

August 11, 2019 • Maya Ceremonial Era Long Count: 0.0.6.13.4 • 10 K'an 12 Yaxk'in • G3

The 2018 Field Season at Santa Rosa Xtampak

by Antonio Benavides C. and Sara Novelo O. INAH Campeche

Consolidation works at Santa Rosa Xtampak continued during 2018 and further helped with our understanding of the ancient Maya society who lived here. This city was founded over several centuries BCE, reached its apogee during the Late Classic (ca. 700–1000 CE) and was later abandoned around 1200 CE.

Santa Rosa Xtampak is located 130 km northeast from the modern city of Campeche traveling by road, but it is only 90 km away as the parrot flies. Monumental buildings at the site exhibit very good examples of the Chenes architecture style. A recent contribution by Hasso Hohmann (2017) carefully documented architectural features of the Palace, an emblematic three stories building with 44 vaulted rooms and two interior staircases.

A new detailed map of the ancient city is now being prepared by a German/Mexican team headed by Iken Paap and funded by the Berlin Ibero-Americanistic Institute. The program considers previous efforts by researchers of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (Pollock 1970), the Brigham Young University (Stamps 1970), the Oregon University (Andrews 1997), and the Autonomous Campeche University (Morales and Folan 2005).

Planning of this Maya city is clearly indicated by the distribution of the principal structures forming regular quadrangular plazas and patios (some having a 50-meter module) and due to the location of its principal buildings on top of a hill, water acquisition heavily relied on the construction of large subterranean reservoirs (*chultuns*) and their surrounding paved surfaces.

Evan DeBlois worked at the site during 1969 and 1970 documenting more than 60 *chultuns*.

His measurements helped to calculate



▲ Teobert Maler's 1891 photograph of the façade of Structure 66, that he called the "Heads of Serpents Building".



▲ Final result of the restoration of the "Serpents" motifs on the western side of the central room façade of Structure 66.

Technical illustration of the "Serpents" motifs by Hasso Hohmann.

the water volume once contained by each *chultun* and the results go from a minimum of 7,000 liters to a maximum capacity of 86,000 rain-water liters. In the past, the *chultuns* must have been the only means of obtaining water during the long dry spell from November to May (Cfr. DeBlois 1970).

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Jim Reed,
Editor

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Ancient Burial Site Off Manasota Key is 1,000 Years Older Than Estimated

New tests push back dates when underwater burials were practiced

Native Americans in the Archaic Period in Florida used the burial ground now known as the Manasota Key Offshore archeological site as far back as 8,000 years ago, noted Ryan Duggins, underwater archaeology supervisor, for the Bureau of Archaeological Research for the Florida Department of State. Prior to this, previous activity at the site was thought to date back roughly 7,000 years. Before the rising of the Gulf of Mexico, it was a shallow freshwater burial pond similar to Little Salt Springs in North Port, FL.

“We know that 8,000 years ago... there was a small freshwater pond,” said Duggins, “And we know Florida’s indigenous people used that pond as a mortuary pond.”

The prehistoric burial site, discovered in 21 feet of water off of Manasota Key in June 2016, is the first example in North or South America of human remains being identified offshore.

That in itself is a game-changer for the 50-year-old field of underwater archaeology, which Duggins said was primarily concentrated on finding shipwrecks as recently as 10 or 15 years ago.

“This demonstrates that we can have preservation of worked wood, of cordage of burials that have survived thousands of years of storms – It’s completely unprecedented.”

“We’ve displaced less than a cubic meter of the site, we’ve learned enough on how we can successfully manage the site,” Duggins said, then added that more than 40 visiting scientists from more than 20 organizations have pitched in to help document the site.

John McCarthy, executive director of Historic Spanish Point and a frequent lecturer on the Manasota Key Offshore site, noted that underwater burials dating back to 10,000 years before current human occupation have been documented in Warm Mineral Springs and back to 12,000 years in Little Salt Springs. At Historic Spanish Point, one of the oldest shell midden burial sites in the state, burials date back to 5,000 years before current human occupation.

“So now, this Manasota Key Offshore nestles in at 7 to 8,000 years, right between a shell midden site which is on the current coast and these ancient sites,” added McCarthy, who is also part of a team assembled by the state, to assist in both protecting and learning from the site. “Sarasota County has just an amazing constellation of sites but the continuum over time is tremendous.”

