



*The Santa Cruz Archaeological Society Newsletter— Winter 2023*

## *SCAS-related Fall Events*

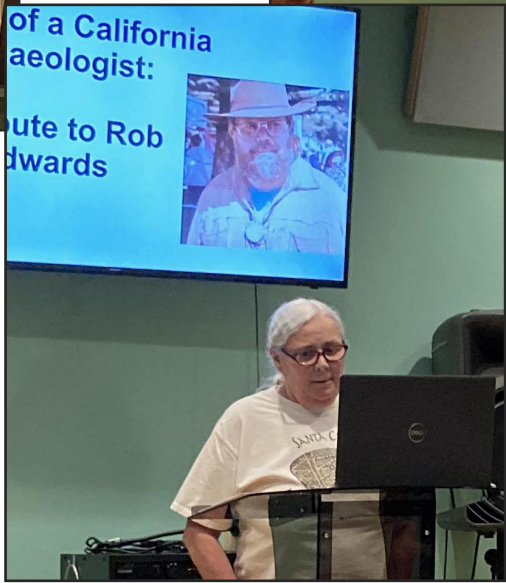
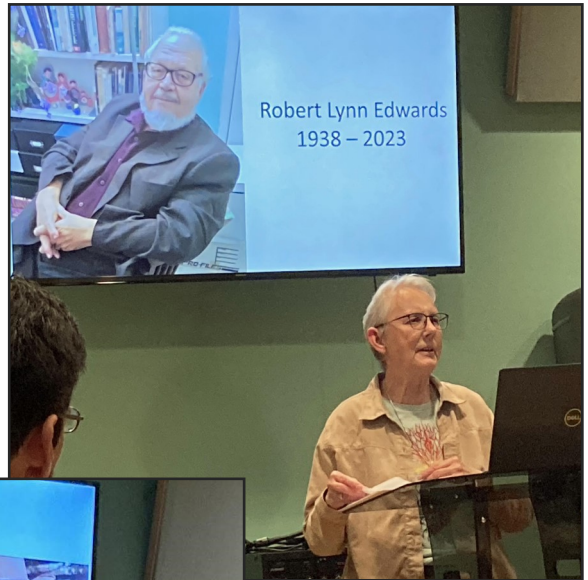
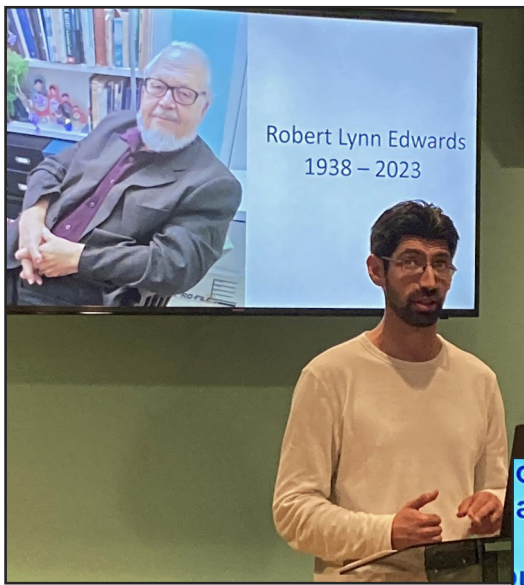
This fall, SCAS welcomed members back to in-person speaker events, beginning on September 14th with Sam Connell of Foothill College and Mike Wilcox of Stanford University, speaking on “The Future is Indigenous, and Community Based Participatory Archaeology”.



