

VESTIGES



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President's Message

Thanks to the many people who made the 2010 URARA Symposium in Blanding so successful. A special thanks to the citizens of Blanding for their hospitality, particularly the mayor, Larry Guymon, Karen Rawlings of the Blanding Arts and Events Center, and Karen, Lois and Kol, our caterers who provided such wonderful food. Walt Layton suggested Blanding as a URARA symposium location, and he was a wonderful symposium chair and host. Troy Scotter and Diane Orr were primarily responsible for choosing speakers whose presentations steered us in new directions. Thanks to Carol Garner, auction chair, and Dell Crandall and Larry Evans for their energy and humor in hosting the URARA auction. Thanks also to the people who worked in the kitchen or served food in the morning and during the breaks. Thanks to Margaret Grochocki, who drove down a truckload of publications, t-shirts and kitchen items from Salt Lake City. In addition, thanks, most of all, to Ed Delay and the nearly two-dozen field trip leaders who worked so hard for us.

Jeff Allen
2010 URARA President

Annual December Meeting

From Barbara Saxon

The annual December meeting will be MONDAY, DECEMBER 6 due to a scheduling conflict with the usual Friday. We will start at 6 pm. The meeting will be at the usual facility, First Unitarian Church, 569 South 1300 East, Salt Lake City. This is a potluck event with a honey-glazed ham supplied by URARA. There will be an after dinner program. Barbara Saxon will call members a few days before as a general reminder and to coordinate food selections. For more information contact Barbara Saxon, 801-262-4432, or Barbara Green, 801-466-7702.

Think About It!

By Rebecca Stoneman
Looking Back...Paper Paves Way for Public Archaeology

In 1974, Bill Lipe, Washington State University anthropology professor, now emeritus, authored the paper "A Conservation Model for American Archaeology," a reaction to rapidly dwindling archaeological resources because of development and vandalism. The paper proved seminal in the

formation of modern public archaeology in the U.S., and its influence on cultural resource management (CRM) archaeology remains evident.

As land-managing agencies have moved from conservation toward a preservation mandate, making public lands less accessible to archaeologists and limiting research to sites threatened with destruction from development, Lipe has continued to engage the public, the CRM community and governments on matters of archaeological practice, ethics, legislation and the future. He argues, "well-justified, problem-oriented research on judiciously selected 'non-threatened' sites is ethically acceptable."

URARA Grand Gulch Backpack Trip, Oct 2010

By Ben Everitt

We arrived at the BLM Kane Gulch ranger station at 8:00. Puddles spoke of last night's rain. The forecast said more rain. We decided on Plan "B" which was to forego the long and possibly muddy car shuttle into Government Trail, and just go in and out via Bullet Canyon. I jettisoned a liter of water to make room for my tent.

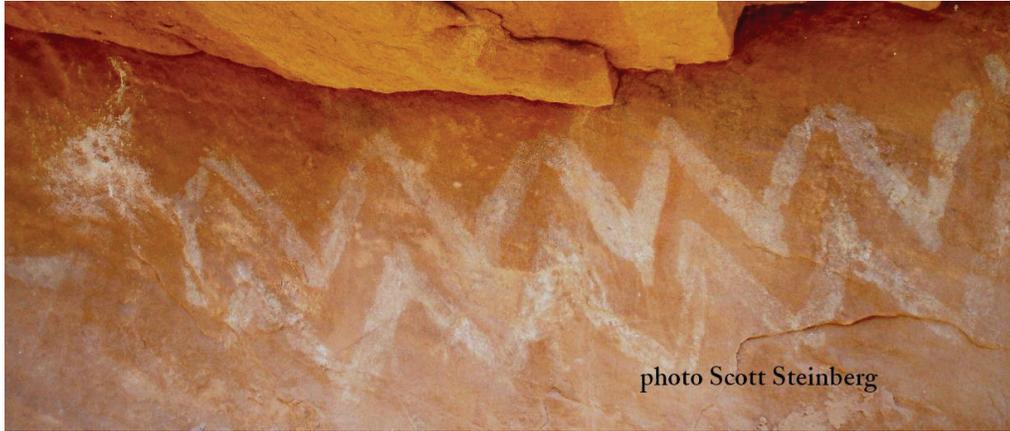
A trip into Grand Gulch is a spiritual journey. After wandering among junipers on the plateau, the trail drops over the edge of the mesa and descends, layer by geologic layer, into past time. It is like climbing down the ladder, rung by shaky rung, into the kiva to visit the ancestors. The walls close in. The gray sky recedes. The ruins of a square watchtower perch on the distant rim above. Ruins appear; granaries tucked under ledges, small houses, here and there a glyph or a painting. Larger ruins appear. Lunch at Perfect Kiva ruin. The stream channel is narrower, and the brush thicker than I had remembered.

