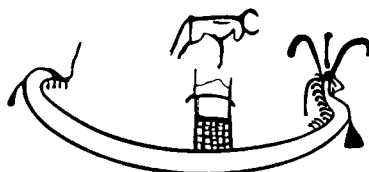


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IN MEMORIAM

MICHAEL ALLEN HOFFMAN

October 1944 — April 1990

THE HIERAKONPOLIS EXPEDITION

by *Walter A. Fairservis*

Co-Director, Hierakonpolis Expedition

The Hierakonpolis Project began in 1959 with an initial survey, followed in 1967 with the opening of excavations on the Kom. The project was one part of a two-pronged approach to recover material evidence for the origin of civilization; the other "prong" was a site in the Indus Valley in Pakistan. By 1969 it was clear that the Egyptian site was far more complex than originally estimated. There were epigraphical, geomorphological, ethnohistorical, and archaeological materials to be studied at every hand. It was essential to staff the fieldwork with specialists. Really good people to work with in the field are hard to find, however. It was then that I received a letter from Michael Hoffman, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, asking, almost begging, to be considered for the team. This was backed by a superb letter of support from his University mentor, Chester Chard. I enlisted Mike then, sight unseen. It was a decision for which I bless all the gods of the Nile and the Indus. Mike brought to the project a rigorously disciplined field technique, a realistic sense of the purpose, and an infectious comradeship that marked him as a leader. It was essential that my work alternate between Pakistan and Egypt, and I brought Mike to the work in the Indus Valley, where again he added his sound archaeological sense to the complexities of excavation.

As the years went by, other responsibilities made my directorship of the Egyptian work more and more difficult to schedule and, correspondingly, Mike increasingly

took over and with a fierce determination he kept the project on its feet . . . so much so, in fact, that he made the Hierakonpolis Project a model of its kind. He enrolled Egyptian and European experts as the work demanded their skills. It is a tribute to his integrity and talent that year after year the Egyptian Antiquities Organization renewed the licence for the concession, without the hesitation often characteristic of negotiations with other projects.

Michael Hoffman achieved many successes, but at the cost of constant struggle. Again and again Mike asked me to write recommendations for positions at various universities. Again and again he was turned down in spite of his brilliant research and teaching ability. In several cases that I know of, the positions were filled with mediocrities without the skill or imagination that he had. Mike was a strong personality, vibrant even when sitting still. He was the kind of person who upsets the intellectually cautious. He was too alive and optimistic to linger over defeat, but he was often terribly hurt. He'd call me from time to time to express despair, then call later full of hopes for the future as something would get published or a new job seemed to be opening up. I must confess my anger that Mike had to suffer so much to keep his career going. But he made his contributions and publications a part of the body of basic research of our times. At his death there is no question that he was the leading American scholar in the research on the genesis of pharaonic Egypt . . . and by this he brought to us vital evidence on the genesis of civilization itself. Paradoxically his frustrating career gave him time to do research and foster the Hierakonpolis Project, which might not have been possible if he was settled in a teaching position — comfortable and completely occupied by it.

NEKHEN NEWS

I remember one night some thirty years ago, a group of us had a party near the Ramasseum on the west bank of the Nile. With us was John Wilson, dean of American Egyptology and heir to James Henry Breasted, founder of the Oriental Institute. It was one of those splendid evenings when the Egyptian sky glows with starlight. To the beat of drums a troupe of local "stick dancers" performed a rhythmic emulation of combat, much as they had through the millennia. Mike suddenly got to his feet; completely unselfconsciously, our young grad student seized a stick and, dancing in perfect rhythm, joined the fellahin — matching each intricate move without flaw. John turned to me and said, "That boy's heart is Egyptian . . . perhaps he is recalling his ancestry." He was jesting, of course, but it really was the kind of compliment that holds inner truths. Mike's heart was in Egypt. This gave him the strength to keep digging and reveal to us secrets of the Egyptian past. How fortunate we are that that complex enthusiasm, kindness, iridescent mood, and scientific elan which was Michael Hoffman touched our lives. Oh, How I miss him! "Live forever dear Colleague"

MEMORIES OF MIKE

by *Renee F. Friedman*

Member, Hierakonpolis Expedition

To this issue dedicated to the memory of Dr. Michael Allen Hoffman, there is little more that I can add to the sentiments expressed by other members of the expedition except to say thank you to a man who took a chance on a precocious graduate student in 1983. I'd like to thank him for sharing his site, insight, knowledge, enthusiasm, and encouragement. Without him I would not be who and where I am today. I am also grateful that he gave me the chance to tell him this before he left us.

I would, however, like to take this opportunity to set the record straight. You may have read an article written by Mike for the March/April 1989 issue of *Archaeology* magazine in which he told the story of his determined ceramicist and a sandstorm. That wind-blown pot counter was me. But the story is incomplete.



Walter A. Fairbrother's ceramic survey at Hierakonpolis.



