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PCAS Newsletter

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May PCAS Speakers

Lauren Biltonen, Aimee Montenegro, and Paul Langenwalter

Archaeological Investigations at CA-ORA-423, a Multicomponent Site in the Lower Aliso Creek Drainage, Orange County, California

In-Person and Zoom Meeting
May 11, 7:30 pm. See p. 4.

Speakers will be present at the in-person meeting.

CA-ORA-423 is a multicomponent occupation site located in the Aliso Creek drainage of southern Orange County, California. The site contains a modest material culture associated with a number of occupations spanning a period in excess of 4,000 years. The site is average in size for the lower part of the Aliso Creek drainage, straddling perhaps half of the modern flood plain to a depth exceeding four meters. It consists of a stratigraphically complex midden composed of fluviatile sediments with varying concentrations of artifacts and ecofacts situated on a basal paleosol and with a capped veneer of top soil. The initial occupation appears to be situated on a basal paleosol developed from a marsh.

During the 1992–1993 rainy season, erosion exposed three human burials in the lowermost occupational stratum. These burials were recovered, documented, and repatriated the following spring. The 1993 and later excavations at ORA-423 recovered chipped stone, groundstone, hearths, fire-affected rock scatters, and a dog burial, as well as two additional human burials. Chipped stone artifacts in the assemblage include projectile points, scrapers, and utilized flakes. The projectile points are of types associated with the use of atlatl and dart in the earlier strata, and bow and arrow in the uppermost stratum. Debitage was present in small amounts. Groundstone artifacts include pestles, manos, and a metate. Bone and shell artifacts include awls, fishing equipment, and items of adornment.

Bone and shell ecofacts were recovered throughout the midden. The marine invertebrates are dominated by mussels and associated species typically utilized along the Orange County coast during the Milling Stone, Intermediate, and Late periods. All were procured from nearshore and tidal zone habitats. The vertebrate assemblage includes evidence of fishing along with mixed small to large game procurement. The fishes are nearshore open water and kelp associated species. The terrestrial mammals used for food include rabbits and deer. The dog was a large or common Indian dog rather than the smaller Techichi. Its burial indicates more complex human-animal activity at the site. It was intentionally buried in a curled position with its forepaws and hind paws immediately adjacent to one another. Whether the burial was that of a pet which died or was sacrificed during property destruction at the time of its owner's death is not known.

(Continued on p. 3)

Join us at the in-person meeting!
Speakers will be present.
See p. 4.

April Speaker Notes

Relic Hunters: Archaeology and the Public in Nineteenth-Century America

By Megan Galway

Dr. James E. Snead began his presentation by noting his childhood in New Mexico where he was exposed to archaeology on almost a daily basis. He was surprised to later learn that much of this local knowledge was not documented or taught by academia. This led him to a keen interest in archival study to find the history of the discipline.

He believes that modern archaeologists use a "top-down" approach, where they trace the discipline from today back through time, and he prefers a "bottom-up" method, starting with where and how the discipline developed. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, there were no national institutions, university programs, or any common understanding of archaeology in general. The general public was aware of and curious about archaeological sites and artifacts, and articles were written about them, but there was no defined method of recording or research.

In the early nineteenth century, the Appalachian Mountains were considered the western frontier, and many people such as Thomas Jefferson, who we know had an interest in archaeology, never ventured west of the mountains. They learned about the west from friends and relatives who had traveled there. Through archival research, Dr. Snead has put together the story of a frontier collection (now lost) from this period. He describes many of the relic hunters as "Antiquarian Entrepreneurs"—collectors who were hoping to make money off their finds. Many of these were part of an "Antiquarian Circle"—groups of like-minded people who gathered to discuss their finds. Iconic artifacts were found and documented during this period, and we learned of the journey and fate of one of those artifacts.

The Triune Idol was discovered in the Cumberland Valley of western Tennessee around 1815. It was a Mississippian ceramic vessel with heads on three sides and thought to be about 1,000 years old. It later came into the possession of James Overton, who was on the faculty of a medical school in Lexington, Kentucky, and was a member of the Lexington Circle, a group of people with an interest in American antiquities. The circle included Sarah (Clifford) Ward and her brother John, and the best illustration of the idol was painted by Ward. One of Ward's art students was Mary Todd Lincoln. Various members of the circle were associated with Transylvania University in Lexington. Caleb Atwater of Circleville, Ohio, became interested in the idol, and with other members of the Lexington Circle, he concluded that the idol had a basis in Hinduism. Another member of the circle was a European immigrant,

PCAS April speaker, Dr. James E. Snead.

