INTRODUCTION

TARA’s mission is to: “Create greater global awareness of the importance and endangered state of Africa’s rock art; survey sites, monitor status, be an information resource and archive; and promote and support rock art conservation measures”. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, TARA is dedicated to the conservation of this heritage for the benefit of future generations and considers its mission to be an imperative in the field of art history and human history as a whole. With these objectives in mind the Trust has placed a high priority on photographing this art. Since 1996 David Coulson and Alec Campbell have travelled tens of thousands of miles, building up a unique collection of high quality photographs recording rock art in 16 different African countries. A fundamental approach of TARA’s has been to image these paintings and engravings as “art” first, and “science” second.

Dear Friends,

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES SINCE AUGUST, 2000

It is now three years since our last Newsletter was distributed and I would like to apologize for this long delay. So much has happened in a relatively short period that our resources have been severely stretched. We do, however, fully appreciate how important it is to keep our supporters informed and would like to assure you that such a delay will not happen again!

Much has happened during these last three years. Most important of all, the Ford Foundation has made several important grants aimed at putting the Trust on its feet. A grant for institutional capacity-building has resulted in two consultancies to define the Trust’s future direction. In addition, we have moved to larger headquarters, a house and garden at 93, Nandi Road, Karen; restructured our staff; and are in the process of introducing improved systems of administration, bookkeeping and accountancy.

Our funding situation has greatly improved during this period and, apart from the support we have received from the Ford Foundation, we have recently received a grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation in New York for the digitization of TARA’s slide collection and the creation of our own archiving capability going forward. At the same time the Robert H. and Ann Lurie Foundation in Chicago continues to provide vital financial support for TARA’s ongoing institutional expenditure. Our surveys of new and known areas have continued with more exciting discoveries and revelations adding more and more photos and data to our archive. In 2000 the World Monuments Fund awarded TARA a grant in order to carry out a conservation and management study at an important Sahara site and a British Oil Company invited me to visit sites in Libya that were, and still are, threatened by oil exploration and exploitation. Our observations and recommendations to the Oil Company were subsequently published in INORA (Issue No. 29 - 2001) and SAHARA (Issue 12 - 2000). Meanwhile in 2001, my book in collaboration with Alec Campbell, “African Rock Art”, was published in New York. May I take this opportunity to thank all of you who have supported us over the last few years, and promise that the next Newsletter will be with you before Christmas 2004!

David Coulson - Chairman
ROCK ART SURVEY TRIPS

2000

In August, 2000, David and Alec visited the Tsodilo Hills in northwestern Botswana where they photographed and documented newly discovered sites including a frieze of big red elephants in a deep cleft and a huge white rhino in a cave full of carved grooves. On the same trip David travelled to Namibia in order to visit a particular site in the Brandberg Mountains not seen on previous visits. This site features several polychrome giraffe with parallel lines descending from their necks. Some researchers think these lines could represent rain. At the end of the year David and Alec crossed the Great Sand Sea in Egypt’s western desert to survey sites in the Gilf Kebir and at Jebel Uweinat, on whose summit the frontiers of Egypt, Sudan and Libya all meet. Among the many important sites they visited on this trip was the so-called “Cave of Swimmers”, made famous in the book and subsequent movie, “The English Patient”. They took with them an Egyptian army Major who skillfully guided them through the minefields around Uweinat. On their journey they came across 20 million year old sharks’ teeth in fossil beds and 60-year-old vehicles left behind by the Long Range Desert Group in World War II.

2001

In February, 2001, David and Alec returned to Niger for another survey trip. During their travels in the Air Mountains they revisited the Dabous area where they photographed an important new site a few kilometers from the big giraffe site. They then traveled northeast to a site near Mt. Greboun, a rare painting site featuring pastoral paintings, perhaps dating to around 5000 BP; and many much more-recent (ancestral) Tuareg paintings from the last 2000 years. Later they also surveyed unknown engraving sites in the southeastern Air.

Paintings of oryx - Tsodilo Hills, Botswana

Giraffe paintings, Brandberg, Namibia

“Cave of Swimmers”, Gilf Kebir, Egypt (for images see Conservation)
In June David surveyed new rock painting sites on two islands on Lake Victoria in Kenyan and Tanzanian waters. Both sites featured bi-chrome concentric circles, possibly painted by Twa artists in the last 2500 years. On the same visit David found rock gongs on the islands and hundreds of scooped out depressions in the granite, each about 50 cm. x 250 cm.

