



The Award Winning

Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

October 26, 2016

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu

Malibu Rotary Club President of Record Bill Wishard

Malibu Rotary Club President of the Month (November) W David Baird

Malibu Rotary Club President Elect Bianca Torrence

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Pictures by Dr. John W. Elman

In This Issue (click underlined topics for web link when connected to the Internet)

- **Last Week:** Archaeologist John Wilson Tells us “Things I Learned While Digging”
- **Next Week:** Regular Malibu Rotary Club Noon Meeting in LC 152 on the Pepperdine campus—Speaker will be David Zielski talking about Using Social Media
- Check **Calendar** on Malibu Rotary website **www.maliburotary.org**
- **Rotary International Website:** **www.Rotary.org**
- **Rotary District 5280 Website:****www.rotary5280.org/**
- **RI President (2016-2017) John F. Germ**
- **Rotary District 5280 Governor (2016-2017) Greg O’Brien**

Archaeologist John Wilson Tells us “Things I Learned While Digging”



John F. Wilson is a field archaeologist, writer and lecturer on archaeology in the Middle East, and Professor of Religion, Emeritus at Pepperdine University. At the Nov 4 2016 meeting of the Malibu Rotary Club is a presentation he called “Things I Learned While Digging” in making the point that “Hard work isn’t as important as good luck,” he showed this picture of 283 gold coins that were found by a lady from Australia who happened to be in Israel on vacation at the time of one of Wilson’s digs and uncovered the coins after he handed her a broom.

Professor Wilson presented a light-hearted series of stories about strange or interesting things that have happened on archaeological digs he has been on through the years that illustrate some lessons learned.

These revelations were broken down into 5 lessons:

- 1. Don’t worry about running out of places to dig.**
- 2. Everyday you are throwing away something of value.**
- 3. Long hard work isn’t as effective as just having good luck.**
- 4. Never make an argument about something unless you see it.**
- 5. Be kind to the cook.**

1. Don’t worry about running out of places to dig.

Most of John Wilson’s archeological work, his digs, were done in northern Israel. When public works projects are done in Israel they will call in archaeologist for salvage projects before digging for construction on new buildings and roads There have been several civilizations that have lived on this land, and if you dig deep enough you will find the evidence of one civilization on top of another. Where a new road was to be built Wilson found and 1800 year old mosaic floor. 10 feet below a housing project there was evidence of a 4000 year civilization. Wilson explains that there are places all over the world where there are civilizations that have been built over land that centuries before were the homes of previous civilizations. After the archaeologists have brought out some relics and noted and photographed what they have seen they cover it up. And they try to only dig up half of what they think is the ancient civilization, leaving future archaeologists the opportunity to dig up more with improved technique.

Wilson explains the life of an archaeologist is usually not like what is portrayed in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but sometimes it is like that movie. When a youth hostel was being constructed in Galilee a bulldozer nearly fell into a 30 ft hole. Wilson was invited to go into the cave into which the hole was an entrance. Climbing down a rope ladder with their flashlights they saw pictures of grotesque animals painted on the wall, and the floor was covered with human bones. Stalactites and stalagmites formed of the minerals in the cave had the shape of human skulls. Boxes in the cave had human bones in them. What they had stumbled onto was a 7,000 year old burial chamber.

Wilson admitted to the nature of archaeology. “Archeology is a form of vandalism,” he confessed.

2. Everyday you are throwing away something of value.

In Israel metal detectors are illegal. There was one fellow named Esah who had one, however, and he was able to find rare coins and other things that archaeologists found of value. In building a new mosque much of the dirt discarded in the excavation turned out to have valuable relics in it discovered by Esah.

3. Long hard work isn't as effective as just having good luck.

Wilson explained there was a lady from Australia who happened to be in Israel on vacation at the time he was on one of his digs. Often his group will work for weeks and not find anything interesting. The lady had never been on an archaeological dig before and asked if she could participate in the dig. Part of the archaeological process is to sweep away the tops of rocks and objects with a broom to reveal things they might not have seen. Wilson told the lady she could help by sweeping a large stone with a broom after his crew lifted it. She swept and said she noticed something shiny in the sunlight after she swept. She had accidentally uncovered one of 283 gold coins found in that dig. Wilson said that one of those coins had an inscription of Mohammad and was valued at \$2 million. It is possible the gold in the coin may have come from a goldmine that Mohammad allegedly had.

