

South Carolina Archaeology Month



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South Carolina Archaeology Month 2017: Archaeology in State Parks

Archaeology in South Carolina State Parks

David Jones, Archaeologist, South Carolina State Park Service

During the Great Depression, the state of South Carolina established a state park system with the assistance of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and local communities. The CCC built 16 state parks during the 1930s, and in the process protected thousands of acres containing important scenic, natural, and cultural resources. The South Carolina State Forestry Commission, the agency charged with operating the new parks, added several historic sites to the system over the next few decades, including Old Dorchester, Rivers Bridge, and Rose Hill Plantation. In 1967, the General Assembly created the Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SPCRT), which took over management of the South Carolina State Park Service.

In 1968, Johnny Miller conducted preliminary excavations on the Ashley River, in search of remains of the 1670 settlement of Charles Towne. The South Carolina Bicentennial Commission hired Stanley South (South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology) to conduct additional excavations there in 1969. In 1970, the Tricentennial Commission turned the property over to SPCRT, and it became Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site.

In 1970, the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA) established a Statement of Goals, intended to serve as a flexible "master plan" over the following decade. Included in that plan was continuing excavations at Charles Towne Landing to follow up the work that South had begun, as well as a long-term project for excavations at Colonial Dorchester. The plan also referenced efforts to investigate known tar kilns at Paris Mountain State Park, and excavations at shell ring sites along the coast. It is unclear if this part of the plan included work at Spanish Mount, located at Edisto Beach State Park. However, Donald Sutherland did conduct excavations at Spanish Mount during the summers of 1973 and 1975 under the auspices of SCIAA. Additionally, SCIAA was involved in work at Colonial Dorchester, and Landsford Canal, under the direction of Robert Carrillo. Ken Lewis and Helen Haskell excavated portions of Hampton Plantation in 1979 and 1980.

The State Park Service hired its first full time archaeologist in 1989. Donnie Barker served in that position until 1999. Barker continued working on excavations at Colonial Dorchester and Hampton Plantation until he vacated his post in 1999. Since 2000, the South Carolina State Park Service has viewed archaeology as consisting of three general areas of focus. Compliance archaeology endeavors to assess impacts to cultural resources, and guide the placement of infrastructure development on the 47 parks across the state. With research archaeology, we are uncovering information that enhances interpretive services at the parks and contributes to current archaeological scholarship. Our public archaeology program bridges the gap between research and interpretation. It gives the visitor an appreciation for the importance of historic preservation, careful and professionally supervised archaeological excavation, and the ways in which archaeology can contribute to the understanding of our past.

Their Story Ends

Dr. Karen Smith, South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

"On the southwest end of Edisto is a mound of shells from fifteen to twenty feet high, and its base half an acre of land. It is called the Spanish Mount." (Ramsay 1858:157).



Courtesy of Brandon Joy

Bone pin recovered from Spanish Mount, 2016.

development, and strengthening coastal storms. Unfortunately, the climatic issues that we face as a society, indeed, as a species have already claimed the mound as a victim.

It was within the context of a salvage situation that Donald Sutherland led a University of South Carolina (USC) field school at Spanish Mount in the early 1970s. At that time, some 3 meters (9 feet) of shell was still present at its tallest point. His work, and the work of his students, staff, and volunteers, provided data for numerous syntheses of late Archaic Period (5000 to 3000 BP) life on the southern Atlantic Coast. The only other major excavations to take place on the mound have occurred within the last year, first in 2016 and then in 2017, when only about 1 meter (3 to 4 feet) of intact mound remained. The timing of this new work was no accident. Indeed, the rate of site degradation had increased dramatically following a series of back-to-back storms. Were one to do more work at the site, and draw on new analytical methods not available in the 1970s, it had truly become a now or never proposition.

Thus, with the help of more than 50 amazing volunteers, an additional 17-square meters of the mound was recovered, including more than 80 samples collected for specialized analysis. USC students and staff are working diligently to process the massive collection of oysters, whelk, clams, periwinkle, crab, fish, turtle, deer, pottery, and much, much more. With these samples, we hope to calculate rates of shellfish deposition within the mound. We also plan to address questions related to food preparation and consumption as well as how the pottery and bone pin assemblages from Spanish Mount fit into local and regional decorative traditions. So, stay tuned for the results!

