

ESRARA NEWSLETTER

Quarterly of the Eastern States Rock Art Research Association

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

Volume 11, Number 3

Summer 2006

2007 Eastern States Rock Art Conference and Call for Papers.

The 2007 ESRAC will be held on Friday and Saturday March 23 to 24, at the University of Arkansas Winthrop Rockefeller Center on Petit Jean Mountain. The web address for the Winthrop Rockefeller Center is www.wrcenter.net. The Center has conference facilities and lodging, and provides meals, which I have heard are delicious. So while somewhat remote, the Center offers everything we need for the 2007 ESRARA Conference.

March is Arkansas Archeology Month and the 2007 theme is "Rock Art." The Arkansas Archaeological Survey will be designing the posters highlighting Arkansas Rock Art. The Conference will be a big event on the Archaeology Month schedule, so we hope to have lots of local attendees.

Friday will be a field trip day. Plans this year are a little different than the past few years, as all the rock art sites we will visit will be within a few miles of the conference site. Therefore no bus rental will be necessary; participants can drive their own cars or carpool with others. The Arkansas Archeological Survey may provide a van or two for people who are unable to drive on their own. A bit of trail walking will be required, but the trails are beautiful and the rock art is worth it! Lunch will be arranged as part of registration.

There is a possibility of a reception at the Arkansas Technical University museum in Russellville on Friday night. They are planning to have a rock art exhibit at the museum. This is still in the works, so we're not sure if it will happen or not. Dinner will be 'on your own' on Friday.

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Current Research at the Hensler Petroglyph Site by Jack Steinbring University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and Ripon College

The Hensler Petroglyph Site is one of only two "hard rock" sites in the State of Wisconsin. It consists of a decorated seam of Andalusite schist between two quartzite domes (Fig. 1). The seam rises steeply from north to south, and contains a highly variable array of some 30 petroglyphs, all pecked into the relatively hard schist. Morphologically the "earliest" forms begin at the bottom, and continue up the seam where the "latest" forms occur. The upper zone lies within a fairly flat, but dissected rock surface with unusual channels and declivities. A soil mantle has developed on top of it over a long period of time. Since the initial recording of the site (Steinbring and Farvour 1987), extensive vegetation, to include substantial trees, had grown up on the crown of the site. This in turn had led to extreme shade over the engraved panels, as well as on the crown, leading to extensive lichen growth.

In an effort to clean the surface, including that covered by low foliose lichen colonies, a pressure washer was brought onto the site. Several measured patches of surface were tested for effect (above the decorated panels) at 1350 fps. Only loose material, including top layers of relatively soft lichen, were easily removed. Application of this technique cleared all loose material from the decorated panels without damage to the markings. In the process, at least two petroglyphs never previously seen became visible (Fig. 2). These were exposed in the lower position of the seam, hypothesized on the basis of taxonomy to be the "earliest" in time. The iconography of the two
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President's Message . . .

Hello to All:

I would like to remind everyone that our bi-annual meeting is scheduled this spring for Arkansas. Please check the **ESRARA** web site in upcoming weeks for information on this meeting as things develop and we get closer to the date. These meetings, which are open to all members, are a great way to see rock art sites in parts of the country that one might not otherwise travel to for that purpose. The meetings typically include at least one day of papers, tours to rock art sites, banquet with a keynote speaker, and an auction of donated items and books to raise money for **ESRARA**. They also have a strong social aspect, with members able to visit and talk with officers and other members of the organization that they might otherwise not have had a chance to meet. So, again, please check the **ESRARA** web site this fall for detailed information on these meetings.

All my best,
Mark

Check out the ESRARA web site at:
esrara.org.

Send Fall Newsletter items or your questions about the upcoming **ESRAC 2007** to:
Nancy Bryant
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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributor or editor and not those of the **ESRARA** organization.

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Saturday will be papers and presentations. Lunch will be arranged as part of registration. Saturday evening will be the banquet and auction at the Winthrop Rockefeller Center. Jim Duncan has agreed to be our auctioneer again this year, so prepare to be entertained. We may need volunteer's to be Jim's (lovely) assistants, so if you're interested contact Michelle Berg Vogel. Items for the auction are donated by members and conference attendees, so please start collecting items that you feel would be suitable. Items with rock art and archaeological themes are always appreciated, but are not the requirement. Proceeds from the auction are directed to the ESRARA publication fund. Come prepared with cash or a checkbook and you'll be guaranteed a treasure by the end of the night!

