Sacramento Archeological Society, Inc.
Newsletter

www.sacarcheology.org. July/August – **2026**

UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

July 2026
July 11, 2026 – Saturday 2:00 -3:30 PM PT 1:00 – 6:00 PM PT Seven Annual SAS Pool-Party/Pot-Luck/Social Dan and Victoria Foster's home

August 2026
August 1, 2026 - Saturday 2:00 – 3:30 PM PT - **SAS Webinar**, Dr. Paulette F. C. Steeves, Cree-Métis, Anthropologist /Archaeologist, Agoma University, Canada, "Un-Erasing the Indigenous Paleolithic: Re-Writing the Ancient Past of the Western Hemisphere (the Americas)"

See announcements: https://sacarcheology.org/announcements/ for **webinar access information** and calendar: https://sacarcheology.org/archaeology-activities/calendar-of-events/ for the complete **set of events** in our website: www.sacarcheology.org.

The seminars will start at 2:00 PM PT generally on the first Saturday of the month and formally conclude at about 3:30 PM. All presentations are provided via Zoom. Some will be held in Davis, CA at Pena Archaeology Facility (607 Pena Dr. Suite 600. Friends are welcome and also invited to join our organization. There is no participation fee. All are invited to attend the webinar before 2:00 PM PT, 1:45 for chat time.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Each year Sacramento Archeological Society is pleased to award scholarship to students who are pursuing a career in anthropology/archaeology. This year we received 20 applications from which eight scholarships were awarded. The scholarships in amounts varying from $500 to $1000 will be used by students for their graduate research or attendance at field schools.

These scholarships are funded by generous donations from members of the society. Without the support of these donors the scholarships would not be possible. Thank you!

The scholars who received scholarship will be giving talks on their research/archaeological experiences to SAS in 2027. The scholarship recipients are listed as follows in alphabetical order.

Michaela Maguin, Graduate student at Rice University

Michaela is a PhD student exploring later cultures' interactions with Greco-Roman art and architecture. She plans to attend the IFR's field school in Corona, Italy. This program has a strong emphasis on survey and mapping technologies including 3D photogrammerty, LiDAR, drone survey, GIS mapping, AI and virtual/augmented reality. Michaela is interested to incorporate the digital reconstruction and GIS mapping skills learned at Cortona into her dissertation. In her research she hopes to use digital tools to make apparent the impact foundation myths had on the formation of Roman group identity. The SAS scholarship will support her attendance at this field school.

Joy Mersmann, Graduate student at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Joy is tackling a dissertation project that involves the analysis of archaeoobotanical material from a 1970's legacy collection associated with the Turner site, a small Mississippian-period farming village and ancestral Osage community in southeastern Missouri. Allison will attempt to clarify the site's timeline of occupation. She will use digital imaging analysis to characterize variation within these crop assemblages and radiocarbon dating of oily seeds such as sunflower and sumpweed (*Iva annua*). Both studied seeds played a likely role in Native cuisine. The SAS scholarship will be used to perform AMS dating of samples at the NOSAMS lab.

Rosa Murphy, Graduate student at University of California, Davis

Rosa as a graduate student interested in Classical Studies she plans to take part in the University of California Berkeley sponsored Nemea Center's Field School at Tsoungiza, Greece. This will be her first field school. While at Tsoungiza, in addition to learning archaeological skills, she will be working to create 3D models of artifacts from the site. The SAS scholarship will be used to support her attendance at this field school.

Kelly Ng, Student at University of California, Berkeley

Kelly plans to attend her first field school at Rusellae, in Southern Tuscany, Italy. It is an IMPERO project that examines long-term occupation patterns, lived experiences of inhabitants and site evolution between the Etruscan and medieval periods. The SAS scholarship will be used to support attendance at this field school.

Miriam Romero Toledo, Graduate student at University of California, Davis

Miriam is investigating Neanderthal Middle Paleolithic and modern human Upper Paleolithic adaptations in southeastern Spain. With the existing record from sites in southeastern Spain she aims to use faunal remains to study the environments and suggest how Neanderthals and humans adapted to the environment. The SAS scholarship will support her travel to Spain for data collection and analysis.

