

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop

Vale vicinity, Lincoln County, LN0097, Listed 1/9/2008

Nomination by Jason Harpe

Photographs by Jason Harpe, May 2006



Pottery Shop and Reinhardt-Craig House



Pottery Kiln on left

**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.

1. Name of property

historic name Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3171 Cat Square Road (West side of SR 1002, at the intersection with SR 1124 not for publication N/A

city or town _____ Vale _____ vicinity X

state North Carolina code NC county Lincoln code 109 zip code 28168

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 X statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
_____ 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): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln and Pottery Shop
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

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
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade Sub: Professional
Industry/Processing/Extraction Manufacturing Facility
Domestic Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Industry Sub: Manufacturing Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other/gable front house
Other/Groundhog Kiln

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Brick, Stone
roof Metal, Asphalt
walls Brick, Stone, Wood
other _____

Narrative Description

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

Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln and Pottery Shop
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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)

Art
Architecture
Industry

Period of Significance

ca. 1933-1957

Significant Dates

1933, 1945

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Craig, Burlon B.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Reinhardt, Harvey- kiln

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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: Lincoln County Museum of History, 403 East Main Street, Lincolnton, NC, 28092

Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln and Pottery Shop
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 2.685 acres

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

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 461080 3935360
2 _____

Zone Easting Northing
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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jason L. Harpe and Brad J. Guth

organization _____ date _____

street & number 410 South Cedar Street telephone (704) 742-3182

city or town Lincolnton state NC zip code 28092

12. Additional Documentation

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)

Property Owner

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

name Donald B. Craig

street & number 119 Crow Woods Road telephone (828) 245-1003

city or town Bostic state NC zip code 28018

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.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Lincoln County, North Carolina

7. Narrative Description

The Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop are situated on 2.685 acres in the Henry community in northwestern Lincoln County, North Carolina at 3171 Cat Square Road. The property, triangular in shape, is bordered on the east by Cat Square Road/SR 1002, on the west by Palm Tree Methodist Church and cemetery, on the north by a brick Ranch house built by Burlon Craig for his family ca. 1987 that his daughter Colleen now owns, and straddles Palm Tree Church Road/SR 1124 to the south. The nominated property is 2.685 acres of the original twenty-four acres that Burlon Craig purchased from Harvey Reinhardt in 1945. This property is the fifth tract divided among the heirs of Burlon Craig between 1996 and 2002, and forms the northeastern tip of the original twenty-four acres. Burlon Craig's son, Donald, inherited this property in 2003.¹

The property retains a few small trees near the Reinhardt-Craig House, built by Harvey Reinhardt in ca. 1933-36, and a rolling landscape that is consistent with the natural features of the property from the 1930s to the 1980s. Until the 1970s, the property produced corn, wheat, and other agricultural products that Burlon Craig harvested as a farmer/potter. As his popularity grew, and the desire for folk pottery increased, Burlon Craig became a full-time potter and spent less time farming on the property. In the late 1970s, Palm Tree Church Road was re-aligned and the intersection with Cat Square Road shifted slightly to the north, resulting in the property line being bisected by the right-of-way.

A dirt driveway off Cat Square Road provides access to each of the resources at the potter. Donald Craig has graded the southwestern portion of the property to provide access from Palm Tree Church Road for potters and vendors who participate in the annual Burlon Craig Pottery Festival that welcomed its first visitors in 2004.

The property is situated two miles northwest of Vale, an unincorporated community in northwestern Lincoln County. Vale is a mailing district (rural route) that includes areas in three counties: Catawba, Cleveland, and Lincoln. Located less than one half mile south of the Lincoln/Catawba County border, the property is situated at the northernmost end of an area in western Lincoln County that potters have inhabited for over two hundred years. The property is located less than two miles north of the historic pottery sites of Daniel Seagle, Mack Lawrence Leonard, Nelson Bass, the Propst family, and the Reinhardt Brothers.

¹ Lincoln County Tax Records, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

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The historic resources at this site are situated in their original layout and configuration, and the Craig family is committed to preserving the site's historical integrity. The property includes one structure, five buildings, and one object. Three of these resources, the house, kiln and pottery shop, were built by Harvey Reinhardt between 1933 and 1936. The house fronts east on Cat Square Road. The buildings are arranged in a square shape enclosing a center section that Burlon Craig used to display his pieces during pottery sales from the 1950s to 2000.

An earlier mill built by Harvey Reinhardt was originally located on the southern end of the pottery shop, and he utilized a mule to power it. It was removed from the property in the early 1950s. Burlon Craig built the current pug mill just west of the pottery shop when he purchased his first tractor in 1949. He modernized the pug mill during the 1960s when he acquired a large cast iron wheel that he called a pulley, and connected it to his tractor engine with a substantial rubber belt that turned the pug mill's metal blades and ground his clay.

Harvey Reinhardt's water-powered trip hammer mill is located on a small creek 200 yards from the pottery site, and it is not included in the acreage being nominated to the National Register. The trip hammer mill was part of the original twenty-four acres tract that Burlon Craig purchased from Harvey Reinhardt in 1945. Craig used the hammer mill to pulverize glass from windows and glass bottles into a fine powder that he mixed with other materials such as water, clay, and iron cinders to glaze his wares. He used the hammer mill from 1945 until 1988 when Charles Lisk, Catawba Valley potter and apprentice to Craig, secured large amounts of Econoglass from Statesville Brick in Statesville, North Carolina. Lisk learned of this material while "chipping out" bricks from the company's old brick kilns that were obsolete by the late 1980s. Statesville Brick stored this glass in sacks in large railway cars and used it to add a slick exterior to their bricks. Craig and Lisk transported this glass from Statesville to Henry in Craig's cattle trailer.²

Integrity

The Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln and Pottery Shop property conveys the significance of Harvey Reinhardt's pottery operation and Burlon Craig's propagation of the Catawba Valley pottery-making tradition through his contributions as an important folk potter. Three of the seven resources on the property were constructed in ca. 1933-36, and the pug mill in 1949. Very few alterations have been made to compromise their historical and architectural integrity. Some alterations to the Reinhardt-Craig House were made after 1957. The non-contributing frame woodshed located to the south of the groundhog kiln maintains its original design, but received a new tin roof and locust

² Charles Lisk interview by author, Lincolnton, NC, May 23, 2007. Donald Craig interview by author, May 23, 2007.

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support posts in 2005 after being destroyed by inclement weather. The materials used in the new construction are consistent with the historic materials used during the period of significance. The Craig family moved the noncontributing metal shed to the property after Burlon Craig's death in 2002 as an additional storage building for the garden tools and household items. This shed is located in an inconsequential location on the property, and is not a dominant resource. Although the property consists of only two acres of the original twenty-four acres associated with the Reinhardt and Craig pottery, the historic contributing buildings and structure are situated in the same location as their original orientation when Harvey Reinhardt constructed them in ca. 1933-36.

Inventory

1. Reinhardt-Craig House - Contributing Building, ca. 1933-1936

The Reinhardt-Craig house is a one-story, rectangular frame building, two bays wide by three bays deep, with a front gable roof and a shed-roofed, full-width, front porch. It has an interior chimney that rises from the house's living room on the southern side of the house. A diamond shaped louver at the house's front gable provides ventilation to the house's attic. The exterior walls, originally covered with four-inch wide wood clapboards, are finished with artificial siding that Burlon Craig added in 1998, and the house's roof is finished with asphalt shingles. The porch roof is finished with tin. The foundation was originally brick piers, and it is now infilled with concrete blocks. The front porch has horizontal pine flooring, a concrete block foundation, and is supported by four cast steel posts designed in a floral pattern. In 2005 Donald Craig replaced the original 1930s six panel, single lite pine door with a thirty-six inch seven panel steel door.

Craig replaced original sash windows at the front of the house (eastern elevation) with non-corroding aluminum windows during the 1950s. Two 4/1 wooden sash with original casements occupy the first two bays on the northern side of the house. The third bay on the northern side contains an aluminum projecting window. Craig added two 2/2 wood double hung windows on the southern side of the house in 1961 when he enclosed the rear gabled porch. These windows flank a three-panel, three-lite pine door that provides access to the rear section of the house. Three of the windows on the northern side of the house, and two on the southern side are flanked by nonfunctional exterior aluminum shutters.

