

Schedule of Events

February 20

IPCAs Executive Board Meeting.

7:30 pm. Boulder Police Bureau. 1805 33rd Street, Boulder.

February 27

Ipcas General Meeting. 7:30 pm. at The Meeting Place

Crossroads Mall in Boulder.

Enter mall by corridor

between Round the Corner

and Montgomery Wards

on SW end of mall.

Dr. James Dixon

Curator of Archaeology at the Denver Museum of Natural History, will speak on

The Lamb Spring Site.

Comanche Creek Update

I recently attended a meeting of the Center for Plains Archaeological Research. Other attendees were Chris Prillwitz, Vanda Larson, Amber Lopez, and Larry Tradlener, President of the Denver Chapter, CAS.

There will be a lot of opportunities for volunteers out there this summer, starting with regular lab sessions at the DU Lithics Laboratory every Monday evening beginning January 29. This activity dovetails nicely with the Laboratory Techniques PAAC class being taught at the Foothills Nature Center in Boulder over the next five weeks. The preliminary report will follow completion of lab work sometime this spring. (I have a complete copy of the research design should anyone wish to see it.)

This summer the Center plans to construct two pit houses on the Parker Ranch this summer, plant traditional native crops beside the creek, and make pottery using prehistoric techniques. Authentic tools and materials -- bone, wood, stone, plant fibers and green animal animal hides -- will be used. One of the pit houses will be burned in November, and the other allowed to decay naturally.

The excavations will be either on Badger Hill or near the old ranch house where the digging of a hole for a clothesline pole once produced a large quantity of lithics and debitage.

Living Springs at Comanche Creek has not run dry in historical times. It has been a magnet for men and animals for many thousands of years. It is home to a rich array of plant life and attracts many rare birds. A portion of the Overland Trail crosses the property and is still clearly visible, marked by a slight depression and a swatch of greener grass, one hundred and twenty three years after it was abandoned.

I believe that the future of plains archaeology lies primarily in the hands of private land owners such as the Parkers. Their good will, generosity, and the knowledgeable conservation of the invaluable archaeological resources found on their land will shape our understanding of the past.

Later this spring, a full schedule of volunteer opportunities available at Comanche Creek will appear in the CALUMET. Until then, the lab is open. Anyone wishing to gain hands-on experience may call Chris at 324-7124.

- Michael Landem

Michael Landem is a 1996 IPCAS Co-president
Crews Needed for High Altitude Excavations
July 29 - August 2, 1996

Jean Kindig and Jim Benedict are offering twofers as a remedy for midsummer blahs -- two great sites in the Devil's Thumb Valley, with the opportunity to excavate at both. Jean will be working at the Devil's Thumb Pass Trail, where, last summer (under Forest Service permit) she collected twenty-five potsherds, three projectile points, a projectile point tip, and a bifacial knife. The site is certain to add to our knowledge of high-altitude ceramics, which are still poorly known. Jean will be making a special effort to obtain sherds with cooking residues that can be identified, and carbonaceous crusts that can be radiocarbon dated. Because of the significance of the materials found in 1995, and because artifacts occur in the trail, as well as along side it, she has requested a permit for salvage excavations.

Jim will be digging at site 5BL3440, a funnel-shaped game drive tested by CAS volunteers in 1994. Projectile point tips from the kill area suggest that the site was first used during the Paleoindian period. In deepening one of the grid squares for profile description, the excavators exposed a buried land surface, deformed by processes of the sort that often accompany melting of icy permafrost. Charcoal from the buried surface, collected 7 feet east of an obliquely-flaked projectile-point tip, was dated at 9390 + 70 BP. The date is almost 2000 years older than the oldest existing date for game-drive hunting above timberline, and is a reasonable age for the projectile point. Hoping to find evidence linking the charcoal to the site's Paleoindian component, Jim has applied to the Forest Service for a permit to expose a larger area of the buried land surface.

We are seeking twelve crew members interested in camping for a week, and capable of backpacking six miles with a 2,000-foot elevation gain. Our camp will be in the krummholz ecotone, protected from the winds, in a magnificent valley at 11,200-foot elevation, just east of the Continental Divide. The crew will be treated to awesome surprises and sunsets, spectacular scenery, watchable wildlife, great companionship, and an introduction to alpine game-drive systems.

If you wish to participate, contact Tom Cree at 776-7004
- Jim Benedict

White Mammoth Gift Exchange a Hit!

It was the sauciest, silliest and most delightful IPCAS holiday party ever. Held on December 9 at the home of Mac and Jan Avery, it was attended by a record-breaking 34 people.

Retiring officers and members of the board were honored. Exceptional service awards (engraved medals) went to Steve Montgomery, Dock Teegarden, Jeannie Hamiton, and Ed Grefrath. Outstanding service awards (blue ribbons) were received by Maureen Arthur and Bob Powell.

