TRISTÁN de LUNA y ARELLANO

PENSACOLA SETTLEMENT
1559-1561
PRESS RELEASE

SITE OF FIRST MULTI-YEAR EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT IN THE U.S. IDENTIFIED BY UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM

Pensacola, Fla. – Dec. 17, 2015 – The University of West Florida archaeology program recently identified the archaeological site of the Luna settlement – the first multi-year European settlement in the United States – in a developed neighborhood in Pensacola.

The artifacts discovered are evidence of the Spanish settlement by Tristán de Luna y Arellano from 1559 to 1561, the earliest multi-year European colonial settlement ever archaeologically identified in the United States.

The work began on Oct. 2, 2015, when Pensacola native Tom Garner discovered Spanish colonial and Native American artifacts at a privately owned residential lot within view of the two uncovered shipwrecks in Pensacola Bay, which were also linked to the Luna expedition. In 1983, Garner attended a UWF archaeology field school led by Dr. Judith Bense, founder of the UWF archaeology program and current University president. Garner is well versed in the identification of historical artifacts and aware of areas considered likely candidates for the location of the Luna settlement.

After multiple visits and surface collections, Garner brought the artifacts to the UWF archaeology lab on Oct. 30, 2015. Dr. John Worth, associate professor of historical archaeology, is an archaeology and ethnohistory expert and focuses on the Spanish colonial era in the southeastern U.S.

“What we saw in front of us in the lab that day was an amazing assemblage of mid-16th century Spanish colonial period artifacts,” said Worth. “These items were very specific to this time period. The University conducted fieldwork at this site in the mid-1980s, as have others since then, but no one had ever found diagnostics of the sort that Tom found on the surface. People have looked for this site for a long time.”

With the cooperation and support of residents and property owners, UWF began test excavations at the site and recovered additional artifacts in undisturbed context. Worth is the principal site investigator and Dr. Elizabeth Benchley, director of the UWF archaeology program, provides administrative and financial support. Garner also recently joined the team as a research assistant and neighborhood liaison for the project.

UWF archaeologists recovered numerous sherds of broken 16th century Spanish ceramics found undisturbed beneath the ground surface. They are believed to be pieces of assorted cookware and tableware, including liquid storage containers called olive jars. Small personal and household items were also among the findings – a lead fishing line weight, a copper lacing aglet and wrought iron nail and spike fragments. Additionally, the team recovered beads known to have been traded with Native Americans. These items are consistent with materials previously identified in the shipwrecks offshore in Pensacola Bay.

The artifacts were linked to the Spanish expedition led by Tristán de Luna y Arellano, who brought 1,500 soldiers, colonists, slaves and Aztec Indians in 11 ships from Veracruz, Mexico, to Pensacola to begin the Spanish colonization of the northern Gulf Coast in 1559. One month after they arrived, the colony was struck by a hurricane, sinking many of their ships and devastating their food supplies. After two years, the remnants of the colony were rescued by Spanish ships and returned to Mexico.

The Luna settlement inhabited Pensacola from 1559 to 1561, which predates the Spanish settlement in St. Augustine, Florida, by six years, and the English settlement in Jamestown, Virginia, by 48 years.

“If the Luna expedition hadn’t been devastated by a massive hurricane and had instead achieved its original goal, the reasons and circumstances surrounding the 1565 establishment of St. Augustine might never have happened,” explained Worth. “If Florida had grown as an extension of New Spain through Pensacola on the Gulf Coast to Santa Elena on the Atlantic, the history of the United States itself could have evolved quite differently.”
The winter encampment of Hernando de Soto’s Spanish exploratory expedition to Tallahassee, Florida, from 1539 to 1540, is the only earlier European habitation site positively identified by archaeologists in the southeastern U.S. Two earlier Spanish colonial settlements have yet to be found – those of Juan Ponce de León near Fort Myers, Florida, in 1521 and of Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón near Brunswick, Georgia, in 1526. However, neither settlement lasted more than a few weeks.

