Dear ICA Members;

As many of you know, the ICA Interest Group conducts its annual business meeting at the Society for American Archaeology meeting each year. Reported on page 2 of this issue, this year’s meeting in San Francisco, California was an opportunity for members to come together to discuss the expanding activities and agenda of the Island and Coastal Archaeology Interest Group. In relation to this, I am particularly excited to announce the recent launch of the ICA website (http://ica.uoregon.edu/) and an open call for applications for ICA symposium sponsorship at the 2016 SAA meeting in Orlando, Florida (p. 3). The sponsorship call is just one of a number of announcements for upcoming conferences and events of interest to ICA members. If you have a future workshop, meeting, award, competition, or event that you would like to publicize, I encourage you to consider submitting it to The Current and the ICA website where it may reach our membership audience of more than a thousand.

Readers may notice that Research Highlights contributions in this issue are several more than usual. Collectively, they underscore the geographic and topical diversity of archaeological investigations pursued by ICA members. On page 6, for instance, Benjamín Ballester and Riesco Francisco Gallardo Ibáñez report on rock art depictions of marine mammal hunting from the Atacama Desert, Chile, accompanied by stunning, vividly hued photographs of large prey pursued by hunters in small boats. Suzanna Pratt, Christian Wells and Georgia Fox discuss efforts to establish the ecological legacy of sugar cane cultivation at the historic Betty’s Hope Plantation site on Antigua in the Lesser Antilles (p. 10). Similarly pursuing understanding of past human ecodynamics, albeit in a very different setting, Catherine West, Courtney Hofman, and Steve Ebbert detail current research on Chirikof Island where they document changing biodiversity on Alaska’s coastal islands (p. 12). Their investigation employs interdisciplinary data to establish ecological baselines, species invasions, and anthropogenic and climate impacts. Other highlighted research spans the globe, addressing subjects from hot rock technology to the tentative identification of a Calusa king’s house. I encourage you to take a few minutes to look over the pages of this issue and enjoy a glimpse into the compelling research being conducted by our colleagues in island and coastal archaeology.

Christina M. Giovas, Editor, The Current
Report on the Annual ICA Interest Group Meeting 
at the 80th SAA Meeting, San Francisco, California

The ICA Interest Group conducted its annual business meeting on Thursday April 16, 5 – 6pm at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square during the 80th meeting of the SAA. The meeting was presided over by interest group committee members, Christina Giovas (University of Pittsburgh), Catherine West (Boston University), and Todd Braje (San Diego State University). Approximately 35 – 40 members were in attendance. The meeting commenced with status updates on past business, following which were discussions relating to submission procedures for ICA sponsored sessions and future activities to be undertaken by the Interest Group.

Agenda summary:

- The creation of an Executive Committee (Scott Fitzpatrick, Victor Thompson, Christina Giovas, Todd Ahlman, and Kristina Guild Douglas) and Meeting Committee (Victor Thompson, Catherine West, Todd Braje, and Jessica Watson) was noted.

- The recent launch of the new Island and Coastal Archaeology Website (http://ica.uoregon.edu/) was announced. The website provides information about the Interest Group, upcoming conferences, field school announcements, archives of The Current, and links to the Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology and other sites of interest.

- A future call for applications for ICA SAA symposium sponsorship and discussion of submission guidelines was announced. ICA sponsorship will be awarded to a single session relating to the theme of island and coastal archaeology at the 81st SAA Annual Meeting to be held in Orlando, Florida in April 2016. For application details see page 3 of this issue.

- The possibility of sponsoring a social event, such as an ICA dinner or mixer, or a field excursion (archaeological site or museum visit) in association with the annual SAA meeting was discussed by the membership. The Executive Committee will investigate possible options for the 81st Annual Meeting to be held in Orlando, Florida.

- The possibility of hosting lightening talks in a lengthened annual business meeting was also discussed, but no final consensus was reached and the issue was held over for future consideration.

- A proposal to sponsor an electronic symposium was rejected by meeting attendees on the basis of insufficient interest.

