

# SANTA CRUZ ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Number 1

July, 1972

Here it is--our first newsletter! SCAS is taking shape and gathering friends weekly--much interest and enthusiasm was generated by SCR-20, and the Laguna Creek site survey trip. Our treasurer, Starr Gurcke, has a treasury to preside over, and our secretary, Jean Stafford, has received copies of by-laws and well-wishes from the San Luis Obispo and Sacramento groups. These topics will be discussed at our next general meeting, July 28.

We owe a great deal to our professional advisor, Rob Edwards, whose expectations of a coordinated effort by professionals, students, and amateurs to recognize and preserve Santa Cruz area prehistory we hope to fulfill. Charles Prentiss and the Santa Cruz City Museum, whose support and facilities were freely given for classes and artifact processing, deserves our thanks and appreciation. One aim of SCAS is to work in a supportive role with the museum in bringing order to the California Indian collection. The museum has an ambitious project with an exciting concept planned for fall. Many new cases will be added, and the focus will be on the interrelationship of biological, kinship, religious and mythological systems. What happens to a culture when these systems become unbalanced will be portrayed. The opening of the new exhibit is planned for the spring of '73.

We have much work ahead of us, and a necessity to define long-range and immediate goals. It is sincerely hoped that none of our members and friends lose their enthusiasm during the fumbings to get started--we need support to complete our efforts to survey existing and rumored sites, interview the growing list of people with artifacts or knowledge of them, chase down rumors, and educate the public. So--let's begin!  
Micki Farley, President

### FIRST MEETING

The evening of May 30 witnessed the coming together of many faces for our first formal SCAS meeting. Included were students from Cabrillo College and community members who had either attended Rob Edwards' recent Community Services course on Archaeology for the interested at the Santa Cruz Natural History Museum, or had expressed an interest in local archaeology.

Informal discussion on the archaeological interests of the various individuals provided the group an opportunity to become better acquainted. Some of the topics under discussion included inquiries Cari Snyder and Micki Farley had made into the existence of caves along Escalona Drive in Santa Cruz; the possibility of reconstructing the kinship relations of the local Costanoans from records kept at the Santa Cruz Mission; coordinating our activities with those of the Santa Cruz Museum, whose staff has been most cooperative; and locating and cataloging private local collections.

Starr Gurcke had brought artifacts from the surface of SCR-24 on Beach Hill which were turned in for cataloging. A nouncement was made of the exhibit prepared by Cabrillo College students covering the historical archaeology of the Zavante Villa site which opened in June and is now continuing in the newly restored Octagon Building at Front and Cooper Streets.

## FIRST MEETING cont.

Rob Edwards invited anyone interested to attend a Cabrillo College two-week course in archaeological excavation which was to begin the following Monday at a site in Bonny Doon. The property owner, Mr. Allan Brown, was present and his remarks on artifacts that had been previously found at the site evoked considerable enthusiasm.

The above discussions underlined the wide range of interests in the group and its enthusiasm to tackle the many jobs awaiting us. They also pointed up the need for better organization such that individual efforts will not be duplicated and group goals can be realized in a coordinated and systematic manner. We had received a copy of the by-laws of the San Luis Obispo society and are awaiting replies to our inquiries to other societies. We hope these will provide a guide for drawing up our own organization. A meeting was set for July 28 for this purpose.

The evening concluded with the showing of a video-tape of Rob Edwards' interviews with two archaeologists conducting separate excavations at the Buchanan site near Madera. In the first interview Dr. Mike Moratto of San Francisco State explained how he was carefully excavating to retrieve as much data as possible. His methods contrasted with those of Tom King of UC Riverside. King had formulated the problem of determining if stratification existed in Indian social organization of this area as evidenced by the kind of burials, locations, and associated artifacts of groups or individuals. His methods--which included bulldozing off the surface--were selected to give him the greatest amount of data possible relative to his problem before the site was destroyed. The film was informative and provoked a lively discussion on current methods and theory in practice.

June 24 was set for a site survey trip, and July 28 for the next general meeting, before adjournment.

## SECOND MEETING--SITE SURVEY

Thirteen SCAS members met at Davenport on the morning of June 24 and proceeded to Laguna Creek on the old Majors ranch to survey archaeological sites. Five sites had previously been recorded, and the purpose of the present survey was to train members in discovery, determination of site limits, transit use, and recording field sites.

The sites are all located within a one mile distance along the eastern side of Laguna Creek. Surface occupation indications consist almost entirely of molluscan remains and chipped chert, but the sites vary in size as well as density of surface remains.

