

Great Basin Glyph Notes

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

2nd Quarter 2009

Volume 8-2

Fieldtrip Highlights of the 6th Annual Meeting of the Nevada Rock Art Foundation

In addition to the many fascinating rock art themed presentations given on Saturday, May 3rd, Annual Meeting participants will also be able to visit some of Nevada's spectacular rock art sites, as the entirety of Sunday, May 4th will be dedicated to field trips to rock art sites in central and southern Nevada. Interested parties will have the opportunity to sign up for the tours of their choosing during the Friday evening reception and during the Saturday program until noon. Barring any permit or weather issues, there will be seven guided tours and two self-guided tours. Maps and more complete descriptions will be available at the Annual Meeting, but generalized descriptions are provided below.

Upper Arrow Canyon, approximately 45 miles from Mesquite, contains Archaic, Ancestral Puebloan and possible Fremont rock art, and is an easy, short hike. Another easy hike will be the White River Narrows tour, 200 miles north of Mesquite and containing Basin and Range tradition abstract art and a long "fence line" motif that may be a solar



The tour to Mt Irish will focus on the Shaman Hill and Shaman Knob sites, which have the densest concentrations of rock art in the area, including Pahrnagat style anthropomorphs and bighorn sheep.

marker.

A slightly more strenuous hike will take participants to Brownstone Canyon, located 90 miles south of Mesquite in the Las Vegas Valley, to see Basin and Range tradition petroglyphs and one of the best preserved and spectacular pictograph panels in Nevada. The Whitney Hartman site, located 30 miles south of Mesquite will require some moderate hiking, and participants able to scramble over rocks will be able to see the locally famous "swing set" and "falling man" petroglyphs.

Participants willing to attempt more strenuous conditions can either visit the Shooting Gallery site (100 miles from

Mesquite), where they can see Pahrnagat style anthropomorphs and bighorn sheep, or go on the Babe's Bluff/Kirk's Grotto tour (30 miles south of Mesquite), where they will be treated to amazing Ancestral Puebloan and Basin and Range tradition rock art. Participants interested in Pahrnagat figures and bighorn sheep can also visit Mt Irish (pictured above).

Individuals not able to participate in the guided tours should consider visiting either the Lost City Museum in Overton, which boasts an impressive collection of Puebloan and Southern Paiute artifacts, or to the Valley of Fire State park to see Puebloan and Basin and Range tradition rock art.



From the Executive Director

I am pleased to report that NRAF has received the 2009 Helen C Smith Award for Avocational Society Achievement from the Society for California Archaeology. Board President Pat Barker accepted the award at the Annual Meeting of the SCA in March. Praising NRAF, the SCA noted that NRAF “promotes the protection and public awareness of rock art in Nevada and surrounding areas...and...exemplifies the very best in cooperation and support between the avocational archaeological community and professional archaeologists...”. We are honored to be the recipients of this year’s award and, as always, the credit goes to our volunteers who continue to set the gold standard for excellence in their efforts on behalf of NRAF.

In other news, the weighty four volume tome “Archaeology in America, an Encyclopedia” edited by Francis P. McManamon, Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn. has just been published. Volume 3 “Southwest and Great Basin/Plateau,” has articles in it on Great Basin archaeology, rock art, and early Euro-American exploration and trading by NRAF Board Members Mark Boatwright, Don Fowler, Catherine Fowler, and myself. This is an invaluable reference work for those interested in building their library and learning more about the archaeology and history of the Great Basin; check with the publisher, Greenwood Press, for pricing. Also recently published is the lavishly illustrated, informative and highly readable

“The Great Basin: People and Place in Ancient Times,” edited by Board Members Catherine Fowler and Don Fowler. This provides a very accessible overview of Great Basin archaeology, prehistoric lifeways, and environmental history and is available at a discount to NRAF members by purchasing through NRAF.

