Doctoral Student Research

The Museum of Anthropology is both the physical and the emotional home of doctoral students in anthropological archaeology at the University of Michigan. While gaining training in the four traditional subdisciplines as part of the Department of Anthropology, archaeology graduate students’ professional and social lives continue to be based in the Museum, as they have been for more than 80 years. That is, when they are not in the field. But often they are in the field—spread across the globe, directing and participating in major archaeological projects. Here, we highlight the work of just a few of our current doctoral students.

Elizabeth Bridges is directing a regional survey project at the sites of Keladi and Ikkeri in southern India. These two cities were the successive capitals of a state that was, for part of its history, tributary to the fourteenth-through sixteenth-century Vijayanagara empire. Although the Vijayanagara capital has been well studied (by Curator Carla M. Sinopoli, among others), Liz’ work is the first archaeological project to systematically examine a peripheral area of the empire. The Keladi-Ikkeri polity is especially appropriate for her interests in imperial structures and imperial authority since it was a powerful tributary state in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which became autonomous as the empire began its decline after AD 1565. Through systematic survey and archival research on the two successive capitals of this small polity, Liz is documenting the nature of relations with the imperial center and how these changed over time. Liz has completed one season of survey—which has revealed rich evidence on administrative, sacred, defensive, and domestic architecture and remains—and is returning to India in January for her second field season. Liz’ work is supported by a junior fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies, and the Ranvir and Ardash Trehan gift for South Asian Archaeology to the Center for South Asian Studies.

(continued on page 10)
In 2008, the Ruthven Museums Building celebrates its 80th anniversary. The Museum of Anthropology predates our main home by six years, having been formally created in 1922 (with the Anthropology Department created a few years later). Wayne was a member of the Great Lakes, the Orient (since renamed Asian Division), Archaeology, and Ethnology (including the Ethnobotanical Library). Over the decades, we have grown into twelve research divisions (North America, South America, Near East, Latin America, and, most recently, Africa, plus the Human Osteology, Anthropology, and Archaeology Laboratories), and are now distributed across five separate buildings. Our collections nearly weigh four million objects with more than 30,000 photographic images and we are working hard to integrate the many digital databases to increase their accessibility to scholars and the public. The Museum has been a major center of archaeological research and teaching since its inception, with tremendous impact on the discipline of anthropology. 

Our commitment to excellence, fostered in those early years by W.B. Hiscock, Carl Guthrie, and James Griffin, continues today. Long strong in graduate student training, over the last few decades the Museum has enhanced its commitment to undergraduate education and through field schools and participation in the University’s Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP). The Museum is also increasingly engaged with teaching and collection units across the University. Our collections have been important components of courses in Asian Languages and Culture, Art History, and the School of Art and Design; we have recently or are currently developing exhibits with the Museum of Art, Institute for the Humanities, Exhibit Museum of Natural History, and Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments. As I write this, I have just returned from my first meeting as a member of the Public Goods Council, a group appointed by the Provost that represents campus units responsible for important cultural resources. The Museum serves to promote the same cultural experience on campus and in the community.

In this newsletter, we highlight a subset of our recent activities and accomplishments—including curatorial research, undergraduate field experiences, and collections and exhibits. We focus particularly on our doctoral students in anthropology, and on the achievement of having been selected for so long have been at the heart, and comprise the future, of our mission. Thanks to all of you who have supported us over the years through your contributions to our fellowship funds. This year, we call your attention to a wonderful new opportunity to continue that support through a donation to the Museum of Anthropology President’s Challenge for Graduate Support (see p. 16). Your gifts will be matched by a 50% match from University President Mary Sue Coleman and will help to assure the vibrancy of graduate training in anthropological archaeology at UM for the next 80 years.

November 16, 2007

C ongratulations to Donna Steiner, who worked her last day at the Museum on October 31, 2007. Donna’s Halloween costume of sunglasses, straw hat, and shorts gave us clues to her retirement plans to winter in Arizona and return to Michigan after the snow thaws. In her position at the main office’s front desk, Donna has been the face and heart of the Museum for eleven and a half years, and we will miss her greatly. All best wishes to Donna and husband Dwight for a happy and healthy retirement.

