



In-Situ

Newsletter of the Nevada Archaeological Association

Summer 2000

Summer Board Meeting in Yerington

The next NAA Board Meeting is scheduled for June 2 and 3rd, 2000 in Yerington, Nevada.

Friday evening at 6:00 p.m., Anne DuBarton will give a presentation on Gypsum Cave in the Lyon County library public room (The library is at 20 Nevin Way in the new county complex on the north side of town).

Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m., Oyvind Frock will lead a tour to a petroglyph site on the East Walker River on Barron Hilton's Flying M Ranch. The site is a 45-minute drive south of town. The road is only paved part of the way, but is suitable for automobiles. Plan on meeting at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot of the Casino West Motel.

The board meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. in the Casino West Motel. Remember that board meetings are field trips are open to all interested NAA members.

The Casino West Motel has rooms from \$40 to \$52, and can be reached by calling 1-800-227-4661. The weekend of the board meeting is also the weekend of Yerington's Spring Fling, and rooms might be scarce.

2000 Annual Meeting

Nearly 60 NAA members attended the 29th Annual NAA

Conference at the Ely Holiday Inn March 10-12, 2000. Activities went well in spite of the local arrangement chair's insistence on having her baby.

(The baby boy, Sam, was born March 3 weighing in at 7 lbs. even and measuring 20 inches long. He is eating a lot, and is now 16 lbs. and 23¼ inches long. Mother and baby are both doing great. [*submitted by Gretchen Burris*])

Activities on the 10th were limited, with a board meeting that afternoon at 4 p.m. being the main event. Saturday was a full day, starting with an 8:00 a.m. registration. At 8:40 paper presentations started and continued until nearly 5:00 p.m. A total of fourteen papers was presented, covering a wide range of topics. It was gratifying to hear of the varied and interesting work being conducted throughout Nevada by avocational, professional, and student archaeologists.

After the papers were presented, a membership meeting was held. There was some turnover on the board, with Gretchen Burris, Peggy McGuckian, Susan Murphy, and Bill Johnson leaving--we wish them well in their new endeavors and thank them for all their hard work. New board members elected are Doug Dashiell, Steve Daron, Renee Kolvet, and Wally Ward. Anne DuBarton was reelected president. Pat Hicks, while retaining her duties as Secretary, also assumed some of the

Executive Secretary duties of Susan Murphy. Oyvind Frock remains Treasurer, and Christi Shaw retained her position as Membership Chair. David Valentine is the new newsletter editor (complaints can be sent to 5713 Cliff Point Court, Las Vegas, NV 89149 or valentinedw@juno.com).

An exploding stove delayed the banquet, but the Holiday Inn pulled through and delivered a tasty banquet (well, as good as can be expected). While no jewelry was in the offering this year for the auction, dollars were raised with spirited bidding over items such as rare books, replica petroglyphs, and photographs.

N.A.A.'s 2000 Ting Perkins Award was presented to Helen Mortenson of Las Vegas. Helen has been very active in archaeological activities for many years, and among other things was a past president of Archeo-Nevada Society and is currently very active in trying to bring Gypsum Cave artifacts back to Nevada.

The banquet speaker this year was Dr. Sue Fawn Chung from the History Department of University of Nevada Las Vegas. She performed a chautauqua, in which she portrayed Ah Kum Kee, born in Carson City in 1875. The presentation chronicled her experiences as she raised six children, assisted her husband in running a store, and farmed in Hawthorne and Reno.

The following morning a few die-hard folks stuck around for a field trip to the Nevada Northern Railway Museum and the McGill Historical Drug Store. The massive machinery involved in railroading is really quite impressive, and the Nevada Northern Railway Museum is a must for railroad buffs or anyone interested in the technical side of the human experience. The McGill

Historical Drug Store is also an inspiring site to visit, with a wide range of artifacts and drug paraphernalia covering much of the 20th century.

Next years' conference will be in Overton. The program chair is Steve Daron and the local arrangements chair is Eva Jensen. Please contact them if you need further information.

Call For Papers

Steve Daron

With all the enthusiasm and fond memories generated at the 2000 conference, lets take this opportunity to get a jump on the 2001 conference. The 2001 conference will be in Overton and promises to be a fun and informative event. Abstracts for papers, symposia, and posters are now being accepted for the 2001 annual meeting. There is no theme for this meeting so presentations in all fields including archeology, history, ethnography, and geology are encouraged. Please send abstracts of 150 words for 20-minute presentations to Steve Daron, P.O. Box 60643, Boulder City, NV 89006, or e-mail to Steve_Daron@nps.gov.

