

# Maya Archaeology at Minanha, Belize

*An excavation opportunity for  
college and university students*

jointly sponsored by  
the *Social Archaeology Research Program (SARP)*, and  
the *Department of Anthropology, Trent University*



**FIELD SESSION: MAY 12<sup>th</sup> – JUNE 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

## Project Goals

The Social Archaeology Research Program (SARP) is a long term project focused on the investigation of ancient Maya sociopolitical interaction. In particular, we are interested in examining the following questions: Why were Maya city-states so unstable? How did city-states of different size and strength interact with each other? How were these city-states integrated? How were royal courts organized? What was life like on the border of a city-state? And, What factors lead to the infamous “Maya collapse?” Our research is focused at the ancient Maya center of Minanha. Thirteen years of research at this ancient Maya center has answered many questions, but there is much more to learn.

## Readings:

Iannone, Gyles

2002 *Annales History and the Ancient Maya State: Some Observations on the “Dynamic Model”*. *American Anthropologist* 104(1):68-78.

Iannone, Gyles

2006 *Archaeological Approaches to Ancient Maya Geopolitical Borders*. In *Space and Spatial Analysis in Archaeology*, edited by Elizabeth C. Robertson, Jeffrey D. Seibert, Deepika C. Fernandez, and Marc U. Zender, pp. 205-214. University of Calgary Press, Calgary.

Iannone, Gyles

2010 *Collective Memory in the Frontiers: A Case Study from the Ancient Maya Center of Minanha, Belize*. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 21(2):353-371.

## The Site of Minanha

Minanha was once a small, but strategic, city-state located within the north Vaca Plateau of west central Belize. It is situated almost equidistant between two of the most intensively investigated regions of the Maya lowlands, the upper Belize River region to the north, and the realm of the large, hegemonic, city-state of Caracol to the south. In contrast to these two areas, the north Vaca Plateau is one of the least explored regions of the Maya lowlands. The site itself first came to the attention of archaeologists in 1922, when a chicleero (someone who taps the chicle tree for the resin used in chewing gum) stumbled upon the ruins. During his exploration the chicleero noted that one of the vaulted burial chambers had caved in,

exposing human bone, and Maya ceramics. These ceramics, including four complete vessels and a fragmentary one, were taken to the nearby town of Benque Viejo and left with Reverend Arthur Versaval. The ceramics, some of which were polychromes (painted in three or more colours) with Maya glyphs and calendric dates, intrigued Versaval enough that he launched an expedition to the site. The expedition took place on April 27, 1922. Versaval was accompanied by Dr. Windsor, the Medical Officer from nearby El Cayo (today's San Ignacio), and the chiclero guide. Upon completion of their explorations they decided to name the site *Mucnal Yok Tunich* (roughly translated as "grave upon a stone"). Versaval's findings were published in the Belize newspaper, *The Clarion*, on May 11, 1922.

We next hear of the site in various reports detailing the British Museum's 1927 expedition to British Honduras (the country we now know as Belize). Having heard of the newly discovered Maya "city", T.A. Joyce, Thomas Gann, J. E. S. Thompson, and J. Cooper Clark decided to mount an expedition to map and excavate the ruins. The numerous reports describing the British Museum expedition all discuss the difficulties encountered in reaching the site, as well as their amazement at its size. Over a period of a week this expedition was able to survey the main residential acropolis, and sketch small portions of the larger, public plaza. Although the limited excavations did not produce any remarkable finds, many of the excavators underscored the importance of the site with regard to trade, and sociopolitical interaction. Given the lack of a permanent water source, the British Museum expedition was forced to leave the site after a short, one week field season. It was this lack of water that prompted the renaming of the site to *Minanha*, which loosely translates as "place without water."

Descriptions of the 1927 Minanha expedition can be found in:

Gann, Thomas  
1927 *Maya Cities*. Duckworth, London.

Joyce, T.A., J. Cooper Clark, and J.E.S. Thompson  
1927 Report on the British Museum Expedition to British Honduras, 1927. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 57:295-323.

