



North Carolina Archaeological Society

Newsletter

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Historical Archaeology in North Carolina Well Represented

A Report from the Recent Society for Historical Archaeology
Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia

In whatever vocation you practice—be it actor, artist, or accountant; doctor, diplomat, or detective; salesman, secretary, or soldier—conventions and professional meetings are a means to learn about new technological or legal developments, renew friendships with acquaintances, and see and try new products (not to mention an occasion to take a brief vacation away from the routine of an office!). For the archaeologist, professional meetings and conferences offer all of the above, in addition to an opportunity to share their most current research with their peers. Different conferences are organized around different themes or locations, the most common of which are: a geographic region (such as the Southeastern Archaeological Conference for those archaeologists practicing in the southeastern United States and Caribbean region); a specific topic, such as a lithic or prehistoric ceramic conference to debate types and typologies; or a specific time period.

This latter theme is the case with the Society for Historical Archaeology, the 40th annual meeting of which was held in Williamsburg, Virginia, this past January. The location for this conference was chosen to commemorate the 400th anniversary of permanent English settlement on nearby Jamestown Island, and the meeting was attended by almost 1600 historical archaeologists. Due to its convenient location, many archaeologists who have been working on protohistoric and historic period sites in North Carolina took the opportunity to share some of their recent field projects and other research with their professional colleagues. I take this opportunity to share pertinent papers presented as a current summary and state of historical archaeology in North Carolina to the members of the North Carolina Archaeological Society.

Three symposia were organized specifically on and around historic sites in North Carolina. The first one, an all-day session entitled “Beyond Brunswick and Bethabara,” was organized by John Mintz and Tom Beaman to review and share insights of urban archaeology in the “Old North State.” Because North Carolina has only

a few “urban” areas when compared to neighboring states and regions, the definition of urban was modified to consider areas that served social, economic, and political functions, not size or populations. As was done at SEAC, Mintz and Beaman selected and invited participants to talk on the archaeology of individual cities and towns. Charles Ewen spoke on East Carolina University’s archaeological research program in Bath, North Carolina’s oldest incorporated town, and how extensive testing throughout North Carolina’s oldest incorporated town revealed which lots early settlers occupied by versus those that were likely held for later speculation. Beaman reviewed the numerous projects conducted in New Bern, Edenton, and Halifax, including the earliest and perhaps largest urban project in North Carolina to date: the excavation of two city blocks between 1952-1954 for the reconstruction and restoration of Tryon Palace in New Bern. Though many of the projects in these towns were geared towards restoration activities for heritage tourism, Beaman’s central theme was that the historical identities of these small towns made its citizens more aware, alert, and active in exploring their archaeological resources. Kenneth Robinson discussed the extensive exploration of public resources in downtown Fayetteville, including the exploration of a plank road and public foundation. Michael Hartley reviewed how the initial Moravian settlement of Wachovia has grown into modern Winston-Salem, and how this planned development protected the archaeological resources of the early settlements of Salem, Bethania, and Bethabara. Lawrence “Lea” Abbott provided a twenty-year retrospective on the investigations conducted prior to the construction of the Museum of History, as compared to more recent archaeological projects, in downtown Raleigh. Linda Stine discussed the diachronic changes in Greensboro’s evolving landscape, and focused upon the potential for future archaeological research in this largely unexplored urban center. Similarly, Mintz mused on the disappointing lack of investigations in Wilmington and Charlotte, despite both having historic districts, history

museums and universities with Anthropology departments. Heather Olsen discussed the recent archaeological documentation of Ruby City and Ravensford, two late nineteenth and early twentieth century "company towns" founded for rhodolite mining in the mountains. Finally, Scott Madry reviewed the potential and pitfalls of using Advanced Geomatic technologies (e.g., GIS, GPS, remote sensing, spatial modeling, and the use of historic cartographic sources) and the use of the NCDOT Archaeological Predictive Modeling Project in future urban archaeological research. Long time urban archaeology stalwarts Patrick Garrow and Paul Mohler were the discussants and provided a broader perspective on relating the status of urban archaeology in North Carolina to other states.

