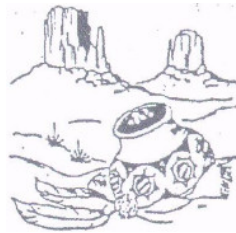


THE MOKI MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY A
CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



JUNE 2008

The San Juan Basin Archaeological Society, our chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society, usually meets on the second Thursday of each month, but our next gathering will be an exception – this will be on the third Thursday, June 19th. And, instead of a meeting featuring the customary lecture, our group will celebrate the coming of summer by substituting a gourmet affair: our 25th annual summer picnic, wiener roast, and super-special whing-ding! This will commence at 5:00 PM, and will take place at the historic Fort Lewis campus a few miles south of Hesperus, The picnic grounds are on the site of the former 1881-1891 military establishment, now the home of the San Juan Basin Agricultural Research Center. As in previous years, we'll have a semi-potluck supper; the chapter officers, with financial assistance from our chapter treasury or contributions, will provide an ample supply of hot dogs, sausages and buns, plus disposable tableware and condiments, and the rest of us can bring whatever goes well with an old-fashioned picnic. To avoid having too many people bring too much of the same sort of thing, we suggest that those members whose last names begin with an A through G bring salads; those in the H through M range might bring desserts; and those N through Z people could bring a vegetable dish. And as many of you as possible are encouraged to bring drinks – wine or lemonade or ice tea or whatever – to share with the gang. And we can always use a few folding chairs, although we understand that a supply of chairs and tables will be available at the picnic area. Please call Bev Danielson (970-358-2594) or Eliane Viner (970-382-2594) if you plan to attend this function, so that they can know how much food may be needed? they can also answer any questions that you may have regarding the picnic plans or location. They would also welcome the help of a few volunteers to assist with the food preparation or table setups. we do hope that as many of our members as possible, along with their families, friends, and prospective new chapter members, will attend this yearly event; it's a great way to become acquainted with the newer members of our organization and to introduce outsiders to our chapter, as well as to have an informal social bash as a supplement to our many excursions, work projects, and other somewhat more serious archaeological activities. •

Victorio and the Mescalero Apaches Field Trip

June, as always, will be a busy month for our group. In addition to the wiener roast, there will be three field trips on our month's schedule, plans for some of which may be discussed at the picnic. The first of these outings will be on June 3rd (Tuesday) through June 7th (Saturday), and will be the "Victorio and the Mescalero Apaches" trip that is being organized by Paul and Beverly Dittmer. Details regarding what we expect to see and do on this visit to the historical past were provided in previous issues of the Moki Messenger, and at previous chapter meetings. If you would like to go on this five-day excursion, and have not already signed the roster and made your down payment and reservations, you might call the Dittmers (970-375-9568 or 817-421-1496) and ask if there are places still available.

John's Canyon Field Trip

Our second June outing, to take place (weather permitting) on the weekend of June 14/15th, will be a car-camping affair, and will be a tour of the upper, forks of Utah's Johns Canyon. This is planned as a follow-up to our chapter's 2007 trip, a journey during which we explored and searched for rock art panels in the middle portion of this deep and awesome canyon complex. Trip participation, because of certain logistical factors, will be limited to ten members, with preference given to those who went on our previous Johns Canyon trip. The area to be visited this year contains an abundance of cliff dwellings and other Anasazi structures, in contrast to the 2007 excursion, which focused upon petroglyphs and views of spectacular canyon scenery can be expected. But do note: a certain amount of fairly strenuous rock scrambling will take place, high-clearance 4WD vehicles will be needed, and there are no motels in Johns Canyon – sorry about that! Participants will depart from Durango's Santa Rita Park at 8:30 Saturday morning, and should bring the usual camping gear, plus food and lots of water – it's dry out there in June! Plans for this excursion were discussed at our last meeting; if you should wish more information about this trip, and about signing the roster, you can call trip leader John Sanders (970-259-0841).

