

- Dave Cox in Cortez, Colorado, Fri. May 13, 2011



David T. Cox

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Sent: Fri 5/13/11 2:40 PM

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Hello everyone. I last wrote as I was winding up my trip through southern Mexico a couple of months ago. I spent two non-descript months back in Tucson, and then decided to spend perhaps a month or more driving again through the 4-Corners area of the southwest US to visit Puebloan Indian archaeological sites and related rock art. Next week I will fly from Denver to Kansas City to visit my brother and sister for a few days, and then return to Colorado to continue my driving trip.

My trip started May 1, driving north from Tucson through the old copper mining country around Globe-Miami, then through the Salt River Canyon, and finally climbing up onto the Mogollon Rim where I spent the first two days in Winslow and Holbrook, Arizona. There I spent a day visiting the Homolovi Anasazi Puebloan Indian ruins north of Winslow, and the ruins and rock art sites of the Petrified Forest National Park, along, of course, with viewing plenty of petrified tree trunks. In the northern reaches of the Park are views over the Painted Desert of Arizona.

From the Park I drove up into the Navajo Indian Reservation to Chinle at the mouth of Canyon de Chelly, a spectacular red rock series of canyons with sheer towering rock cliffs, rising 1000 feet above the canyon floor. A few Navajo still live in the canyon in hogans as they have for

over 300 years. 1,000 years ago, however, the canyons were populated with the Anasazi, who built a number of spectacular cliff dwellings in alcoves high above the canyon floors. Some of these can be viewed from scenic overlooks from the rim of the canyon, but to visit the interior of the canyons one must have an Indian guide and 4-wheel drive transportation. I finally took the famous all-day Thunderbird Lodge tour (known for over 50 years as the “shake & bake” tour), which uses 1952 Korean War 6-wheel drive personnel carriers with open padded benches on the raised flat bed; no covering of any type to obstruct the incredible 360 degree views while driving through the canyons, which have perennial running water streams and quicksand.

From Canyon de Chelly I drove north and revisited Monument Valley, also in the Navajo Reservation. The visitor center still sells the movie posters for the 5 John Wayne movies filmed there under the direction of John Ford. I camped there in the primitive campgrounds over night, and you will have to see the attached photo taken out the rear of my vehicle to appreciate the world-class view I had in the evening while sipping red wine and smoking my pipe. I defy anyone to produce a better view, from anywhere on earth, from a personal campsite.

From Monument Valley I drove into Utah and spent one night in Mexican Hat, hiking a ways down the San Juan River photographing birds. I spent the next 4 days in Bluff, which lies at the heart of the San Juan River region of Anasazi Indian ruins, and has some particularly good petroglyph rock art for those willing to do some 4-wheel driving and some hiking down rock ledges. I hiked to re-photograph the “wolfman” rock art panel which I had trouble getting to years ago after heavy rains. On Wednesday I took the all-day, 26 mile, river trip down the San Juan from Bluff to Mexican Hat. The first part of this trip provides the only opportunity to physically get to some huge petroglyph panels along the confluence of the Butler Wash and the San Juan River. The second half of the trip is through towering rock canyons with the opportunity of see Desert Bighorn Sheep, a very rare animal to see in the wild. We were particularly lucky and passed two small herds feeding right on the river banks.

From Bluff I drove north towards Canyonlands National Park to visit a couple of out-of-the way rock art sites, and then down into the corner of Colorado to Cortez where I arrived yesterday. As my last week and a half have been either on the Indian reservation (completely dry) or in southern Utah (with no state liquor stores and only 3.2 beer, essentially also dry), my entrance last evening into the Main Street Brewery of Cortez might as well have been an entrance through the pearly gates. I will spend the next several days headquartered here while visiting the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park, with its many Anasazi Puebloan ruins, as well as Canyon of the Ancients and, of course, Mesa Verde.

