Editor’s Note

Dear ICA Members,

At a time when the impacts of climate change are being felt at an ever-increasing rate – new patterns of erosion and deposition, increased storm frequency and intensity, flooding, increased loss of coastal and island land mass – there is no more critical time to conduct research on coasts and islands across the globe and to share that work with others. The Current provides one place where this important research can be shared at all stages of project development, from conception to results, providing opportunities for collaboration with an international body of researchers.

After a brief hiatus, The Current is back in a slightly modified form. We will be focusing our efforts on soliciting other types of content from interest group members and colleagues – research highlights, conference announcements, field school opportunities, etc. As we rebuild the newsletter, we ask you to consider sending in submissions about your own work and share this opportunity to share work with others and with your colleagues. We can’t thank Elizabeth Moore enough for agreeing to take on this exciting and important role.

The biggest change with this issue that you will see is that the comprehensive survey of publications for new books and articles will no longer be compiled by the editors. We will publish book announcements and article references submitted to us, but we will not be surveying journals for new publications. In doing so we aim to minimize the editorial time commitment and ensure timely publication. If you would like to survey journals and submit citations for new publications, we will be happy to include them in upcoming issues and credit you for your efforts.
The ICA Interest Group will be meeting at this upcoming SAA meeting to discuss a number of items including, but not limited to, ways we hope to see the Interest Group improve engagement with members, starting a virtual speaker series, leadership opportunities within the Interest Group, and more! If you are interested in being involved and connecting with other members with similar interests, be on the lookout for specific time, date, and location announcements for our Portland meeting. Further, looking ahead to the next meeting in New Orleans, we are interested in organizing an excursion, so please let us know if you are aware of a good candidate.

Thanks for your participation in the interest group and we hope you enjoy the revitalization of *The Current*,

Brandon T. Ritchison  
Isabelle Holland-Lulewicz  
Co-Chairs  

Elizabeth Moore  
Editor  

**Survey Participation Requested**

**Archaeology of the Eastern Oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*): Collection and Curation Practices by North American Practitioners**

The purpose of this study (UF IRB 202201685) is to survey the diversity of practices related to recovery and curation of archaeological eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) specimens. We aim to understand the ways in which practitioners carry out various aspects of field design, laboratory analysis, and/or curation. Results from this survey will identify practices across institutions housing archaeological oysters including museums, universities, government and tribal repositories, and private cultural resource firms. The broader impacts of this survey will highlight the commonalities and differences in curation practice as a foundation for discussing best practices in eastern oyster curation and collections management, as well as how to improve inter-institution research across archaeological oyster collections. The results of this study will have implications for other archaeological shell taxa and their long-term curation care.

Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. No identifying information will be shared as part of this study besides self-identified profession or professional status and type of institutional affiliation. No identifying information will be collected or connected with your responses, which will be anonymous. [https://forms.gle/7ke4HKoKx3RL9dhn6](https://forms.gle/7ke4HKoKx3RL9dhn6)
MEETINGS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND CALLS FOR PAPERS

The Society for American Archaeology 88th Annual Meeting, Portland, Oregon, USA – March 29 – April 2, 2023

From the SAA Annual Meetings Local Advisory Committee: “Portland is a wonderful city located in a state known for its spectacular scenery: big mountains, big rivers, big trees, volcanoes, waterfalls, wild seascapes—all within an hour’s drive of the city. The City of Roses, as it has been known for more than a century, is situated at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, which have been the highways for Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. These rivers are the raison d’être for the Euro-American settlement that took shape in the mid-nineteenth century. At first glance, visitors will see a modern city that looks pretty much like most cities. But look more closely and you'll see a progressive and quirky place with an almost absurd number of great restaurants, brew pubs and wine bars, cannabis shops (recreational use was legalized in 2014), farmers markets, cycling and walking paths, European-style trolleys, and walkable neighborhoods.” (Virgina Butler, et al, The SAA Archaeological Record 22(4):6-9) The preliminary program will be available in December.

The 2023 Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Lisbon, Portugal, January 4 – 7, 2023

The 2023 Lisbon conference promises a beautiful location and a packed agenda with many sessions of interest to ICA members. These include Fish, Oyster, Whale: the Archaeology of Maritime Traditions; Trade, Mobility, Circular Navigation and Foodways in the Atlantic World; Maritime Archaeology in West Africa; Climate Change and Maritime Archaeology: Developing Research Agendas, Gap Analyses, and Next Steps; and many more. You can see the onling program at The Society for Historical Archaeology, www.conftool.com/sha2023/sessions.php.

