

# SCAN

**THE SANTA CRUZ ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER – FALL 2015**



## **Surveying the McClune Property: Connecting with an Old Adobe Hacienda**

**By Patricia Paramoure**

*“The grandest of all adobe buildings representing Northern California’s rancho period is the two-story Castro Adobe near Watsonville. This hacienda features a spacious fandango room on the second floor and an original one-story cocina, one of only five such Mexican kitchens remaining in the state” (Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks).*

Immediately west of the McClune Property is the Rancho San Andrés Castro Adobe Property, at 184 Old Adobe Road, Watsonville, owned by California State Parks and administered by Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks. The Castro Adobe State Park is currently still undergoing restoration and renovation in preparation for being opened to the public. Since 1873, when Juan José Castro was deeded 39 acres, the adobe’s parcel has been whittled away to just 1 acre today.

The Castro Adobe and its remaining land were acquired by State Parks in 2002 and restoration began in 2007. The Friends has set out to acquire more of the original lands surrounding the adobe, hence their purchase of the adjacent properties: the McClune parcel (1 acre), the focus of this survey, and the Kimbro parcel (8.5 acres), located north of both the McClune Property and the Castro Adobe parcel (1 acre). The Kimbro house will be the state parks Visitors Center and Edna Kimbro Archive.

José Joaquín Castro first came to the Monterey Bay area as a boy, traveling with his family and the Juan Bautista de Anza party, in 1776. By the year 1823, José Joaquín had been granted “provisional concession” from the Mexican government to the Rancho San Andrés, two square leagues, approximately 8,800 acres, of Monterey Bay area lands stretching from the Pájaro River, to Corralitos, to Aptos, and to the ocean. José Joaquín received title to the rancho in 1833. The patriarch of a prominent Californio family rich in land and cattle, eventually José

Joaquín and his offspring gained possession of over 250,000 acres, mostly in Santa Cruz County.

After José Joaquín died in 1838, the rancho property passed to his landless sons. Juan José, one of José Joaquín’s male heirs, built the Castro Adobe hacienda in 1848 or 1849, supposedly with money from the gold rush, and it became the “headquarters of the Castro family empire.” It was the largest adobe in the area, and the only two-story adobe ever built in Santa Cruz County. Around 40 people lived in and around the home. The family was known for their hospitality, generosity, and all-night fiestas, complete with music and dancing in the large upstairs fandango room.

The take-over of California by the American government changed the property laws, instituted property taxes, and encouraged squatters and lawsuits. The Castro family sold off portions of their lands to pay for taxes and lawyers, attempting to protect their title. In 1851, Juan José lost title due to taxes and attorney’s fees, but he retained possession and control of the final 40 acres on which the adobe was situated, until final partition to neighbor and rival, José Amesti, in 1873. Although Amesti’s attorney took control of the property, Juan José Castro lived there until he died in 1877. Members of the family continued renting the property until around 1883.

On October 29, 1883, Hans Hansen took legal possession of the adobe and the surrounding 39 acres, including a large barn. Over the next 105 years, 19 different owners

legally controlled the Castro Adobe and its surrounding land, its parcel dwindling down to 9.5 acres by 1988 when Joe and Edna Kimbro bought the property. After the 1906 earthquake, the Hansens built the house now known as the Holtzclaw property, and the adobe was uninhabited and served as a barn, as a fruit drying building, and for storage.

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On Sunday, April 27, 2014, the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society (SCAS) hosted a field trip to the Castro Adobe, led by Castro Adobe Committee Chairman, Charlie Kieffer. After the field trip was finished, some of the attendees assisted in a general pedestrian reconnaissance survey of the McClune Property, which was led by Rob Edwards. Nine volunteers contributed to this survey, including Charlie Kieffer, Patricia Paramoure, Michael Boyd, Lauren Carriere, Cathy Mistely, Brian Strehlke, Alex Strehlke, Charlotte McManus-Gutherie, and Christopher Gutherie.

The survey was performed on the generally flat property, using pin flags to mark artifacts. Close attention was paid to gopher and ground squirrel back dirt piles that can be an excellent means of detecting sub-surface archaeological deposits.

Included within the sparse historic domestic artifact scatter on the property were fragments of a white improved earthenware cup rim and a blue on white ceramic plate fragment. Also noted were fragments of colorless container glass, opaque white glass, marine shell, and faunal bone.

