

The Colorado Desert Archaeology

Society Bulletin

September 2025

LAND

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Kumeyaay, Cahuilla, Cupeño, and Payómkawichum/Luiseño are the Original peoples of the Anza-Borrego Desert, Palomar Mountain, and Cuyamaca Rancho state parks. These traditional homelands in the Colorado Desert District are rich with their heritage and cultural tradition. The Colorado Desert Archaeology Society acknowledges these places as the Peoples' homelands and offers gratitude for their stewardship of these lands from time immemorial through the present and into the future.

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NOTES FROM THE PARK

Hayley Elskén

Associate State Archaeologist and CDD Tribal Liaison

A New Season Begins

Welcome back for another exciting season! I'm thrilled to see that many of you took the summer to steward sites in the mountains and catch up on paperwork. Now, it's time to gear up for the work ahead!



Over the summer, I've been collaborating with the Cannabis Watershed Protection Program (CWPP) and ASM Affiliates to plan a two-year survey of the Coyote Canyon Cultural Preserve. Due to the presence of former cannabis grow sites in the area, CWPP is funding this effort to help protect cultural resources and support future park planning within the canyon.

The Coyote Canyon Cultural Preserve spans 29,752 acres and while various parts of the canyon have been surveyed over the past 70 years, this will be the first systematic survey of the entire preserve using modern tools such as GPS and digital photography.

To prepare for the upcoming work, Llouise Jee undertook the massive task of reviewing over 900 previously recorded sites in the canyon. She meticulously sorted through decades of old survey maps, reports, and site records to ensure that pre-GPS data is as accurate and useful as possible. Her dedication ensures that surveyors will head into the field with the most up-to-date information available.

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CALENDAR

COVID UPDATE

The mask mandate has been lifted.

LAB DAY
Every Tuesday,
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Members only

LIBRARY
Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Members only

Contact Hayley by email if you wish to work in the lab or library
hayley.elsken@parks.ca.gov

CDAS ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS

Third Thursday of the Month:
3 p.m., Virtual, via Zoom
Pre-season meeting on
September 18

Save the Date!

ARCHAEOLOGY DAY
Saturday, November 8



SEASON KICKOFF EVENT
In person
Saturday, November 22
Details to come!

NOTES FROM THE PARK--CONTINUED

She then decided to continue this detailed review for the rest of the sites; she has just finished Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and is starting on Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.



Survey co-leader, Brenda Wills (co-leader Eli Vasquez, not pictured) with Arch Tech and Advisory Group Coordinator Pam Wiedenkiller on Brenda and Eli's survey in Blair Valley

These surveys will be open to CDAS archaeological

technicians on a limited basis and will be conducted in collaboration with professional archaeologists. Please note: this work involves rugged terrain, long 10-hour days, and miles of hiking at a steady pace to keep the project on schedule. In addition, aerial drone imagery of the entire preserve will help guide our surveys, especially on slopes exceeding 30 degrees.

This summer also gave me the chance to review site records created by our survey leads this past spring. I continue to be impressed by the quality of both the fieldwork and the countless hours spent behind the scenes at the computer. Thank you all for your dedication and leadership! As we begin a new season, I want to remind all surveyors: your group leader is not only out there hiking with you—they're also investing many hours before and after each survey to handle planning, mapping, and documentation. There would not be opportunities to record archaeological sites without the leadership of these volunteers.

Here's to a productive and inspiring season ahead!

—Hayley

FROM THE EDITORS:

WE'RE LOOKING FOR Volunteers TO HELP WITH THE BULLETIN'S "MEMBER PROFILE" FEATURE!

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT SALLY BICKERTON FOR MORE INFORMATION.

SALLYBIC@COX.NET

**CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS
AND RECREATION**



The Colorado Desert District includes Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and Palomar Mountain State Park.

