

New Mexico Archaeology

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF ARCHAEOLOGY

MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO FOUNDATION

WWW.NMARCHAEOLOGY.ORG

AUGUST 2024

THINGS ARE STARTING TO HEAT UP AT THE OFFICE!

JOHN TAYLOR-MONTOYA
OAS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is August, which means that we are all getting ready to make the transition from summer to fall. Hopefully the temperatures will cooperate and follow suit! Our field projects are going well but we have definitely felt the heat out there. "Unseasonably hot" has become so commonplace in the weather forecasts it may soon become the norm. What is interesting to me as an archaeologist is how the very words "climate change" have become politicized and polarizing in our society. But don't worry, I'm not going to get political or do much pontificating here. What makes this so salient to me is the fact that our office recently completed ethnographic interviews with local ranchers and a common theme among the respondents was the fact that it's hotter and drier than it used to be, and those factors are directly affecting their ability to raise stock. A common refrain was, "Well, I don't know if you want to call it 'climate change,' but..." The term is so laden that the respondents felt the need to qualify their statements despite speaking about phenomena they were experiencing firsthand.

As an archaeologist, I encountered those words before they were a political hot button, and so they evoke a different response from me. Indeed, my original field of study was

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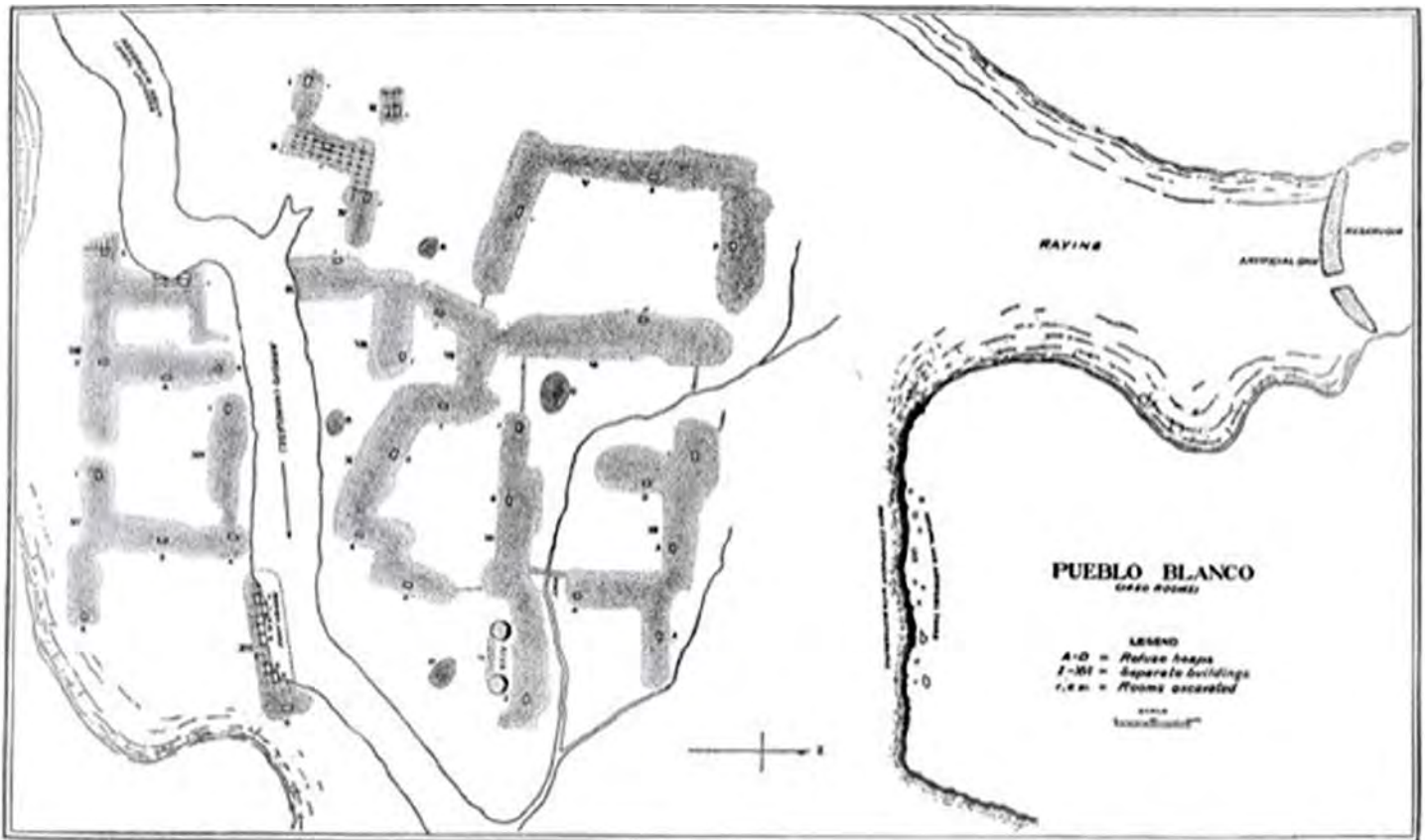
FLASH FROM THE PAST

