

Equinox Sunrise & Sunset Horizon Markers

By: Ray Urbaniak

Horizon Markers are quite common in the SW United States. However, it is uncommon to find both a Sunrise and a Sunset marker within 2 miles of each other and more than likely constructed by the same group of Anasazi Indians (Ancestral Puebloans).

These 2 markers I estimate to be *at least* 1500 years old, from the Anasazi Basketmaker III period, based on pottery sherds noticed near the sites.

The sites may have been constructed even earlier than 1500 years ago and the ancestors of those who created the pictographs and petroglyphs continued to use them until about 1500 years ago.

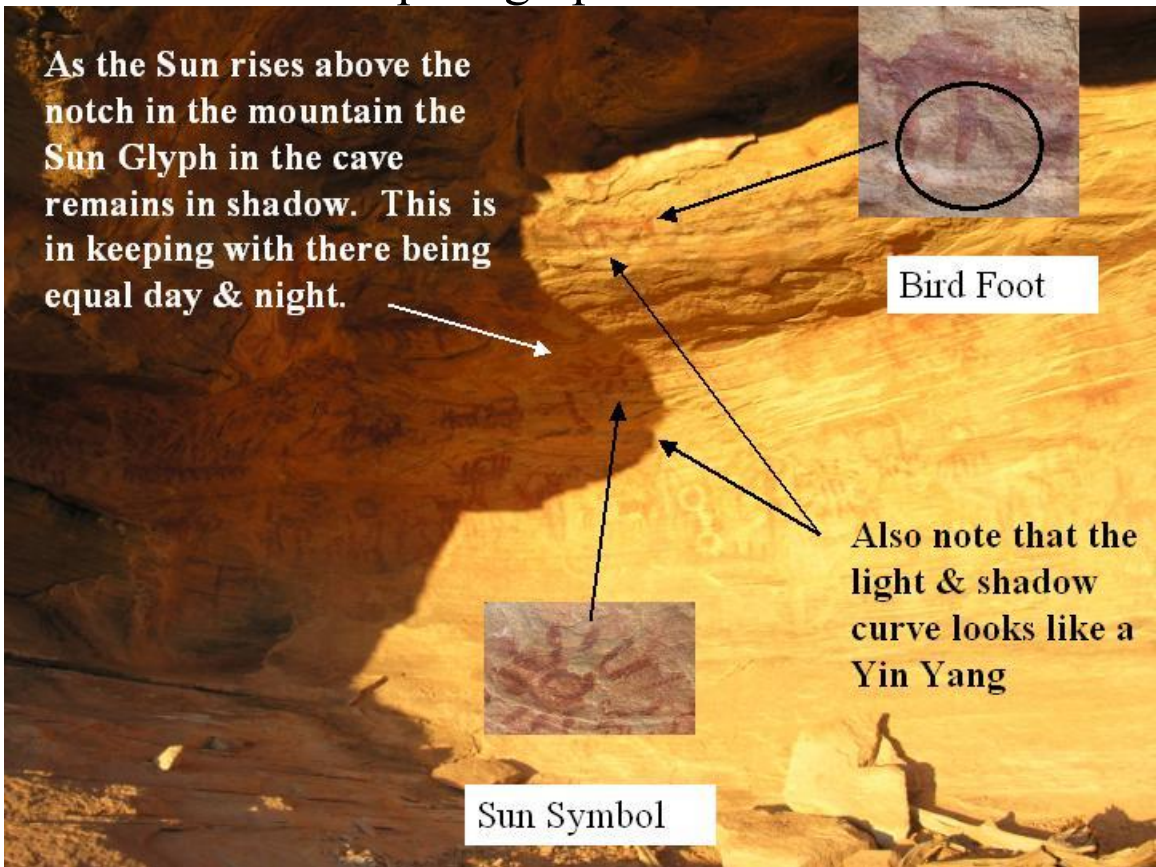
The Equinox is difficult to mark precisely based on the fact that the Sun is moving both in altitude & azimuth (degrees North or South along the horizon) at its fastest rate in the year around the Spring and Fall Equinoxes. Despite this fact, both of these markers fit the horizon positions precisely on the Equinoxes (the equinoxes vary by a day or 2 but are on approx. March 21 & September 21).

