



Prehistory Society

OF ZIMBABWE
NEWSLETTER

April 2012 | Issue 147

Editorial

This issue of the newsletter comes to you nearly a year after the last. In that time we have seen the destruction of a national icon (reported below), the death of one of our most famous archaeologists (obituary below), and the passage of the first new legislation for National Museums and Monuments in over two decades. A full review of the last will appear in our next newsletter since it has significant implications for the future of archaeo-tourism in the country as well as general archaeological practice.

I would like to make my usual appeal for short articles and notes for the newsletter. There is a great deal of research happening across the country and at present, this newsletter remains the only locally produced medium for Zimbabwean archaeologists to communicate with each other and the outside world. I am happy to report that preparations for Volume 30 of the society's journal *Zimbabwean Prehistory* are well underway and we are already searching for material for Volume 31. I must stress that the journal remains an excellent place to publish findings from surveys, impact assessments and honours and masters dissertations. It is a gentle introduction to the hurly burly world of academic publishing, especially for students and those not in an academic environment.

Schofield's Salisbury Commonage Sites Revisited

ROB BURRETT

Director, Kalahari Sands Foundation, Bulawayo

In 1923 amateur archaeologist John F. Schofield excavated two small shelters in the granite rocks that lie between the Municipal Quarry and what in Harare is today commonly called Coke Corner on Seke Road. At this time the area was commonage; open country for residents to graze their horses and oxen. Further south was the semi-autonomous village of Hatfield.

Schofield's results were subsequently published in 1932. This included a brief description of the shelters, the excavations and some of the more notable artifacts recovered (Schofield 1932). In 1999 as part of my master's research I traced the artifacts he recovered to the Durban Natural Science Museum, South Africa. Through the kind assistance of the Director I was able to look at the Salisbury Commonage collections in April 2002. I was disappointed in what I found and this note puts on record for future reference what was located, what was missing and the location of this material.



The table below indicates those artifacts donated by Schofield and recorded as “Salisbury Commonage, Southern Rhodesia” in the museum records:

Museum Accession Number	Date of Accession	Artifacts Description	Material located
3233	20 March 1926	Ornamented bone	NO
3263	12 April 1926	Stone Artifact & Fragment pot found at 18 inches	NO
3268	14 July 1926	11 pigment stones	NO
3269	14 July 1926	23 stone implements, upper strata	14 PIECES
3270	14 July 1926	70 stone implements, lower strata	NO
3271	14 July 1926	123 stone implements. Lower strata	23 PIECES
3272	14 July 1926	Fragments of bones from upper and lower strata	NO

Much of the material cited in the catalogue seems to be missing. This may reflect the fact that the archaeological collections were removed some years back to storage elsewhere and they may have been misplaced in the process. Or else it reflects simple carelessness over the years and artifacts have got mixed up, lost and removed. I hope that some of the boxes are indeed there, just that they were not located at the time of my visit. I am particularly disappointed in not being able to see the decorated bone artifact.

The extant pieces fall into two categories, much as Schofield suggested in his 1932 paper. The artifacts from the upper strata (his Horizon A & B) are Later Stone Age – Museum Accession Number 3269. He called them Wilton with Smithfield elements. Today we would class them as part of the ill-defined Pfupi Complex of the Later Stone Age (LSA) (Burrett 2005). Twelve pieces were fractured quartz, both crystal and milky. There were chips, chunks and flakes but not distinctive formal artifacts (cf. Burrett 2002). One clear quartz crystal shows possible working or crushing at one end. This may be a drill. One quartz and one red jasper segment, classical LSA artifacts complete the existing collection. Schofield’s agate artifacts, scrapers, adzes and concaves were not located.

Interestingly at the base of Schofield’s Upper Strata there was a marked increase in large slabs of granite and below these the material culture was different. Is this another case of the so-called rockfall identified by Cooke (1971) as often separating the LSA from earlier deposits? Certainly many of the lower strata artifacts that I saw from the Commonage sites are from this earlier period - Museum Accession Number 3271. The Middle Stone Age (MSA) as an entity was not at the time of Schofield’s research yet fully defined, hence he does not use this term. Yet he appreciated this material earlier date and distinctive appearance.

