



Welcome to Thimlich Ohinga

Thimlich Ohinga

It Takes a Village to Build a Wall

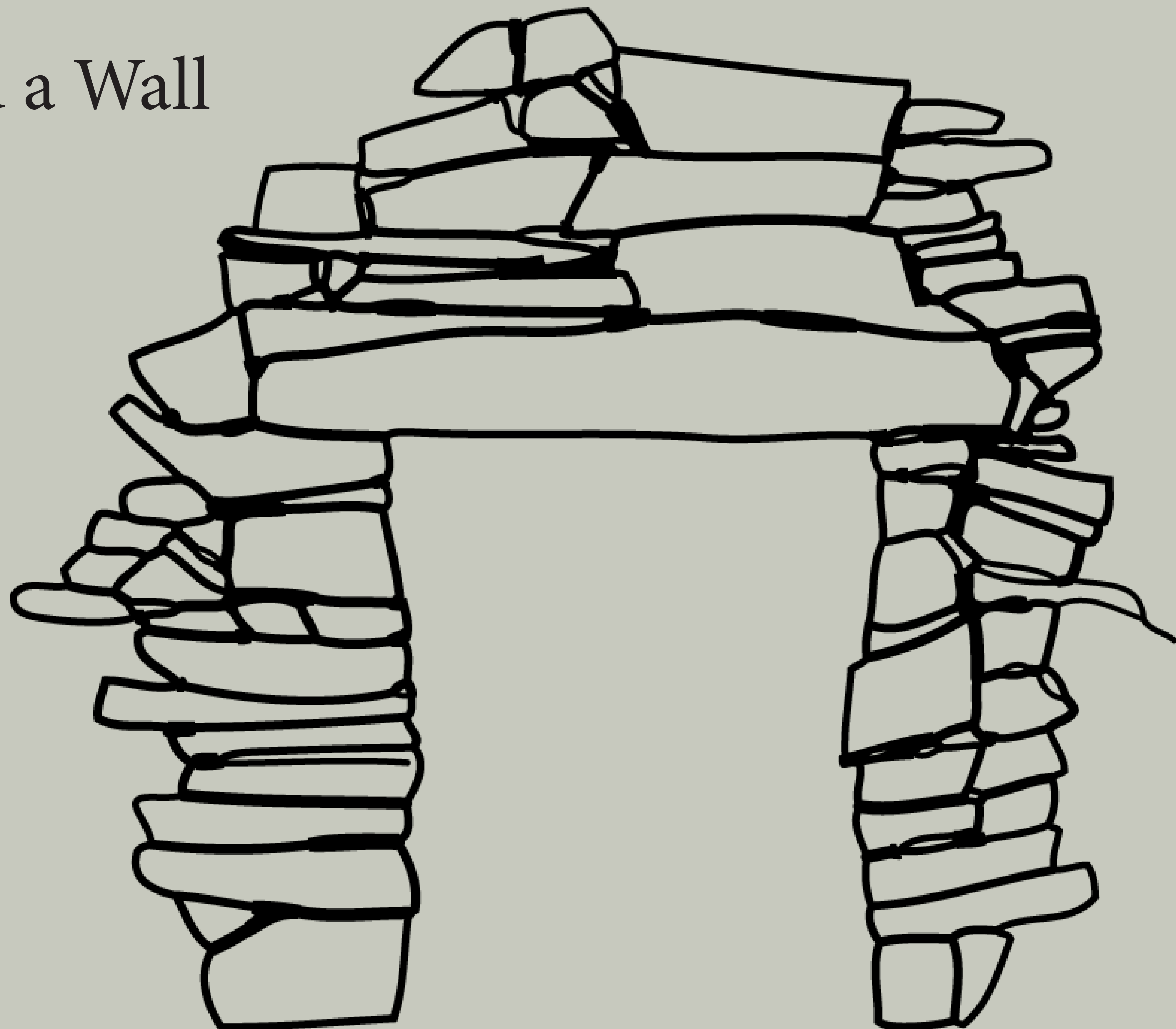
Many people were needed to create the immense walls of Thimlich Ohinga. Younger men and children gathered stones from nearby fields. Experienced stone masons carefully fit the stones in place. Women prepared food and drink to sustain the workers.

