SAAAnthroQuest The Newsletter of The Leakey Foundation

Leakey Grantee Finds Oldest Jawbone of Genus Homo

CHALACHEW MESFIN SEYOUM, INSTITUTE OF HUMAN ORIGINS, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Arizona State University affiliated researchers and colleagues from other institutions have been searching for hominin remains in Ledi-Geraru, Afar, in the Northeastern part of Ethiopia for the past decade. However, these well-exposed sedimentary outcrops have previously failed to yield any remnants of our ancestors. While the Ledi-Geraru Research Project was started in 2002, I did not become affiliated with the project until 2012, when I was invited by Dr. Kaye Reed to work with Dr. Brian Villmoare on any fossil hominins uncovered. I joined the fieldwork the following year. In mid-January of 2013, I arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, unaccompanied by my stowed luggage, which was lost in transit. Unable to claim my baggage, I made the ten-hour trek to Ledi-Geraru in an old Land Cruiser to spend a handful of days in the field before heading back to Addis to collect my lost belongings. And so, after a week of waiting in Addis, it was on January 28 that my field season truly began.

On the morning of January 29, I joined the others—full of energy and with a fresh eye—as we started our survey across the sedimentary hills of the Lee Adoyta locality. This locality was chosen because geologists estimated the sediment ages to be between 2.5 Ma and 2.8 Ma years old—a time period in Eastern Africa represented by few sediments and few (often poorly preserved) hominin fossils. January is winter in Ethiopia, and the sun was hot as I hiked up and down the many outcrops that morning. The terrain is uneven, made up of



hills of coarse sand and loose pebbles. These sedimentary hills are separated from each other by water-cut valleys—the erosion of these hills exposes fossils to us in the field.

During my survey of one of these hills, I chose to search the slope. Finding nothing, I then climbed up the little plateau and continued my survey on the other side of the hill. Within minutes my eyes were drawn to the reflective shine of a bit of tooth enamel peaking out of the silty sediment. My heart skipped a beat as I realized that it was part of a hominin tooth—not only that, but it was actually intact along with a piece of jaw. I remember sitting down and picking up the precious fossil. In my hand

I held the anterior part of the jaw with part of the third premolar, the roots of the canine, the fourth premolar, and the first molar. The jaw had a fresh break so I knew that the other piece could not be far from where I found the jaw. I felt stunned but also very calm. Before yelling out to the other members of the project, I searched for the missing portion. In seconds I had located a second jaw fragment. This fragment (the posterior part of the jaw with the root of the ascending ramus and second and third molars) matched up perfectly with the first without any displacement, forming the left half of a mandible. Cradling the mandible in my hands, I called out to the others, telling them that I had found what we were all look-[continued on page 3]

The mission of The Leakey Foundation is to increase scientific knowledge, education, and public understanding of human origins, evolution, behavior, and survival.

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Letter from the President

Many people ask me how I, an English major with a Master's Degree in Education, happen to have become President of The Leakey Foundation. Paleoanthropology would seem to be an esoteric subject, quite removed from the editing and teaching I have done professionally.

I reply that the most important question in life is WHAT IS IT TO BE HUMAN? That is the question that all literature addresses. And that is the question paleoanthropology is systematically working out. The Leakey Foundation is on the cutting edge of that research, granting the first, critical funds to PhD candidates, postdocs, and seasoned researchers who need support to look for fossils, study animal behavior, or examine DNA in the lab.

There is nothing more exciting than seeing what researchers find out about the origin of human nature. Why did we begin to walk on two legs? When did we learn to talk, and why? Who are our ancestors? How are we like our closest ape cousins, and how are we different?

We discover answers to questions like these when we travel to research sites. This last May, the Leakey Foundation Fellows visited South Africa to meet the scientists who work there and to see early hominin fossils. On the west coast of Africa we saw where the earliest use of paint was discovered. Ground red ochre was found mixed with fat in a conch shell, hidden away in 100,000-year-old deposits. A skull of Homo sapiens was also found. Symbolic marks on the ochre, and this evidence of paint use, means Homo sapiens were utilizing symbolic gestures much earlier than was previously thought. In another location, we saw where a skull of Homo heidelbergensis, dating back 500,000 years, was found.



