



N E V A D A

ROCK ART
FOUNDATION

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 indigenous peoples in all its activities

—
Member International Federation of Rock Art Organizations

***Our Past
Deserves a Future***

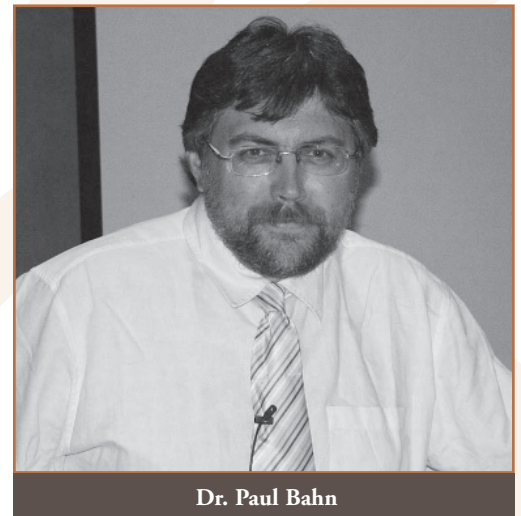


GREAT BASIN GLYPH NOTES

Paul Bahn Lectures a Great Success

In October 2007 NRAF hosted two lectures by Dr Paul Bahn, one of the world's leading experts on Palaeolithic cave art. This event was made possible with the support of the Nevada Humanities, the Springs Preserve, HRA Conservation Archaeology, and the Department of Anthropology UNR.

Dr Bahn spoke to audiences in Las Vegas and Reno on exciting new discoveries of Palaeolithic cave art in Britain and Europe, and discussed the importance of rock art as one of humanity's earliest form of artistic expression. The presentations were an entertaining mix of scientific fact and humor, and the rapport Dr Bahn developed with the audiences was one reason the lectures were so enthusiastically received. A total of 280 people attended the two lectures, attesting to the public's interest in rock art and the opportunity to listen to a world famous archaeologist and educator speak in Nevada.



Dr. Paul Bahn

The program also provided an opportunity for Dr Bahn to see some of Nevada's rock art in the south and the north. His appreciation of the state's beautiful rock art was enhanced by the tour leaders who accompanied him (thanks to Mark Boatwright, Bill James, Chuck Williams, Anne McConnell, Oyvind Frock, Ralph & Cheryl Bennett, and Jeff Thelen).

This lecture series was a resounding success that enhanced public awareness of rock art and NRAF. We thank Dr Bahn for sharing his knowledge with us and for being such an entertaining speaker. The success of this program owes much to Dianne Jennings' hard work in organizing the event and the enthusiasm of NRAF members who made it all so worthwhile. Plans are underway for a similar event later this year.

Project Reports

Lagomarsino Documentation Project

The Lagomarsino Documentation Project is a multiyear project at a National Register of Historic Places property that is one of the most spectacular rock art sites in the western US. Working in partnership with Storey County, which owns the property, NRAF has been working at the site since June 2003. The project seeks to protect the prehistoric artistic legacy of Native American traditions that have created one of the largest and most stunning rock art sites in Nevada. Lagomarsino contains imagery that may be as old as 10,000 years old. Archaeological inventory of the site will result in the production of baseline data that will assist future management of the site, allow effective site monitoring, and provide information that can address important research questions for the area.

Rock art at Lagomarsino is distributed along an extensive east-west-trending basalt rim rock and talus. Previous research at the site indicated that it contains somewhere in the range of 1000-10,000 panels. Because of the spatial extent of the site and the very large number of panels it was estimated to contain, the documentation of Lagomarsino was planned as a multiyear project. In the first field season (June 2003) an artificial grid was devised to cover the site. The dimensions of this grid were mapped and each year work begins with the grid being re-established to determine which areas of the site have already been surveyed and which still need documentation. The grid allows a schematic view

of survey coverage and gives a good indication of spatial variability in the frequency of the site's rock art panels. All documentation tasks are conducted following IFRAO standards for non-invasive recording techniques. A scaled line drawing of each panel (including graffiti) is made in the field using string grids. Each panel is photo-documented using digital and print media to ensure a robust photographic archive. All panel locations and associated archaeological features are mapped using a handheld GPS unit. A specialized IMACS rock art attachment form is also completed for each panel recorded.

