



Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS)
OUR 45th YEAR
October 2025 Newsletter
<https://swflarchaeology.org/>

PRESIDENT'S CORNER *By John F. Furey M.A., RPA, jffurey@charter.net*



Please note that SWFAS has permanently moved our November and April meetings from the Collier County Museum in Naples to the Bonita Springs Fire Station No. 24 located at 27701 Bonita Grande Drive. See the directions and information on this upcoming interesting presentation by Jacob Winge, a well-known local historian and speaker on The Seminoles and the Seminole Wars below. Save the date, Wednesday November 19, 2025 at 7:00 PM. We'll see you there!

In June, SWFAS received an e-mail from Tracy Cavanaugh, a teacher at Martin County High School in Stuart, FL. She informed us that a student of hers named Ileana was interested in archaeology and wrote a paper on it as a part of her fun research project of their choice. She found that the SWFAS website was full of information for her paper and wanted to thank us.

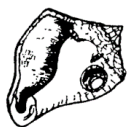
SWFAS is carefully watching the budget appropriations process for the U.S. Department of Interior, which includes the National Park Service budget (1/15th of 1% of the total federal budget). The President's proposed budget for 2026 recommended a greater than \$1 billion cut to funding levels at the National Park Service, achieved with a \$900 million reduction in operating costs by eliminating staffing and funding for 433 park units, including transfer of certain national parks to states. This would directly impact archaeological and historical resources that are currently protected by federal law. States can not afford to effectively manage and protect these sites. In contrast, the appropriation bill from the U.S. Senate largely maintains current funding levels at \$3.3 billion while the U.S. House of Representatives budget recommends \$3.12 billion, with reductions mainly to maintenance and construction. Both bills have passed their respective committees. The budget reconciliation process will determine final funding levels and policy inclusions. It is heartening to note the Senate bill passed with bipartisan support and includes a provision to prevent transfer of national parks. The attached article from the non-partisan (but strongly pro-park) National Parks Conservation Association outlines the differences between the President's, Senate, and House budgets and their potential impacts on park operations and conservation. <https://www.npca.org/articles/10178-3-competing-visions-for-the-future-of-our-national-parks>

SWFAS NOVEMBER 19, 2025 PRESENTATION
7:00 PM, BONITA SPRINGS, BONITA SPRINGS FIRE STATION 24



The next Speaker Presentation on Wednesday 7:00 pm, November 20, 2025 will be in Bonita Springs (not Naples Collier Museum). Jacob Winge, a master story teller, will provide a history of the Seminole Wars. Spanning from 1817 to 1858, these three conflicts between the United States and the Seminole people stand as the longest and most costly Indian wars in American history. This program will highlight significant causes and moments across the decades of conflict as well as the lasting legacy of the wars, from the forced removal of Native peoples to the survival of the unconquered Seminole Tribe in Florida today.

SWFAS DUES REMINDER 2025



SWFAS dues for 2025 are due. Your support of archaeology, history, preservation, and education in Southwest Florida is critical. Our sole source of income is your dues and your gifts, and SWFAS is a 501(c)(3) registered Florida non-profit organization. Thanks to everyone that has already renewed their 2025 tax deductible membership. If you have not done so, we have two ways, you can renew online electronically with a credit card at <https://swflarchaeology.org>. On the Home page, go to “Select Member Level” and then “Add to Cart.” Or send a check to: Charlie Strader, SWFAS Treasurer, 27655 Kent Road, Bonita Springs, FL 34135.

REMINDER: SWFAS MEETING LOCATION CHANGING FROM NAPLES MUSEUM

SWFAS has a new meeting location in Bonita Springs from our old Collier County Museum in Naples location. Our April and November meetings and presentations will be held there. It's just off I-75 and should be convenient for all. See below for directions.

BONITA SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT STATION 24 – To go there:



Located at 27701 Bonita Grande Dr, Bonita Springs, FL 34135. Turn off of I-75 at the Bonita Springs interstate Exit 116 (CR-865) to the East opposite the beaches. Go for 0.7 mi. Turn left onto Bonita Grande Dr at red-light (Publix and Racetrack). Go north for 0.3 mi. Turn East onto Snell Lane to the entrance. The parking lot is well lit. You may also access Bonita Grande Dr from West Terry St.

SWFAS PRESENTATION SCHEDULE 2025 – 2026

NOVEMBER 19, 2025, 7:00 PM, BONITA SPRINGS, BONITA SPRINGS FIRE STATION 24

Jacob Winge, Civic Leader and Local History Advocate

Topic: The Seminole & The Seminole Wars

DECEMBER 2025

Field Trip: TBA

JANUARY 21, 2026, 7:00 PM, FT. MYERS, IMAG MUSEUM

Robert Macomber, Local Author

Topic: Key West in the Civil War

FEBRUARY 18, 2026, 7:00 PM, FT. MYERS, IMAG MUSEUM

Dr. Jonathan Harrison, Adjunct Professor Hodges University

Visiting Professor FGCU

Topic: The Rise of Jim Crow in Fort Myers 1885-1930

MARCH 18, 2026, 7:00 PM, FT. MYERS, IMAG MUSEUM

Alf Monaghan, Lecturer

Topic: Ireland: A Sacred Island Before Christianity

APRIL 15, 2026, 7:00 PM, BONITA SPRINGS, BONITA SPRINGS FIRE STATION 24

Presentation: TBA

MAY 8, 9, and 10, 2026

FAS ANNUAL Meeting

RECENT RESEARCH

HUMAN OCCUPATION OF AUSTRALIA WAS NOT VIA TIMOR



Excavations on the island of Timor in a cave site called Lailli show that Timor was occupied about 44,000 years ago while Australia was occupied about 65,000 years ago. This demonstrates that the route taken to occupy Australia was via other islands to the north. Excavated by Sue O'Connor and her colleagues from the National University at Canberra, they say that this rules out that the first arrivals came via Timor. The cave had a clear boundary between no evidence of humans followed by tens of thousands of years of artifacts. This boundary is called an 'arrival signature.' Source: *New Scientist*

at <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2432435-early-humans-took-northern-route-to-australia-cave-find-suggests/>

