



DECEMBER 2021

# PCAS NEWSLETTER

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## DECEMBER PCAS SPEAKER

**Dr. Kevin Smith**

*A Technological Approach to  
Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene  
Aquatic Adaptations in the Far West of  
North America*

**Free Zoom Meeting**

**December 9, 7:30 pm**

**Registration required**

**Please see instructions on p. 2.**

A growing body of data suggests that the Western Stemmed Tradition and Island Paleocoastal Tradition likely originated from a Pacific coastal migration from northeast Asia in the late Pleistocene. These two traditions are often considered as linked due to overlaps in crescent and stemmed point typology. While interior groups of the Western



**Dr. Kevin Smith.**

Stemmed Tradition did take large terrestrial game including artiodactyls, their subsistence pattern largely mirrors the broad-spectrum aquatic diet of the Island Paleocoastal Tradition. Increasing evidence shows that both Island Paleocoastal Tradition peoples and interior Western Stemmed Tradition peoples made use of upland environments and resources, however their dominant settlement pattern was oriented near large bodies of water: the sea and inland pluvial lakes. Due attention has been given to technological systems associated with lithic reduction of the Western Stemmed Tradition (WST) in the Intermountain West, yet little technological analysis has been conducted on the California Channel Islands (largely due to the fact that late Pleistocene and early Holocene occupations were only relatively recently discovered). This talk focuses on a detailed technological analysis surrounding the organization of production of flaked stone tools across three of the best preserved sites associated with the Island Paleocoastal Tradition on California's Channel Islands. Details of this technological system are then compared more broadly with mainland Western Stemmed Tradition finds. Additionally, as watercraft clearly played a significant role in the colonization and subsistence system of the earliest known islanders, experimental archaeology is used to evaluate the production dynamics associated with simple boating technology (the tule balsa). I use these data to address when and why hunter-gatherers initially invest in watercraft, and whether WST people would have used boats in the Great Basin pluvial lakes of the Pleistocene-Holocene transition. Additionally,

*(Continued on p. 3)*

**Renew your PCAS membership!**  
**Pay online with PayPal—see page 3.**

## NOVEMBER SPEAKER NOTES

### Did The First Americans Initially Travel Along the Pacific Coast? Recent Research and New Directions

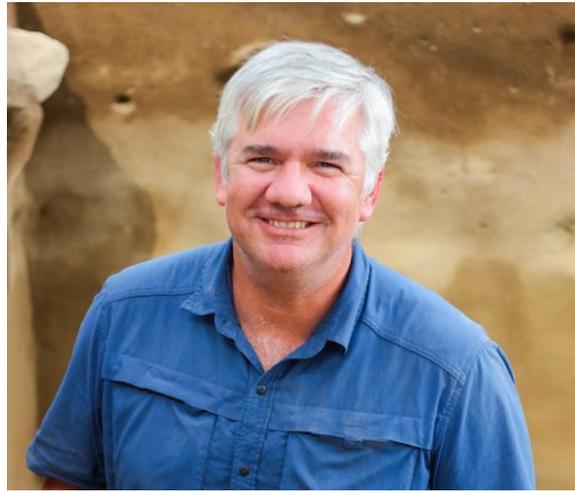
By Megan Galway

Dr. Loren G. Davis brought us more evidence of pre-Clovis cultures in the Americas, focusing on the coastal migration hypothesis. He notes that the American population has roots in northeast Asia with a genetic split occurring some 24,000 years ago. The Anzik child found in Montana has been dated to 12,600 years ago and shows a genetic change from earlier populations and is closer to modern Native Americans. Dr. Davis noted that the footprints recently discovered in New Mexico were dated to 30,000 years ago based on the presence of a variety of aquatic plant which he said was not reliable for dating because they have demonstrated a +/- 10,000 year deviation.

The Cooper's Ferry site in Idaho has long been known as an early occupation site, with some features being dated as early as 16,000 years ago. At that time the Cordillera Ice Sheet extended down to just north of the Columbia River, and the area was subject to flooding as the ice melted. Cooper's Ferry was at a higher, and safer, elevation. Area 'A' of the site was studied in 2008 through 2019, and level 3 of the site was identified as windblown dust and soil. A storage pit of andesite was found, along with four points, ash, and bone fragments. These were dated to 16,000 years ago. A pit through this level from the surface was dated at 13,250 years ago. A tooth fragment from an extinct horse was identified, and the points were compared to those from northern Japan.

