Gitin Donates Sherd Collection

Sy Gitin, director of the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (AIAR) in Jerusalem, recently placed his personal collection of pottery sherds on permanent loan with the Horn Archaeological Museum. The collection consists of thousands of sherds from numerous sites throughout the Levant.

Some might wonder about the value of broken sherds: the monetary value is negligible, but for study purposes, Gitin’s collection is invaluable. Such a collection allows students the opportunity to learn basic pottery forms before participating in field work, and also provides examples of those unique pottery types not commonly found at all sites.

To prepare the sherds for study, each sherd is being “accessioned” into a computerized database. The student will be able to input a sherd number and gain access to information about the sherd: provenance, whole-form type, and location of bibliographical examples.

Gitin began collecting these sherds in the early 1970s with the intent of using them in his own classroom instruction. Since that time, his need for the collection has not continued. When he discovered that the Horn Museum was in the process of expanding its own study corpus, he generously volunteered his collection.

Gitin’s collection is especially valuable because it has many forms previously uncommon in the museum sherd collection. For example, it contains both Philistine and Mycenaean sherds. These pieces of painted pottery are extremely important to ceramic studies.

On behalf of Andrews University students present and future, Dr. Gitin, we thank you. (David Merling)
Archaeology and the New Testament by John McRay (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991) is divided into four parts. These parts follow an introduction which outlines the role, limits, and methods of archaeology.

Part 1 exposes the reader to the cultural background of New Testament times—Hellenistic and Roman architecture. Plans and structures of civic, domestic, and religious life are described. The two chapters of Part 2 examine the building activities of Herod the Great. Half of the discussion concerns Herodian Jerusalem and the other half, Herod's accomplishments outside of Jerusalem. Part 3 focuses on the archaeological discoveries that intersect the life of Jesus Christ. This discussion is geographically subdivided following the events of Jesus' life in Galilee and Judea. Part 4, the final section, returns to the broader scope of the ancient world by surveying the remains of the first centuries of Christianity. This involves a virtual tour of New Testament sites, and a summary of manuscripts discovered in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Archaeology and the New Testament appeals to a broad audience including non-specialists, students, and scholars. Readers will appreciate the 157 photos, 8 maps, and 32 drawings that complement the text which is presented in the clear, pleasant writing style of the author. McRay provides a balanced appraisal of the evidence as he treats each issue in turn.

Helpful for those who are rusty on their Roman building terms, is the "Glossary of Technical Terms." Those who want more information on topics not fully discussed due to the survey nature of the book, will appreciate the book's copious notes (1,525). The index is also helpful.

One hesitates to criticize a book of such substance and value, but two suggestions would increase its effectiveness. Of minor concern are two printer errors: the photograph of Beth Shean (an easily visited and photographed site), page 25, is notably out of focus; and the lamps displayed on page 31 are reversed compared to the text). But a more important improvement would be better coordination between the text and some of the "schematic" drawings. Figure 18, for example, the "Schematic of Caesarea Maritima" (page 141) does not clearly illustrate the text. McRay discusses features not included in the schematic while the schematic includes elements not mentioned in the text. This lack of coordination does not benefit the reader.

McRay's work on the archaeology of the New Testament period will not only attract attention, it may well become a classic reference. He has accomplished his task with thorough research, excellent scholarship, and obvious enthusiasm. That this project has been his life-long interest is revealed in the completeness of the book. McRay's involvement in the project is also demonstrated by the fact that virtually every photograph was taken on-site by the author.

Archaeology and the New Testament is highly recommended and much needed in the field of New Testament studies. No doubt it will serve as a standard text for many years to come. (David Merling)

Younker Elected Albright Trustee

Randall W. Younker was elected as a trustee of the Jerusalem-based W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (AIAR) in November 1990. The AIAR is the headquarters facility for the American Schools of Oriental Research providing offices, library, and limited housing for research scholars.

"This election provides Andrews University with a unique opportunity to participate more directly in archaeological research in Israel. We hope to establish a fellowship between Andrews and The Albright to provide students with the opportunity to spend six-to-nine months studying overseas," says Younker.

The AIAR, founded in 1900 and later named for the "dean" of biblical archaeology, is the oldest American institution of archaeological research in the Middle East. It has had a profound impact on ancient Near Eastern, biblical, and Judaic studies through its involvement with excavations at major sites in Israel. Today, it continues to provide a variety of research fellowships for undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students.

The Albright Institute Board of Trustees is made up of an international group of academics and distinguished individuals, governing the AIAR with an annual budget of about $300,000.

