



North Carolina Archaeological Society

Newsletter

4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619

<http://www.rla.unc.edu/ncas>

WINTER 2006, Volume 15, Number 4

From the President

Greetings to all! I hope that Archaeology Month 2005 was as exciting for you as it was for me. With so many events on the calendar it was difficult to choose because I wanted to attend all of them. But that being impossible, I'll tell you about my "Archaeology Month." Actually, things got started in late September at our Fall Meeting at ECU in Greenville. Charlie Ewen and Randy Daniel and staff treated us to another interesting and informative program in addition to touring their new laboratories. That visit to the Underwater Archaeology Lab was out of this world! Well attended, but if you were not there, we missed you and you missed a fun time! My next adventure was a "dream come true." I was invited to Badin to attend a special ceremony commemorating the gift of prehistoric artifacts from the Hardaway Site and a gift from the Alcoa Foundation to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I had always wanted to visit the Hardaway Site, especially after reading Joffre Coe's account in *Formative Cultures of the Carolina Piedmont*. Tommy Gibson and Alcoa Aluminum were gracious hosts, and I was able to visit and explore one of the oldest and best known sites in North America. What a wonderful day! Just when I didn't think it could get better, it did. On October 13-16, the NCAS sponsored a volunteer dig in practically my backyard! Joe Herbert, archaeologist from Cultural Resources at Fort Bragg, organized the event, and with his hardworking staff plus many local volunteers, students from area schools, and Society members (some who traveled many miles), it was an outstanding experience! One thing stood out in

my mind after it was over — participation is the key to a successful organization! I'm looking forward to more of the same in the future. Last, but not least, was the NCAS booth at State Fair in Raleigh. For part of two days I had the privilege of representing the NCAS to the public. The Forest Service had a very attractive and informative display, and it was a rewarding experience. This is something that all members should do at least one time. Take my word for it — you'll enjoy it more than you can imagine. So as you can see, Archaeology Month 2005 was a favorite time for me. But this leads to another subject — NCAS membership. I am having such a good time as a Society member that I want others to have the same fun, so I'm always prospecting for new members. With the Christmas season coming soon, a gift membership to a friend would be a gift that they would treasure. Also, I would like to challenge all members to sign up at least one new member this year and when you do, email me and tell me about it! In summary, I am pleased and honored to serve as President, and I am looking forward to a rewarding two years. If you have any suggestions or concerns, please get them to me. My address is on the back of the newsletter: my email address is toakes_ec@yahoo.com and my telephone is 252-453-2545. I promise that all comments will be considered and that I'll personally answer you. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!

