach and Education Coordinator, Valerie Feathers, left for another opportunity in North Carolina. Beginning in January 2021, Maegan A. Smith will fill the position.

Maegan comes to the Division from Bayou Vermilion District / Vermilionville Living History Museum and Folklife Park in Lafayette, LA. As their Collections Manager since 2016, she worked on various projects such as formalizing the collections management system, writing and implementing a federal grant project, starting and maintaining their French Table program, and developing interpretive content through staff development, social media, exhibits, and presentations.

She also served on their Indigenous Relations Committee and worked as the assistant project manager for museum accreditation, which Vermilionville received from the American Alliance of Museums in the summer of 2020.

Maegan received her BA from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, double majoring in American History and Anthropology, with her field school experience through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has an MA in Public/Applied History from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

While earning her Masters, she served as the Public Archaeology graduate assistant with Dr. Mark Rees searching for the sites of the first Acadian settlements along Bayou Teche and as graduate assistant to the Center for Louisiana Studies working with their collections and public programming.

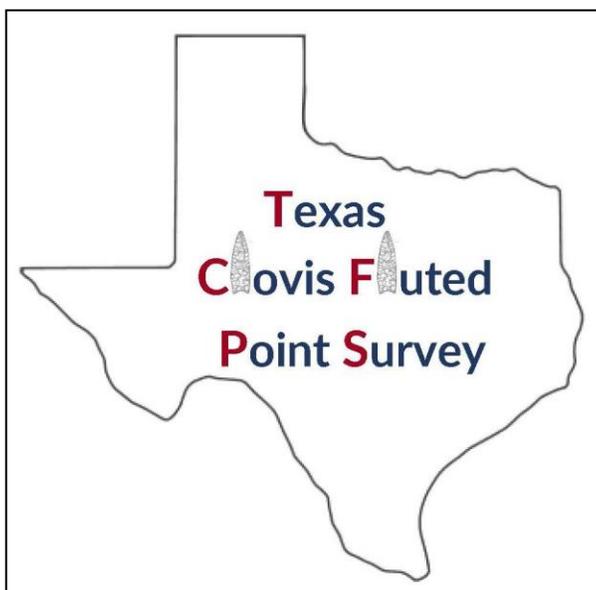
Between stints at school, she worked as a field and laboratory technician for Coastal Environments, Inc. on various projects in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. Maegan also has background in GIS and has worked as an intern for the Division of Historic Preservation one summer geocoding their standing structure records.

Maegan brings a diverse background and training to the Outreach position. Her experience working with various public communities, particularly American Indian communities will be very beneficial. The Division is very pleased to have Maegan join the crew.



**BYE Y'ALL!!**

This is the last LAS newsletter with me as editor. It is the 45<sup>th</sup> newsletter I have put together. It hardly seems possible that I have been doing this for 15 years, but alas it is so. I have also edited 20 bulletins for the LAS, as well as two special publications. For the most part I have enjoyed it and I have learned a lot about Louisiana's past. The new LAS editor, Mark Rees, is a great person to take over and I look forward to reading what he and his team provide for the LAS membership. Future contributors to the newsletter or bulletin should contact him at [rees@louisiana.edu](mailto:rees@louisiana.edu). I look forward to seeing LAS members at future meetings and conferences once we get through the COVID pandemic. – Dennis Jones



The Texas Clovis Fluted Point Survey (TCFPS) has reached out to the membership of the Louisiana Archaeological Society for help in updating their information.

In 1985, David Meltzer initiated a survey of Clovis fluted points in Texas. That survey continues to the present, and as of 2007 when the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the survey was published, there were over 544 Clovis fluted points recorded by the Texas Clovis Fluted Point Survey (TCFPS). The majority of Texas Clovis fluted points were made of Edwards chert from central Texas, with a minority fashioned of Alibates agatized dolomite and Tecovas jasper from the High Plains.

The TCFPS has now come under the control and curation at the Texas Archaeological Research Laboratory (TARL). It is anticipated that the number of Clovis fluted points from Texas will be increased as will the counties from where the points were reported. If any LAS members have possession of or know of fluted points from Texas, they are asked to contact Alan Slade at [allan.slade@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:allan.slade@austin.utexas.edu) or leave a phone message at (512) 232-4898. More information and forms for reporting is at: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/tarl/texas-clovis-fluted-point-survey.php>

## **Archaeology Field School Summer of 2021**

**In partnership between the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and Historic Preservation Department, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana**

UL Lafayette will offer undergraduate or graduate-level credit in Anthropology 490G (3 credit hours).

Learn scientific techniques of archaeological excavation, site investigation, and survey while participating in applied research.

- To be held at historic Coushatta sites in southwest Louisiana (locations to be announced).
- Students can enroll in one of two three-week sessions:
- Session 1 (Summer Intersession): May 17 – June 4, 2021
- Session 2 (Summer A Term): June 7 – June 25, 2021
- Both sessions will meet Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM–4:30 PM.
- Students will be responsible for their own transportation and lodging, although some assistance with lodging will be provided.

Enrollment will be limited, so apply early. For information on admission options and enrollment, email: [admissions@louisiana.edu](mailto:admissions@louisiana.edu) or go online to: <https://louisiana.edu/admissions>. For information about the Field School, contact Mark A. Rees, Ph.D. RPA, Principal Investigator at [rees@louisiana.edu](mailto:rees@louisiana.edu).

## FIELD NOTES AND CURRENT RESEARCH

### Recent Investigations by the Mississippi River Delta Archaeological Mitigation Project

By David J. Watt and Tad Britt, National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT)

The Mississippi River Delta Archaeological Mitigation (MRDAM) project is a multi-institutional initiative to mitigate the ongoing loss of historic properties and cultural heritage by collecting data on endangered archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties (TCPs); (Britt et al. 2019; Watt et al. 2019). The ultimate goals of MRDAM are to build a database of poorly known, endangered sites, and TCPs that will be gone within decades, if not within a few years, and to advance scientific knowledge of historical ecology and community sustainability on Louisiana's Gulf Coast. A systematic response to the imperiled coast can be developed and implemented only through collecting and analyzing data about these places before the remaining sites are destroyed. Partnership and collaboration between universities, federal and state agencies, Native American tribes, descendant groups, and coastal communities comprise a working group that will guide implementation of a long-term, cooperative program for rapid reconnaissance, site monitoring, and investigation of at-risk sites and TCPs. In the process, the working group aims to promote public education, support graduate and undergraduate research in higher education, and advance cultural resource management (CRM) planning on Louisiana's imperiled coast.

Knowledge of the historic, current, and projected environmental impacts to these sites provides critical information for CRM planning. While relative sea-level rise (RSLR) is an increasingly serious problem across the southeastern coastal plain (Anderson et al. 2017), the loss of coastal wetlands is occurring faster in Louisiana than anywhere else in the United States (Penland et al. 1990). The causes and long-term adverse effects on archaeological sites have been known for decades and considered a critical, yet, largely unaddressed problem (Gagliano 1984; Gagliano and van Beek 1970; Gagliano et al. 1977, 1981; McIntire 1958:24–28; Neuman 1977:31). Annual land loss rates in southeastern Louisiana vary (Couvillion et al. 2017), but erosion, episodic storm surges, and RSLR are ongoing concerns for the integrity of the cultural heritage of south Louisiana (Figure 1). Coupled with subsidence, estimates for global sea-level rise suggest catastrophic scenarios for Louisiana's coastal communities and cultural resources in the forthcoming decades (Bamber et al. 2019; González and Törnqvist 2006; Keogh and Törnqvist 2019).

