

# YOSEMITE

JANUARY, 1980

VOLUME FORTY-SEVEN, NUMBER 8

*Published for members of Yosemite Natural History Association*



*Prior to removal of pavement and disruption of soil in Village Mall area, Danziger takes core samplings to a depth of 1.5 m. The soil midden so removed is screened to reveal any archeological material which would give evidence of the area's having been inhabited by aboriginal residents.*

For several thousand years Native Americans occupied Yosemite. As they were neither agriculturists nor herdspeople, they depended primarily upon acorns for subsistence, and to trade. Black oaks grew profusely in the Valley and the perhaps 2000 bedrock mortars used to pound the acorns into edible mush attest to the supply and to this dependence. Many of these mortars, carved into the bedrock to a depth of a foot or more, indicate heavy usage over a long period of time, perhaps as long as 1000 years.

Except for artifacts of obsidian, an occasional piece of rock art, and the soil containing the remnants of their material and culture, these people, who once flourished throughout the region, left little impact on the fragile and magnificent Yosemite.

In the approximately 120 years that Anglos have inhabited the area the impact on the environment has been considerable. We see today 2½ million visitors a year, 100,000's of cars, over 600 miles of surfaced roads, over 750 miles of graded trails — stores, hotels, sewers and electrical lines.

With these types of impacts occurring daily on federal lands, the government has passed laws to protect and preserve the nation's cultural and natural resources. These legislative acts

## **The Yosemite General Management Plan, Its Impact on the Park's Archeology**

*Steve Danziger, Park Archeologist, received his degree in Anthropology from New York State University. He continued his studies at the University of Arizona. In addition to work with the University of Buffalo, N.Y., and with the Arizona State Museum, Steve held a position with a San Diego environmental consulting firm. We think his research and his subsequent recommendations for the identification and protection of Yosemite's archeological heritage will be heeded.*



include: the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Historic Sites Act of 1935, Antiquities Act of 1906, Executive Order 11593, and, most recently, the Native American Religious Freedom Act PL 95-3141 and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, passed on October 31, 1979.

As Park Archaeologist in Yosemite, I am responsible for managing its cultural resources. Basically, I work with members of the Park staff in planning so that all projects will have the least possible effect on archaeological sites. All projects within the Park, whether initiated by the NPS or concessioner, must have archaeological clearance. Some of the types of projects dealt with include underground sewer-electricity-telephone lines, road or trail-building, tree-planting, prescribed-burning, tree-cutting, erecting and demolishing buildings and well-drilling. Located within Yosemite are eight National Register Archaeological Districts. These are Foresta, Crane Flat, Tuolumne, Yosemite Valley, Wawona, Mariposa Grove, El Portal and Hodgdon Meadow. All are listed on the National Register of historic places as important archaeological resource areas. Any work that will disturb the land within these areas must undergo a stringent review by the Regional Park Service office in San Francisco and the State Historic Preservation Office in Sacramento; only after their approval may projects proceed. If cultural resources cannot be avoided, measures will be taken to ease the disturbance by excavation, surface collecting, mapping, or monitoring the archeological remains. As preservation of cultural resources is a policy of the Park Service, only after all possible ways of avoiding the site are examined will the preceeding work take place.

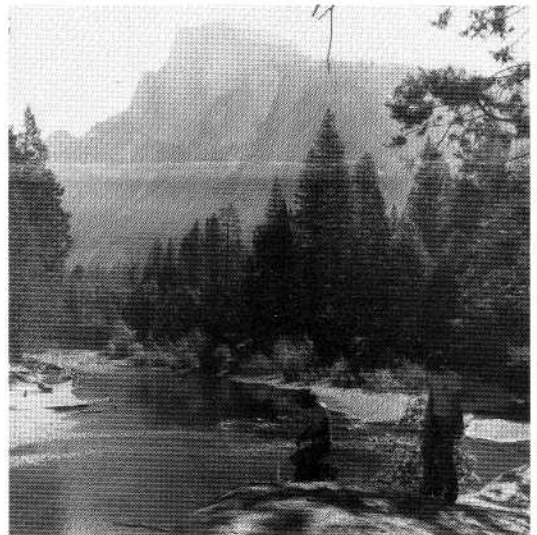
In the course of this work, research is constantly carried out to guide us in managing the cultural resources and to find the answers to questions — such as the effect of fire on cultural materials, the feasibility of covering sites with fill-soil for protection, and the fencing-off of sites to stop vandalism.

