ARCHAEOLOGY ABROAD
THE GUIDE TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE THE UK

EMAIL UPDATE No 7 – July 2009

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR DIGGING ABROAD

EXCAVATIONS AND FIELD SCHOOLS

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GUIDANCE NOTES FOR DIGGING ABROAD

Archaeology Abroad provides information about archaeological excavation and field school opportunities outside the UK suitable for both experienced and inexperienced participants. Projects are listed alphabetically by country, except for the Caribbean countries, which appear under a banner heading of 'Caribbean'. Please note that projects in Guam and Hawaii appear under the USA. Each entry gives a summary of the information provided to us by directors and organisers. Many excavations are willing to accept people with little or no previous fieldwork experience, but even so, to make the most of your trip abroad we strongly recommend familiarising yourself with basic archaeological techniques before committing to joining a project in another country, frequently at substantial cost. Further information about excavations, training digs, local archaeological and historical societies (some of which run their own excavations at weekends etc) in the UK, can be obtained from the Council for British Archaeology or from Current Archaeology.

Archaeology Abroad is not able to inspect or vet the projects it lists, but aims to publish information only from reputable professional archaeologists and institutions. Participants join any excavation or field school at their own risk and Archaeology Abroad cannot be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury sustained by anyone joining a project it lists. Projects may be cancelled or details changed without notice – so do verify all arrangements with excavation directors or organisers in advance and do not go without being formally accepted.

CHOOSING A PROJECT

The attractions of joining an excavation or field school abroad are numerous and varied. Perhaps you're a newcomer to field archaeology looking for travel, adventure, the chance to meet new people and experience new situations and cultures. If you are a student of archaeology, ancient history, anthropology, classics or related subjects, you may be required to undertake fieldwork as part of your university course. In this event, you should check with your tutor or college that the excavation you intend to join will meet the course requirements. Whether this is your first taste of archaeological fieldwork or you are a seasoned digger with considerable site experience and skills to offer, it is important to ask yourself what you are seeking to gain from the experience. Find out as much information as possible about the project or projects which interest you before making an application, choose carefully, be realistic and well-prepared. Set out below is some advice and tips which should help you to make the right choice.

Whilst some projects are run specifically as field schools and offer a fully-structured programme of fieldwork training and tuition, at most sites you will be expected to "learn on the job" from experienced team members and staff, supplemented by varying degrees of on- and off-site learning such as lectures, finds processing, laboratory work, etc. The majority of projects have a minimum age for participants of 18 years, but a few projects can accept younger applicants. There will normally be a minimum length of stay, which can be as little as one week, or you may need to commit to a two- or three-week field school session, or to the entire season.

Participation fees also vary but can be quite high depending what is being offered and whether a project is self-funding, part- or wholly-supported by a university, research foundation or other funding source, or is state-run and financed. Be sure to choose something you can afford, and don't forget that you will also need to meet the costs of your train or air fares, which are not normally included in the participation fees. Undergraduates may be able to apply to their college for financial assistance with their dig expenses. As a subscriber to Archaeology Abroad you are eligible to apply for a Fieldwork Award of between £100–£200 towards your dig costs. Full details and an application form are enclosed with this bulletin or can be obtained from Archaeology Abroad.

