

GLYPH

Notes

PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2012 • VOLUME 19 NUMBER 5

The Best Is Yet to Come! Short Review of Two New Books

By Sherrie Kline Smith

Stone of Kings: In Search of the Lost Jade of the Maya, by Gerard Helferich, Lyons Press, Guilford, Connecticut, 2012, 287 pages.*

As the title indicates, this book is about Mesoamerican jade. Some years ago, it was suggested that the stones touched by the hand of the Lord to give light in the Jaredite barges could have been jade.** Therefore our desire to let you know about this book.

The author Helferich is not an academic, but an award-winning author and former publisher, but, he has done his research. Writing in story format, the author doesn't clutter the text with citations and notes, rather he includes notes at the end as well as a good bibliography along with an index, all of which lend credence to his work.

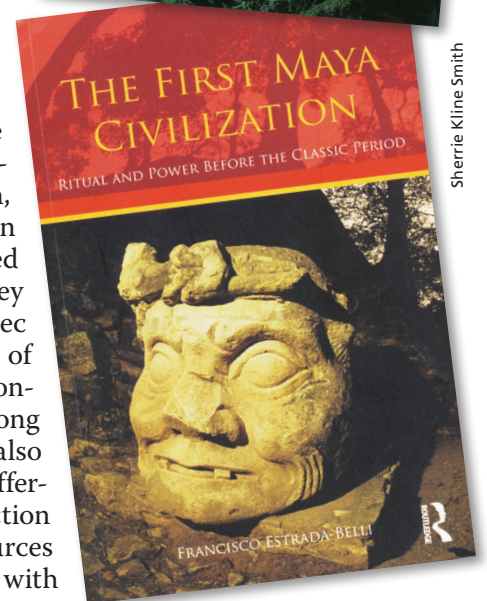
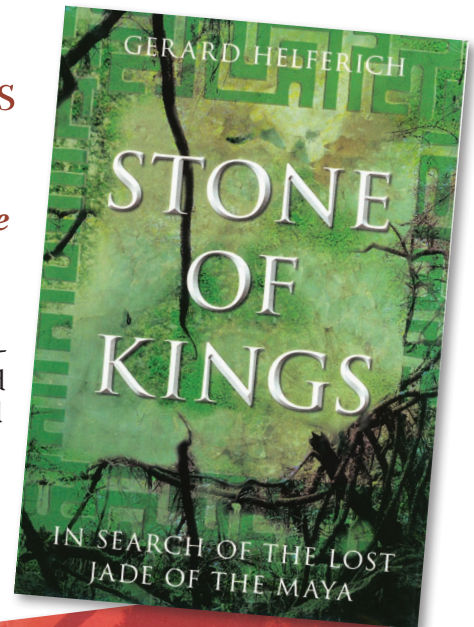
Helferich divides the text into three sections: 1) The Bonediggers; 2) The Entrepreneurs; and 3) The Storytellers. In the first section, Helferich reviews, in-depth, several discoveries of large amounts of worked jade in ancient tombs and how both the Olmec and Maya prized jade above gold. In the second, he introduces us to key players in the search for the locations where the Olmec and Maya obtained their jade because the knowledge of the source or sources of jade had been lost after the Conquest. Jade is found in boulders or pebbles near and along river banks, and that's where they began searching. We also learn a lot about mineralogy and the makeup of the different types of stones commonly called jade. The third section details how scientists try to match the present-day sources of jade along the Motague River Valley in Guatemala with recovered artifacts from archaeological sites.

This book should greatly appeal to rock hounds and the geologist, but also to those interested in Maya and Olmec archaeology. Former travelers with PSI Tours who toured one of the jade factories in Antigua, Guatemala, would also probably enjoy this book. Two of the key players mentioned above, Mary Lou Johnson, an anthropologist, and Jay Ridinger, an entrepreneur from Chicago, opened the first jade factory and store, Jades S.A., in Antigua in 1974. They were featured in the September 1987 issue of *National*

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*Thanks to Craig Zellers for calling our attention to this book.