Organized by community elders, these work groups or '*sagas*,' were efficient ways to get the job done and deepen a sense of community. Elders also organized sagas to restore broken walls.

Try This: The Village Needs Your Help!

Choose a stone from this pile and carry it to the next sign to help build a wall.

How many stones could you carry in a day?



Thimlich Ohinga

Let the Stones Talk

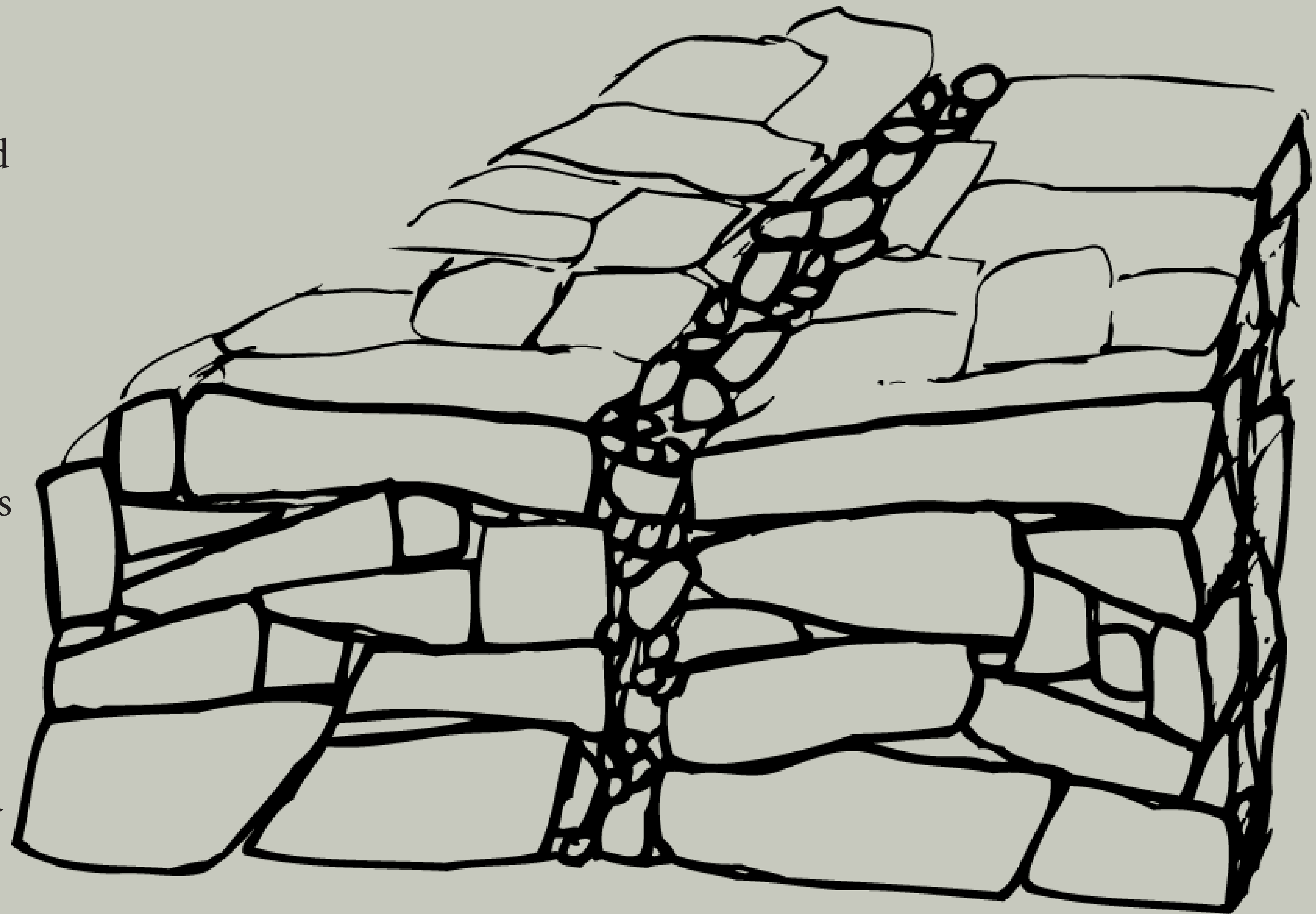
To picture how these walls were built, imagine a **Stone Sandwich**. Each wall or '*ohinga*' is comprised of three sections - the two outside layers contain large stones and the filling inside is made up of smaller rocks and gravel.