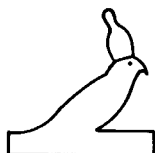
Renee Friedman and the newly discovered boat painting at Locality 64, Hierakonpolis.



Renee Friedman identifying wares in the sherd yard, Locality 29A, Hierakonpolis.

The missing details illustrate those particular qualities of Mike that I will miss so acutely.

Sherd yards, areas set aside for the preliminary sorting and counting of pottery from excavations, are usually placed close by on relatively barren ground so that the unexcavated part of the site is disturbed as little as possible. The sherd yard at HK- 29A, the Gerzean temple, was no exception. Why the chosen area should be unencumbered with artifacts while the excavations, not 30 feet away, should produce over 280,000 sherds was given little thought. On the day in question, I was in my ever-growing kingdom of sherds when the wind began blowing in cold gritty gusts. Positioned with my back to the wind, head down, notebook anchored, I intended to ride out the storm without eating too much sand. Then I heard my name. Mike was beckoning me, interrupting me, no doubt to ask me how I was doing or to point out something — a habit he had when excavations were going slowly. I tried to ignore him, but the calls continued. Finally, begrudgingly, I rose and began to trudge up to where he stood when SPLAT! I was hit full face with a nasty gust of flying sand that almost knocked me over. His laughter could be heard through the scarf that covered his face. This was, in fact, what he wanted to call to my attention—site taphonomy. Why was the sherd yard barren? It was a natural wind tunnel. All the artifacts had been blown away and I got to experience it first hand. That was a lesson, a man, and a mentor I will never forget.



"FROM KABUL TO KANDAHAR TO KARACHI — DOWN THE HATCH"

by Jim Shaffer, with Diane A. Lichtenstein

Title taken from Mike's dedication to me in his book
Egypt Before the Pharaohs

I met Mike Hoffman the first day I entered the anthropology graduate program of the University of Wisconsin at Madison in the fall of 1967. Although our friendship was instantaneous, we could never have predicted the extent to which we would share life experiences over the next twenty-three years and three continents.

From Mike's and my first beer together, it was clear that he was devoted not just to the study of the ancient world in general but to Egypt in particular and specifically the site of Hierakonpolis. In 1969 Professor Fairservis extended an invitation to Mike to join his Hierakonpolis Expedition. For Mike it was a dream come true — for the rest of us at Madison interested in Old World archaeology it was an inspiration of sorts, demonstrating you *could* obtain specific long-term goals. There were few Old World archaeologists at Madison during this period and Mike's success was important to all of us. Mike returned from Egypt with his crate of artifacts and properly distributed them on archaeology laboratory tables. Then, for the ensuing months he hovered over his materials, dressed in a white lab coat complete with magnifying glass and calipers in the pockets. By fall 1970 he was invited to join Professor R. J. Braidwood's excavations in southeastern Turkey. In the early summer of 1970 I joined Professor Louis

NEKHEN NEWS

Dupree's excavations in Afghanistan with the intent to undertake research at a site in southeastern Afghanistan during the winter of 1970-71. The summer of 1970 saw the dispersal of Mike to Turkey, Diane Lichtenstein (Mike's friend and my future wife) to Uganda, and myself to Afghanistan. Certainly at the time Mike and I had no idea that our friendship would bring us together again that winter, half-way around the world.

I spent the 1970 summer with Professor Dupree's excavation team in northwestern Afghanistan, testing the cave site of Ghar-i-mar deh Ghousfan. That fall we requested permission to undertake excavations at the site of Said Qala Tepe near Kandahar in southeastern Afghanistan, a site originally discovered and tested by Professor Fairservis in the early 1950's. Bureaucratic delays prevented the excavation permit from being issued until late November. These delays were disastrous to my plans, as one after another of Professor Dupree's team had to leave for other commitments. It was clear that only one Western-trained assistant would be left by December and he could remain only until the 20th. In early November I wrote Mike at his Turkish address and told him I needed help desperately, but I had no funds for transportation or salary. I had no reason to suppose that Mike would have either the funds or the time to come to my aid and I left for Kandahar without receiving any response from Mike.

By Christmas Eve I had been directing the excavations alone for four days, aided only by my Afghan government representative whose major ability was translating my orders. It was becoming clear that I would have to greatly scale back my efforts at Said Qala Tepe in order to maintain control over the excavations. At that time I had set up a base of operations at the

Monsalbat Hotel, which was an old Mortison-Knudson Engineering Company facility resembling a 1930's type motel with independent cottages. It was Christmas Eve, a fact confirmed by Quetta City radio which had just played Gene Autry's "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer." it was cold and dark and I was depressed by the way excavations were progressing so slowly. As I looked out my kitchen window, I saw a non-turbaned person wearing a heavy coat and carrying a bag walk in front of the fence surrounding my cottage. I assumed it was the government representative returning from visiting friends. Within seconds the front door came crashing open and before I could get to the living room I heard Mike Hoffman's voice singing "I Wish You A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year." Without writing, Mike had taken a series of local buses across eastern Turkey, northern Iran, and western Afghanistan to reach Kandahar as soon as he could once the Turkish research was finished early in December. We spent the rest of the evening and into the early morning at the Mortison-Knutson compound just outside Kandahar where the company maintained a guest house, bar, and commissary for "official" foreigners.

