

Santa Cruz Archaeological Society Newsletter

A Seasoned “Seasonal” Works and Plays in Sierra National Forest – Part One

February 20, 2013

Mary A. Gerbic, SCAS Member



At seven AM on a Monday morning in May, my new crewmates and I were sitting on a park bench outside the Bass Lake District Headquarters in North Fork, California. All of us had been hired as Archaeological Technicians at various “GS” levels. Three of the people: Kate, Tim and I, were crew chiefs. Two of the crew members are local people and the rest are graduate students at several universities or undergraduates from Fresno State. Our job was to organize among ourselves the work that Erin - our manager - gave us and complete surveys with our two crew members.

This year 2012 the Sierra National Forest has hired a large archaeological crew because the amount of survey work was beyond the abilities of the three to four archaeologists and technicians normally working in this forest. There are nine of us today and two more are starting later.

For those of you unfamiliar with the southern Sierra Nevada, Bass Lake District of the Sierra National Forest is located in the foothills and mountains on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range; from the southern edge of Yosemite National Park, to the northern edge of the impressive San Joaquin River Canyon. Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness areas are located within Sierra National Forest and the Inyo National Forest to the east. The district is named for Bass Lake, a reservoir located about 15 minutes northwest of the town of North Fork.

On our first field day, Erin took us on a field trip to see what we would be surveying within the *Grey’s Mountain Ecosystem Restoration Project* (GMERP), our main survey area during the summer of 2012. Outside of its legal context, the restoration project looks like a timber harvest, but it much more than that. The Forest Service takes forest restoration seriously.



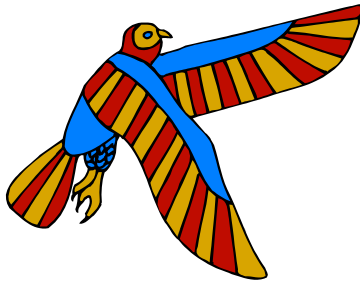
Central Camp Railroad Grade Survey (*M.Gerbic*)

Most students of ecology, history and archaeology in California know that in the early 1900s, fire suppression became the main land management technique practiced in California. California's biotic community evolved through thousands of years to tolerate or even require fire for its health. Fire was one of the tools the native inhabitants used to manage their land and resources before white settlers arrived. Until the early 1900s, many ranchers and herders continued the process of periodically burning the land to keep down scrub and understory, maintaining browse and pasture for animals. A result of fire suppression was, ironically, hotter and more severe fires, as overgrown forests and chaparral grew thick with dead vegetation. Wild fires have become a major issue, especially in areas experiencing drought. 2012 was not a serious fire year in California, but many of you may remember the lightning-induced fires of 2008, when it seemed like the entire state was on fire.

California land managers now recognize the benefits of fire in the ecosystem and have tried to reintroduce its use where appropriate. Land managers also use thinning of understory and small trees to improve forest health. The GMERP, as listed in the Federal Register (Vol. 76 No. 36) states that the USFS intends to use thinning and logging and other treatments (including fire) to restore the forest to its previous health, removing invasive species, masticating brush and restoring native plant communities. Before any of this work can be performed, surveys for endangered plants, animals, and cultural resources are required so that sensitive areas such as cultural sites and riparian areas can be avoided.

Sounds simple, but GMERP consists of 9600 acres of steep terrain with meadows and dark forests full of rattlesnakes, bears and yellow jackets. No wonder one of our crew bailed on the first day! No, it wasn't that bad. The bears ran from us, the snakes hid, but the yellow jackets were, well, yellow jackets, and at season's end, most of us could say we could have done without them.

...Next Issue, Part Two: North Fork and Minarets!



Upcoming General Meetings

All General Meetings are held at the historic Sesnon House on the campus of Cabrillo College, located at 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA and begin promptly at 7:30 PM.

May 16, 2013

"The Archaeology of the Presidio of San Francisco: Past, Present, and Future"

Come hear the secrets of the Presidio of San Francisco past and learn how you can be a part of its future. Archaeologist Kari Jones and Curator of Archaeology Liz Clevenger will speak about the archaeology program, the untold stories of centuries of soldiers and their families, and current plans to celebrate this history in a new Heritage Center and Program.

Liz Clevenger is the Curator of Archaeology at the Presidio Trust in San Francisco, California. She oversees the Trust's archaeology laboratory and manages the collection, comprised of a half million objects and records from archaeological sites throughout the park that document the occupation and use of the Presidio by various cultures over the last thousand years. In addition, she leads content research and development for Presidio heritage exhibitions, working with a team of historians, archaeologists, curators, researchers and exhibit specialists.

