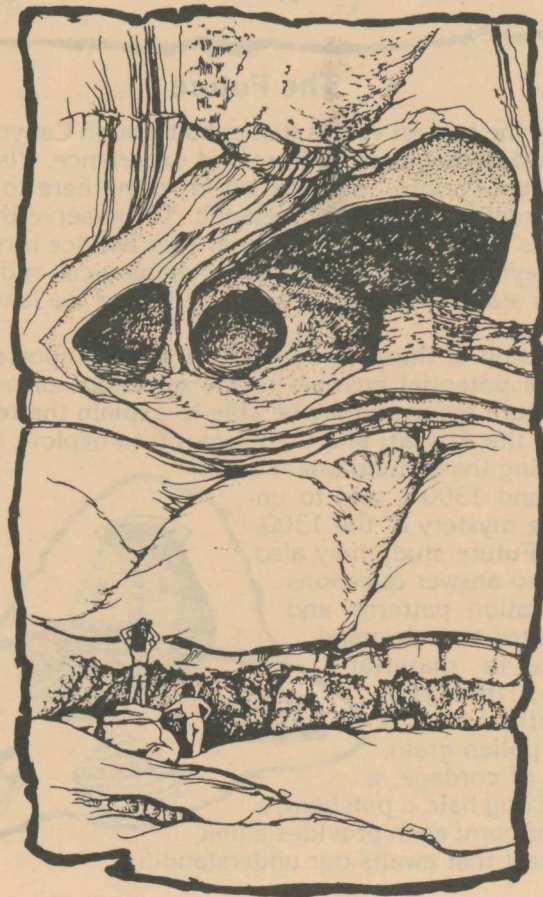


Our Heritage Threatened

Archeology attempts to explain the mystery of past human activity by describing and then explaining the material remains of human culture. Once a site is disturbed, it becomes very difficult to tell a complete story of human activity. Without a thorough description of an artifact's context, it remains merely an object and can not give us meaningful information regarding past human behavior. Illegal surface collection and excavation ("pot hunting"), unintentional site trampling, and malicious vandalism can all permanently destroy cultural resources, the non-renewable remains of our cultural heritage.

Preservation of the past for future study is threatened daily by acts of vandalism. Twice the federal government has passed laws to protect our cultural resources. Both the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 make it illegal to excavate, remove, damage, alter or deface the material remains of human life and activity over 100 years old. Stiff criminal and civil penalties are being upheld, especially for those who traffic illegally obtained artifacts. Rewards of up to \$500 are provided for information leading to arrest and conviction of offenders.



The Past Belongs to the Future. . . But Only the Present Can Preserve It. --Anon.

Share the responsibility and show your respect for this fabulous heritage and the unique conditions that have preserved it:



Walk Like Bobcat

Ruin walls are fragile and ancient mortar crumble easily. Walk around ruins carefully, staying off the walls. Look inside the ruins, but be careful not to lean on doorways or windows. Disturbing the deposits at the base of ruins can result in toppled walls.

Camp at least 300 feet from any archeological site.



Look With the Eye of Eagle

Enjoy artifacts for their beauty and leave them in place for others to enjoy.

Appreciate the mystery of prehistoric rock art, but please don't touch. Skin oils hasten deterioration of pigments and rock surfaces.



Think With the Caution of Coyote

If you should see someone in the act of vandalizing a site, removing artifacts, or any other suspicious activity, note critical information such as time, location, vandal's physical description, vandal's vehicle description and license number, and report to a ranger as soon as possible.

