



IMS Explorer

Our Explorer of the Month is a Guatemalan adventurer who paved new trails back into the Petén chicleros' camp that would later become the archaeological site known as La Corona, but who is he?

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



October 17, 2012 • Maya Long Count: 12.19.19.14.15 • 4 Men 18 Yax • G7

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Editor's Note: *La Corona, located deep within the Petén jungles of Guatemala, has been in the news lately since the discovery of a second glyphic reference to the 4 Ajaw 3 K'ank'in date identified on Block V of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 (IMS Explorer, Vol. 41, Issue 8, August 2012, pg. 2). Few realize that La Corona is located near a chicleros' camp named Lo Veremos. In 1989, the camp and some nearby structures were described by a German expedition led by Nikolai Grube, which failed to find any of the carved stelae or monuments that came to characterize the later expeditions that resulted in the appreciation of La Corona's importance. From a scientific point of view, who publishes a site first is considered the discoverer. What follows is an unedited account recently submitted by Petenero Santiago Billy of his early trips into Lo Veremos. His personal original photos are a treat! Follow-up by reading Karl Herbert Mayer's clarification of the early days of discovery at La Corona on page 5.*

A Chance Encounter with the Extraordinary Mayanist Ian Graham and the Early Days of Discovery at La Corona

by **Santiago Billy**

It all started with a misunderstanding on a November day in 1977. Intrigued by the archaeological site El Peru (anciently known as Waka') and its scarlet macaws, I decided to organize an expedition. Soon thereafter, we would set off by mules from the town of San Andrés, on the shores of Lake Petén Itzá, Guatemala. Informed of my visit to the site, the Scotsman Ian Graham had me followed by the police, thinking I was a looter aiming to steal and then sell Guatemala's cultural heritage.

It was more than a decade later, sharing an excellent bottle of Chablis, in my house in Antigua, that Graham confessed this anecdote to me. Talking as old friends, it was the first time that we spoke of a site related to the Maya



Santiago Billy (SB) with Luis Morales, and one of the stelae found at the site (SB, February 1996).

kingdom of Calakmul, long known only as "Site Q". I was fascinated by what he told me. Before saying goodbye, he said his intuition was that it could be located close to the source of the Chocop River. Time would tell.

While working on a study of the macaws in El Peru in the early 90s, I talked to rubber tappers (chicleros) of the La Carmelita community. It was at that time that I first heard about an old campsite called "Lo Veremos" located near the Chocop River, where macaws were known to hang around. Remembering Ian Graham, I insisted until finally my rubber tapper friends and guide confessed that although they did not know how to get there, they

continued on page 4



Carmen Zapata, preparing the mules for the expedition (SB, February 1996).

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Inside this issue:

El Zotz Masks Yield Insight Into Maya Beliefs	2
Who Was Waterlily Jaguar, by Janice Van Cleve, continued from Vol. 41, Issue 9	3 & 5
The Early Days of Discovery at La Corona, continued from page 1	4
Clarification Concerning the Original Discovery of La Corona, by Karl Herbert Mayer	5
Pioneers in Maya Archaeology: Count Maurice de Périgny, by Keith Merwin, continued from Vol. 41, Issue 9	6
October Lineup of IMS Presentations and Membership Application	7
Upcoming Events	8

IMS Presentation: October 17, 8 pm



"The Making of Maya Civilization: A Surprising New Perspective from Northeastern Petén"

with **Francisco Estrada-Belli, Ph.D.**
Boston University



Jim Reed,
Editor

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El Zotz Masks Yield Insight into Maya Beliefs

A team of archaeologists led by Stephen Houston has made a new discovery at the Maya archaeological site in El Zotz, Guatemala, uncovering a pyramid believed to celebrate the Maya sun god. The structure's outer walls depict the god in an unprecedented set of images done in painted stucco. In 2010, the team uncovered a royal tomb filled with

artifacts and human remains at the same site. Researchers believe the pyramid was built to link the deceased lord to the eternal sun.

The team began uncovering the temple, called the Temple of the Night Sun, in 2009. Dating to about 350 to 400 CE, the temple sits just behind the previously discovered royal tomb, atop the Diablo Pyramid. The structure was likely built after the tomb to venerate the leader buried there.

Houston says that through this find, much of it pristinely preserved, researchers are gaining a significant amount of new information about the Maya civilization.

