

# CERAMICS AND CULTURAL INTERACTIONS ON THE COLONIAL FRONTIER

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A project that we are currently participating in is the Lord Ashley site, located outside of Charleston, South Carolina. The Lord Ashley site was the 1675-1685 fortified plantation and trading post for Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper, one of the original eight Lords Proprietors of the Carolina colony. Archaeological research here has identified the foundation of oldest British brick foundations in the Carolinas, and the defensive moat. Research here has furthered our understanding of the Proprietary period and Lord Ashley's involvement in the development of the Carolinas, even though he never had a chance to visit his Carolina estate. The artifacts have allowed us to identify specific groups of Native Americans who interacted with the colonists and the likelihood that at least some of the fifteen enslaved adult Africans there made their own pottery.

Nicole Isenbarger, our president, conducted an analysis of the locally produced earthenwares recovered during the 2011 College of Charleston/The Charleston Museum archaeological field school excavations. These ceramics, otherwise known as Colono Wares, are the non-European low fired hand built pottery found in the colonial sites of the eastern United States that were produced by both free and enslaved Native Americans and Africans. Her analysis gave us an idea of the different groups of people who interacted with one another at the site. A brief blog on her work can be seen on the Lord Ashley site blog at <http://lordashleysite.wordpress.com/2013/06/17/making-pots-and-mixing-traditions/> One of our main questions was to look for evidence of cultural mixing or the sharing of potting traditions within these ceramics. So far the ceramics are very distinct and separate and we have not seen any evidence that the potters were sharing their ideas and techniques for making ceramics.

This year, Nicole volunteered with the field school excavations, which now also included students from Salve Regina University. She spent 3 weeks in the field working with students and teaching them proper excavation techniques. The artifacts from this field season will be processed at The Charleston Museum by student interns from the College of Charleston. Once the artifacts have been cleaned and catalogued, Nicole will study the Colono Wares we found looking for evidence of specific pottery traditions/styles and possibly even wares that show the sharing of traditions between these different groups.

To learn more about the Lord Ashley site you can follow the blog at <http://lordashleysite.wordpress.com> where we will be keeping you up to date on the progress of our research as we begin to research the artifacts we uncovered during this year's excavations.