From the Director

ERIC BLINMAN, Ph.D., OAS DIRECTOR

THEORY THAT Tewa PEOPLES ARE THE RESULT OF A MASS MIGRATION FROM Mesa Verde IS ...

In our last newsletter, I introduced the topic of problems caused by conflicting archaeological interpretations. Specifically, I (and other OAS archaeologists) believe that a popular archaeological model of Pueblo prehistory is wrong. We find serious inconsistencies in the recent proposal by Scott Ortman that modern Tewa peoples are the result of a mass late thirteenth-century migration from the Mesa Verde region.

Ortman’s interpretation has been widely accepted by the academic archaeological community, to the point of receiving awards and national recognition. Of more immediate concern is that the model has been embraced by many Tewa individuals and communities. That puts our objections in the light of challenging personal and community beliefs and identities.

Our case against the “Mesa Verde = Tewa” model is strong in archaeological terms. Ortman’s model is inconsistent with nuances of timing, material culture style, continuity (and lack of discontinuity) before and after the supposed “migration” event, incompatibility with linguistic models, etc. Our objections require relatively rich knowledge of northern Rio Grande prehistory as well as knowledge of the greater Four Corners region. Very few archaeologists are familiar with both. Also, the detailed evaluation of Ortman’s model has led to the development of an alternative that is a much better fit with the archaeological, linguistic, and cultural data from both regions.

We see Tewa communities developing in place in the northern Rio Grande from before AD 900 to the present. These communities contrast with a single cultural expression in the Four Corners region, from Gallup, NM, to Dolores, Colo. That uniformity dates back to at least AD 600 and is punctuated by multiple out-migrations beginning in the mid-twelth century (the environmental crisis that brought an end to Chaco as a central place) and ending with the abandonment of the Mesa Verde region in the late thirteenth century. Based on strong evidence from both ethnohistory and archaeology, the post-Chaco migration into the Rio Grande Valley is ancestral to modern Keres-speaking communities. It follows that the subsequent Mesa Verde abandonment also involved Keres-speaking communities, and we have strong evidence of their migration settlements to the west of the Rio Grande, all the way down to the Truth or Consequences area. Although we have evidence for possible individuals or families crossing the Rio Grande as part of the Mesa Verde migration, we have yet to find any evidence of migrant communities.

We have tested our own interpretations sufficiently and are confident that our position will prevail as the scientific process unfolds. But where does that leave us in our relationships with modern Pueblo communities? There’s no indication that Ortman is conscious of the risk he has taken, if he is wrong, by asserting the truth of his model to descendant communities. Although we believe he is incorrect, I also want to believe that we are more self-critical and accepting of inherent limitations in the scientific process. We will challenge Ortman in the scientific forum, but we will stop short of enlisting the beliefs of contemporary Pueblo people and communities as part of our debate.
The Chiles and Sherds event returns this year with a rare opportunity to visit an astonishing place. Generously, the San Cristobal Ranch has given us permission to hold our Chiles and Sherds program (tours and lunch) at San Cristobal Pueblo. Just 25 miles south of Santa Fe, this archaeological site combines a large Galisteo Basin pueblo with one of the most spectacular rock art sites in the Southwest. The human story includes dramatic responses to late twelfth-century climate change, village formation on a remarkable scale, the florescence of new religious ideas and institutions, Spanish colonization and the seventeenth-century mission system, the Pueblo Revolt, and ranching of the modern era. The Pueblo itself has an estimated 1,600 rooms organized around a dozen plazas. The rock art images are uncountable (estimated to be more than 10,000). Most of the images are pecked (petroglyphs), but some painted images are preserved in protected settings (pictographs).

The event will include small group tours (16–18 participants each) of rock art panels and of the pueblo itself, spaced at 30 minute intervals throughout the day. Each tour will last 2–3 hours and will cover about 2 miles of rough terrain, often up steep rocky slopes. Tours will be scheduled around a long lunch period, with some participants touring, then eating and others eating, then touring.

Included with event will be a single, day-long, physically strenuous hike to the pictographs of Pine Canyon. These images are preserved in small alcoves in steep side canyons and arroyos away from the pueblo. Hikers will be enrolled on a first-come-first-served basis, and the hike will be limited to 16 participants. This cross-county hike will cover more than 6 miles of extremely rugged terrain, requiring agility and stamina for a full day of back-country exploration (as many as five rattlesnakes have been encountered in past hikes). Participants will be provided a “box lunch” to carry and should bring their own water and snacks.

