

REVELATIONS FROM MEGIDDO

The Newsletter of the Megiddo Expedition

Why a Megiddo Newsletter?

Keeping our Team Members, Sponsors and Friends in the Know about the Excavation, Survey, Lab Work, Research and Publication of Megiddo—the Daily Life of the Megiddo Family

Megiddo is not just 'another site'. It is the cradle of the archaeology of Israel; in fact, it is the cradle of Biblical Archaeology. But its importance goes far beyond archaeology, extending into biblical studies, and far beyond the borders of present-day Israel to the Levant and the entire Ancient Near East. Hence, we feel we must tell our sponsors, team members and many friends about the field and lab work, the people involved, both center stage and behind the scenes—the 'daily life' of the project.

Revelations from Megiddo will include updates not only on final publications, but shorter articles to be published in various journals and keep you up to date on public lectures and future excavation and survey. *Revelations* is produced by the Megiddo Expedition staff, and we hope to go to press twice a year.

Lest *Revelations* become a carbon



copy of the often dry, technical academic publications, we will also offer lighter tastes of the human side of the Megiddo team. The pots and artifacts don't crawl from their ancient burial places of their own volition, and the crew members who carefully, even lovingly, expose their secrets have much more personality than *Megiddo III* will reveal.

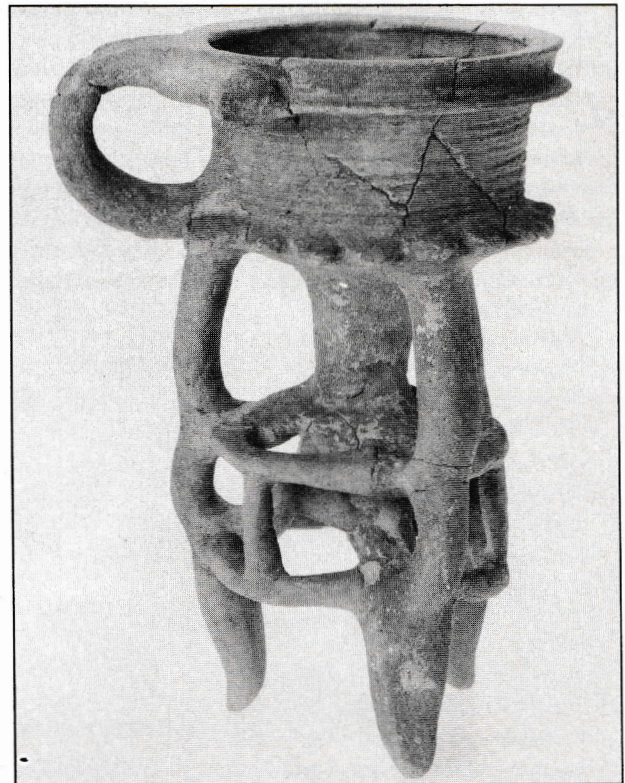
Why a Megiddo newsletter? A modern archaeological excavation involves such an enormous amount of work behind the scenes, after the hot summer mornings have yielded their treasures, we thought we would be nothing less than remiss if we did not reward the Megiddo Family with a continual peek into the doors of Nogah's restoration room, Itzhak's world of virtual reality, Paula's laboratory—the secondary resting place of Megiddo's

bones—and the continuing saga of those who are uncovering the *Revelations from Megiddo*.

Israel Finkelstein
Baruch Halpern
David Ussishkin

Allenby Returns to Megiddo

Unlike many archaeological sites, which are so obscure that only archaeologists who are a few sandwiches short of a picnic would dream of spending a summer investigating them, Megiddo has attracted its share of visitors. Due to its place in history and Christian prophecy, for example, Pope Paul VI, during his historic visit to Israel in 1964,



Cult stand from Area H of the renewed excavations. It dates to one of the last chapters of Israelite Megiddo in the 8th century BCE.

