

Mideast Ramblings – Egypt

By: Keith L. Sorrels

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As I write this, I am at 30,000 feet, somewhere over “fly-over” country. The first 3 hours of my trip, provides me time to ponder the events that preceded this trip. This is the best time of a trip, sort of like the moment that a Christmas gift is in your hands just prior to opening; when one can feel the tingle of excitement. In the case of a trip like this, the “tingle” lasts a long time, and here is how it all started.

Last December (1997), I went on a tour of Israel with my friend, Eric Lembcke. Traveling to the Mid-East is nothing new to Eric because, he is the capable right hand man for Ron Wyatt. Ron has spent a major part of his life searching the greater Mid-East area, looking for archeological evidence of places and events told about in the Bible. In this endeavor, Ron has been very successful, having been credited by the Turkish government as the discoverer of Noah’s Ark. Ron also found evidences of what appears to be the site of Gomorrah (as in Sodom and Gomorrah), and also found convincing evidence of the place on the Red Sea, where the Children of Israel (the Jews) crossed, in order, to escape the Pharaoh’s army. Many people have been interested in Ron’s Red Sea discovery. One of these is Dr. Lennart Moller, Associate Professor of the Karolinska Institute - Center for Nutrition and Toxicology in Sweden. One of the projects that is being conducted at the institute, is cancer research, especially relating to nutrition. Lennart had dove at the site with Ron and Eric before, and his continuing interest caused him to fund a new, extended expedition with the goal of finding some artifacts and getting some up to date



Dr. Lennart Moller

photos for a book and video about the Exodus that he is writing titled: The Exodus Case

Eric was invited to go on the trip, and asked by Lennart, to find another certified diver to be part of the expedition. I was the person that Eric selected. After assuring that I had approval to go on the trip from my wife, Kathy, and authorized time off from work, the next thing I needed, was to become certified as a scuba diver. Soon I was standing in the Paradise Dive Shop, and talking to the proprietor and X- Navy Seal, Dwayne, the dive master. I developed an instant rapport with Dwayne by telling him that I wanted to learn to dive and that I didn’t know anything about it. Dwayne said that he liked my approach, and that he looked forward to teaching me. Diving, in my opinion, is a sport, which, in my final assessment is “bizarre”.

I say this because a person is willingly putting himself, in a very hostile environment, depending entirely in his equipment to allow him to maintain the critical bodily function of breathing. The sport is not for the lazy; there is a lot of equipment required in diving, that must be lugged around and meticulously cleaned every time it's used. My training with Dwayne went well, and cumulated with a two-day certification dive at Monterey, with Dr. Jerry Niswonger and his son, Jeremiah, Eric, and me. Eric's girlfriend Christian also went along. The underwater visibility at Monterey was not the best; it varied somewhere between 4 and 12 feet, kind of claustrophobic! After my certification dives were completed, Eric and me went on two dives on our own.



Eric Lembcke & me

The objective for the additional dives was for Eric and me, to be able to work together closely as a team and developing our skills. We performed some drills like removing the mask while under the water, and putting it back on. We also tried some various schemes for buddy breathing, and catching a couple of emergency breaths from our Buoyancy Compensators – BC's (a BC is a vest worn by divers which is basically an air bladder that the diver can inflate or deflate, in order to ascend or descend). We also tried out some hardware that we were developing for the Red Sea trip; namely some inexpensive markers and a buoy made from a plastic toilet valve float, filled with foam. The markers worked well, but the float tended to collapse under the water pressure. We also practiced navigating with our wrist compasses, because underwater, every direction looks the same, so a diver must learn to trust his compass. My certification was completed only one week before the trip, which was cutting it kind of close.

The Red Sea trip officially started when Kathy dropped me off at Jerry Niswonger's house in Paradise. Soon, Jerry, Jeremiah, Eric, and me, were on our way to SFO in Jerry's vehicle. The drive to SFO was routine except for intermittent rain showers. After about a three-hour drive, we arrived at our motel. The plan is to get some sleep and in the morning, utilize the "park and drive" service that will take us from the motel to the airport. Hitting my bed (I volunteered to sleep on the floor), I manage to sleep fairly well. In the morning, we visited the continental breakfast bar and came to the realization that continental means "not much to eat".



Eric Lembcke and Ron Wyatt.
These two have shared
many adventures

Soon we are on the plane and on our way. Our domestic flight from SFO to JFK is just the first leg of a trip that will take us to Cairo, Egypt, then to the town of Nuwieba on the Red Sea, and back again, (Lord willing). My seatmate for this leg of the trip is Mitch, a pleasant Jewish man from Aptos, Ca. He is in the eyeglass business and proudly shows me a case containing what he says is the cutting edge in eyewear; some of which he invented. Since Jerry Niswonger is an Ophthalmologist, I introduced Mitch to Jerry who is in the seat ahead of us and Mitch shows Jerry his wares. For breakfast we have scrambled eggs, sausage, potatoes and fruit.

The food was good, but the amount was not enough, so I am considering going for some of the snacks that I have in my bag. We arrive at JFK Airport and soon we met Ron Wyatt; he is looking great. In consideration of the long flight ahead, Eric and I decide that we should try to get some seats in the emergency exit row, so we could stretch out our legs during the flight. We were directed by the airline representative to go back to the main ticket counter to make the switch.

The airline official that serviced us was most accommodating; he took our boarding pass and tickets, and made the switch for us. Then things got interesting! When we arrived back at the boarding area, boarding was in progress, so we got into the line. When we arrived at the head of the line, we gave the attendant our paperwork; then a problem surfaced. It seemed that when the ticket agent changed our seats, he tore up the old boarding passes along with our actual tickets. Now it was being made clear to us, that without the tickets, we would not be allowed to board the plane. We were directed to a lady official who seemed somewhat sympathetic to our story, but she still insisted that we needed the ticket. It seems rather strange to me that although we had a copy of our ticket and a boarding pass in our names, they still would not let us on the plane.

Adding to the stress, every couple of minutes we would hear the announcement of the time left until the airplane door would close, and now they were saying, "2 minutes". As you might imagine, thoughts were swirling though our minds on what was going to happen if the plane left without us; especially considering that the rest of our party were already boarded and were unaware of our plight. The airline officials continued asking us rapid-fire questions, mostly questions we had already answered, and the pace of the questions peaked to a nightmarish crescendo when finally, with an irritated sarcastic tone in her voice, the person in charge said, "get on the plane". Those words were sweet music to our ears and we hastily complied before they changed their minds. The lesson for potential travelers is, that a boarding pass (while official looking), is just a boarding pass and not a ticket. The actual ticket should always be protected and carefully handled.

With that nightmare behind us, the flight to Cairo was long, and for the most part, uneventful. The monotony of the 9 hour and 40 minute flight was interrupted by about 4 hours of actual sleep. The flight attendants, with only one exception, were rude and uncaring. We passengers, seemed to be nothing more than disturbing nuisances to them. As a test of their "give a care" level, I watched a parade of flight attendants walk over a discarded (almost full) salad dressing packet, which fell into the aisle. It was just a matter of time before a passenger's foot found the packet and splattered its fat laden contents all over the carpet resulting in the low "care level" score for the flight attendants. It appeared that we were simply cattle to them.

We were rapidly coming to the end of our flight, and soon we flew over the outskirts of Cairo where we could see a vast "land of sand", in the morning light. The pilot announced that the pyramids would soon be visible out the right side of the plane; and he was right. Through the small portholes, shrouded in a dust storm, was the Great Pyramid of Giza. While we were craning our necks to catch a glimpse, the pilot decided to give all of us a thrill by doing a right hand 360 degree turn around the pyramids at a height of about 3,000 ft.

