

## **CHAPTER 2 FROM APATHY TO OBLIVION: THE SHAMEFUL HISTORY OF REDAN**

### **PART 1 1882 - 1956**

#### **1882 - 1920 THE PREHISTORIC ROOTS OF VEREENIGING**

The history of Redan is inextricably bound up with the development of Vereeniging as a mining and industrial metropolis. A study of the rock engraving site would be incomplete without some reference to this intertwined history. In the following chapter this history, the events and personalities that contributed to the recognition of Redan as an important heritage site, and its imminent demise, are discussed.

Stow's untimely death did not deter Marks and mining operations continued at the Bedworth Colliery, inevitably leading to an influx of shopkeepers and miners. In 1882 approximately 300 people, including 100 mine workers, were established on the farm Klipplaatdrift No. 336 that Stow had previously acquired for the Association, prior to his death. Marks instructed the firm Simpson and Shappert to apply to the Transvaal Government for township rights on this farm (Willemsse 1999:29-30). Pretoria agreed in principle and stipulated that the proposed township be called 'Vereeniging' (Dutch for 'Association'). Due to the economic depression of the mid-eighties and the lack of an infrastructure in the area, plans were temporarily stalled, only to be revived in 1889 after the recent discovery of gold on

the Witwatersrand and the possibility that the coal fields of Vereeniging could supply fuel for the gold mines.

In 1891 T.N. Leslie, an emigrant from England who was employed by Marks in Pretoria as a building contractor and stone mason, accompanied Marks to Bedworth Colliery in order to build offices and housing for the mine workers. Leslie settled on the farm Leeukuil and opened the Wildebeest Quarry in the area close to the confluence of the Klip River and the Vaal River (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:77-90). While excavating for building stone he made the discovery that would change the course of his life and impact directly on the future of the rock engravings of Redan. He discovered that the area was exceptionally rich in fossil plants, Early Stone Age tools and rock engraving sites:

Scattered in the neighbourhood were exposures of sandstone. On the surface of these in many places were pictographs of animals or geometric figures ... The great variety of specialised tools in stone - the only material that has survived - and the artistic nature of the etchings, or peckings, gives us the idea that prehistoric man had developed faculties we had hardly expected ... (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:78)

Leslie's (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:77) interest in the prehistory of the area was fueled and he came to the conclusion that 'prehistoric man lived here in great numbers, probably for thousands of years'. He rapidly became

known as a skilled amateur archaeologist and paleobotanist with a remarkable knowledge of the prehistory of the area.

A year after Leslie's arrival, plans were resumed for the establishment of a town and on 29 July 1892, the village of Vereeniging was officially proclaimed. Plans went ahead to lay out *erven* (stands) on the farms Klipplaatdrift No. 336 and Leeukuil No. 596. The final plans were drawn up by J. Rissik according to the standard grid pattern and *erven* were pegged out by E. Jorrisen. The intersecting streets and avenues were named after prominent politicians of the time (Prinsloo 1992:39). Stow's name was not commemorated. The fact that ancient rock engravings occurred on both Klipplaatdrift and Leeukuil and the possibility of conserving them as valuable prehistoric relics of the past were of no concern to Marks or the authorities. The farm Kookfontein, the richest site of rock engravings in the Vereeniging area, was not included in the town plans, thus saving the engravings from annihilation.

Throughout the 1890s mining activities continued to dominate the burgeoning town of Vereeniging. Stow's prophetic words of more than a decade earlier became a reality when Cornelia Mine was opened on the Transvaal side of the Bedworth Collieries in 1894 in the area where Stow had conducted the first primitive mining operations. This mine was destined to become the greatest coal-producing mine in South Africa (Prinsloo 1992:241-242). In 1897 the company was converted into a public company and Vereeniging Estates (Ltd) became the major landowners in

Vereeniging (Willemse 1999:62). Leslie maintained a close working relationship with the new company as builder. In the course of excavating building stone at his quarry on the banks of the Klip River, Leslie discovered many extinct fossil plants and subsequently established that the town of Vereeniging was laid out on the dried up bed of an ancient lake stretching from the Houtkop area to Viljoensdrift Station. This lake had been fed by the Vaal River, then at a much higher level (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:79-80).

During the Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902) mining activities were severely curtailed but a second shaft was sunk at Cornelia Mine (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558:80, Leslie 1939:110). Hearing that the Boers planned to blow up the mine (and in the process inevitably destroy the rich fossil sites in the area) Leslie, on the advice of Draper, removed 200 cases of explosives from the mine, transported them by ox-wagon and hid them in his quarry. When martial law was declared Leslie departed for Cape Town where he spent a few days in the company of L. Péringuey, Director of the South African Museum (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:112-117). Soon after his arrival in South Africa from France in 1879 Péringuey had become closely involved in conservation issues and was instrumental in requesting farmers and magistrates to report finds of rock art in their districts to the Colonial Secretary (Rudner 1989:2). He developed a particular interest in rock engravings, and subsequently published a number of papers on the subject.

Returning to Vereeniging in 1900, Leslie experienced the hoisting of the Union Jack in his own garden on 19 September 1901 and listened to the announcement of the formal annexation of the Transvaal, read in Dutch and English by the Commissioner (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:133). Leslie quickly became embroiled in a variety of civic matters, including the health care of civilians both in the town and in the concentration camps. Mining activities had practically ceased, but the Bedworth mining area continued to play a significant role. During the occupation of the town, the mine offices were occupied by the British forces of Lord Roberts. Peace negotiations took place on 15 May 1902 in the mining area on a piece of open ground near the mine, and Leslie (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:137) recalls that it was 'immediately opposite the present entrance gates of the Rand Water Board's pumping station'.

On 17 August 1904 the Milner Government conferred municipal status on Vereeniging and Leslie was appointed to serve on the board of this 'smaller municipality' and elected as chairman (Prinsloo 1992:43; Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:164). He became closely involved in the restructuring of the town and served in many diverse capacities. In terms of this appointment Leslie found himself engaged in shaping a modern industrial town in the same area where thousands of years ago early man had created a variety of stone tools, taking the first tentative steps towards industrialisation. In years to come his paper *The Stone Age industry of Vereeniging* (1926) would be widely acclaimed in scientific circles. In the course of his duties Leslie met General J.C. Smuts and they

soon discovered a shared interest in archaeology and botany (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:150). Smuts subsequently became an impassioned spokesman for the advancement of prehistory in his capacity as parliamentarian. The Cape Colony was far removed from war-ravaged Transvaal and it was here in 1904 that a number of concerned citizens formed The South African National Society, the first organisation dedicated to conservation in the country. The primary concern of the society was to create an awareness of colonial architecture and furniture, but it also campaigned successfully for legislation to protect archaeological and rock art sites. Stow's pioneering work in rock art conservation was at last bearing fruit. In the same year the House of Assembly in the Cape adopted a resolution to request the government to take effective steps 'to preserve from decay and destruction Bushman paintings at Rebels' Kloof in the Cala District, and elsewhere in the Cape Colony' (Rudner 1989:3). With the assistance of district magistrates and relying heavily on Stow's research during the nineteenth century, a list of painting sites in the Cape Colony was drawn up. No comparable official recognition of rock art was forthcoming in the Transvaal.

