



The IMS honors David H. Kelly – an outstanding archaeologist and epigrapher who has recently entered the road to Xibalba.

# IMS Explorer

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



June 15, 2011 • Maya Long Count: 12.19.18.8.5 • 8 Chik'chan 13 Sots • G3

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## Divers find Maya Artifacts Amid the Wreckage of the "Oldest Shipwreck in the Caribbean"

**"We have just scratched the surface", says Captain Billy Rawson**

A chance encounter with a fisherman has led one team of treasure hunters to discover what they believe is the oldest Spanish shipwreck in the Caribbean. And after only diving the site a handful of times, the team of Deep Blue Marine has unearthed some serious treasure.

At the last count Captain Billy Rawson and his crew had uncovered 700 silver coins that could be worth millions, what appear to be Maya jadite figurines and also what could be a Maya ritualistic mirrored stone.

Everything was in pretty good condition, despite dating back to the 1500s. "We only started diving last autumn and haven't gone down that much because it's been the winter" said Randy Champion, vice president of the Utah-based company. "We have just scratched the surface," he added. "All of the stuff we've found is just from mucking about really."

Although the team hasn't officially confirmed which ship they are diving, Champion said they had a pretty fair idea, "but were keeping quiet for now".

"If it's the ship we think it is, she probably went down in a hurricane. The ship would have been quite small, around 50- to 60-feet, with 25 to 45 people on board" noted Champion.

"There were almost certainly a few dignitaries on board hitching a lift, and they wouldn't have made the journey all the way back to Spain with just 700 coins.

"Some of the carved jadite figurines had holes in the back side suggesting they could have been part of a head piece".



The dive site is a closely guarded secret, but is off the north side of the Dominican Republic.



The pre-Columbian carved jadite figurines, all approximately 2 to 3 inches in height, could be 500 years older than the wreck itself.

Valuable silver coins, ancient Maya jewelry and a mirrored object (iron pyrite?) possibly used in Maya



shamanic ritual were all found on the wreck. All photos courtesy of Deep Blue Marine.

"We're not just looking for things that glitter and things that are real pretty, we're trying to find out what happened to this ship." said Champion.

Deep Blue Marine is under contract by the Dominican Republic to uncover and research the shipwreck. They will then split the proceeds 50/50.

Source: From a press release by Amy Oliver, posted 4/29/2011 at: [www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk) Submitted by Scott Allen.

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### Inside this issue:

The Cave of Balankanché, with George Fery; The Mexican Digital Library 2

In Memoriam: Merle Greene Robertson, by Dr. Edward Kurjack 3, 6

Pioneers in Maya Archaeology: Raymond E. Merwin and Holmul by Keith Merwin 4-5

June Lineup of IMS Presentations and Membership Application 7

Upcoming Events 8

### June 8, 8 pm: IMS Explorer Session



Main altar close-up, by George!

### "Chaak's Cave: Balankanché"

with George Fery



**Jim Reed, Editor**

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## June 8: IMS Explorer Session Join George Fery with a report on the Cave of Balankanché

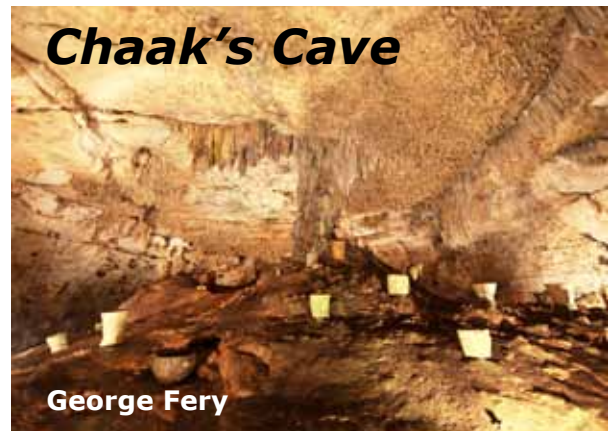
Caves provide a different kind of setting than surface architecture, typically dealing within art historic studies. Cave art mostly addresses paintings, petroglyphs and hieroglyphic writing as found in the caves of Mesoamerica, in the southern highlands and lowlands of Mexico, the Petén of Guatemala and the Maya Mountains of Belize.