2. Reinhardt-Craig Kiln – Contributing Structure, ca. 1933-1936

The Reinhardt-Craig Kiln is located on the southernmost part of the property, just north of Palm Tree Church Road/SR 1124. The kiln is situated thirty feet southwest of the pottery shop, five feet

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northwest of the open storage shed. It is a traditional, wood-fired, alkaline glaze groundhog kiln that until Burlon Craig's death in 2002 was North Carolina's oldest continually operated groundhog kiln. The Reinhardt-Craig kiln is a cross-draft kiln that includes a firebox, arch, and chimney, all made of brick.

The floor of the kiln is located three feet below ground. Its walls are eight inches thick, and Reinhardt built it with bricks aligned in an alternating course of headers and stretchers.³ The floor is angled upward twelve inches to improve the draft during the firing. It has a long, rectangular form with a sand setting floor that holds three to four inches of sand laid over a bed of red clay, and a brick arched roof that measures thirty inches at its center. A gabled tin roof covers the arched brick kiln, and protects it from the weather. Reinhardt constructed the brick arch with archboards that potters in the Henry and Vale communities have used for many years. Family tradition attributes the archboards to either Enoch and Harvey's grandfather or great-grandfather. The archboards, still in the possession of the Craig family, span nine feet eight and one-half inches, and maintain a rise of twenty-nine inches. The builder constructed them of one-inch pine boards with two inch by four inch pegged braces.⁴

The kiln measures twenty-four feet eleven inches long by eleven feet six inches wide, and the its interior setting floor is twenty feet by ten feet.⁵ The interior holds from 450 to 500 gallons of wares, ranging from four-inch miniatures to eight-gallon jars and jugs. Harvey and Enoch Reinhardt fired over 125,000 bricks to construct the kiln, after numerous unsuccessful attempts to build the kiln with manufactured bricks. They constructed the kiln using wooden arch boards to frame the kiln's arched roof. They secured the white sandy clay for the bricks from a local farm in the Henry community.⁶

A brick firebox is located at the front (south end) of the kiln, and contains three fireholes where the potter "stokes" the kiln with long pine slabs. The firebox is two feet five inches deep, nine and one-half inches wide, and three feet three inches tall from ware floor to the top of the firebox. The middle firehole measures two feet two inches in height and one foot four inches in width, and is flanked by a firehole one foot six inches to the left that measures one and one half feet in width and one foot eight inches in height, and a firehole one foot two inches to the right that measures one foot one and one half inches in width and one foot eight inches in height. In front of the fireholes are draftholes that inhale air underneath the burning fireholes to maximize combustion. Each of the

³ Charles G. Zug, III, *Turners and Burners: The Folk Potters of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986): 230.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 203, 233.

⁶ Ibid., 203.

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nearly square draftholes is two feet five inches in depth. The center drafthole measures eleven inches in height and ten and three quarters inches in width. The draft hole to the left of the center measures thirteen inches in height and ten and one-third inches in width. The draft hole to the right of the center measures twelve inches in height and ten and one-half inches in depth.⁷

Situated at the north end of the kiln is the red brick chimney. The chimney abuts the kiln and is supported by two end piers. The chimney measures five feet in height, eleven feet five inches in length, and is eight and one half inches deep. The loading door is situated at the center of the base of the chimney and measures three feet in width and one foot nine inches in height. The top of the loading door is two feet two and one-half inches from the top of the chimney. Burlon Craig installed a twelve-inch concrete patching that forms the arch of the loading door in ca. 1990 after a firing partially destroyed the original brick in this location. The potter accesses the kiln through the loading door to load the kiln with greenware, and closes the loading door with loose bricks for the firing. The potter utilizes long boards to acquire the greenware from a helper who stands outside the kiln. With assistance from others, the potter pulls in the pottery-laden boards from inside the kiln and situates the pieces inside the kiln in order by size and types of glazes. The potter situates the larger pieces in the center of the kiln, and places the remaining pieces down the kiln's arched sides as they get progressively smaller in size.⁸

3. Woodshed – Non-contributing Building, ca. 2005

Located at the firebox end of the kiln is a twenty feet by seventeen feet woodshed with a tin gabled roof that Donald Craig rebuilt in 2005 to replace the previous woodshed that was supported by oak logs, and was destroyed by inclement weather. The woodshed has a dirt floor, and is supported by four locust tree trunks. Under this woodshed the potter stacks long slabs of wood that he uses to fire the kiln. Potters use dry wood to prevent steaming and rising temperatures from damaging wares during the firing. They prefer pine because it projects heat and generates a lengthy flame that is essential for the proper firing of a large kiln. Traditionally, potters cut, dried, and stacked their wood for the firing, but later potters took advantage of the services of sawmills. Potters use between 2 ½ and 3 cords of wood per firing, and cut the pine into four-foot slabs.⁹

4. Reinhardt-Craig Pottery Shop – Contributing building, ca. 1933-1936

The Reinhardt-Craig Pottery Shop is located on the easternmost part of the property and borders Cat Square Road. The one-story shop is a frame structure with a side-gabled tin roof and wood

⁷ Eliot Wigginton and Margie Bennett, eds. *Foxfire 8*. (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1984): 252.

⁸ Wigginton and Bennett, *Foxfire 8*, 251.

⁹ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 204-205.

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clapboard siding. Measuring twenty-three feet by twenty-six and one-half feet, entrance doors are on the east, south, and north.¹⁰ The front door is located on the north. On the eastern side, two windows flank a center vertical board door. The window sashes contain a single pane of glass divided into four units by four muntins. The shop's interior contains drying shelves, tables, turning wheel, clay storage, wedging counter, benches, glaze mixing box, tool shelf, wood stove with stove pipe and chimney, and store room. The interior maintains an earthen floor, walls of three inch horizontal pine boards, and round log rafters that support the roof. The shop contains an overhead loft above the main space that is accessed through trap doors in the ceiling at each end of the shop where Burlon Craig stored greenware and bisque-fired stoneware in the loft throughout his career, and it is currently utilized by Craig's son, Donald, to store broken stoneware of his father's and wares from other local potters. They used the shop as a workplace for turning, glazing, and drying wares. In 2000, Donald Craig removed the kick wheel from the pottery shop.

5. Open storage building – Non-Contributing Building – ca. 1960

The open storage building is a three-bay frame, Creosote pole shed constructed by Burlon Craig during the early 1960s that measures eighteen feet two inches in width by thirty-six feet three inches in length. Tin covers the roof, western side (back), and portions of the southern and northern ends of the building. Located less than ten feet to the southwest of the groundhog kiln, this building served as a sales room, storage facility, and garage during Burlon Craig's ownership. Currently, Donald Craig utilizes the building for storage of agricultural equipment, miscellaneous household appliances, and cars. From the 1960s to late 1980s, Craig utilized the building for the storage of unglazed flowerpots, hay, agricultural equipment, clay, and other materials relating to pottery production. He installed chicken wire over the openings of the two southernmost bays to prevent people from stealing flowerpots. Two doors provided access from the 1960s to the 1990s to the two southernmost sections, and the northernmost section served as a garage for a Model T Ford with no doors. (Donald Craig has considered razing this building because of its poor condition, and close proximity to the kiln's chimney. During firing, accelerated temperatures and height of flames from the kiln's chimney make the open storage building susceptible to fire.)

6. Metal Shed – Non-Contributing Building – ca. 2000.

Located directly to the north of the Reinhardt-Craig House is a ca. 2000 front-gabled shed with horizontal and vertical metal sheeting and a metal vertical sheeted front door. The metal shed measures ten feet in length by eight feet in width, and the Craig family moved it to this location in 2004 to store garden and landscaping supplies that they utilize around the property.

¹⁰ Ibid., 134.

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7. Pug Mill – Contributing Object, 1949

The pug mill is located west of the pottery shop, and encompasses one of the most essential components of the pottery making operations at this site and other sites in the Catawba Valley tradition for over two hundred years.

