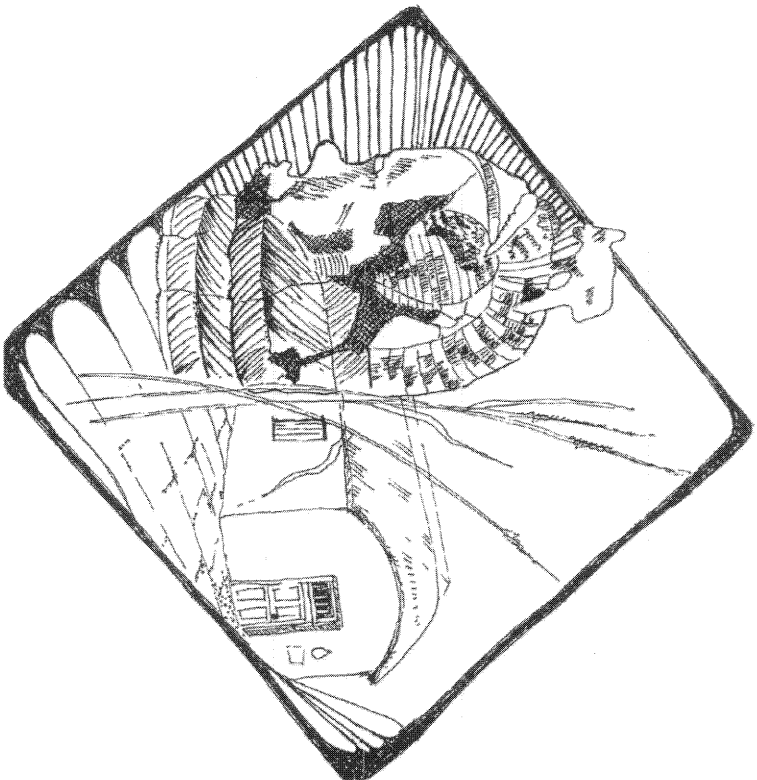


Received
19.02.06.

Report on Archaeological Survey on the farm Sterkspruit in the
Lydenburg District, JT
compiled by

Lydenburg Museum



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December 12,

*Income
report sent.*

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1. Introduction

The National Heritage Resources Act (Act no. 25 of 1999) requires of individuals (engineers, farmers, mines and industry) to have impact assessment studies undertaken whenever any development activities are planned.

This includes guidelines for impact assessment studies to be done whenever cultural resources may be destroyed by development activities.

Against this background a preliminary Archaeological or Cultural Resources Management (CRM) survey was carried out during 7 December 2005 on the farm Sterkspruit In the Lydenburg District.

Van Vollenhoven (1995:3) describes cultural resources as all unique and non-renewable physical phenomena (of natural occurrence or made by humans) that can be associated with human (cultural) activities.

These would be any man-made structure, tool, object of art or waste that was left behind on or beneath the soil surface by historic or pre-historic communities.

These remains, when studied in their original context by archaeologists, are interpreted in an attempt to understand, identify and reconstruct the activities and lifestyles of past communities. When these items are disturbed from their original context, any meaningful information they possessed is lost, therefore it is important to locate and identify such remains before construction or development activities commence.

A CRM survey consists of three phases, this document deals with the first phase. This (phase 1) investigation is aimed at getting an overview of cultural resources in a given area, thereby assessing the possible impact a proposed development may have on these resources.

When the archaeologist encounters a situation where the planned project will lead to the destruction or alteration of an archaeological site, a second phase in the survey is normally recommended.

During a phase 2 investigation the impact assessment of development activities on identified cultural resources is intensified and detailed investigation into the nature and origin of the cultural material is undertaken. Normally at this stage, archaeological excavation is carried out in order to document and preserve the cultural heritage.

Phase three consists of the compiling of a management plan for the safeguarding, conservation, interpretation and utilization of cultural resources (Van Vollenhoven, 2002).

Continuous communication between the developer and surveyor after the initial report have been compiled may result in the modification of a planned route or development to incorporate or protect existing archaeological sites.

2. Description of surveyed area

The survey was carried out near Lydenburg on the farm Sterkspruit

The surveyed area consists of around 12 hectares of previously cultivated land as well as typical middleveld bushveld. The largest part of the survey was conducted on foot in an effort to locate cultural remains.

3. Aim and method of survey

The purpose of the archaeological survey is to establish the whereabouts and nature of cultural heritage sites should they occur on the surveyed area.

This includes settlements, structures and artefacts which have value for an individual or group of people in terms of historical, archaeological, architectural and human (cultural) development.