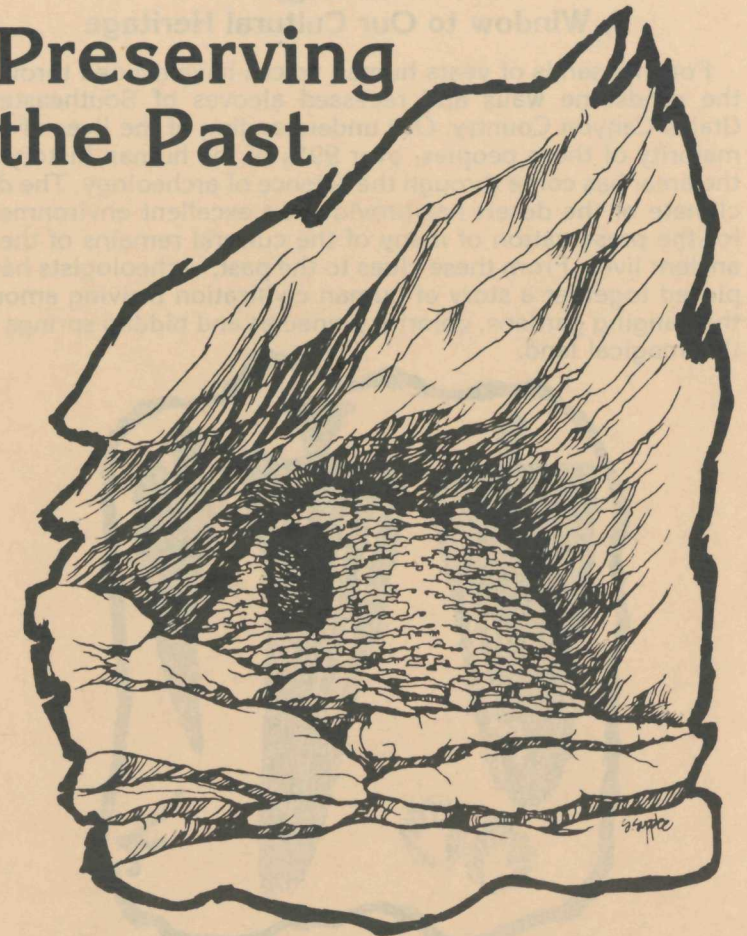


Learn With the Wisdom of Owl

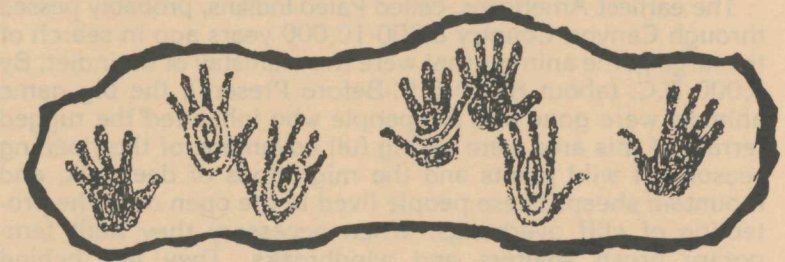
Educational institutions, private research organizations and government agencies offer opportunities to participate in ongoing archeological excavations. Become a volunteer.

**The best protection for our Cultural Heritage
is a Caring Public.**

Preserving the Past



For the Future

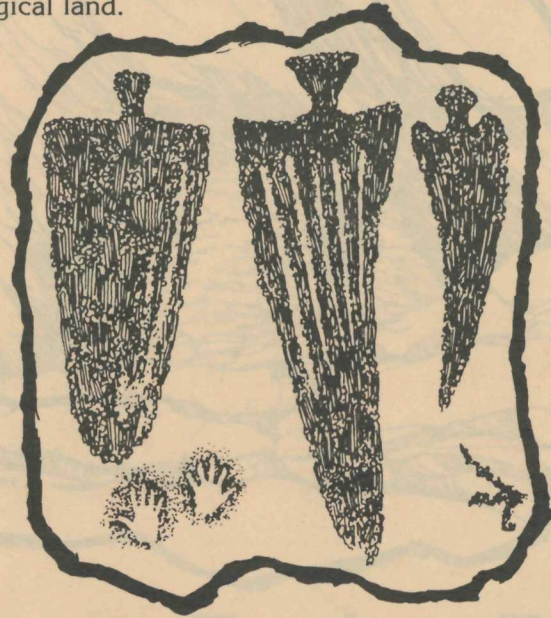


Canyonlands National Park
125 W. 200 South
Moab, Utah 84532

Archeology

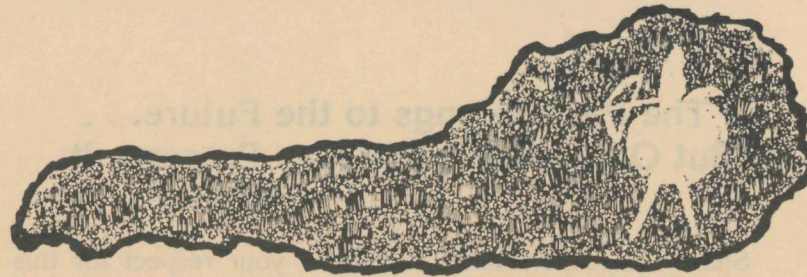
A Window to Our Cultural Heritage

For thousands of years human voices have echoed through the sandstone walls and recessed alcoves of Southeastern Utah's Canyon Country. Our understanding of the lives of the majority of these peoples, over 99% of the human history of the area, has come through the science of archeology. The dry climate of the desert has provided an excellent environment for the preservation of many of the cultural remains of these ancient lives. From these clues to the past, archeologists have pieced together a story of human civilization thriving among the hanging gardens, colorful pinnacles and hidden springs of this magical land.