**"Sacred Stones," *The Zarahemla Record*, Spring, Summer, Fall 1984 and "Jade: Stones of Light" in *Recent Book of Mormon Developments: Articles from the Zarahemla Record*, Vol. 2, 1992.



Sherrie Kline Smith

Both books are of interest to us because they provide insights into the correlation between Mesoamerican artifacts and archaeology and the Nephite and Jaredite records found in *The Book of Mormon*.

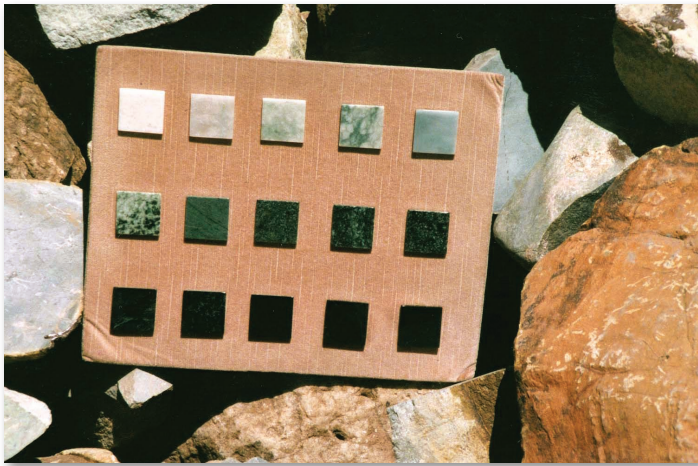
The Best is Yet to Come! (*Cont. from Page 1*)

Geographic. Now there are numerous shops and stores selling jade in the ancient town of Antigua as well as other places.

Some statements in the book give a false impression of the Maya. One of these is on page 58.

Then, from A.D. 250-900 . . . [the Maya] presided over the greatest cultural flowering ever seen in Mesoamerica.... It's not for nothing that archaeologists call this golden age the Classic period.

In reality the cultural flowering began much earlier. The second book reviewed below provides clarification.



Don Beebe

Amidst jade boulders at the factory sits a board with examples of the different colors of jade available in 1989. Since then, some new colors have been found including lavender. Pure jadeite is white. Trace amounts of other minerals cause colors ranging from pale green to black.

The First Maya Civilization: Ritual and Power before the Classic Period, by Francisco Estrada-Belli, Routledge, 2011, 176 pages.

Estrada-Belli, with Boston University, “specializes in Mesoamerican archaeology, the emergence of Maya civilization, and GIS [Geographic Information System] and remote sensing” (p. i). In this book, he elucidates that so much new data is

forcing us to reconsider old theories and to change our perspective.... In essence, we have discovered that the Maya people created their first civilization in the Preclassic period.... [T]he cultural peak we call the “Classic” civilization was a second, and even less dazzling, manifestation of cultural elaboration (p. 28).

Few textbooks on the Maya, however, have yet to embrace this theory, but more are moving in that direction.

The book was written for those working in Mesoamerica, specifically with the Maya, and includes technical

material and makes assumptions that the reader already knows certain things. On the other hand, much is of interest to believers in The Book of Mormon. First, when so much Maya archaeology in the past has concentrated on the Classic (A.D. 250-900) which occurs mostly *after* The Book of Mormon period, the author focuses on the timeframe important to us, i.e. before A.D. 250. Even though the basic timeline from archaeological studies for Mesoamerica already matches The Book of Mormon, there is a lot still unknown about the specific time period of history covered in The Book of Mormon. This book indicates that much of the ongoing and new work in the Maya area will target this timeframe called the Preclassic period. This is exciting! Estrada-Belli writes, “In short, we have only just begun to uncover ancient Maya civilization. Fortunately, for those who study it, the best is yet to come” (p. 147).