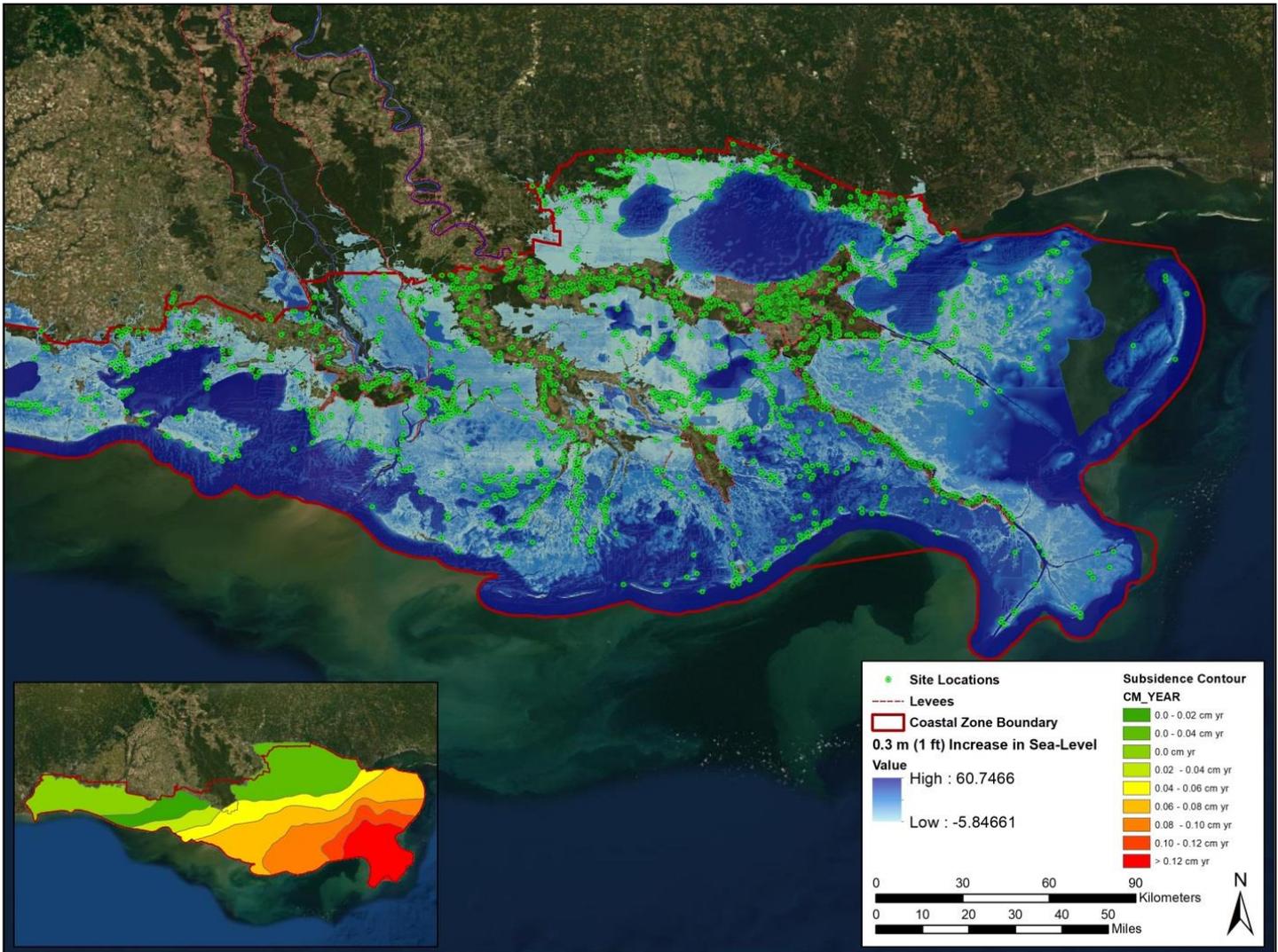
### Climate Change and Anthropogenic Impacts

As the shoreline recedes due to coastal erosion and RSLR, tidal action, severe hurricanes, and storm surges intensified by global warming, coastal archaeological sites become increasingly inundated, eroded, and redeposited. According to an assessment in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010, approximately 47% or nearly half of all previously recorded sites along the MRD shoreline are now mostly or completely submerged (Cloy and Ostahowski 2015:7–18) (Figure 1). A MRDAM field campaign was conducted in 2019 in which a series of archaeological sites were targeted for investigation, approximately 30% of which were unable to be located due to submersion echoing the concerns of McIntire in 1958, Neuman in 1977, Cloy and Ostahowski in 2015. The cumulative effects of natural and anthropogenic processes represent devastating yet still largely unaddressed impacts on hundreds of archaeological sites and TCPs. Factors such as sea-level rise and subsidence are producing an increasing number of submerged and deeply buried deposits that will be increasingly difficult and nearly impossible to study.

While archaeology has a long tradition of macro-scalar, regional analysis; it has simply not been systematically applied to the unfolding disaster on the Gulf Coast except more recently in the wake of the disaster of the BP Oil Spill a decade ago. The MRDAM project is redressing this oversight by implementing a proactive, long-term program of site sampling and rapid reconnaissance in the wake of environmental impacts such as hurricanes. Geomorphic survey and cultural and ecological surveys in close collaboration with local and traditional communities throughout the MRD continue to facilitate prioritization and site mitigations.

### Research and Fieldwork

The MRDAM working group began by generating a database by compiling archaeological datasets for CRM planning. The database prioritizes terrestrial and partially inundated sites and TCPs for eventual mitigation. While unknown numbers of marine cultural resources, such as sunken watercraft and fully submerged sites, are also at-risk, the ongoing effects of coastal erosion and RSLR are especially destructive to terrestrial sites situated in low-lying environments of the CZ. Offshore sites that have become fully submerged or



**Figure 1. Map of southeastern Louisiana and the MRD, displaying a projected increase in sea level of 30 cm (1 foot). Inset map indicates a relative projection of subsidence. Maps courtesy David Watt, sea-level rise rasters adapted from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and satellite imagery derived from Google Earth.**

destroyed by coastal erosion have been excluded from the database and mitigation planning matrices as these sites are frequently prohibitively expensive and impractical for study. Such triage in CRM planning will involve difficult decisions regarding where to focus limited resources (Anderson et al. 2017:12–14). The database prioritizes cultural resources by characterizing each site according to a wide range of interrelated variables: archaeological integrity, historical significance, function, components, cultural affiliation, landform, research potential, and projected land loss from coastal erosion, RSLR, and storm surges

In addition to archaeological datasets and consultations, the database also synthesizes information from archival sources, ethnographic research, coastal

geomorphology, and wetlands ecology as attendant variables in generating risk values for archaeological sites.

The geographic information systems (GIS) database is being used to develop a risk matrix to facilitate integrated CRM planning and to visualize the cumulative effects of natural and anthropogenic impacts on these sites. The risk matrix is continually updated with information from consultations, field reconnaissance, and site monitoring to refine the observed impacts of recent and projected land loss at sites and TCPs. The results of this project will be used to develop mitigation strategies and to better inform site selection for mitigation.

The MRDAM working group conducted an initial field reconnaissance in 2019 to ground-truth the GIS data compiled during the first phase of the project, acquire high-resolution aerial photographs, and investigate site integrity (Figure 2; Watt et al. 2019). The reconnaissance consisted of shoreline survey, visual inspection, and drone-assisted aerial 3-D photogrammetry of 27 at-risk sites, including earthen mounds and shell middens (Figure 3). Attempts to relocate six sites based on previously recorded coordinates were unsuccessful. These sites were observed as subsided and completely submerged. Shoreline and pedestrian survey at the remaining sites resulted in identification of exposed ceramic sherds, lithic artifacts, and shells. Site conditions such as shoreline erosion and RSLR were documented at all locations with still photographs and video.

A real-time kinematic (RTK)-global positioning system (GPS) was used to acquire centimetric ground control and elevation point data for these sites. These data were processed using Agisoft Metashape and

structure-from-motion (SfM) to derive three-dimensional (3-D) point clouds and orthorectified mosaic images. These 3-D renderings will prove invaluable as future records of sites that will one day be eroded away or submerged. Additionally, historical aerial photographs ranging in date from the 1940s to 2018 were georeferenced in GIS, and shorelines and archaeological site boundaries were digitized. These recent small Unmanned Aerial Systems (ssUAS) and historical data were used to quantify individual time-series analyses of land loss for each site. Similar real-time data must be collected from sites during the proposed research program and compared with existing site records. The use of sUAS surveying is extremely effective and will be crucial for more frequent site monitoring, as it allows for sufficiently high spatial-temporal resolution to map yearly changes in both elevation and shoreline. By comparing the sUAS based imagery with historic satellite photos the researchers were able to map the extent of land loss and RSLR at the site over the past century.



*Figure 2. MRDAM archaeologists investigating an exposed and eroding shell midden. Photograph courtesy of Tad Britt.*



*Figure 3. One of the mounds rising out of the partially inundated marshland at the Magnolia mounds site (16SB49). Photograph courtesy of Tad Britt.*

### Conclusion

Coastal erosion and RSLR over the next 50 years are anticipated to inundate 1,750 square miles of Louisiana's Gulf Coast. Natural and anthropogenic-driven impacts are expected to accelerate and increase in intensity. Risk analyses, as well as coastal restoration and protection efforts, are focused on avoiding potentially catastrophic economic, infrastructural, and residential impacts (Barnes and Virgets 2017:1-4). Low-lying coastal parishes are already experiencing unprecedented flooding from storm surges and heavy precipitation, both intensified by climate change. The catastrophe is not forestalled for future decades; the engineered disaster is occurring today. Immovable cultural resources, such as archaeological sites and TCPs, may seem like an afterthought or low priority to decision makers, especially since large-scale engineering for coastal restoration and protection is likely to have direct and indirect adverse effects on these places. Given sufficient opportunity for systematic investigation, archaeologists are uniquely equipped to plumb the depth of time in human-environmental interactions, with crucial information on historical ecology and community resilience in the MRD.

