



# **Sacramento Archeological Society, Inc.**

## **Newsletter**

[www.sacarcheology.org](http://www.sacarcheology.org)

September/October - 2012



### **Maidu Park and Museum Tour** **John W. Foster, SAS President**

August 18<sup>th</sup> saw SAS members assemble at Maidu Park in Roseville for a tour of the museum and archaeological sites. We were greeted by Mark Murphy, Director of the museum. The morning was pleasant and activities concluded before the heat became intense.

For those of you who have not visited, the Maidu Museum and Historic Site is really worthwhile. (It's located at 1970 Johnson Ranch Dr. in Roseville, CA 95661 - (916) 774-5934).  
<http://www.roseville.ca.us/museum>

After a quick tour of the museum itself, our SAS group took to the trails to visit the outstanding rock art and midden sites encompassed by a protective fence. Our museum guide, Alan Wallace, gave us some Maidu background and thoughts on the site and its meaning. The petroglyphs are executed on sandstone boulders in an oak grove at the crest of a low hill. Recorded many years ago as CA-PLA-37, the main rock art complex can be viewed on a series of low boulders. Most of the designs are deeply incised and readily visible. Comparing them to illustrations made by Louis A. (Sam) Payen for his MA Thesis in 1959, the patterns and design characteristics look the same. Perhaps they have eroded a small bit, but are clearly visible. Horizontal wavy lines, dots with circles, concentric arcs and individual geometric designs can be seen. Payen's research showed the present soil level having buried some of the petroglyphs since they were made.



So what can be said about the rock art? We have more questions than answers, but:

1. The designs are formed by deep incisions in the sandstone. In some cases these are very deep.
2. The incised boulders face the village areas – marked by extensive bedrock mortars and midden. They seem to be example of “public art” as opposed to secretive art for ritual purposes.
3. It's possible that the rock art precedes the other archaeological evidence by many centuries. The deep incisions and unique designs may be attributable to pre-Maidu peoples in the region. There is no reliable dating method for the petroglyphs themselves, so future research will need to resolve who made them as new techniques are developed. One large boulder has been split apart after the petroglyphs were incised.

The historic site includes a section of Strap Ravine, a salmon and steelhead habitat, a large wetland, a riparian woodland and grassland. All would have attracted native people and contributed to their sustenance. Over 100 deep bedrock mortars and a dark, ashy midden attest to Nisenan use.

I have a sense of accomplishment as I walk around the lovely museum and preserved archaeological sites because my brother Dan and I had a part in its preservation. We did a study of the area in 1983 and recommended it be set aside as a community cultural area as the surrounding Johnson Ranch was developed. We weren't the first to recognize its value – Jerry Johnson from Sacramento State has nominated the sites to the National Register a few years before. Sam Payen had brought them to the attention of archaeologists and planners even before that, but Maidu Museum and Historic Site has become a valuable community asset. School kids regularly visit and learn about Roseville's ancient past. Nisenan people identify very strongly with the site and provide guidance on its management. The site is amazing – and well worth a visit.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **October is Archaeology Month!**

#### **Northern Data Sharing Meeting**

**Saturday, October 6, 2012**

Continuing the recent tradition of holding the Northern Data Sharing Meeting at California's scenic parks, this year's meeting will be held on Saturday, October 6, 2012, in the Red Barn Classroom at Point Reyes National Seashore along the beautiful Pacific Coast and Tomales Bay in Marin County. A catered lunch will be provided, and free camping is available on Friday (October 5) and Saturday (October 6) at nearby Samuel P. Taylor State Park for the first 50 members who reserve a spot. Planned talks will highlight projects along California's North Coast but discussions on other geographic areas and topics are welcome. Information on the meeting can be found at:

[http://scahome.org/meetings\\_events/index.html](http://scahome.org/meetings_events/index.html) or by contacting Northern Vice President Greg Collins ([gcollins@scahome.org](mailto:gcollins@scahome.org); 707-407-7491).