At the completion of the 2007 field season 1,992 rock art panels in a 20,400 m² area of the site had been documented. The area recorded to date comprises the area immediately north of the wash and dirt road, and adjacent areas extending to about 50 m from the rim rock. About 240 recorded panels contain graffiti or other defacement. Graffiti is largely concentrated in areas nearest the dirt road to the base of talus and in a couple of areas midslope where prehistoric rock art is densely distributed. This indicates that areas that are easy to access and parts of the site that attract public visitation because of the high visibility of rock art, are at greatest risk from defacement.



Cheryln Bennet, Paula Reynosa at Lago

NRAF's work confirms previous observations that the site is composed mainly of abstract curvilinear and rectilinear designs that are representative of Basin and Range Tradition motif types. Circles, dots, grids, and meanders are all common; some are sufficiently large and

deeply engraved that they are visible from the wash at the bottom of the site. Representational motif types are relatively rare and limited to occasional incidences of stick figure anthropomorphs, bighorn sheep figures, and lizard motifs. Most of the art documented to date contains few motifs that can be relatively dated. Most panels only exhibit light surface repatination and motif types and styles are generally not of time-sensitive types. This makes refining the chronology of rock art production at the site particularly challenging. There are some possible Middle Archaic or late Middle Archaic-Late Archaic motif types; a few atlatl-like designs and some projectile-point designs that resemble artifact types known to have been used as dart points. There are also designs that resemble ethnohistorically known nets. The overall impression is that the site may have components that date to the Early

(continued)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Don Fowler, PhD

VICE PRESIDENT
Sharon Chase

SECRETARY
Chuck Greene

TREASURER
Thomas J. Hall, Esq

DIRECTORS
Catherine Fowler, PhD
Pat Barker, PhD
Dianne Jennings
Judi Steele
Craig King

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Angus Quinlan, PhD, RPA



Archaic, but that rock art production and the use of the area for resource acquisition and processing was probably concentrated in the Middle and Late Archaic, and extending into the Late Prehistoric.



Atlatl-like motif at Lagomarsino

Spatial patterning is discernible in the distribution of rock art panels at the site. Based on data collected to date, it is apparent that certain

areas of the site were favored for the placement of rock art panels. Although some low-density rock art areas are the result of a lack of suitable boulders for making rock art on, others are not. The site's structure and the interrelationships between design elements will become clearer once the collection of spatial data at the site is completed.

Although interpreting the meaning of its rock art is not the primary focus of NRAF's work at Lagomarsino, it is uppermost in the minds of most visitors. The site was important in refining the application of hunting-magic theory to the rock art of the western US. The presence of hunting-related features, bighorn sheep and other game animal motifs, and hunting themes in Lagomarsino's art have been cited as evidence that its rock art was used in social practices that served to ensure success in the hunt and increase the numbers of game animals and other critical resources. Because the site's art is dominated by abstract imagery, if it was related to hunting-magic it did not communicate this theme through representational imagery, in the way envisaged by classic hunting-magic theory. The site's abundant rectilinear and curvilinear designs could be regarded as evidence of some association with the practice of shamanism (the use of controlled spirit possession for a variety of social purposes), portraying mental imagery experienced in trance states. This is also speculative because elsewhere art traditions are known that incorporate trance-derived mental imagery, but the art refers to a wide variety of social themes unconnected with shamanism. Lagomarsino's associated archaeology indicates that it was seasonally occupied for a variety of economic purposes, including seed and plant processing, suggesting the site's rock art was viewed and used by a broader cross-section of the social group than just hunters or ritual specialists. It is possible that Lagomarsino's art provided a visual symbolism through which the social identities and practices embedded in the domestic routines performed at the site were given cultural meaning.

We estimate that an area of about 15,000 m², containing perhaps as much as 3,200 panels, remains to be documented.



Typical Basin and Range Tradition motif at Lagomarsino

This year's field season is intended as a big push to complete the fieldwork phase of the project. The data collected during the project will allow a better assessment of various long-term management plans for the site than otherwise would be possible.

Acknowledgments—NRAF's work at Lagomarsino is made possible with the support of: Storey County, USDA Western Regional Conservation and Development, the US Forest Service, the National Endowment for the Arts, NDoT, the Nevada State Museum, Western Village Inn & Casino, Ed Laine Photography, Jim Ouimet Photography, and panel sponsors Sharon P. Chase, Don & Kay Fowler, Douglas Fowler, Don Frazier, John Gianotti, Petit Gilwee, Dittany Lang, Chuck Greene, Tom & Peggy Hall, Sam & Kathleen Hayes, Elizabeth Sweeney, Keegan Turner, Tavis Turner, David & Trish Vaughan. Ralph & Cheryl Bennett's work as field coordinators for this project is greatly appreciated. And of course, the invaluable contributions made by NRAF volunteers in the field and the office is always recognized and appreciated—you are too numerous to name individually but we know who you are and remember your efforts.

