

IMS Explorer

Dedicated to the man who first introduced the date December 21, 2012 into mass consciousness with the book *The Mayan Factor ... but who is he?*

A monthly newsletter published by the **Institute of Maya Studies**



April 20, 2011 • Maya Long Count: 12.19.18.5.9 • 4 Muluk 17 Pohp • G1

An affiliate of the Miami Science Museum

Editor's Note: It is not the type of thing that we would normally report on, but this definitely caught my attention. In the shallow waters off Quintana Roo, Mexico ... above where ancient Maya canoe traders once traveled ...

There's Something New Under the Sea An artist's awe-inspiring underwater reef is complete

Coral reefs are an integral part of oceanic wildlife. They make up less than 0.2 percent of the world's oceans, but they are home to one-fourth of all marine life. They filter the water, feed the fish, buffer coastal areas from storms, and provide homes for oceanic life. And as the *Los Angeles Times* recently reported, a coral reef-like structure can also take the form of an impressive underwater art exhibit.

Artist Jason deCaires Taylor recently completed "The Silent Evolution," an underwater museum and permanent sculpture exhibit set up in the waters near Cancún, Mexico. It is located in the National Marine Park of Isla Mujeres, Cancún, and Punta Nizuc.

Experts hope that the exhibit, easily accessible by snorkeling, will alleviate some of the tourist traffic on the nearby natural coral reefs. Cancún Marine Park is in close proximity and receives up to 750,000 tourists annually.

Called "awe-inspiring" and "surreal" by the *L.A. Times*, the exhibit is 400 sculptures of people standing silently on the ocean's floor, eyes closed, heads tilted towards the surface. As deCaires Taylor shared with the *L.A. Times*, the exhibit has "taken 18 months; required 120 tons of cement, sand and gravel; 3,800 m of fiberglass; 400 kg of silicone; 8,000 miles of red tape; 120 hours working underwater; and \$250,000."

Coral reefs are under assault all over the globe. Sewage and agricultural run-off from coastal areas poison many reefs via toxic algae blooms that can cut off their much-needed oxygen supply.

Human visitors also cause



Photos courtesy of artist Jason deCaires Taylor.

extensive damage by literally knocking into the ecosystems, breaking off pieces of souvenir coral and dragging boats and anchors across its fragile surfaces.

Furthermore, as ocean temperatures increase, reefs are succumbing to coral bleaching. This is the process in which coral expels some of its inhabitants due to heated waters, leaving them white and lifeless.

Fossil records date some of the oldest corals on Earth to be 500 million years old, and yet they are under grave assault from warming temperatures and humankind's encroachment.

Made from environmentally friendly materials, deCaires Taylor's sculpture promotes awareness of the plight of coral. The artist says his sculpture garden in Mexico is only in the first stages of development.

As he told the *L.A. Times*, "I would also like to point out that this installation is by no means over and the second phase is dependent on nature's artists of the sea, to nurture, evolve, and apply the patina of life."

Source: From an article by Katherine Butler of Mother Nature Network, posted 10/11/2010 at <http://green.yahoo.com>

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**April 13, 8 pm:
IMS Explorer Session**



**"Digging Deeper
in the
Dry Tortugas"**

**with
Michele Williams, Ph.D.**



**Jim Reed,
Editor**

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IMS Website Notice: *Increased IMS Archives*

Dear IMS Members:

As we've been promising for the past few months, our website is being updated with new features that we are sure will please all faithful readers. As a member, you will now be able to access past IMS Explorers from 2008 to the present. We are in the process of adding past

Explorers on a yearly basis. This will be a tremendous archive made available to all members. We have also begun the process of adding to the website an extensive photographic collection, including some photographs that date back to the 1950s. As we all know, these can be an invaluable tool to researchers

and scholars. We also have plans to make available lectures presented at our home base at the Miami Science Museum. No member will be left out from enjoying most of the benefits that members in South Florida presently enjoy. In order to do this, we need you to send to us your email address and a password. These will be kept confidential and will only be privy to members of the Website Committee. Send these to imsmiami@yahoo.com

Help us to keep improving! This is our quest. Steve Mellard
Chair, Website Committee

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IMS Explorer of the Month:

José Argüelles recently passed on March 23. He initiated the Harmonic

Convergence movement of 1987. Argüelles founded the annual Whole Earth Festival (1970) in California, and was one of the originators of the Earth Day concept. Look for an article about his life and times in our May issue.

