

[Home](#) / [India](#) / Stone Age Foote

## Stone Age Foote

There's a new museum in Karnataka and The Telegraph tells us why everyone should take note



His story: A granite quarry in Sanganakallu  
Sourced by the correspondent

[Anasuya Basu](#) | Published 02.08.20, 12:54 AM

Among the many events put into the shade by the outbreak of Covid-19 in India was the inauguration of a museum in Bellary in Karnataka. Most likely the only museum in India focused on the Stone Age, the Robert Bruce Foote Sanganakallu Archaeological Museum is dedicated to an Englishman.

Robert Bruce Foote was a British geologist employed with the Geological Survey of India (GSI). Today, he is regarded as the father of south Indian geology, while archaeologists regard him as the father of Indian prehistory — a reference to the period before the invention of the alphabet or even the appearance of the first writings on stone surfaces.

The Englishman conducted his geological surveys between 1858 and 1891, and the greater part of his service was spent in south India — mostly in the Madras Presidency, which included Andhra Pradesh, parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, Odisha and Lakshadweep. In the Rayalaseema and Kalyana Karnataka regions — covering the whole of present-day northern Karnataka and western Andhra Pradesh — Foote had carried out detailed mapping of geological formations. But his interest went beyond minerals.

“He was a geologist with a passion for documenting evidence of prehistoric humans and their cultural evolution,” said the honorary director of the new museum, Ravi Korisetar, at a virtual talk organised recently by the Indian Museum in Calcutta. According to Korisetar, ever since his appointment by the GSI, Foote began his search for Early Man sites, especially in the Madras Presidency.

The Stone Age is divided into the Paleolithic (or Old Stone Age), Mesolithic (or Middle Stone Age) and Neolithic (or New Stone Age) periods. Megalithic is that which is typical of the period between the Neolithic period and the Bronze Age. There are a large number of Paleolithic, Neolithic, Ashmound (typical of the Neolithic Age) as well as Megalithic sites not only in the Bellary region, where the museum stands, but also in Kurnool and Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh and Chitradurga in Karnataka.

Korisetar stresses on the importance of having a Stone Age museum and explains how an understanding of one’s past, even the remote past, is crucial to one’s sense of heritage. In the fitness of things, the new museum has initiated public outreach activity and archaeology workshops for museology students and schoolteachers, he tells **The Telegraph**.



The entrance to the Robert Bruce Foote Sanganakallu Archaeological Museum  
Sourced by the correspondent

In the preface to his 1901 work, *Catalogue of the Prehistoric Antiquities*, Foote writes how, ever since he had learnt about the English geologists who had discovered chipped flint instruments in the drift beds of the Somme river

valley in northern France, he was convinced of “the necessity of looking out for possible similar traces of early human art in south India where my work then lay...”

Foote’s geological investigations helped generate the basic maps of geological resources, including the most productive gold fields, and in the identification of prehistoric sites. He discovered over 450 prehistoric sites in the Madras Presidency. In Bellary alone, in the heart of the Rayalaseema region, he discovered more than 160 sites. Says Korisettar, who is also a professor of archaeology at Karnataka University, “Among the several sites that he discovered, the Sanganakallu site, about seven kilometres northeast of Bellary, was of much importance.”

In Sanganakallu, Foote identified a large ground-stone axe workshop of the Neolithic Age, dating back to 3000 BC. Korisettar says, “He also discovered Lower Paleolithic sites at Pallavaram and Attirampakkam, which represent the Acheulean phase associated with the *Homo erectus* or archaic man’s expansion out of Africa.”

Large-scale granite quarrying in the region in the last 20 years has destroyed many of these sites. Korisettar says Sanganakallu too has sustained much damage.

This is what prompted a group of archaeologists to approach administrative officials of the region with the idea of a museum.

The museum, as it stands now, houses artefacts from the Palaeolithic period to the Iron Age; human and animal remains from various sites; plant remains, especially charred grains, from the Neolithic and Iron Age levels at Sanganakallu; beads and other objects of adornment; ritual and symbolic objects.

