



People, Places, Projects

LANDMARK SYMPOSIUM HELD AT THE PENN MUSEUM

On March 19, 2011, the Penn Museum held a public symposium, *Reconfiguring the Silk Road: New Research on East-West Exchange in Antiquity*. This was the first major event in over 15 years to focus on the history of the Silk Road and the origins of the mysterious Tarim Basin mummies. Since the last milestone conference was held on the topic at the Penn Museum in 1996, new archaeological discoveries and scholarly advances have been made, creating a need to critically reshape the very idea of the “Silk Road.” Major topics of discussion included ancient transportation and economies, the origins of early westerners

in Central Asia, the excavations of textiles in Xinjiang, and a reinvestigation of the Tarim Basin mummies. The program was supported by the Henry Luce Foundation and the University of Pennsylvania’s Center for Ancient Studies. Publication of papers presented at the Symposium is planned.

Above, participants in the Silk Road Symposium included, from left: Richard Hodges, Victor Mair, Christopher Thornton (who delivered remarks prepared by Philip Kohl), Peter Brown, Joseph Manning, David Anthony, J.P. Mallory, Elizabeth Barber, Michael Frachetti, Wang Binghua, and Colin Renfrew.

PENN MUSEUM AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Penn Museum's largest object from Alaska—a 15-foot Umiak, or Iñupiaq boat—journeyed to the United Nations headquarters in New York City, where it took center stage in a new exhibition, *The Right to Water and Indigenous Peoples*, which ran from May 16 through June 30, 2011. The exhibition, which marked the Tenth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, highlighted water's critical relevance to indigenous peoples' cultural vitality as well as their social and economic well-being, and included contributions from indigenous film and photographic artists from all over the world.



This wooden frame boat is covered with stretched walrus hide coated with seal oil, and dates to the late 19th–early 20th century. Umiaks are still used by Iñupiaq people for hunting whales and for summer transport. (Object #29-47-5, collected by William B. Van Valin)

INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVISTS ATTEND RECEPTION AT MUSEUM

The Penn Museum Archives was honored to host a group of international film and sound archivists for a reception on November 2, 2010, to celebrate the restoration of one of the Museum's most interesting films, *Matto Grosso: The Great Brazilian Wilderness* (1931). The event coincided with the first joint annual meeting of the Association of Moving Image Archivists and the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives. The great significance of *Matto Grosso*



Showing of the *Matto Grosso: The Great Brazilian Wilderness* film.

in film production history is that it is likely the first documentary to have used synchronized sound-on-film recording in the field.

THANK YOU, PENN MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS!

On April 11, 2011, the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held at the Penn Museum. About 250 Museum volunteers offered their time and talents in many departments throughout the year. Over the previous 12 months, volunteers logged an amazing 27,456 hours of service.



Museum volunteers on the outdoor steps in the Warden Garden.
