

The Uncompahgre Journal

October 2025

CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 42 Issue 7

Mark Your Calendar

Oct 1: [Montrose Historical Society](#) monthly meeting with Sally Johnson on Thomas McKee. County Fairgrounds Event Center, 7:00 pm.

Oct 8: [San Juan Basin](#) Archaeological Society monthly meeting with Kaitlyn Elizabeth Davis on early Tewa occupations and adaptations along the northern Rio Grande. In the lyceum, Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, 7:00 pm. Also on Zoom.

Oct 15: [Chipeta Chapter](#) monthly meeting with Kellie Carroll on the role of agriculture in Mesa Verde and beyond (*right*). United Methodist Church, South Park and 1st Street, 7:00 pm.

Oct 22: [CAS-GJ](#) monthly meeting with Lucinda Schroeder on the recovery of stolen Native American sacred objects. Redlands United Methodist Church 527 Village Way, Grand Junction, 6:30 pm.

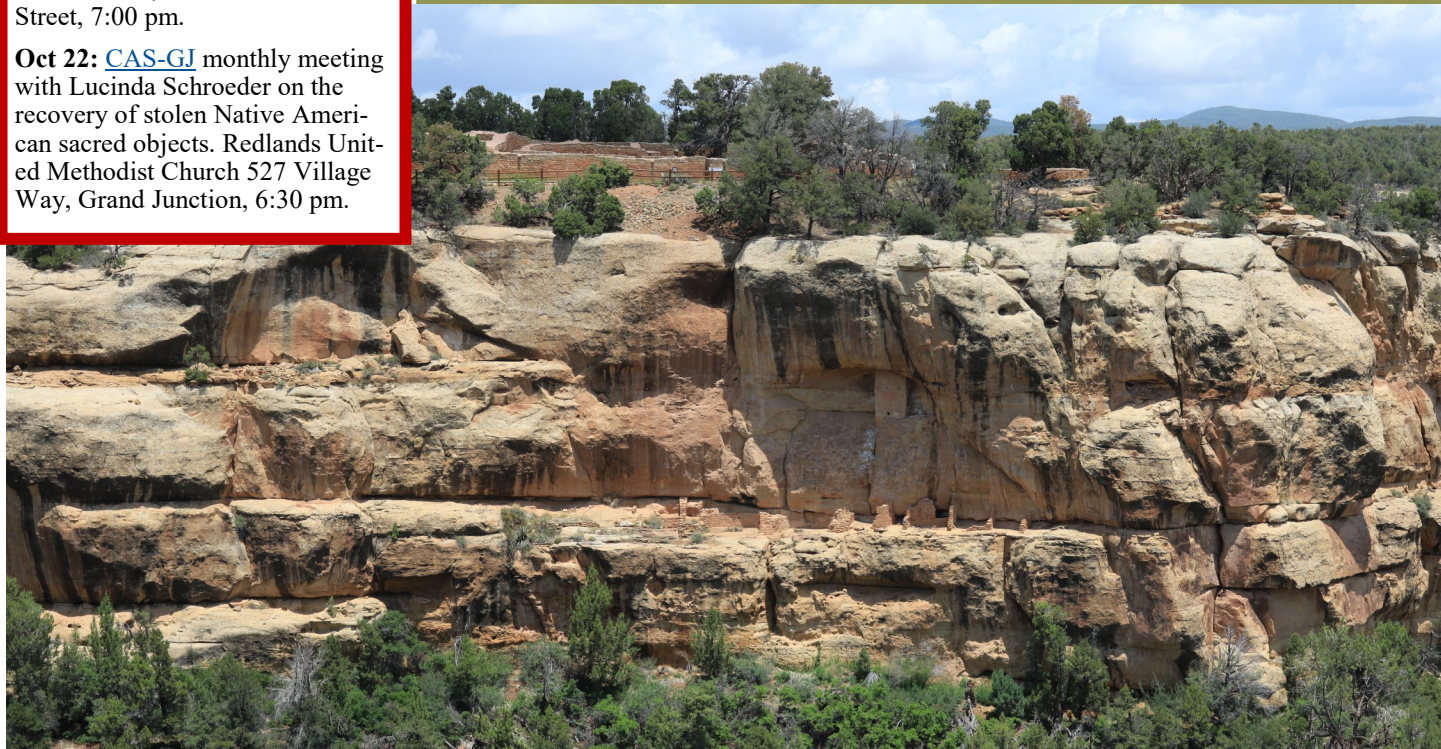
Our October Presentation

Mesa Verde and the 3 Sisters

by Kellie Carroll

Discover how the Three Sisters crops at Mesa Verde connect to Ute origin stories, revealing the deep ties between people, food, and the land.

Kellie Carroll of the Ute Indian Museum will discuss how farming, food, and story intersect at Mesa Verde and beyond. The Ancestral Puebloan people relied on the “Three Sisters”—corn, beans, and squash—not only as staples of survival but also as symbols of balance and cooperation with the land. These agricultural traditions find resonance in the cultural teachings of the Ute people, whose origin stories tie them directly to this same landscape and emphasize respect for the gifts of nature. Together, the archaeology of Mesa Verde and the oral traditions of the Ute reveal how food, culture, and place are deeply woven into identity and survival in the region.



Our October Speaker

Kellie Carroll

Kellie Carroll is the Education Coordinator at the Ute Indian Museum, where she has worked for the past five years. She holds a bachelor's degree in Anthropology with a focus on Southwestern Archaeology from Fort Lewis College. While living in Durango, Kellie led tours of Mesa Verde for a couple of years. She first joined the Ute Indian Museum through AmeriCorps, leading the Shavano Valley Petroglyph Tours. For the past three years, she has served as Education Coordinator, expanding her role to include developing and leading educational programs such as in-person and virtual field trips, overnights, Hands-on History Camps, and community events.



