

KLAMATH RIVER ARTIFACT COLLECTION BEING MOVED TO THE KARUK PEOPLE'S CENTER MUSEUM IN HAPPY CAMP

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In 1972, the author, at Michigan State University, received a grant from the California branch of the U.S. Forest Service to conduct a summer program at Happy Camp in Siskiyou County. One part of the program was to provide archaeological training and field experience for several dozen U.S. Forest Service workers. Another was to survey and record archaeological sites along the Klamath River between Orleans and Seiad Valley to determine whether any sites might be endangered by planned development projects along that part of the Klamath River Valley. Surface collections were taken from more than 60 sites. The collections were taken to Michigan State University and were stored there after the reports were filed. Now that the author is retired, the collections are being returned to California. The collections were taken from the ethnic territory of the Karuk people, who still live in the region and have developed an increasingly formal tribal government with many services and resources. One is the Karuk Tribal Center in Happy Camp which, among other things, has become a generator of community preservation and expanded knowledge of the past. The return of this collection is providing some additional help for the Karuk Tribal Center to expand knowledge about their community's history and increase the sharing of this knowledge.

Not only has the field of California archaeology undergone significant development and change over the past half-century, but so have many other elements of the society in which we live and operate. This paper will make reference to developments in aspects of the Native American communities with which California archaeologists have been interacting over the decades. It is not a summary of the state as a whole, but focuses on an example which has many characteristic elements.

The example in this case is the Karuk community in northern California. The tribal center for the Karuk community is in the town of Happy Camp, which is on the north bank of the Klamath River. Happy Camp lies roughly about 45 linear miles west of Yreka, on Interstate 5, and about 50 linear miles east of Crescent City, which is on the Pacific Coast. The road distances are a good deal longer than that, because there are no straight roads involved.

During the past year I have been working on the return of an archaeological collection I made in the Happy Camp area back in 1972. Since the collection is not from a site in Michigan, the Michigan State University Museum has never taken in the collection. I have not analyzed it for a number of years, so the collection, for permanent preservation, needs to be accessioned by an appropriate institution. The Karuk People's Center, as an administrative base for the Karuk Tribe, is obviously an appropriate destination for a collection that came from the Karuk territory. I contacted the Center and was well-received. The Center has a museum facility and has been grateful to receive the collection, about half of which has now been shipped to it. The Center will preserve the entire collection, as well as putting some of the relevant artifacts on display for teaching and historical purposes.

The point that particularly inspired this paper, however, is the changes that have taken place in development of tribal objectives and operations to bring the situation to the current level. Back in 1972, when my field project took place, the project was sponsored by the United States Forest Service's California division, primarily to offer training opportunities for Forest Service employees in archaeological field work that was related to the then-developing cultural resource management legal situation. As a colleague of the then-director of the U.S. Forest Service's California archaeology division, Donald S. Miller, I was asked to use actual field work as a field school for a group of 20 Forest Service staff members from around northern California whose work involved them with issues regarding the

occurrence of Native American sites in the properties managed by their national forest. The Happy Camp region of the Klamath River Valley was chosen for this project because it offered many good opportunities for site surveying, site recording, test excavation and field laboratory activities in an area that had low overall population and a good deal of federally-owned land, as well as a useful campground owned by the Forest Service that could be used to house my training program and provide areas for some of the teaching and training activities. We came out from Michigan in June of 1972, and brought 12 students from Michigan State University with us, some to help direct the field work and training, and some to also take the field school for their own training. Several of the students who participated in that project went on to have careers in California archaeology, by the way.

Our efforts to provide appropriate experiences for the Forest Service staff members involved not only a fair amount of formal discussions, which were held in camp since we had no classroom. It also involved giving them some field experience, both so they could see how archaeologists were doing field work in regard to cultural resource management-based projects funded by the Forest Service, and so they could become better accustomed to the data that was being discovered, observed, recovered, and recorded. The large majority of our fieldwork involved reconnaissance, so that we could give them experience in how to do surveying, how to recognize archaeological remains, how to identify and record sites and locations within sites, how to appropriately collect samples, and how to properly clean, catalogue and preserve the remains collected. We also did some test excavations at several of the sites we found where there were available landowners to give us permission. This allowed the field experience to be extended into such things as using trowels, doing sifting, identifying levels within pits, labeling collection bags appropriately, laying out grids on sites and defining positions within grids (Chartkoff 1991).

While in the Happy Camp area, we made some very good contacts with members of the Karuk community, and visited what then was the tribal headquarters. We were very nicely received, but at that time there was little interest shown to us about participating in archaeological research into their ancestors, or compiling the information and materials about what was discovered, or in having anything like a museum for either artifact preservation or presentation of information to their community. A number of people were socially very nice, but reflected no real interest in participation. Some individuals were quite negative about any archaeology being done, and did not regard archaeology as a useful means of expanding upon known tribal history and traditions. As has been the case throughout California and the rest of the United States, a good deal of resentment was felt toward archaeologists for disturbing their ancestors' cultural remains, much less their physical remains, as being very destructive toward their heritage.