Collection 3271 contained only 23 pieces; one hundred were missing. Of those seen some appear of LSA type, including a number of bladelets. With them however were several distinctive MSA artifacts in form and flaking technique (I refer to the prevalence of faceted striking platforms in the MSA as opposed to plain platforms in the LSA). Generally these artifacts were larger and produced from brown or red jasper-like material. This is probably what Schofield termed chalcedony. Included were two classical triangular MSA unifacial points; five large MSA blades; three side scrapers made either from blades (two) or a chunk; and a disc or pyramidal core.

Mixed with these are other artifacts labeled as coming from two totally different sites – Mount Busie and Fort Victoria. The labels are the same hand as the other Schofield pieces so I believe they are also his, but that the collections have been mixed up with the Commonage collections. This places in question the curation of these artifacts. This “foreign” material is all MSA.



Unfortunately none of the decorated ceramics were located. Museum records suggest that these may not have been donated to this institution. Certainly Schofield later worked extensively on “Primitive Pottery” and he may have retained these pieces for this work (Schofield 1948). Where they are now I cannot say. However looking at his sketches in his 1932 paper it would suggest Harare Ware in the upper layers with Maxton ceramics below. The academic value of these “Iron Age” ceramics in a LSA context is in their indications of potential trade and contact between farming and foraging communities.

Sadly Schofield’s collections from the Salisbury Commonage are no longer of much value to researchers. Over the years artifacts have been lost and mixed up. These excavations, some of the first in Mashonaland, are unlikely to yield further information. Equally unfortunate is the near complete destruction of this area through quarrying and building activities as well as more recent human habitation, fires and general disturbance. My visit to the area in 2005 would indicate that there is no significant archaeological deposit remaining intact.

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Zimbabwe's sacred 'Hanging Tree' is felled

Summarised from various Press Reports.

Witnesses said the 200-year-old Msasa tree, declared a historic site and national monument, fell after it was hit by a workers' truck and collapsed onto one of its strong branches in the middle of the street. Some of those workers then fled, believing it a sacred omen of "bad things to come."

A n'anga, known in the West as a witchdoctor, performed rites over the split trunk and gnarled branches the next day demanding homage be paid and forgiveness sought at Nehanda's grave site north of Harare for the destruction of the tree. Crowds gathered at the felled tree to take pieces of its billowing green leaves, splinters and bark.

The fall of the tree came on the same day that President Robert Mugabe marked the country's national tree planting and reforestation campaign by planting a tree in the second city of Bulawayo. It also coincided with the annual congress of Zanu-PF. "It's got to be a sign something big is going to happen," street vendor Mathias Vinyu told The Associated Press of the tree fall. The Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association said the tree represented "powerful forces" in the nation's social and political life. Its toppling over is believed to signal the dawn of a new era of truth on past injustices, including Nehanda's execution, the group said. The indigenous African tree, or



The Msasa Tree was knocked down on December 7, 2011. Picture courtesy Jono Waters.`



Brachystegia speciformis, was commemorated on a Zimbabwe postage stamp in 1996 and political rallies have often been held there. Historians, however, have cast doubt it was ever used for hangings.

Nehanda was a tribal spirit medium believed to have had immense powers. She is upheld by highly superstitious Zimbabweans as the country's greatest symbol of black resistance to colonial rule. Since independence in 1980, Nehanda has been revered with statues erected in the parliament house and main government buildings, and streets have been named after her in all of Zimbabwe's cities and towns. Colonial records show she was executed for the 1897 killing of administrator Henry Pollard, known for his brutality toward blacks.

Zimbabwe historian Rob Burrett told The Associated Press that records indicated she was actually hanged on gallows at a prison where the main Harare Central Police Station stands today. But a myth built up before independence and persisted that the colonial court presided over by "Hanging Judge" John Watermeyer sent Nehanda and those he condemned to death to the distinctive tree, Burrett said. At that time the tree was on the outskirts of the small colonial settlement known as Salisbury in the British territory of Rhodesia that later became Harare, Zimbabwe's sprawling capital of two million inhabitants.

"It is a great urban myth that has grown over time. The Zimbabwean nationalist version has been superimposed on earlier white stories," he said. Successive city authorities resisted calls for the tree - seen as a traffic hazard - to be removed from a central island in the boulevard leading past the colonial style Harare Sports Club and the State House used as offices by Mugabe. The tree came down as workers were repaving the boulevard and a vehicle bumped into the base. Burrett said the tree was scarred at the base by traffic accidents and became diseased and rotten. "But it is really sad it has now gone," he said.