The second symposium was a two-part session on the purported site of Blackbeard's flagship, *The Queen Anne's Revenge*, organized by Mark Wilde-Ramsing. The morning session focused on interpretation of the ship itself and the artifacts recovered from almost a decade's worth of intermittent dives. Chris Southerly opened the session with a discussion on the overall stability of the site itself with a focus of on-going formation processes and artifact distribution. David Moore of the North Carolina Maritime Museum described the physical aspects of the boat using calculations for scantling (the thickness and breadth of the timber) and overall tonnage of the vessel. Lee Newsome identified seven different wood species that comprised the main vessel, primarily white oak and Scott's pine, indicating a European origin for the ship's construction. A study by William Miller, John Callahan, and James Craig focused upon the distribution and origin of the ballast on the wreck site, and concluded that it likely has a single regional origin. James Craig, Sarah Watkins-Kenney, and Wilde-Ramsing then reviewed a history of analytical techniques used to define aspects of the wreck and many of the recovered artifacts in an attempt to ascertain exactly what the ship represents. Lisa Schliescher and William Miller presented a study of oil jar fragments recovered from the wreck as compared to similar ones identified by Mintz and Beaman from the terrestrial site of Brunswick Town. Using an electron microscope set in "environmental scan electron mode," they noted thicker lead glaze on the wreck specimens and more tin content in the body of the Brunswick Town sherds. Linda Carnes-McNaughton established a behavioral context for the personal gear by placing the artifacts into a functional artifact arrangement for their analyses. Watkins-Kenney, Wendy Welsh, and Kim Smith discussed analysis methods and techniques used to study the recovered wooden barrel and cask fragments and associated metal bands. A faunal study of the animal bones found on the wreck was discussed by David Clark, which revealed the use of a variety of both land and sea animals. Carnes-McNaughton and Wilde-Ramsing placed the galley goods into behavior context, as was done earlier with the personal goods. Nathan Henry was scheduled to present a paper on the weapons and armaments recovered from the ship, but had to leave the conference early due to unexpected circumstances. Chris Southerly filled in for him and presented Nathan's study. The morning session ended with discussant comments by Charlie Ewen who,

based on the morning papers, provided an overall perspective on the state of the analysis and identity of the Beaufort Island shipwreck.

The second portion of *The Queen Anne's Revenge* session was held later that afternoon and continued with several artifact studies, but also sought to establish a sound historic context for the wreck and to manage the remaining archaeological resources in its present extremely dynamic environment. Wendy Welsh, Watkins-Kenney and Noelle Ocon described the use of x-ray techniques prior to conservation of artifacts. Wilde-Ramsing presented an overview of the interpretation of the Beaufort wreck, and stated that after a decade of fieldwork and laboratory analysis archaeologists can now address with a degree of certainty the vessel's period of operation, cultural affiliation and function, circumstances of its loss, and state of preservation, and can now begin to explore larger anthropological issues. Richard Lawrence then compared the attributes of the site to known eighteenth century shipwrecks recorded in Beaufort Inlet. Historian Lindley Butler offered a perspective on the effect of pirates, specifically Blackbeard, on the maritime history of North Carolina during its Proprietary Era. Based on the dynamic environment of Beaufort Inlet and the continued scouring of the site, Jesse McNinch, John Wells, and Arthur Trembanis attempted to project the total destruction of the site—unfortunately, their projection was not too long in the future! Antonio Rodriguez, Chris Southerly, and Wilde-Ramsing discussed the potential effectiveness of an artificially created berm of sand on the seaward side of the wreck site in an attempt to preserve artifact loss resulting from currents and storms. Finally, in a presentation co-authored with Steve Claggett, Wilde-Ramsing discussed the on-going management of the archaeological sites, including the uphill battles with State finances. David Conlin from the National Park Service's Submerged Resource Center offered comments as a discussant and placed the managerial and archaeological issues facing the Beaufort Island shipwreck site into a broader perspective with other noted shipwreck sites.

