

VESTIGES



Brief

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President's Message

This is my last opportunity as URARA president to express my appreciation in *Vestiges* for all who have contributed to URARA's programs, activities, and service these past two years. We are a volunteer organization, and the participation of all who contribute to the effectiveness of our great organization is certainly appreciated. THANK YOU!

I am very sorry to have to inform our membership that Craig Bowen's health is now such that his wife, Nina, has found it necessary to take a temporary hiatus from her position as a board member. Craig and Nina have long been URARA members and have been key contributors in many aspects of our success. Nina has served as president and has been on the board several times.

Right at the top of the list of their contributions is the organization, filing, and storage in their home of URARA's library of studies, papers, books, *Utah Rock Art* volumes, and the rock art photograph collection of Clifford Rayl's. It is a thankless but vital and essential part of our operation.

In taking this leave of absence from her board responsibilities, Nina asked Steven Manning to replace her subject to board approval. That approval has been essentially unanimous with only one reservation in the form of recommendation that we operate without replacing Nina. We are very fortunate to have Steve on the board. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of Utah rock art.

As previously announced, there will be a meeting of the newly elected board January 16-17. The Saturday meeting will convene at 10:00 a.m., in the St George public library. The Sunday meeting will convene at 9:00 a.m. in the Green Springs clubhouse in nearby Washington.

We invite URARA members to recommend topics for discussion. Preferably, the topics would be submitted in advance. They may be sent to me at slrmar@cox.net, or the URARA secretary, Cindi Everitt, rockdoc@xmission.com. The first item on the agenda Saturday morning will be the election of the URARA president. The floor will be open for nominations. These meetings are open to all members.

We express appreciation to Glenn Omundson for organizing the extensive field trips in the El Paso, Texas area next month. The sign up was quickly filled.

Again, many thanks to all who have served our excellent organization. I'm looking forward to another great year for URARA. Some of the initiatives which were developed during these last two years, such as the student stipend on scholarship award, have not yet come to fulfillment, but I am confident they will, and URARA will continue as a very viable and effective organization.

Happy Trails,
Steve Robinson
2009 President

December Meeting and Potluck Pictures

Pictures by Kirk Robinson



An overall view of December meeting



Barbara Saxon, standing, checking to see if all is okay.



Jesse and Judy Warner [hidden behind Jesse's arm] with family (future URARA) members



Troy Scotter, Margaret Grochocki, Diane Orr



Ben, Cindi and David Everitt



*Gary and Janet Burningham, Oscar Olson, Mary Sheffield,
Ed Delay and Dorothy Lynn*



Barbara and Fred Saxon

Nine Mile Canyon Update

By Steven Manning

Three days after the URARA symposium in Cedar City, I was working with the Colorado Plateau Archaeological Alliance in an archaeological survey on Hunt oil company property in Nine Mile Canyon. Andy Yentch and I were following a series of petroglyph panels previously recorded by volunteers from the College of Eastern Utah in 1996. We had copies of the site forms so we had no trouble locating each site, but as we walked along the long horizontal line of cliffs, we realized that we had skipped a site. We checked back along the cliffs, but there were no other petroglyphs. I observed that a section of the cliff had apparently recently broken off because there was an absence of patination on the cliff face, and there were mud and white streaks on the rock surface. I investigated the fallen rocks below this area, and there I discovered the remains of the petroglyph panel. The section of the cliff face had fallen taking the petroglyphs with it. The panel is now facing down on the underside of the large rectangular rock in photograph 1. The white arrow shows its location. Most of the panel is still visible because the large slab fell on large rocks that are now holding it above the surface of the ground -- see photograph 2.

An idea of what the panel looked like exists because the site form contained a photograph of the petroglyphs. A copy is shown in photograph 3. The description of the panel on the site form is "The site consists of four possible mountain sheep. One of the sheep has a meandering line from its mouth that forms a sort of a box figure". This was an interesting panel because of the box like

peculiarity, along with the fact that the mountain sheep were pecked in an unusual style. Unfortunately, other small images in the panel were not described.

The most disturbing thing about this situation is not necessarily the loss of this particular panel. The more disturbing thing is that this is not the first panel that has been recently lost from the collapse of a cliff face in Nine Mile Canyon. Another panel was lost near Cottonwood Canyon when a much larger section of the cliff face just above the road collapsed. Very likely, this is not the second panel that has been lost either. Because most of Nine Mile Canyon has never had a systemic archaeological survey, it is very likely that other unrecorded panels have also been lost. I have been hiking along the cliffs in Nine Mile Canyon for over 40 years, and I have not seen so many sections of fallen cliffs as exist today. It is apparent that the heavy industrial truck traffic in Nine Mile Canyon has had deleterious effects on the rocks and the rock art in the Canyon. The difficulty in proving this is trying to quantify the apparent increase in rock falls.

This situation once again reinforces the idea that when documenting rock art sites: one photograph is not sufficient - you can never take too many pictures - you can never make too detailed a drawing - you can never write too detailed a description.



