



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2012

DIXIE ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

P.O. Box 611
Washington, Utah 84780

John Mangels - President & Newsletter Editor	Dave Evans - Treasurer
Keith Rhea - Board Member	Mel & Marie Langness
Boma Johnson - Board Member	Karen Monsen

November Meeting

When: November 14th @ 7 PM

Where: DSC
Udvar-Hazy Bldg.
Room 219

Why: David Van Alfen of the BLM will talk on "The Paiutes and Prehistory: An Archaeological Problem or the Problem with Archaeologists?" The presentation discusses the "traditional" and "heretical" views of the Southern Paiutes relationship to the prehistoric populations of southern Utah and northern Arizona.

Web Site

The Dixie Archaeology Society web site (www.dixierockart.webs.com) is up and running. Please consider signing up as a site member. Site members should receive email updates whenever anything on the site is updated.

Please post your comments on the blog that is part of the site. This site is for you, the members. We'd like to hear what you think.

Field Trip Report

The October field trip was to Fremont Indian State Park in Clean Creek Canyon. The group was small but we had a great time viewing the glyphs, picnicking along Clear Creek and viewing the excellent museum in the park.



The glyphs were difficult to view, with many at the top of talus slopes. However many were visible with binoculars and telephoto lens. The style of the glyphs ranged from archaic to Fremont / Paiute. Go to <http://dixierockart.webs.com/Field%20Trip%20Reports/Fremont%20Indian%20State%20Park%20Field%20Trip%20Report%20-%20October%202012.pdf> to see the glyphs.

The museum had artifacts from the various site inside the park and from other Fremont sites within Utah including weaving tools, pottery and figurines.



Weaving Tools



Pottery



Pottery



Figurines

On the way home we viewed a very unusual site over Beaver. Perhaps it was coming to pick up its leader.



This was a great trip and this was a perfect time to visit the park.

Field Trip Info

The November 17th field trip will be to Lower Arrow Canyon and one other site near Moapa NV. This will be an all day trip with about a 1 ½ to 2 hour drive. There will be some hiking involved. There will be dirt road driving so high clearance vehicles will be required. Remember to bring a lunch and lots of water.

Remember, you must be a member of DAS to participate in a field trip. You must be at the meeting in order to sign up for a field trip.

Meeting Report

Kaye “Feather” Robinson gave a talk on the “Birthing Cave” in Cave Valley.

Feather began her presentation with some general remarks about rock art. Native Americans believe that it was created for specific purposes at high level sacred places. She noted that the geography of the Cave Valley region of Zion National Park has the elements necessary to create one of those places.

She discussed the symbology associated with the geography of the area. She noted the association of Mother Earth with a “turtle” shaped hill and Father Sky with a “lying down Indian” shaped hill. Getting closer to the cave, she noted the rock shaped “midwives”, a rock shaped phallic symbol, and a ridge line forming the legs and feet of mother earth. Finally the at the cave entrance you enter the womb of mother earth.

At the entrance to the cave, you see a Paiute petroglyph of a birthing scene (hence the name of the cave). This scene has a figure with one hand up and one hand down, a motif seen inside the cave as well as other rock art sites in SW Utah. A power symbol is over the head of one figure along with a swastika style movement symbol.

Upon entering the cave, you begin to encounter pictographs on all the walls.

Beginning on the left wall are pictographs in black paint on a very dark surface, making the glyphs very difficult to see if you do not know they are there. The black paint represents the underworld or the “before” world.

On the back cave wall, the glyphs are in a brighter color, yellow or white. This represents the current world. The main character in the cave is shown in Figure 1. This is a

transitional figure - note he has only 4 toes. He is important – note the flute players playing in his ear, which is up signifying he is listening. He also has an array of dots above his head. Interestingly, it appears that the design of his legs was changed at some point in time.

Also on the back wall are other figures in yellow, with at least one having flute players playing in his ear (Figure 1). The flute players give this cave an alternative name, the “flute” cave.