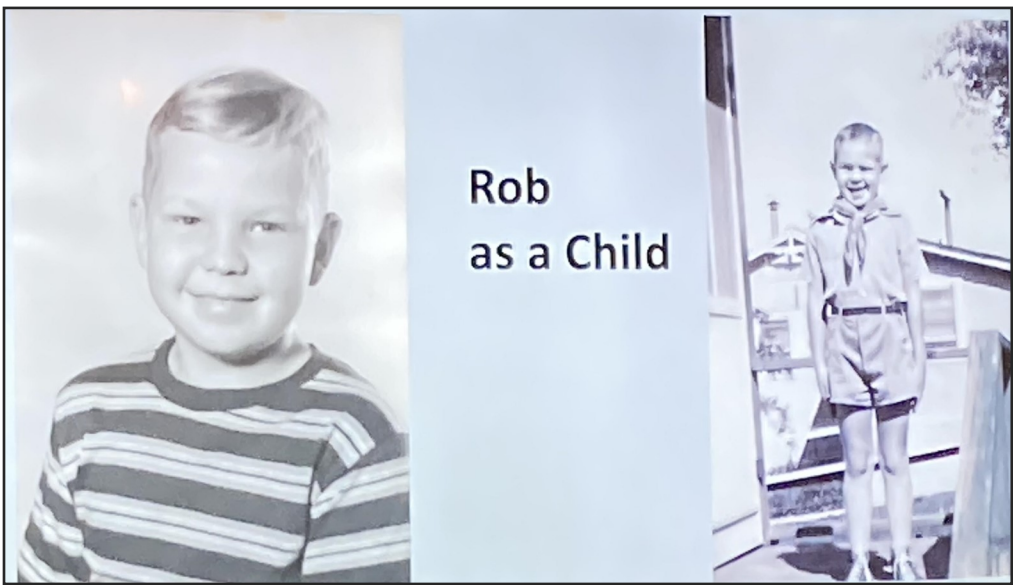
Sam Connell of Foothill College, our professional adviser Sarah Brewer, and Mike Wilcox of Stanford University at the beginning of Sam’s talk.

SCAS speaker events are now happening on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Resource Center for Nonviolence at 612 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz. For those who are unable to make the in-person meeting, we are still streaming on Zoom, and require you to RSVP in advance to receive the link.

Our second meeting was on October 12th, and featured a presentation by SCAS Vice President Pat Paramour entitled “The Life of a California Archaeologist: A Tribute to Rob Edwards”. After Pat, several people stepped to the front and told us their “Rob” stories.



**Branden Melendez, Pat Paramoure and Kären Johansson speaking about Rob.**



**Photo courtesy of the Edwards Family.**

The end of October is always a lively time in Santa Cruz. This year, SCAS participated in the Museum of Natural History's "Museum of the Macabre" event. Here's a synopsis by Professional Advisor Sarah Brewer. Sounds like a good time was had by all.



Just wanted to let you know how the event went last Friday at the Natural History Museum. Pat and I set up a booth for the "Museum of the Macabre" event, a costume party that included cocktails, food, games, an outdoor movie, and all sorts of creepy-crawlies. There were many booths highlighting paleontology, mushrooms, bats, insects, "biggest fears", worm casting, etc. The theme was "underground".

Pat Paramoure, John Schlagheck and Sarah Brewer and SCAS's booth. Photo courtesy of Sarah Brewer.

The SCAS booth focused on how archaeol-

ogists distinguish between human and non-human remains when encountering bones in the field. We had a polymer replica of a human skeleton, a bunch of non-human faunal remains (some showing historic butcher marks) from the SCAS outreach box, tools, and a bunch of reference materials. When people approached the booth, we discussed the process archaeologists go through when encountering a bone during a ground-disturbing project, such as involving the coroner, the tribes, assigning a MLD (Most Likely Descendant) and how legislation such as NAGPRA and CAL-NAGPRA leaves the fate of any human remains or grave goods to the associated tribe (as well as any analyses). Many people just wanted to learn more about what archaeologists do and, of course, what SCAS was all about. We handed out many items of schwag, and membership forms and discussed our monthly presentations at the Resource Center for Nonviolence. SCAS member and fellow professional archaeologist, John Schlagheck, was also present, and helped us talk to people about all these subjects too!

Our booth was a big hit! It was almost always busy and people were very intrigued by the process and the bones. I felt I was talking to people non-stop all night!



On November 9th, we heard from Mark Walker of the Anthropological Studies Center at Sonoma State University, on “An Archaeology of California’s Migratory Workers”. We heard about transient workers, where they lived and how archaeologists locate their old camps. Mark told us that we first notice transient workers after the Civil War when many soldiers returning from the war had no place to go, so they went to work in extractive industries, which functioned on a “boom and bust cycle”, so people were always moving. Transient and migrant workers are hard to see in archaeology. They were mostly poverty stricken and homeless. Their camps are mostly recorded as “can dumps”.

