What Does the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society Do & What Have We Done?

By Rob Edwards

This is a question I have received both from the public and from newer members. It is hard to answer off the top of my head. The following is a response after some consideration of the role and the history of the Society in our Community.

The Santa Cruz Archaeological Society (SCAS) was started in 1972 and has been continuously active for over 44 years. In its first two years the Society grew to over 50 members, almost all who had had at least one class in Introductory Archaeology from Cabrillo College and many had had a Field Class experience as well. They came with a fascination for archaeology and with deep ties to our community. The impact of these “community archaeologists” over the years has been extensive. Members have been active in public education by creating local Indian and archaeological school kits that the local museums could lend out to schools; preparing exhibits for our County Fair and for various Historic Heritage Days; making class visits to elementary schools to teach about how archaeology is done and what it has taught us.

Society members have persistently worked with local land owners to preserve historic and prehistoric sites including assisting in the salvage and saving of the 2500BCE site (CA-SCR- 20 1972-4) in Bonny Doon. They
have carried out volunteer salvage in the Watsonville area in 1974-75 at Lee Road where a prehistoric burial site was being destroyed and at the St. Francis Cemetery. SCAS members volunteered their energy for the salvage and processing of prehistoric lithic materials from CA-SCR-35 in Davenport in 1978. They also supported the salvage and processing of materials from the Branciforte Adobe and at the Sunflower House in Santa Cruz.

It was this same local Archaeological Society who arranged (beginning January 1975,) the contract with the County Planning Department to do initial (presence/absence) surveys for local construction permits and continued that service for over 30 years. All told, SCAS members carried out over 1,000 volunteer surveys that increased the County’s capacity to surpass CEQA requirements while reducing the cost to local land owners. In addition to SCAS’s long relationship with the County Planning Dep’t, members have done volunteer surveys for the cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola.

In the early 1980s, in response to major development in the area of the old Santa Cruz Mission, SCAS, under the guidance of the Cabrillo College Archaeology Program, carried out several years of unfunded “salvage” excavations at the site of the old adobe on Mission Hill. The Santa Cruz Archaeological Society members worked with the local historic community (members of the Adobe Coalition) to change how the City handled development on Mission Hill and indeed in the City as a whole.

SCAS members contributed financial support to this effort and also helped write both a historic and a prehistoric ordinance. In the years just prior to the bi-centennial celebration of Santa Cruz’s founding in 1991, SCAS was visibly and effectively active in the public education projects in public venues such as Fiesta Days, County Fairs and in the schools.

In 1981 a major, significant, and very early prehistoric site was deliberately destroyed by the city of Scotts Valley. The Archaeology Society led the way in a legal suit to attempt to preserve what was already heavily impacted site at Scotts Valley City Hall and to force the city to comply with environmental law. When there was no alternative, the Society membership joined together with the local historic community including the Scotts Valley Historical Society and the statewide Society for California Archaeology, to provide leadership, raise funds, carry out a campaign of education and political action and finally went to court in legal battles against that local municipality. It was the history of involvement and commitment to local heritage that led to the Society being recognized by the local courts as a stake holder in local cultural resources in this case.

Those battles lasted over 3 years, (1981-4) and were finally concluded by the Society accepting an out of court settlement from the City of Scotts Valley of over $25,000 dollars. The Society went on to organize one of the largest volunteer “events” for an amazing large scale “salvage” effort in 1983. Archaeological volunteers came from across the State to help in this project. There were more than 125 people a day involved over a four day period.

Photo courtesy of Rob Edwards.

Due in a great part to the high visibility of the archaeological activities locally in the 1980s and the awareness of the archaeological interest from the local community, in early 1990’s the “vocational” Cabrillo College Archaeological Technology Program, was created. Santa Cruz Archaeological Society members were among the first to go through the training, receive certificates, to provide scholarships for other students and to support the Program financially.

All these ‘local’ projects allowed local students the ability to attend and receive accessible and inexpensive professional training. Many of these students became members of the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society and contributed to its success.