Owed to Donna

Running an office by day,
Can leave one flustered and gray,
No one will ask
If there’s joy in the task,
And it’s never what you’d call fun.
If no one could say it was fun,
Yet the task was efficiently done;
And no one was near
To bear our travaile.
Let’s keep our Museum in the run.
So we celebrate all of these years,
As you leave to the sound of our clocks;
A salute to you,
And best wishes too.
For a life-changing shifting of years.

Donna Steiner

Thanks to Wes Cowan of Cowan’s Auctions, Inc., for his generous donation to the Museum for the printing and distribution of this newsletter.

Donna Steiner

November 16, 2007

UMMA Newsletter — Fall, 2007

UMMA Newsletter — Fall, 2007
UMMA Archaeological Field Schools

The Museum sponsored three archaeological field schools in the summer of 2007, involving 26 undergraduates and 5 graduate students in field projects in Arizona, Michigan, and Senegal.

In Arizona, the Humo’ovi Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (HUROP) directed by UMMA Research Scientist Lisa Young had its second field season. This project, funded by the National Science Foundation’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program and UM, integrates fieldwork, lab experiences, and public outreach. During summer 2007, fifteen undergraduate students from across the U.S. participated in the excavations at Creswell Pueblo, a site located within the Humo’ovi Regional Park State Park and monitored by the Archaeological Conservancy. UM students included undergraduates Leah Collins, Annelle Doll, Danielle Forsyth, Stephanie Owens, and Joseph Ramirez; lab director Claire Barker (a graduate of the 2006 field school); and doctoral students Matt GALLOW, Kholi Newlander, and Uthara Sreerathnam. UM Professor Ray Shiverson (Museum Studies) serves as a faculty mentor to the project.

For the second year, visiting graduate student Augustin Holzer and UMMA’s Karen Bloomer directed the investigation. The project seeks to understand trends and changes in the lifeways of the hunter-gatherers who lived in the Humo’ovi region during the late prehistoric period. From 900 B.C.E. to A.D. 1500, these sites include circular or rectangular structures surrounded by numerous scatterings of artifacts and other objects.

In May and June 2007, I joined UMMA Curator Richard Reddick and the Giza Plateau Mapping Project Team. My contributions to this project entailed the fauna analysis of one functionally discrete area within the site known as East of the Galleries, or EOG.

Assisted by funding from the UMMA, Richard J. Ford Endowment Fund, I carried out a research project aimed to provide insight into the socioeconomic structure of the Egyptian Old Kingdom. In May and June 2007, I joined UMMA Curator Richard Reddick and the Giza Plateau Mapping Project Team. My contributions to this project entailed the fauna analysis of one functionally discrete area within the site known as East of the Galleries, or EOG.

I was excited to participate in the expedition to Sanga Zaba II, a habitation site that was occupied since the Early Neolithic period and dramatically transformed when one of its structures was burned. The Giza Mapping Project Team has established a number of secure and repeatedly used surface sites dating to the Early and Middle Dynastic periods. With the use of a Brunton compass, total station, and mapping software, and developed an understanding of how archaeologists excavations are planned. Because our team was made up of international students and staff, I was able to view firsthand a range of approaches that archaeologists take to fieldwork and analysis.

I was confident about working as an archaeologist as I left for Russia last June; it was camp-life I felt unsure about. The half hour I spent inside my tent after I bought it was the only time I had ever felt so alone. When I think back to our late-night card games and the beautiful Lake Baikal sunsets, I realize that aside from taking part in a great project, I was able to travel to a beautiful, exciting place with a group of warm, interesting people. Who could ask for more?

Lost City of the Pyramid Builders: Research Experience in Egypt — by Kelly Wilcox

Assisted by funding from the UMMA, Richard J. Ford Endowment Fund, I carried out a research project aimed to provide insight into the socioeconomic structure of the Egyptian Old Kingdom. In May and June 2007, I joined UMMA Curator Richard Reddick and the Giza Plateau Mapping Project Team. My contributions to this project entailed the fauna analysis of one functionally discrete area within the site known as East of the Galleries, or EOG.

