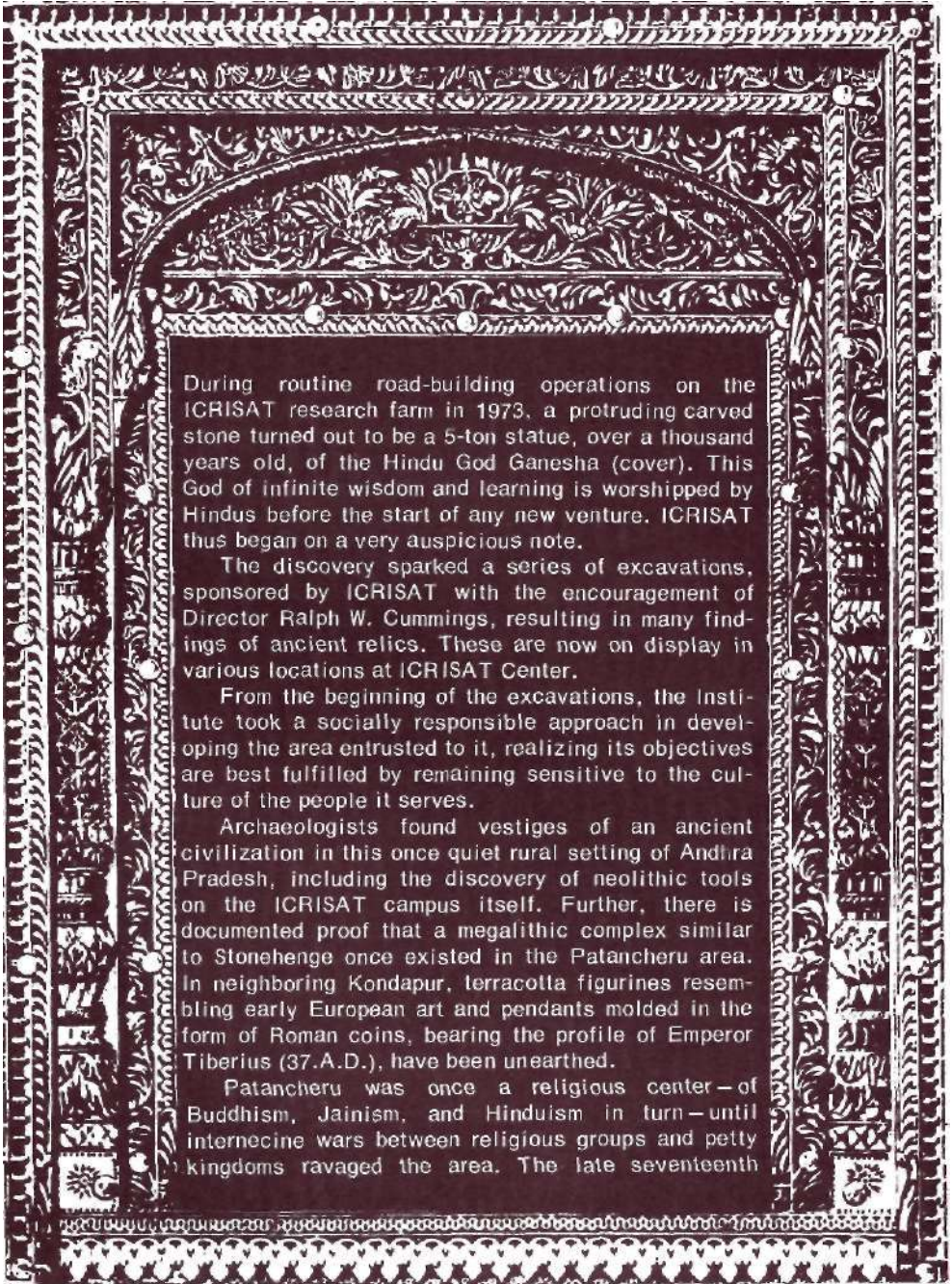


Historic Relics at ICRISAT Center



Cover: The Ganesha sculpture carved on gray granite is approximately 1000 years old. The iconographic features of Ganesha date the statue back to the late Kalyani Chalukya period. Ganesha is the elephant-headed son of the Goddess Parvathi, consort of Shiva.