**ARCHAEOLOGY DAY IS BACK OCTOBER 19, 2024!
FOR MORE INFORMATION, TURN TO PAGE 7...**



Photos by Richard T. Hasbrouck (2019)

TOUR PUEBLO BLANCO ON SEPTEMBER 21



Nels Nelson's map of Pueblo Blanco (1914).

Pueblo Blanco is the southwestern-most of the Galisteo Basin pueblos. It sits in a small valley at the western root of the dike known as Comanche Gap. The pueblo is nestled into the foothills below the San Pedro and Ortiz mountains. One of the super-pueblos investigated by Nels Nelson in 1912, it is estimated that Pueblo Blanco consists of 1,450 ground-floor rooms, representing an estimated population of 1,500 people. Nelson defined 15 roomblocks, with more than 10 partially or completely enclosed plazas, but was only able to define two kivas. The pueblo embraces a drainage now deeply entrenched through the site.

Nelson excavated 47 rooms at the site, some of which suggested that some roomblocks included two stories. Excavations failed to yield a mission component, and none was expected, based on the historic record. The pre-European artifact characteristics were similar to those of nearby Pueblos Colorado, San Lazaro and She. Ceramic dating suggests that the main occupation is confined within the

STRENUOUS HIKE!

This hike is considered strenuous and will cover rugged terrain. It is important that hikers dress accordingly. Wear sunblock, hats, long-sleeved shirts, and long pants. Hiking boots are a must! Each hiker should bring along at least 2 liters of water and snacks!

fifteenth century. A small amount of rock art is present in the site area and more is adjacent, both locally and along Comanche Gap. Two, or possibly three, reservoirs are associated with the site, and two are similar in construction to the reservoirs at Pueblos San Cristobal and She.

One of Nelson's excavated rooms adjacent to the plaza with the kivas yielded an apparent altar. A stone sculpture was placed on a low earthen platform adjacent to a room wall. Clusters of small vessels and artifacts were placed on the platform

around the base of the sculpture. This rare assemblage hints at the rich ceremonial life of the community. One roomblock was damaged by erosion in Nelson's time, and the erosion continued in the intervening decades. The State Land Office (SLO), owner of the site, has worked to control the erosion, sponsoring salvage excavations of the roomblock in the 1990s by Winifred Creamer of Northern Illinois University and the School for Advanced Research. Creamer and her students recorded surface pottery; several of their theses have added to Nelson's interpretations of the site. SLO also created an erosion control structure to lessen future erosion.

This tour will be conducted on State Trust Land and private land. Two tours will be offered Saturday, September 21. The first tour starts at 8:30 a.m. The second starts at 12:30 p.m. Tours will be limited to 24 participants each. Cost will be \$145 per person for FOA members and \$160 per person for non-members. Sign-up starts Wednesday, Sept. 11, on <https://friendsofarchaeology.eventbrite.com>. ❖

Office of Archaeological Studies

The Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS) was the first museum program of its kind in the nation. OAS staff conduct international field and laboratory research, offer educational opportunities for school groups and civic organizations, and work to preserve, protect, and interpret prehistoric and historic sites throughout New Mexico.

Friends of Archaeology

The Friends of Archaeology is an interest group within the Museum of New Mexico Foundation that supports the OAS. To join the FOA, you need only become a member of the Museum of New Mexico Foundation and sign up. Visit www.nmarchaeology.org for information. We're also on Facebook, at www.Facebook.com/FriendsOfArchaeologyNM.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Friends of Archaeology is to support the Office of Archaeological Studies in the achievement of its archaeological services mandate from the State of New Mexico through participation in and funding of research and education projects.