Though clearances for work projects take up most of my time, I am also involved in other archaeological activities. These include collecting and analyzing artifacts picked up and given to us by visitors, checking possible archaeological features reported by park personnel or visitors, locating and recording unrecorded sites, policing sites that have been disturbed, and interviewing people who may have knowledge about archaeological resources.

During the summer of 1979 an interesting and unusual occurrence took place. A visitor noticed bones eroding from the high river bank near Housekeeping Camp in Yosemite Valley. Instead of reporting this, he removed many of the bones thus losing for us information that cannot now be retrieved. Because the bones were human, consultation with members of the American Indian Council of Mariposa County was sought and it was decided that it would be appropriate to excavate the remains so that they would not fall into the river.



*The skeletal remains shown above were partially exposed by erosion and by cautious excavation.*



*This photo indicates the general location of the remains along the Merced River, approximately 2.5 m. above the river.*

Because the bones were exposed in the bank a meter below the ground surface, I dug down to them to get the entire picture of what I was dealing with. After removing and screening the overburden, a human burial was exposed, lying in a flexed (fetal) position, on its side with the head toward the west. No artifacts were recovered from the excavation. As this was



*Danziger prepares to lower himself to the excavation-site, aided by Jay Johnson of the American Indian Council of Mariposa County.*



*Completed burial excavation, showing bones in situ.*

only the second burial excavated in the Valley, permission was granted by representatives of the Council for an in-park study of the remains. Dr. Roger LaJeunesse, Biological Anthropologist from Fresno State University was called in to study the bones; he determined that they belonged to a Native American woman, between 50-75 years old, of slight build, with arthritis, a fractured radius and a skull deformity.

This information added materially to our sparse knowledge of the actual morphology of the people who inhabited Yosemite. The remains later were traditionally reburied in the Yosemite Pioneer Cemetery beside the remains of a Native American woman excavated in 1978.

As the General Management Plan is implemented, I will be working closely with the planners in all areas that will be affected. Working with the staff, I will indicate areas containing cultural resources, which should be preserved. Although only about 5% of the Park has been surveyed for archaeological resources, close to 600 sites have been recorded. Locating areas in which to build — especially in flat areas in the major drainages — will be difficult. But in planning any construction, all effort will be made to keep impact to a minimum, and completely avoided when possible.

As the Park facilities and people move from the Valley to El Portal and Wawona, cultural resources undoubtedly will be impacted. To acquire as much information as possible, a research design is being prepared that will set up specific procedures for studying the material in accordance with the most recent archaeological methods and theories.

An item of high priority on the immediate action plan of the GMP is the removal of portions of the Village Mall blacktop. Complicating this removal is the fact that ethnographically, and from previous work, we know that the village of Ahwahnee, perhaps the largest Native American village in the Park, previously was located here. A testing program of coring four-inch auger holes throughout the area was done to determine ways of removing the blacktop without impacting the site, the extent of the site, and its state of preservation. Tests indicated that the west portion of the Mall, from the post office to the Administration Building, lies only 6-8 inches above on undisturbed archeological site and that the east portion of the Mall lies on at least three feet of fill soil. From this testing we can plan how to remove the blacktop and where caution must be maintained to avoid disturbing the remains. Tests further showed that the soil containing cultural materials (midden) is over four feet deep in places, without any breaks, indicating a very long and continuous occupation of the area, possibly spanning 1000 years or more. Tests also showed the site area to be longer than previously known, extending from near the Wells Fargo bank building to the Pioneer Cemetery and from a point north of the Visitor Center into Cook's Meadow on the south. Information such as this adds much to our knowledge of aboriginal existence in Yosemite.

