

The Uncompahgre Journal

February 2021 CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY Volume 38 Issue 2

The Shavano Springs Project

by Leigh Ann Hunt

The Dominguez Archaeological Research Center (DARG) out of Grand Junction is interested in re-evaluating the archaeological site at Shavano Springs in the Shavano Valley. Principal Investigator Michael S. Berry is currently working to obtain funding. The Chipeta Chapter is assisting in this recent re-evaluation work. On September 19 of last year, chapter members went on a field trip to visit the site with Carl Conner

and Sonny Shelton, archaeologists from the Dominguez. The Shavano Springs site is located about a mile from the well-known Shavano Valley petroglyphs on private land. It was test excavated in 1963 as part of Buckles' Uncompahgre Project and found to be a deep stratified (layered) deposit with 44 projectile points, but they were unable to follow up on the dig or to obtain radiocarbon dates on all the samples they took. The objects and field notes were curated at the Canyon of the Ancients National Monument center (previously the Anasazi Heritage Center).



Figure 1: Chipeta Chapter Members touring Shavano Springs site in September (Photo by Leigh Ann Hunt).

When discussing projectile points, it is important to realize that, while they are the only real time-diagnostic type of artifact you can easily find, telling us approximately how long ago they were made, that time assignment was developed by archaeologists from excavations at many sites in the area where reliable carbon dates were obtained from the same strata or possibly features such as hearths or house floors, as the points. This



“cross dating” is how the projectile points got placed in a chronological sequence such as the one Buckles created for the Uncompahgre Plateau.













1	4					
2						
3	7		5		7	
4	5		8			
5	5		7			
6a	5		5			
6b	8					
6c	8					
7						

Figure 2: Buckles’ 1971 Projectile point series from Shavano Springs site levels (1 through 7) provided by DARG with Berry’s updated type numbers (4 through 8) based on current dating. These are mainly atlatl dart types (Chart image provided by DARG).

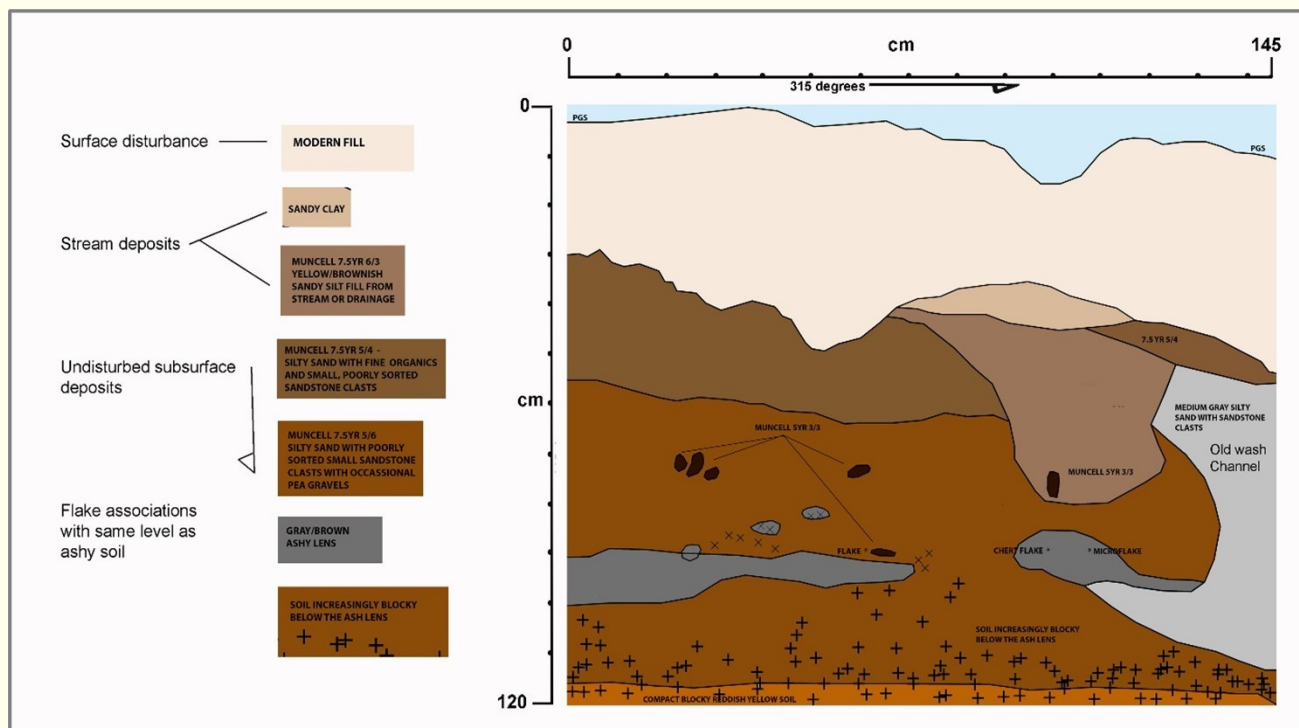
In the 1971 report, the big news at the Shavano Springs site was that it might contain structures or hearths that could be further explored. Buckles’ Excavation Unit 1, the northern end of the Springs site, contained atlatl dart points to the exclusion of the more recent, smaller arrow points. Excavation Unit 2, a separate locus in the southern end, contained a relative abundance of arrow points in the two most recent strata and only four atlatl darts in the earliest levels and had no carbon dates. Initial radiocarbon dating from Excavation Unit 1 consisted of two samples: 2100+/-180 BP from Level 4 and 2695+/-180 BP from Level 5, with a statistical suggestion they should date from around 500 BC. This would make it a late Archaic or early Formative period site where hunter-gatherer people would have camped near the good spring nearby.

