

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter

Hal C. Ball, Editor

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MEETING NOTICE:

The May meeting of the Institute will be held on Wednesday the 21st in the Museum of Science Auditorium at 8:00 p.m. Our program for the evening will be presented by Florida International University Professor Ellen Jacobs, whose subject will be the Maya ceremonial center of Copan. During her lecture, Miss Jacobs will show color slides which will emphasize the splendid architecture and exquisitely carved stone monuments found at this important Maya Classic site in western Honduras...

LIBRARY NOTES:

Mrs. Ethel Teller has been appointed to the library committee and will serve as librarian on Saturday afternoons alternately with Reginald Kennedy. As a convenience to our members, books from the library may be requested by mail and obtained from the librarian at one of our regular monthly meetings. (Mail name of title and author to: Mr. Reginald Kennedy, 14620 S. W. 83 Avenue, Kendall, Florida 33158). A number of donations have been made to the library during March and April and we are sincerely grateful to the following people who have contributed to our growing collection of books, journals, monographs, etc. - Stanley Boggs, Jack Eaton, Nicholas Hellmuth, Daniel Meyer, and Hal Ball. Each donation will be acknowledged on an IMS bookplate...

JADE FOUND AT CERRO MAYA:

David Freidal, Director of the Cerro Maya archaeological project in northern Belize, has reported that excavations at the site have revealed a cache containing five objects of jade, one of which is a pendant carved in the Olmec style. All five of the jade pieces were found together in a pottery vessel that was buried approximately 4 feet beneath the floor of one of the temple pyramids at the site. Freidal believes all are of a pre-Classic origin and that the Cerro Maya site is an example of an early type of Maya ceremonial center built prior to the great Classic Period...

EXCAVATIONS AT QUIRIGUA:

During the first season of excavations being conducted at Quirigua by The University of Pennsylvania Museum, all of the stone structures of the Temple Plaza at the south end of the site have been cleared and bushed and two of the larger zoomorphs have been dug around for stratigraphic study...



Mr. Pedro I. Arao	Dr. William L. Rathje
Mr. & Mrs. Craig Goodman	Mr. Robert M. Reilly
Mr. John Davenport	Mr. Paul A. Rothman

NEW BURIALS DISCOVERED AT THE MAYA SITE OF LAMANAI:

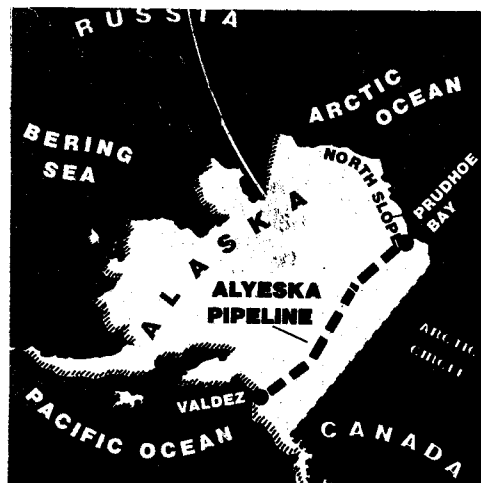
On a recent visit to the Maya ruins at Lamanai in central Belize, your editor was informed by Project Director David Pendergast that many new burials have been found at the site since the second year of excavations began in January. In one mound alone (No. 4), 39 separate burials were discovered and additional ones were also found in mounds No. 2 and 7, all located near the southeast boundary of the site. Excavations of the burials revealed that many of the bodies had been placed face down with the legs bent back over the pelvis, and it was of special interest to note that the majority of those interred in this position also had their front teeth filed or modified in some manner. Close examination of the skulls indicated that some of them had definitely been deformed, although conditions prevented all but a few of these from being removed intact. Another interesting aspect of the burials in mound 4 was that there was an abundance of funerary objects and articles of personal adornment around some of the skeletal remains, while others in the same mound were completely void of any type of artifact. However, the overall collection of objects found with the burials was quite varied and included various types of pottery vessels, shell beads, carved bones, whistles, obsidian blades, flint knives and projectile points, and a number of different copper artifacts. Some of the small copper bells that were found were of particular interest because they had small faces etched on the side, while others were somewhat unusual in that they were mounted on top of slender metal pins. A round iron pyrite mirror with a pottery rim around the outside was also found, and a polished peccary jawbone was unearthed that had a series of "dot" numbers on one end and the likeness of an individual peccary on the other. As excavations continue at Lamanai, it is probable that additional burials and artifacts will be discovered, and a report on these will be made at the conclusion of the 1975 season...

