## Calendar

**September 7 (7 p.m.) Museum of Man**  
¡Viva Oaxaca!  
See announcement inside (Pg. 10)

**September 14 (7 p.m.) Museum of Man**  
Dr. Richard O’Connor  
“Juan Quezada”  
See announcement inside (Pg. 10)

**September 16 (7:30 p.m.) Los Peñasquitos**  
Summer Evening Lecture  
“Archaeological Investigations at Camp Hual-Cu-Cuish”  
Speakers: Lynn Gamble and Monica Guerrero  
See announcement inside (Pg. 3)

**September 16-17 (9 a.m.-6 p.m.) Balboa Park**  
California Indian Days Celebration  
See announcement inside (Pg. 3)

**September 23 – Fort Guijarros**  
20th Annual Fort Guijarros Fiesta  
See announcement inside (Pg. 10)

**September 23 (9-10:30 a.m.) Mission Trails**  
“Land of the Kumeyaay” Interpretive Walk  
See announcement inside (Pg. 10)

**September 26 (7 p.m.) Mission Trails**  
Monthly SDCAS Meeting: Fourth Tuesday  
Speaker: Craig Lorenz  
Topic: Land Development vs. Archaeology  
See announcement inside (Pg. 8)

**September 30-October 1---Santa Catarina, Baja CA**  
Kumiai Basket Workshop  
See announcement inside (Pg. 3)

**October 1 (10 a.m. – 3 p.m.) Los Peñasquitos**  
Collections Rehabilitation  
See announcement inside (Pg. 3)

**October 7 (2 p.m.) Museum of Man**  
Collectors Club Auction  
See announcement inside (Pg. 10)

**October 24 (7 p.m.) Mission Trails Regional Park**  
Monthly SDCAS Meeting: Fourth Tuesday  
Speaker: Gary Hurd  
Topic: Fish Traps of Lake Cahuilla  
See announcement inside (Pg. 8)

### President’s Message

By Glenn Russell

Greetings from the president. I hope this summer finds you in good spirits and health. I hope that you have had the opportunity to attend the first two of our summer lecture series, held at the Rancho Peñasquitos Adobe. We have had good turnouts and excellent lectures. Many thanks to Mick Calarco for his diligent efforts organizing a fine lecture series. If you missed the first two, you still have one more chance. The final summer lecture series will be held on Saturday evening September 16. Dr. Lynn Gamble and Monica Guerrero of the Department of Anthropology, SDSU, will present the lecture. They will lecture on their recent archaeological excavations at Cuyamaca State Park. Don’t miss this exciting lecture.

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The SDCAS Office is at the Peñasquitos Ranch House, west of Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Community Park.

The New SDCAS General Meeting Location is at Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor Center, from Highways 52 or 125 take Mission Gorge Road to Father Junipero Serra Trail. From I-15 take the Friars Road exit east (it turns into Mission Gorge Road) to Father Junipero Serra Trail.
Editor’s Message

Hello all. Hope your summers were full of interesting and enjoyable memories. If you had any anthropological or archaeological experiences this summer that you’d like to share with the membership, please send in a short write-up and we may print it in the next newsletter. In this issue I’ve included two write-ups for the “What I did on my Summer Vacation” assignment. Thanks to Delmar Dobecki and Kaitlin Meadows for providing interesting and enlightening articles that will hopefully inspire others of you out there to plan an archaeological or anthropological vacation (even if it is only for a weekend excursion to an upcoming ethnographic workshop!).

Speaking of ethnographic workshops, I hope all of you take the unique opportunity they provide to learn from Native American artists and craftspeople who are carrying on the traditions and artistry of their ancestors. The ethnographic workshops are a great way to learn about these traditions, help support the community, and keep the traditions alive through our interest in learning about traditional arts and crafts, and maybe purchasing a few beautiful examples of these items.

Finally, Al Verna requested that I include one of our “lessons” from the most recent ethnographic workshop: How to count to five in Paipai (and I apologize for not knowing the proper spelling!) – One=Schreet, Two=Huak, Three=H’muk, Four=Hupah, Five=Serap.

Please send any archaeology-, anthropology-, or history-related news items, stories, events, photographs, drawings, cartoons, or anecdotes to me for inclusion in upcoming Newsletters. Items in MS Word are preferred, but others will be considered for inclusion. Carol Serr (Web Master) and I would really appreciate pictures (send us photos of your summer archaeological experiences even if you don’t want to write about it, or maybe your son or daughter drew a nice picture that reminds you of rock art or some other aspect of archaeology, or did you find a perfect cartoon in the newspaper or your favorite magazine that you’d like to share – please send them in!). Pictures should be sent as-is or if you have scanning capability, TIFF format is preferred.