In Memoriam: Mercedes Best Styne

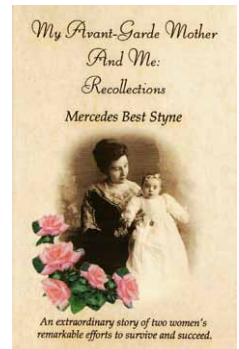
A very special, long-time IMS member passed away on January 21, 2011, at the age of 100. Mercedes was born in Barcelona, Spain. She lived in Cuba as a young girl and moved to the U.S. at the age of 18. There, she met and married the love of her life, Harry Best. Mercedes was an avid traveler and was fluent in several languages. She visited 72 countries during her long life and gave educational lectures on her knowledge of World cultures.

Mercedes' rich life experiences inspired the writing of her memoirs, *My Avant-Garde Mother and Me*, which she completed at the age of 96. Mercedes has been laid to rest

next to her husband, Harry, at South Memorial Cemetery in North Miami, FL. The family of Mercedes wishes to thank the caring staff of the Pueblo Norte Retirement Community in Scottsdale, AZ, which was her home since 1998.

"Please remember Mercedes as the strong, vital and vibrant woman that she was. She was an extraordinary person and made friends everywhere she went. We know that you will miss her. We already do."

The family of Mercedes:
Henry, Kris and Kim



CANCUÉN: An Adventure to Remember

by Marta Barber

We had arrived late in the afternoon at La Aurora Airport in Guatemala City with only a couple of hours to spare before the nearby Anthropological Museum would close. Most of the IMS members traveling on this 7th annual trek to the Maya world had been to the museum before. There's always something you've missed previously, I figured, so, off we went.

Fortunately, there have been some changes and some additions. Unfortunately, the "Jade Room" behind the vaulted doors was closed. "We don't open it on Saturdays," the young woman collecting entrance fees told me. In the front, though, before taking a turn to the room with textiles, there was a big sign: CANCUÉN: New Discoveries.

I had been reading recently about Cancuén, the site by the shore of the Pasión River, that had been the link between the Petén and the Highlands – the gateway in Classic times to the profitable riverine trade route that snaked



In order to get to Cancuén you need to take the ferry barge across the Pasión River at Sayaxché.

through the Pasión and the Usumacinta rivers giving rise to jewels such as Yaxchilán and Piedras Negras.

At the museum, an oar and other wooden objects were on exhibit, definitely rare finds. What if I could change our itinerary and visit Cancuén, I wondered. "Arthur Demarest had trouble while working in Cancuén," remarked Rick Slazyk, IMS Vice President and avid

continued on page 3



IDAEH sign at entrance to Cancuén. Panel 3 portraying the ruler T'ah 'ak' Cha'an. Royal pool in main "Palace". All photos by Rick Slayzk.

CANCUÉN: An Adventure to Remember

continued from page 2

traveler. "Nah," I said, not paying attention to Rick's notion that the visit would involve some risk.

Upon our arrival the next morning at the Flores airport, I asked Eric García, the guide who would become our friend, "How possible would it be to drop the visit to Yaxhá and Topoxté and go instead to Cancuén?" Eric said he would look into it.

Two days later, we were taking our bus on the long road from El Remate on the eastern end of Lake Petén Itzá to Sayaxché and then to Cancuén. Much like the rivers did in ancient times, this is the only road connecting the Petén with Cobán in Alta Verapaz, the beginning of the Highlands and, past that, the rest of Guatemala.

The lack of preparation time had gotten us out of Casa de Don David, our hotel in El Remate, later than advisable. Finally, by 9 am, after collecting our box lunches, we were on our trip south. Our driver Juan Carlos made it as comfortable as he could trying to avoid the ubiquitous potholes, "túmulos" – what the Mexicans call "topes" and we call speed bumps – and animals on the road. We killed a 6-ft. snake that Eric originally said was a fer-de-lance. Needless to say, we had to stop and check it out and take a picture with the poor animal. It was a boa, though, as the pictures would attest.