To take part in an archaeological dig you should be fit and healthy, enjoy working as part of a team (both on and off site), and be prepared to muck-in and to put up with a few discomforts! Not all archaeology is digging, but at most excavations you will be expected to undertake varying degrees of physical labour for which you must be prepared. This may take the form of picking, shovelling and clearing spoil and heavy building rubble, (beware of blisters and aching muscles, especially in the first week!), alternatively you may be kneeling, crouching or laying in a trench undertaking careful and painstaking work for hours on end! Here are some important factors to consider when deciding which project to apply for:
• does the archaeological/historical period(s) of the site really interest you?
• distance and cost of getting to the country in which project is taking place
• distance and ease of access to the site location
• the climate – hot and dry, tropical, temperate, cool, mixed
• location – urban or rural, at high altitude, riverside or coastal, in open country, a cave
• language – do you have basic knowledge of language of the country where the project is?
• the size and type of site – large, multi-period ancient settlement, Roman villa, cave site etc
• the size of the dig team (these vary from small units of 2–3 staff and 10–12 diggers, to very large projects with 20+ staff and specialists and 70+ diggers)
• how long the project has been running; aims for the forthcoming season
• the cost of participation and what is included – eg board, lodging, daily transportation, tuition/lectures, excursions on days off, academic credits or certificate of participation
• nature/variation of the work you will be expected to undertake and degree of training given, if any
• length of the working day/week; what arrangements in place for days off eg trips, visits etc
• daily travel to and from site (car or bus ride, long trek up hilly terrain or mountain track, short walk)
• accommodation and catering arrangements – in shared rooms, camping, facilities available, self-catering or meals provided, arrangements at weekends or on days off
• what is provided and what you will need to bring (especially if camping)
• how far from the nearest bank, shops, telephone, pharmacy, doctor or dentist, etc.

APPLYING TO JOIN AN EXCAVATION OR FIELD SCHOOL

Many projects now have their own websites and, if so, you may also be able to apply online. Remember to print out a copy of your application and copies of responses from the organiser(s), including your notice of acceptance which you should take with you. If applying by post, it is helpful to include a self-addressed envelope and pre-paid postal coupon (not stamps). Give your application the same care that you would give a job application; summarise clearly your education, skills, language abilities and previous archaeological experience, if any. State if you have any particular dietary or other health requirements or any other special requirements and check whether these can be accommodated.

In general, the earlier you apply for a place, the better your chances of being accepted and the more time you will have to make all the necessary arrangements for joining the project. If the final application deadline for a project which interests you is close or has passed, contact the director or organisers to check if all spaces have been filled. You may be lucky if the project is not full or, if not, it might be possible to go onto a waiting list in case someone drops out. Equally, should you be accepted on an excavation and then find you are not able to go, it is essential that you inform the director immediately, so that a replacement can be found. Once accepted on an excavation you can begin to make your own arrangements.

GETTING ORGANISED

Passport and Visa
Check your passport is valid for when you intend to be away or apply straightaway if you do not already have one. Some countries require passports to be valid for a period of time following intended departure home. Directors/organisers usually indicate whether or not a visa is required, especially if there is a long lead time, which is the case for certain countries. Depending on your nationality and where you are going, it is advisable to check visa regulations with the relevant embassy well in advance. Sometimes a visa can be bought at the airport on your arrival at your destination, in which case ensure you have the correct money available in the local currency. Those intending to travel to the USA should note that from January this year it became necessary to register online under the new Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) rules at least 72 hours prior to travel. Check online, with your travel agent or contact your nearest US Embassy.

Travel arrangements
Many projects will give advice about travel to their country and as well as to the site location. Once accepted on a project, you will be informed what arrangements are in place for meeting and transfer from point of entry to the dig site or base, or whether you will be responsible for making your own way. Ensure you know exactly where you are going, arm yourself with a map, guidebook, phrase book and contact information in case you are delayed or experience any problems in reaching the pick-up point at a pre-arranged time or arriving on an agreed date.
Search out the best deals and decide whether you want to do some travelling before joining the excavation or continue travelling once your time there is complete. If so, make sure you have student international travel card, youth hostel membership, and driving licence in case you intend to hire a vehicle. For some of the best travel advice and deals, we recommend UK subscribers contact STA Travel – visit their website at www.statravel.co.uk

Insurance
Archaeology Abroad recommends the specialist Insurance for Archaeologists policies available through Towergate Risk Solutions Fareham (TRS Fareham), which are also endorsed by the Council for British Archaeology and the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The staff in their dedicated Archaeology & Heritage Section have unrivalled knowledge and experience of the particular needs of those taking part in archaeological fieldwork and offer an excellent cover and claims service. Cover is available for single trip or on an annual basis, and includes medical, repatriation, cancellation and curtailment cover, public liability, legal expenses, baggage and money etc. Where necessary, policies can be tailor-made to your specific needs or circumstances. For further information, contact Tariq Mian or Michelle Cannon on 01329–826260, email fareham@towergate.co.uk or go to www.towergate.co.uk/archaeology

