NOTICE OF 52ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society for 1978 will be held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide on

MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER 1978 AT 8.00PM

AGENDA

1. Apologies.

2. Confirmation of minutes of the Annual General Meeting held Monday, 28 November 1977. Copies of these minutes are attached.

3. Annual Reports from the Secretary and Treasurer to be received, copies of these reports are attached.


5. Presidential address to be given by Mr. R. Ellis. The title of his paper will be:

    'Aboriginal Cultural Resource Management and the Amateur'

6. The next Ordinary Meeting of the Society will be held on Monday, 26th March 1979.

7. Supper will be served after the meeting.
   Tea and coffee with biscuits.

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AN INVENTORY OF ABORIGINAL SHELTER PAINTING SITES

ON PLUMBAGO HISTORIC RESERVE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JULY 1977

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M.F. Nobbs

ADELAIDE.
LEGEND

Water Courses
Station Boundary
Roads & Tracks

General Tectonic Features

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Geological Survey Olary Province S A Dept of Mines
AN INVENTORY OF ABORIGINAL PAINTING SITES ON PLUMBAGO STATION

General Description.

Plumbago Station of 880 square kilometres is north of Mannahill township on the Adelaide-Broken Hill highway. It occupies the north west extremity of the granite basement of the Olary Province and drainage is generally north to Lake Frome. The landscape consists of low massive-granite hills separated by wide alluvial plains which have formed from weathering of the granite. (Maps 1 and 2.) The area lies outside the 200 mm isohyet and can be said to be in the arid zone of Australia. The climate shows extremes of temperature and the rainfall, when it comes, is often torrential. In summer the tropical monsoon system often reaches as far south as the Murray River, and in winter there is occasional rain as "spin-off" from the cyclonic disturbances to the south.

In contrast with the country to the east and with the Flinders Ranges the watercourses on Plumbago Station are, with one exception, subject to great lateral erosion in times of flood, to the extent of forming braided stream courses. It is not uncommon for the braided streams to become in turn the main channel. When flash flooding occurs the erosional effect is very violent. There are no stands of the large red river gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) on Plumbago except in the north west corner of the property. In fact eucalypt species are very uncommon and remains of stumps and humus debris in the banks of the watercourses have not been seen. Whether this is the effect of over grazing by stock or rabbits or of an increase in aridity is not clear. J.P. Buttfield in "Report to the Aboriginals Department" 1st July, 1868, (1), writes "I can note no appreciable increase of native animals. For years to come the Aboriginals will remain more or less dependent upon the Government for support. A condition which would not have arisen but for the flocks and herds of the invader during the long and disastrous drought". Buttfield was writing about the country west of Bimbowie
Distribution of Granite Outcrops Plumbago Station

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  Geological Survey Olary Province S A Dept of Mines
and of the effects of eight practically rainless years between 1859 and 1868. The old Pastoral Leases Maps of circa 1880, (2), mention acacias and saltbush but not mallee as might be expected, at least in the southern paddocks. The area at the time of the early pastoral maps had been occupied spasmodically for about 25 years.

The vegetation consists of saltbush (*Atriplex* sp.), bluebush (*Kochia* sp.), bullock bush (*Heterodendron* sp.), sheoak (*Casuarina* sp.), many species of acacia, eremophila and native grasses, and many varieties of ephemeral plants. The Murray lily (*Crinum flaccidum*), a source of food for the Aboriginal, grows abundantly after 25 - 50 mm of rain; Nardoo (*Marsilia drummondii*), grows prolifically in the gilgai or crabbie areas which hold water for many months after rain. Bird life is abundant and grey kangaroos (*Macropus major*), red kangaroos (*M. rufus*), and euros (*M. robustus*) are present. No permanent or semi-permanent waterholes are present except perhaps Talbots Gum Creek which supports the only stand of *E. oxalidifolia*. However the very numerous gnamma holes and pits usually found on granitic surfaces may contain water for months after rain. Numerous gnamma holes are present on the hills of Plumbago, several at Mt Victoria copper-gold mine being 1 to 2 metres deep and still retaining the stone lids supported by cut timber - so placed to keep the water clean.