At the request of both the Seminole and Miccosukee tribes, no images or video of human remains are displayed publicly. Also, no DNA



Archaeologists work the Manasota Key Offshore archaeological site that includes a prehistoric burial site from the Florida Archaic period, a time when bodies of deceased individuals were interred within a pond.

testing has been performed to determine how the current Native Americans may be related to the prehistoric inhabitants Members of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, which is responsible for protecting and preserving Native American sites have indicated that at this point in time, they are not supportive of testing.

“They’ve made it clear they’re not interested in destructive analysis like that,” Duggins said. “What we can say, though, is that they were here 8,000 years ago.”

At the time the shallow peat-bottomed pond was used as a mortuary pond, the Gulf of Mexico was 30 feet lower, so the site was about nine feet above sea level.

After the burial site was found in 2016 by Joshua Frank, an amateur diver looking for shark teeth, archaeologists visited the site and confirmed the existence of an organic peat bed, which typically occurs in freshwater, as well as burial sites and worked wooden stakes. Further assessments in 2017 mapped the extent of the peat bed, which was about two meters deep, and found human remains.

The underwater burial ritual, Duggins said, involved wrapping the deceased in fabric, submerging them at the bottom of a small freshwater pond and placing a series of sharpened branches around them at an angle to hold those bundled in place.

Source: Condensed from an article by Earle Kimel, staff writer for the Herald Tribune Online, released 05/16/2019. Search the title at < www.heraldtribune.com > Posted to the editor’s email by Mark Brenner and posted to the IMS Facebook page by Janet Miess.



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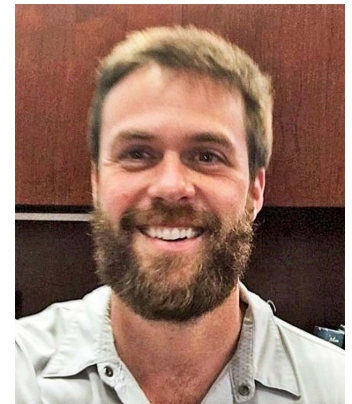
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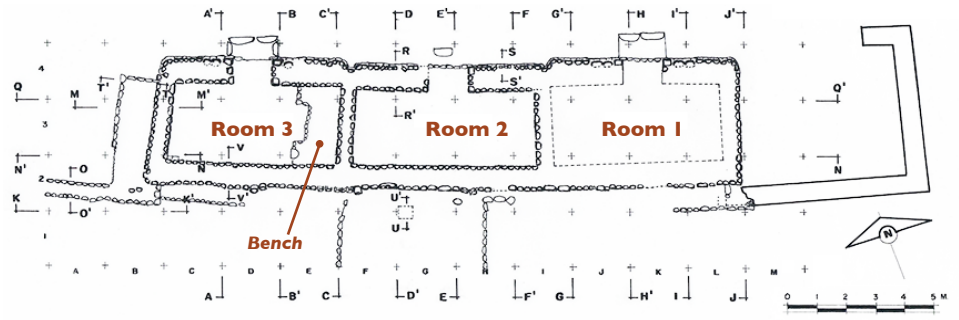
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Ryan Duggins, underwater archaeology supervisor, Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research.



L) Final cleanup after restoration of the bench found inside of Room 3 within Structure 66 (see location above). R) Plan layout of Structure 66.

The 2018 Field Season at Santa Rosa Xtampak by Antonio Benavides C. and Sara Novelo O. *continued from page 1*

The epigraphic information of Santa Rosa Xtampak has been studied by Daniel Graña, first analyzing the eight stelae of the site (Graña 2005) and now working with the 64-glyphs on Altar I (at right) that was reported several years ago by Karl Herbert Mayer (1989). The altar was found in 2018, its two sections were restored and can be seen today at the office at the entrance to the site.

The exploration and restoration of Santa Rosa Xtampak's structures began in the early 1990s (Benavides 1992, 2010). Hasso Hohmann and Erwin Heine prepared and published photogrammetric registers of the Palace also during the 1990s (Heine 1995). Several years later another consolidation program headed by Renée Zapata (2005, 2007) explored several buildings during 2001 through 2012, but works were not concluded.

An excavation program to restore abandoned structures began in 2018. The field season helped to solve conservation problems affecting Structure 66, located just south of Structure 8, the building that closes the Palace plaza on its southern side. Structure 66 is 20.50 m long by 4.60 m wide. It was first reported by Teobert Maler (1997: 210-217), who named it the "Temple of the Serpents Heads" alluding to the mosaic-stone elements preserved on the central part of the northern façade. Later, we found a very similar motif on the southern side of the northern building of the Cuartel compound.