The excavation of the El Zotz site became more important last year, when it was named one of the World Monuments Fund's 67 International cultural heritage sites at risk. The site is known for one of the very few carved wooden lintels with hieroglyphic text to have survived from pre-Colombian Mesoamerica.

The team is learning much more about the temple's purpose. Sitting on a high escarpment overlooking the main part of El Zotz, an ancient Maya city, the pyramid would have been a spectacular presence 1,600 years ago, according to Houston. Painted a saturated red, the temple was intended to announce its presence and the power of the ruling dynasty. It would have been at its brightest during the rising and setting of the sun and visible up to 15 miles away.

The stucco masks on the walls of the temple appear to depict several celestial beings, including the sun, which the Maya thought of as a god – K'inich Ajaw. Standing 5 feet tall, several of the masks illustrate different phases of the sun as it moves from east to west in the sky over the course of the day. One mask displays fish-like characteristics, a representation of the rising sun on the horizon, which the Maya associated with the Caribbean to the east. Jeweled bands running between each mask contain archaic representations of Venus and other planets acting as the sky in this solar representation.

The structure was built during a challenging time in the Maya world. The people of El Zotz and Tikal, another large Maya city nearby, were, for the first time, experiencing contact with and intrusions from the people of Teotihuacan, ancient America's largest metropolis located near modern-day Mexico City. The pyramid may have been erected to signal local power at a time of intrusion and political turbulence. Another finding indicates that the Maya



Diablo Pyramid, north side: A tracing of an image found at the El Zotz archaeological site in Guatemala depicts the Maya sun god. "The stuccos provide unprecedented insight into how the Maya conceived of the heavens," said archaeologist Stephen Houston, "how they thought of the sun, and how the sun itself would have been grafted onto the identity of kings and the dynasties that would follow them." Credit: Stephen Houston.



One of the many Maya stucco masks uncovered at the recently discovered temple. It shows the Maya sun god as a shark-man. Courtesy of Edwin Román, Brown University.



L) Stephen Houston hard at work. He says "The Diablo Pyramid is one of the most ambitiously decorated buildings in ancient America." R) Undated photo released by the El Zotz Archaeological Project of archaeologist and project co-director Edwin Román posing in front of a bas-relief depicting the Night Sun.

saw the building as a living being rather than just simply a physical structure. 🏰

Source: Press release issued 7/18/2012 by Brown University. There is also a nice embedded video in HD narrated by Stephen Houston of the new pyramid find at El Zotz, at: <http://news.brown.edu/pressreleases/2012/07/masks>

Marta Barber will share views of El Zotz as part of her IMS program on November 17.

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IMS Explorer of the Month: Santiago Billy

His adventures are covered in this month's special article

penned by Santiago himself that begins on page 1 and continues on page 4. The article was reviewed and only slightly edited by Marcello A. Canuto, who is Co-Director of excavations at La Corona and Director of M.A.R.I., the Middle American Research Institute at Tulane.



Who was Waterlily Jaguar?

by Janice Van Cleve

Stela 9 was erected on 9.6.10.0.0 (January 27, 564 CE) by the tenth ruler of Copán, Moon Jaguar. This stone was still intact when Maudslay recorded its text in the late 19th Century. However, locals subsequently broke it up and used it as part of the construction of an adobe wall around the town cemetery. Only a few broken pieces remain, but David Stuart was able to identify them in 1986. The stela records a ceremony, but at the end names Moon Jaguar as the son of Waterlily Jaguar. This is an important note, because two kings ruled between the father and the son. Today we know them as Wi Yohl Kinich and Sak Lu.

This is where dates conflict. Stela E was witnessed by Waterlily Jaguar in 544 CE. Yet the Hieroglyphic Stairway records Wi Yohl Kinich coming to the throne in 532 CE. It is possible that Waterlily Jaguar raised his son to join him on the throne during his lifetime as a guarantee of succession. Yax Kuk Mo seems to have done that with his son as recorded on the Mot Mot marker. Wi Yohl Kinich ruled until 551 CE when Sak Lu became king. He ruled for only two years, and then Moon Jaguar acceded to the throne. It is possible that all three of these rulers were sons of Waterlily Jaguar, each succeeding the other. All four are depicted on the east face of Altar Q (**Fig. 4**).

