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The Santa Cruz Archaeological Society Newsletter—Winter 2021

Unlocking a Mystery: The Search for a “Lost” Adobe on Mission Hill, Santa Cruz, California (Part 3)

by Rob Edwards and Charr Simpson-Smith, May 24, 2021.

What Can We Say About The Lost Adobe from this Project?

The structural foundation data from four years was used to create a map of the dimensions of the Lost Adobe on the Tefertiller’s property. The dimensions of the rooms that can be said to be “clearly documented” are Rooms I – V plus the drain space east of the central datum. The rooms range from 4 meters to 4.4 meters in width east/west. The rooms are almost, but not quite, of equal interior distance. The drain, 1.1 meters wide, is an anomaly.

Rooms to the west are documented to have the same southern exterior foundation alignment as Rooms I –IV and the east/west width of these room are similar to Rooms I-IV. The northern external foundation for some

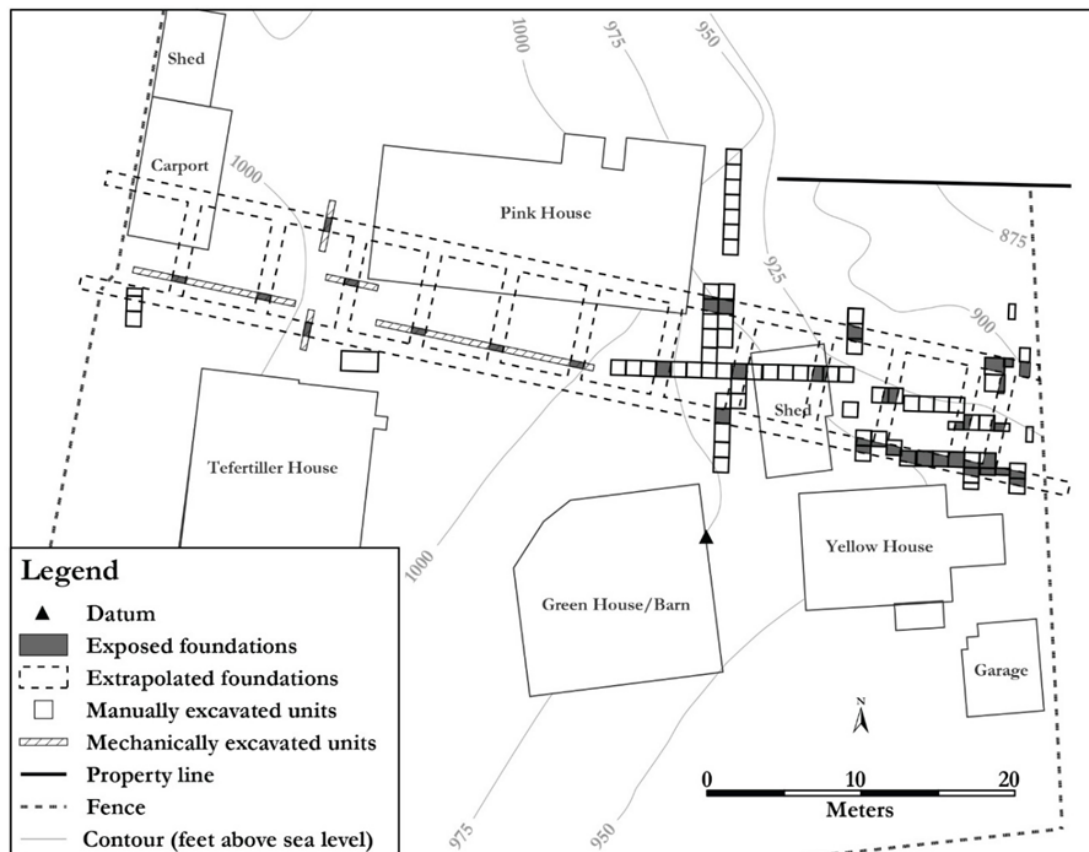


Figure 3: Contour map of “Lost Adobe” with test units (Redrawn by Stella D’Oro from Dr. Gary Breschini)

of the A – G designated rooms are undefined as they lie under the “Pink House”. Jim Tefertiller had reported that this area was leveled just prior to moving the Pink House onto the parcel, and this may have impacted the foundation. The contour map for the property shows a rise in this area that could mean the foundations still exist under the house (Figure 3). It is probable that the northern foundation is/was on the same alignment because it is so evenly aligned on both the east and west sides of the Pink House.