The trouble is, many of those atlatl dart points should date from 5500 or 6500 BC, based on many other digs in many other sites in our area. One such site is Eagle Rock Shelter, where many atlatl points were found and the dates went from around 4000 B.C. to very far back into the early Archaic, to around 11500 BC. DARG archaeologists Carl Conner and Michael Berry initially became interested in the Shavano Springs site because it had this disparity in carbon dates versus projectile point types, and might still contain preserved areas that could help clarify the situation, even though quite a bit of the site has been disturbed by road, ditch, and field construction and ongoing use.

In fall of 2020, DARG received funding from the State Historic Fund to conduct a very limited “scrape” of a profile of the northern part of the site, which helped them determine that the site had some undisturbed areas of considerable depth for our area -- 3-4 feet (1.2 m). DARG also relocated the collections at the CANM museum and obtained C14 dates on 8 more samples, on animal bone. Those samples, from upper layers in Unit 1, were all much more recent, like 100- to 300 years ago, or 1700 to 1900 AD. So that added another big question to be asked—did the prevalence of skinning and scraping tools, and ground stone, that Buckles found in the upper levels at Unit 1 actually come from a Ute occupation in recent times, even historic times?

A wide-angle landscape photograph taken from an elevated position, looking down over a rural area. In the immediate foreground, the terrain is rocky and covered with sparse, low-lying green shrubs. A dirt road or path winds from the bottom center towards the middle ground. Along this road, several vehicles are parked, including a dark SUV, a red car, and a white car. Beyond the road, the landscape opens up into large, flat agricultural fields. Some fields are lush green, while others are brown and appear to be fallow or recently harvested. A few scattered trees are visible in the middle ground. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The overall scene depicts a typical rural landscape with a mix of natural and agricultural elements.

Figure 3: View from Shavano Petroglyph site across Shavano Valley in the direction of the Shavano Springs site, September 2020 (Photo by Leigh Ann Hunt).



President's Corner

by Sally Johnson

Photo by Sally Johnson

Great news: we have a date for the Colorado Archaeological Society Annual Conference and Member Meeting. In case you did not know, the Chipeta Chapter will be hosting this year's meeting, and it will be at the Holiday Inn Express on October 8-10th. We don't know for sure what the Covid situation will be next fall, so we are planning for a zoom type of meeting and an in-person meeting. It could even be a combination of the two.