1905 proved to be a conspicuous year for both conservation and rock art. The British Association for the Advancement of Science held their annual meeting in South Africa for the first time. Péringuey used the opportunity to bring to the attention of the delegates, the rock engravings of South Africa. Hitherto it had been the rock paintings that had elicited the greatest interest (Wilman (1933) 1968:5-6). This meeting coincided with the publication of Stow's *The native races of South*

*Africa.* Prior to the meeting a number of the delegates visited Vereeniging at Leslie's invitation. Leslie conducted the eminent visitors to places of geological and anthropological interest and displayed his private collection of plant fossils and prehistoric stone tools (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:191). Also present was Maria Wilman, protégé of Péringuey and one of a handful of women scientists in South Africa at the time. Wilman would later gain international renown for her pioneering work on the rock engravings of the Northern Cape.

In the following year (1906) Leslie made another remarkable discovery, further proof of the great antiquity of the Vereeniging area. In his capacity as a prominent member of local government, Leslie frequently advised Marks on possible improvements to the mine. He was also well aware of Marks' ambition to develop Vereeniging into an industrial giant (Mendelsohn 1991:55-56). The water supply to the mine from the Vaal River was irregular and unpredictable and Leslie persuaded Marks that in order to stabilise the water supply and feed prospective industries, it was necessary to dam up the river. Marks agreed and Leslie built a small weir across the Vaal River. In the course of laying the river bed dry, he discovered an ancient fossilised forest. Leslie (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:173) recalls: 'I rode down the river and at about a mile and a half below the weir and fronting the old Central Mine Dump I saw to my astonishment in the exposed bed of the river a fossil forest'. This unique discovery was subsequently confirmed: '... at Vereeniging, where the casts of the stumps of trees actually rooted

in the upper surface of the coal were temporarily exposed in the bed of the Vaal River over an area of two acres...' (Du Toit 1954:287-288). According to Leslie (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13558, Leslie 1939:76) this was also close to the site of Stow's grave: 'He is buried on the left bank of the Vaal River almost overlooking the site where, years afterwards I discovered a fossil forest'. Many years later the fossilised forest (and presumably Stow's last resting place) would be completely submerged when the Vaal River Barrage was built in 1923 by the Rand Water Board (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 03/13560, Rosenthal 1957:161; Willemsse 1999:97). In spite of Leslie's remarkable discovery, the prehistory of Vereeniging attracted little local interest. However a number of eminent scholars visited the rock engraving sites. Rudolph Pöch of the McGregor Museum inspected a large number of engraving sites throughout South Africa, including the sites at Vereeniging. On his return to Vienna he published a number of papers, including one devoted exclusively to the rock engravings of Vereeniging (Pöch 1908). J.P. Johnson, a geologist working for the Government also included a description of the engravings at Kookfontein (Redan) in one of his publications (Johnson 1910).

In 1910 the bitter memories of the Anglo-Boer war were almost a decade away and on 31 May the constitution of the first Union Government united the separate provinces under a single government. In this more stable political climate it was appropriate that matters other than conflict and dissension receive attention. In the same year the Government appointed a small commission to report on the rock paintings and engravings in the Transvaal and to make recommendations on what



steps to take to preserve them from destruction and vandalism. The commission consisted of J.P. Johnson, Prof. R.B. Young (chairman) and T.N. Leslie of Vereeniging (Wilman (1933) 1968:8). This appointment gave official recognition both to Leslie and to the rock engravings of Vereeniging. The findings of the small commission were instrumental in the promulgation of the first law in South Africa offering some form of protection against the vandalism and destruction of rock art. In 1911 the *Bushman Relics Protection Act No. 22 of 1911* was promulgated, making it a penalty to damage or destroy rock art, archaeological sites and other relics, and to control the export of rock art. Unfortunately no mechanisms were created for administering the law and sites continued to be desecrated (Rudner 1989:3). The relative isolation of the farm Kookfontein, away from human settlements, saved the rock engravings of Redan from desecration. However, the site became progressively more neglected and forgotten. The following year (1912) the status of major municipality was conferred on Vereeniging and Leslie was elected mayor. In the years to come he would continue to combine his civic duties with his pursuit of the prehistory of the area. In the course of his duties he met a young civil engineer Clarence (Peter) Van Riet Lowe. Van Riet Lowe was destined to continue the work that Leslie had initiated.

#### **1920 - 1955    RETRIEVING THE PAST**

In the latter part of 1920, Van Riet Lowe, employed by the Pretoria Public Works Department as an assistant Clerk of Works, was sent to assist in the building of a bridge over the Vaal at Vereeniging. In Vereeniging Leslie introduced him to the

prehistoric sites in the area (Mason 1989:7) and Van Riet Lowe's interest was aroused: 'Here for the first time were remains of human industry in stone that covered ... hundreds of thousands of years of human development... Seldom had I been so stimulated ... and with Mr Leslie's encouragement I made up my mind to devote as much of my time as possible to them...' (cited in Mason 1989:8). Prior to this meeting Van Riet Lowe had already acquired a considerable knowledge of the prehistory of South Africa and after his meeting with Leslie he actively began pursuing this interest and showing an early concern for the preservation of prehistoric sites (Mason 1989:39). During the Smuts regime (1920-1924), a further important step was taken to protect the rock art heritage of South Africa. Act No. 22 of 1911 was replaced by the *Natural, Historical and Monuments Act No. 6 of 1923* and a Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments of the Union of South Africa was appointed to facilitate implementation of the act (Rudner 1989:3). 'Monuments' were defined as 'objects (whether natural or constructed by human agency) of aesthetic, historical or scientific value ... and ... Bushman paintings...' This commission was responsible for compiling a register of the monuments of South Africa and could enter into agreement with any public body or private individual to ensure that it was preserved.

In 1926 Van Riet Lowe delivered a paper on conservation issues at the meeting of the South African Association of Science at Grahamstown. His paper was well received and also served as an introduction to a number of prominent academics who shared his interest in the Early Stone Age in South Africa (Mason 1989:11).

His working relationship with A.J.H. Goodwin of the University of Cape Town would culminate a few years later in an important publication (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe 1929). In 1928 Van Riet Lowe was transferred to Johannesburg to supervise the building of a number of bridges on the southern Highveld (Mason 1989:21). All the sites revealed an abundance of ancient stone tools, confirming his belief in the presence of prehistoric man in the Vaal area. He regularly accompanied prominent visitors to the archaeological sites he had identified on the Vaal, the Klip and the Suikerbos Rivers. These visitors included Prof. Raymond Dart and Mrs R.A. Hoernlé of the University of the Witwatersrand (Mason 1989:21-23). Miles Burkitt from Cambridge University was especially intrigued by the rock engravings (Mason 1989:125-126); he subsequently published one of the first books devoted solely to the rock art of South Africa (Burkitt 1928). During this period Van Riet Lowe was also invited to meet Smuts at his home in Doornkloof (Mason 1989:22-23). Smuts had a deep and abiding interest in prehistory and had on many occasions acted as its spokesman in parliament (Mason 1989:102-109).

In 1929 Smuts was preparing for his presidency of the combined meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the South African Association of Science, scheduled to take place in South Africa in July of 1929 (Mason 1989:59), and Van Riet Lowe was invited to submit a paper. At the conclusion of the meeting, he organised a tour to the Stone Age sites in the valley of the Vaal between Vereeniging and Barkley West and other areas. This epic tour included the Abbé Breuil, considered at the time to be the world's greatest scholar of

rock art, Harper Kelly from Paris, Hoernlé, and H.J. Braunholtz from the British Museum and a number of other dignatories. The abundance of prehistoric sites and the variety and wealth of rock engravings in this valley excited the visitors as they had previously excited Burkitt. A large number of stone tools were collected at Klipplaatdrift in Vereeniging, including hand-axes and cleavers of the Early Stone Age and dispatched to museums in London and Paris (Mason 1989:24). Breuil was particularly enthusiastic, comparing the tools to those at Acheulean (Early Stone Age) sites in Europe and North West Africa. In the same year Van Riet Lowe co-authored the *Stone Age cultures of South Africa* with Goodwin. This epochal publication established archaeology as a discipline in South Africa and it was taught for the first time at the University of Cape Town by Goodwin. It was also the first attempt to develop an essentially African nomenclature for the Stone Age (Deacon 1990:42-43). After the 1929 meeting and the joint publication, Van Riet Lowe determined to leave engineering and to pursue archaeology as a full-time career.