Structural measurements show the Lost Adobe to be consistent in width (n/s) but varied in internal (e/w) segmental length. The segmental room distance from inter-wall to inter-wall is 4.8 meters except for the drain feature.

A quick initial analysis of the materials from Rooms I through IV seems to show functional differences between the rooms. Rooms I and III seem to be functional kitchens and lithic and possibly shell bead processing areas. This is based on both having large hearth areas evidenced by ash and fire-cracked rock and a plethora of small flaked tools, including drills, points and knives, and food processing artifacts such as a pestle, mano and metate. Room II had a small hearth and Room IV does not seem to have one at all. Both II and IV contain artifacts that can be interpreted as high status. Room II has five times as many beads as Room I, a copper pin, a silver Mexican réal, and two phoenix buttons, while Room IV has one phoenix button. It will be interesting to see what can be told after the final analysis of the Room artifacts.

How was the Adobe “Lost”?

The excavations of 1981-1984 (and what we later learned was on the Condominium property) define an adobe structure with a documented 18 rooms and there is sufficient room on the church property for many more (11?). How could such a large building be missing from written records?

The 1835 Secularization inventory had only two Adobes listed that had dimensions that might have applied to the Lost Adobe. One structure is listed as “One row of seventeen sections where the natives live, each section ten x six varas”. However, as the Neary Rodriguez Adobe was standing during 1835 (indeed it is still standing) and fits the 17-room structure description, this entry most likely apply to that building.

There was another structure listed in the 1835 inventory, this one comprising of 29 units. The total length of this structure was said to be just under 600 feet. After the Cabrillo project was completed, preliminary reports of the condominium portion of the Lost Adobe, indicated six ½ segments of room could be located within that parcel. The number of rooms of the Lost Adobe found on of the Tefertiller property is 11 ½, which would total 18 rooms and one drain space for the parcels. While no proven evidence exists that the Adobe extended onto the convent parcel to the west there is some tentative remote sensing data that suggests that it might (Figure 4).

Based on work carried out in 1999 for Holy Cross Church which defined the east wall of the cemetery ¹⁶ there is sufficient space on the Church’s property to allow for the extension of another possible 10 rooms plus a roadway, all to the east of the cemetery. There was considerable bulldozing and leveling on the Church property in the 1950s and it is uncertain what might possibly have survived.

Given the evidence of roof tile scatter and wall fall found during the Cabrillo College excavations, it is likely that the building came down in either an earthquake and/or storm. The question is when? While there are records of major earthquakes, rainstorms and other destruction in the 1820s and later in 1840, there were phoenix buttons found in good cultural context in Rooms II and IV of the Lost Adobe. This would suggest either a very late 1830s occupation date of the site, or an earlier date for the entry of phoenix buttons into Central California.

