



Bay Area Rock Art News

A Publication of the Bay Area Rock Art Research Association

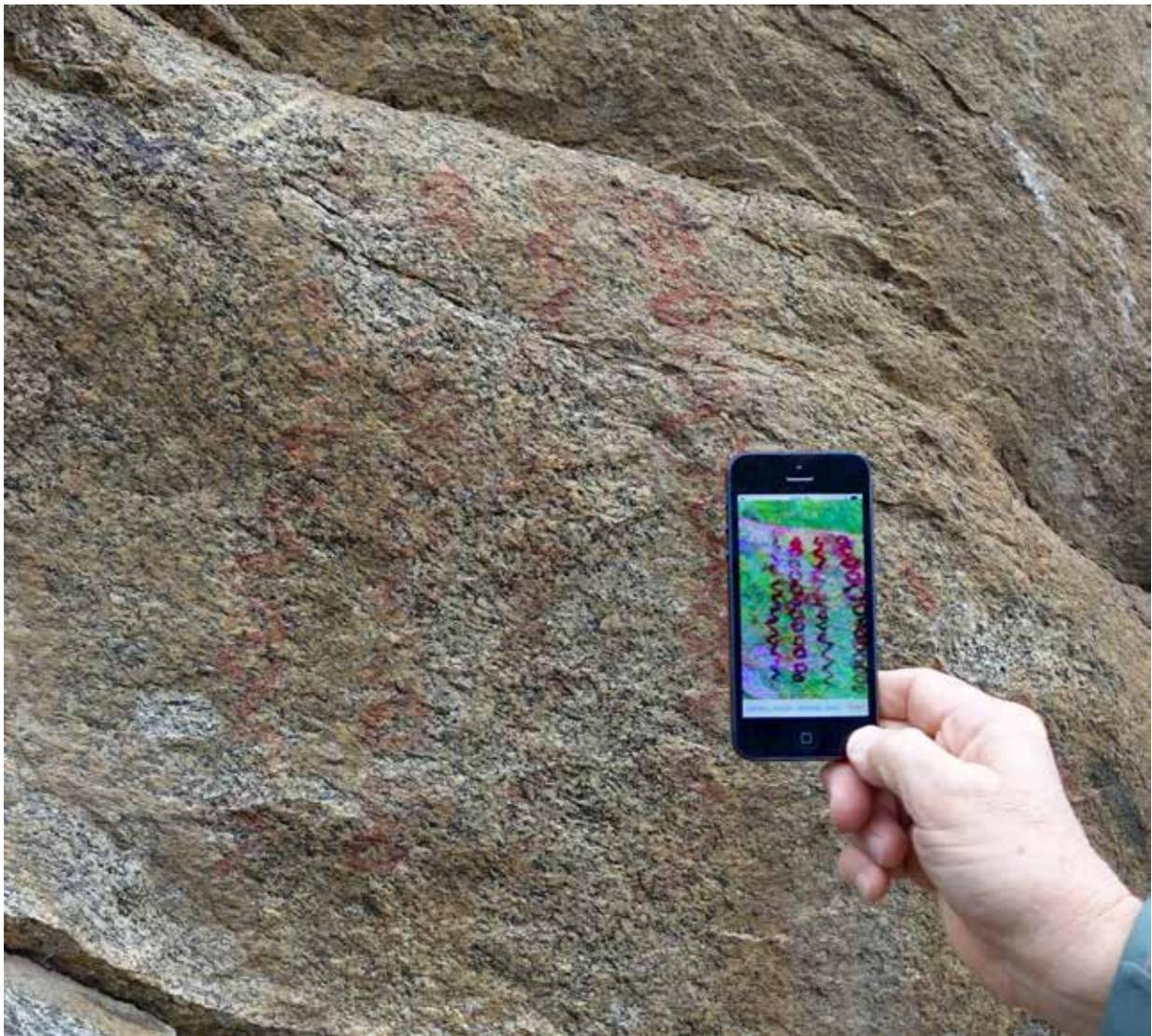
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iDStretch: A Breakthrough Technology for the Field

a conversation with Jon Harman

Coming soon to an iPad or smartphone near you...iDStretch! That wonderful image enhancer that almost magically extends the capabilities of the human eye to reveal the palimpsest of faint, nearly invisible pigments in rock art. Regular DStretch users have been anticipating this logical next-step spin-off of the desktop version, to be easily usable in the field. Jon heeded the call, and deftly developed iDStretch over the winter holidays, in time for a new year of sleuthing new images in sites we thought we knew!



