December PCAS Speaker

Don Christensen

Rock Art and the Cultural Landscape: A Study in the East Mojave

The Eastern Mojave Desert covers portions of California, Nevada, and Arizona and has significant concentrations of rock art. In 1993 the author and his colleagues developed a research design to sample rock art in the region in a variety of contexts and dispersed locations. Over the last twenty years this study went far beyond its original intent and evolved into a fairly comprehensive inventory that resulted in the recording of 345 sites with over 35,000 motifs. We are now in the process of analyzing and synthesizing this data into some meaningful conclusions. This presentation represents a work in progress.

(Continued on p. 3)

Petroglyph panel exhibiting superimposition and repecking, Black Mountains, Arizona.

PCAS Meetings Calendar

Holiday Gathering

December 12 - 6:30 pm
RSVP - see page 5
Lecture: 7:30 pm
(free and open to the public)

Speaker: Don Christensen
Topic: Rock Art and the Cultural Landscape: A Study in the East Mojave
Location: IRWD Community Room
15500 Sand Canyon Ave, Irvine

The Irvine Ranch Water District neither supports nor endorses the causes or activities of organizations that use the District’s meeting rooms which are made available for public use.

No Board Meeting
This Month!

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The Holiday Gathering replaces Dinner with the Speaker this month. See page 5 for information.

Please renew your PCAS membership. Save PCAS postage by renewing before notices are mailed.
**NOVEMBER SPEAKER NOTES**

**AQUÍ NACIÓ EL MUNDO:**

*Takalik Abaj, Guatemala, and Early Mesoamerican Civilization*

Submitted by Megan Galway

Dr. Brian D. Dillon presented an informative and entertaining description of many years of work at Takalik Abaj on the Pacific Slope of Guatemala and other sites throughout Mesoamerica. Takalik Abaj (meaning “Standing Stones”) was first identified in 1888 when a road cut exposed a Maya stela and was visited and reported on by a number of archaeologists through 1965. In 1976 Dr. Dillon began a five-year UC Berkeley excavation at the site. Ten years later he returned under the auspices of UCLA and was instrumental in having the site designated an Archaeological National Park. Dr. Dillon also introduced us to life in various field camps and to field workers, informants, and fellow researchers from sites around Mesoamerica.

Dr. Dillon discussed the question of whether the Olmec and Maya cultures were different and successive as previously thought. He believes artifacts from Takalik Abaj reflect the two cultures overlapping both geographically and chronologically. He notes that the Maya used a form of hieroglyphics (a written language) while the Olmec used iconography, and both forms may be found on the same steleae and sculptures at the site. This overlapping is found elsewhere in the Maya lowlands, with the Maya eventually becoming the dominant culture. There did appear to be some changes in cultural beliefs at Takalik Abaj over time, and the excavations have revealed sculpture “museums” and “dumps.” Mutilation of earlier sculptures was also noted.

The Pacific Slope of Guatemala has great elevations changes, creating many microclimates. This supports a variety of vegetation and resources. Maize is seen as a long-time staple with a 1:1 ratio noted between sites and cornfields. Hunting was also found to be important and diets were mixed and nutritious over a period of 3,000 years. Plant domestication over time included rubber and cacao. Dr. Dillon believes that Takalik Abaj is among the oldest and most important multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual sites on the Pacific Slope. It is an important pilgrimage site today. Forms of the cultures that flourished 3,000 years ago may still be seen in parts of Guatemala. Fifteen Indian languages in the region have roots in the original Mayan, and traditional deities are honored alongside Catholic saints. An annual shamans’ convention is held at a shrine at Takalik Abaj, venerating Stela 5, which was discovered in 1976.

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**2014 MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS**

PCAS memberships and subscriptions expire at the end of the calendar year, and renewals for 2014 will become due on January 1st.

Renewal reminders will be sent in early January, but we encourage you to avoid the holiday rush and send your renewal before year-end. Use the membership form in this newsletter, or print one from our website, www.pcas.org, and mail your check before the holiday rush begins.

Postage costs have risen again, and effective with the January newsletter, our preferred distribution will be by email. We email in printable PDF format, as opposed to the non-printable version posted to the website. If you are unable to accept your newsletter in this format, please advise us when you renew your membership, and we will continue mailing your copy. Libraries will continue to receive a mailed copy unless they chose otherwise. If accepting the electronic option, please be sure we have your current email on file. The continuing success of PCAS depends on the support of our members, and we thank you for this.
NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Submitted by Brian Steffensen

President Megan Galway called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Old Orange County Courthouse in Santa Ana, California. Board members present: Bob Brace, Gail Cochlin, Sherri Gust, Joe Hodulik, Hank Koerper, Steve O’Neil, and Brian Steffensen. Members present: Rene Brace, Scott Findlay, and Kathleen Shada.