Sunrise Horizon Marker(Site 1)



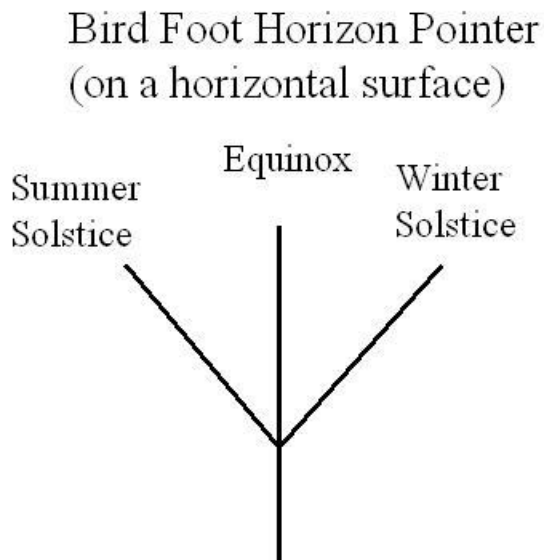


As viewed from a pictograph cave...



I have observed and documented the fact that the Anasazi from SW Utah used bird hands or feet on a Shaman figure or bird tracks to point to the Sunrise or Sunset Horizon Points for the Solstices and Equinoxes. The center toe indicates the Equinox and in this case (detail in the above photo) it is in line with the Sunrise position and is painted more boldly than the other 2 toes. (Note: This bird track is also on a vertical surface, therefore it would only work for the Equinox, it would have to be on a horizontal surface to mark either of the Solstices.)

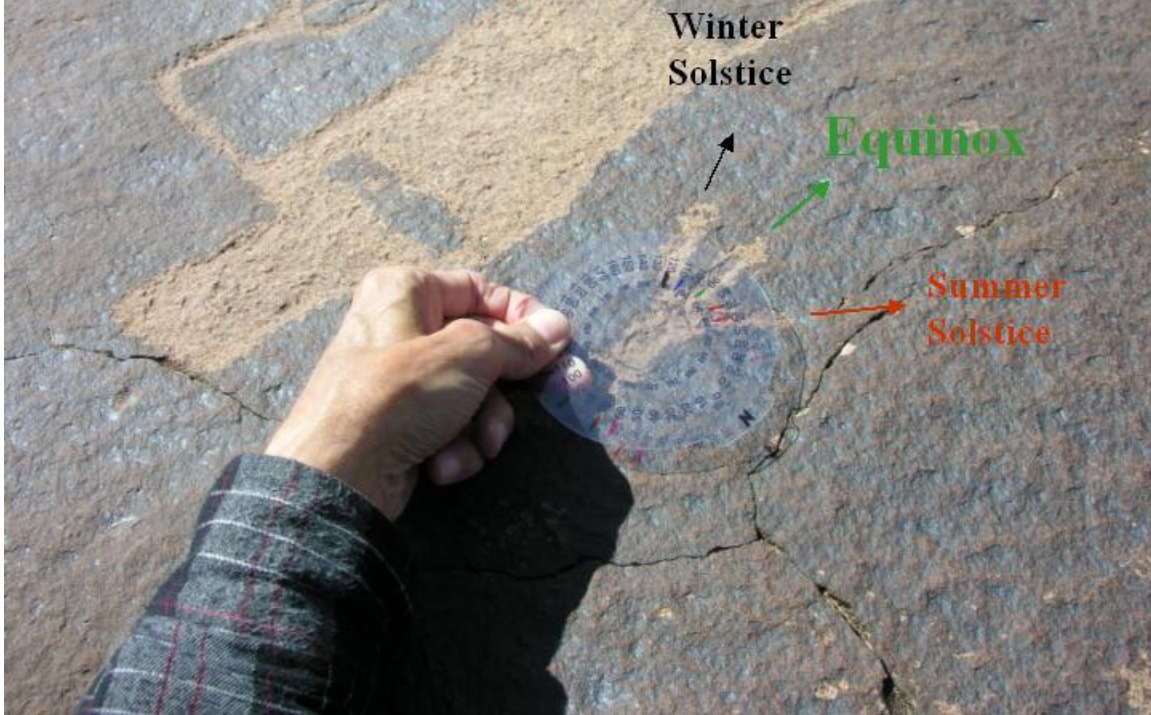
A Sunrise pointer looks like this....



