January 23, 2018

Pictographic Clues on the Cultural Landscape of Southern California

Steve Freers

Southern California is rich in pictograph and petroglyph evidence of Native American interactions with their landscape. Digital rendering advancements over the past decade have augmented opportunities to expand our understanding of southern California rock art--especially pictographs. In tandem with new site discoveries, we have a better handle on rock art “styles”, their distribution, and in some case regional “style” variations. The expressions of rock art along the primary Late Period ethnographic division between Yuman and Takic speaking groups has been of particular interest recently. Additionally, specific forensic analysis of pictograph impression handprints has supported conventional suppositions regarding the makers of certain types of rock art. This visually rich presentation will demonstrate to the audience how much of this new information aligns with examples of pictographic rock art comprising the La Rumorosa, Rancho Bernardo, and San Luis Rey Styles.

Steve Freers Bio: Avocationally, Steve Freers has spent the past 27 years researching Native American rock art in Riverside and San Diego Counties, as well as concentrated studies in the Grand Canyon region. Steve served for five years as senior editor for the American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA). Steve has co-authored two books on rock art: Fading Images in 1994 with Dr. Gerald Smith; and, Rock Art of the Grand Canyon Region in 2013 with Don Christensen and Jerry Dickey. The Arizona Governor’s Archaeology Advisory Commission awarded Mr. Freers and his co-authors the 2014 Arizona Governor’s Award for Special Achievement in Public Archaeology for their book and the over 10,000 volunteer hours dedicated to recording archaeological sites for federal agencies based in Arizona. In 2016, Mr. Freers was awarded the Crabtree Award by the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) for outstanding avocational archaeology. Steve’s specialty is taking a physical anthropological approach to rock art research. Using anthropometric data collected in the late 1800s and early 1900s by the famous anthropologist Franz Boas, he developed a regression equation that assists in predicting the physical stature and gender of the makers of prehistoric hand impressions. The regional results of this research has been presented to the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations (IFRAO), SAA and ARARA. Currently, Steve serves as Program Chairperson for the San Diego Rock Art Association (SDRAA).

February 27, 2018

Bioarchaeology of the lower Río Verde, Oaxaca, Mexico

Dr. Arion T. Mayes

Associate Professor in Biological Anthropology, Director of Bioarchaeology at the Biological Anthropology Lab, San Diego State University
Frequency and type of trauma as well as degenerative bone changes is presented for two sites located on the Pacific coast of Oaxaca, Mexico. Occupied from the Middle Formative to the Early Post-classic, Río Viejo is a 250-hectare site on the west bank of the Río Verde. It was an urban center and the political seat of a regional polity. Cerro de la Cruz is a small Late Formative site covering 1.5 hectares that is located in the floodplain. Suggestions that Cerro de la Cruz is an example of territorial expansion of Monte Alban, as well as the evidence against this, have been discussed elsewhere. While distant influences are evident on the skeleton and dentition, it does not appear to be in the form of violent conquest, further supporting the archaeological evidence.

March 27, 2018

Flaked Stone Symbols: Eccentrics, their meaning, and function in ancient Maya society

Marcos Ramos

This presentation examines the possible symbolic representation and functions of symbolic flaked stone artifacts, commonly known as eccentrics. These ceremonial artifacts are found as sets of chipped chert or obsidian zoomorphic and geometric shapes found deposited beneath the floors of buildings and beneath stelae set about the built sacred landscapes of many lowland Maya centers in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras. This presentation analyzes a wide range of eccentric forms that are representative of the Late Classic Maya eccentric assemblage complex. These eccentrics were recovered from the Late Classic regional center of Buenavista del Cayo in the upper Belize River Valley. These ceremonial artifacts have been the subject of archaeological study for the past 200 years; however, only in the last 30 years, has research focused on the possible symbolic meaning and function of these offerings. This presentation brings a plausible understanding of these artifacts and what they probably represented to their ancient Maya creators.

April 17, 2018

La Rumorosa Rock Art Along the Border: A survey of Kumeyaay and related artwork in Southern California, Colorado River Corridor, Western Arizona and Baja California

Don Liponi

Extending from more than 100 miles south into Baja California, to Gila Bend, AZ in the east, as far north as Havasupai Canyon in the Grand Canyon and as far west as the foothills of San Diego. This shamanistic tradition of artwork was used to promote and optimize interactions with nature and to life situations encountered by the group. The shaman, by various means sought out the spiritual world for answers and relayed their visions in the paintings they rendered. Since the rock is overwhelmingly granite, petroglyphs are quite rare. Our team and the book has about 15 major contributors, one-third of which are Native Americans, along with prominent regional professional archaeologists and avid avocationalists. Working together over a five year period, we discovered or rediscovered more than 100 new rock art sites that have never been
published. They are presented here for the first time. Please come join us for an amazing evening. Don Liponi, photographer, editor and author will be signing his book. Don is a volunteer researcher for the BLM in El Centro, CA. The book is on sale for only 20$ this evening in order to raise funding for the second volume of this area which is underway. Don has memberships with the Society of California Archaeology, California Rock Art Foundation, Anza Borrego Desert Natural History Association, Utah Rock Art Research Association, Coachella Valley Archaeologic Society and the San Diego Rock Art Association. Most of all he loves to be in the desert and finding new sites for the project with other friends. I really feel like I have saved something important and it is a very positive feeling.

