



The Ban Chiang

Newsletter for the Friends
of Ban Chiang

UpDATE

Preserving a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Issue #3 Spring/Summer 1996

From the Director . . .

The Winter/Spring for the Ban Chiang Project has been a time of both expansion and focus. First of all we are very excited at the interest among citizens of Thailand in the Project and the Friends of Ban Chiang. Over the past year, eight of our new Friends have been from Thailand. The Project also received a very significant and generous grant from Thailand's **John F. Kennedy Foundation for Thai-American Friendship** to support the production costs in full of the first two volumes of the Ban Chiang monograph series. Funding for scholarly publication is particularly difficult to raise. Therefore such major support from Thailand is indeed extremely gratifying.

The two volumes that will be supported include Volume One on the chronology and stratigraphy of Ban Chiang, and Volume Two on the skeletal analysis. With regard to the chronology of the site, we have received several new Accelerator Mass Spectrometer (AMS) dates from the radiocarbon laboratories at Oxford and Arizona. Friends' contributions are supporting this special dating program. I am in the process of interpreting the results, and additional dates are expected in the coming months. In general I am pleased with the results and when we have the full picture, we will have a special FOBC event to explain the new information and its meaning.

will allow a broadscale reconstruction of the ancient environment of Thailand.

Thailand Palaeoenvironment Project

In late November, Dr. Lisa Kealhofer and I returned to Thailand for six weeks to continue the National Geographic funded Thailand Palaeoenvironment Project. We cored lakes in two provinces, Phayao in the north and Trang in the south. Lisa is now organizing the analysis of the cores, including the phytoliths - her specialty. The results from this work combined with our previous research in the Ban Chiang region

Finally, I wish to thank all the Friends of Ban Chiang for your ongoing support. Your support has helped to attract interest from many sectors. It has helped bring attention to our need for an endowed Center for the Archaeology of Thailand here at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and it also helps to pay for project needs. My next intermediate goal for funds is to be able to support the palaeobotanical analysis of the site in conjunction with Bradford University, England. Your continued contributions will help ensure that the work of the Ban Chiang Project will go forward! ♦

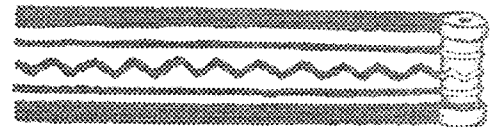
Dr. Joyce White
Director, the Ban Chiang Project



Joyce with some names of this year's new Friends

♦A Special Offer for the Friends♦

At the end of the newsletter, you will see that we have two special offerings for Friends of Ban Chiang, a T-shirt with the FOBC logo, and the new *TimeLife* volume in their Lost Civilizations Series: *Southeast Asia: A Past Regained*. Written in the *TimeLife* style for a popular audience, this book includes an essay on Ban Chiang and places the prehistory of Thailand in the region's larger historic continuum. The book has beautiful photographs and includes many archival illustrations. -A.A.



Talk for Wharton Alumni in Thailand

While in Bangkok, I spoke to alumni of Penn's Wharton School at a gathering hosted by Dr. Olarn Chairavat, President and CEO of the Siam Commercial Bank, at the Bank's spectacular new headquarters. Four of the attendees became new Friends, and we hope to build upon our nascent relationship with Penn alumni in Thailand.

Joyce's Thai House Blessing

On the first anniversary of Joyce moving into her late Victorian home in West Philadelphia last October, she decided to have a traditional Thai house blessing which many FOBCers were able to attend. In Thailand, this is called a *Tam Bun Ban* or "making merit by offering food to monks at home." Five monks from the nearby Wat Mongkolthepmunee conducted the two hour ceremony, and explained the meaning of the rites to the 50 or so friends and neighbors who joined in to ensure that Joyce would be happy in her new home. Good humor was shown on all sides during this unusual cross cultural experience which is an event to be remembered by all who attended! (Below is a recipe from that day.) ♦



Making Merit by Feeding Monks at Home

(Tam Bun Baan)

For this ceremony monks are invited to come to the home. An odd number are required, and the temple (wat) in Bensalem has five monks who were with us in October. The furniture was moved out of the living room where the monks sat and conducted the ceremony. A sacred white cord called a "sai sin" was draped around the edge of the property: one end of the cord was held by the monks. The cord defines the perimeter to be blessed, keeping out evil spirits and protecting everyone and everything inside.