Chloe Schutt, Undergraduate student at University of California, Berkeley

Chloe plans to attend Berkeley's Nemea Field School in Greece. She is majoring in anthropology, Ancient Greek and Roman Studies. As a research intern she cataloged archival materials from Nemea and Mycenae field schools. The SAS scholarship will support her attendance at Nemea Field School.

Claire Villegas, Undergraduate student at University of California, Santa Cruz

Claire will be a participant in the 2026 Puerto Rico Materials Unearthed (MUD) project, a geoarchaeological survey. She will provide support for graduate student's dissertation project by collecting clay samples. These samples will be used in a comparative analysis of previously recovered ceramics to reconstruct trade routes and production techniques. The field work will involve collecting clay and performing site surveying across the island. Claire plans to record photos and written documentation from the field process. The SAS scholarship will support her participation in the project.

Caitlyn Young, Graduate student at University of California, Davis

Caitlyn is passionate about what drone technology can bring to questions related to the archaeological record. One of her project involves using drones to monitor traditional tuber cultivation by Paiute groups. The SAS scholarship will support her attendance at "Drone Camp", a collaborative and intensive Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle (UAV) field school by the UC Agriculture and Natural Resource department, five UC campuses, CSU Monterey Bay and three community colleges. Developing these skills will help her fill the growing demand for drone pilots in archaeological site surveys as well as mapping utility corridors and ecological and wildfire management.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Eight Annual SAS Pool-Party/Pot-Luck/Social

Saturday, July 11, 2026

1:00 – 6:00 PM PT

Dan and Victoria Foster's home
8629 White Front Way
Elk Grove, CA 95757

Dan and Victoria Foster have again offered their home for this event. This is a chance to socialize with fellow SAS members. Friends are of course welcome.

Bring your favorite dish and swimming suit. Put the event on your calendar and **RSVP** to Dan Foster at calfirearchy@gmail.com or (279) 444-2099 to log your attendance, obtain a parking

map and sign up for a dish. There will be plenty of parking close to their house. Dan can offer a map showing the best places to park (really close to their home).

SAS Webinar

Saturday, August 1, 2026

2:00 – 4:30 PM PT

"Un-Erasing the Indigenous Paleolithic: Re-Writing the Ancient Past of the Western Hemisphere (the Americas)"

Dr. Paulette F. C. Steeves, Cree-Métis, Anthropologist /Archaeologist, Agoma University, Canada,

Abstract: In the Americas, the deep Indigenous past dating to more than 12,000 years ago has been aggressively denied by American anthropologists for over a century. Anthropologists' denial of the deep Indigenous past of the Americas has cleaved Indigenous people's links to their homeland and created them as recent immigrants to the Americas on a global scale of human history. Dr. Steeves has listed over 500 pre-11,200 YBP archaeological sites in a database of Pleistocene-age archaeological sites in North and South America that meet or exceed the scientific criteria for a legitimate archaeological site. Based on research and the published data of hundreds of pre-11,200 years before present archaeological sites, oral traditions, environmental evidence and paleo-mammalian migrations, she argues that people have been in the Western Hemisphere for over 130,000 years.

About the speaker: Dr. Paulette Steeves. Ph.D. **(**Cree- Metis) is an Indigenous archaeologist. She was born in Whitehorse, Yukon Territories, and grew up in Lillooet, British Columbia, Canada. She received her BA in Anthropology, Honors Cum Laude, from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 2000. In 2008, she was awarded the Clifford D. Clark fellowship for graduate studies at Binghamton University in New York State; she successfully defended her dissertation in 2015. Dr. Steeves has taught in Canada and the USA, focusing on Native American and First Nations histories and decolonization of academia, archaeology and knowledge production. She is a Full Professor in Geography, Geology, and Land Stewardship at Algoma University. Dr. Steeves was awarded a five-year Canada Research Chair Tier II in Indigenous History, Healing, and Reconciliation for 2019-2024 and 2024-2029. Dr. Steeves's primary research focuses on the Western Hemisphere's Indigenous Paleolithic, reclaiming and reviving Indigenous peoples' deep-time links to homelands and ancestors, and healing and reconciliation. She has built extensive databases of Pleistocene-age archeological sites in the Western Hemisphere (the Americas). She weaves Indigenous knowledge from oral traditions and rock art through \archaeological evidence that supports an early human entry into the Western Hemisphere as early as 200,000 years before the present. Her book *The Indigenous Paleolithic of the Western Hemisphere* was published in July 2021 and received the American Library Association Choice 2022 Outstanding Academic Title award.