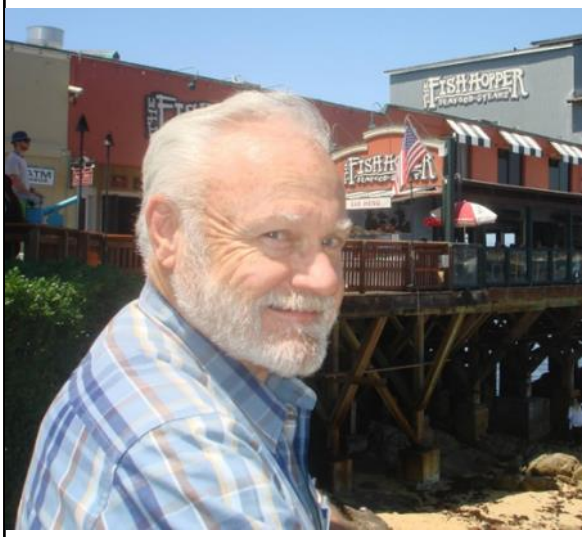
Constantine Rafinesque, a naturalist and an associate of John Clifford who helped him obtain a position at Transylvania. During his work as a naturalist, he also documented archaeological sites and developed a keen interest. Dr. Snead describes Rafinesque as a "slightly unhinged individual." When John Clifford died young, Rafinesque offered to buy his estate and collection for $2,000 and donate it to the University of Virginia in exchange for a professorship.

One of the first museums in the country was the Western Museum in Cincinnati, built in 1820 to house a collection of local artifacts. The director of the museum was Joseph Dorfeuille, who purchased the Clifford collection to the regret of the Lexington Circle. In a few years local interest in the museum waned, and lecturers were brought in to speak on other subjects, including phrenologist William Powell, who would bring in skulls and discuss them. In the 1930s Dorfeuille worked with Hiram Powers to design Infernal Regions, a clockwork depiction of hell. By this time there was more interest in western collections in the eastern cities, and Dorfeuille moved his collection, still including the Triune Idol, to New York City. He was writing a book on western antiquities when he died. The book was never published, and the collection may have been burned or sold as a fundraiser, and the Triune Idol has never been seen since.

This one story illustrates the immense difference between the archaeology of then and now. There was no less interest in the artifacts themselves, but the science of when, how, and why was missing.

*This presentation and other PCAS lectures are available on the PCAS YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@pcas-acificcoastarchaeolo9403. We thank **Stephen Dwyer**, our Zoom host, for establishing and maintaining our YouTube channel.*

PCAS May Speakers



Paul Langenwalter is past-Chair of Anthropology at Biola University where he taught archaeology and biological anthropology. His research focuses on the human-animal interaction sphere (economic use of animals, prehistoric dogs, and animal ceremonialism), bioarchaeology, and religious ritual among the peoples of California and Oceania. Currently his work is centered in central and southern California, with projects addressing the archaeology and history of the Fresno River area involving rock art, reservation period conflict, ethnicity, and subsistence. Other projects involve ancient DNA and gene flow in southern California, the Pleistocene paleontology of the eastern Los Angeles Basin, and the renovation of orphaned collections.

Aimee Montenegro is a cross-trained archaeologist/paleontologist with experience in survey, excavation, monitoring, curation, and reporting. During her tenure as an undergraduate, she participated in several field investigations to collect data from California's Central Valley, recording multiple sites with archaeological features, including pictographs, bedrock mortars, and milling slicks. She also participated in the on-campus excavation, curation, and reporting of a Columbian mammoth from the Rancholabrean North American Land Mammal Age (NAMA). As a collections intern at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles, she participated in the conservation and curation of vertebrate fossils, as well as the mapping of associated paleontological localities. As an archaeological crew chief with Heritage Resource Consultants, Aimee participated in archaeological excavations in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Currently, she works as a cross-trained field/lab technician with Applied Earthworks and has served as a lead field technician on a number of surveys and construction monitoring projects for archaeological and paleontological resources during land development in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties.

Lauren Biltonen is cross-trained in archaeological and paleontological fieldwork, with experience in survey, excavation, monitoring, curation, and reporting. She has participated in field studies in central California, documenting, and excavating multiple sites including a cave site and others with features ranging from pictographs to monuments. Her undergraduate fieldwork was at the Hope Hall Mammoth site working on the excavation, curation, and reporting of a Columbian mammoth from the Rancholabrean. As a research and teaching assistant, Lauren has worked as an archaeological crew chief with Heritage Resource Consultants on bioarchaeological projects in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Presently, Lauren works as an archaeologist for Duke Cultural Resources Management participating in archaeological and paleontological surveys and construction monitoring projects in southern and eastern California.

