



# E.S.R.A.R.A. NEWSLETTER

*Quarterly of the Eastern States Rock Art Research Association*  
30th member of IFRAO - International Federation of Rock Art Organizations

**Volume 8, Number 1**

**Spring 2003**

## *Outgoing President's Message*

In this last message, I would like to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as President of E.S.R.A.R.A. — a great organization. Membership is expanding steadily. Good things are happening. We have our committees in place, and chairs or co-chairs to lead two of them (Education and Conservation). We even have a new website, thanks to member and Web Developer, **Marc Silverman**. Check it out at [esrara.org](http://esrara.org). The spring meeting in Huntsville, Alabama was a huge success due largely to the planning and work of **Bart Henson** and **Jean Allan**. I wish our new President, **Mark Wagner**, all the best at the helm, and thanks to our new Vice President, **Ed Lenik**, for his willingness to serve. To our continuing officers, Treasurer, **Iloilo M. Jones**, and Secretary, **H. Denise Smith**, a huge debt of gratitude is owed for all their hard work. Best wishes to all our members and their families. Hope to see you at the next ESRARA Conference, if not before!

*Carol Diaz-Granados*

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## **2003 ESRARA Conference A Great Time!**

This issue features photos and abstracts of the Fifth Eastern States Rock Art Conference (ESRAC-5) hosted by the University of Alabama at Huntsville and Bankhead National Forest. Congratulations and our many thanks to conference organizers **Jean Allan** and **Bart Henson** and their volunteer assistants for putting together an outstanding conference attended by people from all over the country! Conference highlights included a field trip to visit several amazing and very impressive rock art sites in North Alabama. At *Kinlock Rock Shelter*, for example, we saw a petroglyph boulder with Mississippian glyphs inside a huge rock shelter; at *Trapp Shelter* we visited a large boulder containing cup and rings, concentric circles, birds, and a cross underneath an enormous natural stone arch bridge; and, at the *Tennessee Valley Museum of Art* we saw two large boulders with hands, footprints, and serpents from the Late Woodland/Mississippian period. At the *Nelson James site* we were greeted both by the friendly landowner and two snakes sleeping on the petroglyphs! A large Trailways bus made transportation to the sites very comfortable. The three keynote addresses at the conference were given by **Dr. Carol Diaz-Granados**, **Dr. Jan Simek**, and **Dr. Charles Faulkner**, and Saturday was devoted to papers presenting current rock art research taking place throughout the eastern United States. Papers were presented at the new Beville Conference Center on the beautiful campus of the University of Alabama at Huntsville, which allowed us to have plenty of room for exhibitors' tables and all of the new rock art publications. The papers were followed by an awards banquet and a fundraising auction to finance upcoming publications—like this one. (There might be a few T-shirts left, if you didn't get yours.) The conference was a huge success and great fun! We all look forward to ESRAC-6 coming up in two years.

*Kevin Callahan*



**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

*presented to*

**DR. FRED E. COY, JR.**

*(Co-Founder, ESRARA, President 1996-1999)*

For Lifetime Achievement and Leadership  
in Rock Art Research  
in the Eastern United States

*presented by the*

**Eastern States Rock Art Research Association**

Saturday, March 22, 2003

Eastern States Rock Art Conference  
Huntsville, Alabama

PLEASE SEND RESEARCH  
REPORTS, NEWS, AND NOTES  
FOR THE SUMMER NEWSLETTER

(by July 5)

to

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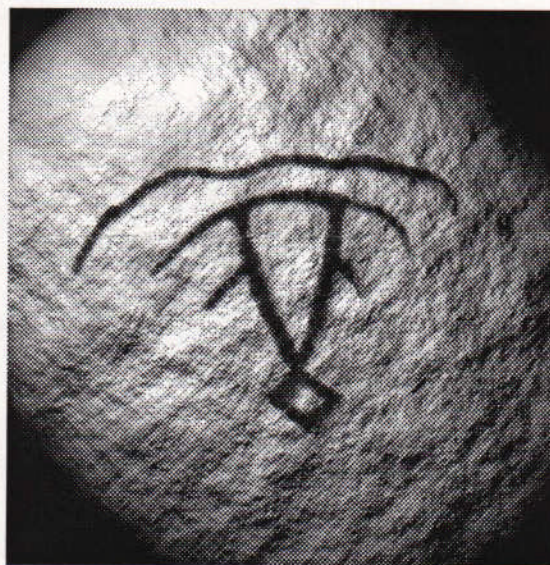
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Garden City, GA 31408

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*Reconstruction of a Thunderer from Tainter  
Cave, WI by Charles Bailey.*

This issue of the newsletter is being printed by **Prairie Smoke Press**. PSP specializes in books on archaeology, rock art, and related fields. Titles include *The Gottschall Rockshelter* by **Robert Salzer** and **Grace Rajnovich**, *The Jeffers Petroglyphs* by **Kevin L. Callahan** and a new book by **Robert Bozhardt** on the *Deep Cave Art* of Wisconsin. For information on these and other books from PSP please write:  
Charles Bailey 7125 Willow Lane  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
[cbailey@tcinternet.net](mailto:cbailey@tcinternet.net)  
[www.prairiesmokepress.com](http://www.prairiesmokepress.com)



*Bird effigy mound at Crawfordville, WI. Surveyed  
in 1850 by Increase A. Lapham.*



## New Publications

**Ed Lenik's** *Picture Rocks: American Indian Rock Art in the Northeast Woodlands* is now available.

This new book documents all of the known permanent petroglyph and pictograph sites from the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the six New England states, New York, and New Jersey. Interspersing interpretations with comments from other scholars and Native American storytellers, Ed provides a definitive look at the rock art of the Northeast and his book includes 200 illustrations, including historic sketches, photographs, and drawings. (\$24.95 Paper 288pp, 200 illus. Univ. Press of New England 1-58465-197-0).

**Deborah Morse-Kahn's** *A Guide to the Archaeology Parks of the Upper Midwest* will be available starting June 2003. The introductory chapters offer an overview of the archaeology of the Upper Midwest and explore the symbols and meanings of intricate rock art and effigy mounds. Eighty-five dedicated archaeology parks exist in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and northern Illinois. Wisconsin alone contains sixty-three of these outstanding parks. From Effigy National Monument in Iowa to the privately held Henschel Mounds in Wisconsin, this book demonstrates the abundance and magnitude of managed sites in the Upper Midwest. (\$18.95 Paper 240pp Rinehart 1-57098-396-8).

**Johannes "Jannie" H.N. Loubser's** book *Archaeology: The Comic* has just been published. "Archaeology - The Comic" is a book for introducing archaeology to students and any interested beginner. The book covers a vast number of topics including how to survey, excavate, analyze, interpret, and preserve archaeological sites and their material remains. Readers follow the main character, young Squeeze, after some antiquarian pots are discovered on her family farm. She learns about site protection laws, consultation, museum exhibition and a variety of other public archaeology topics and she visits experts who explain the complexities of carbon dating, ground-penetrating radar, flotation, and thermoluminescence, among other analytical methods. She develops an understanding of how all these tools allow archaeologists to make confident inter-

pretations of the past. This fun and innovative book includes a complete glossary and bibliography (\$24.95 Paper 152pp Altamira Press 075910381X.)

**Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt's** book *Deep Cave Rock Art in the Upper Mississippi Valley* has just been published. His book tells the story of the discovery, protection, and recording of two ancient rock art sites, which form the largest concentration of petroglyphs and pictographs in the Upper Mississippi region. The fully-illustrated publication makes available to both the professional archaeologist and the general public all of the current research being done in these caves, treating readers to a compelling mystery whose solution involves archaeology as well as Native American traditional knowledge. The beautiful river valleys and bluffs of southwestern Wisconsin have been home to various cultures for millennia, some of whom have left their marks in the caves and rockshelters that line this vast unglaciated area (\$24.95 Paper 94pp Prairie Smoke Press 0-9704482-3-6).