**Mark Walker, ASC, SSU. Photo courtesy of the author.**



**Dr. Pryor, CSU Fresno. Photo courtesy of the author.**

Our last event for 2023 featured Dr. John Pryor of Fresno State University, December 14th, speaking on “The Skyrocket site: A Case Study of the Value of Old Collections in the Era of CALNAGPRA.” John received his undergraduate degree at UCSC and was mentored by Rob Edwards. He was happy to present in person about an extremely important precontact site in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, near Sonora. Skyrocket Site was first excavated in 1989, and is important for several reasons: it is a place where we can see the long history of, and evolution of the methods of acorn processing in one place. It contains about 10,000 years of Miwok history and it can also tell us how people adapted to changes in climate.

Skyrocket is the name of a gold mine. The mining company went well beyond the letter of the law to spend about a million dollars on the archaeology alone. The oldest part of the site is a buried, sealed deposit 10,000 to 7,000 years old. There was a stone platform, which extended out into what was an old marsh. There were hundreds of manos and metates found there, and on the last day, one of the workers found what he thought was a Clovis point. A Clovis researcher who later visited the site confirmed this, and found second Clovis point and debitage. This old site was eventually buried under sediment, and showed signs that the marsh burned, and drought conditions prevailed for the next 2,000 years. Instead of the winter rains we are used to today, a shift in the rainfall pattern meant rain arrived in the summer like the monsoons of the Southwest, before eventually returning to Mediterranean-style winter rains. Dr. Pryor continued with this environmental story, and the contributions of the local tribal people. He emphasized that our modern rainfall amounts and patterns reflect a period of higher rainfall that is not typical of California over the entire Holocene. There is a lesson here for us about how to live in a time of changing climate.

## Book Review

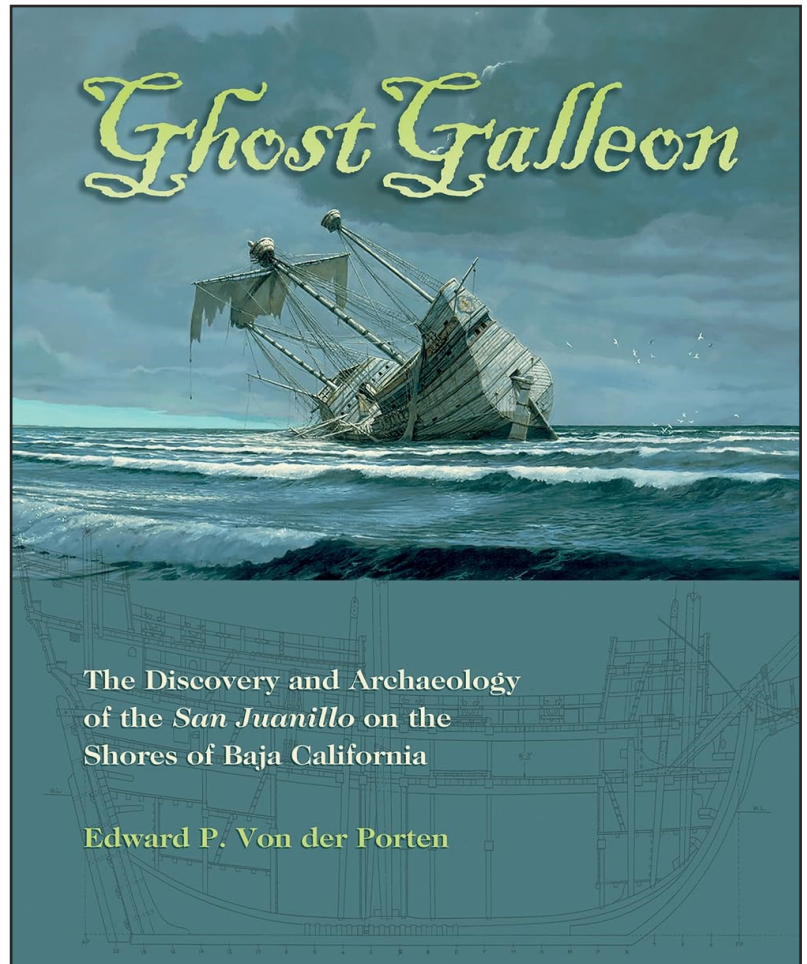
**Ghost Galleon: The Discovery and Archaeology of the San Juanillo on the Shores of Baja California**, by Edward P. Von der Porten, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, TX, 2019, xii+240 pp., \$50.00 (hardcover) 978-1623497675. (Reprinted with permission of Taylor & Francis Group)

Louis Pasteur, the French microbiologist, famously said, “fortune favors the prepared mind.” The adage certainly applies to Edward Von der Porten and his 20-year quest to find and record the final resting place of the sixteenth-century Manila Galleon *San Juanillo*. While paging through a museum catalog in 1998, Von der Porten noticed several photographs of sixteenth-century Chinese porcelain with unusual captions that read “Excavated from an unpublished site off the California coast.” As one of the foremost experts on sixteenth-century Chinese porcelain and Manila Galleons, Von der Porten was not aware of any reported shipwreck sites that could be the source of the depicted porcelain, and his curiosity was piqued. Thus began a more than 20-year quest to research, find, and document the source of the porcelain fragments.

