

Kentucky to display Indian Head Rock

By G. SAM PIATT

PDT Staff Writer

SOUTH SHORE, Ky. — City officials here are working on coming up with a plan for displaying Indian Head Rock now that an agreement calling for the aged boulder to be returned to Kentucky from Ohio has been reached.

"I've talked to several people who have some ideas about it, but there's been no serious discussions on the council about exactly what we'll do with it," said South Shore Mayor Cheryl Moore. "I've had no chance yet to talk to Bobby (Carpenter, Greenup County judge/executive) but I will be doing that."

Carpenter plans on keep-

ing the rock inside at the county garage until a decision on how and where it will be displayed is reached.

"It belongs to the people of South Shore, since it came from the river down there," Carpenter said. "We will keep it safe. My guys will not touch it."

He said he has been to look at the rock in Portsmouth, where it has remained in the city garage since Ironton resident Steve Shaffer, a history buff, and others raised it from the bottom of the river near the Kentucky Shore and floated it across the river to Portsmouth.

"I judge it will weigh 6 tons," Carpenter said. "The Portsmouth people were

very nice about it. They want to get rid of the rock. State officials, with the Kentucky Attorney General's office, I'm assuming, will call me when it's supposed to be picked up. They will have a contractor go get it and bring it here and unload it. I won't have to even touch it."

Carpenter said he believes the sandstone boulder will have to be stored under roof to protect it from the elements.

"When it dries out from the sun it could bust apart. I would say South Shore will have to put it in something, like a little gazebo or carport. That way it could last a long time," he said.

Bobby Allen, son of the late state Sen. Nelson Allen

and tourism director for Greenup County, couldn't be reached for comment, but Carpenter said Allen believes Indian Head Rock will be a great tourist attraction.

"He wants it make sure its displayed where the public will have access to it," Carpenter said.

U.S. District Judge Henry R. Wilhoit Jr. late last week ordered a lawsuit involving the rock stayed after the two states reached a deal.

The rock has received nationwide publicity in newspapers and on television since the controversy between the two states began.

It's been nearly three years now since Shaffer and those working with him

removed the rock from below the surface on the Kentucky side of the river near South Shore.

It has been stored in the City Garage in Portsmouth ever since as Kentucky officials waged a battle to see it returned.

Kentucky prosecutors lodged felony charges against Shaffer for removing a protected archaeological treasure without permission. That charge was dropped last year because prosecutors decided they could not prove the rock Shaffer took was THE Indian Head Rock, that another rock located upstream could actually be it.

After that, Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway filed a lawsuit in Wil-

hoit's court against Shaffer and the others, seeking to have the rock returned.

For years, before the Ohio was dammed in the 1920s, the rock Shaffer took had jutted above the surface of the river on the Kentucky side, about 300 yards upstream from Grant Bridge. People from Portsmouth and other areas would visit the rock. Some initials and dates chiseled on it date back to pioneer days. A crude image of a human face is carved on one side of it.

The rock had been totally submerged for decades, after the dams raised the water levels.

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