I hope that as many of you as possible are planning on attending NRAF’s 6th Annual Meeting. As ever, we have a diverse program of topics exploring Nevada rock art, NRAF’s accomplishments, and our upcoming projects. The Annual Meeting also provides a venue for NRAF to recognize and celebrate our dedicated volunteers. We have field trips organized to sites in the region that showcase the south’s distinctive rock art styles (see page 1 for highlights). I thank all those volunteering behind the scenes to make the Annual Meeting a success—particularly Elaine Holmes, Anne McConnell, and Deb & John Mitchell—and look forward to seeing you all in Mesquite.



Angus Quinlan,
Executive Director, NRAF

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Newsletter News

Check out page 6 in this issue which features a profile of our new development consultant, Janice Barbour, and which also outlines our efforts with development.

Also note the continuing feature, Volunteer Profile on Page 3, as well as a new feature, Donor Profile on Page 7.

We also have included an educational article on rock art of Southeast Nevada, page 4-5, in preparation for our Annual Meeting.

Members are encouraged to submit story ideas, pictures, or information to editor@nvrockart.org. Praise is welcomed; criticism frowned upon.

Note that our website and email addresses have changed.

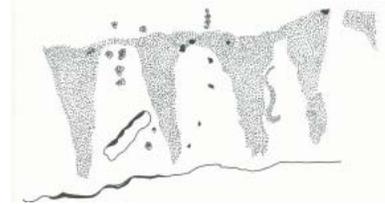
We are now www.nvrockart.org and info@nvrockart.org.

Field Notes

Lincoln County Rock Art Inventory Project—In the fall of 2009 NRAF will start the fieldwork phase of this three year inventory and assessment project. This project seeks to record baseline information to assess the current condition and management needs of known prehistoric rock art sites on public lands managed by the BLM. We are currently identifying the rock art sites to be worked on in the first season of fieldwork, performing the necessary literature searches to support the recordation work, and planning the logistics for this challenging project.

Post fieldwork Data Processing—We have volunteer opportunities available for those wishing to support the processing of fieldwork materials and data collected during our site documentation projects. This is an extremely important and time-consuming part of the documentation process. No site documentation project is finished until the information collected has been analyzed and written into report format, and the field drawings and photographs have been processed for final archiving. Our current focus is on processing field drawings from recent projects into their final archival digital

format by transferring drawings made in the field in to an inked format that is then digitized. Every Wednesday and Saturday the Reno office is open from 10 am – 2 pm for volunteers to drop-in at a time that is convenient for them. Training is available at these sessions. We will be announcing similar sessions in the Las Vegas area in the near future.



Volunteer Profile: Jeff Thelen



Jeff Thelen, NRAF Volunteer

Jeff was born at the San Diego Naval Hospital on May 18, 1949 and grew up in San Diego, and Marin County California. He attended the University of California, Riverside majoring in Physical Geography. During his junior year Jeff had the opportunity to work on a multidisciplinary archaeology project for seven months in the highlands of Guatemala. Most of his work was an “ethnology” of modern Maya, but he also did site mapping and learned survey techniques. Jeff learned his archaeological ethics here after seeing the damage caused by looters. This is also where he learned the field cooking

techniques that are much appreciated by any volunteer who has been on a field project with Jeff.

As a senior Jeff had the opportunity to work on the Perris Lake Salvage Archaeology Project, doing site mapping and ethno-botany for this project, before heading off to San Diego State University for graduate school. Even before completing his thesis, Jeff was hired by the City of Del Mar and The City of Escondido to write General Plans, and then do EIRS. Once more Jeff was working with archaeologists, but now as a “Land Manager”. There were some petroglyphs in southern California, but his interest in rock art wasn’t peaked until he started hiking in southern Utah.

Jeff eventually became disillusioned with the planning process and working for the government, and the next stage of his life involved him moving to Sacramento, starting a business, meeting wife Diane, and having children before building a house in Truckee.

Jeff continued to travel to the southwest to satiate his interest in rock

art. One morning he saw Alanah on KOLO promoting a Grimes Point/Hidden Cave tour. He wrote down her number, and dogged her relentlessly at the Nevada State Museum. His persistence made Alanah realize that he was exactly the type of person that the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION desperately needed. The day after taking the tour, he and Diane wrote a check for two T-shirts and an annual membership, and Jeff has been an integral part of the Foundation ever since.