The state organization would like to have a presentation about our chapter, since we are the oldest continuously-operating chapter in the state. So if anyone has any photos from the early days, please let me know. We will be using them for a Power-Point show. I will be contacting some of the older members to see if they would like to do the presen-

tation. I will keep everyone up to date about the keynote speaker and other information. Until next time, stay safe in the wonderful winter weather that Colorado is offering.

Thanks, Sally

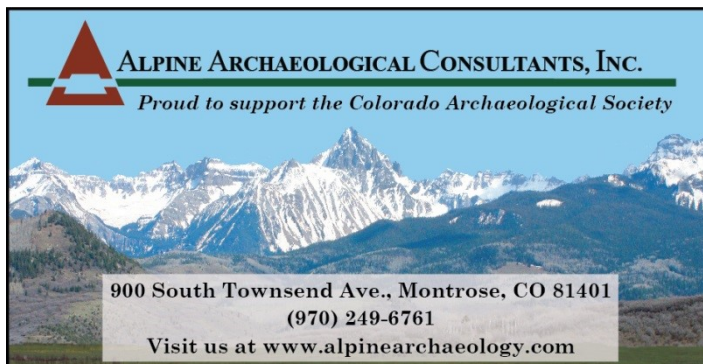
The Squint and Juanita Moore Scholarship

Created in honor of Chipeta Chapter founding member Carlyle "Squint" Moore and his wife, the scholarship is awarded each year to a deserving high school senior or college student intending to enroll or already enrolled in an Anthropology or Archaeology program. Students can apply online at collegeXpress—and note that the deadline is April 1.

The scholarship is managed by the Montrose Community Foundation. If you wish to donate, please send your tax deductible donations to the Montrose Community Foundation, PO Box 3020, Montrose, CO 81402.

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A Message From the Vice President of CAS

by Dave Melanson

We live in challenging times.

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated necessary public health restrictions have adversely impacted CAS operations. Despite this, we've found ways to successfully pursue our public archaeology mission. By following CDPHE guidelines, CAS members continue to safely contribute to archaeological research and conservation projects. Through online streaming of meetings and lectures, we continue to conduct the Society's business and educate the public on the importance of Colorado's rich cultural heritage. A great example of this is IPCAS's excellent hosting of our 2020 online Annual Meeting.

It's not clear yet if conditions will allow us to safely return to a physical annual meeting this year. This is our big challenge in planning our 2021 Annual Meeting. Even so, we're off to a great start. Sally Johnson and the Chipeta Chapter have nailed down a date (10/8 - 10/10) and venue for a physical meeting in Montrose. The pathfinding work of Katy Waechter and IPCAS on last year's online annual meeting gives us a great head start on supplementing a physical meeting with online activities or conducting the meeting completely online, if necessary.

We've also received suggestions for program themes and topics. Now at this point, Sally and I invite each chapter to help us plan an annual meeting that all our members will want to attend. To do this we're forming a working group of chapter volunteers to help plan the meeting program and other activities. If you or one of your members would like to help shape this year's annual meeting please reply to this email and let me know. We've already heard from the Denver Chapter. Thank you.

As always, support of this working group is completely voluntary, but we hope you'll be able to help make our annual meeting a compelling experience for our members and possible transition back to normalcy. Even if your chapter can't participate in the working group we would like to hear from you on what program content, events, and activities your chapter members would like to see at this year's annual meeting.

In the meantime, stay safe,

Dave

David Melanson, Vice President

Colorado Archaeological Society



Chipeta Chapter – CAS 2020 Annual Treasurer Report

The chapter has had a successful 2020 financially, even though the pandemic made for a very unusual year. Income for the year was \$2,501. Expenses for the year totaled \$705, leaving a cash surplus for the year of \$1,796. Our expenses were dramatically lower due to very few meetings during the year, resulting in less meeting room rent and speaker fees. The chapter ended the year with a robust balance in the bank of \$10,047.

During the year, the “Spendable Account” in the chapter’s scholarship fund did not have enough money to pay the \$750 annual scholarship award. This was the result of the very low returns on the fund investments and the fees charged by the Montrose Charitable Foundation that manages the fund. For this reason, the board approved a charitable contribution to the Spendable Account of \$248 in order to fully pay the scholarship award during the year.

