



ISSUE 39 • FALL 2024

# THE CURATOR

Official Newsletter of the San Diego Archaeological Center



## FEATURED ARTICLE

*Suzanne Moramarco's 20 years serving the SDAC Library*

P 5

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**"THE BEST LITTLE-KNOWN MUSEUM IN SAN DIEGO"**  
- San Diego Magazine



**San Diego Archaeological Center**

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*The mission of the San Diego Archaeological Center is to promote the importance of cultural resources through education and preserve them in partnership with Tribal and other communities.*

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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



## *Doral's Desk*

*I never had the pleasure of meeting Doral Hurd, but thankfully her presence is still felt at the Center. Doral was a volunteer for thirteen years, from 2002 to 2015. She joyfully welcomed museum visitors from our makeshift front desk and enjoyed showing them around the museum. She did many other tasks and was happy to do whatever was needed, including labeling bags for artifacts.*

*Doral was one of the first in a long line of people who have volunteered since the Center relocated in San Pasqual Valley. I am so delighted to hear a volunteer say how their favorite days are when they get to come to the Center, or they wish to continue volunteering after their internship ends because they enjoy being here so much. That is a credit to our tremendous staff who have continued to foster the welcoming culture that Doral helped instill at the Center so many years ago through 2,860 hours of dedication.*

*Doral passed away in 2018, just shy of her 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Center received a generous gift from her estate and applied it toward the purchase of a new and proper front desk in her honor. This year it became a reality and Doral's Desk was installed. Next time you are at the Center, make sure to check it out and thank Doral for her lasting contributions.*



Thank you,  
*Stephanie Sanodval*  
SDAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*"Doral was the sweetest lady. She greeted every guest like they were very important."*

- Cindy Stankowski,  
SDAC Founding Director

*"Doral had quite the imagination... she would ask me what I thought a rock looked like. To her, they looked like vegetables or an animal of some sort."*

- Suzanne Moramarco, SDAC  
Collections & Library Technician





# NOW CURATING

by Jessica McPheters, Director of Collections

The San Diego Archaeological Center houses many pre-contact and post-contact collections from the San Diego County and adjacent regions. The Center is equipped with over 5,000 square feet of vault space that allow us to provide long-term care for a wide range of archaeological materials, including artifacts, ecofacts (unmodified bone and shell, and charcoal samples), maps, photographs, and site records. Partnering with local colleges and universities provides a setting for volunteers and students interested in archaeology to gain hands-on experience working with archaeological collections.

## HOW IS A COLLECTION CURATED?

Curating a collection involves many steps: including reading the report and organizing the artifacts/ecofacts, updating the catalog, printing labels and attaching them to the bags, printing box labels, and creating collection documentation like the master catalog.

An executive summary is filled out for each collection that documents the details of the project before it came to the Center and everything that happens to it after it arrives. Collections are curated by SDAC staff with the assistance of the volunteers and interns under their guidance.

When we come across anything that stands out as an interesting and insightful story into our past, we make note of it for possible use in future exhibits.



When curating an exhibit to display in our museum, we dig a little deeper. Our team begins by reading each site's project reports and highlighting any interesting findings so that, while cataloguing the collection, we have the background information on the artifacts we are preparing

for long-term care. Then, we carefully arrange the artifacts and informational placards to tell their story in a balanced and interesting way.

## HOW DOES THE SDAC ACQUIRE COLLECTIONS?



Most of the collections that are curated at the Center come to us from Cultural Resource Management (CRM) firms who have done work for private companies, or federal, state and local government agencies.

These CRM firms make sure that archaeological sites are documented. Once their work is complete, CRM firms curate collections at the Center for long-term care.







# COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT

## RADIAN PROJECT, POINT LOMA

*Exhibit & Blog by Mariam Jafari  
Collections Intern, Summer '24*

*This summer, we hosted high school student Mariam Jafari as an intern. Hosting students like Mariam gives students firsthand experience working with archaeology in San Diego and an opportunity to decide if the field is right for them!*

*Mariam's project was to curate a post-contact collection, create a small single-case exhibit, and write a blog post for our 'Now Curating' virtual exhibit.*

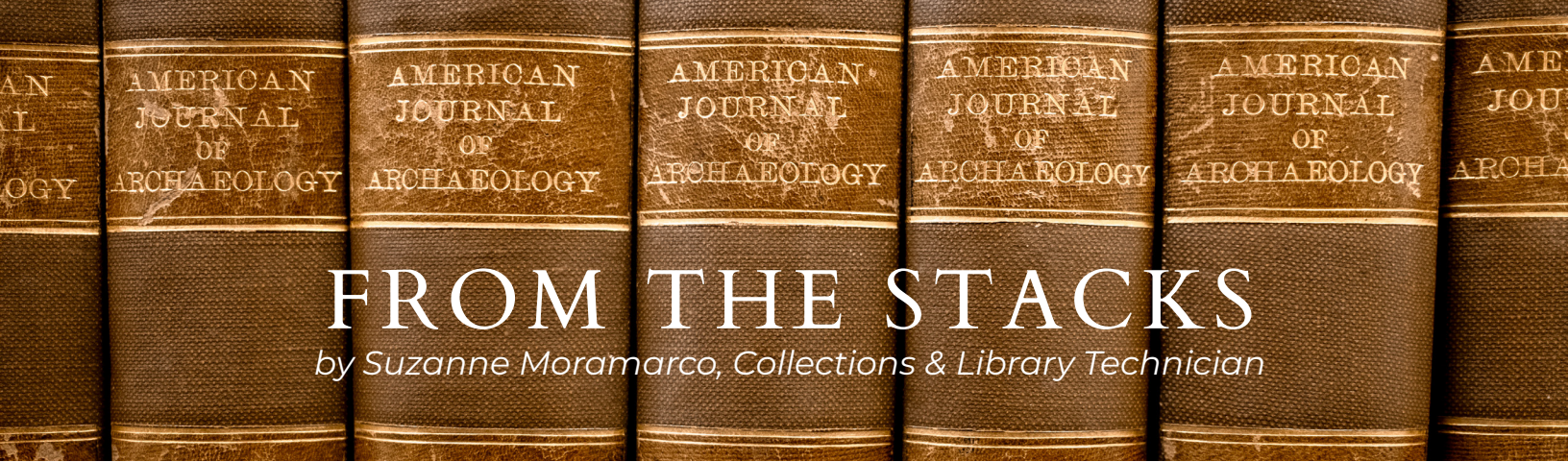
*She chose to focus on a collection from a 2021 commercial development project in the East Village. This historic area, situated on unsanctioned former Pueblo lands, housed several artifacts from the 1900s that provided significant historical insights into the area.*

*Here is a sneak peek at some of the artifacts in her mini-exhibit, which you can visit at our museum and read about on our blog.*



*Fun fact! Alonzo Horton, a 19th century real estate developer for whom the Horton Plaza mall is named, owned a residence within this project's site boundaries.*



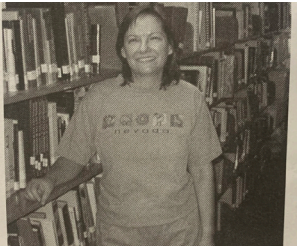


# FROM THE STACKS

by Suzanne Moramarco, Collections & Library Technician

The SDAC Library has come a long way in the past 20 years. When Library Technician Suzanne Moramarco started her internship with the SDAC in August 2004, the library consisted of two shelving units and a jumble of books, journals, and reports cloistered in a small room next to the exhibit hall.

In addition to working in Collections and in the library, Suzanne started taking Geographic Information System (GIS) classes at Palomar College in 2007. That same year, the Center underwent a large renovation that saw the north side of the building turned into collection storage with the library at the west end, near the lab, and Suzanne reorganized the library into the much larger space.



Center's Library to be Updated

The Center is pleased to have Suzanne Moramarco join us as an intern this semester. She is at-

**SDAC Newsletter  
FALL 2004**

Suzanne's intern project was to find a customizable software solution to use for cataloging library holdings. She impressed the team with her organizational skills and commitment. After introducing the new library software system and completing her internship, she continued to volunteer in the library and lab.

Suzanne received her Certificate of Proficiency in GIS in 2009. She enjoys using GIS maps of county and SDAC collection sites to find archaeological reports for collections that did not come in with reports, and for finding SDI numbers for temporary site numbers for collections and library purposes. When Collection Manager Ad Muniz left in April 2018, she took over the GIS department and has since supervised eleven GIS volunteers and interns.