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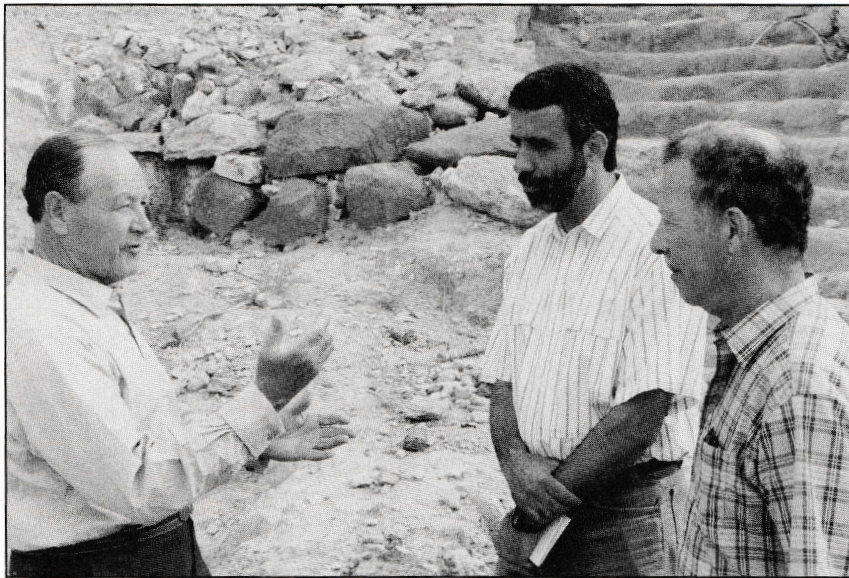
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The Megiddo Expedition operates under the auspices of Tel Aviv University. Senior American partner: Pennsylvania State University. Consortium institutions: Universities of North Carolina and Southern California.



Megiddo Expedition Directors: Israel Finkelstein, David Ussishkin and Baruch Halpern. Excavation Directors: Israel Finkelstein and David Ussishkin. Head of Academic Program and Consortium Coordinator: Baruch Halpern.



Viscount Michael Allenby of Megiddo and Felixstowe (left) discusses his family's long relationship to Tel Megiddo with Israel Finkelstein (center) and David Ussishkin, the dig directors.

met here with Israel's then-President Zalman Shazar. During the 1996 excavation season, Viscount Michael Allenby of Felixstowe and Megiddo, the grand-nephew of renowned British Field Marshal Edmund Allenby, spent a few days with the Expedition team on the tel.

The Allenbys' interest in Megiddo began in World War I when Edmund Allenby, leading an Australian cavalry division and the Tenth Indian infantry, dislodged from the advantageous heights of the tel a group of about 100 Turkish fighters who were defending the last vestiges of the Ottoman Empire. Admittedly, the battle for the tel of Megiddo itself wasn't much of a fight, as Allenby, using tactics similar to those of Thutmose III (See Yuval Gadot's article about the Aruna Pass survey in the next issue of *Revelations*), caught the defenders unaware and entered the Jezreel almost unhindered. The larger battle for the valley, however, was a hard-fought, strategically significant victory.

The historical significance of the site prompted Allenby to include the name of the tel in his family's hereditary title, along with that of the family home at Felixstowe, England. In his own words, 'I don't think I can do better than Allenby of Megiddo — Megiddo was the crucial point of last year's campaign; and is the base of the name Armageddon...'

Michael Allenby, who today serves in the British House of Lords as Deputy Speaker, has also done his tour of duty in the British forces,

serving in the armored cavalry in such diverse corners of the former Empire as Malaya, Cyprus, Nigeria and Hong Kong. He is also President of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society and has been an invaluable friend of the Megiddo Expedition.

During his visit to the tel with his wife, Sara, as special guest of Tel Aviv University, Allenby saw the newest revelations from Megiddo as described by Israel Finkelstein and David Ussishkin, the dig's directors. The Allenbys then attended a gathering for the friends and staff of the Expedition, highlighted by greetings from Sir Leslie Porter, Chancellor of Tel Aviv University. The Allenbys stayed with the staff for three days at Kibbutz Megiddo, even taking the opportunity to take trowel and brush in hand and participate in the physical excavation of Megiddo.

