

# GREAT BASIN GLYPH NOTES

NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION

3RD Quarter 2011

MEMBER INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION ROCK ART ORGANIZATIONS

Volume 10-3

## CONSERVATION AT COURT OF ANTIQUITY: GRAFFITI REMOVAL

In September the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION hired professional archaeologist and rock art specialist Dr Jannie Loubser to inspect graffiti at the Court of Antiquity site and recommend ways to mitigate or camouflage its appearance. Dr Loubser has been treating graffiti at archaeological sites for over 20 years, and has worked throughout the United States, most recently at Red Rock National Conservation Area in Las Vegas Valley.

The Court of Antiquity site contains 15 petroglyph panels that are directly affected by graffiti, as well as 30 areas of pecked or spray paint graffiti separate from rock art. Dr Loubser's work focused on removing painted graffiti that is visually intrusive to the site's setting and the rock art, but not directly superimposed over rock art. This approach was adopted in consultation with the land manager so that the effectiveness of removal or camouflage techniques could be tested before possibly applying them in the future to fragile petroglyphs effected by vandalism.

The graffiti selected for treatment comprised areas of spray painted names and initials that highlight the site's location from a distance and which are visually obtrusive to the general environmental setting. Left untreated, these areas of graffiti could promote new graffiti as well as attract people to the location who otherwise would not be aware that it contains prehistoric rock art.

Dr Loubser notes that graffiti removal is more accurately described as a cosmetic exercise that aims to reduce graffiti's negative visual appearance as any attempt to remove it will generally leave some residue, especially at the microscopic level. The general process of treating vandalism at archaeological sites requires consultation with land managers and stakeholders, recording effected areas, testing and assessment of vandalism to determine the least invasive treatment method, and documenting the methods used during removal or treatment of vandalism. The guiding principal of treating graffiti is to remove it using minimum impact techniques. This makes graffiti removal at archaeological sites a painstaking, slow process.

Assisted by NRAF volunteers Anne Higgins and Cindy King, Dr Loubser removed six large areas of spray and acrylic paint from the site. Two areas of removed graffiti were prominent from the Truckee River and one area of green paint (which during treatment was found to cover large white letters) was prominent from the southern approach to the site. The other areas of graffiti that were treated were visible from rock art concentrations and visually intrusive to the site's overall setting. This work builds on NRAF's partnership with NDOT, Washoe County, and stakeholder groups to rehabilitate the site and its environment through archaeological inventory, weed abatement, and trash removal as part of a broader effort by environmental organizations to restore the natural environment of the Truckee River corridor.



*Panel showing graffiti, before and after mitigation*



# MEADOW LAKE FIELDWORK UPDATE

## Documenting Meadow Lake

Despite being listed on the National Register of Historic Places, prior to August 2011 the Meadow Lake site had only previously been minimally recorded and not to modern professional standards. The Tahoe National Forest partnered with NRAF to fully document the site to assist the Forest Service's culture resource management and public interpretation programs at Meadow Lake.

During late August 2011, NRAF staff and volunteers documented the Meadow Lake Petroglyph site through extensive photography, line drawings, mapping, and archaeological observations. Located at an elevation of approximately 7300 ft in the Sierra Nevada, Meadow Lake is one of the highest rock art sites recorded by NRAF to date. Snow makes the site accessible for only a few months during the year, at the height of summer, and so NRAF was very much at the mercy of the weather when scheduling this project. NRAF staff was very thankful to have a volunteer crew who was willing to be flexible, as well as one willing to brave teeming mosquitoes and exploding Coleman stoves. We thank the Tahoe National Forest for the opportunity to work with them on this project and NRAF volunteers Catherine Camp, Anne Higgins, Janice Hoke, Bill James, Joan Johnson, Dan Joseph, Cindy King, Paula Reynosa, Diane Thelen, and Jeff Thelen.



