

# North Carolina Archaeological Society

## Newsletter

4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619

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

FALL 2014, Volume 24, Number 4

### Fall 2014 Joint NCAS/NCAC Meeting

This year's general membership meeting took place October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in the Southport area. Organized by NCAS members Tom Beaman, Hannah Smith, and Jim McKee (of Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site), it provided an opportunity for both NCAS and North Carolina Archaeological Council (NCAC) members to take a peek at the archaeological riches of the Lower Cape Fear.

Events kicked off Friday evening with a walking tour of Southport, led by Jim McKee, a local historian and Interpreter at Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site. Later that evening, the NCAC hosted a reception at the North Carolina Maritime Museum. Attendees to the reception were able to check out the collections here, including plenty of artifacts recovered from sunken blockade runners. The evening concluded with a stop at Ports of Call for dinner and drinks. Good food and good company were enjoyed by those who came along.

The Saturday morning meeting began with NCAS business; a BOD meeting followed by a business meeting at Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site (BT/FA). During the general meeting, elections were held for Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, and two At-Large board positions. Linda Carnes-McNaughton, Steve Davis, and Bill Conen were reelected as Secretary, Editor, and Treasurer, respectively, and Eric Deetz and Shane Peterson were elected as new At-Large Board members. Following the meeting, three guest speakers described recent research at the site. Tom Beaman presented the results of recent work at Brunswick Town by William Peace University's Field School. Traditional excavations and a metal detector survey yielded valuable information about the lives of Confederate soldiers stationed at what is now BT/FA throughout the Civil War and especially after the fall of Fort Fisher in January 1865. Hannah Smith discussed the conservation of a knit cap and two leather shoes recovered at what is now called the William Dry wharf, on the banks of the Cape Fear River at the site. Afterwards, meeting attendees got to see more organic items (a leather apron, shoes, coat pieces) recovered from the colonial-era wharf along the waterfront. Jim McKee and Hannah Smith then led a tour of the wharf site, pointing out features along the waterfront area and site erosion issues.

In the afternoon, Tom Beaman led a tour of Fort Caswell on Oak Island, discussing the history of the fort, as well as preliminary conclusions drawn from the results of William Peace University's field school in 2013. Beaman highlighted the changes that Fort Caswell had undergone during the course of its use, and how well preserved it has remained since being decommissioned in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



NCAS Board Members examine the exhibits at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Southport during the NC Archaeological Council reception.





NCAS Members inspect the site of the William Dry wharf on the waterfront at Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site during their tour.



NCAS members who attended the tour of Fort Caswell on Saturday afternoon.



## William Dennis Kiln and House Site Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

The William Dennis Kiln and House Site (31RD981\*\*) in Randolph County, North Carolina was listed in the National Register of Historic places on January 22, 2014. On Monday, October 6, 2014, at 11:00 am, the official certificate of listing was presented to Hal and Eleanor Pugh, owners of the site and authors of the National Register nomination, by Lawrence Abbott, Assistant State Archaeologist.



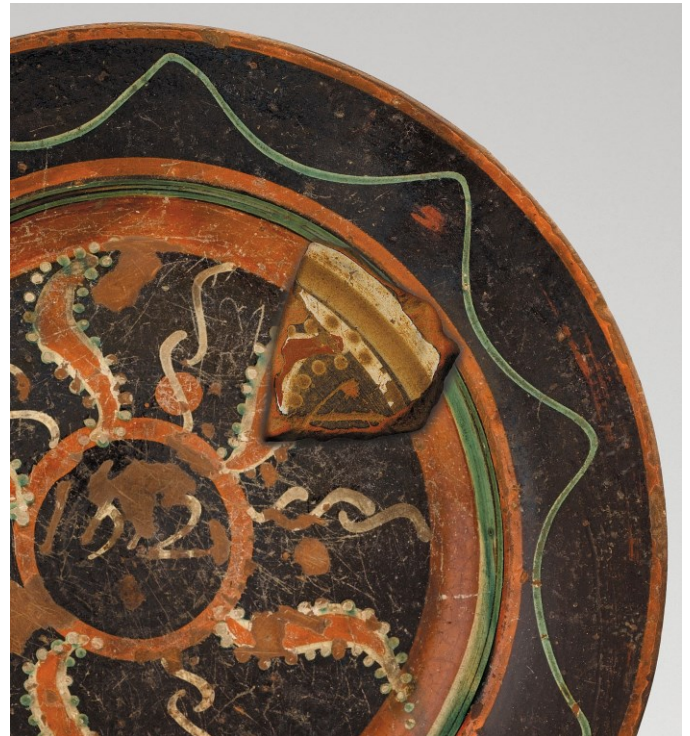
Eleanor Minnock-Pugh, Hal Pugh and Lea Abbott  
at NRHP certificate presentation