Where's the glue?

No mortar or cement was used to keep these stones together. Look closely at the stones and you see how each fits together like a puzzle.

Try This: Build A Wall

Add your stone to the practice wall. Try and find a good fit. Will this wall last another 100 years? Do some areas seem more stable than others?



Thimlich Ohinga

Keep Our Cattle Close

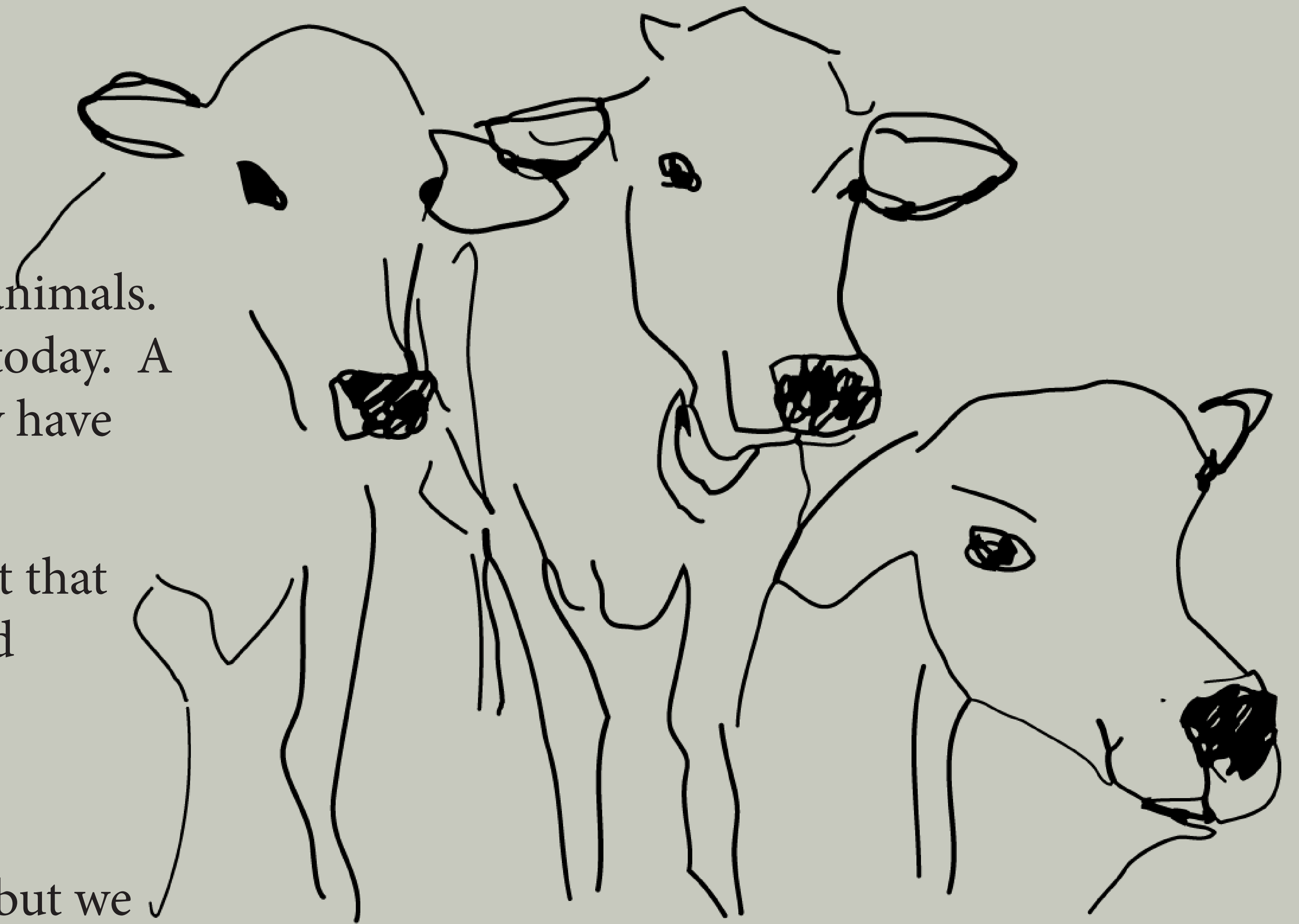
Living with Livestock

Each stone enclosure had a separate areas to keep the family's animals. These circular stone built enclosures or 'kraals' can still be seen today. A large kraal would be used to keep cattle and smaller kraals may have kept goats and sheep.

Cattle were led in and out of the enclosures, but it was important that they were kept close by to protect them from other animals and poachers.

Two ways to look at the Kraals

There is evidence of multiple kraals in some of the enclosures, but we are not sure how they were used. Did the numbers of the herd increase requiring more kraals? Was there a shift to a less communal style of ownership as individuals required kraals of their own?



Thimlich Ohinga

Life on the Inside

Welcome to the first and largest enclosure, Kocheing.