The third symposium was a short morning session organized by David Alberg on the *USS Monitor*, the famed Civil War era Union ironclad that sunk off Cape Hatteras in December 1862, entitled "New Orders for *USS Monitor*. A look at the *Monitor's* past, present, and future." John Broadwater opened the session with "When Leaving It in Place Doesn't Work," which reviewed the discovery and recent diving expeditions and partial recovery of the wreck. Eric Nordgren lauded the unique architectural design and functionality of the gun turret, which made the appearance of the vessel, as described by Civil War soldiers, "a cheesebox on a raft." Nordgren also discussed how underwater archaeologists from the US Navy and Mariner's Museum in Newport, Virginia recovered the turret from its precarious location under the ship's hull (the boat turned over as it sank). Krista Trono described how the joint recovery efforts have inspired an entirely new audience to ascribe to protection of underwater resources. Following the latest recovery efforts, James Moore gave a visual description of the entire *Monitor* marine sanctuary and the potential for future research. Finally, Alberg discussed

how the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is working with the Mariners' Museum and the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Cape Hatteras to insure proper conservation display for the recovered engine, turret, and numerous other artifacts from the *USS Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary.

There were also many papers delivered on terrestrial historic sites in North Carolina that were parts of other thematic symposia or general sessions. Charlie Ewen gave several additional papers, one of which was on the recovery of two iron coffins during the search for Governor Richard Caswell's lost grave in Kinston. Lawrence Babits and Tiffany Pecoraro reviewed the past forty years of archaeological investigations on Fort Dobbs, a 1750s French and Indian War fortification site in modern Iredell County, and offered a modern reinterpretation of the fort complete with an abatis in the defensive ditch surrounding the site. Ken Robinson presented the efforts of Wake Forest University's Public Archeology Laboratories to locate and identify elements of the Confederate prison in Salisbury through remote sensing and test trenches in modern residential neighborhoods. Nicholas Lucchetti, Eric Klingelhoffer, and Phillip Evans again discussed archaeology at the Fort Raleigh site in Manteo, and how the actions and discoveries of the Roanoke colonists established a foundation for the later successful settlement of Jamestown.

There were also additional papers delivered on underwater sites in North Carolina that were part of other symposia or general session. Frank Cantelas and Tim Runyan discussed the creation of a database of the over 2000 historic ships lost between Cape Hatteras and Cape

Lookout, and subsequent survey of selected areas to locate the *USS Alligator*, the US Army's first submarine, by the ECU Maritime Studies Department. The study of the architectural construction from the wrecks of two Confederate Civil War ironclads, the *CSS North Carolina* and *CSS Neuse*, was the focus of a presentation by Raymond Tubby and Gordon Watts. Two additional papers on the *USS Monitor* site were presented as part of a field conservation symposium, one by Suzanne Grieve on the evaluation of different compounds used to mold fragile organic and iron artifacts in place prior to their removal, and the second by Eric Nordgren on the current state of conservation of artifacts and structural hull pieces (including the turret) removed and in storage at the Mariners' Museum. Finally, Emily Jateff documented the practice of shore whaling from January to May at Shackelford Banks in the 18th and 19th century, and how Diamond City mariners supported themselves the remainder of the year through mullet and shellfish.

As a disclaimer, these papers discussed here certainly do not represent the entire depth and breadth and historical archaeology being conducted in North Carolina. These were just the studies presented at the 2007 Society for Historical Archaeology conference, one venue for the presentation of such studies. However, I certainly cannot remember an SHA conference in the past 12 years where historical archaeology in North Carolina was as well represented as it was at this one. This summary will hopefully provide a perspective for NCAS members on some of the exceptional archaeological work being done on historic period sites in North Carolina.

Thomas E. Beaman, Jr., RPA

NCAS Participation in State Fair Ends

The NCAS would like to formally thank our members, friends, and other volunteers who have assisted and supported the North Carolina State Fair exhibits for the past 22 years. It is with much regret that the NCAS Board of Directors (BOD) has decided that the NCAS will no longer sponsor a booth at the NC State Fair (by a vote of 7 to 2). Over the last few years, it has become clear from the BOD's lengthy discussions that staffing and financing the fair booth have become increasingly less feasible. Furthermore, the BOD currently feels that the fair booth does not provide the level of public education and outreach commensurate with the burden and logistics involved in such an event. While this decision may disappoint those members who have regularly volunteered to staff the fair booth, we look forward to exciting new venues for public education and outreach across the State. We encourage and welcome all suggestions!