I have attached a number of photos which tell the tale of my trip better than words. The photos start with the Winslow local “standin’ on a corner” monument celebrating the Eagle’s “Taking It Easy” song; followed by yours truly leaning on a petrified log; a wind-blown raven; a petroglyph of a wading bird catching a frog (which most people think looks like a stork with a baby); the Painted Desert; Spider Rock in Canyon de Chelly; White House Ruin in Canyon de

Chelly; 4 views in Monument Valley, including the view from the back of my car while camping; Chukkar; a robin with a bunch of grubs; a Lazuli Bunting; the “wolfman” petroglyph panel dating to the Basketmaker II era, about OAD; White-faced Ibis; the lower Butler Wash petroglyph panel; Desert Bighorn Sheep; yours truly while floating down the San Juan River; and finally the Newspaper rock art panel. Later. Dave

## Dave Cox in Cortez, Colorado, Fri. May 13, 2011

Corner of Winslow, AZ

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This online album has 20 photos and will be available on SkyDrive until 08/11/2011.

photographer at Petrified Forest Nat Park, AZ	Common Raven, Petrified Forest Nat Park, AZ	Puerco Ruin petroglyphs, Anasazi, Petrified Forest Nat Park, AZ	Painted Desert, Petrified Forest Nat Park, AZ	Spider Rock, Canyon de Chelly, AZ
White House Ruin, Canyon de Chelly, AZ	Sentinal Mesa & W Mitten Butte, Monument Valley, AZ	Merrick Butte, Monument Valley, AZ	Mittens & Merrick Buttes from car camp, Monument Valley, AZ	Cly & Elephant Buttes, Monument Valley, AZ
Chukar, San Juan River below Mexican Hat, Utah	American Robin, Recapture Lodge, Bluff, Utah	Lazuli Bunting, Recapture Lodge, Bluff, Utah	Wolfman South Panel Petroglyphs, Butler Wash, Utah	White-face Ibis, San Juan River, Utah
Lower Butler Wash Panel Petroglyphs, San Juan River, Utah	Desert Bighorn Sheep, San Juan River, Utah	San Juan River float, Utah	Newspaper Rock petroglyphs, Canyonlands,	







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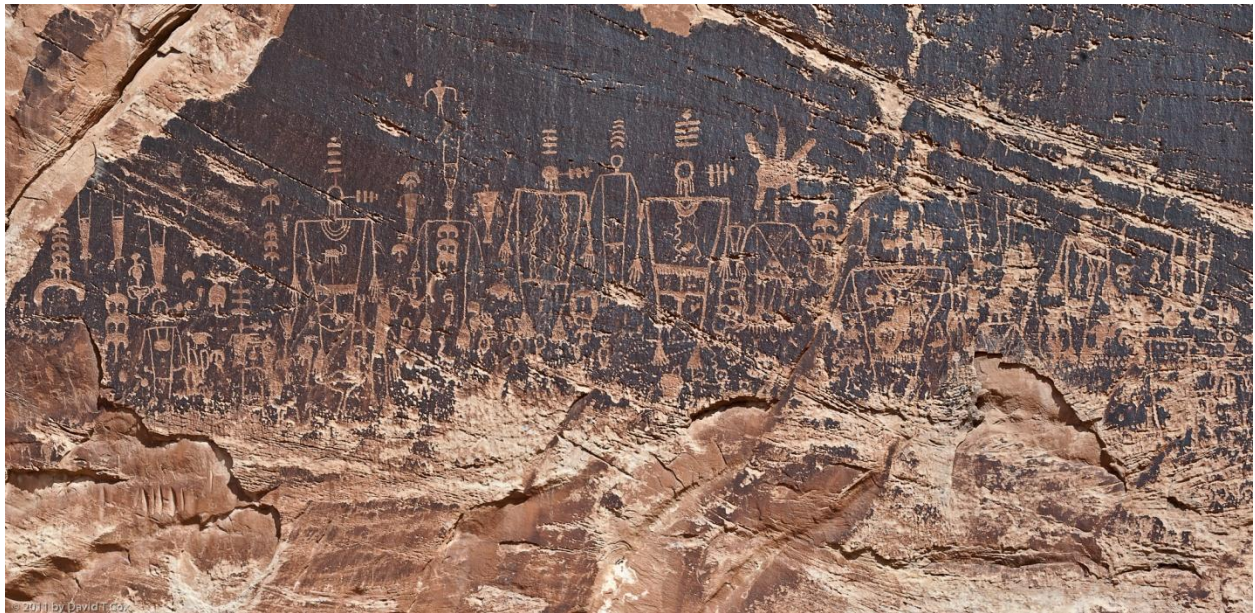


















