

# INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

## Newsletter

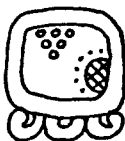
Hal C. Ball, Editor

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(August 11, 1976)



CAUAC



YAXKIN

### MEETING NOTICE:

The August meeting of the Institute will be held in the Museum of Science auditorium on Wednesday the 18th at 8:00 p.m. At the conclusion of our business meeting a color/sound film will be shown entitled "The Early Americans." The film was obtained through the courtesy of the Shell Oil Company and "takes a fresh look at ancient man from the viewpoint of contemporary evidence, providing insights into the way science helps reconstruct events that occurred as far back as the Ice Age." The film deals with numerous different archaeological sites, including Cahokia, Koster, Lehmer and Etowah, and is highly recommended...

### EXCHANGE AGREEMENT MADE FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MERIDA'S "BOLETÍN":

While your editor was in Merida in June, an agreement was made with Director Alfredo Barrera Rubio for the IMS to receive the "Boletín de la Escuela de Ciencias Antropológicas de la Universidad de Yucatan" on exchange basis for our monthly Newsletter. The Boletín is published in Spanish six times a year and each issue consists of 25 to 30 pages of various articles pertaining to the archaeology, ethnology and history of Yucatan...

### MAYA TEMPLES TO BE FEATURED IN NEW EXHIBIT AT FLORIDA STATE MUSEUM:

Following the museum's theme of "Man, Organisms, and Environment," a new exhibit in preparation at the Florida State Museum in Gainesville, will include replicas of two of the temples located at the important Maya ceremonial centers of Bonampak and Palenque. The exhibit will trace the path of man from his earliest known existence to the present era and one of the highlights will be the temples representing the civilization of the Maya. The reproduction of the Bonampak temple will feature room #2 of this well known Maya structure and a copy of the murals is being painted on the walls and ceiling by the Mexican artists Felipe Dávalos and Kees Gittenboer. The two chambered Palenque temple will contain plaster reproductions of the finely carved stone tablets found there and they are presently being prepared at the site by Merle Greene Robertson. No date has been set for the opening of the new exhibit, but as soon as the information is announced it will be published in the Newsletter...





Andre J. & Charlotte M. Stutz	Isora Travieso
Sidney & Ray Jean Hollander	Pauline Rojas
Terri Will Brodie	Max & Mina Sockloff

#### TWO CARVED MAYA STELAE FOUND UNDER THE FLOOR OF CHURCH IN GUATEMALA:

Two Maya stelae were recently found under the floor of a church in the town of Flores, the capital of the Department of Petén in northern Guatemala, when workmen there were in the process of digging into the foundation to reinforce it for the construction of two new towers. Although no dimensions of the sculptured stones have been given, they appear from the photographs in the Guatemala newspaper article to be about five or six feet long. One is rectangular in shape and has a standing figure in profile carved in a panel that occupies approximately three quarters of the top of the stone. At the bottom of the stela there are two horizontal rows of glyphs, but to date these have not been deciphered. Except for a small piece missing from the lower left corner, the stela seems to be complete. The portion of the second one that was found is roughly triangular in shape, but because of the poor condition of the stone the carvings are difficult to recognize. However, there appears to be the faint outline of a figure wearing a kilt-like garment who is standing with his feet wide apart and holding some sort of object in his outstretched right hand. The details of the head (and headdress?) can not be identified and there are no glyphs on the stone. Because the island where the church is located, originally called Tayasal, was occupied by the Itza-Maya until their final defeat by the Spaniards in 1697, some archaeologists believe that the two stelae may date to the Late Postclassic period, and therefore represent some of the latest examples of carved stone monuments found within the Maya area...

#### "LUBAANTUN: A CLASSIC MAYA REALM":

This is a new Peabody Museum monograph written by Norman Hammond that represents the results of excavations in 1970 of the Maya site of Lubaantun. The site is located in the southern part of the Toledo District of Belize, and the study places Lubaantun in its environmental, spatial, and historical context, and depicts how the ceremonial center and its settlement acted as a focus of human activity within the region defined as its realm. 448 pp., 154 figures, including many maps, 8 appendices. \$25.00...