Structure 66 began to be explored during October and November 2018 taking away all the vegetation covering it and liberating its walls which hadn't undergone any consolidation work. The building had remained in such condition for five years, so when it was explored again by our team, we found many conservation problems to be solved.

Altar I of Santa Rosa Xtampak has hieroglyphs on not only its four sides but also on its top surface. ▶

The 2 m by 2 m grid helped to systematically clean each sector. Some veneer stones had to be dismantled, each one marked with a key-number to be later reinstalled in their original place. Dirt, roots, and old mortar were removed to be replaced with new limestone mortar. Consolidation work in the western room included an interior bench located on the eastern side. Seen from above, the bench evokes a letter "C", measuring 2.75 m long by 1.44 m wide (maximum) and 95 cm (minimum). It is only 50 cm high.

The central room is a little longer than the others; around 6.50 m instead 5.80 m. It was also cleaned and consolidated with new limestone mortar. The entrance façade is flanked by three masks at each side. Left and right sides of the masks have diagonal blocks forming the mat motif, a well-known political authority symbol. The mat was also the sign for the first Maya month.

The 2.20 m high by 1 m wide representation is an ingenious mosaic of veneer stones of different dimensions originally covered by stucco applications in order to form details like eyes, earrings, brows, mouths, and antennae (?). Today, most of them are eroded or missing. The smaller blocks are square, some used to form the earrings and others to adjust the mosaic. Mouths and eyes were represented with square sunken sections. The biggest stones were used to form the curve noses of the masks. Some sections still preserved traces of red painting.

To restore this façade, we used the very useful photographs made by Teobert Maler in 1891 and by Harry Pollock in 1936. Analysis of their images



helped us to identify the still existing blocks and those that had collapsed. The nearest masks that can be compared to these are located about 150 meters away, at the southern side of the northern Cuartel range, where we find very similar elements.

The eastern room (1) was not explored. Research and interior exploration will be planned for another field season. But consolidation of central (2) and western (3) rooms is now complete, as well as the remaining exterior walls of the building.

During explorations around the structure we also found large stones, of what we term "gargoyles", (see page 6). Near the southwestern corner, for example, a 1.08 m long, 20 cm wide, and 14 cm high drainpipe was found; its stucco covering is still preserved.

Another relevant action taken during 2018 was the restoration of several painted capstones retrieved from a storage room at the site. The capstones were cleaned and consolidated by INAH Campeche restorers headed by Diana Arano Recio.

continued on page 6



A Settlement with a View: Fundamentals of Maya Archaeology: Settlement Patterns by Zach Lindsey

Maya archaeologist and surveyor extraordinaire Marc Wolf once said, “The ancient Maya were just like us. They wanted a place with a nice view and a good breeze near some water.”

But ancient Belize was much more populated than it is today, and not everyone got what they wanted.

Over the years, archaeologists such as Gordon Willey have studied settlement patterns to explain how and why some places in the Maya world got to be the size of Tikal or Palenque (or Xunantunich in Belize), other places only developed a small pyramid or two, and some remained small farms.

There are three basic types of Maya settlements: house mounds, minor centers, and major centers. You know major centers when you see them: Your mouth drops and your neck gets sore from trying to find the top of the pyramid. But the other two are harder to describe, and the difference between them is more a “continuum” than a strict hierarchy, according to Gyles Iannone.

In fact, a house mound can become a minor center. That’s what happened at Bedran near Baking Pot, according to James Conlon and Terry Powis.