CORRECTIONS: My deepest apologies to Donn Grenda (our August speaker), Ron May (our program chair), and our members for putting the wrong speaker information in the last newsletter. For those of you who came to the August meeting hoping to hear Gary Hurd’s talk on Lake Cahuilla Fish Traps, I hope you enjoyed Donn’s interesting presentation (I know I did). And for those of you who still want to hear about Fish Traps, Gary Hurd will be giving his talk in October.

The submission deadline for the next issue is October 27.

Please send all items to:
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Members’ News Corner

Summer Lecture Series

Each year the SDCAS sponsors a series of lectures at the Los Peñasquitos Ranch House Adobe. There is no charge for the event. Bring a folding chair, flashlight, and warm jacket or blanket. Come early, and bring a picnic dinner. Dessert and drinks will be supplied by the SDCAS. Lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. with an optional docent tour of the Ranch House at 6:00 p.m.

Important Notice:
Date Change: Third Lecture in the San Diego County Archaeological Society Summer Lecture Series

Previous Date: Saturday, September 9, 2000

New Date: Saturday, September 16, 2000, 7:30PM.

Please join us on Saturday, September 16, 2000. Archaeological Investigations at the Camp Hual-Cu-Cuish Site, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. Lynn Gamble, PhD, and San Diego State University Graduate Student, Monica Guerrero will discuss their research and findings from the previous two seasons in the field and lab.

Kumiai Basket Workshop

When: September 30 – October 1, 2000
Where: San José de la Zorra, Baja California
Cost: $100.00
Contact Steve Bouscaren at 619-230-2609 or stevebouscaren@mindspring.com for more information, and/or to reserve a space.

Rancho Los Peñasquitos Collections Rehabilitation

The final collections rehabilitation day for the important archaeological collections that are currently stored in the barn at Rancho Peñasquitos will be on Sunday, October 1. Meet at 10 a.m. at the barn. We will work until 3 p.m. Bring a bag lunch. Desert will be provided. These are very important collections and we all have a good time examining them as we rebag and rebox the artifacts. It is a good opportunity to learn about the artifacts, including both historic and prehistoric, while hanging out with fellow society members. For further information please contact Glenn Russell (858-694-2981).

California Indian Days Celebration

The 17th annual California Indian Days Celebration (CIDC) is Saturday & Sunday, September 16 and 17 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the corner of Park Blvd. and President’s Way in Balboa Park. Admission is free.

This year’s program highlights and honors the culture and diversity of California’s indigenous people, featuring California Indian dance groups from across the state. The CIDC will also have a “California Indian Village” where California Indian storytellers will regale us with insights into their culture. Numerous demonstrators and displays will offer insight into California Indian culture. There will also be over 50 arts and crafts booths, American Indian food booths, Indian community organization information booths, and much more. For more information please call 619-281-5964.

(Continued on Page 10)
An Agave Weekend

By Delmar Dobecki
Photos by Delmar Dobecki and Marla Mealey

The adventure began at 7:30 Saturday morning at the drive-in Mexican insurance office just off I-5 at the Via de San Ysidro off-ramp. Our group for the Agave Fiber Ethnographic Workshop met there before crossing the border into Baja California.

Steve Bouscaren was unable to attend this workshop so Julie Gay was our leader. Our group was composed of Mike Brady, Daniel Schoenberg, Marla Mealey, Patty McFarland, Al Verna, Lynnette Salmon, Sheliah Vickery, and Delmar Dobecki.

After leaving our rendezvous point, we agreed to meet up again after the last toll station before Ensenada. It was there that Mike Wilken joined the group. We took a quick break to stretch our legs, and then proceeded into Ensenada. The five-car caravan made a few stops, including a “healthy” bakery for goodies. After Ensenada we headed east into the mountains with a quick stop at the cheese store.

After what I am sure was their best cheese sale of the day, we continued east on Mexico 3 for approximately 65 miles to De La Independencia, where the turn-off to Santa Catarina is located. The last 20 miles to our destination was on “washboard” dirt road.

We took a lunch break at the Santa Catarina dam, just outside “downtown” Santa Catarina. Following lunch, we split into our two groups. Mike B., Daniel, Julia, and Delmar went to Teresa Castro’s house, while Patty, Al, Lynnette Marla, Sheliah, and Mike W. went to Teresa Aguiar’s nephew’s (Raul’s) house.

After making our introductions, Teresa Castro led us to her craft palapa where she spent the remainder of the afternoon trying to teach us how to weave a carrying net out of agave fiber cord, and how to make cord out of the fiber by rolling it on your leg.

In the late afternoon, Teresa took us on an agave hunt in order to replenish her agave fiber supply. We drove several miles to where Teresa directed us, parked the car on the side of the road, and followed Teresa into the brush with the caution: “watch out for snakes.”