I was excited to participate in the expedition to Sanga Zaba II, a habitation site that was occupied since the Early Neolithic period and dramatically transformed when one of its structures was burned. The Giza Mapping Project Team has established a number of secure and repeatedly used surface sites dating to the Early and Middle Dynastic periods. With the use of a Brunton compass, total station, and mapping software, and developed an understanding of how archaeologists excavations are planned. Because our team was made up of international students and staff, I was able to view firsthand a range of approaches that archaeologists take to fieldwork and analysis.

I was confident about working as an archaeologist as I left for Russia last June; it was camp-life I felt unsure about. The half hour I spent inside my tent after I bought it was the only time I had ever felt so alone. When I think back to our late-night card games and the beautiful Lake Baikal sunsets, I realize that aside from taking part in a great project, I was able to travel to a beautiful, exciting place with a group of warm, interesting people. Who could ask for more?

Our Michigan field school returned to the UM Biological Station (UMBS) at Douglas Lake, under the direction of UMMA Research Scientist Meghan Howey. The project explores Native American occupation in this inland lake landscape in the period preceding European contact.

In 2006, excavations at a Late Prehistoric habitation site revealed the remains of several large burial pits, indicating a substantial structure. In 2007, field school students: Ruth MacNellie, Darren Poltorak, Chris Jackson, Elinor Israel, and Jessica Larkins (Central Michigan University) and graduate student Bethany Dykstra (UM 2006, now a graduate student at Florida State University) expanded the excavations to identify the plan of this structure. The structure’s edge has yet to be reached, but work uncovered several hearths, post locations, and a posthole. Further work may suggest a domestic ritual function. Further work is necessary to clarify the exact role of this tantalizing and exciting site.

In Senegal, 2007 marked the seventh consecutive field season of a long-term investigation of the Senegambian “megalithic phenomenon” by the Sine Nyagne Archaeological Project (SNAP) directed by UMMA Curator Brennan Quenneville and the Sine N’Gaye Research Centre. Our Michigan field school returned to the UM Biological Station (UMBS) at Douglas Lake, under the direction of UMMA Research Scientist Meghan Howey. The project explores Native American occupation in this inland lake landscape in the period preceding European contact.

Our Michigan field school returned to the UM Biological Station (UMBS) at Douglas Lake, under the direction of UMMA Research Scientist Meghan Howey. The project explores Native American occupation in this inland lake landscape in the period preceding European contact.
Snapshots from the field...

Henry Wright joined UM PhD Bill Honeychurch and Joshua Wright in the Baga Gazaryn Chuluu Archaeological Survey Project in Mandelgov, Mongolia.

Cameron Gokee and Amanda Logan in the central Falémé Valley in eastern Senegal. (see page 10)

Doctoral student Emily Holt spent the 2007 season working at Nuraghe Nuracale, a Late Bronze Age site in Central Sardinia. In addition to the huge stone towers on which she is standing, the site included circular stone huts and a monumental tomb a hundred yards away. Emily is currently applying for funding to return to Sardinia and run an excavation at the nearby Bronze Age site of Siddi Plateau.

Li Min received a graduate fellowship in the Institute for the Humanities. In a spring research trip to Southeast Asia, he visited important shipwrecks from Indonesia as well as major sites for the spice trade. After one month of lab work in China for dissertation research, he taught a summer class on archaeology of trade ceramics in early global trade, inspired by and designed around the UMMA’s Guthe collection.

Undergraduate Maia Dedrick participated in the Programme for Belize, a non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and study of Belize’s natural heritage, including archaeological sites. In a project directed by Dr. Fred Valdez of the University of Texas at Austin, Maia worked to gather archaeological data from across the region to create an integrated view of the development of Mayan civilization in the region up to its collapse.

Doctoral student Matthew Kroot, with co-director Chantel White of Boston University, traveled to Jordan to conduct the first season of the Asal-Dhra Archaeological Project. The project combines landscape survey and excavation at the Prepottery Neolithic A (PPNA) site of Jebel er-Seis to explore the ways in which various sites were interdependent. ADAP identified ten new prehistoric sites, nine water sources, ten flint sources, nine check dams, and three dispersed stone structures. Both PPNA and Chalcolithic remains were identified.

