



## Northern Colorado Chapter/Colorado Archaeology Society, The Folsom Point

April 2014

### The Places that Knew Them

21 MARCH, 2014 - MARAGARET COEL

CHIEF LEFT HAND, WHOSE ARAPAHO NAME IS NIWOT, CAMPED BELOW THE FLAT IRONS.

In the years I have been writing about the Arapahos, I've developed double vision. What I see among the skyscrapers and sprawl of Denver, the other cities along the Front Range, the small towns, ranches and farms on the plains, is another reality: the reality of what used to be. From the 1700s to about 1870, eastern Colorado was the land of the Arapahos and Cheyennes. Called the "land between the two rivers," this vast, empty space stretched from the Platte River to the Arkansas River and from the Continental Divide to central Kansas. Other tribes---Sioux, Pawnee, Kiowa, Comanche---would send hunting and war parties into the area, but the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie acknowledged that the land belonged to the Arapahos and Cheyennes. This is where their villages stood, where they hunted buffalo, fought encroaching tribes, held ancient ceremonies and buried their dead. This was where, as they say, they lived free.

Traces of them are everywhere. When I see the hikers and bikers at Confluence Park where the Platte meets Cherry Creek in Denver, I also see the large Arapaho village that stood there in the 1860s. As goldseekers flooded onto Indian lands in 1858, the Cheyennes moved their villages out onto the plains, as far away as they could get. But Arapahos were traders, and they chose to stay close to the

burgeoning tent and log cabin settlement on Cherry Creek so they could trade with the newcomers.

Today Larimer Street is filled with boutiques and restaurants and lights twinkling in the trees. But in my double vision I see a mad place of saloons, log cabins and wagons pulled by mules and oxen, dusty from the trip across the plains. Gold seekers jiggle one another on the wooden sidewalks, and Arapahos move among them, trading buffalo robes, ponies and beaded items for tobacco, sugar, flour, fabric, beads and other goods.



Confluence Park Today

The Arapahos have many connections to the Boulder area. Every winter, Chief Left Hand, whose Arapaho name was Niwot, camped below the Flatirons. When he first encountered the goldseekers, he was camped at the foot of Red Rocks where Pearl and Arapaho Streets converge today. East of Boulder, around the barren peak called Haystack Mountain that juts out of the plains, are tipi rings, rocks that had fastened tipis to the ground. Other tipi rings can be found near Niwot, the town named for the chief. It is easy to imagine—almost to see—the large, bustling villages that had stood in these places.

Left Hand also liked the Lyons area. On Rabbit Mountain, a group of tipi rings are so perfectly arranged that it seems as if the village had just departed and might return at any moment. Boulder County Parks and Open Space is protective of this site, with good reason. How long would it take for souvenir hunters to carry away the rocks and destroy the last signs of an Arapaho village?

Every summer Arapahos hosted a large trading fair where the Platte River meets Beaver Creek near Brush. The site is now part of a ranch, and the last time I was there, a black bull patrolled the periphery. It is a quiet, windswept place, but I see a large social gathering, filled with tipis and brush shades, and crowds of Plains Indians renewing acquaintances and trading a variety of goods. Yes, I even see warriors courting young women, because the trading fair was an opportunity to find a wife.

Another favorite Arapaho trading place was Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River near LaJunta. Built in 1833, the fort was the first permanent structure on the plains, a cosmopolitan center where Indians, Easterners and Europeans came together to exchange goods. On any day dozens of languages could be heard spoken there. A few years ago, I was fortunate to visit the fort with a group of historians. After the tourists had left and the fort closed, our group stayed on. Buffalo roasts turned on spits in the courtyard. Guitarists played 19<sup>th</sup> century songs. Reenactors walked around in hide shirts and deerskin dresses. We ate dinner as the sun set over the adobe walls. It was easy to imagine Arapahos at such gatherings.

Forty miles to the north is the place Arapahos and Cheyennes consider the most sacred in Colorado—the site of the Sand Creek Massacre. In the winter of 1864, the tribes, under orders from Governor John Evans and Colonel John Chivington, brought their villages to Sand Creek to await a peace agreement with the people who had taken over their lands. In the freezing dawn of November 29,

Chivington led the 3<sup>rd</sup> Colorado Regiment in an attack on the sleeping camp. One hundred and sixty-eight Cheyennes and Arapahos—women, children and old men, for the most part—were killed. Chief Left hand's band was destroyed. Mortally wounded, the chief would die a few days later.