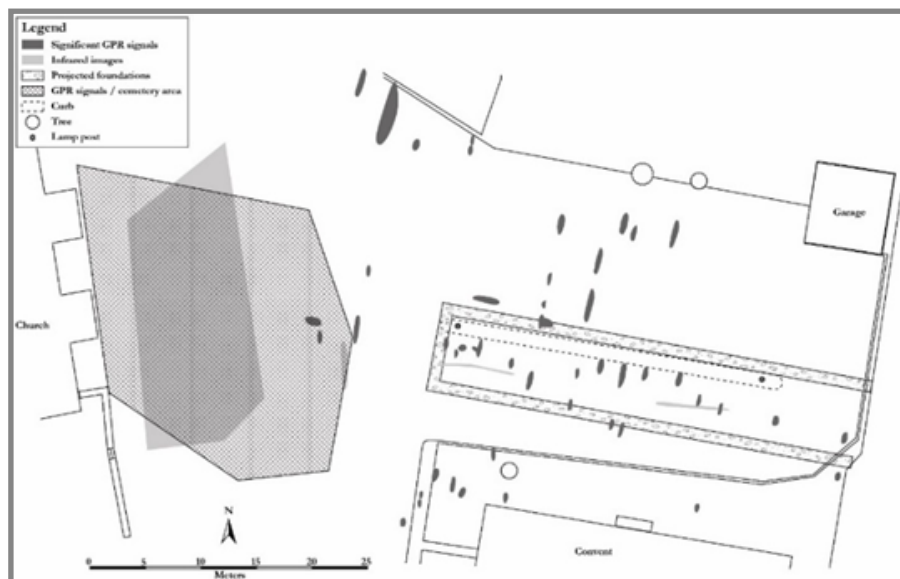


Figure 4: Ground Penetrating Radar map of Holy Cross Church land. Redrawn by Stella D'Oro from Yetter (1985)¹⁷

As noted earlier, Torchiana wrote in 1933:

“...on the opposite (*northern*) side of School Street an adobe was located Between the two rows of (*adobe*) houses ran a diverted stream.”¹⁸

In searching the post-1835 written records for Mission Santa Cruz, one clue was found that may relate to the “Lost Adobe.” In 1840, there was a visitor to Santa Cruz who is quoted in Webb (1952):

*“In fact, with every step we encountered objects of sadness and disgust; the long rows of little huts made of sun-dried bricks, lately occupied by the neophytes of the monks, had no doors or windows and were covered in part by their debris”.*¹⁹

While the historical description of a 29-room structure may be the “Lost Adobe,” it cannot be said with certainty that it is.

An additional perspective on the Lost Adobe comes from Casey Tefertiller who recently restated Ruby’s story that,

*“There was supposedly an old white-wash shack in the back yard of the (yellow) eastern most house on our property. A white-wash shack is what Anglo settlers called old adobe buildings. My sister says that she can remember the foundations and they are at the spot where the Lost Adobe has been located. It could have been one room that survived from the old adobe and was reconditioned into a residence. That remnant would have lasted into the 1840s. There were no family stories about an adobe structure running across the property, which means it was almost certainly gone and forgotten by 1846.”*²⁰

It seems possible that the one room adobe may well be Room IV. It would have had the survival advantage of an eastern double wall of the “Gap”. Its post- Mission residential use could be supported by the small number of lithic and the lack of any glass artifacts in our sample.

Public Education at the Adobe

Public education was an ongoing focus during the excavation years as it was considered a key part of professional development for students of archaeology, and a necessary responsibility of professional archaeologists. Near the end of each excavation session the community was invited to visit at an “Open Hole” (rather than an open house). Students walked visitors around the site explaining what was being done and how and why. Additional tours of the site were organized for local and statewide interested heritage groups.

There was active participation (along with the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society) in the Adobe Coalition's Mission Fiesta in the Fall of each year (See photos following). This included displays of artifacts and findings and screening activities for young folks of all ages.

Public lectures were given throughout the four years of the project at the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society monthly meetings, and many hours were volunteered by the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society members.²²

Other informal talks were given to local groups such as the Rotary, Kiwanis, and other organizations. The local newspapers and T.V. stations were invited to visit and report about each season's work, which resulted in local information and education.

Formal papers were also delivered at annual meetings of the Society for California Archaeology, Society for Historical Archaeology, and the (then new) California Mission Studies Association.

More recently (2020) a Wikipedia entry was added to the Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Historic Park page for the Adobe and another for phoenix buttons.^{23,24}



Figure 5: Rob Edwards with Ruby and Jim Tefertiller.

Gratitude and Acknowledgements

This has been a volunteer project from the beginning, carried out by the Cabrillo College Archaeological Program and the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society with the strong support of the Tefertiller family. Jim and Ruby Tefertiller provided unusual commitment and enthusiasm in hosting four years of classes on their property. Ruby was a major source of historical knowledge about Mission Hill. Jim gave us exceptional assistance for the excavation processes, often finding or making tools and equipment that allowed the work to proceed expediently.



