

Summary of Field Trip to Dixie Mine January 8, 2021 In Maricopa County McDowell Mountain Regional Park

Text below is based on observations by Dennis DuBose who participated on the Field Trip and is responsible for all inaccuracies and photos.

Dixie Mine is a popular hike destination in Maricopa County McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Some prehistoric petroglyphs are nearby.

The round trip hiking loop for this Field Trip hike was about 6 miles taking about four hours. This Field Trip was almost identical to the previous Dixie Mine Field Trip on December 19, 2020. Consequently, this summary will avoid repetition of items in the summary of that trip. Instead, it will focus on items passed over before, new items, and perhaps some better photos of some items.



Dixie Mine is near Thompson Peak, a well-known Landmark in the McDowell Mountains. More commonly, it is seen from the opposite side on the West in Scottsdale, rather than from the East as here.

The first Rock Art encountered on the hike is a boulder with cupules on the “top” and some faint petroglyphs on one side. In the earlier summary there was not a truly good photo of either.



Cupule Boulder in Place



Faint Petroglyphs on the Backside of the Cupule Boulder



Close up photo of the Cupules on the top of the Boulder

Cupules are found in many parts of the world, including several sites in the Payson-Phoenix area. They are usually in an array or rows. They are distinctly different from Bedrock Metates, generally being much smaller. Cupules occur on horizontal, vertical, and sloping surfaces, while metates are typically on horizontal surfaces. They are also different from some natural “cups” that are due to weathering. It is uncertain what purpose they had for prehistoric peoples, although there are many theories.



Some Isolated Petroglyphs a few feet from the Main Panel

There appears to possibly be a depiction of a cornstalk on the side of this boulder where there is little "desert varnish." On the varnished side, there is a squiggle, a couple of X's, and some small glyphs, which one hiker thought looked like baby footprints.



Field Tripper Climbing to the Next Level near the Main Petroglyph Panel



There is a "P-" in the Main Panel and an "H P 1925" graffiti to the right on a smaller boulder.

McDowell Mountain Park was the Pemberton Ranch (or P-Bar Ranch) before Maricopa County purchased it for a County Park in the 1970s . The “P –” is the Pemberton Brand “P Bar”. “H P” is Henry Pemberton, owner of the Pemberton Ranch from 1918 to 1935.



Field Tripper Viewing Faint Petroglyphs of “Sunbursts”



Deep Grooved Concentric Circles on a Boulder that appears to have lost most of its Desert Varnish

The above photo was taken about 1:15 pm. It is in a narrow canyon and the canyon rim was casting a shadow across these petroglyphs at near midday.



Looking at a Petroglyph With a Column of Dots, Perhaps Someone Counting Something



A Better View of the "Counting" Petroglyph ... Various Field Trippers Counted Ten, Eleven, or Twelve Dots



January 8, 2021 Dixie Mine Field Trippers Pose for Photo

Weaver's Needle in the Superstition Mountains is the little blip up on the horizon between the two hikers on the right, directly above the hiking pole. Two peaks out of Four Peaks in the Matagal Mountains are visible at the left edge of the horizon. Dale Bellisfield is peeking out from behind Marie Britton.



Weary Hikers Heading Out