

EARTHQUEST NEWS

A Newsletter from Andrew Collins. Vol. 4, No. 1, Summer 2001

QUESTING CONFERENCE 2001

This year's Questing Conference is to be held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 on Saturday, 3rd November. We have switched the venue quite simply because the Institute of Education was uneconomical. What we want to do is give you the best possible extravaganza of alternative history, forbidden archaeology at the best possible price. Hence tickets for this year's event have been reduced from £28 to just £20 in advance, or £22 on the day. In addition to this, we have introduced a scheme where by you can purchase four or more tickets at a discount of 10 percent.

The line up is one of the strongest we have ever put together. We are joined for the first time by SIR LAURENCE GARDNER, the author of such books as BLOODLINE OF THE HOLY GRAIL, GENESIS OF THE GRAIL KINGS and REALM OF THE RING LORDS. In this exclusive lecture, Laurence will explore the origins of sacred bloodlines from the Watchers, Nephilim and Annunaki of Middle Eastern mythology through till the birth of Christianity. Historical botanist MICHAEL CARMICHAEL, who last year presented a dynamic lecture on the importance of the blue water lily in Egyptian kingship and religion, will return to present a talk on the origins of alchemy. IAN LAWTON, co-author of the 1999 best-seller GIZA: THE TRUTH will deliver a key lecture on the alternative history field, and how it is time for some changes in the way we approach this subject. ADRIAN GILBERT, co-author of the seminal classic THE ORION MYSTERY, will speak on the very latest developments in his search to understand the significance of archaeo-astronomy at Giza. Writer and journalist DAVID ELKINGTON, who is the author of the recently published book IN THE NAME OF THE GODS, will present a lecture on the significance of acoustics and sonic technology to prehistoric cultures. He promises to bring along a special guest musician to demonstrate the power of acoustics. In contrast, LYNN PICKNETT and CLIVE PRINCE will lecture about their revelations concerning the mystical intrigue surrounding Rudolf Hess, Rosslyn Chapel, and the involvement in Hess's plight of the English royal family. I will introduce the day with a review of the latest findings in the alternative history, forbidden archaeology field, while my friend and colleague GRAHAM PHILLIPS will end the day with a presentation of a slightly different sort. In 'Graham Phillips – the Early Days', Graham will tell us about some of his childhood exploits! By the way, this section of the day is not to be taken too seriously!

In addition to the above lectures, ROBERT TEMPLE, who delivered a lecture on his book THE CRYSTAL SUN at last year's Mysteries of the Past conference, has agreed to attend the conference if commitments allow. However, his wife Olivia tells me that he is more or less certain to be there (although no guarantees can be given). In an exclusive lecture entitled 'Conversations with Eternity', Robert will explore the practice and techniques of divination among the ancient Greeks, the Romans and the Chinese.

As I am sure you'll agree this is a pretty impressive line-up, and one which takes the Questing Conference slightly away from the same old dross on offer at other events of this nature at twice the price! It is taking on a more esoteric level, which reflects the change in attitude of an audience interested in the subjects of alternative history and forbidden archaeology. People want more than simply arguments about astronomical alignments on the Giza plateau, or the endless politics surrounding the search for the Hall of Records. Join us for an event that will enrich the soul, and not hurt your pocket. A word of warning, be careful of imitations!

Tickets are available either via credit card from Atlantis Bookshop on 020.7405.2120 (+20.7405.2120 outside of the UK), by post from the PO Box at Leigh-on-Sea, using the reply coupon which accompanies the conference flyer, or by purchasing them on the door. The Questing Conference is also sponsored by NEXUS magazine, and through adverts in their magazine tickets can be obtained via their credit card hotline as well. Watch out for other outlets which will also be selling tickets via their websites. Eden - Andrew Collins website contains further information on the various lectures as well as easy-to-follow details on how to obtain tickets. There are also answers to frequently asked questions regarding the conference. These include details of hotels and accommodation, and how to get to the venue from the nearest tube station. See you there.

THE GROUP WITH NO NAME

Several rumours on the internet have been spread about a new cabal of authors of the alternative history, forbidden archaeology meeting clandestinely at a London hostelry each month to discuss matters of the day. Names banded

about have included Adrian Gilbert, Ian Lawton, Chris Ogilvie Herald, Clive Prince, Lynn Picknett, David Elkington, Marcus Allen of NEXUS, Nigel Skinner-Simpson and myself. There are suggestions that they are planning to take over the world, or something to this effect!

