

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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1. Name of Property

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historic name Knotts Creek/Belleville Archaeological Site
other names/site number DHR File 44SK194/133-5255

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2. Location

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street & number 1000 Ft. West of Intersection of Routes 17 and 658 not for publication x
city or town City of Suffolk vicinity x
state Virginia code VA county Suffolk code 800 zip code 23435

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Virginia Department of Historic Resources Date _____
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____
Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Camp
Domestic Single Dwelling
Defense Fortification

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Landscape Sub: Forest

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
roof N/A
walls N/A
other N/A

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Archaeology, Prehistoric
Archaeology, Historic/Non-Aboriginal
Exploration, Settlement

Period of Significance 500 B.C – A.D. 1600 (Middle/Late Woodland Period); 1635-1650

Significant Dates N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation Native American; English

Architect/Builder N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property 1 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	371	660	2	18	4080	700	3			
									4		

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
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name/title E. Randolph Turner, III, Archaeologist/Director, Tidewater Regional Office
 organization Virginia Department of Historic Resources date May 5, 2007
 street & number 14415 Old Courthouse Way, 2nd Floor telephone 757-886-2815
 city or town Newport News state VA zip code 23608

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner
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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Virginia Department of Transportation, Attn.: Antony F. Opperman, Environmental Division
 street & number 1401 East Broad Street telephone 804-371-6749
 city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Knotts Creek/Belleville Archaeological Site
(#44SK0194) Suffolk, Virginia**

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7. Description

Summary Paragraph

Situated along Knotts Creek in the City of Suffolk, Virginia, the Knotts Creek/Belleville Archaeological Site, hereafter referred to only as 44SK194, contains significant Native American and English components. The Native American component dates to the Middle and Late Woodland periods (ca. 500 B.C. - A.D. 1600) and likely represents a seasonally occupied base camp, while the English component dates to the second quarter of the seventeenth century and represents a rare enclosed settlement. Archaeological investigations at 44SK194 have documented that both components of the site remain well-preserved.

Background

44SK194 is an archaeological site containing intact deposits of Middle/Late Woodland Native American occupation (ca. 500 B.C – A.D. 1600) and the remains of an English enclosed settlement dating to the second quarter of the seventeenth century. It is situated approximately 1,000 feet west of the intersection of Routes 17 and 658 at Belleville near the headwaters of a branch of Knotts Creek which flows into the mouth of the Nansemond River approximately 1 ½ miles to the northwest (Figure 1). When first discovered, the site was in cultivation, though it now is in dense undergrowth and secondary forest cover.

First added to the archaeological inventory at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in 1988, 44SK194 was discovered earlier that decade by the James River Institute for Archaeology during an archaeological survey of the Harbor View development tract in Suffolk, Virginia. This survey clearly identified it as a seventeenth century English site. Later in 1989, the site is noted by the Virginia Commonwealth University’s Archaeological Research Center (VCU-ARC) as being likely within the proposed impact zone for construction associated with Route 164 (McLearen and Boyd 1989). Testing at this time was limited due to the placement of a spoil heap upon portions of the site sometime shortly before 1989.

Given the potential significance of 44SK194, a Phase II evaluation study was conducted in 1990 by VCU-ARC (McLearen and Harbury 1990). At that time, VCU-ARC redefined the site’s boundaries by carefully removing the spoil pile, having the site plowed and disked, and then conducting a comprehensive surface collection within 25 ft. squares. To determine the presence of subsurface features, plowed topsoil was then removed in a series of six trenches and one large block (Figure 2). While a large number of cultural features, both Native American and English were identified at this time, most were merely mapped, with only a handful actually tested through archaeological excavation.

Following the Phase II investigation, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) decided that 44SK194 could be avoided during the Route 164 construction. The site was enclosed within a chain link fence which remains there today. However, in 1991, VDOT recognized that after one severe storm, a large erosion gully had formed in a drainage ditch wall to the south of the site which in turn was causing southern portions of the site to erode. To

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Suffolk, Virginia**

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mitigate this impact, at the direction of VDOT, VCU-ARC conducted archaeological excavations in this portion of the site, followed by monitoring of back-filling to stabilize the site from further erosion. Based on Phase II and III testing (Figure 2), 44SK194 is estimated to be approximately 150 x 250 feet in size.

Historic artifacts recovered included mainly lead-glazed earthenwares, the majority of which appear to be locally manufactured. Other wares included delft, slipped earthenware, and German stoneware. Case bottle fragments were the principal glass artifacts. Pipe fragments included both European white clay pipes (with at least one Dutch piece) and locally made terra cotta examples which were more common than the European fragments. Also present were a number of small flakes and chunks of English flint, including one gun spall in addition to hand-wrought nails, lead shot, and unidentified corroded iron fragments. The artifacts indicate an occupation date during the second quarter of the seventeenth century, possibly extending into the second half of the seventeenth century.

