



# ESRARA NEWSLETTER

Quarterly of the Eastern States Rock Art Research Association

30th member of IFRAO - International Federation of Rock Art Organizations

Volume 6, No. 1

Winter 2001

March 28-April 1, 2001

## EASTERN STATES ROCK ART CONFERENCE – Still time to register!

Although the cabins are almost all taken, don't let that deter you from attending what promises to be another great ESRARA meeting (you can stay in nearby Carbondale)! We already have a full slate of papers set for Saturday, the reception Friday evening at Southern Illinois University, the Banquet at the Winery is arranged, and don't forget the field trips to southern Illinois rock art sites. You don't want to miss this meeting! For detailed information, and registration forms, check out the ESRARA Web Site at:

[http://www.public.asu.edu/~rexweeks/Eastern\\_States\\_Rock\\_Art\\_Re.htm](http://www.public.asu.edu/~rexweeks/Eastern_States_Rock_Art_Re.htm)



The line drawing, based on a photograph contributed by Dr. Fred Coy, depicts two footprints on metamorphosed sedimentary bedrock layered with fine lamellate (slate? fine grain sandstone?) by a roadside near the town of Woodbury, Vermont. The petroglyph outlines appear to have been cut first with a sharp implement before layer(s) of lamella were removed, leaving a uneven inner surface. There are no indications of pecking with a hammerstone. In a presentation to the 1996 ESRARA meeting in Machias (among several awaiting funds for publication), Dr. Coy pointed out that similar petroglyphs of human footprints appear in the midwest as far west as St. Louis. I have not located an example in Maine. However, oral traditions credit Maine shamans with the power to sink their feet beneath a ground or rock surface at will (Ekstorm 1945). Vermont was historically in the territory of western Abnaki whose language is considered the most recent member of the Eastern Algonkian language group, separating from Central Algonkian about a thousand years ago. The human footprint petroglyph in Vermont may

1 represent a late prehistoric movement of shamanistic ideas out of the midwest. MH

Footprints in Stone from Vermont: A Comment.



***President's Message . . .***

*Just a short note this time to encourage you to attend the upcoming Eastern States Rock Art Conference in Southern Illinois. There will be the opening reception at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, a whole day of eastern rock art papers, the banquet at a winery, the field trips to rock art sites, and maybe a few surprises!*

*Although our ESRARA business meeting will also take place, we know that it is not "the draw." However, it is important to come to the meeting, too, so that we can handle some agenda items important to the function of our organization. We need to move our committees (Education, Conservation, and Central Repository) further along, make long-range plans and goals, develop strategies, discuss our second Eastern Woodlands publication, vote on awards to be presented at our next meeting, and more. If you have anything you would like to add to the meeting agenda, please get in touch with me at:*

*[cdiazgra@artsci.wustl.edu](mailto:cdiazgra@artsci.wustl.edu)*

*See you at Giant City!*

*Carol*

*P.S. Can you believe that we are in our 6<sup>th</sup> year/volume of newsletters already?! Me either! But we are!! And wasn't our special fall color issue great? I would like to commend Jean Allan (Fall newsletter editor, and her brother, Glenn Allan) for making our fall issue such an exceptional color edition. Thanks, Jean!!*

**DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR \$12.00 DUES TO:**

**ILO M. JONES:  
ESRARA, Treasurer  
Post Office Box 4335  
Helena, MT 59604**

**ESRARA**

**Board of Directors**

**Carol Diaz-Granados, *President***

**Fred E. Coy, Jr., *Vice President***

**Iloilo M. Jones, *Treasurer***

**H. Denise Smith, *Secretary***

**James Swauger, *Ex Officio***

**Rex Weeks, *Manager/Designer***

**ESRARA Website:**

**[http://www.public.asu.edu/~rexweeks/  
Eastern\\_States\\_Rock\\_Art\\_Re.htm](http://www.public.asu.edu/~rexweeks/Eastern_States_Rock_Art_Re.htm)**

**Check the ESRARA Website for our 2001 Meeting details, activities, books, membership information, board e-mails, and links to other rock art sites.**