Well-written in an engaging, easy-to-read style, *Ghost Galleon* is as much a travelogue as it is an archaeological text. Von der Porten invites the reader to accompany him and the project crew on an archaeological adventure, and then meticulously describes the project in detail as it unfolded over 20 years and 17 field expeditions. After noticing the porcelain artifacts depicted in the museum catalog in 1998, Von der Porten was able to identify and eventually meet the beachcombers who had recovered the artifacts from a remote stretch of the Baja California coastline. Over time, he gained their trust and eventually included them in the project team he assembled with partners from Mexico’s Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), which consisted of a diverse crew of professional archaeologists, scholars, and volunteers from both the United States and Mexico. In the course of many field seasons, the project team found an abundance of porcelain and stoneware fragments spread across a large swath of sand dunes.

Von der Porten’s book is an intriguing story whose narrative unfolds as it had for the author and crew. The book is richly illustrated with photographs provided by a variety of project crew members that document the expedition and help sweep the reader along on the journey. Informative chapters interspersed throughout the volume provide background information, and context on the Manila trade, Chinese porcelain production, sixteenth-century ship construction, and a detailed description of the daily lives of sixteenth-century Spanish sailors involved in the Manila trade.

Von der Porten’s slow and steadily growing understanding of the shipwreck site and the distribution of artifacts after numerous expeditions allowed him and the project team to make new and important finds during each subsequent expedition. For example, the author tells the fascinating story of how shipworm tunnels observed in newly discovered wax blocks (another common cargo item in Manila Galleons) suggested how the



shipwreck had occurred, indicating that the vessel must have grounded in shallow water and remained relatively intact for more than a year, at least, before it broke apart and scattered its cargo along the nearby beach.

Eventually, the project team gathered enough clues from mapping the distribution of artifacts on the beach to identify the general location of the shipwreck site. One of these clues was the discovery of lead sheet fragments (a critical piece of evidence supporting identification of the ship as a sixteenth-century Spanish vessel) uncovered by the metal detector crew. Its discovery is an example of Von der Porten's engaging writing, and his enthusiasm is infectious to the reader. Upon hearing of the discovery of the lead sheet fragments, Von der Porten writes, "Lead! The material I had told them to be alert for. Breakthrough! Congratulations all around. Euphoria!" It is impossible for the reader to not share the author's enthusiasm for the discovery.

After narrowing down the location of the shipwreck site, the project team conducted a number of marine magnetometer surveys in an attempt to locate the remains of the ship's hull. Von der Porten documents the extreme difficulty of working in a remote location with challenging and unpredictable weather and nearly impossible underwater working conditions (strong surge, limited visibility, and deep sand), which continually hampered any attempts to investigate a promising series of magnetic anomalies identified during the surveys. The reader cannot help but share the frustration Von der Porten and crew must have felt when they were thwarted in their attempts to find any underwater trace of the shipwreck.

Because so little of the actual galleon was discovered, the site and the project represent a unique and little studied type of nautical archaeology. Von der Porten's field methodology demonstrates the importance of systematically mapping and recording finds that seem to be randomly scattered over miles of beach; only when meticulously plotted and analyzed are the larger patterns revealed. After several field seasons, distribution patterns became evident and pointed to the likely location of the wreck site itself, how the wreck must have broken apart, and the dispersal pattern that led to a site spread out over so many miles of shoreline. As such, the project, as well as Von der Porten's book, demonstrate the research value of widely scattered, beached shipwreck sites that consist of a seemingly random distribution of artifacts.

As much as anything, *Ghost Galleon* is a lesson in planning and executing a series of archaeological expeditions in a remote location with myriad issues related to logistics, equipment, and crew personalities. Von der Porten and his wife, Saryl, organized and led the project over many years, and its success is a tribute to their determination. In addition, the story demonstrates how serendipity plays a role in the process of discovery (e.g., the photos that started the project, and the wax block that revealed the wreck event), but those serendipitous moments do not come without years of dogged determination and unwavering commitment to pursuing a dream.

