

**Motivation for archaeological excavations on N'Rougas Noord 108, Kenhardt, ZF Mgcawu District, Kai !Garib Local Municipality, Northern Cape.**

Dr Lita Webley & Prof Sarah Wurz

**Location:**

The farm is located slightly to the east of the R27, 32km north of Kenhardt. 1km east of the R27. In the ZF Mgcawu District and Kai !Garib Local Municipality

The site is located on 1:50 000 map sheet: 2921 AA N'Rougas

GPS Co-ordinates:

29° 03' 52.54" South and 21° 09' 49.27" East

Proposed Site Reference Number: **NRG001**

Property owner and Address:

Veronica Rorich  
N'Rougas Noord portion 108

Kai Garib  
Northern Cape  
8900

Contact email: [veronica@rorich.co.za](mailto:veronica@rorich.co.za)

Contact telephone: +27 (0)827353595

Background

Kurukop on the farm N'Rougas, is associated with a permanent water source and several rock engravings occur on hill. There is a large number of Later Stone Age quartz artefacts associated with these engravings. Some of these are backed and would appear to have been hafted. It is likely that these artefacts date to the last 2000 years. At the quartz outcrop a few hundred metres away, there is evidence of quartz exploitation by both LSA and MSA people.

Similar sites, such as that by Deacon at Arbeidsvreugd (1996), Morris of the McGregor Museum at Springbokoog (1990), as well as the adjoining farm of Melkboom 1 (Parsons 2008), have added to our knowledge of the inhabitants of Bushmanland during the last 2000 years.

Melkboom 1 is located on the adjoining farm (Melkboom 57) and consist of a shallow open-air deposit, next to a gneiss outcrop with hollows that accumulate water after rain shows. In 1991 Peter Beaumont of the McGregor Museum excavated twenty 1x1 m squares. The average depth of deposit was 4cm, but Square P10 was excavated to 36cm and yielded bone remains up to a depth of 28cm. The site has been attributed to the Doornfontein signature, but a colonial presence is also indicated by flaked glass tools, ceramic fragments, and rectangular stone walling. Radiocarbon dates for the sub-surface deposit indicate occupation between the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (Parsons 2008:53). The material from this excavation was re-analysed by Isabelle Parsons for her thesis and subsequently published in 2008.

