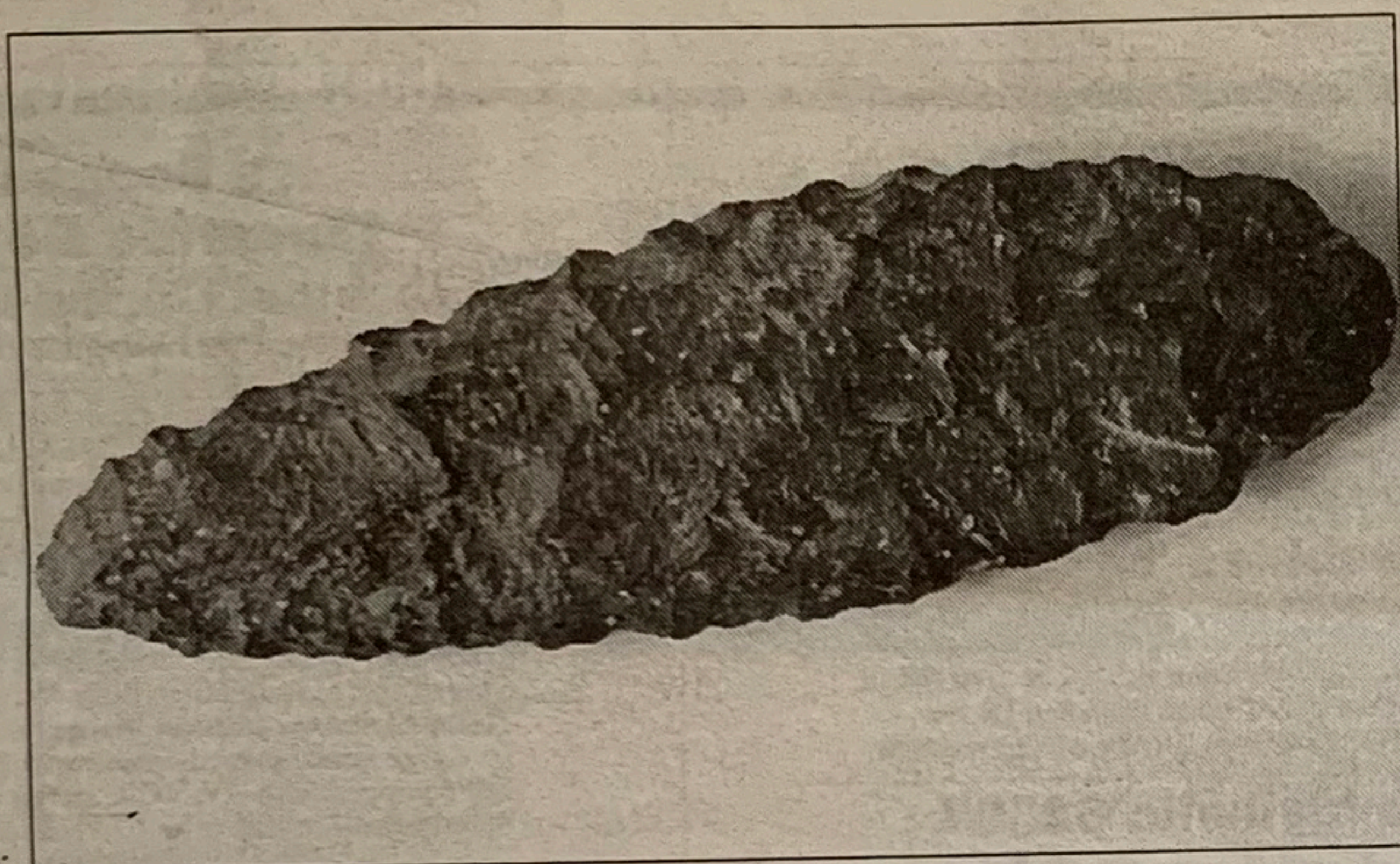


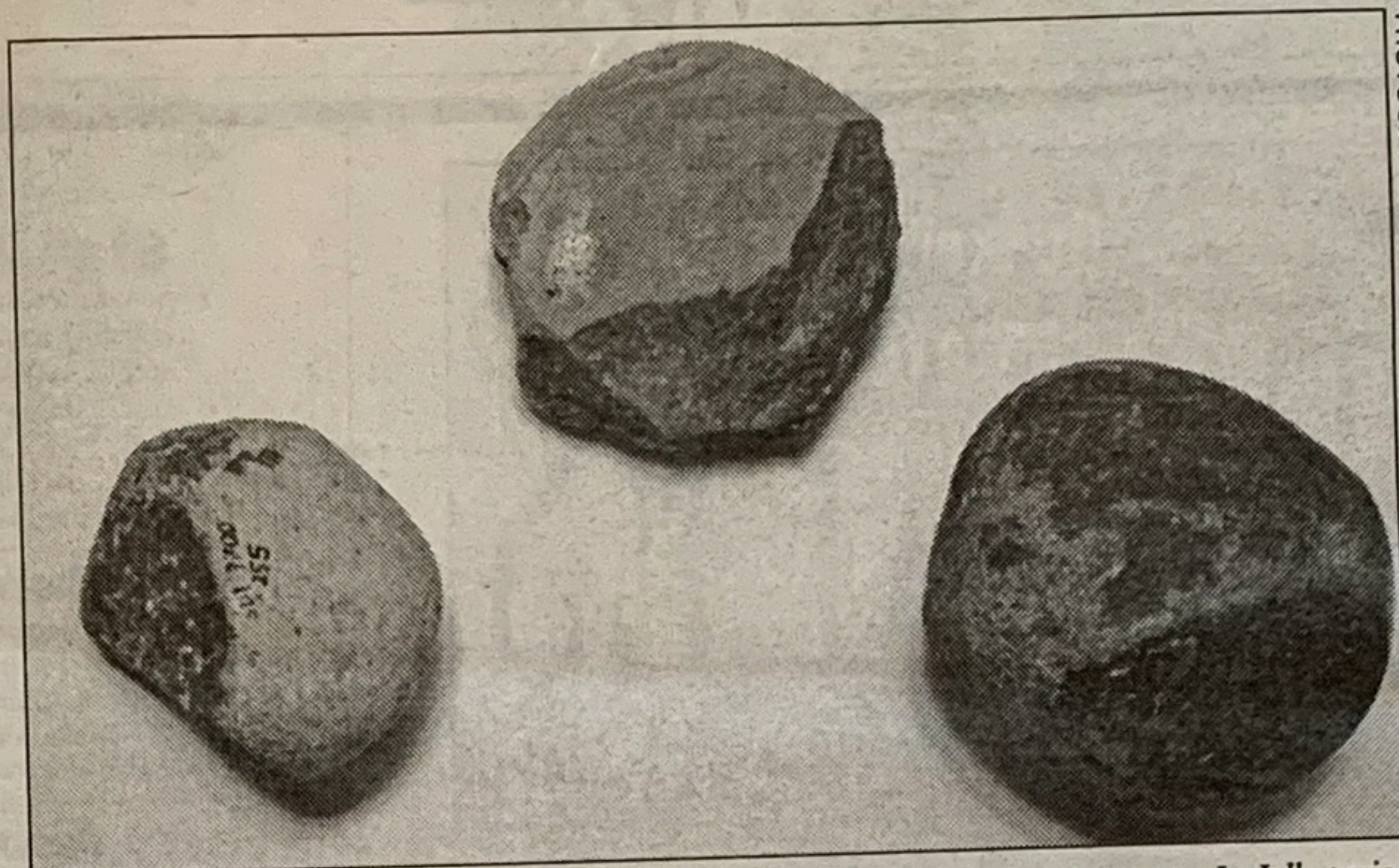
Calendar

Too Much History

There Are More Than 15,400 Archaeological Sites in San Diego



Spearpoint from Escondido area, San Dieguito period

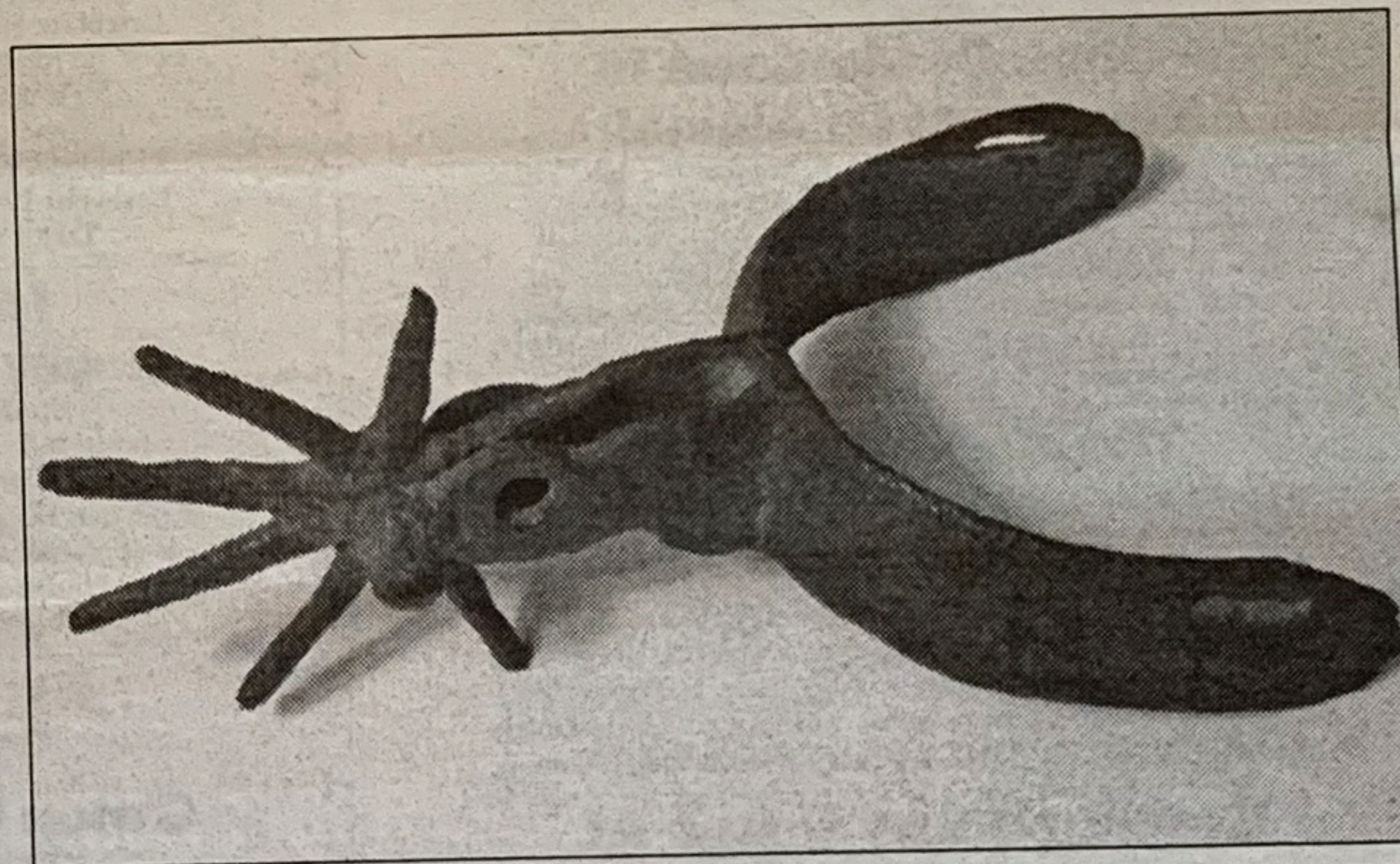


Hammer stones, La Jolla period

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE ALLEN



Chamber pot, late 1800s



Hand-forged stirrup, Californio period, late 1800s

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LOCAL EVENTS

Any kid in a canyon around here" may find a prehistoric stone tool — a 10,000-year-old hammer, a knife, a chopper, or a scraper. And that's the trouble, says Cindy Stankowski, director of the San Diego Archaeological Center. "It wasn't too long ago that a Boy Scout could earn

a badge for collecting Indian arrowheads." Now it's illegal to remove artifacts from state, federal, or Native American land.

Legislation also prevents developers from "interrupting" cultural material. "Before you put a shovel to the earth, an assessment must be done on the property. If it looks like you're going to have a negative effect, you're going to have to 'mitigate' it."

For years, "mitigation" meant simply digging up. The government neglected to say what should be done with the material that was presumably

meant to benefit the public. "But if they just put the stuff in boxes and nobody ever looked at it again, how was that beneficial?"

Today, the "curation crisis" is recognized. "People said, 'This is a national disgrace. This is a bad thing.'" And attempts are being made to rectify it.

About two years ago, the private, nonprofit San Diego center was established to collect the boxes, bags, and crates of materials from the building companies, public institutions, and government agencies that were warehousing them. "It's a joke in my family that I went from rescuing people to rescuing artifacts," says Stankowski whose earlier career was as one of San Diego's first female paramedics. "But it's really true. It's a shame we didn't think the whole thing through."

"Chaotic" is a word she uses to describe the condition of many collections. "I have one [collection] here that was dug up 30 years ago, and I look at how it was packaged, and say to

myself, 'Oh, my God! What were they thinking?' But they were doing what was considered a good job for the time."

