

Obituary

Alice "Sue" Marie Frances Haeussler (1932-2009)

Sue Haeussler passed away in November, 2009, at the age of 77, following a lengthy period of illness linked with Alzheimer's disease. Among the many reasons to remember Sue, especially for the readers of this journal, is that she was Editor of *Dental Anthropology* for 10 years (1991-2001), sharing editorship for her last issue with Edward F. Harris. During her tenure she advanced *Dental Anthropology* from being a short newsletter started by DAA founder, M. Yasar Iscan, to a professional journal in *AJPA* style with peer-reviewed articles, book reviews, DAA secretary and treasurer's reports, presidential addresses, and other interesting items. Sue also promoted an international membership, paying out of her own pocket the annual dues for overseas scholars she knew who were in financial need. Whoever reads this necrology will hopefully carry on Sue's helping our needy foreign dental anthropology colleagues.

Born on July 26, 1932, in Philadelphia, the city where in 1954 she earned a B.A. degree in microbiology from the University of Pennsylvania. As an undergraduate she was involved in various extra-curricular activities, notably photographic editor and feature writer for *The Pennsylvania News*, experiences that she expertly applied years later to her meticulous guidance of *Dental Anthropology*.

I first remember Sue being in an introductory anthropology class that I taught in the large auditorium at the 1930s-style Arizona State University agricultural building. The old, Depression-era concrete building had as its only architectural excess, large fronting intaglio portraits of five or six famous scientists. Only one was mostly hidden by a large tree – Charles Darwin. Sue often came up excitedly after class with a ream of questions, especially about the issue of the colonization of the New World, a subject that would eventually become the heart of her massive doctoral dissertation and her grand odyssey in the former USSR.

Later, Sue earned an M.A. in 1985 and a Ph.D. in 1996, both in physical anthropology at our explosively-growing Arizona State University campus in Tempe. Her dissertation data on dental morphology was collected traveling alone during a nine-month trip in the former USSR from December, 1990, to August, 1991. She was formally invited by scholars in various USSR Academy of Science institutes and universities housing archaeologically-derived human dental remains [St. Petersburg, Kiev (the Ukraine), Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Tomsk, Tbilisi (Georgia), Moscow, and Krasnoyarsk], in that order, based on my examination of her more than 1,000 labeled color slides. Her grit and stamina at a mature age (58) can be appreciated by the fact that despite unrelenting back pain, she walked resolutely,



Fig. 1. Sue Haeussler (*left*) and Irkutsk State University archaeologist, German I. Medvedev, at the Siberian village of Mal'ta, south of Lake Baikal, March 31, 1991. The pair are standing on the frozen ground, beneath which (at about two meters depth) is the 21,000 year-old Upper Paleolithic site of the same name. The Mal'ta archaeological site is world famous for its carved ivory female figurines, carved images of birds, stone blade knives, other artifacts, and mammoth bone shelters, all strongly suggestive of a link with European Upper Paleolithic culture. This link is further strengthened by the European-like permanent incisor and molar morphology of a child found "buried" at the site. Sue and the author agree on the European character of the Mal'ta teeth, making Mal'ta the most eastern-known extension of Cro-Magnon culture and people. Photographer uncertain, but probably by Ekaterina Lipnina, Medvedev's archaeologist wife.

with the help of a stout wooden walking stick (Fig. 1), even in the frigid winter months of her Russian odyssey. Her Soviet research was aided by an IREX fellowship and other sources. Her speaking and reading knowledge of Russian was gained with immense help from ASU language professor, Sanford Couch. Sue's institute visits were greatly helped by the Russians in her photos that I know also spoke excellent English, including Serghei A. Arutionov, Moscow; Alexander G. Kozintsev, St. Petersburg; Alexander K. Konopatski, Novosibirsk; and the world renowned dental anthropologist, Alexander A. Zoubov, Moscow.

