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PCAS NEWSLETTER

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APRIL PCAS SPEAKER

John Rafter

The Tortoise Intaglio Mystery

In the Mojave Desert, northeast of Barstow and north of the sleepy town of Yermo, there lies an enigma referred to by the late Bill Mann as the Tortoise Intaglio because the design is of a giant tortoise with an arrow-like dagger through its upper body portion. The “newness” of some parts of the design has led some observers to suspect that it may have been created during military training under the command of General George S. Patton in the early 1940s, or possibly by someone from the nearby Fort Irwin National Training Center. Yet, there are parts of the Intaglio that appear to be older. Mr. Rafter has visited and studied the site for nearly five years, and during that time he has made surprising additional *(Continued on p. 3)*



The Tortoise Intaglio.

DINNER WITH THE SPEAKER

Please join this month's speaker, John Rafter, and PCAS members for dinner before the April 10th General Meeting. We will meet at 6 pm at Mimi's Café, 4030 Barranca Parkway, Irvine.

PCAS MEETINGS CALENDAR

GENERAL MEETING

Free and Open to the Public

April 10 - 7:30 pm

Speaker: John Rafter

Topic: *The Tortoise Intaglio Mystery*

Location: IRWD Community Room
15500 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine

The Irvine Ranch Water District neither supports nor endorses the causes or activities of organizations that use the District's meeting rooms which are made available for public use.

BOARD MEETING

All Members Welcome

April 17 - 7:00 pm

Location: Old Orange County Courthouse
PCAS Library, Ground Floor
211 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 March Speaker Notes
- 3 Field Trips
- 3 April Curation Workday
- 4-5 An Interesting Photographic Find
- 6 Dig This—Exhibits, Lectures, and more
- 7 Speaker Schedule

If you have not renewed your membership for 2014, this will be your last PCAS Newsletter. Use the form in this Newsletter and mail today!

PCAS scholarship application deadline is April 30. PCAS is offering two \$1,000 scholarships. Information: www.pcas.org.

MARCH SPEAKER NOTES

The Intersection of Archaeology and Restoration Biology in the Age of the Anthropocene

Submitted by Megan Galway

Dr. Todd Braje introduced us to the “Age of the Anthropocene,” an epoch dominated by human influence. This epoch is described by some as beginning around 11,800 years ago, and Dr. Braje discussed the ongoing debate surrounding this date and whether it began at the time of the great megafauna extinction event or later as human population expanded. He noted there are at least five proposed starting dates from 13,000 BP to AD 1950 but that human effects on the landscape were somewhat negligible prior to the industrial revolution. He described the study of historical ecology, using data sets derived from paleobiological, archaeological, and historical data to develop modern resource management practices.

Ten years of research on the northern Channel Islands, off the coast of southern California, have provided evidence through time of man’s effects on the landscape. Otter Point, on the northwest coast of San Miguel Island, contains well-preserved archaeological deposits spanning 7,000 years of habitation. It provides evidence of human and ecological history through a time when there were relatively few terrestrial resources and a great dependence on marine mammals and fish. Although population of the islands appears to have been fairly constant for 13,000 years, it appears to have been most dense at the time of Spanish contact. Hunting and fishing technology changed over time with bone gorges being used for fishing in the Early Holocene and being replaced with bone composite fishhooks in the Mid Holocene. By the Late Holocene the islanders were using canoes for fishing and also trading with the mainland. Shell bead currency had been introduced and was traded as far away as Oregon and Texas.

Dr. Braje is using this data to compare ecological changes demonstrated by the archaeological record with those being noted today and also to use the prehistoric data to develop action plans to reverse some of these changes. In an area study of rockfish, only 25 percent of the original 56 species remain. This is probably due to a variety of causes including warming ocean temperatures, overfishing, and deterioration of nursery habitats. Measurements of the bones of modern rockfish have been used to create regression formulas to estimate overall size. When the formulas were applied to bones in the archaeological record, the results indicated a 14 percent reduction in size over the past 12,000 years.

