

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter



AHAU

Hal C. Ball, Editor
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MEETING NOTICE:

The Institute's March meeting will be held in the Museum of Science auditorium at 8:00 P.M. on Wednesday the 15th. The guest speaker for the evening will be Dr. Alan K. Craig, Department of Geography, Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Craig's lecture will be on "The Archaeology of Colson Point, Belize". The meeting is open to the public and visitors are most welcome...

IMS TRAVEL SECTION MEETING:

The next meeting of the Institute's TRAVEL SECTION will be on Wednesday, March 8th at 8:30 P.M. The meeting will be in the Museum's Plaza Maya and the program for the evening will be presented by Jules Blustein whose topic will be "Reflections of a 2 month trip down the Pan American Highway 21 years ago". The meeting will be informal and a special invitation is extended to newly joined members. All members, of course, are always welcome...

SPECIAL YUCATAN TOUR OFFERED TO IMS MEMBERS:

The C.I.A. Travel Agency of Miami has announced a special 4 day "Basic Yucatan" tour for IMS members on April 14-17. For more information contact either Nina Meyer (595-9563) or Shirley Knox (856-3445)...

NEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE ARTS ESTABLISHED AT THE U. OF TEXAS:

The College of Fine and Applied Arts at the U. of Texas at San Antonio has recently established a new organization called the Research Center for the Arts (RCA). The Director is Jacinto Quirarte and the Review Editor for the Center's Newsletter/Bulletin, called the RCA Review, is Elizabeth H. Boone. The Center's activities will encompass several disciplines, and have a special reference to the study of Iberian and Interamerican arts.

The first issue of the RCA Review was published in January of this year and consists of nine pages, including an informative article by the Director on "Methodology in the Study of Pre-Columbian Art". Subscription to the RCA Review is \$3.00 per year (4 issues). Make checks to Research Center for the Arts and mail to Dr. Boone c/o U. of Texas at San Antonio.

1977 PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR THE STUDY OF PRE-COLUMBIAN CULTURES OF THE LESSER ANTILLES: Copies available for \$15.00. Order from: Centre de Recherches Caraibes, U. de Montreal, CP 6128, Montreal, PQ H3C 3J7.



THE BURIALS OF EL TRAPICHE:

As mentioned in an earlier issue of the IMS Newsletter, several burials have been found during the excavation of Mound 7 at the El Trapiche site near Chalchuapa, El Salvador, and more information on these has now been received in a letter from Stanley Boggs.

According to Boggs, all of the burials uncovered so far have been found in an unusual face-down position, and from the appearance of at least three, the wrists and ankles had been bound. Also of special interest, is that two were found with their mouths open, as though they had been buried alive! Most of the burials are believed to have been of male individuals between the ages of 19 to 45, but at least two found in late January appeared to be well over fifty. All of them, however, are of the Late Preclassic period, and as in other burials discovered in similar mounds in El Salvador, they are associated with burned floors representing enlargements and additions to the original structure.

There was almost a complete lack of grave goods with the burials, and the only artifact of consequence was a jadeite bead found in the mouth of one individual. Nevertheless, all seem to present certain peculiarities and are carefully examined and cleaned. Close examination of burial #12, for instance, revealed that the upper medial incisors had been inlaid with pyrite discs, but because of strong tooth wear had apparently dropped out before death. As investigations continue at El Trapiche and other archaeological sites in the country, it is believed that enough significant data will be obtained to establish a better understanding of the burial customs of the inhabitants of El Salvador during the Late Preclassic period...

IMPORTANT PRE-COLUMBIAN JADE FOUND IN COSTA RICA:

A pre-Columbian jade amulet recently found near San Jose, Costa Rica, is estimated to be about 2,500 years old and is believed by some archaeologists to be new evidence that directly links the ancient civilizations of Mexico, Guatemala and Costa Rica. Michael Snarskis, of Columbia University, who examined the jade shortly after it was found is of the opinion that it was originally the work of the Olmecs somewhere between 600 and 300 B.C. He believes that the bas-relief on the amulet's surface, however, was carved about 500 years later by the pre-Classic Maya culture at Kaminaljuyu.

