



# THE MOKI MESSENGER

October 2024

San Juan Basin Archaeological Society  
[sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org)

## SJBAS Monthly Meeting: October 9

“Salmon Ruins: History and Recent Research” by Larry Baker, director Salmon Ruins

A reception kicks things off at 6:30 p.m. in the foyer of the Center of Southwest Studies with the zoom presentation starting at 7 PM. Details are on [sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org).

## President’s Message

Rusty Chamberlain, SJBAS Field Trip Program Coordinator, has scheduled an afternoon at his home to map out our 2025 Calendar of Field Trips. Field trips are an essential part of our mission and why many people join SJBAS. Even if (and especially if) if you have never led a trip you should attend. We have an archive of dozens and dozens of field trip reports that are step-by-step recipes for conducting your favorite field trips—be it a day trip to a museum or day-hike/car camping trip to Bears Ears—easily replicated with help from other members. This year we had several first-time trip leaders. Rusty has also planned a brief training session for new and prospective trip leaders. Lunch will be provided. **12 PM on October 27**. Contact Rusty at [chambrke@aol.com](mailto:chambrke@aol.com) to let him know you will be attending. – *Paul Landrum*



## Colorado Timberline Academy Students Learn about early SW Colorado Cultures and Gain Survival Field Experience

A handful of students at Colorado Timberline Academy spent an afternoon with two SJBAS members learning about Southwest Archeology and pre-European contact cultures and then headed outdoors for some atlatl throwing experience. Two students proved quite adept at the difficult-to-master weapon when they brought down a *lifelike* mastodon.



Picture above shows students throwing atlatl spears at Melvin the Mastodon. Instructors were Paul Landrum and Hunter McCleary. This class is part of SJBAS's ongoing educational outreach program.

## Trip Report: Navajo Rug Tour, 6-7 September

The trip began in Durango with a visit to the Tohatin Gallery in Durango and a lecture on Navajo weaving by Jackson Clark II. After lunch at the Postler home, everyone carpoled to the Crownpoint Rug Auction in Crownpoint, New Mexico.

At the Friday evening auction everyone examined the rugs the weavers brought to sell and enjoyed the fun of the auction. A couple of the group members even purchased rugs at the auction. The night was spent in Gallup.



On Saturday morning we visited Richardson's Trading Post in Gallup and learned about the history of the post, the practices of pawn shops and their importance to Native peoples. We then looked through their collection of hundreds of new and old Navajo weavings (and jewelry and Katsinas and pottery).



From there we traveled north to Toadlena Trading Post (near Newcomb New Mexico). The folks there fed us lunch (Navajo tacos!). We were then treated to a carding, spinning and weaving



demonstration by 88-year-old master weaver Violet Brown and her 12-year-old granddaughter, Jamie – who hopefully represents a new generation of weavers. We enjoyed them as much as we enjoyed the demonstration.

Mark Winter (the owner of Toadlena and one of the leading experts on Saltillo and Navajo weaving in the country) then gave us an overview of weaving in the Southwest and showed a variety of weavings from 1750 to the present. Among the many examples he displayed were one-of-a-kind weavings worth hundreds of thousands of dollars! We also got to see the new exhibit (“Prayers”) in the Toadlena museum – which focused on historic Yei and Yei Be Chai rugs. And once again a few of us found treasures that we had to take home with us!

We returned to Durango, tired but filed with great memories and a good deal more knowledge about Navajo weaving. Everyone – from long-time collectors to folks who knew almost nothing about Navajo weavings – said that it was a great experience.

Participants were Bill and Jan Postler, Cory Pillen, Jim and Jerri Spellman, Ellen Roberts, Mark and Michelle McKibben, Sandy Rickon, Libby Shafer, Mimi Balduc, Cathy Roberts and Rich and Janet Wheeler. *Submitted by Bill Postler.*

## How do you get SJBAS News?

SJBAS is considering reducing the number of Moki Messenger issues from 12 per year to quarterly or even bi-monthly. With changing reading habits, we are wondering if members find several times monthly email blasts to be a more useful vehicle for Society news. Moki would continue publishing a calendar, president's message and trip reports. Please send your feedback to [hunter.mccleary@gmail.com](mailto:hunter.mccleary@gmail.com).

## Trip Report: Hovenweep Outlier Towers Tour, Aug. 28

Eight SJBAS members headed into the canyon-head country for a tour of three Hovenweep National Monument outlier sites. The venturers were guided by retired BLM archaeologist Kristi Arrington. The sites visited were Cutthroat Castle, Horseshoe/Hackberry and Holly.