- Dave Cox in Green River, Utah, Thur. May 26, 2011

1:17 PM

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Hello everyone. I last wrote from Cortez after visiting Anasazi Puebloan ruins in Arizona's Canyon de Chelly and around Bluff in the SE corner of Utah. In Cortez, in the SW corner of Colorado, I spent the next 5 days visiting more Anasazi ruins. A number of huge (populations of between 2,000 and 3,000) pueblos of around 1200 AD were situated in the Montezuma Valley north and west of Cortez; much of the area now is designated a national monument known as the Canyon of the Ancients. Its headquarters is the very well done Anasazi Heritage Center with a first class museum displaying many of the artifacts found in these pueblos, and to my surprise the first two pieces of pottery I have seen with painted Kokopeli figures (the anthropomorphic figure of a flute player often depicted in rock art all over the SW). I also spent two full days in the Mesa Verde National Park touring 3 of the great cliff dwellings, and photographing a dozen more from canyon overlooks, as well as studying the many earlier surface pueblos and much older pit dwellings and kivas. One entire mesa top of the Park was still closed until after Labor Day at the end of the month, and I am considering returning to see this part of the Park I which I have not visited before.

On Tuesday 9 days ago I spent the day with a small group and a Ute Indian guide visiting the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park which lies on the south border of Mesa Verde and has a continuation of the same canyons and Anasazi cliff dwellings. The Ute reservation is much wilder than Mesa Verde, and only was opened for white man to tour about 40 years ago. To visit the cliff dwellings in Lion Canyon we drove 42 miles of deserted dirt road into the mesa and canyons of the reservation (not even Utes live in this area anymore), and then climbed a short way onto a ledge trail which runs for several miles along the rock cliff face. Along this ledge path we encountered 4 Anasazi cliff dwellings, each originally with 10 to 30 rooms. Almost all is unreconstructed, and pottery shards and corn husks, as well as animal bones lie around in the rooms. This was an up-close and really exciting way to visit ruins.

The next day it rained all day in Cortez, and the following day I drove to Denver to fly Friday morning to Kansas City to visit my brother and sister. The 420 mile drive from Cortez to Denver took me over two very high passes (11,000 feet) in the Rockies. I hit snow storms 9 miles east of Cortez, and almost blizzard conditions going over Wolf Creek Pass. It was somewhat frightening, and I was thankful for 4-wheel drive. I had a good visit with family in Kansas City, and flew back to Denver, where I had parked my car at the airport, on Monday of this week.

From Denver I drove back through the snowing Rockies on I-70 and arrived here in Green River, Utah on Tuesday. Here I have visited 3 out-of-the way and not well known rock art sites noted for their barrier canyon style red pictograph paintings of life size shamanistic spirit figures, as well as some Fremont style pictographs. The sites are Sego Canyon, with 3 splendid separate panels displaying first historical Ute pictographs, then Fremont trapezoidal petroglyphs, and finally barrier canyon painted shamanistic figures, the Black Dragon Canyon with mostly eerie barrier canyon pictographs with large vacant eyes, and finally Buckhorn Wash Panel which almost exclusively includes a long display of painted shamanistic figures. The barrier canyon paintings are from the archaic hunter gatherers and date from 2,000 BC to perhaps 1 AD. The barrier canyon style is named for the great paintings found in the formerly "Barrier Canyon", now known as Horseshoe Canyon, which lies just 40 miles south of here. I have visited it once and plan on returning in a couple of days. The Fremont are the geographically peripheral relatives of the Anasazi ancestors, and created impressive trapezoidal anthropomorphic figures as petroglyphs (from 1 AD to perhaps 800 AD) in many of the same locations as the Barrier Canyon art, and so very likely are the descendents of the Barrier Canyon peoples. Perhaps the best Fremont petroglyphs are located in Capital Reef Park just SW of here, and I probably will also revisit that site in a day or two.