The jade was found with the burial of a teenage boy who is believed to have been of a high social status and lived about 400 A.D. The color of the 13 inch artifact is grey-green and it is carved with the motif of a slender, graceful human hand grasping an animal with a catlike head and a serpent or insect-like tail. There is still speculation on how it may have reached Costa Rica, but it seems unlikely it was brought in directly by the Olmecs.

43RD ANNUAL SAA MEETING TO BE HELD IN TUSCON, ARIZONA:

The 1978 Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology will be held at the Tuscon Marriot Hotel and Tuscon Convention Center on May 4-6. Chairperson is Dr. Dee Ann Story, Dept. of Anthropology, U. of Texas at Austin.

EXCAVATIONS RESUME AT THE MAYA SITES OF LAMANAI AND CERROS:

Excavations have now been resumed in Belize at the Maya ruins of Lamanai and Cerros, and while the editor was visiting the sites in February, he was informed that work will continue this year at Cerros until the last week of May, and at Lamanai until mid-July.

The Lamanai Project, which has been reported on in the Newsletter several times during the past four years, is still under the auspices of the Royal Ontario Museum and the Field Director is David Pendergast. This year the investigation of a small isolated mound named "Turk" has already been completed, and excavations are continuing on the terraced pyramids referred to as "Lip", "Lag" and "Fut". In addition, clearing has begun on two parallel mounds near the center of the site that strongly suggest they once formed a modest size ballcourt.

Burials are still being found in various parts of the ruins and the remains of over 200 individuals have now been uncovered, with some mounds, such as "Cib", containing as many as 56. Later in the season more intensive investigations are planned in the numerous structures atop a large 18 meter high platform at the north end of the site called "Stin", and although no significant data was obtained in 1977 from digging in the "Kambal" mound, additional trenching may be done by Stanley Loten later in the year.

The Cerros Project is being directed by David A. Freidel (Southern Methodist) and will be completed at the end of the 1978 season. During the five years of excavations at the site, one of the highlights was the uncovering in 1977 of a grotesque stucco mask on the south side of a small pyramid identified as 5C-2nd. It was flanked by ear-plug assemblages and plumed serpents and the building has been dated to the middle of the Late Preclassic period by the discovery of a cache of Red Sierra vessels. Also, of particular interest, was the discovery of a massive stone dock and the remains of a Late Preclassic nucleated village at the extreme north end of the site. An interesting dispersed settlement zone was also found and research during the next few months will concentrate on this and continued excavation of the pyramidal mounds at the center of the ruins...According to Freidel, he plans to have a preliminary report published on the project as soon as possible after final field work is completed...



Map of Northern Belize

PROYECTO COPAN:

Se encuentran ya instalados en Copán Ruinas el Dr. Claude F. Baudez y su familia para darle curso a los trabajos relacionados con la preservacion y restauración de las Ruinas de Copán. Ademas la Sra. Isabelle Baudez como Antropóloga Social realizara estudios de los grupos étnicos de esa región, de acuerdo a un programa presentado y aprobado por el Consejo Directivo del Instituto. A tan distinguidos colaboradores que han demstrado por tantos anos su interés por la preservacion del patrimonio de nuestro país les deseamos los mejores éxitos y les ofrecemos toda la cooperaci6n al alcance del Instituto. (BOLETIN INFORMATIVO NO. 11, INSTITUTO HONDURENO DE ANTROPOLOGIA)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS ON MESOAMERICA:

Cultural Continuity in Mesoamerica
Aldine Publishing Co. 460 pp., \$26.00

Edited by David L. Bowman

Middle Class Mesoamerica
Columbia University Press, \$29.00

Edited by Esther Pasztory

Studies in Ancient Mesoamerica, III
Archaeological Research Facility, \$6.00 (U. of Cal., Berkeley)

Edited by John A. Graham

The Prehistory of Chalchuapa, El Salvador
University of Pennsylvania Press, \$45.00 (3 volumes)

Edited by Robert J. Sharer

The Sea in the Pre-Columbian World
Dumbarton Oaks, 188 pp., 47 illustrations/3 tables. \$15.00

Edited by Elizabeth Benson

NEWSLETTER

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TIME VALUE