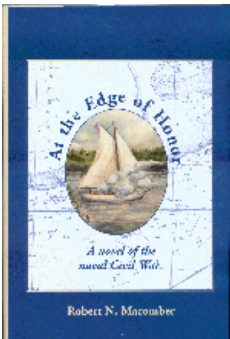
MAGDALENIAN ART DEPICTS THE USE OF FISHING NETS AT THE GONNERSDORF SITE IN GERMANY



Recent finds of 400 stone "plaques" at the Gonnertsdorf Site on the northern bank of the Rhine River depict the use of fishing nets and other "Ice Age Artwork". The site is dated at 15,800 years ago and some of the "plaques" convey the concept of fishing with nets during the Magdalenian Period 17,000-12,000 years ago. The nets could have been made from various fibrous plants that exist in the region or from what these people made their cloth with. Source: *Sonja Anderson, Smithsonian Magazine* at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/these-ice-age-artworks-etched-into-rock-15800-years-ago-may-be-the-earliest-known-depictions-of-fishing-180985492/>

LOCAL HISTORY DID YOU KNOW?

WHAT HAPPENED AT FORT MYERS IN THE CIVIL WAR



On February 20, 1865 the "Battle of Fort Myers" took place at the fort that was in what is now downtown Ft. Myers on the Caloosahatchee River. Known as the "southernmost land battle east of the Mississippi River," the 'skirmish' lasted only a half-day. A Confederate rebel force of about 275 men marched from Fort Thompson in LaBelle on the fort that was held by a 300-man garrison of the Union 2nd Florida Cavalry, the 110th New York Infantry, and the 2nd US Colored Infantry commanded by Captain James Doyle. It was not a major engagement and losses on both sides were minimal. The fort was not taken and the rebels returned to LaBelle that night, but why were Union troops at Fort Myers and Union naval forces at many other locations throughout Florida?

Florida was feeding the Confederacy by shipping cattle north by cattle drives, that they called the Cow Cavalry. Additionally, Florida was home to many fast ships called blockade runners that further supplied the Confederacy with much needed European manufactured war materials imported through Cuba and the Bahamas. The Union forces reused coastal forts that were originally established during the Seminole wars and most of the Civil War action was in Florida waters during the war. Intercepting and sinking these blockade runners was where most of the action in Florida took place. If you are interested in reading more on the naval history of Florida, see the Lt. Peter Wake novels by local Matlacha based author Robert Macomber. Historical archaeologists have excavated many of these forts and battle sites to better understand what happened there.

ARTICLES

EARLIEST EUROPEAN SITE WITH ACHEULEAN STONE TOOLS DISCOVERED IN SPAIN

Dr. Diego Lombao, a Spanish researcher at the site of El Barranc de la Bola in northeastern Tarragona, Spain announced that they have found a site dated at 900,000 years ago where the earliest Acheulean stone tools in Europe were produced. Acheulean tools are characterized by their symmetrical shapes and fine details and were a major technical refinement over the earlier more primitive Oldowan tools. See below.

THE RAID ON DEERFIELD, MA DURING QUEEN ANNE' S WAR

On February 29, 1704 a mixed group of French-Indian forces attacked and burned this settlement on the Deerfield River in Western Massachusetts killing 47 English colonists and taking 112 men, women, and children captive. This force of about 250, under the command of Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville, consisted of Abenaki, Huron, Mohawk, and Pocumtuc Indians and they planned to march their captives 300 miles through the snow over frozen rivers north to Montreal. See below.

Editor's Comments: Being from Massachusetts, I attended the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA just south of Deerfield and know the town well. I used to fly fish the river in front of Deerfield and, at the time, knew nothing of the events of February 29, 1704. It is a picturesque small village with all old colonial style homes and in a perfect location for farming with many flat glacial lake bottom fertile fields still surrounding the village. It is hard to realize the horrible events that took place there. To the west, the Deerfield River flows into the Connecticut River that runs all the way from Canada to the Atlantic Ocean and to the northwest the Mohawk River flows from New York. The country to the west is quite rugged and hilly as it is the northern foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. These raids were a continuation of the French and Indian Wars. Enjoy this bit of history. To learn more about this raid see *The Deerfield Massacre* by James L. Swanson, 2024, Scribner, New York. Ed. JFF. See below.

WHAT DOES THE HOMESTEAD ACT OF 1862, THE DUST BOWL, AND SMOKEY THE BEAR HAVE IN COMMON, AND WHAT ARE WE DOING TO RECOVER FROM IT? HOW ARE FOREST FIRES RELATED TO ALL OF THIS?