**Aboriginal Occupation.**

From fossil evidence in the Lake Frome basin to the north, e.g. Lake Callabonna, it may be inferred that in the past the climate of the area was probably much wetter than is the case today, and probably the Olay Province supported a viable Aboriginal population in the past. As the climate became more arid this population probably diminished in number and their culture became synthesised with the Darling River people (Marowera) to the east and the Flinders Ranges (Adnya mathanha) to the west; both groups moving into the area in good seasons following game. The last tribe in the Province
lived in the Booloomatta Hills and moved to sanctuary on Poolamacca Station round about 1890, (3).

From Tindale's map (Map 3) it can be seen that Plumbago Station lies at the north east extremity of country belonging to the Ngadjuri people, whose territory extended from the Koolka Hills south and south west as far as the Barossa Valley, a distance of some 200 kilometres. Plumbago seems to have been the place where four tribal boundaries met: JADLIAURA and NGU'RUNTA - both having affinities with the DIERI to the north; NGADJURI; and WILKADJALI who had Darling River (Marowera) affinities. The number of Aboriginal painting sites in the vicinity within this area of abutment (at present sixteen are known in Olary Province) suggests that the area had very great cultural significance for the tribally distinct people who lived nearby. There are several place names of Aboriginal origin on Plumbago:

Ethiudna - hill of the diamond finch - a dreaming centre.

Weeroopie - the cockateil.

Arkarula referring to Arkaroo, a large snake associated with whirlwinds and waterholes.

The three words above were supplied by J. McEntee of Erudinna Station (5) and the following Ngadjuri words were supplied by Professor Berndt (6):

Mindamereeka - place of sorcery, danger area of bones, belonging to Vapi the snake.

Koolka - alternate name - Wiba-junda or Wiba-yunda, winged ant holes, a dreaming centre.

Windamerta also Windagudna, the constellation "The Southern Triangle" but also associated with Minda the Owlet - a dreaming centre.

European Contact.

European contact in the region occurred during the mid-1850s at which time the Ngadjuri were contracting west and south to the Orroroo district and near Burra. Ten or so years later J.P.
Buttfield, the Assistant Protector of Aboriginals (Far North), was stationed at Blinman, and supervised Government supplies to the Aboriginals at Bimbowrie. Buttfield reported seeing no Aboriginals between Bimbowrie and Baratta. From about 1856 until fences against the dingo were erected in 1878, itinerant shepherds moved flocks of sheep through the area. The remains of chimneys that the shepherds built and the "folds" constructed from rocks and branches of trees can still be seen on Plumbago. These European relics all occur within a short distance from gnamma holes. When water became scarce the shepherds moved south to the semi-permanent water at Winnininie and Ootalpa and east to the Booloomattta Hills; or else the stock was moved right away. Between 1865 and 1890 intense activity occurred to stabilise water supplies for stock. 56,000 sheep were shorn annually at Antro Woolshed in the ten years after its construction in 1878. Olary Province is rich in minerals and two mines in the north west of Plumbago were worked - Billeroo copper mine was opened in 1874 and was still being worked in 1906 (7). Mt Victoria copper-gold mine was opened in 1883 and was worked spasmodically for the next thirty years.

The construction of the dingo-proof fences meant that paddocks were formed, and the area comprising the present day Plumbago was divided into four paddocks called Billeroo, Mt Victoria, Arkarula and Mindamereeka. Elaborate trough and tank systems were built and of the six that exist, the Homestead trough and tank are still in use.

The station took its present name and form when the Bimbowrie Run was divided among members of the Crawford family in 1936.

Owing to the large number of Aboriginal and pre-1900 European historic sites present, Plumbago Historic Reserve was gazetted in 1972 under The Aboriginal And Historic Relics Preservation Act, 1965.
Schematic Diagram of Features Common in Shelters in Granite Areas
PAINTING SITES.