Figure 6: Raiders of the Lost Adobe providing public education at the Mission Fiesta Days (1981)

Most of the labor was done by students and volunteers who worked to find and define the Lost Adobe in six field sessions over four years and during several research and laboratory classes on the Cabrillo Campus. The major funding was from Cabrillo College which provided the support for the various the courses that were offered. Other funding was from a mix of small grants from the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society; from historic foundations including Caryl Kane and the Underwood Foundation, the Santa Cruz Historical Society; from community groups such as the Santa Cruz Rotary, the Skaggs Foundation, the Solari Family Trust, from the Cabrillo College Faculty Senate, from Mrs. Lilian Rouse and other individuals who chose to remain anonymous.

This volunteer effort included professional researchers, historic archaeologists, and specialists in a number of fields. Their contributions were singular, and to describe them all would take another chapter. I will list alphabetically all I can remember and apologize to any I might have forgotten.

David Barry, Claire Biancalana, Michel Bihn, Larry Bourdeau, Gary Breschini, Jacquelyn Cooper, Julia Costello, Steve Dietz, Mary Doane, Lambert Dolphin, Nancy del Grande, Charlene Duval, Roberta Greenwood, Glenn Farris, Father Jim Henry, Larry Felton, Paul Hampson, Trudy Haversat, Karen Hildebrand, Chuck Holman, David Huelsbeck, Mary Ellen Irons, Bonnie Keeshan, Edna Kimbro, Rob Jackson, Sandy Lydon, Eric Mathes, Robin Mc Hugh, Clement Meighan, Lynne Moritz, Norman Neuerberg, Tom O'Brien, Micki Ryan, David Scott, Tsim Schneider, Russel Skowronek, Jean and Don Stafford, Stan Stevens, Casey Tefertiller, Bill Weber, and Tom Yetter.

Special acknowledgments must go to Tsim Schneider for taking responsibility for this research to go forward at UCSC and for convincing us to delve into the past to produce a Project History story to set the stage for future stories to come. Thanks also to Casey Tefertiller for providing access to these collections and by reading a first draft and convincing us we could do better. Julie Edwards took our revised fractured writings and smoothed them out to be more readable. Toby Edwards made needed corrections and clarifications. Stella D' Oro has done her magic to make our maps and figures professional. And finally, gratitude to Jim and Ruby Tefertiller for sharing their lives and love for Mission Hill. 🌱

16) Edwards, Rob, Charlotte A. Simpson Smith, and R. Paul Hampson, Historical Resource Investigations at Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, Santa Cruz, California, 1999.

((17) GPR transects in the region of the projected extension of the "Lost Adobe" (on the church property) indicated radar anomalies, some of which might be footings. Letter report from Tom Yetter, 1985, S.R.I. For a detailed discussion of methods, see "Geophysical Survey at Neary-Rodriguez Adobe, Mission Santa Cruz" by Dolphin and Yetter.

(18) Torchiana, H.A. van Coenen, Story of the Mission Santa Cruz, Paul Elder and Company, San Francisco, CA, 1933.

(19) Webb, Edith B., "Indian Life at the Old Missions" W.F. Lewis Co. Los Angeles, 1952 (Reprint 1982).

(20) Tefertiller, Casey, Personal Communication, email, March 3, 2018.

(21) Edwards, Rob and Mary Gerbic, "Forty-Five Years of Community Archaeological Impact by One Avocational Society in Santa Cruz County, CA." Council of Affiliated Societies (of the Society for American Archaeology) Newsletter, Fall, 2017, page 11.

(22) en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lost_Adobe

(23) en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenix_buttons

(24) en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenix_buttons

Bell Marker Removal

By Valentin Lopez, Amah Mutsun Tribal Chair and Martin Rizzo-Martinez

In November 2020, the Santa Cruz City Council unanimously resolved to remove all El Camino Real bell markers from public property, following requests by the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, and became the first city in California to do so. On August 28th, 2021 the bell marker was removed.