Archaeologists have voiced concerns over the loss of sites in the MRD due to anthropogenic and natural processes for more than 50 years

(McIntire 1958:24–28; Neuman 1977:31). The GIS database and preliminary reconnaissance for MRDAM indicate these processes have continued to result in ongoing site destruction and unknown numbers of formerly terrestrial sites are now submerged.

Archaeologists should not potentially repeat the mistakes of the past by limiting mitigation to data recovery within the existing regulatory framework of CRM. The ongoing crisis on the coast will otherwise result in an unmitigated loss of cultural heritage and scientific knowledge. Through consultations, partnerships, and community outreach, the MRDAM working group is implementing a GIS database and risk matrix for rapid reconnaissance, site monitoring, and prioritization for alternative mitigation strategies. Much more than the future of CRM archaeology is at stake. The development of this coastal Louisiana research hub will continue to encourage interdisciplinary research and cooperative study of the MRD by a consortium of university researchers across fields of research all committed to an increasingly nuanced understanding of the human-environment interaction in the region.

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## Historical Archaeology of the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana: An Update on Recent Research

By Mark A. Rees, Samuel M. Huey, Linda Langley, and Raynella Fontenot

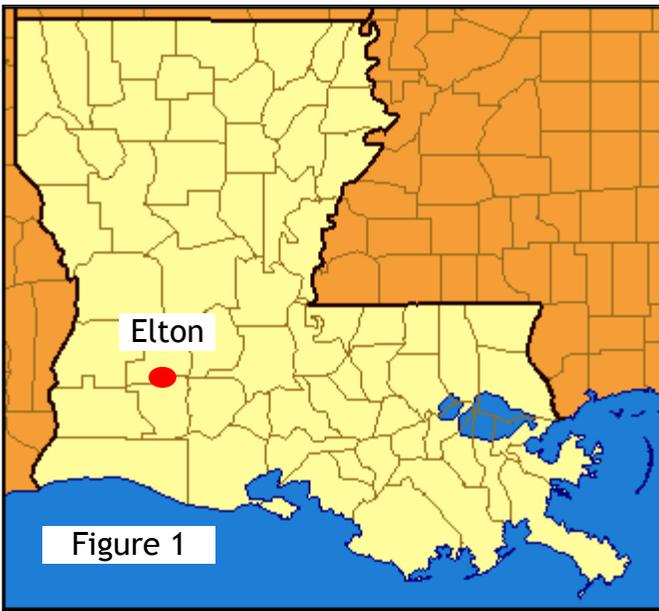
In the fall of 2019, the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana and the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette formed a partnership to undertake a collaborative study of historic Coushatta sites in Louisiana. The Coushatta Tribe is a federally-recognized, sovereign nation located in Allen Parish near the Town of Elton (Figure 1). The Coushatta have lived in Louisiana for more than two centuries, having migrated from the Tennessee River Valley during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Swanton 1922:201-207). There has been extensive historical and ethnographic research on the Coushatta, much of it focused on their westward movement into Louisiana and Texas (Bates 2020; Hook 1997; Hunter 1973; Jacobson 1960; Langley 2005; May 2004; Shuck-Hall 2008). Archaeological studies have focused on Coushatta material culture and village sites in Texas and Louisiana (Jurney and Perttula 1995; McCrocklin 1990, 1992; Perttula 1994; Perttula and Boyd 2008; Perttula and Wilson 2008).

Among the principal goals of this collaborative study are to provide additional information on Coushatta migration and settlement in Louisiana through historical research and systematic archaeological investigation. The objectives are to delineate, investigate, and evaluate culturally and historically significant places associated with the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana in order to develop a geographic information systems (GIS) database. This study is also intended to advance current knowledge of diagnostic material culture from Coushatta sites and to provide members of the Coushatta and students at UL

Lafayette with professional training and applied education in archaeology. While Louisiana archaeology has a long tradition of research into historic tribes, the broad scope and collaborative nature of this investigation builds on those earlier studies. This unique partnership in community archaeology, promotes shared values of heritage conservation and stewardship. The partnership and preliminary results might serve as a model for similar collaborative studies by archaeologists and Native American tribes.

Since the winter of 2019, archaeological surveys have been carried out in the upper Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine, and Red River drainages, informed by historic maps, archives, oral histories, and previous studies on Coushatta village locations. Samuel Huey directs the field and lab work with the assistance of two to three UL Lafayette students, including members of the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana. Fieldwork began in the Calcasieu River drainage during December of 2019 and lasted for four weeks, into February of 2020 (Figure 2).

The crew identified and recorded numerous sites, including four historic Coushatta sites, two of which appear to be significant settlements on ridges east of the Calcasieu River (Figures 3, 4 and 5). The archaeological identification of historic Coushatta villages was confirmed by information from the Coushatta Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO), historic maps, and a dissertation by David Jurney (2001). Other historic and pre-contact Native American sites were also recorded (Figure 6). One previously recorded site, 16AL9, appears to have been destroyed by the Calcasieu River.



**Figure 1.** Location of Elton, La.

**Figure 2.** Tyler Langley, Noelle Latiolais, and Sam Huey (left to right) on the bank overlooking the Calcasieu River.

**Figure 3.** Tyler Langley and Noelle Latiolais shovel testing at 10-meter intervals at a historic Coushatta site in the Calcasieu River drainage.

**Figure 4.** Tyler Langley and Noelle Latiolais excavating a 50-by-50 cm unit at a historic Coushatta site in the Calcasieu River drainage.

**Figure 5.** Noelle Latiolais gives a shovel full of dirt to Dr. Linda Langley, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana.



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**

The summer fieldwork was conducted over a period of nine weeks, from May through July of 2020. Along with the usual challenges of summer fieldwork in south Louisiana, the UL Lafayette crew was tasked with developing and following standard operating procedures for archaeological survey during the COVID-19 pandemic response. These precautionary measures included social distancing, wearing personal protection equipment, remote coordination of site access, separate lodging, and travel arrangements. Survey during the summer of 2020 focused on the Sabine River drainage and resulted in the identification and recording of numerous pre-contact Native American and historic Coshatta sites. Survey was especially productive along the remnant levee of Old River and the higher elevations to the east. The selection of areas to be surveyed was once again informed by historic maps, archival documents such as surveyor's notes, and previous studies in the region. Previously recorded Native American sites 16BE10 and 16BE35 were also visited during the summer.

More recently, survey was conducted during four weeks of in December of 2020 and January of 2021 on terraces overlooking the Red River in Bossier Parish. This included areas first examined by McCrocklin (1990) in the 1980s with the Arkansas Archeological Society and Louisiana Archaeological Society. The terraces overlooking the east bank of the Red River north of Shreveport are undergoing substantial suburban development and unknown numbers of archaeological sites are endangered. The UL Lafayette crew surveyed in residential yards, wooded areas, and developed lots in Bossier Parish (Figure 7). The team received permission to survey relatively undeveloped portions of the terrace east of the Red River and identified three previously unrecorded sites. Based on historic maps and archival documents, one of these sites appears to be the lower Coshatta village that McCrocklin (1990) searched for and believed he had found. The others are historic and pre-contact Native American sites. The recording of these sites and analysis of collections is now ongoing at the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab in Lafayette.

The partnership between the Coshatta Tribe of Louisiana and UL Lafayette has supported collaborative research in the field and lab, as well as community outreach and education. Involvement by members of the Coshatta Tribe of Louisiana has been critical to the success of this research partnership, while bolstering communication, interaction, and teamwork between archaeologists and the tribe. It has also assisted with local contacts in seeking landowner permission for survey. The Coshatta Tribe of Louisiana Heritage Department organized a trip to the 2020 joint annual meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society and Mississippi Archaeological Association, including a tour of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians.



***Raynella Fontenot, Director of the Coshatta Department of Cultural, Historical and Natural Resources, her husband Elam, and a property owner, Keith Lormand, excavating a shovel test at a pre-contact Native American site in the Calcasieu River drainage.***



***Nicholas Fisher excavating a shovel test at a historic Coshatta site on the terrace east of the Red River***

During the bus ride the project director and Coushatta student assistant gave presentations on the project to tribal members and the Elders, who were in turn invited to share their childhood experiences, language, culinary insight, and history. It was an opportunity not only for the Coushatta to visit an archaeological site and attend an archaeological conference, but for increased interaction between archaeologists and the tribe. The partnership has also provided such mutually beneficial interaction during the fieldwork and in the lab.