In 2005, the Center received the first of two NAGPRA grants and officially hired Suzanne as the Second Collections Tech. One of the first collections she worked on, the Mazzanti Lot Split, was 98% surface collected chipped stone artifacts. She curated the collection with the help and guidance of Board Member Tim Gross, who taught her many lessons in lithics identification. In the process of inventorying one of the site's artifacts, Suzanne noticed that the material of one core and several consecutively numbered flakes looked very similar. She was able to fit them together onto the core, leaving just a couple of empty spaces. This breakthrough moment remains one of her highlights from her time at the Center.



Suzanne has helped teach over 50 volunteers and interns in the library over the last 18 years, from high school students to senior volunteers. The library catalog is in constant flux with the adding and updating of library materials, and Library Interns have helped Suzanne populate the library catalog with over 13,000 titles, including books, monographs, journals, magazines, archaeological reports, media, maps, and personal archives.



Suzanne will be leaving the Center at the beginning of October to move to North Carolina with her twin sister Lucette. She will miss the SDAC staff, volunteers, interns and members.

A new adventure awaits.





Thank you, Suzanne, for your many wonderful years of dedicated work serving as our steward for the decades of invaluable archaeological knowledge stored in our library! Your legacy of care will live on in the stacks, and though we will miss you, we are excited for you to begin the next chapter of your life in North Carolina.

- The SDAC Staff, Board, Interns, and Volunteers you've taught and supported



## TO ANTIQUITY AND BEYOND:

## WHAT'S NEW IN OUR LIBRARY ARCHIVES?

This past year, Suzanne kicked off a huge project digitizing the SDAC library's physical collection of archaeological reports. We acquired a new printer/scanner that allows us to scan two-sided reports and save them as searchable PDFs, making their contents much more readily accessible for researchers. Two volunteers are currently working to digitize reports from the SDAC collections, but more hands are needed for this project.

A by-product of receiving donations from people with the same interests is multiple copies of the same titles. We sell the titles as "Recycled Knowledge" in our gift shop and also donate unneeded titles to institutions that can use them to share the knowledge. We are looking for organizations that could benefit from these used books.

If you are interested in getting involved in our digitization project or if you know of any great organizations that could use our books, please contact us at [library@sandiegoarchaeology.org](mailto:library@sandiegoarchaeology.org).





# PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY

by Adam Niesley, Public Archaeology Coordinator

It's hard not to stop and look back upon this last spring and summer with a smile. The Programs department saw the launch of its new adult series, Ancient Echoes, and it did not disappoint! We designed Ancient Echoes to open the doors to ancient human history by pairing sensory, hands-on activities with insightful lectures.

Another accomplishment this year has been our *Storytime with an Archaeologist* and *Art with an Archaeologist* programs. Designed from the onset to be a free, safe, and fun educational space for kids and their parents, these programs have introduced archaeology to over 300 children (so far!) through books like *The Magic School Bus* and *The First Drawing*, and through art activities such as pinch pots, Pleistocene art, bead making, and cordage weaving. Initially intended to be short-term, these were so popular we decided to continue offering them into the foreseeable future on Thursdays at 11 AM and select Saturdays from 10 AM to 1 PM.



The sold-out pilot program, *Pints & Pigments*, began with a journey through 80,000 years of rock art, the pigments used, and techniques. Guests then did experimental archaeology by making their own art pieces using raw ochres and pigments.

ochre painting

For our second program, *Mead and the History of the Holocene*, we partnered with Twisted Horn Mead & Cider at their alehouse in Vista and traced mead's origins deep into the Holocene by looking at archaeological finds and linguistic similarities across cultures.

Over the summer, we restarted our Boy Scout merit badge program. We hosted Troop 226 and Pack 734 here at the Center and certified two merit badge counsellors for Archaeology and one counsellor for Geology. We look forward to hosting many more troops!



flintknapping for merit badge

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

EGYPTOLOGY LECTURE

RECYCLING for DEATH  
Coffin Reuse in Ancient Egypt  
and the Theban Royal Caches

THURS, OCT 10, 6:30PM on ZOOM  
with Dr. Kara Cooney

Our Ancient Echoes series started back up this **September 21<sup>st</sup>** with our highly requested **Pints & Pigments** kicking off the 5-program series for the 2024-25 lecture season. Guests got inspired by thousands of years of art history, mixed minerals, and created meaningful artwork to take home.