With Mike's assistance and expertise I was able to continue excavations through most of February. Although Mike could only stay until the end of April, he was able to complete a study of the physical stratigraphy, do an osteological analysis of the Kushan burials, study the flint tools, and redraw site maps, profiles, and architectural features. Meanwhile, I studied the pottery — a task that would occupy my time through most of the summer. Besides analyzing data there was little to do. One diversion that Mike intensely enjoyed was to spend an afternoon in the carpet bazaar.



Michael A. Hoffman documenting the Freidjmaster tomb at Loos Jij K, Herakowpol.

Here we would spend hours in one of these small shops, looking at carpets and sitting on the floor drinking tea while Mike haggled with the merchant over price using his "pigeon" Turkish-cum-Farsi, only to leave without purchasing anything. Otherwise, we waited for the international papers to come on Thursday, went to the 25 Hour Club for Chinese food, or visited the Dupree's and listened to Afghans talk politics.

During the spring semester of 1973 I received an invitation from Professor Fairservis to join his Allahdino excavation team, which included Mike, in Pakistan. At this point, many friendships now overlapped as Fairservis and Dupree were old army friends, students together at Harvard, and worked during the early 1950's in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Allahdino excavations were to test everybody's methodological and analytical abilities, as we learned that large horizontal exposures are much more than just a series of individual test squares. From the very first hot, humid summer morning on the Indus Delta, Mike's rigorous field methodologies and insights on cultural patterns revealed by excavations were to influence us all. Workdays were long and intense with excavations beginning at 5 am and lasting until 12 or 1 pm, depending on the heat, when we would return to our hotel in Karachi and do laboratory analysis until 5 or 6 pm. At the end of each day we would meet to discuss what happened at the site, what we were finding in the lab, and what it all might mean. The point and counterpoint discussions were intense as Mike, Walter, and I exchanged ideas. Mike and Walter would contrast Harappan and Egyptian contexts and gradually, over those two seasons, our — and certainly my own — perspective on South Asian cultural history began to change. Indeed many of my current interpretive ideas are still indebted to these discussions as Mike would constantly challenge any ideas not consistent with the data. These discussions also revealed Mike's ability to synthesize data and reconstruct social processes affecting cultural development no matter what region of the world. Mike's talents in gathering field data and analyzing and interpreting it within the broader cultural context were demonstrated by his work on Allahdino lithics. This study, combined with that of his student James Cleland, fundamentally altered our perspective on lithic technology during the South Asian Bronze Age and perhaps elsewhere for that matter. Mike left the Allahdino project after 1974 to focus more exclusively on ancient Egypt and Hierakonpolis, although he always retained an interest in what was found in subsequent seasons by Professor Fairservis, myself, and others.

Unfortunately Mike and I were never to work together in the field again. We kept in contact via late night telephone calls and encounters at national meetings, when we would try to pack all our current ideas and experiences into what now are remembered as all too brief periods of time.

Mike loved archaeology and his friends; he was intensely loyal and giving of himself and his death leaves a great void in our minds and hearts. Even on the Sunday before he died, Diane and I could still perceive

that intellect, wit and, at times, irascible personality characteristic of the Michael Allen Hoffman I met that first day in Madison.



THOUGHTS OF MIKE

by Carter Lupton

Milwaukee Public Museum

To many of you reading this Mike Hoffman is little more than a name associated with Hierakonpolis. That's all he was to me twenty years ago. We first met in Germany in 1971 and after that Mike was a real person, if only an intermittent acquaintance. Ten years ago, when I joined the Hierakonpolis Project, he became a sometime boss and colleague. Before too long, Mike Hoffman became a friend. Not the kind of friend you grew up with and with whom you share life's memories. And not the kind of friend you see every weekend and drink beer with while watching football games. To me, Mike was the kind of friend you get to know as a (more or less) mature adult, a person who shares not all of your interests but certain very basic ones.

For Mike and me, the thing we shared was ancient Egypt. Of course, Mike shared this with all of us on the Hierakonpolis team. But for me at least, it was more than that. I had been intrigued by Egypt long before I met Mike and had visited it three times prior to working at Hierakonpolis. Nevertheless, my interest, though strong, remained primarily academic until 1980 when, thanks to Mike, I became a real part of the search for ancient Egypt. Through him I first met many long standing friends from the UK and the USA as well as Egypt. Because of him, Egypt became an integral part of my life.

I didn't always agree with Mike. His ideas sometimes seemed to me to get the better of his judgement. But his passion for the work was truly infectious. For every time that he angered or frustrated me I can cite another time that he challenged or inspired me. I didn't always agree with Mike, but I always respected him.