Welcome to Egyptian airspace! Airspace rules there are no rules! The landing was exciting because we had a strong right crosswind. Eric and I, along with several others, nervously watched the control surfaces on the wing battling with the crosswind. When we finally made a well-planted landing and realized that we were on the intended runway, still in one piece, the whole cabin erupted in wild clapping and cheering. After a long taxi (are we going in circles?), we finally parked and gathered our carry-ons and waited to leave the plane. I was expecting a continuous stream of bu-byes upon leaving the plane, the kind of bu-byes typified in the Saturday Night Live skit where they took on a definite mocking tone. To my surprise, and relief, the heroic flight crew bid us farewell, basking in the complements of their much-appreciated good work. I was puzzled at the absence of the flight attendants figuring, they could have at least ‘mooed” a goodbye to us.

3/25/98 At the terminal, we did the normal things. Passports were checked and there was another check that was new to me. Everyone with a video camera was taken aside, and the authorities carefully recorded information about our cameras. This information would come into play later when we left the country, because, the authorities would make sure that we left with the cameras that we brought. Ron Wyatt said that the fine for not having your camera with you when you leave the country, is \$1,500.00, ouch! Needless to say, we all kept close track of our cameras. Soon after we left the sanctuary of the terminal, we were confronted by a mob of taxi drivers, all wanting to be our friends (for a price of a ride of course). During this pleasant interlude, Ron is busy negotiating with a man who represents the Novotel Hotel. Ron felt that the last time he was here, somehow, they ripped him off. The negotiating became somewhat heated when Ron said, “No deal”, and walked away with the man in hot pursuit. After a mostly one-sided conversation, Ron heard a price that he liked and a deal was struck. We boarded a van and soon we were deposited at the Novotel Hotel which was located just a couple of blocks from the airport. After we were checked in, I exchanged some greenbacks for some Egyptian pounds, and we gathered for dinner. Ron had dinner with the negotiator, and worked out a deal for transportation to Nuwieba and around Cairo. Cairo is a large city; a population of over 11 million.

At about 6:30 PM, we boarded a small diesel minivan and we headed to the see the Sound and Light Show at the pyramids; located on the other side of the city. Although it took about an hour to get to the pyramids, the show began as soon as we left the hotel. This was not going to be some relaxing drive through a sleepy town. When I observed the chaotic traffic situation, my first thought was, “so this is what a breakdown of civilization is like”. The Cairo traffic flows just like blood cells in our body’s arteries. The vehicular disorder seems to be complete chaos, with no rules. I saw only one working traffic light in our hour drive, but as the drive unfolded, I could see that subtle rules of the road were starting to emerge like these:

1. Headlights are not used, only running lights.
2. Lane lines don’t indicate traffic lanes. The lanes accommodate as many vehicles as possible.
3. If, as a driver you straddle a lane line, that tells the people behind you that you have the option to veer in either direction.

4. Vehicles are driven with one hand on the wheel, and the other hand on the horn. The horn is an essential piece of equipment as evidenced, by me counting no less than 36 horn blasts in 2 1/2 minutes. In the USA, a blast on the horn is most always considered an insult. In Cairo, the horns are used in short blasts that say to pedestrians, "I'm not stopping" or to the car in front of you, "I'm here". Only a couple of times did I hear an angry blast which, along with the flash of the hand, said, "You stupid idiot!"
5. The vehicle is driven as close to pedestrians as possible without hitting them.

Dents in most all of the cars are a testament to the numerous close encounters. Driving in Cairo is hard work. I watched our driver's eyes darting about and never resting. He was always planning on where the path of least resistance was, in the slug of cars ahead. Buses would use their bulk to lever their way into the lane of flow. At times, we were so close to the cars around us, that I expect to hear a scrapping noise. Pedestrians have a special challenge here in a technique, which closely resembles the Frogger game. People venture across one row of traffic at a time, then wait to proceed until the next lane opens up. While this Mid-East form of the "chicken" game may be appealing to teenagers, I saw a mom with two small children crossing in this manner with no consideration or courtesy given them from the drivers. From what I could see there were no crosswalks and the speed of the traffic depends entirely on the road ahead. If the road is relatively open for a couple of blocks, you accelerate as fast as you can go for those 2 blocks. Police are seen here and there, but they seem somewhat disinterested, like they don't want to get involved. Intersections are crossed on a first come, first served basis, and no stop is required. Well, here is an amazing site! A man on a motorcycle taking both hands off his handlebars while completely turning around to get something out of the basket behind him! Don't worry; it's just another day in Cairo.

Time and time again, our driver threads the needle through converging walls of steel. While going past the City of the Dead, I hear a loud screech and see a vehicle roll over onto its top in a cascade of sparks, as another one bites the dust. I am sure that the drivers that are left in the game, appreciate the extra maneuvering room. My final assessment of the driving system in Cairo is that: they move a lot of traffic here. It's not pretty, and pedestrians are potential road-kill, but, the traffic is moving. The drivers in this "critical mass" transit system are skilled, and a system, like we have in America simply would not work here.

On our drive, we see large buildings, like Saliden's castle, parks, and a place called "Cairo Land", sort of like Disneyland, but a bit smaller. OK, it's a lot smaller. We also see filth and decay and many fitting examples of the term "hovel". This is definitely a third world country. Look! There is a horse drawn cart on the boulevard with what looks like several tons of steel reinforcing bars on it. Everywhere we look are people, who like all of us, are just doing their best to survive. Our hearts are pricked as we see a young boy whose eyes are full of tears, begging on the center divider while we are momentarily stopped. His eyes are haunting to me as I see in my mind's eye, one of my own sons standing there in his place. Seeing such poverty causes me to ponder the special blessing of my American heritage. Compassion flows from my heart and I do what I can, mainly a smile or wave to give the recipient a happy moment from a stranger. When it comes down to it, these people are just like me. They are trying to make the best life for themselves, in the world that they were born into.

Because poverty is the rule here, helping by giving money is like trying to stop a flood with a bucket.

The poverty here has caused many people to become entrepreneurs; people will lift your bags and, of course, expect a tip. In the restrooms, there will be a man or young boy who will offer you toilet paper, a towel, or will turn the facet on for you obligating you for an Egyptian pound or two. At first these people seem annoying, but



they are merely trying to eke out a living. Despite the peril of our trip across Cairo, we made it to the Sound and Light Show on time. The show was a laser light show in which the laser drew pictures on the side of the Great Pyramid. The show would have been OK, except that the blowing dust in the air was a continuous distraction. Eric said he was able to see the same show on an earlier trip, on a crisp, clear, night when the stars were out, he said that it was “impressive”. I was getting a little bothered with the effort in the presentation to overplay the mystique of the pyramids in an effort to make the mystery bigger than what it really is. The spectacle and mystery of the pyramids need no hype; they are impressive! After the show and the hour long drive afterward, we arrived back at the hotel, and with a shower, eye drops, nose spray all done, and I hit the hay. The foam mattress is firm but comfortable and until 4:00 am, I sleep like a rock, but after that, I have just a couple of hours of fitful sleep. Don’t worry; it’s just my body trying to make sense of the time change.