Following the 1927 expedition there were sporadic references to the site in the literature, but no concerted effort to carry out research there. *Minanha* was originally recorded as an archaeological site by the government of

British Honduras in 1967, although it now appears evident that the site was not visited at this time. In 1997 Trent University's Social Archaeology Research Program (SARP) was asked by the government of Belize to relocate the site, and assess the potential for carrying out an archaeological project there. The "70th Anniversary Minanha Expedition" set out in late July in order to relocate the site. Unfortunately, it soon became clear that the site was incorrectly marked on the government maps. Still, we were able to document the presence of numerous agricultural terraces and small residential clusters. In addition, we also spent some time exploring a newly discovered "minor center", which we named *Waybil* (resting spot). In early May, 1998, we returned to *Waybil*, and continued our search for *Minanha*. Although our initial efforts were again unsuccessful, the following week two of our local assistants were able to relocate the site, some 1.9 km northeast of *Waybil*, and roughly 3.4 km from where it was situated on the government map. By the end of the 1998 field season we had made five trips to *Minanha*, and as a result we were able to develop a detailed understanding of site morphology. Our first significant observation was that the site was much larger than we had expected, given the 1927 map. Well over half of the site was not included in the initial mapping. These unmapped features included the main, public plazas (ritual and administrative foci), along with a number of more restricted access courtyards and patio groups. Our explorations eventually indicated that the *site core* consists of at least 169 structures.

Over the past thirteen years we have conducted detailed archaeological investigations in the epicentral court complex, site core, and adjacent periphery, in association with various agricultural terraces, water management features, and caves. The 2012 excavations will focus on the highly significant minor center of *Waybil*, located 1.9km south of the *Minanha* epicenter.

#### *Readings:*

Iannone, Gyles  
2001 Rediscovery of the Ancient Maya Center of Minanha, Belize: Background, Description, and Future Prospects. *Mexicon* 23:125-129.

Iannone, Gyles  
2005 The Rise and Fall of an Ancient Maya Petty Royal Court. *Latin American Antiquity* 16:26-44.

Schwake, Sonja, and Gyles Iannone  
2010 Ritual Remains and Social Memory: Maya Examples from West  
Central Belize. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 21(2):331-339.

### The Setting

By virtue of its location, each archaeological field project has unique characteristics. The tropical lowlands of Belize are no exception, and applicants should consider the conditions under which the work will take place. One must be prepared for warm, humid, and sometimes wet weather. In addition, applicants should give careful consideration to their ability to adjust to a small group situation in a tropical setting.

We will be staying at the *Martz Farm*, a Belizean run eco-resort located about 5 km northeast of Minanha. The *Martz Farm*, and the larger town of *Benque Viejo*, are situated quite close to the Belize/Guatemala border, and they therefore make an ideal place to begin daily excursions into the latter country.

Belize itself was previously known as British Honduras, and was a British colony until 1981. The official language is English, but the majority of the population also speak Spanish. The multi-ethnic culture of Belize is comprised of Carib/Creoles, Mestizos, and Maya, to name a few. Politically, Belize is very stable, and has a democratic system of government. Other than its ruins, Belize is best known for having the second longest barrier reef in the world.

### The Director

The Director of the project, Dr. Gyles Iannone, is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Trent University. His M.A. research, which he completed at Trent in 1992, focused on the interpretation of ancient Maya eccentric lithics. He received a Ph.D. (1996) from the University of London, England, for his research into ancient Maya settlement and social organization. Dr. Iannone has been involved with field schools since 1988, and has been conducting research in Belize since 1991.

### The Staff

Staff members derive from a variety of universities based in Canada, the United States, and England. Most staff members have been field school students on one of the earlier SARP projects, and they are thus well versed in field school instruction. These individuals specialise in a variety of subjects including the study of architecture, lithics, ceramics, faunal and human remains, as well as ethnobotany, illustration, and conservation. We pride ourselves in having a consistent student/supervisor ratio of at least 2:1.

