



CENTER FOR
NEAR EASTERN
ARCHAEOLOGY
LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY

La Sierra Digs

Newsletter of the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology | HMS Richards Divinity School | La Sierra University | Vol. 10:2 Spring 2022

14th Annual Archaeology Discovery Weekend

November 12-13, 2022

The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt:

Glory, Grit, and Grandeur

Held In Person
and Online:
Find out more at
lasierra.edu/archaeology



Archaeology Discovery Weekend 2022

In order to tap into global Egyptomania (on the rise again due to increased travel possibilities), to contribute to the centennial celebrations at La Sierra University, and to showcase CNEA during the year of its 10th anniversary, Archaeology Discovery Weekend will focus on Egyptian Pharaohs — “The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt: Glory, Grit, and Grandeur.” Keep updated by visiting <https://lasierra.edu/cnea/discovery-weekend/> and join us in person or online on 12–13 November 2022.



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A Tassel Worth the Hassle: Dawn Acevedo’s MA Degree

Douglas Clark

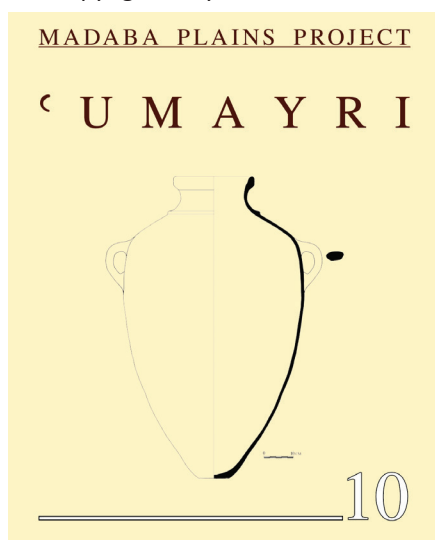
On 10 March 2022, Dawn Acevedo, Curatorial Assistant at CNEA, received her MA degree in Near Eastern Archaeology from La Sierra University. While working in several capacities at CNEA, sharing home responsibilities with her husband Gabe, and welcoming their daughter Anna into their world last summer, Dawn found the time to complete her thesis on “Tholos Architecture of the Bronze and Iron Age Aegean.” A complicated history surrounds the development of tholoi (tholos, singular), which typically feature a circular structure at times surrounded by a colonnade or buried below ground and which can serve as temples or burials.



Release of MPP-U 10 in March 2022

The Center is pleased to announce the release of the tenth seasonal volume of La Sierra-sponsored archaeological research at Tall al-'Umayri, part of the Madaba Plains Project. Published and copyrighted by CNEA, the volume was produced by Penn-

sylvania State University Press, using the imprint of Eisenbrauns publications. La Sierra contributors include Douglas Clark, Larry Geraty, Kent Bramlett, Monique (Vincent) Roddy (CNEA Publications Manager), and former La Sierra faculty member, Bob Bates, presenting results from the 2006 season of excavation.

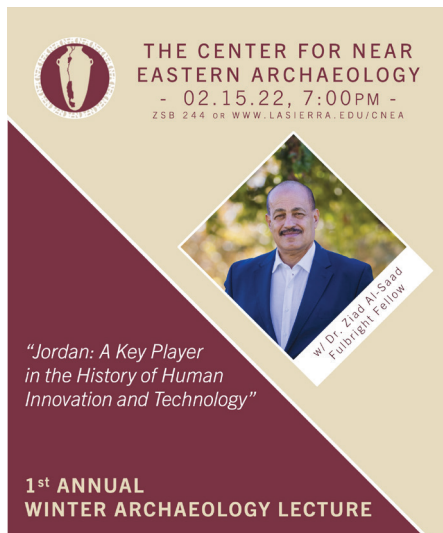


15th Annual International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ 15)

Several CNEA archaeologists will participate in the 15th ICHAJ, to be held at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan 2–5 August. Initiated in 1980 by HRH Prince Hassan of Jordan’s royal family, under whose patronage they continue, these triennial conferences allow for a unique gathering of international and Jordanian scholars to share their research, thus widening everyone’s perspectives. Participants from CNEA will include Douglas Clark, Chang Ho Ji, and Ziad Al-Saad, Fulbright Fellow at CNEA this year who is on the faculty of Yarmouk University.

