



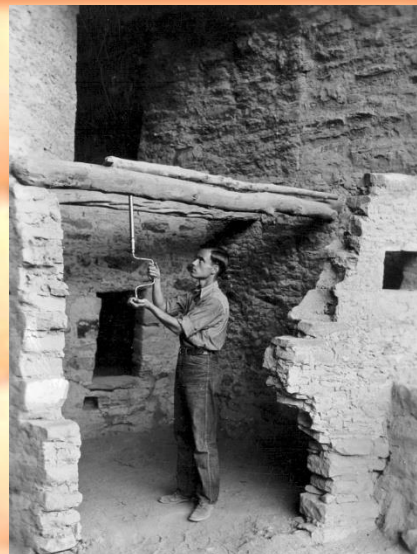
Old Pueblo Archaeology Center's "Third Thursday Food for Thought" Series

An Embarrassment of Riches: Tree-Ring Dating and the (Mis-)Interpretation of Southwestern Archaeology

Free Zoom Presentation by Archaeologist Stephen E. Nash, PhD

In December 1929, *National Geographic Magazine* published new tree-ring dates for a small, select group of archaeological sites in the American Southwest. For the first time ever, archaeologists then knew how old those sites actually were, but the annually resolved dates often proved difficult to interpret when compared to other archaeological data, which cannot be as finely resolved with respect to dating and time.

Ever since then, however, southwestern archaeologists have been blessed with an incredibly rich, and still growing, database of calendar-year tree-ring dates to guide their analyses. Unfortunately, our interpretations often play fast and loose with the underlying data, and so may not be as reasonable as we might think.



Harry T. Getty collecting a tree-ring sample in 1934



Tree-ring core from Painted Kiva House

In this presentation, Dr. Stephen E. Nash will examine the history of southwestern archaeological tree-ring dating to explore what might, or might not, be reasonable to infer from large sets of tree-ring dates. In so doing, he will weave a tapestry of wonderful historical vignettes from the activities of fascinating archaeologists and other scientists, many of whom were based at the University of Arizona. These include archaeologists Emil Walter Hauray, Lyndon Lane Hargrave, and Earl Morris, and the founder of archaeological tree-ring dating, astronomer Dr. Andrew Ellicott Douglass.

More on next page.

Thursday August 15, 2024

7 pm Mountain Standard Time*

* Same as Pacific Daylight Time

To register for the Zoom program go to

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gmON_cDdS2WmPfniPv2Gsg.

For more information contact Old Pueblo at info@oldpueblo.org or 520-798-1201.

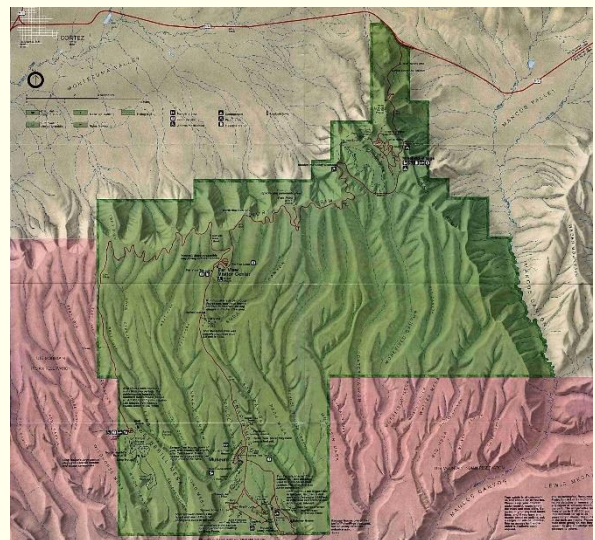
An Embarrassment of Riches . . .

This month's Third Thursday presenter is archaeologist Stephen E. Nash, PhD

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center welcomes Dr. Nash, who in January of this year took over from Bill Doelle as President and CEO of the Archaeology Southwest non-profit organization in Tucson. Dr. Nash earned his PhD at the University of Arizona in 1997. Since then he worked at The Field Museum in Chicago from 1997 to 2006 and the Denver Museum of Nature & Science from 2006 to 2023.

Dr. Nash is an expert on the history of archaeological tree-ring dating, the history of museums, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and the subject of voluntary returns from museums to source communities. He has written or edited nine books on a wide range of topics and has published nearly three dozen peer-reviewed articles. He also has authored more than 60 "Curiosities" columns for the on-line anthropology magazine *SAPIENS.org*.

In 2024 the Society for American Archaeology awarded Dr. Nash its Curation and Collections Management Award in recognition of a quarter-century's work on orphaned and legacy museum collections.



Nash in the field at Mesa Verde National Park (map), June 2007, with National Park Service employee Kara Naber

Page 1 tree-ring background photo from www.hobbitthouseinc.com



Other photos courtesy of Dr. Nash