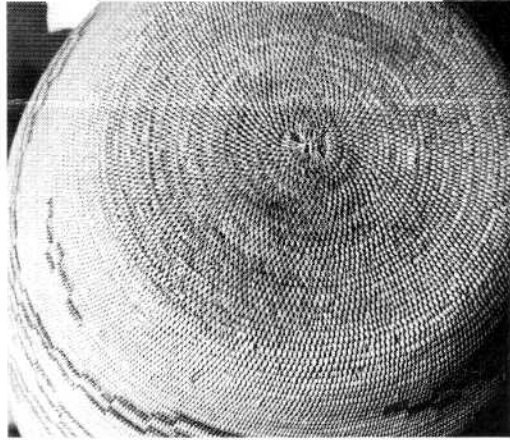
Thus far, the Cultural Resource Management program in Yosemite has been successful. Park staff people are sensitive to the resources and are working with the archaeologist on all projects that may impact the land.

When the GMP work begins in earnest, archaeological activities will increase as we plan for the removal of facilities from the Valley to outlying areas.

Reverting impacted areas back to nature and preserving the prehistoric and historic resources is a goal of the park management and it is my hope that this concern will continue here and elsewhere across our country so that we will be more mindful of our archaeological heritage.

By Steven Danziger

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF YNHA recently approved an expenditure of \$1,200 for the purchase of an outstanding Miwok basket which now is a part of the Yosemite Collection. Craig Bates of the museum staff provides the following information.



*The basket donated by YNHA to the Park Collection measures 54.9 cm. in diameter, 27.4 cm. in height. The detail photo of the exterior base shows the indicative clock-spring start and spaced stitching so characteristic of three-rod coiling of the Sierra Miwok of Tuolumne County.*

It is rare to find a documented basket — that is a basket about which there is information regarding the place of collection, the date it was purchased and from whom. It's especially difficult to locate any about which much is known that were collected prior to the turn of the century.

Documented baskets are often the only tool available for learning about the people who made them. Such things as the relationships between neighboring tribal groups, clues to their pre-history, and the source of the materials used become evident in coiled basketry.

The basket which YNHA purchased is significant because it is a documented piece — collected in Sonora by a family who bought it from the family of Napoleon Maximillion, a local Central Miwok. The basket, unusual for its size, is a type commonly used in aboriginal times for serving acorn mush at feasts. With these functions being held less frequently after 1900, fewer and fewer baskets of this type were made.

This basket was probably purchased new in 1897. It shows no wear pattern to indicate it was used in stone boiling, which would have been its native function in connection with the acorn mush. Its warp rods are probably willow, and the buff background material from the split shoots of the redbud cut in the spring; the material with which the pattern was woven is of the split shoots of the redbud gathered in the winter when the bark adheres. Construction techniques are identical with Central Sierra Miwok baskets from the Sonora areas as used in the early years of this century. The clockspring-start is a classic example of the traditional beginning of a basket made by the Central Miwok.

What can be learned from the baskets? The clockspring-start is a shared feature, used by most Northern and Southern Sierra Miwok groups. Certain features, such as a slight spacing of the stitches, indicates the work was done in Tuolumne County and a small portion of neighboring Calaveras County, including the area of Murphys and Railroad Flat. The redbud design and the weft (background) material indicate the source as a river canyon — the only natural habitat of redbud, either the Tuolumne River, near what was Jacksonville, or on the Stanislaus River, near Parrotts and Robinson's Ferry.

The connection between the use of redbud and the spaced-stitching technique seems to indicate that the basket was woven in a specific place, Tuolumne County. One could assume that the Stanislaus drainage was a favorite source for the redbud because it is closer to Sonora than to the Tuolumne. The feature of spaced-stitching is only shared with groups adjacent to the North, near the Stanislaus, and not to the South.