The Birthplace of South Carolina: Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site

Nicole Isenbarger, Archaeologist, Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site

John Hight, Park Historian, Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site

Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site, situated in Charleston, South Carolina, preserves the location of the first capital of England's Carolina colony. Chartered in the 1660s, Carolina encompassed a vast swath of southern North America, stretching southward from Virginia into northern Florida. A small group of English colonists and enslaved Africans inaugurated the permanent European settlement of what is now South Carolina in 1670. Accepting the hospitality of the Kiawah Native Americans, the colonists established their first town on a secluded bluff directly across the Ashley River from present-day downtown Charleston. They named it Charles Towne in honor of their king, Charles II, the colony's grantor.

Defensive concerns figured prominently in Charles Towne's placement. As one colonist observed, the English were settling "in the very chips of the Spaniard." Spain, one of England's oldest European rivals, was already firmly entrenched in northern Florida and also claimed the territory that constituted English Carolina. Wary of Spanish attack, the Carolina colonists situated their capital on high ground amidst impassible marshes and then strengthened their position with fortifications, erecting a palisade to protect against land-based threats and earthen cannon platforms to control the approaches up the Ashley River.

Charles Towne on the Ashley served as Carolina's seat of government for a decade, but never grew into a significant population center. Most of the colonists, in fact, failed to build houses in town, preferring instead to live outside of the capital on their larger estates. Thus, Charles Towne probably never comprised more than a few dozen structures — the most prominent of which were the governor's residence and a public storehouse. In 1680, the colonists moved their capital to a new location on the Charleston peninsula, taking the name Charles Towne with them. The old town site had been abandoned by the 1690s, when a single landowner incorporated it into a plantation that he aptly named Old Town.

Archaeological inquiry into the original location of Charles Towne began in the late 1960s on the eve of South Carolina's 300th anniversary. The first systematic excavations, led by Stanley South under the auspices of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, found evidence of Charles Towne's fortifications, exposing portions of the palisade's footprint and the broad ditch associated with the cannon platforms. State Parks has partially reconstructed these defenses to give visitors a better sense of the early colonial cultural landscape. South returned in 2000 and uncovered a rectangular pattern of postholes, with hundreds of related artifacts, belonging to a post-inhabited ground building from the 1670s. A wooden "ghost structure" currently marks the site of this former earthen structure.

More recently, park archaeologists have revealed the remnants of other buildings from the early colonial period. These consist of a series of brick and tabby remnants at differing levels, suggesting that multiple building episodes occurred in this small area within a short span of time. More significantly, this is the earliest evidence of permanent architecture from the colonial period in South Carolina. Near these structural remains, they also uncovered a line of postholes indicative of an additional palisade as well as other features that may have been part of Charles Towne's defenses.

Excavations are ongoing at this complex building site. The artifacts are helping us answer questions about how these buildings were used and what types of activities took place there. Artifacts related to daily life include broken pieces from the dishes they used for cooking, eating, and food storage as well as tools, clothing items, tobacco pipe fragments, and bits of animal bone and plant remains from the foods they ate. Archaeologists are also finding a good number of artifacts related to the military defenses of the colony, such as remnants of suits of armor, gun parts and artillery. One such artifact includes an ornate wheel-lock cover for a pistol. Such weapons, which contained intricate firing mechanisms, were expensive to make and repair. Thus, the wheel-lock pistol likely belonged to a militia officer or a member of the gentry.

Archaeology has also delved into Charles Towne's agricultural history. Carolina's London-based proprietors organized their colony's economy around agriculture and specifically instructed the colonists to experiment with a variety of cash crops in search of viable staples. During an excavation that began in 2006, a team of archaeologists not only uncovered a series of planting features from a former cultivated area; they were also able to determine what had been grown there. They sent soil samples to a laboratory, where botanists analyzed them for plant indicators, such as pollen and phytoliths. Phytoliths are silica bodies that form in living plants and allow for identification long after a plant's organic structures have decomposed. The soil analysis confirmed the presence of sugarcane, cotton, corn, grapes, rice, and sorghum. Park staff established a small representative garden on this excavated site to interpret these findings.

