

NEWSLETTER

The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



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INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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The Newsletter is published four times a year by the Institute of Archaeology, Andrews University. Annual subscription price is \$7.50. Museum membership, subscription, and editorial correspondence should be addressed to the Horn Archaeological Museum, Institute of Archaeology, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0990, Telephone 269-471-3273, Fax 269-471-3619, e-mail hornmusm@andrews.edu.

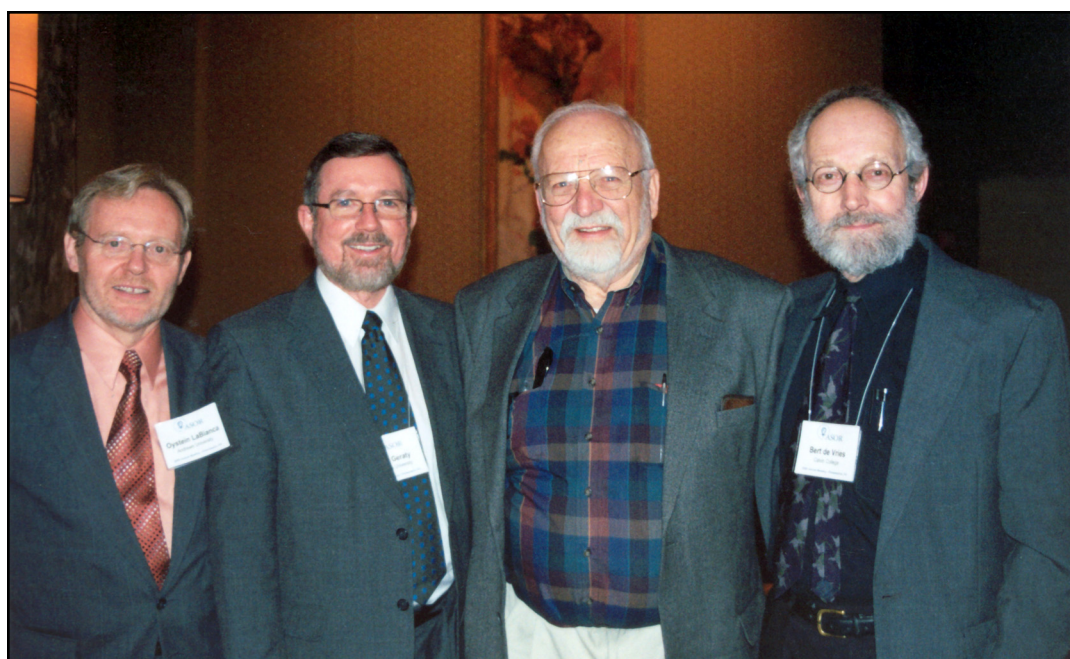
Volume 27.1
Winter 2006
ISSN 1095-2837

2005 ASOR Annual Meeting

The 2005 annual meeting of the *American Schools of Oriental Research* was held in Philadelphia from November 16-19, along with the *Near East Archaeological Society* annual meeting from November 15-18 and the *Society of Biblical Literature* from November 19-22. This year's *ASOR* meetings drew a crowd of 668 people, who attended 53 different sessions, where 236 papers were read. The plenary session featured James Muhly, who focused on the topic of "The Mesopotamian Metals Project: Recent Discoveries." Highlights of the program included presentations on newly discovered inscriptions from Tel Zayit and Tell es-Safi. The awards recipient this year was Roger S. Borass, who was honored for his pioneering role in the development of scientific archaeology in Jordan, particularly as part of the Heshbon Expedition from 1968-1976.