About 40% of Cabrillo’s “Arche Tech” students continued on to four year schools, or, those with BA’s, on to graduate school. Still others obtained and went to work in private businesses (including local Cultural Management firms) or with governmental agencies. At the SCA meetings in San Jose about 10% of attendees wore “Blue Alumni Badges”. The other Arche Tech Program graduates have taken their interests and knowledge into their lives and their communities.

I was fortunate to have taught in one community college for almost all of my 40+ years of teaching and therefore have had the opportunity to see some of these local community contributions that I think may be unseen by those with less time in one place. These students, many of whom are SCAS members, have provided energy and expertise to support the archaeological needs in their communities. They were the backbone of political support for archeology at public meetings, for appropriate legislation, for public education at county fairs and in the schools and at community heritage celebrations. The volunteer Survey contract went through 2005. Volunteer surveys have continued when warranted, for example site recordation at Lexington Reservoir and the recent Volunteer Field Day survey of the McClune property/Castro Adobe for Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks. Society members continue to do...
outreach in the community such as: the Map Sales at a local public market, regular participation in the Adobe Archaeological outreach at the Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Park and what has to be one of the longest continuous archaeological lecture series in the State. These community based archeologists are true life-long learners and important contributors to Santa Cruz. They are also the energy of the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society and the major reason for the awareness of and interest in archaeology in our local community.

Santa Cruz Archaeological Society Map Sales at the Cabrillo Farmers Market.
Photo courtesy of Rob Edwards.

Castro Adobe Field Trip April 27, 2104
A Field Trip to Church Rock by Mary Gerbic

On Sunday afternoon, March 15th, a group of SCA attendees carpooled with Dr. Eric Ritter to Church Rock, northeast of Redding, to tour a prehistoric site that is not open to the public, or ordinarily available for private tours. The site, described as the former Wintu village of Tsarau Heril, is also a petroglyph site containing hundreds of elements on many panels, and areas of bedrock mortars, cupules and grooves near a creek. This site is in the ethnographic area of the Wintu people but in much earlier times was also the territory of the Yana, whose ancestors were pushed east by the arrival of the Wintu ancestors about 5,000 years ago.

The 1.9 acre site was preserved in 1998 as a “greenbelt” by the City of Redding as mitigation for the nearby golf course resort and luxury house development whose sewer line cuts across the prehistoric site. Dr. Ritter told us that this area around Redding was one of the areas of highest population in California in prehistoric times, because the abundance of resources. The site is covered with oak and pine trees and grass, with numerous wildflowers including geophytes such as Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) and Wavy Soap Plant. A nearby creek supplied water and fish.

Before entering the site, Dr. Ritter gave us a safety lecture, and a handout consisting of a few pages from an early report including drawings of some of the rock art panels. The original report was the result of a three-day survey conducted for the City of Redding. The figures on the panels were hard to see even in 1987, and some were photographed at night using artificial light.

It was important for us to walk single file through the site so we would minimize damage to the site. The sandstone bedrock on which the grooves, bedrock mortars and petroglyph elements were created is literally underfoot and very delicate. Dr. Ritter informed us that weathering, acidic runoff from the nearby middens and our footsteps cause damage, so we were very careful to stay off the rock except when we were told it was permitted. It is an unfortunate fact that looting in the midden was common in the past, and despite the fencing, looting has occurred recently as well. The petroglyphs have not been defaced, but they are disappearing due to natural causes.

As we walked from the parking area to the rise behind us, we examined the reddish soil, derived from the sandstone of the Chico Formation. As we walked up the mound, we noticed that the soil had turned black, and we saw numerous fire affected rocks in the rodent mounds. This was the main village site. We dropped into a large depression. This was the location of a former dance house. The soil in the depression was the natural red color, and there were no trees inside.