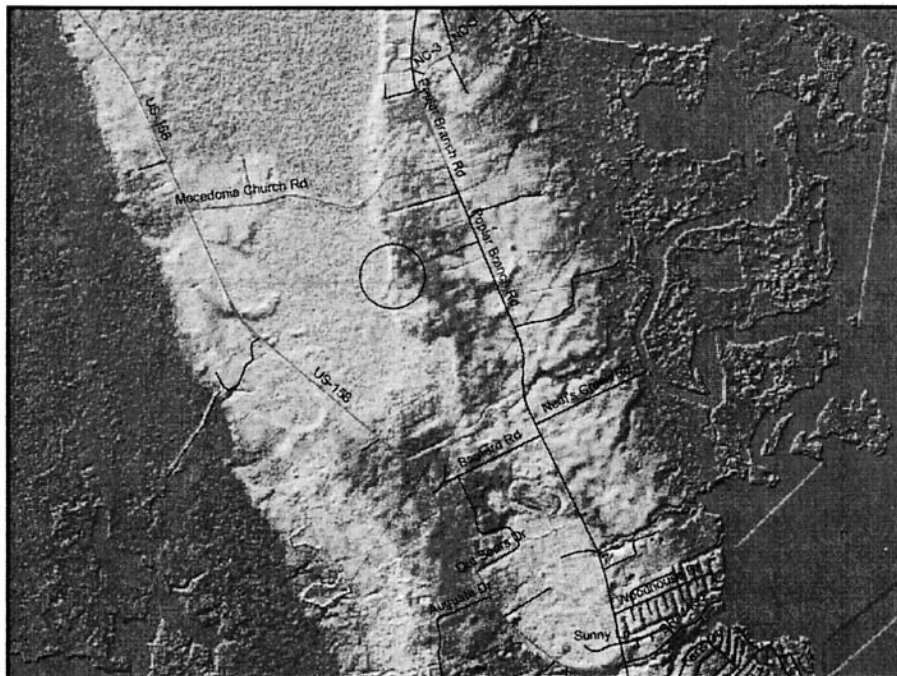
Tom Oakes

Twiddy Site Volunteer Dig Big Success

On October 13–16, the North Carolina Archaeological Society sponsored a very successful volunteer dig in Currituck County on property that is scheduled for development. Activities focused on the Twiddy-Saunders site, so dubbed following on-site negotiations with the folks who found the site (the Twiddy family of Poplar Branch) and those who owned the property (the Saunders family) prior to selling it to the developer. The site is located on the western side of the Currituck peninsula against a broad wetland bordering the North River. It is situated on a long, narrow, aeolian (wind-blown) sand dune that formed during the Pleistocene on the rim of a very large Carolina Bay, or blowout depression (Figure 1). The swamp adjacent to the site is actually the interior portion of the bay, probably an attractive location for wetland resources in the past. The fact that the site is situated on a Carolina Bay rim increases its archaeological significance, as further research could answer broad questions about climate change over the

Four 2-x-2-m
1-x-2-m unit
excavated along

Figure 1. Satellite LIDAR image showing the topography of the site area (circled), which occupies a relict Carolina Bay dune rim. Carolina Bay rims like those pictured here have great research potential to provide paleoclimate data from the Pleistocene and Holocene era.



materials were
deep as 100cm
water table

at 120cm. A possible post-mold pattern was detected in one excavation unit, but further digging would be necessary to confirm this. A buried paleosol (or A horizon) and several large features (pits of unknown function) were exposed at about 65cm below the surface in two excavation units. When these pit features were excavated, they were found to contain charcoal and flakes, but no diagnostic (culture-identifying) artifacts.

Based on field observations, the cultural components represented in the NCAS-excavated collection are affiliated predominantly with the Middle Woodland Mount Pleasant Phase. Current estimates of the dates for site occupation (based solely on artifact styles) are about 300 B.C. to A.D. 300. Pottery was found in every unit and most of it was net impressed, with a few cord-marked and plain (smoothed) specimens. Based on field observations, these sherds appear to be fragments of pottery vessels with walls that were rather thin, with reddish brown paste including no appreciable temper, fired at relatively low temperatures. Cord-marked wares were excavated from the site by members of the Twiddy family prior to the NCAS dig,

units and one
were
a base line
oriented with
the dune
crest, with
about 70
meters
separating the
southernmost
and
northernmost
units.
Cultural
recovered as
with the
encountered

but pottery of the Colington series (Late Woodland period, post A.D. 900) or Deep Creek series (Early Woodland, pre A.D. 400) were noticeably absent from the site. Also in the Twiddy collection, found at the site prior to the NCAS dig, were a few Kirk/Palmer, Morrow Mountain, and Savannah River projectile points, but no clearly diagnostic Archaic points were found in the NCAS excavations.

The Middle Woodland lithic assemblage at the site is especially interesting. It includes a great deal of jasper apparently reduced by bi-polar methods from local gravel. There is a very strong representation of a point type that does not fit comfortably into any previously described typology for the region (Figure 2). This class of points is typically small and triangular in shape with a rounded, excurvate base. (It is this consistent rounded basal shape that sets these points off from the normal range of Woodland period triangular points.) Many of the points tend to be thick along the median ridge and vary widely in shape and size, suggesting a more expedient, somewhat less structured reduction process, perhaps constrained by the small size of the cores. These points were common in levels with the Mount Pleasant pottery, and it appears that the pottery and point type are part of a cultural stylistic focus. Not a single large triangular point of the Roanoke type was represented either in NCAS finds or the Twiddy collection.