I took a fresh look at the Shaman Birdmen Summer Solstice Figures featured in my book *ANASAZI of SW UTAH, The Dance of Light & Shadow* several years ago, and have decided to include my findings in this article.

The large Shaman Bird Man figure's right hand (pictured below and featured on page 17 of *Anasazi of SW Utah, The Dance of Light & Shadow*) is very well pecked. Therefore, several years ago, I thought I would see how it aligned with the Solstices & Equinoxes.

Bird hand finger spacing matches the Horizon Points spread for Solstices & Equinoxes



Large Shaman Birdman Figure

It was a perfect match except that his hand was strictly aligned to receive the light shaft energy and is not in perfect alignment to be a horizon pointer.

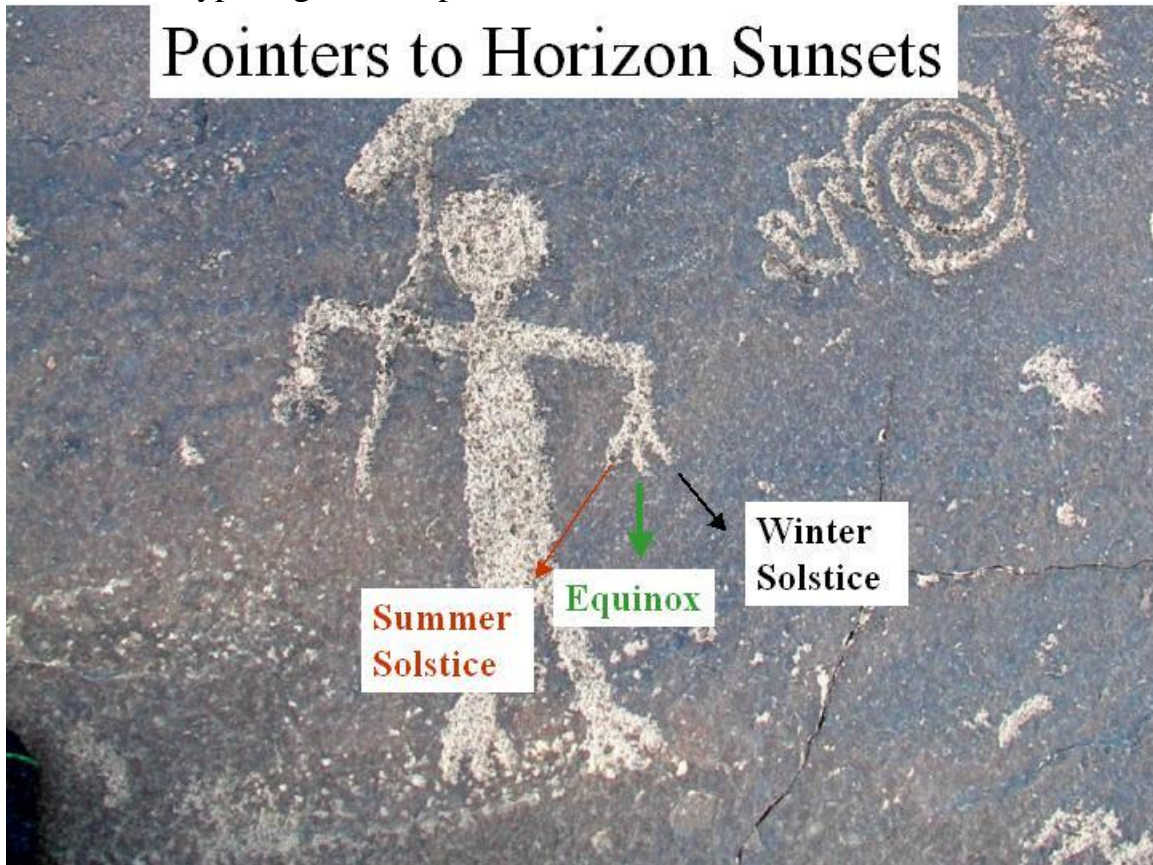
However, the left hand of the second Shaman Figure pictured below (which I call *Owl Man*) and is positioned above the Large Shaman Figure is aligned as a horizon pointer. His *left hand is the only hand that doesn't receive a light shaft on the Summer Solstice* and it is aligned as horizon pointers. The fingers on his left hand receive light energy in this way.