Teresa was very selective as to which agave plant she wanted. When the proper specimen was found, she chopped out the core of the plant with a large heavy iron bar that was flattened to a sharp edge on one end.

Firewood was scarce at the ranch so Teresa decided to fire (bake) the agave near where they were found. A shallow pit was dug in the center of a clearing, a large quantity of dried wood was placed in the pit, and it was set on fire. After the wood burned down to coals, the agave leaves were placed on the coals and covered with about 8 to 10 inches of earth. Then more wood was placed on top and set on fire. When this wood had burned to the point that there was no longer a danger of starting a brush fire, we left.

We met up with the other group and we all caravanned to our campsite. The camping area had a few trees that provided shade and shelter. Those who had tents set them up and those who didn’t spread their sleeping bags under the stars. As night fell we gathered around the campfire for companionship and tall tales. After the sun went down the temperature cooled to make for pleasant sleeping under millions of stars.

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An Agave Weekend

(Continued from Page 4)

At first light the campers were up and packing. Everyone enjoyed coffee at Sheliah’s camp, compliments of Mike W. After everyone was packed we headed back to our teachers. The first order of the day for our group was to return to the spot where we roasted the agave. Teresa Castro skillfully uncovered and removed the still hot agave leaves and placed them in a carrying sack. We then returned to the ranch to process the roasted leaves into fiber.

The first step in the process is to break off the needle-sharp point of the leaf. When the “spear” is no longer lethal, a one-inch strip is removed from each side of the leaf. The coarse outside layer of the skin is removed, leaving only the fine center fibers. This center portion is then pounded with a rock on a metate to loosen the pulp around the fibers. These fibers are continually washed and scraped on the metate with a stone scraper (although Teresa Castro preferred to use an ax head) until nothing is left but the fine white fibers of the agave. The fibers are dried and then they are ready to be culled into cord. That was how the traditional people made the cord that had a thousand uses in their daily lives, for us it was the end of the agave fiber workshop. We met up with the other group, made a brief stop at Margarita Castro’s house in the village center to buy a few of her beautiful pots and rattles, and then we headed for Ensenada. We had carne asada tacos for lunch in Ensenada before heading home. The return trip was uneventful, except for being sent to secondary inspection at the border because of the willow bark skirts that had been purchased in the village. Secondary said there was no problem and we were quickly back in the U.S.A.

In closing I must say that Julie is an absolutely fearless driver in Mexico and credit must also be given to Patty who stayed right behind us all the way. All in all it was a great trip. I learned much about Paipai ways and I will definitely return again if given the opportunity.

Making an Agave Fiber Carrying Net

1. Make a “ring” to support the first row of loops on the net.
2. Attach the string to the ring with a knot.
3. Tighten the knot.
4. Start the net’s first loop. Use third finger to hold the loop to desired size.
5. Proceed as in 4, creating a new knot to hold the previous loop in place.
6. Continue making loops and knots, using index and third fingers to keep the size of the loops uniform.
7. To start the next row, flip the ring over, and bring the string through the last loop made in the previous row.
8. To knot the first loop in this row, bring the string around the loop of the previous row...
9. ... and through it.
10. Tighten the knot, make the next loop (using fingers to maintain uniform size), knot it in place, and so on.

(Diagrams reprinted from “Manuela Aguiar’s Agave String and Nets” by Beverly Ortiz. In News from Native California, Winter 1997/98. Drawings by Jeannine Gendar.)
President’s Message
(Continued from Page 1)
I would also like to announce our final (I hope) collections rehabilitation day for the important archaeological collections that are currently stored in the barn at Rancho Peñasquitos. These are very important collections and we all have a good time examining them as we rebag and rebox the artifacts. It is a good opportunity to learn about the artifacts, including both historic and prehistoric, while hanging out with fellow society members. We will meet at 10 a.m. on Sunday October 1 at the barn and work until 3 p.m. Bring a bag lunch. Desert will be provided. Please take the time to read this newsletter. There are lots of other archaeological opportunities and events to take advantage of. Visit our web site for the latest information. And, if you like what you read and you are not a member (or you are a past member), please join our ranks. Your support and participation are needed! See you all very soon, hopefully at our next lecture. Bye for now.

President Elect’s Message
By Mick Calarco
Summer Lecture Series:
This summer we have been treated to two excellent presentations as part of the San Diego County Archaeological Society Summer Lecture Series.

