

North Carolina Archaeological Society

Newsletter

4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619

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

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Fall Meeting Held at Town Creek

The Society held its annual fall meeting on October 13th at Town Creek Indian Mound. This was the second straight year that Town Creek has hosted the meeting and, as in 2006, the meeting allowed Society members to participate in an on-going archaeological excavation at the site. The weather was nearly perfect, and more than 100 persons attended. Members were treated to excellent presentations in the morning by Dr. Tony Boudreaux and Mr. Vance Tiede. Tony spoke about his doctoral research, supported in part by an NCAS research grant in 2001, which developed a lengthy occupational history for the South Appalachian Mississippian community at Town Creek spanning more than 300 years. Vance discussed his astro-archaeological research aimed at demonstrating astronomical meaning in the alignment of structures and other features at Town Creek.

After a catered barbecue lunch, members participated in Eastern Woodlands Indian crafts, hosted by Bill and Susie Gingras, and they helped excavate and screen for artifacts within a 10-ft by 30-ft area along the south edge of the village plaza. The Woodlands Indian crafts demonstration, held at the outdoor Learning Center near the Visitor Center, offered opportunities to see fire-pit cooking, tanning of hides, stone tool production, pottery making, and beading of jewelry.

The excavations took place within the stockaded, reconstructed site. The purpose of this excavation was to re-expose three 10x10-ft previously dug units so they could be mapped and photographed. The excavation also permitted the recovery of numerous chipped-stone artifacts and pottery fragments. More than 60 Society members helped dig and screen on Saturday, and a few dozen others helped out on Friday and Sunday.

As part of the field project, Shawn Patch of New South Associates, an archaeological consulting firm in Greensboro, conducting a remote sensing experiment at the site using GPR (ground penetrating radar). The 20x20-meter block he investigated was studied in 2006 using soil resistivity and a gradiometer. A comparison

of the results of these three techniques with site maps and the photographic mosaic will allow archaeologists to assess the applicability of remote sensing at sites such as Town Creek.

A final report of the 2006 excavations is available on the Society's website at: <http://www.rla.unc.edu/ncas/>. When completed, the 2007 report will also be available there.

The fall meeting also provided an opportunity for the Society to pay a special tribute to recently retired Archie Smith, who served as the site manager at Town Creek Indian Mound State Historic Site for more than 30 years. Tom Oakes, the outgoing NCAS President, presented Archie with an engraved Award of Appreciation, and Archie also was given a special gift from a few NCAS members to acknowledge his long-term care of the site and his advocacy of archaeology in our state. Archie had already been honored by the Department of Cultural Resources, who on behalf of Governor Easley presented him with the Order of the Longleaf Pine for lifetime achievement. The Friday night reception was highlighted by a wonderful Powerpoint show of Archie's career at Town Creek and his many accomplishments, put together by the new site manager, Rich Thompson. Members of the North Carolina Archaeological Council also were on hand Friday night to convey their congratulations to Archie for his retirement.

As a postscript to this event, Archie offered to step up his service to the NCAS and fill the vacated seat left by a resigning board member. The NCAS Board of Directors voted to approve his offer, and he will serve until Fall 2009, the remainder of the term. Welcome aboard, Archie, and thanks again for your dedication to the NCAS and your stewardship of the archaeological resources of North Carolina.

**Steve Davis and
Linda Carnes-McNaughton**



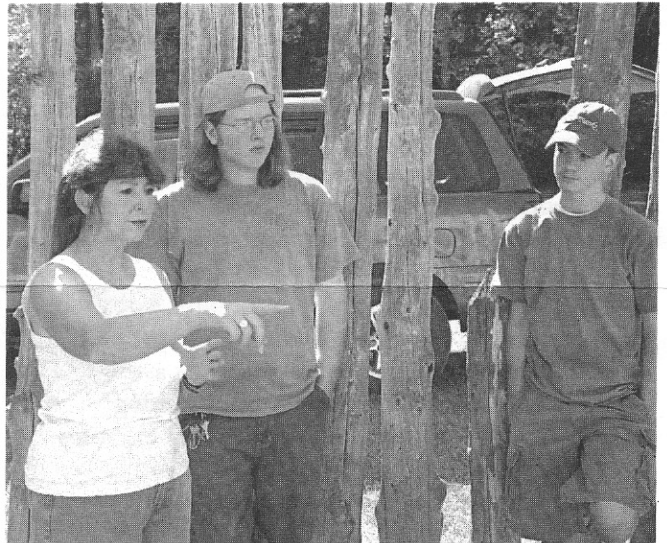
NCAS members and volunteers excavate and screen soil to recover artifacts on Friday.