In October, check out our upcoming **Living Room Lecture** with Egyptologist Dr. Kara Cooney, streaming virtually on **October 10<sup>th</sup>** at 6:30 PM. Dr. Cooney will discuss her latest book, *Recycling for Death*, a meticulous study of the significance of coffin reuse in ancient Egypt.





# IN CLASSROOMS & THE COMMUNITY

*by Hayden Bulloch, Education Specialist*

This summer, the San Diego Archaeological Center hosted and participated in many exciting events! We celebrated the ingenuity of San Diego's past peoples alongside the San Dieguito River Park as part of the Watershed Explorers Program. This program provided youth with an incredible opportunity to experience the length of the San Dieguito Watershed while demonstrating its environmental, cultural, and historical importance to the area.



**Coming Up:** The SDAC has begun a new partnership with the Carlsbad City Library to bring the intrigue of the past to you! We'll be hosting events in Carlsbad City Library's three locations to discuss ancient technologies and allow participants to try their hand at making their very own clay vessels, similar to the ones that are found all over the world, just now with your unique designs!

We also collaborated with the Girl Scouts of America in their 'Time Travelers Summer Camp,' which took the scouts on a tour through time to ancient civilizations and futuristic worlds. We led workshops in Pleistocene pigment rock art and reed basket weaving to transport their creativity to periods before the advent of our modern technology.

Now, with summer at a close and the school year beginning, the SDAC is switching gears to host field trips with schools visiting us from all over the county!

*"Thank you for visiting us and teaching us so many new things! We ♥ & appreciate you."*

- Girl Scouts San Diego Day Camp



## WELCOMING OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER



*Meet Hayden, our new Education Specialist!*

*With a degree in anthropology from the University of Utah and extensive experience in child education, Hayden facilitates the Center's outreach program. She organizes captivating, fun, and interactive learning activities in collaboration with libraries and schools to get kids excited about archaeology.*



# JOIN THE CLUB

by Linn Splane, Membership & Marketing Coordinator

## INTRODUCING: MEMBER CLUBS

In June, we launched three new Member Clubs to enhance the SDAC membership experience by taking you beyond the museum! We've partnered up with local organizations, researchers, and projects to connect our members to more of what they love.

Whether you're an intrepid explorer, an avid learner, or are raising an archaeologist-to-be, we have curated a membership experience to speak to your interests and connect you with more like-minded people. Dive into your interests with happenings all over the county and member-exclusive events, and enjoy seasonal newsletters filled with recommendations for more of your favorite things. Club access is included in your existing membership. Just sign up for any or all that interest you [here!](#)

## WHICH CLUB IS RIGHT FOR YOU? ARE YOU..

### AN INTREPID EXPLORER?



San Diego  
Archaeological Center



SAN DIEGO  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CENTER

Trekking Club

*Get out and explore San Diego County with local hikes, historical and ecological tours, ancient sports and games, hands-on restoration projects, and more!*

### LOOKING FOR LECTURES?



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*Attend lectures and mixers with esteemed archaeologists, writers, and academics. Dive deeper into fascinating topics with our book club and engaging workshops.*

### RAISING A CURIOUS KID?



San Diego  
Archaeological Center



*Whether your little one is a budding archaeologist or just eager to learn in a whole new way, they'll love our creative activities centered on archaeology, art, and nature.*



# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



## INTERN CORNER with SHANE MOORE

Public Archaeology Intern, Summer '24

Hi, I'm Shane! I'm a student from Mesa College. In my free time, I enjoy exploring the outdoors, Lion Dancing, and historical fencing. I was drawn to the SDAC internship program as an opportunity to explore my interest in archaeology further while building connections with people in the field. Since I started, I've gotten lots of great first-hand experience and knowledge from everyone at the Center!

My favorite project was definitely photographing the center's artifacts

and exhibits! It was a really fun project that combined my interest in photography with archaeology, and it was also rewarding to give back to the SDAC.



