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Basin, San Bernardino County, California. Report on file at the Archaeological Information Center, San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands.



***Multi-Component Archaic and Late Prehistoric Residential Camps Along the Sweetwater River, Rancho San Diego, California.*** Brian F. Byrd and Carol Serr, with contributions from John Beezley, Lynne Christenson, Margaret Newman, Thomas Origer, M. Steven Shackley, and Beta Analytic. San Diego: Brian F. Mooney Associates Anthropological Technical Series 1, 1993, xiii + 431 pp., 40 figs., 213 tables, 9 appendices, \$25.00 (paper).

*Reviewed by:*

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Recorded archaeological sites in San Diego County now number over 14,000, and the vast majority has been documented during environmental planning law studies in the last two decades. An immense gray literature has been produced on the regional prehistory. Despite the many important contributions officially filed, only a modest few studies have been formally published. Brian F. Mooney Associates, one of the premier environmental planning businesses in the San Diego region, is to be commended for launching a new anthropological publication series in late 1993 with this volume. (The second in the series was announced in late 1994, *Prehistoric Settlement Along the Eastern Margin of Rogers Dry Lake, Western*

*Mojave Desert, California.*)

The authors acknowledge the many parties involved with this new publication. The book is a synthesis of a series of site evaluation and data recovery studies for the Rancho San Diego land development project. Home Capital Development Group, the project owners, funded the 1991-1992 field work and write-up. These studies were overseen by the County of San Diego, as part of the development's environmental planning law requirements. John Cook and Jerry Schaefer, archaeologists at Brian F. Mooney Associates, plus numerous other staff specialists, had key roles in these investigations. Now the firm moves boldly forward with a new operation—publishing and distributing major anthropological works.

This synthesis describes and interprets sites situated on four low knolls along the valley flood plain of the Sweetwater River. This foothill region is about 15 miles inland, east of the city of San Diego. With a multiphased field program of increasingly intensive sampling, the four sites were redefined and interpreted as 12 discrete residential areas discernable by strong horizontal patterning of artifact classes, often associated with bedrock processing features. Although differing in extent, the loci typically covered about 30 by 50 meters.

The report describes the area of each residential locus, noting any bedrock features present, as well as the lithic debitage, stone and bone artifacts, ceramics, and ecofacts recovered, along with their frequencies. Debitage is described in detail, as is the flaking technology represented in the artifacts. Lithic debitage at most loci composed over 90% of the artifact assemblages, with discarded or broken tools being infrequent. The categorized lithic assemblages included flaked, percussing, and ground stone tools and preforms. Shell beads were recovered at only one locus. Specialists' studies were made of the faunal bone, which was dominated by rabbit, hare, and pond turtle. Studies also are presented on modified bone, protein residue analysis, obsidian sourcing, obsidian hydration, and radiocarbon dating. Seven of the 12 loci demon-

strated considerable midden development with higher faunal and artifact recovery rates. No burials, hearths, or other subsurface features were excavated. As a descriptive synthesis, this volume is quite comprehensive and will serve as an important publication for comparing regional sites.

The authors characterize all these loci as representing seasonal residential bases differing only in the degree of reoccupation, rather than as resource specific processing camps. These loci are presented as variously reoccupied over the time period of the Late Archaic to the Late Prehistoric, between 3,000 and 700 years B.P. No major cultural break appears in the technology, only the addition of new elements: the bow and arrow and ceramic vessels. Although the evidence is statistically modest, it is asserted that an increasing complexity in organizational strategies is evidenced with increasing diversity in activities over time and a shift toward a stronger "collector" strategy. This interpretation is consistent with the authors' stated perception of the prehistory of the region. They assert that it is generally accepted that desert Yuman people migrated to the coast about 3,000 to 2,000 B.P., displaced or absorbed the earlier La Jollan population, and focused on a localized extractive economy. Interestingly, it is inferred that after these loci were abandoned, the regional aboriginal population coalesced their residential locations at the ethnohistoric Kumeyaay village of Jamacha. Jamacha probably was a dispersed settlement area about one-half mile up the river valley.

