



AIA-MN Newsletter

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The AIA-MN Newsletter is a publication of the Minnesota Society of the Archaeological Institute of America

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Spring, 2008

SOCIETY UPDATE

Happy New Year! We have an exciting slate of lectures for the spring on such diverse topics as the Romans in the eastern Mediterranean, the medieval Irish, and the ancient Maya. Details follow below. We hope you can join us!

President Michael Nelson, vice-president Mireille Lee, and former president Anne Salisbury have just returned from the Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in Chicago. We all attended the AIA Council, at which we were brought up to date on the activities of the national organization. We are pleased to report that the AIA is strong and growing in new directions, especially in terms of international outreach. Please feel free to talk with Michael, Mireille, or Anne if you have any specific questions about the national organization.

Later this spring, we will be looking for nominations to run for office in our local society. If you would like to nominate someone, please let us know (self-nominations welcome!). We will send details about the election later in the spring.

As a reminder, we now have a new website hosted at Macalester College. You can find all the latest information about the AIA-MN, as well as contact information for all the officers, at: <http://www.macalester.edu/aia-mn>. Please feel free to send additional links and announcements to: nelsonm@macalester.edu.

UPCOMING LECTURES

We are pleased to announce three exciting lectures this spring. On Thursday, February 7, we will host our first annual Reports from the Field. For our inaugural lecture, we will have the directors of both the projects sponsored by Macalester College speak about their research. Andy Overman, Associate Professor of Classics, will speak on the site of Omrit, Israel, and Joe Rife, Associate Professor of Classics, will speak about Kenchreai, Greece. Please note that this event will take place at 6:00 pm in the John B. Davis Lecture Hall at Macalester College (1600 Grand Avenue, St. Paul; free parking at Snelling and Grand). On Thursday, March 6, Thomas Finan, Assistant Professor of Medieval Studies, University of St. Louis, will speak on The Medieval Ecclesiastical Complex at Kiltasheen, Co. Roscommon, Ireland. This talk will be at 6:00 pm in the Pillsbury Auditorium at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (2400 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis). Our last speaker for the year will be Dr. Skip Messenger, Professor of Anthropology at Hamline University, who will talk at Macalester on the current state of research in Mayan archaeology. Flyers for the spring lectures are on pp. 2-4 of this *Newsletter*.

As always, lectures are free and open to the public. We look forward to seeing you!

CONTRIBUTIONS

The AIA-MN seeks contributions from its members to support travel expenses for our speakers. Please contact any officer for more information.

6:00 PM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2008
JOHN B. DAVIS LECTURE HALL
MACALESTER COLLEGE

*Reports from the Field:
Current Research by Macalester
Faculty and Students*

Dr. J. Andrew Overman, Professor
Dr. Joseph L. Rife, Associate Professor
Classics Department
Macalester College

Synopsis:

Professors Overman and Rife will present their findings from the 2007 field seasons at the Macalester-sponsored excavations at Omrit, Israel, and Kenchreai, Greece. Omrit is the site of a well-preserved Roman temple dating to the Republican period. Kenchreai was the eastern port of the city of Corinth, that flourished during the Roman Empire. Both projects involve students and faculty from a range of disciplines, including archaeology, classics, anthropology, religious studies, art history, and geology.

About the Lecturers:

Professor Overman teaches and publishes widely on the interactions between Christians and Jews in the Greco-Roman world. Professor Rife specializes in the archaeology, history, and literature of the eastern Mediterranean during the Roman period.

Directions to Macalester:

Macalester is located at the corner of Grand Ave. and Snelling Ave. in St. Paul. Free parking is available on campus and in adjacent lots. The John B. Davis Lecture Hall is located in the Ruth Stricker Dayton Campus Center on the lower level. For driving directions and link to a campus map, please visit: www.macalester.edu/about/directions.html

Dinner at Shish Restaurant (1668 Grand Ave.) will follow the lecture.
RSVP to Mireille Lee, leem@macalester.edu, 651/696-6853.