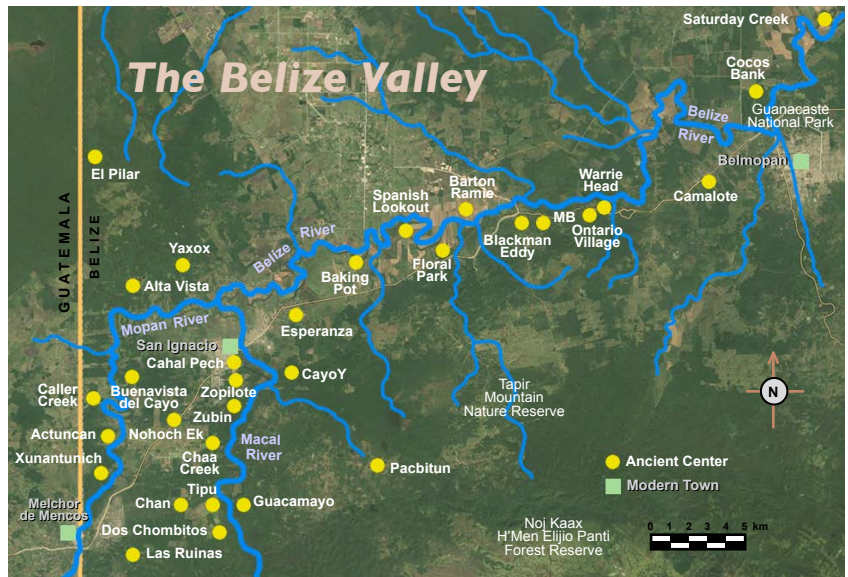
Bedran was a well-positioned house mound, and its residents took advantage of good soil to develop a large surplus. In time, Baking Pot took notice, boosting Bedran’s prestige. From a few small plaster floors, they built a pyramid and a *plazuela* group.

But increased prestige carried with it responsibilities, according to David Driver and James F. Garber. Minor centers served as places where community members could gather for holidays... and as tools so major centers could keep an eye on the populace.

They were also a sort of border guard, monitoring and maintaining areas between major centers. In some areas, like the Belize River Valley, major centers are a specific distance apart. (In the Belize River Valley, it’s 9.9 km; in Quintana Roo, a number are 26 km, and the minor centers are in the middle.)

Minor centers probably aren’t places you’ll go to on tours. Sometimes after a long day at a big site like Tikal, you might visit a smaller site for a few minutes, but mostly, they go overlooked today.

Still, for many ancient Maya people, they were the link between the elites with their great feathered headdresses and the regular daily grind of maize farming. 🌾



The Belize Valley. The upper Belize Valley, characterized by hilly terrain, extends from the modern town of Melchor de Mencos on the west to the conjunction of the Macal and Mopan Rivers into the Belize River on the east. The central Belize Valley, characterized by settlement on flatter alluvial terraces, starts at the conjunction of the Mopan and Macal River and extends to the marshy area just east of Cocos Bank. Note that El Pilar and Pacbitun are technically not in the Belize Valley.

Based on Map 1 drafted by James F. Garber in the book *The Ancient Maya of Belize Valley*, and recreated in color utilizing Google Maps satellite imagery by editor Jim Reed.

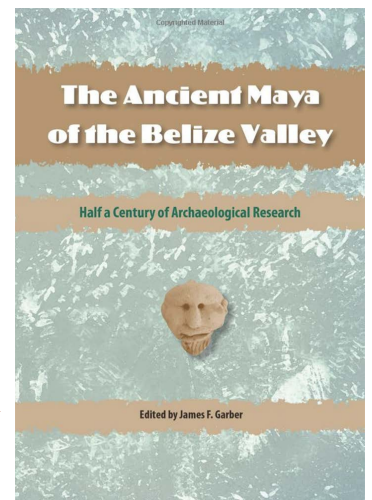


View from atop “Ancestor Mountain” (more commonly known as El Castillo) of the main plazas at Xunantunich. Photo by Zach Lindsey.



Dr. Jaime Awe answering questions at Cahal Pech.

Research from: *The Ancient Maya of Belize Valley: Half a Century of Archaeological Research*. Garber, James F. (ed.) 2003 University of Florida Press: Gainesville, FL. ISBN: 978-0-8130-2685-7 (cloth: alk, paper)





A) Jack, Linda Hausmann, Janet Miess, and Marta Barber at Lubaantun, 2014. B) Jorge Can, Jack, and Rick Slazyk at Caracol, 2014. C) Marta, Jack, and Joaquin Jr. smile on the way to Piedras Negras, 2008. D) Rick, Jack, and Ruben Maldonado at Dzibilchaltun, 2008. RS



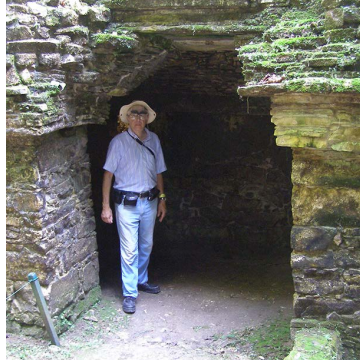
**Director of Research for the IMS:
Joaquin (Jack) Rodriguez (1944-2019)**
In Memoriam by Marta Barber

Joaquin Jose Rodriguez III, 75, of Fort Lauderdale, FL, entered the road to Xibalba on June 11th, 2019. He is survived by his three children: David Rodriguez, Joaquin J. Rodriguez Jr., and Elena Rodriguez. Joaquin was a structural engineer and a dedicated Army veteran. He will be laid to rest in South Florida.