Photo courtesy of Kellie Carroll

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Greetings from the President

A big “Thank you” to Joe Oglesby for leading us up Mount W in Gunnison. We were able to look at ancient paleo sites. The views were amazing as one could see miles and miles in any direction. Professor Landon took us inside the University to show us many of the artifacts that had been collected from the Mountain top. An educational and enjoyable excursion.

As we look ahead, I want to remind everyone that November is our designated month for short presentations on archaeology topics of interest. If you have a subject or idea you would like to present, please consider sharing it with the group. To participate, contact Dan Elsner at 970-361-6813. We look forward to hearing from members who are interested in sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm with the rest of us.

Save the date for our Christmas potluck on December 10 at The Association. Watch for more information from Sally Johnson. A note from The Association: There is no heat in the basement where our party will be held. The management said no one has ever complained. However, you may wish to wear an extra sweater.

The State CAS adopted a set of Goals listed below:

- Ensure that all committees have chairs and sufficient members, and that all BOARDS are fully staffed.
- Ensure that the tools and platforms are available to support the work of the boards and committees.
- Ensure that our current website and member platforms meet our needs.
- Create and strengthen processes for communication that keep people informed of what is happening at all levels and how they can engage with the organization and with archaeology.
- Create a Policies and Procedures Manual to ensure effective functioning of State Boards and Committees and smooth transitions as board and committee members change.
- Collaborate across the State and Chapters to support our public education mission pillar.
- Utilize Educational Grants to support our public education mission pillar.
- Develop an effective message and a plan for communicating it that advocates for archaeology as important, fun, and interesting.
- Re-establish the Scientific Advisory Committee.
- Establish a budgeting and fundraising process. (Ways and Means Committee)

Looking forward to seeing you all at our next meeting October 15, 2025, 7:00.