Jon Harman's new IOS version of DStretch in action

☼ *Jon, I know that DStretch has revolutionized rock art research, and that now it is a standard tool for revealing hard-to-see images--how long has it been in use, and how widespread is its implementation?*

Hi Chris, this is a good place to talk about the early history of DStretch and BARARA. I developed DStretch in 2005. On a BARARA trip to Clear Lake in April Rachael Long's friend Bob Orleans got to see it in action. Bob is an archaeologist and a member of SCA (Society for California Archaeology). He suggested I give a poster about it at the SCA meeting which was being held in Sacramento later that month. Things were a little less regimented back then and I was able to get SCA to allow me to put up the poster even though I was not a member. Paul Freeman and I made the trip to Sacramento and I added my poster to a poster session. At that session I met archaeologists from Baja California who have been very helpful to me in the years since. My first publication about DStretch was in a BARA News article in June 2005. Now DStretch is being used worldwide. At the IFRAO conference in Spain last year I was very pleasantly surprised by the large number of European researchers who used the program. It even got us (Ken Hedges, Diane Hamann, Jeff LaFave and I) special treatment at some of the Paleolithic caves in Spain.

☼ *What led you to develop iDStretch for the iPad?*

Competition! Bob Mark released LABstretch for the iPad around November of last year. I knew nothing about iOS and I didn't have an iPhone or iPad or Mac computer, but by coincidence I was doing image processing work for a company that made an iPhone app. They encouraged me and showed me what I needed to buy to get set up for iOS (Apple insists you do iOS development on a Mac.) It turned out to be relatively easy for me to develop an app that I soon realized would be very useful in the field.

☼ *It seems very easy to use --I like the presets you have provided*

The app benefited from all the work I had done for DStretch cameras. The DStretch camera has turned out to be too hard to keep current for new cameras so something else was needed. The camera did force me to make a minimal interface. Essentially you just pressed a button. I took a subset of the camera enhancements and added them to the iOS app. It is important to note that the enhancements on the app are not exactly the same as those in the computer DStretch. I had to cut corners for iOS due to lack of horsepower and code libraries. But the enhancements have worked pretty well so far for me at the sites I have visited.

On the front page is an example from a site within the city of Tehachapi. My wife Sheila and I visited it in January.

☼ *Can you tell our readers how to get iDStretch?*

There is only one way: Apple store. Search for iDStretch.

☼ *What about Android?*

It's coming soon. It turned out that iOS was easy to develop for and handles images amazingly well. Android is not easy and it has some nasty imaging limitations. Despite this I think I can make something for Android that will be useful and fun for rock art people.



Our BARARA website--barara.org
by Chris Galapp

Did you know that BARARA has a website? It is a work in progress, of course, and I get to it as I can fit it into my worklife. Leigh Marymor has been busy compiling his Bibliographic Database into special topics, and we are pleased to feature his comprehensive list of PCN-related bibliographic material (PCN = Pecked Curvilinear Nucleated). PCNs comprise a healthy percentage of the petroglyph elements we see in our Bay Area sites, and

now Leigh has gathered the material together for easy reference. <http://barara.org/publications.html>

The site is live, and awaits more content. I will be posting select past issues of the BARARA News, trying to stay current with events (operative word--TRYING!) and am happy to receive feedback from the membership.

Visit barara.org!



Effigy Mounds National Monument *by Rachael Long*

Effigy Mounds along the Mississippi River in north-east Iowa is a hidden jewel. I was lucky to find it through a poster at the National Bat Conference in Monterey, CA, where researchers were studying bats in the area. I ‘googled’ the park and not only was the site important for bats, it also had a rich history of people inhabiting the area for over 10,000 years. Intrigued, I had a chance to visit the site last fall, while attending another meeting in Minnesota. It’s about a 3-hour drive from the Twin Cities, but time went by fast with the lovely rolling hills, streams, towns, and occasional Amish horses and buggies to enjoy. The weather was also a dream with balmy skies and golden colors.