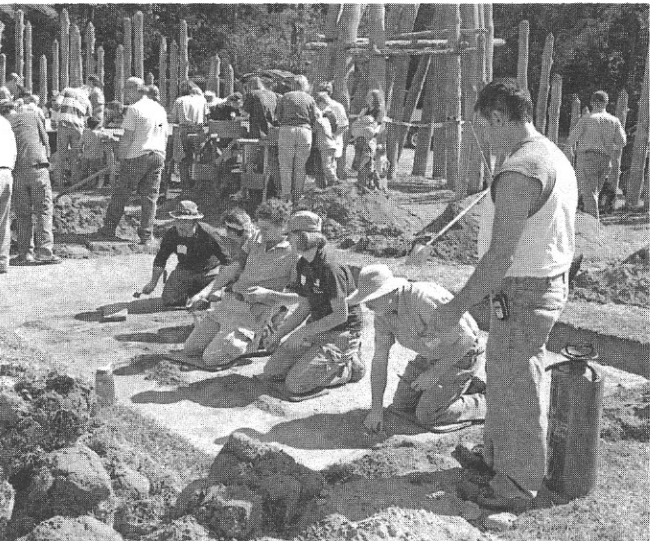
Jonathan Flood pulls a GPR (ground penetrating radar) unit over the site surface at Town Creek to detect buried features.



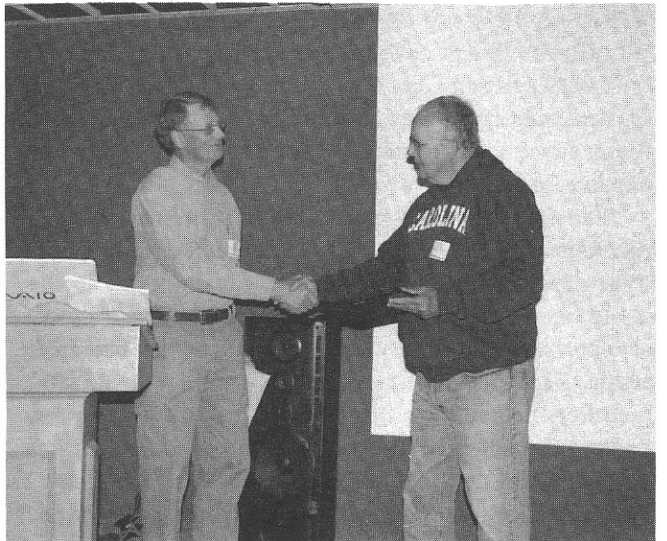
NCAS members and volunteers help out with the Town Creek dig on Saturday.



NCAS Executive Secretary Linda Carnes-McNaughton explains archaeological procedures to two Society volunteers.



NCAS members and volunteers prepare the excavation for mapping and photography on Saturday.



NCAS President Tom Oakes presents Archie Smith with an Award of Appreciation on behalf of the Society.

Rock Art Conservation Comes to North Carolina

The North Carolina Rock Art Survey (NCRAS) began its mission in 1997 and has since recorded 52 prehistoric and historic "rock art" sites. These include 28 prehistoric petroglyphs, 3 pictographs, and 21 historic petroglyphs. While continuing to document new sites, the NCRAS is now working to conserve two prehistoric petroglyph sites. One of these sites is Judaculla Rock—North Carolina's best known petroglyph. Site degradation and vandalism prompted the NCRAS to take the lead in organizing a Judaculla Advisory Committee composed of: site owner Jackson County, NC; members of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Tribal Historic Preservation Office and Tribal Elders; Office of State Archaeology; professors from nearby Western Carolina University; and members of the surrounding community.

