

## 21st Century Women of Lamanai

Inspired by the recent Belize IA post celebrating women in archaeology in Belize, we want to share this post featuring the women who have been actively involved in archaeology at Lamanai in recent decades, many of whom have done, or are currently doing, extensive research at Lamanai for their advanced degrees in archaeology.

**Brenda Arevalo, AS.** Brenda earned an Associate's Degree in biology and environment at Muffles College. She lives in the local village of Indian Church, adjacent to Lamanai. She has assisted with both excavations and lab work at Lamanai, and she works as a tour guide at Lamanai Outpost Lodge.

**Ella Békési, BA.** Ella got her BA in archaeology from University College London/Institute of Archaeology and is currently studying for her master's degree in archaeology there, focusing on Cultural Heritage and tourist and local perceptions of the Lamanai site. She has been an active participant in both lab and field work at Lamanai since the summer of 2014.

**Louise Belanger, BA.** Louise has a BA degree in Art & Design (Ceramics) from Central St Martins, London UK and has been the archaeological illustrator for the Lamanai since 1979. In 2001-2002 Louise and Claude Belanger undertook the restoration of limestone masks on temples at Lamanai as part of the Tourism Development Project. Louise also participated in the Indian Church Village Craft Training Project for residents at the nearby village where she taught ceramics workshops. She created the Lamanai guidebook and continues to update it as new information becomes available.

**Arianne Boileau, MA.** Arianne has an MA in anthropology/archaeology from Trent University and is pursuing a PhD in archaeology at University of Florida. She analyzes turtle bones as part of her study concerning social status and community organization at the moment of Maya Spanish contact as revealed by zooarchaeology at Lamanai, Belize.

**Lisa Duffy, MA.** Lisa has an MA in anthropology/archaeology and is pursuing a PhD in archaeology at University of Florida. At Lamanai she has sampled pottery vessels for purposes of identifying the residues on ancient food production tools to determine what substances they may have held, which ultimately helps archaeologists learn about vessel and tool function, foodways, subsistence, economy and ritual activities.

**Lindsay Duncan, MA.** Lindsay has an MA in archaeology from UCL and is pursuing a PhD in archaeology at University College London/Institute of Archaeology where her research focuses on "*Lessons in Sustainable Waste Management from an Ancient Maya Salt Production Centre in Belize*". In 2014 she collected botanical specimens at Lamanai as part of her research at Lamanai's presumed port site, Marco Gonzalez, on Ambergris Caye.

**Gabi Dziki, BA.** Gabi received her BA in archaeology from University College London/Institute of Archaeology and is currently studying for her master's degree in archaeology at University of Cambridge. Her research focus is on 'Maya architecture: from space to function'. She has been an active participant in lab and field work at Lamanai since the summer of 2014.

**Kitty Emery, PhD.** Kitty is the curator responsible for the Environmental Archaeology Program at University of Florida. Emery is an environmental archaeologist who specializes in ancient Mesoamerican peoples and environments. Her research links archaeobotanical, zooarchaeological, and geochronological data to reconstruct ancient human/environment relationships.

**Elizabeth Graham, PhD.** Liz is a Professor of Mesoamerican Archaeology at University College London/Institute of Archaeology and has been the Principal Investigator of Lamanai since 1997. Her research interests include Maya archaeology, urban environmental impact in the humid tropics, coastal trade, religion and iconography in Colonial Mesoamerica and ecotourism and development. Liz participated in the investigations directed by her husband, David Pendergast, at Lamanai from 1983 to 1986, and served as the Archaeological Commissioner of Belize from 1977 to 1979. She has worked at various sites in Belize since 1973, including the Spanish colonial site of Tipu, not

far from Chaa Creek in the Cayo District. The Spanish colonial investigations at both Tipu and Lamanai are described in her book, *Maya Christians and Their Churches in Sixteenth-Century Belize* (2011, University Press of Florida). Since 1997 Graham's excavations at Lamanai build on Pendergast's earlier work by focusing on periods of transition. The years bridging the Preclassic to Early Classic periods, the Terminal Classic to Postclassic, and the transition to the European presence have all received attention. Her most recent emphasis is on improving the organization and access to the on-site collections. This means not just display, but exploring ways in which a wide range of people—artists, craftspeople, students, guides, ecotourists—will be able to view and even handle the excavated material.

