

EDITORS

Johan Binneman
Lita Webley

The aim of *Southern African Field Archaeology* is to communicate basic data to professional archaeologists and the public.

Manuscripts of original research undertaken in southern Africa will be considered for publication. These may include reports of current research projects, site reports, rock art panels, rescue excavations, contract projects, reviews, notes and comments. Students are encouraged to submit short reports on projects. *Southern African Field Archaeology* also welcomes general information on archaeological matters such as workshops and conferences.

Southern African Field Archaeology is published once a year.

Subscription rates are as follows : R50.00 per annum for individuals and R60.00 for institutions. Outside of southern Africa U.S. \$25.00 for individuals and U.S. \$30.00 for institutions.

The views expressed by the authors are their own and neither the Editors nor the Trustees of the Albany Museum take responsibility for them.

Copyright: Trustees of the Albany Museum, Somerset Street, Grahamstown, 6139, South Africa. The Albany Museum is an institution under the auspices of the Department of Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture, Directorate Museums and Heritage Resources, Eastern Cape Provincial Government.

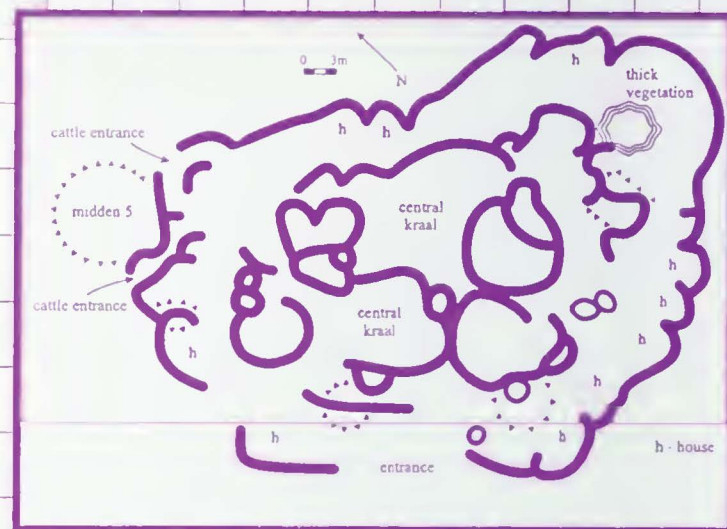
ISSN 1019-5785

southern african

Field
archaeology



2006/7 Vol. 15 & 16



Cover illustration:

A Kliprivierberg Type settlement. See p. 42.

ADVISORY EDITORIAL BOARD

G. Abrahams

Iziko Museums of Cape Town

J. Brink

National Museum, Bloemfontein

S. Hall

University of Cape Town,

Z. Henderson

National Museum, Bloemfontein

L. Jacobson

McGregor Museum, Kimberley

A. Malan

University of Cape Town

D. Miller

University of Cape Town

A. Morris

University of Cape Town

D. Morris

McGregor Museum, Kimberley

M. Schoeman

University of Pretoria

B. Smith

University of the Witwatersrand

A. Thackeray

Pretoria

F. Thackeray

Northern Flagship Institution

J. van Schalkwyk

Northern Flagship Institution

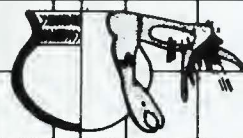
L. van Schalkwyk

Pietermaritzburg

G. Whitelaw

Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg

southern african

Field
archaeology

2006/7 Vol. 15 & 16

CONTENTS

OPINIONS 1

ARTICLES

Remembering the Mountain Bushmen:
observations of nineteenth century
hunter-gatherers in Lesotho as
recorded by Victor Ellenberger.

P.J. Mitchell 3

Ethnographic observations on the
butchering of domestic stock amongst
the descendants of Nama-speaking
pastoralists in Namaqualand,
Northern Cape.

Lita Webley & James Brink 12

Vessels for the ancestors: cupules
and the annual rain-control cycle in the
Shashe-Limpopo confluence area.

M.H. Schoeman & M. Murimbika 26

Later Stone Age burials from the
Western Cape Province, South
Africa part 2: Leeufontein.

A.G. Morris 35

Stonewalling in the Klipriviersberg:
archaeological mitigation for the
Aspen Hills development project.