Although Andrews University has been a corporate member of the American Schools of Oriental Research for nearly thirty years, this is the first time one of its faculty members has been asked to serve as a trustee at the AIAR. Younker began his three-year term on July 1, 1991. (Michael G. Hasel)
Lectures Continue

Keith N. Schoville, professor of Hebrew and Semitic Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and author of *Biblical Archaeology in Focus*, gave background to the discovery, nature and current state of analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls. His January 27th lecture was very well attended by students, faculty and members of the local community.

*A Morning in Abraham’s Town* was offered on March 5th by Elizabeth E. Platt. The presentation was a particular treat as Dr. Platt illustrated her lecture with many artifacts from the museum collection. Platt, associate professor of Biblical Studies at the Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque, is also object specialist for the Madaba Plains Project excavations. (Ralph E. Hendrix)

Calendar

Apr 6  James Hoffmeier. *The Route of the Exodus*, 8pm evening lecture.

Apr 15  Deadline to return dig application and deposit.

May 4  Bert DeVries. *Archaeology in Jordan after the Gulf War*, 8pm evening lecture.

May 15  Deadline to apply for Middle East Tour. End of Discount on MPP 2.

Jun 16  Dig Season Begins (for both full season and first half participants).

Jul 1   Second Half of Dig Season Begins.

Jul 5   First Half of Dig Season Ends.

Jul 28  Dig Season Ends.

Jul 29 - Aug 9  Middle East Tour Begins (Jordan, West Bank, Egypt).

Aug 9-16  Middle East Tour Extension (Turkey and Greece).

Chang-Ho Ji Assists Curator

Graduate student Chang-Ho Ji has taken up the role of assistant to the curator during the current fiscal year. The establishment of the Horn Library in April 1991 required a general shift in the work areas of the institute building. This gave Chang a unique opportunity for "hands-on" experience. He has been consumed in reorganizing and reassigning storage for pottery and objects. This has also involved updating the computerized database which contains information on each of the museum’s thousands of artifacts, including the new storage location. The job included inventorying the collection, correcting the existing database, troubleshooting problems, and accessioning new objects recently received. The enormously detailed task is now complete.

Now Chang is engaged in a second major project: establishing a database for the recently-acquired Gitin Sherd Collection. This group, combined with smaller collections and the museum’s existing corpus, will require hundreds of hours to prepare for use by students. Each of the thousands of sherds must first be washed and individually numbered, then, a computerized record will be initiated. It is this record that students can access as part of the learning process. (Special mention should be made of the support given by the Andrews University Office of Scholarly Research which continues to facilitate this project.)

Chang and his wife Shirley arrived on campus in June 1991 from the Chicago area. He is enrolled in a program in education preparatory to his eventual return to Korea. (Ralph E. Hendrix)
The Organization of the Institute

Over the years, the organization of the "Andrews University Archaeological Institute" has continued to evolve. What began as a handful of artifacts in Professor Wood's desk drawer, became a full-fledged excavation and museum under Siegfried H. Horn, and then an actual "institution" under the management of Lawrence T. Geraty. Now, the institute has many types of artifact collections, a library, an exhibit floor, a publications office, and has participated in the excavation of six separate sites in three countries. Those of us who work within the institute every day may take its diversity for granted. Here, we'd like to describe a little more about the institute and how it operates.

The "institution" is an umbrella organization composed of the Institute of Archaeology itself, the Horn Museum, the current excavation, and publications department. It is networked with several leading archaeological associations and other organizations in order to facilitate the free exchange of information. As director of the overall institute, Randall W. Younker coordinates the archaeological interests of Andrews University, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the SDA Theological Seminary, and the consortium of dig sponsors. He serves on the Old Testament faculty within the SDA Theological Seminary.

The Horn Archaeological Museum is the oldest formal archaeological organization in the institute with a history dating back to 1938. Traditionally, it has been the primary department within the institute. Associate Director David Merling is curator of the museum, and supervises the collection and care of artifacts housed in the museum. These artifacts highlight the Bible Lands and are gathered through donations and purchases, but most numerous through excavation. After analysis and publication, excavated artifacts are accessioned into the museum collection. As curator, Merling administers the institute in the director's absence, is editor of this newsletter, and serves on the SDA Theological Seminary Old Testament faculty.