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE – COAST LINE MAPPING**

**Help Survey the Marin County Coastline**

**Led by Michael Newland**

**October 7, 2012**

Throughout the fall, the Society for California Archaeology will be coordinating a series of volunteer archaeological surveys on public lands along the Marin County coastline. A big push will be made **Sunday, October 7, the day after the Northern California Data Sharing Meeting** at Point Reyes National Seashore. The study is being done in preparation for expected loss of coastal archaeological sites due to pending effects of climate change. Michael Newland, Sonoma State professor and current SCA President, is leading a project. The Sacramento Archeological Society is signed up to provide volunteers. The date for the first survey has been set for October 7<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested to participate, contact John Foster at [parkarky@yahoo.com](mailto:parkarky@yahoo.com) or SCA President Michael Newland at [Newland@sonoma.edu](mailto:Newland@sonoma.edu).

#### **SANTA CRUZ ISLAND ARCHAEOLOGY TOUR**

Led by Dr. Jennifer Perry, Channel Islands Archaeologist

October 26, 2012

Dr. Jennifer Perry, Channel Islands Archaeologist and professor will be leading a tour of the natural and cultural history of the island with emphasis placed on the 13,000 year record of human occupation on the Channel Islands. The tour will start at Scorpion Anchorage, the location of native Chumash village sites and historic ranching operations, and will continue to archaeological sites and other island feature on the east end.

## The Chumash and the swordfish

“Evidence of a special relationship of the swordfish, *Xiphias gladius*, to the Chumash, a coastal and island people of Southern California, is available to us from a number of different sources: linguistic; ethnographic (recorded myths, ceremonial dances); archaeological (finds of swordfish parts, [harpoon](#) harpoon (härp n`), weapon used for spearing whales and large fish. The early type was a flat triangular piece of metal with barbed edges and a socket for attaching a wooden handle, to the pieces, portrayals in Chumash art); and technical (fishing techniques and some facets of swordfish behaviour). Of extraordinary interest in the archaeological evidence are the so-far unpublished notes (with sketch) of David Banks Rogers, an early curator at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, describing his find in 1926 of a burial containing a masked 'Swordfish Dancer'. Taken together, the evidence indicates that the Chumash must have engaged in an open-ocean harpoon fishery for *Xiphias* and other large fishes and, as has been the practice of aboriginal folk the world over, called upon their shaman to identify with this 'master of animals' (in this case, of fishes) and thus persuade it to provide the community with food, either in the form of its own body or that of other large species, or of an occasional whale driven ashore.” (Davenport, Demorest; Johnson, John R. Timbrook, [Chumash Culture of Santa Barbara, CA](#))

In addition to the Santa Cruz Island tour on Friday, October 2 attendees will visit the Natural History Museum in Santa Barbara and view pictographs in the Santa Barbara area. At this time the tour is full and other interested participants will be put on a waiting list. For more information contact Jan Johansen at [janjohansen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janjohansen@sbcglobal.net).

## 2013 Announcements

### The 2013 Maya Meetings

*The Art of Maya Architecture:*

*Cosmology and Dynasty in the Built Environment*

January 15-19, 2013

The University of Texas at Austin

Registration is now open for The 2013 Maya Meetings. Here is the agenda:

Tuesday, January 15 - Thursday, January 17

9: 00 am - 4: 00 pm

Beginner Hieroglyph Workshop

Intermediate Hieroglyph Workshop

Iconography Workshop- Justin Kerr

The Maya Meetings will be offering a new workshop:

An Introduction to Nahuatl Hieroglyphic

Writing Workshop with workshop

leader Marc Zander

This workshop is the fourth workshop that the 2013 Maya Meetings will feature:

1. Beginner Hieroglyph- workshop leader

Nicholas Carter

2. Intermediate Hieroglyph- workshop leader

Daniel Law

3. Iconography workshop- workshop leader

Justin Kerr

4. An Introduction to Nahuatl Hieroglyphic

Writing Workshop-workshop leader

Marc Zander \*\*some knowledge of the Nahuatl

language and/or Maya hieroglyphic writing would be helpful but not necessary\*\*  
\*Spaces for the workshops are limited. Register early to reserve a spot.  
Thursday, January 17 \*\*\* These events require registration HOWEVER their price is included in the Symposium fee. You must register for the Symposium to attend the key note and reception. \*\*\*  
6:00 pm  
Welcome Remarks  
Key Note Speaker- Dr. George E. Stuart  
7:00 - 8:30 pm  
El lienzo de Quauhquechollan Exhibition

Opening  
The Maya Meetings Opening Reception

Friday, January 18 - Saturday, January 19  
Symposium  
Confirmed speakers: Barbara Fash, Stephen Houston, Heather Hurst, William Saturno, Karl Taube, Marc Zender, Anabella Coronado, Michael Long, Edwin Roman, and Meghan Rubenstein.