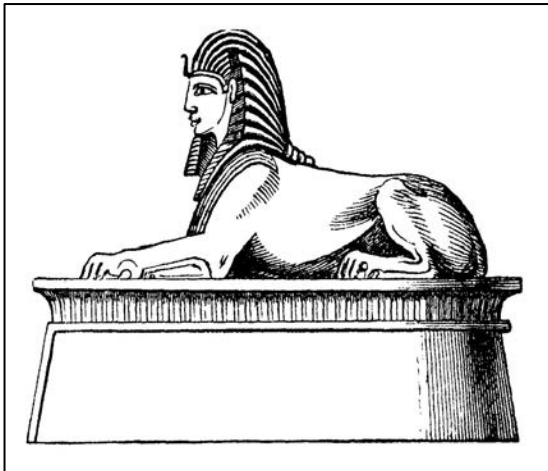
Kari Jones is an archaeologist with the Presidio Trust in San Francisco, California. She is responsible for designing, executing, and reporting archaeological field investigations as part of the Presidio's elective archaeological research program. She also ensures that the Presidio's 30+ archaeological areas are preserved for the future and interpreted to the public.

June 20, 2013

"Consuming Identity: The Role of the Feast in Iron Age Britain"

Andrew Woodhead will discuss the Iron Age in prehistoric Britain, which witnessed a major restructuring of people's ways of life. Understanding the changing social, political, and economic discourses of this period requires an understanding of an important social institution: the feast. This talk will explore the numerous roles feasts can play and highlights the importance of feasting for understanding certain aspects of society.

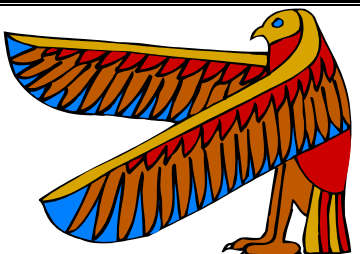
Andrew Woodhead grew up in Santa Cruz, attended Santa Cruz High School, and received a BA in anthropology/archaeology from the University of California, San Diego. He then studied in Scotland and received a Master's degree in European Archaeology from the University of Edinburgh. His research interests have largely focused on prehistoric Britain and Ireland and the archaeology of foodways.



THE SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

SCAS is renewing our outreach efforts to local Elementary Schools. We need Society Volunteer Docents willing to work with 3rd – 6th grade students studying local archaeology, history, science, and math. Training workshops are planned in the near future to bring together teachers, docents, and interested members to share a variety of activities and ideas for the classroom. If you are interested in

participating please contact **SCAS Outreach Coordinator Charr Simpson-Smith** at (831) 728-2802 or charrsmithaacc@gmail.com for more information.

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Society Members Revitalize the Cabrillo Archaeology Warehouse!

R. Edwards, Professional Advisor Emeritus
January 19, 2013

SCAS members volunteered a “warehouse workday” at Cabrillo to thank Dustin McKenzie, Cabrillo Archaeology Instructor, for his ongoing support. Dustin has helped make possible our monthly meetings at Cabrillo, provided space for the SCAS’s “map project” (a public outreach and fundraiser of the Society), and has also been supportive of the SCAS’s school outreach program.

Cabrillo, like all California Community Colleges, has had several years of financial reductions from the State and like other instructors; Dustin has had an increase in workload and has had no help to deal with all the “stuff” of field work. SCAS members hoped that their labor would assist Dustin to keep archaeology courses available in the community and to support his survival as a new instructor and in his new role as the father of two children.

The Warehouse is a large space that contains all the equipment needed for archaeological field work. Society members cleared out debris, cleaned and reorganized equipment, and sorted files! There was such an exceptional member response that what had been thought to be a four hour job, took just over two. This left time for conversations between old friends and new. There was also time for interested folks to have a first look at the recently donated map collection from Christian Gerike and Suzanne Stewart.

While family responsibilities prevented Dusty from being there in person that day, previous discussions with him guided the effort. Prior to the workday, SCAS members Charr Smith, Laurel Davenport, and Ann Marie Leon-Guerrero put in time getting the Warehouse ready for the big clean up. Workday volunteers included: Charr Smith, Dawn Johnson, Pat Paramoure, Cathy Phipps, John Schlagheck, and fellow SJSU Graduate student Jerry Starek, Amanda Trujillo, Dr. Lindley Vann (University of Maryland) and Lolly Vann, recent MA in Archaeology from Scotland Andrew Woodhead and me. Current SCAS President Kären Johansson thoughtfully contributed snacks to the effort and a good time was had by all!

Dusty has responded with a strong “THANK YOU” to the Society Board in which he noted the warehouse “*looked beyond amazing*” and “*your hard work is greatly appreciated and your support is a huge contribution*”!

