NEW YORK &
NEW MEXICO

LUCY FOWLER WILLIAMS, ASSOCIATE
CURATOR AND SABLOFF KEEPER IN THE
AMERICAN SECTION
In support of the upcoming exhibition
Native American Voices: The People—Here
and Now (2014), Williams conducted
interviews in two locations this past
summer. She traveled to upstate New
York to talk with members of the
Iroquois Nationals Lacrosse team, and
to New Mexico to observe and talk with
Tewa participants in the annual Pueblo
distance runs that commemorate the
Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Her goal was
to gain first-hand knowledge of the
meanings and roles of these events as
sources of strength, pride, and identity in
contemporary Native America.

Around the World

Every year, the Penn Museum’s
curators and staff conduct
research around the world.
Read on for a small sampling
of this work from the past year.

TIHOSUCO, MEXICO

RICHARD LEVENTHAL, DIRECTOR,
PENN CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER AND
CURATOR IN THE AMERICAN SECTION
A major initiative of the Penn CHC is
its community-based heritage preserva-
tion and economic development project
in the town of Tihosuco, Quintana
Roo, focused upon the preservation of
sites associated with the Maya Caste
War rebellion of the 19th century.
The Yucatan Maya identify the sites
related to the Caste War as the real basis
for their identity and heritage today.
Leventhal spent much of the summer
lecturing and continuing collaborative
work with the community to identify a
plan for economic growth in the region.
IRAI KURDISTAN
LAUREN RISTVET, DYSON ASSISTANT CURATOR IN THE NEAR EAST SECTION
In summer 2013, Lauren Ristvet launched “The Land of Idu Project” in Iraqi Kurdistan. The project seeks to illuminate the “dark age” between the collapse of the Middle Assyrian empire and the rise of its Neo-Assyrian counterpart, focusing particularly on changes in city-planning and daily life. Excavations from 2010–2011 unearthed 52 rare brick inscriptions, revealing that from 1050–900 BCE, during the “dark age,” Idu was the capital of an independent kingdom with diplomatic relations with Assyria and Hasanlu. In August, archaeologists from the Penn Museum studied pottery, analyzed human remains, and prepared 3D scans of artifacts. In addition, they visited sites in the region to understand Idu’s ancient landscape.

SOUTH ABYDOS, EGYPT
JOSEF WEGNER, ASSOCIATE CURATOR IN THE EGYPTIAN SECTION
Excavations led by Josef Wegner (pictured above with his son Alexander) have been ongoing at South Abydos since 1995. A focus of current research includes systematic excavation and restoration work of the 200 m long tomb of pharaoh Khakaure-Senwosret III, 5th king of Egypt’s 12th Dynasty. This architectural wonder, a project undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of State for Antiquities and with support of the American Research Center in Egypt, is Egypt’s first hidden royal tomb: a forerunner to the well-known tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Also in 2013, with funds from Penn’s Faculty Research Foundation, seal impressions from Wah-Sut-Khakaure are being studied. These impressions frequently preserve hieroglyphic texts recording the names and administrative titles of the people who lived in this ancient community.

LA FERRASSIE, FRANCE
HAROLD DIBBLE, CURATOR IN THE EUROPEAN ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION
Following an initial testing of a Neandertal site in 2010, a multidisciplinary project directed by Alain Turq (Musée Nationale de Préhistoire, shown on the right of Dibble) and Harold Dibble with collaborators from around the world began new excavations at the site of La Ferrassie (Dordogne, France) this year. Originally excavated over 100 years ago, the site is famous for the large number of Neandertal remains found there. The present project focuses on understanding the context of those bodies—for example, whether or not they represent deliberate burials—and on obtaining new dates for the archaeological sequence.