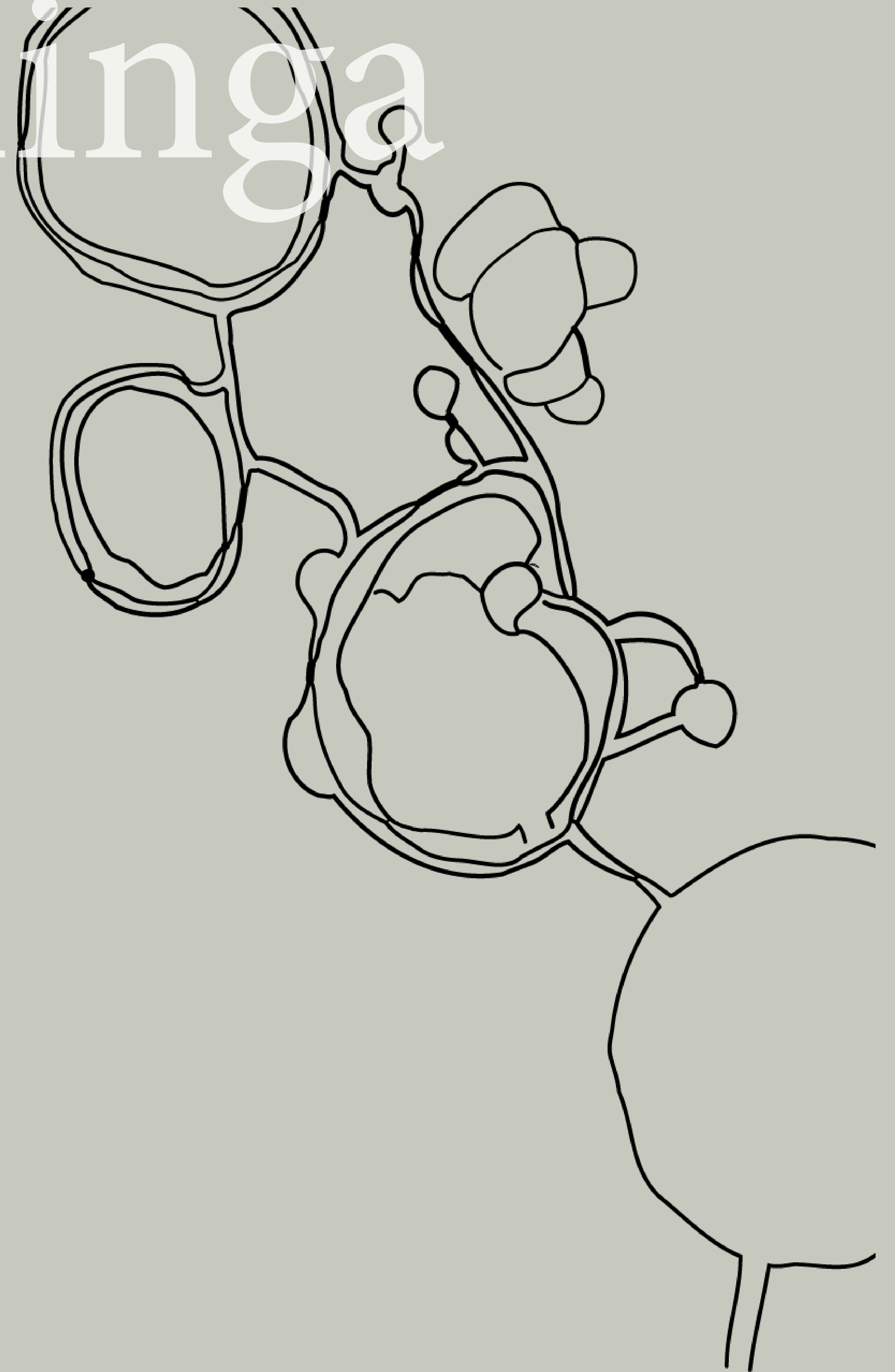
Communal Way of Life

The enclosures of Timlich Ohinga allowed for many families to live and work together. Look for round depressions and raised platforms inside the enclosures. We believe these are the foundations of huts where families once lived.

Work, Work and Play!

Archaeologists have discovered objects associated with black-smithing: tools and pieces of iron slag. Grinding stones have also been found.

The people of Thimlich Ohinga also enjoyed playing an ancient form of the popular East African board game Bao. Look for the large rock located in the North Eastern side of this enclosure. This game is very similar to Mancala - have you played it?



Thimlich Ohinga

The World Beyond the Walls

Look at the Forest beyond these walls. What sounds do you hear? Do you see any animals?

Where would you build your house?

Camping at Thimlich Ohinga

These platforms are designated camping areas, where you can come sleep under the stars. An amazing opportunity to camp next to 500 years of African history!



