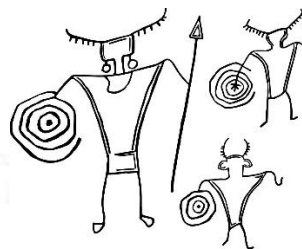


VESTIGES



May 2026
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Number 05

Monthly Newsletter of URARA, the Utah Rock Art Research Association

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From the Prez

Rick Mathews

Happy May Everyone!

As you all know, May is Archeology Month. Our friends and Utah SHPO and other partners have got some great events planned. Here is a link to SHPO's calendar. <https://ushpo.utah.gov/events/category/2026-archaeology-and-historic-preservation-month-events/2026-05/>



The Board got together in April for our quarterly board meeting. It was great to meet as a board and good to hear updates on the 2026 Symposium progress. This year will be another great Symposium and I urge you all to check your calendars and try and make it.

In April the joint CRAA/URARA webinar featured Jerod Roberts. He gave an interesting presentation on the Lower Pecos Canyonlands imagery. I'll admit I'm a bit of math nerd and found his use of statistics interesting and of course I loved the pictures he shared of the images. URARA's collaboration with CRAA allow both groups to learn from one another.

May means warmer weather. I encourage you all to get out and see stuff and don't forget to share your stories and pictures. You can start a thread on the forum or submit an article to Vestiges.

URARA 26

Bluff, Utah

October 8-12

Work shops
Field Trips
Presentations
Artists vendors

<https://urara.wildapricot.org/>

Field Trips Update

Tina Tan

Happy Spring! I hope you all have been able to get out and explore. Our field trips are up and running, and while I try to keep the Vestiges calendar up to date, sometimes it's best to just check the website to see what's on offer.

I want to mention that the sign-up for Nine Mile Canyon is now open and spots are available. Please sign up if you're interested.

A reminder of Field Trip Protocols:

- **Can't make a trip you signed up for?** Please cancel as soon as possible so we can offer the spot to someone on the waitlist. The more notice they are able to get, the better the chances of them filling up your cancelled spot.
- **With over 400 members, demand is high!** To keep things fair, participation is limited to three field trips per person per year. Be sure to check the Vestiges calendar and prioritize the trips you're most excited about.
- **The Vestiges calendar is a work in progress.** I'll keep it updated with upcoming trips, but details may shift as we go. It's still the best way to see what's coming up!
- **Some field trips on the website aren't open for registration yet.** These will become available 2-3 weeks before the trip date.
- **Huge thanks to our volunteer trip leaders!** We couldn't do this without you.

Bluff Symposium Field Trip Leaders Needed – Plus a Quick Note on First Aid

As many of you will agree, field trips are a highlight of our annual URARA Symposium – they're a chance to connect, explore, and learn together in the landscapes we care so deeply about. But they can't happen without your help!

We're looking for volunteers to lead field trips in Bluff during the Symposium. Your support makes a big difference. If you haven't yet, please consider stepping up to help make this year's event a success. If you're willing to volunteer, please email me at tinatan07@gmail.com and let me know.

First Aid Training Requirement For Field Trip Leaders

We will be operating under a BLM permit for field trips in Bluff, and part of that agreement requires that *all Field Trip Leaders have current basic First Aid training*. If you don't already have a valid certification, we ask that you complete a basic First Aid course before the Symposium.

You can complete this training online or in person, and URARA will reimburse you for the cost. One option is through the American Red Cross (visit redcross.org for details).

We know how much everyone looks forward to the field trips, and we want to make sure they're safe and accessible to all. If you're willing to lead a trip, please take this step and get certified. It helps us move forward with planning and ensures we meet our permit requirements.

If you volunteered to lead a trip for Kanab, and already have a current First Aid certification, we hope you will consider leading a trip or two for Bluff! Please get in touch!

Getty Conservation Institute Needs Assessment Survey

Forwarded from ARARA

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Getty Conservation Institute's **Rock Art Conservation and Management Needs Assessment**, an international survey aimed at identifying key priorities and challenges in the field of rock art conservation and management.

This initiative seeks to gather perspectives of everyone working with rock art across different regions, contexts, and areas of expertise. The results will help inform future discussions, research agendas, and initiatives to better support the field at both regional and global levels.

The survey takes approximately **15–20 minutes to complete** and is **available in English, Spanish, and French**. The language can be selected through the drop-down menu on the top right corner of the form.

