

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter



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Hal. C. Ball, Editor
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(December 15, 1977)



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MEETING NOTICE:

The December meeting of the Institute will be held in the Museum of Science auditorium on Thursday the 15th at 8:00 p.m. The president will announce new officers for the next year and inform members of the chairpersons of the organization's various committees and special sections.

The program for the evening will be presented by Mr. A. P. Rosenberg, who will speak on the topic of "The Problems of Appraising Pre-Columbian Art." Mr. Rosenberg is chairman of the IMS Cultural Diffusion Research Section, and in addition has a special interest in Pre-Columbian art, particularly ceramic objects. We suggest you make a note on your calendar to be sure to attend this last meeting of 1977...Remember, December 15th...

SPECIAL NOTICE REGARDING THE IMS MEETING IN JANUARY:

In lieu of the Institute's regular monthly meeting at the Museum of Science in January, arrangements have been made for a special Dinner/Lecture on Friday the 27th at the Marriott Hotel. Guest speaker for the evening will be Dr. William R. Coe, well known anthropologist and Curator of the American Section of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Coe's topic for the evening will be on "The Restoration of Tikal." A brochure with details of the Dinner/Lecture and a reservation card has been mailed to all IMS members and more information will be published in the January issue of the Newsletter...

SIX MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE IMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

At the Institute's Annual Meeting on Wednesday the 16th, the following six members were elected to the Board of Directors: Mitza Desic Block, George R. Hays, Allan A. Kaplan, Charles Lacombe, John Rousseau and Anne Stewart. The election of the officers will be announced at the December meeting...

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA GIVEN NSF AWARD FOR STUDY OF GUATEMALAN EARTHQUAKE:

A three year continuation award effective June 1, 1977, has been granted to the University of Georgia for a quasi-experimental longitudinal and crosscultural study of the earthquake that occurred in Guatemala on February 6, 1976. The budget for the three year project has been set at \$548,900 and Frederick L. Bates has been named as Principal Investigator...

Welcome
New Members 

Donald Behnke
Raul Pavon Abrue
Ms. Freda Baum
Mrs. Margaret Biglin

Mrs. Dorothy Talley
Ms. Cynthia Zaentz
Jean-Claude Lemagny

MIAMI'S MUSEUM OF SCIENCE OPENS NEW EXHIBITION ON PRE-COLUMBIAN MUSIC:

On Friday evening, November the 18th, the Museum of Science opened a new exhibition on "Pre-Columbian Music of Mesoamerica." This consisted of several showcases of Pre-Columbian musical instruments fashioned from clay, bone, shell, wood and animal skins, plus a taped commentary on the gallery's reproduction of one of the scenes from the Bonampak murals that depicts a procession of musicians and god-impersonators. The Editor was especially interested in the exhibition, as he had suggested both the theme and the idea of an audio-visual program on the Bonampak mural, after the Director of the museum appointed him Coordinator of Mesoamerican Exhibits in 1976. The exhibition is scheduled to continue until February 15, 1978 and there is no admission fee. Illustrated catalogs are available for \$1.00...

HONDURAS TO RESTRICT NEW PERMITS FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH:

The Institute has been informed in a letter from Lic. Vito Veliz R. to the IMS chairman of the Archaeology Section, that with the exception of the Sula Valley area, the Republic of Honduras will not issue any new permits for archaeological research within the country. It has therefore been necessary for us to cancel the proposed IMS project in the Comayagua Valley. It is possible, however, that we may now sponsor a small project in El Salvador, and information relative to this will appear in a forthcoming issue of the Newsletter...

F.L.A.A.R. OFFERS TWO NEW TOURS INTO THE MAYA AREA:

The Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research in Guatemala City has announced that it will conduct two new tours into the Maya area during early 1978. Both tours are of 12 days duration, the first beginning on February 24 and the second on April 1. Those participating on the Feb. trip will visit the Maya sites of Quirigua, Aguateca, Seibal, Altar de Sacrificos and Yaxchilan; and those on the April trip will have an opportunity to see the ruins of Tikal, Nakum, Xunantunich, Tzikin Tzakan, Uaxactun, Yaxcha and Topoxte. For details write: F.L.A.A.R., A/P 1838 Guatemala City.

