

# INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

## Newsletter.

Hal C. Ball, Editor

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### MEETING NOTICE:

The August meeting of the Institute of Maya Studies will be held at the Museum of Science on Wednesday the 15th at 8:00 pm. The evening's program will be presented by Dr. John R. Rousseau, who will give an illustrated talk on "Re-visiting Maya Sites in Guatemala and Honduras". As Dr. Rousseau has been interested in various aspects of archaeology for a number of years, and an active member of the West Palm Beach Archaeological Society and the Institute of Maya Studies, we look forward to an interesting and informative account of his recent trip...

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SECTION MEETING:

The next meeting of the IMS archaeological section will be in September, at which time the topic for the evening will be "Dating Methods in Archaeology". The meeting is planned to be held in the Museum of Science and the time and date will be announced in the September Newsletter...

### NEW MEMBERS:

A cordial welcome is extended to the following new members who joined the Institute of Maya Studies in July:

Ms. Nancy D. Beach

Mr. Henry B. Petersen

Ms. Dicque Barton

Mrs. Mable Gilbert

Mr. George R. Holland

Ms. Adrienne Seccia

### LETTER RELATES ACCOUNT OF MUSEUM'S "GUATEMALA EXPERIENCE" TRIP:

The following letter is from Ms. Elizabeth L. Beardmore, who recently returned from one of the Museum of Science "Guatemala Experience" trips.

"Do you want to know what its like to share in a Museum "Guatemala Experience"? Let me tell you, as I have just returned from one, and even though I chose for my first trip the "Archaeological Experience", I found available many other facets of the country that intrigued me. For example, bromeliads, orchids, and ferns were profuse, and flocks of vividly colored macaws and bright green parrots streaked overhead in

esoteric staccato. Also, the observance of the gentle Maya living in the shadows of towering pyramidal temples, like Tikal and Copan, now have much more significance, and even names like Kaminaljuyu roll smoothly from my tongue. One of the highlights of the trip was spending a day at the archaeologist's camp of Yaxha, which is still in the grip of nature's mantle and yet to have it's secrets revealed. All this, and more, added to pure escapism and undiluted joy! Why not let it be for you too?"

(For further information, phone 854-4242, or contact the editor)

#### MAYA EXHIBIT IN LONDON:

The Museum of Mankind in London has announced the opening of A Maya Exhibit beginning on September 27th. The building of The Museum of Mankind is a relatively new addition to the British Museum and is located at No. 6 Burlington Gardens. Besides the Maya Exhibit, which will be open to the public for approximately one year, there is a very interesting exhibit on Turquoise mosaics from Mexico and others on Eskimo art and The tribal image...

#### POTTERY AND ARTIFACTS OF COLUMBIA:

The Miami Art Center, 7867 North Kendall Drive, currently has an interesting exhibit on "Pre-Columbian Pottery and Colonial Art by Columbian Masters" There is a large display of various artifacts and pottery, which is divided into seven categories: Calima, Tolima, Quimbaya, Musica, Sinu, Tairona and Tamalamque. The Art Center is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except Saturday and Sunday, (1:00 to 7:00 p.m.), and the exhibit will last through August 15th...

#### COMPUTER PROGRAM FOR MAYA/CHRISTIAN DATE CONVERSION:

A new computer program has been devised, that according to the writers, can be used to convert the Maya Long Count Calendar to the Christian Calendar (or reverse), for dates exceeding A.D. 100. It is claimed that the program eliminates the possibility of error in performing a large number of conversions and incorporates the use of the Modified Thompson Correl-Constant. (Krowne, Sidrys and Nicholson---SAA meeting, 1973.)

#### ATLANTIS FOUND... (AGAIN!):

According to an account by UPI, that elusive and legendary "lost" continent of Atlantis, from where some people believe the first Maya migrated, has finally been found! This time off of the coast of Cadiz, Spain. Mrs. Maxine Asher, organizer and co-director of the expedition, is an avid spiritualist, and claims "the success of the discovery was due to good vibrations".

"THE CLASSIC MAYA COLLAPSE":

What was the cause of the collapse of the highly developed Maya civilization near the end of the Classic Period? Some of the answers to this question, which has perplexed students and anthropologists for many years, may possibly be found in a new book just released by the University of New Mexico Press entitled, "The Classic Maya Collapse". The book is edited by Professor T. Patrick Culbert, and brings together in one volume the opinions of thirteen leading scholars, who discuss previous theories on the Lowland Maya collapse, and offer new interpretations in regard to ceramics, inscriptions and sculpture. The conclusions in the book seem to suggest a general sociopolitical collapse of the Maya that evidently was not limited to just their cultural history, and chapter 12, by the late E. Wyllys Andrews IV, is of particular interest, because of Dr. Andrews' somewhat different approach to the subject...

NOTES OF MAYA RESEARCH AND DISCOVERYTHE CORAZAL PROJECT:

At the beginning of July, the first season of archaeological field work was finished on the Corazal Project of northern Belize, (formerly British Honduras). The project was sponsored jointly by the British Museum and Cambridge University, and the director was Dr. Norman Hammond, who has done previous archaeological work in southern Belize at the site of Lubaantun. One of the initial tasks of the first season was the re-mapping of the site of San Estevan, where four additional plazas were discovered. New sites were also investigated in both the Corazal and Orange Walk districts, but the principle excavation was at Nohmul, a Maya ceremonial site between the Rio Hondo and the New River. A large number of mounds of varying size were found and a preliminary analysis of the pottery recovered indicates a period of occupation beginning in the Late Preclassic Period and continuing through the Classic. (ca. 300 B. C. - 900 A. D.) Near the new site of Colha there was evidence of a sizeable flint tool manufacturing workshop, and at Kichpanha, fragments of a very unique Maya effigy vessel was found. Continued excavation work is planned for 1974...

MAYA SITE OF RIO BEC "REDISCOVERED":

The interesting Maya archaeological site of Rio Bec has been reported as having been "rediscovered" by an expedition headed by Hugh and Suzanne Johnston, documentary film makers, and Gilbert G. Griffin, pre-Columbian art historian at Princeton University. The impressive temple designated as "B" was located and appeared much the same as when it was first photographed and recorded by R. E. Merwin in 1912 for the Peabody Museum. The type of architecture at Rio Bec is uniquely different than that in other parts of the Maya area and the name of the site is used to designate this particular style, examples of which may be seen at Xpuhil and Becan, in southern Campeche, Mexico...

"SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PREHISTORIC MAYA SITES":

For those interested in a somewhat different approach as to why the Maya selected particular locations for settlement in the Corozal District of Belize, (British Honduras), a paper on this subject appeared in volume 38, number 3 of American Antiquity. (July, 1973) The author is Ernestene L. Greene, who examines the proposition that Maya sites in the area studied were originally chosen so as to minimize the effort expended in acquiring critical resources, and Dr. Greene used a method of isolating characteristics of the environment so that a test could be made of their correlation with settlement distribution...

NEWSLETTER

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