

# Remembering Bernard Wailes

(1934–2012)

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**D**R. BERNARD WAILES was Associate Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Associate Curator Emeritus of the Penn Museum's European Archaeology Section. Bernard was born in Mawgan Porth in Cornwall, and he received his education at St. Catherine's College,

Cambridge, including his B.A. (1957), M.A. (1961), and Ph.D. (1964). He was a student of Grahame Clark, Raleigh Radford, and Nora Chadwick. Bernard joined the Anthropology Department at Penn in 1961 and served in a variety of different roles in the department and the University until his retirement in 1999. At various times he served as the graduate chair for Classical Archaeology, Ancient History, and Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World. He also served as Editor of *Expedition* from 1978 to 1987.

Bernard is well known for his excavations at the Iron Age royal site of Dún Ailinne in County Kildare, Ireland, between 1968 and 1975. Several of us were fortunate enough to be part of the original excavation teams. The grants he received from the Ford Foundation allowed him to take us on tours of interesting archaeological sites all over the country. On weekends Bernard would lead us over green hill and dale to discover megaliths, raths (fortified settlements), country churches with carved stone crosses, Bronze Age barrows, and in the evening led us in drinking Guinness in the pub. Bernard published the final results of the Dún Ailinne excavations with Susan A. Johnston in a 2007 Penn Museum monograph, *Dún Ailinne: Excavations at an Irish Royal Site, 1968–1975*.



Bernard Wailes, here at Kilcullen, Ireland, was Editor of *Expedition* magazine from 1978 to 1987.

Bernard was a champion of later European prehistory and early medieval archaeology, and he made the case that these fields had much to contribute to the broader anthropological study of social evolution. He traced his intellectual lineage to V. Gordon Childe, whom he met in the 1950s, and in 1996 he published an edited volume, *Craft Specialization and Social Evolution: In Memory of V. Gordon Childe*.

Bernard received a distinguished teaching award from the University in 1996, and all of his students remember him fondly. He was a larger-than-life figure who was a presence



Bernard Wailes supervises students in the early 1970s.

at all the departmental events and who could discuss just about anything. One of Bernard's intangible qualities was his willingness to put faith in young people whose abilities were unproven but who were eager and intellectually curious. Bernard created an inclusive, welcoming, joyful community—fostered by his irrepressible character and made real through the way that he allowed his students, graduate and undergraduate alike, to have their own meeting place in his office library, to present themselves as valued, thoughtful participants in his seminars, and to feel like their conversation with him was the most important and urgent matter at hand. He was a mentor without equal: deeply devoted to his students, thoughtful, kind, and the possessor of a wicked—and very British—sense of humor.

Bernard took a very real and personal interest in his students' research and welfare, helping out wherever he could, and continuing this same genuine friendship and interest

after we left Penn and became his peers. He visited many of us when we were carrying out dissertation research in Britain and Ireland. He did everything from lending one of us a car to taking another one of us to the emergency room. Part of Bernard's great gift was that he never stopped mentoring.

Two of us were in Ireland at a conference a few weeks ago, and a number of people told us that they would miss Bernard, and that he had left too soon. We could not agree more. Bernard, may the road rise to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. May the rains fall soft upon your fields until we meet again. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam* (May his soul be on God's right side). 🏠

*The authors are former students of Bernard Wailes.*

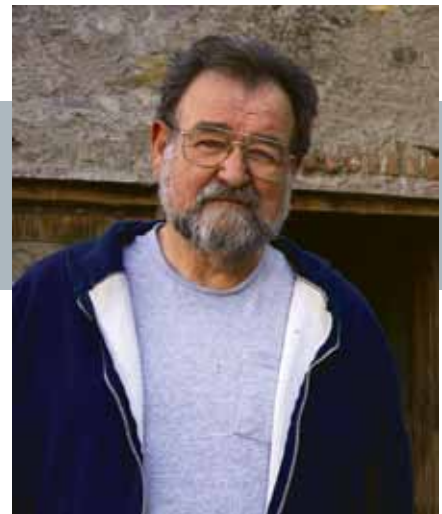
# Greg Possehl

A LOVE FOR  
ARCHAEOLOGY,  
TECHNOLOGY,  
AND PUNS  
(1941–2011)

BY UZMA Z. RIZVI

**I** always knew when Dr. P was in his office at the Penn Museum. His car with the license plate Meluhha (the Sumerian name for the Harappan Civilization) alerted all of us to his presence. I recently went to visit the Museum and realized how much I missed that simple welcoming sight.

Dr. Gregory L. Possehl, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania and former Curator of the Asian Collection at the Penn Museum



Greg Possehl conducted archaeological research in South Asia and was a frequent contributor to *Expedition* magazine.

of Archaeology and Anthropology, passed away on October 8, 2011. A man of few words, but incredibly prolific in text, Possehl authored over 14 books and 101 articles and book chapters. His passion for archaeology was only matched by his passion for puns and new technology. It is because of his quick

## PORTRAITS



Greg Possehl, at far left, stands for a group photograph early in his career with Kenneth Kennedy (Cornell University) at far right and Indian colleagues.

adoption of computer programs that his databases became available so early for all of us at Penn and his colleagues in the field. Throughout the 1990s, almost all of his students, at some point or another, contributed to his organizational databases which ultimately led to his online gazetteer of sites and radiocarbon dates. He excelled at synthesizing these large quantities of data into clear ideas and hypotheses about ancient South Asia.

His long and productive career has resulted in foundational archaeological research work in South Asia. Early in his career, he conducted excavations at Oriyo Timbo, Babar Kot, and Rojdi in Gujarat, India. From 1999–2005, Possehl joined forces with Dr. Vasant Shinde (Deccan College, Pune, India) to co-direct excavations at Gilund, Rajasthan, a site at which many of his recent graduate students (including myself) have worked. His current excavations include the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bat in Oman. The coast of Oman is also where one of his more recent experiments in ethnoarchaeology became international news. Possehl, in association with Drs. Maurizio Tosi and Serge Cleuziou, worked with a

team to reconstruct and sail one of the ancient black boats of Magan (Sumerian name for Oman) in 2005. Unfortunately, the ship sank, but it made headlines across the world and, as he told me many times, gave him a boatload of stories to share.

Not only has Possehl's work left a significant mark on field research, but he has been instrumental in shaping the future of South Asian archaeology. Through the years, he has taught students at the University of Pennsylvania and also served as an external examiner for many students of South Asian archaeology worldwide. He has been particularly attentive to students from the South Asian subcontinent and has always offered support and advice. He had

an unmatched generosity of spirit and willingness to share data through books, photocopies, and CD/DVDs. There are few scholars of South Asian archaeology who have not benefited from him in some capacity or another.

*I first walked into Dr. P's office in 1994 as an undergraduate looking for a course in South Asian archaeology and over these 17 years I have always looked to that office as a refuge, as a fantastic library, and as a place where I always knew I would be taken for who and what I was.*

*Dr. P was always patient, good humored, and even when we argued (and we did argue) he always looked out for me. Perhaps most significantly, he taught me the significance of human relationships within archaeological practice. 🏠*

UZMA Z. RIZVI is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Urban Studies in the Department of Social Science and Cultural Studies at Pratt Institute of Art and Design, Brooklyn, NY. She graduated with her doctorate under the advisement of Dr. Gregory L. Possehl in 2007.