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NRAF Education Series: Rock Art Styles of Southeast Nevada

The southeastern region of Nevada hosts a large number of rock art sites as well as great diversity in motifs, both features that make the region remarkable. Distinctive rock art with higher than average numbers of anthropomorphs and bighorn sheep, more realistically and elaborately portrayed than elsewhere in the state, also characterize this area.

What is it that makes this area so culturally distinct? Perhaps it's water. In the alleged words of Mark Twain, whiskey is for drinking, but water is for fighting over. The significance of water to the Desert West is profound, and where we find water, we find higher concentrations of plants and animals, which provide a better living situation for those who inhabit the area.

Occupational History of Southeastern Nevada

The southeastern portion of Nevada lies outside of the hydrographic Great Basin, meaning that waters do not drain inwardly, but instead are part of the Colorado River drainage. The Virgin River enters Southern Nevada near Mesquite, Nevada, and flows into the Colorado River 40 miles east of Las Vegas. The Muddy River, formerly known as the

Moapa River, is a short river about sixty miles north of Las Vegas that flows into the Virgin River.

The significance of these rivers for the region is that by AD 300-500, Archaic hunter-forager cultures using the atlatl were replaced by economies that emphasized some reliance on horticulture, sometimes referred to as Puebloan in southern Nevada and the Fremont in southeastern Nevada. The Virgin branch and Sevier Fremont cultural patterns evidence a shift from pure hunting and gathering to a combined economy of cultivation of plants and continued reliance on wild resources. The Virgin pattern shows small village living near streams with associated ceramics, cultivation of plants, and particular stylistic elements in basketry and ceramics. The Sevier Fremont culture leaves no trace of village living in the southeastern Great Basin (villages were found farther north), but there is strong archaeological evidence for the presence of hunting and gathering activities, including the remains of ceramics as well as diagnostic elements of Fremont-style petroglyphs.

Southeastern Rock Art

Basin and Range Tradition

Rock art for the region falls predominantly within the Basin and Range tradition, a primarily abstract expression. The Basin and Range tradition of rock art is defined by large areas of open space, repetition of relatively simple geometric shape and a lack of borders and is strongly associated with the Archaic hunter gatherer cultures (approximately 12,000 - 2000 BP) but also has a continued presence in rock art made by later horticultural and Numic

cultures. Painted images using similar motifs are also part of the abstract style.

Curvilinear and rectilinear abstract designs are most common and are increasingly considered by researchers as components of the Basin and Range Tradition. Previously considered as distinct styles, rectilinear and curvilinear elements have a wide distribution in time and space that extends far outside the Great Basin culture area. Rectilinear and curvilinear designs appear to have been made for as long as rock art was made in the Great Basin and are strongly associated with rock art made by Archaic hunter-gatherer cultures. However, these abstract design elements are also present in styles associated with Fremont and Puebloan groups, though are not as prominent.

Curvilinear design elements include circular forms, such as circles, concentric circles, connected circles, curvilinear meanders, wavy lines, sinuous lines (or "snakes") and star figures. This style expresses some sense of a 'canvas' in that the shapes tend to fill the area defined by the outline of a single boulder.

Rectilinear styles are characterized by linear motifs and elements organized in linear fashion, such as rows of dots, grids, rectangles, cross-hatching, etc. The curvilinear and rectilinear styles co-occur frequently at sites, do not seem to have discrete chronologies of production, and thus are not separate stylistic groups.

The other major stylistic component of Great Basin rock art is the Scratched style, made by a sharp stone tool to incise lines into stone. It is characterized by dense crosshatching, squares, rectangles, and circles with lines radiating from them. These elements are widely distributed throughout the Great Basin but are rarely the predominant style. Some authors have suggested the association of the



Curvilinear and rectilinear design elements on a single boulder

NRAF Education Series: Rock Art Styles of Southeast Nevada, cont.