See Cristobal, continued on Page 3.
Financial Support

THANKS!

FINANCIAL DONATIONS MAKE OUR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH GOALS A REALITY

Everything OAS accomplishes outside of client services is supported by contributions. Often these contributions come in the form of volunteer support for OAS activities, but fundraising is essential to achieving our visions and goals for education and research.

This past calendar year you have helped us raise more than $44,000 in support of our education outreach program. That translates into 285 programs reaching more than 4,200 adults and 5,400 children. Many of these programs have been directed to Native American audiences, and many include input from our Native American staff members. These numbers, however, do not include secondary impacts. When Mollie Toll conducts trainings in the Project Archaeology curriculum, she gives teachers the tools to utilize the mystique and fun of archaeology as a vehicle to build critical thinking skills in students, whether in elementary, middle, or high school. A teacher will commonly use the program with 30–90 students each year, and teachers have been our best recruiters for bringing more educators into the program. Also, we try to be as efficient as we can, leveraging other sources of support to extend our reach. We are negotiating with the New Mexico State Library to reach out to community libraries in the northwestern corner of New Mexico, combining presentations to summer reading programs in rural communities with teacher trainings in the schools.

OAS staff builds research into client-supported projects, but we are constantly faced with opportunities that go beyond what clients are prepared to fund. The Dr. Don E. Pierce Endowment for Archaeology and Conservation is our major source of research support, but the intent of Don’s bequest was focused on building analytic capacity for the two organizations. The important work of data collection and writing using those tools stretches that definition. Although research is second to education in our priorities, contributions to the Foundation in support of OAS research are always welcome. Along those lines,

Gary Sanford, a retired nuclear engineer, offered his time and expertise to help OAS design and build a shielded space for the new digital radiography system. Ann Stodder, OAS bioarchaeologist, will use the system. Photo by Ann Stodder.

bequests are a remarkably powerful means of support. Anyone considering making archaeological education or research a beneficiary should contact Laura Waller at the Museum of New Mexico Foundation (505-982-6636, ext. 116).

Cristobal

Continued from Page 2.

Cost for the San Cristobal event will be $100 per FOA member, $110 per non-members. Children ages 10–16 are encouraged to join the pueblo and rock art tour, for a reduced fee of $60 each.

The Pine Canyon hike will cost $130 for each participant.

The voice mail system of the FOA hotline will be taking first-come-first-served reservations starting at 7 a.m. on Feb. 20. Call (505) 982-7799, ext. 7, and leave your name, phone number, number of participants in your party, and whether you are interested in the Pine Canyon hike or the San Cristobal tour. An FOA volunteer will return calls to confirm contact information and hike priority so out-of-town visitors can make travel arrangements. Calls for payment and tour time assignments will made in late April based on sign-up priority. Detailed information packets and waivers will be distributed in mid-May.
Susan Moga and Rick Montoya watch as the backhoe digs trenches in the yard of sculptor Eugenie Shonnard (1886–1978), near the corner of Galisteo Street and Paseo de Peralta. The trench excavation is part of an “archaeological reconnaissance” project, a step property owners are required to take when they want to build something new in Santa Fe’s historic district. In this case, the Museum of New Mexico Foundation is preparing to construct a new administrative building adjacent to the historic home and sculpture studio of Eugenie Shonnard.

Eugenie Shonnard trained at the New York School of Applied Design for Women, then at the Art Students League in the early twentieth century. She and her mother moved to Paris in 1911, so Eugenie could study with August Rodin and Émile Antoine Bourdelle. After returning to the United States at the start of World War I, Eugenie and her mother visited Santa Fe in 1925. They settled here permanently in 1927. Eugenie Shonnard’s mother purchased the home on Paseo de Peralta that same year and deeded it to Eugenie and her new husband, Edward Ludlam, in 1934. Eugenie’s husband encouraged her artistic endeavors, which encompassed all media. Her work was displayed in both international and local shows, and she had an international clientele.