We met modern San people who demonstrated the click language and their way of life. Several hours north of Cape Town, we saw San rock art that is thousands of years old in the Cederberg wilderness.

In the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Cradle of Humankind, about 30 miles northwest of Johannesburg, we visited Sterkfontein cave where Ron Clarke discovered "Little Foot," a nearly complete *Australopithecus* fossil from 3.3 million years ago. Then we had dinner with Ron Clarke and other scientists in the working warehouse. It is hard to explain how absolutely thrilling all this was for me and why I am so honored that the Foundation has asked me to become President. I will do my best.

Camilla Smith

(audle All Smith

President, The Leakey Foundation

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"Jawbone" (continued from front page)



ing for. With many pats on the back and lots of congratulations, we all celebrated the new discovery. Recalling the age of the sediments, I knew that it was going to be a very important specimen.

As dry sieving the surrounding sediments uncovered most of the missing crown pieces, Brian and I discussed whether or not this could be a new species or, perhaps, a late surviving population of *Australopithecus*

afarensis—both would still be very important. Later that day we took some of the most important measurements and ran some statistical analyses to find that our specimen consistently fell outside of the variation of *A. afarensis*. Our subsequent analyses revealed that it was most similar to other *Homo* specimens, making it the oldest *Homo* specimen dating to 2.8 Ma.

For the last several decades, researchers have been searching for hominin fossils to document the origin and evolution of the *Homo* lineage. To date, the oldest specimen attributed to the genus *Homo* was dated to 2.33 Ma (an upper jaw from the nearby site of Hadar, also in Ethiopia). Not only that, but specimens recovered dating to the time period between 2.5 and 3.0 million years ago have been very limited and often fragmentary. To complicate matters more, this time period also saw the appearance of three different species of *Homo* (*H. habilis, H. rudolfensis and H. erectus*). The new discovery from Ledi-Geraru pushes the *Homo* lineage back by 400,000 years and narrows down the gap between primitive apelike *Australopithecus* and more derived humanlike *Homo*, the genus to which we belong. The combination of primitive features seen in *A. afarensis* and advanced features from *Homo* makes the Ledi jaw a transitional form between *Australopithecus* and *Homo*.

The Franklin Mosher Baldwin Fellowship

H. GREGORY, PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

Chalachew Seyoum is an Ethiopian national who earned his Masters of Science from Addis Ababa University in 2009. Seyoum was awarded his first Baldwin Fellowship from The Leakey Foundation in 2010. This financial assistance helped him enter the PhD program in paleoanthropology at Arizona State University where he was sponsored by Dr. William Kimbel. Seyoum was awarded his second Baldwin Fellowship in the spring of 2011.

While all of our granting programs have a considerable impact on the science of human origins, the Baldwin Fellowship is unique in its effect. Every year we provide financial assistance to young scientists from developing countries who wish to attain education or training outside of their home country. Typically these students are from countries that have extraordinary resources in the field of prehistory, but educational options may be limited. Once they finish their education abroad, students like Seyoum are equipped to return to their home country and assume leadership roles in the future of paleoanthropology and primatology.





Hear Chalachew Seyoum's story of discovery on our new Origin Stories podcast! Listen online at leakeyfoundation.org/origin-stories or subscribe on iTunes.



Behavioral

Iulia Badescu, University of Toronto

Investigating the infant nutritional development of wild chimps

Stephanie Bogart, University of Southern California Savanna chimpanzee ecology at MARS (Mount Assirik Research Site)

Marina Davila-Ross, University of Portsmouth Systematically testing facial thermal imaging as a most sensitive and reliable novel technology to directly compare subtle emotion changes in apes and humans

Kelsey Ellis, University of Texas at Austin Grouping dynamics of woolly monkeys (Lagothrix poeppigii) in Amazonian Ecuador

Karline Janmaat

Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology The ecological intelligence of human rainforest foragers

Susan Perry, University of California, Los Angeles
Life histories of wild capuchins in Lomas Barbudal, Costa Rica



