Too much is going on for my comfort level… Chuck Hannahford has retired after nearly four decades of service to the Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS). Thankfully, he continues to be part of OAS as a research associate, contributing to the vibrancy of the education program he started and adding his knowledge and experience to ongoing OAS and Friends of Archaeology (FOA) ventures. We had hoped to roast him at the International Archaeology Day open house or at the Holiday Party, but he is already committed to family events on both days, so we will have to find a future time to celebrate his career and contributions.

Kathleen Yount, our office administrator and gatekeeper at OAS for many long years has also retired. In addition to keeping us supplied and connected, Kathleen kept track of our volunteers and often served as photographer for our many events. She is now free to spend more time with her far-flung family, but we expect to see her at many upcoming OAS and FOA celebrations.

By the time you read this, we hope to be starting excavation work at the old Santa Fe County courthouse in downtown Santa Fe. Many of our long term volunteers, veterans of the Palace of the Governors and Civic Center projects, have already registered their interests in helping with either field work or artifact processing. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities and haven’t already contacted us, please leave a voice mail at (505) 476-4401, and we’ll get back to you to discuss possibilities.

On a substantive note, Ann Stodder (OAS bioarchaeologist) and I have been involved in research, discussions, and formal meetings regarding the treatment of human remains encountered at archaeological sites. Archaeology in New Mexico is at the threshold of a new era that will see the unification of burial treatment under both State and Federal regulations. This is a good thing, with the potential for improved communication and consultation with tribes concerning treatment, scientific analysis, and disposition of burials. New regulations will, hopefully, resolve awkward situations in which consultations under State regulations have stalled and will streamline protocols for future projects. Beyond the narrow goals of improving burial treatment, consultations associated with these changes should open up information sharing between archaeologists and tribes on all aspects of archaeological histories.

The plasma radiocarbon sampling lab is another exciting aspect of science at the Center for New Mexico Archaeology. Marvin Rowe and Jeff Cox, with support from Joe Martin and John Martin, have added “residual gas analysis” to the plasma sampling process. RGA adds a new dimension to our ability to understand what is actually happening when we prepare and collect radiocarbon samples.

Finally, I’m happy to report that OAS has been awarded another education outreach cooperative agreement by the Bureau of Land Management. This will support our school-focused education outreach efforts for the next several years, with an initial award of $20,000. These cooperative agreements require a 1:1 match, so please consider responding to Museum of New Mexico Foundation and FOA contribution requests for education (or research, for that matter).

I’m looking forward to new opportunities and adventures in 2017, and as always, thank you for your interest and support!

–Eric
This past September, Tim Maxwell, archaeologist extraordinaire, led a fabulous, five-day trip to La Gran Chichimeca, or the Great Plains region, of Mexico to visit Paquimé and other nearby archaeological, historical, and artistic places of interest. It had been several years since this trip was last offered by Friends of Archaeology, and many participants had never before been to this rich agricultural and archaeological region. It was a refreshingly delightful and fascinating adventure for everyone involved!

We visited several extraordinary locations, including: Paquimé, Casas de Fuego, La Hacienda de San Diego, Mata Ortiz, and Cueva de la Olla in the Sierra Madre Occidental. While this may not be a complete list of all of the fascinating places that we enjoyed, it is a manageable one.

Paquimé is almost directly south of Chaco Canyon and is a three-hour drive beyond the Mexico border. The site is close to the small town of Casas Grandes, where the tour group stayed several nights. Paquimé, a former trading center that had been 60 percent excavated by Charles Di Peso in 1959, is currently maintained by the National Institute of Anthropology and History, Mexico (INAH). The institute operates an excellent museum near the site.

The pueblo of Paquimé was constructed in the 1200s by approximately 20 people, who built small, adobe family compounds at the site. By 1250, the settlement had grown into a thriving town of 2000 people. It is thought that the story of Paquimé can be linked to the “boom and bust” cycle that has played out many times in the American Southwest. Following the decline of Mesa Verde, Paquimé flourished, perhaps due to resettlement by some of the displaced Native people from the north.

Due to its location, south of Chaco Canyon and north of Mesoamerica, Paquimé boasts a unique mix of archaeological motifs from both regions. For example, the distinctive T-shaped doorways found throughout Pueblo Bonito at Chaco Canyon were also incorporated at Paquimé. Several large effigy mounds built of stone and fill, one of a long, undulating serpent and one of a bird, are likely to be Mesoamerican in origin.