*NRAF volunteers Jeff Thelen and Bill James (above) and Anne Higgins and Cindy King (below)*

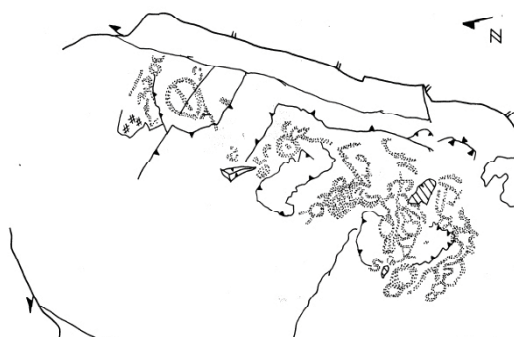


## The Rock Art at Meadow Lake

The site was summarily described by Julian Steward in 1929 before being studied more thoroughly by Louis Payen in the 1960s for a Master's thesis. Payen classed the site's rock art to "Style 7" or "High Sierra Abstract-Representational," a style characterized by its emphasis on circles, lines, wavy lines, and track motifs. Sites that are representative of this style are also characterized by their large, complex designs and the large number of motifs they contain. This style is generally found at high elevation sites (over 5000 feet) in the Sierra Nevada and is traditionally associated with the Martis Culture (ca. 4000-1500 BP).

NRAF recorded 159 petroglyph panels in the area, which are primarily distinguished by their placement on the horizontal surfaces of exposed granite bedrock. Many of the panels extend for several meters, composed of densely arranged abstract design elements dominated by circular forms and complex curvilinear meanders. There were 7 panels represented only by graffiti, as well as several areas containing historic inscriptions that date to the early 1900s.

Due to the low contrast between the granite's patina and exposed natural surface, the site's rock art is difficult to discern except under optimal light conditions. Participants on this project camped only a 10 minute walk from the site, and so were able to access the site at different times of day and under varying light conditions to determine the best time for photographs, field drawings, and IMACS data collection. NRAF volunteers are currently busy processing the field materials collected during the August fieldwork's session, so please contact the Reno office if you would like to participate (775/323/6723).

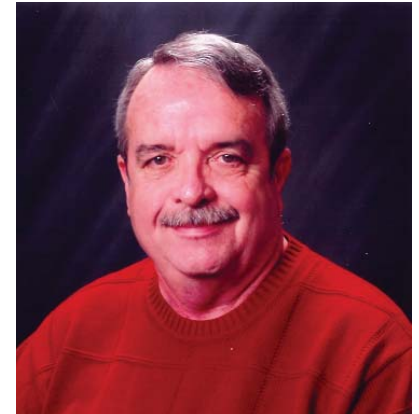


*Inked field drawing of a panel at Meadow Lake*

# From the President

## Our Mission and Our Vision

The mission of the Nevada Rock Art Foundation is and will always be to identify, document, preserve, and protect ancient rock art in Nevada and surrounding states. Over the last ten years we have been very successful at recording rock art and helping land managers with preserving it. We have also promoted rock art in lectures, school involvement, and tours. Over the last few years we have had to devote more time to developing income to sustain the FOUNDATION and continue its mission. While these activities will continue, we can also have a vision of how they should be done and of how we can better do our work with limited resources.



*Pat Barker, President,  
NRAF Board of Directors*

So, after ten years it is time to think about a new vision of where the FOUNDATION and preserving Nevada's world class rock art should be headed. We should all be thinking about a path we can follow over the next five years to be even better at preserving rock art.

It appears as if we have recorded most of the major threatened rock art sites in Nevada. As this vital work draws to a close what should we be recording? The rest of the known sites? Finding new sites in Nevada? Recording sites in other part of the Great Basin? Or . . . ?

So far our public education efforts have focused on informal lectures, an annual Distinguished Lecture, tours, and the informal Art On The Rocks traveling show. Where should we go next? More emphasis on schools? Or, on site interpretation? Or, formalized tours in Nevada? Or, in surrounding states? Or, on Facebook? Or, virtual tours? Or, video? Or . . . ?

As we have recorded sites in Nevada, we have developed an impressive amount of information that needs to be available for interpretation and research. The FOUNDATION is currently developing a database to assist with our research (and which was unveiled at the 2011 Annual Meeting in Eureka, by designer and NRAF member Anne Higgins). What is the best way to share the information? More books? More conferences? More articles? More . . . ?

We have been doing on site interpretation at Lagomarsino and are working on a public interpretation plan for the Court of Antiquity. Should we do more site interpretation? At sites? With guidebooks? In the popular press? On the web? Or . . . ?

All of these opportunities can be explored and most would help us become more effective at our mission. The question is which of them we want to emphasize over the next five years. These choices are best made with a vision of where we want to be in five years. So, the Board and staff will be working to develop this vision, and hopefully you will help us with your comments and suggestions. Help us look to the future while protecting the past.