Although the colonists left behind many records that document the Charles Towne experience, the extant sources are far from complete and only tell part of the story. Archaeology has, and continues to fill in some of the gaps, enhancing our interpretation of the site's rich and complex history. Since the late 1960s, archaeologists have made many exciting discoveries at Charles Towne Landing. These discoveries have increased our knowledge of the 1670s landscape and have also given us a better understanding of what life was like for the English colonists, enslaved Africans, and Native Americans who shaped the Carolina colony within the broader context of the 17th century Atlantic World.

The Archaeological Investigation of St. George Parish Church

Larry James, MA RPA, Brockington and Associates Inc.



The church bell tower at Colonial Dorchester

The ruins of St. George's Parish Church are one of many unique features of Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site. Located in Summerville, SC, a surviving bell tower is a stark reminder of the 18th-century Anglican church that endured years of prosperity, war, fire, and abandonment. Between 2012 and 2013, a look inside the sacred grounds of this site presented researchers with a view into this unique past. Established by the colonial legislature in 1717, St. George's Parish served both Anglicans and Dissenters that settled within and around the Congregationalists' planned community of Dorchester (settled in 1697). As the congregation increased, the small rectangular church was expanded into a larger cruciform shape, adding more pew space, an organ and a bell tower. After the war, the church and town were left abandoned and dilapidated. Over time, the walls and foundation were removed by scavengers while the tower was heavily damaged in the 1886 earthquake. Only the church's bell tower remains partially intact and serves as a visible symbol of the

colonial past, preserved and maintained by the South Carolina State Park Service since the 1960s.

The focus of the archaeological investigation was to further comprehend the ruins of St. George's Parish Church and to better define the boundary of the church's cemetery. A detailed background study, three stages of archaeological fieldwork and two years of laboratory analysis were employed to uncover significant information concerning the church's interior and exterior footprint. With the discovery of over one thousand architectural, domestic, and military-related artifacts, new insight was gained about the church's usage before and during the Revolutionary War as well as revitalization efforts in the 19th century after the abandonment of the town. The efforts of the College of Charleston field school students and numerous volunteers proved to be a key element in the success of this investigation.

Exploring Life in Colonial Dorchester: Providing Opportunities for Public Education and Engagement

Mary Mikulla, Archaeological Interpreter, Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site

Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site strives to develop programming opportunities that allow visitors to learn more about the history and archaeology of the site. One way is through living history events that encourage visitors to step into the past for a few hours. Historical interpreters, dressed in period clothing, demonstrate specific activities like spinning, cooking, medical care or the duties of a soldier. They depict everyday colonial life, a complement to the archaeological excavations conducted at the site. Living history interpreters set up their demonstration near an active excavation. At the excavation, staff and volunteers provide information about the history, significance of the artifacts, and process of archaeology. Displayed artifacts are selected for the story they can tell about the site and how they complement the living history programming going on around them.

For example, visitors can interact with an interpreter representing a British soldier. They can see, hear and smell musket and cannon demonstrations and begin to imagine the town occupied during the Revolutionary War. In addition, they can also see proof of the occupation through artifacts uncovered in the park that represent military life: musket balls, flints, buttons, an ammunition pouch cover, smoking pipe fragments, etc.

An archaeological excavation continues to help deepen the visitor's intellectual connection. The display of 18th century artifacts that visitors can touch and interact with brings the past into the present. The artifacts remind them of the people who lived and died in the town, of the lives that were lived there. Visitors come for a fun event and unknowingly delve into the site's history, forging a deeper connection with the resource. They become advocates of the unique site, telling their friends about the park and spreading the historical and archaeological significance of Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site.



Archaeology has become a part of the annual Colonial Days Festival at Colonial Dorchester.