The painting sites on Plumbago Historic Reserve have been given a code number in order to index the material and to preserve anonymity. None of the sites have been disturbed at present except that:

i. one signature dated 1917 in white chalk occurs in P.7.

ii. the floor of P.2 was excavated in a random fashion by unauthorised persons "looking for carbon samples for radio-carbon dating".

iii. the large boulder resting on the surface of the floor of P.1 was seen to partially shelter numerous pieces of carbon which protruded from underneath it. These pieces were collected because it was felt that they could easily be dispersed by animals.

Eleven painting sites have been discovered on Plumbago Historic Reserve and all occur in "overhangs" in the granite massif comprising the Ethalda Hills, the East Crocker area, Mt Victoria and its pediment and the Windamerta-Billeroop Hill complex. All but two sites occur below the 33 metre contour line and all have campsites associated with them on the plains. (The schematic diagram opposite illustrates the terminology used below.)

Floors

The floors of the painting shelter sites consist of fine loose sand which is heavily charged with digested humus, and which is shallow (less than 30 cm). The shelters have been occupied and stirred up by euros and small animals since time immemorial. Several sites contain banks of glauberite (sodium-calcium sulphate) derived possibly from the leaching and deposition of calcium and sodium-rich feldspars which are a relatively common component of the granite suite of rocks in the area. The large bank of glauberite in P.7 appears to consist of glauberite interleaved with fine layers of dust.
Staining

All painting sites, indeed most shelters examined, have staining present to a greater or lesser extent. The types of staining are as follows:

i. Most shelters have dark staining present and some effort was made to differentiate between carbon from smoky fires, mineral staining, and algae staining. During the very wet season of 1973-74 patches of greenish black algae were noticed on the walls and ceilings of several shelters. On examination later, the patches had become desiccated and quite black in colour, making a determination of composition difficult, as carbon is present in both soot and organic material.

ii. Many shelters have a "dusty" surface (pale brown-red) which is impossible to remove by brushing. The dust seems to have been absorbed into the skin of the rock and actually obscures the lower half of the large circles in P.7. Having photographed P.7 before the very wet season of 1973-74 it is apparent that the dust patina on the shields of P.7 has become more dense since then.

iii. One genus of Sphecidae - the thread-waisted mud-dauber wasp (Sceletiphron laetum) - builds a nest which when abandoned drops off the rock surface, leaving a white stain. The nest consists of two joined rows of elongate cells, sometimes up to 30 cm in length. These leave a typical white stain which is difficult to distinguish from white pigment used in painting; indeed the wasp material may have been used as a pigment.
iv. Another genus of wasp, Buminidae or the potter wasp, builds round colonies of egg cells, of red-brown mud, to shelter its eggs and their prey. These round nests when abandoned disintegrate leaving red-brown stains on the rock surface. (iii and iv were identified by Mr Hans Mincham, formerly of the South Australian Museum).

v. The bottle shaped nests of the fairy martin (Petrochelidon nigricans) built on the upper walls and ceilings of shelters leave brick-red stains.

vi. Occasionally birdlime, from perching birds, can stain areas within the shelters.

vii. Many minerals present in the rock surface, particularly when rock falls are recent and weathering is not far advanced, show different colours which must be taken into account in determination of the forms of motifs on a painted surface. Where the painting is very indistinct as in P.6 the absence of multiple red mineral staining on a grey-white surface and the presence of faint red straight lines is taken as evidence of painting.

Sources of Pigment

Four colours of pigment - red, white, yellow and black - are present on the painting surfaces. (Discovering the sources of the various pigments is a continuing study.) The composition of the various colours can be determined by spectrographic analysis of very minute quantities.

1. Red Pigments

i. Purple-red is present in P.3 and P.8 and possibly originates from Bookartoo near Parachilna in the Flinders Ranges.

ii. Red pigment may come from any number of copper and/or iron deposits in the area perhaps as far west as the haematite deposit in Nackara Creek.
Red ferric salts commonly occur in the periphery of copper deposits, particularly those formed from chemical-solution processes. These ferric minerals occur in a variety of textures, some suitable for grinding and use as ochre pigment. Samples of hard red ochre have been noted on campsites and in the spoil dumps at Mt Victoria copper-gold mine and at Billeroo copper mine, and are visually similar. Minerals which show a red streak - haematite and cuprite - are present on Plumbago and may have been used as a dry pigment, rubbed directly on to the rock surface.

iii. A very dark red-brown pigment occurs in P.3 and P.4. This could have been blood.

