

Great Basin Glyph Notes

The Newsletter of the Nevada Rock Art Foundation
Member International Federation of Rock Art Organizations

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Artification: The Work of Ellen Dissanayake

“Suppose there were a person who saw, before almost anyone else, that the most important concept in modern biology could be applied to the arts. Suppose, however, that this person studied biology only as an undergraduate, never took a class in anthropology, and never received a Ph.D. Suppose, in fact, that she were a homemaker for a dozen years and then spent fifteen years in the Third World, where it was difficult for her to gain access to the research libraries and social networks that most professors take for granted. Nevertheless...she has managed to publish three books setting forth her ideas. And today a new field of study has sprung up where she pioneered. Suppose, in addition, that some people think a scholarly framework based on her insights will displace much of current aesthetic theory—that future generations will understand literature and the arts as she does, thereby reconciling the humanities to the science of human nature” (Caleb Cain, *The Artistic Animal*, *Lingua Franca* 2001).

Cain’s description of Dissanayake gives us an insight into the theoretical interests and background of our 2011 Distinguished Lecturer. The lectures will be held in February, in Reno and Las Vegas. The Nevada State Museum at Springs Preserve in Las Vegas will be the venue on February 8th, and the Nevada Museum of Art will be the venue in Reno, on February 10th. Both lectures will begin at 6 p.m., followed by a book-signing and reception.

SEE PAGE 10 FOR SPONSORS AND TICKET INFORMATION.

Archaeologists frequently assume that the appearance of “art” provides a window into ancient human minds and social groups, indicating their degree of human intelligence or cultural development. In contrast, Ellen Dissanayake claims that art, considered ethologically as a behavior of “artifying” (rather than as artifacts or products of that activity such as engravings or paintings on rocks or walls, shell beads, or bone instruments), can be considered as a biologically distinctive and noteworthy characteristic of humans in itself, not simply as a subset or byproduct of their intelligence, symbolizing ability, or cultural level. In her view, artification—intentionally making parts of the natural and manmade environment (shelters, tools, utensils, weapons, clothing, bodies, surroundings, and other paraphernalia) extraordinary or special by marking, shaping, and embellishing them beyond their ordinary functional appearance—is a heretofore undescribed (or overlooked) capacity in the human repertoire. Calling these activities “artification” (rather than “art”) avoids connotations of value, beauty, skill, or representation inherent in the modern Western concept. Her hypothesis about evolutionary antecedents, motivation, and adaptive advantages provides a new approach to the concept of “art” in human evolution--Ellen Dissanayake.

Dissanayake’s theoretical home, as such, is perhaps best explained under the intellectual umbrella of evolutionary psychology. Although not the first to suggest an evolutionary advantage to aesthetics, the evolutionary psychologists are at the forefront of such studies. Charles Darwin, in the 19th century, proposed a selective advantage to aesthetics, noting that humans and animals alike prefer that which is pleasing, but it wasn’t until the later part of the twentieth century that scholars began to address the question in depth. In her first book, *What is Art For?* (1988), Dissanayake



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From the Executive Director

As a charter member, I find it hard to believe that fall 2011 will be the tenth anniversary of when Alanah Woody and Shari Chase started the organizational work to found NRAF. With NRAF's ten-year anniversary only 12 months away, some longer-term reflection creeps into my thoughts as I think about the year's accomplishments.

Our documentation program continues to prioritize places that are most in need of work. This year we have worked in Clark County with the NPS to record the Tinaja Trail and Bridge Canyon sites, and assisted HRA Conservation Archaeology's inventory of the Lower Arrow Canyon area. Our project in Lincoln County that aims to provide a current condition assessment of that county's rock art sites passed the milestone of recording 99 sites since it began in late 2009. This significant achievement demonstrates our strong volunteer support and capacity to do fieldwork. We also started a documentation training project at Grimes Point, one of the largest and oldest sites in the state. The Tribal involvement in this project has been very encouraging.

