



# PCRG

PaleoCultural Research Group

## Organization Report for 2008

2008 witnessed the culmination of a long period of transition and transformation for PCRG. We believe the changes made over the last several years will lead to a period of sustained growth for the organization. The most far-reaching change is the transfer of operations to Colorado. During the fall, Mark Mitchell and Stacey Bennett settled into the organization's new lab facility in Broomfield, a Denver suburb. Our office address is 555 Burbank Street, Unit A, Broomfield, Colorado, 80020. Correspondence can be sent to P.O. Box 745309, Arvada, Colorado, 80006. Our new phone number is (303) 429-4098. We report on the move in more detail on page 6.

PCRG also moved into cyberspace this year. Our newly launched website will help keep members up-to-date on the organization's activities and provide a mechanism for distributing PCRG research and education products. As a part of the rollout of the website, PCRG introduced a new logo reflecting the organization's commitment to research on the Great Plains and adjacent regions. Visit us regularly on the web at <[www.paleocultural.org](http://www.paleocultural.org)>. E-mail correspondence can be sent to <[info@paleocultural.org](mailto:info@paleocultural.org)>.

This year, PCRG renewed its emphasis on student training by establishing a partnership with the University of Colorado. Whether working under the federal work-study program, volunteering as a student intern, or earning college credit, this program gives CU anthropology students hands-on opportunities to learn

about archaeological research. In turn, they make valuable contributions to PCRG activities.



PCRG's new office in Colorado.

During 2008, PCRG continued its productive collaboration with the State Historical Society of North Dakota at Chief Looking's Village, a well-known earthlodge settlement managed by the Bismarck Parks and



New PCRG lab space in use by Chris Johnston (l) and Lauren Longnecker (r).

Recreation District. The week-long project, which combined a large-scale geophysical survey with a small-scale testing effort, promises to provide new perspectives on the archaeology of the Heart River region. A summary of this work can be found on page 2.

The coming year will feature another field season at Beacon Island, an Agate Basin bison kill and camp site that was the focus of PCRG projects in 2002 and 2006. Previous field investigations concentrated on the site's large bonebed; this year we will turn our attention to associated activity areas. Other projects slated for this year include a preliminary survey and testing project at a complex, but little-known stone enclosure site in southern Colorado's San Luis Valley. In 2010, PCRG members may again have an opportunity to work at the Gault site in central Texas, one of the premier Paleoindian sites in North America. We encourage members interested in participating in these projects to return the enclosed research opportunities response form with their 2009 dues.

Like all non-profit organizations, PCRG's continued well-being depends on the support and participation of its members. We are grateful for your continued support during this period of transition and look forward to collaborating with you in the future.

Mark D. Mitchell, President  
and Treasurer  
Kimberly Spurr, Vice-President  
Carl R. Falk, Secretary

## Field Investigations at Chief Looking's Village in 2008

*Mark D. Mitchell*

In 2008, PCRG again teamed up with the University of Arkansas and the State Historical Society of North Dakota to investigate a village settlement in the Bismarck area. This year the work focused on Chief Looking's Village. With its breathtaking views of the Missouri River, the site (formerly known as Ward Village) is now the centerpiece of a popular Bismarck city park. The goals of the project are to learn more about the overall layout of the village, to document its current condition, and to obtain a sample of artifacts for chronological study. To achieve these goals, the research team carried out a large-scale geophysical survey and excavated three small test units.

As always, the fieldwork was supported by the generous volunteer efforts of PCRG members. Fifteen people

took part in the excavation program, including Fern Swenson, Paul Picha, Tim Reed, Amy Bleier, Emily Sakariassen, and Stacey Bennett of the SHSND; PCRG volunteers Doug Wurtz, John Vicha, Craig Johnson, Alicia Johnson, Richard Krause, Kacy Hollenback, Chris Roos, and Peter Leach; and PCRG research director Mark Mitchell.

Previous work at Chief Looking's Village documented a complex fortification system surrounding the settlement. A deep ditch, incorporating two large projecting bastions, marks the eastern end of the site. A shallower ditch lacking bastions protects the western end. Shallow depressions marking the locations of earthlodges are scattered throughout the site. Of special interest to the research team was a line of at least eight prominent subrectangular depressions running along the north side of the village. The clarity of these features suggests significant intact cultural deposits may be preserved there and for that reason the testing effort focused on this part of the settlement.



Aerial view of Chief Looking's Village, showing rectangular house depressions at upper right along the bluff edge, bastion at lower right, and modern trails that cross the site. Photo by Mike Frohlich (State Historic Society of North Dakota).

The site has an unusual disturbance history. Unlike virtually every other earthlodge settlement in the region, Chief Looking's Village never was plowed. Because it has been publicly owned since 1930, it also has not been affected by road construction or other development projects. However, a variety of other activities have left their mark. The most significant of these was the construction of three replica earthlodges by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1934. The CCC also built an access road across the site, which is still partially visible in aerial photographs. The lodges burned in the early 1960s and the access road was formally closed in 1976.

The initial findings of the 2008 field investigation paint a picture of a settlement that was quite different than most settlements previously investigated by the research team. Most strikingly, Chief Looking's Village appears to have been occupied only briefly. In contrast with Larson, Boley and



Mark Mitchell and Chris Roos discuss a test unit at Chief Looking's Village.

finding, coupled with excavation data obtained by the CCC in 1934 as well as modern topographic data, suggest that the village's residents built long-rectangular-style lodges. Whether all of the settlement's structures were of this type is not known; however, data on ceramic vessels from the site suggest that it may have been occupied during a period of transition from long-rectangular to circular lodges.