Sloan Canyon

The Sloan Canyon Petroglyph Site is a National Registered property in the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, Clark County. In 2006 the BLM had NRAF document the site to gather data that would allow a condition assessment to be made. NRAF's report was completed this winter (weighing in at nearly 1,000 pages of drawings, photographs, and text) and an overview is provided here.

The Sloan Canyon site is in the northwestern McCullough Range, south of Las Vegas and Henderson. The site had previously been recorded by the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Sciences (HRC) in 1997/98 and by Far Western Anthropological Group (FW) in 2004. HRC's work focused on providing an inventory of the site's rock art and defined its spatial characteristics and established its boundaries. Their work was supplemented by FW whose

(continued)

investigations identified other archaeological features at the site and noted additional rock art panels, extending the northern boundary of the site.



Bighorn sheep motifs at Sloan Canyon

HRC identified some 318 rock art panels at the site, distributed throughout Sloan Canyon for a distance of about a mile. HRC divided the site into four sections (Lower Canyon, Middle Canyon, Upper Canyon, and Narrows) composed of varying numbers of loci. The greatest concentration of rock art panels was noted in the Middle Canyon and Narrows areas of the site, which are located midway through the canyon. FW supplemented this record with the identification of 14 additional rock art panels and 7 archaeological features. The results of these archaeological surveys indicate that the Sloan Canyon area has evidence of Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, Puebloan, and Late Prehistoric occupation, mainly connected with resource procurement and processing.

The objectives of the NRAF site recording conducted in spring 2006 were to produce accurate scale drawings, archival photo-documentation, GPS datalog, and IMACS records of all rock art panels at the Sloan Canyon site. In addition, public education in the form of training in rock art site documentation methods was provided to site stewards for the site.

Where possible, all previously identified rock art panels were relocated in the field and assigned the designation given them by HRC. Panels that had not been previously identified were given a numeric designation. After relocating previously recorded panels, each locus underwent pedestrian survey to identify additional rock art panels and archaeological features. Each identified panel was then documented by: a scale line drawing; photography in digital and print formats; the preparation of an IMACS rock art attachment form; and its location mapped using a hand-held GPS device.

During our fieldwork we also observed several additional panels (both graffiti made since 1998 and prehistoric panels previously obscured by vegetation and colluvial materials) that were also recorded using the above methods. All panels were carefully examined in the field for observed changes in condition from that documented by HRC and FW. The condition data collected during our survey supplements the BLM's existing programs and measures to protect the cultural resources as Sloan Canyon.

Sloan Canyon's rock art is predominantly Basin and Range Tradition in character. Abstract motifs account for about 89 percent of the 1133 motifs present. Circular forms are more frequent motif types than rectilinear designs or variants of lines. In terms of numbers of panels, though, these three broad forms occur in roughly equal quantities, but variants of lines are slightly less common. In general, there is little spatial variation across the site in the distribution of abstract motif types; i.e., discrete spatial patterning in the occurrence of the three broad abstract types is not discernible.



Basin and Range Tradition motifs at Sloan

Some specific abstract motif types are, however, localized in their distribution. So-called "necklace" designs (two nested arcs outlined by a row of dots that follows the contour of the outer arc) are found only in Upper Canyon I. Possible "atlatl" representations are rare, but seem to be concentrated in Middle Canyon I. If these really are schematic "atlatls," then this might indicate a Middle Archaic date for some rock art production at that location.

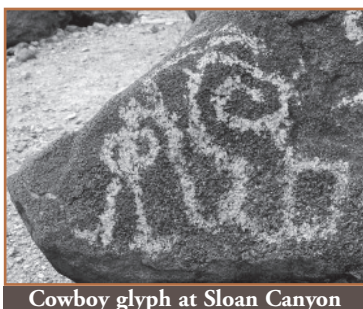
Overall, the abstract imagery at the site exhibits a tendency to open forms, sometimes with other motifs inside. Its opaque references probably encouraged ambiguity in the cultural interpretations attached to it by its users, perhaps indicating that it functioned to provide an exegetic space for the expression of competing social narratives, a common function of visual symbolism. Alternatively, it may have had very specific cultural meanings for its users, meanings that an external observer cannot "read" based simply on a visual consideration of its properties. Some art may be more performative in its motivation than other types. Simple vertical lines, usually occurring singly, account for about 10 percent of all motifs at the site. As these are not related to other design elements they may be related to practices where leaving a mark was the main motivation.