Paleoanthropology

Harold Dibble, University of Pennsylvania
New excavations at La Ferrassie (Dordogne, France): The final season

Davide Faggionato, Iowa State University

Molecular and functional analysis of vision in three hominin species

Tyler Faith, University of Queensland Middle Stone Age of the Gwasi and Uyoma Peninsulas, Kenya

Halszka Glowacka, Arizona State University

Biomechanical constraints on molar emergence in primates

Avi Gopher, Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University Continued excavation in Middle Pleistocene Qesem Cave, Israel

Ashley Hammond, The George Washington University Reconstructing phenotypic change of the pelvis in apes and humans

John Hoffecker, University of Colorado at Boulder The geochronology of the earliest Upper Paleolithic in Eastern Europe

Carolina Mallol, Universidad de La Laguna *Neandertal fire technology*

Rebecca Miller, University of Liege
The Middle-Upper Paleolithic transition at Trou Al'Wesse (Belgium)

Thierra Nalley, California Academy of Sciences Ontogeny of the thoracolumbar transition in extant hominoids and Australopithecus

Marco Peresani, University of Ferrara Rediscovering the Uluzzian in Italy

Gabrielle A. Russo, Stony Brook University Elucidating the evolutionary pathways of hominin basicranial morphology using a formal phylogenetic comparative primate approach

Christopher Stevenson, Virginia Commonwealth University Hydration dating of Late Pleistocene archaeological sites in eastern Africa

Paola Villa, University of Colorado Museum Uluzzian technology in Central Italy: From neandertals to modern humans

Amelia Villaseñor, George Washington University

The biogeography and behavioral ecology of hominins in Pliocene
Eastern Africa: A macroecological perspective

Nicolas Zwyns, University of California, Davis Human response to the Late Pleistocene climate change in Northern Mongolia: The Upper Paleolithic site of Tolbor 16

Baldwin Fellows

Dagmawit Abebe is a second year Baldwin Fellow from Ethiopia. She is majoring in physical anthropology at City University of New York under the sponsorship of Eric Delson. When finished with her PhD, she intends to return to her home country where she hopes to join the faculty at Addis Ababa University.

Ainash Childebayeva is a first year Baldwin Fellow from Kazakhstan. She is in the first year of her PhD studies at the University of Michigan. Under the supervision of Abigail Bigham, Ms. Childebayeva's research focus is the analysis of human adaptation genetics in high-altitude ancient Peruvian populations.

Hailay Reda is a first year Baldwin Fellow from Ethiopia. He is beginning his PhD program at the University of Oregon under the supervision of Stephen Frost. He has extensive field experience in places such as Hadar, Woranso-Mille and the Middle Awash Project. He is interested in studying the taxonomy and phylogeny of the Eastern African Plio-Pleistocene primates.

Abebe Taffere is a first year Baldwin Fellow who is beginning her PhD Studies at the University of Florida under the sponsorship of Steven Brandt. She intends on specializing in Late Pleistocene archaeology and lithic technology. She would like to return to her home country of Ethiopia to work at the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage as the first staff member to have a PhD in archaeology.







Read more about these grantees online!

leakeyfoundation.org/blog

Director's Diary: South Africa 2015

realized something as I scrolled through photos from The Leakey Foundation's tour of South Africa this May...there were many photographs featuring the tops of people's heads. Disappointed in my seeming lack of composition skills, I finally recognized the reason for this photo faux pas; there were so many incredible things that required us to look down! From viewing the extraordinary (at the time unpublished) finds from the "Rising Star" site with Lee Berger in the fossil vault of the University of Witwatersrand, to seeing the microfauna and in situ fossils at the West Coast Fossil Park in Langebaanweg. We crouched low to see a tiny rock art elephant at Bushman's Kloof, and bent to behold the floor mat where Nelson Mandela slept in a prison cell for 18 years.



We even had our heads down while selecting delectable treats from a buffet of sweets at high tea on the veranda of the Mount Nelson Hotel, and while admiring the exquisite presentation of our lunch at Jordan Wine Estate in Stellenbosch. Our journey through South Africa provided the 14 Leakey Foundation travelers with an astonishing opportunity to see a variety of incredible treasures, up close.

