



Old Stone Fort Archaeological Society

July 2011

The Old Stone Fort Archaeological Society will meet **Thursday, July 14th at 6:00 pm** at the Old Stone Fort Museum in Manchester, Tennessee. The purpose of this Society is to learn more about prehistoric Native American cultures and the early historic period of Tennessee. Our meetings are **Free** and open to the public. Our program this month:

Mark Norton

who will present

Swift Creek Influence at Pinson Mounds

The Swift Creek culture was centered on what we now call Georgia, extending into eastern Alabama, northern Florida, and slight portions of South Carolina, North Carolina, Louisiana, and Tennessee. This culture thrived in this geographical area during the Middle Woodland Period (200 BC – 500 AD) and is distinguished from other Native American groups by very intricate, curvilinear pottery designs. Archaeologists have labeled the elaborate designs associated with this culture as Swift Creek Complicated Stamped.

A number of Swift Creek Complicated Stamped sherds have been recovered at the Pinson Mounds site located approximately ten miles south of Jackson, Tennessee. Finding an exotic pottery fragment at Pinson is not a surprising fact since extensive trade networks, including the Hopewell Interactions Sphere, provided exotic items to groups throughout the Eastern Woodlands from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes, to the Pacific Coast.

In an effort to enhance the educational displays in the Pinson Mounds Museum one of the Swift Creek style sherds recovered at Pinson was chosen to replicate. The design was transferred to a piece of wood and carved out creating a paddle stamp. A conoidal jar was then replicated and the stamp applied to the moist clay over the outer surface. The vessel was fired in wood charcoal in an attempt to give the finished product a more authentic look.

This experimental archaeology project revealed this particular stamp design shares distinct similarities with a design on another artifact recovered at Pinson. The similarities possibly indicate a site specific design that may represent Pinson and/or rituals taking place at the site.

This presentation will highlight some of the amazing Swift Creek designs from the core cultural area and from Pinson Mounds. The experimental archaeology project of paddle carving and pottery replication, as well as the Pinson stamp will also be discussed. I encourage all to bring decorated pottery sherds to the July meeting.

Information: Mark Norton – 615-741-1588, ext.113 mark.norton@tn.gov
Old Stone Fort State Park 931-723-5073

<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/parks/OldStoneFort/>

Tennessee Archaeology Network

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~kesmith/TNARCH/>

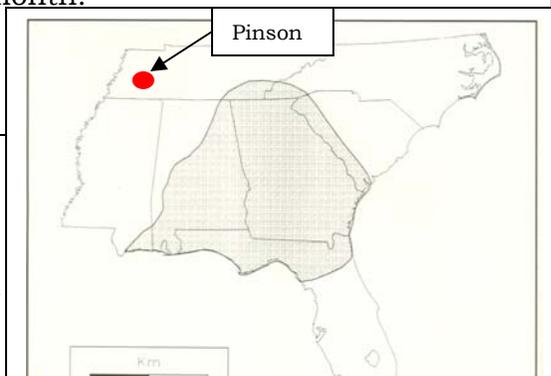
Middle Woodland Period – National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/history/seac/outline/04-woodland/index-2.htm>

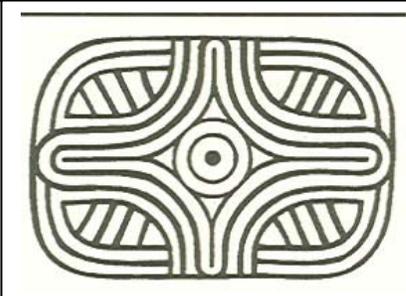
Fly General Store Knap-In – July 8-10, 2011

Information: Buddy Hayes 615-519-0914

<http://www.flintknappers.com>



Primary Swift Creek Cultural Boundaries
(adapted from Mark Williams and Daniel Elliott)



Swift Creek Complicated Stamp Design from Georgia (drawing by Frankie Snow).



Swift Creek Sherd from Pinson and Replication Stamp with clay impression.