Dr. George Sabo III has agreed to give the Keynote address. He is currently a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Arkansas and the Fayetteville Research Station Archaeologist for the Arkansas Archaeological Survey. He recently received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to study Arkansas Rock Art in the context of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex iconography. Dr. Sabo is also an ethnohistorian working closely with modern American Indians such as the Caddo, Quapaw and Osage.

Sunday we are trying to arrange for maps to some public (and possibly private) rock art and other archaeological sites. We'll try to do a 'guided' driving tour, but the maps also will provide directions for those who would like to go on their own schedule.

The Winthrop Rockefeller Center has accommodations for around 60 people so call early to reserve your room. The Center is planning on ESRARA being the only group there, so for the most part all the rooms are reserved for us - first come first served. The Petit Jean State Park (<http://www.petitjeanstatepark.com>) is only about 3 miles away and has both a lodge with hotel rooms and cabins. The lodge and some of the cabins were built by the CCC when the park was opened (I have stayed in both the lodge and cabins and highly recommend them). Camping (both RV and tent) is also available. Other hotels should be available in both Russellville and Morrilton, however both are about a half hour drive from Petit Jean Mountain.

Petit Jean Mountain is about 75 miles (about 90 minutes) northwest of Little Rock, and 115 miles (about 2.5 hours) east Fort Smith. If you're flying check rates for both, although Little Rock is a bigger airport, sometimes rates are better into Fort Smith. For those interested in exploring other archaeological sites, the Toltec Mounds site is about 30 minutes south of Little Rock and Spiro Mounds is 30 minutes west of Fort Smith - both are public parks.

March is 'iffy' weather in Arkansas. It could be 70 degrees or it could be 30 degrees, but it's a wonderful time to visit Petit Jean Mountain. Pack prepared for the weather and for hiking the trails!

Presenters please be ready to submit your abstracts in January. Papers should be no longer than 20 minutes in length to accommodate everyone. The Winthrop Rockefeller Center has state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment. Powerpoints, slide presentations as well as posters are welcome. Registration material and more details will be provided in the Fall Newsletter (to be mailed early December) and on the website soon (I hope!).

Michelle Berg Vogel

(Continued from page 1)

Current Research at the Hensler Petroglyph Site

"new" petroglyphs tends to support this view.

One of the newly exposed petroglyphs first appeared to be some kind of insect, with a long central tail and broad contiguously pecked "wings." Closer inspection, with reference to known forms of the Archaic suggests that it is, in fact, an image of the "butterfly bannerstone." Depictions of objects are well known in Archaic petroglyphs, with classic examples (Old Copper) at the Jeffers Site (Lothson 1976) in southwestern Minnesota, the Mud Portage Site (Steinbring et al 1987) and other Shoal Lake Sites in Northwestern Ontario.

These sites include several bannerstones and atlatl weights (which most bannerstones are thought to be). Bannerstones, in fact, figure in a theory of lunar cultism in the upper Great Lakes Region (Steinbring 1977:24).

The other "new" petroglyph is a contiguously pecked quadruped, another common Archaic motif. This specimen is not identifiable as to species, but is quite clearly a quadruped. At other sites, deer, bear, fox, bison, and caribou are reasonably well identifiable, all of them in Archaic contexts, or even earlier. Directly dated quadrupeds are well known for the Archaic in Wyoming and in Western South Dakota.

While these additions to the Hensler petroglyph inventory are of compelling interest, a discovery on the crown of the formation is also exceptional. While removing low shrubs and root mat from an area previously offering acoustical affect, a genuine archaeological deposit was exposed. Lithic artifacts were encountered on and near the rock surface beneath some 30.0 cm of a dark organic soil deposition. The dark soil zone lies below the root mat, and appears to be undisturbed, reflecting a thin natural soil development above the bedrock. The artifacts appear to have been deposited directly on top of the rock surface, and quite close to the petroglyph panels. They consist of some 27 flakes, one damaged projectile point, a flake scraper, and a sectional biface fragment. The entire concentration is confined to an area approximately 25.0 cm in diameter (Fig. 4). The projectile point, a corner notched specimen (Fig. 3) with an ovate blade has distinct grinding at the base, and exhibits unmistakable impact damage. The flakes are relatively small, and represent at least nine separate materials. They vary in size from a maximum of 24.00 mm in diameter down to 8.5 mm in diameter. Sixteen are less than 17.0 mm in diameter. Several flakes exhibit color changes and pit-spalling due to heat. In addition to the flaked lithics there is one small cobble bearing percussion marks at two ends. This could be used in the production of markings. If so, it was only briefly used, since the surfical percussion marks are minimal.