The truth of the matter is that these monthly meetings, under the banner of the 'group with no name', are merely an attempt to bring together like-minded individuals to discuss research topics which are of interest to us all. So far the meetings have been restricted to a few selected individuals. Subjects debated so far include the case for the age of the Sphinx presented by Chris Ogilvie Herald, the evidence for a pre-Ice Age civilisation by Ian Lawton, and the case for a mystery at Renne-le-Chateau in France by Marcus Williamson. There are no plans to have the talks published as research papers, although what I can say is that new information of this sort enables authors of this field to update their own background knowledge of the subjects under scrutiny, and this can be only a good thing.

One thing that No Name does hope to do in the near future is establish an on-line forum for the discussion of new ideas or developments in alternative history and forbidden archaeology. The important difference between what is intended and anything else that exists currently is that it will be overseen by key members of the group, and in the hope of allowing what it might produce to be used as thought-provoking research, where possible primary reference sources must be cited. It is being set up at the moment by Nigel Skinner-Simpson and will be accessed via the Eden – Andrew Collins website. Further news on the development of the group will be given on the websites of the individuals involved, as well as on THE DAILY GRAIL at <http://www.dailygrail.com>, so watch out.

ANTIQUARIAN BOOK LIST

From time to time my friend and colleague Richard Ward and I produce an antiquarian book-list under the name ABC Books. These were printed up and dispatched to everyone on the postal mailing list. The last one was some three years ago now. However, we gave up this idea when we realised that the costs were beginning to out way the sale of the books, plus I ran out of time to do it on a regular basis. Yet with the advent of on-line book services, we have decided to resurrect the idea and sell the books either through the website or via the electronic mailing list. So if you are registered in this way, you should hopefully receive a copy of our latest book-list which includes over 160 books. The service is world-wide, enabling people anywhere to order books either via email or by telephoning the book-list hotline. If you have not received a book-list, log on to the website and click on the section marked ABC Book-list to see if we have that enigmatic book you have been trying to track down for years, or one which will enlighten you further on your specialist subject of interest.

If you do not receive EARTHQUEST NEWS electronically, then you are missing out not just with regards to the antiquarian book-list, but also newsletters themselves. In January I produced a newsletter (Vol. 3, No. 4, Winter 2000) which was sent out only to those who had registered their email address. If you want to read or download it, the full text can be accessed on the website. However, what it says, although informative, is now out of date. So don't miss out in the future, register now by sending an empty email to subscribe@andrewcollins.net.

TUTANKHAMUN – THE EXODUS CONSPIRACY

In the last newsletter (sent out electronically) I told how I was writing a book about a local holy site known as the Running Well, following a self-published booklet I did on the same subject back in 1983 entitled THE RUNNING WELL MYSTERY. Well, I'm afraid that this venture has had to be shelved for the moment, due to the foot and mouth problem in the UK and, more importantly, a contract I now have to write a book on the mysteries of Tutankhamun. It is to be written with Chris Ogilvie Herald, the co-author with Ian Lawton, of GIZA: THE TRUTH, who has been working hard on this subject for several years. I cannot say too much at this time, other than to say that it is going to be very controversial indeed. So if anyone has any unpublished stories regarding the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun, Howard Carter, Lord Carnarvon, etc., Chris and I would be pleased to hear from them.

PHOENICIAN SHRINE CLUE TO ATLANTIC JOURNEYS

Now on to other matters. A votive cave on the Mediterranean island of Gibraltar has provided vital clues that the Phoenicians ventured out into the Atlantic Ocean as early as the 8th century BC.

Over the past 10 years archaeologists have unearthed several thousand items which show that the ancient religious shrine, which faces out to sea, was dedicated to Melkart, the Phoenician form of the classical god Hercules. It was found to contain 400 pottery jars, 25 blue, yellow and green glass perfume and ointment bottles, 10 finger rings and a large number of figurine pendants depicting representations of Melkart. In addition to these items, a selection of the votive pieces were found to depict Egyptian gods such as Bes and Horus, the infant son of Osiris and Isis. Since the cave is visible for up to several miles out to sea, archaeologists now believe that Phoenician vessels making Atlantic journeys would pause at Gibraltar – the traditional site of one of the Pillars of Hercules – to pay a tribute to the shrine of Melkart. They would then continue their journeys to places such as Britain, the Baltic, West Africa and even the Canary Isles. Melkart was chief god of Tyre, the main port of the Phoenicians, on the Levant coast of Lebanon. It is thought that his veneration in Spain, and in particular the Phoenician and later Carthaginian port of Gades, gave rise to the myth that Hercules visited this port during the age of the gods.

