

MAY - 2026

PRESERVE ♦ EDUCATE ♦ RESEARCH ♦ INSPIRE

Dear Member:

Thank you for your support during the April 15-16, 2026, Giving Challenge. We raised over \$5,000!!!!

We are proud to announce the Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Grant winners for 2026 – Layla Avarado of USF and Luke Berna of UCF. Please see page 5 for more information about their studies.

Don't forget the FAS Convention on May 8-10 in Punta Gorda. It is open to the public.

Darwin "Smitty" Smith, President
hmsbeagle22@gmail.com

Historical Trivia
Name his Archaeologist.



Answer on page 7.

May 20th - at 5:45 PM at the Selby Library in downtown Sarasota



“Egmont Key: Digital Heritage & Engagement at the Disappearing Island”

Dr. Laura Harrison
President
ARCHEO Consulting

Egmont Key is a tiny island with a rich history, located where the Gulf of Mexico meets Tampa Bay. This presentation highlights recent research at Egmont Key that explores hidden and lesser-known stories from the past - including the island's role as a haven for rum runners during Prohibition, the story of Julius the Baker at Fort Dade, and the story of a lighthouse keeper who rode out a hurricane in a boat tied to a palm tree. Along the way, we will see how shifting sands and rising tides threaten to wash away this history, and view digital projections about the areas of the island that are most at risk. The presentation closes with an overview of digital



Photos: Laura Harrison



approaches that have been used to document the island and share its many stories, and a reflection on the fragility of coastal cultural heritage.

Dr. Laura Harrison is the president of ARCHEO Consulting, based in Tampa, and advocates for community-centered and digital approaches in archaeology and museums. She holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in anthropology from the University at Buffalo, and a B.A. from

Ithaca College. In her research, she uses advanced instruments like lidar and drones to address real-world problems across the sciences and humanities, such as documenting and preserving at-risk sites, assessing climate impacts, and engaging the public with cultural heritage. A unifying theme in her work is using advanced digital technologies in ways that benefit society.



Dear Darwin, we have great news to share. With your support, Time Sifters raised \$2925 in 24 hours! We expect most of that to qualify for The Patterson Foundation match, which will bring our total to over \$5000.

We couldn't have done it without your generous donation. Thank you for believing in our mission and joining us to strengthen the organization for the future.

Thank you from Smitty, Sherry, and the entire board.

In The News

Roman Military Camp at 7,000 feet in the Alps.

By Smitty, Time Sifters Board Member. **Sources:** Popular Mechanics, Morning Overview, and The Daily Mail.

A team from the *University of Basel* started excavating the landscape in the Crap Ses area between Cunter and Tiefencastel in 2021, in collaboration with the *Graubünden Archaeological Service*. This is the site of the battlefield where the 3rd, 10th and 12th Roman legions fought the Suanetes tribe on the hilltop. It is located at 4,050 feet in the Oberhalbstein Alps, in eastern Switzerland.

In the fall of 2023, a volunteer working on the project discovered some previously unknown ruins located about 3,000 feet above the battlefield. Using a high-resolution digital terrain model and LiDAR data, the team investigated the hilltop site. The LiDAR revealed the profile of an artificial fortification. The site is at a shocking 7,200 feet!

Reports about the find began to emerge around 2024, leading to formal announcements of the Swiss Alps discovery a year later. The data revealed the ruins were a Roman Military Camp. The camp was fortified by three ditches and a defensive wall. The site, on top of the mountain, is strategically positioned to have tactical views of the surrounding mountain passes of four valleys: Landwassertal, Albulatal, Domleschg, and Surses.

Over the last year, the team has uncovered the layout of the large camp including barracks, towers and foundations of other buildings. Also found was a number of artifacts including equipment such as boot nails, buckles, and arrow heads. The finding of sling shots that carried the stamp of the Imperial Roman army's 3rd legion, which was involved in the battle, proved that the camp was in use at the time of battle.



Photos: Andrea Badrutt/Canton of Graubunden, militaryinsigna.blog



Future research and excavations are planned, focusing on the site's connection to the historic battlefield. Conservation of this alpine discovery presents challenges, but also the potential to yield more artifacts from the Roman era, further enriching our understanding of Roman military history.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites

#198 - Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site (USA)

By Smitty, Time Sifters Board Member. **Sources:** UNESCO, National Park Service & Wikipedia.



