Volume 40 Number 1 August 2013

ARTEFACTS

Reports covering the period February to June 2013

EVENING LECTURES

The cultures and civilisations of Peru (7 February 2013)

Graham Reeks has a masters in archaeology and is chairman of the Trans-Vaal Branch of the SA Archaeological Society

Graham Reek's lecture, which was accompanied by spectacular pictures of the cultural treasures of ancient Peru, was based on a three-week tour of Peruvian archaeological sites in 2011. He told us that Peru is mainly mountainous with a long and narrow littoral that is largely desert. Most of the pre-Inca civilisations evolved in the coastal region. The east of the country is dominated by the Andes with the tropical jungle and the source of the Amazon river beyond. Many of the foods that the world takes for granted originated in Peru, including potatoes, tomatoes and avocados. The main source of protein, apart from fishing, was and still is the guinea pig and llama. The conventional view that humans in the America's started with the Clovis migrations is now being challenged by skeletal and tool finds in Peru and Chile dating to over 14 000 years old. The earliest civilisation, the Paijan, dates back to 8 000 BC and evidence of early plant farming in seasonal river valleys goes back to 5 000 BC.

Graham then took us through the main sites dating to before the Spanish conquest of the Inca in 1533.

Ventarron (Late Archaic Period, 2400–1900 BC): Located in the north, this is the site of Peru's oldest pyramids and contains the oldest mural in the country. The site appears to have been badly raided in the past and few artefacts have been found. Adobe-built pyramids are the most significant structures built by all the early cultures. Excavations were still in progress at Ventarron and the primitive building method of using lumps of clay covered by plaster is clearly seen. The truncated temple appeared to be dedicated to the deer. The 'Andies' cross-design of the walls was copied by some of the later cultures.

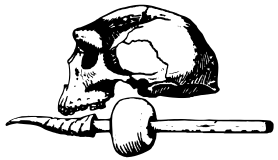
Cupinisque (1000–400 BC)**, Paracas** (500 BC–100 AD) and **Chavin** (500–200 BC): These cultures of the Formative Period overlapped in time, but were located in different areas. The Cupinisque were based on the northern coast, the Paracas on the southern coast and the Chavin in the northern highlands. This period saw a flowering of gold ornamentation and technology such as metallurgy, looms for textiles and ceramics. The Cupinisque culture is defined by its fine ceramics and in particular the 'stirrup handle' bowls and the ubiquitous feline designs. The Chavin culture is identified with carved monoliths and the cult of the staff. The best examples of this work are found at the temple of Chavin de Huantar. The Paracas people were more famous for their wonderful polychrome textiles.

Moche (AD 100–750): The Moche are probably second only to the Inca in fame. Like the Inca, they had a stratified society with an elite class supported by artisans of great skill who produced textiles, pottery and metal work in gold, as well as fishermen and a rural farming peasantry. The north-coast reign lasted 600 years and their spectacular treasures of gold and ceramics are now housed in impressive local museums. Their signature pottery has lifelike faces, fine gold masks and nose-guards. The Moche, who occupied the Early Intermediate and Middle Horizon Periods, left numerous archaeological sites and built impressive pyramids – the outstanding ones being the Huaca del Sol and Huaca del la Luna, the tombs of the Lords of Sipan and that of the 'painted lady' or Senora de Cao. It is believed that this civilisation collapsed because of social stress probably caused by long periods of drought alternating with heavy rain as a result of the El Nino effect.

A Moche pyramid at Huaca del Sol

Museum of the Lords of Sipan at Chiclayo on the northern coast

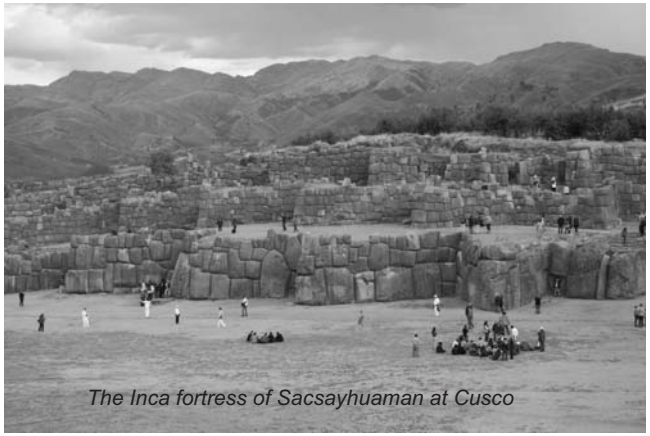
Nazca (AD 100–750): The Nazca culture was cotemporaneous with that of the Moche, but was located along



A publication of the Trans-Vaal Branch
South African Archaeological Society
PO Box 41050 Craighall 2024
Editor: Reinoud Boers
Production: Marion Boers

the southern coast. The main claim to fame of the Nazca are the lines and figures drawn in the desert 'sand'. The lines are believed to be indicators of water sources, as well as having astronomical significance. The Nazca were a warlike people who were notorious for their practice of decapitating their captives. On the other hand, they produced beautiful textiles and ceramics, and demonstrated great engineering skills, as evidenced by their irrigation systems for directing water from the Andes to their cities.

Lima (AD 200–750): The Lima were also contemporaneous with the Moche, but unfortunately most of their structures and artefacts have disappeared under the modern city of Lima.



The Inca fortress of Sacsayhuaman at Cusco

Lambayeque or Sican (AD 750–1350): Probably the descendants of the Moche, they also suffered from climatic disasters and moved many times. They built pyramids for priests, but the theocratic system collapsed and was substituted by a cult of natural icons such as birds and fish. They were overcome by the Chimu people.

Chimu (AD 900–1475): Based along the northern coast and having absorbed the Lambayeque, the Chimu are regarded as the ultimate inheritors of the Moche culture. They created the largest Andean empire prior to the rise of the Inca, who conquered them in the 1470s and incorporated them into their empire. The principal legacy of the Chimu is the site of nine citadels at Chan Chan, which covers a breathtaking area of 25 km^2, most of which is still unexcavated. It was an administrative centre as well as a palace and tomb site for kings.

The Inca royal residence of Machu Picchu

Inca (AD 1438–1532): Although recognised as one of the great civilisations of the world, the Inca empire lasted only about 100 years before it was destroyed by the Spanish conquistadors. As the inheritors of the previous civilisations, the Inca were the last of the ancient Peruvian cultures. During their brief reign they conquered most of the coastal and mountain regions of Peru, Chile, Ecuador and parts of Argentina and Bolivia. They are most famous for their military and administrative systems, road works, and formidable and exquisite masonry. The culmination of the latter can be seen at Machu Picchu and Cusco.

One was left with an impression of civilisations that produced beautiful works of art and significant structures, much of which is probably still to be 'discovered' by archaeologists. To quote Graham Reeks: 'Despite a three-week exhaustive tour, there are sufficient unseen sites to justify another three weeks!'

Reported by John McManus with photos by Graham Reeks

Wonderwerk Cave and southern African rock art (7 March 2013)

Professor Francis Thackeray is with the Evolutionary Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand

Francis Thackeray began his talk by locating Wonderwerk Cave near Kuruman on a map that also showed other important sites, such as Melikane in Lesotho, Logageng near Wonderwerk Cave and Apollo 11 in Namibia. He related how in 1979 and 1980 he and his wife Anne excavated in Holocene deposits behind a large stalagmite near the front of Wonderwerk Cave. Anne analysed the artefact assemblages, while Francis examined faunal remains, focusing on large vertebrates like eland, roan antelope and zebra. He also gave attention to rock engravings that included animals and geometrics at Wonderwerk. These engravings stimulated his interest in rock art. He showed fine line engravings from Vaalpan and the Drakensberg, comparing the markings to those of a zebra he found at Wonderwerk. He thought that these might relate to 'hunting-magic' rituals. Lebzelter in 1934 had said: 'Before they go out to hunt, the Bushmen draw the animals, and in a range of ceremonies they shoot their arrows. The place where the figure of the animal is hit is where they believe the wild animal will also be hit.'

