



Newsletter  
**ARCHAEOLOGY**

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September 2024



## **SCDNR Archaeologists Training in DAACS**

**By Allison Morris and Dr. Jodi Barnes**

In July 2024, SCDNR Heritage Trust archaeologists Dr. Karen Smith, Dr. Jodi Barnes, and Tamara Wilson completed a two-week training on [The Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery \(DAACS\)](#) at the [Department of Archaeology at Monticello](#) in Charlottesville, Virginia. This

training enhanced their knowledge and skills in identifying, evaluating, and preserving historical archaeological artifacts and resources. It allows them to train others in DAACS protocols and to ensure that the collections held at SCDNR's Parker Annex Archaeology Center in Columbia, South Carolina are properly cared for and broadly comparable according to the Heritage Trust Program's directives. The DAACS is an archaeological database that allows comparisons with cultural sites across and between SCDNR properties in addition to comparisons with cultural sites in the Southeast and the Caribbean.

*Image features instructors and members of the July 2024 DAACS training cohort. Image courtesy of DAACS.*



## **Columbia, S.C. PARK(ing) Day 2024**

**Friday, September 20, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Join the SCDNR Archaeology team on Main Street in downtown Columbia, S.C. on Friday, Sept. 20 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. for PARK(ing) Day 2024. [PARK\(ing\) Day](#) is an annual open-source global event where citizens, artists, and activists collaborate to temporarily transform metered parking spaces into PARK(ing) spaces - temporary public spaces. Always scheduled for the third Friday in September, the City of Columbia has been host to PARK(ing) Day celebrations since 2015. Each year, artists, architects, advocates for public space, and others come together to design and build temporary parklet installations in parking spaces throughout the urban core, inspiring and challenging Columbians to reframe how we think about public space.



## **Jubilee: Festival of Black History and Culture**

**Saturday, September 21, 2024 from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

Join the SCDNR [Archaeology](#) and [Community Engagement](#) teams at the 46th annual [Jubilee: Festival of Black History and Culture](#) from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024. This free outdoor festival brings musicians, artisans, dancers and storytellers together to celebrate South Carolina's Black history and culture on the grounds of the [Mann-Simons Site](#), located at 1403 Richland Street, Columbia, S.C. 29201. For more information, please visit the Jubilee website [here](#).

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## **Spring 2025 Archaeology Internship Applications Now Open**

Applications for the Spring 2025 SCDNR Archaeology internship program are now available [here](#). Applications close at 5 p.m. EST on Thursday, October 31, 2024. This 15-week, in-person internship will begin on Monday, January 6, 2025 and end on Friday, April 18, 2025. Up to two interns will be selected for this term. Interns are paid \$12 per hour, and may work up to 20 hours per week at Parker Annex Archaeology Center (2025 Barnwell St., Columbia, SC 29201). Interns will assist the SCDNR Archaeology team with preparing and providing community engagement programs, including programs that take place on Saturdays. Applicants must be enrolled at the time of the internship as an undergraduate (B.A./B.S. and Associates) or graduate (M.A./M.S. and Ph.D.) student seeking a degree in anthropology, archaeology, history, or a closely related field. Housing is not provided. Please email SCDNR archaeologist Meg Gaillard with any questions or concerns ([GaillardM@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:GaillardM@dnr.sc.gov)).

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## 50th Anniversary Poster Contest South Carolina Heritage Trust Program

Calling all artists and art students to help us celebrate the 50th anniversary of the South Carolina Heritage Trust Program! We are looking for artists of all ages to create posters (maximum size: 11" x 17", horizontal or vertical) celebrating your favorite South Carolina [heritage preserves](#).

There are two categories for the poster competition: Kids (K-12) and Adults (18+). You can use any medium you like to create your poster: digital, pastels, oils, paints, colored pencils, or crayons. Once you finish your artwork, please complete the [poster competition application](#) and upload a high resolution (300 dpi or greater) scan or photo of your artwork as part of the application [here](#).

The poster competition will close on Tuesday, December 31, 2024 at 11:59pm EST. Judges for the competition are made up of South Carolina Heritage Trust Program staff. Three posters from each category (kids and adults) will be selected to receive a prize package. Winning posters will be published in [South Carolina Wildlife magazine](#). Prize winners will be contacted on or before Monday, March 3, 2025.

