

## GLYPH

Notes

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*Facts Joseph Smith Could Not Have Learned in 1829*

By Glenn A. Scott

*Following the January 20, 2008, meeting of The Book of Mormon Round Table held at the Stone Church, I was approached by a young man. He said that he had heard that everything Joseph Smith wrote about Book of Mormon people he could have learned from the libraries in nearby towns. He asked what I thought about that remark. I replied, "It is absolutely untrue."*

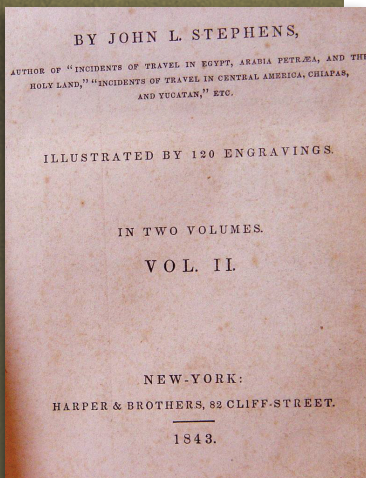
He then asked if I could cite a couple of examples of things Joseph Smith could not have learned. It was late and I was tired, so I replied that I would provide not a couple of examples, but twenty or more.

Joseph Smith Jr. grew up on the western frontier of the newly independent United States of America. He was born in 1805, only twenty-two years after the Revolutionary War ended. It is said that he had altogether the equivalent of a fourth grade elementary school education and had probably never traveled more than a hundred miles from where he grew up. Having spent his youth as a farmer and a day laborer, he never had time to visit the libraries of surrounding villages. At age fourteen while working on his father's farm, he and his family attended a series of religious revivals held by several denominations in the area. Confused by the conflicting claims, Joseph retired to the

woods near his home to pray for light concerning which religious group to join. He had the awesome experience of a vision of God the Father and God the Son, and being told that he had a very special work to do.

Soon after, he was visited by an angel who told him about a record buried nearby which described an ancient civilization that existed in the Americas more than 1400 years before. The angel said this record was connected with the work he was to do and showed him in vision where to find that record.

You might think that he would have spent the next four years studying and preparing for the special work he had been chosen to do; but that was not to be because he and his family had to farm full time just to survive. In 1827 Joseph was allowed to remove the ancient record from the stone box in which it had been buried and to begin the translation with God's help. In 1829 Oliver

*Continued on Page 2*

The first recognized explorers in Mesoamerica [Stephens and Catherwood] published Volume I of their findings in 1841 followed by Volume II in 1843—more than a decade after the publication of The Book of Mormon.

## *Facts Joseph Smith Could Not Have Learned in 1829 (cont.)*

Cowdery, a school teacher, was led to offer his service as a scribe for Joseph, but though he was educated, neither he nor any man alive in the early 1800s knew much about that lost world that had existed in the Americas millennia before. (*Joseph Smith Tells His Own Story*, Price Publishing Company, Independence, MO)

I hope my friend from the Round Table will read the following examples of the many things that Joseph Smith Jr. could not have learned from the libraries in the villages in western New York State in his day.

Leading authors recognized for their research in Central America and who were published during Joseph Smith's time included: (1) Stephens and Catherwood, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan*, Harper & Brothers, New York, Vol. I; 1841 (2) Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico, Vols. I and II*, DM Kay, Boston, 1843; and (3) Bancroft, *The Native Races Vol. 1: Wild Tribes*, A.L. Bancroft and Company Publishers, San Francisco, 1883. The reader should take special note of the publication dates—the earliest listed is 1841, long after *The Book of Mormon* was published in 1829.