Our next stop was Sayaxché, a town divided in half by the Pasión River, forcing cars, trucks, pedestrians and motorcycles to take a ferry barge across the river. The line to board the ferry seemed longer than the actual crossing. Most of us got off the bus to wait our turn.

About one hour after Sayaxché, our bus had to slow down to cross a military checkpoint. Soldiers in uniforms bearing heavy armament, green military trucks and Jeeps stood by the narrowed roadside but graciously saluted and let us go by.

We wouldn't be so lucky the next time, when we approached what seemed like a more formalized checkpoint, though the military presence was less imposing. Here, we were told to step down off the bus with our personal belongings while young men in fatigues checked the bus. Outside, a table such as the ones we find in airports, was

ready to have our bags inspected. Explanation? We were traveling on the only road to the Highlands, where so much of the agriculture of Guatemala is farmed, so they look for fruits and vegetables to check for any infestation coming from the tropical Petén up to the cooler valleys. Oranges and bananas saved from our lunch boxes were confiscated, making a few in our group unhappy. I reminded everyone that it made no sense to get upset at armed men.

Another hour would pass before we made the turn onto the unpaved road that would take us to the "embarcadero," the spot where we would board the boat for Cancuén, leaving the imposing majestic mountain peaks of the Highlands behind us.

Half-an-hour later, we were at Cancuén's landing. It was approximately 2 pm. The sun in the Tropics sets pretty early, and in deep forests, where the sun barely filters down through the huge trees, you don't want to be around in the dark. I knew we would never get back in daylight to our next hotel in Flores.

Cancuén is a beautiful site. Across the forested areas, rock paths have been laid down to ease the walk from the escarpment to the site. There's a lot of Cancuén that is constantly flooded. This is probably the reason why wood artifacts have been found at the site.

Our guide took us first to the ballcourt, where one of those thrilling stories about Maya finds took place in 2004. "Arthur Demarest, the Ingram Professor of Anthropology and Archaeology at Vanderbilt, who spearheaded the recovery effort, said the relic is one of the finest Maya altars known and provides important clues about one of the wealthiest Maya kingdoms," says *Exploration*, Vanderbilt University's online research journal.

"The great altar was placed in 796 CE as a marker at the end of the royal ballcourt." Today, copies of the three altar/markers are set in place for everyone to see. (Read http://exploration.vanderbilt.edu/print/pdfs/news/news_mayaaltar.pdf for details about Demarest's adventure to find the looted piece.)

From the ballcourt, we made our way up an incline on a path that seemed

to cover a man-made structure. This is all part of the palace, we were told. The Cancuén palace "is not only one of the largest and most elaborate residences of ancient Maya kings discovered but also one of the best preserved," writes Demarest, who with Tomás Barrientos from Universidad del Valle in Guatemala did the exploration. "With more than 170 rooms built around 11 courtyards in three stories, this eighth century royal palace is about the same size as the central acropolis in Tikal."

According to Demarest, the Palace remains intact under the forest soil. Unfortunately, not much has been uncovered and the small section that has been exposed leans quite visibly to one side. It doesn't seem as if it will hold for a long time, commented Rick Slayzk, our in-house architect. What is there, though, shows beautiful stone work.

Most amazing of all is the "royal pool," a stone-covered pool with open steps, where the working team found evidence that a massacre had taken place. This pool is like nothing we've seen before, and we were most impressed by its location by the palace. One would pay a pretty price for a room like that at the inn.

We finally made it back to the guardian's palapa where we paid our entrance fee of about \$9US a person and made it down to our boat to start our trek back. It was almost 5 pm in the afternoon and Eric kept asking us to hurry up. There was no way we would get back to Flores in daylight. What was the rush?

What Eric and Juan Carlos had failed to tell me was that unless you cross the two checkpoints before 9 pm, our bus would not be allowed to stay on the road. A "state of siege" begins at that time as Guatemala faces another type of war: the war against drug cartels trying to take their business to the isolated Petén. (An article in the *Washington Post* of Feb. 9, just a couple of days after our return, confirmed this problem.)