Doctoral student Amy Nicodemus excavated two Bronze Age sites, the Fecica “Santul Mare” tell in Romania (with Curator John O’Shea) and Tarhos 26, a small settlement in Hungary (with doctoral student Paul Duffy). As part of ongoing research into Bronze Age economies of the Carpathian Basin, she analyzed the fauna from these sites and Sarkad-Peckes, a contemporary Hungarian tell. Additionally, she presented at the annual Hungarian Zooarchaeological Conference and continued to procure modern faunal specimens to build an Eastern European comparative collection.

Doctoral student Howard Tsai excavated the site of Las Varas in the Jequetepeque Valley, Peru. The Las Varas site dates from the Late Intermediate Period between the eleventh to fourteenth centuries. Howard excavated several tombs, plazas, platforms, and houses, including a house with deep cultural deposits that will give us the first Coastal Cajamarca ceramic sequence.

Jeffrey Parsons and colleagues from the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco, visiting chinampas in the Southern Valley of Mexico.

Richard Redding descending into a tomb shaft on the Giza Plateau, where he is documenting the communities associated with construction of the Great Pyramids.

Lisa Young and Katie Calton excavating Cresswell Pueblo at Homol’ovi Ruins State Park, Arizona. (see page 4)

Cameron Gokee and Amanda Logan in the central Falémé Valley in eastern Senegal. (see page 10)

Elizabeth Bridges completed the first of two seasons of dissertation fieldwork on the Keladi-Ikkeri Nayaka Zone Survey in Karnataka, India. This project investigates the composition and evolution of a regional polity under the Vijayanagara Empire, and builds an extensive survey by Curator Carla M. Sinopoli and Kathleen Morrison (U Chicago) in the Vijayanagara Metropolitan Region. (see page 1)

Jeffrey Parsons and colleagues from the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco, visiting chinampas in the Southern Valley of Mexico.

Doctoral student Amy Nicodemus excavated two Bronze Age sites, the Fecica “Santul Mare” tell in Romania (with Curator John O’Shea) and Tarhos 26, a small settlement in Hungary (with doctoral student Paul Duffy). As part of ongoing research into Bronze Age economies of the Carpathian Basin, she analyzed the fauna from these sites and Sarkad-Peckes, a contemporary Hungarian tell. Additionally, she presented at the annual Hungarian Zooarchaeological Conference and continued to procure modern faunal specimens to build an Eastern European comparative collection.

Doctoral student Matthew Kroot, with co-director Chantel White of Boston University, traveled to Jordan to conduct the first season of the Asal-Dhra Archaeological Project. The project combines landscape survey and excavation at the Prepottery Neolithic A (PPNA) site of Jebel er-Seis to explore the ways in which various sites were interdependent. ADAP identified ten new prehistoric sites, nine water sources, ten flint sources, nine check dams, and three dispersed stone structures. Both PPNA and Chalcolithic remains were identified.

Doctoral student Emily Holt spent the 2007 season working at Nuraghe Nuracale, a Late Bronze Age site in Central Sardinia. In addition to the huge stone towers on which she is standing, the site included circular stone huts and a monumental tomb a hundred yards away. Emily is currently applying for funding to return to Sardinia and run an excavation at the nearby Bronze Age site of Siddi Plateau.

Li Min received a graduate fellowship in the Institute for the Humanities. In a spring research trip to Southeast Asia, he visited important shipwrecks from Indonesia as well as major sites for the spice trade. After one month of lab work in China for dissertation research, he taught a summer class on archaeology of trade ceramics in early global trade, inspired by and designed around the UMMA’s Guthe collection.

Undergraduate Maia Dedrick participated in the Programme for Belize, a non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and study of Belize’s natural heritage, including archaeological sites. In a project directed by Dr. Fred Valdez of the University of Texas at Austin, Maia worked to gather archaeological data from across the region to create an integrated view of the development of Mayan civilization in the region up to its collapse.

Doctoral student Matthew Kroot, with co-director Chantel White of Boston University, traveled to Jordan to conduct the first season of the Asal-Dhra Archaeological Project. The project combines landscape survey and excavation at the Prepottery Neolithic A (PPNA) site of Jebel er-Seis to explore the ways in which various sites were interdependent. ADAP identified ten new prehistoric sites, nine water sources, ten flint sources, nine check dams, and three dispersed stone structures. Both PPNA and Chalcolithic remains were identified.

