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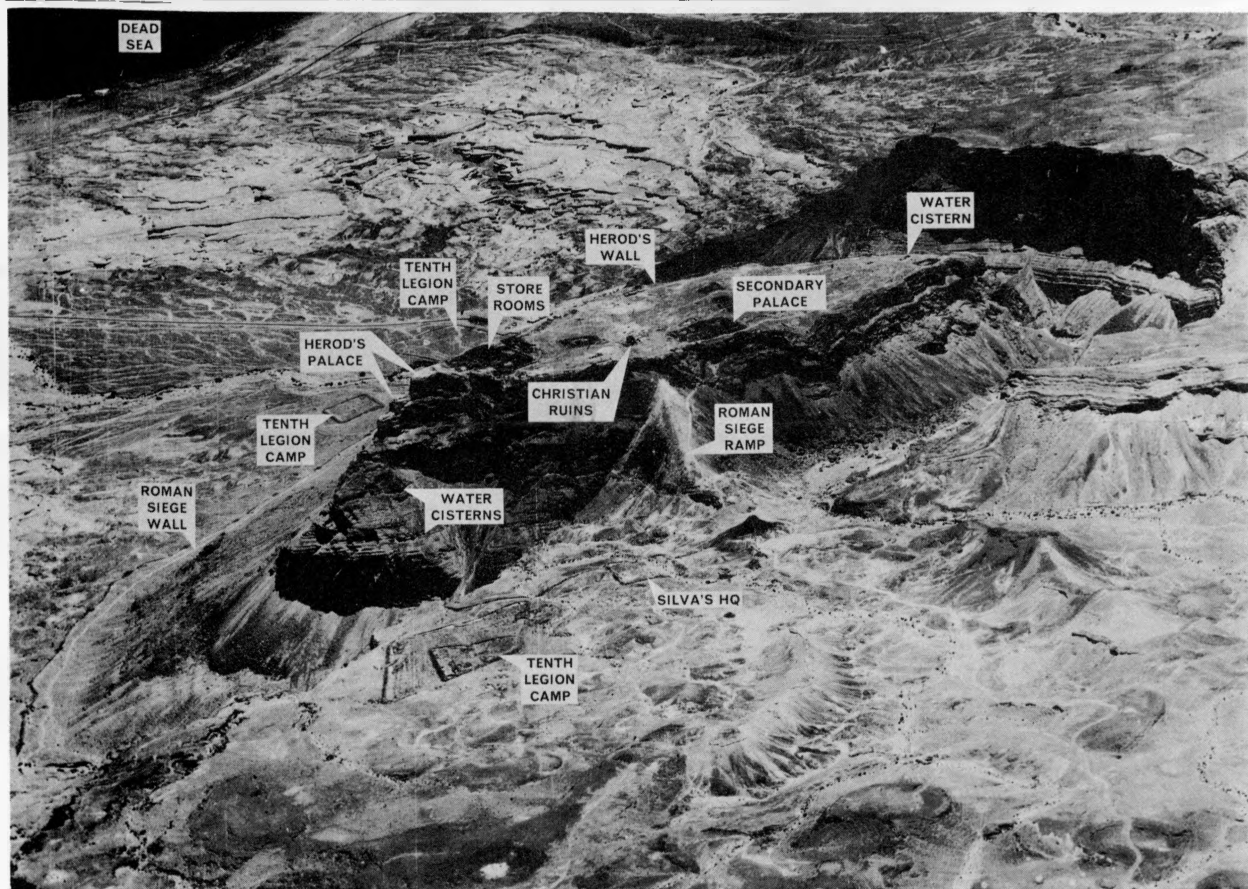
U. A. S. NEWSLETTER

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Assistant Editor: Forrest Richard Hauck

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Published six times a year by THE UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The purpose of the Newsletter is to provide members of the Society with up-to-date information regarding archaeological discoveries and research bearing upon the Hebrew-Christian and Latter-day Saint scriptures, through news reports, reviews, and short articles; also with news concerning the Society and its members, and the BYU Department of Archaeology, of which the Society is an affiliate organization. All views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the author of the particular contribution in which they appear and not necessarily those of Brigham Young University or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Subscription by membership in the Society (three dollars per year; Life Membership, fifty dollars), which also includes subscription to other publications of or issued through the Society.