2002

In February, 2002, David and Alec returned to Niger for meetings with the Tuareg. As a result they took the opportunity to survey more sites, e.g. a life-size elephant, big giraffe, and a life-size running cheetah in the western Air, as well as some dinosaur footprints in the rock. They were accompanied on this trip by Katharine Pearson and Robert Burnet of the Ford Foundation (EA office). Part of the idea of this trip was to try and give Ford (EA) a greater understanding of rock art and of community conservation issues. It was also an opportunity to demonstrate the need for foundation sponsorship in this part of Africa.

In July David and Alec both flew to Cape Town for meetings with Dr. Janette Deacon (for TARA’s Strategic Plan) who also took them into the Cedarberg to visit sites in the Nardousberg area as well as in the Bushmanskloof area. Janette has spent years studying the rock art of the Western Cape and has published on this area. Their trip coincided with the worst storm in the Cape for 100 years and for 24 hours they were cut off by a river in spate.

In October David and Alec were asked to take the President of the Ford Foundation and one of her Trustees, Wilmot James on a helicopter trip round East Africa to introduce them to a cross section of Kenyan and Tanzanian rock art sites and give them a greater understanding of the value and extent of Africa’s rock art heritage and the need to conserve it. Meanwhile the trip proved a rare opportunity for David and Alec to visit a number of otherwise inaccessible and unknown sites. These included rock shelters in the Lake Eyasi region of northern Tanzania, as well as engraving sites in Turkana in northern Kenya’s Great Rift Valley. The Ford Foundation is an important supporter of TARA’s work.
In November David and Alec, together with Victoria Waldoock and Prof. Heinz Ruther of the University of Cape Town, travelled to the Sahara desert (Algeria) in order to record, using photogrammetry, an exceptional site first noted by Henri Lhote in the 1950s. This site consists of a number of huge engravings of larger-than-life-size giraffe, probably engraved over 8,000 years ago, on a river pavement in a remote valley of the northern Tassili mountains and was first surveyed by David and Alec in February, 2000 (see previous newsletter). The largest of the giraffe measures 8.5 m. (27 ft.) from head to hoof. On this second trip Heinz Ruther photographed, square-by-square, the 110 sq. m. (1100 sq. ft.) panel, transferred the results onto computer, and later in Cape Town produced a detailed (composite) photograph of the entire engraving. Victoria Waldoock filmed the whole operation for TARA’s archives and for later use in an educational film. The expedition, which was sponsored by the National Geographic Society, also involved a visit to a hitherto unrecorded site in a neighbouring valley featuring over 20 wonderful engravings of hippo, the biggest of which measured approximately 4.6 m. (15 ft.) in length. Amongst the hippo images was a remarkable scene of an almost life-size Egyptian-looking bowman shooting an arrow at a hippo. On the same trip David and Alec also surveyed a new painting site in the western desert featuring several huge Barbary sheep, a giant mythical bird, and a “Round Head” figure, superimposed by more recent paintings from the pastoral and horse periods. When David first heard about the site from a Tuareg friend he was told there was a painting of a dinosaur here. The “dinosaur” turned out to be a mythical (?) bird.
In October, 2000, David, Alec, Jean Clottes and Richard Nightingale travelled to Dabous, Niger in connection with TARA’s Niger project, funded by the World Monuments Fund (WMF) who had previously listed the Dabous giraffe site on its 2000 Watchlist of the World’s Most Endangered Sites. They had come to prepare a Management and Conservation Study for the site. Jean Clottes is an international rock art authority who, like David and Alec, has special knowledge of this area and Richard Nightingale is a Kenyan/British architect who specializes in African projects. Immediately after this site visit the TARA team participated in a presentation ceremony where David officially presented a life-size cast of the Dabous Giraffe to representatives of the Niger government and the Tuareg community. The cast was unveiled at Mano Dayak International Airport, Agadez and, apart from David, the speakers included the Minister of Tourism, the US Ambassador, and Jean Clottes. The cast was a gift from the Bradshaw Foundation who had sponsored the molding of the giraffe in 1999 and who supervised the assembly of the cast before the presentation. A book on the Dabous site is being prepared for publication by Jean Clottes, Alec, and David.

