



LAS July 2016 Headlines:

Caprock Chronicles: Salt Lake woman third oldest set of remains found in North America

By Dolores Mosser, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal, May 22, 2016

In May 1967, Earl Green, director of the West Texas Museum at Texas Tech, was summoned to an archaeological excavation near Arch, New Mexico, just west of the Texas state line in Roosevelt County southeast of Portales.

Near Arch Lake, Green, an expert in Paleoamerican geoarchaeology, found several people working a burial site of "considerable antiquity."

The urgent summons had come from James Warnica, president of the El Llano Archeology Society of Portales, New Mexico.

On May 20, society members Gregg Moore and Cecil Clark had discovered human remains on a high ridge of sand hills south of the Arch Lake in Portales Valley. The skeleton remains soon became known as Arch Lake Woman.

During the project, the archeological team took measures to ensure the remains would be properly preserved for future study. Green supervised and photographed the final excavation. The intact skeleton was of a Paleo-American woman 17 to 19 years of age.

Eastern New Mexico University in Portales took possession of the skeleton, artifacts and project data.

For nearly 20 years, Arch Lake Woman was exhibited at the university's Blackwater Draw Museum, an amazing institution for years credited as the home of the first recovered Clovis points from 12,000 or more years ago.

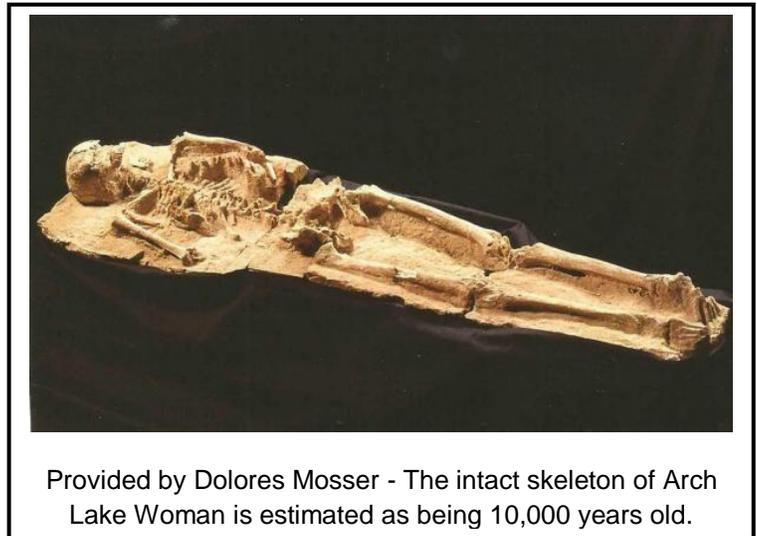
Amazingly, after the remains and grave were found in 1967, the story of the Arch Lake Woman attracted little attention, except locally.

In 1990, however, archaeologists from England's Oxford University descended on eastern New Mexico to examine the skeleton. Their radiocarbon dating indicated her remains as dating from 10,000 years ago, making her the third-oldest set of human remains to be discovered in North America.

In 2000, a team led by the prominent archaeologist David Owsley from the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., came to "reexamine" Arch Lake Woman's burial history.

The team used research methodologies unavailable 40 years earlier, including geologic context, bone chemistry, AMS radiocarbon age, cultural affiliation, burial practice and associated artifact assemblage.

Its investigation led to a comprehensive study of the discovery, published in 2010 as "Arch Lake Woman: Physical Anthropology and Geoarchaeology." The book's authors dedicated their study to Dr. F. Earl Green and acknowledged his important work in the Clovis culture of eastern New Mexico and West Texas.



Provided by Dolores Mosser - The intact skeleton of Arch Lake Woman is estimated as being 10,000 years old.



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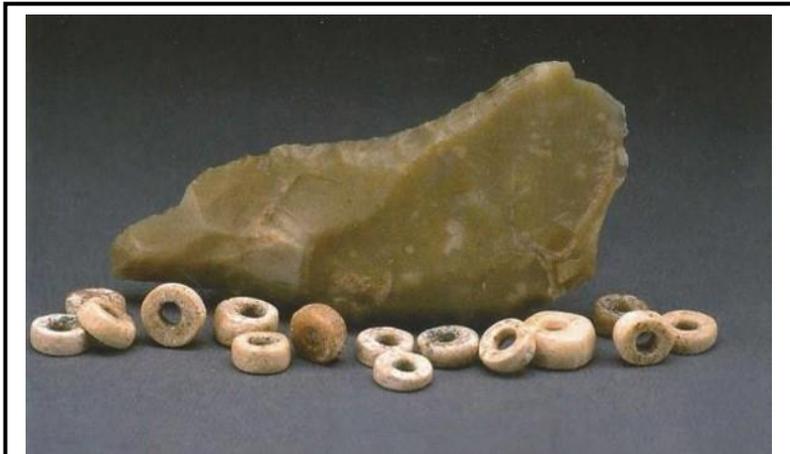
From the geological data dating to 1967, the researchers first examined the burial pit. The people living with Arch Lake Woman, the researchers determined, had dug a grave with vertical walls in sand deposits 3 feet above the original land surface. As time passed three different and millennial-separated phases of sand deposition had covered the gravesite.

