



SCAN

SANTA CRUZ ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER



Notes from the Mono Mills Outreach Field Trip

by Charr Simpson-Smith

Patrice Berry, Lyn O'Niel, Judy Husted, and I set out on an adventure at the invitation of Dr. Charlotte Sunseri, Associate Professor at San Jose State University and Director of the Mono Mills Field School Excavation class, to visit the Mono Mills site. The field school crew was composed of the Director, three instructors, and seven mixed-age students from SJSU, UCB, and one recent B.A. from SFSU who plans to go on for graduate work.

Travel

Lyn, Judy and I left Scotts Valley about 10:15 a.m. via Hwy 101N to Hwy 25E to 156N to 152E to 59N to Merced 140E thru Mariposa and El Portal into Yosemite Park. Took Tioga Pass road/120N to 395N and Lee Vining and our field home/Murphy's Motel.

Lee Vining/Murphy's Motel

Met Patrice at the Motel. We called Charlotte and got directions to Field House about 3 blocks away. We walked over to introduce Charlotte and Jun Sunseri (Charlotte's husband and assistant instructor for the project) to our SCAS team. We got directions and a map to the site, as we would set out later than the excavators, who start for site at 6:30 a.m. We walked into Lee Vining for dinner, shopping, then to bed at the motel.



Photo 1: Judy Husted, Dr. Charlotte Sunseri, Lyn O'Niel, and Patrice Berry at Mono Mills Kiosk (Inyo National Forest) Photos by Charr Simpson-Smith

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Thursday, July 12, 2012

After breakfast at Nicely's in Lee Vining, we drove Hwy 395S to 120S and parked. As we climbed out of the car at the "Mono Mills Information Kiosk" and we could see a cloud of dust off to the east across the ravine. We instantly knew where the dry-screening was taking place. Charlotte joined us shortly and gave us a tour of the kiosk, answering our many questions (Photo 1).

From the kiosk platform we could see down into the ravine: the concrete foundation that supported the mill boiler with the embedded bolts to secure it; the boiler's metal smoke stack; large (-1' x 1.5'), pink quarried Bishop Tuff blocks; and scattered railroad ties (Photo 2).

After doing a cursory surface survey next to and west of the kiosk (which is the area of the general store and housing where we found Chinese ceramic fragments, a rusted condensed milk can lid, and many rusted, crushed can fragments), we followed an old road cut to the ENE across the ravine to the excavation site. The crew had just begun work on the mill location at the first of this week. They'd completed another area survey and test last week. Charlotte and Jun met us and gave us a tour of the units. The excavators explained their strategy and finds (Photos 3-5)

We broke for lunch and had great conversations with the crew. They are so eager and they work together as a cohesive team. We are impressed. I think Charlotte and Jun set such a great example! After

lunch we were invited to participate in the excavation. Judy, Patrice, and I got down into the units. We were in heaven (Photo 6). The loose, light grey, very coarse, volcanic soil made up the matrix. There were many small rootlets. I chose to use a whisk broom, dustpan, and trowel as there was only 2cm left in the level. I noted in the screen: one fragment of charred bird bone; a number of obsidian pressure flakes, and one fragment of charred wooden dowel.

We left the site to return to Mono Lake visitor's center, then to the motel for a rest and fresh-up before dinner. We walked to the shops, then to SJSU Field House at 6 p.m. to join the crew for a delicious dinner. It was a serendipitous day of learning, sharing, and making new friends.

After dinner, we walked to the market, purchased items for tomorrow's lunch at Bodie

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Photo 2: Mono Mill's remains in the ravine.



Photo 3: Chinese Opium vial—fragment of aqua glass

Calendar

All General Meetings are held at Sesnon House Cabrillo College
6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos, California at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.
SCAS website -www.santacruzarchociety.org

- October 18 **General Meeting** - Speaker: Patrick Orozco
- October 7 **Gathering of Ohlone Peoples** - Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Coyote Hills Regional Park, 8000 Patterson Ranch Road,
Fremont, California. "A celebration of the history, culture and traditional
skills of the Ohlone Peoples."
- November 15 **General Meeting** - Speaker: Val Lopez
- December 8 **SCAS Map Sale** at the Aptos Farmers Market on the Cabrillo College
campus, 8 a.m. to noon.
- December 20 **General Meeting** - Speaker: Louise Ramirez
- January 17 **General Meeting** - Speaker: TBA
- February 21 **General Meeting** - Speaker: TBA
- March 21 **General Meeting** - Speaker: TBA

Deadline for submissions for the fall issue: October 15, 2012
Items to add? Corrections to make? Please contact us at editorscan@gmail.com.