### Project Requirements

The field course is open to “for credit” students and graduate student volunteers. “For credit” participants will register in ANTH 3000 (Belize) at Trent University (there is an extra Trent University tuition fee for credit students). ANTH 3000, “Field Methods and Techniques”, is equivalent to a full-course at most universities. All participants will take part in a five week field session, the main goal of which is to provide an introduction to, and training in, archaeological field and laboratory techniques. During the first few days in the field students will participate in a series of “workshops” designed to introduce them to the archaeological skills that they will be required to learn. These workshops will be conducted within the controlled setting of the base camp. We find that this is the most effective way for students to acquire the skills that they will employ on a daily basis while in the field. These first few days also allow for a period of acclimatisation.

**Survey and Excavation Work.** Field work will run Mondays to Fridays (7:30 am to 3:00 pm). All students are expected to be on site during the week. Field work will include site reconnaissance, surveying, setting up units, general excavation, screening, drawing of plans and profiles, and data recording. All participants will keep personal notebooks in which they will detail their field and lab activities. The supervisors will advise you on how to maintain these necessary records. Students will find these notebooks to be their most malleable recording device, as they allow for personal insights to be included with hard data. The project also uses a series of recording sheets (i.e., level, burial, and feature records). These record measurements and descriptive data for all excavations undertaken by the project. In combination with the notebooks, these records provide the basic data base

for the project. Finally, recording cards are included with all excavated materials to provide quick and easy access to contextual information while in the lab. Notebooks and recording sheets, along with any drawings, will be handed in at the end of the field session, and become property of the SARP project. Students who require copies of their field notes should either photocopy them, or copy them into a second notebook.

**Laboratory Work.** Lab work, which includes the washing, cataloguing, drawing, and classification of artifacts will be conducted once per week, on scheduled lab days. In addition, emergency lab days may be called, particularly during rainy days. The student's lab work will provide them with a detailed understanding of the various material culture items produced by the ancient Maya.

**Lectures.** There will be formal lectures twice a week, in the evenings. These will provide a survey of Maya prehistory. It is hoped that in some instances guest lecturers will also be scheduled. More informal seminars will be scheduled periodically. These seminars are intended to provide an opportunity for staff and students to discuss their personal research. **Students should bring a separate notebook to record their lecture notes.**

*Readings:* Students should purchase and read Arthur Demarest's "*Ancient Maya: The Rise and Fall of a Rainforest Civilization*" (Cambridge, 2004) **before arriving in Belize** in order to supplement the lectures (available through Chapters and Amazon). Given our current focus on minor centers, you may also want to read Gyles Iannone and Samuel V. Connell's edited volume "*Perspectives on Ancient Maya Rural Complexity*" (Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA, 2003); as well as the following book chapter:

Iannone, Gyles

2004 "Minor Centres" in the Upper Belize River Region: Problems in Definition and Interpretation. In *The Ancient Maya of the Belize Valley: Half a Century of Archaeological Research*, edited by James F. Garber pp. 273-286. The University Press of Florida, Gainesville.

**Final Exam and Grading.** "For Credit" Students will also be required to take a final exam. This exam will cover not only basic field techniques, but also lectures, seminars, lab work, and recent finds or discoveries made by the project. A final grade will be provided combining the field work, field notebooks, seminar participation, lab work, and the final exam.

#### GRADING BREAKDOWN

Fieldwork.....	30%
Labwork.....	15%
Notebook.....	25%
Participation.....	10%
Final Exam.....	<u>20%</u>
	Total 100%

#### Arrival and Departure Details

**Travel to Belize.** We have found in the past that many students prefer to travel before and/or after the actual project dates. Given this fact, and considering that our students derive from many different countries, we have always felt that it is easiest to let students make their own travel arrangements. Participants are therefore responsible for the cost of their travel arrangements to and from the Belize International Airport (or the *Martz Farm* if not arriving on an airport pick-up/drop-off date, see below). We recommend that you purchase a round-trip ticket (to satisfy Belizean Immigration authorities). **We also strongly recommend trip cancellation insurance in the event you must modify your travel plans.** With regard to purchasing tickets, we are currently trying to work out a group rate through a local travel agent. We will forward the contact number to participants as soon as this arrangement is finalised.

