



David Reiss

1951-2009

David Reiss died at home on November 8, 2009 in Laramie, Wyoming. He was born on February 4, 1951, and is formerly from Hopkins, Minnesota.

Dave graduated from St. Cloud State University in Minnesota with a BA in Anthropology and Sociology in 1973. He also completed course work towards a Master's degree between 1981-1987 from the University of Wyoming, Department of Anthropology, but was lacking a thesis to complete the degree requirements.

After graduating from St. Cloud State, he briefly worked as a curatorial assistant at the St. Cloud Museum of Man. He then became a part of the Lower Sioux Agency Project, an archaeological field school operated by the Minnesota Historical Society and St. Cloud State University. The field school involved the excavation of an historic site that was burned and destroyed during the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862.

In 1976, he became associated with the Lubbock Lake Project, a stratified Paleoindian site under the direction of Dr. Eileen Johnson, and then later the Paleoindian age Lake Theo Project. Mark Denton, a St. Cloud State classmate relates: "...when I graduated in 1976 and moved to Lubbock to work at the Lubbock Lake Site, I called Dave and told him he needed to stop cleaning carpets and come down and work for Vance Holliday. If I remember correctly, he was there in three days, and he never stopped working in archeology from that day forward. Dave always loved field work more than anything and regardless of whether he was digging with a dental pick, or a pickaxe, or just walking a cotton field on survey, he preferred the field over any indoor archaeological activities."

After Texas, Dave moved to Laramie in 1978 to become an archaeological crew leader with the Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist and remained so up until his recent untimely death. During this time, he worked on archaeological projects throughout the state, investigating hundreds of historic and prehistoric sites, and authoring or co-authoring over 200 archaeological Cultural Resource Management reports.

In 1991 he started what was to be a long relationship with the Wyoming Army National Guard (WYARNG). Here he spent most of every summer surveying and testing archaeological sites on

WYARNG lands, mostly on their training areas near Guernsey. During this time he and his crews inventoried nearly 50,000 acres, recording nearly 1000 archaeological sites. These sites ranged from Paleoindian sites, rockshelters, prehistoric workshops related to the manufacture of stone tools from the local chert and quartzite outcrops, to stone circles or "tipi rings" to the mapping the numerous trails and ruts of the Oregon-California-Mormon Trail that pass through the area.

As a consequence he formed close friendships with the WYARNG personnel and the local town's people. He would often volunteer his time following out leads on archaeological sites provided by the locals and worked with Randy Brown with the Oregon-California Trail Association mapping and marking ruts and segments of this National Historic Trail. As a result of these efforts, in 2007 Dave Freudenthal, Governor of Wyoming, and Major General Ed Wright, Adjutant General, State of Wyoming awarded Dave as an "Honorary Wyoming Cowboy Colonel." The award reads, "For meritorious service to the United States Army and Wyoming Army National Guard. Your professional interest in the lands and cultural resources under the jurisdiction of the Wyoming Army National Guard, sometime to the detriment of your own time and expense is worthy of recognition and our unconditional thanks. Your actions are a credit to the United States Army and citizens of Wyoming."

Dave was a founding member of the Wyoming Association of Professional Archaeologists (WAPA) from its inception in the fall of 1978. In the early years, he served on the Membership and Ethics Committee and Resource Base Committee. In later years his collection of WAPA newsletters resulted in his designation as the unofficial WAPA historian. During meetings, he could always be relied on to provide some humor and pertinent comments to the issues at hand.

Over the years he presented a number of professional papers at the Plains Anthropological Conferences and Wyoming Archaeological Society meetings. He also gave archaeology talks at Laramie and Cheyenne grade school classrooms. The variety of his archaeological interests is illustrated in the lists presented below.

He also participated in OWSA-Wyoming Archaeological Society collaborations such as the excavations at the Late Prehistoric age Edness Kimball Wilkins Site (48NA969), the Historic Richards Trading Post, the McCleary Site, all near Casper, and the Grass Creek Site near Thermopolis.