May 22, 2018

The Northwest Passage through the Canadian Arctic and the 150-year Search for the Fate of the Crew

Sandra Pentney

On May 19th, 1845 two ships left England in search of the fabled Northwest Passage through the Canadian Arctic to the Orient. Under the leadership of Captain Sir John Franklin, 128 men crewed the HMS Erebus and HMS Terror for what was planned to be a two-year expedition. The ships had been heavily modified for the expedition by adding iron plating and heavy iron beams in the bow of the ship to withstand the arctic ice. State of the art steam engines were also added to support the sails to provide more thrust for the ships in the thick ice. Franklin’s Expedition was also the first expedition to rely on the revolutionary new technology of canned foods. The ships and their crew last had contact with Europeans in July 1845 by a whaling ship. After this date, the ships and crew were never seen again.

Within the first 33 years, 25 rescue missions were commissioned to find the ships and their crew. Over the next 117 years, multiple fact-finding missions were commissioned and completed by both the English and Canadians, each adding small amounts of information about the doomed expedition. In 2014, an expedition led by Parks Canada discovered the wreck of HMS Erebus, and then two years later, located HMS Terror.

This presentation will outline the known facts of the expedition, and the 150-year search for the fate of the crew.

Sandra Pentney MA, RPA
Environmental Team Lead, Ecosciences
San Diego
Engineering, Design; Project Management
June 26, 2018

Remaining Undocumented: Immigrant Youth Living Outside of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

Linda E. Sanchez

President Obama’s 2012 executive order, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), gave undocumented youth relief from deportation and a 2-year renewable work permit provided they met certain criteria. Of an estimated 1.9 million individuals who were eligible, only 40% of those eligible applied. With a one percent overall denial rate, it is unclear why close to half chose not to seek DACA benefits. This study compares individuals who did not apply to the DACA program to those that did. It asks how immigrants decide to apply to programs that transition out of illegality, and looks at the chronic vulnerable availability created by the state through spaces of liminal legality and processes that are meant to transition out of illegality. The sudden change in DACA-related policies adds an unanticipated dimension to the comparison of those who took advantage of this government program and those who stayed away.

This presentation is based on preliminary dissertation research currently being carried out in Southern California. When this research is completed, it will be used for the partial fulfillment of a Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine.

July 28, 2018

Polynesian Settlement and Heritage Management at Western Raiatea

John O’Connor, RPA

The Society Islands are of primary importance for understanding settlement patterns and human impacts among initial colonizing populations in East Polynesia. Archaeology on the island of Raiatea serves multiple roles in terms of academic research, archaeological and ecological conservation, and cultural education for island residents. Excavations at the megalithic Marae Tainuu have revealed changes in land use that are instrumental to understanding environmental and social change in the area of Tevaitoa, including pre-contact and post-contact effects on the coastal landscape analogous to other areas of the Leeward Group. The exposure of early architecture, hearth features, subsistence remains, and evidence for the manufacture and use of lithic tools gives insight into the spatiotemporal organization of human activity at this important heritage site. Ongoing research at Tevaitoa is helping to define the history of human activity at western Raiatea with consequences for local environmental management and community outreach. This work contributes to archaeological knowledge in Central East Polynesia, a corpus of information from which we can establish an archaeological baseline for human occupation at Raiatea and expand global knowledge of human-environmental interactions in island and coastal contexts.

John O’Connor is a Registered Professional Archaeologist, a Ph.D. candidate and Instructor at the University of Oregon Department of Anthropology, and the Cultural Resources Specialist for
ECORP Consulting, Inc., in San Diego, California. His dissertation work concerns settlement chronology and human impacts on coastal ecosystems at Raiatea, Leeward Society Islands, French Polynesia. John works on professional resource management projects throughout California and the Hawaiian Islands, in addition to teaching and research activities in Oregon, French Polynesia, and the Kingdom of Tonga. John passionately supports the ethical management of natural and cultural resources, with supplementary interests in indigenous philosophy, traditional ecological knowledge, natural resource law, and environmental conservation and protection.

August 25, 2018

Post-Disaster Archaeology

Natalie Brodie, Rachel Droessler, and Patrick McGinnis

Join the SDCAS for a panel discussion of the challenges and unique experiences associated with protecting and managing cultural resources following natural disasters. Panel participants have completed archaeological studies following fires and hurricanes, and will discuss a variety of topics from agency resources, and working collaboratively with emergency responders.

Natalie Brodie is a Senior Cultural Resources Manager with LSA, and has been working as a professional archaeologist for the past 16 years. Ms. Brodie managed a team of archaeologists and biologists to respond to a series of wildfires in 2015-2016, in support of Southern California Edison. She is the current Second Vice President for the San Diego County Archaeological Society and is also a past-President of the Society. Ms. Brodie’s interests include historical archaeology, the history of water development, and GIS applications.