The 14th ICAZ International Conference in Cairns, Australia, August 7 – 12, 2023

The meeting will be held at the Cairns Convention Centre and the organising committee is comprised of Patrick Faulkner, Melanie Fillios, Jillian Garvey and Tiina Manne. Further details will be made available in the near future, and the organising committee can be contacted via email at admin@icaz2022.org.
RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

An Interdisciplinary Study of Woodland and Protohistoric Oyster Harvesting in the Lower Chesapeake Estuary

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Archaeological studies of shell midden sites in the Chesapeake region indicate that Native people harvested the oyster fishery sustainably for centuries before contact. This remarkable history raises a host of questions about ecological conditions in the estuary, Native harvesting practices, and their potential management of the ‘commons’. With these issues in mind, an interdisciplinary team of archaeologists (William & Mary and Flagler College), marine biologists (Virginia Institute of Marine Science [VIMS]), and geologists (William & Mary), formed in 2021 to answer the question: Is it possible to infer which part of the estuary an oyster was harvested from based exclusively on morphological attributes and bioindicators observed on archaeological shell? Differences in the morphology and bioindicators evident on oysters from midden and feature contexts at the village of Kiskiaq suggest that, except in the case of feasting, past peoples in the York River estuary, harvested oysters by focusing their day-to-day collection on nearshore intertidal zones (sink populations), leaving offshore subtidal parent reefs (source populations) to spawn.

To test this hypothesis, the research team collected modern samples of oysters in the summer of 2022 from each of the three harvestable zones present in the York River: the

Figure 2. Martin Gallivan collecting modern oysters from Timberneck Reef on the York River. Visible in the background are two of the three harvest zones: the intertidal and the shallow subtidal. (Photo courtesy of J. Jenkins)
intertidal, the shallow subtidal, and the deep subtidal. The research team recorded variations in oyster morphology, bioindicators and the position of oyster reefs (i.e., nearshore zones versus offshore zones). Attributes of modern oyster shells, including size, shape, type of attachment scar, presence of sponge boreholes, and associated biofoul, allowed us to characterize variations among samples as they related to harvest zones.

In the next phase of this project, we will compare the results of the modern oyster study to previous studies of archaeological shell collected from six Woodland and Protohistoric sites on the York River. We hope to determine whether Native fishers selectively harvested the oyster fishery in accordance with sustainable collection practices, as previously hypothesized.

Figure 3. Undergraduate students collecting intertidal oysters from a sampling location on Cedarbus Creek. This sample site is particularly important as it is the location of an eroding Woodland period midden (top of the stratigraphic profile) as well as exposed Yorktown Formation deposits (base of stratigraphic profile). (Photo courtesy of J. Jenkins)
Shorescapes and Cemeteries: Documenting the Impacts of the 2018 Hurricane Season on North Carolina’s Coastal Heritage

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North Carolina has over 1,500 miles of shoreline from the oceanfront to the inland sounds and rivers. These shorelines witnessed thousands of years of history and buffer communities from hurricanes. In 2018, two major hurricanes, Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael, struck North Carolina, flooding communities and causing millions in damage. These hurricanes contributed to the exposure of shoreline archaeological sites, erosion of these same shorelines, and flooding and uprooting damage to coastal cemeteries. The NC Office of State Archaeology developed two coastal surveys in response to these hurricanes. Funded by the National Park Service’s Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund, these surveys will survey state-owned and managed lands in twelve coastal counties - Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Carteret, Craven, Dare, Hyde, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, and Tyrrell. The Shorescape Survey aims to identify and assess archaeological sites spanning the intertidal zones of islands, rivers, and creeks across these counties, including those related to the maritime industry, infrastructure, and the African American communities. The Historic Cemetery Survey seeks to

Figure 4. Erosion of the marshline on Town Creek in Brunswick County. Visible within the mud are remains of built wooden structure, likely related to rice plantations that lined Town Creek. The rise in sea level has caused more water to move along the shoreline, breaking off large sections of marsh and exposing buried structures. (Image by NC Office of State Archaeology, 2022)
document and assess historic cemeteries throughout these counties, with special interest given to the region’s unmarked enslaved and African American cemeteries. High-priority areas for each survey have been identified through a desk-based analysis of integrated historical analysis and hurricane impacts on the state-owned and managed lands. Fieldwork is gearing up to begin in the next few months. Check out our website, Climate Change and Archaeological Sites | NC Archaeology (ncdcr.gov), to learn more about these projects and other climate-focused research initiatives in North Carolina.

