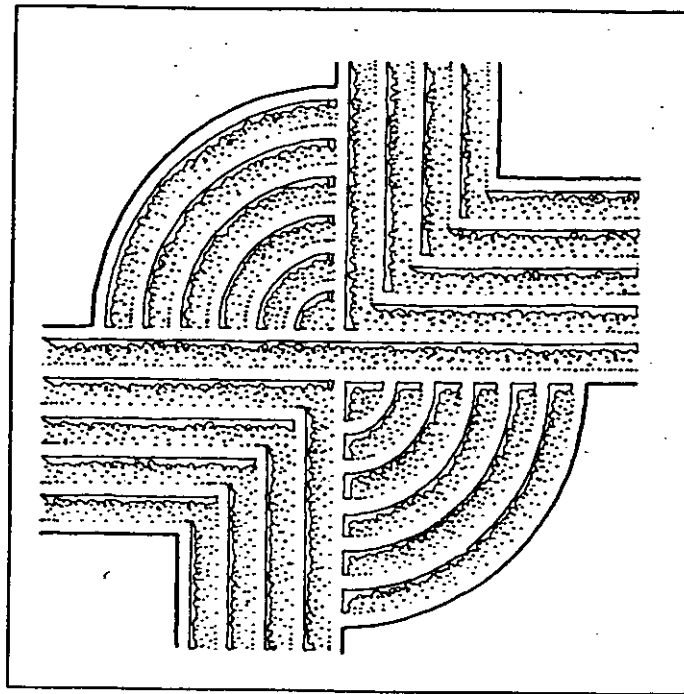


ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE SEA PINES
SENIOR LIVING CENTER TRACT, HILTON HEAD
ISLAND, BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 88

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE
SEA PINES SENIOR LIVING CENTER TRACT,
HILTON HEAD ISLAND, BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Chicora Research Contribution 88

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Background

This investigation was conducted by Ms. Natalie Adams of Chicora Foundation, Inc. for Mr. Ray Pittman, developer of the 70 acre development tract. This tract is situated just southwest of Bay Point Marina, adjacent to Broad Creek, on Hilton Head Island in Beaufort County (Figure 1). The tract is bounded to the west by Broad Creek, to the north by Broad Creek and privately owned property, to the east by Bay Pines subdivision, and to the south by Point Comfort Woods subdivision.

The tract is expected to be developed as a senior living center, with accompanying water, sewer, power, and road construction activities. This development activity has the potential for damaging or destroying archaeological sites and this intensive archaeological survey was conducted in order to allow the developer to obtain S.C. Coastal Council certification. This summary is intended to provide a discussion of the archival research and the archaeological survey of the tract sufficient to allow the S.C. State Historic Preservation Office to determine the eligibility of sites for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition, this study will provide a detailed explanation of the archaeological survey of the tract, and the findings. The statewide archaeological site files held by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology were examined for information pertinent to the project area. Chicora Foundation initiated consultation with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office concerning any National Register buildings, districts, structures, sites, or objects in the project area, as well as the results of any structures surveys on file with that office on July 17, 1992. We have not yet received a response to that request for information.

This project was coordinated with Ms. Jill Foster, Long-Range Planner with the Town of Hilton Head Island and Archaeological Investigations Approval 92-9 for the archaeological investigation was received July 18, 1992.

The historic research was conducted on July 20 and July 21, 1992 by Dr. Michael Trinkley at the Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances and the Charleston County of Mense Conveyances. In addition, the Beaufort County Cartographic Survey was also consulted for information on sites expected in the project area (Hacker and Trinkley 1992). The archaeological survey was conducted by Natalie Adams and Ms. Darwin Ramsey-Styer on July 21 and 22, 1992. Field work conditions were good and a total of 32 person hours were devoted to the study. The report preparation (including laboratory studies) was conducted on July 30 and 31, 1992. The artifacts from this project will be curated at The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island.

Goals

The primary goals of this study were, first, to identify the archaeological resources of the tract and, second to assess the ability of these sites to contribute significant archaeological, historical or anthropological data. The second aspect essentially involves the sites' eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, although Chicora Foundation only provides an opinion of National Register eligibility and the final determination is made by the lead compliance agency in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

The secondary goals were to examine the relationship between site location, soil type, and topography, expanding the previous work by Brooks and Scurry (1978) and Scurry and Brooks (1980) in the Charleston area, and Trinkley (1987,