### **Things that Joseph could not have learned from nearby libraries:**

1. That the Olmec [Jaredite] culture appeared on the west coast of Mexico around the third millennium B.C. (Brush 1965).
2. That this ancient civilization came from East Asia as indicated by scores of similarities too numerous to be coincidences (M. Coe 1987).
3. That vessels carried by the Japanese Current would take about a year (344 days per Ether) as confirmed by the author of *Wind and Currents* (Maury 1947).
4. That it was possible to build and to safely travel in vessels with a hole in the bottom without sinking (Butterworth 1974).
5. That America's first true civilization developed in Mexico while all of the rest of North America was filled with primitive hunter-gatherers (Drucker 1955 and Stirling 1940).
6. That the first true civilization disappeared around 400-200 B.C. (M. Coe 1968).
7. That elephants survived in the Americas as late as 1700 B.C. (*National Geographic* 1993).
8. That there was actually a place in Yemen called Nahom (Aston 2001).
9. That there really was actually a verdant valley on the southern coast of Arabia with flowers, bees and large trees—totally unknown in 1829 (Conder 1826 / Thomas 1932).
10. That Phoenicians had sailed around Africa by 600 B.C. and had landed in Brazil leaving a message there carved in stone. BRZL in Phoenician means "land of iron" (Gordon 1971).
11. That portraits carved in stone of Phoenicians have been found in Mexico at Vera Cruz and Tres Zapotes (von Wuthenau 1979 and Irwin 1963).
12. That a "new" culture called Chicanel appeared on the Pacific coast of Guatemala about 600 B.C. (M. Coe 1966).
13. That coincidentally another "new" culture Mamom appeared on the Gulf coast of Mexico about 600 B.C. (Adams 1977).
14. That archaeologists agree, the Chicanel merged with the Mamom about 250-200 B.C. (M. Coe 1987).
15. That there really is in Mesoamerica: (a) a land "nearly surrounded by water;" (b) "a narrow neck" leading from this land northwest into a "land northward;" (c) a narrow range of mountains running from East to West separating the lowlands in the north from the highlands in the south; (d) a major river rising in the mountains of the south and emptying into the Gulf of Mexico in the north; and (e) ruins of ancient cities dating from about 600 B.C. to A.D. 900 (Stevens 1840-42 & Hanson 1951).
16. That under a temple at Chichen Itza, Yucatán, Mexico, was found a Pre-Columbian mural showing two races, one light skinned and one dark skinned (Morris 1931).
17. That the native people of Mesoamerica from the Rio Grand Rivers south to the Ulua River in Honduras are of a different blood type [antigens] from all other Indians of the Americas (Layrisse 1968 and Zegura 1986).
18. That the various dialects of the Maya language are unrelated to any other native language in North or South America (Campbell 1983 and Greenberg 1986).
19. That Mesoamerica was laced with paved highways 25 to 30 feet wide and built up above the adjacent terrain and smoothed with stone rollers which may be seen today (von Hagen 1957-60).
20. That in the late 1800s in Nevada, a breed of wild horses with stiff manes and a blood type different from the European horses brought by the Spanish was found. These horses are almost identical to wild horses found in Mongolia today (*American Bashkir Curly Register* 1992).

21. That recent American archaeology (unlike earlier assumptions) has learned that the Maya were extremely warlike with cities surrounded by moats and palisades (Ruppert 1943).
22. That recent excavations since 1978 revealed (contrary to earlier assumptions, that civilization in Mesoamerica began about A.D. 200-250) that other huge cities actually existed from about 600 B.C. (Hansen 2001).
23. That archaeologists would find among the glyphs a "King Laman" (Grube 2000).
24. That a distinctive type of pottery, first produced in El Salvador was later found 300 miles north in Belize, which archaeologist Gordon Willey said "represented an intrusion associated with the migration of people," just as described in The Book of Mormon (Alma 15:23-29).
25. That the teachings of the Maya god Kukulcan (white and bearded) were so similar to the Biblical Jesus that Spanish priests, following the Conquest, thought the natives were practicing a degenerated form of Christianity possibly brought by Apostle Thomas (Fray Duran 1590-96 tr. Heyden & Horcasitas 1971).
26. That The Book of Mormon as translated contains grammar and syntax that are pure classic Hebrew. Joseph Smith did not study Hebrew until many years after the publication of The Book of Mormon (Crowell 1992).
27. The Book of Mormon translation contains about 1400 uses of the phrase "and it came to pass" which is also found 700 times in the Hebrew Bible. In 1981 David Stuart found it in numerous Maya inscriptions (Morrell 1985 and Schele 1988).
28. That The Book of Mormon contains many examples of an ancient literary form called "chiasmus," which proves the literal translation of The Book of Mormon because neither Joseph Smith nor any scholars of his time knew about chiasmus.