The partnership between the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana and Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab at UL Lafayette is already making substantial contributions to our understanding of Coushatta migration and settlement in Louisiana. In the process, it will inform a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of Louisiana history. It would not be possible, of course, without

the support of the Coushatta Tribal Council, the Coushatta community, and the hard work and contributions of the UL Lafayette students who have assisted in the fieldwork and lab: Noelle Latiolais, Tyler Langley (Coushatta), Garrett Crunkleton, Nicholas Fisher (Coushatta), and Rebecca Plants. The landowners have generously given permission for the crew to do fieldwork. Many local residents have kindly shared their knowledge of where artifacts and sites have been found. The research continues to advance, despite the restrictions and unusual circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lab work and site recording will be conducted during the spring of 2021 with all participants looking forward to an exciting and productive culmination of this study. An archaeology field school through ULL is planned for the summer of 2021.



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## Salvage of Treefalls at Port Hudson

By Chip McGimsey, LA State Archaeologist

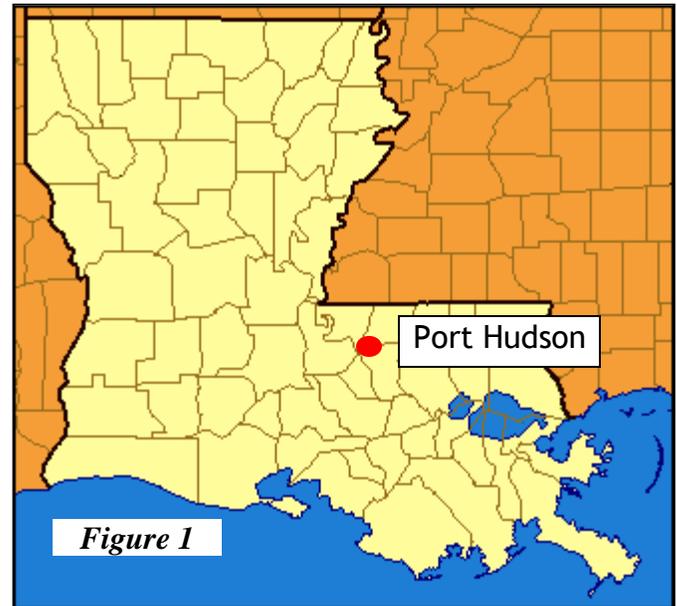
On October 10, 2020, Hurricane Delta made landfall in western Louisiana. Hurricane force winds were noted as far east as the Mississippi River. At the Port Hudson State Historic Site and battlefield (16EF7 / 16EBR42) (Figure 1) (see also LAS Bulletin #31 for 2004) numerous trees snapped and/or were toppled. Most of those occurred in parts of the park that are not immediately adjacent to public visitation (trails, exhibits, facilities). Two treefalls did occur in very accessible areas (Figure 2).

Treefall A stood on the interior of Confederate Fort Desperate and fell onto part of the boardwalk that allows visitors to walk over the fortification. Treefall B stood only 4-5 m off of the main trail into the battlefield in an area where previous investigations had demonstrated artifacts were present (McGimsey 2020). Due to the public visibility and accessibility of these two treefalls, it was determined that the disturbed dirt from both should be screened to recover any artifacts that may be present.

The investigation of Treefall A was undertaken on 6 November 2020 by Chip McGimsey, Emily Dale, and Abby Bleichner from the Louisiana Division of Archaeology, Site Manager Daniel Goyer and Interpretative Ranger Marvin Steinbeck from Port Hudson State Historic Site, and volunteers Calvin Wiggs and Benny Tilbury. Treefall B was investigated on 8 January 2021 by Chip McGimsey and volunteers Dennis Jones, Jacob Mendoza, Sally McMillan, and Conan and Valerie Mills.

Treefall A is situated on the interior of Fort Desperate, a Confederate fortification that was the scene of a major battle during the Civil War siege. The fort is a generally rectangular, three-sided earthwork that is open on its southwestern side. The fort blocked access along a ridge crest with steep, dissected ravines guarding both flanks. Today much of the earthwork remains intact and is a significant part of the battlefield tour. The Park has built a boardwalk that enables the visitor to walk over above the fortification, along with a small exhibit center.

Treefall A stands about 10 m due south of the exhibit center and less than 5 m from the southern end of the fortification. A Park walking trail runs along the southern side of the tree. The tree is a large oak with a diameter at breast height of 1 m or more. When it fell, the tree just missed the exhibit center but impacted several sections of the aerial boardwalk. At the ground, it disturbed an area nearly 7.5 m wide and 3.5 m across. Due to a lack of a central tap root, the hole created was relatively shallow and ranged in depth from 5 to 25 cm.

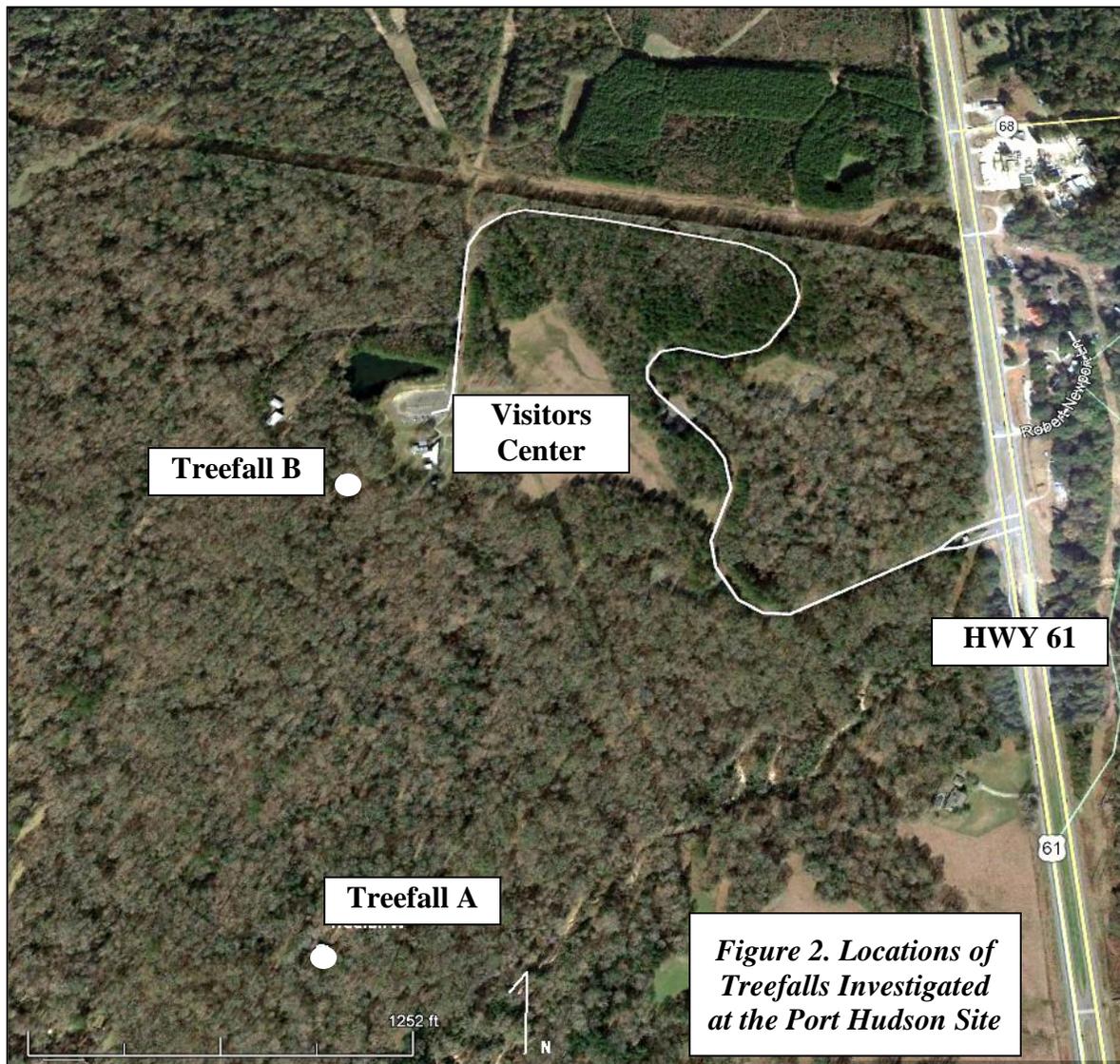


*Figure 1*

The project removed the majority of the dirt from the rootball and screened it through ¼ inch mesh. In addition, all of the disturbed dirt in and around the rootball hole was also excavated and screened. Calvin Wiggs and Benny Tilbury ran metal detectors over the upturned root mass as well as the disturbed earth to ensure that no metal artifacts were overlooked in the excavation (Figure 3). Given the nature of the disturbance, no effort was made to piece-plot or point provenience the recovered artifacts.