**Mark Wagner's** *The Archaeology and Rock Art of the Piney Creek Site, Illinois* is now available. The Piney Creek site (11R26) is the largest rock art site in Illinois with over 150 painted and carved images. In 1997 the Center for Archaeological Investigations (CAI) at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale documented this and three other rock art sites within the Piney Creek Nature Preserve through a combination of mapping, photography, and test excavations. The report by Mark J. Wagner describing the rock art at the four ravine sites is available for purchase from the Illinois Transportation Archaeology Research Program (ITARP). (Report No. 12) This 126 page monograph contains 20 color photographs by Chuck Swedlund as well as 24 maps and line drawings of the rock art images at the four ravine sites. Ordering and cost information can be found at the ITARP web site publication page at <http://www.anthro.uiuc.edu/itarp/publications.html>



**About ESRARA's 2003 Lifetime Achievement Award winner: Fred E. Coy, Jr., MD!**

**Fred Coy, Jr.** was born in **El Paso, Texas** October 27, 1923 and lived at State College New Mexico until the age of seven. Both of his parents were on the faculty of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanics Arts. They moved to Gainesville, Florida, in 1930, and Fred received elementary education in the P. K. Younge Laboratory School, associated with the University of Florida. He was a **Life Scout** in the **Boy Scouts of America** and a Patrol Leader before moving to Fern Creek, Kentucky at the age of 14 in 1937. He attended high school there graduating from Fern Creek High School in 1942. While in high school he was **class president** two years, vice-president one year, he **lettered in football**, played in the band, was on the Creeker staff and was a member of the Photography Club. In 1942 he enrolled in University of Louisville for one semester before enlisting in the United States Air Force. His pilot training was in the Gulf Coast Command. His **pilot wings and commission** in the United States Air Force were received on January 6, 1944 at Foster Field, Texas. After graduating from flying school he received training in P-40 fighter planes at AAF Pilot School, Marianna Army Air Field, Florida and in P-47 fighter planes at Bluthenthal Field, Goldsboro, North Carolina. In June of 1944 he was sent to the European Theater of Operations. He flew 130 combat missions in the P-47 for the 9th Air Force with the 367th Fighter Squadron of the 368th Fighter Group and was awarded the **Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with 20 oak leaf clusters**. In July of 1945 he was discharged from the Air Corps and returned to the University of Louisville. A Doctor of Medicine degree was obtained in June of 1950. At graduation the student research award was presented for work done and papers given at national meetings of The American Physiological Society on gastro-physiology. **Fred married Emily Jean Ellison**, June 17, 1950 and over the years three children resulted from that marriage. They have a son, **Fred E. III**, a dentist with the rank of Captain in the United States Public Health Service permanently attached to the United States Coast Guard, two daughters, **Karen Jean**, a graphic artist and **Emily Kim**, a nurse specializing in intravenous therapy.

Fred's internship was at the Tampa Municipal Hospital in Tampa Florida 1950-51. During the Korean engagement he was a physician in the United States Army continuing research in gastric physiology at the Army Medical Research Laboratory, Fort Knox, Kentucky. He began a residency program in **orthopaedic surgery** at the University of Louisville in 1953 that was completed in 1957. At that time he entered into a private practice in orthopaedic surgery with Dr. James Riley and Dr. Daniel Costigan. Initially he practiced in all of the Louisville hospitals but in later years his practice was confined to The Norton Hospital. This hospital was a teaching hospital associated with the University of Louisville. While in practice Fred was president of the Kosair Children's Hospital and the Kentucky Orthopaedic association. Initially his practice was in general orthopaedics but in later years it was almost completely confined to total joint replacements. Fred retired from active practice in 1989 as **Emeritus Assistant Clinical Professor** from the University of Louisville.

After retirement, Fred's time was devoted to an avocational interest, which had been initiated, while in medical practice, many years before. This interest included research and writing papers on Kentucky's historic industries and papers presented and published on the rock art of Native Americans in Kentucky. Papers on the rock art of Kentucky have been presented at local, state, national and international archaeological meetings. In addition to his interest in historic and prehistoric Kentucky the field of botany was explored using photography and talks given to natural history groups on Kentucky wild flowers. He was **organizer and co-chairman** of the 1993 Natural Bridge, Kentucky, **Eastern States Rock Art Conference**. After the conference Fred served as president pro tem of the Eastern States Rock Art Conference. He received a Certificate of Recognition that was presented by the Kentucky Heritage Council March 2, 1996. The Certificate read: "Certificate of Recognition. This Certifies that Fred E. Coy, Jr, Is Recognized for His Outstanding Commitment, Dedication and Service to Kentucky Archaeology And Is Hereby Awarded This Certificate By Kentucky Heritage Council". He presided at the meeting of the **Eastern States Rock Art Research Association** (new official name) at Machias, Maine, May 1996 and was officially elected president at that time. The University Press of Kentucky published a book, **Rock Art of Kentucky**, in 1997. Sunday evening, May 26, 2002 at the 26th Annual Conference of the American Rock Art Research Association at Dubois, Wyoming was awarded the prestigious **Klaus Wellmann Award** for "Distinguished Service in the field of rock art research, conservation and education."

**Recent Publication:**

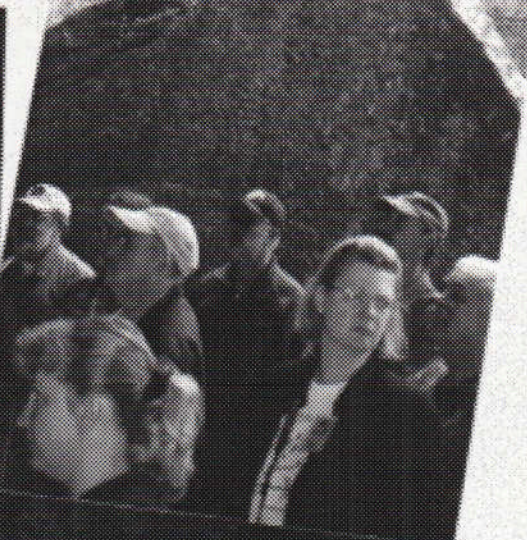
1996 Petroglyphs and Pictographs in Kentucky. Rock Art of the Eastern Woodlands. Proceedings from the Eastern States Rock Art Conference. Edited by Charles H. Faulkner. American Rock Art Research Association Occasional Paper 2. San Miguel, California.



# ESRARA CONFERENCE

March 2003, Huntsville, Alabama

Field Trip (by bus!)



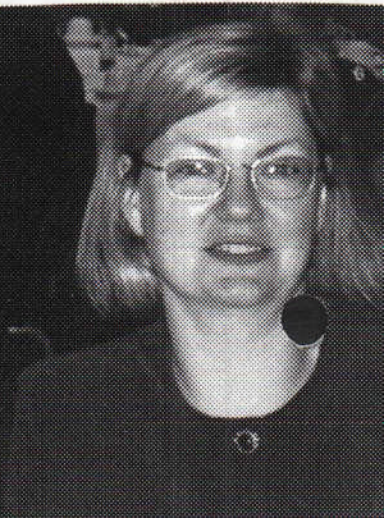
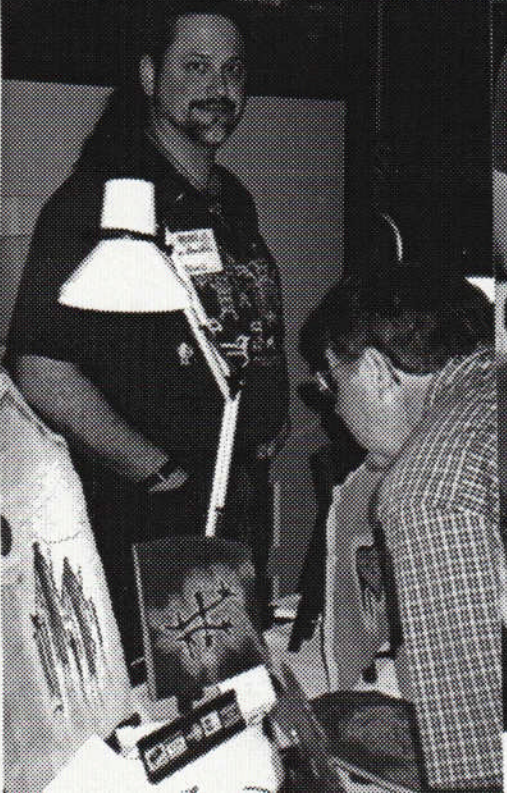
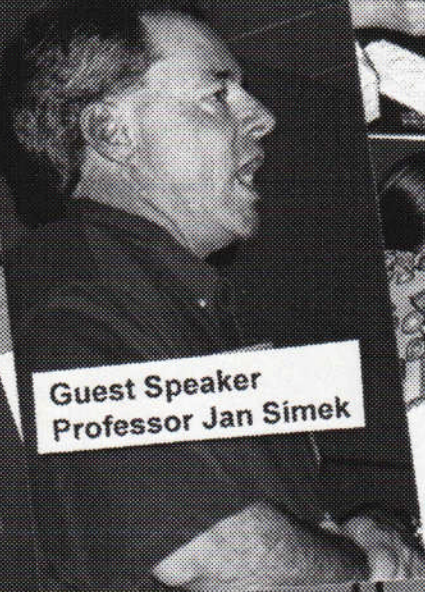
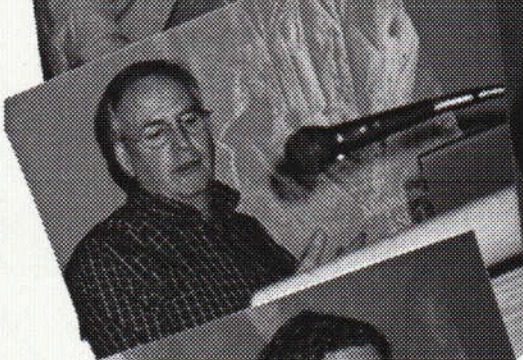
Petroglyphs, more petroglyphs,  
and a couple snakes