Wilson is noted for having written an article in 1995 “Does Archaeology Prove the Bible.” Few modern Biblical archaeology discoveries have caused as much excitement as the Tel Dan inscription—writing on a ninth-century B.C. stone slab (or stela) that furnished the first historical evidence of [King David from the Bible](#).

The Tel Dan inscription, or “House of David” inscription, was discovered in 1993 [at the site of Tel Dan](#) in northern Israel in an excavation directed by Israeli archaeologist Avraham Biran.

4. Never make an argument about something unless you see it.

The exact location of a significant ancient place is open to speculation. Wilson that he had uncovered what appeared to be an ancient market place, He stopped the dig 6 inches short of what would have been an even more significant find—ancient palace.

5. Be kind to the cook.

While on his digs in a rural area of Israel Wilson and his party of archaeologists would often stay on Kibbutz. On one of these occasions the cook in the kibbutz served them some roundish gray objects that did not look very appetizing. Neither he nor anyone was with him ate this meal, which they found out was turkey gizzards.

They usually would have different dinner each not but the next night the meal was the same—the same gray roundish objects aka turkey gizzards. Wilson realized he had to make the cook think that they ate the turkey gizzards to they would get a different meal the following evening. While the others distracted the cook Wilson removed all the turkey gizzards from the plates on the table and put them into a planter at the side of the room, covering them with the plants.

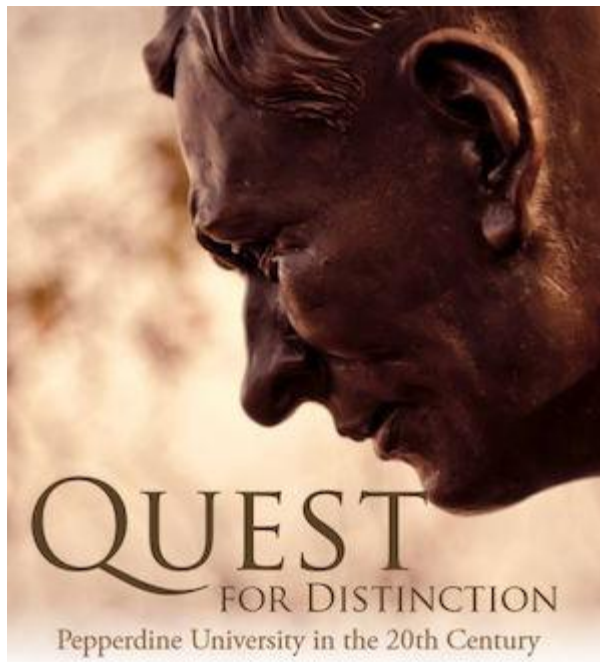
The following night they had a much better meal and Wilson was not sure if the cook ever found out that turkey gizzard meal was never consumed by his Kibbutz guests.

Wilson said that there were times during his archaeological discoveries when he felt connected to the people he was studying. In holding an ancient pot or clay jar he can sometimes see a finger print on it. This brings the reality of the people to him. Another time he recalls seeing a Byzantine roof tile that had the imprints of a kitten on it. At these times he feels not so much the scientific importance about what he does but the human element.

Most of the time, he points out, we are not seeing the ancient peoples treasurers, but their trash.

When asked how technology has changed to archeology profession Wilson responded that it has changed in several ways—the ability to categorize discoveries into a large database that can be accessed by archaeologists worldwide via the Internet, and also in using radar to tell where probably archaeological sites are.

Other News And Guests at the Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting



W. DAVID BAIRD

Malibu Rotary Club President of the Month W. David Baird introduced his fellow Pepperdine Professor Emeritus John Wilson. David had several pieces of news on what he had been up to lately.