Paquimé residents carefully and expertly managed their water supply. The community housed a reservoir, water troughs, and a well. My favorite was the subterranean well room. Since parts of Paquimé are not accessible to the public, our group was only able to enjoy and experience the building in the form of an excellent museum diorama that depicted an adobe building with two flights of stairs leading below ground level. A pueblo inhabitant who walked down those sets of stairs could have safely, and quickly, stooped, filled an empty olla vessel with water, and walked back up the stairwell. What a very simple and efficient way to get a day’s supply of fresh water!

Casas de Fuego is another inactive pueblo several miles east of Paquimé, and the debate continues on this community’s
original relationship to Paquimé. On Day 2, we were joined by Mexican archaeologist Rafael Cruz Antillón, who charmed and captivated our group with an engaging story about the many small rooms found at the site. The purpose of these rooms is still being debated. Did large scale pottery production take place at Casas de Fuego? Or had these many rooms been used exclusively for corn storage? All of the rooms had been burned out several centuries before and the vitrified walls are a tantalizing clue as to what may have happened at this site in the past.

On Day 3, we visited the historic Hacienda de San Diego, a short distance from Casas Grandes. Now owned, protected, and in the process of being renovated by one devoted working-class family, Hacienda de San Diego is a testament to the vast financial and political power of its original mid-nineteenth century owner, Don Luis Terrazas.

The once formal limestone building is dilapidated and decayed. Bullet holes in the stone walls bear mute testament to the anarchy that gripped Mexico after the 1910-1922 revolution for independence. Our young tour guide, Daniel, and his immediate family are restoring this hacienda one small project at a time. As this property is privately owned, INAH does not contribute to its upkeep and restoration, so the family’s commitment to this piece of their personal and national history is truly inspirational.

Mata Ortiz is a small, modern day Mexican town about half an hour south of Casas Grandes. Here, the friendly inhabitants have developed a distinctive and famous pottery style distinguished by carefully executed decorative detail. This town offered “a major shopping opportunity” for many of us norte americanos. My husband, Rick, and I enjoyed one or two of the pottery studios while strolling along the dusty streets of this charming, unpretentious town. We were soon befriended by a frisky, chestnut brown colt that had escaped from his owner’s yard. The colt was running wildly up and down the narrow streets, delirious with his newfound freedom. It seemed he wanted to gallop right up to us, but he was fearful we might corral him and prematurely end his delightful afternoon of unbridled freedom. We let him be.

On Day 4, our tour group, made up of the friendliest, most archaeologically inquisitive folks you could ever hope to encounter, set off for Cueva de la Olla, deep within the Sierra Madre Occidental. This impressive mountain chain, 200 miles wide, runs along the west coast of Mexico. The early Native people found this place to be a paradise, within which they built room blocks much like those one might see at Mesa Verde, but on a smaller scale. The rooms were built beneath the cover of a large cave, toward the back of the cave wall. In this beautiful organic space, perhaps by a stroke of artistic and/or engineering genius, one villager came up with the idea to construct an olla, or pot, on an unprecedented scale, just beneath the cave’s overhang to the front of the cave. The olla was carefully placed. It was protected by the eaves of the cave from rain and snow, and it was also the first thing a person saw upon entering. Maximum wow factor! Period. This, of course, may not have been the original builder’s intent, but it certainly influenced my twentieth century reaction!

See Paquimé, continued on Page 4.

Friends of Archaeology November | 3

Kimberly MacLoud

I just got back from four nights in Casas Grandes, Mexico with Friends of Archaeology. I got to ride down—it was a 10+ hour drive—with two sisters and a husband. The main attraction was Paquimé, a wonderful ancestral site and trading hub between the Pueblos and Aztlán in the 1300s. They raised turkeys and macaws and had 5 tons of sea shell.

Paquimé has been excavated but has only been periodically repaired with more mud. We had the great fortune to stay at a bed-and-breakfast in the old village of Casas Grandes. It was just a short path from there to the site.

Of course, first we had to deal with the border crossing. Expectedly funky, the drivers, having gotten their visas at the head of the line, had to go over to the farmacia to make copies of their visas, insurance, passports, and credit cards, I think. This took about an hour and a half, and we passengers hung out at the Pink Store—all things Mexican kitsch, and air conditioned. I bought 10 woven napkins for $1.50 each. The ones I bought on the way to Pátzcuaro, maybe 20 years ago, are showing some wear.

Cueva de la Olla, deep within the Sierra Madre Occidental.