On Monday, May 12, 2014, Archaeologists, Rob Edwards and Patricia Paramoure returned to the site to define the boundaries of the artifact scatter noted during the recent survey. Two long tape measures, calibrated in feet, were laid out oriented north/south and east/west, crossing near the center of the property. Using the measuring tapes

for reference, the locations of the many historic artifacts flagged by the volunteer survey crew were noted. Three diagnostic ceramic artifacts were collected that assisted in the subsequent assessment of the archaeological deposit. It was determined that the entire property contains a historic artifact scatter deposit continuous with the historic artifact scatter that surrounds, and is associated, with the Castro Adobe. The portion of the archaeological deposit that is located on this parcel appears to be denser to the rear, northern portion of the lot, where a shallow gulch containing a seasonal drainage is located. Perhaps this relates to the common practice in historic times of people discarding refuse into conveniently available, nearby low-lying areas.

The artifacts on the McClune Property are all part of a larger historical archaeological site deposit related to the historic activities in this area. In addition, this site also encompasses the Castro Adobe property, and all or parts of the other surrounding properties, including the Holtzclaw property, and the Kimbro property. The site likely also extends into other surrounding properties located beyond these modern property boundaries that were delineated after the Castro family lost title to the lands of the San Andrés Rancho.



**Figure 1: Blue unscaloped ceramic. All photos courtesy of Pat Paramoure**

Of the three artifacts collected during the second investigation of the parcel, two are tableware plate fragments that are roughly datable. A rim fragment of a blue unscalloped shell-edge plate was likely manufactured between the 1840s and the 1860s.

Shell-edged, or more generically, edged wares are characterized by molded rim motifs, usually painted under the glaze in blue or green on refined earthenware. The term “shell-edge” was used by Staffordshire potters in the eighteenth century to describe these wares. Nineteenth-century potters’ price fixing lists and invoices use simply “edged” to describe both shell-edged and embossed rim motifs

A later ceramic plate fragment is a scalloped edged, embossed rim, multicolored floral underglaze decal on white improved earthenware. This fragment was manufactured during the late 1880s.

The third ceramic artifact is more unusual. It is a 3/16 inch thick flat fragment of whiteware, likely shaped by chipping, into a rough circle measuring approximately 1 inch in diameter. This could possibly be a historic era Native American gaming piece. When the newly independent Mexican government secularized the missions during the 1830s, many natives voluntarily left or they were evicted from Mission holdings and became laborers at Californio-owned ranchos (ranches) or in the developing pueblos (towns).



Multicultural Native American hamlets formed from these displaced populations were established within and just outside many new towns and ranches. This artifact may be evidence that the Castro family employed such Native American laborers.

The treatment of the McClune property, along with the surrounding parcels that contain portions of the Castro Adobe site, is crucial to the adobe’s long term preservation. Since the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks have endeavored to take on stewardship of this project and ownership of adjacent properties, the community will benefit from their efforts.



**Figure 3: Circular whiteware fragment.**

It is recommended that the owners of all surrounding parcels be approached, and permission requested, to perform a survey of their property, so that a more accurate understanding of the extent of the archaeological resources associated with this historic structure can be attained. Additionally, an updated records search should be conducted, and a full complement of updated Site Record forms completed by Friends and/or State Parks.

**Figure 2: (Left) Scalloped, embossed rim, floral design.**

## BOOK REVIEW

# LOST IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC – THE “NIKU PROJECT”

BY KÄREN JOHANSSON

In the book, *Amelia Earhart's Shoes*, Thomas F. King, Randall S. Jacobson, Karen R. Burns, and Kenton Spading write about their work on the “Niku Project,” as part their work with the International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery, known by the acronym, “TIGHAR.” TIGHAR is a non-profit that is “dedicated to promoting responsible aviation archaeology and historic preservation.” *Amelia Earhart's Shoes* is a carefully detailed account that examines the likely, last known location of Earhart's Electra aircraft, on an island called Nikumaroro in the Republic of Kiribati in the South Pacific. King and others from TIGHAR have gone to the island and to related locations as part of their investigation, and the tone of their narrative is set within the first few pages.

The journey that you undertake with these authors will consist of equal parts mystery and science – a mystery that has generated world-wide amateur and professional interest for decades, and a science that is complex and multifaceted yet accessible. A passel of disciplines make their analytical appearance throughout the book with voices from fields as far apart as navigation, aeronautics, physics, chemistry, and environmental science. These help discourage conspiracy approaches yet they seemingly, alternately prove and disprove the authors own ideas and explanations for Earhart and Noonan's disappearance more than seventy-five years ago. The anthropological and archaeological focus of the narrative helps keep the humanity of those lost and those looking for them on the same page.