2. Yellow Pigment

The yellow pigment used in P.2 and P.8 is thought to have come from a deposit of carphosiderite situated near Cathedral Rock painting site on Bimbowie-Old Booloomatta Station. The mineral Limonite also gives a yellow colour.

3. White Pigment

i. Only one specimen of white pigment, from P.7, has been spectrographically analysed and the following results received:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly present</td>
<td>calcium, magnesium, silicon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>sodium, iron.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong trace</td>
<td>manganese, tin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trace</td>
<td>copper, aluminium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very faint trace</td>
<td>barium, boron, chromium.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that no phosphorus was present probably rules out birdlime as the source of the pigment from P.7. It was suggested that the sample was in fact pipeclay. (If the sample were kaolinite the table above should show more than a trace of aluminium).
ii. Birdlime, particularly from birds of the hawk family which roost on the granite outcrops, was used as pigment. Birdlime has often a tinge of blue or pink colouration derived from berries eaten by birds. (One of the Bimba Hill painting sites has a blue-white pigment present).

4. Black Pigment

i. Carbon from charred wood was probably used as a pigment.

ii. Minerals such as pyrite, magnetite and ilmenite give a black streak when rubbed on a harder surface and may have been used dry.

Vehicles for Pigment.

It is assumed that the vehicle for the pigment was either water or saliva; or else the stone was rubbed directly on to the rock surface or the surface of an older painting (p.2), that is the direct use of ochre as with a crayon.

Technique for Recording.

Many photographs of each site have been taken during the last six years - both slides and colour positives and several different types of film were used. (Ink drawings were made by putting a slide or negative in an enlarger and tracing the enlarged image directly on to paper.) The purpose of the small white rectangles is twofold. Originally a 5 cm length of ordinary Contact was applied to the rock surface and used (not always with success) as a focussing line. This piece of Contact appears in many photographs - sometimes with the site number on it. When tracings were made the rectangle was also traced, thus giving a permanent scale.
References:

(1)  Buttfield, J.P.  "Report to the Aboriginals Department"
     1st July, 1868.
     S.A. Archives No. G.R.G. 52 Series l.,
     Correspondence Aboriginals Department,
     1866 - 1878.

(2)  S.A. Lands Department Pastoral Leases Maps.

(3)  Mawson and Hossfeld.  "Relics of Aboriginal Occupation in
     Olary District."

(4)  Tindale, Norman B.  "Aboriginal Tribes of Australia",

(5)  McEntee, J.C.  "Pronunciation guide to the Adnamatana
     language".

(6)  Berndt, Professor R.  "Personal Communication".

(7)  Brown, H.Y.L.  "Records of the Mines of South Australia",
     Government Printer, 1906.

SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P.1.

P.1. occurs in a long wide granite overhang facing south. The painting
consists of some tracks which are barely visible and other clustered
white tracks which overlie very faint and indistinct red ochre marks.
The motifs (in white pigment) are a pair of macropod tracks, a pair of
smaller macropod tracks and one bird track. Distinct red tracks are
not visible to the naked eye but infra-red sildes show extra lines on
the rock surface, in particular Fig. D. A powdering of red ochre
occurs behind the white tracks.
There is a large boulder of granite lying 40 cm from the back of the shelter. The boulder is 34 cm high, 86 cm long and 48 cm across at its widest part. The back of this boulder, facing the back of the shelter, has parallel white vertical lines separated by red vertical lines. This boulder is resting upon the sandy floor of the shelter and is not part of the rock base. This fact was investigated when carbon was removed from immediately beneath the lower edge of the boulder in order to prevent scattering by animals; the boulder was not otherwise disturbed. In the IR photograph the red lines on the boulder appear to be the same colour as the sandy floor.