On July 29, the first annual Mary Ward Memorial Lecture took place. Dr. Ron Quinn inspired and challenged the audience to think differently about historic preservation and public site interpretation. Dr. Quinn stressed the importance of interpreting significant sites for the public in a way that encourages preservation through education. Thanks to the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee for offering a $100.00 honorarium. Dr. Quinn was generous enough to donate the funds to the Ranch House. An additional thanks goes out to Park Ranger Reneene Mowry for earmarking the funds for the continuing acquisition of books from Mary Ward’s library. SDCAS will have some of Ms. Ward’s books in its library for research access and preservation.

On August 12, Dr. Lynne Christenson and graduate students Donna Beddow, Shasta Gaughen, and Gay Hilliard presented a fascinating lecture on the artifacts from Dr. Paul Ezell’s excavation of the Chapel site at the San Diego Presidio. Each student presented on a different artifact type; ceramic, wood, and metal. Dr. Christenson gave an interesting introduction to the site and spoke about the curation crisis. In addition, the panel discussed how they designed and implemented their exhibit at the Junipero Serra Museum in Presidio Park. Many people in the audience commented on how much they appreciated that the artifacts from the San Diego Presidio were being so well cared for.

Note: Treasures Uncovered: Trade and Exchange at the San Diego Presidio is an archaeological exhibit at the Serra Museum in Presidio Park. The Serra Museum is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Call 619-297-3258 for more information.

September Lecture:
Saturday evening, September 16, 2000 is the date for the final lecture in the SDCAS Summer Series. Dr. Lynn Gamble and San Diego State University graduate student Monica Guerrero will be speaking about the previous two field seasons, and their work in the lab.

Camp Hual-Cu-Cuish site, located in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park within the Cuyamaca and Laguna Mountains in Eastern San Diego County, was excavated in the Spring of 1999 by the archaeological field class at San Diego State University. Artifacts recovered from these excavations includes whole and fragmented projectile points, flakes, bone fragments, mano and metate fragments, pot sherds, worked bird bone, a stone pendant, and tourmaline crystal. A diachronic and synchronic examination of the distribution of these and other artifacts provide a prehistoric perspective of the cultural and physical environment.

Each year the San Diego County Archaeological Society sponsors a series of free lectures at the Los Peñasquitos Ranch House Adobe. Come early, and bring a picnic dinner. Dessert and drinks will be supplied by the SDCAS. Optional docent tour of the Ranch House at 6:00PM, and the lectures begin at 7:30 p.m.

IMPORTANT: The date for this lecture has been changed from Saturday September 9, 2000 to Saturday September 16, 2000. Please update your calendar.

SDCAS Executive Board Nominating Committee:
Page III - 15 of the Board of Directors Policy and Procedures Manual states:

“The nominating Committee shall consist of three (3) voting Members, at least two of whom are non-Board Members. One shall be appointed by the President and two by the Board of Directors. For the regular elections, the Nominating Committee shall present the slate of nominees at the October General Meeting, at which time additional nominations shall be accepted from the floor.”

The SDCAS October General Meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., October 24, 2000 at Mission Trails Regional Park. Are you interested in being a part of the Nominating Committee? Or, are you interested in serving on the 2001 Board? We need you and welcome your participation in the SDCAS. We are only as strong and active as our Board and Membership. If you have any questions, please not hesitate to contact me. My contact information is on the second page of this newsletter.

Membership News
By Carol Serr
Welcome New members: Laura Barrie, Harley Bartlett, Laura Orange, and Leslee Simon.

I want to apologize for never getting membership cards out to those members who renewed this last year. It seems too late in the year to spend the postage now, but I will make a point to get them to you immediately upon (Continued on Page 7)
Membership News

(Continued from Page 6)

your renewal of dues this October (and of course to you Life members also).

So make sure to get your dues paid by the 31st of October, or sooner! If you don’t renew by the end of the year, you will not receive any more newsletters or fliers of up-coming events. So don’t miss any important info - send your check in early even - or bring it to the last summer lecture September 16th, or the general meetings (your payment will be credited to the 2000-2001 year).

Hopefully those who have not noticed their 1999-2000 newsletter is “missing” will remember to renew for the upcoming year. We’d love to welcome you back. Remember, you can not partake of the informative ethnoarchaeology workshops in Baja, CA without being an SDCAS member.

Please remember to inform me of address changes, either via e-mail or call our answering machine - to save the society the fifty cents fee for forwarding each newsletter. Any money saved is used to buy more books or in other ways to better the society for You, the members.

Carol Serr, Membership Chair
858-578-8964
ArkyLabGds@aol.com

Monthly Meeting Synopses

July Monthly Meeting
By Beth & Chris Padon

Dear Ron [May]

Thanks for inviting us to talk to SDCAS. We appreciate the opportunity to spread the word about CASSP and to gain new ideas on how the program may operate even better.