The Board approved the minutes of the October 2013 meeting with one correction. The Treasurer’s report was approved. It was noted that there have been PCAS Quarterly sales of $4,162 this year, not including subscriptions. The Board approved moving $2,000 from the curation reserve fund.

Old Business:

Kathleen Shada of the Election Committee reported that Rene Brace, Scott Findlay, and Jane Gotheild were elected for three-year terms to the Board of Directors. The Board certified the election and thanked outgoing directors, Bob Brace, Joe Hodulik, and Hank Koerper, for their service. Curation managers have keys to the gate surrounding the Red Car Building.

New Business:

Members who normally donate ham and turkey for the Holiday Dinner will be supplying snack trays. This year we will be meeting in the Sand Canyon IRWD Community Room and will be restricted to finger foods. There will be no Board meeting or curation workday in December.

Committee Reports:

Joe Hodulik’s Award-Donation table raised $154 at the November meeting for the scholarship fund! Field Trip Chair Scott Findlay said that there will be no field trip in December. PCAS Quarterly Editor Hank Koerper reported that a PCAS Quarterly double-issue, Volume 49, Numbers 1 and 2, will be published in January, and only those current on their 2014 membership will receive it. Joe Hodulik will have a silent auction for a kachina doll at the Holiday meeting with all funds to support the PCAS Scholarship fund.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 pm.

December Speaker (continued from p. 1)

The context of sites has always offered a more concrete view of the significance of rock art than the more subjective models that focus on interpreting the meaning of rock art that are popular today. The approach used here will involve the concept of cultural landscape. Prehistoric and historic people lived within the context of their natural environment; it is not a separate entity to be treated as an abstraction. Through behavior, cognition, and perception people assign meaning to the environment and transform spaces into places. This dynamic process results in a cultural landscape full of symbolism and metaphor that reflects ideological, social, and political relationships. This conceptualized environment is transmitted by culture and language to create comprehension and order within the physical surroundings. Traditionally, archaeology has focused on settlement patterns and the ecological adaptation of subsistence strategies. It has given scant attention to social maintenance that includes ritual significance and social and economic interactions of multiple societies. Rock art is just one device used to commemorate significant places. It is associated with such basic necessities as water, shelter, resource procurement, commodities exchange, and the travel corridors that facilitate those activities. Rock art is also involved in the nonmaterial aspects of social relationships. Recent ethnographic investigations of the Chemehuevi and the Aha Makav provide Native American perspectives to historic, mythical, and spiritual places of importance. Some of these sites are unmarked, but many have rock art present.

Besides an investigation of the importance of context, the presentation will discuss the traditional problems of rock art research: recording methodology, chronology, and cultural affiliation. One of the problems in the East Mojave is the lack of data obtained from systematic excavations that provide the foundation for developing cultural chronologies that rock art studies rely upon.

Mr. Christensen is a retired teacher of social science at the secondary level and a former collegiate track/cross country coach. He has a BA in history from CSU Fullerton and a MA in education. He has been a member of PCAS since 1972. He has 40 years of field experience working on excavations, surveys, and rock art recording for CRM firms, the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and BLM in California, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. He has over thirty articles published in a variety of journals, including the PCAS Quarterly. He is the co-author with Jerry Dickey and Steve Freers of the recently released book, Rock Art of the Grand Canyon Region.

Curation Workday: There will be no curation workday in December.

Field Trips: There will be no field trip in December. Please check your January 2014 Newsletter for future field trip information.
AN INTERESTING PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE EVANS COLLECTION, RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL MUSEUM (PART 1)

Henry C. Koerper

A number of articles might familiarize the reader with Samuel Cary Evans, Jr. (1866–1932) (e.g., Langenwalter and Brock 1984; Woodward 2006; Koerper and McDearmon 2010, 2011; Koerper and Cramer 2011). The four-time mayor of Riverside and two-term state senator is perhaps best remembered for his quixotic efforts to learn the function and meaning of one of California’s most celebrated species of artifact—the coggled stone.

Evans grew a passion for Indianology beginning when he was a preteenager, eventually amassing an ethnographic and archaeological collection that became the nucleus for an upstart Riverside Municipal Museum (RMM). Along with coggd stones, ceramic pots and jars, baskets, and other Native manufactures, Evans donated, for instance, photographs, one of which is shared here through the kind permission of Kevin Hallaran, RMM Archivist.

This circa 1910s photograph was perhaps taken at the Torres-Martinez Reservation, Coachella Valley. Located at the northwestern end of the Salton Sea, Torres-Martinez straddles Riverside and Imperial Counties. This is Desert Cahuilla territory, with a few Chemehuevis then attached to the reservation.