We walked on to a small creek which ran over exposed sandstone bedrock. In it, we saw numerous depressions: some appearing to be bedrock mortars and a few that appeared to be naturally sculpted in running water. Everyone gathered around to look at the grooves carved in the sandstone. A “bathtub ring” of yellow pine pollen
made the grooves and bedrock mortars easier to see, as the overcast sky created poor conditions for viewing shallow indentions in the rock. A possible explanation for these grooves was that they were created while manufacturing or sharpening tools. It is notable that the grooves appear on bedrock in the drainage where they would be at least seasonally wet. Dr. Ritter placed a half of an arrow straightener in a groove, where it fit perfectly.

We continued on to a grassless, level area edged with a curved sandstone outcrop. Within the level area was a sandstone outcrop roughly three feet long and about two and a half feet tall with sloping sides. This rock is known as Altar Rock, and sacred to the Wintu people. Dr. Ritter and Dr. Jon Harman, developer of DStretch, a tool which is used to make color contrasts visible, conferred as Dr. Harman photographed sections of the wall with his color space-altered camera, to see if there was any residual paint. I had not heard about “Altar Rock” before arriving at the site. Someone asked Dr. Ritter why the place was named “Church Rock” and then it made sense that a church in the western worldview would have an altar.

Figure 1 Grooves in the sandstone. Photo by Dawn Johnson.

Altar Rock and Dr. Eric Ritter.
Walking on, we came to the petroglyph panels. Here, looking at the rocks at an angle, using the patina and washed-in silt, we could see small cupules, stylized plant-like designs including flowers, a spiral, and parallel grooves.

The next panel had more small cupules, some in long rows, stylized bear paws, spirals and other designs. Soil has covered parts of the panels over the years, so some of the designs present in the handout figures were no longer visible. Raised areas of some elements had lost their patina; the natural yellow sandstone further obscuring the design. One feature looked like a wheel with spokes, and some figures strung together resembled writing. The elements which resembled bear paws were most distinctive. Tilburg et al. (1987) citing ethnographies of the Wintu and the Yana, said that bears were very important animals and both groups hunted them. Two Wintu bear dances were recorded in the ethnographies. Other animals which may be represented in the panels are quail and deer. The authors also stated that some elements might be newer, and related to the dreaming dances of the late 1800s.
Some boulders on higher ground were completely covered with small cupules and dense with lichens. Cupules may have resulted from fertility rituals, but both cuts on rocks and cupules have also been cited by ethnographers as weather controlling symbols in Northern California. The cut was made to start rain, and a perpendicular cross was to stop it. Spirals also feature as symbols of an altered state of consciousness.

When asked about the age of the petroglyphs, Dr. Ritter said it was hard to say with any certainty. There are few available means to determine age at Church Rock. One is the superposition of an element type on top of another type. There appears to be no superposition at Church Rock. Another method of dating is to analyze the style. There were cupules, and a single PCN-like element on one boulder. I asked Dr. Donna Gillette about the PCN-like element, thinking that it was not typical. She said that it was PCN-like, but PCNs are hypothesized to be the product of ritual quarrying of powder from talc-rich rocks, and are only found in coastal California. This site is too far inland to be part of the PCN Tradition.

Cupules, on the other hand, are found everywhere in the world, and some Native groups have revived the tradition of making them. There were no painted features at Church Rock which could be carbon-dated, and Dr. Ritter said there had been no formal excavation, so that the living areas could be correlated with the petroglyphs. Given the fragile nature of the sandstone, it’s unlikely that the petroglyphs or the other elements predate the occupation of this territory by the Wintu. So, it’s hard to say how old the Church Rock site is.

As the tour ended, we were invited to stay, and some did, to walk carefully among the boulders to examine other panels and work areas.

Strings of cupules on sandstone.


(Photos by Mary Gerbic unless otherwise noted.)
A Field Trip to Shasta State Historic Park by Sue Scott

Those of us who participated in the Shasta Field Trip at the SCA Conference this March were treated to a fine experience with a local guide, Dottie Smith, author of *The Dictionary of Early Shasta County History*.