December Board Meeting

Anne DuBarton
NAA President

The NAA board's December 1999 meeting was held at the Exchange Club in Beatty. In conjunction with this meeting the board took a trip to the ghost town of Rhyolite and then down Titus Canyon, beginning in Nevada and ending up in California at Death Valley. High-clearance and/or four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended for this trip, although we saw people in sedans that made it through the canyon. The weather in Beatty was cold and windy,

causing some of the northern constituent to wonder where the warm, desert weather was. We spent a few hours admiring the buildings in Rhyolite and then headed to Titus Canyon. We accessed the Titus Canyon road just outside of Rhyolite and headed up, up, up and then down into the Canyon itself. Our first stop was the historical mining town of Leadfield. There are still some buildings standing at the site, mostly made of corrugated metal and wood. Apparently the entire site was a scam constructed to get wealthy eastern investors to part with their money. We continued down the valley from Leadfield through spectacular rock formations until we reached Klare Spring. Several petroglyph panels at the spring show that prehistoric people had a special feeling for the site where tules and palms spring from the desert. While these panels are faint, they are fairly easy to find as they are on boulders right at the spring. Vandalism has been a problem at this site, as it is the only rock art that folks at the visitor center regularly divulge to the public. We continued down the Canyon from Klare Spring into a steep-sided slot canyon. This part of the trip is really spectacular although there are no sites to investigate. The canyon becomes so steep and narrow that traffic has been restricted to one-way only as two cars abreast will not fit through. When you reach the end of the canyon, it suddenly opens out into Death Valley. We were amazed at how much warmer the temperature was on this end of the valley! Several layers of clothing were stripped off as we basked in the sun. A final rock art panel and several rock alignments were viewed at the very end of the valley. Then it was on into Death Valley and back to Beatty via the highway. Field trips are offered

in conjunction with all the board meetings. These trips are open to all members and I strongly urge everyone to participate when they are able. We always have a great time.

Am-Arcs News

Oyvind Frock

Our meeting in April featured Dr. Don Fowler of UNR. Don spoke on the connections between Aztec, Salmon, Chaco and other southwestern sites and the Mimbres Valley and Casas Grandes in Chihuahua. Around 60 members attended to hear how the old interpretations are being changed in light of new information.

Our first field trip for the year attracted 30 members in 13 vehicles. We visited a canyon northwest of Sparks, which has about 15 rock rings, 40-50 talus pits, and one petroglyph panel.

In May Alanah Woody will lead a work party and show how to record a petroglyph site in detail.

For the weekend of June 10 and 11, we are planning a bus trip to Klamath Falls and points in between.

Meetings will be held as usual on the second Wednesday of May and June.

March 2001 Trip to Oaxaca

Am-Arcs is organizing, through the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, a trip to Oaxaca, Mexico. The trip is scheduled for March 2001. You should have already received a trip prospectus from Crow Canyon. Am-Arcs members will have a first priority for space on the trip, but N.A.A. members are welcome to fill out the group. The prospectus has all the details.

Archeo-Nevada Society (A-NS) News

A-NS had a busy spring. General meetings are held once a month, and include lectures from guest speakers. The guest speaker in March was Don Hendricks, who spoke about "History and Archaeological Significance of the Rolling Hills Ranch." In April, Robert Jones of the Desert Research Institute presented the lecture "Prehistoric Native American Presence on the Nevada Test Site." A-NS president Howard Hahn spoke about "The Turtle in Native American Spiritual and Material Culture" at the May meeting.

A-NS also organized a display for the Southern Nevada Archaeology and History Festival held at Floyd Lamb State Park. They provided information on their many activities, and had an exhibit of replica prehistoric tools and weapons created by A-NS members.

A-NS is expanding beyond learning about the past to participating in the "Adopt-a-Highway" program. They have their eyes on a mile-long section of Charleston Avenue near Red Rock Canyon, where they will be responsible for cleaning up roadside trash. U.S.F.S Archaeologist and A-NS member, Kathleen Sprowl, will be the Group Coordinator for the program.

Churchill County Chapter News Bob Kautz

The Churchill County Chapter meets the 1st Wednesday of each month (excluding the summer months) at the Round Table Pizza in Fallon at 7 PM.

Each meeting includes a program of interest to archaeology and a short business meeting. At recent meetings Gary Bowyer, Susan McCabe, and Rebecca Lasell of the BLM Carson City Field Office have helped Chapter

members participate in the agency's recently updated Adopt-A-Site Program. Plans are also being made to conduct Spring field trips to local sites. The Chapter has donated a basket of "Made In Nevada" items to the Churchill County Museum for help with the Museum's Building Fund. Contributors to the fund may contact Jane Pieplow, Director of the Churchill County Museum, 1050 Maine Street, Fallon 89406.

For more information about the Churchill County Chapter of the NAA, please contact Maie Nygren at 775/423-2212.

Elko County Chapter News

The Elko County Chapter is starting out the new millennium with 38 members and a wide variety of projects and activities.

One activity they're involved with is the Carlin Chinese burials. Plots in the Chinese section of the Carlin cemetery have been donated for the reburial of the 13 Chinese men excavated in 1996. The plots need to be probed prior to the re-internment. Other projects include an Archaeology Fair held on May 20th and assistance with Federal and University excavation projects in Huntington Valley, Island Mountain, and Elko Hills.