- The possibility of levying a small annual ICA membership fee of up to US$5 was introduced as a means for raising revenue to fund future ICA activities such as a student award, student conference travel stipend, or ICA fieldtrip/social event. The possibility of granting a student fee waiver in conjunction with this was also addressed. The proposal was met with general approval, but no final decision on the fee issue was reached. The broader ICA membership is asked to provide feedback on their willingness to pay a $5 annual fee by emailing Christina Giovas at cmgiovas@uw.edu.
As the Executive and Meeting Committees continue to work on the action items identified at the annual meeting, they are seeking input and feedback from the membership. Questions or comments may be directed to the Committee contacts below.

Executive Committee Contact – Scott Fitzpatrick: smfitzpa@cas.uoregon.edu
Meeting Committee Contact – Victor Thompson: vdthom@uga.edu

MEETINGS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND CALLS FOR PAPERS

Call for Submissions: Proposed ICA Sponsored Session at the SAA 2016 Annual Meeting, April 6-10, 2016, Orlando, Florida

Organizers of symposia with an island or coastal archaeology theme for the 81st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology to be held in Orlando, Florida are invited to apply for ICA sponsorship. Only a single session can be sponsored. The sponsored symposium will be announced in the fall/winter issue of The Current and noted in the SAA meeting program. To be considered for sponsorship, session organizers should email a symposium abstract and participant list to the Meeting Committee contact Victor Thompson (vdthom@uga.edu) with the subject line “ICA Sponsored Session” no later than July 17, 2015. The award announcement will be made in August.

Call for Papers: Annual International Conference on Mediterranean Studies, 21-24 March 2016, Athens, Greece

The Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER), a world association of academics and researchers, organizes its 9th Annual International Conference on Mediterranean Studies, 21-24 March 2016, Athens, Greece. Please submit a 300-word abstract before 24 August 2015, by email (atiner@atiner.com), addressed to Dr. George Poulou, Emeritus Professor, University of South Africa, South Africa & Vice-President of Research, ATINER.

Please include with this order: title of paper, first name, family name of all co-authors, current position of all co-authors, institutional affiliation (university/organization) of all co-authors, country of all co-authors, an email address of all co-authors and at least 3 keywords that best describe the subject of your submission. Decisions will be reached within four weeks of your submission

Should you wish to participate in the Conference without presenting a paper, for example, to chair a session, to evaluate papers which are to be included in the conference proceedings or books, to contribute to the editing of a book, or any other contribution, please send an email to Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, ATINER & Honorary Professor, University of Stirling, UK (gregory.papanikos@stir.ac.uk).
Call for Papers: Early Maritime Cultures on the East African Coast, 30-31 October, 2015
Organized by the Africa Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Memorial Union on the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus

The Indian Ocean has long influenced cultures along the East African coast. This inter-disciplinary conference on maritime history will allow scholars from multiple disciplines to present work connected with seafaring in East Africa in any era. The organizers will particularly favor paper proposals focused on maritime developments before about 1500 CE.

Themes of particular interest include:
1) Early instances of maritime activity in East Africa.
2) Lines of evidence available for the study of early seafaring along the East African coast.
3) East African maritime cultures and their connections by sea with other lands.
4) The engagement of non-maritime East African peoples, including foragers, farmers, herders, with the Indian Ocean.
5) Indian Ocean migrations to and from East Africa.
6) Indian Ocean trading systems.
7) The Indian Ocean and the contours of East African cosmopolitanism
8) Maritime technologies, innovation, and change.

Papers on other themes will be considered, especially those that deal in some way with maritime technologies and practices in East Africa before about 1500

One of our ambitions is to produce an edited volume, but we cannot guarantee publication.

The conference organizers expect to be able to provide lodging for participants in Madison for one or two nights as well as some sociability (a meal or two). Potential participants planning to come from locations outside the United States, especially Africa, may request additional support, such as help with air fare, but it is very unlikely that we will be able to provide more than $1,000 of such support for anyone, nor can we guarantee it at this time.

