

The Uncompahgre Journal

March 2026 CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY Volume 43 Issue 3

Our March Presentation

Mark Your Calendar

Mar 11: [San Juan Basin Archaeological Society](#) monthly meeting with Daniel Hampson on preliminary analysis of Southwest LiDAR data. Lyceum, Center of SW Studies, Fort Lewis College, 7:00 pm. In person and on Zoom.

Mar 18: [Chipeta Chapter](#) monthly meeting with April Brown on archaeological preservation (*right*). United Methodist Church, 19 S. Park Ave, Montrose, 7:00 pm.

Mar 25: [CAS-GJ](#) monthly meeting with Jim Krehbiel speaking about Sightlines and Site Lines in SE Utah (Archeoastronomy). Redlands United Methodist Church, 527 Village Way, Grand Junction, 6:30 pm.

The Archaeological Conservancy Collaborative Strategies for Archaeological Preservation

by April Brown

April Brown is the Southwest Regional Director for the Archaeological Conservancy. She began her archaeology career at the University of Louisville in the 1990s, conducting field work and research around the northern Kentucky region. She later finished her degree at the University of New Mexico, where she received a BS in Anthropology with a minor in Geographic Information Science. Archaeological preservation and non-invasive research techniques were central to her undergraduate research at UNM. Her honors research focused on documenting rock imagery in the Jemez Mountains and studying environmental impacts at archaeological sites using drones and other 3D modeling techniques.

Her talk will outline the Conservancy's mission and collaborative approach to preserving significant archaeological sites across the Southwest.






Our March Speaker

April Brown

April has over 35 years of business experience, where she has worked as an Executive Assistant, Graphic Designer, Journalist, Filmmaker, Advertising Executive, and Digital Outreach Professional for a variety of organizations, including Harrah's Entertainment, the Los Alamos Monitor newspaper, Hutton Broadcasting, Bechtel Nevada, and Los Alamos National Laboratory. Since her tenure as Southwest Regional Director, April has aided in the preservation of several cultural properties that include a portion of the San Lorenzo de la Cruz Mission site in east Texas, Cottonwood and Sagrada Jardin de Piedra Petroglyph Preserves at Mesa Prieta in northern New Mexico, and the large Pueblo I village at Knuckles Preserve in southwest Colorado.



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Allow me to happily say that January and February are finally behind us now. I like those months, but with March here, we have the vernal equinox coming up on March 20. The vernal equinox announces springtime for us in the northern hemisphere. All sorts of possibilities open up with spring. Including some nice field trips with our club. I am sure there are many of us who are looking forward to getting out and about together on an archeology adventure.

For those of you who might be interested, below is an announcement from the Center for the Study of the First Americans.

Paleoamerican Odyssey 2026

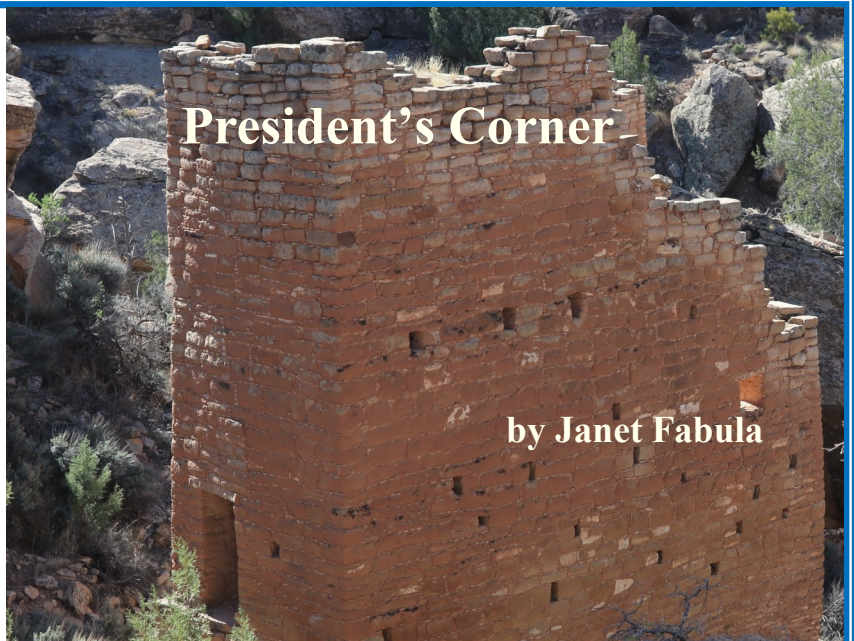
An International Conference on the First Americans, October 14-17, 2026
Santa Fe Convention Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico

The Center for the Study of the First Americans invites you to participate in a three-day examination of the first people to explore and settle the Americas at the end of the last Ice Age. This conference is for everyone—archaeologists, avocational archaeologists, Quaternary scientists, students, and anyone interested in archaeology.

Please see their website for further details. If any of you do attend this conference, take good notes, we would love to hear all about it at one of our fall meetings.

Looking ahead, our March speaker will be April Brown. She is the Director of the Archaeology Conservancy. That being said, our next meeting will be Wednesday March 18. Third Wednesday of the month. I hope to see you then.

Janet



President's Corner

by Janet Fabula



The Colorado Archaeological Society Logo

By Leigh Ann Hunt

After seeing the Mimbres bowl that contains the original motif of the Archaeological Society logo, I recalled that I saw a note about it in a past issue of *Southwest Lore*, the society's journal. Sure enough, in Spring of 2010, the 75th Anniversary issue of the society, there is an article about the logo by William Whatley, which was reprinted from the September 1985 issue of *Southwest Lore*. The note says that the "man behind a bowl" logo was adopted from a bowl that was excavated in 1932 by Harry Endner, the archaeologist at Western State who was the first president of the Southwestern Colorado Archaeological Society.

H.W. Endner used to excavate in New Mexico in the winter each year to escape the Gunnison winters, and in 1932 he and Kenneth Lucy excavated a pithouse site in the Mimbres Valley, 25 miles southwest of Silver City. They found the bowl there, and thought it was "one of the finest examples of Mimbres craftsmanship that either of the men had ever seen".

Three years later CAS was formed, and preserving such irreplaceable artifacts and sites was one of the founding archaeological principles of the organization. The logo was adopted then, in 1935, at a time when many of the projects and research printed in *Southwest Lore* addressed Ancestral Puebloan and general Southwest archaeology issues, with contributors from all over the Four Corners area. Judy Prosser, who was a curator of the Museum of Western Colorado, provided a photograph of the bowl for the 1985 article.

William Whatley was able to interview Endner, Lucy, and others who had been directly involved. What he did NOT tell us, however, is how Professor Endner's excavated artifact ended up being curated in Grand Junction. For that, as we always say, "more research is needed"!

Originally printed in Volume 51, Number 3, September 1985, pages 30-32

THE MIMBRES SUN GOD: OFFICIAL EMBLEM OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

by
WM. J. WHATLEY
Archaeological Research and Exploration

During the past 50 years, the Colorado Archaeological Society has developed into a respectable research organization whose archaeological contributions have furthered the study of historic and prehistoric cultural remains. These contributions have helped to establish a series of ethical standards that have influenced the research of both professional and amateurs alike.

Since the founding of the "Southwestern Colorado Archaeological Society" in May of 1935 (Hurst 1935:2), a distinctive prehistoric symbol has been used by the society to represent the standards and ideals for which the society stands. As a result, this familiar symbol (Fig. 1) has appeared in every issue of the society's official publication, *Southwestern Lore* since the publication of Volume 1, Number 1 in June 1935. Interestingly, the origin of this symbol predates the founding of the society by approximately 800 years.

