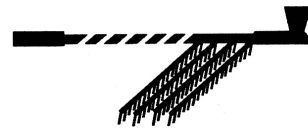


CALUMET



Newsletter of the Indian Peaks Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society
May, 2009

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Presentation (lecture) meetings are held in the University of Colorado Museum, Dinosaur Room on the Second Thursday of most Months, at 7:00 PM. **The public is always welcome.**

Web Site: WWW.INDIANPEAKSARCHAEOLOGY.ORG

- May 7** Executive Board Meeting, 7:30PM, Location to be determined
May 14 **Presentation Meeting**, Drs. Robert Brunswig / Frederic Sellet, UNC's North Park Cultural Landscapes Project, See Page 2
May 15-17 CRAA Annual Meeting, Cortez, details at www.coloradorockart.org
May 22-24 American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) Annual Meeting, Bakersfield, California, details at: www.arara.org
- June 11-13** Conference on Archaeoastronomy of the American Southwest, Camp Verde, Arizona, details at: www.caasw.org
June 12-14 2009 CAS Canoe and Rock Art Trip, Colorado River, Information at: http://www.coloradoarchaeology.org/news_announcements_files
June 16-23 PAAC Summer Training Survey at Antelope Gulch
June 22 to July 17 Volunteer opportunities excavating a site in North Park with Drs. Brunswig/Sellet.
- September 3** Executive Board Meeting, 7:30
September 10 **Presentation Meeting**, Dr. Douglas Bamforth, Topic: Boulder Clovis Cache See the article on page 4.
- October 1** Executive Board Meeting, 7:30
October 2-4 CAS Annual Meeting, Pueblo, details available later
October 8 **Presentation Meeting**, Speaker and topic to be determined
October 8-11 Ninth Biennial Rocky Mountain Anthropological Conference, Gunnison, See Page 4
October 9-12 Morey Stinson IPCAS Rock Art Trip near Moab, Utah
- November 5** Executive Board Meeting, 7:30
November 12 **Presentation Meeting**, Speaker and topic to be determined
- December 3** Executive Board Meeting, 7:30
December 10 **Christmas Party**, Details to be determined

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May Topic

2008 North Park Archaeological Excavations and Paleoenvironment Reconstruction Research Results

Bob Brunswig and Fred Sellet

Anthropology Program, School of Social Sciences, University of Northern Colorado

The University of Northern Colorado completed its fourth field season in Colorado's North Park Valley in 2008. Work concentrated on two sites: 5JA1183, several miles southeast of Walden and 5JA421, several miles northeast of that town.

Excavations at both sites expanded previous test excavations by the university. 5JA1183, known from earlier investigations to contain Late Paleoindian (Cody), Early Archaic, Middle Archaic, Late Archaic and Early Ceramic cultural occupations, produced several intact Early Archaic hearth and faunal processing features, along with assorted lithic tools, an unusual, complete Early Archaic projectile point, and several new radiocarbon dates.

5JA421, an extremely rich and extensive multi-component site, produced closely time-spaced camp and food-processing occupations spanning successive, seasonal occupations spanning one and two centuries in length from ca. 1300-1450 rcybp.

Ceramics recovered from the site's latest Late Prehistoric occupations suggest a Ute cultural affiliation and obsidian flake source analyses show connections with Yellowstone National Park. Other discoveries from 5JA421's surrounding drainage valley included an Early Archaic campsite with an intact, radiocarbon-dated metate slab-lined hearth and a Late Prehistoric (ca. 1100 rcybp) hearth buried in a spring-fed fen upstream of 5JA421.

Geomorphologic and paleoenvironmental studies of 5JA421 and its local area were conducted to initiate the process of placing it, other local sites, and its surrounding landscape in geological and paleoclimatic historic context.

Fall PAAC Class

The Fall 2009 IPCAS Program for Avocational Archeological Certification (PAAC) Class will be either:

- (a) Perishable Materials,
- (b) Field and Lab Photography,
- (c) Historic Archeology, or
- (d) Colorado Archeology.

Detailed information about these classes is at

<http://coloradohistory-oahp.org/programareas/paac/classinfo/classdescription.htm> .

Please provide input (see below) during the next month so a final decision on the subject of the class may be made, and the class then more widely advertised. This course will take place on Wednesday evenings, at Foothills Nature Center in Boulder, during the approximate time period mid-October thru early December (final dates to be announced when the subject of the class is finalized).

Total cost for the class remains a \$22 – a true bargain in this economy! Please provide Dave Hawley, IPCAS PAAC Coordinator, with your subject choice(s), in order – at either 303-443-2332, or dave_hawley@comcast.net.