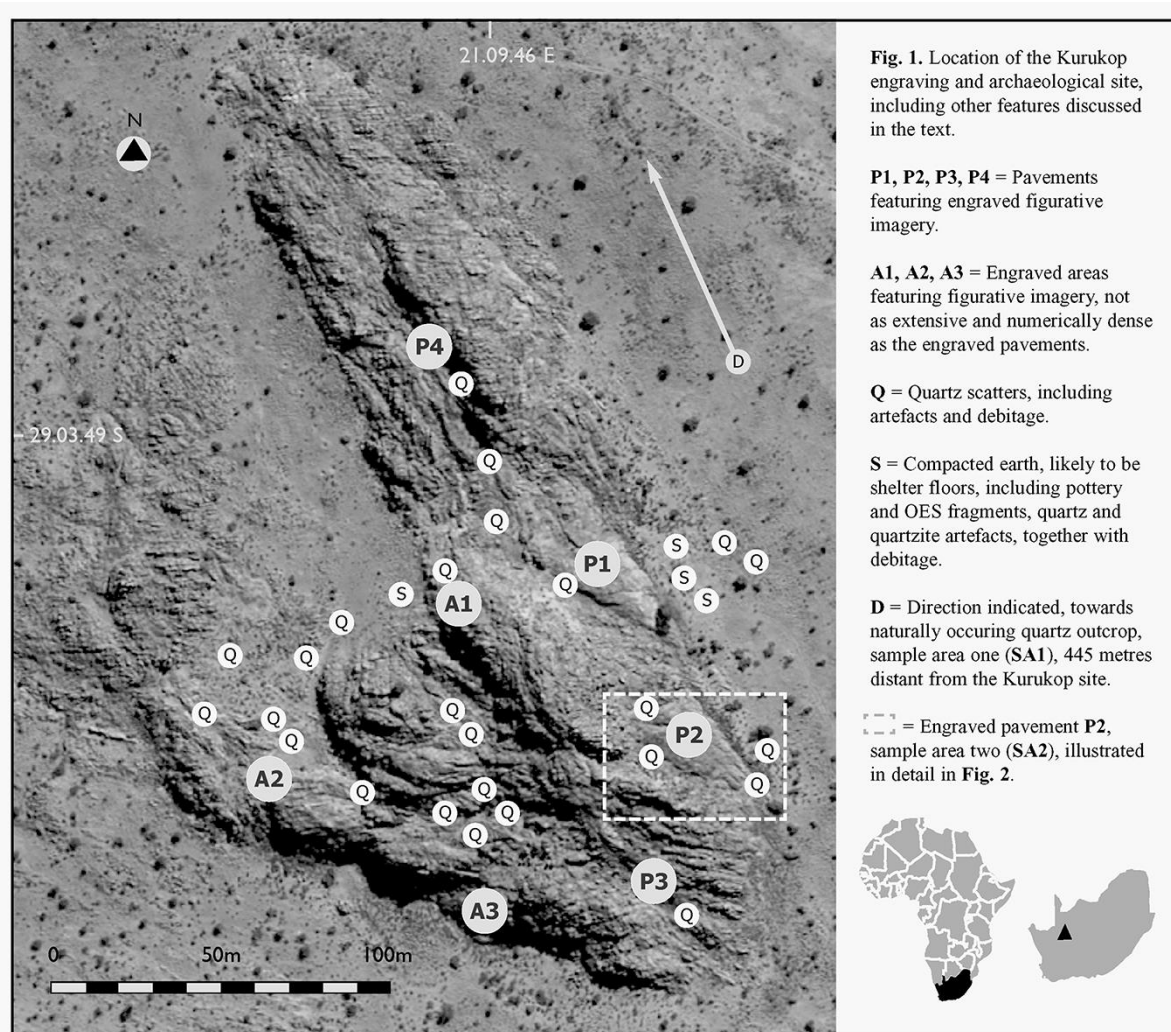


Figure 1: Location of the possible hut floors and pottery (S).

## Methodology and Excavation Equipment

To the east of Kurukop is an area of compacted earth, likely to be hut floors, with pottery and ostrich eggshell (OES) fragments. There is also many quartz and quartzite artefacts, together with debitage.

In order to map the hut floors and associated stone artefacts, it is proposed to set up a 1m x 1m grid (which may be divided into 50cm x 50cm quadrants if required) using a datum point established on the nearby rock. The grid will be set up using tape measures and string.

Similar to the excavations at the nearby site of Melkboom 1, it is proposed to scrape the surface soils using a trowel, paint brush and dust pans. All sand will be sieved through a 2mm sieve. Unsorted material will be placed in marked bags and taken back to the laboratory in Cape Town for final sorting and analysis.

If there is any evidence of archaeological material in the sub-surface soils, then these will be removed stratigraphically and retained in separate bags. Stratigraphic layers will be marked with nails and labels and recorded on graph paper using levels and string.

If there is no evidence of stratigraphy, then the soils will be excavated in 5cm spits until sterile soils are reached.

In situ features, such as hut floors, hearths, upper and lower grindstones, large stones etc will be plotted *in situ* on graph paper. If there is any evidence of an arrangement of features (such as hut floors or hearths), it is important that this is recorded for the purposes of spatial analysis.

The excavated areas will be covered with soil after completion of the excavations and the material will be transported to Cape Town for analysis and publication.

#### References:

Deacon, J. 1996. The Archaeology of the Flat and Grass Bushmen. In. Deacon, J. & Dowson, T.A. (eds). *Voices from the Past*. Page 245-270.

Morris, D. 1990. "Etchings" and "Intaglios" in the Upper Karoo: Part 1: The Engravings at Springbokooog. In. Beaumont, P. & Morris, D. (eds). *Guide to Archaeological Sites in the Northern Cape*.

Orton, J. & Parsons, I. 2018. Looking beneath the surface: Later Stone Age remains at Klipgats Pan, Bushmanland, South Africa. *Southern African Humanities*: 31 (1).

Parsons, I. 2008. Five Later Stone Age artefact assemblages from the interior Northern Cape Province. *The South African Archaeological Bulletin* 63(187): 51-60.