Eugenie’s sculpture media included bronze, stone, wood, clay, and plaster. At the time, the lack of any bronze casting capacities within New Mexico constrained her work to smaller pieces and distant foundries. This encouraged her experimentation with alternative materials including an artificial medium she called Keenstone.

Eugenie continued to create bronze sculptures in Santa Fe, working with foundries in Paris, but she wanted the satisfaction of a process in which she had more control. Keenstone was her own Portland cement-like product that could be cast and then sculpted. The composition and texture were under her control, as was the shape and size of the “blank” cast.

The backhoe in Shonnard’s yard that morning cut through a depression, the remains of an old well that served the house from the 1880s to the 1950s. In addition to a Rainbo Bread wrapper (evidence of the 1950s filling of the well) the backhoe and hand excavation pulled hundreds of pounds of melted red brick out of the hole. The cumulative brain trust of OAS had seen a lot of burned features, but nothing like this—the closest thing being debris from burned buildings. Even the most extreme case never revealed anything close to the condition of these bricks. Many are melted to the point of flowing and congealing into basalt-like masses of black, glassy rock. Nothing else in the well looks to have been exposed to this level of heat. What had Eugenie been up to?

The bricks themselves offer some clues. They appear to have been local Penitentiary brick, manufactured by inmates of the old state penitentiary located in the vicinity of today’s South Capitol Complex in the first half of the twentieth century.

Bricks found on the Shonnard property were melted to the point of flowing and had congealed into basalt-like masses of black, glassy rock. Photo by OAS.
BROWN BAG TALKS

OAS brown bag lunch talks are free and open to the public. All talks start at noon and take place at the Center for New Mexico Archaeology, unless otherwise noted. Please be aware that other “unadvertised” talks are often listed on our web site, many with very little notice.

SETTLERS AND CONSUMERS: TEWÁ PUEBLO POTTERY FROM LATE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURY SITES

Tuesday, Feb. 13, by Dean Wilson

Much of what is known about pottery produced by the Tewá and other Pueblos during the Late Colonial and Early Territorial periods is based on whole painted vessels found in museums and in private collections. Recent studies of archaeological sherd assemblages from Northern Rio Grande Hispanic and Anglo sites occupied during this time have provided the opportunity to characterize a broader range of pottery produced by Pueblo potters for use in non-Native households. These collections also provide information on the nature and extent of interaction, influence, and trade between these groups.

WE WILL DATE ANY OLD THING: RADIOCARBON DATING AT THE CENTER FOR NEW MEXICO ARCHAEOLOGY

Tuesday, March 13, by Marvin Rowe, Jeff Cox, and Eric Blinman

The Low Energy Plasma Radiocarbon Sampling Laboratory is on the cutting edge of radiocarbon sampling. The ability to date extremely small amounts of organic materials through “gentle” surface oxidation has opened up a variety of dating applications difficult to address with conventional radiocarbon methods. These include the collection of stratigraphically sequential samples from sooted rockshelter ceilings, the dating of oxalate layers both underlying and overlying rock art images, and the dating of residues from sherds. Although it did not stretch the lab’s capabilities, the recent sampling of a reputed Picasso canvas proved an interesting diversion from normal archaeological work.

CRISIS AND PROSPECTS IN ARCHAEOMagnETIC DATING

Tuesday, April 17, by Jeff Cox and Eric Blinman

Two schools of archaeomagnetic (AM) dating have developed in North America. Both derived from the 1960s and 1970s research of Robert DuBois but diverged, taking on distinct identities in the 1980s. One school embraced mathematical and statistical rigor in curve construction and date estimation as a reaction to perceived subjectivity in DuBois’ procedures. The other continued and refined “subjective” approaches to AM dating, believing that statistical procedures were no more accurate and were in some cases flawed when compared with subjective dating results. The laboratory at OAS reflects the latter. Recent research has confirmed that “nonsensical” date ranges, produced by the former school, are putting the utility of AM dating at risk.