An Israeli Air Force photograph of Masada, where Hebrew University archaeologists are now excavating. Courtesy of The Observer (London.)

88.0 THE MASADA EXPEDITION: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TREASURE HUNT AT HEROD'S DEAD-SEA PALACE. By Patrick O'Donovan. From the October 13, 1963, edition of The Observer (London), copyright holder. Reprinted here with the permission of the latter's agent, the Los Angeles Times - Washington Post News Service.

(The Hebrew University of Jerusalem is now carrying on archaeological excavations at the ancient fortress of Masada. Important information on the New Testament period, including possible manuscripts, is expected to be found at the site where Herod built his pleasure palace and 960 Jewish heroes slaughtered each other in AD 73, rather than fall into the hands of the Romans

88.00 Fortress in the Desert. Masada is a great rock in the wilderness of Judea. It is shaped like a broad ship. Its sides are almost sheer. Its top is flat and is littered with ruins. Its circumference is three-quarters of a mile.

It dominates a landscape of ferocious, bare brown hills where almost nothing grows, which appears to tremble in the terrible heat. It has a worn, exhausted look. It glares out over the dry, scored plain of rock and dust that sweeps down to the bright blue of the Dead Sea.

It is an impossible place. It has an air of horror about it that exactly suits its history.

In a few days, a large expedition, led by Prof. Yigael Yadin of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, will begin a winter season of excavations on and around Masada. The staff will be almost all graduates of Prof. Yadin's Department of Archaeology, and labor will be provided by detachments of volunteers from the Israeli army and groups from Israeli youth clubs and from England and other countries.

They will come for periods of two weeks and live in camps at the foot of the rock. Each morning they will climb up a steep path cut across the lowest side of the rock (400 feet) and reach the top at dawn.

The path is for strong heads, since it hangs above nothingness, though Israeli army engineers have built a light railing along it, and the last part has been eased with stairs to the top. Nor will the work be easy, but the chances of great discovery are very real.

88.01 Refuge of Herod. Masada is mentioned in several sources, but most of what is known of it comes from the work of Flavius Josephus. He was an odious aristocrat who wrote, among other books, The Jewish War.

He was a Jew who sold out to the Romans, and his history is marred by his attempts to justify himself and blacken the names of those Jews who fought on.

Recently I sat on Masada, in the ruins of King Herod's palace, while someone read aloud Josephus's account of the terrible things done there. Despite the author, the story is a great one. And despite the incrustations of death and destruction about it, Masada seemed still alive.

Jonathan, a high priest, first fortified the rock. He is a doubtful figure, but in BC 40 Herod the Great fled to the rock fortress when Jerusalem fell to the Parthians. He left his family and his bride-to-be safe on its summit while he restored his position.

This Herod, of course, is a figure of familiar evil. He was not a Jew by birth; he was a native of Palestine, an Idumeaan who, more or less, practiced the Jewish faith. His policy was to maintain friendly relations with Rome and to consolidate a new dynasty in Judea of which he was the founder. He was a ruthless and excellent general.

Herod survived the violent changes in Rome at the fall of the Republic. He pleased the Romans by building temples to their gods and even sacrificing in them. He tried to please the Jews by rebuilding their temple to a state of marvelous splendor.

He was, indeed, the greatest builder Palestine has ever known. He was a paranoiac who was impelled to murder those whom he loved and depended on, his wife,



Palestine. Map by F. R. Hauck

his children. He is said to have died a death of peculiar and morally suitable nastiness.

88.02 Water for a Siege. From BC 37 to 31, Herod built up Masada. He made it a sort of eastern Berchtesgaden. He surrounded its summit with towers and a wall.

He dammed a high valley to catch the sudden and brief rush of water that comes in a few weeks of the year. He made an aqueduct that led the water to two tiers of cisterns cut halfway up the rock face.

These enormous chambers cut by hand into the rock could hold 41,000 cubic meters of water. Even under siege conditions, they could be reached by dizzy paths from the top. He cut more cisterns on the surface that were presumably kept full by hand. Life for the slaves would have been strenuous and brief on Masada.