DIG THIS ...

Lectures

Inca Architecture: A Woman's World?, by Dr. Stella Nair (UCLA). An in-person and Zoom meeting of the Fresno County Archaeological Society, May 1, 6 pm. Free. Information with Zoom link: mailchi.mp/dbaf750d67b6/fcas-may-newsletter.

Materiality of Wak'as: Between History and Archaeology at Sacsayhuaman, Cuzco, with Peter Kaulicke (Universidad Católica del Perú). Presented by the Andean Working Group, Cotsen Institute, UCLA, May 5, 12 pm. Free. Required Zoom registration: www.ioa.ucla.edu/events/upcoming.

New Perspectives on the African Empire of Kush: Excavation at Jebel Barkal (Northern Sudan), by Dr. Geoff Emberling (Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan). An ARCE/Bowers Museum onsite lecture, May 6, 1:30 pm. Fee: $15; Bowers and ARCE members free. Recorded lecture available one week after onsite event. Fee: $10, Bowers and ARCE members free. Ticket purchase and information: www.bowers.org.

Communities and Networks in the Bolivian Tropical Mountains during the Middle Horizon (ca. CE 600–900): A Bioarchaeological Study of Migration, with Juan Carlos Chavez Quisp (Ph.D. candidate, UC Riverside). A lecture of the AIA, Orange County Chapter, Concordia University, DeNault Auditorium, 1530 Concordia West, Irvine, May 7, 2 pm. Fee: $10, members and students free. Information: aia-oc.org/dates.

The End of Teotihuacan: Perspectives on Collapse and Regeneration from Beyond the Ancient Metropolis, by Dr. Sarah Clayton (University of Wisconsin). An online lecture of the AIA, Los Angeles Chapter, May 9, 5:30 pm (PDT). Information and required registration: aia-la.org/online-lectures-webinars-and-meetings.

A History of the Morongo Basin, by Tom Crochetierre (Morongo Basin Historical Society). An Old Schoolhouse Lecture, 6760 National Park Dr, Twentynine Palms, May 12, 7 pm. Fee: $5. Information: 760-819-4714 or desertinstitute@joshuatree.org.

The Archaeology of Death Valley, by Wanda Raschow (retired National Park Archaeologist). A Zoom

Lectures *(continued)*

presentation by the Colorado Desert Archaeology Society, May 16, 7 pm (PDT). Free. Required registration: www.anzaborregoarchaeo.org/death-valley/.

Past PCAS lectures are available on YouTube at *www.youtube.com/@pcas-pacificcoastarchaeolo9403*.

Classes, Meetings, and Events

Malki Kéwet Celebration, the annual celebration honoring Native American veterans, will have food, entertainment (Cahuilla Bird Singers), and Native American vendors. Malki Museum, 11795 Malki Road, Morongo Reservation, Banning. May 28, 10 am–4 pm. Free. Lunch is $10 per plate. Information: www.malkimuseum.org.

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

In-Person Meeting

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.

Zoom Meeting

- Email a **new** Zoom registration request by **noon on Thursday, May 11,** to membership@pcas.org. You will receive an emailed link to the meeting.
- Guests (non-PCAS members) are welcome with registration.
- When the presentation starts, please **mute your microphone and turn off your webcam**.

PCAS host **Steve Dwyer** will open the Zoom meeting at 7 pm to allow time to resolve any technical problems prior to the beginning of the PCAS General Meeting and lecture at 7:30 pm.

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.

Join us on Thursday, May 11, for an in-person or Zoom lecture: "Archaeological Investigations at CA-ORA-423 a Multicomponent Site in the Lower Aliso Creek Drainage, Orange County, California."

PCAS Speaker Calendar

June 8. 2023
Dr. Nathan Nakatsuka
Genetic Evidence for Ancient Population Shifts and Migrations in Central and Southern California

No meetings in July and August.

September 14, 2023
Dr. Philip de Barros
Exciting Pottery Discoveries in the Coachella Valley: 14th Century Ceramic Firing Pits in the City of Coachella?

October 12, 2023
Dr. Ian Straughn
Archaeology in Interim Spaces: Excavation and Pedagogy at the Historic Bonita Camp Site on the UCI campus

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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

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☐ Family Membership – $50

☐ Supporting Member* – $55

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* May be individual or family membership

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www.pcas.org

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