

# THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM REPORTS



M. Wakely

*"There has been created, without expense to the city, a great Museum to which the public may come at all times for instruction or recreation, and in which the mind that is interested in the science of Man may find unlimited opportunities. Such is The University Museum, an institution occupying a unique post among the Museums of America. Its scope and purpose are nothing less than the History of Mankind."*

Museum Brochure, 1910

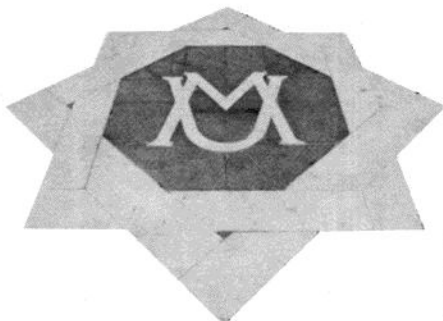


## A Century of Community Outreach

▲ School groups in the Kress Gallery.

▶ Louis Shotridge, a Chilkat Indian of the Tlingit group, and Assistant Curator from 1912-1932, with his wife and a school group in 1912.

▼ Stone inlay at the Sharpe Gallery entrance.



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In 1987 The University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania will celebrate the centennial of its founding. The advent of this anniversary has provided an opportunity for the Museum to reflect not only upon its past accomplishments, but also on its current and future roles, particularly its function as an integral part of the University and as a major center for cultural outreach to the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The University Museum is among the handful of cultural institutions that succeeds in being both a museum associated with a private university and also an institution with a strong commitment to an active public program.

The vast collections of the Museum encompass ethnographic and archaeological materials that few institutions can rival. Yet objects are but one of the Museum's resources. The University Museum undertakes laboratory and field research on a worldwide scale, houses an applied science center, supports the epigraphic studies of Egyptian, cuneiform, and Maya texts, and maintains a vigorous publications program which produces research monographs resulting from past and ongoing Museum sponsored excavations, as well as *Expedition* magazine, and the *Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology (MASCA) Journal*.

The Museum interacts on various levels with the University. Its curators



*"The Museum, in other words, provides for every member of the community without regard to age, station, or general training; liberal and altogether exceptional opportunities for self-instruction on a great variety of subjects that are closely related to the welfare and intelligence of the individual and of the community. In addition to this it provides for all alike entertainment of the highest and most wholesome character."*

George Byron Gordon, *Museum Journal* Vol. II, no. 3 (1911)

teach courses in American Civilization, Ancient History, Anthropology, Art History, Classical Archaeology, Oriental Studies, Religious Studies, and Southeast Asian Regional Studies. They also conduct special programs for the College of General Studies. Cooperative research is currently underway between MASCA and both the Medical School and the Laboratory for Research on the Structure of Matter. The unique research collections of The University Museum Library are utilized by students and scholars from many departments of the University. And, the beautiful Museum building is used by the entire University community not only for classes but also for many social and University activities.

The Museum's public outreach programs are almost as old as the institution itself. The first public lectures, complete with lantern slides, were sponsored by the Museum as early as

1894. They marked the beginning of a continuing tradition of commitment to the community—involving the region, the city, the state, in fact the entire world, in the activities and resources of the Museum. It is clear from announcements for these 19th century talks that the Museum was involved in research and studies almost without geographical or chronological boundaries since its beginning: lecturers from all over the world came to speak at Wednesday afternoon programs on such diverse topics as "Household Life of Women in the Colonial Period," "Coins of the Ancient Greeks," and "Impressions of the Philippine Islanders." Today it is still a primary objective of the Museum to present informative and intellectually stimulating programs on a wide range of subjects.

In the years since 1894, public outreach programs have changed and grown to keep pace with an increasingly interested and informed public. Intellectual curiosity about other cultures, both modern and ancient, is greater than ever before. The entire Museum staff is being challenged to interpret the Museum's scholarship in

fresh and exciting ways to a public convinced that learning is a lifelong, enjoyable adventure.

In recent years, the Public Programming Department of the Museum has introduced several innovative series to the public. In the fall of 1982 an annual day-long public series, "Avenues of Anthropology," was initiated. Curators and professors from the Department of Anthropology, and such allied fields as Art History and Oriental Studies, discuss their current research projects to help promote a greater public understanding of the broad reaches of scholarship encompassed by anthropology. Participants also visit behind-the-scenes areas of the Museum, such as the conservation lab, the Sumerian tablet room, and Museum archives among others. On other occasions, specialized one- and two-day symposia and workshops offer opportunities for detailed study of single topics.