Photo #1, Steve Manning



Photo #2, Steve Manning



Photo #3, site form, College of Eastern Utah

Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum

Rock Art Digital Image Archives Available for Research, Blanding, Utah

By Erica Olsen, Project Archivist

The Earthwatch/BLM Rock Art Project digital image archives are available for research at Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum in Blanding, Utah. The collection features more than 1,500 digital images of southeastern Utah rock art ranging from pre-Basketmaker through the historic period. The digitization project was funded through a grant awarded in 2008 from the Utah State Historical Records Advisory Board (USHRAB), as part of the Regional Repository Training and Development—Preserving Utah’s Historical Documents program. The searchable digital image collection became available in August 2009 to researchers, educators, and members of the public through a computer terminal in the museum library.

The Earthwatch/BLM rock art survey was conducted from 1993 to 2001 as a cooperative effort of the Earthwatch Institute and the Bureau of Land Management—San Juan Resource Area, Utah. The digital archives at Edge of the Cedars Museum represent about half of the rock art sites that were documented in areas including Cedar Mesa/Grand Gulch, Beef Basin, Fable Valley, Montezuma Creek, and the San Juan River corridor. The survey documented sites with significant rock art content as well as sites that are being impacted by erosion, visitation, and vandalism, according to archaeologist Sally J. Cole, who directed the project and supervised the volunteers who carried out the work.

The goal of the USHRAB grant was to preserve the original rock art documentation (drawings and photographs) and enable public access to these digital images. Edge of the Cedars Museum also houses the complete collection of original project records including approximately 3,000 original drawings, 11,000 color slides, and 5,000 photographic prints, negatives, and transparencies.

“The Earthwatch/BLM Rock Art Project archives constitute the largest and best documented collection of prehistoric and ethnographic rock art images for southeast Utah,” said Deborah Westfall, the museum’s curator of collections. “It is a significant resource for comparative archaeological research, museum exhibits, public education, and public land management.”

Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum is located at 660 West 400 North in Blanding. The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and closed on Sundays. Please call the museum at 435-678-2238 for more information.

[Note: *Vestiges* Editors, Marion and Steve Robinson were part of this documentation project with Sally Cole. In 1994, we spent two weeks in August with Sally and her crew, documenting rock art sites in the Grand Gulch. A memorable experience!]

Think About It!



Our author entitles the closing chapter of his book from which the following quotation comes, "Through the Glass, Darkly": from 1 Corinthians 13 to introduce a hopeful note regarding our understanding of rock art which "ultimately will be replaced by direct knowledge". He continues in the closing paragraph entitled "A Glimpse of the Future". . .

Archaeologists may bemoan the fact that they will never know the past directly, for theirs is an inferential discipline, but the good news is that more and more of the past is becoming clear through arguments that link different domains of knowledge. It could be said that the archaeological record becomes more meaningful as the number of ‘glasses’ used to view it increases. Some of these lenses relate to the spatial and temporal distribution of the materials we study. Others refract scenes and activities from ethnographic sources that appear relevant to, for instance, the interpretation of rock art

images. It is only by combining insights from these various intellectual domains that we will develop a comprehensive picture of past life on the High Plains, and the place in it of rock art.

Thunder and Herds: Rock Art of the High Plains, Lawrence L. Loendorf, West Coast Press, Walnut Creek, California, 2008, p 231.

[Note: Professor Loendorf was the first keynote speaker at the URARA 2009 Symposium in Cedar City, Utah.]

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Calendar 2010

Jan 16-17 Annual Board Retreat - St George, Utah
Feb 12-16 Field Trip - El Paso, Texas, Leader, Glenn Omundson,
jgomundson@yahoo.com, 915-584-7862

Editors' Message

As relatively new members of URARA, we volunteered to help in any way that might be appropriate. Much to our surprise, that resulted in a request in the spring of 2004 for us to be the *Vestiges* editors. To be true to our offer to help we felt we should agree, though we had never before tackled such a task. Then in our first issue we said, "Though somewhat intimidated by the task at hand we fully support what David Sucec said in the last [March 2004] issue of *Vestiges*. 'For our organization to become more professional, to grow in intelligence gaining and holding the respect of the rock art community, and showing the appropriate respect for Native American cultures, we need to ascribe to a higher standard in our publications and presentations.'

We have been doing our best to accomplish this for the 69 issues of *Vestiges* we have edited. A great, yet enjoyable challenge for us. However, after our five and one half years, we feel it is time for us to pass along the opportunity to someone else. It has been a service we have enjoyed very much, in large measure because of the assistance we have received from the many members who

have contributed articles, counseled on the workings of the computer, helped on the final editing, the publishing, and then the mailing. We thank them all, and now it is time for us to change.

Interested? Please email us at slrmar@cox.net. We look forward to hearing from you.

Happy Trails,
Steve and Marion Robinson

Field Trip Full *El Paso, Texas - February 12-16, 2010*

Leader, Glenn Omundson, jgomundson@yahoo.com, 915-584-7862

Glenn Omundson, URARA member living in El Paso organized this field trip. He reports that 50 people have signed up for the trip, reaching capacity.