At the dig we suffered through each morning as Mike came around with his disgustingly cheerful "Rise and Shine." I used to think I never wanted to hear that again, but now I'll miss it. And I'll miss the long distance calls with the familiar opening remark, unprintable here, that told me it was Mike even though he didn't use his name, and that told me we were friends more than any obvious avowal of such could have. The last thing Mike ever said to me was, "I'll see you somewhere sometime." I hope so.



Noel L. Sweitzer with Michael A. Hoffman at a party to celebrate the magazine closing, February 1990.

TO MICHAEL WITH LOVE

by Noel L. Sweitzer

President of the Southern California Chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt

How proud I am to call myself a friend of Michael Hoffman. How sad I am not to be able to pick up the telephone and talk to him. How grateful I am that I had some years to share in Michael's world.

I clearly remember the beginning and the end of the times I was able to see Michael. My introduction to him came when I was taking a stalwart group of Egyptology enthusiasts on an intensive, no nonsense tour of Egypt. We began at 7:00 every morning and finished our day at 7:00 in the evening. The in-between times did not permit other than a box lunch in some remote location among the antiquities of the country.

A highlight of one of our days was to be a stop at Hierakonpolis. I had not arranged for specific permission to visit the site, but assumed that the seriousness of the group would overcome any resistance of the authorities. That was before I met Michael.

As the large bus pulled up to the line of vegetation just before stepping onto the desert, what seemed to be an apparition came charging out of the horizon on our left by the palace/temple structure. Accompanying it were savage cries that did not seem to indicate "welcome." As well, numbers of people were in the attack party.

Put off by this phenomenon, my group hovered at the bus in order to have the opportunity for a quick getaway if that was necessary. It wasn't. Out of the chaos stepped

Dr. Michael Allen Hoffman. With some emotion he told us the site was closed and that it would not be possible to visit our heart stopping target, Khasekhemui. It is hard to believe that from this inauspicious beginning Michael and I became friends. And after what the group and I learned of his work, we as a body became his fans.

It is harder for me to think of the last time I saw Michael. That day was February 10, 1990. Michael was one of four speakers in an all-day symposium sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution in connection with the installation of "**The First Egyptians**" traveling exhibit. It was problematic as to whether he would be able to attend. Mike told me that Walter Fairservis had volunteered to step in if he could not participate. I arranged to go to Washington and see Michael, either at his home or at the Smithsonian.

Well, nothing could stop Michael. It was evident he was in pain. He had told people that he had a back problem, but few knew the gravity of the condition. I think Michael did this in one way so as not to be a burden and also to be able to handle the illness with the courage and solitude that he managed throughout his life. There were other reasons, too, but his consideration for others was the main one that directed his decision.

Michael was terrific. He led off the day and spoke for a bit over an hour. The only concession he made was to give his talk sitting down. The enthusiasm in his voice and the grasp of his topic was a challenge to the other participants. Michael's work, once again, focused attention on the major contribution he was making through his dedication to Nekhen. He discussed his plans for the project and, as always, encouraged people to join the Friends of Nekhen. His lapel sported the emblem of the Nekhen members.

When people let him off the stage, or rather when the organizers of the conference had to move it to the next speaker because the audience did not want to give up Michael, I walked him out to his car.

I brought a copy of *Egypt Before the Pharaohs* to have Michael sign because I had worn out the previous copy he had signed. As he was finishing his note to me, he stopped and asked if he could end the thought using "Love, Michael Hoffman." He said that he did not do that often, and he really wanted to at that moment. That book will always be my favorite because part of the love I have for Michael was given back to me by him.

Like his last audience at the Smithsonian, I do not want to give up Michael. His warmth and kindness will stay with me until I die. He can never be replaced in my life and I will continue to share the meaning of friendship that he taught me. Surely, I am a better, more loving person because of Michael, just as the world is better for the contribution he made to it. He was cheated by time but he was gifted by love.



**"FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT
MICHAEL A. HOFFMAN"**

by Carol Starnes McCanless

Member, Egyptian Studies Association

Such was the directive that introduced me to a remarkable gentleman. I called Mike at his home in

Virginia concerning the first "Friends of Nekhen" tour of Egypt in 1985. I expected to hear a business-like voice giving brief answers to my inquiries. What I heard was the warm, friendly voice of a person who tried desperately to answer my questions between spurts of telephone failure. I spent this initial introduction trying to call him back while he attempted the same from his end — and I was just a voice he had heard for the first time that day.