The largest site, CA-SCR-15, was found to be of smaller extent upon actual measurement than had previously been estimated on the original site survey. On the other hand, CA-SCR-13 extends over a much larger area. The latter extension covers an additional estimated area of 200 square feet uphill on the easterly side and is heavily overgrown with vegetation. Scattered light shell midden, two bedrock mortars, and a chert drill were found on the surface.

Among other surface artifacts collected on these sites were an obsidian point on the dirt road between SCR-13 and SCR-14; and a green chert projectile point from SCR-15.

An attempt was made to determine if the canyon walls of Laguna Creek contained caves suitable for occupation, but none were discovered. Caves are known to exist in the Santa Cruz area and some have been reported to contain petroglyphs, but to date none have been surveyed. Several SCAS members are presently engaged in interviewing informants and seeking out these caves.

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT CA-Scr-20

by Jean Stafford

SCAS was fortunate in being invited to participate in a June 5-18 special summer session course, Field Experience in Archaeological Techniques. Site location of the class, originally scheduled for Marin county, was changed a few weeks before the course began to a site at Malibu Beach, where reports of urgent need for salvage work had been received. As the group assembled at Cabrillo College with swim suits and beach gear packed, Rob Edwards, instructor, announced that the location of the dig had been changed once more and would be held practically in our own back yard.

Scr-20, a rich site in the Bonny Doon area in the Santa Cruz mountains, was scheduled for destruction in a few weeks. The soil was to be removed by a San Jose contractor for use in subdivisions. Property owner, Mr. Allan Brown, who has long had an interest in local archaeology, offered the site for excavation prior to its destruction. Our appreciation must also be extended to him for providing us access to his cabin located adjacent to the site. Here a modern kitchen, space to set up a lab, and certain plumbing niceties were afforded us, all in a beautiful redwood grove setting. Rob Edwards, Director; Bill Roop and Mary Asturias, Teaching Assistants from San Francisco State; thirteen students from Cabrillo College; and four members of SCAS camped on the site and participated in the excavation.

Scr-20 is located about five miles from the ocean at an elevation of 1560 feet and consists of a mound of midden some 80 by 70 meters in area. Vegetation typical of this ecotone--where redwood forests meet the flora of lower elevations of the Coast Range--would have provided an abundant food supply for the Costanoans here. Shell, chert, bone fragments, and fire cracked rock occur on the surface.

The site has been disturbed in the past by pot hunters, a bulldozer had cut two trenches four feet deep across it, and gophers had added their usual disturbances. In addition, it had been cultivated to a depth of about twelve inches from the 1880's to the early 1960's.

Areas to be excavated were located in the least disturbed parts of the site and consisted of eight units, each 1x2 meters. These were excavated to bedrock which averaged about 130 Cm. in depth.

The first level, 0-20 Cm., was dug with shovel and 1/4" screen but succeeding levels were 10 Cm. deep, dug with trowel, and screen on most pits was reduced to 1/8" mesh. A micro unit used 1/8" screen and saved all materials remaining in the screen for future analysis.

During the course of excavation students received instruction on transit use, contour mapping, staking out units, proper excavation techniques, identification of artifacts, and how to fill out many forms--unit level records, artifact records, feature records, field specimen catalogue sheets, and field notebooks--and most of these in duplicate! As unit levels were completed, shaped or utilized artifacts were washed and catalogued, but other lithic, shell, and bone remains were bagged for future analysis in the college lab.

Examination and tentative interpretation of artifacts reveal that three sets of food resources were utilized on the site. First, fishing was evident by the presence of a bone fish hook and a stone fishweight, probably for use on nets. An artificially flattened whalebone piece was possibly used as an abalone pry and a worked antler might also have served this purpose. Molluscan remains as evidence of use of ocean resources included abalone (Haliotis sp.), California mussel (Mytilus californianus), and the bay mussel (Mytilus edulis).

Secondly, small triangular, finely retouched, and usually notched points, probably used as arrow points, were frequent in the uppermost levels to

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT CA-Scr-20 cont.

a depth of 30 Cm. and infer hunting. Larger and more crudely shaped projectile points from lower levels also attest to hunting activities. Deer bones showing butchering marks were also present.

And, finally, presence of manos, mortars, and pestles indicates seed grinding and the use of acorns as a major dietary item. Species providing seeds in the immediate vicinity of the site included the tanbark oak (Lithocarpus densiflora), California live oak (Quercus agrifolia), and buckeye or horse chestnut (Aesculus californica). Some carbonized acorn shells were also found.