Summer Solstice Celebration at Chaco Canyon

Our third excursion of this month, a special treat for those SJBAS members who are interested in archaeoastronomy, will be a summer solstice celebration at Chaco Canyon's Casa Rinconada on Saturday morning, June 21st. In addition to witnessing a calendrical solar display on that date (participants should plan to be at the loop road gate, near the Chaco Visitor Center, between 5:30 and 6:00 AM), there will be sunrise music and dances provided by people from Acoma Pueblo, possibly a campfire and guest speaker on Friday evening, and hikes and other activities on the weekend. Trip, organizer Irene Wanner suggests that, because of limited camping places in the park, those who wish to camp should plan to arrive early on Friday morning, or perhaps even on Thursday morning, in order to find or share a place in the Chaco campground; otherwise a truly early departure from Durango or Farmington will be required in order to see the solstice sunrise. Rich Robinson (970-259-1943) can furnish more information about the plans for this trip, and will bring a sign-up sheet to our wiener roast; and you can also contact Irene (575-829-3357 or iwannerflmyuw.net) for details regarding the trip agenda and information concerning camping facilities in the park or nearby.

Field Trips Notes

A note regarding our field trips: we've already had several very worthwhile outings this year, and of course we've had many more in previous years. Much credit for these highly educational ventures, which have taught us so much about the prehistory of our region, must go to those hard-working people who have volunteered to lead these excursions. But don't forget: we also owe a great deal of thanks to Rich Robinson, Chairman of the SJBAS Trip Committee, who has done such a splendid job of scheduling and coordinating these various journeys to the past!

Silverton Hillside Cemetery Work Day

Each summer a number of our people join the members of the Silverton Historical Society with their Hillside Cemetery Work Day, as listed below. A feature of this project will be the brown bag luncheon at the Beaber's home, where one or more participants will give talks regarding the miners and mining history of our area. So, if you don't plan to attend the solstice ceremony at Chaco, why don't you plan to help our Silverton friends with this cleanup project?

IT'S THAT TIME!!

The Fifteenth Annual

Silverton Hillside Cemetery Volunteer Work Day

**Saturday, June 21, 2008
10:00-Noon**

Suggested tools to bring: (BE SURE TO PUT YOUR NAME ON THEM!) Limb loppers, hand-held clippers, shovels, rakes, pruning saws, soft brushes, rags, plastic or wooden tools for scraping tombstones (no metal), plastic bags.

Wear sunscreen, work gloves, hat, tough shoes, and don't forget your picnic lunch!

When parking, be sure to leave room for vehicles to drive through.

Jobs waiting include gathering and dragging branches to the road, picking up trash and broken glass, placing fourteen donated tombstones, leveling and straightening tombstones, filling in sunken areas. There are always lots of small aspens to be thinned out and low-growing tree branches to "lop".

We always need "supervisors" for help in registering our volunteers, and if you like, just watching the others work! Everyone is more than welcome - we'll find something for you to do. Bring a lawn chair to sit in while supervising, and it will also come in handy for our picnic lunch.

Following the work session, we'll adjourn to the Beabers' back yard to eat the lunch you didn't forget. If you have any "cemetery stories" or if you have relatives or friends buried at Hillside, please share your thoughts and memories of those loved ones with the rest of the group.

For additional information contact: Freda Peterson 387-5734 or Mary Beaber 387-5360

Our chapter's mid-May trip to the eastern flank of the Chuska Mountains of New Mexico was a delightful excursion – good springtime weather, a good variety of things to see and do, and a good turn-out of chapter members. Before visiting the century-old Toadlena Trading Post our host Mark Winter, owner of the historic establishment, and his tour assistant Linda Larouche, took us to a large Anasazi ruin near Newcomb, the unexcavated remains of one of the several Chacoan outliers of the area that provided the massive timbers that were used at Pueblo Bonito and Chetro Ketl. Our group were then invited to visit a nearby Navajo hogan, the home of master weaver Virginia Peal and her son Roger, where we were shown one of her ongoing projects, a Two Gray Hills rug that was still on the loom. After a lucid discussion of Virginia's prize-winning weaving techniques, our people proceeded to the Toadlena Post and Museum, where we saw a truly magnificent display of Navajo textiles, a collection highlighted by documented examples of rugs made during various periods of the 20th Century and primarily of the Two Gray Hills type. Then, after an al fresco lunch of Navajo tacos and watermelon on the post veranda, the knowledgeable Clay Powell gave our members a talk regarding Navajo silversmithing and jewelry, accompanied by an extensive display of the same. This interesting day-trip was organized by Ralph Blanchard – many thanks for your good work, Ralph!