FOA Board

Chair: Jerry Cooke
Treasurer: Marja Springer

Board Members:
Barbara am Ende, Margaret Armstrong, Greg Dove, Tom Harrison, Susan McMichael, Tom Noble, and Sherill Spaar

Contributors to the Board:
Shelby Jones, Melissa Martinez, Lauren Paige, Thatcher Seltzer-Rogers, John Taylor-Montoya

FOUNDATION HOSTS ALBUQUERQUE TALK AT MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND SCIENCE



WHITE SANDS FOOTPRINTS LECTURE ON SEPTEMBER 12

A fascinating controversy surrounds the dating of footprints left by early humans at White Sands National Park. Join Dr. David Rachal, a New Mexico geoarchaeologist, for an enlightening lecture in which he guides listeners through recent discoveries and research developed in collaboration with Dr. Robert Dello-Russo and Matthew Cuba. David will discuss theories about the formation of the footprint site, the biology of *Ruppia cirrhosa*, and why *R. cirrhosa*'s characteristics—coupled with the dynamics of Paleolake Otero—make it challenging to date these footprints. This event is ideal for history buffs, science enthusiasts, and anyone curious about geoarchaeology and the age of the human prints.

David Rachal is a geomorphology/geoarchaeology consultant and has more than 12 years of professional experience consulting in southern New Mexico and West Texas. David has a PhD and a Mas-

DETAILS

The White Sands Footprints Lecture with Dr. David Rachal will be Thursday, Sept. 12, at 5:30 p.m., at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, 1801 Mountain Road in Albuquerque. Tickets are \$20. For information, visit museumfoundation.eventbrite.com or call Lauren Paige at (505) 982-2282.

ter's Degree in Soil Science and Physical Geography from NMSU. His research interests include soil geomorphology, modern and paleo-eolian systems, geoarchaeology, Quaternary environments, and arid pedology. Proceeds from this event will support education and research at the Office of Archaeological Studies. ❖



Photos by Johnnie Martinez

THE LIVING SPIRIT OF PUEBLO COLORADO

BY JOHNNIE MARTINEZ

"Pueblo, Colorado?!...Really?... That's a long way to go for a one-day tour of an archaeological site."

"No, Dad. It's 'Pueblo Cōloradō,' not 'Pueblo, Cōloradō,'" Melissa's patient Hispanic pronunciation of "Colorado" (Spanish for "red"), complete with long-o's, instead of today's short-o enunciation, cast the event in an entirely different light for her father, whose fascination with all things ancient about New Mexico far exceeds his technical knowledge.

"Sign me up!" was my immediate response.

Having participated in the Friends of Archaeology's recent Comanche Gap Tour, I had an idea about what to expect, but I wasn't entirely prepared for the long shadows and sheer early-morning beauty of the Galisteo Basin's dynamic palette of reds, yellows, browns, and blues.

We were greeted at the entrance to the site by some familiar FOA faces who checked off our names on their guest rosters and gave us detailed directions about how to reach the tour's "base camp" further up the road.

And what a drive that was...

See **Colorado**, on Page 5.

COLORADO

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Pueblo Colorado is situated on the Singleton Ranch, the site of several motion picture productions set against ancient-looking saloons, ranches, and corrals that prompted me to expect encounters with cowboys, stage-coaches, and maybe an armed posse chasing Marty Robbins on his way to Rosa's Cantina in El Paso.

Eric Blinman and a group of FOA visitors were already gathering at base camp when Melissa and I arrived. Eric, ever the stickler for safety, made certain we were aware of the hazards posed by heat, dehydration, and snakes before we set off in two groups, one led by Eric and the other by Charles Hannaford, a seasoned FOA veteran of previous visits to the site.

I won't attempt to go into detail about the archaeological features and historic value of the Pueblo Colorado site... much better information than I could share is available elsewhere, but take it from me that any archaeology tour hosted by Eric or Chuck is guaranteed to be a learning experience. What I will try to convey is the sense of reverence that rose up within me as I watched Eric and his little band of disciples stop to examine (and carefully return to their original positions) pottery sherds and bits of flint and obsidian. After listening to Eric's explanations, those objects were no longer the broken remnants of a long-dead group of a mysterious people but instead had been crafted by skilled artists, farmers, hunters, traders, and fighter-protectors with deep spiritual beliefs and passions.