The field investigation also demonstrated that extensive intact archaeological deposits are preserved at Chief Looking's Village, despite its history of intensive recreational use. In some parts of the site village-age deposits are present within 15 cm of the modern ground surface.



Paul Picha inspects one of many soil core samples while John Vicha and Dick Krause look on.

Double Ditch villages, Chief Looking's Village lacks the massive, encircling debris mounds indicative of long-term occupation. Moreover, the geophysical data demonstrate that Chief Looking's Village is surrounded by just one fortification ditch. Four concentric defensive systems enclose both Larson and Double Ditch villages and at least three ditches are present at Boley. The construction and reconstruction of multiple fortification systems must have taken place over a considerable period of time at each of these sites.

PCRG's test excavations at Chief Looking's Village revealed that some of the settlement's residential structures were built in pits roughly 35 to 40 cm deep. This



PCRG Lab Director Stacey Bennett and CU student Jacob Lueck sort waterscreen samples from Chief Looking's Village.

Laboratory analyses of the artifacts and other materials collected in 2008 will continue through 2009, with a report on the results of the project scheduled for completion at the end of the year.

## Beacon Island Project Update

Mark D. Mitchell

In 2008, PCRG staff and members under Mark Mitchell's direction initiated a new study of faunal remains and other materials from the Beacon Island site, a Paleoindian bison kill and camp located on Lake Sakakawea in western North Dakota. Previous work at the site demonstrated that it was occupied by Agate Basin hunters between 11,750 and 12,800 years ago. The current analysis will answer key questions about Agate Basin subsistence and settlement and provide insights into the origins of the earliest human groups to arrive in North America. Funding for the project is provided by a National Park Service Save America's Treasures grant awarded to the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

The first major step in the analysis is to identify and code the more than 3,000 plotted bison bone fragments recovered from a 114-square-meter excavation block. PCRG Lab Supervisor Stacey Bennett is conducting the analysis, in consultation with PCRG members Jennie Lee and Carl Falk. The faunal data will be used to reconstruct the age and sex composition of the bison herd, to estimate the season in which the kill was made, and to investigate Agate Basin carcass processing practices.

The second step is the creation of an interactive site map. Using excavation photos and level drawings, along with precise total station data, PCRG member Dr. Ken Kvamme is producing a GIS-based map that will be linked to data generated by the faunal analysis. This map will be used to investigate the distribution of skeletal elements across the site, as well as their relationship to stone tools, flaking debris, and other materials. Data on the density of flaking debris and burned bone fragments will be used to help define activity areas within and adjacent to the bonebed.

A variety of other analyses also are currently underway. Mark is conducting a technological analysis of the stone tools and flaking

debris as well as a comprehensive refitting study which will answer questions about the post-depositional processes affecting the bonebed and adjacent camp areas. To learn more about projectile point reuse, PCRG member Dr. Marvin Kay is conducting a high-power microscopic use-wear analysis on a sample of points and point frag-

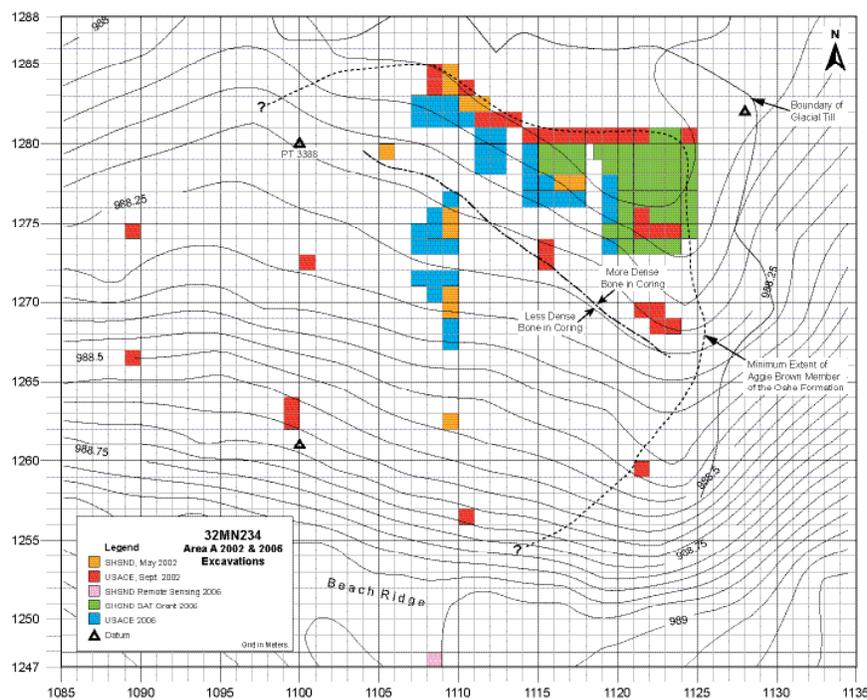


Stacey Bennett analyzing bison bone from Beacon Island.

ments from the bonebed. Dr. Robert Yohe, Director of the Laboratory for Archaeological Science at California State University at Bakersfield, is using protein residue analysis to identify organic residues on a sample of projectile points and flake tools. Dr. Rolfe Mandel from the University of Kansas is using phytolith and stable carbon

analyses to investigate the ancient environment in the area. Environmental reconstruction is also the goal of research conducted by PCRG members Paul Picha and Doug Wurtz on the gastropod collection from the site.