The Spencer Site at Hampton Plantation State Historic Site

Martha Zierden, Curator of Historic Archaeology, Charleston Museum

Ron Anthony, Archaeologist, Charleston Museum

David Jones, Archaeologist, South Carolina State Park Service

In 2014, Stacy Young and other archaeologists conducted a shovel testing survey on the front lawn, south of the mansion at Hampton Plantation State Historic Site. This work completed the archaeological survey of the park — a task that started in 2010. The survey identified three distinct concentrations of artifacts. Of note was an area that yielded early 18th century artifacts.

Joseph Spencer owned the property from 1710 to 1729. His will, written in 1729, is the first indication of a European residing on what would become Hampton Plantation. In that will, Spencer leaves the household goods and one room to his wife. So, there must have been a structure (probably a house) on Spencer's property. Spencer, his family, and one enslaved woman named Bess apparently lived close together at this site.

Spencer used his land primarily for raising cattle and other livestock. The number of cattle in his inventory suggests he had one of the largest herds in the parish. His imprint on the land remains: a large pond just a few hundred feet from the site still bears his name.

In 2015 and 2017, Barbara Borg, Martha Zierden, and Ron Anthony led the College of Charleston/Charleston Museum Archaeological Field School in data recovery excavations in this area. Artifacts recovered include European and Historic period Aboriginal ceramics dating to the late 17th to early 18th century, lead shot, a few glass trade beads, smoking pipe fragments, likely reflecting a residential occupation. The site also yielded some personal items, including buttons and a sword hilt that could date to the time of the Spencer occupation.

The Spencer property was most likely in very close proximity to a contemporary Sewee Indian village under the leadership of King Jeramy. Among the most interesting aspects of this site is the presence of colono ware — likely made by enslaved Africans and Native people. In addition, it is possible that this site contains an earlier Mississippian Period component as evidenced by well-executed complicated stamped pottery. The overall artifact assemblage certainly suggests, as seen elsewhere, interaction between Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans during the early colonial period.

To date, features discovered include a large feature, possibly a cellar; a linear array of small post holes (paling) and post holes and molds that could represent one or more structures(s). No feature excavation has taken place at this point.

Work at the Spencer site will continue as time and funds become available in an effort to tease out details of the evolution of human activity and history of Hampton Plantation. The site also offers the opportunity to glean information (and address questions) pertinent to the early settlement of the French Santee — including the nature and degree of multi-cultural encounters in this area.

African American Archaeology at Hampton Plantation State Historic Site

Stacey L. Young, MA, RPA, TRC, Columbia, SC

Hampton Plantation State Historic Site, located just south of the South Santee River in Charleston County, South Carolina, was acquired by the South Carolina Park Service in 1971. Hampton functioned as a rice plantation in the 18th and 19th centuries under ownership of the Horry-Rutledge family. Since its inception as a state historic site, historic preservation efforts have played a significant role in documenting the site history. Over the past seven years, archaeological investigations at Hampton have focused on identifying sites associated with the African American families who lived and worked at the Plantation. Engaging local communities, site visitors, and volunteers in this work has proved vital to its success. The results of this work have provided insights into the settlement history of the area, stylistic architectural changes, foodways, beliefs, and rituals of the enslaved who lived at Hampton.

For several seasons, work focused on exposing the brick foundation of a duplex-style house (Structure 1), located within an area occupied by enslaved workers. The presence and locations of two end chimneys, a central partition, and two side doorways indicated that two rooms were present and that at least two families lived there. The house was one of several buildings within a small cluster shown on an 1809 map of the plantation. In 1809, Harriott Horry managed the plantation and a work force of nearly 300 enslaved men and women. Datable artifacts recovered from the house indicate it was occupied from the late 18th century until the late 19th century, after emancipation. Notable artifacts recovered include a flat iron for ironing clothes, weights for a fishing net or line, a bone awl used for sewing and possibly making nets, lead shot and gunflints used in association with guns for hunting, sewing scissors, thimbles, and dozens of glass beads. The presence of scissors and thimbles suggests someone in the house was a seamstress or tailor. Two additional structures shown on the 1809 map and associated with this 19th century slave community have been identified.

