

3-1997

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Publication Info

Published in *Legacy*, Volume 2, Issue 1, 1997, pages 13-13.

<http://www.cas.sc.edu/sciaa/>

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Petroglyph Survey in the Upstate of South Carolina

By Tommy Charles

A survey to locate and record petroglyphs (rock art) in Piedmont South Carolina is being conducted by the Institute. During the month of January, 1997, approximately 50 carvings were rediscovered and recorded. Petroglyphs are pecked etchings or carvings on a rock face made by prehistoric and historic people. They can be found to represent anthropomorphic and animalistic figures, as well as geometric designs

and even dates from the historic period. Most of them have been found as a result of citizens reporting their finds to me. We encourage all interested persons to survey lands that they have access to and areas where they live to determine if petroglyphs occur on any rock outcrops. Petroglyphs can be very difficult to see as they are often highly eroded. My greatest success in locating them has been on rainy days when the stone is wet and the light

reflects the carving. Below are some examples of petroglyphs already recorded across the Piedmont of South Carolina.

If you know of any carvings on stone other than tombstones, please contact Tommy Charles at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1321 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC 29208 or call (803) 777-8170.

