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# HISTORY OF THE CHAMA RIVER VALLEY AND EXCAVATIONS AT THE GR2 ROCKSHELTER: 6,000 YEARS OF HUMAN OCCUPATION IN THE CHAMA VALLEY

Bradley J. Vierra

7:30 PM, Tuesday October 15, 2024 Albuquerque Museum of Art and History 2000 Mountain Road NW

(Also available online)

Dr. Vierra received his Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of New Mexico in 1992. He is currently an Affiliated Scholar at New Mexico State University and is a recipient of the 2019 New Mexico State Historic Preservation Award. Most recently he was the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer at the Pueblo de San Ildefonso. Over the past forty years he has conducted pure and applied research in archaeology, most of which has been done in the American Southwest and northern Mexico. However, he has also worked in California, Washington, and Texas, as well as France, Portugal, and Senegal.

His research interests include hunter-gatherer archaeology, stone tool technology, origins of agriculture, Archaic in the American Southwest, and Mesolithic in southwestern Europe. The University of Utah Press recently published his edited volume entitled "The Archaic Southwest: Foragers in an Arid Land" (2018). He has also edited the monographs "From Mountaintop to Valley Bottom: Understanding Past Land Use in the Northern Rio Grande Valley, New Mexico" (2013), and "The Late Archaic Across the Borderlands: Foraging to Farming" (2005) and co-edited a book with Dr. Bousman entitled "From the Pleistocene to the Holocene: Human Organization and Cultural Transformations in Prehistoric North America" (2012).

#### **Selected Publications**

Vierra, B. 2008. "Early Agriculture on the Southwestern Periphery of the Colorado Plateau: Diversity in Tactics." In *Archaeology Without Borders*, edited by L. Webster and M. McBrinn, pp. 71-88. University of Colorado Press, Boulder.

Vierra, B. 2011. "Foraging Societies in an Arid Environment: Coping with Change in the Greater Southwest." In *Movement, Connectivity and Landscape Change: The 20th Anniversary of the Southwest Symposium*, edited by M. Nelson and C. Strawhacker, pp. 25-44. University of Colorado Press, Boulder.

Vierra, B. and M. McBrinn. 2016. "Resistant Foragers: Foraging and Maize Cultivation in the Northern Rio Grande Valley." In *Late Holocene Research on Foragers and Farmers in the Desert West*, edited by B. Roth and M. McBrinn, pp. 58-77. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

McBrinn, M. and B. Vierra. 2017. "The Southwest Archaic." In *The Oxford Handbook of Southwestern Archaeology*, edited by B. Mills and S. Fowles, pp. 231-246. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Vierra, B. and A. Faustino Carvalho. 2017. "The Mesolithic-Neolithic Transition: The View from Southwest Europe and the American Southwest." In *Quaternary International* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quaint.2017.09.018.

This program will be presented at the regular members meeting in the Albuquerque Museum Auditorium as well as available on Zoom. Prior to the meeting, an email message with the Zoom link will be sent to members.

# MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2024, MEETING OF THE ALBUQUERQUE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

President Evan Kay called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. He welcomed new members and guests, and thanked Melinda Kelly for the evening's refreshments.

**MINUTES:** Minutes for the July 2024 meeting were approved as published in the newsletter.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Sole income for the past month was \$15.00 from the sale of a *Pottery Southwest* publication and two *Pottery Southwest* CDs. The only operating expense was the monthly \$16.77 Zoom license fee. There were no program expenses. The checking account balance is \$4,003.47.

#### VICE PRESIDENTS' REPORTS

Bob Hitchcock: Brad Vierra will be speaking at October's meeting on the Archaic and Doug Bamforth will be speaking at November's meeting about the Great Plains.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Membership** – **Mary Raje:** Five students have responded to an email request to update their membership information for this school year.

**Newsletter –Sherry Kircher:** There were some issues with emails kicked back from Comcast email accounts from Lobo. Gretchen reported that she had not received her paper copy.

Maxwell Collections (Lab) – Donna Rospopo reported that the team is working on the Chamisal collection.

**Rock Art – Carol Chamberland:** Rock Art recording is on hold at present.

**Seminars – Carol Chamberland:** On August 24 Tom Windes gave a successful seminar on tree ring dating. Next seminar will be in November.