Francis found geometrics (including grids) at Wonderwerk similar to imagery elsewhere and believes that the geometric imagery may be related to trance. He demonstrated the similarities between a Melikane painting and a ritual photographed at Logageng in 1934. The Melikane rock art shows a hunter dressed as a buck, holding two sticks. The hunter takes on the appearance of an antelope and is symbolically wounded and killed in the belief that this will contribute to success in the forthcoming hunt. He sees this as 'sympathetic hunting magic'. Francis also discussed linguistic data from many languages and showed us an apparent link to roan antelope in the Chi Wara rituals in Bambara, Mali. According to him, there are also links to similar rituals among the Arunta of central Australia and the rock paintings of animals in Europe's Upper Palaeolithic art at Les Trois Freres in France. Abbe Breuil had also considered this 'sympathetic hunting magic'. Prof. Thackeray concluded with his working hypothesis that the principle of 'sympathetic hunting magic' was expressed in some examples of African art as well as of the upper Paleolithic art in Europe, which had a common heritage in Africa in the late Pleistocene.

Report by Hilary Geber

Excavating ephemeral remains in a life in a time of witchcraft

New insights into the 18th and 19th century occupations of Leokwe and Nyindi hills in the Shash-Limpopo Confluence Area (4 April 2013)

Dr Alex Schoeman is a lecturer in the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies, University of the Witwatersrand

Alex Schoeman has spent much of her time excavating and studying the Shashe-Limpopo Confluence area. Research by John Calabrese of various pottery styles found on Leokwe Hill had resulted in the realisation that a range of different people have lived in the Mapungubwe area. Alex's research aimed at to confirming archaeological records is based on her own archaeological data, the recordings of NJ van Warmelo, an ethnologist with the former Department of Native Affairs, and oral traditions. Van Warmelo recorded the narratives of two women from the area, royal-blood Sekgobogoba and Maphengwa, concerning elements of Sekgobogobo life history, which pointed to the at times lethal effects of internal political processes combined with regional instability and an approaching colonial frontier. Sekgobogoba told Van Warmelo the story of the Machete occupation of the area. She tried to explain why she was alive and why she lived where she did. She was reluctant to speak of what happened at the time as she was concerned that she might 'rock the boat'. However, Maphengwa did not have such concerns and was happy to talk about what happened.

Sekgobogoba was born in the Soutpansberg. Her father originated from Zimbabwe and had settled at Nyindi, while her mother came from Leokwe. The chief at the time was not a warrior, but had a good mind. Sekgobogoba was married to the chief's second son to strengthen political allegiances. The chief died of a chest infection, thought to be tuberculosis, the first Machete to meet such a fate. His son took over, but was killed by a leopard shortly thereafter. The chief's diviner considered that two chiefs dying in such quick succession had to involve magic and accused Sekgobogoba and her uncle of witchcraft. Many villagers wanted to kill her immediately, but she was eventually cleared from the charge. She nevertheless had to forfeit her right to royal status and lost any rights she had to royal land. She remarried but never overcame the stigma of being involved in witchcraft. She and her husband spent their life wandering in the Soutpansberg.

Alex and others excavated Leokwe Hill. They were protected by armed guards from elephants that could climb to the top of the hill. Massive stone walls some 2 m thick protected certain areas, which suggested that the chief was not comfortable occupying the hill. There was no evidence of domestic walling, but the top layers on the eastern side revealed historic occupation. Hoes, adzes and other iron tools that were brought to light suggest that the occupation was more Khami than Bakoni. Compared to Mapungubwe, the amount of material found was small, but finds included spear heads, metal, a few glass beads and a small amount of pottery. Bead specialist Marilee Wood had been able to date the blue annular and hexagonal beads to before the introduction of garden-roller beads at Mapungubwe.

Elephants were a strategic resource in the area and trade in ivory was of major economic benefit. Slave raiding north of the Soutpansberg was a major threat, so people migrated south. People were lost because of security problems, drought and tribute not getting through. Witchcraft was used more often to keep people in line, rather than for casting spells. Larger-scale politics probably put an end to this practice.

Alex is among a group of pioneering archaeologists, historians and anthropologists who are combining their fields of speciality. Pooling their knowledge under her leadership has resulted in a far greater understanding of life in the Shashe-Limpopo area during the 18th and 19th centuries. It has highlighted the fluidity of groups at the time, the marginalisation of women and the devastating effects of allegations of being involved in witchcraft. **Report by Noni Vardy**

The first farmers and their symbolic world – the Göbekli Tepe and Catelhöyük sites in Turkey (16 May 2013)

David Lewis-Williams is Professor Emeritus and a Senior Mentor in the Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand

Hunter-gatherers were Palaeolithic people and the introduction of farming saw the start of the Neolithic period. The change from hunter-gathering to farming was not just a matter of wanting an easier and safer live, as is the usual explanation, but was brought about by a number of events, including influences within society and a change weather patterns, in particular the fact that it became dryer in many regions. Prof. Lewis-Williams drew attention to the similarities between the art at Neolithic sites in many regions, such as engravings at New Grange in Ireland and Gavrinis in Brittany. In conjunction with bows and daggers, swirling interlinked spiral designs end in a line pointing down a passage towards a grave at the end. All sites are aligned with the winter solstice. Religion played a large part in the monuments left from this period. However, the question still remains – was it religion that brought about the change to farming, or was it the other way round?

One of the earliest farming communities is situated at Göbekli Tepe in eastern Turkey, in the fertile region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The tepe or mound of Göbekli Tepe is man-made. The site dates to 9600 BC as indicated by the C14 dating of animal bones. Excavation is being led by Klaus Schmidt, but to date only about five per cent of the site has been exposed. What has been brought to light is a series of sunken areas with roughly built exterior walls surrounding a circular ring of huge T-shaped stone columns with a low doorway for access. In some cases there are seats between the pillars and in others seats in the centre. This suggests that there was some form of stratified society or that there were divisions in society, and that different areas were reserved for different people. Cupules found in the tops of the pillars could have had religious significance. Washing bowls were found in front of some of the pillars. Many of the pillars are decorated with stunning reliefs of a wide range of animals, including fox, wild boar, snakes, insects, lion and a net-like pattern. So far, 11 'crypts' or sunken areas have been excavated. It appears that at some stage the sunken areas were back-filled with rubble. Much of the fill consists of the bones of wild animals (animals had not been domesticated at this early date). No graves have been found to date.

Pillar from Göbekli Tepe (image: Wikipedia)

A later site, Catelhöyük, which overlooks the Konya Plain in Turkey, has been dated to about 7500 BC. The site was first excavated by Mellaart in 1958 and is currently being excavated by Ian

A house entrance at Catelhöyük (image Noni Vardy)

Hodder. To date, 14 levels have been excavated. Catelhöyük comprises domestic buildings of varying size, but no evidence has been found of a ruler or a ruling class. There are no streets between the buildings. The houses were entered through the roof and the roofs served as 'streets'. The interior walls of the houses were decorated with murals painted in red ochre. Clay figurines, largely female, have also been uncovered. Cattle heads were mounted on walls, which suggests that cattle had some form of religious significance. It is thought that the town supported some 5 000 to 8 000 people. Storage bins have been found in the upper levels together with remains of wheat, barley, peas and almonds, indicating improved farming methods and the domestication of animals. Nevertheless, hunting continued to be a major source of meat. David Lewis-Williams' talk fascinated the audience and gave a new insight to early farming communities, their habitation and possible religious practices.

Report by Noni Vardi

Closing a Chapter: ten years of research on the archaeology of Historic Cave, Makapan's Valley (6 June 2013)

Dr Amanda Esterhuysen is an archaeologist and senior lecturer in the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies, University of the Witwatersrand

Makapan Valley lies between the towns of Mokopane and Polokwane in Limpopo Province. It was listed as a World Heritage site in 2005 because of the richness of the hominid fossil record preserved in the caves of the valley. It is also famous for the conflict between the Kekana chiefdom and local Boers that was played out in 1854 in what is now known as Historic Cave. The valley is situated in a region where two major ecological zones shade into each other, with tropical-zone vegetation to the north and more temperate-zone vegetation to the south. Because of its good grazing and relatively low incidence of malaria, the region was favoured for settlement by African farmers and also, from the 1840s onward, by intruding Boer pastoralists.