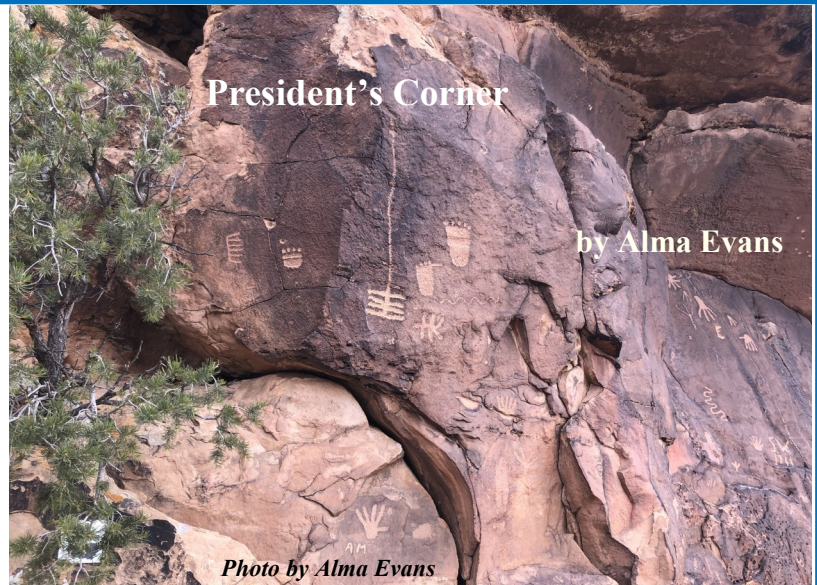




Photo by Dan Elsner

Field Trip to the Mountaineer Site above Gunnison today.
Landon our guide and check out the rainbow!



Photo by Alma Evans



Photos by Alma Evans





MONTROSE CAMPUS
COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY

MONTROSE *LECTURE* SERIES

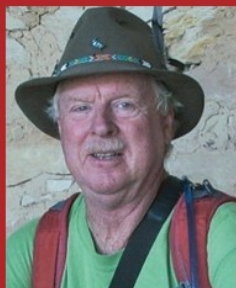
INVESTIGATIONS AT THE HARRIS SITE

WITH MONTROSE RESIDENT BILL HARRIS

The Harris Archaeological Site is named after Montrose resident Bill Harris, who discovered it in 1984 on the eastern edge of the Uncompahgre Plateau, southwest of Olathe. The site is unique for its prehistoric and historic findings, including a rock shelter that Archaic people occupied at least 4,000 years ago and rock art in the Abstract Tradition of an Archaic culture known as the Uncompahgre Complex, as well as a Ute campsite in use as recently as the late 19th century. Harris presents on the excavations and recordings of his important discovery.

BILL HARRIS BIO:

Bill Harris is an avocational archaeologist and has been a member of the Colorado Archaeological Society since 1984. Harris served on the Dominguez-Escalante Advisory Council that helped formulate the Resource Management Plan with the Bureau of Land Management for the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area. He was a board member of the Colorado Canyons Association for nine years and actively supports CCA's child and adult outdoor education programs. He is also an avid birder and mountain biker.



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2025

6-7:30 PM

Free and open to the public.

Learn more at coloradomesa.edu/calendar.



MONTROSE CAMPUS, CASCADE HALL

South 3rd Street and Cascade Avenue

From the Editor

Last month I wrote about the genetic relationship that has been established between the people of Picuris Pueblo and those of Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon. There is similar evidence of a connection in the material remains. Two articles in *American Antiquity* affirm the likelihood of a descendant relationship with the Chaco world, while aiming to identify and analyze the kinds of changes that took place in the intervening centuries. The principal difference is taken to be that the Chaco polity was headed by a wealthy class that lived in Great Houses and built monumental structures to house small but wealthy populations, while modern Pueblos have institutions in place that prevent members from gaining extraordinary economic or political power.