Among known caves in the Maya Lowlands, Balankanché received little attention. Perhaps because with the exception of a few positive hand prints, it lacked other painted motifs, hieroglyphic paintings or petroglyphs. The cave holds however, beautiful artifacts set in exceptional settings, especially the striking chamber of Group 1 (above and at right).

Balankanché is one of the most stunning of Lowlands caves. It is an integral part of the great complex of Chichén Itzá, for which it bears its real name: "The Throne of the Tiger Priest" (E. Willis Andrews IV, 1970).

Balankanché was intermittently used from the Formative period up to contact with the Europeans, a span of approximately 3000 years. It was during the Modified Florescent phase (860 CE +/- 90), with the strong Mexican influence referred to as the "Rise of the Toltecs", that most ritual use was evidently undertaken in the cave.

The limestone karst landscape of the Yucatán possesses many extensive caves, and most Maya cities have several which were used as elite temples for ceremonial purposes, mainly those involved in the invocation of water and crop fertility (corn is also seen as having originated in Xibalba). Their existence was long-known to local people and explorers, but it was not until 1959 that a local tour guide named José Humberto Gómez stumbled upon a passageway that had been deliberately obscured in antiquity. Through this passage was found the main chamber



George Fery



cyark.org

*In ancient Maya belief systems, a cave is a sacred place. Caves offer a portal to Xibalba, the Maya underworld, where the spirits of the valiant dead tangle with supernatural beings, and the roots of the great World Tree are found. From here, these roots extend through the earthly realms of the forests up to the celestial heavens of the mountains. Caves are seen as the mouths of the Witz mountain spirits, and water is seen as having its origin deep within them, issuing forth as rain or rivers. Check out other color laser scan images of the cave at: [www.cyark.org](http://www.cyark.org)*

with all of its artifacts intact surrounding a great natural limestone column, stretching from floor to ceiling, in the center of the room (top). All artifacts were left in situ, where they remain today.

Balankanché's significance can be understood when set within the monumental secular site above ground, integrating the religious seat of power underground. The interaction between the surface elements and those of the cave shed an unusual light beyond architectural art, on the life of the great metropolis. 🏛️

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### IMS Explorer of the Month: David H. Kelly

Dr. Kelley, recently passed on the morning of May 20, 2011.

He was Professor Emeritus in the Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. He is most noted for his work on the phonetic analysis and major contributions toward the decipherment of the Maya writing system.

### The Mexican Digital Library

has been launched at [www.bdmx.mx](http://www.bdmx.mx).

Material from 500 CE on has been digitized. *The Totomaxtlahuaca Codex*, the *Techialoyan de Cuajimalpa* and *Marquesado del Valle Códices* are included. Códices such as *Huamantla*, dated to 1592, which describes migration of a group of Otomies from Chiapan, in what currently is the Estado de México, to Huamantla, are also included.

From the Independence period, the *Agustín de Iturbide Manifesto*, found hidden on his body after his execution in 1824, is included. The digital version of the *Plan de Ayala*, signed by Emiliano Zapata and Otilio Montañón, is also available. 🏛️





***In Memoriam:***  
**Merle Greene Robertson**  
**(1913–2011)**

**By Dr. Edward Kurjack**

*Rubbing of  
Stela 1 at  
Dzibilchaltún.*



*In 1971, Robertson posed next to Stela 16 at Dos Pilas, Guatemala. It is one of more than 2,000 Mesoamerican sculptures of which she has produced rubbings.*

There are many extraordinary people in archaeology, but Merle Greene Robertson is one of the outstanding figures who have contributed to the field. Born on August 30, 1913, in Miles City, Montana, Merle passed away on Friday, April 22, 2011.