In a depression beneath an adjacent boulder a disc shaped rock was discovered, composed of material not found in the immediate vicinity. It measures 12.5 cm by 9.5 cm by 1.5 cm and is ground on both sides. It is suggested that this stone could have been used as a palette.

Between each visit the floor surface of this shelter was disturbed by euros.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P.2.

This painting site was first described by J.E. Johnson in 1953. The quotations used here are taken from his unpublished notebook. This shelter faces west and the width of the overhang is 5 m, the dripline height is 1 m and the ceiling is vaulted to a height of 1.50 m. The area of the painted surface is 2.00 m by 1.40 m and occupies the northern end of the shelter and the adjacent 1.20 m of the eastern wall. There are two distinctly different painting techniques present. "The multicoloured designs on the northern wall are very old and faded, semi-realistic and have been retouched. The motifs on the back of the shelter are fairly fresh and bright". The occurrence of this technique is not uncommon in Olary Province: P.3, P.4, P.7 and Cathedral Rock all show white lines which appear to have been painted once with a very liquid medium as a vehicle for the pigment. This painting site is unusual in that there are very few hearths in the immediate vicinity, although gnemma holes with stone lids, and several hearths occur close by.

Key
Refer to Drawing Shelter Painting Site P. 2. opp. page.

A. "is probably some sort of lizard. It has been retouched by a red paint which is not ochre but a red ferruginous clay-sericite and haematite. It has been repeatedly retouched. The yellow colour outlines the left side and also the skeletal area within the motif. Both yellow areas are partly covered with red and the white outlining stripe is now pale pink".

B. is a "circle" in yellow with patches of red and red blurring at the lower margin.

C. is now an indeterminate red motif previously similar to C in P.4.
PAINTING SITE, P.2. (CONTD.)

D. is composed of a line joining two rhomboids, now very faded red ochre.

E. "The design E. has been partly destroyed by exfoliation but when complete must have been similar to the brown symbol in P.3 which is a more conventional copy, it may even symbolize a human figure, the ovoid at the top representing the rib cage". The extent of the exfoliation has increased since 1953.

F. This multiple barred circle is drawn in thin white pigment and the long yellow trifid line is joined to the circle.

G. is a single-bar and tailed circle in thin white pigment.

H. consists of a line of macropod tracks; the two lower pairs are possibly wallaby tracks and the upper pair of tracks are of a larger macropod. Again the white pigment used is thin and appears to have been applied once.

I. is a strong outline in thin white pigment.

J. This motif is drawn in purple-red pigment and has been retouched many times. It probably belongs to the group on the northern wall of the shelter. The technique contrasts obviously with the other white motifs on this part of the rock surface.

K. This motif is a single large black bird-track and it appears to have been retouched seldom.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P.3.

This painting site was described by J.E. Johnson in 1953. It occurs in a shelter in a "spine" of granite rock and faces north. The dripline width is 3.35 m and the height is 1.20 m. The width of the floor from the back of the shelter to the dripline is generally 1.8 m. The ceiling is vaulted and has white tracks - bird and macropod - distinguishable from the white stain left by wasp nests (Sphecidae). The ceiling also had a red ochre line meandering through the tracks. This site is well preserved. The patina is black - possibly soot - and the pigment covers the patina; both are overlain by "dust surface".

Key  Refer to Drawing Shelter Painting Site P. 3. next page.

A. J.E. Johnson suggests that this figure is a symbolic human figure. It is executed in a very dark brown-red pigment - possibly blood - and is in a good state of preservation.

B. This motif was painted in a solid white pigment and is well preserved.

C. This motif consists of two pairs of tracks, one painted with the dark brown-red pigment used in A, representing macropod tracks, the other painted with white pigment and representing bird tracks. The macropod track slightly overlies the bird track.

