



KENNETH SONG / NEWS-PRESS

Dr. Melissa Chatfield demonstrates the screening method participants will use when digging for artifacts at the Presidio Archaeology Day Camp for ages 11 to 15 at El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park. She is director of education for the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, which is sponsoring the camp for the first time.

By MARILYN MCMAHON
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

Kids ages 11 to 15 in Santa Barbara County will have the chance to dig some dirt at the first Presidio Archaeology Day Camp sponsored by the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation.

The camp from July 13-17 is open to 20 students. Sessions will meet 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. behind the chapel at El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, 123 E. Canon Perdido St. The cost is \$225.

Instructors will be Dr. Melissa Chatfield, Ph.D., director of education for SBTHP, and Michael Imwalle, the archaeologist at SBTHP.

"In the day camp, we will be excavating and doing things that archaeologists do to record information about the artifacts

that we pull out of the ground," said Dr. Chatfield. "This will involve teaching participants some basic principles before launching them into an excavation unit. For example, artifacts from layers of dirt that are deeper in the ground are older than artifacts found in layers closer to the surface. Also, artifact 'styles' change through time (like clothing styles, for instance). Participants will learn how to read a map and draw a map."

Dr. Chatfield, who earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology at the University of Colorado in Boulder and her master's and doctoral degrees in anthropology at UCSB, explained that archaeology is the study of ancient cultures that "usually falls in the anthropology departments in college curricula."

She recalled becoming interested in archaeology when her third-grade social studies

class did a unit on the ancient Maya of Mexico.

"The book showed a picture of skulls that had been unearthed during the excavations, and these skulls were shaped differently. Someone asked if the people had been sick in a way that caused the misshapen skulls. My teacher said no and pointed out that the skulls were shaped oddly on purpose because the Maya thought that flattened foreheads were beautiful.

"The Maya also filed their teeth into odd shapes, which was also supposed to be beautiful. So, understanding that beauty is culturally determined blew my little third-grade mind," said Dr. Chatfield.

Participants in the camp will learn how archaeologists study and interpret clues to reconstruct the history of Santa Barbara.

"At the end of the week, they will have a better understanding

of how information is recovered and maintained so that it can be used to reconstruct the past, especially the location of the fort where the city was founded in 1782 and the later Japanese community," Dr. Chatfield said.

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IF YOU GO

The first Presidio Archaeology Day Camp for youth ages 11 to 15 will meet 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. July 13-17 at El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, 123 E. Canon Perdido St. It is offered by the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, which operates the park. The cost is \$225 and limited to 20 students. For more information, call 965-2004.