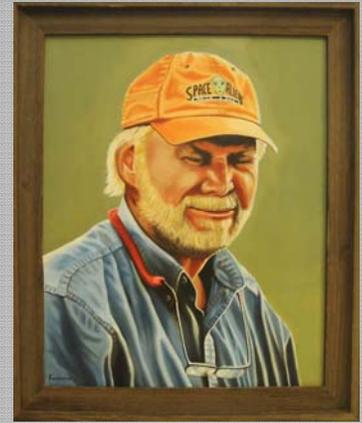
PCRG plans to return to the site in 2009 to further investigate the camp area adjacent to the bison processing locality. Additional information about this work can be found on the enclosed fieldwork opportunities page.



Map showing areas investigated in 2002 and 2006 at Beacon Island.

## Stan Ahler Honored with 2008 Plains Conference Symposium

The 2008 Plains Anthropological Conference, held in Laramie, Wyoming, featured a two-part symposium honoring PCRG co-founder Stan Ahler and his many contributions to the study of Plains Village archaeology. Stan's four decades of research on the native farming communities of the Dakotas helped transform archaeological practice in the region and contributed to a deeper understanding of its complex and dynamic history. The first session was devoted to current research on material culture and technology, while the second focused on recent studies of Plains Village settlement and subsistence. Each session was followed by an open discussion period in which presenters and audience members asked questions, shared ideas, and considered directions for future research. The symposium was organized by PCRG members Mark Mitchell and Dale Henning and featured presentations by several long-time members. PCRG member Ken Kvamme kicked off the Symposium by unveiling an original portrait of Stan that he painted especially for the event.



Stan Ahler, PCRG co-founder.

### PATTERN AND VARIETY IN PLAINS VILLAGE ARCHAEOLOGY: PAPERS IN HONOR OF STANLEY A. AHLER

#### SESSION 1

Mark D. Mitchell: *Stanley A. Ahler and Plains Village Archaeology*

Marvin Kay: *No Stone Unturned: A Fond Reflection of Stan Ahler's Interest in Lithic Technology*

Craig Johnson: *Initial Middle Missouri Chipped Stone Procurement in South Dakota*

Susan Vehik, Ben Banks, Richard Drass and Stephen Perkins: *Shooting Bison for the World Market: Changes in Wichita Stone Projectile Points A.D. 1450-1760*

Richard Krause: *Conjecture and Refutation: An Analysis and Description of Ceramics from Fort Carson, Colorado*

Paul R. Picha: *Middle Missouri Archaeomalacology: Materials, Modes, Means and Meanings of Marine and Exotic Shell Use in the Plains Village Archaeological Record*

William Billeck: *Glass Trade Beads at Plains Villages Sites in the Dakotas*

#### SESSION 2

Wendy Munson-Scullin and Michael Scullin: *Estimating the Subsistence Potential of an All But Vanquished Landscape*

Rob Bozell: *Villagers on the Central High Plains*

Donna Roper: *Variation in Central Plains Tradition House Construction*

Fern E. Swenson and Carl R. Falk: *Settlement Plans for Traditional Mandan Villages*

Andrew R. Heller and Kenneth L. Kvamme: *New Interpretations of the Fort Clark State Historic Site, North Dakota Based on Color and Thermal Infrared Aerial Imagery*

Kenneth L. Kvamme: *Microtopographic Mapping of Northern Plains Villages as a Form of Remote Sensing and Preservation*

W. Raymond Wood: *Discussant*

## Research Contributions of PaleoCultural Research Group

PCRG assigns numbers to research products to provide a permanent record of substantive work generated by its members and to enhance and facilitate dissemination of information. During 2008 PCRG generated two Research Contributions (listed below). Single copies of Research Contributions are obtainable upon request by PCRG members, subject to availability and restrictions imposed by some contracting agencies and copyright laws. 'Out-of-print' copies are also available at a nominal fee to cover the cost for photocopying and shipping.

81. Mitchell, Mark D. (editor)

2008 *Archaeological and Geophysical Investigations During 2007 at Larson Village, Burleigh County, North Dakota*. Submitted to the State Historic Society of North Dakota, Bismarck. 104 pp. (with 4 contributing authors: Kenneth L. Kvamme, Mark Mitchell, Paul R. Picha, and Fern Swenson)

82. Mitchell, Mark D.

2008 *Interim Report on Phase 1 Fieldwork, Geophysical Survey and Limited Test Excavation at Chief Looking's Village (32BL3)*. Submitted to the State Historic Society of North Dakota, Bismarck. 7 pp.

## PCRG on the Move!

*Kimberly Spurr*

When the PCRG lab in Flagstaff was closed in early 2007, most equipment and other materials went into a storage unit in anticipation of eventually opening a new office and lab space in Colorado. After a year and a half, that move has finally become a reality.

Mark Mitchell, our new President, spent time over the summer of 2008 scouring office parks for the perfect space to accommodate PCRG's lab and office needs. Mark finally found a suitable location in Broomfield, between Denver and Boulder. The location offers access to students and resources at the University of Colorado, something we are already taking advantage of through a work-study program and internships with the Anthropology Department.

Once the space was rented, it was time to make the move. PCRG member David Purcell helped Kim load the entire contents of the Flagstaff storage unit into a 26-foot U-Haul truck. The next day Kim headed for Denver in the vehicle she affectionately called the "road whale" because of the way it swam down the highway and through traffic. This trek took place just before Labor Day, and Kim arrived in Denver the day after the Democratic National Convention ended, which made for interesting traffic through the city.

