



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2012

## DIXIE ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

P.O. Box 611  
Washington, Utah 84780

John Mangels - President & Newsletter Editor	Dave Evans - Treasurer
Barbara Bergman - Secretary	Susannah & Mark Nilsson, Board Members
John Macumber, Board Member	Kat and Boma Johnson - Board Members

### January Meeting

**When:** January 11, 2012 @ 7 PM

**Where:** DSC, Udvar Hazy Bldg, Room 219

**Why:** THE MAYA OF GUATEMALA: Losing Cultural Identity in a Rapidly Changing World

This slide-illustrated presentation by photographer and former archaeologist Michael Plyler examines the cultural erosion of the highland Maya of Guatemala, descendants of the pyramid-builders of such classic Maya sites as Tikal, Palenque, Caracol, and others. The Maya are extraordinary for many reasons. A continuously existing culture for 4,500 years, they were the first to develop the mathematical concept of zero. Their accurate astronomical measurements allowed them to calculate the path of Venus with an error of 14 seconds a year and to create a calendar projected 30,000 years into the future with an error of less than three minutes. Additionally, they invented the corbelled arch, had the most advanced writing system in the western hemisphere and some of the most admired weaving. Their empire lasted roughly six times as long as the Roman Empire.

This program will recap their exceptional accomplishments and cultural history before examining their collisions with European culture, their oppression at the hands of a series of right-wing dictators from the 1950's through the 1990's, and today's cultural erosion

accelerated by their exposure to rampant consumerism and tourism. Audience discussion will focus on what is lost when ancient cultures are eroded, as is happening with the Maya.

Michael Plyler has been photographing the Maya of Guatemala since 1982 and has made some 15 trips there between 1982 and 2008 to record his vision. Trained as an archaeologist, Plyler brings an anthropological perspective to his photography. Over the course of the years his portraits record the subtle changes and diminishment of the traditional dress, or traje.

Michael Plyler has been giving presentations on the Maya for the last ten years. His studies of the Maya and their traditions (including weaving) have included both extensive research and conversations with, and observations of, the Maya themselves.

His photographs of the Maya are contained in the permanent collections of the Museum of the American Indian, the Heard Museum, the San Diego Museum of Man, the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, the Barrick Museum of Natural History at the University of Nevada - Las Vegas, the Museo Ixchel in Guatemala City, Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo in Guatemala City, and the premier research center in Central America, Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Meso America in Antigua, Guatemala.

This program is presented in conjunction with the Utah Humanities Council.

## Web Site

The Dixie Archaeology Society web site ([www.dixierockart.webs.com](http://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.

## Dues are Due

The dues for 2012 are due. The dues for 2012 remain unchanged from 2011. They are:

\$20 per person

\$25 per family

The dues include the opportunity to participate in monthly field trips, a summer social and a December holiday party. Your dues also go to room rent for the monthly meetings, liability insurance for the field trips and hosting of the web site.

Please bring your payment to the January meeting or go online and follow the directions on our web site <http://dixierockart.webs.com/membershipinformation.htm>.

## Meeting Report

Christmas is about family. Our DAS “family” gathered at the Green Spring HOA Clubhouse for our annual Holiday party.

Good Friends:



Good Food:



Good Music supplied by our talented Native American Flute players:



Bob



Joan



Mark and Dave



Chris



Jane



Bob and Jane

The evening was highlighted by a surprise visit by Santa himself.



Thanks to all who worked hard to make this event possible.

## Field Trip Report

The December field trip was a “Tour of St. George” that highlighted a number of petroglyph sites within the city. All of the sites visited were within 100 yards of subdivisions or commercial developments, putting them in danger. All of the sites visited consisted on glyphs on individual rocks spread over a fairly wide area. Consequently, taken individually, they receive little attention. However, taken in their entirety, and we did not have time to visit all of the sites in this general area of the city, they represent a unique resource and look back at the life of the St. George’s first inhabitants.

**Bloomington:**

The panel in Figure 1 shows typical Virgin Anasazi glyphs; two anthro's and a pair of spirals perhaps telling of a journey. The glyph on the lower left and the "Cr" glyph next to the anthro's is unique.



**Figure 1**

The glyph in Figure 2 appears to be very old, however this could be deceiving because the rock has no patina. The primary image is of shaman in spirit form (no arms or legs).



**Figure 2**

### **Bloomington Petroglyph Park:**

The petroglyph park consists of two very large rocks that are covered with glyphs (Figures 3-6). It is a “newspaper” rock, with many of the glyphs being over written by newer glyphs. One dominate glyph is a very large spiral (Figure 5).



