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Town Creek Indian Mound [1]

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The reconstructed mound and temple at Town Creek Indian Mound State Historic Site. Photograph courtesy of North Carolina Division of Tourism, by Alexis W. Locklear, 2006Film, and Sports Development.

Town Creek Indian Mound is located five miles southeast of Mount Gilead [2] in Montgomery County [3]. More than 600 years ago, migrating Indians selected this spot overlooking the Little River for a ceremonial center. The Town Creek center served as a fortified refuge and a place to discuss matters important to the people of the Pee Dee [4] culture, as well as a site for religious ceremonies and feasts, which often lasted several days. When white settlers arrived in the eighteenth century, the Pee Dee Indians had long been living elsewhere, probably with the Catawba [5]. When whites occupied the site where the Pee Dee had lived, they left the mound alone but farmed the land around it.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, people untrained in archaeological techniques from time to time excavated the site in hopes of finding a treasure or other valuable objects. In 1936, however, under Joffre L. Coe, a student at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill [6], careful archaeological excavations began. Coe's thorough work, continuing into the late twentieth century, produced a unique record of professional excavations.

In 1937 the landowner, L. D. Frutchey, donated the site to the state for scientific excavation and the creation of a state park, and Town Creek Indian Mound [7] became the first North Carolina State Historic Site. Transferred to the Department of Archives and History [8] in 1955, the modern-day site includes a visitors center, two temples, a burial house, and a stockade, in addition to the mound. Restorations are based on extensive archaeological and documentary research.

References:

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