Those interested in participating should send an email message to Mr. Akshay Sarathi, the prime organizer, with the subject line “East Africa Maritime Abstract” to: events@africa.wisc.edu. Attach to the message as a pdf or Word document an abstract of 200 to 300 words. Deadline for receipt of abstracts: 17 July 2015. By 1 August 2015 we hope to notify submitters whether or not their paper has been accepted.


**European Association for Archaeology - September 2-5, 2015.** Glasgow, Scotland.

**Island and Coastal Themed Sessions:**

*Complex Issues in Dating Coastal and Island Settlements*, organized by Anthony Krus and Victor Thompson

*Islands And Archipelagos in European Prehistory: Navigation Cradles and Sea-Routes Junction*, organized by Francesco Tiboni and Kewin Peche-Quilichini

*Wetland Settlement; Understanding the Motivation Behind Living Out On the Water*, organized by Anne Crone, Aidan O'Sullivan, Graeme Cavers, Francesco Menotti

*Stationary Fishing Structures – Use of Joint Facilities by Fishing Communities*, organized by Harald Lübke, Stefanie Klooss, Satu Koivisto, Vladimir Lozovski, Lisbeth Pedersen


**The X Nordic Meeting on Stratigraphy & The XI Nordic Conference on the Application of Scientific Methods in Archaeology SMIA XI - October 20-23, 2015.** University of Helsinki, Finland. Themes include the *Baltic Sea* and *Underwater Stratigraphy*. For more information visit [http://www.helsinki.fi/arkeologia/tapahtumat/SMIA_XI/SMIA_web2.htm](http://www.helsinki.fi/arkeologia/tapahtumat/SMIA_XI/SMIA_web2.htm)

**Connecting Continents: Archaeological Perspectives on Slavery and Colonialism - Joint SAA-EAA Thematic Meeting - November 5-7, 2015.** Curaçao, Caribbean. Conference information: [http://www.saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/Meetings/Connecting%20Continents%20updated%201.pdf](http://www.saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/Meetings/Connecting%20Continents%20updated%201.pdf)
El Médano Rock Art: Large marine prey hunting paintings in the Atacama Desert coast (northern Chile)

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Located in Northern Chile (Fig. 1), the coast of the Atacama Desert was inhabited by marine hunter-gatherers for almost 13,000 years. Throughout the history of this region, its occupants developed social and economic practices that were highly specialized around the sea. These developments included the use of boats, sedentary settlements, dense cemeteries, an economy based on dried fish, storage, interregional exchange networks and sophisticated technologies for procuring marine resources. Climbing from their littoral settlements into the coastal high mountains, Atacama peoples left evidence of their belief systems through the creation of dense and varied rock paintings that are scattered throughout the intermediate ravines. These rupestral images include hundreds of scenes of seafaring hunters who use harpoons to capture sea lions, dolphins, sharks, swordfishes, turtles, cachalot (sperm whale) and other species of cetaceans.

Figure 1. Geographical location and panoramic view of the ravine and paintings, with the horizon and the Pacific Ocean visible in center frame.

Figure 2. One of the rock art panels from Izcuña Ravine.
The hunting of large marine animals depicted in the rock art (Figs. 2 and 3) is not merely a reflection of local imagination, as excavation projects conducted at various settlements in the region reveal dense midden deposits with skeletal remains of large marine animals. Ethnohistorical sources suggest that such features relate to instances of social congregation and collective consumption. At present, we are designing an archaeological protocol for evaluating these fascinating activities that focuses on the documentation of new rock art sites, the examination of ancient hunting technologies and evidence for the consumption of large marine prey within residential sites along the Antofagasta coast.

Figure 3. Detail of a painting from El Médano ravine, with a boat depicted at the top of the frame and below, the prey with body size overrepresented. Three hunting lines linking the two main motifs.

