

The Significance of Archaeology

By Jim Garrison, SHPO

Of the four National Register of Historic Places types of significance (A, B, C or D), "Criterion D: Information Potential" would at first glance appear to be the most objective or science based criterion but in reality it is often the most subjective. The "Criteria of Evaluation" National Register Bulletin states, "Properties may be eligible for the National Register if they have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history." Criterion D is obviously used to recognize the significance of archaeological sites or districts.

The first paradox dealing with Criterion D is if an archaeological site or district has yielded important information like Grasshopper Ruin, it is still eligible and worthy of preservation. Therefore even if it has been excavated the site remains eligible because of the information already collected. Often eligible sites are excavated and then totally lost to new development and therefore not preserved even though they yielded important information.

The second paradox dealing with Criterion D has to do with preserving an unexcavated site with the expectation it will yield important information. We technically cannot guarantee excavation will yield important information even when some testing has occurred on the site. At the same time we don't want to excavate the site if we don't have to. And we certainly can't predict what kind of research questions might even be asked in the future.

The third paradox has to do with the idea of "important information." If we know enough about the site to fit it nicely into current archaeological research then we already know the kind of information we are looking for, so how important does the information need to be? If it adds to our body of knowledge of previous archaeological work then it is important. If it verifies previous assumptions it is probably important. If it neither extends the topic nor verifies the topic then it probably is not important.

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Las Capas (The Layers) Site near Tucson

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Watch Newsletter

The Arizona Watch is published four times per year: Winter (January), Spring (March), Summer (July) and Fall (October) by Arizona State Parks. Please submit articles via email to sitestewards@azstateparks.gov or mail to 1300 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ. 85007 .

Announcements

Farewell to three Regional Coordinators. We are sorry to lose the tremendous support of Sherman Loy from the Sedona Region, who has served for many years, and is a wealth of knowledge.

In addition, we are also going to miss the upbeat and smiling support of Rose Werner from the Salt River Region and the hard work of Larry Mozis from the Kingman Region.

If anyone is interested in helping with these three regions please contact Nicole at narmstrong@azstateparks.gov or call 602-542-7152.

We want to welcome Greg Davies and Kristen McLean as Co-coordinators for the Central Region. This region has been without a Coordinator for over a year, so we are thrilled to have Greg, a Site Steward from the Tonopah Region, and Kristen, our previous Program Coordinator, working together to support the region.

The Significance of Archaeology Cont.

The fourth paradox has to do with nominating archaeological sites or district. Although many significant archaeological properties have been nominated and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places like Fortaleza, the first property in Arizona to pass the state review committee, many more properties are simply determined eligible and then never nominated. Most of these sites are owned by federal agencies and are therefore protected with or without being nominated.

The fifth paradox has to do with thinking that an archaeological site has only scientific value. Many sites also can have historical and cultural values to existing tribes making the site eligible under Criterion A for its history. Excavation of the scientific information may offend tribal members that want the site to remain intact and undisturbed.

DATABASE ENTRY SYSTEM UPDATE

As I hope everyone knows, on October 23, 2009 we went live with a new database entry system for keeping track of your activity logs and contact information. To date we have held trainings for the following regions

Prescott	Northeastern	
Hassayampa	Lake Havasu	
Payson	Tonopah	Agua Fria
Salt River	Cave Creek	Central

If you were unable to attend the training, please contact your RC.

In addition, several Regional Coordinators are ready to train you themselves. If you are in Middle Verde, Az. Strip, and Williams, please contact them to get access to the system.

Very Important: Please do not enter any data into the Google system that was set-up last year. This system is now off-line so any entries will go into internet never-never land! Until you have access to the new system, please hold all your activity logs for the year.

We will be setting up new training dates to help get the rest of our regions up and running. If you are very familiar with computers and data-entry systems, and would like to help with this process, please contact Nicole.

The Significance of Archaeology, Cont.

The sixth paradox is that most archaeological sites come to our attention because of a federal or state undertaking that will adversely impact them. Therefore many archaeological excavations occur to mitigate the adverse effect of the undertaking. But excavation is itself an adverse effect on the integrity of the site. The project-by-project approach for the mitigation of archaeology instead of a site-by-site approach does not allow the pursuit of research issues in a logical scientific way but in a more haphazard random way. How can archaeologists reach general conclusions while studying only random pieces of the puzzle?

All of these contradictions make the work of the “preservation archaeologists” at SHPO very difficult. When do we tell an agency they must save a site even after excavation? When do we tell an agency to save a site even if its information potential is low? When do we tell an agency to excavate even if the data recovered may end up not being important? When do we insist on having a property nominated even if it has other protections? When should a site remain intact despite its scientific potential? Can excavations be prioritized to focus on the most critical research issues at the expense of others? Not as objective a decision making process as you might think.