I have included pictures of Anasazi cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde, including Cliff Palace, Balcony House, Square Tower House, and Spruce Tree House, and in Lion Canyon on the Ute Reservation Eagles Nest and Morris No. 5; wildlife including a collared lizard, 2 male chipping sparrows fighting for territory, and an ash-throated Flycatcher; rock art including the Fremont and the barrier canyon panels at Sego Canyon and part of the Buckhorn Wash Panel; and Anasazi artifacts including a huge stash (found in a pottery jar) of semi-precious stones, shells and bone pendants and beads of perhaps an ancient trader, and a ceremonial kiva jar.

Later, Dave

Cliff Palace, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO

Dave  
Cox in  
Green

# River, Utah, Thur. May 26, 2011

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Collared Lizard, Mesa Verde, CO

Mesa Verde Museum, Anasazi, CO

Eagle Nest House, Lion Canyon, Anasazi, Ute Mtn Tribe, CO

photogra pher in Balcony House, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO	Square Tower House, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO	Chipping Sparrow males territorial fight, Mesa Verde, CO	Spruce Tree House, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO
Mesa Verde Museum, Anasazi, CO	Coyote Village at Far View, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO	petrogly ph panel along Mancos River, Anasazi basketm aker thru Pueblo & Ute, Ute Mtn Tribal Park, CO	Ash- throated Flycatche r, Ute Mtn Ute Tribal Park, CO
climb down from Eagle Nest House,	Morris No 5 Ruin, Anasazi, Lion Canyon, Ute Mtn	Sego Canyon Rock Art, Fremont, UT	Sego Canyon Rock Art, Barrier Canyon style, UT

Lion Canyon,  
Anasazi,  
Ute Mtn  
Tribe, CO

Buckhorn Wash Panel pictographs



















**KIVA JAR**

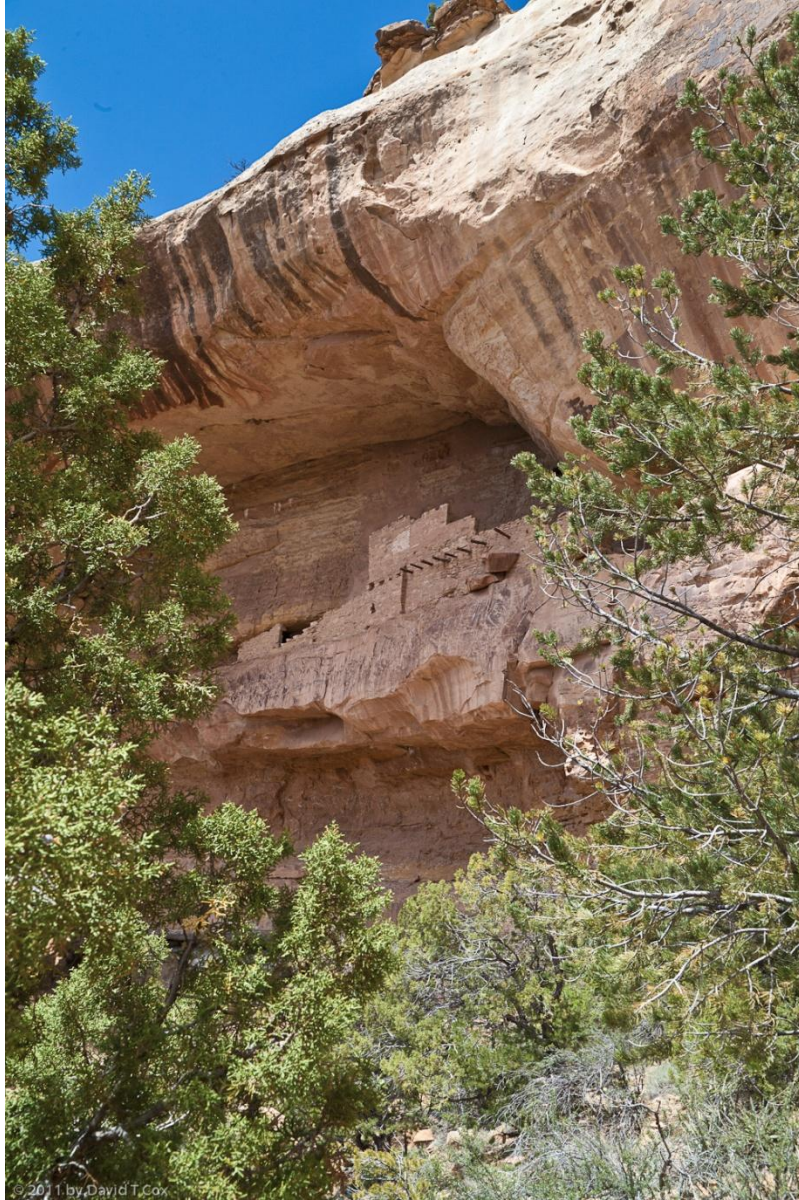
This kiva jar is the finest piece of pottery in the Mesa Verde collection. With its perfect shape, elaborate decoration and fine finish it represents the peak of pottery development in the Mesa Verde.



