

were visited, aspects of the archaeological excavations and textually (biblical and extrabiblical) related issues. This type of hands-on experience is an important way of broadening the experience of students beyond what they are able to get from books and lectures alone. An additional advantage of the tour was the opportunity to broaden the digital archival holdings of the Museum. (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



## Bienkowski at Andrews

Piotr Bienkowski, curator of the Egyptian and Near Eastern Antiquities of the National Museums and Galleries in Liverpool, England spoke for the Horn Museum Lectureship series. His lecture entitled, "Tribes, Towns, and Trade: The Late Iron Age in Southern Jordan and the Negev" was presented on November 27, 2000 in the Architecture Amphitheater at Andrews University.

Dr. Bienkowski believes that recent evidence from the Southern Negev and Edom explains the increase in settlements during the Late Iron Age. This new evidence may be suggesting that beginning in the early Iron Age mining centers started to emerge after an absence of nearly



Bienkowski at Busayra



Group photo in Turkey. From left to right: Bob Bates, Gregory Arutyunyan, Paul Ray, David Merling, Alex Breja, Efrían Velázquez

one thousand years. These mining centers could be associated with nonsedentary pastoral-nomadic groups. In addition, the complex mixture of ceramic assemblages at sites like 'En-Hāzeva, Ḥorvat Qitmit and Malhata suggest that Edom and other Transjordanian Iron Age states were essentially kingdoms with a large pastoral-nomadic component. These groups may be mentioned in some Egyptian inscriptions associated with early mining sites in the area. The late 9th century B.C. mining centers in Edom precipitated in an intensification of settlement during this period. These settlements included a mixture of pastoralist, semi-sedentary agriculturalists and miners involved in copper production, and by the late 8th century B.C. gradually expanded their settlements throughout the Southern Negev and Edom. This expansion also coincided with the rise of the Late Assyrian empire and its interest in copper production and the Arabian trade.

To explain the interaction between the largely pastoral-nomadic component emerging in the Southern Negev and Edom in the Late Iron Age, Dr. Bienkowski has developed a basic embryonic model. He suggests that there were several tribal groupings that lived in different core areas but moved, overlapped,

shared resources and had arrangements for crossing each other's territory. Some of these tribes controlled the trade between Edom and the main ports on the Mediterranean coast occasionally they even raided along this same trade route. Most tribes had some special relationship with the intermediate towns between Edom and the Mediterranean coastal cities. These towns served as gathering places or "gateways" to the outside world. They served as points of contact between the civilized world and pastoralists. In the eighth century B.C. they included Beersheba, and in the seventh century B.C. Malhata and possibly Tall al-Khalayfi. Tell Jemmeh and Tell Sera, situated between the Beersheba Valley and Gaza, may have been Assyrian administrative centers established for the purpose of controlling Assyrian interests in Arabian trade and to integrate the tribes in the region. Though these pastoral groups may have been under the control of a "central" government, as tribal societies their primary affiliation was to kin-groups within the tribes and not to states. Alliances with city states were flexible. To ensure loyalty, imperial powers like Assyria initially tried to control these tribal groupings through conquest. This method proved unsuccessful. Later,

efforts including integration and having the tribal societies provide services were more successful.

According to Bienkowski, all the evidence suggests that Edom and the Negev were occupied by nonsettled pastoral nomadic groups. By the late eighth century B.C., a combination of copper mining, the Assyrian peace and the Arabian trade had intensified settlement in Edom, which became the independent kingdom with its capital at Busayra.

Edom was at the heart of tribal and pastoralist society during the late Iron Age. This was not, however, a monolithic nation state. It was a kingdom made up of largely independent tribal groupings held together by bonds of cooperation and allegiance. They did not give up the pastoralist life but developed a combined migratory and settled existence. The settlements that did exist were primarily the result of Assyrian incursion into the region and Assyria's interest in copper and the Arabian trade, but these settlements were temporary. Once the Assyrian Empire began to decline and its interest in the area subsided, the Edomite state did not continue much longer. Though some settlement may have continued into the Persian period, evidence from nearly every excavated site shows a clear gap between Edomite and later Nabataean settlements. (Robert D. Bates)



## Hester Thomsen Chilson

The Madaba Plains Project and its participants mourn the death of Hester Thomsen Chilson, who passed away in Walla Walla, Washington on February 27, 2001 of a massive stroke.

Hester served as pottery registrar for all five seasons of excavation at Hisban from 1968 through 1976 and began the first 'Umayri season (1984) in the same position. Following the 1994 excavations at 'Umayri, Hester volunteered to help restore the large collared pithoi that were in thousands and thousands of pieces. Over the past several years she had been instrumental in organizing the laboratory for this reconstruction project, beginning the process of restoring what may turn out to be 65 or 75 jars. She supervised several community volunteers and college students in their work. In addition, she trained the person who has now taken over the task of supervising volunteers in the lab.

In the course of her three decades of work with the Madaba Plains Project, she has likely touched, cleaned, glued and registered more sherds of pottery than any other single person. She did her work with mind-numbing attention to detail, intense industry and amazing efficiency. Lawrence T. Geraty says, "As the one who founded the pottery process for the



Hester drawing mosaics, Hisban 1968

Madaba Plains Project, her countless hours of hard work are still represented in the tiny ink notations on thousands of potsherds." When problems arose "she solved them quickly and with wisdom. The workers she supervised never grumbled and the work was always done on time," Larry Herr remembers.

Her mark on the MPP excavations, processing of finds and publication of ceramics, is incalculable and indelible. The world of biblical archaeology owes a substantial debt of gratitude to this steady, industrious and quiet force working behind the scenes to enhance our understanding of and appreciation for the pottery of the ancient Near East.