Harvey Reinhardt built a mule-powered pug mill on the site in ca. 1933-36 when he constructed his house, kiln, and pottery shop. Harvey built his pug mill on the same design he and his brother Enoch used at their pottery operations just south of this site. Reinhardt's pug mill was located to the south of the pottery shop. This pug mill is not extant, though Donald Craig remembers its location on the site as being far enough from the pottery shop to accommodate the large span of the flywheel and course of the mule.

Burlon Craig built the current pug mill, located just west of the pottery shop, on the site in 1949. He operated this pug mill with a tractor. Craig built the pug mill with metal scraps and parts that he salvaged. The mill maintains a large cast-iron wheel that Craig secured from a water-powered Delco light system.¹¹ The large cast-iron wheel that Craig called a pulley was hooked to a tractor's rear axle that he used to operate the pug mill. Craig also utilized a truck's rear axle, a fifty-gallon steel drum, that he built on some rocks and set a wooden frame on some poured cement. The tractor pulled the belt connected to the pulley wheel and turned the metal blades that sliced and blended the clay.¹²

The pug mill's tub maintains a horizontal bar with three metal knives that extend vertically downward from the shaft. A second horizontal bar is mounted on the shaft at a ninety-degree angle to the first bar, and has four metal knives that protrude upward. This pug mill has the capacity to grind roughly 150 pounds of clay, or three large balls that weigh between forty to fifty pounds each.¹³

Before buying the Reinhardt pottery, Burlon Craig operated a pug mill utilizing a mule at Uncle Seth Ritchie's pottery. Upon the death of Ritchie, Craig and Vernon Leonard rented Ritchie's pottery from his wife, and at this location they continued their pottery-making until Craig purchased

¹¹ Wigginton and Bennett, *Foxfire* 8, 227.

¹² *Ibid.*, 228.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 227.

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the Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop in 1945. Before he purchased the property from Harvey Reinhardt, Craig built his first pug mill as a wooden tub in the shape of a large barrel with ribs and hoops. He built his second pug mill at the Reinhardt pottery. This pug mill included a metal shaft and metal blades, with a wooden sweep. He utilized a mule to turn the metal shaft until it “got too expensive to feed the mule just to grind clay with,” so he began work on a pug mill that he could operate with a tractor in 1949.¹⁴

¹⁴ Ibid., 226.

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8. Statement of Significance

Summary

The Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop, built in ca. 1933-1936, are an important assemblage of intact historic structures associated with the alkaline glaze pottery tradition in North Carolina. Harvey Reinhardt built the structures after he discontinued his partnership with his brother, Enoch, and produced traditional utilitarian and art pottery to meet the needs of the local community and the emerging tourist market of the 1930s and 1940s. In 1945, Harvey sold the site to local potter Burlon Craig, who had just returned from World War II. Craig began turning traditional Catawba Valley pottery at age fourteen under the tutelage of his neighbor, Jim Lynn. Through his apprenticeship with Lynn, Craig was directly connected to Daniel Seagle, the earliest Catawba Valley potter to whom a plethora of marked alkaline-glazed pieces can be attributed.¹⁵ After local potter Poley Carp Hartsoe discontinued producing pottery in 1957, Craig was the only practicing traditional potter in the Catawba Valley.¹⁶

The Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop, with a period of significance extending from ca. 1933-1957, has statewide significance in industry under Criterion A as the only existing assemblage of historic structures from the traditional alkaline glaze pottery industry in North Carolina. It meets Criterion B in art as the property associated with Burlon Craig, 1945-1957, a folk potter of statewide importance. Although Burlon Craig continued to produce pottery at the property after 1957, this period is not of exceptional significance, and therefore does not meet Criteria Consideration G. Under Criterion C, the Reinhardt-Craig kiln, ca. 1933-36, has statewide architectural significance as a well-preserved traditional, alkaline glaze southern groundhog kiln.

Historic Context: Traditional Catawba Valley Alkaline Glaze Pottery Industry

The Catawba Valley region of North Carolina's western piedmont consists of Lincoln and Catawba counties, and makes up one of the state's oldest centers of pottery production. The Catawba Valley is one of five pottery centers in North Carolina. The other centers of pottery

¹⁵ Daniel Seagle trained his son James Franklin "Frank" Seagle; Frank taught John Leonard; John Leonard passed the tradition along to his son Mack Lawrence Leonard; and Lawrence Leonard taught Jim Lynn, who taught Burlon Craig.

¹⁶ Poley Carp Hartsoe (1876-1960) descended from the David Hartzog (Hartsoe), one of the earliest Catawba Valley potters, and was the son of Sylvanus Leander Hartsoe. He was a journeyman potter that worked in the Catawba Valley for Tom Phillips, the Hilton family, Luther Seth Ritchie, and Harvey and Enoch Reinhardt, and worked for various potteries in South Carolina and for Kennedy Pottery in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. He moved to Catawba County around 1926, and practiced there until he retired.

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production are the Moravian region of Wachovia (Forsyth County), the eastern piedmont section of north Moore, north Montgomery, south Randolph and south Chatham counties, and the Appalachian mountain regions that include a section of Wilkes County and a section of Buncombe County.¹⁷ The western piedmont potters produced lead-glazed earthenware from the time of their arrival in Catawba Valley during the second half of the eighteenth century to the late 1830s. Though ceramic historians are unable to pinpoint the earliest usage of alkaline glaze in this region, they theorize that a potter from the Edgefield district of South Carolina introduced the new alkaline glaze during the 1830s. Catawba Valley potters of the nineteenth century were predominantly of German descent, and they produced utilitarian alkaline-glazed stoneware forms such as storage jars, jugs, crocks, pitchers, and churns. Potters from the Seagle and Hartzog (Hartsoe) families were the most noted and prolific families of the Catawba Valley pottery tradition during the first three quarters of the nineteenth century. Other potters located in the vicinity of the Seagles and Hartsoes produced utilitarian alkaline-glazed stoneware during the mid-nineteenth century. These potters included John Alrand, Jeremiah Clemer, Daniel Haynes, James M. Page, Thomas Ritchie, Noah Shuford, and Alexander Stamey. Three other prominent pottery families from the Catawba Valley during the last quarter of the nineteenth century include the Ritchies, Propsts, and Reinhardts.¹⁸

The beginnings of the Catawba Valley pottery tradition can be traced to the arrival of European immigrants in the region during the middle of the eighteenth century. Over one hundred potters with European roots turned ware in an area that measured eight miles in length, located on the waters of the South Fork of the Catawba River that bordered on Lincoln and Catawba counties.¹⁹ The largest group of folk potters that worked in North Carolina resided in the Catawba Valley region. During the mid- to late-nineteenth century, the region maintained a designation as “Jugtown.” This reference can be traced to 1874 when the United States Postal Service established an office near the Banoak Community in Catawba County. Over the next twenty years, the area boasted 130 residents, and among them were potters, tanners, builders, sawmill operatives, and a blacksmith. The Jugtown post office closed in 1906, and the area now known as Seagrove in eastern North Carolina (Moore and Randolph counties) has since been widely recognized as Jugtown.²⁰

¹⁷ M. Ruth Little, *Jugtown Pottery*, Registration Form, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 1999.

¹⁸ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 84-88.

¹⁹ Dr. Charles G. Zug, III. “The Alkaline Glazed Stoneware of the Catawba Valley” in *Potters of the Catawba Valley*. Exhibition Catalog. (Charlotte: Mint Museum, 1980): 11-12.

²⁰ Sarah Yoder and Ralph Farmer, eds. *Potters of the Catawba Valley*. Exhibition Guide. (Lincolnton: Lincoln County Museum of History, 1992, 1995): n.p.; Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 84.

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The first potters in the Catawba Valley region, specifically old Lincoln County, were predominantly of German descent. The pottery-making craft was well established in western Lincoln County by the late eighteenth century. Though individual potters such as Christopher Culp, John Dietz, John Hefner, Henry Miller, John Pope, Peter Reese, Moses Seitz, and Andrew Yount produced lead-glazed earthenware in Lincoln County from the 1780s to the first decade of the nineteenth century, members of the Seagle and Hartzog (Hartsoe) families dominated all early documented pottery ventures in the Vale area of western Lincoln County.²¹ These families owned and operated pottery shops where they produced lead-glazed earthenware forms such as jugs, jars, and crocks, while deriving their primary source of income from farming or from trades such as sawmilling or wagoning. Potters inculcated orally the pottery-making tradition to their family members and neighbors. They also propagated the trade by employing on-the-job training.