All responses will be treated as confidential and will be presented anonymously and in aggregated form only.

Survey link: [Rock Art Conservation and Management Needs Assessment](#)

Please share this invitation with your colleagues and networks who may wish to contribute; we are seeking as much feedback as possible.

The survey will be open **until 31 May 2026**.

Thank you very much for your valuable time. Your contribution is important to us. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

Tom McClintock

Tom McClintock (he/him)

Associate Project Specialist | Buildings and Sites, Getty Conservation Institute | (310) 440 6803 | [getty.edu](mailto:tom@getty.edu)

Symposium Call for Abstracts

Bob Crifasi, Speaker Coordinator

The symposium committee is inviting potential speakers to submit abstracts for the 2025 URARA symposium to be held Oct 8 – October 12, 2026 in Bluff, Utah.

Presentations will take place on Saturday October 10 and Sunday October 11. Speakers receive free symposium registration and an expense reimbursement allowance. Proposals should have a title and brief abstract of the topic. A wide range of ideas and subjects are acceptable provided they relate to rock art in Utah and the western states.

The deadline for submitting proposals is July 1, 2026. Please email your abstract to Bob Crifasi at rcrifasi@hotmail.com or send to 3257 Hawthorn Hollow, Boulder, CO 80304

Outdoor Safety



The Season of the Tick

April Gray, M.D.

We commonly think of ticks only being active in the hot months. In fact, any time the temperature is above 32 they may be out and active especially if it is 40 or above.

They carry 14 diseases so it behooves us to take measures to prevent getting a tick attached to our bodies. In Utah the common tick-transmitted diseases are Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, Colorado Tick Fever, Tick Paralysis, Tick-borne Relapsing Fever, and Lyme Disease.

To reduce chances of getting ticks on your body treat yourself with DEET or your clothing with permethrin. When you get home get naked and check all of your bare skin. Use a mirror to see everything. If you find a tick use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Pull upward with a steady even pressure. Do not jerk or twist as this can cause the mouth parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this occurs then remove the mouth parts with clean tweezers. After removing the tick thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with soap and water, rubbing alcohol, or an iodine scrub.

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor and tell him when the bite occurred and where.

Shovel Bums Resume Stewardship

John McHugh

In March the Blessed Sacrament School (Sandy, UT) “Shovel Bums” archaeology club (5th through 8th grade) resumed their role in finding, stewarding, and studying Native American rock art. Classroom meetings began on March 26th. The main goal of this field season is to find out which panels have been recorded by URARA at sites 42UT1454 and 42UT1455, figure out which ones have not been registered on the SHPO database, then thoroughly document all missing panels and upload that data to SHPO.

The Shovel Bums’ first field trip, April 17th, was rain-snowed out. But last Friday’s field trip was successful and filled with much excitement. The twelve club members spent the afternoon pin-flagging the rock art panels at the aforementioned sites, then comparing those panels with the SHPO site forms. During subsequent Friday field trips in May, the Shovel Bums will document the

missing panels and share that data with SHPO.

6th grade Shovel Bum, Fang Yu Wang, stands at the spot where sites 42UT1454 and 1455 meet.



5th grade Shovel Bum, Mckenzie Soriano, points out a petroglyph panel near the Table Rock petroglyph.



5th grade Shovel Bum, Adrianna Vergara, stewards a panel at the Lake Mountains.



Hitchhiker-Perfect Panel Report

Rein van West

'When out in the Utah backcountry you better come prepared', quoth the raven. Thunder, rain, lightning, and wind (did I say 'wind'!) shook our tents and vehicles but our intrepid little band was 'game on'. Perhaps the ghosts of the nomadic Barrier Canyon Style people were tossing a challenge our way to see if we really wanted to see what they had left behind.

But not before we had visited the Big Deer Hunting Panel in North Wash south of Hanksville and the Moki Queen figure near Hog Springs. It's not surprising to find such a rich trove of rock art in this area given the relative abundance of water and how North Wash affords a remarkable migratory route through a matrix of slickrock to the Colorado River and beyond.

Perhaps the only sure tip of where Barrier Canyon Style rock art is found is that there's not any set of location criteria - it's found where one is lucky enough to locate it. Such is the case with this BCS image we came across - positively brain-rattling! What we wouldn't give to have this pictograph intact - a porcupine? A hedgehog? A zoomorph?