To register, please go this website  
<http://tinyurl.com/cbs47f4>

## MEMBER'S NEWS

### Society Members Dig in Colorado

Michael Barnham spent time this spring in Colorado working on a Pueblo 2 excavation through my membership in the Colorado Archaeological Society and the local chapter in Durango, CO. Diane Sangster, from Sacramento Archeological Society, was also on the dig and found some interesting pottery sherds.

This link is to a news article about the excavation. The ritual burials were certainly unexpected and very amazing to see exposed first hand.

<http://www.cortezjournal.com/article/20120604/NEWS01/706049979/Unclearing-new-mysteries>

I hope that you enjoy this short article and the photos of 2 of our member's busy digging in Colorado this summer.

### New Member

Welcome Robert Orlins as a new member to the society.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS

Remember when we visited Paisley Caves and few points had ever been found. Well, this year points have been found and archeologists believe that they date to Clovis age.

<http://news.yahoo.com/identity-first-americans-questioned-181210855.html>

"Ancient stone projectile points discovered in a Central Oregon cave complex have cast new light on the identity of the first Americans. ... These stone points, a type known as Western Stemmed points, are narrower and lack the distinctive flute, or shallow groove, found on Clovis points. Researchers believe the two types of points represent different technologies, produced by different cultures. ...

"The coprolites appeared to have been left behind at about the same time as the nearby projectile points. Radiocarbon dating put the coprolites and other organic samples located near the points at more than 13,000 years old. The team examined the sedimentary layers and the artifacts to determine if the sediment, and as a result the timeline preserved as new layers are laid down, had been disrupted or if the samples had been contaminated.

“As a result, they determined that the projectile points — which were broken and appear to have been cast aside as garbage — were as old or older than Clovis points found elsewhere.” The article describing Dr. Jenkins’ research is as follows:

### “Clovis Age Western Stemmed Projectile Points and Human Coprolites at the Paisley 'Caves”

Since we have been there and met the principal author, Dennis Jenkins, this article is particularly of interest. It notes that humans arrived in the Northern Great Basin by 12,300 BP. The extract follows:

“The Paisley Caves in Oregon record the oldest directly dated human remains (DNA) in the Western Hemisphere. More than 100 high-precision radiocarbon dates show that deposits containing artifacts and coprolites ranging in age from 12,450 to 2295 14C years ago are well stratified. Western Stemmed projectile points were recovered in deposits dated to 11,070 to 11,340 14C years ago, a time contemporaneous with or preceding the Clovis technology. There is no evidence of diagnostic Clovis technology at the site. These two distinct technologies were parallel developments, not the product of a unilinear technological evolution. "Blind testing" analysis of coprolites by an independent laboratory confirms the presence of human DNA in specimens of pre-Clovis age. The colonization of the Americas involved multiple technologically divergent, and possibly genetically divergent, founding groups.”  
(Dennis Jenkins, *Science*, 2012-07-13, pages 132 & 223-227)

### “Early Americans Arrived in Three Waves”

“New genetic evidence suggests people first settled the Americas in not one but three waves of migration from Siberia fleshing out the mysterious prehistory of the New World, scientist reported”  
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 in *Nature*.

Comparing thousands of genetic variations among 52 contemporary Native American populations to 17 Siberian groups seeking traces of their common ancestry hundreds of generations ago, research team led by geneticist David Reich at Harvard Medical School found that Native Americans descend from three distinct streams of genes from Asia—each the hereditary signature of different ethnic group of settlers who began to arrive 15,000 years ago or more.

“Most Native Americans from Canada to the tip of South America owe their ancestry to the first of three migrations—a group of restless Ice Age nomads the researchers call the “First American” wave.