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- Dave Cox back home in Tucson, Mon. June 6, 2011

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Hello everyone. I arrived back in Tucson yesterday afternoon. I last wrote from Green River, Utah almost 2 weeks ago. I have done a lot of sightseeing in between. I spent one day re-visiting Capital Reef National Park to view the Fremont petroglyphs above the Fremont River. These peoples were related to the Anasazi and produced a distinctive trapezoidal form of anthropomorphic petroglyphs, as well as large numbers of well rendered animals, heavily weighted to large groupings of big horn sheep. While waiting for the sun positions for photography, I also hiked to Hickman's Bridge, one of the stunning natural rock bridges and arches which seem almost common in that part of southern Utah. From Capital Reef I drove the dirt roads to the very out-of-the way Horseshoe Canyon, which is an outlier of Canyonlands National Park completely unconnected to the rest of the Park. Originally named Barrier Canyon, that is the location of the archetype of the "Barrier Canyon" style pictographs which most believe (myself included) to be the finest rock art in the United States. From the trail head at the top of the canyon, one must descend 750 feet into the canyon, then walk a number of miles through the winding mostly dry river bed, to ultimately be rewarded with 4 large rock alcoves covered with the life-size painted ghostly figures which experts describe as shamanistic. The



paintings consist mostly of red, black and white paint, with many figures “dressed” in intricate designs. Paint sample dating along with artifacts found at the sites lead experts to conclude the paintings were done during the archaic period, from around 2,000 BC to 500 BC, well before the Anasazi predecessors, the Basketmakers. It was my second hike into the canyon, and I kept “discovering” paintings I failed to see on my last trip.

A couple of days later I traveled through Moab on the east side of Canyonlands National Park and visited three different rock art collections. These included the Courthouse Wash Panel with both Barrier Canyon pictographs and more recent Fremont petroglyphs. The panel was severely defaced in 1980 when vandals painted over the surface; the original colors never can be fully restored. Also in the area are the series of Potosh Panels with Fremont and historic Indian petroglyphs, including a favorite of a hunting scene with a gigantic bear, and finally the Golf Course Panel. My visit was over the Memorial Day weekend, and Moab’s streets and surrounding roads were under a perpetual rush hour consisting of thousands of raised 4-wheel drive beasts; I don’t think I saw tourists over 30 (except for me). Moab is a center for “adventure” sports, including rafting, mountain biking and rock climbing, which was occurring all along the cliffs around the Potosh rock art panels.

