

OCTOBER-2026

PRESERVE ♦ EDUCATE ♦ RESEARCH ♦ INSPIRE

Dear Member:

In this newsletter we have the announcement of Board member Uzi Baram's lecture *"Smoking Tobacco, Sipping Coffee, and Subjected to the Sultan: Insights from the Archaeology of the Ottoman Empire"* on October 21.

Also we have Luke Berna's, one of 2026 Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Research Grant winners report on his summer field school.

Enjoy.

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

Historical Trivia

Name this famous stadium in Rome.



Answer on page 4

October 21st - at 5:45 PM at the Selby Library in downtown Sarasota



"Smoking Tobacco, Sipping Coffee, and Subjected to the Sultan: Insights from the Archaeology of the Ottoman Empire"

Dr. Uzi Baram

Professor Emeritus, New College of Florida

From its legendary origins in 1299, the House of Osman ruled over Anatolia, southeast Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and North Africa during turbulent centuries. Archaeological research is recovering the lives of the peoples of the Ottoman Empire as global commodities, like tobacco and coffee, entered everyday life under imperial rule. The legacies of those centuries haunt the successor states of that vast region.

Dr. Uzi Baram received his BA in Anthropology from the State University of New York at Binghamton and MA and PhD in Anthropology from the University of Massachusetts at



Photos: Uzi Baram, pinterest.



Amherst; his first book focused on constructing an archaeology of the Ottoman Empire. Dr. Baram taught anthropology and archaeology for a quarter century at New College, founding its Public Archaeology Lab, where he is professor emeritus. A life-time member of Time Sifters

Archaeology Society, Professor Baram sustains an active public speaking schedule on archaeology as heritage, Israel and Jewish history, and Florida's history of freedom.

In The News

By Smitty. Sources: Heritage Daily - Mark Milligan, Ancient Origins - Gary Manners and ARKEONEWS.



High in the rugged peaks of the South Caucasus, in the country of Georgia, archaeologists have uncovered the sprawling remnants of a forgotten civilization that thrived for millennia.

After eight years of intensive fieldwork, the *Samtskhe-Javakheti Archaeological Project* – a collaboration between Georgian and Italian researchers published a study in *Antiquity*, that documents 168 ancient sites across the highlands of southern Georgia. Included are cyclopean fortresses, multi-phase settlements, and extensive necropolises. The harsh climate and difficult terrain of the Javakheti Plateau, which sits at elevations between 5,000 and 11,000 feet, has discouraged investigation. Since 2017, the Project has used satellite imagery, GPS mapping, and GIS-based analysis alongside targeted excavations to expose a vibrant civilization that occupied these highlands from the Early Bronze Age through

the medieval period. Traditionally dismissed as a marginal zone, the Javakheti Plateau is now emerging as a dynamic crossroads between the Caucasus highlands and the surrounding Eurasian steppes.

Fortifications dominate the landscape. The most striking discoveries of the project are the monumental cyclopean fortresses, constructed from massive, unworked basalt blocks without the use of mortar. These imposing structures, including the well-known Abuli and Shaori complexes, were not simply isolated defensive outposts but functioning permanent citadels. They include extensive necropolises, such as the excavated sites at Bertakana and Lake Tabatskuri. The discovery of thick layers of ash at several sites suggests that these communities experienced repeated episodes of destruction by fire.

One of the most compelling discoveries comes from Baraleti Natsargora, a mound known as the "hill of ashes." Excavations have confirmed the accuracy of this

ancient label. Beneath the surface lies multiple layers of occupation, each marked by evidence of repeated destruction by fire. These findings suggest cycles of destruction and rebuilding, hinting at a turbulent past of human conflict. Archaeologists uncovered defensive walls, domestic structures, and clay installations dating from the Early Bronze Age to the Iron Age (3500–500 BCE).

Yet the most striking artifact from the Baraleti site is not architectural, but symbolic: a finely crafted bronze solar disc. Adorned with concentric patterns, angular motifs, and carefully spaced perforations, the object reflects a sophisticated tradition of metalworking tied to solar imagery and ritual practice.

Further east, the **Meghreki Fortress** presents another site that reveals a remarkably deep and continuous occupation during the same period. Excavations have uncovered complex architectural remains, including perimeter walls, storage facilities, and domestic compounds. But it is the discovery of decorated clay plaques that has captured the attention of researchers. These plaques, found embedded in clay installations such as ovens or raised platforms, feature geometric designs painted in red, white, and dark blue. Such decorations are rare in the South Caucasus, making the Meghreki artifacts particularly significant.

The full article is at *Antiquity* –
<https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2026.10331>.

Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Research Grant

University of North Florida's six-week Summer Field School.

By Luke Berna.



With the *Time Sifters Student Research Grant*, I attended the University of North Florida's

(UNF) six-week Summer Field School from May 11th-June 18th. The Field School was located in Jacksonville, along the St. Johns River near the Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve.

UNF and the field school focus on deep indigenous history of Northeast Florida with heavy interest in pottery. The field school site contained three cultural periods of local history: Late Archaic Orange (2500-1000 BCE), Colorinda (800-900+ CE), and St. Johns II (940-1300 CE).