Figurative forms tend to evoke greater interest from modern observers of rock art, largely because their apparently representational nature gives us a false confidence that we can identify its subject and cultural references. These motif types also bear the burden of style definitions in rock art studies as stylistic variation is easier to recognize in forms for which the apparent theme or subject can be identified. Representational forms are statistically a small component of the Sloan Canyon rock art assemblage, only about 11 percent of all motifs but

(continued)

approximately 23 percent of all panels. Anthropomorphs outnumber zoomorphs in number of panels in which these are present, but zoomorph motifs are slightly more frequent than anthropomorphs. In general, anthropomorphs tend to be represented singly in contrast to zoomorphs, a greater proportion of which are depicted with other zoomorphs. Most zoomorphs and anthropomorphs at the site are of types that are not culturally specific. Two anthropomorphs are historic in character as they appear to be wearing cowboy hats and one is apparently holding a rifle. One other anthropomorph may be historic in age as it is depicted apparently riding a quadruped. These historic motifs may be important records of early contact between Native Americans and Euro-Americans. The remaining anthropomorphs at the site predominantly are Basin and Range Tradition stick-figure anthropomorph types.

Although the archaeology of Sloan Canyon NCA documents the presence of Puebloan, Patayan, and Southern Paiute peoples (among others), these cultural identities seem to be only weakly expressed through the site's rock art. If



Cowboy glyph at Sloan Canyon

the rock art did function to construct and communicate cultural identities with external groups, it did this in a way that we cannot apprehend through its motif assemblage. Some rock art is directly associated with milling features and the general archaeological context of the site's art is one of resource acquisition and procurement, and temporary habitation for task-specific purposes. The informing context in which prehistoric populations would have used and encountered the site's rock art is one of daily economic and social routines. The art is generally not in spaces that can be considered private (other than the few panels that are up high above the canyon floor and that are difficult to access) and largely is placed in natural traffic corridors or activity areas. Therefore, it is likely that Sloan Canyon's rock art negotiated and expressed social identities experienced in the routines of daily social life. The art may have been used in a cultural discourse that allowed people to reflect on the lived experience of social and domestic routines, providing a physical embodiment of a social memory that transcended individual experience.

Acknowledgments—We are grateful to the BLM Las Vegas FO for the opportunity to have participated in this project and thank Mark Boatwright, Charlie Carroll, and Lola Henio for the various support and assistance they provided during the project. The documentation work would not have been possible without the large number of NRAF volunteers who came from far afield to help in both the fieldwork and the mammoth inking effort. As ever, their efforts are gratefully acknowledged.

THIS & THAT

THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION'S Reno office is moving! By the time this newsletter goes to press our new address will be: 1201 Terminal Way, Suite 215,

Reno, NV 89502. Our phone numbers remain unchanged. For the past 3 years we have been well served by our offices on California Avenue and we thank Kenneth & Tina Wener and TechPro for being such helpful and sympathetic landlords. We wish them the best in their new offices and thank them for donating surplus office furniture and equipment to NRAF.

The Annual Meetings of the Nevada Archaeological Association (April 2008) and the Nevada Rock Art Foundation (May 2008) have scheduled sessions in honor of Dr Alanah Woody, co-founder and Executive Director of the Nevada Rock Art Foundation before her untimely death in July 2007. Anne McConnell and Elaine Homes are presenting a paper at both meetings that contains reminiscences and pictures of Alanah and would like to include stories from NRAF members. If you would like to share stories or pictures please contact Anne and Elaine directly by email (annemuggs@aol.com for Anne, kokopelli3@cox.net for Elaine).

“To document, conserve and ensure the integrity and protection of Nevada and Great Basin rock art.”