The variability in resource material along with an impact-damaged projectile point in an area not larger than 25.0 cm. and perhaps 2 - 3.0 cm deep suggests intentional placement. It is not a domestic refuse deposit. And, the impact damage on the projectile point would, with this,

suggest "ritual shooting." Taken also with the profound acoustical effect at this locus prior to the rapid and dense vegetation growth since 1987, a preliminary prospect of ritualism is not avoidable.

Ritual shooting at perceived critical landmarks is not unknown. In the early 1960's Northern Ojibwa informants repeatedly reported arrows to be protruding from a crevice in the granitic formations at Whiteshell Lake in eastern Manitoba. The explanation for this was given as an effort to strike a magical spot in the formation for good fortune.

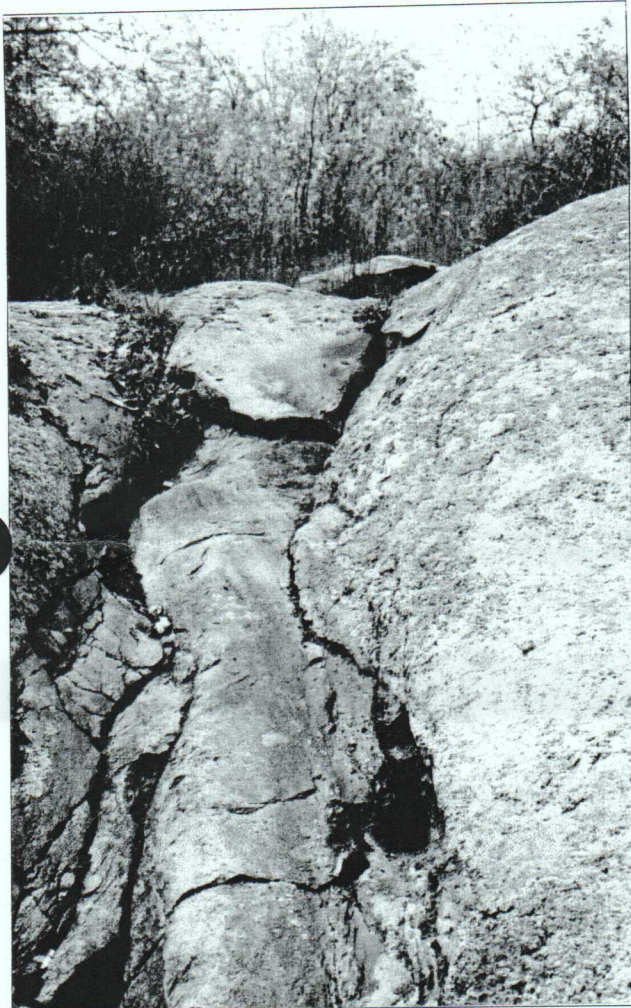


Figure 1 Andalusite schist seam between two quartzite domes at the Hensler Site in Dodge County, Wisconsin. View is to the south, up toward the crown. Photo by J. Steinbring 2005.

