



## *From the Director, Jason Toohey*

Greetings from the George C. Frison Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. I am very happy to report that the Institute has had another very productive and influential year! Due to the generosity of donors to the institute, our endowment has continued to grow throughout the past year allowing us to award a total of 23 grants supporting anthropological, archaeological, and laboratory-based research. This work is traditionally focused in the American West, but in the past year we also supported research in Peru, Chile, and Croatia!

I am very passionate about the role of the Frison Institute! Funding for research, particularly at the undergraduate and graduate levels, is competitive and often hard to come by. Many universities, in fact, do not offer much internal funding at all to students. What makes the Frison Institute so critical and special is the fact that supporting early stage research is a primary part of our mission. Through a series of grant competitions each year, we are able

to help research projects get off the ground that might not otherwise have a chance.

This critical work is only possible through the endowment which is funded by donors like yourselves. Knowing how interested you are in our work, I would like to invite you to continue to support the Institute and all the good that it does with a donation this season. Thank you so much and I am excited to see where we will go in the year to come!

Finally, beginning in the Fall of 2020, the annual Frison Institute Bulletin will be available digitally in PDF format in addition to paper copy. If you would like to receive future Bulletins by email, please send a request to Keith Kanbe ([kanbe@uwyo.edu](mailto:kanbe@uwyo.edu)) or Jason Toohey ([jtoohey2@uwyo.edu](mailto:jtoohey2@uwyo.edu)) with a current email. If you would like to continue receiving a paper copy of the Bulletin, there is no need to email and you can expect the next one in the late Fall of 2020.

### **OSL Dating at Three Dinwoody Bison Jump Drivelines (48FR7682)**

With generous support from the **William and Gloria Tyrrell Fund**, **Morgan Robins**, an advanced undergraduate at UW engaged in Optical Stimulated Luminescence dating (OSL) at the Dinwoody Bison Jump complex, locates at 11,000 feet in the Wind River Range. The site complex consists of a 1.6km system of three converging drivelines with classic doglegs, as well as domestic sectors and lithic scatters.



Collection of sample for OSL dating.



Sample collection site.

*Until now, the age of the jump has been unknown. In September 2018, in partnership with the Utah State University optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) lab and with funding from the Frison Institute, soil samples from several stacked stone cairns and hunting blinds in the three drivelines were collected. Recent results place the jump firmly in the Late Prehistoric period and support hypotheses of construction and maintenance sequences during use and re-use of the jump complex. OSL evidence indicates that the jump was last used shortly before the reservation period in the Wind River Valley below.*

## ***INSTITUTE FUNDED RESEARCH STUDENT & FACULTY PROJECTS***

The Frison Institute supported the research of 13 students in 2018-2019 including **Alex Craib**, **Alex Garcia-Putnam**, **Jennifer Lemminger**, **Jessica Droke**, **Ken Hladeck**, **Kenneth Humphrey**, **Morgan Robins**, **Phineas Kelly**, **Sarah Allaun**, **Scott Dersam**, and **Wesley Vanosdall** of the University of Wyoming, as well as **Trevor Aguirre** (Colorado State University) and **Ethan Ryan** (University of Montana). Also supported was the research of senior archaeologists including **Todd Surovell** of the University of Wyoming, **Laura Scheiber** of Indiana University, and **Todd Guenther** of Central Wyoming College.

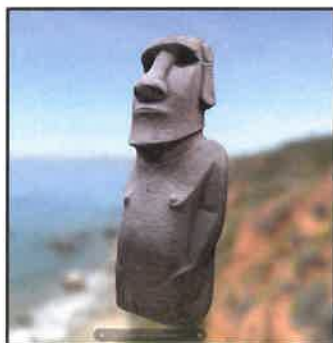
### ***JUNE FRISON FUND***



**Architecture at the Orongo site, Rapa Nui.**

UW graduate student **Phineas Kelly** received generous funding for his project, The Rapa Nui Project: Cultural and Linguistic Anthropology – Indigenous Cultural Revitalization, from the June Frison Fund.

Material culture and linguistic heritage on Rapa Nui (Easter Island) are increasingly endangered by tourism and a lack of funding. Kelly's research seeks to address these looming losses in cultural heritage on Rapa Nui through the use of novel educational and recording technologies. Through the collection of laser scanned 3D point maps of archaeological sites and audio and video recordings of cultural and linguistic data on Easter Island, Chile, his research will explore how a new type of educational application can be created with the data from this field work for place-based language and cultural revitalization on Easter Island. This focus on high resolution recording of both material culture and linguistic data is relatively novel in archaeology today and stands to make an important contribution.



Example of a 3-dimensional scan of a Moai statue.

### ***PATRICK MULLEN FUND, JUNE FRISON FUND, AND TYRRELL FUND***



**Paint Rock Canyon.**

UW Ph.D. student **Alex Craib** received funding from the June Frison, Patrick Ryan, and Tyrrell Funds to support his ongoing graduate work with **Dr. Robert Kelly** at the well stratified Alm Rockshelter located at the mouth of Paint Rock Canyon, Bighorn Mountains, with almost 12,000 years of continual occupation (Late Paleoindian-Historic). Over the course of five field seasons, three test units and 6 1x1 m units were excavated, uncovering a vast assemblage of faunal and lithic materials. Primary lithic formations present are Phosphoria, Madison, and Amsden cherts and Morrison quartzites. The lithic assemblage is dominated by these locally available raw materials pre-10,000 BP, and sees an increased use of nonlocal materials from 10,000-5,000 BP, with a return to locally available materials after 5,000 BP. While the assemblage is dominated by local materials, there are some materials that are considered exotic (sourced from greater than 20km). One of these materials is obsidian, or volcanic glass.