On Saturday, Kim, Mark, and Cindy Souders, unloaded the lab and field equipment, library, computers, and furniture into PCRG's new space. Stacey Bennett arrived the week before from North Dakota with a truck full of boxes of artifacts and waterscreen samples from PCRG's excavations

at Beacon Island and Chief Looking's Village, to be sorted by PCRG lab staff. Stacey and Mark spent November settling into the new space and setting up the lab, and by December the PCRG Colorado office was up and running at full speed!

Our new headquarters has 1200 sq. feet of space, including two offices, a small wet lab, a student work area, and storage space for artifacts and equipment. While not as spacious as our Flagstaff venue, it fits our current needs nicely.



The storage unit in Flagstaff before loading the truck (top), in the midst of loading (middle), and nearly empty (bottom). At left, David packs the load for the trip to Broomfield.

As part of the move to Colorado, PCRG is now incorporated as a non-profit organization in that state. Membership records, fiscal records, and other documents of the organization are now on file in Broomfield, in accordance with State and Federal laws. PCRG members passing through the area are encouraged to visit.

## PCRG Member News

**John Vicha** reports that he is still doing docent work at the Field Museum in Chicago, where finances are tight and the docents are being asked to do more each month as regular employees leave or are eliminated. John worked at Chief Looking's Village last summer with Dick Krause and other members and found it very interesting.

**Craig and Alicia Johnson** spent one week excavating at Chief Looking's Village in Bismarck last summer. Alicia says: I had been waterscreening at various PCRG sites for three years and this is the first time I got to take a leadership role. Being in charge of the station caused me to really think about the process and how to make it work efficiently. I loved working with my past waterscreening colleagues such as Stacy Bennett and Paul Picha and I also enjoyed showing Chris Roos and Kacy

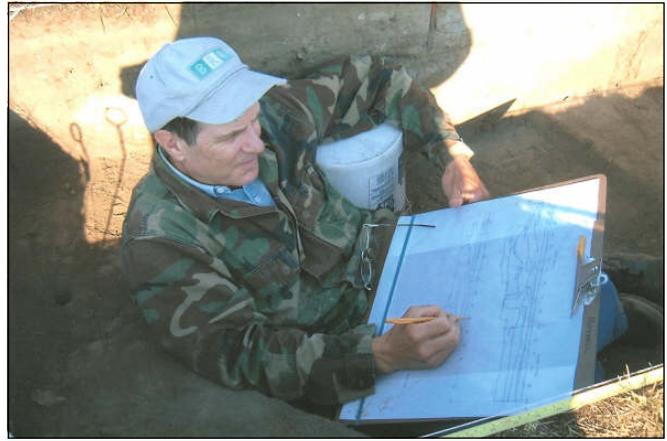


Alicia Johnson heads up the water-screening effort.

Hollenback the ropes. This experience was challenging in that it made me think on my feet and make decisions to better the group but it was also fun because I was doing what I loved. I love being outside and that is probably one of the big draws for me to fieldwork and waterscreening. I love to rough it, get dirty, and have fun all at the same time. I really enjoyed the different setting we had this year. I was used to waterscreening in rural

areas with no one around besides us. What I really like about this year was being able to teach people in the Bismarck community about our research and findings. I feel like a lot of people go to museums and don't know where all of the artifacts came from. It was especially interesting to inform the people living right next to the site. They have been living there and probably never knew what was underneath the surface.

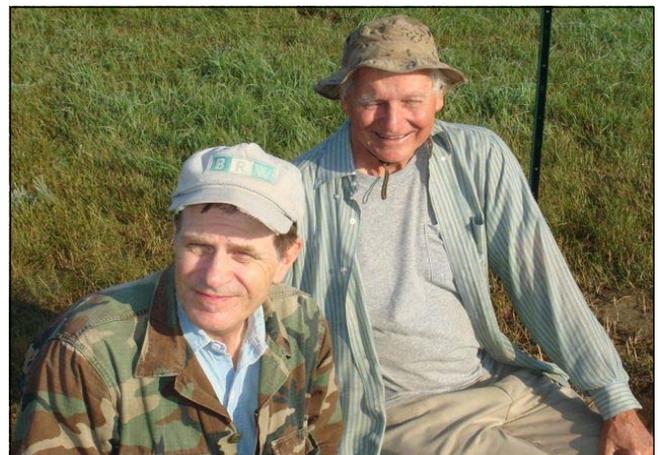
Craig says of his field experience: Peter Leach and I teamed up to excavate a shallow basin-shaped pit at the north end of the village. Like excavations at Boley several years before, it was difficult to define the edge of the pit because the color and texture of the pit fill was similar to the surrounding matrix. Chris Roos identified some very subtle differences between the two that enabled us



Craig Johnson interpreting the pit profile.

to define the pit edges which made me realize that even though excavating is largely a manual endeavor, you still have to think about what you are doing.

I also participated in the 2008 Plains Conference symposium honoring the contributions of Stan Ahler. I wrote (with Mark Mitchell delivering) a paper on Initial Middle Missouri chipped stone procurement patterns from 12 of the earliest Plains Village sites in South Dakota. Much of the focus of my contribution was on the procurement and exchange of Knife River flint from Jones Village (39CA3), a site on the Missouri River near the North Dakota-South Dakota border, to related sites far to the south along the Missouri and James rivers. These findings will be the basis of one chapter in an on-going site report being written by myself, Carl Falk and Bob Nickel. In addition to the time PCRG spent processing and recording artifacts from the site, the information was used in two papers by Stan and I in *Plains Village Archaeology: Bison Hunting Farmers in the Central and Northern Plains*. In my Plains Conference paper I acknowledged the early and continuing influence of Stan's lithic work on my own research, an approach that emphasizes inductive research based on rigorous data collection to form empirical generalizations.



