

Tam An Mah Cave buried jar site, Luang Prabang province, Laos

Update: Tuesday, January 8, 2013. Images from the site of Tam An Mah, showing some of the amazing things MMAP found there in 2010 –and the current disturbed state of the site.

Site review by Helen Lewis, University College, Dublin (UCD), 2010 Tham An Mah excavation director. UCD School of Archaeology is a collaborator in the joint project of UPenn Museum & the National Museum of Lao PDR that is exploring the archaeology of the Middle Mekong.

For further information on the MMAP project, see <http://penn.museum/sites/mmap/>



(upper left)Dr. Joyce White of UPenn Museum with the first ceramic jar found by the project, its pit excavated.

(upper center, right) The first jar we found was standing upright in the profile, in a pit. When fully excavated, with the upper dirt taken out, we found three human skulls and other human remains, but no single entire body. Many jar burials in the area seem to represent a secondary deposition of previously buried, or sometimes cremated remains

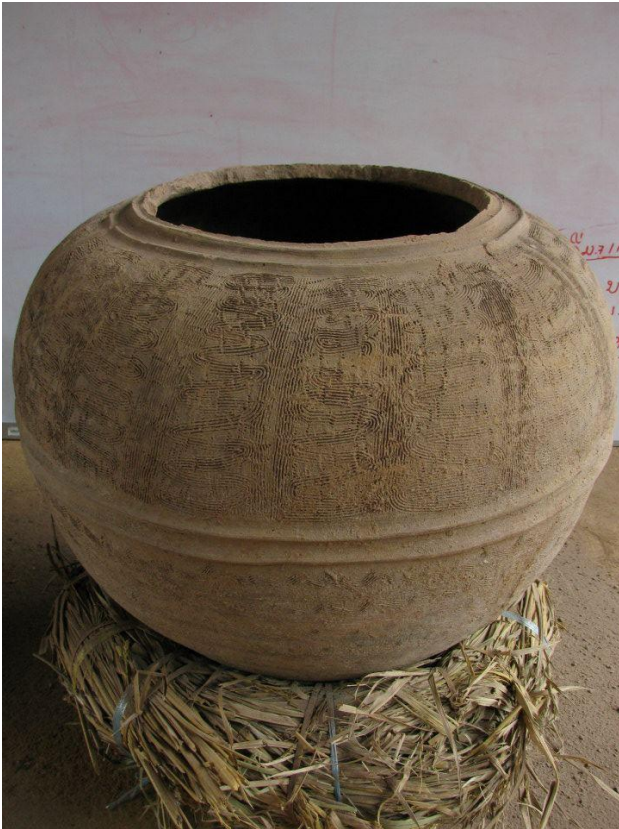
(Photos: MMAP, Amy Ellsworth)



Pot ready to come out (Photo: MMAP)

In one area we found a pit that just kept going and going...This (the third intact) ceramic jar was at the bottom of it (Photo: Amy Ellsworth)

The pot from the deep pit (Photo: MMAP)



.....and it's base (Photo: MMAP)



Stone discs have been found on sites in the Plain of Jars, near to stone jars and associated with buried human remains. (Photo: MMAP)



Underneath this disc we found an almost entire, although crushed, pot. Under that were human remains. (Photo: MMAP)



This jar was found crushed underneath the stone disc and later reconstructed in the MMAP lab. (Photo: Korakot Boonlop)



Human remains found under the third intact jar (Photo: Korakot Boonlop)

Tham An Mah: Jan 6, 2013. Looting was reported to the National Museum not long after we had completed our test excavations, but it took us some time to be able to return to Tam An Mah and survey the extent of the damage. We are planning rescue sampling and recording of this and a second reported dug out known site in the vicinity.

MMAAP test excavation, Tham An Mah, Jan. 2010



Photo: MMAAP

Tham An Mah, Jan. 2013



Photo: Beth Van Horn

Trench B showing full excavation extent in 2010; Test Pit A is already backfilled in the lower left (Photo: MMAAP)