David had missed several meetings recently because of post op cataract surgery visits, and spending a week in Washington DC prepared to give testimony on behalf of an Indian tribe. After he arrived in DC he was told he didn't have to testify. The day after the Malibu Rotary Club meeting David was going to be in the Fireside Room at Pepperdine University at the official release party of his new book on the history of Pepperdine University, *Quest for Distinction*.

Guests

In addition to our speaker, winter guest **Tom Bos** the Past Rotary District Governor from Holland Michigan was back in Malibu to enjoy the weather and contribute to our activities. We also welcomed back Malibu Rotary Club member **Peter Formosa** who rejoined us at the District Breakfast and it was good to see him back at a club meeting.

Special 6 Club Rotary meeting November 30

November 30 6:00 p.m. Rotary District Assistant Governor Richard Miller has arranged for Special Dinner Meeting of 6 Rotary Clubs (including Malibu RC) at the Sagebrush Cantina, 23527 Calabasas Rd, Calabasas, CA 91302. Cost is dinner is \$25.00. (no Malibu Rotary noon meeting at Pepperdine that day). Malibu Rotarians should RSVP and pay to our Treasurer Carlye Rudkin.

Malibu Rotary Club Holiday Party

- Carlye has confirmed December 14 Holiday Party in Wine Room in Tra di Noi Restaurant at Malibu Country Mart at 6:00 p.m. (no noon meeting)—Cost of \$37.00/person includes tax and tip. Menu is salad, entrée choice of Chicken Marsala or Salmone, and Tiramisu for desert. Carlye may throw in a bottle or 2 of her Malibu wine. RSVP to Carlye Rudkin. Space limited to first 20.

Rotary District Events

Humanitarian Trip to Merida, Mexico will take place January 25-30 2017, and will feature Rotarians participating in 7 different humanitarian projects. Margo is going on trip. She said that the district is asking each Rotary Club in the Los Angeles district to contribute something towards a Rotary project in Merida.

Rotary District Leadership Skills Courses.will take place February 4 and 11th

Malibu Rotary Club Presidents of the Month (2016-2017)

Malibu Rotary Club President of Record (2016-17) Bill Wishard

August 2016-----Margo Neal

September 2016—David Zielski

October 2016-----John Elman

November 2016—W. David Baird

December 2016—Bill Wishard

January 2017-----Robert "Bob" Syvertsen

February 2017-----John Elman

March 2017-----W. David Baird

April 2017-----Margo Neal

May 2017-----Robert "Bob" Syverstsens

June 2017-----David Zielski

CALENDAR (see up to date calendar on maliburotary.org)

- **November 9** Divid Zielski will Talk About Using Social Media
- **November 10-13** will be Zone Institute at Fess Parker Resort
- **November 15** will be USC/UCLA Tailgate Lunch
- **November 16** Speaker at the Malibu Rotary Club will be Gern Munro. Gern is Director of Amarok Society, a registered Canadian charity that provides education programs to the very poor in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigeria.
- **November 23** No Meeting
- **November 30 6:00 p.m.** Rotary District Assistant Governor Richard Miller has arranged for Special Dinner Meeting of 6 Rotary Clubs (including Malibu RC) at the Sagebrush Cantina, 23527 Calabaras Rd, Calabaras,CA 91302. Cost is dinner is \$25.00. (no Malibu Rotary noon meeting at Pepperdine that day). Malibu Rotarians should RSVP and pay to our Treasurer Carlye Rudkin.
- **December 7** Teresa LeGrove Craft Talk

- **December 14** Holiday Party in Wine Room in Tra di Noi Restaurant at Malibu Country Mart at 6:00 p.m. (no noon meeting)—Cost of \$37.00/person includes tax and tip. Menu is salad, entrée choice of Chicken Marsala or Salmone, and Tiramisu for desert. Carlye may throw in a bottle or 2 of her Malibu wine. RSVP to Carlye Rudkin. Space limited to first 20.
- **December 21 and 28** No meetings
- **January 18 2017** Ken Chong on “Membership”-- Ken Chong is Past President of LA 5 and membership chair Rotary District 5280. He was featured speaker at Governor Elect Seminar in San Diego because of his creative ideas.