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# **Report: SCAS Board Meeting Notes Summary – August- December 2023**

By Mary Gerbic, SCAS Secretary

Due to unexpected events this year, there was not room in the fall issue of the SCAN to summarize activities and discussions by the SCAS Board. Here is a summary of events in retrospect.

## **August 2023 Board Retreat:**

As this was our yearly “retreat”, the topics we usually discuss were tabled until September. This includes Financials, Membership, Outreach, New and Continued Business, Speakers and Website.

The Fall SCAN Issue: At our previous (June) meeting, the board discussed collaborating on a fuller issue about Rob Edwards. Rob will be memorialized in the upcoming *California Archaeology* journal of the Society for California Archaeology. It is due out in December. Pat and others will be contributing to this memorial, but she (and maybe they) could write up something separate for the SCAN, to be published first, avoiding copyright issues. Rob’s family has settled on October 15 at 1pm at Cabrillo College as the date and time of Rob’s official memorial, and they asked that people RSVP by Sept 1 so they will have an idea of how many people will be attending.

Upcoming Elections: Given everything going on, we decided by a vote (4-0) by the SCAS officers, to hold our official nominating meeting in November. We have a lot on our plate this fall. We read our by-laws again and decided that this was appropriate. Pat Paramoure will be running for Vice President again, and Kevin Hildreth for Treasurer. Ballots are going out soon.

Updates on Meeting Space for September and thereafter: Kären Johansson and Sarah Brewer called and visited several potential venues to see what was appropriate. We wanted modern audiovisual, a central location, accommodation of our usual meeting hours and date, cost, sufficient space and good parking for attendees.

We will not be holding our meetings at the Live Oak Grange. The property owner has placed a number of restrictions on the Grange including the amount of parking and the hours the building can be open. The Resource Center for Non-Violence was a strong contender, meeting all our requirements. They have plenty of parking, multiple rooms, know how to do hybrid meetings, and have no problem with us selling merchandise or having refreshments. The Museum of Natural History is an organization we want to collaborate with, as we did in the past. However, parking is limited, space is small and so we will seek to collaborate with them, but not hold our meetings here. London Nelson Center looked promising. However, the parking situation is tight and the paperwork for application to use their space was confusing. The MAH. We decided we did not want to have attendees pay to park and the cost of renting a room was more than we were willing to pay. Veterans Hall downtown. We liked the space and the friendly people. Prices and parking are good. A second visit is in order.

The Scotts Valley Display Project: We are picking up the reins and running the project that was previously ably handled by Rob. We chose Sarah Brewer, one of our professional advisors (she volunteered). Diane Gifford-Gonzalez, who has been assisting Rob from the beginning, will continue assisting. She is the current custodian of the artifacts removed from the display case.

Our first actions were to determine the status of all parts of the project. Where are we with the reconstruction of the display case, creation of replica artifacts and the design of the display case? Will Linda Yamane be involved in the project

and create a mural for us? How do our project finances stand?

At present, everything is in a good state, but we are working to resolve any outstanding issues with the creation of the artifact replicas. We have one set that will be making its way to Santa Cruz to be stored until needed by Diane Gifford-Gonzalez. The text of the display is our next concern. Finances are in good shape and all payments and donations are accounted for. Kevin Hildreth, with assistance from Kären and Mary will be in charge of project finances. Sarah will call a committee meeting soon. There are several non-SCAS people on the committee making important contributions and we want them to know the project is alive and continuing.

#### The role of SCAS in the Community College Scholarship Fund in Rob's Name

The new scholarship that was set up in Rob's name is being administered by the Community Foundation, and donations are coming in.

Goals for the Coming year: We decided that our first task was to find a place to hold in-person meetings.

Our second goal is to continue to manage and complete the Scotts Valley Display Project.

Other goals include doing more outreach and public archaeology events, possibly with other groups, continue to work on a refresh for our website and review our board job descriptions.

#### **September 2023:**

Financial Notes: Kevin reported that SCAS now has a new credit/debit card through Bay Federal that will make paying for necessary items and services online easier.