The ground floor has a section each on the African roots of humankind, the Indian subcontinent’s prehistory, the prehistory of Kalyana Karnataka, and the geological resources exploited by the Neolithic communities in the Rayalaseema region. A variety of stone tools of the Palaeolithic period too are on display. In the central sunken area of the ground floor the scale-down model of the Sanganakallu hill complex and various archaeological features associated with the site are highlighted.

A sarcophagus burial pot — recovered from the Kudatini ashmound on the Bellary-Hospet road and exhibited in the first-floor gallery — is one of the prize collections attesting the emergence of elites in the Early Iron Age of south India. The multi-legged, boat-shaped pot gestures at the rise of a complex society, wherein a certain section of people was given special burial, indicative of status. It was found to contain the remains of a seven-year-old.

Foote himself was cremated, after he died in Presidency Hospital in Calcutta in 1912. He left most of his collection to the Government Museum in Chennai for future researchers, while some have found their way into the Indian Museum in Calcutta via the GSI.

Among the many events put into the shade by the outbreak of Covid-19 in India was the inauguration of a museum in Bellary in Karnataka. Most likely the only museum in India focused on the Stone Age, the Robert Bruce Foote Sanganakallu Archaeological Museum is dedicated to an Englishman.

Robert Bruce Foote was a British geologist employed with the Geological Survey of India (GSI). Today, he is regarded as the father of south Indian geology, while archaeologists regard him as the father of Indian prehistory — a reference to the period before the invention of the alphabet or even the appearance of the first writings on stone surfaces.

The Englishman conducted his geological surveys between 1858 and 1891, and the greater part of his service was spent in south India — mostly in the Madras Presidency, which included Andhra Pradesh, parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, Odisha and Lakshadweep. In the Rayalaseema and Kalyana Karnataka regions — covering the whole of present-day northern Karnataka and western Andhra Pradesh — Foote had carried out detailed mapping of geological formations. But his interest went beyond minerals.

“He was a geologist with a passion for documenting evidence of prehistoric humans and their cultural evolution,” said the honorary director of the new museum, Ravi Korisettar, at a virtual talk organised recently by the Indian Museum in Calcutta. According to Korisettar, ever since his appointment by the GSI, Foote began his search for Early Man sites, especially in the Madras Presidency.

The Stone Age is divided into the Paleolithic (or Old Stone Age), Mesolithic (or Middle Stone Age) and Neolithic (or New Stone Age) periods. Megalithic is that which is typical of the period between the Neolithic period and the Bronze Age. There are a large number of Paleolithic, Neolithic, Ashmound (typical of the Neolithic Age) as well as Megalithic sites not only in the Bellary region, where the museum stands, but also in Kurnool and Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh and Chitradurga in Karnataka.

Korisettar stresses on the importance of having a Stone Age museum and explains how an understanding of one’s past, even the remote past, is crucial to one’s sense of heritage. In the fitness of things, the new museum has initiated public outreach activity and archaeology workshops for museology students and schoolteachers, he tells **The Telegraph**.

In the preface to his 1901 work, Catalogue of the Prehistoric Antiquities, Foote writes how, ever since he had learnt about the English geologists who had discovered chipped flint instruments in the drift beds of the Somme river valley in northern France, he was convinced of “the necessity of looking out for possible similar traces of early human art in south India where my work then lay...”

Foote’s geological investigations helped generate the basic maps of geological resources, including the most productive gold fields, and in the identification

Presidency. In Bellary alone, in the heart of the Rayalaseema region, he discovered more than 160 sites. Says Korisettar, who is also a professor of archaeology at Karnataka University, “Among the several sites that he discovered, the Sanganakallu site, about seven kilometres northeast of Bellary, was of much importance.”

In Sanganakallu, Foote identified a large ground-stone axe workshop of the Neolithic Age, dating back to 3000 BC. Korisettar says, “He also discovered Lower Paleolithic sites at Pallavaram and Attirampakkam, which represent the Acheulean phase associated with the Homo erectus or archaic man’s expansion out of Africa.”



Foote's portrait in the museum  
Sourced by the correspondent

Large-scale granite quarrying in the region in the last 20 years has destroyed many of these sites. Korisettar says Sanganakallu too has sustained much damage.

