



La Sierra Digs

Major Artifact Donations to the CNEA!

The beneficiary of several recent artifact donations from the ancient Near Eastern world, the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology continues to enjoy the generosity of friends and colleagues searching for a good home for their archaeological treasures. Over the past few months, three significant artifact collections, all of different sizes and consisting of varied kinds of objects, have found their way to CNEA for future study and display.

The first involves three pristine coins from the Bar Kochbah revolt in AD 132–135, during which the Jewish resistance attempted a last stand against the Romans, a stand that met a disastrous end. The coins come from Dr. Ronald Duerksen who has long been intrigued by ancient coins and who has long supported CNEA.

The second collection, parts having been contributed over a period of several years (and still coming), consists of more than 900 exquisite artifacts from around the ancient Mediterranean



Part of recent Larry Geraty artifact donation



Northern Mediterranean Exhibit at CNEA of Cohen Family Collection

world—the northern Aegean Sea, Mesopotamia, the southern Levant, and Egypt—all components of the Cohen family collection. These were celebrated over La Sierra University’s Alumni Homecoming Weekend on 15 April (watch the presentation here: www.lasierra.edu/cnea/homecoming).

The third collection, incorporating 170 artifacts from various types of living contexts in ancient Israel/Palestine for the most part, were largely acquired in the early 1970s and have now found their way to CNEA thanks to the generosity of Larry Geraty. Mostly ceramic in material, they represented vessels and other kinds of artifacts from daily use across long time periods in the region.



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Alumni Homecoming Weekend 2023

Alumni Homecoming Weekend at La Sierra took place 14–16 April and, among other campus events, featured CNEA’s normal Open House hospitality in our genuine goat-hair Bedouin tent, as well as a special onsite and online archaeological presentation (now an annual fixture of the weekend), updates on the work of CNEA, and our annual awards ceremony. The presentation, “A Thousand Windows into the Past: The Cohen Family Collection,” featured the collection of more than 900 exquisite ancient Near Eastern artifacts donated or being donated by Dr. Harvey Cohen of La Mesa, CA. Dr. Cohen was joined by Dr. Kent Bramlett and Mr. Shaun Eccles in a conversation about the significance of many of the artifacts, with a focus on those from ancient Egypt. Display cases housed other Cohen artifacts from the northern Mediterranean, Mesopotamia, and Israel/Palestine. An update of CNEA activities and research followed the presentation, and the program concluded with the granting of CNEA archaeology awards to Carolyn Waldron and Daniel Hantman and Marcia Gilman. To view CNEA’s 2023 Homecoming presentations, please visit www.lasierra.edu/cnea/homecoming. And watch for photos of awardees in the next issue of *La Sierra Digs*.



Dr. Harvey Cohen on screen during presentation

CNEA Students Update: Current MA Thesis Topics

by Kent Bramlett

Shaun Eccles: *Polity Formation in Iron Age Jordan: Was Moab a State?*

The origins and nature of the Moabite kingdom in the Iron Age has been a subject of scholarly debate and theorizing, or even whether an actual “state” can be discerned. Shaun is examining what might be identified as “Moabite,” and how this identity was constructed.

Joseph Rutkin: *Phoenician Colonization Patterns*

From their homeland in modern-day Lebanon, the Phoenician civilization expanded, establishing trading colonies throughout the Western Mediterranean and traversing as far as Britain and perhaps through the Cape of Good Hope around the horn of Africa. Following the collapse of the major political systems at the end of the Late Bronze Age, the Phoenicians were in a prime position to exert control over many of these Eastern Mediterranean regions. This was due to their overwhelming focus on naval maritime power, and the establishment of trading cities along their coastal territory as they had done in the West. Gen-

erally, however, they did not seem to, whether by lack of desire or ability. This is the conundrum addressed in this thesis. Examining the motivating factors behind what is seemingly a missed opportunity may shed light upon the values, both monetary and cultural, of the Phoenician people, and perhaps imply new possibilities about the state of the relevant regions in the period immediately following the Late Bronze Age.

Paul Richards: *Corvée in the Pharaonic Times*

Paul’s research examines the content and context of forced labor during the pharaonic times. The paper will analyze what he argues are false ideas of ancient “slavery.” First, the paper presents the origin of these ideas. Then the research examines how some of these ideas involved in the discussion of forced labor became convoluted in our present time about the ancient narrative. From the archaeological record he attempts to ascertain the mindset of those under *corvée*. The research follows various lines of inquiry through different authors and successive time periods, focusing on three questions: what did forced labor produce, who was forced, and how was this forced labor carried out. This thesis analyzes content from different authors through the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms of Egypt. Finally, there is an attempt to see biblical evidence in the study of forced labor.