The Egyptian trip was expertly planned by Mike but guided by Carter Lupton of the Milwaukee Public Museum. Mike confided that the group would be much better off with Carter, who would be a better tour guide than himself. Hierakonpolis was my first meeting with the voice on the phone and he greeted me as an old friend. He knew all our names. He made each feel he or she was a treasured guest and a vital part of the efforts at Hierakonpolis. His enthusiasm and eagerness soon had all of us enthralled with the native village, the desert littered with sherds, and the site itself. His staff were efficient, well-chosen additions to a well planned and executed excavation. But it was Mike — quick steps, waving, expressive hands, hat pushed back on his head and then forward again — who caught us up in the wonder of it all. He was genuinely happy to have us there, to share his discoveries and visions, to open to us the world of Predynastic Egypt. He was responsible for showing us the site, but all the extras we had inside came from the man himself. I felt important when we left that day; I was part of something wonderful and I had a friend directing it.

The 1988 trip was much like the first one, only this time I just stood back when we arrived at Hierakonpolis and watched the response of the group. Whether on his



Carol Starnes McCanless (standing, far right), with Michael A. Hoffman and members of an ESA tour, November 1985.

knees in the sand at the burned Predynastic house site, or striding around the perimeter of the temple, or eating the box lunch inside the "Fort," he managed to catch them all up in his vision — discoveries yet to be made, the interpretive implications, the teaching possibilities, and plans for construction of the research center. When we returned to the bus, one lady remarked that she had expected a brief, dry lecture on archaeological methods; she had not expected Mike to be so friendly, she had not expected to learn so much.

"The First Egyptians" exhibition was a dream that became a reality, as so many of Mike's dreams did, because he made them happen. The opening at McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina in Columbia was an elegant and festive occasion, and Mike made sure everyone felt welcome and a valued part of the evening. Later that summer I returned to the exhibit and had lunch with Mike. As we walked across the campus, dodging sprinklers on the lawns, he talked about the exhibit's tour, writing up the work done at

Hierakonpolis for publication in professional journals, future plans for work in Egypt, as well as ways to reach more people with the story of Predynastic Egypt. He was so full of plans and dreams and he had the drive to carry them all out. He shared it all with me — just a person who loved Egypt, not a professional, not anyone special, just a person. That was Mike's gift to me and to so many others; he made us all feel valuable. He listened to our comments and ideas. I never wrote him that I did not receive a personal reply full of comments on my news and the latest reports on the Egyptian Studies Association and the work at Hierakonpolis. I never called that he did not take time to talk or return my call. He even pasted the silly archaeology cartoons I sent him in the office. When I went to a lecture he spoke at in Greenwood, SC, and to a reception before at the home of Tommy Cox, Mike spent time talking to my Egyptian guest who had just arrived for a two month visit.

In 1985, I met a noted archaeologist who allowed me to be a part of his discoveries in Egypt. He shared with