It was not Evans’ camera that captured the image of the lady seen milling flour in front of a rectangular jacal structure. The Riverside politician wanted to learn the woman’s identity, so in early 1932 Evans mailed the photo to Mrs. Nellie Coffman of Palm Springs. She soon located two elderly Indians who quickly identified the woman as the wife of Pancho Lomas of Torres-Martinez.

The scene appears staged, the photo shoot requiring a confluence of varied tools associated with female industry. The author suspects that the photographer’s selection of artifacts drew conscious guidance from Alfred Kroeber’s (1908) monograph, *Ethnography of the Cahuilla Indians*. Mrs. Lomas balances a heavy pestle within a hopper basket affixed, probably with vegetal gum rather than asphaltum, to the rim of a large stone mortar, albeit probably with a shallow cavity. Given the large diameter of the basket’s bottom opening, it was undoubtedly constructed on the foundation of a hoop rather than crafted as a normal coiled basket with its bottom subsequently cut away (see Kroeber 1908:43, Plate 15).

Mrs. Coffman commented to Evans (letter, 11 February 1932) that such basket hopper mortars were not used at Torres-Martinez. Indeed, Kroeber (1908:40, 43, 52) recorded that Desert Cahuilla did not employ basket hopper mortars but used wooden mortars with long pestles, equipment best suited to processing mesquite beans; however, in Kroeber’s day the Pass Cahuilla still had shallow stone mortars with basketry rims. Was the photograph not taken in Desert Cahuilla territory, or was this hopper mortar a prop that was secured elsewhere?

(To be continued, January 2014 Newsletter)

References Cited

Koerper, Henry C., and Joe Cramer

Koerper, Henry C., and Bobby McDearmon


Kroeber, Alfred L.

Langenwalter, Paul E., and James P. Brock

Woodward, Lisa L.
PCAS HOLIDAY GATHERING

Thursday, December 12TH
6:30 PM
IRWD Meeting Room
15500 Sand Canyon, Irvine

Our speaker is Don Christensen:
Rock Art and the Cultural Landscape: A Study in the East Mojave
Lecture at 7:30 pm - free and open to the public

1. Bring finger foods (appetizers or desserts) to serve 6 people.
2. This year’s Holiday meeting will be at the IRWD Community Room on Sand Canyon.
3. Please bring food ready to serve. No heating is available.
4. No alcoholic beverages are allowed.

Sign up by contacting Megan Galway, Membership@PCAS.org or 714-539-6354, and let us know what you are bringing.
Exhibits


Lectures


Classes, Meetings, and Events


Websites

Visit www.pcas.org for all the latest news.

Editor’s Note: Please confirm time and place of listing prior to the event. Submit items for Dig This to newsletter@pcas.org.
PCAS CODE OF ETHICS

The Pacific Coast Archaeological Society (PCAS) is a non-profit group of professional and avocational people dedicated to proper management of our cultural resources, public education, and the protection and preservation of archaeological materials and collections.

The following principles have been adopted by the PCAS:

1. Professional methods and forms will be used on all archaeological field surveys, excavations, and laboratory sessions.
2. A complete record of field and laboratory work will be filed with the PCAS Curator and stored at a facility approved by the Society’s Board of Directors.
3. No archaeological materials will be removed without proper permits, landowner permission, and a field research design.
4. Unless otherwise legally stipulated before activity commences, all materials collected will be deposited for further research with the Curator at a facility approved by the Society's Board of Directors.
5. All generated reports will be the property of the Society and distributed as deemed appropriate.
6. All Society field activities will be performed only under the direction of a qualified field archaeologist (Principal Investigator) and the supervision of field or site directors.
7. The above principles will be observed on both Society approved projects and projects performed under the direction of an authorized institution or organization.
8. The Society and its members will strive to educate the public of the importance and proper management of our non-renewable cultural resources and to discourage the collection and commercial exploitation of archaeological materials.
9. PCAS members shall not benefit from the acquisition, purchase, sale, or trade of archaeological artifacts, materials, or specimens.
10. All members shall adhere to City, County, State, and Federal antiquities laws.

PCAS SPEAKER CALENDAR

January 9, 2014
Steve Freers
*Anthropometric Stature and Gender Inferences from Pictograph Handprints in Southern California*

February 13, 2014
Dr. Micah Hale
*Adaptive Divergence Among Southern California Hunter Gatherers*

March 13, 2014
Dr. Todd Braje

April 10, 2014
John Rafter

May 8, 2014
Cara Ratner

PCAS President Megan Galway with Alexandria Fursboon, the 2013 recipient of the $1,000 Myrtle Sodeburg Memorial Scholarship, at the October PCAS meeting. Alexandria is a student at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and expects to graduate in June 2014. She plans to pursue her master’s degree and work in cultural resource management.
2013 PCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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*Denotes PCAS Board Member

PACIFIC COAST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
2014 Calendar Year Membership and Subscription Form

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I have read and agree to abide by the PCAS Code of Ethics __________________________

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