Herod also built himself a palace. This extraordinary affair stands at the prow of the rock. It is on

three descending terraces, the last based on vast buttresses into the valley below. At the top is a group of domestic rooms. Below is a round tower of uncertain purpose, and below that what must have been the most sumptuous gazebo in the world.

It was a square colonnaded building, open to the sky at the center. It was richly painted, and it was for pleasure. Here Herod could sit in the afternoon, in the shadow of his rock, and look out over the stupendous view of the salt sea below him and the great dead cliffs and hills on every hand as far as the final dim barriers of the Mountains of Moab. It was a palace for a melancholy mad man.

He also built a complex of long, narrow storerooms, another large domestic building and others which have not been identified. It was all plastered and painted, and the top of the rock was cultivated.

The purpose of the place was not wholly mad, however. Herod kept it as a possible refuge from the resentments of his subjects and against possible aggression from Cleopatra in Egypt, who tried to persuade Anthony to take Herod's lands for her. Herod died in power, but his dynasty failed. And the rock was garrisoned by the Romans.

88.03 Survived Suicide Pact. The Jews rose against the Romans in AD 66. It was a genuinely ideological conflict for which the erection of Roman eagles on the Temple in Jerusalem was the final cause.

Josephus was the Jewish leader in Galilee. Defeated and surrounded, he made a suicide pact with his followers, but he survived it by a trick and was made welcome by the Romans.

But the real insurgents, the Zealots, divided in factions, depending on an intervention by God that never came, fought on. One of their first acts was to surprize and massacre the Roman garrison on Masada. But in AD 70, Jerusalem fell, the Temple was destroyed, the long Diaspora (dispersion) began, and the revolt was over--except for Masada.

There, 967 men, women, and children held out. To stamp out this last spark of resistance, the Roman procurator Silva brought the Tenth Legion (Fretensis) to the siege of the rock.

There would be about 6,000 in the legion and Silva probably had some 9,000 Jewish slaves to build fortifications and carry water for the siege. They cut rock locally. They carried water from the springs at En Gedi, 15 miles up the coast of the Dead Sea. They must have died by the thousands.

The wonderful thing about Masada is that you can see precisely what happened. Silva built a wall all around the rock with guard castles to prevent escape, and it is still there. He laid out camps for his troops, and they too are clear on the bare ground.

Then on the lowest side of the rock, he built a great earth ramp, held together with logs, right up to Herod's wall on the summit of the rock. The ramp still stands, still reinforced with logs, long, smooth, deadly, pointed like a sword at the heart of the castle. This ramp cut across the aqueduct, but the Jewish stores of water were sufficient.

88.04 Lethal Lottery. Silva paved this ramp with rocks and built an iron-clad tower at its top which dominated the walls of the besieged. He cleared these of defenders with stones and arrows and proceeded to batter down the wall.

The Jews built a wooden plug for the breach. The Romans fired this (there are still clear traces of the fire) and then retired for the night to prepare for the final assault. This was in May, AD 73.

The defenders met under their leader, Eleazar. He spoke to them at length and they agreed to kill themselves. The men killed their families and then drew lots to kill one another. (An ostrakon, or inscribed potsherd, was found in the ruins of the palace. Scratched on it was the name Harrani, son of Simon.)

The survivors then set fire to the buildings and died themselves. But two women and five children hid themselves from the killing and lived to tell of the suicide pact and of the speech by Eleazar.

Josephus says of the Roman reaction: "When they came upon the rows of dead bodies, they did not exult over their enemies but admired the nobility of their resolve and the way in which so many had shown, in carrying it out without a tremor, an utter contempt for death."

88.05 Vanished Colony. The Romans left a garrison on the rock. Later, Christian monks occupied it, and the remains of a small and handsome church sit among the other ruins.

It is uncertain who the Christians who sought this solitude were, since there is no reference to them anywhere. From pottery found in the ruins, they may have been Syriac. And that is all.

From time to time, bold travelers scrambled to the top of Masada. It was not mapped accurately until 1955, and it has never been excavated.

The results of excavations cannot, of course, be predicted. The diggers know they will find some of the earliest mosaic pavements in Israel, parts of the painted walls of Herod's palace, carved columns. A trial trench dug in 1955 found the pavement, and another in the storehouses produced fragments of a storage vase and a glass vial.

