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Archaeological Society

Newsletter

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## CLAY TOBACCO PIPES OF CHARLES TOWNE (31BW133)

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Smoking pipes in North America have been around since at least the Late Archaic period (Rafferty and Mann 200: xi) but do not appear in southern coastal North Carolina until the Late Woodland period (Irwin 2004: 43). Europeans were introduced to tobacco and pipes in the early sixteenth century through the Portuguese after they began exploring the New World (Beaman 2005: 53). As smoking became more popular in Europe and in the Colonies, demand for tobacco grew and it quickly became the number one cash crop in the North Carolina colony.

Likewise, the demand for smoking pipes also increased leading to emergence of a new cottage industry of pipe-making. Due to the popularity of its time, white clay pipes are common artifacts that appear at many colonial archaeological sites, Charles Towne included.



Figure 1. Possible Native American pipe stem

In 1661, fifty miles up the Cape Fear River, in what is now Brunswick County, NC, Charles Towne (31BW133) was established by the English from Barbados. Unfortunately, the settlement only lasted four years due to unforeseen circumstances. The first year was mildly successful; however, in 1665, supply ships from Barbados sank during the voyage to Charles Towne, leaving the settlers with little means (Fryer 2015: 132). Then in 1666, England was at war with the Dutch, and many supply ships were sunk in England, Barbados, and Virginia. The failed relationship with the local tribe began to arise in 1667 and in that same year a hurricane off the North Carolina coast destroyed what was left of the settlers' homes and supplies (Fryer 2015: 137, 140, 141). They soon left North Carolina and headed back to Barbados. In 1670, another group from Barbados returned to the Carolina shores but went further south and established what is now Charleston, South Carolina.

Archaeologists from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (UNCW) began preliminary work in the 1960s and 1970s. From these excavations, a field school was held through the University from 1987 to 1992. The North Carolina Office of State Archaeology Research Center (OSARC) received all collections from UNCW around 2011. In 2017, OSARC began to re-analyze the Charles Towne artifacts collected from the field schools. Currently, the 1987, 1988, and 1989 field seasons have been thoroughly analyzed, yielding a total of 2,324 pipe fragments.

The pipes from the Charles Towne assemblage generally fall into two categories defined largely by the visual appearance of the clay used to construct them. White clay, or kaolin, pipes represent the largest proportion of the Charles Towne pipes (95.5%). The second group of pipes have an orange surface color and may represent locally sourced clays and made on or near the site, by either European settlers or Native Americans (Figure 1). These two types were analyzed separately. While Native American clay pipes and early colonial clay pipes can be hard to

distinguish, Native American pipes tend to be more crudely made than the early colonial clay pipes. Native American clay pipes need further research and for now, the identity of these pipe makers will likely remain a mystery. One hundred and four orange clay pipe fragments have been found so far at Charles Towne with stems (54.8%) making up the majority of the assemblage followed by bowls (28.8%) and unidentified (16.4%) fragments. Two orange clay pipe stems stand out amongst the rest from the 1989 field season with one having horizontal notches around the mouth with the bore hole measuring 4.2 mm in diameter and the other stem has a ridge on one side.

The distribution of bore size measurements from the white clay pipes (**Table 1**) appear to show an earlier date than the known occupation of Charles Towne, with a mean date of 1655. The early pipe stem measurements likely reflect European settlers bringing with them white clay pipes that had been made from a few decades to a few years before their arrival. Currently, it is unclear who, if anyone, occupied the property once the Charles Town settlers left in 1668. It is possible Native Americans and/or later settlers occupied the land and made or carried with them the orange and white clay pipes.

When the pipe fragments are sorted out by section (i.e. stem, bowl, etc) it is not a surprise that the most frequent section found on archaeological sites is the stem. Research states there are two possible reasons why stems are found more than bowls. One, is the ends of the stems were broken off during its use life of the pipe, and second, "the remaining piece of pipe, with the bowl attached, would have been finally discarded in the fire or rubbish bin" (Ayto 1979: 30).

