

# People, Places, Projects

## THAI ARCHAEOLOGY CHALLENGE II (TAC-II)

Long-time Museum members and volunteers John and Christie Hastings will match up to \$100,000 in contributions to support publications of the Ban Chiang Project. In 1997 the Hastings established the original Thai Archaeology Challenge to support reanalysis of the metal remains and publication of the human remains from this UNESCO World Heritage Site excavated by the Museum in the 1970s. TAC-II will help publish monographs on the site's metallurgy, stratigraphy, and pottery. Contributions are payable to the "Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania" and can be sent c/o Ban Chiang Project, University of Pennsylvania Museum, 3260 South Street, Philadelphia PA 19104.



"From our many years of involvement with the Museum, we know that monographs presenting data from excavations are the primary means of preserving and disseminating the Museum's accomplishments."—John and Christie Hastings

## WARDEN GARDEN RE-OPENING

The Warden Garden in the Museum's upper courtyard facing South Street is scheduled to re-open to the public in May 2005.

## NEW FIELDWORK IN LAOS

The National Geographic Society and the National Science Foundation's high-risk archaeology program have granted Dr. Joyce White, Senior Research Scientist and Director of the Museum's Ban Chiang Project, funds to look for archaeological sites along three tributaries of the Mekong River in Laos. The Middle Mekong Archaeological Project (MMAP), scheduled for March and April 2005, will investigate the origins of agriculture and bronze metallurgy and the precursors to the Ban Chiang cultural tradition in Southeast Asia. Visit the Museum's webpage <http://www.museum.upenn.edu/mmap> for journal entries from the survey team in the field!

## PAKISTAN IN WORLD-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From April 29 to May 1 the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS)—whose U.S. office is in Museum room 507—will host the Second Biennial International Conference of Pakistan Studies in the Museum. Open to the public, this conference focuses on Pakistan's relationship to larger historical processes not only in neighboring South and Central Asia but in Asia, the Indian Ocean, and in a globalizing world. It will offer panel discussions and individual papers from current research in a variety of fields relating to the territory and peoples of Pakistan, now and in the past.

## MUSEUM CAFE DONATES PROCEEDS TO TSUNAMI RELIEF EFFORTS

The Museum Cafe, owned and operated by Bruce and Beatrice Nichols (Museum Catering Company), donated its net proceeds for the month of January to the relief efforts for the victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster. For their operating hours and daily menus, visit <http://www.upenn.edu/museum/PublicServices/museumcafe.html>.

## FBI ART THEFT TRAINING AT THE MUSEUM

On January 13, 2005, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's new Art Theft Team toured the Museum's cultural heritage collections as part of its training. Philadelphia was chosen as the training site because of the great collaborative working relationship the Philadelphia FBI Office has with the public and private art and archaeology museums and institutes in the area. The rapid deployment Art Theft Team was recently established as a result of the specialized knowledge required for art theft investigation. Investigations of art theft cases by the Philadelphia Division have resulted in the recovery of more than \$100 million in art and cultural property.

For example, in 1998 Dr. Clark Erickson of the Museum's American Section worked with Special Agent Robert Wittman to identify a stolen gold artifact of the Moche culture (Peru) confiscated in Philadelphia. This collaboration brought about a temporary Museum exhibition of the archaeological treasure prior to its return to Peru. To learn more about this artifact's cultural importance and the problem of looting worldwide visit <http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Moche/moche.html>.



Left to right: FBI Headquarters Art Theft Program Manager and Analyst Lynne Richardson; Roger Atwood, journalist and author of *Stealing History: Tomb Raiders, Smugglers, and the Looting of the Ancient World*; Dr. Clark Erickson, Associate Curator, American Section, Penn Museum; Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Goldman, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, assigned to provide prosecutorial support for the Art Theft Team; and Jane Levine, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern District of New York.

Penn. Museum

## ARCHAEOCHEMISTRY AND ANCIENT CHINESE FERMENTED BEVERAGES

Penn Museum archaeochemist Dr. Patrick E. McGovern, working with an international team of scholars, recently announced that Neolithic humans in China produced a mixed fermented beverage of rice, fruit, and honey 9,000 years ago. The team obtained this finding from chemical analyses of ancient organic remains preserved in pottery jars from the already famous Neolithic village of Jiahu, Northern China. Current evidence suggests that this Chinese beverage is even earlier than the grape wine and barley beer of the ancient Middle East. Researchers have also found and tested 3,000-year-old liquid remains of rice and millet wines preserved inside tightly lidded bronze vessels from Chinese Shang–Western Zhou dynasty tombs, including one from the ancient capital city of Anyang. Learn more at [http://www.museum.upenn.edu/new/research/Exp\\_Rese\\_Disc/masca/jiahu/jiahu.shtml](http://www.museum.upenn.edu/new/research/Exp_Rese_Disc/masca/jiahu/jiahu.shtml).



Dr. Patrick E. McGovern, Senior Research Scientist, Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology (MASCA), in his laboratory, examining and "sniffing" the 3,000-year-old liquid.