The day-trip sought to examine these enigmatic multi-story structures and ask: were they defense, residence?

by cultivated

beginning around 900 AD and represented corn-based Basketmaker III and Pueblo I cultures.



used for observation, communications, astronomy calendars, ceremonies, food storage/processing and These sites, surrounded land, were occupied

The first stop began with a one-mile hike through pinion-juniper forest to Cutthroat Castle. Unlike most tower sites in the region, Cutthroat sits below canyon walls with productive farm lands around it. Cutthroat has at least seven kivas intermingled with one thick square tower, two smaller circular ones and enough rubble to suggest a significant population.

Next stop was Horseshoe/Hackberry, a half-mile walk along sandstone slickrock. This complex of structures includes circular, walled-off Horseshoe Tower and Horseshoe House, a large D-shaped tower. A major seep resides under Horseshoe House, protected by a multi-story kiva on the rim. Rubble piles surround the towers.

The final stop was Holly Ruin, down the road from Horseshoe and the closest to Hovenweep. Situated above a canyonhead seep, Holly puts the skills of Pueblo III masons on full display with its decidedly defensive bent. All of Holly three major towers were built atop large fallen

boulders, making access difficult. The massive Holly Great House is alarmingly tall and rectangular, with intricate McElmo masonry throughout. Each of the towers had single entrances and small window-like openings. The tilt of the openings suggested an angle for shooting. Tree ring dating indicate a construction date of about 1200 AD when civil strife may have been more common.

Travelers were SJBAS members Chris Anderson, Thomas Polich, Tish Varney, Pete Varney, Elena Varney, Paul Landrum and Andy Dennison, and retired BLM archaeologist Kristi Arrington. —*Andy Dennison*

## FLC Students Complete Summer 2024 Sanders Internships

Two FLC students recently completed their SJBAS-supported internships at the Center of Southwest Studies.

**Sam Fontenot**, a Computer Engineering major, worked on several archaeology-related archival collections. He began processing the Jiri Vondracek papers, a new collection that provides essential context for the Center's archaeology collections. Sam then inventoried books donated by archaeologist Al Lancaster and integrated them into our archaeology/anthropology library collection. He also described and integrated additions to the San Juan Basin Archeological Society collection, rehousing items as needed. Upon completion (outside his internship), Sam will update the funding aid to reflect these changes.



**Lacy Miller**, the SJBAS Sanders intern during spring 2024, completed an inventory of material from the Brougher site, which included documenting the proveniences of intermixed collections from the Weimer Ranch Site excavations. She also laid the groundwork for the transfer of specific items to the BLM. Her efforts played a crucial role in clarifying questions related to ownership, advancing Fort Lewis College's NAGPRA-related work.

Lacy's internship was extended this fall to the next phase of the project, which involves physically reorganizing the collection by site, date, and other identifying factors. This work will allow us to process these materials and catalog them in our collections management database. Her continued dedication remains instrumental in moving this project forward.

## Upcoming SJBAS Events for 2024

[Contact trip organizers for details.  
See [sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org) for the latest version of the full-year calendar.]

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>October 4</b>    | <b>Canyons of the Ancients – Day trip – Hike to Ismay and Mud Springs Pueblo guided by Diane McBride. End the day at Sutcliffe Winery.</b> Trip limit 14. Difficulty: Moderate. Contact Lorraine McCleary at <a href="mailto:lorrynemccleary@gmail.com">lorrynemccleary@gmail.com</a> . <b>Trip is FULL; there is a wait list.</b> |
| <b>October 8-10</b> | <b>Cedar Mesa Backcountry sites</b> – Pending BLM approval, three-day car-camping trip with day-hikes to a variety of Ancestral Puebloan sites. Difficulty: Hard. Limit of 12. Contact Lyle at <a href="mailto:lylehancock99@gmail.com">lylehancock99@gmail.com</a> .  |
| <b>October 9</b>    | <b>SJBAS meeting – “Salmon Ruins: History and Recent Research”</b> by Larry Baker, director of Salmon Ruins. Lyceum at FLC, 7 PM.  |
| <b>October 27</b>   | <b>SJBAS Annual Trip Planning Meeting.</b> Contact Rusty at <a href="mailto:chambrke@aol.com">chambrke@aol.com</a>   |
| <b>October 28</b>   | <b>Chimney Rock National Monument</b> – Guided hike to the most important lunar observatory in the Chacoan world. Difficulty: Hard. Contact Hunter McCleary at <a href="mailto:hunter.mccleary@gmail.com">hunter.mccleary@gmail.com</a> . Sign-up begins Aug 1 <sup>st</sup> .   |
| <b>November 13</b>  | <b>SJBAS meeting</b> – “Recent Insights into the Fremont People of Uinta Basin, Utah” by Elizabeth Hora, Public Archaeologist with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office.  |