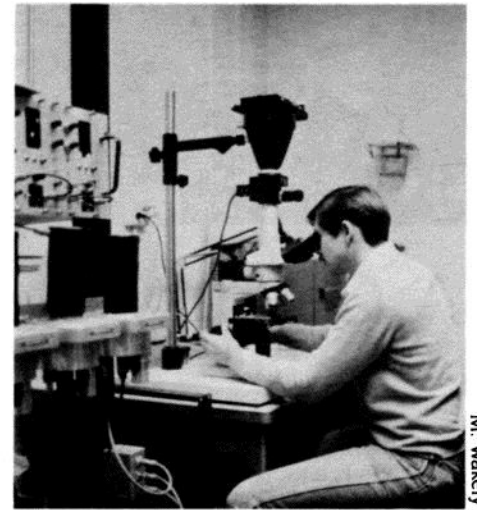


◀ Suspension hook, Sepik River District, New Guinea.

▶ Photomicroscopy at the Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology (MASCA).

△ When was the last time you visited The University Museum?

△ Exhibition of Native American artifacts, c. 1915.



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Major exhibitions, such as the recent *Ban Chiang: Discovery of a Lost Bronze Age* and the current *Spirit Keepers of the North: Eskimos of Western Alaska*, offer opportunities for a unified series of lectures and programs. More informal opportunities for discussion of current Museum research are offered by the Third Friday Series, a program of informal lunchtime lectures by various curators and staff offered to faculty, students, and University staff. A wide range of music and dance performances by visiting foreign troupes and local artists provide an introduction to the art forms of foreign cultures, both ancient and contemporary.

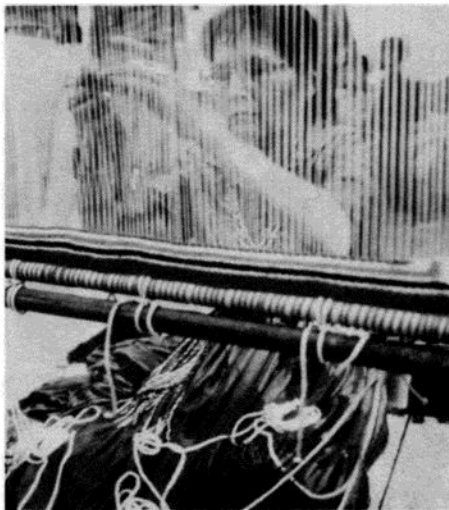
Since 1980 MASCA has offered annual symposia on a wide variety of topics dealing with the uses of scientific methods for interpreting archaeological data. These Saturday symposia offer the public a view of the current research being conducted by MASCA

more than 40,000 school children through the Museum each year, but also with many programs geared to adults. This has been the role of the Department since its inception in 1915 as the Docent Service, which evolved into the Education Department in the early 1920s. Before the days of films and television, the Education Department sponsored essay contests and puppet shows for children, as well as guided tours for the public.

Today the Education Department continues to devote much effort not only to bringing students into the Museum, but also in sending the Museum into the school classroom by means of artifact loans and an energetic group of trained volunteers known as "Museum on the Go." This group, funded by local private foundations, visits city schools for periods of two to six weeks at a time, giving lively presentations to their young audiences

been in operation for seventeen years, supported by annual appropriations from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This Outreach Lecture Program utilizes traveling exhibit cases in conjunction with lectures given by students from the Graduate Groups of Ancient History and Classical Archaeology as well as Museum staff and research associates. The program operates through the network of libraries and community centers across the state. Last year 198 free lectures were given throughout the state, reaching nearly 11,000 people.

The Education Department also cooperates with the University of Pennsylvania's College of General Studies to present courses for interested adults on many different aspects of archaeology and its historical interpretation. In addition to classes on current archaeological techniques, courses have included an in-



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Native American Day, 1982.

staff as well as an opportunity to hear visiting scholars. The lecturers arrive several days in advance of the symposia to conduct more in-depth seminars and lectures for University students and to avail themselves of the chance to share their latest research with colleagues.

The Education Department of the Museum plays a vital role in the public outreach effort, not only in guiding the

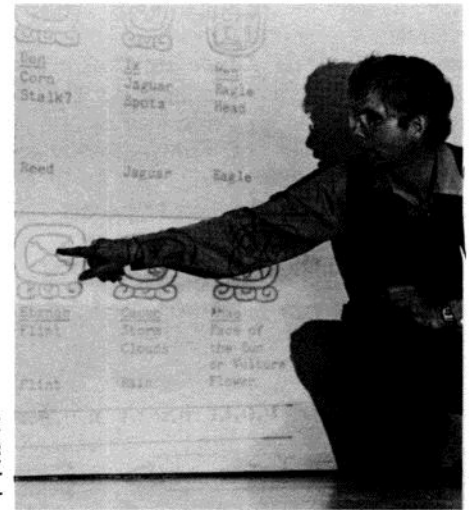


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Gallery Concert in the Lower Egyptian Gallery.

on different cultures such as the North American Indians, Ancient Egypt, and the Classical World, using artifacts from the vast collections of The University Museum. The children dress in reproductions of ancient costumes and even try to grind corn the way it was ground for centuries to make bread. They get quite a new view of life in other cultures this way!