I revisited 5 of the 6 sites in Hovenweep National Monument on my way back to Cortez. Hovenweep contains Anasazi pueblos at various small canyon-heads, all of which contain extraordinary circular, square and “D” shaped towers of unknown purpose. I then returned for a day to Mesa Verde to finally visit the Wetherill Mesa which only is open during the summer months after Memorial Day. It contains a number of additional wonderful cliff dwellings dating from the terminal phase of the Anasazi presence, around 1250 AD.

From Cortez I drove down into the Rio Grande Valley north of Santa Fe, New Mexico to finally visit some of the intermediate Puebloan Indian sites. Many people talk of the Anasazi as disappearing around 1280 AD, but most recognize today’s Hopi, Zuni and Rio Grande Puebloan tribes as descendants of the Anasazi. In fact, pueblo ruins and cave sites exist in Bandelier National Monument and at the nearby Puye Cliff Dwellings on the Santa Clara Reservation that date mostly from around 1280 to 1500 AD. The current San Idelfonso and Santa Clara Pueblo tribes of New Mexico moved into their current locations around 1500 (where they soon encountered the arrival of the Spaniards), having moved from these cave sites, and both tribe’s traditions have them moving from Mesa Verde to these cave sites along the Rio Grande drainage. The Bandelier and Puye cave dwellings are very unlike the cliff dwellings which characterize the terminal Anasazi period in Mesa Verde (as well as all ancient Puebloans throughout the southwest). Rather, these dwellings were created by enlarging natural cavities in “tuff”, a relatively soft rock made of million year old volcanic ash. All along the tuff cliffs in Bandelier and Puye are hundreds of hollowed out rooms (called “cavites”, a term coined by the first researcher in the late 1800s, presumably derived by conjoining the words caves and cavities) on at least two levels; above the rooms are series of small holes which were used to support poles extending out from the cliffs. Two story stone pueblos were constructed out from the cliffs, such that the cliff faces were the interior walls, with the cavites forming further rooms

inside the cliffs. Quite remarkable, if a little less sophisticated than the cliff dwellings of earlier times. I was reminded of the tuff fairy chimneys and dwellings of Cappadocia, Turkey.

Finally I spent a day hiking the canyons of Petroglyph National Monument just west of Albuquerque. Around miles of bluffs are thousands of petroglyphs pecked into the black volcanic boulders. They are generally less well formed than the petroglyphs of the Fremont and Basketmakers, but make up for that with sheer numbers and variety. A number of remarkable petroglyphs are apparently of birds, with a couple almost certainly being macaws, further offering evidence of trade with Mesoamerica. From Albuquerque I was going to return to Arizona via US 60 which passes through Springerville, just 5 miles north of the now leading edge of the horrific Wallow Fire of eastern Arizona. As of this morning it has burned almost 200,000 acres and is rated as 0% contained after 6 days; more than 1,300 firefighters already are battling the blaze. I read that Springerville is covered with ash. My entire three days around Santa Fe and Albuquerque had terrible visibility with the smoke from the Arizona fire covering northern New Mexico. So I returned via the southern route using I-10. That put me through Deming and Lordsburg, New Mexico and Wilcox, Arizona, all of which are completely under heavy smoke haze from the southern Arizona fire which has closed the entire Chiricahua Mountains and Monument. Arizona is having a really bad fire season. Tucson is just hot. I think it is 102 today.

I have included some pictures from these last couple of weeks, including Hickman Bridge, the Fremont trapezoidal petroglyphs of Capital Reef, two panels of Barrier Canyon archaic paintings from Horseshoe and one from Courthouse Wash, the giant bear hunt scene and more Fremont figures from Potosh, a composite of two related species of brilliantly colored collared lizards from Hovenweep along with the ruins of two of its famous towers, the ruins of the Long House and the Kodak House cliff dwellings of Wetherill Mesa, the "cavities" of Bandelier, an American avocet, a black-tailed jackrabbit and finally a petroglyph of a macaw above what appears to be a macaw in a cage. Later. Dave

