EGYPTOLOGIST DAVID SILVERMAN HONORED IN CAIRO

A Festschrift celebration honoring the lifetime achievements of Dr. David Silverman was held in Cairo, Egypt, at the headquarters of Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities on May 8, 2010. The celebration party was hosted by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Egypt’s Secretary General, Supreme Council of Antiquities. Dr. Silverman, Egyptian Section Curator-in-Charge at the Penn Museum and the Eckley Brinton Coxe Chair in Egyptology at the University of Pennsylvania, was presented with a Festschrift, a traditional academic celebration publication, entitled *Millions of Jubilees: Studies in Honor of David P. Silverman*. Dr. Hawass and Dr. Jennifer Houser Wegner, Associate Curator in the Egyptian Section at the Museum, served as co-editors of the publication.

BAN CHIANG PROJECT HONORED AT THAILAND MUSEUM OPENING

Penn Museum and Dr. Joyce White, Associate Curator of the Museum’s Asian section, were honored by her Royal Highness of Thailand, Crown Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, on February 9, 2010 at the opening of the new National Museum at Ban Chiang, Thailand, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1992. Dr. White has served as Director of the Museum’s Ban Chiang Project since 1982. At the new Thailand museum, the full story of the Ban Chiang discovery, continuing research, and transformation from prehistoric village to thriving modern town is told, including life-size reconstructions of the excavations, dioramas illustrating lifeways 4,000 years ago, and hundreds of artifacts as well as human remains from the site. Research from Dr. White’s ongoing work at Ban Chiang is featured in several galleries described as the “Pennsylvania Rooms” by one villager.
Conservation of the Tang Horses was made possible with support from Mr. and Mrs. John R. Rockwell. Mr. Rockwell is a graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. The Chinese delegation traveled to Philadelphia courtesy of the Da Ming Palace Foundation in China.

Left, the Tang Horse reliefs can be viewed again in the Chinese Rotunda.

Below top, a large section of one stone relief, weighing approximately 2,500 pounds, is moved into place by specialist art handlers.

Below bottom, small white dots are visible on one Horse relief, as 3-dimensional scans are made by Yaritza Hernandez (pictured here) and Lauren Vollano, Research Associates at Penn Design and the Architectural Conservation Lab. The scans will be used to create accurate reproductions of the reliefs.

TANG HORSE RELIEFS REINSTALLED IN CHINESE ROTUNDA

Since early 2009, the Museum has been working on a major conservation project involving the Tang Taizong Horse Reliefs, two world-renowned, monumental Chinese reliefs depicting two of six famous horses that belonged to Chinese Emperor Taizong (599–649 CE), the true founder of the Tang Dynasty. The massive stone reliefs, each measuring more than six feet by five feet, and more than a foot thick, were purchased for the Penn Museum in the early 20th century. They arrived, in pieces, in 1918, when restorers first mended them for display in the Museum. Recent examinations of the reliefs indicated that the early repair work was no longer stable, and the Museum, under the direction of Lynn Grant, Senior Conservator, devised a new conservation plan.

After thorough cleaning and removal of old fills and restorations, specialist riggers were brought in to disassemble the reliefs in August 2009, removing them to a closed gallery space where conservation work continued. Historic preservation specialists were consulted, and armature designers and structural engineers were employed to create the best possible steel support for reinstallation. The final stage of the project, in which guest conservators from China participated, involved replacing remaining fill sections and final finish. The reliefs have now been reinstalled in the Chinese Rotunda, where final conservation work and 3-dimensional scanning will be completed.