An extensive lecture program has



Dr. Christopher Jones at the First Annual Maya Hieroglyphs Symposium.

roduction to Egyptian hieroglyphics and the history of the Olympic Games.

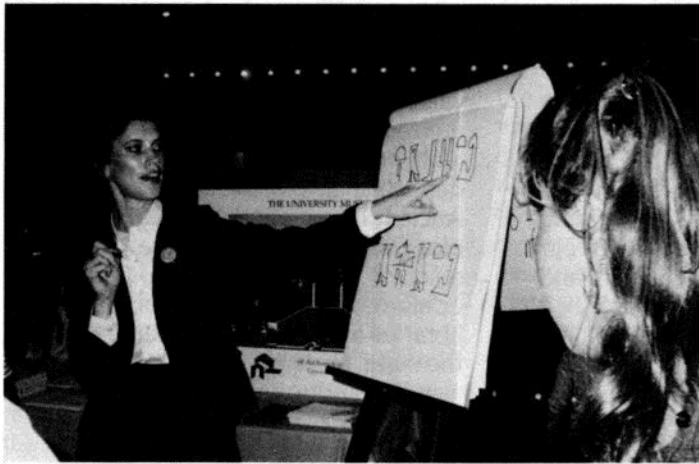
International Classroom, an affiliate of the Education Department, has been providing programs of international education for elementary, high school and college students at the Museum since 1974. IC now administers seven different programs held in the Museum and in Philadelphia city and suburban areas. Each fall foreign





*"As it gathers within its walls the harvest of cultures that men once gloried in, the Museum becomes a center for the spread of a higher culture in the present and in the future for all time."*

*The Museum Journal, Vol. I, no. 1 (1910)*



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students studying at local colleges and universities are recruited and trained to participate in IC programs as "International Speakers." They lead informal discussions on modern aspects of their culture—dating, social mores, religion, music, family life, traditional holidays. International Speakers from Indochina serve as cultural consultants and tutors in several elementary and high schools. *The World: Ancient and Modern*, is one of the programs available for children and adults. A guided tour of one of the galleries led by a museum guide focuses on ancient aspects of a particular culture, and is followed by a discussion of modern life given by an International Speaker. Last year 4,000

students participated in *World: Ancient and Modern* programs at the Museum.

Ten special programs will be presented at the Museum this year for children in the School District of Philadelphia. Each will concentrate on a particular culture or region of the world and will include a presentation by an International Speaker, gallery tours, and demonstrations of dance, music, traditional crafts or story telling. In an effort to make the unique facilities and resources of the Museum accessible to members of the nearby community, many classes from neighboring schools are specifically chosen to participate in these programs.

The University Museum will soon be one hundred years old. It has seen nearly a century of challenge and growth. Looking ahead to the next century, the Museum is eager to continue the research and exploration that have made it renowned throughout the world and to devise new ways of sharing this knowledge. The Museum is an active and interactive part of the University and the community, with a firm commitment to its important role as a *public museum*.

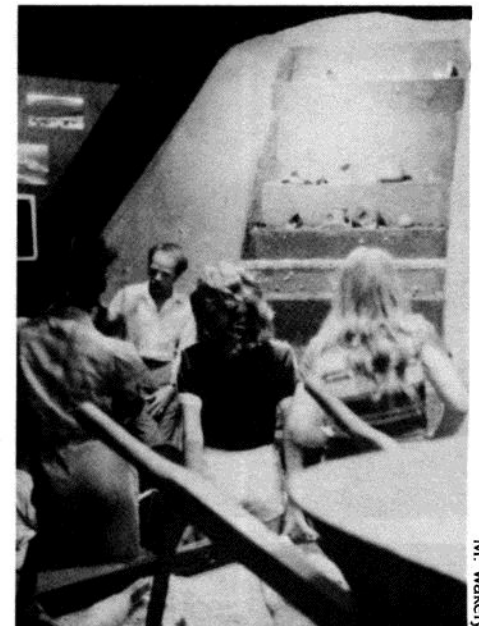
▽ Egyptian hieroglyphs demonstration at Museum Showcase in the Bourse.

△ *The World Ancient and Modern*, a program sponsored by the Education Department and International Classroom.

▽ Schoolchildren in the Palestine Gallery.



Dr. Robert H. Dyson, Jr., Director of The University Museum.



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*"As the University Museum approaches its hundredth anniversary, it finds itself young, not old. Rather than focusing upon 96 years of achievement, the people who make up the Museum discover that they see themselves as pioneers, embarking upon a new era, with new challenges and new potential for accomplishment."*

R. H. Dyson, Jr., "The University Museum: An Institutional Strategic Plan, 1984-1988"