What drives the primary storyline is the question of what survivors would do in general on an island in the South Pacific and what Earhart and Noonan could specifically have done in their last hours of flight and/or time on the proposed island site. This seemingly singular line of thinking sits behind a continuing evolution of hypotheses, and

from this place, King and the other authors generate their research questions. As their story unfolds, an extraordinary number of intricate details about a distant part of the world emerge, and we learn that the island in question is a place that is costly and physically challenging to travel to, and is alternately too hot and too humid or too hot and too dangerous to spend much time in. It is also known that the typhoons and intense, unpredictable storms that prevail in the area have prevented unmitigated long-term, human occupation and in more than one instance prevented the investigator's boats from safely landing.

Several hypotheses share a common theme, that these elements along with the effects of the activities of British colonists and their subjects living on Niku, and of occupants of an American military outpost between the late 1930s and 1950s affected the disposition of any likely physical evidence from the Electra flight. And then, there's the enduring coconut crab, alive and well in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with an ability to slice a whole coconut to shreds with its razor-sharp claws. Weather, people moving airplane parts about, and crabs that can tear through a campsite without fanfare were also likely adversaries. A combination of these and other difficult conditions could and likely did affect the



Nikumaroro, Phoenix Islands, Kiribati

kinds of physical evidence one would expect from a downed plane and the activities of possibly injured survivors.

While this book is a historical mystery, it is also an investigation of investigations relayed to a general audience in ways that are entertaining and deeply engrossing. It is also a narrative that reveals how people from many different backgrounds and expertise find commonality of purpose and ways to collaborate. As in all good mysteries, neither the halfway nor three-quarter marks of the book's 374

pages bring forth proven theories or a distinct resolution to Earhart's and Noonan's disappearance. Definitive answers to the question, "What happened?" are conspicuously absent. For all of the right reasons to be wrong, this book reveals that unprovable or not yet proven theories, the lack of expected evidence often generates new and unimagined questions.

From the safe vantage point of one's couch, where no coconuts or their accompanying critters reside, one discovers that this book provides an artful read of a well-known but better-told archaeological story with many non-archaeological voices in the chorus. While I avoided reaching the final pages, the best news I can deliver is that the story is not yet over. More abounds from the world of investigative archaeology and science, some of which will likely be revealed when King makes his appearance at the Society's October 2015 Speaker Meeting. Please see the Calendar section on the SCAS website, [www.santacruzarchsociety.org](http://www.santacruzarchsociety.org) for more details.



Coconut Crab *Birgis latro*, length to 16", and 9 pounds.



Tom King on Nikumaroro

Thomas F. King holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology and has worked for multiple agencies within Cultural Resource Management. Focusing on cultural heritage management, his research specialties include Pacific Island cultures. His blog can be found at <http://crmpluss.blogspot.com> and other titles at Left Coast Press, [www.lcoastpress.com](http://www.lcoastpress.com). He currently serves on TIGHAR's Board of Directors.

Randall S. Jacobson, Ph.D. is a geophysicist who also works as a senior researcher with TIGHAR. Forensic anthropologist, Karen R. Burns (now deceased) worked with the TIGHAR team on the Niku Project to explore and understand the effects of environmental conditions on human remains. Kenton Spading works as a hydrologic engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



## OBITUARY – CHARLES HOLCOMB APRIL 6, 1927 - JUNE 30, 2015

Charles Holcomb, who was a strong supporter of the Society in the 1980s and 90s, has died. He was a successful contractor and developer who build a number of local quality projects including the Seascapes Village Shopping Center and Seascapes Beach Resort and Spa above the Aptos Beach. Chuck helped out on the “Lost Adobe” project and was supportive on other projects including the Scotts Valley City Hall event. Her had a great sense of humor and loved to show people a photo of he and his bulldozer with the bumper sticker “I DIG ARCHAEOLOGY” stuck on the side. For a full obit see Santa Cruz Sentinel, July 29, 2015, page G-6.



### **READERS!**

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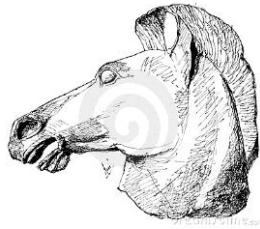
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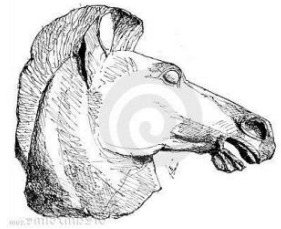
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**THANK YOU!**





# Ancient History



Detail of the Santa Cruz Mission from the U.S. Coast Survey Map of 1853, A.D. Bache Supt.