UK citizens should also have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) which entitles the holder to receive healthcare during a stay in an EEA country or Switzerland. The EEA consists of the European Union countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. You can apply for an EHIC card by phone (0845 606 2030), by post (application forms available from Post Offices or write to EHIC Applications, PO Box 1115, Newcastle upon Tyne NE99 1SW), or online at: www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAdviceForTravellers/fs/en Information about the EHIC card is also available in a very useful booklet entitled "Health Advice for Travellers" available at Post Offices or online, which is packed with helpful information about travelling abroad. If you do get a hard copy of this booklet, keep it safe, preferably with your passport and EHIC, and carry it with you when travelling in the EU.

Health and safety
Please advise the project organisers if you are taking medication or you have any particular health problems, allergies, asthma, etc. If you are asthmatic, be sure to take your inhaler and at least one spare canister. Anti-tetanus vaccination is strongly advised for those undertaking archaeological fieldwork and is obligatory on many sites. Check which vaccinations are needed for the country you are visiting well ahead of time as some courses, such as anti-malarial tablets, need to be started several weeks before departure. It is also advisable to have a dental check-up before you leave, particularly if you are going to an isolated site. Advice on medical matters can normally be obtained from your student or local health centres or from your General Practitioner. Detailed advice for travellers can also be found at: http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Travel-immunisation/Pages/Introduction.aspx

Excavation sites can pose a number of hazards - deep trenches, unstable balks and deposits, shoring and scaffolding and the spoil heap! The project is responsible for keeping the worksite safe and should provide safety instructions and supply suitable safety equipment (eg: hardhats), well-maintained tools that are safe to use, and a fully-equipped first aid kit. However, dig participants should heed the possible dangers, take note of safety advice, be sensible and take care when working on site and using potentially dangerous equipment.

Clothing and equipment
Find out what equipment you are expected to bring and ask about the appropriate clothing for the country (both on- and off-site), the climate and the terrain. If you are camping you will need to know what equipment is provided and what you will be expected to bring with you. Plan ahead and consider taking the following: a 4-inch forged trowel (WHS or Marshalltown trowels are the best) available to order online from the Past Horizons’ Toolstore at www.pasthorizons.com/shop/, gloves (a worn-in leather pair highly recommended), kneeling pad, lightweight luggage, maps/guidebooks/phrase book, personal first aid kit, a small backpack to take to the site each day, water bottle, sturdy footwear, a waterproof jacket, a sweater, sun hat, sunglasses, torch, batteries, sunscreen, mosquito repellent, note book, camera, and a good book! In Muslim countries women should wear loose long-sleeved shirts or blouses, long trousers or skirts and a headscarf when visiting a mosque.

Money
It is recommended that you take a certain amount of local currency (enough to cover your entry visa if needed, local travel on arrival, food, incidentals and any balance of participation fees due). Take the rest in travellers’ cheques, plus a bank or credit card. In both cases, check what is acceptable in your destination country and the charges likely to be made for exchanging foreign currency. Ensure you have international emergency phone numbers for your bank/credit or debit card company in case of loss or theft. Remember that even if you have paid your field school or excavation project fees from home, you will need personal ‘pocket money’ once on the dig, to cover personal shopping, social life, excursions, telephone, laundry costs, emergencies etc.
BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Be sure you are entirely happy with all the arrangements. If not, contact the organisers for clarification on any outstanding questions before you depart. Check you have all your documents, eg: passport, visa, airline or other travel tickets, insurance documents, EHIC, site information (including address and contact details), maps, immunisation certificates, together with your acceptance letter or email. Make two sets of photocopies of the main page of your passport, airline tickets, insurance policy and instructions, EHIC, list of travellers’ cheques numbers and telephone contact numbers. Put one set in your luggage, separate from the originals. Give the other copies to someone at home (ideally a family member) so that you can contact them for help if you lose any or all of these. If you do lose your original documents, or they are stolen, you will be able to replace them far more quickly if you have made photocopies. Check you have entered your next-of-kin details into your passport. It is also important to give family members or close friends details on how you can be contacted (phone, fax, email, mobile).