Ancient Pathfinders

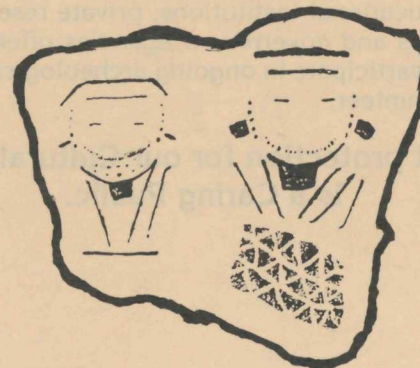
The earliest Americans, called Paleo-Indians, probably passed through Canyon Country 8,000-10,000 years ago in search of the large game animals that were the mainstay of their diet. By 6,000 B.C. (about 8,000 B.P.-Before Present), the big game animals were gone and the people who inhabited the rugged terrain of this area were taking full advantage of the ripening seasons of wild plants and the migrations of deer, elk, and mountain sheep. These people lived in the open or in the protection of cliff overhangs. When necessary they built temporary brush shelters and windbreaks. They left behind remains of fine baskets, sandals, projectile points and throwing sticks called "atlatls." They also left us the fanciful birds and animals and mystical lifesize "ghosts" that greet us as paintings on the sandstone walls. Today, we refer to the culture of these people as Desert Archaic, a hunter/gathering lifeway that shaped all great civilizations of the Southwest.



Makers of Pottery / Builders of Stone

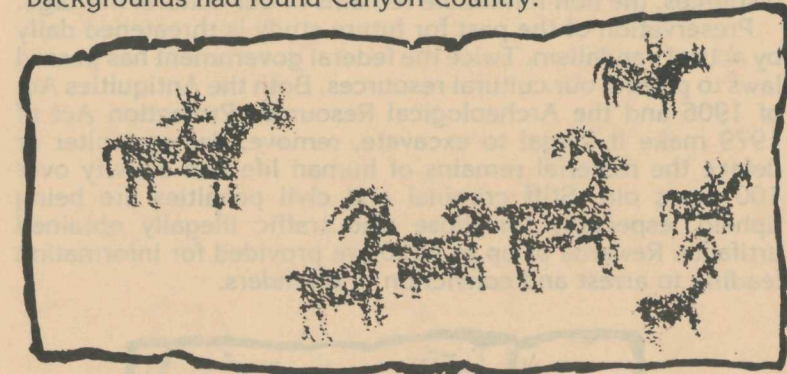
By the last years B.C., Canyon Country dwellers had begun to grow small supplies of corn to add to the bounty of wild foods they could gather. The reliance on cultivation grew and the people we now call Anasazi began to flourish. As villages formed, dwellings evolved from pit houses to surface houses of poles and mud and then to surface masonry rooms and underground kivas. The bow and arrow replaced the atlatl. There was a heavy reliance on agriculture as squash and beans were added as crops. Pottery gradually replaced basketry. Throughout this time, areas of population density changed as the people adapted to the rough topography and harsh environment of Canyon Country. Seasonal farming was intensive in arable sections of land while hunter/gatherer techniques were continued in others. On the northern fringes of Canyon Country were a similar horticultural based people, the Fremont, whose rock art of a different style is also found adorning canyon walls. The extent of Fremont presence in Canyon Country remains a subject for further archeological exploration.

Then, between A.D. 1200 and A.D. 1300 (about 700 B.P.), the Anasazi and their Fremont neighbors disappeared from Canyon Country, leaving behind their stylistic rock art, pottery, dwellings, and other archeological remains which now help to tell their story. Overuse of natural resources, changing weather patterns, and social unrest probably all played a part in the abandonment of the area.



Historic Cultures

The human history of Canyon Country remains somewhat clouded after the Anasazi and Fremont sites were left to weather the silence of the next 400 years. Ute and Paiute Indians were living in this area when the Spanish arrived in the 1700's, though it is difficult to say when these hunter/gatherer peoples may have first made their home here. It is also not known exactly when the Navajo Indians left their northern homelands to settle in the redrock canyons and juniper mesas of Southeastern Utah. By the mid 1800's people of many different backgrounds had found Canyon Country.



The Future

Today the human voices that echo through Canyon Country are mixed in language, culture and experience. Visitors from all over the country, and the world, come here to enjoy the special quality of these homelands. To preserve the cultural resources of this area, the National Park Service is responsible for surveying and documenting archeological and historical sites, for stabilizing ruins, and for enforcing the laws that protect them.

Protection of these resources is of great importance for in them are potential answers to the questions of our cultural past. Future research may be able to explain the relationship between the Anasazi and the Fremont, to explore the factors influencing the abandonment of the 1200's and 1300's, and to unravel the mystery of the 1300-1700's. Future study may also be able to answer questions on migration patterns and trade routes, to understand changes in material culture, lifestyles and climate. A minute pollen grain, a piece of cordage, a twine of dog hair, a potsherd, a kernel of corn; each provides a link to the past that awaits our understanding.