Announcing NCAS Email Roster

The NCAS is compiling an email address list of its members. Individual emails will not be distributed outside of the society. Primarily for periodic announcements of NCAS meetings, reminders, special events and happenings, digital newsletters may be included in the future. Want to be included on the electronic mailing list? If so, please forward your name, title and email address to Brian Overton at bpoverton@dot.state.nc.us. Those that do not want to receive any electronic notices can also email the address above to decline.

The End of the North Carolina State Fair Exhibit Booth: An Obituary for a Long Standing Society Project

Offered by Thomas E. Beaman, Jr., RPA,
NCAS Past President and Friend of the Deceased

There is little joy in North Carolina archaeology this winter, for a long running, highly visible project sponsored by the North Carolina Archaeological Society (NCAS) is no more. After several years of debate, the NCAS Board of Directors decided not to continue to sponsor and staff an archaeology exhibit booth at the North Carolina State Fair.

As a NCAS Past President and organizer of the most recent (and final) State Fair exhibit, my feelings on this matter are somewhat conflicted. The benefits of such exhibits and regular booth at the State Fair was best summarized once as, "Cooperative, work intensive efforts like the Fair exhibit enhance our group through new memberships and enhanced public identities. We attract people's attention by showing them artifacts and photographs. And then we can pass along the 'real' message about the need for protecting and interpreting North Carolina's archaeological resources. [This is] Public education at its best" (NCAS Fall 1992 Newsletter 2[3]:2). I am saddened to see public archaeology in North Carolina once again reduced in visibility (and thereby, its implied importance). Yet admittedly I also knew the tireless efforts of Dee Nelms, who organized and promoted the booth for more than the majority of years it was in existence, and the long hours of the numerous stalwart volunteers who staffed the booth for the 130 hours of public visitation through the run of the annual State Fair.

Let us not dwell upon the sorrow of its loss. Rather, let us remember and celebrate the 22 years this booth was in existence, and the grand efforts of present and past volunteer efforts and exhibits that brought archaeological exposure, education, and enlightenment to a generation of State Fair visitors.

A search through the newsletter archives revealed that the first booth at the North Carolina State Fair sponsored

by the (then) Archaeological Society of North Carolina (ASNC) was in October 1984. Organized by President David Moore and Vice President Bob Weaver, and assembled by Moore and Mark Mathis, the exhibit featured a projectile point chronology, a book display, and a photographic display of the UNC Research Laboratories of (then) Anthropology excavations at the Occaneechi site in Hillsborough. Staffed by members of the State Archaeology Branch and volunteers from the ASNC and Friends of North Carolina Archaeology, the effort was heralded a success by all. In the ASNC Newsletter of January 1985, President David Moore reported on the success of the initial booth: "I had a chance to spend one morning at the booth and enjoyed meeting and talking with many North Carolinians who were excited about the exhibit and wanted to hear more about North Carolina archaeology. More than 20 new memberships have been received as a result of this exhibit" (ASNC Newsletter 83:4). In a year when the ASNC membership was comprised of 206 individuals and 135 institutions (ASNC Newsletter 79 [January 1984]:5), the new additional members (a 10% increase among individuals) generated by the State Fair booth were a welcomed addition!

So goodbye, old friend. Thanks for your presence and efforts towards public awareness and education on North Carolina archaeology these last 22 years. All of your friends who donated their time, loaned artifacts, or provided financial support towards making archaeology in North Carolina a more visible presence in the public eye will miss you. As a final tribute to your memory, I offer to the NCAS membership the following comprehensive list of the past State Fair archaeology exhibits, distilled from past newsletters and minutes of the ASNC, Friends of North Carolina Archaeology, and NCAS:

- 1984: Projectile point chronology, book display, UNC Occaneechi Town photo exhibit.
- 1985: UNC Occaneechi Town site (Orange County), with artifacts and book display.
- 1986: Prehistoric and historic artifacts (no additional details available).
- 1987: Prehistoric and historic artifacts (no additional details available).
- 1988: Prehistoric and historic artifacts. Organized by Cindy Autry, Mike Carraway, Billy Oliver and John Clauser, this exhibit won the Governor's Award for Best Non-Commercial Exhibit at this year's State Fair. An image of part of this exhibit appears on page 5 of the Friends of North Carolina Archaeology Winter 1989 newsletter (Volume 5, Number 1).