Mystery Underground Room Is An Old Water Cistern

Reporter: McKenzie Martin

A Colorado Springs man finds what appears to be a hidden underground room in his back-yard and it's filled with all kinds of old artifacts. A UCCS archaeologist tells 11 News the hidden room is actually an old water cistern. It's believed the old underground water tank was abandoned more than 100 years ago, around the year 1900, when the house that is now on the property was built.

"To an archaeologist this is a treasure," said Roche Lindsey, a Professor of Anthropology at UCCS. A treasure likely buried in Chris Harper's back yard around the turn of the century. "Old whiskey bottles, shoes of all kinds, just really unique artifacts," Harper said.

Artifacts that Lindsey says were likely dumped when the cistern was abandoned. "Gets filled up with garbage for awhile before it's topped off and abandoned." He says the bottles found inside, give the best clues. "There was a syrup bottle in the collection, date was 1884," Lindsey said.

Other pop bottles found were made between 1899 and 1902. "Right now we only have a time frame of when it was abandoned, we don't know the time range for when it was used," he said.

Which is why they will continue digging and sifting until they reach the bottom of the cistern. And each artifact found can offer up a lot of information. "It can be an incredible wealth of information, commodity flow during that time period that's not documented in historic record," Lindsey said. So in this case it seems the saying holds true, one's man's trash is another man's treasure.

The house attached to the backyard where the cistern was found is up for sale so they want to get it all cleaned up. Still no word though on what they plan to do with all the artifacts.

A New Dating Method for Rock Art

March 11th, 2009

A new dating method finally is allowing archaeologists to incorporate rock paintings — some of the most mysterious and personalized remnants of ancient cultures — into the tapestry of evidence used to study life in prehistoric times. That's the conclusion of a new report in ACS' *Analytical Chemistry*.

In the study, Marvin W. Rowe points out that rock paintings, or pictographs, are among the most difficult archaeological artifacts to date. They lack the high levels of organic material needed to assess a pictograph's age using radiocarbon dating, the standard archaeological technique for more than a half-century.

Rowe describes a new, highly sensitive dating method, called accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) that requires only 0.05 milligrams of carbon (the weight of 50 specks of dust). That's much less than the several grams of carbon needed with radiocarbon dating.

The research included analyzing pictographs from numerous countries over a span of 15 years. It validates the method and allows rock painting to join bones, pottery and other artifacts that tell secrets of ancient societies, Rowe said. "Because of the prior lack of methods for dating rock art, archaeologists had almost completely ignored it before the 1990s," he explained.

"But with the ability to obtain reliable radiocarbon dates on pictographs, archaeologists have now begun to incorporate rock art into a broader study that includes other cultural remains."



Ninth Biennial Rocky Mountain Anthropological Conference

Hosted by *Western State College of Colorado*
OCTOBER 8 - 10 WITH FIELD TRIPS ON SUNDAY OCT 11

Call for Submissions

Registration Deadlines and Fees

Early Registration Sept. 1, 2009
Student \$35 Professional \$70

On-Site Registration
Student \$40 Professional \$85

Submission Deadlines

Symposia - August 21, 2009
Papers/Posters - September 1, 2009

Email abstracts to: DByers@MissouriState.edu

Conference Center

Aspinall- Wilson Center
Western State College of Colorado
909 Escalante Dr. Gunnison, CO 81231

Lodging Facilities

Holiday Inn Express Gunnison
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Giant Masks Found

Publication by the Latin American Institute

Recent archeological finds in Guatemala have reset the clock for scientists engaged in the ancient art of trying to decipher the mysteries of the Mayan civilization. Workers in the field have abandoned one certainty after another in the attempt to separate myth and folklore from a reliable reading of the historic record. The latest diggings suggest that Mayan culture had spread hundreds of years earlier than previously thought.

Archeologist Francisco Estrada-Belli of Vanderbilt University unearthed a pair of giant masks at a site in the ancient lowland city of Cival. The fanged masks measure about five by three meters. Husks about the eyes have led to speculation that they represent a Mayan god of maize.

The site had been looted and damaged extensively in the past, but much was left behind by those who preceded Estrada-Belli, some artifacts missed by just inches. Looter and damage, archeologist and excavate, are relative terms of considerable operational overlap, as the facts in this instance demonstrate. Estrada-Belli was making his way through a tunnel dug by a looter, when he chanced upon one of the masks while peering into a crack in the wall.

The pair of masks dates from about 150 B.C., and are the oldest sculptures of their kind presently known. They flank a staircase ascending to a room at the top of one of the five pyramids at Cival. This pyramid is positioned to be oriented to the point on the horizon where the sun rises at the equinoxes. The city's plaza is dated at about 500 B.C. A set of five shattered jars arranged in a cross pattern, five jade axes, and more than 100 jade pieces are thought to be contemporary with the construction of the plaza. Estrada-Belli thinks the jars were used for water offerings during the maize growing season, and the jade pieces symbolize the maize. Also discovered was a stone slab dating from about 300 B.C. depicting the oldest known portrait of a Mayan king.

