

Memorial Stanley A. South 1928–2016



Stanley South at Charles Towne Landing, South Carolina, 2000.
(Photo by Michael Stoner, South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology.)

Stanley A. South, one of the pioneers of historical archaeology, a founder and early officer of the Society for Historical Archaeology, the organizer of the Southeastern Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology, one of the leading figures in the “new archaeology,” and a prolific and persuasive author and editor, passed away on 20 March 2016 at the age of 88. Stan referred to himself as a “mountain groundhog” (South 2005:1), but for other historical archaeologists he was simply a mountain, a prominent figure that dominated the landscape of the discipline.

Stan South was born on 2 February 1928 in the Appalachian mountain town of Boone, North Carolina. He was raised in Watauga County in a household that supported and encouraged both the arts and education. Growing up in the mountains, he was exposed to rural life on family farms as well as life in the town of Boone, and was aware of the social, cultural, and economic differences between town and farm, his first recognition of culture. Stan was interested in the world beyond the mountains and, at the age of 13, on his own, he rode his bike from the mountains to Charleston on the South Carolina coast, a one-way distance of roughly 300 mi. His interest in the world at large led him to graduate from high school three

years early and attempt to join the military, but he failed the physical because of a punctured eardrum. Instead, Stan enrolled at Appalachian State Teachers College (ASTC), now Appalachian State University, pursuing a degree in education. After finishing his freshman year, he enrolled in the navy. As Stan was completing his training, it was announced that the A-bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, and hence the war was drawing to a close. Following his discharge in 1946 and with the support of the GI Bill, he enrolled in the Southwest Photo Arts Institute in Dallas, Texas. In that same year, with a photography certificate in hand, he returned to ASTC as a sophomore at the age of 18.

Stan became a photographer for the ASTC student paper and yearbook while pursuing his education. In his senior year, he met Jewell Barnhardt, whom he would subsequently marry; the couple had three children, David, Robert, and Lara. Jewell shared and supported Stan's interest in archaeology, as did David in later years. Following graduation Stan became a junior high school sciences and social-studies teacher. The social-studies curriculum required teaching about American Indians, but the textbook assigned to Stan's class did not have a section on Indians. This gap led to an interest in learning about American Indian life, and Stan and Jewell began exploring Watauga County to find American Indian sites and artifacts. Stan took artifacts they found to Douglas Rights, author of *The American Indian in North Carolina*. Rights identified one of the projectile points as a Hardaway Point and advised Stan to contact Joffre Coe at the University of North Carolina (UNC), as Coe had recently named the point based on its recovery from a site of the same name. Coe introduced Stan to the UNC Research Laboratory of Anthropology and informed him of the need to record his finds carefully. Stan and Jewell continued to survey Watauga County over the next year, with Stan preparing a report on their findings. By now hooked on archaeology and with a report that demonstrated his interest and ability to Coe, Stan applied and was admitted to the graduate program at UNC Chapel Hill.

While studying with Coe, Stan directed archaeological work on a number of sites, most notably the Gaston and Thelma sites for the Virginia Electric Power Company's Roanoke Rapids hydroelectric reservoir on the North Carolina/Virginia border. The work included the survey of the reservoir as well as excavations at the Gaston site, where Jewell and classmate Lewis Binford assisted him. Stan's work on the stratified Gaston site was reported in *Newsweek* as well as in the North Carolina newspapers. Planning on pursuing his Ph.D. in anthropology, Stan and his classmate, Lew Binford, had applied to and been accepted by the University of Michigan's Department of Anthropology, home to James Griffin and Leslie White. However, Jewell crashed the Souths' car into a coal truck, totaling the car, damaging the truck, and causing it to lose its load of coal. Once Stan had paid for the damage, the load of coal, Jewell's medical bills, and the police citation, his savings were exhausted and plans for doctoral work cancelled.

