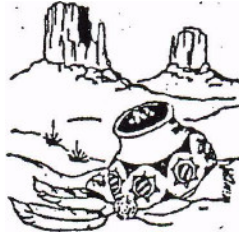


# THE MOKI MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



SEPTEMBER 2008

The next meeting of the San Juan Basin Archaeological Society, our chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society, will be on Thursday, September 4th (do note that, for reasons too lengthy to explain in this newsletter, this gathering of our group will be on the first Thursday rather than the customary second Thursday of the month). As usual, the meeting will commence at 7:00 PM, and will be held in the Lyceum of Fort Lewis College's Center of Southwest Studies. There will be a program by Laurie Webster concerning "Perishable Artifacts from Pueblo Bonito and Aztec Ruins". As many of you readers know, our featured speaker was a former resident of Durango and, during her tenure as a San Juan National Forest archaeologist, Dr Webster took our members on several tours of Anasazi and historical sites in La Plata and Montezuma Counties; and a number of our people also assisted her with archaeological surveys and site monitoring in our part of Colorado. It will be a pleasure to hear her comments regarding the textile and wooden remains found at Aztec and Chaco Canyon.

As mentioned at the last meeting of our chapter, our proposed visit to mining camps in the Creede area has been postponed. And our intended visit to Peter-son Ridge, near the Piedra Valley, has also been cancelled – sorry about that, but perhaps we can visit this interesting area next year. As a substitute, Rich Robinson and Rhonda Raffo have planned a somewhat different pair of excursions for the weekend of September 13th and 14th, a historical study of stagecoach and wagon trails of the late 19th Century. The first of this two-part affair will be on Saturday, and will consist of a one-mile or slightly longer hike along a portion of the long-abandoned Animas Canyon toll road, the first established wagon road connecting the Durango-Rockwood area and Silver-ton. This was built in 1876 and used until 1892, and went from Bakers Bridge to the Bakers Park mining camps. The hike should take about two hours; our participants will depart from the Chris Park Campground at 9:00 AM or, if any should wish to carpool, they can meet at 8:00 AM at Durango's Santa Rita Park. The hikers should bring water, sun screen, bug repellent, and possibly rain gear. The second event of this weekend, a more leisurely thing, will be on Sunday evening, from 5:00 to 7:30 PM, when we will learn more about the stagecoach era and enjoy an authentic stagecoach ride that will be followed by a western steak dinner and entertainment at Bartel's Mancos Valley Stage Line in Mancos. Those of our people who wish to go on this second part of the weekend celebration and who have signed the trip roster can meet at Santa Rita Park at 4:00 PM if they wish to carpool. If you have any questions about this pair of outings you may contact Rhonda Raffo at 970-259-8870.

Our chapter's second outing of the month will be on the last weekend, when 20 of our members will tour the scenic Montezuma Canyon. This is one of southeastern Utah's major drainages, with a reasonably good dirt road extending

through the portion to be traveled. The canyon bottom and adjacent mesa rims were the home of both the Anasazi and the Ute and Navajo people, and contain an abundance of Indian ruins and rock art panels; a major focus of this trip will be the large Coal Bed and Three Kiva Pueblos, with a possible visit to a modern pueblo on the agenda. Trip participants will meet at Santa Rita Park at 2:00 PM on Friday, September 26th, and will then drive to a campsite in the canyon; non-campers may wish to find motel accommodations in either Blanding or Monticello. The next couple of days will be spent in the canyon, with a return home on Sunday afternoon, September 28th. Trip leaders Joe Griffith and Diane Donovan report that the trip roster is already full, but if you wish to go on this outing and are not on the trip list you might call the leaders (970-382-9156) and ask about being on standby status.

We're sorry about the date conflict of the Montezuma Canyon trip with that of the Colorado Archaeological Society's Annual Meeting. We do try to avoid this sort of snafu, but simply don't always succeed.

## The CAS Annual Meeting

The CAS Annual Meeting will be held in Montrose Sep 26 - the 27<sup>th</sup>, with tours and special events on Sunday, the 28th.

- The Friday night CAS working meeting will be held at the Museum of the Mountain West, a sensational historical museum run and developed by Archaeologist Rich Fike and his wife Carol. In addition to the CAS meeting, there will be dinner, entertainment, and tours.
- The main meeting, social hour, and dinner will be at the Holiday Inn Express, a super facility.
- A block of 14 queen and 15 king rooms are reserved for CAS members discounted from \$139 to \$119 (plus tax). To reserve, identify as "CAS". These are available for Sept 26-28. There are many other hotel choices - a list will be sent out well in advance.
- The general paper topic is American Indian Architecture for papers presented Saturday.
- The Saturday night banquet speaker is Dr. Alien West - a topic and speaker of national renown! The talk presents the graphics-rich story of 26 scientists from 18 institutions, who followed multiple trails of evidence to uncover one of the greatest catastrophes of the human race. They propose that an enormous space object, likely a fragmented comet, exploded over the Northern Hemisphere 12,900 years ago, producing massive detonations with more force than the world's entire nuclear arsenal.
- Optional sightseeing tours on Sunday.