They are going to excavate by building up. Many of the buildings have collapsed, leaving their stones still in rows. Masons will re-erect these as they are moved. Errors made at this stage can be corrected later.

In the debris beneath the stones, in cellars and rock passages, in the almost inaccessible caves that honeycomb the rock, the diggers may find the treasures that archaeologists dream of.

There is reason in this optimism. It is safe to assume that Josephus was fairly accurate. There must have been a time, then, when Eleazar, from the top of the rock looking down on the army crawling beneath, must have seen that his position was hopeless. He may either have looked for a chance to escape or foreseen suicide. In either case, it would have been natural for the Jews to have hidden what they prized most highly, their sacred writings.

88.06 Treasures in a Cave. Exactly this was done by another group of Jewish insurgents during the second rising in AD 132. This was in the revolt led by Bar Kochba.

It was a resistance group from En Gedi, who had fled to an almost inaccessible cave, not far from Masada. But they were found by the Romans, who set up a camp above their cave, and they died without escaping, presumably of thirst.

But before they died, they carefully hid their possessions in crevices of the rock. Other Jews came later and piously collected their bones in baskets. Prof. Yadin, exploring the caves in 1960, found a mass of household treasures, combs, baskets, keys.

There was also a hoard of Roman sacrificial vessels, presumably captured by the resistance group, and a small library of documents, deeds, some fragments of prayers, and dispatches from Bar Kochba himself. In a similar situation, a similar pattern may have been followed at Masada.

An additional reason for hope is that it was not the custom of the Jews to burn or spoil any sacred writing. Such scriptures were buried like bodies if they had to be destroyed.

Again, the fallen pattern of the ruins at Masada seems undisturbed. Many parts of the rock are now inaccessible without ropes and ladders.

Some of the caves have been used by Christians and have crude crosses on the walls, but others can be reached only by ropes. These will be explored by Israeli soldiers dangling on parachute harnesses. It was just such caves that the Jews at En Gedi chose for their treasures, and others living elsewhere, as caches for the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the search for buried metal the whole area will be covered by mine detectors.

88.07 Sacred Place. There remain a host of mysteries about Masada. There are the staircases linking the terraces of Herod's palace, blocked or fallen away. There are the cellars, crammed now with rubble, to be emptied. There are the 960

bodies, some of which may have been left in the burning ruins.

When the Romans broke in, there were still huge stores of provisions and of weapons unruined in the dry, desert air. It looks like a place of infinite promise. But the bare exploration of the Herodian palace and fortifications and of the Roman camps will provide justification and reward enough.

Masada has become a sacred place to Israelis. A popular epic poem begins, "Masada shall not fall a second time," and it was one of the inspirations for the re-creation of the State.

Thousands of young men and women make the appalling scramble to the summit each year and in the past accepted the occasional casualties from falling stones. Young soldiers are taken to the top to make their oath of allegiance to the State.

For Israel, then, this expedition is more than an archaeological dig; it is an act of piety. In its own terrible right, Masada presents a challenge to the present that Israel cannot refuse.

88.1 SACRED WRITINGS EXPECTED AT CONTINUING MASADA DIG. Sacred treasures, including perhaps even copies of books of the Old Testament, are expected to be found during the Hebrew University excavations now in progress at Masada, according to a second article by Patrick O'Donovan in The Observer (London) of October 20, 1963.

The numerous underground chambers with which the desert fortress is honeycombed are being cleared. These were carved by Herod the Great and later used by the Zealots during the great Jewish Rebellion of AD 66-70.

The ancient Jews, when their sacred manuscripts became worn, would sometimes bury them in caves or other subterranean chambers. Such a depository is that of Kirbet Qumran, where a group of writings known as the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in 1947 (Newsletter, 45.0, etc.). It is hoped that the present Masada expedition may bring to light sacred records, deposited in the cisterns when the Zealot cause became hopeless, and that such records may be found well-preserved in the dry atmosphere.

The excavation is continuing during the present season under the direction of Yigael Yadin, professor of archaeology at the Hebrew University and former chief of staff of the Israeli army during the fighting against the Arabs. No less than 208 volunteers to work under him have been accepted from 16 different nations. Included are 15 graduate students in archaeology from the Hebrew University.