*"Interning with the SDAC has been an excellent experience. It's helped me better understand where I want to take my education, and I'd really recommend it to anyone interested in pursuing a career in archaeology."*



## BOARD CORNER with JON SPENARD Board Member since 2021

*Hi! I'm Dr. Jon Spenard, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Cal State San Marcos where I teach undergraduate archaeology classes related to my expertise on the ancient Maya, Mesoamerica, and digital archaeology.*

*After joining CSUSM, I recognized the need for my students to gain more local archaeological experiences and connections and began partnering with the SDAC to develop courses with their collections. Joining the Board was a natural extension of that partnership and has allowed me to learn more about the Center's offerings and how I can use my expertise and connections to help it grow.*

*One point of pride I've been involved in with the Center is helping with the 3D digitization of its type collections. Digital models aren't just a tool for researchers - they provide the public with the chance to digitally handle objects that would otherwise be locked away, opening up a deeper appreciation for the past.*

*"My pride in these efforts is also personal, as one of my former students is directing the project, building on skills they learned in my classes in ways I couldn't have imagined at the time!"*

### SDAC 3D Type Collection



[sketchfab.com/  
SDAClocalarchaeology](https://sketchfab.com/SDAClocalarchaeology)





# WE LOVE OUR SUPPORTERS

by Danté Farenga, Development & Marketing Director

The Staff of the SDAC would like to express our heartfelt thanks to our members, donors, and volunteers for your support over the past year. Through your donations, memberships, and volunteer hours, you helped accomplish the following:

- Offered **516 visitors free access** to museum exhibits of San Diego's past 12,000 years of human history
- Introduced **1,906 children** to archaeology and how we use archaeology to study the past through 271 field trip and classroom programs
- Hosted **25 lectures and workshops**, which provided a public platform for 593 attendees to learn about current archaeological research
- Provided 629 hours of internship opportunities for **27 college students**, who gained valuable career experience learning archaeological laboratory procedures
- Preserved over **2 million cultural resources** from more than **1,000 archaeological sites** around San Diego County and adjacent regions
- Developed **3-D models** of monos and hammerstones for a comparative teaching collection for college students and interns
- Added a **soundscape** to the museum
- Began work on a **new interactive exhibit** called *Hallmarks of the Holocene*

Whether it's through an annual membership, monthly donation, one-time gift, or hours of your time, we appreciate your efforts to preserve pieces of the past with us.



Thank you for supporting us on September 5th for San Diego Gives!

Through your generosity, we were able to raise **\$9,450** to support archaeological education and preservation. Your gifts will go a long way towards expanding our programs, preservation, and exhibits.







## BECOME A MEMBER

Your membership helps further the Center's mission to promote the importance of cultural resources through education and preserve them in partnership with Tribal and other communities. Membership can be [purchased online](#), by phone, or by mail and includes access to our new Member Clubs.



## VOLUNTEER WITH US

Docents and volunteers welcome visitors and answer general questions regarding the Center and exhibits. Hours are flexible. To apply for a volunteer position or for more information, email us at [vol.intern@sandiegoarchaeology.org](mailto:vol.intern@sandiegoarchaeology.org).



## MAKE A DONATION

Cash donations may be made to the Center by visiting our [website](#), or with a check made to the San Diego Archaeological Center. In-kind gifts are contributions of goods or services to our organization. Please [contact us](#) if you would like to make this kind of donation.



## LEAVE A LEGACY

Planned gifts are a wonderful way to contribute to our mission. Making a plan in your estate or will ensures peace of mind and the future of The Center's programs and collections. We will work with you to customize any gift and thank you for your generosity.



## GIVE MONTHLY

Our Monthly Donation Program is an easy and convenient way of supporting the many important projects at the Center. You may determine the amount to donate per month and the specific campaign, project, or program to fund. Please [contact us](#) for more information.



## 2X YOUR DONATION

You may be able to increase the impact of your gift to the Center. In many cases, businesses will match the donations full-time, part-time, and/or retired employees make to charitable organizations in the community. Check with your employer to see if they offer a matching gifts program.



# IN APPRECIATION

*For the time and talents, membership, donations, and in-kind support we have received so far this year*

## THANKS TO OUR...

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