Over the years I had seen development of more cooperative interaction and changes in community values emerge. For example, when I worked on the Go Road project in the Siskiyou Mountains in 1978, I had some very productive meetings with Yurok tribal committees to build a cooperative relationship between them and our project. However, I really had not kept up to date with the development of the Karuk tribal community's organization in Happy Camp. Last year, when I began look for ways to get the collections we had made in 1972 moved to a secure home in the region, one thing I did was to go online to see what was being presented these days about the Karuk community's organization. There I discovered that a Karuk Peoples Center had been established in Happy Camp a number of years ago. Its objectives were to foster the preservation of Karuk history, language, traditions, and continuing though evolving cultural traditions, and to communicate this knowledge both to the people of the Karuk community and to the larger population as a whole. To help reach these objectives, the Karuk Peoples Center established several sections: a library, a museum, an archive, and a gift shop to make Karuk art and craftwork widely available, as well as to help get incomes for the artists and artisans working in Karuk traditions. A variety of classes, ranging from craftwork training in basketry to courses in Karuk culture and language, were established and given at the Center. The creation of teachers and lecturers to present Karuk cultural and historical information at schools also was developed.

This development of institutions in the Karuk community is not a topic that has been given a great deal of coverage in the Anthropological literature, so its cultural significance goes well beyond the topic of collections transfer. For example, in A. L. Kroeber's *Handbook of the Indians of California*, published in 1953, there was no real discussion of modern development in the Karuk community (Kroeber 1953: 98-108). In 1978, when Robert Heizer edited Volume 8, *California*, of the Smithsonian's Handbook of North American Indians series, it included a paper by William Bright, a UCLA linguist who had studied the Karuk community. Bright's overview of Karuk culture and history was quite substantial, but did not include coverage of the development of institutions in present-day Karuk society (Bright 1978:180-189).

My own interest, in providing the Karuk community with useful examples of their historical heritage, happened to coincide with the objectives of the Center. Thus I was quite happily surprised to learn about the development of this institution in the Karuk community, and I therefore contacted them to see if the transfer of this collection could be appropriately worked out. At that time, Carolyn Smith was serving as the coordinator for these efforts at the Karuk Peoples Center. I therefore got in communication with her, and found out that the Peoples Center would be very enthusiastic to gain possession of the artifacts and data we had recovered from the region back in 1972.

With the encouragement and support of Ms. Smith, I began to package and ship groups of artifacts to the Karuk Peoples Center. It was not a quick job. I had to inventory each artifact, record it, and pack it carefully in a well-wrapped small shipping box. In the year 2015, I shipped ten boxes to Happy Camp. For each box, I made a detailed inventory, and sent the inventory to Ms. Smith both by e-mail and regular mail, along with a copy in the box. The vast majority of the artifacts was collected at sites through survey and surface collection. Virtually all those sites had been listed in the literature by the UCLA linguist, William Bright, so I identified each site by the village name that Bright reported as well as by its geographical location. I also have sent to the Center copies of the field work reports we generated after the work as done in the summer of 1972. My academic department (Anthropology) at Michigan State University has been supporting the cost of shipping.

In the late summer of 2015, Ms. Smith stepped down from her position in the management of the Karuk Peoples Center so that she could return to Berkeley for the completion of her doctoral degree. She was replaced by Ms. Bari Talley. I have been in communication with Ms. Talley since then, and she has given me as much strong support as Ms. Smith did, so more boxes are being prepared and sent, and the full collection should be return by this coming summer. I would have finished earlier except for having been away from campus for a few months.

One consequence of this shipment is that the Karuk Peoples Center is becoming increasingly involved in the development of education about its traditional cultural heritage and history beyond what gets passed down in families and communities. Its growing body of insight and information is being shared within the Karuk community and with the larger community as well, through making available a number of displays, publications, and other forms of communication. It spreads the sharing of knowledge and helps foster increased unity and relationship in many ways.

The changes I have seen with the Karuk tribal approach to relationships with archaeology show not only a very significant growth in sophistication of perspective and in approaches for increasing the effectiveness of goals and values, but a remarkable increase in the effectiveness of operating in the environment of today's world. I think that, for the Society for California Archaeology, becoming increasingly integrated with these evolving cultural patterns would be a very valuable development and contribution. Many of our colleagues are developing such relationships, but I suggest it should become an increasingly wide-spread objective. Undertaking a challenge to learn more about the changes and developments that have been taking place in California's Native American communities would be a very productive objective for California archaeology, both as a means of creating stronger relationships between researchers and tribal organizations, and as a valuable area for learning in the framework of Anthropology.

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