The earliest Catawba Valley potter whose marked pieces are readily recognized, and from whom lead-glazed and alkaline-glazed pieces exist is Daniel Seagle. His pieces are identified by a "DS" mark stamped prominently on the shoulder of jugs and on the handles of jars. The exception is a diminutive lead-glazed jug in the collection of the Lincoln County Museum of History that reveals a "DSEAGLE" stamp in the form of a semicircle on the jug's shoulder. Though there remains a dearth of primary and secondary material to delineate the source of Daniel Seagle's education in the trade, many pottery scholars and collectors attribute his education to his father, Adam Seagle. Adam Seagle immigrated to Lincoln County between 1790 and 1800, and according to family tradition he made an unmarked diminutive lead-glazed earthenware lidded jar that has been in the family since this period.²² Daniel Seagle was born in Lincoln County ca. 1805, and lived in western Lincoln County near Trinity Lutheran Church. He descended from early German settlers who immigrated to western Lincoln County by way of the Great Wagon road from Pennsylvania. Seagle married Sarah Hoover in 1821, and one of their children, James Franklin, learned the trade from his father and practiced with his brother-in-law, John Goodman, until the 1890s.²³

In addition to training his son as an apprentice, Daniel Seagle also apprenticed his son-in-law, John Goodman, and two other men. Seagle turned pieces ranging in size from half-gallon jars to robust fifteen-gallon jars. All of his extant pieces are perfectly symmetrical and balanced, and

²¹ Scott Smith, "Documenting Early Catawba Valley Potters," *Traditions in Clay: A Publication of the North Carolina Pottery Collectors Guild* 13 (Fall 2006): 2-10. Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 82. This area of western Lincoln County was recognized as Reepsville Post Office, then Henry Post Office, before being named Vale in 1926.

²² Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 85.

²³ Bill Beam, Jason Harpe, Scott Smith, and David Springs, *Two Centuries of Potters: A Catawba Valley Tradition*. Exhibition Catalog. (Lincolnton: Lincoln County Historical Association, 1999): 14.

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their thin walls embody the skill of a master potter. He produced traditional utilitarian forms such as storage jars, jugs, cream risers, pitchers, and crocks. His pieces exhibit very little decoration, but a few extant jugs bear decorative colors and motifs on the handles and around the shoulders from glass melting during a firing, and handmade coggle wheels.²⁴

Seagle's technical and aesthetic influences also pervade the extant pieces of his apprentices, and their wares exude Seagle's propensity for elegance, technique, and perfection. Their pieces include alkaline-glazed utilitarian jars, jugs, churns, and milk crocks that range in capacity from one half to five gallons. They contain an equal attention to function and utility, and exhibit a globular shape and small support with wide shoulders. Minimal adornment accentuates these pieces and, when used, is limited to glass runs extending from the tops of handles over the shoulders and to the bases of their pieces.²⁵

Seagle's first apprentice was Daniel Holly, who learned the earthenware trade as early as 1828. Holly practiced the trade in Lincoln County during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth-century. John Goodman and Isaac Lefevers were Daniel Seagle's two other apprentices. John Goodman, Seagle's son-in-law, moved to Lincoln County from Cabarrus County in 1842, and married Seagle's daughter Barbara. Goodman learned the trade from his father-in-law over the next two decades, and formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, James Franklin Seagle, after Daniel Seagle's death in 1867. Franklin Seagle and John Goodman maintained their business in Lincoln County through the 1890s. Daniel Seagle apprenticed Isaac Lefevers as early as 1845, and Lefevers remained under Seagle's tutelage until late in 1852.²⁶

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Seagle and other potters from the Catawba Valley first made lead-glazed earthenware. This clay maintained a pale ocher color and contained large proportions of iron. They fired these pieces at a relatively low temperature (1800 degrees), which made them less durable and more porous. Lead glazed pieces are very fragile and susceptible to fractures and breaks from years of usage and exposure to fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity. Very few examples of these pieces are found today. Caution against the use of lead as a deadly poison when mixed with food and liquid did not become a part of the repertory of citizens of the backcountry, specifically the Catawba Valley, until the early

²⁴ A coggle wheel is a wheel shaped device used to impress designs in clay.

²⁵ Beam, Harpe, Smith, and Springs, *Two Centuries of Potters: A Catawba Valley Tradition*, 14. Pottery enthusiasts and academics believe that potters also utilized glass to strengthen the handles of jugs.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 14-23.

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nineteenth century. During this period, potters in the Catawba Valley shifted from glazing their pieces with lead to alkaline or ash.²⁷

Folklorists and pottery enthusiasts assert that the alkaline glaze tradition came to the Catawba Valley from Europe, though an alkaline glaze tradition existed in China during the Han dynasty from 206 B.C. to 220 A.D. Some scholars and ceramic historians theorize that potters in England and the Edgefield District of western South Carolina sought out the letters of French Jesuit missionary Pere d'Entrecolles. Earlier, in 1712 and 1722, he had recorded in two letters the manufacturing techniques of the Chinese. These letters included descriptions of Chinese glaze mixtures of lime, plant ash, feldspar, and water. During the 1730s these letters were published in both French and English translations. Pottery historian John Burrison suggests that Abner Landrum (1780-1859), potter, physician, and newspaper publisher from the Edgefield District, is a logical candidate to seek and acquire knowledge of the Chinese techniques to correct glazing problems that he faced. Landrum began his pottery operation in Edgefield in ca. 1810, and maintained an acute knowledge of Old World decorative pottery that is evident in the names his sons: Wedgwood, Palissey, and Manises.²⁸

The Edgefield District potters such as Abner Landrum and other members of the Landrum family mixed glazes of ash, lime, feldspar, and flint between 1810 and 1820 that closely resembled the glazes used by potters in China. Scholars theorize that South Carolina journeymen potters transported the alkaline glaze tradition to the Catawba Valley during the 1830s and 1840s, where it is still used today.²⁹ Early nineteenth-century Catawba Valley potters perfected the alkaline glaze by mixing wood ash and clay with sand and water. Potters achieved a variant by mixing powdered or crushed glass, plant ashes, and iron slag from the numerous iron furnaces in the eastern part of Lincoln County.³⁰

During the 1860s, the second large cluster of potters in the Catawba Valley were situated in southern Catawba County, near the current Corinth community in Bandy's Township. A clear example of the movement to this area is the establishment of the Jugtown post office in 1874. During the period from 1860 to 1900, potters from the Hartsoe (Sylvanus Leander and Poley Carp), Hilton, Johnson, Ritchie, Reinhardt, and Propst families, and individuals such as Tom Phillips and Colin Yoder, lived and worked in western Lincoln County and southwestern

²⁷ Zug, Charles G, III. *The Traditional Pottery of North Carolina*. Exhibition Catalog. (Chapel Hill: Ackland Art Museum, 1980): 24.

²⁸ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 72.

²⁹ Hewitt, Mark and Nancy Sweezy. *The Potter's Eye: Art and Tradition in North Carolina Pottery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005): 9.

³⁰ Zug, "The Alkaline Glazed Stoneware of the Catawba Valley," 13.

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Catawba County. Some of these potters worked as journeymen for other potteries in areas near Wilkesboro, North Carolina, and in South Carolina. These potters produced utilitarian wares such as jugs, preserve jars, churns, milk crocks, and cream risers.

Prohibition of the 1910s and the emergence of new technologies from the 1920s to the 1940s transformed the production of pottery in the Catawba Valley. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the proliferation, utility, and practicality of glass canning jars and refrigeration, in addition to mass-produced factory pottery forced many of the traditional potters to change the function of their wares from utilitarian and functional to innovative, creative, and decorative.³¹ Faced with the prospect of losing one of their main forms of income, numerous Catawba Valley potters such as the Propst family, Hilton family, and Reinhardt brothers began producing swirlware and fancy wares from the 1920s to the 1940s to meet the needs of an ever-increasing market of consumers that were interested in acquiring handmade crafts.

