



# La Sierra Digs

Newsletter of the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology | HMS Richards Divinity School | La Sierra University | Vol. 7:2 Spring 2019

## CNEA Associates Receive Archaeology Awards

*Douglas Clark*

Students, faculty, administrators, and volunteers at CNEA have received several impressive awards over the past few months. These range from travel scholarships to recognition awards to research grants. The following students received these awards:

**Jaime Bennett** (MA student) – Foundation for Biblical Archaeology travel scholarship to attend the ASOR (American Schools of Oriental Research) annual meeting last November in Denver

**Betty Adams** (MA student) – Pierre and Patricia Bikai month-long research fellowship to study more about cosmetic palettes at the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman, Jordan

**Nicole Castanon** (MA student) – excavation grant from ASOR to help with expenses for participation in the CNEA excavations this summer at the Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP)

**Andressa Pujol Leitzke** (recent graduate) – Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) award for this summer's excavations at Balu'a

Inaugurated this year at the La Sierra University Homecoming Weekend, CNEA Archaeology Awards were given to three individuals who have contributed to the growth and prosperity of archaeology at the university. These include:

**Dr. Randal Wisbey** – university president, long-time supporter, site visitor, cheerleader

**Dr. Audrey Shaffer** – veteran of 44 excavation seasons and long-time volunteer at CNEA

**Dr. Lawrence Geraty** – pioneer archaeologist, beginning field-work in the 1960s, former president of La Sierra, and Associate Director of CNEA

A Versacare Foundation grant of \$10,000 was awarded to co-directors **Kent Bramlett**, **Monique Vincent**, and **Friedbert Ninow** for the Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP) excavations at Khirbat al-Balu'a this summer in Jordan.

**Dr. Monique Vincent**, CNEA Publications Manager and Assistant Professor of History at Walla Walla University, received a Faculty Development Grant from Walla Walla University for the BRAP 2019 excavations.

**Dr. Douglas Clark**, along with other American, Italian, and Jordanian co-directors of the Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP) are scheduled to receive a second round of grants via SCHEP (Sustainable Cultural Heritage through Engagement of Local Communities Project), a USAID project implemented by ACOR. The three-year grant, renewed annually, will support continued work to establish this regional archaeological museum in Madaba, Jordan.

*Wisbey, Shaffer, and Geraty receive their awards at Homecoming*



Acevedo at BASLA	2
Collaboration with the Getty Villa	2
Summer Fun	2
PNW ASOR Mtg	2
Homecoming	3
Holy Land Tour	3
Display Case	3

11<sup>th</sup> Annual Archaeology Discovery Weekend • Nov 16-17, 2019

SAVE THE DATE!

# Ancient Synagogues and Churches in the Galilee

<https://lasierra.edu/cnea/discovery-weekend/>

spend the afternoon with the class of six second-year UCLA students and their teacher Dr. Julia Baker, professional conservator from Pennsylvania. A fine potluck lunch, made by the class, was followed by the full afternoon lab class. The UCLA students were learning about creating

impressions and used several interesting ceramic seals from our collections lab, as well as incised metal weights. Using various materials and approaches, they experimented with what works on these artifacts without affecting them.

## Acevedo Presentation to BASLA

*Douglas Clark*

Dawn Acevedo, Curatorial Assistant at CNEA, made a presentation at the Biblical Archaeological Society-Los Angeles (BASLA) on 5 April. Dawn's MA thesis for La Sierra provided the subject matter: circular, columned architectural features (tholos) with a long history stretching from the Bronze Age into the modern world, with a focus on use by Herod the Great. This followed two conference presentations on the topic, one for Archaeology Discovery Weekend (ADW) in 2016 and one for the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research in Denver last fall. La Sierra is fortunate to enjoy a long-standing cooperation with BASLA in providing lectures for their meetings and in their co-sponsorship of Archaeology Discovery Weekend each November.

## Collaborative Research with the Getty Villa

*Douglas Clark*

Faculty, staff, students, and volunteers at CNEA have long enjoyed a mutually beneficial if informal relationship with the Getty Villa. Villa staff have been on campus to provide workshops and we have attended workshops there. We have also collaborated in the development of our recording systems. In addition, over the past several years students in the UCLA/Getty Villa conservation program have used artifacts from CNEA collections in their educational process, applying best practices in preservation to them.