- 1989: "Catch Up With Your Past." An exhibit of prehistoric and historic items with their contemporary counterparts.
- 1990: Featured the Quaker Meadows Site (McDowell County), Jenrette Site (Orange County), and Worsley Site (Edgecomb County).
- 1991: "Hidden Beneath the Waves," an underwater archaeology exhibit.
- 1992: Featured the Broad Reach Site (Carteret County), the Hunting Creek Site (Davie County), and the Cullowhee Valley School Site (Jackson County).
- 1993: NCAS minutes and newsletters indicate there was a State Fair booth, this year but no one can seem to remember what the theme or projects featured were!
- 1994: Featured the excavation of the United Carolina Bank Site (Craven County) and a projectile point chronology. Due to a decrease in booth size, the exhibit space was reduced to two cases, which it remained through the remaining years, 1999 excepted.
- 1995: Featured the Cane River site (Yancey County). A good picture of this booth is featured on page 3 in the NCAS Fall 1995 Newsletter (5[3]).
- 1996: Exhibit on the *USS Huron* shipwreck preserve in Nags Head.
- 1997: Display of projective points and other Native American tools.
- 1998: Exhibit featured artifacts from the Eden House site (Bertie County)
- 1999: This year featured the traveling exhibit of artifacts from the purported wreck of Blackbeard's flagship, *The Queen Anne's Revenge*. The booth was doubled in size, as the exhibit was co-sponsored and shared the space of the neighboring NC Department of Cultural Resources booth.
- 2000: Archaeology at Fort Bragg, with a focus on recent cultural resource management projects including the Overhills project. Organized by Wayne and Beverly Boyko, and cosponsored with TRC Garrow Associates and Fort Bragg Cultural Resources.
- 2001: Cosponsored and featuring projects conducted by Wake Forest University Public Archeology Laboratories. The exhibit included prehistoric lithics and ceramics from the Yadkin Valley (many sites, including a village site in Wilkes County) and Cape Fear regions (specifically sites in Wilmington and Fayetteville), plus information on historic projects from Davie County (house site) and Forsythe County (cemetery and Bethabara investigations). Organized by Ken Robinson and Micki Vacca.
- 2002: "Archaeology of North Carolina: 10,000 Years and Counting." Organized by John Mintz, this exhibit featured a chronology of projectile point and prehistoric ceramics
- 2003: "Archaeology and the History of Land Use in the Sandhills." One exhibit case featured prehistoric stone tools and ceramics, the other historic 19th century artifacts related farmsteads and the Naval Stores industry. Co-sponsored with from Fort Bragg Cultural Resources.
- 2004: This exhibit featured the archaeological program and projects of the North Carolina Department of Transportation. It contained artifacts from the Wilson By-Pass site (also known as the Contentnea Creek site, Wilson County) and the Eden House Site (Bertie County), as well as information on the NCDOT Predictive Model project and the process of site identification and evaluation used by DOT archaeologists.
- 2005: Exhibit co-sponsored and provided by the US Forest Service. Featured information on the Passport in Time program, the North Carolina Rock Art survey, and efforts to locate and identify of archaeological sites associated with 19th century Cherokee removal.
- 2006: This final exhibit featured artifacts from Fort Dobbs State Historic Site (Iredell County). Also included was a draft copy of the recent reinterpretation of Fort Dobbs based on the previous archaeology by Dr. Lawrence Babits (East Carolina University), as well as pictures of the current fieldwork by Wake Forest University's Public Archeology Laboratories. Co-sponsored with the Historic Sites and Properties Section and Friends of Fort Dobbs, Inc.

2007 Dues

The 2007 dues reminder card mailed in January had a misprint. Regular dues are \$15 rather than \$10. If you have not mailed in your dues payment, please make the appropriate change if you are a regular member. Thank you for your continued support.

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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