In February 1930 an important debate took place in parliament regarding the advancement of prehistory in the country. The Prime Minister J.B. Hertzog expressed his concern at the needless desecration of rock art and the necessity of taking steps to save the art:

Anyone, however, at all acquainted with the history of South Africa knows that the drawings which in my youthful days could be seen everywhere in the Free State have almost or for more than a third part, disappeared. I should say that it is

worthwhile for South Africa to spend £5,000 or even £10,000 or £20,000 to save the drawings for all posterity. (cited in Mason 1989:104)

The debate was an opportunity for Smuts to inform parliament of the important contribution that Van Riet Lowe had made and to announce that he had 'opened this door of our past and has made us realize that South Africa has been, from time immemorial, for tens of thousands of years, an inhabited country by one race of men after another who left their marks here, their tools here and their art here' (cited in Mason 1989:103). In the following year Smuts delivered his presidential address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science in London, and emphasised the important archaeological discoveries that had been made in South Africa, including the discovery of Early Stone Age artefacts in the Vaal gravels (Mason 1989:107).

In spite of the fact that the country was experiencing the debilitating effects of the Great Depression, great strides were being made in the field of prehistory. The Smuts-Hertzog coalition government of 1933-1939 was sympathetic towards the advancement of prehistory and particularly the preservation of rock art and other artefacts. The dramatic discovery of the ancient site of Mapungubwe in the Central Limpopo Valley and its gold artefacts in 1933, focussed international attention on the prehistory of South Africa (Meyer 2000:4). This acted as an incentive to review existing legislation and in 1934 the *Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques Act No. 4*, replaced all previous acts, and made it possible for the first time to declare particular sites national monuments (Deacon 1991:230). The

*Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques* was now empowered to recommend to the relevant minister that a site be officially proclaimed a monument by notice in the *Government Gazette*. In future the export of a proclaimed artefact or antique could lead to a fine of up to 75% of the artefact's market value; however, owners of potential monuments could lodge official objection to the proposed proclamation. This special privilege granted to landowners would prove an obstacle in the proper protection and maintenance of proclaimed sites.

In the following year (1935) Smuts was instrumental in the establishment of the Bureau of Archaeology (under the Department of the Interior) and Van Riet Lowe was appointed its first director and also the secretary of the commission (HMC). The task of developing a new department and simultaneously controlling and developing the vast historic and prehistoric wealth of the country was extremely daunting. This heavy workload was exacerbated by inadequate staffing and funding (Mason 1989:73-74). Van Riet Lowe immediately began researching the rock engravings of the Harts, Vaal and Riet River Valleys and in the Vaal River basin alone he was able to identify 95 sites (Van Riet Lowe 1937:253). The rock engravings at Kookfontein were temporarily in the news in 1936 when the Klip Power Station was erected by ESCOM on a portion of the farm Waldrift No. 599, in close proximity to the rock engraving site on the adjoining farm Kookfontein (Prinsloo 1992:242). These two farms, bought originally in 1888 by Donald McKay, were both coal-bearing, and coal mining was conducted at the Meyerton

Colliery on Kookfontein (Prinsloo 1992:139). In order to supply sufficient fuel to the Klip Power Station (at the time of its erection the largest steam-driven power station in the southern hemisphere [Stander 1946:30]) McKay Estates entered into a contract with Amalgamated Collieries and Springfield Colliery was established at Kookfontein some distance away from the engraving site. The possibility of sinkholes precluded any residential development on the farm and the engraving site remained undisturbed. A small settlement and a post office were subsequently established on Waldrift. The closest railway station was Redan and the settlement adopted the name of Redan. The adjoining rock engraving site at Kookfontein also became known as the Redan rock engraving site.

During this period, and in spite of an exceptionally heavy workload, Van Rie: Lowe set about compiling a list of all known rock art sites in South Africa and in 1941 the first systematic index of rock art sites, *Prehistoric art in South Africa* was published. The list included the following four sites in the Vereeniging area: Klipkop No. 16; Klipplaatdrift No. 336; Vereeniging Townlands and Kookfontein No. 187 (Van Riet Lowe 1941:16). During this period Van Riet Lowe became a major influence in the investigation, excavation and conservation of prehistoric sites throughout South Africa. His early interest in the Vereeniging area was re-awakened and the Kliprivier Archaeological Reserve (Government Notice No. 1262, 1 July 1943) was proclaimed a national monument (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/9; 3/1/8/Ver/5). The site is situated on portion 47 of the farm Klipplaatdrift in the immediate vicinity of the former Wildebeest Quarry that Leslie had operated

in the 1890s in order to obtain building stone for the first mine offices, and where he had discovered numerous stone artefacts in the course of his excavations. This was also the site that international delegates had visited under his guidance during the epic 1929 tour of the Vaal basin. According to Mason this Early Stone Age site is critically important, and due to the similarity of the stone tools it can be directly related to the Australopithecine sites at Sterkfontein (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, File note, 2 March 2001). The reserve is situated in Genl. Hertzog Road, immediately next to what used to be the USCO Recreation Club.

One year later on 21 April 1944 a second Early Stone Age site, the Van Riet Lowe Archaeological Reserve was proclaimed on portion 83 of Klipplaatdrift (Government Notice No. 733). This proclamation was replaced a few years later by Government Gazette No. 1586, 11 July 1952. In 1968, after some controversy regarding the archaeological value of the site, Mason declared:

The deposits preserved at the site are crucial for the scientific understanding of the history of the Vaal River in the Vereeniging area as the Duncanville deposits are directly relateable to the deposits of the Klipriver Quarry which is a short distance away. We excavated both sites in 1960/61. (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, File note, 2 March 2001)

The area in which the reserve is situated was subsequently incorporated into the Duncanville township and is frequently referred to as the Duncanville site. The reserve is situated between Van Riet Lowe Street and Houtkop Road. In 1981 a



bronze plaque with the following wording was put up at the site by the National Monuments Council:

Millions of years ago, when the level of the Vaal River was 320 metres higher, it flowed across this area and deposited gravels, which later became sources of material for tool-making for Stone Age people. The site yielded large quantities of stone implements which suggested that the people who made them were related to the Early Stone Age occupants of the Sterkfontein caves. The site also provided evidence of the climatic conditions and geological period during which these primeval people lived (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/5 (16/T/Ver/2 or 3/1/3/Ver/4, Box 129))

The plaque disappeared in 1990 and was probably stolen.

Having established the great antiquity of human tool-making activity in the Vereeniging area, Van Riet Lowe turned his attention to the other great legacy of early man, his art-making capacity. The non-representational rock engravings of Redan were overlooked and Van Riet Lowe chose instead to write a comprehensive paper on the predominantly naturalistic engravings of animals in the Krugersdorp and Rustenburg areas, considered by him to be 'the climax of artistic achievement in prehistoric art in South Africa, and are rivalled only by the finest rock paintings of the best polychrome period - the Abbé Breuil's "Period of the Eland", when Stone Age artists held complete sway over the sub-continent' (Van Riet Lowe 1945:329).