EARLY MAN IN NORTH AMERICA:

Dr. Jeffrey L. Bada, a geo-chemist at Scripps Institute of Oceanography, has announced that a new dating system indicates the colonization of North America may possibly have begun as early as 140,000 years ago! By using the amino acid technique, Dr. Bada has recently dated a skull found on a cliff overlooking Del Mar, California, that he estimates to be 48,000 years old. Besides bones, archaeologists working in the area have also uncovered charcoal-bearing fire pits, and the remains of birds, fish and shellfish. As much of this material is dateable, and since the Del Mar site is said to contain the oldest human remains yet discovered in the Western Hemisphere, this appears to be a very significant archaeological site...

ALASKA'S "PIPELINE ARCHAEOLOGISTS" SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE OF THE FIRST AMERICANS:

During the past three years, some of the most intensive archaeological survey and salvage work in the history of North America has been taking place along the route of the new trans-Alaskan pipeline that is being built to bring oil to the ice-free port of Valdez. This route tranverses regions that were heretofore blank spots on the maps of the archaeologists and anthropologists, and it is believed that investigations here may eventually reveal evidence of early man's migration from Siberia to Alaska as far back as 60,000 years ago. The work has been under the supervision of Dr. John B. Cook, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alaska, and so far 250 different sites have been located along the 800 mile route that is being cleared by the Alyseka Pipeline Service Company. The sites range in size from table-size weapon-factories to small villages of some complexity and permanence, many of which have been discovered by pipeline crews. More than 20,000 artifacts have been recovered, and the oldest, which are knife blades, date back to 11,000 years before the present. The collection of artifacts also contains a great variety of other objects, which includes stone scrapers, projectile points, bone clubs, ivory harpoons and antler awls. Dr. Cook reports that there has been a genuine and helpful rapport between pipeline crews and archaeologists, so that today Alaskan archaeology is not only on the track of the first Americans, but trailblazing new cooperative attitudes between economic developers and scientific researchers...



NEW PUBLICATION SERIES ON THE MAYA:

A new subseries within the current Museum Brief publication series of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Missouri, has recently been formed and will relate directly to papers on the inhabitants of the southern Maya Lowlands and adjacent area. The aim is not a comparative studies as such, but rather the synthesis of new unpublished data on little known sites, communities, or peoples in papers that are too long for an article but too short for a book. The first in this series was written by Lawrence Feldman and is entitled "Riverine Maya"...

"PREHISPANIC AMERICA":

This is a new book giving a concise overall picture of the beginnings and subsequent rapid growth of the indigenous cultures of the central and southern parts of the New World prior to the Spanish Conquest. It is edited by Shirley Gorenstein and contains 165 pp., 30 of which are illustrations. (St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y. 10010)...

UNUSUAL CLAY DRAINAGE TUBES FOUND AT CIHUATAN:

During this year's excavations of the ruins at Cihuatan, located in the western region of El Salvador, unusual shaped clay tubes have been found within the west wall of the principal plaza of the site. These were discovered in two stone lined drainage conduits that were apparently built to divert rainwater from the plaza floor and were made from a coarse brown clay. Because of their condition, however, it has not been possible to remove any of the tubes intact, but fortunately they are restorable and, therefore, can be carefully examined in their original form at the Cihuatan Museum laboratory. The length of the largest one is 65 cm. and the diameter at one end is 16½ cm. and at the other 22 cm. The tubes could thus be fitted together for fairly water-tight conduction of rainwater and are the first ones of this type found in a pre-Columbian site in El Salvador...

CORRECTION OF NAME OF ARCHAEOLOGIST WORKING IN EL SALVADOR:

Please be advised that the correct name for the Harvard archaeologist working with the Cerron Grande Project in El Salvador is Howard Earnest, and we apologize to Mr. Earnest for the error in his name in Vol. 4, No. 2...

A REMINDER FOR OUR "NOCTURNAL" MEMBERS:

There will be a total eclipse of the moon at 12:49 a.m. on May 25th...

NEWSLETTER

**Institute of Maya Studies
Museum of Science
3280 South Miami Avenue
Miami, Florida 33129**