Cancuén is not easy to reach and a visit there has some risk. Yet, we made it and perhaps in a few years, when the palace is released from the grip of the jungle, we'll return to this city rich in history and beauty.

Thank you **Marta Barber** for this travel report! Next month: Dos Pilas ●●●

Restoration Work at Kanki, Campeche

Antonio Benavides C. and Sara Novelo O.
INAH Campeche

Kanki archaeological site is located between farmlands just 17 km southeast from Tenabo or 57 km northeast from Campeche city. The ancient Maya builders took advantage of a natural elevation surrounded by wide flat areas of reddish soils today known as *kankab*.

The ancient name of the site is unknown and some locals explain that *kanki* means "yellow agave or sisal", but others suggest that the original place-name could be *Kancib* or "yellow wax" derived from a high production of honey and wax in pre-Columbian times. As a matter of fact, the Tenabo 1549 *encomienda* papers register the Maya were supposed to deliver, among other products, an annual tax of "an *arroba* and a half of honey and fifteen wax *arrobas*". At that time Juan García de Llanos, inhabitant of San Francisco de Campeche, was the encomendero. An *arroba* weighs around 25 pounds, so the 15 wax tax of the XVI century could weigh around 172 kilos.

Harry Pollock was the first researcher to visit and report Kanki. He worked for the Carnegie Institution of Washington during the 1930s and 1940s, when he surveyed southern Yucatán and northern Campeche. He published his notes,

photographs and analysis in 1980 under the title of *The Puuc: An Architectural Survey of the Hill Country of Yucatán and Northern Campeche, Mexico*. After that report, the site stayed practically abandoned, with eventual visits by hunters, tourists, looters and some researchers, notably George F. Andrews, an Oregon University architect who registered some structures during the 1980s.

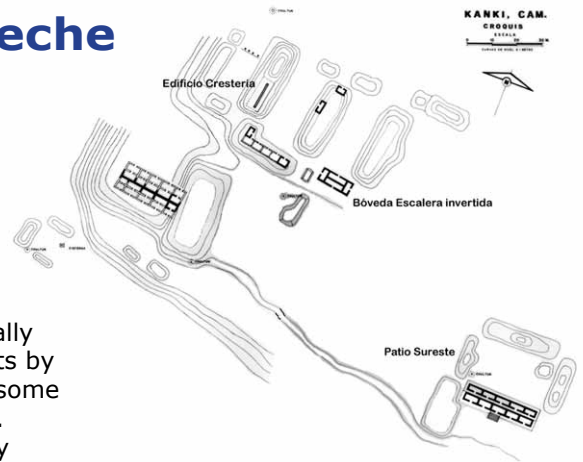
Kanki was first restored in 1990 by INAH Campeche archaeologists Renée Zapata and Antonio Benavides C. with financial support of the Tenabo municipality. In 2001, Florentino García reported an archaeo-astronomic event at the site. In 2007, INAH delimited a protection polygon for the principal structures including 8.61 hectares. During 2009, INAH promoted and financed a maintenance season for the most affected still standing buildings, involving Cumpich specialized masons and laborers from the nearby Kanki community.

Kanki is a medium-size settlement not comparable with Uxmal, Edzná or Chichén Itzá but with larger structures

than Xuelen or Chunyaxnic. Documentation of its principal buildings and the environment modifications (quarries, ground leveling, chultuns, etc.) has been advanced.

A rocky natural hill a little more than 10 meters high was used to build the largest constructions, most of them vaulted, forming rectangular patios and plazas distributed on several levels, but we also find masonry complexes on the surrounding *kankab* terrains. There are also three *aguadas* or water reservoirs where rains accumulate each rainy season and that undoubtedly played a vital role in the ancient inhabitants' daily life.

Some buildings were used for religious purposes,



The Crestería structure before exploration.



Roofcomb on same structure after restoration.



A corbeled-arch ceiling within a buried structure.



●●●● A few of the rescued stone altars.



The surviving Ahau sign within roofcomb.

others helped administrative activities and some housed officers of different socioeconomic levels. Constructions were built with foundations and walls of limestone covered with veneer stones. Ceilings, walls and floors were plastered and color bands, glyphs or designs were added according to the construction. A commonly used color was red, but some vestiges of blue and black have also been registered.

