

1990 - [1991](#) - [1993](#) - [1994](#) - [1995](#) - [1997](#)

CARACOL, BELIZE 1990 SEASON

From "Field Notes" in PARI Newsletter 12:2-3 (August, 1990)

The 1990 Caracol Archaeological Project, directed by Drs. Diane and Arlen Chase of the University of Central Florida and sponsored by U.S.A.I.D. and the Government of Belize, ran from January through June and involved 94 individuals in various phases of excavation, stabilization, and laboratory work. This season's work focused primarily in three locales in the epicenter — Caana in the B Group, the South Acropolis, and the A Group.

At Caana, the tallest man-made construction in Belize, a series of upper rooms were excavated and consolidated. Living debris was encountered on the floors of several of these rooms. Even more important was the abundant stucco decoration which once adorned these rooms and included a multitude of figures, texts, and dates; these are being analyzed by Katherine Stine of the Virginia Commonwealth University.

Architectural renderings of various parts of Caana were also made by Dr. Joseph Ballay of Carnegie Mellon. In the South Acropolis, Structures D4, D17, and D18 were excavated and Structures D17 and D18 were stabilized. The layout of this building concentration was found to continually shift throughout its long history of use and evinces a heavy Early Classic focus.

A cremation burial was found in association with Str. D4. In the A Group, Structures A2, A6, A7, and A8 were intensively investigated, ostensibly to see how this group functioned as an "E" or "Observatory Group." Caches were found in all of the investigated structures: 2 in Str. A8, 1 in Str. A7, 1 in Str. A6, and 5 in Str. A2. An important assemblage of pottery vessels and other artifacts dating to the Terminal Classic/Early

Postclassic was found in the rooms of the "Temple of the Wooden Lintel," Str. A6.

The rear of this building was stabilized during 1990 and the rest of the structure will be consolidated during 1991. Structure A7 revealed a tomb dating to the end of the Early Classic era; it is the 3rd largest chamber yet found at Caracol (out of a total of 54 thus far excavated and recorded). A flexed burial was also encountered in Str. A2. Nonepicentral work was carried out as well. Susan Jaeger of Southern Methodist University continued work on outlying terraces. Dr. Don Rice of the University of Virginia began a study of vegetation patterns at Caracol.

Three new monuments were recovered during the course of the field season; all were drawn and studied by Dr. Nikolai Grube of the University of Bonn. Two, both stelae, were found associated with Structure A2. One dates to 9.10.0.0.0. and exhibits 140 hieroglyphs while the other was broken and cached beneath an altar. Two large fragments of the second stela were recovered; one fragment bears an ISIG long count date of 8.>15.3.?.?. making it the earliest dated monument found in Belize. A third monument dating to the 18th katun of cycle 9 was found associated with the the B Group ballcourt; this ballcourt marker contains information pertaining to the progenitor ruler of Caracol dating to the 14th katun of the 8th cycle.

A half-hour video, shot during the 1989 field season entitled "Maya Conquerors of Caracol" was also completed in 1990 and is available for purchase from Rusty Okoniewski, Division of Sponsored Research, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida 32816 (phone 407-275-2671).