Manihiki and Rakahanga: Persistence on the Margins of Oceania

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The first phase of this multi-year dissertation research involves a series of ethnographic interviews and an archaeological survey on the atolls of Manihiki and Rakahanga in the Northern Cook Islands (Fig. 1). The goals of this pilot research include identifying key subsistence practices and locating archaeological sites on the atolls. The larger dissertation project uses ethnographic and archaeological research to understand the complex patterns of human/environmental interaction on the atolls. Manihiki and Rakahanga are geographically remote Polynesian islands which have an extremely narrow resource base that includes a very limited supply of fresh water and lacks hard stone, quality timber, and overall dietary diversity. Yet, relatively dense populations have persisted on these atolls for centuries. The project will investigate patterns of settlement, resource use, and long-distance trade as well as an ethnographically documented system of ritualized mass migration that may have been utilized to promote this long-term population persistence. This work aims to create a multifaceted understanding of human life-ways on Manihiki and Rakahanga as well as a base understanding of how populations manage the difficulties of life in highly marginal environments.

Figure 1. Map of South Pacific Ocean showing the location of Manihiki and Rakahanga.
Recent Research in Southwest Florida

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Mound Key

In 2013/2014, Victor Thompson, Amanda Roberts Thompson, William Marquardt, and Karen Walker conducted archaeological research funded by National Geographic Society, the University of Georgia (UGA), and the Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida (UF) at Mound Key (8LL2), an island in Estero Bay near Fort Myers Beach (Fig. 1). They were assisted by students from UGA, UF, and Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) (Fig. 2). In the 1500s, Mound Key was the capital of a vast Calusa domain that stretched throughout South Florida. The site is a complex of mounded middens, one of which rises over nine meters high. Excavations produced evidence for two or more structures that relate to both pre- and post-European-contact occupations. There is tentative evidence that we have identified the Calusa king’s house or perhaps an earlier version of that structure. In 1566, the house was said to be large enough for 2,000 people to stand inside.

Pineland

In February and March, 2015, excavations by Walker at Pineland (8LL33) revealed evidence of occupation ca. A.D. 600, a time when the sea level was lower than today’s. Located on Pine Island, Pineland is the second largest of the Calusa towns and home to the Florida Museum’s Randell Research Center (RRC). This past year the RRC welcomed over 8,000 visitors, including local school children and adults as well as tourists from around the world.

Oysters

In 2014 and 2015, Walker and Marquardt collaborated with Mike Savarese of FGCU in a paleoconservation study of local archaeological and modern oysters.
Fire-Cracked Rock in Context: Late Archaic Hunter-Gatherer Chipped Stone and Hot Rock Technology of the Great Lakes Region

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This PhD research combines a detailed analysis of hot rock and chipped stone technologies in order to investigate ancient behaviors related to subsistence and settlement strategies, domestic life, and knapping activities. This will be the first step in developing a synthetic overview of Late Archaic people’s daily life on Grand Island in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (UP). The comprehensive analysis of over 40,000 lithics from six sites on the island will more than double the current number of c. 34,000 lithics analyzed in the entire UP from dated Late Archaic habitation and raw material extraction sites. Because organic remains are poorly preserved in the region, fire-cracked rocks (FCR) may hold the key to investigating subsistence practices. FCR is found in great quantities at North American hunter-gatherer sites, but remains an understudied and undervalued analytical artifact type. The common practice of discarding FCR in the field has led to an obscured understanding of hunter-gatherer domestic features and of how food was processed, cooked, and discarded by ancient peoples. In order to contextualize FCR’s utilization by Late Archaic people, this study combines lithic analysis with information related to hearth feature size, morphology, soil characteristics, and associated materials. This research may contribute to a new analysis of FCR beyond the current approaches that are often limited to basic quantification or even presence/absence reporting, and may help scholars to expand their understanding of ancient diets by recontextualizing the FCR that dominate most Great Lakes hunter-gatherer sites.

Figure 1: Two views of a fire-cracked rock that was later reutilized as a tool. This end scraper presents retouch with differential lustrous flake negatives.
Landscape Legacies of Sugarcane at Betty’s Hope Plantation, Antigua

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The commercial sugar industry played a central role in the history of Caribbean societies, economies, and environments since the seventeenth century. The Eastern Caribbean island of Antigua in the West Indies was almost exclusively dedicated to sugarcane monoculture from the mid-1600s until its independence from Britain in 1981. This research seeks to better understand the landscape legacies left by long-term sugarcane monoculture at Betty’s Hope Plantation on Antigua.