She accepted various roles during her fruitful life including that of artist, teacher, parent, grandparent, archaeologist and avid adventurer, but she used most of her time on earth in determined campaigns to record prehispanic Maya art. In this task she was diligent, deliberate and focused. Her friends marveled that she was tireless, but it would be more accurate to say that although exhausted after long days of work, Merle would keep going!

Merle is perhaps best known for her rice paper prints of Maya carvings. Combining an ancient oriental technique with contemporary computer technology, Merle prepared copies of relief sculpture and inscriptions from all parts of the Maya country. Scanned photocopies of her work are available to students everywhere thanks to Mesoweb ([www.mesoweb.com/rub/rubbings/database.html](http://www.mesoweb.com/rub/rubbings/database.html)).

I met Merle in the 1960s when she worked at Dzibilchaltún copying the sculptured monuments found there. Twenty years later I worked with the Archaeological Atlas of Yucatán project. While most archaeologists viewed that project as a race to record as many new archaeological sites as possible, the goal was really the creation of a database to guide future research efforts.

For that reason, I tried to facilitate any work designed to collect data on a regional basis. At the time, anything of possible aesthetic value was disappearing from ancient settlements only to reappear on foreign art markets.

The archaeological world needed to mark the context of this art while it was still in place. Thus, after a lifetime of accomplishments, the new adventures of Merle in Yucatán began with reports of the remarkable sculpture from an isolated site called Xtelju. Some of the carvings were in the town hall at Yaxcabá while others were deep in the forest at the site. Merle came to Yucatán to copy them. She went on to make prints at isolated sites over the entire peninsula. Merle was concerned that despite the rich detail

they exhibited, no comparative drawings were available for the six magnificent sculptured panels on the face of the benches of the Great Ballcourt at Chichén Itzá. Indeed, despite the research and publications of the Carnegie Institution of Washington at that site, no comprehensive catalog of relief art was available. Merle proposed a project to remedy the situation.

After years of working at the site, in collaboration with INAH's Archaeological Atlas of Yucatán and in later years with research at Chichén Itzá headed by Dr. Peter Schmidt, Merle was able to produce a set of compact disks filled with images of art from the site.

Merle's data base of Chichén Itzá art constitutes the most comprehensive description of sculpture from the site available. Her extensive work complements the well-known studies by Charnay, Maudslay, Holmes and Selser. Today as thousands of tourists flock to Chichén Itzá, most of the art there is hidden from view. Much of the site is roped off and inaccessible.

The best way to learn about what is there is to access Merle's data base.

Merle's work at Chichén Itzá was physically demanding. Remember that she was about 75 years old when she toiled there under the hot Yucatecan sun. Producing the copies of carved monuments may seem to be light work, but in practice it can be quite arduous. The procedure involves taping specially made, thick Japanese rice paper to the sculpture and then applying just the right amount of water with a fine brush. The wet, pliable paper is then pressed into the face of the monument and finally pounded into place to expel

*continued on page 6*

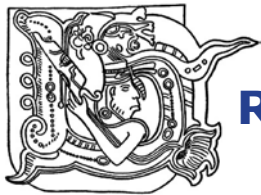


*Photo by Ed Kurjack*



*The pace of Merle's activity did not slow down through the years. She recently carried out a project documenting the sculptures of Chichén Itzá (left) through her rubbings. Center) During one stint at Palenque, she took notes on pieces of sculpture to be replicated for installation at the Florida Museum of Natural History. Right) Merle at rest at a site after receiving the "Orden del Pop" award from the Popul Vuh Museum in 2004. (All other images courtesy of MGR)*





## **Pioneers in Maya Archaeology:** **Raymond Merwin: (1881–1928)**

**Submitted by Keith Merwin**

Most students of Mesoamerican archaeology will not recognize the name Raymond Merwin, but his work provided a number of firsts in the field. The site he is most identified with, Holmul, Guatemala, is often shown on maps of sites in the Petén. His excavation work there in 1910 and 1911 was the first stratigraphical study of a Maya ruin and produced the first ceramic sequence. He located the famous twin tower structure at Río Bec, and at Lubaantun, he found three round carved stones that he called ball court markers, the first such reference. Yet, because of a long illness and early death, little of Merwin's work was published and he remains all but unknown.