I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Jim Douras MBA, CPA (inactive)
Treasurer

Southern Arizona Field Trip, February 22-26

Anyone who would like to meet up with Leigh Ann Hunt in southeastern Arizona during the week of February 22-26, please email her at lahunt970@gmail.com. There are motels, dispersed camping, and state parks. Patagonia Lake is the closest state park and is highly recommended, but reservations would have to be made asap. Depending on timing and interest we may see the Murray Springs Clovis site, the Millville historic mining site plus petroglyphs, the Naco military fort that housed buffalo soldiers around 1920, the Fort Bowie ruin, and/or



the Amerind Museum. On your own you can make reservations (ASAP) to see Kartchner Caverns State Park, open to tour size of 6 people at a time. You can also tour Tumacacori, Bisbee or Tombstone on your own. Masks are required indoors in Arizona but restaurants and motels are open. Once I know if anyone is interested, I will get more information together for a couple of days of trips. It is a long way, but it’s fascinating country!

From the Editor

I'm a fan of proxy measures. I've written about them before in this column. Often they involve DNA and parasites, like figuring out from their genetic code how long ago head lice became a distinct species from genital lice, which might give us information on when we lost our furry coat. The latest issue of *American Antiquity* contains a report of the use of a proxy to get a better handle on the prevalence of metal artifacts in the eastern North American arctic (east of the Northwest Territories as far as northern Greenland) between about AD 500 and 1300 (the time period of the so-called Dorset assemblages). Metal was widely traded in this time period, and used for harpoon points along with more traditional flaked stone points.

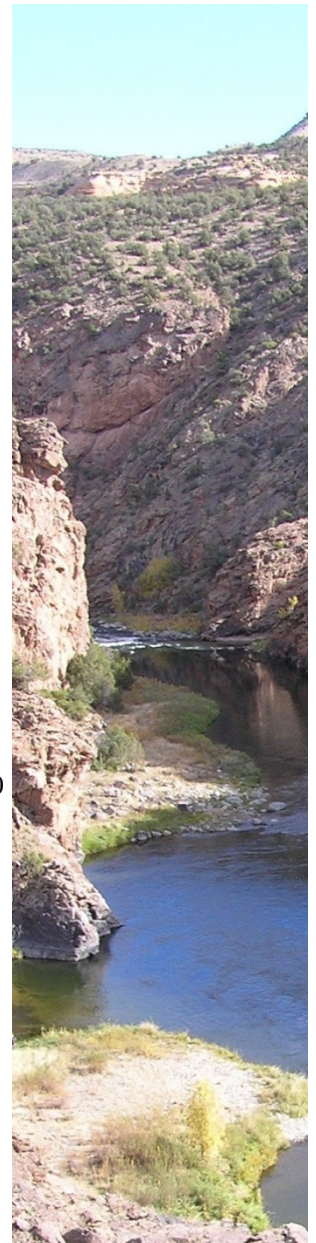
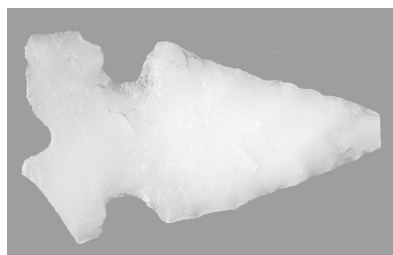
Researchers have been suspicious that the number of metal artifacts recovered from Dorset contexts is a lot smaller than the actual amount of metal that was used in that time period. We're talking about copper and iron mainly. Iron has the problem that it rusts away over time. Copper doesn't really decay, but it can be recycled, and such a valuable resource might well be handed down for generations even as the hafts of the tools became worn and were discarded (i.e. entered the archaeological record). So the question becomes, how do we more accurately estimate the importance of metal in these early societies, when the metal itself either doesn't enter the archaeological record, or disappears from it? What proxy can we use to count metal points?