Having completed his master's degree, Stan took a job with North Carolina State Parks to work at Town Creek, an American Indian site he had visited with Coe, who had worked there extensively. At Town Creek, Stan worked with Ed Gaines on excavation of the site, as well as on an interpretive reconstruction for the public of the priest house and temple house. His interest in the house reconstruction brought him into contact with Charles Fairbanks, who had directed excavations of the earth lodge at the Ocmulgee National Monument. Stan heard Fairbanks speak on excavations of the Hawkins-Davidson houses and historical archaeology at the 1956 Southeastern Archaeological Conference (SEAC) and began paying more attention to the few papers and publications then being produced on historical archaeology. In 1957, Sam Tarleton, Stan's boss at the time, contacted him about a new historic state park that was being established on the Cape Fear River. Tarleton told Stan that Fairbanks had been offered the job as archaeologist for the site and asked him to write a letter of support for Fairbanks's file, which Stan did. Fairbanks, however, declined the job offer to remain at the University of Florida, and Tarleton, in turn, offered the job to Stan. Stan sought the advice of his mentor, Joffre Coe, who said: "If you want to end your career in archaeology, I suppose you should take it" (South 2005:106). Stan took the job despite Coe's opinion, becoming the archaeologist at the Brunswick Town historic site.

Brunswick Town would prove to be pivotal in Stan South's career. It introduced him to the then-emergent field of historical archaeology, and it was the first in what would prove to be a lifelong emphasis on the archaeology of lost towns. Building on the emphasis Joffre Coe placed on taxonomy and typology, Stan's excavations focused on material culture, to which he added Leslie White's concepts of the science of culture. He interacted with the few other historical archaeologists then active in the field, visiting Ivor Noël Hume at Colonial Williamsburg to learn more about British historical ceramics and publishing, in 1959, *Description of the Ceramic Types at Brunswick Town*. At Brunswick Town, South developed the mean ceramic date, his historical artifact classification system, and artifact patterning, all of which would become hallmarks of the field.

As Stan communicated with other archaeologists interested in historic sites, he encountered disinterest and discouragement from prehistoric archaeologists regarding the value of this work. When he contacted Joffre Coe, who at the time was chair of the 1958 SEAC Conference, requesting the opportunity to present his work on Brunswick Town, Coe refused to add him to the program, noting that SEAC was primarily interested in "Indian Archaeology." The following year, Stan requested travel funding from his boss, Sam Tarleton, to attend the SEAC Conference, but Tarleton refused on the grounds that he worked in the state's Historic Sites Department, which did not justify going to an Indian conference. This led Stan to organize the Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology. Writing to his colleagues in the field, he noted that

we historic sites archaeologists are often looked upon by our fellow anthropologists as a kind of bastard researcher—half archaeologist and half historian. ... We will always remain a breed apart from our colleagues' work on the American Indian. As a result ... we are not represented in the programs of the existing archaeological conferences. ... I would like to suggest the formation of the Historic Sites Archaeological Conference that would meet each year to present a program based on problems encountered by historic sites archaeologists in the excavation and analysis of their data. (South 2005:112)

Beginning in 1960, what became known as the Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology met the day before SEAC in the same town and hotel. These co-location meetings continued until the Tuscaloosa, Alabama, meeting in 1976. There, prominent archaeologist James Griffin arrived at the conference hotel without a reservation, only to find that there were no hotel rooms available. Griffin advised the SEAC directors that "the historic sites people have taken all the rooms," and, as a result, SEAC informed Stan that the CHSA was no longer allowed to meet in conjunction with SEAC. CHSA continued to hold annual meetings on its own through 1982. Stan published the conference papers each year, and the Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology Papers were an early and extremely important outlet for historic sites studies. However, the 1982 conference generated no contributed papers, which led Stan to bring the conference to an end.