Cooper's Ferry indicates the presence of humans 16,000 years ago, while the ice-free corridor was not present until over 2,000 years later, leading to the concept of coastal migration. Dr. Davis notes that approaching the Americas by this route, the first left turn after leaving Alaska would be up the Columbia River—right to Cooper's Ferry. Other sites which may have been along the lower river would likely have been destroyed by floods.

Studies are currently underway off the Oregon coast to identify possible settlements that are now underwater. Various methods are being used, including sonar and seismic surveys, ROV (remotely operated vehicles) dives, and vibracoring. Results in one area indicate a possible shell midden from 17,000 years ago, prior to the ocean rising 15,000 to 14,000



**Dr. Loren G. Davis.**

years ago. Another area appears to be mudflow from an estuary. Recent studies indicate that DNA may be sequenced from mud, and this is being attempted.

Cedros Island, off the coast of Baja, is another location of early sites. Shell middens here are found not on the coast, but inland near a spring, and a site is dated to 12,000–9,000 years ago. Artifacts found include shell fish hooks, grooved pebbles, and projectile points. These date to 12,000 years ago as compared to 5,000 years on the California Channel Islands. Tools identified as agave scrapers indicate the possible use of fiber cordage. Fish bones are identified as black sea bass (which can weigh more than 200 lb), barracuda, and yellow fin tuna. All of which are deep water fish that cannot be caught from shore.

The question remains as to how sites like Meadowcroft Rock Shelter and the Gault site fit this hypothesis. Did the migration occur even earlier than we're seeing on the coast or ...?

## PCAS ZOOM MEETING

- Email a registration request by **noon on Thursday, December 9**, to [membership@pcas.org](mailto:membership@pcas.org).
- You will receive an email with a link to the Zoom meeting.
- Guests (non-PCAS members) are welcome with registration.
- When the presentation starts, please **mute your microphone and turn off your webcam**.

PCAS host **Steve Dwyer** will open the Zoom meeting at 7 pm to allow time to resolve any technical problems prior to the beginning of the PCAS General Meeting and lecture at 7:30 pm.

## December Speaker *(continued from p. 1)*

parallels in the chaîne opératoire/reduction sequence behind flaked stone tool production on the California Channel Islands and mainland Intermountain West suggest that the Island Paleocoastal Tradition should be considered a coastal variant of the broader Western Stemmed Tradition.

Dr. Kevin Smith received his BA from Humboldt State University in 2007 where he emphasized archaeology on San Nicolas Island in the California Channel Islands. He received his MA in 2012 from Cal State Los Angeles with a thesis that concentrated on reconstructing single-piece shell fishhook production at the last occupied major village site on San Nicolas Island (CA-SNI-25). Most recently, he received his PhD in 2021 from UC Davis in anthropology/archaeology with a subemphasis in paleoanthropology. His dissertation focused on Island Paleocoastal Tradition lithic analysis of artifacts recovered from three of the earliest known occupations of the California Channel Islands. Additionally, he used an experimental approach to better understand the potential role of watercraft in Western Stemmed Tradition subsistence and settlement patterns associated with the Great Basin pluvial lakes of the late Pleistocene and early Holocene.

## 2022 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

PCAS has successfully maintained many of our activities during the 2021 pandemic year. We have had monthly meetings via Zoom which has allowed us to meet people who would otherwise not be able to attend our meetings and have had renowned speakers from outside southern California. We are hoping to resume in-person meetings next year (but with reduced room capacity), possibly with a hybrid format.

All of which brings us to the point of this column—your annual membership expires on December 31, and it's time to renew! You can pay online with any credit card at [www.pcas.org/membs](http://www.pcas.org/membs), or by check with the renewal form in this newsletter. Also, please keep in mind, since we were unable to hold in-person meetings, we were also unable to conduct our donation/award table which funds our annual scholarship. Perhaps you'll consider us in your year-end charitable giving?

If your mailing address, phone number, or email for PCAS membership has changed in the past year, please email [membership@pcas.org](mailto:membership@pcas.org) with the correct information.

We appreciate your continued support of PCAS and look forward to receiving your renewal for 2022.

## In Memoriam: Scott Findlay 1940–2021



It is with extreme sadness that we report the passing of PCAS President Scott Findlay on October 21. Scott had been an essential part of PCAS for over 20 years, serving several terms as president. He also served as field trips co-chair and as manager of our curation facilities. Scott was extremely organized and made sure we were prepared for any emergency, both at home and away. His vitality, kindness, generosity, and sense of humor made PCAS welcoming to guests and both new and old members. Those of us fortunate enough to have been on field trips with Scott learned much from his vast knowledge and curiosity about topics ranging from archaeology to the whole natural world. He will be missed.