The Amah Mutsun had called for the statewide removal of El Camino Real bell markers and all other monuments that attempt to glorify and celebrate the domination, dehumanization and erasure of the Indigenous people of California.

For the Amah Mutsun and other Indigenous Californians, the El Camino Real or Mission bell markers symbolize the enslavement of Indigenous people in the California Mission system. The ringing of the bell regimented every aspect of daily life within the missions. Roadside “El Camino Real” bell markers were invented in the early 1900s as a nostalgic symbol to boost automobile tourism and visitation of the missions and to celebrate a white-washed, romanticized and distorted history that has long been promoted in the state. These markers reflected the Franciscan-centered accepted narrative of California’s history that was promoted in those years, without consultation or thought about what these bells and this history might mean for Indigenous Californians.

For members of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, these bell markers are deeply painful symbols that celebrate the destruction, domination and erasure of their people. As Tribal Chairman Val Lopez explains, that “We are grateful to the City of Santa Cruz for taking this historic step and setting an example for other cities and the state of California. El Camino Real bells represent a false and romanticized mission history that has caused great harm to Indigenous people in California. Today we are working to ensure that the stories of our ancestors and all that they suffered through are no longer silenced and covered up. We believe that healing begins with telling the truth. At the missions, our ancestors were enslaved, whipped, raped, tortured and exposed to deadly diseases. It is shameful that these places have been whitewashed and converted into tourist attractions. Removing these bells today is a call for change. ‘We conquered you, we controlled you, we destroyed you’ — that’s what those bells mean to us.”

During the removal ceremony, members of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and other California tribes offer traditional songs and prayers and celebrated this acknowledgement of historical wrongs and injustices.

The bell was replaced with an informational metal sign that will describe the reasons for the bell’s removal. That sign will eventually be replaced by a permanent memorial which will be developed by the Amah Mutsun in coordination with the City of Santa Cruz.

Additionally, an interactive [virtual exhibit](#) was designed by California State Parks to help teach the public about the history of these markers and the controversies around them. This exhibit offers quotations and images helping to explain the different meanings attributed to these symbols by different communities. Thanks to recent funding through the Dolkas-Mertz History Award, a kiosk will be placed at the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park for visitors to engage with this virtual bell exhibit and learn more about the controversy behind them.

Scotts Valley Revisited, Forty Years Later

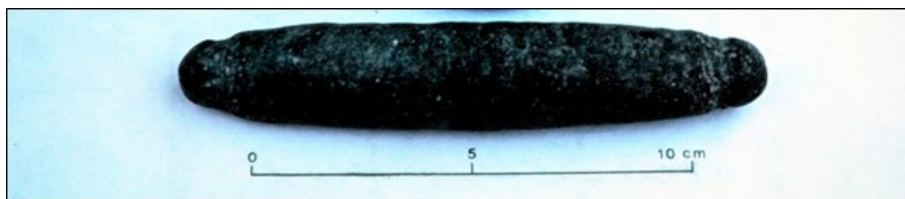
*A 12,000-Year-Old Settlement in Scotts Valley, California that led to the
Largest Volunteer Archaeological Excavation in Central California (Part 1)*

By Rob Edwards



The “Dig” site, looking north. This, and other photos courtesy of Rob Edwards.

The oldest indigenous settlement with the longest documented history in Central California is located in Scotts Valley. It was discovered in 1978, ignored in the construction of City Hall ¹ reported, appealed, and later tested in 1980. That report was ignored (disbelieved) by the City of Scotts Valley in 1981 and the site attempted to be destroyed by the Mayor. This was the basis for a legal suit by local archaeologists and SCAS (later joined by the Society for California Archaeology) against the City of Scotts Valley in 1981; which was settled out of court in 1982, and led to the largest volunteer archaeological excavation (or “Dig”) ever in Northern California in 1983. ²



L to R: Crescent, atlatl weight.