Craig Johnson and Peter Leach at Chief Looking's Village.

## A Busy Year for PCRG's Eastern Office

Carl R. Falk

The past year, marking my 12<sup>th</sup> with PCRG, was a busy one, passing swiftly (too swiftly!). Much time during the early months of 2008 was centered on developing office and lab space in Pennsylvania. Throughout the year, in addition to assisting Kim and Mark from afar as PCRG opened a new office in Broomfield, I've continued involvement with several PCRG-sponsored projects, including Jones Village and Deadwood in South Dakota, and Beacon Island and Menoken Village in North Dakota.

As Craig Johnson noted in his section above, he and I are actively working toward completing a detailed report on Jones Village, an early Middle Missouri site located on the east bank of Lake Oahe in north-central South Dakota. The site has been nearly destroyed by shoreline erosion over the past four decades. First introduced to the PCRG membership in the combined 1997-1998 annual report, the Jones Village project began as an emergency salvage excavation completed under Archaeological Resources Protection Act permits. Field work was completed in 1997 and 1998 under Craig's direction with the volunteer participation of several PCRG members. Since 1998, PCRG members and lab staff have been directly involved in processing much of the collection, as well as in specialized analyses of lithic, ceramic, botanical, and bone materials. Interest in the site is linked directly to PCRG's long-term commitment (in cooperation with the State Historical Society of North Dakota) to research at Menoken Village, a roughly contemporaneous Late Woodland community located a few miles east of Bismarck. Craig's recent article "Jones Village: an Initial Middle Missouri Frontier Settlement" in *Plains Village Ar-*

*chaeology: Bison-hunting Farmers in the Central and Northern Plains* (University of Utah Press, 2007) will provide significant momentum for completion of the final site monograph. Craig and I are presently working on a more detailed analytic structure for the final analysis. Other PCRG members will be involved in the project, including Bob Nickel who will continue his analysis of macrobotanical remains. Personally, I hope this final report will combine the results of Craig's 1997-1998 field work with those from an earlier U.S. Army Corps of Engineer-funded survey and test investigation in 1979.

A second project in South Dakota is PCRG's study of nearly seven thousand animal bones from Feature 28, a rich trash layer excavated by Rose Fosha (State Archaeological Research Center, Rapid City) in the historic Chinatown section of Deadwood. The bone assemblage is dominated by the

remains of cattle, pigs, sheep, and domestic birds (chicken, duck, goose and turkey), along with a modest number of smaller mammals and both marine and freshwater fish. The study, completed with PCRG member Rob Bozell, reveals a mix of butchering waste and food debris representing several historic periods, beginning in the late 1870s and continuing into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Turning to North Dakota, the report of PCRG's 2005 field investigations at the Menoken Village site is nearing completion. As time permits, I am editing various sections and working on the concluding chapters. Coordinating closely with Fern Swenson (SHSND), we hope to have the final manuscript available by early summer.

During 2008, I also consulted with Mark Mitchell, Stacey Bennett, Fern Swenson, and Jennie Lee (Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc.) concerning PCRG's analysis of the bone assemblage



Carl's lab space in Fairfield, Pennsylvania.



Carl's office space in Fairfield, Pennsylvania.

from our fall 2002 field investigation at Beacon Island, as well as the more recent SHSND field program in 2006.

In the fall, Fern invited me to work with her on a paper for presentation at the 67<sup>th</sup> annual Plains Anthropological Conference. The paper, "Settlement Plans for Traditional Mandan Villages," was presented in a session organized by Mark and Dale Henning entitled "Pattern and Variety in Plains Village Archaeology: Papers in Honor of Stanley A. Ahler" (see page 5). The presentation was an expansion of an earlier paper by Fern published in the University of Utah Press book cited above. To the six original sites considered by Fern, we added Scattered Village and Chief Looking's Village, providing a discussion of both settlement pattern and community structure for the period spanning the late 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. A visual highlight of the paper was a recent aerial view of Chief Looking's Village showing what appears to be rectangular house depressions in rows oriented in a northeast to southwest direction (see page 2 for more information on Mark's 2008 field program at Chief Looking's Village).

In addition to PCRGSponsored work, during the past year I participated in several other projects. In February, I completed descriptive analysis of a select sample of bone from two excavation units at site 5LA08658, a small rock shelter within the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site, Colorado. The sample was from fieldwork completed under the direction of Larry Loendorf. The specimens submitted primarily consisted of passerine wing and leg elements, along with other bird (dove), mammal (cottontail, gopher, and kangaroo rat), amphibian (salamander and toad), and reptile (lizard and snake) debris. This lab analysis was completed as a direct follow-up to an earlier PCRGSponsored project at the nearby Barnes site.

A second project, this time in Kansas, involved a small sample of fish bone from the prehistoric Phil site (14JW48). The analysis was part of a larger project directed by Brad Logan (Department of Anthropology, Sociology, and Social Work, Kansas State University, Man-

hattan). Rob Bozell also worked on bone remains from the site. The sample consisted mainly of crappie and freshwater drum specimens, as well as pieces of goldeye, sucker, catfish and pike bone. The cultural association of the fish bone was somewhat problematic. The site was previously inundated by an artificial lake (Lovewell) and it was thought that some of the bone might possibly be of recent origin. With one exception (pike), the sample included fishes native to the Kansas River basin. Also, any of the remains might be expected in a Central Plains vil-

lage assemblage. The bone was well preserved and at least one drum spine showed possible evidence of metal tool marks, suggesting a recent origin.