Fortunately, the Hitchhiker-Perfect Panel is close to intact - whether it's more recent, the paint more resilient, less damaging moisture, the gods more protective - what? We were a happy, inquisitive, admiring, and thankful group still left with the mystifying question - who were these people?



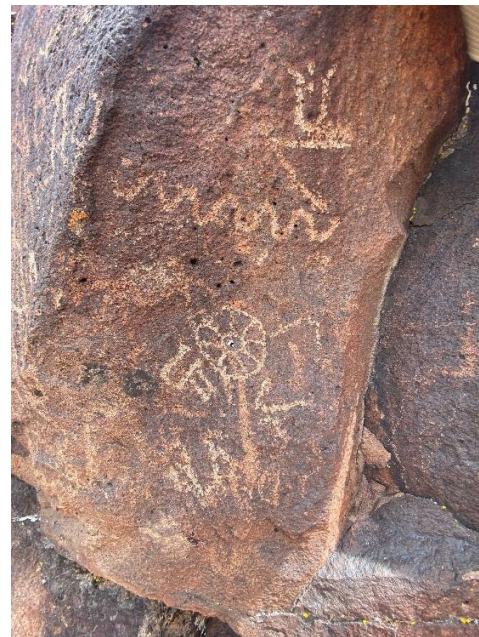


Back Roads, Camp Chairs, and Rock Art

Diana Acerson

Steve and I took a road trip to see rock art with our newly purchased camp trailer along with whatever we needed to make the journey comfortable and rewarding. Out in the west deserts of Utah in mild weather, with just the wild horses, pronghorns, and an occasional rabbit or coyote for company. And let's not forget the raptors soaring overhead looking for their next meal. Just the two of us nestled in one of our favorite environments. The morning was quiet, all but the faint sounds of a singular vehicle on a distant highway in the early morning dawn. As the sun rose from the eastern hills, its rays touching the parched earth, insects began their chirping and buzzing as we sat in our camp chairs enjoying the coolness of the April morning. Coffee and Chai in hand, contemplating which great sites we would visit today.

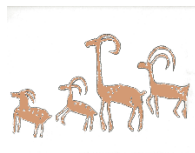
After making sure the cell phone was charged up, the extra battery in the pack, the binoculars in the truck along with the hiking gear, lots of water and snacks, we began our journey along exciting, sometimes questionable dirt roads. With our onX app in hand, we navigated our way to previously identified and marked site locations. Getting new experiences looking for roads that did not exist. But eventually we found routes that got us where we wanted to be.



Then the experience of climbing or walking to well-hidden and amazing imagery sites rarely ever visited evidenced by a lack of trails, graffiti, and other indicators. Seeing only the dry or fresh deposits made by the wanderings of the wild horses, or stray cattle.

In front of amazing panels, we stopped to really feel the spirit of the places. Imagined the time period and the disposition and lives of the People who put the images there. Why a solitary figure in some places, and then one boulder after another in other places, or a massive wall with many panels in one place. Taking the time to think and ponder the questions is hard to do sometimes when we are in a hurry. But not this time. As I used the URARA information gathering app, I drew closer thinking about it all. Feeling good that this documentation gesture may help to safeguard the images for the future.

Returning to camp at the end of the day pondering all we had seen was such a great feeling. Watching the sun set after a cooked meal, listening to the evening sounds wrapping around us, and feeling the warmth of the day disappearing, replaced by the momentary chill that hits the air as the sun disappears over the hill, we felt truly blessed. Another wonderful day, first of many at this camp, being able to experience and imagine the stories of the rock imagery we saw. Picturing in our minds what the People's lives in whatever the environment at the time may have been like....



What Should We Call It?

Editor's note



Is it Art?

Is it Writing?

Is it History?

Is it Prayer?

Or maybe all of the above?

Rock Art in the News

Epstein had petroglyphs moved for décor at Zorro Ranch, federal records show
Santa Fe New Mexican 4 March 2026 <https://www.santafenewmexican.com> › ... › Local News

The Sahara Desert Hasn't Always Been a Dry, Desolate Landscape *Smithsonian Magazine*
5 Mar 2026 <https://www.smithsonianmag.com> › science-nature › sa...