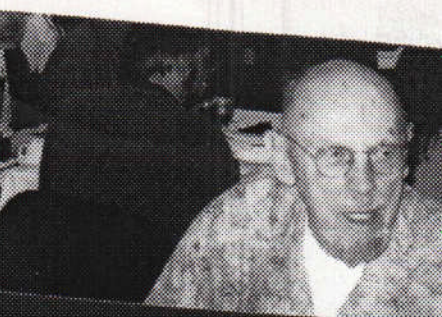
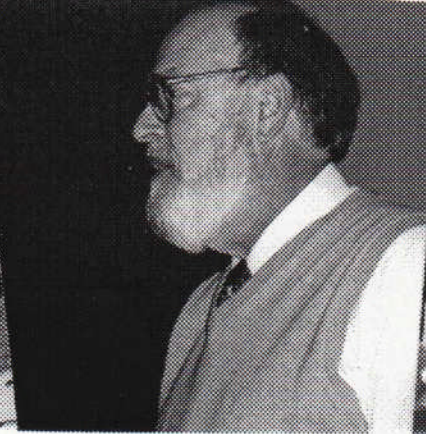
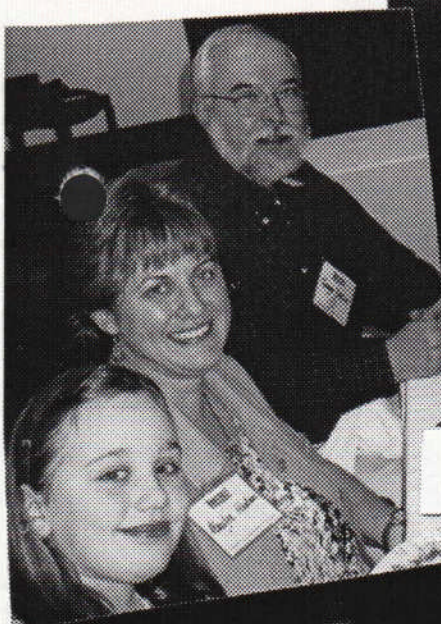




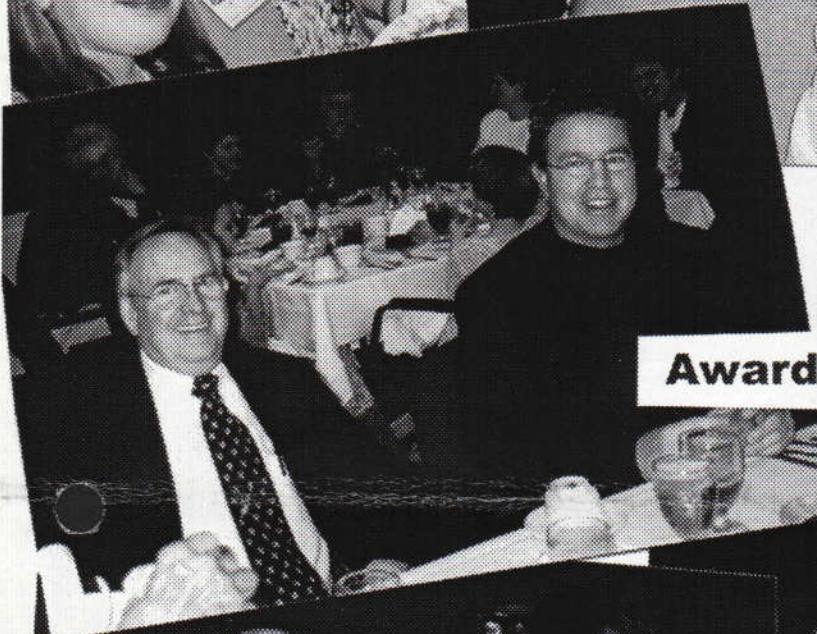
**Papers, Meeting, Reception, Guest Speaker**



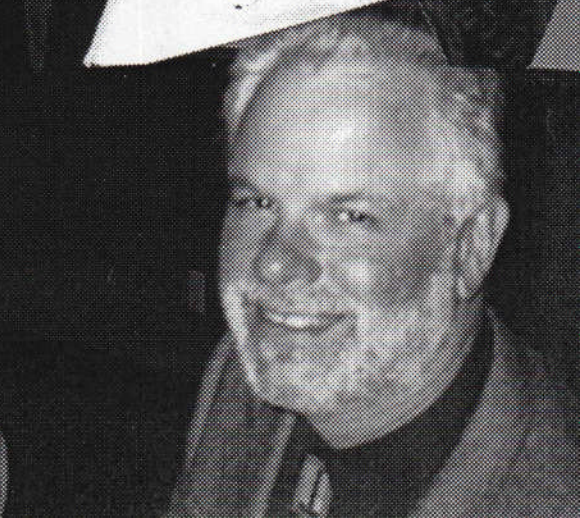
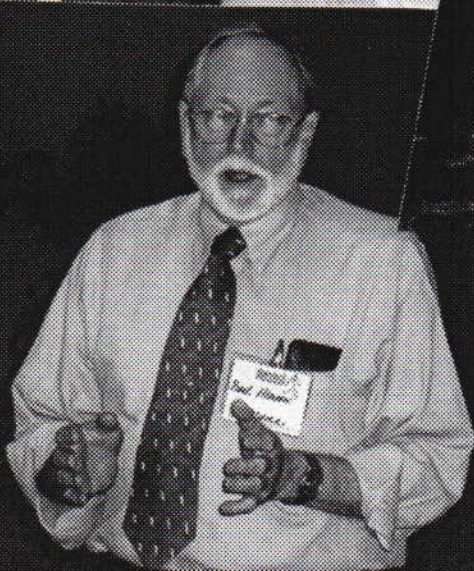




