

San Juan Basin Archaeological Society

a Colorado Nonprofit Corporation



Field Trip Report

Destination: Local Rock Art – Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park

Date: July 11, 2019

Leader(s): Lyle Hancock

Number of Participants: 16

Our group of sixteen SJBAS members, plus Layne Miller and his family, met at the Twin Buttes Trailhead parking area to arrange carpools for the drive to the Ute Mountain Ute Visitor Center south of Cortez. Layne was our presenter for our July 10th SJBAS meeting; his area of expertise is Archaic, Fremont and Ute rock art. We rendezvoused at the Visitor Center for our 9:00 a.m. half-day tour of ancestral Puebloan, Ute and Navajo rock art in Mancos Canyon. Our guide was Ricky Hayes, a well-known guide from the Ute Mountain Ute tribe.

After squaring away our tour payment, most of the group piled into the Tribal Park van and we headed into Mancos Canyon, the large drainage on the southern edge of Mesa Verde National Park. After driving about ten



miles we stopped at our first rock art site. Numerous ancestral Puebloan and Ute panels were scattered along the sandstone cliff faces along the canyon. Our intrepid group scrambled along keeping up with Ricky despite the 96-degree July heat. Many of the petroglyphs were random clan symbols, but Ricky spent a lot of time describing a solstice marker that worked for the summer and winter solstices. Ricky is full of stories and he does a stream of consciousness version of the Hopi creation stories that many believe also relate to the ancestral Pueblos. As Paula later shared, “We are fortunate to get the stories and interpretations and oral tradition from our Native American guides. As outsiders, we get impatient to get moving but our good fortune is getting the oral tradition and interpretation of the rock art.” Layne left early due to a previous commitment, but the group soldiered on as far as Kiva Point.



- by Lyle Hancock

Participants: Lyle Hancock, Rhonda Raffo, Jim Mueller, Lorraine and Hunter McCleary, Mary Moorehead, Ruth Guarino, Susan and Donn Hicks, Paula Lutz, Barbara Arnold, Betsy Moore, Phil Bruckbauer, Joan and Byron Kellogg, Chris Merlier, and Layne Miller (July 10th meeting presenter) plus his wife and two sons