**COLORADO DESERT
ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY**



The mission of CDAS is to assist Park staff with the documentation, preservation and protection of the district's prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

★ **HAYLEY ELSKEN**

ASSOCIATE STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST/
TRIBAL LIAISON
COLORADO DESERT DISTRICT
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ANDREA ROBINSON
Archaeological Specialist
Andrea.Robinson@parks.ca.gov

CDAS Advisory Group

The CDAS Advisory Group meets once a month during the season. Meetings are on the third Thursday of the month from 3 to 4 p. m. They are held via Zoom and are open to all members. If you have any comments or suggestions and cannot attend a meeting, please contact:

Advisory Group Coordinator and Arch Tech Coordinator: Pam Wiedenkeller
pwiedenkeller@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer: Brenda Wills
Brenda.s.wills@gmail.com

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evnewton8@gmail.com

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COVER BANNER: HARPER CANYON AREA,
NOVEMBER 2018
PHOTO BY BARBARA BARNES

**FROM THE ADVISORY GROUP
COORDINATOR**



A ton of worked obsidian in the Bodie Hills, Mono County, one of the places Pam visited this summer

Welcome Back, CDAS Volunteers!

A new season is upon us, and I couldn't be more excited to welcome you all back—especially the newest members of our team from the 2024 and 2025 Arch Tech graduating classes. We're so glad you're here!

Arch Techs: This year, our focus shifts to **Discovery Surveys** in both Cuyamaca and Anza-Borrego. No more soil surveys—I heard your cheers! We'll begin posting survey opportunities as soon as the temperatures cool down, so stay tuned. Last season's efforts were impressive: our discovery surveys resulted in six completed primary records. That's a big accomplishment—congratulations to all the survey team members who helped make it happen!

But remember, volunteering with CDAS isn't limited to field work. We need helping hands in many areas, including:

- Assisting at the BARC Library
- Helping with the CDAS website
- Supporting education programs, field trips, and the bulletin
- Representing CDAS at public outreach events

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If something sparks your interest, just let me know—I'll connect you with the right person to get started.

And mark your calendars... Our Pre-season Zoom Meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 18** from 3-4 p.m. I look forward to seeing you then.

Here's to another season of discovery, learning, and camaraderie!

Warmly,

Pam Wiedenkeller
Advisory Group Coordinator



Pam's dog Annie enjoying a glacial lake in the Sierras, another summer destination



**CDAS DECALS
AVAILABLE!**



TO GET YOURS, EMAIL SCOTT McCLINTOCK:

PalomarTowers@gmail.com

A \$5 DONATION IS APPRECIATED

Archaeology Day

Saturday, November 8, 2025

"Honoring the People"

William Madrigal and the Traditional Cahuilla Birdsingers and Dancers



Opening
Ceremony
9:15 am

—
Closing
Ceremony
3:15 pm

William Madrigal and the Cahuilla Birdsingers and Dancers are part of a long, inter-generational tradition of culture bearers in the local California Indian Cahuilla community.

With life-long commitment, they have been given the gift of Birdsinging from oral teaching by the elders. They adhere to the strict protocol of Cahuilla culture in public presentations. The birdsongs and dances are a celebration of life for all Cahuilla peoples.



11:00 am
Eva Salazar,
Kumeyaay,
Basket weaving
demonstration



2:00 pm Ami Admire,
Payómkawichum, Storytelling

Presented by

**COLORADO DESERT
ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY**

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

**Anza-Borrego Desert
State Park Visitor Center**



More info:
<https://www.anzaborregoarchaeo.org/archday2025/>

~ Exhibits and Activities ~

- Indigenous artists - Eva Salazar basket sales; Traditional Games & Plant Medicines by 'ataaxum Pomkwaan.
- Exhibits ~ Barona Museum & Cultural Center, SD Archaeology Center, Imperial Valley Desert Museum, Native American Land Conservancy, Rincon Tribal Museum & more.
- Paddle and anvil pottery making & rock painting.
- Native plants & their uses with Kumeyaay-Ipai Interpretative Center.
- Video "field trips" ~ La Rumarose in Baja, Pictograph Trail in Blair Valley.