During the 1930s the promotion and consumption of mountain or “folk” art and crafts from the Appalachian region of the United States marked the beginning of a development that defined the “folk” and utilized this label to market products to a middle-class popular culture. Modern forces such as industrialization, craft guilds, promoters, festivals, museums, and governmental agencies invented an ideological definition of tradition and folk and opened the door to a market that sought these products to connect to a pre-industrial and pre-capitalist ideal. The issue of authenticity and the manipulation of culture helped foster the growth of Appalachian folk arts and crafts as a sellable commodity.

The rise in popularity of traditional handicrafts from the Southern Appalachians and the reshaping of this tradition can be attributed to the societal needs of the middle class. The economic, social, and political paradigm shift within this segment of society manifested a desire and longing to acquire the fruits of modern culture. The traditional element of the Appalachian handicrafts provided modern middle-class consumers with the values and standards of an “imagined past” albeit the label of consumer mass production. In addition, mountain handicrafts enabled the middle-class to purchase affordable functional art in place of items such as Shaker chests and primitive portrait paintings. Handicrafts promoters such as Olive Dame Campbell, the Hindman Settlement School in eastern Kentucky, and the White Top Folk Festival in southwestern Virginia with their schools and cooperatives employed sales and design professionals to integrate marketing schemes of style trends and standards into the sales strategy to appeal to the interests of middle-class women. These schemes appealed to the middle-class

³¹ Jeff Pruett, *Burlon Craig: From Utilitarian Craft to Decorative Art*. Master’s Thesis. (Charlotte: University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2006): 14; Barry G. Huffman. *Innovations in Clay: Catawba Valley Pottery*. Exhibition Catalog. (Hickory, N.C.: Hickory Museum of Art, 1987): 4-5.

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women's desire to juxtapose modern forms, styles, materials, and designs with authentic and traditional crafts outside the modern market.³²

These consumer interests were consistent with the Arts and Crafts movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As more people purchased cars, and tourists traveled through western North Carolina to visit the mountains, these potters produced creatively colored and designed pieces to meet the tourist demand. Members of the Hilton family produced lines of wares known as blue edge, Catawba Indian--emulating traditional pottery made by Catawba Indians, raised dogwood decorated, and miniature nativity scenes, squirrels, and other figurines.³³

The Propst family made traditional utilitarian jars, jugs, and churns from the 1860s to the 1910s, but turned swirlware art pottery in the form of pitchers, lidded jars, monkey jugs, and miniatures by mixing darker and lighter clays from the 1920s to the 1950s.³⁴ Sam Propst, who learned the trade from his father, Jacob, and Lawrence Leonard, was one of the most skilled and highly-regarded turners of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He is credited with being the first Catawba Valley potter to turn and perfect swirlware that combined dark clay from Lincoln County and lighter clay from Mt. Holly, North Carolina, and other locations in South Carolina.³⁵ In addition to swirlware pieces, Sam and his son, Floyd, made decorative vases with fluted edges and vases with holes, known today as flower "frogs", that combined glazed interiors with unglazed exteriors on which patrons could paint mountainous natural scenes, animals, and other decorative motifs.³⁶ Sam was one of the only potters in the region who worked as a full-time potter. Floyd began turning when he was eight years old, and produced baskets and pinch bottles. The Propst family's pieces increased in popularity with the growing tourist market in western North Carolina. Floyd continued to turn and produce wares with the assistance of older traditional potters such as Will Bass and Jule Ritchie, and they continued their operations until Floyd relocated to California in 1937.³⁷

³² Jane S. Becker, *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998); David Whisnant, *All That is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

³³ Huffman, *Innovations in Clay*, 6-7; Danielson, Leon, "Hilton Family Potteries" in *Two Centuries of Potters*, 41-43.

³⁴ A monkey jug is a type of jug that has one or more spouts placed off center. Tradition holds that people would drink liquor from one chamber of a double chambered monkey jug and chaser from the other chamber.

³⁵ Huffman, *Innovations in Clay: Catawba Valley Pottery*, 4.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 88.

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The Reinhardt Family and Burlon Craig: Master Potters of the Catawba Valley Alkaline Glaze Pottery Tradition

The pottery-making tradition in the Reinhardt family began with patriarch Ambrose A. Reinhardt (1831-1914) and continued with his sons James and Pinckney A. (1864-1932). With assistance from Ambrose's nephew, Hugh L. (b. 1893), the family produced traditional alkaline glaze utilitarian wares at their shop in the Henry Community of western Lincoln County.³⁸ Their shop is no longer extant. Enoch W. (1903-1978) and Harvey Ford Reinhardt (1912-1960) were introduced to the pottery trade at a young age, and worked with their father Pinckney Reinhardt and uncle, James. The entire family participated in the pottery production, and Enoch and Harvey ground clay, prepared balls of clay for turning, filled the kiln with ware, cut and hauled wood, prepared glazes, and carried ware to and from the kiln.³⁹ In 1932, the Reinhardt Brothers joined other local potters in the Henry Community of Lincoln County in the production of art pottery for the tourist market by opening their pottery across the road from their father's home in Henry. Prior to 1932, Harvey worked for local potter and neighbor Jim Lynn (1872-1942) before convincing Enoch to join his pottery operation. Harvey produced larger utilitarian alkaline-glazed jars and churns, and Enoch turned most of the smaller swirlware pieces, particularly pitchers, baskets, vases, and miniatures that they sold in the tourist market. They marked their pieces with a stamp bearing the name "REINHARDT BROS/VALE, N.C."⁴⁰

Between 1933 and 1936, Harvey built his own house, kiln, and pottery shop just north of the Reinhardt Brothers' shop, and began stamping his wares "H.F. REINHARDT, VALE, N.C."⁴¹ He built his operations on twenty-four acres that he purchased from his father on March 24, 1931.⁴² He continued to produce his large utilitarian pieces, and on at least one occasion produced a large face jug between ten and fifteen gallons. This face jug appeared in a photograph of the potter in front of his pottery shop during the early 1930s.⁴³ Enoch and Harvey ran separate potteries until 1942, when they both discontinued their pottery businesses. Harvey took a position in the shipyard at Wilmington, North Carolina, and Enoch pursued his profession as a barber in Henry. Enoch fired the final kiln load of his and Harvey's wares during the summer of

³⁸ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 89. Ambrose's shop was occupied later by the Propst family, Sam (1882-1935) and his son, Floyd. The Propsts operated the building as a pottery shop until 1937.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 5, 88.

⁴¹ Beam, Harpe, Smith, and Springs, *Two Centuries of Potters: A Catawba Valley Tradition*, 59.

⁴² Lincoln County Deed Book 180, Page 101. Earlier, P.A. Reinhardt had purchased this property from his father Ambrose A. Reinhardt.

⁴³ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 93.

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1946.⁴⁴ He was unable to fill the entire kiln with his pieces, and secured the help of Burlon Bart Craig, a young local potter who had learned the pottery trade from older potters such the Propst family, Luther S. Ritchie, Will Bass, and Jim Lynn, to produce enough large pieces to completely and successfully fill the kiln. Craig was a new neighbor of Enoch Reinhardt who had purchased Harvey's house, kiln, and pottery shop less than a year earlier for \$3,500.⁴⁵ Craig's new acquisition and the wares he contributed to Enoch Reinhardt's last firing sparked the continuation of a two-hundred-year-old tradition. Three decades later, Burlon Craig influenced a group of contemporary potters who currently practice traditional Catawba Valley methods of production.

Burlon Bart Craig was born in the Henry Community in western Lincoln County on April 21, 1914. He was the son of Major Craig, a minister in the Church of God denomination and a rural farmer.⁴⁶ Craig's participation in the pottery-making trade began as a young man. He ventured from his first grade class at Ridge Academy to watch potters such as journeyman potter Will Bass and others turn at Lawrence Leonard's shop.⁴⁷ At the age of fourteen he used his father's mule to grind clay for potter Jim Lynn, who did not own a mule. Not long after Craig began grinding Lynn's clay, Lynn secured him as an apprentice. From Lynn, Craig learned to turn utilitarian alkaline-glazed churns, storage jars and jugs, and acquired the skills to properly and successfully fire a groundhog kiln.