In addition to the 19th century slave community, archaeological investigations and historic research have also identified the locations of four domestic sites dating to the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century. These sites are associated with newly emancipated slaves who worked for Henry Middleton Rutledge as sharecroppers and tenant farmers. The sites were located in an area along the western boundary of the current park boundary where a row of four houses is shown on a 1901 map of Rutledge's land. A church and school for African American families were also present at this time. Sometime thereafter, lots of land located adjacent to Hampton were granted to African American families in the area. These families built their own houses and the community now known as Germaville. Researchers have engaged members of this community in their work and received valuable information concerning the histories of the past communities.

Sherd is the Word: A Summary of Current ColonoWare Research from Hampton Plantation State Historic Site

Brooke Brilliant, ACC, Inc.

Preliminary findings from an analysis of colonoWare from the early 18th century Spencer occupation and a late 18th to 19th century enslaved worker house provide insight into on-site colonoWare production and trade at Hampton Plantation State Historic Site.

Spencer Occupation. One of the most distinctive characteristics of the early 18th century colonoWare assemblage is the relatively large percentage of Coarse ColonoWare. This colonoWare variety shares characteristics with colonoWare typically found on plantations and Mississippian ceramics, and may have been produced by Native Americans. The recovery of Coarse ColonoWare suggests the occupants of the site were interacting and likely trading with Native Americans, possibly the Sewee Indians, who were in the area at the time.

Enslaved Worker Occupation. The variety of colonoWare lip, vessel, and base forms distinguishes the late 18th to 19th century colonoWare assemblage from the earlier assemblage. Changes in the functionality of colonoWare, increased trade, and production may account for the expanded diversity of this assemblage. The recovery of River Burnished colonoWare, a market ware produced by the Catawba Indians, from the house site suggests the enslaved workers were trading with itinerant Catawba potters, acquiring these goods from the market or from trading networks.

The enslaved occupants of Hampton Plantation were also involved in the production of colonoWare. The identification of spalls or possible spalls on 12 of the colonoWare sherds and the recovery of smoothing stones and shell scrapers are indicators of colonoWare production on the household level. Involvement in the production and distribution of colonoWare likely provided an avenue for sharing and receiving information, in addition to a source of income or a way to acquire goods.

Conclusion. The analysis of colonoWare from the early 18th century and late 18th to 19th century settlements at Hampton Plantation suggests the enslaved occupants were engaged in trade with Native Americans in both contexts and involved in the production of colonoWare in the later context. Involvement in the market economy likely provided enslaved people a source of power and a path to navigate the social and economic terrain of the colonial and antebellum landscapes.

Developing an Immersive Virtual Heritage Platform for Hampton Plantation State Historic Site, Charleston County, SC

Susan J. Bergeron, PhD, Anthropology and Geography Department, Coastal Carolina University

The *Virtual Hampton* project encompasses the multi-year development of a prototype immersive, interactive virtual landscape exploration platform for Hampton Plantation, one of a complex of well-known rice plantations along the South Santee River in South Carolina's Lowcountry. The virtual platform utilizes the Unity 3D game development engine to reconstruct the physical and cultural elements of the Hampton landscape, derived from GIS data, historical, and archaeological sources. The multimedia content embedded within this virtual landscape is being developed in collaboration with South Carolina State Parks staff, and will present historical, archaeological, and humanistic narratives that illuminate the lives of the intertwined communities that lived and worked in Hampton's landscape.

Immersive virtual landscape platforms such as *Virtual Hampton* are designed around an individual experience as a user navigates a graphical representation of a place, interacts with features within the landscape, and builds a personal narrative of that journey. This experience can be further enhanced by the integration of digital representations of knowledge about those places, such as historical accounts, photo, graphics and other visual media, video, audio, and interactive animations. Such experiential platforms can be valuable tools in virtual heritage for synthesizing and presenting knowledge about past landscapes for a wide range of audiences.