Inaugural Winter Archaeology Lecture

The CNEA has for years sponsored two major events during the academic year: Archaeology Discovery Weekend in the fall and presentations for Alumni Homecoming Weekend in the spring. In order to provide an archaeological fix during the winter, CNEA inaugurated the annual Winter Archaeology Lecture Series in February 2022. The intriguing inaugural lecture, “Jordan: A Key Player in the History of Human Innovation and Technology,” was presented in person and online by visiting Fulbright Fellow, Dr. Ziad Al-Saad from Yarmouk University, Jordan.



Alumni Homecoming Weekend – A History of Archaeology at La Sierra

One major event in the year-long celebrations of La Sierra’s centennial year comes in the form of Homecoming Weekend. This year is special since it also represents CNEA’s 10th anniversary. Titled “Preserving the Biblical Past: A History of Archaeology at La Sierra University,” the main feature covered archaeology connected to La Sierra from the 1970s to the present day, including projects, programs, publications, and more. The multi-authored illustrated presentation preceded the annual CNEA Archaeology Awards, given this year to Mr. Norman Yergen, university Vice President for Advancement and Ms. Darla Martin Tucker, university Director of Public Relations. For more about this and other CNEA events and activities and to view a video of the complete presentation, visit: <https://lasierra.edu/cnea/>.

Getty Villa Connections

Dawn Acevedo

As COVID-19 restrictions lifted around the country, students in the UCLA/Getty Conservation Institute program were able to return to the labs at the Villa in Pacific Palisades, CA, where they are learning art and artifact conservation techniques from some of the country’s best conservators. For several years now CNEA has proudly partnered with GCI by loaning artifacts from our excavated and donated collections to be analyzed, stabilized, and conserved by these phenomenal students. Furthermore, Doug Clark and Ziad Al-Saad recently enjoyed the honor of presenting lectures to UCLA and GCI students on their conservation efforts in Jordan. We extend our gratitude to Glenn Wharton, William Shelley, the visiting scholars, and the students at GCI for joining us in the care and conservation of our ancient artifacts.

A Museum Database – ARGUS by Lucidea

Dawn Acevedo

Curators, assistants, and La Sierra's web team have made great strides over the past two years in procuring and designing a searchable database for the future University Museum. Lindi Montes of the World Museum of Natural History and Dawn Acevedo of the CNEA have been hard at work loading detailed records of the tens of thousands of various artifacts of the collections into the ARGUS database, while web editor Marcelo Vetter ensures an attractive and compliant website experience. Once the database goes live researchers, museum visitors, and the general public will have access to search and examine the university's collections, see what's on exhibit, and utilize La Sierra's academic collections in their professional research.

Update on the New Campus Museum

Larry Geraty

April 13 was a red letter day for the concept of a University Museum & Visitor Center to house La Sierra University's three spectacular collections in archaeology, natural history, and anthropology/ethnography, plus a visitor center. Several members of the DLR Group architectural firm paid a campus visit to these three collections. Then the group moved to the DLR Riverside Office for presentations and discussion of the campus representatives' views of the mission, size, location, and concepts of such a museum's unique design, including landscaping. Since its location would be the first campus building on the right upon driving through the main entrance gates (opposite the Zapara School of Business on the left), there was a distinct desire for something arresting as well as serviceable. By the end of the day, both the DLR architects and the campus and community representatives were energized. The next such meeting will take place in early May.

In the meantime, the university's Advancement Office is organizing to secure final financial commitments of at least \$20M by the end of June to allow DLR to finalize on the overall square footage of the desired University Museum & Visitor Center. A

"full court press" is expected within the next two and a half months. Should any reader have suggestions that would help achieve this outcome, s/he is invited to contact either Norman Yergen, VP for Strategic Initiatives, or Larry Geraty, Executive Director of the La Sierra University Foundation. Donations can be made online at lasierra.edu/donate.

Centennial Holy Lands Tour – March and April 2022

Kent Bramlett

The CNEA was involved in the recent spring Holy Lands Tour sponsored by the Loma Linda University (LLU) and La Sierra University churches. Organized by Shirley Gregg of La Sierra's School of Education, it was led by Randy Roberts, Lead Pastor of the LLU Church, with Kent Bramlett and Larry Geraty as resource guides for Bible, archaeology, and ancient history. The itinerary covered Israel and Palestine (80 participants), Jordan and Sinai (60 participants), and Egypt (30 participants).