Earlier, Jim Lynn had acquired pottery making skills from Mack Lawrence Leonard, whose father, John F. Leonard, lived a short distance from the shop of James Franklin Seagle and John Goodman. According to local tradition, John F. Leonard learned from James Franklin Seagle, whose father Daniel Seagle is the earliest potter for whom marked earthenware and stoneware are extant. One can see the lineage that Jim Lynn cemented between Burlon Craig and Daniel Seagle in Craig's traditional pottery forms and methods of production.

As Craig began to turn and sell his pieces throughout the community, over twelve other Catawba Valley pottery shops -- the Propst Family, Reinhardt Brothers, Hilton Family, Jim Lynn, Mack Lawrence Leonard, Poley Carp Hartsoe, Luther Seth Ritchie, Thomas H. Phillips, William W. Weaver, Colin M. Yoder, Wes Houser, and Harvey H. Heavner -- supplied families and stores with utilitarian wares to store meats, liquors, sauerkraut, vinegar, and other foods for their

⁴⁴ Ibid., 90.

⁴⁵ Lincoln County Deed Book 238, Page 220.

⁴⁶ Wigginton and Barrett, *Foxfire* 8, 210.

⁴⁷ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 243. Lawrence Leonard's pottery shop was in sight of Ridge Academy, located at the intersection of Cat Square Road and Zur Leonard Road in Vale.

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homes.⁴⁸ Craig worked with Enoch and Harvey Reinhardt for a summer in the early 1930s before joining and learning from Vernon Leonard and Neely Blackburn. From the Reinhardts, specifically Enoch, Craig learned to turn the swirlware pottery that he would produce throughout his career. From Harvey he learned to turn large utilitarian forms. Craig also worked with other local potters, including Luther Seth Ritchie, during the 1930s and 1940s before joining the U.S. Navy during World War II. He returned from the war effort in 1945 and continued his pottery-making efforts in his native community.

He opened his own shop after purchasing the groundhog kiln, pottery shop, and house of Harvey Reinhardt in 1945. Over the next thirty years he produced traditional Catawba Valley forms such as storage jars, milk crocks, butter churns, flowerpots, and vinegar jugs that bore little or no artistic embellishment. He marked very few of his pieces before the late 1970s, with the exception of a five gallon lidded church jar that bears the script "B.B.Craig/1936".⁴⁹

By the late 1940s, many of the old traditional potters had discontinued their potteries or transitioned from the production of utilitarian wares to art pottery. Burlon Craig carried on the Catawba Valley alkaline glaze pottery tradition in his work.⁵⁰ During this time, the market for utilitarian stoneware pottery had experienced a drastic change that affected the pottery-making tradition in the Catawba Valley and Craig's role in the propagation of this tradition. The proliferation of tin cans, glass canning jars, mass-produced ceramics vessels, and refrigeration displaced the production of traditional utilitarian jars, jugs, and churns, and deemed these conventional forms obsolete.⁵¹ Though potters such as Floyd Hilton, Ernest A. Hilton, Sam and Floyd Propst, and Enoch Reinhardt began making decorative pieces to sell to the tourist market, Burlon Craig sold his utilitarian wares to local families and hardware and general stores in Lincoln, Catawba, Cleveland, and Rutherford counties, in addition to selling pieces from his yard.⁵² His standard price was ten cents a gallon. On occasion, hardware stores owners bargained with Craig to secure a larger number of pieces (between one hundred and two hundred gallons of ware) at a discounted rate of eight cents a gallon. Craig settled on these discounts with hardware store owners because of the uncertainty of securing ten cents a gallon on future

⁴⁸ Beam, Harpe, Smith, and Springs, *Two Centuries of Potters*.

⁴⁹ Beam, Harpe, Smith, and Springs, *Two Centuries of Potters*, 98.

⁵⁰ Barry Huffman. *Catawba Clay: Contemporary Southern Face Jug Makers*. (Hickory, N.C.: A.W. Huffman, 1999): 15.

⁵¹ Pruett, *Burlon Craig: From Utilitarian Craft to Decorative Art*, 12.

⁵² Burlon Craig Ledger, 1948-1950. Burlon Craig Collection. Lincoln County Historical Association and Lincoln County Museum of History.

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transactions.⁵³ After 1957, when Poley Hartsoe ceased his production of pottery, Burlon Craig was the only potter in the Catawba Valley who produced traditional utilitarian pottery.

For nineteen years, starting in 1945, Craig worked at the North Hickory Furniture Company setting up lathes and machines, and farming and turning pottery in his off hours with the assistance of his wife Irene and five children. His children, Lester, Dale, Donald, Colleen, and Sue, assisted their father by digging clay, cutting and gathering wood, and assumed other various responsibilities associated with the pottery-making process.⁵⁴ This process involved turning and putting handles and faces on the jars, jugs, and other forms. Burlon's wife Irene also participated by decorating her husband's pottery with green, blue, and white flowers and other decorative motifs. Craig dug his clay from the old Rhodes clayhole in Lincoln County, turned his wares on a treadle wheel, mixed glazes, utilized a trip hammer to break glass bottles for his glaze mix, and fired his wood-fired groundhog kiln.⁵⁵ He fired his kiln around six times each year, and each kiln held approximately 500 gallons of wares. As his trip hammer mill deteriorated he purchased powdered glass for his glaze mixture, and as he advanced in age he turned his wares on an electric wheel instead of a treadle wheel.⁵⁶

Using his traditional methods of production, Craig turned a wide range of traditional forms such as storage jars, butter churns, milk crocks, liquor jugs, chamber pots, flowerpots, and pitchers. He glazed his pieces using a traditional alkaline glaze mixture of clay, iron cinders, glass, and ash. When fired, this glaze mixture results in either a dark brown appearance that occasionally provides dark runs, or a brown-green color. The dark brown color is produced from large amounts of ash in the glaze, and the brown-green hue is attributable to quantities of iron. The environment in which Craig grew to maturity as a potter held the belief that pottery maintained its value by holding its full capacity and didn't leak." Craig's made his pottery "to be used and not seen."⁵⁷

⁵³ Charles G. Zug, III. *Burlon Craig: An Open Window into the Past*. Exhibition Catalog. (Raleigh, N.C.: Visual Arts Center, North Carolina State University, 1994): 6-10.

⁵⁴ Pruett, *Burlon Craig: From Utilitarian Craft to Decorative Art*, 12.

⁵⁵ The Rhodes Clayhole is located near the Henry Rhodes Cemetery in Lincoln County. This property is situated on the South Fork of the Catawba River approximately four miles southwest of Lincolnton.

⁵⁶ Potters built water-powered trip hammers or "glassbeaters" near a creek and utilized an iron stake or spike to pulverize glass bottles for use in the glazing process. They dammed up a creek and funneled water into a waterbox. As the waterbox filled, the iron spoke rose at the opposite end, and when the waterbox emptied the iron stake smashed into glass and iron cinders in the glazebox. Harvey Reinhardt built a trip hammer near his pottery during the 1930s, and Burlon Craig used this to pulverize glass until the 1990s.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

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Firing the kiln is time-consuming and laborious for the potter, his family, and neighbors, but was an occasion that Burlon Craig remembered at the Propst family's pottery site in Henry that featured festive activities such as storytelling, courting, jovial boxing matches, and the consumption of roasted corn and sweet potatoes.⁵⁸ Over the years, Craig welcomed other Catawba Valley potters, local individuals and families, pottery enthusiasts and collectors to his kiln firings, in addition to musicians who brought their instruments to entertain the crowd.

Throughout his career, Craig adhered to traditional Catawba Valley methods of production and forms. By the late 1970s through the 1990s, historians, folklorists, and museums featured him and his work in various periodicals, books, scholarly journals, demonstrations, and exhibitions. Charles Zug, Daisy Wade Bridges, and other scholars and collectors of southern folk pottery and decorative arts realized Craig's status as the only remaining potter in the Catawba Valley, and played a crucial part in the promotion of Craig's work and his shift from utilitarian wares to decorative art. Under the watchful eye of Daisy Wade Bridges, the Mint Museum of Art in 1980 featured the first exhibition and exhibition catalog on the Catawba Valley pottery tradition. Titled *Potters of the Catawba Valley*, the exhibit and accompanying catalog featured Craig's wares in the context of the two-hundred-year-old southern alkaline glaze tradition. The Ackland Museum of Art in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, spotlighted Burlon Craig and his contribution to the preservation of the Catawba Valley pottery tradition the following year, and the Hickory Museum of Art in Hickory, North Carolina, produced a similar exhibit in 1987-1988. The Smithsonian Institute added Craig's pieces to their collection during the early 1980s, and invited him and his wife Irene to participate in the Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. in 1981. He demonstrated at the World's Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1982, and the National Endowment for the Arts awarded him the National Folk Heritage Award in 1984.

Also during the 1970s, Burlon Craig received advice from Lincoln banker and Catawba Valley pottery collector Roddy Cline, Daisy Wade Bridges of the Mint Museum's Ceramic Circle in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Charles G. Zug, III, a Ph.D. candidate in History and Folklore at the University of North Carolina, to begin marking his wares with a metal stamp bearing his name. Prior to the 1970s, Craig marked his wares with a nail or another sharp tool to denote the capacity. The stamp that Roddy Cline produced for Craig read "B.B. Craig/Vale, N.C." Craig also used a second stamp that read "BBC." Another friend, Howard Smith, encouraged Craig to make face jugs for the ever-increasing number of collectors of southern decorative arts and folk art. Smith was a major proponent for the preservation of the folk pottery tradition, and even decorated some of Craig's pieces with white and brown slip decorations, indicative of ornamentation from the Edgefield District of upper South Carolina.

⁵⁸ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 199.

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In 1984, Eliot Wigginton and his students from Rabun County, Georgia, featured Burlon and Irene Craig in one of their monumental books (*Foxfire 8*) on Southern Appalachian culture. Wigginton started the Foxfire project in 1966 with his ninth and tenth grade students, and incorporated the documentation of Appalachian culture into their language arts curriculum.⁵⁹ Wigginton decided to spotlight Burlon Craig after being recommended by John Burrison as the only potter who used a water-powered trip mill to pulverize glass for his glazes, the only remaining folk potter who used a kick wheel to turn his wares, and the last remaining potter who used a traditional groundhog kiln to fire his wares.⁶⁰ In forty-six pages, Wigginton and his students interviewed Craig about his background in the Catawba Valley pottery tradition; photographed him turning wares and adding decorative elements to his pieces; measured and documented his groundhog kiln and pottery shop; and recorded the terminology Craig used to reference the traditional elements of pottery production in the Catawba Valley.

Charles G. Zug, III, professor of English and Folklore at the University of North Carolina, published a monumental and definitive work on North Carolina folk pottery in 1986, and influenced many subsequent exhibits, articles, and books on Burlon Craig. Though *Turners and Burners: The Folk Potters of North Carolina* covers the major regions of pottery production in North Carolina, Burlon Craig dominates each section that relates to the Catawba Valley region of North Carolina. Subsequent books and articles that examined Burlon Craig and devoted special attention to his transition from utilitarian wares to decorative art include Chuck and Jan Rosenak's *Museum of American Folk Art Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century America Folk Art and Artists* (1990); Nancy Sweezy's *Raised in Clay: The Southern Pottery Tradition* (1994); N.C. State University's Visual Arts Center's *Burlon Craig: An Open Window into the Past*; Barry Huffman's *Catawba Clay: Contemporary Southern Face Jug Maker's* (1997); Lincoln County Historical Association's *Two Centuries of Potters: A Catawba Valley Tradition* (1999); A. Everette James's *North Carolina Art Pottery: 1900-1960, Identification and Value Guide* (2003); Barbara Stone Perry's *North Carolina Pottery: The Collection of the Mint Museums* (2004); and Jeff Pruett's Master's Thesis project, UNC Charlotte, *Burlon Craig Pottery: From Utilitarian Craft to Decorative Art* (2006).⁶¹

⁵⁹ Wigginton and Barrett, *Foxfire 8*, 5.

⁶⁰ John Burrison is a professor of English and Folklore at Georgia State University. His interest in folklore began as undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania, and during this time he was the publisher and editor of *Folkways* magazine. His research focuses on the folk culture of the southeastern United States and on the British Isles, and his interests include both oral literature and traditional crafts, with a specialization in folk pottery. He is the author of numerous publications on folk culture that include *Shaping Traditions: Folk Arts in a Changing South, Handed On: Folk Crafts in Southern Life*, and *Brothers in Clay: The Story of Georgia Folk Pottery*. See *Foxfire 8*, 209.

⁶¹ Zug, *Burlon Craig: An Open Window into the Past*, 4.

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Burlon Craig's Influence on North Carolina Potters Today

In 1983, Charles Lisk, a native of Robbins (Moore County), North Carolina, moved to the old Reinhardt place just south of Burlon Craig's pottery site, and a year later Kim Ellington moved into the area. Both Lisk and Ellington had experience turning small contemporary tableware, but were unfamiliar with Burlon Craig and the pottery tradition that existed in the Catawba Valley for over two hundred years. When they learned of Craig from neighbors and local residents, both potters paid him visits to learn more about the tradition. Craig provided Lisk and Ellington with the same instructions that he had received from potters during the 1920s and 1930s. They visited his shop and observed the techniques that Craig used to turn large pieces that ranged from five to eight gallons. They learned the traditional method of turning large forms in two pieces instead of struggling with one piece and taking the chance of it collapsing during the process. Craig instructed them to turn the smaller portion (the cap) first, and then turn the body. To complete the piece, they welded the top and bottom portions. Though Craig provided instruction to Lisk, Ellington, and other contemporary potters, he imbued the understanding that each person had to learn their own way; what might work for one potter may not work for the next. Potters such as Charles Lisk, Kim Ellington, Walter Fleming, Steven Abee, Harry Kale and son, Jamie Kale, Gary Mitchell, Joe Reinhardt, and Michael Ball all share a commitment and dedication to preserving the tradition that was passed along to them, directly or indirectly, by Burlon Craig.⁶²

The continuity of this tradition culminated in the Millennium Firing of 2000 at the Reinhardt-Craig Kiln. Over ten potters participated in the firing by including their pieces in the kiln and assisting in the firing. To commemorate the event, each potter used a special Millennium Firing stamp on their pieces in addition to their individualized stamps. This was one of the last firings before Burlon Craig's death on July 7, 2002. The Millennium Firing was a celebration of Burlon Craig's significant and influential contributions to the Catawba Valley pottery tradition, and spotlighted the continuity between the traditional and contemporary elements of pottery-making in the Catawba Valley.

Burlon Craig's son Donald acquired 2.685 acres on which the Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop stands from his sister Colleen Craig Alexander, administratrix of Burlon Craig's estate, on July 15, 2003.⁶³ Alexander sold four other tracts during 2002 and 2003 that encompassed the original twenty-four acre parcel that Burlon Craig purchased from Harvey Reinhardt in 1945.⁶⁴ Over the past three years, the Craig family, West Lincoln Library

⁶² Huffman. *Innovations in Clay*, 23.

⁶³ Lincoln County Deed Book 1505, Page 532.

⁶⁴ Lincoln County Deed Book 02E, Page 400, Book 1491, Page 460, Book 1491, Page 463, Book 1505, Page 532.

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Auxiliary, and other citizens of western Lincoln County have hosted the Burlon Craig Pottery Festival. Over the past two years this event has taken place at the Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop, and members and friends of the Craig family fired the kiln during the event. This event afforded visitors an opportunity to purchase traditional Catawba Valley wares from contemporary potters, and celebrate the life, work, and contributions of Burlon Craig. Craig's son Donald is the only child that has continued his father's legacy, and Donald's son Dwayne is currently the third generation of the Craig family to produce traditional Catawba Valley pottery.