**Banquet Speaker  
Professor Charles Faulkner**



**Awards Banquet**

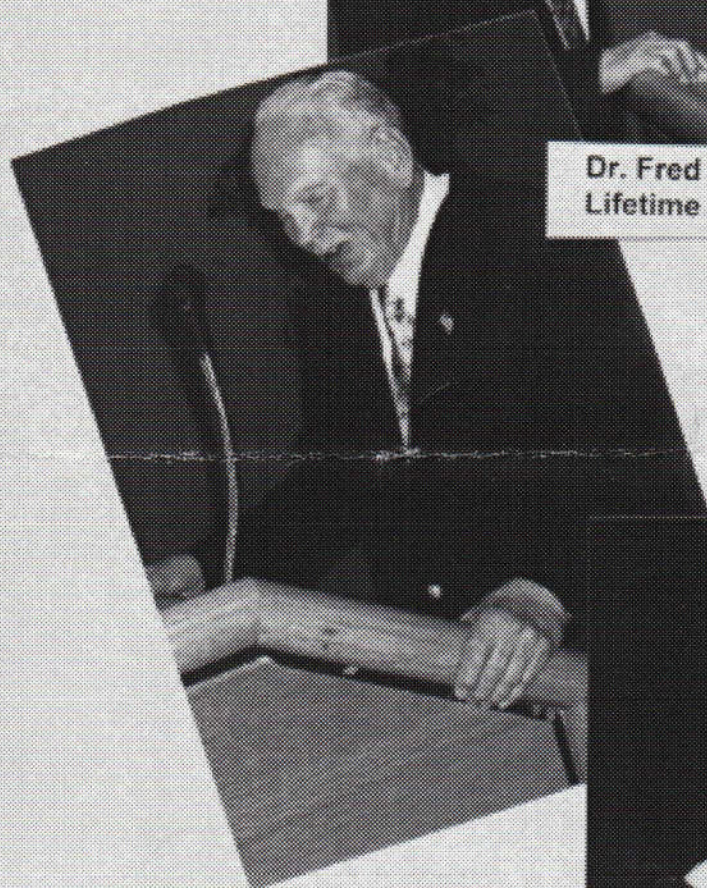




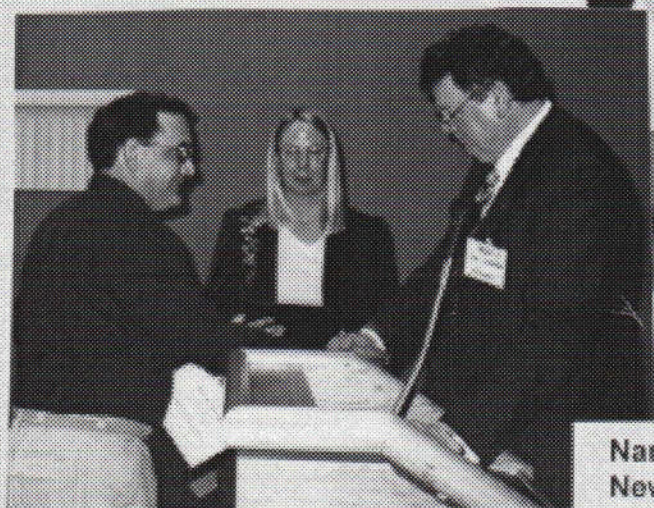
## AWARDS PRESENTATIONS



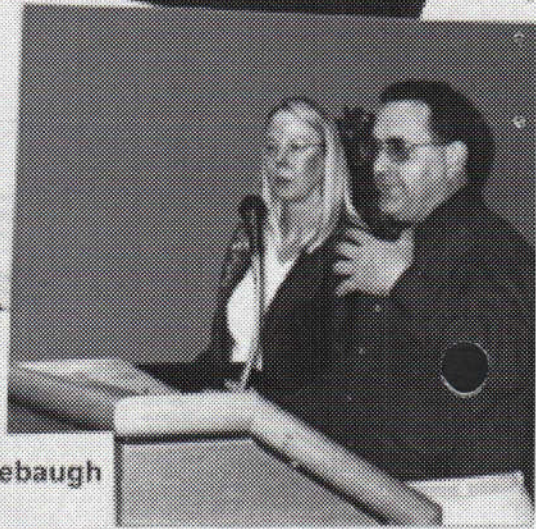
**Dr. Fred E. Coy, Jr.**  
Lifetime Achievement Award



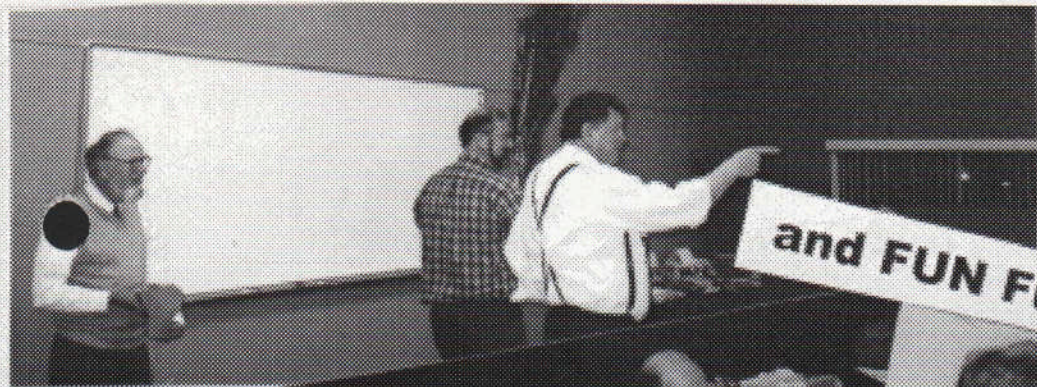
**Paul Nevin**  
Preservation Award



**Nancy Bryant and Brian Kreidlebaugh**  
New Research Award







and FUN Fund-Raising Auction!





## **EASTERN STATES ROCK ART CONFERENCE 2003**

### **ABSTRACTS**

*(in alphabetical order)*

Berg-Vogel, Michelle (Arkansas Archeological Survey)

#### **Identification of Paddlefish and Fish Trap Pictographs at Arkansas' Rockhouse Cave**

Over 80 rock art elements have been recorded at Rockhouse Cave in Arkansas' Petit Jean State Park. This paper focuses on two particular pictographs, identified as a paddlefish (*Polyodon spathula*) and a woven fish trap. These pictographs are the only recorded rock art examples of fish or basketry in Arkansas. Investigations of these elements will aid in the understanding of the site as a whole and of the people who produced the rock art, providing information regarding fishing technology and subsistence, as well as the importance of the aquatic environment in their belief system.

Bryant, N. and B. Kridelbaugh

#### **Missouri Petroforms**

Prehistoric Native American inhabitants of the Ozark Highland Region of Missouri constructed numerous functional and symbolic petroform features. This paper is a report of the stonework structures discovered and studied during five years of field research. The geology of the region focusing on the Roubidoux Sandstone Formation's relevance to petroform construction and the stone elements that compose Missouri petroforms are discussed. A petroform which reflects the Native American belief of a three-layered universe, a human effigy equinox predictor which utilizes sun and shadow, and a vision quest U-shaped enclosure are a few of the petroforms included.

Callahan, K. (University of Minnesota - Department of Anthropology)

#### **The Hegman Lake Pictographs: Archaeoastronomy in the Boundary Waters of Minnesota**

Some of the best-known and most photogenic pictographs in the Upper Midwest are located at Hegman Lake, north of Ely, Minnesota in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. A review of Ojibwe and Cree ethnohistoric sources suggests that these red ochre figures probably represent the Ojibwe wintertime meridian constellations visible during the early evening. These Ojibwe constellations would have been useful for navigating in the deep woods during the winter hunting season and have many rich mythological and cosmological associations.

Coy, F. (Kentucky)

#### **A Physician's View of a Kentucky Pictograph**

Kentucky has only three recorded pictograph sites; one is well preserved on the back wall of west facing sandstone shelter in Edmonson County. It consists of two design elements presented in black and red. The left of the two elements is a large circle encompassing several figures. The right element is a human figure with small horns, a "mask" and upraised arms. The face of the human figure has numerous red spots. It is speculated, based on analogies to historic Algonkian picture writing, that the pictograph represents the travels and demise of a family group that succumbed to the dreaded disease of smallpox. A brief discussion of the history of smallpox is included.



Duncan, J.R. (St. Louis, Missouri)

### **Missouri Rock Art - "Tattoos" on Stone: Consecrating the Earth**

Comparing rock art imagery and the western Mississippian decorative arts on shell and copper provides some interesting correlations. Linking the iconography with data in ethnographic accounts evinces connections with supernatural characters, particularly Morning Star, Grandfather Snake, and the Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies. Stories from Dhegihan sources allow an interpretation of many of these motifs, particularly those found on shell cups, gorgets, and copper. Therein we find a wealth of related imagery, all associated with an immense cycle of oral traditions that integrates the middle world's human inhabitants with the supernaturals who comprise a multi-layered cosmos.

Lenik, E. (Sheffield Archeological Consultants)

### **Ezra Stiles: Pioneer Rock Art Researcher in 18th Century New England**

In the late 18th century, Ezra Stiles (1727-1795), a Congregational minister, lawyer, and President of Yale College from 1777 to 1795, surveyed and recorded rock art site in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. His meticulous notes and drawings created an important documentary record for future researchers. Stiles stands out as a major contributor to rock art research in southern New England and his influence continues to the present day. This paper examines Stiles' petroglyph drawings and interpretations and compares them to the existing sites as they appeared in the late 20th century and to current interpretations.

Kolber, J.

### **Rock Art Recording Recommendations: Lessons From 30 Years Experience**

Rock art recording has recently burgeoned into an active field of endeavor. Many methods and techniques have been attempted and applied to accomplish successful documentation. In this paper, I will highlight problems and solutions and successes and failures learned from the rock art recording projects that I have either lead or participated in. Stress will be placed on the necessity of preparing individual plans and procedures for each project according to its specific requirements and limitations. Recommendations and advice will be offered for those planning future documentation efforts.

