



October 2011

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Monthly General Meeting

Unless otherwise noted, all Chapter meetings are held at the First Presbyterian church at 1016 Cooper St., Glenwood springs, at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of the month

Monday, October 17, 2011

This spring the Colorado Archaeological Society organized a 3 day raft trip on the San Juan River from Bluff to Mexican Hat, Utah, as a benefit for the Alice Hamilton Scholarship Fund. Sally Cole, author of *Legacy on Stone: Rock Art of the Colorado Plateau and Four Corners Region*, was the tour guide. Join us for a photographic travelogue of the rock art, scenery, fossils, and lizards as seen by Cynthia and Mark Vodopich.

PAAC (Program for Avocational Archaeology)

Fall Schedule:

- Pueblo, Oct. 21-23, Principles of Archaeological Excavation
- Cortez, Nov. 5-6, Research design & Report Writing
- Denver, Nov. 19-20, Introduction to Laboratory Techniques
- Denver, Dec. 2-16, PAAC Lab. Project (contact Kevin Black for details)

Colorado Archaeological Society Annual Meeting

October 15-16, Boulder, CO (info and registration in the August newsletter or online)

Here are the current field trip plans for the annual meeting:

- Option 1: Colorado Museum of Natural History - Steve Lekson & friends are going to show off some artifacts from their extensive collection
- Option 2: Rabbit Mountain Archaeological Sites - short hike to several local archaeological sites
- Option 3: Tour of Boulder's Pioneer Columbia Cemetery

Each of these options will likely take the morning. The first two will have limited space so we will have sign ups at the conference on Saturday.

Learning About The Apishapa

Roper's Walk offers insights into a little-known culture.

MUCH OF SOUTHEAST COLORADO consists of dry mesas marked by deep canyons cut through sedimentary rocks by tributaries of the Arkansas River. Beginning in the 1930s, archaeologists recorded a number of prehistoric sites in the region that were usually located on elevated areas of the landscape near water sources. The sites often featured a cluster of rock slabs and pillars arranged in circles that appeared to be the bases of houses. The house walls and roof could have been made of perishable brush that was plastered with mud. Side-notched projectile points were commonly found there. Radiocarbon dates suggest these sites were occupied from A.D. 1100 to 1450.

The people who inhabited these sites are known as the Panhandle Aspect culture. This culture, which was defined by archaeologist Alex Krieger in 1946, also occupied sites in New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. The Panhandle Aspect has three regional variations known as Antelope Creek, Optima, and Apishapa. Due to the limited amount of archaeological research in the region, little is known about these variants.

For the past eight years, archaeological student Chaz Evans has been hiking southeast Colorado's canyons and mesas and recording archaeological sites. In a 2003 he found Roper's Walk, an Apishapa village built above a tributary of the Arkansas River. The site takes its name from the Ropers, a pioneer ranching family that lived nearby.

Roper's Walk contains nine intact architectural features with 16 rooms, together with numerous exterior hearths, and a possible quarry area. A number of surface artifacts including stone flakes, grinding slabs, and manos were also noted, as were exotic materials such as chert from Texas' northern panhandle, obsidian from both northern New Mexico and southern Idaho, and a Catlinite pipe fragment from a Minnesota quarry. There is also a natural pool that is capable of holding up to 4,000 gallons of runoff water at the base of a cliff.

Evans conducted a region-wide survey that ultimately



The site's natural pool can hold up to 4,000 gallons of runoff water.

identified five rock shelters, open-air lithic scatters, and over 50 architectural rooms near the town of Beulah, which he used as the basis of his master's thesis at Colorado State University. His work represents the first extensive look at Apishapa sites in decades.

Roper's Walk is situated on a five-acre residential lot within a gated subdivision of custom homes. The Conservancy will fence the preserve, develop a management plan, and establish a volunteer site steward program to protect it. Red Creek Land Company, the developer of the subdivision, has generously agreed to donate \$15,000 of the value of the Roper's Walk lot in a bargain-sale-to-charity.

JIM WALKER

CONSERVANCY Plan of Action

SITE: Roper's Walk

CULTURE AND TIME PERIOD: Apishapa (A.D. 1100-1450)

STATUS: The site is threatened by development.

ACQUISITION: The Conservancy needs to raise \$61,930 by January 2012.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Please send contributions to: The Archaeological Conservancy,
Attn: Roper's Walk, 5301 Central Ave. NE Suite 902, Albuquerque, NM 87108-1530.