The Advisory Committee agreed to pursue a formal recording of the petroglyphs along with a condition assessment and conservation plan. The plan will make recommendations for resolving destructive environmental factors, public visitation issues, and ongoing maintenance and aesthetic matters. Close consultation with the Cherokee Tribe has been an important part of the process and the Cherokee perspective will be a basis for interaction and interpretation at this sacred site. In addition, a site stewardship program utilizing local interest will be established as part of the plan.

Jackson County contracted with rock art conservation specialist Dr. Jannie Loubser, (Stratum Unlimited, Alpharetta, Ga.), to complete the initial recording and assessments. Field work began with the removal of historic sediments deposited on the base of the boulder. Historic photos show that approximately half of the boulder has been covered with sediment since the 1920s. Sediment removal revealed two soapstone bowl scars and many pecked glyphs extending into the soil. Dr. Loubser mapped the boulder utilizing a one-to-one tracing of the pecked and engraved surfaces. Additional recording was done at night with artificial side lighting. Dr. Douglas Frink, soil scientist from Valdosta State University, assessed the sedimentation problems at the site, and his conclusions will be an important component of the final report. The next phase of the project will involve evaluating the recommendations and raising funds for their implementation. Updates of the project will be made available through the North Carolina Rock Art Survey website, www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc/rock_art.

At the same time that attention was being focused on Judaculla Rock, another petroglyph site located in

DuPont State Forest, Transylvania County, NC, was being irreparably damaged. This site, mostly pecked circles on a large expanse of exposed granitic outcropping, is jointly owned by DuPont State Forest and a private citizen.

This site has experienced severe impacts from illegal campfires, spray paint, littering of broken glass and cigarette butts, and off-road use of pick-ups and ATVs. It has long been known as a local "party area", and the landowners have had little success preventing unauthorized access.

DuPont State Forest officials, the private landowner, and the Friends of DuPont State Forest citizens group sought assistance from NCRAS to record the site and assess preservation needs. With the interest and generosity of the Friends group, Dr. Jannie Loubser was brought in for an initial consultation. Just two weeks prior, another set of pecked circles were discovered in the forest and these were confirmed during Dr. Loubser's visit. As a result of these new discoveries, the Friends of DuPont State Forest will conduct a forest petroglyph survey before a conservation plan is sought. The NCRAS will conduct a training session for the volunteers, and the survey will take place over the opportunistic winter months of less vegetative coverage. The next step will be to seek further funding and consult with the Cherokee Tribe. A stewardship program is also planned. Updates on this site will be posted to the NCRAS website.

In other NCRAS news, members recently volunteered with the National Forest in North Carolina's assessment of the Paint Rock pictograph in Madison County, N.C. Pigment analyses show that the pictograph was much older than originally thought. Conventional Carbon-14 results for the surprisingly intact pigments date the panel to 4,420 years Before Present (+/- 40 years) and the calibrated range is 2,920 – 3,320 BC. This likely 5,000 year-old date at Paint Rock makes it the second oldest rock art panel in the Southeastern U.S.! The Forest Service has developed a conservation plan for the site and will soon begin several preservation measures.

North Carolina has a limited number of known rock art sites and even fewer that are open to the public. NCRAS has been exceedingly fortunate to have the enthusiasm and cooperation of many groups and individuals in our initial conservation attempts. If you know of any rock art sites or have questions, please contact The North Carolina Rock Art Survey, Scott Ashcraft, 828-257-4254 or Lorie Hansen 828-697-6187.



DuPont Circles overview with selected glyphs (photo credit: Lorie Hansen)



Sediment Removal on Judaculla Rock (photo credit: Scott Ashcraft)

CLOVIS DETHRONED

Editor's note: Articles in recent issues of *Science* and the *Mammoth Trumpet* declare that the Clovis-First model makes no sense. This pronouncement was almost sure to draw strong rebuttals from pro Clovis-First proponents. The Society as an organization has no intention of taking part in the Clovis-First issue. However, since the Clovis culture plays such an important part in our study of the past, it is believed that members would like to keep abreast of the thinking on both sides of the controversy and form their own opinions.