The feeling we were being watched, and the need to behave accordingly, grew inside me as we looked at the rock art depicted on the red cliffs and boulders of Pueblo Colorado. I'd felt that slightly eerie sensation once before as twilight set in on a cold evening in faraway Chaco Canyon. Thanks to Eric and the Friends of Archaeology, I learned more about those ancient spirits who might still be watching us from the quiet, lofty beauty of Pueblo Colorado's cliffs and shadows. ❖



OAS WELCOMES EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Ziggy Prothro, the new Office of Archaeological Studies' education coordinator, had a career in archaeology prior to joining the OAS team. She has a background in archaeology education and was previously employed by the Texas Archaeological Research Laboratory (TARL). While at the University of Texas in Austin, Ziggy developed a love for public outreach while delivering programming at a local archaeological center and volunteering with schools and community organizations. She developed a lifelong interest in Paleoindian studies while working at the Gault Site in central Texas and volunteering at the TARL.

Ziggy moved to New Mexico in 2004 to attend graduate school at Eastern New Mexico University. While there, she engaged in research at Blackwater Draw Locality #1 and continued public outreach programming. Her master's thesis, "Archaeology in Education: Public Outreach for Archaeological Awareness and Educational Enrichment," cemented her desire to work in outreach and bring all of the exciting aspects of archaeological research to the public. Ziggy has worked in cultural resource management in Texas and New Mexico and as a public school teacher in Santa Fe.

Ziggy lives in Santa Fe with her two teenagers (and near her oldest son), three cats, and dozens of fish. She loves gardening, tabletop gaming, and tacos, and she thinks New Mexico is incomparably beautiful. ❖

LOOKING FOR US?

OAS is located at 7 Old Cochiti Road, off Caja del Rio Road. If you're driving west, we're the first building on the left just before you reach the animal shelter.

ARCHAEOMAGNETIC AND ANALYTIC LABS LAB ANALYST HIRED AT OAS



Emma Kostecki

Emma Kostecki is the new laboratory analyst at the Office of Archaeological Studies. Emma earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Earth Science from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities (UMN) in 2024.

Emma gained geology field experience in Montana, Minnesota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Brazil. During her undergraduate career, she completed her senior honors thesis in rock magnetism at the Institute for Rock Magnetism at UMN.

Outside of geology, Emma enjoys hiking, camping, rock climbing, and reading. ❖

FAUNAL LAB NEW LAB ANALYST AT OAS

The New Mexico Office of Archaeological Studies welcomes osteologist Esther Peramune. Esther will be working as a laboratory analyst in the osteology and faunal lab at OAS.

Esther earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology from Florida Atlantic University in 2023, and an Associates of Arts from Palm Beach State College in 2020. Esther spent several of her college years working on archaeological and faunal analysis in South Florida.

Her interests include zooarchaeology and the analysis of faunal remains from pre-historic and historic sites. ❖



Esther Peramune

ROOTED IN LEGACY, POISED FOR THE FUTURE

BY SHELBY JONES
OAS LABORATORY SUPERVISOR

Since the development of the OAS Archaeomagnetic Laboratory in the early 1990s, it has been at the forefront of archaeomagnetic dating—a technique that allows us to determine the age of archaeological sites and features by analyzing the preserved magnetic characteristics in burned materials and comparing those characteristics to the changing behavior of Earth's past magnetic field. Under now-retired OAS Lab Analyst Jeff Cox, there was an incredible focus on collecting high-quality archaeodirectional data from across the Southwest and preserving lab founder Dr. Dan Wolfman's legacy. That changed slightly in 2008, when Wolfman's advisor, Dr. Robert DuBois, died and then-OAS director, Dr. Eric Blinman, negotiated with DuBois' estate to donate all his laboratory equipment and nearly 2,000 samples collected from archaeological sites to OAS.

At the same time, CNMA was being designed, Blinman worked with architects to design a new Archaeomagnetic Laboratory with a focus on its future potential and needs. This included ensuring the room was large enough to support the growing archives of legacy specimens and associated documentation as well as a world-class laboratory, complete with additional, new equipment and a magnetically shielded space. Following the hire of Dr. Shelby Jones as a contractor to OAS in 2020, and then as the analytic laboratory supervisor in 2023, Jones directed the acquisition for the Archaeomagnetic Laboratory of retiring Dr. Jeff Eighmy, Dr. Stacey Lengyel, and Dr. Robert Sternberg's archaeomagnetic collections and brought for the first time all the US's archaeomagnetic datasets and surviving samples under one roof. During these years, Jones also led negotiations on the transfer of slightly used, modern equipment from the University of Texas at Dallas to OAS, following the retirement of their paleomagnetist Dr. John Geissman.