PAST EVENTS

SAS Webinar "From Steppe to Cave: Faunal Isotopic Reconstructions of Late Pleistocene Climate in Mongolia and Belgium" by Daniel Goring, PhD Student at University of California Davis

On Saturday, May 2, 2026 to an audience of SAS members and friends on Zoom Daniel Goring, a 2025 scholarship recipients and PhD student from UC Davis talked about his PhD dissertation project on the possible effect of climate on the disappearance of Neanderthals.

Daniel gave background and preliminary research on two studied sites: Trou Al'Wesse in Belgium and Tolbor-17 and -16 in Northern Mongolia. The period of interest is The Middle to Upper Paleolithic transition (50-40 ka.). His study is intended to investigate local climatic conditions in each of the sites during the period when Neanderthal disappeared and *Homo sapiens* expanded their range. His method for identifying climate is to sample faunal teeth enamel (horse's currently) from the sites and measure oxygen isotope ratios that reflect changes in seasonal water drank by the animals. Preliminary results suggest that summers were cooler but no change was found for winters. More analysis is necessary for a stronger conclusion. This work will involve collection of more samples from both sites.

SAS Webinar "Reconstructing Pleistocene – Holocene Lifeways at Máani Húyyu Muwekma Yatiš Túnněste-tka (CA SCL-1070)" by Hayley Kievman, PhD student at University of Utah and "From Iberia to the Eastern Steppe: Human and Neanderthal Subsistence Strategies at the Edges of Eurasia" by Madison McCartin, PhD student at University of California Davis

On Saturday, June 6, 2026 to an audience of SAS members and friends on Zoom Hayley Kievman began the scholar symposium with a discussion of her dissertation. She had analyzed mortuary remains from the period ~7000 to 12,000 years before present (BP) to ascertain lifeways in the lower East Bay during the late Paleocene and early Holocene. These remains were recovered from a site located on Walsh Avenue, Santa Clara. The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area gave permission to Dr. Alexandra M. Greenwald, Department of Anthropology, University of Utah, Hayley's professor to do archaeometric (C14/AMS) dating analysis on these remains. In this talk Hayley reported on the results of stable isotope, radiocarbon, proteomic, and ancient DNA analysis performed on 19 of these skeletal elements. She highlighted the diet across the population and singled out specific individuals. She discovered that C3 plants were consumed the most and then fish. It was interesting that big game was not a large dietary source even for Holocene individuals.

Madison McCartin followed with a discussion of her dissertation research project. She is researching hominin subsistence during the Middle to Upper Paleolithic transition for Neanderthal and modern humans in Eurasia. Her focus is the analysis of macrofaunal remains at sites in Spain, Belgium and Mongolia. Madison's dissertation hopes to ascertain the hunting preferences of hominins and postulate possible differences in subsistence strategies between Homo sapiens and Neanderthals, which may have led to Neanderthals' demise. She presented preliminary results from Trou Al'Wesse, Tolbor-17 and T-AM. More work is planned.

MEMBER'S CORNER

Major Donors

We are pleased to acknowledge our major contributors for 2025/2026. These donations support our scholarship program.