In 2007, Sand Creek became a National Historic Site and part of the National Park Service. When I visit Sand Creek, I look out over the dry, windy swath of plains and see the soldiers bearing down on the tipis, the chiefs running out and waving white flags of surrender, and the howitzers firing into the village. The place has the feel of a cemetery, which it is. Arapaho and Cheyenne elders still visit Sand Creek to pray for the dead. They say they can hear the sounds of the attack there and see the spirits moving through the trees.

There is irony in the fact the highways that take you to Sand Creek and the other places of the Arapahos follow old Indian trails. Arapahos say their trails took the easiest way around the sandy hills and bluffs of the plains. That is, they followed rivers and creeks, just as modern road builders have done. We know that when Chief Left Hand rode from the Boulder area to the new town of Denver, he followed a north-south trail to present-day Golden before turning east. That north-south trail would become Colorado Highway 93.

When I drive across eastern Colorado, I always look for the large stands of cottonwoods along the creeks. This is where Arapaho villages stood. Some of the trees are probably old enough to have sheltered the villages. And I see in my double vision white tipis shining in the sun, children running about, ponies in the corral and warriors riding into the village after the hunt. All gone now, of course. Today Arapahos live in Oklahoma and on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, which they share with the Shoshones. But they maintain a strong bond with the Colorado plains; this is still home. They have never forgotten the places where they had once lived, and I like to think that the places have not forgotten them.

## Margaret Coel

Margaret Coel is a native Coloradan who hails from a pioneer Colorado family. The West – the mountains, plains and vast spaces – are in her bones, she says. She moved out of Colorado on two occasions – to attend Marquette University and to spend a couple years in Alaska. Both times she couldn't wait to get back.

Along with the Wind River Mystery series, Margaret Coel is the author of five non-fiction books (two of which are featured on her website, including the award-winning **Chief Left Hand** published by the University of Oklahoma Press. This biography of an Arapaho chief and history of the Arapahos in Colorado has never gone out of print. The Colorado Historical Society has included both **Chief Left Hand** and Margaret's memoir-history of railroading in Colorado, **Goin' Railroading** (which she wrote with her father,



Samuel F. Speas) among the best 100 books on Colorado history.

Her articles on the West have appeared in the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, American Heritage of Invention & Technology, Creativity! And many other publications. Speaking engagements on the people and places she loves best have taken her around the country and as far away as Australia. She visits the Wind River Reservation every year, "just to catch up with friends."

She writes in a small study in her home on a hillside in Boulder. The window frames a view of the Rocky Mountains and the almost-always blue sky. A herd of deer are usually grazing just outside, and one summer a couple years ago, a mountain lion made its home closeby.

"Every day," she says, "I drink in the West."



## Call for Volunteers

From Larry Fullenkamp, USFS:

We are planning an Archaeological Educational Outreach Day with 5<sup>th</sup> graders from a school in Evans, Co again this year on May 9<sup>th</sup>. If you know of anyone that might like to help us teach Kids about archaeology we could you a little extra help this year. We have a former field crew member that went on to teach 5<sup>th</sup> grade and has been incorporating archaeology into her curriculum throughout the year and then we collaborate on a field day to teach them about survey, artifact ID, atlats, excavation, grassland ecology, wildland firefighting, and working with a map and compass.

We could use few extra volunteers this year. We thought it would be fun to add a flint knapping demonstration station as well this year if we find someone who could help us. We are expecting 70 kids this year! Thank you!

Larry Fullenkamp  
Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests  
Pawnee National Grassland  
Fort Collins, CO  
970-295-6619  
[lfullenkamp@fs.fed.us](mailto:lfullenkamp@fs.fed.us)



## Dos Rios Elementary School Experiences History on the Grassland

**GREELEY, Colo.** – For the third year in a row Dos Rios Elementary School’s fifth grade classes are teaming with archaeologists from the Pawnee National Grassland to provide an unforgettable archaeological experience inside and out of the classroom.

On May 9, the fifth graders of Dos Rios Elementary School from Evans, Colo., will experience a day of hands-on archaeology, history and geography learning at the former site of the Prairie View School, north of Briggsdale, CO.