6:00 PM, THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2008
PILLSBURY AUDITORIUM
MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

*The Medieval Ecclesiastical
Complex at Kiltasheen, Co.
Roscommon, Ireland*

Dr. Thomas Finan
Assistant Professor of Medieval Studies
University of St. Louis

Synopsis:

In 2002 Dr. Finan began a long term research and training project analyzing the medieval parish churches in the Diocese of Elphin, in Co. Roscommon. In 2005, as part of that survey, excavations began at the medieval ecclesiastical complex at Kiltasheen. The complex includes a medieval parish church, a medieval cemetery, a kiln, earthen fortifications and several other unidentified structures. Initial geophysical surveys of the site revealed a complex palimpsest of occupation layers, including what appeared to be prehistoric evidence of settlement. The first season of excavations in 2005 confirmed the initial geophysical survey by revealing the walls of the medieval parish church, the foundations of a medieval fortification and cemetery, and substantial evidence of Neolithic settlement under the cemetery and fortification. For more information, visit: www.instituteofirisharchaeology.com

About the Lecturer:

Thomas Finan is Assistant Professor of Medieval Studies at the University of St. Louis, St. Louis MO. His primary research interests include the history and archaeology of Gaelic Ireland, thirteenth and fourteenth century bardic poetry, the history and theology of the Gaelic church in medieval Ireland and the ideology of nationalism in medieval Ireland. Dr. Finan is director of the Settlement in the Medieval Diocese of Elphin research project. The goals of this long-term project are to identify the local parish churches in the medieval diocese of Elphin, Co. Roscommon, Ireland, to survey the extant remains, and to establish the form and function of those individual churches with the diocese and wider medieval Irish church.

**Dinner at Christos Greek Restaurant will follow the lecture.
RSVP to Mireille Lee, leem@macalester.edu, 651/696-6853.**

6:00 PM, THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2008
JOHN B. DAVIS LECTURE HALL
MACALESTER COLLEGE

*The Ancient Maya:
What We Thought We Knew,
What We Think We Know, and
What We Would Like to Know*

Dr. Lewis “Skip” Messenger
Professor of Anthropology
Hamline University

Synopsis:

Our perceptions of the nature of ancient Maya civilization have undergone dramatic transformations since they were first brought to our attention. More recently the ancient Maya have been represented with yet another “twist” as seen in movies like Mel Gibson’s, *Apocalypto*. Following a long tradition of research and publishing articles on the ancient Maya, the August 2007 National Geographic had yet another lead cover article featuring them. What is the current “conventional wisdom” about the ancient Maya? This illustrated talk will attempt to bring us “up to speed” as far as what we understand what that ancient Maya civilization may have been like.

About the Lecturer:

Skip Messenger is Professor of Anthropology at Hamline University. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, he has taught and published widely on the archaeology of complex societies, tropical food-producing systems, cultural ecology and environmental change in Middle America and Southeast Asia. He is the president of the Maya Society of Minnesota:
<http://www.hamline.edu/mayasociety/>

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www.macalester.edu/about/directions.html

**Dinner at Shish Restaurant (1668 Grand Ave.) will follow the lecture.
RSVP to Mireille Lee, leem@macalester.edu, 651/696-6853.**



AIA-MN
Classics Department
Macalester College
1600 Grand Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105



Schedule for the Spring, 2008 Archaeology Lecture Series:

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Andy Overman, Professor of Classics, Macalester College, Director, Excavations at Omrit
Joe Rife, Assistant Professor of Classics, Macalester College, Director, Kenchreai Excavations

Reports from the field

6:00 PM, John B. Davis Lecture Hall, Macalester College

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Thomas Finan, Assistant Professor of Medieval Studies, University of St. Louis
The Medieval Ecclesiastical Complex at Kiltasheen, Co. Roscommon, Ireland

6:00 PM, Pillsbury Auditorium, Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Thursday, April 3, 2008

Skip Messenger, Professor of Anthropology, Hamline University
*The Ancient Maya: What We Thought We Knew, What We Think We Know, and What We
Would Like to Know*

6:00 PM, John B. Davis Lecture Hall, Macalester College