In 1951 Dr. Marcus Bach, Dean of the University of Iowa, School of Religion, wrote: "Wherever these auxiliary scriptures come from ... no Vermont schoolboy wrote this, and no Presbyterian preacher tinkered with these pages."

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# MEMORIES *from Meso*

I would be remiss if I didn't share my thoughts on this trip in which I had the opportunity to participate with like believers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Many of the other travelers with us were regulars and had gone on numerous trips with this tour group before. Others were first-timers like Joe and myself. My dad was planning on taking my thirteen-year-old son, Joe, but he developed a detached retina and was unable to travel. So, he sent me in his place and paid for both Joe and me to go.

On day 5 we began with a class in the conference room of our hotel, Hotel Chablis, in Palenque [see photo, right]. In this class, Sherrie Smith gave a brief overview of the makeup of Maya hieroglyphs. In particular, she showed us how to read one glyph that seems to pop up everywhere; it's throughout the Bible and The Book of Mormon.

Excerpt from Travelogue  
Julie Skotak  
Irving, TX



Julie Skotak

This trip opened the door to the Maya world. What a joy to discover their art, structures and writings. Climbing my first pyramid was sheer terror (not quite) and sheer joy followed by sheer pain in the legs. Pat Beebe said it would get better in three days, and it did.

It was breathtaking to view the art on the pyramids, not to mention the bats in the vaulted rooms! Equally exciting was to see a line of a leaf cutter ants and monkeys in the jungle—the grandest and smallness, both exquisite.

I am truly grateful for Uncle Wayne taking our family together for this adventure.

One memorable event came after a fresh fish supper at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Chetumal. Ron, Renee and I were looking at desserts. Tarimasa looked good; alas, there was no tarimasa. We chose bananas flambé. The waiter disappeared for a long time. Later a cart emerged, odd ingredients were added and the cart plus waiters came to our table. Soon there were flaming pans, sizzling bananas, cherries and sauce with a display of pouring flames—all over ice cream. We were all entertained that evening.

Anne Romig  
Independence, MO



Pat Beebe

I had a wonderful time on this trip. The experience was great. I made a lot of friends that are good Christians and believe in The Book of Mormon. My favorite part of this trip was all of it—the sites, hotels, views and friends. All was a trip of a lifetime, and I hope I can come next year. I loved learning the glyphs and climbing pyramids. It was a good workout running up the steps as fast as I dared. Evan (McMillan) helped me face my fears. I got to practice my Spanish and learn more Spanish. I also learned about the Mexican and Maya cultures. I learned more about The Book of Mormon, God and Jesus Christ. I know God was with us, protected us, blessed us, loved us and always will. I hope to see everyone again.

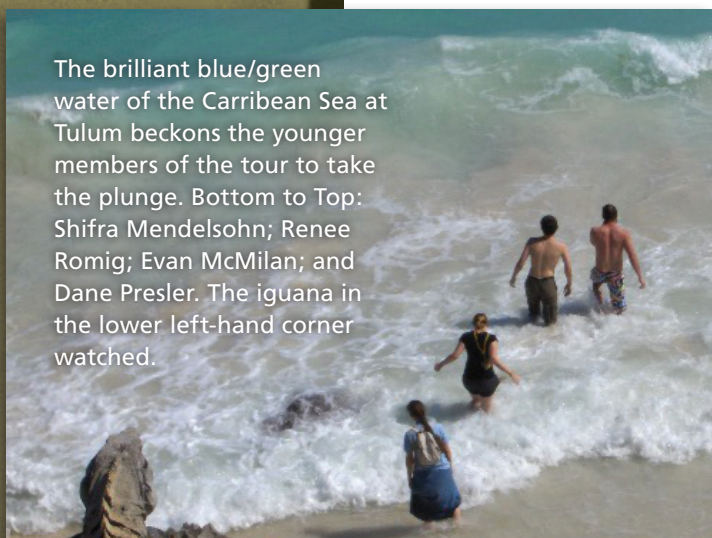
Joseph William Skotak  
Irving, TX



Julie Skotak at Tulum, Mexico, with Caribbean in background.



Shirley Holloway, Anne Romig, Ron Romig and Renee Romig wait in anticipation of a banana flambé prepared by waiters at Holiday Inn Hotel in Chetumal.