In order to accomplish this extraordinary investigation, referred to by Mr. O'Donovan as "a massive para-military assault on history", appalling difficulties have had to be overcome. An entirely new road through 25 kilometers of waterless wilderness has been constructed between the nearest connection with the highway to Beersheba and the area on the west side of Masada. The archaeologists' campsite has been located there, near the ramp made by the ancient Romans to storm the Zealots' wall.

A power-driven, steel-cable hoist is now operating at this point to get equipment and supplies onto the site. Among other things, the hoist will lift 100 tons of cement to be used in the reconstruction of Herod's palace and storerooms. Also, ten cubic meters of water a day are to be transported to the top, for drinking and for mixing the cement. The water, as well as cooked meals, is being trucked in from a nearby Israeli settlement. From five to ten gallons per day will be allowed for each person, enough for a shower, it is hoped, every second day.

Progress of the excavations at Masada is being reported in exclusive dispatches to The Observer.

88.2 MAJOR UAS PUBLICATION MAILED. Copies of Progress in Archaeology, a major publication of the UAS, are being placed in the mail this week for distribution to all Society members.

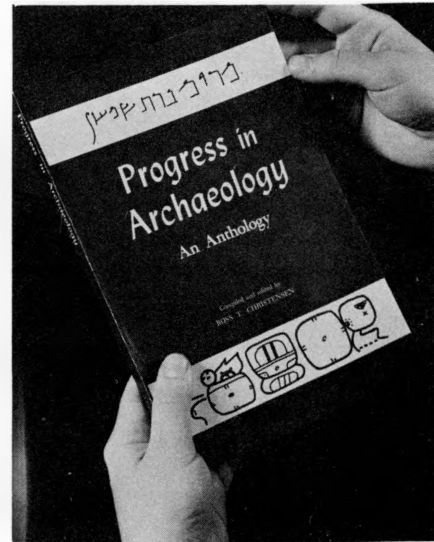
Progress in Archaeology is an anthology of selections from the first 85 issues of the UAS Newsletter, which were published between 1951 and 1963. The selections were made for their interest to students of the LDS scriptures: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Pearl of Great Price. They are arranged in the anthology according to subject.

The UAS Newsletter was created on August 2, 1951, by action of the UAS Executive Committee for the purpose of providing Society members with up-to-date information concerning archaeological discoveries and research bearing on the Scriptures, also news of the Society and the BYU Department of Archaeology. The first issue appeared the following August 15. A total of 412 pages were printed between then and 1963, when Newsletter 85 was published.

Because many issues of the newsletter were out of print and could not be obtained by UAS members, the idea took shape of republishing the more important articles in the form of an anthology. The work of compilation began in February, 1956.

Progress in Archaeology contains 219 pages, including 14 illustrations, measures six by nine inches, and is stitch-bound in a paper cover.

A free copy of Progress in Archaeology has been mailed to every current member of the Society, and will also be sent to every new member, or former



renewing member, who dues are received by June 30, 1964. The volume is also available by purchase: the price to non-members of the Society, or for extra copies to members, is \$2.75 per copy.

88.3 PLANS MADE FOR ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM. Arrangements have been initiated for the Fifteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, according to Dr. Ross T. Christensen, symposium chairman. The all-day event will be held this year on May 16 in Salt Lake City at a location yet to be announced (Newsletter, 87.12).

88.30 Committee Appointed. A Symposium Committee has been appointed, with Dr. Christensen as chairman. Other members are Dr. Welby W. Ricks, UAS president; Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, professor of archaeology at BYU; Darrell R. Tondro, director of the Salt Lake Chapter of the UAS; F. R. Hauck, assistant to the UAS general secretary-treasurer; and Sherryll Willes, BYU archaeology major. Among other duties, the committee will have that of selecting the papers to be presented at the Symposium.

88.31 Papers to be Published. Arrangements have been made with BYU Extension Publications to publish this year's proceedings in full. These "Symposium Papers," it is expected, will be distributed to all UAS members free of cost, as heretofore, as soon as they are ready. Extra copies may thereafter be obtained only from Extension Publications. The cost will probably be \$1 per copy.