Archaeological findings from this site (CA-SCr-177) are dated as old as 7,000 to 12,000 years ago ³ based on carbon dates, geological context, and artifact styles; such as the crescents, an atlatl weight, and large leaf style projectile points. ⁴

History

This ancient settlement was first recorded in 1978 by Jan Whitlow ⁵ and later tested in 1980 by a consulting firm, Archaeological Research Management. A report was delivered to the Scotts Valley City Council in 1980 indicating great significance and possible dates of 4,000 to 7,000 years ago ⁶. The Council disregarded the report as they wanted to build a new city hall parking lot on the site ¹. The Mayor, Friend Stone directed and participated in the attempted destruction of the site. ⁷

After appeals by the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society to the City to mitigate the damage were ignored by the City Council, the Society sued the City, (Nov. 1981) to have the Ancient Settlement considered and mitigated under CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act).

In an out-of-court settlement ⁸ in November 1982, the City of Scotts Valley agreed to change their planning procedures to consider cultural resources more fully in the future ⁹, and to fund (via the Society) efforts to mitigate the damage by documenting and expanding the archaeological sample in the damaged areas to see if the age and significance of the site as stated in the 1980 report could be supported ¹⁰.



Large leaf-style projectile points.

The Santa Cruz Archaeological Society organized the Memorial Day weekend excavation in 1983 ¹¹. This event would turn out to be the largest volunteer excavation crew ever assembled for such an occasion. Archaeologists, students, and avocational members from all of Northern California participated. Over 200 people contributed almost 500 people days to the effort. There were no Native monitors as there was no bone of any kind due to acidic soil. Over these three days, members of the local Native Peoples groups visiting the site including Rosemary Cambra, Rosemary Franks, and Mr. and Mrs. Martinez of San Jose and Irene Avalos and Patrick Orozco of the Pajaro Valley Ohlone Indian Council. ¹²

Five very competent women organized people, organized the logistics, and kept everything running amazingly well. These included: Dr. Diane Gifford Gonzalez, SCAS Professional Advisor, Charr Smith (Past-SCAS President at the time of excavation), Charlene Duval, (Past-President of Scotts Valley Historical Society (SVHS)), Jennice Singer, a member of both SCAS and SVHS, and Kate Harper (then current SCAS president). ⁵



L to R: Jan Whitflow in 1976, Charlene Duval, Jennice Singer, Charr Smith, and Kate Harper, and (r) Charr Smith and Dianne Gifford-Gonzalez.

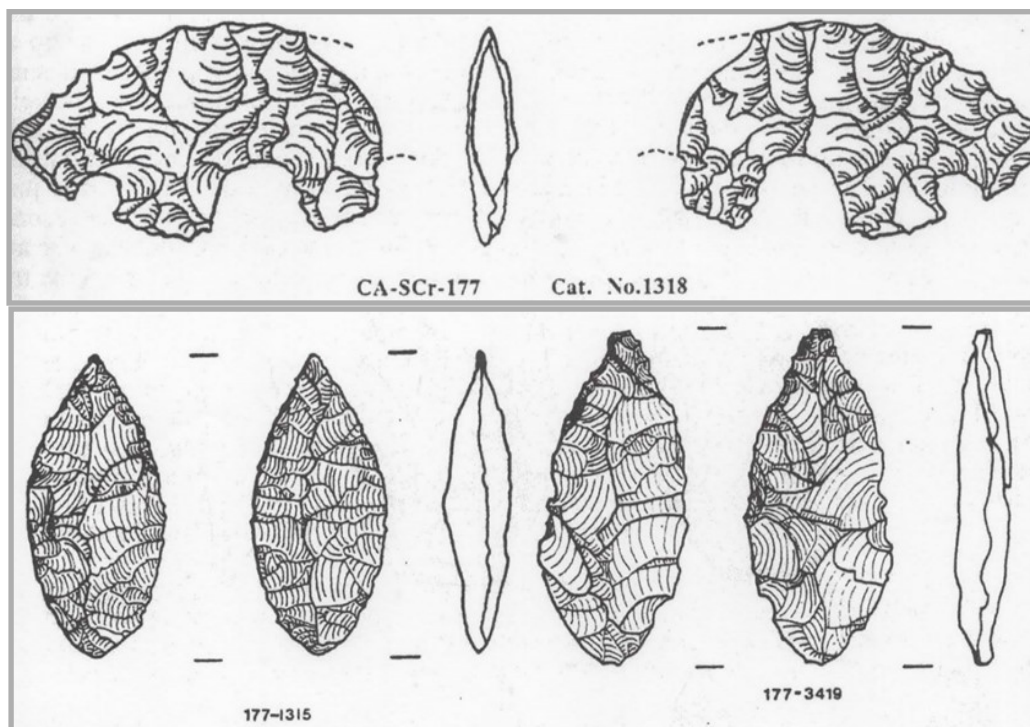
The Oversight Committee, whose focus was to design the mitigation, met with many professional archaeologists including Gary Breschini, Rob Edwards, David Frederickson, Bert Gerow, Diane Gifford-Gonzalez, William Hildebrand, Tom Jackson, Terry Jones, Jim West, and Robert Cartier, who became the Excavation Director ⁵.