## Upcoming non-SJBAS Events

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>October 1</b>  | <b>“Cave Canyon Village: Persistence and Change in the San Juan Lowlands,”</b> Hisatsinom Chapter monthly meeting. 7 PM Cortez.   |
| <b>October 3</b>  | <b>“Ink and Identity: Exploring the History of Indigenous Tattoo Traditions in the United States Southwest,”</b> Andrew Gillreath-Brown, Crow Canon Webinar, 4PM. Go <a href="#">here</a> for registration and more info.   |
| <b>October 10</b> | <b>“The Paleoindian Southwest: The Role of the Greater Southwest in Understanding the Earliest Americans,”</b> David Kilby, Crow Canyon Webinar 4 PM, Go <a href="#">here</a> for registration and more information.  |
| <b>October 17</b> | <b>“Modeling Early Maize in the North American Southwest,”</b> Lori Barkwell Love, Crow Canyon Webinar, 4 PM. Go <a href="#">here</a> for registration and more information.  |
| <b>November 7</b> | <b>“The unique importance of archaeology in Colorado,”</b> CEO of Crow Canyon Archaeological Center Elizabeth Perry explores little-known aspects of Southwest archaeology and their significance. Part of the FLC Lifelong Learning Series. 7 PM Ft Lewis College. |

## Briefs

**Maria Benítez, World Class Flamenco Dancer, dies at 82.** Who, you say? Maria Benítez was the daughter of a Chippewa mother and was raised on the Taos Pueblo. You may view samples [here](#) of her performing and hear her talk about the influence of her indigenous upbringing on her style of Flamenco. Check it out.

‘... as told from dominant perspectives. This phrase from the SJBAS [and many other] land acknowledgements is seeing fresh perspective in new scholarship. The new book, *Native Nations: A Millenium in North America*, examines many of the ways that the “dominant perspective” got it wrong. Among them, the myth of the *Lost Colony of Roanoke*. While the colony may have been wiped out or absorbed what history neglects to mention is the ruthlessness with which the British treated local natives in the year prior to the Colony’s arrival. You can read more and hear a podcast with the author [here](#) and check out the book at the Durango library.

Then there is Bacon’s Rebellion of 1676. Bacon is revered by many as the first patriot for anticipating the American Revolution by a century. New scholarship reveals Bacon, with money from his father, had fled to the Colonies to escape charges of fraud. His agenda was not quite freedom for his people but rather extermination of local indigenous people with which the colonial governor had signed trade agreements. You may read the [article in the Washington Post](#). [Note: WashPost access requires a subscription.]

## Additional SJBAS Volunteer Opportunities

**Program Co-Chair:** We are looking for a volunteer to work with our Program Chair, Janice Sheftel. The Program Chair secures speakers for regular membership meetings and works with other SJBAS members to organize other lectures, such as the John W. Sanders Lecture. This is a Board position. Please contact Janice at [janicesheftel@gmail.com](mailto:janicesheftel@gmail.com) for more information.

**Membership Co-Chair:** The co-chair will work with Tish Varney and, eventually, move into the chair position. The Membership Chair is responsible for organizing recruitment of new SJBAS members and supporting Board members in encouraging active participation by members. This is a Board position. Please contact Tish Varney ([tishvarney@att.net](mailto:tishvarney@att.net)) for more information.

**Webmaster Assistant:** If you know your way around a computer, please consider volunteering to assist our Webmaster, Lyle Hancock, when he is unable to access a computer. The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining and updating the SJBAS website- [www.sjbas.org](http://www.sjbas.org). Please contact Lyle for more information, [lylehancock99@gmail.com](mailto:lylehancock99@gmail.com). Training and support will be provided for all positions.

**Social Chair:** Plan the summer picnic and holiday brunch. The current social chair members, Michelle and Mark McKibben, have offered to assist whomever decides to step forward. Without them there might be no summer and winter get-togethers.

We look forward to working with you! We need you!!

## SJBAS Elected Officers and Board Members

|                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| President                      | Paul Landrum               |
| Vice President                 | Thomas Polich              |
| Secretary                      | Susan Hicks                |
| Treasurer                      | Mary Moorehead             |
| Communications chair           | Byron Kellogg              |
| Membership chair               | Tish Varney                |
| Field Trip Program coordinator | Rusty Chamberlain          |
| Education/PAAC representative  | Betsy Moore                |
| <i>Moki Messenger</i> editor   | Hunter McCleary            |
| Programming chair              | Janice Sheftel             |
| Publicity chair                | Rusty Chamberlain          |
| Social chair                   | Michelle and Mark McKibben |
| Webmaster                      | Lyle Hancock               |



SJBAS Membership renewals are due by January 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Individual dues drop to \$15 after June 30. If you need to renew a lapsed membership or join SJBAS, please complete the [SJBAS Annual Membership Form](#), make your check for \$25 (\$50 family, \$10 student) payable to 'SJBAS' and mail with the Annual Membership Form only to: SJBAS, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 3153, Durango, CO 81302.