The project was initiated by Lindsey Mieras, a fifth grade teacher at Dos Rios Elementary and former U.S. Forest Service archaeological technician.

Dos Rios is a K-5 school serving a population of approximately 600 students. The project began within the classroom. Mieras has been integrating archaeological concepts in the classroom by use of a multidisciplinary approach within the fields of math, science, social studies, reading and writing. Students have also researched historical documents and artifacts.

During the May 9 field trip, students will work alongside professional archaeologists and U.S. Forest Service employees using maps, compass and Global Positioning Systems performing archaeological survey and mock excavations. The former one room school house has been relocated to the High Plains Historical Society museum in Nunn, Colo. However, the archaeological material that remains will allow the students to peek into the lives of students like themselves 100 years ago, as well as Native Americans who lived in what is now the Pawnee National Grassland many hundreds or even thousands of years ago.

While on the grasslands, students will also interact with other U.S. Forest Service staff learning about fire prevention, wildlife and being responsible stewards of our public lands.



## From the Presidents

Dear Members of NCC,

Welcome Spring! We look forward to seeing you at our next NCC meeting on Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. Remember, guests are always welcome.

Our new Folsom Point newsletter editor is Cindie Bright. She is doing a great job! If you have something of interest for the newsletter, please let her know.

Dave Swinehart is proud to announce that we have met the minimum of 10 for the upcoming PAAC Rock Art Class starting this Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. Great job Dave!

An important issue of concern is our website. Joel has notified us that the software he has been using is obsolete, and, too, he would like to step down as webmaster. If anyone has any suggestions, please let us know!

Again, thank you!  
Bev Goering, co-president  
Joel Hurmence, co-president



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## Places to Visit

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### Mesa Verde National Park

Mesa Verde, Spanish for green table, offers a spectacular look into the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people who made it their home for over 700 years, from A.D. 600 to 1300. Today the park protects nearly 5,000 known archaeological sites, including 600 cliff dwellings. These sites are some of the most notable and best preserved in the United States.

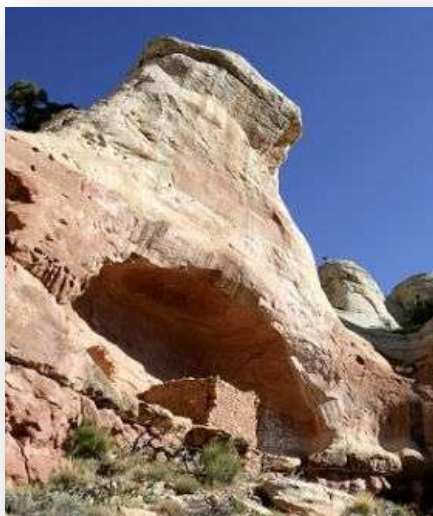
[www.nps.gov/mev](http://www.nps.gov/mev)



### Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

Founded in 1983, the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center is dedicated to understanding, teaching, and helping to preserve the rich history of the ancestral Pueblo people (also called the Anasazi) of the American Southwest.

[www.crowcanyon.org](http://www.crowcanyon.org)



### Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

Southwestern Colorado contains a huge number of archaeological sites, more than 6000 recorded so far, and up to 100 per square mile in some places-- representing Ancestral Puebloan and other Native American cultures.

Canyons of the Ancients is managed as an *integral cultural landscape* containing a wealth of historic and environmental resources.

<http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/nm/canm.html>

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## Medicine Lodge Archaeological Site

Known for its carved rock-art images—petroglyphs—and painted rock-art images—pictographs—Medicine Lodge is one of Wyoming’s premier archaeological sites. Rock art covers the face of a 750-foot long sandstone bluff, which shelters the area at its base from wind. Here, archaeologists have found evidence of human habitation stretching back 10,000 years.

[www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/medicine-lodge#sthash](http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/medicine-lodge#sthash)



## Pueblo Grande Museum Archeological Park

Pueblo Grande Museum is located on a 1,500 year old archaeological site left by the Hohokam culture located just minutes from downtown Phoenix next to Sky Harbor International Airport. This National Historic Landmark and Phoenix Point of Pride has been a part of the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department since 1929, and is the largest preserved archaeological site within Phoenix. Easily accessible by the Sky Train and the Light Rail, the museum is open 7 days a week October through April, and closed Sundays and Mondays, May through September

<http://phoenix.gov/recreation/arts/museums/pueblo/index.html>



## Tuzigoot National Monument

Crowning a desert hilltop is an ancient pueblo. Tuzigoot is an ancient village or pueblo built by a culture known as the Sinagua. The pueblo consisted of 110 rooms including second and third story structures. The first buildings were built around A.D. 1000. The Sinagua were agriculturalists with trade connections that spanned hundreds of miles. The people left the area around 1400. The site is currently comprised of 42 acres.