*Image features an artist painting at [Botany Bay Plantation Heritage Preserve / Wildlife Management Area](#). Image courtesy of Meg Gaillard, SCDNR.*



## Focus on Heritage

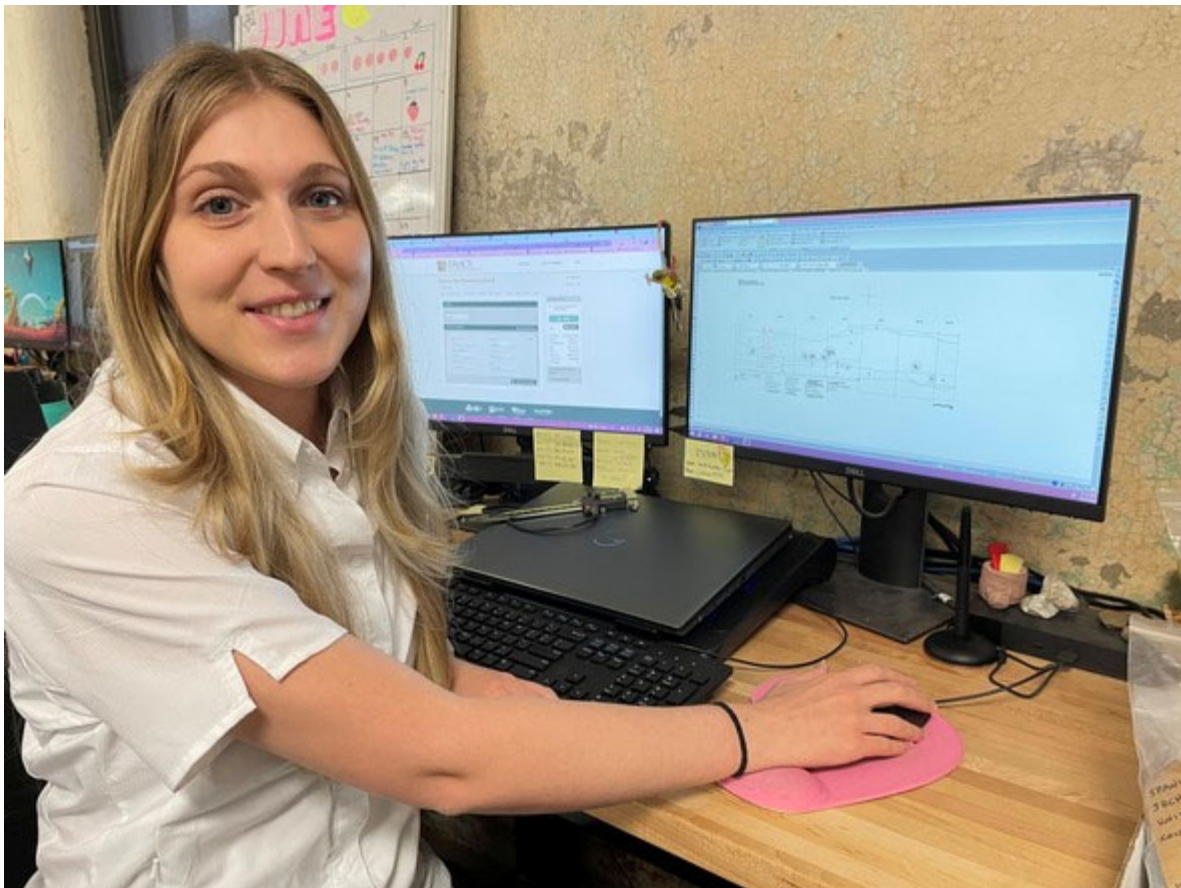
### Altamaha Towne Heritage Preserve

[Altamaha Towne Heritage Preserve](#) is in Beaufort County, approximately six miles north of Bluffton, S.C. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) Heritage Trust Program dedicated the 100-acre parcel of land in 2008 to protect and preserve archaeological sites left behind by the Yamasee, the Indigenous peoples who once lived in this area and along the coastal waterways from South Carolina to Florida. The preserve was jointly purchased with funds from the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program as well as the Heritage Trust Land Fund.

Altamaha Towne was an Indigenous peoples' village named for Altamaha, a former chief of the Yamasee. In the early 1700s, the Yamasee lived in an area considered the frontier, the land ranging from the Spanish settlement in St. Augustine, Florida to the British in Charles Towne, S.C. Their numbers were estimated to be 1,500 to 2,000, with a small group of about 100 located at Altamaha Towne. One of several Yamasee towns located throughout Beaufort and Jasper counties, Altamaha Towne served as the central seat of the Yamasee people from the 1690s to 1715.

The Yamasee were considered the closest Indigenous allies of the European colonists in South Carolina. However, a dispute chiefly over fur trade practices initiated a war between the British and Yamasee from 1715 to 1716. The Yamasee War decimated and disempowered the Yamasee who were then scattered across the southeast, some joining other Indigenous groups as a strategy for survival. The Altamaha Towne Heritage Preserve offers archaeological information that helps archaeologists better understand the impacts of European contact on Indigenous peoples. Archaeological investigations of the preserve indicate that Indigenous peoples lived in the area as early as 1500 BCE. The Altamaha Towne site was listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) in 1994.

The area is only open during daylight hours. Visit the SCDNR's Heritage Trust [website](#) to learn more about [Altamaha Towne Heritage Preserve](#) and other preserves, view documentary films, and download lesson plans and activities.