The second oldest section within the institute facilitates ongoing excavations and dates back to 1968. Associate Director Øystein S. LaBianca is responsible for the Madaba Plains Project budget and conducts research within the project. He represents the College of Arts and Sciences among the dig-sponsoring consortium schools. He co-edits the Hesban Final Publication series, is professor of Anthropology and is chairman of the Behavioral Science department.

Publications is the youngest institute segment and was formally organized just two years ago. Headed by managing editor Ralph E. Hendrix, the department is responsible for preparing "printer-ready" copy of all institute archaeological publications. These publications include the Hesban Final Publication series, the Madaba Plains Project series, the Horn Archaeological Museum Assyriological series (publishing the cuneiform tablet collection), this newsletter, and other ancillary projects. The volumes are then marketed by Andrews University Press.

Keeping everyone on track is administrative secretary, Trudy Stokes. Seven student workers assist department heads by completing scores of tasks. Clearly, the "institution" has become quite complex. Perhaps this short description makes it a little more understandable. (Ralph E. Hendrix)

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A Hesban 25th Anniversary is planned for spring 1993. Top scholars have agreed to participate in the weekend celebration. Their papers, anecdotes, photographs and memories will be gathered into a popular book commemorating Hesban after 25 years. Look for more information in upcoming newsletters!

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The Dig

by

Marian Love*

Rose-petalled dawn slowly sets blazing craggy heights, like the birthday candles of some venerable patriarch

while deep pools of night linger in silent valleys, warm, earth-scented in the milky mist.

Already sweat-wet faces frown, aching winter-weak muscles peeling away layers of time like ants at a peony.

Silvered casings, cast like discards of modern locust hordes, witness the bond of past and present in conflict and pain.

Sun-strained eyes tear as wind stirs ashes warm as still-smoldering fires in the noonday's heat.

Etched sherds breathe anew air still secretly vibrating with the crystal notes of David's harp, phantom in the dust.

In destructive discovery, creation in reverse, each age is in turn scattered to breathe anonymous souls to life.

---

*Marian Love is wife of 1990 Tel Gezer volunteer, Peter Love.
MADABA PLAINS PROJECT 2:  
The 1987 Season at Tell el-Ümeiri and Vicinity and Subsequent Studies

Editors:  
Larry G. Herr, Lawrence T. Geraty, Øystein S. LaBianca, Randall W. Younker
Including the research of 24 contributors representing 16 academic institutions

The Institute of Archaeology and Andrews University Press are pleased to announce the upcoming delivery of Madaba Plains Project 2: The 1987 Season at Tell el-Ümeiri and Vicinity and Subsequent Studies which represents publication of the second season of work in the Madaba Plains region. A natural development of Andrews University’s field expeditions to Tell Hesban (also located in the Madaba Plains region), on-going excavation at Tell el-Ümeiri has continued through three seasons.

The Madaba Plains Project emphasizes “regional” research involving excavation complimented by agricultural, cultural, geological, and industrial surveys. Already revealed is a cyclical pattern of occupational intensification and abatement during ancient times. This "regional" approach maintained by the Madaba Plains Project, combined with the excavation of Tell el-Ümeiri, Tell Jawa and two hinterland sites, has greatly illuminated the history of the southern portion of the Ammonite Kingdom during the Iron Age.

Special 20% Discount until May 15, 1992

Available for delivery May 15, AU Press offers a special discount of 20% off the regular price of $49.95. Order your copy before May 15 for just $39.95 (plus shipping/handling). Regular prices apply after the May 15 deadline.

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-- 633 pages; 23 chapters; 2 appendices
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-- 159 pages of detailed locus sheets
-- 17 pages of ceramic, geologic, floral, and faunal specialist reports

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Ancient Pets?
In 1930, a scholar in Palestine was studying ancient Aramaic texts that referred to a little mouse-like animal which was a popular children’s pet in antiquity. The texts mentioned that the pet was brought to Assyria from the land of the Hittites. So, travelling to the ruined Hittite city of Chaleb (now Aleppo), the scholar had the good fortune to find and collect the last thirteen surviving red-golden rodents. The scholar: Professor Aharoni! The rodent: The golden hamster which now numbers in the tens of millions and is again a common household pet!

The winter of 1991-92 has been extraordinarily wet in the Middle East. After several seasons of inadequate rainfall, the dry land has been battered with rain and blanketed with snow. Recently, the Jordan River flooded... an event which has not happened in 40 years!

The Horn Museum was likened to A House of Treasure, in an article appearing in the January 16, 1992 issue of Adventist Review. The color photo-filled article, authored by curator David Merling, highlighted the museum collection and recounted its early history.