On the other hand, either one or both of these intermediate kings could have been usurpers and the installation of Moon Jaguar could be the reinstatement of the legitimate line. Sharer notes that most of the monuments in Copán before 560 CE are fragmentary, perhaps from deliberate smashing. He points out that most of the monuments after that date are complete and even intact in position. Was there a revolution, a coup, or an outside invasion at this time? Was Sak Lu or even Wi Yohl Kinich an intruder? This and the hypothetical destruction event are major questions in the 6th Century history of Copán.

Stela 16 at Caracol (**Fig. 5**) was found in 1951 buried underneath the plaster floor upon which Altar 7 rested. It was broken in two pieces which destroyed the glyphs at B9

and at C7-D8 and badly damaged the ones adjacent. The bottom glyphs at A19-B19 and C19-D19 are also destroyed. This stela was raised in 9.5.0.0.0 (July 3, 534 CE) by the then-reigning king of Caracol, Kan I. Although the text is difficult to read, it appears to list Kan's parents and grandfather, Kak Ujol, a female sibling, a royal lady of Xultun (a nearby city), and Waterlily Jaguar.

Lady Atbe was the wife of Kak Ujol, king of Caracol (431-480 CE), and mother of Yajaw Te, king of Caracol (484-530 CE). She was therefore the grandmother of Kan I. We still do not know what her relationship was to Waterlily Jaguar. The five glyphs D14-D16 do not contain any known verb or relationship, nor are they the common glyphs for witnessing or overseeing. Yet his name is positioned toward the end of the inscription followed by his official title "Copán Holy Lord". He must have exercised some authority at Caracol or at least have been related to the ruling dynasty.

Accomplishments

Waterlily Jaguar has often been credited with a major expansion and refurbishing of the east courtyard of the Copán acropolis. The east courtyard was the home of the dynastic clan since Yax Kuk Mo conquered the city in 427 CE. Over the years, structures were built and torn down, covered over by plazas, and incorporated into new structures. A significant number of new buildings were constructed between 500 and 520 CE, during



Fig. 4: The east face of Altar Q.

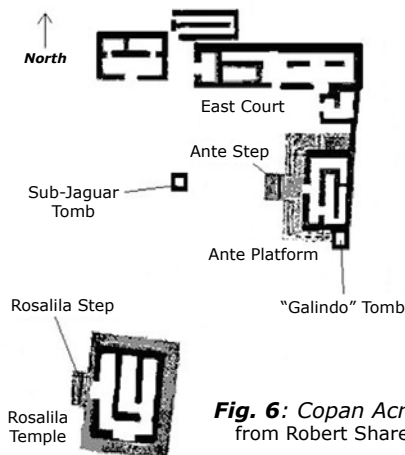


Fig. 6: Copan Acropolis 500-600 CE. Adapted from Robert Sharer, Early Copan Acropolis Project.

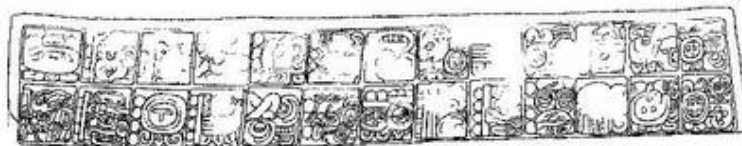


Fig. 7: Drawing of Ante Step. Courtesy of Barbara Fash.

the first half of Waterlily Jaguar's reign. Modifications and wholesale rebuilding continued during the following reigns. Three structures stand out in the east courtyard that date from this period: the Ante Platform, the Sub-Jaguar Tomb, and Rosalila Temple (**Fig. 6**).

The Ante Platform is a large raised surface on the east side of the east court that was topped by a large stone building. The platform is decorated with large stucco masks on either side of the front stairs as well as on the north side. On the south side is a tomb called "Galindo's tomb" after the archaeologist who discovered it in 1834. Robert Sharer, who excavated the site, suspects this to be the tomb of the 10th ruler of Copán, Moon Jaguar. One of the risers on the front stairs displays glyphs recording the dedication of the platform in 542 CE. Tourists today can enter the archaeologists' tunnels that circle the Ante Platform to see the masks and the step (**Fig. 7**).