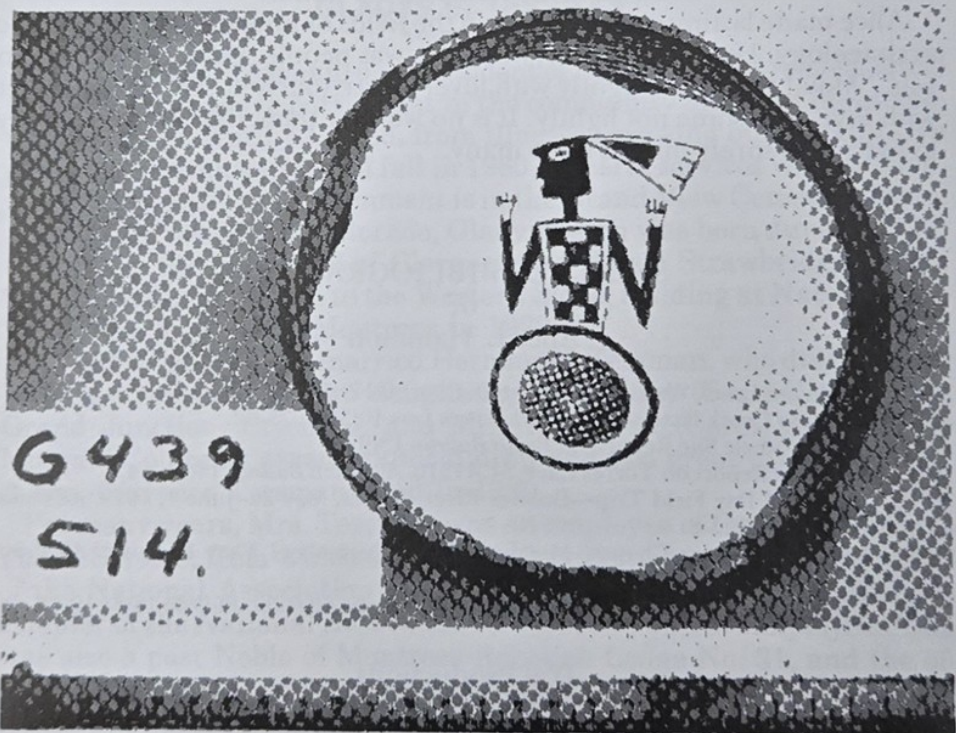


FIGURE 1: Official emblem of the Colorado Archaeological Society.

From the Editor

I learned a new word this week: *polynya*. It refers to an expanse of open ocean surrounded by ice in the northern winter. There is a polynya between Greenland and Ellesmere Island in the northern reaches of Baffin Bay. Within, or on its margins, there is a cluster of islands called Kitsissut (Carey Islands on English maps) whose archaeological remains tell an interesting story about the nature of the first human presence in the northeastern American Arctic. The local name of this particular polynya is Pikialasorsuaq.

The earliest people to leave traces in the archaeological record of the Arctic have been dubbed the Early Paleo-Inuit, and they were active in the Greenland area from around 4500-2700 years ago. Coincidentally, or not, the polynya also is thought to have come into being around 4500 years ago. The authors stress the importance of these ice-bound stretches of open ocean as places of “high primary productivity,” meaning plankton that in turn attracts fish, marine mammals, and seabirds—all of which attract people. In the winter, the floating ice around the edges of the “landfast” ice created complex icescapes that would have served as prime winter hunting grounds for the Early Paleo-Inuit. The Kitsissut islands, however, were too far offshore for wintertime travel—and there wouldn’t have been much reason to go there.

The main attraction of these islands were the birds: thick-billed murres to be exact. I gather that it was the eggs that were most of interest, though they definitely ate the birds also, when they could catch them. It is interesting that the eggs and birds were enough of a draw to entice the Paleo-Inuit to spend 12 to 15 hours paddling kayaks and small round-bottom boats across the treacherous waters of the polynya.