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Completed restoration of the "inverted stairway" structure. Restoring Kanki's Proto-Puuc building.



Initial image of mosaic mask within roofcomb of Structure 1.



Kanki *continued from page 4*

The most relevant buildings were sometimes complemented with roofcombs where symbolic and religious motifs were placed so everyone could see them, enhancing their monumentality. Those added walls could be solid (as seen on Tikal's high temples crowning elements) or they could have interstices (as Edzná's or Labna's principal pyramids).

A stone mosaic mask

Kanki's Structure 1 still has a large section of its original roofcomb. At the central part there is a mosaic mask or anthropomorphic face whose stucco details have been lost but his square eyes, a long stone forming the nose and part of the mouth still can be seen. It also had earrings and some sections reveal it was originally painted with red, purple, black, green and yellow tones. A narrow band running on the lower section of the roofcomb was decorated with stucco motifs but only one survived, an Ahau sign.

The first activities at the place included vegetation cutting and excavation of the rubble covering the section. Those operations helped to detect and restore several cracks and crevices located on both sides; also some fallen blocks were set in place. Archaeological exploration registered several constructive moments. Now we know that the vault under the roofcomb was filled with several tons of rocks around 700 CE, then a rough stairway was built on its eastern side and the roofcomb was partially covered adding transversal walls in order to build several small rooms.

Unfortunately those elements covering the roofcomb suffered severe looting during the 1950s and many valuable data were lost. Depredation also destroyed three masonry tombs and their associated burials. But careful analysis of the roofcomb provided some good surprises: it has more windows or openings than previously thought.

There are two more vertical holes at each side of the central mask.

But what do we know about the roofcomb building? Architectonic traits help us to date its construction to between 650 and 700 CE, an Early Puuc building according to Andrews and Pollocks' chronology. Veneer blocks are generally small and it had several entrances formed by columns built with several *tambours*. Its frieze was decorated with many stucco elements but now only the broken stone structures remain. Similar constructions have been reported at Xcalumkín and Chencollí in Campeche, but also at Kabah and Sayil in Yucatán.

An earlier building

The patio located just to the east of the previous one has a long building partially conserving its vaults. But those ceilings are peculiar; they were built as forming an upside-down stairway. The vault was made with projecting slabs but with their edges exposed. This construction technique corresponds to the transition between Petén and Puuc masonry buildings. They have been dated from 600 to 650 AD in what has been called the Proto-Puuc phase. Such an architecture has been reported at other Maya sites such as Xchan (south of Cumpich); Xmuulí (near San Antonio Yaxché) and Oxkintok, Yucatán.

Kanki's Proto-Puuc building was hardly affected by the growth of several *k'anchunup* trees (*Thouinia paucidentata*) whose hard roots displaced moldings and blocks at different sections and levels. To prevent more damages and the collapse of walls and corners the trees were cut and the accumulated rubble was removed. After dismantling the dangerous sections, firm bases were consolidated and blocks were placed in their original position.

Maya builders achieved experience and improved skills through time so they roofed bigger spaces using specialized stones.

Kanki's later vaults show those improvements: they were built with blocks in the form of a boot whose tenon is firmly anchored in masonry. In a similar way, jambs previously formed by several blocks were later prepared with only one big block (or two pieces maximum) covering the width of the wall. Those elements also assured greater stability.

Complimentary works

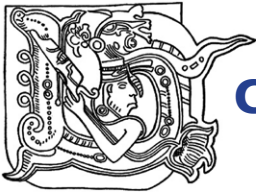
Other actions procuring preservation of ancient Maya heritage at Kanki were the register and replacement of three monolithic altars and a pair of grinding stones or metates. They were found in a small group of mounds located 600 meters southeast of the nucleus of the site, where they were frequently exposed to occasional fires. Those five elements now can be seen at the center of the site as part of the ancient history of the region. Surveys also helped to achieve a better map of the central section of the site.

We continue explore and reveal Kanki's cultural heritage. Undoubtedly, future excavations at the site will offer more places to visit and that will also help to have a better understanding of the settlement through time, the Maya technical and artistic advances. A visit to Kanki is a good idea to learn something about its past and to value our historic roots.