Obituary: Peter Garlake 1934-2011

JONO WATERS

The Standard, Saturday, December 31, 2011

At least to the academic world, Peter Garlake put to rest the "Mystery of Great Zimbabwe" with his 1973 publication on the greatest historical site in sub-Saharan Africa. Great Zimbabwe, the ruined stone settlement brought to the attention of Western world by Karl Mauch in the late 19th Century, was the capital of a local Shona state, having reached its zenith in the 14th Century AD.

The white settlers had found that keeping the "mystery" alive by suggesting Rhodesia was the Ophir of the Ancients, not only helped drive tourism, but satisfied their own racist ideals in that the blacks were not sophisticated enough to build this great stone structure on their own.

For the myth to thrive, the Rhodesians had it that ruins were built by the Queen of Sheba, with King Solomon's Mines in close proximity. Garlake, who has died aged 77, resigned his post as Inspector of Monuments in 1970 when it was demanded — in the Rhodesian Parliament no less — that he give an "equal" platform to the "theory" that Great Zimbabwe was built by "light skinned people". According to the member for Fort Victoria District, Colonel George Hartley OBE, the "theory" that Great Zimbabwe was erected by indigenous people was "nothing but pure conjecture".

Where previous archaeologists hid to some degree behind scientific obscurity to make their case for



the construction by the local African people, Garlake was unequivocal in his findings:

“Great Zimbabwe must be recognised for what it is — a building of peculiar size and imposing grandeur; the product of two or three centuries of development of an indigenous stone-building technique, itself rooted in long traditions of using stone for field walls, building platforms and terraces. The structure reflects the economic dominance and prestige of a small oligarchy that had arisen within an Iron Age subsistence economy.”

Peter Storr Garlake was born in Cape Town on January 11 1934, the son of a soldier, “Dooley” Garlake, later Major-General, Commander of the forces in the Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland. His mother Catherine, a South African of Scottish extraction, had a passion for animals and was instrumental in setting up the SPCA in Rhodesia.

After completing senior school at St Georges College in Harare, Garlake went on to read architecture at the University of Cape Town from 1952-1957. After college, he left for England, finding a job as an architect in London within two days of arriving. Joining the Catholic Order was also a consideration, and he was drawn to a Carmelite monastery at Aylesford in Kent, where he participated in processions with relics of the revered local saint Simon Stock.

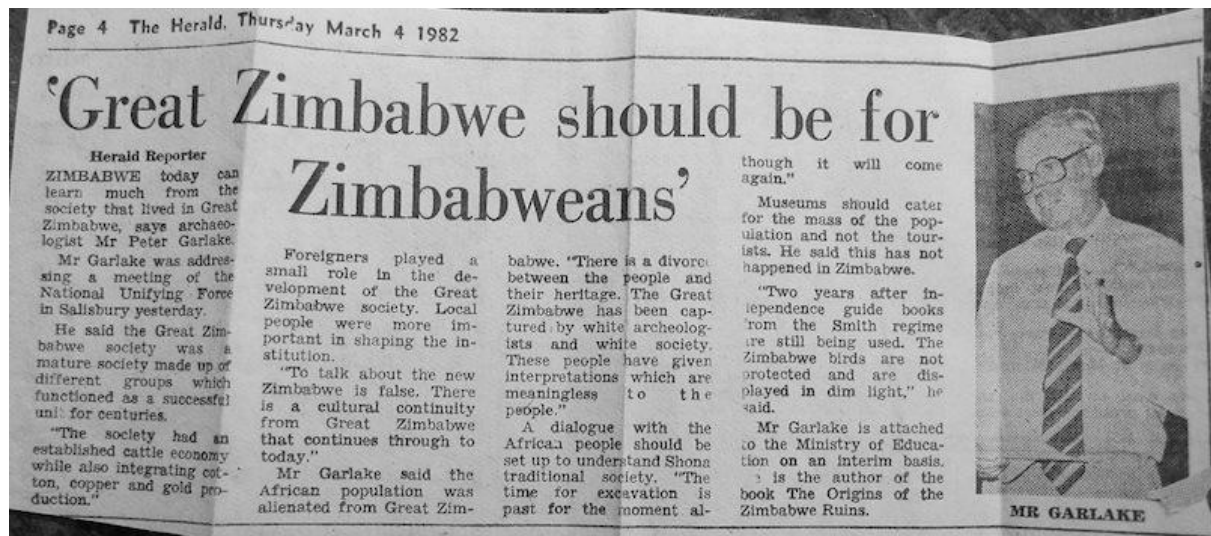
Enrolling at UCL’s Institute of Archaeology in London in 1961 for a post graduate diploma, he met his future wife Margaret, who was studying archaeological conservation. They married in 1962, the year he was awarded a Nuffield Research Studentship, which took him to the British Institute in Eastern Africa in Dar es Salaam.