D. This area is occupied by a number of tracks in red ochre, both bird and macropod. All are faded.

E. This consists of a faded red ochre circle and line leading from it.

F. This consists of a very faded red ochre "comb".
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P. 4.

This site was described by J.E. Johnson. It occupies an overhang in rock composed of granitic migmatite some 100 metres above the plain level. The width at the dripline is 2.40 metres and the shelter widens inside to 4 metres. The floor is dry and sandy. The shelter faces south east and the south east wall has an oval 'window' 50 cm from the floor, with the dimensions of 57 cm by 38 cm. Apart from the prominent painted surface there are groups of faded emu tracks close to the floor and surrounding a natural niche in the back wall of the shelter. The main painted area occupies an area of 1.40 m by 0.60 m.

This shelter is in a good state of preservation with no background of faded motifs. The obvious painted surface is more than 1.50 m above the floor and has very little dust surface.

**Key**

Refer to Drawing Shelter Painting Site P. 4. next page.

A. This group consists of two pairs of white macropod tracks superimposed upon a line of dark brown-red bird tracks. Beneath this group is a white line; the paint, applied once, is very thin.

B. This group consists of two pairs of macropod tracks and a barred "circle" in red ochre.

C. This group consists of bird tracks and two line motifs, all in red ochre.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P.5.

This painting site occurs some three metres above plain level in gneissic granite rock. The shelter faces south west and the opening, obscured by a dense stand of *Acacia aneura*, is difficult to find. The dripline width is 5.20 m and the height is 2.7 m. The ceiling is vaulted and in the south west wall two oval windows are present – one is 40 cm across and the other is 55 cm wide. The floor of this shelter is sandy with a large number of small boulders randomly scattered over the surface. (The presence of boulders on a shelter floor is sufficiently uncommon to be noted.) When this painting was first seen it appeared very indistinct, but after photographs were taken it was discovered that several very interesting features are apparent.

1. Most of the discernible tracks point downwards rather than up, as is more general in these sites.

ii. No white pigment is present.

iii. An area of red hatching occurs bounded by a red line.

iv. A "fish" shaped outline occurs, hatched all over with short black lines. The black substance used in the hatching has been analysed and found to be carbon.

v. An area of black parallel lines occurs close to the "fish" shape.

Key

Refer to Drawing Shelter Painting Site P. 5. next page.

A. Consists of a group of parallel fine black lines partially overlying a single red ochre track.

B. This motif appears as a distinctly "fish" shaped motif, composed of fine black lines which at the top right of the motif cover a patch of red ochre.

A and B may well turn out to have been made recently, perhaps about the time of contact with Europeans. This site was discovered by Mr Robert Baker in 1974, when he was manager of the station.
C. This motif is an area of red ochre hatching within a cone shaped outline. Hatching covers a red ochre bird track.

D. Is a red ochre bird track, similar to the black bird track in P.3 but upside down.

E. Is a red ochre painting partially obscured by a pale red-brown dust patina and associated with it are a number of red ochre motifs - fairly indistinct.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P.6.

This painting site occurs in a granite overhang which is almost completely hidden by very large boulders (rock fall). The floor is composed of sloping rock. The rock surface is a pale grey, fine grained mica-feldspar schist and the motifs are very faint indeed, but the exposed rock face does not exhibit any red stain except those which appear to have "artificial" form.

Key

A. Consists of two tracks which are very faint.

B. Consists of a single motif of red ochre, five lines arranged like the outline of the five fingers of the left hand. Since 1974 this motif has been partially covered with a wasp nest (Euminidae sp.). This figure is not a stencil.

C. Consists of a very faint motif of red ochre of indeterminate shape.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P. 7.

This painting site is a deep recess (1.4 metres wide at the dripline, 4 metres deep, and 1 metre high) in granite rock. The shelter faces south west. Sand covers the floor of the front half of the shelter which is 4 metres deep. The south wall of the shelter is nearly obscured by a bank of glauberite 80 cm high and the floor at the narrow back of the cave is hard compacted sandy clay, 10-15 cm higher than the fine sandy floor of the entrance.

Key Refer to Drawing Shelter Painting Site P. 7. opp. page.

