DINNER WITH THE SPEAKER

Please join this month’s speaker, Cara Ratner, and PCAS members for dinner before the May 8th General Meeting. We will meet at 6 pm at Mimi’s Café, 4030 Barranca Parkway, Irvine.

Groove marks in Fate Bell Shelter, Lower Pecos, Texas.

May PCAS Speaker

Cara Ratner

Ritual Symbols in Rock Art: Cupules and Incised Grooves in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands, Texas

Rock art at archaeological sites is often dismissed as a culturally symbolic representation that cannot be objectively or scientifically analyzed or interpreted adequately. Such dismissals are detrimental to understanding all aspects of a given culture. Although uninformed interpretations of rock art panels are counterproductive, systematic recording and the testing of different hypotheses is a valid way to begin to better understand the possible range of social functions of rock art. This research examines whether indigenous women’s fertility is represented in rock art depictions, known as cupules and groove marks, (Continued on p. 3)

PCAS Meetings Calendar

General Meeting
Free and Open to the Public
May 8 - 7:30 pm
Speaker: Cara Ratner
Topic: Ritual Symbols in Rock Art: Cupules and Incised Grooves in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands, Texas
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.

Board Meeting
All Members Welcome
May 15 - 7:00 pm
Location: Old Orange County Courthouse
PCAS Library, Ground Floor
211 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana

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Call for Volunteers
Garfield Archaeology Day, June 16
See Page 7 in this Newsletter
APRIL SPEAKER NOTES

The Tortoise Intaglio Mystery

Submitted by Megan Galway

At our April meeting John Rafter presented new information and ideas on the origin of the Tortoise Intaglio. This ground figure is located two miles north of Highway 15 between Barstow and Yermo and is believed by many to be a recent creation. Tortoises are uncommon in Mojave Desert petroglyphs, but similar images have been noted at Buzzard Rock on the Mojave River and in the Rodman Mountains.

Mr. Rafter noted he was told by the San Bernardino County Museum that the intaglio had no site trinomial and was most likely created by General Patton’s troops during desert warfare training. He believes the area to be too close to civilian activities to have been used for live fire practice, and there is no visible evidence of military activity in the immediate area. Mr. Rafter researched military emblems but was unable to find any depicting tortoises, and the curator of the military museum at Fort Irwin was unaware of any.

The area is covered by dense desert pavement and the intaglio was created by clearing away the surface gravel to expose the sandy ground underneath. The body of the tortoise is round with a central unexcavated mound. There is an oval head, oriented to the north, and four legs of unequal length. A spear or dagger pierces the body from roughly east to west. The dagger was noted to point to a nearby rock cairn, and study of the rocks forming the cairn showed a similar dark patina to the surrounding desert pavement.

Mr. Rafter worked extensively with the late Carobeth Laird and inherited a large collection of her notes. Laird, who was once married to John P. Harrington and later married her Chemehuevi informant, George Laird, collected extensive information on Chemehuevi mythology. This was the source of the information Mr. Rafter used in analyzing the tortoise intaglio site.

The intaglio is situated on flat, open landscape with good exposure to the night sky raising the question of whether the image had astronomical significance. Mr. Rafter also questioned why the tortoise’s legs were of different lengths and did not appear to have been modified from the original design. The head points to the north, but the legs do not indicate any of the cardinal directions. It was discovered that a line drawn through the tips of the front legs aligns with the equinox sunrise and sunset, while the back legs align with the middle three stars of Orion’s Belt—a group of stars known to be important in Chemehuevi mythology and in marking the time of winter solstice. The dagger was discovered to point to the star Spica, which becomes visible in the night sky at the beginning of fall—the time of harvest.

Mr. Rafter finds no evidence to support the theory that the intaglio was in any way connected with the activities of General Patton and suggests that the tortoise represents summer and the dagger represents the death of summer. He believes it is certainly aboriginal (Chemehuevi) in origin and up to 500 years old. The astronomical site lines he suggests would not have been accurate any earlier. He also suggests the intaglio is still being maintained. He left us with a quote from Carobeth Laird’s book The Chemehuevis: "The tortoise also had a peculiar aura of sacredness. It was and is to this day symbolic of the spirit of the People. 'A Chemehuevi's heart is tough, like the turtle's.' This 'tough-heartedness' is equated with the will and the ability to endure and to survive."

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MAY CURATION WORKDAY

When: May 10, 2014, 1 pm
Where: Red Car Building

We will continue work on the CA-ORA-291 collection. Everyone is welcome. Please contact Mark Roeder (714-299-4150, curator@pcas.org) or Scott Findlay (714-342-2534, fieldtrips@pcas.org) for directions and to let us know you will be coming.
FIELD TRIPS

The March 29–31 field trip visited the Black Butte area north of Yucca Valley. With beautiful weather the group walked nearly six miles and saw some glyphs that had not been seen on prior hikes. The group also hiked in the Stirrup Tank area of Joshua Tree National Park and saw slicks, some glyphs, a few flakes, small sherds, and two rattlesnakes (one sleeping and one very awake).