During routine road-building operations on the ICRISAT research farm in 1973, a protruding carved stone turned out to be a 5-ton statue, over a thousand years old, of the Hindu God Ganesha (cover). This God of infinite wisdom and learning is worshipped by Hindus before the start of any new venture. ICRISAT thus began on a very auspicious note.

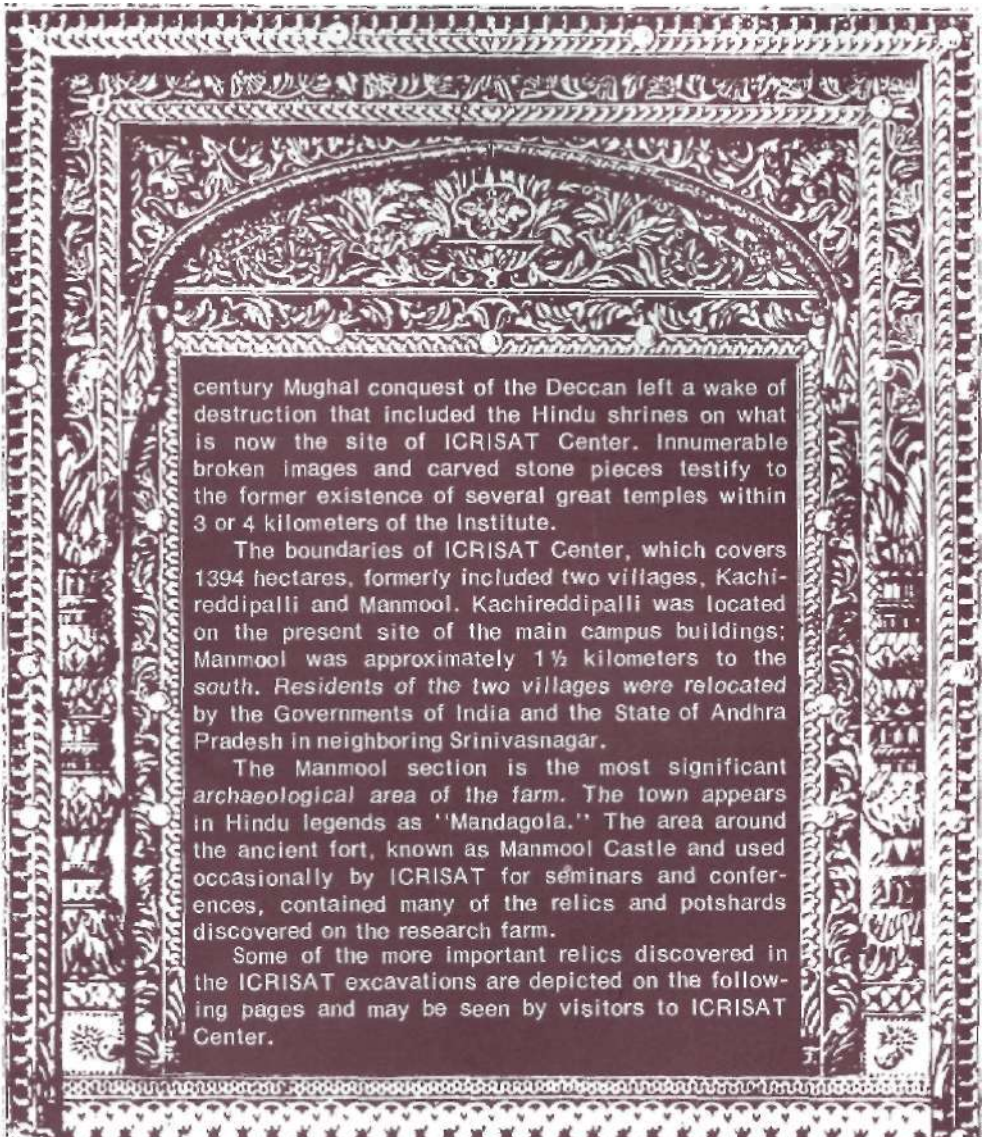
The discovery sparked a series of excavations, sponsored by ICRISAT with the encouragement of Director Ralph W. Cummings, resulting in many findings of ancient relics. These are now on display in various locations at ICRISAT Center.