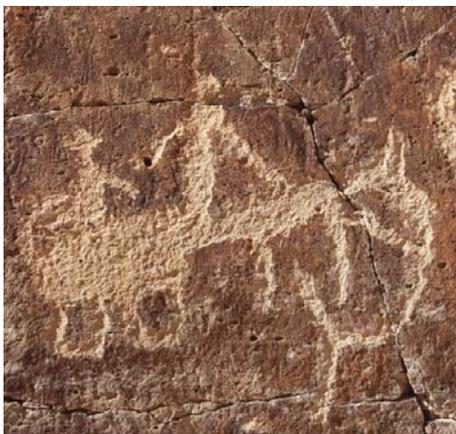
Scatched Style with the spread of Numic cultures, which began approximately two thousand years ago.

In general, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations for the region are characterized by stick-figure type humans and naturalistic animals. These representational figures share the same distribution as abstract styles and are perhaps best seen as a highly localized treatment of the universal portrayal of people and animals in rock art.

The southeastern region also features the highest number of rock art sites with historic imagery, such as cowboys and horses. These design elements usually co-occur with Basin and Range tradition rectilinear and curvilinear elements, providing evidence of the long duration of rock art production in the region.

Regional Styles

Distinctive representational styles in southern and southeastern Nevada and western Utah are marked by motifs associated with the Fremont and Puebloan cultures in the region. Birds, hand and foot prints, and most notably stylized trapezoidal and triangular figures often shown with elaborate headgear,



Historic anthropomorphs (cowboys on horses) and curvilinear elements

horns, or jewelry are highly distinctive motifs in the region, as well as solidly pecked, square-shaped bighorn sheep.

The Pahranaagat Style in southeastern Nevada is known for its unusual, stylized anthropomorphic figures identified from the Pahranaagat Lake site and sites in the Mount Irish Archaeological District, and found only in the Pahranaagat area. This style comprises two anthropomorph types. One is a rectangular figure filled with lines of dots or simple geometric designs and sometimes holding atlatls. The second is a solid-pecked figure, oval or rectangular in shape, with large eyes, and a line protruding from the head; this variant has been suggested to represent disguised hunters. In addition to the distinctive 'hunters,' the Pahranaagat style includes representations of mountain sheep and other game in association with ticked lines, which might suggest a game drive.

The Grapevine Canyon style is another distinctive style in the region, and is associated with the Patayan Culture found in the eastern Mojave and concentrated along the drainage of the Colorado River. Abstract elements include rectilinear, symmetrical and geometric forms, and distinctive 'shield' designs (rectangular forms with internal designs). Representational forms include stick-figure anthropomorphs that have fingers and/or toes indicated, and lizard figures. Anthropomorphs with distinct fingers and toes are not restricted to the Grapevine Canyon style, and are found within and beyond the Great Basin.

Painted images fall within the same stylistic categories as pecked images, but have a less frequent expression in the region. Petroglyphs are found on sandstone outcrops, white cliff faces, shelters, and boulders, suggesting both private and public expressions of the art



Pahranaagat anthropomorph

whereas pictographs are found primarily in shelters.

Meanings and Functions

The meanings and functions of southern Nevada rock art have provoked much discussion. The most popular explanations include the idea that rock art was made as a form of hunting magic to ensure success in the hunt or increase numbers of game animals and other critical resources; that it was made by shamans to record significant trance experiences; and that rock art was a public symbolic resource that expressed important cultural knowledge.

Suggested Reading:

Fowler, Catherine and Don Fowler (editors), 2008, *The Great Basin: People and Place in Ancient Times*. SAR Press, Santa Fe.

Heizer, Robert and Martin Baumhoff, 1962, *Prehistoric Rock Art of Nevada and Eastern California*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Schaafsma, Polly, 1986, *Rock Art*, in *Handbook of American Indians: Vol. 11, Great Basin*. Edited by Warren D'Azevedo, pp. 215-226. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Development News by Janice Barbour



I'm honored and excited to have the opportunity to work with the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION, its staff, volunteers and members, and for the chance to raise funds for a cause that everyone is enthused about – the NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION. Over the next year, I look forward to expanding our membership base; implementing a Planned Giving program, and introducing a new fundraising program. I'll be asking for your support, feedback and ideas on how we can best raise funds for NRAF.

