

Fallen Petroglyph is Retrieved at Wilson Lake



The stone block contains the figure of an animal, possibly a deer. The scale is graduated in centimeters.

The Saline River valley in Lincoln and Russell counties in north-central Kansas has a number of outcropping sandstone bluffs, some of which contain petroglyphs carved into the rock by early Native Americans. Petroglyphs in this region sometimes occur in large concentrations, such as at the Russell site (14RU313), which have been well known for many years. Other, more obscure glyphs are found singly or in small numbers at more remote locations. J.R. Mead, a founding father of Wichita and a nineteenth-century hunter and trader on the Plains, reported finding petroglyphs while hunting in this locality in the 1860s, and other reports of petroglyphs have been made in the years following. A number of petroglyph sites were recorded during archeological surveys of Wilson Lake prior to its construction, but one site was officially recorded only recently.

This solitary petroglyph originally was on a shelf of sandstone above the course of Hell Creek, a southern tributary to the Saline River, not far from its confluence with the river. At some indeterminate point in the past the sandstone ledge was sufficiently undercut by erosion to cause it to fall approximately four feet down the talus slope, where it broke into two large blocks. The block that contained the petroglyph, assumed to represent a deer, was oriented with its top projecting downward to the

water. The petroglyph originally was thought to have been in a horizontal position, the ledge of sandstone and bluff from which it projected forming a shallow niche to shelter the carver as the figure was carved into the floor. The drawing was formed as an intaglio; that is, the body of the animal was dug out, forming a hollow in the rock. Most petroglyphs in the region are formed by outlining the figure to be represented, but other intaglio petroglyphs have been found.

The block containing the petroglyph was in an exposed position. Both the elements and vandals could readily affect it, and thus it was decided to move the glyph in order to preserve it. The block was below the bluff at a point where water runoff from above was directed at the stone. The lake's water level was still below the petroglyph, but softer sandstone beneath the block was being eroded away, setting the stage for the time when its support would be gone and the block would slide into the water. There was also concern that the glyph would be vandalized by lake visitors. Unfortunately, other petroglyph sites at the lake have been defaced by ignorant or uncaring people. Moving a petroglyph destroys its context (the setting in which it is located) and consequently seriously diminishes its value for research and for its appreciation. However, that the petroglyph had

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Save Outdoor Sculpture

Public sculpture has always been a source of civic pride and identity in the United States. Conveyor of many different messages, outdoor sculpture is accessible to everyone and serves to remind us of the people and events that shaped our nation. Today much of our outdoor sculpture is in danger of being destroyed by weather, pollution, vandalism, and neglect. To reverse this trend, the Kansas State Historical Society, Inc., applied for and received a grant to participate in the Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!) project.

SOS! is a joint project of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American Art and the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property. The project will find, survey, and assess the condition of all publicly accessible outdoor sculpture in Kansas. (Sedgwick, Harvey, and Butler counties are being surveyed separately under the direction of Project Beauty of Wichita.) The resultant information will be entered into a database kept both in Washington, D.C., and in Topeka.

It is hoped that the project will generate appreciation of public outdoor sculpture as an important part of our visual, cultural heritage; emphasize its role as a record of our history, values, attitudes and styles; and build understanding of its impact aesthetically, artistically, and economically on individuals and communities. Also, it will increase the awareness of the importance for maintenance, restoration, and preservation of public outdoor sculpture and encourage the involvement of the public.

Betty Lu Duncan of Mission Hills, Kansas, has been hired as project coordinator, and Larry Jochims of the Historic Preservation Office will serve as project director. Most of the leg work will be accomplished by volunteers recruited from various regions of the state. These volunteers will be trained by Betty Lu and others and then sent out to find and document the sculpture in their areas. The project is scheduled to be completed by June 1995. Persons wanting more information or interested in volunteering for this project should write or call Betty Lu Duncan, 3621 West 63rd Street, Mission Hills, KS 66208; (913) 262-1869.—Larry Jochims.

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already been taken from its context by erosion also figured in the decision.

The steepness of the rock bluff, the petroglyph's position below the bluff top, and the weight of the stone block containing the glyph all pointed to transport by water as the easiest way to retrieve it. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks volunteered the use of a pontoon boat. The craft, equipped with a boom-mounted winch and flat deck, was ideal for the project. A combined crew composed of personnel from Wilson Lake and from Wildlife and Parks set out on a windy spring morning to move the sandstone block, and they were successful. Robert Kraus and Brian Montague of Wildlife and Parks assisted Robert Wenthe, Jerry Soukup, Jack Taylor, and Paul Arnett of the Corps of Engineers at Wilson Lake. Wilson Lake ranger Marcia Thomas and Kansas City District archeologist Roger Grosser recorded the events. Using web belts that were wrapped around the sandstone block, large planks to form a ramp, and a hand-operated and electric winch as power, the crew moved the block from shore onto the boat. Windy conditions on the day of the move caused problems keeping the boat steady during loading and created some anxious moments while the stone block was transported across open water. The block was moved to a cove with a boat ramp. From there, a tractor with a front end loader transferred the block from the boat to a truck that carried it to the lake office for storage. Plans are to incorporate the block with the petroglyph into an updated display at the Wilson Lake office.—*Martin Stein.*



The stone block containing the petroglyph was lashed with wide web straps prior to moving it.



Personnel from the Corps of Engineers staff at Wilson Lake and from the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks winch the stone block onto a Wildlife and Parks pontoon boat.

Worth Noting . . .

The new director of the National Park Service is **Roger Kennedy**, a former director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and the author of numerous books on American history and architecture.

The theme of the 47th **National Preservation Conference** is "The Challenge of Livable Communities: Revitalizing Urban Environments

through Historic Preservation." The conference will be held in St. Louis from September 29 to October 3, 1993. For registration information, contact National Preservation Conference Registration, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (telephone 1-800-YES-NTHP).

The Independence Arts Council (113 West Myrtle, Independence, KS 67301) and the Independence Main Street

Office (106 East Myrtle) are selling a new publication by Ken D. Brown entitled *A Guide to Historic Homes in Independence*. The cost is \$15.00.

Monroe Elementary School in Topeka has been designated a national historic site and will be acquired by the National Park Service to tell the story of the 1964 Brown vs. Board of Education court decision that outlawed school segregation.