## Digging It

The Local Line – June 7-20, 1978

(Reprinted in the SCAN Vol 7 Number 4, July 1978, and re-edited for this issue.)

Murphy's Law and the Peter Principle are now part of the language for better or worse. It's time, we think, for an embellishment of the local lexicon. The new law is as yet unnamed, but its summary may read: "for any historical significance generated by a site's heritage of man-made structures such as Spanish Missions, there is an equal and opposite pressure to build condominiums on that site."

The little Mission you see in the plaza by the freeway entrance has little to do with the real thing. It's smaller, in a different place, and built only recently as a replica of the original, which was destroyed by an earthquake. The replica seems almost as much a tourism booster as a nod to heritage; the structural and social history of the Santa Cruz Mission is a confusing and multi-staged one, and nobody is really sure just what besides PG&E conduits lies underneath Mission Hill.

So when Ruby Terfertiller and/or archeologist Rob Edwards and/or city planning officials and/or construction workers (there is some debate over who found what first) discovered at the end of Adobe Street last month a tile and other physical evidence of a long submerged structure, local history buffs, including the cake and coffee variety, started buzzing. A lost chapel? More of a complex of which the School Street Adobe is only part?

The answer is unknown and is likely to remain that way. The tile was found only because bulldozers helped unearth it. The small lot (less than an acre) is the site of a nine unit condominium development, which, after a half decade of delays, is under construction.

Make that *was* under construction. A stipulation in the use permit, granted by the City Council last year, calls for holding up development if something new and significant is found. Now archeologists, developers, conservationists and planners are holding open and closed meetings to figure out what to do.

Roger Ginnert, of the local Bogart Construction company, still has a valid use permit; the delay is only a delay and not a revocation. Ginnert had originally proposed more than 40 units in a five story complex back in 1971, and saw that whittled to nine units by the city—barely over the profit threshold. He and city planners are operating on the assumption that the project will get built.

Surprisingly, there is little sentiment on the part of most of the archeologists involved to excavate the site. "Archaeology is potentially as destructive as bulldozing," said one. But there is much resentment by history buffs that the city allowed condo development in an area (Mission Hill) listed in the National Register of Historical Landmarks.

The involved parties are still at an information gathering state, and the probable course of action is to find a way to build the condo's without destroying anything underneath, thus preserving whatever is down there for some post-condo society to investigate. The disagreement is over how much research needs to be done before proposing mitigation measures. Preservationists are complaining that pressure from city hall to "get the thing built" is negating the importance of the site and discovery.

There is also some talk of delaying the project until some public purchase can be arranged. The zeal for that may be there, but as one planning department staffer said, "It wouldn't be a Town Clock kind of project; you're talking about a lot of money." There is also the Jarvis factor.

For now it's a waiting game. Interested observers can pass the time reading a passage from the city-approved application for Mission Hill's inclusion in the National Register: "Perhaps the greatest aspect of the Mission Hill area is its undisturbed character ..."

## ANCIENT OCCUPATION SITE FOUND NEAR RILEY, OREGON

From the *Lake County Examiner*, Lakeview, Oregon, March 25, 2015, and edited for this issue.

In 2012, near the Rimrock Draw Rockshelter outside of Riley in Harney County, Oregon archaeologists discovered evidence of one of the oldest known human occupations in the western United States. Archaeologists with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the University of Oregon Archaeological Field School have been excavating at the Rimrock Draw Rockshelter since 2011. Their discoveries have included a number of stone projectile points and tooth enamel fragments likely belonging to a prehistoric camel that became extinct approximately 13,000 years ago. What has the archaeological community most excited though is a small stone tool recently found below a layer of volcanic ash.



Orange agate tool. Photo Credit: University of Oregon

Near the bottom of a 12-foot deposit, archaeologists found a layer of ash that was identified as volcanic ash from a Mt. St. Helens eruption approximately 15,800 years ago. Beneath

the layer of volcanic ash, a small orange agate tool believed to have been used for scraping animal hides, butchering, and possibly carving wood was found. A blood residue analysis of the tool revealed animal proteins consistent with bison, the most likely species being *Bison antiquus*, an extinct ancestor of the modern buffalo.

“The discovery of this tool below a layer of undisturbed ash that dates to 15,800 years old means that this tool is likely older, which suggests the oldest human occupation west of the Rockies,” said Scott Thomas, BLM Burns District archaeologist.