This material was produced with assistance from the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund, administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

Figure 5. The Old Burial Grounds in Beaufort, North Carolina, following Hurricane Florence. The winds and rains of Hurricane Florence destabilized the ground and caused several trees in the cemetery to uproot. This uprooting pulled over headstones and disturbed the burial plots. (Image by NC Office of State Archaeology, 2018)
Archaeology at the Catlett Islands, Gloucester County, Virginia

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The Catlett Islands, located on the north side of the York River in Gloucester County, Virginia, 35 km from the mouth of the river at the Chesapeake Bay, are under serious threat from rising sea level and cataclysmic weather events endangering both natural and cultural resources. Several previously recorded archaeological sites have been lost to erosion and submersion and more are in imminent danger of destruction. The 280 ha islands consist of multiple parallel ridges of forested wetland and upland hammocks, emergent wetlands, and tidal creeks surrounded by shallow subtidal areas. Physical evidence of human occupation on the islands extends back thousands of years; ownership of the islands by European settlers began in the early-to mid-17th century and the presence of enslaved Africans and African Americans on the islands is clear through cartographic records and other documents from the 19th century. Little is known about these sites and their destruction is likely unavoidable. From 2019-2022, DATA Investigations LLC, in collaboration with the Chesapeake Bay National Estuary Research Reserve—Virginia (CBNERR-VA) at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) with grant support from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) conducted a multi-part project to research the cultural
landscape of the islands, update documentation for known archaeological sites, and identify new archaeological resources through pedestrian survey and limited shovel testing.

Testing in high probability areas resulted in four new sites being recorded including a Late Woodland component, four likely quarters for enslaved African Americans, and a wharf. Some of the sites were documented on an 1857 nautical map of the York River. Recommended future work includes additional systematic survey as well as data recovery at immediately threatened sites.

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During the War of 1812, the British used their superior naval strength to blockade U.S. ports, thus hobbling American efforts to deploy their small navy. In 1813-14, the British established a blockade of the Chesapeake Bay. British forces under Rear Admiral George Cockburn established a staging area on the small island of Tangier, located near the middle of the Chesapeake Bay. Named Fort Albion, the installation was built by British soldiers with the help of more than 1000 escaped slaves, who were declared free British citizens as soon as they set foot in the fort. It was from Fort Albion that the British launched combined land and sea attacks on Washington and Baltimore and other locations.

Figure 10. Tangier Island, 1892. (NOAA)
Since that time Tangier Island has lost more than two thirds of its land to erosion and storms. Fort Albion has disappeared into the bay, along with the entire southern end of the island. In 2014 Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. conducted a remote sensing survey of the area thanks to funding from the Threatened Sites Fund of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The survey was inconclusive. In the area where the fort was located the silty bottom was relatively level with sand ridges formed by tidal currents and storm action. A number of magnetic anomalies were detected, but since the area was once part of a bombing range the targets may all represent modern debris. There are plans to return to the site in late 2022 to expand the survey and possibly conduct ground truthing activities.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CURRENT

A variety of interest pieces and announcements are accepted for publication in the ICAIG newsletter. Generally, the deadline for submission for the Spring/Summer Issue is March 1st and for the Fall/Winter Issue, September 1st. Submissions and inquiries may be directed to The Current co-Editor, Elizabeth Moore (elizabeth.moore@dhr.virginia.gov). Contributions need not follow any specific format, with the exception of “Research Highlights” and “Recent Publications” (instructions below).

Instructions for Submitting Recent Publications
PLEASE NOTE: The editors will no longer be surveying literature for the Recent Publications section; Recent Publications will only contain those citations sent to us.
• Citations submitted for the “Recent Publications” section of the newsletter should follow the American Antiquity / Latin American Antiquity style guide.
• “In press” citations should be accompanied by a digital object identifier (DOI).
• Submit recent publications to elizabeth.moore@dhr.virginia.gov

Instructions for Preparing “Research Highlights” Descriptions
• Prepare a short description, written in the third person, that includes the purpose of the research, location, brief review of findings to date (if relevant), and other information of potential interest to the membership.
• Descriptions should be single spaced, using 12 pt, Times New Roman or Calibri font, and should be submitted as an MSWord file (.doc or .docx).
• Be sure to provide a title (project name or site name) and include the names and organization of the author(s)/principal investigator(s) submitting the description.
• Provide a valid email address for a single contact author/principle investigator.
• Proof read and spell check the research description, especially place names.
• Word limit: please keep the description to a maximum of about 250 words (i.e., abstract length).
• Only include literature citations if absolutely necessary. List these after the research description using the citation format for American Antiquity.
• Images: One or two (maximum) JPEG or TIFF format photos/images/illustrations may be included with the research description. Image resolution should be 600 dpi. Please note that photos may be cropped to fit to the page if images are too large or include significant “empty” space. To avoid this, please format images prior to submission to include only necessary content.
• Include a caption for any images submitted.
• If your images contain identifiable photographs of people, each person in the photo will need to sign a release form, which we will provide for you.

Submit descriptions and images as separate files to (Elizabeth.moore@dhr.virginia.gov). Submissions that do not meet the above guidelines will be returned to the author for revision, which may delay publication in The Current. Due to space constraints not all submitted pieces may be included in a given issue of The Current. If this is the case, your contribution will receive priority listing for the next issue. Do not hesitate to contact the editor if you have any questions. We look forward to receiving your contributions.

Past Issues of The Current are available on the Island & Coastal Interest Group’s Website.