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

***Summer:* Carol Diaz-Granados, Missouri  
[cdiazgra@artsci.wustl.edu](mailto:cdiazgra@artsci.wustl.edu)**

***Fall:* Jean Allan, Alabama  
[jallan@fs.fed.us](mailto:jallan@fs.fed.us)**

***Winter:* Mark Hedden, Maine  
P.O. Box 33  
Vienna, Maine 04360**

***Spring:* Kevin Callahan, Minnesota  
[Kevin.L.Callahan-1@tc.umn.edu](mailto:Kevin.L.Callahan-1@tc.umn.edu)**



**SEE YOU AT ESRARA'S 2001  
EASTERN STATES ROCK ART  
CONFERENCE!!!!**

**MARCH 28- APRIL 1  
GIANT CITY STATE PARK  
LODGE  
MAKANDA, ILLINOIS**





## **Seventeenth Century Petroglyphs of European Ships Recorded in Machias Bay, Maine.**

Two previously unrecorded petroglyph sites were located in the summer of 1999 in Machias Bay by Rick and Martha Jordan and reported to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). During the following spring, a total of fifty-three glyphs were recorded on five tidal ledges off an island in the bay with the aid of a grant from the MHPC. All surviving designs on the heavily eroded surfaces of metamorphosed slate were attributed to Styles 5 and 6 of the Machias Bay Petroglyph Tradition (Hedden 1996). The designs on the two sites, listed as 62.46 and 62.47 on the Maine archaeological site register, have considerably expanded the inventory of Style 6 Contact period and early historic petroglyph motifs and include two representations of seventeenth century sailing vessels. Like the other petroglyphs, the ship images were pecked with a hammerstone in the traditional manner. The results of the survey and research formed the basis for nomination of the sites to the National Register and will be summarized and presented as an article for a forthcoming issue of the *Archaeology of Eastern North America*. A presentation will also be made as part of an ESRARA symposium at the SAA annual meeting in New Orleans in April, 2001.

Research on the newly recorded petroglyphs offered an opportunity to review and analyze a third ship petroglyph from the mainland site 62.1. This site was one of two visited by ESRARA members during the Machias Conference in 1996. Visible structural features of each of the three single masted ship petroglyphs indicated a late 16th to early 17th century date in ship architecture

and sail rigging. Documented European voyages to the Machias Bay area during this period limit the probable contact times with Native Americans to French exploration between 1604-1606 and an English trading venture between 1630-1633. Following 1633, 125 years of conflict between the French and English rendered Machias Bay a virtual no-man's-land. The area was under nominal French control but subject to punitive raids by English colonists.

Other petroglyphs and interpretable signs associated with the ship images offer insights into the identity of the ships, the time period of the associated designs as well as the effects of European contact on the petroglyph makers. The petroglyph makers were probably visionary shamans (Hedden 1996). In particular, the ship image at site 62.1 offers what may be a shaman's wry comment, using sign language, on Christian dogma. Before the bow of the ship image is a Christian cross larger than the ship itself. Two parallel arcs rise from the behind the ship and enter the hull. The parallel arcs appear to be entirely arbitrary and cannot be satisfactorily read as having anything to do with the functioning of the ship but show identical technique and patination.

The significance of the parallel arcs remained a puzzle until I recalled an Ojibway explanation of similar parallel arcs as the mountain a shaman ascends to commune with spirits who reside in the sky (Rajnovich 1994). In the Ojibway version, the arcs complete the curve back to the ground (plane of earth). The arcs at site 62.1 enter the ship's hull but do not return! The petroglyph seems to express, through sign language, a Native American's understanding of French religious instruction (i.e. a Christian meets the spirits in the sky after death and does not return).



Another puzzling set of arcs in a petroglyph on the Kennebec River (Site 69.4) seems to corroborate the interpretation. At the Kennebec River ledge, the parallel arcs rise from ground level and end at the peak of a post and beam structure. The structure fits a description of the Jesuit Father Rasle's last chapel (built in 1722) at Old Point, a few miles downstream from site 69.4 (Ekstorm 1939; Hedden 1988).

By contrast, the ship petroglyphs on the island sites of 62.46 and 62.47 show details of structure and rigging that differ from the probable French ship at 62.1 and indicate innovations developed somewhat later in the seventeenth century on Dutch and English ships. Moreover, the island ship images are not associated with a Christian cross. The complete ship petroglyph at site 62.46 is associated with an inactive human figure set at an oblique angle, a sign of passivity as in sleep or death. The figure, located above the stern of the ship, may represent the visionary shaman responsible for the ship petroglyph whose spiritual powers, perhaps, influenced the coming of the ship.