According to Greek mythology Hercules' tenth labour was to kill the monster Geryon, king of Gades, and

steal his precious cattle. It was from the port of Gades in south-west Spain that Iberic-Phoenician vessels are thought to have left on their voyages of discovery to unknown Atlantic islands. Hercules' eleventh labour was to steal the golden apples from the Hesperides, fabled islands, or nymphs, which lay across the ocean, and which, in all likelihood, were the Caribbean islands of Puerto Rico, Hispaniola and Cuba.

In one version of the story, Hercules went to Africa and demanded from Atlas three of the golden apples. Accepting the challenge, the giant unloaded on to Hercules his burden of supporting the heavens on his shoulders. Atlas then set off for the Hesperides and returned with the divine fruit. Hercules then tricked the giant into taking back the burden and promptly stole the golden apples, which had been cast to the ground. In another version, Hercules himself goes in search of the golden apples. On arriving in the Hesperides, he mortally wounds the dragon and steals away the precious fruit. Since the only place in which they could be preserved was the Hesperides, the goddess Athena returned the fruit to the garden.

The story of the golden apples is a myth integrally linked with both the western limits of the known world and the outer ocean. It brings together Hercules, whose name is attached to the entrance to the Atlantic; Atlas, whose petrified form was seen as the mountain that bears his name in Mauritania, an ancient country of West Africa, and the Hesperides themselves, which were both nymphs of great distinction *and* islands situated in the Atlantic Ocean.

These revelations come at the same time that evidence of a Phoenician presence on the Isles of the Canaries has materialised for the first time. According to the work of Pablo Atocha Pena, an archaeologist working on this subject in the Canaries, an inscription dating to around 500 BC has been located there, confirming the presence of Semitic voyagers during this early epoch. It is only a short journey westwards using the Northern Equatorial Current to the Caribbean, lending weight to the theory that this group of islands might have been behind the classical accounts of journeys by Hercules from the Phoenician ports of Spain to the Hesperides.

Source: Pena, Pablo Atoche, *La Colonización Del Archipiélago Canario: Un Proceso Mediterráneo?*, La Colonización Del Archipiélago Canario:) Un Proceso Mediterráneo?, 2000.

PREHISTORIC CARVINGS FOUND ON THE CANARY ISLES

In addition to the work of Pablo Atocha Pena on Phoenician exploration of the Canary Isles, news comes of the startling discovery on the island of Fuerteventura of stone carvings depicting zoomorphic, or more likely reptilian, heads. What is incredible about this discovery is that the pieces have been dated to 6000 BC by palaeontologist Francisco Garcia Talavera of the University of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote. Why he should date them to this early time-frame is unclear, since the Canary Isles are conventionally thought to have been uninhabited until the arrival of the Guanche peoples, most probably from West Africa, during the first millennium BC.

Source: 'Mistero sotto la Sabbia', HERA, 15, March 2001, p. 11, cf. *Mas Alla*, no. 143.

ATLANTIS – THE LOST EMPIRE

This summer sees the release by Disney of a film animation entitled ATLANTIS – THE LOST EMPIRE, with narration provided by actor Michael J. Fox, star of the BACK TO THE FUTURE films. To accompany its release Disney, through their subsidiary the ABC television network, commissioned the making of a documentary about the true location and meaning of Plato's Atlantis. It was broadcast across the States to an audience of many millions on Sunday, 10 June, one week before the release of the film, and is to be screened world-wide in the months to follow. More importantly, both myself and my theories on the Caribbean origin of the Atlantis story feature heavily in this television special.

I was originally approached to take part in the documentary some months ago, but nothing came of it. However, in late April I was approached again by the production company involved. Initially they were to dispatch a film crew to interview me at my home in Leigh-on-Sea, but after due consideration they decided to fly me out to Hotel Atlantis on Paradise Island in the Bahamas, where they were conducting a number of interviews during the first week of May. I thought about the idea for a moment, before reluctantly accepting their invite!

