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# Memorial to Roy Arnold Salls

(1934 - 1993)



Roy Salls demonstrating flintknapping techniques to students on Santa Catalina Island, 1991.

**THE** archaeological community lost an extraordinary researcher, teacher, and friend with the death of Dr. Roy Arnold Salls in November, 1993. Roy succumbed to leukemia at age 59. His passing saddens a host of archaeology students and professionals throughout California.

Friends and colleagues remember Roy's exceptional energy, professional dedication, and range of talents. Many of these qualities stemmed from his life experiences outside of archaeology, and illustrate how the field can be enriched by the contributions of people from many backgrounds. Before entering the field of archaeology, Roy served for over twenty years

with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), retiring at the rank of lieutenant. He worked as a homicide detective during much of this time. As an archaeologist, Roy sometimes worked two or three days straight on research projects, bringing great physical and intellectual discipline to his work; abilities honed, no doubt, by years of police work.

Even before retiring from the LAPD, Roy evidenced great interest in scientific research, including archaeology. Also an avid scuba diver since the inception of the sport in the 1950s, Roy acquired a keen understanding of marine ecology firsthand. This knowledge provided a foundation for his later doctoral research and expertise in analysis of marine faunal assemblages. While working as a policeman, Roy earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in anthropology from California State University (CSU), Los Angeles, where from 1978 to 1982, he served as editor for the *California Anthropologist*. At the same time, he completed degrees in law and business, served as a docent at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, and worked as a research associate at the Page Museum. This work on paleontological material presaged his specialization in zooarchaeology.

At a time when others might have been contemplating retirement, Roy went on to study at UCLA, earning his Ph.D. in 1988. This work resulted in a dissertation that many consider to be the definitive work to date on prehistoric marine fisheries of southern California. Roy's expertise in faunal analysis, particularly marine species, was recognized worldwide. Roy was in constant demand as a faunal analyst, continuing his research up to the time of his death.

Roy worked on scores of field projects in locales as diverse as California, Arizona, Mexico, and Ecuador. These projects included teaching field schools in archaeology for UCLA

and other institutions. Some of Roy's greatest contributions to field research were in connection with seven field schools and many other research projects on San Clemente Island, first with UCLA and later with CSU Northridge, and the Natural Resources Office of the North Island Naval Air Station. Roy's work with the latter came about after he became the assistant director of the Center for Public Archaeology at CSU Northridge in 1989. Roy was truly the bulwark of many of these field campaigns, serving variously as project director, teacher, laboratory researcher, and trusted counselor.

Roy had an enduring love of museums for the roles they play in educating the public and sustaining professional research. Roy accepted the directorship of the Lompoc Museum in 1991 and occupied that post until his death. During his tenure there, he is credited with bringing "a new level of professionalism" to the museum, reorganizing the museum's collections and setting up exhibits in public places throughout the city. While at the museum, Roy also directed the excavation and reconstruction of the La Purisima Mission in the Santa Ynez Valley. In all of this work, Roy enjoyed close working relationships with Native Americans.

Roy was always mindful of his beginnings as an avocational archaeologist. He found time each year to give public lectures about the importance of archaeology. He taught field and laboratory classes at UCLA and CSU Northridge to avocational archaeologists, where he is remembered with great affection as a friend, teacher, mentor, and world-class storyteller.

At the 1994 annual meeting of the Society for California Archaeology, Roy's wife, Lucy Salls, accepted the Martin A. Baumhoff Award on his behalf. This award was given in recognition of Roy's outstanding contributions to California archaeology in the areas of research and publication.

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#### PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS OF ROY A. SALLS

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