T.N. Huffman, L. Barrie,

N. Black, K. James, J. Lier,

L. Mallen, S. Mokhanya,

P. Sekgarametso-Modikwa &

S. Smuts 42

Archaeological research along the south-
eastern Cape coast part 2, caves and
shelters: Kabeljous River Shelter 1
and associated stone tool industries.

Johan Binneman 57

BOOK REVIEWS

Re-viewing the archaeology
of Southern Africa.

Peter Mitchell 75

OPINIONS

ARCHAEOLOGY AT MUSEUMS

In June this year some 17 archaeologists and other colleagues (with a training in archaeology) involved in archaeology at South African museums met in Bloemfontein to discuss mutual problems facing the profession in these institutions. There are approximately 34 full-time archaeologists and support staff employed at museums, not including vacant posts. This meeting, the first of its kind and long overdue, was organised by Zoë Henderson and her colleagues from the National Museum in Bloemfontein (NMB). It took place over two and a half days at a venue outside the city where discussions were conducted in a relaxed atmosphere. At the end of the proceedings a Museum Archaeology Working Group (MAWG) was established as the official 'voice' for museum archaeology. Many problems and issues were discussed, but only a few will be briefly addressed here.

The standard 'joke' about museums, and archaeology in particular - not enough money and posts, overworked and underpaid - has never been more 'true' than now (some of the delegates received financial assistance from the NMB to attend because of a lack of funds). However, more important is the fact that the old traditional museum environment is changing rapidly, and so is the life of the museum archaeologist. In the past museum archaeologists spent most of their time in fieldwork, on research and curation of their research material and related activities, which included preparing papers for publication. This situation has changed radically in recent years and some activities, such as research, are being replaced by public outreach programmes (museums are expected to initiate community service projects relating to HIV, crime prevention and job creation), an ever increasing administrative load, and greater demands for heritage consultancies/management.

Concerns were expressed that transformation of museums are resulting in the transformation of specialised people, such as archaeologists, into 'people who work in museums'. For example, only one museum has appointed archaeologists exclusively as researchers and they are involved full-time in archaeological research. The next best was "if I am fortunate, between a few hours a week, and sometimes only about a day a month". Some do not do any creative research/fieldwork anymore because of a "lack of time and funds"(there may be other reasons too). Whatever the reason, museum-based research appears to be 'driven to extinction' by 'new' demands from the 'new' public and social environment which have evolved during the past ten years.

To meet the demands and the challenges we need a 'new breed' of museum archaeologist to respond in an professional archaeological manner. It is important that we have an urgent meeting between the three major partners of South African Archaeology; museums, universities and SAHRA to discuss and plan for the future.

It is important for the future of archaeology that Universities train skilled graduates who can meet the specific demands made of museum archaeologists. Teaching 'world archaeology' is not preparing a graduate for a practical career in museums, or to be a heritage planner and manager such as is required with the explosion in consultancy work. Theoretical courses must make way for practical museum environment/consultancy courses to avoid or reduce the 'Frankensteins' walking archaeological surveys. Possibly we must consider dividing the discipline of archaeology into 'academic archaeology' and 'practical archaeology', with the latter being presented at a technical institution, rather than at universities.

A major problem facing museums (and South African Archaeology as a whole) is that museums struggle to fill archaeology posts. The Albany Museum, during the past six years has advertised a post three times, and has yet to receive a single application from a qualified candidate (BA. Honours degree). The National Museum in Bloemfontein has a similar problem. A few years ago the Natal Museum also faced this problem and in 1977 Aron Mazel wrote:

... there is an emerging trend in the employment pursuit pattern of archaeology graduates that we need to recognise and discuss. Archaeology graduates seem reluctant to leave the major centres of Gauteng and the Western Cape to pursue careers in these 'provinces' (Mazel 1997:87).

Mazel suggested that the information university graduates receive during their training at the 'centres', maybe at the root of the problem. He believes that students are not "adequately exposed to the research and results of 'peripheral' archaeologists and to the archaeological potential of 'peripheral' areas". Furthermore, 'peripheral

archaeologists' are never invited to the 'centres' to present their research to students and to expose them to other research areas. Mazel (1997:88) concludes by asking the question:

What, then, is the message being sent to provincial archaeologists about the value of their work? More important, what message is being sent to the students who might one day consider applying for posts in the 'peripheries'? Why apply for a job in an area you do not believe has much to offer?