Coincidentally, the use of redbud shoots as a pattern material in baskets extends among the Northern Miwok only to those groups who use the spaced-stitching technique. Thus, the basket not only tells us the places where materials were gathered by certain Miwok groups at certain times of the year, but also would seem to indicate that the Sonora Miwok had more contact with the Northern Miwok than, say the Southern Miwok — a point which is supported by ethnographic data and by the statements of Central Miwok elders contacted during the last decade.

As to pre-history, the basket is, like most Miwok work, similar to a certain style of basketry found in dry caves in Central Nevada that dates back some 6,000 years. It is hypothesized that the people who produced the basketry in Central Nevada at that time, moved into California and either were assimilated by or that they displaced groups already in what is now California.

So, from the study of their basketry materials and design, the Miwok people's pre-history, their social contacts, habitats, and their use of resources becomes clearer.



MUYBRIDGE PRINTS AVAILABLE INDIVIDUALLY. Because of the interest shown in the purchase of separate prints from the *Muybridge Portfolio*, we can now take orders for any of the ten photos from the Portfolio. We do not carry an inventory of prints but the Chicago Albumen Works, producers of the prints, tells us that orders can be filled in five or six weeks. These prints are made in the same fashion as those contained in the portfolio. The price per print is \$175, plus tax and \$10 for packing and shipping. Because of the slender margin on the sale of prints, we cannot give a discount to members.

**THE MEETING:** The Fourth Annual Members Meeting November 3 and 4, was attended by some 200 members and families. It was held at the Happy Isles Nature Center, with the barbecue, meeting, etc. scheduled to be outdoors in the magnificent forest and alongside the Merced River — all in all, a lovely setting. The YNHA staff was conscious that bad weather would necessitate moving all the functions into the Nature Center, a building really too small to accommodate the meeting comfortably. But it seemed a reasonable gamble. Those present were aware early on that the bet was lost! Rain came down in bucketfuls with no respite.



*Sierra Club Executive Director, Michael McCloskey, addressed YNHA members during the November, 1979 Fourth Annual Members' Meeting held at the Happy Isles Nature Center.*

*Rus Stolling photo.*

The members accepted it all with patience and even good cheer. For reasons yet unknown, the food supply was exhausted with a dozen or more souls left to be fed. The wine and cheese held out, thus easing the dilemma somewhat.

Board Chairman Dana Morgenson and Director Len McKenzie conducted the business meeting; many members participated in the discussions.

Michael McCloskey, Sierra Club Executive Director, was the principal speaker. He described a recent official trip to the U.S.S.R. and reviewed the Sierra Club's successes and occasional

failures in the environmental conservation movement. We were fortunate to have him at our meeting, for he represents the most effective conservation organization in the land.

At about 4:30, the members paddled away to their hotels and camps.

A hundred or more turned out that evening to hear Park Superintendent Bob Binnewies and Yosemite Park and Curry Co. head Ed Hardy discuss the Yosemite General Management Plan from their respective viewpoints.

Sunday's weather was fair and the several hikes and walks were well attended. Sierra Nevada weather between October and June is notoriously unpredictable. We got caught in the first major storm of the fall, and it was the first time a meeting has been rained on. But it's all a part of life in the mountains. We figure the odds for good weather for the 1980 meeting are now improved.

WHAT'S YNHA ALL ABOUT? During the recent Annual Members Meeting, we sat in the wings and, to accompaniment of rain-on-the-roof, listened to several members who spoke about one thing or another.

The comments we overheard led us to the conclusion that we may have failed to describe the defined purposes of YNHA. These are spelled out clearly in both the Association's By-laws, the operating guidelines set forth by the National Park Service, and the cooperative agreement with the Park Service.