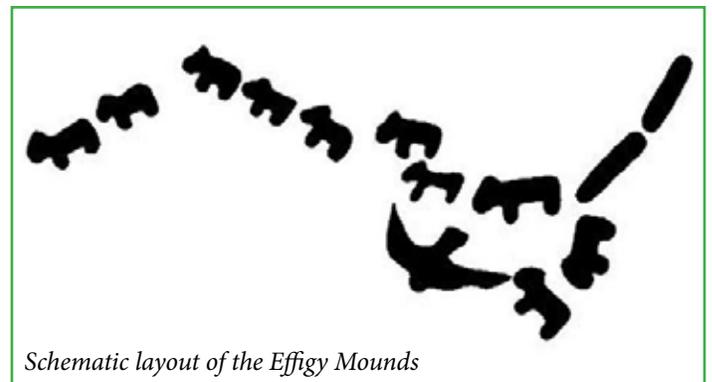
As we approached the Mississippi River, the road dropped sharply and the area became more wild with forests and marshland replacing endless cornfields. The river is nearly 3-miles wide, and its power can best be felt by Mark Twain’s words, “The Mississippi River will always have its own way; no engineering skill can persuade it to do otherwise.” For thousands of years, hunter-gatherer cultures thrived on its rich resources. People fished, hunted elk and deer, and gathered mussels, arrowhead roots, wild rice, and acorns. They lived in rock shelters along the river’s edge and then, about 850 years ago, settled into more permanent larger villages in the valleys.

Although people have lived in the area for many thousands of years, the earthen effigy mounds that we came to see began to appear about 1,400 years ago. They are primarily on the high bluffs overlooking the river. As one walks along trails, shapes of animals rise out of the ground, as if roaming the forests. We

saw a slew of bears marching down river and birds soaring over grasslands. These effigies are massive and leave one wondering how they were made by hand, as the amount of dirt moved is staggering. The great bear mound is nearly 140-ft long, 70-ft wide, and 4-ft tall. At one time they were probably double that height, but centuries of erosion has taken a toll.

Thoughts are that these earthen effigies were religious sites or clan symbols and used in seasonal ceremonies. Some tribal stories hold that the bear is the guardian of the earth and the bird the guardian of the sky. Perhaps the animal mounds were a means of connecting people to the land, the spirit world, and their ancestors. The building of these mounds ceased about 850 years ago when people started living in villages.

The park headquarters has an impressive museum that documents the history of the people who lived in the area. Artifacts are nicely displayed and include stone tools, spear points, jewelry, and pottery decorated with intricate patterns. A bonus for us was watching enormous barges charging up and down the river and trains racing on the river’s edge carrying coal, while a convocation of 16 eagles soared overhead. The river continues to be just as important today as it has been for thousands of years.



Schematic layout of the Effigy Mounds

Field Trips and Events

Vandenberg AFB, Santa Barbara County

BARARA is making arrangements with Chris Ryan, the Vandenberg Air Force Base archaeologist to tour the base sites on **Saturday, July 16**. We will plan some other side trips as well, but mark your calendars for that weekend. There are very interesting pictograph panels on base, so download your iDStretch, and get ready for some color! More info to come via email, so be sure we have a current email address for you.

Kern County sites

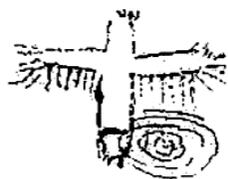
Jim Gorden is working on a field trip to rock art sites along the Kern River for **May 21st and 22nd**. This will not involve a difficult or long hike, but you'd be wise to have sturdy hiking shoes, snacks and drinks, sunblock, and a hat. He's also planning a 4 day revisit of **Pahranagat Valley** and possibly some other sites in Nevada for **October 19-23 or October 26-30**. Call him to sign up for either trip: 559-730-0454 or email him at jim@gordenag.com. Recently, he's begun asking field trip attendees to join SSAS (\$10/individual, \$100/lifetime) and to sign a code of ethics form as well as a waiver of liability.

American Rock Art Research Association

Las Cruces New Mexico will be the venue for the ARARA conference this year, and it should be sensational. Las Cruces is central to a number of high quality rock art sites, and there will be nearly 40 field trips in all to discover them. Of course, presentations covering the most current rock art research on the planet form the core of the program. The dates are **May 27 - 30**, at the Ramada Inn in Las Cruces. Information, online registration forms and field trip descriptions and applications can be found at the ARARA website: www.arara.org



Petroglyphs at Alamo Mountain--Marglyph Berrier



Join/Renew your membership in the Bay Area Rock Art Research Association!

Founded in 1983 by Dr. Paul Freeman and Leigh Marymor, BARARA attracts like-minded individuals who are committed to exploring rock art all over the world, preserving and conserving it, providing education, and studying rock art in creative and interesting ways. Members enjoy access to field trip information and receive a newsletter that is published twice a year.

First name (please print) _____ Last name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

E-mail address _____ Phone (with area code) _____

Membership period _____
 Individual membership (\$25)
 Member-plus-one membership (\$35)
 Donation (amount) \$ _____ (thank you!)

Dues are collected annually for membership from July of the current year through June of the next year

Make checks payable to: BARARA

Mail to: BARARA Membership
1400 Pinnacle Court, #405
Point Richmond, CA 94801

For additional information:
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