**Arrival in Belize.** Participants should make every effort to arrive at the **Belize International Airport**, outside *Belize City*, on the pick-up day (Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>). Included in your fees is the cost of hiring transportation to take you directly from the airport to the *Martz Farm*. This conserves time on a day which usually begins very early or involves a very long and tedious journey. If you are unable to meet us at the airport on the pick-up day you must make your own way to the *Martz Farm* in time to begin work on the first day of your session (see details below). **Final**

**arrangements for meeting at the *Belize International Airport* will be made upon receipt of a copy of your air transportation schedule.**

**Immigration.** When you arrive at the Belize International Airport they will bring out the stairs, and that first blast of Caribbean air will hit you! Proceed into the terminal and make sure you have your passport handy. You must bring a passport, and should keep this on your person when travelling (not in a bag). American, British, and Canadian citizens will be issued visas free of charge upon arrival in Belize. If you are travelling under another passport you should check with your local travel agent concerning the required travel documents. At the immigration counter they will ask you what your visit is for, and how long you will be staying. Tell them that you are a student assisting in archaeological research near San Ignacio. Try not to make the mistake and say that you are "working" on an archaeological dig, as customs agents usually get excited when they think that a foreigner is coming to *work* without a work visa (which of course you won't have). It is best if you tell them that you are on a field school, and that you will be staying for five weeks. It is usual that a 30 day visa is granted upon arrival. This will suffice to cover the majority of your field session. You will have the option of renewing your visa at a later date, either at the western border during the Tikal weekend, or at the immigration office in the capital of Belmopan (visa extensions may require a small fee).

After claiming your luggage, pass through customs. A porter will then take your bags and carry them outside (for a small fee per bag). If you have sent us your travel arrangements, one or more of the crew members will be waiting for you outside the airport's front door "arrival lounge". If you arrive on an early flight, you will have to wait with the staff until all the flights for that day come in (e.g., 4:30 pm). This time will give you a chance to chat with some of the new students, as well as question the staff about project matters. There is a bank at the airport where you can cash travellers checks if required. Remember, bring travellers checks in American dollars. You may want to bring a small amount of American cash with you to use immediately (tips, coffee, soft drinks, beer, etc.). **We also urge you to take this time to call home, and inform your family that you have arrived in the country safely.**

For those individuals who wish to make their own way to Belize (e.g., those travelling through Mexico; or those who fly into Belize early),

arrangements can be made to meet us at the airport on the pick-up day, or one can proceed directly to the *Martz Farm*. If you choose to do the latter you will have to catch a cab to the bus station in Belize city. Make sure that your cab has **green** license plates. These are registered cab drivers. Cars without green plates are not cabs, and these people will sometimes take you for a ride in more ways than one! Once you reach the station get the bus to *San Ignacio* (also known as "Cayo"). The front of this bus will usually say **Benque** or **Benque Viejo** (the stop directly after *San Ignacio*). Ask the Bus driver to make sure that the bus you are on is going to *San Ignacio*. The fare to *San Ignacio* should be around \$3.50 U.S. (\$7.00 BZE). The bus will be quite crowded, and you may want to watch your gear. The bus stops many times, and you may have to spend about 30 minutes in the capital of *Belmopan*, located about an hour from *Belize City*.

*San Ignacio* is approximately an hour or so away from *Belmopan*. You will first go through *Santa Elena*, *San Ignacio's* sister town, then cross the new wooden bridge (or the big suspension bridge) over the *Macal River*. Finally, at long last, you will be in *San Ignacio*! The Bus will let you off downtown. From this point you can catch a cab to our camp at the *Martz Farm*, south of *Benque Viejo*. This ride will take about 40 minutes, and should cost \$80 BZE (\$40 U.S.).

Alternatively, you may want to walk over to **Erva's Restaurant**. The staff there should be able to tell you whether there are any project members in town. Often somebody from the project will be sitting in there having lunch, or a drink. If you can't find Erva's ask anyone for directions – it's a popular place! If you arrive a day or two before your session starts you may want to stay in *San Ignacio* for a couple of nights. Again, check at Erva's and they will be able to point you to lodgings and other amenities.