Without quoting the language, which is fairly cumbersome, it boils down to the fact YNHA exists to support the interpretive, educational, and scientific programs in Yosemite. The Association is non-profit and self-supporting; the bulk of its income is from the sale of publications at various park locations, as specified by the National Park Service. Revenues from book sales, the financial support of the membership and income from seminars allows the Board of Trustees to commit funds for specific needs identified and requested by the Park's Interpretive Division.

It is a fact of life that the National Park Service, which gets its money from Congress, is always underfunded — in Yosemite perhaps by as much as 50%. Thus, the local administrators must scratch even to protect the park minimally and to provide services for visitors.

So we, the YNHA staff, applaud the Board's approval of financial aid to the Park in the amount, this year, of \$49,400. We hope you share our enthusiasm for the Board's decision. Following is listed the details of our projected aid to Yosemite this fiscal year.

#### APPROVED REQUESTS FOR AID TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Interpretive signs for Pioneer Yosemite History Center .....	\$ 900	Funding for Annual Folk Music and Dance Workshop at Pioneer Yosemite History Center .....	1,000
Snowshoes for visitor use at Badger Pass and Crane Flat .....	3,300	Purchase two fiberglass horses for barn at History Center .....	900
Remodel Visitor Center lobby .....	6,800	Purchase period costumes for use in living history program .....	800
History exhibit panels .....	1,500	Purchase a drill press for wagon barn at History Center. Needed for stagecoach maintenance/restoration .....	500
Wildlife "anti-feeding" signs .....	1,800	Employ a blacksmith to demonstrate his craft at the History Center. Sales of products made in demonstrations will be sold to help defray salary. Amount requested represents net cost to YNHA .....	2,000
Prints of "Yosemite Indians" film .....	500	Develop a new meadow exhibit for Tuolumne Meadows Visitor Center .....	2,000
Indian Museum display case .....	300	Purchase enlarged photo reproduction of the maps for Big Oak Flat Information Station .....	200
Multi-lingual orientation slide program .....	600	Print folder explaining the life cycle, ecological relationships, and recent outbreak of the lodgepole needle miner and NPS management policy on subject .....	2,000
Weather exhibit for Visitor Center .....	800	Materials for preparation of displays in buildings to be converted into visitor-use facilities under the General Management Immediate Action Plan .....	1,500
Announcement board for naturalist programs at Badger Pass .....	250	Place ads in publications and establish a reward for information leading to the recovery of nine Indian baskets stolen from the Museum Collections Room .....	1,250
Glacier Point map/information leaflet .....	500	Replace two NPS camera lenses stolen this past summer .....	1,600
Brochure on fire management .....	1,000	Purchase of rare Miwok Indian basket .....	1,200
Leaflet describing displays in Indian Museum .....	1,000		
Mariposa Grove display map .....	500		
Glen Aulin obsidian analysis (a research project) .....	1,000		
Two slide/sound units .....	700		
Nature connection exhibit, Happy Isles Nature Center .....	1,000		
Purchase computerized multi-lingual information translator .....	1,500		
Develop self-help Travelers' Information Center in Visitor Center .....	2,500		
Acquire additional taxidermic mounts for displays and programs .....	1,500		

*Continued*

Provide funds to continue the acquisition program in Research Library .....	1,500	Produce an oral history of Dr. Carl Sharsmith's recollections of his experiences in Yosemite .....	1,000
Continue program to bind volumes of recent periodicals .....	500	Purchase a telephone transcribing machine for the deaf .....	600
Continue to augment CETA funding to resume environmental education programs .....	1,000	Provide funds for miscellaneous expenditures up to \$100 at the discretion of the YNHA Executive Director, under the provisions of the Association's By-Laws .....	1,500
Purchase a programmable calculator to improve capabilities in statistical analysis and financial management .....	400	TOTAL .....	\$49,400

**NEW MEMBERS OF YNHA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** A series of events within the last several months has resulted in the seating of three new members on the YNHA Board.

First, in April, 1979, Mr. Lewis Eaton resigned; Mr. Eaton has a number of civic responsibilities in Fresno as well as commitments to other boards and to his business. The vacancy thus created was, by Board action, filled by Mr. Eugene Rose of Fresno; Rose's term runs through 1983.

Next, the By-laws of the Association were changed to expand the number of Trustees from seven to eight; Mr. Carlo Fowler of San Francisco was elected by the Board to a four-year term.

Finally, as the term of Mr. Sterling Cramer was to end in January, 1980, nominations for election to his seat were held at the Annual Members Meeting November 3. Mr. Cramer had been nominated by the Board's nominating committee. Ms. Phyllis Weber and Mr. Neil Tuthill were nominated by petition to run against Cramer. Twelve hundred twenty-five ballots along with background information on the three candidates were mailed to the membership November 21. Three hundred ninety-nine were returned before the December 15 deadline with Weber receiving 215, Cramer 164, and Tuthill 18; two ballots were improperly marked.

So, as of January, 1980 the Board consisted of Jeanne Adams (Treasurer), Carlo P. Fowler, Dr. Fred Harper, Dana Morgenson, Dr. Harvey Rhodes, Eugene Rose, Thomas J. Shephard, and Phyllis Weber; Yosemite Superintendent Robert Binnewies is the National Park Service ex-officio, non-voting member.

**NEW MEMBERS.** We welcome to membership in YNHA the following good people.

Jean Abbey (L)	Sherwin Kaplan	Mille Purvis & Family
Melvin D. Anderson	R. A. Kaspar	Gladyn & Helen Putt
Ward R. Anderson & Family	Frances A. Kelley	Beryl T. Reilly
John Applegarth (L)	Mr. & Mrs. William J. Kelly, Jr.	Charles & Judy Reilly
Art & Phyllis Baggett-Weber (L)	Bruce, Denise & Dawn Knopf	Clifton J. Reynolds & Family
Hank L. Bakker & Family	Douglas G. Ladd	Michael Rivers
Arnie Becker & Family	Karen Laing	Madeline Rock
Michael Bigelow & Family	Jody Larson	Gene Rose (L)
Kathy Bredger	Marian Lockwood	Mr. & Mrs. Arthur A. Rosen
Bob Brooks	Mike Maki	Priscilla Rosenfeld
Michael K. Brown	Jeanne Makihara	Michael Elsohn Ross & Family
Virginia Burley	Mr. & Mrs. Anthony L. Makjavich	Virginia Schneberger & Family
Monica A. Burton	Elizabeth Maury	Van & Susan Schultz (L)
Dr. Donald Corbett & Family	Stephen Ward McCabe	Steve Schwarzback
Ida J. Crawford	Jim McCall	Melanie & Philip Sheats
Phill Crone	Harold McDonald & Family	Paul C. Simpson, Jr. & Family
Steven M. Danziger	Drs. Mary & J.W. McKibben (L)	Esther G. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Phil DeBoer	Skip McLaughlin (L)	Susan & Mark Smith
Gregory M. Dixon	Paul McManus	Marcia Speziale
Cynthia Edwards	Karlin A. Merrill	Richard Spittler
Kasey Eisler	Lin Moore	Richard J. Steil
Simone Fineman	Carol Blue Muller	Susan Svans
Emil Fogarino	Richard Newberry	Jean & David Trask
James D. Forward (L)	Richard L. Newhouse & Family (L)	Albert C. Tsao
Kenneth & Audrey Greene	Laura Newman	Dan Wilkerson (L)
Eldora Halliday	Roddy J. Nolten	Scott C. Williams
Katherine C. Hart & Family	Kermit Norris	Charles J. Wirtz
Harriet Hungate	Bob & Jeanne Paul	Dr. & Mrs. Charles Woessner
Larry L. Johnson	David H. Paulson	Tae J. Yaki
Lucy D. Johnson	Mr. & Mrs. Robert W.L. Potts	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Zidell (L)

(L) indicates Life Member



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Dan Anderson