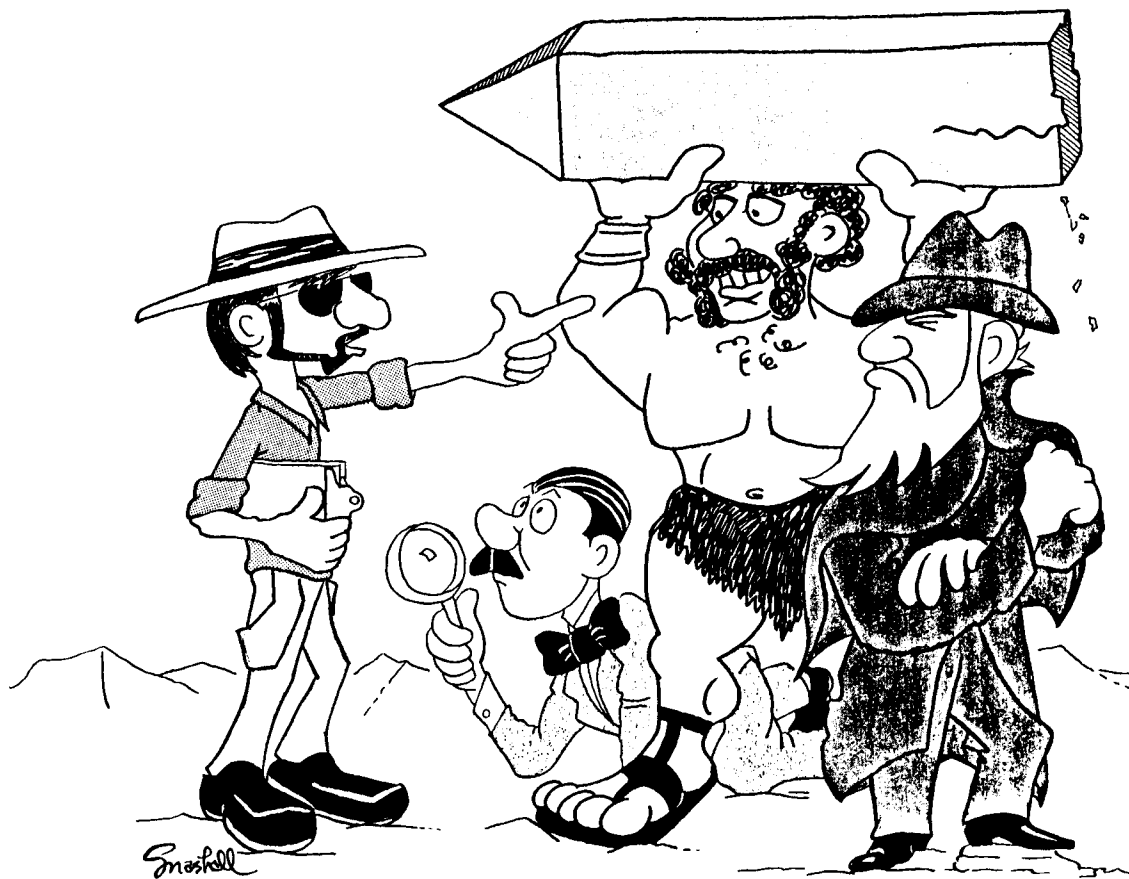
A HEAVENLY SITE

by Robert C. Snashall, Jr.

Member, Hierakonpolis Expedition

Hoffman assigns crew:

"Carter, you get the tomb! Belzoni, take the quarry! Petrie — to the sherd yard!"



me, he was interested in my life, he encouraged me as I began to volunteer on archaeological sites. But most of all, he gave me a great gift — the gift of his friendship. I will miss you, Mike.



A BRITISH VIEW OF MICHAEL ALLEN HOFFMAN

by Barbara Adams

Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London

In the late 1970's I knew of the modern American expedition that had commenced work at Hierakonpolis in 1967, but not really of Michael Hoffman. I was steeped in the material from the earlier excavations of the British Egyptologists Quibell and Green, who had worked there before the turn of the century, so I certainly knew the site from afar. Then Michael came to see me at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology in London, on his way back from the site in 1979 after he had discovered the burnt house in the Predynastic settlement. After not more than ten minutes of enthusiastic conversation he asked me to join the expedition, which I did in 1980, thus fulfilling a personal ambition to dig an early site in Egypt and to get to know the site of Hierakonpolis for real. Later I realised that this was

typical of him — to make accurate initial judgements of individual suitability and then to draw out the best from the people he had chosen. From then on it was a case of mutual support, collaboration, and dedication to the goal of elucidating the processes of development in the Predynastic that led to the formation of the Egyptian state. During that time I watched as his thorough archaeological procedures came to be admired in Great Britain among the Egyptological fraternity, who have been, like their American colleagues, tending ever more in that direction starting from a philological viewpoint. His almost seminal book, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, which came out in 1980, was a much admired best-seller in the UK, and it remains the book I would have liked to have written. I was delighted when his reputation led to an invitation to address a seminar at the British Museum on the problems of the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods, where he joined and debated strongly with other international scholars in the field. Later the accolade afforded to him through his lecture to the Egypt Exploration Society in London put him and his work firmly on the map in England and I was extremely proud to be associated with him, especially as some of the audience told me that his was the best lecture that they had received there for a long time. I have many personal memories of Mike, which will remain with me always, and the certain knowledge that he entrusted us with the perpetuation and publication of his work. There could be no finer memorial from the international Hierakonpolis Expedition than a unified determination to achieve this for him.



Barbara Adams recording ceramics from the Predynastic tomb, Locality 6, Hierakonpolis.

**"THE FIRST EGYPTIANS"
A VISION THAT CAME TRUE**

by Karin L. Willoughby

*Curator of Natural Sciences, McKissick Museum,
University of South Carolina*

Michael and I worked together very closely on one of the projects that occupied much of his time for the last five years — **"The First Egyptians"** exhibit. This project started simply enough. I was given about 20 black and white photos of the dig at Hierakonpolis and asked to mount a small hallway exhibit at McKissick. The more I looked at the photos, the more unhappy I became. Where was the excitement, the vision, the drive to succeed that would capture the imagination of the general public? This project had "dog" written all over it. Finally, I asked my supervisor if I could meet Dr. Hoffman; maybe I could get a little more information to help the photos.

We met and looked at the available space. I asked if a few artifacts would be possible. As we talked, the excitement built as we both threw out more and more suggestions to improve the show, like more space and color photos and a more thematic presentation. Michael had vision and drive to spare to develop a really good exhibition. Maybe we could write a grant? If so, the show would have to travel in order to generate enough visitors to justify the expense. I read his book *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*. Michael went to see George Terry, then Director of McKissick Museum, to get permission for us to collaborate and write a grant for the proposed exhibition to travel regionally.

For one solid year, Michael and I wrote, laughed, argued, re-wrote, and made phone calls to prepare the grant proposal. Periodically, Michael was in Egypt or California or England so we would pre-arrange when and where I would call him as each section of the project developed. Soon we were preparing for a national traveling exhibit as Carter Lupton of the Hierakonpolis Expedition committed his home museum, the Milwaukee Public Museum. And you should have seen Michael and me the day the Smithsonian called to inquire about the show! Experts from around the world were gathered and committed to the project. Artifacts were chosen. Finally, the grant proposal was sent in to the National Endowment for the Humanities, all 300 pages! Michael was in Egypt at the time, so I called to let him know we had made the deadline. For the next six months, while we waited to hear from NEH, we continued to develop our host institutions and refined our plans for the exhibition. In June 1987, we heard from NEH — **"The First Egyptians"** would be fully funded, not a penny was reduced from our requested budget. This was a victory.

