



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2012

DIXIE ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

P.O. Box 611
Washington, Utah 84780

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| John Mangels - President & Newsletter Editor | Dave Evans - Treasurer |
| Barbara Bergman - Secretary | Susannah & Mark Nilsson, Board Members |
| Keith Rhea, Board Member | Boma Johnson - Board Members |
| | |

March Meeting

When: March 14, 2012 @ 7 PM

Where: DSC, Udvar Hazy Bldg, Room 219

Why: Robert Nash of Bighorn Archaeological Consultants will give an overview of St. George Basin prehistory and recent excavations in the area by Bighorn Archaeological Consultants.

Organization

John Macumber and Kat Johnson have resigned from the DAS board. We thank them for their service.

Keith Rhea has agreed to serve on the DAS board. Welcome Keith.

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.

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

Meeting Report

Diana Hawks of the Arizona BLM gave a presentation on "Discovering the Archaeology of the Arizona Strip".



Diana Hawks



Diana described the Arizona Strip and the area located between the Utah State line and the Grand Canyon. In January 2000, President Bill Clinton created the Grand Canyon / Parashant National Monument consisting of over 1 million acres. This area is jointly managed by the BLM and the National Parks Service. In November 2000, President Clinton created the Vermillion Cliffs National Monument which is managed by the BLM. In total, the BLM manages over 3.2 million acres of land on the Arizona Strip. Of that land, only 3% was inventoried in 2001, 6% in 2008 and 7-8% in 2011.

The archaeology on the Arizona Strip goes back to 8000 – 12,000 BC to the Paleo-Indian time. This was confirmed when a Clovis Point was found in the Virgin River Gorge. There are a number of Archaic sites (8,000 – 1,000 BC), including in Paria Canyon. The Anasazi farmed this area from 1,000 BC to about 1300 AD. The Southern Paiute were on the Arizona Strip beginning in about 1150 AD. Historic time on the Strip begins in 1776 with the Escalante expedition.

She said that 17 of the 35 Hopi clans trace their heritage to the Arizona Strip. The Hopi are direct descendants of the Anasazi people.

The Arizona Strip came into being in 1912 when Arizona obtained statehood. It was part of the Arizona territory and in 1911, the politicians questioned if Arizona wanted the area. One state legislator, a woman, visited the area and reported back “You want it!” and the rest is history.

Diana said that there are currently 20 public use sites on the Arizona Strip including Little Black Mountain and Nampawap in the St. George area.

Diana went on to talk a great deal about the Vermillion Cliffs area, showing wonderful photos of the scenery and of some of the rock art.

Diana detailed a number of opportunities for volunteering on the Arizona Strip. These include:

Kaibab – Vermillion Cliffs Heritage Alliance -

<http://www.grandcanyontrust.org/kane/kaibab-vermillion-cliffs.php>. The KCVHA is chartered with preserving, protecting and interpreting the cultural resources of the Arizona Strip. This organization provides volunteer opportunities in the spring and fall, as well as events during March which is Archaeology Month on the Strip.

Grand Canyon Trust - <http://www.grandcanyontrust.org/kane/kvcha-field-school.php> operates a field school as well as many other activities.

Old Spanish Trail Association - <http://www.oldspanishtrail.org/> is working to locate the exact routes taken by the early Spanish as they moved through Utah and the Arizona Strip.

Arizona Site Steward Program was started in 1986 and currently has over 75 members dedicated to helping preserve the archaeological sites in the Arizona Strip.

Field Trip Report

The February field trip was to Kirk's Grotto in the Gold Butte area of Southern Nevada. The conditions and the weather were perfect for this field trip and the group had a great time.



The field trip consisted of visiting a number of sites in the Kirk's Grotto area. As you view the photo's, observe that the style of the glyphs appear quite different from site to site, even though they are all within about 1 to 2 miles of each other.

Mud Wash Site:

The petroglyphs are high on a red rock wall that is adjacent to Mud Wash.

These glyphs are very similar in design to some at Kotha Circus and at the Whitney Hartman site.



Figure 1 – The Main Mud Wash Panel

Kirk's Grotto:

The Kirk's Grotto site consists of a number of panels in different locations in the same general area (about ¼ mile diameter). The site consists of a relatively flat, sandy area between two groupings of red rock outcroppings (Figure 2).



Figure 2 – The Grotto Site



Figure 3 – The Grotto



Figure 4 – Location of the Main Panel

The Grotto is really a slot canyon (Figure 3) at the back of the center - right outcropping.

The main panel at the end of the Grotto (Figure 4) at the top of a rock pile. The main parts of the panel are shown in Figures 5, 6 and 7.

It appears that this panel was created at different times or at least by different authors. The left portion of Figure 5 is done in a completely different style than the right portion of Figure 6 and of Figure 7. The glyphs are not drawn as precisely and the line quality is less defined. The images in Figure 7 are very different from those in either Figure 5 or Figure 6, even though the line quality is about the same as Figure 6.



Figure 5 – Left Portion of Main Panel



Figure 6 – Center Portion of Main Panel



Figure 7 – Right Portion of Main Panel

The main theme in Figure 7 is the upside down corn plant. Around this image are rain symbols and a rainbow. The interpretation is that the corn is dying and the people are asking for rain.

A separate panel outside the Grotto, on the north face of the outcropping, again shows an image of dying corn plants (Figure 8). The prayer for rain and lack of food is a central theme in many of the rock art sites in the Gold Butte area. Remember, the survival of the Anasazi was “All about the Rain”.