PAQUIMÉ,
SEPTEMBER 2016

See 2016, continued on Page 5.
The olla appeared to be about 10-15 feet high and 8-10 feet at its widest point. It had a few holes in its surface that were likely created by modern-day treasure seekers. When completed, the structure likely had a smooth off-white stucco finish. What a beautiful creation! Apparently, the builder used thick bundles of dried grasses laid in coils (much like today’s pueblo potters build their coil clay pots) that were shaped and secured into a recognizable olla. The structure was then covered with mud and with a finishing layer of stucco on the outside. When finished, the olla’s wall assembly was about 8-10 inches thick. Perhaps the top of the jar was originally covered in some way, but a top covering may have been unnecessary. During our visit, the top of the olla was uncovered.

This artistically breathtaking structure was probably used as a granary. What a beautiful example of form and function melded together as one. For me, this one olla represented the imagination, tenaciousness, and engineering prowess of the early native peoples of the Casas Grandes region. I was truly grateful for and enriched by the astonishing legacy that they left behind for all of us.

I especially want to thank Tim Maxwell and Ann Noble, who made this part of the world accessible to all of us earthly travelers. I am so much the richer and wiser for what I have seen, smelled, heard, and felt. ¡Muchas gracias!
2016
Continued from Page 3.

It was another two hours to Casas Grandes, through very handsome country, with cornfields and pecan groves and jagged mountains in the distance. Everything was green. The lady at the homestay met us and gave keys, first to the couples and then to the singles. I got No. 8. The room had both a front-wall and back-wall window that opened and an overhead fan. Some folks weren’t so lucky. I think we may each have had one warm shower in four days, but that was okay. It was maybe 90°F during the day and warm at night too.

After checking in, we all climbed back into various cars and went into town for dinner. We had had a full lunch in Deming, so I ordered a shrimp taco and a beer. Ward had a stuffed potato with mixed meats, and Rick and Deanna had garlic shrimp. We took a shrimp cocktail to our hostess.

The next morning, I went for a walk before 8 o’clock. After breakfast we walked to Paquimé, and Tim showed us around the site. Nearly the best part was a wavy house in California. After breakfast we walked to Paquimé, and Tim showed us around the site. Nearly the best part was a wavy wall, maybe 100 feet long, made of stone and decorated with a filled-in serpent’s head. Really good.

We went back to the bed-and-breakfast and waited for a very wonderful, kind, folded-up, old anthropologist named Spencer McKullum to introduce us to Mata Ortiz. Years ago, he traveled to New Mexico twice a year to look after a gold mine he owned with a partner. While staying in Deming, Spencer made the junk-store rounds and came upon three small pots he was sure were very old. He bought the pots after being assured that they were quite new and had been traded to the shopkeeper for used clothes not 6 months earlier. Spencer took it into his head to find the potter and eventually located him in Mata Ortiz after driving into every border town with photos of the pots.

Several families in the town also make what are now quite famous ceramics, but before we headed to Mata Ortiz, Spencer insisted on taking us to the yellow-orange church where the inside had been painted by the same woman who is constructing the bottle house. The woman studied in Italy and came home to Casas Grande. It was the unfinished church that inspired her to paint the bottle house. The woman studied in Italy and came home to Casas Grande. She insisted on taking us to the yellow-orange church where the inside was as big as Paquimé, only with less excavation work. Rafael explained to us his theory that the small, burnt-out rooms there had been used as ovens for pottery, and that, once they had deteriorated to the point of uselessness, the rooms were ritually burned. He gently argued with one member of our group over this while the rest of us entertained ourselves looking for pot sherds. Later on that day, we drove a long way to another site, Galeana, and a few of the more hardy members of our party went on to see some nice archaic petroglyphs at Angostura.

I think this was the day that we also drove through Old Juarez, now a Mormon community, and peeked up a hill at a large white temple. A man nearby hopped into his pickup truck, drove quickly down a steep utility driveway, and sounded his siren as he passed us on the road. The man turned around and sounded his siren again as he passed us, hauling ass back up the hill. Our smaller group left late for dinner, around 8:30. Dinner was served at 9:30, and we were home, worn out, before 11. I had a lovely shrimp, onion, and pepper kabob and more beer. Tim and Ann came over to get some toothpaste on their brushes.

We set out for Cueva de la Olla the next day. First, we went to a gorgeous 1902-1904 hacienda built by Don Luis Terrazas, a very wealthy man who was paid well for how many Apaches he had killed. The hacienda is now owned by a family of modest means who are gradually refurbishing the building with help from a few grants and small entrance/tour fees. At one time, Pancho Villa paid a visit to the hacienda, and bullet holes in the courtyard walls serve as a reminder of the Mexican Revolution.

A sweet young man was our tour guide.