It is the aim of this study to locate and identify such objects or places in order to assess whether they are of significance and warrant further investigation and/ or protection.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) formulated guidelines for the conservation of all cultural resources and therefore also divided such sites into three main categories. These categories might be seen as guidelines that suggest the extent of protection a given site might receive. They include sites or features of local (Grade 3) provincial (Grade 2) and national (Grade 1) significance.

For practical purposes the surveyor uses his own classification for sites or features and divides them into three groups, those of low or no significance, those of medium significance, those of high significance.

Sites of low significance:

These are sites or features that indicate some form of human activity in the form of a structure, shelter, materials used by historic settlers but which is in such a weathered state that it will provide very little information that warrants further investigation. Features or structures that are not considered as national treasures also fall within this category.

Sites of Medium significance:

A good number of sites fall into this category. These include sites which are moderately to well-preserved and may be of such a nature that they may be utilized for future research. Sites of this nature also fall into an archaeologically well-known category which means that in most instances they will provide little new or significant information during further investigation.

Sites of High significance:

There exist archaeological sites that contain invaluable data which will significantly enhance the knowledge that archaeologists currently have about our cultural heritage. These sites are rare and normally of more ancient origin (Stone Age shelters and Early Iron Age settlements are among the more common ones). In most instances these sites should be preserved and not damaged during construction activities.

When development activities do however jeopardize the future of such a site, a second and third phase in the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) process is normally advised.

Graves are considered very sensitive sites and should never under any circumstances be jeopardized by development activities. In all instances where graves are found by the surveyor, the recommendation would be to steer clear of these areas. If this cannot

be done or if construction activities have for some reason damaged graves, specialized consultants are normally contacted after development activities have been brought to a halt.

4. History of the area

The Voortrekkers staying in Natal, Free State and Transvaal, used the Port Natal (Durban) harbour for their trading. In 1843 the British annexed Natal. The trekkers needed a harbour for free trade as well as to receive visitors, especially schoolteachers and preachers from the Netherlands. After several attempts, Potgieter and his followers eventually succeeded in finding a route to Delagoa Bay (Maputo) in Mozambique. An agreement between Potgieter and the Portuguese governor would allow the Trekkers to stay inland, four days' journey from the bay.

Smellekamp, a dutch merchant, who had been refused dockage at Port Natal by the British, was eager to trade with the trekkers and promised to bring a ship with goods as well as schoolteachers and preachers to the bay.

At that time, Potchefstroom was the capital of Transvaal. On his numerous trips to the north, Potgieter kept a lookout for a suitable place to settle, closer to a harbour and further from the British. Such a place, well-watered and abounding in vegetation was identified and in July of 1845, Andries Potgieter accompanied by W.F. Joubert and his followers from Natal, established the new capital north of the 26th Latitude and 300 km west of Delagoa Bay. The town was named Andries Ohrigstad. Three hundred families settled at Ohrigstad in 1846.

A severe problem with malaria and the inability of Joubert and Potgieter to reconcile their differences, caused Potgieter to once again move north to the Zoutpansberg to establish Schoemansdal with a group of followers. Because of the malaria the group that stayed behind and who functioned under the Volksraad, decided to find a place with a healthier climate. Thus Lydenburg was founded in January 1850 and was named after the suffering at Ohrigstad ('Lyden' the dutch word for 'suffering')

The Pedi

The Pedi is surely the most famous tribe to have inhabited the Lydenburg area in historic times. The area in which these people settled is historically known as Bopedi but other groups resided here before the famous Pedi came onto the scene. Among the first of these were the Kwena or Mongatane, who came from the north and were probably of Sotho origin. A second tribe to settle in Bopedi before the arrival of the Pedi were the Roka, followed by the Koni (Mönnig, 19..)

Some Koni entered the area from the east and other from the north-west. According to historians, most Koni trace their origin to Swaziland and therefore claim that they are related to the Nguni. After the first Koni settled in the southern part of Bopedi, the area became known as Bokoni. Many people who were previously known as Roka

also adopted the name Koni as the name "Roka" was not always held in esteem by other groups (Mönig, 19....).

Historically the Pedi was a relatively small tribe who by various means built up a considerable empire. The Pedi are of Sotho origin. They migrated southwards from the Great Lakes in Central Africa some five centuries ago. The names of their chiefs can be traced to a maximum of fifteen generations. Historical events can be deduced reasonably well for the last two centuries, while sporadic events can be described another two centuries preceding the former.

Some 150 years before the Voortrekkers entered the area, some battles took place between the Koni (Zulu under Makopole) and Swazi (under Moselakase). At that time the Mapedi resided in the Steelpoort area.