Please remember to pack your trowel and other similar equipment in your checked-in baggage and not in your hand luggage, otherwise you are likely to encounter problems at the airport!

SAFETY ABROAD

If you or your family are at all concerned about the political situation and safety in the country or region in which you propose to work, particularly in view of present circumstances, contact the appropriate department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at www.fco.gov.uk. British nationals who get into difficulty abroad can seek help from the nearest British diplomatic mission 24 hours a day. Where there is no British representative in a country, British nationals may instead contact the nearest EU Mission in that country. If anything goes badly wrong, contact your relatives and friends at home so they can take appropriate action within the UK.

Participation in an excavation can be rewarding and fun, but it can also be difficult at times. You will be part of a team in which co-operation is essential for a successful outcome. A keen interest in the excavation is important. Don’t be afraid to ask questions, request help when needed or ask for additional responsibilities. Patience and a cheerful outlook will help to enrich your experience. Have a great time and send us your feedback!

Wendy Rix Morton
Honorary Editor
arch.abroad@ucl.ac.uk

Archeology: What it is, where it is, and how to do it by Paul Wilkinson

A very useful basic introduction to archaeology.

Mick Aston

It tells you everything you need to know in order to decide what sort of archaeology you’d like to learn more about. It doesn’t just deal with digging; instead it introduces you to aerial photograhpy, geophysics, surveying, recording, finds processing, soil science and how to take samples - in fact all the subjects you’ll need to master if you want to become a field archaeologist.

It’s well written and beautifully illustrated in full colour throughout.

Francis Pryor

Get your copy today from:

Archaeopress
Gordon House
276 Banbury Road
Oxford OX2 7ED
bar@archaeopress.com
01865 311 914
BARBUDA, WEST INDIES

BARBUDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL

Directors  
Dr Sophia Perdikaris, Dr Reg Murphy, Matthew Brown and Cory Look  
(Brooklyn College, City University of New York)

Period  
Saladoid (c 200 BC – AD 500)

Dates  
4 – 24 January 2010

Apply by  
5 September 2009

Experience  
No previous experience required

Academic credit  
Three credits available from Brooklyn College

Contact Dr Perdikaris for tuition details at: sophiap@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Minimum stay  
Full season

Minimum age  
18

Language  
English

Costs  
$3400, excluding international and local airfare

Board & lodging  
Accommodation and meals will be provided by the field school. Student housing will be in rented houses, cottages or guest houses. Three meals per day will be provided seven days a week. Meals will consist of a light breakfast, bag lunch, and dinners will be a combination of fresh local cuisine and beach barbecues.

NOTE: We apologize but specialized dietary needs may not be met. Please contact us if you have further questions.

Vaccination/Insurance  
Check with organiser

Visa  
Check with organiser

Barbuda is a small island located north of Antigua, on the outskirts of the Leeward Island chain. This limestone island is surrounded by fringing and barrier reefs teeming with extensive marine resources. Barbuda offers a high water table and rich fertile soil. It has been a long held assumption that prehistoric Amerindians bypassed these smaller islands for the larger volcanic islands. Research results from our last field season have proven otherwise. Barbuda is an important prehistoric settlement for migrating Amerindians c 200 BC – AD 500. The Strombus Line, a continuous shell deposit over one meter thick, dates back over 4,000 years and stretches across the southeastern coast of the island. Numerous midden mounds scattered across the island offer limitless potential for future excavation sites. Artifacts excavated from our last field season resulted in the opening of Barbuda's first museum.

The goal of the Barbuda Field School is to understand the island’s prehistory through the framework of historical ecology. We will bring together a variety of skilled experts from various disciplines to provide an international and dynamic learning environment. Students will have the opportunity to learn from these instructors; they will gain valuable experience in excavation methods, land surveying, GPS mapping, and artifact and faunal analysis.

This project is a collaboration between Brooklyn College Archaeology, National Parks of Antigua Barbuda, and the Barbudan Council.