Since it was tied to SEAC in the beginning, the CHSA also emphasized historic sites in the southeastern U.S., but the emergence of the discipline nationally led to the formation of another organization. Stan met with other historical archaeologists in Dallas in 1967, during which the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) was created. In his autobiography, Stan noted that much of the discussion centered around whether the new society should be "for" or "of" "historic" or "historical" archaeology, and whether archaeology should be spelled with or without the second *a*. Stan argued that "historic" implied the field itself was historic if not connected to the word "sites," and that "historical" was the correct term, thus giving the SHA its name.

Stan continued to work on North Carolina historic sites and parks, which included the lost towns of Russellborough and Bethabara, as well as Fort Fisher and Brunswick Town. Living in Raleigh, South became engaged in the sixties art culture of the area, applying his hand to poetry, painting, photography, sculpture, ceramics, and music. Poetry would remain a passion throughout his later years. While his creative capabilities were clearly on display, scientific archaeology remained South's favored endeavor. In 1966, he took on a contract assignment from Glen Little, president of Contract Archaeology, Inc., that led him to work outside North Carolina at the Paca House in Maryland. Back in North Carolina, he was contacted by John Combes regarding the South Carolina Tricentennial Commission's desire to excavate the original site of Charleston,

Charlestowne Landing, in preparation for the South Carolina Tricentennial in 1970. Replying that he might be interested, Stan subsequently received an offer from Robert Stephenson, director of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA), to join Combes in the survey of Charlestowne Landing. Stan worked on the project on a leave of absence from North Carolina Historic Sites, but returned from the first season of fieldwork to be told that he was a “loose cannon,” who should curtail his out-of-state work efforts and focus on administration rather than archaeology. After turning in his report on the exploratory work at Charlestowne Landing, Stan received a job offer from Bob Stephenson to serve as an archaeologist with the SCIAA on a permanent basis. He accepted the offer, shunning administration to keep his hand in the archaeology game while moving on to the fluorescence of his career in South Carolina.

At Charlestowne Landing, Stan employed a large-scale site-excavation approach and the kind of reconstruction he had learned at Town Creek. The opening of large excavation blocks and shovel shaving, “schnitting,” their surfaces to identify cultural features, guided the reconstruction of the town’s palisade. These excavations also encountered a moundless American Indian ceremonial site on the proposed location of the visitors’ center, and Stan lobbied the Tricentennial Commission to preserve the site by modifying the project plans. When the find was reported on the Huntley-Brinkley national nightly news, with Chet Brinkley noting the irony that an American Indian site was being destroyed for the construction of a visitors’ center, the commission dug in its heels. They were determined not to be influenced by Northern media and refused to modify the plans.

Working with Stephenson at the SCIAA provided Stan the support and platform to expand his publications and research. Stephenson established both the Research Manuscript Series (RMS) geared to professional archaeologists and the Notebook geared to the public, and Stan was a frequent contributor to both; in fact, his 1969 report, “Exploratory Archaeology at the Site of the 1670–1680 Charles Towne on Albemarle Point in South Carolina,” became the first publication in the RMS. Stephenson subsequently established the Anthropological Studies series, for more in-depth publications aimed at both the description and interpretation of significant sites, and Stan’s Palmetto Parapets, published by the institute on his work at Fort Moultrie in 1974, was also the first in that series. With Stan’s growing resume of publications in the RMS, Notebook, and the Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology Papers, he achieved recognition as one of the significant voices of historical archaeology. In 1974 he was invited to attend a Society for American Archaeology seminar on report writing and, while there, interacted with Stuart Struever, consulting editor for the Studies in Archaeology Series from Academic Press. Struever asked South if he was interested in preparing a book on historical archaeology for the series, and *Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology*, published in 1977, was the result.

Method and Theory was a landmark publication in which South relayed his thoughts on historical archaeology as a scientific discipline and his concepts of artifact patterning, material culture patterning, dating material culture, and the archaeological perspective on historic sites and cultures. Along with Noël Hume’s *Guide to the Artifacts of Colonial America*, it was, and still is, found on the shelves of every historical archaeologist.