The discoveries made at the site of the Luna settlement signify that the two shipwrecks previously discovered in Pensacola Bay were wrecked at the anchorage for the entire Luna fleet. The first shipwreck was discovered by the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, and the second was found by UWF. The second shipwreck is currently being excavated by UWF with the assistance of a Florida Division of Historical Resources Special Category Grant. This new information about the location of the settlement may help UWF archaeologists narrow the field of search for the remaining shipwrecks.

With the continued cooperation of residents and property owners, UWF archaeologists will continue to examine the neighborhood to determine the extent and organization of the site.

“The shipwrecks have provided a tremendous insight into the nature of the machinery that brought Spain to the New World and how they operated this entire vast empire,” explained Worth. “In terms of understanding who they were after coming to the New World, this kind of archaeology at the terrestrial site will provide us that window.”

The UWF archaeology program includes a select group of 13 full-time professional archaeologists, nine support staff and numerous graduate students. The program has a rich history of significant instruction, research and public outreach in the Pensacola region. Exhibits displaying UWF research and Pensacola area archaeology are open to the public at the UWF Archaeology Institute, T.T. Wentworth Jr. Florida State Museum and Destination Archaeology at the Florida Public Archaeology Network Coordinating Center.

Experiential learning is a key component of undergraduate and graduate education at UWF. Each summer, the archaeology program offers multiple 10- to 11-week field school sections – like the one Garner attended in 1983 – during which students receive hands-on experience and develop skills necessary for employment. The University plans to include the Luna settlement site in field school sections led by Worth in Summer 2016.

“It’s hard to believe that this opportunity is finally here,” said Worth. “Not only do we know where the site is, but now we get to explore it.”

In order to protect the neighborhood and the integrity of the site, the UWF archaeology program does not plan to disclose the exact location of the Luna settlement. For more information, visit uwf.edu/luna.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA: Founded in 1963, the University of West Florida is a vibrant, distinctive institution of higher learning with undergraduate, graduate and targeted research programs. With multiple locations in Northwest Florida, the University serves a student population of more than 12,000. Dedicated to helping students realize their full potential, UWF favors small class sizes with quality teacher-scholars who deliver personalized, innovative, hands-on learning and leadership opportunities.
JOHN WORTH
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
John E. Worth is associate professor of historical archaeology in the Department of Anthropology at the University of West Florida, where he specializes in archaeology and ethnohistory focusing on the Spanish colonial era in the southeastern U.S. A Georgia native, Dr. Worth received his doctorate in anthropology from the University of Florida in 1992 and spent 15 years in public archaeology program administration in Georgia and Florida before becoming a member of the faculty at UWF in 2007. He is author of Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narratives of Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast (2014), The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida (1998), The Struggle for the Georgia Coast (1995 & 2007) and more than 150 other professional and lay publications and presented papers.

ELIZABETH BENCHLEY
ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Elizabeth D. Benchley is director of the Division of Anthropology and Archaeology and of the Archaeology Institute at the University of West Florida. Dr. Benchley manages the institute’s resources to support the academic and research interests of the division’s faculty, staff and students. Her local research focuses on the Spanish, British and American archaeology of the Pensacola area. She teaches courses in cultural resource management and writing in anthropology and she is active in public archaeology outreach. Dr. Benchley received her doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she directed the archaeological research laboratory and managed the cultural resource management program for over 20 years. She has authored hundreds of reports and monographs on her archaeological investigations in the Midwest and the Pensacola area.

TOM GARNER
RESEARCH ASSISTANT
Tom Garner is a Pensacola native and a local historian with more than 30 years of historical research experience. He attended the archaeology field school at UWF in 1983, which was then led by Dr. Judith Bense. Following his time attending the field school he worked at UWF as an archaeology field and lab tech for several years on a number of historic and prehistoric archaeological sites in the Pensacola area. In 1986, he alerted UWF to the location of the 1698 settlement of Pensacola, Presidio Santa María de Galve, which was the first permanent settlement of Pensacola and 139 years after the Luna settlement. Garner also contributed to the local community by founding the Pensacola Archaeological Society in 1985.
TOM GARNER'S FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT OF DISCOVERING THE LUNA SETTLEMENT