Contact  
Cory Look, Dept of Anthropology/Archaeology, Brooklyn College, 2900 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11210, USA.

Tel  
+1 718 951 4192

Email  
barbudafielldeschool@gmail.com
FIJI ISLANDS

FIJI’S ANCIENT SEAFARERS, ROVE PENINSULA, VITI LEVU

The first humans to live on these idyllic tropical islands more than 3,000 years ago were the most accomplished seafarers of their time. Known as the Lapita people, they routinely crossed more than 1,500 km of ocean long before people in other parts of the world sailed one-tenth that far. Their earliest human settlement in Fiji is on beautiful Bourewa Beach overlooking one of the broadest fringing coral reefs in the islands. Greenstone tools and pottery shards with intricate Lapita designs have been found here, as well as obsidian traded all the way from Papua New Guinea. Volunteers can help Dr Patrick Nunn excavate this exciting site, and explore others nearby, to help understand the cultural history of the region.

Rove Peninsula is a scenic peninsula fringed by a vast mangrove forest on one side and white sand beaches with coral reefs on the other. You will work with members of your team and Pacific Islander university students to excavate at Bourewa Beach and other nearby sites, taking down the layers and sifting sediments to find intriguing evidence of the Lapita culture. You may also spend time searching out other sites and using other archaeological techniques. An exciting part of your expedition will be living and interacting with local villagers, who are eager to share their colourful culture with you, starting with a bowl of mildly soporific kava. In your recreational time you can visit Natadola Beach, rated one of the ten most beautiful in the world, and explore the grassy landscape on horseback for beautiful views of the ocean.

The villagers of Vusama will welcome you into their gracious hospitality. Some team members will stay with village families, sharing a bedroom with two simple beds, while others will stretch out on mattresses in the local community hall. Bucket showers and pit toilets are the norm, and a village generator supplies electricity each evening. Villagers will prepare breakfasts and dinners to serve in the community hall, and lunches to pack into the field. Local fare includes bounteous seafood, ranging from mangrove lobsters to fried fish, and root crops like taro and cassava. Alcohol is not permitted.

Call Earthwatch on +44 (0) 1865 318831 and talk to one of their friendly expedition advisors if you would like more information.
FRANCE

CHANTIERS HISTOIRE AND ARCHITECTURE MEDIEVALES (CHAM)
(MEDIEVAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY VOLUNTEER PROJECTS)

The French non-profit making organisation, CHAM, was created in 1980. Its aim is to protect some of the many historical buildings which are suffering from neglect and which are in great need of conservation work. It organises long-term and seasonal heritage conservation volunteer projects and youth and heritage training sessions in France (both metropolitan and overseas territories), as well as abroad. The organisation is officially recognised by the three French ministries responsible for youth, education and culture.

Over the twenty years of its existence CHAM has contributed to the restoration of more than fifty French historical sites – castles and forts, churches and abbeys, towers, ancient streets etc. These monuments are mainly 12th to 16th century, though some are from later periods. Most are listed French Historic Monuments and all are open to the public. CHAM operates on these sites at the request of those public authorities which own them. Each project is approved by the relevant state bodies dealing with heritage and youth. The organisation has won prizes from the French National Heritage Commission for volunteer conservation projects on twelve of these sites.

Youth volunteer projects gather together twenty or more young people motivated to work on the restoration of a heritage site for periods of 2 to 4 weeks. Their work involves masonry, stone-cutting, site clearing, archaeological surveys and excavations, led by trained and experienced CHAM project officers. As well as work, these projects involve group life and discovery of the local area. Each year CHAM organises around a dozen such projects in metropolitan France.

For details of the 2009 projects in Alsace, Normandy, Burgundy, the Loire, Lorraine and Rhones Alps, visit the CHAM website (English version available).

Contact  
Association CHAM, 5–7, rue Guilleminot, F-75014 Paris, France.