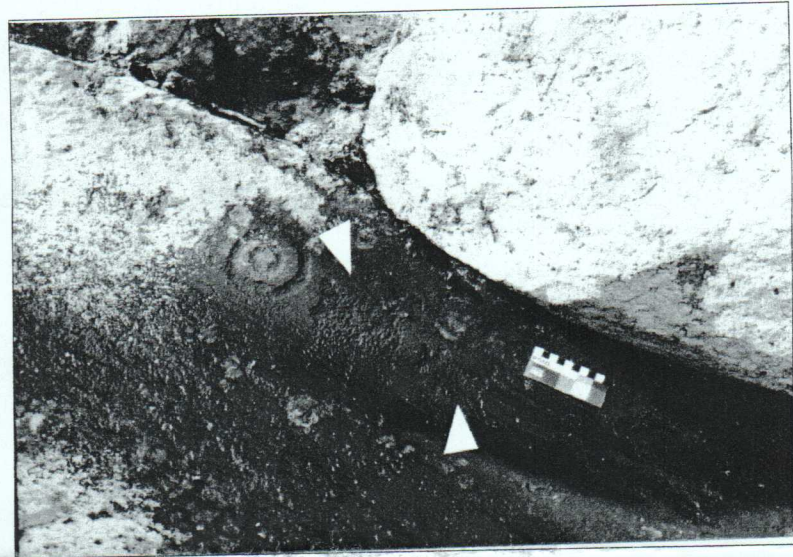


Figure 2 Newly discovered petroglyphs at the Hensler Site, Dodge County, Wisconsin. Photo by J. Steinbring 2005.

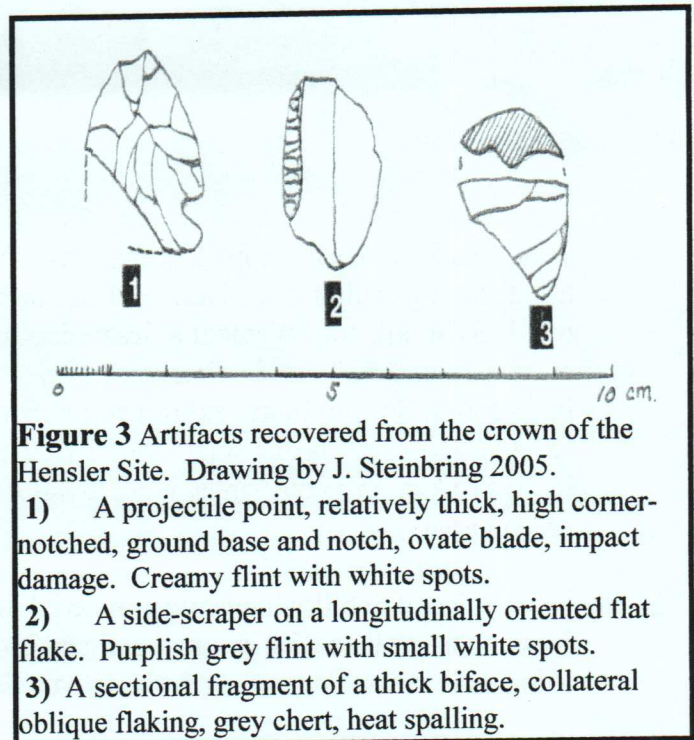


Figure 3 Artifacts recovered from the crown of the Hensler Site. Drawing by J. Steinbring 2005.

- 1) A projectile point, relatively thick, high corner-notched, ground base and notch, ovate blade, impact damage. Creamy flint with white spots.
- 2) A side-scraper on a longitudinally oriented flat flake. Purplish grey flint with small white spots.
- 3) A sectional fragment of a thick biface, collateral oblique flaking, grey chert, heat spalling.

Offerings at rock art sites are widely reported, and are not necessarily exotic. Rock painting sites in the Canadian Shield have been found to have near them in crevices or on shelves, buttons, ribbons, pennies, old moccasins, various items of clothing and, in one case, a "nest" of children's marbles (Steinbring 1998:90)!

A close and probable association between petroglyph sites and archaeological deposits is extremely rare in North America. Only a handful of such cases exist, and they have even more rarely, been scientifically excavated. Thus the Hensler site offers a unique opportunity to undertake such investigations for the elucidation of context and meaning for an exceptional American petroglyph site.

Figure 4 Sketch map of Hensler Site, Dodge County, Wisconsin.