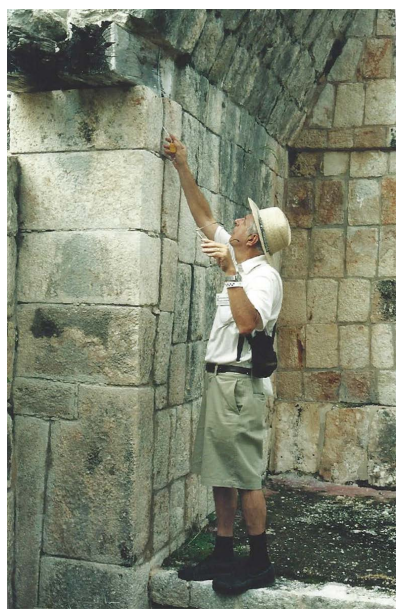
The first big argument I had with Joaquin (Jack) Rodriguez – past-president, Director, Scientist-at-Large of IMS – was about horses in America. The outcome: He was right. Horses had roamed the American Plains much before the Spaniards brought the modern version of equus to our shores.

Our years of sparring had just begun. Jack loved to debate. At his warm and personal Celebration of Life last month – beautifully organized by his three children: Joaquin, Elena and David – we all remembered the extremely bright man who loved a good debate. He never missed the opportunity.

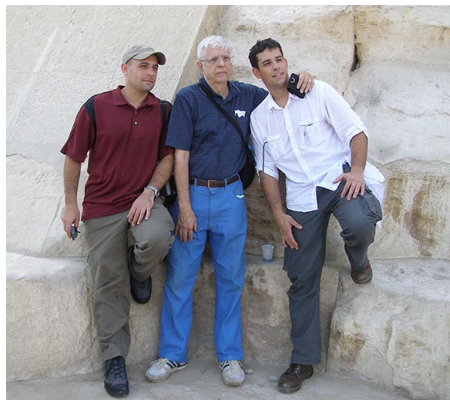
Jack didn't do it to prove you wrong. He didn't do it to make you feel less knowledgeable. He didn't do it to feel superior. He just had an encyclopedic knowledge of cultures of the past and would love to bring into the conversation an angle that you had not considered.



Jack emerges from within the depths of the Murceilagos Group at Palenque, 2005. RS



Jack measuring widths, heights, and dimensions at Chichen Itza, 2004. DDM



Jack and sons Joaquin Jr. and David, at base of the Pyramid of Cheops, Egypt, 2010. RS

The Jack we knew traveled with a kit to test the limestone in ancient Maya buildings. He carried tapes to measure lintels and door openings. He corrected anyone in the Maya field who used the word "stucco" to describe



Jack pointing out structural features to a group member at Uxmal, 2005. DDM



Jack showing of his Stella Lager Beer during a group trip to Egypt, 2010. RS



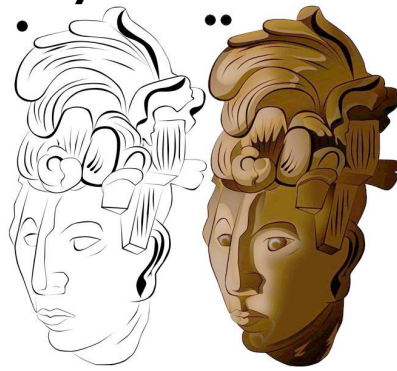
Marta, Jack, George Fery, and Anthony Ariza share some well-deserved refreshments during a trip to Punta Gorda, 2014. RS

the material covering the buildings. He would explain to anyone who listened what caused the collapse of so many corbeled rooms, including Palenque's famed Temple of the Foliated Cross (an earthquake).

continued on page 7

Unbundling the Past: Events in Ancient and Contemporary Maya History for August by Zach Lindsey

