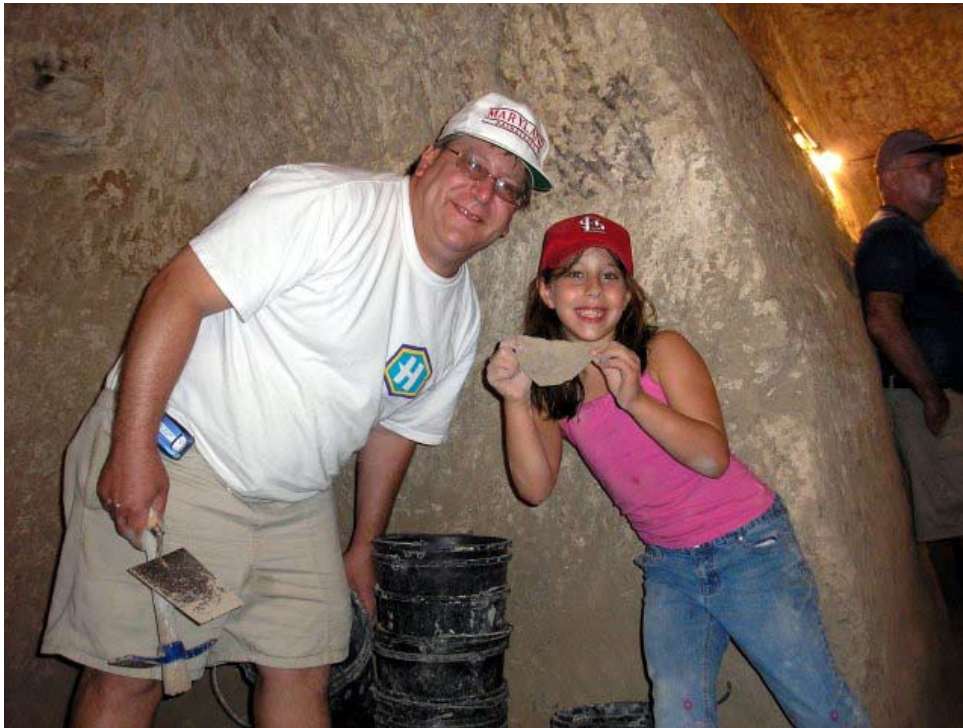


The MAGS Youth  
will join the adults for  
a Holiday Party on  
Friday, December 14, 2007.



## Beit Guvrin

By Lauren and Danielle Schaeffer



Alan (left) and Lauren (right) Schaeffer at Beit Guvrin, Israel, with Lauren holding a piece of pottery.

When we went to Israel last summer, we went on two archeological digs. The first place was a tel called Beit Guvrin. A tel is a hill that villages are built on. When one group of villagers leaves their homes, another group sometimes comes and builds new homes and villages on top of the old structures and the hill or tel grows taller. After this happens several times, the hill can become very tall. This happened at Beit Guvrin.

Usually trained archeologists are required to uncover ancient ruins. It is important to document where relics are found. We were able to dig because we dug through the trash of the people who lived on the tel. Two thousand

years ago, the people who lived in Israel had houses on the surface. They dug into the ground to find water and store the water in cisterns. When the water dried up, they dug elsewhere and used the old cisterns for the trash. Because the trash was placed there at different times, it is not as important to know exactly where the relics were found. We were thus allowed to participate in the excavation. We found broken pottery, the handle of a pot, burnt wood, animal bones and animal teeth. After we finished the dig, we walked through the previously excavated cisterns that were like caves. It was very cold in the caves while it was very hot on the surface outside.

Many things have been found in the cisterns at Beit Guvrin. Coins, oil lamps and pottery are not uncommon. A 1700 year old menorah and an ancient ketubah (Jewish wedding contract) were also found in the caves.

We had to give all the things we found to the archeologists but in the end, they gave us pieces of pottery and Beit Guvrin archeology shirts.

## Archaeology

By Karen Schaeffer

Archaeology is the study of ancient civilizations and the people who lived in them. There are many different places that archaeologists go to study archaeology. These places include, Israel, Egypt, Italy, Greece, and many others. They look for things that can tell them what time period the relics that they have found are from, what life was like for the people of those ancient civilizations, and how they avoided the roadblocks that kept their communities from flourishing.

Archaeologists have to be very careful while excavating a site. They don't want to break any of the ancient artifacts or bones. They use many different tools. One tool is the small paintbrush. No, they do not use it to paint on the relics. They use it to delicately brush off any dirt or small pebbles that may be on the surface. Another tool used to take off dirt from an ancient object is the hand pick. If the object is buried underground they use a shovel. A small hand-shovel may be used if the object is partly visible but stuck in the ground.

Archaeology is very complex. Archaeologists can also be thought of as historians, uncovering the mysteries of the past.

## Reminder notes to the MAGS youth

**December Holiday Party:** The youth will be joining the adults for the annual MAGS Holiday Party on Friday night, 7:30 pm, December 14, 2007 at Shady Grove Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN. Bring your family and friends and join in the festivities. If you plan to participate in the gift exchange, please bring one gift from each person in your group. The gift should be related to our hobby (rock collecting, geology, paleontology, archaeology, minerals, gems, etc.) and valued at approximately \$10.00. The gift should be appropriate for either a girl, boy, woman, or man. Your family should also bring a pot luck dish to share with everyone at the party.

**Send your articles in for the MAGS Explorer newsletter:** Karen Schaeffer is the MAGS Explorer youth newsletter editor, but she needs your help. You can write articles, tell us about your adventures, draw a picture, write a poem. You can give your articles, artwork, poems, puzzles, experiments, pictures or stories to Karen Schaeffer or email them to mbaldwin05@gmail.com or mail them to Mike Baldwin, 367 North Main Street, Collierville TN 38017.