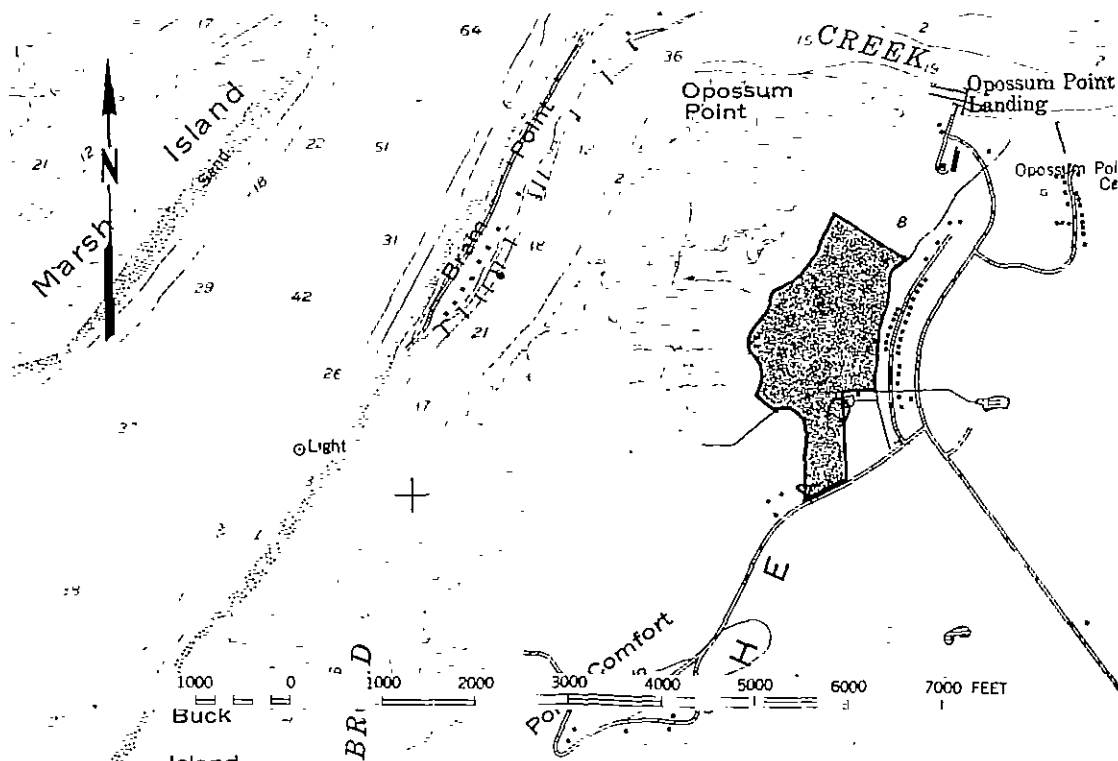


Figure 1. Location of project area, Bluffton Quadrangle.

1989) on Hilton Head and Daufuskie Islands for prehistoric site location, and South and Hartley (1980) for lowcountry historic site location.

Work at prehistoric sites in the area has revealed relatively small, shell and nonshell middens found almost exclusively adjacent to tidal creeks or sloughs. Few sites have been found in the interior, away from both present marsh habitats and relic sloughs. Most sites, based on previous studies, are found on excessive to moderately well drained, although a few are consistently found in areas which are poorly drained (which suggests that factors other than drainage may occasionally have determined aboriginal settlement location).

Research by South and Hartley (1980) suggests that major historic site complexes will be found on high ground adjacent to a deep water access. Plantation main houses tend to be located on the highest and best drained soils for both health and status reasons. Slave settlements tend to be located for easy access to the fields, although clearly other considerations were involved, and slave rows are often found on low, poorly drained soils.

Previous archaeological research in the area has located one site on the survey tract (Trinkley 1987). Site 38BU891 represents a prehistoric shell midden eroding into the marsh of Broad Creek. The site was described as consisting of sporadic shell eroding from the bank with surface shell scatter further inland. No artifacts were collected. Additional work was suggested to determine National Register eligibility, site boundaries, and cultural affiliation.

Based on the previous findings and the proximity of Broad Creek, the area

to be found further inland.

Curation

Artifacts recovered from this study will be curated with The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island as Accession Number 1992.4, catalog numbers ARCH 3297 through 3304. All original field notes (including photographic materials) and archival copies will also be curated at this facility. Site numbers have been assigned by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. Additional information on the conservation of the recovered materials can be found in the section on laboratory methods.

Effective Environment

Hilton Head Island is a sea island located between Port Royal Sound to the north and Daufuskie Island to the south. The island is separated from Daufuskie by Calibogue Sound and from the mainland by Skull Creek (Figure 2).

Hilton Head is situated in the Sea Island section of South Carolina's Coastal Plain province. The coastal plain consists of unconsolidated sands, clays and soft limestones found from the Fall Line eastward to the Atlantic Ocean, an area representing about two-thirds of the state (Cooke 1936:1-3). Elevations on Hilton Head range from sea level to about 20 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Additional environmental information on Hilton Head is available from Trinkley (1986, 1987).

The study area is situated on Broad Creek, southwest of Bay Point Marina. Vegetation consists of pine/mixed hardwoods, intermixed with pockets of saw palmetto. In addition, there was a small grove of relatively large live oaks located in the center of the tract. All of the vegetation appears to have been established within the last 100 years, with possible exception of the live oaks.