The Ante Step and therefore the Ante Platform had long been attributed to Waterlily Jaguar but

continued on page 5

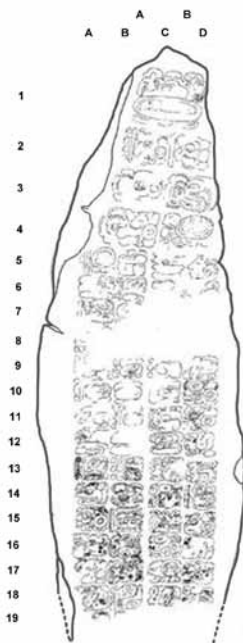


Fig. 5: Stela 16 of Caracol.



A Chance Encounter with the Extraordinary Mayanist Ian Graham and the Early Days of Discovery at La Corona by Santiago Billy

continued from page 1

knew someone who did. His name was Don Bartolo, a solitary marijuana trafficker. Five years later, Bartolo decided to accompany us to "Lo Veremos".

Unfortunately, a week before setting off on the expedition, Bartolo was found dead in the deep jungle. Even though my friends and guides Luis Morales and Carlos Catalán offered to take me there, insisting it was possible to find the site, I thought it would be too dangerous. Traffickers of all sorts were known to use the area. However, Luis and Carlos, being from the town of La Carmelita, negotiated with their "friends" for safe passage through the jungle until reaching the River Chocop.

Something strange was in the air, the atmosphere was gloomy and felt very heavy when finally, on February 22, 1996, six months after the death of Don Bartolo, we left La Carmelita and set off for an uncertain destination. Besides the guides, the group was completed by Kelly Reed (a "gringa" handling the GPS), 4 mules, 5 chickens and a rooster that sang its last morning glory that day.

Even though I consider myself an explorer, never before did I cross such a hostile environment; we passed through parts affected by wildfires, impenetrable jungle with immensely dense bamboo vegetation, nearly impassable marshlands, lakes and man-swallowing swamps. And throughout the endeavor, not a single man-made track or footprint anywhere in sight. I particularly remember the fourth day, fighting the dense jungle with all our might, machetes in hand for over 10 hours. Setting up camp at night, Kelly informed us we had managed to progress only a mere four kilometers.

Fortunately, the next day, we came across a path, apparently made by the Western Petroleum Company back in the 1950s. Only a few hours later, around midday on February 27, 1996, we came across a stela. Could this be the famous long-sought after Site Q?

Macaws were flying in groups, the trees were enormous and only a few of the *chicozapote* trees did not bear the marks of the rubber tappers.

Going around in circles, we had encountered about 2 km of stelae, when we stumbled across a complex of five pyramids, each with a height of about 12 meters. Approximately another half mile further out, we found a separate palace.

Once back from this ordeal, I immediately contacted a great friend at Conservation International, Dr. James Nations, as well as Dr. Tom Sever, an archaeologist at NASA. Five months later, a second expedition was organized, one that I almost did not survive due to a sting in the neck from an *ahorcadora* or "choking" wasp.

After that adventure, we notified Ian Graham and Guatemala's Department of Anthropology and History of the Ministry of Culture in order for them to inspect and officially register the site.

Then in May 1997, with the same group of explorers, we entered the jungles for a third time, but this time guiding in the Head Inspector of the Petén, Don Pancho Moro. Famous Mayanists Ian Graham and epigrapher David Stuart had already reached Lo Veremos and were present at the site. Sharing an evening dinner under the stars, we discussed giving the site a new name that would better suit the discovery, and to differentiate it from the camp of rubber tappers. And so, "La Corona" was born.

Unedited Biography by Santiago Billy

Jacques Santiago Billy, 56 years young. My life is controversial – formally educated in France, academically, I received my degree in the sub-tropical jungle "university" of Petén, Guatemala. Idealist, Franco-Guatemalan, a 21st-century explorer (if such a thing still exists), I am a researcher of biodiversity and archaeological sites. Currently atypical and a music lover, I own a hotel/restaurant (Mon Ami) on the shore of the Lake Petén Itzá, in the village of El Remate, Guatemala. I love photography, my kids and traveling without any destination in particular. Lastly, with a great old friend, a shaman of Itzá ethnicity, together we practice ancestral rituals as a way to thank the Maya Gods.

I want to thank and acknowledge my friend Jasper Kok for helping with the Spanish-to-English translation



Santiago Billy (center) with his two guides and friends, Carlos Catalán (left) and Luis Morales (right). They hover over Stela 1 from La Corona (SB, February 1996).



Santiago Billy (center) with Dr. James Nations of CI (left) and Dr. Tom Sever from NASA (right). In their midst, another stela from the site (SB, May 1997).