On to the Sierra Madre! Together, we headed up a nearly completed paved road to Cueva de la Olla. I hitched a ride with Ward this day and the day before. He’s making his way in the archaeology world. We talked about New Mexico, parents, adventures, whatever came to mind. Very pleasant. The cave of the water jug was cooler than it looked and was up an incline in the heat. Tim noted that there are many examples of these structures that perhaps were granaries. Then it was back to town for another nice dinner. I got the garlic shrimp plate that many in my group had raved about, and we were back in time to shower—my first mostly hot shower during the trip—and to do a little reading.

The next morning, after breakfast, we began the long drive home. At the border, we hung out again at the Pink Store. I bought six bouquets of little paper roses, and we had our last Mexican meal. I even had a margarita. Pat introduced me to some yummy, cheap tamarind candy, and I bought some little bags. I think I’ll have one now.
On June 25, FOA members toured Pueblo I sites in the San Juan Basin with Tom Windes, a retired archaeologist from the National Park Service. The group visited two clusters of sites, one near Pueblo Pintado and one closer to Chaco Canyon. The sites represent the ninth and early tenth century villages that preceded great house construction in Chaco Canyon itself. Some participants camped overnight at Chaco and toured the great houses with Eric Blinman the next day. As you can see in Bob Florek’s photos, the Chacoan great house architecture is more photogenic than the Pueblo I artifact scatters.
LA BAJADA: A SHORT TRIP TO A CLASSIC SITE

Jerry Cooke

On a beautiful Saturday, September 10, 2016, seventeen participants as well as archaeologists Eric Blinman, of the Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS), and Mike Bremer, of the National Forest Service (NFS), made the short drive south to the Rio Grande Classic period site of La Bajada.

This was a special tour for a number of reasons, including the fact that the site had not previously been toured by any group. It was a day of discovery for all of us. The La Bajada site sits on Cochiti Pueblo land, and we were very pleased to have Cochiti Pueblo Lt. Gov. Everett P. Herrera and Dr. Joseph Suina, a former governor, in attendance. They were both as new to the site as we were.

Mapped and first excavated in 1915 by Nels Nelson, La Bajada is one of the largest ancestral pueblos this close to Santa Fe. However, the site has not garnered much archaeological attention. La Bajada was originally made up of at least 1400 rooms, mostly single story, made of puddled adobe. There are four distinct plazas. The north and west plazas are viewed as the site’s oldest structures, with pottery sherds found there dating back to the late 1100s.

Tour leaders involved us in a search for sherds and glaze ware data in the southern portion of the ruins. This data might place the later occupation of the site near 1700, and such an occupation has been reported in a previous survey. Mike pointed out a remnant of the Camino Real that once passed through the area, thus connecting this portion of the site with the late seventeenth century. Our sharp-eyed group found a number of sherds, backing up data from the previous survey.

In the central portion of the site, an assemblage of uncharacteristic linear stone alignments was viewed by the archaeologists as perhaps being part of a sixteenth or seventeenth century church. There are, however, no records of this being a mission site. After lunch, we took time to view some of the rock art at a contemporaneous site beside Old La Bajada Route 66 that leads to the top of the escarpment.

Participant reviews of this tour were very favorable and complementary. Many said that they enjoyed the explorative aspect of the tour. The gentlemen from Cochiti Pueblo were especially positive. The tour closed with Eric speaking about the future protection and conservation of the site.

Brown Bag Lunches

Brown Bag Lunch talks take place at the Center for New Mexico Archaeology at 12:00 noon (generally) Tuesdays in the CNMA library. Seating is limited. Admission is free.

Please visit nmarchaeology.org for a list of scheduled talks and to catch any spur-of-the-moment presentations before they are held. Talks can be formal presentations or informal discussions, and they are open, without charge, to all members of the public.

Members of the Office of Archaeology staff commonly deliver presentations, both during these meetings and in front of other archaeological groups throughout the Southwest. We encourage our staff to practice or reprise their professional talks for our local audience. We also encourage visiting scholars to update us on their research.
Looking Ahead

It’s never too early to start looking forward to the Friends of Archaeology proposed event offerings for spring, summer, and fall of 2017.

This spring:
Sunday Lecture Series: “Culture and History of the Southwest: Archaeological Perspectives”
Salinas Pueblos
Chiles and Sherds

This summer:
Zia Agricultural Fields
Pecos

This fall:
Eastern P1/Dinetah
Mimbres/Gila
National Archaeology Day
FOA Holiday Auction

Don’t forget to check out the February 2017 New Mexico Archaeology newsletter for more exciting news and information. You can also log on to nmarchaeology.org and museumfoundation.org/friends-archaeology for more events, confirmations, and updates.