5-1993

The Goody Bag - May 1993

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

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Savannah River Survey Project Begins

By Darryl Boyd

The Savannah River Survey Project has begun with dives being conducted in the North Augusta vicinity. Diving will continue on a one-weekend-per-month basis until October. The project, conducted under the guidance of the Underwater Division of SCIAA, is intended to document the area and train sport divers in underwater survey techniques.

The area being surveyed is located at the bridge at Beech Island and from about Fifth Street to the North Augusta Boat Landing on the South Carolina side. The survey will identify and record features such as wrecks, docks, artifact scatters, and landings.

"This project will give sport divers the chance to learn underwater surveying techniques under the guidance of professionals, and to meet other divers who have similar interests," according to Lynn Harris, Underwater Archaeologist at SCIAA.

Any sport diver desiring to participate in this survey will need to provide their own equipment, including tanks with air and lights (having their own boat would also be an advantage). Also, any diver wishing to join the project will be required to have a current South Carolina Hobby Diver License. Equipment for measuring and recording will be provided.

The diving will be limited-visibility diving, and the current can be moderate. The maximum depth will be 30 ft, but the average depth will be about 20 ft. Experience in limited vis-

Have Funding, Will Dive!

By Lynn Harris

The Underwater Archaeology Division is preparing for a busy season of fieldwork starting this summer. Funding has been obtained from the University of South Carolina for a project that is officially being called the SCIAA Underwater Archaeology Site Verification Program. As this fieldwork will involve active participation of the sport diving community, we thought it was important to tell you about it. We are very excited about the project and are sure that you will be too!

Currently, the state's archaeological information management files are composed of 90% land sites and only 10% underwater sites. This is a gross misrepresentation of the actual number of underwater sites according to the data generated by hobby diver reports in the past seventeen years. However, without a higher level of verification and more detailed information many of the hobby reports are not adequate to identify

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Filling in Those Forms

Over the past few months, we have noticed some common errors by those of you who are applying for South Carolina Hobby Diving Licenses or having your license renewed. Unfortunately, these errors slow down the processing time, delay the application or renewal, and confuse the heck out of us poor paper-pushers.

Persons filling out applications for a license should completely fill out the application form. This means that on the address line the applicant should include their city, state, and zip code. It’s amazing how many applications we receive with only the street address and nothing else.

Also, the applicant needs to sign the application form as well as the license form. Both forms are legal requirements and need to be filled out properly. On the license form sign your name, the date, and have your signature witnessed (this does not have to be by a notary public). Do not write anything else on the license form. We will fill in the appropriate dates, names, etc.

Oh, one more thing on applications — please use the current application and license forms (these are the ones that discuss the 1991 Antiquities Act and have the current fee schedules). We have been lax on this in the past, however, we have been reminded that the license constitutes a legal contract, and only the most current forms are acceptable.

On renewals, please use the current license renewal form (SCIAA 7/91), for the same reasons as stated above for applications. Also, on the address line, in addition to your complete address please print your name. It’s amazing how many signatures (including most of ours) are totally unfathomable. And remember to have your signature witnesses. Again, this does not have to be by a notary public.

In an upcoming issue we will discuss how to properly fill out those darn quarterly report forms.

Weekend Licenses

Dive stores or clubs may be interested in issuing weekend licenses to divers. This procedure makes it more convenient for divers to obtain a last minute license over the weekend when our state offices are closed. It also enables out-of-state divers to have a short term license rather than the regular six month or two year license. Your facility will retain half of this $5.00 fee to cover you paperwork costs and the other half will go to SCIAA.

The divers are issued a receipt and report forms from the store or club. This receipt must be kept on the dive boat. To find out more about these licenses please call Elizabeth Collins at (803)777-8170 at the SCIAA Columbia Office.
In a recent quarterly report, Mack Allen (hobby license #3132) sent us this photo of a pitcher he found in the Waccamaw River. It was found in the middle of the river in 30 ft. of water. From his report, and a subsequent telephone conversation, the pitcher appears to be porcelain with a blue underglaze “willow pattern” design similar to those on Chinese porcelain of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. However, the shape (style) of the pitcher indicates a much later date, perhaps the late 1800s or later. According to Mack, the pitcher is miraculously unblemished. Mack, you didn’t buy this at Pier 1, did you? (Just kidding).