The Homestead Act of 1862 was initially designed to provide freed slaves their own land, however more Northern white settlers and immigrants benefitted from it than freed Blacks. The initial problem was no one told these new settler/farmers how to work the land. All the trees were cut down to make houses, fences, and firewood and the topsoil sod was broken. Eventually the soil blew away and the dust bowl and all the associated human misery was created. To find out how it was all related and what is working today, please read the article below.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN SPAIN DISCOVER EUROPE'S FIRST ADVANCED STONE TOOLS

By: Christopher Gomez

November 28, 2024

From Columbia One at <https://colombiaone.com/2024/11/28/advanced-stone-tools-tarragona-spain/>



Archaeologists have found the first advanced stone tools to have been made in Europe, in Barranc de la Boella, Tarragona, Spain. Made by hominins between 900,000 and 780,000 years ago, the advanced stone tools mark a milestone in evolutionary discoveries. This find bridges the era in which our ancient ancestors lived in Africa to when they migrated into the world abroad. The unexpected discovery caught researchers from the Catalan Institute of Human Paleoecology and Social Evolution (IPHES-CERCA) by surprise, as the tools were made utilizing carving strategies specifically intended to improve the tool's

efficiency. The researchers also found that the ancient hominins residing in what is now the Spanish region of Catalonia managed their resources well and even transported them effectively.

The oldest advanced stone tools in Europe

According to the archaeologists, the ancient hominin tools illustrated a higher level of expertise than Olduvian technology, a widespread stone tool archaeological style used in prehistory. As such, they are categorised as Acheulian, a more advanced stone toolmaking technique that was used during the Paleolithic era. The researchers' were able to make this categorization having discovered that the stone used to make the tools was worked upon off-site. This enabled the hominins to apply more concentrated and advanced techniques and to select their materials based on the use they envisaged. They also used efficient means of transporting the finished products to the sites where they were needed. "The Barranc de la Boella is a key witness of the first dispersions of Mode 2 (Acheulian) in Europe, marking a turning point in the technological history of the continent," said Diego Lombao, the leader of the team of archaeologists who published the study. Lombao and the team found that the ancient hominins built large pick-axes as well as regular axes, suggesting they were more advanced in their collection of resources and their strategic use.

Evidence of constant migration and communication between Africa and Europe

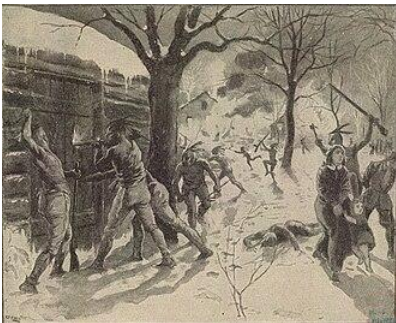
The advanced stone tools found in Barranc de la Boella are not only proof of a significant leap in technology made in Europe at the time, but also prove that hominins were constantly travelling between Africa and Europe during that period. "The Barranc de la Boella is a key testimony that shows us that Europe was not an isolated stage, but a space of exchange and technological evolution in constant contact with Africa and the Near East, marking a turning point in the technological history of the continent," Lombao explained.

Lombao and the team also said that the advanced stone tools found in Tarragona point to certain intelligent and strategic behaviors typically not found in ancient societies that utilized Olduvian technology. "These behaviors represent a significant advancement compared to the technologies present in Europe at that time, known as Mode 1 or Oldowan. Among these advancements, the selection and preparation of raw materials stand out, with a differential management of their resources," the team reported.

RAID ON DEERFIELD

By: Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raid_on_Deerfield

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/raid_on_deerfield



The Raid on Deerfield, also known as the Deerfield Massacre, was an attack on February 29, 1704, of French and Native American forces on the English colonial settlement of Deerfield, Province of Massachusetts Bay. Springing just before dawn, raiders under the command of Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville burned parts of the town and killed 47 colonists. They left with 112 colonists as captives, whom they took overland the nearly 300 miles to Montreal; some died or were killed along the way because they were unable to keep up. Roughly 60 colonists were later ransomed by their associates, while others were adopted by Mohawk families at Kahnawake and became assimilated into the tribe.

In this period, English colonists and their Indian allies were involved in similar raids against French villages along the northern area between the spheres of influence. Typical of the small-scale frontier conflict in Queen Anne's War, the French-Indian forces consisted of French soldiers and about 240 Indian warriors, mostly Abenaki (from what is now Maine), but including Huron (Wyandot) from Lorette, Mohawk from Kahnawake (both mission villages), and a number of Pocomtuc who had once lived in the Deerfield area.

Given the diversity of personnel, motivations, and material objectives, the raiders did not achieve full surprise when they entered the palisaded village. The defenders of some fortified houses in the village successfully held

off the raiders until arriving reinforcements prompted their retreat. However, the raid was a clear victory for the French coalition that aimed to take captives and unsettle English colonial frontier society. More than 100 captives were taken, and about 40 percent of the village houses were destroyed.

Although predicted because of existing tensions during the war, the raid shocked colonists throughout New England. Conflict increased with the French and French-allied Indians. Frontier settlements took actions to fortify their towns and prepare for war. The raid has been immortalized as a part of the early American frontier story, principally due to the published account by a prominent captive, Reverend John Williams, who was the principal leader of the village. He and much of his family were taken on the long overland journey to Canada. His seven-year-old daughter Eunice was adopted by a Mohawk family; she became assimilated, married a Mohawk man, and had a family with him. Williams's account, *The Redeemed Captive*, was published in 1707 soon after his release, and was widely popular in the colonies. It became part of the genre known as captivity narratives.

