

Nevada Archaeological Association

Spring

NEWSLETTER

1995

ANNUAL MEETING

Q: Why would anyone want to go to the loneliest opera house in the loneliest town on the loneliest road in America? (Sounds like the setting of an archaeofiction mystery to me.)

A: Because your NAA friends will be there and you can expect to see, hear, experience, and eat great things! What other reasons would you want or need to motivate you to attend the up coming NAA Annual Meeting? The meeting will be held at the Eureka Opera House in Eureka starting with a barbecue Friday night, May 12, paper presentations,



auction/raffle, and banquet with speaker on Saturday, and ending on Sunday, May 14, with assorted field trips.

Wally Cuchine, our gracious host at the Eureka Opera House, urges those members who plan on attending to register and reserve your room/s early because accommodations are limited; we have to compete with the local miners. If you did not receive a registration package, give Wally a call at 702-237-6006 (W). Wally states that in addition to the meeting, attendees will have the opportunity to view a traveling art show entitled "A Common Thread." The show is sponsored by the Nevada Historical Society.

Mark Henderson, Program Chairman, has requested a second call for papers. If you are interested in presenting a paper of archeological, historical, or preservation interest at the meeting please give Mark a call at 702-289-4865 (W) or 702-289-8250 (H).

Dr. Donald Grayson, with the Burke Museum, University of Washington, and author of *The Desert's Past*, will be the guest speaker at the banquet. Dr. Grayson's presentation is entitled "Death and Sex in the Westward Migration." (Ah, the plot thickens.) Partial funding for Dr. Grayson's appearance is being provided by the Bureau of Land Management.

NAA T-shirts and journals will be on sale as well as used books of archeological and historical interest. If you have used books cluttering your shelves at home, how about donating them to NAA? Also, there will be an auction and/or raffle during the meeting to raise operating funds for NAA. If you have any new or craft items that you would like to donate for the auction/raffle, please call William White at 702-293-8705 (W) or bring them to the meeting.

One last item, the festivities begin on the evening of May 12, Friday, with an old fashion Western barbecue at the County Fair Grounds, 2 miles north of town on lonely U.S. 50, starting on or about 6 p.m. See you there; bring an appetite and a bib!♦

EUREKA OPERA HOUSE

Did you know that the Eureka Opera House received a 1994 National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation? The newly restored Opera House, originally built in 1880, continues to serve Eureka as the community center for cultural events. (Now that's culture with a capital C.)♦

OUT AND ABOUT

Archaeo-Nevada Society, Las Vegas. ANS members have concluded their volunteer work with Louis Berger & Associates as excavators and laboratory help in association with excavations at the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort. In December alone, 42 volunteers contributed a total of 884 hours to excavations. And despite a record-breaking amount of rainfall in January, volunteer spirits (and bodies) were not dampened by the mud. In addition to activities at the Fort, ANS has participated with the Bureau of Land Management and several other organizations in the preparation, placement, and dedication of a geological interpretative site at the base of Sunrise Mountain east of Las Vegas. The site interprets a geologic phenomenon known as the "Great Unconformity." Rocks below the GU are 1.7 billion years old while rocks above the GU interface are only 500 million years young. The unconformity, therefore, represents 1.2 million years that are missing from the geologic record in this region. As a result, visitors will no longer have to walk to the bottom of the Grand Canyon to view this hard rock fact but can do so from the comfort of their car all the while enjoying another great unconformity, Las Vegas. ANS had a membership roster of 38 single and 24 families as of January.

Southern Nevada Rock Art Enthusiasts, Las Vegas. SNRAE, has been busy hosting field trips with the Utah Rock Art Research Association in the vicinity of Whitney-Hartman, Arrow Canyon, and the Valley of Fire petroglyph sites. The group has also assisted Toiyabe National Forest Archeologist, Kathy Moskovitz, in recording and monitoring petroglyphs at the Yellow Plug site southwest of Las Vegas. The Yellow Plug site will be SNRAE's Community Service Project for 1995. SNRAE continues to monitor the Cottontail site for

vandalism, greatly assisting BLM Archeologist, **Keith Myhrer**, and **Chris Miller** of the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. The Cottontail site was SNRAE's 1994 Community Service Project.