This is what prompted a group of archaeologists to approach administrative officials of the region with the idea of a museum.

The museum, as it stands now, houses artefacts from the Palaeolithic period to the Iron Age; human and animal remains from various sites; plant remains, especially charred grains, from the Neolithic and Iron Age levels at

Sanganakallu; beads and other objects of adornment; ritual and symbolic objects.

The ground floor has a section each on the African roots of humankind, the Indian subcontinent's prehistory, the prehistory of Kalyana Karnataka, and the geological resources exploited by the Neolithic communities in the Rayalaseema region. A variety of stone tools of the Palaeolithic period too are on display. In the central sunken area of the ground floor the scale-down model of the Sanganakallu hill complex and various archaeological features associated with the site are highlighted.

A sarcophagus burial pot — recovered from the Kudatini ashmound on the Bellary-Hospet road and exhibited in the first-floor gallery — is one of the prize collections attesting the emergence of elites in the Early Iron Age of south India. The multi-legged, boat-shaped pot gestures at the rise of a complex society, wherein a certain section of people was given special burial, indicative of status. It was found to contain the remains of a seven-year-old.

Foote himself was cremated, after he died in Presidency Hospital in Calcutta in 1912. He left most of his collection to the Government Museum in Chennai for future researchers, while some have found their way into the Indian Museum in Calcutta via the GSI.



In the corridors of the past: Belvedere House



The Sister Nivedita Heritage Museum and Knowledge Centre unveiled

[Museums](#)

[Karnataka](#)

Share



Advertisement

**It all starts with a name.**

Trust in yourself. Trust in your idea. Get going with the right doma

### Is your kid aged 4-6? Get them Personalized Reading Classes. Free Demo Class!

Vedantu SuperKids | Sponsored

### Coding Classes for Kids Age 6-14 from IIT/Harvard Team

Book a FREE trial now! Laptop/Desktop is mandatory.

CampK12 | Sponsored

Learn More

### Book a free coding class for kids aged 6-18 yrs.

Live online coding classes with Whitehat Jr. Book a free coding class for kids, aged 6-18 yrs.

WhiteHat Jr | Sponsored

Sign Up

### You can now support hungry people with cooked meals

Akshaya Patra | Sponsored

### Modular kitchen costs in Telangana might actually surprise you

Modular kitchen | Search ads | Sponsored

### Exclusively for Ages 4-14.

Get a Free Trial

PlanetSpark | Sponsored

Learn More

### Celebrate with everyone

Dell | Sponsored

### The Cost of Properties for Sale in Dubai Might Totally Surprise You

Dubai Properties | Search Ads | Sponsored

### Book a free online Piano class for ages 6-18.

Learn Piano with WhiteHat Jr's online music classes. Book Now for Ages 6-18.