This volume concludes with a substantial discussion of hunter-gatherer mobility theory following Binford, which stresses the strategies behind the archaeological patterning as middle-range theory. Further, three previously proposed, but conflicting, models of local prehistoric settlement-subsistence are discussed, models derived mainly from regional ethnographic data secured after generations of historic era disruptions. These discussions of theories and models are critically important, but it is in the procedures to archaeolog-

ically operationalize these issues that certain technical problems appear. The research design originally composed for this project proved inappropriate, being focused on Late Prehistoric problem issues, and the work plan was substantially revised as the investigations proceeded. Three concerns are evident which ultimately affect the interpretation offered: (1) a reliance upon shovel test units; (2) few absolute dates; and (3) scant attention to seasonal activities.

First, the shovel test units which resulted in redefining the sites as multiple, discrete loci to be further sampled are only very briefly mentioned. These served essentially as initial pattern tests of midden boundaries. No maps of the shovel test units and results are provided. The ultimate plots of subsurface artifact densities, based on the extensive excavations of later phases of the investigation, sometimes appear inconsistent against these previously proposed loci. Defining the diverse patterning of these loci only as residential camps obscures other possibilities.

Second, the loci sampled were not particularly rich in datable materials, and few absolute dates were obtained. For the 12 loci, only eight radiocarbon dates were obtained from submitted midden sediment samples, because the deposits lacked features or visible chunks of charcoal. Archaeological bone and shell apparently were dismissed for radiocarbon dating. Interpretation of the 24 obsidian hydration measurements, mostly on simple flakes, was not generally inconsistent with the few radiocarbon dates. Ultimately, dating the occupational time span represented at each loci was largely an inferential exercise of comparisons between a few key types of artifacts.

Third, there was scant attention to indicators of the seasonal round of activities in interpreting the regional subsistence-settlement pattern. For instance, the presence of marine resources is not fully considered. Small amounts of unmodified marine shellfish (10 species) and fish bones (at least three species), and even a sea otter phalanx, were recovered. These marine materials occurred

at almost half of the loci, and they originated at least 15 miles away. There is no discussion of these marine materials as a "redundant activity set" in a seasonal round of activities in subsistence-settlement models. It is presumed that such items represented food remains, but it is challenging to preserve meat for transit over such distances. Some items may have been used as artifacts; one was a fish centrum bead fragment, and the *Laevicardium* shells could be considered natural bowls. Alternatively, these marine items simply may be personal mementos of excursions to the beach and to fiestas. The full significance of nonlocal materials is not developed in the subsistence-settlement model depicted in this study.

Overall, this volume is an important contribution. Its formal publication makes it widely available, and other firms hopefully may follow suit. It will be widely used for comparisons against other modest sites, and there are many such sites throughout southern California. Its bold theoretical discussion should spur refinements in understanding of local subsistence-settlement models. The publication is nicely designed and printed. There are good line drawings showing key artifact forms but no photographs; however, these site assemblages apparently warrant little else. The text is well edited, and the CAD-produced site maps are crisp. This volume is a good value for the price. Brian F. Mooney Associates is to be commended for launching this new series.



*Time's Flotsam: Overseas Collections of California Indian Material Culture.* Thomas C. Blackburn and Travis Hudson. Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 35. 1990, 225 pp., 30 photographs, tables, bibliography, index, appendix (out of print).

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The national move to repatriate Native American cultural materials was formalized when President Bush signed into law the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA, PL 101-601) on November 16, 1990. During the 1970s and 1980s, academic scholars, as well as native activists, were paving the way to repatriation as a matter of conscience and/or good scholarship. *Time's Flotsam* is the record of good museum scholarship done by Thomas Blackburn and Travis Hudson before NAGPRA compliance began to drive museum and academic professionals to document Native American collections. Tom Blackburn is an anthropologist at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, and Travis Hudson, who tragically died in 1985, was an anthropologist at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

In *Time's Flotsam: Overseas Collections of California Indian Material Culture*, Blackburn and Hudson document the California Indian collections held by 140 foreign museums in 20 countries in Europe, Russia, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. NAGPRA does not apply to the foreign museums inventoried in this book. However, the NAGPRA directive to document American Indian collections has had the effect of creating a new generation of native and academic scholars who are turning their interests to the research of Native American collections worldwide. As material culture items become the vehicles for research on history and culture, the new scholars working in native California are finding that some of the oldest and most unusual cultural materials belong to foreign museums.