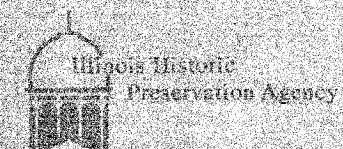


F.A. RTE.	SECTION	COUNTY	TOTAL SHEETS	SHEET NO.
		ST. CLAIR	18	17
STA.		TO STA.		
FED. ROAD DIST. NO.		ILLINOIS FED. AID PROJECT		
CONTRACT NO. 44966				



# Monks Mound

The largest prehistoric earthwork in the Americas



Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site

NOTES:  
FULL-COLOR, ELECTRONIC FILE  
GRAPHICS WILL BE MADE  
AVAILABLE TO CONTRACTOR FOR  
EMBEDDED FIBERGLASS SIGN  
PRODUCTION.

Monks Mound is the largest prehistoric earthwork in the Americas. Its base covers over 14 acres, and it rises to a height of 100 feet. It contains an estimated 22 million cubic feet of earth, all hand-carried in baskets from the many burrow pits throughout the Cahokia site.

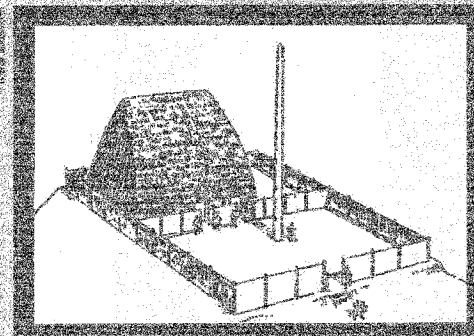
It was not built all at once, but in a series of stages, mostly from AD 950-1200. Core drillings through the mound suggest eight to 14 building stages. Excavations at various locations found indications of a stairway on the South Ramp, several buildings and a small mound rebuilt eight times on the First Terrace, a large temple structure on the Fourth Terrace, evidence of a French chapel and historic Indian occupation (1720s) on the First Terrace, and the discovery of the Birdman Tablet on the east side of the mound.

Recent tests confirm that the First Terrace was a late addition to the front of the mound and drilling deep beneath the Second Terrace encountered a large mass of stone cobbles whose function is unknown at this time. The Mississippians were also doing soil engineering, sorting and placing specific soils for strength or drainage.

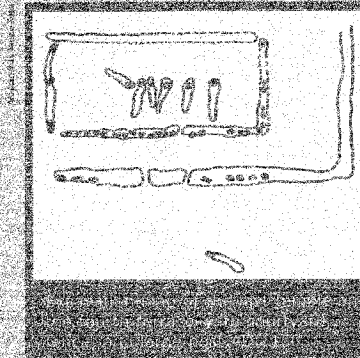
It is called Monks Mound because a group of French Trappist Monks lived on a nearby mound from 1809-1913 and planted gardens, fruit trees and wheat on the terraces of this mound.



- (A) South Ramp
- (B) First Terrace with mound and building
- (C) Second Terrace
- (D) Third Terrace
- (E) Fourth Terrace with large structure and marker post



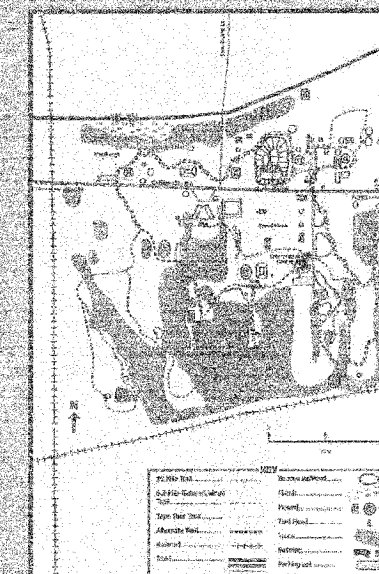
The Fourth Terrace building was probably the residence of the leader and the religious/political focus of the urban center. A fenced courtyard with a flag post in the center enclosed the Fourth Terrace. In the 1830s, among other things, the farm complex on the Third Terrace was removed, a small mound in the southeast corner. It is buried on the northeast corner of the Fourth Terrace.



### Mound Facts

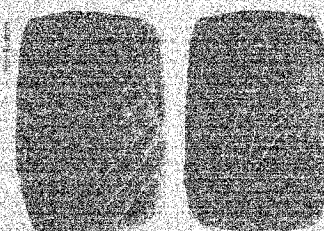
- The mound covers an area of over 14 acres and is 100 feet at the highest point.
- It contains 22 million cubic feet of earth.
- The building on the top terrace measured 54 feet by 114 feet and possibly 80 feet high.
- Construction of the mound began around AD 950 and it was enlarged several times until AD 1200.

### Site Trail Guide

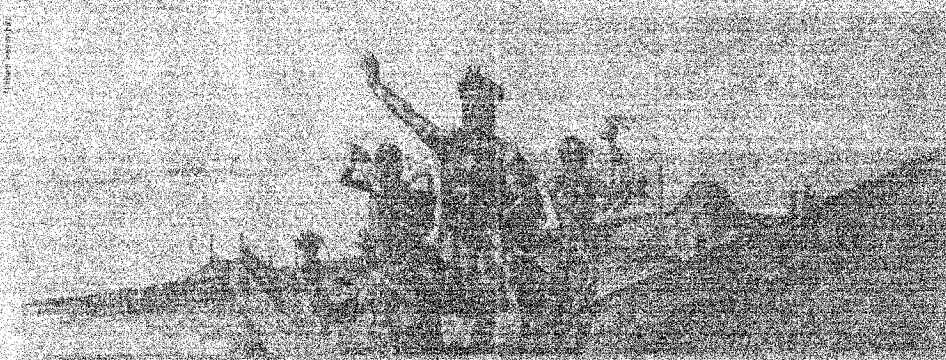


This mound is finished in sandstone. Visit the mound. Have fun, there's nothing else like it!

This mound is finished in sandstone. Visit the mound. Have fun, there's nothing else like it!



The "Birdman Tablet" was discovered in excavations on the east side of Monks Mound in 1971. The front side of this engraved sandstone tablet depicts a man in a falcon dancer outfit, with a beaked mask and wings; the reverse side has a cross-hatched diamond pattern representing a snake.



The falcon dancer and the attendant, from the early site from the end of Preclassic Period. Among some later Mississippian burials in the Sandhills, the chief was depicted as being topped by the Sun, and that may have been from Cahokia as well.

DISTRICT PROJECT ENGINEER - LANCE KIDD

REVISIONS	
NAME	DATE

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
SIGN GRAPHICS 5  
IDNR / IHPA STATEWIDE  
SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS  
CAHOKIA MOUNDS STATE  
HISTORIC SITE  
SCALE: NTS  
DATE: 2-26-07  
DRAWN BY: EJR  
CHECKED BY: GWW