Raymond Edwin Merwin, born in Humbolt, Kansas on November 21, 1881, earned undergraduate degrees from the University of Kansas. In 1913, he earned a Ph.D. from Harvard University, where he had worked since 1906 as a graduate student. During his years there, Merwin worked at The Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, which was and is the heart of Harvard's anthropology program. He was appointed to the Hemenway Fellowship for several years while working in the field for The Peabody and was also named The Peabody's Fellow in Central American Archaeology.



Raymond Merwin in 1914 at Rio Grande Ruins, now called Lubaantun, 2004.24.10000. Both images courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, [www.peabody.harvard.edu](http://www.peabody.harvard.edu)

The Peabody Museum planned an expedition to Guatemala in 1909, naming Dr. Alfred Tozzer field director and Raymond Merwin second officer. The main objective for this trip was to map Tikal and gather the information needed to complete and publish a report on Tikal begun by Teobert Maler.

Merwin performed the surveys and photography at Nakum and Tikal and supervised work done at newly located sites, including Holmul. The expedition produced not only the completion of the Maler report on Tikal but also two other Peabody Museum reports, on Tikal and on Nakum. He returned from this trip with a bad insect bite that would not heal. His health continued to deteriorate for the rest of his life. Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli, head of the current research at Holmul, has suggested that Merwin suffered from Chagas Disease.

Following the expedition of 1909-1910, Merwin was again named Fellow in Central American Archaeology and appointed as director of the expedition of 1910-1911. His younger brother Bruce, who had worked for The Peabody Museum at other sites, assisted him on this expedition, which focused on Holmul. One building in particular, Building B, Group II, produced much more than anyone would have hoped for.

Jeremy Sabloff in his book *The New Archaeology and the Ancient Maya* writes "When in 1912 R. E. Merwin of the Peabody Museum excavated a pyramid at the site of Holmul, he found for the first time, evidence that a succession of buildings had occupied the same location." The results of this expedition were not published until many years later, as *The Ruins of Holmul, Guatemala*, by



View of the "black doorway," looking from Long Room, Group 2, Ruin 1, Holmul, by Raymond E. Merwin, 1910. Peabody number: 2004.24.3880.

Raymond E. Merwin and George C. Vaillant.

Raymond Merwin again was director of the expedition in 1911-1912, this time joined by chief assistant Clarence L. Hay and zoologist J. L. Peters. They traveled to the southern region of Quintana Roo and the Hondo River. At Río Bec they located groups of ruins undiscovered by Comte Maurice de Perigny. One ruin they located and photographed, a structure that Merwin called Temple B with twin towers and false doorways, is the basis for the so-called "Río Bec" style of Maya architecture. Other sites, including the ruin of Kohunlich best known for its Temple of the Masks, were located on this expedition.

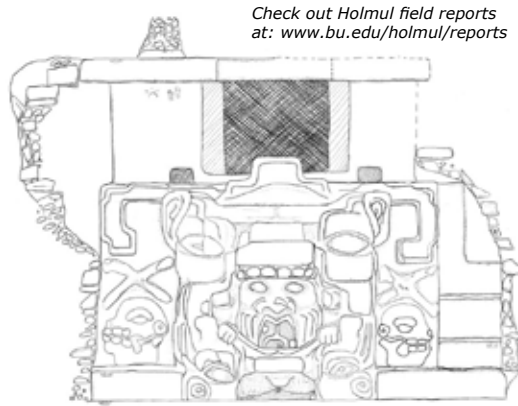
The 1914-1915 season found Merwin and his assistant A. W. Carpenter exploring Guatemala and British Honduras. Much time was spent at Lubaantun, locating many new structures and producing the first photographs and map.

