

Calgary Centre - 2018/2019 Speaker Series

SEPT 19th:

Presenter: Jack Brink

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Curator Emeritus, Royal Alberta Museum

Title: Archaeological Survey, and a UNESCO World Heritage Nomination, for Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park.

Writing-on-Stone Park (WOS) is home to one of the largest collections of rock art (petroglyphs and pictographs) in North America. Spread over a vast region of the Milk River valley and tributary coulees are thousands of carved and painted rock art images. So important is this rock art and associated landscape that the Park area has been proposed for designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This nomination is currently under consideration. In anticipation of the nomination Alberta Parks acquired two new parcels of land located along the Milk River to the west of the current park. In total some 14 quarter sections were acquired. I volunteered to conduct an initial archaeological review of these new lands in order to give Parks a better understanding of heritage resources on their property. In this talk I will discuss the results of these surveys, including new discoveries of rock art, historic graffiti, archaeological and historic sites. In addition, I will provide an inside look at the UNESCO nomination process that took 13 years to complete.

OCT 17th:

Presenter: Ben Potter (University of Alaska, Fairbanks)

Title: Title: Ancient Beringians and the Colonization of the Americas

Recent genetic analyses of two buried infants from Alaska reveal a previously unknown group of people, called Ancient Beringians, that play an important role in illuminating the early prehistory of Native Americans. These and other recent genetic analyses have transformed our understanding of the peopling of the Americas. This presentation explores this new genetic framework, rigorously connected to archaeology and paleoecology of Siberia, Beringia and Northwestern North America. The timing of migrations, the routes used, including the interior Ice-Free-Corridor and coastal route (or both), and the later genetic diversification of Native Americans are discussed. The integration of these sciences provides for novel models of this first colonization of the Americas.

NOV 21th:

Presenter: Terence Clark

Assistant Professor, University of Saskatchewan and Director of the shíshálh Archaeological Research Project

Title: *T'i s-tsitsiy-im-ut-?e* (They worked here): the shíshálh Archaeological Research Project (sARP)

This talk will discuss the results of the shíshálh Archaeological Research Project, a long-term collaborative project based in Sechelt, BC. SARP has uncovered the most elaborate pre-contact burials yet known in Canada, with one individual interred with over 350,000 ground stone beads. This talk will discuss previous fieldwork activities and outline the future directions of the project. Topics will include coastal survey, shell midden excavation, public archaeology, museum exhibitions, landscapes of meaning, community-based research, and mortuary archaeology.

JANUARY 16th:

Presenter: Dr. Elizabeth H. Paris, University of Calgary

Title: Ancient Maya Lithic Technology in the Jovel Valley of Chiapas, Mexico

The ancient Maya are widely recognized for their extensive development of chipped stone tool technology. The objects they created range from elaborate ceremonial objects to the tools that supported the everyday activities of ordinary households. This presentation examines the domestic lithic assemblages from sites in the Jovel Valley of highland Chiapas, which forms the western frontier of the Maya culture area. Located within a mountainous karstic plateau, valley residents had access to multiple sources of high-quality, fine-grained chert, and created diverse assemblages of formal and informal tools. Chert tool production and use in the Jovel Valley was particularly associated with the political center of Moxviquil, where assemblages emphasize weapons production, maguey fiber processing, woodworking, and cross-valley exchange. I also examine the significance of imported obsidian blades and chert spear points within the Jovel Valley, in the context of a robust, local production sphere.

FEB 20st:

Presenter: Jenna Hurtubise

***Title:* Entanglements of Conquest: The Chimú conquest of the Casma at Pan de Azúcar de Nepeña, Nepeña Valley, Peru**

From the Romans to the Inca, empires have conquered regional ethnic groups via a multitude of direct and indirect tactics to gain territory and control resource extraction. Collective agency plays a key role in structuring interactions between locals and foreign intruders that cause transformations in material culture and cultural practices of both groups. These interactions are complex and dynamic in nature as locals respond in varying and multiple ways to episodes of conquest in relation to their own political and economic agendas, as well as how they strategize to make sense of these encounters. I am specifically interested in how locals responded immediately after conquest. In what ways were the responses dictated by the foreign states' means of conquest, as well as indigenous agendas and values? How are negotiations between local and foreign elites and administrators at the moment of conquest reflected culturally and biologically? Are certain mediums more expressive and susceptible to change than others during this time of socio-political stress? This research focuses on these shifting and fluid responses through examining the Chimú conquest of the Casma at Pan de Azúcar de Nepeña, located in the Nepeña Valley, Peru, during the Late Intermediate Period (A.D. 1000 – 1400). Through an analysis of the cultural (architecture, ceramics, mortuary practices) and biological (skeletal analysis) data at Pan de Azúcar de Nepeña I examine the relationship and interactions between the Chimú and Casma before, during, and after conquest as well as how the Casma responded in varying ways to Chimú conquest.

MARCH 20th: check date

Presenter: Patrick Rennie

***Title:* The MacHaffie Site and its Place in NW Plains Archaeology**

The MacHaffie Site (24JF4), located in SW Montana, has perhaps the best name recognition, while being the most poorly documented multi-component archaeology resource in the NW Plains. It is also a site with connections to the University of Calgary. Both Dr. Richard G. Forbis and Leslie B. Davis conducted excavations at the site — the former in 1951 and the latter from 1989 sporadically until 2010. Although generally thought of as a Folsom campsite, the earliest and best documented occupations appear to be those of Scottsbluff. The presentation will discuss recent efforts to fully catalogue and analyze the entire MacHaffie collection, the site geomorphology, and the current interpretations of that work.

APRIL 17th: check date

Presenter: Kisha Supernant

Title: Mobility, Material Culture, and Metis Identity: A Comparison of 19th Century Wintering Camps in the Canadian West

Relationships between artifact assemblages and cultural identities are complex and difficult to disentangle. The Canadian west during the 1800s provides an interesting historical and archaeological case study that has potential to shed light on the dynamics of settlement, material culture, and the mobile nature of Métis peoples. Based originally in the Red River Settlement, some of the Métis began to expand west after 1845, forming interconnected wintering communities to participate in winter bison hunting. These wintering communities were almost entirely inhabited by Métis families, so the assemblages from wintering sites present a test case to examine the day to day material culture of the Métis hunting brigades during the mid- to late- 1800s. In this paper, I examine patterns from previous and new excavations of Métis wintering sites in Alberta and Saskatchewan to explore how Metis communities balanced the mobility of buffalo hunting with the need for a protected home base during the difficult prairie winters. I compare assemblages across sites and make inferences about the complex nature of Métis identities during the nineteenth century, including the relationship between mobility, family, and the economics of buffalo hunting.