A couple quotes from the book illustrate how these new understandings further support The Book of Mormon. First, though, a word about dates used by archaeologists. Shirley Heater gives a good explanation in her article “Discovering the Lost Worlds of The Book of Mormon: Sixty Years of Progress!” (May/June 2010 *glyph notes*, pp. 1-9).

As the process [radiocarbon dating] became accepted, refined testing techniques were developed for more accuracy, with the need to calibrate, or correct, the results using tree-ring dating (dendrochronology). Calibrated dates are used freely in many published archaeology reports. In many cases the reader is not informed whether the dates are radiocarbon or calibrated (p. 4).

In this book, Estrada-Belli indicates calibration on only three of the dates in the text, referencing these in footnotes (pp. 75, 148), but he also later comments on page 137, “the archaeological dates leave 100-plus years margin of error....” Sometimes, though, the margin is even wider.

Many areas of the central Lowlands appear to have experienced devastating population losses.... In the course of the following 100 years [according to the author after A.D. 100], many of these sites would be completely abandoned (pp. 64-65).

These [mass burials] and other signs of violent events and drastic changes across the Lowlands are perhaps symptomatic of the tumult at the end of the Preclassic period [around A.D. 200-250 in archaeological textbooks] (p. 81).

Estrada-Belli discusses this phenomenon in-depth. His dates are not exact, but very close to The Book of Mormon events of that time when the people divide again into “ites” at the end of the “children of Christ” era; a time with major changes in government and religion and finally, the extermination of the majority of the Nephites around A.D. 385. With the accepted discrepancies in radiocarbon dating, the above statement matches beautifully!

The best *is* yet to come..... 

New Faces and Some PSI History

P By Sherrie Kline Smith

re-Columbian Studies Institute began 18 years ago in 1994. The first issue of *glyph notes*, the bi-monthly newsletter, showed up in mailboxes in November of that year.* This four-page inaugural issue included an interview with the new officers of the organization: Lyle L. Smith, president; Vim Horn, vice president, and Don Beebe, secretary/treasurer. (See page 4 for a reprint of this article.)

Don Beebe served as secretary/treasurer for many years and president from 2005 to early spring of 2011 when Lyle Smith once more became president. Clyde Noren became treasurer in 2005 and his wife Margaret took on the role of secretary. Due to health issues, both Don and the Norens are requesting to be relieved of some of their responsibilities, but they will continue to meet with us and provide their excellent support. They all have been associated with PSI from its inception. What great workers they have been!

Ted Combs will be joining PSI as treasurer. Ted works at Commerce Bank, downtown Kansas City, and resides in Independence, Missouri. Ted, and his wife Liz, who works part-time at the Grain Valley branch of the Mid-Continent Library, have traveled with PSI Tours several times. Liz will assume duties as secretary for PSI. We are excited to have them as volunteers in these two key areas.

Both Don and Clyde served PSI in other capacities, including teaching classes and giving presentations. Beginning in 1997, Clyde began writing for the column "glyph quotes" in *glyph notes*. Through the intervening years others also contributed to this column but Clyde created most of them. We have appreciated his wisdom and thoughts about the Scriptures. Eric English (Lee's Summit, Missouri) and Kevin Anderson (Independence, Missouri) have stepped up to the plate and will now share this task. We look forward to their contributions.

Don's many talents include photography, and he was the "official" photographer on PSI sponsored tours. Many of the photographs you see in *glyph notes* were taken by Don. One of the objectives in the beginning of PSI was to provide educational videos with footage taken on the tours. Several were produced, but these required



Ted Combs is the new PSI treasurer and his wife Liz is the new PSI secretary.



Dave and Connie Spivey will handle the bi-monthly mailing of *glyph notes*.

enormous amounts of time, and in later years, creation of the videos ceased. These videos, though, are still pertinent and available.