As with all Leakey Foundation tours, we guarantee the participation of researchers who are stewarding human origins science forward. This includes those who did pioneering work establishing excavation sites as well as the next generation of thought leaders using technology like the micro-CT scanner to elucidate an even more meaningful understanding of what it means to be human. Our group was joined by over 50 scholars including: Graham Avery, Lee Berger, Kristian Carlson, Ron Clarke, Job Kibii, Kathy Kumin,fTeresa Steele, Dominic Stratford, and Bernhard Zipfel to name just a few.

At every stop along the way, our colleagues, grantees and friends opened doors, filing cabinets, and even cellars to let us peek behind the scenes. One such moment was a surprise for our travelers. We filed out from the tour bus into a small room at the Slave Lodge of the Iziko Museum to see the actual Saldanha skull. Discovered in 1954 in about 60 fragments, this fragile cranium is still to this date the southernmost early *Homo sapiens* find.

Not every exclusive viewing was a surprise, and so our travelers had ample time to research a topic before meeting an expert or seeing an artifact. One such opportunity occurred on the final day of the tour



SHARAL CAMISA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR







at Sterkfontein in the Cradle of Humankind. Professor Ron Clarke peeled back a piece of African Shwe Shwe fabric to reveal the Little Foot specimen in its entirety. After so much anticipation, Little Foot didn't disappoint; no one could believe their eyes as they peered closely to see the most complete australopithecine skeleton ever found!

Our time at Sterkfontein provided even more treats, including an after-hours tour of the site. When guests left the grotto, they were greeted with a glass of wine to enjoy while watching the sunset, followed by an intimate, candlelit dinner in the shed. We were surrounded by artifacts from the 80 years of ongoing excavations at the site. During dessert, Professor Clarke shared personal stories of his time working as the technical officer and assistant to Louis Leakey in Kenya.

The tour didn't focus purely on paleoanthropology, as much time was spent exploring the rich cultural history of the country, most notably that of the San people. John Parkington helped us imagine the past hunter-gatherer life ways by explaining the intersection of the ethnographic, ecological, archeological and historic records. David Pearce of the Origins Center led the group through a beautiful array of rock art, shedding light on the story of humanity in southern Africa.

The Leakey Foundation Tour inspired scientific curiosity and helped to establish deeper friendships between travelers. Whether it was staying up late to discuss the emotional impact of the Apartheid Museum, bonding over shared interests in stone tools, driving at sunset in a jeep to see the wildlife, or laughing hysterically over an elevencourse lunch at the beach restaurant of Die Strandloper... everyone had at least one magical moment that was made better by sharing it with kindred souls.

Of course not every moment in South Africa was spent looking down. One of the most magical moments for me happened in the Cederberg mountains atop a bluff at a very special restaurant called Embers. As I looked up into the star-filled expanse, I felt connected to my earliest ancestors who, like me, had once stood under those same African skies.

Become a Fellow and join us on our next trip.

We're visiting France in May 2016!

leakeyfoundation.org/travel

MartinMuller & AnneStone Join The Scientific Executive Committee

H. GREGORY, PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

he Leakey Foundation Scientific Executive Committee (SEC) is an all-volunteer committee comprised of senior scientists who represent the various sub-disciplines of anthropology and the allied sciences. They are at the heart of The Leakey Foundation's scientific direction and granting programs. We recently welcomed new members Martin Muller and Anne Stone who make a significant contribution to the diversity of expertise in our SEC.

Martin Muller joined the SEC in the fall of 2013. He is an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. Dr. Muller received his PhD from the University of Southern California in 2002.



Dr. Muller began working with the Kibale Chimpanzee Project in Uganda's Kibale National Forest in 1996. He has served as co-director since 2004. The Kibale Chimpanzee Project is a long-term field study of wild chimpanzees that covers a broad range of topics related to reproductive and life history strategies as well as social relationships. The project has conducted continuous endocrine monitoring of the chimps since 1997 and thereby has played a leading role in the field of primate socioendocrinology by testing hypotheses about the relationship between physiology and behavior. In fact, Dr. Muller was awarded his first Leakey Foundation research grant in the spring of 1996 to study the "Endocrine aspects of aggression and dominance in chimpanzees of the Kibale Forest" for his PhD thesis.