Bore Size	Date Range	Number of Pipes
9/64"	1590-1620	1
8/64"	1620-1650	393
7/64"	1650-1680	448
6/64"	1680-1720	45
5/64"	1720-1750	17
4/64"	1750-1800	4
unknown	historic	1313

**Table 1: Combined frequency of white clay pipes from 1987-1989 field seasons**



**Figure 2. Edward Bird pipe bowl**

For the combined field seasons, white clay stems make up the largest portion of the pipe assemblage (59.3%), followed by bowls (25.1%), and heels (1.8%), with unidentified fragments making up the remainder (13.8%). There are forty-three bowls with rouletting (1580-1680) on the rim and twenty-three have makers marks with EB stamped on the heels (**Figure 2**). EB stands for Edward Bird, who was an English pipe maker living in Amsterdam. He began his shop in 1638 and quickly grew in popularity. With his connections, he was able to sale his pipes to England and beyond. At the time of his death in 1665, his son, Evert Jr., took over the shop and continued to use the EB until 1678 when he was struggling financially and had to sell the business. He sold the rights of EB to Adriaen van der Cruis from Gouda. Sometime around 1700, EB pipes were no longer in use (Ducu). Another pipe maker found at Charles Towne was RT (**Figure 3**) with five pipe fragments. Robert Tippet was an English pipe maker from Bristol, England. It is believed he started around 1660, and many members of the family continued using RT with variations until the late 1700s (Newns). One heelless spruce

has been found in the 1989 field season and is believed to have been made by either William Evans I or II. William Evans I produced pipes from 1660-1682 in Bristol, England (Marx 196: 23).

In conclusion, the European settlers at Charles Towne did not stay long, but they did provide good evidence of their presence. With the lack of primary sources of their experience at the site, other sources, including archaeology, have made it easier for researchers to understand how these people lived. The pipes left behind are one of the many artifacts current archaeologists use to date the Charles Towne site. With the presence of the Edward Bird, Robert

Tippet, and William Evans white clay pipes, archaeologists have evidence of pipe production made in England and Amerstadam making it to the North Carolina shore. The orange clay pipes along with thousands of prehistoric potsherds, and a dozen projectile points, provides direct evidence of Native American occupation from the Woodland period up to Contact and maybe even after the Charles Towne settlers left.

#### Bibliography

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Figure 3. Robert Tippet heel fragment

**TRIVIA TIME – What common piece of facial apparel dates to at least 9,000 years ago? The answer will appear somewhere within this Newsletter.**

## Digital Spotlight: "Bits of History Podcast!"

(<https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/learning/bits-of-history-podcast>)

From a look at early Spanish exploration of the mountains to an overview of the life and times of Pauli Murray to a deep dive into the development of the banjo, the NC Museum of History's **Bits of History podcasts** cover a wide range of subjects related to North Carolina's history and culture. With over 90 podcasts, learn about North Carolina's unique stories through conversations with historians, scholars, authors, and professors.



## NCAS Word Find: Projectile Points\*

“Dig” through the letters and find the 23 words “buried” inside the puzzle. Words can go forward, backward, or diagonally. Answers will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter. Word List: Badin, Big Sandy, Caraway, Clarksville, Clovis, Formative Cultures, Guilford, Gypsy, Halifax, Hardaway, Joffre Coe, Kirk, LeCroy, Morrow Mountain I, Morrow Mountain II, NCAS Newsletter, Palmer, Randolph, Savannah River, Stanly, Swannanoa, Uwharrie, and Yadkin.

