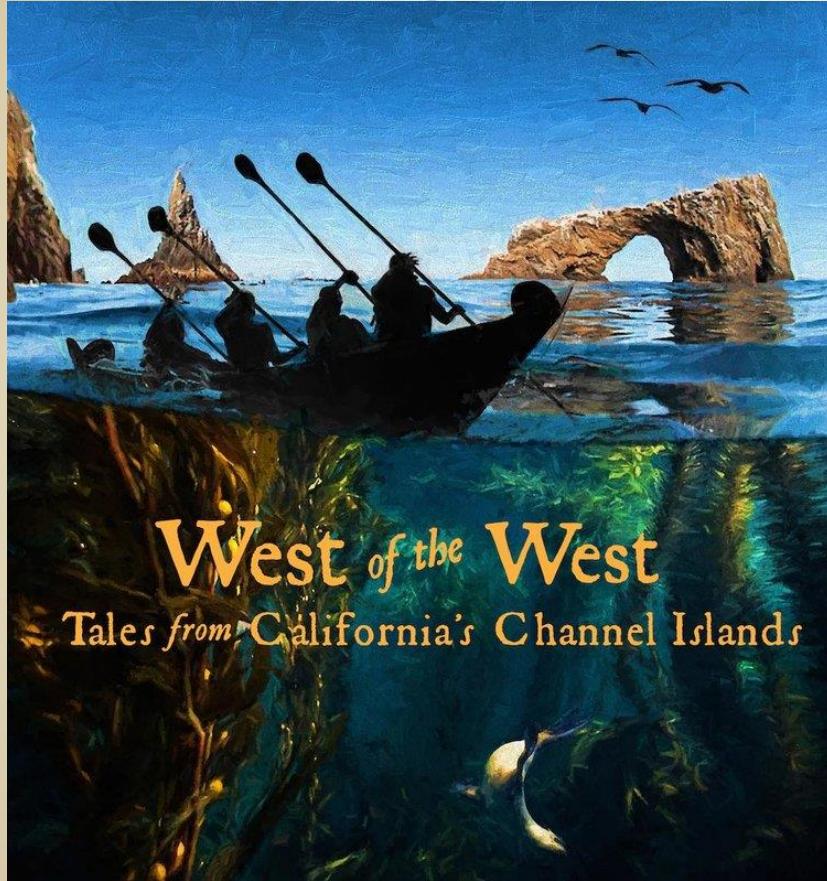
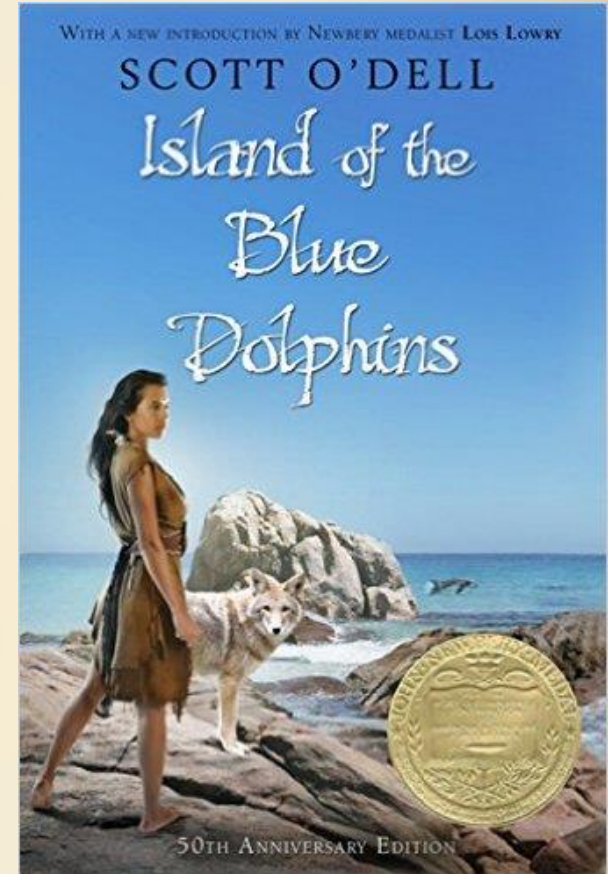


Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands – West of the West



Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands – West of the West

- This presentation was inspired by the 3 hour public television program “***West of the West – Tales from California’s Channel Islands***”. The three episodes first aired in Southern California in May 2016 on KCET-TV.
- The DVD is available for purchase at <http://www.thecifilm.com/>. Several DVDs have been donated to the Los Angeles Public Library. And episodes are available on [Amazon Prime Video](#) for \$0.99 each.
- The first one hour program is ***Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands***. Beginning with the discovery of the oldest human remains ever found in North America – 13,000 year old Arlington Springs Man on Santa Rosa Island – to the true story of the Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island – the inspiration for the best selling children’s book ***Island of the Blue Dolphins***.



Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands – West of the West

- Evidence that people had arrived on Santa Rosa Island 13,000 years ago demonstrates that watercraft were in use along the California coast at that early date.
- This leads to a theory that the earliest peoples to enter the Western Hemisphere may have migrated along the Pacific coast from Siberia and Alaska using boats, along the “**Kelp Highway**”.
- This presentation will begin with a brief introduction, followed by a 44 minute edited version of the first one hour episode, followed by a question & answer session.



The red arrow depicts a theoretical ancient coastal migration route using watercraft along the “**Kelp Highway**”

Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands – West of the West

- Five Tales are told in the first Episode:
 - **“Island Rotation”** – The Geologic formation of the Channel Islands.
 - **“Prehistory and Archaeology”** – The end of the Ice Age, Pygmy Mammoths, migration along the Kelp Highway, and Arlington Springs Man.
 - **“First Contact – the Voyage of Cabrillo”** in 1542 Cabrillo explored the Channel Islands, only 50 years after Columbus’ voyage to the Caribbean Islands, and 21 years after Cortez’s conquest of the Aztec Empire.
 - **“Chumash and Mission History - Once Upon a Time”** – The Portola Expedition in 1769 begins the Mission system and colonization of Alta California (227 years after Cabrillo’s visit)
 - **“The Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island”** – based on the true story of a woman rescued in 1853 who had lived alone on San Nicolas Island for 18 years. The story was the foundation for the classic 1960 children’s novel “Island of the Blue Dolphins”.

Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands – West of the West

- Local Archaeologists that are included in the program are John Johnson and Chester King. Both of them have contributed to local historic projects, especially the 2006 Ethnohistoric Overview for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park.



Dr. John Johnson discussing the geologic and archaeological aspects of the islands



Dr. Chester King discussing a village on Santa Cruz island where the Chumash made stone blades that were used as drills to make beads.

“First Contact – The Voyage of Cabrillo”

- Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo was the first European to navigate the coast of California.
- Cabrillo sailed into San Diego Bay in September 1542, then sailed up the coast to Catalina, San Clemente, and San Miguel Islands. His three ships traveled north past San Francisco, then overwintered on either San Miguel or Santa Rosa island. He died of gangrene on the island in January 1543, and the fleet returned south to Mexico.
- The program makes a point of ***Petroglyphs of Sailing Ships*** representing this “First Contact”, 70 miles inland from San Diego.



Petroglyphs of Sailing Ships
representing “First Contact”
in the Jacumba National Wilderness
(70 miles east of San Diego)



Petroglyphs of a
Masted Vessel and
Anchor
representing
“Early Contact”
At Point Conception

Albert Knight pointed out additional “Early Contact” petroglyphs at Point Conception, just 30 miles north of the Channel Islands. Incised into the red pigment of a Chumash rock shelter.



Petroglyphs of a
Masted Vessel and
Anchor
representing
“Early Contact”
At Point Conception...
Incised into the red
pigment of a Chumash
rock shelter.



The 44 minute edited version of the first one hour episode,

West of the West – Part 1 –

Ancient Peoples of the Channel Islands

is not included in this presentation. The DVD is available for purchase, or can be viewed by borrowing it from the Los Angeles Public Library, or you can buy the episode from [Amazon Prime Video](#) for \$0.99

Sources/Acknowledgements

- “West of the West – Tales from California’s Channel Islands”
- Contributions/Editing from Albert Knight, Anthropologist

Prepared by Ray Vincent, Chatsworth Historical Society, March 2018, revised Apr 2023

