

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only  
received MAR 29 1982  
date entered MAY 4 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic \_\_\_\_\_

and/or common ROCK ART SITES IN ARKANSAS *Thematic Resources*

**2. Location**

street & number See individual inventory forms N/A not for publication

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of congressional district N/A

state Arkansas code county multiple code

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thematic	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> group		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: recreational;

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple ownership; see individual inventory forms

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. See individual inventory forms

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title 3YB19 listed on National Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date February 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Arkansas Archeological Survey, Box 1249

city, town Fayetteville state Arkansas

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> variable			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This thematic nomination includes 28 individual rock art sites in Arkansas which are considered to meet National Register criteria for eligibility. Of these individual sites, 18 consist of pictographs (painted designs) and 10 are petroglyphs (pecked or incised designs). Most of the features were created by aboriginal inhabitants of the area that is now the state of Arkansas, but petroglyphs at one of the sites were carved by pre-nineteenth century Europeans or Euro-American settlers. Most rock art sites in this state currently in good enough condition to have research potential are sheltered by rock overhangs; however, five of the sites included in this thematic nomination contain figures and symbols carved on the relatively horizontal surfaces of open, exposed rock.

In most cases the areas nominated are restricted to rock surfaces containing the actual petroglyphs and pictographs. Although archeological deposits exist in many bluff shelter sites where rock art features were made, the nature and significance of the habitation debris at most of these sites is not currently known. Furthermore, we are unsure of the relationships between the buried remains and the designs on the walls or breakdown boulders and are unable to explore these relationships at this time. It is difficult, however, to isolate rock art features from their larger environments, since setting appears to have been a critical factor in the creation of aboriginal pictographs and petroglyphs. Therefore, information concerning the nature of the larger site area (e.g., inhabited bluff shelter containing rock art on one wall) is included on the individual inventory forms, although the extent of the limited area being nominated is clearly specified.

Rock art sites in Arkansas display considerable variation in style and subject matter. Some sites contain only a single pecked or painted design element, while others consist of panels or groups of figures extending for many meters. Anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures are represented, as are abstract geometric forms. Pecking was the most common technique for petroglyphs, but abrading, incising, and chiseling have also been noted. Most of the pictographs are red, probably from use of iron oxide paint applied with fingers or with some sort of brush. Black and yellow pigment have also been found. More than one color of pigment was used at three of the pictograph sites.

In general, rock art sites in this state appear similar to sites in Missouri, southern Illinois, Tennessee, and northern Alabama. Petroglyphs in Independence County, Arkansas, fit especially well into the style which has been designated "Mississippi Stylized" (Grant 1967:137-144). A few sites in the western part of the state contain elements, most notably the predominance of the human form and the arrangement of these figures in horizontal panels, which probably resulted from Plains Indian influence or intrusion.

No pictograph styles had been designated in the southeastern United States prior to the recent research in Arkansas. The designation of the "Petit Jean Painted Style" was introduced to accommodate description of the cluster of pictographs (i.e., State Site Numbers 3CN17, 3CN20, 3CN32, and 3CN125-132) located on Petit Jean Mountain in the Central Arkansas River Valley (Fritz and Ray 1980). The apparent high density of rock paintings found in this region is unparalleled in the eastern United States as far as can be determined from available literature. Dr. T. W. Hardison, who conducted an early study of the local rock art, indicates that as many as 300 separate pictographs might exist on Petit Jean Mountain alone (Hardison 1955). Design elements were usually

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executed using red iron oxide paint. Geometric forms, both rectilinear and curvilinear, predominate, but human and animal figures are also present. While groups of symbols at the same site have been recorded, it is common to find single design elements or very small groupings of designs in relative isolation on shelter walls and ceilings. In addition, it has been observed that many of the design elements are stylistically similar to designs found on Carson Red-on-Buff pottery vessels from Carden Bottoms (a large late prehistoric and early historic aboriginal occupation area located just west of the mountain.)

### Chronology

Most rock art sites in the eastern woodlands of the United States are believed to date to the Mississippi period, with some probably belonging to the Woodland period (Wellmann 1979:156-157). This interpretation is based upon the rapid deterioration of rock surfaces in humid environments which prevents long-term preservation, the presence of motifs commonly depicted on late prehistoric ceramics, engraved shell objects, etc., and the absence of design elements showing European influence. In spite of the sheltered situations here in Arkansas, we have found no evidence which suggests greater antiquity for the rock art sites included here. There is, however, a possibility that sites of the "Petit Jean Painted Style" may date to protohistoric times. The horse-like quadruped at 3CN129 would support this hypothesis, as would the stylistic similarities between pictographs and designs on Carson Red-on-Buff pottery vessels from the Carden Bottoms.

