

# INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

## Newsletter



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Hal C. Ball, Editor

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(April 19, 1978)

### MEETING NOTICE:

The April meeting of the Institute will be held in the Museum of Science auditorium at 8:00 P.M. on Wednesday the 19th. An illustrated lecture on "Women in Maya Art" will be presented by Ellen Jacobs, professor of fine arts at Florida International University and co-chairperson of the IMS research section on art and ceramics. Don't forget the date: Wednesday, April 19th...

### NEW MEMBERS:

A cordial welcome is extended to the following new members: Alfred F. Alden, Robert S. Couban, John Everett, C. Ray Hord, Peter K. Lehnert, Harry W. Riehl, Jessie W. Kent, Marlys Holm, William R. Wiley, Douglas and Kathryn Diehl, Bernie and Ealeen Abeele, and Donn J. and Maria A. Tilson...

### I.M.S. TRAVEL SECTION MEETING:

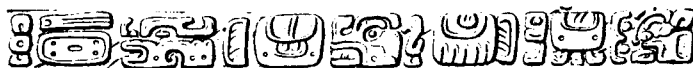
The Institute's Travel Section will hold a meeting on Wednesday, April 12th at 8:00 P.M. in the Rainbow Room of the Immanuel Luthern Church. As this is a new meeting place, please make a note of the address: 1770 Brickell Avenue, Miami. A program will be presented by Rusty Sherrill on Chichen Itza and the Puuc cities of Uxmal and Kabah, with particular emphasis on the time periods of these three sites. All members are invited to attend and share the travel experiences of this new group...

### NEW FACADE AND ENTRANCE TO MUSEUM'S "PLAZA MAYA" COMPLETED:

The new facade and east entrance to Museum of Science "Plaza Maya" has now been completed and will officially open with a Champagne Preview Reception between 5:30 and 7:00 P.M. on April the 27th. Although the reception is by invitation only, the entire gallery and its new exhibits will be open to the public after 7:00 o'clock...

### JOURNAL OF MAYAN LINGUISTICS:

A new Journal of Mayan Linguistics is scheduled to begin publication this year and the first volume will be sponsored by the University of Iowa. It will consist of two numbers, each containing approximately 100 pages, and will include articles on all aspects of Mayan linguistics. The subscription cost is \$7.00. Checks should be made out to the Dept. of Linguistics and addressed to Prof. Nora C. England, U. of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242...



NEW TOMB DISCOVERED AT "CHIKIN TIKAL":

A new tomb was discovered in February by the Guatemalan archaeologist Miguel Orrego Corzo at the ruins of Chikin Tikal, a Maya site located about 4 km. west of the National Park of Tikal, Guatemala. The tomb was found in a structure referred to as Temple "A", and although looters had initiated excavations earlier, they had apparently not completed entry into the tomb and the skeleton and funerary objects did not appear to have been disturbed.

The tomb, which was carved out of rock, was found 2 meters below the base of the temple structure, and measured 2.70 meters in length and 1.50 meters in width. A somewhat unusual feature of the tomb was that one of the long walls was straight and the other oval, giving the enclosed chamber a halfmoon appearance. Another curious aspect of the burial is that the skeleton had been placed on top of several vases at the time of internment. Also, beside the principal skeleton, which Corzo believes was that of a woman approximately 30 years of age, was another smaller one, that, in the opinion of the archaeologists was that of a child about 6. The bones of both skeletons were in reasonably good condition, and indications of smoke and charred wood within the tomb suggest that smoke impregnation may have contributed to the good state of preservation of the skeletons. The date of the burial is estimated to have been about A.D. 450, and artifacts included jade objects, pearls, sea shells, an alabaster vase, a sewing needle, the dorsal spine of a swordfish and several ceramic vessels...

DIVERS EXPLORE CENOTES IN BELIZE:

In conjunction with the Rio Hondo Project of investigating the Maya of northern Belize, Dennis Puleston, Paul Hundley and Brian Jaskowiak have explored two cenotes near the village of San Antonio, Belize. Puleston, who has been studying prehistoric farming and irrigation systems in Belize since 1973, initiated the idea of diving into the cenotes, as he thought there was a possibility of finding pottery and other artifacts that were thrown in during religious ceremonies. Both the El Rancho and the Sayabmay cenotes were explored, but the divers were very much handicapped by the murky water and the fine limestone muck that has accumulated on the bottom. However, the first dive into the Sayabmay cenote proved successful, as an intact clay vessel was discovered in the muddy bottom about 25 feet below the surface. By the size and shape of the pot, Puleston believes it to be of the Maya culture and estimates it dates to about A.D. 1100, or near the middle of the Post-classic Period. (See Editor's Bulletin Board for details)...