Several additional projects can be briefly noted. Early in the year I was asked to examine fish bone from the Nebraska State Historical Society's 2003-2004 test excavations site 25WN106, the Engineer Cantonment site – the location of the Stephen Long Expedition's 1819-1820 winter encampment. This work is scheduled for completion during the coming spring. The opportunity to work with materials from a site associated with what many consider America's first 'biodiversity inventory' looks to be quite interesting. Additional work in

Nebraska during 2008 included a minor contribution to a manuscript detailing work at the Eagle Ridge site, a protohistoric Oto or Ioway occupation in eastern Nebraska. Working with Rob Bozell and Amy Koch (Nebraska State Historical Society, Fort Robinson Museum), final editing of a chapter dealing with the modified and unmodified bone sample should be completed later this winter. The Eagle Ridge report is tentatively scheduled to be published in *Central Plains Archeology* in 2009. Finally, in cooperation with Dale Henning, I began a reexamination of the faunal remains from the Beals site (13CK62), a stratified, multi-component site with evidence of Great Oasis and earlier Woodland occupations. Having completed a preliminary analysis of the sample over 40 years ago, this study should be informative from several perspectives. This work is part of a larger study of the site assemblage by Dale.



Near complete and butchered carpometacarpi from Feature 28, site 39LA3000-CT, Deadwood, South Dakota: **a.** domestic goose (*Anser* sp.), **b.** domestic duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), **c.** turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), and **d.** chicken (*Gallus gallus*).

## Highlights of the 2008 Year of a Contract Archaeologist

*Eugene Gryba*

As usual, I spent the first few months of 2008 working on reports from the 2007 field season. In mid February I took part with Professor Brian Kooyman and his undergraduate students at the University of Calgary in a lively question and answer session on lithic technology. It included examination of various raw and heat treated lithic materials plus demonstrations of basic principles of flaking stone and individual attempts at flint knapping.

In March my family and I spent three weeks with my wife's family in the Philippines. I searched gravel bars along a few streams in central and northern Luzon but



My family with my wife's parents on their acreage in Abra.

did not find any good quality chert or obsidian. Also, to my dismay I learned that none of the universities at Baguio City had an anthropology or archaeology department, or even taught any archaeology courses; they are oriented more toward the health and agricultural sciences.

I spent much of the 2008 field season with three assistants carrying out archaeological impact assessments for FMA Heritage Consultants Inc. of three oil sands leases in the Boreal Forest north of Fort McMurray in northeastern Alberta. The general project area is situated on flat to low rolling glaciolacustrine terrain located between the Athabasca River and the Birch Mountains. Access to and within the leases was by helicopter from a remote construction camp nestled deep in the woods at the northeastern base of the Birch Mountains. The camp is located around 50 miles from the nearest town. As in previous years, worker safety was a major concern on our survey projects. Aside from attire like steel-toed work boots, safety glasses and fluorescent safety vests, we were re-

quired to carry a first-aid kit, two-way radios and bear spray, plus our standard survey equipment. In addition, we were required to bring along a large survival kit which we left at helicopter drop-off sites so that it would be handy in the very remote chance that we would be-



Aerial view of our 2008 field camp in northeastern Alberta.

come stranded in the forest through unexpected circumstances. Fortunately, the opportunity to use the survival kit never did arise.

I find the northern Boreal Forest an interesting and very challenging place to do archaeological work. The sites are usually considerably smaller than many of those we find on the plains in the southern part of the province, and the cultural remains frequently occur within 10 centimeters of the surface. Also, the territory comes with an overabundance of mosquitoes and blackflies. These pesky insects are around from the beginning of June well into September and even into October, if the days are warm. Whether I was trying to demonstrate how tough,



Getting ready to depart from camp to search out archaeological sites on one of the oil sands leases.

macho, or stupid I was, I seldom used insect repellent during the surveys. This sort of behavior on my part was in marked contrast to that of my assistants who almost always wore bug nets.

We discovered 51 previously unrecorded prehistoric archaeological sites during the 2008 field season. At one site we found a small lanceolate Paleoindian point and at another site we recovered half of a huge biface and percussion flakes of high quality “salt and pepper” quartzite. I am still baffled why a knapper would have attempted to produce such a monstrous tool when access to good quality stone in a forested environment is very restricted because of vegetation cover. Also, prehistoric groups likely had to be on a constant move as the local food resources were rapidly depleted. A huge biface would simply have added more weight to the daily possessions the family would have had to tote around. My best hypothesis to account for why the broken biface was abandoned, when it could have been reworked into a reasonably sized functional tool, was that “a bear ate the knapper.” This local lithic reduction station is one of the areas that I have recommended for controlled excavations with the hope of finding the other half of the biface and possibly even some culturally diagnostic artifacts.

Many sites we discovered were identified only by a scattering of flakes. At times we were a bit amazed with our degree of success in finding sites in a forested environment where there are few ground exposures and where prehistoric activities that would show up in the archaeological record were usually localized to areas measuring only several square meters. But, then we simply dug thousands of shovel tests at what appeared to be good places to camp. And, whenever possible, we sifted the sandy matrix from our shovel tests through my portable home-made aluminum and steel framed fine-mesh screens which made it possi-



Broken quartzite biface and associated debitage recovered in a shovel test on one of the oil sands leases in northeastern Alberta.