Funds generously provided by the Frison Institute were used to source 25 obsidian artifacts in order to better understand where on the landscape people were travelling from. Results of the sourcing study show that the obsidian was primarily procured from Bear Gulch in Idaho and Obsidian Cliff in Yellowstone, WY. The movement of this material demonstrates that groups were either travelling across the Bighorn Basin and procuring obsidian or that they were in contact with and possibly traded with groups who resided in these obsidian rich areas.



**Obsidian artifacts from Alm.**



## FEATURED PROJECT: THE RED BUTTES SITES



*U.W. field school students excavating the Harold Bergman Site, the major prehistoric component of the Buttes Sites.*

*By Jason Toohey, Todd Surovell, and Alexandra Kelly*

In the early summer of 2019, UW professors, Todd Surovell, Alexandra Kelly, and Jason Toohey directed an archaeological field school at the Red Buttes south of Laramie, providing students the opportunity to conduct investigations in both prehistoric and historic contexts.

Field school students working on the prehistoric resources at Red Buttes learned three skills important to the early stages of investigation of any archaeological locality— surface survey, augering, and test excavation. Though much of the Red Buttes property has not been systematically surveyed, we identified seven archaeological sites in addition to 23 isolates scattered over 95 acres. The most common artifacts we encountered after flakes were projectile points and endscrapers. Diagnostics appeared to span the prehistoric era.

The focus of our excavations was a large site associated with springs. We named this locality the Harold Bergman site. Dr. Bergman was a former head of the Zoology Department at U.W., and he was the first person to bring our attention to the area. After putting in two transects of auger holes to guide testing, we excavated three test units to bedrock, almost a meter beneath the ground surface. Our test excavations revealed wetland deposits with signs of high water tables, and we



UW student excavating at the Harold Bergman Site.

recovered a modest artifact assemblage composed of flakes, a projectile point, and endscrapers. We also recovered large mammal bone throughout. We currently view the Bergman site as a place to which people repeatedly returned to ambush animals attracted to spring waters.

The historic aspect to our recent work at Red Buttes involved the excavation of a well preserved early 20th century dugout home. Much is known about the lives of people in the late 19th and early 20th century towns of the West, but archaeologists and historians know much less about the lives of those on the plains outside urban areas. Archival research suggests that this home was built in 1917 as part of the 1916 Stockraising Act. Students on this project gained valuable and practical skills related to the survey, mapping, and excavation of historic architectural structures.

Excavation within the 4 by 6 meter structure uncovered a packed soil floor, porcelain furniture fittings, and glass and ceramic artifacts. Excavation outside the door of the dugout revealed a well-built stone staircase. Finally, testing to the southwest of the dugout encountered a feature with remains of a child's toy and additional fine ceramics. Ongoing work at the Buttes is adding to our understanding of the importance of this area and its spring through time.



*Students testing at the Harold Bergman Site.*



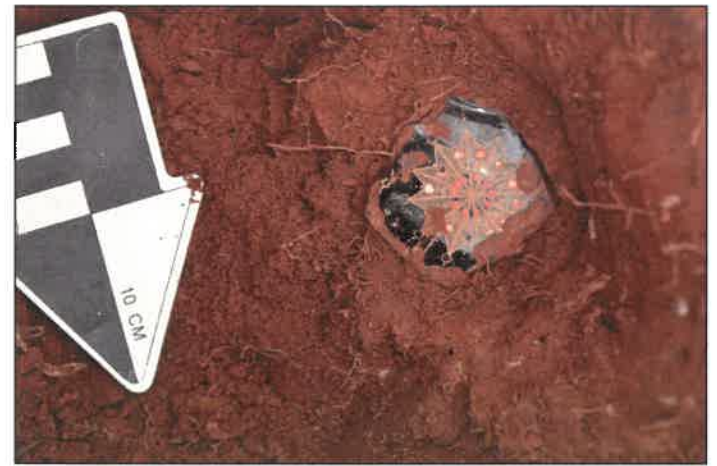
*Entrance to the historic Buttes Dugout, June 2019.*



*Students excavating within the dugout.*



*Excavated stone staircase leading into the dugout.*



*Finely painted ceramic tea kettle fragment from the dugout.*

## ***JUNE FRISON FUND***

UW Ph.D. student **Wesley Vanosdall** is a bioanthropologist/bioarchaeologist investigating the potential negative effects of social inequality and structural violence on individuals' skeletal health through the detailed analysis of a large existing collection. Her analysis of this Euro-American collection is taking place at the University of Iowa-Stanford Collection, of the Office of the Iowa State Archaeologist in Iowa City.



Vanosdall collecting data on a Euro-American individual.

The collection is made up of individuals who were residents of public institutions (for example, county hospitals, almshouses, and asylums, etc.) in Santa Clara County, CA in the early to mid-20th century. Because of their place of death, and the fact that many were not claimed after death, many of these individuals were donated to medical schools for educational purposes, and are today available for academic study.

This large collection is enabling Vanosdall the rare opportunity to study the effects of inequality, social difference, and structural violence (for example that resulting from long-term labor and domestic service). Her initial findings are offering critical clues to the nuances and complexity of various groups' life and death experiences. This work is made more important by the fact that those people that make up the study are just those people that would not have had a voice during their lifetimes. This is a critical and growing emphasis in bioanthropology, its ability at times to give voice to those who were often unheard in life. Vanosdall's research and data collection will continue into the summer of 2020.

## ***FALL LECTURE***

In the Fall of 2019, we welcomed **Dr. John Verano** of Tulane University as our annual Frison Institute speaker. Dr. Verano delivered a fascinating and thought provoking talk entitled "Human Sacrifice in Ancient Peru: New Discoveries and New Questions" at a packed room at the University of Wyoming.



2019 Frison Institute speaker Dr. John Verano

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