Rock Art Suggests the Tasmanian Tiger May Have Survived on Mainland Australia Longer Than Previously Thought *Smithsonian Magazine* 3 April 2026 <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/rock-art-suggests-the-tasmanian-tiger-may-have-survived-on-mainland-australia-longer-than-previously-thought-180988472/>

Historical, cultural and environmental tensions mount ahead of uranium exploration hearing
South Dakota Searchlight 7 April 2026 <https://apple.news/AUu18MW7ZR8-By29OIAFKrQ>

Prehistoric and Postclassic Rock Art Discovered in Mexico Near Ancient Tula *Arkeonews.net*,
14 April 2026 <https://arkeonews.net/prehistoric-and-postclassic-rock-art-discovered-in-mexico-near-ancient-tula/?shem=dsdf,sharefoc,agadiscoverSDL,sh/x/discover/m1/4>

Calendar, Trips and Other Events

May 2-3	URARA Field Trip Vernal area, Darlene Koerner
May 11-12	URARA Bluff, UT area Field Trip
May 16	URARA Field Trip Nine Mile Canyon, Layne Miller
June	URARA Field Trip Vernal area summer solstice, John McHugh
June 25-29	ARARA Symposium Great Falls, Montana https://arara.wildapricot.org/Conference-General-Info-2026
Aug 14-16	URARA Summer Picnic, Fremont Indian State Park.
August 22	URARA Field Trip Head of Sinbad, Layne Miller
September	URARA Field Trip Fremont Indian State Park, John McHugh
September	URARA Field Trip Smith Reserve, Rick Mathews
Oct 02	URARA Field Trip SE Colorado Area
Oct 8-12	URARA Symposium, Bluff, Utah

URARA symposia and field trips (FT) are available to members only. Members will be notified by email when a field trip opens for registration, usually about 3-4 weeks before a trip. If a trip is full when you try to register, your name is added to a wait list. You will get another notification if and when someone drops out and you can be added to the trip. <https://urara.wildapricot.org/>

CRAA and URARA are currently doing monthly ZOOM presentations on alternate months. CRAA will have January, March, and May (Summer months off), and October (December off).

URARA will have February, April, Sept, and November. <https://coloradorockart.org/>

American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) is hosting on-line events. Free access is granted to URARA members. Registration at: <https://arara.wildapricot.org/Lectures>

Desert Archaeological Society (DAS), St George, meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Saturday field trips once a month. Accessible on-line via Utah Tech University ICL .
<https://reg125.imperisoft.com/ICL/ProgramDetail/3837333038/Registration.aspx>

San Diego Rock Art Association (SDRAA) meets on line until further notice.
<https://sandiegorockart.org/meetings>

Grand Junction Chapter CAS meets regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month
<https://www.casgchapter.org/public-meetings>

URARA Board and Officers

Utah Rock Art Research Association: Box 511324, Salt Lake City, UT 84151-1324.

www.utahrockart.org . Contact information - utahrockartresearchassoc@gmail.com

2026 URARA Board and Officers

President	Rick Mathews
Vice President	Carol Patterson
Secretary	Nancy Lombardo
Treasurer	Carol Duecker
	John McHugh
	Darlene Koerner
	Tina Tan
	Margo Mahoney
	Rein van West

Committee Chairs and Appointees

Tribal Liaison	Carol Patterson
Historian/Archives	Keith Fessenden
Website/Board Advisor	Troy Scotter
Membership Coordinator	Deb Mitchell
Funds Manager	Pat Sullivan
Conservation/Preservation	Kent Williams
Education	John McHugh
Field Trip Coordinator	Tina Tan
Symposium Chair	Carol Patterson
Publications Editor	Dennis DeVore
Vestiges Editor	Ben Everitt
Nominations/Governance	Diana Acerson

URARA Conservation Coordinators

<u>BLM District</u>	<u>Field Office</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>
Coordinator Lead		
Canyon Country	Moab	Pam & Quent Baker
Canyon Country	Monticello	Werner Duecker, Carol Duecker
Paria River	Kanab	Jeff Frey
Color Country	Cedar City	Diana Acerson
Color Country	St. George	Nina Bowen
Color Country	Richfield	Steve Acerson
Green River	Vernal	Tim Sweeney, Darlene Koerner
Green River	Price	Layne Miller
West Desert	Fillmore	Jeff Roberts
West Desert	Salt Lake	Bill Hirt