The question inevitably arises why Van Riet Lowe chose to overlook Redan as this would have completed the work he had already undertaken in the area and given further credence to his belief in the archaeological significance of Vereeniging. In the interim period the Archaeological Bureau had become the Archaeological Survey and a number of prominent researchers had joined Van Riet Lowe's team, including Breuil. At the invitation of Smuts, Breuil was spending the war years in South Africa where he would assist Van Riet Lowe in several important projects, especially with the copying and recording of the rock art (Mason 1989:127). Acknowledged as the world's foremost scholar of rock art, Breuil's opinions were highly respected, shaping the views of the much younger and inexperienced researchers he worked with in South Africa. He was extremely critical in his evaluation of the art, only appreciative of the naturalistic, polychrome paintings of animals (his 'Period of the Eland') and dismissive of non-representational imagery. This viewpoint was shared by M.D.W. Jeffreys of the Department of African Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. Jeffreys visited Redan in 1948 and subsequently published a paper in which he referred to the engravings in derisive terms (Jeffreys 1953). The fact that Van Riet Lowe chose not to make Redan the focus of a major study must be seen in the context of these prevailing perceptions.

From 1943 to 1946 Van Riet Lowe co-ordinated a major archaeological project at Rose Cave Cottage in the Ladybrand area of the Orange Free State. B.D. (Berry) Malan who had joined the bureau as a professional officer was in charge of excavations (Mason 1989:65) and was destined to play a key role in the future of

Redan. Breuil was an important member of the team and it was his task to 'make a thorough study of the rock paintings of the area' and to 'establish the relationship between the various phases of the art presented on the walls of the cave' (Mason 1989:65). Van Riet Lowe also invited the artist Walter Battiss to participate in the copying of the art. At the time Battiss was employed as an art teacher at Pretoria Boys' High School, and he joined the team on a voluntary basis in 1944. A publication was planned for which Van Riet Lowe would provide an introduction and conclusion. Malan would be responsible for descriptions of the material culture, Breuil would analyse the art and Battiss would provide copies of the rock art. The project did not materialise and Breuil returned to France in 1946 (Mason 1989:139). However, the Ladybrand experience was the inspiration for Battiss' *The artists of the rocks* (1948). Couched in poetic language the book is illustrated with photographs and copies of the art and interspersed with Battiss' own inimitable contour line drawings. This publication, the first from a practicing artist, spoke directly to the layman and did much to popularise the concept of rock art conservation. Unlike Breuil, Battiss refrains from making value judgements of the non-representational images, includes a number of examples and refers to them as 'this astonishing museum of prehistoric design' (Battiss 1948:128).

Encouraged by the success of this publication, Van Riet Lowe continued searching for, and locating rock art sites. In 1952 a second, more comprehensive index of sites *The distribution of prehistoric rock engravings and paintings in South Africa*, was published. In the preface Van Riet Lowe acknowledges the contribution of

Battiss and also mentions that he discovered a number of important sites (Van Riet Lowe 1952:3). In this second survey the original list of engraving sites in the Vereeniging area is expanded to include Springfield, Leeukuil and Leeukraal No. 187 (Van Riet Lowe 1952:12). A few engravings can still be located at Leeukuil on what is presently a small island in the Vaal River north of Ascot Bridge. *These engravings plus the Redan engravings are the only surviving engravings of the once rich rock art legacy of the Vereeniging area* (emphasis added).

Between 1936 and 1946 seven rock art sites, including four engraving sites were declared national monuments (Deacon 1991:231). Redan was not included. The reasons for declaration were often linked to the presence of a dedicated landowner who was prepared to maintain and curate the site, rather than the outstanding merit of the art. This was probably a contributing factor in the exclusion of Redan. During this period a number of changes occurred in the sphere of town planning in Vereeniging that would impact directly on the future ownership and maintenance of Redan. After World War I the need for agricultural land (the second largest source of revenue in Vereeniging) increased dramatically and a large number of outlying farms were acquired by the Town Council and sub-divided into small holdings (Willemse 1999:159). Mining activities ceased at Springfield Colliery in 1953, making Kookfontein available for agricultural purposes (Willemse 1999:164).

The fate of Redan was sealed. The land on which the site occurs would be rented by the Town Council to a succession of small farmers with no interest in the engraving

site or obligation to maintain it. After 1946 the policy of the Historic Monuments Commission changed regarding the declaration of rock art sites as national monuments. It was reasoned that since all rock art sites were already protected in terms of legislation, there was no need to declare any sites national monuments as well (Deacon 1991:231). Consequently Redan was doubly disadvantaged, and although the engravings were protected in terms of legislation, the commission did not have the funds or the manpower to intervene. The only remaining measure was to erect a fence around the site and secure it with a locked gate, a task which Van Riet Lowe undertook and financed personally in the early 1950s, with the assistance of H.W. Chatterton of the Town Council (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Minutes 3 March 1958). The general neglect and deliberate desecration of rock art sites continued, and Van Riet Lowe (1952:10) persevered in his efforts to improve existing legislation. At a South African Museums Association meeting he suggested that special grants be made available for the removal to museums of important rock art that could not otherwise be protected (Rudner 1989:3). He argued that extreme measures were necessary to protect and conserve the art: 'The deliberate removal of these early works of art is recommended as the only certain method of salvage in the great majority of cases'. This decision had unfortunate repercussions for Redan. A large and particularly striking non-representational engraving was removed from the site in the 1950s, with the approval and permission of the Historic Monuments Commission. It is presently housed in the Rock Art Institute of the University of the Witwatersrand.