Dale mentioned that you will be writing a short summary of our presentation for the SDCAS newsletter. So we are sending a couple of paragraphs about CASSP for your use.

“In January, 1999, the SCA, with public and private partners, created the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program (CASSP) to address archaeological site protection and management in California. CASSP partners include: Department of the Interior-Bureau of Land Management, California State Office; California Office of Historic Preservation; California Native American Heritage Commission; Discovery Works, Inc; Imperial Valley College Desert Museum; Maturango Museum; and the Society for California Archaeology.

“The goals of CASSP are to foster greater appreciation and protection of archaeological resources for people now, and in the future to benefit California citizens. CASSP trains teams of 10 to 20 volunteers to regularly visit and monitor specific archaeological sites in an area, under the coordination of a professional archaeologist. In 1999, with a grant from the Bureau of Land Management, teams of site stewards were formed in Ridgecrest and Imperial. These volunteers are regularly visiting and recording their observations on more than 50 archaeological sites that have been open to public visitation, but not monitored. In May, 2000, CASSP helped organize another team of volunteers to monitor archaeological and historical sites in the Bishop area. With additional support, CASSP will continue to protect our fragile cultural heritage, find new ways to educate the public about our past, and achieve meaningful solutions to reduce vandalism and promote appreciation for our archaeological sites.”

The discussion after the presentation was great. On the way home, we realized that we should have mentioned that the SCA receives 15% of the CASSP funds for overhead expenses. The SCA handles the grant money for the program and reimburses our project expenses.

Also, we did not mention how we evaluate the success of our program. At the end of each workshop, participants complete an evaluation form concerning the content and amount of time spent each topic covered during the workshop. As result of these evaluations, the workshop and the notebook have changed to include more information about local archaeology, about monitoring techniques and terminology, and about Native American views. We anticipate that the workshops and the notebooks will continue to evolve, because we individualize them for each CASSP team.

We look forward to working with the SDCAS and others in San Diego to organize a CASSP team in your area. We like the idea that someone made about publicizing site stewardship in order to generate interest. Perhaps flyers could be distributed and sign up sheets provided for interested parties. With enough interested people, we could more easily find a coordinating archaeologist and the necessary funding. In the meantime, anyone interested in CASSP can call us (949-733-1915), write to us (Discovery Works, P.O. Box 51476, Irvine CA 92619), or send us email (bpndon@discoveryworks.com)

August Monthly Meeting

By Ron May

Donn Grenda delivered a double-lecture at the August 22nd San Diego County Archaeological Society meeting. The first involved investigations of a coastal site on Newport Bay in which ground penetrating radar and magnetometers were used to detect house floors and fire hearths. This exciting new application proved true in field excavations, which confirmed eleven house pits.

The second slide lecture linked San Diego with his discoveries at Lake Elsinore. The focus on Early Archaic social structure change into recent prehistoric people had implications for early population movements from the California deserts to the Peninsular Ranges. Grenda presented evidence for specialized Lake Mohave hunting camps and residential areas that evolved into Middlet Archaic communal residential patterns with changing environments over time. Additional changes in the past 1500 years resulted in social organization reorganization to small nuclear families and abandonment of the earlier communal settlements.

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Monthly Meeting Synopses
August Monthly Meeting
(Continued from Page 7)

The implications for San Diego from the Lake Elsinore data are that Middle Archaic social groups in contact with our local La Jollan or Encinitas Tradition coastal groups are many. Grenda envisions social adaptation to changing environments over the past 7500 years as a breakdown of large communities toward small nuclear family units. The “villages” reported by early Spanish explorers would have been concentrations of those nuclear family units, rather than formal communal social organizations.

Upcoming Speakers for 2000
By Ron May

September 26, 2000. Craig Lorenz, Planner and Environmental Consultant. Lorenz will deliver a slide lecture on case examples of when land development conflicts with archaeology. For example, Lorenz represented the Lakeside Jehovah Witnesses in their quest for a new church on Willow Road. Lorenz will explain how the project engineer and church congregation designed a protective soil-capping and avoided destruction of the site for the benefit of science and the community.

October 24, 2000. Gary Hurd will deliver a slide presentation on Lake Cahuilla and recent efforts to preserve the mysterious ancient fish traps in Imperial County. Hurd will discuss various theories on the correlation between the lake and population movements between 2000 and 400 years ago.

Historian Replacement in the Budget
By Jeff McDonald, San Diego Union-Tribune
July 26, 2000

Eighteen months after the death of county historian Mary F. Ward, a woman local preservationists credit with saving many of the buildings, artifacts and manuscripts that tell the story of the area, county officials are poised to hire a replacement.

San Diego County parks director Susan M. Hector has included money in her department’s new budget not only to hire a person to oversee county properties of historical significance but to expand the formerly part-time job to a full-time position.