Membership Report: Branden reported that we have one new family, one new student membership, and two renewals. We have 122 members. The new members did not give us their email addresses, only their mailing addresses. This poses a problem, as we prefer to send out the SCAN in email, and most of our other communications with members are also through email. Pat proposed making the email address "mandatory" on the membership form. Kären seconded the motion. We also discussed our membership rates. They were apparently last raised in 1985, and it was time to consider another raise. We will consider a formal proposal to do this next month.

Speakers and Website: Pat met with Julie Edwards last week. Pat would like to do a presentation called "The Life of a California Archaeologist" next month (October). There will not be an "open mike" at Rob's memorial, and we want to give people a chance to remember Rob in their own words. Additionally, Pat has finalized our speaker list with the exception of December (still looking).

Branden is still working on a mock-up of the new website design. We discussed using different elements from our full sized logo as mini-logos on subsequent pages.

Outreach: Kären said that we have been invited by the Museum of Natural History to take part in two events being held this fall. She would like to say "yes" to both activities.

New and Continuing Business: Sarah reported on the Scotts Valley Display Project team meeting. The SVDP team will split up into subcommittees to work on aspects of the display. We are concerned that we have not heard back from Linda Yamane. Kären has contacted Jana Nason regarding the Esselen stamp but has not heard back yet. We agreed that our first in-person meeting was a success.

#### **October 2023**



Financial Notes: Kevin noticed an omission in our non-profit filings with the State of California. Until we resolve this problem, (Kevin and Kären are working on compliance) we cannot accept donations. We have temporarily disabled our “Donate” buttons on the website. This issue does not affect membership dues.

Membership Report: Branden told us we had one senior renewal this month. Kären asked if this was a good time to discuss raising our membership rates. Mary made the change on the paper form in real-time and shared it with the rest of the Board on Zoom. It was approved. All membership dues except the “Lifetime” category will go up by \$5.00 a year.

Speakers and Website: Pat said that the October meeting will be “hybrid” – Zoom and in-person. Pat is putting together a presentation on Rob’s life. The website committee did not meet over email since last month.

The SCAN: The fall issue of SCAN has been published. Thanks to Robbie Gleaton and Pat Paramoure for sharing their essays about Rob Edwards. Mary is now gathering material for the winter issue.

Outreach: Kären says we will participate in First Friday *Underground: Unearthing Unseen Worlds*. On Oct 28, we will participate in the Museum of the Macabre Halloween party. We are looking for “spooky” items for the party.

Election Status: We are voting for VP and Treasurer this year. Kevin will send out the ballots this week.

Proposal to raise membership rates: By minimum of \$5 - except Lifetime-no change. We seem to have the lowest dues of any of the similar Societies we have looked at. Sarah mentioned that in recent years we have incurred more costs as a Society than in the past: the Zoom license, and the cost of the venues preCovid and now that we are meeting in person again. We will send out a message to all members letting them know of the change. Branden will write the letter and send it to Kären to review. The Board agreed on the change, and Mary edited the membership form and sent it to Kären and Robbie.

## **November 2023**

Financial Notes: Kevin summarized the status of our Charitable Trust Filings so far. He met with a lawyer to understand exactly what we can and can’t do while out of compliance with the State. We can collect dues, hold meetings, and be “circumspect” but we cannot accept donations unless we tell the donor the donation is NOT tax deductible.

Membership Report: Branden said that we have one new senior and one regular member renewal. One person has also changed their membership to a life membership.

Speakers and Website: Pat said that John Pryor of Cal State Fresno will be speaking to us in December. He will be talking about the importance of old collections since Cal-NAGPRA. Jim Delgado of Search, Inc. will speak in January and John Schlagheck of Dudek in February. John will be speaking about the Spanish galleon that ran aground in Baja California that was also the subject of Ed Von der Porten’s book, *Ghost Galleon*.

Scotts Valley Display Project (SVDP): Pat related a conversation she had with a fellow archaeologist while she was working in the Sierra NF recently. He told her he photographed some really old artifacts for Al Schwitalla. It turns out these were the artifacts SCAS loaned to Al so he could create high quality casts for the display cabinet. Once he realized Pat’s involvement, he gave her a copy of the photos. They are very good. Sarah will call another meeting of the committee.

New Business: Kären related for us her attendance at the previous night’s event at Mission Santa Cruz, the premiere showing of a 10-minute documentary movie, “It Needs to be Told”. She said it was “spectacular”. The movie was shown outdoors overlooking town, and our hosts provided shawls because it was cold. There were more attendees than expected and it was standing room only. Kären was impressed by the openness of the speakers about very painful topics.