**Figure 7.** *T.N. Leslie (Vaal Teknorama).*



**Figure 8.** *'Leslie's weir' across the Vaal River, Vereeniging c. 1906 (Vaal Teknorama).*



**Figure 9.** *The fossil forest in the exposed bed of the Vaal River, Vereeniging c. 1906 (Du Toit 1954:fig. 43).*



**Figure 10.** Clarence van Riet Lowe with San man (Mason 1989:fig. 3).



**Figure 11.** The Abbé Breuil collecting stone artefacts in Vereeniging area, 1929 (Mason 1989:fig. 11).



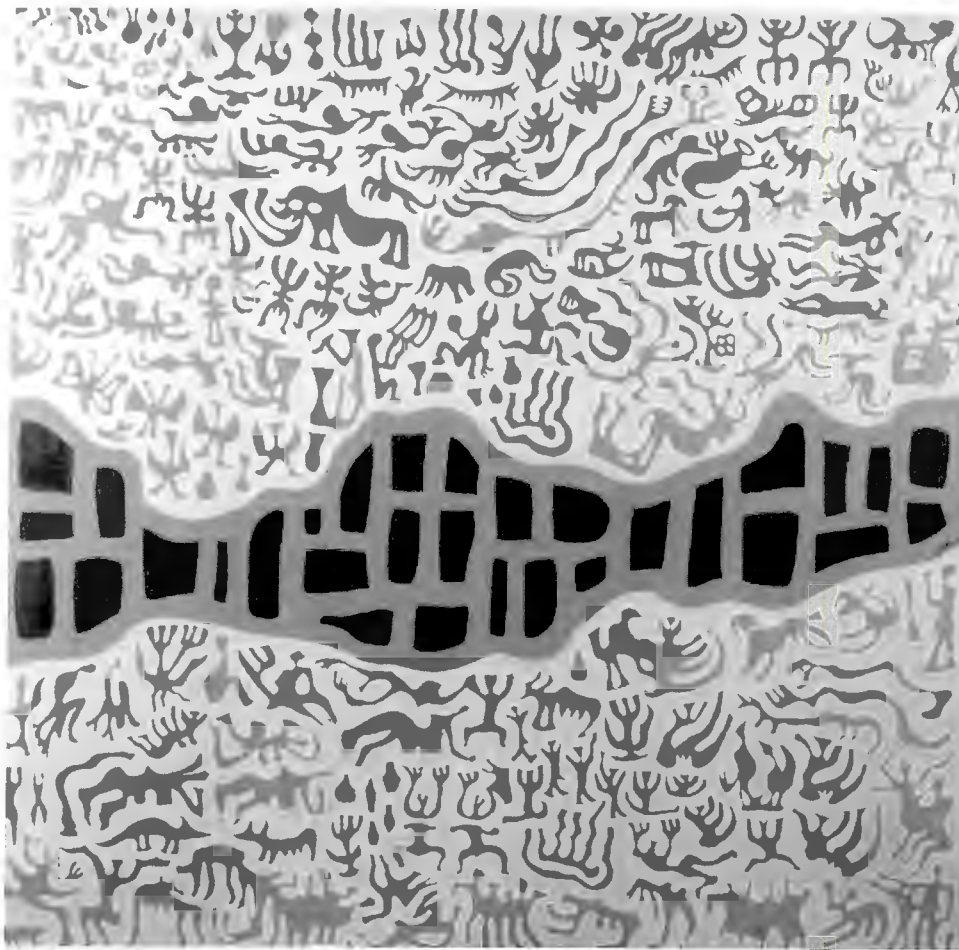
**Figure 12.** The Abbé Breuil and Van Riet Lowe sorting early Acheulean stone artefacts at Klipplaatdrift, Vereeniging, 1929 (Mason 1989:fig. 13).



**Figure 13.** *Walter Battiss's copies of non-representational imagery (Battiss 1948; 29).*



**Figure 14.** *'The painter and the rock' by Walter Battiss (Skawran & Macnamara 1985:pl. 7).*



**Figure 15.** *'Symbols of life' by Walter Battiss (Skawran & Macnamara 1985:pl. 26).*



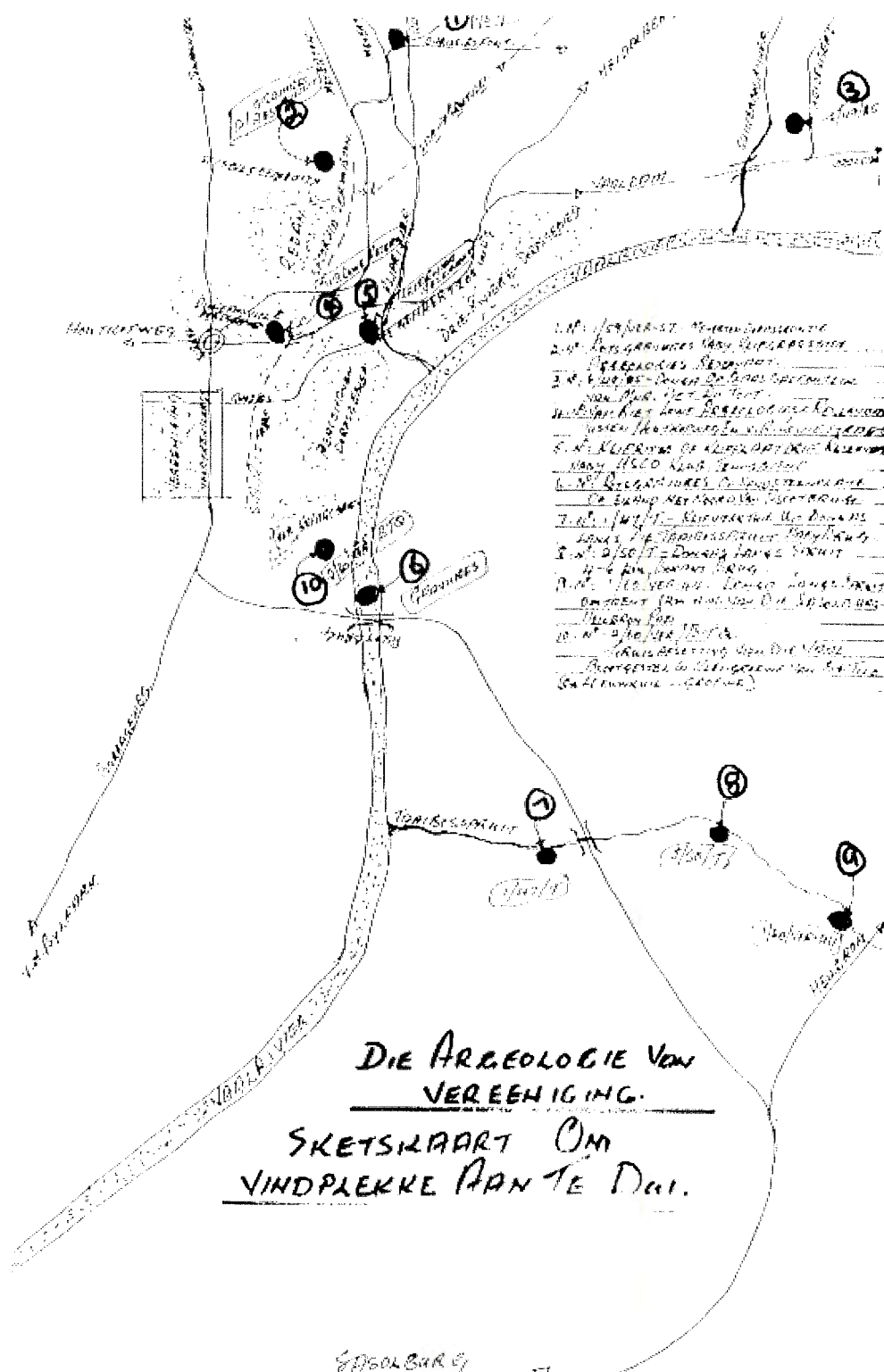


Figure 16. Map of archaeological sites in Vereeniging drawn by C.F. Le Roux, 1958 (Vaal Teknorama).

## **PART 2 1956 - 2005**

### **1956 - 1977 RESTITUTION AND RECOGNITION : REDAN COMES OF AGE**

Van Riet Lowe retired in 1955 and died the following year. He was succeeded by B.D. (Berry) Malan. Like his predecessor, Malan was appointed both as Director of the Archaeological Survey and Secretary of the Historic Monuments Commission. As a senior member of Van Riet Lowe's team, Malan had been closely involved in both archaeological projects and conservation issues (Mason 1989:119). Malan would continue the work that Van Riet Lowe had initiated in the Vereeniging area. During a meeting of the Town Council in 1958, H.W. Chatterton, who had assisted Van Riet Lowe in fencing Redan some eight years earlier, pointed out that the protective fence was in urgent need of repair, and that the engravings were being damaged by the farm labourers who were living on the farm. A decision was taken by the council to repair the fence, erect a roof over the engravings and inform the commission of the matter (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Minutes 3 March 1958). Malan expressed his appreciation at the initiative taken, a costing was submitted and the necessary negotiations between the Town Council and the farmer renting the land took place (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Minutes 5 May 1958). The suggestion of protective roofing was abandoned but the fence was repaired and the engravings were reasonably secure.