Finally, we are starting our End-of-Year Appeal, and you can help us build the resources necessary to continue our work. Think about upgrading your membership by one level. Think about increasing your other financial support. The last five years have been spectacular—help in any way you can to make the next five years even better!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Pat Barker', written on a light-colored rectangular background.

# Philanthropy Notes

Careful readers may recall that Board President Pat Barker called for a 'second stream of funding' when he began his tenure three years ago. Since then, the Board Development Committee and NRAF staff have begun and/or intensified grant writing, fund-raising events, membership campaigns, and public outreach, all as important components.

Grants and Contracts: We recently received a \$10,000 grant from the E. L. Cord Foundation. Those funds will be used to improve access to Lagomarsino Petroglyph Site (in association with Storey County) and to design and install an information kiosk at the site. This grant award is very exciting and goes directly to mission related work. On a related note, the nomination for Lagomarsino as a National Historic Landmark is in its final editing stage, and we have been notified that we will receive funding from the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office to create an 'e-book' about Lagomarsino. We will also receive funding from SHPO to develop a website that will feature all rock art sites in Nevada that are open for public visitation. And last, but not least, we received a second award from the John Ben Snow Memorial Trust to continue manuscript preparation for the Lagomarsino volume we want to publish.

We have also been notified of approved funding for more work in Lincoln County next year. NRAF received not one, but two grants from Round 4 of the Lincoln County Archaeological Initiative. One will allow us to do a full recordation of the "Gathering" Petroglyph Site, and the other will result in the creation of educational materials for 5 sites within the White River Narrows District. We have a National Science Foundation grant submitted that would, among other things, allow NRAF to begin survey work in Nye County. Project Petroglyph begins in October, and offers Washoe County 4th graders the opportunity to visit the Grimes Point Petroglyph Site with transportation, activities, and instruction provided by NRAF, and funded by a generous grant from the Robert Z. Hawkins Foundation.

Adventures on the Rocks Fundraising Series: Our second annual major fundraising event will kick off in Las Vegas on October 15th. See page 6 for detailed information!

Member campaigns: Our End-of-Year Appeal will be coming to you in early November. Donations from members and income from fund-raising events keep our doors open. In the past three years, roughly 75% of our expenses are covered by grants and contracts. The remaining 25% is covered by non-project related income (fundraising events, membership dues and gifts, and Giving Circle gifts). We strive always to be fiscally conservative, and as our Treasurer Craig King often says, our financial challenges are not a matter of expense, but of revenue. So, a big thank-you to all of you for the support you give to the FOUNDATION. We all share a passion for the rock art of Nevada and your gifts support the FOUNDATION's ability to protect and preserve this priceless heritage.

*Darla Grayboze*

NRAF's Wish List: We continue to receive inquiries about what types of items NRAF needs to continue our work. Please see below for items that very much help NRAF document and spread awareness about Nevada's rock art.