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**



**Figure 6**

**Tonaquint:**

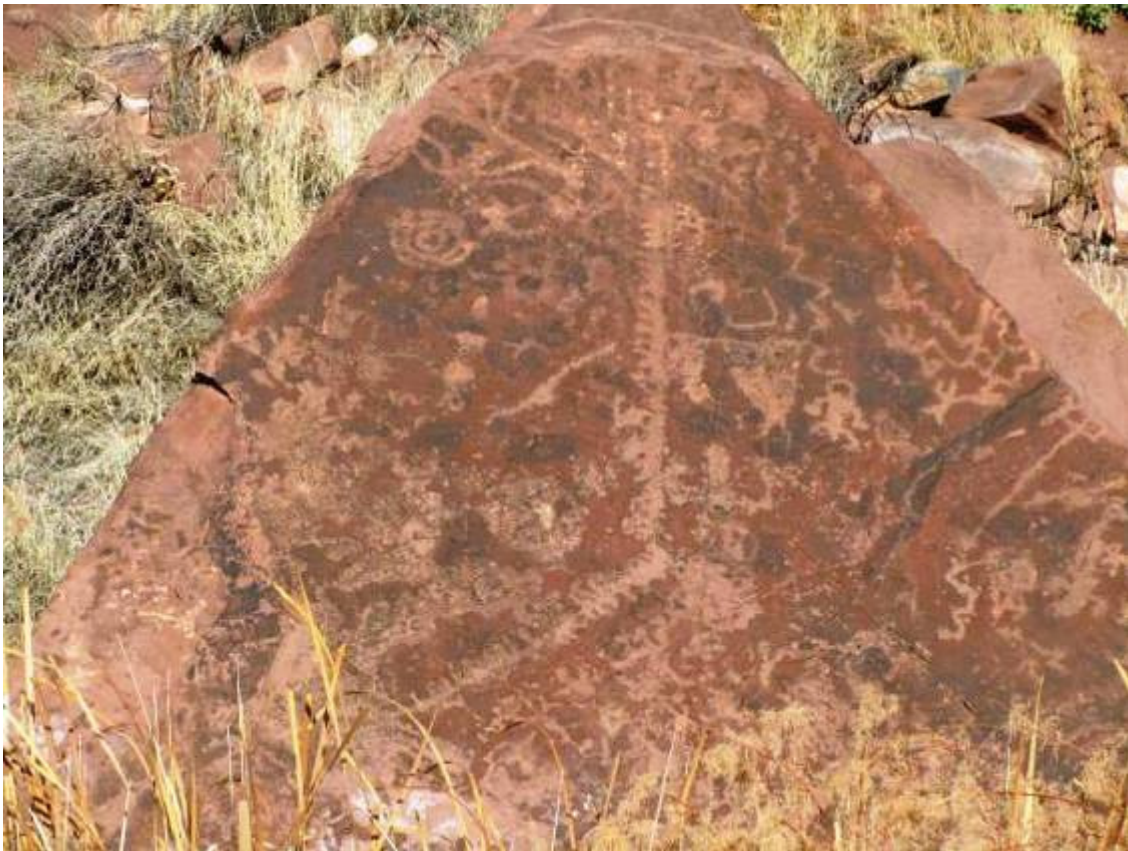
This is a unique site because of the location of the glyphs on a rock face at ground level. The spiral (Figure 7) is also unique with the “dot” pattern that almost makes the design look like a maze. This appears very old because the glyph is mostly re-patenated.



**Figure 7**

### **Number 13:**

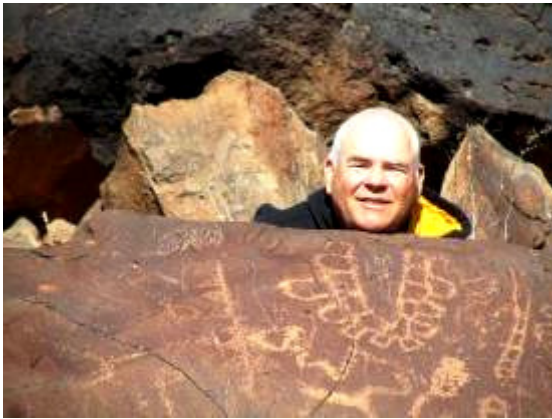
This site consists of one rock panel (Figure 8). The dominate glyph is formed by two lines (one vertical and one at a 45 degree angle). The lines have a series of “tick” marks along their length. This likely related to a story with commentary at each mark. The remaining images on the rock likely relate to the story in some way.