After the successful conclusion of this matter, Malan's conservation efforts were directed to the other two neglected sites in the area. His first concern was for the

Kliprivier Archaeological Reserve. Since its declaration as a national monument in 1943, the site had become progressively more neglected. In an impassioned plea, Malan requested the co-operation of the Town Council in the care and maintenance of the site and emphasised its prehistoric value: 'Die terrein is 'n groot skat nie alleen in Vereeniging nie, maar vir ons land en vir die Kultuurgeskiedenis van die mensdom.' ('The site is a great treasure not only for Vereeniging, but for our country and the Cultural History of humanity') (my translation). (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 1 Aug. 1960). Malan's conviction of the prehistoric significance of the site was supported by archaeological evidence. Mason (1962:40) had been conducting archaeological excavations at Klipplaatdrift in the Vereeniging area since July 1960. In his subsequent findings he disproved Van Riet Lowe's dating of the site; Van Riet Lowe had not based his findings on controlled excavation but on the pluvial/interpluvial model which is based on climatic and sea level changes and how these affect successive gravel deposits in river terraces. This dating system has since been proved flawed and is no longer used in the South African context (Clark 1990:191; Deacon 1990:47). This does not necessarily detract from the archaeological importance of the site and Mason (1962:40; 45) confirmed that Klipplaatdrift could have a Middle or Later Stone Age date. These findings were subsequently published in Mason's seminal work *Prehistory of the Transvaal* (1962).

In spite of the significance of Mason's findings, and repeated requests from the Historic Monuments Commission, the council was not prepared to make any

financial contribution. They expressed a willingness to maintain the site but insisted that the Historic Monuments Commission cover all costs (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 1 Aug. 1960 - 19 June 1968). However, the Commission was clearly not in a position to do this. Malan worked tirelessly to improve existing legislation and finally in 1969 *Act No. 28* (with amendments) was promulgated and the existing Historic Monuments Commission (HMC) was replaced by the National Monuments Council (NMC) (Rudner 1989:3). The staff was expanded, regional representatives were appointed and more funding was made available. In 1973, after more than ten years of negotiations the newly designated National Monuments Council (NMC) was in a position to erect a protective fence around the site and to put up a commemorative plaque and badge of the NMC (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 1 March 1973).

While these protracted negotiations were taking place, Malan continued in his efforts to devise a strategy to preserve the rock art from further deterioration, particularly the damage caused by natural weathering. At a South African Museum's Association meeting in 1956 he reiterated this concern. The outcome of this and subsequent meetings was that the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) was approached and asked to assist. A small investigative committee was appointed and long-term research was initiated for the *in situ* preservation of the art. Conservation measures such as the installation of protective structures, and the application of various preparations to the rock surface were investigated. Due to the lack of funds and the long term nature of the research, few

of these conservation and management recommendations could be implemented (Rudner 1989:4-26). The harsh reality was that there was no immediate solution. Also present at the 1956 meeting was A.R. Willcox, independent researcher and scholar of rock art. Echoing the sentiments expressed by Stow almost 100 years earlier, Willcox strongly advocated the recording and copying of all paintings as an immediate measure to conserve them (Rudner 1989:4). An even greater challenge was presented by engravings, especially those executed on friable sandstone as at Redan. These engravings were particularly vulnerable to exfoliation, aggravated by the extreme climatic conditions of the southern Highveld. Willcox (1964) had already expressed an interest in non-representational engravings and Redan was the obvious choice to demonstrate his commitment to the cause of conservation. A grant was obtained from the CSIR, the artist and photographer Harald Pager was co-opted, and in the winter of 1967 Willcox and Pager commenced the self-imposed task of recording the engravings of Redan. The results were published in the same year (Willcox & Pager 1967).

In their report mention is made of the general neglect of the site, particularly the broken fence and the damage caused by grazing pigs. Having successfully completed the fencing-in and maintenance of the Kliprivier site in 1970, and alerted by the Willcox/Pager report, Malan sent one of his members, Prof. J.F. Eloff, to inspect Redan. Eloff was horrified at the appalling conditions at the site and expressed his shock in no uncertain terms:

Die toestand van die terrein is werklik skokkend. 'n Gedeelte van die draadomheining lê op die grond en die skrif op die kennisgewingbord het so vervaag dat dit onleesbaar is. 'n Aantal krotte wat deur Bantoes (werknemers van 'n Portugese tuinier) bewoon word, staan teenaan die terrein en teen die een kant van die omheining is daar 'n varkhok en 'n beeskraal opgerig. Op die rotsbank waarop die gravures voorkom, lê die ekskrement van mense, varke en beeste rond, asook bottels, blikke, bierkartonne en ander gemors. Meeste van die tekeninge is nog onbeskadig, maar op verskeie plekke waar daar vuur gemaak is, het die rots swart gebrand en het die oppervlak gebars.

(The condition of the site is really shocking. A portion of the wire fence is on the ground and the writing on the notice board has faded and is illegible. A number of shacks occupied by Bantu (labourers of a Portuguese gardener), are close to the site and on the one side a pigsty and cattle kraal have been erected. The rock surface on which the engravings occur is covered with the excrement of people, pigs and cattle, and includes bottles, tins and beer cartons and other rubbish. Most of the drawings are undamaged, but in some areas where fires were lit, the rocks are blackened and the surface has cracked.) (my translation) (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 22 May 1970)

The National Monuments Council emphasised the need for immediate intervention and requested that the Town Council as owners of the land take immediate action, remove the shacks, pigsties and cattle kraals, relocate the farm labourers to another part of the farm and repair the broken fence. Eloff's damning report had the desired effect and the Town Council agreed to comply with all the requests. Six months later Malan expressed his appreciation and informed the Council of the pending

declaration of Redan as a national monument (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 24 Nov. 1970). On 20 August 1971, Redan was finally declared a national monument:

#### **DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION**

No. 1415

20 August 1971

#### **DECLARATION OF A NATIONAL MONUMENT**

By virtue of the powers vested in me by section 10 (1) of the National Monuments Act, 1969 (Act 28 of 1969), I, Johannes Petrus van der Spuy, Minister of National Education, hereby declare the site with rock engravings at Redan, District of Vereeniging, to be a national monument.

*Description.* - A fenced site, approximately 4 047 square metres (one acre) in size, being a portion of the remainder of Portion 29 of the farm Kookfontein 545 IQ (Diagram 6094/55 of the Surveyor-General) and situated north-east of the beacon marked N on the aforementioned diagram.

*Scientific value.* - These petroglyphs are a good example of abstract art practised during the Stone Age. The drawings probably had a ceremonial or mythological significance.

J.P. VAN DER SPUY, Minister of National Education. (South Africa. Department of National Education 1971)

Eighteen months later (1973) the safety fence and a gate were finally erected around the site (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 9 Feb. 1973). For the next five years no correspondence passed between the National Monuments

Council and the Town Council and it appears that all parties concerned were satisfied.

#### **1978 - 1994 CONSOLIDATION AND CONTROL**

In spite of Redan's new status as an officially proclaimed national monument, the site once more became neglected and abandoned. In the past a few individuals had always intervened on behalf of the prehistoric sites of Vereeniging. This concern lasted as long as these individuals were alive, but inevitably declined sharply after their deaths. This inexorable cycle of neglect and reparation would continue *ad nauseum*. In 1978 the role of unofficial custodian of Redan was taken over by Mrs Baby Deyzel, curator of the museum section of the Public Library and Museum of Vereeniging. Deyzel became a passionate spokesperson for Redan and fought tirelessly for the preservation and maintenance of the three prehistoric sites in Vereeniging. A visit to the three sites on 26 May 1978 revealed that all three sites had deteriorated and were in urgent need of attention. The Kliprivier Archaeological Reserve (popularly referred to as the Kliprivier quarry) was in a reasonable condition but the site was overgrown with weeds. At Redan conditions had reverted to what they were in 1970 when Eloff visited the site: shacks had been erected immediately next to the engraving site and the fence (broken in parts) was used as a wash line and farming activities were being conducted in the immediate vicinity of the engravings. Of immediate concern was the Van Riet Lowe Archaeological Reserve (popularly referred to as the Duncanville site). The fence was destroyed and little remained of the original site (Vaal Teknorama Archives



Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 1 June 1978). The National Monuments Council and the Town Council were duly informed of these shocking conditions.