Another area where Don's help has been extremely appreciated has been his role in handling the mailing of *glyph notes*. For the last 18 years with six issues a year, Don never missed one of those 108 mailings! Don's expertise in handling the complicated process of the bulk mailing requirements has been outstanding and is the reason the newsletter/journal appears in your mailbox. This most important job will now be managed by Dave and Connie Spivey (Blue Springs, Missouri). Connie has been in charge of mailings for different branch newsletters, and Dave recently retired after working 40 years at the post office. Gena Martin will assist them. PSI is fortunate to have their knowledge and willingness to serve in this capacity. We also want to thank all who help put labels on *glyph notes*. Over 20 volunteers came for the last mailing which expedited the process in record time!

Vim Horn was vice president until 2004 when Glenn Scott assumed that role. But Glenn has done much more than serve as vice president. He has been on the editorial committee for over 15 years and contributes many of the drawings of glyphs and other graphics for *glyph notes*. In addition, Glenn has contributed numerous excellent articles. His unique background, a career in advertising and marketing and in later years a degree in anthropology, makes him an invaluable asset to PSI. His comments and suggestions always enhance the content in *glyph notes*, and we depend heavily on his marvelous artistic skills and the articles he provides.

Shirley Heater, whose archaeological training and extensive knowledge of The Book of Mormon, has contributed exceptional assistance to PSI. She followed Glenn as vice president and was a member of the editorial committee. In addition, her insightful, faith-building articles provided quality content for *glyph notes*. In the

Cont. on Page 4

*The first issue of *glyph notes* in 1994 was the only one for that year. All subsequent years have had six.

Help needed on the editorial committee.

If you have experience in this area, we would love to have you join us. Write to Sherrie at sksmith2@gmail.com or call 816.867.5057.


New Faces *(Cont. from Page 3)*


future, Shirley will be working on numerous goals in relation to The Book of Mormon—one being an in-depth guide to a booklet with various maps implementing geography as it's found in The Book of Mormon. She will, however, continue to be available for consultation in all matters related to the study of The Book of Mormon.

In the early years of PSI, I served as editor of the four-page newsletter, which later grew to eight pages, and occasionally twelve pages. In 1995, my husband Lyle and I moved to China where I continued to edit the newsletter

until it became increasingly difficult living so far away. In the summer of 1997, Patricia Beebe graciously assumed editorship, and her steadfastness for the past 14 years in this sometimes challenging job deserves a medal! Her humor, kindness, and persistence are so appreciated. Beginning with the March/April 2011 issue, I resumed editing *glyph notes*, which is now more a mini journal than a newsletter, and Pat continues to provide invaluable help on the editorial committee and will now also serve as PSI's new vice president.

Over the years, others have served PSI in different ways like Joy Muir (who contributed the column "Joy Line"

for many years), Tim Rafferty, Cliff Herod, Barent and Barbara Eliason, and Dale Machart, to mention a few. Our many volunteers have worked so faithfully and have accomplished much. Together we have seen miracles and the Lord's blessings again and again. We look forward to a great and blessed future. 



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The tour films and other PSI-produced materials are available for purchase at:

Restoration Bookstore

915 E. 23rd St. S, Independence, MO 64055

(816) 461-5659.

- *Pyramids and Tombs*, DVD—\$18
- *Land of Nephi*, DVD—\$18
- *Glyph Notes covering the first 10 volumes*, CD Vol. 1 and 2—\$15 each
- *Restored Scriptures*, CD—\$11
- *Joseph Smith Tells His Own Story*, CD—\$11

An Interview with PSI Officers

By Sherrie Kline Smith, editor

Editor's note: This article appeared in the first issue of glyph notes, Nov./Dec. 1994, on pages 2 and 3. It is reproduced here with some slight editorial changes.