The archaeological excavations at 44SK194 identified a number of historic cultural features, including portions of a small 17th-century settlement. The site contains at least two interlocking palisaded enclosures with corner bastions and related features, along with evidence of earthfast structures both inside and beyond the palisade lines. Clearly visible in Figure 2 is the ditch forming the two interlocking palisaded encloses, both of which have only been partially exposed, in addition to a semi-circular feature on the west wall of the larger enclosure, which may be a gun platform or watchtower. Intriguingly, one of the two palisades intrudes into earlier post figures, suggesting that English occupation here could have preceded the construction of the palisades.

Prehistoric artifacts from an earlier Native American occupation at 44SK194 included a variety of sand-tempered, sand-and-gravel tempered, and shell-tempered sherds as well as triangular projectile points, all of which date to the Middle/Late Woodland periods, along with examples of fire cracked rocks and lithic flakes, biface fragments, and hammerstones. Diagnostic Middle Woodland (500 B.C. – A.D. 900) ceramics present at 44SK194 included Prince George Net-Impressed, Popes Creek Net-Impressed, and Mockley Net-Impressed ceramics, while the Late Woodland period (A.D. 900 – 1600) is represented by Roanoke Simple-Stamped ceramics.

Also present, and documenting the well-preserved Native American component of the site, are a number of small and medium-sized pit features and a large number of post molds defining houses and other structural features at the site (Figure 2). A radiocarbon date of A.D. 1360 +/- 50 was obtained from charcoal from one pit feature. Besides wood charcoal, other pit features were characterized by the presence of well-preserved floral (charred seed and nut fragments) and faunal (calcined bone) remains. The size of the site and types/density of artifacts and features present suggest that 44SK194 served as a seasonal base camp off and on during the Middle and Late Woodland periods, with more substantial settlements likely located closer to the Nansemond River.

Less than 25% of 44SK194 was actually stripped in 1990 to determine the presence of features (of which very few were actually excavated at that time and thus remain well-preserved) and with less than 10% of the site being fully excavated in 1991 as a mitigation measure. Thus, the vast majority of 44SK194 remains available for future archaeological investigations and research associated with the Middle/Late Woodland periods and seventeenth century in Virginia. Today, the site is well protected, being fenced and under ownership by the Commonwealth of

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**Knotts Creek/Belleville Archaeological Site
(#44SK0194) Suffolk, Virginia**

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8. Statement of Significance

Summary Statement

44SK194 is significant because it can address important historical and archaeological issues related to the lifeways of Native Americans in coastal Virginia during the Middle and Late Woodland periods (500 B.C. – A.D. 1600), as well as the outward expansion of English settlements from Jamestown during the seventeenth century. 44SK194 meets the following two criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places:

Criterion A. The site is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, namely

- * The site is a rare example of a second-quarter seventeenth century enclosed settlement, representing one of the earliest English expansions out of Jamestown into Nansemond territory. While unproven, the date of the settlement suggests it is associated with the 1644-46 period of Powhatan-English conflict.

Criterion D. The site has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in history, namely

- * The site contains well-preserved archaeological deposits that can provide significant new information on Native American lifeways during the Middle/Late Woodland periods, including the origins of sedentism in coastal Virginia accompanied by the rise of the Nansemond chiefdom, which by 1607 was part of the Powhatan paramount chiefdom.
- * The site contains well-preserved archaeological deposits associated with a second-quarter seventeenth century English enclosed settlement that can provide significant new information on lifeways in a frontier environment at that time.

Background

The Nansemond Indians, at the time of the founding of Jamestown by the English in 1607, occupied territory on both sides of the Nansemond River in present-day Suffolk, Virginia. With the exception of a single aborted attempt to occupy Dumpling Island, the Nansemonds' territory was not settled by Europeans during the initial years of contact (Virginia Company period, A.D. 1607 -1624). With a population of 850 or more persons, the Nansemonds were one of the more powerful districts in the Powhatan paramount chiefdom and among the last in the James River drainage to be dominated by the English.

The first evidence of English settlement in the environs of 44SK194 are patents dating to 1635 and 1637 (McLearen and Harbury 1990). This is shortly after the termination of hostilities between the English and Powhatans (including the Nansemonds) that swept through the region in 1622 and continued for a decade until a peace treaty was concluded in 1632. Intriguingly, the first recorded sign of peaceful relations among the English and at least some of

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Nansemonds is a 1638 marriage between a son of Captain Nathaniel Bass and a Nansemond named Elizabeth who was the daughter of the Nansemond chief at that time (Rountree 1990, 1993; Rountree and Turner 2002). Shortly afterwards, war again broke out among the Powhatans and English, lasting from 1644 to 1646, when the Powhatans were defeated. As in 1622-32, records indicate that the Nansemonds fought against the English during the 1644-46 conflict.