Krieger, A. (U.S.F.S. - Hoosier National Forest)

### **The Roll Petroglyph Site: An Example of Rock Art in Indiana**

The Roll Petroglyph Site was recently rediscovered on the shores of the Ohio River in Indiana. One of only three known rock art sites in the state, the Roll petroglyph site is rapidly fading away. Each of the twelve elements are described and shown in conjunction with images derived from photogrammetric recording.

Mooney, R M.

### **Capturing the Lunar Extreme Standstills at the Moonshadow Site in Tennessee**

The Moonshadow Site in Southeast Tennessee continues to provide new surprises in the connections between this small petroglyph site and the cosmos. A brief overview of this site will be presented, as well as a short discussion on the shadow alignments confirmed to date. Of particular interest are the documentation of the lunar minimum extreme standstill alignment in 1997 and the plans for further observations for the 2006 maximum extreme standstill. Also, the recent developments in non-contact digital 3-D technology to document this type of alignment site will be discussed.



Nevin, P.

**The Safe Harbor Petroglyph Recording Project in Pennsylvania - "Recording in the Stone Age"**

Although the existence of petroglyphs at Safe Harbor, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania has been documented since 1863, they have never been a completely catalogued. In the late summer of 2002 Paul Nevin and members of the Conejohela Chapter 28, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology engaged in an effort to locate and catalogue every design, both Native and non-Native. A Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission Historic Preservation Grant, sponsored by the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, funded the project. This paper will describe the project's methodology and results as well as present some additional unexpected findings.

Smith, D. (Savannah College of Art and Design)

**The Hickory Nut Site in Northern Georgia**

I will offer a report on my recent research of the Hickory Nut Site in Northern Georgia. Located on National Forest land, this small site offers another piece of history recorded in stone by the native peoples of Georgia. It also offers an opportunity to examine management issues and landscape theory in the state of Georgia. I will also include a brief look at other sites I have recently recorded on public land

Steinbring, J. (University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh - Department of Anthropology and Ripon College)

**A Summary of Petroform Research in East Central Wisconsin**

From an archaeological perspective, North American boulder arrangements have been largely overlooked. The discovery of intact examples within the past few years has inspired clinical investigations of them. The work to date will be summarized, along with some tentative conclusions.

Wagner M. and M. McCorvie

**Clarida Hollow: An Early Historic Period Pictograph Site in Southern Illinois**

The Clarida Hollow Site is the best-preserved pictograph site in Illinois. Located in a massive rock shelter, the site contains a unique series of red pictographs completely unlike prehistoric Mississippian paintings within the same area. Identifiable images include staked-out bison hides, aviomorphs, mammals, and water creatures. We suggest that these paintings probably were created by Mascouten Indians associated with a 1702 - 1704 French bison hide tannery located along the nearby Ohio River. The Mascouten, who believed in bison manitou, may have created these paintings as a part of a shamanistic ceremony seeking the help of this manitou in bison hide-hunting activities.



# Inverted Worlds: Rock Art and Ethnography in the Deep South

by

Johannes Loubser, Jean Allan, and Tommy Hudson

## Introduction

Pecked rock art of human footprints and animal tracks are common on boulders of northern Georgia and western North Carolina (as indicated by A on the map in Figure 1). Rock art of incised and drawn birds, fish, and snakes are common in the dark zone caves of Alabama and Tennessee (as indicated by B on the map in Figure 1). We propose that to better comprehend the differences between the rock art forms knowledge of the archaeological and landscape contexts alone are not sufficient; an ethnographically informed context is an essential component to understand rock art and its landscape context.

## The Landscape Context of Southeastern Rock Art

Conventional rock art studies tend to focus on the physical context, or archaeology, of rock art motifs, particularly their placement, age, and spatial distribution. Recognizing that archaeologically derived knowledge of the overall physical context is *necessary* to better understand rock art, archaeological studies are unfortunately not *sufficient* to interpret rock art without an explicit consideration of ethnographic context. Actually, neglecting the ethnographic context can result in misleading interpretations of the rock art. For example, scholars might wrongly assume that rock art of the dark zone caves necessarily portrays the underworld. As we show in this article, Southeastern Indian notions about rock art locales do not always agree with our Euro-centric preconceptions of physical places.

By stressing the necessity of ethnography in rock art studies is not to deny the central place of physical evidence, such

as obtained through archaeology and landscape studies. Considering the overall landscape context of rock art locales it helps to know their spatial and chronological relationship with other archaeological features. Based on historic period maps we have good reason to conclude, for instance, that open boulders with petroglyphs occurred along old Indian trails in the Blue Ridge Mountains and foothills, typically at locations that mark a change in landscape, such as mountain passes or river crossings (Figure 2). Boulders with cupules tend to occur on the edges of settlements in the bottomlands, at the juncture of culture and nature. By their very nature, the deep dark zone limestone caves of the Ridge and Valley regions of Tennessee and neighboring states tend to be hidden. But landscape features do not speak for themselves; different cultures often have divergent views of the same features. To determine what significance these features most likely had to the prehistoric inhabitants of the area it helps to look at the conceptions of their closest living descendants, the Southeastern Indians.

## The Ethnographic Context of Southeastern Rock Art

We know from various lines of evidence that the majority of rock engravings and paintings in the Southeastern United States date to the Late Woodland and Mississippian periods. Contrary to prudent scholars that claim that we cannot use ethnographic analogy to

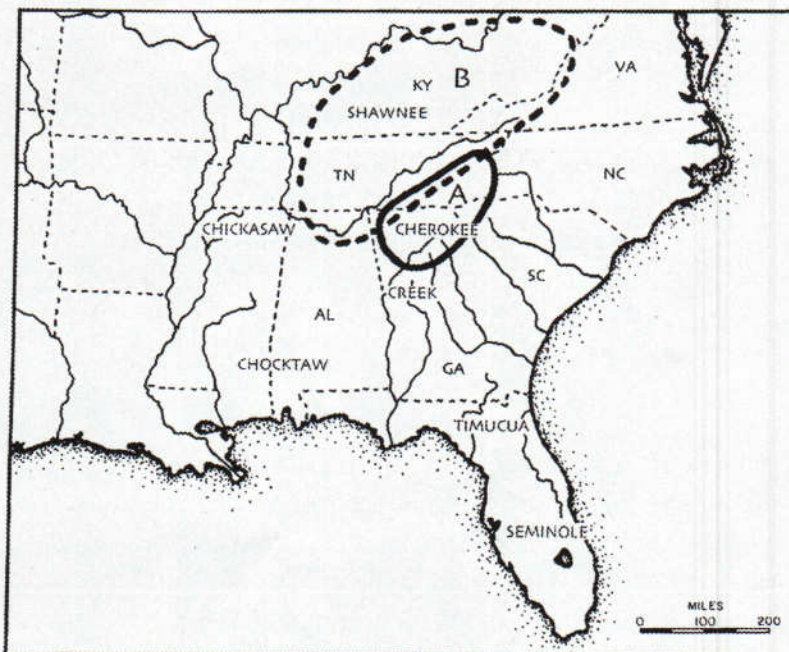


Figure 1. Pecked Boulders (A) and Dark Zone Cave Rock Art (B) Considered in the Text.



understand rock art of this period, there is evidence for the continuity of ideological notions, even at a very general level. Considering that widely separate Southeastern Indian groups share rituals and myths, it is valid to talk about a Pan-Southeastern cognitive system. Such a system can be expected to have deep roots extending into prehistory.

### Pecked Images on Open Boulders

Although we are not aware of any historical period references to indigenous rock art production in the Eastern Woodlands, there is widespread ethnographic information indicating that landscape features near rock art sites have special connotations to Southeastern Indians.

Cherokees know the petroglyphs at Track Rock Gap in far northern Georgia as Degayelûñ'há, "Printed (Branded) Place" or as Datsu'nalâsgûñ'yi, "Where their tracks are this way". The different names for the petroglyph boulders perhaps reflect the varied stories of their origins. Some Cherokees state that humans pecked the images, others say that the images were created through supernatural means. For example, certain Cherokees told Mooney (1900:418-419) that hunters carved and pecked images of human and animal footprints, bird-like tracks, concentric rings, cross-in-circles, vulva-like shapes, and cup-shaped depressions in the rock "for their own amusement while resting in the gap". Other Cherokees insisted that: "...they were made...by a great army of birds and animals fleeing through the gap" (Mooney 1900:419).