WhiteHat Jr | Sponsored

Sign Up

### Now A Term Plan Which Also Gives Your Premiums Back

Max Life Insurance | Sponsored

### Get a free Public Speaking Class for your child

Book Now

PlanetSpark | Sponsored

Learn More

### Egypt throws a spatula in Indian Basmati rice exports

BusinessLine | Sponsored

Learn More

### Order Medicines Online With Discount

Get flat 25% off on all online medicines & earn Rs. 50 Cashback

Dhani Pharmacy | Sponsored

Shop Now

### Kolkata anchor 'gang-raped' in Patna hotel alleges police inaction

Telegraph India

### Shikhar Dhawan, wife Ayesha Mukherji get divorced after eight years of marriage

Telegraph India

### Pay ₹5K/m for 10 yrs, Get ₹11.6Lakh in income\* from 12th yr

Guaranteed Income Plans | Sponsored

Learn More

### Born between 1975-1990? Check eligibility for 1Cr Term Plan

New Max Life Term Plan | Sponsored

### Why is Everyone In India Buying This Jet Fast Blender Only for Rs. 2999?

slursh.in | Sponsored

### This plan gives guaranteed returns to fulfill your goals

Guaranteed Income Plans | Sponsored

Get Quote

### Term plan premium for women are lower by 16.47%^ . Check Now

New Max Life Term Plan | Sponsored

### Rain alert for 48 hours in Kolkata

Telegraph India

### Champions League: PSG call for patience on Lionel Messi

Telegraph India

### Refugees Seeking Peace After Persecution

Our Better World | Sponsored

### Pay only for what you Use with HPE GreenLake

Hewlett Packard Enterprise | Sponsored

### What's your sleeping position? This is what your sleeping position can say about your health

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

### Shilpa Shetty says she did not know what Raj Kundra was doing as she was 'too busy'

Telegraph India

### Put your learning skills to the test!

Take the BYJU'S National Aptitude Test (BNAT), analyse your skills and win scholarships!

BYJU'S | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

### A Hand Up, not Hand Out for Refugees

Our Better World | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

### Why are Dubai houses so cheap?

Dubai | Search Ads | Sponsored

### The Price of Studying in the United States Is Cheaper Than You Think

Study In US | Search Ads | Sponsored

### Do You Speak English? Work a USA Job From Home in India

USA Work | Search Ads | Sponsored

### Apartments For Sale in Adraspalli Might Be Cheaper Than You Think

Flats for Sale | Search Ads | Sponsored

### Javed Akhtar defamation case: Kangana Ranaut appears before Mumbai court

Telegraph India

### No-nonsense Naveen acts on party leader, shows the way

Telegraph India

### Born between 1960-1975? Term Life Insurance Worth ₹1cr at ₹2500/Mon\*. Get Quote!

Life Insurance Quotes | Sponsored

[Get Quote](#)

### Interior Designs in Adraspalli You Might Be Amazed

Interior Designers | Search Ads | Sponsored

### The Prices of Data Science Masters Program in Adraspalli Might Surprise You

Data Science Masters | Search | Sponsored

### From India and Want to Study in the United States? See Degree and Course Options

Study In US | Search Ads | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

### Do You Speak English? Online Jobs In The USA May Pay More Than You Think

Online Jobs in the USA | Search Ads | Sponsored

### Find Orthopedic Memory Foam Mattresses at Unbeatable Prices in Adraspalli

Memory Foam Mattress | Search Ads | Sponsored

**Cover medical expenses along with this term plan. Check how**

Max Life Insurance | Sponsored

**No Upper Age Limit For Health Insurance. Get ₹7 Lac Health Plan @ ₹1300/mon\*. Get Quote!**

Best Health Policy | Sponsored

Get Quote

**Industry concerned over plans to hike GST on packed edible coconut oil**

BusinessLine | Sponsored

Learn More

**Do You Speak English? Work a USA job from home in India**

Work from Home | Search Ads | Sponsored

**Age between 25 - 45 Years ? Term Life Insurance Worth ₹1 Cr Starting at ₹1250/Mon\*. Get Quote!**

Term Life Insurance | Quotes | Sponsored

Get Quote

**This is what your sitting posture says about your personality**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

**Raj Kundra walks out of Mumbai jail after bail in pornographic films case**

Telegraph India

**EPL: Ronaldo will make his second debut for Manchester United when they host Newcastle United**

Telegraph India

**This is why everyone's freezing lemons after buying them! Frozen lemons are amazing!**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

**Getting Hair Transplant in Adraspalli Might Be Cheaper Than You Think**

Hair Transplant Clinic | Search Ads | Sponsored

### **3BHK Apartments is On Sale and Much Cheaper Than You Think.**

Apartments In Bangalore | Search Ads | Sponsored

### **These 5 Superfoods Can Help Arrest Hair Loss - Beauty, Cosmopolitan India**

Cosmopolitan.in | Sponsored

### **Do You Speak English? Work a USA Job From Home**

Search | Work in USA | Sponsored

### **Assam: Death of a 12-year-old and CM's shockingly cavalier statement**

Telegraph India

### **Safe, reliable, energy-efficient and world-class building solutions**

Toshiba | Sponsored

### **The Price of a Masters Degree In Germany Might Surprise You - Find Out More Today**

Master's Degree Germany | Search Ads | Sponsored

### **This is what the shape of your feet says about your personality!**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