Part of the difficulty faced by Stankowski and others is the sheer quantity of material. California's laws are even more far-reaching than many people suppose. They protect not only ancient relics but items from the Mission era and beyond. Indeed, anything 50 years or older is considered worthy of preservation. "Right now, the Cold War-era installations, buildings, and what-have-you are objects needing to be preserved — although I wouldn't want an atomic bomb in here."

"Frankly," she admits, "we have dug up more stuff than we could study in several lifetimes."

More "stuff" is unearthed every day. The center claims there are 15,400 recorded archaeological sites in the county. Who counted them? "Ninety-nine percent of the finds are development-driven," Stankowski estimates. And while she hates to spend time on the freeways that developments

spawn, she says "the good news is that when sites are excavated and artifacts come here, we can share them with the public."

Beyond a general mention of Otay Mesa and Table Mountain, exactly where these sites are Stankowski will not reveal. She hesitates because of what's known as "pot hunting." "It's hard for us to provide information" without alerting those who would pot hunt — trade illegally in antiquities.

She will say sites "can be as big as a whole prehistoric village or as small as a lithic scatter, where someone has noticed stone flakes on the ground that may indicate more material below."

She also says there are sites inside the city limits. "When they start digging for the ballpark, they're going to find a ton of stuff," she predicts. "We know the East Village was one big prehistoric site. But historical buildings have also come and gone there. So I think we're going to find a lot of evidence about Old Chinatown, the Portuguese who lived there, and other ethnic groups, too."

Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

A new exhibit at the center chronicles "the lifeways" of all the known people who have ever made San Diego their home. The "Wall of Time" explains how objects become part of the archaeological record. For kids there are "pretend artifacts" to handle and identify. They are not allowed to take them home. Instead, they are asked to place them on the "Wall of Time" in their

proper chronological layer.

What kids can keep is their "official" written reports. Each has a "sermon" on the verso about the evils of pot hunting.

"It's easy to awaken the treasure hunter in anybody," Stankowski concedes. "But we tell kids that something that goes into a pocket may be lost to study forever, and it may have been the key piece to understanding."

— Jeanne Schinto

"Layers of Time: The Archaeological Record of San Diego"
On view through August

San Diego Archaeological Center
334 Eleventh Avenue
(11th & J Streets)
Downtown
Hours: Monday to Friday,
9-4;
Saturdays (starting in
June), 9-3
Free
Info: 619-239-1868

EVENTS LISTINGS

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact

phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER EVENTS, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at www.SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

BAJA

Mainly Mozart Time Is Here! The 12th annual Mainly Mozart Festival focuses on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, composers who influenced him, and those who were inspired by him. The series commences with orchestral music by Mozart, Vivaldi, and Bach at 8 p.m. tonight, Thursday, June 1, at the Catedral de Guadalupe (at Calle Segunda and Niños Heroes). The program repeats on Friday and Saturday, June 2 and 3, at 8 p.m. each night, at Saint Paul's

Cathedral (2728 Sixth Avenue, at Fifth and Nutmeg).

Preconcert lectures are given one hour prior to each U.S. performance. Tickets range from \$18 to \$42 for concerts in the U.S. and from \$12 to \$25 in Baja California. For tickets and information, call 619-239-0100. (TIJUANA, MIDTOWN)

Where the Dirt Meets the Pavement, it's where round three of the Tecate Score Baja 500 Desert Race ends on Saturday, June 3. Entries from ten U.S. states, Japan, and Mexico will roll over the 440.6-mile loop course, finishing on Avenida Ruiz in Ensenada. Racers will compete in 23 classes for cars, trucks, motorcycles, and ATVs, beginning at 6 a.m. in front of the Riviera Convention Center. For more information, call 818-225-8402. Admission is free for spectators. (ENSENADA)

Springtime on the Beach, the 15th annual Festival de Primavera "on the

beach run" — with 5k, 10k, 5k walk, and 1-mile fun run and walk — is slated for Saturday, June 3, starting at 8 a.m., at Rodriguez Park (one-half mile north of the Rosarito Beach Hotel, and one-half mile south of the Quinta del Mar hotel). For details, call 714-841-5417. (ROSARITO BEACH)

Pop Music from Spain is promised when Miguel Bose and Ana Torroja perform at the Monumental Bullring by the Sea at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 3. For tickets and other information, call 011-52-66-83-2938. (PLAYAS DE TIJUANA)

Spikes, Sun, and Fun, Week Two, the Rosarito Open 2000 beach volleyball tournament continues through June 4 in Rosarito Beach. The top 32 world-ranked teams are competing with teams from 40 countries for the prize money. Qualification tournaments continue on Thursday, main draw tournaments are scheduled on Friday and Satur-

GETAWAYS

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DESERTS

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