Suggested reading:

Andrews, George F.
1995 *Pyramids and Palaces, Monsters and Masks. Vol. 1: Architecture of the Puuc Region*. Labyrinthos Press, Lancaster, CA.

Pollock, Harry E. D.
1980 *The Puuc: An Architectural Survey of the Hill Country of Yucatán and Northern Campeche, Mexico*. Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.



Pioneers in Maya Archaeology: **Charles P. Bowditch (1842-1921)**

Submitted by Keith Merwin

When we think of the pioneers in Maya archaeology, names like Alfred P. Maudslay, Tobert Maler, Edward H. Thompson, Sylvanus G. Morley and Alfred Tozzer come to mind. What all of these people have in common is the financial support of Charles Pickering Bowditch.

Charles Pickering Bowditch was born in Boston, MA, on September 30, 1842, into a family well-known in Boston and around Harvard University. His grandfather, Nathaniel Bowditch, described as the father of modern maritime navigation, was a self-taught mathematician whose work in mathematics and astronomy led to an honorary Masters from Harvard and to his election as president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences from 1829 to 1838, a post Charles P. Bowditch later would hold from 1917 to 1919.

Charles Bowditch graduated with an A.B. degree from Harvard in 1863 and then served as an officer in the Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry and the 5th Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry during the Civil War. Returning to Harvard after the war, he completed his A.M. degree in 1866 and then married Cornelia Livingston Rockwell. In his business life he was a director of the Boston & Providence Railroad Corporation and president of several companies, including Pepperell Manufacturing Company and Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company.

Bowditch traveled for pleasure in 1888 to southern Mexico and the Yucatan, developing an interest in Maya studies. In that same year, he became a benefactor of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard and continued to support its programs until his death.

In 1891, he funded the Peabody's first expedition to Central America and continued to fund these and most of the museum's publications concerning these expeditions for the remainder of his life. He did not just provide the money for the Central American Expedition Fund, he personally planned each expedition. Bowditch became a

member of the Peabody's Committee for Central American Researchers in 1891, was elected a trustee of the Museum for 1894 and 1895, and served on departmental committees from 1889 through 1899. He joined the Department of Anthropology faculty in 1894, and in 1902, Bowditch became a founding member of the American Anthropological Association.

Alfred Tozzer, first recipient of the Archeological Institute of America's Traveling Fellowship in American Archeology (primarily funded by Bowditch) wrote in his obituary of Charles Bowditch "There is hardly a man now working in the Central American field today who was not directly beholden at some time in his career to Mr. Bowditch for encouragement and aid."



Charles P. Bowditch in the field at Patuca Bar, Honduras, March, 1890.

His support began with Edward H. Thompson's work in the Yucatán in 1888-1891. For the first expedition actually dispatched by the Peabody Museum, to Copán in 1891, Bowditch had helped the Peabody secure a 10-year concession with Honduras to explore there. He became friends with Alfred Maudslay when he joined the Copán work. The Peabody and Bowditch financed Teobert Maler's work from 1899 through 1905. Other work supported by Bowditch through the Peabody included the work at Chichén Itzá on the dredging the cenote by Edward Thompson occurring from 1904 to 1910 and the mostly annual



Photograph of a painting of Charles P. Bowditch by Ignace Gaugengigl.

Both images courtesy of the Peabody Museum Online Collections.

exploratory expeditions starting in 1909 and continuing until his death.

Mr. Bowditch's personal work included research on hieroglyphic writing and the Maya calendar. His *Notes on the Report of Teobert Maler in Memoirs of the Peabody Museum, Vol. 2., No. 1* was published in 1901 and continues to be referenced occasionally. In 1910, he published *The Numeration, Calendar Systems and Astronomical Knowledge of the Mayas*. Many translations of Maya studies were financed by Charles Bowditch. He translated Maler's work from German to English for publication.

Other German writers whose works he had translated include Eduard Seler, Ernst Förstemann and Paul Schellhas. Bowditch had copies made of the Codex Nuttall, Codex Laud, and the Sahagun manuscript, and he purchased photographic copies of the William Gates collection of more than 50,000 pages of manuscripts and books. Charles Bowditch had amassed a large library of Maya documents, most of which was presented to the Library at the Peabody Museum.