Arch Lake Woman was positioned fully prone with a bone tool lying across her ribs. In harder ground surfaces, grave diggers usually placed skeletons in a fetal position.

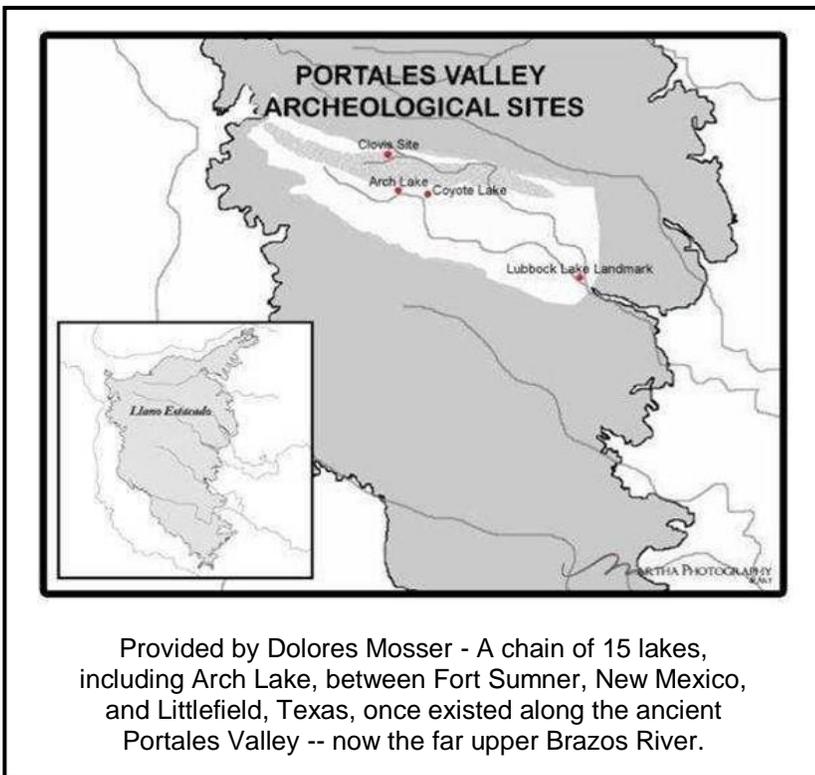
She was five and one-half feet tall. Her skull resembled Native Americans and her teeth were not worn. She ate buffalo meat and plants native to the Texas Panhandle.

A stone knife and bone tool buried with her were typical Paleoamerican utensils. Around her waist was a disintegrated bag that contained pulverized ocher. After 10,000 years, the ocher powder was still vivid red.

She also wore a necklace of 19 drilled beads made from talc, a mineral similar to soapstone. The report placed the closest talc deposits from Arch Lake as Hembrillo Canyon in New Mexico, near Van Horn, Texas, or in the Llano uplift in central Texas.



Provided by Dolores Mosser - Stone scraping tools and talc necklace beads were buried with Arch Lake Woman.



Provided by Dolores Mosser - A chain of 15 lakes, including Arch Lake, between Fort Sumner, New Mexico, and Littlefield, Texas, once existed along the ancient Portales Valley -- now the far upper Brazos River.

Obviously, Arch Lake Woman's people traded with Native American groups far from their Llano Estacado homeland.

Similarities to other recovered ancient North Americans included her jewelry, tools, and the red ocher. Her robust arms and leg bones showed she worked hides and carried heavy loads. Her feet suggested she traveled only short distances.

Despite the new information about Arch Lake Woman, researchers were unable to determine cause of death. As to her cultural associations, they pointed to a 10,000-year old Plainview-style camp site located 32 miles northwest of Arch Lake as a possible home.

Arch Lake Woman, once of little scholarly interest, now holds a stellar place in the world of human science as one of the oldest Paleoamericans ever found.



LAS Find of the Month, July 2016:

Members can bring an artifact to be entered into the competition at the monthly meeting, which will be judged based on the following rules:

1. Must be a member of LAS in good standing.
2. The artifact must be a personal find.
3. It must have been found within the specified time frame, i.e., within the month prior to the meeting.
4. The artifact doesn't have to be a Colorado find—all that matters is that it was found in the last month.

The Find of the Month for July 2016 was made by Shane Skutvik.