[www.nps.gov/tuzi](http://www.nps.gov/tuzi)

## Colorado Archaeological Society Mission Statement

The Colorado Archaeological Society is a non-profit organization committed to the stewardship of archaeological resources in Colorado. We achieve this through public education, research, conservation and enhanced opportunities for responsible participation in archaeology for interested individuals and organizations.

### 2003 Revised Constitution of the Colorado Archaeological Society, Inc.

[CAS Constitution - 2003 \(PDF\)](#)

### 2003 Bylaws of the Colorado Archaeological Society, Inc.

[CAS Bylaws - 2003 \(PDF\)](#)

[Chipeta Chapter \(Montrose\)](#)  
[Colorado Rock Art Association \(State-wide\)](#)  
[Denver Chapter \(Denver\)](#)  
[Hisatsinom Chapter \(Cortez\)](#)  
[CT Hurst Chapter \(Gunnison\)](#)  
[Indian Peaks Chapter \(Boulder\)](#)  
[Northern Colorado Chapter \(Fort Collins\)](#)  
[Pikes Peak Chapter \(Colorado Springs\)](#)  
[Pueblo Archaeological & Historical Society \(Pueblo\)](#)  
[Roaring Fork Valley Chapter \(Glenwood Springs\)](#)  
[San Juan Basin Archaeological Society \(Durango\)](#)  
[Vermillion Chapter \(Craig\)](#)

## OBJECTIVES AND CODE OF ETHICS

*As Members of the Colorado Archaeological Society, we pledge:*

- To uphold State and Federal Antiquities Laws.
- To support policies and educational programs designed to protect our cultural heritage and our State's antiquities.
- To encourage protection and discourage exploitation of archaeological resources.
- To encourage the study and recording of Colorado's archaeology and cultural history. To take an active part by participating in field and laboratory work for the purpose of developing new and significant information about the past.
- To respect the property rights of landowners.
- To assist whenever possible, in locating, mapping and recording archaeological sites within Colorado using State Site Survey forms.
- To respect the dignity of peoples whose cultural histories and spiritual practices are the subject of any investigation.
- To support only scientifically conducted activities, and never participate in conduct involving dishonesty, deceit or misrepresentation about archaeological matters. To report vandalism.
- To remember that cultural resources are non-renewable, and do not belong to you or me, but are ours to respect, to study and enjoy!

# Northern Colorado Chapter Colorado Archaeological Society Membership Application

I/We \_\_\_\_\_,  
do

hereby agree to uphold and abide by the Code of Ethics as a condition of membership in the Colorado Archaeological Society (CAS) and the Northern Colorado Chapter.

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Membership type (check one): Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> New Member Joining Jan-Jun	<b>New Member Joining Jul- Dec</b>	<b>Category</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> \$26.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$13.00	Individual
<input type="checkbox"/> \$32.50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$16.25	Family
<input type="checkbox"/> \$18.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 9.00	Student (includes <i>Southwestern Lore</i> , must be currently en- rolled)
<input type="checkbox"/> \$18.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 9.00	Senior (does <b>not</b> include <i>Southwestern Lore</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> \$22.50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$11.25	Senior Family (does <b>not</b> include <i>Southwestern Lore</i> )

Note: Renewals are due in January each year. New members joining after June 30 pay half the annual dues for the remainder of the year.

Donation to the Greenacre Scholarship Fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the Northern Colorado Chapter/CAS. Print this page, fill out the application, and send with your check to:

Northern Colorado Chapter/CAS  
PO Box 271513  
Fort Collins, CO 80527-0738

Note: Your dues include concurrent membership in the Colorado Archaeological Society and the Northern Colorado Chapter, a subscription to the Chapter newsletter, the *Folsom Point*, four issues of the journal *Southwestern Lore*, and four issues of the CAS newsletter, the *Surveyor*. The Colorado Archaeological Society is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization.