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Upcoming Events

Founders Hall
 Archaeology Lecture Series
 presents

"Archaeology at Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site"

by Rebekah Sease and Ashley Chapman

Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site, Founders Hall

November 18th, 6 pm.

For more info, call
 (843) 852-4200

Charles Towne Landing Archaeology Update

With cooler temperatures on the horizon, our archaeologists and volunteers are returning to the Miller Site to find out more about the mysterious tabby floor. This season, we are hoping to delineate and expose the entire floor and learn a little bit more about the architecture of the house.

Historical records show that the land that encompassed the original Charles Towne became known as the "Old Towne Plantation" after the colonists officially moved the settlement. The first owner of this 760 acre land on record is James Lesade, who purchased the property in 1694-1697. After his death, his brother Peter inherited the estate and passed it onto his son. The property seems to have stayed in the Lesade family for at least a few decades.

The dates our archaeologists were able to generate based on the artifacts

recovered from the Miller Site fit in with the Lesade ownership of the land. Can the tabby floor be part of the Lesade household? The fact that the builders opted for more durable materials such as brick and tabby



A 1685 map refers to the abandoned settlement as the "Old Charles Towne". North Carolina State Archives.

mortar instead of timber architecture suggests that this may have been a more permanent residence. We are hoping that this season's finds will solidify our preliminary dates and offer a few more clues. ■

Colonial Dorchester Archaeology Update

To enhance the current archaeological investigation and interpretation, Colonial Dorchester is now expanding its weekend events to include a new living history program. This interpretive event will highlight the archaeological record by bringing the past material culture and life ways to the surface. Visitors can now experience a variety of activities such as mid-18th century military lifeways, "Process of Discovery," archaeology lab tours and "Digging the Past Through Archaeology."

Our new mid-18th century military lifeway program is visually appealing thanks to the newly established Independent Company of South Carolina. As part of this program, six specialists will gather in the town's market square to drill, mend tents, and clean and fire their brown Bess muskets. This enables Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site to connect the visitor with living history while complementing the best preserved tabby fortification of its type in North America. This program is available to the public on the first Saturday of each month.

"Process of Discovery", our traditional program which interprets the site's archaeology, is held on the second Saturday of each month. On these Saturdays, the public may observe a variety of archaeology methods including field excavations, lab analysis, artifact washing, or checking out an artifact collection gathered from a previous excavation. This program encourages the public to talk with the archaeologists and learn the techniques used to collect information for the site's historical and archaeological record.

If you're interested in archaeology, we encourage you to visit our on-site lab

facility. We have recently completed renovations to the 1960s forestry building that houses our archaeology lab and ranger station. A short guided tour will explain the process of conservation when an artifact enters the lab. Also, visitors will be invited to take a behind-the-scenes look at some of the amazing artifacts found at this historic site.

The often untold stories of daily life take shape through the efforts of archaeologists as they uncover, clean, analyze and care for the clues left behind. "Digging the Past Through Archaeology," is a program that offers insight into the role of an archaeologist while promoting ethical involvement in the protection and preservation of South Carolina's historical resources. If you have ever thought it would be neat to work with an archaeologist, then come spend the day experiencing the first-hand excitement of discovery by following the material culture from its recovery in the field to its conservation in the lab.

If you would like further information on each program including age ranges, fees and times of events, please contact Colonial Dorchester at 843.873.7475. ■

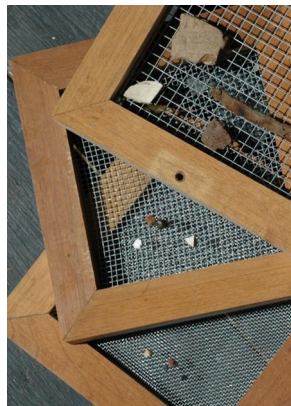


Tools of the Trade

Screening Techniques

Trowels and shovels are the first tools that spring to mind when we think about archaeology, but most archaeologists would refuse to break ground without one other essential piece of equipment: the screen. Sifting the dirt is vital for the recovery of smaller artifacts— and in archaeology size does not matter.

Archaeologists generally can pick from a number of different methods of sifting depending on the sensitivity of the area, work force, and time constraints. Probably the fastest option is sifting the dirt through a wire mesh with openings usually $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide. A $\frac{1}{8}$ inch mesh can be used, but this slows down the excavation considerably, especially in clay deposits. Archaeologists can be creative when it comes to inventing new systems of dry screening— ranging from stationary frames to “shakers” on bipeds or suspended from tripods. A motor can be attached to the screen to mechanically sift the dirt. If a $\frac{1}{8}$ ” or finer mesh needs to be used at a particular site, using water can speed up the process. After the soil is washed away, the wet debris and artifacts left on the screen are usually removed, dried and sorted by hand in the lab.



The difference between 1/4", 1/8", and 1/16" screens.

For recovery of even smaller remains, such as charred seeds or fish bones, soil samples from promising deposits may be floated. Archaeological flotation is based on the simple principle that soil and heavy artifacts sink to the bottom when submerged whereas botanical remains float to the top. In a basic flotation tank buoyant remains are allowed to float and flow into an ultra-fine cloth mesh where they will be caught and dried. These remains are commonly called the “light fraction.”

The “heavy fraction,” including small ceramics or beads, are also collected in a separate tank at the



Flotation at Charles Towne Landing. Light fraction flows into the fine mesh to the right, heavy fraction is collected in the left tank.

bottom. Allowing buoyancy to do the majority of the work also minimizes the handling and possible destruction of the fragile botanical and zoological samples. Thanks to recent developments in paleoethnobotany, the study of plant remains from archaeological sites, archaeologists can now reconstruct foodways of past cultures with confidence. ■



Water screening through a 1/16" mesh allowed Charles Towne Landing archaeologists to catch 385 lead shots (left) and 21 glass beads (below) last year.



Left: A paleoethnobotanist studies and sorts the light fraction from Catalhoyuk, Turkey. Above: Charred grain recovered through flotation at an archaeological site in England.

Site Spotlight

Archaeological Investigations at Hampton Plantation

by Stacy Young

Archaeological investigations were conducted at Hampton Plantation State Historic Site (38CH241) between the months of February and April of this year. New South Associates, Inc. conducted the work on behalf of South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) in conjunction with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, as part of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. The purpose of this work was to assist park staff in identifying acreage that was best suited for various forest management techniques and to provide archaeological compliance prior to the initiation of forest recreation activities involving heavy equipment.

Hampton Plantation functioned as a rice plantation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was home to several generations of the Horry and Rutledge families and their enslaved workers. Many of the enslaved stayed and worked the lands of Hampton as tenant farmers after the constraints of the plantation were lifted. Much of what is known about the history and daily lives of the individuals that lived and worked at Hampton Plantation are from letters of Horry and Rutledge family members, plat maps, and accounts of Archibald Rutledge. The only remaining buildings are the planter's mansion, a detached kitchen, and the chimney of a tenant farmer's house. Former rice fields and agricultural fields have nearly converted back to their natural

state although a portion of the canal and embankment system of a rice field remains visible. The embankment shown on an 1809 plat map was used as a path connecting the planter's house across the rice field to a slave settlement along the banks of Wambaw Creek. Rice field workers likely lived at this settlement. The slave settlement is probably outside of the SCPRT property boundaries, although

the embankment now serves as part of the nature trail for visitors to the plantation grounds.

Results of survey investigations in a 165-acre area on the western portion of the property identified sites in areas near the former path, that were likely the focus of activities conducted by slaves out of the view of the plantation overseer. Typical artifacts recovered



The Georgian style planter's mansion at Hampton was built between 1730 and 1750.

included Colonoware, whiteware, milk glass, container glass, and brick. Although few artifacts were recovered from the sites, additional investigations in the area may yield more artifacts or sub-surface features useful in interpreting the function of the sites. Survey investigations also identified an area occupied by Will Alston during his last years at Hampton in the 1970s to 1980s after the land was used as a park. A former pump house constructed by the park and animal pens were present. Although the site is not yet 50 years old, it presents an interesting aspect of the land-use history by the African-American community of Hampton.

Phase II testing investigations were focused on a five-acre area just west of the mansion house where several buildings are shown on an 1809 plat map. Based on the sizes of the buildings, proximity to the planter's house, and oral accounts of descendants, it was suspected that the buildings served as houses for skilled slaves such as blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, shoemakers, or other specialized workers or that they served as outbuildings such as stables, sheds, or a rice barn used to support the daily tasks of the plantation.

The five-acre area was shovel-tested on a 50-foot interval grid and a selective metal detector sweep was made in areas where brick was observed on the surface. A total of eight 5x5-foot square test units were then placed in areas where artifact density was greatest and where brick scatters and/or metal detector readings were concentrated. Geo-referenced maps indicated that these were areas where former buildings were shown.



Chimney and brick foundation.

A brick foundation and chimney base, and a subsurface pit feature were identified in one area investigated. After conclusion of the work by New South Associates, David Jones, an archaeologist with SCPRT, returned to further investigate the brick foundation and exposed more of the chimney base. The foundation, as it is currently defined, measures at least 6-feet in length while the chimney base measures at least 5 by 2 feet. Given that the chimney base measures at least 5 by 2 feet, the building associated with it would need to be much larger than 6-feet long to support the chimney. Only the tops of this brick have been uncovered.

In addition to the brick foundation and chimney, a subsurface pit feature was also encountered approximately 23-feet to the west. From the excavations

conducted, it is unclear if the pit feature is inside the building or in the yard area. Regardless, the presence of the pit provides insight into how slaves maintained their

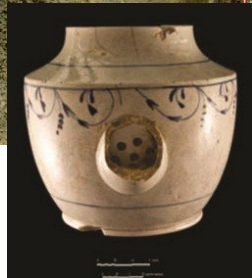
space and additional excavations in the area may provide answers to this question. The pit feature measures at least 3 by 2 feet, although the entire pit was not defined due to the current excavation limits. The feature was bisected and soils contained few artifacts within a single fill episode of a pit measuring 1-foot in depth. The original use of the pit feature was undetermined from the portion of the feature excavated. A nearly complete hand painted teapot was recovered from the top of the fill, a portion of the spout and handle were missing. Interestingly, a colonoware teapot was recovered during previous archaeological investigations conducted in 1979 in an area occupied by slaves located closer to the planter's mansion.



Partially excavated pit feature. A hand painted teapot was recovered from the bisected area.



The excavation of the pit feature (above) and the teapot after cleaning (right).



Artifacts recovered from the area of the foundation and pit included various types of eighteenth-nineteenth century ceramic artifacts, tobacco pipe fragments, container glass, window glass, bricks, nails, clothing buttons, a green glass jewel, a blue glass faceted bead, sewing scissors, a possible polished bone awl, a quartzite polishing stone, a fishing weight, and a lead ball. The presence of the sewing scissors, beads, and possible awl suggests a seamstress or tailor in residence, supporting the idea that slaves with specialized skills occupied the area. Historic period ceramic artifacts included a large number of Colonowares and European wares such as pearlware and creamware. Most of the decorated European wares were identified as annular and hand painted wares.

Results of the recent archaeological investigations at Hampton Plantation identified structural remains and artifacts associated with enslaved African-American workers living at Hampton. The data collected provides information useful in interpreting another facet of Hampton Plantation's history and presents new research questions that additional excavations may address. ■

Stacy Young is an archaeologist with New South Associates, Inc.

Meet an Archaeologist

Dee Dee Joyce

Dee Dee says she didn't get into anthropology for the "right reasons." Her best friends in college were anthropology majors and she became interested in the field through their influence. She didn't take an anthropology class until her senior year, but once she did, she was hooked.



After her graduation from Catawba College with a B.A. in history, Dee Dee switched to anthropology and earned her M.A. and PhD degrees from the University of Arkansas and SUNY Binghamton respectively. She gradually became more and more involved in the 18th-19th century Lowcountry sites and eventually studied race, class, and ethnic relations in antebellum Charleston in her dissertation. More recently, she worked at a project in North Charleston looking for the home and garden site of botanist Andre Michaux.