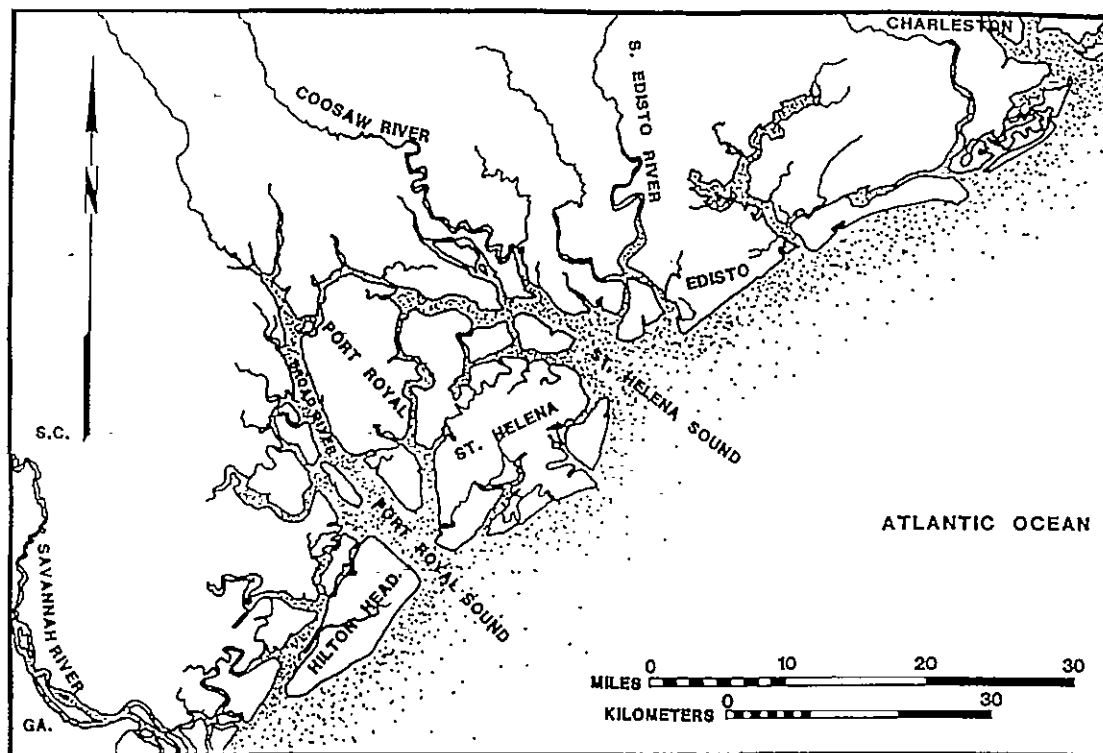


Figure 2. Location of Hilton Head Island.

Elevations in the survey area vary from about 5 to 9 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL). There are two dirt roads which run through the tract. One road enters the property from the southeast and ends approximately 100 feet from the marsh. The other enters the property from the east, parallels the marsh, and exits on the southwest side, near Point Comfort Woods subdivision. It was also noted that the ground has been extensively disturbed by previous grading and earth moving. For instance, large depressions in the survey tract appear to be man made since they are often surrounded by spoil piles. Also there are push piles in the north central portion of the tract, and heavy machinery tire tracks in other areas.

Soils in the project area are somewhat poorly drained Seewee fine sand. Typically the Ap zone consists of very dark brown fine sand (10YR2/2) about 0.8 foot thick. The underlying material to a depth of 14 inches is pale brown (10YR6/3) fine sand, and the B horizon to a depth of 25 inches is dark brown (7.5YR4/4) fine sand (Stuck 1980:83).

There is considerable erosion along the Broad Creek face and a number of archaeological sites have been identified through sightings of remains on the beach (Trinkley 1987).

Background Research

Several previously published archaeological studies are available for the Hilton Head area to provide background, including the Fish Haul excavation study (Trinkley 1986), Cotton Hope Plantation (Trinkley 1990a), excavation at a St. Catherine's/Savannah shell midden (Trinkley et al. 1992), testing at Stoney/Baynard Plantation (Adams and Trinkley 1991), survey of portions of Indigo Run Plantation (Adams and Trinkley 1992), and the reconnaissance level survey of Hilton Head Island for the Town of Hilton Head (Trinkley 1987). In addition, considerable survey and excavation work has been conducted on nearby Pinckney Island (Drucker and Anthony 1980; Trinkley 1981), Spring and Callawassie Islands (Trinkley 1989b and 1991); and Daufuskie Island (Trinkley 1989a). These sources should be consulted for additional details.

Virginia Holmgren (notes on file, South Carolina Historical Society) suggests that the survey tract was originally part of the 1750 acre Point Comfort or Calibogue tract owned by James and John Devant and that the property was transferred to William E. Pope, Sr. Pope's plantation management and abilities have been discussed in relationship to his Cotton Hope and Haig Point lands (Trinkley 1989, 1990a), and he seems to have been ineffectual, at best. When Hilton Head Island fell to Union forces in November 1861, William Pope and his family took refuge in Sandersville, Georgia where he died in 1862 (Bailey et al. 1986:1296). A March 20, 1862 letter from Gertrude Pope Woodward informed Heppy (Heph J. Pope), one of Pope's granddaughters, of his death, remarking, "his health was bad for a long time - but the loss of his property, & the loss of the grandchildren, all coming upon him at once, was more than he could bare, [and] he soon sunk under the weight of his afflictions (South Carolina Historical Society, Pope Correspondence File 11-550).