Mention of "...a great army of birds and animals fleeing through the gap..." is reminiscent of a legend of two brothers who followed their father, a shaman, towards the west "...up the mountain until he stopped at a certain place and lifted a large rock. At once

## CHEROKEE STUDIES

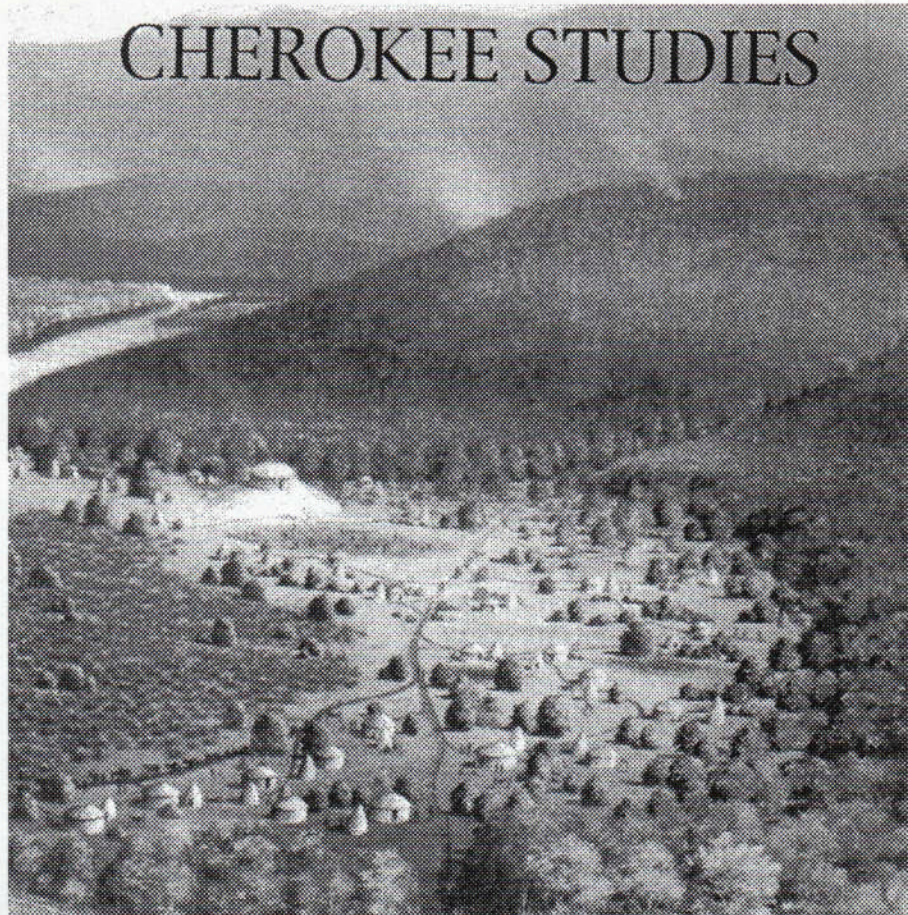


Figure 2. Cherokee landscape Dating to the Late Mississippian Lamar Period

there ran out a buck" (Mooney 1900:243). After the boys had let all the deer out of the cave where their father used to keep them, Cherokee hunters could find no more game. The hunters recognized the special powers of the boys, who were accomplished shamans in their own right, and sent messengers to elicit their help in returning wild animals. Once the messengers contacted the brothers, the "...boys came and sat down in the middle of the townhouse and began to sing" (Mooney 1900:248). Their singing generated a roaring sound from the west that drove a herd of deer towards the waiting hunters. Interestingly, multiple game in the underworld of spirits meant a shortage of game in the world and vice versa.

Cherokees believe that spirit people have a townhouse and fire under the mountain near the Track Rock Gap petroglyphs. Mooney (1900:332) states that warm vapor emanated from a small hole in this mountain where: "Sometimes in cold weather hunters would stop there to warm themselves, but they were afraid to stay long."





Figure 3. Photograph of the Main Boulder at Track Rock taken in the 1940s, far North-Central Georgia (courtesy of Carey Waldrip).

Cherokees believe that spirit people inhabit townhouses underneath anomalous features such as big rocks, abandoned temple mounds, deep river pools, waterfalls, river fords, or even old trees. The spirit people are for the most part invisible in their underworld abodes, except when they make surprise appearances to passing travelers or, as we maintain, travelers have visions of spirit people. Spirit people manifest themselves in different forms, ranging from voices to ordinary looking people to "Little People" to animals behaving like people. Accounts mention encounters between a wide range of Cherokees and Creeks, including children and hunters, with spirit beings. Judging from the accounts, encounters by-and-large occur when individuals are alone on a trail or river corridor some distance away from inhabited areas. At these normally quiet and isolated locations, the spirit people would take the person, or less frequently groups of people, to their abodes or townhouse via an anomalous feature.

The setting at Shoal Creek, in west-central Georgia, is reminiscent of an account that a "...whole company of Little People come down to the ford of the river and cross over and disappear into the mouth of a large cave on the other side" (Mooney 1900:334). A line

of pecked footprints at Shoal Creek is most visible when crossing the creek from the northeast. The footprints (Figure 4) lead to a low rock overhang in the background.

Doorways to the townhouses in the underworld are frequently at a rock face. The entrance to the townhouse inside Pilot Mountain, for example, "...opened out like a great door in the side of the rock" (Mooney 1900:342). Inside the isolated mountain the visitor "...found an open country and a town, with houses arranged in two long rows from east to west" (ibid.). Interestingly, the description of the townhouse and its immediate surroundings in the underworld tends to be the opposite from the location at which the individual first saw the spirit people. Typically, the underworld would be bustling with activity in contrast to the placid location in this world.

Such an inversion is recounted in a story of a lost Cherokee hunter caught in a winter snowstorm who entered a mountain via a rock. "the hunter found himself in front of a large townhouse...and the trees around were green, and the air was warm, as in the summer. There was a great company getting ready for the dance, and they were all panthers, but somehow it all seemed



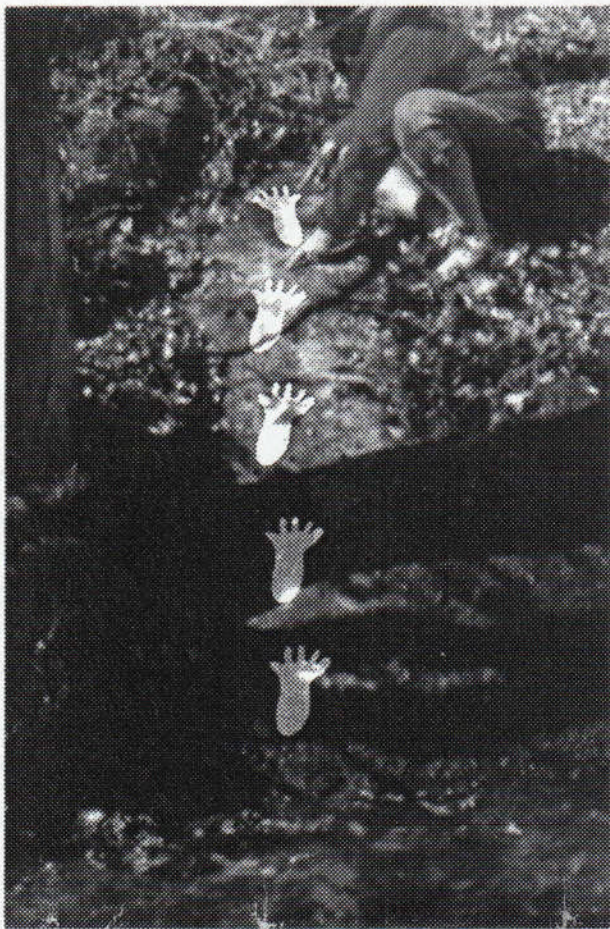


Figure 4. Adobe PhotoShop Enhancement of Footprints at Shoal Creek, West-Central Georgia Foothills.

natural to the hunter....So the panthers opened the door and he went out, and at once he found himself alone in the woods again, and it was winter and very cold, with snow on the ground and on all the trees." (Mooney 1900:324).

In another account a warrior eager to obtain a wife followed two women with long hair into a rock cave close to Tallulah Waterfalls. Once inside the rock, the warrior witnessed strange transformations; the women turned into bald spirit beings, his horse turned into a uktena snake, the saddle became a turtle, and the leather bracelets were living snakes. A crash of thunder in the underground cave finally brought the terrified warrior back to this world where he "...was alone in the forest" and the snakes twisted around his wrists were only laurel branches (Mooney 1900:346). Apart from showing that the underworld is the reverse of this world, this story illustrates how a European horse and saddle are incorporated into traditional conceptions; a change in content has not affected the residual struc-

ture. In this story the horse and saddle represent the ordered world of culture, whereas the uktena snake and the turtle are representatives of the unruly underworld.

