

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter



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Hal C. Ball, Editor

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MEETING NOTICE:

The next regular meeting of the Institute will be held in the Museum of Science auditorium on Wednesday the 21st at 8:00 p.m. Following a short business meeting, Irving Eyster will present an illustrated talk on the "South Florida Archaeology." This should be a particularly interesting program, as Irving has been involved in archaeology in one way or another since he was seven years old, at which time he helped his grandfather dig and record sites in Indiana. Although he is a graduate of computer technology and electronics, his major interest has always been in the field of archaeology, and he has done contract work for Museums and schools, and worked on many sites for the state of Florida. His most recent excavations have been in the Florida Keys, including one very old one just off Key West, and in addition he has worked on a number of underwater sites. Be sure to attend on Wednesday for an exciting narration and slide presentation of archaeology in south Florida...

CONGRATULATIONS TO GERTRUDE DUBY BLOM ON HER 75TH BIRTHDAY:

We take this opportunity to extend congratulations from the members of the Institute of Maya Studies to Sra. Gertrude Duby Blom, who celebrates her 75th birthday during this month. Often referred to as "Trudy" by her many friends, she is well known for her achievements in Mexican ethnology, Maya archaeology and her untiring assistance to the Lacandon Indians of Chiapas. We wish her good health and "all the best" during the future years...

SPECIAL MAYA BENEFIT EXHIBITS AID GUATEMALA EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS:

Two benefit exhibits featuring some phase of the Maya civilization have been held by the Peabody Museum of Harvard University and Tulane University of New Orleans. The one sponsored by the Peabody Museum was held in the Organization of American States building in Washington, D. C. and among the objects on display were a number of photographs by Maya archaeologist Ian Graham. Proceeds from both exhibits were donated to Guatemala.

OLD MAYA PROVERB: "A broadminded archaeologist is a person who can see both points of view--the wrong one and his own"...



Beatrice F. Blumenfield
Judith Ann Fennell
Robert A. Marrese
Lewis Meyer

Julio Fanjul
Deborah K. Hale
Kristina Meyer
Alice M. Perry

NEW BOOKS ADDED TO IMS LIBRARY:

Copan, Home of the Mayan Gods
Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphics

Indian Background of Colonial Yucatan
The Nuttall Codex Maya Sculpture

"A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF YURI KNOROZOV'S DECIPHERMENT OF MAYA HIERGLYPHICS":

In a preprint edition of a paper that will appear in the Middle American Research Institute's forthcoming Publication No. 22; Arthur Demarest offers an analysis and criticism of the work of Yuri Knorozov on his decipherment of Maya hieroglyphics. Demarest begins by discussing Knorozov's proposition that the hieroglyphics are largely composed of graphemes and then examines the 5 major sets of principles of his system. He also points out that there are now at least 700 recognizable graphemes, rather than the approximately 300 estimated by Knorozov, and that in his opinion the order of reading is somewhat different. The author concludes by acknowledging that although Knorozov has stimulated a return to a linguistic approach to the glyphs, "his system fails in terms of application to new data, correlation to Maya grammar, and internal logic." (For details, read pages 63-73 MARI #22)...

"TSIKBAL"--STUDIES OF THE LOWLAND MAYA:

The second number of "Tsikbal," a here-to-for unknown publication on the Lowland Maya, was received by the editor in June. The first number was published in April of 1975, and the second one a year later. The name means "conversation," and besides articles on the Lowland Maya, four pages are devoted to current books, articles, reviews, dissertations and theses. The Editor is Alice Littlefield, Dept. of Anthropology, Central Michigan Univ...

STUDIES IN MESOAMERICA, II:

This is one of the Contribution Series of The Archaeological Research Facility of the University of California at Berkeley. It is edited by John A. Graham and contains nine separate papers, mostly on the Maya. \$6.00...