Dottie’s stories were filled with interesting facts and experiences of the people, especially from the Gold Rush era. We stopped to see places where during that period there was a stage coach robbery, where the Chinese community was located and we viewed some still lived in homes of the wealthy and local Shasta individuals. The stone foundation of what was planned as a cathedral and old stone walls along the back roadways are still evident. An early building with high original windows is being renovated to accommodate a local church. Our guide wishes they can be saved. An old brick school house is still being used, though not as a school house. On the same property was the site of a school house built for Indians and other minorities in the region. A brewery building is still standing and has an historical marker.

One story was very touching. There is a marker for the one grave, a child, which was kept from being demolished when a road was redirected. The story is of a couple whose child died, but there was no local cemetery for them to use. They drove a very long distance to place the child in a cemetery that allowed them to. It was a Jewish Cemetery. The child is the only person left there.

We ended our tour at the Shasta Museum which is housed in the original Court House. I especially enjoyed the ability to choose voices from the past by lifting an old style receiver and listening to tales of those individuals who experienced the days of the Gold Rush. One voice was a former slave who came with his owner to work the fields. He did laundry to raise his own money which, after they returned to the owner's home, the owner kept...about $700. He returned to Shasta to work and eventually paid for his freedom. He sent his children to Canada for an education, but eventually worked to open that school house for Indians and minorities. He also was able to convince locals to open a “retirement” home for the elderly where he spent his final days.

For more information about Shasta County history, visit: [http://shastacountyhistory.com/](http://shastacountyhistory.com/).
Ancient History

Welcome to Ancient History, where we will revisit SCAN columns from the past. I hope you enjoy this article from 41 years ago, on the Flightless Scoter at Sand Hill Bluff, by Rob Edwards. Sincerely, the Editor

5400 YEARS ON THE SANTA CRUZ COAST?

Submitted by Rob Edwards to SCAN Volume 3, Number 3, May 1974

The Laguna Creek-Sand Hill Bluff site, SCr-7, received more than archaeological interest last month when a student brought in to Dr. Victor Morejohn, paleontologist-ornithologist at San Jose State University, some bones of an extinct bird recovered from the blownout dunes there. Dr. Morejohn, who is also associated with the Moss Landing Research Center, identified the bird as “Chendytes lawi”, an extinct flightless scoter. Chendytes was a member of the diving duck family, similar in size to a goose but with the wing size of a teal. Previous to this finding, ornithologists had believed the bird to be in the range of 33,000 years old, as were the remains found on the offshore islands of southern California, particularly Anacapa.

Dr. Morejohn brought students out to the site on a methods field trip, and they proceeded to excavate a three foot square pit in two six-inch levels. During this excavation they recovered one more example of Chendytes. Dr. Morejohn then returned with Ken Lajoie of USGS, Menlo Park. They took two Carbon14 samples, one from the bottom of the excavated unit, and one about 1.5 meters below the surface by cleaning away a wind eroded face. Both samples were made on mussel and barnacle shell. These samples were sent to Isotopes Inc. for dating and the results were as follows:

Sample #1 I-7828 from the top portion, 3790 ± 110
Sample #2 I-7827 from 1.5 meter depth, 5390 ± 100

Cultural material was found in both areas, including a human cranium and femur fragment near the lower sample.

The significance of this date is critical for several fields; for the Archaeologists involved, Michael Moratto, Rob Edwards and John Fritz, if the dating proved to be accurate, this would be the oldest site in the central California coastal area, and might well help to rewrite the prehistory of this area. From the Paleontologist-Biologists view, Dr. Morejohn and graduate students Diane Mattiesen and Mike Holst, the find not only expands the range of Chendytes, but also the terminal extinction date. The Geologist, Lajoie, has an interest in dating the formation of the sand dunes and of the beach below; and the Geographer involved, Dr. Gordon from San Francisco State and the Moss Landing Research Center, is working on the Monterey Bay environment over time, and research here adds data to his work. As an additional note to
the archaeological interest in this early date, *Olivella* shells are known to have been traded into Nevada 7000 years ago. This coupled with evidence of occupation of the central coast area at an early date presents a valid reason for supporting a change in the prehistory and trade networks of the central coast, as well as time and manner in which the area was settled.