Locating the site of the 1559 settlement of Tristán de Luna has been a “holy grail” of Pensacola historians and archaeologists for many years, likely since the publication of “The Luna Papers” in 1928. My interest in the settlement began in the early 1980s under the guidance of Norman Simons, former curator of the Pensacola Historical Museum in Old Christ Church and later the first curator of the T. T. Wentworth Jr. Florida State Museum. Norman instilled in me a love of Pensacola history and, as an avid supporter of Pensacola archaeology, started me down the path of artifact identification. In 1983, at the urging of Norman, I attended an archaeology field school at the University of West Florida under the direction of Dr. Judy Bense. It was through Judy that I learned professional archaeological methods. In my mind it was Norman Simons and Judy Bense who, more than 30 years ago, set the stage for the discovery of the Luna settlement.

On Oct. 2, 2015, while driving through a Pensacola neighborhood, I noticed an area of ground that had recently been disturbed. Based on information contained in “The Luna Papers,” this general vicinity had, since at least the early 1980s, been considered a possible candidate for the site of the Luna settlement. The presence nearby of two shipwrecks associated with the Luna expedition further pointed to this general vicinity as a likely candidate. With this information in mind I checked the area of disturbed ground to see if any artifacts might be present.

I immediately noticed a large rim fragment of what I identified as middle style olive jar, a Spanish colonial pottery type, as well as several other fragments of pottery. Although middle style olive jars can occur over a significant time range, I knew that they could possibly be associated with the mid-16th century. With the idea in mind that this artifact could represent the Luna settlement, I contacted the UWF Archaeology Institute and explained what I had found. The institute then began the process of establishing contact with the property owner so that further investigation could take place.

On Oct. 23, I revisited the area of disturbed ground and noticed that the middle style olive jar rim was still in place. At that point I decided to perform a thorough surface collection of the area as artifacts exposed on the surface of the ground are susceptible to damage or collection by persons untrained in archaeological methods. It was my desire in collecting these potentially significant artifacts that they be properly preserved and not removed or damaged.

During the course of this first surface collection I discovered a large fragment of Columbia Plain majolica pottery, which can clearly date to the mid-16th century. At that point I understood that the site was likely associated with the Luna expedition. I immediately called the Archaeology Institute again, explained what I had found, and informed them that I had begun surface collection. Over the course of the next week I performed three additional surface collections of the area of disturbed ground and recovered numerous Spanish colonial and Native American artifacts, primarily fragments of pottery.

On Oct. 30, I brought the collected artifacts to the UWF Archaeology Laboratory where they were viewed by:

- Jan Lloyd, Director of the UWF Archaeology Laboratory
- Dr. John Worth, Associate Professor of Historical Archaeology in the UWF Department Anthropology
- Dr. Elizabeth Benchley, Director of the UWF Division of Anthropology and Archaeology and Director of the UWF Archaeology Institute.

John, an authority on Spanish colonial artifacts, archaeology and documents, confirmed that this artifact assemblage did date to the mid-16th century and was likely associated with the Luna settlement. John’s initial assessment of the artifacts was “Holy Moly!” – the best assessment of an archaeological site I’ve ever heard. One week later, on Nov. 6, with the generous permission and support of the property owners, a UWF archaeology team under the direction of Dr. John Worth, with assistance from Dr. Elizabeth Benchley, began preliminary investigation of the site of the 1559 settlement of Tristán de Luna.
LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Assorted pottery sherds originally found on the surface of the Luna settlement, including Spanish olive jar, lead glazed coarse earthenware, majolica, incised and plan Native American pottery.

Tom Garner holding a sherd of undecorated Spanish majolica he originally spotted on the surface of the site, a type called Columbia Plain diagnostic to the 16th century.

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LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Tom Garner holding a neck sherd of early style Spanish olive jar he originally spotted on the surface of the site, diagnostic to the 16th century.

