

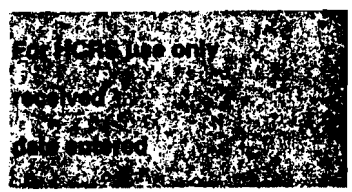
VLR: 11-15-83  
NRHP: 3-14-85

Listed On:  
VLR 11/15/1983  
NRHP 03/14/1985

58-84

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic ELM HILL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE (VHLC SITE NO. 44MC78)  
and/or common N/A (VHLC FILE NO. 58-84)

2. Location

street & number N/A XX not for publication  
city, town [redacted] XX vicinity of congressional district  
state Virginia code 51 county [redacted] code 117

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Commonwealth of Virginia: Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries  
street & number 4010 West Broad Street  
city, town Richmond N/A vicinity of state Virginia Zip Code 23230

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mecklenburg County Courthouse  
street & number n/a  
city, town Boydton state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
title Survey (Site No. 44MC78) has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date March 1983  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Research Center for Archaeology Zip Code  
P. O. Box 368  
city, town Yorktown state Virginia 23690

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Elm Hill Archaeological Site (44MC78), a prehistoric site dating from the Late Archaic through the Late Woodland Periods, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Prehistoric occupational debris is distributed over a 1400 foot long by 300 to 500 foot wide area. Excavations conducted by Harry L. Schoff in 1939 and the Archeological Society of Virginia in 1964 determined that well-preserved features exist across the site. Principal occupation at the Elm Hill Archaeological Site dates to the Late Woodland Period (A.D. 800-1600), illustrating close relationships with other tribal societies along the Roanoke, Staunton, and Dan Rivers. Deeper deposits contain remains from the Middle Woodland (500 B.C. - A.D. 800) and Late Archaic Periods (3000 - 1000 B.C.).

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The Elm Hill Archaeological Site is located in a cultivated field [REDACTED] (Photo #1). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. In 1964 the nominated acreage and surrounding area were included in a permanent game and wildlife refuge managed by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. The Elm Hill Archaeological Site has been designated 44MC78 in the State's Official inventory of archaeological sites.

Due to the high density of prehistoric surface debris and occasional burials unearthed by plowing, the site has long been known to local inhabitants as the Indian Field. Prehistoric debris is heavily scattered over an area of at least 1400 feet east-west by 300 to 500 feet north-south.

The first recorded excavation in November 1939 by Harry L. Schoff, of Holcomb, New York, on what was then known as the Elm Hill Plantation, revealed numerous deep pits filled with well-preserved refuse and fifteen burial pits with human skeletons.

Clifford Evans in 1955 included sherds from the Elm Hill Archaeological Site in his Ceramic Study of Virginia Archaeology, placing all of the classified ceramics in the Late Woodland Clarksville Series.

In 1964 the Archeological Society of Virginia conducted investigations on a small portion of the site, excavating forty-six five foot squares oriented east-west in a central trench across the site with a few squares or short lateral trenches dug to the north and south. Cultural debris was found to a depth of 36 inches. The top 12 inches was removed as plowed soil and the deeper undisturbed soil removed in four arbitrary 6 inch levels. Thirty-six pits were uncovered of which nine contained human burials. Scattered postmolds also were encountered. In addition, a wide variety of artifacts made from clay, stone, bone, and shell were recovered. Faunal remains of bone and shell fish were also abundant. Lithic flakes and Savannah River projectile points (dating to the Late Archaic Period, 3000 - 1000 B. C.) were found in the lowest level. The ceramics were described as being similar to the Late Woodland Clarksville Ware, although after recent re-examination, many of the sherds have been identified as representing Middle Woodland Clements Ware and Late Woodland Gaston Ware. This indicates increased site complexity and suggests that features

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates                      N/A                      Builder/Architect                      N/A

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Elm Hill Archaeological Site (44MC78), a prehistoric site in [REDACTED] Virginia, contains stratified deposits dating from the Late Archaic through Late Woodland Periods which could significantly contribute to the limited research data currently available [REDACTED]. Late Archaic projectile points and flake have been documented in a stratified context from the lowest tested level of the site. Multiple Woodland Period occupation is denoted by the presence of preserved strata, pit features, hearths, and human burials. These strata and features are characterized by dense concentrations of the lithic and ceramic artifacts as well as well-preserved animal bone and shell fish remains. Such well-preserved data possess significance for Late Archaic through Late Woodland Period regional studies in chronologies, subsistence systems, settlement patterns and socio-political/religious organization.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Situated on a natural levee, the Elm Hill Archaeological Site represents one of the last, if not the last, well-preserved stratified bottom land sites [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. The John H. Kerr Reservoir and Lake Gaston have inundated and probably deflated all other bottom land prehistoric archaeological sites [REDACTED].