The brilliant blue/green water of the Carribbean Sea at Tulum beckons the younger members of the tour to take the plunge. Bottom to Top: Shifra Mendelsohn; Renee Romig; Evan McMillan; and Dane Presler. The iguana in the lower left-hand corner watched.

Joey Skotak

Pat Beebe

Julie Skotak

*merica*



Don Beebe



Julie Skotak

Joey Skotak studies carvings and glyphs on side of a throne removed from Temple 19 on display in the museum at Palenque.

Group Tour 2008 - Thirty-nine members, PSI's largest group, gather on the steps of a pyramid at the site of Becan, Mexico. Becan is known for its moat and high banks which surround the site.

Front Row, Left to Right: Lyle Smith; Dane Presler; Julia McGary; Barbara Eliason; Pat Beebe; Joyce Meddaugh; Kathy Jennings; Shirley Holloway; Melvin Quick. Second Row: Joyce Heidi; Sherrie Smith; Evan McMillan; Susan Thomas; Pam Henson; Linda Barber; Ron Jennings; Julie Skotak. Third Row: Sallie Presler; Shifra Mendelsohn; Susan Meddaugh; Cliff Herod; Ann Brown; Anne Romig; Ron Romig; Renee Romig; Wayne Kearns. Fourth Row: Joe Skotak; Clyde Warner; Nadine Ballantyne; Rebecca Bailey; Jim Bailey; Ralph Bessmer; Luana Bessmer. Top Row: Aaron Presler; Isaac Ketchum; Donna Ketchum. Adventurers not pictured: Don Beebe; Tim Raffety and Barent Eliason.

# From OUR READERS

Having just read the current *glyph notes* [Jan/Feb 2008], I was delighted to see a pair of birders featured – Sherrie and Eleanor Wage. It's always a delight to see fellow birders having a great time and watching some live birds in the rain forest .... I'm a member of the board of directors of the Book of Mormon Archaeological Forum .... As an ardent birder, I get twice as much enjoyment as my compatriots on the tours because I get to see and identify all the birds each year. Birding is a great avocation and more people should take it up, especially when they might be going to some exotic places that they may never see again. It's also a treat to think that Alma, Helaman, several of the Nephis, Lehis, Amulek, Samuel, etc., would have seen these same birds' ever-so-great grandparents in the same areas that we visit.

Except from letter  
Stephen L. Carr, M.D.  
Holladay, Utah



Don Beebe



Don Beebe

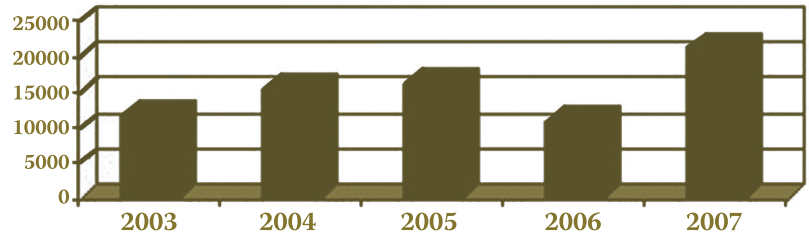
## Financial Report 2007

It is with great joy and appreciation that we announce a substantial increase in contributions for 2007. Our thanks go to all who have faithfully renewed their subscription to *glyph notes* and to those who have given more than their subscription renewal that others might receive testimony of the exciting new discoveries being made relating to The Book of Mormon.


For those who have had opportunity to attend Book of Mormon classes sponsored by Pre-Columbian Studies Institute, you should recall the map by *National Geographic* depicting the number of ancient ruins identified in Mexico alone. Book of Mormon lands include Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. *National Geographic* reported the number of ruins identified to be greater than 200,000. Of that number, less than one percent has been excavated. Therefore, the marvelous discoveries relating to The Book of Mormon that have been revealed to you through *glyph notes* over the past twenty years have come from less than one percent.

Sadly, less than one percent is also the percentage of PSI supporters—financial, in-kind and volunteer. But, countless more individuals have received *glyph notes* and have taken opportunity to attend classes and/or Book of Mormon days. Imagine what might be learned if the percentage of ruins excavated were merely doubled or tripled in 2008. The primary reason more ruins have not been excavated is funding. A line from a Restoration hymn

reads, “the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from his word” (*Hymns of the Restoration*, 1989, p. 197). Does that line bolster your faith when sung or read? Imagine also how much greater an outreach PSI could make through *glyph notes*, from research and opportunity to attend archaeological workshops, if contributions were



doubled or tripled.