Two neck sherds of early style Spanish olive jar found at the Luna settlement, with a partially complete early style olive jar with preserved stopper found on the Emanuel Point I wreck.

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LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Sherds of Spanish lead glazed coarse earthenware found at the Luna settlement.

Sherds of Spanish lead glazed coarse earthenware found at the Luna settlement, with three larger sherds discovered on the Emanuel Point I wreck.

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LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Sherds of Columbia Plain majolica found at the Luna settlement, with scale.

Sherds of Columbia Plain majolica found at the Luna settlement, with an intact plate discovered on the Emanuel Point I wreck, with scale.
LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Sherds of Aztec tradition red filmed pottery found at the Luna settlement, two with traces of black painted designs, with a modeled face sherd discovered on the Emanuel Point I wreck, with scale.
LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Sherds of incised, punctated and plain Native American pottery found at the Luna settlement.

Assorted metal artifacts found at the Luna settlement, including two decorative sheet copper rosettes, rolled lead line weights, a fragment of an engraved copper bell, and a rolled copper aglet, or lacing tip.

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LUNA SETTLEMENT ARTIFACTS

Assorted wrought iron nails found at the Luna settlement.

Glass trade beads found at the Luna settlement, including five seven-layer faceted chevron beads, and one tubular Nueva Cadiz Twisted bead, with scale.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM operates under the umbrella of the Division of Anthropology and Archaeology. Units of the program include the Department of Anthropology, which hosts the academic program; the Archaeology Institute, which conducts local archaeological research, instruction and public outreach and provides financial support to the academic program; the Florida Public Archaeology Network, which provides innovative public outreach statewide; and the Maritime Services Center, which provides for safety on and under the water by maintaining UWF’s fleet of boats and overseeing UWF’s scientific diving program. The archaeology program includes a select group of 13 full-time professional archaeologists, nine support staff and numerous graduate students. The program also includes faculty members in the areas of cultural and biological anthropology.

Exhibits related to UWF research and Pensacola area archaeology are available to the public on campus at the UWF Archaeology Institute and in downtown Pensacola at the T. T. Wentworth Museum and Destination Archaeology at the FPAN Coordinating Center.

The UWF archaeology program was founded by Dr. Judith A. Bense in 1980 and has a rich history of significant research and public outreach in the Pensacola region on land and underwater. The program’s discoveries and accomplishments, listed below, have contributed to the community in many ways.

- The 2,000-year old Hawkshaw Native American site was found and investigated at the planned location of the Gulf Power headquarters building in Pensacola. The project included extensive use of volunteers and public outreach, and it initiated the UWF focus on public archaeology.

- Two Spanish shipwrecks associated with the 1559 Luna colonization attempt have been investigated in Pensacola Bay through multi-year projects.

- Pensacola’s three First Spanish presidios (a Spanish settlement with a fort, a church and a village) were investigated through multi-year projects including:
  - Presidio Santa Maria de Galve (1698-1719) at NAS Pensacola
  - Presidio Isla de Santa Rosa (1722-1752) on Santa Rosa Island
  - Presidio San Miguel de Panzacola (1756-1763) in downtown Pensacola

- One Spanish shipwreck associated with the Presidio Santa Maria de Galve, the Rosario (1705), was investigated.

- One Spanish mission to the Apalachee Indians near Molino, San Joseph de Escambe (1741-1761), was found and investigated through multi-year field schools.

- The British forts and Town of Pensacola (1763-1781) continue to be investigated through various projects in downtown Pensacola.

- The Second Spanish town and related settlements (1781-1821) continue to be investigated through various projects in downtown Pensacola.

- The Second Spanish and American water powered mill sites and brickyards were investigated across the region, including the Arcadia Mill industrial complex near Milton.

- St. Michael’s Cemetery, Pensacola’s colonial and American community cemetery, was mapped, inventoried and restored multiple times.

- Historic cemeteries in the region, including African American cemeteries, are being documented and restored by working with the public.

- Sites related to the Civil War are being identified across the region.

- Shipwrecks dating from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century are being documented in the Gulf of Mexico, Pensacola Bay and the rivers that drain into the bay system.
EUROPEAN COLONIZATION in the southeastern U.S.