Tensions grew as the penetration of groups of Boers threatened to press African communities off the land and as they demanded increasing supplies of African labour. In the Makapan region matters came to a head in 1854 when a party of Boers apparently seized children from the Kekana under Mokopane (after whom the valley is named). The Kekana and the neighbouring Langa Ndebele retaliated by killing a number of Boers. Many Kekana, including their chief, took refuge in the Cave of Gwasa (Historic Cave), which they had fortified against attack. After attempts to storm the cave failed, the Boers laid siege to it. Numbers of Kekana were killed in the fighting or while trying to escape. Many more died in the cave itself. After a month, the survivors surrendered; subsequently they were distributed as labourers among the Boers. Later on, the war became an important iconic event in Afrikaner nationalist mythology. In sharp contrast, by the mid-twentieth century, if not before, it had come to be erased from the collective memory of the Kekana.

The desire to find out more about the experiences of the Kekana who were caught up in the siege was one of the factors that, in the late 1990s, led Dr Amanda Esterhuysen, who was then lecturing in the Archaeology Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, to begin a programme of excavations at Historic Cave. Another important factor was the very good state of preservation of material remains in the cave, which resulted from the alkaline nature of the dolomitic deposits. To complement her archaeological research and to try to find out why the siege was not publicly remembered by the Kekana, Dr Esterhuysen also conducted in-depth oral interviews with a number of Kekana elders. Over a period of ten years, with the permission of the Kekana ruling house, Amanda excavated at eight different points in Historic Cave. All the excavations were done in the eastern cave, as the instability of the roof made working in the western cave too dangerous. She retrieved a wide range of materials and has discussed her findings and interpretations in a number of publications. In her lecture to the branch, she focussed on what the material remains tell us about, firstly, the causes of death during the siege; secondly, divining practices during the siege; and, thirdly, the nature of political alliances at the time of the siege between the Kekana and other chiefdoms.

The evidence suggests that the people besieged in the cave, who may have numbered over 1 000, probably had adequate supplies of food in the form of sorghum and millet, but that they ran out of water for drinking and cooking. Deaths were probably due mainly to dehydration rather than starvation. Perhaps 800 to 1 000 people died in the cave. The remains of 38 individuals were recovered by Dr Esterhuysen's teams, which are to be returned to the Kekana community for reburial after scientific examination has been completed.

A novel aspect of Amanda's work was her search for evidence of divining practices carried out during the siege. Even though holed up in the cave, Chief Mokopane continued to be held responsible by the people with him for interceding with his ancestors to protect them. As people died in the cave, the community faced disintegration and destruction. The chief would have called on his diviners in increasingly desperate attempts to find out why the ancestors were not responding. But he was unable to put an end to the people's misfortunes and thus failed as a leader. Mokopane himself survived the siege but died six months later, either by suicide or because he was poisoned by some of his senior relatives.

Analysis of the plentiful pottery remains found in the cave suggests that before the siege the Kekana ruling house had often taken wives from among the Langa Ndebele and the Kgatla to strengthen political ties with these chiefdoms. Today, for reasons having to do with more recent politics, this is flatly denied by Kekana elders, a clear example of how, in societies with minimal written records, collective memory of the past can be manipulated to fit the political needs of the present. Similarly, the question of why the Kekana today have no 'official' memory of the siege of 1854 can be answered only through a detailed examination of the politics of succession to the Kekana chieftainship since that time, and of how dominant groups among the Kekana want that history to be remembered today. In her address to the society, Amanda took the audience through an intricate explanation based on her own interviews on the subject with Kekana interlocutors.

The talk provided a fine example of how, in the hands of an expert scholar, evidence from archaeology, ethnography, colonial documents and present-day oral histories can be combined to

give new perspectives on past events that have previously been known about mainly through settler mythologies.

Report by John Wright

Cryptic cattle forms in the rock art of Bukoba, Tanzania

(4 October 2012)

Dr Catherine Namono is a researcher at the Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand

An enigmatic motif occurs repeatedly at many sites in the Bukoba area, north-west Tanzania. The sites hold red and off-white monochrome paintings described as 'cattle forms', which are conventionalised schematic depictions of humans, cattle types, cattle signs, cattle figures, matchstick figures and alphabetical script. In 1967, James Chaplin documented most of the cattle forms in this area. He quantified the images, noting down the modes of depiction, description and quantity of the cattle forms. Dr Namono sought to revisit these sites. She found that all the paintings occur in a valley within easy reach of water. Most of the cattle forms are upright and always clustered. Along with these cattle forms are geometric shapes such as clusters of dots, grids and squares. The cattle forms look quite recent and perhaps stopped when Germans killed the last king of the Karagwe in 1885. The authorship of the paintings is unknown. Who painted these cryptic cattle forms and why did they paint them?

The Bukoba area was populated by different groups through the ages. These diverse groups not only shaped the landscape in which they found themselves but also altered the social, political, economic and linguistic character of Bukoba. Southern Cushitic-speaking peoples moved from the Ethiopian highlands with livestock and grain cultivation. Before them, however, Hamitic-speaking pastoralists had migrated into the area speaking a now-lost language. Bantu-speakers arrived in the area around 500 BC and speak remnants of this language, testifying to the long-term interaction between the two groups. The Karagwe assimilated many of the pastoralists they found when they arrived.

The Karagwe developed a power base that later became the Karagwe kingdom, one of the kingdoms of the Great Lakes region in the 19th century. The kings of the Karagwe built elaborate palaces and claimed a direct link to God. The king's control of his people was through ritual and symbolism. Royal leadership was symbolically associated with cattle-keeping, fertility, iron working and smelting in particular. For example, once a month during the festival of the new moon, the king with a ritual anvil, the head of which resembles a cow's horns, would symbolically 'pierce the land', renewing the fertility of the country, the success of crops, the flow of milk and the fecundity of calving cows. Interestingly, a component of the Karagwe regalia was long-horned 'cows', abstract sculptures of cows with exaggerated horns. Several of these objects of regalia were found in royal graves during recent excavations of the area.

The anvils, the 'cows' or the symbolism related to them are represented in the rock art. It would seem that it expresses a localised tradition, perhaps appearing when the Karagwe kingdom arose. They could have adopted this tradition from pastoralists. We know that Sudanese people deform the horns of their cows. Dr Namono's findings are preliminary and she hopes to clarify many of these questions with further fieldwork and analysis.

Report by Law Pinto

EXCURSIONS AND OUTINGS

'Prehistory: the investigation'. An exhibition at Origins Centre

(16 February 2013)

With Lara Mallen, Programmes Manager at Origins Centre and a Research Fellow at the Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand

Not many ArchSoc members have ever encountered skeletons, nor have they had the opportunity to touch and examine state-of-the-art replicas of prehistoric ones. This outing to Origins Centre was therefore a once-in-a-lifetime experience for us to study and puzzle over two mysterious skeletons whose deaths occurred between 7 400 and 6 500 years ago on the small island of Teviec off the coast of Brittany in France. The bodies were buried together beneath a whalebone and reindeer antlers. They wore shell ornaments around their necks, and shells and animal bones formed part of the grave goods. The exhibition was designed by the Toulouse Museum of Natural History, where the skeletons had lain from their excavation in the 1930s until their rediscovery in the museum basement in 2004.

Under the expert guidance of Lara Malan, who guided us and answered questions, our task was to try and find out the status of the persons represented by the skeletons and whether their violent deaths had resulted from murder, ritual killing or warfare. We became crime scene investigators in *Prehistory: the investigation*, which is an interactive 'murder mystery'. We were equipped with modern archaeological information from five different fields of investigation: anthropology, chronology, environment, technology and social life.

Our investigation started at the Mesolithic, double burial grave at Saint-Pierre de Quiberon on Teviec. We then went to the 'autopsy table' where replicas of the skeletal remains were displayed. Therafter, we investigated five booths with lots of information about the Mesolithic period and the gender of the skeletons. At the same time as trying to solve the mystery, we learnt about how archaeologists reconstruct ancient lives and deaths from multiple lines of evidence. Many of the large group of participants came to the conclusion that the two women of elevated status died in a violent event, possibly war.