Petroglyphs Taken From Volcanic Tableland Recovered

January 31, 2013

D. Christy, Bureau of Land Management

Acting on an anonymous tip, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has recovered the petroglyph panels taken from a major rock art site north of Bishop, CA. Suspects have not been identified. The investigation is ongoing so additional information is not available at this time.

Reward funds totaling \$9,000 have been donated or pledged for information leading to the conviction of the responsible party or parties. The damaged petroglyph panels at the site on the Volcanic Tableland were discovered in late 2012.

"Recovery of the petroglyphs was a priority from day one. I am pleased that they were returned. Now we need the public's help to identify the vandals responsible for damaging the site," said Bernadette Lovato, BLM Bishop Field Office Manager. Anybody with information about the theft is asked to contact BLM law enforcement at (760) 937-0301 or (760) 937-0657. The suspect may have experience and access to masonry cutting tools.

The petroglyph site is protected under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This site is one of the most significant rock art sites in the region and is still used by the local Native American Paiute tribes for ceremony.

Convictions on ARPA violations can result in fines and/or prison. ARPA provides for civil fines either in conjunction with or independent of any criminal prosecution. Forfeiture of vehicles and equipment used in the violation of the statute is also subject to the statute.



"OK, let's see—that's a curse on you,
a curse on you, and a curse on you."



Outreach at Orchard School

E. Zaborsky, Professional Advisor

November 7, 2012

October is California Archaeology Month. As part of the outreach and education to support this month-long celebration, SCAS was requested to 'teach archaeology' to students of the Orchard School in Aptos.

Orchard School teacher Rob Owen contacted Charr Simpson-Smith of SCAS to visit their school and show the students what archaeologists do in the field. The invitation to work with Orchard School was the perfect opportunity to exercise some of the history and social sciences and math and science standards for grades 3-6 according to the State of California.

On Wednesday October 17, 2012, Charr Simpson-Smith, current SCAS Treasurer Cathy Phipps and me went to Orchard School, located off Trout Gulch Road in the heart of the old Aptos Rancho land grant. Along with the SCAS crew was Tammy Wright, Park Ranger and Interpreter from the local Bureau of Land Management Hollister Field Office. Tammy has a degree in History and is well-versed in interpretive techniques with the public. Tammy was invited by me to assist SCAS for this California Archaeology Month outreach and to help evaluate the field exercises developed by SCAS for this event.

The Orchard School students we worked with were third through sixth graders, about thirty students in all. Tammy and I taught the 5th and 6th graders how to figure out their 'pace' – and then apply that skill in archaeological survey. Charr worked with the 3rd and 4th graders while Cathy maintained the field lab station and provided data control as the students discovered artifacts for collection from their surveys.

Tammy and I split the fifth and sixth grade students into different areas for survey, sending the sixth graders into a ravine on Orchard School property which appears to have some sort of historic dump. Orchard School is situated on the edge of a redwood forest and is included within the historic Aptos Grant. This land grant was one of the few in the region that remained private property of the original grantee. [Many of the Spanish and Mexican Land Grants were legally contested when the United States won California from Mexico in 1848, and these legal challenges continued into California statehood and beyond.] Some of the buildings and structures on the Orchard School property appear to date from the late 19th or early 20th centuries and it is still unclear if any of the buildings date to the rancho pre-American period.

The students did a great job in learning the basics of archaeological survey, and even found a few bottles and ceramic fragments! At the end of the day, each of the students was able to share what they learned and what they found interesting about their 'outdoor classroom' experiences. All of the students, teachers, and visiting parents received a commemorative 2012 California Archaeology Month poster to remember their day with archaeologists in the field.



Poem for the Living

By Theodora Kroeber

Pretext: Recently during a Map Sale Outreach at the Cabrillo Farmers Market, I talked with a person from Corralitos named Norma Johnson. In our discussion she mentioned a poem that she had seen about *Ishi* written by Theodora Kroeber. I asked if she would send it to me and she did. I thought others in the Society might enjoy it as I did. It was published in 1973 and was evidently very popular at that time although I don't remember seeing it. Enjoy, *Rob Edwards*

*When I am dead,
Cry for me a little.*

*Think of me sometimes,
But not too much.*

*It is not good for you
Or your wife or your husband
Or your children
To allow your thoughts to dwell
Too long on the dead.*

*Think of me now and again
As I was in life
At some moment which is pleasant to recall,
But not for long.*

*Leave me in peace
As I shall leave you, too, in peace.*

*While you live,
Let your thoughts be with the living.*





Skin Decoration Goes Way Back

Popular Archaeology Volume 9
February 16, 2013

About 1.5 to 2 million years ago, early humans, according to the prevailing view of most paleoanthropologists and archaeologists, evolved into nearly hairless primates to more efficiently sweat away excess body heat. But later, according to Penn State anthropologist Nina Jablonski in a report to the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, humans may have begun to decorate skin to increase attractiveness to the opposite sex and to express, among other things, group identity.