Other interests included listening to Eric Clapton and other blues musicians, hunting, fishing, gardening, and weekend garage sales. A few weeks before his death, he boasted of a great bargain he had gotten at local garage sale: a full size, fully articulated, educational grade human skeleton--for a dollar. He didn't know what he was going to do with it, but for Dave it was too good of a deal to pass up. He ended up putting a hat and Hawaiian shirt on it. Typical Dave.

Dave is survived by his brother Chris and Chris' wife Judy, who with help from Dave's friends have established the David Reiss Memorial Fund with the Wyoming Archaeological Society. The fund will be used to aid anthropology students attending Wyoming Community Colleges and the University of Wyoming.

Donations can be sent to Carolyn Buff, 1617 Westridge Terrace, Casper, WY 82604, and should be specifically marked to the WAS/Dave Reiss Memorial Fund.

Paul H. Sanders
Archaeological Survey Manager
Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist

PUBLICATIONS

Reiss, David

1981 Prehistoric settlement pattern analysis of a portion of the Hanna Basin, Wyoming. *The Wyoming Archaeologist* 24(2-3):29-45.

Reiss, David and Danny Walker

1982 Pronghorn utilization at 48UT390 in southwestern Wyoming. *Wyoming Contributions to Anthropology* 3:1-25, Department of Anthropology, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

Reiss, David and Skylar Scott

1984 Archeological and historical Investigations at the Wagon Box Fight, Sheridan County, Wyoming. *The Wyoming Archaeologist* 27(3-4):57-78.

Reiss, David and David G.Eckles

1990 The McCleary Site,(48NA1152): A Late Prehistoric bison processing site, Natrona County, Wyoming. *The Wyoming Archaeologist* 33(3-4):63-76.

Reiss, David, David G. Eckles, Karin M. Guernsey, Michael McFaul and William R. Doering

1993 The Grass Creek site (48HO120): A Middle Archaic period Housepit, Springs County, Wyoming. *The Wyoming Archaeologist* 37(1-2):27-47.

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

Reiss, David

1979 Report on the Warm Winds Hearth site (48CR502). Paper presented at the Annual Wyoming Archaeological Society meeting. April, 1979.

Reiss, David

1979 Preliminary excavations at South Pass City (48FR434). Paper presented at the 37th Annual Plains Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. November, 1979.

Reiss, David

1980 Settlement pattern studies of the Hanna Basin, Wyoming. Paper presented at the 38th Annual Plains Conference in Iowa City, Iowa. November, 1980.

Reiss, David

1981 Prehistoric settlement pattern analysis of a portion of the Hanna Basin, Wyoming. Paper presented at the Annual Wyoming Archaeological meetings. April, 1981.

Reiss, David

1981 Preliminary report of a pronghorn utilization site (48UT390) in southwestern Wyoming. Paper presented at the 39th Annual Plains Conference in Bismarck, North Dakota. October, 1981.

Reiss, David

1982 A comparison of pronghorn antelope utilization sites. Paper presented at the Annual Wyoming Archaeological Society meeting, 1982.

Reiss, David

1983 Preliminary analysis of lithic utilization at the Medicine Lodge Creek site. Paper presented at the 54th Annual Meeting of the Colorado-Wyoming Academy of Science. April, 1983.

Reiss, David

1983 Archaeological and historical investigations at the Wagon Box Fight, Sheridan County, Wyoming. Paper presented at the 41st Annual Plains Conference in Rapid City, South Dakota. October, 1983.

Reiss, David and David G. Eckles

1986 Preliminary report of a Late Prehistoric period bone grease manufacturing area (48NA1152). Paper presented at the 44th Annual Plains Conference in Denver, Colorado. November, 1986.

Reiss, David

2004 Elk Dreamers in Wyoming. Paper presented at the 62th Annual Plains Conference in Billings, Montana. October, 2004.