F	G	B	Y	I	N	I	A	T	N	U	O	M	W	O	R	R	O	M	A
R	O	N	F	N	I	D	A	B	H	A	R	D	A	W	A	Y	U	M	X
P	H	N	E	O	Q	Z	X	E	V	L	Y	F	X	Z	L	Z	O	H	Y
F	R	E	V	I	R	H	A	N	N	A	V	A	S	D	S	R	W	L	J
A	R	C	W	B	D	M	G	J	Y	I	J	K	K	H	R	P	N	D	S
I	M	L	R	Y	F	Y	A	D	K	I	N	H	T	O	E	A	V	U	I
G	M	A	T	N	P	S	M	T	R	Q	H	D	W	I	T	B	G	W	E
U	H	R	S	S	C	B	H	I	I	P	L	M	N	S	X	I	Y	A	E
I	X	K	Y	W	N	A	W	N	L	V	O	D	Z	H	J	G	A	B	O
L	K	S	U	R	A	F	S	O	Z	U	E	X	K	M	N	S	W	X	C
F	T	V	P	T	B	N	D	N	N	U	R	C	C	V	K	A	A	R	E
O	J	I	W	E	Y	N	N	T	E	O	I	E	U	E	O	N	R	Z	R
R	Z	L	X	L	A	L	A	A	D	W	Y	C	M	L	G	D	A	Z	F
D	M	L	H	R	Q	I	F	X	N	O	S	Q	I	L	T	Y	C	Q	F
Z	C	E	T	D	N	T	B	H	R	O	C	L	C	S	A	U	Q	S	O
L	Q	W	Y	I	K	N	N	C	L	T	A	Q	E	L	T	P	R	Y	J
X	A	F	I	L	A	H	E	G	K	A	U	D	K	T	O	I	I	E	G
V	A	M	F	V	K	L	F	I	Y	M	Z	U	I	Q	T	V	N	Y	S
A	O	W	Y	G	E	I	R	R	A	H	W	U	L	W	V	E	I	V	H
B	R	R	T	B	K	K	V	P	I	O	K	G	I	G	Z	K	R	S	G

## New NCAS T-Shirts!

The carved Citico-style or “rattlesnake” shell gorgets illustrated on our new t-shirts were made by the Sara Indians, an ancestral tribe of the modern Catawba Indian Nation, between AD 1450 and 1600. These decorative pendants, made from conch shell, were recovered from the Hairston archaeological site (31Sk1) in Stokes County, North Carolina, during excavations by the University of North Carolina in 1981. Illustrated here by contemporary artist Alice Martin, the original artifacts are part of the North Carolina Archaeological Collection of UNC’s Research Laboratories of Archaeology.

3D models of these artifacts can be viewed at <https://sketchfab.com/rla.../collections/shell-gorgets>. More information about the Catawba Indian Nation can be found at: <http://www.catawbaindian.net/>.

As you can see, the front of the shirt sports the NCAS logo whereas the back features three different shell gorgets. These Hanes nano-fabric black t-shirts are available in crew neck or v-neck style for \$16 each (sales tax included) plus shipping. Please contact Tom Beaman at [tbeamanjr@aol.com](mailto:tbeamanjr@aol.com) if you want to order one or anything else from our Merchandise page (<https://www.ncarchsociety.org/ncasmerchandise>). NCAS can take personal check, PayPal, or Cash App.



## 2021 Dues Reminder

2020 cannot end soon enough! Let us all focus on what we can accomplish together in 2021 so please consider renewing your membership today to stay current with the Society’s latest news. Membership types include: Student (\$10), Regular (\$15), Family (\$20), Sustaining (\$25), Institution ((\$25), and Life (\$250). Please submit your dues payment to: North Carolina Archaeological Society c/o Mary Beth Fitts, Office of State Archaeology, 4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4619. If you wish, you may also renew your membership online via PayPal at <http://www.ncarchsociety.org/membershipoptions>.

## TRIVIA ANSWER:

Masks – Archaeologically, we don't know when our human ancestors first made and wore masks. However, the earliest well-documented masks come from the arid Judean Desert in the Middle East about 9,000 years ago. For more information about the history of masks, read *The Masked Man* at <https://www.sapiens.org/column/curiosities/history-of-masks/>

**NEW NCAS BOARD MEMBERS** – Please extend a warm welcome to the society's newest board members: Sarah Watkins-Kenney and Douglas Hill. We would also like to offer our appreciation to not only Catie Bailey and Angela McArdle, for their service as they rotate off the board, but also Mary Beth Fitts for her continued efforts as our Treasurer.

***THANK YOU!***

### NCAS Officers

**President:** Shane C. Petersen ([scpetersen@ncdot.gov](mailto:scpetersen@ncdot.gov))  
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### NCAS Newsletter Publication Schedule

All NCAS members should submit articles and news items to Paul J. Mohler ([pjmohler@ncdot.gov](mailto:pjmohler@ncdot.gov)) 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 30</b>	<b>Fall Issue – October 31</b>

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