EDITORIAL

The 12th Congress of the Panafri-can Archaeological Association for Prehistory and Related Studies (or the “Panafri-can Congress” for short) is scheduled to begin in Gaborone, Botswana on July 3, 2005. It is hosted by the Archaeology Unit in the Department of History of the University of Botswana. The web site for the conference was updated at the beginning of May 2005 with details about the program and other events, including the post-congress excursions. It can be accessed at http://www.ub.bw/departments/humanities/panaf2005/index.html. Congratulations in advance to the organizers for hosting such a wide range of presentations.

The next Society of Africanist Archaeologists conference will be held at the University of Calgary, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada from June 22 to 26, 2006. The organizers have created a web site with all basic conference information, including registration and local information. You can access it at this URL: http://homepages.ucalgary.ca/~safaconf/SAFA/. Titled “Integrating African Archaeology”, the conference is in honor of Professor Peter Shinnie, who was one of the founders of our discipline, first in Sudan, then in Ghana, then later in Calgary, Canada. The organizers can be e-mailed at safaconf@ucalgary.ca.

There is also a new SAfA e-mail list serve address, Safaannounce-l@mailmain.rice.edu. It is designed for the executive to communicate information to members, and for members to post brief announcements. Information about the mailing list is available at this URL: https://mailman.rice.edu/mailman/listinfo/safaannounce-l. It is not intended as a discussion forum. Such a forum is already available through the SAfA web site at http://safa.rice.edu. SAfA members can also access digital versions of Nyame Akuma at this site. Access to the digital version is free to individuals based in Africa.

After preparing this issue, it struck me how much we now rely on e-mail and internet access for our day to day information. Members are reminded that they can submit manuscripts to me electronically. This includes figures. As long as I can open your files, I can deal with both figures and text. Occasionally, I have to re-scan figures for consistency in desk top production. But the technology has evolved a long way from the mid 1980s when I assisted David Lubell in literally cutting and pasting columns of page proofs.

The following papers discuss field research in Namibia (Vogelsang), Senegal (Richard), Sudan (Lange), and Tanzania (Pradines, Seitsonen). One thing that ties a number of them together is their concern with modern or recent sites, and their place in the consciousness of African countries in the 21st century. Kienon-Kabore discusses the general role that archaeology could have in cultural and economic development in Africa. She stresses that knowledge of traditional cultures, their technologies and world views could have a role in modern social integration and state building. Vogelsang writes about archaeological work on a recently abandoned (1954) San village in the Etosha National Park of Namibia. Pradines reports on a joint Tanzanian - French heritage project at the monumental Swahili site of Kilwa in southern Tanzania. While the project is mainly involved in the rehabilitation of this UNESCO World Heritage site, Pradines also conducted additional survey and test excavations at one of its constituent islands, Songo Mnara.

Richard discusses archaeological evidence for the Siin Kingdom in Western Senegal, and shows how our discipline supplements more traditional historical and ethnohistorical accounts. Seitsonen discusses a recent survey around the Late Iron Age monument of En-garuka in northern Tanzania that led to the discovery of a number of Stone Age occurrences. Finally, Merrick Posnansky reports on the 10th meeting of the West African Archaeological Association which was held in Port Novo, Benin in late November 2004. This includes a brief history of this group, which, he points out, is the second oldest archaeological association in sub-Saharan Africa, next to the South African Archaeological Society.