One of the articles examines the configuration of plazas, thought to be public spaces, as an indicator of the degree to which societies were open and inclusive. After combing the literature for descriptions of plazas through time, from Chaco to the modern Pueblos of New Mexico and Arizona, they looked for signs of exclusivity or openness. For example, if a plaza was totally enclosed by four walls, that would indicate a degree of exclusivity. The size of the plaza or plazas in a site was also important. How did the total plaza area compare to the population of the community. Was it too small to accommodate everybody, or was it so large as to fit more people than lived in the community? They found that plaza areas at Chaco tended to be smaller and more restrictive than plazas in many of the later communities, with the Northern Rio Grande Pueblos typically having plazas that were very large and open, capable of hosting visitors from outside the Pueblo, making them suitable for markets.

The other article looked at the physical remains of two New Mexico sites to evaluate the nature of their political economies. They compared the material arrangements in a small Chacoan Great House called Kin Nizhoni (AD 950-1100) with those of a Northern Rio Grande Pueblo called Wiyo'owinge (AD 1275-1400). Kin Nizhoni comprised an impressive structure for elites surrounded by 80 or so individual one-room farm homes. It included Chacoan roads (9 meters

wide), which didn't really go anywhere but pointed to important landmarks or neighboring Great Houses. The community consisted (at any given time) of one Great House with large structures housing few people, surrounded by many small houses, scattered about the landscape and presumably housing just one family each. The total population was probably less than 150 individuals.

Wiyo'owinge consisted of three house mounds up to three stories high with an estimated 425 rooms and a population of around 425 people. A trail led down to agricultural fields below the site. The mounds were oriented with a north and south pair on the east side, and a single mound opposite on the west. The discussion focused on the relationships between the two eastern mounds and their alignments with geographical features vis-à-vis the rising and setting sun at the solstices, when viewed from the western mound. The authors suggest that the southern mound housed the winter people, and the northern mound the summer people. Following modern Tewa Pueblo practices, the headman of the northern house would have been in charge of the entire community during the summer, and leadership in the winter would switch to the southern house.

The interpretation of these two different sites from different time periods focuses on the shift from stratified society with elites and commoners at Kin Nizhoni to a carefully egalitarian society at Wiyo'owinge. Although the reasons for the change aren't explained, these two articles clearly document the seismic shift in political arrangements among puebloan societies over time.



References

- Hanson, Kelsey E., Kathleen Barvick, Rebecca Harkness, Evan Giomi, Scott G. Ortman, and Barbara J. Mills
2025. From Exclusive to Inclusive: The Changing Role of Plaza Spaces in the Ancestral Pueblo World (AD 800–1550). *American Antiquity* 90(3):508–529. <https://doi.org/10.1017/aaq.2025.4>.
- Weiner, Robert S., and Scott G. Ortman
2025. Landscapes, Religion, and Social Change in Pueblo History. *American Antiquity* 90(3):530–554. <https://doi.org/10.1017/aaq.2025.13>.

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 Chapter 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*

**Southwest Lore* is the journal of the Colorado Archaeological Society: a .pdf is posted to Member365 for download. Effective soon, if you want a print copy, you will have to go to the state CAS website and pay an additional fee.

Photos by Dennis DeVore



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

CHIPETA CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

- **President:** Alma Evans, president@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Vice Pres:** Leigh Ann Hunt, vp@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Secretary:** Elizabeth Binder, secretary@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Treasurer:** Jim Douras, treasurer@chipetachaptercas.org
- **CAS Rep:** Nick Ard, casrep@chipetachaptercas.org

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- **Newsletter:** Dave Batten, editor@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Membership:** Sally Johnson, membership@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Site Steward Coordinator:** Leigh Ann Hunt, sitestewards@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Library:** Linda Manske, library@chipetachaptercas.org

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)

For information, visit:

<https://www.historycolorado/paac>

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Leigh Ann Hunt

Chipeta Chapter PAAC Coordinator

vp@chipetachaptercas.org

Upcoming

November: Potpourri (three short talks)

December: party

January: Zeb Miracle

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 Bill Harris. All other unattributed photos are by the editor.