A number of *Madaba Plains Project* staff presided over sessions including: Lawrence T. Geraty, the president of *ASOR*, who chaired sessions on "Excavations at Tell Gezer in Retrospect and Prospect"; and "Fakes and Forgeries in the Ancient World"; as well as a number of business sessions (Presidents, Chairs and Directors; Institutional Representatives; Executive Committees; and the *ASOR* Membership Meeting) and receptions (Madaba Plains Project Staff Consultation); and Douglas Clark, former *ASOR* Director, on the Etana Workshops I and II (with James Flanagan) and the Academic Masterminding Committee Business meeting. Others included: Constance Gane (Archaeology of Mesopotamia); Gary Christopherson (Geographic Information Systems, Remote Sensing and Archaeology); Bethany Walker (Archaeology of Jordan); Gloria London (Outreach Education, and its Business session); David Graf (Arabia I, and its Business session); Larry Herr

(cont'd on p. 2)



Øystein S. LaBianca, Lawrence T. Geraty, Roger S. Boraas and Bert de Vries at honors celebration.



Keith Mattingly presents paper at *ASOR*.

(Committee on Publications); and Øystein LaBianca (Material Culture in the Ottoman Period), with Bert de Vries; (Madaba Plains Project Reception, and ASOR Honors and Awards).

Papers read by *Madaba Plains Project* members included: David Graf (In Search of Hellenistic Petra: Excavations in the Civic Center); Bethany Walker (Identifying the Late Islamic period Ceramics: Preliminary Observations on the Ottoman Wares of Central and Northern Jordan) and (The Visual World of Women in Medieval Islam); Robert Bates (The Graves of Alalakh: Re-examining Woolley's Excavations at Tell Atchana); Timothy Harrison, with Stephen Batiuk (Towards Understanding the Iron Age Lower Mound at Tell Tayinat); Øystein LaBianca, with Leif Manger (Global Moments and Inter-Civilizational Encounters in the Levant); Randall Younker and David Merling (The 2005 Season at Tall Jalul); Keith Mattingly, with Øystein LaBianca (Parochialization of the Byzantine Great Tradition in Transjordan: The View From Tall Hisban); and Larry Herr (Layer Cakes of Civilization: Ancient Tells and How People Lived in Them). (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



Larsa Archive

Paul-Alain Beaulieu of Harvard University was at the Horn Museum in April of 2005 studying some of the Neo-Babylonian tablets in our collection. When asked to give us some background to his visit, he had this to say:

The collection of cuneiform tablets housed in the Horn Museum includes more than two hundred tablets from the Neo-Babylonian period. Of these, roughly a hundred come from Larsa, a city of great importance during the Old Babylonian period (2000-1600 BC), whose rulers competed with Babylon for hegemony. During the first millennium BC the site was largely deserted until the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 BC) revived its institutions, including Ebabbar, the temple of the sun god Šamaš, the patron deity of Larsa. The reappearance of cuneiform texts at Larsa around this time testifies to the city's relative prosperity in the 6th century BC.

Eighty of the Larsa texts in the Horn Museum belong to the archive of a family of entrepreneurs headed by a man named Itti-Šamaš-balātu and his son Arad-Šamaš. Additional texts from that archive are preserved in the British Museum (80 texts) and Yale University (35 texts). The time span of the archive is from the 4th year of Nebuchadnezzar II (601 BC) until the 2nd year of Cambyses (528 BC). These ca. 200 texts make up only a small portion of the original archive of the family. According to the currently accepted terminology they form a *dead archive*, or a collection of outdated transactions and memos which were discarded in one batch after a clean-up of the main archive. In spite of this they are representative of the type of business run by the family, which primarily involved the trading of commodities in short-term commercial joint-ventures, as well as tax farming for the three most important landowners in that region, the Ebabbar temple of Larsa, the Eanna temple of Uruk, and the royal estates. The members



Paul-Alain Beaulieu.

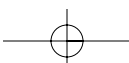
of the family bear no patronymic (or ancestor's name), which indicates that they did not stem from the urban elite which controlled the temples and civic institutions. However, the texts show that Arad-Šamaš married a daughter of the influential Šamaš-bāri family, thus gaining a foothold in the local aristocracy.