Background

When European colonists began in the 17th century to settle in the middle reaches of the Connecticut River valley (where it flows through the present state of Massachusetts), the area was inhabited by the Algonquian-speaking Pocumtuc nation.[9] In the early 1660s, the Pocumtuc were shattered as a nation due to conflict with the aggressive Mohawk, the easternmost of the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, who were located west of Albany in the Mohawk Valley and raided into New England. They also had suffered population losses due to high mortality from the new, chronic infectious disease carried by traders and colonists, to which Native Americans had no acquired immunity.[10][11]

In 1665, English colonists from the Massachusetts settlement of Dedham were given a grant in the Connecticut Valley area, and acquired land titles of uncertain legality from a variety of Pocumtuc Indians. They established a village in the early 1670s, at first called "Pocumtuck", but later, "Deerfield".[12] Located in a relatively isolated position in the Massachusetts colony, on the edge of English colonial settlement, Deerfield became a target of frontier conflict between the French and English and their respective Native American allies.[13] The colonial outpost was a traditional New England subsistence farming community. The majority of Deerfield's settlers were young families who had moved west in search of land. The labor of the wives and other women was essential to the survival of the settlement and its male inhabitants.[14]

Previous raids on Deerfield

By 1675 the village had grown to a population of about 200. In that year, conflict between English colonists and Indians in southern New England erupted into what is now known as "King Philip's War".[15] The war involved all of the New England colonies, and the colonists destroyed or severely decimated and pacified most of the Indian nations in the region. There were also many casualties among the New England colonists.[16]

Deerfield was evacuated in September 1675 after a coordinated series of Native American attacks, culminating in the Battle of Bloody Brook, resulted in the deaths of about half the village's adult men. The village was one of several in the Connecticut River valley abandoned by the English, and it was briefly reoccupied by the warring Indians.[17][18] The colonists regrouped, and in 1676 a force of mostly local colonists slaughtered an Indian camp at a site then called "Peskeompscut". It is now called "Turners Falls", after William Turner, an English colonist who was killed in the action.[19]

Ongoing raids by the Mohawk forced many of the remaining Indians to retreat north to French-controlled Canada or to the west.[20] Those going west joined other tribes that had formed a peace of sorts with the authorities in the eastern area of the Province of New York. During King William's War (1688–1697), Deerfield was not subjected to major attacks, but 12 residents were killed in a series of ambushes and other incidents. Supposedly friendly Indians who were recognized as Pocumtuc were recorded as passing through the area. Some claimed to have participated in attacks on other frontier communities.[21]

English attacks on the frontier communities of what is now southern Maine in the Northeast Coast Campaign of 1703 again put Deerfield residents on the alert, as they feared retaliation. In response to their own losses in the Campaign, the French planned an attack on Deerfield with their native allies.[22] They were specifically seeking to capture a leader of high enough rank to propose a prisoner exchange.

The town's palisade, constructed during King William's War, had been rehabilitated and expanded.[23] In August of that year, the local militia commander called out the militia after he received intelligence of "a party of French & Indians from Canada" who were "expected every hour to make some attaque on ye towns upon Connecticut River".[24] However, nothing happened until October, when two men were taken from a pasture outside the palisade.[23] Militia were sent to guard the town in response, but these returned to their homes with the advent of winter, which was generally not the period for warfare.[2]

Minor raids against other communities convinced Governor Joseph Dudley to send 20 men to garrison Deerfield in February. These men, minimally trained militia from other nearby communities, had arrived by the 24th, making for somewhat cramped accommodations within the town's palisade on the night of February 28.[1][8] In addition to these men, the townspeople mustered about 70 men of fighting age; these forces were all under the command of Captain Jonathan Wells.[1]

Organizing the raid

The Connecticut River valley had been identified as a potential raiding target by authorities in New France as early as 1702.[25] The forces for the raid had begun gathering near Montreal as early as May 1703, as reported with reasonable accuracy in English intelligence reports. However, two incidents delayed their execution of the raid. The first was a rumor that Royal Navy warships were on the Saint Lawrence River, and the French sent a significant Indian force to Quebec for its defense. The second was the detachment of some troops for operations in Maine; critically, these forces included Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville, who was intended to lead the raid on Deerfield. In addition, his raid against Wells raised the frontier alarms at Deerfield. Hertel de Rouville did not return to Montreal until the fall of 1703.[26]

The force assembled at Chambly, just south of Montreal, numbered about 250. It was a diverse collection of men.[27] The 48 ethnic Frenchmen, were made up of Canadien militia and recruits from the troupes de la marine, including four of Hertel de Rouville's brothers.[27][28] Several men among the French leadership had more than 20 years' experience in wilderness warfare.[27] The Indian contingent included 200 Abenaki, Iroquois (mostly Mohawk from Kahnawake), Wyandot (also known as Huron, from Lorette), and Pocomtuc, some of whom sought revenge for incidents by whites that had taken place years earlier.[27][28] As the party moved south toward Deerfield in January and February 1704, this force was joined by another 30 to 40 Pennacook warriors led by the sachem Wattanummon, raising the troop size to nearly 300 by the time it reached the Deerfield area in late February.[29][30]

The expedition's departure was not a secret. In January 1704, Iroquois warned New York's Indian agent Pieter Schuyler of possible action by the French and their allies. He notified Governor Dudley and Connecticut's Governor Winthrop; they received further warnings in mid-February, although none was specific about the target.[31]

Raid

The raiders left most of their equipment and supplies 25 to 30 miles (40 to 48 kilometers) north of the village before establishing a cold camp about 2 miles (3.2 km) from Deerfield on February 28, 1704. From this vantage point, they observed the villagers as they prepared for the night. Since the villagers had been alerted to the possibility of a raid, they all took refuge within the palisade, and a guard was posted.[32]

The raiders had noticed that snow drifts extended to the top of the palisade; this simplified their entry into the fortifications just before dawn on February 29. They carefully approached the village, stopping periodically so that the sentry might confuse the noises they made with more natural sounds. A few men climbed over the

palisade via the snow drifts and opened the north gate to admit the rest. Primary sources vary on the degree of alertness of the village guard that night; one account claims he fell asleep, while another claims that he discharged his weapon to raise the alarm when the attack began, but that it was not heard by many people.[33] As the Reverend John Williams later recounted, "with horrid shouting and yelling", the raiders launched their attack "like a flood upon us".[33]