Dee Dee now teaches anthropology and archaeology courses at the College of Charleston and education is truly dear to her heart. What she loves most about archaeology is not finding artifacts or chasing treasures—she just loves introducing archaeology to new students and seeing the spark of interest in their eyes. Her reward is "seeing them become excited about the discipline and how it contributes to a deeper and broader understanding of the past." But don't think that she is churning out dilettantes. She encourages hard work, research, and some soul-searching. "Make sure you are passionate about archaeology before you head off to graduate school," she advises her students, and "get as much field and lab experience as you can on a variety of sites." ■

Digs Around the World

NEWS!

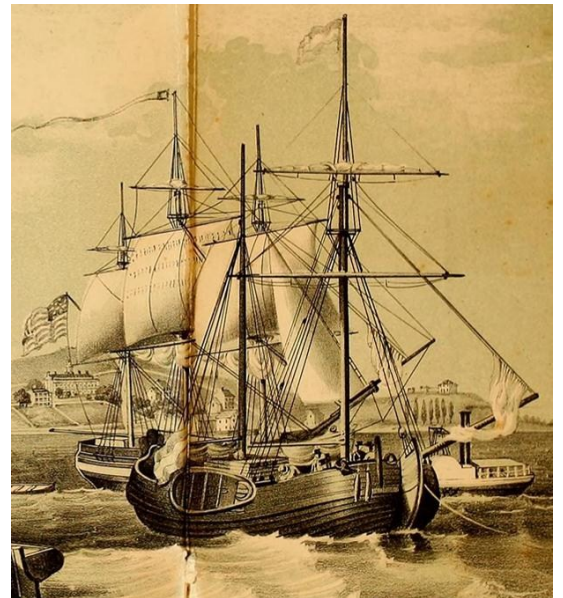


- DNA analysis of the skeletal remains from the 15th century cemetery at La Isabela in the Dominican Republic, revealed two African inhabitants. La Isabela was founded in 1494 after Columbus' second voyage and abandoned in 1498. These skeletons belonged to the first Africans in the New World, scientists say. [New Scientist](#) has the rest of the story.

◀ 15th century church remains at the colony of La Isabela.

- Archaeologists found more than 14,000 skeletal fragments at a 9th century massacre site at Sacred Ridge, Colorado. The excavators believe that the violent raid was the result of conflict between Anasazi Ancestral Puebloan ethnic groups. A study of the bones showed signs of torture and mutilation. Among the artifacts recovered were axes that tested positive for human blood. Visit [Discovery News](#) for more.
- Remains of an 18th century shipwreck were discovered in Manhattan during the construction of the future World Trade Center. Only about a 32-foot portion of the ship survives, but based on the projected dimensions and the placement of the mast, archaeologist Warren Reiss argues that it was a brigantine. Waterlogged remains of the ship were transported to the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab for cleaning. The MAC Lab's [live journal](#) has photos of the conservation process. New York Times has the [original](#) and [follow-up](#) articles with excavation photos.

A brigantine sailing by Staten Island. From the Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York, 1851. ➤



- Underwater archaeologists found a doctor's kit and several tightly sealed tin containers at a 2000-year-old Roman shipwreck off the coast of Tuscany. They soon discovered that a number of green tablets survived inside the containers for centuries. Preliminary analyses managed to identify carrot, radish, parsley, cabbage, alfalfa, and hibiscus as part of the ingredient list. The tablets could have been vitamin supplements for sailors, one scientist suggests. The kit also contained surgical instruments and a bleeding cup. More on the excavations at [Discovery News](#).
- Excavations at Camp Lawton, the largest Civil War prison of its time, yielded 200 artifacts including personal items that once belonged to prisoners of war. The archaeological site near Millen, GA escaped notice by relic hunters and stayed undisturbed for 150 years. Archaeologists estimate up to 30 years of digging at the site. Hundreds of POWs died at the camp, but the excavators are not planning to disturb burials. CNN has [the story](#), as well as photos of the artifacts recently recovered from the dig.