3/26/98 It is morning again and I am drinking a Coke just after breakfast. I started out not having one because I thought I was safe since I didn’t eat any fresh vegetables. When I said that to Ron, he said, “If you are eating in Egypt, you’re never safe”. Ron further explained that it is the local bathroom habit, to wipe after using the toilet, not with toilet paper, but with a hand, and chances are that the “hand”, was probably not going to be washed before being used for the preparation of the delicious pastries I ate this morning. Following Ron’s advice, I ordered a Coke from the bar and slammed it down hoping it would catch up with what I had eaten for breakfast. It seems that in Ron’s 100 or so trips to the Mid-East, he learned that for some reason, cola neutralizes the bacteria that causes travelers diarrhea. As I sit here writing this, my lower intestinal tract is rumbling; I hope it’s only physiological.

3/27/98 Today, Ron, Jerry, and Jeremiah, are going to fly to Israel and spend the day so Jeremiah, can see Jerusalem and some of the other sites. They will catch up with us at Taba tomorrow. Today; Eric and I are going to tour Cairo. I think this is the 3rd time that Eric has seen all of the things we will see today, but he is willing to go with me so I can see them. I really appreciate Eric doing this.

After finishing our breakfast buffet meal of scrambled eggs, potatoes, beans, yogurt, coffee and pastry (I tried 5 different kinds), Eric and I boarded the minivan and we were off to the Cairo Museum. This morning’s traffic seems lighter or somehow at least more cooperative; maybe I am just getting used to it. The Cairo Museum is housed in a massive building and there is a lot to see. Eric shows me a statue of a fellow whose nose looks Jewish, maybe it’s Moses or Joseph.



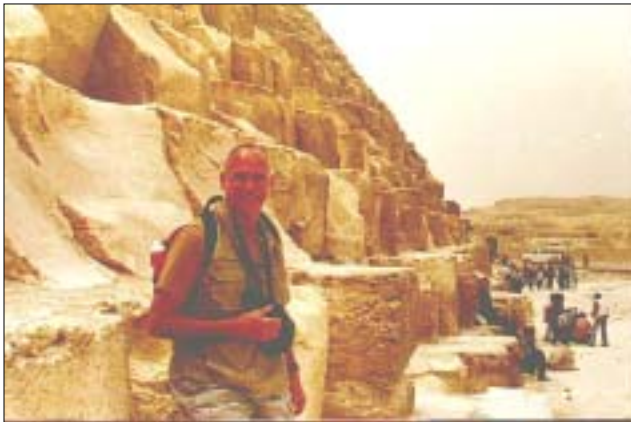
King Tut's mask and gold items are housed here and they are impressive; I have never seen so much gold in one place. One of the things I liked best, were small clay figurines of families, which were sort of like family portraits. There were several of them, with usually 4 people in the group. The facial features of each family member were distinctly unique and different; I thought they were fascinating. We also saw the chariots taken from King Tut's tomb, hopefully, we would see more on the bottom of the Red Sea. Another interesting thing I saw was a coral encrusted metal hub from a chariot. This fits the story that Ron told us about giving a hub to one of the antiquities officials of Egypt; it could be the same one.



Me and my "guard Friend"

Unfortunately, we only had about an hour to spend at the museum; I think we could have easily spent three or four. One interesting thing that happened in the museum was that one of the museum guards, insisted that we take our photo with him. This seemed a bit strange, but since he had a gun, and we had a camera, we complied. I don't think the guard was being

mean, just overly friendly. Eric did a good job showing me the highlights of the museum and after making a bathroom stop at the nearby Hilton, we were on our way to the pyramids.



The pyramids are amazing. I was impressed with the steepness of their sides and the huge size of the blocks of stone. The stones fit together with a close fit, even though many of the mating surfaces were irregular. We took videos and pictures from several vantage points while fending off potential "friends" who all wanted to sell us things. We also looked at the Sphinx, which like most of the statues that we saw at the museum, its nose had been defaced. Eric said that

breaking off the nose was the big defilement. The thought was, that if the nose were broken off, the soul of the person represented by the statue would not go to Heaven. In the case of the Sphinx, the nose was blown off by a well-placed artillery shot. What fools they were to destroy such a wonderful artifact.



After Giza, we loaded up into the mini van and headed to Saqqara about 10 miles away to see the stepped pyramid. On the way there, we paralleled a canal/sewer where the filth and squalor was even worse than what we had seen before. I saw people fishing, washing clothing, and cleaning pots and pans in the same sewer.

← Ever Seen Such Filth?

Saqqara, for a number of reasons, is thought by Ron and others, to be the pyramid that the Children of Israel built during the time of Joseph and Moses. The first thing we saw at the site was an unusual building which had a door sized opening on the east end, and similarly sized opening on the west end. A long hallway connected the two openings and on each side of the hallway, were small square alcoves that were about 6 by 6 ft, perhaps 10 of these on each side. This building looks like it was built for a special function. Ron Wyatt thinks that this building goes back to the story in the Bible during Joseph's time, when there was 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine.



Grain Storage Pit & Stepped Pyramid at Saqqara. Egypt

The theory is that during the famine, people came from many surrounding nations to buy grain from Egypt. These people spoke different languages and would have needed someone who could make the deal in their own language, and currency. The building makes sense when looked at from this viewpoint; the people would come in and go to the table in the alcove that matched their language and then traded their money for chits.

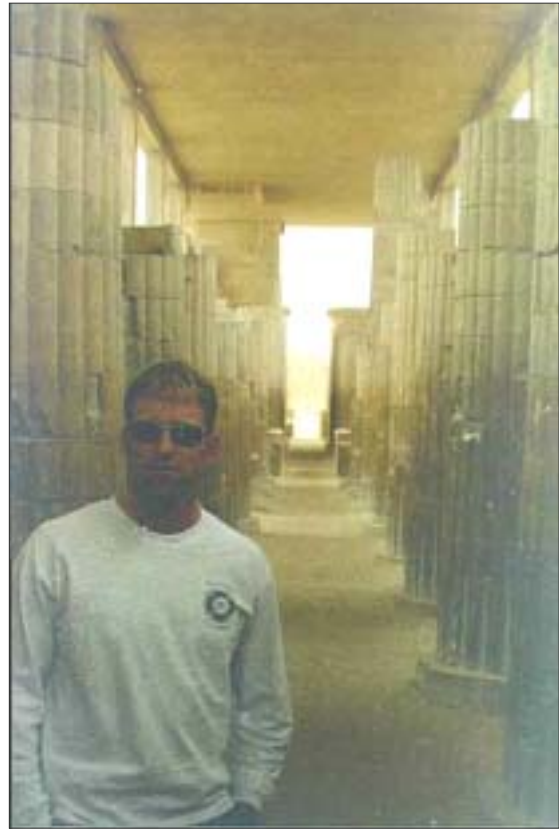


They then continued west down the one-way hall and not far outside, were the large in-ground silos; where they would be issued grain for their chits. The silos, are about 40 feet across and look about 70, or so, ft. deep. Eric said that Ron had explored the bottoms of the silos, and had found that they were interconnected by small passageways; just the way modern grain storage silos are interconnected. There are 11 of these pits here.

Eric told me that Ron found some grain at the bottom in the shafts when he explored them. While we were walking around, we found a clay item that was shaped like an ice cream cone, and had a center that was blackened. Eric said that it was a torch handle, and that the black stuff was leftover from whatever they used to burn as torch fuel. Eric said that these torch handles are all over the place.