The raiders' attack probably did not go exactly as they had intended. In attacks on Schenectady, New York, and Durham, New Hampshire, in the 1690s (both of which included Hertel de Rouville's father), the raiders had simultaneously attacked all of the houses. They did not do so at Deerfield. Historians Haefeli and Sweeney theorize that the failure to launch a coordinated assault was caused by the wide diversity within the attacking force.[34][clarify]

The raiders swept into the village, and began attacking individual houses. Reverend Williams's house was among the first to be raided; Williams's life was spared when his gunshot misfired, and he was taken prisoner. Two of his children and a servant were slain; the rest of his family and his other servant were also taken prisoner.[35] Among the first casualties of the raid were two black men.[36] Similar scenarios occurred in many of the other houses. The residents of Benoni Stebbins' house, which was not among the ones attacked early, resisted the raiders' attacks, which lasted until well after daylight. A second house, near the northwestern corner of the palisade, was also successfully defended. The raiders moved through the village, herding their prisoners to an area just north of the town, rifling houses for items of value, and setting a number of dwellings on fire.[37][clarify]

As the morning progressed, some of the raiders began moving north with their prisoners, but paused about a mile north of the town to wait for those who had not yet finished in the village.[38] The men in the Stebbins house kept up the battle for two hours; they were on the verge of surrendering when reinforcements arrived from the south. Early in the raid, young John Sheldon managed to escape over the palisade and began making his way to nearby Hadley to raise the alarm. The fires from the burning houses had already been spotted, and "thirty men from Hadley and Hatfield" rushed to Deerfield.[39] Their arrival prompted the remaining raiders to flee; some abandoned their weapons and other supplies in the rush.[38]

The sudden departure of the raiders and the arrival of reinforcements raised the spirits of the beleaguered survivors. About 20 Deerfield men joined the Hadley men in chasing after the fleeing raiders. The New Englanders and the raiders skirmished in the meadows just north of the village, where the former reported "killing and wounding many of them".[38] The New Englanders soon ran into an ambush set up by the raiders who had left the village earlier. Of the 50 or so men who gave chase, nine were killed and several more were wounded.[38] After the ambush they retreated to the village, and the raiders headed north with their prisoners.[38]

As the alarm spread to the south, reinforcements continued to arrive in the village. By midnight, 80 men from Northampton and Springfield had arrived, and men from Connecticut swelled the force to 250 by the end of the next day. After debating over what action to take, they decided that the difficulties of pursuit were not worth the risks. Leaving a strong garrison in the village, most of the militia returned to their homes.[40]

The raiders destroyed 17 of the village's 41 homes, and looted many of the others. Of the 291 people in Deerfield on the night of the attack, only 126 remained in town the next day. Forty-four residents of Deerfield were killed: 10 men, 9 women, and 25 children, as were five garrison soldiers, and seven Hadley men.[4] Of those who died inside the village, 15 died of fire-related causes; most of the rest were killed by edged or blunt weapons.[41] The raid's casualties were dictated by the raiders' goals to intimidate the village and to take valuable captives to French Canada. A large portion of the slain were infant children, who were not likely to have survived the trip to Canada.[42] The raiders took 109 villagers captive; this represented forty per cent of the village population. They also took captive three Frenchmen who had been living among the villagers.[5][38]

The raiders also suffered losses, although reports vary. New France's governor-general, Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil, reported the expedition lost only 11 men, and 22 were wounded, including Hertel de Rouville and one of his brothers.[3][4] John Williams heard from French soldiers during his captivity that more than 40 French and Indian soldiers were lost;[4] Haefeli and Sweeney believe the lower French figures are more credible, especially when compared to casualties incurred in other raids.[3] A majority of the captives taken were women and children, as the French and Indian captors considered them more likely than adult men to successfully assimilate into native communities and a new life in French Canada.[43]

Captivity and ransom

For the 109 English captives, the raid was only the beginning of their troubles.[44] The raiders intended to take them to Canada, a 300-mile (480 km) journey, in the middle of winter. Many of the captives were ill-prepared for this, and the raiders were short on provisions. The raiders consequently engaged in a common practice: they killed those captives when it was clear they were unable to keep up. Williams commented on the savage cruelty of the Indian raiders; although most killings were "not random or wanton",[43] none of those killed would have "needed to" be killed had they not been taken in the first place. Most (though not all) of the slain were the slow and vulnerable who could not keep up with the party and would likely have died less quickly en route.[45] Only 89 of the captives survived the ordeal. Survival chances correlated with age and gender: infants and young children fared the worst, and older children and teenagers (all 21 of whom survived the ordeal) fared the best. Adult men fared better than adult women, especially pregnant women, and those with small children.[46]

In the first few days several of the captives escaped. Hertel de Rouville instructed Reverend Williams to inform the others that recaptured escapees would be tortured; there were no further escapes. (The threat was not an empty one — it was known to have happened on other raids.)[47] The French leader's troubles were not only with his captives. The Indians had some disagreements among themselves concerning the disposition of the captives, which at times threatened to come to blows. A council held on the third day resolved these disagreements sufficiently that the trek could continue.[48] On Sunday March 5, five days after the raid, the captors and their captives reached what is now Rockingham, Vermont. The captives asked for and were given permission to hold a worship service that Sunday, near the mouth of a river that was later named the Williams River in honor of that service.[49] A historical marker was placed near the site in 1912.