“It’s what Mary and I always talked about,” Hector said.

The winning job candidate will have a graduate degree in history, anthropology, archaeology or a related subject. The position is expected to pay between $40,000 and $50,000 annually, depending on experience.

The new county historian should be on the job by the end of the year, overseeing the department’s facilities at Rancho Guajome, Vallecito stage stop and Los Peñasquitos Canyon, among others. The successful candidate also will be asked to create interpretive programs to promote interest in the county-owned sites, Hector said.

“It’ll be an expanded position, but only related to county parks and county facilities,” she said.

Volunteers from the historic preservation community praised the county for finally getting close to filling the position.

But several local historians expressed worry over Hector’s plan to limit the authority of the position to county properties. A county historian should be an advocate for historic sites all across the region, like Ward was for so many years, they said.

“We have a lot of trouble getting our buildings into the National Register, not because we don’t have any old buildings but because we don’t have any clout here,” said Kathy Flanigan, an architectural historian. “A county historian could provide and assist with that.”

California state parks historian Alex Bevil said the new county historian should have the time and authority to assist with projects outside the county park system.

“If they limit the person’s duties to just the parks, then that person is basically just a curator,” Bevil said. “I’m not saying that’s not important, but the county needs someone to evaluate threats to the county’s resources.”

Even before Ward died Jan. 1, 1999, county officials were criticized for failing to protect aging buildings and other historically significant places. Among other things, supervisors had done away with their historic preservation oversight board in 1993.

In addition to endangering dozens of significant places, critics said, the decision to disband the historic site board prevented San Diego County from applying for thousands of dollars in state preservation grants.

The board reinstated that committee in March, just weeks after The San Diego Union-Tribune reported those and other concerns of volunteers who work at the museums and historic outposts across the county.

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What I did on my Summer Vacation
Adventures of an Itinerant Archaeologist
By Kaitlin Meadows

The first slight seasonal shifting. A momentary monsoonal deluge after months of drought. Acorns from the ancient oaks providing excellent punctuation, bouncing off the metal barn roof as I write. September already! Time to hang up the dusty rucksack, drag in the tools & twaddle of weeks of camping, heal the blistered hands and aching back, download the data, decode the field notes, process the snapshots, and share news of my summer trampings as an itinerant archaeologist.

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What I did on my Summer Vacation

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I give dozens of interpretive talks a year to people of all ages about the joys and wonders of archaeology, paleontology, ethnobotany, geology, etc. I’m pretty good at it. My enthusiasm for the subject shows. But besides my own fieldwork and commitment to public outreach and education for SDCAS, I’ve got a whole other life going on.

For a dozen years I’ve worked closely with Project Wildlife to help hundreds of injured and orphaned wildlife (from ducklings to coyotes) get back into the wild. I’m a dedicated member of various land, wildlife, and nature conservancies. An adult literacy tutor, mentor to a wonderful little girl for the Big Sister organization, an avid gardener (heirloom herbs and flowers), I raise ten endangered desert land tortoises (one 75-year-old specimen I’ve cared for twenty five years!) I’m writing an eco-novel about the “mound builders,” enjoy jazz from the 50s and 60s, and love spelunking. But what I think I like doing more than anything is spending my summers exploring, camping, and contracting to do little archaeological projects along the way.

In June I was feeling a little over-taxed and under appreciated on many fronts (I’m sure you can relate.) I reluctantly resigned my position as Education and Outreach Chair for SDCAS. I needed some serious recharging. It was time to pack the truck up for weeks of camping and contract with the National Forest Service to do some rough and tumble archaeology. “Dirt time,” I call it. Before I tell you about my adventures, let me say that the upshot of my summer sojourns is that I’d be pleased to return to the responsibilities of my SDCAS Board position if you’ll have me. With renewed energy and enthusiasm, I hope to continue to make a positive contribution to the goals and mission of the SDCAS.

Enough about me. Here’s some of what I did this summer that so revived my spirits.

In the Six Rivers National Forest, up from the mouth of the Smith River, almost at the Oregon border, is the merest remnant of Altaville, an old mining town that was a-boom in the 1860s at a place called Low Divide. Heavily looted now and used by pothunters for practice, Altaville thrived from the early 1860s through the early 1870s but by 1876 it had, for all practical purposes, gone bust. I was exploring, camping, and contracting to do little archaeological projects along the way.

Prospectors had discovered rich copper deposits in this desolate area in 1853 but owing to its remoteness, the cost of mining, transporting, and smelting the ore outstripped its market value. That is, until the Civil War erupted. Both the Union and the Confederate forces were cut off from their traditional sources for precious copper used in shell casings and the war generated an insatiable appetite for this metal.