The research component of NRAF's mission has, until now, been largely in the background as research requires high quality data. But, having recorded 15% of the state's rock art, including virtually all the largest sites in the state, we now have a solid database to explore challenging research questions posed by Nevada rock art. Or, as archaeologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler put it, "we have timetables now it's time for some trains!" Accordingly, I'm excited that this year the John Ben Snow Memorial Trust funded the beginning of the writing of a book on the state's largest rock art site (Lagomarsino), which we hope to have published in time for NRAF's official anniversary. I can think of no better way of launching NRAF into its second decade than with a book on the place that was the inspiration for its creation, honoring the volunteers and supporters who made the project possible, and paying tribute to our founding Executive Director's vision. I am also pleased that our work at Lagomarsino continues both on the ground (with the interpretive signs installed in the summer) and working with SHPO and the County to develop a National Historic Landmark nomination, which will make it one of the few rock art sites in the county to be so honored.

For many nonprofits, just surviving in the deep recession is an achievement. NRAF has been able to maintain and expand programs largely through careful management of strategic reserves. Unfortunately, the length of the recession means that maintaining operations and programs at current levels will require new sources of funding to be

found. We have been extremely fortunate to have supporters so dedicated and committed that despite this very difficult economic climate, our donated and membership income has grown. The Board has worked hard to identify potential new financial supporters, highlighted by their work in holding NRAF's first fundraising luncheon. And the Board has led by example, not just exhortation, contributing \$20,360 to support NRAF's mission. The Board's leadership in this area is greatly appreciated and their confidence in both NRAF's future and mission is a source of considerable encouragement.

In 2011 I look forward to working with you all to ensure that Nevada rock art is appreciated by the community for both its scientific and heritage value. The work made possible by NRAF's members, volunteers, and supporters is truly impressive, making NRAF's contribution to the archaeology and preservation of Nevada rock art a lasting and essential achievement.



ANGUS QUINLAN,
NRAF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Field Notes

The Story of the Rock by Jeff Thelen

At one of the sites I like to visit is a mostly inconspicuous rock that seems to be out of place. It's not a large boulder, only 1 m. by 1.5m., a piece of river polished basalt lying in the middle of limestone badlands above the Walker River. The nearest basalt flows are 20 miles south and 3 million years old, so this is an old story. The rock is a "river erratic," like a glacial erratic; it was left high and dry when the Walker River changed course in its endless task of moving the Ranges to the Basins. As the river slipped away, the rock eventually found its way to a hillside in the much older limestone badlands south of the Walker river.

As you might have guessed, I was not the first one to notice this rock. A number of petroglyphs have been pecked into the surface of the rock. They are simple, completely repatinated, and very old, likely thousands of years old. Some of the lines may be abstract, or they may be map symbols. There is one glyph that appears to be a sheep. To my knowledge this is the only petroglyph site for many tens of miles in any direction. Apparently ancient people recognized that this rock was special, and chose to adorn it for their own reasons. It is black, polished, hard, and unlike the soft limestone that it lies on. While it may not have been the only surface that could have been used, it is the most durable and long lasting surface available.

Sadly I was not the last person to notice this rock. An unenlightened person(other adjectives might come to mind) chose to pick up a rock and randomly scratch the entire surface of the boulder. It is impossible for me to understand this mindless act, but the news is not entirely bad. The rock the vandal chose as his/her weapon was no match for our basalt rock tempered by fire and polished by water. The soft limestone had not broken the surface of the rock, but simply left a trace across the surface. A few wet years will remove it like chalk on a chalkboard.

Finally, the last chapter of this story once more belongs to the Walker River. As it continues its endless task of moving the Ranges to the Basins, it will eventually reclaim its property and send it on its journey to Walker Lake. For the boulder this has just been a detour along the way.



Photo by Jeff Thelen

2011 Anticipated Fieldwork

Court of Antiquity

The Court of Antiquity site is located just off I-80 near Sparks, and NRAF will conduct a full documentation project starting in early 2011.

Northern Washoe County

NRAF will be surveying and recording several sites in the Surprise Valley area over a two week period in June 2011. Camping will likely be required.

Lincoln County

The last fieldwork sessions of the Lincoln County survey project will take place in spring 2011. Work will likely be centered in Alamo NV.

Meadow Lakes

NRAF, in conjunction with the National Forest Service, will be recording a petroglyph site in the High Sierras area in August 2011.

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Member News



Elaine Holmes and
Anne McConnell

Members Anne McConnell, pictured right, and Elaine Holmes, pictured left, received the 2010 RED SPRING AWARD given to them by the Friends of Red Rock Canyon. The Red Spring area is a restored riparian zone, home to a fragile meadow and rare water resource; the area also has a significant cultural history associated with it. The RED SPRING AWARD goes to individual(s) who have made “extraordinary contributions regarding community outreach, environmental education, and preservation/protection of cultural significant areas of Red Rock Canyon.”