Dr. Muller's current research continues to focus on patterns of aggression in relation to food availability, age, sex and endocrine status. He also studies pathogens in wild chimpanzees as well as the reproductive ecology of human males, focusing on the role of testosterone as a modulator of male mating effort.

"The Leakey Foundation has provided critical support for the Kibale Chimpanzee Project over the years, and we have been fortunate to host several of the trustees at our field camp. I have long been impressed by the knowledge, curiosity, and dedication of the trustees and the staff, and am thrilled to have this opportunity to give back to the Foundation."

The newest member of our SEC is Anne Stone, professor in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University. Dr. Stone received her PhD from Pennsylvania State University in 1996. She has been a Fulbright Fellow and a Kavli Scholar.

Dr. Stone studies anthropological genetics. Specifically, her research focuses on population history. She is interested in how certain populations adapted to their environments, including disease and dietary environments. In this vein she studies the biological history of Native



Americans with her current focus being Peruvian populations. Dr. Stone also studies the co-evolutionary history of apes and humans with diseases such as tuberculosis and leprosy.

Anne Stone is also a former Leakey Foundation grantee. Her latest research grant was for her project entitled "Genetic analyses of Gombe chimpanzee skeletons (1966-1987)." This work was featured in the fall/winter 2014 issue of *AnthroQuest* where she described her team's progress (and difficulties) in extracting the DNA from the teeth of deceased Gombe chimpanzees. Though these chimps died relatively recently by ancient DNA standards (30-40 years ago), they were buried in an environment unfavorable for DNA preservation.

"Dr. Stone's expertise in molecular anthropology enhances the Scientific Executive Committee's ability to evaluate the increasing number of proposals we receive that contain a genetic component." - Paddy Moore, Leakey Foundation Grants Officer

We are delighted to welcome Anne Stone and Martin Muller to The Leakey Foundation SEC. We look forward to working with them in the future!

H. GREGORY, Program ASSOCIATE From the Archive:

or nearly half a century The Leakey Foundation has been collecting photos, letters and other ephemera chronicling Louis Leakey, the Foundation's history, and the science of human origins. This archive has grown to a considerable size, and as we approach the 50th anniversary of the Foundation, the digital curation of its contents for the purpose of preserving and sharing this history with the public is now a priority.

While we are in the process of preparing the collection for digitizing and raising funds for the project, we are lucky to have help from Leakey Fellow and volunteer Jim Carty. Jim is an architect who lives in Santa Rosa, California. He has been visiting our Presidio office once a week to sort through and organize the collection. "The Leakey Foundation has boxes and filing cabinets full of incredibly rich stuff," says Jim. Indeed, there are so many treasures. Through personal letters

from Jane Goodall, you may witness the beginnings of modern primatology. Pull up a chair and read the minutes from the very first Leakey Foundation board meeting, learn about the time when the Foundation only had \$3.08 in its bank account, or simply smile at pictures of Louis Leakey in the field. This archive documents an important time in the science of human origins, and much of it is on a personal

Jim Carty has been a member of The Leakey Foundation since 1988 and a fellow since 2014,

level.

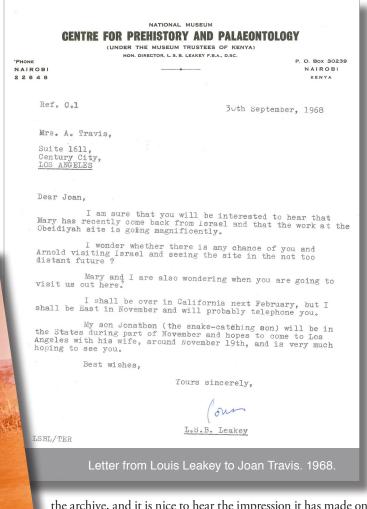
so this is a personal journey for him as well. "I'm identifying things I know about or have read about, and it tugs at my memories of trips I've taken and of all my reading. Looking through the archives brings it together."