Black abalone was a valuable and common resource in the archaeological record, but its depletion began with Chinese fishermen in the 1850s and continued until abalone fishing was closed in 1993. The population



PCAS Program Co-Chair Joe Hodulik with March speaker, Dr. Todd Braje.

has continued to decline over 21 years of management. One of the few terrestrial mammals on the islands is the Channel Island fox. It had been believed that it evolved from the mainland gray fox that migrated to the islands about 16,000 years ago when the sea level was much lower; however, the oldest bones tested only date to 6,500 YBP, suggesting it was introduced by humans at the same time as domestic dogs. There is no indication, however, that the foxes were ever domesticated. The fox population was decimated in historic times by a fascinating sequence of events. The islands were home to bald eagles and were occupied by ranchers whose livestock included pigs. The bald eagle population was wiped out by DDT and replaced by golden eagles that preyed on piglets and other farm animals. The ranchers moved on, but left feral pigs behind which were then determined to be a threat to the landscape and were exterminated, leaving the golden eagles with nothing but the foxes for prey. In this case captive breeding programs have been successful for both the foxes and the bald eagles, and both populations are rebounding.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the seal and sea lion populations were hunted to near extinction by fur traders, and by 1874 elephant seals were nearly annihilated. In 1892 a Smithsonian Institute expedition located eight elephant seals and killed seven to “preserve them for research in the future!” Today, the western coast of San Miguel Island is the home of the second-largest pinniped nursery in the world and is home to elephant and harbor seals. In the period from 1,500 to 1,200 YBP, canoe technology was introduced in the area, and large sea mammal bone beds provide a picture of existing resources. Comparing this data to today’s populations, the Guadalupe fur seals of the past have been replaced by elephant seals.

In each of these case studies, Dr. Braje believes the archaeological record provides valuable information on what species were successful in the past and will also hopefully guide us in determining what we can do to continue this success in the future.

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP

Photograph (petroglyphs) from the February 22–24 field trip to the Clark Lake area of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.



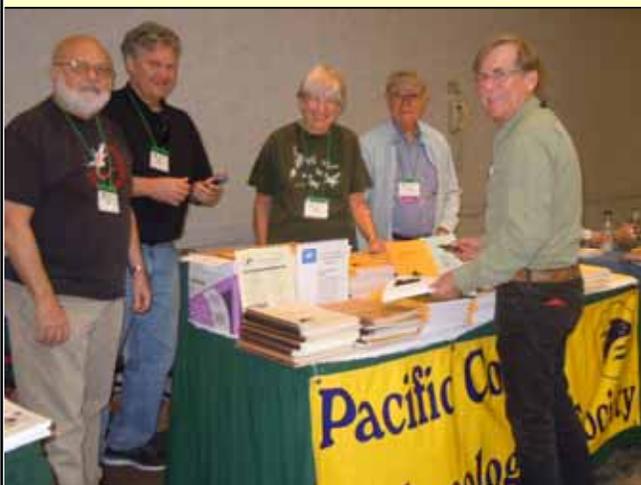
PCAS APRIL FIELD TRIP

April 19–21, 2014

Mojave National Preserve

We plan to visit several rock art sites. The group will dry camp. Some sites will require cross-country hiking. For those with time constraints, this may be a two-day trip, but it is not recommended as a one-day trip. Please be aware you will be required to sign a code of ethics and waiver of liability.

Contact Scott Findlay (fieldtrips@pcas.org or 714-342-2534) for additional information and to sign up for this field trip.



The PCAS Quarterly sales and information table at the SCA Meeting, Visalia, March 20–23. More about the SCAs in the May Newsletter.

April Speaker (continued from p. 1)

observations and uncovered some possible ethnographic support.