## **Katie Gray**

### **Archaeological Analyst and CAD Illustrator**

Archaeological field projects will often generate an overwhelming amount of information with detailed field drawings, the daily handwritten notes of each archaeologist, progress photographs, and other data that becomes part of the overall archival record for a project. It can be complicated to consolidate this data, both physical and digital, into user-friendly products that capture the story of the fieldwork and what was learned through archaeology.

At the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) Heritage Trust Program, Archaeological Analyst and CAD (computer-aided design) illustrator Katie Gray helps tell the story of archaeological fieldwork by wading through that data and creating tailored illustrations that accompany the final reports.

“Having visual graphics can make the information easier to digest,” Gray said in describing how her visual products complement the official written report of the work. “It’s nice to have digitized documents that can be completely customized to put in our reports. It can be time-consuming trying to cross-reference a million notes and to understand what someone is explaining without visual references.”

In producing her graphics and other illustrations, Gray works closely with Dr. Karen Smith, Heritage Trust’s Archaeological Research Manager, who establishes the research questions for field projects and writes the final reports.

“I’ll look at our field notes and field photographs, then cherry-pick the information that she wants in order to answer and illustrate her research questions,” Gray said about the collaborative process. “The original data set of notes, the photos, and the drawings can be interpreted in a million different ways, so it just depends on what your research question is and what you want to answer.”

Some basic information to illustrate might include type and color of soils or specific artifact densities,

information that helps show how a people might have lived within a cultural heritage site. Statistical data on shell and animal bone types, for example, illustrate the food ways of the Indigenous people who once lived within a cultural site.

Gray's illustration work with Heritage Trust Program began several years ago when she realized a digital drawing tablet could be used to draw on field photographs, helping to highlight significant aspects of excavation photos.

"I realized that the tablet could work as a normal mouse, and maybe help my wrists not feel so exhausted at work," she said. "I discovered I could draw on field drawings and it was useful to make little notes on the photographs from the field, like outlining the edges of a feature to show exactly where we excavated, because in a photo it can be hard to see soil changes with the lighting."

One of her more complex and challenging projects was to illustrate the entirety of a trench excavated at the Pockoy Island Shell Ring Complex, a 4,300-year-old ring of shells left by the Indigenous people who once lived at what is now the Botany Bay Plantation Heritage Preserve on Edisto Island. The trench measured 1 meter by 20 meters with varying depths.

"I started with the goal of creating a digitized profile map of the entire trench, to show the stratigraphy, the artifacts, and the soil samples, illustrated in a way that would reflect all of the information in the notes, everything interpreted in the trench," she explained. She illustrated the 20-meter-long profiles or "walls" of the trench, showing soil changes, artifacts densities and other features using archaeologists field notes, drawings, and photographs.

The final illustration features a side-by-side comparison of the north and south 20-meter-long trench walls, showing the relationship between the two sides, where soil changes, shell deposits, and other features related within the trench. The final map was also formatted using the protocols of the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS), an online database where archaeologists share their research and compare artifacts across sites.

Gray uses her self-taught digital art skills to develop novel ways of capturing archaeological fieldwork, adding life and color to otherwise mundane textual reports. To illustrate a deposit of knobbed whelks in a trench excavated at Spanish Mount, a 4,000-year-old Indigenous shell mound located at the Edisto Island State Park, Gray used images of actual whelks discovered at the site.

"I didn't want to use just a clipart or a drawing of a whelk, so I grabbed one from our type collection, the kind we actually see at the site," Gray explained. Her goal was to show how the field archaeologist documented how the whelks were discovered in the field, as they were deposited by the original person 4,000 years ago. "All of the whelks positioned on the final map reflect the actual size and positioning of the whelk in the profile, so you get the visual representation of what the artifact looks like and how it was deposited."

The trench excavation at Spanish Mount was also part of a field school where archaeological students were learning how to take adequate notes and draw technical illustrations of their work. The quality, scale, and information keys varied greatly between drawings. Gray had to translate these drawings into one consistent scale and consolidate the data into one map.

"This was very challenging and time consuming, because I wasn't in the field for this one, and I had to ask a lot of questions. I only have the notes to work with and this was a field school, so it was the first time for taking notes for many students," Gray said. To collect the essential information for the illustration, she combed through field notes and photos and clarified fieldwork with archaeologists. "What was the goal of digging this unit? Was the feature excavated or was it left in the wall? Do we know what's in that feature or do we only see this side view of it in the profile?"

Gray said through her work she has a better appreciation for quality note taking as it helps her paint the pictures that help document the archaeology work conducted by the Heritage Trust Program.

"Just digitizing the data is a kind of final revision for all of the field notes," Gray said. "Because that is when the field notes are put to the test, to make sure you understand what is being explained and what was interpreted in the field."

Gray earned her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of South Carolina. Before joining the SCDNR's Heritage Trust Program, she worked with the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA).

*Image features Katie Gray working on a CAD illustration. Image courtesy of Larry Lane, SCDNR.*

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Questions about archaeology events and programs? Please visit the [Heritage Trust website](#), or email [ArchaeologyOutreach@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:ArchaeologyOutreach@dnr.sc.gov).

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