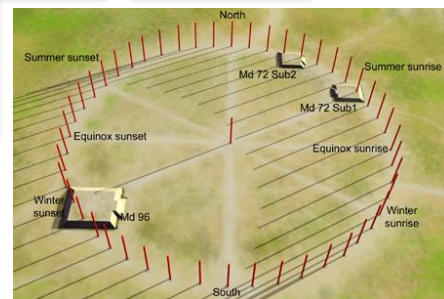
198 Cahokia Mounds, located in Collinsville, Illinois some eight miles north-east of St. Louis, Missouri, is the largest pre-Columbian settlement north of Mexico. It was occupied primarily during the Mississippian period (800–1400 CE), when it covered nearly 3,954 acres and included some 120 mounds. It is the pre-eminent example of a cultural, religious, and economic center of the Mississippian culture, which extended throughout the Mississippi Valley and the south-eastern United States.

It is a striking example of a complex chiefdom society, with many satellite mound centers and numerous outlying hamlets and villages. Primary features at the site include **Monks Mound**, the largest prehistoric earthwork in the Americas, covering over 12.5 acres and standing 98.5 feet high, which was constructed in 14 stages. This agricultural society may have had a population of 10,000–20,000 at its peak

between 1050 and 1150, which was equivalent to the population of many European cities at that time. If surrounding sites in East St. Louis, St. Louis and others are included, "**Greater Cahokia**" may have had a population of 40–50,000.

Cahokia Mounds includes 51 platform, ridgetop, and conical mounds; residential, public, and specialized activity areas; and a section of reconstructed palisade, all of which together defined the limits and internal symmetry of the settlement. Dominating the community was Monks Mound. The mounds served variously as construction foundations for public buildings and as funerary tumuli. There was also an astronomical observatory known as **Woodhenge**, consisting of a circle of wooden posts.

Cahokia became the most important center for the Mississippian culture. This culture was expressed in settlements that ranged along major waterways across what is



Photos: Wikipedia, UNESCO World Heritage, drloihjournal.blogspot.com & World Atlas.

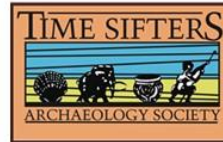
now the Midwest, Eastern, and Southeastern United States. Cahokia was located in a strategic position near the confluence of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois Rivers. It maintained trade links with communities as far away as the Great Lakes to the north and the Gulf Coast to the south, trading in such exotic items as copper, Mill Creek chert, shark teeth, and lightning whelk shells.

It was designated **UNESCO World Heritage Site #198** in 1982.



Time Sifters Presents

Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Research Grant



The Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Grant is made possible thanks to the support of CRM industry leader **Archaeological Consultants Inc, (ACI)**, as well as many individual donors. The grant of up to \$2000 is open to students currently enrolled at a Florida university or college who have begun their junior year of undergraduate studies at the time of application, MA students, and Ph.D. students who are pursuing a major in anthropology with a focus on archaeology.

The **2026 grant cycle** is specifically funding participation in field schools that include training in excavation techniques or targeted research in archives that may yield new information about the history of the European presence in Florida. This year they will go to **Layla Alvarado, USF**, who will be attending Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) CRM Professional Training Program at Old Cahawba Archaeological Park in Alabama, and **Luke Berna, UCF**, who will be attending University of North Florida's Archaeological Field School.

We continue to support the important work being done in the USF field schools in the Mediterranean; but this year we have had the opportunity to give both grants closer to home. We wish all the students the best luck for their summer projects and future studies.

The 2026 Winners



Layla Alvarado
M.A. Student,
University of South Florida

I will be at the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) CRM Professional Training Program at Old Cahawba Archaeological Park

in Alabama, directed by William Henry. The program is RPA certified. We will be working with contexts from the Woodland to mid-20th century, but the main cultural and archaeological context of the excavation will focus on the mid-19th century. I will be attending from July 6th-July 31st, 2026.