These are soul searching questions for South African Archaeology and concerns in this regard was expressed and discussed at the meeting. Is this a reason why graduates do not apply for posts at museums? Why are 'peripheral archaeologists' not invited to the 'centres'? Are 'peripheral archaeologists', their research and departments regarded as 'second grade'? Whatever the reason, the museum collections are highly rated and are well-researched by graduates and university colleagues.

Another field of concern is the fact that museum archaeologists do not always have the full support of SAHRA. Several problems were discussed at the meeting, but one important problem is the lack/absence of a **National Human Remains Policy**.

Another major problem facing museum archaeologists, especially those institutions which are depositories for Phase 2 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessments (AHIA), is storage space and related activities. Most museums are already experiencing a space shortage and they do not have the financial resources to build new storage facilities. Who will/must provide these? Further problems include the fact that the museums are/will receive vast quantities of Phase 2 material from AHIA projects in the near future. How will this operate in terms of quantity and quality, and who will decide and implement/enforce this. Or will it be a case of museums becoming 'dumping yards' for thousands of boxes of badly curated Phase 2 material and museum archaeologist spending most of their time 'slaving' to curate and manage material from private AHIA practitioners?

Unfortunately, this column has run out of time and space but there are many more issues which need to be addressed. I am only the messenger but feel free to shoot me.

Johan Binneman
Department of Archaeology
Albany Museum
Grahamstown

References

Mazel, A. 1977. Guest Editorial: Thoughts on posts, provincialism and power in South African archaeology. *Southern African Archaeological Bulletin* 52:87-88.

BOOK REVIEW**RE-VIEWING THE ARCHAEOLOGY
OF SOUTHERN AFRICA****PETER MITCHELL***School of Archaeology, University of Oxford**and**St Hugh's College, Oxford, OX2 6LE, United Kingdom**email: peter.mitchell@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk*

Schoeman's (2004/05) recent review of my book, *The Archaeology of Southern Africa* (Mitchell 2002), raises some interesting points that deserve consideration by all those working in southern African archaeology. Others require clarification or correction, and I take these first.

1. Schoeman (2004/05:81) writes that the archaeology of indigenous farmers constitutes but "a small portion of the volume". In fact, Chapters 10, 11 and 12, which are presumably those to which reference is made, make up 131 (33.1%) of the 396 pages devoted to the region's substantive archaeological record. In a work that covers some three million years, this does not seem "small".
2. Calabrese's exciting work in the Shashe-Limpopo Confluence Area went unreferenced not for lack of interest, but because the manuscript of the book was submitted in November 2000, one month before the relevant papers were published. Publishing constraints then prevented their inclusion during copy-editing, though they receive what I hope is due recognition in a more recent synthesis (Mitchell & Whitelaw 2005).
3. The book is claimed to be "rather South Africa centric" (Schoeman 2004/05:81). As someone whose fieldwork experience has been entirely outside of South Africa, I find this observation interesting, but untrue. Every conceivable effort was made to provide detailed coverage of the archaeologies of Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, not just in the text, but also in the illustrations. However, the plain fact is that with the partial exception of Zimbabwe (to which a large part of Chapter 11 is necessarily assigned) nowhere near as much work has been undertaken in any of these countries, as has been the case in South Africa. The extremely limited number of archaeologists currently operating in at least three of these states underlines the point.
4. The related comment about my "predisposition towards Anglophone publications" (Schoeman 2004/05:81) is

equally odd. I am unaware of any significant publication that was omitted from the book's bibliography, which actually includes 22, not "less than ten" non-English language titles, ten in Afrikaans, six in French, five in German and one in Portuguese. That this total is so small reflects a combination of the linguistic affiliation of those working in the region and the choices they make when publishing their work. Both *Southern African Field Archaeology* and *Southern African Humanities*, for example, are monolingually English in content, while the *South African Archaeological Bulletin* last published something in Afrikaans over 40 years ago. Far from being a personal "predisposition" or a reflection of my own linguistic competence, this is a bias that reflects the reality of the discipline. For the record, my own efforts to transcend it include substantial overviews of southern African archaeology in French (Mitchell 2005a) and Italian (Mitchell 2005b), and a more recent paper that seeks to enhance the access of South African archaeologists to an important French language source on the Maloti-Drakensberg Bushmen (Mitchell 2006/07).

With these points clarified, we come to the more interesting challenge that Schoeman sets out, how best to write about the history of human beings in southern Africa from the standpoint of archaeological evidence. Three aspects of this question merit attention.