With the support of DCA and the Museum of New Mexico Foundation (MNMF), Jones, on behalf of OAS, accepted delivery of a



Photo by Scott Jaquith

Shelby Jones and Mark Harvey unload archaeomagnetic equipment donated to OAS by University of Texas at Dallas.

vast amount of laboratory equipment in July 2024! In addition to this, the State is supporting the redevelopment of the OAS Archaeomagnetic Laboratory with the investment of funds to retrofit the electrical system and build custom-made shelving to support the entirety of the now unified archive.

Laboratory Supervisor Jones described the updates, which she has ceaselessly striven and advocated for over the past four years, "It is very exciting to be building something at the forefront of this research in New Mexico, where archaeomagnetism has a strong 60-year legacy."

The advancement of this research is only possible with the support of individuals like you. In order to support future developments in the laboratory, MNMF needs your help. To make a donation, contact Lauren Paige by phone at (505) 982-2282, or via email at lauren@museumfoundation.org. ❖

CELEBRATE ARCHAEOLOGY DAY AT OAS ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

The OAS is excited to be hosting a variety of programming for International Archaeology Day on Saturday, October 19. Current plans include workshops or demonstrations in fire-making, flintknapping, atlatl throwing, bone tools, creating and painting pottery using traditional methods and materials, constructing arrows, uses of yucca fiber, and the making of adobe bricks.

Our touch-and-feel tabletop museum will be on display, and we will be utilizing our large classroom for multiple activities. We hope to have representatives from New Mexico State Parks, the Bureau of Land Management, Ghost Ranch, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and New Mexico Historic Sites. We would like to have many of our labs open, with presentations and activities by our lab directors and volunteers. Our colleagues at the ARC are also working on programming for the day, which will likely include tours of the facility and activities in their workroom.

To have the best day possible, we need you! Many of these activities will be volunteer led or volunteer supported. We're happy to provide training in activities that spark your interest, and we look forward to the enthusiasm and knowledge that only our volunteers can bring. Contact us via email at oas.education@dca.nm.gov to participate. ❖

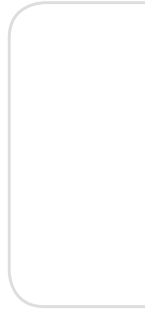
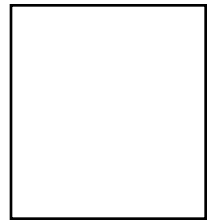
OAS NEEDS DAY-OF VOLUNTEERS

If you'd like to volunteer at this year's Archaeology Day event, please send an email to oas.education@dca.nm.gov.



MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO FOUNDATION

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DIRECTOR

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steeped in studies and data about climate change. I was studying lifeways of hunter-gatherer traditions that spanned the end of the last Ice Age and the beginning of the Holocene. As a student of human evolution and evolutionary ecology, my view of climate change is grounded in the perspective of deep time and the trajectory that our species has taken over hundreds of thousands of years. That's one of the valuable perspectives that archaeologists can provide on a topic that is often so narrowly focused. It is a personal aspiration of mine that the stories archaeologists tell can serve as some measure of hope for the generations that follow us.

Now I want to focus on change of a different kind. As of August, we have welcomed three new staff members. Esther Peramune has joined OAS as an archaeologist and zooarchaeology specialist. She comes to OAS with exceptional academic credentials and solid

experience in faunal osteology. Esther has already tackled several projects in the faunal lab and is a key member of our excavation team at Acoma. Ziggy Prothro is our new educational coordinator. She comes on board as a full-time education and outreach coordinator whose position was funded by the most recent legislative budget. OAS now has a staff member who can devote their full time and energy to education, outreach, and volunteer coordination. Ziggy has experience both as an archaeologist and an educator, and we are thrilled she has joined our staff. We also welcomed Emma Kostecki, who has joined OAS as a laboratory analyst. Emma's background is in geosciences, and she will be working alongside Shelby Jones in the archaeomagnetic and low-energy plasma radiocarbon sampling labs. We are excited that Esther, Ziggy, and Emma have become part of our team. I hope that you will have a chance to meet them soon. Perhaps you'll join us for Archaeology Day at CNMA on October 19. Until then... ❖

MAKE YOUR MARK ON NM ARCHAEOLOGY!

Please consider supporting the Office of Archaeological Studies by making a gift to education or research by check, credit, stock, IRA rollover, or planned gift. Your tax-deductible donation through the Museum of New Mexico Foundation will have a lasting impact. One hundred percent of your donation will be directed to the OAS. No administrative fees are charged. Give online: museumfoundation.org/give/. For questions, or to donate, contact Lauren Paige at (505) 982-2282, or via e-mail at lauren@museumfoundation.org.