It was not until I got out to the Bahamas that I found that the script was originally to focus on the idea that the ice-bound continent of Antarctica was ancient Atlantis. However, after reading the American edition of my book GATEWAY TO ATLANTIS, the producers decided to gear the whole programme around the idea that Atlantis lay in the Bahamas and Caribbean, and more particularly off Cuba!

Also featured in the ABC Atlantis special, which is to be screened in the UK prior to the release of the Disney film in July, is Boston geologist Robert Schoch, who talks about ice-age catastrophes and the Carolina Bays; ancient mysteries writer David Hatcher Childress, who will also argue that Atlantis was located in the Bahamas and Caribbean, veteran Atlantis researcher Maxine Asher, and Taffi Fisher, the daughter of America's late great treasure salvor Mel Fisher. He, you will recall, from GATEWAY TO ATLANTIS claimed, shortly before his death in December 1998, that he had detected underwater archaeological features somewhere in the Caribbean Sea. Moreover he was confident that these were Plato's city of Atlantis. However, he stated also that he would only reveal the exact location of the features when the United States was on better terms with the country in whose territorial waters the ruins were detected using satellite imagery and sonar scans. In GATEWAY I suggested that the site in question lay

close to Cuba, even though Mel had provided just enough information for me to pin down, almost exactly, the country and location in question (and it is close to Cuba).

Since I knew that Mel's daughter, Taffi, was to feature in the documentary I felt it was time to reveal to camera where exactly in my opinion the features could be found. This assumption was echoed by Garry Bormet, the producer of the documentary, and he hoped that Taffi would say the same during her interview. It would be improper for me to say here the exact location, especially in the knowledge that Taffi did not reveal the location during her own interview. All I can say, as I did in GATEWAY, is that in my opinion the location is not far away from Cuba. In addition to this, the documentary features an interview with the Canadian research team that recently detected evidence of an 'urban development' stretching for several miles off the Cuban coast (see below). Keep a check on the TV programming to find out when the Atlantis special is to be screened in your country.

'LOST CITY' FOUND OFF CUBA

A 'lost city' has been located off the coast of Cuba by a Canadian scientific research team, according to a recent report by a British press agency. In a release dated Havana, 14 May 2001 Reuters of London informed the world that Soviet-born ocean engineer Paulina Zelitsky, the president of Canadian-based company Advanced Digital Communications, has detected 'a sunken city' in deep waters on the edge of the geological feature known as the Cuban Shelf in the Yucatán Channel between Cuba and the north-eastern coast of the Yucatán peninsula.

Using satellite-integrated ocean bottom positioning systems and high precision side-scan double-frequency sonar the ADR team working aboard the Cuban vessel 'Ulises' detected the presence of what have been described as 'shapes' that 'resemble pyramids, roads and buildings'. Their regularity seems consistent with the idea that they represent an 'urban development' composed of 'symmetrical architecture'. They hope to be able to send down remote robot video cameras to explore the site more fully in the next few months, to be followed eventually by exploration using a one-man submersible. Somewhat cautiously, Zelitsky speculates that the deep-sea city, which sits upon a huge land plateau lying in 600-700 metres of water, belongs to 'the pre-classic period' of Mesoamerican history, and was populated by 'an advanced civilization similar to the early Teotihuacan culture of Yucatán'.

'It is stunning,' she said during an interview at her office at Tarara, on the coast east of Havana. 'What we see in our high-resolution sonar images are limitless, rolling, white sand plains and, in the middle of this beautiful white sand, there are clear man-made large-size architectural designs. It looks like when you fly over an urban development in a plane and you see highways, tunnels and buildings. We don't know what it is, and we don't have the videotaped evidence of this yet, but we do not believe that nature is capable of producing planned symmetrical architecture, unless it is a miracle,' she added. You can be assured that if these discoveries pan out, you will get to hear about any developments first from me! I didn't write GATEWAY TO ATLANTIS for nothing! For a full report on the discoveries by myself, including a review of their implications for the Cuba-Atlantis theory, go to Eden - the Andrew Collins website at www.andrewcollins.net. Sources: 'Looking for lost riches in Cuba's seas: Underwater surveyors say they may have found sunken city', Reuters report dated Havana, 14 May, 2001, MSNBC Home News (see http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/nm/20010514/lf/cuba_treasure_dc_1.html)

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