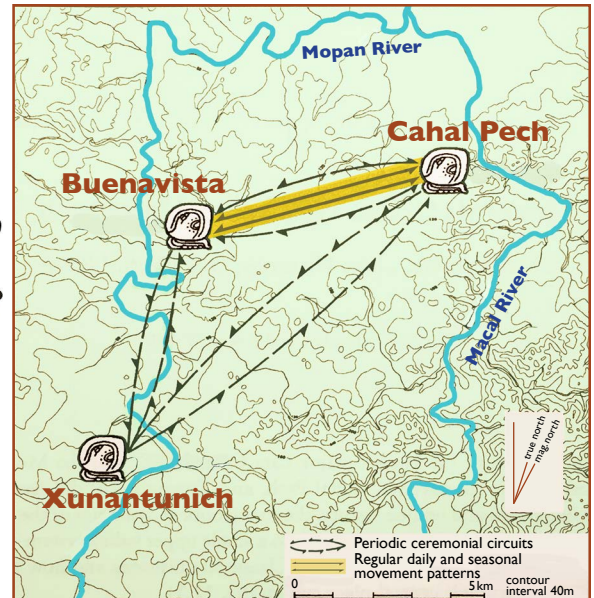
To the Classic Maya, the events of **13.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 8 Kum'ku G9** (August 11, 3114 BCE) were well-known. It was the day of the creation of this world. Now, many of those details are lost to erosion, the Spanish invasion, and looting. But we know the most important part – the gods got together to build the cosmic hearth, a three-stone hearth like the one at the center of old-style Maya houses, even today. The gods weren't just creating a world, they were creating a home.



Pakal, by Walter Paz Joj. Walter starts with a line drawing (•), then fills it all in with color (••); always most excellently!

Along with the beginning of this world, an important ending happened in August: Palenque ruler K'inich Janaab' Pakal died on **9.12.11.5.18 6 Etz'nab II Yax GI** (29 August 683 CE), 1,286,478 days after the creation of the earth. Don't be too sad, though: He had one of the longest reigns of any sovereign in

world history. Famed for rebuilding Palenque after its military defeat, his legacy must have loomed large for generations over the city before its fall. The artwork of his era and of two of his sons is some of the most beautiful in the world, and the temple containing his



“Three Hearthstones” in the Upper Belize Valley. Some scholars suggest that the ancient Maya sites of Cahal Pech, Xunantunich, and Buenavista, may have been located where they are to mirror the three hearthstones of creation above.

Submitted by Joseph W. Ball, who has promised to explain this image in a future *IMS Explorer*. (enhanced by the editor)

body is a fixture of the plaza. Even the last king of Palenque called himself Janaab' Pakal – an echo of former glory. 🏛️

The 2018 Field Season at Santa Rosa Xtampak by Antonio Benavides C. and Sara Novelo O. *continued from page 3*

Field laborers at Santa Rosa Xtampak benefited from the participation of archaeologist Juan Méndez Itzin and the dynamic team of masons and helpers from Cumpich and Bolonchén. Our special thanks also go to Fidel Kantún, INAH guardian of the site.

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One of the stone “gargoyles” we located around Structure 66.



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Director of Research for the IMS: Joaquin (Jack) Rodriguez (1944–2019)

In Memoriam by **Marta Barber** continued from page 5

He would call everyone to gather around him to show the uniqueness – sorry, Jack, should be “rarity” – of the “groin” vault in a structure in Old Chichen. (Two interior rooms coming together with vaults in different directions.) Together with Ed Kurjack, he had come up with the idea of trying to prove that the deforestation caused by the preparation of lime mortar – yes, the dreaded stucco – was not the main cause of the Maya Classic collapse. His final paper for the IMS, to prove this point, was findings from samples taken from a couple of buildings in Belize, the last trip he took with the IMS.

The IMS will miss Jack, and so will the group of friends at this organization who came to recognize his “uniqueness”. Bye, querido amigo.

– Marta Barber



Jack takes a break with IMS friends Ory Cuellar, Suzette Pope, Lynn Hausmann, Dave Quarterson, and Beverley West, in Calakmul, 2008. GF



Looks like Jack may be in another debate, this time with archaeologist Antonio Benavides and Marta Barber at Structure 512 at Edzna in 2012! GF

“Jack was a dear friend and will be missed. As a work colleague, we had near daily conversations over a 30-year period. Jack introduced me to the IMS and involved me in his research projects. We roomed together when we traveled. We laughed and we argued. I am a better person and professional for knowing Jack. Although he has left our world, Jack is still with me everyday.”