First, the study creates a 400-year simulation of crop yields using the USDA’s Erosion Productivity Impact Calculator (EPIC). The simulation is then evaluated based on records of historical crop yields extrapolated from documents from the Codrington family of England, which owned and operated the Betty’s Hope plantation from 1674 to 1944, providing over 250 years of documentation on landscape use and crop production. The third component draws upon the results of recent physical and chemical analyses of subsurface soils and sediments along two catenas adjacent to the main plantation to reveal new insights on historical and contemporary landscape degradation.

Preliminary findings suggest that some parts of Betty’s Hope have experienced degradation due to long-term sugarcane monoculture, but degradation in other parts of the region may be the result of the cessation of commercial agriculture in 1972, when human investment in the highly anthropogenic landscape ended. If these results are representative of other parts of the island, then they suggest that current erosion and degradation experienced today cannot be attributed
to intensive plantation agriculture alone, but rather are part of a complex mosaic of human-environmental interactions that includes abandonment of engineered landscapes.

Figure 2. Line graph of the six-year moving average of the historically-recorded and EPIC-simulated sugarcane yields (the gray lines show periods lacking data).

**Archaeology and Conservation: The Chirikof Island Project**

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Courtney Hofman  
University of Maryland; Smithsonian Institution

Steve Ebbert  
United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The Gulf of Alaska is home to substantial seabird and migratory waterfowl populations, which are under threat from landscape degradation and predation by invasive species. This is particularly evident on small islands, many of which are managed by the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. Management decisions for these islands have focused on eradicating invasive species and restoring island landscapes to their “natural” state. However, given that people and climate have influenced these landscapes for thousands of years, how do we determine a baseline for restoration? The goal of the Chirikof Island Project is to employ long-term environmental data in the archaeological record to expand our understanding of changing biodiversity on Alaska’s coastal islands. Using an interdisciplinary approach that draws on archaeology, historical ecology, geochemistry,
genetics, and biology, this research addresses three questions central to understanding and managing the contemporary landscape: 1) Which bird species inhabited Gulf of Alaska islands before invasive species introductions? 2) How did Native people influence bird populations and biodiversity before European colonization? 3) How did changes in Late Holocene climate affect bird biodiversity on the islands through time? To address these questions, the research team traveled to Chirikof in the summer of 2013 to test well-preserved middens spanning 2000 years and to observe the modern bird populations. The faunal material is currently under analysis at Boston University and genetic work is being done at the Smithsonian Institution. This work is funded by the National Geographic Society, the University of Maine, and Boston University.

Limestone Turtle Marks Portal to the Underworld

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A limestone turtle sculpture (37.9cm x 34cm x 11cm), rather than toad as previously published in 2002, marks a liminal feature in Jaina, Campeche, Mexico (Figs. 1 and 2). Maya worldview reveres sea turtles, whose profile not only reiterates the shape of the universe, but also whose nature shows a unique capacity to thrive in all three realms, as a stellar icon near the celestial heart and by reproducing solely on land while living in a watery otherworld. This recalls polychrome pottery scenes where principal life force deities, dressed as the Tonsured Maize God and witnessed by the Hero Twins, emerge from a cracked carapace portal through which First Father’s transformed bones, sown beneath him in Xibalba, sprouted life once again in the terrestrial plain. A similar chelonian resided beneath a key architectural space, previously described as a ballcourt despite being one of the few north-south oriented pre-Columbian examples in the Yucatan Peninsula (Fig. 3).
sculpted monument sat atop the liminal interface between land and sea at minus 1.10m, placed head down within a mixed white marl and ash context marking this access to the Underworld. Here the Sun’s daily celestial journey ended in death after setting in the west’s aqueous realm, to navigate transformed and reborn the next morning in the east at Tulum, Quintana Roo, Mexico. While turtles grace additional liminal contexts in other pre-Columbian sites in the Yucatan Peninsula, none so conspicuously commemorate the first built horizon in an artificial island that served as gateway to the Underworld.