Testing one of the 51 sites we discovered in 2008 (HjOw-2).

ble for us to recover even small pressure flakes. Since I prefer survey work, I leave the excavation of selected sites we found to other crews.

In September I learned that Thomas F. Kehoe had passed away. I received this sad news from both Tom’s former wife, Dr. Alice Kehoe and from his surviving one, Mary Ann Siderits. Tom Kehoe was the first archaeologist I ever worked under when he was the Provincial Archaeologist at the Saskatchewan Museum of

Natural History in Regina and I truly acknowledge his role in jump-starting me along a career in professional archaeology.

It is near the end of December as I am composing these notes. I have already completed two project reports for this past summer’s work and am now well into the third one. Two “extracurricular” items on the archaeological agenda for the rest of the winter are a flint knapping session with members of our local archaeological society and work on several research papers. The global

economic slowdown has had a major effect on the Alberta oil patch. We have already been informed by a number of developers that some of the oil sands projects had been put on indefinite hold. This suspension of development may actually be a blessing in disguise as it will allow me to direct attention toward archaeological projects in other parts of the province. One of these projects is a potentially early Paleoindian site that I discovered back in the 1980s

near the scenic Rocky Mountain Front Range in west-central Alberta. We are currently awaiting radiocarbon dates from the lowest component of that site. Also on the drawing board for the summer season is a possible family trip to northeastern British Columbia and Yukon to visit relatives and colleagues. If time allows, our travels may even take us as far as Fairbanks.

## Moving to the Southern High Plains

*George Crawford*

For me, 2008 was another busy year. In January, I was able to volunteer for a week at the State Historical Society of North Dakota in Bismarck to continue work with the Beacon Island specimen-sorting project. Not long after, I began the process of moving back to the Southern High Plains of New Mexico to take on the new position of Site Archaeologist at Blackwater Draw (a.k.a. the Clovis site) for Eastern New Mexico University. This is familiar ground for me as I worked at the site and ran the contract arm for the University in the past.

The new position is a combination of curator, tourism director, and indentured archaeologist primarily focusing on Paleoindian research in the region. Although there are a lot more administrative duties than I would prefer, we have been able to launch a new round of fieldwork and dive into the massive amounts of unanalyzed data previously gathered at the site. I, along with David Kilby (ENMU), have constructed a website to keep people with an interest informed about our work here at Blackwater Draw. With the help of our graduate assistants we intend to keep a weekly update on our progress and upcoming opportunities. Visit the website and post comments questions at: <[theclovissite.wordpress.com/](http://theclovissite.wordpress.com/)>.

We are hosting the ENMU field school for five weeks this summer (June 8 through July 10) and hope to continue work at the site for many years to come. I would like to extend an invitation to all PCRG members to come and visit any time or take part in upcoming fieldwork opportunities. If time permits, I hope to be able to participate in upcoming PCRG projects as the organization moves into its new era.



George Crawford giving a tour of the bone bed at Blackwater Draw.



JoAnne and Ken Kvamme

## PCRG at Chief Looking's Village



Mark Mitchell



Fern Swenson (above) and Stacey Bennett (below)



Emily Sakariassen and Doug Wurtz (left)



Alicia Johnson



## Greetings from Colorado!

Stacey Bennett

The past year has been full of many changes, most notably my transfer from the State Historical Society of North Dakota to be Lab Director at the new PCRG lab in Colorado. Living in Bismarck was great and I am so relieved it was during the relatively mild 2008 winter rather than the very snowy 2009 winter. Timing is everything!



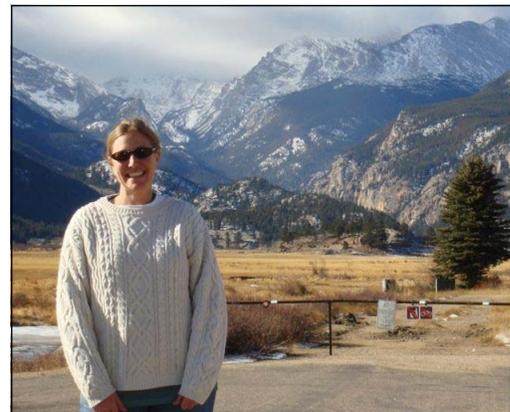
Fern Swenson, Stacey, and Mark Mitchell in the field.

Excavation of Chief Looking's Village in August of 2008 was a great ending to my stay in North Dakota. It was fantastic to get my trowel dirty again and see so many PCRG members return with such enthusiasm to participate in the project. The sorting phase of Chief Looking's Village is making good progress and we now have six students from the University of Colorado helping with the effort. Looking at recovered village materials is as exciting as I remember and a great distraction from identifying fragmented faunal bone.

The year spent in North Dakota was very successful and with the help from everyone at SHSND, the records and collections from Beacon Island were prepared for a smooth transition to the PCRG lab in Colorado for further analysis. After the initial week or so of building shelves, unpacking boxes, and deciding how to organize our new space it was time to get to work. I am currently identifying faunal remains from the fall 2002 and 2006 excavations at Beacon Island. Thankfully, Jennie B. Lee (Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc.) has been training, guiding, and answering all of my difficult questions regarding recovered bone from the site. Her familiarity with the site and her participation during all field seasons at Beacon Island has been an invaluable bonus.