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<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>+33 1 43 20 46 82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cham.asso.fr/">www.cham.asso.fr/</a></td>
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MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE

Each year the French Ministry of Culture publishes *Chantiers archéologiques ouverts aux bénévoles*, a directory of French excavations that accept volunteers aged 18 years and over. It includes accommodation details and a list of archaeological districts (*Services régionaux de l’archéologie*) with contact names, postal and email addresses. Information on the many archaeological excavations planned throughout the country annually can also be accessed via the Ministry of Culture website (see below). The first link is direct to the fieldwork opportunities. Information about French archaeology can be find on second link, (in french, few documents in english).

Contact  
Ministère de la Culture, Direction de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Sous-direction ARCHETIS, 182 rue Saint-Honoré, 75033 Paris Cedex 01, France.

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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
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**TIBERIAS EXCAVATIONS, SEA OF GALILEE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Director</strong></th>
<th>Dr Katia Cytryn-Silverman (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
<td>Roman, Byzantine, Early Islamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dates</strong></td>
<td>10 October – 5 November 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply by</strong></td>
<td>20 September 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td>No previous experience required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum stay</strong></td>
<td>One work week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum age</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>$400–$500 depending on length of stay. Fee includes meals during the working week (Sunday breakfast to Thursday dinner), as well as field trips and lectures. Check full details with organisers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Board &amp; lodging</strong></td>
<td>The expedition will stay at the Aviv Hotel, 10 mins on foot from the site, along the promenade of the Sea of Galilee and 5 minutes from the city centre of Tiberias. All rooms have private bathroom, TV, air-conditioning and a balcony. Single or double rooms available. Camping options also possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insurance/ Medical</strong></td>
<td>Check with project organisers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visa</strong></td>
<td>Check with project organisers</td>
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Tiberias constitutes one of the most important archaeological sites in Israel, relevant to the cultural and religious heritage of the three monotheistic faiths. The city was founded in the year 19 CE by King Herod Antipas as a Roman city in Jewish Palestine. The city grew and flourished under Roman and Byzantine rule, reaching its peak during the Early Islamic period, as the capital of the province Jund al-Urdunn. Tiberias was repeatedly ravaged and damaged by earthquakes during the 11th century, resulting in its final decline at the time of the Crusader conquest in the year 1099 CE.

Several excavations have been conducted in Tiberias during the past fifty years. A new project began in March 2009 dealing with a colonnaded structure in the heart of the ancient city, partially excavated in the 1950s by B Ravani and later by Y Hirschfeld. The building, which was originally dubbed as a covered market, has recently been restudied by Dr Cytryn-Silverman, who suggests that the structure is not a market, but rather a congregational mosque dating from the Early Islamic period. The main focus of the March season was to excavate squares in and adjacent to the colonnaded building, defining its phases, dating and architecture. Initial data was retrieved during the season, prompting further research questions dealing with the building, its phases and its urban context. These questions will be the focus of our work in the October–November season. Special finds from the first season include: a mosaic floor, an Arabic inscription, complete oil lamps and hundreds of coins. Volunteers will be provided with a series of field trips in addition to lectures by Israeli archaeologists.

**Useful reading**

**Contact**  
Shulamit Miller, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mt Scopus, Jerusalem 91905, Israel.

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**Email** tiberiasexcavation@yahoo.com
ITALY

MARSILIANA D’ALBEGNA PROJECT, GROSSETO, TUSCANY

Director
Dr Andrea Camilli
(Supervision to Archaeological Properties in Tuscany)
Professor Andrea Zifferero
(Dept of Archaeology, University of Siena)

Sponsors
As above

Period
Etruscan

Dates
31 August – 1 November 2009

Apply by
Until spaces filled

Experience
Previous experience not required

Minimum stay
One week

Minimum age
18 years

Language
Italian/English/French

Cost
€80 for one week, €150 for two weeks, €200 for three weeks. Price includes full board and lodging, transfer by car, workshop and excursions. Participants are required to pay a €20 annual membership fee, which includes insurance.

Board & lodging
Participants are housed in the ‘La Speranza’ holiday farm house, situated in Marsiliana d’Albegna, in flats with 4 or 5 beds, kitchen, bathroom, air conditioning/heating, soccer field and swimming pool. All meals will be provided. See below for equipment to bring.