The group of friends together in Carmelita village, left to right: Luis Morales, Santiago Billy, Chepe Crashbor and Carlos Catalán (SB, December 1995).

of my report and Marcello A. Canuto, co-director of the site of La Corona, for reviewing and approving my story. 🇺🇸

Comments by Marcello Canuto

"As the Co-Director of the La Corona Archaeology Project, I have made the site my professional home for almost a decade. During the numerous visits Santiago has made to the site and our camp since we began our research, we have often discussed the early days of exploration into this area. And as in many other parts of the Petén, La Corona was made known thanks to the skill and knowledge of the local chicleros guiding waves of explorers in this area. While this knowledge too often led to the massive looting of the region, a large part of our effort now is dedicated to recording it so that more sites like La Corona can be rescued and studied."



Clarification Concerning the Original Discovery of Lo Veremos

by Karl Herbert Mayer, Mexican, Austrian Bureau

This Letter to the Editors from Karl Herbert Mayer appeared in Vol. 51 (6):10-11, 1998 issue of *ARCHAEOLOGY*:

"In July of 1989 a German expedition consisting of Nikolai Grube, Ekkehardt-Wölke Haase and Mareike Sattler located four previously unknown archaeological sites in the northeast Petén of Guatemala. The four Maya ruins were named El Achiotal, Lo Veremos, El Limón, and El Juleque, and a concise description of them

appeared one year later in the journal *Mexicon*. Concerning Lo Veremos, the local guide provided the information that he had visited the site 15 years before. In the September/October 1997 issue, *ARCHAEOLOGY* published an article titled "Mission to La Corona" (p. 46) where the discovery of Lo Veremos is attributed to the Guatemalans Carlos Catalán and Santiago Billy, who visited the ruins in February 1966. No mention is made that the ruins were already partially

investigated in 1989 and that a report was published in 1990.

Karl Herbert Mayer

The editors of *ARCHAEOLOGY* replied with this note of their own:

"We regret not having acknowledged Grube, Haase, and Sattler's work at Lo Veremos. However, that the *Mexicon* article contained neither a sketch map of the site nor references to the carved monuments described in *ARCHAEOLOGY* may account for their expedition's not having received its due credit."

Who was Waterlily Jaguar?

by Janice Van Cleve

continued from page 3

the name of Wi Yohl Kinich has since been identified on the step (Fig. 9). It is the latter whose remains are also thought to be those found in the Sub-Jaguar tomb.

Given the apparent overlapping of reigns – if that is true – and the size of the project, it is likely that both the 7th and 8th rulers had a hand in creating the Ante Platform but it was the latter who finished the work and therefore celebrated the dedication.

The tomb of Waterlily Jaguar has not yet been identified. Rosalila Temple is unique among all the temples of the Maya because it was interred intact (Fig. 10). The usual practice was to ritually "kill" the old building by reducing it to rubble to provide construction fill for a grander, larger building over the top of it. In this case, however, the Maya carefully filled the inner rooms with rubble to support the ceilings and then encased the entire outer structure in a thick layer of stucco before they built over it. This effort was completed with much reverent ceremony as testified by the offerings cached inside. Rosalila was evidently a very holy place.

Ricardo Agurcia discovered the temple in 1989 while tunneling under Copán's main temple, designated 10L-16 by archaeologists. Because it was so carefully encased, the outer walls still preserve their fine detailing and even their rich colors. Below Rosalila were the platforms of several earlier structures and ultimately the tomb of the Yax Kuk Mo himself. This was the center of Copán's world, the hearth stone

of its dynasty. The fifth step on the stairs of the Azul platform leading up to the front door of Rosalila, contains a dedication inscription. Unfortunately it is badly eroded. Linda Schele and Nikolai Grube originally reconstructed the date as 9.6.17.3.2 (February 21, 571 CE) which would place its construction near the end of Moon Jaguar's rule. This interpretation was picked up by many later researchers.

However, David Stuart suggests that elements of Wi Yohl Kinich's name glyphs are visible, which would move the dedication at least 20 years earlier. Agurcia agrees and adds that stratigraphic evidence supports the claim that Rosalila is contemporary with the Ante Platform. In any case, the step is in such bad shape that all interpretations of dates and names must remain tentative. The fact that the step is actually on the Azul substructure and not on Rosalila itself may indicate a third variable – that Azul and Rosalila are not contemporaneous.