Only a small number of artifacts were collected. The low frequency is surprising given the location of the treefall within an area that saw significant combat during the battle. Although metal detectors have undoubtedly hit this area very hard, especially in the years before it became a state park, it was anticipated that amongst all the tree roots, numerous artifacts would still be present. The results indicate this area has been pretty thoroughly examined prior to this project. Only six munitions were found – two lead balls, two buckshot (from buck and ball cartridges), and one 3-ring Minie ball (Figure 4).

The most interesting artifact is a portion of a Minie ball that has been shaped. It appears to be a 2 or 3-ring Minie that was completely flattened and then cut off just above the upper ring. It forms a trapezoid-shaped rectangle that is 2-4 mm in thickness. It is unclear if this piece is a manufacturing discard or if it was the intended product. If the latter, the purpose and function of the piece are unknown. In addition, a few ceramic, glass, and rusted iron artifacts were found but it is not clear if these are contemporary with the fort or more modern intrusions. It was surprising to also recover four American Indian artifacts. They include three Baytown Plain body sherds, and the distal portion of a biface made on gravel chert.



*Figure 2. Locations of Treefalls Investigated at the Port Hudson Site*



*Figure 3. Benny Tilbury (left) and Calvin Wiggs (right) metal detecting Treefall A.*

Treefall B stands on the crest of an upland ridge overlooking a drainage to the east. Previous investigations of a proposed trail route immediately to the east and northeast had identified a number of munitions, suggesting that they would likely be present in the treefall. The tree disturbed an area about 6 m wide and 3 m across. Like Treefall A, the disturbance was relatively shallow. The investigation removed all the A and A/B horizon sediment from the root ball and in the disturbed earth in the hole (Figure 5). Much to our surprise, we did not find anything, not even a piece of modern trash.

The investigation of these two treefalls did not yield much archaeological information. The primary goal was to minimize opportunities for opportunistic collecting, and to enable Park staff to deal with the respective trees without having to worry about removing artifacts from their original context. The investigation did identify the first evidence of an American Indian component of the battlefield area.

**Figure 4. Civil War munitions from Treefall A at Fort Desperate, Port Hudson.**  
**A – round shot, B – fired Minie ball, C – buckshot, D – cut Minie ball**



**Figure 5. Excavation of Treefall B. Left to right – Jacob Mendoza, Valerie Mills, and Conan Mills .**

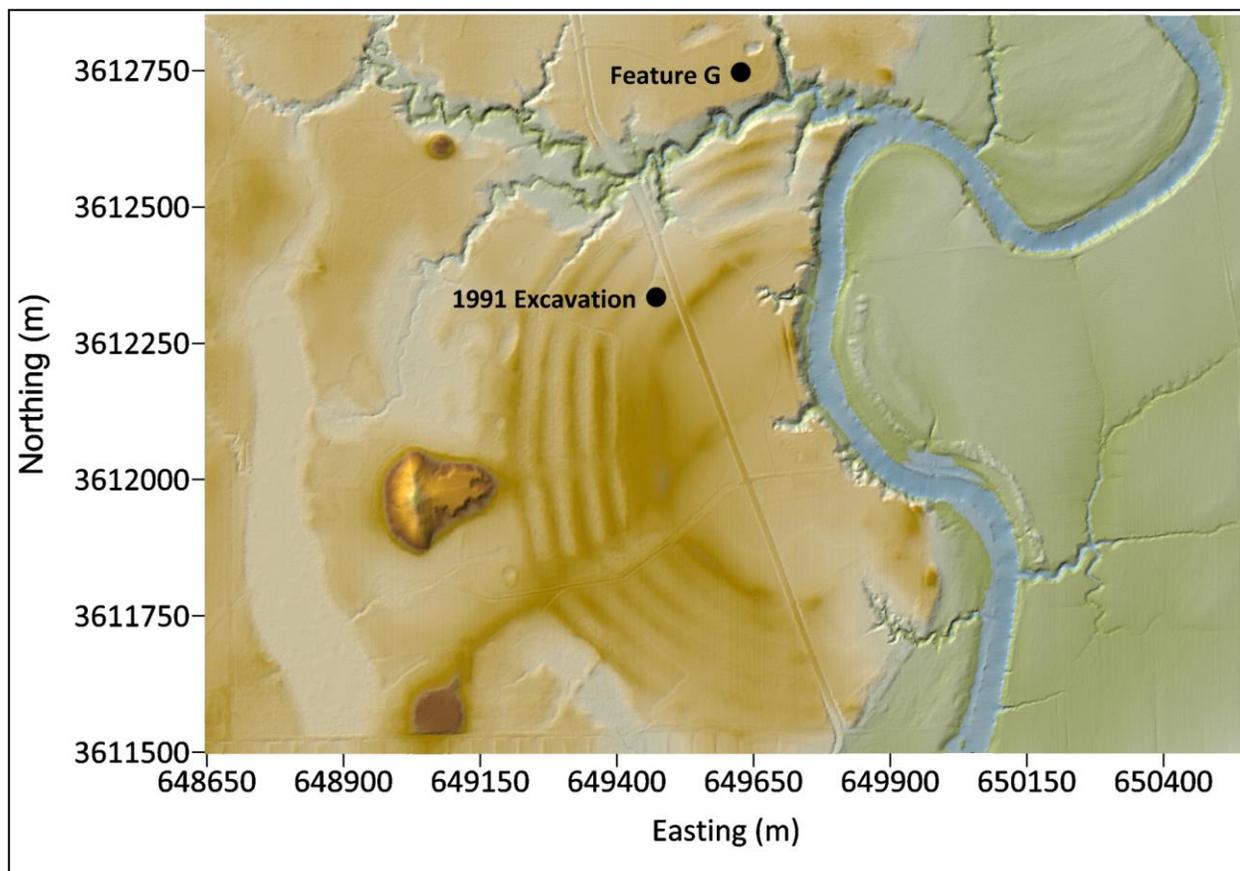
## Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program Update

By Marsha Holley and Diana Greenlee

Over the past year, students from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), the University of Louisiana Lafayette (ULL), and the University of Memphis (UM) collaborated on a curation rehabilitation project. This project, funded by the Marshall Fellowship Fund, the NBK Foundation, and the Advocates for Poverty Point, is analyzing and curating to standard the artifacts and associated records from an excavation conducted in 1991 by Drs. Glen Greene and Roger Nance. The excavation, which involved field schools from Northeast Louisiana University (now the University of Louisiana Monroe) and UAB, was in Ridge 2 of the Northwest sector at the Poverty Point site (Figure 1).

The purpose of that excavation was to investigate deposits thought to be structure floors. The start of the project was initially delayed due to Covid restrictions, but Madeline Hammer and Hunter Metzel (both of ULL) were able to work remotely, transcribing student and instructor field books. The transcribed field notes were then reorganized to provide a better format for analysis. Implementing safe practices, interns Marsha Holley (UAB) and Simon Sherman (UM) worked over the summer, with assistance from Hammer and Metzel, to rehabilitate the artifact collection (Figure 2).

About 37,850 artifacts, including some noncultural concretions, were catalogued and re-housed following the curation standards for the Louisiana Division of Archaeology. A sediment sample from previously unprocessed midden was provided to Sarah Gilleland (Binghamton University) for eDNA analysis to identify plants and animals whose remains may not have been preserved. The remaining midden was then subject to flotation and the remains are being sorted prior to analysis. Datum coordinates, previously translated into UTM's by surveyor Rodney Ray, allowed the units to be relocated and a solid soil core was recently retrieved by Thurman Allen and Rachel Stout-Evans from one of the balks between units (Figure 3).



*Figure 1. Poverty Point (16WC5), with locations mentioned in the text.*



*Figure 2. Students apply labels to bags of artifacts from the 1991 legacy curation project. Left to right: Hunter Metzel, Madeline Hammer, and Marsha Holley.*



*Figure 3. Looking at a soil core extracted from one of the balks left during the 1991 excavation. Left to right: Madeline Hammer, Hunter Metzel, and Diana Greenlee.*

The community outreach component of this project is postponed until CDC guidelines allow close contact. In an effort to test some of the planned outreach activities, young family members participated in a fun day of learning about curation and the skills used by archaeologists in trying to understand how an archaeological site could have been utilized by peoples from the past. The children created their own PPOs out of modeling clay (Figure 4), tried their hands at water screening, and sketched their ideas of how the ridges might have looked with houses placed on top. We look forward to engaging with the community in the future as we uncover more exciting details about this excavation.