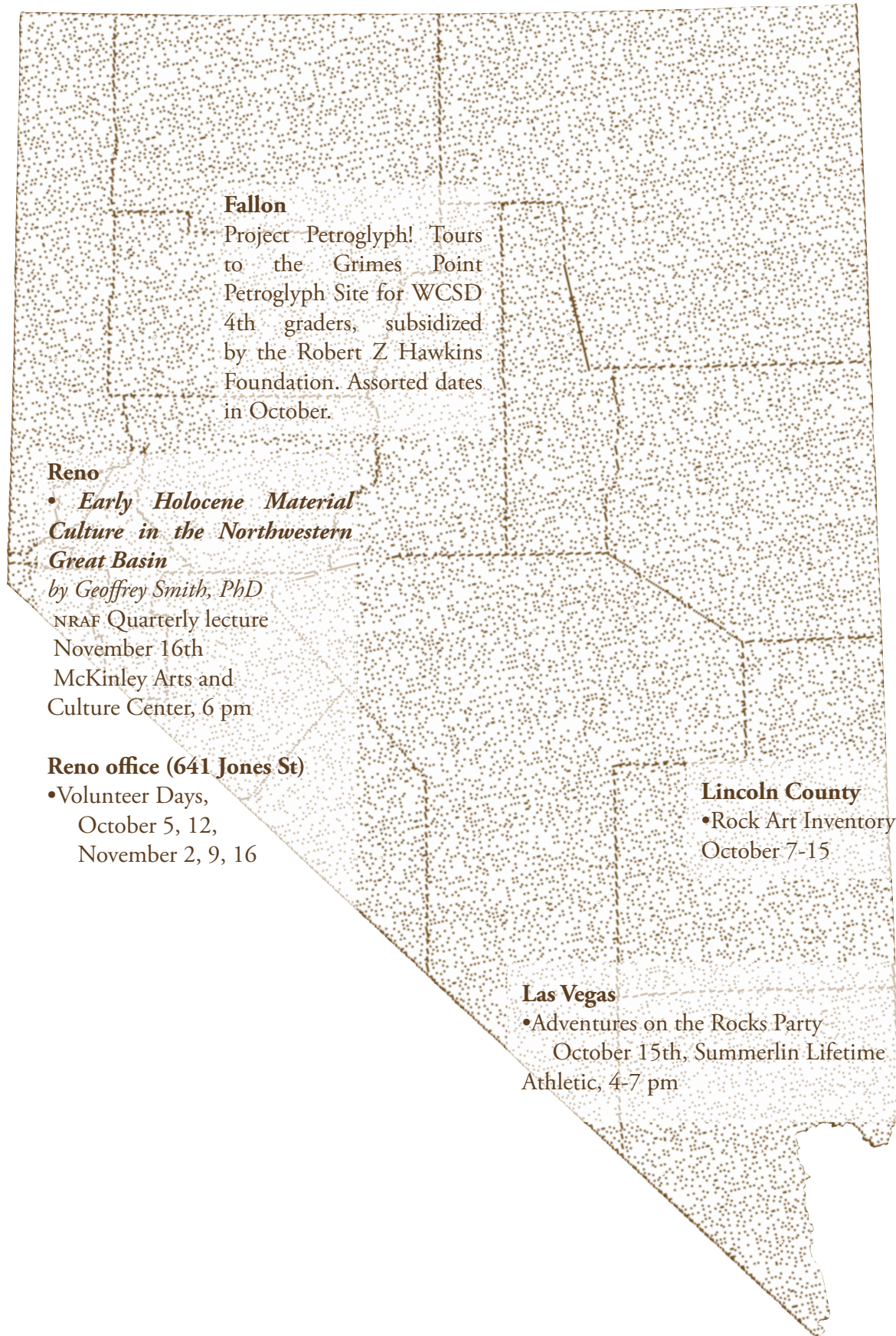
Office Supplies: Office Depot or Home Depot gift cards, paper, ink (HP 74 and 75, HP 88 black and all colors)

Documentation and Public Education Supplies: Paper goods (plates, silverware, cups, napkins, etc): preferably made of recycled stock, USB drives, laptop with wi-fi, new computer equipment (call for specifications), gas gift cards, archival pens: Pigma Micron #1, #3, #5.

Please contact the office at 775-323-6723/702-804-6723 or [khopkinson@nvrockart.org](mailto:khopkinson@nvrockart.org) to arrange pick up or drop off of any items

*Kim Hopkinson*

# Across the State



## Fallon

Project Petroglyph! Tours to the Grimes Point Petroglyph Site for WCSD 4th graders, subsidized by the Robert Z Hawkins Foundation. Assorted dates in October.

## Reno

### • *Early Holocene Material Culture in the Northwestern Great Basin*

by Geoffrey Smith, PhD

NRAF Quarterly lecture  
November 16th  
McKinley Arts and Culture Center, 6 pm

## Reno office (641 Jones St)

- Volunteer Days,  
October 5, 12,  
November 2, 9, 16

## Lincoln County

- Rock Art Inventory Project  
October 7-15

## Las Vegas

- Adventures on the Rocks Party  
October 15th, Summerlin Lifetime Athletic, 4-7 pm



## "ADVENTURES ON THE ROCKS"

GIVING THE PAST A FUTURE!

