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*Southern African Field Archaeology* will accept manuscripts in English and Afrikaans. Manuscripts submitted in Afrikaans must be accompanied by an abstract in English.

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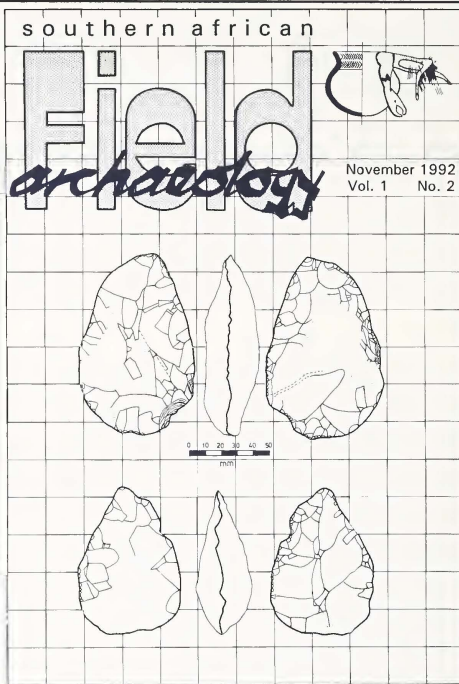
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**Logo**

Decorated pot from Kulubele, the first *in situ* Early Iron Age site discovered south of the Great Kei River, eastern Cape, and a painting of a 'trance figure' from the same region.

**Cover illustration**

Handaxes from Wonderwerk Cave, northern Cape; p. 92.

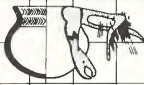
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**OPINIONS**

The second number of SAFA contains a variety of contributions, from reports on the stone age, iron age and rock art to historical archaeology. The encouragement, both public and private, which we have received from our colleagues since the first number was presented to the Southern African Association of Archaeologists in Cape Town in July has confirmed that SAFA can and will play an important role in the dissemination of archaeological knowledge.

The name of our **Editorial** has been changed to that of **Opinions**. In future issues of SAFA we will be approaching our colleagues for their opinion on a wide variety of archaeological issues of concern to us all. We hope that this will stimulate some lively debate in this column.

We will start the ball rolling by raising the thorny issue of access to database systems. Our professionally executed, archaeological site recording forms at the Albany Museum cover much of the eastern Cape and have been built up over a period of 30 years, although much of our information pre-dates this. A large percentage of the funding for the research which generated these site records has been forthcoming from the Museum itself or from institutions like the CSD, and therefore indirectly from the South African tax-payer. We recognise the rights of bona-

vide researchers to this material and encourage them to make full use of it. We have no quarrel with them. Our concern is with those engaged in contract-type research. They have negotiated an agreement with a company or government agency to provide information on archaeological matters for financial gain. They approach museums or archaeology departments at universities with requests to provide them with this information. Should we make our records freely available to them when they have been paid handsomely for their efforts?

There are two issues at stake here. One is that of making data freely available to individuals who in turn benefit financially from them. The other is that our records, be they of archaeological sites or the result of any other scientific endeavour, constitute a body of knowledge generated by our institution. Once this information has been passed onto other institutions and becomes freely available, it will not be necessary for

future developers in the eastern Cape to consult our institution. They may store all our data themselves and make use of it as they see fit.

We believe that access to our records should be channeled through, and a consultancy fee negotiated with, our museum. Our museum must be acknowledged in all publications which result from this consultancy. Some may accuse us of placing a monetary value on research; this is not our aim. But we believed that a value should be given to the time and space-consuming component of keeping a collection available for researchers.

There appears to have been some disagreement on the free distribution of information in database systems to users among a variety of museums and a meeting at the annual SAMA conference in Durban has not resolved this dispute entirely. We know there is a wide range of opinions on this issue among our archaeological colleagues and we look forward to hearing from you.