From the beginning of the excavations, the Institute took a socially responsible approach in developing the area entrusted to it, realizing its objectives are best fulfilled by remaining sensitive to the culture of the people it serves.

Archaeologists found vestiges of an ancient civilization in this once quiet rural setting of Andhra Pradesh, including the discovery of neolithic tools on the ICRISAT campus itself. Further, there is documented proof that a megalithic complex similar to Stonehenge once existed in the Patancheru area. In neighboring Kondapur, terracotta figurines resembling early European art and pendants molded in the form of Roman coins, bearing the profile of Emperor Tiberius (37.A.D.), have been unearthed.

Patancheru was once a religious center—of Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism in turn—until internecine wars between religious groups and petty kingdoms ravaged the area. The late seventeenth





century Mughal conquest of the Deccan left a wake of destruction that included the Hindu shrines on what is now the site of ICRISAT Center. Innumerable broken images and carved stone pieces testify to the former existence of several great temples within 3 or 4 kilometers of the Institute.

The boundaries of ICRISAT Center, which covers 1394 hectares, formerly included two villages, Kachireddipalli and Manmool. Kachireddipalli was located on the present site of the main campus buildings; Manmool was approximately 1½ kilometers to the south. Residents of the two villages were relocated by the Governments of India and the State of Andhra Pradesh in neighboring Srinivasnagar.

The Manmool section is the most significant archaeological area of the farm. The town appears in Hindu legends as "Mandagola." The area around the ancient fort, known as Manmool Castle and used occasionally by ICRISAT for seminars and conferences, contained many of the relics and potshards discovered on the research farm.

Some of the more important relics discovered in the ICRISAT excavations are depicted on the following pages and may be seen by visitors to ICRISAT Center.



This piece of stonework representing Vishnu, the preserver, and attendants, was found in Manmool . The statue belongs to the late medieval period (600 A.D.).

Vishnu bears the characteristic symbols--a shell in the left hand, a wheel in the upper right hand, and a club in the lower right. The female deity attendant bears a flywhisk in her right hand and a bowl in the left. The male attendant (to the right of Vishnu, not visible in the picture) bears a bowl in his left hand and a wheel in his right hand. These figures are displayed in the lobby of the Administration Building.





Two to three feet of earth was removed in the snake mound area to reveal the basal structure of what is believed to be a Surya (Sun God) temple. Collapsed brickwork was evident above large granite slabs and columns, which formed the temple substructure. Excavations to a depth of 6 feet beneath the floor slabs gave no evidence of lower structures.

Two pieces with Surya iconographic features were found here—a broken top portion of Surya bearing the characteristic crocodile earrings and one arm bearing a lotus, and the vehicle of Surya—seven horses (on the pedestal).



Several neolithic tool implements—mace heads, hand chisels, and pounding tools—were found in and around the area of the Shaivite temple. Some of the tools were objects of worship in the temple, their original function long forgotten.



This rectangular Vaishnavite temple, supported by crudely carved pillars, predates other exposed structures within ICRISAT Center. Legend has it that two priests associated with this temple about 100 years ago mysteriously died within the temple, whereupon the structure was abandoned and came to inherit its dreaded name -- Temple of Death. There are reports that a large cobra (worshipped as a Snake God) now inhabits the temple. A banyan tree dominates the shrine, extending its roots right into the garbha griha (sanctum sanctorum), almost reducing the ceiling to the ground. The temple has been renovated to protect the original structure from collapsing.

The Vaishnavite *dwarapalakas* (doorkeepers), *Jaya* and *Vijaya*, can be seen on the outer door frames of this temple.

