

Archaeological Society of Alberta

Calgary Centre

2010-2011
Speaker Series



The Alberta Point

2010-2011 SPEAKER SERIES

Would you like to join like-minded people one evening a month to discuss current archaeological issues and attend lectures regarding on-going research?

If So Please Join Us...

Where: The University of Calgary,
ES 162, the Tom Oliver Room

When: 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month

All lectures are free!!

SEPTEMBER 15th, 2010

Ray Le Blanc (University of Alberta)
Stone Adzes or Antler Wedges? An Experimental Study on Precontact Tree Felling in the Northwestern Boreal Forest

ABSTRACT: "Adze-cut stumps" is the name commonly used by local residents, ethnographers and archaeologists to designate culturally modified tree stumps that are found in many areas of the Northwestern boreal forest of North America. They are thought to be an indication of pre-Contact period logging activities that preceded the arrival of metal trade axes during the fur trade period. Field observations from the Old Crow-Porcupine River area of the northern Yukon indicate that many of these stumps, especially when found in clusters are associated with the construction and maintenance of caribou fences, semi-subterranean housepits, and various types of caches.

OCTOBER 20th, 2010

Duane Froese (University of Alberta)
Alaska's Last Mammoth-No Bones About It

ABSTRACT: Our ideas of extinction of the megafauna are based on the latest appearance dates (LADs) from radiocarbon dating of bones and teeth recovered from a variety of contexts, but a primary issue is what is the likelihood that we will find the last survivors if large population declines occurred? In this talk I discuss an alternate approach to detecting late surviving populations of mammoth and horse in Alaska using ancient environmental DNA (sedimentary ancient DNA) from permafrost soils. This approach yields positive hits for horse and mammoth, along with a range of extant fauna, several thousand years after conventional estimates of extinction.

NOVEMBER 17th, 2010

Ian Robertson (Stanford University)
The Place Where Divinity Came Into Being- Archaeology at Teotihuacan, Mexico

ABSTRACT: Teotihuacan is one of the most interesting and dramatic of the world's early cities. Founded in the Basin of Mexico over two millennia ago, Teotihuacan grew rapidly into a regional metropolis and for centuries enjoyed widespread influence throughout Mesoamerica. After its political power was eclipsed by a massive conflagration, Teotihuacan remained a religious and cultural symbol, its ruins recreated in the Aztec imagination as the origin of the world we live in today—the Fifth Sun. While the ceremonial core of Teotihuacan has come to be Mexico's most important destination for archaeological tourism, the rest of the city is rapidly disappearing. Involved for many years in research at Teotihuacan, Ian Robertson will review aspects of the history and culture of this ancient city.

JANUARY 19th, 2011

William Fitzhugh (Smithsonian Institute)
Norse, Vinland, and Public Promotion: From Erik's 'Greenland' to Modern Times

ABSTRACT: Erik the Red's discovery and settlement of Greenland initiated a 1000-year campaign of public relations that has brought new opportunities, religious beliefs, and a good dollop of public promotion from "green" land to grapes, maps, runestones, towers, and exhibits. This talk illustrates contributions and controversies that have accompanied the Norse Atlantic saga through the ages and why they continue to inspire historians, archaeologists, and the broader public today. Examples will be drawn from a wide variety of resources, including new fieldwork, exhibitions, and archaeological objects.

FEBRUARY 16th, 2011

Heinz Pyszczyk (Gov't of Alberta)
Fort Vermillion 1 (c.1798-1830) and the Archaeology of the Northern Alberta Fur Trade

ABSTRACT: Rumours of untold wealth in furs created a rush into the Athabasca and Peace River regions by both British and Canadian fur trade enterprises by the late 1780s. But, there also came a price for the fortunes that were to be made - untold nightmares in the logistics of carrying out the fur trade in these remote northern regions of western Canada. And, unlike the early period forts along the Saskatchewan River drainage, that had access to northern plains and vast bison herds, these northern posts' occupants constantly faced the possibility of starvation. Using the Fort Vermillion 1 research activities as an example, this lecture will focus on the challenges of finding this and other northern posts and then excavating them.

MARCH 16th, 2010

Julie Cormack (Mount Royal University)
Hand Axes in China?: Today's View of the Movius Line

ABSTRACT: In 1948, archaeologist Hallam Movius proposed a theoretical line trending from northern to southern India that distinguished the Early Palaeolithic into handaxe cultures west of that line from non-handaxe (or chopping) cultures east of that line. Because of the historic paucity of handaxes, especially from the early archaeological work at the Peking Man site (Zhoukoudian), the Movius Line became the cultural partition between east and west. Over the last 20 years, archaeological research has shown clear evidence for handaxes in East Asia including northern and southern China, and Korea. This presentation will examine some of the current discoveries in the Baise Basin, Guangxi Province, and how these artifacts may be related (or not) to their African contemporaries.

APRIL 20th, 2011

Margaret Hanna (University of Calgary)
Accommodation in a Northern Cree Community

ABSTRACT: Stanley Mission was established on the north shore of the Churchill River in central Saskatchewan in 1852 by Rev. John Hunt of the Church Missionary Society. During Rev. Hunt's tenure, he organized the construction of Holy Trinity Church, a neo-Gothic structure that is Saskatchewan's oldest building. Although Holy Trinity is all that remains of the Old Village, archaeological and archival data, together with oral histories, have uncovered much about its history and organization. Archaeological work focused on the excavation of a Cree house that was built sometime in the late 1800s and demolished sometime before 1920. This talk will examine the ways in which the Cree adopted and adapted built structures into their housing repertoire by examining the difference between Cree and European houses and their use of space both inside and outside of the house. I will also discuss how the Cree adapted the settlement itself into their traditional life style.

Refreshments and Discussions
follow each lecture

SEE YOU THERE!!

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