As a case study, Hampton Plantation State Historic Site offers unique opportunities to implement an immersive virtual landscape. Hampton Plantation was part of a complex of well-known rice plantations along the South Santee River. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Hampton was a prime example of plantation culture and the plantation economy in South Carolina. Because the plantation remained in private family ownership for over 200 years and was then acquired by the State of South Carolina, its cultural landscapes have not been impacted by modern development and still retain readily identifiable features from past activities, such as the remnants of dikes and water control features in the former rice fields. In addition, recent archaeological work in the undisturbed areas of former slave quarters is yielding new clues to that portion of Hampton's past cultural landscape that can be illuminated through the virtual reconstruction.

The first technical prototype of the *Virtual Hampton* platform has been completed, and is currently undergoing testing. Content development and functionality enhancements are also underway, including building out the vegetation models for the rice fields, developing models representing the outbuildings and other cultural features of Hampton's landscape, and the final expansion of the embedded multimedia content to include historical information, archaeological interpretation, and information about the landscape of rice cultivation.

From The Surface Down

L. Jesse Rouse, Department of Geology and Geography, University of North Carolina Pembroke

Geospatial and geoscience technologies have been widely used in the search for, and examination of, cultural resources. Tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing provide a view of surficial alterations, while tools such as Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) allow us to seek below the surface to ascertain whether there are subsurface anomalies that may represent buried cultural materials or features. In the context of a historic site survey, these technologies can pick up where the historic record leaves off and provide a glimpse at what lies below the surface before the archaeologists break ground.

GPR has become a standard technology used to conduct non-invasive surveys to delineate features and guide invasive excavations. The GPR unit works by emitting a series of radio waves (radar) and receiving the waves that reflect off an anomaly. Anomalies are objects or features that differ enough in density and/or make-up from the surrounding materials or soil. For instance, in an undisturbed soil, wood such as a root would likely be seen in the output, but a denser material such as metal would create a much stronger reflection.

GPR data collection at Hampton Plantation State Historic Site, as with any archaeological field work, requires a systematic approach to ensure that the spatial context is maintained. Data collection transects and grids were set up in relation to existing test units in the site's archaeological grid. Once the transect or grid was set, data was collected through a series of passes first running from south to north then west to east. The transects were interpreted in two dimensions, where X is the distance traveled along the transect and Y is the time the wave energy travels before reflecting off of a subsurface object. The grids were interpreted in three dimensions, where X is the distance traveled on the north-south transect, Y is the distance traveled on the east-west transect, and Z is the time that the wave travels before reflecting off of a subsurface object.

Areas surveyed with GPR at Hampton Plantation were selected based on either historical or archaeological activities. Where historic documents indicated the existence of a feature or where a cluster of archaeological shovel tests showed positives, a transect or grid was surveyed. However, only a small portion of the state historic site has been surveyed. This leaves plenty of future work to be done.

Redcliffe: A Reflection of Historical Experiences

Joy Rainhree, Manager, Redcliffe State Historic Site

Located on a bluff overlooking the Savannah River Valley in Beech Island, South Carolina, the buildings of Redcliffe stand as century-old structural legacies to the lives of the Hammond family and the numerous African-American families who called the site home from 1855 until 1975. The home was constructed in 1859 for South Carolina Governor, James Henry Hammond. It was his great-grandson John Shaw Billings, an editor of *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune* magazines, who donated the plantation to the state of South Carolina in 1973. Numerous African-American families, including the Henleys and Wigfalls, were crucial to the construction, protection and preservation of the property over the years as well.

Redcliffe symbolizes the ambition, wealth, and power of James Henry Hammond, a successful cotton planter, congressman, governor, and senator, who spent his life defending the southern plantation system and his status within it. The historic site provides a setting for exploring the experiences of the enslaved, as well as the larger institution of slavery. Through the interpretation of change over time, visitors are able to understand the historical experiences and impact of the white and black families who lived and worked at the site.

Today, Redcliffe Plantation operates as a state historic site, one of 47 parks in the South Carolina State Park System. The historic mansion is fully furnished with furniture, artwork, and other artifacts original to the home. Two of the original four historic slave/freedman quarters still remain, as well as the 1903 stables. All of these structures reflect the different economies and varied tastes and lifestyles of successive generations of the many families associated with the site.