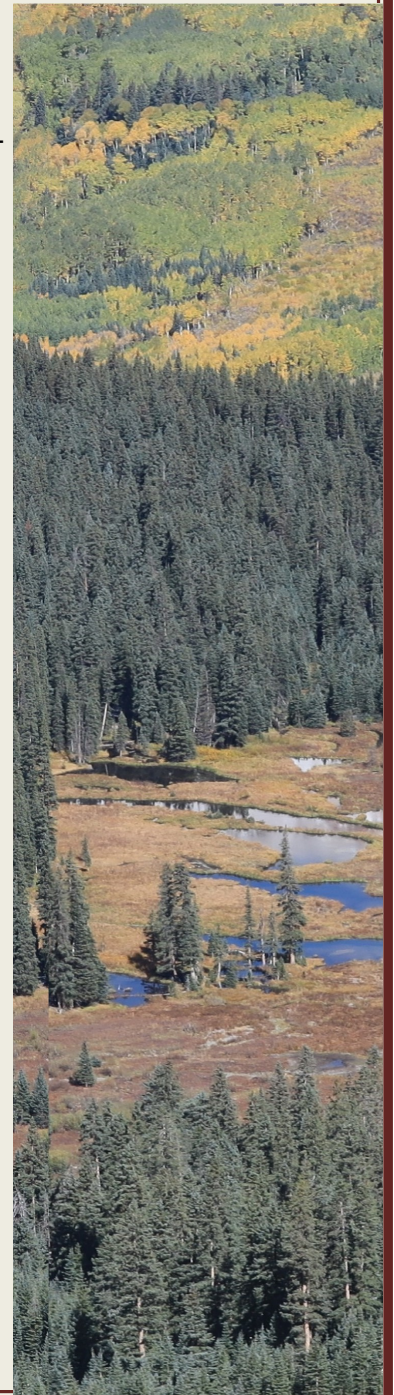
The archaeological work reported on in this article took place on three of the Kitsissut islands. The authors were able to distinguish a handful of Early Paleo-Inuit dwellings by something called a box hearth and by the shape of the remains of shelters, which were “bilobate tent rings,” essentially forming a circle of rocks with a bisecting line of rocks through the center. Although datable organic material was almost vanishingly rare at these sites, they were able to find the humerus bone of a murre, which could be dated to 4400-3900 years ago (calibrated radiocarbon date).

Okay, here’s where it gets interesting. From this tiny bit of solid archaeological information, and paleoecological information on the formation of marine and avian ecosystems around the polynyas and arctic islands, the authors postulate that the early human population of the high arctic was an essential element of the evolving ecology. Just as the murres enriched the ecology of the islands by providing organic materials on the rocky islands with their droppings, the Early Paleo-Inuit were doing the same thing in their seabird and egg collecting pursuits, as they were presumably also hunting, fishing, and discarding organic waste on their trips out to Kitsissut.

So this is the grand conclusion of the article: that humans, having arrived in the Greenland high arctic at the same time as the earth had warmed enough for a polynya to form between Greenland and Ellesmere Island, bringing with it all the fish and marine mammals that were attracted by the teeming new life in the Pikialasorsuaq polynya, were every bit as essential elements of the creation of the arctic ecosystem, not only on the Kitsissut islands, but all around the polynya centered between western Greenland and the large arctic and subarctic islands to the west.

References

Walls, Matthew, Mari Kleist and Pauline Knudsen
2026 Voyage to Kitsissut: a new perspective on Early Paleo-Inuit watercraft and maritime life-ways at a High Arctic polynya. *Antiquity*. <https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2026.10285>



Chipeta Chapter
Colorado Archaeological Society
P.O. Box 593
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Membership Application

Date: _____
Name: _____
Street or RR Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____
Email: _____

Photos by Dennis DeVore



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

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

New Family (2 or more members same household)\$40
 Renewal 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.



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:
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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

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Next Month's Speaker

April: Bruce Bradley, Lithics Guru

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.