At this Summer Solstice Site, three (3) of the hands on the Shaman Figures receive shafts of light on the Summer Solstice. The remaining Shaman's left hand has fingers pointing at the Horizon Sunset points for the Solstices and Equinoxes.

Just as we point to things with the finger of our hand, the Owl Man Shaman Glyph Figure also points with his Bird Hand!

Pointers to Horizon Sunsets



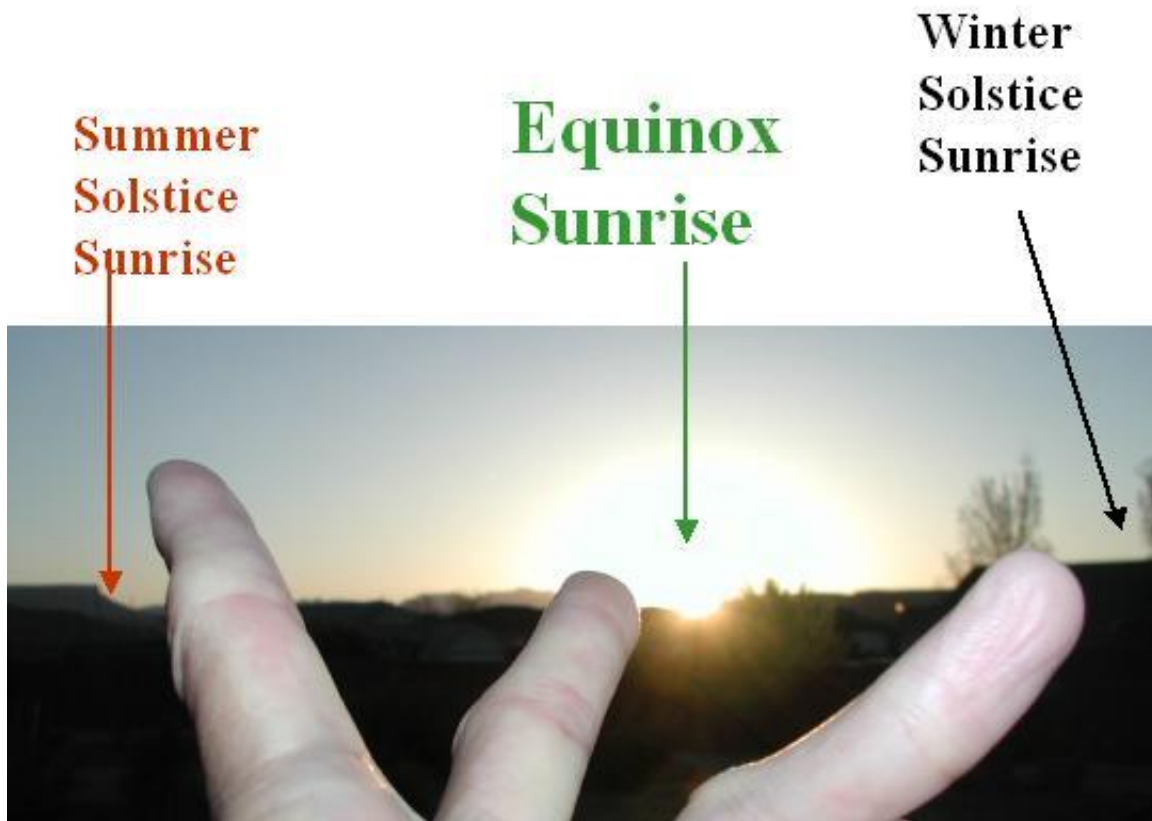
Owl Man (second Shaman Figure)

Equinox Sunset



Owl Man pointing to the Equinox Sunset

**The Anasazi in this area may have
formed a bird hand to roughly
determine the Solstice & Equinox
Horizon Positions**



**If you know one position
you can easily estimate the
other 2**

The hand pointer above is for the Sunrise. The Sunset hand position would be the mirror image...In other words, the Equinox is still in the center, but the Summer Solstice Sunset would be on the right and the Winter Solstice Sunset would be on the left.