### **Departure From Belize**

As part of your field school fees, SARP will provide transportation to the **Belize International Airport** at the end of your session, as long as you depart on the determined departure day (Sunday, June 17<sup>th</sup>). Students should be reminded that, like Mexico, Belize has a "departure tax" which must be paid before they will allow you to check in for your return flight. Last summer the tax was ca. \$39.25 U.S. (this fee must be paid in US currency). The fee may be included in your airfare – please check with your travel agent.

### Weekday Room, Board, and Site Travel

**Room.** Weekday room and board will be arranged by the project director. Given the limited water supply at Minanha itself, all students and instructional staff will stay at the *Martz Farm*, a Belizean run eco-resort located ca. 5 km from the site. **Students will stay in the project's dorm building, but will be required to supply their own bedding (i.e., mattress, sheet, and blanket, and/or sleeping bag), and mosquito net.** Although there is no electrical power at the farm, there is abundant water, fabulous food, and amazing scenery. *Martz Farm* is a 15 minute drive from the town of *Benque Viejo*, and the Guatemalan border. The larger town of *San Ignacio* is roughly a 35-40 minute drive. *San Ignacio* is a picturesque, hilly town of approximately 16,812 inhabitants. The town has 24 hour electrical supply, treated tap water, a hospital, three banks, plus daily and dependable bus service.

**Board.** Meals will generally consist of local cuisine (rice, beans, chicken, fish etc.). Belizean food tends to reflect both Central American and Caribbean influences. Although we can generally cater to all dietary needs (e.g., vegetarian, allergies etc.), you will find that the variety of foods is limited. We are very lucky, however, in that our cooks at *Martz Farm* are some of Belize's best. Regardless of personal tastes, the food always seems to satisfy everyone, and no one ever leaves the table hungry.

We will eat breakfast and supper at the farm. Lunches will be carried to the site. Breakfast usually includes toast and/or tortillas, condiments (jam and peanut butter), eggs, fresh fruit, and beans. Due to the difficulty in transporting and keeping food, lunches will generally consist of sandwiches. Students should bring water to the site to drink at lunch, and other times during the day to ward off dehydration. Supper varies considerably, from stewed chicken, pork, or beef, baked chicken or pork chops, spaghetti, to traditional soups. Most suppers include a medley of some of the following: freshly made tortillas, zucchini, okra, mashed potatoes, rice and beans, stewed beans, stewed vegetables, guacamole, salsa, white rice, salad, and Ms. Julia's insanity peppers (also a natural laxative!). **If you have any food allergies please indicate these on your application, and don't be afraid to speak up if you are served something you can't eat.**

**Site Travel.** On most days students and staff will travel ca. 1 hour by tractor and trailer to Waybil, which is located in a beautiful section of rainforest, surrounded by ancient Maya agricultural terraces. If the weather turns nasty, which can happen periodically in the tropics, the Waybil access road may become impassable for short periods of time (although it has yet to stop our tractor, affectionately known as "the bulk"). If this does occur we will focus on lab work until such a time as the road dries out.

### Weekends & Extraneous Travel, Lodging, and Meals

Following the suggestion of past students, weekends will be totally open. As part of the program fees our bus will carry people into *San Ignacio* town after work on Friday, and return them to the *Martz Farm* on Sunday evening, after supper (all extraneous transportation costs must be covered by the individual participant). The free weekends will allow you time to travel, and to get to know the country of Belize (and its neighbours) better. It will also give you the opportunity to consume those foods you might miss (pizza, pasta, steak, Chinese etc.), learn some Belizean dances, and to make new friends. **All weekend costs will be the responsibility of each individual student.**