Reported by Hilary Geber

Following the Witwatersrand gold mining trail (17 March 2013)

A coach tour with Professor Morris Viljoen, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geology, University of the Witwatersrand

Members of ArchSoc boarded the coach at Cresta Centre and spent the day with Professor Morris Viljoen who not only introduced significant geological features of Johannesburg's unique position on the Witwatersrand ridge, but also brought the early history of Johannesburg to life. He highlighted various elements of gold mining on the Reef and elaborated on the formative influence it had on subsequent development. Environmental challenges were also stressed, especially dust and river pollution, as illustrated when we viewed the tailings dams at Crown Mines and CMR.

The Witwatersrand is the largest and richest gold deposit in the world. The gold bearing layers were deposited by rivers that drained into a large inland sea between 2 700 and 2 900 million years ago. The region contains seven separate and major goldfields that extend over a distance of 350 km, from Evander in the east to Carletonville in the west, and south to Klerksdorp and Welkom. In this area there is still an estimated 56 000 t of gold waiting to be mined, representing 60 per cent of the world's gold, even though past gold mining activities have been so extensive in the Johannesburg area alone that the underground mining tunnels developed here over the last 127 years would stretch over a distance of 1 600 km. However, the remaining gold mainly lies very deep, beyond economic sustainability with today's technology and gold price.

As we made our way towards Aasvoëlkop on top of Northcliff Ridge, Morris Viljoen pointed out that the Witwatersrand could be seen as a mini plateau, the layers of which dipped to the south. At the small koppie near the Irish Club we viewed some of the oldest rocks on earth, serpentine Komatiitic greenstone that was laid down by volcanic action some 3 500 million years ago and was intruded by granites 300 million years later. These form the basement of the overlying 2 850 million-year-old Witwatersrand sediments. During the melting process, the greenstone could reach super-high temperatures of 1 600° C since they contained 36 per cent magnesium. The rocks had its origin in submarine intrusions and some pillow-structure komatiiites have also been identified in this locality. On our way into town resistant quartzites such as those forming the Orange Grove, Parktown and Bryanston ridges were pointed out, as well as the Brixton tower that sits on Brixton quartzite. The vegetation on these hills is characteristic of Gold Reef Mountain Bushveld, where sugar bush proteas (Suikerbos) are prevalent.

We drove past Melville Koppies that forms part of the 187 m high Orange Grove quartzite ridge. Here significant archaeological deposits were excavated. Along Jan Smuts Avenue we passed through the reddish lower-lying Parktown shales characterised by magnetite-rich layers of slate and banded-iron formations. At the tope of the ridge, we paused on the continental watershed where water flows north to the Limpopo basin and south to the Vaal River basin. From this vantage point Morris Viljoen referred to a significant number of geological superlative occurrences that surround the Witwatersrand region. He first pointed to the Vredefort Dome to the south-west that formed 2 000 million years ago and then north towards the Bushveld Complex created by massive volcanic action and contains the world's largest deposits of platinum, vanadium and chrome. Also to north lies the Tswaing Crater that was formed 250 000 years ago. To the north-east there is Premier Mine near Cullinan where some of the world's largest diamonds have been discovered. Closer to Johannesburg there is the Cradle of Humankind, home of some of the most significant fossilised hominid finds. Pointing to the north-west, he referred to the geologically significant Pilanesberg and praised the initiatives that involved the establishment of interpretation centres at each of these important sites.

Where Melle Street runs between the Helpmekaar schools we looked at impressive geological layers known as the Contorted Beds**.** They consist of banded magnetites, the so-called Main Reef Leader, a highly significant iron-rich magnetic formation that was of great importance to tracing the Witwatersrand gold sediments that lay below younger cover formations. These 2 500 million-year-old beds can be up to 50 m thick and consists of black iron oxides (magnetite and haematite), red jasper and amorphous white chert, as well as a clearly discernable thin carbon-rich layer. The various layers were deposited under water at a time when primitive life forms were able to develop owing to the development of oxygen in the atmosphere. The magnetites have such high iron concentrations that their magnetism can be followed even 2 km underground, thereby providing a very important marker for gold-bearing layers that lie just above the 43 km long Main Reef Leader. Significantly, in 1929, Guy Carleton Jones mapped the outcrops and then continued to link them by following the magnetic layers through instrumental readings. This is how he discovered the Carltonville goldfields, opening up exploration of the West Rand.

While at the Melle street site, Morris referred to a number of historic buildings associated with early Johannesburg, as well as to the role of Randlords such as Sir Joseph Robinson, after whom Robinson Deep was named. Randlord mansions on Parktown Ridge, mostly designed by Sir Herbert Baker, still to be seen include Sir Lionel Phillips' 'Villa Arcadia', Dale Lace's 'Northwards' and Charles Anderson's 'Dolobran'. Of further significance are the schools built by the RandLords, which include Parktown Boys, Jeppe, Barnardo Park, Roedean, St John's, King Edward and Pretoria Boys High School. The history of early Johannesburg also came to life at the Standard Bank Centre in Fereirasdorp, where the historic Ferreiras stope lies on the Main Reef Leader. It forms part of the Reef Horizon that can be followed over hundreds of kilometres. Johannesburg's first gold mining company was established in Ferreirasdorp.

This early gold mining history is effectively captured at the subterranean Interpretation Centre in Standard Bank. It enabled us to come into direct contact with the gold bearing 'banket' layers, while photographic displays effectively provided us with a historic cameo of the time. The often narrow gold-bearing banket layers, which were deposited in a conglomerate structure in a fan delta, were mined from the surface in narrow open trenches and produced many tons of gold. The gold is contained in the mineral structure of the pyrite and extraction requires a complex process involving the addition of cyanide after the rock has been crushed. The gold, which is then is solution, is further processed in tanks with porous carbon such as coconut shells. The gold latches on to the carbon and then has to be stripped from it using mercury amalgam, a technique developed in 1886.

Participants enjoyed lunch at Moffat Park where deposits of large gold-bearing conglomerate pebbles of the Elsburg Reef are clearly visible. No significant mining has taken place here even though this is the most spectacular of the conglomerates. Morris pointed south to the Ventersdorp Contact Reef where the Ventersdorp lavas had poured out and now overlie the Witwatersrand layers. The lavas are fine-grained but contain large crystals that formed when the gas cavities filled. In the distance we could see the impressive classic Victorian house of Randlord Sir Carl Meyer, as well as the Klipriviersberg.

A visit to George Harrison Park on Main Reef Road to the west where gold was first discovered in 1886 provided another highlight of the tour. Here the current opencast-mining operations on the South Reef were pointed out, as well as the area where Cecil Rhodes and CharlesRudd purchased most of the prime ground in 1887, followed by Barney Barnato and Solomon Joel in 1888. Barnato also bought ground along the water sources and started extensive waterworks, and he bought up Houghton Estate, starting Johannesburg Consolidated Investments or JCI. Friedrich Eckstein established Corner House in Marshall Street and had further boreholes drilled to supply water to Johannesburg. He and Phillips consolidated much ground and established Rand Mines. From the viewing platform we could clearly follow the Main Reef Leader that we had earlier encountered in Braamfontein. Considering the potential of the remaining gold deposits, Professor Viljoen concluded that a new shaft should be sunk in Johannesburg to make further exploration feasible.