Would you rather receive you newsletter by email rather than by USPS?
If so, send your preference and your email address to editorSCAN@gmail.com.

Past newsletters can be viewed—in color!—online at:
<http://www.santacruzarchociety.org/newsletters.html>
Newsletters will be posted online approximately four months after they are mailed out.

Dear Readers,

Due to a family and friend emergency and the aftermath that occupied most of the summer, this issue of the newsletter is extremely late. I apologize for any inconvenience that may have resulted from the lack of timely announcements.

Cat Nichols, Editor, SCAN

SCAS Board Members 2012

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Mono Mills field trip, continued

Photo 4: Units 18N/15E & 16E thermally-altered Bishop Tuff cobbles, probably chimney collapse.

State Historic Park, *and* an ice cream treat. Home to bed early, but talked until 11 p.m., we were so stimulated from the day.



Photo 5: Saw-cut, small mammal bones from 18N/16E.

Friday, July 13, 2012

Up and out headed for Bodie by 9 a.m., arriving about 10:15 a.m. The road undulates between 7,000'-9,000' elevation through a very stark landscape. We parked in the lot then walked to Green Street, stopping to look at various building details. As the day progressed great cumulous clouds moved overhead. Some eventually turned black with rain, thunder and lightning. We were able to duck into doorways as it passed.

We left Bodie about 2:30 p.m. and returned to the motel. We walked downtown for dinner where Lyn got her long awaited piece of carrot cake.

We talked about the trip and unanimously agreed it was super. Judy's comment was, "I have to choose two best things from the trip: 1) the field school—meeting Charlotte, getting to mingle with the students to learn of their backgrounds and aspirations, and meeting them at the coffee shop, the BBQ restaurant, and on the street; and 2) finding the book on



Photo 6: Patrice and I checked out the 1/8" dry screen remains.

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Have you ever wondered what California used to be like? Member Edita McQuary found a place to learn all about it.

A Surprise at the End of Highway 152 East!

By Edita McQuary,
B. A. Cum Laude in English Literature
Archeology Afficionada, and SCAS Member

Photos by Bill McQuary

If you haven't driven the Pacheco Pass Highway to the Central Valley lately, you are in for a pleasant surprise. You can enjoy the lovely green hills on this side of the pass while also carefully watching the huge trucks passing each other on the upgrade at 35 and 40 mph. Once past the San Luis Reservoir and Los Banos, you are almost back in America's Midwest flatland farm country. Mile after mile of crops, fruit trees, and an occasional goat or alpaca farm spread out on both sides of the highway. Old Glory



flutters every few miles and the radio stations morph into religious programs or conservative talk shows. A road sign says it all—Indiana Avenue.

Shortly after merging into Hwy 99 South at Avenue 21½, Exit 164, is an interesting relatively new exhibition center called the San Joaquin Valley Paleontology Foundation's Fossil Discovery Center, also known as the Fairmead fossil site. Located across the street from what archaeologists call a "midden" but commonly referred to as the county dump, this site is the largest fossil recovery site in the United States.

More than 15,000 fossils from 37 species have been recovered from the site to date. California State University, Fresno, archaeologists plan on 20 more years of active digging. The fossils are between 500,000 and 780,000 years old—the Middle Pleistocene Epoch, which lasted from 1.8 million years ago to until around 10,000 years ago.

As I walked from the parking lot past a covered "mock" dig, some school children were eagerly digging up "fossil" bones. A couple of adults held books with photographs to help the kids identify what they had dug up. Brian, one of the staff, walked with me into the center and explained the procedure. First thing is viewing an 8-minute film in the theater showing how this fossil center came into existence. Afterward, it is easy to follow the exhibits in this small museum from each scene or topic to another.

I was lucky enough to join a class of 4th and 1st graders from Terry Elementary School in Selma, California, which was being toured by Betty, one of the staff. Their teacher told me the 4th graders had been tutoring the first graders all year in learning to read—this was their end of the school year treat.

As you enter the main hall, the first thing you see is a replica of a gigantic California mammoth standing about 14' at the shoulder—bigger than an SUV. A tusk from a California mammoth was found 35' below the surface in May, 1993, by a landfill worker, which started this whole dig. After being blown away by the mammoth, we saw an archaeological work table at the back. There were a variety of tools and a sample plaster-coated burlap jacket in which fossils are carefully preserved upon recovery out of the earth.