According to John Williams' account of his captivity, most of the party traveled up the frozen Connecticut River, then up the Wells River and down the Winooski River to Lake Champlain. From there they made their way to Chambly, at which point most of the force dispersed. The captives accompanied their captors to their respective villages.[50] Williams' wife Eunice, weak after having given birth just six weeks earlier, was one of the first to be killed during the trek; her body was recovered and reburied in the Deerfield cemetery.[51]

Calls went out from the governors of the northern colonies for action against the French colonies. Governor Dudley wrote that "the destruction of Quebec [sic] and Port Royal [would] put all the Navall stores into Her Majesty's hands, and forever make an end of an Indian War",[52] the frontier between Deerfield and Wells was fortified by upwards of 2,000 men,[53] and the bounty for Indian scalps was more than doubled, from £40 to £100.[54] Dudley promptly organized a retaliatory raid against Acadia (present-day Nova Scotia). In the summer of 1704, New Englanders under the leadership of Benjamin Church raided Acadian villages at Pentagouet (present-day Castine, Maine), Passamaquoddy Bay (present-day St. Stephen, New Brunswick), Grand Pré, Pisiquid, and Beaubassin (all in present-day Nova Scotia). Church's instructions included the taking of prisoners to exchange for those taken at Deerfield, and specifically forbade him to attack the fortified capital, Port Royal.[55]

Deerfield and other communities collected funds to ransom the captives. French authorities and colonists also worked to extricate the captives from their Indian captors. Within a year's time, most of the captives were in French hands, a product of frontier commerce in humans that was fairly common at the time on both sides.[56] The French and converted Indians worked to convert their captives to Roman Catholicism, with modest

success.[57] While adult captives proved fairly resistant to proselytizing, children were more receptive or likely to accept conversion under duress.[58]

Some of the younger captives, however, were not ransomed, as they were adopted into the tribes. Such was the case with Williams' daughter Eunice, who was eight years old when captured. She became thoroughly assimilated in her Mohawk family, and married a Mohawk man when she was 16. She did not see her family of origin again until much later and always returned to Kahnawake. Other captives also remained by choice in Canadian and Native communities such as Kahnawake for the rest of their lives.[59] Negotiations for the release and exchange of captives began in late 1704, and continued until late 1706. They became entangled in unrelated issues (like the English capture of French privateer Pierre Maisonnat dit Baptiste), and larger concerns, including the possibility of a wider-ranging treaty of neutrality between the French and English colonies.[60] Mediated in part by Deerfield residents John Sheldon and John Wells, some captives (including Noel Doiron) were returned to Boston in August 1706.[61] Governor Dudley, who may have needed the successful return of the captives for political reasons, then released the French captives, including Baptiste; the remaining captives who chose to return were back in Boston by November 1706.[62]

Many of the younger captives were adopted into the Indian tribes or French Canadian society. Thirty six Deerfield captives, mostly children and teenagers at the time of the raid, remained permanently. Those who stayed were not compelled by force, but rather by newly formed religious ties and family bonds.[63] Captive experience was possibly dictated by gender as well as age. Young women may have more easily and readily assimilated into Indian and French Canadian societies. Nine girls remained as opposed to only five boys. These choices may reflect the larger frontier pattern of incorporation of young women into Indian and Canadian society. It's theorised some young women remained, not because of compulsion, fascination with the outdoor adventure, or the strangeness of life in a foreign society, but because they transitioned into established lives in new communities and formed bonds of family, religion, and language.[64] In fact, possibly more than half of young female captives who remained settled in Montreal where "the lives of these former Deerfield residents differed very little in their broad outlines from their former neighbors". Whether in New France or in Deerfield these women generally were part of frontier agricultural communities where they tended to marry in their early twenties and have six or seven children.[65] Other female captives remained in Native communities such as Kahnawake. These women remained because of bonds of religion and family. While colonial men castigated the slavery of English women, some captive women from this time chose to remain in Native society rather than return to colonial English settlements.[66][67]

John Williams wrote a captivity narrative, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*, about his experience, which was published in 1707. Williams' narrative was published during ongoing ransom negotiations and pressed for greater activity to return the Deerfield captives. Written with assistance from prominent Boston Puritan minister Reverend Cotton Mather, the book framed the raid, captivity, and border relations with the French and Indians in terms of providential history and God's purpose for Puritans.[68] The work was widely distributed in the 18th and 19th centuries, and continues to be published today (see Further Reading below). Williams' work was one of the reasons this raid, unlike similar others of the time, was remembered and became an element in the American frontier story.[69] Williams' work transformed the captivity narrative into a celebration of individual heroism and the triumph of Protestant values against savage and "Popish" enemies.[70] The last known survivor of the raid was ironically Williams daughter Eunice Kanenstenhawi Williams, also known as Marguerite Kanenstenhawi Arosen.

Legacy and historical memory

Deerfield holds a "special place in American history".[71] As Mary Rowlandson's popular captivity narrative *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* did a generation earlier, the sensational tale stressed reliance on God's mercy and "kept alive the spirit of the Puritan mission" in eighteenth century New England.[72] Williams' account heightened tensions between English settlers and Native Americans and their French allies and led to more war preparedness among settler communities.[73]