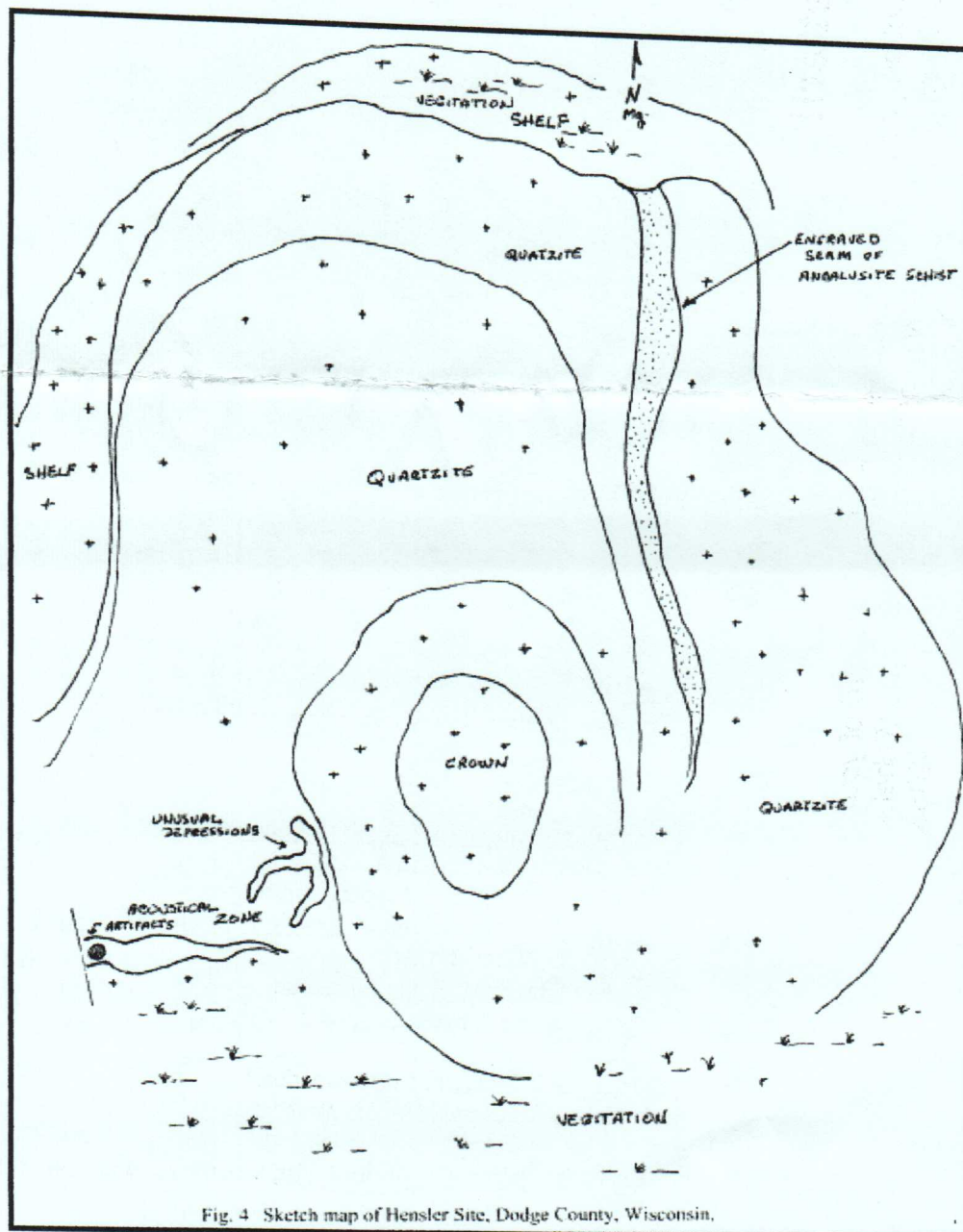


Fig. 4 Sketch map of Hensler Site, Dodge County, Wisconsin.