Merwin returned to the Peabody Museum three carved round stones. They were cited in Alfred M. Tozzer's biography of Merwin included with the 1932 publication *The Ruins of Holmul, Guatemala*: "From this site he brought back three circular carved stones which he calls in his notebook 'Ball Game' stones. He has a drawing of a ball-court with the position of the stones carefully noted. This is probably the first definite statement of such a structure in a site, possibly First Empire."

*continued on page 5*



Comparative view of the "black door" in Holmul, taken by Keith Merwin during his trip in 2009.



Check out Holmul field reports at: [www.bu.edu/holmul/reports](http://www.bu.edu/holmul/reports)



The current data suggest that Holmul was a large city in the Late Classic period with settlement extending in a 3 km radius from its center and peripheral large centers located in a ring around it at 5 km distance. The entire Holmul region is the subject of study by Boston University, under the direction of Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli. There have been amazing discoveries, such as the impressive Preclassic burials at Holmul, the giant mask from the Preclassic at Cival and a mural painting with iconography at La Sufricaya. At Holmul, excavations include an elite residential area adjacent to a ballcourt. It is adorned with giant masks (above) on two façades.

## Raymond Merwin

*continued from page 4*

Raymond Merwin did not return to the field after 1915, but as his health deteriorated, he continued working at The Peabody Museum on his notes from the various expeditions. His untimely death on November 25, 1928, precluded him from publishing the details of his work. As his obituary explained, "In this work he contracted a tropical disease which baffled the skill of many physicians and from which he never recovered."

### Sources:

*The New Archaeology and the Ancient Maya* by Jeremy A. Sabloff; *The Ruins of Holmul, Guatemala* by Raymond E. Merwin and George C. Vaillant; field notes in the archives of The Peabody Museum, Harvard University; personal correspondence in the collection of the author.

### Web Resources:

<http://merwinatholmul.com>

About one hundred years ago, Raymond Merwin traveled to Holmul, Guatemala to do a scientific study of the Maya ruins there. Even though many important finds were made, the report on the study was not published until 1932. Much of this website is based on information from his personal journals and a new look at the field notes from his work.

I created *MerwinatHolmul.com* to help document the story of Dr. Raymond E. Merwin. My interest in Raymond and his work dates

from the 1970s when I heard stories about him from his younger brother, Bruce W. Merwin. Bruce had spent his professional life as an Educator but had a lifelong love for archaeology. He had worked for the Peabody Museum at Harvard on several sites and with Raymond at Holmul.

When I tried to find information on Raymond or Holmul I really could not find anything other than references to the 1932 Peabody Museum report *The Ruins of Holmul, Guatemala*. When Bruce passed away he left my family two personal journals Raymond had written while in the field. Many years later while searching the internet for information on Holmul I learned of Francisco Estrada-Belli and his work at Holmul. As we corresponded I learned that Raymond's work at Holmul was important to early Maya studies.

In February 2009 I traveled to the archive at the Peabody to expand my research. The staff was very helpful and the information fascinating. As I have reached out to people for information, I have

found many to be surprised that the journals exist and interested in the picture they contain of what archaeology was like in 1909. During the summer of 2009, my family and I were able to travel to Belize and Guatemala visiting many of the sites Raymond and Dr. Tozzer visited in 1909. At the kind invitation of Francisco Estrada-Belli, we were able to visit the Holmul Project and see the sites of Holmul and Cival.

The website is a work in progress. Many people have provided information that will be available on this site. Any errors in this information are probably mine. Please let me know if you find any so I can correct them.

### Keith Merwin

Keith Merwin has 25 years experience developing software and providing training for customer service operations in government and for-profit organizations. He is a principal in a consulting firm providing strategic technology analysis, planning and development. Keith has spoken at conferences in the United States and Europe.

He is currently writing a book on a journal kept by his ancestor Dr. Raymond E. Merwin an early Mayanist for the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University. Keith grew up visiting Raymond's brother Bruce who told him stories of expeditions he worked on in the early part of the twentieth century.



