

IAMS completes ten years work -and plans for future

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the foundation of IAMS as an international organization whose function is to promote, supervise and co-ordinate research into the origins and development of mining and metallurgy from earliest times.

The immediate objective of the Institute on its formation in 1973 was to ensure the continuation and expansion of archaeo-metallurgical work which had begun in the Near East in the 1950s and, in particular, expeditions in Wadi Arabah in Israel under Professor Beno Rothenberg, now director of IAMS.

Whilst IAMS continues to operate with its own Board of Trustees and Scientific Committee, it is now officially affiliated to the Institute of Archaeology, University of London.

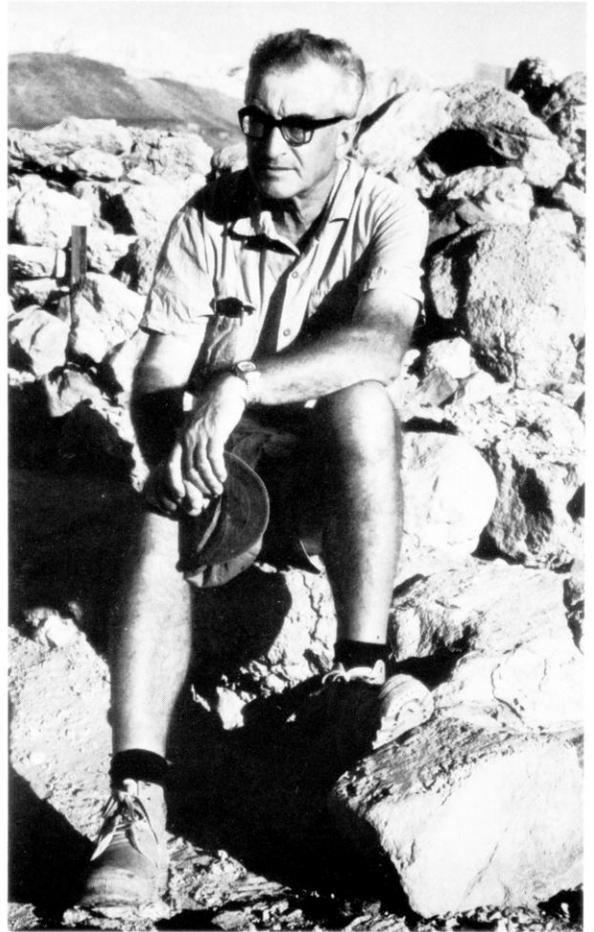
The following projects have been completed during the past ten years, are currently in operation or planned for the future:

Completed projects

- * *Arabah and Timna*: excavation of remains of earliest Egyptian copper mining and smelting in southern Israel, and discovery of Egyptian mining temple with more than 10,000 votive gifts and other small but precious finds, circa 13th century BC.
- * *Copper smelting*: discovery of furnace remains dating to 4th millennium BC — excavation of Bronze Age copper smelting sites — reconstruction of ancient furnaces in laboratory and on site — construction of mathematical model of basic metallurgical processes.
- * *Sinai*: largest archaeological survey undertaken of this desert area — 700 ancient mining and smelting sites identified, dating from late Neolithic to Roman period.
- * *Huelva project*: study of early Western European metallurgy — survey in southern Spain, followed by systematic excavation of mines and smelting sites.
- * *Rio Tinto*: excavations of copper and silver mining sites dating from 3rd millennium BC to the Roman period, establishing Rio Tinto as world's oldest mining area still in production.

Present projects

- * *Cyprus*: investigation into pre-Bronze Age mining history.



Professor Beno Rothenberg: his work in the Arabah pioneered the formation of IAMS

- * *Man and metals*: world-wide study of manufacturing techniques and impact of metal on cultural and economic developments.
- * *University courses*: a collective undertaking by IAMS and the Institute of Archaeology for teaching archaeo-metallurgy at London University — the world's only degree-awarding course in archaeo-metallurgy.
- * *Publications*: scientific papers, books, monographs, aimed to disseminate knowledge obtained from researches and excavations as widely as possible.

Future plans

- * *Iberia*: study of mining and smelting techniques throughout the Iberian pyrites belt and the impact of mining on history of the peninsula.
- * *Silver smelting*: investigations into the ancient processes for the recovery of metal from the complex silver, lead and copper ores of Western Europe.
- * *British Isles*: study of the early metallurgy ranging from Cornwall to Ireland, and the relationship between earliest mining and prehistoric remains and monuments, habitations and cults.