Insurance
Site insurance included as part of membership fee, but participants should also arrange their own travel/medical insurance.

Vaccination
Tetanus certificate required

Visa
Not required for US or EU citizens

Since 2002, the Project has contributed to the rediscovery of this important Proto-historic and Etruscan site, already known for its rich and large necropolis brought to light by Prince Corsini at the beginning of the 1900s. The Project has defined the settlement system of ager caletranus. Survey in the Poggio del Castello has identified a site, dating to the Final Bronze Age. After the gap referring to the Iron Age, the site was then occupied by a settlement linked to the necropoli of Banditella, Perazzeta and Macchiabuia. The discovery of dwellings on top of the hills located south-east of Poggio del Castello, dating to the final Orientalising period and late Archaism, suggests that the settlement of Marsiliana progressively extended. After an early appropriation of the ager, evidenced by the diffusion of several orientalising mounds, the forming of settlement sites took place and led to a dense settlement pattern, whose characteristics resemble those of urban centres. Such a settlement pattern fostered the development of rural settlements in the lower Albegna Valley and commercial exchanges promoted by the nearby centre of Doganella.

During the 2009 season the following activities are planned:
(1) Excavation of an Etruscan production site located near the Albegna. This is a massive outcrop of transport amphorae from 6th century BC and waste production, contiguous to a building that has uncovered bucchero, coarseware and Etrusco-Corinthian ware;
(2) Continuation of the excavation in the “Casa delle Anfore”, a peripheral residence with central atrium, dated between the last quarter of the 6th – end of the 5th century BC. This building is divided into at least six rooms;
(3) Continuation of the survey within Corsini’s Estate: clean-up and identification of some graves not yet explored, discovery of new sites for a more precise definition of the living and funerary fabric of the Etruscan Age.

Four credits are offered by the University of Siena. Participants should bring sturdy, protective footwear, long trousers and long-sleeved shirts, cup, working gloves, insect repellent, rucksack, water bottle, and trowel. Participants can fly to Rome, Pisa or Florence airports, then take a train to Albina (Orbetello) where pick up will be arranged. Bibliography available from project organisers.

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MEXICAN MEGAFAUNA, SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, GUANAJUATO

The glyptodont, an armadillo the size of a Volkswagen, was probably a common sight in central Mexico millions of years ago. In the canyons and arroyos of the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt, Dr Oscar Carranza Castañeda (Universidad Nacional Autonoma de México) and his research team found fossils of glyptodonts and many other amazing animals. These fossils are helping to piece together a puzzle whose origin lies millions of years in the past. North and South America were not always connected, as they are today, by the Isthmus of Panama. When, exactly, Panama rose out of the sea to connect these two continents has been the subject of debate. Scientists have turned to fossils to answer this question. By dating the fossils, scientists are able to pinpoint with increasing accuracy when the bridge formed, and when animals started migrating across this land bridge in what is known as “The Great American Biotic Interchange.” Recent finds on Carranza’s project indicate that the land bridge may have been complete at least 4 million years ago, more than a million years earlier than previously thought. You can help Dr Carranza discover more clues about the effects of future climate change on modern ecosystems at this productive site.

You will help uncover fossils in the scenic mountains and valleys of Central Mexico, where, Carranza reports, there are still “zillions of fossils to be unearthed.” You will excavate specimens using brushes, ice picks, or chisels, and then plaster-jacket them for protection during transport. You will also screen-wash sediments for smaller vertebrates, photograph and sketch finds, and even help prepare some of the fossils. With more than 25 years of field experience, Carranza will bring the prehistoric landscape of Mexico to life for your team. In your free time, you can relax at the pool and catch up on your reading.

At the Hotel Parador El Cortijo, a comfortable western-style hotel with gardens and a swimming pool a short drive from San Miguel City, you’ll share a hotel room with one of your team-mates, including a private bath and reliable electricity. You’ll enjoy continental breakfasts and hearty homemade Mexican dinners at the hotel, from soup to salsa. In the field you will have sandwiches, fruit, cheese, chips, choriso and eggs, or an occasional barbecue with Carranza’s secret recipe!