**Figure 8**

### **Maverick:**

The Maverick site is noted for its “necklaces” (Figure 9 and 10). It is one of three locations in the St. George area where necklaces dominate the rock art motifs. The other two are Santa Clara Canyon and Fort Pierce wash.



**Figure 9**



**Figure 10**

Also present are anthro's of differing styles; one is a large stick figure (Figure 11) while the others have distinct triangular shaped bodies (Figure 12).



**Figure 11**



**Figure 12**

### **Indian Hills:**

The dominate glyph on this site is this anthro done in the “Cave Valley” style with triangular shaped body, arms , legs and head (Figure 13).



**Figure 13**

This site also has a number of panels with concentric circles (Figure 13 and 14).



**Figure 14**

This site also has one panel with a necklace (these are located all along this ridge, which is not far from the Maverick site).



Figure 15

## Field Trip Info

The January field trip will be on Saturday, January 21st will be to Santa Clara Canyon. This trip will involve about a four mile round trip hike with some scrambling to see the two main rock art panels. There are some gradual elevation changes in the hike. The main hike will be on a well maintained dirt trail / dirt road. Regular vehicles can be used to get to the parking area at the trailhead.

**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.**

## Thanks

Thanks to Dave and Vickie for setting up the holiday party. Thanks to Susie who was the “designated shopper” for the holiday decorations. Thanks to Kat for her help with the presentation. Thanks to the flute players (Chris, Dave, Mark, Bob, Jane and Joan). Special thanks to Santa (Ron Greenlee) for making the party special.

Thanks also go to Dave for his work with the tee shirt project. I’m sure that there were DAS tee shirts under a many Christmas trees this year.

## New Class

### *NATIVE AMERICAN ROCK ART SYMBOLS PART I*



PRESENTED BY

# Boma Johnson, Archaeologist



Community Education Department

**DAY: MONDAY**

**DATES: Jan 9 to Feb 27, 2012**

**TIME: 6:00 TO 8:00 PM**

**PLACE: SUN RIVER COMMUNITY CENTER, MULTIPURPOSE ROOM  
(Fast & Easy To Reach From St George- Take Exit 2 From I-15)**

**COST: \$44 per person (Cost set by DSC)**

**PHONE: 435-652-7675 FAX: 435-628-1286** Easiest way to register is by phone.

**IN PERSON: 300 South 800 East, St George, Utah**

"Hey Mister, what are those squiggles on the rock?" Wanna find out? Yes, they have meaning, and no, they are not "just graffiti". Join us for our further exploration of the fascinating mysterious world of Native American Rock Art, with emphasis this time on how rock art- petroglyphs (pecked symbols) and pictographs (painted symbols) were used as a form of specific written communication, for specific purposes: stories, history, clan migrations, astronomical calendars and more! Find out which symbols traveled, and why. Learn about the "Flower World" and how it is shown in rock art. The class will be presented with a wide variety of updated or new media formats, from PowerPoint lectures, to videos and DVDs. Group discussions and questions are encouraged- our classes are FUN as well as informative. Our previous classes are NOT a prerequisite- you may jump on the Merry-Go-Round at any time! If you have taken this class before- don't worry- you won't be bored! The new handouts on petroglyph symbols would alone make it worthwhile to take the class! For more info, go to: [www.petroglyph.info](http://www.petroglyph.info)

**STUDENTS SHOULD REGISTER BEFORE CLASS BEGINS**

## **ARARA 2012 Annual Meeting**

The American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA, [www.arara.org](http://www.arara.org)) will be holding their 2012 annual meeting in St. Gorge from May 25-28, 2012 at the Lexington Hotel. We will need volunteers to help at this event:

- Thurs May 24
  - Registration, 2-3 people
  - Set up for Public Lecture, 2-3 people
- Fri May 25
  - Field trips ~15 people
  - Registration, 2-3 people
- Sat & Sun May 26-27
  - Flute Players for AM & PM Breaks
  - Misc Assistance during the day, 1-2 people
  - Misc Assistance during the evening events, 1-2 people
- Mon May 28
  - Field trips ~15 people

This is a big deal for the community and DAS. Your help is appreciated.

## Final Thought

I was very happy with the Holiday Party, with how hard everyone worked and how everyone pitched in so the work was shared. I was also very happy to see the large attendance (free food equals lots of people). I was pleased to see the friendships that have developed within the DAS “family”. This made the party a true “family” celebration. What a great way to end 2011 and to begin 2012!

Joan and I want to wish every one of you a very Happy New Year and hope the joy of this Holiday season extends to you and your family throughout 2012.



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