We found out that the most common animal remains are from various types of horses. There were cabinets filled with horse and other fossils. *Camelops*, an archetypical camel, was also prevalent along with many other forerunners of today's animals.

Going forward on the left is a prep laboratory where archaeologists and paleontologists prepare fossils for display. This is a well-done exhibit showing how archaeologists and paleontologists work in

Continued next page

identifying and classifying remains. Staff member Linda showed us a variety of tiny remains and asked the children to identify them. With her help they were able to recognize a tiny ancient snail shell, tiny rodent and a small blue tooth. We learned that things we could not identify were classified as “random unidentifiable objects.”



In front of the lab was a taphonomy exhibit that displayed a study of decaying organisms and how they become fossilized, but the kids and I were more interested in the back inner wall which had cast skeletons of ice age animals behind small cases of fossils. Included were skeletons of a saber-toothed cat, a dire wolf, a giant ground sloth, and a short face bear. We found out that the saber-toothed cat, or *Smilodon*, is the official state fossil of California—who knew?

Outside the building, a Pleistocene Water Source (waterhole or pond to us) has been constructed. The

water hole and its lush native vegetation reflect how this area appeared some 700,000 years ago—very different from today’s semi-arid climate. For those



interested in plants, there is a leaflet at the entrance describing the various ancient plants replicated in the pond area.

This museum, while small, is extremely interesting and especially geared to introduce children to paleontology and archaeology. The contrast between what this area was like in pre-historic times compared to today’s farmlands is rather staggering. It is certainly worth a trip over the hill.

The Fossil Discovery Center is open Tuesday through Sunday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is closed on Mondays and holidays. The entrance fees are modest: Adults \$8, Seniors/Military \$6, Students/Children \$4; children 3 and under are free. Mock digs must be set up in advance. Call 559.665.7107 or visit their website, www.maderamammoths.org. 🌻

SCAS at the Cabrillo Farmer's Market

By Kären Johansson

Last December and again in May of this year, in the hours just past sunrise, representatives from the Santa Cruz Archaeological Society board and other SCAS members gathered equipment, displays, and SCAS merchandise, and headed out to the Saturday morning Aptos Farmer's Market at Cabrillo College. After erecting tarps and canopies to combat the sun, and assembling our display equipment, tables were decked with t-shirts, archaeological stamps, USGS topographic maps, and miscellaneous items for sale to the general public. The close to non-stop response from those perusing our



Treasurer Cathy Phipps, Acting President Kären Johansson, and Membership Coordinator Kevin Hildreth enjoying a beautiful Aptos morning in the SCAS booth.

as an eventual robust online interface will continue to provide resources to teachers and aides throughout Santa Cruz County.

If you find the idea of a morning of archaeological outreach intriguing and inviting, please look for us again at the Farmer's Market this coming fall and winter. Our next map sale will be on Saturday, December 8, 8 a.m. – 12 noon. Future dates will soon be posted on our calendar page on our website, www.santacruzarchsoc.org. If you have questions, feel free to email jobans161@gmail.com at any time. We hope to see you all soon! ☀

wares and information material was excitingly overwhelming. A strong, pervasive interest in archaeology is alive and well in Santa Cruz!

A display of Charr Simpson-Smith's educational outreach posters and hand-out materials put a public face on the Society and complemented the items offered for sale. In conjunction with the Society, Charr Simpson-Smith, retired Cabrillo archaeology instructor, has launched an educational outreach effort designed to offer pre-historic archaeological resources to 3rd and 4th grade teachers in support of California history curriculum. The Farmer's Market venue, and a past workshop at Cabrillo College, "Outreach to the Classroom," as well



Cabrillo College Field School 2012

By Annamarie Leon Guerrero

Another field season has come and gone and a new generation of students completed the Cabrillo College Archaeological Field School. This year's field school took place in two different locations on the central coast and was particularly special for a few different reasons. First, the students were able to work with a number of different agencies including the US Forest Service, the Society for California Archaeology and the California Army National Guard. Second, there were several amazing guest speakers who not only gave lectures, but camped and volunteered as crew chiefs as well. Second, many of the crew chiefs who volunteered this year were returning Cabrillo College Archaeology Field School alumni, especially from the 2010 field school.

