

Paper, Rock, Bone, and Bronze: An Epigraphic Odyssey

Sunday April 19, 2009

2 - 4 pm

The National Museum of Language
7100 Baltimore Avenue Suite 202
College Park, Maryland 20740

Open to the public. Admission is free.

Speaker: Dr. Edward D.

Rockstein, L-3 Communications

Take this odyssey through the learning and experience processes stemming from Rockstein's interest in languages and, most particularly, in the development and evolution of writing systems. His journey goes from Latin, Greek, and Russian to the Korean han'gul 한글 alphabet and Hancha 漢字 Chinese characters used in Korean, the development of the Japanese kana カナ syllabaries, to various

Runic scripts with a side journey into Ogham along the way. Rockstein has had a life-long interest in the decipherment of unknown scripts, in writing systems, and in the origins and evolution of scripts. He stumbled into Norse Runic cryptography and pre-Columbian American epigraphy "by accident." He eventually studied the Turkic and Hungarian runiform scripts. The story of the Turkic 'runes' begins in the early 1700's when inscriptions in an unknown script and language were found on the banks of the Yenisei River in Siberia. They were deciphered with the aid of a bilingual text with Chinese. Early in the 20th century F. Babinger was preparing and editing a text of a 16th-century travel journal which included a transcription of an inscription in "litterae incognitae." Vilhelm

Thomsen later identified the script as the Hungarian Szekeley script and applied it to decipherment of the Turkic inscriptions from Mongolia. Ed will share some of his experiences and insights while "rambling among the Runes" in this presentation.

The Marian M. Jenkins Memorial Speaker Series

The Marian M. Jenkins Memorial Speaker Series commemorates the generous bequest of a friend of the Museum. From September 2008 to May 2009 there are monthly events at the National Museum of Language; open to the public and free of cost, they expand on topics related to the languages of the current exhibit.



For reservations, please call (301) 864-7071 or e-mail events@languagemuseum.org

For future events, please visit our website at: languagemuseum.org/calendar.htm

Light refreshments will be served.

Ample free parking available. Free and open to the public. Reservations are needed because of limited seating.

Directions can be found at languagemuseum.org/directions.html