John Rafter has been interested in the study of rock art since 1975 when it was first introduced to him by the late Eugene Shepard, an avocational archaeologist for the San Bernardino County Museum (SBCM), who continued to take him to rock art sites until his passing in 1989. During this time, the late Wilson G. Turner also helped to increase John's knowledge of rock art. John became assistant field director and artist for Mr. Turner's rock art recording project in Black Canyon near Barstow, which was funded by Earthwatch. Many of John's drawings were published along with Mr. Turner's by the SBCM. Other rock art researchers, such as the late Arda Haenszel of San Bernardino and Delci Vuncannon of Yucca Valley, contributed much to John's growing knowledge of rock art and geoglyphs. Ultimately, the study of rock art merged with his interest in archaeoastronomy, which then led him to sites once occupied by the Luiseño and the Chemehuevi that were found to have astronomical connections. This also led him to a fortuitous meeting with the late Carobeth Laird, author of *The Chemehevis*. Mrs. Laird, formerly the wife of John Peabody Harrington and later married to her Chemehuevi informant, George Laird, kindly taught Mr. Rafter much of the Chemehuevi language and lore. After her passing in 1983, John inherited over 3,500 pages of her ethnographic notes recorded in 1919 and 1920. Her notes contained rare information from her conversations with George Laird on the Chemehuevi's vast knowledge of astronomy, and John has organized these important bits of information in book form, which is presently being reviewed by Dr. E. C. Krupp of the Griffith Observatory, one of the foremost researchers in the field of archaeoastronomy. Every November since 1981, John has been invited by Ken Hedges to be one of the lecturers at the San Diego Rock Art Symposium, speaking on his many archaeoastronomical findings.

APRIL CURATION WORKDAY

When: April 12, 2014, 1 pm

Where: Red Car Building

We will continue work on the CA-ORA-291 collection. ORA-291 was located on Huntington Mesa. Everyone is welcome. Please contact **Mark Roeder** (714-299-4150, curator@pcas.org) or **Scott Findlay** (714-342-2534, fieldtrips@pcas.org) for directions and to let us know you will be coming.

AN INTERESTING PHOTOGRAPHIC FIND

Henry C. Koerper

Attendance at the most recent triannual Long Beach Coin and Collectible Show proved especially rewarding. Sequestered among a stamp and paper dealer's huge inventory of ephemera was a ca. 1890–1910 photograph, much of its content reflecting coastal southern California prehistory (Figure 1). In terms of sheer mass, the Native artifacts shown added up to the largest private relic collection I had ever encountered in a single image, motivation enough to purchase this serendipitous find in order to share it with *Newsletter* readers.

In past decades, it was not unusual for relic collectors to photograph artifacts in displays they maintained in a backyard, “museum” outbuilding, or home den (e.g., see Militello 2009:24–25; Koerper et al. 2014; and Koerper and Peterson 2014). Such visual records might serve to draw friends, acquaintances, or even strangers into discourse revolving on a collector's hobby interests (e.g., arrowheads, Indian fire making, trade beads, California baskets, stone fetishes, etc.).

Immediately apparent in the picture (Figures 1–3) are numerous pestles and mortars, and one wonders whether the owner was particularly partial towards milling technology and whether his accumulation occurred through pothunting, purchase, and/or trade. Indeed, 48 pestles are counted, 34 of them paired intimately with a mortar. Five pestles exhibit the kind of knob-like device intended to communicate phallic imagery.

Penciled in block letters on the cardboard backing of the photograph, one reads “San Diego Indian Collection.” Is the referent here some collection of which the photo was itself one of the items, or is the referent those objects displayed in the image? Several colleagues well versed in Luiseño and Northern Diegueño archaeology suggested that there may be too many mortars and pestles to recommend a San Diego County provenance for the collection. More likely, the photo was taken in Tongva territory.

