

Mt. Irish

DAS visited Mt. Irish in October 2010.

The Mt. Irish site is one of many located in the Pahrnagat Valley of Lincoln County Nevada. Mt. Irish is set up as a “Rock Art and Archaeological District” by the BLM.

The Mt. Irish sits above the Pahrnagat Valley at above 5000 ft. The vegetation is primarily juniper / pinion forest. The sites in this area were not habitation sites, but rather hunting and gathering sites, with the habitation sites lower in the valley area where there was most likely a good water supply. The Pahrnagat Valley was on a major north - south trade route that ran through the Mesquite / Overton area. We visited four of the sites on Mt. Irish. All of these sites were rock outcroppings that created good shelter from the elements, making them good camp sites. They were located around washes that would have supplied water at various times of the year.

The rock art consisted of Great Basin rectilinear and curvilinear styles along with later Shoshoni or Paiute style. The recognizable patterns consisted of many rain and star patterns along with sheep and deer / elk figures. The anthropomorphs were very different from the anasazi types of the St. George area. Absent were the common anasazi migration symbol (spiral), and clan symbols common in the St. George area. The sheep and deer symbols are often observed to have overwritten the abstract patterns indicating they were from the later groups (Shoshoni / Paiute).

Monolith Echo Panel

The rock art was located on a north facing wall. This site had mostly Great Basin Abstract images some of which have been overwritten with more figurative designs.



Figure 1. Sheep, water symbol serpents



Figure 2. Abstract symbols



Figure 3. Sheep, Shaman with head dress (Anasazi style)



Figure 4. Lower part of same panel, rain symbol at bottom



Figure 5. Water Bird

Paiute Rocks Site (Walking Tour 1)



Figure 6. Atlatl (top center)



Figure 7. Sheep in a depression in the rock face. Dinner??



Figure 8. Eight Anthros with hands touching. Family?



Figure 9. Anthro – note rounded body shape



Figure 10. Complex panel. Rain, lightning, portals, etc.



Figure 11. Sheep, possible bear paw



Figure 12. Spirit person, serpent, 7 portals



Figure 13, Elk



Figure 14. Deer, sheep



Figure 15. Shield

The shield image in Figure 15 is very unusual. Shields are usually associated with Fremont or Ute people. Neither was common in this area. This could be from people who were transient to the area – on the trade route from north to south.

Shaman Knob Site (Walking Tour 2)



Figure 16. Patterned Body Anthropomorph (PBA) with a sheep



Figure 17. Pahranagat Man (Shaman) with rain symbols and turkey clan symbol



Figure 18.



Figure 19. "Coyote spreads the stars" story. Coyote, star pattern and burden basket with Stars.

Figure 18 is interesting. It has a rectangular sheep (the only one) that is similar to ones on Anasazi Ridge. At the bottom it has a series of figures from left; thin man, fat man,

upright burden basket. In the center is a symbol that is probably a cloud with rain, but looks like a sombrero or a spaceship. Next to it is another thin man, burden basket and two other men. This panel looks Virgin Anasazi (Gold Butte) and appears to be the only one of its type on the sites that we visited.



Figure 20. Rectangular patterns.



Figure 21. Drummer (basketball player).
Only one of its type.



Figure 22. Rectangular pattern. PBA, rain, star symbols.

Shaman Hill (Walking Tour 3)



Figure 23. Star pattern over written with sheep.



Figure 24. Sheep



Figure 25. Pahranagat man (Shaman Figure).



Figure 26. Sheep and PBA. There were at least 12 sheep on this panel.



Figure 27. Sheep, Lizards (?)



Figure 28. PBA with an Atlatl (?)



Figure 29. Many sheep



Figure 30. Sheep panel continued. Pregnant sheep (Top left) and detailed sheep on right.



Figure 31. Horned man (SBA) perhaps with atlatl.

This is a great complex of many individual sites and panels. For more information on this site, go to:

<http://www.forsythlv.com/mtirishpetroglyphs.htm>

<http://www.forsythlv.com/mtirishpetroglyphs.htm>

<http://www.forsythlv.com/mtirishpetroglyphs.htm>

For information about Mt. Irish and other sites in Lincoln County NV go to
<http://lincolncountynevada.com/images/RockArtGuide.pdf>.

#####