On 23 April Dawn Acevedo and Doug Clark returned, along with MA students Jaimie Bennett and Nicole Castanon, to

## CNEA Summer Adventures

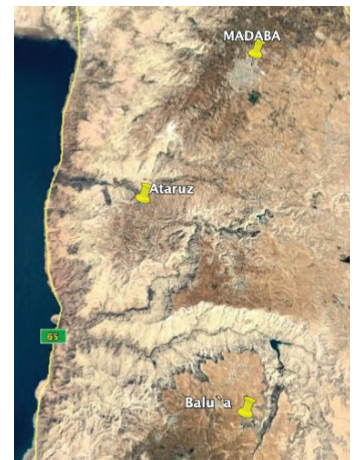
*Douglas Clark*

Summer is just around the corner and a number of CNEA and CNEA-connected archaeophiles are ramping up plans for their summer archaeological adventures. Watch for reports upon their return from Jordan in the autumn issue of *La Sierra Digs*.

20 June through 2 August – The Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP) will engage approximately 40 participants including co-directors (Kent Bramlett, Monique Vincent, and Friedbert Ninow), core staff, specialists, students, volunteers, and government officials from around the US, Canada, Germany, and Jordan.

21 June through 7 July – The Khirbat Ataruz excavations, under the direction of Chang Ho Ji and in affiliation with Brigham Young University, will return to this unique Iron Age religious (cultic) site.

11-19 July – All four co-directors for the Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP) will be in Jordan together working on several aspects of this long-term, multi-faceted endeavor – Doug Clark from La Sierra; Suzanne Richard from Gannon University in Erie, PA; Andrea Polcaro from Perugia University, Italy; and Marta D'Andrea from Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, along with onsite coordinator Basem Mahamid of the Department of Antiquities office in Madaba.



## PNW Regional Conference SBL/AAR/ASOR Program

*Monique Vincent*

May 3-4 the Pacific Northwest (PNW) regional meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), the American Academy of Religion (AAR), and the American Schools of Oriental Research

(ASOR) met at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington. Monique Vincent, Assistant Professor of History at Walla Walla University and Publications Manager for the CNEA, chaired the ASOR program. The May 4 ASOR session featured a special one-hour presentation on “The Madaba Plains Project @ 50: Maintaining Best Archaeological Practices and Reinventing Biblical Archaeology” by Douglas Clark. This stimulating presentation wove together the history of one of the Middle East’s longest running archaeological projects and the changing approaches in biblical archaeology.

Gloria London also shared an MPP-related paper based on her long-time research on ceramics for the MPP—‘Umayri excavations, “Ancient Store Jars at Tall al-‘Umayri.” Monique Vincent presented “Excavating the Moabites at Khirbat al-Balu’a,” which focused on the BRAP’s renewed excavations at Balu’a since 2010.

ASOR-related abstracts are welcome for the spring 2020 PNW region annual meeting! Contact [monique.vincent@wallawalla.edu](mailto:monique.vincent@wallawalla.edu) for more information.

### Archaeology at Homecoming Weekend – April 27, 2018

*Dawn Acevedo*

This year’s Homecoming program at the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology was themed “In Pursuit of Ancient Moabites.” Approximately 60 guests enjoyed lectures from La Sierra’s own archaeologists, Dr. Kent Bramlett and Dr. Chang Ho Ji. These presentations focused on the excavations taking place in the region of ancient Moab at Khirbat ‘Ataruz and our most recent site, Khirbat al-Balu’a. Following these lectures was a momen-



### Display Case

*Jaime Bennett*

Textile production was widely practiced in the ancient world, making use of wooden looms to create wool and linen products. One popular type of loom utilized during the Iron Age (10th through 6th centuries BC) was the warp-weighted loom, which was a standing or vertical loom that only needed one person working at a time and did not require another helper to assist with the tension on the cloth beam. Standing looms required loom weights, which were fastened with the warp thread to the cloth beam, allowing the weaver to move the horizontal threads through in order to create the bolts of cloth. The loom weights pictured here provide an example of the items surviving from this industry and found in the archaeological record at Khirbat al-Balu’a during the 2017 dig season. Loom weights are typically made from clay that was either sunbaked or low-fired and have a perforation at the top, normally made with the use of a small piece of wood.

tous occasion for the Center: the presentation of the first-ever CNEA Archaeology Awards! Three awardees were honored this year for their significant support of and contributions to archaeology at La Sierra: the university’s President, Dr. Randal R. Wisbey; long-time volunteer and excavation participant, Dr. Audrey Shaffer; and President Emeritus and archaeologist, Dr. Lawrence T. Geraty. In addition to the lectures and awards, guests enjoyed refreshments under our authentic Bedouin tent as well as open house access to Moabite- and Ammonite-themed displays and our 3D immersive C.A.V.E. experience.



