



UNC CHARLOTTE

# Mount Zion Excavations 2018 season



Our expedition members gathered at our new dig headquarters situated on Shlomo Hamelech Street, just 5 mins walk from the Old City of Jerusalem and 25 mins walk from our dig site at Mount Zion



The first thing we did on arriving in Jerusalem, was to organize all the boxes of archaeological materials and dig equipment. It was not an easy task....



It required a lot of patience, but eventually we managed to squeeze everything into the rooms. We even built a garden shed for tools.



Our excavation materials are now carefully organized in boxes according to season

Each one of these boxes contains at least 1000 artifacts including pottery, animal bones, shells, metal objects, etc.

We even had fish bones....



This is what our headquarters looks like after our massive reorganization of the four large rooms.

The office with computers is situated at one end of the building, and the kitchen and bathroom at the other.

Here you can see the room where we sort the pottery and other artifacts on trestle tables.

Ella does the conservation of the broken pottery vessels – painstakingly gluing the pieces together into complete vessels.

Below: a bowl from the first century CE after restoration





Recording is an important part of the excavation. Here you can see the Site Recorder, Virginia, and the Assistant Area Supervisor, Will, hard at work

Digging in progress, and (right) washing the soil from the important locations to find small artifacts that might not be noticed otherwise...



Breakfast is an important break and as they say: an army marches on its stomach....





The excavation team during a break at the hotel

We also had youngsters working with us – an important educational experience. Left: an Israeli boy from Tel Aviv, and right, a Palestinian boy from Jerusalem





We had high hopes of finding something in this cave – but our hopes were dashed. Our co-director Rafi squeezes in...



The structures from the Second Temple period are very well preserved:

Left: a building from the late Hasmonean period or from early on in Herod the Great's reign (late first century BCE).

Right: houses from the first century CE preserved to a height of two floors. Note the circular bread ovens in front.





Robert who directs the university Study Abroad group of students working at the site, has just discovered a perfume bottle going back to the first century BCE.

A coin hoard from the time of the revolt against the Romans.

We also came across an amphora rim with a strange inscription (below)



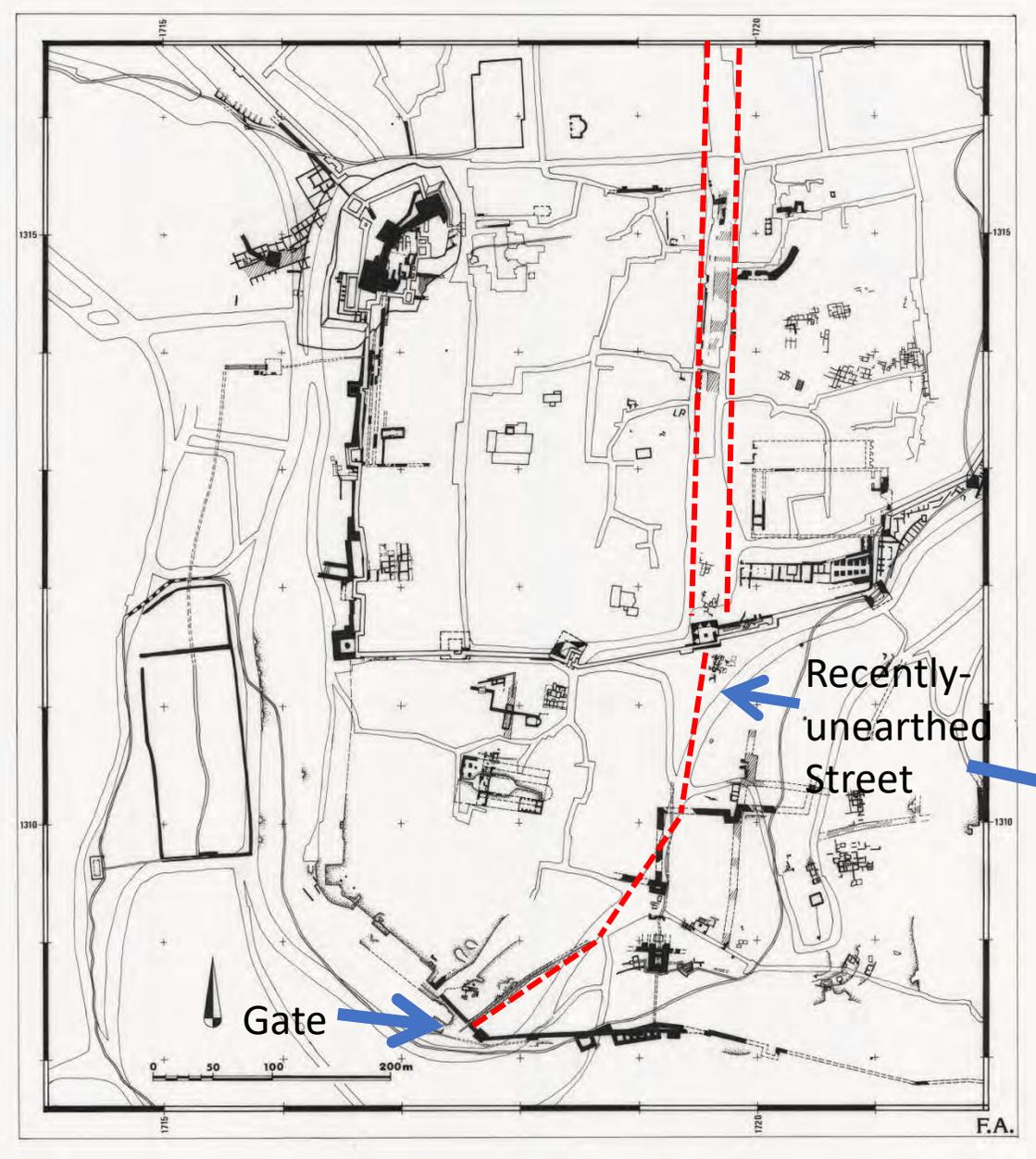
Collapsed stones from buildings destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE



An important discovery this season is a paved street with a central drain. We believe it is the continuation of the famous Cardo Maximus street which extended across Mount Zion as well, as far as a gate in the fortification wall which was found last century by Bliss and Dickie.



A reconstruction of the *Cardo Maximus* street



The street appears in the Madaba map of Jerusalem, late 6<sup>th</sup> century CE





Numerous archaeologists visited the site.

Here you can see Hillel Geva in conversation with Shimon (right).

We also put up signs for the general public providing information about the site (in English, Hebrew and Arabic), and a color-coded map of the remains made by our Precision Recording director, Steve Patterson

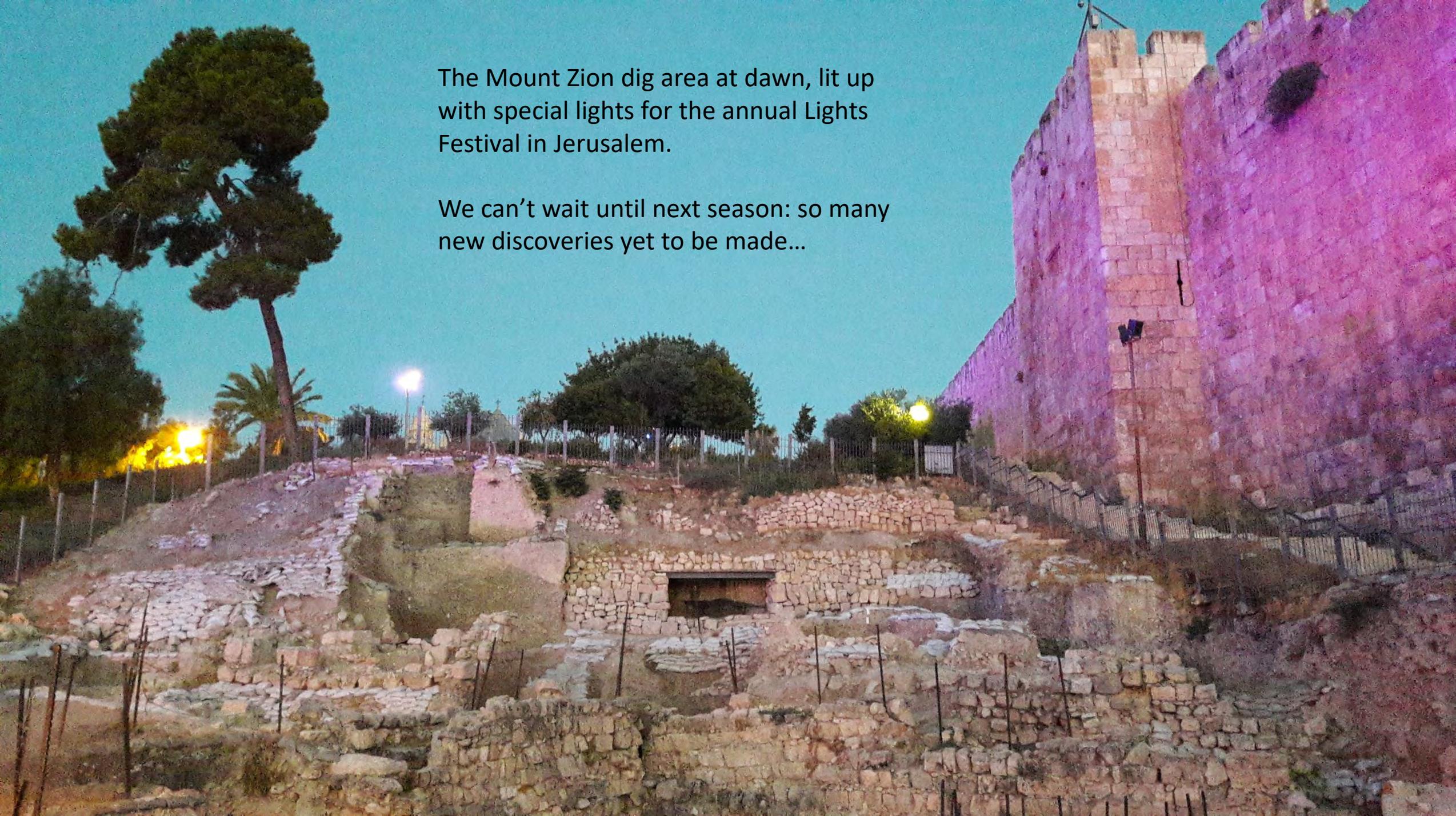


It was always good to see our friends at the site...



This is what the site looked like at the end of the 2018 season





The Mount Zion dig area at dawn, lit up with special lights for the annual Lights Festival in Jerusalem.

We can't wait until next season: so many new discoveries yet to be made...