Part 1

Note: This is a shortened version of an article in the July '07 issue of the *Mammoth Trumpet* written by Dr. Waters and Dr. Stafford, both with the Center for the Study of the First Americans (CSFA, Texas A&M, College Station, Texas).

Like any science, American archaeology has its own long-standing and cherished theories. However, in the face of new evidence, it appears that one of the most abiding theories, the Clovis-First model, must now bow out of the debate. According to CSFA research first published in *Science* and later in the *Mammoth Trumpet*, Mike Waters and geochronologist Tom Stafford, using revised radiocarbon dating, stated that "it's impossible for the Clovis people to be the First Americans." This dating was prompted by the fact that the age of Clovis in the past has been based on radiocarbon dates using old radiocarbon technologies or unreliable carbon types. Also, the standard deviations on many of them were very large.

In order to accurately determine the revised age range for Clovis, Waters and Stafford acquired 43 radiocarbon samples from documented Clovis sites. New dates were then generated on bone, charcoal, and seeds, using highly accurate accelerated mass spectrometer (AMS) dating methods.

Waters and Stafford found that their new dates fell between a minimum range of 13,125-12,925 CALBP and a maximum range of 13,250-12,800 CALBP. This gave Clovis duration some 200 to 240 years, a relative eye-blink in archaeological terms. These findings show that "We have Clovis people living in North and South America at the same time. So how could this make Clovis first?" Then there are demographic objections. It's unlikely that hunter-gatherers entering the New World from the north could have traveled to the southern tip of South America in less than 500 years. Says Waters, "It just wasn't enough time for people to adapt to environments.... This just didn't make sense if Clovis were the first to enter the Americas."

Part 2 - THE REBUTTAL

As was anticipated by the authors of the "Clovis Dethroned" articles first in *Science* and later in the *Mammoth Trumpet*, Dr. Gary Haynes and other well known anthropologists responded to the assertion that Clovis was a short-lived cultural phenomenon. Haynes et al. (2007) commented in *Science* that Waters and Stafford have not "definitely established the temporal span of this cultural complex in the Americas." Haynes also stated that the Waters and Stafford assertion that the Clovis point-making people could not have migrated to the Tierra del Fuego site in Chile lacks solid evidence and empirical support.

In more detailed comments, Haynes provides examples of why he and others disagree that the overlap of Clovis and non-Clovis at some sites proves the presence of pre-Clovis occupations in the

Americas. For example, the occupants of the Bonneville Estates site in Nevada and Arlington Springs site in California may or may not have even been Clovis people, lacking diagnostic artifacts. It is also pointed out that while the Goshen site is characterized by well-made unfluted points, the dating of the points is ambiguous.

What Stafford and Waters (personal correspondence) and Haynes et al. agree on is that only a continuing program of radiometric dating and careful stratigraphic correlations can address the continuing ambiguity of the emergence and spread of the Clovis culture. In other words, do more digging below the Clovis level.

Submitted by Pete Peterson

2007 Election of Officers

The 2007 Election of Officers was held at the fall business meeting on Saturday, October 13, at Town Creek Indian Mound in Mt. Gilead.

Terri Russ replaced Tom Oakes as President with Tommy Stine replacing Terri Russ as Vice President. Ruth Morgans and Kate Pattison replaced Paul Mohler and Brian Overton as new Board Members. Thank you Tom, Paul, and Brian, and welcome Tommy, Ruth, and Kate. Archie Smith replaced Tara Potts, who resigned because of relocating to Hong Kong.

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

NCAS Officers

President: Terri Russ, PO Box 81, Hillsborough NC 27278.

Vice-president: Tommy Stine, 1923-36th Avenue NE, Hicikory, NC 28601.

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

Secretary: Linda Carnes-McNaughton, Dept of the Army, Public Works Business Center (AFZA-PW-E) (Carnes), Fort Bragg Garrison Command (ABN), Installation Management Agency, Fort Bragg, NC 28310.

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

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Executive Board Members: Jeff Irwin, Matthew Jorgenson, Ruth Morgans, Kate Pattison, Scott Seibel, Archie Smith

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