Doug Boehme (hobby license #3042) drew this piece of pottery he found in the Cooper River. The piece is pearlware and the design appears to be a handpainted underglaze blue design dating from 1780 to 1820. Pearlware is a form of earthenware, as opposed to either porcelain or stoneware (the other forms of ceramics), and like other eighteenth and nineteenth century earthenwares was an attempt at copying the look of porcelain. Pearlware is distinctive in that its glaze had a bluish tint to it and puddles bluish in crevices. Pearlware’s predecessor, creamware, generally had a yellow tint. The bluish tint of pearlware led to the popularity of blue designs, and blue transfer-printed pearlware is perhaps the most common type of historic earthenware found in the rivers.

However, the best part of the drawing is the drawing itself. Note the scale and also the cross-section drawing. While not all of us are professional artists, neither is Doug, and it just goes to show that anyone (even Lynn) can make a credible drawing which is worthy of being reproduced.

Doug has also been volunteering in the Charleston office with drawing and photographing artifacts. Thanks for the help!
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ibility conditions is necessary.

The diving schedule for the project is planned for the following weekends: May 15 & 16, June 19 & 20, July 17 & 18, August 14 & 15, September 25 & 26, and October 9 & 10. Additional dates may be added, or the schedule altered, because of weather or other unforeseen problems. Divers will meet at Pauley’s Boat Ramp at 9 a.m. and return about 4 p.m. on Saturdays and about 12 noon on Sundays.

For more information contact Darryl Boyd at 278-4184 (home) or 952-5871 (work), Lynn Harris at 881-8536 (work), or Mark Newell at 777-8170 (work).

Avocational Underwater Archaeologist of the Year and Research Associates

Billy Judd, from John’s Island, was awarded the Avocational Underwater Archaeologist of the Year at the annual Archaeology Society of South Carolina meeting. For many years, Billy has independently documented watercraft and rice gate structures along river banks in South Carolina. He also assisted with several SCIAA projects and produced professional, high quality, technical drawings that have been used for publication purposes. Billy was recently nominated as a SCIAA Research Associate together with Hampton Shuping, a hobby diver, Judy Wood, a historical researcher, and Fred Hocker, an underwater archaeologist with Texas A&M University.

New Season Starts For Cooper, Waccamaw River Projects

The Cooper River Survey, directed by Jimmy Moss, will continue this year starting in June. The objective is to complete surveying the west bank of the West Branch between Pimlico development and Point Comfort. This year, some days will also be devoted to more detailed recording of the two wrecks located in the survey area and in setting up an exhibit about the project at a local museum. Project days are scheduled for June 26 and 27, July 24 and 25, August 28 and 29, September 18 and 19, and October 16 and 17. For more information contact Jimmy at (803) 446-2722.

The Waccamaw River Project, directed by Hampton Shuping, will involve documenting a few more details on the barges at Laurel Hill Plantation. A survey of the surrounding area will also be conducted to record any artifact concentrations or submerged structures in proximity to the barges. Dates for these activities have not yet been set. If you want to be notified as soon as this project gets underway, please contact Hampton Shuping at (803) 248-1223.
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or locate sites accurately according to the state's minimum, lawful, standards.

The primary objective of this project is to provide a more complete data set about these known sites. Simultaneously we intend to upgrade the reporting abilities of the state's existing network of sport diver volunteers by teaching them some basic archaeological and recording skills during this project. The education process has already been initiated to some extent through our newsletter, field schools, and avocational archaeology projects. This project will take it a step further and at the same time allow us to accurately inventory our submerged cultural resources. This is a management procedure that is long overdue, primarily as a result of fiscal limitations.