### Field Trips – Pat Harris:

Upcoming (available for signup in the lobby, or via trips@abgarchaeology.org):

- Sunday, October 6: Tsama is an ancestral Tewa community Pueblo along the Rio Chama near Abiquiu. The leader will be Mandy Woods with the Archaeological Conservancy. Tom Windes and Pete McKenna excavated the site. Limited to 10 members and 10 cars.
- Saturday, October 19: Ponderosa site in the Jemez with two large ancestral pueblos and a great kiva. Will be led by US Forest Service Archaeologist, Becky Baisden. Limited to 20 members. ("Twin Sisters" pueblos about a half mile away.)

In planning stages (no signup yet):

• Saturday, November 9: San Jose de las Huertas in Placitas, with the Archaeological Conservancy. The site consists of an old village and pueblo. Limited to 20 members.

Trip information sources are the AAS newsletter, published the second week of the month; the meeting, on the 3rd Tuesday of the month; the AAS website at www.abqarchaeology.org, as soon as the trip is ready for signup; and email announcements on occasion.

#### ONGOING BUSINESS

Annual board member elections are coming up this fall. The slate of nominees will be announced in October. Mary Raje and Sherry Kircher make up the nominating committee. President Kay encouraged members to get involved and they may reach out for more information to abqarchaeology.org. He said that for avocational societies such as AAS, the Board is the backbone of the organizations.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Gretchen Obenauf: Members are encouraged to join the nonprofit Archaeological Conservancy, if they haven't already done so.

# **ADJOURNMENT**

The business meeting was adjourned by Evan Kay at 7:50 p.m.

#### **SPEAKER**

Vice President Robert Hitchcock introduced the night's speaker, Devin Pettigrew, who gave a lecture on "Insights from Exploratory Experiments with the Atlatl and Dart: Reconsidering Megafauna Hunting Potential in the Pleistocene." Robert gave a brief bio and description of this recent research.

# FIELD TRIP NEWS ~ PAT HARRIS, FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR

During the Ponderosa area Field Trip on October 19<sup>th</sup>, we'll visit the "Big and Little" Pueblos which are within 100 yards of each other with a great kiva between them. These are close to the road. This trip is limited to 20 members, and we have reached that number. I am forming a wait list. Sign up at info@abqarchaeology.org.

On November 9<sup>th</sup>, a field trip is planned to San Jose de las Huertas in Placitas. The details are not available yet. However, people are already signing up and you're welcome to sign up and as soon as details are known you'll be notified. Sign up at info@abqarchaeology.org.

#### **BOOK REVIEW**

*El Fin del Mundo: A Clovis Site in Sonora, Mexico*, edited by Vance T. Holliday, Guadalupe Sánchez, and Ismael Sánchez-Morales. Anthropological Papers No. 84. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. 2024. xii+255 pp., 94 figures, 77 tables, abstract, bibliography, index, appendices. \$22.95 paperback (ISBN 9780816552993), \$22.95 eBook (ISBN 9780816553006).

Reviewed by Thatcher A. Seltzer-Rogers

The lifeway of the earliest recognizable hunter-gather archaeological complex, Clovis, during the Late Pleistocene in the American Southwest is well known from sites such as its namesake Clovis, Mockingbird Gap, and a series of mammoth kill sites and campsites clustered along the Middle San Pedro valley in southeastern Arizona, among others. In fact, the set of famous sites (Lehner, Leikem, Murray Springs, Naco, and Navarette) along the Middle San Pedro established the model of Clovis hunters as big-game specialists and forms the densest intact, buried concentration of Clovis sites yet known (Haynes and Huckell, 2007). To the south of the United States-Mexico international border, however, Sonoran archaeologists have long known of several Clovis sites, mostly surface finds, until the discovery of El Fin del Mundo, located about sixty miles (100 km) northwest of Hermosillo (Sánchez 2016). This volume reports the results of investigations at the site, the first excavation of a Clovis site outside of the United States, conducted over seven field seasons by a binational research team headed by Vance Holliday (Executive Director of the Argonaut Archaeological Research Fund), Guadalupe Sánchez (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia researcher in Sonora), and Ismael Sánchez-Morales (Curator at Arizona Museum of Natural History).