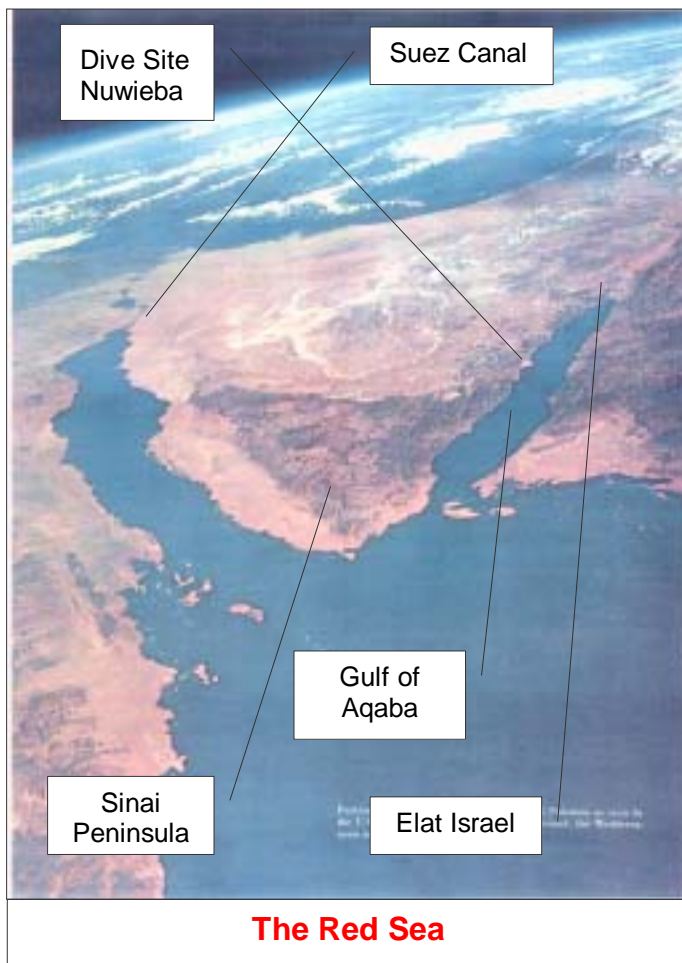
We then proceeded to walk around the stepped pyramid that unlike the Great Pyramid of Giza, is made of mud bricks instead of stone, and thus, not as well preserved. Eric said that there has been some bricks found at this pyramid that have been made with no straw, this also fits an element in the Bible's; Children of Israel account.

After that, we returned to the van and the drive back to the hotel. After a nap of about an hour, I went to the coffee shop downstairs for a cup of coffee and a not so good pastry. I recorded the days events into my journal. It has been a very interesting day and I am once again feeling dog tired, and I retire for the evening.



3/28/98 Our wake up call this morning is 4:30 am because we are leaving at 6:00. Today, Eric and I are going across the Sinai desert to Taba, which is a boarder crossing between Israel and Egypt Taba is located at the end of an arm of the Red Sea, called the Gulf of Ababa. There we will wait for Ron, Jerry, Jeremiah, and the others, who are finishing there tour of Israel today. After a wonderful breakfast, Eric and I head east across the Sinai with our Egyptian driver, Mahmoud Ezzat El-Mihy, in a Mercedes diesel van. Mahmoud speaks English pretty well, although, his voice is so low, I have a very difficult time understanding him; I have to listen to him v e r y c a r e f u l l y. There is a lot of dust in the air today, and the terrain is pretty stark. Mahmoud selected some Brian Adams music for us, but after hearing the same music three or four times, I ask Mahmoud to play some of the kind of music he likes. His musical preference is typical Mid-Eastern; high velocity music, and he likes it LOUD!

Mahmoud tells us that he didn't get any sleep the night before, and judging by the way his eyelids keep drooping, I think it is true. Now that we know that he is sleep deprived, some of the things he is doing are alarming. Mahmoud is trying to keep awake by taking frequent drinks of water, smoking, and keeping the window open, even though it's rather cool today. When we come to a curve, for some unknown reason, he slows way down much slower than what the curve deserves. These actions put Eric and I on edge. Mahmoud wanting to be friendly, tests the waters by telling us a rather filthy joke, which soars like a lead balloon. While it may have been a hit with the last folks he toured around, the joke sort of just laid there. Because of the lack of success in the joke, it was the last one of that flavor that we heard from Mahmoud.



Another strange culture difference I take note of, was that, after Mahmoud was through drinking water from his plastic bottle, he merely threw it out the window; this explains the abundance of litter present.

After crossing under the Suez Canal, we stop in a little town that can be fittingly called “the middle of nowhere”, but my map says that its real name is Nakhi. We fuel up and Mahmoud buys me some Turkish coffee. The coffee is very strong, but not bitter, and I like it. There are several Muslims here that are traveling by bus on a pilgrimage. In the restroom there are several men that are washing their feet in the sink, which is a bit different. Soon we are on the road again, and every hour or so on the trip, there are military checkpoints that we have to stop at. The soldiers are very friendly, they smile a lot as they talk to Mahmoud about his passengers and our intentions. Soon, instead of the wide-open stretches of desert, we are entering a rocky canyon

and descending; I think that the Red Sea cannot be far away. After about 1/2 hour, we arrive at the Red Sea on the Gulf of Aqaba just south of Taba, and proceed for a short distance to Taba itself. We find a place to park near the border while we wait, and watch, for the others.

Nearby are a couple of local gardeners that are sprucing up the area. One of them is a young man who has a horrendous cut on his hand. It looks to me like his hand is infected, I try to clean up his wound and put a couple of band aids on it in order to help him keep it clean. I do all of this despite a major language problem. After I am done with that, he returns to his work, and I am dismayed to see that already one of the band-aids is already falling off. I feel compassion on this poor kid, and approach him to give him some money, \$20.00, which is probably a week’s wages, but he will not take it and conveys to me that, “Allah will provide”.

While waiting for the others to cross the border, Mahmoud asked if I would like some tea; I told him “yes”. He walked around to the back of some ramshackle buildings, and soon returned with a glass containing hot tea. Tea is a like a national drink here, and they like it strong and sweet. It was very good. We eye everyone that comes through the crossing, and after several hours, we finally see some of our party: Lennart Mollar and Viveka Ponten, both from Sweden. Lennart is the cancer researcher, and Viveka is an adventurer. On one of her adventures, she was employed as a midwife in Saudi Arabia at the small town directly across the Gulf of Aqaba from where we were diving.



Nerida Titchiner & Arron Sen

She worked there for a year so she could explore the other side of the Red Crossing site and visit the real Mt. Sinai, which she did. Soon, we spotted Ron, Jerry, and Jeremiah, coming across the border. After exchanging greetings, we loaded up in the van for the hour ride to the Nuwieba Hilton where we have accommodations. Once we arrived and checked in at the hotel, we were introduced to the rest of the team: Arron Sen and Nerida Titchiner both from England. I had met Arron on a previous trip to Israel.



Our Accommodation's, The Nuwieba Hilton

After introductions, we gathered for a briefing conducted by Lennart. Among other items, secrecy is stressed because, if the word gets out of what the true nature of our trip is, there could be some big problems. It is conceivable that the artifact area could be closed off to us for this, and future trips. We develop a loose vocabulary, substituting "coral" for "wheel". After the briefing, it was time to turn in. I share a bungalow with Jerry and Jeremiah. Jerry bears a striking resemblance to Jacques Cousteau confirmed by the illustration of Jacques, on the package that my dive mask came in. For the

rest of the trip, I call him Jacques. His reply is always that he is Jacques brother, Joke. We have a lot of fun with that.