Type: Cody Knife

Material: Semi-translucent quartzite

Location: Morgan County, Colorado

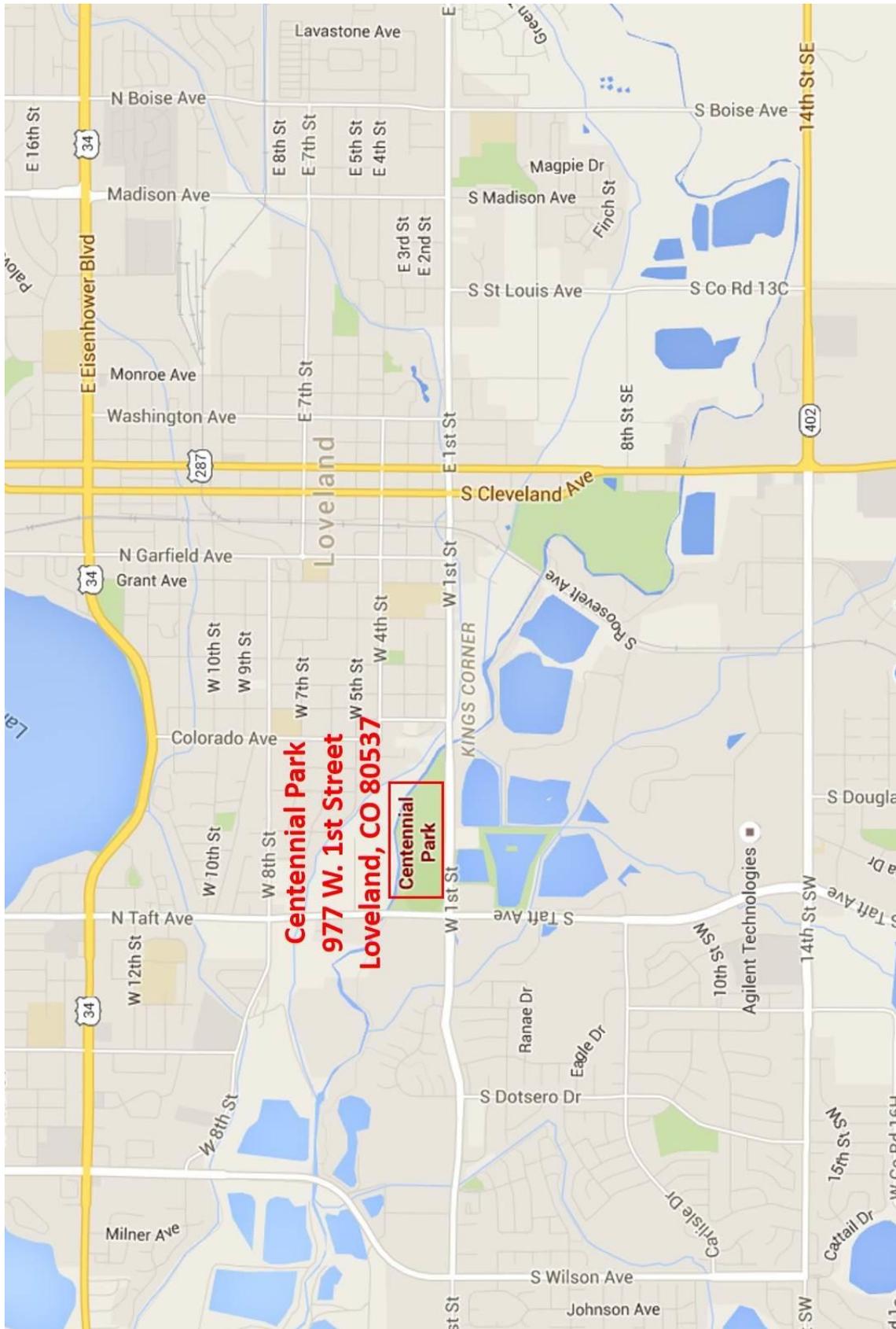


LAS News and Upcoming Events:

- August 2, 2016 August meeting. Program: Annual picnic/potluck at Centennial Park in Loveland, Colorado. The park is located at the Northeast corner of 1st Street and Taft Avenue. A map is attached. The picnic will start at 6:00 p.m. and go until 9:00 p.m. Come whenever you can. Please bring your own service and a dish to share.
- August 11-14, 2016 Annual Buena Vista, Colorado Gem & Mineral Show at the Buena Vista "City" Rodeo Grounds. This is the largest outdoor Gem & Mineral Show in the State of Colorado with over 200 dealers. There are also Native American relics, artifacts, fossils, historic memorabilia, books, beads, jewelry, lapidary equipment, tools, and lots of friendly folk.
- September 3-5, 2016 Loveland Archaeological Society Labor Day Weekend field trip to the Harris Ranch at Bosler, Wyoming. A map and instructions will be included in the August newsletter.
- September 6, 2016 September meeting. Program: Rich Savino will give a presentation on the excavation of the Kaplan-Hoover site near Windsor with video footage. Make sure you're there to hear about this important Northern Colorado archaeological site.
- September 24 & 25, 2016 2015 Loveland Stone Age Fair. More information will be provided in the coming months. Put the dates on your calendar, and plan now to attend!
- October 4, 2016 October meeting. Program: Plan your presentation and give me a call today!



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- Sponsor of the Annual Loveland Stone Age Fair -
www.stoneagefair.com