Architectural Context: Reinhardt-Craig Groundhog Kiln

The kiln is one of the most essential components of the pottery-making operation, and is easily the most dramatic part of the process. This process requires numerous abilities, knowledge of the procedure, astuteness, and attention to detail. Potters acquired the essential skills associated with firing the kiln from older potters and through "on the job" training. It was imperative that the potters possess these skills to ensure that several weeks of digging clay, turning ware, and glazing did not result in the destruction of their ware from miscalculations and the lack of planning during the firing.

Ceramic or pottery kilns dotted the physical landscape of the world as early as 8000 B.C.⁶⁵ Potters have constructed kilns in a myriad of sizes, forms, and shapes, and have utilized various fuel and methods of operation to ply their trade. Potters and academics have separated kilns into three categories based on the direction of the flow of hot air through the body of the kiln. Ordered chronologically, these kilns include the updraft, crossdraft, and downdraft, with North Carolina potters utilizing the first two types. The updraft or beehive kiln was for the production of earthenware and the crossdraft kiln for stoneware. The groundhog kiln is consistent with the crossdraft category, and has been prevalent in the Catawba Valley for over two centuries. This form is differentiated from the updraft kiln because during the firing the flames move "across one side of the kiln chamber to exit flues along the opposite side."⁶⁶

Throughout America during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, potters used simple round and rectangular updraft or downdraft kilns. There were a number of variations in the round or beehive types. These kilns contained fireboxes that varied in number from one to six, and were large because they used wood to fuel the kiln's firebox. These variations existed at pottery kilns in the southern and northern United States at sites such as the Crowntype Downdraft Kiln of Lee County, Texas, and the Updraft Kiln in Morganville, New York. Rectangular kilns were simpler in their production of stoneware because they used only one firebox and one chimney at the

⁶⁵ Ibid., 202.

⁶⁶ Frederick L. Olsen. *The Kiln Book*. Second Edition. (Bassett, Calif.: Keramos Books, 1973): 41.

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opposite end for the exit of the heat. These kilns are from the crossdraft family because heat travels through the wares from front to back, but they also may be part of the updraft or downdraft kiln categories. The groundhog kiln of the United States was primarily from the cross draft category.⁶⁷

Though the origins of the southern groundhog kiln are uncertain, some academics and pottery collectors postulate that there is a correlation between the Catawba Valley groundhog kilns and two-thousand-year-old kilns in China that led to the development of stoneware and ceramics fired at temperatures over 2400 degrees. Potters from the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) in China utilized the same methods of glazing their wares with ash glazes as did the Catawba Valley potters during the early nineteenth century. The color, aesthetic, and chemistry of ash glazes was best perfected and produced in China, as in the Catawba Valley, with the wood-fired groundhog kiln. Chinese potters in Jingdezhen, southeastern China, fired their large forty to fifty gallon slip glazed jars in dragon kilns. These kilns resemble in shape, form, and operation, and are believed to be the predecessor of the groundhog kilns that were built in the Catawba Valley. Just as alkaline glaze groundhog kilns in the Catawba Valley, the dragon kilns are part of the crossdraft family of kilns. They possess firing holes that are located at one end of the kiln, and are fired with long pine slabs.⁶⁸

The southern groundhog kiln is a long, low rectangular form constructed of handmade brick with a deep firebox at one end and a chimney at the opposite end. Potters throughout North Carolina built and used groundhog kilns to fire salt-glazed and alkaline-glazed stoneware. Over the course of 150 years, the various differences between the salt glaze and alkaline glaze have caused potters to build groundhog kilns in two distinctive subgroups. Each subgroup exhibits varying regional features and requires separate production practices.

Potters in eastern North Carolina built salt glaze kilns that were comparatively smaller than those built in the Catawba Valley. Salt kilns ranged from sixteen feet to twenty feet in length and six feet to eight feet in width, while alkaline glaze groundhog kilns measured twenty-four feet eleven inches in length and eleven feet six inches in width. Other differences between the two subgroups include longer burning periods, differently constructed fireboxes, different firehole door coverings, and different configurations of kiln interiors. Eastern North Carolina potters used hardwoods such as hickory and oak to fire their kilns because the kilns were shorter in length, and the hardwoods provided more intense heat. This contributes to the harder and more durable

⁶⁷ Georgeanna H. Greer, *American Stonewares, The Art and Craft of Utilitarian Potters*, (Exton, PA: Schiffer Publishing Co., 1981): 217-220.

⁶⁸ Daisy Wade Bridges. "Ash Glaze Traditions of Ancient China and the American South." *Journal of Studies of the Ceramic Circle of Charlotte* 6, 1997, 2-3.

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nature of the salt-glazed stoneware of eastern North Carolina. The salt kiln has a single large firehole with two small draftholes near the base of the kiln. With this construction, the potter stands at the same level as the firebox. The fireboxes of the alkaline kilns are three feet below the level of the potter, and the potter stands at the level of the setting floor.⁶⁹ The salt kilns of eastern North Carolina resemble the English Newcastle Kiln, and the kiln used in the alkaline glaze tradition is indicative of the German Cassel kiln.⁷⁰ The differentiations in kiln construction from each of the North Carolina regions are consistent with the derivation of the early potters from each region. Early potters of the alkaline glaze tradition in western North Carolina were of German derivation, while eastern North Carolina potters of the salt glaze tradition were of British descent.⁷¹ Several modern groundhog kilns are extant in eastern North Carolina, but the only operable traditional wood-fired groundhog kiln in North Carolina is the Reinhardt-Craig groundhog kiln in western Lincoln County.

Harvey Reinhardt built the Reinhardt-Craig Groundhog Kiln between 1933 and 1936. Harvey had ample experience with building and firing kilns through his father, uncle, and brother. In addition, Harvey was familiar with other local potters' kilns and pottery production in the Henry community of western Lincoln County. He maintained an understanding of and proficiency in brickmaking and bricklaying, fuel, and principles of combustion. He and his brother Enoch imbued Burlon Craig with the essential principles involved with properly firing the kiln, and Craig employed these and other principles he learned from other area potters during the first three decades of the twentieth century to produce wares for almost sixty years.

The Reinhardt-Craig Kiln exhibits physical characteristics that exemplify the groundhog family of cross draft kilns. It maintains the long, low typical form measuring nearly twenty-five feet in length and over eleven feet in width, and utilizes a deep firebox, approximately three feet deep by ten feet by three feet in area at one end, with a chimney spanning the other. The floor of the Reinhardt-Craig Kiln angles upward twelve inches to improve the draft like traditional groundhog kilns. Upon completion of the vertical sidewalls of brick and stone, Harvey Reinhardt raised the kiln's arch with four archboards that potters in the Catawba Valley have used for over four generations.

⁶⁹ Zug, *Turners and Burners*, 216.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 223.

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As the oldest fully intact and operable traditional wood-fired, alkaline glaze groundhog kiln in North Carolina, the Reinhardt-Craig kiln meets National Register Criterion C. Farms or developers have demolished all but one other traditional alkaline glaze groundhog kiln in the Catawba Valley. An older kiln built by Enoch and Harvey Reinhardt before 1932 is located to the south of the Reinhardt-Craig kiln property, but only retains the kiln's brick arch. The firebox and chimney of this older site have been neglected by various owners and they are badly deteriorated.

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Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the property consist of Parcel 12758 as shown on the attached Lincoln County GIS map at the one inch = 200 feet scale.

Boundary Justification

This property encompasses 2.685 acres of the original twenty-four acres that H.F. Reinhardt and Iva Reinhardt sold to Burlon B. Craig and Irene Craig on November 12, 1945, and it is an appropriate setting for the Reinhardt-Craig House, Kiln, and Pottery Shop.

Photographs

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Photographer: Jason Harpe

Date: May 2006

Location of original digital photographs: North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh

1. Overview looking west, showing Pottery Shop and House
2. Pottery Shop and kiln, looking northwest
3. Kiln, south end, looking northwest
4. Kiln, shed, and house
5. Kiln, south end, looking northeast
6. Kiln, north end, looking south
7. Pottery Shop, looking south
8. Pottery Shop and pug mill, looking south