3/29/98 I awakened early and while Jerry got up and showered, I caught up on my journal and made sure that my dive gear was ready to go. When it was time for breakfast, I headed out to the restaurant. When I arrived, I was horrified to see that the rest of the group were eating, and, in fact, were all finished. They all wondered why I was so late and I wondered myself. I looked at my watch which said 7:00 AM, which I thought, was the appointed time for breakfast. Meanwhile, a swell of embarrassment washed over me as they said my watch was set wrong and Ron said, "What part of the breakfast time plan did I not understand"? That remark stung. I was angry with myself for making such a stupid mistake on the first day of diving. I'll bet they're all impressed with me! My appetite dwindled.

After a few minutes, Eric joined us; having gone to the front desk to see what time it really was, to my relief, my time was correct. Immediately, my appetite returned and I felt better about the situation. Now, the shoe was on the other foot, I tried not to gloat. After a "casual" breakfast, we went to the dive shop on the hotel compound to get some gear we needed, but there was a problem; they would only give us one scuba tank each and we needed a minimum of 2. After a bit of haggling, Ron and Lennart drove to another dive shop a few miles away. The people there were more helpful, and we were able to get everything we needed.



Our Dive Camp

Before long, we are driving to the place where we will dive, which conveniently is only about 15 minutes away. On the way, we travel through downtown Nuwieba which is a small Bedouin town; the place is obviously poverty-stricken. The buildings resemble burned out concrete houses, and as I understand, they are used seasonally. There are not many people out and about, but here, and there, are a few idle men sitting around. On some trips through the town, there are piles of garbage burning. The garbage system here is designed for minimal labor, in

that, garbage is left to accumulate wherever it happens to land. When an accumulation is dense enough to support combustion, it is lit. Because there is a lot of plastic in the refuse, the fire produces volumes of acrid black smoke. No air pollution control officials to worry about here! Most dooryards have small herds of goats and no doubt, one of the poor unsuspecting animals has been selected as the “special one“, intended for the next family special occasion.



Lots of Coral Shapes like These

We arrive at the dive site and it is fairly rocky except for a few scattered patches of sand. We unloaded all of the equipment and set about organizing our dive camp. One of the things we do, is to establish one of the lockable bags as a “bank”. After everyone puts his or her valuables in, it is locked up. This keeps us from having too many separate bags to worry about and is a system that worked well. Soon we went on our first dive, and immediately, I can see that the underwater visibility is good. Once we swam away from the shore, the bottom is sandy and fairly sparse except for scattered corals of various sizes. Some

coral formations are just a few feet across, and some in the 8 to 10 ft range. Most of them seem to be random shapes, and only once in a while can I see a large coral head. Because of the lack of coral that provides protection for fish, there are very few fish seen. When we get close to a large piece of coral then we see a few colorful fish.

I learned that coral grows on objects, so that would mean that these scattered formations all have something solid underneath. It could be a rock, but it also could be an artifact that provided the original nucleus. Eric and I find an area of several formations that look interesting, and set out to mark it off with some of the grid ropes we had brought. The yellow polypropylene ropes are 100 ft long, and we placed lead pieces in the middle of the rope to keep it from floating. Flagging, was added 25 ft intervals to help us judge distance.



The rope was loaded into heavy zip lock bags, and could be easily deployed by a diver holding onto one end of the rope, while the other diver, swims away with the bag containing the rest of the rope. The rope pays out the rope as he goes. When we deployed the first rope, we found that the water was so clear, that when Eric reached the 75 ft mark, he could see me clearly. I then signaled with my outstretched arm which direction for him to go, to be on the desired compass heading. After the marking was complete, we looked around and Aaron had found a corral formation that looked like a hub with some spokes. Meanwhile, I found a formation that looked interesting, so we marked both of them with some markers made of zip lock bags and flagging. We would exhale some air into the bag, and it would float above the marked site with the ribbons of flagging tape trailing

down. I am pleased that the improvised markers work OK. The first dive lasted 35 minutes and a depth of 35 ft.

The second dive, a little later in the day, is to 40 ft for 30 minutes. During these shake down dives we are all making little adjustments to our systems and methods of storage. Ron is having some problems getting the proper weight needed to keep his buoyancy under control. On this dive, I take video of some interesting formations with Jerry's underwater camera. We also search the area south of the grid, but find nothing interesting. Although the water temperature is probably in the 70's, we are in the water so much that when I get out of the water, I notice that my hands have a bluish tinge. The reason for this is because I didn't bring along my dive hood to keep my head warm, and the wet suit I rented here does not fit me very well. I always seemed to have a pool of cool water sloshing around in the area of my kidneys. Our dives on this first day yield nothing too interesting, and at the end of the day, we drove back to the hotel. After cleaning our gear and ourselves, we debriefed and then had dinner, which consists of a large buffet of many interesting and wonderful foods.

The food is pretty much standard food, and not anything unusual (like goat kabobs). Shortly after 9:00 PM, I'm bushed so I went to my room. Jeremiah went with me, and while I wrote in my journal, he said that he was going for a walk. Forty five minutes later, Jeremiah has not made it back, and since Jeremiah is a young man (14), I start to worry about him and go searching. Some of the areas around the hotel are dark and spooky, and I feel frantic when I hear a scream somewhere in the distance; thinking that it could be him. After not finding Jeremiah, I went to Ron's room where I am relieved to find out that Jeremiah went with Eric to the Papyrus shop. Soon Eric and Jeremiah returned, and I spend some time telling Jeremiah the story of looking for him, and to please not go wandering around by himself alone again. Tiredness overtakes me, and I find my way to my bed, and soon, the events of the day fade into sleep. Today was just a warm up, tomorrow we go out to deeper water to find a really "big coral". I hope we find one.

3/30/99 Today's goal is to locate a sunken buoy and its concrete anchor block. This buoy is made of steel and looks like a hockey puck that is about 12 foot in diameter. The reason that finding this buoy is so important is because if we can, Ron can find the chariot wheel that he videotaped on an earlier trip. It is also the wheel that is in the picture on Ron's web site <http://wyattmuseum.com/images/wpe2E1.jpg> .

The wheel is a gold trimmed 4-spoke wheel. Why a wheel has gold on it probably has some special significance, perhaps the chariot belonged to someone of importance, but just who or what level in the Egyptian hierarchy, is unknown. The plan is to tow Ron and Lennart, which are in an inflatable raft, out about a mile to the site and do some surface snorkeling in order to locate the buoy. With Eric pulling and me pushing the raft, we headed out. On the way, I breathe through my snorkel while keeping my head under the water, scanning the bottom just in case I see something interesting along the way. After what seems like eternity, plus a day, we arrive at the site which "looks right" to Ron as he sights on the mountains to our west.

Lennart joins Eric and me in the water, and with the help of a length of rope, the three of us surface screen using our snorkels for what seems to be more than an hour. The water is very clear and the bottom is about 50 feet down, but still we are unable to locate the buoy and large block of concrete. A few days later, we would find out from Forrage (the Bedouin boat operator) that sometime in the last couple of years, the Egyptian Navy had removed the sunken buoy and anchor block. This means that the whereabouts of the wheel in Ron's videotape is lost again. Having no success in finding the sunken buoy, we pulled the raft to another buoy that is still floating about 1/2 a mile away.