Summary

The reign of Waterlily Jaguar falls in the middle of a long stretch of time from the founding events of the Copán dynasty to the later kings, roughly from 470 to 578. In these 100 years, the framework of the city as laid out by Yax Kuk Mo and his son was filled in and developed into a well established ritual center. Eight kings took the throne during this period but some had very short reigns and few left recognizable

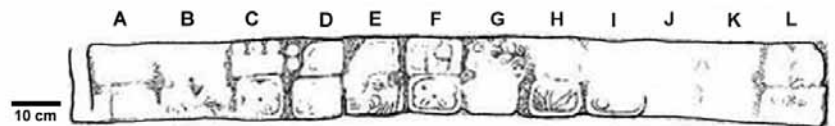


Fig. 9: Hieroglyphic step of the Azul substructure. Drawing courtesy of Barbara Fash.



Fig. 10: A cutaway illustration shows the "entombed" temple Rosalila. When a new ruler was named, workers held "burials" for existing structures, then built a new temple above the previous ruler's, creating a mountain of nested temples.

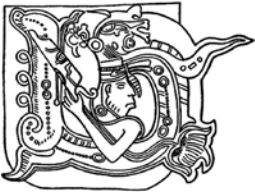
By Christopher Klein, courtesy of: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>

monuments. Of those monuments that have been found from this period, many show evidence of destruction. Yet a considerable and consistent building program did continue during that span, including the east courtyard, the Ante Platform, and Rosalila Temple.

Whatever upheavals, interregnums, or insurrections occurred to erase or prevent more evidence from surviving until the later years of the kingdom, the rulers who emerged from this period were strong, long lived, and powerful. It may well be that Waterlily Jaguar was the vital link that sustained the dynasty from the founders to Copán's golden age. 🏛️

For full references, contact the author through her website at: www.mayas.doodlekit.com/home

Van Cleve has many books about the Maya available.



Pioneers in Maya Archaeology: Count Maurice de Périgny (1877-ca. 1935)

Submitted by IMS webmaster Keith Merwin

Continued from September 2012, Vol. 41, Issue 9:

Périgny journeyed to the area of Laguna de Hon near Xcopen where he found three additional groups of ruins. The first he named Nohochná which he said was "Casa Grande" in Mayan. He found these ruins to be different in style, not like Río Bec or Uxmal or others he had visited.

About 500 yards away, another group included a monument topped with a structure with a great many rooms, so he designated it Yaabichna for "many rooms". The last find on this trip he called Nohcacab or "large town" in Mayan because the site had an avenue with a pyramid at one end and behind it a structure with a large interior court surrounded by additional structures. Périgny left Mexico after giving a report to the National Museum in Mexico City, then another for the Geographical Society of Paris describing his successful trip.

Périgny made his fourth trip in 1909, this time actually commissioned by the French Geographical Society and the French Department of Public Instruction. He visited the capital of Guatemala receiving a letter of introduction from President Manuel Estrada Cabrera to all officials he would come in contact with. During this part of his trip, he visited Palo Verde, Los Tarros and Santa Lucía Cotzumalhuapa. From there, he traveled to Coban to hire porters and guides.

Getting on the trail, Périgny visited a cave at Seamay with hewn stairs and rock art. Stopping at Dolores, he visited several sites in the area. Reaching Benque Viejo, he met up with the expedition from the Peabody Museum at Harvard University and stayed for two weeks. The Peabody Expedition had planned to visit Nakum and agreed to put off their visit for a month or two to allow Périgny time to work the site. Dr. Tozzer also offered to hold his report from publication until after Périgny had published his report.

Arriving at Nakum, he had the site cleared so he could photograph the site properly. He also made

casts of hieroglyphic moldings and stelae,

Keith presents three more of the four unpublished early images of Count Maurice de Périgny that he acquired from a New York City antiques/bookstore.



unfortunately they have since disappeared.

This trip ended in Belize City, British Honduras. Périgny's report to the French Geographical Society was covered by newspapers in Europe and the United States. He was a talented spokesman for his efforts calling Nakum "the capital of the Maya" and giving structures names such as "The Temple of King", "The Temple of Priests", "The Temple of Hieroglyphs". He also presented a report on his travels at the 1912 International Congress of Americanists in London, England.

Périgny returned to Central America in 1913, this time visiting Costa Rica and the Panama Canal. He reported to the French Geographical Society on the canal, a project they had followed closely since its earliest planning.