First, comes the way in which any chronological narrative is to be structured. Schoeman (2004/05:81) suggests that the divisions followed in *The Archaeology of Southern Africa* "perpetuate an illusion of isolated and bounded communities who lived in different 'Ages'," acknowledges nevertheless that hunter-gatherer and farmer interaction is addressed, but feels that the "current layout creates the impression that contact took place in the 'farmer' period". Attentive reading of the book would show that the "traditional divisions" are challenged as much perpetuated, for example by placing the MSA1 into Chapter 3 along with the Early Stone Age, and by grouping the post-Howieson's Poort MSA into the same chapter as most of the Pleistocene LSA (Chapter 5). Chapter 14, it might also be

noted, deals not with historical archaeology, but with the discipline's contemporary and future practice. Moreover, the placement of hunter-gatherers of the last 2000 years within chapters (9-13) emphasising pastoralist, farmer and colonial archaeologies was done precisely to stress the continuing presence of foragers *and* the mutuality of the interactions between people practising different patterns of subsistence. How contact with farmers could take place before 'the farmer period', I am at a loss to understand.

A second, and more substantive criticism, is that the volume is "theoretically uncritical and unrooted", something that supposedly reflects a non-engagement with the sociopolitical situation of southern Africa because of my location in Britain (Schoeman 2004/05:81-82). Obviously, I must plead guilty as far as current residency is concerned, but I would hope that living and working in South and southern Africa for much of the period 1985-1993 provided at least some understanding of their politics and of how these relate to the region's archaeology (Mitchell 2005c). I would thus agree wholeheartedly that there is much scope for developing a critical and contextual history of South (and southern) African archaeology, a topic broached by the papers in Robertshaw (1990), and more recently explored by Shepherd (2003) and others. However, the difficulty lies not just in striking a happy marriage between data synthesis and critical theory within a narrative framework. We have rather to ask what theoretical framework could be appropriate for the *whole* of southern African archaeology, from the australopithecines to apartheid (and, happily, now beyond). Crude geographical determinism aside, I cannot readily think of one.

This difficulty leads into my final point, which concerns what kind of publications we want or need, for what audiences they should (or could) be written, and what styles of writing they should employ. Data-synthesising textbooks for the use (I dare not write 'benefit') of students and colleagues are one kind of work. Publications addressing a more popular, but still informed, public and those that can take advantage of colour images are another (e.g. Blundell 2006). Outputs and outreach involving non-print media or written in indigenous (*i.e.* non-English) languages are also vital. Conveying the excitement, diversity and significance of southern Africa's past is a respon-

sibility incumbent upon all archaeologists practising in, or concerned with, the region. How this can best be done probably deserves more explicit and open debate than it has often been afforded, but that it is necessary is something on which both Schoeman and I surely agree.

REFERENCES

- Blundell, G. (ed.). 2006. *Origins: the story of the emergence of humans and humanity in Africa*. Cape Town: Double Storey.
- Mitchell, P.J. 2002. *The archaeology of southern Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mitchell, P.J. 2005a. L'Age de la Pierre moyen et final en Afrique méridionale. In: M. Sahnouni (ed.) *Le Paléolithique d'Afrique: l'histoire la plus longue*: 227-259. Paris: ArtCom.
- Mitchell, P.J. 2005b. L'archeologia dell'Africa Meridionale: il II millennio D.C. In: *Enciclopedia Archeologica Africa*: 603-610. Rome: Istituto Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani.
- Mitchell, P.J. 2005c. Why hunter-gatherer archaeology matters: a personal perspective on renaissance and renewal in southern African Later Stone Age research. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 60: 64-71.
- Mitchell, P.J. 2006/07. Remembering the Mountain Bushmen: observations of nineteenth century hunter-gatherers in Lesotho as recorded by Victor Ellenberger. *Southern African Field Archaeology* 15/16:3-11.
- Mitchell, P.J. & Whitelaw, G. 2005. The archaeology of southernmost Africa c. 2000 BP to the early 1800s: a review of recent research. *Journal of African History* 46: 209-241.
- Robertshaw, P. (ed.). 1990. *A history of African archaeology*. London: James Currey.
- Schoeman, M.H. 2004/05. Book review: *The archaeology of southern Africa*. *Southern African Field Archaeology* 13/14:81-82.
- Shepherd, N. 2003. State of the discipline: science, culture and identity in South African archaeology, 1870-2003. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29:823-844.