Rachel Droessler is an archaeologist and GIS specialist with ICF and has been working as a professional archaeologist for the past 8 years. Ms. Droessler served as a consultant program delivery manager for FEMA in Texas in support of the Hurricane Harvey disaster response. The program delivery manager position involves project management; primarily coordinating efforts between project applicants and internal FEMA teams, including the environmental group. Ms. Droessler served this role during the implementation of a new project delivery system from 2017-2018. She has also served as an archaeologist and GIS specialist for several local FEMA mitigation projects. She is the current Social Media board member for the San Diego County Archaeological Society and her interests include historical archaeology, San Diego history, Mesoamerican archaeology, and GIS applications.

Patrick McGinnis is a Senior Archaeologist with ICF and has been working as a professional archaeologist for 22 years. Mr. McGinnis was a former Secretary for the San Diego County Archaeologist Society. Mr. McGinnis served as a consultant environmental specialist for FEMA in New York in support of the Hurricane Sandy disaster response from 2012-2016. He also served a similar role for several FEMA mitigation projects including in American Samoa in support of the disaster response for the 2009 earthquake and tsunami. His interests include precontact archaeology, historical archaeology, and architectural history.
September 22, 2018

“No es lo mismo llamar al diablo que verlo venir”: climate change, changing weather and archaeological heritage as seen from Puerto Rico.

Isabel Rivera-Collazo

A popular proverb in Puerto Rico warns that “it is not the same thing to call the devil than to see him come”. For many years scientists have been warning about the potential impacts of climate change. In the last five to ten years archaeologists have been linking those impacts to heritage. These past two years, 2017 and 2018, have demonstrated the real-life meaning of changing weather – which eventually will add up to changed climate – and it is not the same to see the devil come. In the context of rapidly changing weather, heritage is a tool for adaptation, for recovery of lost knowledge, and for communication of locally relevant climate science. But at the same time, this reality puts heritage professionals at the front of a social, physical and cultural disaster that is simply overwhelming. This presentation will share the experiences of working with archaeological heritage and climate change research in Puerto Rico before, during and after a record-breaking catastrophic year of hurricanes and winter storms, and will contextualize the work of archaeology in the practicality of equity and justice from within the communities themselves.

Isabel Rivera-Collazo is Assistant Professor on Biological, Ecological and Human Adaptations to Climate Change at the Department of Anthropology and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Dr. Rivera-Collazo is an environmental archaeologist specializing on geoarchaeology, archaeomalacology, coastal and marine processes, maritime culture and climate change, with regional interests in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean Basin and the Neotropics (Pan Caribbean region); Israel and the eastern Mediterranean. Her research focuses on the effect that human activity has over island ecosystems through time, as well as how have people responded to climatic and environmental change in the past. Dr. Rivera-Collazo’s work focuses on resilience and adaptation, investigating what decisions enhance or reduce adaptive success. Taking an applied approach, Dr. Rivera-Collazo also works with local communities in the quest for understanding the current and expected impacts of climate change, including threats to coastal heritage. Dr. Isabel Rivera-Collazo has a MSc degree on Palaeoecology of Human Societies and a PhD on Environmental Archaeology both from the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. She is also Research Fellow of the Center of Tropical Ecology and Conservation (CATEC) and the Laboratory of Environmental Archaeology at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus.

October 23, 2018

It’s Bedlam Out There: The Dark History and Study of Asylums

Karen Lacy and Sandra Pentney
SDCAS is proud to present another chilling Halloween themed lecture, given by our resident supernatural (and archaeological/anthropological) experts. Quarantines, decrepit buildings, and hauntings. Asylums of many different types have long been associated with images of dank towers, long corridors, and nefarious staff. Why are some of the scariest places on earth also places where people were once sent for healing and hope? In this year’s talk we explore the history of sanitoriums, and asylums in the western world beginning in the medieval period through to the early 20th century. A cautionary note that this presentation may include photos of human remains.

Presenters:

Karen Lacy has over 18 years of museum and writing experience as well as a Master’s degree in Museum Science and a Bachelor’s in History with minors in Art History and Anthropology. She recently completed a second Masters in Anthropology at San Diego State University. Karen co-founded Muse Curatorial Consulting Group, a company that specializes in collections care, training, grant writing, and exhibit development of archaeological, historic, library and archive materials. Previously, Karen was the Collections Manager of the San Diego Museum of Man for seven years and the Curator of Exhibits of the San Diego Air & Space Museum for 5 years.

Sandra Pentney has called herself an archaeologist for 18 years. Born, raised and educated in Canada, she moved to the US after said education showed her that choosing a career based mostly on being out of doors in a climate where the out of doors was frozen and under two feet of snow for 5 months of the year wasn’t the best choice. She spent the first five years in the U.S. enjoying fieldwork in the very temperate climate of California, and now is firmly planted indoors at a desk for 49 weeks out of the year. Sandra received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and her Master of Arts in Archaeology from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, which no one outside of Canada seems to be able to pronounce.

November 27, 2018

Kumeyaay Game Night, hosted by Barona Cultural Center

Join us for a night of Kumeyaay games hosted by the Barona Cultural Center and Museum. Prizes go to the winners.