Where My Nightmare Dive Took Place

The new plan is for Eric and me to dive, and see if we could find the wheel that Eric had found (and lost) the previous year. I was feeling somewhat nervous about this dive since this was going to be my first dive to 100 feet. The wind had come up, and the waves were building and making it more difficult to don my dive gear, but with Eric's help, we soon were ready to go, and we started down into the deep. Everything seemed normal, and as we descended, I looked down and all that I can see is assure blue in all

directions, and I noticed that I was descending at a faster rate than Eric. I tried to slow my descent, but despite adding air to my buoyancy compensator (BC), which divers wear to control their buoyancy, I kept going down faster than what I wanted to. The experience was similar to what I imagine a skydiver has falling through a cloud. Soon I could see the bottom appearing below. I kept adding air to the BC, but still sank to the bottom hitting it, with a muffled thud. I looked around and it became clear why the buoy was located here. It was because the bottom, which up to this point gradually became deeper the further out we went, now plunged downward at a rather steep angle and continued this angle down to as far as I could see. The scene is surreal to me, the water magnifies the objects around me and it seems like I am the size of a small ant compared to the geography of the bottom around me. All of these cumulative new sensations were soon take their toll.

The bottom here is mostly rocks and irregular formations that are shaped like rings, which have sand in the bottom of them. It is in one of these rings, that Eric found the bronze wheel. Besides the surroundings, I am distracted by the new sensation of air explosively filling my lungs when I inhale. I feel like I am getting adequate air, but instead of merely inhaling, I feel like I am being forced fed air from a high pressure hose. I can sense that there is a high volume of air flowing through my throat, and into my lungs, (which is really what is happening). Along with all of these new sensations, my mind feels a bit detached. I add some additional air into the BC and finally started to rise, however, too much, and I have to let some out to get back down to Eric. I deflate a bit and struggle to swim down to Eric, I see that he is writing something on his message board; "We have too much weight". We started to swim horizontally, but in a short distance, I started to ascend rising feet first and concurrent with that, I realize that for a number of reasons, this dive just is not going well for me and I decide to call it off. I struggle to swim down to Eric and give him the thumbs up signal that means, "I am going up".

Eric returns my signal with a thumb down while shaking his head saying, "Noooo, let's stay down". At that moment, actor Bill Bixby best characterizes my feelings when he played "The Incredible Hulk"; in the process of "hulking out". A tremendous wave of dread envelops me as I become awash with adrenaline; my new "dive buddy", and together, we decide to ascend to the surface, which didn't take long in the under-controlled ascent. I have since been told by others that what I had experienced was a classic "panic attack", something that I never want to experience again. The good news is that my total bottom time was only about 3 minutes and, therefore, my body didn't have enough time to pick up much of a load of nitrogen. If my bottom time would have been much longer, I would have had had the potential of being seriously injured. Have you ever noticed how a bottle of soda bubbles when you first remove the cap? This is precisely the same thing that happens to a deep diver's blood when he comes up too fast; not a pretty mental picture.



How did I get into this situation? First, I am a novice diver; I was hypothermic and fatigued by all of the swimming and time in the water. This was also my first deep dive where I would experience high-pressure breathing and wet suit compression, which is where the foam in your wetsuit compresses, and you sink a lot faster than say, at 50 ft. These factors came together, and formed this nightmare, which was my first deep dive. Looking back with a 20/20 view, I wish that Eric would have given me a couple of raps on

the head and helped me focus, by telling me what to expect. But there was no way that he could anticipate what was going to happen. Soon Eric appeared at the surface and with his help; I unloaded my SCBA cylinder back into the raft. It was apparent that I was in no shape to try another dive attempt so we pushed and pulled the raft back to our base with a welcome assist from the wind. We drink hot chi that Mahmoud made for us, and I licked my mental wounds.



Camra, Zena, & Latifa

Three small Bedouin girls are visiting us almost every day and they make pretty bracelets and hatbands out of thread for us. We buy them with a bit of haggling for 5 pounds each.

Eric and I go for another dive though not as deep, and about the only interesting thing we see is a giant clam about 14 inches across. Eric teased it so it would close, by putting his fin in it. We also see a Lionfish that is very colorful, but also very poisonous. Fortunately Lionfish are not aggressive so we just have to be careful where we step or

where we put our hands. Because of the lingering memories of the previous dive, this dive was not real enjoyable to me, afterward, we dried out by the campfire and soon the dive day was over. We arrived back at the hotel at 7:00 PM. Cleanup, dinner and debriefing took until 10:00 PM, and then I slung my tired bones and mentally damaged body into bed.

3/31/98 I awakened at 6:00AM after a night of fitful, restless, sleep with reoccurring thoughts and dream snapshots of my unpleasant dive experience the day before. Through it all though, I feel fairly well rested and ready for another day's worth of activities. Today we went in the Bedouins boat to look again for the sunken buoy and we did some more surface screening. For a while, I thought we had found the anchor block but upon closer examination it turned out to be nothing but an odd shaped rock. Later, by myself, I did some surface snorkeling and in about 40 ft. of water and saw the classic shape of a chariot wheel.



Eric, Forrage and his boat



The outline was very clear against the sandy bottom and the wheel appeared to be about 3 feet in diameter. I could see that one of the spokes was broken. I managed to guide the lead weight of a buoy marker I had to within a few feet of the wheel. With the wheel marked, I swam back to the dive base. Eric and I assembled our gear and we went with Forrage in his boat to the marker.

With my eye on the wheel, Eric and I descended down toward the bottom, but about half way down, I lost sight of the wheel and could not see where it was, so we surfaced and immediately, I could see it again. We started down again, and try as I might, bubbles distracted my eyes, I lost sight again of the wheel, so up we surfaced again. Once on top, I could clearly see the outline and we made another attempt to dive toward it but the same thing happened when we arrived at the bottom. There was nothing that looked like a wheel to me. Eric scribbled on his pad, "It's just moss". Seeing there was light moss on the bottom, we surfaced and abandoned the search. I was disappointed, and didn't understand what I had seen and what was going on. It was only later after telling Ron what I had seen that Ron told us; that it would make sense for the moss to be a little bit thicker over the top of a wheel that was buried just under the sand.

This is because the moss would feed on the nutrients in the wheel, and that we should have done a little bit of digging in the area to see what we could see. After returning from this disappointing dive, Mahmoud made Northern Egyptian chili. It tasted great as it warmed us up.

Forrage, the boat operator, like the Bedouin children that made daily visits to our dive base, didn't wear shoes, they just went barefooted, and it was amazing to see the children literally running on the rocky shore while playing tag without as much as a stubbed toe.

I asked Forrage if I could examine the bottom of his feet, which may have seemed a bit strange to him, but he let me. The skins on the soles of his feet were somewhat thicker, but smooth and subtle, not hard and leathery like I thought they would be. I showed him the bottom of my feet, and when he touched them, I said, "baby feet", and he laughed.

For many times over the rest of the trip, he would refer to me as Baby Feet. It was really funny. Forrage was trying in his very limited English to talk Eric into moving to Nuwieba and working for him. Since the basic daily wage for a man in Nuwieba is \$6.00 a day I think that Eric decided to pass on the offer. Once again, two Egyptian policemen visit us, one of which, is carrying a machine gun. They conversed in Arabic with Mahmoud, who knows nothing of our real mission and seemingly satisfied, they move on smiling and waving to me as they go.



Viveka & the Boat Lennart Chartered for us

4/1/98 Today I awoke with a headache, and it was going to be my companion for most of the day. Lennart chartered a 35-foot cabin cruiser for us, and the plan is to tie up at the buoy where Eric had previously found the wheel. We would make a concerted effort to find it. The cruise to the buoy took about 45 minutes, and was most enjoyable. We had a wonderful view of the Wadi Watir, which is the rugged drainage that was probably the exodus route of the children of Israel.