You are probably wondering why you received this newsletter—and—just what is Pre-Columbian Studies Institute or PSI? First, we thought you, a believer in The Book of Mormon, would find *glyph notes* not only informative, but helpful and inspirational. In it you will learn about exciting events taking place as the Lord moves with power and great glory to show unto the world that His words are true.

Second, since you are probably curious about PSI, we thought an interview with the officers would help. President Lyle Smith, vice president William (Vim) Horn, and secretary/treasurer Donald Beebe willingly agreed to the interview.

Editor: Lyle, why don't you begin.

Lyle: I'm really excited about this new organization formed especially for Book of Mormon research and outreach. So much is happening so rapidly in the fields of archaeology, epigraphy, and related areas that keeping informed is difficult. Thus the need for PSI.

Editor: What do you see PSI accomplishing?

Lyle: We see PSI acting as a bridge between these academic areas and you, our readers. Many of you do not have the time or inclination to research, analyze, and distribute these findings. But most of you *do* want to know! Evidences which confirm the truth of The Book of Mormon thrill your soul, strengthen your faith, magnify your relationship with Jesus Christ, and bring you joy!

Through classes, slide presentations, study/travel programs, videos, research reports, and this bimonthly newsletter, PSI will share insights, testimonies, and the latest discoveries and understandings pertinent to The Book of Mormon.

Editor: I've heard many say, and even boast, that they didn't need proof or evidences for them to believe the truth of The Book of Mormon because they had faith the record was true. How do you respond to this?

Lyle: Faith is the principle by which we believe and is the first step. But the Lord himself says, "I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another.... That I may prove unto many that I am the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (2 Nephi 12:59-62). Read the whole passage.

Further Nephi writes that God "*proveth all his words.*" He continues with, "Behold, my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth

of the coming of Christ” (2 Nephi 8:6-7). Like Nephi, I delight in proving to many that The Book of Mormon—wherein lies the testimony of Jesus Christ—is true.

Editor: I never thought of it that way before.

Lyle: Here’s another way of looking at it. If we only study the theology of The Book of Mormon, we miss the full significance of its narratives. The study of archaeology and related fields gives you a more complete understanding of the people in The Book of Mormon. People and places come alive!

Editor: Yes, I know that is true! Vim, let’s hear from you. What would you like to tell our readers?

Vim: I want to add to what Lyle said. Learning about what’s happening in the world relevant to The Book of Mormon makes us better witnesses. That’s one reason I believe you will want this newsletter. In it you will find help in answering criticisms and tips for improving your witness. The next time your family, friends, or neighbors confront you with criticism, you can answer much more knowledgeably.

In addition, you will be kept up to date about new publications, books and recent articles, and exhibits of interest. Many have asked about classes or workshops. Schedules for these will be printed in *glyph notes*.

Editor: Thanks Vim. Now I want to ask Don a question. Don, as one of those instrumental in establishing PSI, you have been spearheading the effort to comply with the legal requirements. What progress has been made?

Don: First, let me say I’m most excited about our new capability for producing high-quality videos. We

hope to reach many lives with this medium.

Now to your question. Since incorporating as a non-profit organization in the state of Missouri in March of 1994, we completed the necessary paper work and applied in August for the important 501(c)3 status with the IRS. This means contributions to PSI will be tax deductible, and we can purchase supplies without paying taxes. Their approval should be soon. Also, PSI is unaffiliated with any specific educational, religious, or community group, and all of us serving with PSI are volunteers working out of our homes.

Editor: Don, how can our readers become a part of PSI?

Don: Make a contribution and become a member! We need volunteers, too. Write and ask for more details about how you can help. Send us your comments and suggestions for the newsletter. And, if you can’t answer a question about The Book of Mormon, give us a try. PSI is *for you!*

Editor: You can write to us at PSI, PO Box 477, Independence, Missouri 64051. Or call Lyle at 816.867.5057 or Don at 816.796.4094. They would love to hear from you.

Do any of you want to add anything?