Figure 8 – Dying Corn Plant Panel on the North Side of the Grotto Outcropping

There are other rock art images inside the Grotto; however they appear to be isolated images of abstract designs and in general are in very poor condition. Many appear to be older than the images in the main panel.

An interesting anthro outside the Grotto (Figure 9).



Figure 9

Across from the Grotto in the East Outcropping is a large alcove where there is a large “newspaper” rock (Figure 20).



Figure 20



Figure 21



Figure 22

The glyphs on this rock are more “typical” with anthro’s, sheep, bear paws, etc.

Walking away from the Kirk's Grotto complex about ¼ mile to the northeast around the east outcropping is a site consisting of two large boulders.

The first panel (Figure 23 shows some circles (portals), some spirit beings, and a rain symbol (on the bottom right). Central to the panel is an hour glass shape and an oval shape with cross hatching. The oval could be an upside down burden basket and the hour glass could be a burden basket in two positions, up and down. This could relate to the theme in Gold Butte of draught and poor crops. The hour glass shape could be a full basket becoming empty with the oval shape being an empty basket.



Figure 23

The second panel at this site consists of two separate areas. Figure 24 is at the top of the boulder and the glyph is mainly a large cross hatched area perhaps representing the sky or the Milky Way.

The bottom portion of the boulder has two glyphs shown in Figure 25. The image on the left is a parabolic in shape and could be a burden basket. The image on the right is a circle with a cross in the center with some lines radiating from it on the bottom. There appears to be something attached at the top of the circle. This could be an image of the sun, a shield or something else. The images on this boulder appear to be more deeply pecked than those in Figure 24, perhaps because of the different patina on the rock.



Figure 24



Figure 25

Babes Butte:

About ½ mile from the Kirk's Grotto site is Babes Butte (Figure 26).



Figure 26

The main panel is shown in Figures 27 and 28. The top portion of the panel consists of a sheep next to an image that looks like a pendent on a necklace. It is however a series of dots that eventually lead in to the main portion of the panel in Figure 28. This likely represents a journey, perhaps made by the sheep clan. Coyote may be seen along the way. The dots in the “pendent” could represent the number of days that were spent at a particular area.

In the bottom area, we see some concentric circles (portals), a spiral, a sun image, some spirit beings, a hand print and other images. This likely represents the story of a long and complicated journey.



Figure 27



Figure 28

There were some other, smaller panels, but one stood out (Figure 29). It shows two images of a single sheep and one of a turtle all upside down. These are possibly clan symbols and could mean that the clans died out or perhaps left the area. That would play into the Gold Butte theme of draught and famine.



Figure 29

One last glyph from Babe's Butte is shown in Figure 30. Debbie and Andy – this one's for you. I didn't know that the Anasazi knew about Texas, but thinking about it...



Figure 30 – Don't Mess with Texas

Go to

<http://dixierockart.webs.com//Field%20Trip%20Reports/Mud%20Wash,%20Kirks%20Grotto%20and%20Babes%20Butte%20Field%20Trip.pdf> to see more photos from the Kirk's Grotto field trip.

Field Trip Info

The March 17th field trip will be to the Quail Creek Ranch. This is a special opportunity as the rock art that we will be viewing is located on private property. Special permission must be obtained to enter this land. This is a drive up site and normal vehicles can make the trip. Some amount of walking is required with some minor scrambling, but it is a relatively easy trip. Bring water and snacks.

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 again to John and Kat for their service on the DAS board.

Thanks to Diana Hawks for a great presentation.

ARARA 2012 Annual Meeting

DAS Hosts ARARA Conference in St. George

The American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) is coming to St. George for a four day rock art conference on Memorial Day Weekend, Friday, May 25 through Monday, May 28. DAS is pleased to be co-host of this conference along with the Utah Rock Art Research Association. The conference consists of two days of speakers and two days of fieldtrips. Information on the conference, including registration materials, is available at the ARARA website, www.arara.org.

A number of DAS members have already volunteered to do fieldtrips. We need a few more volunteers. The following fieldtrips are open:

- Fort Pierce Wash, Friday, May 25 and Monday, May 28.
- Parowan Gap to Black Point Loop, Friday, May 25 and Monday, May 28.
- Nampawep and Paiute Cave, Friday, May 25.

- Mt. Irish, Friday, May 25
- Anasazi Ridge, Friday, May 25 (half-day trip)
- Virgin River Gorge, Little Black Mountain, and the Bear Site, Monday, May 28.
- Red Cliffs, Babylon, and Quail Creek, Monday, May 28.

If you haven't been to one of these sites, you will be taken there in April. Leading a trip for ARARA is essentially the same as for DAS. Trips are informal, you don't need to interpret or give a presentation, and ARARA members are grateful for your assistance. ARARA has liability insurance for ARARA sanctioned fieldtrips, and you will receive a complementary ARARA conference t-shirt.

If you are interested in leading an ARARA fieldtrip, contact Jeff Allen at allenjeffrey@beyondbb.com with a copy to John Mangels at johnmangels@msn.com.

In addition to field trip leaders, we will need volunteers to help with other tasks 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

The ARARA conference is coming closer. Please look at your calendars and please consider volunteering for this event. There are lots of things that are needed to assist the ARARA organizers and attendees to make their time in St. George a memorable one.

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