Seizing this new opportunity, a small group of investors commissioned a survey of a town site at Low Divide in 1862, naming the place “Altaville” for its proximity to the Alta California Mine. Town lots sold briskly as other mines opened and the transportation improved to Crescent City. Although Altaville’s economy slowed with the ending of the Civil War, it remained a bustling place through the early 1870s, its life extended by chromium mining in addition to copper.

Rich in contextual history, Low Divide has come full circle from its earliest use by the Tolowa people as a place to hunt, gather plant materials and make “small magic” to its use today by modern man for the same purposes. But it is this obscure place and a brief slice of time—Low Divide during the 1860s and 1870s—that was the focus of my historic and archaeological investigations this summer.

Economic and political turmoil in China, France, Ireland, Mexico, and Germany made these populations ripe for exodus when the discovery of gold at Colma opened Alta California to a tide of sojourners and immigrants representing most of the world’s countries.

The zenith of copper mining at Altaville and of the community’s population was from 1863 through 1865. At that juncture, the town had two hotels, several saloons, company houses, a town square, a blacksmith shop, a general merchandise store, and miners’ cabins. Twenty-five mining companies were at work in Low Divide and seven were shipping ore. It was in 1863, when mining operations were running at full tilt, that the State Mineralogist, William H. Brewer visited Altaville and wrote: “A filthier, dirtier, nastier, noisier place I have not struck on the state.”

Copper ore, after being tediously extracted from the mines around Altaville, was hauled great distances on bad roads by mules to the harbor of Crescent City. There it was used as ballast on ships traveling to England or Germany where it could finally be smelted and then shipped back to the eastern United States to be made into bullet casings.

It was our job on this project to locate material and historical remains to help us piece the colorful, patchwork past of Altaville together. From the dust, noise, tumult, and isolation that was Altaville in the 1860s, a small population of mostly ex-patriot miners suffered exhaustion, injury, and frequent clashes between contrary customs and cultures. These miners did not enjoy the instant wealth and conspicuous consumption of their comrades working in the gold fields. Theirs were the plain tools of “getting by,” the ruder, sturdier stock material culture that comes from a harsh life with few amenities.

We began excavating in the deep red, blowing dust under a relentless sun in the serpentine soil pocked with scrubby, dwarfed vegetation, on hillsides slashed with slag scars, and we turned up some clues and suppositions about the people and their lives. Rummaging through the trash, the leavings of the lives of miners and merchants, exalting in the broken, discarded pieces of Altaville’s fascinating puzzle, I learned a lot. What for instance?

Well, all about square head nails, where and how they were forged and used. (I can tell the subtle difference (Continued on Page 10)
Members’ News Corner
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Fort Guijarros Fiesta
By Ron May

The 20th Annual Fort Guijarros Fiesta will be held on September 23, 2000 at the Harbor Inn. Actor Jeffrey Paul Whitman will perform his famous one-man play based on Richard Henry Dana’s 1859 book, Two Year’s Before the Mast. Spanish dancing will be performed out on the patio by San Diego Bay prior to the performance. Dinner will follow.

Retired U.S. Navy Commander John C. Hinkle, will serve as Master of Ceremonies at the 20th Annual Fiesta. This is only fitting, as CDR. Hinkle started the archaeology project in 1980-1981, when he served as Commanding Officer. U.S. Naval Submarine Support Facility on Ballast Point. He also co-founded the Fort Guijarros Museum Foundation and served as Master of Ceremonies at the first Fiesta in 1981.

Casa de España and Peña Andalusia dancers will perform traditional regional dances of Spain out on the patio deck of the Harbor Inn. This performance will start off the Fiesta in our traditional manner to bring the audience in synch with the 18th and early 19th century California. Spanish soldiers and their families performed those same dances on the plazas of the Royal Presidio de San Diego and the cannon battery “San Joaquin” (better known today as “Fort Guijarros”).

SDCAS Members should plan to send $35.00 to the Fort Guijarros Museum Foundation (P.O. Box 23130, San Diego, CA 92193) to reserve places early. This year is anticipated to be a sell-out due to the popularity of the handsome Jeffrey Paul Whitman. Funds raised by this event will go toward research on the collection of over 250,000 artifacts and ecofacts at the Fort Guijarros Lab on the U.S. Naval Submarine Base.

Land of the Kumeyaay

Mission Trails Regional Park Ranger Paul Kilburg will lead a one-and-a-half hour interpretive walk starting at the Old Mission Dam parking lot on Saturday September 23 at 9 a.m. Wear sturdy shoes and bring water. For more information please call 619-668-3275

Museum of Man Evening Programs

Thursday, September 7, 7:00 p.m.
¡Viva Oaxaca!