May Speaker (continued from p. 1)

in the archaeological record. Cupules are defined as a boulder or rock slab covered with small rounded depressions (cupules), usually four to six cm in diameter and two to three cm in depth. Groove marks are deeply and narrowly incised lines rarely more than two cm in depth. In her research, Cara Ratner systematically documents and contextualizes the pit and groove rock art style in the Lower Pecos, Texas. She also tests whether cupules and groove marks are tied to a functional purpose with an experimental project.

Cara Ratner earned her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in anthropology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, with an emphasis in archaeology. Her main research focus was on gendered issues among prehistoric sites in North America. Along with a background in research, Ms. Ratner has worked as an archaeologist for a number of years in both the public and private sectors and has had the opportunity to do fieldwork in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California. She is presently the Education Program Director at the San Diego Archaeological Center, where she combines her experience in archaeology with her passion for education.

Future Field Trips

Please check for future field trips at www.pcas.org.

IN MEMORIAM: FRANK CHAPEL
1930–2014

Frank Chapel passed away on February 23, 2014. Frank was a longtime member of PCAS and served as President and more recently as Treasurer. As Field Director, he worked on many early PCAS excavations including the Edwards Street project (CA-ORA-82), and he was involved in PCAS’s investigations at China Ranch. He was a past member of the PCAS Quarterly Committee.

Frank met his second wife, Vada Drummy, through PCAS, and they were married for over 30 years prior to Vada’s death in 2010.

PCAS sends its sincere condolences to Frank’s family and friends.
MARCH BOARD MEETING SUMMARY
Submitted by Rene Brace

President Megan Galway called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm at the Old Courthouse, Santa Ana. PCAS Board Members present: Rene Brace, Linda Christison, Gail Cochlin, and Scott Findlay. Members present: Bob Brace and Hank Koerper.

In the absence of the secretary, approval of the February minutes was deferred. The treasurer’s report with all expenditures was approved unanimously.

Old Business

PCAS members sold $1887 in memberships and Quarterly issues at the SCA Meeting in Visalia. Paul Campbell’s donated books provided a great incentive. Megan Galway met with Cooper Center and SCA staff to discuss venues for the 2014 Southern Data Sharing Meeting.

Gail Cochlin reported she is working on data entry for our library catalog.

New Business

Scott Findlay announced that Garfield Archaeology Day will be June 16, and activities will take place in the new community center building adjacent to the Red Car Building.

The Board approved Scott Findlay’s proposal that he purchase up to $100 in shelving to replace the ice cream chest and broken bookshelf in the library.

The Board agreed to donate duplicate copies of the Newport Coast Archaeological Project (NCAP) reports to the OC Archives. Hank Koerper will attempt to find replacement copies for two missing NCAP reports.

With Board approval, Scott Findlay will purchase curation supplies (bags and boxes).

Committee Reports

Speakers have been scheduled through 2014. The Donation-Award table earned $121 at the March meeting. Scott Findlay announced that this weekend’s field trip has been changed to the Black Butte area. The April 26–28 field trip will be to the Mojave National Preserve. Hank Koerper announced that PCAS Quarterly 49(3&4) will be published in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

APRIL BOARD MEETING SUMMARY
Submitted by Brian Steffensen

President Megan Galway called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Old Courthouse in Santa Ana. PCAS Board Members present: Rene Brace, Gail Cochlin, Scott Findlay, Steve O’Neil, Linda Christensen and Brian Steffensen. Members present: Bob Brace, Hank Koerper, and Kathleen Shada.

The February and March minutes were approved. The treasurer’s report was approved with all expenditures.

Old Business

Scott Findlay will contact Garfield Elementary staff and schedule a visit to the community center building where Garfield Archaeology Day will take place on June 16. A call for volunteers will be in the newsletter.

Gail Cochlin is continuing to input data into the Library Thing program. We will announce when the database is complete and available online.

New Business

OC Parks will investigate whether there is surplus book shelving that can be use in our library.

Megan Galway and Steve O’Neil have been contacted about the location for the SCA Southern Data Sharing Meeting.

Committee Reports

Curator Mark Roeder vacuumed the entire Curation Facility before the April workday. Scott Findlay purchased more bags and boxes for curation.

At the April meeting Joe Hodulik’s Donation-Award activity took in $208 for the PCAS Scholarship fund! Programs Co-Chair Brian Steffensen reported that he and Joe Hodulik will begin booking speakers for 2015 this summer. Field Trips Chair Scott Findlay is asking for suggestions for a May field trip.

Megan Galway reported that members who have not renewed for 2014 will not receive any more newsletters. No scholarship applications have yet been received.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.
More Information from the Evans Papers, Riverside Municipal Museum

Henry C. Koerper

A December 2013 *PCAS Newsletter* article (p. 4) offered a quick sketch of Samuel Cary Evans, Jr. (1866–1932), noting that the nucleus for the upstart Riverside Municipal Museum (RMM) developed from the former city mayor’s ethnographic and archaeological collections. With the permission of Kevin Hallaran, RMM Archivist, information is shared here that surfaced among Evans’ documents and that stems from a 1931 visit by Evans to the Rincon Reservation, Luiseno territory.