Pope's property, including Point Comfort, was confiscated by the Federal Government when the advertised taxes were not paid. The plantation, listed as 1000 acres by the District Tax Commission and valued at \$4,000, was sold to the Federal Government for \$1000 (National Archives, Record Group 217, Records of the Beaufort, S.C. Tax District, Valuation Volume; Senate Documents, 1st Session, 47th Congress, Executive Document 82).

Curiously, of the at least five tracts owned by Pope on Hilton Head (Cotton Hope, Point Comfort, Piney Woods, Leamington, and Coggins Point) only his main seat, Cotton Hope, is consistently listed on the Monthly Report of Lands by Captain A.P. Ketchum of the Freedmen's Bureau (Monthly Report of Lands, Freedmen's Bureau, South Carolina Department of Archives and History). This may indicate the relative insignificance of Point Comfort, although the 1838 National

Ocean Survey Chart T803, Sea Coast of South Carolina from Savannah River to May River shows the Point Comfort plantation under the ownership of Baynard (Figure 3), suggesting that there might have also been some confusion regarding ownership. Regardless, the plantation consisted of what appears to be a main complex, as well as a slave row. This is essentially repeated on the 1873 U.S. Coast Survey Chart 55, Coast of South Carolina from Hunting Island to Ossabaw Island (Figure 4).

At Pope's death the Point Comfort plantation, as well as his other property, passed to his wife. Eventually this tract, like the other Pope tracts, was restored by the Federal Government. In 1889 the 1373 acre Point Comfort tract was sold by John E. Woodward, Eliza Woodward, and A.P. Woodward, executors of Sarah Pope to William P. Clyde (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyance, DB 16, p. 407).

Clyde held extensive tracts on the south end of Hilton Head, including Lawton, Leamington, Brickyard, and Braddock plantations, as well as Point Comfort. Elsewhere on the island he acquired the Pine Land tract and Grasslawn Plantation. In 1919 these plantations, accounting for over 9000 acres, were sold to Roy A. Rainey for \$10,000 (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyance, DB 37, p. 61). In 1931 these parcels were sold by Rainey to Landon K. Thorne and Alfred L. Loomis (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 48, p. 117).

In 1883 W.D. Brown sold 165 acres of the adjacent Possum Point Plantation to Josiah Wright for \$1 an acre (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 13, p. 565). The property was bounded to the northeast by Possum Point Plantation, southeast by the Braddocks Point Road and Possum Point, south and southwest by Point Comfort Plantation, and northwest by Broad Creek. This parcel, which eventually passes from Wright to Highsmith Lumber Company, was sold by Highsmith to Thorne and Loomis in 1949 (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 62, p. 640).

While not on Point Comfort, this tract is important since its western line apparently formed the division between Point Comfort and Possum Point plantations. The location of the tract, fortunately, is shown on the 1950 plat of the Thorne and Loomis lands being sold to The Hilton Head Company (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 70, p. 7; PB 7, p. 51, Figure 5; see also Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, PB 6, p. 2). The survey tract is clearly to the west, entirely within the boundaries of Point Comfort.

The Hilton Head Company lands in this area were transferred to Sea Pines and in 1975 Sea Pines sold the bulk of the survey tract, encompassing 50.97 acres, to the Central Real Estate Investment (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 226, p. 1603). The tract was sold in 1979 to R Square, Inc. (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 292, p. 244). The parcel was subdivided and sold to at least 12 individuals prior to 1984, by which time the Delta Group had repurchases the individual tracts, "reconstituting" the original 51 acre parcel. That same year Delta sold the tract to Tide Point Partnership (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 401, p. 1532). Tide Point then sold about 31 acres to the First Corporation of Kansas and 19 acres to the Delta Group in 1988 (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 508, p. 2258; DB 508, p. 2251). The 31 acre tract passed from the First Corporation to the First Federal Savings Bank of Kansas and from there to Point Tide Associates (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 518, p. 7; DB. 554, p. 1211). Point Tide Associates sold a half interest in the property to Asset Management Corporation, who passed it on the LRH, while the other half interest was sold to Bluff Golf Company (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 561, p. 1497; DB 561, p. 1516).

The 20 acre tract when from Tide Point through the First Federal Savings Bank of Kansas to the Delta Group, who then sold a half interest in the property to KKV and the other half interest to Reed Realty (Beaufort County Register of