As announced above, the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Colorado Archaeological Society will be held in Montrose on the last weekend of September; the conference theme will be "American Indian Architecture". The highlight of this annual gathering will be a full day of lectures and poster presentations on Saturday at the Holiday Inn Express (1391 South Townsend Avenue, Tel. 970-240-1800), with an evening banquet and a keynote talk by geophysicist Alien West concerning an intriguing topic: "Diamonds, Mammoths and Comets". Dr West and other scientists have recently uncovered evidence of a truly earthshaking event - they propose that an enormous space object, perhaps a comet, exploded over the northern hemisphere 12,900 years ago, with a force that pushed many large animal species, such as mammoths, mastodons, American camels and horses, and saber-tooth tigers, into extinction. This impact, and the loss of much of the megafauna, just may have caused a significant decline in human populations and a major reorganization of culture, as evidenced by the sudden disappearance of Clovis points and the emergence of those of the Folsom style. This annual conference will be followed on Sunday by fieldtrips to local museums and archaeological sites, such as the Shavano rock art panels, the Moore rock shelters, and the Ute Indian Museum (with its current Telluride Blanket exhibit), and the Museum of the Mountain West. Peggy Morris and Rick and Rae Moeller, our chapter's CAS Representatives, can provide you with more information about the plans for this meeting.

Looking ahead: we have an interesting pair of SJBAS outings scheduled for the next month, trips that should help give us a better appreciation of the past of the Southwest. The first of these will be on **October 12th** through **October 15th**, when we intend to examine a series of large Pueblo III/IV ruins and rock art panels in the Galisteo Basin/Santa Fe area, including the huge Arroyo Hondo, Pueblo Blanco, and possibly the Puye communities; we also hope to visit the School of American Research (SAR) Museum. This trip will be led by Richard Robinson (970-259-1943), and our group will be staying at Santa Fe's Comfort Inn at 4312 Cerrillos Road. This adventurous excursion will be followed by a three-day guided tour of Monument Valley, including the historic Goulding Trading Post, on October 25/27th, with accommodations at the Monument Valley Lodge. Leaders of this second October outing will be Linda Robinson (970-259-1943) and Gail Schulz (970-259-3249). There will be more information regarding the plans for these two trips in the next issue of the Moki Messenger, or you can call the trip leaders for further details as to the plans and itineraries. As was announced at our last chapter meeting, participation limits have been established for both of these outings, and we understand that both are already booked up – but you might wish to add your name to the standby lists if you haven't already signed the rosters, as there could be vacancies because of last-minute cancellations.

Our tag-end-of-July tour of the Lowry preserve in south-western Colorado was a delightful summer excursion, with an excellent turnout – 22 of our members journeyed to the area to learn a bit about what life was like on the Great Sage Plain one thousand years ago. Much of this visit focused upon the Pigg Site, the PII-PIII component of the Lowry community. Fort Lewis College's Anthropology Dept. has been conducting summer archaeological field classes in and near the Puzzle House and Pigg vicinity for a number of years; archaeologist

Charles Riggs gave our group a talk and guided tour of the ruins that he and his students have excavated during the past six weeks, with a discussion regarding the purpose and long-term goals, of the project. Our SJBAS crew then proceeded to the large Lowry Pueblo and its associated Chaco-style great kiva, where they learned about its various construction stages and its possible role as an important community center during the relatively prosperous times of the late 11th and early 12th Centuries. The group then, after a brown-bag lunch in the Lowry picnic grove, traveled to the Anasazi Heritage Center near Dolores, where they viewed photographs of the Lowry Ruin that were made by Paul Martin and Al Lancaster during their excavations of the early 1930's; our people also enjoyed a couple of video presentations at this splendid museum. We wish to thank Beverly and Robert Danielson for organizing this fine outing and for arranging the talk and tour by Dr. Riggs. Field trips such as this do so much to expand our knowledge and appreciation of the past of our region.