Archaeological evidence indicates that the principal English occupation at 44SK194 dates to the second quarter of the seventeenth century. This site represents a rare enclosed settlement likely built for defensive purposes (cf. Hodges 1993). Archaeological evidence also suggests that English occupation at 44SK194 may have preceded the construction of the palisaded enclosures here, a sequence of events fitting the available historical documentation noted above, i.e., initial occupation at 44SK194 possible in the late 1630s followed by the construction of the palisaded enclosures as a result of the hostilities that broke out in 1644.

As a result, 44SK194 is historically significant as a representation of English expansion out of Jamestown during the 1630s and 1640s following the defeat of the Powhatan paramount chiefdom during two periods of armed conflict at this time. The archaeological deposits associated with the English occupation at 44SK194 are well-preserved, thereby having high research potential to expand our knowledge on life in a frontier setting as well as the structural composition of outlying fortified settlements such as at 44SK194. For example, most of the ceramic vessel and pipe fragments at 44SK194 are locally made and may assist in providing additional information on the economy of the Jamestown colony during its first decades, the rise of local crafts, and how the degree of economic dependence on England may have varied over time. Similarly, the enclosed settlement, while largely unexcavated, has high significance in providing a better understanding on the layout and use of such facilities during hostile times. Fortified settlements in Virginia dating to the first half of the seventeenth century are extremely rare, with fewer than ten examples having been identified archaeologically.

44SK194 also is significant for well-preserved Native American deposits dating to the Middle and Late Woodland periods (500 B.C – A.D. 1600). Based upon its size and the types/density of artifacts found, it likely served as a seasonal base camp off and on over 2,000 years, with the larger, more substantial settlements located closer to the Nansemond River and the rich estuarine environment in the nearby Chesapeake Bay. This a critical period in the prehistory of coastal Virginia, which sees the rise of sedentism associated with increasing population. By 1607, this culminated in the region-wide Powhatan paramount chiefdom. Further archaeological investigations at 44SK194 are likely to provide us with new information on the lifeways of the Nansemond Indians and their predecessors over the two millennia preceding 1607. Archaeological excavations have documented excellent feature preservation at the site with both well-preserved floral (charred seed and nut fragments) and faunal (calcined bone) remains, in addition to wood charcoal allowing for radiocarbon dates. Given this state of preservation and the known multiple occupations of the site, 44SK194 has high significance for documenting changing lifeways along with increasing sedentism and population during a critical period, that would see the Nansemonds consolidate into a chiefdom and become one of the most dominant Native American groups in the Powhatan paramount chiefdom and in coastal Virginia by 1607.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Hodges, Charles T.

1993 Private Fortifications in 17th-Century Virginia: A Study of Six Representative Works. In *The Archaeology of 17th-Century Virginia*, edited by Theodore R. Reinhart and Dennis J. Pogue, pp. 183-222. Archeological Society of Virginia Special Publication No. 30.

McLearen, Douglas C., and Luke Boyd

1989 Phase I Cultural Resources Survey of the Route 164 Project Area, City of Suffolk, Virginia. Report prepared by Virginia Commonwealth University Archaeological Research Center for Virginia Department of Transportation. Copy on file at Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.

McLearen, Douglas C., and Katherine E. Harbury

1990 Phase II Archaeological Significance Evaluation of 44SK194, City of Suffolk, Virginia. Report prepared by Virginia Commonwealth University Archaeological Research Center for Virginia Department of Transportation. Copy on file, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.

McLearen, Douglas C., and Katherine E. Harbury

1991 Phase III Archaeological Investigations of a Section of 44SK194, City of Suffolk, Virginia. Report prepared by Virginia Commonwealth University Archaeological Research Center for Virginia Department of Transportation. Copy on file, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.

Rountree, Helen C.

1990 *Pocahontas's People: The Powhatan Indians of Virginia Through Four Centuries*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

1993 The Powhatans and the English: A Case of Multiple Conflicting Agendas. In *Powhatan Foreign Relations, 1500-1722*, edited by Helen C. Rountree, pp. 173-205. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Rountree, Helen C., and E. Randolph Turner, III

2002 *Before and After Jamestown: Virginia's Powhatans and Their Predecessors*. University of Florida Press, Gainesville.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

44SK194 measures approximately 150 ft. north-south and 250 ft. east-west, enclosing an area just under one acre. Situated adjacent to a branch of Knotts Creek in Suffolk Virginia, it is 1,000 ft. to the west of the intersection of Routes 17 and 658.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries were determined through a controlled surface collection using 25 ft. squares followed by the clearing of subsoil through six trenches and one additional block excavation.