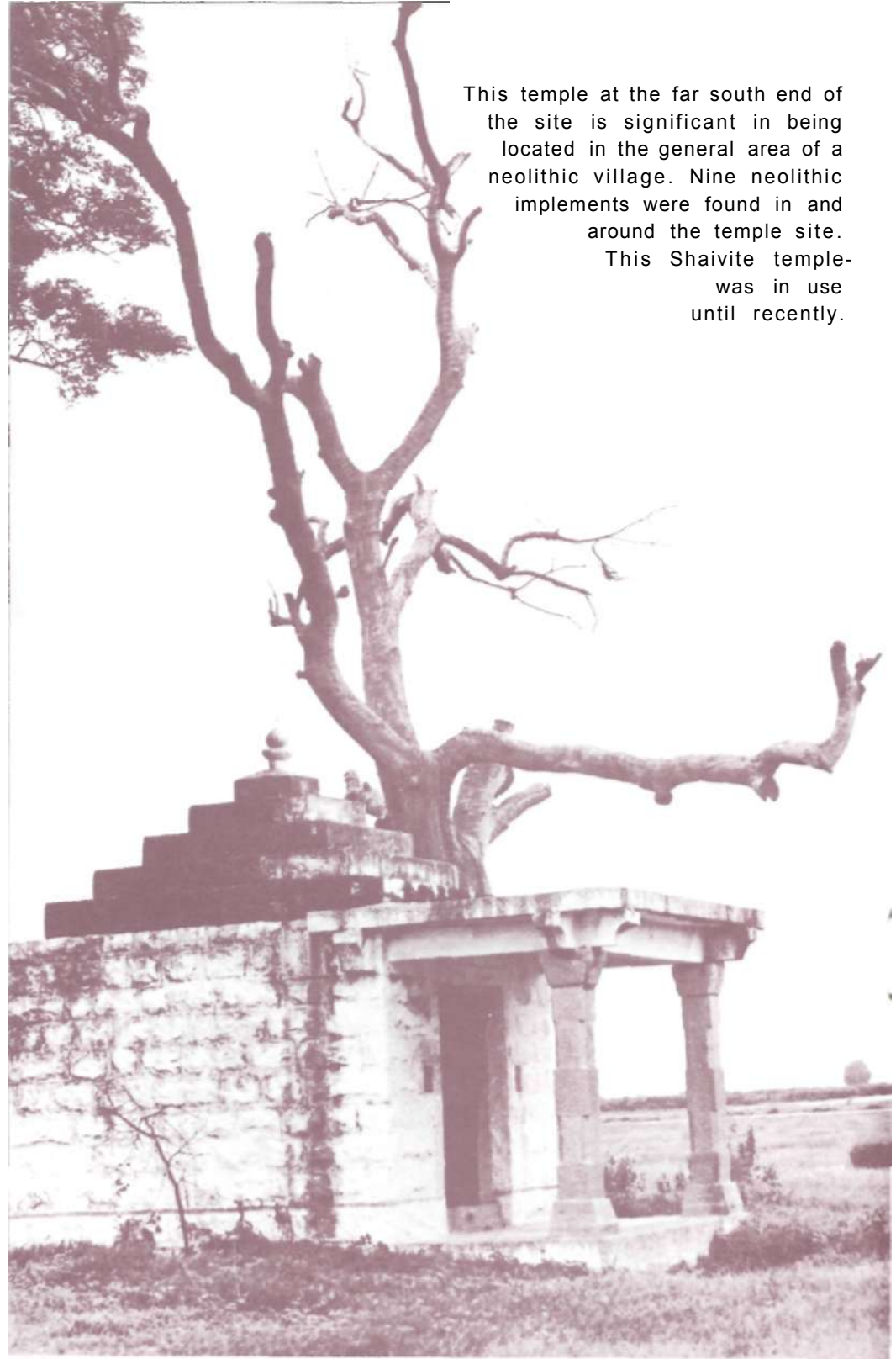




These statues of Shiva and his attendant were discovered at the fort temple excavations.