Over thousands of years, humans used their skin as canvases of self-expression in a variety of ways, including permanent methods such as tattooing and branding, as well as temporary, including cosmetics and body painting, according to Jablonski. But the determination of when this practice began to occur is somewhat more elusive than estimating the time when humans as primates actually began to lose their hair. "We find a lot of evidence of when humans began to lose hair based on molecular genetics," said Jablonski.

But studying skin itself is difficult because it can be preserved only for a few thousand years, as opposed to bones, which fossilize and last millions of years. Nevertheless, while it is difficult to know when humans began to decorate their skin, some of the earliest preserved skin shows signs of tattooing, maintains Jablonski. Decades of research in caves in Europe and South Africa, among other places, have evidenced the manufacture and use of ancient pigments by early modern humans, particularly as media for creating wall paintings. Many scientists suggest that the pigments were also used for body decoration, and the practice could go as far back as more than 100,000 years.

A recent discovery of a prehistoric "workshop" in the South African cave of Blombos, for example, evidenced the manufacture of ochre in a cave where there was no evidence of any wall painting. The "workshop", consisting of abalone shells where ochre was stored and processed, combined with fat, crushed bone, quartz and charcoal to produce a pigment compound that was possibly used as paint for painting, decoration and skin protection, was dated to about 100,000 years BP. The dating corresponds to a time when early modern humans were thought to be on the threshold of thinking and expressing themselves in symbolic ways and laying the foundations for art and language.

But as ancient as body painting and tattooing could be, Jablonski makes the point that the age-old craft has implications for understanding the nature and behavior of modern humans today, as well. "We can paint a great design on our bodies and use those designs to send all sorts of messages or express group memberships," said Jablonski. "Usually it is something with deep meaning. When I talk to people about their tattoos they tell me they've spent months or years choosing a design that is incredibly meaningful and salient to them."

SCAS Outreach, BLM Hollister Office, and Orchard Elementary School Join to Celebrate *CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY MONTH*

C. Simpson-Smith, Outreach Coordinator
October 29, 2012

Students at Orchard Elementary School discovered a Historic Farmstead. It was right there on their 14 acre rural campus! Their current "Theater Arts/Gymnasium" building was once the site of a ca.1859 barn, and a second structure, the "Math Studio and the quiet room" appears to have been used to feed/milk cows; it and still contains the concrete feeding trough now being used as a foundation to divide the structure into two rooms. Also, a foundation made of concrete is there representing a third structure that has collapsed.

On October Seventeenth, thirty-four surveyors surveyed, found and collected artifacts, and mapped their location. Twenty-six students in Grades 3/4 and 5/6, along with 4 assistant teachers under the leadership of 2 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representatives and 2 SCAS Outreach members, participated in the archaeological survey.

Orchard School Teacher Rob Owen contacted the Outreach Committee in late August and invited SCAS to develop an "archaeological experience" for two of his classes. It was obvious at our first visit to the campus that this a rare opportunity for a pilot project of the *Outreach to Elementary Schools* Program.

The Principal, Ms. Jody Johnson, is familiar with the history of the parcel. She was able to guide Rob Owen, Erik Zaborsky, and me to an area rich with resources so we choose it for our "survey" area.



Orchard School Teacher Rob Owen, SCAS Outreach Coordinator Charr Simpson-Smith, and Principal Jody Johnson pre-plan for the educational outreach (*E. Zaborsky*)

After much planning thanks to the assistance of our Project team, Erik Zaborsky, Cathy Phipps, and Dusty McKenzie, we were able to develop an experience for the classes.

Up in a ravine on the parcel is abandoned equipment near a large non-natural feature of what appears to be an abandoned road grade. The roadbed and bank rising to the hill crest to the north was surveyed by Teams 5 and 6 (of Grades 5/6). *Could this roadbed have been used to bring wood and/or later apples from an orchard higher up on top of a flat near the summit down to the large barn for storage? This is yet to be determined.*

Teams A, B, C, and D (Grades 3/4) worked around the barn and math building. *Was there evidence to indicate how the barn was used? Was it for Wood, and/or Apples or something totally different? The answer has to await the classes' artifact lab work in the future.*

All had a great experience so stay tuned as we continue to unravel the archaeological heritage of Orchard School.



SCAS Treasurer Cathy Phipps with “Team D” recording Jody’s artifacts
(C. Simpson-Smith)

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