Jared L. Miller

Himan, a Griffin and an Egyptian *ankh*

Three bullae (clay lumps used to secure containers or papyri, in our case the former) impressed with the same seal were found in Area H in a context sealed within the debris of a burnt house. The stratum dates to the last major, well-understood phase of the eighth-century Israelite city. Benjamin Sass, a Megiddo Excavation team member who works with such items, has been busy over the last

months analyzing, among the many other small finds from Megiddo, these bullae and their place in the larger picture emerging from the ground.

The best-preserved of these bullae is illustrated below. The impression shows a griffin wearing the Egyptian double crown and kilt and striding towards an *ankh* sign (or an *ankh*-shaped stand). A two-winged beetle is depicted below in the exergue. These Egyptianizing royal and solar motifs, common in the art of the period, are often labeled Phoenician, but similar elements in the art of Israel and Aram Damascus permit one to extend the distribution of such Egyptianizing art to much of the southern Levant.

Mindless delight in decor is not in the spirit of the period; whether the Israelite users of the seal with which the bullae were impressed were aware of the original (i.e., Egyptian) religious-protective meaning of the motifs, gave them local significance or simply regarded them as generally beneficial remains unknown.

Between the two world wars the Chicago expedition to Megiddo unearthed a very similar stamp seal (top of page 3), but with a much



Eighth-century BCE bulla from the renewed excavations.

rarer motif, a locust, in the exergue. A legend in ancient Hebrew letters was added to the originally un-inscribed seal. It reads *lhmn*, 'belonging to Himan', a not-so-common personal name. Discovered out of context, the seal was dated to the eighth century by numerous parallels; the archaeological context of the bullae from the renewed excavation clinches this date.

Benjamin Sass
with Jared L. Miller



Eighth-century-BCE seal inscribed in Hebrew found by the Chicago expedition [Israel Antiquities Authority 34.1490].

Archaeological Virtual Reality

One of the most exciting 'behind the scenes' activities in the Megiddo project is the effort to depict the finds from Megiddo, from the seemingly most insignificant bead to the massive structural walls of the megaron temples, with the help of advanced computer technology.

According to Dr. Itzhak Benenson of the Tel Aviv University Geography Department who is heading up the project, the computerization of the Megiddo data is divided into three stages. The first is storage of the excavation data. Traditionally, drawings, photographs, find location data, non-spatial characteristics and some kind of description of the finds were all stored separately, often in different rooms, or even different buildings or cities, making a comprehensive proc-

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site (which includes *Revelations* with color illustrations), currently under construction, at:

<http://www.tau.ac.il/~archpubs/index.htm>

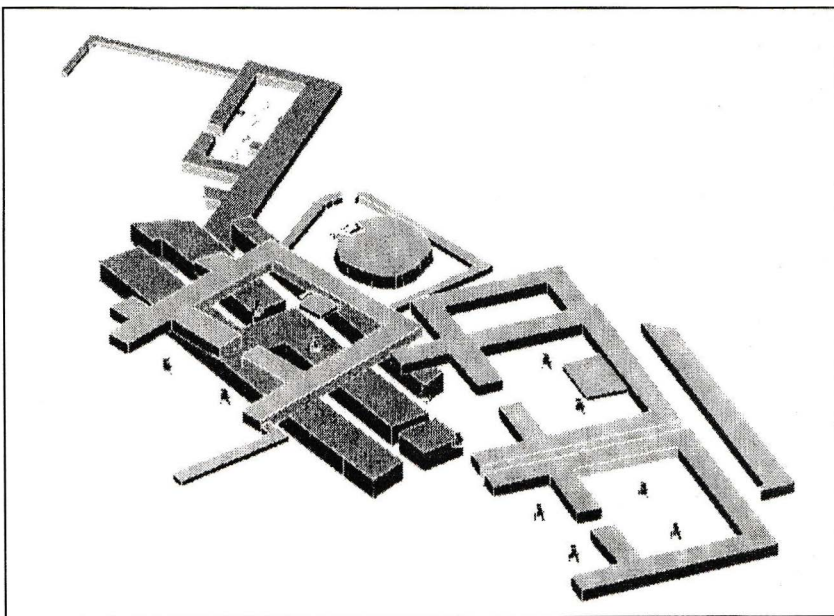
essing of their relationships like trying to reassemble that 500-page proposal after your briefcase falls open on a windy day in Chicago. That's where modern Archaeological Information System (AIS) comes in. Combining an alphabet soup of programs and theories, like SIS (Spatial Information Systems theory), 3DV (Three-Dimensional Visualization), SSA (Spatial Statistical Analysis), 4D GIS (Four-Dimensional Geographic Information Systems) and TIN (Triangulated Irregular Network—which you and I thought was some kind of Sumerogram for Persian rice), AIS allows the simultaneous storage, updating and management of spatial, imaginal, attributive and temporal data in one place.