Share Keith Merwin's enthusiasm for the accomplishments made by his ancestor!

**June 15, 8 pm**  
IMS Presentation:

**"Holmul: Revisiting an Early Maya Expedition"**

*See program announcement on page 7.*

# Merle Greene Robertson

continued from page 3

any air between paper and stone. Any of these steps could and often did produce gaping holes in the very expensive paper. Merle would then watch the monument dry until the paper retained just the right amount of moisture. At that point, using silk balls filled with cotton, she daubed Sumi ink on elevated areas of the carving. The work had to proceed quickly for if the paper dried before the inking process was complete, it would not accept additional pigment.

Merle had to do almost all of the inking at Chichén Itzá because very few of the many talented people that helped us with the project became proficient enough to be trusted to apply pigment. Most commercially available rice paper is very thin. Even with the thick paper we used, considerable practice is needed to avoid ink bleeding through the paper and defacing the monuments. Ink stains from attempts by various would-be artists mark numerous carvings at Chichén Itzá – the reason that making rubbings at the site is now prohibited.

Merle tried to interpret the art of Chichén Itzá through the eyes of the artists that once worked there. She interpreted repeated treatments of the same theme, some exhibiting excellent workmanship and others executed in an indifferent manner, as the product of an artistic school with masters and apprentices. As an artist herself, Merle emphasized details. For example, she insisted that one of the figures from the Lower Temple of the Jaguars that Tozzer considered a typical "Toltec" warrior had female anatomical features.

It is clear that great art, especially when associated with architecture, had to be supported. How was a project such as the Northwest Colonnade of the Temple of the Warriors funded? Merle suggested that kin groups were enticed to support the construction with the opportunity to depict an ancestor on one of the columns. While we were aware that together the columns of the Northwest

The Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute (PARI) is proud to present **Never In Fear**, the autobiography of Merle Greene Robertson. Order yours today at <http://mesoweb.com>



Left) The cover of Merle's latest book. Center) Merle pictured on the frontispiece of the book. Right) Merle's painting of the daily life of elites at Palenque on the back cover.



Colonnade form a scene with warriors surrounding elite prisoners at the foot of the stairs leading to the Temple of the Warriors proper, Merle and I presented a paper interpreting that scene as a stratified institution captured in stone at a moment in time. We were all impressed with the significance of the captives depicted at Chichén Itzá. I was particularly interested in the carved wooden lintels found in the dark inner room at the top of the Castillo. I insisted that we should copy these lintels and Merle happily agreed (see below).

One carving shows a group of richly dressed individuals in typical "Toltec" costume seated and tied together at the wrist by a long rope. But traditional thinking from Charnay, to Selser and Tozzer emphasized "Toltec" conquest of the Maya. Even Tozzer thought these captive "Toltecs" were difficult to explain. Today of course, Mayanists are rethinking the whole "Toltec" concept.

Merle was well-known for slips, falls and other sometimes debilitating accidents she suffered. She had no fear! (Her autobiography is even called *Never in Fear!*) Peter Schmidt once remarked that our main job was to keep her from breaking her neck at the site! Given the rickety, makeshift scaffolding we used during the early part of the project, an angel must have been watching over us. Later, when Peter's project was under way, he made sure we had proper platforms to use. There are many photographs of Merle up on a barely stable ladder, working away.

Our life at Chichén Itzá was hardly dangerous or unpleasant! We stayed in cabins provided by the Mayaland Hotel or the Piramides Inn and had meals at their excellent food services. Camping out at one of the world's famous tourist locations

as easy living for archaeologists! Clean water was assured and we even had a swimming pool to ourselves. Sojourns to more remote places, however, were a bit adventuresome.

Merle insisted on sleeping in a tent on the ground at El Palmar and was rewarded with botfly larva under her skin. Even though the people in the village correctly identified the parasite, she had to take the problem to several medical people in the USA before anyone believed her. Finally the worm began to come out in the doctor's office. I think Merle was very proud of that "battle scar."