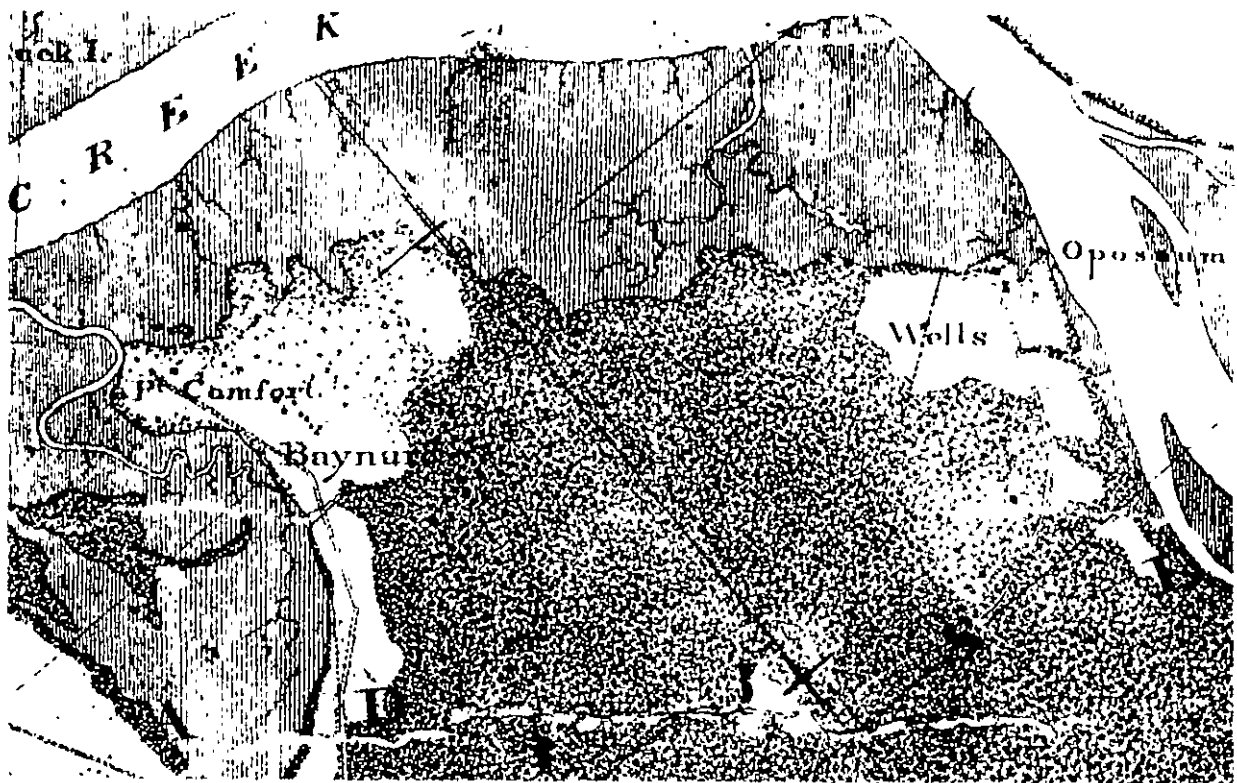


Figure 3. A portion of an 1838 chart showing the vicinity of Point Comfort and Possum Point plantations.

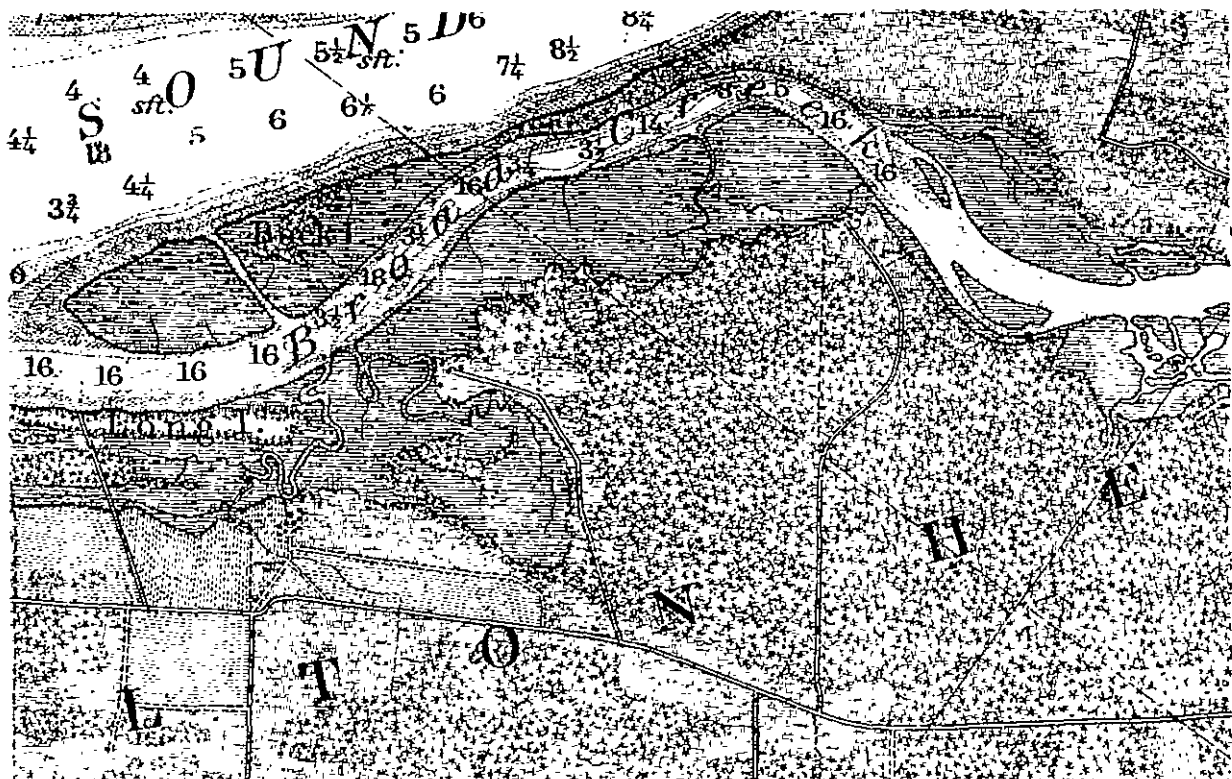


Figure 4. A portion of an 1873 chart showing the Point Comfort and Possum Point plantation area.