A brief sweep through some of the locations we visited in Egypt will illustrate the range of history encountered on the tour. At Memphis, fragments of statuary mark the location of the once-important capital of the Old Kingdom. The step pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara illustrates the first stages of pyramid engineering. Giza afforded a chance to ride camels or clamber through the tunnels and burial chambers of the pyramids.

The temple at Karnak incorporates the reliefs of Sheshonq (biblical Shishak), listing cities conquered in the time of King Rehoboam. Great obelisks of Hatshepsut and 134 columns in the hypostyle hall still stand. Our group entered several New Kingdom tombs in The Valley of the Kings, among which were those of Ramesses III, Merneptah, and King Tut.

One memorable day in 107-degree weather, we visited the archaeological ruins of a Jewish temple on Elephantine Island. Later Ptolemaic temples at Philae, Kom Ombo, and Edfu illustrated the continuation of Egyptian religion under the Greeks.

The tour also included a nighttime climb up the traditionally-designated Mt. Sinai, which afforded a sunrise view of the rugged Sinai landscape above St. Catherine's monastery.

Display Case

Dawn Acevedo

Speaking of display cases... CNEA is honored to have three large displays and one small display in which to showcase some of our wonderful Ancient Near Eastern artifacts during events such as Alumni Weekend and Archaeology Discovery Weekend. The cases, donated by La Sierra's art department many moons ago, are constructed from wood with viewing windows made of glass and metal with plywood backings in the large cases. They also have storage beneath the display areas, which certainly comes in handy! But did you know that as wood ages it off-gasses? This means that over time, chemicals, including formaldehyde and acetic acid, are released from the wood which can damage artifacts and cause the buildup of crystals on and in artifacts. While we are incredibly grateful for these cases which currently house and display our pieces on special occasions, we will strive to provide safe, archival-grade environments for our objects when we are at home in La Sierra's

new museum! You can help us achieve this goal by financially supporting the construction of the University Museum – scheduled to break ground October 2022.



La Sierra Digs

Editors: Douglas Clark & Dawn Acevedo

Layout: Monique Roddy

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Dawn Acevedo

La Sierra University
4500 Riverwalk Parkway
(951) 785-2632 (CNEA)
archaeology@lasierra.edu
www.lasierra.edu/archaeology
www.facebook.com/lasierracnea

La Sierra University
Center for Near Eastern Archaeology
4500 Riverwalk Parkway
Riverside, CA 92505



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2022 Calendar of Events

Excavation dates

15–27 May – Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP)

23 June – 20 July – Ataruz

23 June – 4 August Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP)

2–5 August

15th International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ 15)
Yarmouk Univeristy, Irbid, Jordan

12–13 November

Archaeology Discovery Weekend – The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt

Recent Discoveries

Assembled by Dawn Acevedo

An Ancient Phoenician Pool Near Sicily

According to Italian archaeologist Lorenzo Nigro of Sapienza University of Rome, the Phoenicians constructed “the largest known sacred pool from the ancient Mediterranean world” in the center of their cultic compound on a small island called Motya off the coast of Sicily. The pool, built approximately 2,550 years ago, seems to have been aligned with certain stars or constellations, and it may have had a statue of the god Ba'al on a pedestal in its center. Read more at: www.sciencenews.org/article/sacred-pool-ancient-seafarers-phoenicians-largest-mediterranean

Roman Emerald Mines in Egypt

Recent excavation seasons revealed tremendous information regarding the mining of emeralds by Romans in the Wadi Sikait in Egypt's Eastern Desert. Once “productive veins were identified,” large-scale operations ensued “include[ing] logistical infrastructures such as small settlements, necropolises, ramps, paths, working areas and watchtowers.” Moreover, inscriptions found at the site reveal that the Roman army assisted in the construction and protection of the mines. Find out more at: www.shorturl.at/eAHP2

A Robot and Conservation at Pompeii

Spot, a four-legged “dog-like robot” made by the American company Boston Dynamics, is being used “to identify safety and structural issues [at Pompeii] including tunnels dug by relic thieves.” Data gathered by Spot allow Italian park authorities to plan and better execute site restoration and protect workers. Additionally, “park authorities have also experimented with a flying laser scanner [to conduct] 3D scans across the [163 acre] site.” Learn more at: www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/mar/28/robot-dog-to-help-manage-pompeii-spot-tunnels-thieves

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!