A field school is incredibly important to my academic plans as I would like to pursue my Masters in Archaeology. I would like to advance the study of Florida archaeology as that is my field of interest specifically the study of prehistoric indigenous peoples of Florida. I have completed an undergraduate honors thesis on prehistoric indigenous foodways and would love to do a similar project in the future. A field school will give me the confidence and knowledge needed to conduct safe and proper fieldwork in academic and CRM settings. I hope to acquire shovel testing experience as that is an incredibly important skill to have in the field. The research being conducted at the field school will also be important as it will add to the historical record from the mid-19th century. This will make me a well-rounded archaeologist especially since Florida tends to have overlaps in context due to construction or looters.



Luke Berna
M.A. Student,
University of Central Florida

I will be attending the University of North Florida's Archaeological Field School. This field school is directed by Dr. Keith Ashley and sponsored by UNF. The projected site is in the stages

of finalization and is an Indigenous site that will have a Late Archaic Orange component and a Late Woodland component. I have been accepted to UNF and await the enrollment period beginning on April 3rd. In addition to my academic work, I am a full-time UCF employee. The UNF Field School course will last six weeks in May-June, dates that allow me to take time off and concentrate on the experience and learning opportunities in the field.

The field school at UNF is vital to the progress of my educational development and professional career within CRM. Having received my bachelor's in history, I lack hands-on archaeological field experience that will benefit my professional development. Additionally, the UNF field school will inform my thesis topic, which will focus on human-ecosystem interactions and landscape modification in Atlantic coastal Florida during the Woodland and Mississippian periods. As part of the field school, my learning outcomes will provide me with the fundamental skills needed for a successful career within CRM after my graduation. Knowledge from excavation units, archaeological features and artifact identification is also pivotal to the fieldwork required for my thesis.



Tree Rings as Poetry Reciprocity, Storytelling, and Science from Florida Trees

By Uzi Baram, Time Sifters Board Member.

Thank you Time Sifters!

The guest presenters were very pleased with the active participation in the *New College Public Archaeology Lab (NCPAL)* as well as the Zoom viewers. Participants learned the basics of dendrochronology and worked through a European Bronze Age example, went outside for creative movements among the trees and created art and poetry in the Lab, and toured the Bayfront Campus from College Hall to Caples Mansion with the history of the landscape as the focal point and identifying trees along the way

As a board member and former director of NCPAL, thank you, particularly Sherry without whom the undergraduate's dream of having a public outreach program would not have happened.

Uzi Baram

student led event! email a.bernard25@ncf.edu with questions!

Tree Rings as Poetry:

Reciprocity, Storytelling, and Science from Florida Trees

WHEN: APRIL 10, 2026
WHERE: NEW COLLEGE PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY LAB (main sessions also offered virtually)

SESSIONS:
9:30 am: WELCOME TO NCPAL!  
10:00 am - 12:30 pm: DOING DENDROCHRONOLOGY with Professor Kat Napora
2:00 pm: POETICS IN DENDROCHRONOLOGY with Rev. Houston Cypress
3:30 pm: NCF HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TOUR with Professor Uzi Baram
4:15 - 4:30 pm: CLOSING DISCUSSION

RSVP: use the QR CODE, or EMAIL: a.bernard25@ncf.edu
Registration is required!

  Funding for this program was provided through a grant from the Florida Department of Parks and the Mosaic Company. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of Florida Humanities or The Mosaic Company. 

Photos: Uzi Baram



Professor Napora

140 year old Slash Pine's stump

Rev. Houston Cypress



MAY 8-10, 2026
FAS ANNUAL MEETING
Punta Gorda on the Peace River

CONFERENCE: **Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center**

HOTEL: **Four Points by Sheraton Punta Gorda Harborside**

RECEPTION: **TT's Tiki Bar at Harborside Garden**

BANQUET: **Laisley Crab House on the Peace River**

ALL THESE VENUES ARE SHORT WALKS FROM EACH OTHER ALONG THE WATERFRONT

[MORE DETAILS ON THE FAS WEBSITE](#)

AT THE EVENT

- Friday Reception
- FAC Stewards of Heritage Award
- Papers & Posters
- Vendor Displays
- Meetings
- Awards Dinner
- Keynote Speaker
- Field Trips

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Historical Trivia: Agatha Christie.