Patrick Jolicoeur has identified a proxy in the harpoon heads into which the sharp stone, bone, or metal points were hafted. He reasons that metal points and blades were consistently thinner than stone. The harpoon heads were typically made of ivory or antler, and a notch or slot was carved into the end of the harpoon head into which the sharp point was fastened. Therefore, by measuring the thickness of the existing metal tips and doing the same for stone tips, he could create a statistically meaningful prediction for the thickness of the notch required to firmly hold the tip in place. Then, by measuring the notches in all the known harpoon heads, he came up with a reasonable estimate of the number of metal points in use in this time period, relative to the number of stone tips. Through this process, he determined that metal tips were considerably more numerous in Dorset material culture than it appears from the extant metal tips in museum collections.

I like this article partly because of the ingenuity involved in finding a reasonable proxy to gather information on a topic of interest, but also because of the evidence of metal use. We tend to categorize pre-Columbian American cultures as restricted to stone, bone, and antler tools (apart from precious metals associated with Central and South American societies). But copper and iron were used to some degree in the arctic and around the Great Lakes. They were not smelted or forged; rather, they were hammered into shape from native copper and meteoritic iron. Native copper (probably in the form of nuggets) was found in the Coppermine River and adjacent areas, while iron from meteorites came mostly from a meteorite impact area in northern Greenland called the Cape York strewn field. As everywhere, the people of the arctic were intimately knowledgeable about their environment, and they experimented with and made use of the interesting things they found—like metal.

Jolicoeur, Patrick C.

2021 "Detecting Early Widespread Metal Use in the Eastern North American Arctic around AD 500–1300." *American Antiquity*, Volume 86, Issue 1, January 2021, pp. 111 – 132. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/aaq.2020.46>



Chipeta Chapter
Colorado Archaeological Society
P.O. Box 593
Montrose, Colorado 81402



Membership Application

Date: _____

Name: _____

Street or RR Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

(email required to receive Chipeta & CAS newsletters & field trip info)

Check One:

☐ New
☐ Renewal

Annual Dues* (includes state CAS dues): Check one

☐ Family (2 or more members same household)\$40
☐ Individual\$35
☐ Student (Circle if Individual or Family)\$25
☐ Secondary (Circle one) Individual (\$10) or Family... (\$15)
☐ Opt out of printed *Southwest Lore*

Photos by Dennis DeVore



**Southwest Lore* is the journal of the Colorado Archaeological Society: print copies are mailed quarterly.



Code of Ethics

As a member of the Colorado Archaeological Society, I pledge to:

- Uphold local, state, and federal antiquities laws.
- Respect the property rights of landowners.
- Report vandalism to appropriate authorities.
- Support only scientifically and legally conducted archaeological activities.
- Conduct field and/or laboratory activities using professionally accepted standards.
- Not condone the sale, exchange, or purchase of artifacts obtained from illegal activities.
- Be sensitive to the cultural histories and spiritual practices of groups that are the subject of archaeological investigation.
- Accept the responsibility, if serving as principal investigator, to publish the results and make the collection available for further study.

Signature: _____ Other Family Signature: _____

Make checks payable to "Colorado Archaeological Society" and mail the signed application to:

Chipeta Chapter
P.O. Box 593, Montrose, CO 81402

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- **Library:** Linda Manske, manske46@gmail.com

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- **Scholarship:** Jon Horn / Bill Harris/ Fred Henderson, trlgpa48@gmail.com

CHIPETA CHAPTER WEBSITE

- <https://www.chipetachaptercas.org>

TO JOIN OR RENEW:

- Go to the Chipeta Chapter website and follow the membership links.

Program for Avocational Archaeological Certification (PAAC)

PAAC Contacts

Rebecca Simon

rebecca.simon@state.co.us
Assistant State Archaeologist/
303-866-4671

Dave Upchurch

PAAC Coordinator
uphill1354@gmail.com

Want More?

Archaeology Southwest is a great link to find out about current issues and events relating to Southwest Archaeology.

Field Trip Committee

Leigh Ann Hunt, Joe Oglesby, and George Decker

For more information on upcoming field trips and to sign up, please contact the Field Trip Leader

Masthead photo courtesy of Carol Patterson. All other unattributed photos are by the editor.