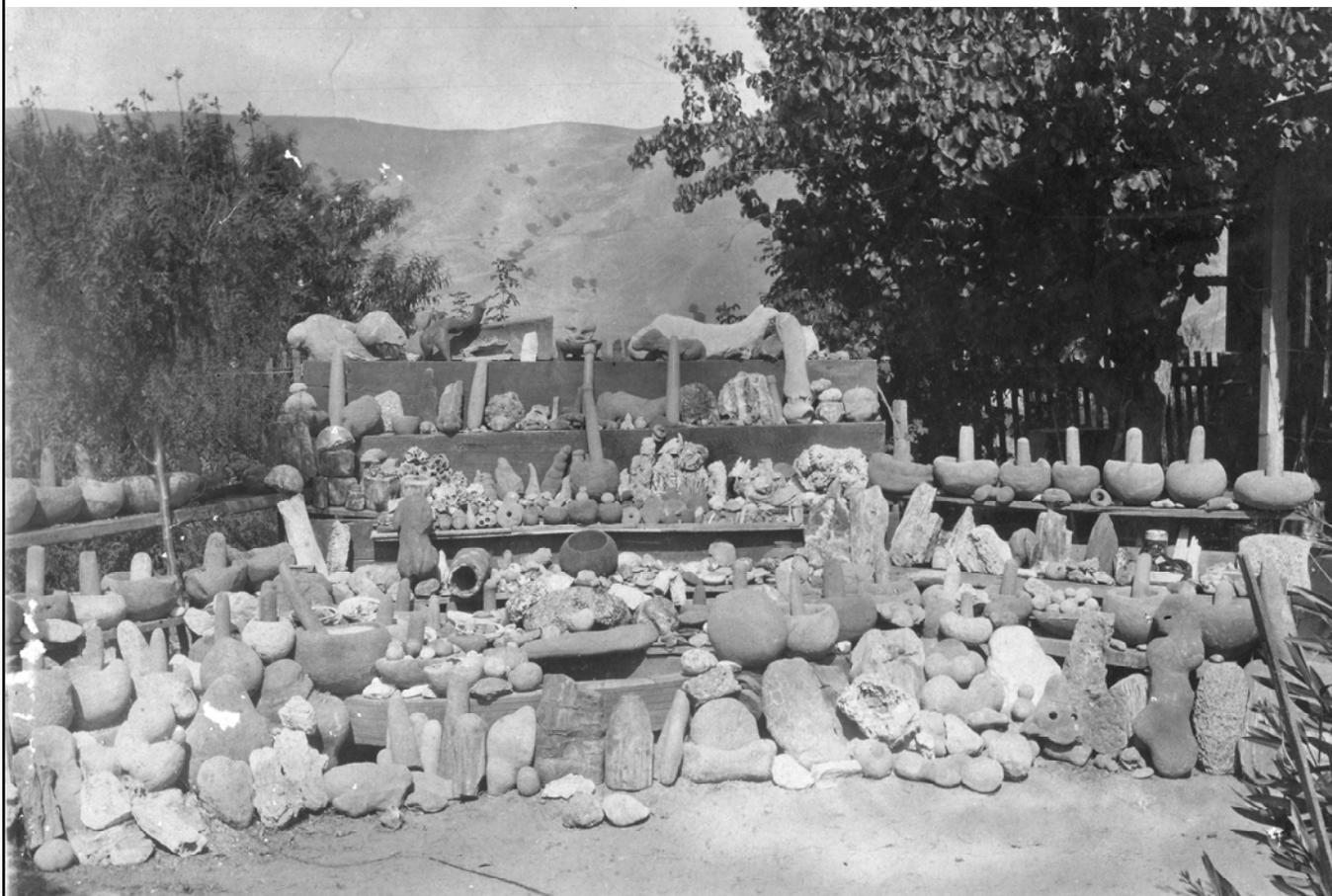


Figure 1. Relic collector's display.

Several donut stones are in evidence; there may be a steatite *olla* (see Figure 2), or is that thin-walled receptacle actually a ceramic pot? There are double-bulbed and multi-bulbed concretions, some of which may have been Indian manuports.

Whoever amassed the many cultural items had eclectic interests. There are coral specimens, fossils, large sea shells, and oddly shaped natural stones. Looking to the uppermost shelf of the display, and applying liberal imagination, one might recognize animal-like forms, and there is even a large rock that evokes the form of a human skull. To the far lower right of the photo, propped upright with one end resting on the ground, there is a large undulating rock, looking somewhat like a snake (see Figure 3).