Tozzer described Charles Bowditch's personality as "very strong," and based on comments by others, many felt this was kind. Bowditch's legacy, though, is his contribution to the early foundations of Mesoamerican Archaeology.

He is memorialized by the "Charles P. Bowditch Professor of Central American and Mexican Archaeology and History" at Harvard University, the chair currently held by Dr. William Fash.

Sources: *Who's Who in Finance, Banking and Insurance*, 1911; "Charles Pickering Bowditch" by Alfred M. Tozzer, *American Anthropologist* Vol. 23, No. 3, 1921; *Alfred Maudslay and the Maya, A Biography* by Ian Graham; "Alfred Maudslay" by Alfred M. Tozzer, *American Anthropologist* Vol. 33, No. 3; 1931.

Institute of Maya Studies Line-up of Presentations!

**April 13, 2011: IMS Explorer Session:
"Digging Deeper in the Dry Tortugas"
with Michele Williams, Ph.D., RPA**



Fort Jefferson is a Civil War-era fort. For info on tours to the site, visit <http://drytortugasinfo.com>

Many people know about the history of Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park, but we will spend some time talking about the archaeology of this great place. Come learn about the unwritten stories that have been preserved at this Guardian of the Gulf!

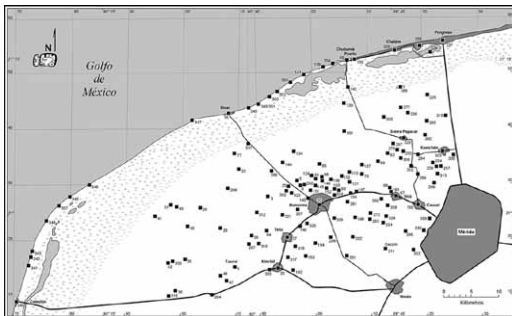
Fort Jefferson is located seventy miles west of Key West, Florida.



Michele Williams, Ph.D., RPA is the Director for the Southeastern Region of Florida Public Archaeology Network. Dr. Williams has participated in digs throughout the southeastern United States for the past 20 years. Her specialty within archaeology is the use of plants by prehistoric Native Americans.

April 20: IMS Presentation:

**"Surveying Cycles of the Longue
Durée in Northwest Yucatán:
3,000 Years of Cities & Towns, Villages
& Haciendas, Temples & Ballcourts"
with Anthony P. Andrews, Ph.D.**



Survey map showing some of the 260 prehispanic sites.

Dr. Andrews' presentation will be an overview of a survey and subsequent salvage work in northwest Yucatán, which has been ongoing since 1999. The survey covers the area between Progreso-Mérida-Celestun and the coast, an area of 2000 square kilometers, and from the Middle Preclassic to 2000 CE. To date they have recorded 260 prehispanic and 160 historic sites. Several field operations are ongoing to save sites being affected by the construction of the urban aggregations of Ciudad Caucel and a new highway, plus other developments west of Mérida.

Dr. Andrews received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Arizona where he taught before coming to the New College of Florida in 1981 and is currently the Chairman of the Division of Social Sciences. His Ph.D. Dissertation was entitled: Salt-making, Merchants and Markets: The Role of a Critical Resource in the Development of Maya Civilization. He earned his B.A. (magna cum laude) in Anthropology at Harvard University. Andrews has published too many books, monographs, articles, chapters, reviews, papers and reports to list here.

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Coming up next month:

Passage to Dos Pilas and Altar de Piedra:

Our own lovely Maya Lady Marta Barber continues her account of a recent Maya adventure into the heart of the Maya Lowlands. They traveled jungle roads in 4-wheel-drive vehicles, crossed rivers, rode horses, encountered snakes and roadblocks with numerous heavily-armed individuals. "Our first stop in Dos Pilas was the pyramid of El Duende, the largest pyramid on the site and the tallest pyramid in the Pasión/Petexbatún area". Later, "I took a few Extra-Strength Tylenol and went to sleep. I was happy!" *Thank you for sharing, Marta, nothing better than gettin' real!*

Field Notes: Digging at La Milpa: Recent Tulane graduate and now man-of-the-world Dan Bailey volunteered at La Milpa for a week this past summer through

the University of Texas Field School Program (Programme for Belize Archaeological Project). Dan offers a general idea of what it's like to volunteer at a Maya archaeological site, and ties the experience into some recent research at La Milpa. "Even as La Milpa's temples were slowly reclaimed by the jungle, the Maya remembered the city as a sacred place and continued to visit the ancient site during religious holidays, a practice that continues today".