Patron (**$1000** or more, listed in alphabetical order)
Paul K. Davis and Knuti VanHoven
Jan and Tom Johansen
Dennis Fenwick and Martha Lewis
Ruth McElhinney
Carolyn and Gordon McGregor

Sponsor ($100 - $999)
George W. Foxworth
Jeremy Johansen
Teresa Steele

Members

We welcome new members: Kiera Colorado, Madison McCartin, Karum Yee, Denise Miller, Andrea Mahoney, and Leah Wargo. We are sad to report the passing of a past member, Carol Berry. Our kind thoughts go to her family in this time of loss.

Annual Memberships

All memberships are renewable on **January 1** annually except for those who joined recently (after September 1 of the previous year). Please support the society by promptly paying your **2026** dues. Remember your dues help make **scholarships** possible. We keep overhead low so that the funds can be used to support students. You may now use our web site https://sacarcheology.org/society-membership/pay-dues/ to renew and make payment using a credit card or Paypal. Remember a membership benefit is email receipt of archaeological/anthropological articles and notices of related events.

The annual dues are:

Student/Limited Member	$15
Individual Membership	$30
Family Membership	$40
Sponsor	$100 – 999 (individual)
	$500 – 999 (business)
Patron	$1000

Alternatively, please make out your check to "**Sacramento Archeological Society, Inc**." and mail it to:

Sacramento Archeological Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 163287
Sacramento, CA 95816-9287
We really appreciate your support.

Annual Dues for 2026

Name(s):_____ Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

_____ Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address:

_____

_____

Student/Limited Member	$15	____	$_____
Individual Membership	$30	____	$_____
Family Membership	$40	____	$_____
Sponsor	$100	____	$_____
Scholarship Donation			$_____

Total enclosed $_____

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REFERENCES

Recent Articles

The reviewed article(s) chronologically presented (oldest subject first) are:

- "An Early Miocene ape form the biogeographic crossroads of African and Eurasian Hominoidea"
- "Neanderthal males paired with modern human females" and "Interbreeding between Neanderthals and modern humans was strongly sex biased"

- “Neanderthals lived on a knife’s edge for 350,000 years”
- “Debate explodes over key early American site”
- “World’s oldest dog identified at ancient hunter-gatherer site”
- “A rare elderly loom”
- “Ancient artifacts hint at protowriting”
- “Roman rituals rise from the ashes of Pompeii”

“An Early Miocene ape from the biogeographic crossroads of African and Eurasian Hominoidea”

“The Early Miocene fossil record documenting hominoid evolution has long been restricted primarily to sites in East Africa, whereas contemporaneous North African sites have only yielded remains of cercopithecoid monkey. In this article the researchers describe a fossil ape from North Africa, a new genus (*Masripithecus*) from the Early Miocene (~17 million to 18 million years) of northern Egypt, on the basis of mandibular remains. A combined molecular-morphological Bayesian tip-dating analysis positions *Masripithecus* closer to crown hominoids that coeval fossil apes from East Africa, thereby filling a phylogenetic and biogeographic gap in the evolution of stem hominoids. This evidence suggests that crown Hominoidea might have originated during the Early Miocene in the underexplored northeastern part of Afro-Arabia, rather than in eastern Africa or Eurasia.”” (Bridget Alex, *Science*, 2026-02-26 pp. 855-856)

“Neanderthal males paired with modern human females”

“As groups of modern humans moved into Eurasia, they repeatedly encountered the Neanderthals who had lived there for millennia. The Neanderthal DNA that persists in people today comes from an episode of interbreeding between 40,000 and 45,000 years ago, only a few thousand years before Neanderthals vanished. Hardly any of it can be found along our X chromosomes, one of which is always inherited from the mother. In contrast, autosomes—the non-sex chromosomes numbered 1 through 22—contain on average five times more Neanderthal DNA than the X chromosomes in people today. One possible explanation for the skew is that male offspring carrying an X chromosome inherited from a Neanderthal mother may not have survived or reproduced as readily as their counterparts with (one or two) X chromosomes from modern human parents. But there’s an alternative explanation: that the female partner in the cross-species sex was usually a modern human. To test the hypothesis the researchers examined the X chromosome of a Neanderthal female who resided in Siberia roughly 122,000 years ago and found traces of earlier affairs between Neanderthals and *H. sapiens. T*heir study estimated that those couplings happened roughly 250,000 years ago. I males from one species monopolized females from the other, Steven Churchill, a Duke University paleoanthropologist says, “it’s hard to reconcile that with anything but a competitive, unfriendly interaction.”” (Bridget Alex, *Science*, 2026-02-26 pp. 855-856)
“Interbreeding between Neanderthals and modern humans was strongly sex biased” (Alexander Platt *et al*, *Science*, 2026-02-26 pp. 922-925)