*Figure 4. PPOs made of modeling clay during a trial run of the children's outreach program.*

By Diana Greenlee

Last summer, a pit was exposed in a trench during the construction of a new septic system for the dormitory and service buildings on the north end of the park. When construction was complete, the pit (Feature G) (see Figure 1) was relocated and a 1 x 1 m excavation unit was placed there (Figure 5). Marsha Holley (UAB) assisted with the excavation. The feature was visible below the plow zone at about 23 cm BS and continued to 70 cm BS; it was about 70 cm N-S by an estimated 50 cm E-W (part had been lost in the trench). Feature G was unusual for excavated features at Poverty Point because of the density of macrobotanical remains, the many large pottery sherds (Figure 6), and a relative paucity of debitage. Several sherds were decorated and have been tentatively identified as Mazique Incised *var. Preston* (Ryan 2004; Wells 2005). A few rims were recovered, as were several grog-tempered plain sherds that are thought to be consistent with Baytown Plain *var. Little Tiger*. Also notable was the presence of a thick deposit of carbonized material on the exterior surface of some sherds. No diagnostic Poverty Point or Post Contact artifacts were recovered in the excavated feature. Thus, based on the artifact content, it appeared to be a late Coles Creek or early Plaquemine feature (Figure 7).

Macrobotanical remains from three levels within Feature G were analyzed by Karen Leone. She identified hickory, oak, and pine wood charcoal; nearly equal amounts of hickory and acorn remains; corn kernels; and maygrass, amaranth, tobacco, and persimmon seeds. The contents of this feature are consistent with observations about subsistence during the Coles Creek period (Fritz and Kidder 1993).

A persimmon seed and a sample of carbonized residue from one of the pottery sherds from Feature G were submitted to Beta Analytic, Inc. Comparison of the calibrated date from the exterior carbonized crust of the sherd with the calibrated date from the persimmon seed shows overlap during the highest probability spans (Table 1; Figure 8). The sherd crust appears to be slightly older, however they are the same statistically ( $t = 2$ ;  $X^2_{.05, 1} = 3.84$ ). Both dates fall within the Mississippi period (AD 1200-1700). Feature G may be the first Plaquemine deposit to be excavated within the site, although outside the monumental core, indicating a relatively late use of the Poverty Point locale.

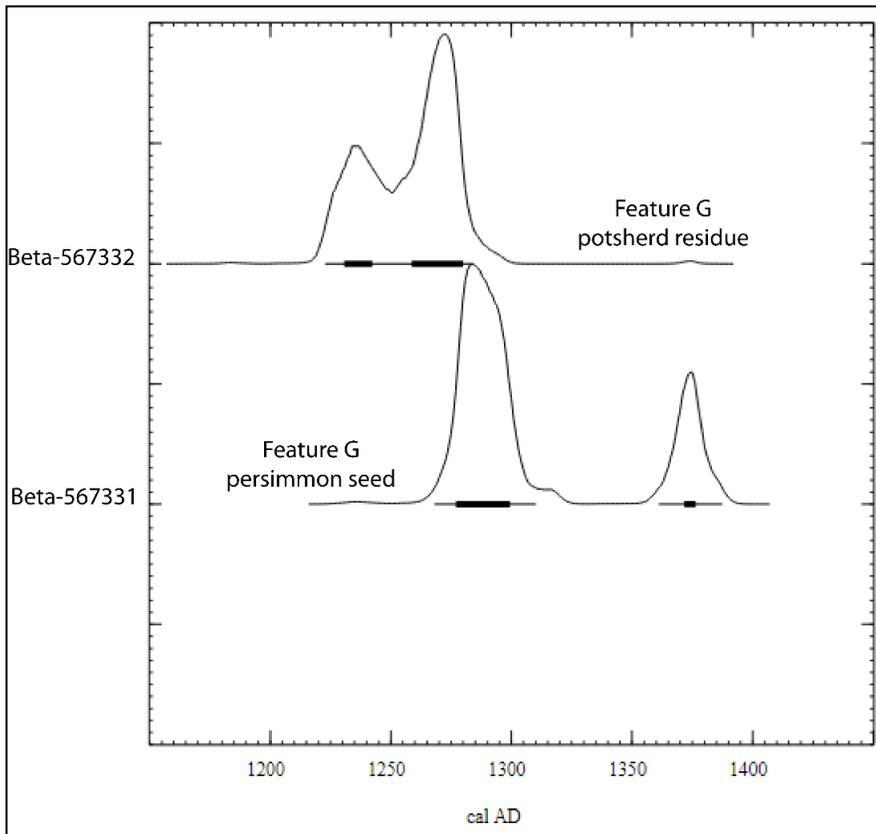
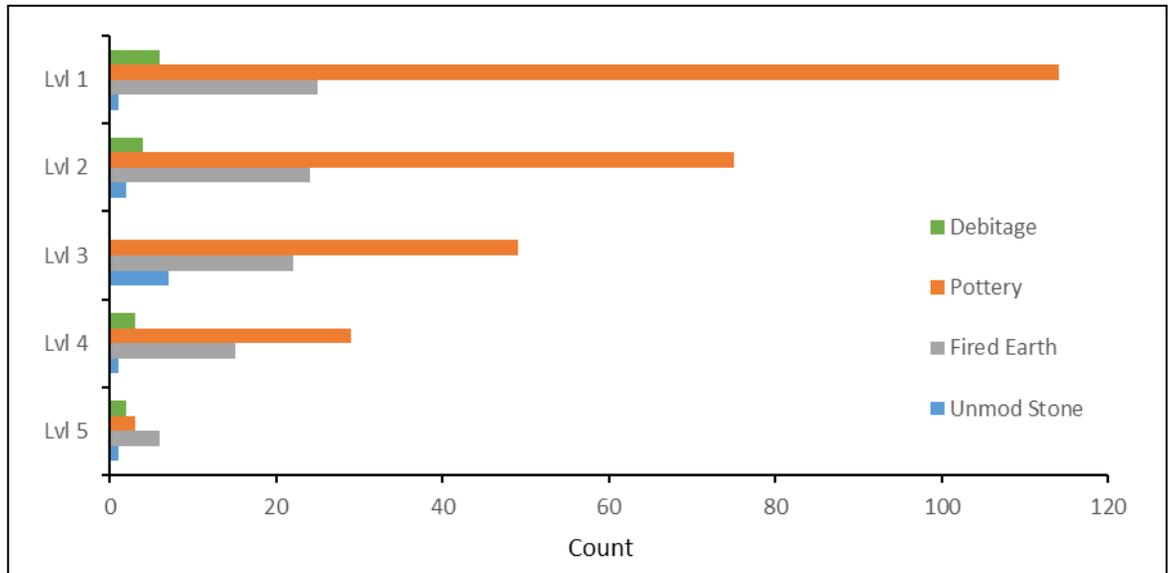


**Figure 5. Feature G at base. The filled trench sediments are visible on the left. Auger holes used to assist in placing the unit are visible in the north and south walls.**



**Figure 6. Select Pottery sherds from Feature G.**

**Figure 7.**  
*Distribution of artifact types ( $\geq 1/8''$ ) within Feature G.*



**Figure 8.** *Probability distributions for radiocarbon dates from Feature G.*

**Table 1.** *Radiocarbon determinations, calibrated 2 $\sigma$  age ranges, and relative area under the probability curve from Feature G. Ages calibrated using Calib Rev. 8.2 (Reimer et al. 2020; Stuiver and Reimer 1993).*

Lab #	Provenience	<sup>14</sup> C Age (Yrs BP)	$\delta^{13}C$ (‰)	Cal yrs AD	Area
Beta-567331	16WC5/BP-86, Fea G, Lvl 3 Persimmon ( <i>Diospyros virginiana</i> ) seed	700 ± 30	-24.5	1268-1310	0.758
				1361-1387	0.242
Beta-567332	16WC5/BP-71, Fea G Potsherd residue	760 ± 30	-26.6	1223-1284	1.000

## **The LSU Anthropology Collection has moved to Foster Hall**

*By Rebecca Saunders, Anthropology Curator, LSU Museum of Natural Science*

The Anthropology Division of the LSU Museum of Natural Science has new digs! Planned for decades, we have finally moved from the basement of the Gym-Armory building (our main collections were in the Armory part), to a portion of the east wing of the first floor in Foster Hall. This area was previously occupied by Art and the Art Gallery. The back gallery is perfect for our ethnographic collection; archaeological materials and our lab are in the nicely refurbished front gallery and art studios.

We completed a small part of this move last December, although that was the predominantly newer (and relatively unproblematic) archaeological collections stored in rooms acquired after 1994. Our core collection goes back to the early 1900s, although the bulk of it was generated by excavations done in the 1930s and 40s under the auspices of the Works Project Administration (WPA) and related programs. Much of that material was still in its original boxes. Thus, we (Beverly Nuschler, Irene Martí Gil, Ken Tremblay, and I, along with special appearances by Dr. David Chicoine and Eli Cruzado Carranza), did an enormous amount of re-boxing and re-taping of box bottoms; we removed and boxed all of the zooarchaeological collection specimens from their cabinets; we removed hundreds of pottery and other specimen type drawers from their cabinets, stabilized the contents, and boxed those.