The figures on the rear wall (Figure 1) have unique triangular shaped bodies, arms, legs and heads. This design motif has been given the name “Cave Valley” style.

Note also in Figure 1, the figures with one arm up and one arm down. In Chinese mythology, this motif means either friendship or prosperity, depending on which arm is up.

The right wall changes into figures using a white or blue / turquoise paint motif, representing the sky world. This is called the “spirit” wall.

Feather closed with the comment that she believes that the cave represents how one “transforms” or “transcends” from the underworld to the current world to the sky world.

Go to

<http://dixierockart.webs.com/Technical%20Presentations/The%20Birthing%20Cave%20-%20October%202010,%202012.pdf> for more information and photos from Feather’s talk.

Go to <http://dixierockart.webs.com/Field%20Trip%20Reports/Cave%20Valley%20-%20June%202010.pdf> for a discussion of a prior field trip to the “Birthing Cave”.

Feather also calls this site the “Flute Cave”. Go to

<http://dixierockart.webs.com/Technical%20Presentations/The%20Magic%20Flute%20by%20Feather%20-%20October%202012.pdf> to read that story.



Figure 1

New Project

Billy Wilkin is a documentary film maker who has produced films for DOCUTAH such as "From Depression to Destiny" a film about the CCC. He is currently planning to produce a film about rock art vandalism. He hopes that this film will help educate the public about the importance of rock art and the damage that vandalism can and is causing to this important cultural resource. He has approached Feather who has in turn approached DAS for help in providing him with information about various aspects of rock art.

The DAS board fully supports this project and has directed Billy to various individuals who can supply Billy with the information that he needs. If you want to participate in this project, contact Billy@SillyBillyMedia.com.

This is a unique opportunity for DAS to fulfill one of our primary goals – helping to preserve rock art through education. I hope everyone helps Billy in any way possible.

Rock Art Visitors to St. George

A group from Western Rock Art Research (WRAR) (<http://www.westernrockartresearch.com>) will be visiting St. George. This group works to promote and facilitate the preservation and scientific research of prehistoric and historic rock art heritage resources on private and public lands throughout the world, focusing on the western United States. They will be visiting Southern Utah and working with BLM to document some of the sites around our area.

As a part of their visit, Mr. David Lee, archaeologist, investigator, director, and member of the non-profit organization, Western Rock Art Research (WRAR), will give the noon **brown-bag lecture**, "Through the Eyes of the Elders: Understanding the Rock Art of the Dreamtime" at the St. George BLM field office Friday, **November 9, 2012** and will present the same topic again at **Sun River on November 16, 2012 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.** Both lectures are open to the public and free of charge.

Mr. Lee will share what he learned after examining twenty - seven sites in Northern Australia, one of the last places left where rock art is still a living part of indigenous culture.

The BLM brown-bag lecture series is sponsored by Dixie/Arizona Strip Interpretative Association, the BLM, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Forest Service. Lectures are free of charge, but seating is limited. To reserve a seat, visit the BLM field office at 345 E. Riverside Drive or call 435-688-3200. Registration procedure for the Sun River presentation has not been established yet, but you can contact the Sun River Community Center at 435-773-4100 or events@sunrivertoday.com for more information.

Thanks

Thanks to Feather for giving the October presentation and introducing us to Billy Wilkin. Thanks to all who are or will be helping Billy with his rock art related video and thanks to Billy for undertaking a rock art project.

Thanks to Mel for leading the field trip to Fremont State Park.

Final Thoughts

There certainly is a lot happening with DAS and with rock art in the area. The rock art video project proposed by Billy Wilkin is extremely exciting. Those that viewed his film on the CCC know that he produces a quality product.

The visit by the WRAR is also exciting. I assume you can contact BLM to see how you can participate in their project.

This is a perfect time of year to go out and view rock art. Get out and hike! – But be careful.

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