Dr. Moratto is currently coordinating a multi-discipline, multi-institutional research proposal, with a possible field date of spring, 1975.

Artifacts recovered during Dr. Morejohn’s field class included awls, a flaker, two whale bone pries, twenty-eight species of birds and mammals, knives, points similar in size to atlatl spear points, scrapers and a hammer stone. No ground stone tools were found, and of the knives, points and scrapers none were manufactured from obsidian.

---

**SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY NEWS**

By Chelsea Rose (rosec@sou.edu)

The Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) and the Southern Oregon University Hannon Library are pleased to announce the launch of the Jim Rock Historic Can Collection! We were fortunate to inherit Jim Rock’s traveling bottle and can exhibit, and in an effort to continue his legacy of education and outreach, we have digitized the can assemblage so it can be used as a resource by everyone.

Follow this link to find detailed information about tin cans, and pdfs of Jim Rock's hard to find can publications!

http://digital.hanlib.sou.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16085coll5
Upcoming Events, Opportunities

March 17, 2015
Applications Being Accepted for US/ICOMOS Pathways to Diversity Summer Internship. (Published on www.usicoms.org on March 17, 2015)
US/ICOMOS, in partnership with the Student Conservation Association is currently accepting applications for a Pathways to Diversity Intern through the National Park Service’s Cultural Resources Diversity Internship Program (CRDIP). Cultural resources diversity internships provide career exploration for diverse undergraduate and graduate students ages 18-35 in historic preservation and cultural resources management. US/ICOMOS is hosting one of several such positions being offered throughout the National Park Service. The US/ICOMOS “Pathways to Diversity” program connects diasporic US communities whose heritage draws meaning and context from places outside the US to international research, resources and experts on those places. To learn more, visit: http://www.thesca.org/serve/program/cultural-resources-diversity-internship-program-crdip. Expected internship dates: June 1-August 9, 2015.

April 22, 2015

May 22-25, 2015
The American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) will be holding their annual meeting at the Colorado Bell Resort and Casino, Laughlin Nevada, May 22-25. For more information: www.arara.org.

June 2015
MISSION SANTA CRUZ - SUMMER ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

As part of public outreach, Santa Clara University and the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park are looking for volunteers to sort and process artifacts from California’s Mission Period. These artifacts, recovered from excavations of the neophyte (Indian) housing at the Santa Clara Mission will help a variety of researchers better understand mission life. This summer opportunity will take place at the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park, the site of the only neophyte housing that remains in California today.

For more information, contact Julie Sidel at the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park at 831-425-5849. Also, stay tuned to the SCAS website, www.santacruzarchsociety.org for more information.
June 6, 2015

**SANTA CRUZ ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY MAP SALE – CABRILLO FARMERS MARKET 8 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.**

Come support your society and pick up some organic produce!

June 6, 2015

**OPEN HOLE 10 A.M. TO 12 P.M.**

Come visit UCSC Anthro 189 students and their instructor, Pat Paramoure at their excavation at Cabin H, upper Ranch View Road. More information will be available on the Friends of the Cowell Lime Works Facebook Page.


**LEGION OF HONOR, FINE ARTS MUSEUM, SAN FRANCISCO**

**Ancient Luxury and the Roman Silver Treasure from Berthouville**

In 1830, a French farmer plowing his field near the village of Berthouville, in rural Normandy, accidentally discovered a hoard of spectacular silver-gilt objects that were deliberately buried during antiquity. The items, all dated to the first or second century AD, were dedicated to the Roman god Mercury and collectively became known as the Berthouville Treasure. The exhibition features more than 160 pieces, including selections from this find as well as precious gems, jewelry, and other Roman luxury objects from the royal collections of the Cabinet des médailles at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. For more information, visit: [http://legionofhonor.famsf.org/exhibitions](http://legionofhonor.famsf.org/exhibitions)

Feb 22-Dec 6, 2015

**City Rising: San Francisco and the 1915 World’s Fair**

California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street, San Francisco

Feb 22 – Dec 6, 2015

Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco


This exhibition is part of San Francisco's Centennial Celebration of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE100), presented by AT&T; [www.ppie100.org](http://www.ppie100.org). CHS is an organizing partner of the PPIE100 along with Innovation Hangar, the Maybeck Foundation, and the San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department.