The first chapter presents a summary of the site and the history of research there, as well as laying out the project's objectives and this volume's contents. The following chapter describes investigation of the site's stratigraphy and age. The third chapter builds upon the geomorphological focus of the prior chapter by presenting the results of soil and sediment morphological analysis. The fourth chapter presents the fieldwork excavations in the upper bonebed, which is a Clovis aged feature at the site. The fifth chapter describes the lithic artifacts collected from the surface and excavations at the site and compares the analytic results to those from other sites in Sonora and along the Middle San Pedro. The sixth chapter presents the results of zooarchaeological and paleontological analysis of the remains from the upper (archaeological) and lower (paleontological) bonebeds. Nearly all of the upper bonebed faunal remains are from gomphotheres (mastodon-like elephants that went extinct during the end of the Pleistocene, ca. 12,000 years ago), whereas the lower bonebed is more mixed. The seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters report on different paleoenvironmental analyses, including pollen, phytolith, diatom, and ostracodes, respectively. The concluding chapter contextualizes all the results in a larger picture, provides the summary update for researchers, and offers interpretations and questions to guide future research in the vicinity. Following this are five appendices that report the dating of the faunal remains, luminescence dating, data on the flaked stone artifacts, raw data from the bonebeds, and finally the diatom data.

El Fin del Mundo is a tremendous contribution to Late Pleistocene archaeology in the American Southwest/Mexican Northwest region, especially given the historical bias against Paleoindian archaeology in northern Mexico. This, combined with prior work by Sánchez (2016), represents the predominant scholarly basis for understanding Clovis-aged land use practices in northern Sonora. Furthermore, the studied site contains the first definitive Clovis-aged association of gomphotheres in North America and a sizable campsite. Holliday and colleagues, though, go beyond this and provide a significant contribution to the regional literature with an

outstanding paleoenvironmental reconstruction and a systematic, detail-rich study of a megafauna kill site and Clovis campsite. Given the specific content and focus, *El Fin del Mundo* may not appeal to all; however, the contributors' thoroughness and careful attention to detail, along with the holism of the study, make it worth a read by regional archaeologists and avocationals and a must-own for those interested in hunter-gatherer lifeways in the ancient Southwest/Northwest and scholars of North American Paleoindians.

#### References Cited

Haynes, C. Vance, and Bruce B. Huckell (editors). 2007. *Murray Springs: A Clovis Site with Multiple Activity Areas in the San Pedro Valley, Arizona*. Anthropological Papers No. 71. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Sánchez, Guadalupe. 2016. *Los Primeros Mexicanos: Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene People of Sonora*. Anthropological Papers No. 76. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

# MINUTES OF THE ALBUQUERQUE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

President Evan Kay called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. Also present were Board members and Committee chairs Gretchen Obenauf, Tom Obenauf, Ann Braswell, Dick Harris, Pat Harris, Sherry Kircher, and Mary Raje.

Mary and Sherry volunteered to serve as the nominating committee for the 2025 Board elections.

AAS is hosting the ASNM annual conference in spring 2025. President Kay appointed Gretchen, Tom, Dick, Pat, Mary, Sherry, and Ann to the 2025 ASNM planning committee. The Board will encourage AAS members at the next monthly meeting to get involved as well. The ASNM annual meeting will be held in Albuquerque May 2-4, 2025.

Due to increased travel costs, Ann made a motion to increase the existing cap to \$175 to be available to each monthly speaker to cover mileage and lodging costs to travel to and from Albuquerque, and Gretchen seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

#### CALENDAR CHECK

#### Conferences

**New Mexico Archeological Council Annual Meeting** November 9 at the Hibben Center, University of New Mexico Campus. Details upcoming at nmarchcouncil.org.

#### Lecture

"The Geology of the Sandia Mountains" by Dirk Van Hart, Sunday October 27, 2024, at 2:00 pm (MST) at the Martha Liebert Public Library, 124 Calle Malinche, Bernalillo (behind the Town Hall at 829 Camino del Pueblo). \$5 donation suggested for non-members.

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# ALBUQUERQUE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# PO Box 4029, Albuquerque, NM 87196

# www.abqarchaeology.org and www.facebook.com/abqarchsoc

**Annual Dues:** For emailed newsletter: Student, no charge (provide copy of current ID); Basic Individual \$25; Basic Family \$30. Print newsletter by First Class mail: Basic Individual \$30; Basic Family \$35; Institutions/Libraries: \$10 for print newsletter by First Class Mail, emailed newsletter at no charge.

# 2024 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

To contact officers or committee chairs, or to change mailing or email address, email <a href="mailto:info@abqarchaeology.org">info@abqarchaeology.org</a> or consult Membership Directory. Current members can sign up for field trips at meetings or by emailing trips@abqarchaeology.org.

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Robert Hitchcock	Mailer: Ann Braswell	Barbara am Ende
Secretary:	Maxwell Museum Crew:	Asst. Gretchen Obenauf
Susan King	Karen Armstrong	Pottery Southwest
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Carol Chamberland Sherry Kircher Thatcher Seltzer-Rogers