Some trade with more distant areas was indicated by the presence of several large quartz crystals; several points, a drill, and a few waste flakes of obsidian; and a steatite pipe fragment. The rarity of waste obsidian flakes might infer that finished obsidian tools were traded to the site rather than the raw material itself. Obsidian tools were found throughout the levels indicating such trade had been established and continued for a considerable period of time.

Most chipped stone tools and waste flakes were of Monterey banded chert which is prevalent on the beaches at Año Nuevo, some eighteen miles to the north, although it is also found on beaches closer to Bonny Doon. Tools of chert included scrapers, knives, points, and a drill. Some may have been hafted, the stone being affixed to the shaft by means of asphaltum. One local source is a natural asphalt pit located about 2 1/2 miles from this site and possibly this natural pit provided the necessary raw material. Traces of asphaltum were also found on one olivella shell.

Personal adornment was indicated by the presence of two clamshell disk beads and many olivella beads. Most of the latter are spire lopped, although square, incised, and perforated beads are present. Some abalone pieces show indications of having been worked and may have been used as pendants. A biconically perforated siltstone disk may have served a similar purpose. Ochre, though rare, was also present.

The site appears to have had various activity areas although any accurate analysis of these must await a more thorough examination of the evidence and coordination of the levels in the various pits--since activity centers probably shifted through time. However, unit 8, for example, contained no food grinding equipment but yielded a high frequency of bone awl tips and fragments, probably used for basketry making. In contrast, bone awls were rare in unit 4, but it contained several mortars, pestles, and manos which indicate that this area was probably used more frequently for food processing.

Features noted in several units included hearths, concentrated shell deposits, and house floors. However, no extensive or complete house floor with post holes was noted.

Whether the site was occupied all year or only seasonally remains to be determined. Food supply would have been plentiful here all year, but the absence of burials had led to the conclusion that it was probably a seasonal camp. In addition, artifacts had been sparse or absent in levels from 20-40 Cm., this multi-component evidence invoking the conclusion that the site had been vacated or at most occupied only intermittently for the period of time represented by these levels.

At the end of the scheduled two weeks of excavation, two units had not yet reached bedrock. Several students volunteered to assist in continuing the units on the following weekend. Subsequently, a fragment of a human mandible with P<sub>2</sub> and M<sub>1</sub> was recovered from one of these units. Finally, on the very last day as Bill Roop and Allan Lonnberg were approaching bedrock on unit 4 at a depth of 170-180 Cm., the first

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT CA-SCR-20 cont.

burial was exposed. And, also true to form, only part of the burial appeared in the northeastern corner, the remainder extending into unexcavated units. Foot and leg bones were exposed and the position of these bones seem to indicate that the burial was probably flexed and faced toward the southwest. From levels just above the burial a quartz crystal and an obsidian flake had been recovered.

While the presence of burials may argue for a more permanent settlement, a definite conclusion requires more data. It is, of course, possible that for some years the site was occupied permanently while during another period occupation was intermittent.

Based on stone tool typology, especially with reference to projectile points in lower levels, the site may have been occupied as early as

CLASSES cont.

- Santa Cruz Mountains, as the buildings are to be destroyed as part of the Zayante watershed of the Santa Cruz Water Department. Congratulations to Cari Snyder and the many Cabrillo students who put a great deal of time and work into this project.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

July 25 is the date set for public hearing before the City Council of the new City Ordinance for protection and preservation of historical structures, districts, and heritage trees. SCAS, and many others, feel that this ordinance is a good one but that the wording should specifically include archaeological sites. Members are being contacted to write letters to this effect to the City Councilmembers, and to attend the public hearing. Copies of the second and third drafts of this ord-

Changes through time are evident from the lower to higher levels as, for example, with points--the earlier ones larger and cruder than those of later levels. However, any detailed interpretation of culture change must await the reports to be written after artifacts and data have been thoroughly studied. In fact, all inferences suggested above will undoubtedly be altered and restructured as a consequence of final analysis--and are therefore to be considered only as rough preliminary interpretations of the evidence.