### Health Matters

Certain aspects of fieldwork involve a good deal of physical labour and participants should be in good health. As such, participants should carefully evaluate their potential to put in a full day of manual labour, and complete the daily hike to and from the site. The hot, humid climate requires that one drink large quantities of water to avoid dehydration, and apply sun-screen to avoid burning. **It is also imperative that each participant meet with their physician for a check-up and consult the *Center for Disease Control* website for an updated list of suggested immunizations and medications well in advance of their trip (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel>).** All students must take some type of Malaria pill, and insect repellent may help some to avoid the cause of this illness. You must advise the Director of any physical conditions which may pose a problem while in Belize so that we may react accordingly should an emergency arise (all SARP staff have basic first-aid training). If you suffer from any allergies do not forget to bring your prescribed medication. Remember, certain drugs or brand names may not be available locally. There is a medical clinic and hospital with trained doctors in *San Ignacio*. Should you need extreme emergency care, such as

an airlift to Miami or other major U.S. city, this may not be covered by your basic medical insurance. Check with your insurer and purchase additional travel/medical insurance if necessary. **All project participants must have their own travel/medical insurance to cover such circumstances.**

## Equipment

**Suggested Clothing and Personal Accoutrements.** All participants should be prepared for hot and wet weather. We do not generally halt excavations for mild downpours and if you feel you would be uncomfortable in wet clothes then bring a rain poncho of some sort. Although the majority of vegetation in the Vaca Plateau is of the relatively pleasing, and shady old growth forest, some comparatively dense secondary growth also exists. Thus, primarily when surveying, there is a real need to protect oneself from jungle type flora scratching your arms and legs. Some may also find themselves allergic to some of the plants, and thus covering up as much skin as possible is beneficial. Generally, it is best to take your style tips from the crew members, as they are all well aware of the proper attire for each specific situation. In some cases, particularly when touring some of the more open sites, the sun can be a problem. Thus, hats are essential equipment. If you are looking for that exceptional tan then please use some common sense and bring adequate sun screen with you (we also advise you to drink as much water as possible, as it is very easy to dehydrate in a tropical environment). In sum, although you may find it possible to excavate in shorts and T-shirts in some instances, cool, cotton long-sleeved tops and full length pants may be to your advantage. In addition, one or two pairs of sturdy hiking boots are highly recommended (the extra pair for when the others are wet). Some other items you should consider bringing for non-excavation hours include:

1. T-shirts and shorts.
2. jeans for the cool evenings.
3. a rain poncho for rainy days (preferably one that will fit over your back-pack).
4. swimsuits and towels.
5. tennis shoes and sandals.
6. hats.
7. insect repellent.
8. books.
9. IPOD or MP3 players.

10. toiletries.
11. camera and film.
12. a good flashlight.
13. pens and pencils.
14. sunglasses.
15. Bandannas or sweat-bands.
16. sun-screen for your skin type.
17. something for sunburn (aloe gel etc.).
18. photocopies of your passport and other documents should the originals be lost.
19. an alarm clock.
20. a notebook for your *lecture* notes.

**\*\*note\*\* make sure to put your toiletries, flashlight, and sleeping gear on the top of your bag for ease of access when you reach camp. Also, keep your passport, airline ticket, traveller's checks, and other valuables handy; we will deposit them in our safe box in *San Ignacio* before departing for Martz Farm (you should bring the remaining \$1600 U.S. payment with you to Martz Farm, however, as we will be collecting the balance of the fees on Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup>; **make sure to write down your passport number** – you will need it to transfer the traveller's checks).**

**Field Equipment you must provide.** All participants should provide the following as part of their excavation/camping gear:

1. 2 water bottles/canteens.
2. geologist type hand-pick (about the size of a hammer, with one pointed end and a flat or square opposing end).
3. sturdy, pointed, *mason's* trowel (**no bigger than 5"**; Marshalltown, WHS, Goldblat, or some other drop-forged variety; don't waste your money on a welded brand or a "garden" trowel).
4. 5 metre measuring tape.
5. a roll of nylon string.
6. plumb bob.
7. line or spirit level (about 5 cm long, with hooks to hang it from a string).
8. pens, pencils, erasers.
9. ruler (metric).
10. compass set (geometry set).
11. protractor.