In typed correspondence (S. C. Evans to B. W. Hathaway, letter, 26 May 1931, Evans Papers, RMM) Evans related that he procured from within a shed that stood next to an abandoned adobe home a ceramic olla that had been made in 1892 or earlier by Isabella Wassick (La Jolla Reservation) for the grandmother of Gregario Omish. The grandmother had passed away in 1929. Evans learned from the grandson that the old woman had placed coarse gravel at the bottom of the vessel in order that white sage and other seeds not burn when the pot was heated. When the seeds were parched, “she poured all onto a winnowing basket ... and the gravel was discharged.” The seeds were stored in baskets or bags or tied up in cloth. Later the seeds were milled using metates or mortars, and the flour might be mixed with corn meal or acorn meal.

Handwritten notes reveal that on the same visit Mr. Omish allowed Evans to remove four bundles of “mountain grasses” from the wooden shed. Each of three bundles was wrapped using a rag, but a fourth was held together with a tie of grass. The grasses were to be split for the manufacture of basketry. When returned to Riverside, Evans propped up the bundled grasses for a group portrait (Figure 1).

SCA MEETING

The 2014 Annual Meeting of the Society for California was held in Visalia, March 20–23. The conference organizers did a great job—the conference facility was spacious with large meeting rooms and vendor space. A symposium honored Dr. Patricia Martz for her southern California preservation work. There were symposiums on rock art, California State Parks, Catalina Island, the Santa Monica Mountains, development of social and political complexity, and many more.

Friday evening’s silent auction was held at the Tulare Agricultural Center, and two bidders were the lucky winners of four *PCAS Quarterly* issues—all picked up at the PCAS table in the vendor room. At the Saturday banquet, PCAS member Susan Hector was presented the David A. Fredrickson Lifetime Achievement Award, and Jon Harman (creator of DStretch) received the Helen Smith Award for Avocational Achievement.

Figure 1. Bundled “mountain grasses” retrieved by Samuel Evans from Luiseno territory.

Southern Sierra style pictograph at Rock Hill rock art site, Exeter. SCA field trips on Saturday and Sunday visited The Archaeological Conservancy preserve. Photo by Brian Steffensen.
Exhibits


Lectures


Classes, Meetings, and Events

Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Open House will be held May 10, 1–4 pm, with open laboratories and archives. Fowler Building, A level, UCLA. Free (parking $12). Information: www.ioa.ucla.edu.

Little Lake Field Trip, with Sandy and Fran Rogers, the spring field trip of the Maturango Museum, will visit an Archaic site (the Stahl site), a late prehistoric Shoshonean village (Pagunda), and rock art (petroglyphs and pictographs). May 24, meet at Maturango Museum at 7:30 am. Fee: $60; members $45. Deadline for reservations May 17. Limited to 20 people. Information: 760-375-6900 or www.maturango.org.

Malki Fiesta, a day-long celebration will honor Native American veterans. Food, entertainment (Cahuilla Bird Singers), and demonstrations will be held at the Malki Museum, May 25, 10 am–4 pm. Free. Information: 951-849-7289 or www.malkimuseum.org.


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

Editor’s Note: Please confirm time and place of listing prior to the event.
PCAS CODE OF ETHICS

The Pacific Coast Archaeological Society (PCAS) is a nonprofit 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.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Archaeology Day at Garfield Elementary School will be June 16, and volunteers are needed to man the activity stations. No experience necessary! You will be paired with a experienced volunteer. For information or to volunteer, please contact Scott Findlay, 714-342-2534 or fieldtrips@pcas.org.

PCAS SPEAKER CALENDAR

June 12, 2014
Dr. Matthew Boxt
Post-Olmec Archaeology at La Venta, Tabasco, Mexico

September 11, 2014
Dr. Alan Garfinkel Gold
Talking Stone—The Story of Coso Rock Art (video)

October 9, 2014
Dr. Patricia Martz
A Possible Shaman's Cache on San Nicolas Island

November 13, 2014
Dr. Michael Moratto
The Peopling of the Americas: Current Perspectives

December 11, 2014
Dr. Brian Fagan
The Intimate Bond: How Animals Changed History
2014 PCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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PACIFIC COAST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

2014 Calendar Year Membership and Subscription Form

Name(s): ____________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _________ Zip Code ___________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: ____________________________

Newsletters will be sent by email unless a mailed copy is requested.

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

Signature ____________________________________________

Membership (Includes Quarterly/Newsletter)  Subscription Only  Scholarship Fund

☐ Active Member - $45  ☐ Quarterly - $37  ☐ Donation $________

☐ Family Membership - $50  ☐ Newsletter - $18  ☐ Student Associate - $10 (email Newsletter only)

☐ Supporting Member* - $55

☐ Donor Member* - $75

☐ Lifetime Member* - $1000

* May be individual or family membership

www.pcas.org

Return form with payment to:

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