"A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON NATIVE AMERICAN ASTRONOMY":

This new bibliography became available in March and contains over 1400 references on ancient North, Central, and South American Astronomy. Compiled by Beth A. Collier and Anthony F. Aveni, it is cross-referenced into 18 categories and 125 sub-categories. As it crosscuts all of the sub-disciplines, it thus provides a comprehensive listing of the many sources specifically related to Native American Astronomy. Bound, soft cover, \$3.00 postpaid. Dept. of Physics and Astronomy, Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y. 13346...

LA CUEVA DEL ESPIRITU SANTO:

Located a short distance northeast of the village of Corinto, in the Department of Morazan, El Salvador, is a cave that is believed to have been used by a group of nomads during the country's Archaic Period, and which may possibly date back as far as 15,000 years ago. It is called La Cueva Del Espiritu Santo (Cave of the Holy Spirit) and on the interior walls are a series of paintings that constitute excellent examples of prehistoric Central American Art.



One portion of the cave paintings

The cave is near a hill by the name of Zancuyo, at an altitude of 850 meters, and its entrance is a little over 11 meters in height. The top slopes down towards the back of the cave at an angle of approximately 35 degrees and the floor extends inward some 18 meters. The paintings consist primarily of human figures, birds and odd looking animals, all of which appear as rather primitive representations.

Dr. Wolfgang Haberland, of the Museum Fur Volkerkunde in Berlin, Germany has been the principal investigator of the cave, which he first visited in 1954. His latest study of the cave was in 1977, when he spent two months at the site, not only carefully examining the interior, but in addition, much of the adjacent terrain. He also made minor excavations in the floor of the cave where he uncovered charcoal, broken projectile points and fragments of obsidian. Close examination of the walls of the cave showed that they were covered with a mineral deposit that had to be dissolved before details of the paintings could be properly recorded. This was accomplished by applying an alkaline substance over the walls, resulting in the paintings appearing much like the illustration shown above. However, although Dr. Haberland has obtained a great deal of valuable data on the cave paintings, there is still much to be learned regarding who painted the pictures, when they were painted and what their significance is...

"STONE MONUMENTS OF THE GUATEMALAN PIEDMONT AND CHIAPAS":

Through the courtesy of William F. Parady, whom the Editor met while he was in Retalhuleu, Guatemala last month, the Institute has received a number of copies of a small book entitled "Stone Monuments of the Guatemalan Piedmont and Chiapas". The publication was written by Parady and John L. Clark, and besides the text, which is in both English and Spanish, it contains several photographs and line drawings. A copy will be presented to all IMS members at the next regular meeting. We extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Parady for this generous donation...

A REMINDER; Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday...

"SCHOLARLY DATA" OFFERS NEW MICROFILMS ON MESOAMERICAN STUDIES:

Scholarly Data, of Los Angeles, California, presently has available many 35mm microfilms of rare and useful sources of basic research in the field of MIDDLE AMERICAN STUDIES. These include reels on the codices, dictionaries, journals, Pre-Columbian art, archaeology, and several other subjects. Some are in color and the prices vary. Write for catalogue to: Scholarly Data, P.O. Box 33451, Los Angeles, California 90334...

"THE CENTER FOR FIELD RESEARCH," 1979 PROGRAM:

This Center is interested in supporting postdoctoral Maya studies that require field research. In 1978 a half million dollars was awarded by The Center, 40 percent of which was in the social sciences and the humanities. Grants range between \$5000 and \$20,000 for archaeological investigations, but the Projects must be able to utilize non-specialists in the field. Write: Jane Fisher, Director of Operations, Box 127, Belmont, Mass. 02178...

ARCHAEOASTRONOMICAL FIELD WORK IN MESOAMERICA:

Toni Aveni, Horst Hartung, Flora Clancy and several Colgate students recently returned from doing archaeoastronomical field work in the Peten, Guatemala, Copan and Mexico. Some of the problems being investigated were: a) a remeasurement of the "Copan baseline", and b) the geometry of the Tikal architecture. (Archaeoastronomy Bulletin, No. 2; February 1978)...



**NEWSLETTER**

**Institute of Maya Studies  
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**TIME VALUE**