Eric and me in the water

While our boat was paralleling the shore, Jeremiah, Eric, and I were all on the top deck. While Eric and I were sitting and looking at the countryside, Jeremiah was laying down on the deck; enjoying the warmth of the sun. It was during this time that either Eric or I said, "Look a nude beach", and what a laugh it was to see Jeremiah's head immediately shoot up at the speed of light. It was really funny. Once we arrived at the site, Eric and I dove, and did a general search of the area where he had seen the bronze wheel. We dove for 18 minutes to a depth of 96 ft. One of the problems of re-locating the bronze wheel is that the wheel was on the bottom of a rough circle of coral.

The diameter of the coral circles range from 6 ft to maybe 10 ft., and they have sand and silt on the bottom. There are hundreds of these circles in the area we are in, and all it takes is for the silt in the circles to be a few inches too high and the wheel will not be visible. The dive went well despite my headache.

On the next dive, we took 200 ft. of rope down, and fastened one end of each to the buoy anchor, and then laid them out roughly 160 degrees apart so that teams that followed could make sweeps using the ropes as a guide to scan the bottom for artifacts. We looked, but didn't find anything interesting during our 20 minute dive. Later, there was a bit of excitement when Ron surfaced and said he had seen something shiny on the bottom and had marked it. Within a few minutes everyone capable of diving was into the water, and upon investigation, we found the shiny object to be what looked like the remains of a Mylar balloon reflecting the sun. While we were all down, we searched the area, but didn't find anything. Success alluded us, and soon the day was ending; we cruised back to port.

Several times before the trip and many times during the trip, Eric asked me if I would go on a night dive with him and I said I would. Tonight was the night and Aaron and Nerida decided to go along. We loaded our gear into the van and drove to a place where there was supposed to be a reef with abundant sea life. We decided before the dive, that we would only go to a depth of 30 ft since this was our forth dive of the day. We entered the water and started down. The dive feels familiar, but visually, things look weird. Looking at my fellow divers, they look to me like a UFO landing at night with its lights scanning around looking for obstacles. Each one of us has a single flashlight whose beam is quite busy; looking here and there in the blackness. What's that, a shark! Oh, just a rock. We descend along the bottom and when I looked at my depth gauge, I was shocked to see that we had descended to 50 ft so we turned back to the shallower waters toward shore.

There is a reef here but the fish that we were hoping to see must have taken the night off, or they are hiding so well that we cannot find them. I think they must be sleeping. We thought the reef would be teeming with life, curious about our lights. Soon our time was up and we slogged back to the van and took off our gear. A big part of diving is gear management, at the end of each day, it is necessary to thoroughly flush all of the salt water and sand from our gear and wetsuits and then hang them up to dry. There is a nice rack over the bathtub that is a great help in drying our gear but tonight it collapsed under the load, which certainly complicated things. By the time I got into bed it was 10:30 PM. It had been a long day and we were getting disappointed that we had not found anything too interesting. I was glad though that I was feeling better about the deeper dives and the night dive was a neat experience.

4/2/98, Today we have some more deep dives to do out at the buoy. The thought is that if we concentrate on the area where we know a wheel is, maybe it will pay off. My first dive was with Viveka and Nerida and we traveled out in Forrage's boat. We retrieved one of the boundary ropes and re-deployed it to have a new boundary of about 90 degrees. With a third rope that we used as a guide we sweep back and forth scanning the bottom between the two boundary markers. Nerida thought she saw something interesting but it turned out to be just some modern discarded junk.

While we were down, the wind picked up and as we began surfacing we noticed a strong surge. At 20 ft we stopped to do what is called a safety stop where we would remain stationary for 3 minutes in order to breathe off the additional nitrogen that our bodies have absorbed while we were at depth. Usually, it is kind of tricky to remain still at 20 feet so the procedure that Eric and I use is that we grab each other with our right hands while holding onto and looking at our depth gauge with our left hands. Eric uses his BC to stabilize us and my job is to give a kick or two if I notice that we are sinking. This system works well and we don't seem to work against ourselves as could



Nerida, me and Viveka

happen. On this dive, we have the buoy anchor chain to hang onto to help stabilize us while we do our safety stop. The only problem with this is that the wave action above us is causing the anchor chain to heave up and down (along with us). With only a backdrop of azure blue all around us I find that the movement of the anchor chain to be very disorienting and I feel the onset of vertigo and loss of balance. Fortunately, I find that the symptoms subside if I look away from the chain and that is what I do to get through the rest of our safety stop time.



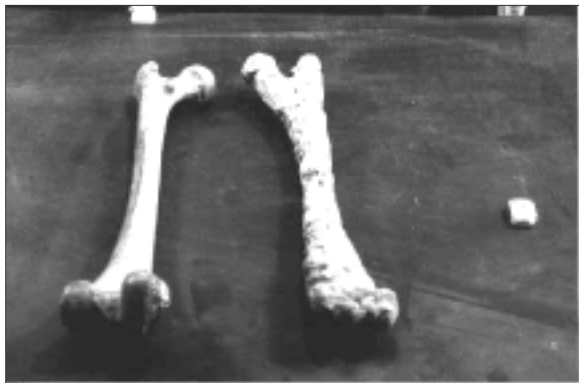
The wind came up, Jerry Niswanger

We surface and the wind and waves have picked up noticeably and getting into the boat takes more effort as usual but we all help each other and get the job done. When we get to base the waves are really pounding and Forrage has to keep his boat back away from the shore. It is very difficult to safely get ashore with all of our gear, but the others in the group help us and, somehow we do. Forrage, done for the day, heads for home.



The wind shows no sign of letting up so Eric and Jeremiah bodysurf in the waves. Even Mamoud dons a wet suit and joins them, which was fun to watch. We really enjoyed having Mamoud as our driver. He was always assisting us in loading the heavy dive tanks (which the folks from Sweden called "tubes") and making hot chi for us. He is a very likeable fellow.

4/3/98, Today, Eric and I dove out by the buoy to check out an interesting corral that he had seen on a previous dive. Our depth was 98 feet. The corral we were interested in had “pipes” like a pipe organ, but in this case, they were lying horizontal. We quickly located the area and determined that an anchor probably pulled over the patches of pipes. The only other thing that happened on this dive was that Eric almost accidentally touched a Lionfish but fortunately missed it.



Normal Leg Bone on the left.
Corralized bone on the right.

Back on the shore, Lennart and Ron were looking at some coral pieces that they thought were bones. I just caught a glimpse of the “bones” and thought this notion was ridiculous; an act of desperation. Several months after the trip, I received an E-mail from Lennart; he wrote that he had given the coral specimens to the bone department of the Karolinska Institute. He didn't tell them about his inclination of what they were, or even where the specimens came from. After examining the objects for a couple of weeks, they concluded for a variety of reasons that the specimens were Corralized leg bones. I was stunned.

My next dive of the day was with Lennart. We started out just in a meandering dive and shortly after it started, I lost sight of Lennart! After looking for him and not finding him, I decided to surface. When I got to the surface, I could see Lennart's bubbles so I followed them down to their source and rejoined Lennart. Lennart soon found something that looked interesting to him and he tied his marker buoy to it and we continued on. After a while we came into an area that had some really interesting formations. I found what looked like a metal spoke or maybe a sword handle sticking out horizontally out of a corral formation. Lennart also found something that looked interesting to him and I started searching for the buoy marker that I had clipped onto my BC. No matter where I looked, I could not find it and signaled to Lennart that I couldn't find it. I was feeling frustrated as a check of the air remaining in our tanks said that the dive was over. As we surfaced, the gentle current was already moving us away from the interesting site on the bottom. That was all the diving I did that day. The day concluded in about the same way as the previous ones. I hit the bed at 9:00 PM, tired and sore from all of the cumulative activity.