The events at Deerfield were not commonly described as a massacre until the 19th century. Reverend John Taylor's 1804 centennial memorial sermon first termed the events at Deerfield a "massacre". Previous eighteenth-century accounts emphasized the physical destruction and described the raid as "the assault on", "the destruction of", or "mischief at" Deerfield.[74] Viewing the raid as a "massacre", 19th century New Englanders began to remember the attack as part of the larger narrative and celebration of American frontier spirit. Persisting into the twentieth century, American historical memory has tended to view Deerfield in line with Frederick Turner's Frontier Thesis as a singular Indian attack against a community of individualistic frontiersmen.[75] Re-popularized and exposed to a national audience in the mid-twentieth century with the establishment of Historic Deerfield, the raid was contextualized in a celebration of exceptional American individual ambition. This view has served as a partial justification for the removal of Native Americans and has obscured both the larger patterns of border conflict and tensions and the family based structure of Deerfield and similar marginal settlements.[76] Although popularly remembered as a tale of the triumph of rugged Protestant male individualism, the raid is better understood not along the lines of Turner's thesis, but as an account of the strong factors of community life and cross-cultural interaction in border communities.[77]

An 1875 legend recounts the attack as an attempt by the French to regain a bell, supposedly destined for Quebec, but pirated and sold to Deerfield. The legend continues that this was a "historical fact known to almost all school children".[78] However, the story, which is a common Kahnawake tale, was refuted as early as 1882 and does not appear to have significantly affected American perception of the raid.[79]

Canadians and native Americans who are less influenced by Williams' narrative and Turner's thesis, have given the raid a more ambivalent place in memory. Canadians view the raid not as a massacre and mass abduction but as a successful local application of guerilla techniques in the broader context of international war and stress the successful integration of hundreds of captives taken in similar conflicts during Queen Anne's War.[80] Similarly, most Native American records justify the action in a larger military and cultural context and remain largely unconcerned with the particular event.[81]

A portion of the original village of Deerfield has been preserved as a living history museum, Historic Deerfield; among its relics is a door bearing tomahawk marks from the 1704 raid.[76][82] The raid is commemorated there on the weekend closest to February 29. Moving toward a more inclusive Historic Deerfield's yearly reenactment and educational programs treat "massacre" as a "dirty word" and stress Deerfield as a place to study cultural interaction and difference at society's borders.[78]

Note: Please see the website at the url above for provided notes.

THEY'VE CUT DOWN 200,000 TREES IN FIVE YEARS TO SAVE THE FOREST...AND IT'S WORKING.

By: Ashley Haugen

February 12, 2025

From AZ Animals at <https://a-z-animals.com/articles/larimer-conservation-district/>



If you saw a plan that's already cut down 200,000 trees, with millions more in the crosshairs, you might think it's an environmental apocalypse in the making. However, this seemingly drastic approach to forest restoration is actually preventing catastrophic wildfires, revitalizing fragile ecosystems, and turning once-homogenous forests into flourishing habitats for plants and wildlife. It's time to rethink everything you know about our nation's forests

A few minutes into a casual conversation with Dylan Alsbach, and it's quickly evident that he's smarter than the average bear. His use of words like dendrochronology and riparian tipped me off early on that I needed to keep my trusty Merriam-Webster's nearby. Indeed Dylan's vocabulary is impressive, but his work as the Foresty Program Manager of the Larimer Conservation District (LCD) and his

passion for the history and importance of that work is nothing if not contagious — and insightful. “The impetus for conservation districts started in the 1930s after the Dust Bowl,” he shares. “The federal government wanted a better way to find out what was happening with local land owners, especially farmers, and they wanted local people to go out and convene with these folks and figure out what was happening on the ground.”

From Dust Bowl Devastation to National Conservation

The Dust Bowl drought in the early 20th century was, in fact, the reason conservation districts were created, but the issues on the land started many years before. It was the Homestead Act of 1862 that provided settlers to the Great Plains with 160 acres of land per family with the agreement they would work the land and presumably, in so doing, improve it. And work the land they did. However, there was little provision for agricultural education, and therefore, little thought was given to how the land was worked. As a result of haphazard farming practices, the topsoil was disrupted, and the native prairie grasses that anchored it were farmed away. When massive winds swept through the land, as they were known to do, they carried with them the soil — now brittle dust. Crops were blanketed in the fine particles, thus destroying them. The dust also caused severe respiratory issues for inhabitants and ultimately displaced thousands of families.

In response to the Dust Bowl drought, the federal government established the Soil Conservation Service in 1935. A part of the Department of Agriculture, the service was created to educate people on better farming practices such as crop rotation and reforestation in order to stabilize the soil. One year later, in 1936, the government adapted its approach, appointing local groups — conservation districts — to be run by farmers and landowners to manage their land responsibly. (Explore *the Soil Conservation Service Guide to Field Activities, circa 1941*, [here](#) [at the above website].)

Today, according to the National Association of Conservation Districts, there are 3,000 conservation districts in the United States, 74 of which are in Colorado, each acting as a liaison between private landowners and the State Conservation Board. These districts are the boots on the ground, literally combing through Colorado’s vast and varied landscape in search of opportunities to improve everything from soil health and noxious weed control to riparian and forest restoration, while simultaneously educating landowners about this important work.

Why Fire Can Be Great: A History of Biodiversity

To understand the restorative work done by Dylan and the Larimer Conservation District, we must first understand the problem. Before the lands were colonized, regular fire cycles occurred, the variation of which depended on elevation and type of timber, among other factors. For example, in the Mountain West, the fire cycle was every five to 30 years for ponderosa pine forests, typically found at 5,500-7,500 feet of elevation. The cycles may be longer or shorter depending on the variables. It was that regularity of fire cycles, though, that actually maintained the fuels in the forest, keeping them at a healthy level for all plant and animal species to thrive.