Do the ocean related items place the display in an area with near access to the coast? Are the hills in the background toward the seaward side of the scene, or do they lie eastward? I encourage readers to look carefully at the hills with the purpose of offering their thoughts on location. Final disposition of the photograph will be with the PCAS Archives, and there are plans to display it at the Blas Aguilar Adobe, San Juan Capistrano.

References Cited

- Koerper, Henry C., Galen Hunter, and Ivan Snyder
2014 Five Effigies with Possible to Probable Cetacean Referent. *Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly* 49 (1 & 2):21–36.
- Koerper, Henry C., and Mark L. Peterson
2014 On the Anatomy of the Malaga Cove Site. *Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly* 49(1 & 2):37–62.
- Militello, Teresa
2009 Horatio Nelson Rust and His Contributions to the Development of American Archaeology. *Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly* 41(1):1–57.

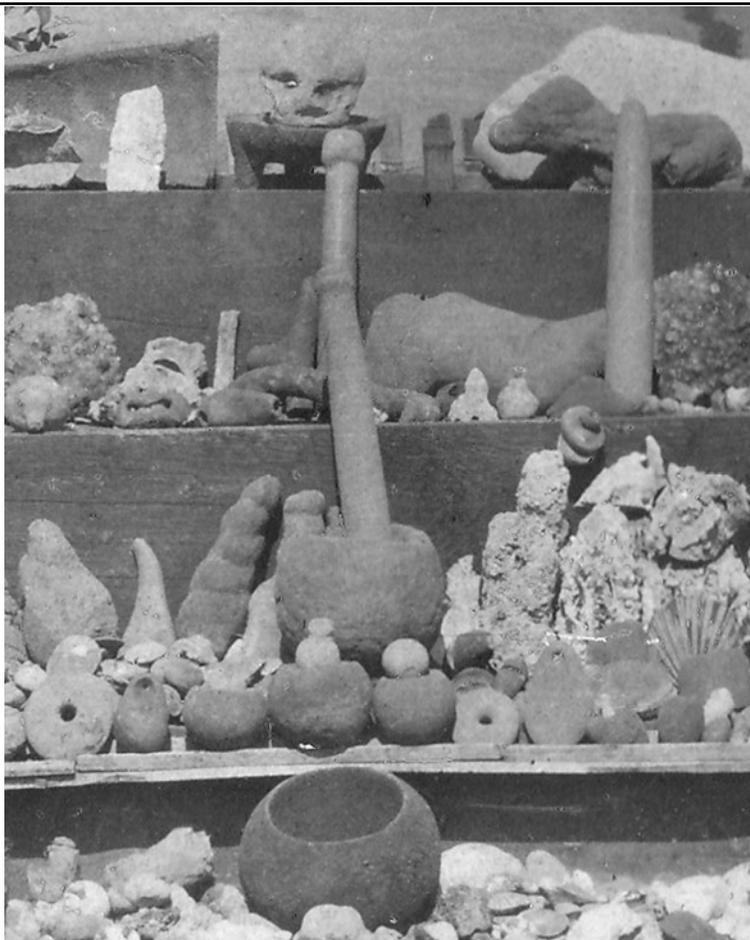


Figure 2. Note olla at bottom, middle; also see donut stones on shelf just above. Two large pestles directly above olla each have a proximal knob. On the top shelf, middle, a natural stone has the look of a human skull.

