9-1997

Shell Rings of the Late Archaic - 1997

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology--University of South Carolina

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/archmonth_poster

Part of the Anthropology Commons

Publication Info
Published in 1997.
http://www.cas.sc.edu/sciaa/
© 1997 by University of South Carolina, South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

This Poster is brought to you by the Archaeology and Anthropology, South Carolina Institute of at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Archaeology Month Posters by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact dillarda@mailbox.sc.edu.
South Carolina Archaeology Week
“Shell Rings of the Late Archaic”
September 27 - October 4, 1997

For more information contact: South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1321 Pendleton Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29208 (803) 777-8170
September 27 - October 4, 1997

HUNDRED

SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, SC Department of Archaeology and History of the University of South Carolina, South Carolina National Park Service, Southeastern Ceramics, South Carolina Archaeological Research Program, US Forest Service, Contact Information, The Field Museum, Institute for Environmental Awareness, Inc.

DESIGNER

John and Juka Caves, Extraordinary Design, Inc.

South Carolina Archaeology Week

Shell Rings of the Late Archaic

What Are Shell Rings?

The shell rings that dot the coastal islands of central South Carolina were once a common feature of the landscape, belonging to a culture of ancient inhabitants referred to as Late Archaic. They are circular or oval mounds made of clay and shell, and were used for a variety of purposes including living quarters, ceremonial centers, and defensive structures. Despite their cultural and historical significance, shell rings are often overlooked as they are not as well-known as other prehistoric sites.

The Gradual Accumulation Theory

A reconstruction of the 0.600 Year Old Waterfront Beach House

One of the earliest pieces of evidence to support the idea of shell rings was that of Michael Kelly in 1827 which appeared in the Smithsonian Institution’s Annual Report. He argued that the rings were “shelves” for councils or gatherings. In addition, the rings were often found near river mouths, which suggests that they were used as meeting places or for trading purposes.

The Ceramic Mount Theory

A reconstruction of 0.600 Year Old Waterfront Beach House

The ceramic mound theory is another popular explanation for shell rings. According to this theory, the rings were used as a means of disposal for ceramic waste. Over time, the rings would fill up with debris, creating a mound.

The Symbohism of Circles

The symbolic significance of circles may have even extended to the shaping of shell rings. Some have argued that shell rings were used as a means of communication or as a form of art.

Epilogue

Archaeological resources in South Carolina

The shell rings serve as a reminder of the past and a testament to the Ingenuity and skill of our ancestors. They serve as a reminder of the importance of preserving our cultural heritage and the need to continue to learn about our history.

Shell Rings Occur on the Sea Islands of South Carolina

Archaeological Mounds Across the Southeast

The idea that shell rings offer insight into the lives of ancient people is not new. However, until recently, these sites were largely ignored. The recent rediscovery of several shell rings has reignited interest in these ancient structures.

The FUNCTIONS OF ACHIEVABLE MOUNDS

By Michael Ross

Until recently, archaeologists believed that shell rings were used for a variety of purposes, including living quarters, ceremonial centers, and defensive structures. However, new evidence suggests that they may also have been used as markers or as boundaries for agricultural plots.

The SYMBOLISM OF CIRCLES

The significance of circles in ancient societies is well documented. Some have argued that circles were used as a means of communication or as a form of art. Others have suggested that they were used as a means of measuring time or as a symbol of the sun.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Seven miles up the Savannah River from Augusta, Georgia lies one of the most significant archaeological sites in the United States: the Shell Ring Mound Site. This site is teeming with artifacts and provides a glimpse into the lives of the people who lived there.

The STALLING’s CULTURE

By Kenneth Naff

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

The Stallings’ culture was a group of prehistoric peoples who lived in what is now South Carolina. They were known for their elaborate burials and the use of shell rings.

The STALLING’S CULTURE

The Stallings’ culture was a group of prehistoric peoples who lived in what is now South Carolina. They were known for their elaborate burials and the use of shell rings.

The SYMBOLISM OF CIRCLES

The significance of circles in ancient societies is well documented. Some have argued that circles were used as a means of communication or as a form of art. Others have suggested that they were used as a means of measuring time or as a symbol of the sun.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Seven miles up the Savannah River from Augusta, Georgia lies one of the most significant archaeological sites in the United States: the Shell Ring Mound Site. This site is teeming with artifacts and provides a glimpse into the lives of the people who lived there.

The STALLING’S CULTURE

By Kenneth Naff

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

The Stallings’ culture was a group of prehistoric peoples who lived in what is now South Carolina. They were known for their elaborate burials and the use of shell rings.

The SYMBOLISM OF CIRCLES

The significance of circles in ancient societies is well documented. Some have argued that circles were used as a means of communication or as a form of art. Others have suggested that they were used as a means of measuring time or as a symbol of the sun.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Seven miles up the Savannah River from Augusta, Georgia lies one of the most significant archaeological sites in the United States: the Shell Ring Mound Site. This site is teeming with artifacts and provides a glimpse into the lives of the people who lived there.

The STALLING’S CULTURE

By Kenneth Naff

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

The Stallings’ culture was a group of prehistoric peoples who lived in what is now South Carolina. They were known for their elaborate burials and the use of shell rings.

The SYMBOLISM OF CIRCLES

The significance of circles in ancient societies is well documented. Some have argued that circles were used as a means of communication or as a form of art. Others have suggested that they were used as a means of measuring time or as a symbol of the sun.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Seven miles up the Savannah River from Augusta, Georgia lies one of the most significant archaeological sites in the United States: the Shell Ring Mound Site. This site is teeming with artifacts and provides a glimpse into the lives of the people who lived there.

The STALLING’S CULTURE

By Kenneth Naff

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

The Stallings’ culture was a group of prehistoric peoples who lived in what is now South Carolina. They were known for their elaborate burials and the use of shell rings.

The SYMBOLISM OF CIRCLES

The significance of circles in ancient societies is well documented. Some have argued that circles were used as a means of communication or as a form of art. Others have suggested that they were used as a means of measuring time or as a symbol of the sun.