I'm often asked by my friends and colleagues why I like to raise money. In over 17 years of fundraising my answer to that question has never changed: it's not about asking people for money, it's about getting to know interesting people and connecting to their desire to support the needs of an organization – now that's a great job!

I started in fundraising as the founding director of the Nevada Self-Employment Trust, a microenterprise program that grew statewide in seven years. I refer to those years as my "on-the-job" training. The organization grew rapidly and is still in existence today – we did something right!

I've done grant writing for Washoe Legal Services; served as Director of Development for the National Judicial College, and Director of Corporate & Foundations Relations for Boalt Hall, School of Law, UC Berkeley. As a nonprofit consultant I have the privilege of working with clients such as the Nevada Rock

Art Foundation, the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, Tahoe Mountain Resorts, Truckee Trails Foundation, and the Squaw Valley Institute.

FUNDRAISING PRIORITIES & HOW YOU CAN HELP

Raising funds for NRAF is necessary to make sure that we can continue to record sites and help protect rock art in Nevada. To ensure the success of our efforts, we are asking for everyone's involvement, support and ideas to help us reach our goals. Let's take a look at our current goals and Wish List:

President's priorities

1. Raise an additional \$50,000 a year
2. Increase our capacity for field projects which includes developing two full-time staff positions, including someone to help with fundraising
3. Double our membership and increase volunteer effort in the field and in the office

Funding Wish List

1. Additional archeology staff for field projects and to write reports
2. An office in Las Vegas
3. More money for staff which equals more research; more field time; more public education and more published research
4. A facility to host a rock art archive and a library with records

Here's How You Can Help

1. Help us build our membership by referring new members
2. Renew your membership, if possible, at higher level
3. Host a point of entry event in your home as a way to introduce NRAF to your community, friends and family
4. Make an annual gift at our end of year appeal
5. Refer names to us of people you think might be interested in supporting NRAF and its mission
6. Participate in the "preserve a panel" program
7. Leave a planned gift to NRAF

If you would like to talk with me about a gift, or share your ideas, please call me at 775-376-3832 or email at jsbarbour@nvrockart.org. See you at the Annual Meeting in May!

Donor Profile: Joann J. Jackson, 1934-2008

In memory of his late wife, Joann J. Jackson, NRAF member Bill Jackson has sponsored a panel at Lagomarsino.



Joann grew up in Long Beach, California, and attended the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles in the 1950s. She loved the beach and ocean, but life took her to the Great Basin, where she was graduated from University of Nevada, Reno in 1981. She then earned her master's degree in Foods and Nutrition from the University of Utah. She subsequently trained as a Registered Dietician and worked both in Utah and Nevada. In Reno, she worked for

the Nevada State Women, Infants, and Children Program.

When Joann retired, she turned her focus to gardening, hiking, travel, and once again to artistic endeavors, working with her first love, painting, but also in a variety of media and styles, particularly landscapes of the Sierra and Great Basin. Her work was shown in several galleries and art shows, frequently in the "Rockin" Art Shows held at the Artists Co-op of Reno. It was Joann's interest in art that brought her to NRAF, and she and Bill joined the FOUNDATION in 2003. Joann focused her volunteer hours on inking as a natural extension of her artistic talents.

In addition to her artistic work, Joann devoted her time to Nevada Greyhounds Unlimited, an organization that finds homes for retired racing greyhounds. Her own adopted racer was Molly, and Joann and Molly visited local hospitals and nursing homes providing 'pet therapy' to patients as part of the

Paws of Love program.

Joann was also a master gardner with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Service. She particularly enjoyed cultivating roses and vegetables, in her own garden.

Joann J. Jackson died on October 14th after a lengthy crusade against cancer.



Joann J. Jackson

THE NEVADA ROCK ART FOUNDATION

Membership

Spiral (individual) \$25 Big Horn Sheep (family) \$50 Atlatl \$100

and

Archer \$250-\$500 Weaver \$501-\$1,000 Sunburst \$1,001- 4,999

Donation Levels

Alanah Woody Dot Circle

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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 renew by: CHECK MC VISA (sorry, no AMEX)

Card # _____ Expiration date _____

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

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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



N E V A D A

R O C K A R T

F O U N D A T I O N

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