In celebration of the PPIE's centennial anniversary, the California Historical Society presents two related exhibitions exploring the PPIE as a critical event that shaped the San Francisco we know today—a city undaunted by tragedy, audaciously innovative, rising to meet the challenges of the day. For more information about exhibits, see [http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/exhibitions/current_exhibitions/](http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/exhibitions/current_exhibitions/)
SCAS General Meeting Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings will be held at the Sesnon House on the Cabrillo College Campus, 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA, at 7:30 P. M.

May 21, 2015  
**Gustavo Flores** San Jose State University, Holman & Associates, will be speaking on: Native American Response and Resistance to Spanish Conquest in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1769 - 1846

June 18, 2015  
**Gregg Castro**

October 15, 2015  
**Tom (Thomas F.) King** is Senior Archaeologist on TIGHAR’s Amelia Earhart Search Project, and co-author of Amelia Earhart’s Shoes (AltaMira Press, 2004) – an account of TIGHAR’s work in pursuit of the Nikumaroro Hypothesis through 2003.  

King has been doing archaeological research and writing since he was a teenager in California in the 1950s, and holds a PhD from the University of California, Riverside. He has worked in government, academia, and the private sector, and currently manages his veteran-owned consulting firm. He is widely known as an expert in the interpretation and application of U.S. environmental and historic preservation laws to promote the careful management of archaeological sites, tribal spiritual places, cultural landscapes, and other historic places. He has published several textbooks on archaeology, historic preservation, and related topics.

King has taken part in five TIGHAR expeditions to Nikumaroro, including three seasons of excavation at the “Seven Site” – which may have been Earhart’s last campsite. He regularly speaks on the Earhart Search Project to historical, aviation, and civic organizations, and has published a novel, Thirteen Bones, about the discovery of what may have been Earhart’s bones on Nikumaroro in 1940.

Contact:
Phone 240-475-0595, email tomking106@gmail.com
Books: [http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-F.-King/e/B001IU2RWK/ref=la_B001IU2RWK_st?qid=1394198577&rh=n%3A283155%2Cp_82%3AB001IU2RWK&sort=daterank

November 19, 2015  
**Kristin Wilson**, Ph.D., Cabrillo College
Announcing
San Jose State
Archaeological Field School
June 1-19, 2015

LOMA PRIETA MILL PROJECT
at
The Forest at Nisene Marks State Park
About one hour from campus in Santa Cruz County.

Don't just read about history, discover it yourself! Learn the basic skills of archaeological field methods while contributing to the study of early California timber milling, immigrant labor, and the development of the bay region.

The Loma Prieta Mill was one of the largest lumber operations of 19th century California. This project will investigate the mill itself, associated narrow-gauge railroads, and the labor camps.

Tuition plus project fee
Earn 3 units upper division credit: Anthropology 169

The field school will operate as a commuter project Monday-Friday 9:00-4:00.

If interested and want to learn more about how you can participate or to pre-register, contact:
Dr. Marco Meniketti
Department of Anthropology
marco.meniketti@sjtu.edu
Join us in our efforts to study and preserve the Past for the Future…

☐ Individual $20  ☐ Students $15  ☐ Seniors $15  ☐ Family $25
☐ Lifetime $400  ☐ Institution $25

☐ New Member  ☐ Renewal  ☐ Gift Membership (from) ___________________________

Name: __________________________________________________________
Street Address / Apt.#: _____________________________________________
City, State, ZIP: _________________________________________________
Email Address: ___________________________________________________
Phone: __________________________________________________________

Please share any archaeological interests or experience:

_____________________________________________________________________________

I would prefer to receive the SCAS Newsletter by:   O post mail   O email   O both

Mail completed application with dues to:
SCAS Membership
P.O. Box 85
Soquel, CA 95073