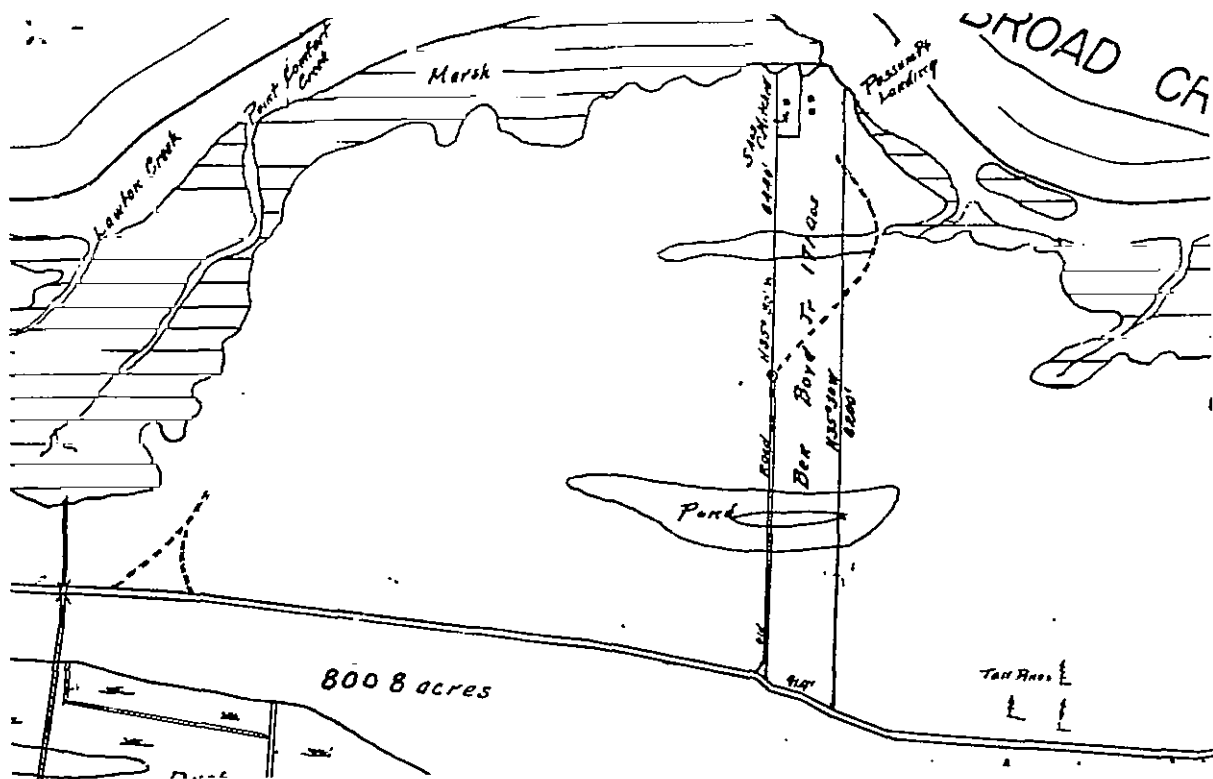


Figure 5. 1950 plat copied from 1931 mapping showing the Ben Boyd tract dividing Point Comfort from Possum Point.

Mense Conveyances, DB 508, p. 2258; DB 508, p. 2251; DB 554, p. 1216; DB 561, p. 1502). KKV Enterprises, Inc. sold their one-half interest in the 20 acre parcel to LRH Associates in 1990 (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, DB 561, p. 1521). Today the survey tract is essentially divided between four owners. The 31 acres along the marsh front is owned by Bluff Golf Company and LRH Associates and is part of the former Tidepoint Subdivision (Beaufort County TMS R550 14 00A 0342), while the 20 acres inland are owned by Reed Realty and LRH Associates (Beaufort County TMS R550 14 00A 342A) (see Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, PB 35, p. 238).

This historical research demonstrates that the survey tract, while close to the Possum Point Plantation, was actually located on Point Comfort, but was apparently not within any nineteenth century settlement. In fact, prior to the development pressures of the twentieth century, it appears likely that the tract was constantly wooded since at least the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The series of owners over the past 10 years, and the unsuccessful Tidepoint Subdivision, largely explain the extensive disturbance observed on the survey tract and discussed in more detail in a previous section. Consequently, it seems unlikely that any historic sites will be situated on the survey tract; it is also likely that whatever sites might be present will be extensively damaged by previous, unsuccessful, development attempts.