Louis Leakey in Kenya in 1955

Photo: G.H.R. Koenigswald

Recently Jim has been working on materials donated by Joan Travis, one of the founders of The Leakey Foundation. This has been one of his favorite collections. "Joan Travis took a lot of pictures, wrote a lot of letters and had a lot of correspondence with Louis Leakey." Mrs. Travis kept careful records of the history and formation of The Leakey Foundation. "There are always interesting things in Joan Travis' photos, which she very carefully labeled and identified."

Jim is one of the few people who have spent considerable time viewing

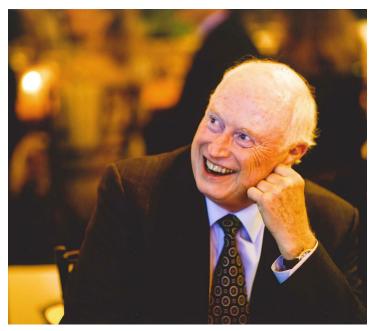


the archive, and it is nice to hear the impression it has made on him. "My conclusion is that Louis Leakey was an incredibly kind and thoughtful person," Jim says. "He thought ahead. He worked with kindness, and that's the most important thing I've seen in the collection I've sorted." § § \$



In Memoriam: C. Paul Johnson

SHARAL CAMISA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



t is with immense personal sadness that we share the news of the passing of Foundation Trustee C. Paul Johnson, in April. He was 83 years old.

Paul is survived by his wife Debra, his five children, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. In his 83 years, Paul lived an extraordinary life; some might even say he lived the lives of many men. Born in Detroit, Michigan, Paul experienced his first business transaction at the age of 7, swatting flies for a penny a piece at his grandfather's Chevrolet dealership. Since then, through Paul's adventurous and entrepreneurial spirit, he created a rich and varied life full of opportunities. He was a jet fighter pilot for the US Air Force, he established and led the First Colonial Bank in Chicago, and he owned his own winery.

Paul's passions also included philanthropy, supporting Stetson University, and serving as a Trustee of the Adler Planetarium and Roosevelt University. He was also chairman of the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center.

It was Paul's love of archaeology that led him to The Leakey Foundation. He joined the Board of Trustees in 1999. Paul was a devoted advocate of the Baldwin Fellowship, a program that offers support for scholars from developing countries to obtain education or training abroad. He personally funded the scholarship of Kenyan-born Nancy Moinde to complete her Masters. Today, Moinde is pursuing her PhD from Rutgers University.

As chair of the development committee, Paul was the driving force behind the 2008 endowment campaign he launched in honor of his

friend F. Clark Howell, UC Berkeley Professor Emeritus. The campaign eventually raised over \$6 million for the Foundation. This was the most ambitious fundraising campaign in the 40-year history of the Foundation, and Paul made it a success, ensuring the future funding of scientific research.

Paul served as chair of the audit committee and was an active participant of the finance committee, but Paul's contributions were not limited to the committees on which he served. Paul believed strongly in educational outreach opportunities for all. On the 40th anniversary of the Foundation in 2008 when we awarded the Leakey Prize to Jane Goodall and Toshisada Nishida, Paul was a major sponsor of the educational outreach programs. In 2011, he sponsored an opportunity for the famous primatologist Dr. Birute Mary Galdikas to visit Sonoma Academy to present to the students about orangutan conservation, and in 2013, Paul

helped the Foundation bring Dr. Christina Warriner to Sonoma Day School for a lecture to over 100 students. In 2014, Paul was the architect behind a truly unique outreach event at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago.

There are more details, statistics, and committee initiatives we could list, but we prefer to remember Paul for the kind of man he was, curious, kind, dedicated and generous beyond measure. It's the stories and the moments that make the man. We will miss him greatly.



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10/26

SAN FRANCISCO Being Human Series Speaker: Robert Sapolsky at Public Works leakeyfoundation.org/beinghuman

Next Being Human Event:
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