The William Dennis Kiln and House Site (31RD981\*\*) is a Colonial period domestic dwelling and cottage craft site (pottery manufactory) located in north-central Randolph County in the community of New Salem. The house and pottery kiln were constructed about 1766. The kiln was operated by the Dennis family until about 1832; the house was abandoned in 1843 after the death of then owner Peter Dicks. The kiln site is one of the earliest English pottery manufacturing sites found and excavated in North Carolina. The kiln feature is unique in that it represents a square furnace (as opposed to a rectangular groundhog type, or circular beehive or bottle kiln) and has been demonstrated to be directly related to the English Quaker tradition in Randolph County. This archaeological site is also linked by documentary evidence to a known free African-American potter apprentice, George Newby, who apprenticed here from 1813 through 1822.

The site's settlement history, family records and archaeological evidence combine to make this an ideal site to enhance research/interpretation on the farmer-potter subsistence model of colonial North Carolina. The archaeological evidence includes, but is not limited to, manufacturing debris from the pottery

making craft, the kiln furnace feature, and domestic-related artifacts which provide valuable chronological, economic, and social indicators of the Colonial period settlements in Piedmont North Carolina. The William Dennis Kiln and House Site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at a statewide level of significance under Criterion D (information potential).

Just as the existence of large beds of earthenware clay attracted the Dennis family to the property in 1766, Hal Pugh and Eleanor Minnock-Pugh established their New Salem Pottery in 1972. The Pughs produce a variety of original redware and stoneware pottery, as well as replicas of slip-decorated redware from the sixteenth through the twentieth century. Some of their slip-decorated wares were replicated from sherds recovered during the archaeological investigations at the William Dennis Kiln Site. Their interest in the history of the site and their efforts have led to its preservation, investigation, and listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Detail of an 1812 slip decorated dish attributed to William Dennis from MESDA with a matching slip-decorated cavetto sherd recovered from the William Dennis site.

Submitted by Dolores A. Hall, Office of State Archaeology

## 2014 Election of Officers

The 2014 Election of Officers was held at the fall business meeting on Saturday, October 18, at Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site Visitors Center and Museum in Winnabow, NC.

The editor, treasurer, and secretary will remain the same. Eric Deetz and Shane Petersen will replace Tony Boudreaux and Charles Heath as new Board Members effective January 1, 2015. Thank you Tony and Charles, and welcome Eric and Shane.

### 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:

<b>Winter Issue – January 31</b>	<b>Summer Issue – July 31</b>
<b>Spring Issue – April 31</b>	<b>Fall Issue – October 31</b>

### NCAS Officers

**President:** Theresa McReynolds Shebalin, PO Box 676, Mebane NC 27302

**Vice-president:** Tom Beaman, 5210 Carr Road, Wilson NC 27893

**Treasurer:** E. William Conen, 804 Kingswood Drive, Cary NC 27513.

**Secretary:** Linda Carnes-McNaughton, Directorate of Public Works (IMBG-PWE-DR CARNES), 2175 Reilly Road Stop A, Fort Bragg NC 28310-5000

**Editor:** R.P. Stephen Davis, Jr., Research Laboratories of Archaeology, CB# 3120 Alumni Building, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill NC 27599-3120.

**Associate Editor:** Dee H. Nelms, Office of State Archaeology, NC Division of Historical Resources, 4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619.

**Executive Board Members:** Daryl Armour, Tony Boudreaux, David Cranford, Charles Heath, John Krebs, Hannah Smith

NC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
4619 MAIL SERVICE CENTER  
RALEIGH NC 27699-4619