12. hardcover notebook (8"x11", about 100 pages, metric graph paper on one side if possible; e.g. a "physics" book).
13. a small, personal first-aid kit (well stocked with Band-Aids, gauze, disinfectant cream etc.).
14. work gloves (canvas or leather - some people use them, others don't).
15. a sturdy, lightweight knapsack for transporting your gear and any other personal items you will need to take to site with you each day.
16. a directional compass.
17. a sturdy dustpan.
18. a whisk broom.
19. root cutters.
20. a large back-pack (large enough to carry your camping gear).
21. an air mattress or "thermarest".
22. a sheet set to fit your mattress (or light sleeping bag).
23. a light blanket and travel pillow.
24. a mosquito net to cover your bed.
25. a small tupperware container (for your lunch).
26. a multi-purpose knife (e.g., swiss army).
27. at least one pair of sturdy hiking boots.
28. 1 extra pair of shoes or boots you can work in.

### Money Matters

**Currency.** The local currency is based on the Belize dollar, which exchanges at exactly 50 cents U.S. (i.e., \$1.00 U.S. = \$2.00 BZE). We strongly recommend that you bring U.S. travellers checks (American Express, Visa, Mastercard) as they are easily replaced. A limited number of banks operate bank machines from which debit withdrawals may be made. Personal checks are not negotiable in Belize, and wiring money to Belize from abroad is difficult, and often involves delays. Most banks can provide cash advances on *some* credit cards. Although the latter provide a good source of *emergency* funds, we do recommend that you budget wisely from the beginning of your trip and bring all necessary funds with you. Also, bring some small American bills with you for when you first arrive to pay for items until you can get to the bank or a money changer to change your travellers checks (U.S. bills are accepted throughout the country at the \$2.00 BZE = \$1.00 U.S. rate).

**Program Fee.** The total cost of room, board and project-related travel while in Belize is fixed at **\$1,700 U.S.** Some of this money also goes towards daily operations of the project, as well as governmental and other administrative fees. This money (minus the \$100 U.S. application deposit; e.g. **\$1,600 U.S.**) will be collected a day or two after arrival in Belize. The **only** acceptable payment is by **travellers checks (no money orders please) – PERSONAL CHECKS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AS THEY ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE IN BELIZE** (may I suggest for the fees you bring travellers checks in \$500 or \$100 U.S. denominations; for your personal expenses \$20 or \$50 U.S. denominations are sufficient). **Failure to produce the required fee when requested will result in forfeiture of your position with the field school.**

**Basic Personal Expenses.** Students will be required to cover their subsistence, lodging and extraneous travel costs on the weekends. On average, hotel rooms range from \$5-\$10 U.S. per person (per night) – based on *shared* occupancy. A good meal at most restaurants will cost between \$5-\$7 U.S. Additional expenses will also be incurred for such items as gifts, beverages (beer = \$1.75 U.S.; soft drinks = \$0.50 U.S.; mixed drinks = \$1.00-2.00 U.S.), snacks, toiletries (can be expensive), film, postage, laundry, local crafts, taxis, buses, and various other items. Dancing to a Caribbean beat is also a favourite nighttime activity for both Belizeans and visitors, and some clubs have a cover charge (\$5-\$7.50 U.S.). We have found in the past that \$500-\$1000 U.S. usually suffices to cover personal expenses for the month.

### Optional Trips and Free Time

Weekends are open. If there are unexpected problems (e.g., poor weather conditions), our work schedule may have to change, requiring that plans and personnel be flexible. Various points of interest exist within the vicinity of *Martz Farm*, and *San Ignacio*. These include the *Mountain Pine Ridge*, where one can visit the *Rio Frio Caves*, the *Rio On Pools*, *1000 ft. falls*, and the site of *Caracol*. Two long weekends will be scheduled in order to allow students to visit some areas slightly further afield. Some destinations include the offshore *Cayes*, and the southern Belize coastal town of *Placencia*. While in the *Cayes* or *Placencia* one can dive, fish, swim, or just relax. The proximity to the *Guatemala* border also offers the ideal



setting for a weekend trip to *Tikal*, and the island capital of *Flores*. The Mexican border city of *Chetumal* can also be visited over a long weekend.

