

Archaeology and Palaeontology

With peace prevailing in the Arabian Gulf, archaeology in the Emirates returned to normal in the second half of 1992 with the usual flow of foreign teams working in the country, and with locally-based teams also more active than usual in recent years.

At the level of the ENHG, a highlight was a weekend trip to Ras al Khaimah in November, during which members were given a guided tour of the site of the ancient mosque at Julfar by the leader of the British team, Dr. Geoffrey King. An earlier report on the excavations was carried in *Tribulus* Vol. 1.2, October 1991.

Dr. King also spoke to the Group in Abu Dhabi in November about the results of the first Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeology Survey, which took place on the islands of Sir Bani Yas, Dalma and Merawah in March and April.

As an expression of support for the Julfar excavations, the Group made a donation of Dh. 5,000 towards the expenses for the 1992 season, the largest such donation yet made by the Group towards scientific work. Group members Kate Bonner and Carolyn Lehmann both spent a considerable amount of time with the Julfar team, while both were also members of the team for the second season of the Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeology Survey Project in March and April 1993.

A Japanese team from the University of Kanazawa also continued work on the excavation of a settlement area at the Julfar site. A report will be published in a subsequent issue.

Elsewhere in the UAE, there was also substantial activity over the winter months. In Umm Al Qaiwain, Professor Ernie Haerinck, of the University of Ghent in Belgium, continued excavations at the Ad Door site from October to early December, concentrating on the clearing of an area of about 2,000 sq. metres of this Parthian-era town. (See Page 24). Earlier excavations by Professor Haerinck were reported on in *Tribulus* Vol. 1.1, April 1991.

At the end of December, Professor Dan Potts, late of the University of Copenhagen, and now from the University of Sydney, Australia, commenced a two month season at the Tell Abraq site, not far from Ad Door, with the dual objectives of examining the interior layout of the Third Millennium tower and of excavating an Umm an Nar type collective tomb first discovered during the 1990 season under the edge of the mound.

In the Emirate of Sharjah, one highlight was the inauguration of the Sharjah Museum by the Ruler, His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed al Qassimi. The Museum, in the preparation of which a French team was involved, displays finds from excavations throughout the Emirate.

A French team arrived at the end of the year to resume work on the 2,000 year old fortress building at Mileiha, between Dhaid and Al Madam. Another excavation took place at Tarif, near Kalba, one of Sharjah's East Coast

enclaves. (See Notes and Queries, Page 25).

Elsewhere on the East Coast, the UAE's first Iron Age site, discovered at Dibba in the late 1960s and cursorily examined by personnel of the Trucial Oman Scouts, was re-located and excavated by a team from the Fujairah Department of Antiquities, under the direction of Dr. Walid Yasin al Tikriti, of the Al Ain Department of Antiquities and Tourism.

The structure proved to be a stone-lined collective tomb of Iron Age date, mixed with material under a mound and other graves of an earlier, perhaps Second Millennium date. Further excavations in Dibba are planned for future years.

In the Emirate of Dubai, the Dubai Museum continued rescue excavations in the Qusais area.

The focus of attention in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi was rescue archaeology in the Hili and Rumailah area of Al Ain, and on nearby Jebel Hafit, together with the planning of work on Islamic sites in the western desert regions.

Along the coast, the palaeontological survey conducted by a team led by Peter Whybrow, of London's Natural History Museum, and supported by our Corporate member, the Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Oil Operations, ADCO, resumed in early December, and finished at the end of January.

The focus of attention was on analysis of sediments in the Miocene era rocks. Some further work on lithic industries was conducted by Sally McBrearty, of Brandeis University, U.S.A. (A report on her first season of lithic survey can be found on Page 13).

A report on a survey of late Cretaceous rocks in the eastern UAE and neighbouring Oman, carried out in early 1992, was submitted to ADCO by Andrew Smith and Noel Morris, members of the Whybrow-led palaeontological team, and revealed major new discoveries. A summary is in Notes and Queries on Page 23.

Overall, archaeology and palaeontology in the Emirates continue to attract increasing attention, from both foreign and local sources. With several more teams at work in the first three months of 1993, the winter of 1992-1993 may well prove to be the busiest yet in terms of studies into the country's ancient heritage. Evidence of increasing local support was underlined by the interest shown by President His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan in the Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeological Survey Project, which completed its second season in April 1993.

As always, however, there remains scope for interested amateurs to play a role in the location of new sites, and also as volunteers in the professionally-directed excavations.

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Archaeology Recorder

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