With the start of the war in Europe Périgny enlisted in the French Army as a sub-Lieutenant of the Nineteenth Regiment of French Dragoons. He would serve mostly in Morocco. He produced several reports on Morocco.

The Count did not return to Central America, in fact he became less and less involved in geography after 1920 and it appears he passed away in Brazil before 1935.

Each of Count Maurice de Périgny's four expeditions cost him several months of his time and he traveled and explored at his own expense. He also became sick with fever at least twice, both times requiring long recuperations.

During his adventures, Périgny located at least eleven Maya sites, two that are now well-known – Nakum and Río Bec. The French Geographical Society awarded him a Silver medal and a Gold medal for his work. These travels were clearly a labor of love.



Structure N, taken by Raymond E. Merwin during the Peabody Expedition to Nakum in 1909-10, compared to its restored version today (courtesy of www.authenticmaya.com).



Historic photo of construction along Culebra Cut on the Panama Canal, during the time that Périgny visited the project in 1913. Courtesy of www.canalmuseum.com

Sources: Dr. Eric Taladoire, 1995: *Maurice de Périgny, Archaeologist or Explorer?*; *Maurice de Périgny, 1907 – Maya Ruins in Quintana Roo*; various newspaper and magazine articles.

Institute of Maya Studies Line-up of Presentations!

October 10, 2012: IMS Explorer Session:

"The Maya Civilization: Art & Architecture"

with IMS President Rick Slazyk, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP



Magnificent sculpture in 3D at Ek Balam.

This introduction to the Maya will cover their origins in the early Pre-Classic period (1500 BCE–200 CE) through their societal collapse in the Post Classic period (900–1500s) as reflected in their art and architecture.

Our journey will explore the impact of different geographical locations, politics, economy and religion through the different periods that combined to influence the development of its regional art and architectural styles.

The intelligence, artistic creativity, ingenuity and determination of these ancient people produced beautiful art and architecture.

With advanced city planning, hydraulic engineering, astronomy, mathematics, calendrics and a written language, the Maya had given birth to one of the world's most advanced civilizations. *Read Rick's full credits on the IMS website.*



The Maya past meets the future.

Tikal will host numerous modern Maya ceremonies leading up to and on 12/21/2012.

October 17: IMS Presentation:

"The Making of Maya Civilization: A Surprising New Perspective from Northeastern Petén"

with Francisco Estrada-Belli, Ph.D. – Boston University

Excavations & Field Work: Holmul and its minor centers (Cival, La Sufricaya, K'o, T'ot, Hamontun, Hahakab etc.) This project investigates the rise and fall of political institutions in the Maya Lowlands. At Cival and Holmul we are focusing on the earliest ritual practices and iconography that mark the beginning of the political institution of the ajaw in the Preclassic and how it transitioned into the Classic period.



Another subject of investigation is what political changes occurred at the end of the Preclassic period and what role Teotihuacan played in the Maya Lowlands in the Early Classic period. In this respect, the evidence from La Sufricaya and Holmul is providing new clues.

Finally, we are investigating the relationship of the Late Classic Holmul elite with that of peripheral centers such as K'o and Hamontun and what was the political milieu in NE Petén as Holmul ended its path as a Classic Maya city.

Francisco Estrada-Belli, Ph.D. – Boston University, 1998

Areas of interest: early emergence of state society in the Maya Lowlands, settlement patterns studies, GIS & Remote Sensing, and (occasionally) underwater archaeology.

Learn about the Maya Archaeology Initiative at: <http://mayaarchaeology.org>. Explore the Holmul Archaeological Project website and find out more about Holmul and the sites around it, at: www.bu.edu/holmul

All meetings are 8 pm • Institute of Maya Studies • Miami Science Museum • Maya Hotline: 305-279-8110

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Coming up next month:

A Tribute to Archaeologist Robert J. Sharer

Robert J. Sharer, an internationally renowned archaeologist and Mesoamerican scholar entered the road to Xibalba on September 20, 2012. Sharer, was the Emeritus Curator, American Section, Penn Museum, and the Emeritus Sally and Alvin Shoemaker Professor in Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, having officially retired in 2009.

