



# Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

---

Volume 24 | Number 4

Article 4

---

January 2004

## Herculaneum Papyri Project Catalyzes New Oxford Society

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/insights>



Part of the [Mormon Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

(2004) "Herculaneum Papyri Project Catalyzes New Oxford Society," *Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship*: Vol. 24: No. 4, Article 4.


Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/insights/vol24/iss4/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact [ellen\\_amatangelo@byu.edu](mailto:ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu).

## Herculaneum Papyri Project Catalyzes New Oxford Society

Brigham Young University's Herculaneum papyri project continues to gain support among American and European scholars. The project's director, Roger T. Macfarlane, an associate professor of classics at BYU, was invited to serve on the organizing board of the nascent Herculaneum Society, which was inaugurated in Oxford, England, on 3 July 2004. The society promotes international attention on scholarship and fund-raising related to the ancient town of Herculaneum and its Villa of the Papyri. Together with David Armstrong, a classics professor at the University of Texas at Austin, Macfarlane will direct the North American division of the Herculaneum Society. "There is no secret," he says, "that the society is eager to capitalize on our project's success."

During the society's first year, a DVD copy of the KBYU-TV documentary *Out of the Ashes* is being offered as a perk for all new members. The board feels sure that the documentary's high quality will attract donors to the society's cause. The documentary, which has won two international awards and a prestigious Bronze Telly Award during 2004, tells the history of the Herculaneum papyri as well as the story of how BYU's Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts

(CPART, a sister organization of FARMS) has applied multispectral imaging technology to the scrolls. Information about the documentary is available online at [www.byubroadcasting.org/ashes](http://www.byubroadcasting.org/ashes). The Herculaneum Society can be visited at [www.herculaneum.ox.ac.uk](http://www.herculaneum.ox.ac.uk), and the site contains a link to the inaugural edition of the newsletter *Herculaneum Archaeology*. To stay abreast of BYU's ongoing work on the Herculaneum papyri, visit the CPART Web site at <http://cpart.byu.edu> and select the "Herculaneum" link. 

### Newsletter Survey Results

We would like to thank the more than 1,000 of you who participated in our subscriber survey several months ago. We have tallied the results, read your written comments, and considered how we can improve. Some of the results regarding the *Insights* newsletter may be of interest to you: 70% of subscribers are male, 30% female; 54% are over age 60 (26% age 50–59, 11% age 40–49, 5% age 30–39, 3% age 20–29, 1% under age 19); 91% read all or most articles; the favorite features are Scripture Insights (89%) and Updates (83%); 90% rate the quality of the newsletter "very good" or "excellent." Although we are pleased with the results, we are dedicated to improvement and will implement your suggestions for improvement where possible.

## Ancient Exegesis and the Study of Scripture

Attention to exegesis in and of the Hebrew Bible has much to offer Latter-day Saint students of scripture in their efforts to understand the biblical text.\* Exegesis is the explanation or interpretation of a text. The word is derived from Greek, meaning literally "to lead out (of)." The general study of biblical exegesis has come to incorporate at least three subdivisions, each having direct relevance for Latter-day Saints: inner-biblical allusion, biblical and postbiblical exegesis, and scribal comments and corrections.

Inner-biblical allusion refers, simply, to the Bible's self-reference. As Michael Fishbane has shown in his standard *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (1985), there is much evidence indicating that biblical authors used traditions found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to "preserve, render contemporary, or otherwise reinterpret these teachings or traditions for new times and circumstances" (p. 8). An example of this is Jeremiah 2:3, in which Jeremiah adapts a law known from Leviticus 22:14–16 in order to reinforce his teaching of the importance of Israel's relationship with God. Another example is Malachi 1:6–2:9, in which the prophet turns the priestly blessing of Numbers 6:23–27 into a condemnation of priestly practice.