The ceremony began with the homeowner bowing before the head monk and lighting two candles and three incense sticks on the altar. The head monk lit a candle that dripped into a bowl of water which was consecrated during the chanting (tam nam mon). The monks chanted for about 30 - 40 minutes while the seated community held their hands in a "wai" or prayer position. The monks had to be fed beginning by 11 am (they cannot eat after 12 noon). After eating, five more minutes of chanting were conducted and the homeowner poured water over her forefinger wishing that the benefit of the food given to the monks may pass on to the spirits of the dead (truat nam). The monks then blessed the house and participants with the consecrated water and marked the door of the house with a special type of earth. After the monks left, the water from the "truat nam" was poured at the base of a large tree in the back yard (Thais view trees as dwelling places for spirits). The sai sin was allowed to blow away on its own. ♦

Spread the word, renew your support -- every contribution is gratefully received!

-Levels of Giving

over \$1000	Bronze Caster
\$500-1000	Pottery Painter
\$100-499	Iron Smith
\$25-99	Stone Carver

-Send to:

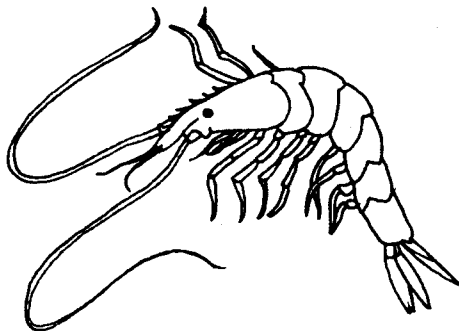
Friends of Ban Chiang
University of Pennsylvania Museum
of Archaeology and Anthropology
33rd and Spruce Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6324



House Blessing Shrimp:

Saute 3-6 cloves of minced garlic in 2 tblsp peanut oil in a medium pan. Add 1 lb peeled and deveined shrimp. Sprinkle with 1/2 to 1 tsp fish sauce* to taste - be careful it's salty. Add 1 tsp holy basil in chili paste*, more or less to your hotness taste tolerance. Add black pepper to taste. Saute until the shrimp are cooked and firm - do not overcook! Make a big pot of white rice to serve with the shrimp. Enjoy! Serves 4-6.

* Ingredients available at P. P. Grocery: on the 4300 block of Locust St. in West Philadelphia. ♦



Become a Friend of Ban Chiang!

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ payable to the TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

I would like to renew my contribution of \$_____ to support the Ban Chiang Project.

I would like more information about FOBC and the Ban Chiang Project.

I have changed my address. The following is my new address.

Our Exhibition

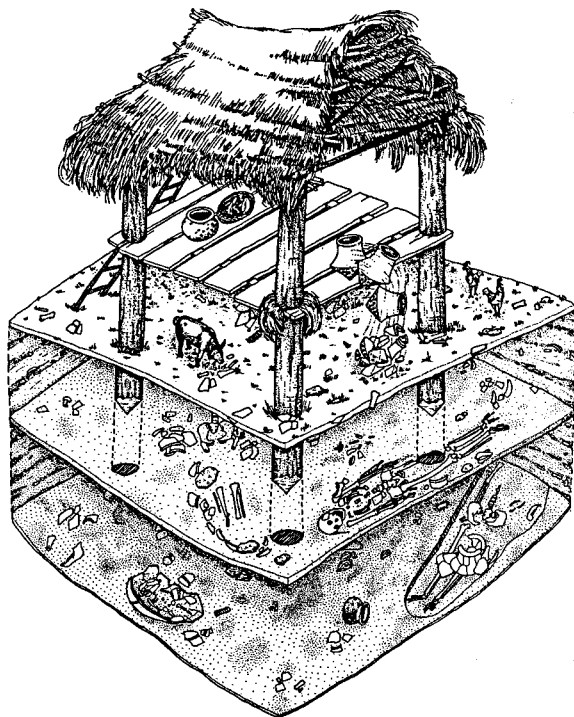
One Year Later

Last week, Raymond Rorke, Friend and designer of our exhibition "Illuminating the Past: Art and Artists of the Ban Chiang Project" was working on a new exhibit in the Sharpe Gallery. From the other side of a panel he overheard a Museum visitor exclaim "Oh, this is where that really humorous exhibit last year, you know 'Small Finds, Splatt Theory' ..." This comment showed us that we had really made an impact on the viewing audience.