Even with these series of complex contradictions the profession of archaeology has been making some outstanding discoveries such as the recent work at the Las Capas (The Layers) Site near Tucson. Here James Vint and other Desert Archaeology archaeologists have uncovered evidence of an enormous network of canals and fields dating to 1200 BC. This is the oldest documented irrigation system in North America.



Thank you so much to all the Site Stewards, and to SHPO staff who took the time to recognize Nicole Armstrong-Best, who does not feel that she deserves this!



Thank you to our photographer, Linda Dorsey from the Hassayampa Region, whose pictures follow.

ARIZONA SITE STEWARD PROGRAM CELEBRATES EXCEPTIONAL VOLUNTEERISM

As we struggle to hold the Site Steward Program together during these difficult economic times, we were thrilled to be able to continue with the tradition of providing recognition and training to our Stewards, at least annually.

This year we gathered at the Rockin' River Ranch in Camp Verde, Arizona for a day of hiking and honoring. With the help of Ned Greenelch, Middle Verde Regional Coordinator and one of his stewards, Ken Lamont, nearly 50 Site Stewards hiked out to the Calloway Sites.

After a strenuous morning, everyone gathered for lunch at the Rockin' River, followed by presentations to many deserving Site Stewards. In the afternoon, attendees were able to join Maggie Leef, Site Steward from the Northeastern Region for a presentation entitled "Petroglyph Appreciation & Context" or Dan Campbell from the Nature Conservancy who walked the group along the Verde River and discussed issues with this important Arizona waterway.

With the generous support of many individual donations of money, raffle prizes and silent auction items, Arizona State Parks was still able to recognize outstanding volunteerism found throughout our program. Thank you to all the attendees who supported the Silent Auction. The program is \$663.00 richer! This money will be used to purchase much needed and overdue Site Steward nametags, as well as supporting further meetings and trainings.



Site Stewards during lunch at the Rockin' River Ranch



Great items donated to the Silent Auction



Greg Davies accepting his award for Outstanding New Site Steward of the Year.



Fred Krops, Prescott Regional Coordinator, accepting his award for Regional Coordinator of the Year



Rose Werner with her Appreciation Award

2010 Arizona Site Steward Program Award Winners

Regional Coordinator of the Year: Fred Kraps, Prescott Region

Asst. Regional Coordinator of the year: Malcolm McGregor, Tucson Region

Regional Support Steward of the Year: Linda Dorsey, Hassyampa Region

Outstanding Site Steward of the Year: Janine Hernbrode, Tucson Region

Outstanding New Site Steward of the Year: Greg Davies, Tonopah Region

Lifetime Achievement Award: Darlene Brinkerhoff, Northeastern Region

Appreciation Award: Rose Werner, Salt River Region
Pete Reilly, Prescott Region

Special Awards: Richard Logsdon, Az. Strip Region
Charles Bidulph, Az. Strip Region
Joe Stambaugh, Az. Strip Region
Roger Kleckner, Tucson Region
Val Davidson, Tucson Region
Bob Wright, Payson Region
Del Wright, Payson Region
Jerry Hassimer, Payson Region
Helen Hassimer, Payson Region

Angel Award: Mary Ann Clark, Tucson Region



On the left, Janine Berg accepting her award for Outstanding Site Steward of the Year. On the right, Darlene Brinkerhoff accepting her Lifetime Achievement Award.



Robin Rutherford accepting the Angel Award for Mary Ann Clark



Pete Reilly accepting his Appreciation Award.

REGIONAL NEWS



Region 22 Prescott

Hello Fellow Stewards:

The State meeting Saturday in Camp Verde was a huge success. Nicole did an amazing job with very little resources. For those who attended give yourself 8 hours and list it under "other". Call it "State Site Steward Conference". For those who were not able to make it; Pete Reilly received the Appreciation Award. Congratulations Pete on a well deserved recognition.

It's been a difficult winter for visiting most of the sites and that is reflected in the lower than usual visits recorded this winter. It is understandable, even I have been remiss due to the weather. It seems every time I schedule a day, it snows or rains. BUT spring will be here soon and it will dry up and we need to be ready to get out there and see how our sites fared over the winter.

Speaking of recording; the old quarterly report is a thing of the past. Please get in the habit of recording your visit online when you get back or as soon as possible. If you are still having problems with the online system give me a call at 778-0653 and I'll talk you through it.

Keep up the good work and be safe out there!!

Fred Kraps, Regional Coordinator



Region 9H Hassayampa

It has been a fairly quiet winter in the Hassayampa Region. There has been a lot of visitation to some of our well known sites but very little vandalism.