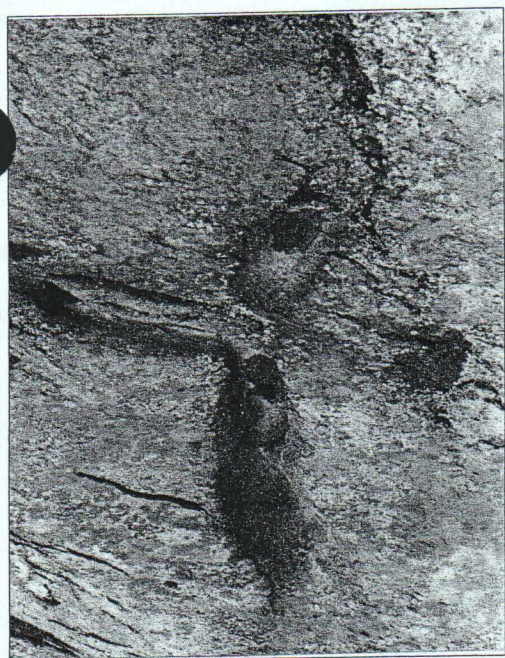


Figure 5 Unusual erosional pattern near the crown of the Hensler Site. Immediate area presented remarkable acoustical effect prior to extreme vegetation growth. Photo by Franklin Farvour 1986.

Collectively, the Hensler Site offers attributes frequently cited among site selection factors. The site occupies a significant prominence from which long and wide vistas are possible (without the obscuring vegetation which is recent). The schist seam between two masses of much harder stone is unique, especially since the seam is particularly suited to marking. The seam also has a northeast orientation, which can incorporate several historically significant astronomical events, depending again on vegetation. In 1986, an orientation of 40° E was selected as a mean of several readings, since there appeared to be anomalous conditions.

The crown offers highly eccentric erosional features (Fig. 5) as well as a pronounced acoustical effect. Moreover, there is a local tradition that the site is susceptible to lightning strikes. With all this, it would seem extremely unusual if it had not been the site of prehistoric marking! One of the great assets of this site is its location inside a huge and secure operating commercial quarry! The Michels company, which owns and operates the quarry, has always been sensitive to the need for site security. It has been steadfastly cooperative with site investigators and has, among other things, built a massive enclosing berm on the west edge of the site, fully denying access from the west side. The east access is also fully secured by locked gates, and is closed during working hours because of the danger of quarry explosions, etc.

Plans are underway for intense excavations during the 2006 field season. Since the expanse of high-potential areas is relatively small, it is hoped that work will be reportable by the 2007 biennial meeting of ESRARA in Arkansas. March 2006

Acknowledgements

Foremost among those who contributed to this renewed interest in the Hensler site is the Michels Quarry for the provision of necessary equipment and special access. Debbie and Gordon Yelk were outstanding helpers in many ways, and received the 2005 Field Service Award from the Mid-America Geographic Foundation. Further indispensable helpers were Joe O'Hearn, Glen Oechsner, Dwight Weiser, and Jennifer Schmidt, all volunteers from Mid-America.

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MAGF and ESRARA Field Trip

On the morning of Sunday, March 19th, one day before the official vernal equinox, a tour bus rolled into the parking lot of Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site. In the freezing cold darkness, members of the Mid-America Geographic Foundation from Wisconsin along with several Missouri ESRARA passengers quietly unloaded the bus and headed towards the giant circle of upright cedar posts which defined Cahokia's woodhenge. A crowd of one hundred or so people had gathered to view the sunrise over Cahokia's Monk's Mound just as the original inhabitants of Cahokia had done for generations. As the sky in the east, directly over Monk's Mound, slowly began to turn a soft red, everyone waited in anticipation of the event that was about to happen. The sun's rays would strike the east post of the woodhenge causing its shadow to cast upon the center post. This alignment would mark the equinox where day and night are of equal length. Unfortunately, cloud cover prevented the hardy individuals who were braving the very cold March morning from witnessing the actual event. As the passengers quickly reloaded to the warmth of the tour bus, everyone agreed that the spirit of the morning and the opportunity to stand at this sacred place on such an occasion left no disappointment.

The previous day's activities included a trip to Washington State Park to view the hundreds of petroglyphs carved into the top surfaces of large, flat rock outcrops. The hour's drive from St. Louis to the park allowed Jim Duncan and Carol Diaz-Granados the time to give the group a most interesting talk concerning the history of the park and the people associated with carving the glyphs. Several captivating, and sometimes humorous, Native American myths were recounted by Jim. After lunch, the group arrived at Cahokia Mounds to wander through the park's impressive museum, watch an informative film on the history of Cahokia and tour the expanse of grounds which included earthen mounds that were smaller in size than the huge flat-topped Monk's Mound but none-the-less remarkable.