THE LORDS OF XIBALBÁ--MASTERPIECES OF CLASSIC MAYA CERAMICS:

This is the title of a new book by Michael D. Coe which was published in conjunction with the exhibition of a rare Maya vase recently acquired by the Princeton University Art Museum. Twenty Maya vases are illustrated in full color foldouts and the author discusses his analysis of the scenes which he believes refer to Xibalbá, the Maya Underworld. 144 pp., 25 black and white illus., 20 color foldouts, 8 x 11. Princeton U. Press, \$56.50...



THE ABAJ TAKALIK PROJECT---1977:

In April of this year the Archaeological Research Facility of the University of California at Berkeley finished its second season of explorations at Abaj Takalik. The site is located a few miles northwest of the capitol of the Department of Retalhuleu, Guatemala, and an earlier report on the discoveries there was published in the IMS Newsletter in March, 1977. Since then additional information has been received from the project director, John A. Graham, which indicates that the past season was a very productive one.

Data obtained from the mapping of the site this year has revealed that it is considerably larger than previously determined, and evidently covers approximately 8 square kilometers. However, since the ruins are spread over four different fincas, mapping of the architecture requires a great deal of time, as it is not practical to remove the numerous coffee trees that cover the site.

In addition, a deep deposit of volcanic ash which buried the ruins in 1902 hides many of the surface features of the site's large platforms, terraces and various pyramidal structures. Preliminary investigation of some of the mounds, however, has shown them to be primarily of earthen construction, and nothing so far has been found to indicate the use of lime plaster or cut stone masonry, although considerable use was made of andesite cobbles for stairways, ramps and mound facings.

The most interesting discoveries at Abaj Takalik, of course, are the sculptured stones, and several new ones were uncovered during the past season. It has been determined that the carved stones at the site are of at least three different art styles, and a particular important find this year was a re-carved "colossal" head. This unusual stone was apparently first sculptured in the form of a large human head, and at a later date the face was cut back into the stone in such a manner so that a niche in the Olmec style was created for a seated human figure. Other of the carved stones have clearly decipherable Maya dates, with stela #5 bearing an early inscription that corresponds to A. D. 126. Some of the stones are believed to be even older, but the hieroglyphic dates are so badly eroded that it is almost impossible to read them.

Excavations during 1977 also established sufficient information to determine that the curious "museum galleries" were definitely the work of Late Classic occupants, who apparently re-arranged the Preclassic sculptures with those of a later date to conform with their alterations and additions to older structures. Further investigations will resume in January of 1978...



Figure 1. Carving on stone at Abaj Takalik, Guatemala.

SFAA TO HOLD 1978 MEETING IN MERIDA, MEXICO:

The Society for Applied Anthropology has announced that the organization's 38th Annual Meeting will be held in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, on April 2-8. Those wishing to volunteer papers or obtain detailed information should write to: Dr. Nancy Modiano, Instituto Nacional Indigenista, Ave. Revolucion 1279, Mexico 20, DF...

RECENT PUBLICATIONS ON MESOAMERICA:

1. Aspects of Classic Maya Rulership on Two Inscribed Vessels.
George Kubler. Dumbarton Oaks.
2. Archaeology and Ethnohistory of the Central Quiche.
D. T. Wallace & R. M. Carmack. Institute for Mesoamerican Studies.
3. The Chantuto People: An Archaic Period Society of the Chiapas Littoral, Mexico. Barbara Voorhies. New World Arch. Foundation.
4. Pre-Columbian Man in Costa Rica.
Doris Stone. Peabody Museum Press.

THE IXCHEL MUSEUM OF INDIAN COSTUMES:

This museum in Guatemala City has an excellent exhibit of fine Indian textiles from all areas of the country. It was founded in 1973 under the auspices of the Tikal Association, whose goal for the museum is to collect and preserve as many of the traditional Guatemalan costumes as possible. It is located on 4th Ave. 16-27, zona 10 and the admission is only \$1.00.

NEWSLETTER

Institute of Maya Studies TIME VALUE

Museum of Science

3280 South Miami Avenue

Miami, Florida 33129



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