Here Garlake studied the architecture and archaeology of medieval Swahili coast towns after which he published *The Early Islamic Architecture of the East African Coast* (1966). However, he went on to lecture at the History Department at the University of Zimbabwe in 1984, a year before a full archaeology programme was set up.

While regarded as highly amusing in his private life, professionals found him “prickly”, especially when it came to criticism from amateur and racist quarters, and loony nationalists after 1980. He received his doctorate in archaeology from SOAS in 1992.

A year before UDI in Rhodesia in 1965, Garlake was appointed Inspector of Monuments. In this position, he visited many of the ruined settlements or dzimbabwes (“houses of stone”) that cover much of modern Zimbabwe, excavating two of the smaller centres.

He also excavated three ancient Portuguese settlements in modern Zimbabwe — Dambarare, Maramuca and Luanze — which had been occupied by the Portuguese until they were overrun by Changamire in the late 17th Century. However, finding his intellectual integrity increasingly compromised as the racist politics of the settler regime impinged on his domain, he resigned and left the country in 1970.



Having been offered a post at the University of Ife in Nigeria, Garlake led two major excavations of sites with lifelike terracotta heads (now on display in the British Museum). During this time he also completed his Great Zimbabwe manuscript.

"The major question posed over the years — was Great Zimbabwe the unaided work of indigenous Africans — has created lasting controversy, and probably no other prehistoric site has aroused such strong, widespread and often bizarre emotional responses."

Garlake's book brought together the work of early antiquarians and archaeologists such as David Randall-McIver, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Roger Summers and Keith Robinson. Being free of the imaginative theories of later archaeological symbolic, Garlake's work remains the definitive work on the facts of the subject.

From 1976 to 1981, Garlake held an appointment as Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at University College London during which time he carried out excavations at Manekweni, a stone-walled settlement in Mozambique. Garlake returned to Zimbabwe after Independence and was reportedly disappointed at not being offered the top post in the National Museums & Monuments.

However, he went on to lecture at the History Department at the University of Zimbabwe in 1984, a year before a full archaeology programme was set up. After his losing a complete manuscript on Zimbabwean Archaeology to a fire at his Borrowdale homestead in the late 1980s, Garlake shifted his focus again: this time to Zimbabwe's diverse rock art. Building on his earlier work *The Painted Caves* (1987), it was to culminate in his 1995 treatise, *The Hunter's Vision*.

This he regarded as his magnum opus and it established Zimbabwean rock art in a field of its own. Garlake popularised it with lecture tours to the US and Europe. Drawing on many of the symbolic interpretations of Prof David Lewis-Williams and the trance experience, Garlake went further to draw his own conclusions.

He said there was more to the shamanism of the San people as there was something deeper in the art when it came to the wider religious experience. He hypothesized that "formlings" – oval-shaped images unique to Zimbabwe rock art – were an abstract representation of the physical manifestation of "potency", which he argued guides the worldview of San people.



Following publication of *The Hunter's Vision*, he took up rose growing, delivering his produce to florists around Harare. Increasingly he started to divide his time between Harare and London, and published his final book, *Early Art and Architecture of Africa*, in 2002. An avid theatre goer, Garlake enjoyed visiting cities in Europe and the Middle East, where he fed his love of Islamic architecture. Believing “what you write is your memorial”, Garlake opted for “green burial” and no ceremony. He is survived by sister Carole, his wife Margaret, three children and six grandchildren.

Peter Storr Garlake, archaeologist and architect. Born January 11, 1934. Died December 2, 2011

New Publications on Zimbabweanist Archaeology

Burrett, R.S. & Hubbard, P. 2011. *Madzimbahwe of the Southwest: A Guide to Khami, DhloDhlo & Naletale*. Bulawayo: Khami Press.