Southern Nevada Rock Art Enthusiasts (SNRAE)

SNRAE has an informal gathering the first Thursday of the month and a more formal meeting, with a guest speaker, the third Thursday. Gatherings and meetings are at the Las Vegas Library at 7:00 p.m. Recent guest

speakers were N.A.A. members Alanah Woody and Angus Quinlan, and Eva Jensen is the invited speaker for July. Field trips to rock art sites throughout southern Nevada and portions of Arizona, California, and Utah are also regularly held. The latest field trip, to the Aztec Tanks and Yellow Plug sites in the Spring Mountains, was attended by 16 rock art fans who had a great time exposing film and pondering the mysteries of the prehistoric mind. For information on meetings and field trips call the SNRAE voice mail, 702-897-7878.

Elko County Has Field Schools and Other Diggings

Great Basin College will conduct archaeological investigations near Tobar, south of Wells, Nevada, May 23 through June 10. The project will involve both prehistoric habitation sites and early twentieth century Euroamerican homesteads. Greg Haynes of UNR and the Desert Research Institute will direct the field school. Tim Murphy of the BLM will assist Greg. For more information contact: Dr. Eric Henderson at Great Basin College, 775-753-2385.

Drs. Ted Goebel, UNLV, Paul Buck, DRI, Ken Adams, DRI, Bryan Hockett, BLM, and David Rhode, DRI, will be leading a field school in the Goshute Valley from July 10 through August 11. The field school will investigate the Late Pleistocene and Holocene prehistory and paleoecology of the valley. Studies include excavations of a late Paleoindian campsite, testing of Archaic sites near springs, geologic study of fossil shorelines and Pleistocene lake deposits, packrat midden survey, and pollen coring. For more information

contact Ted Goebel, UNLV, at 702-895-4447.

Fred Frampton of the Toiyabe National Forest will continue his Heritage Program excavations at Island Mountain July 17-21, 24-28 and July 31-August 4. Dr. Donald Hardesty and Ms. Patricia Hunt-Jones of UNR will provide assistance with the excavations. This is the second season of excavations at the Chinese mining camp. For more information contact Fred Frampton at 775-738-5171.

Student Scholarships

The Nevada Archaeological Association is proud to announce a new program in support of student papers. We will offer two scholarships annually to encourage University and Community College students from throughout the state to present papers at the N.A.A.'s annual meetings. We will choose one student from the northern half and one from the south to receive a stipend of \$200.00 each to support a presentation of their research. To apply for the N.A.A. Student Scholarship send evidence of your student status (i.e., a copy of your student I.D.) and a 1-page summary of your paper to: Student Papers, N.A.A., P.O. Box 73145, Las Vegas, NV 89170-3145. Our annual meetings are held in March at various locations throughout the state. The 2001 meetings are scheduled for Overton.

Stone Tool Fanatics Join the Computer Age

Check out N.A.A.'s web page at <http://www.webpanda/NAA>. The web site contains lots of useful information, such as how to order your very own N.A.A. mug, and links to related web sites.

N.A.A. Conference and Beyond

by

Oyvind Frock and Mary Rusco

At the March N.A.A. conference in Ely, Mary Rusco presented a paper that she and Ed Stoner wrote. This paper described an enigmatic, U-shaped, stacked rock feature. It was isolated from other features and artifacts and looked like an Anglo firebox, but showed no evidence of fires. Ed and Mary had never seen such a structure before. It was a “head-scratcher.”

Subsequent research uncovered a photograph of a similar feature in Chartkoff and Chartkoff's *The Archaeology of California*. There it was termed a power seat that functioned as part of a vision quest. The authors stated they are quite common in northern California. They are also reported in Texas and Montana.

At the end of the presentation, Mary asked the attendees if anyone had seen a similar feature in Nevada. She had five positive responses.

On April 25, 2000, Oyvind and Mary looked at a stacked rock feature not far from Wadsworth which Oyvind and seen in February. It turned out to be very similar to Mary's structure, except it did not have a flat stone in the center and it was a little larger.

The opening faced east, as did Mary's. It also is on top of a hill and isolated from any site. The feature's measurements are 3'3" (0.99 m) across the internal opening; 3'7" (1.09 m) long on both interior sides; 6'7" (2.01 m) external side length; 6' (1.83 m) external width at the rear. The walls are 2' (0.61 m) high at the back and taper 1'10" (0.56 m) at the front.

The feature is constructed of irregularly rounded volcanic rocks averaging 10" x 12" (25.4 cm x 30.5 cm). The rear wall could function as a partial windbreak if a user were seated within it. The floor is flat, smoothed, and about 2" (5 cm) lower than the naturally sloping surrounding surface. Probing with a rock pick indicated a 4" (10 cm) minimum depth of rocks and sediment.

These features have not reported previously in Nevada. We hope this short report will alert everyone of their existence. Mary will appreciate hearing from you when you learn of similar structures.

As a final comment, we encourage N.A.A. members to submit similar “quick and dirty” reports to *In-Situ* on interesting items (*An encouragement whole-heartedly supported by the editor!*).



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