

## **Richard Carrillo (1945 – 2014)**

Richard Carrillo grew up in La Junta, Colorado, surrounded by the history of the Santa Fe Trail and Bent's Old Fort, where he developed a passion for historical archaeology during the mid-1960's. He went on to receive a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Kansas in 1971. He worked for the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, where he first met his mentor, eminent historical archeologist, Stanley South. Following his return to Colorado in 1981, Richard performed historical archeological studies throughout the American West, becoming recognized as one of the foremost regional scholars on the history of southeastern Colorado and the Santa Fe Trail. He founded Cuartelejo HP Associates, Inc. and was owner and principal of the firm until his death.



For many years Richard spearheaded the research and management of the historic site of Boggsville, where he and colleagues conducted numerous archaeological field schools between 1994 and 1998. His research and many publications contributed immeasurably to the documentation and further understanding of the Santa Fe Trail, the settlements associated with it, and the cultural history of southeastern Colorado as a whole. Beyond his scholarly contributions, Richard served as the administrator of the Boggsville Historic Site, which included the duties of maintenance, interpretations, and tour guide.

In 1999 Richard conducted the last of a series of joint archaeological field schools with UCCS, surveying, testing and documenting Bent's New Fort, Fort Wise and Bent Cabin Site and Santa Fe Trail. According to the Boggsville Times (September 1999) "The aim of the 1999 field school was to map Bent's New Fort; map and test excavate at Fort Wise (early Fort Lyon); map and test excavate a possible site that is thought to be the location where William Bent built three cabins that were used for trading while Bent's New Fort was being built. Phil Petersen, of PSP Enterprises and Boggsville Historical Researcher, conducted research on the sites at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. ...".

While the 1999 project may have been the last in this series of archaeological field schools, it was only the beginning of Richard's continued research and documentation of Bent's New Fort on the Santa Fe Trail. Beginning in 2011, Richard began a series of archaeological investigations at Bent's New Fort in collaboration with the site's owners, the State Historical Fund, the National Park Service, Canyons and Plains of Southeast Colorado, the Santa Fe Trail Association, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, and others in the effort to preserve and interpret the privately owned site and make it accessible to the public.

The projects included a comprehensive survey of the site, complete mapping of its features, and test excavations across the site, both within the fort and outside its walls. He conducted an additional archaeological field school, collecting data that lead to knowledge of the complex site and its role on the Santa Fe Trail that had not been previously explored. With the conclusion of his fieldwork, the National Park Service was able to install interpretive signage on the site and the site's owners, the Boy Scouts of America and the Youth Preservation Summit were able to construct walking trails, enabling a new public educational and recreational opportunity on the Santa Fe Trail. Richard addressed a crowd assembled at

a dedication ceremony in October 2013, marking the site's debut to the public. Through his work, Bent's New Fort was literally "put on the map."

Unique to his interests and widely recognized expertise, Richard's research focused on understanding the overlapping uses and occupations of the site, including interactions of members of an array of cultures. His interests in cultural diversity and relationships represented in the archaeological record reflected his understanding and appreciation of the Santa Fe Trail era in southeastern Colorado. The places that influenced Richard since his youth and throughout his career until his untimely death in 2014 – Bent's Old Fort, Boggsville, Bent's New Fort, Fort Lyon, and the Santa Fe Trail itself – embody the cultural diversity that defines the region's history. Author Minette Church, Ph.D., further explores the scholarly implications of Richard's work at Boggsville and Bent's Fort in "The Cultural Context of Commerce: Historical Anthropology along the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail," in *Historical Archaeology through a Western Lens*, Margaret Purser and Mark Warner, eds. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. [American Library Association CHOICE book: top 30 academic titles for 2017.]

Richard authored and co-authored numerous reports and academic papers and was a contributing author of several notable publications. He shared passion for archaeology and historic research with many friends and colleagues, as well as students at several Colorado colleges and universities, regularly teaching classes at Otero Junior College and Lamar Community College. He served on the Colorado Historic Preservation Review Board. As well as on boards and committees for many archaeology and preservation related organizations in the state. His outstanding contributions to the field of archaeology were recognized by the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists, who name Richard a Fellow in 2013, and in 2014 he received the Stephen Hard Award for Archaeology from History Colorado. Despite his many accomplishments and extensive contributions to the literature, he was genuinely humble and modest, never wishing to claim the spotlight and always giving credit and assistance to others. Above all, Richard Carrillo was a gentleman and a scholar, and a legacy of the Santa Fe Trail.

Submitted by LaDonna Hutton