Doctoral student Emily Holt spent the 2007 season working at Nuraghe Nuracale, a Late Bronze Age site in Central Sardinia. In addition to the huge stone towers on which she is standing, the site included circular stone huts and a monumental tomb a hundred yards away. Emily is currently applying for funding to return to Sardinia and run an excavation at the nearby Bronze Age site of Siddi Plateau.

Li Min received a graduate fellowship in the Institute for the Humanities. In a spring research trip to Southeast Asia, he visited important shipwrecks from Indonesia as well as major sites for the spice trade. After one month of lab work in China for dissertation research, he taught a summer class on archaeology of trade ceramics in early global trade, inspired by and designed around the UMMA’s Guthe collection.

Undergraduate Maia Dedrick participated in the Programme for Belize, a non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and study of Belize’s natural heritage, including archaeological sites. In a project directed by Dr. Fred Valdez of the University of Texas at Austin, Maia worked to gather archaeological data from across the region to create an integrated view of the development of Mayan civilization in the region up to its collapse.

Doctoral student Matthew Kroot, with co-director Chantel White of Boston University, traveled to Jordan to conduct the first season of the Asal-Dhra Archaeological Project. The project combines landscape survey and excavation at the Prepottery Neolithic A (PPNA) site of Jebel er-Seis to explore the ways in which various sites were interdependent. ADAP identified ten new prehistoric sites, nine water sources, ten flint sources, nine check dams, and three dispersed stone structures. Both PPNA and Chalcolithic remains were identified.

Doctoral student Emily Holt spent the 2007 season working at Nuraghe Nuracale, a Late Bronze Age site in Central Sardinia. In addition to the huge stone towers on which she is standing, the site included circular stone huts and a monumental tomb a hundred yards away. Emily is currently applying for funding to return to Sardinia and run an excavation at the nearby Bronze Age site of Siddi Plateau.
Collections: Rehousing the Tapa Cloth Collection

In March 2007, Conservator Alex Allardt came to Ann Arbor for two weeks to work on repairing, cleaning, and rehousing our tapa cloth collection. Alex had first come to our Museum in 2006 to conduct a conservation assessment survey and to help identify some of the most critical conservation needs of the Museum’s vast collections. With support from the College, we were able to bring her back this year to work on two of those collections: the Pacific tapa cloths and the infamous “Soper frauds,” a set of “ancient” engraved clay tablets and figurines that were manufactured and planted in archaeological sites in southeastern Michigan in the early 1900s.

During the project, Ms. Karen O’Brien, trained students in the expertise of Alex, we were able to determine that they were most likely made in Hawaii.

The collection of the Zoological Laboratory has grown thanks to the purchases of scientific artifacts by Richard Tedding and a donation from the Bird Division of the Museum of Zoology. New comparative specimens include a limited number of dragonflies and butterflies. Two new collections have also come into the Latin American Archaeological Laboratory; Carl J. Wendt, Professor of Anthropology at California State University at Fullerton, has donated a type collection of diagnostic pottery, dating from 1500–900 BC, from his excavations at the Olmec site of El Remolino, Mexico. Wendt’s collection is especially significant because every object is identified by type and provenience, as defined by the excavator. Our receipt of this type collection, arranged by Curator Jane Soper in consultation with the Mexican government. Other materials coming into the Latin American collections include ceramics and other objects from Mesoamerica and South America collected by the late Rev. Francis X. Grogg, a Jesuit priest and anthropologist. Rev. Grogg, first hired as a history professor at Loyola University in Chicago, eventually became the first chair of Loyola’s Department of Anthropology; he later served as director of the Latin American Studies Program. He traveled and studied widely in Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru. The materials in his personal collection came from many important sites including Tarahumara, Monte Albán, and Tiwanaku.