Report by Anna Steyn

Remember: www.archaeology.org.za for branch activity and books for sale

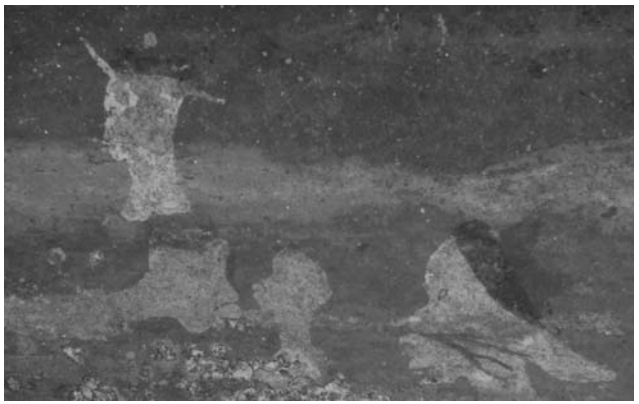
Rock art in the New England (Barkly East) and Maclear areas

(4 to 12 May 2013)

With Dawn Green and Sheila Bell-Cross, Eastern Cape rock art experts

Fifteen ArchSoc members participated in this extended tour to see breathtaking and very well preserved rock art in this 'far, far from anywhere' region, also referred to as Nomansland, in the Eastern Cape uKhahlamba-Drakensberg. The group was guided by New England resident, Dawn Green assisted by Jonathan Sephton, and by Sheila Bell-Cross with Victor Biggs in the Maclear area. High-clearance vehicles were required on some of the farm tracks and the painted sites were often difficult to reach, requiring long walks over uneven and sometimes very steep terrain, and on two occasions in very wet grass. But everyone managed to reach all the painted sites and we were all pleased to do so because of the superb rock art that awaited us.

Women 'dancing' at the 'Serpent' site in the vicinity of Lady Grey



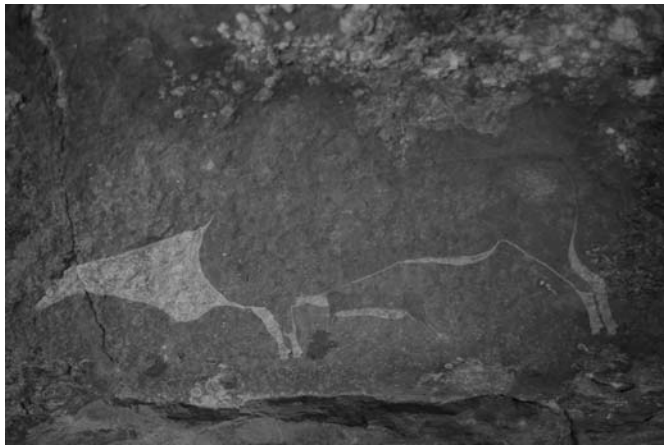
Five detailed disembodied heads at 'Faces' shelter, New England

The group arrived independently in Aliwal North on the first afternoon and were accommodated in two B&B facilities. We had dinner at Toll Inn, which was delicious, after being welcomed with sherry and a fire as the weather was quite cool. The next day took us to the vicinity of Lady Grey where we met Dawn Green and Joe Sephton and climbed up a small hill to the 'Serpent' site where paintings depicting a large painted serpent, rain animals and women 'dancing' awaited us. Later we crossed the Karingmelkspruit and climbed a steep rocky hill to view finely detailed paintings of therianthropes and what were possibly Khoekhoe finger-paintings. Then we drove on to the high-mountain area of New England where we were accommodated on two lovely farms, Dawn's Millard and Joe's Pitlochrie. We joined Dawn and Joe for a welcome dinner at Millard after a presentation by Dawn on the rock art we would be seeing over the next two days.

On the morning of 6 May we travelled to Wartrail, one of the first farms in the area, which took its name from a nearby pass over which warring and cattle rustling parties crossed to and from Lesotho. The double-storey building where the carts and stores were kept had served as a refuge for the family in case of attack and even had built-in firing slots. An easy walk and a stream crossing took us up a little hill to 'Dance' shelter. The depiction of a trance dance was most intriguing and we had a discussion on the influence of altered states of consciousness in hunter-gatherer paintings of this area. We later continued on to Joggemspruit farm where a steep descent brought us to the small 'Faces' shelter depicting five detailed disembodied heads. A walk further along the valley took us past five San-painted clusters to 'Main' cave, where we had a picnic lunch before continuing to 'Rain' shelter and a mixed-group site with geometric finger-paintings. After a full day, we returned to Millard for dinner and a cosy fire.

Report by Hilary Geber

On 7 May we returned to Wartrail with Dawn and Joe to visit more sites, including 'Ancestral' site. The paintings and associated archaeology at this site told a story of multicultural interactions. We enjoyed many naturalistic depictions of eland, figures dancing in trance postures and Khoekhoe paintings. We also came to the original signature, on the rock surface, of Joseph Millard Orpen, who in 1874 met Qing, a San descendant who explained certain features of several paintings in this area [see *The Digging Stick*, April 2013]. This account would later provide researchers with an insider view into the artists' ritual activities and insight into what ritual specialists experienced during altered states of consciousness.

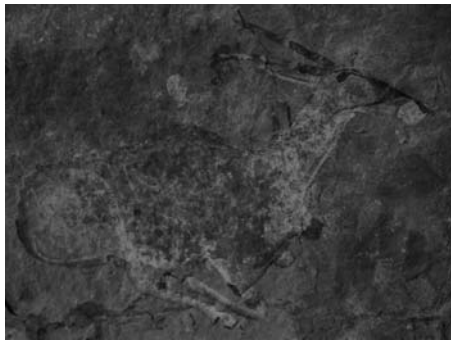


Female eland with young at 'Cathedal' cave, Wartrail farm

At one end of this cave we came to an abandoned sandstone structure built under the overhang. Dawn informed us that the structure was one of the first European settler's homes built in the area in 1864. A few meters from this building, there was 1970s graffiti and San rock paintings covered in regular white circular markings. These blotches were puzzling until Dawn interviewed local women who explained how these seemingly enigmatic markings were created. They would mix cow dung with sand and would then throw the cow pats onto the vertical rock surface to dry. When dried, they fell off or were removed and used as fuel for fires. The placement of these cow pats, often over San rock paintings, was apparently unintentional. Dawn is currently writing about this and hopes to interview more individuals in this regard.

The next site we visited was the magnificent 'Cathedral' cave. This enormous cave with its superb view over the river canyon contains over 300 individual San rock paintings occurring on two levels. The easily accessible paintings on the lower level were good, but the upper-level paintings, which were difficult to reach, were magnificent, the colours often so strong and

fresh-looking that it seemed as if the images had been painted just yesterday. To get here we had to scramble steeply up onto a wide ledge. Dawn pointed out to two exceptionally large therianthropes measuring about 80 cm tall. At their feet one could see a tiny trail of eland spoor. Other uncommon imagery included a curled up snake with tusks and several contact images including horses, cattle and black-painted figures with red earrings and shields, probably representing Xhosa individuals. After having our picnic lunch at Cathedral Cave, we set off for the long walk back and returned to Dawn's farm for dinner.



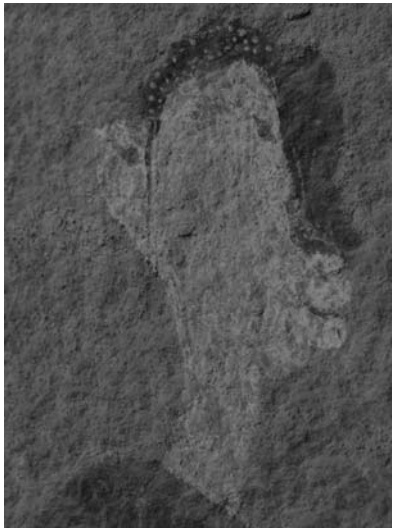
A striking image from 'Cathedral' Cave, Wartrail farm – as if it was painted yesterday

On the morning of 8 May we bid farewell to our exceptional guides and hosts, Dawn and Joe, and took the long gravel road to Maclear, travelling via Rhodes and over South Africa's highest public road. We made a good stop at Rhodes, a quaint historical town that was founded in the 1890s. It has a gift shop, a hotel that includes an English pub and lots of B&Bs. One can visit the original Dutch reformed church, post office, court room and gaol. From here we continued our scenic drive over Naude's Nek Pass lying at a height of 2 920 m above sea level, close to where the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg, the Witteberg and the Maloti mountains meet. The wind was so strong (and cold) on the summit that it was impossible to have our packed lunches outside of the cars, and most of us only took a very quick look at a view that seems to go on forever. The harsh conditions at that altitude must have made the construction of this pass very difficult, particularly as the Naude Brothers in the late 1890s only had picks and shovels. Arriving in Maclear, we settled into the comfortable Declan's B&B before having dinner at Butcher's Diner, the only eatery in town and thus our regular dinner spot for four nights. They served great steaks.