My own Russian travel and research before and after that of Sue's has taken me to many of the institutes that she visited. Everyone asked how she was, and had very kind words to say about her. She was an excellent ambassador for the United States. Sue made an additional trip to Russia that I know about. She participated in an international conference held in Vladivostok. Hence, she traveled across the totality of Russia, from the Baltic (St. Petersburg), to the Sea of Japan (Vladivostok). I know of few other graduate students, or even seasoned professors, who have undertaken such an odyssey, and everywhere left so much good will.

In addition to her monumental two-volume dissertation (> 750 pages), Sue also published a number of articles, abstracts, and presented posters, all at national and international meetings. A few of her more easily obtained titles are cited in the following bibliography. Her dissertation lists several papers that were waiting publication or were in progress.

As a dental morphology researcher, Sue was a careful observer. Where she and I studied the same dental collections in the USSR, we were concordant in >90% of our ranked scale and discrete observations. The prime rule governing the ASU Dental Anthropology System of trait observation is: "when in doubt, never guess." Sue followed this rule religiously. In Irkutsk, she found an example of Donald Morris' "Uto-Aztecan" premolar. While her finding was only one of two examples ever recognized outside of the New World, there is absolutely no reason to doubt her observation. The gene(s) for this trait was present but very rare in northeastern Asia, but its relatively frequent occurrence in American Indians fits nicely with the views that there was founder's effect in the crossing of Beringia, and more than one Siberian migration to the New World since the trait has never been found in Aleut-Eskimo populations. Sue's thousands of other observations fit well with the hypothesis of a northeast Asian origin of all Native Americans, and not an origin from central Asia or Europe as has been suggested on the basis of some archaeological considerations. I mention these finding to make two points: (1) Very few archaeologists concerned with the colonization of the New World have traveled to Russia to learn what archaeologists have found there. Sue traveled to see the actual teeth of late Pleistocene and Holocene Eurasian

people. And, (2) few if any molecular geneticists (paleo- or modern) read or acknowledge the findings of dental anthropologists. Sue's magnificent dental morphology study in the USSR will hopefully not be overlooked.

As wife of a busy psychiatrist (William B. Haeussler, M.D.), and mother, Sue balanced her professional and personal life with admirable skill, compassion, and charm, always hiding her chronic back pain. Her daily routine at ASU often started at 4:00 a.m. lasting until well after dinnertime. She usually rode the bus from her home in Phoenix to the ASU campus in Tempe. Her time in transit was usually spent editing or reading articles, a number published in Russian.

Peers and associates will greatly miss her, as will her family. At the risk of overlooking someone, Sue's close dental anthropology colleagues of whom I am aware of included Edward F. Harris; G. Richard Scott; Diane E. Hawkey; Donald H. Morris; Shara E. Bailey; C. Loring Brace; Joel D. Irish; Scott Burnett; Christine Lee; Jaime Ulinger; Heather H. Edger; Kenneth A. R. Kennedy; Korri D. Turner; Christian R. Nichol; John R. Lukacs; Alma J. Adler; Lorrie Lincoln-Babb; Edwin F. Crespo; Stephen C. Reichardt; Thelma Dahlberg; Natalya I. Khaldeyeva; Alexander A. Zubov; Simon Hillson; and the late Daris R. Swindler, Albert A. Dahlberg, and Kazuro Hanihara. Sue had close professional colleagues in other branches of anthropology or science who will also miss her. Again, those whom I know of include Serghei A. Arutiumov, Russia; Liu Wu, China; Inna Potieklhim, Ukraine; Triona G. McNamara, Ireland; Yoshitaka Manabe, Japan; and a number of others who Sue met along the way during her USSR odyssey and during her DAA editorship. I mention these names here and earlier, probably inappropriately, but to simply illustrate the fine mesh of Sue's professional and social net. A little of each of these friends of Sue, and myself, have or will die as a result of Sue's passing. I am at a loss of words to say how much my late wife, Jacqueline, and I enjoyed Sue and Bill's presence at various gatherings in our home honoring one or another graduate student's completion of his or her program, and various visits by established scholars. Sue and Bill almost always sat on the large built-in couch by the big front room window. They were older than most of the other guests, but their quiet cheerful presence always gave class and respect to the evening gathering.

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