Archeologists' belief system shaken

Taken together, the discoveries reduce to the status of mere belief the long held scientific assessment that Mayan culture developed first in the central highlands of Guatemala, and spread later to the lowlands. "We are pushing back the beginning of dynastic rule in the lowlands at least 200 years," said Estrada-Belli.

The city, large enough for 10,000 inhabitants, was abandoned about 100 A.D. Shortly before abandonment, a defensive wall was hastily constructed, leading to the speculation that the city fell to a rival kingdom. It remained abandoned for 1,000 years.

One difficulty the find presents for Mayan archeology is that the field is now left strewn with damaged chronology and taxonomy. "It's pretty clear that 'Pre-Classic' is a misnomer," Estrada-Belli said. The dating of Cival places it in the Pre-Classic period, but the contents of the city indicate rule by kings, complex iconography, grand palaces, polychrome ceramics, and writing. All these are hallmarks of the Classic period. The Pre-Classic may, according to archeological lore, have begun around 2000 B.C.

According to what might be called "classic" archeology, classic Mayan civilization began around 250 A.D., about the time of the earliest written inscriptions in city plazas and temples. The period ended around 900 A.D. with the collapse, from uncertain causes, of the great Mayan Cities in Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, and Mexico. These events triggered the Post-Classic period, which ended with the coming of the Spanish conquerors. All that may be wrong now, but, said the scientist accustomed to seeing things written in stone, "It may be too late to change the [classifications]."

Scientists have known for a while that the neatly charted pre- to-Post-Classical designations probably didn't hold water, and the archeologist was not overly concerned. "Ultimately, I think this information will be of tremendous help to understand the early development and the unexpected complexity of the Pre-Classic Mayan kingship," Estrada-Belli said.

The question of time seems to have been central to the existence of the city. Estrada-Belli believes the entire city was designed to measure time. "It had an important astronomical function. It's not a coincidence that the central axis of the main buildings and the plaza is oriented to sunrise at the equinox," he said. He thinks this "shows that the plaza was for public rituals celebrating the recreation of cosmological order in the beginning of the cycle of maize, as well as the accession of Mayan rulers."

Another spectacular find

Not far away, at Cancuen, a site in southern Peten near the Alta Verapaz line, another Vanderbilt team under the leadership of Arthur Demarest uncovered another spectacular Mayan artifact. This was a stone panel weighing about 42 kilos and measuring less than a meter in width depicting the eighth-century king Taj Chan Ahk. The piece was in perfect condition. It shows the king sitting on a symbol for Earth, on a jaguar skin-covered throne, installing rulers in the nearby city-state of Machaquila.

Text on the panel confirms Ahk as one of the last great classic period kings. He controlled a vast portion of the Peten. He is thought to have maintained his power by political and economic means, rather than by war, during a period of decline of other Mayan city-states.

Said Demarest of the find, "This panel is incredibly important. Every once in a while you have a beautiful, spectacular piece of art that is also profoundly historically important. It is the best piece of Maya art that has ever been found in an excavated context. It looks like it was made yesterday."

Of equal significance, the project also dug up a 250 kg stone altar set into the royal ball court used by Ahk. A find like this "has never happened in Maya archeology," said the scientist, who, like Estrada-Belli, got the jump on the competition. "These things have always turned up in [private] collections. They've always been looted." Two other markers from the court were discovered in the last century, one in 1905, and a second that was stolen in 2001.

The markers were used as goal posts, and they all show Ahk in full regalia playing against a visiting ruler. According to Demarest, these games were political equivalents of photo-ops to mark treaties and other power plays.

Cancuen, a port city on the Rio Pasion, was also where, five years ago, Demarest and his team, along with researchers from the Ministry of Culture, discovered the largest Maya palace ever found. Another Ahk spectacular, the 23,225 square meter facility had 200 rooms with vaulted ceilings, and 11 courtyards. Demarest interprets the size as a means to induce shock and awe in rivals. "By the time you got to the foot of the king, you were ready to do anything for him," he explained.

Cancuen, situated on the river, was a gateway for trade between the city-states of the Peten rain forest and those of the volcanic southern highlands, brokering in obsidian, jade, seashells, and stingray spines. These were all used in fashioning the trappings of wealth and power.

Demarest goes about his fieldwork under the protection of a half dozen armed guards. He was instrumental in the capture of the alleged thieves of Ahk's goalpost in 2001. Their trial comes up this month, and Demarest has been threatened with death if he testifies.