The Bakoni (Koni) was attacked and defeated by the Marabele and their chief, Makopole, was killed. The Marabele, not yet satisfied with their victory, moved further north towards the Bapedi headquarters. At Olifantspoortjie the whole Bapedi regiment was wiped out as well as all the sons of Thulare, the Bapedi chief (except for Sekwati who managed to escape).

After four years, Sekwati together with a few followers who had also managed to escape the Matabele, now slowly started to rise. In 1830 Sekwati invaded some of the smaller and eventually the Koni (under Marangrang) was ambushed and defeated. Now the empire of Maruteng (Bapedi) ruled the Koni (Bulpin, 1984; Mönig, 19...).

When Potgieter and his followers entered the area in 1845 a Peace Treaty was signed between himself and Sekwati. Sekwati also asked for protection against the larger tribes in the area.

After consultation with Prof. Tom Huffman, it became clear that the ruins to be found near the town of Lydenburg most probably belong to the Koni rather than the Pedi, who resided further to the south-west towards Steelpoort and Burgersfort. It follows that the ruins found during this survey then probably belong to the Koni or Pedi, there is not enough evidence to be certain. The ruins then probably date from as far back as the seventeenth century (Mönig, 19....:16).

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5. Findings and recommendations

Only one site location was documented.

Site 1, numbered NRI/05 is characterized by five graves aligned in a north-south direction. At least three of these feature headstones on the western end. Each grave measures approximately 1.5 metres across and 2 metres long. They are located in an area which is densely vegetated and difficult to access.

No further cultural material could be found in the immediate vicinity of the graves. This is regarded as a high significance site and should under no circumstances be disturbed without prior consultation with an archaeologist.

It is recommended that the graves either be fenced off or that the client have the choice to relocate the graves. Another option is to leave the graves undisturbed if no development activities are planned near the location of these structures.

It is important to note that the bulk of archaeological remains are normally located beneath the soil surface. It is therefore possible that some significant cultural material or remains were not located during this survey and will only be revealed when the soil is disturbed.

Therefore it is recommended that the owner of the land or developers take this into consideration when such activities are planned and executed at these locations.

Should excavation or large scale earth moving activities reveal any human skeletal remains, broken pieces of ceramic pottery, large quantities of sub-surface charcoal or any material that can be associated with previous occupation, a qualified archaeologist should be notified immediately.

This will also temporarily halt such activities until an archaeologist have assessed the situation.

It must also be noted that if such a situation occurs, it will probably have further financial implications for the developers.

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7. Appendix A

Appendix B

8. List of Site Locations

During the survey, the location of sites are normally plotted with aid of a GPS (Global Positioning System). The site locations are then numbered in the following fashion: The initials LS followed by a number marks the identity of the site. The "L" stands for Lydenburg and "S" for Sterkspruit.

1. Site name: LS 1 (Site 1)
Date of compilation: 07/12/2005
GPS reading: Longitude, 30° 29, 253' E
Latitude, 25° 06, 832' S
Altitude: 1 503 m
Photo: Fig. 1, 2.
2. Site name: LS 2 (Site 2)
Date of compilation: 07/12/2005
GPS reading: Longitude, 30° 29, 202' E
Latitude, 25° 06, 827' S
Altitude: 1 533 m
Photo: Fig. 3.
3. Site name: LS 3 (Site 3)
Date of compilation: 07/12/2005
GPS reading: Longitude, 30° 29, 114' E
Latitude, 25° 06, 823' S
Altitude: 1 494 m
Photo: Fig. 4.
4. Site name: LS 4 (Site 4)
Date of compilation: 07/12/2005
GPS reading: Longitude, 30° 29, 056' E
Latitude, 25° 06, 850' S
Altitude: 1 498 m
Photo: None.
5. Site name: LS 5 (Site 5)
Date of compilation: 07/12/2005
GPS reading: Longitude, 30° 29, 000' E
Latitude, 25° 06, 880' S
Altitude: 1 503m
Photo: Fig. 5.

6. Site name: LS 6 (Site 6)

Date of compilation: 07/12/2005

GPS reading: Longitude, 30° 28, 926' E

Latitude, 25° 06, 913' S

Altitude: 1 454m

Photo: Fig. 6, 7.

