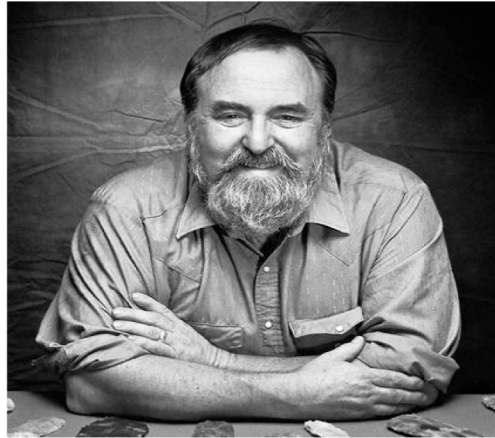


IN MEMORIAM DENNIS J. STANFORD 1943-2019



The following message was sent on April 24, 2019 by Sant Director, Dr. Kirk Johnson, Smithsonian Institution, NMNH concerning the passing of Dennis Stanford.

“It is with great sadness that I write to tell you that our friend and colleague, Dennis Stanford, Curator of

North American Archaeology and Director of the Paleoindian Program, passed away this morning at Georgetown University Hospital after a long illness. Dennis was a beloved member of our community and could always be counted upon for a kind word and a smile. He was also a gifted and passionate archaeologist.

After receiving his PhD from the University of New Mexico, Dennis joined the Department of Anthropology in 1972, launching a 47-year career at the museum. He became one of the best known archaeologists in North America, with a gift for communicating research to both scholarly and public audiences. At a time when Paleoindian archaeology was still in its formative stages, Dennis helped advance the field through his studies of lithic materials, especially the distinctive stone tools known as Clovis points. His early-career fieldwork at the Jones-Miller Bison Kill Site in Colorado was an exceptionally careful excavation and study of a rich bison butchery site that dated to the Folsom period, roughly 10,000 years ago, and helped set the stage for the rest of his career. The last few decades of his research focused on the origins of the first inhabitants of North America, along with human adaptations to the changing environment as the last Ice Age was ending. He conducted fieldwork in Siberia, northern China, the western Arctic, the Rocky Mountains and, most recently, in the Chesapeake Bay region. Early on, his experimental research in using traditional stone tools to butcher an elephant that recently died was covered by National Geographic.

During his career Dennis authored 136 publications, including several books. *Across Atlantic Ice*, which

described his theory for an Atlantic route taken by the earliest Americans, was his most recent book. It was translated into multiple languages and was made into an audiobook.

Dennis was generous in his service to the museum and academic community, serving as chair of the Anthropology department from 1993 to 2000, serving as head of the archaeology division multiple times, hosting 32 fellows and serving on many dissertation committees. However, his substantial research and service accomplishments are almost outstripped by his extraordinary contributions to the archaeology collections. Dennis was the excavator/donor of 20 acquisitions totaling 475,000 objects and was the curator of record when an additional 32 acquisitions joined the collections, representing an additional 673,000 items. He will remain one of the foremost contributors to the North American archaeological collections for decades, if not centuries, to come.

I know all of you join me in sending our deepest sympathies to Dennis' wife Pegi and his family, friends, and colleagues.

Sincerely, Kirk Johnson, Sant Director

(photo and text courtesy of Smithsonian Institution)