The South Carolina State Park Service preserves historic resources that document the layers of history and patterns of change at Redcliffe Plantation State Historic Site. Our preservation philosophy is based on the recognition that the site reflects the contributions made by multiple generations and individuals over more than 150 years of history.

Redcliffe's artifacts, structures, and landscape reflect the historical experiences and impact of the white and black families who lived and worked at the site during the 19th and 20th centuries. The stories of these individuals overlap as did their daily lives, leaving behind the legacy that visitors see today.

Mapping a Civil War Battlefield at Rivers Bridge State Historic Site

John White, Interpretive Ranger, Rivers Bridge State Historic Site

Rivers Bridge is the site of a relatively small battle fought during the waning days of the Civil War. Preserved and interpreted by the South Carolina State Park Service since 1945, the site includes well-preserved earthen field fortifications and other physical features from the time of the battle. The State Park Service has used noninvasive archaeological methods to identify and assess these features to improve their management and interpretation.

A 2003 grant from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program allowed the State Park Service to map the battlefield using global positioning system (GPS) and geographic information system (GIS) technologies. Steve Smith and Jim Legg of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology traced the remains of earthworks, roads, and other physical features from the time of the war and afterward with the GPS. The GIS-generated maps they produced showed that battlefield maps drawn by Union army engineers were remarkably accurate. The modern GPS maps also made clear that much of the 1865 battlefield remained intact, on both the historic site and adjacent properties.

To help preserve some of the most important and fragile elements of the Rivers Bridge battlefield — the remnants of the soldiers' earthen field fortifications — the State Park Service used GPS to conduct a survey of the trees around the Confederate earthworks that stand at the center of the site's battlefield trail. Devised by State Park Service biologist Stan Hutto, the survey identified trees that would pose a hazard to the earthworks if they were to fall and prioritized those trees for gradual removal. The survey produced a series of maps that graphically depict how tree cover would change around the earthworks as hazard trees are removed and where new trees will have to be planted to retain the protective canopy needed to preserve the fortification remnants from erosion.

The grant-funded project resulted in the report *"The Strongest Position I Ever Saw In My Life: Mapping and Site Study of the Rivers Bridge Battlefield,"* the first fully documented investigation of the physical remains of the battle site. Besides providing baseline information for interpreting and managing the cultural resources at Rivers Bridge State Historic Site, the report also offers a possible framework for the preservation of remaining battlefield features outside the site in partnership with local land owners.

The Face of Battle: Interpreting the Casualties of the Battle of Rivers Bridge

Dan Bell, Historic Resource Coordinator, SC State Park Service

Rivers Bridge was a small battle of the Civil War. Fought on February 2-3, 1865, by a relatively small number of troops over a limited area, the battle shows us Civil War combat on an intimate, human scale. The relatively small number of casualties that resulted from the fight lets us understand the cost of the war on a similarly human scale.

Union and Confederate forces both reported total losses of about one hundred men at Rivers Bridge. The

South Carolina State Park Service has identified more than one hundred and fifty soldiers who were killed, wounded, captured, or went missing in two days of combat along the Salkatchatchee River. But we've done more than just name the men who became casualties in the fight. We've done accounts of how these men died or were wounded, medical and pension records that graphically describe the lingering effects of terrible wounds, and in some cases, photographs of the men whose sacrifices made Rivers Bridge hallowed ground.

Visitors to Rivers Bridge State Historic Site can now learn more about the casualties of the battle. At the Memorial Grounds, the site where the Confederate dead from the battle were reburied in 1876, a small structure built in the 1930s has been reused to house a permanent exhibit commemorating the losses from both North and South.



Photomural of casualties and image of William Tweed at Rivers Bridge Memorial Grounds exhibit.

The State Park Service's research on the human cost of the battle of Rivers Bridge is ongoing. We continue to identify additional casualties and locate new information on these soldiers to share with the public. We encourage the public to share their information with us. People who had an ancestor in the battle — whether they were casualties or not — are asked to contact the State Park Service to help us build our knowledge of the men who fought the battle of Rivers Bridge.