Shiva, the destroyer and the procreator in Hindu mythology, is also given anthropomorphic form as Vira Bhadra-which represents Shiva in his vengeful aspect. This highly ornate figure is in 3/4 relief, on a soft marble slab. Shiva bears his characteristic implements: a shield, a sword, the trishula (trident), and damaru (source of original sound). Daksha (a goat-headed figure) stands at the lower niche of the main sculpture. The cobra in the upper right hand of Shiva is symbolic of the Vira Bhadra form.



A photograph of a Shaivite temple. The temple is a rectangular structure with a stepped roof and a small shrine on top. A large, gnarled tree with many bare branches grows out of the center of the temple's roof. The temple is surrounded by a field and a fence. The sky is clear and bright.

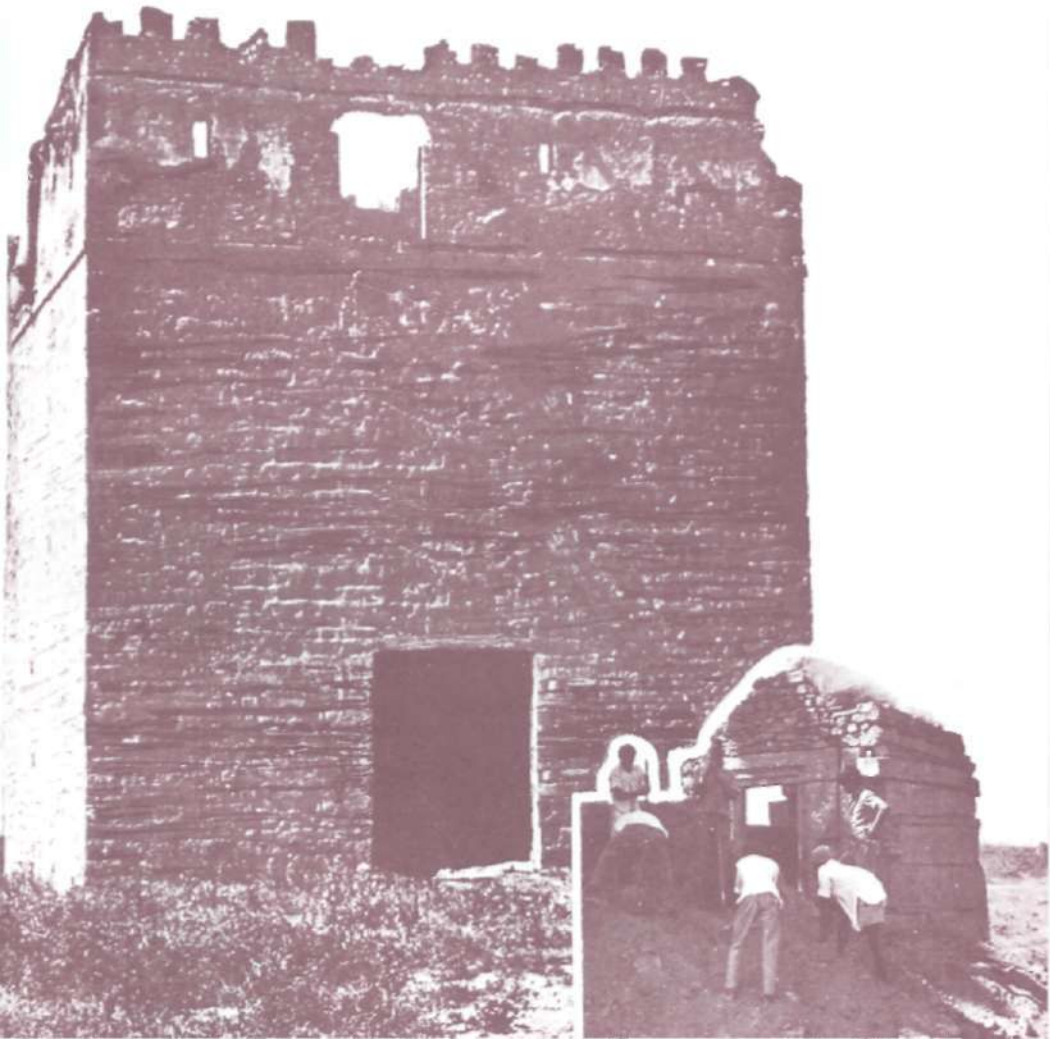
This temple at the far south end of the site is significant in being located in the general area of a neolithic village. Nine neolithic implements were found in and around the temple site.