Elaine and Anne more than meet the nomination requirements of noteworthy and documented contributions in program specific areas that provide knowledge, appreciation, and/or preservation of Red Rock Canyon. Their nomination for the award read as follows: *Elaine Holmes and Anne McConnell have been active in preserving and protecting cultural resource sites for many years. They are active Site Stewards as well*

as Site Steward Coordinators for the Red Rock area. They are members of Friends of Red Rock Canyon's Cultural Resource team where their expertise has been invaluable in our documentation efforts. They were responsible for developing detailed narratives of rock art panels which have been added to all our completed site books. In addition Elaine developed a method for cataloging individual rock art motifs and has completed an inventory of all Red Rock sites. Both ladies are nationally recognized by the Rock Art Community and have assisted in recording rock art sites throughout Nevada. —Thanks to Chuck Williams for providing this information.

Notes from Kim



As 2010 comes to a close, it is time to reflect on our successes for the year. At the beginning of 2010, the Development Committee set a goal of acquiring 77 new members by 2011. By increasing our public presence through our Art on the Rocks information events and Fundraising Luncheon, we not only met this goal, we more than doubled it! NRAF had 520 members in 2010, as compared to 330 in 2009.

We are going to need your help to continue this trend- if you are interested in hosting an Art on the Rocks informational event, or helping to organize one in your area, please contact me at 775-323-6723 or khopkinson@nvrockart.org. Our promotional efforts in 2010 were focused primarily in northern Nevada, but we want to expand more into southern Nevada during 2011. If you have any suggestions for

locations or groups that we should target, please contact me.

You can also help by renewing your membership in the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION, or maybe even increasing your membership level. Joining or renewing at a higher level not only supports our mission to preserve and protect rock art in Nevada, it also entitles you to additional benefits, such as invitations to special events and tours. Please remember that your NRAF membership will expire on January 31st 2010. In NRAF's continued efforts to save resources, for the first time ever I will be emailing, rather than mailing, renewal notices starting January 1st. Members without email access will still receive notices in the mail. You can help us by printing and sending in your membership renewal, or by calling and renewing over the phone, or by using the new 'donate' function on the support page on our website. With your help, 2011 will be even more successful than 2010!

Kim Hopkinson

New Board Members

Alice Baldrica was Deputy State Historic Preservation officer for Nevada for 20 years, ending with her retirement from State service in 2010. Prior to working for the State, she was an archaeologist at the Desert Research Institute and for the U. S. Forest Service. Alice earned her M.A. and B.A in anthropology from the University of Nevada, Reno with an emphasis in the study of prehistory and history of the western Great Basin. Her concern over the decades has been with the protection of archaeological sites but in recent years, she has devoted more time to public archaeology and historic preservation, helping develop Nevada's Archaeological Awareness/Historic Preservation Month celebrated every May, and Nevada's site stewardship program. It is her belief that protection of archaeological and historic sites can be better achieved through education and active involvement by members of the public, not solely through the enforcement of laws. Ms. Baldrica serves on the board of Preserve Nevada and previously served as the state's representative on the board of the Nevada Archaeological Association..



Alice Baldrica,
NRAF Board Secretary

Geoff Smith was born on Prince Edward Island, Canada, and moved to the United States in 1999. He received a B.A. from the University of Prince Edward Island (1997), a M.A. from the University of Nevada, Reno (2006), and a Ph.D. from the University of Wyoming (2010). He has been conducting archaeological fieldwork since 1993 and has worked in Nevada, California, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming, New York,



Geoff Smith,
NRAF Director

Georgia, Florida, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. Geoff currently serves as the Executive Director of the Sundance Archaeological Research Fund and Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Nevada, Reno. His research interests include the Paleoindian-Archaic transition in the Great Basin, lithic technological organization, and the peopling of the New World.