Thimlich Ohinga

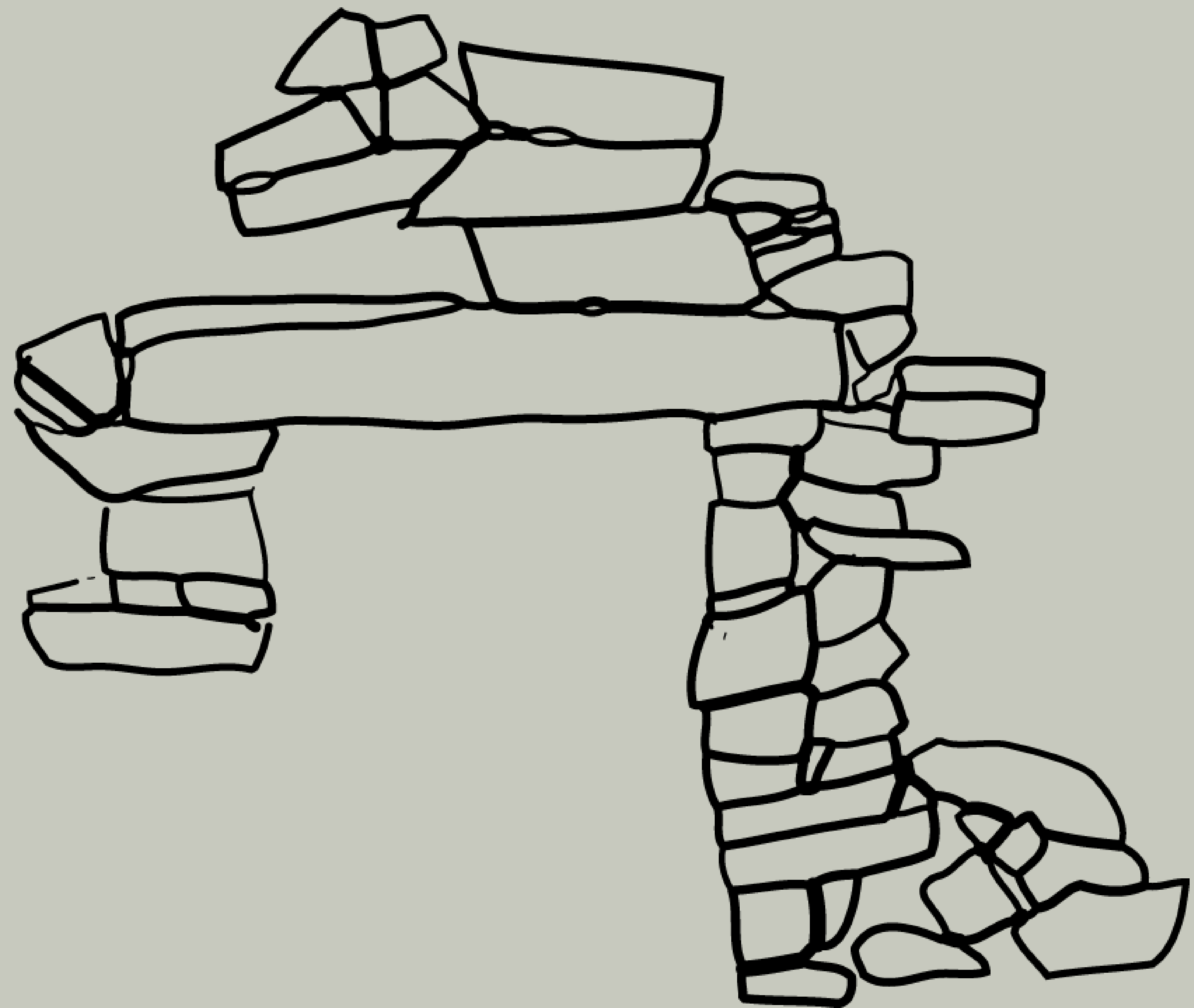
Preserving Our Heritage

Old Stones in New Hands

Over the years, the walls of Thimlich Ohinga have started to fall apart. Trees grow too close or even within the walls. Rocks have fallen down. Today, skilled stone masons work to repair these walls. Masons try and use original materials and building practices to restore the walls to their original beauty.

Working Together to Take Care of Our Past.

Look around - do you see sections of the wall that need repair? Is the damage done by people, plants or animals? If you see a section of the wall that needs help, please let your guide know. Help us to protect 500 years of unique architecture.



Thimlich Ohinga

What the Land Provides

Living Off the Land

Where do you get your food? Your clothes? Who built your house? Imagine living in a time before stores and markets. What would be different?

Medicine Cabinet Behind These Walls

The people who lived in Timlich Ohinga grew plants to help heal and protect. Many of these plants are still grown today and are used as treatments. What plants help you to feel better?



Thimlich Ohinga

A Traditional Luo Homestead

Look at the round huts in front of you. This is a traditional Luo homestead built thirty years ago as a demonstration compound. Luo families have lived here in the past - today it is used as an example of Luo culture and intangible heritage.

A Luo Nuclear Family

A typical Luo compound or 'dala' may contain up to 15 separate houses for the multiple wives and grown sons of the male leader of the family.

I've seen something like this before...

Do these shapes seem familiar? Circles are prominent in both stone enclosures behind you and the Luo homestead. What else seems similar?