On the day following our Toadlena excursion a small group of indefatigable chapter members drove to the Farmington area, where – as an element of New Mexico's Historic Preservation Month – we were given a private and very special tour of the huge and quite scenic Tom Bolack Ranch. Our guide was San Juan College archaeologist Linda Wheelbarger, who has been (with the assistance of her field class students) surveying and excavating Anasazi sites in several portions of this 10,000-acre tract in the San Juan River valley. This was a delightful and informative follow-up to our Toadlena trip. We just wish that more of our members could have taken advantage of this opportunity to visit this private archaeological preserve.

We also had an exciting several-day trip to Santa Fe and its vicinity later in the month, an excursion primarily focusing upon sites of the Pueblo IV (1300-1700) period, on the first day of this outing, May 22nd, our group was met by Bureau of Land Management archaeologist Paul Williams, who led a tour of the La Cieneguilla Ruin, a huge adobe pueblo near the Santa Fe River. This structure had, to a considerable extent, weathered down into a relatively shapeless collection of elongated mounds, a small number of which were excavated by Nels Nelson in 1912. The pueblo was a thriving Indian community in the years prior to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, and in historic times was a paraje, or overnight stop, for travelers on the Camino Real between Santa Fe and Mexico. Paul then took our group to the nearby Cieneguilla Cliffs preserve, an unusually extensive series of petroglyph panels on BLM land along the edge of a lava flow. The display of Puebloan rock art at this site was quite impressive, with its wide variety of figures and symbols somewhat similar to those found at the better-known Petroglyph Park west of Albuquerque but perhaps of even greater quantity with a notable profusion of the humpbacked and horny flute players sometimes called "Kokopellis".

On the following morning our people toured Pecos National Monument, where our volunteer guide Wendy Hartman explained the role that this Upper Pecos Valley pueblo served as a trading center frequented by both Rio Grande farmers and the buffalo hunting tribes of the plains until its inhabitants were driven out by bellicose Comanches. This Pecos visit was followed by an afternoon tour under the guidance of archaeologist Don Pettigrew, of a neighboring site, the Arrowhead Pueblo. This was one of the several 18th Century communities that later coalesced with other settlements to form the regional trade establishment at Pecos.

May 24th, the final day of this excursion, was spent exploring a portion of the Cochiti area west of Santa Fe, where our group climbed a high and scenic ridge near Canada de Cochiti Creek and studied the sprawling Kuapa Ruin, an interconnected group of room blocks, kivas, plazas and other features of PIV age. This site, largely unexcavated, featured a relatively sophisticated but hand-built acequia system in the valley below the settlement, and included what appeared to be a later Spanish colonial hacienda and its associated plaza and corral. Our guide on this last portion of the three-day trip was David Eck, New Mexico State archaeologist, who provided a copious amount of helpful information about the significance of what we saw at Kuapa.

Aztec Ruins Talks

We've just received a list of more talks that will be given at the Aztec Ruins National Monument Visitor Center as a feature of that institution's Summer 2008 Presentation Series. These should be of much interest to our members, the price is right (admission is free!), and all commence at 7:00 PM. On Thursday evening, June 5th, anthropologist Carmelita Topaha, of Farmington's San Juan College, will discuss "The Navaho Landscape and its Contexts". Ruth Van Dyke, of Binghamton University, will tell us about "The Chaco Experience: Landscape and Ideology at the Center Place" on Thursday, June 12th. And on Thursday, June 26th, astronomer Ann Owen will explain "How to Recognize Southwestern Archaeo-astronomical Features", a talk that should be especially fascinating. If for any reason any of these programs are cancelled, they will be replaced by ranger-guided tours of portions of the sprawling Aztec Ruins complex. During this time of high gasoline prices, it would be expedient for the Colorado members of our chapter to arrange to carpool to Aztec if they wish to hear these interesting talks; you might contact Richard Robinson (970-259-1943) about this.

In Memoriam

With deep regret we report the loss of long-time CAS/SJBAS member Kathy Fritch, who – after a long and valiant battle – succumbed to cancer last May 5th. Kathy and her husband Don joined our chapter shortly after it received its charter, and until her activities were curtailed by illness, she was one of our most enthusiastic and active members, helping with a number of our volunteer projects and participating in our field excursions. She will be greatly missed by Don and her family, and by her many, many good friends.