“They found additional genetic evidence of the second ethnic migration from Asia preserved among the Eskimo-Aleut people of Arctic, and traces of a third ethnic wave among the Na-Dene-speaking Chipewyan people of Canada. Those two waves, which may have started a few centuries after the first, are more closely related to today’s Han Chinese population”.

(Robert Lee Hotz, *Wall Street Journal*, Thursday, July 12, 2012, A3)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/12/science/earliest-americans-arrived-in-3-waves-not-1-dna-study-finds.html?\\_r=1&hpw](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/12/science/earliest-americans-arrived-in-3-waves-not-1-dna-study-finds.html?_r=1&hpw)

### “Genes Suggest Three Groups Peopled the New World”

The 2 captions for its 3 photos follow:

“**First** wave. This Zapotec woman from Mexico descends from the first people to colonize America.”

“**Diverse origins.** This Chipewyan woman (*left*) in Canada and Aleut boy (*right*) in Alaska descend in part from two distinct groups of ancient migrants to the New World.” (Ann Gibbons, *Science*. 2012-07-13 page 144)

## “An Ancient-American Starbucks?”

“Europeans exploring the American southeast in the 1600s wrote of a purification ritual practiced by the native people, involving dancing, vomiting, and large amounts of what the travelers called black drink. The highly caffeinated tea was brewed from the shrub *Ilex vomitona*, a species of holly. Researchers have now found the first direct evidence of black drink-in ceramic beakers at the ancient city of Cahokia . . . In its time, between about 1050 C.E. and 1350 C.E., Cahokia was the largest and most sophisticated metropolis north of Mexico. Archaeologists excavating at Cahokia have found fragments of distinctively patterned, mug-shaped beakers containing residues presumed to be from chocolate. . . . [Archaeologist Patricia Crown of the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, and her colleagues] . . . showed that the beakers had indeed contained black drink-some 500 years before the Europeans described the brew in their journals. . . . The leaves must have been brought to Cahokia from the coastal region between eastern Texas and Florida, 400 kilometers away . . . <http://scim.ag/Black-Drink>”  
(*Science*, 2012-08-10, p. 630)

## “Neanderthal Champion Defends the Reputation of Our Closest Cousins.”

The article is a profile of archeologist **Joao Zilhao**, who argues that Neanderthals were “modern.” In Zilhao’s earlier years his “team found Neanderthal tools, hearths, and fossils dating from 65,000 to 35,000 years ago at Oliviera, making them among the latest surviving Neanderthals consistent with other evidence that Portugal and Spain served as a “refugium” for the last Neanderthals.”

Zilhao has argued “that Neanderthals and modern humans are the same species and that they intermixed extensively. For example, in a 2010 paper in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Zilhao and Trinkaus argued that the teeth of a child from the Lagar Velho rock shelter in Portugal show hybridization between moderns and Neanderthals. Recently, the two have argued that the oldest undisputed modern human fossil in Europe, a roughly 40,000-year-old skull from Romania, bears some Neanderthal features.”

“He also argues that he already has produced the smoking gun on Neanderthals' symbolic abilities: jewelry, including ochre-painted shells, from sites in Spain dated as early as 45,000 to 50,000 years ago, earlier than the first accepted dates for modern humans in Europe (*Science*, 15 January 2010, p. 255).” The article also provides opposing views. (Michael Balter, *Science*, 2012-08-10, pp. 642-3.)

## “A New Face Reveals Multiple Lineages Alive at the Dawn of Our Genus *Homo*”

“Ever since paleoanthropologist Meave Leakey got her first look at the skull of a strange new kind of human ancestor in 1972 at Koobi Fora, Kenya, she and others have searched in vain for more members of this enigmatic species. The 2-million-year-old skull had a big brain that made it a member of our own genus *Homo*. But its long, flat face and other features distinguished it from the other two members of early *Homo* known at the time, so many researchers thought of it as a new species, *Homo rudolfensis*. But some questioned whether it was a new species or just an unusual member of *Homo habilis*, which lived 2.3 million to 1.4 million years ago. “It was always an anomaly,” says Leakey, of the Turkana Basin Institute in Kenya and Stony Brook University in New York. “We always knew we had to find more of it.”