PSI is asking you, our readers, and our supporters, to make it happen. PSI is not asking the faithful less than one percent to continually give more; PSI is asking MORE of you to give something. Money is always important, but equally important are those who are willing to get involved with PSI to help enlarge its outreach. PSI needs researchers, scholars, reporters, and clerical workers. Less than one percent has provided a multitude of blessings over the past twenty years for supporters of The Book of Mormon. Let's set the goal higher for 2008. Use the enclosed self-addressed envelope to let us know how you are willing to help. 

## GIFT *Opportunity*

A gift that keeps on giving—Charitable Gift Annuity. These gifts provide two unique benefits: one for the donor and one for the charitable benefactor. The donor receives the opportunity to receive a charitable deduction and a higher effective rate of return on their monies than would otherwise be possible, AND it allows the benefactor, a charitable institution such as Pre-Columbian Studies Institute, at some point in the future, to have access to funds to further its mission. Contact your accountant or Estate Planner about this very special gift opportunity.



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# GLYPH *Quotes* By Clyde Noren

## Decrees of God are Unalterable—Alma 19:71

The Passion Week climaxed by Easter morning brings to the Christian conscience the tragic events of Jesus' crucifixion upon the cross, followed by the awesome miracle of his resurrection. These events are coupled together because Christ had to die for man's sins to prepare the way for man's salvation (John 3:16) and supports Christ's dual purpose in death.

Jesus promised The Father that he would die to redeem all mankind and give him, The Father, the glory as recorded in Genesis 3:2-3 (I.V.). Christ's offering, so different from Satan's of redemption of all sinners, is termed the atonement as stated in Genesis 6:56 (I.V.) "that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt." Apostle Arthur Oakman has said that the atonement meant to him becoming "at-one" with God.

Because of the event of Easter morning, mankind has belief in a new hope. Moroni asks, "And what is it that you shall have hope for? Behold, I say to you that you shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection to be raised to life eternal" (Moroni 7:46-48). Resurrection of the dead is one of the definite and assuring principles of the doctrine of Christ as listed in Hebrews 6:2. The topic of resurrection and restoration is thoroughly delineated in the nineteenth chapter of Alma. In this chapter, Alma wrote that the decrees of God are unalterable (Alma 19:71).

By utilizing faith and hope, we firm up conviction and belief in eternal and lasting values while traveling through this probationary time of our life. Alma speaks of this probationary state in Alma 9:41, as a time to meet God in the endless eternity.

What is eternity? It is a time without end when man abides with God and Christ in a celestial life which is equivalent to the glory of the sun. Paul refers to this celestial body as housing celestial glory in I Corinthians 15:40. What is one to expect in eternal kingdom? There will be peace because Christ reigns in the kingdom. Isaiah refers to Christ as the Prince of Peace, with peace predominant in His Kingdom (Isa. 9:6).

Christ's Kingdom upon earth in the last days will be called Zion. Such a name was attributed to Enoch's people because they were of one heart and one mind with no poor among them, as described in Genesis 7:23 (I.V.). Because of the righteousness of the believers, Christ will bring to pass peace, justice, mercy, fairness, safety, stewardship sharing along with many other blessings.

Idealistic? Yes, but Jesus said, "with God, whatsoever things I speak are possible" (Mat. 19:26). Remember, it is yet day when all can work to become a partner with Christ in the glorious life in the Eternal Kingdom. ☺

### Acknowledgment

It has been brought to our attention that the original source for "Why Read The Book of Mormon" was authored by Frank Frye in the early 1990s and was later made available through the Conference of Restoration Elders. The source reported for the article in *glyph notes*, Nov/Dec 2007, "What to Tell Your Friends and Neighbors about The Book of Mormon" cites a source from *Teaching The Book of Mormon, How and Why*, by Theo Boyd, et al, Arrow Printing which is currently out of print. Although the cited source in *glyph notes* gives credit to Frank Frye for this excellent resource, both published sources for "Why Read The Book of Mormon" are out of print; therefore, we wish to fully acknowledge and thank Frank for his contribution.