Lyle: Yes, I do. The multitude of confirming evidences which will come in *glyph notes* will fortify your faith and convert your mind. I encourage you to join PSI and make a regular contribution. It will fill your soul with joy.

Editor: Thank you Don, Vim, and Lyle for telling our readers about what promises to be a most faith-strengthening organization.

Readers, won’t you share with us in this exciting work? 



Holy Land Tour
 May 23-June 2, 2013

Walk where Jesus walked and see the silver amulets from Lehi’s time!

Sponsored by Pre-Columbian Studies Institute
Tour presented by PSI Tours, LLC, Lyle and Sherrie Smith, Tour Leaders

We’ll visit Jerusalem and Galilee areas, Qumran, Masada, and much more with our own in-country private guide and transportation.

Tour cost per person in double room: \$3,950 (single supplement additional \$799) (Actual tour cost remains close to the same price as the 2009 tour, but the airfare has increased.)

Deposits of \$400 per person due January 15, 2013
 Final payment due March 10, 2013 (Deposits refundable until March 10, 2013)

Registration forms will be in the next issue of *glyph notes*.

A number of people have tentatively said they will go. Will you join us??

Call Lyle Smith, 816 838-5192 or email: smith.lyle@usa.net



GLYPH *Quotes* *The Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream... —1 Nephi 1: 24*

By Kevin Anderson


Imagine...being warned of God, in a dream, that the people of your nation whom you have loved seek the life of you and your family. Consider that the resulting response to your decision might mean the relocation of your family and their subsequent inheritance in a promised land, where the fulfillment of a great work will commence. This is the story of Lehi and his family as recorded in The Book of Mormon as he was commanded of God, in a dream, to flee into the wilderness (1 Nephi 1: 24-28).

A simple dream was the prophetic tool that God used to bring to pass the entire events found in The Book of Mormon. It required tremendous faith on the part of Lehi's family to make that departure, but the result was a "second witness," through the seed of Joseph, to the record and testimony of Jesus Christ. Because of the faithfulness of Lehi and his family in taking the Lord's direction, we have The Book of Mormon today.

During a difficult time in my wife's young life, she began to pray that God would send her a companion who would love her and cherish her when she was older. Because of circumstances in her life, she felt the need, even as a child, for the security of that blessing. It became a continual prayer. One night in her sleep, she was taken in a dream to a place of great peace and love. She saw herself as an adult, married and happy, working and playing in the backyard of a home with her husband. However, in the dream, she thought the man to whom she was married strongly resembled her brother. He looked just as she imagined her young brother would look as an adult. She

thought it strange, but kept the dream in her heart...thinking perhaps it was God's way of comforting her because she loved and trusted her brother who represented love and security to her.

Many years later, my wife Julie and I found ourselves deeply in love, deeply devoted to each other, and desirous to be married. We gave ourselves in prayer and fasting over the matter. One day, carrying this prayer heavily upon her heart, she came home from work feeling unusually sleepy and lay down upon her bed and fell fast asleep. She had no more than drifted off when she was taken again in a dream. Just as in her childhood, she found herself once more carried away to that same place of peace and love. This time her vision was clearer, and now, almost 20 years later, she saw that the man to whom she was married was not her brother, but a man who looked just like him...me. It had been kept from her, this likeness, until God chose to reveal His marvelous plan in His perfect timing. Surprisingly, a large number of friends and family who came through the wedding reception line commented on how much I resembled her brother... many of them thinking that he looked as much like me as my own identical twin.

God had been creating a testimony that would cover many years, but one that would reveal His willingness to comfort and guide even the youngest of souls, because of her faith and her strong desire to trust Him. God's will to clearly lead and direct us, *yea, even in a dream*, is still very much alive today. 

A simple dream was the prophetic tool that God used to bring to pass the entire events found in The Book of Mormon. God's will to clearly lead and direct us, yea, even in a dream, is still very much alive today.