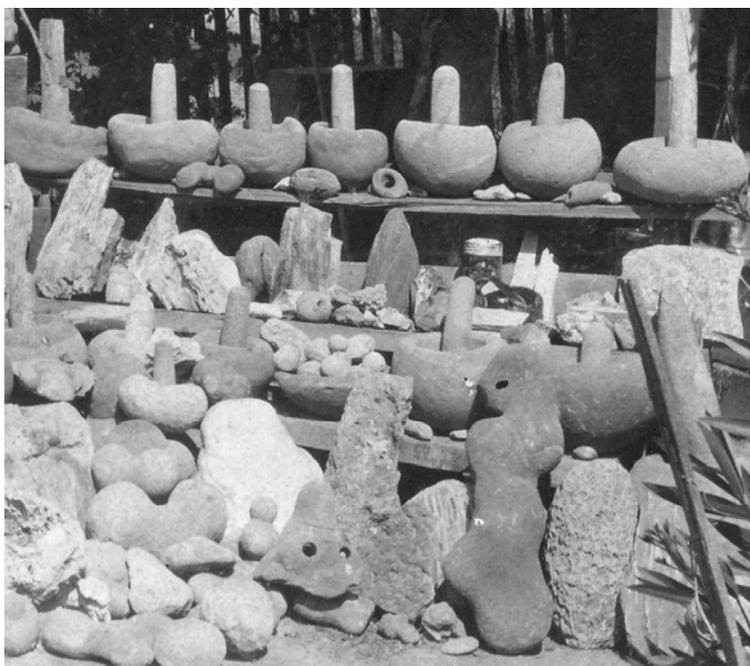


Figure 3. A dozen mortar/pestle combinations are seen here. An interesting (snake-like?) stone is set upright within the lower right quadrant.

DIG THIS...



Lectures

Agave Strategies of the Cahuilla People, by Daniel McCarthy, part of Malki's Lecture Series. Malki Museum, March 29, 11 am. Fee: \$10 donation. Information and reservations: www.malkimuseum.org or 951-849-7289.

A UK Adventure—Finding Rock Art in Unexpected Places, by Ken Hedges. San Diego Rock Art Association, Kumeyaay-Ipai Interpretive Center, 13104 Ipai Waaypuk Trail (formerly Silver Lake Drive), Poway, April 6, potluck at 4 pm, presentation at 6 pm. Information: www.sandiegorockart.org.

The Current Situation of Chinese Archaeology, by Dr. Lothar Von Falkenhausen (Professor of Art History and Associate Director of the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA), presented by the AIA, Orange County Chapter. DeNault Auditorium in Grimm Hall, Concordia University, April 6, 2 pm. Fee: \$5; members and students free. Information: <http://aia-oc.org>.

Manufacturing Divinities: Creating Animal Mummies in Ancient Egypt, by Dr. Salima Ikram. Bowers Museum, April 8, 7:30–8:30 pm. A part of Bowers After-Hours, 5–9 pm. Fee: \$20 (members and students \$15). Information: www.bowers.org, 714-567-3677, or education@bowers.org.

A Tribute to Alvino Siva, by Harry Quinn and Sandy Craig. A Coachella Valley Archaeological Society lecture, Portola Community Center, 45-480 Portola Ave., Palm Desert, April 17, 6:30 pm. Free. Information: www.cvarch.org.

The Wantok System, Scale and Vulnerability: Shaping Disaster Recovery in an Immigrant Community of the Western Solomon Islands, by Savanna Schuermann. San Diego County Archaeological Society, Los Peñasquitos Ranch House, Canyonside Park Driveway, San Diego, April 22, 7:30 pm. Free. Information: www.sandiegoarchaeologicalsociety.com.

Classes, Meetings, and Events

Malki Museum's Annual Agave Harvest, led by Daniel McCarthy, will be held April 5, 10 am. Meet at Cahuilla Tewanet Overlook on the Palms to Pines Hwy 74. Fee: \$10 donation. The ***Agave Roast*** will be held at the Malki Museum, April 12. Food tasting will begin at noon; those arriving at 10 am may assist in removing the agave from the pit. Fee: \$10 for food tasting. Reservations for both events: 951-849-7289.

Colorado Desert Archaeology Society will be hosting its ***11th Annual Archaeology Weekend*** in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park on April 5–6, 2014. The weekend will include displays, lectures, field trips, a silent auction, activities for kids, archaeology lab tours, and sales of Native American crafts. Information: <http://theabf.org/event>.