On normal weekends shorter day trips to the Guatemalan border town of *Melchor* can also be undertaken for shopping purposes. While waiting for the shoppers, some may wish to participate in the informal fiestas which are common place in *Chan Pond*, the "no-man's" land between the two borders. More organized fiestas are held during the summer at the traditional Maya village of *Socotz*, and its neighbouring town of *Benque Viejo*. Further afield, participants may wish to visit the *Belize Zoo*, or the *Blue Hole*, both located near the Capital of *Belmopan*. Closer to home, participants can visit a number of archaeological sites. We have close working relationships with the directors of all projects within west central Belize. These include Dr. Jim Garber's Texas State University project at *Cahal Pech*, Dr. Annabel Ford's UC Santa Barbara project at *El Pilar*, Drs. Arlen and Diane Chase's Central Florida project at *Caracol*, and Dr. Jaime Awe's BVAR project at *Baking Pot* and *Cahal Pech*. These relationships provide students with the opportunity to meet with some of the leading players in Maya archaeology.

*Martz Farm* and *San Ignacio* are situated near creeks and rivers, and many students spend a great deal of time swimming. Canoe trips are another popular activity. Finally, horse-back riding trips are easily organized.

It is unlikely that anyone will be able to include all of the above trips, however there has yet to be a participant who has not gone on one or two of the less expensive day excursions. Therefore, participants should budget for extracurricular activities. Belize is a wonderful country, and you will want to get the most out of your visit.

#### ENROLLMENT AND FEES:

**Program Fee:** All participants must pay the program fee of **\$1,700\* U.S.** This fee covers **weekday** subsistence, lodging, operational, administrative, and non-academic staff costs, as well as governmental administrative fees. The full Program Fee must be paid to the Project Director upon arrival in Belize, with the exception of **\$100 U.S.**, which must be submitted with your application as a deposit.

**"For Credit" Student Enrolment:** Students wishing to take the field school **for credit** will enrol in ANTH3000 (Belize) through the Registrar's

Office at Trent University. Credit will be for a full course equivalent, and will be granted by Trent University after payment of the requisite tuition fees, and completion of the course requirements. Participants will be graded based on their fieldwork, lab work, notebook, participation, and final exam. Students will be sent information concerning Trent summer school enrolment in mid-March. The summer school application form, and tuition fee, must be returned to the Registrar's Office at Trent before the admission process can be completed. Students from other universities must apply for admission to Trent as a visiting student and also submit a *letter of permission* from their home institution in order to participate in this Trent course (this should be submitted with the Trent summer school application, not the SARP application).

#### Trent Summer School Tuition Fees:

- 1). Canadian Residents - \$1,168.56\*\* Canadian
- 2). International Students - \$3,050.26\*\* Canadian

\*\* these are 2011 summer fees, and they are subject to change (fees are determined by the year a student first registered at Trent).

**Graduate Student Volunteer Enrolment (space limited to five participants):** Graduate students wishing to **acquire field experience**, regardless of their level of experience, may participate in this field course. Interested graduate students must submit this application form and the \$100 U.S. deposit. If accepted, graduate students will be required to participate in the entire five week course, and pay the balance of the Program Fee (\$1,600 U.S.) to the PI upon arrival in Belize

\* **All students** will be required to cover the cost of their transportation to and from Belize, as well as the cost of weekend room and board, any **optional** field trips, medical expenses, personal insurance, or other non-project related expenses (e.g., personal equipment, personal spending money).

#### COMMUNICATION MATTERS

**Our Mailing Address in Belize.** Airmail correspondence to Belize can take up to two weeks. There are pay phones with international linkage in *Benque Viejo* and *San Ignacio*. Mail to project participants should be directed to:

**C/O Martz Farm  
P.O. Box 161  
San Ignacio, CAYO  
Belize, Central America**

**Phone.** Our emergency contact number is **011-501-614-6462**. This is the *Martz Farm* phone. They will pass phone messages on to the recipient. However, this is a business phone, so please keep to the emergency only policy.

**Email.** There are many locations in *San Ignacio* where you can check your email on the weekends.

**NOTES**