This small booklet provides a reasonably detailed introduction to three of the most important archaeological sites in Matabeleland. Each of the ruins is discussed in detail in the form of a walking tour. Well illustrated, the booklet serves as a useful precis of the current information and theories regarding the rise and fall of the latter days of the Zimbabwe Culture.

Hubbard, P. & Burrett, R.S. 2011. *The Matopos: A Short History*. Bulawayo: Khami Press & The Amalinda Collection.

The Matobo Hills are arguably one of the most sacred and spiritual areas in Zimbabwe in addition to hosting an incredible array of historical and cultural diversity. This brief booklet outlines the major events in the history and archaeology of the area in addition to providing a precis of the natural environment. A set of tree, bird and animal checklists provide useful information for tourists.

Makuvaza, S. 2012. Who Owns the Special Area at Victoria Falls World Heritage Site? Political, Organizational and Governmental Interests. *The Historic Environment* 3 (1): 42-63.

This article examines the dispute between the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) and the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA) over the ownership of a part of the Victoria Falls, a transboundary world heritage site located between Zambia and Zimbabwe. It scrutinizes efforts by the NMMZ to take over the management of the site from the ZPWMA based on its designation as a national monument. Different interests are examined and the history of management is traced, showing how part of the site ended up under the custodianship of the ZPWMA and why the NMMZ is being refused its ownership. Finally, ways of resolving this protracted dispute are suggested for the better management of this celebrated world heritage site.



Makuvaza, S. & Burrett, R.S. 2011. Old Bulawayo (koBulawayo) - the Failure of Heritage Renewed: Public and State Discourses. *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites* 13 (2-3): 189-211.

This paper discusses the various management problems experienced at the site of Old Bulawayo, one of the leading cultural heritage sites associated with the pre-colonial Ndebele Kingdom and the colonial process in Zimbabwe. The partial reconstruction of the site as a theme park was dogged by controversial management approaches, competing versions of its significance and interpretation of the past. By developing the project, the Zimbabwean government had hoped to gain political mileage in Matabeleland, a region considered to be marginalized with the project being viewed as a revival of the long lost Ndebele culture and tradition. The management problems discussed in this paper, and its neglect over the recent years, resulted in its total destruction by wild fire in August 2010, casting doubts if the site is ever to be reconstructed once again.

Matenga, E. 2011. The Soapstone Birds of Great Zimbabwe. Archaeological Heritage, Religion and Politics in Postcolonial Zimbabwe and the Return of Cultural Property. Uppsala: Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia. (Studies in Global Archaeology 16.)

This long awaited thesis, building on Matenga's earlier work on these Zimbabwean icons firmly places the sculptures in their archaeological, historical, cultural and archaeological setting. The story of the bird's flight and return home as told here is a surprisingly gripping one involving politicians, cultural heritage specialists, traders and theologians, whose actions combined to create a thought-provoking debate on the ownership of cultural property and how one artefact can mean many things to many people. One is left wondering about the fate of the last bird in South Africa and how its return can be amicably negotiated.

Wood, M. 2011. Interconnections Glass beads and trade in southern and eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean – 7th to 16th centuries AD. Uppsala: Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia. (Studies in Global Archaeology 16.)

Glass beads comprise the most frequently found evidence of trade between southern Africa and the greater Indian Ocean between the 7th and 16th centuries AD. In this thesis beads recovered from southern African archaeological sites are organized into series, based on morphology and chemical composition determined by LA-ICP-MS analysis. The results are used to interpret the trade patterns and partners that linked eastern Africa to the rest of the Indian Ocean world, as well as interconnections between southern Africa and East Africa. Comprehensive reports on bead assemblages from several archaeological sites are presented, including: Mapungubwe, K2 and Schroda in the Shashe-Limpopo Basin; Chibuene in southern Mozambique; Hlamba Mlonga in eastern Zimbabwe; Sibudu Cave in KwaZulu-Natal, Kaole Ruins in Tanzania and Mahilaka in northwest Madagascar. The conclusions reached show that trade relationships and socio-political development in the south were different from those on the East Coast and that changes in bead series in the south demonstrate it was fully integrated into the cycles of the Eurasian and African world-system.

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