Putting together the exhibit of archaeological drawings and "objects d'archaeology" was a great experience for me. As an artist, I normally think in visuals, but for the exhibit I was asked to express verbally what was involved in clearly illustrating archaeological data. With the help of Raymond and Joyce, eventually a clear text emerged that articulated the reasons and processes behind archaeological illustration. We had great fun then adding humor so that what might be considered by some a dry subject could become both enjoyable and informative for the layperson. An excerpt from the exhibit was published in the Museum's magazine *Expedition* which became a "mini exhibition catalogue" (reprints available upon written request to the Ban Chiang Project.)

Not all viewers appreciated the humor, which the *Philadelphia Inquirer* called "jejune" (sending us all to our dictionaries). We felt the reporter had missed the point of the tone which was

to capture "lab banter" - the means by which the crew of artists keep the lab atmosphere lively. But overall, most feedback indicated that viewers seemed to enjoy the unique writing style (for an Archaeological Museum) in the exhibition and learned about



The "Splatt Theory"

aspects of archaeological research as well. After all, one year later someone still remembered the "Small Finds!"

Now I am back at work finishing the site plans for Volume One (see "From the Director") and soon will start the sections. The success of my artist's reconstruction of how the site was formed, "Splatt Theory," has encouraged me to tackle new artist conception paintings in the future, the lake coring process perhaps. ♦

Ardeth Anderson/ Abrams
Ban Chiang Project Illustrator



LABnotes:

♦At a meeting in May of a small group of Friends, we set a **goal of 50 new Friends by October 1st**. If you have a friend who might like to become a Friend, please pass along this newsletter and encourage them to join us.

♦**Vince Pigott and Joyce White** gave talks on the Museum's archaeological research in Thailand at Harvard University's Seminar for East Asian Archaeology in March.

♦Ban Chiang Project intern **Julianna Lange** will be graduating from North Penn High School this June, and will be hired by the Project for the summer before she goes to college in the fall at Penn State University, Berks Campus.

♦The village of Ban Chiang has its first guesthouse called the **Lakeside Sunrise Guesthouse**, making an overnight stay possible and affordable.

Recent Publications:

Joyce C. White

1995 "Incorporating Heterarchy into Theory on Socio-Political Development: The Case from Southeast Asia," *Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Societies*, The American Anthropological Association, No. 6, Arlington, VA.

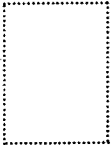
1995 "Modeling the Development of Early Rice Agriculture: Ethno-ecological Perspectives from Northeast Thailand." *Asian Perspectives*, Vol. 34.

TimeLife:

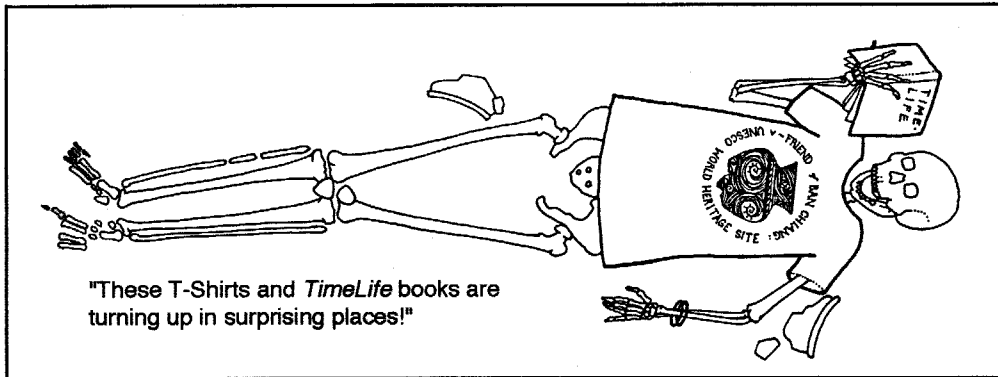
1995 *Southeast Asia: A Past Regained*, TimeLife Books, Alexandria, Virginia.

Ardeth P. Anderson

1995 "Splatt Theory," *Expedition Magazine*, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.



UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
 MUSEUM of Archaeology and Anthropology
 FRIENDS OF BAN CHIANG
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Show the world that you are a Friend of Ban Chiang by purchasing a FOBC T-shirt (50/50 cotton-poly white shirt with large terra cotta FOBC logo on its front.) Also, now available is the *TimeLife* book, *Southeast Asia: A Past Regained..* Each specially priced at \$10.70 (tax included). Please make checks payable to THE TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA and send check and order form to the Ban Chiang Project.



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