During the first week of field school, the students surveyed almost 300 acres of Los Padres National Forest along the southern Monterey County coastline as part of the coastal erosion study organized by the Society for California Archaeology. So not only did the students take part in a field school, but they participated in and contributed to this larger, overall effort to gather data about sites that are being affected by coastal erosion as a result of global climate change. (Please see *Rising Seas Threaten California's Coastal Past*, below—ed.) The students visited and learned how to write site record updates for 19 sites, all of which were previously recorded, with most of the original records dating to the 1970s. This

gave the students the opportunity to really see how the sites had changed between when they were originally described and now. Many of the sites, especially those adjacent to the steep coastal bluffs, were visibly affected by erosion. It is hoped that the resulting report from the field school survey will provide an idea about the data the sites contained when they were originally recorded, the data that these sites contain now, and the information that may be lost as coastal erosion continues to impact these sites.



Gary Breschini and Trudy Haversat who have worked in the area were kind enough, once again, to present a guest lecture. In addition, Mike Newland, who coordinated this survey with the Forest Service, came out for a night to talk about the coastal erosion study. His talk also included other topics, such as pointers on starting a career in archaeology.

The second segment of the field school consisted of two weeks of excavation at Camp San Luis Obispo. The students worked with the base archaeologists, Ethan Bertrando and Sarah Mellinger. The

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Rising Seas Threaten California's Coastal Past

Higher tides and increased erosion will wipe out archaeological sites

By Molly Samuel
KQED News, July 29, 2012

On a sunny day earlier this summer at Point Reyes National Seashore, I scrambled behind Mike Newland as he clambered across gullies and bushwhacked through thigh-high lupine. Once we got to the spot he was aiming for, on the edge of a sandy beach-side cliff, he stopped and started to pick through shells and stones.

“You can see, we’ve got sort of a handful of little guys here, popping out of the ground,” he noted. “Some of these that we’re going to see, they weren’t here a year ago, when I came here last time.”

Newland, an archaeologist at Sonoma State University and the president of the Society for California Archaeology, was hunting for Native American artifacts, clues about what life was like in coastal California before Europeans arrived. It was easy for him to find them; wind, rain and tides have eroded these cliffs and exposed the ancient trash piles and stone tools.

This site and these cultural resources — some of them a thousand years old or more — might not be around for much longer. These pieces of California’s history are in danger of disappearing as the Pacific Ocean claws at the base of this cliff. Sea level rise is accelerating the problem.

It’s not just that the tides will be higher. The cliffs are so soft, they could recede hundreds of feet back, with just a few feet of sea level rise.

“You know, this isn’t just gonna be a matter of, the ocean’s going to pop up and cover it up and then we can get back to it later,” Newland said. “These sites are toast. And we’re essentially losing them all at once.”

Nick Tipon, a retired high school teacher and member of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, whose territory includes Point Reyes, said he became aware of the extent of the erosion several years ago.

“In one part of the park, there’s a layer of soil that indicates human habitation in that spot, and sticking out from the side of a cliff was a human skull,” he said. When human remains are disturbed or exhumed, tribal policy is to rebury them as close as possible to where they were found. “So then we thought, ‘How far inland do we have to go away from the cliff to find stable soil?

So we don’t have to do this 100 years, 200 years again? So that literally our ancestors can rest in peace?’”

Newland says there is evidence that people have lived in California for at least 11,000 years, and the soft sandstone cliffs on the coast have always been susceptible to erosion. Traditionally, Tipon said, the tribe would have let the ocean take burial sites, since it was a natural process. But now, with two million or so people visiting the park every year, they can’t leave human remains exposed.

Meanwhile, climate change threatens to expose more of them. A tide gauge in the nearby Golden Gate has recorded eight inches of sea level rise in the past century. Scientists project it could rise three feet in the next.

Point Reyes contains more than 120 Coast Miwok settlement sites. (The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria includes both the Coast Miwok and the Southern Pomo people.) The National Park Service works closely with Native Americans to protect graves and other important objects or sites. And the Park Service supports and conducts climate research and has programs to help mitigate and adapt to changes coming to the parks. But Mark Rudo, a National Park Service archaeologist, said the Park Service isn’t prepared to deal with the scale of the threat that sea level rise presents.

“At the same time that we’re trying to figure out what the impacts are, we’re also trying to identify what we can do about them, so it’s not an easy situation to work in,” he said. It’s a special challenge with archaeological sites. While it may be possible for natural resources, plants and animals, to migrate, Rudo pointed out that cultural resources, like archaeological sites that remain in the ground, can’t be moved, even with help. “We’re stuck,” he said. “We can’t hide or run away from the problem, or adapt to it.”

But the park does have help measuring the extent of the problem. Newland is recruiting archaeologists from all over the state in a volunteer effort to survey sites along the coast in Marin, Monterey, San Diego and Del Norte Counties, and he hopes to continue expanding the project, to study the thousands of sites up and down the California coast.