After the ceremony David arranged for the Minister of Tourism to chair a meeting of local Tuareg tour operators in order to emphasize and discuss the importance of responsible rock art tourism in the region.

TARA’s initiatives, activities, and funding in Niger have led to the formation and official registration of a Niger Rock Art Association (Aniguarane), whose President is Sidi Mohammed Illies. In addition TARA is currently negotiating an agreement with the Niger Government regarding its presence and activities in that country.
In November, 2000, David flew to Libya at the invitation of the British oil company, LASMO. He was met by the Managing Director, Michael Buck, who took him to see LASMO’s exploration drilling operations in the Messak Satafet in the Fezzan. The Messak is one of the richest rock art regions in Africa, if not the world. When LASMO started their exploration work in the Messak they were apparently unaware of the region’s archaeological eminence and much damage was done to the landscape before the alarm was raised. TARA was one of the first organizations to lobby LASMO and the Libyan authorities. This led to an invitation to David, Alec and Jean Clottes to look at LASMO’s operations first hand in November (only David was able to go). At the end of the visit David made a number of recommendations to Michael Buck which were subsequently published in INORA (Issue No. 2001) Journal of the International Committee of Rock Art, and in SAHARA (Issue No.12), an annual scientific rock art journal. David was impressed by LASMO’s commitment to protect the archaeological heritage. LASMO has since been bought by AGIP.

- TARA has produced a ‘Code of Conduct’ for rock art safaris in brochure form. This was printed in English and French and has so far been distributed to relevant tour operators in north Africa.

- TARA is presently involved in discussions with the National Museums of Kenya concerning recent damage to a major Kenya rock painting site and the need for site protection. TARA has proposed that the site be made a National Monument as soon as possible and that a conservation and management plan be drawn up on the site, as a matter of urgency. TARA has offered to help raise funds for the future protection of the site subject to the recommendations of the Conservation and Management plan.

ARCHIVE

During the last 8 years TARA has become a leading archivist of rock art images continent-wide, with some 60,000 slides of paintings and engravings taken in 16 African countries. Now TARA has been awarded a substantial grant by the Andrew Mellon Foundation to digitize 25,000 of these images, for data storage, display, and internet access. Mellon plans to make these images available, on a subscription basis, to students and scholars globally. This grant will also enable TARA to set up its own on-going scanning and archiving facility and to make its images available through its website. David has already started work on the preparatory phase of this project which will precede the digitizing and data-basing of the materials.

PUBLICATIONS


LECTURES

During 2002 David and Alec promoted their book in England (Royal Geographical Society, London), USA and in Africa, (Kenya, Botswana and South Africa). They also recorded radio and television interviews as well as national press interviews in those countries.

In the USA Coulson and Campbell’s book, African Rock Art, was launched at the Explorers’ Club, New York, after which the publishers sponsored a national lecture tour. During the space of about 10 days David and Alec spoke in about 7 different cities from the east to the west coast and later in the year (October) David returned to the USA to speak at the Museum of African Art (Smithsonian). During this second visit, he was interviewed by Alex Chadwick of National Public Radio in Washington DC. The interview went out on Thanksgiving Day to an estimated nine million people. In March 2002 David and Alec returned to the USA for another lecture tour in museums, universities and galleries in 12 different cities across America. In October, 2002, David gave a lecture at the British Museum in London where he was introduced by Sir David Attenborough. In 2003, Alec participated at a conference in Canberra, Australia, delivering a paper and taking part in a panel discussion on rock art.

