The 2013 field report begins on a sombre note: this is the first year that Dr. James A. Tuck did not return to Newfoundland to participate in the ongoing archaeology at Ferryland. Jim became interested in the history of Ferryland in the late 1960s, conducted two field schools in the mid-1980s, and was instrumental in securing federal and provincial support for the project beginning in 1992. Under his leadership and direction, the two decades of subsequent archaeological research revealed one of the best built and preserved early English settlements in the New World – the results of which helped rewrite the early colonial history of Newfoundland and Canada. Although enjoying a much deserved retirement, Jim’s presence was truly missed.

Our plan for 2013 was to continue investigations on two informative, yet challenging areas of the site. The first was a large terraced area directly south of the main living chamber (or hall) of Lord Baltimore’s “Mansion House” and east of the stone kitchen which served residents of the same house. The second area was south of the Pool road, directly opposite the Colony Café, where excavations in 2011-2012 exposed the remains of a late seventeenth- to early eighteenth-century timber-framed house, below which lay evidence for earlier occupations from the Kirke and Calvert periods and pre-colonial activities by European migratory fishermen and Native Beothuk. In each location there were specific research questions we hoped to answer: why was such a large (approximately 10m by 15m) area dug out of the hillside and levelled off behind the Mansion House in the 1620s and what activities took place here during the Calvert and Kirke periods?; what are the dimensions of the late seventeenth- to early eighteenth-century timber building, what social and economic role(s) did its residents play in Ferryland society and what is the nature and extent of the underlying occupations?

Starting mid-June, half of the crew began excavating the remains of the timber-framed house, exposing the preserved sills and floor joists, many of which still contained upright nails indicating the placement and position of wooden floorboards (Figure 1). Not far from the large stone fireplace and brick hearth at the east end, we uncovered several iron objects including a fireplace poker, pot hook and iron knife.

**Figure 1**: Post 1696 timber-framed house, looking east.
Other areas inside the house revealed clay tobacco pipes and ceramic cooking vessels produced in the West Country of England, decorative tin-glazed earthenware, bottle glass and wine glass fragments, a copper buckle, a small silver coin and many small ‘seed’ beads (Figure 2) once adorning the clothing of someone who lived here. Of particular note was the large number of firearms-related artifacts scattered throughout the floor of the house, including many gunflints and thousands of small lead shot. Perhaps the residents of this house were avid hunters. It’s equally plausible that the occupants imported quantities of flint and shot for eventual sale and distribution to others living in Ferryland.

Figure 2: White seed beads with 5 cent piece, for scale.

Upon completion of excavations, the house measured 32 feet long by 16 feet wide (9.75m x 4.87m) excluding a small flagstone-floored ‘room’ behind the fireplace. This is the most complete and substantial post-1696 dwelling found thus far at Ferryland. As suggested from previous archaeology reports, we believe it may be the home of prominent merchant-planter James and Mary (Kirke) Benger, who claimed title to the lands around the inner harbor not long after the deaths of George, David II and Phillip Kirke in 1696-97. Regardless of whether or not this is the former house of the Benger family, archaeology has revealed valuable information on the daily lives and activities of its former residents. The challenge now is to preserve the integrity of the building’s main structural elements for interpretative purposes while allowing for continued investigations into earlier cultural strata.

This task was made obvious directly north of the Benger house whereby, after excavating and recording the associated deposits, earlier strata from several colonial and pre-colonial occupations were revealed (Figure 3). The Kirke period deposits are represented by a thick midden accumulated during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, possibly associated with the nearby house of Phillip Kirke (to the east) or a planter’s house to the west described by Doug Nixon in 2000. Among the finds were significant quantities of North Devon sgraffito-decorated plates and bowls, one of which was inscribed with a date of (16)67 (Figure 4). This may be part of a commemorate plate, a special order ceramic vessel commissioned to celebrate an important life event such as a birth or marriage.

Deeper still were deposits of forge refuse originating from the nearby blacksmith shop built by George Calvert’s men in 1622 and occupied until ca. 1650. Hundreds of pounds of slag as well as nails, scraps of
iron, and copper and brass fragments were recovered. The lowermost cultural layers, at 175 cm below the surface, are represented by thin organic lenses separated by deposits of beach sand. The first of these pre-colonial layers contained the remnants of a possible slipway, in the form of a series of horizontally laid logs, as well as fragments of European earthenware from Brittany and Portugal; below which is a black, greasy deposit containing a mix of European ceramics of the same provenance noted above as well as lithic debitage produced by the Beothuk.

With clear evidence for 500 years of intensive occupation, this area will play an important role in promoting the Colony of Avalon’s primary goal of public education. Its proximity to the present road affords visitors a close up view of the ongoing excavations, allowing for a fuller understanding of the nature of archaeological investigation and the necessity for careful recording techniques.