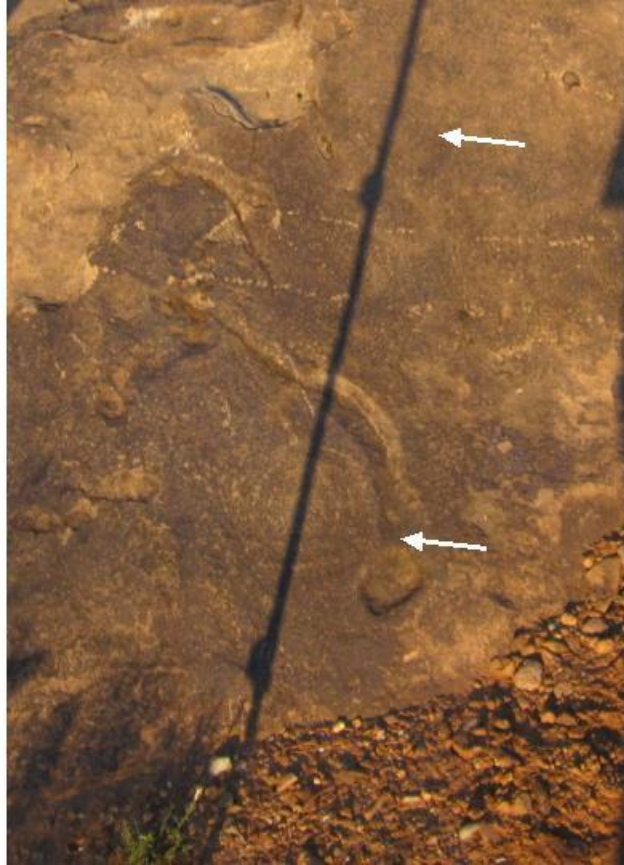
I felt that my findings regarding the bird hand and bird track were worth expanding on prior to getting back to Horizon Marker (Site 2) photographed on the Fall Equinox 2012.

Equinox Sunset Horizon Marker (Site 2)



(Site 2) pictures above has a beautiful alignment to the Horizon Sunset when viewed from the Petroglyph Viewing Site.