I am at the Horn Museum working on these tablets because I am preparing a monograph that will include an edition of the texts (cuneiform hand copies, transliterations, translations, commentaries) and a detailed historical analysis of the type of business conducted by this family as well as its significance for our understanding of the economy and institutions of Babylonia during the time of the Babylonian and Persian empires. (Paul-Alain Beaulieu)



Rainey Lecture

On Nov. 14, 2005, Anson F. Rainey, Professor Emeritus of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures and Semitic Linguistics at Tel Aviv University in Israel, presented a lecture entitled "From Where Did the Israelites Come?" as part of the Horn Museum lecture series.



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A critical response to William Dever's analysis in *Who were the Early Israelites and Where did They come From?* this lecture presented evidence suggesting that the Israelites were not, as Dever contends, indigenous Canaanites, but a separate group of pastoralists who migrated from Transjordan. The primary lines of evidence to support this view are ceramic remains and linguistic analysis. While Dever claims that the new pottery styles of Iron Age I "Israelites" are continuous derivations of the Late Bronze Canaanite ware, Rainey attempts to show that these forms are paralleled in the ceramics of Late Bronze Age Transjordan. With the assistance of Christie Goulart-Ribiero, an archaeology student at AU, Rainey has developed a pottery typology

chart which evidences the movement of these forms from Late Bronze Age Transjordan to Iron Age I Israel.

In terms of linguistics, Rainey challenges the view that the Hebrew language was a dialect derived from the Coastal Canaanite language. Key to his argument is the syntax of narrative preterits, common in Hebrew. This sequence has been identified in Moabite (in the Mesha inscription), and in Old Aramaic, (in the Zakkur and Tel Dan inscriptions). It is, however, absent in Phoenician, the most clear example of Coastal Canaanite. This, according to Rainey, is support for placing the origins of Hebrew and Moabite in Transjordan.

In addition Dr. Rainey also gave another lecture on "The Relationship



Anson Rainey.

Between the Habiru and the Hebrews," to an archaeology class. (Darrell J. Rohl)



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RANDOM SURVEY

Tutankhamen Infection:

Recent CT scans of the mummy of Tutankhamen indicate that the young king died of an infection stemming from a wound to his knee. His left foot was also broken. Embalming fluid entered the space in the knee fracture, indicating that the wound had not healed by mummification. Traces of gold decorations found in the wound became lodged in the leg when it was struck by a sword or some other sharp object. This wound ultimately became infected, leading to Tutankhamen's premature death around age 19.

Tomb Unearthed in Greece:

An eight-chambered tomb, the largest of its kind ever found in Greece, has been found near Pella, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Macedonia. It was filled with pots, figurines, copper jewelry, and coins, and was in use by a wealthy family from the 4th-2nd centuries BC.

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Jiroft Inscription:

A fragmentary inscription on a brick from an Elamite palace in Jiroft, Iran, may be the earliest example of a written script found in Iran. The inscription is not yet firmly dated, but linguists believe it to be 300 years older than the earliest inscriptions found in Susa. The area where the inscription was found also contained many objects dating to the third millennium BC. The Elamite language has no modern descendants, nor does it belong to any known language family, and is poorly understood by scholars.

Ancient Seed Sprouts:

A 2,000-year-old Judean date seed has been successfully sprouted in Israel, producing a seedling nearly 1 foot tall. The seed was found during excavations at Masada. Judean date palms once grew throughout the Jordan valley, but most of the trees now growing in the region are imported from California. Scientists hope that this seedling will bear seeds of its own by 2010, allowing the Judean date palm to be reintroduced in the region.

Tomb Discovered on Crete:

A large, underground tomb has been found outside one of the main gates of Aptera on the island of Crete. The tomb, belonging to an important Roman period family, was looted in antiquity, but still yielded a wealth of artifacts, including statues of the god Eros.

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