We now had nine months to create the show and open. We often joked about the time period and its similarity to having a baby. From the time we first started writing the grant to the opening of **"The First Egyptians"** in April 1988, I spent more time with Michael than I did with anyone else, including my husband and children. But it was worth it. The exhibition was a hit at every site: Columbia, Milwaukee, Denver, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. Well over a million people saw the show and Michael was able to see a public acceptance of his and the Hierakonpolis Expedition's work that a pharaoh would envy.



Michael A. Hoffman preparing the temple model for the opening of "The First Egyptians" traveling exhibition



From left to right: Karin Willoughby with His Excellency El Sayed Abdel Haouf El Reedy, Egyptian Ambassador to the USA, and Dr. James B. Holderman, then president of the University of South Carolina, at the opening of "The First Egyptians" exhibition at the Smithsonian, February 1990.

The last time I saw Michael, he was immaculately dressed in his tuxedo and black brocaded vest. He was bathed in light from a spotlight at the Smithsonian presentation of "The First Egyptians" — waving his gold-handled cane in the air as he made a point to his appreciative and admiring audience. Though we spoke again, I am glad to think of him thus, receiving public recognition of his superb scholarship, his enthusiasm for his profession, his drive to be the best he could be, and the vision to share his knowledge with others.



Michael A. Hoffman excavating below the water table at Nekhen.

MICHAEL A. HOFFMAN: A REMEMBRANCE

by Jeremy Geller

Member, Hierakonpolis Expedition

When Walter Fairservis took five Vassar undergraduates to Hierakonpolis in 1978, I don't quite recall whether he warned us that one would be banished to the windy, gritty, lonely desert to work with the other archaeologist on the project: a young fellow named Mike Hoffman, seemingly a bit quick-tempered and frenetic, and with a sense of humor that was — how should I put it? — idiosyncratic. My own sense of humor, or just plain sense, was bad enough at the time that I attracted Mike's attention in not an entirely positive light, and it came to pass that I was the one to be subjected to weeks of his bad jokes, criticism, and verbal abuse in the desert, along with Fred Harlan, a former student of Mike's at the University of Virginia. After a while though, I discovered that much of the teasing and stern words were in fun — and the criticism was well deserved. And that through it all, I was learning a great deal about desert archaeology and how to cope with the demands of field-work, which incorporated timely and subtle lessons in growing up. I came to admire Mike for his skill as an archaeologist and anthropologist, and for his sensitivity to my strengths and weaknesses and those of the others he trained or with whom worked at Hierakonpolis. A friendship grew. I thought of him as more than a director or teacher, as kind of a professional big brother. As time passed, criticism turned to praise and direction to

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discussion. Mike helped me to define a personal and academic trajectory and gave me the first glimmering of a sense of professional presence. My debt to him is very great, my memory of him very dear.

REMEMBERING A FRIEND

by John E. McArdle

Member, Hierakonpolis Expedition

Mike was a friend and colleague for twenty years. From that time there are many experiences he and I shared in relation to our mutual fascination with ancient Egypt and the early history of animal domestication and husbandry, as well as his appreciation of and insistence on the multidisciplinary approach to archaeological research and the value of faunal analysis to those efforts. Two instances, however, stand out as typical of the intensity Mike brought to his work and the "big picture" he was always visualizing, enlarging, and elaborating.

Mike and I met on the early village site of Cayonu in Eastern Turkey. His square included a very large and complex building with an inlaid terrazzo floor set in concrete, with a large white rock near its edge. Mike worked around that rock, sat on it and looked at it. When my professor and I returned to the site, after a five week absence, we went out to see what had been done. Standing outside of the excavation block he asked Mike when was he going to move the "alter stone." They all looked up and around in bewilderment then revelation. No one on the excavation, including Mike, had noticed the bull's head and large horns carved into that white rock, they were all working in too close. It was a lesson on perspective — one which Mike took to heart and often retold.

The next time Mike and I worked together was my first field season at Hierakonpolis. In addition to examining the backlog of faunal material from previous seasons, Mike and I would often walk around the sites and areas between them, discussing the evidence that was accumulating and his vision of what the area looked like and how life was structured in Predynastic times.



Jeremy Geller clearing ancient pottery shards.



John E. McArdle investigating beehive bones.