#### THE POPOL VUH---A NEW TRANSLATION:

The Houghton Mifflin Company has announced the forthcoming publication of a new translation of the Popol Vuh by Ralph Nelson. This "Sacred Book of the Ancient Quiché Maya" was first transcribed in the Quiché language, but in Latin characters, in the middle of the sixteenth century, and since its discovery in a library in Guatemala City in 1857 has been translated by a number of different authors. It will be interesting to see how the new version differs from those previously published...

### THE CARVED STELA OF ARROYO PIEDRA:

During the latter part of 1975, a Maya site called Arroyo Piedra was discovered in the Petaxbatún region of Petén, Guatemala by Benedicto Linga. To date, there has been no scientific excavation reported at the ruins, and although it is not considered a large site, and has no visible standing architecture, it does have two interesting sculptured stone stelae in the main plaza. Both of the carved limestone monuments are rectangular in shape and resemble the art style of nearby Dos Pilas. The stela referred to as No. 1 is broken into two parts, but fortunately the break occurred near the lower part of the stone and the hieroglyphic inscription and the standing figure that are depicted are not damaged except for slight erosion from the weather. It is 3.45 m. high, 1.15 wide, the thickness varies from 25 to 28 cm. A priestly figure wearing an elaborate quetzal headdress and holding a spear or lance in his right hand is portrayed on the front of the stone, where there are also two vertical rows of glyphs that extend from the base to the top of the stela. There are a total of 39 separate glyphs in the text, and an IS inscription in the upper left corner records a Maya date of 9.9.0.0.0 3 Ahau 3 Zotz. According to the Thompson correlation this was May 12, A.D. 613, and the stela is thus considered important because this is the earliest date found on any of the stelae within the Petexbatún region. The second carved monument at the site is broken into about ten pieces, but appears to have been approximately 4 m. high when it was intact. A fragment of the upper part retains 20 well executed glyphs that include a date of 9.14.0.0.0. 4 Ahau 13 Yax. However, this seems to be in error, as this particular inscription should end with 6 Ahau 13 Muan, but since the 4 Ahau 13 Yax is correct for a 9.15.0.0.0. date, it seems that the Maya scribe made a mistake of 1 katun! Also, of interest is a damaged glyph in the F-3 position that is believed to be a Tikal emblem glyph, and suggests possible political relations with this large ceremonial center to the north. Another part of the stela has a Maya head shown in profile (Fig. 1) and is a good example of the stone carving that was done at the site. (Information courtesy of Karl H. Mayer)...



Figure 1. Head on stela No. 2

FOUNDATIONS OF OLD INDIAN HOUSES DISCOVERED BEHIND MEXICAN MISSION:

During excavations of the San Bernardo Mission in Guerrero, Mexico, archaeologists from the University of Texas in San Antonio have located the foundations for a long row of houses where the Coahuiltecan Indians once lived. These houses had not been reported in any records and besides the numerous artifacts recovered in middens, some buried as much as six feet under the buildings, 50 different animal species representing food remains were found. The Director of the on-site excavations is IMS member Jack Eaton, and the two year study, called the Gateway Project, has provided a new historical perspective of the missionaries who left Guerrero on foot in the 1700's to minister to the Indians of southern and eastern Texas...

TWO CORRECTIONS:

In the April 1976 NEWSLETTER on page 3, the height of the Lamanai pyramid was erroneously given as 90 feet rather than the correct height of 70 feet. Also, on page 3 of the June issue, line 9 in the Ilopango volcano article should read uninhabitable rather than inhabitable...

WORDS OF GOOD CHEER: One thing about experience is that when you don't have very much, you are apt to get a lot!!!



NEWSLETTER

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TIME VALUE

