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Repository Citation
ISSN: 2475-9333
Available at: https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ita/vol2019/iss1/9

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Archiving our History, Publishing Results: Current Research at the Arkansas Archeological Survey’s Henderson State University Research Station

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At the Arkansas Archeological Survey’s Henderson State University (HSU) Research Station, we continue to inventory curated artifact collections. The research station has been on the HSU campus in Arkadelphia since 1967, and our collections include artifacts, photographs, maps, and field and lab records from projects as well as artifact donations from local residents. Field notes and lab forms have been scanned and archived on the server, and we are in the process of scanning the station’s collection of 14,000 color slides. Assisted by volunteers, we have been inventorizing artifacts, updating station databases, and submitting site revisit forms to the Registrar’s Office. This inventory project has spurred new research and efforts to disseminate results of older field investigations.

Chelsea Cinotto presented a talk to the 2018 Caddo Conference on results of one of these projects. Her analysis of pottery sherds and other artifacts established a Late Caddo period age (A.D. 1400s-1500s) for a pit feature excavated at the Caddo Hills site (3MN22) in 1973. She wrote a summary article and submitted it to The Arkansas Archeologist for publication. Her next project will be an analysis of two Survey testing projects at nineteenth-century houses in Arkadelphia, one at Magnolia Manor (3CL768) in 2002 and the other at the James E. M. Barkman House (3CL450) in 1990 and 1993. Mary Beth Trubitt and Chelsea Cinotto presented a preliminary paper on this work at the South Central Historical Archaeology Conference in October 2018.

As collections from Survey research stations are inventoried, information is added to the “Arkansas Novaculite: A Virtual Comparative Collection” website database. Using an online form, professional and avocational archeologists across the Caddo Area can add data to the map (Figure 1) showing the distribution of novaculite sources.

Figure 1. Map from the “Arkansas Novaculite: A Virtual Comparative Collection” website showing source counties in red and counties where novaculite artifacts have been found in purple (map created using Google Maps by John Samuelsen).
of novaculite artifacts beyond the Ouachita Mountains
source area (http://archeology.uarl.edu/novaculite/
index.html?pageName=Sourcing%20Novaculite). Mary
Beth Trubitt and John Samuelsen presented a poster at
the 2018 Southeastern Archaeological Conference that
shows temporal changes in the extent and direction of
novaculite artifact distribution, based on data on typed
projectile points.

In January 2018, we completed a multi-year
project to document and photograph pottery vessels
in the Joint Educational Consortium’s (JEC) Hodges
Collection. Resulting from work by local avocational
archeologists Thomas and Charlotte Hodges and Vere
Huddleston in the 1930s and 1940s, this major collection
is curated at HSU. Chelsea Cinotto completed data
entry on 1,352 vessels, and Mary Beth Trubitt wrote
and submitted an article on artifacts from eight ancestral
Caddo sites near Arkadelphia to Caddo Archeology
Journal (see this issue). Plans are now underway to
move the JEC Hodges Collection to the renovated
Caddo Center on the HSU campus for curation and
display.

Analysis, interpretation, and writing continues
on the Jones Mill (3HS28) excavations in 2007-2008
and the Dragover (3MN298) excavations from 2013-
2014. Public talks on both projects served as inspiration
for a short book manuscript on “Ouachita Mountains
Archeology” that Mary Beth Trubitt wrote and
submitted to the Survey’s Popular Series. he presented a
poster (Figure 2) on the spatial and temporal distribution
of dart and arrow points at Jones Mill to the Arkansas
Archeological Society’s 2018 annual meeting. While a
mixture of point types were found in upper strata, only
Archaic period forms were in lower levels at the site.

Figure 2. Projectile points from the Jones Mill site.
The Arkansas Archeological Society awarded Trubitt an Archeological Research Fund grant in September 2018 to obtain a radiocarbon date on charred nutshell from a Dragover site feature that also contained sherds of Cooper Boneware. The AMS date result of 1050-895 cal B.C. supports this Fourche Maline type as the earliest pottery in the Trans-Mississippi South (details to be published in the Society’s *Field Notes* newsletter).

Archeological sites in Clark, Garland, Polk, and Pike counties were added to the Arkansas site files database (AMASDA) by station staff in 2018. Chelsea Cinotto assisted the Natural Resources Conservation Service with site investigations in Saline County, worked with Meeks Etchieson to survey sites in Clark County, assisted the Survey’s Southern Arkansas University (Magnolia) at Prairie D’Ane battlefield in Nevada County, and assisted with the annual Society Training Program excavations at Pea Ridge in Benton County. Working with the local cemetery committee, Cinotto and Trubitt completed mapping at the Mount Tabor Cemetery in Dallas County.

Mary Beth Trubitt serves as editor for *Southeastern Archaeology*, the journal of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference. The April 2018 issue featured “Ear Spools, Ceramics, and Burial Mounds from Southwest Missouri: Caddoan and Spiro Connections on the Northern Frontier” by Jack H. Ray. The editor welcomes submissions on current research on the archaeology and history of the Caddo Area (see https://tandfonline.com/toc/ysea20/current).