

Edgefield County Historical Society



Dave Drake
Stoneware Vessel

Cultural and Craft Legacies of Edgefield, SC

Summer 2016 Speaker Series



Face Vessel

These public presentations and discussions focus on the cultural creativity, history, and heritage of the pottery enterprises that flourished in the Edgefield District of South Carolina in the 1800s.

Join us at 6:30pm on June 9, 16, 23, and 30, and July 7, 2016, at the Joanne T. Rainsford Discovery Center, 405 Main Street, Edgefield

**Sponsored by the *Edgefield County Historical Society*,
the *University of Illinois*, and the *University of Chicago***

2011 excavations at Pottersville revealed a 105-foot-long “dragon” kiln constructed by Abner Landrum and African-American artisans circa 1815.

Visit the *Archaeology of Edgefield Pottery Communities* [web site](#)



Public Presentations & Discussions, Thursdays, 6:30pm, at the *Joanne T. Rainsford Discovery Center*, 405 Main St., Edgefield, SC --

- ◆ **Bettis C. Rainsford**, JD. President, Rainsford Development, and Historian on Edgefield and South Carolina, June 9, 2016.
- ◆ **Joe W. Joseph**, PhD, RPA, President of the Society for Historical Archaeology, and Director of New South Associates, June 16, 2016.
- ◆ **Carl Steen**, MA, Principal, Diachronic Research Foundation, June 23, 2016.
- ◆ **George Wingard and Keith Stephenson**, Savannah River Archaeological Research Program, University of South Carolina, June 30, 2016.
- ◆ **April L. Hynes**, Principal, The Wanderer Project, July 7, 2016.

Bettis C. Rainsford

**President, Rainsford
Development, and Historian
on Edgefield and South
Carolina**

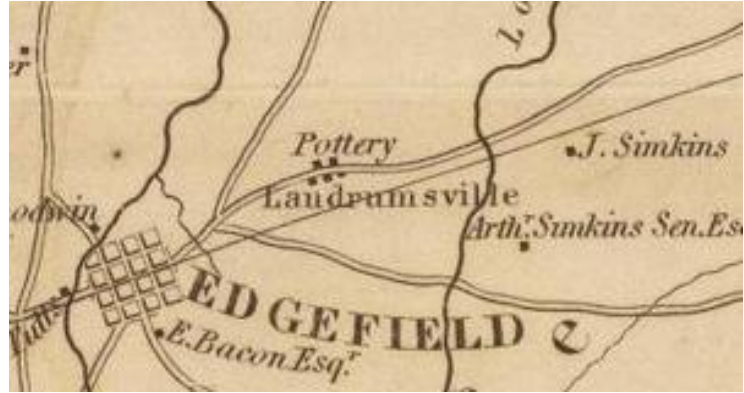
**Thursday, June 9, 2016,
6:30pm.**



Title:

The Economic and Social Context of the Edgefield Pottery Industry

Mr. Rainsford is a leading historian of Edgefield and South Carolina. After his college degree in history at Harvard University, he received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of South Carolina. Bettis has been a stalwart supporter to the Edgefield County Historical Society and has published extensively on the histories of Edgefield and South Carolina. His talk will describe the background and interests of Abner Landrum and his family, the spread of cotton planting as the dominant economic force of the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the development of other economic engines in the region, the founding of Pottersville, the development of alkaline glazed pottery as a competitive advantage, and the evolution of the pottery industry from 1809 to 1900.

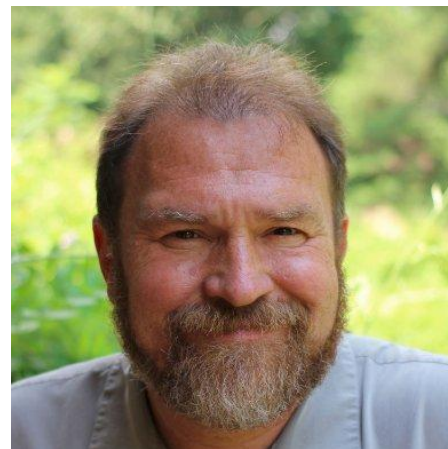


2011 archaeology field school participants and an 1825 map of Edgefield

Joe W. Joseph

**President of the Society for
Historical Archaeology, and
Director of New South Associates**

Thursday, June 16, 2016, 6:30pm.