Field Methods

The initially proposed field techniques (detailed in Chicora's proposal submitted to and reviewed by the Town of Hilton Head) involved the placement of shovel tests and transects at 100 foot intervals. All soil would be screened through 1/4-inch mesh. Notes would be retained on stratigraphy and the tests

would be immediately backfilled. If archaeological remains were encountered, the spacing of the tests would be decreased to no greater than 50 feet in order to determine site boundaries, site integrity, and temporal periods represented.

All shovel tests would measure 1-foot square and would be excavated to sterile subsoil. On positive shovel tests, soil profiles would be drawn and soil coloration would be described using Munsell soil color charts. All cultural remains, except brick, shell, mortar, and charcoal, would be retained. Samples of the other material would be retained. The information required for S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology site forms would be collected in the field and photographs would be taken that were deemed warranted by the field investigator. A site would be defined at the presence of cultural items in at least two successive shovel tests, otherwise the materials would be characterized as "isolated remains."

These plans were put into effect, with no significant deviations. The interval was increased from 100 to 200 foot intervals in the south inland portion of the tract (away from the marsh edge) as it was discovered that the topography was low and the soils continued to become less well drained as the survey moved inland. In addition to the shovel testing, the creek bank was thoroughly examined for any cultural remains eroding out of the bank. Also, areas of good surface visibility, such as bare spots and dirt roads, were examined for remains (and were surface collected).

At the identified sites, shovel test and transect intervals were reduced to 50 and 25 feet. A total of 194 shovel tests in 32 transects were excavated throughout the survey tract.

Laboratory Analysis

The cataloging and analysis of the specimens was conducted at the Chicora laboratories in Columbia on July 30 and 31, 1992. The collections have been accepted for permanent curation by The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island as Accession Number 1992.4. In addition, all original field notes and archival copies of the field notes will be curated with the collections. All photographic materials have been processed to archival standards.

Analysis of the collections followed professionally accepted standards with a level of intensity suitable to the quantity and quality of the remains. Prehistoric ceramics were classified using common south coastal types (DePratter 1979; Trinkley 1983). The temporal, cultural, and typological classifications of the historic remains follow Noel Hume (1970), Miller (1980), Price (1979), and South (1977). No remains were encountered during these investigations which required conservation treatments.

Identified Sites

As a result of the archaeological survey of the Sea Pines Senior Living Center tract two sites, 38BU891 and 38BU1299, were identified.

Site 38BU891 was originally identified in 1986 by Chicora Foundation's reconnaissance level archaeological survey for the Town of Hilton Head Island (Trinkley 1987). It is situated along the bank of Broad Creek in the north central portion of the survey area. Thirty-three shovel tests were placed at 50 and 25 foot intervals in the site area. Eight (24.2%) evidenced moderate to heavy shell midden or artifacts, while the remaining 25 tests (75.8%) contained very sparse shell or were negative. Shell was also found eroding from the creek bank. It appears that the majority of the site has eroded into the marsh of Broad Creek since only the shovel tests immediately adjacent to the marsh revealed artifacts or shell midden. An exception was in the northern-most portion of the site where it was found extending 100 feet inland. Despite finding surface