White Pine Chapter, Ely. **Mark Henderson**, former NAA Secretary and Board Member, continues to compile a history of the NAA which will celebrate its 25th Anniversary in 1997. Mark informs us that the Chapter, which is merging with the local historical society, has completed the revision of their combined bylaws and will submit them for NAA acceptance at the next NAA Board meeting. Numerous talks open to the public have been scheduled during Nevada's Archaeological Awareness and Historic Preservation Week. For example, **Phillip Earl** of the Nevada Historical Society will talk about and show a 1920s silent movie entitled "Covered Wagon" that was filmed in Snake Valley.

Am-Arcs, Reno (submitted by **Oyvind Frock**). Am-Arcs was fortunate to have **Dr. George Jones** of Hamilton College, N.Y., as the speaker at our March meeting. Dr. Jones spoke on "The Early Archaic Peoples of Eastern Nevada." The March field trip was to the laboratory of Archaeological Research Services in Gold Hill, Nevada. **Vicki Clay** showed how the material items recovered from ARS's Washoe Winter Village site excavation in Carson City were being cleaned, catalogued and permanently marked for curation. (Volunteers from Am-Arcs have assisted in excavations at this site).

Several members took advantage of **Dr. Jane Goodall's** appearance in Reno on March 31 and listened attentively to her presentation.

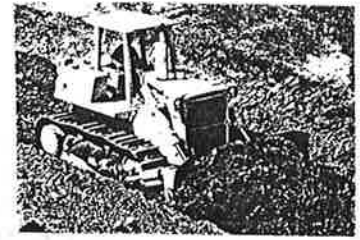
Two Am-Arc members spent two days in February assisting **Alvin McLane**, of the Desert Research Institute, in a field survey and recording project at the Stead Airfield in Reno. One large prehistoric site and a historic ranch were recorded.

In General. This past January, Washington, D.C. hosted the 28th annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology. Nevada archeologists presenting papers at the conference included: **Dr. Don Hardesty**, University of Nevada, Reno, with a paper entitled Landscapes and the Archaeology of Mining Communities in the American West; **Peter B. Mires**, Intermountain Research, Silver City, and his paper Desert Dwellings: The Historical Domestic Architecture of Rural Nevada; and **William G. White**, Bureau of Reclamation, Boulder City, Railroad Pass Squatters' Camp: "There Were a Few Tents Out There Where People Were Living". ♦

NDOT RUNS A MUCK

A fencing contractor, under contract with the Nevada Department of Transportation, partially destroyed an archeological site southwest of Las Vegas on State Route 160 before the action was stopped. The site, first identified in 1984 and considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, consisted of no less than 67 rock ring features. The features are thought to

have acted as water catchment basins, man-made tenajas, rather than functioning as architectural features. A small rock shelter with two nearby roasting pits has also



been impacted as a result of the road modifications. A significant petroglyph site, Sandstone Bluff, and an undisturbed portion of the Old Spanish/Mormon Trail are located in this archeologically sensitive area and may be indirectly affected by this action. The State Historic Preservation Office is investigating the matter in cooperation with BLM and NDOT.

Alert members of SNRAE, in a futile attempt to stop the bulldozer, were the first to bring this serious matter to the attention of the appropriate agencies. Perhaps it is time to form a state-wide archeological site stewardship program similar to the one Arizona has so successfully implemented to monitor sites for senseless vandalism and destruction. Such examples as this emphasize the fact that we need creative ways to ensure resource protection and wise treatment of our common cultural heritage in Nevada. ♦

NEVADA'S CULTURAL COMMISSION FUNDING PROPOSED

A legislative bill promoted by Assemblymen Gene Segerblom, John Marvel and 28 co-sponsors has been submitted for approval. The bill would provide renewed funding, \$20 million dollars spread over 10 years, through the sale of bonds for the state's Commission on Cultural Affairs. The money would be awarded to non-profit and governmental agencies for the renovation of historic structures for cultural purposes. A previous one-time appropriation of \$2.5 million was awarded for such worthwhile preservation projects as the Caliente Depot, Boulder Dam Hotel, Huntridge Theater, and historic buildings in Yerington and Fallon. Contact your state legislators and let them know that you support archeological and historic preservation within the state. ♦

BOARD MEETING

An NAA Board meeting was held on March 4th at **Susan Murphy's** newly completed house in Las Vegas. After a motion and unanimous vocal vote, **William White** acted as President for **Chet Bate** who was absent attending to matters of a personal nature. The meeting lasted three hours in which old and new business was discussed and matters voted upon. Several breaks were taken to enjoy Susan's home, back yard, and munchies. At noon, Susan fed the ravenous crowd of 11 with home-made soup and bread; nobody went wanting. Susan then led those present on a field trip to two petroglyph sites,

Aztec Tank and Yellow Plug, at the southeastern base of Mt. Potisi southwest of Las Vegas. This lasted until sunset; some, however, continued the activities in to the night. Thanks for your gracious hospitality, Susan!