Dan smiling in La Milpa.

Teotihuacan Tunnel Update: We have another update on the work going on in the tunnel discovered under the Temple of Quetzalcoatl at Teotihuacan. Piles of stone and debris deliberately placed there to block the tunnel by the Teotihuacanos have to be removed slowly. 300 tons of material thus far have been removed, including 60,000 fragments of jade, bone and ceramics. They have only advanced 7 meters into a tunnel believed to be 120 meters long. It will take several years to finish the job.

Dos Pilas was 3-hours in and 3-hours out, by horseback.



Upcoming Events at the IMS:

April 13, 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*
"Digging Deeper in the Dry Tortugas" – **Dr. Michele Williams** will discuss the archaeology of Dry Tortugas National Park, located inside Fort Jefferson which sits on Garden Key, 70 miles west of Key West, FL.

April 20, 8 pm: *IMS Presentation*
"Surveying Cycles of the Longue Durée in NW Yucatán: 3,000 Years of Cities & Towns, Villages & Haciendas, Temples & Ballcourts" – An overview of a survey and ongoing subsequent salvage work in northwest Yucatán since 1999, with **Anthony P. Andrews, Ph.D.**

May 4, 8 pm: **IMS Board Meeting**
All members are invited to attend.

May 11, 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*
"Alfred P. Maudslay" – A discussion of the life of one of the original Maya explorers, with **Dave Quarterson**.

May 18, 8 pm: *IMS Presentation*
"Flying Down to South America: Fieldwork in Ecuador" – with **Robert Feeney**.

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

April 14-17: *Conference*
"Maya At The Lago" – The first annual Maya at the Lago Conference (M@L) is a four-day "Everything Maya" event, including lectures, workshops and social gatherings. The M@L provides a venue for many of the world's top Maya archaeologists to share their experiences and current research with colleagues and the general public. Speakers include Marc Zender, Francisco Estrada-Belli, Norman Hammond, Arlen and Diane Chase, Patricia A. McAnany and George Stuart. In Davidson, NC. Get more info at: www.mayaatthelago.com

April 15-17: *Maya Weekend*
"The Ancient Maya in the 21st Century: Advances in Analysis and Presenting the Past" – Theme of the 29th Annual Maya Weekend at the Penn Museum, Philadelphia, PA. Get info at: www.penn.museum/events-calendar/details/390-29th-annual-maya-weekend.html

April 28: *Lecture*
"The Preservation and Importance of Inscriptions" – Theme of a Harvard Peabody Museum

Ancient Americas Lecture with Barbara Fash, at: www.peabody.harvard.edu/node/151

Through May 8: *Exhibition*
"Fiery Pool: The Maya and the Mythic Sea" – This exhibition, on loan from the Peabody Museum of Harvard University brings together over 90 works – many never before seen in the United States – to offer exciting insights into the culture of the ancient Maya. Surrounded by the sea and dependent on the life-giving power of rain and clouds, the ancient Maya created fantastic objects imbued with the symbolic power of water. This exhibition presents four thematic sections – Water and Cosmos, Creatures of the Fiery Pool, Navigating the Cosmos, and Birth to Rebirth. At the Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO. Get more info at: www.slam.org/Fiery_pool/index.php

On view: Carving of a frog, 700-800 CE; from Topoxté Island, Petén, Guatemala; shell and quartz.



IMS Explorer

Please note that all articles and news items for the *IMS Explorer* must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor by the second Wednesday of the month. E-mail news items and images to mayaman@bellsouth.net or forward by postal mail to: Jim Reed, 936 Greenwood Ave NE, Apt. 8, Atlanta, GA 30306

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