9. Appendix C

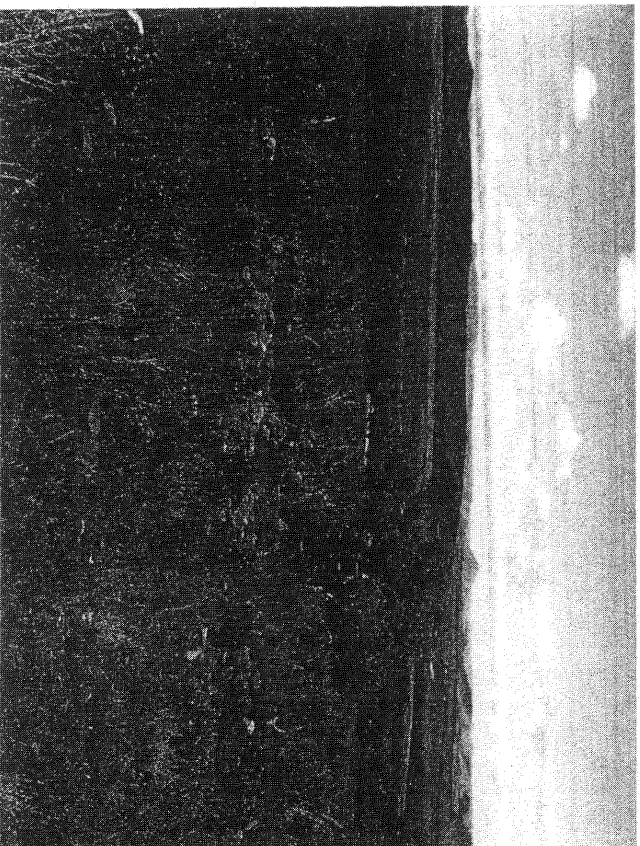


Figure 1. Stone enclosure at Site 1 (LS 1). Photo taken in southern direction.



Figure 2. Stone walling at Site 1 (LS 1). Photo taken in northern direction.

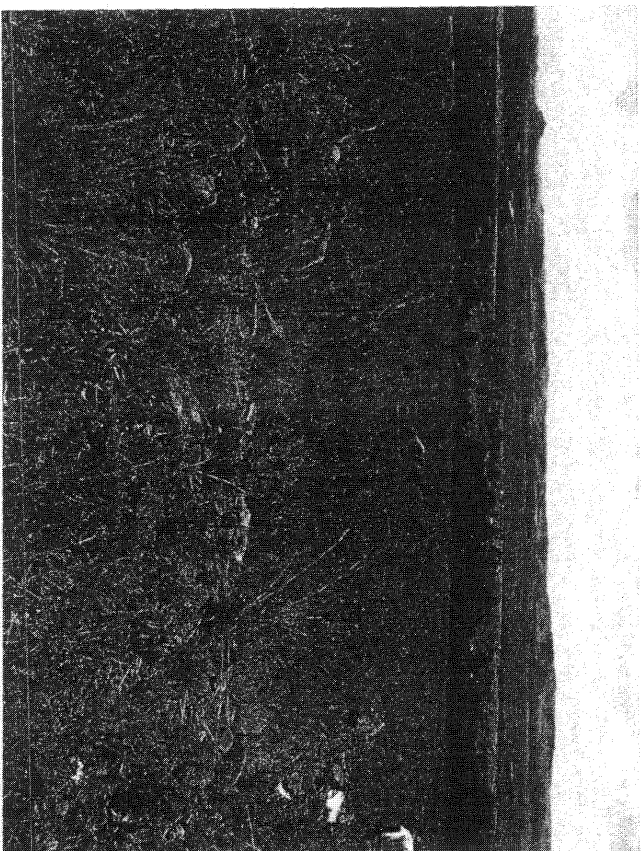


Figure 3. Photo of circular stone structure at Site LS 2. Structure is located east of the property boundary. This feature is probably linked to Site 1.