Report by Law Pinto

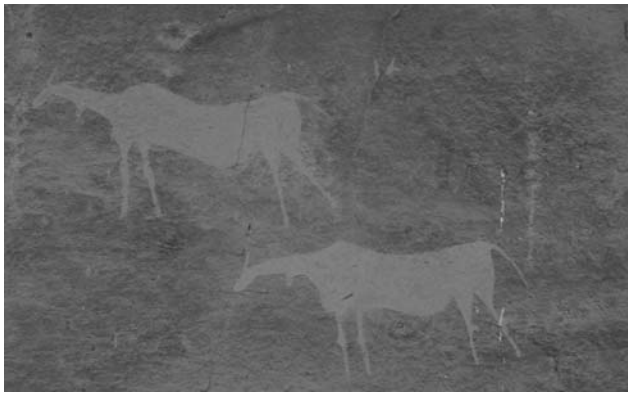
Eland image in ghostly white in Storm Shelter

On 9 May we met up with guides Sheila Bell-Cross and Victor Briggs and set off on a two-hour drive to the top of Potberg Pass and over farmland to the start of a trail that would take us to Storm Shelter, so-called because rock art specialists Geoff Blundell and Sven Ouzman took shelter in this newly discovered cave (1992) during a heavy mountain storm. To reach the cave we had to descend down the side of a very steep valley on a completely washed out track, cross a stream and then scramble up a trackless slope to reach the shelter far above. But it was certainly worth the effort. The well-preserved 6 m long main panel has 231 images and up to four layers of paintings in the most densely painted area. A large bull eland and female eland move from right to left across the main panel to a huge feline on the left side. The eland are interspersed with an array of fascinating transforming figures. Large heads with animal ears, bodies and no legs raise comment. At the extreme left one finds finger paintings of crude figures in pink and orange pigment. A rock facing the main panel has paintings of 'elows', described as a combination of a cow and an eland. One could sit and look at this magnificent panel for a very long time. More polychrome, bichrome and monochrome images of animals and human figures appear on other panels nearby. A thin red line fringed with pinhead-sized white dots appears to weave in and out of the rock face. After enjoying our packed lunches we commenced the long slog back to the vehicles and Maclear. Storm Shelter was without doubt the most magnificent site we saw in the Maclear area.



Large heads with animal ears, bodies and no legs at Storm Shelter in the Maclear region

The weather had been with us until now: cold starts to the days but sunny, warm weather thereafter. Things now changed. It rained during the early morning of 10 May and still drizzled as we were ready to set out. With the wet grass, our boots and socks would be sodden through within minutes. We nevertheless decided to continue with at least part of the day's programme and to visit Melrose reached via forest tracks. This entailed the usual long drive and an hour-long hike to a long sandstone ridge with a dense concentration of seven painted sites. Each shelter has a different theme, which allows one to see with good effect the infinite variety of the artistry of the painters and their world view. One shelter features a rain animal, another a selection of clothes and bags with nearby two tiny, exceptionally clear human figures intricately painted. There is a complex scene of trance dance at a third shelter, while over 600 flying termites painted in white cluster on top of a 2 m long snake in a fourth shelter (the latter we did unfortunately not see). It was quite a scramble to get from site to site, but the rock art was brilliant and varied. By the time we had looked at the fifth shelter and had had our packed lunches, heavy rain clouds were approaching and the temperature was falling markedly, so we decided to call it a day and return to the vehicles and our accommodation to dry out and get warm.



'Elows', described as a combination between eland and cow, at Storm Shelter

The 12th of May was our last day of discovering the rock art of Nomansland. We left to visit the KwaBhaliwe shelter on the Tsitsane river, a site that only became know to archaeologist in 2006/7. At the village in the Tsitsane valley where we parked our vehicles we were met by Thabathani Tshaka, a local rock art guide who with great care guided us on the two-hour walk to the high shelter. Here we found 60 m of continuous paintings that glow with the pinkish pigment

Our guide Thabathani Tshaka in front of an eland panel at KwaBhaliwe, part of 60 m of rock art

used to shade the huge eland that cover the rock face. Other images abound – a small spotted leopard, a fat-tailed sheep, painted eland spoor leading to an intricately painted therianthrope, clapping figures, flying figures, a trance bird, hartebeest and vaal rhebuck, amongst others. After our descent Thabathani introduced us to three friendly ladies of the community who in a large rondavel sat us down and invited us to sample five traditional dishes. All had the mealie as its main ingredient, from the slightly fermented drink of mageu to stiff porridge, salted ground mealies and a mealie powder with a touch of sugar as 'dessert'. It was a fascinating experience and a fitting end to a day in the depths of the Eastern Cape.

Eland disappearing into a crack at KwaBhaliwe

After dinner with Sheila and Victor and another good night's sleep to recover from our exertions, we bid each other farewell and travelled home, some via Barkly East and Aliwal North, and others via Mount Fletcher, Matatiele and Underberg. It had been a fascinating and delightful stay in a wonderful part of South Africa that offers superb insight into the great rock art tradition of the country.

Report and images by Reinoud Boers, with thanks to Sheila Bell-Cross for descriptions of the rock art sites

Outing to Paul Kruger's farm Boekenhoutfontein (21 July 2013)

With Dr Ceri Ashley, senior lecturer and programme coordinator in archaeology, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Pretoria

A group comprising 21 members and guests visited Boekenhoutfontein Farm, home of the former president of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, Paul Kruger. After the group had toured the buildings on the site, Ceri Ashley gave an open-air presentation on the results of archaeological work undertaken at the site. Dr Ashley received her PhD on the Early Iron Age around Lake Victoria from the UCL Institute of Archaeology in London in 2008 and was subsequently the Cotsen Visiting Scholar and a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at UCL. Her research has focused on material culture, particularly ceramics, and she has recently conducted research in Kenya, Uganda, Ghana and Botswana, and now in South Africa.

The historical farm structures now form part of Kedar Lodge, situated about 20 km beyond Rustenburg. In addition to the Paul Kruger connection, the lodge also has a comprehensive collection of military objects from the South African War, principally focused on the British regiments that participated in the war, including paintings, uniforms, weapons, etc. The Kruger farm buildings and surrounds are now a heritage site and, starting in 2012, have been used by the University of Pretoria as an archaeological training site focusing on historical archaeology. The buildings have been restored and fitted with period furnishings and objects. Boekenhoutfontein was occupied from the mid-19th century until the early 20th century, latterly by Paul Kruger's oldest son, Pieter. The family farmed about 500 ha, producing tobacco, oranges and lemons.

We were ferried the short trip to the original dwelling, seeing eland and nyala on the way. The building was erected by an early pioneer named Bronkhorst in 1839 and is the oldest known pioneer cottage in the old Transvaal. The neighbouring cottage, which Kruger had built in 1862, is a larger version of the Bronkhorst cottage and he lived in his until he constructed a much larger dwelling in 1873. Designed in what is described as 'Eastern Cape Classical Style', this building was unique in the Rustenburg area. We then climbed up the koppie behind the house to Paul Krugers 'prayer spot' where, before a little church was built, he went to pray every day. There is a small stone monument and plaque to commemorate the spot. Kruger had 15 children with his second wife, many of whom lived on the farm. Pieter Kruger built his own Victorian-style house on the site in 1890. This has also been restored and was visited. All of the houses are amply furnished with furniture and memorabilia of the period and of Paul Kruger himself. An interesting example is a display of items made by the Boer prisoners-of-war held on St Helena. Another interesting piece was a document recording the fact that the Rustenburg commando performed the war's first action against the British by blowing up an armoured train.

After the tour of the houses, Ceri took us to a domestic ash midden where she explained the history of the excavations on the site and the relevance of historical archaeology as distinct from regular archaeology. So far there have been seven excavation seasons at Boekenhoutfontein, with more planned for the future. Historical archaeology aims to find clues to the lifestyles and customs of occupants from the items discarded in middens. Ceri circulated several objects such as a sardine tin, a bully beef tin, a gin bottle shard and medicine bottles that, although prosaic in themselves, had helped to weave a story of what daily life was like. Another site of excavation in front of the houses we visited had revealed the foundation stones and a large number of large loose rocks inside the foundations of a largish, five-roomed building. The building's function is not clear, but this might be revealed in the future when further excavations are to be undertaken. No domestic artefacts have come to light, but the discovery of metal objects such as horse shoes and plough parts has led to speculation that the building may have been a smithy workshop, which would have been an essential farm activity in the 19th century.