#### UP-COMING AND CURRENT CLASSES OF INTEREST

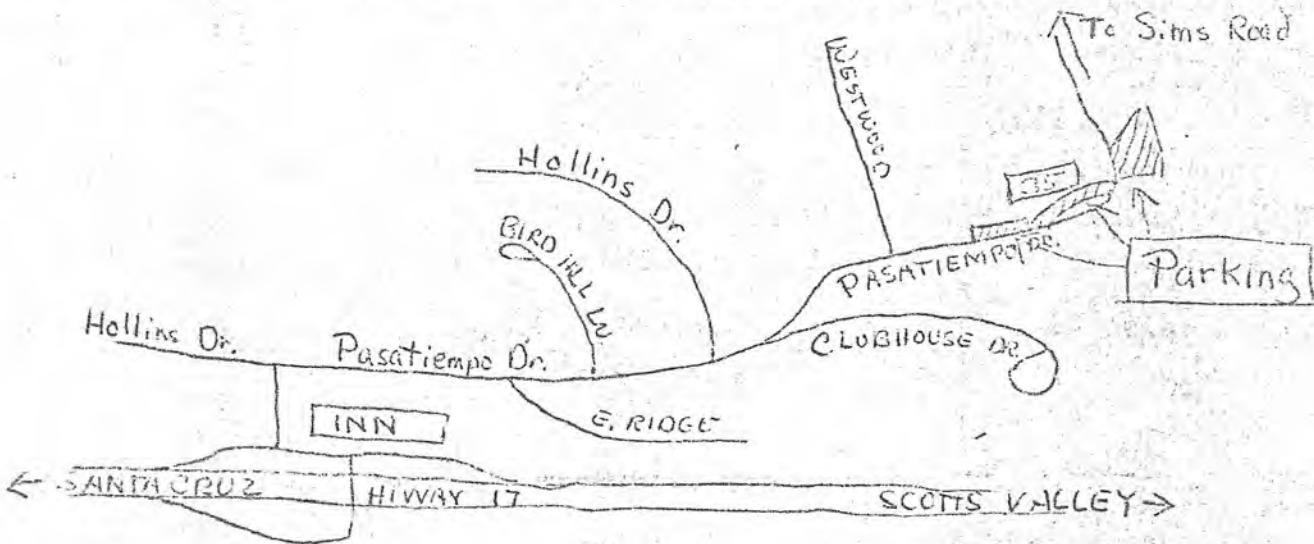
Introduction to Archaeology, An Undergraduate Seminar in Anthropology called Native Peoples of California, and Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology are courses to be offered by Bob Edwards in the Fall at Cabrillo College. Courses in Physical Anthropology, and an Undergraduate Seminar in Anthropology called Religion and Anthropology will be offered by Jim Funaro. Introduction to Cultural Anthropology will also be offered at night--instructor not selected at this time. Please consult the 72-73 Catalog and Fall 72 Class Schedule for information.

Anthro. 106X--Introduction to California Indians is a San Jose State Extension course also being offered by Bob Edwards at Cabrillo College in the Fall. The cost of this course is \$72--see San Jose State Extension Catalog for details.

This newsletter appeared too late to catch a one-day series of talks and lectures on The Indian in Contemporary California July 15 at UCSC. This was part of a class entitled Indians of California running four Saturdays, July 8--August 5. Brysis Buchanan offered a course July 10-14 on Introduction to Survival Skills of Pioneers and the California Indians, and another entitled Indian and Pioneer Uses of Plants July 17-21--these through the Education Dept. of UCSC Extension. It is hoped that anyone attending these classes will tell others of their new skills and knowledge at our July 28 meeting.

Be sure and see the exhibit at the recently refurbished Octagon Building next to the Cooper House--many interesting displays of early Santa Cruz life; the one of MOST interest being artifacts and photographs from the Zavante historical dig. This case contains an interesting account of the history of Zavante Villa and the work that went into reconstructing the unhurried holiday life of an earlier era. This glimpse is the only one we will get of that aspect of turn-of-the-century life in the

After the business meeting, Rob Edwards will show slides of the Bonny Doon dig, and display available artifacts from the site. Many items up for discussion--please come, share your views, sign up for site survey and interview teams--phone if you need a ride or would like to take someone from your area. Guests and interested persons are invited.



Take Pasatiempo exit from Hiway 17. 5th house on left after Westwood. Parking in driveway, room for more at top of drive next to mailboxes, and just around curve on right.

NFW ADDRESS

Members please note that the mailing address for SCAS is in care of the City Museum--correspondence and membership dues may be sent to this address.

FINAL NOTE from Rob Edwards

If a society is to "live", certain things are needed--interest, commitment, time, and some money--Please pay dues (\$5.00 regular membership, \$8.50 family, \$2.50 student) as soon as possible to Starr Gurcke in person or mail in. Also, if you can't come to meetings, let us know your interest is there or we may discontinue this newsletter.

See you July 28