## Dave Cox back home in Tucson, Mon. June 6, 2011

Hickman Bridge, Capital Reef NP, UT

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Capital Reef Fremont Petroglyphs, UT	Horseshoe Canyon, Great Gallery, UT	Horseshoe Canyon, Great Gallery, UT	American Avocet, S of Green River, UT	Courthouse Wash Panel, Moab, UT
	Potosh Fremont Panel, Moab, UT	Collared Lizard, Hovenweep - Square Tower Complex, UT	Hovenweep NM, Holly Group, Anasazi, CO	Hovenweep NM, Cutthroat Group, Anasazi, CO
Long House, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO	Long House, Anasazi, Mesa Verde, CO			Jackrabbit, Petroglyph Nat. Monument, Rinconada Canyon, NM
Petroglyph Nat. Monument, Boca Negra Macaw Trail,				











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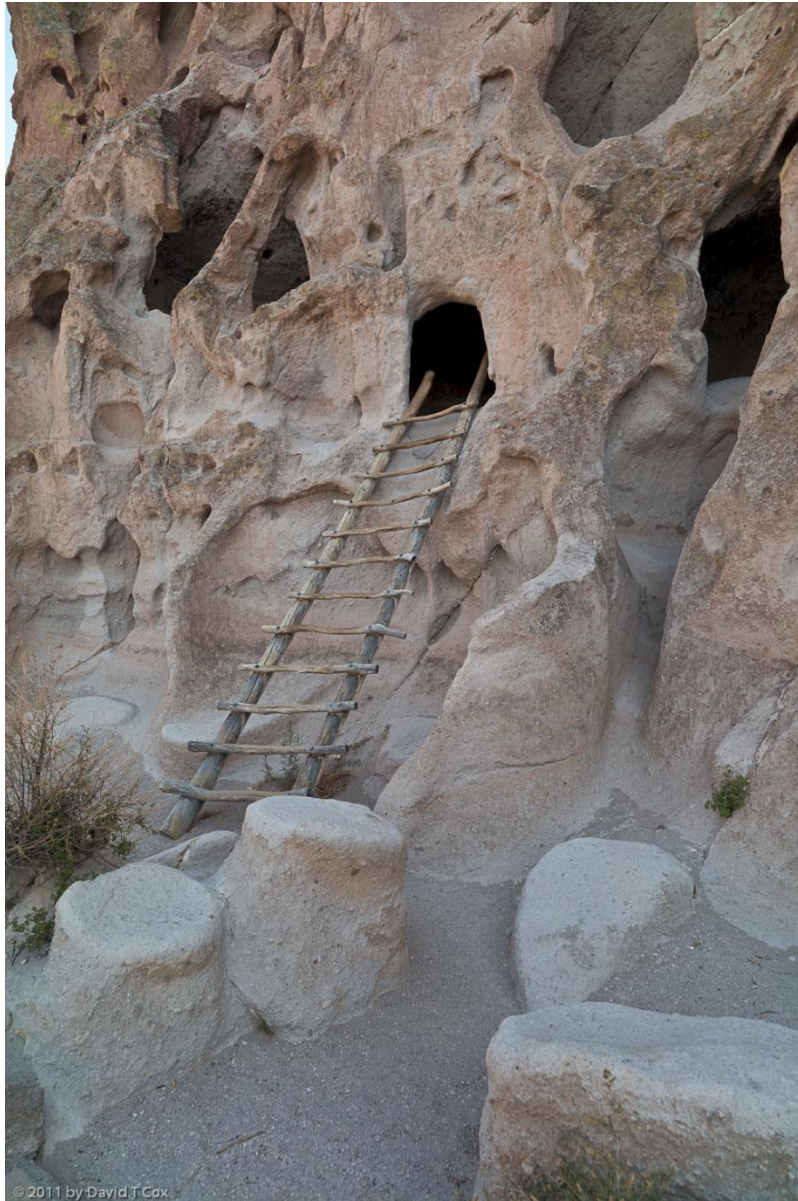












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