The cause of these cyclical fires could be anything from lightning strikes to the measured use of fire as a tool by the Indigenous people who lived there. Regardless of how they started, because these fires were regularly occurring, it ensured the forest maintained a healthy amount of diversity. “We didn’t have all this buildup of overly dense canopy,” explains Dylan. “Because you had a mosaic of the landscape where the fire would come on a regular basis, it was in a lower intensity way than we see today. It maintained the [forest] fuels enough to where we didn’t have a full canopy anywhere. We had maybe some meadows. You had groups of trees, but you also had openings. And so you had a lot of variability in the forests to where you provided a whole range of habitats, especially for wildlife.” It’s that diversity that makes a forest resilient — openings that slow a fire down, for example, but that also invite various plant and wildlife species to the area.

Along Came Smokey

During World War II, the number of available firefighters was limited as many of them went off to war. That meant that wildfires were more difficult to fight or contain by untrained members of the community. Therefore, a heavy focus was placed on fire prevention — the need to stop fires from happening in the first place. The U.S.

Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters and the War Advertising Council created the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program, which arguably vilified forest fires. The initiative, according to ForestHistory.org, featured a stern but friendly bear as its mascot, Smokey the Bear, and the goal was “to inform the public about how forest fires could undermine the war effort and destroy much-needed lumber.” Putting the onus on average citizens, Smokey’s iconic message was, “Only YOU can prevent forest fires.”

For decades that messaging persisted — that fires were both bad and preventable. This failure to acknowledge the fact that no fires means increased canopy, and thus increased ignitable fuel, has been at the detriment to the land and its inhabitants. “If you frame it in the context of a 30-year fire interval, we’ve lost the opportunity for maybe four or five fires in the last 150 years,” Dylan explains, of the opportunity to maintain healthy forests and a nice balance of biodiversity. “And if you lose that, that means there’s a lot of extra fuel out there. That means the forest starts to homogenize.” It wasn’t until 2001 that Smokey’s messaging was updated to say, “Only you can prevent wildfires,” a nod to and acknowledgement of the ecological benefits of controlled forest fires for the overall diversity of both flora and fauna.

Cutting to Conserve: Why Fewer Trees Means a Healthier Forest

That brings us to the work of the Larimer Conservation District — and all conservation districts. With decades of messaging to reverse, Dylan says that reaching enough of the landowners and having the time to educate them on the benefits of properly managing the land and protecting it from massive wildfires through tree removal is perhaps the most challenging part of his work. “[Landowners] understand the problem, and a lot of it is oriented towards community protection — wildfire protection. And people can get on board with that,” Dylan shares. “Where we run into a problem is getting on board with the rest of it — a restored forest, wildlife habitat, diversity. People don’t like to make that step. They like to hang out where it’s nice and easy and comfy. If they’re able to cut a few trees, then they feel better about their wildfire risk. And what we’ve seen recently is that’s probably pretty naive. It’s time to be aggressive.”

According to Dylan’s estimations, the LCD has completed treatment on 500-600 acres of land over each of the past five years. “For reference,” he says, “if we think about how many trees are on an acre of ground if you have an unhealthy forest, you can get up into the hundreds of trees per acre.” He estimates that cutting that number in half — half of the trees being removed per acre of unhealthy forest — and “you’re quickly into the hundreds of thousands” of trees the LCD has removed over the past five years — approximately 200,000 trees when you do the math. The results, Dylan shares, are happy landowners, healthy land, and the slow return of biodiversity, all of which prove the efficacy of this work. “When you vary the landscape — have a section of trees and then an open meadow and then perhaps a grove of smaller trees — there will inevitably be a more diverse array of plants, animals and insects that dwell there,” explains Dylan. “And if you have a diverse mix of plants everything builds from that.”

Where to Go from Here: What You Can Do to Help

While there is still plenty of resistance to the work, it’s largely due to not understanding the full scope — the why — of the LCD’s work. But it all boils down to one thing: A healthy forest devoid of overgrown canopy and thus unhealthy amounts of fuel housed within is less likely to perpetuate a catastrophic wildfire. Additionally, it’s more likely to create an environment in which a rich and biodiverse array of plants and animals can thrive. “When you have a diverse mix of those, all of a sudden your soil is starting to develop a capacity to sequester your carbon. Your soil is developing more ability to hold water, to hold life, and to hold carbon,” Dylan says.

To learn more about the work done by the Larimer Conservation District, visit larimercd.org. To find a conservation district where you live, check out the conservation district directory on the *National Association of Conservation Districts* website.

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We encourage those interested in Florida archaeology to become members of The Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS). Annual dues are due in January and membership applications to both organizations are attached. Membership in the FAS provides you with four annual volumes of *The Florida Anthropologist* and occasional newsletters on anthropological events in Florida in addition to the annual statewide meeting. More information on FAS can be found online at: www.fasweb.org. Membership in SWFAS offers you a local series of talks on archaeological and anthropological subjects that you can attend. The SWFAS monthly newsletter keeps you up to date on local events as well as other important archaeological topics. We urge you to support both with your membership. All of the SWFAS Lecture Series are open to the public at no charge.



JOIN US!

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society

<http://swflarchaeology.org/>

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS) was founded in 1980 as a not-for profit corporation to provide a meeting place for people interested in the area's past.

Our goals are to:

- Learn more of the area's history
- Create a place for sharing of this information
- Advocate for preservation of cultural resources

Its members include professional and amateur archaeologists and interested members of the general public. Members come from all walks of life and age groups. They share a lively curiosity, a respect for the people who preceded them here, and a feeling of responsibility for the conservation of the places and objects they left behind.

The Society holds monthly meetings between October and April, attracting speakers who are in the forefront of archaeological and historical research. Occasionally members join in trips to historical and archaeological sites.

A monthly newsletter, Facebook page, and website keep members abreast of our events and happenings.

The organization is a chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society, a statewide organization that publishes quarterly newsletters and a journal, *The Florida Anthropologist*, and holds an annual conference.

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