1983-84 FIELD SEASON

Back row, from left to right:

Janet Long
Hany Hamroush
Barbara Adams
Gamal Qudis

Front row, from left to right:

Bob Greenlee
Hala Barakat
Michael A. Hoffman



1985-86 FIELD SEASON

From left to right:

Ahmed Irawy
Michael A. Hoffman
Carter Lupton
Renee Friedman



1986-87 FIELD SEASON

From left to right:

Wagdy Nazim,
Roxie Walker,
Michael A. Hoffman
Diane Holmes,
Doug Brewer

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On one walk through the cemetery for Hierakonpolis' Predynastic elite, Mike was explaining to me that the series of large depressions on the northwest edge of the cemetery were the tombs of the Predynastic rulers, similar to several he had already excavated. While he was talking, I picked up some large bone fragments. It was clear that at one time the pit had contained the remains of an elephant. The next large pit had bones from a hippopotamus. Mike stopped his interpretations and we began to examine the bone fragments lying on the surface of all the graves. It quickly became obvious that a significant number of them contained the remains of animals. Mike at first thought that one special grave was human, a child burial. Upon examination we found that, in fact, it contained the remains of several baboons. What I remember most about that experience, was how Mike took in the new information, integrated it and modified his "big picture." I will miss those talks and walks. It was intellectually and personally enjoyable to be a part of his perceptions and understanding of the ancient Egyptians.

RECALLING MICHAEL HOFFMAN

by James O. Mills

Co-Director, Hierakonpolis Expedition

Michael was always in the midst of moving mountains, or at least planning their relocation. He expanded Walter Fairervis's regional study of Hierakonpolis to include a team of international scholars focused on the

Predynastic, conceived and mounted a traveling museum exhibition on the Predynastic which toured major museums throughout the country, and at the time of his death was preparing a multi-volume magnum opus on our research. But perhaps his greatest legacy will prove to be the changes he demanded be made in doing archaeology in Egypt, providing a model of rigorous field methods and multidisciplinary research at Hierakonpolis.

His success I would attribute foremost to his peculiar but appealing and sincere style — a code of conduct that blended his professional and personal life such that they were indistinguishable. I remember Michael saying more than once, about no one in particular, "He takes himself too seriously. . . . You should always take your work seriously, but never get carried away and take yourself too seriously." He lived this philosophy, he could pursue his work as if at the height of battle and maintain his humor in the midst. In the field Michael managed the shifting balance of priorities from doggedly pursuing data collection, to locating a tourist in England to bring out a distributor for the ARCE Land Rover, to tending the sick. Michael is to be credited for organizing a true multidisciplinary project.

Too often projects claiming this do not actually integrate their research. Over the years Michael assembled an enthusiastic team of scholars from diverse disciplines, individuals who passionately love their work and work well together. He was an excellent judge of talent and a masterful arbiter.

His ability to manage the day to day ills and potential catastrophes that beset an expedition in the field was exemplary. Aside from maintaining the peace, he coaxed



James O. Mills drawing a profile of deposits at locality Z9A, Hierakonpolis.

each of us into finding our own means of being effective. He bestowed on each of us a confidence. This seems ironic, when I recall my first season at Hierakonpolis, when Michael would rail at our blunders or snap, "Mills, you're FIRED!" But the moment would pass, predictably, and the firing became a joke as it began to happen daily. I remember an instance when, one morning, Michael called me aside from excavations and said, "I've got to go to Cairo for a few days, but while I'm gone you're in charge. I know you — if there has to be a decision made you'll make it. Whatever you decide, I'll back it. If it's wrong you're fired, but I'll back it."

And now he is gone — his life a passionate pursuit of prehistory which he could so brilliantly translate. He was and will remain a mentor and close friend.

Now more than ever, we need you to renew
your annual membership in the
Egyptian Studies Association.
We appreciate your past support and hope
you will continue to assist us into the future.

A FITTING MEMORIAL

by Marion Becker Clough

*Chair of the Long-Range Planning Committee,
Egyptian Studies Association*

Michael Allen Hoffman was a brilliant individual. His death from cancer on April 23, 1990, deprived us of a leading scholar. Michael's ability to communicate his great love and understanding of archaeology and prehistory to everyone was one of his most outstanding characteristics. This, coupled with his high degree of professionalism, the scope of his interests, and the depth of his knowledge, impressed all who knew him.

Michael expressed the wish that his work should be continued. This is certainly the intent of the highly talented team that he assembled.

On behalf of the board of The Egyptian Studies Association at the University of South Carolina, I ask for your help in continuing Michael's programs. This is the most fitting tribute we can make to Michael's life and work.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

THE EGYPTIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

I would like to help the Hierakonpolis Expedition by joining The Egyptian Studies Association. In return for my tax deductible contribution, I understand that I will receive a membership certificate and card, badge, and NEKHEN NEWS, and that I will be entitled to travel discounts with expedition tours and reduced rates on expedition publications and Egyptian archaeological slide sets.

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* * * * *

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Hierakonpolis Expedition

James O. Mills and Mari A. Custodio
Co-Editors of NEKHEN NEWS
ESA Office: (803) 777-2920

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IN MEMORIAM
MICHAEL ALLEN HOFFMAN
October 1944 — April 1990

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