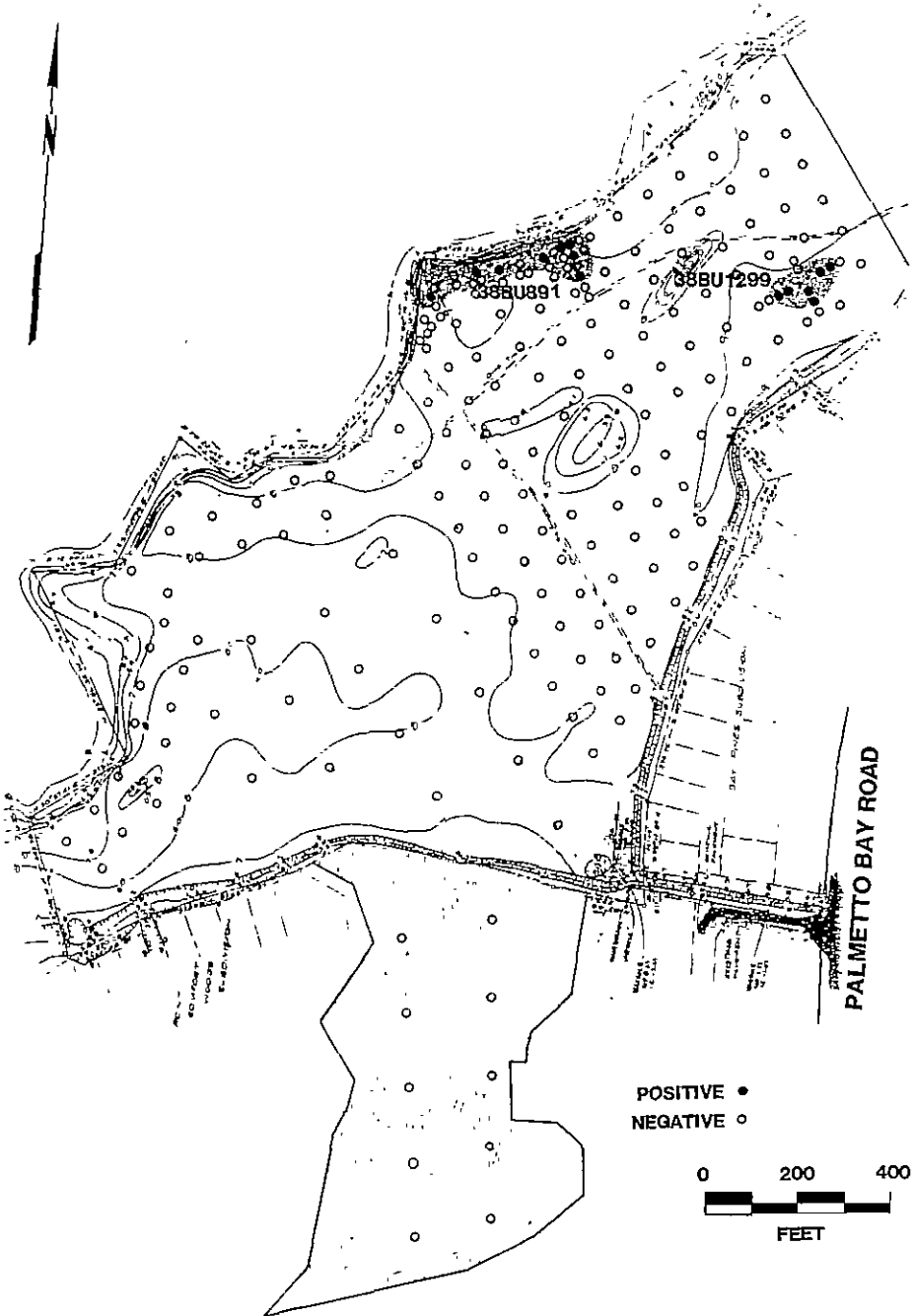


Figure 3. Location of 38BU891 and 38BU1299 on Sea Pines Senior Living Center parcel.

scatters of shell adjacent to the southern portions of the site, shovel testing yielded no artifacts or midden there.

The site extends for 400 feet along the marsh and inland 25 feet except in the northern-most area where it extends 100 feet. The central UTM coordinates are E521140 N3559700 and the soils are classified as somewhat poorly drained Seewee fine sands. Soil profiles indicated that the top horizon was generally 0.9 feet in depth (Munsell Color 10YR3/3). Subsoil exhibited a Munsell Color of 10YR6/4. Midden was generally found between 0.2 and 0.9 feet in A horizon soils. Artifacts recovered through shovel testing and surface collection consist of two St. Catherine's Cordmarked sherds, one St. Catherine's Fabric Impressed sherd, and two Coastal Plain Chert flakes.

38BU891 is recommended as not eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The majority of the site has eroded into the marsh of Broad Creek and most of the site extends inland only about 25 feet. Few artifacts and very little midden was encountered. It is unlikely that the site possess sufficient integrity to make contributions on research topics such as settlement or subsistence.

Site 38BU1299 is located approximately 500 feet from the bank of Broad Creek and 200 feet from the eastern property boundary, just south of a dirt road. Eight shovel tests were placed at 25 foot intervals in the site area. Four (50%) evidenced moderate to heavy shell or artifacts, indicating that the site measures 100 by 100 feet. Two small prehistoric sherds (possibly St. Catherine's) and one Coastal Plain chert flake were recovered. The central UTM coordinates are E521300 N359760 and the soils are classified as somewhat poorly drained Seewee find sands. Soil profiles indicated that the Ap horizon was typically 0.7 feet in depth (Munsell Color 10YR4/3). Subsoil exhibited a Munsell Color of 10YR6/4. When midden was encountered it was found in 10YR4/3 soils to a depth of 0.7 feet.

38BU1299 has been heavily disturbed by previous grubbing activities. Because of the heavy disturbance the site has received and the sparsity of artifacts, this site is recommended as not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Summary and Recommendations

The goals of this project were, first, to locate sites and determine their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The archaeological survey located two sites (38BU891 and 38BU1299). Neither site is recommended as eligible for inclusion on the National Register. No further work is recommended by Chicora Foundation.

The previously stated secondary goal of this study was to examine the relationship between site location, soil type, and topography. It was anticipated that the prehistoric sites would be found in areas adjacent to Broad Creek. No sites were expected further inland since the soils are somewhat poorly drained. Site 38BU891 is located adjacent to Broad Creek, however 38BU1299 is located approximately 500 feet away from the creek bank. This site is located on the only inland rise on the property which probably explains its existence there.

It is possible that other archaeological remains may be encountered in the survey tract during construction. Construction crews should be advised to report any discoveries of concentrations of artifacts (such as bottles, ceramics, or projectile points) or brick rubble to the project engineer, who should in turn report the material to the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office or to Chicora Foundation, Inc. No construction should take place in the vicinity of these late discoveries until they have been examined by an archaeologist.

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