The 15 foot high natural levee at the Elm Hill Archaeological Site has high potential for deeply stratified cultural deposits. Excavations to date have already identified Late Archaic Period artifacts in a stratified context at the lowest tested level of the site. In situ deposits from sites other than rockshelters or caves are rare in Virginia, particularly for the Late Archaic and earlier periods. Such data possess particular significance for late Archaic Period regional studies on chronologies, subsistence systems, and settlement patterns.

Multiple Woodland Period occupation is documented in the presence of preserved strata, pit features, hearths, and human burials. These cultural deposits are associated with dense concentrations of lithic and ceramic artifacts as well as preserved animal bone and shell fish remains. As possibly the last remaining well-preserved major bottom land Woodland Period archaeological site in this area, data contained within cultural deposits at 44MC78 should be particularly significant when compared to earlier excavations by Joffre L. Coe near Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina and Carl F. Miller near Clarksville, Virginia before the John H. Kerr Reservoir and Lake Gaston were inundated. The diversity of Woodland Period cultural deposits at the Elm Hill Archaeological Site contain data likely to be significant to numerous regional studies on such topics as chronologies, subsistence systems, settle-

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

- Coe, Joffre L. "The Formative Cultures of the Carolina Piedmont". Transactions of the American Philosophical Society. N.S. Vol. 54, Pt. 5, 1964.
- Evans, Clifford. "A Ceramic Study of Virginia Archaeology". Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin, 160, 1955.
- MacCord, Howard A. "The Elm Hill Site, Mechlenburg County, Virginia". Archaeological Society

## 10. Geographical Data

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 12 acres

Quadrangle name John Kerr Dam, Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A				B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (See continuation sheet #1)

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date 1983

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*H. Bryan Mitchell*  
H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date November 15, 1983

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

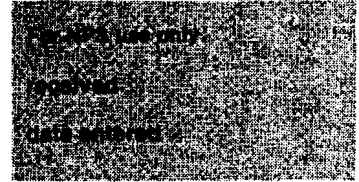
National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

ELM HILL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE, MECKLENBURG COUNTY, VA (44MC78)

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7,8,9,10

Page 1,1,1,1



7. DESCRIPTION--Archaeological Analysis

and undisturbed strata at the Elm Hill site date to various occupations during the Middle and Late Woodland Periods. The complete lack of European trade goods indicates a pre-A.D. 1600 date for the terminal occupation of the site, although a slightly later radiocarbon date of A.D. 1670±70 was obtained from charcoal from one feature. The earlier Middle Woodland occupation is supported by a radiocarbon date of 520±70 B.C. on charcoal from another feature.

Following the work of the Archaeological Society of Virginia in 1964, two members, John H. Wells from Victoria, Virginia, and Phillip Lewis of Norlina, North Carolina, returned and conducted further investigations. They excavated thirteen five foot squares, encountering heavy concentrations of cultural debris and seventeen pits, including one human burial.

In February 1983 the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission's Research Center for Archaeology surveyed the site, noting the great density of surface artifacts in the sandy soil and the extremely large size of the site. There was no surface indication of recent disturbances other than plowing. Most of the site thus remains in a good state of preservation.

8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

ment patterns, and socio-political/religious organization. Of special significance is the range of Middle and Late Woodland Periods ceramics at the Elm Hill Archaeological Site illustrating close cultural affiliation, the nature of which is unknown in detail, with other tribal societies living in a region stretching from the fall line on the Roanoke River to west of the Blue Ridge escarpment in the contiguous areas of Virginia and North Carolina.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Of Virginia. Vol. 23, no. 2, 1968.

Miller, Carl F. "Archaeology of the John H. Kerr Reservoir Basin, Roanoke River, Virginia-North Carolina". Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin, 182, 1962.

10. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

[REDACTED]

JUSTIFICATION

The nominated acreage consists of 12 acres situated on a narrow neck of land [REDACTED]. Boundaries have been defined based upon the distribution of prehistoric artifacts noted through surface examinations and subsurface testing.