#### **Significance of the Newly Recorded Sites**

In general, the new set of petroglyphs from Machias Bay appear to represent the transition from the Late Prehistoric to Contact with Europeans and through to the end of the eighteenth century. By the 1790s post-Revolutionary War settlement of Machiasport forced the Passamaquoddy to abandon their traditional fall gatherings at the mouth of the Machias River and move to reservations along the St. Croix River. The effects of European contact on the role of the shaman seem to be implicit in changes in subjects depicted in this transitional group of petroglyphs. Finely pecked large images of a variety of anthropomorphic

forms that demonstrate the shaman's rapport with spiritual sources of power are replaced by diminished and abbreviated forms of moose, small anthropomorphs with raised arms (equivalent to the Ojibway *Maymayguayshi* rock paintings concerned with curing?- See Rajnovich 1989) and canoe figures with serpent forms (Cf. Hedden 1991 for an engraved slate figure that may have served as a talisman against the hazards of water travel in late prehistoric times and Molyneaux 1988 for incised historic petroglyphs in Nova Scotia of a horned serpent carrying off a (drowned ?) canoe traveller).

These changes suggest that the shaman's role as expressed in post-Contact rock art became increasingly specialized in support of the hunt, curing of the sick and providing spiritual support against the hazards of water travel. While these specialized functions were undoubtedly performed by the shaman before European contact, they are rarely suggested by the prehistoric petroglyph imagery at Machias Bay. The post-Contact petroglyphs at sites 62.46 and 62.47 indicate that the role of the shamans as keepers of a traditional spiritual world view, expressed in the prehistoric rock art imagery at Machias Bay, had been undermined by Christian dogma and usurped by priests and other missionaries who saw the shamans as agents of the devil and fakers rather than as peers in spiritual leadership!

#### *References cited:*

- Ekstorm, Fannie Hardy  
1939 "Who was Paugus" In: *The New England Quarterly* 12:2:203-226
- Hedden, Mark H.  
1988 Prehistoric Maine Petroglyphs. *The Maine Archaeological Society Bulletin*. 28:1:3-27



*EASTERN STATES ROCK ART RESEARCH ASSOCIATION*  
Membership Renewal Form

(mail w/ your dues of \$12.00 to: Ilo Jones, ESRARA Treasurer, P. O. Box 4335, Helena, MT 59604)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

INSTITUTION/ORG./CO: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #2: \_\_\_\_\_

ROCK ART RESEARCH IS MY:    PROFESSION \_\_\_\_\_    HOBBY \_\_\_\_\_

I RESEARCH ROCK ART IN (NAME OF STATE) \_\_\_\_\_

I RESEARCH ROCK ART IN OTHER STATES/COUNTRIES INCLUDING:

MY MAJOR INTEREST IN ROCK ART IS:

- VISITING
- RECORDING/DOCUMENTING
  - PHOTOGRAPHING
  - DRAWING
  - MAPPING
- ANALYZING ROCK ART
- WRITING REPORTS
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one committee (or more) on which you would be willing to work:

- Rock Art Education Committee
- Preservation/Conservation Committee
- Central Repository for Eastern Rock Art Data

Additional comments (use back, if needed):



62901-2210 03



**ESRARA**  
**Quarterly Newsletter Editors**

Winter: Mark Hedden  
 Spring: Kevin Callahan  
 Summer: Carol Diaz-Granados  
 Fall: Jean Allan

Send Items for the Spring Newsletter to:  
 Kevin Callahan  
 1102 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE  
 Minneapolis, MN 55414  
 or E-mail:  
 Kevin.L.Callahan-1@tc.umn.edu

**MARK HEDDEN**  
 Winter Newsletter Editor  
 ESRARA  
 P. O. BOX 33  
 VIENNA, MAINE 04360

*Don't forget to bring items for the Auction!*



*Continued from Page 4:*

- 1991 A Winged Figure Incised on a Slate Pebble. *The Maine Archaeological Society Bulletin*. 31:1:41-50
  
- 1996 3,500 Years of Shamanism in Maine Rock Art In: *Rock Art of the Eastern Woodlands*. American Rock Art Research Association, Occasional Paper 2, San Miguel

- Rajnovich, Grace
- 1989 Visions in the Quest for Medicine: An Interpretation of the Indian Pictographs of the Canadian Shield. *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 14:2:179-225
  
- 1994 *Reading Rock Art, Interpreting the Indian Rock Paintings of the Canadian Shield*. National Heritage/Natural History, Inc. Toronto

**IN THIS ISSUE. . .**

- FOOT PRINTS IN STONE: A COMMENT
  
- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
  
- SEVENTEEN<sup>th</sup> CENTURY SHIP PETROGLYPHS IN MACHIAS BAY
  
- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORMS

**SEND NEWS ITEMS FOR THE  
 SPRING NEWSLETTER TO:**  
**Kevin Callahan**  
**1102 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue., S.E.**  
**Minneapolis, Minnesota**  
**55414**

**or E-mail Kevin at:**  
**Kevin.L.Callahan-1@tc.umn.edu**