**Laura Howard, MA.** Laura received her master's degree in anthropology/archaeology from Florida State University in 1997. She has worked with the Lamanai Archaeological Project for many years, assisting with annual field schools held by Dr. Graham starting in 1997, and with Dr. Simmons field schools. Laura served as the resident archaeologist for the Lamanai Outpost Lodge and Research Center from 1997 – 2001. She has been active in community development in Indian Church Village, which included the founding and development of the community library, the artisans training project, and other local projects in both Indian Church and San Carlos villages. Through her business, Beyond Touring, she leads eco-tours to Belize emphasizing archaeology, cross-cultural experiences, and giving-back through involvement in community projects.

**Linda Howie, PhD.** Linda began working at Lamanai in the early 2000s when she began an analysis of Lamanai pottery and participated in excavations in the Lamanai Central Precinct. Her work with Lamanai artifacts included petrographic analysis of ceramics. Her 2005 PhD dissertation is titled *“Ceramic Production and Consumption in the Maya Lowlands during the Classic to Postclassic Transition: A Technological Study of Ceramic at Lamanai Belize”*. (Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom). Linda's expertise is cross-disciplinary studies of geological and engineered materials (e.g. ceramics, construction and building materials, refractories, glass, metals). She specializes in sourcing and characterization studies and the reconstruction of ancient production technologies.

**Jennifer John, PhD.** Jenny's study of Lamanai pottery in the early 2000s culminated in her 2008 dissertation for her PhD at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, titled *“Postclassic Maya Ceramic Iconography at Lamanai, Belize, Central America”*.

**Meredith Martinez, BA.** Meredith assisted Claude Belanger and Liz Graham during the Lamanai Tourism Development Project and helped with the Indian Church Village Craft Project and other village activities.

**Tracy Mayfield, PhD.** Tracie began her research at Lamanai in 2008. She specializes in historical period archaeology and zooarchaeology and has focused on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century at Lamanai when a British sugar plantation was constructed at the site. Her 2015 PhD dissertation is titled *“The Nineteenth-Century British Plantation Settlement at Lamanai, Belize (1837-1868)”* (University of Arizona).

**Karen Pierce, MA, MFA.** Karen has an MA in anthropology/archaeology from University of Colorado/Denver. Her 2016 thesis, *“Late to Terminal Classic Transition at Lamanai with Implications for the Postclassic”* focuses on changes in architecture and caching patterns in the Ottawa Palace Group, which may signal a shift in emphasis away from exclusive elite-led activities associated with divine kingship toward those of a more inclusive and public nature. Previous careers in the fields of architecture and art led Karen to attend a Maya architecture field school at Lamanai in 1998 and she has been involved in Belize archaeology and community development projects ever since. With the help of other Lamanai archaeologists, Karen directed the Indian Church Artisans training program from 2000-2007, enabling local villagers to learn craft and business skills and to market their craft locally, and she established a high school scholarship fund for students in the village.

**Dorie Reents Budet, PhD.** Dorie has written on the iconography of Lamanai Stela 9 and she worked with Mark Shelby on interpreting the iconography of the stucco frieze at Structure N10-28 in the Ottawa Group.

**Heidi Ritscher, MSc.** Heidi assisted Liz Graham with Lamanai field schools, organizing the first Lamanai website, and creating a Lamanai database. She was also involved with the reorganization of the old Lamanai site museum.

**Synnove Kvam Stromsvic, BA.** Synnove has a BA in archaeology from UCL, and in 2015 she assisted in the lab at Lamanai where she cleaned and rehoused small finds, cleaned pottery, and did some vessel reconstruction.

**Christine White, PhD.** Christine is professor emeritus at University of Western Ontario and a bioarchaeologist who utilized stable isotopic (chemical) & forensic analysis of mummified as well as human skeletal remains to construct diet, life histories of disease, physical activity, environment & geographical relocations on both individual & complete populations. She has analyzed portions of Lamanai's excavated skeletal material.

**Darcy Wiewall, PhD.** Darcy got her PhD in anthropology/archaeology from University of California, Riverside, in 2009. She began her work at Lamanai in 2000, where she conducted research for her PhD dissertation entitled, *"The Impact of the Spanish Colonial Regime on Maya Household Production at Lamanai, Belize during the Late Postclassic to the Colonial Period Transition"*.

**Sonia Arevalo.** Sonia lives in the local village of Indian Church, adjacent to Lamanai. She has assisted with both excavations and lab work at Lamanai, and she has assisted archaeologists with both the Indian Church Village craft training program and the high school scholarship program. She is the Indian Church Village librarian.