The next Board meeting will be held at the Eureka County Fair Grounds, May 12, at 4:00 p.m., prior to the Annual Meeting's Friday night barbecue. Wally Cuchine, has promised to provide the Board with a "horse stall" or some other type of meeting room. (Hey, nothing but the best!) As always, Board Meetings are open to the general public and membership, and you are encouraged to attend, please. ♦

CLAYTON VALLEY FIELD SCHOOL

Robertta McGonagle, BLM District Archeologist in Battle Mountain, mailed out a Notice of Interest to the NAA membership concerning the field school. According to Bobbie only four persons returned the questionnaire: three members are interested in participating and one person is interested but has scheduling conflicts. Its not too late to show an interest and sign up; give Bobbie a call at (702) 635-4063 or Pat Hicks, BLM Archeologist in Tonopah, at (702) 482-3691.

The field school, under the direction of Dr. Mary Ludwig, Department of Anthropology, California State University, Fresno, will occur from May 30 to June 19, 1995 at the western end of Clayton valley at an altitude of approximately 5,000 ± feet. Mary states that 8 students, thus far, have signed up for the field course in which they will receive academic credit for their efforts. Along with a staff of 4, the students will be offered personalized attention as a result of an ideal student-to-teacher ratio.



The field school will have an isolated field camp with BLM providing the camp chief. There will be an opportunity to participate in field survey, site mapping, excavation and rock art (petroglyph) recording. This is a great chance for avocationalists to gain experience or to refine their archeological techniques. The site being excavated is an open air campsite and adjacent rockshelter with petroglyphs that has been heavily vandalized. The proposed rock art site to be recorded is either the Kane Man or Dancing Man site; both equally spectacular in quantity and quality of petroglyphs. And if that isn't enough to entice you, there's always Nevada's great "out back" that you can explore after hours. If you can't volunteer this year, then think about next year because this is a multi-year project. Give Pat or Bobbie a call. ♦

MEMBERSHIP

As a reminder, membership is from January 1 to December 31 of each year. If you have not done so, please renew your membership and pledge to Nevada's only non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of conservation and preservation, scientific study, and interpretation of prehistoric and historic archeological resources. Membership is open to all avocational and professional archeologists and interested/supporting members of the public. Be sure to sign the Code of Ethics before you send in the form. An application and renewal form is attached to the current *NEWSLETTER* if you have misplaced; or the dog chewed up the last one sent. Thank you for your support. ♦

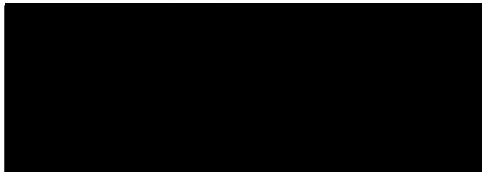
DATES TO REMEMBER

- Society of California Archaeology Annual Meeting, Eureka Inn, Eureka, Ca., April 5-8, 1995.
- World Atlatl Association Annual Competition, Valley of Fire State Park, Overton, Nv., April 7-9, 1995.
- Society of American Archaeology Annual Meeting, Minneapolis Hilton, Minneapolis, Mn., May 3-7, 1995.
- Intertribal Pow Wow and Market Place, Sam Boyd's Silver Bowl Stadium, Las Vegas, Nv., May 5-14, 1995.
- Nevada Archaeological Association Annual Meeting, Eureka Opera House, Eureka, Nv., May 12-14, 1995.
- NAA Board Meeting, Eureka County Fair Grounds, Eureka, Nv., 4 P.M., May 12, 1995.
- American Rock Art Research Association Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, NM., May 27-29, 1995.
- Utah Rock Art Research Association Annual Meeting, Blanding, Ut., Sept. 1-4, 1995.

LAST LAUGH

As Federal government agencies and private organizations come under pressure to conform with executive commands to "downsize and reorganize," one is reminded of the paraphrased words of Petronious, Director of Elegance under Roman Emperor Nero. "Reorganization is a word used to describe a method that creates an illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization." Petronious later committed suicide after being told to do so by Nero; and Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Sad but true. One wonders if we have learned anything at all from history? Not! ♦

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