This verification project will include evaluating sites ranging from Native American canoes and prehistoric artifacts eroding out of river banks to Colonial period watercraft, Revolutionary and Civil War vessels, passenger and cargo steamboats, and shipwrecks associated with industries which played an important role in South Carolina's history such as agriculture, fishing, lumber, and shipbuilding. In addition to shipwreck sites, historical structures like docks and landings associated with high concentrations of artifacts will be investigated. The Sport Diver Archaeology Management Program (SDAMP), the goal of which is to maintain a good relationship between the professional archaeologists and sport diver community, will co-ordinate this project. This project will be conducted by Underwater Archaeology Division staff and SCIAA funded archaeology graduate student, Bill Barr, from the Anthropology Department at University of South Carolina and Harry Pecorelli, from the Program in Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology at University of East Carolina in North Carolina.

Hobby divers who report unverified sites to SCIAA will be contacted and invited to accompany our staff on these day excursions. Volunteer divers are welcome if we have enough boat space on that particular day. We are planning to visit sites all over the state in rivers and offshore. Site location will be accurately plotted with a Global Positioning System (GPS) and divers and archaeologists will gather information about the site. This will involve making observations, drawings, maps, and taking photographs and measurements. It will not involve the collection of artifacts.

All this information will be transferred to legal forms and submitted to the Information Management Division at SCIAA. This project will enable archaeologists in the future to prioritize specific sites for more intensive research and excavation or to more accurately pin-point an important site that is threatened by waterfront development or environmental processes.

Get ready to come on out and help us preserve South Carolina's underwater heritage. For more information call Lynn Harris at (803) 881-8536 or Christopher Amer at (803) 777-8170.
Archaeology versus Collecting:  
*A Diver's Perspective*  
by Scott Heavin

All too often I hear divers say they have been “doing archaeology” in the local rivers. What may be archaeology to some is simply collecting artifacts to others. The difference between the two is great, and as most people understand the term “collecting,” it’s the concept of archaeology that perhaps needs clarification.

Archaeology is more concerned with the gathering of data than the collection of cultural artifacts. An archaeologist’s dream would be to study a site, take notes, photos, video, and record even the smallest detail without removing a single item. Unfortunately, due to construction, pollution, erosion, and other human-caused calamities, this is not always possible. Archaeologists do occasionally remove specific artifacts to answer research questions. So why, you ask, would an archaeologist want to leave all of those “goodies” on the bottom of the river? Simple. If Al the Archaeologist first studies the site, and Ann the Archaeologist, in doing further research, decides that Al missed something important, has a different interpretation of the site, or has access to new technology, she can simply revisit the site. True, Al took field notes, drew maps, and conserved the artifacts, but wouldn’t the actual site be more accurate? The point being made here is that archaeologists are not out to collect artifacts, only information to share with other researchers and members of the public.

Another myth of the collector is “if I don’t take it, someone else will.” This is the “If you’re not part of the solution, you’re part of the problem” argument. Think of the excitement when you first see that intact dispensary bottle sticking out of the sand. If you could, wouldn’t you share that excitement with someone else by leaving it in its place? If you really want a bottle for your mantle, they’re available at many antique stores. The one in the river is unique though. No other bottle will ever be in the same place and tell the same story.

Another common misconception is that the artifacts will rust or rot away. No, not until they’re taken out of the environment where they have reached equilibrium. Without proper (and often expensive) conservation, almost any artifact will degrade faster when removed than if left alone.