ABBREVIATED CHRONOLOGY OF EUROPEAN COLONIZATION IN THE SOUTHEASTERN U.S.

SELECTED CHRONOLOGY OF EUROPEAN COLONIZATION IN THE SOUTHEASTERN U.S.

1492: The first Christopher Columbus expedition reaches the Bahamas and Greater Antilles.

1513: The first Juan Ponce de León expedition reaches Florida and explores its southern coastlines.

1521: The second Juan Ponce de León expedition attempts to establish a colony near Fort Myers, Florida. The colony is repulsed by Calusa Indians and withdraws; Ponce dies in Havana from a mortal arrow wound.

1526: The Lúcas Vázquez de Ayllón expedition attempts to establish a colony along the Atlantic coast of Georgia. Ayllón dies and the colony lasts only a few weeks before the survivors withdraw to the Caribbean.

1528: The Pánfilo de Narváez expedition unintentionally lands near Tampa Bay after storms blow the fleet off their original course to settle along the northwestern Gulf of Mexico; the expedition members attempt to travel westward across Florida’s Gulf Coast by land and then sea, but nearly all, including Narváez, are lost along the way.

1539-1543: The Hernando de Soto expedition lands at Tampa Bay and pushes north to Tallahassee and inland, exploring much of the southeastern U.S. Soto dies along the way and the survivors finally make their way to Mexico. Francisco Maldonado, one of Soto’s lieutenants, makes annual resupply expeditions from Havana to Pensacola Bay, known then as Ochuse, but he never meets the expedition.

1549: Dominican priest Fray Luís Cancer, three other priests and one lay brother attempt to establish a purely religious settlement in Florida, landing in Tampa Bay. Cancer and two others are murdered before the expedition withdraws back to Veracruz, Mexico.

1559-1561: The Tristán de Luna y Arellano expedition establishes a colonial settlement at Pensacola Bay, originally in an effort to push inland to Coosa and finally to Santa Elena on the South Carolina Coast. The destruction of the fleet by a hurricane dooms the expedition, which finally withdraws two years later.

1562-1565: Successive French expeditions under Jean Ribault and René de Laudonnière establish short-lived colonial settlements at Charlesfort at Santa Elena and at Fort Caroline near Jacksonville, Florida, but the former is abandoned and the latter is conquered by the Spanish.

1565: Pedro Menéndez de Avilés establishes St. Augustine as the first successful and ultimately permanent Spanish colony in the U.S.

1585-1587: Walter Raleigh’s expeditions establish short-lived English colonial settlements at Roanoke on the coast of North Carolina.

1607: English Jamestown is established by the Virginia Company of London.
BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF THE TRISTÁN DE LUNA Y ARELLANO EXPEDITION

June 11, 1559: The Luna fleet departs from San Juan de Ulua (Veracruz).

July 12, 1559: The fleet reaches the coast of Florida at Santa Rosa Island near modern Navarre Beach.

Late July, 1559: Accidentally passing the Bay of Ochuse (Pensacola Bay), the fleet reaches the Bay of Filipina (Mobile Bay), offloading surviving horses to travel by land back to Ochuse.

August 14, 1559: The fleet arrives at the Bay of Ochuse (Pensacola Bay), selecting a site for settlement (christened Santa María de Ochuse) and offloading ships over the following five weeks.

September 1559: An exploratory detachment of 100 men under two captains is sent into the interior from Ochuse, one by land and the other by water up the Escambia River, returning after traveling 20 leagues in 20 days and arriving just after the hurricane.

September 19-20, 1559: A hurricane strikes the fleet at Ochuse, destroying all but three vessels and most of the provisions.

September-November 1559: A detachment of 200 men under four captains is sent back into the interior from Ochuse, discovering a large Indian town called Nanipacana along the central Alabama River some 40 leagues inland, remaining there and sending word back to Ochuse.

December 1559: The first relief fleet arrives in Ochuse from San Juan de Ulua.

