

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter



MANIK

Hal C. Ball, Editor

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MEETING NOTICE:

The January meeting of the Institute will be held in Room "A" of the Museum of Science at 8:00 P.M. of Thursday the 19th. The program for the evening will be presented by Allan Kaplan and John Rosseau, who will show a movie and slides on "Santa Semana En Guatemala"---a colorful account of the processions and festivities of the Indians of Guatemala during Holy Week.

IMS DINNER/LECTURE FOR JANUARY CANCELLED:

It was announced at the board of directors meeting on January 4th, that the proposed IMS Dinner/Lecture for this month has been cancelled because the scheduled speaker has informed us he will be unable to attend on that date...

IMS OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 1978:

At a Board of Directors meeting on December 7th, the following members were elected to serve as the Institute's officers for 1978. Allan A. Kaplan, president; Ellen D. Jacobs, vice-president; Beverly B. Little, secretary; and Fay L. Hochen, treasurer. In addition, Anne S. Stewart was appointed as assistant secretary and Hal C. Ball was elected as an emeritus member of the Board of Directors. The next board meeting will be held on February 1st...

ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION MEETING:

The first IMS archaeology section meeting of 1978 will be held in classroom "C" of the Museum of Science at 8:00 P.M. on Wednesday January 25. Those members scheduled to present papers on "Stone Sculpture of the Ancient Maya" are requested to contact the chairman, Hal Ball, prior to January 20...

ANNUAL "AROUND THE WORLD FAIR" TO BE HELD IN FEBRUARY:

The annual "around the World Fair" sponsored by The Patrons of the Museum of Science will be held at Tropical Park on February 4th and 5th. As this is one of the major fund raising activities of the museum, we urge all members to attend and take their family or friends...

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Editor is grateful to IMS members Gene Dynner and Sam Grossman for their cooperation during the past few months in the translation of German and Spanish newspaper articles and archaeological journals...

MAYA RUINS IN MEXICO IN COLOR:

This is the latest volume in a long series of publications by the University of Oklahoma Press of books pertaining to the Maya civilization. The author is William M. Ferguson, who wrote it in collaboration with John Q. Royce, a friend who has made several trips to Mexico with him to study and photograph Maya ruins. The foreword is by the well known Mesoamerican scholar, Dr. Michael D. Coe, who has written numerous books and articles on many aspects of Maya culture.

The book can probably best be described as a pictorial guide of the important Maya site of Chichen Itza and eight other major ruins located on the Yucatan peninsula. In addition, however, there is an introduction by Ferguson that presents a brief summary of the basic history of the Maya, including such subjects as religion, agriculture, warfare, hieroglyphic writing, astronomy, and artistic achievements. The 320 page book (8 1/2x11) is profusely illustrated and contains almost 200 photographs in full color. Of these, there are aerial views of eight different archaeological sites, which as Coe states in the foreword,..."give one a far better idea of Maya buildings and their relationship to one another and the landscape than any amount of maps and plans". The Editor certainly agrees with this opinion, as he has been flying over the Maya area and photographing ruins since 1958, and is happy to see a book that places more emphasis on this perspective.

IMS members may obtain a copy by ordering through our Librarian, and others by writing direct to the University of Oklahoma Press, 1000 Asp Ave., Norman, Oklahoma 73019. \$25.00...

EXCAVATIONS TO CONTINUE AT MAYA SITE OF MI CIELO:

According to information received in late November, archaeological investigation of the site of Mi Cielo, Guatemala, will continue during January and February of 1978. The Field Director is Gary Walters, from the University of Missouri, and the project will again be sponsored by EARTH-WATCH, a non-profit organization which is funded by laypeople who participate as actual working members under the supervision of a professional archaeologist. The site is located along the Rio Maria Linda, just a short distance north of the Pacific coastal town of Iztapa, and is easily accessible by road from Guatemala City.

In 1977 Walters reported recovering well-preserved skeletal remains, together with an abundance of ceramics, some obsidian, ground stone and jade. This year new and deeper excavations are planned and the resulting data will be analyzed in an attempt to establish tighter chronological control for the Mi Cielo site and also the South Coast region as a whole...

MANIFEST CONTENT VS. SYMBOLISM: A RE-INTERPRETATION OF A MAYA 'HISTORICAL' VASE: Professor John P. Smith, University of New Orleans...