Take a magical journey and learn about the people, crafts, and ancient ruins of Oaxaca with Grace Johnson, Curator of Latin American Ethnography. Oaxaca is a living museum of art and archaeology, with traditions that merge past and present in a vibrant tapestry of life. Grace’s slide tour and discussion may well have you packing your bags—or at least give you something to dream about!

Thursday, September 14, 7:00 p.m.
Dr. Richard O’Connor

Join Museum Trustee Richard O’Connor and explore how ceramic artist Juan Quezada brought about the rebirth of an ancient tradition of pottery and change the economics of his village, Mata Ortiz. This slide discussion will illustrate Juan Quezada’s process of discovery, which recently earned him Mexico’s highest award to a living artist, the Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Artes.

Museum of Man
Collectors Club Auction

Mark your calendars for the date of Saturday, October 7, for the sixth annual auction of ethnic art from around the world, sponsored by the Museum of Man Collectors Club. Auctioneer Ron Munn is again donating services for this fun event. The past five auctions have been profitable both for the Museum’s collections and for those attendees who have added to their own collections. Items already received include handwoven textiles from Finland, Turkey, Poland, and Tunisia; nine masks from Papua New Guinea; five Navajo rugs, African baskets, a framed Guatemalan huipil, and many more items from India, Greece, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, China, England, and Peru. New items are being donated as this newsletter goes to press. All proceeds benefit the acquisition and care of Museum collections.

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between a 7/8-inch tobacco nail and a 6/8-inch Hungarian shoe nail, in case you’re interested!) Not to mention makers marks and ceramic typologies (porcelain, scroddleware—I’m not kidding—and earthenware’s of several sorts). Not to forget a whole lot about medicine bottle anatomy: closures, finishing methods, mold seams, base profiles. And don’t even get me started on cans!

And what did we find? Nails (impossible quantities of a dozen different sorts)—cast iron stove parts, rusty tack and wire, thick chunks of broken crocks, a bit of Double Happiness Willow Ware, solarized amethyst glass, buttons, ceramics, bottles, and a lovely marble, probably from Germany. After all my years on prehistoric projects, it was refreshing to explore the lives of people for whom we often had names, census records and family trees.

And what did I learn? Renewed enthusiasm for the protection and conservation of these historic sites and the key responsibility of continuing to educate the public, exposing them to the history right under their feet, challenging them to be a part of the solution and not the problem. And an immeasurable respect for the public servants of archaeology—National Forest Service
archaeologists walking the narrow ground between the vying constraints of timber sales, increased recreational use, cattle grazers, poachers, politics, and budgetary intrigues.

Everywhere I went I met good folks willing to do the work, dig the units, screen the tons of soil, catalog and curate the findings, write the reports and deliver their findings to the appropriate ears.

But I realized anew that it’s an important job, a necessary evil, this educating the public and the body politic about archaeology. I can only do my very small part, but I’d be happy to take on the task again for SDCAS and I hope to bring to it this renewed energy generated from my summer sojourners in itinerant archaeology.
San Diego County Archaeological Society Membership Application

Name ___________________________ Phone ___________________________

Address __________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State _____ Zip ______

E-mail Address: ______________________________________________________

Occupation / School ________________________________________________

Special Skills / Interests _____________________________________________

How did you hear about us? __________________________________________

The SDCAS membership year begins October 1. Please check the membership desired and enclose payment for the amount shown in the table below. Membership is subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

1-Year*

______ Individual $20.00
______ Family $30.00
______ Student $10.00

Institutional $15.00
(Company, University, College, Etc.)

______ Life $250.00

* Half-year rates (at ½ the full-year price) are available after April 1.

☐ Check here for ½-year rates.

☐ Check here for Renewal

Code of Ethics

1. The collecting in any manner of archaeological material or data shall be done using contemporary scientific techniques, and shall have as its express purpose the finding and dissemination of information relative to the history and prehistory of California.

2. Provisions shall be made for the housing of archaeological materials and data in accordance with accepted professional practices, and such materials and data shall be made available to qualified individuals through accumulated field notes and records or to the general profession through the publication of findings.

3. The gathering of archaeological specimens or the destruction of archaeological sites for purposes of selling artifacts or personal acquisition shall in all cases be forbidden and shall subject member to expulsion proceedings.

All members will adhere to this Society’s Code of Ethics, and to State, Federal, and International Antiquities Laws.

I have read and agree to abide by the above Code of Ethics.

Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

Sponsor* ___________________________ Date ____________

* Persons under 18 years of age must be sponsored by an adult SDCAS member

Please send completed form and payment to San Diego County Archaeological Society, P.O. Box 81106, San Diego, CA 92138.