“When we had the volcanic ash identified, we were stunned because that would make this stone tool one of the oldest artifacts in North America,” said Dr. Patrick O’Grady of the University of Oregon Archaeological Field School. Given those circumstances and the laws of stratigraphy, this object should be older than the ash,” said O’Grady. “While we need more evidence before we can make an irrefutable claim, we plan to expand our excavation this summer and hopefully provide further evidence of artifacts found consistently underneath that layer of volcanic ash.”

“For years, many in the archaeological field assumed that the first humans in the western hemisphere were the Clovis people – dating to around 13,000 years ago,” said Stan McDonald, BLM lead archaeologist. “While a handful of archaeological sites older than Clovis cultures have been discovered in the past few decades, there is still considerable scrutiny of any finding that appears older. With the recent findings at Rimrock Draw Shelter, we want to assemble indisputable evidence because these claims will be scrutinized by researchers. That said, the early discoveries are tantalizing.”



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND GENERAL MEETINGS



### **September 12, 2015 OHLONE DAY AT HENRY COWELL REDWOODS STATE PARK**

This event takes place on Saturday, Sept 12, from 10 am to 4 pm, in the group picnic area. All activities are free; day-use parking fee is \$10. The main entrance to Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park is located off of Highway 9 in Felton at 101 Big Trees Park Road.

### **September 19, 2015 RANCHO DAY FIESTA AT SANCHEZ ADOBE, PACIFICA, Noon to 4 pm**

The San Mateo County Historical Association presents the annual Rancho Day Fiesta. Families will enjoy early California music and participatory dancing. Rancho style refreshments will be available. Demonstration of bygone trades and craft activities for children will be featured. There will be a \$1 suggested donation with additional charges for food and crafts. For more information, go to <http://www.historysmc.org/>

### **October 10, 2015 ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ALL - 10:00 AM — 12:00 PM**

Hopland Research and Extension Center, Hopland, CA

Celebrate California Archaeology Month at the Hopland Research and Extension Center with Dr. Donna Gillette who will explain existence of cultural markings (petroglyphs) found on the site and their significance. This event is part of a statewide effort to encourage respect, appreciation and a better understanding of California's diverse cultural heritage.

### **October 15-17, 2015 TIME AGAIN TO GATHER: CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF THE CALIFORNIA INDIAN CONFERENCE**

University of California, Berkeley. This year we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the California Indian Conference by bringing it back to where it began in 1985! Submissions for papers and presentations on any topic focusing on California's Native American peoples are welcome. <http://nasd.berkeley.edu/cic>

### **October 17, 2015 ARCHAEOLOGY DEMONSTRATION 1:00 PM**

California State Parks, 144 School Street, Santa Cruz, CA

How do artifacts give us clues to the past? Follow the archaeological process from the dig to the display, and participate in hands-on activities to discover the stories told by the artifacts. Presented in collaboration with the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society. This event is FREE. Rain Cancels. The Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park is located on School St. off of Mission and Emmet St. in Santa Cruz. Please call (831) 425-5849 for more information. [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

### **October 23-25, 2015 SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTHERN DATA SHARING MEETING**

To be held at Fort Tejon State Historic Park. Free group tent camping has been provided by California State Parks for Friday and Saturday nights. Presentations and a tour of the park will take place on Saturday, and Sunday field trips are being scheduled; additional details forthcoming.

### **November 6-8, 2015 SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY NORTHERN DATA SHARING MEETING —**

To be held in Little Basin Group Campground at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Visit [scahome.org/future-meetings](http://scahome.org/future-meetings) for more information.

### **March 10-13, 2016 SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY — 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**

Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Ontario Airport, Ontario, CA.

**September 17, 2015** **Kari Lentz**, Staff Archaeologist, William Self Associates. *Of Washbasins and Whiteware: Socioeconomic Status and Travel Tokens in the South of Market Area of San Francisco.*



**October 15, 2015**     **Tom (Thomas F.) King**, Author and Senior Archaeologist with The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR)  
***“Amelia Earhart and Archaeology: Excavating a Mystery.”***

[King/e/B001IU2RWK/ref=la\\_B001IU2RWK\\_st?qid=1394198577&rh=n%3A283155%2Cp\\_82%3AB001IU2RWK&sort=daterank](http://www.king.e/B001IU2RWK/ref=la_B001IU2RWK_st?qid=1394198577&rh=n%3A283155%2Cp_82%3AB001IU2RWK&sort=daterank)

**January 21, 2016**     **Kären Johansson**, San Jose State University

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