



glyphs

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society

Vol. 71, No. 5

November 2020



Next General Meeting:
November 16, 2020
7:00 pm

AAHS@Home (Zoom webinar)
www.az-arch-and-hist.org

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President's Message

by John D. Hall

This time last year, I wrote about my favorite holiday: Thanksgiving! I talked about the custom of a large meal, getting together with family and friends, and the intricate relationship between cuisine and culture. I even went so far as to suggest a Cuisine Challenge. I challenged my fellow Tucsonans to visit local food establishments and write back about their experience. Unfortunately, less than four months later the Coronavirus spread to the U.S. and going out for casual dining experiences became a risky endeavor, if not impossible.

In the meantime, I have thought a lot about culture and Thanksgiving. It occurred to me that my previous November issue of *Glyphs* glossed over the long and complicated history that is Thanksgiving, and I apologize. Growing up, I was taught the traditional story that the Native Americans in present-day Massachusetts provided food to starving Pilgrims (Figure 1). The story I learned was more of a “narrative of colonial validation” (Bryant 2020). It’s now impossible to tell what, if any part of this story is true, but the idea of a peaceful unity “is like circling one paragraph in a dense history book that is rife with brutality and repeated assaults on indigenous lives” (Turiel 2019).

At the same time, however, Thanksgiving coincides with the fall harvest, and it represents a time of cornucopia and very tangible gratitude. Much, if not all, of our Thanksgiving feast is traditional Native American cuisine. What would Thanksgiving be without turkey, maize, beans, pumpkin, pecans, potato, tomato, chili, sweet potato, maple, wild rice, and wild onions? How does one reconcile the two ends of this spectrum? Acknowledging and learning from history is now more important than ever (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014). In fact, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock 400 years ago this month (Bryant 2020).

The idea of the Mayflower voyage as an origin story for the United States also permeates archaeological and historical discourse. Much of our research describes the beginning of American history with



Figure 1. *The First Thanksgiving, 1621*. Oil on canvas by Jean Leon Jerome Ferris (circa 1912–1915).

the arrival of the Spanish to the present-day Southwest or the arrival of the Pilgrims to the Northeast. Framing history in this manner marginalizes more than 10,000 years of history that preceded these European voyages.

In a November 2014 message, Chief Qaqemasq of the Wampanoag tribe wrote: “Historically, Thanksgiving represents our first encounter with the eventual erosion of our sovereignty and there is nothing wrong with mourning that loss. In fact, as long as we don’t wallow in regret and resentment, it’s healthy to mourn. It is a necessary part of the healing process.” As Turiel (2019) states, “There is power and liberation, individually and systemically, in a nation of people acknowledging historical accuracy and taking stock of the past’s effect on the present.” A burden is upon us to be educated and seek accurate sources of information.

So, I present a new challenge! This Thanksgiving, when we are gathering together (if possible) with our families and friends, cooking, and enjoying cool weather, take a moment to think about the origin of your food. Where did it come from, and how has it changed over time? Most importantly, think about the people who have made this

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feast possible. For centuries, Native Americans have encouraged and domesticated countless native plants that highlight our Thanksgiving table. Think also of the people who are less fortunate and struggle socially or economically. Do what you can to help. Get involved in your community. Be thankful, and have a wonderful holiday!

References:

Bryant, Nick

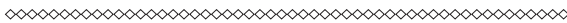
2020 *Mayflower at 400: What We All Get Wrong about the Pilgrim Fathers*. BBC News, September 18. Electronic document, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-54199565>, accessed September 2020.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne

2014 *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Beacon Press, Boston.

Turiel, Rachel

2019 What Does Thanksgiving Really Mean? *The Durango Herald*, November 26. Electronic document, <https://durangoherald.com/articles/304193-what-does-thanksgiving-really-mean>, accessed November 2019.



AAHS Lecture Series

*Brought to you by AAHS@Home through Zoom
until we can meet again in person*

Nov. 16, 2020: Jeffrey H. Altschul, *Using the Past as a Bridge to the Future*

Dec. 21, 2020: No lecture; Holiday Party TBD

Jan. 18, 2020: John D. Speth, *The Beginnings of Plains-Pueblo Interaction – The View from Southwestern New Mexico*

Feb. 15, 2021: Steve James, *Chicken Bones on Pueblo Grande*

Mar. 15, 2021: John Roney, *TBD*

Apr. 19, 2021: Lisa Young, *TBD*

Upcoming AAHS Field Trip

*Video Field Trip to the ASM Pottery Vault
Special Opportunity for AAHS Members Only*

Saturday, December 5, 2020
11:00 a.m.