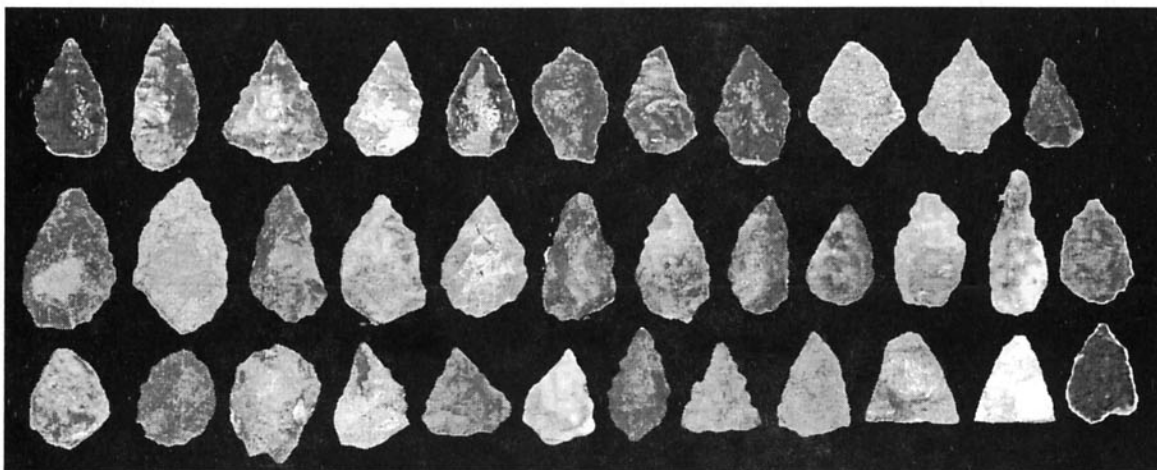


Figure 2. Jasper projectile points such as these, in Clayton Twiddy's collection, were excavated in association with Mount

The NCAS project made good use of the opportunity to collect samples of charcoal for ^{14}C dates, soil and pottery for thermoluminescence (TL) dates, and sediment samples for optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) dates. Now all we need are the funds! The site is on property zoned for the construction of single-family residential homes and the lots are soon to be sold. With the cooperation of the developer, C. A. Howard and the NCAS, the residents of Currituck County have taken a decisive step in preserving North Carolina's cultural heritage!

Tom Oakes, our new NCAS president, did an outstanding job recruiting volunteers, arranging support from the Currituck Historical Society and the Coinjock Ruritan Club, flawlessly organizing the event. NCAS volunteers were treated to wonderful meals each noon and evening. Many local folks volunteered each day and two high school classes participated. Several new NCAS members submitted applications at the site and it is rumored that Clay Swindell and Tom Oakes are considering organizing a local chapter of the NCAS. A new NCAS member, Max Freeze, who is a professional photographer, made loads of

pictures and will be having these posted to a Wal-Mart web page soon. With the log-in password anyone can select photos and have them printed at their local Wal-Mart, so contact Tom Oakes for a password if you are interested. Artifact processing and analysis will begin sometime this winter and if you would like to be involved with this, please call Tom or Clay.



Alcoa donates outreach grant, artifacts, to UNC-Chapel Hill

CHAPEL HILL — School children, scholars, and the public will learn more about North Carolina's earliest inhabitants, thanks to two gifts from Alcoa Inc. and the company's nonprofit foundation to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Alcoa Inc. is donating more than 1.3 million artifacts to UNC's Research Laboratories of Archaeology from the 10,000-year-old Hardaway archaeological site near Badin in Stanly County.