"Neanderthal lived on a knife's edge for 350,000 years"

"Between 400,000 and 45,000 years ago, Neanderthals had most of Eurasia to themselves, hunting large game, harvesting plants, expertly knapping stone tools, and fashioning clothing from animal skins. But their existence was precarious. Two new studies show many Neanderthals lived in small, far-flung groups; likely experienced significant inbreeding and survived a close brush with extinction about 75,000 years ago. The findings, based on ancient DNA obtained in some cases from bone fragments no bigger than a French fry. We're finding little pieces in lots of places," says Hélène Rouger, a paleoanthropologist at California State University, Northridge who co-authored on the new papers, both published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. One paper details genomic insights from a fragment of Neanderthal bones just 2.5 centimeters in length. It was found in the back of Denisovea Cave, a vaulted chamber in the Altai region of southern Siberia. The analysis found many genetic differences that occurred relatively quickly. The pattern likely reflects inbreeding in small, far-flung populations of just a few dozen individuals.

The second study hoping to examine the fate of Europe's Neanderthal population over their last 100,000 years linked the distributions of Neanderthal sites across Europe to genetics information from the mitochondrial DNA. The team found that Neanderthal sites and skeletal remains were widely distributed across the continent and their genomes relatively diverse, until about 75,000 years ago. Then as an ice age gripped the continent between 75,000 and 65,000 years ago the number of sites declined. Archaeological data show some Neanderthals found refuge in southwestern Europe, taking shelter inside caves in valleys of southern France, while abandoning or dying out in the rest of the continent. When the ice melted, the surviving Neanderthals spread out again. All the genetic diversity before 60,000 years ago vanished and one single line survives. Yet even as they expanded throughout Eurasia once more, genetic data also show the number of breeding individuals remained small for millennia. About 45,000 years ago sharp swings in climate conditions coincided with the arrival of anatomically modern humans in Europe. Those two events may have been disastrous for these fragile, inbred survivors." (Bridget Alex, *Science*, 2026-02-26 pp. 855-856)

"Debate explodes over key early American site

A new study challenges pre-Clovis age from Monte Verde site in southern Chile"

"A study published in *Science* aims to shatter the theory that human occupation at Monte Verde in southern Chile occurred about 14,500 years ago. The new study's first author, Todd Surovell, an archaeologist at University of Wyoming concluded that 14,500 years ago, the area was a forest. Later, sediment from a wetland settled over the wood and other debris from the forest floor, followed by volcanic ash from an eruption 11,000 years ago, Then, Chinchihuapi Creek formed cutting into the landscape and carrying some of the older wood and material into the rivers channel. Some 8600 years ago, gravel and sand started to fill in part of the creek, sealing the 14,500-year-old organic material inside much younger segments. The original Monte Verde dates, obtained from the older organic material are good but the human

occupation came later, characterized by stone tools that closely resemble those from other South American sites dating to after 8200 years ago.

The interpretation ignores that fact that some of the 14,500-year-old objects were clearly made by humans. Mastodon tusk shaped into a gouge and wooden artifacts with traces of mastodon skin still attached were found in the 1997 expedition. It seems unlikely that the mastodon remains were exploited thousands of years after the animal went extinct as the new dates would require. Also it is unclear whether the sediments dated in the new study are the same ones that Dillehay's team recorded during the original excavations. Surovell's team didn't find the intact peat layer, and Dillehay's team never found ash from the 11,000-year-old volcanic eruption. It is doubtful that the deposits dated by Surovell's team are the actual Monte Verde occupation deposits.