A. Is a pair of small barred circles strongly executed with deep lines of white pigment; they appear to have been traced several times.
To the left of A is what I can only describe as a doodle - an implement has been drawn through a daub of white paint similar to the pigment of the adjacent motifs.

B. Is a pair of large barred circles, 80 cm by 50 cm and 72 cm by 26 cm respectively. The pigment in B is sparsely applied and has the appearance of a "wash" - altogether less sophisticated than A.

A printed name "W. Pearce" and the date "1917" occur to the right of the large barred circles and both the name and the date are written with what appears to be white chalk.
The white pigment of the small barred circles has been analysed (page 8) and is composed of pipeclay.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE P. 7.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P. 8.

This painting site was described by J.E. Johnson. Paintings occur on three walls of the nearly square shelter. The width at the dripline is 2.20 metres, the width of the east wall is 2 metres, the width of the south wall is 1.4 metres, and the width of the north wall is 1.90 metres. The site faces west and the height at the entrance is 1.2 metres. The floor is of fine sand with very little coarse material. A very extensive campsite occurs on the flood plain in full view of the shelter entrance.

Key to the south wall.

A. Is a human stick figure in red ochre with a single red ochre bird track.
B. Is a white bird track and part of a white barred circle.
C. Is a red ochre barred circle.
D. Is a circle with a yellow outline and red ochre bars. The yellow outline follows what is either a natural circular depression in the rock face or an engraved circle. The yellow pigment fills the trough which is 3 cm wide and 1.5 cm deep.
E. Is a very faint, red, tailed circle.

This wall is very much darkened by a black substance, and the figures (especially A and B) appear to have been painted on top of this material. The rock surface behind C, D and E is more crystalline than that behind A and B.

28.
Key to the east wall.

A. Is a group of white figures superimposed upon black patina and red ochre dusting which is very faded indeed.

B. Is a red ochre "comb" with four prongs.

C. Is a yellow footprint - a very rare motif, and also very faded, probably painted with carphosiderite.

D. Is a collection of white tracks both paired and single.

E. Is a red ochre "tailed" circle, similar to E on the south wall.

This painting has faded considerably since J.E. Johnson drew it in 1954.
Key to the north wall.

All motifs (with one white exception, marked w on the tracing) are drawn in red ochre. This north wall was very indistinct when J.E. Johnson drew the other walls in 1954. The photographs from which this tracing was made were taken with a flash and the resultant photography showed lines of red ochre not readily visible to the naked eye.

A. Red ochre tracks.
B. Branched red lines.
C. Red ochre figure - resembling roots of a tree.
This site was discovered in 1974, under a very wide overhand facing east above a rockhole.
The floor is of fine sand and strewn with boulders. The motifs are very indistinct. The rock surface appears to be fretting in patches and these friable areas are interspersed with tough smooth granite. Unfortunately the painted surface containing the white motif is friable.

Key

A. Is a "barred" circle painted with red ochre.
B. Is a "barred" circle painted with white pigment.
This simple motif appears on the wall of a shelter high on the eastern slopes of the East Crocker Massif. No other artificial pigmentation occurs in this large shelter. The pigment used is white, and appears to be lightly covered with a white patina which extends in all directions from the motif. The floor of the shelter is fine white sand, more than 30 cm deep (as measured with a thin wire probe). The floor is about 12 square metres in extent.
SHELTER PAINTING SITE, P. 11.

This painting site was found recently, close to a spring which was still running after six months without rain. It is also very close to what appears to be the first European settlement on the property.

The motifs are very faded but A appears to be a "lizard" form painted in red ochre with a faint track close to it on the back wall of the shelter.

On the side wall of the shelter, appears to be a pair of red ochre tracks. This site is particularly difficult to photograph as the background colour of the rock is similar to the very faint outline of the "lizard" figure.

This shelter has a steeply sloping floor with little sand present.
Discussion of the Shelter Painting Sites on Plumbago Historic Reserve.