Title:

The Children of Edgefield: Alkaline Glazed Pottery of the Southeastern United States

Dr. Joseph's talk will focus on the alkaline glazed pottery tradition, which was established in the Edgefield District in the 1810s, spread throughout the southeastern U.S. in the 19th century, and continues to be produced today. His presentation looks at alkaline glazed pottery of South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama; discusses kilns and glaze formulations; reviews the forms made by folk potters and regional variations; and describes pottery marks and decoration forms. Joe also examines the work of African American potters. Using both historic and contemporary examples, this talk is an introduction to an important American folk art called alkaline glazed pottery.

Carl Steen

**Principal, Diachronic
Research Foundation**

**Thursday, June 23, 2016,
6:30pm.**



Title:

Edgefield Stoneware from an Archaeological Perspective

Carl Steen has dedicated decades of his expert work to uncovering the archaeological legacies of the Old Edgefield Pottery District. He will discuss insights gained as archaeologists have examined a number of pottery production sites in the Old Edgefield District. In 1987, he and his colleagues visited and recorded nine sites, and tested four. In 1994 another site was recorded and four sites were tested. Since then he has recorded two new sites, and performed testing on four. In this presentation, Carl will provide an overview of the work at the sites as a group and discuss the results of the testing at the John Landrum, B. F. Landrum, J. P. Bodie, and 38AK172 sites.



**George Wingard and
Keith Stephenson**

**Savannah River
Archaeological Research
Program, University of
South Carolina**

**Thursday, June 30, 2016,
6:30pm.**



Title:

The Biography of an Artifact: From a Mid-Nineteenth Pottery Manufacturing Center to a Mid-Twentieth Century Trash Midden

George and Keith will take you on a journey of discovery. In 2006, the archaeological field staff from the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program unearthed an unusual find. They were excavating in a 1950 era trash midden in the Savannah River Site (a Department of Energy facility in Aiken, South Carolina) and unearthed a piece of alkaline-glazed pottery with the name 'Dave' and the date 1862. Who was "Dave" and how did the jar end up broken and discarded. This presentation will discuss the excavation, the story of the jar, and details of the life of Dave the Potter. New, high technology methods of analysis may lead to further insights in this remarkable, still-unfolding story.



April L. Hynes

**Principal, The Wanderer
Project**

**Thursday, July 7, 2016,
6:30pm.**



Title:

***“Where I Come From...” The Wanderer Africans and the Edgefield
Face Jug Tradition.***

Ms. Hynes’ presentation tells the remarkable story of how, in the course of trying to learn the origins of a piece of inherited pottery, she unearthed a long-forgotten episode of American history—the stories of the survivors of the 1858 illegal importation of more than 400 enslaved West Africans aboard the slave ship *Wanderer*. In her dogged efforts to find out who might have made her face jug and how it ended up in Philadelphia, she found herself enthralled by the story of the *Wanderer* survivors and the Kongolesse roots of the Edgefield face vessels.

In this presentation she traces the jug’s origins back to Edgefield County, South Carolina and discovers how her face jug traveled 700 hundred miles north. Teaming up with local historians and experts, she was introduced to many descendants of the survivors of the *Wanderer*, the slave ship many earlier scholars such as John Michael Vlach and Robert Farris Thompson believe were instrumental in the face jug tradition in America.

April has continued the preservation of African American cultural survivals in Edgefield County by visiting local communities and capturing memories on film. Edgefield still holds on to memories of the face jugs poly ritualistic use and she will share how they recall their many uses by the African American community. New insight into the culture and practices of African American folk beliefs, the use of coded messages coupled with the recent contributions of African American scholars, has led to the fascinating connections between the spiritual practices of the Kongo and the face jug tradition.

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