

PENN MUSEUM: INTO THE COLLECTIONS

Eleanor Toyama '26

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Haverford excavation at the site of Beth Shemesh, 1928 to 1933
- Material sold to the Penn Museum in 1961
- Shelves of ceramics, stoneware, and lithics (+ drawers of beads, amulets, and game pieces)
- Inventoried, photographed, re-bagged/boxed each item
- Trips to the galleries and archives!



FINDING THE BEAUTY...

A lot of the objects I got to handle were stunning! This collection of carnelian beads would have been strung together in a beautiful array for a necklace, bracelet, or other jewelry. Carnelian is my favorite stone because of its rich orange-red color, and these pieces show just how gorgeous they can be. I also worked with some Egyptian amulets made with a light blue faience, as well as scarabs with intricate detail.



...IN EVERY PIECE

Many pieces in the collections of a museum are those that are not flashy enough to be displayed in the galleries, and so they may not catch your eye at first glance. Through this internship, I've gained an appreciation for every little piece and what it can offer. This bowl, for example, became one of my favorite objects because of its rough edges — you can tell exactly where the ancient person formed the shape, and it reminds us that those in the past were just like us.

TAKEAWAYS AND SKILLS

- Navigating a museum collection
- Inventory and object handling
- Object photography and synthesis
- Archaeological collections serve those outside the museum (researchers, curators, students, educators, etc.)
- Accessibility



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