### **The Most Expensive Transformations In Hollywood**

Crafthought | Sponsored

### **Located in India? You Might Qualify for a Work From Home**

Work from Home | Search Ad | Sponsored

### **Online Jobs in Adraspalli may pay you more than you think**

Find Jobs Online | Sponsored

Learn More

## Lessons for Kolkata Municipal Corporation from Mukundapur

Telegraph India

## Naseer wishes Khans of Bollywood had 'more confidence' to speak out

Telegraph India

## Husband Illustrates Everyday Life With Wife In 22 Pictures, Try Not To Cry!

LoveMyFamilyMag.com | Sponsored

## Online Project Management Courses Might Be More Fun than You Think

Online Project Management Courses | Search ads | Sponsored

## 25 World's Most Horrible Places - Where Not to Travel

TripOnMag.com | Sponsored

## Most People Don't Know About This Free Cashback Offer. Know More!

Add Chrome Extension & Get Cashback | Sponsored

Install Now

## Interested In AI? Courses In India Might Surprise You

Artificial Intelligence Course | Search Ad | Sponsored

## Gavaskar sees risk of MS Dhoni, Ravi Shastri clash

Telegraph India

## Get comprehensive protection till age 85 with this plan

Max Life Insurance | Sponsored

## Get premium back at no extra cost~1 with this term plan

Max Life Insurance | Sponsored

### **Term plan premium as low as Rs 565/ month. Buy now**

New Max Life Term Plan | Sponsored

### **Income > 7L? Check your premium for 1Cr term plan cover**

New Max Life Term Plan | Sponsored

### **A Day In The Life Of A Caregiver - Living with Schizophrenia**

Our Better World | Sponsored

### **Tax Query: Does a senior citizen pay advance tax on capital gains?**

BusinessLine | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

### **Football Fandom: A father's gift to his daughters**

Telegraph India

### **In pictures: Rain batters Kolkata**

Telegraph India

### **Sugar mills get orders to supply 302 cr litres of ethanol**

BusinessLine | Sponsored

### **Men saved her cubs, then mama bears does something unbelievable**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

### **Get rid of cockroaches in no time at all with these useful tricks**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

### **A Marine rushes home to greet his wife, but is surprised when he sees her.**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

### **This House May Seem Small, But Check Out Its Interior!**

GardensTricks.com | Sponsored

### **Toronto Real Estate Prices Might Surprise You**

Toronto Real Estate | Search Ads | Sponsored

### **Singapore Job Vacancies Might Actually Surprise You**

Singapore Job Vacancy | Search Ads | Sponsored

### **Tiger Wood's Ex-wife Turns 41, Hold Your Heart Before You See Her**

Sizzlfy | Sponsored

### **40 Hit Songs That Are Now Banned From Playing On The Radio**

Oceandraw | Sponsored

### **Overseas Money Transfer from India Might Be Faster Than You Think**

Overseas Money Transfer | Search Ads | Sponsored

### **This Lady in a Wheelchair Couldn't Climb the Stairs, but Watch What Happens When She Pushes the Button**

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

### **England vs India: Fans blame Ravi Shastri and Virat Kohli for fifth Test cancellation**

Telegraph India

### **On Bhowanipore bypolls, high court has a few questions**

Telegraph India

### **Real Estates in Adraspalli Might Be Becoming More Popular This Year**

Prime Real Estate | Sponsored Ads | Sponsored

### **The One WD40 Hack You Aren't Supposed To Know About**

Oceandraw | Sponsored

### **People in Adraspalli Might Be Earning Lots of Money Online - See Options**

Earn Money Online | Search Ad | Sponsored

### **Study In Canada With 100% Scholarship For Indian Student. Apply Now!**

Study In Canada | Search Ads | Sponsored

[Click Here](#)

### **After A Seven Hour Makeover, This Bride-To-Be Is Unrecognizable**

Trendscatchers | Sponsored

Download the latest The Telegraph app



### More from The Telegraph India

- News
- Opinion
- India
- States
- Calcutta
- World
- Business
- Science and Tech
- Health
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Culture

### More from ABP Group



Copyright © 2020 The Telegraph. All rights reserved.

[About](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Terms of use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