It may seem as though I have done nothing but work over the past year, not true. Luckily, I was able to take a couple months off over the summer and travel. I spent time with my family in Florida and welcomed my new niece into the family during a visit to Vermont. My best friend and her son were able to visit Colorado in December and we spent some time in the Rocky Mountain National Park.

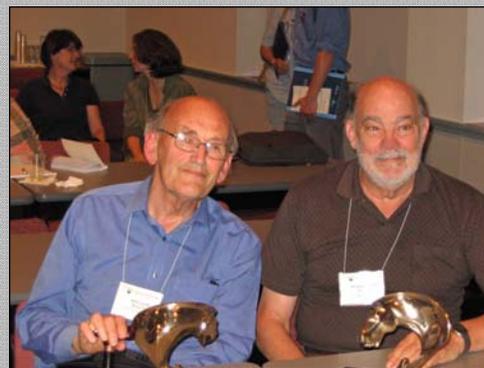
All in all it has been a great year and I am looking forward to an exciting 2009 field season and hope to see many familiar faces over the summer.



Stacey at Rocky Mountain National Park.

## Ray Wood Honored with AMQUA Award

Well, I did no fieldwork this past year. But in June 2008 I was honored to receive the Distinguished Service Award for 2007 from the American Quaternary Association (AMQUA) at their biennial meeting at Pennsylvania State, in University Park, Pennsylvania. The recipient for 2008 was William A. Watts, a distinguished palynologist from Trinity College, Dublin. My award was fallout from the 15-year interdisciplinary research that I initiated and directed in the Harry S. Truman Reservoir in the 1960s and 1970s. The work investigated Rodgers Shelter and a number of nearby artesian spring bogs that contained flora and fauna dating back to the last interglacial. The 10,000-year-plus cultural record at Rodgers Shelter, reported by R. Bruce McMillan, was augmented by the paleoenvironmental and geochronological records assembled by James E. King and C. Vance Haynes, Donald Lee Johnson, Jeffrey R. Saunders, and a suite of other scholars in a wide spectrum of the natural sciences. The award itself consists of a beautiful 12.5 pound polished bronze casting of a Pleistocene horse -- surely the most prized and effective paperweight in town!



Ray Wood (right) with his AMQUA award.

## A Year of Archaeology Across Arizona

Kimberly Spurr and David Purcell

We began 2008 with Kim working and living in Tucson, helping excavate the original (19<sup>th</sup> century) Tucson city cemetery, and David working in Cameron (north of Flagstaff) on another phase of the 6700-mile-long powerline survey that he began in August of 2007. This disparity of location was typical for 2008, and in fact, much of our year was spent contriving to end up in the same place at the same time.

In March, we joined family for a two-week trip to western Belize, where we enjoyed the excellent cuisine, watched the colorful birds, and visited many Maya ruins (including Tikal in Guatemala, a long-time goal). David worked on an archaeological project in northern Belize for two summers in 1987-1988 but it was Kim's first trip.

The Maya archaeology and architecture is so impressive it makes most of the sites we routinely deal with seem far from substantial in duration or scale!



Temple 1 and south plaza at Tikal in Guatemala.

Immediately on returning home, David was sent to Utah for three weeks to work on a 100,000-acre survey, then back to Arizona to rejoin the powerline survey on a line extending from the Colorado River across northern Arizona to near Four Corners. He worked on that project until October, then spent the fall working on a series of smaller powerlines across northern Arizona (and saw his first gila monster in the wild).

Despite being in the field for the entire year, David was able to complete his first book (as editor and contributing author), *Crossroads of the Southwest: Culture, Identity, and Migration in the Safford Valley of*



Reticulated gila monster crawling across Hualapai Valley, Arizona.

*Arizona*, as well as a chapter in a book in the Nevada State Museum series, and editing of a 1967 manuscript from the Museum of Northern Arizona.



Kim on belay 1000 feet above the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon.

Kim finished her work in Tucson and returned home to Flagstaff in June. In August, she served as lead scholar on a trip for Crow Canyon Archaeological Center on the Navajo Reservation. As in past years, she spent a month in the spring and another in the fall excavating in the Grand Canyon. Another highlight was a project in November to document a 1956 plane crash in the Grand Canyon, which could only be accessed by helicopter and then rappelling down the steep slope.



A small glimpse of the 6700 miles of powerline to be surveyed in Arizona.

So far in 2009, Kim has worked on projects in Prescott and Tucson, and David has walked powerlines in central Arizona that cross some remote county he's long wanted to traverse (but there aren't many projects out there so one has to be patient). It looks like another busy year is looming for us!

## PCRG Member Directory

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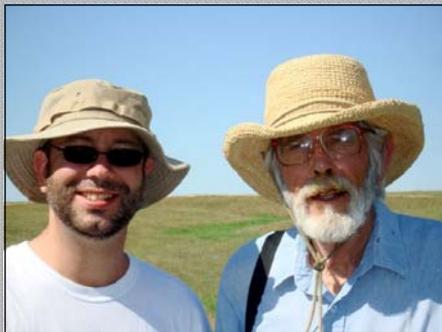
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## More Images of PCRG Activities in 2008 (photos by Stacey Bennett)



Tim Reed and  
Dick Krause

Paul Picha



Chris Roos and Kacy Hollenback



Stacey Bennett with David Nix, Mary Diebel, Doug Wurtz, and Brittney Babel, SHSND volunteers who worked on the Beacon Island project



JoAnne Kvamme



Ken Kvamme



Some interesting finds



Doug Wurtz and Fern Swenson