Sarah Brewer related to us about some email she received from a man named Alex Schwed of San Francisco, who said he had held a conversation with Rob Edwards at the SCA in March about some bedrock mortar boulders in his possession. He offered them to us for sale. He bought them from someone in Scotts Valley. Our by-laws specifically state that we will not buy or sell artifacts, and Sarah said she would create a draft letter (for our approval) to send to Alex, saying, firmly, no, we are not interested. We thought this solicitation was very strange and wondered if he was approaching other groups or planning to sell them on eBay.

**December 2023**

Financial Notes: Kevin sent mail on Nov. 27 informing us that we have been reinstated with the Registry of Charitable Trusts. We can resume accepting donations, and the “Donate” buttons on our website will be reactivated.

Membership Report: Branden reported no new or renewing members this month. He thinks it is because people prefer to renew or join using PayPal online and don’t want to mail a check.

Speakers and Website: Pat said we have speakers lined up through May and she is still working on getting a speaker for the June meeting.

SCAN: Mary is starting work on the winter SCAN. The deadline for submission is Dec 20 and the newsletter will be out after Christmas.

Scotts Valley Display Project (SVDP): The committee will be meeting over Zoom on Monday, Dec 11. Sarah sent links to us so we could see the status of the text we are developing for the display.

Diane Gifford-Gonzalez emailed the committee about something she would like to do for the project – to take the artifacts to the University of Oregon in January, to be examined by a pair of experts in this technology. The agreement she has worked out with them is to examine the artifacts and produce a short paper about them that we can use to make sure our interpretive text is accurate and up to date. They will be able to use what they write in their own research. She may take the accurate casts that Al created, along with photographs, if her experts think that would be sufficient, as some people think the artifacts are too rare and precious to take out of the area. We will also offer a small honorarium to each expert. We will discuss this further at the Dec 11 meeting.

Past and Continued Business: We discussed activities for early 2024 for our membership. This might include workdays with the Amah Mutsun Land Trust, a tour for SCAS of the Castro Adobe, or a tour of UCSC’s California Botanical Garden. Sarah emailed Alex Schwed about the bedrock mortars, and has heard nothing back.

Regarding the SCA Conference in Riverside, CA in March, Ryan and Sarah will be there, delivering papers. SCAS will not be “officially attending” as we usually do, with an outreach table and items for sale. No one else on the board thinks they will be attending the meeting. In 2025, the conference will be held in San Francisco, and we can consider having a table in the bookroom then.

Mary alerted us to a particularly interesting issue of the SCA’s newsletter which no one else has had time to read, so we will discuss it in January.



## *2024 Speaker Lineup*

We are planning to meet at 7:30 this fall, “hybrid”, with in-person and Zoom attendance possible. For more information, and directions for how to RSVP for meetings, visit the SCAS website:

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

- Jan 11 Jim Delgado, SEARCH, Inc.
- Feb 8 John Schlagheck, Dudek
- Mar 14 Julie Swift, Ventura Arch Society \*Zoom\*
- Apr 11 John Foster, CA State Parks (ret) and SAS
- May 9 Kathy Dowdall, Caltrans
- Jun 13 TBD

## *Archaeological Society Business*

### *SCAS Officers and Contact Info*

Position	Name	Email	Phone
President	Kären Johansson (acting)	johansson.outreach@gmail.com	831-247-3063
Vice President	Pat Paramoure	patsunicorn@sbcglobal.net	831-465-9809
Treasurer	Kevin Hildreth	kevinhildreth59@gmail.com	831-431-6905
Outreach Coordinator	Kären Johansson	johansson.outreach@gmail.com	831-247-3063
Secretary	Mary Gerbic	mgerbic@yahoo.com	831-331-7173
Membership Coordinator	Branden Melendez	brandenmelendez1@gmail.com	
Professional Advisor	Sarah Brewer and Ryan Brady	SCASproadvisor@gmail.com	831-227-6301
Newsletter Editor	Mary Gerbic	editorscan@gmail.com, mgerbic@yahoo.com	831-331-7173
Webmaster	Robert Gleaton		

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*Mail completed application with dues to: SCAS Membership, P.O. Box 85, Soquel, CA 95073, or visit our website:  
<http://www.santacruzarchsociety.org/join>*