### Holy Land Tour – March–April 2019

*Kent Bramlett*

March 14–April 5 Larry Geraty and Kent Bramlett co-led a Loma Linda University Church tour with Pastor Randy Roberts to Israel and Egypt. The Israel segment (163 participants) focused on traditional biblical sites from the Hebrew and Christian testaments with archaeological commentary, devotionals, historical information, and evening Q&A sessions.

Those who continued on to Egypt (120) stopped to see the copper mining area of Timna, called Solomon’s Pillars. Then crossing into the Sinai, they went to St. Catherine’s Monastery. Many of the group chose to make the sunrise climb of the traditional Mt. Sinai, a cold but spectacular view. Then on to Cairo to visit the Giza Pyramids and the Great Sphinx. Further stops included Abu Simbel and a river cruise to Luxor to visit the temple of Karnak and the Valley of the Kings.

Many of the group expressed how much they enjoyed the journey, as long and strenuous as it was, and how much they had learned of biblical times and places. Plans are underway for future trips to these and other regions.



## La Sierra Digs

Editors: Monique Vincent, Douglas Clark  
Photographs: Darla Martin Tucker,  
Dawn Acevedo, Jaime Bennett, APAAME  
Map: Google Earth

Center for Near Eastern Archaeology  
HMS Richards Divinity School  
La Sierra University  
4500 Riverwalk Parkway  
(951) 785-2632 (CNEA)  
archaeology@lasierra.edu  
www.lasierra.edu/archaeology  
www.facebook.com/CNEAatLSU

La Sierra University  
Center for Near Eastern Archaeology  
4500 Riverwalk Parkway  
Riverside, CA 92505



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### 2019 Calendar of Events

20 June – 2 August 2019

BRAP Excavations at Khirbat al-Balu'a

21 June – 7 July 2019

Excavations at Ataruz

16 – 17 November 2019

Archaeology Discovery Weekend – Ancient  
Synagogues and Churches in the Region of  
the Galilee

### SUPPORT CNEA!

As this issue of La Sierra Digs makes clear, the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology at La Sierra University is on the move! And it needs your support for student travel scholarships, the new university museum, and ongoing operations. Please go online at <https://lasierra.edu/donate> and click on "Center for Near Eastern Archaeology" to make your contribution. Or contact the Office of University Advancement at (951) 785-2500. Thank you!

## Recent Discoveries

*Assembled by Monique Vincent*

### "Colossal" Ammonite Statue Excavated in Amman

Rescue excavations in Amman, Jordan, by the Department of Antiquities discovered a monumental basalt stone statue of an Ammonite king, likely from the 9th or 8th century BC. Though presenting motifs derived from Egyptian cultural traditions, the statue more closely follows Syrian practices in depicting royal symbols in a mortuary context. More about the statue and its parallel finds at <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/iron-age-ammonite-statue-says-lot-about-religion-influence-egyptians-assyrians>

### The Mesha Stele Revisited

Recent papers have contributed to a debate over the reading of a section of the Mesha Stele, a 9th century monument erected by the Moabite king Mesha at his capital at Dhiban. This section of the stone was damaged and debate has focused on whether or not the stone refers to the "House of David." Find more on the history of the stone and the new research at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/high-tech-study-of-ancient-stone-keeps-davidic-dynasty-in-disputed-inscription/>, <https://www.livescience.com/65381-mesha-stele-biblical-king.html>, or <https://www.aftau.org/news-page-archaeology?=&storyid4677=2451&ncs4677=3&erid=7886027>

### Iraq's Marshes Revived

Renewed rainfall in southern Iraq has revived its marshlands (a UNESCO world heritage site associated with the biblical Garden of Eden) that have been home to the Marsh Arabs over the centuries. Pictures and more on the challenges these marshes face at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-marshes/water-is-life-unexpected-rainfall-revives-iraqs-historic-marshlands-idUSKCN1S01VO>