The ethnography suggests that even regarding to pecked cupules there seems to be a connection to the underworld of spirits. For instance, when a six-year old Creek initiate in Alabama was left alone at a stream he heard a voice that said, "Come over here." The initiate recalls that "I came upon a rock there, a big flat rock...And then I looked and right in the middle of that rock, there was a little cylinder about the size of a bowl (*i.e., a cupule*)...Right in the middle of that big rock there were the red roots and the medicine. I jumped up on that rock and I looked down and it was there. It caught my eye. I reached in there, I took that root out and I chewed on it and put it back. And then the voice said, 'Wash with it'... When that last voice was heard, that was it." (David Lewis as quoted in Lewis and Jordan 2002: 49). According to this twentieth century account, cupules have connotations with things from the underworld, in this instance medicines and voices from invisible beings.

Considered together then, the placement, subject matter, and ethnographic context of open petroglyph boulders suggest that they depict things from the underworld locales that mark the transition points on the landscape.

#### **Incised and Drawn Images in Dark Zone Caves**

As mentioned before, the subject matter within dark zone caves is different from those on open boulders. Thinly incised or charcoal drawn depictions of turkeys are particularly ubiquitous in the caves. These depictions are fairly idiosyncratic and lack the standardization of turkey images on carved artifacts from chiefly burial mounds. Compared to the predominantly abstract designs found on open boulders, the motifs within dark zone caves tend to be iconographic. Perhaps not surprisingly then, conceptions that Southeastern Indians have about these animals also differ from their conceptions about the subject matter encountered on open boulders.

The wild turkey's beard, as depicted in this incised motif from Turkey Cave in Northeastern Alabama (Figure 5), a tuft of black hair-like feathers on the



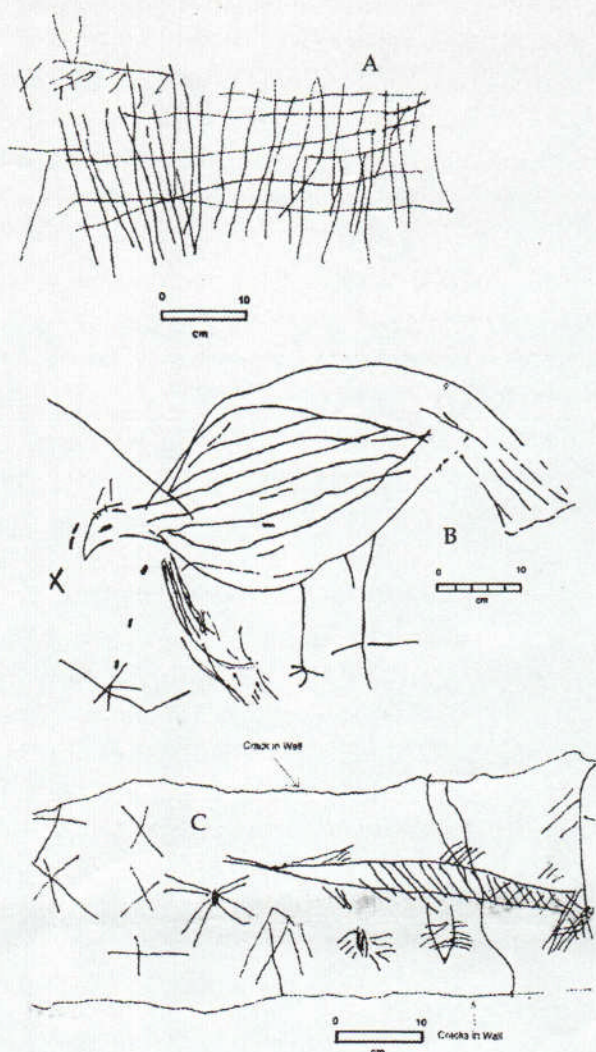


Figure 5. Turkeys and Garfish from Turkey Cave, Northeastern Alabama.

turkey's breast, is often clearly depicted on the gorgets and in the cave art from the Southeastern United States. Judging from various Southeastern Indian accounts about turkeys, mention of the turkey's beard refers to a scalp trophy obtained in battle (e.g., Mooney 1900:287-288, Dorsey and Swanton 1912:36-37). That the wild turkey's association with conflict is symbolic rather than literal can be seen by the fact that Chitimacha shamans sometimes use turkey beards as potent charms to bring calamity to their opponents (Densmore 1943). Southeastern Indian myths also attribute people-killing propensities to the turkey, swooping down and bearing away its human victims. Another common theme in the stories is the supernatural confrontation of a dog puppy, and sometimes a rat, fighting on behalf of humans against the man-killing turkey sorcerer. A Creek story, first recorded

in 1735, for example, points to the supernatural nature of the confrontation by stating that the turkey sorcerer "...had a bow and arrows" (Swanton 1928:36). The stories normally end with the puppy or rat killing the malicious anti-social sorcerer appearing in the form of a turkey.

The wild turkey's association with conflict and sorcery in the ethnographic record has contextual support in the rock art. We propose that the depiction of incised garfish near depictions of wild turkeys in Turkey Cave, for instance, provide such support. Gars are easily distinguished from other freshwater fish by long, slender, cylindrical bodies, their long snouts, predatory teeth, and by the fact that they have diamond-shaped scales and are equipped with round tails. They feed close to the surface by stalking their prey or by lying and waiting for their prey to swim within striking distance.

Perhaps due to its anomalous appearance and habits, we suggest that the garfish is depicted in the cave art for the generally same reasons as turkeys. For a Southeastern Indian ball player to obtain supernatural help from the spirit world, a sorcerer would scratch him with the sharp splinters of a turkey leg bone or the scales of a garfish (Hudson 1976). The use of parts from these animals were believed to transfer some of their properties to the ball players, helping them to overcome their opponents in a ball game that they considered as "the little brother of war" (Hudson 1976:411).

## Concluding Remarks

It is safe to say that virtually all the American Indians from the Southeast had a thorough knowledge of the spirit world, especially the underworld. When things turned bad, Southeastern Indians usually sought to rectify the problems themselves by retiring to a remote location, in some cases rock art locales such as Judaculla Rock in North Carolina, where they could converse with spirits in private. However, if the problems appeared to be sufficiently severe, Indians went instead to see a ritual specialist sorcerer whom they believed had a more intimate knowledge of the spirit world, including the upper world. Unlike the general population, only sorcerers among the Cherokees and Creeks had the experience, training, and ability to



change shape and to fly "...through the air in a fiery shape, with arms outstretched like wings, and sparks trailing behind..." (Mooney 1900:401). The depiction of winged creatures in dark zone caves independently support current Cherokee thinking that this rock art depicts "conjurers' things."

Depictions of winged creatures are more common in the caves of Alabama and Tennessee than on the open boulders in northern Georgia and western North Carolina, whereas depictions of human footprints and animal tracks are more common on boulders than within the caves. The ethnography suggests that everyday people might have depicted their visions of underworld encounters on boulders, whereas experienced sorcerers depicted their visions and transformations in the spiritual world within caves. However, simply because sorcerers conducted their art underground does not imply that they necessarily portrayed things from the underworld. As we have attempted to show, caves do contain images with upper world associations, and sometimes images of sorcerers transformed into upper world beings. In this sense then images on above ground boulders and those within underground caves are topographically inverted.

We endorse the philosophy of science stipulating that archaeologists should use relevant analogies to understand the past. We contend that no analogy can be more relevant to the understanding of the late prehistoric record of the Southeast than the ethnography of the people who once inhabited the region. Even though Southeastern Indian communities experienced severe disruptions, the broad tenets of their conceptions of landscape features have survived. The fact that these people have been physically removed from most of the Southeast does not justify that archaeologists remove them from their interpretations.