In January there were a few days of heavy rain that caused major flooding at some of our sites, washing away access roads. When the water receded and the mud dried we found that the sites were okay. After all, they have been there for hundreds of years and who knows how many flooding events.

I would like to thank Linda D. for all her help in working with the Hassayampa Site Stewards in converting their volunteer hours from paper activity logs to entering their hours on line with the new program. Her help has been invaluable.

Shelley Rasmussen, Regional Coordinator




Region 37 Lake Havasu/Parker

We have had a Site Steward display set up in the Lake Havasu Museum of History since the beginning of March. As a result, we have had a few inquiries about our site steward program. Many of the winter visitors to Lake Havasu visit the museum and are fascinated with the early history of the region.

We held a regional meeting/potluck on March 15 at the museum, and our group all saw the display.

Jenny Anderson, Regional Coordinator



Region 6 Tucson

The Tucson Region has been involved in a January training session for new stewards and follow up classes in February on Artifact Identification and in March on Using a GPS.

Several state and local awards have been received by stewards including: Janine Hernbrode for Outstanding Site Steward of the Year; MaryAnne Clark for the Angel Award, Malcolm McGregor for Assistant Regional Coordinator of the Year. Roger Kleckner won a Special Award as did Val Davison.

There are several special projects underway which involve many local site stewards. Two projects in particular have been developed in cooperation with the National Forest Service archaeologist, Bill Gillespe. These Site Stewards have seen something special needing to be worked on and have established a plan to address that need. One such project deals with recording the rock art in a site area. The other is a survey and mapping project relating to a historic site in danger of being lost to erosion and increased public use.

We celebrated a good and productive year at a spring year-end potluck/awards ceremony. Ralph Mersiowsky presented information about the work being done at the Federal Prison Camp site. Good wishes to all as the summer slowdown begins.

Georgia Erdmann, Tucson Area Site Steward



Region 18 Flagstaff

Site Stewards Bern Carey, Christine Stephenson and Rich Rogers were out monitoring sites with Dr. David Wilcox of the Museum of Northern Arizona in the Peaks Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest south of the Wupatki National Monument during February 2009. Rich Rogers happened to see a small piece of pottery exposed at the bottom of a gully created in a slope of volcanic cinders. Upon closer examination it appeared that what was being exposed by erosion of the volcanic cinder slope was a prehistoric pot.

Following Dr. Wilcox's advice the artifact was left in an undisturbed condition and Bern contacted the lead archeologist for the Peaks Ranger District, Mr. Jeremy Haines. Jeremy then asked Bern to take him to the location in the forest where the possible pot was seen. When there Jeremy observed that there were nearby vehicle tracks from off road vehicles, plus recent foot prints. He was able to determine that this was a very rare find, a large, intact prehistoric pot. Because of the nearby vehicle tracks and foot prints Jeremy decided that an emergency excavation of the artifact was required. As Jeremy and Bern removed the volcanic cinders from around the pot it became apparent that this was a very significant find as the pot was completely intact and quite large; approximately 2 feet high and 20 inches in diameter. To their amazement they found that a second pot of equal size was buried with the first pot. Of even more interest was that one pot was made by the Cohonina culture, A Deadman's Fugitive Red pot, and the other was made by the Kayenta Anasazi culture, a Sosi type pot.

Knowing this it can be estimated that the pots were buried in the volcanic cinders in the 1075-1125 AD time period. Jeremy and Bern excavated both pots and transported them to a safe location in the Peaks Ranger District head quarters. Upon examination it is felt that this is one of the most significant prehistoric artifact finds ever made in the Coconino National Forest. Jeremy also contacted SHPO to inform it of the find and the need for the emergency excavation. He submitted a formal report which was approved by SHPO. Jeremy plus members of his archeology staff, assisted by Christine and Rich, returned to the site and made a thorough examination of the site and the surrounding region to ensure the pots were not connected with a burial. It was determined that these pots had been buried as what is called a "pot cache." The hypothesis is that the two pots were buried with the intention of retrieving them at some future time, but that never happened.

Since the artifacts were part of the same cultural complex that is represented by the Wupatki National Monument Bern and Jeremy approached the Superintendents of the Coconino National Forest and the Flagstaff National Monuments and recommended that the pots be loaned from the US Forest Service to the Wupatki National Monument so that visitors to the monument can see and learn from them. The two Superintendents saw the value of the interagency collaboration and gave their approvals. The National Monument built an attractive and secure display case. These beautiful and important prehistoric pots are now on display in the Wupatki National Monument Visitor Center as of the Fall of 2009.

Bern Carey, Regional Coordinator



Bern Carey, Christine Stephenson and Rich Rogers, Site Stewards in the Flagstaff Region with the pots that they helped to find at the Wupatki National Monument Visitor Center display.