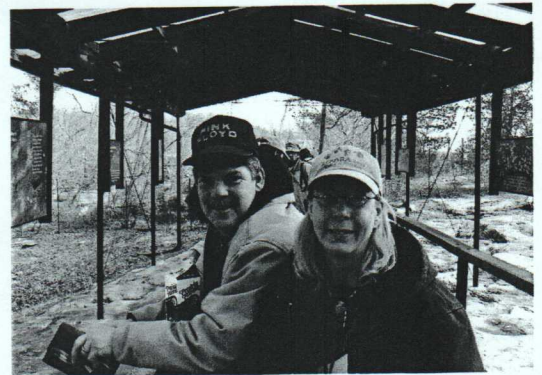
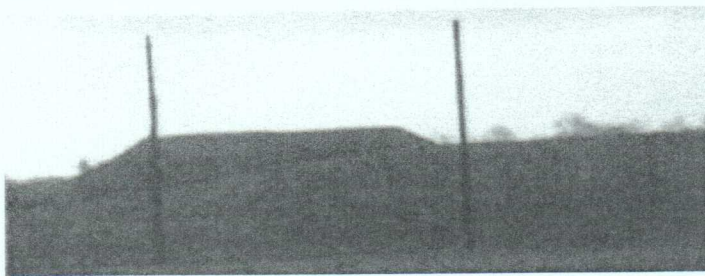
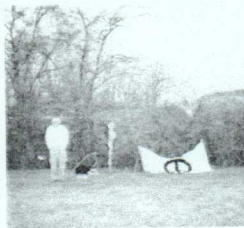
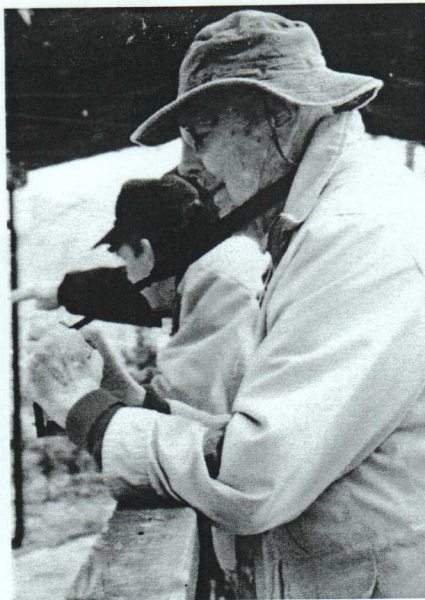
The evening concluded with delicious food and refreshment at a local Collinsville Mexican restaurant. The reuniting of old friends and the making of new, delightful conversations, and the overall merriment of the evening transformed the night into a genuine festivity for all. The tour bus headed north to Wisconsin on Sunday after the equinox sunrise ceremony and, upon departing, many members were looking forward to another reunion in Arkansas for ESRAC 07. (Opposite page: Photos from MAGF and ESRARA field trip.)

Nancy Bryant

In Memory of Frank Farvour 1919-2006



Frank Farvour taking photos of petroforms in Mark Twain National Forest, Rolla, Missouri. 2001 Photo by N. Bryant.



A BEACH BOULDER MYSTERY ON LONG ISLAND, NY A CAUTIONARY TALE FOR ROCK ART RESEARCHERS

By
Edward J. Lenik

In February 2006, I received an inquiry from Gaynell Stone of the Suffolk county Archeological Association regarding an unusual carved rock located on the south shore of Montauk Point at the eastern end of Long Island, New York. Here, lying in the intertidal zone among numerous other rocks, was a large boulder with an intricate abstract and curving maze-like pattern carved into its top surface.

The mysterious boulder was discovered and reported to Ms. Stone by Mary Anne McCarick, a local resident. Gaynell and Mary Anne asked me to investigate the nature and origin of this veritable labyrinth on stone. In email communications Ms. McCarick wrote, "We happened upon it (the boulder) last summer (2005)... We found it again (last) fall and took this interesting picture. I am pointing to the center of the boulder to show the scale (FIGURE 1). It has moss on it and must be submerged at high tide. We can't wait to get to the bottom of this."

Who carved the huge boulder, when and why? Speculation regarding its origin was both varied and exotic and plentiful online. A suggestion was made that it might be Indian, however, the design is certainly unlike any American Indian motifs found in the northeast region. Some individuals attributed the carving to the Maya, Aztecs, or extraterrestrials, while another person thought it has something to do with a top-secret government operation known as the "Montauk Project."