Palenque was Merle's favorite site. Her friends enjoyed the hospitality of her novel cottage and library there. Her multi-volume *Sculpture of Palenque* (University of Princeton Press, 1983-91) is a very comprehensive and detailed account of what was known about the site until that time. She devoted particular attention to recording colors used in the mural paintings.

Two volumes feature Merle's copies of Maya monuments. The New York Museum of Primitive Art published *Ancient Maya Relief Sculpture* in 1967. Merle Greene, Robert L. Rands and John A. Graham made their *Maya Sculpture from the Southern Lowlands, Highlands and Pacific Piedmont* available in 1972. These volumes contain high quality reproductions of some of Merle's best work.

Surrounded by friends and family, Merle faced her mortality without fear. I understand that she instructed her friends to have a party in her memory. Some of my last conversations with her, too long ago, involved possible projects copying inscriptions in Istanbul and Cambodia. Yes, there is much work to be done in the conservation and study of the ancient world.

If she were with us, Merle would be leading the effort. Archaeology in general, and her many friends will sorely miss her.



Merle's rubbing of the elite tied prisoners carved on a wooden lintel at the top of El Castillo pyramid.

## Institute of Maya Studies Line-up of Presentations!



### June 8, 2011: IMS Explorer Session: "Chaak's Cave" with George Fery

See article on page 2.

The scope of the lecture will show the cave, its structure, history and artifacts. We'll revisit the last great ritual that took place in 1959, the ceremony of *Tsikul T'an Ti'Yuntsilob*. George will offer an explanation of the importance

of Balankanché within the Chichén Itzá cultural complex. He'll share recently-taken photos and a surface sketch of the site never before published. Plan on attending!

*Years after its rediscovery, the cave of Balankanché was opened to the public, who can now admire the artifacts exhibited in the exact places in which they were found.*



### June 15: IMS Presentation:

## "Homul: Revisiting an Early Maya Expedition"

with Keith Merwin

See article on pages 4-5.

In June of 2009, Keith Merwin took a trip 100 years into the past. His adventure recreated an early Peabody Museum Expedition to the Petén. The original trip was taken by Dr. Alfred M. Tozzer and Raymond E. Merwin. Raymond Merwin was another early Mayanist working for the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University and he is a relative of Keith's. Keith grew up visiting Raymond's younger brother Bruce who told him stories of expeditions he worked on in the early part of the twentieth century. When Bruce passed away, he left Keith Raymond's personal journals. These journals have never been published and contain his daily observations in the field.



Keith Merwin and Francisco Estrada-Belli pose within a vaulted room at Holmul in 2009.



Model of Building B, Temple of the Sepulchre, Holmul; Peabody Number 38-19-20/5298.



Black incised dish with jaguar effigy lid cover, Holmul; Peabody number: 11-6-20/C5577.

Images courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University. Check out their online photographic collection at: [www.peabody.harvard.edu](http://www.peabody.harvard.edu)

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## Coming up next month:



Pair of Maya seated musicians playing conch shells, Kerr image 5888. Check out: <http://research.mayavase.com>

### Ancient Shells Meet High-tech: Stanford Researchers Study the Sound of Pre-Inka Conches

"We have evidence of the manipulation of light; we have acoustic spaces where it seems that they were playing around with sound. We've got evidence of the use of psycho-active

drugs," says John Rick, associate professor of anthropology at Stanford and part of the team working at the ancient site of Chavín in Peru. "But what other effects were they using in this very early multimedia show, and why? Was it a kind of mind control using sensory manipulation exercised by the priestly elite?"

### Famous Palenque Ruler Pakal II May Have Had a Second Son

The reintegration of two fragments of a glyphic text into the northern tablet of the Temple of the Sun sanctuary in Palenque, have led Mexican INAH archaeologists to conclude that Pakal II may have had a second son. The fragments which disappeared due

to looting in the early 20th century, were recovered in 1993 by archaeologist Arnaldo González and were recently incorporated back into the northern tablet. Epigraphist Guillermo Bernal Romero, from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) was then called in to help with a revised interpretation.