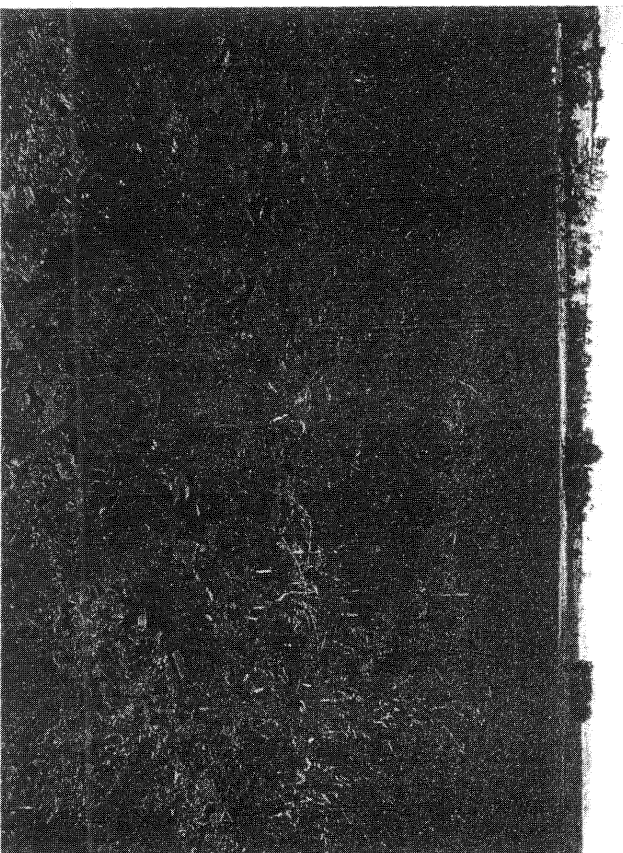


Figure 4. Circular stone structure at Site LS 3. Photo taken in north-western direction. This feature is probably linked to Site 1.



Figure 5. Photo at Site LS 5. Photo taken in northern direction.

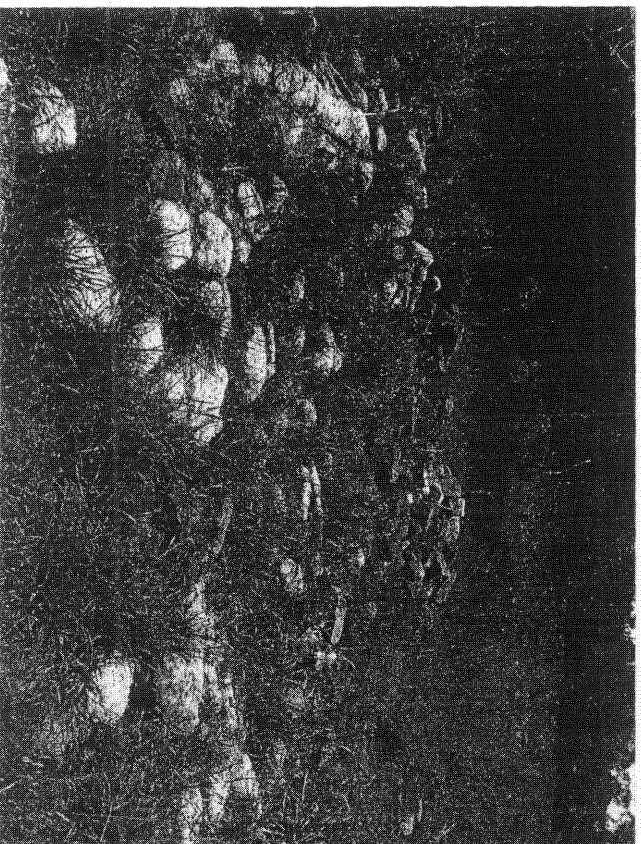


Figure 6. Photo of one of the rectangular structures at Site LS 6. Photo taken in eastern direction.

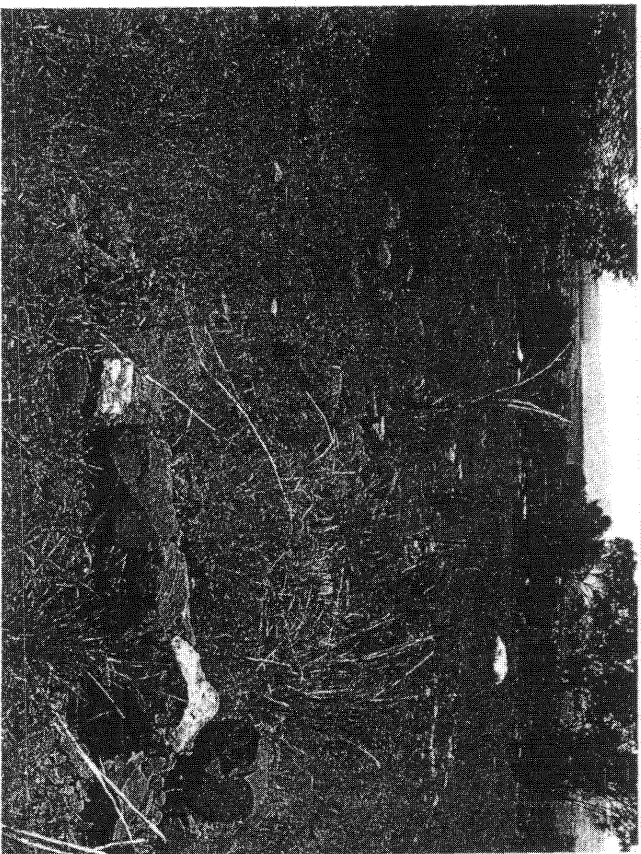


Figure 7. Photo of second rectangular structure at Site LS 6. Photo taken in southern direction.