Our camp was on a high bench at the confluence of Bullet and the main gulch. There is supposed to be a spring here, but all we found were some brown pools from the last rain. The clouds were breaking, so I elected not to pitch the tent I had lugged all the way there, and threw my bag in a dry spot under a ledge. A gentle rain during the night showed that I fit nicely just inside the drip line.



photo Scott Steinberg

The morning dawned partly cloudy. The consensus was to go upstream in the Gulch to Shiek's Canyon and the Green Mask pictograph. We buttoned up camp, grabbed some lunch and water, and went. We crossed the dry creek bed just above camp and followed a good trail on the west bank. Every alcove has a ruin and some glyphs or paintings. One of the favored themes is snakes and/or lightning. Are they trying to tell us something? Here a bug-eyed lightning figure peers out from under a ledge.



Just above the Ruin of the Red Deer, the trail crosses back to the east side, and we were surprised to see a good flow of muddy water. Odd, because there had not been any just downstream.



We ate lunch at the Green Mask and filled our water bottles at the spring. A gathering darkness and the rumble of distant thunder interrupted talk of afternoon exploration. The gusty wind

smelled like rain. The consensus was to beat feet back to camp. If anything, this group does have a good consensus. The facts are these: The trail is on the west side of the creek. Camp is on the east side. The east side of the canyon is impassable because the creek runs against the wall in several places. If the creek should rise before we get to the lower crossing, we will be in a tough spot.

We didn't make it. Just as it really began to rain hard, an alcove presented itself, and we ducked in. Perched on a dry ledge, we watched the rain splatter on the slickrock all around. It was a perfect time for afternoon tea and not a stove among us.

The rain came down in sheets. Then the slickrock began to work its magic. To our left, a jet of water shot out over the cliff as if Engine Number 8 had just turned on the pumps. The snout of the flow hung in the updraft for a moment, then wafted away as more water poured over the edge, and the whole river worked its way slowly down through the windy air. Soon we were looking out from behind our own waterfall. Water raced down every wash and gully toward the creek faster than we could run. We knew we had been outflanked.

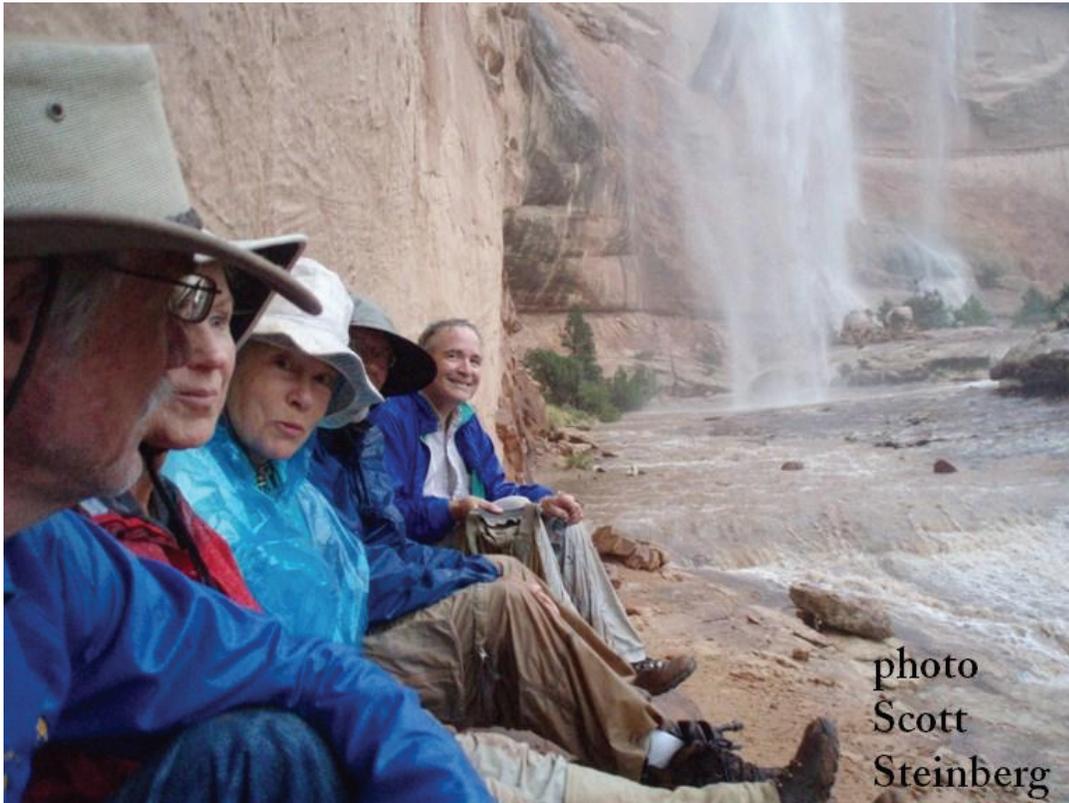


photo
Scott
Steinberg

When the rain let up, we squished our way down the trail to the crossing where we could look wistfully toward our camp across a hundred yards of rolling brown waves and whitecaps. The late afternoon sun came out. We spread our stuff to dry in what little light remained, and measured the water level. Still rising. We found a large boulder that we could all fit under and took an inventory. Someone had a couple of loaves and some fishes, and soon we had enough for supper, and maybe breakfast, too. The sun set. Measured the water level again; down a foot, dropping fairly fast, but still up in the tamarisk and willows. It will be dark soon and no moon. Not a good time to be wading in a cold, fast river full of snags and floating trash.