TALE OF TWO TYPES: MESA VERDE BLACK-ON-WHITE, SOCORRO BLACK-ON-WHITE AND PUEBLO MIGRATION HISTORIES

Tuesday, May 8, by Eric Blinman and Dean Wilson

Pottery has long been used by archaeologists to trace interaction and migration. Mesa Verde Black-on-white has been a popular focus of attention, since it was made right up to the late thirteenth century abandonment of the northern Four Corners region. Despite the common belief that Mesa Verde pottery documents the migration of people to the Rio Grande region, that assertion doesn’t hold up well when evidence is examined in detail. Neglected, however, is evidence supporting interaction and migration in the form of Socorro Black-on-white pottery. This underappreciated pottery provides a much stronger case for population interactions and movements in the late twelfth- through thirteenth-century periods.
Intriguing because, not only has there been little excavation done in this northeastern area of New Mexico—and thus the opportunity for OAS to contribute to that small base—but preliminary research in the area indicated the possibility of a rare Jicarilla Apache component. While the latter theory did not pan out reliably and a possible human tooth turned out to be that of a deer, such is the work of archaeologists: to find the meaning in the actual assemblages revealed through rigorous sampling, excavation, and analysis.

Located along NM 434 in Mora County, on the eastern edge of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the general vicinity of Coyote Canyon Rockshelter is complex both environmentally and culturally, as was the site itself. Actually comprising multiple shelters, the steeply set site is about 50 m (164 ft) west of Coyote Creek, at the base of a volcanic cliff at an elevation of 2,347 m (7,700 ft). Past roadwork as well as sedimentary deposition had disturbed the site area, and so a selective sampling strategy was chosen to maximize the data that might be extracted prior to NMDOT’s additional planned improvements to the roadway.

The earliest evidence of site use is the presence of four En Medio points, which date to the Late Archaic period, ca. 800 BC–AD 400. Radiocarbon results—including data drawn from OAS’s new low-energy plasma radiocarbon sampling lab—and ceramic and projectile point data indicate site use from at least AD 500 until AD 1400, and again in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both ceramics and chipped stone artifacts indicate the strongest links with the Taos area, to the north, however rare items, such as a single Cibola White Ware sherd and Narbona Pass and Zuni spotted cherts, also point to ties to the west. A few instances of rock art were not datable, but are preserved for future investigators as they are just outside the mitigation zone.

Ultimately, evidence suggests that LA 139965 was primarily used as a seasonal base camp for Ancestral Pueblo peoples hunting deer and smaller animals. Use by Jicarilla Apaches and other more transient groups is more difficult to discern, but evidence for later occupation by Hispanic sheepherders and possibly by Anglo travelers is present as well.

Also Published in 2017:

In addition to Archaeology Notes (AN) 477, myriad smaller planning, monitoring, and interim reports from fieldwork across the state were produced by OAS. Notable among these was the preliminary findings data-recovery report for the Old County Courthouse site in downtown Santa Fe, and the re-issue of AN 456, LA 159879: A Late Archaic/Early Agricultural Period Site in the Mimbres Bolson, Near Deming, Luna County, New Mexico (originally published in 2015, reissued summer 2017 in the NMDOT Cultural Resource Technical Series, 2015-3, 328 pp).

Archaeology Notes Series, Reports Forthcoming in 2018:


Also Coming Up:

Office of Archaeological Studies

The Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS) was the first museum program of its kind in the nation. OAS staff conducts international field and laboratory research, offers educational opportunities for school groups and civic organizations, and works to preserve, protect, and interpret prehistoric and historic sites throughout New Mexico.

Friends of Archaeology

The Friends of Archaeology is an interest group within the Museum of New Mexico Foundation that supports the OAS. To join the FOA, you need only become a member of the Museum of New Mexico Foundation and sign up. Visit www.nmarchaeology.org for information. We’re also on Facebook; just search for “@FriendsofArchaeology”.

Mission Statement

The mission of FOA is to support the OAS in the achievement of its archaeological services mandate from the State of New Mexico through participation in and funding of research and education projects.

Friends of Archaeology Board

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2018 Trips & Events

Day Hike: Gallina

On Saturday, April 28, Mike Bremer, Forest Archaeologist for the Santa Fe National Forest, will lead a tour of the Gallina area in northwestern New Mexico. The Gallina people entered this area, possibly en masse, in the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries and lived in small farming villages that will be visited during this tour. The Gallina people also constructed towers now viewed as having a defensive or possibly spiritual context. The area was entirely depopulated by 1300. Participants will visit sites in the Llaves Valley, including Nogales and Rattlesnake Ridge, as well as other sites in the Golondrinas Mesa area. This 2.5 mile (round trip) hike will be moderate or strenuous in difficulty. The first 1.25 miles will be all uphill on a rugged trail with a steep change in elevation. For more information or to make reservations call (505) 982-7799, ext. 6, after 7 a.m., starting March 27. The cost will be $85 for FOA members and $95 for non-FOA members.