Hosted by the SCIAA, Stan saw the 1975 SHA conference in Charleston, South Carolina, as an opportunity to promote scientific archaeology—the conference theme was “Toward Archaeological Science through the Material Remains of Culture” (South 2005:284). Stan tasked Leland Ferguson, a recent addition to the institute staff, to chair a session in which scientific and humanistic archaeology would be compared and contrasted. Ferguson’s session, entitled “Historical Archaeology and the Importance of Material Things,” featured talks by Lewis Binford, James Deetz, Leland Ferguson, James Fitting, Henry Glassie, Mark Leone, and William Rathje. It was subsequently published by the SHA as Special Publication Number 2. Much to Stan’s chagrin, humanism, led by Glassie, Deetz, and Leone’s presentations, held sway over the audience, as opposed to science, which Stan acknowledged in his introduction to the volume.

Stan went on to work on a number of historic sites in South Carolina including the Revolutionary War-era star fort at Ninety Six, the Pawley House, and Fort Moultrie, and he also

conducted a survey with Michael Hartley of 18th-century sites along the rivers near Charleston. In 1978, he began work at his last lost town—Santa Elena. Stan's interest in Santa Elena had been piqued in 1958 when he was working at Town Creek with Joffre Coe. Coe had noted that copper found in some of the Town Creek burials could have originated either from the Spanish at Santa Elena or possibly from the French Charlesfort. Charlesfort (1562–1563) was established by the French along the South Carolina coast, and a fortification at the tip of Parris Island—the Marine Corps Training Center—had been excavated by Major Osterhout in the 1920s and identified as the French Charlesfort. Santa Elena was established in 1566 as the first capital of Spanish Florida in what would become South Carolina; it was in existence from 1566 to 1587 and abandoned following conflict with local American Indians in 1576. The town was burned, but the Spanish returned in 1577 to rebuild the town and fort that remained until 1587. The Spanish constructed three forts at Santa Elena—San Felipe I, San Felipe II, and San Marco—and there was discussion and debate in the historical community over whether the fortification identified by Osterhout was actually Charlesfort or one of Santa Elena's fortifications.

In 1978, Bob Stephenson of the SCIAA received a call from Joseph Judge, senior associate editor of *National Geographic*, who was planning to do an article on 16th-century Spanish La Florida and was requesting permission to send either Charles Fairbanks or Kathy Deagan to Parris Island to look for evidence of Santa Elena. Stephenson replied that if anyone was going to search for Santa Elena, it would be Stan South and the institute. South thus applied to the Marine Corps for permission to conduct an archaeological survey to search for Santa Elena and submitted a proposal to the National Geographic Society to fund it. The Marine Corps approved his proposal, but the National Geographic did not fund it, stating that he had not provided evidence that Santa Elena existed at the end of Parris Island, which was, of course, what the survey sought to determine.

In response, Stan launched a largely volunteer effort to survey the end of Parris Island, working with his family (notably his wife, Jewell, who did the recording, and sons, David and Robert, who assisted with the excavations), friends, and two SCIAA technicians, Mike Harmon and Joe Joseph, who Stephenson had agreed to fund. Stan laid out a grid of 3 ft. excavation squares to begin the survey. The excavations recovered a number of early-20th-century Marine Corps artifacts, as well as other historical materials, but nothing conclusively identified as Spanish. However, both South and Joseph excavated units that exposed a dark feature deposit, and to determine its extent and width they both began slot trenches from their units to reach the feature's outer edge. The two excavated feverishly, racing to find the opposite edges of the feature, while also recognizing that the feature was extensive. Once the edges were reached, it became clear that they had discovered a ditch roughly 14 ft. wide. Stan recognized the ditch as a fortification moat and laid out additional units to map the moat's presence further. While excavating Square 34, David South encountered pottery in the feature fill, which he cleaned and photographed in situ. It proved to be the neck of a Spanish olive jar, which led Stan to conclude that they had found Fort San Felipe and the town of Santa Elena. The story made national news, and National Geographic funded further work on the site. This began Stan's work at Santa Elena, the major excavation of his career.