The excavation was so large that it was broken into several areas supervised by experienced professionals,



including, Bill Hildebrand, (**Dave Fredrickson, Terry Jones, left**), and Alan Leventhal. The field director was Robert Cartier (**far left**) of Archaeological Resources Management of San Jose.

The volunteer excavation produced artifacts and other data that supported the previous research; including a crescent and leaf-shaped bifaces that supported an estimated date of 7,000 to 10,000 YBP. *(end of part 1)*



(1) Duval, Charlene, (Communication by email) 2021.

(2) Richards, Joan and John McNicholas, Prehistoric artifacts found at Scotts Valley City Hall Site, Santa Cruz Sentinel, P. 1, May 31, 1983.

(3) Harris, Tom, Artifact, possibly 8,000 years old is unearthed, San Jose Mercury, P 2B, May 31, 1983.

(4) Flynn, John, 'Oldest Tool' found in Scotts Valley, S.F. Examiner, May 31, 1983, p. A-26.

(5) C. Smith and Rob Edwards, Archaeology of Concern, by Committee and with Consensus, Chapter 2 in Cartier, Robert (Editor) "The Scotts Valley Site: CA-SCR-177" Santa Cruz Archaeological Society Monograph, 1993.

(6) Cartier, Robert, Presentation of Descriptive and Scientific Data for CA-SCR-33 and CA-SCR-177. Report on File, California Northwest Information Center, 1980.

(7) Mauter, Larry, Settlement reached in City Hall dispute Scotts Valley Banner, P. 1, Vol VIII, No. 40 November 24, 1982.

(8) Mc Nicholas, John, Scotts Valley, Archaeological Groups Settle, Santa Cruz Sentinel, P. A2, Nov 18, 1982.

(9) Bradford, Marcia, Cultural Ordinance Goes to Planning for Review, The Valley Times, P. 3, June 24, 1983.

(10) Anon. a, Call for Mass exposure at CA-SCR-177, SCAN Vol. 12, 3, 1983.

(11) Anon. b, Scotts Valley Memorial Day Weekend Dig, SCAN, Vol. 12, #3, 1983.

(12) Edwards, Rob, "Shovelful of Thanks" Opinions, Scotts Valley Banner, July 8, 1983.

(13) Cartier, Robert, The Scotts Valley Crescent, A report, SCAN, Vol. 12, #3, P. 8-9. 1983.

2021-2022 Speaker Lineup

Until further notice, SCAS General Meetings will be held online. For more information, and directions for how to RSVP for meetings, visit the SCAS website:

<http://www.santacruzarchsociety.org/calendar>

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- December 9, 2021 — Dr. Kelly Fong, UCLA, on “The Delta is in the Heart: Uncovering the Historical Archaeology of Isleton’s Chinese American Community.”
- January 13, 2022 — Trish Fernandez, InContext
- February 10, 2022 — Kathy Dowdall, Caltrans
- March 10, 2022 — Matt Metcalfe-Armstrong, PG&E
- April 14, 2022 — Dr. Alexis Boutin, SSU
- May 12, 2022 — Jennifer Farquhar, Albion Environmental, Inc.

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