The Editor still has a few extra copies of this paper and anyone who is interested in obtaining one should contact him after the February meeting...

A REMINDER: To err is human but to really foul things up requires a computer!

MOUND 7 AT RUINS OF EL TRAPICHE BEING EXCAVATED:

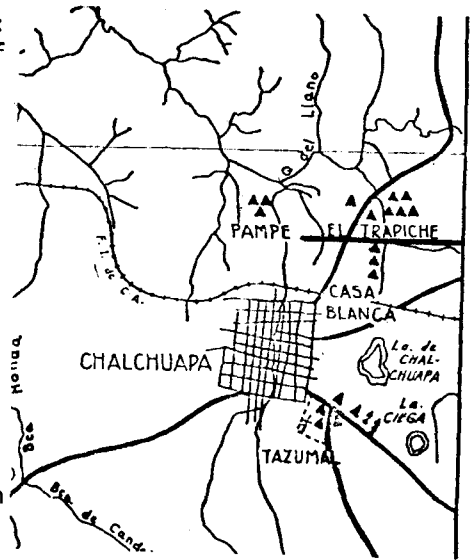
William R. Fowler Jr., of the University of Calgary, and Manual Lopez, of El Salvador's Museo Nacional, are presently conducting excavations in Mound 7 of El Trapiche, a site which is located northeast of the town of Chalchuapa in the Department of Santa Ana. The mound that is being dug is on the property of the Compañia Salvadoreña de Café, who is financing the project and who plans to build on the site after excavations are completed.

Fowler believes the mound to be Late Formative, as in removing about half of its constituent fill he has thus far found no material later than this period. During the digging several fragments of fired clay floors have been found, but these have been very difficult to define due to their poor preservation. They are in stratigraphic succession, however, and a few samples are being taken for archeomagnetic dating so that probable time of construction may be better substantiated.

A noteworthy aspect of the mound is the large number of burials that have been found during preliminary excavations. These are all judged to be male individuals varying in age from 19 to 45 and the position in which they have been found is rather unusual. With one exception, all had been placed in a prone position, extended, and with their hands placed palms-outward under the pelvis. Seven were oriented with their heads precisely to the west and only one had his head pointing north. Grave goods were included with only one, and these consisted of a single jade bead and a small jade hacha. One of the individuals is reported to have been so well preserved that he was encased in plaster and taken to the museum for display in 1978. (A supplementary report on the project will be in a later issue of the N/L).

MAYA HIEROGLYPHIC WRITING WORKSHOP TO BE HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS:

On March 10-11 the Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, will sponsor a Workshop on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing conducted by Professor Linda Schele (University of South Alabama). The workshop will be a completely non-technical explanation of recent fundamental advances in glyph decipherment that now enable many of the surviving texts to be read, and will be presented in four three-hour lectures. No prior knowledge of Maya hieroglyphics is necessary to understand these lectures, which will begin with basic data. Attendance to the Workshop is open to everyone and the \$10.00 registration fee includes the cost of all handouts and other program materials. Additional information may be obtained by writing to Dr. Nancy P. Troike, Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, Austin, Tx: 78712...



Location of El Trapiche

NEPOHUALTZINTZIN---AN AZTEC COMPUTER:

A recent UPI article gives credit to David Esparza Hidalgo for discovering an Aztec computer called the Nepohualtzintzin, which according to Hidalgo is still used today in some parts of Mexico. He reports to have spent 18 years in his quest for evidence of such a computer, and says that the breakthrough came when he talked to an old Indian in the Puebla Sierra of central Mexico, who told him about the "kipotl", a simplified version of the Nepohualtzintzin.

The computer consists of a board divided into two sections of keys separated by a divider which has dots representing values of 1, 10, 100, 1000, etc. In the top section, there are thirteen rows of three keys each; in the bottom section thirteen rows of four keys. The keys in the top section have a value of five and those in the bottom section a value of one, and the computer is operated by moving keys from right to left, in order of their decimal value. Hidalgo claims that the computer can also be used for astronomical calculations and..."can beat the electronic brains in more ways than one". (See complete article on Editor's Bulletin Board)...

AN EXPANDED U.S. PASSPORT IS NOW AVAILABLE that consists of 48 pages instead of the regular 24-page version. The fee remains the same, \$10.00...

NEWSLETTER

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TIME VALUE