As part of the introductory nature of the field school, I learned to lay excavation units, excavate those units, and record/map field documentation. With a career interest in CRM, this opportunity allowed me to work with a field crew and manage records and documentation in a similar fashion to CRM field crews. The field school also had guests from University of Florida's Archaeology Department and several Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve staff members. I had the opportunity to have one-on-one conversation with these guests regarding my thesis and feasibility of my broad research questions. Being from the Jacksonville/St. Augustine area, I already had a deep adoration for



the area's history, archaeological sites and nature. On my off time I visited the newly reconstructed Fort Mose, Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR) and other outdoor locations along the Tolomato River. Both as a result of my studies in historical ecology and due to my enrollment in field school, I found myself looking at historical sites through the lens of archaeological research.

Attending this field school was paramount in the development of my thesis proposal as the hands-on experience guided my research into shell midden archaeology and the archaeological history of east-central Florida. From the work I completed, I gained further insight into research structure and differing theoretical and methodological approaches

focusing on human-ecosystem interaction and landscape modification. I will take my learned experience and continue to develop my thesis proposal at University of Central Florida (UCF) under the guidance of my advisor Dr. Sarah Barber. I plan on researching shell middens within the Mosquito Lagoon/Canaveral National Shorelines as the region and its archeological resources are underutilized considering their historical ecological importance.

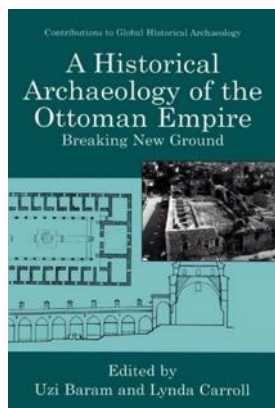
Additionally, being a student of UCF and UNF, I see the pitfalls many students encounter when seeking extracurricular educational opportunities such as internships or service-learning opportunities. Students have personal and or financial commitments that interfere with university sponsored activities or simply do not know where to look for resources. I hope to invite CRM firms in the Orlando area to present to students at UCF as a networking opportunity and a showcase of possible careers.

I am extremely grateful to have received this grant as well as the educational and professional opportunity. I would like to thank the Time Sifter Archaeological Society, Dr. Keith Ashley of UNF and my advisor Dr. Sarah Barber, for their support as I undertook my first field school. I look forward to sharing my experience and gained knowledge with my classmates at UCF.

A Time Sifters Book Review

A Historical Archaeology of the Ottoman Empire: Breaking New Ground.

Edited by: Uzi Baram, Lynda Carroll. Source: Google Books.



Editors Uzi Baram, Lynda Carroll
Edition Illustrated
Publisher Springer Science & Business Media, 2006
ISBN 0306471825, 9780306471827
Length 272 pages
Springer Science & Business Media, Mar 16, 2006 - Social Science - 272 pages

Archaeology in the Middle East and the Balkans rarely focuses on the recent past; as a result, archaeologists have largely ignored the material remains of the Ottoman Empire. Drawing on a wide variety of case studies and essays, this volume documents the emerging field of Ottoman archaeology and the relationship of this new field to anthropological, classical, and historical archaeology as well as Ottoman studies.



Speakers for 2026/2027

All are at 5:45 PM live at the Selby Library
1331 First St., Sarasota

Time Sifters Archaeology Society is pleased to announce our 2026 - 2027 Fall schedule of presentations. All lectures will start at 5:45 PM and are free. Each presentation will be about one hour with time for questions and answers. Please come and join us.

September 16

**"Crusader Castles:
Evolving Frontiers in the Holy Land"**

Dr. Matt King

October 21

**"Smoking Tobacco, Sipping Coffee, and
Subjected to the Sultan: Insights from the Archaeology
of the Ottoman Empire"**

Dr. Uzi Baram

November 18

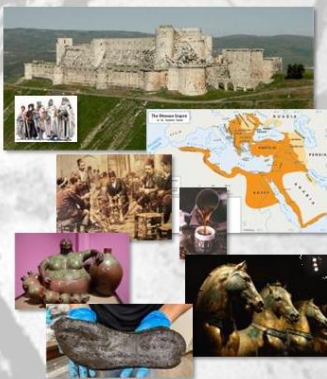
**"Tracing the Footprints of Imperial Expansion
at Monte Lima, Peru"**

Dr. Sarah Taylor

January 20, 2027

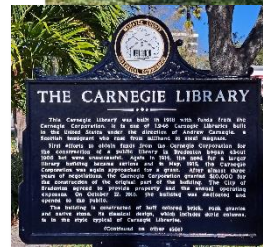
**"Year in Review: What's been Discovered &
What's being Talked About"**

Dr. David Miano



Photos: Wikipedia, Britannia, Pinterest, twitter, Wikipedia, Vindolinda Trust, & Pinterest.

Time Sifters Archaeology Society - A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society - P. O. Box 5283, Sarasota, FL 34277
www.timesifters.org President: Darwin "Smitty" Smith - HMSBeagle22@gmail.com



**Board of
Directors**

Officers:

Darwin "Smitty" Smith, President
Sherry Svekis, Vice President
Wallace Schroeder, Secretary
Ken Woodworth, Treasurer
Marion Almy Joan Bachrach
Uxi Baram Jack Brown
Karen Jensen Evelyn Mangie



Lifetime: \$500
Individual: \$35
Family: \$45
Student: \$10
Supporting: \$50

Pay online at:
WWW.TimeSifters.org
Or mail checks to:
Time Sifters, Inc.
PO Box 5283
Sarasota, FL. 34277

Copyright © 2026 Time Sifters Archaeology Society, Inc. All rights reserved.

Historical Trivia: Circus Maximus, Rome, Italy.