JOIN US ON OCTOBER 15TH FROM 4-7 PM TO

# PARTY HARDY FOR ROCK ART!

**Imbibe fine wine ▼ Sample chef-created hors-d'oeuvres**

**▼ Enjoy the jazz of Otto Ebring ▼ Win rock art raffle**

**loot ▼ Bid on fantastic memorable experiences ▼ Meet**

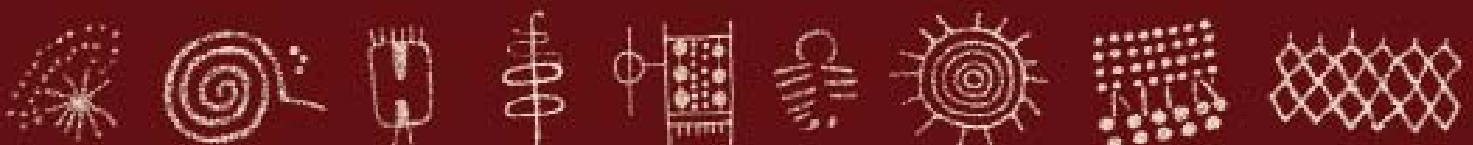
**sterling supporters just like yourself ▼ Have fun ▼ All**

**while giving the rock art's past a future for new generations!**

All this for just \$20! Plus- all attendees are automatically entered to win an NRAF gift basket valued at over \$500!

Poolside at Summerlin Life Time Athletic  
10721 W. Charleston Blvd  
Las Vegas, NV 89135

RSVP now by visiting [adventuresontherocks.eventbrite.com](http://adventuresontherocks.eventbrite.com), and check out our amazing Adventures for auction!



INFO@NVROCKART.ORG

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QUARTERLY LECTURE: NOVEMBER 16TH

# Early Holocene Material Culture in the Northwestern Great Basin

by Geoff Smith, PhD

The northwestern Great Basin contains a rich record of human occupation spanning the past 10,000 years. Multiple lines of evidence including obsidian sourcing, textile design, and rock art style suggest that early groups occupied a discrete geographic area that extended from south-central Oregon in the north to the Black Rock Desert in the south. While we cannot say for certain if these populations were geographically or culturally isolated from other Paleoindian populations in the Great Basin, it is clear that groups living in northwestern Nevada and south-central Oregon shared a common suite of material culture that suggests close ties to one another.

All lectures are free and open to all, but seats are limited so please RSVP at

<http://earlyholoceneculture.eventbrite.com/>

November 16th  
McKinley Arts and Culture Center  
925 Riverside Drive  
Reno, Nevada 89503  
Lecture begins at 6 pm



The Nevada Rock Art Foundation's principal objectives are to document rock art sites at risk and work to conserve and ensure the integrity and future protection of all Nevada Rock Art sites.

The Foundation respects the cultural heritage and traditions of all indigenous people in all its activities.

The Past  
Deserves a Future

## Code of Ethics

*The NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION subscribes to the following code of ethics and its members, as a condition of membership, agree to abide by the standards of conduct stated herein.*

1. NRAF respects the cultural and spiritual significance of rock art sites and shall not engage in any activity that adversely affects site integrity. NRAF members will be respectful at rock art sites—many are regarded as sacred by indigenous peoples and as such will be treated as a valued part of our shared cultural heritage.
2. NRAF members will strictly adhere to all local, state, and national antiquities laws. All research or educational activities taking place at rock art sites shall be subject to appropriate regulations and property access requirements.
3. All rock art recording shall be nondestructive with regard to the rock art itself and any associated archaeological remains which may be present.
4. No artifacts shall be collected unless the work is done as part of a legally constituted program of archaeological survey or excavation and with express permission of the landholder.
5. No excavation shall be conducted unless the work is done as part of a legally constituted excavation project and with the express permission of the landholder. Removal of soil shall not be undertaken at any time for the sole purpose of exposing subsurface rock art.

*Working for the Conservation of Nevada's Rock Art Heritage*

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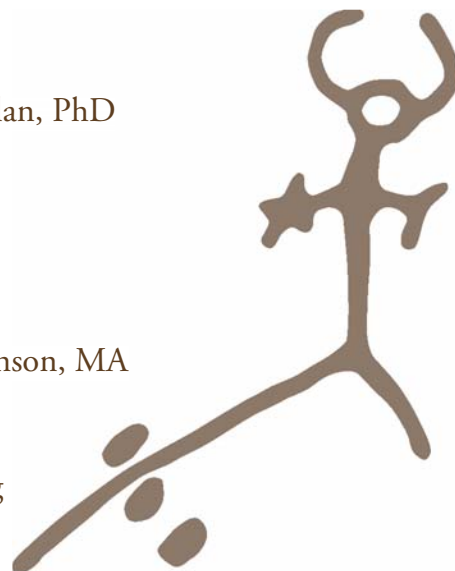
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