Fragments from the northern tablet. Photo: DMC INAH M. Marat.

### Power Structure at El Tajín Revealed

New hypotheses about the last stage and government of the El Tajín civilization point out to a rule that was not exclusive of one person but of several, as announced in a recent conference series organized by the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH).



Fragments of murals found in the nucleus of Building 40. Photo: Zamira Medina.

Check out **Ray Stewart** with an IMS presentation about his recent visit to El Tajín, July 20, at 8 pm.

## Upcoming Events at the IMS:

June 8, 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*  
**"Chaak's Cave"** – A in-depth look into the ceremonial cave of Chichén Itzá known as Balankanché, with our good friend, Maya enthusiast and now ritualist, **George Fery**. See article on page 2.

June 15, 8 pm: *IMS Presentation*  
**"Holmul: Revisiting an Early Maya Expedition"** – Recent archaeological investigations at the site of Holmul prove what an important site it was. Now we get a glimpse into the life of one of its original discoverers, Raymond Merwin, from one of his surviving relatives, **Kevin Merwin**. See article on pages 4–5.

July 6, 8 pm: **IMS Board Meeting**  
All members are invited to attend.

July 13, 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*  
**"Chichén Itzá Update"** – A report on three previous underwater excavations that have amassed a treasure trove of artifacts and results of recent plaza excavations with **Dr. Anne Stewart**.

July 20, 8 pm: *IMS Presentation*  
**"El Tajín: A Visit to a Maya Neighbor"** – **Ray Stewart** takes you there and shares what everyone needs to know.

## Upcoming Events and Announcements:

June 9: *ASSF Lecture*  
**"Uranium Series Dating: South Florida Findings"** – with Dr. Curtis McKinney. Findings include an ancient horse tooth excavated in the Monkey Jungle (of Miami) sinkhole that dates to 150,00 BP. 7 pm at the Deering Estate Auditorium, 16701 S.W.72th Ave., Miami.

June 16–18: *Conference*  
**"2011 Conference on Archaeoastronomy of the American Southwest"** – Themes include Mesoamerican and South American connections to the Southwest: Did cosmologies transport? At the Hibben Center for Archaeological Research, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM. More info at: [www.caasw.org/2011Conference.html](http://www.caasw.org/2011Conference.html)

June 17–19: *Convention*  
**"Mundo Maya 2011"** – Three days of presentations by nineteen researchers and archaeologists who currently work and study in the Mundo Maya, including Drs. Francisco Estrada-Belli and David Sedat. At the Hotel Camino Real, Antigua, Guatemala. Get additional info at: [www.eventosantiguaguatemala.com](http://www.eventosantiguaguatemala.com)

November 9–11: *Congress*  
**"Archaeology and Identities in Central America"** – Theme of the Fourth Central American Archaeology Congress to be held at the Dr. David J. Guzmán National Museum of Anthropology in San Salvador, El Salvador. Get more info at: [www.cultura.gob.sv](http://www.cultura.gob.sv)

November 16–20: *AAA Annual Meeting*  
**"Traces, Tidemarks and Legacies"** – Theme of the AAA 110th Annual Meeting. To be held in Montréal, QC, Canada. Get additional info at: [www.aaanet.org/meetings](http://www.aaanet.org/meetings)

December 9–10: *Conference*  
**"The Maya in a Mesoamerican Context: Comparative Approaches to Maya Studies"** – Theme of the 16th European Maya (WAYEB) Conference. Dedicated to sharing the most recent research about linguistics/languages; epigraphy/writing systems; religion/ ritual practices; and archaeology/material culture. At the University of Copenhagen. More info at: [www.wayeb.org/conferencesevents/](http://www.wayeb.org/conferencesevents/)



## 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](mailto:mayaman@bellsouth.net) or forward by postal mail to: Jim Reed, 936 Greenwood Ave NE, Apt. 8, Atlanta, GA 30306