Welcoming New CNEA Assistant

With the departure of CNEA Curatorial Assistant, Rory Slattery, at the end of February, who brought with her an MA degree in archaeology and cultural heritage with an emphasis on ancient Egypt, CNEA has tapped one of its own MA students to assist in the CNEA office: Kaitlyn Satelmayer.



Kaitlyn Satelmayer at Khirbat Safra, Jordan

Kaitlyn will complete her coursework in June and begin working on her thesis soon thereafter. She is already working more than half-time, and this will increase once the summer begins. A Canadian citizen, Kaitlyn has real-life work experience in the two businesses her parents operate; she has also spent one archaeological field season in Jordan at Khirbat Safra, southwest of Madaba. We welcome Kaitlyn to the CNEA office with her excellent academic record, strong work ethic, and gentle spirit.

CNEA Support

In addition to the largess of artifact donors (see cover story), CNEA has also been the happy recipient of other kinds of recent donations. The Center was just notified of a substantial award from Versacare Foundation in Riverside, CA of \$15,000 to support, as the primary sponsor, next fall’s Archaeology Discovery Weekend on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible. As

well, CNEA recently received another scholarly library donation, this one from Rosemarie MacDonald in honor of her late husband, Dr. Burton MacDonald of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada. Burton, a long-time friend and colleague of most archaeologists at CNEA, spent several decades undertaking major regional archaeological surveys in Jordan, helping us fill in the blanks from rural, hinterland areas not normally touched by archaeological research.

Post-doc in Transition

Following a few delays, the post-doctoral research fellowship for Dr. Ian Jones, formerly of UC San Diego, began the first day of spring quarter with the crucial work of organizing the massive donation of research material from southern Jordan, along with teaching a new class on the archaeology of the Islamic periods from the 7th century to modern times. However, whereas we had anticipated a two-year project, Dr. Jones just received the great news that he has been hired to a position at New York University and will work on our project through the end of August. He will train one of our MA students, Shaun Eccles, to continue and complete the project. We are indebted to the generosity of a long-time friend and colleague for supporting this research fellowship.

ADW 2023—The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible

Mark your calendars for the 15th annual Archaeology Discovery Weekend (ADW) on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible, 11–12 November 2023. Along with the usual ADW components consisting of exhibits, displays, activities for kids and families, receptions, etc., the lectures on Saturday and Sunday will be provided by some of the most respected Dead Sea Scrolls scholars in the world. Saturday will feature specialists Dr. Emanuel

Tov (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) and Dr. Jodi Magness (University of North Carolina) on the texts and archaeology of the scrolls, and Ms. Sabal Al-Zaben (Amman, Jordan) on her father's initial discovery of Cave 1 at Qumran. Sunday will

focus on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible with presenters Drs. Sidnie White Crawford (University of Nebraska), Alex Jassen (New York University), and John J. Collins (Yale University). You do not want to miss this event! Stay up-to-date by visiting the website: www.lasierra.edu/cnea/discovery-weekend.

Library Progress Report

by Kaitlyn Satelmayer

Over the past year, CNEA has received several extremely generous donations of academic books. With these books now seeming to outnumber our artifacts (maybe that was a little exaggerated!), we have been tasked with the new goal of cataloging them according to the Library of Congress numbering system and making them available to both students on and off campus. With help from the campus library, in methods of training of proper book registration, we hope to have our Geraty Library available for use sometime soon. Although this will not be a circulating library, it will be joined to the central campus system and searchable digitally through their records. We want to offer our most sincere thanks to the library for its ongoing help and support during this process!