4/4/98, This was our last day in Egypt and the grueling routine of the previous week was catching up to all of us. One indication of this was when we were in the van on the way out to the dive base, I asked the others, “Who is excited about diving today?” No one was, but all of us felt that we wanted to do our best for Lennart, who generously provided our room and board and the rental of the dive gear. Maybe we would find something today. My dive buddy was Ron Wyatt and we just meandered along seeing what we could find which was not anything. The dive was pleasant and it was great to dive with Ron. Back at the dive base, I almost caused a near riot by giving away left over food and Frisbees to the local Bedouin children who visited us almost every day. They were delightful.

Soon we were on our way back across the Sinai headed back to Cairo to catch our midnight flight home. The drive to Cairo seemed to go by a lot faster than the trip to Nuwieba. For a while, it looked like we might have to stay in Cairo for a few days because Jeremiah's passport apparently was stolen. As it played out, Jerry and Jeremiah stayed in Cairo for a couple of days so that Jeremiah could get another passport. On the way to the airport, we stopped at the Novotel and there was a bit of a ruckus between Ron and the negotiator. It seemed that we kept the driver and the van an extra day or two than originally agreed to and now, the negotiator was trying to gouge Ron for an exorbitant amount for the extra day/s. After a while, the two struck a deal and everything was OK. We proceeded to the airport and did the normal things and soon the airplane was leaving the lights of Cairo behind. The flight back to the U.S. was uneventful as well as the domestic flight back to San Francisco. Eric's parents were kind enough to meet us at the airport for the ride back to Paradise.

This had been a trip of a lifetime, an adventure like I had never had before. I had seen some very interesting things, the mossy outline of a chariot wheel, a spoke or sword. I didn't hold a chariot wheel in my hand but I worked and dove with those who have. I also witnessed their frustration of not being able to relocate the artifacts again and I clearly understand the difficulties of finding and re-finding these elusive treasures. I have seen photos and video of a gold gilded wheel partially covered with corral and I have also seen a corral incusted chariot wheel hub at the Cairo Museum. I believe these artifacts are there and feel that I have unfinished business in Nuwieba. I hope that someday, I will get another opportunity to dive there.

To me, the presence of chariot wheels and other artifacts at this site on the Red Sea are further proof that the Bible is accurate, unique and true. I wish people would seriously consider (like I have), that the Bible reveals God's nature and His desire to have a personal relationship with those who want one with Him. I have come to the conclusion that the only purpose of life is to provide us with a the means (and limited time), to choose whether or not to fill the "God shaped hole" that we all have in our hearts; through this wonderful relationship. A lifetime is short. Many people go through their entire lives without spending any quality time considering life's most important question; which is: ***What are we doing here?*** It is a question that begs an answer that so many, never seek an answer to. If this question seems important to you, I encourage you to investigate further. Here are some resources that I have found to be helpful.

Books:

The Bible (I recommend the New Kings James version). Read *"The Gospel of John" First*

The Best of Josh McDowell, a Ready Defense

Answers to Tough Questions, Josh McDowell

The Exodus Case, by: Lennart Mollar <https://www2.securevaults.com/~exodusbo/order.html>

Free Book (no obligation) Power for Living 1- 800-382-8000

Web Sites: Josh McDowell At: <http://www.josh.org/apologetics/>

My Web Page with more stories and links to interesting places:

<http://www.oro-ville-eternal-riders.org/keith.html>

Or ask me, Keith L. Sorrels 1-15-00. E-Mail: itsksorrels@sbcglobal.net

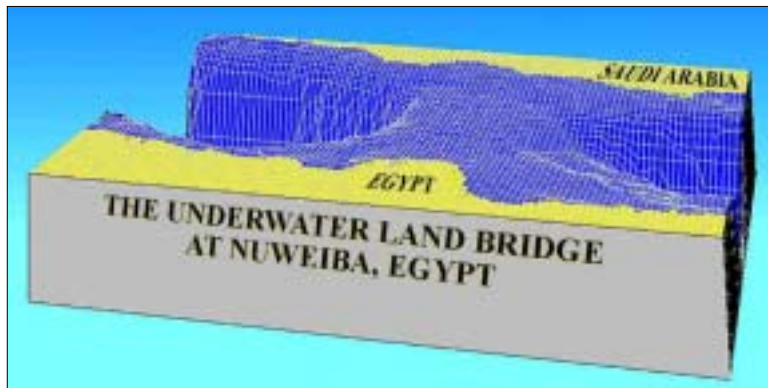
The evidence that Ron Wyatt cited to show that this was the actual Red Sea crossing site is as follows:



Newieba, where the Children of Israel assembled while waiting to cross the Sea.

- ⊕ The geography of the area fits the Biblical Story in that:
- ⊕ There was a canyon (Wadi), long enough and steep enough to confine the pursuing Egyptian army.
- ⊕ There was a flat area large enough to accommodate the million plus Jews that were on the exodus (see the photo below and the satellite photo on page 11).
- ⊕ To the south along the shoreline, they were completely cut off by a mountain that plunges directly into the sea.

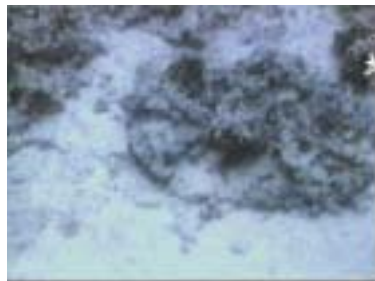
- ⊕ To the north is the remains of an Egyptian fortress, so they couldn't go north.
- ⊕ The actual Mt. Sinai is on the other side of the Gulf of Aqaba; east of the crossing site.
- ⊕ An underwater land bridge lies between the 2 columns. To the north the water depth is 4,000 ft and to the south the water depth is 6,000 ft but between the two columns the water is 500 to 900 feet deep.



Ron found a Roman style column laying in the water at the dive site the column was about 25 ft. long and 2 feet in diameter with no visible inscriptions because they had been worn or chiseled off. On a trip to Saudi Arabia, Ron found a matching column adjacent the other one still standing with words in Hebrew that said:

"MIZRAIM (Egypt), SOLOMON, EDOM, DEATH, PHARAOH, MOSES, YAHWEH (God)."

- ⊕ Ron and his sons were arrested and detained for 78 days because they were in Saudi Arabia without permission. Saudi authorities subsequently removed the column in Saudi Arabia after Ron showed it to them and a metal post replaced it. The hatred of the Jews by the Arabs goes back a long ways through history and they (the Arabs) want nothing to do with evidence that the Jews were at one time in their land.
- ⊕ Ron located and filmed chariot wheels on the bottom of the crossing site. Other Items such as coralized bones and horses hooves have been found.
- ⊕ Others have seen chariot wheels first hand at the site.



Actual coral covered chariot wheel



Shape of wheel – enhanced image

An abundance of information on Ron's discoveries is available at <http://pilgrimpromo.com/WAR/> as well as several other web sites, which feature Ron's discoveries.

P. S. Ron Wyatt died of Colon Cancer on 8/4/99. It was my privilege to accompany him on three trips to the Mid-east. During that time, he showed himself to be trustworthy, generous, honest, and above all, humble. One of Ron's more controversial claims is that he found the Ark of the Covenant. This claim is unsubstantiated because he is the only one that has seen it. My opinion in light of my observations of him on these trips is, I believe him. He is certainly missed by many people, including me.