**Cahuilla Elder
Catherine Saubel
Video on
Cahuilla traditions &
history. 12:30 pm.
Presented by William
Madrigal.**

**Begole
Archaeology
Lab &
Library
Guided
Tours.
Conducted
hourly.**

**In-person Field Trips

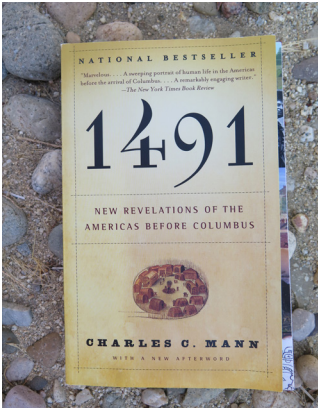
Saturday afternoon,
Nov 8, to Mine Wash
Village;
Sunday Nov 9, to Blair
Valley cultural sites**

SELECTIONS FROM THE CDAS LIBRARY

REVIEWED BY LLOUISE JEE

Inhabitants of the Americas before the European conquest

Four authors cover the profound societal changes and the lasting impact of indigenous peoples



1491, New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus

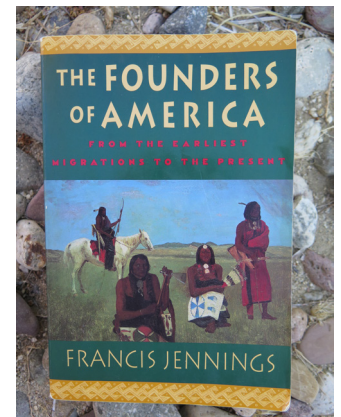
by Charles Mann, 2005

Charles Mann writes about the peoples who occupied the western hemisphere and their possible travel routes and methods well before any new visitors. He counters the impression that all inhabitants of the New World were living simply and spread out over pristine countrysides upon arrival of the Europeans. He discusses grand and small societies and cultures of all the Americas and their impressive achievements before the conquest, as well as the subsequent impact of European contact. With their worlds completely upended, those who survived migrated, leaving empty ruins — a shocking testimony to decimation by disease and domination. Mann's investigation of epidemics is illuminating.

The Founders of America from the Earliest Migration to the Present

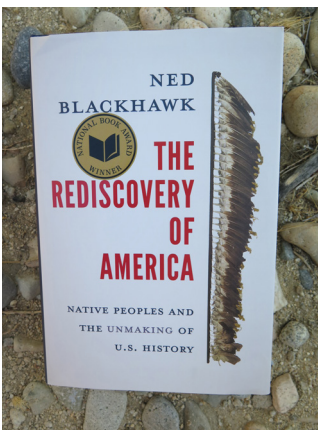
by Francis Jennings, 1993

This book by renowned scholar Francis Jennings is a lively conversation primarily about populations north of the Rio Grande, but references earlier Spanish settlements in Mexico to illustrate arguments and discussions. He expands the definition of “founders of America” to recognize the original visitors; nomadic people who migrated across a temporary land bridge that connected the continents of Asia and North America thousands of years ago, creating networks of trails and trade. Jennings touts the great number and sophistication of early societies in the America. His facile presentation is like listening to a symposium presenter query the supporting evidence, using humor and sharp facts to carry the evolving story — that the Europeans didn't discover the Americas, they invaded and conquered it. His last chapter is worth reading and food for thought.



The Rediscovery of America, Native People and the Unmaking of U. S. History

by Ned Blackhawk, 2023



Author Ned Blackhawk writes about the importance of Indigenous history to understanding the evolution of modern U.S. society, which has not been widely acknowledged. He covers historic events that occurred between Indigenous and non-native cultures, including federal government policies. Treaties and agreements regarding land ownership, payments and activities, originally ratified by both parties, were not honored by the government citing questionable legal loopholes. Natives were left with nothing or less than nothing, provoking extreme responses from communities in a revolving cycle of action and reaction. Blackhawk closes with Indian Schools, self-governance and tribal termination.

