

# NEANDERTHALS ON NAXOS, GREECE?

July 28, 2017   Jason Lau   Day of Archaeology 2017, Excavation, Fieldwork, Greece, Prehistory, World Archaeology   early humans, lithics, Neanderthal, Neanderthals, palaeolithic, snaparchaeology, stelida2017

## HI THERE, THANKS FOR TUNING IN!

What a cool event and initiative this is – it's always fascinating to engage with the field of archaeology and see what kinds of great research is being done all around the globe. That being said, we should introduce ourselves.



*Our 2016 Team*

We're the **Stélida Naxos Archaeological Project** (aka SNAP), a team digging away on the beautiful island of Naxos, Greece. Not the worst place to dig in the world, that's for sure... We dig on a hill called Stélida on the West side of the island:

And although we've just very recently finished our 5<sup>th</sup> working season (our 3<sup>rd</sup> excavation season after 2 years of surveying), we definitely didn't want to miss out on Day of Archaeology 2017!

<https://youtu.be/IaGVm-H5bNg>



*Our 2017 Team*

SNAP IS A GEO-ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION OF A CHERT SOURCE (CHERT IS A TYPE OF ROCK). WE SAY GEO-ARCHAEOLOGICAL BECAUSE WE BORROW METHODS FROM THE EARTH SCIENCES (LIKE GEOLOGY) IN ORDER TO HELP SOLVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

This site is associated with early prehistoric stone tool workshops—places where what we call *lithics* were created. So it's quite different from the traditional archaeology we see in this area of Greece, which usually include things like figurines and ceramics. Stélida was first used as far back as 260,000 years ago, with some of its early visitors likely including Neanderthals. Awesome, right?

But wait for it: what's more awesome is that, if we're right about Neanderthals having been on this island more than 200,000 years ago, it means that it very much predates the popular idea that the region was only colonized by early farmers arriving about 9,000 years ago.

**Would it mean that Neanderthals could have gotten here on boats?**

This is an exciting time to be working on the earliest history of human activity in the Aegean. We hope to conduct a detailed survey and excavation of Stélida because it has the potential to teach us a lot about the earlier prehistoric Cyclades, specifically how early humans and Neanderthals moved around this region.

## A DAY ON THE DIG

**Digging on a beautiful Greek island is nothing short of fantastic.**

The sights and sounds from the moment you wake up are vibrant and lively. We also owe it to the wonderful village of **Vivlos** for giving us a place to call home when we're not digging up on Stélida. Instead of writing about it here, we've got a cool video on what an average day on the dig looks like, starting from the 5am wake-ups:

<https://youtu.be/OlP1zXj1yB4>

And then the rest of it captured in this cool Instagram story:

<https://youtu.be/LcKJbBnfD-U>

## ASK US ANYTHING

**In an effort to make our work more dialogical, we decided to open up the floor for questions from our followers and viewers from all over the world.**

This season, we answered all of the brilliant questions on an average day on the site:

<https://youtu.be/w0xdVY5MOKg>

## CARTER'S CORNER

**SNAP is directed by Dr. Tristan Carter of McMaster University. (Some call him *Stringy*.)**

And since Dr. Carter's a fantastic lecturer, we couldn't hesitate to get him his own vlogging show, *Carter's Corner*, where he answers viewer questions from various locations. For the first series of 5 videos, we have him sitting in Trench 28 up on the hill of Stélida.

<https://youtu.be/LIxlZxLEmPI?list=PLhnkIOzlrGJUHe4So4OvhGmEWc30wEBsV>

In keeping with the spirit of our "Ask Us Anything", we continue to take questions from our followers from all over the world and Dr. Carter responds directly to them in a lighthearted vlog-style series. Here is our official release of our first 5 episodes—we hope you enjoy!

## EXCAVATION BLOGS

**If you're more of a reader, we also wrote weekly blog posts this season for our 6 weeks on Naxos, here on Medium, documenting our week-to-week lives on the dig:**



 Stélida Naxos Archaeological Project  
Jul 15 · 4 min read

## 2017 Season: Week 6


Hello archaeology fans! We're back!

Hopefully it's not a surprise for you, but we've recently just completed our *last* week of excavation on Naxos this season. Let's take a look at how it all went, shall we?!

### Wrapping Up Around Stélida

[Read more...](#)



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6

## NEXT STEPS

The next couple of years for SNAP looks exciting, but without all of the dirt and thorny bushes.

Specifically, next summer, we'll be having a study season, which means that we won't be doing any digging, but instead really getting down and looking at everything we've found over the past 4–5 years and all the data we've collected.

Over the next two years we're also looking forward to more public engagement and local cultural heritage activities, such as creating a **teaching pack for local elementary schools** as well as an eventual **public exhibition at the Naxos Museum** (which is currently being renovated). Super exciting!

## KEEP IN TOUCH

If you've liked our work and want to stay in touch, we'd absolutely love that too.

We have a bunch of social media that is also open for questions and comments:

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Reddit](#)

Our official website has official information about the project: <http://stelida.mcmaster.ca>

And lastly, if you have any direct questions, please feel free to email us at [stelida@mcmaster.ca](mailto:stelida@mcmaster.ca)—we'd love to hear from you!

## THANKS FOR CHECKING OUT OUR WORK AT SNAP!