How do I know these things? Avocational archaeology. No, I am not a professional archaeologist, or a lobbyist for the archaeological community. I am a hobby diver, but of a new breed. A diver who believes in assisting archaeologists by not collecting, and by volunteering on projects whenever possible. With minimal training, such as the SCIAA field school, almost anyone can assist in archaeological projects. I’m not talking about carrying archaeologists’ tanks or making them lunch, we’re talking about a real contribution to fieldwork and ultimately towards preserving our underwater heritage for future generations of divers as well as non-diving members of the public. Throughout the summer, SCIAA seeks volunteers with training for projects across the state. These are times to get together with other divers, meet new people, and learn more about archaeology. If you’d like more information concerning upcoming volunteer or avocational projects, watch the GOODY BAG, or contact Lynn Harris in the Charleston Field Office, or Elizabeth Collins in the Columbia office.
Step 1 in Photography for the Hobby Diver

by Doug Boehme

So, you found a pre-archaic midden widget on your last dive. You are justifiably proud, and you want to send a picture in with your quarterly report. How do you go about getting a good shot, so that Lynn and Carl will be suitably impressed with your photography skills? Here are some hints you may find helpful.

1. The first step is to get out your trusty old camera. Be sure it's loaded with fresh film and the battery is up to snuff. Use the best camera you have available, preferably a 35mm with auto-focus or manual focus. A focus-free (the cheaper "Instamatic" type models) camera is the least preferred. If you have a small artifact and your camera does not have a close focus capability, you may not be able to get a usable photo.

2. More important than the camera is your knowledge of how to use it. The best place to start is the manual that came with your camera. Be thoroughly familiar with the basic operation of your equipment.

3. The best place to take artifact pictures is outside. Early morning and late evening are best (be sure and have the sun at your back), or use open shade (such as the shade of a tree or building surrounded by sunshine). Don't use a built-in or on-camera flash unless you have no other choice.

4. Pay attention to the play of light and shadow on the surface of the artifact or backdrop. Move the artifact around until a pattern of important marks are displayed to best advantage.

5. Choose a background. A large sheet of stiff, non-glossy paper or smooth cloth draped over a chair works very well. Pick a solid color that does not blend with the artifact.

6. FILL THE FRAME! FILL THE FRAME! FILL THE FRAME!

Shooting a small artifact from a distance will produce a useless photo. Use Macro mode if your camera/lens has this feature. If you are photographing a small artifact, you may have to get as close as your camera will focus. Your camera's manual will give you the minimum focusing distance. Do not get any closer than this. Your picture will not be sharp if you do. If you no longer have your manual you can find the minimum focusing distance by taking a series of experimental pictures at increasingly shorter distances. After the pictures are developed you can pick the closest one still in

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focus. Most point and shoot cameras focus to about 2 to 3 feet.

7. You must put a size reference in the shot. Copy the scale shown at the end of the article on a sheet of white paper and paste it to a piece of cardboard. This will make an excellent reference scale. In a pinch, put a ruler by the artifact. Don’t cover up any of the artifact with your scale. These are just basic instructions designed for those with basic equipment. A little care and thought can make the difference between a clear sharp photo, and one fit only for the trash can. A good photo enables the SCIAA people to identify your artifact, and if it’s of interest they may want to use it in the next issue of the Goody Bag. In the next article I’ll give you some tips for those with more advanced equipment and experience. Until then, good diving and good shooting.

South Carolina Shipbuilding
in the Age of Sail - Part 1

By Carl Naylor

As soon as the early Carolina colonists cleared their land and built their homes they undoubtedly turned back to the sea and constructed water craft. The rivers and creeks of what was to become known as the Carolina Lowcountry provided ready-made highways for the colonists, and they needed a variety of watercraft to carry on the business of establishing a new colony. They needed vessels to visit their neighbors, to trade with the friendly natives who inhabited the region, to carry goods from a central landing place to their respective homes, and (not least of all) to explore their new world. Fortunately, any colonist with the tools and knowledge to build a house could build a boat to suit almost any purpose.

A Slow Beginning

In a letter written in 1680, Maurice Mathews, one of the colony’s original settlers and eventually its surveyor-general and Commissioner to the Indians, noted that “There[...] have been several vessels built here, and there are now 3 or 4 upon the Stocks.” This is perhaps the first written record of boatbuilding in Carolina and probably refers to “vessels” capable of at least coastal trading. The myriad amount and variety of small skiffs, launches, barges, boats, and canoes needed by the colonists would hardly be worth mentioning.