Our condolences to Scott's family and many friends. Scott's family has asked that you consider a contribution to the PCAS Scott Findlay Memorial Scholarship fund. Donations can be made online at [www.pcas.org](http://www.pcas.org), click on Latest News on the left menu. Please note the donation is for the Scott Findlay Memorial Scholarship. Checks can be made payable to PCAS and mailed to Pacific Coast Archaeological Society, PO Box 10926, Costa Mesa, CA 92627.



## DIG THIS ...



### Exhibits

***Becoming Jane: The Evolution of Dr. Jane Goodall.*** *Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County*, through April 22, 2022. Advance ticket available online: Fee in addition to museum admission varies; members free. Information: <https://nhm.org/>.

### Lectures

***Living Room Lecture: Turkeys in California—Late Pleistocene Fossils Recontextualized the Ecology of Introduced Turkeys in California***, by Ashwin Sivakumar. An Archaeological Center of San Diego Zoom lecture, December 9, 6:30 pm. Free. Information and required registration: [www.sandiegoarchaeology.org/](http://www.sandiegoarchaeology.org/).

***Embodied Knowledges within Cultural Collections***, by Sven Haakanson (Curator, Burke Museum, University of Washington). A Cotsen Institute online lecture, December 10, 11 am. Free. Information and required registration: <https://ioa.ucla.edu/>. Many past lectures are available on the Cotsen Institute YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxT96YAosmk7vP3aNB4SHw>.

***Desert Training Center***, by George Kline. A Coachella Valley Archaeological Society lecture, Portola Community Center, 45-480 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, December 10, 6:30 pm. Free. Information: [www.cvarch.org](http://www.cvarch.org).

***ARCE Online: “Backwater Puritans”? Racism, Egyptological stereotypes and the intersection of local and international at Kushite Tombs***, by Stuart Tyson Smith (UC Santa Barbara). An ARCE, Bowers Museum event. Recorded lecture available for 24 hours, December 11. Fee: \$10; Bowers and ARCE members free. Information: [www.bowers.org](http://www.bowers.org).

***Columbia Plateau Rock Art: Images of Forgotten Dreams***, by James D. Keyser. A San Diego Rock Art Association Zoom lecture. December 12, 4 pm (meeting opens at 3:45 pm). Required registration: [www.sandiegorockart.org](http://www.sandiegorockart.org).

### Lectures (continued)

***A Window into California’s Past Coastal Environments: Using Chemical Tracers from Bivalve Shells to Uncover Ocean Food Webs of the Past***, Dr. Natasha Vokshoori (Postdoctoral Scholar, Smithsonian Institute Museum of Natural History). A Ventura County Archaeological Society virtual lecture, December 14, 7 pm. Free. Information and required registration: [www.venturacountyarchaeologicalsociety.com/](http://www.venturacountyarchaeologicalsociety.com/).

### Classes, Meetings, and Events

***Putuidem Village***, in the San Juan Capistrano Northwest Open Space, will honor the area’s indigenous Acjachemen people. The public opening ceremony will be at 30291 Camino Capistrano, December 3, 3:30 pm.

***The Society for California Archaeology 2022 Annual Meeting*** with the theme “Archaeological Gatherings: Foodways and Community Resilience” will be held at the Visalia Convention Center, March 3–6, 2022. Paper submission deadline December 5; early-bird registration deadline December 16. Information and online registration: <https://scahome.org/meetings/annual-meeting-2/>.

Visit [www.pcas.org](http://www.pcas.org) for all the latest news.

***Editor’s Note:*** Please confirm time and place of listing prior to the event. Submit items for Dig This to [newsletter@pcas.org](mailto:newsletter@pcas.org).

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## 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.



Martijn Kuypers testing all-stone-tools tule canoe.

**Join us for the  
December 9 Zoom lecture!**

## PCAS SPEAKER CALENDAR

**January 13, 2022**

**Dr. Terry L. Jones**

*Chendytes lawi: Big Lessons from a Little Duck*

**February 10, 2022**

**Dr. Torben Rick**

*Cultural Keystone Places and the Chumash Landscapes of Humqaq', Point Conception, California*

**March 10, 2022**

**Allen Dart**

*Archaeology's Deep Time Perspective on Environment and Social Sustainability*

**April 14, 2022**

**Dr. Vance T. Holliday**

*Pre-Clovis Footprints, White Sands National Park*

## 2021 PCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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\*PCAS Board Member

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### 2022 Calendar Year Membership and Subscription Form

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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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* – \$40
- Newsletter* – \$20

#### **Scholarship Fund**

- Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Join online:**

[www.pcas.org/membrs.html](http://www.pcas.org/membrs.html)

**Or return with payment to:**

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