Continued on page 7

SITE STEWARD REPORT

Welcome to a New Season

I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful summer and had the chance to travel, relax, or pursue new adventures. John and I were fortunate to take an amazing RV trip mainly through Wyoming. Along with exploring the state's beautiful national parks and landscapes, we made sure to visit some archaeology-related sites, including the **Big Horn Medicine Wheel** in the Big Horn Mountains and the **Dinwoody petroglyphs** near Dubois, Wyoming.

Our most exciting news this season is that Hayley has developed a **new mobile app** for reporting impacts! Some of the benefits will include:

- It will replace the Impact Report form and separate photo submissions and log.
- Capture GPS location, take photos, and complete your report directly in the field.
- Submit everything once you're back in cell service with no emailing or photo attachments.

We still have some testing to do, so we're looking for volunteers to try it during your fall visits. If you don't encounter any actual impacts, you can create test reports to help us fine-tune the system.

As always, life changes—relocations, retirements, or temporary injuries—create openings for new site assignments.

- Interested in taking on a new site?
- Want to temporarily assist at a different location?



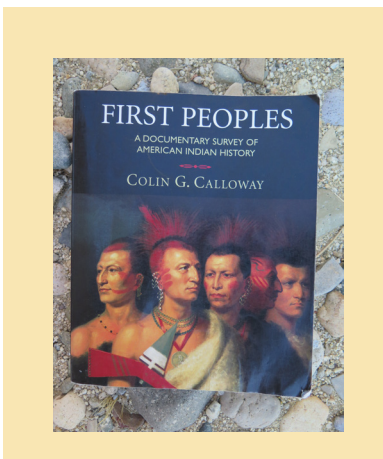
*Big Horn Medicine Wheel,
Wyoming*

We need volunteers! Please reach out if you'd like to step in.

Your dedication and passion for protecting cultural resources make a real difference. Thank you for your continued commitment to safeguarding these special places. Here's to a productive and rewarding season ahead!

— Pat Downing
pdsnewmail@gmail.com

From the CDAS Library--Continued from page 7



First Peoples, a Documentary Survey of American Indian History by Colin G. Calloway, 1999

Calloway has written an acclaimed textbook that acknowledges significant early peoples' cultures as builders, farmers, confederacies and buffalo hunters. He presents blocks of time to include policy, law, government and events that are supported with maps, picture essays and actual first-account documents. Here you can find the Laws of the "Confederacy of the Six Nations," the political system of the Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse), which includes the nations of the Cayuga, Seneca, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga and Tuscarora. It is a fascinating and timely read.

One topic that all authors present is the question of citizenship, who is or who is not a citizen. As the War of 1812 closed, the regions held by Mexico became part of U.S. territory. This included Florida, as well as the Southwest. More land was good, but the problem was that Mexico said everyone was a citizen, and that included folks of all sorts and mixtures, Native American, Black and European descent. Andrew Jackson, his political agenda and racist solutions to the problem are well presented by all the authors.

MEMBER PROFILE: JEFF HASLETT

As a young child in New York, the only image I had of a desert was of sand dunes. After moving to San Diego and seeing Anza-Borrego, I was amazed at how much life there was out there. My fascination grew when I was introduced to desert camping back in the 1970s. Even though we camped too close to the Colorado River and got eaten alive by mosquitos, I was hooked.

I majored in architectural drafting in college and worked in that field for a while, but lean times forced me to look for something else. Through a twist of fate, I ended up becoming a flight attendant for TWA and later American Airlines. Not being shackled to a 9 to 5 job, I was freer to spend more time out in the wilderness. In 1976, my friend, Ron Bain, introduced me to backpacking, and since then I've logged over 1000 miles, mostly in the Sierra Nevada range, but also in other southwest states.