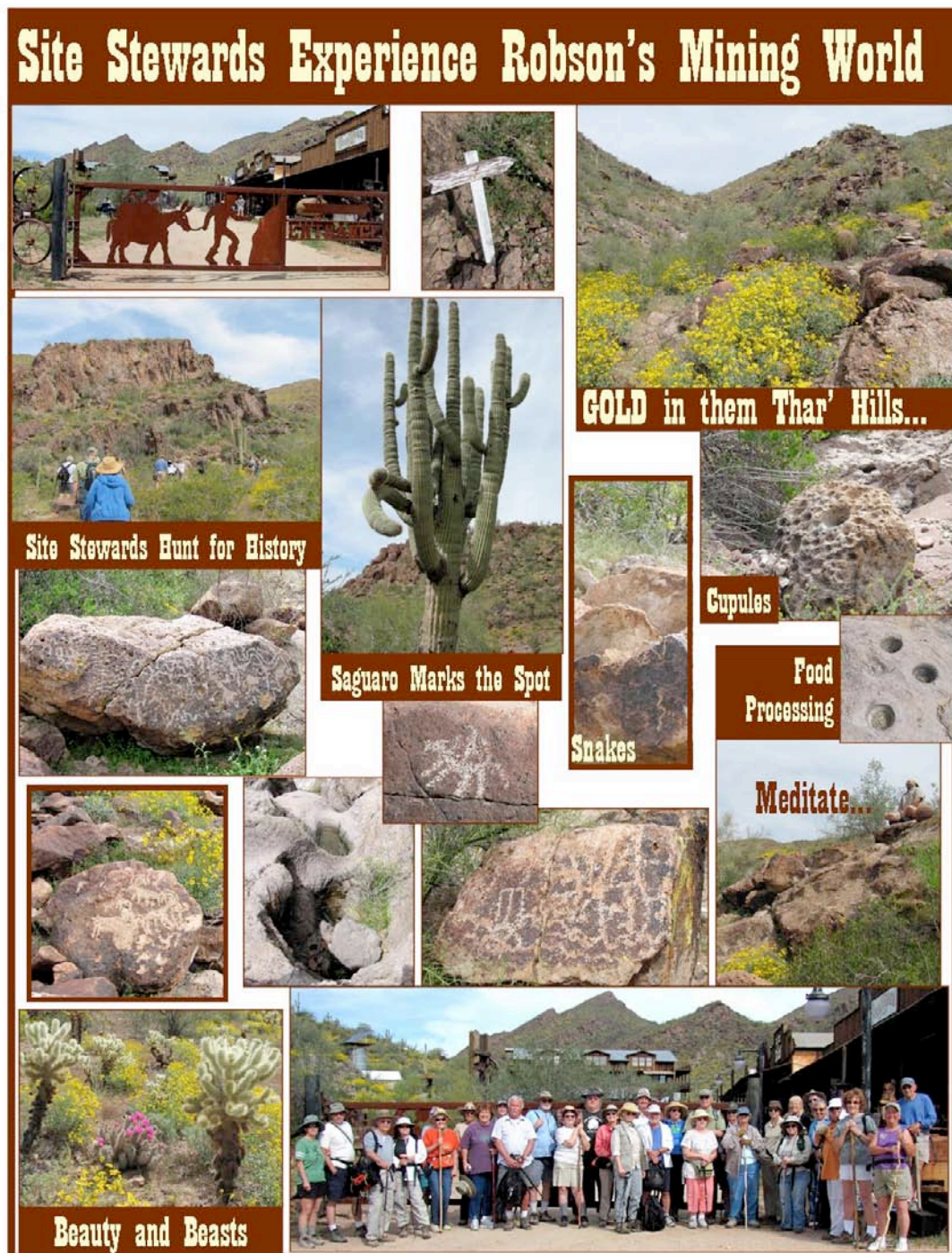
Region 20 Arizona Strip

Region 20 (The Arizona Strip Region) continues to function 100% due to the continued dedication of our Site Stewards and support from our land managers. We will shortly train our second group of new Site Stewards this year, and we are adding new sites in a previously neglected and remote area. Most of our group has managed to conquer the new web-based reporting system, despite some grumbling. Some of our Stewards have volunteered for archaeological projects in the district. Archaeologist Diana Hawks gave a presentation to our group on the archaeology of the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument.

We look forward to another good year. Thank you Region 20 Site Stewards!

Roger & Lesley McPeck, Regional Coordinators

*SEVERAL REGIONS IN CENTRAL
ARIZONA RECENTLY VISITED
ROBSON'S MINING WORLD*



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