– Rick Slazyk

“Joaquin was truly a wonderful man! Always engaged in conversation, and sharing his passions. Everyone says that he always asked the best questions of our speakers at our IMS presentations. He was very knowledgeable when it came to Maya architecture and construction techniques. I will truly miss him.”

– Jim Reed



Joaquin (center) outside the 2013 Maya at the Playa symposium, with Ed Kurjack (left) and George Stuart (right). Photo by Jim Reed.

“Sorry to hear this news. IMS and all of us will miss him. A good man. Condolences to friends and family. R.I.P.”

– Steve Radzi

“I’m heartbroken to hear this. He was and remains one of my favorite people.”

– Antonio Ricardo Ariza

“Jack was a good friend, smart and knowledgeable in the history of cultures of the Americas and beyond. Above all, he will be missed on the road with his ‘Jack’ sense of humor, and will always be remembered by all who shared life with him, even so briefly.”

– George Fery

Note: Except where noted, the images in this homage were submitted by Rick Slazyk (RS), George Fery (GF), and Debb DuMond (DDM).

Thank you, all!

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I would like to invite you all to join the listserv “Aztlan”

by **Mike Ruggeri**

Aztlan has been around for well over two decades, and has recently been moved to a new server at aztlan@simplelists.com. Aztlan is one of the oldest and most respected listservs for the world of the Ancient Americas.

Recent conversations on Aztlan cover such topics as:

- The Maya Collapse, breaking news reports on Ancient Americas Archaeology
- The origins of Maya writing (discussing the new discovery of murals at the site of San Bartolo)
- The uses of yokes and other ballcourt artifacts in the Gulf Coast ball games
- Wheels in Mesoamerica
- Pre-Clovis Sites
- Caral, Peru
- Announcements of Ancient America lectures, conferences

and exhibits and discussions on all topics of the Ancient Americas from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego.

The moderators filter out ad hominems and science fiction archaeology.

The listserv has members from the professional archaeological community, enthusiasts, students, and folks who have an interest in the Ancient Americas. All can participate in posting, and the listserv is free to all.

If you go to any of my Tumblr pages, you will see a link to Aztlan at the top. Click on it, and there is the invite from Aztlan and easy access for joining.

Go to:

The Aztlan Listserv

<https://aztlanlistserv.tumblr.com>

or go to:

Mike Ruggeri’s Ancient Americas Web Pages

<https://mikeruggerispages.tumblr.com>



Original artwork by artist Walter Paz Joj. Look for more of his designs in the September IMS Explorer!

Walter is amazing!

Also, I’d like to meet any members of the IMS who might be planning to attend the annual symposium of the Pre-Columbian Society of Washington, DC. I always attend, and I look forward to hearing the lectures, seeing old friends, and meeting new ones.

This year, the one-day symposium will take place on Saturday, September 21. The theme is: *Ancient Mesoamerica through 21st Century Science*. For full details, speakers, and program, go to: <http://www.pcswdc.org/symposium-2019-e>

Ancient Mesoamerica through 21st Century Science

a one-day symposium sponsored by

THE PRE-COLUMBIAN SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, DC

Saturday, September 21, 2019

This year, our annual day-long on breakthroughs in the frontiers practice. We will examine how including (but not limited to) laboratory analysis, and the latest art analysis – have demolished old Mesoamerican societies and prompted



PCSWDC symposium will focus of archaeological knowledge and exciting new technologies – LiDAR, 3-D imaging, forensic techniques for mapping and rock preconceptions about ancient archaeologists to ask new questions.

Six highly-regarded professionals will present outstanding examples of recent research findings made possible by the application of advanced technologies. Speakers include

Marcello Canuto (moderator); **Gerardo Gutiérrez**; **Heather Hurst**; **Mary E. Pye**; **Robert Rosenswig**, and **Alexandré Tokovinine**.

**9:00 am – 5:45 pm at the U.S. Navy Memorial & Naval Heritage Center
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC**

For more info and to register, see the PCS website, www.pcswdc.org

IMS EXPLORER

Join the **Explorer-ation!** Scholar or not, we welcome submissions from IMS members and other Maya enthusiasts. Share what interests you with others. All articles and news items for the **IMS Explorer** should be forwarded to the newsletter editor at: mayaman@bellsouth.net