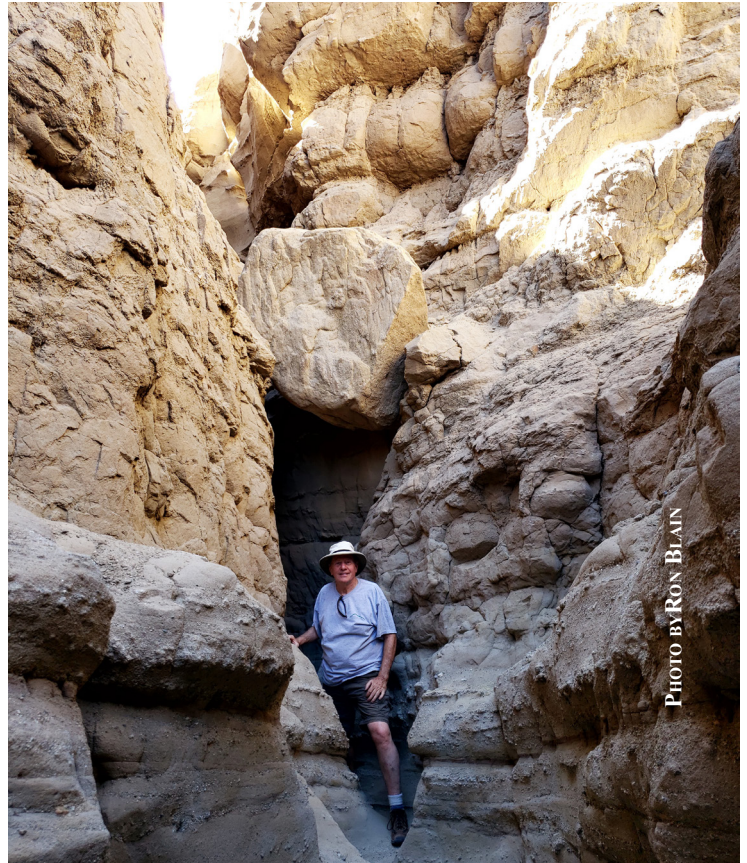


PHOTO BY RON BLAIN

Jeff in slot canyon in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park



PHOTO BY SCOTT MCCLINTOCK

Rock hopping at Indian Hill Site

In 2020, Scott McClintock told me about the site stewardship program at CDAS and I signed up. My first site was the hardest to reach in the system, Jackass Flat, but I enjoyed the opportunity to slip my truck into 4-wheel drive and hike out in the middle of nowhere. Nowadays, I'm older, retired, and hitting sites that are easier to reach and traverse: Indian Hill, Culp Valley, and Paso Picacho. My backpacking buddy, Ron, is my current site steward partner.

Learning about the cultural history of the area adds a new dimension to the entertainment value of driving off-road, hiking, and enjoying the scenery, the clean air and silence of the desert and mountains. For the last two years, I have also volunteered to work the CDAS Archaeology Day event at the Borrego Springs Visitors Center helping show videos to visitors.

—As told to Sally Bickerton by Jeff Haslett

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY

Several organizations offer programs that may be of interest to CDAS members. Please check the websites below for upcoming events. If you know of other programs that CDAS members might enjoy, we would love to share the information in future bulletins—please send us the details!

AGUA CALIENTE CULTURAL MUSEUM
<https://www.accmuseum.org>

MALKI MUSEUM
<https://malkimuseum.org>

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY
SOCIETY**
<https://sdcas.org>

CALIFORNIA ROCK ART FOUNDATION
<https://www.carockart.org>

**BARONA CULTURAL CENTER AND
MUSEUM**
<https://www.baronamuseum.com>

IMPERIAL VALLEY DESERT MUSEUM
<https://www.ivdesertmuseum.org>

**SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA
ARCHAEOLOGY**
<https://scahome.org>

**SAN DIEGO ROCK ART
ASSOCIATION**
<https://www.sandiegorockart.org>



PHOTO FROM WEBSITE

COURTESY AGUA CALIENTE MUSEUM WEBSITE

EDITORS' NOTE: WE WELCOME YOUR ACTIVITIES!

THE CDAS BULLETIN IS PUBLISHED ONLINE IN FIVE ISSUES,
SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY.

ALL CDAS MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE NEWS, STORIES, AND PHOTOS. PLEASE SEND ITEMS TO

SALLY BICKERTON AT: [SALLYBIC@COX.NET](mailto:sallybic@cox.net)