Our extensive photographic collections include slides stored in racks within cabinets. Slides were loose in the racks of the older cabinets, so we removed, bagged by rack row, and boxed them, too. Slide racks from newer cabinets were secured between flattened boxes. To lighten the load, I discarded all Cultural Resource Management reports and other items in our Anthropology library that are available online, and still ended up with over 60 boxes of books.

While most of the aforementioned boxes, along with office equipment and furniture, were ably moved by Facility Services, we packed and moved all ethnographic items, fragile archaeological items, and laboratory equipment like microscopes in the Department of Geography and Anthropology passenger van (sans seats). Use of the van is greatly appreciated.

We began preparation of the main collection in March, anticipating a move in early May. A variety of factors, including a global pandemic, forced rescheduling. We ended up being ‘essential personnel’ and worked on campus throughout the summer. Most of the move was completed by the end of August; and the last stick of furniture was moved into Foster Hall on September 22.

We’ve still got a lot of organizing to do, but we are happy to be in our new home!



*View of the Entrance to Foster Hall on the main campus of LSU where the offices, exhibits, and collections of the Museum of Natural Science are located.*



*Photos of the New Storage and Lab Space for the Anthropology and Ethnography Collections at the LSU Museum of Natural Science in Foster Hall.*

*A-Zooarchaeological collection, one of ten banks of drawers.*

*B-Slide racks, old and new*

*C-Lab (in progress). In the foreground are the flattened boxes holding the racks of slides from the modern slide cabinet*

*D-Portion of one of three curation areas with excellent new ladder.*

## LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE MEDIA

### After decades of mystery and research, original settlers homestead may be found

*Broussard, Acadians settled in Teche Area, research suggests*

BY Aaron Gonsoulin, THE DAILY IBERIAN  
Nov 1, 2020

The original homestead where explorer Joseph Broussard led a group of Acadians to in South Louisiana in 1765 has been a place of mystery for many decades.

Now, though, researchers may have found the answer to where exactly those settlers ended up. “We have enough evidence that we think we may have made a discovery based on the material from the sites we looked at to have one of the original homesteads,” said Mark Rees, a professor of anthropology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. “No one knows much about it.”

The New Acadia Project, which has been researching the original group of settlers, combines archaeological survey and historical research with public outreach and community engagement in a collaborative effort to discover and investigate the lost colony of the first Acadian settlers, Rees said.

For Rees and many others working on the project, they believe Broussard and the Acadians settled on the Teche Ridge, between St. Martinville and New Iberia, in the vicinity of the present-day village of Loreauville because they needed a new place to re-establish their community after they were exiled from Nova Scotia.

According to the Louisiana Public Archaeology Lab, the colonial government of Louisiana provisioned Broussard and the reported 193 Acadians to settle along the Bayou Teche in the Attakapas District.

Within months of their arrival, they were afflicted with a virulent epidemic, possibly yellow fever, and as many as 34 died between the summer and winter of 1765.

Regina Lowe, who studied anthropology at UL Lafayette, decided to join the project because the field work will help her and her colleagues answer questions they’ve been asking since the start of the project. “We found a lot of building materials, brick, nails, metal and we also found a lot of ceramic materials which we are particularly interested in,” Lowe said.

The ceramics are a good indicator of when and where in time they were produced, according to Lowe. “Because we are looking for the first settlements in 1765, the ceramics can give us concrete evidence of potential sites,” Lowe said.

The ceramic findings can be a key to unlocking where Broussard and the Acadians lived in the New Iberia area.



***The banks of the Teche River were once a possible destination for Joseph Broussard and the Acadians. Decades later, their settlement has been a mystery but new clues may lead to answer many have tried to find.***

“It would be significant in terms of understanding what they were eating the first few months when they first arrived,” Rees said. “If we uncovered animal remains or plant remains in the future, we would know what they ate.”

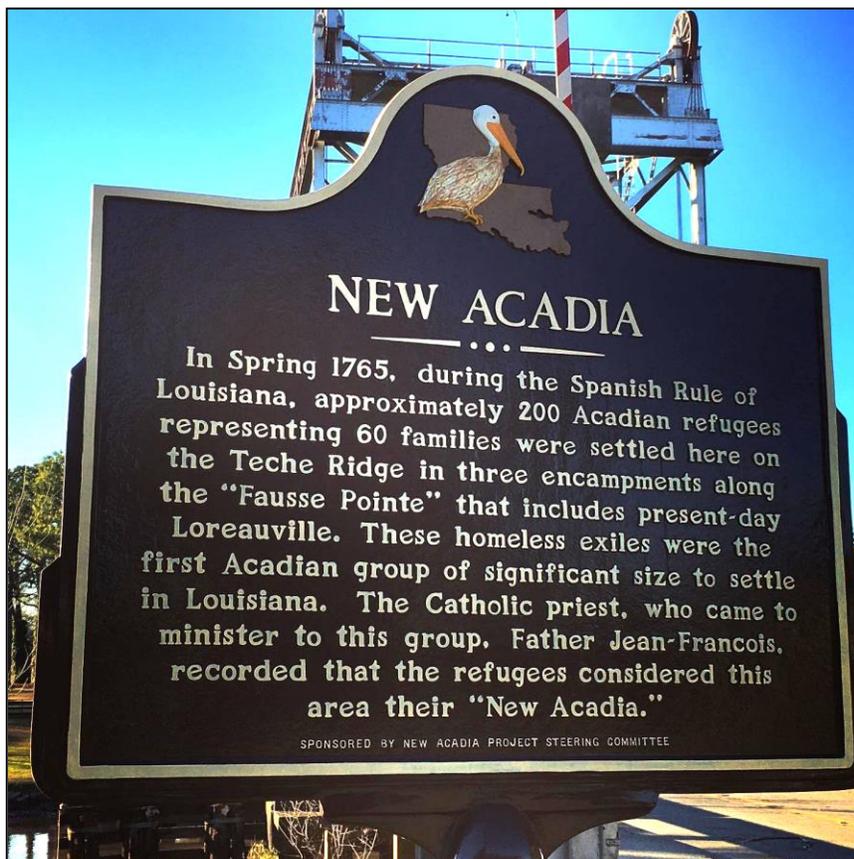
Rees noted that if the group is able to uncover post remains, they would know what kind of buildings the early Acadians were using. And with that evidence, they would be able to determine what an Acadian homestead looked like with their material culture. “So it’s just not the information value because of historical significance and the ties to the culture,” Rees said about the NAP project, which started in May of 2013.

While giving a talk at Vermilionville, Rees said the locals aren’t really sure where Broussard’s group settled — the first group of Acadians settled in south central Louisiana in 1765.

Rees said many people would like to know where their people settled, so there’s a connection to the cultural tradition. “It’s kind of unbelievable for a region that values its traditions on the Acadians because the locals here aren’t really sure where they settled,” Rees said. “Myth has replaced history.”



*Ceramics found by members of the New Acadia Project. Ceramics are a good indicator of when and where in time they were produced.*



*Recently installed Louisiana State Historic Marker placed in Loreauville to mark the site of the first Acadian settlements during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. For more information on the New Acadia Project, email Mark Rees at: [rees@louisiana.edu](mailto:rees@louisiana.edu).*

*To support this public archaeology project, a tax-deductible donation can be made care of the “New Acadia Project” to The Acadian Heritage and Cultural Foundation (P.O. Box 53597, Lafayette, Louisiana, 70505; [acadianmuseum.com/howtohelp](http://acadianmuseum.com/howtohelp), or the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Foundation (705 East St. Mary Blvd, Lafayette, LA 70504; [give.louisiana.edu](http://give.louisiana.edu)), or contact the Steering Committee Chairperson, Alan Broussard, at 337-349 9455.*

The logo for Popular Archaeology features a stylized 'A' composed of black and red geometric shapes. To the right of the logo, the word 'popular' is written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font, and 'Archaeology' is written in a larger, white, serif font, both set against a dark red background.