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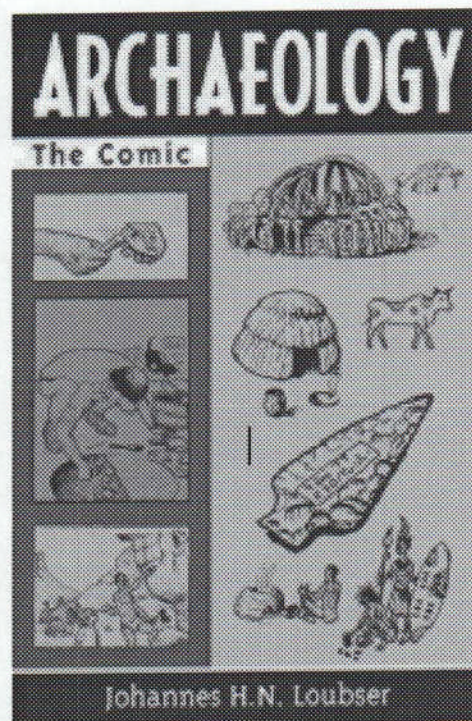
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Jannie Loubser's newly published book *Archaeology: The Comic* is a fun and innovative book for introducing archaeology to students and interested beginners to the field.



# Rock art interpretation and methodology

Kevin L. Callahan

*The core question of prehistoric archaeology [is] how to interpret material evidence. What do artefacts mean and how can we get back to the thought processes of the time in which they were made? —Colin Renfrew (2003).*

*The third criterion [by which scientists judge and compare hypotheses] is one on which . . . Darwin insisted. A hypothesis that covers diverse fields of evidence is more persuasive than one that pertains to only one, narrow type of evidence —David Lewis-Williams, *The Mind in the Cave* (2002:49).*

There is currently a fascinating proliferation of interpretive approaches and interpretive trends within international rock art studies. James Keyser and Michael Klassen (2001) in their book *Plains Indian Rock Art* described eight different interpretive approaches currently in use. An *interpretive approach* for rock art has been defined by David Whitley as “the manner in which we infer the *meaning* of the art” (Whitley 2001:35). Inferring meaning could be defined as recovering the multiple layers of culturally specific referents, which accompanied the rock art artifacts over time.

One of the reasons for divergent interpretive approaches is that researchers have reached different conclusions about the epistemology of interpretation and what constitutes acceptable archeological inference and evidence. A description of this current methodological problem has been put forward by David Lewis-Williams, who is interpreting Upper Paleolithic rock art:

*What is missing today is not a massive collection of data or some crucial but lost piece of a jig-saw puzzle. We need a method that will make sense of the data we already have. Methodology, the study of method, is the crucial issue. Methods should not be confused with techniques, such as radiocarbon dating, computer analysis, or the making of accurate copies of images. Method is the mode of argument that a researcher uses to reach explanatory statements. Today all researchers agree on the need for accurate techniques of dating and so forth, but they do not agree on what form of argument is likely to reach a convincing conclusion (Lewis-Williams 2002:8).*

Lewis-Williams has offered a different model for approaching the issue of archaeological reasoning and inference:

*The intertwining of numerous strands of evidence is a method of constructing explanations that philosophers of science recognize as being closer to what actually happens in daily scientific practice than the formal, sequential testing of hypotheses, the method about which researchers frequently talk. . . . To illustrate the difference between ‘cabling’ and other kinds of argument [Alison Wylie] points out that some arguments are like chains: they follow link after logical link; if one link fails through lack of evidence or faulty logic, the whole argument breaks down. . . . This is a difficulty that faces researchers who tackle the kind of enquiry that we are pursuing. Archaeology is, almost by definition, the quintessential science of exiguous evidence. We have to devise ways of getting around the gaps that – understandably enough – punctuate the entire sweep of the archaeological record. Wylie points out that, in practice, archaeologists overcome this problem by intertwining multiple strands of evidence. The value of this method is that each of the strands is, in its own way, both sustaining and constraining. These two characteristics of evidence require a word of explanation. A strand is sustaining in that it may compensate for a gap in another strand. . . . The ‘cabling’ method is useful in another way as well: it is constraining in that it restricts wild hypotheses that may take a researcher far from the archaeological record (Lewis-Williams 2002:102-103).*

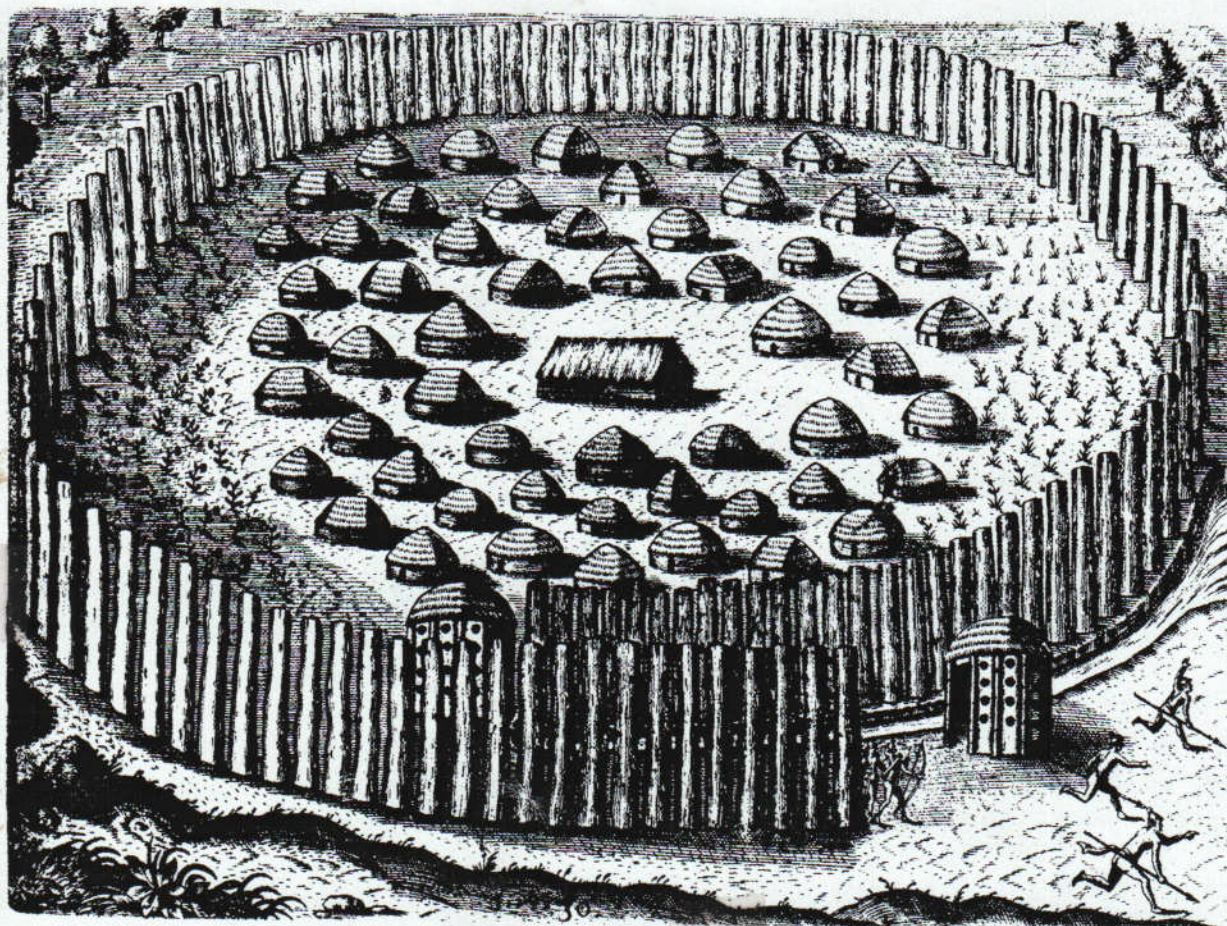
Another rock art researcher, Johannes H. N. Loubser, has suggested that a goal of rock art research should be to develop and use a “three legged stool” research approach. In this metaphor, each leg is an independent method which informs us in some way in the present about the past. Researchers should then develop the “cross pieces” or bridging arguments, which inform, connect, and reinforce the independent methods. It is important for the three methods used for “triangulating” to be independent in order to avoid circular reasoning. These “legs” could, for example, include archaeological evidence, ethnographic analogy, and a third uniformitarian process that we can observe today that was also at work in the prehistoric past.

The variety of approaches is a sign of a healthy discipline. Science progresses through dialectics and innovation. Archaeology has recently had spectacular successes recovering the meaning of historically idiosyncratic symbols. Let’s continue the good work.





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*A fortified village from Nicolas le Challeux's narrative of Captain Jean Ribaut's last voyage in 1565 to "an island in the Indies commonly called Florida" (Lorant 1946:95).*