FORD VIP VISIT 2002

In October, 2002, as already mentioned, David and Alec were asked by TARA's major donor, the Ford Foundation, to escort their President, Susan Berresford (from New York), and their only African Trustee, Wimot James, on a helicopter trip round Kenya and Tanzania. The purpose of the trip was to show them some of East Africa’s major sites in the very short time available. The idea of the trip originated when James read an article about TARA’s work and suggested he they visit us. David and Alec decided to take the group via Mt. Kilimanjaro to central Tanzania to painting sites first recorded by the Leakeys in the 1950’s, the oldest of which may have been made by ancestors of today’s Sandawe several thousand years ago. Further north they were also shown newly reported painting sites in the Lake Eyasi area near the Ngorongoro Crater. In the Serengeti they stopped to photograph ancestral Maasai paintings as well as rock gongs. Crossing the border into Kenya they flew to Lake Victoria where David showed them a geometric painting site on Mfangano Island before continuing to a major rock painting site south of Mt. Elgon.
Unlike the earlier sites, this last site has been recently vandalised and is threatened by a rapidly expanding local population. On their third day the group flew 300 miles north to Turkana to an engraving site associated with grave circles in the Great Rift Valley. They then flew on to the shores of Lake Turkana where they visited another engraving site about 3 miles from the shore. Finally David and Alec flew them to a site near a spring in the Chalbi desert where the Ford party saw engravings of a similar style.

**FILM PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES**

Funds were made available by Ford in 2002 to initiate production of a major TV film. To this end Victoria Waldock, TARA’s Media Director, has conducted extensive and often exciting research to develop a film script and has been negotiating with major film companies. She has also accompanied four survey trips and filmed both TARA’s field activities as well as the rock art sites themselves, including the molding of the Dabous giraffe engravings.

- During early 2002, TARA produced a Kenyan rock art awareness film in both English and Swahili. The main focus of this film is on a visit to Kenya’s premier rock art site near Mt. Elgon (see photo above). The film is designed to be shown to young urban audiences at the National Museum in Nairobi as part of a temporary or semi-permanent rock art exhibit funded by the Ford Foundation. 
- In June, 2002, TARA was invited to stage a rock art exhibit at the Zanzibar Film and Cultural Festival and offered space in the famous "House of Wonders" Palace on the historic waterfront. The exhibition (left) was a great success. David Coulson flew over to the official opening by the Minister of State which was broadcast on Tanzania TV. During the following month over 5,000 people visited the exhibition.
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

REGISTRATION
In January, 2000, TARA was officially registered as a not-for-profit foundation in the USA (501(c)3). In the same year the Trust was also registered locally in Kenya as a charitable trust (KTARA).

BOARDS
In 2001, Dr. Janette Deacon, from South Africa, was elected to TARA’s Executive Board which was further enlarged in May, 2003, by the addition of Professor David Kiyaga-Mulindwa from Uganda. Meanwhile, in 2002, three people were added to TARA’s Advisory Board – Mr. Nigel Winser from London’s Royal Geographical Society, Professor Megan Bieseke from the University of Texas, and Professor Robert Hitchcock from the University of Nebraska.

BOARD MEETINGS
Until this year funds had only permitted the Trust to hold one Board meeting a year, but starting this year the number has been increased to two or three meetings a year. In fact this year TARA has already held 3 Board meetings. In February, 2001, a meeting was held at Giant’s Castle National Park, South Africa, attended by the full Board. After the Board meeting, a separate meeting was held with Dr. Ben Smith and Prof. David Lewis-Williams of the Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, to discuss each other’s programmes and possible future ways to cooperate.

NEW HEADQUARTERS

In 2001, TARA moved its offices to more substantial premises in the same Nairobi suburb (Karen). The new offices provide sufficient space for TARA’s short term office requirements. An extension/annex is however planned for early 2004 to house the new archives. TARA’s total staff now numbers 12 people.
STRATEGIC PLANNING
In 2002, the Ford Foundation awarded TARA a grant for Institutional Review and Strategic Planning. This was used to hire two consultants, one to produce a business analysis and another to assist the Chairman in drawing up a strategic plan. The plan proposes, *inter alia*, that professional staff be recruited and TARA’s activities be divided into departments. Most critical of all is the recruitment of a Chief Operations Officer (C.O.O.) to take over the day-to-day running of the Trust and free the Chairman to concentrate on other things, notably the Archive Project. New departments envisaged are Conservation, Project Development, Archive, In-house Publishing, Finance and Secretarial. On the Administration side manuals and protocols are being prepared detailing governance, procedures and new financial management systems.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SPONSORSHIP
In 2001, TARA sponsored an Ethiopian archaeology student to undertake a rock art survey in Sidamo province in southern Ethiopia. The survey provided information on new sites in this region.
In 2002, the Trust sponsored a Tanzanian student to undergo a rock art Masters course at the Rock Art Research Institute, SA (University of the Witwatersrand). The student has since gained a place at Reading University where he hopes to study for a PhD.
In 2003, in conjunction with the British Institute in Eastern Africa, TARA co-sponsored a Kenyan archaeology graduate (from the University of Nairobi) to survey rock art in the Mount Elgon region of northwest Kenya. He was greatly assisted by John Wilson of Kitale who showed him unrecorded painting sites.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
DONORS 2000 TO 2003:
TARA acknowledges with gratitude the continued support of the Ford Foundation, the Robert H. and Ann Lurie Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the National Geographic Society in Washington DC. Also Mrs. Sunny Seher-Thoss, the late Louise Johnson of New Hampshire, Bea Cassou, Bruce Schnitzer, Edward Roski and David Dangoor.
HELPERS IN AFRICA

