

St. Victor Petroglyph Interpretative Centre and Museum



Located 30 km South East of Assiniboia in the community of St. Victor at the junction of grid road heading South to the Provincial Park and Regional Park.

Open July and August 10 AM to 5 PM
Wednesday to Sunday.

This log structure was obtained from the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park by the Friends of the St. Victor Petroglyphs, and moved to this site to become the St. Victor Petroglyphs interpretative Centre. It is named the Monarch Lodge in respect of the Monarch of the Plains, the Plains Grizzly, and the Monarch Butterfly.

The building was the camp kitchen located in the camp ground at the far south end of the park. It was built in the 1950 from used power poles from the 1930s. Two of the poles have the Bell Pole Company symbol stamped on the logs. Tags remain on the corner logs to show how it was recorded and put back together.

The shed houses our Red River Cart which was generously donated to us by the builder of the cart.



Also in the donation were two sashes, a Horse robe and a bison robe, and a three point Eaton's trapper's blanket. These items can be found in a glass covered display case inside the centre.

The cart, made entirely of wood and held together with wooden pegs and rope bindings, could carry up to 500 pounds of hides, and would travel around 10 miles per day pulled by oxen. Due to the rough ride, most people opted to walk alongside. The sound of the wagons coming could be heard for miles and the smell of the hides even further. Some wagon trains were up to 150 or 200 wagons at a time crossing the plains to get to the forts or to Winnipeg to be unloaded onto boats.

The mural on the side of the shed is a collaborated effort by David L Munro and Tracy Britton, showcasing the arrival of the Metis people to the St. Victor Area in the later part of the 1870-1880's. The house is a representation of the McGillis house that was originally located in Sylvan Park area. This house now resides in St. Victor beside the Regional Park Pool. Take a short walk across the road and look inside this post and beam adobe mud stuccoed house.

The Interpretative Centre

Ten colorful panels around the room tell of the importance of the site, the history of the petroglyphs, and the future of this site. Also displayed are the many uses of the bison, a replica of endangered glyphs, and a display of Mortlach pottery along with worked bone, bone tools and stone tools from the area around the Petroglyphs and other sites in the area. Check out the gift shop, including a sale of mugs with a picture of the sandstone cliff, petroglyph book and tour guides. There is a panel showing some of the many plants found in and around the Petroglyph Park, including a selection of flowers.

Pottery

With the finding of Mortlach pottery in a site nearby, we can suppose that the designers of this pottery lived nearby and may have contributed to some of the glyphs or at least knew about them. Mortlach pottery spans a period of time from around the year 1250 to the year 1750. We can only suggest as to what part of the time line they may have been here. There has been no carbon dating done to give us a positive date of the pottery.

St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Heritage Park

The St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Park "a place of the living stones sacred to the First Nations People of the Northern Plains", is one of many sacred sites in Saskatchewan, Canada. The Glyphs are on the flat surface of an outcropping of sandstone situated on the upper level of the Missouri Escarpment 2.5 km South of St. Victor Saskatchewan. This site predated the coming of horses onto the plains as there are no glyphs carved here that show horse tracks. From the top of the Plateau the visitor can look out over the vast prairie landscape that is almost 700 feet below. The water channel cut by the last glacier and the deep coulee system provided a source of shelter and plants that were used by the First Nations People for over 10,000 years. Learn more in the book "The Place of the Living Stones" by Tim E.H. Jones and S. Louise Jones



This is the next section of the cliff that will break off and be destroyed

This section is under serious concern of falling to the bottom and shattering into many pieces. The Friends of the Petroglyphs pressured the Government into making a replica of this section of the site, and now the replica is part of the display within the interpretative centre. New carvings were discovered after the replica was obtained. Three glyphs could be representations of a salamander. Also found were glyphs of two cloven hoof prints carved within the Grizzly bear paw and what looks like a human body form floating or jumping off the cliff.

What are Glyphs?

Glyphs are the carvings of human feet, hands, and faces, animal tracks, designs, and symbols created by first Nations People over a 1700 year period of

time. By using stone and wood tools the glyphs have been drilled, carved, and pounded out. The glyphs tell of the relationship between man and animals that lived together in harmony.

A section of the cliff that fell in 2001 still remains in serious state of deterioration and in danger of crumbling into dust. The Friends have not succeeded in having a replica made of this section. There is hope we can have this done before it is totally lost. There are unique carvings and maybe some that are unrecorded at this time. The section that fell was further out on the edge and may hold some rare clues to the past culture.

Best viewing glyphs is late afternoon or evening

Visitors can visit this site at any time of the day and sit on the bench and enjoy the atmosphere and power of the view. On a clear day you can view some 60 miles out across the plains to the dirt hills to the NE, and 25 miles to the N to the Town of Assiniboia. You are sitting on top of the Missouri Escarpment which rises over 700 feet above the valley below and the settlement of St. Victor. The elevation behind you at the gate is 2980 ft. and St. Victor sits at 2250 ft.

If you want to see more of the 364 carvings, you have to plan to come during the evening hours, when the shadows are getting longer.

Plan ahead and join a tour with the Guides from This is a map of some of the glyphs that can be viewed if the light is right during late evening tours. Tours are offered during the summer months by request by contacting the Friends of the Petroglyphs. Join in a late evening tour, or a

special tour after dark if you want to experience seeing them close up with the aid of special lighting.

About the Glyphs

Of the 364 Glyphs found at this site, none of them are related to the horse. This suggests to us that they were carved before the arrival of the horse on the plains in 1750. Some of the glyphs relate back to a period in time some 800 years ago. Archaeologists feel they go back to around the year 300 AD. There is no definite dating of the site as to when any one of the carvings was created, and no known ownership of the Glyphs can be placed on them, but it is suggested that they belong to the ancestors of the Siouan speaking nations.



This is a map of some of the glyphs that can be viewed if the light is right during late evening tours. Tours are offered during the summer months by request only. Fees for tours are:

- Adults \$7 per person.**
- Children under 12 free**
- Bus tours inquire for special rates.**

Contacts Friends of the St. Victor Petroglyphs
1-306-642-5386 or 1-306-642-4016

Area Services parks attraction close by:
Sylvan Valley Park, camping across the road in a well treed coulee.

Other services in Assiniboia or Willow Bunch.

Future plans: New viewing platform and informational signboards to be installed.

How you can help:

Donations to the Friends of the St. Victor Petroglyphs through E Transfer. Contact Friends on our face book page for information.

Check out our web site at
st.victorpetroglyphs.ca

Highway map from Assiniboia to St. Victor