The American Archaeology Division received two important collections. Mr. George Lauff has donated his Himalayan Thangka paintings and several small Himalayan bronze artifacts that were originally part of the collection of Dr. Walter Koeler. Mr. Lauff’s second gift to the University, the Ellen Laing Collection, is a wonderful addition to our important Korean collections of South Asian textiles and sacred and utilitarian objects. Curator Carla M. Spinola has recently received an award from The Shelly and Donald Bloch Foundation to assist in documenting the Koelz Collection. A second important Asian collection was donated by Dr. Sarah Bekker of Austin, TX. The Bekker collection consists of more than 100 Asian ceramic vessels and figurines acquired while Dr. Bekker and her husband resided in Thailand and Burma in the 1950s and 1960s. The majority of these well-documented objects are Thai, and date from the tenth century to the present. The collection thus provides a strong complement to the Asian Division’s world-class collections of Asian trade ceramics.

In 2007, the Museum accessioned 23 new collections including materials from our archeological/anthropological field school projects in Senegal and northern Michigan. Several smaller collections have also been donated from a variety of sources; the majority is held in the lab. These include items from field work conducted in Dexter, Michigan.

The exhibit “Tigers to Butterflies: Chinese Children’s Clothing 1880s–1930s,” curated by Carla M. Spinola and undergraduate Saige Jedele, opens in the Exhibit Museum on January 14, 2008. The exhibit features to mid-twentieth- to mid-twentieth-century children’s garments from the Museum of Anthropology’s extensive collections of Asian textiles. Objects in the exhibit derive from the Ellen Laing Collection donated in 2005, and the P.W. Stevenson Collection from 1926. These elaborate garments were both beautiful and functional. Many are decorated with representations of fierce protective animals such as tigers, or with auspicious symbols such as lotus flowers or butterflies, embroidered or appliqued onto hats, shoes, and jackets, to shield children from harm and to ensure a happy life.

Find us on the Web at www.lsa.umich.edu/umma

New in 2007 from Museum of Anthropology Publications

The Viñayagarana Metropolitan Survey: Volume I (Mamani 43) by Carla M. Spinola and Katharine D. Morrison

Excavations at Cerro Tilocaje: A Monte Albán II Administrative Center in the Valley of Oaxaca (Mamani 42) by Christina Ellison

Early State Formation in Central Madagascar: An Archaeological Survey of Western Antsiranana (Mamani 44) edited by Henry T. Wright

COMING SOON

To order these and other UMMA publications visit www.lsa.umich.edu/umma (click on Publications) or email us at: umma-pubs@umich.edu

New in 2007 from Museum of Anthropology Publications

New Exhibits

New in the Exhibit Museum is “Men of Metal: Ancient African Metalurgy,” a display chronicling the labor- and resource-intensive metalworking process. African iron metallurgies date back to 4000 years ago in the south Sahara, and 3000 years ago in the great lakes region of east Africa. This display, featuring artifacts from Africa, including iron spears and jewelry, was curated by Augustin Ntou, Curator of West African archaeology.

Find us on the Web at www.lsa.umich.edu/umma
and American students including UM student near Lake Huaypo. Based on these pilot studies, Allison selected Yuthu, a small agricul
School, the Department of Anthropology, and the Museum
research was funded by Fulbright IIE, Rackham Graduate
places to provision domestic and ritual activities. Allison's
early villages in the Andes relied on resources from distant
ested in long-distance interactions and the degree to which
social, economic, and ritual life. She is especially inter -
these excavations to understand the nature of Formative
complex history and spatial organization of the community.

Dr. Laura Motta

Dr. Laura Motta (PhD, University College London) has joined the Museum this year as a Research Associate. Dr. Motta is an archaeobotanist who uses botanical evidence to explore spatio
emerge and state economies in the vicinity of Rome during the Italian Iron Age (first millen
um 1200–700 BC). Dr. Motta will be offering a hands-on course in archaeobotanical techniques to under-
graduate and graduate students in winter 2008.

We welcome Judy Hartuff to the Museum Staff! Judy joined us this month to replace Donna Steiner (see p. 2) in the front office. Judy comes with many years of experience in the private sector, and enormous skills in office management, computer databases, and accounting. We are delighted to welcome her to our Museum community. Stop by and see hello when you are next in the area.

UMMA Newsletter — Fall, 2007

Find us on the Web at www.lsa.umich.edu/umma
In 2008, the Museum will celebrate its 80th anniversary in the Ruthven Building, shown here in 1928.