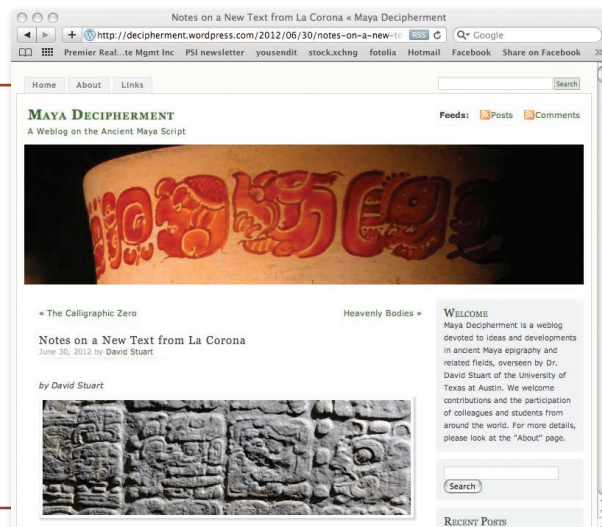
GLYPH *Clips*

By Sherrie Kline Smith

More about 2012

The theme for The Maya Meetings in 2011 was the end of the 13th bak'tun of the Maya calendar. Four of the presentations, those given by Anthony Aveni, David Stuart, Kathryn Reese Taylor, and John Hoopes, can now be viewed in entirety online. <http://vimeo.com/user12591547/videos>

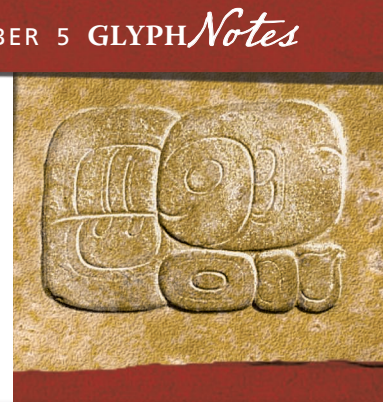
On June 30, 2012, David Stuart posted



an article, “Notes on a New Text from La Corona,” on his blog *Maya Decipherment* (<http://tinyurl.com/9aw8b7c>) about excavations in May of this year that unearthed a *second* inscription that references the upcoming bak’tun ending in December 2012. Stuart, epigrapher for the team working at La Corona where the inscription was found, said, “This text would have been a noteworthy find in any year, but its revelation now, just months before December 21, is extraordinary timing indeed.” He continues, however, “The main message of the new inscription is not at all about 2012—rather it’s the commemoration of a visit to La Corona (Saknikte’) by the important Calakmul ruler Yuknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’ on January 29, 696 AD.” He gives a comprehensive explanation about the inscription in his blog.

You may also want to explore the webpages of Tulane University, Middle American Research Institute’s La Corona Archaeological Project (<http://mari.tulane.edu/PRALC/index.html>).

The multi-disciplinary archaeological research group has been working at La Corona in Guatemala since 2008.



Sophisticated Water System Discovered at Tikal

From *ScienceDaily* website (<http://tinyurl.com/cxc383r>), “Largest Ancient Dam Built by Maya in Central America,” posted July 16, 2012.

Recent excavations at the site of Tikal have revealed a sophisticated water management system—a large ancient dam complete with quartz sand filtration to cleanse the water entering the reservoirs and a “switching station” that accommodated seasonal filling and release of water. The top of the dam was used as a causeway to link different sections of the former city and still used today by tourists visiting the site. The dam is more than 260 feet long, 33 feet high, and held about 20 million gallons of water in a man-made reservoir. To purify the water, “deliberately positioned ‘sand boxes’” filtered the water coming into the reservoirs that was carefully channeled from the expansive plazas, roadways, buildings and canals. The Maya of Tikal traveled at least 20 miles to obtain the quartz sand for the filters, because quartz sand is not naturally available in the Tikal area.