# popular Archaeology

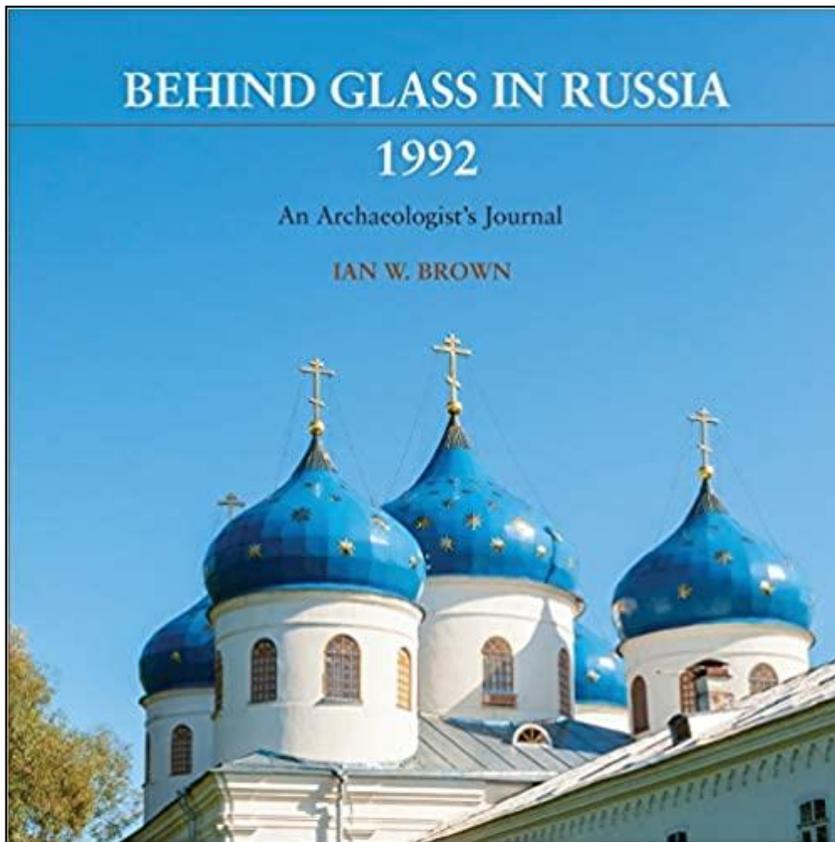


The Winter 2021 issue of Popular Archaeology contains an article by Shannon Farlow entitled “Heritage at Risk” that highlights the impact of climate change and sea level rises on archaeological sites in the coastal areas of three states: Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana. The report on Louisiana is an interview with Tad Britt of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) and Mark Rees of ULL and the Public Archaeology Lab (PAL). The entire article can be accessed at:

<https://popular-archaeology.com/article/heritage-at-risk/>



## BOOKS OF INTEREST FOR LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGY



In September of 1992, less than a year after the collapse of the Soviet Union, an archaeological delegation sponsored by People to People International ventured into Russia. The author maintained a detail journal of their activities as they explored regions stretching from St. Petersburg to Novgorod and into the steppes and the Northern Caucasus Mountains. This was an important time of transition for Russia, when things were not quite what they were like under the previous Soviet regime and certainly not at all like what exists two decades into the new millennium.

Author Ian W. Brown is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alabama and Emeritus Curator of Gulf Coast Archaeology at the Alabama Museum of Natural History. He has served as President of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference and President of the Association for Gravestone Studies and has written numerous books on his research and travel in the United States, England, China, and how Russia.

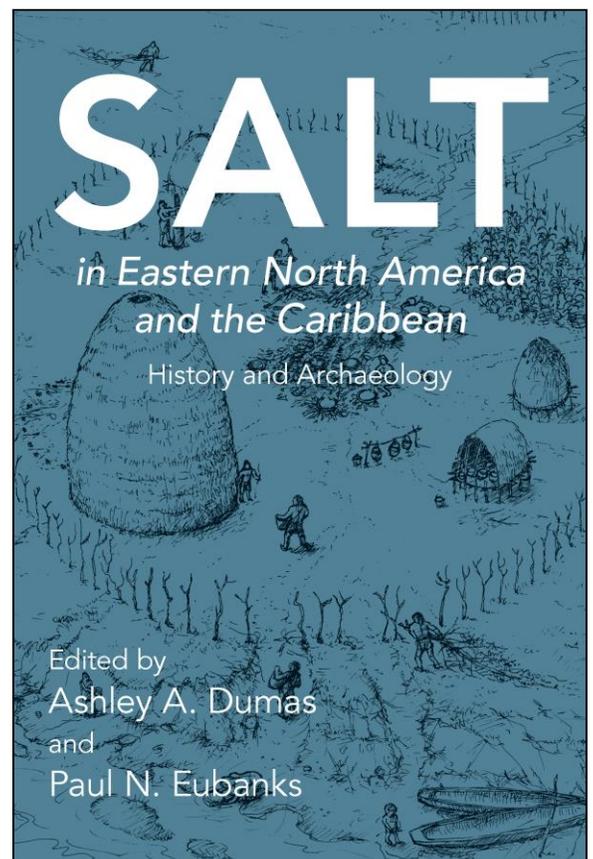
### Case studies examining the archaeological record of an overlooked mineral

Salt, once a highly prized trade commodity essential for human survival, is often overlooked in research because it is invisible in the archaeological record. *Salt in Eastern North America and the Caribbean: History and Archaeology* brings salt back into archaeology, showing that it was valued as a dietary additive, had curative powers, and was a substance of political power and religious significance for Native Americans. Major salines were embedded in collective memories and oral traditions for thousands of years as places where physical and spiritual needs could be met. Ethnohistorical documents for many Indian cultures describe the uses of and taboos and other beliefs about salt.

The volume is organized into two parts: *Salt Histories* and *Salt in Society*. Case studies from prehistory to post-Contact and from New York to Jamaica address what techniques were used to make salt, who was responsible for producing it, how it was used, the impact it had on settlement patterns and sociopolitical complexity, and how economies of salt changed after European contact. Noted salt archaeologist Heather McKillop provides commentary to conclude the volume.

Ashley A. Dumas is associate professor of anthropology and director of the Fort Tombeche archaeological site, University of West Alabama.

Paul N. Eubanks is assistant professor of anthropology at Middle Tennessee State University



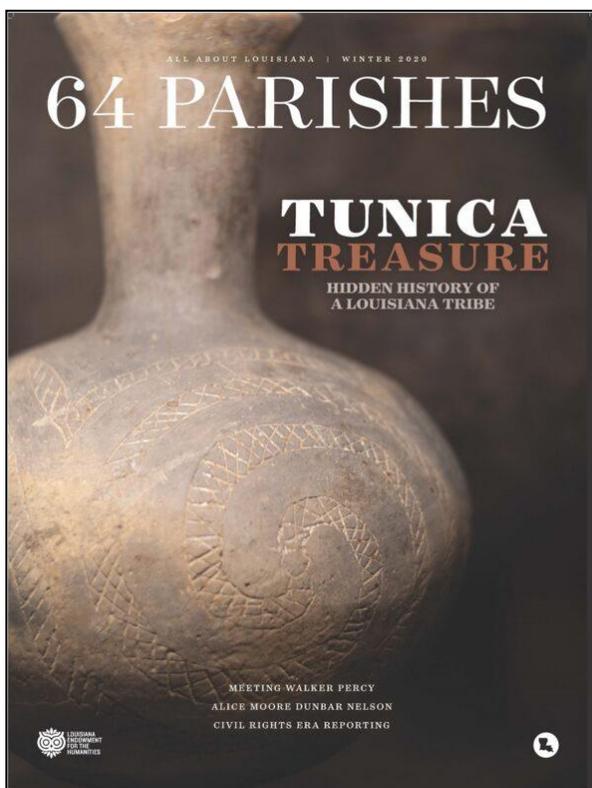
## MEETINGS, FIELDWORK, EXHIBITS, WEBSITES, ETC.

The Capitol Park Museum in Baton Rouge is featuring an art exhibit focused on American Indian mound sites. The exhibit presents 26 illustrations of 10 different sites by artists Dr. Jon Gibson, Martin Pate, Herb Roe, and Steven Patricia. The illustrations include pen and ink, watercolor, oil on canvas, and digitally drawn examples of artwork. The sites span the Middle Archaic period through Coles Creek and Caddo. In most instances, several artists have illustrated the same site, offering different perspectives and views of each site.

The Capitol Park Museum is located at 660 N. Fourth Street in downtown Baton Rouge. It is open Tuesday through Saturday between 9 am and 4 pm. The exhibit is located on the second floor in the far southwest corner of the main exhibit space. The exhibit will be available to view for the next two years.



*Birdseye view of the Marksville Site by Martin Pate*



The Winter 2020 issue of *64 Parishes*, the magazine publication of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities contains an article by **Jeffrey P. Brain, PhD**, emeritus Curator of Southeastern United States Archaeology at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University. He writes for lay people about the so-called Tunica Treasure and its implications for the Tunica people and archaeology.

Go to the magazines website at [64parishes.org](http://64parishes.org) to view the current issue.

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1801 Ormandy Dr. Baton Rouge, LA 70808

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Digital images are encouraged. Contact editor with any questions.

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