However, the answer to this rock art mystery turned out to be rather simple and straightforward.

According to Nejma Beard, a local Montauk resident, "the hard granite rock was actually carved by Kenishi Hiratsuka, a Japanese sculptor, using a hammer and chisel, while visiting the Beards' in the summer of 2004 (Drumm 2006). Ms. Beard stated that "he does it in all the places he considers sacred." A photograph of Mr. Hiratsuka at work was taken by Peter Beard (FIGURE 2).

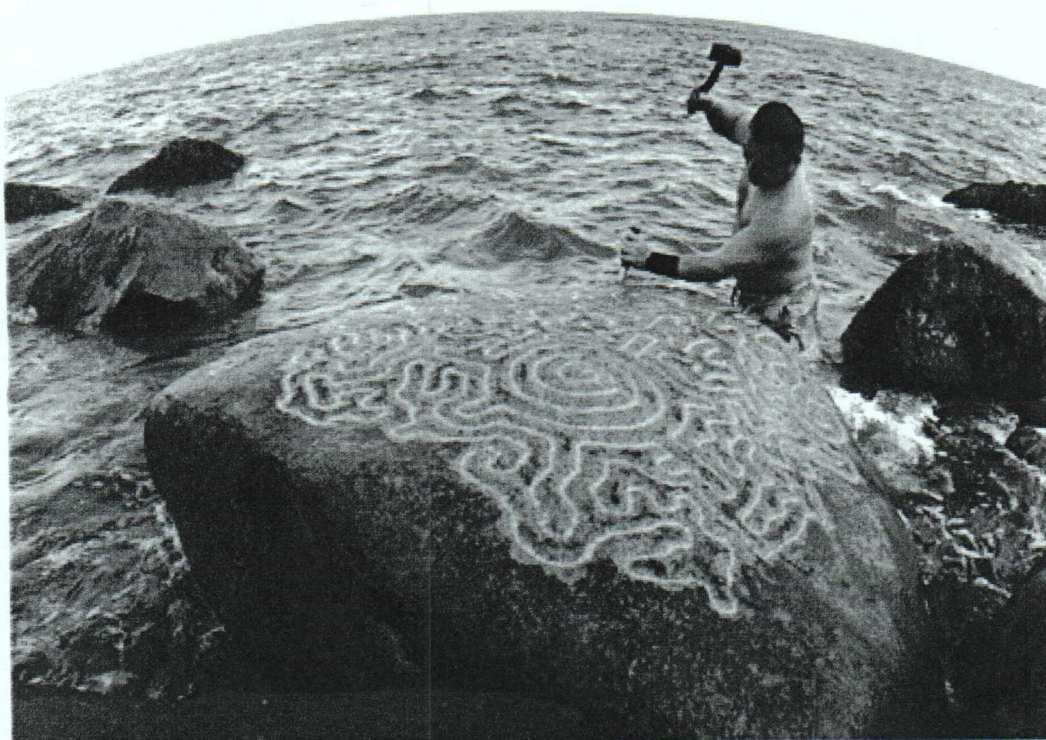
An Internet search by my colleague Nancy Gibbs located information at Mr. Hiratsuka's web site (www.kenrock.com as viewed 3/25/06). Sculptor Ken Hiratsuka began his career by carving sidewalks in New York City in 1982. "This was the beginning of his ongoing work of carving one continuous line in stone around the world." His carvings can be seen in both urban and natural environments as in the case of the Montauk boulder. His "stone works are characterized by maze-like designs of infinite variation, always formed by one continuous line, which never crosses itself."

I publish this report to alert rock art researchers that there may be other examples of Mr. Hiratsuka's carvings, particularly in natural setting, elsewhere in the U.S. Over time they will weather and develop the patina of age and may be characterized as the work of American Indians or other cultures, which, obviously, they are not.

Reference:

Drumm, Russell

2006 "Beach Boulder Mystery is Solved," The East Hampton Star, East Hampton, NY March 2.



ken hiratsuka
sculpture 2004

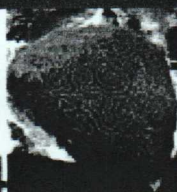


Figure 1



Figure 2