References:

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Culturekiosque, 05/06/04 www.culturekiosque.com ;
South Florida Herald Tribune, 05/10/04;
Associated Press, 05/06/04; 05/11/04

Mexico bequeathed 8,000 pre-Hispanic artifacts

Feb 24, 2009

Xochicalco, Mexico (AFP) — Mexican authorities on Tuesday unveiled a stunning collection of 8,000 pre-Hispanic antiquities, some dating back 3,000 years, donated to the state by a private collector.

"It literally took my breath away as I opened case after case to discover these objects in tortoiseshell, jade, serpentine and gold," Xochicalco archeology director Marco Antonio Santos told a press conference. Experts say it is the most spectacular private collection ever unveiled in Mexico given the number of artifacts, their variety and their general condition.

The collection was put together in the 1940s by an American dentist Miguel Leoff and then maintained by his wife Nadine Vinot, a French winemaker, who decided to donate the collection to Mexico at the end of last year. The collection was transported to the Xochicalco museum last week amid tight police security. It will now be classified and studied before being gathered in a exhibition to be shown in Mexico and abroad from 2010.

Among the most important pieces are a clay flute in the form of a bird, two Inca pottery pieces from Peru, a figure from Ecuador and a pottery figurine from Guatemala. "It's not only one of the most important private collections ever, but it also provides us with vital information," said Eduardo Lopez, director of the National Institute of Anthropology and History Mexico (INAH).

In Mexico, archeological pieces are considered to be state property, but a 1972 law allowed them to be held by private individuals providing they were officially declared.

"Some of the items were purchased in Mexico, others were for sale at galleries in the United States and Europe," said Santos, adding the collection had been properly registered with the Mexican authorities. He hailed the donation saying it marked "the recovery of a collection that otherwise would have been lost due to the looting that has occurred in our archeological sites." But he added some of the pieces had been damaged, or ill-considered attempts had been made to restore them using dental materials

Internet Lecture about Civilization Collapse

Hundreds of years ago in what is now modern Honduras, Copán was a thriving civilization, a center of the cultural life of the Maya. Tens of thousands of people made their home in the Copán Valley. Yet despite its importance, Copán went into decline. Across the vast territory of the ancient Maya, other important sites were sharing a similar fate. Classic Maya civilization was collapsing.

Why did this great civilization fall? The history of humankind has been marked by patterns of growth and decline. Some declines have been gradual, occurring over centuries. Others have been rapid, occurring over the course of a few years. War, drought, natural disaster, disease, overpopulation, economic disruption: any of these or a combination of these events can bring about the collapse of a civilization. Internal causes (such as political struggles or overfarming) can combine with external causes (such as war or natural disaster) to bring about a collapse. What does this mean for modern civilizations? What can we learn from the past?

Join us as we explore the collapse of four ancient civilizations. You'll learn what happens when a society collapses and how archaeologists find and interpret evidence. You can visit the Maya city of Copán and search for clues to its collapse. You can also try your hand at "garbage-ology" and study what trash can tell us about a society.

Go to: <http://www.learner.org/interactives/collapse/> to take the free, lecture.

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☐ **Individual** \$28.50 / Year
 ☐ **Family** \$33 / Year
 ☐ **Student** \$14.25 / Year

☐ **New** ☐ **Renewal**

Tax-Exempt Donation ☐ \$10, ☐ \$25, ☐ \$50, Other _____

NAME _____ **TELEPHONE** (____) _____

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I(We) give CAS permission to :

Yes ☐ No ☐ disclose phone numbers to other CAS members

Yes ☐ No ☐ publish name/contact information in chapter directory

Yes ☐ No ☐ publish name in newsletter (which may be sent to other chapters, published on the internet, etc.)

CODE OF ETHICS

As a member of the Colorado Archaeological Society, I pledge:

To uphold state and federal antiquities laws. To support policies and educational programs designed to protect our cultural heritage and our state's antiquities. To encourage protection and discourage exploitation of archaeological resources. To encourage the study and recording of Colorado's archaeology and cultural history. To take an active part by participating in field and laboratory work for the purpose of developing new and significant information about the past. To respect the property rights of landowners. To assist whenever possible in locating, mapping and recording archaeological sites within Colorado, using State Site Survey forms. To respect the dignity of peoples whose cultural histories and spiritual practices are the subject of any investigation. To support only scientifically conducted activities and never participate in conduct involving dishonesty, deceit or misrepresentation about archaeological matters. To report vandalism. To remember that cultural resources are non-renewable and do not belong to you or me, but are ours to respect, to study and to enjoy.

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

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P.O. Box 18301

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