Kevin Rafferty was born and raised in upstate New York, outside of Albany, New York. He came to Nevada in 1980 to take a job with the BLM, Las Vegas District, as a Resource Area archaeologist. He received his Ph.D. from SUNY-Stony Brook in 1982. In 1983 he became Director of the Division of Anthropological Studies (now the Harry Reid Center) at the Museum of Natural History at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. In 1989 he became the first full-time anthropologist hired at the Community College of Southern Nevada (now the College of Southern Nevada), where he is currently chairman of the Department of Human Behavior. He also ran his own archaeological consulting business until joining Knight & Leavitt Associates as part-time Senior Research Associate in 1993. Rafferty has pursued research in the southern Nevada/southern California region, with his most recent research centering around Valley of Fire State Park, where he became interested in rock art almost out of self-defense. His other research interests include hunter-gatherer studies, CRM law and its implementation, and trying to examine religion and religious ideas embodied in the archaeological record.



Kevin Rafferty,
NRAF Director

2011 ANNUAL MEETING: DINING GUIDE



HISTORIC EUREKA NEVADA WILL BE THE SITE FOR OUR 2011 ANNUAL MEETING



The restored Eureka Opera House will be the site for our Friday night opening reception, Saturday meeting, and Saturday night banquet. It is a short walk from the Best Western Motel and across the Street from the Jackson Hotel.



The Eureka Cafe offers Chinese and American food. It is on Main Street, within walking distance of the Best Western Motel and Opera House.



The Owl Club Cafe is in the Owl Club Casino and offers daily specials to accompany its full menu. It has a bar adjoining the restaurant.



The La Fiesta Mexican Restaurant, also on Main Street, has a full restaurant and bar available for lunch and dinner.



The Pony Express Deli is driving distance from the meeting site at the North end of Eureka. It offers breakfast and lunch (no dinner) and features home-made delicious breakfasts and sandwiches, pastries, and espresso drinks. It also features hand-made gift items from Lancaster County.

Not pictured is DJ's Diner and Drive In, also driving distance from the meeting site.

2011 ANNUAL MEETING: CALL FOR PAPERS



Historic Representations in Rock Art

8th annual Meeting of the
Nevada Rock Art Foundation
Eureka, NV
May 20-22, 2011

The NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION is now accepting submissions for oral presentations at the 8th Annual Meeting, being held in Eureka NV in May 2011. Oral presentations will be presented on Saturday, May 21st. Participants are encouraged to submit papers that focus on historic representations in rock art. Papers that deal with other issues in rock art recordation and research methodology, or on the stylistic components of rock art, will also be considered.

Abstracts for all submissions must be received by March 1, 2011

Presentations are limited to 15 minutes, with 3-5 minutes for questions. PowerPoint is strongly preferred, and overhead or slide projectors will only be available upon special request made at the time of submission. All submissions must include:

- Presentation Title
- First and Last Name and Affiliation of each author (presenter indicated in boldface type)
- Contact Information for the presenter (email, phone number and address)
- Body of abstract (not to exceed 250 words)
- One image may be included (can be embedded in the abstract or submitted via email as a separate attachment)

Email is the preferred method of submission. Abstracts should be emailed to khopkinson@nvrockart.org and the subject line should read "NRAF 2011 Abstract- primary author's last name".

2011 NRAF Student Paper Award
Sponsored by ASM Affiliates



This award will be made to the most competitive student submission, and comes with a \$200 stipend. Please append the subject line of your email to read "NRAF 2011 Abstract (ASM)- primary author's last name" if you wish to be considered for this award.

Visit WWW.NVROCKART.ORG or email INFO@NVROCKART.ORG
for additional conference information

Knowing the Past: Fundraising Luncheon

On November 16th, The NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION hosted its inaugural Art on the Rocks fund raising luncheon, "Knowing the Past", at the Grove Event Center in Reno. The luncheon was free to members and guests, with the Board of Directors subsidizing the cost so that most funds raised went directly to operating costs for the FOUNDATION.

Board President Pat Barker, Executive Director Angus Quinlan, Board Vice President Darla Garey-Sage, and Board Treasurer Craig King were featured speakers at the event. The FOUNDATION premiered a video that showcased founding director Alanah Woody, member CherylN Bennett, and Paiute Artist Ben Aleck, all eloquently expressing the need for rock art preservation. Many thanks are due to the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs and Producer Gwen Clancy for allowing us to use video footage from their documentary series. We are in the process of seeking additional grant funding that will allow us to make the video available on our website and allow us to use additional footage as available.