It is hoped that future archaeological training excavations might lead to the discovery of a grave. It is reported that during the war an informer told the British where they could find Kruger. However, the Kruger family was forewarned and they managed to escape over the koppie behind the house. The informer was later discovered, shot and buried on the property. The tour concluded with an enjoyable lunch provided by the lodge in Pieter's house.

Report by John McManus

Marothodi: the late precolonial capital of a Tlokwa chiefdom

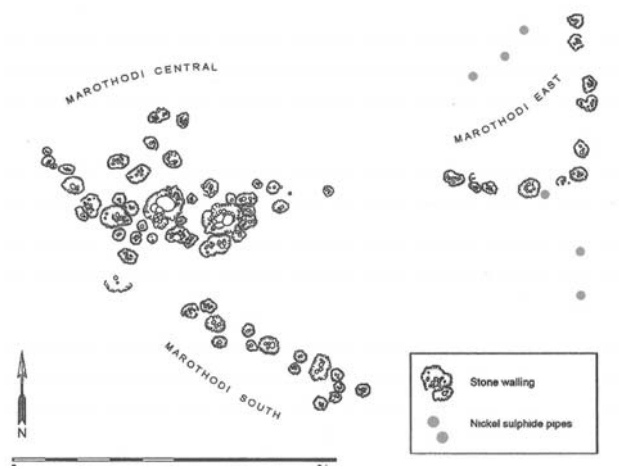
(9 June 2013)

With Professor Jan Boeyens, Head of Archaeology, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, and Francois Coetzee, senior lecturer, University of South Africa

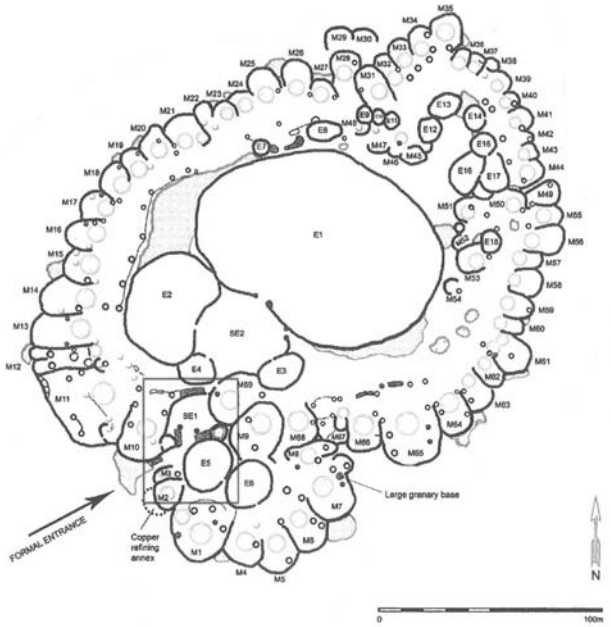
Thirty-three members travelled to the farm Vlakfontein located south-west of the Pilanesberg. A low, shallow profile hill is capped by one of South Africa's largest Late Iron Age walled settlements, rightly styled a 'mega-site' and covering an area of about 8 km^2. In 2003/4, joint excavations by teams of students from the University of Cape Town (UCT) and UNISA revealed significant knowledge about the people who had lived at Marothodi. It was the capital of the Tlokwa chiefdom from about 1780 to the mid-1820s. The central cattle kraal pattern of housing settlements can be seen very clearly and in fact the central cattle enclosure is one of the largest in South Africa. Clearly the wealth in cattle was considerable, yet the people of Marothodi had an additional source of wealth, for they mined and smelted copper and iron.

The Tlokwa settled in the area in the 1780s under the rule of Chief Taukubung. The initial settlement, at Maruping on the Pilwe mountain, is located on the farms Zwartkoppies and Zwaarverdiend, situated some 10 km west of Sun City and eight km south-east of Marothodi. Taukubung had four sons, Makaba, Molefe, Thekiso and Mokgatle. Makaba died before marriage and Molefe fathered sons in the name of his brother Makaba. The sons were named Bogatsu, Phiri and Semela. After AD 1800, following the death of Taukubung, a succession dispute began between his three surviving sons. Molefe broke away from his two siblings and acted as regent for Bogatsu until he became of age. He ruled from around AD 1810 and resettled his people at Marothodi. While still living at Pilwe, Bogatsu's people developed a range of metallurgical skills and became known as the 'bracelet-makers'. These skills became widespread among Bogatsu's people when they occupied Marothodi because of the copper that they could mine there. Bogatsu died around AD 1820 and is believed to be buried at Marothodi.

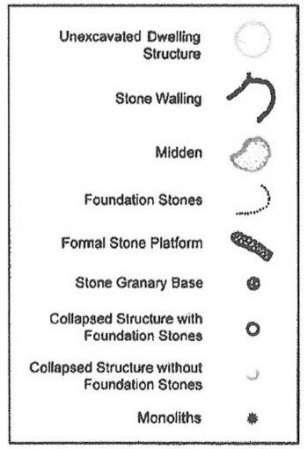
Bogatsu's son, Kgosi, continued living at Marothodi. However, he was attacked and defeated by the Bakwena ba Modimosana ba Mmatau, in about AD 1823 and Kgosi was killed in the battle. The defeat of Kgosi again led to a succession dispute. The dispute between his four sons, as well as the upheavals of the *difaqane*, led to the abandonment of Marothodi and the fragmentation of the Tlokwa people into a number of separate units. Some moved northwards, into present-day Botswana but later returned to settle just north of Marothodi in the Matlapeng range. However, after conflict with the newly arrived Trekkers in the 1850s, most of the Tlokwa moved west into what is now Botswana and eventually settled around the modern capital of Gaborone, which is named after the grandson of Kgosi.



Site layout of Marothodi



Plan of the Senior Kgosing (chief's homestead) at Marothodi



The ArchSoc group was taken on a tour of the central cattle kraal area and eventually to the lelapa (household) of the senior wife of the chief. Here we saw the remains of stone hut foundations and grain bins. We were told about the excavations carried out by UNISA and shown both the remains of the stone walls and pictures taken of the site during excavations. Details of the artefacts found were discussed and then the group was taken to a satellite area where six copper refining furnaces were uncovered. What was significant about the find of the furnaces was that they were part of the homestead of the senior wife.

Mention was made by Prof. Boeyens of the significance of copper production to the general life of the people in Marothodi, and how it became clear during the excavations that rather than isolated instances of people being involved in the mining, smelting and refining of copper, the people as a whole were deeply involved in all aspects of copper production and the manufacture of finished copper items. Certain households did the mining or smelting, and others the refining, production of the raw metal and the manufacture of finished goods such as wire, earrings, bracelets, etc. Apart from smelting copper, the Tlokwa also smelted iron and forged it into items such as iron hoes and, most probably, spear points. It had become evident that while copper production was closely associated with households and women's space at Marothodi, iron smelting took place at some distance from the outer walls of residential units.

Prof. Jan Boeyens explaining some of the features of Marothodi, with Francois Coetzee in the background

ArchSoc members at Marothodi

Graham Reeks, who was a student during the excavations, discussed how the ore was reduced and how during the first season of excavations he and Dr Duncan Miller of UCT were involved in looking for the Tlokwa's mines and copper deposits. They had also found the most likely source of water for Marothodi. Further downstream from this spring they discovered the clay deposit used for pottery-making, as well as a bed of white kaolin used for the decoration of the pottery and huts. The curved rows of stones which demarcate the remains of the hut walls were pointed out. The typical Tlokwa round-hut layout was explained. Side wings separated the front veranda public area from the back veranda private area within a single lelapa. Several midden areas had been excavated in an attempt to find artefacts and faunal remains.

The group was taken on a walk through the eastern end of the Kgosing (the chief's homestead) to a point where one could look down the slope of the hill. Literally everywhere one looked or walked there was walling.