In conjunction with the work undertaken opposite the Colony Café, the other half of the field crew was excavating parts of the anthropomorphic terrace behind the Mansion House. Our initial efforts focused on exposing the remaining refuse deposits produced by those living and working in the kitchen during the Calvert and Kirke eras. Most of the midden was concentrated to the east of a cobblestone walkway that allowed easy access from the kitchen to the second floor living and dining chambers of the Mansion House hall. In addition to the usual ceramic, clay pipe, glass and bone fragments was a large melon bead, a small blue ‘seed’ bead, a gold gilt glass bead, a few tin-plated straight pins and a brass book clasp (Figure 5a-b). The book clasp was a particularly informative piece as it tells us that someone living in the immediate vicinity was in the possession of a book and was therefore literate – an uncommon skill amongst most seventeenth-century servants. One interpretation is that the (somewhat secluded and private) terraced area was frequented by the Calverts and later the Kirkes as much as it was by the servants who worked and lived in the adjacent kitchen. Alternatively, the kitchen may have served as a
Figure 5a: (above) Straight pin, brass book clasp and blue seed bead; Figure 5b: (below) large melon bead and mid seventeenth-century pipe bowl.

dwelling for a member(s) of the Kirke family during a later period; or perhaps, the servants of the Calvert’s and Kirke’s were better provided for and/or educated than most.

At the northern extent of the terrace excavations, the crew uncovered a wood-lined root cellar 7 feet square by 5 feet deep (2.2m x 2.2m x 1.5m). This late eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century feature had been rapidly filled as evidenced by the large quantity of angular rocks with little surrounding clay matrix. The root cellar may be contemporaneous with the reuse and modification of the Calvert era kitchen, as discussed in the 2011 and 2012 field reports (Gaulton et al. 2012; Gaulton and Tuck 2013). In places, the cellar truncated portions of a 1.5m thick layer of re-deposited clay and rock which overlay a 30-45cm thick construction layer consisting of chipped slate and roof slate fragments. The early construction layer was followed to the south where it terminated up against a nearly vertical 1.8m cut into the subsoil (Figure 6). To the north, the building debris (and the 1.5m deep overlying fill layer) continues for 3.6m (12 feet) toward the base of the wall of the Mansion House hall and is at the same elevation.

We propose that the large cut into the subsoil was created while digging and preparing ground for the construction of the Mansion House in approximately ca. 1625 (Tuck and Gaulton 2013). The 12 foot wide space behind the hall of the Mansion House, likely running along the entire 36 foot length of the building, would have allowed for the erection of scaffolding to build this two story stone structure and also served as a work area for masons, slaters, carpenters and other tradesmen. The remains of intensive stone-working activities are evident by the thick layer of chipped slate and roof slate fragments. Once the building was finished, the work space was quickly filled in with 1.5m of re-deposited clay so as to bring the area behind the hall up to the height of the nearby kitchen, thereby providing ready access between buildings. Where did the large amount of earth necessary to complete
this filling episode come from? The hillside directly to the south, finally explaining part of the reason why the large 10m by 15m area behind the hall of the Mansion House and east of the kitchen was dug out.

The final area tested on the terrace was 10 metres east of the root cellar, where evidence for a mid to late seventeenth-century refuse deposit was recorded the previous year. Three excavation units were opened with hopes of learning more about the source and nature of the deposit. Did these artifacts originate from a structure up on the terrace or were they dumped here from one of the nearby structures below (and to the north) such as the ‘Kirke house’ or associated tavern (Gaulton 2006)? Some of the recovered fragments such as milk pans and tin-glazed lobed dishes are suggestive of a domestic occupation whereas others, like clay pipes and case bottle glass, are ubiquitous on seventeenth-century sites (Figure 7). Interestingly, there were two coins found in the three excavated

Figure 7: A milk pan fragment, case bottle glass, clay tobacco pipes and tin-glazed lobed dish fragments found during the terrace excavations.
units and a third recovered in an excavation unit in 2012. The first was an Elizabethan silver sixpence dated 1563 and the two others were copper farthings. Small denomination coins are not uncommon among tavern assemblages, as are clay pipes and bottle glass; however, the lobed dish fragments are identical to those recorded at the Kirke house. For now, the available evidence seems to suggest that this refuse originated from one of the nearby buildings to the north but further investigation is needed to confirm or refute this hypothesis.

In 2014, we hope to return to these two very productive areas: first, to expand excavations up on the terrace and; second, to explore the extent of the earlier occupations below the Benger House.