This Shaivite temple-
was in use
until recently.

Manmool Castle was erected in the early sixteenth century by the Qutub Shah dynasty and reportedly was used as a fort, a taxation center, a hunting lodge, a shelter for the poor, and eventually as a shed for cattle.

The earth around the Castle was rich in potshards and carved granite pieces. There is a legend that golden coins and treasure lie buried somewhere in the vicinity of the Castle and are guarded by a proverbial Jinn.

A small temple (inset) at the rear of the Castle appears to have been constructed after the Castle. Some of the excavated objects unearthed within the temple predate the Castle and the temple itself. The inscription stone with "Halekannada" (old Kannada) script belonging to the eleventh century A.D., an image of Shiva, and a Jain altar still remain within the temple.





Directly south of the Ganesha sculpture, at a five-foot depth, a large hero stone was unearthed.



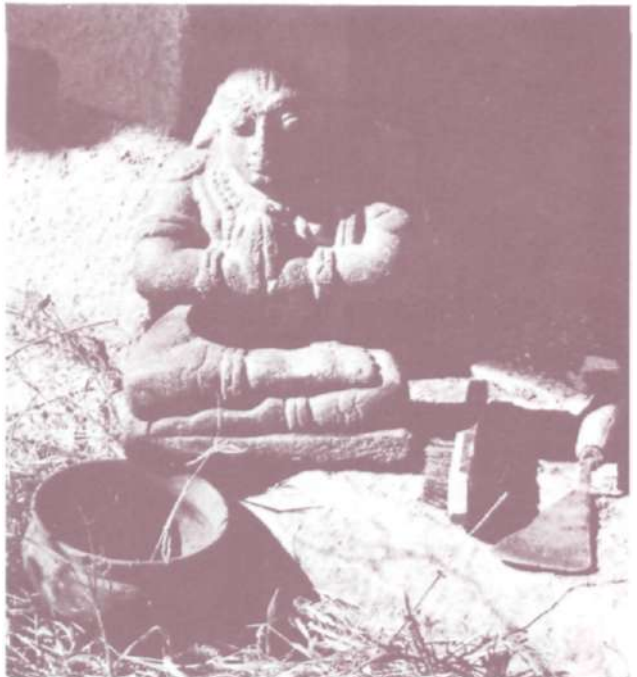
This commemorative sculpture is in 1/4 relief on granite. It depicts a warrior's supremacy in battle over an equestrian enemy. The top-knot of the warrior is said to contain a human skull.



The hero found earlier, provides an interesting counterpart to this one discovered in an overgrown field in the southeast corner of Manmool.



Snake figures vary in representation. All the snake figures found in the snake mound area are relief carvings on crude stones of different sizes. Weaponry and tail arrangements differ in the various figures. The naga (male) and nagini (female) carvings are on brown stone commonly found in this area. One figure of a naga raja (king cobra) was found in the snake mound area.



This dwarf figure of Yaksha, the guardian figure of Kubera, the lord of wealth, was found in the tree temple. The Yaksha-a small, squat figure is deliberately carved with ugly features to absorb the evil eye.



The Manmool temples were in use until resettlement. They date back to the post-Kakatiya period (1400 A.D.) and appear to have been the most active Hindu worship center in Manmoolvillage.

Lively decorative art can be seen on the capital structure of the Shiva temple. The Linga aspect of Shiva is seen within the shrine. Nandi the bull, the vahana (vehicle) of Shiva, observes placidly from the vestibule. Adjacent to the Shiva temple is a Hanuman temple. Hanuman, Rama's chief devotee and helper in the Ramayana epic, is carved in $\frac{1}{4}$ relief on a crude granite slab within.



Nandi: The totemistic bull of pre-Aryan culture, the vahana (vehicle) of Lord Shiva. Carved in relief on black granite stone commonly found in the area.





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