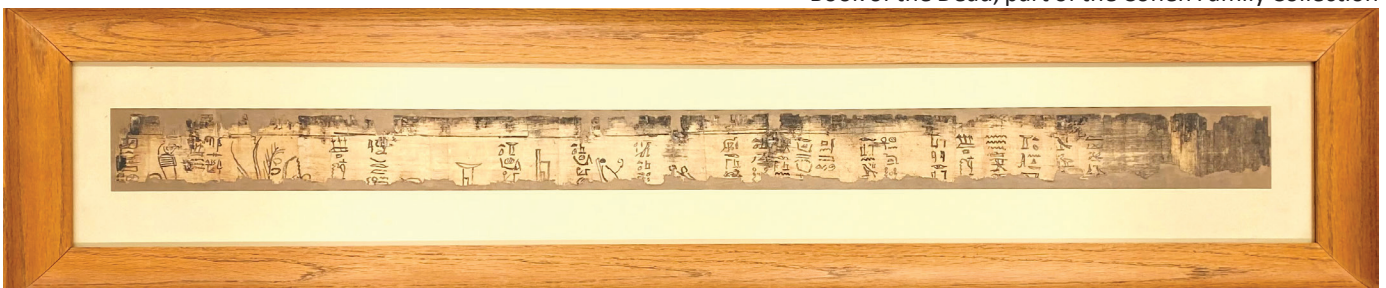
Display Case

Kaitlyn Satelmayer

The Book of the Dead! The unmistakable literature outlining Egypt's mortuary agenda. It is recognized by its interpretation of funerary belief and genuine understanding of a society not afraid of death but expressing knowledge of it. However, it is not really a book at all, but rather a brilliant compilation of synoptic death literature. Only in modern times have we come to describe it as a singular unit defined as a "book." The complex nature of Egyptian death culture reveals a philosophical depth that pioneered the foundation of Egyptian religious ideals. Magic was very real, and the profound way in which magic was used, through language and art, was central to the

continued balance of the two worlds, divine and mortal. However, within this world of morbid allusion, these funerary texts are still overflowing with beauty, and visual imagery captivates the imagination with metaphors for life equally rich in symbolic representation. Throughout the course of Egyptian history the focus of this literature has changed either to expand and incorporate, or restructure and remove varying aspects of the text. But this all depended on the ever-evolving mortuary beliefs of the time. The dead needed guidance and the living made sure to provide as much help as they could, and as such, written documents were commissioned and placed within these tombs, being what we recognize today as "The Book of the Dead."

Book of the Dead, part of the Cohen Family Collection



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2023 Calendar of Events

16–18 June

Graduation

20 June – 18 July

Ataruz Excavations

11–12 November

Archaeology Discovery Weekend on the
Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible

Think Ancient, Online!

CNEA is proud to be expanding its outreach globally by hosting hybrid events, posting newsletters online, and, coming soon, sharing our artifacts via a La Sierra University Museum database! Keep up-to-date, watch videos, access our socials, and much more at our website: www.lasierra.edu/cnea.

SUPPORT CNEA!

As this issue of *La Sierra Digs* makes clear, the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology at La Sierra University is on the move! And it needs your support for student travel scholarships, the new university museum, and ongoing operations. Please go online at <https://lasierra.edu/donate> and click on “Center for Near Eastern Archaeology” to make your contribution. Or contact the Office of University Advancement at (951) 785-2500. Thank you!

Recent Discoveries

Assembled by Dawn Acevedo

Beware the Ides of March

15 March... many know this day as the Ides of March and the anniversary of the assassination of Julius Caesar. In 2016, an exceedingly rare gold coin reading “Eid Mar,” minted by Brutus, “appeared on the international art market” and made its way to a buyer in the US. In 2020, the looted coin sold at auction for a record-breaking amount, but in March of this year, New York officials repatriated the artifact along with 28 others to Greece. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/rare-coin-marking-julius-caesars-death-repatriated-to-greece-180981917/>

King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba

In 2012, archaeologists excavated fragments of an Iron Age pithos (storage jar) inscribed with “Canaanite script” within “the Ophel area south of the Temple Mount.” According to a new study examining the artifact, the inscription “is actually ‘Ancient South Arabian’” from the region of the Kingdom of Sheba and refers “to one of the four ingredients ... required for the [holy] incense mixture.” <https://www.heritagedaily.com/2023/04/clay-jar-points-to-connection-between-israel-under-the-reign-of-king-solomon-and-the-kingdom-of-sheba/146751>

BRAP on the Cover of BAR

The Balu’a Regional Archaeological Project is honored to appear on the cover of the Spring 2023 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*. In fact, readers may recognize the friendly face operating the sift as La Sierra MA graduate and BRAP lab manager, Betty Adams! <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/magazine-issue/biblical-archaeology-review-spring-2023/>