Postscript: At the beginning of the 2013 field season we initiated a pilot project which involved members of the public as an “Archaeologist for a Day”. Our advertising for this one day program started late; however, we still had people sign up and participate in a day of learning about the processes of archaeology and archaeological conservation, the history of Ferryland, and the importance of protecting our provinces rich archaeological resources. For 2014, we plan to diversify this program by offering half day programs, in conjunction with other attractions in the area.

Conservation Summary
(by Donna Teasdale)

During the 2013 field season the conservation laboratory crew processed approximately 13,000 records, accounting for 25,000 artifacts. The Colony employed two summer students, in addition to our four regular staff members to work in the conservation lab. The students were responsible for the daily processing of artifacts such as cleaning, documenting, cataloguing, and packaging artifacts for storage. Our four regular staff assisted with the training of the summer students as well as carrying out their own daily duties.

Charlotte Newton, archaeological conservator, volunteered her time again this season where she spent 10 weeks at the conservation bench. She will be returning for her 13th year next season to carry out more volunteer work in the conservation lab.

The conservation team stabilized approximately 4500 artifacts. We conducted daily artifact assessments and began treatment of various material types such as copper alloys, iron, lead, wood, bone and textile to determine conservation treatments and priorities (Figure 8).

Some of this seasons artifact highlights include a large quantity of North Devon ceramic, Rhenish stoneware, and English creamware. A number of small finds primarily manufactured from copper alloys and lead were conserved on site. Artifacts included buckles, buttons, and coins. One coin of interest is an Elizabethan silver sixpence dating to 1565. Also, a large amount of iron artifacts such as a door hardware, fishhooks, knife blades, and unidentified artifacts were assessed and documented. This season there was a notable abundance of lead musket balls and shot.
The majority of ferrous artifacts in the Ferryland collection will undergo bulk treatment at MUN’s, Department of Archaeology’s Conservation Lab. At the end of the season we had the opportunity to x-ray all of the excavated ferrous metal artifacts from 2013. X-Radiography is used to conduct overall condition assessments of artifacts undergoing bulk treatment. Through X-radiography areas of weakness within the structure of the artifact can be identified and obscured detail can be revealed through penetration of the corrosion layer (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Conservation staff, volunteer and intern stabilizing artifacts.

Figure 9: X-ray of Ferryland ferrous artifacts, conducted by College of the North Atlantic.
We also continued with our collections re-housing project that was started in the summer of 2010. Over the past couple of years collection management has become one of our main priorities. The collection is comprised of approximately 2 million artifacts, with the majority held in storage on site. Our focus has been to re-sort and re-package the vast amount of ceramic, pipe, glass and metals from previous season to improve accessibility of collections storage (Figure 10). This project is ongoing.

![Figure 10: Joselyn re-packaging ceramic for storage.](image)

Overall, we had a wonderful summer at the Ferryland conservation laboratory this year. We reached most of our goals with much of the seasons artifacts completely processed and packaged for storage. This can be credited to the hard work and dedication of all laboratory staff and especially to those that have been with the Ferryland project since the beginning. We all look forward to another exciting season next year.

**Collections Management Summary**
(by Maria Lear)

The Archaeological Collections storage area at MUN houses the digital catalogue of artifact records as received from the data entry that is completed on site in Ferryland. In addition it houses a small portion of the Ferryland collection as well as the original field tags. During the 2013 field season (June-October) a total of 12,700 records were entered into the database which accounted for 24,278 individual artefacts. The majority of the materials collected are as follows:

- **Ceramic:** 10,736 sherds catalogued in 4879 artifact records (refined, coarse & stonewares)
- **Clay pipes:** 4195 fragments (bowls, heels & stem fragments)
- **Glass:** 3294 shards catalogued in 2151 artifact records (ex: wine bottle fragments, drinking glasses & window glass)
- **Lithics:** 1421 finds catalogued (ex: flint, ballast, gunflint, slate & chert)
- **Lead:** 3469 finds catalogued (ex: lead shot, discs, waste & musketballs) with the majority being individual pieces of lead shot
- **Iron:** 729 finds catalogued (ex. nails, fishhooks, straps, blades, hooks, hardware & unidentified
Copper: 171 finds catalogued in 115 records (ex: buttons, sheeting & coins)
Silver: 5 silver coins were recovered (more detailed information on a couple are noted in the Conservation summary
Organics: 216 finds catalogued (ex: bone, wood, leather, charcoal, botanical material & shells)

Most of the collection is stored on site at the Colony of Avalon laboratory and within their dedicated collections storage area. Complete cataloguing of individual finds is also completed on site with digital database updates being submitted to MUN on a weekly basis. In 2006, the entire collection was transferred from Memorial University’s Archaeology Unit to the Colony of Avalon. Since then, the collection has grown significantly.

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