

Nacoochee Indian Mound



The Indian Mound – with its gazebo atop -- is one of the most recognized landmarks in Georgia. The mound itself dates from around 200 BC while the gazebo was added in 1890. A formal excavation in 1915 revealed 75 human burials from various time periods. A test excavation in 2004 documented evidence of occupation during the Middle Woodland Phase (1000 to 200 BCE) and the Lamar Period (1350 to 1600 CE). The Indian Mound and the Hardman Farm were donated to the State of Georgia in 1999.

Notes for the Photographer: Because the mound is in an open pasture it gets good, low light in the morning and the evening. If you shoot from the pull-off on highway 17, you are 360 feet away from the mound. From Highway 75 (sunrise shot?) it is a little over 700 feet. For distances like that I use a tripod. Even in poor light there are possibilities. See this remarkable photo by Barb Johns.

Directions: From the bridge in Helen travel 1.8 miles south on Georgia 17 to a left turn (still on Georgia 17). The Indian Mound is on the right opposite a pull off at the historical marker. Coordinates to the pull off on State Highway 17: 34°41'04.2" N 83°42'31.9W



Interesting Fact: Occasionally someone will make the point that erecting a gazebo on the top of an Indian Mound was the height of disrespect for the 75 individuals there interred. Maybe so. But others point out that the mere existence of the gazebo in 1915 may have prevented the mound from being excavated down to the ground. You might also make the point that the iconic image has done much to promote the mound's recognition and preservation. Either way, it's a beautiful spot.