



Past Projects

Duinefontein

Members of the ACO were part of the international collaboration with Prof Klein from Stanford and Dr. Cruz-Urbe from the University of Arizona that excavated at Duinefontein 2 after the completion of the Koeberg Nuclear plant. The team were there between 1997 and 2001 to further the research that had begun in 1975 by Prof Klein. The new research aimed firstly to characterise the spatial arrangement of bones and stone artefacts, their types and the numbers, damage to bones and artefacts, and other variables to reveal the origin of the bone–artefact association, with the ultimate goal being to estimate the nature and extent of human involvement at the site, and possibly at other sites to which it may be usefully compared.



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Boegoeberg 1&2 1994 & 1996

Boegoeberg 1 was discovered when Alexcor diamond miners bulldozed sand from a gully in the local schist bedrock and exposed a shallow, fossiliferous shelter in the gully wall. Sand removal had also revealed another shelter to the north (Boegoeberg 2) that contained a residual stratified shell midden. The mine geologist notified Prof John Parkington who subsequently recovered a small bone sample from Boegoeberg 1. Unfortunately, the mining had damaged or removed much of the deposit from both shelters, but in November 1994 and April 1996, with funding provided by Prof Richard Klein from Stanford, Dave Halkett and Tim Hart excavated the surviving deposits in both shelters. The location of the Boegoeberg 1 site, the quantity of bones, and composition of the fauna imply it was a brown hyena nursery den. The abundance of Cape fur seal bones shows that the hyenas had ready access to the coast. Radiocarbon dates place the site before 37,000 years ago. Deposits in Boegoeberg 2 provided a few bones, abundant shells, and some characteristic MSA stone artifacts indicating humans as the accumulators. Boegoeberg 2 was at that time one of only seven well-documented MSA shell middens known on South African coasts. (Adapted from various publications).

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