The painting sites on Plumbago Historic Reserve are all fading rapidly. At the present time none have been damaged except by the passage of time. It is indeed fortunate that Mr J.E. Johnson spent some of his free time drawing four shelter paintings during his stay in the area in the early 1950s. Thanks to his work it is possible, twenty-five years later, to make comparisons between his drawings and photographs taken during the last eight years. Even the chalk signature and date in P.7 could be of some value in calculating by comparison the age of the barred circles.

Each painting site has a unique quality and each has some point of similarity with others in the area.

Unique Motifs.

P.2  Lizard figure,
     Stylised human figure.
     Deeply drawn purple-red barred circle.

P.3  Brown-red "skeletal" figure.
     Solid upright branched line.
     A red line meandering across the ceiling.

P.4  White tracks above dark brown-red tracks.
     Red branched line drawing.

P.5  All red and black figures.
     Tracks upside down.
     Fine red hatching over bird track.
     Fine black hatching over bird track.

P.6  Very indistinct hand.

P.7  Only white multiple barred circles are present.

P.8  Yellow circle utilising a deep oval groove.
     One red stick figure.
     One yellow footprint.
     Fine red lines joining and radiating to form a design.

P.10 Consists of a single barred circle.

P.11 "Lizard" figure quite different from that in P.2.
Similarities.

i. The multiple barred circle motif in either red or white pigment occurs in: P.2, P.4, P.7, P.8, and P.9.

ii. Tracks, either bird or macropod - white or red pigment - occur frequently.
Tracks do not occur in P.7, P.9, or P.10.

iii. Purple-red pigment is used in P.2 and P.8.

iv. White "wash" pigment occurs in P.2, P.3, P.4, P.7, and P.8 and also at Cathedral Rock and Bimba Hill 2. (These latter painting sites are on Bimbowie-Old Boolcoomatta Station). The white "wash" appears to have been applied in a very liquid vehicle.

v. White single barred circles occur in P.2, P.8, and P.10.

The floors of the shelters are shallow and subject to disturbance by animals so that levels are constantly changing; this presents difficulties if radio-carbon dating is to be considered. All painting sites with the exception of P.2, P.4, and P.10 have campsites nearby - less than 300 metres distant. All campsites so far examined on Plumbago Historic Reserve contain evidence of Kartan, core, flake and microlith implements. From the absence of evidence of occupation, e.g. numerous hearths, it may be inferred that P.2, P.4 and P.10 are areas of special significance. The painting sites have not been used by Aboriginal people at least since 1890 and it seems likely, from the concentration of painting sites in the Olary Province, that this area had an important cultural significance for the pre-Contact Aboriginal; this impression is strengthened by consideration of the position of Plumbago with relation to the tribal boundaries as described by Norman Tindale.
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PETITION

To The Hon. the Members of the House of Assembly in Parliament assembled.
The humble Petition of the undersigned electors sheweth:
That legislation for the protection of Aboriginal and Historic sites in the
State of South Australia is inadequate and fails to provide recognition for the
needs and aspiration of Aboriginal people in the implementation of programmes
for the protection of Aboriginal sites.
Your petitioners therefore pray that your Honourable House will:
1. Introduce legislation to amend or repeal the Aboriginal And Historic Relics
   Preservation Act, 1965, so as to provide -
   (a) protection for natural features of mythological or sacred significance
to Aboriginal people.
   (b) Aboriginal representation upon the Aboriginal And Historic Relics
       Advisory Board or any other appropriate Board which might be established.
   (c) protection for all Aboriginal and historic sites without the need for
       the prior permission of landowners or tenants.
   (d) control over mineral exploration and similar development with regard to
       Aboriginal and historic sites.
   (e) control over excavation or collection of Aboriginal or historic cultural
       property.
2. Provide adequate support and funds for the implementation of programmes
   concerned with the protection and preservation of Aboriginal and historic
   sites and relics in South Australia.
3. Provide funds and support for Aboriginal people in effecting their own
   programmes in the field of cultural resource management.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever Pray.

Signature

Address

Please return to Vern Tolcher, Honorary Secretary, Anthropological Society of
S.A., 213 Greenhill Road, Eastwood, before 5th January 1979.