The National Monuments Council responded with a long letter to the Town Council in which the respective roles of the Town Council and the owner of the land were set out, underlining once more the inherent weakness of the act in giving too much protection to the land owner. The letter exonerated the National Monuments Council from all blame and emphasised its function: 'Die primêre taak van my Raad, 'n statutêre liggaam, is om gedenkwaardighede te identifiseer en om die verklaring daarvan by die Minister van Nasionale Opvoeding aan te beveel.' ('The primary task of my Council, a statutory body, is to identify monuments and to recommend their declaration to the Minister of National Education.') (my translation) (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 2 Nov. 1978). The council was further requested to restore the Van Riet Lowe site to its former condition and reminded of the importance of the site: 'Hierdie terrein, saam met die Klipriviersteengroef, is wêreldbekend onder argeoloë en dit is maar 'n swak refleksie op ons land dat 'n belangrike wetenskaplike erfenis soos hierdie in so 'n swak toestand verkeer.' ('This site, with the Kliprivier Quarry, is internationally known to archaeologists and it reflects badly on our country that this important scientific heritage is in such a poor condition.') (my translation). This reprimand had the desired effect and the Town Council handed the matter over to the local Department of Parks, Recreation and Properties. The Town Council agreed to restore and maintain the site and to provide for this expenditure in their 1979/1980

budget. It was also agreed that the clearing of the site would be supervised by Mason (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 19 March 1979).

Four years later it was clear that the site had not been maintained as promised. After a complaint was lodged by Deyzel the National Monuments Council visited both the Van Riet Lowe and the Kliprivier Archaeological Reserves and found them both in a deplorable condition. A series of meetings followed and an ambitious plan was devised by the provincial representative of the National Monuments Council not only to restore the sites, but to do excavations, provide protective roofing, on-site information booths, security fencing with search lights, notice boards, parking and ablution facilities (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 20 Febr. 1984). Needless to say, nothing came of these ambitious plans, but the indefatigable Deyzel persisted and these two sites (including Redan) were visited by a second delegation. The findings of this small delegation were diametrically opposite to the previous report: 'Both sites have very low potentials for development as site museums... It is recommended that these sites should be kept clean and neatly cleared of undergrowth, but that the public should be discouraged from visiting them, and referred rather to the Vereeniging Museum, wherein the area's Stone Age Prehistory should be interpreted' (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 2 Aug. 1984). These findings sounded the official death knell for both the Van Riet Lowe and the Kliprivier Archaeological Reserves and marked the onset of their total demise. The Town Council was finally exonerated from the onerous task of maintaining the two sites and although both

sites are still indicated on the maps of Vereeniging, all traces of their former existence have vanished. Redan was more fortunate.

The delegation found the site in 'good condition' and the engravings appeared not to have been vandalised. Furthermore, the site was found to have developmental and interpretative potential and it was recommended 'that a light roof, capable of excluding U.V. rays and creating shade', should be erected over the engravings and 'a catwalk installed across the engraved surface', and 'a small interpretative exhibition' be included (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 2 Aug. 1984). These ambitious plans did not materialise but the favourable 1984 report reflected the concerted efforts that Deyzel had been making over a number of years to maintain the site. As early as 1978 she had written a detailed letter to the Town Council directing their attention to the deplorable conditions at Redan and requesting that the control of the site should be ceded to the museum section of the public library. She requested a duplicate key to the site and permission to accompany visitors to the site (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. 122/2, Correspondence 1 June 1978). This subsequently proved to be an excellent arrangement, ensuring that the site remained well maintained and that access was carefully controlled.

A further step towards the control of Redan and the preservation of the rock engravings was taken when the Vaal Teknorama museum was inaugurated in 1992. This was the first provincial museum in the Vaal area, and it was conceptualised as

both an industrial and cultural museum (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. Vaal Teknorama 1992). This was indeed a fitting tribute to the fact that the modern, industrial city of Vereeniging had arisen on the ruins of a prehistoric stone industry. Deyzel had played a significant part in the realization of the museum and she was appointed its first director. From the secure base of the museum she continued fulfilling her role as unofficial custodian of Redan. She acted as mediator between the Town Council and the National Monuments Council and ensured that regular payments were received from the latter for the maintenance of the site. Deyzel made every effort to attract schools and cultural organizations and consequently an unprecedented number of visitors visited the site during this period. In 1994 she hosted a one-day symposium in conjunction with the Southern African Rock Art Research Association (SARARA) at the museum. Also present was Shirley-Ann Pager who had participated in the historic Willcox and Pager survey of Redan in 1967 (SARARA Chairperson's Report: 1994-1995). The year also marked the first democratic elections in South Africa. This momentous event changed the face of South Africa forever and inevitably presaged significant changes in heritage legislation and museum management. Redan would be directly affected.

#### **1994 - 2005 THE DEMISE OF REDAN?**

In 1994 the democratically elected Lekoa Vaal Metropolitan Council replaced the Vereeniging Town Council. With this step, this august body was finally absolved of all further responsibility towards Redan. A number of changes were effected immediately. Due to an acute shortage of office accommodation, the mayor's office

was relocated to rooms at the museum; this necessitated the restructuring of posts and duties. Deyzel retired in 1997 and died two years later. She was not replaced. Her death marked the onset of complete apathy towards Redan. On 28 May 1999, the farm Kookfontein that had been owned and managed by the Town Council for more than 100 years, and on which Redan is situated, was sold to a private individual, K. Badenhorst. The contract was drawn up by the Kopanong Metropolitan Substructure. However, this body failed to inform Badenhorst of the significance of Redan or to include a clause in either the contract or title deeds of the conditions applying to the engraving site as a declared national monument (Badenhorst 2003). The significance of a prehistoric rock engraving site of uncertain age and authorship, on the outskirts of Vereeniging, paled into insignificance compared to the pressing demands and needs of a previously disadvantaged community.