What do Itzhak and the other computer gurus do with this huge database once they have constructed it? It then comes time for the spatio-temporal analysis of that data. Itzhak describes this process as a multiple recurrent querying of the data sets according to their attributive, spatial and temporal characteristics. In other words, rummaging through dusty photo archives, sorting through hundreds of mis-labeled drawers of architectural drawings and searching for

and in what relation to its surroundings it was found. With immediate access to such a huge amount of information, one can rapidly find accurate answers to those 'how' and 'why' questions archaeologists have a habit of asking.

These questions demand the perception and reasoning of the human mind which no computer (at least not yet!) can match. However, the third aspect of Itzhak's work may aid the archaeologist in his search for answers to these questions, too. From the information gathered it is possible to develop a three-dimensional reconstruction of an ancient site and even 'walk' through it in virtual reality. Judith Dekel has been working tirelessly on her Auto-CAD system, transferring the information gathered from the field into a graphically represented format. Below is her representation of this summer's dig through the massive Early Bronze 'temple' complex, discovered below the already famous Early Bronze megaron in Area J.

The excavation's directors foresee this powerful tool contributing to the clarification of stratigraphic problems, the layout and palaeotopography of multi-period sites and the distribution of a site's finds; e.g., the relationships



Three-dimensional representation of the massive Early Bronze 'temenos' walls discovered in the 1996 season below the well-known megaron temples of Area J.

that one piece of Mycenaean pottery from a Samarian highlands site that someone thought he remembered seeing in 1967, one can simply double-click on the appropriate field to view an object and see exactly where

between faunal remains and types of pottery, faunal and botanical remains, etc. The results should open new avenues for domestic archaeology, i.e., identification of the function of the various parts of the house/site from

Dates:

- May 1996: David Ussishkin's lecture at the University of Haifa.
- Nov. 1996: Israel Finkelstein's lecture on 'Megiddo and Egypt' at the Institute of Egyptology in Vienna.
- Dec. 1996: Finkelstein's introduction to the Megiddo Project at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Upcoming....

- June-July 1998: Excavation season at Tel Megiddo.
- 15 June 1997: Deadline for submission of articles to *Megiddo III*.

the economic and demographic points of view, and by studying the distribution of prestige goods, further the understanding of the social stratification of a population.

Jared L. Miller

The Megiddo Temple Complex

Area J lies in the great sectional trench dug by the University of Chicago expedition in the 1930s. It is a virtual time-tunnel, giving us an opportunity to view the entire settlement history of Megiddo, from the Iron Age (on the surface) to the earliest periods on bed-rock. Past excavations of this part of the mound unearthed great Early Bronze and Middle Bronze fortifications and a series of temples, covering a time span of almost three millennia, from the Chalcolithic period to the early Iron Age. Our goal in this area is to clarify the stratigraphy and chronology of the temples.