EL SALVADOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES DECLARED NATIONAL MONUMENTS:

A new law passed by the government of El Salvador now officially recognizes seven of the pre-Columbian sites in the country as National Archaeological Monuments. These are: Cara Sucia, Casa Blanca, El Trapiche, San Andres, Cihuatan, Tehuacan and Quelepa. Most of these particular sites are well known to Mesoamerican archaeologists, and Stanley Boggs, who has been advocating the new law for some time, believes that in the near future others will be added to those named. The government expects to budget money for the next year to buy the first five sites, and funds have now been approved for the continued digging and restoration of Cihuatan and San Andres during 1977. Investigations will also continue in the Lempa River valley...

THE N.W.A.F. LAGARTERO PROJECT:

The excavation of the Maya site of Lagartero is one of the newest of the many archaeological projects that have been carried out in Chiapas, Mexico during recent years by the New World Archaeological Foundation of Brigham Young University. The site, which was originally discovered by Gareth Lowe in 1973, is located on a small group of islands in a swampy area about 50 km. southeast of Comitan, and almost on the western boundary of Guatemala. Early this year, the project's director, Susanna Ekholm, began excavations of some of the mounds on one of the larger islands that appears to have been the ceremonial center. The island is estimated to contain almost 100 mounds, some of which have been found to be buried pyramids that were terraced and constructed of various sized limestone blocks. Sixty burials and one tomb were discovered during the season, and as digging progressed a large quantity of potsherds, obsidian blades, broken figurines and miscellaneous stone objects were uncovered. At the base of one mound, a midden was found that contained an unusually large amount of polychrome sherds. However, earlier types and styles of pottery from the site indicate that there was once a Preclassic settlement on the island, and occupation may have even continued to the Post-classic Period. At present an analysis of the ceramic material is being made at the Foundation's laboratory in Comitan, and field work will begin again in January of 1977...



Head of figurine from Lagartero

THE HUACAS OF PAMPA GRANDE:

During the 1976 Royal Ontario Museum's archaeological project in the north coastal region of Peru, Field Director Kent Day and his staff completed initial excavations of some of the larger huacas at the site of Pampa Grande. These interesting structures, known as huacas, are large truncated pyramids that were usually built of adobe, although during investigation it was found that some of them had been constructed of a combination of adobe, stone, earth, and rubble. At present the actual use of the huacas is not known, but it is assumed that the larger ones were ceremonial structures with temples of some sort at the summit, while others may have been used as residences of the elite of the Mocheas that occupied the site in about AD 650. The largest huaca at Pampa Grande is 225 meters long and 185 meters wide, and at its highest point reaches 50 meters. It is generally rectangular in plan but has many corners where terraces and subsidiary platforms project outward

from the central mass, and since the vandalizing of the Juaca del Sol, it is now the largest surviving prehistoric building in South America. The lowest terrace across the front (north) of the huaca is reached by a long narrow corridor and ramp, and excavations of the major terrace above, revealed stubs of rectangular rooms, postmolds, cache pits and llama burials. Besides this one particularly large huaca, however, there are seventeen others at the site, and if archaeologists are given the opportunity, further work will be conducted on these and their surrounding enclosures. (Information courtesy of Dr. Kent C. Day)...

"PEDREGAL MAN" AND ARTIFACTS TO BE REMOVED TO NATIONAL MUSEUM:

Most persons familiar with the southern part of the Federal District in Mexico are aware of the Pedregal area that was covered by a vast flow of lava during the Archaic period. Excavations under this lava cap were conducted a number of years ago and revealed the remains of the early cultures that once occupied this part of Mexico and to protect and preserve the in situ burials and artifacts, a museum was built on the site. However, about five years ago this had to be closed because of water infiltrations and humidity which became uncontrollable. Because of their importance, however, a plan is now in affect to remove the skeletons of "Pedregal Man" and the associated artifacts to the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City's Chapultepec Park. (The Interamerican)...

NEWSLETTER

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



TIME VALUE