The Alcoa Foundation is awarding UNC a \$220,000 grant for outreach programs to educate school children and the public about the artifacts and the site, a National Historic Landmark. The company announced the two gifts, valued at around \$353,000, on October 3rd at the Hardaway site.

This is the second gift of Hardaway artifacts to UNC by Alcoa, completing an initial donation of about 200,000 artifacts in 1998. The entire collection contains about 1.5 million artifacts, mostly stone tools that were used by ancient peoples who lived at the site.

The total value of the entire Hardaway collection and the new outreach grant is \$769,000.

The Hardaway site, located on the Yadkin River, is the oldest excavated settlement in North Carolina and one of the oldest and most significant archaeological sites in North America, dating to before 8,000 B.C. The site is owned by Alcoa, which operates four hydroelectric stations, dams, and reservoirs along a 38-mile stretch of the Yadkin River.

“The Hardaway artifacts tell an important story about the earliest inhabitants of North Carolina, and we believe they should be kept in the state permanently,” said Geoff Cromer, president of U.S. Primary Metals, Alcoa. “Through continued research and public outreach, UNC can help us better understand the history of the state and its first people.”

The outreach grant will allow for creation of a variety of inter-related programs, such as an “Archaeology Days” event, an exhibit on North Carolina’s first people at local museums across the state, a public television program, and teacher education materials.

Part of the grant will be used to help renovate a 3,200-square-foot storage space in UNC’s Hamilton Hall, making a new, permanent home for the artifacts.

Under an agreement with Alcoa, UNC archaeologists unearthed the Hardaway artifacts during two separate periods of fieldwork, with the first excavations taking place in 1948.

Dr. Vin Steponaitis, an anthropology professor and director of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, part of UNC’s College of Arts and Sciences, said Alcoa’s gift makes the Hardaway artifacts permanently available to future scholars and students at Carolina, to North Carolina’s school children, and to the public.

“The collection is an important part of North Carolina’s heritage that we have had the privilege of caring for at UNC,” Steponaitis said. “Alcoa’s gift transcends a dollar amount. We are grateful for the completion of this gift, because the artifacts offer a lot of information from which we can keep learning about North Carolina’s earliest people. We’ve only scratched the surface in terms of studying the collection.”

The artifacts are part of the university’s seven-million-piece North Carolina Archaeological Collection, one of the finest collections of Southeastern archaeological materials.

Examples of the proposed programs funded by the outreach grant include:

- a major public event, “Archaeology Days,” at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh, which would showcase the Hardaway collection;
- an exhibit on “North Carolina’s First People,” which would debut at UNC’s Morehead Planetarium and Science Center and could travel to other museums in the state;
- a public television episode on archaeology which would prominently feature Hardaway in the series, “Exploring North Carolina,” which airs on UNC-TV;
- development of teaching kits and posters that could be coordinated with lesson plans on Hardaway. The staff of UNC’s Ackland Art Museum would assist in kit development and poster design; and
- development of an online teacher workshop and digital resource library about Hardaway through LEARN North Carolina, a public service of UNC’s School of Education.

“If you ask most people on the street when North Carolina history begins, they think of the Lost Colony and Roanoke. Our goal is to raise awareness of the fact that people have been living here for 10,000 years,” Steponaitis said. “This is something all citizens of North Carolina need to know.”

The Alcoa gifts count toward the university's Carolina First Campaign goal of \$2 billion. Carolina First is a comprehensive, multi-year, private fund-raising campaign to support Carolina's vision of becoming the nation's leading public university.

NCAS Newsletter Publication Schedule

All NCAS members are encouraged to submit articles and news items to Dee Nelms, Associate Editor, for inclusion in the *Newsletter*. Please use the following cut-off dates as guides for your submissions:

Spring Issue	February 28	Fall Issue	August 31
Summer Issue	May 31	Winter Issue	November 30

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