88.32 Abstracts Due. All UAS members are invited to prepare papers for reading at the Symposium, according to Dr. Christensen. Professional standing is not required, but only a serious interest in the archaeology of the LDS scriptures.

Members preparing papers are reminded of the April 2 deadline for submitting one-page abstracts

(Newsletter, 87.2). Following that date the Symposium Committee will select the papers to be presented and organize the program. Abstracts should be mailed to: Symposium Committee, University Archaeological Society, 139 Maeser Building, BYU, Provo, Utah.

88.4 REPORTS FROM THE CHAPTERS.

88.40 Campus Chapter. The following résumé of the activities of the UAS Campus Chapter in February, March, and April has been submitted by Tim M. Tucker, program chairman:

On February 12 Dr. Ross T. Christensen, chairman of the BYU Department of Archaeology, addressed the Chapter. His topic was, "Why I am an Archaeologist." Included in the discussion were archaeology as a science, its limitations, and its contributions to mankind. He reviewed his experiences while studying in eight different colleges and universities and excavating in Peru and Mexico. The lecture was concluded with comments on archaeology as it relates to historical accounts on archaeology as it relates to historical accounts, such as the Scriptures, and to anthropology; also the vocations offered in the field of archaeology.

That same evening the following officers were elected to serve the Campus Chapter during the spring semester: Dale L. Berge, Provo, honorary president; Virginia Lotzman, Freeport, New York, president; F. R. Hauck, Provo, vice-president; and Sherryl Willes, Riverside, California, secretary.

On March 4 Louis J. Nackos presented a discussion on ruins, traditions, and contemporary customs of the Maya people of Yucatan, Mexico. Color transparencies of Chichén Itzá, Uxmal, and Teotihuacán, selected from his large 35 mm. collection, were shown. Mr. Nackos lived ten months in Mérida and traveled extensively throughout the area.

On March 25 Fletcher B. Hammond, author of Geography of the Book of Mormon (Utah Printing Co.: Salt Lake City, 1959), will address the Chapter.

In April, Paul R. Cheesman of Miami, Florida, will speak. He has traveled extensively in Latin America investigating ancient ruins. He plans to exhibit selected items from his collection of Peruvian gold artifacts.

All UAS members have a standing invitation to attend the meetings of the Campus Chapter. They are generally held in the Eyring Physical Science Center, Room 265, Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p. m.

88.41 Salt Lake Chapter. Darrell R. Tondro, director of the Salt Lake Chapter, has submitted the following information on chapter meetings held at the Senior Citizens Recreation Center, 237 South 10th East, Salt Lake City:

On February 7 Dr. John L. Sorenson, associate professor of anthropology and sociology at Brigham Young University, spoke to the Chapter on the "Nephtite Social Structure" as represented in the Book of Mormon.

On March 6 Verla Birrell, assistant professor of art in home economics at the University of Utah and author of Book of Mormon Guide Book and The Textile Arts, lectured on the ancient civilizations of Peru. Prof. Birrell has traveled widely among the natives of Central and South America and has visited a great many of the ancient ruins. Her lecture was illustrated with slides selected from her numerous collection. One hundred thirty-eight persons were in attendance.

88.5 RENEWAL FOR 1964 PAST DUE. The UAS general secretary-treasurer has called attention to renewal of membership for 1964, which is now past due.

Renewal notices were mailed in November, 1963. But, while a number of UAS members have not yet returned their fees, Society officers have requested that all such unrenewed memberships be left on the roll until after the distribution of the major UAS publication, Progress in Archaeology (see above, 88.2).

Since this book has now been mailed, the present Newsletter will likely be the last publication which can be sent to unrenewed members.

For the convenience of those whose membership is due, the following form may be clipped from the Newsletter and returned with the renewal fee:

Date _____
UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
139 Maeser Building, BYU
Provo, Utah

Thank you for reminding me of my membership renewal fee, which is now due. Enclosed please find my check or money order:

\$ _____ for _____ year (s) of membership (\$3 per year).

\$ _____ for Life Membership (\$50).

\$ _____ for _____ year(s) of Research Patronage (\$10 or more per year in addition to the membership fee).

\$ _____ Total

Name _____

Mailing Address _____