After the new officers were elected, retiring IPCAS President, Steve Montgomery, spoke about the history of the Indian Peaks Chapter. He then passed the insignia of Leadership (the IPCAS Calumet, atlatl and dart)- to Michael Landem, one of the 1996 Co-presidents. The traditional white mammoth gift exchange was hilarious as ever. Someone brought a real white mammoth -- a genuine white elephant pinata!

Thanks to Jan and Mac Avery for providing the ideal setting, and to all who brought scrumptious desserts.

Dinwoody Rock Art

In the Wind River Mountains south of Dubois and in the southern Bighorn Basin north of Thermopolis in central Wyoming there occurs a unique form of rock art. The Dinwoody style consists of life-sized pecked anthropomorphic figures with either complex patterns of interior lines or smaller, secondary figures incorporated into the bodies of the larger.

To quote Frison:

There are often bizarre orientation of the limbs and heads, and horns or headdresses are always present. Feet and hands are depicted in two ways. Some figures exhibit extreme, lifelike detail; others show a series of lines, most closely resembling claws for the feet, and in some cases both arms and hands are depicted as short wings. Wavy lines and danglers often radiate from the hands and heads, and occasionally, concentric circles and arcs surround the head, creating an auralike effect.

One Dinwoody panel has been dated: the Legend Rock site. Here a fully pecked anthropomorphic figure complete with headdress was partially buried. Five distinct levels were excavated. Radiocarbon dates from just above (Francis, 1989) and just below (Walker, 1989) the right leg of the figure set the probable date of the artist's work between 1920 (+ or - 140 B.P.) and 2180 (+ or - 130 B.P.), roughly 1900 to 2000 years ago.

It is not known when the manufacture of Dinwoody style art ceased. Radiocarbon dates from Petroglyph Canyon (Loendorf, 1984) and numerous cases of superimposition indicate that by 1300 to 900 B.P., a much simpler form of rock art had become common. Defined by Loendorf and Porsche (1985) as the "en toto pecked style", it occurs throughout the Bighorn Basin and surrounding mountains of Montana and Wyoming. Gone are the bizarre details, the elaborate headgear, the figures are greatly diminished in size, gender is indicated, men and women often stand side by side as if for a formal portrait.

Some time around 900 B.P., pecked styles were replaced by incised and painted styles throughout the Bighorn region. The incised lines of this period and style were made by a technique which produced deep, rounded grooves. Common motifs were shield-bearing warriors, V-necked figures, rectangular-bodied humans and stick figures: the classic hallmarks of Plains rock art.

Finally, shortly after A.D. 1725, when guns and horses were first reported in the area, a final style emerged. Defined by Loendorf and Porsche as the "fine line incised style", it consists of extremely fine, V-shaped scratches showing horses, tipis, guns, v-necked figures and shield-bearing warriors. Specific events are for the first time carefully depicted: battles, horse raids, counting coup, figures mounted on running horses, the wounded falling; types of scenes which have no precedent in prehistoric rock art. Frison suggests that this change may have been due to the stresses of Euroamerican contact.

Altered states of consciousness induced by fatigue, migraine, hyperventilation, rhythmic movements or psychoactive drugs universally produce certain visual images known as entoptic phenomenon, because they are derived from the basic structure of the human optic system. These include grids, zigzags, dots, spirals and curving lines. Entoptic images are common in Dinwoody art, strongly suggesting an association with the altered states of shamanistic practices.

Neither a narrative of prehistoric life nor simple doodles, the Dinwoody rock art sites of central Wyoming represent man's timeless quest for spirituality and speak eloquently of the culture, ideology and religion of this small group of long-vanished people.

Anyone wishing to tour selected Dinwoody rock art sites this summer, please let us know, and we will organize a tour.

Wormington Award Honors Two Families

The Center for the study of the First Americans has honored two families with the H. Marie Wormington Award for contributions to First American studies. The awards are named for the late Marie Wormington, a leader in the study of earliest American prehistory.

Geologists Mort D. Turner and Joanne C. Turner of Boulder, Colorado, were sited for their role in getting the Center started. Joanne Turner was the principal architect for developing the Center's advisory board, and is a charter member and secretary of the board. Her husband, Mort, helped develop the Center's scientific council and its publishing program.

Both Turners have been involved in the Center's research program, serving as co-investigators of the Mammoth Meadow site near Dillon, Montana.

Also honored was the Hall family of Corvallis, Oregon. Roberta Hall, a professor of anthropology at Oregon State University, was instrumental in helping the Center move to OSU from the University of Maine in 1991. Her husband, Don, has served as editor of the Mammoth Trumpet Since October 1991.

- Mark Floyd

Mammoth Trumpet / January 1996

January Minutes