Mid February, 1560: Luna and most of the remaining colonists move inland by land and water from Ochuse to Nanipacana (christened Santa Cruz de Nanipacana), leaving 50-100 men at Ochuse.

Mid March-Early April, 1560: Luna sends a detachment in four boats upriver from Nanipacana, returning in 22 days after traveling 60-70 leagues along the Alabama River.

April 15, 1560: Luna sends a detachment of 200 soldiers under Sergeant Major Mateo del Sauz upriver from Nanipacana to the Coosa province (near Calhoun, Georgia) in search of food.

June 24, 1560: After multiple petitions from starving soldiers and other colonists, Luna orders Nanipacana abandoned, and colonists descend to Mobile Bay.

Late July, 1560: Luna’s colonists move from Mobile Bay back to Ochuse on Pensacola Bay; a second relief fleet arrives in Ochuse eight days later; some colonists are evacuated with the returning fleet.

August 10, 1560: Luna dispatches 50-60 men in two frigates and a bark to sail to Havana and proceeds to establish a temporary settlement at the Punta de Santa Elena (Parris Island, South Carolina).

Late August, 1560: The Sauz detachment accompanies Coosa warriors in a raid on the rebellious Napochin province (near Chattanooga, Tennessee).

About November, 1560: The Sauz detachment returns to Ochuse from Coosa.

December 1560: A third relief fleet arrives in Ochuse from San Juan de Ulua; more colonists are evacuated with the returning fleet.

Early April, 1561: A fourth relief fleet arrives under Ángel de Villafañe, with orders from the Viceroy to replace Luna as governor; Luna is licensed to go to Spain, with most of the remaining colonists taken by Villafañe to Havana, leaving only a detachment of 50 men at Ochuse.

May 27, 1561: After staging the expedition in Havana, Villafañe reaches Santa Elena, exploring northward before storms and the loss of two frigates force him to abandon the settlement.

Late August, 1561: After returning to Hispaniola and Cuba, Villafañe returns to Ochuse to pick up the remaining soldiers before returning to San Juan de Ulua.
BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF PENSACOLA’S HISTORY STARTING WITH THE LUNA SETTLEMENT

1559: A Spanish expedition from Veracruz, Mexico, led by Tristán de Luna y Arellano forms a colony in Pensacola and names it Santa María de Ochuse. The settlement is disbanded after two years.

1698: A Spanish expedition from Veracruz, Mexico, led by Andrés de Arriola forms a new settlement, this time at the future location of NAS Pensacola. The new settlement is named Presidio Santa María de Galve and consists of a fort, church and village.

1719: French forces capture Santa Maria de Galve during the War of the Quadruple Alliance.

1722: After the end of the War of the Quadruple Alliance, the Pensacola area is returned to Spanish control. A new presidio is established on Santa Rosa Island and named Isla de Santa Rosa, Punta de Sigüenza.

1725: Presidio Isla de Santa Rosa is destroyed by a hurricane.

1756: The Spanish settlement relocates and forms Presidio San Miguel de Panzacola in the future location of downtown Pensacola.

1763: Florida, including San Miguel de Panzacola, is transferred to British control after the end of the Seven Years War. Britain renames the location Pensacola and establishes it as capital of British West Florida.

1781: Spain captures Pensacola from the British in the Battle of Pensacola during the American Revolutionary War.

1783: Florida is officially transferred to Spain in 1783 at the close of the American Revolution via the Treaty of Paris. Florida becomes Spanish territory for the second time.

1814: During the War of 1812, British ships seek refuge in Pensacola Bay. United States General Andrew Jackson storms and captures Pensacola with 3,000 soldiers. Britain retreats and Pensacola returns to Spanish control.


1861: Florida secedes from the Union and joins the Confederacy. The Battle of Santa Rosa Island occurs on Oct. 9, 1861, marking the first major Civil War battle in Florida. Union troops hold Fort Pickens for the entirety of the war.

1865: Florida formally surrenders to the Union on May 20, 1865.

1868: Florida is readmitted to the Union on June 25, 1868.