From 1979 to 1985, Stan worked on Fort San Felipe, Fort San Marcos, Santa Elena's last fort, and two lots that were subsequently identified as belonging to Santa Elena's governor from 1580–1587. He returned to Santa Elena in 1991 with Chester DePratter as codirector, a partnership that continued until 2007. In 1993, they discovered a Spanish pottery kiln on the periphery of the site, and in 1996 they announced the discovery of French Charlesfort, which was found buried beneath Spanish Fort San Felipe. In all, Stan directed nearly 30 excavation projects at Santa Elena. During these busy years, Stan was not content to work on only a single site. He also directed projects at the Bartlam Pottery at Cainhoy near Charleston, and new investigations at Charles Towne Landing and Ninety Six, sites that he had worked on in the 1970s.

Stan South was a man of tremendous energy who was totally committed to his research. During his entire career as an archaeologist, he worked full weekdays and every evening and

weekend, with only occasional time off to see a doctor or take his worn out automobiles to the shop. Toward the end of his life, he focused on clearing out his backlog of unfinished work. He published the edited volume, *Pioneers in Historical Archaeology: Breaking New Ground*, in 1994. His final report on excavations at the town of Bethabara and the Moravian pottery came out in 1999 when he was 71 years old. In 2002, he published his final report on Charles Towne Landing. In 2005, he published a memoir, *An Archaeological Evolution*, covering his life and work, and also his M.A. thesis, a work that had contributed important data for Joffre Coe's volume, *The Formative Cultures of the Carolina Piedmont*. He edited and published his final report on his excavations at Brunswick Town, North Carolina, in 2010. With funds left over from the CHSA, he started, edited, and funded a new series, Historical Archaeology in Latin America, that published a series of Latin American historical archaeological studies that Stan edited and printed and then shipped to colleagues in South America for distribution. Through all those years, he continued his field research, wrote reports, published numerous papers and articles, and, of course, wrote poetry. Then, in 2012, he compiled and published *Recording the Journey: An Annotated Vita*, a 60-page volume. And then, after nearly 60 years of writing and publishing, Stan set aside his pen and wrote no more.

Over the course of his long career, Stan received many honors due to his lifetime dedication to historical archaeology:

- 1979 Distinguished Alumnus Award, Appalachian State University
- 1984 Halifax Resolves Award, Historic Halifax Restoration Association
- 1987 J. C. Harrington Medal, Society for Historical Archaeology
- 1993 R. L. Stephenson Lifetime Achievement Award, Archaeological Society of South Carolina
- 1997 Honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree, University of South Carolina
- 1999 Order of the Palmetto, State of South Carolina
- 2004 Lifetime Achievement Award, Southeastern Archaeological Conference
- 2006 Old North State Award, State of North Carolina
- 2008 Major G. Osterhout Archaeological Stewardship Award, Historic Beaufort Foundation
- 2010 Golden Shield Award, Daughters of Founders and Patriots of America

Stan's wife and early partner in the field, Jewell, died of cancer in 1980, the same year in which Stan went through quintuple-bypass surgery and was advised he had roughly four years to live. Stan married Linda Hunter in 1981 and Janet Reddy in 1991, but neither of these later marriages took. Stan is survived by his children, David, Robert, and Lara, and his grandchildren.

In April 2016, the Santa Elena Foundation opened the Santa Elena History Center in Beaufort, South Carolina. The center and its exhibits are the direct result of Stan's decades of work at the Charlesfort–Santa Elena National Historic Landmark. Visitors to Beaufort can now learn about the site's history and archaeology. Stan did not live to see the opening of this center, but he would have been especially proud to have this part of his life story told in a museum setting and to see the archaeological past brought to the public, one of the constant verses in the poem of Stan South's life.

Reference

SOUTH, STANLEY A.

2005 *An Archaeological Evolution*. Springer, New York, NY.

J. W. JOSEPH

CHESTER B. DEPRATTER