Event at CNMA: Harvest Days

Come celebrate Harvest Days on Saturday, Sept. 15, at CNMA. Explore Rio Grande farming and ethnobotany practices and sample native cuisine. To make reservations call (505) 982-7799, ext. 6, after 7 a.m., starting Aug. 7. The cost will be $85 for FOA members and $95 for non-FOA members.

Multi-Day Trip: The Pre-History of the Salinas Pueblos, the Other Galisteo Basin

An intriguing two-and-a-half day tour of the Salinas region will be offered Sept. 28, 29, and 30. Our FOA group will visit public National Park Service sites as well as large pueblos in the Cibola National Forest usually considered off-limits to the public. The group will also visit an AD 900–1100 jacal village. On Friday, archaeologist and guide Ward Beers will discuss the history of these sites and offer an overview of the prehistoric Salinas occupation. This hike is considered strenuous with some serious climbing and hiking to several sites. Overnight accommodations in Corona are necessary; arrangements will need to be made separately by individual participants. Lunch will be provided Saturday and Sunday. To make reservations call (505) 982-7799, ext. 7, after 7 a.m., starting Aug. 28. Cost is $225 for FOA members and $250 for non-members. A brown bag talk by Ward Beers will be offered in August at CNMA.

Event at CNMA: International Archaeology Day

This year’s event will be held Saturday, Oct. 20, at CNMA. Throw atlatls, shoot arrows, make yucca fiber items, watch pottery firings, learn about coiled basketry, and speak with working archaeologists at this free event.

Holiday Party and Auction

Celebrate the season at a festive afternoon event on Sunday, Nov. 4, with a special buffet and an engaging silent auction. More information is coming soon.

Updates and information on these and other upcoming events will be available on our website at www.nmarchaeology.org and in upcoming newsletters.
Shonnard

Continued from Page 4.

century and were used throughout Santa Fe. It appears Eugenie dry-laid the bricks rather than bedding them in mortar, a technique that assumes exposure to fire. Although the structure had been broken into head-sized chunks before disposal, portions retain evidence of walls, a floor, and the corners of a box or chamber.

The most dramatic quality is the melting. Even where edges of the bricks are evident on some chunk exteriors, the interior surfaces seem to have flowed like lava. Some melted material incorporates nuggets of coal fuel and shale, but x-ray fluorescence analysis of one chunk by Bob Florek and Marvin Rowe reveals no traces of either copper or tin, which would have been evidence of bronze casting.

Our best guess is that we are looking at Eugenie’s attempt at the home manufacture of the ingredients for Keenstone, her favorite sculpture material. We have yet to find her specific recipe, but it is described as incorporating roasted limestone, shale, and gypsum. The process of roasting limestone for cement must achieve temperatures of about 1500° C (2650° F), much hotter than required for most pottery. After roasting, the ingredients were crushed and mixed, then treated as if they were Portland cement.

Whatever Eugenie’s goals, the chunks in the well testify to a dramatic failure. The roasting facility in Shonnard’s back yard may have worked for a while, but its final use would have been a remarkable sight to see—its charge of fuel and ingredients glowing white hot with a heat so intense and prolonged that Eugenie’s furnace consumed itself, melting and collapsing the Penitentiary brick into artificial rock. By the time it cooled, the mass could only have been broken up and disposed of as conveniently as possible—in this case, down the well, consigning the flaming experience to the halls of memory and archaeology.

Make Your Mark on NM Archaeology!

Please consider supporting the Office of Archaeological Studies by making a gift to education or research by check, credit, stock, IRA rollover, or planned gift this year.

Your tax-deductible donation through the Museum of New Mexico Foundation will have a lasting impact throughout the state. One hundred percent of your donation will be directed to the Office of Archaeological Studies. No administrative fees are charged.

Give online: www.museumfoundation.org/support-archaeology.

For questions about giving, or to donate, contact Laura Waller, Director of Leadership Giving, at (505)982-6366, ext. 116, or via email at laura@museumfoundation.org.