Interpreting the Material Remains of Segregation in South Carolina State Parks

Al Hester, Historic Sites Coordinator, South Carolina State Park Service

From its founding in the 1930s until its full integration in 1966, the South Carolina State Park system operated with strictly segregated facilities. Since that time, most of the buildings in the formerly segregated African American areas have been lost. However, a handful remain, and these structures provide opportunities to tell the stories of segregation and integration to today's visiting public. Many of the resources built before the civil rights era are now more than 50 years old, the traditional measurement used in determining a building's historical status. While the preservation and interpretation of resources associated with segregation may create a sense of discomfort for visitors, saving representative examples of segregated buildings is important to ensure that future generations will be able to understand and remember that history. Parks with surviving structures, such as Lake Greenwood, Poinsett, and Hunting Island, can help tell these stories. Other parks, such as Edisto Beach and SesquiCentennial, can focus

on the courageous challenges to segregation that eventually led to the opening of South Carolina's parks to everyone.

Recently, at Lake Greenwood State Park, the State Park Service and the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor developed a series of outdoor exhibits focusing on this topic. These signs, located in a part of the park used by African Americans in the 1950s, testify to the fact that the segregated parks were never equal as claimed. Today, this formerly segregated area is the infrequently used and quiet side of Lake Greenwood State Park. It stands as a reminder of South Carolina's complex and troubled racial history. But it may also remain an important place in the local African American community's memory, since this was one of the few places where local families, friends, churches, and civic organizations could gather in the 1950s and enjoy nature and the outdoors together. Finally, because the park is now open to all people, it commemorates an important chapter in the long civil rights struggle of African Americans and the contributions of the numerous activists who bravely challenged racial inequality.

Walker's Mill and the Recovery of the Mill Stone

Lamar Nelson, Archaeological Society of South Carolina

Walker's Mill was a locally owned mill located on Kelsey Creek in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Like other locally owned, 19th century mills, it served as both a gristmill and a cotton gin. The mill was probably built in the mid-1880s, and it continued to operate for four decades or more. A severe flood, probably occurring in the mid-1930s broke the dam, and the mill ceased to operate at that point. The property on which Walker's Mill was located became a portion of Camp Croft in 1940. In 1949, that same area became a part of Croft State Park.

A millstone had been visible eroding out of the creek bank for several years. In the fall of 2016, members of the Archaeological Society of South Carolina, Foothills Chapter excavated a unit around the millstone. The unit was excavated in a careful, professional manner to preserve the integrity of the stone. All soil removed from the unit was examined for the presence of artifacts. Once all soil had been removed from around the stone, straps were secured to the millstone. The stone was lifted out of the unit and moved up to a trail above the creek. It was then placed into the back of a park vehicle and taken to the park office.

The millstone will be put on display near the kiosk at the park office. Information about the history of Walker's Mill and the family that built and operated it will be added to the kiosk. Other mills existed along creeks that are now a part of Croft State Park. Efforts to bring awareness to the rich cultural resources on what is now Croft State Park will continue with the focus on archaeology and historical research.

The crew, consisting of members of the Foothills Chapter, is to be thanked for their efforts in this endeavor. Without the cooperation and assistance of the park staff, this project would have been much more difficult.

Stanley South (1928-2016)

Stanley South was a leader in the field of historical archaeology throughout his career — which spanned almost 60 years. Along the way, he spurred the establishment of an active archaeological program in South Carolina State Parks.

South graduated from Appalachian State Teachers College in 1949. A few years later, he enrolled in graduate studies at the University of North Carolina, under the tutelage of Dr. Joffre Coe. He completed his work there in 1959, graduating with a master's degree.

In the meantime, he had already become the first archaeologist hired by the state of North Carolina. Just before completing his graduate work, he moved to historic Brunswick Town near Wilmington, to serve as the archaeologist there. His excavations at Brunswick Town propelled him into the world of historical archaeology and led him to publish *Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology* in 1977. The first detailed theoretical work in historical archaeology, *Method and Theory* established him as a leader in this newly emerging field.

In 1969, the South Carolina Bicentennial Commission contracted with the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology to conduct excavations at Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site. South led that effort, anticipated to take a couple of days. The small project turned into one of the most important archaeological sites in South Carolina.