The Visionary Circle, a group of individuals or businesses who make a five year pledge of annual contributions at levels of \$1,000 to \$10,000, received three memberships: President Pat Barker and Lucinda Long, Vice President Darla Garey-Sage and Jon Garey-Sage, and an anonymous donor. Other gifts from generous members and new supporters totaled approximately \$18,000, including a one-time gifts of \$5,000 from the Hall Family Trust, and a one-time gift of \$1,000 from an anonymous donor.

These funds are a critical source of support for the FOUNDATION and will help us continue our important work of protecting and preserving Nevada's rock art. The next step in our fundraising efforts will involve Art on the Rocks events in southern Nevada. If you would like to help with southern events, please contact Kim Hopkinson at khopkinson@nvrockart.org.



ONE NEW SUNBURST MEMBERSHIP



THREE NEW VISIONARY CIRCLE MEMBERSHIPS



ONE NEW FIELD OF DOTS MEMBERSHIP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

asks, "Since all human societies, past and present, so far as we know, make and respond to art, it must contribute something essential to human life. But what?" Using a biological perspective, Dissanayake looks at art as *a set of behaviors* rather than objects. She then looks at the function of those behaviors and suggests that artistic behaviors embued early humans with a competitive advantage during our evolution. That advantage is grounded in 'making special', Dissanayake's term for the artistic process, or 'artification'. She postulates that 'making special' reinforces emotional ties among humans, leading to stronger group dynamics, which increase the survival and success of human populations. Dissanayake has studied this enhanced emotional attachment in premodern rituals, mother-infant attachments, and even in children's play,

For Dissanayake, art should be an integrated part of our modern life, not set aside as the activity of an 'artist,' a specialist per se. All humans engage in the arts; indeed her work suggests that it is part of our hard wiring. She calls for more art education in schools to encourage and value artistic expression, and she argues for the fundamental expressive nature of art, an activity essential to our evolution and survival.

Knowing the Past: Opportunities to Support NRAF

Nevada Rock Art Foundation Art on the Rocks



FIELD OF DOTS

I would like to become a founding member of the Visionary Circle Multi-year Giving Society:

- Guide Level: \$1,000 per year for 5 years
- Scribe Level: \$5,000 per year for 5 years
- Dreamer Level: \$10,000 per year for 5 years



VISIONARY CIRCLE

I would like to contribute in other ways:

- Contribute \$_____ for _____ years.
- Please contact me. I have other thoughts to share.



SUNBURST

We will bill you for your annual pledge,
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Payment Information:

- My check is enclosed, made payable to NRAF.
- Please charge my VISA/MC # _____
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- Please contact me about paying my pledge with stock
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SPIRAL

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE: TICKET AND SPONSOR INFORMATION

The 2011 NRAF Distinguished Lecture is underwritten in part by these Weaver level sponsors:

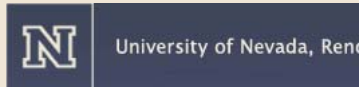
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Partnerships for the 2011 NRAF Distinguished Lecture include

The Nevada Museum of Art



The Nevada State Museum at Springs Preserve



Tickets for the Reno Lecture are available from the Nevada Museum of Art. The website for the Art Museum does NOT support NRAF member discounts. Please call the museum (329-3333) or visit in person (160 W. Liberty St) to get your NRAF ticket discounts. Ticket prices are \$8 for NMA and NRAF members; \$10 for non-members.

Tickets for the Las Vegas lecture are available from NRAF. Please contact Kim Hopkinson at info@nvrockart.org or 323-6723 ext 11, or buy online at <http://nvrockart.org/lectures.html>. Ticket prices are \$8 for NSM and NRAF members; \$10 for non-members.

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

THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION

Membership
and

- Spiral (individual) \$25 Bighorn Sheep (family) \$50 Atlatl \$100
 Archer \$250-\$500 Weaver \$501-\$1,000 Sunburst \$1,001-\$4,999
 Alanah Woody Field of Dots Circle \$5,000+

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*By giving us your e-mail address you agree to receive important updates and news about the Foundation via our Newsflash service. Your e-mail address will not be shared with any other parties and will only be used to provide you with information about the Foundation's upcoming events.



I wish to join by: CHECK MC VISA (sorry, no AMEX)

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- I have or would consider including NRAF in my estate planning I would like to make an additional donation of \$ _____
 I wish my name and contribution to remain anonymous Share my contact information with similar non-profit organizations
 Please do not send me the merchandise gifts associated with this level Please send all future correspondence electronically to my email

THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

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