Call Earthwatch on +44 (0) 1865 318831 and talk to one of their friendly expedition advisors if you would like more information.

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THAILAND

ORIGINS OF ANGKOR PROJECT, NAKHON RATCHASIMA PROVINCE, NE THAILAND

The Origins of Angkor research area comprises the very flat upper reaches of the Mun (pronounced “moon”) River system in Northeast Thailand. The countryside is sprinkled with villages, including the project site, Ban Non Wat (village of the temple mound). Rice fields dominate the landscape and are interspersed with trees and copses and there is a wide range of wild bird-life, from bee-eaters to hawks and water birds.

The small rural village of Ban Non Wat is rapidly becoming one of the most important locations for understanding indigenous societies ancestral to the Empire of Angkor. A major discovery has been the lavishly appointed Bronze Age burials (dating from about 1200 BC) suggesting a level of wealth and hierarchy in this society far beyond what has usually been assumed. In 2004, the foundations of what appears to be a huge Bronze Age building were discovered. Dr Nigel Chang and his colleagues will build on earlier investigations by uncovering more of this structure to better understand how these ancient Bronze Age people lived as well as how they died. Chang and his colleagues are also investigating the building's history beyond the excavated area to better understand the relationship between the people of prehistoric Ban Non Wat and their environment.

In the mornings your team will drive to the dig site, where you'll be given an assignment in excavating the remains of Ban Non Wat, a large mound ringed by banks and moats. You will excavate, screen, and float sediment to isolate microscopic materials, and search for human burials, food remains, pottery, metals, and other artefacts. You will then process your abundant finds at the field laboratory. The team digs under the shade of a tarp or tented roof, working with local villagers. The local people are great fun to work with, and have become knowledgeable and skilled archaeologists over the years. After a day's work, you'll drive back in time to enjoy the local market, check your e-mail, have a cold beer, take a swim, and enjoy a delicious Thai dinner.

Accommodation is at the comfortable Phimai Inn, with a large swimming pool, hot showers, conventional Western plumbing, and air-conditioned rooms. Western or Thai breakfasts and delicious Thai dinners will be served under the pavilion next to the swimming pool, and the hotel provides lunch to take to the dig site daily.

Call Earthwatch on +44 (0) 1865 318831 and talk to one of their friendly expedition advisors if you would like more information.

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Volunteers are needed to participate in a season of environmental and archaeological fieldwork in Western Sahara in October. No experience is necessary. This opportunity would suit anyone interested in learning more about archaeology, the Sahara, past environments and climate change, or just wanting to spend some time away from it all doing something different in a desert environment for a few weeks. It is likely to be of special interest to students wishing to gain experience of archaeological excavation, and environments, and/or palaeoenvironmental research. The work will be part of the ongoing Western Sahara Project. Volunteers can opt for one of the following options:

Option 1: 4 weeks (3 October – 1 November) excavating prehistoric burial monuments under the direction of experienced field archaeologists. The aim of the excavations is to (i) date the monuments, (ii) improve our general understanding of prehistoric populations and funerary practices in this region, and (iii) infer information about diet, mobility and migration in prehistoric populations from trace element analysis of teeth and bones. Six volunteers are required in total for the excavations.

Option 2: 3 weeks (10 October – 1 November) of reconnaissance survey work aimed at (i) identifying and recording new archaeological sites, principally burial complexes, and (ii) identifying and sampling key environmental sites for laboratory analysis and the reconstruction of past environments. We are looking for 7–12 volunteers for reconnaissance work.

The ultimate aim of the project is to combine archaeological and environmental data to understand how prehistoric populations responded and adapted to past changes in climate, specifically the desiccation of the Sahara some 5000 years ago.

The fieldwork will take place in the Northern Sector of the territory of Western Sahara, and travel to the field will be via Algeria. Costs (see below) are higher this year due to the stronger Euro (our field expenses are paid in Euros) and the impact of the economic downturn on our usual funding streams. However, given the time in the field and the unique nature of this opportunity, we believe this still offers very good value for money, with costs comparing favourably with those of adventure holidays and other volunteer schemes.
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