

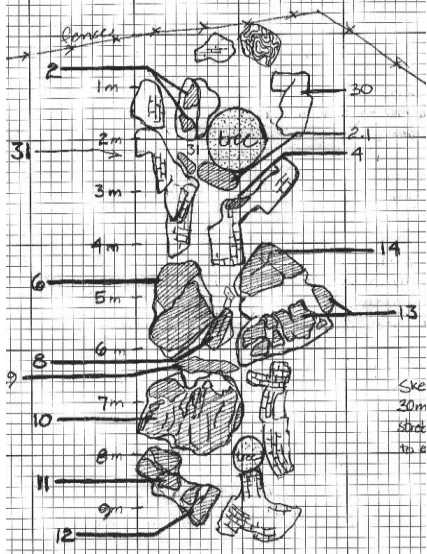
Bald Friar Petroglyphs Moved to MAC Lab



In 1944, the Maryland Academy of Sciences moved their headquarters from North Charles Street to the central branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. A consequence of this move was the loss of space for the display of the reported 90 prehistoric petroglyph stones reconstructed by the Academy after their explosive removal from the channel of the Susquehanna River in 1926. This removal, which literally involved dynamite to render the massive river boulders into manageable size pieces, was initiated by the Academy as a result of significant public outcry at their impending loss (at least from view and access), as the Bald Friar locality lay a mere 3 miles above the soon-to-be completed Conowingo Dam. Until an alternative display space could be found, the City of Baltimore agreed that the Academy could store the stones on the grounds of Druid Hill Park. Since their relocation to the park, some twenty-seven stones have been removed for display in Cecil and Harford Counties. Those stones not removed for display, or lost to other nameless and unauthorized “borrowers,” have lain in the park for 62 years, neither displayed to the public, nor protected from the environment.

In the Fall of 2005, the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) embarked on an effort to move the remaining stones from Druid Hill Park to the Maryland Archaeological Conservation (MAC) Lab at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum in Calvert County. The goals of this effort are to conserve and study these significant and unique prehistoric artifacts, and make them available for display. As a first step, the MHT requested that the City of Baltimore, Department of Recreation and Parks, relinquish to the State of Maryland their interest in the petroglyph stones stored on their property at Druid Hill Park. By a vote of their Board of Estimates, the City did so. In addition, the City provided to the Maryland Historical Trust a right-of-entry to Druid Hill Park for the purposes of the petroglyph stone removal. The MHT also contacted the Maryland Science Center (the descendant entity of the Maryland Academy of Sciences) and requested that they likewise relinquish their interest in the petroglyph stones to the State. While awaiting the outcome of their Board of Directors on this matter, the Center has agreed that the stones should be removed from the park and relocated to the MAC Lab for their protection, study, and management.

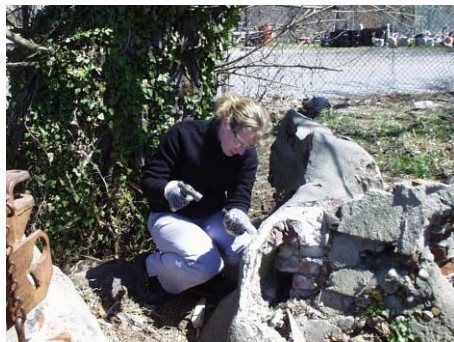




Beginning in March 2006, a team of conservators from the MAC Lab, led by the State's Lead Conservator Howard Wellman, was actively involved in the recovery of the Bald Friar Petroglyph stones from Druid Hill Park. Dr. Charles Hall, the Maryland State Terrestrial Archeologist, worked with Mr. Wellman to document and inventory the stones as they were loaded on trucks for the trip to Calvert County. Prior to removal, numerous color digital photographs of the pile, and of each stone, were recorded. In addition, a detailed map was made for the purposes of identifying and inventorying the stones. An undercoat of clear acryloid B-72 lacquer (25% solution) was applied to each inventoried stone, and a permanent marker used to inscribe a numeral corresponding to the inventory number on the undercoated label. Using a variety of hand tools and, when needed, an electric bumper-mounted winch, the conservators worked the stones onto polypropylene

pallets (selected for their strength and soft, non-marring, surfaces). These pallets were then loaded into trucks with an electric cable hoist mounted to the bed of a dump-truck.

In the case of the larger stones that were still embedded cement, the judicious use of mallets, chisels, and wedges separated them from the Academy's displays. Some of these reassembled displays are made up of numerous fragments worked into elaborate mosaics to exhibit glyphs that were fractured during removal from the Susquehanna River. In the case of complex reassemblies, clear plastic sheeting was laid over the displays and the stones were traced with permanent marker to preserve a record of their configuration. The dislodged pieces of the whole were kept together on single pallets for transportation and eventual storage.



The removal of the stones from Druid Hill Park was completed in June 2006.

The Bald Friar petroglyphs are currently in a secure storage area at the MAC Lab, awaiting further conservation treatment to clean them of any remaining cement, and eventual laboratory study. Eventually, we hope to identify appropriate partner organizations across the State who will wish to display and interpret these prehistoric artifacts to the public.