More evidence of early shipbuilding in the colony comes from the ship registers. Under English law, vessels used for intercolonial or trans-oceanic trading were required to be registered. Few of these records remain. However, dispersed amongst the colony’s early records of deeds, inventories, bills of sale, and wills are several registers for the year 1698. Of these fifteen remaining registers, only four are for vessels built in “Carolina.” These are the 30-ton sloop Ruby and the 50-ton sloop Joseph both built in 1696, the 30-ton brigantine Sea Flower built in 1697, and the 30-ton sloop Dorothy & Ann built in 1698.

There are other indications that the shipbuilding industry in South Carolina got off to a slow start. In 1708, Governor Nathaniel Johnson reported to the Board of Trade in London that “There are not above ten or twelve sail of ships or other vessels belonging to this province about half of which number only were built here besides a ship or sloop now on the stocks near launching.” In 1719, Governor Robert Johnson reported that “Wee are come to no great matter of [ship]building here for want of persons who undertake it tho no country in the world is [as] plentifully supplied with

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timber for that purpose and [so] well stored with convenient rivers . . ." He notes that of the twenty or so vessels belonging to the port, "some" were built here.

Largest Manufacturing Industry

As the colony grew and began to thrive so did the boat and ship building industries. While not comparable with the shipbuilding activities of the northern colonies, shipbuilding became South Carolina's largest manufacturing industry. And just as important, was its impact on the local economy. In addition to shipwrights, the construction of a vessel needed the services of joiners, coopers, blacksmiths, timber merchants, painters, chandlers, glaziers, carvers, plumbers, sailmakers, blockmakers, caulkers, and oarmakers among others.

The extant ship registers show that between 1735 and 1775 more than 300 ocean-going and coastal cargo vessels, ranging from five to 280 tons burthen, were built by South Carolina shipbuilders. This included ships, snows, brigantines, schooners, and sloops. These names referred to the vessel's rig, that is its mast and sail arrangement, and vessels were seldom mentioned without accompanying it with its type. This preoccupation with a vessel's rig is understandable. Denoting the rig distinguishes the schooner Betsy, from the brigantine Betsy, or the sloop Betsy. Even more, those tall wooden masts and billowing sails of the various rigs were easily its most recognizable feature and the first part of a vessel that appeared as it approached over the horizon.

Undoubtedly, Carolina-built vessels were quite similar in most ways to those being built in Britain and the other colonies. The wide, rounded hull-shape of the ocean-going cargo carrier, with its blunt bow and tapering stern at the waterline — meant to imitate the shape of a duck gliding through water — and square stern cabin, had become, like the rigs themselves, fairly standard and widely copied by shipbuilders after centuries of development, innovation, and imitation. Since many of the shipwrights of colonial South Carolina were trained in the best English shipyards or in other parts of America, this is hardly surprising. John Rose, the Hobcaw shipbuilder, had learned his trade on the Thames at the Deptford Naval Yard. His partner, James Stewart, had apprenticed at the Woolrich Naval Yard, also on the Thames, and many of the other prominent Carolina shipbuilders had learned the art of shipbuilding before arriving in the colony. Georgetown shipwright Benjamin Darling had come to Carolina from New England. Charles Minors who built vessels in Little River came from Bermuda, while Robert Watts who set up his shipbuilding business at the remote Bloody Point on Daufuskie Island, where he built the 170-ton ship St. Helena in 1766 and the 260-ton ship Friendship in 1771, had come to South Carolina from Philadelphia.

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Nevertheless it would be hard to imagine that local shipwrights and boatbuilders weren't being influenced by local conditions and preferences and modifying the basic designs so that their vessels accommodated the needs of their customers.

(Part 2 of this series will examine the types of vessels built by South Carolina shipwrights and the shipyards in which they were built.)