Algeria: Melkakh Cheikh, Ali Cheikh, Ahmed Zegri
Botswana: Judy Campbell, Mike & Kerstin Main
Egypt: Major Hassan Abdel Aziz, Samir & Wally Lama,
Salima Ikram & Nick Warner
Libya: Juma Anag (Dept. of Antiquities), Michael Balm (LASMO), Savino di Lernia
South Africa: Malcolm & Anne Badham, John & Veda Carver, Janette Deacon, Iain & Rosemary Lindsay-Renton, Tobina Hackett, Hugh & Jane Patrickson, Heinz Ruther, Stuart Saunders
Tanzania: David Bygott & Jeannette Hanby, Audax Mabula, Ali Sumaya
Zanzibar: Emmerson Dawe & Skion, Hon Adam Mwakanjuji

HELPERS IN THE USA

Arizona: Bonnie Bishop, Nancy Connor, Philip & Judy Tuvalestiwa
California: Neville Agnew, Laurence & Bruce Beazley, Jim Carter, Apela Colorado, Linda & Mike Donnelly-Reid, Kathy Eldon, Peter & Signe Keller, Murphy Lewis, Bruce & Carolyn Ludwig, Pam Ludwig, Anthony & Laura Ponter, Edward Roski Jr., Janet & Edgar Sands, Charles Stannish, Joan & Arnold Travis, Jo Anne Van Tilburg, Victoria Walcock, Ken Wilson, Kate Winters
Colorado: Sally Cole
Illinois: Brad Canale, Janet Ecker, Robin Groesbeck, Michael Legamario, Ann Lurie, John McCarrath, Sophia Siskell, Peter Strolloz
Michigan: Augustine Holl, Professor Kottak, Gail McClure, Larry Robins
Nebraska: Robert Hitchcock, New Hampshire: Janine Johnson & the late Louise Johnson
New Mexico: Johnny Allen & Tango, Charmay Allred, Mark Billo & Abigail Alling, Carolyn Clarke-Beal, Joan Donner, Jim Ebert, Jaime Evans, Tom Joyce, Athi Mara Magadi, Nancy Reynolds, Polly Schafersma, Beth O'Donnell, Lyall Watson, Phyllis Wilson
Oklahoma: Robert Hefner III, Cathy Hefner, Suzanne Mears
New York: Bill Bowen, Bonnie Burnham, Andrea Dorfman, Lois Dubin (Sher), Adam Klein, Murphy Lewis, Tom Nygren, Katharine Pearson, Jack Sabaterre, Cristina Scalet, Bruce Schnitzer, Angela Schuster, Peter Young
Tennessee: Katharine Pearson
Texas: Megan Biese, Carolyn Boyd
Utah: Layne Miller, Jon Olch, Steve Simpson

HELPERS IN EUROPE

UK: Maureen Ali, Carol Beckwith, Nicholas Caxton, Angela Fisher, Mary Claire Gibson, Cheng Hawes, Gerald Houghton, Damon de Laszlo, Richard Nightingale, Meredith Ogilvy-Thompson, John Robinson, Peter Robinson, Barney Wan, Nigel Winser
France: Jean Clottes, Alain Danet, Jean-Marie Soubrier
Italy: Roberta Simonis