

ARCHAEO-NEVADA SOCIETY

founded 1966

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2019



ARCHAEO-NEVADA EXCAVATES ANCIENT AND HISTORIC LAS VEGAS

In the spring of 2019 Archaeo-Nevada Society (ANS) members conducted a scientific survey and excavation of the Las Vegas Springs Preserve, the location where some of the most important sustained inhabitation in the valley can be found.

The site is of international importance and is on the National Historic Register (26CK948) represented by prehistoric and historic period remains. The project is being led by ANS President Dr. Andrew McCarthy, ANS Vice President Dr. Leilani Lucas in conjunction with Springs Preserve Archaeologists Nathan Harper and Tom Lucas. The project included volunteers from ANS as well as acting as field school for students from the College of Southern Nevada and the University of Nevada Las Vegas, coordinated by UNLV PhD student Ben Van Alstyne.

Archaeo-Nevada Society members excavated the dredge mounds adjacent to the north branch of the Las Vegas Creek near its source. This location is important for a number of reasons, including being the point of contact between the prehistoric settlement and the water source as well as representing a location where the historic settler population managed the water source in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In addition to recovering several prehistoric artifacts, including local Ancestral Puebloan corrugated pottery and chipped stone objects (including a fragment of a probable projectile point), the ANS excavation revealed an interesting sequence of water management in the historic period. The stratigraphy of the dredge piles is oddly inverted, with the latest materials being excavated by the dredger being the first placed in the pile, and the oldest materials on the top of the dredge pile. The information that comes from these piles gives a nuanced understanding of the maintenance of the Las Vegas water source into relatively recent decades.

Additionally, ANS contributed to the education of more than 30 field school students, helping to establish a local infrastructure of archaeologists who can help to protect southern Nevada's heritage in the future.

BELOW: Archaeo-Nevada Volunteers excavating the Springs Preserve



ARCHAEO-NEVADA SOCIETY LECTURE SERIES AUTUMN 2019

Archaeo-Nevada Society had two lectures this season, both held at the Springs Preserve. Due to a policy change concerning outside events at the College of Southern Nevada (where we used to hold our lectures), the Springs Preserve has now become our permanent venue. We are very fortunate to have this new arrangement and it represents the strengthening relationship between ANS and the Springs Preserve.



On October 10th Jonah Blustain, BLM Archaeologist based in Tonopah, talked about his work in the historic town of Rhyolite (pictured above), "More than a Ghost Town: Cultural Resource Management in Phantom City of Rhyolite."

The 8th Biennial Three Corners Conference took place at UNLV on the 2nd of November. ANS President Dr. Andrew McCarthy spoke about the "Recent Excavations at the Las Vegas Springs Preserve."

On November 7th Kara Jones, PhD student at UNLV, spoke about her work on "The Boyer Collection: an Ideal Avocational Collection." All talks were well attended and informative. Many thanks to the speakers and to the ANS members who came out to participate.





CLEANUP CREW AT RED ROCK

Archaeo-Nevada Society members had their periodic cleanup of the stretch of Highway 159 just before Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. This is prime “real estate” and we are very proud that ANS is doing its part to protect the natural beauty of the area and to raise awareness of the archaeology of southern Nevada. Hats off the team and their great work!



If you are interested in joining us the next time we have a cleanup, please let us know. It is a fun and relaxing day in a lovely spot, and we tend to go out for breakfast and have a chat afterwards. Hope to see you there in the future!

INTERNATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY DAY AT LOST CITY MUSEUM

October 19th was International Archaeology Day, and this autumn the Lost City Museum in Overton, NV took on the task of hosting the event. Representatives from the ANS were there manning a booth and helping to oversee the “mock excavations” (pictured below, courtesy of Lost City Museum).

In addition to the ANS team, there was a wide range of activities and booths manned by forestry, archaeological and educational groups and it was terrific to be part of this event. Around 80 visitors of all ages made their way out to Overton and we helped to raise awareness of archaeology and promote opportunities for public engagement.



LINEUP FOR SPRING 2020

This spring we have an exciting lineup for speakers in the ANS Lecture Series, which typically take place on the 2nd Thursday of each month (unless otherwise advertised). The lectures will take place at the Springs Preserve at 6:30pm. We usually meet beforehand at the Divine Café on the Preserve grounds for dinner, drinks and chat with the speakers. You are very welcome to join us before the talk and of course, all are welcome to the lecture.

Mark Giambastiani, the President of the Nevada Archaeological Association, Victor Villagran, CRM Lead at the Las Vegas Office of SWCA Ltd., and Dr. Theresa Barket from California State University Bakersfield will each be speaking to us about their work in Nevada and the Great Basin.

Additionally, the College of Southern Nevada will once again hold their Annual Anthropology Conference, which highlights the work of Las Vegas professional and student research in a variety of anthropological, archaeological and ancillary disciplines. ANS has long been a supporter of this conference, which will be held on the 1st of May 2020. Stay tuned for a full schedule later in spring!

An Archaeo-Nevada Christmas

As usual, we did not hold a lecture in the month of December, but rather had a relaxing Christmas dinner for ANS members who could attend. On Thursday the 12th of December we went to the Original Lindo Michoacan restaurant for some lovely food, drinks and conversation. At the end of the semester, those involved in the academic world were particularly relieved! It was a fun way to round out 2019, reflect on the year past and look forward and plan for the years to come.



Best wishes for happy holidays and hope to see you in 2020!

HELP PRESERVE NEVADA'S ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

If you are a member of ANS why not renew your membership now?! If you would like to be part of a vibrant and active community of interested and enthusiastic archaeo-philes, you are welcome to join the oldest archaeology society in the state.

For more information: Archaeo-Nevada.org or email Andrew.McCarthy@csn.edu

Archaeo-Nevada Society is a non-profit charitable organization registered in Nevada.