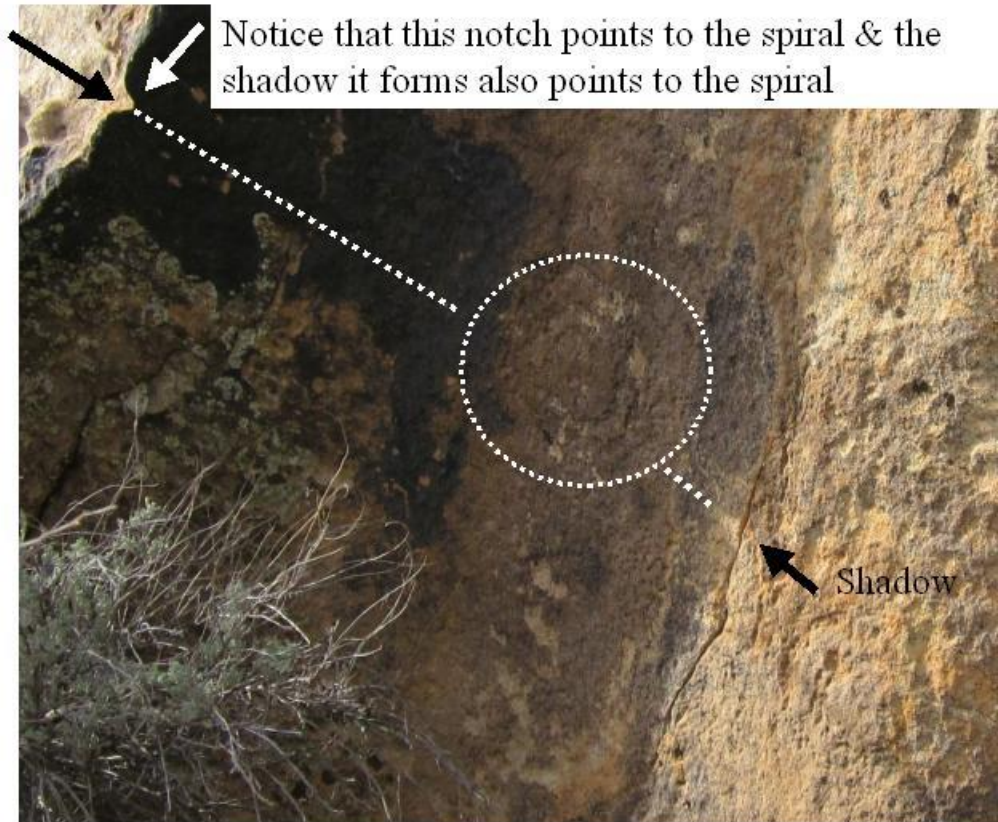
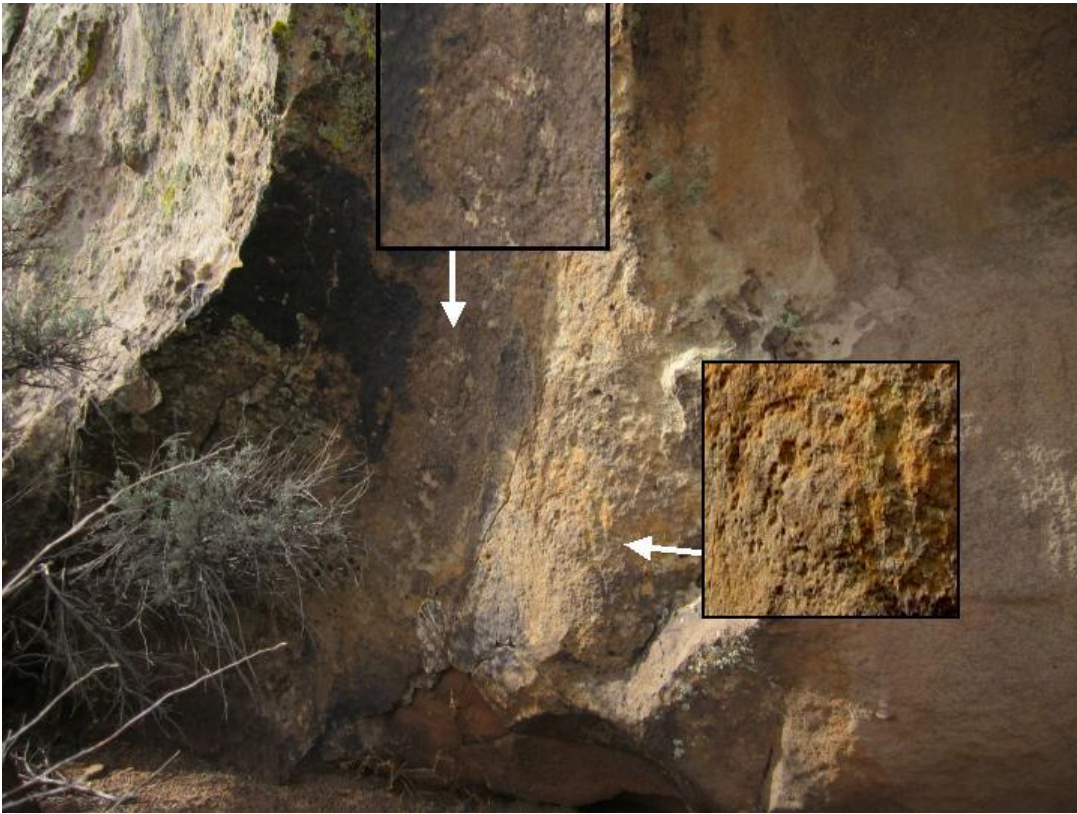
At the Equinox Sunset Marker viewing site, there are 2 very old spirals in line with the setting sun....



Equinox Sunset Viewing Site

As you can see, their alignment with the setting Sun can be shown by letting a stick cast a shadow line through the middle of each spiral (something that the creators of the site probably did, based on my years of experience visiting these sites.)

On a large boulder about 50 feet north from the viewing point are 2 additional very old and faint spirals. About 2 ½ hours before the Sunset a shadow line separates the 2 spirals. One Spiral is in light and the other Spiral is in shadow, just as the day is equally divided into half day & half night. The shadow line holds this position for approximately ½ hour.



Both of these Sunrise & Sunset horizon pointers were obviously very important sites. These observations were sacred ceremonies which continue today with many Native Peoples.