

UC Merced

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology

Title

Allika Ruby (1969–2017)

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3rg5c4cw>

Journal

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 38(1)

ISSN

0191-3557

Author

Gilreath, Amy J.

Publication Date

2018

Peer reviewed

IN MEMORIAM

Allika Ruby (1969–2017)

AMY J. GILREATH

Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., Davis

IN THE EARLY HOURS OF OCTOBER 25, 2017, cancer claimed the life of Allika Ruby. She passed away peacefully at her home in Winters, California. She was only 48. She is survived by her husband of 15 years, Richard (Rick) T. Fitzgerald, Jr., and their daughter, Calla Rochelle Ruby. She is also survived by her parents, Richard M. Ruby and Jacqelen Ruben of Woodland Hills, California, and her sister, Keturah, of Temecula, California. She leaves behind many loving friends and colleagues from her productive, 25-year career, the last 20 years of which were spent at Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., in Davis, California.

Allika was born March 2, 1969, in Norristown, Pennsylvania, but grew up in the suburban southern California community of Woodland Hills. She attended Serrania Avenue Grade School, then Parkman Junior High, and graduated from Grover Cleveland magnet high school in 1986. She participated in an early 1980s desegregation plan designed to alleviate the harms of racial isolation. She studied prehistoric archaeology at U.C. Santa Cruz and U.C. Davis, where she earned a B.A. (1999) and a M.A. degree (2005), respectively.

She was that enviable amalgam of an accomplished field/dirt archaeologist, an articulate and scholarly writer, and a trustworthy colleague. When not advancing her career as a California and Great Basin archaeologist, she was, more than likely, traveling the globe with her family and friends to archaeological hotspots and UNESCO World Heritage destinations, somehow making the time to shoehorn in field work in Bulgaria and Peru.

That sliver of time when prehistory and history bump together was of enduring interest to Allika. In the early 1990s, as an undergraduate, she was a docent at Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Historic Park, as well as a field-school participant in the University of Nevada-Reno's historic archaeology Shermantown



Photograph courtesy of Jerry Doty.

project. In the late 1990s, she first encountered the early mining-related sites in the Coso Range on NAWA China Lake (Hildebrandt and Ruby 1999; Ruby 1999), a topic and a landscape that she returned to time and again (e.g., Hildebrandt and Ruby 2004, 2006; Ruby 2005, 2007; Ruby and Hildebrandt 2008). Her broad knowledge of California's contact-period archaeological record is demonstrated in Tushingam and Ruby (2008), a widely-cited archaeological encyclopedia.

For the last decade, she was a Principal Investigator at Far Western, and this is when most of her 50+ substantive reports were written. Allika was an outspoken, effective lobbyist, especially regarding her preference for archaeological projects in Joshua tree- and pinyon-covered settings of the Mojave Desert; pretty much anywhere in Nevada (see, for example, her chapters “Numic Use of Wooden Pronghorn Enclosures” and “High Rock Country Summary of Findings,” as well as the chapter by Hildebrandt and Ruby “Colonization of Northern Nevada” in Hildebrandt et al. 2016); and along the California coast (e.g., Fitzgerald and Ruby 1997; Ruby 2012). Her most recent publication as lead author—*Salvaging the Past: A Case Study in Archaeological Inquiry*, which is about investigations at CA-SBA-1703 in Goleta—received the California Governor’s Historic Preservation Award in 2017.

Allika was also an outspoken, effective advocate for those who she knew were not getting the opportunities or the accolades that they deserved. She was not one to let a supervisor take undeserved credit for a subordinate’s work, though she was fully cognizant of the risks that might accompany such a confrontation. All of us who had the opportunity to collaborate on projects with Allika, or had the pleasure of working alongside of her, are better for the experience. Those fortunate enough to call her a friend remember her as an independent-minded, articulate promoter of fairness and justice, which was expressed in her ongoing concern for gender, racial, and economic equality.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS OF ALLIKA RUBY

- Fitzgerald, Richard T., Jr., and Allika Ruby
1997 *Archaeological Test Excavations at CA-SCR-117, the Davenport Landing Site for U.S. Abalone, Inc., Davenport, CA*. Garcia and Associates, San Anselmo. Report prepared for U.S. Abalone Inc., Davenport, California.
- Hildebrandt, William R., and Allika Ruby
1999 *Archaeological Survey of the Coso Target Range: Evidence for Prehistoric and Early Historic Use of the Pinyon Zone at Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Inyo County, California*. Report on file at Environmental Project Office, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California.
2004 Archaeological Discovery of Two Wooden Bows from the Coso Range, Inyo County, California. *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 24(2):183–192.
- 2006 Prehistoric Pinyon Exploitation in the Southwestern Great Basin: A View from the Coso Range. *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 26(1):11–31.
- Hildebrandt, William R., Kelly R. McGuire, Jerome King, Allika Ruby, and D. Craig Young
2016 Prehistory of Nevada’s Northern Tier: Archaeological Investigations along the Ruby Pipeline. *American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers* 101. New York City.
- Ruby, Allika
1999 *A Few Pieces of Iron: Archaeological Evidence for 19th Century Charcoal Production in the Coso Mountains*. Unpublished senior thesis. Department of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Cruz.
2005 Itinerant Industry: Nineteenth-Century Charcoal Production in the Coso Mountains. In *Proceedings of the Society for California Archaeology* 18, S. A. Waechter, D. Laylander, and G. G. White, eds. Society for California Archaeology, Chico. (See also related paper presented at the Society for California Archaeology’s 38th Annual Meeting, Riverside.)
2007 *A Section 110 Cultural Resources Inventory and Overview of 4,950 Acres West of the Argus Range and East of Darwin Wash, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Inyo County, California*. Report on file at Environmental Planning and Management Office, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California.
2012 *The Neophyte Indian Village of Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Rio Carmelo: Archaeological Investigations at CA-MNT-188/H, Monterey County, California*. Report on file at Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Sacramento. (See also related paper presented at the Society for California Archaeology’s 47th Annual Meeting, Berkeley).
- Ruby, Allika, and William R. Hildebrandt
2008 *Pinyon East: Archaeological Survey of 2,067 Acres within the Coso Target Range at Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Inyo County*. Report on file at Environmental Planning and Management Office, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California.
- Ruby, Allika, William R. Hildebrandt, and Jay King
2008 The Dynamic Social Landscape of the Coso Pinyon Zone. Paper presented at the 31st Great Basin Anthropological Conference, Portland.
- Ruby, Allika, and Patricia Mikkelsen
2016 *Salvaging the Past: A Case Study in Archaeological Inquiry, CA-SBA-1703, Goleta, California*. Report prepared for Flat Iron West, Inc., San Marcos, California.
- Tushingham, Shannon, and Allika Ruby
2008 Hunter Gatherer People of California. In *Archaeology in America, an Encyclopedia: West Coast and Arctic/Subarctic*, F. P. McManamon, ed., pp. 16–20. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.