University of Cincinnati paleoethnobotanist David Lentz explained, Water management by the Maya included irrigation, which directly impacted how many people could be fed and overall population growth. Accordingly, it is essential to understand the array of canals and reservoirs at Tikal, which conserved water during the annual dry season and controlled floodwaters during the rainy months. These practices allowed the Tikal Maya to sustain relatively high population densities for several centuries.

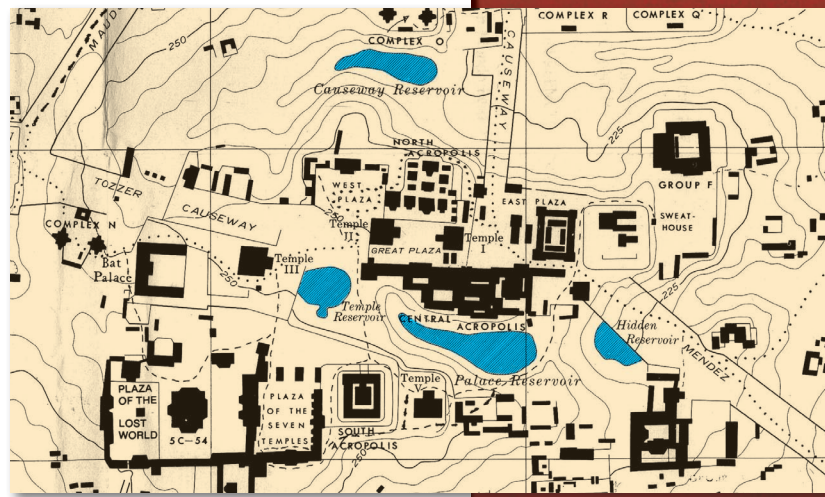
Not long ago, another massive water management system was discovered at El Mirador. These two large cities during some of the years covered in *The Book of Mormon* bear out the high population of the area as chronicled in the book. (See “glyph clips,” *glyph notes*, March/April 2009, and in the same issue “Sand of the Sea and Rising Suns” about high population.)

The full article appeared in the journal of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, *PNAS*, 2012 109 (31) 12408-12413. *American Archaeology* (not to be confused with the popular *Archaeology* magazine), Fall 2012, also featured an article about the dam on page 9. It was also online at *News from Phys.Org*, “Archaeologists uncover largest ancient dam built by Maya in Central America,” posted July 16, 2012 (<http://tinyurl.com/9xl9vpq>). *Cont. on Page 8*



This area in Tikal is referred to as the North Complex. It is a cemetery with the first burials beginning about 350 B.C. The people of Tikal continued to use it as a burial place until around A.D. 800. The thatch roofs protect some of the earlier buildings covered over by later additions that have been discovered during excavations.

The map of Tikal below shows several reservoirs (in blue) that are part of the water management system.



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2013 Maya Meetings at The University of Texas at Austin

The Art of Maya Architecture: Cosmology and Dynasty in the Built Environment

January 15-19, 2013

(NOTE dates—two months earlier than usual)

Tuesday, January 15-Thursday, January 17

9:00 am-4:00 pm

Beginner Hieroglyph Workshop-Nicholas Carter
Intermediate Hieroglyph Workshop-Daniel Law
Iconography Workshop- Justin Kerr

Thursday, January 17

6:00 pm

Keynote Speaker: Dr. George E. Stuart (former Head of
Archaeology for National Geographic Society and
father of David Stuart)

7:00-9:00 pm

El lienzo de Quauhquechollan Exhibition Opening
The Maya Meetings Opening Reception

Friday, January 18-Saturday, January 19

Symposium confirmed speakers: Barbara Fash, Stephen
Houston, Heather Hurst, William Saturno, Karl
Taube, Marc Zender, Anabella Coronado, Michael Long, Edwin
Roman, and Meghan Rubenstein.

Register here: <http://tinyurl.com/cbs47f4> 