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Field School, continued

students tested three multi-component sites for the Army National Guard. At each of these sites, they opened and closed a number of shovel test units and control units. They earned their first pick-and-shovel blisters and they learned how amazing a breaker bar is. They honed their artifact identification skills as they learned how to dig square holes in clay soil that

stubbornly refused to pass easily through 1/8" and 1/4" screens. Spending all day together in their excavation crews, they really learned how to rely on each other and why it was so important for them to be able to work as a team and communicate with one another.

In 2010, I had the idea to have students blog about their experiences. Every night, I had one volunteer (willing or unwilling) write about what they did that day and what they learned. I liked the idea of the blog at first because I thought it would be a nifty public education component to communicate to the public what exactly the students were doing when they were "doing archaeology" while getting the students involved in outreach. After doing the blog again this year and getting feedback on it from 2010 students who volunteered as crew chiefs, I realized that it is a bit more than a nifty public education tool. It is way to watch the students' knowledge and confidence in their archaeology skills visibly grow.

Read about the adventures of this year's field school here: <http://ccarchfieldschool.blogspot.com/>. ☀

Rising Seas, continued

"We have to be honest. Most of the sites are going to be destroyed," he said. "But we should at least know what we're going to lose. That's my goal." At Point Reyes alone, Newland has found that 54 of the 160 sites he studies are in danger of being erased in the next century, and most of the others face some level of threat from other climate change impacts.

And he emphasized, this is going to be a problem everywhere.

"We are in the process of losing all of our maritime sites as a species. Every place that we've launched off to go explore the world through the ocean is now at risk," Newland said.

Tipon, who's a tribal liaison to the parks, said they'll have to decide what to try to protect on a case-by-case basis, but he's less concerned about any given object than with people and culture. And that won't be washed away as easily.

"One of the questions I get asked a lot when I give speeches is, 'How long have your people been here?' And I go, 'Well, you know, the archaeologists say that it's 3,000 years, 7,000 years, 11,000 years,'" he said. "But the cultural response is: we've been here forever. So how long are we going to be around? We will be here forever." ☀

*Archaeology Outreach Opportunity****Teachers! Docents! Archaeology enthusiasts of all types!***

Charr Simpson-Smith will present a training workshop for all those interested in sharing archaeology with students, friends and community in October.

Contact charrsmithaacc@gmail.com for details.

Mono Mills field trip, continued

Photo 7: Judy and Lyn in front of Sam Leon's Bar and Barber Shop.



Photo 8: Miller House wall detail. Wood probably from Mono Mills topped by a gauze cloth and two cloth wall coverings. Note the cut and wire nails.

Obata's Yosemite—*The Art and Letters of Chiura Obata from his trip to the High Sierra in 1927*—after going to the Latte Da Coffee Shop to get an afternoon chai and running into four of the dig students on the porch, and saw the Obata book on the mantle and immediately grabbed it. Later Patrice and I went into the Mono Lake Info Center bookshop and there it was. I picked up the book and danced out to the porch where Lyn and Charr sat!”

Lyn described the experience as, “The good, bad and the ugly. Good archaeology, students, town folks, museums and friends. Bad—hmm?! heat and dust. And the Ugly—have you seen the male brine shrimp up close? They are really ugly!! It was the most fun I’ve had in years. Don’t miss the next one! All kidding aside, you missed a great trip. The site was interesting (some of us even got to do a little digging); the instructors and students were interesting, fun, and knowledgeable; Lee Vining is a small town with friendly folks. You guys miss out when you don’t join us!”

Patrice’s highlights of the trip are: being part of the crew and interacting with them, dinner at the Field House, Charlotte and Jun, the location in the Eastern Sierra, and the smell of the sage.”

I agree with all of the above and would add looking forward to our continued collaboration with Char, Jun and their students. ☀

Carol Roland-Nawi appointed California State Historic Preservation Officer

Carol Roland-Nawi of Sacramento has been appointed state historic preservation officer at the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Roland-Nawi has been senior historian and project manager at Mead & Hunt Inc. since 2009 and was the principal at Roland-Nawi Associates from 2003 to 2009. She served as senior environmental planner at the California Department of Transportation from 2001 to 2003 and associate historian at the State Office of Historic Preservation at the California Department of Parks and Recreation from 1983 to 2001. Roland-Nawi has been a member of the California Office of Historical Preservation since 1991 and served as president from 2005 to 2007. ☀

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