

Time Travel Australia

Our Business is in Ruins

Newsletter Spring 2012

We haven't had any tours to report on for this newsletter but I have been busy working overseas. The family and I spent some time back in Arica recording material from Caleta Vitor that we could not bring back to Australia. I had a conference to attend in Vienna (International Congress of Americanists) in July. En route we stopped off in Ireland in search of a Peruvian mummy – an obvious place to look, I don't think. There is a bit of a story here though ...

Some of you may be aware of my interest in a Peruvian mummy at the MacLeay Museum (University of Sydney) – it was previously the subject of a Catalyst program. This mummy may have come from a site near Arica. In 1851 Mr George Duniam had been sent to Peru to purchase alpaca on behalf of a consortium from Australia. When he arrived in Arica (which was then part of Peru) he found that the Peruvians were none too happy with anyone taking their precious animals and gave up his quest. However, he didn't want to leave empty handed so he dug up a couple of mummies and brought them back to Australia. Back in Sydney he put the mummies on show at a local hotel and managed to make a few pounds. Interest in them soon waned so he tried to sell the mummies to the Australian Museum. The Museum put the mummies on display hoping to raise funds to purchase them but a few weeks later a pawnbroker appeared and seized the mummies to cover a debt left by Mr Duniam. We are not 100% certain what became of the mummies, but the mummy at the MacLeay Museum is likely to one of Mr Duniam's.

Due to my interest in Arica, I have been researching both the mummy and Mr Duniam for a few years. Some time ago I established that Mr Duniam was formerly a sea captain and had sailed between Britain to South America several times in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1839 he landed at Liverpool with a mummy in the cargo which he subsequently sold to the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) in Dublin.

My attempts to find out what became of this mummy failed. I was informed that the RIA collection had passed to the National Museum of Ireland in the latter part of the 19th century but enquiries there failed to elicit a response. Now you can see where I am going.

To cut a long story short, when we arrived in Dublin I called the National Museum and told them my story.

Their response – 'What would we be doing with a Peruvian mummy!!!' but an hour later I received a telephone call to be told that they had found it and I could come and see it the following day!

When they realised what they had, they were very helpful and interested in the full story. The mummy appears to be in good condition. It is stored in a box and, as they did not want to remove it, I was not able to examine it in any detail other than to see that it had a beautiful set of plaits and was missing an ear.

The Museum provided the few records they had. They indicate that the mummy was originally purchased from Mr Duniam for the RIA by Sir William Wilde, the father of Oscar – according to the Museum, Oscar is the 'other' famous Wilde, his father being far more revered as an esteemed surgeon and antiquarian of some note. The records indicate that the RIA sold the mummy only a year or so after purchase. It was bought by an anonymous collector who then donated it to the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RCSI). The RCSI had it on display for some time before it was placed in storage. During the 1990s, the RCSI found the mummy during a clean-up of their storerooms. They didn't want to retain it in their collection so they approached the National Museum to see if they would take it. I get the feeling that the Museum didn't really want it but they didn't want to see it tossed out either!

Anyway, they ended up with the mummy and it has been sitting in storage for around ten years while they decide what they are going to do with it. As they now know its provenance, they have suggested that it be returned to Chile. There are a few issues to deal with though. Chile has hundreds of mummies and they don't really want any more - they have nowhere to put them! Not only that but it was originally taken from an area that was previously Peruvian territory. I don't want to try and sort that out. I have requested some tissue samples as I am keen to get it dated as well as carry out some elemental analysis that may assist with identifying the burial ground from whence it came.

That was my news. I'll keep you posted as the story continues.

Tours –2013

Pyramids, Temples & Tombs: Mexico, Guatemala & Belize

21 days, March 2013.

Led by Chris Carter

The tour will present the cultures of Mesoamerica – from the Prehistoric through the Colonial to the present. Highlights include Mexico City – one of the largest in the world; the art of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo; the imposing ruins of Teotihuacan; the Mayan cities of the Peten – Palenque, Yaxchilan, Lamanai, Tikal and Calakmul; Colonial Antigua and beautiful Lake Atitlan; the colourful markets in Chichicastenango; and snorkelling on the Barrier Reef of Belize.

While this tour will have an archaeological theme, we will enjoy much more including the wildlife of the tropical jungles.



Bodrum Harbour –Southern Turkey

From Pides to Pergamon: Classical Turkey

21 days, October, 2013

Led by Chris Carter & Penny Heath

Turkey sits astride Europe and Asia and has for millennia been a meeting place at which cultures from north, south, east and west have passed through, blended and come into conflict. Experience the Byzantine and Ottoman splendour of Istanbul, including the bazaars, mosques, ancient palaces and the seraglio of the sultans. From Istanbul we will travel to Gallipoli, on to visit the legendary city of Troy and Ephesus.

As with previous tours, we will spend six nights cruising the Mediterranean on a private chartered yacht. We will also experience a range of Turkish cuisine from simple home-cooked meals, making our own pides through to the finest restaurants.

We will leave our yacht in Fethiye and travel to experience the spectacular sites of Cappadocia.

NB: The September tour to Turkey is booked out and there are not too many places left on the October tour.

Ecuador and the Galapagos

23 days November 2013

Led by Ian Fraser.

Due to the popularity of the tour this year, we have a waitlist for 2012 that will fill the 2013 tour should all offers be taken up. If you are at all interested in doing this tour, please let us know and we can add your name to the list (no places will be guaranteed at this stage). Places for the tour will be offered in early 2013 based on registrations of interest held at that time.

Professional Development Tours for Secondary Teachers

We are pleased to be able to offer two tours in 2013 that have been designed as PD for secondary teachers. Specialising in history, classical studies, social sciences and geography these tours relate to subject matter within the National Curriculum. Tours will run during school breaks.

Please pass this newsletter on to any teachers you know.

Classical Turkey:

14 days, September/October. 2013.

Led by Chris Carter

After a visit to Istanbul and the splendours of the Blue Mosque, the Topkapi Palace and the Hagia Sofia, the tour will travel to Gallipoli and spend an entire day there, visiting the museum, exploring the sites of the battles themselves and discussing the ANZAC legend.

From Gallipoli, the tour will visit the Classical sites of Troy, Pergamon, Ephesus and Didyma. As with our standard tours, we will spend six nights aboard a yacht cruising the Aegean coast and visit ancient port sites such as Knidos, Loryma and Caunos. We will also visit a number of lesser known sites that are inaccessible by road.

**Rivers, Rice and Ruins:
Vietnam & Cambodia**

12 days, July 2013

Led by Gillian Hetherington

Covering many aspects of Vietnamese history and culture, from the Vietnam War to its distant past, this tour will introduce you to Vietnam through its superb cuisine, music and dance, and the spectacular beauty of the country and its people. We will journey from bustling Ho Chi Minh City to the colonial town of Hoi An.

From Hoi An we will fly to Siem Reap in Cambodia where we will visit the spectacular temples of Angkor Wat, the old city of Angkor Thom, the capital Phnom Penh and return along the Mekong back into Vietnam.



Hoi An, Vietnam.

Please contact Chris or Genelle if you have any questions or require further information for any of the tours.

If you have any news that would be of interest to our readership, feel free to forward items, snippets of news or photographs to the address below for inclusion in our next newsletter.

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