None of this matters to the larger debate of when people first arrived in the Americans, say University of Kansas geneticist Jennifer Raff. "Later dates from Monte Verde won't make any difference for the genetic models, which continue to be more consistent with a pre-Clovis peopling"." (Lizzie Wade, *Science*, 2026-03-19 pp. 1193-1194)

"World's oldest dog identified at ancient hunter-gatherer site 15,800-year-old puppy pushes confirmed origin of our canine companions back nearly 5000 years"

"In the summer of 2004, Douglas Baird, an archaeologist at the University of Liverpool was leading excavation in a remote hunter-gatherer site called Pinarbaşi in central Turkey when his team found something unusual: three puppies placed in a pit directly above a human burial. The bones were too small to tell whether they belonged to wolves or dogs. Their proximity to the human suggested the latter; but the remains—dated to about 15,800 years ago—were nearly 5000 years older than any confirmed dog. Now, more than 2 decade later, ancient DNA analysis of the bone confirms the pup were indeed dogs.

A few years after the Pinarbaşi discovery Baird made a similar find at a nearby site known as Bonculku Höyük occupied a few thousand years later. But there was a twist. Instead of being buried near humans, the dogs were buried with them, suggesting deepening of the human-dog relationship." (David Grimm, *Science*, 2026-02-26 pp. 1308-1309)

"A rare elderly loom"

"The loom is an ingenious invention: a wooden frame holds vertical threads kept taut by clay or stone weights, while horizontal bars are used to shift the threads and weave fabrics. In the journal *Antiquity* Spanish archaeologists unveiled of the world's oldest surviving looms, preserved within a house that collapsed when a fire ripped through an Iberian village 3450 years ago. The discovery is extremely rare. Loom weights dating to as early as 9000 BCE have been found but ancient looms were made of perishable wood and almost always decayed. The light weights found alongside the loom; charred pine beams hint at Bronze Age fashion—by suggesting the weaving of thin, delicate fibers, possibly from sheep's wool." (Bridget Alex, *Science*, 2026-02-26 pp. 855-856)

“Ancient artifacts hint at protowriting”

“Notches and dots carved into a 38,000-year-old ivory figurine may represent the earliest known symbolic precursors to written language, according to an analysis published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Made by some of the first modern humans to enter central Europe, the Adorant figurine is one of hundreds of handheld objects etched with intricate geometric designs discovered in a series of caves in the Swabian Alps of southwestern Germany. Statistical and computational modeling of thousands of these geometric shapes suggests their structure, diversity and repetition rates resemble that of proto-cuneiform, a precursor to writing that emerged in Mesopotamia roughly 5500 years ago, eventually developing into the cuneiform script used in Sumerian, the first document written language. This suggests early European hunter-gatherers had the same cognitive capacities and could encode similar amounts of information in physical objects as the people who developed written languages tens of thousands of years later” (Taylor Mitchell Brown, *Science*, 2026-02-26 p. 858)

“Roman rituals rise from the ashes of Pompeii”

“People in the ancient Roman city of Pompeii burnt aromatic resins imported from as far away as present-day sub-Saharan Africa and India in household incense burners. Incense burners, or censers, have been found across the Roman world, but scholars’ understanding of their use has mostly relied on ancient texts and images. However, Pompeii—which was buried under ash after a volcanic eruption in AD79—provides a glimpse of the past. The eruption killed thousands of people but preserved the city and other settlements for more than 1,500 years. Johannes Eber at the University of Zurich in Switzerland and his colleagues studied the burnt residues inside two censers: one from Pompeian inn and the other from a shrine in a Roman villa in the modern town of Boscoreale, Italy. Analyses revealed that the censers contained traces of woody plants, probably local species such as oak. The authors also found chemical markers indicative of imported aromatic tree resins. In the Boscoreale censer they found biological markers from grapes, indicating that wine offerings might have accompanied the aromatic resins” (*Nature,* V 652 2026-04-9 p. 277)

Sacramento Archeological Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 163287
Sacramento, CA 95816-9287