In our first season we studied afresh the first temple of the Megiddo cult compound (Stratum XIX). Before our excavations there was a dispute regarding the date of this temple. We have now reevaluated the stratigraphy and dating of the temple. We discovered that there are actually two superimposed temples rather than one, and that both date to the EB I, that is, to the second half of the fourth millennium BCE.

In our second season of excavations we 'moved up the stratigraphic ladder' to Stratum XVIII. On top of the remains of Stratum XIX and under the elaborate temples of the Early

Bronze III we uncovered a set of immense parallel walls. They are built of beautiful, partially-dressed stones with bricks on top. The walls are almost 50 meters long and are preserved to a height of nearly two meters. Two of them are four meters wide. We seem to be dealing here with temenos walls surrounding what must have been a great temple. This hypothesis will have to be checked in the future. The corridors between the parallel walls were full of animal bones, apparently the remains of offerings brought to the temple's altar. This stratum also dates to the Early Bronze I.

The EB I construction at Megiddo is the most elaborate of its kind in the Levant. The settlement covered the entire mound and the plateau to its east, a total of up to 40 or 50 hectares. It was one of the largest settlements in the country. A reevaluation of the results of the Oriental Institute dig in the light of our new excavations reveals that already at that early time the settlement was surrounded by strong fortifications. The results in Area J are therefore crucial for the study of the first urbanization of Canaan in the late fourth millennium BCE and for our understanding of the cult practices of that early period.

A group of about 20 Egyptian vessels was found on a surface in one corridor, a collection representing some kind of squatter activity in very late EB I, after the great temenos walls went out of use. The vessels were made in the vicinity of Megiddo. It is the first time that such a large collection of Egyptian vessels has been found north of the Yarkon River (present-day Tel Aviv). They indicate that Egyptians, possibly merchants,

About the Megiddo Griffin:

The griffin depicted as the logo of *Revelations from Megiddo* is a drawing of one of the ivories discovered by the Chicago Expedition in the Late Bronze palace. The collection from the palace, the most extensive from any site in Israel, is one of the most important corpora of information about the art of Canaan at this time, a genre combining Egyptian, Hittite and Aegean influence with its own local flavor. The ivories were used as furniture decoration, jewelry boxes, cosmetic cases and various ornamentation. Our griffin shows a strong Aegean influence.

were present at the time as far north as the Jezreel Valley, and that they did not hesitate to bring offerings to a local, 'Canaanite' temple.

Next season we plan to continue the investigation of the temple compound, expand our excavations of Stratum XVIII and begin dealing with the later, Early Bronze III strata.

Israel Finkelstein

Orna Zimhoni

(1951-1996)

In Memoriam

The Megiddo Expedition suffered a great loss in December when Orna Zimhoni passed away at the age of 45 after a long illness. Orna was born in



Tel Aviv and studied archaeology and biblical studies at Tel Aviv University. While still an undergraduate, she joined the expedition at Tel Masos, acting as registrar. Even then she began to develop her interest in pottery, particularly that of Iron Age Israel, about which she eventually became one of the world's experts. In 1975 she joined the permanent staff of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University where she worked, studied and taught until her death.

In 1976 Orna became the recorder of the renewed excavations at Tel Lachish, followed by work at Tel Eton, Betar and Tel Jezreel, becoming deeply involved in their publication. In 1993 Orna enthusiastically joined the renewed expedition at Megiddo, helping to organize it, taking part in the excavation and commencing the study of the Iron Age pottery. Though seriously ill during the 1996 season, she managed to participate.

Her publications include the Iron Age pottery of Tel Eton in *Tel Aviv* 1985 and an associated study on the pottery of Levels V through II at Lachish. Her last article on Tel Jezreel appears in the latest issue of *Tel Aviv*.

As a member of the Lachish, Jezreel and Megiddo expeditions, Orna was a dedicated and scrupulous archaeologist. Clever and energetic, she became a central figure in the Megiddo Family, beloved and appreciated. She will be dearly missed.