The stars came out. The Great Bear dipped below the horizon looking for a place to den up for the winter. Jupiter glittered down through our skylight. Some time after midnight, Orion rose over the east rim.

Morning dawned bright and clear. The creek was back in its banks. We hopped across dry-shod. Our camp was relatively unhurt by the storm. After breakfast and double coffee, we packed up and set out for home, stopping by some sites we had missed on the way down.

The trail was hard to follow. It was not washed out exactly, but covered with new sand bars, and, at the creek crossings, obscured by mats of bent willows. Joe had GPS'd our track on the way down, which helped a whole lot to find it on the way back. Scott scouted ahead to look for cairns that had survived the flood.

We passed a little shrine tucked under a ledge near a granary. On the back wall is a sketch of the Lord of Thunderclouds himself, with bug eyes and lightning biceps. Done in red mud, he looks out over the flood plain, its bent willows and piles of driftwood. It is easy to think that he was painted by some long past traveler, just like us, sitting under this ledge, waiting for the water to go down, and scraping the mud off his sneakers. We left a handful of Fritos corn chips to say; "Thanks for letting us pass unharmed through his beautiful wild country."



Photo Scott Steinberg

URARA Contacts

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

Board of Directors 2010

Jeff Allen, President	435-986-0977	allenjeffrey@beyondbb.com
Bob Reed, Vice President	801-566-0741	bobreedclyartist@hotmail.com
Walt Layton	801-561-5228	wclayton@graniteschools.org
Jon Gum	435-627-0938	jon.gum@gmail.com
Margaret Grochocki	801-282-5850	margaret_grochocki@yahoo.com
Diane Orr	801-231-2065	beecherllc@aol.com
Troy Scotter	801-377-6901	troyscotter@comcast.net
Nina Bowen	801-499-0585	nina_bowen@comcast.net
Treasurer, Ben Everitt	435-986-0075	rockdoc@xmission.com

Vestiges Staff

Editor: Rebecca Stoneman-Washee, rebeccastoneman@gmail.com, 735 North 400 West, Blanding, Utah 84511, 435-678-2238; copy editing: Robert Reed, bobreedclyartist@hotmail.com, 801-566-0741; printing and mailing: Barbara and Fred Saxon, fredbarb100@aol.com 801-262-4432; website: Tom Getts, getts@mindspring.com, 970-533-1861

Editor's Message

Enthusiastic greetings to everyone! My name is Rebecca and I will be assembling future editions of your Vestiges newsletter. The plan is to continue the newsletter in the excellent tradition in which the Robinsons have crafted it over the years. Of course, I will be depending upon all of you to contribute announcements, business items, articles, photos, and insights. The newsletter will only be as dynamic as the contributed material!

I am a new URARA member and an unfamiliar voice to many of you, so please allow me a brief introduction. I am currently employed as an education curator at the Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum in Blanding, where I have worked for over five years. Previously, I worked as an archaeologist on the Cibola National Forest, Sandia/Mountainair Districts in New Mexico. Over the years I spent in the field, I learned that the aspect that I loved best about my job was the opportunity to share my passion for the people of the past through education, action, and awareness. The search for that opportunity led me to Utah and the Edge of the Cedars. On a personal note, I am the wife of jewelry artist, Ernie Washee, have three grown children, and three small grandchildren. Like many of you, Ernie and I enjoy searching for messages from the past in the remote canyons of southeastern Utah.

I am including a paragraph about exhibits and events at Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum, a place of which many of you are familiar.

Winter Solstice Navajo Star Stories (portable planetarium), Saturday, December 18, 2011, 10 am - 3:00 pm; free.

"The Land Owns Us - The Cultural History of Westwater Canyon" will be exhibited through February 21, 2011.

"Southern Paiute - A Portrait" by Michael Plyler, February 25 - May 30, 2011.

"Black and White - Light and Shadows in Southeast Utah" by Dave Manley, through January 30th 2011.

Four Corners Indian Art Market May 7th 2011.

Contact me by phone at 435-678-2238 or by email at rebeccastoneman@gmail.com. Please feel free to send newsletter material, advice, constructive criticism, or even just a greeting or introduction. I look forward to getting to know and working with you!

Journey well,
Rebecca Stoneman-Washee