### New Movie: *Cracking the Maya Code*

The Maya Meetings at the University of Texas-Austin included the premier showing of the new movie "Cracking the Maya Code." Based on Michael Coe's book *Breaking the Maya Code*, the movie examines how a group of very different individuals contributed to the decipherment of the Maya writing system, commonly called hieroglyphs. The directors of the movie, who said it took 11 years to complete, did a superb job portraying, in an

easy-to-understand way, how decipherment evolved until now experts claim they can read 90 percent of the hieroglyphs. In addition, the photography was outstanding. The movie first aired on NOVA, April 8, 2008 (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/mayacode/>). DVDs will be available soon, and PSI will be purchasing one for use during their classes. This movie is a must see! ☺

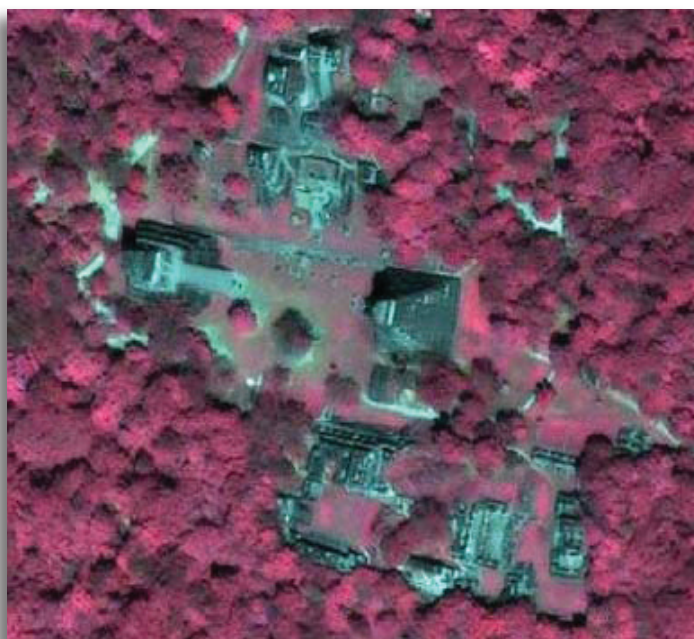


*By utilizing  
faith and  
hope, we  
firm up our  
conviction  
and belief  
in eternal  
and lasting  
values while  
traveling  
through this  
probationary  
time of our  
life.*

# GLYPH *Clips*

## Satellites Capture Images of Maya Cities

Discovering lost Maya ruins has been made easier through space technology. Just as the ancient Mayan astronomers aligned their temples with the stars, archaeologists now trace their findings of hidden cities with the aid of spy satellites and GPS devices. Archaeologist William Saturno credits his find in 2001 at the site of San Bartolo, Guatemala, of an “elaborate mural from around 100 B.C. depicting the Mayan creation myth, dubbed the Sistine Chapel of the Mayan World” (*Science News*, February 20, 2008) to NASA and the use of a GPS device.



As the limestone and lime plasters of abandoned buildings disintegrate, chemicals released from the stone and plasters enter the soil halting the growth of some plants around the structures while affecting the chemical makeup of those plants that continue to grow. The satellite is able to spot these differences in plant growth and produces a virtual road map to the buried structures from far above the earth’s surface.

Tom Sever at NASA, who partners with Saturno in searching for ruins, expresses hope that satellite images will assist in unraveling the mystery of why the Mayan civilization collapsed around 900 A.D.

As “NASA continues its commitment to revisit Guatemala each year through 2009 under a Space Act Agreement with the University of New Hampshire, with the support of the Guatemala Institute of Anthropology and History, and the Department of Pre-Hispanic Monuments . . . we look forward to even more astounding results [finds] when you realize that other than major sites, most of the areas [ruins] have not even been explored on the ground . . . all without cutting down trees” (see “The Ancient Maya as Seen from Space!”, Shirley Heater, *glyph notes*, Mar/Apr 2006).

Source: News.aol.com/science and *glyph notes* Mar/Apr 2006 

## Maya Exploration Center

<http://www.mayaexploration.org/index.php>

This web site is one place to visit for good maps of the Maya sites. It also has opportunities for study abroad, tours, online interviews, and a good bibliography or list of resources for studying the Maya.

Check this one out! 

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