New Members

Peggy Arps & Tommy Thompson
 Tom Bakewell
 Jane Bowden
 J.F. Cado
 Russell Chapin
 Jack Curtis
 Andria Daley
 Kimberley Fabel
 Crystal Kauk
 Anna Keyzers
 Jean Ludwig
 Penny Pemberton & Carol Neel
 Mark & Marsha Richter
 Theodore Schoeder
 Stanley Shumaker
 Suzan Slaughter
 Edie Swift
 Donna Vido
 Shannon Zamboni

The Nevada Rock Art Foundation 5th Annual Meeting

May 2-4, 2008 ~ Minden, Nevada

YES! I'll be attending the 5th Annual Meeting of The Nevada Rock Art Foundation

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

REGISTRATION:

\$18 Individual \$25 Family memberships or above \$30 Non-member individual registration

Register before April 7th (add \$10 for on-site registration)

I plan on attending the evening welcome reception on Friday 2nd May _____ (tick)

BANQUET:

Buffet dinner with salads, a choice of 3 main entrees, desserts, and coffee—\$28 per person

_____ No. of banquet tickets ordered

ANNUAL MEETING T-SHIRTS:

\$12 each SMALL _____ MEDIUM _____ LARGE _____ XL _____ XXL _____ *(circle size and quantity ordered)*

TOTAL \$ _____

I wish to pay by: Check _____ MC _____ VISA _____ *(sorry, no AMEX)* Card # _____ Exp _____

VENDORS! If you wish to sell artwork or other crafts, there will be vendor tables available. For details email: info@nevadarockart.org

Return this form by April 7th to:

The Nevada Rock Art Foundation, 1201 Terminal Way, Ste 215, Reno, Nevada 89502



NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION

Working for the Conservation of Nevada's Rock Art Heritage

Membership Application: Yes, I want to join! Yes, I want to renew!

Memberships: Individual \$30 Family \$45 Limited Income \$25

Donors: Steward \$100 Conservator \$500 Patron \$1,000

Other: Tribute Fund \$500 Founder's Club \$1,500 and above

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

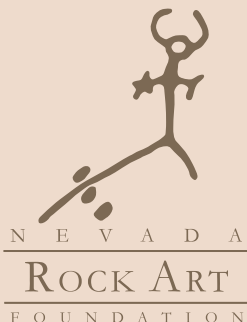
Email Address _____

1201 TERMINAL WAY, SUITE 215, RENO, NV 89502

775 323-6723 TEL 775 323-6725 FAX INFO@NEVADAROCKART.ORG

PO Box 35892, LAS VEGAS, NV 89133 702 804 6723 TEL

W W W . N E V A D A R O C K A R T . O R G



*Our Past
Deserves a Future*

775 323 6723 TEL 1201 TERMINAL WAY, SUITE 215, RENO, NV 89502 PO Box 35892, LAS VEGAS, NV 89133 702 804 6723 TEL



THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION

5th Annual Meeting

May 2-4, 2008

Minden, Nevada

THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION'S 5th Annual Meeting will be held in Minden, at the Carson Valley Inn, May 2nd-4th, 2008.

News and technical notes, field trips, and camaraderie with your rock art colleagues and friends are in store for you at this year's Annual Meeting. You can learn about upcoming events, the year in review, and shop for NRAF merchandise. The always-popular "Rockies" awards at Saturday night's banquet is an event you won't want to miss!

A tribute to Alanah Woody will be a significant part of this year's event.

WHEN	WHAT	DETAILS
Friday 2 nd May		
5-8 pm	Welcome reception & no-host bar	Free
Saturday 3 rd May		
9 am-4 pm	Annual Meeting and Tribute to Alanah Woody	Early-bird registration: Individual \$18 Family & above \$25 Non-member \$30 Registration after April 7, add \$10
6-9 pm	No host bar & banquet; Annual Awards Ceremony	Register by April 7 \$28 After April 7, only if space available
Sunday 4 th May		
Field Trips		TBA Open to NRAF members only

SEND US YOUR FUN PHOTOS

If you have photos of NRAF friends and activities, we can include them in a 'family album' slideshow on Saturday night. Please email the photo, along with a statement that you grant permission to NRAF to use the photo in a slideshow, and any information about the people and place, to info@nevadarockart.org; in the email subject line type: "annual meeting slideshow"

SPECIAL ROOM RATES AT CARSON VALLEY INN

For special room rates at the Carson Valley Inn or Motor Lodge, contact the Reservation Department at 800-321-6983 ext.1 and mention our group number **0501215**.

REGISTER BY APRIL 7

To register for the Annual Meeting, please return the Registration Form and mail it with your payment to our new address: THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION, 1201 Terminal Way, Ste 215, Reno, Nevada, **by April 7**.

Late registration: add \$10. Or, email your registration information to: info@nevadarockart.org.

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 non-destructive with regard to the rock art itself and any associated archeological 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*



THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION
1201 TERMINAL WAY, SUITE 215
RENO, NV 89502