Report by Graham Reeks

East Fort, Pretoria: request for data

In July of this year the first of a number of planned excavations took place in Lynnwood, Pretoria at the site of the 1902 British East Fort. A number of ArchSoc members took part in the excavations and it is hoped that more will consider joining the excavation team next year. If you have never excavated and would like to take part after suitable training, please contact branch chairman, Graham Reeks.

The request for data is in connection with the background historical research. There is so little data on the fort that the team is appealing to all members of ArchSoc for information they may have in their possession. Particularly welcome would be photographs taken of the fort's construction in 1901, during its occupation and of the walled structure's apparent final days in the 1970s. If you have any documents, diaries or perhaps even letters referring to the fort, Graham would like to hear from you.

Graham Reeks' email address is uniwit@lantic.net.

TRANS-VAAL BRANCH CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Annual General Meeting, 16 May 2013

The chairman's report for the June 2012 to May 2013 year was delivered by chairman Graham Reeks. The following is a summary of his report.

We are the largest branch of the South African Archaeological Society, representing about 50 per cent of national membership. I am happy to report that we have seen a steady influx of new members this year. Sadly, we have also seen a drop-off in membership because of relocation on retirement or declining health, and I urge all members to act as marketers for our society to attract new members. Our primary function remains to promote an interest in archaeology and provide dynamic links between those interested in archaeology and professional archaeologists.

Over the past year the committee has arranged a wide spectrum of monthly lectures and outings. These included lectures on trends in Zimbabwean archaeology, the geological evolution of the landscape of the Mpumulanga escarpment, new discoveries at Blombos cave, Tanzanian rock art, hidden treasures at Aksum in Ethiopia, developments with the 'Little Foot' skeleton, the civilisations of Peru, Southern African rock art, and witchcraft in the Shashi-Limpopo Confluence Area. Our outings have been equally diverse, covering Witwatersrand gold mining, the Late Iron Age city of Molokwane, a special exhibition of a Neolithic burial at Wits, and a visit to Freedom Park in Pretoria. A long-weekend visit was arranged to the Waterberg where we looked at rock art and rain-making sites. Reinoud Boers arranged two successful South African tours. The first was to the Cape West Coast under the leadership of Dr Janette Deacon. The second tour to view rock art has just returned from Nomansland in the Eastern Cape. In September this year Reinoud has arranged a very exciting tour of the major archaeological attractions of Peru and Bolivia. Your committee has organised a full programme of lectures and outings for the remainder of this year.

I wish to thank all speakers and outing leaders who provided the wide range of lectures and excursions during the past year. I also wish to make special reference to the continued support the committee and branch receive from the academic communities of the universities of the Witwatersrand, Pretoria, Unisa and Johannesburg, and from independent professionals. A special mention of thanks must be made to the branch's eight patrons for their commitment and assistance over the past year. They are Dr Bob Brain and Professors Tom Huffman, David Lewis-Williams, Bruce Rubridge, Innocent Pikirayi, Francis Thackeray, Lyn Wadley, Jan Boeyens and Karim Sadr. Links with the national council of the society are maintained through our representative at council meetings, Dr Janette Deacon. I thank her for looking after our interests.

The Annual School underwent a name change in 2012 and became the Annual Symposium, a name considered more fitting for this series of academic lectures. The symposium's topic was 'What the artefacts tell us' and seven speakers provided insights into a range of artefacts that included seeds, beads, bones, stone tools, ceramics and shipwreck material. The symposium was

well supported and greatly enjoyed by all, and our thanks go once again to Reinoud and Marion Boers for hosting the subsequent annual brunch.

Last year the committee carried out a survey to determine how many members live in greater Pretoria. It was established that we have approximately 70 members in Pretoria and a decision was taken to hold a meeting in Pretoria. The venue was the University of Pretoria and the meeting was held in conjunction with the UP Archaeological Society. The event was very well supported with over 70 people being present. We intend to repeat the joint meeting later this year. We also plan to approach the Wits Archaeological Students Association to try and engender a closer mutually beneficial relationship.

Most of the branch activities were reported on in the last two issues of *Artefacts*. *The Digging Stick* also appeared regularly three times a year and is now being produced with colour as a standard feature. Reinoud and Marion Boers continue to edit and lay out these publications with professional dedication and we really appreciate their contribution.

The Trans-Vaal branch has continued with its policy of supporting archaeological research and education by providing funds for research projects. Although no grants were made in 2012, two successful applicants received grants for 2013. A grant amounting to the value of R20 000 is to be paid on a phased basis for research in KwaZulu-Natal, and a second grant of R6 000 for research in Limpopo. We have also continued with our support of prizes for academic excellence at the University of the Witwatersrand where three students received Van Riet Lowe prizes, which are awarded jointly by the society and the university. The Hanisch Prize was awarded to a student at the University of Pretoria and a student at Unisa received the society's academic excellence award.

At a meeting of the Natal Branch on 18th June 2013, Mrs Erica Wynter, an archaeology student at UNISA, was awarded the SA Archaeological Society's Trans-Vaal Branch UNISA prize for 2012 by Graham Reeks, chairman of the Trans-Vaal Branch

During the past few months, two academics have left South Africa to take up positions at universities in Australia. Drs Ben Smith and Sven Ouzman, formerly from Wits and Pretoria universities, have both provided valuable service, advice and lectures at national and Trans-Vaal Branch levels over the years, and will be sorely missed. In June 2012 a memorial celebration was held for the late Professor Phillip V Tobias in the Wits Great Hall. A tribute on behalf of the SA Archaeological Society was written by the then president of the society, Professor Francis Thackeray. He was unable to deliver it in person and the honour fell to your chairman to deliver it on his behalf. Last year your committee nominated Reinoud Boers for the Vice Presidency of the society and we were happy to receive the news that he was duly elected for a two-year term.

During the year it came to the attention of two members of the committee that site clearance and preliminary construction work was being conducted on the lower West Campus of Wits university and that some artefacts had been found by the contractors. It was further discovered that they were planning to give these artefacts away to friends. Prof Karim Sadr of Wits was contacted and I am pleased to state that the artefacts were recovered and that Wits archaeological students have recently been carrying out excavations. The finds date from the 1890s when the area was part of the original show grounds.

In the 2011/2012 year your branch made a significant financial gesture when it advised national council that it would forego receiving the society's annual subvention for that year. As our finances are still very strong, a similar decision was made for the 2012/2013 financial year.

I wish to thank my fellow committee members Pamela Küstner, John McManus, Reinoud Boers, Hilary Gerber, Anita Arnott, Gerry Gallow, Noni Vardy, Law Pinto, Louise McKecknie and Peter Mimmack for the commitment, enthusiasm and hard work they have put into the successful running of the Trans-Vaal branch over the past twelve months. Pamela has produced *ArchSoc News* for the past nine years and has been looking for a successor. Norman Blight offered his editing expertise and has started to take over the editing role from Pamela and his contribution is greatly appreciated.

In closing I would like to thank all of you for your participation in the various activities of ArchSoc during the past year. I would also like to thank all those who have approached me with positive and sometimes negative but, importantly, constructive comments – I welcome both. Your participation and enjoyment is what makes this position worthwhile.

University of Pretoria students receive 2012 Hanisch Prizes

University of Pretoria student Bongumenzi Nxumalo receives the 2012 Hanisch prize for outstanding achievement in archaeology at postgraduate level, with Prof. Innocent Pikirayi on the right

Refilwe Rammutloa receives the 2012 Hanisch Prize for outstanding achievement in archaeology at undergraduate level.

At the second annual Pretoria lecture of the Trans-Vaal Branch on 15 August 2013, branch chairman Graham Reeks presented the ArchSoc Trans-Vaal Branch Hanisch Prizes for 2012 to deserving archaeology students of the University of Pretoria. Ms Refilwe Rammutloa received the Hanisch prize for outstanding achievement in archaeology at undergraduate level and Mr Bongumenzi Nxumalo was awarded the Hanisch prize for outstanding achievement in archaeology at postgraduate level. Ms Zurethe Collins was awarded the prize for outstanding achievement in archaeology but as she could not be present, Professor Innocent Pikirayi, Head of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at the university, received the prize on her behalf.