### Function

Rock art sites in Arkansas, like most of those across the rest of the eastern United States, and indeed the country as a whole, were probably created in conjunction with ceremonial activities or ritual behavior of one sort or another. The presence of ideological symbols such as circles, snakes, crosses, the mask, and the posture and accoutrements of the human figures all give credence to this theory. Chapman and Chapman (1964:79) interpreted the petroglyph sites of the Mississippi period in eastern Missouri as possibly "consecrated spots where young men were initiated into secret society rites and were taught the mythology associated with the initiation." The isolated nature of some of the Arkansas sites gives the impression of a somewhat more individual, perhaps solitary, experience. Youths on vision quests were known to make rock carvings in other parts of the country (Keyser and Knight 1976), and some related type of behavior might have motivated the pictograph artists in central Arkansas.

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As holds true for the rest of the eastern woodlands region, rock art sites in Arkansas generally lack symbols with obvious hunting oriented connotations. The bison with spears through their bodies at 3ST70 are a notable exception to this generalization. Especially in the extreme southern and eastern Ozarks and Arkansas River Valley, it appears more likely that we are dealing with ceremonialism connected with agriculturally based societies. Hunting activities were undoubtedly important to these groups, but the relative abundance of game animals and ease with which they could be procured make it unlikely that an elaborate hunting oriented ritual system including rock painting or carving would have developed. More attention needs to be paid to this problem, however.

The Narrows, 3CW35, with its anthropomorphically centered iconography, might fall into a different tradition. Panels of human figures across the High Plains have been interpreted as sites where brave deeds or other important events were recorded (Wellmann 1979: 130-132). Although ceremonialism was probably involved in the creation of these features, they seem to reflect a human rather than supernatural orientation, a quality which sets them apart from the rock art of surrounding regions.

Coincidentally, perhaps, the one historic petroglyph included in the nomination, 3CL108, may be religious in nature. The ornate inscription bears the date 1813.

Nature of Survey

The nomination stems from a two year project (1979-1980) conducted by archeologists Robert Ray, research assistant at the Russellville station of the Arkansas Archeological Survey, and Gayle Fritz, research assistant at the Fayetteville Station of the same agency. The purpose of this part time research project was to visit and obtain good photographs and other information at each previously recorded rock art site in the state, as well as to follow up on new leads acquired by publicizing the project at meetings of local amateur archeological societies, schools, and civic groups. The only survey work which did not entail searching for previously reported or reputed sites was conducted on Petit Jean Mountain where shelters along the Seven Hollows Trail were examined for pictographs, resulting in a number of newly recorded finds.

Criteria for Assessing Significance

Aboriginal rock art sites included in the nomination are believed to be authentic and, thanks to limited weathering and lack of vandalism retain integrity and offer research potential. The historic petroglyph included consists of more than carved initials or names and dates. Twenty-three known rock art sites were excluded from the thematic nomination. Three sites (3CW161, 3CW162, and 3FR64) appear to be of recent manufacture, that is, fewer than 50 years old, or are otherwise of dubious authenticity.

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Purported rock art features at two previously recorded sites (3CR4 and 3WA10) were judged to be of dubious cultural origins, that is, they may be natural features. Six of the sites visited (3BE1, 3CE73, 3FR8, 3NW37, 3WA4, and 3YE224) were found to be too greatly altered, eroded, or faded to retain research potential. One site (3BE6) is currently inundated, two (3CR102 and 3WA16) no longer contain any trace of rock art at the locations specified by the previous recorders. Three (3J072, 3PP41, 3YE222) are excluded at the request of the landowners, and one (3NW77) awaits landowner approval.

Four sites on record (3MR33, 3CE60, 3L030, and 3NW459) could not be relocated in spite of considerable efforts to do so. The last two of these were once visited by reliable reporters and appear to be very significant, but we lack exact locations and other important information about them at the present time. One final known site, Departee Creek Shelter, has yet to be officially reported to or by the Arkansas Archeological Survey, although photographs indicate that authentic rock art does exist in this general location.

Grooved rocks believed to result from tool sharpening activities are not included in this nomination.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates**

**Builder/Architect**

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Aspects relating to the significance of Arkansas rock art (i.e., chronology, function, etc.) have been discussed in Section 7. Rock art has been one of the most neglected aspects in the study of North American archeology, and Arkansas rock art is no exception. Aside from the attention paid by several early investigators (Green 1882; Chapman 1897; Walker 1932; Harrington 1960), no professional investigations had been directed toward the study of petroglyphs and pictographs in this state prior to 1978. Reports by amateur archeologists (Moselage 1957; Waters 1966; Gregoire and Gregoire 1975) include brief descriptions of rock art features at three individual sites. While the research potential of Native American rock art may seem limited by difficulties in dating and interpretation, many of the problems will undoubtedly be resolved by systematic, scientific investigations which have yet to be conducted. Unfortunately, many rock art sites have disappeared due to destructive forces of nature and vandalism during the decades in which professionals largely avoided rock art research. These fragile resources are in desperate need of protection and investigation.