AAHS@Home presents a close-up tour of the renowned Arizona State Museum (ASM) Pottery Vault with Dr. Patrick Lyons, ASM Director, Associate Professor of Anthropology, archaeologist, and ceramics expert. In this pre-recorded tour, Dr. Lyons will give an overview of the collection of 24,000 whole vessels housed in the vault.

The most complete specimen of the oldest kind of pottery yet found in the Tucson Basin is included in this collection as are outstanding contemporary examples of Native American pottery. The tour will concentrate on the archaeological portion of the collection. Dr. Lyons will be available at the end of the tour for your questions. We are very grateful to the ASM for affording our members this opportunity.

There is no limit to the number of current AAHS members who can participate in this field trip; however, **you must pre-register**. Registration information will be emailed to members. The tour will also be posted on the website as we get nearer to the date.



NEED SOMETHING TO READ? JPASS PROGRAM



a digital library of
academic journals,
books, and primary
sources

JSTOR is offering AAHS members the opportunity to subscribe to JSTOR at a 50 percent discount through their JPASS program (\$99/year rather than \$199/year). The yearly JPASS includes unlimited reading access to the archival journals in JSTOR and up to 120 downloads.

You must subscribe through our website using your user name and password to have your membership validated: <https://www.az-arch-and-hist.org/publications/jpass-program/>.

November 16: Topic of the General Meeting

Using the Past as a Bridge to the Future

Jeffrey H. Altschul

There is a rising call for science to confront head-on problems facing society. In discussing the COVID-19 pandemic, Marcia McNutt (2020), President of the National Academy of Sciences, stated simply, “Society is depending on science to deliver us from this health, social, and economic crisis.” She went on to argue that science needs to be actionable—provide results to policy makers in a timely and understandable manner—and strategic—focused not just on the immediate crisis but the long term. Many sciences have answered this call through interdisciplinary, collaborative, synthetic research.

What about archaeology? Are we satisfied keeping our focus on explaining the past, or do we have something to contribute to contemporary debates on climate change, migration, social inequality, disease, food security, and other topics? In this lecture, I will describe a new initiative—the Coalition for Archaeological Synthesis (CfAS)—that leverages the immense amount of archaeological data now available with the diversity of experience and expertise embodied within the archaeological community. CfAS strives to examine aspects of contemporary issues, which are the result of long-term social dynamics that go undetected or under-analyzed by studies based on contemporary observations or data of shallow time depth. Approached through collaborative, synthetic research, I will argue that the archaeological record has much to offer as we confront the challenges ahead.

Registration for this lecture is open to the public, but you must pre-register at <https://bit.ly/aahsNov16JHA>

Speaker Jeffrey H. Altschul has been involved in heritage management for more than 45 years through a variety of consultancies and non-governmental organizations. He is currently President of the SRI Foundation and co-President of the Coalition for Archaeological Synthesis. He also is a former President of the Society for American Archaeology and the Register of Professional Archaeologists, and he is a proud former AAHS board member.



Suggested Readings:

- Altschul, Jeffrey H., Keith W. Kintigh, Mark Aldenderfer, Elise Alonzi, Ian Armit, Juan Antonio Barceló, Christopher S. Beekman, Penny Bickle, Douglas W. Bird, Scott E. Ingram, Elena Isayev, Andrew W. Kandel, Rachael Kiddey, Héléne Timpoko Kienon-Kaboré, Franco Niccolucci, Corey S. Ragsdale, Beth K. Scaffidi, and Scott G. Ortman
- 2020 To Understand How Migrations Affect Human Securities, Look to the Past. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117:20342–20345. doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2015146117.
- Altschul, Jeffrey H., Keith W. Kintigh, Terry H. Klein, William H. Doelle, Kelley A. Hays-Gilpin, Sarah A. Herr, Timothy A. Kohler, Barbara J. Mills, Lindsay M. Montgomery, Margaret C. Nelson, Scott G. Ortman, John N. Parker, Matthew A. Peeples, and Jeremy A. Sabloff
- 2017 Fostering Synthesis in Archaeology to Advance Science and Benefit Society. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* Vol 114:10999–11002. doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1715950114.
- Coalition for Archaeological Synthesis
2020 www.archsynth.org/



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glyphs: Information and articles to be included in *glyphs* must be received by the first of each month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Contact me, Emilee Mead, at emilee@desert.com.

Cornerstone

*Darlene Lizarraga, Director of Marketing
Arizona State Museum*

ASM Receives Grant to Conserve Rare and Perishable Materials

The Arizona State Museum's (ASM) collection of large, handcrafted cloths made of wood bark and large, rare mats woven of desert plants will receive conservation stabilization, technical study, and rehousing, thanks to a \$122,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Museums for America program.

Ethnologically and archaeologically important, these highly perishable items are from the U.S. Southwest, Mexico, Central America, and the Pacific Islands.