A month prior to this event, new heritage legislation was introduced. On 25 April 1999 the *National Heritage Resources Act, 1999* (Act. no. 25 of 1999), replaced the *National Monuments Act, 1969* (Act no. 28 of 1969). The previously designated *National Monuments Council* (NMC) was replaced by the *South African Heritage Resources Agency* (SAHRA) (SA. Parliament 1999). A significant change in the new act was the establishment of a system for grading places and their management according to three separate categories, national, provincial and local. National heritage resources are defined as those places with exceptional qualities of national significance, and they are the responsibility of the South African Heritage Resources

Agency. Provincial heritage resources are those places which have special qualities that make them significant in the context of a specific province or region, and they are co-ordinated by a provincial heritage resources authority (SA. Parliament 1999, chapter 2). In terms of the new legislation, all previously declared National Monuments (including Redan) are now designated as provincial heritage resources sites and their status should be periodically assessed:

- (b) Immovable national monuments in terms of section 10 of the previous Act shall be provincial heritage resources sites: Provided that within five years of the commencement of this Act; the provincial heritage resources authorities in consultation with SAHRA, must assess the significance of such sites in accordance with the heritage assessment criteria set out in Section 3(3) and prescribed under section 7(1) and SAHRA must declare any place which fulfils the criteria for Grade I status as a national heritage site. (SA. Parliament 1999, 11(a))

In the absence of an officially appointed provincial heritage resources authority, and alerted by the new ownership of Redan, members of the South African Heritage Resources Agency visited the site in May 2000. On this occasion they informed Badenhorst of the new legislation regarding heritage sites, and his role as landowner (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, 3 August 2000). This was followed by a second visit a few months later, in which the acting director of the Vaal Teknorama and members of the Rock Art Research Institute (RARI) of the University of the Witwatersrand also participated. The Van Riet Lowe and Duncanville

Archaeological Reserves were also visited, and found to be almost completely obliterated. The conservation potential of these two sites was questioned and the conclusion was: 'There seems to be no interest for the general public, only for specialists'. Redan was found to have 'a profusion of good quality engravings...', but some concern was expressed regarding its status under the new legislation:

'... Redan is a proclaimed national monument, however it has not appeared on the list of national monuments since 1993. There is no evidence that it was deproclaimed' (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, 21 September 2000). The future of the Leeukuil site was also discussed, and it was noted that loose rocks on the island had become dislodged and partially submerged due to flood action; local fires were also causing damage to the engravings. As a final measure to save what remained from total obliteration, it was suggested that some of the remaining engravings be removed. The squatter living on the island was also requested to act as unofficial custodian of the engravings (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, 21 September 2000).

In the ensuing months various plans were devised by the heritage authorities to create an awareness of the heritage sites in the Vaal triangle, including Redan. Needless to say, nothing came of these plans (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, 6 & 7 March 2001). At this stage the Rock Art Research Institute intervened and a feasible business plan was drawn up, *Management guidelines for the Redan engraving site, Vereeniging, Gauteng, South Africa* (SAHRA File no. 9/2/277/17F, Aug. 2001). This document includes a brief history of Redan and contains

guidelines and principles of rock art site protection and management. The latter can be summed up as,

- visitor behaviour and needs, in order to prevent short-term damage to the engravings;
- widely based education programmes aimed at all levels of society;
- managers (landowners) of parks and sites must be willing to pay for expert advice on the long-term planning for rock art site protection and management, and not attempt conservation techniques without the assistance of a trained person.

The last proviso is in accordance with the new legislation: the landowner cannot act independently, but must at all times work closely with the appointed provincial heritage resources authority, who acts as facilitator and monitors all activities at the site. Under certain circumstances (not specified) these powers can be delegated to an approved person (SA. Parliament 1999, 42(1)). A copy of this document was given to Badenhorst, but this did not solve his predicament, as there was no management structure in place to implement the management plan, and a provincial heritage resources authority had yet to be appointed.

On 16 February 2001 the Lekoa Vaal Metropolitan Council was replaced by the Sedibeng District Council. In his inaugural speech, Peter Skosana, the executive mayor, emphasised that the council was committed to regenerating the economy of the district and that tourism was a potential source of income. The important role of cultural tourism was emphasised, and a number of resources were mentioned:



... the historic developments of the area, including Sharpville monument, Suikerbosrand, Vereeniging as a place where the peace agreement was signed, following the Anglo-Boer War, the signing of the Constitution in Sharpville, Heidelberg Aventura Kloof, Klipkerk in Heidelberg, possibilities of shebeen trails etc., agricultural production (looking at food processing) and the secondary industry supporting the auto industry in Pretoria. (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. Sedibeng District Council documents file, 16 Feb. 2001)

Redan was not mentioned, and the potential of the engraving site as an important cultural tourism destination, was overlooked. In the past, the two main role players, the National Monuments Council and the Vereeniging Town Council, had been engaged in endless negotiations, and had displayed an inability to conceptualise a practical plan of action for Redan, and bring it to a successful conclusion. In spite of a new local government and encompassing heritage legislation, Redan appeared to be forgotten. History was repeating itself.

Three years later nothing has changed. Both the South African Heritage Resources Agency and the Rock Art Research Institute have withdrawn and are engaged elsewhere in conservation projects (see Laue *et al.* 2002:5-7). During an interview with Badenhorst (2003), he reiterated his commitment to the conservation of Redan. He is presently heavily involved in the establishment of an agricultural farm, but is nevertheless willing to co-operate with the heritage authorities in the rehabilitation of the site, and is waiting for directives from the South African Heritage Resources

Agency. As an interim measure the portion of the farm on which the engravings occur has been fenced, and access to the site is only possible through the neighbouring Springfield School. Visits to Redan continue to take place on an *ad hoc* basis, loosely supervised by the interested parties themselves. The site is overgrown with weeds and the engravings are littered with debris. The local museum, the Teknorama, continues to maintain an interest in the site, but lacks the necessary manpower and financial resources to intervene. There is no immediate threat of vandalism, and the site is reasonably secure. However, in January 2005, an existing sinkhole in the immediate vicinity of the engravings, caved in completely, creating a huge water-filled chasm and exposing what appears to be the workings of a defunct coal mine. This sinkhole poses an immediate and further threat to the preservation of the engravings.



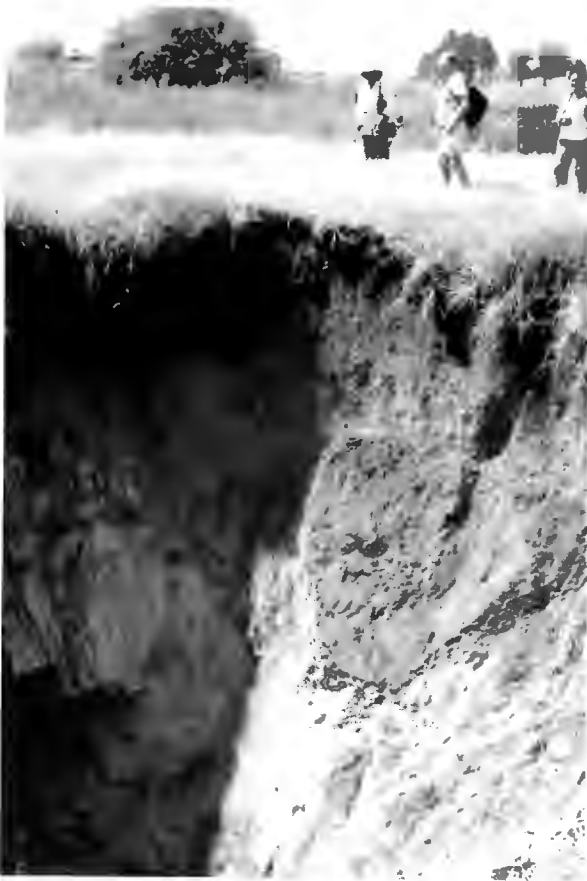
**Figure 17.** *Kliprivier Archaeological Reserve, Vereeniging, c. 1943 (Vaal Teknorama).*



**Figure 18.** *Revil Mason and spectators at the Van Riet Lowe Archaeological Reserve, Vereeniging, c. 1965 (Vaal Teknorama).*



**Figure 19.** *Sinkhole at Redan, 2005 (photo: J. Tempelhoff).*



**Figure 20.** Sinkhole at Redan, 2005 (photo: J. Tempelhoff).



**Figure 21.** Building rubble at Redan, 2005 (photo: J. Tempelhoff).



**Figure 22.** Sinkhole at Redan, 2005 (photo: J. Tempelhoff).