Recent Publications

Anderson, A., Binney, J., and Harris, A. 

Ballester, B., and A. Clarot

Ballester, B., Clarot, A., and V. Bustos

Ballester, B., Clarot, A., Bustos, V., and H. Garcés
2014 Arqueología de la prehistoria de la Península de Mejillones: el campamento de Los Canastos 3 desde sus cuadernos de campo y materiales de museo. Boletín de la Sociedad Chilena de Arqueología 43/44:5-21.

Bell, A.V., Currie, T.E., Irwin, G., and C. Bradbury

Callaghan, R. T.

Campbell, B., and T.J. Braje
Carrasco, C., Echeverría, J. Ballester, B., and H. Niemeyer

Erlandson, J. M., and T.J. Braje
2015 Coasting out of Africa: The potential of mangrove forests and marine habitats to facilitate human coastal expansion via the Southern Dispersal Route. *Quaternary International*. DOI:10.1016/j.quaint.2015.03.046.

Farr, R. H.

Fattovich, R., and K. A. Bard

Firth, A.

Fitzpatrick, S.M., Rick, T.C., and J.M. Erlandson
2015 Recent progress, trends, and developments in island and coastal archaeology. *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 10:3-27.

Gallardo, F., Ballester, B., and N. Fuenzalida
2015 *Monumentos funerarios de la costa del desierto de Atacama: Contribuciones al intercambio de bienes e información entre cazadores-recolectores marinos (norte de Chile).* FONDECYT 1110702, Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios Interculturales e Indígenas, Sociedad Chilena de Arqueología: Santiago.

Galili, E., Şevketoğlu, M., Salamon, A., Zviely, D., Mienis, H. K., Rosen, B., and S. Moshkovitz

Harris, M., Weisler, M., and P. Faulkner

Lambrides, A.B.J., and M.I. Weisler

Mitchell, D.R., Huckleberry, G., Rowell, K., and D.L. Dettman


Nunn, P., and M. Carson

Oron, A., Galili, E., Hadas, G., and M. Klein
2015 Early maritime activity on the Dead Sea: Bitumen harvesting and the possible use of reed


Submission Instructions: How to Contribute to The Current

A variety of interest pieces and announcements are accepted for publication in the ICAIG newsletter. Generally, the deadline for submission for the Spring/Summer Issue is May 1st and for the Fall/Winter Issue, November 1st. Submissions and inquiries may be directed to The Current Editor, Christina M. Giovas (cmgiovas@uw.edu). Contributions need not follow any specific format, with the exception of “Research Highlights” and “Recent Publications” (instructions below).

Instructions for Submitting Recent Publications

- “In press” citations should be accompanied by a digital object identifier (DOI).

Instructions for Preparing “Research Highlights” Descriptions

- Prepare a short description, written in the third person, that includes the purpose of the research, location, brief review of findings to date (if relevant), and other information of potential interest to the membership.
- Descriptions should be single spaced, using 12 pt, Times New Roman or Calibri font, and should be submitted as an MSWord file (.doc or .docx).
- Be sure to provide a title (project name or site name) and include the names and organization of the author(s)/principal investigator(s) submitting the description.
- Provide a valid email address for a single contact author/principle investigator.
- Proof read and spell check the research description, especially place names.
- **Word limit:** please keep the description to a maximum of about 250 words (i.e., abstract length).
- **Images:** One or two (maximum) JPEG or TIFF format photos/images/illustrations may be included with the research description. Image resolution should be 600 dpi. Please note that photos may be cropped to fit to the page if images are too large or include significant “empty” space. To avoid this, please format images prior to submission to include only necessary content.
- Include a caption for any images submitted.

Submit descriptions and images as separate files to the newsletter editor, Christina Giovas, at cmgiovas@uw.edu. Submissions that do not meet the above guidelines will be returned to the author for revision, which may delay publication in The Current. Due to space constraints not all submitted pieces may be included in a given issue of *The Current*. If this is the case, your contribution will receive priority listing for the next issue. Do not hesitate to contact the editor if you have any questions. We look forward to receiving your contributions.