Thirty-one tapa cloths represent the Indigenous cultures of Fiji, Hawaii, Melanesia, the Philippines, Samoa, and Tonga. Barkcloths are traditionally made by beating strips of the fibrous inner bark

of trees into sheets and are used for many everyday and ceremonial purposes, including clothing, bed cloths, and matting. In many museum collections, barkcloths are cut fragments; however, nearly all of those in ASM's collection are whole sheets. Some are 12 feet long.



Susie Moreno, project conservator, meticulously cleans a large Tohono O'odham twill-plaited mat woven of sotol by Jesua Ramón, collected by Emil W. Haury in 1939, with funds provided by Wetmore Hodges.

Most in ASM's collection were acquired in the 1930s and 1940s. Edward Bridge Danson, noted anthropologist, UA faculty member (1950–1956), second director of the Museum of Northern Arizona (1958–1975), and father of the actor Ted Danson, collected one in Fiji in 1934 as he was circumnavigating the globe on the clipper ship, *Yankee*, out of Gloucester, Massachusetts (see

Eric Penn Haury's book, *Edward Bridge Danson Steward of the West*, for details and photos of this trip). Many others were collected by servicemen in World War II, two by Marine Lt. Gen. Charles F. B. Price, who received the Legion of Merit for successfully coordinating and supervising the defense of the Samoan Islands.

Seventeen large mats, collected over the last 70 years, represent the skills of Indigenous groups, including Pima Bajo, Pipil, Tarahumara, southern Tepehuán, Tohono O'odham, Warihío, and Yaqui. Woven of plants including sotol (*Dasyilirion wheeleri*), cane (*Arundo donax*), and other desert vegetation, they were used as beds, floor and window coverings, and ramada walls. By the early twentieth century, the O'odham had ceased weaving the large mats, although they are still made and used by other Indigenous groups in Sonora and Chihuahua, as well as other parts of Latin America.

These items were identified by Dr. Nancy Odegaard, conservator and head of ASM's conservation laboratory, as a priority because:



Condition survey of tapa cloths conducted in Summer 2019 by Gina Watkinson (top), ASM conservation lab manager; Christina Bisulca (center), visiting conservation scientist from Detroit Institute of Arts; and Kate Acuna (bottom), graduate conservation intern from the Winterthur Museum/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation. The cloth in this photo is mulberry bark.

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(1) they have received a detailed item-by-item condition survey indicating they are insecure; (2) they possess high scholarly significance, rarity, and interest; and (3) properly conserving these items represents the final step in ASM's comprehensive *Woven Wonders* initiative that has resulted in the stabilization and treatment of more than 35,000 items of basketry and woven natural fiber over the past decade.

According to Dr. Odegaard, improved storage and exhibition conditions will result from this systematic conservation work, and it will bring about better documentation and access for scholars, students, members of descendant communities, artists, and the general public.

"This is another example of ASM's commitment to the care, management, and conservation of its collections, and also to expanding access to, and the use of, its collections through combined research and education," she said.

The IMLS grant will support the hiring of two part-time conservation professionals—Marilen Pool and Susie Moreno—and the purchase of necessary supplies.

ASM's conservation laboratory, under Odegaard's leadership since the 1980s, is an important source of knowledge and information for museums, archaeologists, school districts, private institutions, and individual citizens around the state. The lab subscribes to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the American Institute for Conservation.

The primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums, IMLS's mission is to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.



AAHS Membership Application

Membership is open to anyone interested in the prehistory and history of Arizona and the Southwest and who support the aims of the Society. Membership runs for a full year from the date of receipt, and covers all individuals living in the same household. If you are joining as a household, please list all members of the household. Monthly meetings are free and open to the public. Society field trips require membership.

Membership Categories

- \$60 **Kiva members** receive four issues of the Society's quarterly journal *Kiva* and 12 issues of *Glyphs*
- \$45 **Glyphs members** receive *Glyphs*
- \$35 **Student Kiva members** receive both *Kiva* and *Glyphs*
- \$100 **Contributing members** receive *Kiva*, *Glyphs*, and all current benefits
- \$150 **Supporting members** receive *Kiva*, *Glyphs*, and all current benefits
- \$300 **Sponsoring members** receive *Kiva*, *Glyphs*, and all current benefits
- \$1,500 **Lifetime members** receive *Kiva*, *Glyphs*, and all current benefits

Note: For memberships outside the U.S., please add \$20. AAHS does not release membership information to other organizations.

I wish to receive *Glyphs* by (circle your choice): Email Mail Both

I am interested in volunteering in AAHS activities: Yes Not at this time

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You can join online at www.az-arch-and-hist.org, or by mailing the form below to:

Rebecca Renteria, VP Membership
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