It seems that the sites being nominated reflect ritual and probably for the most part spiritual aspects of the societies whose members created them. This in itself is significant given the few opportunities archeologists have to study remains of activities which can be identified as more than purely technological and economic, especially in the Ozarks. The human figures hold mysterious objects and wear headdresses which do not show up in the artifact assemblages. Many of the abstract designs were probably important in ideologies which permeated every aspect of Native American life. A greater emphasis on rock art research and its incorporation into archeological studies can only serve to expand our understanding of the total range of prehistoric and protohistoric human behavior. A more specific example of research value afforded by Arkansas rock art features can be mentioned. Current research at the Fayetteville station is focusing on Woodland and Mississippi period adaptations, with one preliminary conclusion being a rejection of the traditional notion of archeologists that the late prehistoric Ozarks is an isolated backwater. Common southeastern motifs found in the rock art sites definitely support the theory that inhabitants of northwest Arkansas were aware of and influenced by cultural developments surrounding them during the Mississippi period.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name See individual inventory forms

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

### UMT References

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing			

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing			

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See individual inventory forms

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	Arkansas	code	county	Baxter, Clark, Crawford, Independence, Marion, Pope, Van Buren, Washington, Conway, Johnson	code	Searcy, Stone,
state		code	county		code	

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert H. Ray, Research Assistant and Gayle J. Fritz, Research Assistant

organization Arkansas Archeological Survey

date May 1981

street & number Box 1249

telephone 501 575-3556

city or town Fayetteville

state Arkansas 72702-1249

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national     state     local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Requeation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William L. ...*

title SAPO

date 2-24-82

**For HCPS use only**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*See continuation sheet for listing*      date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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PAGE 1

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FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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Morse, Dan F.

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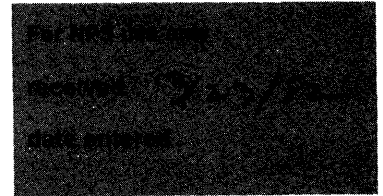
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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Rock Art Sites in Arkansas Thematic Resources  
State ARKANSAS

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
1. ✓ Fox Pictograph <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
2. Cooper's Bluff (Jacob's Rock) Substantive Review	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
3. Crow Mountain Petroglyph <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
4. ✓ Petit Jean No. 9 <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
5. Petit Jean No. 10 <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
6. Petit Jean No. 11 <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
7. ✓ Edgemont Shelter (Indian Rock House) <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
8. Pictograph Cave <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
9. Sunburst Shelter <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest
10. ✓ Serpent Cave <del>Substantive Review</del>	for Keeper 5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u> Attest

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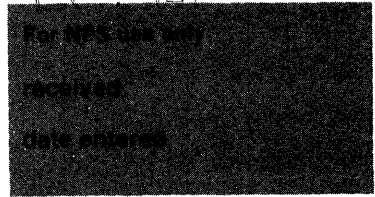
Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Rock Art Sites in Arkansas Thematic Resources  
State Arkansas

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
11. King's Canyon Petroglyphs Substantive Review	5/4/82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
12. Goff Petroglyph Site Substantive Review	5/4/82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
13. ✓ Wyatt Petroglyphs Substantive Review	5/4/82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
14. High Rock Petroglyph Shelter (High Rock No. 2) Substantive Review	5/4/82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
15. Lynn Creek Shelter	Keeper <u>Already listed.</u>
	Attest <u>New area of significance fl/s</u>
16. ✓ Old Joe Substantive Review	5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
17. Pond Mountain Carved Rock Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Return</u>
	Attest
18. Grotto, The Petit Jean No. 8 Substantive Review	5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
19. ✓ Hardison Shelter, Petit Jean No. 3 Substantive Review	5-4-82 <u>Joy T Bush</u>
	Attest
20. Bluff Point Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Return</u>
	Attest

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Rock Art Sites in Arkansas Thematic Resources  
State Arkansas

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
21. Indian Cave, Petit Jean No. 1 <del>Substantive Review</del> for Keeper	<u>Joy T. Bush 5-4-82</u>
22. Rockhouse Cave, Petit Jean No. 2 <del>Substantive Review</del> for Keeper	<u>Joy T. Bush 5-4-82</u>
23. Petit Jean No. 4 Substantive Review for Keeper	<u>5/4/82 Joy T. Bush</u>
24. Petit Jean No. 5 Substantive Review for Keeper	<u>5/4/82 Joy T. Bush</u>
25. Petit Jean No. 6 <del>Substantive Review</del> for Keeper	<u>5/4/82 Joy T. Bush</u>
26. Petit Jean No. 7 <del>Substantive Review</del> for Keeper	<u>Joy T. Bush 5/4/82</u>
27. Keeper	Attest
28. Keeper	Attest
29. Keeper	Attest
30. Keeper	Attest