A large group of our members had an informative and quite pleasant tour of a portion of the hilly Beaver Meadows area, northeast of Bayfield, in mid-August. Led by the knowledgeable Mary Ann Hiller, they searched for, and found, a large number of historic arborglyphs, the aspen bark inscriptions that illuminated the lives, times and preoccupations – and occasional erotic fantasies – of the Hispanic shepherders of the past century, the scribes of the forest. Undaunted by cloudy skies, our people enjoyed viewing some magnificent scenery along the roads, hiking trails, and at our lunch stop overlooking the Piedra Valley. This excursion would be well worth repeating, perhaps next year; this would be an especially magnificent region to visit during the Fall months, when the golden aspen foliage should be spectacular! Perhaps you just might be willing to lead a follow-up tour, Mary Ann.

## TOUR THE CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO

The Camino Real de Tierra Adentro ("The Royal Road from the interior") is North America's longest (1550 miles) and oldest (1598) route, it stretches from Mexico City to San Juan Pueblo north of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Camino Real is now a National Historic Trail in the portions traversing the states of New Mexico and Texas and is similarly recognized by the Mexican government south of the border.

While the portion of the Camino Real in the United States is readily accessible, some people are reluctant to venture south into Mexico to visit the Camino in that country. This is a pity, for the Mexican portion is not only the longest (800 miles), but contains many important and interesting sites that provide the fullest understanding of the economic, political, and cultural significance of the trail as a whole. These are the places that we will visit and discuss. We are interested not only in the "ruts" that remain of the trail, but the complex historical reasons that ruts are where they are and what they meant to the development of northern Mexico and its frontier. Accordingly the general theme for this tour is: **The Camino de la Plata from Mexico City to Zacatecas**. This tour will complement the earlier tours which illustrated the Camino Real route from Zacatecas to the north. That northern section was established in part by Juan de Oñate. The Camino de la Plata was developed earlier as a direct result of the silver strike in Zacatecas in 1546. Some road had to be created to get supplies in and silver out of Zacatecas. Dr. Hal Jackson, author of *Following the Royal Road: A Guide to the Historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* will direct the tour. The tour will begin in Mexico City October 15, 2008 and pass through the colonial cities of Queretaro, San Miguel Allende, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosi, and Guanajuato before returning to Mexico City and the end of the tour on October 28th. The cost of this 14 day tour is \$1550 for double occupancy, \$300 additional for single. Tour begins and ends in Mexico City so participants will need to find their own transportation to that city. Most meals are included in this price. We will travel in a modern forty-passenger motor coach and be staying in four-star hotels. Special local entertainment will be provided at several locations. An extensive walking tour will be made in each of these colonial cities showing Camino sites and routes. Other sites to be visited include the Hacienda de la Erre (where Padre Hidalgo gathered his forces on his march south), the old mining town of Mineral de Pozos, a beautiful set of ruts carved in stone near San Felipe, and the Oñate hacienda outside Zacatecas. The tour is under the auspices of El Camino Real Education, an organization devoted to supporting education along the Camino Real corridor. Surplus funds from tours such as this one will go to schools, teachers, and students in communities along the Camino Real in Mexico and the United States. Already four workshops have been held for high school students and their teachers in Mexico using these funds. Visit the web site for the latest information about the tour: [tourelocaminoreal.com](http://tourelocaminoreal.com)

As announced at our August meeting and in the previous issue of the Moki Messenger, the next series of classes in the Program for Avocational Archaeological Certification (PAAC) scheduled for our area will be on the weekend of September 6th and 7th. This will be the basic "introduction to Archaeology" module; the instructor will be Assistant State Archaeologist Kevin Black, the classes will be held in the Lyceum of Fort Lewis College's Center of Southwest Studies, and the enrollment cost will be \$12.00. You may contact Peggy Morris (970-382-8688) for further details and about registration.

How many of you readers have failed to take advantage of this great PAAC deal? If you wish to learn more about archaeology, this is a wonderful way to do so, at a minimal cost and with no previous training or experience required. Talk to Peggy about this fine program; she can tell you about how so many of our members have benefited by attending the PAAC classes, and the way the PAAC system has made our excursions and monthly lectures so much more meaningful to them.

The final lecture program of the Aztec Ruins National Monument's splendid "Summer 2008 Presentation Series" will be on Friday, September 5th, commencing at 7:00 PM, when Dr David Stuart, of the University of New Mexico, will give a talk concerning "After Chaco Canyon: The Prehistoric Transformation to Efficient Communities". Admission is free, the lecture will be given in the auditorium of the

Aztec Ruins Visitor Center, and we hope to arrange car-pooling for the Durango area attendees (you may call Richard Robinson (970-259-1943) about this gasoline-saving plan). We're sorry to see this Summer Presentation Series end – the talks and

tours have been of great interest, and we do appreciate the efforts of the Aztec Ruins staff to organize this elaborate variety of archaeological programs.