Sharer conducted research in Central America for nearly 50 years. His research career focused on two major Penn Museum excavation projects at two UNESCO World Heritage Maya sites – Quirigua in Guatemala (1974-79) and Copan in Honduras (1988-2003). Sharer was author, coauthor, editor or coeditor of more than twenty books and monographs including, in 2006, *The Ancient Maya* (Sixth Edition), co-written with his wife, Loa P. Traxler.

A fund has been set up for those who would like to honor his memory by supporting the publication of his research. A memorial service is being planned for



Robert J. Sharer seen here in his favorite hammock at the Copan camp house in 2009.
Photo by Loa P. Traxler.

mid-November at the Penn Museum (date to be announced). Our full tribute, with many intimate photos of Robert Sharer, is posted now on the IMS website at: www.instituteofmayastudies.org.

Book Report and IMS Explorer Session speaker: **The Lost Secrets of Maya Technology** with **James O'Kon**

James O'Kon shocked the archaeological world in 1995, with the discovery of a massive, lost landmark of Maya engineering – the long-span suspension bridge at the ancient city of Yaxchilan in Mexico. IMS Director of Research **Joaquin J. Rodriguez III** provides a timely report on O'Kon's book, plus you can meet James O'Kon in person when he speaks at the IMS Explorer Session on November 14. Don't miss it.



Maya Amphitheater Uncovered in Plan de Ayuta, Chiapas

INAH announced the discovery of what they believe was a "theater" at the ancient site of Plan de Ayuta, which is located 128 km from Palenque. Director of research at the site, Luis Alberto Martos López, believes the space around the forum could hold about 120 people and might have been in use for hundreds of years by the elite to legitimize their hold on power.

Upcoming Events at the IMS:

October 10, 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*
"The Maya Civilization: Art & Architecture" – This introduction to the Maya will cover their origins in the early Pre-Classic through their societal collapse in the Post Classic as reflected in their art and architecture, with IMS President **Rick Slazyk**.

October 17, 8 pm: *IMS Program*
"The Making of Maya Civilization: A Surprising New Perspective from Northeastern Petén" – An overview of excavations and field work going on at numerous sites, with **Francisco Estrada-Belli, Ph.D.**

November 14, 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*
"The Lost Secrets of Maya Technology" – Based on over forty years of research by author, award-winning structural engineer, and archaeo-engineer **James O'Kon**.

November 21, 8 pm: *IMS Program*
"New Discoveries in Pre-Columbian Archaeology in 2012" – **Marta Barber** provides a recap of important discoveries in 2012 made by archaeologists working at sites in Mesoamerica.

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

October 18: *AIA Symposium*
"Maya to Modern" – A panel of three presenters will examine three periods in the history of architecture to see how the culture of the time affected the architecture and how the architecture affected the culture. Speakers include IMS President **Rick Slazyk** with a program entitled "The Maya Civilization: Art, Architecture and Culture of Master Builders" 12:30–4:30 pm at the Art and Culture Center, Hollywood, FL. Registration at: www.meetup.com/AIA-FortLauderdale-Chapter or call 954-417-5150.

December 9–15: *Conference*
"How We Know What We Think We Know About the Maya" – Theme of the 17th European Maya Conference, Helsinki, Finland. Get more info at: www.wayeb.org/conference/sevents/emc_newsymposium.php
Through January 5, 2013: *Exhibition*
"For I am the Black Jaguar": Shamanic Visionary Experience in Ancient American Art" – At the Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University, Atlanta, GA. *More info at:* <http://carlos.emory.edu/black-jaguar>

Through Jan. 13: *Exhibition*
"Maya 2012: Lords of Time" – The exhibition features over 100 remarkable objects, including artifacts recently excavated from Copán. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, PA. Get additional info at: www.penn.museum/upcoming-exhibits/995-maya-2012-lords-of-time.html

Feb. 22-24, 2013: *Tulane Symposium*
"KAANAL: The Snake Kingdom of the Classic Maya" – The Tenth Annual Tulane Maya Symposium and Workshops will explore one of the largest ancient Maya political entities – the kingdom of Dzibanche and Calakmul. The Hieroglyph Forum and the Workshops will focus on newly discovered texts from La Corona and elsewhere. Keynote speaker will be Dr. Peter Mathews of La Trobe University. Also featured will be both M.A.R.I.'s new exhibit, "Faces of the Maya" as well as an on-going exhibit of Merle Greene Robertson's rubbings at the Latin American Library. See the speakers and program at: <http://mari.tulane.edu/TMS/program.html>

