

Archaeological Dig – Berrien Springs

INSTRUCTOR

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TARRAGINDI DIG - COURSE OVERVIEW

In this program, you will participate in a real archaeological dig. You will learn how archaeologists conduct a dig, identify and date artifacts, and catalog and record their findings. You are going to dig like the pros and you may uncover some amazing history from our own local area.

We have been given special permission to dig on a piece of land in Berrien Springs that was owned by successive generations of one family for nearly 100 years. Over this time, they created what is called a “Farmer’s Dump” - an archaeologist’s treasure trove of local artifacts from at least the past 100 years. The Journal Era newspaper in Berrien Springs will be following our progress.

A parent, grandparent, or guardian is welcome to accompany you. A parent or guardian must accompany all participants aged 6-12 (unless they are attending the Friday – Forrest Cottage School Class). If you cannot accompany your younger child, please let your supervisors know so they can supervise your child for you. Please respect the neighbors’ right to privacy and peace by not entering their properties and only parking in the designated areas.

SAFETY

Archaeology is a lot of fun and very rewarding, especially when you make a significant find. However, it is not without risks, even though they occur very rarely. We will take all precautions to ensure your safety, but consistent with archaeological digs, all participants will be required to sign a waiver. Please remember that the dig site is private property and you or anyone you know are not to enter the site outside of class hours or when your supervisors are not there.

ARTIFACTS

All artifacts found at the site remain the property of the property owner who has expressed an intention to donate items of historical importance to the Berrien Springs History Center crediting the student/s for the find. Students will be allowed to keep some items with the property owner’s permission provided they are not sold or profited from.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- A camera, or phone/tablet camera (it doesn’t have to be fancy)
- Warm clothes suitable for being outdoors during late winter and early Spring

WE SUPPLY

- Dig tools
- Gloves and protective gear
- Artifact cleaning supplies
- A firepit (to warm up around) and an outdoor classroom
- The dig site maintenance and portable toilet unit rental

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – JAN 21-24	ORIENTATION – OLD COURTHOUSE 7pm-8pm
Berrien Springs History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	This week we will talk about what archaeology is, see some old artifacts, and some modern ones. We will also undertake orientation for our local archaeological dig.
WEEK 2 – MARCH 25 - 28	HISTORY CENTER TOUR – at your selected class time
Berrien Springs History Center – 313 N Cass St, Berrien Springs	This week we will take a tour through the Berrien Springs History Center with curator, John Moga. He will show us artifacts and buildings that are not usually open to the public.
WEEK 3 – APRIL 6	PRE-DIG GET-TOGETHER – 2pm-4pm
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Join us for a pre-dig get-together. Bring yourself, your parents, grandparents, or guardians so they can all take a look at the dig site.
WEEK 4 – APRIL 8-11	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	We will survey the area and decide where we want to dig, set up our dig squares, and start digging, cleaning artifacts, and cataloging.
Week 5 – APRIL 5-18	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Digging, cleaning artifacts, and cataloging.
WEEK 6 – APRIL 22-25	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Digging, cleaning artifacts, and cataloging.
Week 7 – APRIL 29 - MAY 2	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Digging, cleaning artifacts, and cataloging.
WEEK 8 – MAY 6-9	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Digging, cleaning artifacts, and cataloging. <i>Last week for the Forrest Cottage School Class who do longer classes during the semester.</i>
Week 9 – MAY 13-15	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Digging, cleaning artifacts, and cataloging.
WEEK 10 – MAY 20-22	DIG SITE
Dig Site - 6161 Pheasant Court Berrien Springs	Wrap up of the site, replacing excavated soil, and presenting interesting finds to the dig class.

CLASS TIMES

Tuesday – 10am–12pm or 4pm–6pm;

Wednesday 10am-12pm;

Thursday - 10am–12pm or 4pm–6pm;

Friday - Forrest Cottage School Only - 8.30am-12pm

YOUR PROJECT

Research an artifact and try to find an answer to: what was it used for, when was it made in this style, is the manufacturer still in business, do they still make that product, and how has this product changed over time? Is the product still used or has it been replaced with a new invention or technology?

ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTORS

Jan Sigvartsen PhD has taught Archaeology and Ancient Religion classes at Andrews University, Michigan, and the Theologische Hochschule Friedensau, Germany where he was also the PhD Programs Coordinator and Associate Director of the Institute of Biblical Studies and Archaeology. He has participated in archaeological digs in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, has traveled extensively to historic sites globally, and has lived in Israel, Norway, England, Germany, Australia, and the United States. Dr Sigvartsen exceeds the [Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology as stipulated in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61.](#)

Leanne Sigvartsen trained as a psychologist in Australia and spent many years as a counselor and academic advisor for teens and young adults. She currently works with the Chicago-based *Center for Collaborative Study for Trauma, Health Equity, and Neurobiology* as their Research Project Director. She is a triple citizen of the United States, Australia, and Malta, and has lived in the United States, Australia, and Germany.