Rock Art 101 with Dr. Alan Garfinkel Gold and Donald Austin will be a two-day event with lectures on Saturday and field trip to Coso rock art on Sunday. Heritage Inn, Ridgecrest, April 12–13. Fee: \$195. Must register by **April 2**. Information: www.rockart101.com or Alan Gold, 805-312-2261 or avram1952@yahoo.com.

The Society for American Archaeology Annual Conference will be held at the Hilton Austin, Austin, Texas, April 23–27. Information: www.saa.org.

Early Ancestor Day will teach about our early ancestors by touching and examining real hominin tools. San Diego Archaeological Center, April 26, 10 am–noon. Fee: early purchase prices are \$25 (family); \$15 (single). Information and purchase: 760-291-0370 or crater@sandiegoarchaeology.org.

Cast Making Workshop, with Juliana Gay. San Diego Archaeological Center, May 10, 10 am–noon. Fee: \$25. Advance registration required. Contact Cara Ratner, Education Program Director, 760-291-0370 or crater@sandiegoarchaeology.org.

Visit www.pcas.org for all the latest news.

Editor's Note: Please confirm time and place of listing prior to the event.

PCAS CODE OF ETHICS

The Pacific Coast Archaeological Society (PCAS) is a nonprofit group of professional and avocational people dedicated to proper management of our cultural resources, public education, and the protection and preservation of archaeological materials and collections.

The following principles have been adopted by the PCAS:

1. Professional methods and forms will be used on all archaeological field surveys, excavations, and laboratory sessions.
2. A complete record of field and laboratory work will be filed with the PCAS Curator and stored at a facility approved by the Society's Board of Directors.
3. No archaeological materials will be removed without proper permits, landowner permission, and a field research design.
4. Unless otherwise legally stipulated before activity commences, all materials collected will be deposited for further research with the Curator at a facility approved by the Society's Board of Directors.
5. All generated reports will be the property of the Society and distributed as deemed appropriate.
6. All Society field activities will be performed only under the direction of a qualified field archaeologist (Principal Investigator) and the supervision of field or site directors.
7. The above principles will be observed on both Society approved projects and projects performed under the direction of an authorized institution or organization.
8. The Society and its members will strive to educate the public of the importance and proper management of our non-renewable cultural resources and to discourage the collection and commercial exploitation of archaeological materials.
9. PCAS members shall not benefit from the acquisition, purchase, sale, or trade of archaeological artifacts, materials, or specimens.
10. All members shall adhere to City, County, State, and Federal antiquities laws.



Come to the April 10th meeting to hear John Rafter speak on "The Tortoise Intaglio Mystery."

PCAS SPEAKER CALENDAR

May 8, 2014

Cara Ratner

Ritual Symbols in Rock Art: Cupules and Incised Grooves in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands, Texas

June 12, 2014

Dr. Matthew Boxt

Post-Olmec Archaeology at La Venta, Tabasco, Mexico

September 11, 2014

Dr. Alan Garfinkel Gold

Talking Stone—The Story of Coso Rock Art (video)

October 9, 2014

Dr. Patricia Martz

A Possible Shaman's Cache on San Nicolas Island

November 13, 2014

Dr. Michael Moratto

The Peopling of the Americas: Current Perspectives

December 11, 2014

Dr. Brian Fagan

The Intimate Bond: How Animals Changed History

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PACIFIC COAST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Phone: _____ Email: _____

Newsletters will be sent by email unless a mailed copy is requested.

I have read and agree to abide by the PCAS Code of Ethics _____

Signature

Membership (Includes Quarterly/Newsletter)

- Active Member - \$45
- Family Membership - \$50
- Supporting Member* - \$55
- Donor Member* - \$75
- Lifetime Member* - \$1000

* May be individual or family membership

Subscription Only

- Quarterly* - \$37
- Newsletter* - \$18
- Student Associate - \$10 (email Newsletter only)

Scholarship Fund

- Donation \$ _____

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**PCAS Membership
PO Box 10926
Costa Mesa, CA 92627-0926**

www.pcas.org