“Now, after 40 years of searching, Leakey and her international team of researchers have found fossils of a face and two jawbones that they say belong to the same species as the mysterious skull of *H*

*rudolfensis*. Like the first find, the new fossils were unearthed at Koobi Fora on the east side of Lake Turkana. Together, they show that the original skull wasn't a "weird individual," and that **a third type of early *Homo* did indeed live 1.78 million to 2.03 million years ago at Koobi Fora**, says Fred Spoor of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, co-author of a paper on the specimens published this week in *Nature*. That means multiple lineages of early *Homo* lived at Koobi Fora at the same time as our direct ancestor *Homo erectus*, which lived about 1.8 million to 500,000 years ago in Africa and Asia. "This material shows there is really good evidence that there has to be *H. erectus* plus two or three other taxa," says paleoanthropologist Bernard Wood of George Washington University in Washington, D.C., who is not a co-author.

"When the first small bit of jaw was found in 2007, Leakey didn't think it was particularly special. But then Elgite Lokorimudang of the Turkana Basin Institute found the well-preserved face and teeth of a juvenile protruding out of rock in 2008. This "was really exciting," Leakey says. It looked like a small "pocket version" of the *H rudolfensis* skull, known as KNM-ER 1470-with an unusually flat face, as opposed to the more jutting upper jaw found in *H. habilis*, Spoor says. Its small size also ruled out the older view that *H rudolfensis* skulls were invariably larger than those of *H. habilis*.

"With the discovery of a remarkably complete lower jaw in 2009, the team got its first good look at the jaw of this elusive species (1470 did not have a lower jaw). This and the new face revealed that *H rudolfensis* had an unusual U-shaped palate, with canines facing the front of the jaw rather than aligned on the sides in a V-shaped palate, as in *H habilis*. The new jaws also had smaller molars than expected; other flat-faced taxa, such as *Paranthropus boisei*, had huge molars. "Now we know: Having a flat face doesn't equal having big molars," Spoor says.

"The new fossils were all found on the Karari Ridge of Koobi Fora, within 10 kilometers of the fossil beds where the 1470 skull was found-and within the same region where fossils of *H habilis* and *H erectus* have been discovered. Paleoanthropologist Timothy White of the University of California, Berkeley, warns that the new fossils could be *H habilis* because "we still don't understand *H habilis*." But if three species coexisted at roughly the same time and place, says paleoanthropologist William Kimbel of Arizona State University, Tempe, who is not a co-author, "We need to think about hypotheses to explain how they might have divided up their world adaptively." (Ann Gibbons, *Science*, 2012-08-10, p. 635)

### **"Pots and Crocks"**

"The invention of pottery allowed for more secure storage of food than was provided by baskets or hide pouches, and the vessels could also be used in cooking. The earliest pottery has been thought to have appeared in China and Japan - 18,000 years ago, several thousands of years before the advent of agriculture. Wu *et al.* (p. 1696; see the Perspective by Shelach) have now dated broken pieces of pottery from a cave in China, the earliest of which date to 20,000 years ago, the time of the Last Glacial Maximum. Scorch marks on many pieces imply that the pottery was used in cooking." ("20,000 POTERY first in China", edited by Stella Hurtley, *Science*, 2012-06-29 pages 1616 and 1644-5)

### **"Ice Age Tools Hint at 40,000 Years of Bushman Culture"**

"Tools and ornaments found in a South African cave are almost identical to those San hunter-gatherers still use 40 millennia later. Archaeologists studying a South African cave say they have found 44,000-year old artifacts-including bone tools and poisoned arrowheads-nearly identical to those still in use by hunter-gatherers. The team calls the finds the oldest known examples of "modern culture," the adaptations that enabled *Homo sapiens* to make it through the last Ice Age and survive to the present day." Michael Balter, *Science*, 2012-08-03 page 512

## Sacramento Archaeological Society, Inc.

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## Mark Your Calendars

**October 6, 2012, Saturday** – SCA Northern California Data Sharing Meeting

**October 7, 2012, Sunday** - Marin coastal survey

**October 27, 2012, Saturday** – Santa Cruz Island Archaeology Tour

**December 1, 2012, Saturday** – Annual Meeting and Michael Newland speaking on climate change and coastal archaeology



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